

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-United States, 2021-May-06— /ToStories/-Multi-genre fiction author Patricia M. Muhammad discusses *Ardor's Prestige*, her third historical romance novel.

During the 18th century, the Italia city-state of Venezia (Venice) had a prominent role in Europe. Its locale was ideal as an epicenter for maritime trade and art. Native artisans development of style in their paintings, often reflecting the city-state's architectural and landscape beauty. However, canvas portraits were not the only form of painting that Venice was renowned for. Paintings within walls, such as theatre and on a smaller scale, within the homes of the ennobled were commonplace. Venice attracted tourists interested in the regional art and enticed artists from other European nations to use the city-state as their muse. They also sought to learn the painting techniques of Venetian artists. This exchange of art and culture replicated itself throughout the most artistically vibrant European countries. However, Venice took its artists seriously and provided a network for them to thrive locally while developing their craft. Within this context, fiction author Patricia M. Muhammad incorporates at least two of these Venetian aspects in her historical romance novel, *Ardor's Prestige*. In one scene, the protagonist encounters a French painter who uses the waterways and landscape as the focal point of her painting. In another, within the young duchessa's family home, she looks to a fresco commissioned by her father that is a replica of a famous painting. It is here where Muhammad uses art as a character, initially being inanimate until the duchessa converses with it as if the depicted representations have power to become alive, to no longer be a one-dimensional conjuring of a painter. Her hope was for it to provide her an answer that would ultimately save her disgraced servant. Duchess Anastasia, whose affection for Duca Leandro is always genuine and true, displays a mercy to her servente who has continuously annoyed her with his fondness for her that she would and could never return. Her heart has already been claimed by her destined one, Duca Leandro, though it does not mean she is unable to be empathetic to her servente's plight.

The story begins with a young duchessa who has recently become of age. Her family decides to take holiday in another country, yet Anastasia will not be alone. The senior houseservant, Sienna, will keep close watch of the rebellious maiden. Aside from the other maidservants, she is keenly observed by her cavalier servente, Giorgio. He admires and has a deep affection for her. This has no bearing upon how she feels. Giorgio knows that it can never be. The duchessa has often and sternly reminded him of such. She views him as just another one of the servile adornments that her mother and father placed within the House of d'Alessi. The duchessa has an encounter with a dashing nobleman one night after stealing away from the d'Alessi mansion. Both are hesitant to disclose much of their identities. They only state their second names, wondering about the motive of the other. Later on, Anastasia ponders her encounter with the patrician as he does the same. False rumours have now spread regarding a maiden's indiscretion with a higher-ranking courtier. One day in the marketplace, Giorgio hears of this and pummels the verbal offenders. They mock him when they realize that Giorgio yearns for the duchessa. Even they know that his desire for her, though they know not Anastasia by name, is futile.

On another occasion, Anastasia leaves the mansion and walks along the open thoroughfare near the waterways. She senses someone watching her. The duchessa hopes it is Leandro, the aristocrat she encountered that one clear night. Anastasia slips

into the estuary, in need of help. Giorgio appears. She is embarrassed and holds herself for modesty sake. Though her servente wraps a textile around her, Anastasia senses that Leandro is still near. She and her fellow ennobled encounter each other again and realize that they have been inevitably drawn to each other. She and the aristocrat begin a formal courtship. Leandro finds her with surprising quirks about her which only causes for him to further adore her. One day at the mansion, Duchessa Anastasia witnesses the royal guard seize her servente on the allegation of treason by order of the Crown. She looks to a fresco, hoping that its image could somehow hear her plea to save the humiliated Giorgio. He now stands before her in the grips of dutiful royal officers, too weak to defend himself. Duchessa Anastasia, however, does not allow for this incident to interfere with what has already been deemed for her. As time passes, the duchessa and the "duca" continue their courtship. Giorgio is eventually cleared. The season of Carnevale is at its peak. The ennobled use their masques to hide their indulgence. Yet the duchessa thought it splendid to shield others from her bashful nature. The duca convinces her to eventually remove her masque just as he did. They venture to one of the gardens where she accepts his proposal. Another, younger servant who accompanied the duchessa seeks to inform her of what she has learned of Giorgio's predicament. Capriana has an accident and injures herself. She is taken into a chamber and the host has the apothecarist administer a sedative. While she rests in the dark, away from the chatter and decadence, someone enters her room to murder her. Giorgio followed the culprit and intervenes. The esteemed Leandro orders the perpetrator seized. He and the duchessa seek to protect Capriana until the following day. Leandro reveals his status within the king's court to Anastasia. He was a much greater esteemed courtier than he initially revealed. It is not until the day of their nuptials that they learn who colluded with the murderer and framed Giorgio. Not even Anastasia suspected who it could be.

Ardor's Prestige is available for purchase as an ebook from these online retailers:

Amazon ASIN: B08HYK8589
Barnes & Noble: 2940164898397
Smashwords: 9781005616496
Tolino Media: 9783752117806
Thalia EAN: 9783752117806
Kobo ISBN: 9781005616496
Google Play: GGKEY:99HQFZDJLLN E
DriveThru Fiction: N/A
Apple Books: N/A
Lulu: N/A

About the Author: Patricia M. Muhammad is a multi-genre fiction author who often incorporates interracial relationships and multi-racial characters as a part of her storylines. She has written 20 novels. Patricia is currently based in the United States.

Connect with Patricia:
Social Media: @pmmuhammadbooks
Press: permissionsp@gmail.com