

Nicola was born and schooled in Cambridge.

She attended the Cambridge College of Arts & Technology's Art Foundation Course. As Nicola was already set on studying Printed Textiles in London, she resented every minute of the year long course. The highly respected Head of Department, Rose Rands, had a fearsome reputation amongst the students as she didn't suffer fools or time-wasters. However, Nicola won her admiration and support with her first set project, having secured interviews with contemporary textiles designers Sian Tucker and Sally Greaves-Lord.

After three years studying in London, producing wallpapers and furnishing fabrics - highlights included visiting William Morris's former print workshop at Merton Abbey Mills and Cressida Bell's studio - the students had to organise their own degree show and opted for Chelsea Town Hall on the King's Road. Because Nicola worked in black and white, her output didn't sit with the colourful work produced by her fellow students. This turned to an advantage when her tutors assigned her the prime position just inside the connecting room. The layout ensured Nicola's display - a Regency-style room setting with a modern twist - obscured all the others, thereby, visitors didn't see any colour until they continued round and the impact of her prints wasn't lost. Her tutors also nominated her to represent the college at an 'emerging talent' arts fair in Islington, where she exhibited alongside a Scottish student who was already working and showing as 'Timorous Beasties'.

Within days of leaving college, Nicola secured a position working for a London fashion company specialising in prints for UK high street shops, followed by a move to Germany, where she switched to designing prints for 'T'-shirts and swimwear, which were sold worldwide.

A victim of the far-reaching 1989 recession, she returned to Cambridge.

Living in a small studio flat with no room to swing the proverbial 'cat', let alone set up an easel, her options were limited to picking up her writing pen, instead of a paintbrush. It wasn't long before she took to bashing away on a keyboard. Evening classes and writer's groups followed.

In 2011, Nicola became a member of the Cambridge Writers and has been building steadily on her successes. Typically, she writes thrillers and fantasy but likes the challenge of entering short story competitions, which takes her out of her comfort zone.

