

# Author Spotlight

## With Lindy Tucker



### What inspired you to write *Porkelia*?

I am inspired by things that happen every day and by my own experiences. I have always been interested in humor as a form of communication.

One day I just started playing with words, and *Porkelia* and several other characters emerged. Sometimes a story like *Porkelia* assumes a life of its own as it is being written. I did not plan it out. She emerged kicking her hoof, although I am sure some of my own life experiences contributed.

### Why did you decide to tell *Porkelia*'s story using poetry rather than prose?

It is more fun for me, and I do it better. Rhyming and making up stories has been natural for me since I was a child. Poetry allows me to play with words, move them around, and make up new ones. Poetry cuts back the risk of lecturing, over-explaining, and over-analyzing!

I also believe that poetry, humor, art, music, any of the creative arts, bypass the audience's defenses and make it easier, in the long run, to make a point and have readers join in the process or just have fun.

### Why did you write about the low points in *Porkelia*'s early career (such as her brief stint as a blender sales-pig) rather than making her rise to stardom easy?

It wouldn't be an adventure if there weren't any low points. It would be a boring tale.

In our culture right now, lots of young people have the illusion that you can become a star overnight. There is also the belief that stardom is the goal; being celebrated and famous, the end result. There is little understanding of the struggles involved, no growing up that has to happen, no dues to be paid, no deep searching about what it is that you really want. Because of a quick zoom to stardom that does sometimes happen to very young people in our culture, we often see a crash and burn afterward. They weren't ready: they had not worked in the Blender Store!

The low points, in retrospect, are the things that helped form you—made you a stronger, more compassionate person. Simply put, I guess, if you are going to seek out an adventure or live a full life, you are going to have to deal with all of it—the fear, the uncertainty, the joy, and the stumbling about—all of the things that make a life an authentically lived life.

### What was your own path to becoming an author/illustrator like?

Like Porkelia, a bit of a struggle—most of it internal. I had my share of blender-world jobs and real setbacks and moments of confusion and doubt. I have struggled with fear and a lack of confidence. I had many years of “crying in bed.” However, I always knew and never stopped believing that this is what I did best and loved to do. I knew that even if I had to clean houses or sell vacuum cleaners the rest of my life, I would have to find a way to do what I loved on the side.

Ultimately, as an older artist, I have found that the end result—stardom—gets farther and farther away, and that what has really mattered and continues to matter is the process of becoming a better person, becoming better at what I do, and experiencing my life fully—the good and the bad.

### Do you have any advice you'd like to give young readers with big dreams?

Make sure that the dream you have is yours and not someone else's idea of what is good for you: a parent, friends, your culture, TV. Take some time to really figure out what it is that tickles you.

“Tickles” sounds light and fun, but what I am trying to express is that I believe there is something in each one of us that connects us to the process of being alive. When you think of that one thing, you can feel it in your body—whether it be dancing, cooking, bringing up a child, being a teacher. If you follow that thing, that tickle, even if you don't become a star or don't “make it big,” even if you can only do that thing part-time, stick with it, because it will contribute to your maturity and your understanding of yourself and others. It will enable you to grow as a person and find peace within yourself.

If you do become famous and if you really love what you are doing and have chosen well, you will be able to enjoy that fame without losing your moorings and forgetting where you came from. You will be a role model for other folks trying to find their own way. But if you make becoming famous and rich your goal, you run the risk of living an empty, unfulfilled life. If you choose well, when you look back at the life you have lived, you will feel satisfied that you did your best—and you will be able to enjoy watching others do the same.

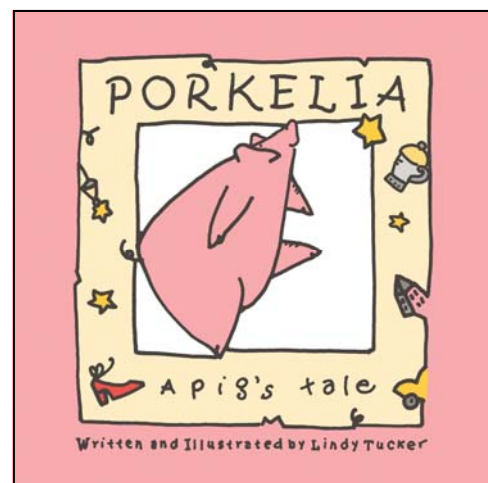
★ By Lindy Tucker ★

## PORKELIA

### A pig's tale

Porkelia is not your average pig. Tired of rooting around in the mud and living in a sty, Porkelia turns to the Wise One for an answer. When the Wise One proclaims that Porkelia was born to be the first piggy Rockette, she is overjoyed—that's all she's ever dreamed of being, after all.

Despite everyone else's doubts, Porkelia takes a leap of faith and says goodbye to her home as she sets off to New York City. Once there, she realizes that the road to becoming a star is not easy. After years of selling blenders by day and dancing by night, Porkelia finally gets her big break when she is discovered by an agent!



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