

INTERVIEWS – NEWS – EVENTS (INE) ©2018

INE: Welcome all. Today I'm happy to interview Eskimo Pie Girl (a.k.a. Rebecca Morrison), owner and editor of EskimoPie.net, an online site for high quality poetry, lyrics, music, stories, art and so much more.

INE: Hi Eskimo Pie Girl. Thank you for agreeing to this interview.

Before we begin, I personally want to thank you for the years of effort, sweat, and support you've put into helping creative individuals publish their works and get their name into the public eye.

EPG: Thank you.

INE: How many years has it been since you started Eskimo Pie?

EPG: I started eskimopie.net in January 2002, sixteen and a half years ago. I also had a second name for it--SPAM (Sacramento Poetry, Art and Music).

INE: I have to ask; how did you decide on the name Eskimo Pie Girl?

EPG: When I was a girl, I grew up in Alaska. Most of the dairy products in Alaska come from the Matanuska Valley Dairy whose logo features a girl with a fur parka who is ice-skating. My mother took a photo of me at age 5 and I looked just like the Matanuska Maid girl. This is the same face that's featured on the Eskimo Pie ice cream bars. In college, I wrote several short stories about a girl named Eskimo Pie, so when I started my website, I continued with that name.

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Alaska

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INE: Tell us more about yourself.

EPG: I was born in the desert, grew up in a village of 500 in Alaska, moved to the Bay Area in my teens, and ended up staying in California and working and going to college in Northern California.

I spent most of my life working for the University of California in a wide variety of editing and administration jobs for environmental science departments. When I was in my mid-twenties, I started writing poetry. I retired five years ago and moved to a small village in France.

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California

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INE: Do you have any publications yourself?

EPG: I've had 10 books published, some of which you can find on Amazon. I've had hundreds of poems published in anthologies, mostly in Northern California. I've also given over a hundred readings. One of my main activities has been organizing readings. I ran several reading series called Hot Poetry in the Park, Poetry in the Arboretum, and Literary Lectures. Now, in France, I host Poetry and Music Soirées.

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INE: Why did you start Eskimo Pie?

EPG: I had just broken up with a guy, and to stave off my heartbreak, I drowned myself in creating this website. I had always wanted to have my own magazine, and the technology had evolved to a point in the early 2000s where it became easy and cheap to start a website.

I only had a few pages at first, including a "News" section. The day I launched my website, one of our local famous poets was involved in a scandal which I included in my "News." I also had a calendar list of events which became very popular and which led to the site getting over 50,000 visits a year.

INE: When you started, did you think your website would grow so big and be so far-reaching?

EPG: I started it to keep myself busy and to amuse my friends. I had no idea that it would last this long and that I would end up publishing poetry from around the world.

INE: You've expanded your reach to France. Tell us about this newer site.

EPG: When I bought my house in France, there was a second dilapidated house out back. It has a big giant room with high ceilings. I was staring at it and wondering what I would do with all that wall space. Then it occurred to me that it would make a great space for an art gallery and a poetry salon. So, I launched a website to go hand-in-hand with the gallery called illuminationsgalerie.wordpress.com.

Just like eskimopie.net, I started the website by publishing some of my own stories and poems, and I am slowly beginning to publish others. I am trying to make it a dual-language site, and I've started to translate contemporary French poets. Last year, I translated and published a book of

poetry by a French poet, and this year, I translated and published one of my own books of poems.

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France

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INE: How often do you publish?

EPG: On eskimopie.net, I publish a few poems and stories every week. I publish one new piece of art once a month. On illuminationsgalerie.wordpress.com, I put up one new item a month.

INE: Do your accepted submissions follow a theme, or are you open to pretty much any form of writing, poetry, story, art, and genre?

EPG: I am open to all forms and genres. However, I don't publish gratuitous s*x or violence or items that are racist or s*xist. Sometimes, if I feel like someone is writing something mean about someone else, I won't publish it. I do publish out-there, avante-garde, experimental writing.

I have published a lot of first poems by high school students because I have a collaboration with some schools in Southern California where teachers assign their creative writing class students to send their work to me as "homework."

But if an adult sends me a simplistic rhyming poem, I will try to encourage them to send me something more sophisticated. However, there are a couple of little old men whose quaint little poems I continue to publish because I'm afraid if I reject them they might keel over from a broken heart.

INE: What writing would you like to see more of in the submissions you do receive?

EPG: I am often pleasantly surprised by the wonderful poems that people send me. I like receiving stories because I don't receive that many. I like poems that tell stories and that have a lot of images in them.

INE: Do you have any advice for authors on what to do before they submit their writing to Eskimo Pie?

EPG: Basically, I would recommend proofing your work well. I also recommend that people read more. People who have a lot of problems with grammar and punctuation need to spend more time reading!

I am struggling to learn a new language myself right now and I have to force myself to read French books. It's difficult but rewarding.

INE: What are a few of your authors/artists success stories?

EPG: A lot of the poets I've published have gone on to publish books and win prizes.

INE: What is your favorite quote?

EPG: I'll paraphrase from one of Rilke's poems, "As once the winged energy of delight carried you over childhood's dark abysses, so now use your own powers to create unimagined bridges because the goddess wants to know herself in you."

Follow your bliss. ~ Joseph Campbell

Don't quit your day job because you're not going to make money writing poetry. ~ a good friend

INE: Readers can discover more about Eskimo Pie Girl at:

Website: eskimopie.net

illuminationsgalerie.wordpress.com

Amazon Author Page: Rebecca Morrison (key words poetry, haiku)

Book Links: (* American, UK, etc.)

My books on Amazon are: Under the Rain, 92 Berrichon Haiku, Sillages
Improbables/Improbable Traces (dual-language), En Suivant Einar/Following Einar (dual-language).

INE: Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to take part in this interview. Best of luck and much success for the future.

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INE Note: answers are provided by the interviewee and are not altered by INE unless the response is deemed inappropriate for a general audience.