



Gold Medal Summer

By Donna Freitas

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Just in time for the Olympics: A gymnastics novel to flip for!

Joey Jordan loves gymnastics: the thrill of performing a backflip on the beam, the cheers of the audience when she sticks a landing. But even with all her talent and style, she's never quite made it to that gold medal stand.

Now big changes shake up Joey's life in and out of the gym. Joey wants to break out some daring new beam and floor routines--but she'll have to defy her strict coach to do it. Her best friend, Alex, is thinking about quitting gymnastics for good. And an old friend named Tanner just moved back to town, and he's suddenly gotten very, very cute. Can Joey handle all the challenges coming her way, and make her gold medal summer happen at last?

Drawing on her real-life experience as a competitive gymnast, acclaimed novelist Donna Freitas delivers both a terrific gymnastics story and a classic novel about stretching some limits, bending the rules, and finding your balance.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 5-8-Joey Jordan 13, is an elite gymnast-she spends eight hours a day at the gym, leaving little time for boys, friends outside of her teammates, and other typical teenage activities. Her older sister retired from gymnastics after winning the national title, and Joey's parents are so burned out that they don't even attend her competitions. But things are changing. Joey's best friend is thinking about giving up gymnastics. Joey is working behind the back of her ultra-strict coach with her sister and assistant coach on new routines that play more to her strengths. And she's become reacquainted with an old friend who's now incredibly "hot" and wants to be her boyfriend-but boyfriends are forbidden because they can destroy an athlete's focus. Joey has never won a gold medal at competitions, but she wonders if she can win the upcoming regional championships and then go further. Donna Freitas was a competitive gymnast, and her novel (Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine Books, 2012) convincingly presents the stress, excitement, pain, and pure joy of the sport. Jaselyn Blanchard convincingly portrays the young protagonist as well as the other characters. Although many aspects of the story are predictable, the plot and characters will appeal to the many tweens who will be particularly interested in gymnastics after the success of this year's U.S. Olympic team.-Margo Tanenbaum, Rancho Cucamonga Public Library, CA(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Review

"Freitas offers young readers plenty to relate to: living in the shadow of a perfect older sibling, battling with parents over life's choices, and handling insecurities that make it seem like failure is looming large.... [An] enjoyable story of a girl overcoming obstacles to realize her dreams, and for readers who have dreamed of trying out the balance beam or uneven bars, Joey's story will be captivating." -- *Publishers Weekly*

"Joey is likable and believable; even readers unfamiliar with gymnastics will identify with her friendship and first-relationship issues. Due to this year's London Olympics, this novel will probably have a wide audience. Freitas is a former competitive gymnast, and her descriptions of routines are taut and eye-opening. Although the hardships of the sport are not underplayed, this is a largely positive novel about hard work and self-confidence." -- *School Library Journal*

"*Gold Medal Summer*... successfully reflects the competitive gymnast's spunk, thanks to Donna Freitas's flash[y] style and relatable protagonist." -- *New York Times*

About the Author

Donna Freitas began her career as a competitive gymnast at the age of eight. She regularly medaled on beam and floor at the state level, and she competed at the Annual Regional Championships with her team until an injury led to her retirement at age fifteen. The author of three young adult novels--*The Possibility of Sainthood*, *This Gorgeous Game*, and *The Survival Kit*--and four adult nonfiction books, she lives in Brooklyn.

Jaselyn Blanchard attended New York University's Steinhardt School in Vocal Performance (Music Theatre). While at NYU, she performed in numerous Steinhardt and NYU productions, including *110 in the Shade*, *Language of Angels*, and *On My Way: A Cabaret*. She continued her education at Brown

University/Trinity Rep Consortium, where she recently completed her Masters in Fine Arts - Acting. While at Brown, she has appeared in numerous Brown/Trinity Rep productions and was featured as Nimue in Trinity Repertory Company's production of *Camelot*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Sharpton:

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