

The Muse of Edouard Manet

M. Clifford

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Edouard Manet is an infamous painter in 19th century Paris. Emily Porterfield is a conservator of paintings in 21st century Chicago. He made her fall in love with art when she was nine years old and yet Emily was the muse of Edouard's greatest artwork 150 years before she was born. Their story begins with a letter.

While x-raying a painting for an upcoming Edouard Manet exhibition at the Art Institute, Emily stumbles upon a hidden letter painted in lead white beneath the layers of oil and varnish. Through the mysterious properties of the letter, Emily is raptured to the past where she becomes the muse who influences Manet's greatest works. As their relationship grows between each new letter and she discovers that his confusing iconography can finally be explained through their story, an underlying plot of murder and art forgery is uncovered in the present. With the exhibition gala approaching, a connection between the murderer and the forgeries reveals itself and Emily is forced to ask how their love can withstand the test of time when only a few letters remain.

The Muse of Edouard Manet Details


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Author : M. Clifford

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From Reader Review The Muse of Edouard Manet for online ebook

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

I had been looking forward to reading The Muse of Edouard Manet for a while. The plot sounded so interesting, a woman travels back in time and falls in love with a painter. Unfortunately the author apparently decided to write and publish this book without an editor. And that wasn't a great idea. The dialog isn't so good and the lovestory between Edouard and Emily is so cheesy that it's actually cringeworthy to read the book. Or perhaps I'm really picky when it comes to romance...

The only redeeming part is Edouard Manet himself. I had never heard of him and it was my curiosity about the man that kept me going. Also the kindle edition provided images of his paintings, so I didn't have to google them, that was great.

Indira says

I never thought that I would be the sort of person interested in Art History. I love literature, I love symbolism but never was able to translate this to a love for art. But this book has really opened my eyes to a whole new culture that I may very well fall in love with. The author effortlessly weaves fact with fiction (and mind you, the fiction is very sci fi...time travel and manipulation) and makes you want to delve deeper into fact to learn more about Manet. I actually did google all of his artwork during the book and all of the iconography that the author is able to connect to his own story is actually there! Its amazing how closely everything is intertwined, and is so well written that if you're not careful, you'll begin to believe that the story could very well be true because of how well things are explained. The author obviously put a LOT of work and research into the story.

I wasn't a huge fan of some of present day elements...specifically the 'secret' that they go on about. I wasn't a fan of how it was executed, and don't think it was necessary to the plot as a whole, but I think that without that, the story could have possibly been a bit flat.

Overall, the book was well written, I enjoyed it a lot and may have discovered a newfound passion for Manet! I definitely am interested in reading more about this artist and his life as a whole.

EDIT: I forgot to mention that I can easily see this book being made into a movie. AND the book is available as an Amazon Prime eligible book for anyone who might want to borrow it.

Jill says

I was torn by this book. I really enjoyed the storytelling, the story was fascinating and well-plotted, with many interesting details of Manet's life and work. I was particularly interested in the iconography and Garrett's puzzle-solving (for lack of a better word). The characters of Emily, Garrett and Edouard Manet were well-drawn. However, I think the book needed some heavy editing. Many of the descriptive passages were marked by awkward, sometimes nonsensical metaphors and imagery and proofreading seemed to be limited to what spellcheck caught. I hope if he continues The Time Chronicles series, that Mr. Clifford finds

a good editor to help marry his excellent storytelling skills with some better writing.

Valerie says

Wow! I LOVED this book! Time travel, a mystery, clean romance, and art. It made a good combination. The attention to detail and the creativity and imagination of the author with putting this all together is very impressive. I couldn't help but turning on my laptop to view Manet's paintings online when they talked about each.

Nichole says

This novel truly had it all! One book managed to satisfy my love of reading adventure, mystery, fantasy, and love stories. I always crave books that can wrap me up in their pages so that I never want to put it down, and *The Muse of Edouard Manet* had me completely absorbed in its pages until the very end. M. Clifford created an intriguing story to explain the mysterious symbolism used in Manet paintings. His main character, Emily, goes back to the 1860's and becomes deeply entangled in Manet's life, art, and heart. I love how M. Clifford meshes fact with his gloriously imaginative storytelling in such a way that I want to believe that it is the truth. I highly recommend reading this novel! I look forward to reading more in this series, as well as more by this author.

