

Date 8.4.25

Headline

Former Prime Minister Photographer Turned Author Wins International Book Award

Introduction

In a month where Federal politics is once again taking centre stage, former Prime Minister photographer turned author, Sensei Sarhn, has captured a different kind of spotlight—this time for a story that inspires teen readers across the globe.

Her debut young adult novel, *Osu*, has been awarded Silver in the Teen Category of the prestigious Wishing Shelf International Book Awards—an accolade judged by school-aged readers in the UK. (Link to announcement <https://www.thewsa.co.uk/winners2024>)

Sarhn, who once photographed four Australian Prime Ministers and numerous national icons, now spends her time in a karate dojo teaching self-awareness and emotional resilience to kids and teens. Her novel *Osu* is a natural extension of this passion—telling the story of Olive, a 16-year-old outsider who finds strength and belonging through martial arts.

“I’ve gone from photographing people who shape our country to writing stories that shape young hearts,” Sarhn says. “*Osu* is about finding courage, especially when you feel different. Winning an award chosen by teens themselves—that’s the highest honour I could hope for.”

Osu features a dyslexic protagonist and celebrates themes of empowerment, identity, and friendship. With its semi-rural Australian setting and authentic voice, the novel resonates deeply with young readers navigating complex emotional terrain.

The award couldn’t have come at a more interesting time: With a federal election looming, Sarhn’s previous work capturing political figures—and her personal shift from media to mentorship—offers a fascinating perspective on public life, resilience, and personal reinvention.

Osu is published by EmpoweringBooks.org and is available now in bookstores, online and Sensei Sarhn’s website.

Author Bio

Renowned and highly trusted in the 1990s and 2000s for her striking and distinctive flair as a professional photographer, Sarhn photographed four Australian Prime Ministers, immortalised numerous celebrities, and vividly captured a plethora of sporting legends through her lens.

After retiring her camera, Sarhn followed her passion for martial arts into founding a karate dojo, channelling her desire into making a profound and positive impact on the lives of her students. Imparting invaluable life skills such as strength of character, compassion, respect, self-awareness, focus, courage, determination, discipline, and confidence.

Her commitment to empowering the next generation is now vividly captured in her debut novel, 'Osu,' where she continues her mission to inspire healthy self-image and resilience in young adults and teenagers.

Author Quote

*“Those who achieve great feats, are not carved from a different stone,
nor are they superhuman.
They just know and do things differently.
All of which can be taught and learnt if one is open.”*

Book Information

Title: 'Osu'

Author: Sensei Sarhn

Reader: Young Adults & Teenagers

Pages: 328

Publisher: EmpoweringBooks.org

Published: 21.8.24

'Osu' Book Description

In the dojo, Olive discovers her empowering strength. Outside, she faces her greatest challenge.

Sixteen-year-old Olive has always been an outsider and when her family uproots her from the bustling city to sleepy Buxton, she's sure her life is over. That is, until she stumbles upon a local karate school.

The dojo becomes Olive's sanctuary, and her natural talent catches everyone's eye—especially Boyan, the enigmatic son of her sensei. As Olive and Boyan's connection deepens, she realises he's fighting battles of his own.

But just as Olive begins to find her footing, a devastating secret threatens everything she's built. Now, she must summon every ounce of her newfound strength to fight for her place in a world that seems determined to push her out.

Osu is a gripping, empowering coming-of-age-tale of self-acceptance, resilience, and the transformative power of finding where you belong.

In this unforgettable debut, Sensei Sarhn reminds us that the stories we tell ourselves can be our greatest enemy—or our most powerful ally.

Review Copies

Contact Sensei Sarhn to advise if you want an eBook or paperback to review (please provide postal address, email and name).

Media Kit & Photographs

<https://sarhn.com.au/media-kit/>

Where to Purchase Osu

<https://sarhn.com/shop> for where to buy *Osu*

* Experience the Inspirational Journey of 'Osu': Get Your Copy Today!

* Don't miss out on Sensei Sarhn's debut novel, 'Osu,' a gripping and heartfelt story that encourages confidence, self-awareness, and resilience in young adults and teenagers.

* Purchase your copy today and join Sensei Sarhn on her mission to empower the next generation.

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