

Novel Production and Publishing

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ABSTRACT

Producing a novel is no easy task. There are many elements to consider when beginning the process of novel production and publishing. When I originally began this research, it was to find a publishing company suitable for the genre of work I had written but also suitable and cost effective for my own purposes, based on my financial situation. One such element I had to consider when locating a publisher – the artwork that supplements the text of the novel and brings the worlds and characters the author has created to life – became the primary focus of this research. When someone picks up a book, usually the first thing that attracts him or her to it is the cover art. An attractive picture on the front of a novel draws readers into reading the book itself. Without attractive illustrations, oftentimes very good works of literature are cast aside or downplayed. When publishing a novel, it is important to not only remember the text but to remember the supplemental artwork that is almost always essential to the success of publishing a novel.

Keywords: Novel, Publishing, Publishing Companies, Science Fantasy

INTRODUCTION

I engaged myself academically, both in my creative writing career and also in my career as a future English educator. I supplemented my knowledge of and skills in the mechanics and usage of grammar, as well as the precise structuring of sentences that I will use to help teach my future students to excel in the areas of writing and communication.

When I published my first novel in July of 2005, I found the publishing process to be incredibly difficult. There were many aspects to consider, and many different options to choose from. One such option involved choosing a type of publishing to undertake. Four main types of publishing options exist in the book industry today. These four include: Self publishing; mass market publishing; print on demand publishing; and subsidy publishing. Originally, I had very few resources available and very few people to direct my publishing questions toward.

In 2005, I chose the "publish on demand" option with AuthorHouse, out of Indiana. This option allowed me to keep all rights to my work and have control over what was edited and what was not edited. There were two large problems with this option. One problem was the cost, which was well over a thousand dollars simply to put the work to print. Publish on demand also was expensive in regard to purchasing books to sell in stores. Though I received an author discount for the books, it was not very much; as a result, I had little money to work with and very few resources to utilize in helping me market my novel. The second issue concerned the illustrations for the novel. My publisher supplied an illustration for my cover art, but the illustration failed to be one of eye-catching ability.

BOOK TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS

While the text of a book is the most important part, illustrations to supplement the work are just as crucial in determining the book's success in the eyes of the public. When I first published, I lacked the advantage of proper illustrations. After undertaking this research, however, my findings came up quite fruitful. One such example of my plans for publishing coming to fruition is a full color cover illustration of my second novel, *The Chronicles of Terra: Seeds of Chaos*.

Without eye-catching illustrations or cover designs, books are very hard to sell. As a result, I needed to locate an illustrator to fit my needs as an author of science fantasy work. I found the perfect illustrator in JoMarie Bentzler. Jo's talents in art were many; she possessed the ability to give life to her creations, and to use her work to supplement the text I had written. Some examples of JoMarie Bentzler's work can be seen in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 (see below) is an example of Jo's artwork using a graphic design format, in which she hand drew the character and then inserted the character into a background using a painting program on her computer. Figure 2 (see below) is a second example that utilizes the graphic design formatting. Figures 3 and 4 (see below), however, are

examples of hand painted landscape portraits. In these illustrations, Jo hand painted both the characters and the landscape backgrounds to provide a more personalized effect for readers of the novel.

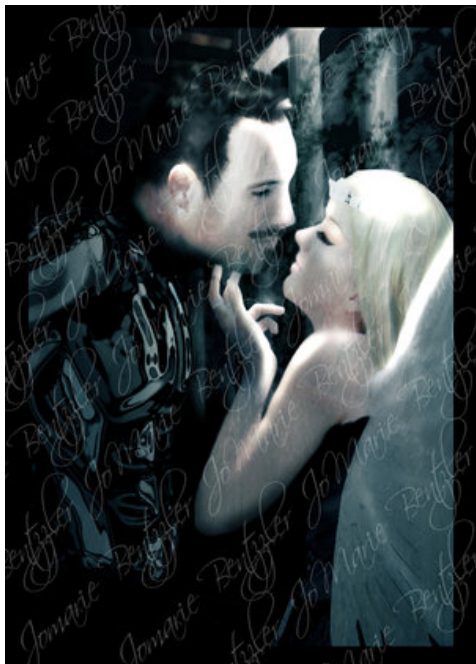


Figure 1. "Maximus and Jasmine"



Figure 2. "Emeralda Creatan"

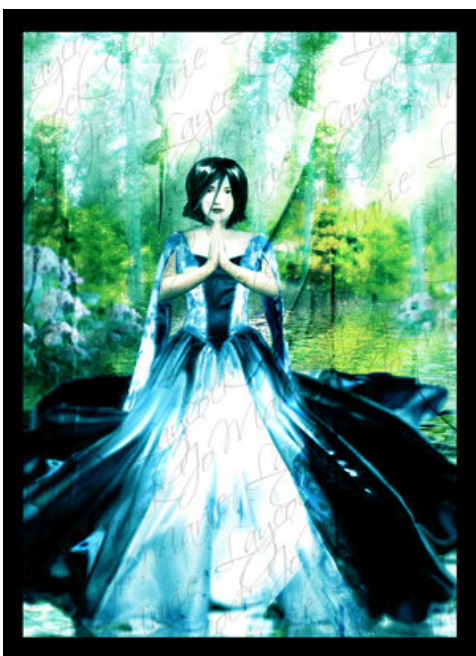


Figure 3. "Michelle Harmonium"



Figure 4. "Serenity Hall"

RESULTS

As a result of the research conducted, a publishing company that would fit both mine, and my illustrator's needs as writer and artist was located. However, due to a lack of funding, I was not able to publish this second novel as of the present time. The money granted by the Research Committee, however, did fulfill its purpose above and beyond expectations.

The money granted allowed me to hire JoMarie Bentzler as my illustrator, thus allowing the creation of world maps, character illustrations, and landscape paintings (examples of which can be seen in the following figures). While the funding was insufficient in publishing the novel itself, it allowed me to further expand and develop my own work and refine it based on the supplemental artwork provided by my new illustrator.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

I anticipated several outcomes and objectives I wanted apparent upon the completion of this work. In regard to the completion of the novel, I envisioned several things to characterize the final product. As a comparison to my first work of fantasy, the predecessor to this second work, I noted several improvements, which included but were not limited to: the advancement of grammar usage and mechanics; a demonstration of the real world problems and proposed means to solving them; real life problems to which both adolescents and adults can relate; and the underlying moral theme that dreams, however big or small, can come true.

Of equal importance, I focused on the demonstration of the artwork necessary to illustrate the story line. I envisioned this artwork as crucial to the novel and to the story line, and thus arranged for the proper expression of ideas. I cannot illustrate with accuracy; and therefore, I hired an illustrator.

As a result of the funding allotted, my project met several of the proposed objectives. I utilized the funding to hire an illustrator to produce the necessary illustrations to supplement my novel, as well as gained the contribution of necessary artwork in regard to my second novel.

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