

Emily is seeking answers about her novel success

ALISTAIR RYDER

CATCHES UP WITH WRITER EMILY SCIALOM AHEAD OF HER APPEARANCE AT CAMBRIDGE WATERSTONES' LOCAL AUTHORS EVENING

Two years ago, Emily Scialom's debut novel *THE RELIGION OF SELF-ENLIGHTENMENT* was released - but it has taken until now for it to become a cult sensation, with positive word of mouth causing it to sell out at bookshops across the region.

Her novel has taken critics by storm, with many drawing comparisons between her tale of a man who starts his own religion after a near-death experience with revered works of literature such as *CATCHER IN THE RYE*.

Now, she's preparing to take part in a local authors event at the Cambridge branch of Waterstones next Thursday due to the growing interest in her work - a place where she previously worked as a Christmas temp, long before she became a successful writer.

But why has it taken so long for her debut novel to capture the attention of readers?

If you know the answer, it's best to tell Emily, as she's slightly "baffled" by the unexpected popularity two years after release.

She said: "It's taken a while for the word of mouth to catch on, but I'm incredibly happy people are starting to discover *THE RELIGION OF SELF-ENLIGHTENMENT*".

"I'm baffled as to why it has suddenly caught on. My only theory is that maybe using the word 'religion' in the title may have led people to think this is a different kind of novel than what it is.

"I already have other projects lined up. My second novel, *THE RIVERS*, deals with a lot of weightier themes".

"On one level, it's a raw love story, that deals with a variety of themes relating to romance and sexuality. But it also weaves in various political and environmentalist themes, as well as



excerpts of poetry. I wrote poetry for ten years before writing my first novel!"

Emily's third book, currently titled *THE EXISTENCE OF GOOD*, is nearing the end of its editing stage, with the hope of publishing in the new year.

To keep up to date with the progress Emily is making on her new novel, and to purchase a copy of *THE RELIGION OF SELF-ENLIGHTENMENT*, visit EMILYSCIALOM.COM.

Other authors participating in the event

include acclaimed writer Anthony Le Moignan, former police officer Chris Bailey-Green, poet Tracey Cracknell and drama teacher Mark Tunstall.

The local authors showcase takes place at the Cambridge branch of Waterstones on Thursday, October 4th, between 6pm and 7.30pm. Tickets are five pounds, and are available by visiting EVENTBRITE.CO.UK/LOCAL-AUTHORS-SHOWCASE-CAMBRIDGE-TICKETS-49853848202.