

Author Lydia Peelle writes in the past and present in *The Midnight Cool*

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The Midnight Cool rhythmically canters through the mind, impacting the surface of familiar reality upon hard footfalls of moral dilemma and vivid southern imagery.

Author and Nashville native Lydia Peelle said her first novel took much longer to hit the shelves than expected.

"After seven years, I am just thrilled it is out in the world," Peelle said.

The timing proves quite relevant as the 100th anniversary of America's entrance into the first world war arrives this April. This is where *The Midnight Cool* pulls the imagination, straight into the lives of horse-trading companions in 1916 Tennessee.

"Though it is set 100 years in the past, this is very much a story of our time," the award-winning author said. "For me, it is a current story."

The plot trails Billy, a sharp-witted Irish immigrant and Charles whose love story ensnares readers deeper into a narrative of humor, big decisions and bad luck. It is their relationship with each other and with themselves that makes each page turn, almost on its own.

"I think this is a good time to stop and reflect on war and America's history, and our roles as citizens to have a voice," Peelle said.

Peelle said the novel addresses familiar issues like xenophobia. Her endearing central characters also begin to face a conflict between personal liberties and civic responsibilities as they are pulled, by way of mule, into a volatile political landscape.

The arresting equine depictions in *The Midnight Cool* provide a deeply emotional insight into the minds of the human characters.

"Horses are huge in my imagination," Peelle said. "Human and non-human relationships can create so much magic."

Captured by a fascination with her grandfather's empty barn that in times past held many animals, Peelle began writing at a young age.

"I can safely say I have been writing all my life," she said.

Peelle hit the road four weeks ago on a multimedia book tour titled *The Midnight Cool Revue*.

The events featured a slideshow and music to accompany a reading of her novel.

Peelle's husband, Ketch Secor of Old Crow Medicine Show, provided some timely tunes during the book tour.

Though the novel is absorbing in its own right, Peelle said she hopes the multimedia experience will further engage audience members with the time period and environment of *The Midnight Cool*.



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