West Side Rag
News about the Upper West Side of NYC

Neighbors Who Write – 2022 Edition

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By Nancy Novick

The Upper West Side has long been home to authors, from the legendary—Phillip Roth, Joseph Heller, Nora Ephron, to name just a few—to the still aspiring. With the gift-giving season upon us, now is our chance to support our neighbors who write, and enjoy giving or receiving a great read!

The authors featured below are just a sampling of those who have published books in 2022. Please let us know about your favorite UWS authors/books in the comments, and we'll follow up in a series of profiles to come.

Sally Koslow.

Who's better qualified to tell a family saga set on the Upper West Side than an Upper West Side author who has called the neighborhood home since the 1970s? Written in the voices of three different narrators, **Sally Koslow's** *The Real Mrs. Tobias*, out in September of this year, explores the relationships between mothers- and daughters-in-law as they navigate a family crisis that threatens to drive them apart. Koslow, who originally hails from Fargo, North Dakota, is also the author of two other novels set on the UWS, *The Late Lamented Molly Marx*, and *Little Pink Slips*. Her connection to the Upper West Side also extends to her role as a creative writing instructor; among the many institutions where Koslow has shared her expertise is the JCC of Manhattan.

Terena Elizabeth Bell.

Kentucky native **Terena Elizabeth Bell**, who has called the Upper West Side home since 2015, published her debut collection of experimental short stories for adults, *Tell Me What You See*, earlier this month. Bell's work is timely and provocative, and brings an original voice and eye to difficult subjects including life during Covid, the future of the planet, and the January 6th uprising. Her creative use of photographs and other design elements in her stories is just one reason Ms. Magazine has selected *Tell Me What You See* as one of their "December 2022 Reads for the Rest of Us".

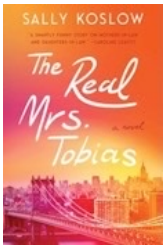
Steve Metzger.

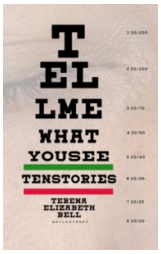
Steve Metzger's new graphic novel, *The Bumble Brothers: Crazy for Comics*, marks a first for the award-winning author, whose picture books have sold thousands of copies in the U.S. and abroad. Drawing on the author's love of slapstick comedy, wordplay, and silly

misunderstandings, *The Bumble Brothers: Crazy for Comics*, features the antics of two clueless twins! The first in a series, this book is sure to tickle the funny bone of 7-11 year-olds who love anything zany and is a perfect selection for "reluctant readers". Metzger, who has lived on the UWS for more than 25 years, partnered with fellow Upper West Sider, author/illustrator Brian Schatell, whose vibrant, full-color illustrations bring these wacky characters to life. Also out from Metzger this year is *Thankful Animals, Thankful Me*, a board book for younger children. Learn more at stevemetzgerbooks.com.

Kate McMullan. Photo by Mark McClennon

From chapter books about a beloved and sassy classroom guinea pig to a fresh and funny take on Greek myths, **Kate McMullan's** work—both on the page and screen—has appealed to generations of young fans. Just out this year, is McMullan's *This is the Tree We Planted* (a sneak peek is here), a rhyming picture book with charming illustrations by Alison Friend that tells the story of a group of kindergarten kids who plant a tree and then watch as it grows into a home for robins, squirrels, and more. Kate and her artist husband, Jim, who has collaborated with her on a number of titles, have lived on the Upper West Side since 2014. Their *I Stink* and *I'm Dirty* books were adapted for "The Stinky and Dirty Show" that streams on Amazon Prime. More about Kate at www.katemcmullan.com.





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10 COMMENTS

Alex 2 years ago

I've read The Real Mrs. Tobias and it is sage and funny and warm. So clever of Sally to zoom in on these mothers-in-law/daughters-in-law relationships. I highly recommend!

0 Reply

Anne Kveta Haack 2 years ago

I live at Lincoln Center and wrote a mystical memoir honoring my grandpa a WWII Czech Air Force and Royal Air Force squadron leader. Our Shakespeare & Co. published it. It is called Petal and Poultice: Memories of Destiny, and you can learn more about it on Goodreads.

0 Reply

Ellen Pall 2 years ago

Hi there! I'm a big West Side Rag fan–so grateful for you–and I live at Riverside and 83rd. I've published 14 novels. The most recent, a psychological thriller called Must Read Well, came out in October. I'd sure love to be included in this feature if it runs again–this year or next. Meanwhile, thanks for publishing this one!

0 Reply

Ellen Pall 2 years ago

Sorry, Ellen again. Somehow the note I just wrote got sent before I had time to add ID info. It's below.

0 Reply

Elisabeth Jakab 2 years ago

Thank you – lovely to know of these authors in our midst.

1 Reply

Mindy Lewis 2 years ago

Thank you for posting this! I already know a couple of these wonderful writers. (Hi Sally and Kate!) I too am an UWS writer and have taught memoir and creative nonfiction writing for many years (details at http://www.mindylewis.com). As a longtime resident and fan of West Side Rag, I'd be honored to be added to your list of neighborhood writers. There are lots of accomplished creative folk up here, including Patty Dann, Charles Salzberg, Mindy Greenstein, Linda Yellin, and many more. Is it the Hudson River air and ozone from Central Park trees? 😉

Last edited 2 years ago by Mindy Lewis

0 Reply

chrigid 2 years ago

Ivan Pharmacy, 691 Columbus, has a nice collection o local writers on the prescription counter at the back.

0 Reply

Shirley Whipple Struchen 2 years ago

Chris Grabenstein is excellent UWS writer of children's books -Mr Lemoncello etc

1 Reply

Kathy Strobos 2 years ago

I've published 3 romantic comedy books, all set on the Upper West Side. I've lived on the UWS my whole life. Book Riot featured my debut, Partner Pursuit, in its list of 8 Epic New York-set Romances: https://bookriot.com/romances-set-in-new-york-city/
Thanks for doing a feature on UWS writers!

0 Reply

Sharon Ross 2 years ago

Please profile Upper West Side writer Carol P Saul who has written several beloved books for children: "Peter's Song", an Oppenheimer List Choice, "Song of the Last Miguel", Someplace Else", one of New York Times' 10 Best Illustrated Books, "Barn Cat", Kirby's Pointer Review, Smithsonian Notable Book for Children, ABA Kids Pick of the List 1998, Child Best Book 1998, and 'Outstanding' Book List.

0 Reply

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