Loretta says

I wasn't really expecting to like this book, yet alone to love it, but I found myself completely entranced by the story of Edouard and Emily, and I think I fell in love with both of them a little bit myself. This genre-crossing novel encompasses historical fiction, fantasy, thriller, mystery, and homage to an artist, tying it all together with a riveting love story.

So glad my book group selected this. I hope the series continues soon.

Lindsey Lang says

wow, this book was even better than i had hoped! it had every element of a great story and my only complaint was that it had to end! seriously, all i can say is read this book! i'm not even into art but i still loved this book and found a new appreciation of art through it. i found myself unable to put it down today as i greedily read page after page speeding towards the end, both excited and saddened that i was almost finished. truly an amazing book that i only wish more people would find and read!

Jessica Czop says

I found this book difficult to rate... while I loved the concept and the story telling, the editing was poor and the dialogue was awkward.

Pamela Barrett says

When is the last time you read a book that you didn't want to end? A book that you couldn't put down, one that took you on a journey? The Muse of Edouard Manet was that book for me. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute I spent reading it. I only stopped reading long enough to look up Manet's paintings. It has all my favorite things: mystery, romance, artists, Museums, puzzles, time travel, Paris in the company of the Impressionists, writers, combined with a touch of danger and some heart pumping action. It's a great mix of fact and fantasy. Well executed and well researched. Please someone make this a movie!

Karen says

Loved loved loved this book!! Cannot wait to read the sequel!!

Jaimie says

A masterpiece! This book is so brilliant I couldn't put it down. I've never read a historical fiction/time travel novel quite like this one. I was completely blown away by the sense everything made and I kept thinking, 'this could SO be true!' I used the author's website for the series ([http://www.m-clifford.com/muse_of_manet...](http://www.m-clifford.com/muse_of_manet)) to view the paintings described in the book (which were so perfectly descriptive I almost didn't even need the actual visual proof).

I loved the iconography that Garrett discovers and, like a puzzle, all the pieces just fit perfectly together. Edouard was depicted as incredibly romantic and Emily was a perfect fit for him. The ending blew me away and I can't wait to read the next book in the trilogy. I wish I knew when I could expect it!

LilaBird says

If I could give this book more than 5 stars, I would. It's rare that you find one of those special books that just stays with you. A book that gets right into your heart and makes a home for itself. A story that you dream about each night after reading and characters you find yourself believing are real friends you know and love. The Muse of Edouard Manet is one of those rare, books we readers long to find. It is tender and romantic and thrilling and exciting. There is adventure and action; intrigue and suspense. The characters are deep and evolved. It makes me sad to realize that they're not in the "real" world. I know them so intimately. How could they not be real? I've loved with them and laughed with them, been scared with them and fought with them. I have never been more satisfied with a book.

The premise to the story is fantastic in and of itself. Emily Porterfield, a young woman of about 30 years,

works in the Paintings Conservation Department at the Art Institute in Chicago. Her main job is to x-ray paintings. As she's performing her job in preparation for an exhibit of Edouard Manet's paintings, she discovers a letter painted beneath the layers of paint on one of his pieces. It's mysterious and she doesn't know what to make of it, but the mystery has only just begun. That night she falls and is knocked unconscious. While she is out, she finds herself transported back to Paris in the 1860's, where she meets none other than Manet himself as a young man. As she continues to find more letters beneath the paintings during her days at the museum, her nights are filled with trips to see the young artist. They form a relationship that's forged beyond the bounds of time. One that will sweep you away and make you long for it to happen to you.

My favorite character, Garrett Keller, lives in Emily's current day life. He works at the museum on a fellowship and becomes Emily's confidant regarding her nighttime time travel adventures. Garrett's keen sense of logic and understanding of art and history make him the perfect helper for her, because Emily needs to decipher Manet's strange iconography within his paintings as well. Garrett is sarcastic and messy; always unshaven with desk drawers full of crazy scribbles and cans of Hawaiian punch -- just my type. But he's also highly intelligent, inventive, sneaky and has a load of common sense. He's one of my favorite characters of all time. Something about him is just magnetic and sexy as hell.

