

Rae Bridgman



Photo courtesy of Dale Barbour

The MiddleGate Books

Fish and Sphinx
2008

Amber Ambrosia
2007

Le sortilège du serpent
2007

The Serpent's Spell
2006

LIBER LONGUS, VITA BREVIS.
LIFE IS SHORT, BUT BOOKS NEVER DIE!

One of Rae Bridgman's earliest memories of writing was when she was in grade six and had to learn to write longhand with an old-fashioned quill pen and a bottle of black India ink. Her teacher, Mrs. Stewart, was very strict, Rae recalls. "She didn't care that all the other teachers let us use pencils and ballpoint pens. We had to learn how to form our letters perfectly (particularly our round O's)." Many years later, when it came time to illustrate *The Serpent's Spell*, Rae remembered that she still had that old quill pen and that's the pen she used for her first illustrations!

Her favourite books as a child were *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll and *The Wonderful Flight to the*

Mushroom Planet by Eleanor Cameron. All three of these books carry you to another world, strangely familiar.

Another favourite book is *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke.

"The characters in her books actually come to life! And after enjoying her small pen-and-ink drawings at chapter's end, I started to do my own."



Griffin: Pen-and-ink illustration from *Fish and Sphinx* by Rae Bridgman 2008

Fish and Sphinx

In this very fishy tale, Wil and Sophie uncover a plot by a secret magical society—the Serpent's Chain—to seize Manitoba's Legislative Building (Palace of the Blazing Star). Stone lions, cow skulls, bison and sphinxes spring to life to help the children save the Palace.

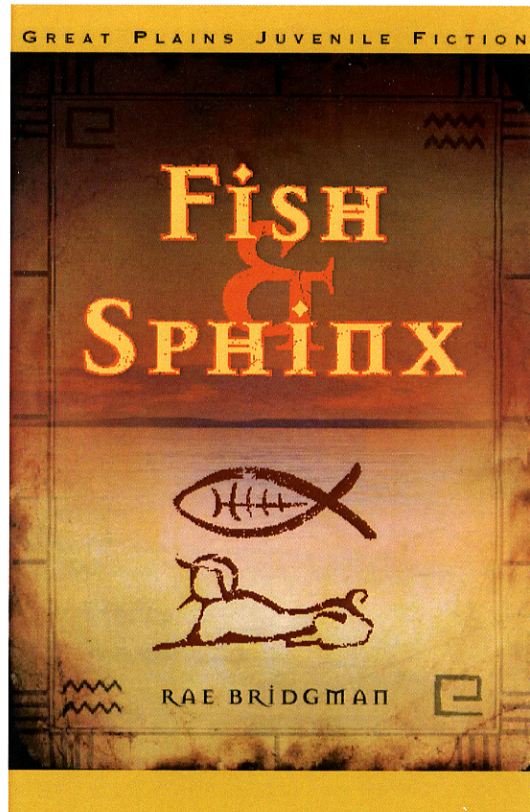
Rae's favourite part of writing *Fish and Sphinx* was when Sophie and Wil magically turn into catfish. "It was great fun figuring out how different fish think and 'talk'."

To prepare for writing *Fish and Sphinx*, Rae did a lot of research, learning about the lives of the snakes of Narcisse here in Manitoba and our native catfish. She also explored the Manitoba Legislative Building, with its many symbols that are hidden right in plain sight. Besides research, this author plots each book in great detail. "Before starting to write, I might have a fifty-page outline in place."

Rae's advice to young writers is: "Write, write, write. Read, read, read. Learn the 'tricks of the trade' from other writers. Learn as many juicy new words as you can, so that you have lots of 'tools' in your toolbox. Hang out with people who like to write or draw. Go to readings of your favourite authors. Attend local writing workshops. Join a local writers' association, such as the Manitoba Writers' Guild."

Fun Fact about Rae

Her studio is filled with all kinds of interesting things... glass marbles, glass fishing buoys, gargoyles, ostrich eggs, stuffed tortoise, stuffed raven, hourglass, stones, quills, maps, drawings, dictionaries, books...



Just for fun...

"I'd like to recommend a great resource! *Don't Forget to Write: 54 Enthralling and Effective Writing Lessons for Students 6-18*, edited by Jenny Traig, published by 826 Valencia, 2005."

– Rae Bridgman

If you enjoyed reading her books, write to the author and tell her what you liked about them.

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www.raebridgman.ca/contact.html

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