

CORAL GABLES

MAGAZINE



NO BRIDGES TO THE BAY

**BIG BOATS, WATERFRONT REAL ESTATE
AND THE JOYS OF YACHTING**

ALSO
A CLASSIC INTERIOR
AUTHORS IN THE GABLES
THE TALE OF A TREE



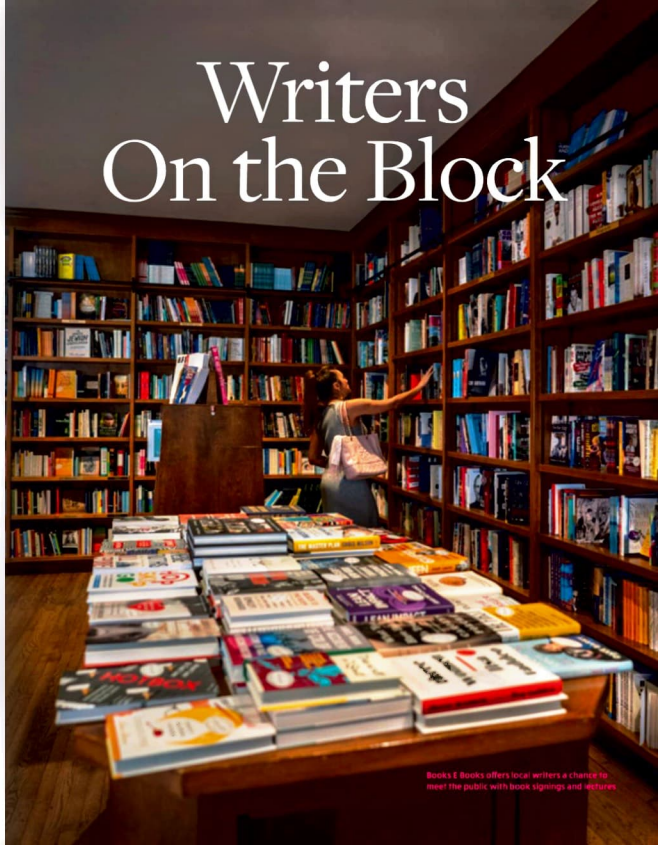
FROM AUTHORS TO PLAYWRIGHTS TO SCREENWRITERS, THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF PUBLISHED WRITERS WHO CALL CORAL GABLES HOME

By Lizzie Wilcox

Coral Gables is nothing if not a literary city. The most important (and successful) book vendor in the state, Books & Books, was born here. It still reigns supreme with a stunning schedule of writers who give talks there. The Gables is also home to the most used library, per capita, in the county system. And its citizens are well educated: half of the adults have college degrees, and more than half of these have another degree on top of that.

So, say what you will about literary legends like Paris or New York or San Francisco. Coral Gables is home to its own roster of talented writers, some of whom we profile here. Read on...

Writers On the Block



Books & Books offers local writers a chance to meet the public with book signings and lectures

LAUREN RIGAU



Lauren Rigau recently published her first book, entitled "The Adventures of LaLa and her Papa." A children's book, it was inspired by her father Carlos, a news photojournalist of over 40 years. Born in Miami, Rigau moved to Los Angeles when she was 14 to pursue acting. She had a lead role in the films "The Inner Circle" and "Common Practice," the latter of which was featured at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. She also co-starred on television shows including HBO's "WEEDS" and ABC Family's "The Secret Life of the American Teenager."

Following her acting career, Rigau studied U.S. History and Political Science at Arizona State University and then moved to New York. It was there that she volunteered at a low income school for a program that taught students about the love of reading. "Reading children's books to them I thought, I could write a book like this," Rigau said.

She moved back to Miami – Coral Gables, specifically – at 26. When it came to putting pen to paper, she decided to write about what she knew best: her childhood. "I had such a cool experience because of my dad," she said. "And kids love adventure books."

As a photojournalist, her dad (now at NBC 6) has been all over the world capturing wildlife, active volcanoes and the Olympics – and it's all illustrated in the book. Of course, "LaLa" couldn't go with her papa on his adventures, but "no matter where he went, he would always bring a trinket home for me."

If you would like to read "The Adventures of LaLa and her Papa," it's available for purchase on Amazon or from the website theadventuresoflalaandherpapa.com.

J.K. FRANKO



J.K. Franko was turning from Kendall Drive onto Old Cutler Road when the inspiration for his book hit: What would it take for him to commit murder? The first book of the Talion series, "Eye for Eye," revolves around this question, as a married couple takes the law into their own hands. The thriller, which was published last year, is set in none other than the City Beautiful. "It's really kind of cool in the sense that it's very much about this whole area," Franko said. "For somebody who lives here it's very easy to visualize."

Born and raised in Texas, Franko admittedly wanted to be a writer since the sixth grade. But since it wasn't an encouraged profession, he took a more traditional route and went to law school. After roughly a decade as a trial lawyer, he worked as a Fortune 100 company's in-house attorney and got an MBA. After running a business in Europe for around five years, he moved back to the U.S. in Austin. In 2014, he found his way to the Gables. Franko's wife, who is also a lawyer, has been pushing him to write professionally for 20 years.

The second and third books of the Talion series are currently in the works. "Book number three is about 70 percent done because I wanted to make sure I could plant seeds in the second that I could bring to fruition in the third," he said. The second book, "Tooth for Tooth," will be available in April of this year.

Franko asks his readers the same thing he asked himself: What would you do if someone hurt the one you love? How far would you go to get revenge? Read the series and decide for yourself: What would you do? ■