

Published September 15th, 2010

Slippery Year Author to Read at Orinda Library

By Andrea A. Firth



Melanie Gideon, author of *The Slippery Year*. Photo Jonathan Sprague

was sitting on the sidelines reluctant to be pulled in."

Today Gideon is more conscious to be present in the moment and does take more risks, although she admits that she hesitates with things that are physically adventurous. (It doesn't look like she'll be skydiving any time soon.) She acknowledges that publishing the memoir was a risk in itself, "I have had to deal with a level of vulnerability. There was no hiding once the book came out." Recently released in paperback, *The Slippery Year* has also been translated and distributed internationally. Gideon's next book, a novel for adults called *Wife 22*, has an anticipated release date in 2012.

Gideon will be doing a reading and question and answer session at the Orinda Library on September 22nd from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Reach the reporter at: andrea@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA

"The idea of slipperiness was born out of my realization that I had become an observer not a participant in my life," says Melanie Gideon, author of the 2009 best-selling memoir *The Slippery Year*, *A Meditation on Happily Ever After*.

"I had slipped out of my life, and I was on the outside looking in," says Gideon, whose book chronicles a year-long journey spent working her way back into her own life. Described as simultaneously poignant and hilarious, *The Slippery Year* is an entertaining and joyful read. "I'm not that funny or witty in person," admits Gideon, but she has found a way to translate what's amusing in the ordinary onto the page.

Gideon, who lives in the Oakland hills with her husband and 11 year-old son, had previously written two young adult fantasy novels, a genre that she loved reading in her youth. *The Slippery Year* is her first venture into nonfiction and subject matter based on her personal experiences. "I had been writing dark fantasy fiction, and this voice just emerged from me like it had been waiting for a chance to come out," says Gideon.

The memoir is a collection of her observations of the everyday life events of a mother, a father, and young son. In contrast to another popular midlife memoir of today, Gideon did not travel to exotic countries to eat delicious food, pray at ashrams, and meet mysterious men; instead she focused on the ordinary things around her. "I didn't want to write a misery memoir," says Gideon, who finds humor in situations like the carpool line at school. "The small, mundane things in life are where the gold is."

The catalyst for her story was her husband's spontaneous purchase of a used, behemoth-sized camper van. Gideon first assumed that her husband was having a midlife crisis-replacing the more predictable Porsche with a family-style truck that has tinted windows, captain's chairs, and a toilet that requires emptying by hand. "I thought he was having a midlife crisis, but I was the one having the crisis," she says, adding, "He was taking risks and enjoying it, and I