

# Reader Views

Book reviews, for readers, by readers.

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*Reader Views is very happy to be speaking with Lisa Haisha, author of “Whispers from Children’s Hearts,” a new thought-provoking, inspirational book that speaks from the hearts of children around the world.*

**Juanita:** What a beautifully presented, heart warming book. Tell us more about your motivation in writing “Whispers from the Children’s Hearts”.

**Lisa:** It was an organic process. I travel a lot for fun and work and my hobby has been to talk with children to help me to better understand a culture. One day my boyfriend at the time was perusing my travel journals and read the children’s words and couldn’t stop talking about the profound effect the accumulation of the children’s thoughts had on him. From that moment on, I began to consciously create a book to memorialize the children’s voices to share with others. The end product being my book, “Whispers from Children’s Hearts.”

**Juanita:** What would you like this book to reveal to your readers?

**Lisa:** The truth and honesty that is innate in each individual. The unconditional love and innocence we all hold deep within our souls. That we are all connected, regardless of what color skin we have or what language we speak.

**Juanita:** It really is amazing how the simple answers of children can touch us so deeply. Why do you think the thoughts of children are so profound?

**Lisa:** I believe that the thoughts of children are so profound because they are still innocent and forming their ideas about life. I found that regardless of what they have been through they are still open to ideas of others.

**Juanita:** How long was this book in the making?

**Lisa:** About five years. It started with a passion for knowing others intimately. Then grew from there as a sociological and psychological exercise, then to a place of

surrendering and letting go – letting the book express what it wanted to say without manipulating it.

**Juanita: You ask three questions to the children in your book: 1) If you had one wish what would it be?, 2) Is God Fair? – Why or why not?, 3) Who in the World would you most want to meet? How did you come up with these particular questions?**

**Lisa:** Trial and error. I asked several different questions but these three particular questions were the ones that offered the greatest insight. They were simple questions for the children yet they were fueled with passion when the children answered them.

**Juanita: How has the innocence and honesty of the children’s answers made a difference in your life?**

**Lisa:** It made me feel connected to the world in a much deeper way. It helped me break down some of my old worn out pre-conceived notions of what people were like in various parts of the world. Now when I travel, I look for “my family” in each place I visit and bond at much deeper levels than simply visiting a place as a tourist.

**Juanita: Which countries have you found the most compelling in regards to the culture and location, and why?**

**Lisa:** I have found all the countries I have visited compelling in unique ways. If I had to choose a couple of countries that left an indelible impact on me, they would be Cuba and Iraq. Cuba because it was like walking into a time capsule or a huge never-ending movie set. Also, the people were so warm and inviting. I felt like I was literally meeting my "family" from all walks of life. They are also very intelligent and innovative. I felt completely inspired with every breath I took in Havana even in the simple moments of silence and people watching. Iraq, because they have been through so much. I visited Baghdad in 1998 right before Clinton bombed them. Just spending time with the Iraqis who have been living under the dictatorship of Saddam and them tentatively sharing their feelings with me on videotape was profound because if for some reason the tape was confiscated, they could be killed for saying the wrong thing. I interviewed top officials, sheep herders, orphans, Shiites, Sunnis. and Chaldeans. I learned about compassion and unconditional love there. I have the deepest respect for the people of Iraq.

**Juanita: Where would you like to travel that you haven’t already?**

**Lisa:** Kenya. I want to go on an African Safari.

**Juanita: “Whispers from the Children’s Hearts” is a book for all ages and cultures. Who is reading this book and what have been some comments so far?**

**Lisa:** Parents are reading it to their children, teachers are sharing it with their students, adults are reading it for better understanding of other cultures. Many people have been influenced by the book because one can’t help but be moved by it. It sort of sneaks up on you. When someone first picks it up they think it is a simple book for children, then as they keep reading they realize the value and depth of the book.

**Juanita: Has there been a difference in reactions to the book between the young and adult readers? If so, please elaborate.**

**Lisa:** Children enjoy the freshness of it. They have no preconceived notions. Many times they express interest in meeting the children from these places, based on the quotes. They ask a lot of questions like, What was Juanita like in Mexico? What was her home like? What was she wearing?, etc. Adults are shocked by what they are learning from these children when they previously felt they knew much more about the world and different cultures. I am happy to say that both gain from the experience. We are now in the process of turning the concept of *Whispers* into a daytime Saturday morning TV series.

**Juanita: How important do you feel travel or the knowledge of other cultures is for children, and will this type of experience translate through your TV series?**

**Lisa:** I feel travel and knowledge of others cultures is extremely important today. Our world is getting smaller and the importance of tolerance has never been stronger. My main goal in the TV Series I'm creating based on my book *Whispers from Children's Hearts*, is to open the doors to the way other families live around the world. To have children watching other children relate to people very different from themselves and take away something unique and special from each experience.

**Juanita: You are a writer, director, filmmaker, and a “creative soul coach,” for starters. You have been featured on radio programs, magazines and television for your many pursuits. Where does this passion for life come from?**

**Lisa:** It originally came from boredom and needing a sense of purpose. I was brought up in a Middle Eastern household that had a lot of restrictions. I felt I didn't have a voice and that my life was being planned for me, a life I didn't want. So, I of course rebelled and started traveling to escape my destiny of early marriage to a cousin and a household of kids by age 25.

**Juanita: Do you have any other book projects in the works?**

**Lisa:** Yes. I have a screenplay called *Belly Dance* co-written by the very talented Randall McCormick that is similar in style to *Bend it Like Beckham*. I would like to see it produced in the near future. It is a comedic tale about growing up in Detroit, Michigan under a Middle Eastern roof. It is about the age-old struggle between the old and new, parents and their children, fate and free will. It is also about two young women coming to terms with their sexuality while caught between a culture that suppresses it and another that exploits it. I also have an ebook series called *Write On: A 365-day Inspirational Writing Journal*. And several *30-day Write On* books that focus on a particular subject like Leadership, Mysticism, Love, Erotica, Self Help, and Writers and Artists. I am also finishing up a book tentatively titled *Unmade Beds*, which is a very personal memoir of my travels around the world as a single woman.

**Juanita: can your readers find out more about you and your endeavors? Do you have a website?**

**Lisa:** Yes, I have a monthly newsletter that talks about the upcoming month's retreats and workshops and I have three websites:

[www.lisahaisha.com](http://www.lisahaisha.com) (updates, information and press kit for the media)

[www.composingalife.com](http://www.composingalife.com) (my coaching practice and information and tips on self help)

[www.whispersfromchildrens hearts.com](http://www.whispersfromchildrens hearts.com) (Website for the book *Whispers from Children's Hearts* and Cultural Retreats)

**Juanita: Thank you so much for your inspiring and thought provoking book. “Whispers from the Children’s Hearts” will undoubtedly open the heart of every one it touches. Is there anything else you’d like to tell your readers?**

**Lisa:** Yes! Remember that miracles are happening everyday in your life, watch out for them and they will change the way you view the world and the way you choose to do life.