

THE ECHOES INSIDE

KATY AUTHOR PENS YOUNG ADULT NOVEL

Written by Cherri Northcutt | Photography by Juliana Evans

In his college days, local author Christopher Gaddis had no idea he would one day become a writer. It wasn't until his junior year of college at Baylor University that he truly found his calling. While in pursuit of his marketing degree, Gaddis took a PR journalism class and was given an assignment to write a story. It was the first time he was able to write about whatever he wanted and found that he actually enjoyed it. After reading the paper, his professor told him his story had promise and that he should continue to write. "I started with poetry, and it grew from there," Gaddis recalls. "After graduation, I decided to write short stories."

SHORT ESCAPES

The short stories became Gaddis' first book, *A Collection of Short Escapes*. "I had so many ideas," he remembers. In one of the short stories, the main character used a lot of curse words. "I was so terrified for my mom to read it," Gaddis admits. "My mom said the story was phenomenal though and the language fit the character."

Gaddis' great aunt Mildred had a little different take on the book, and while she very much enjoyed the story she was a little turned off by all the cursing. So, he set out to write a story for readers young and old. There are certain parameters when writing for the young adult market. "It's a misconception that nothing bad happens in young adult books," he says. "Some subject matter might be off limits, but not if you handle it correctly." Gaddis was very careful to not be too gruesome or use bad language in his second book, *The Echoes Inside*.

KIDS TODAY

Gaddis remembers growing up and how awesome it was falling in love with a good book. Today, teens and pre-teens have a variety of distractions from TV to video games and the internet. "Honestly, not too many kids read," he says. "After school, it's the last thing they want to do when they get home." Gaddis' goal with *The Echoes Inside*, was to write a good story that children today would enjoy.

The book crosses over several genres, from mystery thriller to fantasy. "It's set in a small Mississippi town where everybody knows each other and nobody locks their doors," shares Gaddis. When a young boy disappears, the whole town is in an uproar, and the boy's older brother is left to search for him.

FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND FANS

Gaddis' parents Cindy and Phillip and his sister Ericka have been big supporters of his writing. He's also had a lot of support from people in the Katy community. "Katy Budget Books has hosted both of my book signings," he says. "My old teachers and friends from Taylor High School showed up to buy my books."

Gaddis even had copies of his books on sale at the UPS store where he used to work. "I remember this 9-year-old boy came in with his mom," Gaddis recalls. "He was shy, but his mom told me that he really loved the book and wanted to know what happens next." Luckily for his fans, Gaddis does intend to write a sequel.

HANDLING WRITER'S BLOCK

According to Stephen King, a writer should spend four hours a day reading and four hours writing. A big fan of King, Gaddis has taken this advice to heart. "The scariest thing is a blank screen looking at you," he says. "If I get frustrated, I just grab a book and read."

Gaddis begins a writing project with a list of random ideas and then breaks them down between short story ideas and possible novels. "I pick which one I want to go with," says Gaddis. "I like to make a road map of where I'm starting and where I'm going." Gaddis does admit that he doesn't always stick to the plan. "I veer off the map once I have my characters in place, and they turn out to be the navigators," shares Gaddis.

He occasionally draws inspiration from his own life. "To some degree, every character has a little bit of me

in them,” Gaddis says. He has also become an avid people watcher. “I pay attention to how people talk and act,” Gaddis shares. “The smallest thing can blossom into a wonderful idea.”

DOOR TO ANYWHERE

Gaddis compares writing to sports: You have to practice all the time if you want to be any good. Gaddis chose to self-publish his first two books under the name Door to Anywhere Publishers, because with all the changes going on with NOOK and Kindle, self-publishing is becoming easier and easier. However, Gaddis does intend to submit his next book to various publishers. “A publishing house lends credibility, scope, and visibility,” Gaddis says.

“THE SMALLEST THING CAN BLOSSOM INTO A WONDERFUL IDEA.”

- Christopher Gaddis

Currently, Gaddis is working on a third book. “It’s a modern day religious fantasy with lots of action,” shares Gaddis. The book is tentatively titled, *Secrets of the Soul*, and is based on an idea that came to him in a dream. **KM**



CHERRI NORTHCUTT is an award-winning journalist who enjoys life in Katy with her husband and two children.

ALL ABOUT THE BOOK

By Christopher Gaddis



The Echoes Inside is a mystery-fantasy-thriller about love and kindness, family struggles, kidnapping, revenge, grief, a crazy old lady, soap operas, a hunt for truth, secrets, bipolar teachers, imagination, cartoon shows, fights, romance, wizards, dragons, fairytales, witches, fear, riddles, triumph, heroes, and redemption.

Now available at these fine online retailers:

amazon.com

barnesandnoble.com

lulu.com/spotlight/adoortoanywhere

Why choose Primrose? Just ask a mom.

“Primrose taught my son things that are just being taught in kindergarten, but he knew them already – letter sounds, counting, math, addition, subtraction.”

— Joseph's Mom, Primrose Parent

Primrose School of Kelliwood
281.828.1600

Primrose School of North Mason Creek
281.492.7400

Educational Child Care for Infants through Private Kindergarten and After School



Each Primrose School is a privately owned and operated franchise. Primrose, Primrose Schools, and The Leader in Educational Child Care are trademarks of Primrose School Franchising Company. ©2011 Primrose School Franchising Company. All rights reserved.

NOW ENROLLING FOR 1ST GRADE!



Primrose Schools®

The Leader in Educational Child Care®