

Authors at JCPL



Julia Quinn

**Sun / Feb. 10 / 2-3 p.m.
The Historic Artcraft Theatre
57 N. Main St., Franklin**

Julia Quinn is the author of 17 consecutive #1 New York Times best-sellers including “Mr. Cavendish, I Presume,” which reached #1 on the mass-market paperback fiction list. Julia is one of only 16 authors to be inducted into the Romance Writers Hall of Fame! Her most popular series, *The Bridgertons*, is currently being developed by Shondaland as a Netflix series, with *Scandal* veteran Chris Van Dusen adapting and show running. Julia completed her latest novel, “*The Other Miss Bridgerton*,” in November 2018.

Johnson County Public Library: How did you get started writing?

Julia Quinn: *I began “Splendid,” my first novel, during the summer between my junior and senior years of college. I honestly don’t remember what led me to sit down in front of my computer and write the first few words, but by the end of summer I had four chapters done. I picked it up again after I graduated, and I worked on it while I took pre-med classes and applied to medical school. Amazingly, I was accepted to med school the same month I got my first book deal.*

JCPL: Why did you choose Romance? Did you start out trying to write a romantic/love story? Did you have characters in mind that would lend well to Romance?

JQ: *It was what I loved to read!*

JCPL: What is the hardest thing about writing?

JQ: *Actually doing it. Unfortunately, the only way to finish a book is to finish it. Believe me, if there was another way, I would have figured it out by now.*

JCPL: We’ve read that you have songs that remind you of your books. Do you listen to a specific playlist or station as you’re writing? Do you randomly hear a song on the radio and think about how it relates to the book you’re writing?

JQ: *It’s rare that a song will directly inspire a book, but in the case of “*The Lost Duke of Wyndham*” and “*Mr. Cavendish, I Presume*,” I can trace the idea directly to the Dire Straits song “*Industrial Disease*.” I’ve always loved the irony in the line: “Two men say they’re Jesus. One of them must be wrong.” From there it was a quick jump to “Two men say they’re the Duke of Something. One of them must be wrong.”*

This origin story led me to develop soundtracks for all of my books. They’re not very long, just four or five songs each, but it’s been a fun way for me to connect with readers. Some of the songs listed are ones I loved while I was writing the book; some had an element that seemed to fit the story or characters. I have all of the soundtracks on my website, along with brief explanations of why I chose the songs.

When I’m writing at home, I don’t actually listen to music unless it’s instrumental. I find the words too distracting. Interestingly, though, I have no trouble with this if I’m writing at a café, which I often do. The music becomes part of the general ambiance and I don’t pay attention to the words.

JCPL: If someone hasn’t read any of your books before where would you suggest they start? Do you have a favorite series?

JQ: *It depends on whether they are already a romance reader. For people who have never tried a romance, I often recommend “*What Happens in London*” because it doesn’t seem to fit the stereotype that many people have of romance novels. For people who do read romance, I usually recommend the *Bridgerton* series. It’s my most popular, and it’s currently being developed for Netflix, so there has been a big resurgence in interest.*

JCPL: What can you tell us about the books being adapted into a Netflix series? Did you ever think your books would be adapted for the big screen?

JQ: *To answer your second question first--No. Hollywood has not traditionally looked to romance novels for source material, so I never dreamed my books would be adapted. “*Downton Abbey*” demonstrated the public’s thirst for period pieces but, but it wasn’t until the success of “*Outlander*” that Hollywood began to realize how hungry readers were for adaptations of historical romance. “*Outlander*” isn’t technically a romance series, but the romance between Jamie and Claire is a huge part of the story, and it’s no secret that romance readers make up a large part of Diana Gabaldon’s audience.*

I wish I could spill the details on the upcoming Netflix series, but we’re still very early in development, and I honestly don’t have many details to share.

JCPL: What is your favorite time period or era to write about?

JQ: *All of my books are set in the late 17th and early 18th century, and all but two are set in Britain. “*The Girl With the Make-Believe Husband*” takes place in British-occupied New York City during the Revolutionary War, and “*The Other Miss Bridgerton*” is set primarily on a ship. But the characters are all British, so the flavor and ambiance are similar.*

JCPL: If you didn’t write, what would you do for a living?

JQ: *I would imagine I’d have finished med school. So, I’d be a doctor.*

To read the full interview online and to register, visit pageafterpage.org/authors-at-jcpl