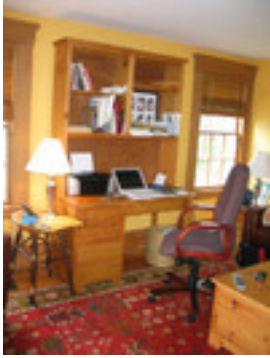


Work Space

Posted on Jun 23, Posted by [Lois Lowry](#) Category [Uncategorized](#)



Where do you work?

is a question I am often asked. I'm not sure why people ask it. But I confess that if I were to be allowed a peek into the day-to-day life of an author I admire - say Ian McEwan - I would want to peek at where he works. Much less interest in where he sleeps or eats.



This, then, is where I work. At least in the Maine house (as opposed to the "main" house which is in Massachusetts). At home, I have a room which was once a doctor's office, because the house had been owned by a doctor who had his practice there. So it is easy to call that room my "office."

Here in Maine, though, this room, where I work, is used for other things as well...the TV is in this room, for example...and it was oddly nameless until we gave it an acronym for a name. We call

it the FOLD. Family room, Office, Library, and Den.

And the Fold is where I work.

Except today! When I sat down this morning to start working, I realized that I did not need my computer. I'm starting on the adaptation of "Gossamer" to the stage, and the first thing I needed to do was to go through the book carefully, dividing it into scenes.

And today is a gorgeous summer day, so I took my iced tea, and the book, and a notebook and a pen, to the porch. The porch has no whimsical name; it is straightforwardly The Porch. And the only bad thing about it as a place to work is the distraction of the outdoors. Two hawks, for example, raising babies in the peak of my barn...the third summer they've nested there. Tough not to jump up and watch every time they fly in with beaks full of babyfood.

But the first thing I noticed this morning was not Hawk Breakfast, but the fact that my hollyhocks are about to bloom. You can see them through the screens behind the rocking chair in the first photo.

Few flowers are as nostalgic for me as hollyhocks. During the time that I lived, as a small child, in my grandparents' house during WWII, I spent a lot of time in the kitchen hanging out with my grandmother's cook. (Years later she became the character named Tatie in my book AUTUMN STREET) She was very patient with me, very loving. And one thing I remember fondly (and used in a scene in the same book) was picking my grandmother's hollyhocks and bringing the blossoms into the kitchen. Lining them up, upside down, pretending they were ladies in evening gowns, as their petals flowed down from their small bumps of heads, making lavish skirts of red and pink and white. Insisting that that poor cook act as a beauty-contest judge; bless her heart, she would pretend not to be able to choose between this one or that, and we would solemnly discuss the attributes before making our important decisions.

So of course this morning I had to sit for a while looking at the hollyhocks and remembering that dear and patient woman who was so much a part of my childhood.

But I did actually work, eventually. You can see my book and notebook and pen on the wicker couch (and my iced tea and gardening gloves on the table beside it) and in the close-up you can see that I have now numbered and labeled each scene, going through the book. 28 scenes, 28 chapters. Too many scenes for a play, of course. So the next task is to combine bits and pieces, to consolidate and rearrange.

And then...in order to start writing...back into the Fold.



Tags: Untagged