



The Sidewalk Artist

Gina Buonaguro , Janice Kirk

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"A fantasia of a double tale skimming through the art capitals of Europe with double muses, double love pursuits, double Raphaels, even double authors, a tale dripping with idealized romantic settings, mystery, art, and a touch of magic, *The Sidewalk Artist* will keep readers wondering what is real and what is artifice--as fine paintings always do."

--Susan Vreeland, author of *Girl in Hyacinth Blue*

While in Europe researching her next novel, twenty-something American Tulia Rose falls headlong into a romance with a handsome sidewalk artist. As he takes her on a tour of Europe's artistic treasures, she begins writing the story of the painter Raphael and his secret lover.

Yet as her own affair grows deeper, Tulia's sidewalk artist grows more mysterious. Why does he seem so familiar? And what is his connection to the great Renaissance painter?

Set in Paris and Italy, this lyrical first novel interweaves two parallel love stories, offering readers a unique view on the research and inspiration that goes into creating historical novels such as *The Girl with the Pearl Earring* and *The Birth of Venus*.

The Sidewalk Artist Details

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Author : Gina Buonaguro , Janice Kirk

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Adrienne says

Intertwined stories of modern day Tulia and a mysterious sidewalk artist Raphael who she meets on a solo trip to Europe, and the Italian painter Raphael and his unnamed beloved. Mostly a romance, but the snippets from the book Tulia is writing bring in a historical element and keep it from becoming too Harlequin-y.

I liked how things turned out for Tulia with her career and relationships (Ethan, her parents), but don't quite understand the ending. Are we to believe that Raphael is a reincarnation of his famous namesake? And Tulia of his beloved? Still a fun summer read.

Marga Vr says

Jeanne Kalogridis, the writer of THE BORGIA BRIDE AND I, MONA LISA, sums it up perfectly, "A deliciously dreamlike tale of modern love and Renaissance romance"

this book has not been treated kindly by the reviewers who like point out errors in logic and flights of fancy gone somewhat overboard. But I loved reading it and certainly recommend it to any woman in need of a flight of fancy , it's so harmlessly romantic, a "why not " book !

Alycia says

My gag reflex kicked in on page 182 and I couldn't care enough to finish.

Christine says

A love story within a love story intertwined by some of Raphael's art and his personal angels. Novelist Tulia Rose is sent abroad by her boyfriend so they can "work out their relationship". Wandering Paris she meets a sidewalk artist calling himself Raphael. He leads her on an adventure discovering the paintings of his namesake Raffaello Sanzio, which leads her to writing her next book. We read her novel as she writes it and live her life as she is living it. A good book for fans of historical romance with a little art history thrown in for good measure. Note: collaborating authors are both Canadian.

Chris says

A love story across the ages. Writer Tulia Rose goes to France on a trip financed by her wealthy Wall Street boyfriend to give them some "time apart." She stops to admire the work of a sidewalk artist who has created an amazing version of Raphael's cherubs. His first words to her are "I thought you weren't coming." There is

instant attraction. Depending on how you look at it, what follows is either brilliant romance or incredibly creepy. I'll give the authors credit for at least making Tulia think the man might be some kind of whack job, but of course she still goes off with him. He won't tell her his real name, but since he looks so much like the Renaissance painter, she calls him Rafael. To avoid confusion they refer to the original as Raffaello. Not only does Tulia become obsessed with the painter's work, as she and Rafael become more deeply involved, she begins to have vivid dreams from the viewpoint of the woman who was Raffaello's true love. Has the painter really come back to life for the sake of the woman he loved and lost 400 years ago? Can they possibly have a future together.

While I enjoyed the story--and enjoyed learning more about the real Raphael--there was something missing for me. It all felt really contrived. But it's easy to see why many readers have been swept off their feet by this one.

Karina says

Have you ever heard a melody so sweet and perfect that it stays with you long after you've walked away? This book left me with just that kind of feeling.

The premise is that a wannabe novelist goes to France, meets this sidewalk artist who may be named Rafael, falls in love, gets inspired to write the story of the famous Rafael and his secret lover...and is forever changed by the experience.

But what makes this so beautiful and memorable is a unique way of writing and description that draws you into the story and lets you see and feel through the characters. And the story also weaves seamlessly between three different scenarios: the contemporary story, the famous Rafael's story, and writings from a travel book the heroine sometimes reads from.

I don't want to spoil this for you by saying any more, but I recommend this for anyone who likes a good story.

Reading Faerie says

3.5 stars.

