

Inspire.

“If there’s a book you really want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”

- Toni Morrison

Meet Simone Di Piero. He is a professor at Stanford University in the Department of English. He is an essayist, poet and translator. I reached out to Simone to share advice with our class. He is the author of nine books, mostly poetry. His most recent book is a collection of essays, *City Dogs* (2009). He writes frequently on the visual arts, is a consulting editor for the *Southwest Review* and he contributes to *Threepenny Review* and *Poetry*. What I loved the most and wanted to share with you is that even successful writers such as, Simone and others, go through the tumultuous disappointments of rejection – but, it is important to remember that writing, like art – is subjective. Never get discouraged. Just pick up your pen (or pencil) and keep writing. Don’t worry about the rest. Enjoy.

Piper: *What is your advice for writers who want to get published?*

Simone Di Piero, Stanford University, Department of English: First, you have to want to write, then you have to want to write some more, then you have to write as much as possible about whatever it is that compels you -- I assume you're talking about criticism, essays, and reviews, not poetry -- and you send the work wherever you'd like to publish. Be familiar with the magazines you intend to approach. To get assignments you have to have a track record usually. If you've already published stuff, you can pitch ideas to editors. Or request specific review assignments. If you're trying to break into art writing, you can approach magazines about covering specific local shows. Be prepared to be filthily underpaid. If you're trying to publish essays for the first time, you're on your own. Write your brains out, be true to your compulsion and your subject, then send to magazines you think might bite. While trying magazines, write another essay.

Piper: *What makes a writer successful in the publishing world?*

Simone Di Piero: Successful how? I know for fact that most of John Berger's books of essays, which are among the best we have, have made very little money for Pantheon. You can write a terrific book or essay that sinks without a trace. Is it successful? Internally, on its own, yes indeed. In the world? Not at all. So what's "successful?" Chance, fickle readers, fad, luck, sympathetic editors -- these all figure in whether a book or essay sees any light. I wrote an essay I sent on spec to The New Yorker and the LRB (I had contacts both places and had published poems in *The New Yorker*); both said no for reasons I thought wrongheaded. It was published instead in a smaller venue, *Threepenny*, then went on to be picked for BEST AMERICAN ESSAYS and THE PUSHCART PRIZE ANTHOLOGY. So, who among those editors was the more astute reader? So, what's successful? Write for the world, if that's what you choose to do, but don't foul your inner life doing so.

PIPER NICHOLE presents “Getting Published” at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Studio School. She is the author of “The Everything Homebuying Book, 3rd Edition,” part of the best selling “Everything Series” by Adams Media, “The For Sale By Owner Handbook,” published by Career Press and “Buying a House on a Shoestring.” She has been featured in CNBC, The Chicago Tribune, Wall Street Journal, AOL Real Estate, ABC Radio and more. For more information, visit www.pipernichole.com.