

Melissa Pritchard's "Flight of the Wild Swan" Captures the Bold, Troubled and Inspiring Life of Florence Nightingale

Award-Winning Author's Fictionalized Biography Reveals Nightingale's Courage and Resilience in Transforming Nursing and the Role of Women in Medicine

COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, USA, March 12, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- In her newest book, [Melissa Pritchard](#), one of America's most awarded and honored fiction writers, delivers a stunningly original and captivating fictionalized biography of Florence Nightingale – the woman who almost single-handedly created and earned global respect for nursing as a profession.

[Flight of the Wild Swan](#) is being published today by Bellevue Literary Press.

Sweeping yet intimate, *Flight of the Wild Swan* tells the story of Nightingale, a brilliant, trailblazing woman whose humanity has been obscured beneath the iconic weight of legend. From adolescence, Nightingale was determined to fulfill her life's calling to serve the sick and suffering. Overcoming Victorian hierarchies, familial expectations, patriarchal resistance, and her own illness, she used her hard-won acclaim as a battlefield nurse to bring the profession out of its shadowy, disreputable status and elevate nursing to a skilled practice and compassionate art.

In lush, lyrical detail, Pritchard reveals Nightingale as a rebel who wouldn't relent – one whose extraordinary life offers a grand lesson in inspired will.

See excerpts from some of the book's striking early reviews and testimonials below.



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REVIEWS

"Pritchard's splendid latest illuminates the life of Florence Nightingale...Marvelous and moving."— [Publishers Weekly \(Starred review\)](#)

"A fresh imagining of an icon (Florence Nightingale,)...in Pritchard's portrayal, is an indomitable force."— Kirkus Reviews (Starred Review)

"From country houses to city slums and distant war zones, Pritchard renders the people and places of Florence's world in lush, richly detailed prose...A compelling story and satisfyingly human portrait of an extraordinary woman." — Booklist (YA recommended)

"This is a fascinating novel, unusual in its brief but extremely telling chapters. It spares us no anguishing detail of an uncaring society ignoring the suffering in squalid circumstances not only of thousands of soldiers, but also the poor in British cities of the time. This is a significant tribute to the strength of the woman who changed that." -- Historical Novel Society

"Exceptional...transformative and riveting..." – Midwest Book Review

"Enthralling...an inspiring novel about a woman whose single-minded determination comforted and inspired thousands." -- Foreword Reviews

“

This is a fascinating novel . . . It spares us no anguishing detail of an uncaring society ignoring the suffering in squalid circumstances of thousands of soldiers and the poor in British cities."

Historical Novel Society

Pritchard was born in San Mateo, California. She has published eight award-winning books of fiction, a biography and collection of essays. Among other prizes, she has received the University of Georgia's Flannery O'Connor Award, the University of Rochester's Janet Heidinger Kafka Award, Chicago's Carl Sandburg Literary Award, and a Barnes and Noble Discover Great Writers Prize.



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A five-time winner of Pushcart and O. Henry Prizes and frequently shortlisted in Best American Short Stories, her fiction and essays appear in *The Paris Review*, *Agni*, *Ploughshares*, *Conjunctions*, *Ecotone*, *LitMag*, *A Public Space*, *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, the *Wilson Quarterly* and

other venues.

WordTheatre has performed her short stories in New York and Los Angeles; two of her books were named New York Times "Editor's Choice," and "Notable Books of the Year." Others, receiving starred reviews from Library Journal and Publisher's Weekly, have been named as O, The Oprah Magazine "Top Titles" and "Book of the Week," and as "Best Book of the Year" by The San Francisco Chronicle and the Chicago Tribune. Her essay collection, given a starred review by Library Journal, was included in Publishers Weekly "Top Ten in Essays, Literary Biography and Criticism," and praised by Lit Hub as a "Best Book about Books," and by Poets and Writers as a "Best Book for Writers."

She has been awarded fellowships and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians, the Howard Foundation at Brown University, the Ledig-Rowohlt Foundation in Switzerland, the Hawthornden Foundation in Scotland and the Bogliasco Foundation in Italy. Pritchard currently lives in Columbus, Georgia.

For more information about Melissa Pritchard and her writings, please visit her website.

For media inquiries about *The Flight of the Wild Swan* or to arrange a time to interview Melissa Pritchard, please contact Scott Busby at scottb@thebusbygroup.com or call (310) 600-7645.

ENDORSEMENTS

"Flight of the Wild Swan is the best of Melissa Pritchard. In this novel, you will come to know Florence Nightingale close up, not as a faraway, distant figure."

-Joy Harjo, three-term U.S. Poet Laureate, author of *Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light* and *Poet Warrior: A Memoir*

"What an amazing book this is...the journey this novel takes is mesmerizing and unforgettable."

-Joan Silber, Pen/Faulkner award-winning author of *Improvement* and *Secrets of Happiness*

"Pritchard's tour de force evokes nursing and medicine today...an enchanting, inspiring



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and utterly relevant novel.”

–Suzanne Koven, MD, author of Letter to a Young Female Physician

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