

Mari Mancusi
Children's Book Author



Mari Mancusi is a New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of more than thirty sci-fi/fantasy books for kids, teens and adults and an Emmy award winning former TV news producer. Her series have been selected for major state reading lists as well as the Scholastic Book Fairs and have been honored by the American Library Association as “Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers.” In addition to writing, Mari loves to travel, watch horror movies and play video games. She lives in Austin, Texas with her husband and their teenage daughter.

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MG/YA BOOK LIST

Dawn of the Dragons - LBYR - out September 2nd
The Official Wednesday Cookbook - PRH - Out July 22nd
Sally's Lament: A Nightmare Before Christmas Twisted Tale - Disney
All is Found: A Frozen Anthology - Disney
New Dragon City - LBYR
Frozen: Polar Nights, Cast into Darkness - Disney
Frozen: Dangerous Secrets - Disney
Dragon Ops - LBYR
Dragon Ops 2: Dragons vs. Robots - LBYR
The Camelot Code: Once and Future Geek - LBYR
The Camelot Code 2: Geeks and the Holy Grail - LBYR
Princesses, Inc - Simon and Schuster
Golden Girl - Simon and Shuster
Scorched - Sourcebooks
Shattered - Sourcebooks
Smoked - Sourcebooks
The Blood Coven Vampires 8 book series - Penguin Random House
Gamer Girl - Dutton - Penguin Random House
Sk8er Boy - Dorchester Publishing

TEN FUN FACTS ABOUT MARI

1. Before becoming a full-time author, Mari Mancusi worked as a multiple Emmy award winning television news producer. She worked in stations around the country, including Orlando, San Diego, and Boston. She later became a lifestyle TV producer for The Better Show, filmed in New York City.
2. Mari loves playing video games. Her all-time favorites include World of Warcraft, Skyrim, Fallout, and the Final Fantasy series. She can't play first person (or third person) shooters, however, because they make her sick to her stomach.

3. Mari is a HUGE Disney fan. Her favorite Disney villain is Maleficent. She's been to Walt Disney World hundreds of times and continues to go a few times a year. Her favorite ride? The Haunted Mansion.
4. Mari is mother to one child and one dog. Daughter is named Avalon and is 13 years old and her dog's name is Minnie.
5. Mari loves to cosplay and makes her own costumes. She favors mash-up costumes combining two fandoms such as Star Wars and Disney Princesses. In fact, she likes costumes so much she actually wore fairy wings to her wedding!
6. Even though she lives in Texas now, Mari grew up in New England and spent her weekends snowboarding. She misses the mountains a lot! (But not the snow and ice on her car!)
7. Mari won the Florida Sunshine State Young Readers' Award in 2025. Thank you Florida!
8. Her books have twice received honors from the American Library Association for being "Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers." Which, in her opinion, is the best honor possible.
9. Mari's ultimate dream wish is to spend the night in the secret hotel room in Cinderella's castle in Disney World.
10. Mari is a huge fan of marshmallow peeps and really doesn't understand Peeps haters! Ditto with candy corn.
11. If she wasn't an author, Mari would probably be a teacher. She loves interacting with kids and that's why school visits are always so fun!

Mari Mancusi FAQ

When did you get started writing?

I don't remember ever NOT writing. In fact, my mother tells me before I could even pick up a pen, I would dictate stories for her to transcribe, while I drew the pictures. I always had a huge imagination and was always a storyteller. When I was in fifth grade, my teacher noticed my interest and put me in an independent study program where I would create little pop-up books about unicorns and pegasus. I also created my own magazine for my neighborhood and would deliver it by hand to all the mailboxes each month.

Where are you from? Where do you live now?

I think a lot of people assume writers all live in either a large city like New York or in a remote cabin on the side of a lake. That's where they always seem to be in the movies anyway! But I grew up in a mid-size town in Massachusetts called Haverhill. I moved out to go to college in Boston (Boston University) and got a job there at the NBC TV station afterward. Over the years I've moved around a lot (pretty common for TV news people!) and lived in Orlando, San Diego, and New York City. In NYC, I met my husband, who is from Texas and we ended up moving to Austin, Texas when we got married. I've been in Texas for fifteen years now and truly love it!

What is your writing process?

I'm half a plotter, half a "pantser" (aka writing from the seat of my pants.) I like to come up with an overall concept of a book – an elevator pitch – and then start whittling it down into an actual story. Since I have to turn in an outline to my editor before they buy the book, I usually come up with some kind of ending, but often the actual ending ends up being very different when I get to it.

What kind of movies and TV shows do you like?

I'm a huge fan of horror! Scary, creepy, even funny and cheesy – I love it all!

What do you do for fun?

I enjoy traveling, watching movies, snowboarding, playing video games, designing costumes, reading, hanging out with friends, and more. One thing I hate? Sitting home bored! I want to constantly be doing something!

What kind of places have you traveled?

A few years ago I decided to make a pledge to visit a different country each year. So far I've visited Japan, Costa Rica, England, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Canada, Columbia, The Cayman Islands and the Bahamas. Problem is – once I visit a country, I end up loving it so much I want to go back instead of trying something new!

Where do I want to go next? Probably China so I can walk the Great Wall of China.

Have any of your books been made into movies?

Not yet! We had a close call with my book GAMER GIRL. It was optioned by Universal and they were very excited to work on the project. But at that time they also acquired Dreamworks Pictures and decided to concentrate on animated projects only. So Gamer Girl was dumped. 😞 Hopefully someday one of my books will hit the big (or small) screen. It would be a dream come true!

Have you ever written a book with a character that's like you?

Yes! Gamer Girl was a very autobiographical book, based on something that happened to me in seventh grade. I had gone to a new school and was constantly being bullied by a group of kids. Of course since Gamer Girl is fiction, I was able to give my character her happily ever after. Which was cool, since after the book was published, I got a lot of letters from readers saying they related to the main character themselves and the book gave them courage to stand up to their own haters. That made me feel very good!

What's up next for you?

A prequel for New Dragon City! It's called "Dawn of the Dragons" and comes out September 2nd. The story will take place five years before New Dragon City just as the dragons are arriving in the United States. A lot of kids wanted to know how the apocalypse happened and with this book they'll get to find out!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MARI MANCUSI OR TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO MARI@MARIMANCUSI.COM.