

Writefest

CREATIVE NONFICTION



ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

Chelsey Clammer is the author of *BodyHome* and the 2015 winner of the Red Hen Press Nonfiction Manuscript Award. Her work has appeared in *The Rumpus*, *Essay Daily*, *McSweeney's*, *The Water~Stone Review*, and *Black Warrior Review*, among many others. She is the Essays Editor for *The Nervous Breakdown*, a reader for *Creative Nonfiction* magazine, Editorial Coordinator of *World of DQ*, and Founding Editor of www.insideoutediting.com. She has an MFA in Creative Writing from the Rainier Writing Workshop. You can read more of her writing at: www.chelseyclammer.com.

NOT WHAT BUT HOW: IMPROVING ESSAYS WITH A FOCUS ON CRAFT, NOT CONTENT

You have a story to tell, but what's the best way to tell it? Should you write about your relationship with your mother in the first person point of view or second? What about tense? Past, present, future? And how about the actual structure and organization of the story? Does a clear chronology better reflect the theme than a non-linear narrative made up of short segments? With an infinite number of possibilities for how we can craft personal essays, our ability to actually make that decision is undoubtedly the eighth wonder of the world. In other words, here's Lacy Johnson from her memoir, *The Other Side*:

"There's the story I have, and the story he has, and there is a story the police have in Evidence. There's the story the journalist wrote for the paper. There's the story The Female Officer filed in her report; her story is not my story. There's the story he must have told his mother when he called her on the phone; there's the story she must have told herself."

In this workshop, we'll explore the different ways we can tell our stories, particularly through using a traditional or lyric narrative structure. We'll also look at a number of craft techniques such as juxtaposition, narrative time, rhythm, subtext, and metaphor that all influence the essay in subtle, yet very significant ways. The goal of this workshop is to experience that the way we decide to tell a story is just as important as the story itself. During each session we'll read examples of that day's theme, and discuss how these particular craft elements affect the reader's experience of an essay. Participants will also do in-class writing exercises, and provide feedback on each other's work. Prior to the start of Writefest, students should be prepared to turn in up to seven pages of their own nonfiction writing to be critiqued. Finally, we will spend some time looking at literary journals and magazines who publish and support essays that take a non-traditional approach to content and structure.

MARCH 6TH – 9TH
MON-THURS 9AM-12PM
SILVER STREET STUDIOS
STUDIO # TBA
ARTIST: TBA

BY WRITESPACE