

The Passion of Marta – 2017 Nautilus Book Awards Winner

Caren Umbarger's 2nd novel recognized by prestigious International Book Award

A young girl's life changes forever when she goes down a forbidden path... toward an exquisite lady's violin. Powerful and moving; an opus of music, beauty, art, love and faith.

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL – May 4, 2018 – Published in November, 2017, and six years in the making, *The Passion of Marta* – Caren Umbarger's masterful new story – is beginning to receive critical acclaim. It has been selected as a 2017 Nautilus Silver Award Winner.

Nautilus Book Awards is held in particular high-regard for recognizing and promoting outstanding print books that nurture positive change to co-create a Better World. Their core mission is to celebrate and honor books that support conscious living & green values, high-level wellness, positive social change, and spiritual growth.

Past Nautilus winning authors include Deepak Chopra, Barbara Kingsolver, Louise Erdrich, Thich Nhat Hanh, Eckhart Tolle, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Andrew Weil, Judy Collins, Desmond Tutu, Charles - Prince of Wales, and many more.

From Readers' Favorite 5-star review of *The Passion of Marta*: “*The plot, much like the form of a musical passion, unfolds in four parts, plus the prologue. Each part speaks with a different voice, a different point of view, but each voice speaks for the violin and the power it holds to express beauty beyond belief. {...} A real treasure.*”

This is the 2nd novel that Caren Umbarger has self-published. She works closely with her husband, Paul, during the editing process and savors having complete creative control over the finished product. “We must've gone through that book a dozen times – honing and polishing until we were satisfied that the writing and form of the story were in complete unity with the book's content and message. We wanted to create a work of lasting beauty and resonance – just like Leopold's violin.”

“I set out to write a relevant and compelling story,” Umbarger says. “*The Passion of Marta* is historical fiction, but it speaks to contemporary issues including immigration, assimilation, religious freedom, women's roles, and also abuse. I write in order to bring forth the voices of women, and to help them be fully heard and honestly understood. For me, writing literature is an opportunity to examine and illuminate the myriad issues that women face in their lives. Every author hopes to have their contribution recognized as significant. This Nautilus award is a true confirmation that I need to keep writing!”

The Passion of Marta was also short-listed for the 2017 Chanticleer Goethe Award for Historical Fiction post-1750.

About the Author: Caren Umbarger attended Bennington College, earned a BA in violin performance from Hamline University, and has been a professional musician and string teacher for more than thirty-five years. Caren grew up in Mason City, Iowa; taught, performed and conducted in Minneapolis for three decades; moved to Florida in 2010 and served as artistic director of the Flagler Youth Orchestra for three years. Her first novel, *Coming To: A Midwestern Tale*, won a 2011 Florida Book Award Bronze Medal for general fiction. She and her husband live, work and play in St. Augustine.

“The Passion of Marta”

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