

Art + Design



13 Questions with Artist + Author Carissa Potter (AKA People I've Loved)

August 16, 2018 | Art + Design | 2 Comments

Welcome to *Lucky Thirteen*, an ongoing series of 13 quick questions (some bookish, some not) for our magnificent authors and illustrators.

You might know Oakland-based artist Carissa Potter through her [Instagram](#), or through her stationery line [People I've Loved](#). Or perhaps you discovered her books—she's the author of *I Like You, I Love You*, an illustrated ode to the feelings of seeking, finding, and falling in love, and the forthcoming book, *It's OK to Feel Things Deeply*. The latter feels like a big hug from a friend when you need it most; it's filled with empathy, humor, and wisdom on how to move through difficult emotions.

We wanted to learn more about Carissa, so we asked her to answer our *Lucky Thirteen* questions. Let's get to know her now, shall we?

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Currently, I am reading a few books—*Why We Make Things and Why it Matters: The Education of a Craftsman* by Peter Korn and *How Emotions are Made* by Lisa Feldman Barrett—but I am also listening to *Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error* by Kathryn Schulz. My summer intern had to read it before going to school in the fall and so we started it together. It's not groundbreaking, I would say, but it is nice to have an advocate for reframing failure in your pocket at all times.

2. Introvert or extrovert?

They are both great. I think that we are all both at all times. I love people but I also love being alone. I feel like I don't know anyone who is really one or the other. I read once that you cannot trust extroverts. That they tell you only what you want to hear. But I don't mind. I like when you can relax into a conversation with someone. Then again, it is so lovely to feel special with introverts, that it takes time to get close, to open up to each other, and then when it happens it feels so worth it and human.

3. You have a newspaper. What section do you turn to first?

We get *The New York Times*. I am really into the Sunday section—I love reading “Modern Love” and about the weddings. It always makes me happy. But I originally got it for the book section and the style magazines. They make me feel connected to things outside the house when I never leave home. If I am really short on time, and I am as we all are, I will just look through the pages at the illustrations. They are always so wonderful just on their own.

4. What's your bookmark of choice?

I am really into lenticular printing—so like dinosaurs that try to eat you while saving your page is totally my jam.

5. Favorite day of the week and why?

Not Mondays. But I try to rally for them anyway.

6. Tell us about a piece of art or writing that has inspired you.

I think for me, I am going to say that I have really been into Bonnard mixed with Yoko Ono. Like the collective action and timelessness of Yoko mixed with the longing for a simple beautiful life in a Bonnard painting.

7. What were you almost named?

Vanessa. There was a fight between Marissa and Vanessa and then I was born and the labor was hard so my dad caved and boom Carissa was settled upon. But my grandma on my dad's side had named everyone a first name with a V and I think I was the first to break that tradition.

This is actually a really kinda pivotal childhood narrative for me. In a way, when my mother would tell me the story, it was a confirmation both of her suffering and of her power position in the family. For my mother's family, control and being right was priority and it took me a really long time to realize that I like compromise more.

8. Your pen (or pencil) of choice is:

I like [Le Pen drawing 4100-brush](#)—it is a felt tip marker-like pen that you can get an extreme variety of line. Or Sumi ink.

9. Indoors or outdoors?

Both. It is more of a state of mind and less about where you are. I think that if you have a space that you feel really comfortable in, outdoors or indoors doesn't matter. I will say, I crave the sun. My best friend moved to Iowa for a couple years, and I would always say I could live

anywhere and be happy. But she seems to think that I should actually try living without the sun and warmth and then see. It is true, I think I get less sick when I can keep the same temp inside and out for the whole year. We really have it made in the bay. The best of all worlds.

10. A friend is coming over for dinner at your place. What would you cook?

I am really into this [Sprouted Kitchen salmon and noodle dish](#). But really it would have to be something that they can eat. I have so many friends with special diets so it gets complicated.

I make [this](#) all the time.

11. What is one of the first books you remember?

I was really into *A Wrinkle in Time*. However, I didn't like the movie. I wanted to. I really did. I was also really into *The Giver*. It's so weird to travel back in time as an adult to the things you enjoyed as a child. It does hit home one essential truth for me, that things change. And certainty is an illusion.

12. Your favorite spot in your home is:

The sofa. With the paper. Or a pizza slice, or some ice cream. On a Sunday. With a clean house. And a dog sitting with me. My buddy, he always changes spots so his body can be touching my body at all times. I love it. And it drives me crazy at the same time.

13. What advice would your 80-year-old self give you?

Figure out a way to calm down and enjoy things before it is gone.

Thanks Carissa! What a gem. You can find her newest book [here](#), and read our other Lucky Thirteen posts [here](#).

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Content and Community Manager at Chronicle Books. When she's logged off, she can be found painting, cooking, camping, or petting her dog Harley. You can follow her on Twitter at @jn_na.



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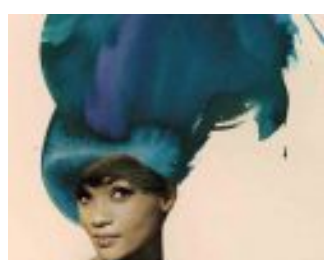
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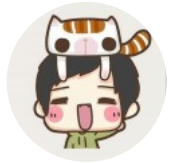
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Kristi Nielsen September 25, 2018 at 11:15 am

This is a great interview with Carissa Potter. It is inspiring to read the things that have influenced her evolution. The first books we remember, the places we like to spend our private time, and the food we enjoy cooking, are all an evolution and part of life-long learning. The coolest part of writing and illustrating is it is that it creates a path to our own growth.

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Kirsten October 17, 2018 at 4:34 am

Great interview with Carissa. The questions are nice as well as her answers. Her arts are also beautiful.

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