Dianne Landry says

This isn't normally my cup of tea but I loved this book. Tulia is traveling in Paris to work out her relationship problems when she meets Raffaele, a sidewalk artist. He charms her and gets her interested in the artist Raphael. Her trip takes a turn and she goes to Italy, where her artist follows her. A romance ensues and her life is changed forever.

I am so glad I went to see the authors speak at the library because otherwise I would never have found this book. I loved it.

Jaymin Cheatwood says

This book was unexpected, but captivating. A unique love story that pulled me in quickly.

Charlotte says

Great read, short and captivating. The novel shifts between two authors and time periods in Europe with special attention to Italy, Paris and Venice. Modern day traveler and fledgling writer Tulia Rose encounters a sidewalk-artist who immediately captures her interest and heart. The novel shifts between passages of following Tulia and her new story which is a fictional retelling of the life of artist Raphael Sanzio set in Renaissance Italy. Speculation about the life of Raphael (or Raffaello, as the Italians know him) eventually leads Tulia to understand mysterious events surrounding her own life and her lover, the sidewalk artist. The novel itself is certainly fictional, but is a very sweet and dear to romantics with a satisfying ending. I enjoyed the many references to art history and real locations and found myself looking up the paintings and artists referenced throughout the text.

Sabiha says

This is a romantic fairy tale that had me in tears by the end, due to both joy and sadness. I could have never predicted the ending, which makes the book all the more heart-warming and touching.

This novel tells the story of Tulia Rose, a novelist who is spending time in Europe. While in Paris, a painting of the artist Raffaello 'Raphael' Sanzio's cherubs catches her attention. The painting is being done by a mysterious sidewalk artist who Tulia decides to call Raphael. Raphael is so mysterious that it had me wondering the whole book who he was- a con artist? a killer? an innocent man? Raphael gets Tulia intrigued to learn more about the artist Raffaello, which leads to her writing her next book. The novel essentially switches between past and present with Tulia and Raphael's love story and the heartbreaking story of Raffaello and his unnamed secret lover. The different stories flow into each other seamlessly. I'd recommend this to anyone looking for a beautiful love story.

Rouelle says

I forgot that I had this book on my bookshelf. It wasn't until my friend asked me to lend it to her that I realized that I just left it there for a year! So after she tells me how good it was, I decided to read it immediately.

It's a great story, reading it was like being transported to the places our main character goes and falling in love with her. I also find the all the references to the arts refreshing and in the end, this book gave me a very peaceful and happy feeling.

Patricia says

I loved this book and read it in one day.

The story was mesmerizing--both of them--and had me so wrapped up that I didn't want them to end.

Speaking of the end of this book--it gave me shivers, and that's not something I say (or experience) often. I think in the hands of lesser authors, this story might have been wasted, but here, with these, it was perfection. As sometimes happens when a historical novel touches me, I know that I will be researching Raphael and his art, because I just have to know more about the man I feel like I've just met.

This is one of the books that makes me wish time travel were real, so I could go back and have the please of reading it again for the first time.

Laura says

Jeanne Kalogridis, the author of "I, Mona Lisa" and "The Borgia Bride", and who also happens to be one of my favourite writers describes this book as "A deliciously dreamlike tale of modern love and Renaissance romance". I'm not sure I can do much better than that! It's such a gorgeous love story - part of me wanted to read it whilst picnicking in the Tuscan countryside under a blazing hot sun and blue sky with a glass of wine, and another part of me wanted to read it snuggled in an armchair by a fireplace with a cup of mulled wine and snow falling outside in the dark. It was such a warm, comforting read.

"The Sidewalk Artist" tells the story of Tulia Rose, who's holidaying in Europe. Whilst in Paris she meets a mysterious artist chalking paintings by the famous Raffaello 'Raphael' Sanzio on the pavement. Intrigued by his work and by the man himself Tulia is pleased when they meet again in Italy and their relationship develops.

Running alongside Tulia and the artist's story is that of the real Raphael and a mysterious, unnamed woman in 16th century Italy.

Unusually for me, I enjoyed the narrative set in the modern day just as much as I did the one set in the past.

"The Sidewalk Artist" has a really wonderful ending, and I don't want to go too much into it because it needs to be read and enjoyed fully - I will say though that I cried for about 15 minutes after finishing it, and they were tears of happiness and sadness! Suspend your disbelief for a little while and read "The Sidewalk Artist! :)

Rajani says

A nice, uplifting story about love with just enough of the fantastic. Not a sappy story and a nice light read that offers some insights into the art of writing historical fiction, the life of Raffael Sanzio, and the Italian Renaissance.

