

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY (First Person)

I grew up near Twickenham, but moved to Bracknell, Berkshire in 1973, and apart from five years in Maidenhead and five months in Florida, have been around Bracknell ever since.

From an early age my three passions were writing, drawing and anything connected with horses – many, many sixpenny exercise books filled with stories complete with plans of stable yards and drawings of horses neatly coloured in! When I was ten I used to teach my friends how to draw ponies, step by step, and at seventeen I was invited to a primary school to do the same thing to a whole class.

On leaving school, to the disapproval of my English and Art teachers, I spent a year training on a Fell pony stud before working in a sculpture gallery in London's West End, a children's bookshop, public and technical libraries (through which I met my husband), a polo pony yard, and the planning department of Berkshire County Council. While I was exercising polo ponies I was often planning the next step in a story, and when drawing from the Animalier sculptures in the gallery, in my head I'd be turning them into abstracts with added colour and pattern. I'm well used to being pulled in all directions.

In the 1980s I became mother to two sons and took time while they were at school to study textile art at East Berkshire College, which led to writing for magazines and giving talks on my work and career, as well as exhibiting and judging.

In the meantime, I continued writing and destroying fiction until the breakthrough realisation that a novel could be constructed like a painting – layers of colour wash followed by sketched outlines and then the detail filled in with an eye to focal points and balance.

“A World Invisible” is my first novel (not counting the pony book in the drawer) and was born while sketching in the sculpture gallery at the V&A Museum. The first paragraph was written then and there, and the rest of the chapter arrived that evening and demanded a story for itself.

“A World Denied” and “A World Possessed” followed in response to the many requests from readers to know ‘what happens next’.

Living with three Oxford engineers, I felt a little anxious about the fantastical elements of the novel until my menfolk pointed out that much of particle physics challenges credulity a lot further than merely a parallel world!

Now involved in equal measures in writing, art and horse whispering – which itself was considered magic less than a century ago – I am currently writing my fourth novel.