



FACED WITH THE DAUNTING TASK OF GETTING PUBLISHED? **SONIA FRIEDRICH** OFFERS HOPE TO THE ASPIRING WRITER.

Kim Carey at work; her first book *Transcend – A Soul's Journey*. Photo: Sonia Friedrich

Thousands of manuscripts arrive each year onto publishers' desks only to end up being rejected time and time again. Many publishers no longer accept unsolicited manuscripts, meaning access has become even more difficult. For some writers who believe in their own work, whether for creative completion, the belief that their work has meaning for others, or to openly satisfy their own ego, the ideal remains to finish their book and have it published. Seeing and holding the first copy of a published work is tremendously gratifying.

The demanding publishing industry is changing and for those with time, commonsense, and the ability to follow directions, self-publishing has now become a possible and cost effective method to ensure that the manuscript doesn't lie hidden in the desk drawer gathering dust while the energy to submit it to one publisher after the next rapidly fades. Self-publishing allows the writer with belief in her work to take their project to the next stage.

At lulu.com it is possible to upload your own work and self-publish your book through easily guided steps, design your own cover, and receive a bound and printed copy in the mail within weeks.

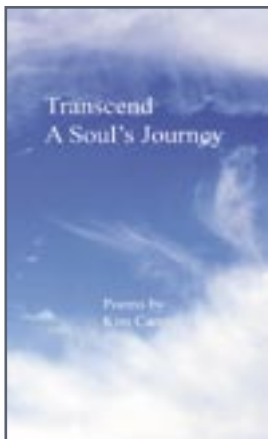
Adding to this process you can order on demand, one, ten, one hundred copies – however many

you want or can afford – and then order again as your book starts to sell and gain exposure. To top it off others can buy your book directly online too. Not only does it help those wanting to self-publish; it also minimises the wastage of the industry where so many books unsold are returned only to be pulped. In this day of so called environmental awareness it is surprising that printing on demand hasn't surfaced sooner.

My partner Kim and I wanted to see if it was as easy as it seemed. Having costed the production of a photographic book a few years earlier that would set us back \$17,000 for 1000 copies, and knowing this was not in our financial reality, we started with a relatively simple project: Kim's first anthology of poetry. The writing was a journey of its own and with the content compiled over many years we began the process of editing a final manuscript. While Kim applied the final touches to her content I went online to learn how to begin. Surprisingly, all was clearly instructed. By taking the time to be guided I was shown how to pull this project together one step at a time. Following five easy steps we chose the size of the book, uploaded our content, chose the binding, created our own cover in Photoshop and then determined the sale price for the book. While we were fortunate to know how to create our own cover, lulu.com provides a range of covers to choose from so you will not have to become a graphic designer. Our biggest decision became the price to set. We did our research in book shops to ensure that we were equitable to the market, that we would make a profit, and lulu.com their own small commission, which frankly they more than deserve.

We ordered our first three copies to use as mock-ups for a final proof and edit. They arrived within two weeks and we were both speechless with excitement. Kim's first book is stunning. Not only were we proud of her content and seeing it move from pieces of paper in many folders and journals into a structured and ordered form; we were delighted in a creation we never anticipated we would produce. Unbelievably, three copies, including postage, arrived for investment of \$40. Can you believe it? We used these copies to make some changes and sent the manuscript to a contact in the industry. Our next journey will involve learning how and where to distribute the books and we have already secured the first retail outlet for distribution. Meanwhile, Kim has read from her first book at a poetry night and will also submit it to the industry to see if a publisher wishes to take it up; we still hope that both our written work will be picked up by a publishing house. But in the meantime, we aren't leaving the success to the chance of others and we are keeping our own enthusiasm and excitement for our projects alive knowing that we can produce our own finished books.

**For more information or a little guidance please to contact [soniafriedrich@optusnet.com](mailto:soniafriedrich@optusnet.com) or visit [lulu.com](http://lulu.com) and try it.**



## TAKE NOTE

J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was rejected by 12 publishing houses. Bestselling authors Julia Cameron and Louise Hay self-published their first books. Virginia Woolf and Anais Nin also self-published.