As the story progresses, we are given doses of things like art theft, forgery, murder, chases, fires and even a 19th century duel. The amazing thing about this book is that almost every aspect of this novel is based in fact. Obviously there's no time travel and the characters themselves are fictitious, but all of the information about Manet and art and the locations and the things that happened in Manet's life, etc. are all real. You can tell when you're reading this that the author (M. Clifford) really did his research. Every page is dripping with authenticity. For me, that is a rare occurrence and something that makes reading so much more enjoyable.

I give this book my HIGHEST recommendation. I believe this book is versatile enough that every single reader could find something in it that resonates with them personally and a reason why they love it. I know I will treasure this book forever and that I will re-read it many, many times in my future. I actually can't wait to start again soon. I already miss my friends and want to be back in their world.

Catherine says

One of the great things about Twitter is meeting new book lovers, publishers, editors and authors. One such author I became acquainted with through Twitter is M. Clifford, the author of the wonderful book *THE MUSE OF EDOUARD MANET*. Reading the synopsis of the book I knew it would be something I would be interested in as it deals with art, mystery, murder and time-travel. Yes, time-travel, how cool is that! Little did I realize when ordering the book from my favorite Indy bookseller how much I would love this book. Once I read the Note From The Author and moved on I knew this was a book that would grab me and not let go until I turned the last page. Not only is it a great story of romance and intrigue, it provides information about an important artist who helped usher in the age of impressionism, Edouard Manet. This is a work of fiction, but it does provide us with information regarding the artist's life, his friends, his family and how he was received in the 19th century Paris art world. *THE MUSE OF EDOUARD MANET* also imparts interesting interpretations of the paintings of Manet, which lead me to look up the artist's work and view it with different eyes. You become fond of Emily who is an art conservator at the Art Institute who discovers letters under Manet's paintings. These letters lead Emily to experience the art at its source. Early in the book you are introduced to what you may think is a minor character, Garrett, but he becomes the agent that assists Emily in her time-travel where she meets the artist Manet and becomes his Muse. This is a story of intrigue, love, friendship, art and time-travel. What more could you possibly want. Do yourself a favor, pick up *THE*

MUSE OF EDOUARD MANET and lose yourself in a wonderful story.

Petra says

An engaging and interesting premise and a well-told story. One of intrigue, art, mystery and love. Although not without some editing flaws, this book is captivating.

I'm now interested in knowing more about Manet and his art. Throughout the book, I googled the paintings to see them.

I'll be looking for the second book when it comes out. I want to know how the story continues and what becomes of the characters.

M. Clifford says

Review copied from www.amazon.com with the permission of the reviewer, Carol Sutton:

M. Clifford's *The Muse of Edouard Manet* is unique among books on Manet. Clifford has very successfully woven a fictional tapestry, that is part love story, part playful yet accurate art history account, and part intriguing crime mystery. This absorbing book has brought to life the character of the man who was Manet. Manet is often credited with capturing 'modern life', and Clifford's book brings a completely new twist to that concept. The beginning of each chapter is place and time dated making it easy to know if you are in 21st century Chicago or in 19th century Paris.

A young museum conservator, Emily Porterfield, finds letters beneath the paint when x-raying Manet's paintings and is fated to fall in love with Manet. Upon falling asleep, Emily time travels back to 19th century Paris and becomes Manet's muse. Their common search for beauty is what links this muse to her artist.

As she is transported back in time, she slowly manifests into solid form. Here is an excerpt (page 205) from when she appears, dressed in her modern jeans, in a Paris fruit market:

"...C'est un scandale," one of the women said, in a haughty French tone. In the sweet tang of fresh pears, Emily looked down at her hands. They were still invisible. "Il est idiot, ce Manet", another woman said, to Emily's alarm."

Much of the book deals with the hidden iconography in Manet's paintings. Emily's loyal friend, Garrett, helps her make detailed analyses into the enigmatic details within each painting and explains why they are there and what those details actually mean. Together they delve into each painting's mystery, for example the psychological 'modern' detachment in paintings such as *Bar at the Follies Bergere*. Emily's last time trip is on October 27, 1873, just in time for the masked ball at the Opera. The last chapters bubble up with fast action in sword fights and fires, but are filled also with tales of art forgery and riddles. Reading M. Clifford's novel on Manet is a chance to enter into the footsteps of time and be delightfully absorbed.
