

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

- **Fiction by published writers:** See due dates. The workshop leader will identify groups of participants who will be responsible for leading each discussion.
- **Fiction by participants:** Participants will select a date to read their work to the class. One week prior to the reading, all participants in the workshop must have a copy of the work to be read so that they will have an opportunity to analyze it. Readers can choose to : 1) make sufficient copies of their work for the workshop and give to their peers one week prior to reading; or 2) email their work to the participants one week prior to the reading.

February

2/2 - Week #1 Discussion of Instructor's Philosophy and Guiding Statements

2/9 - Week #2 *Olive Kitteridge*

2/23 - Week#3 Discussion of participant fiction

March

3/2 - Week #4 Discussion of participant fiction

3/9 - Week #5 *Anna In-Between*

3/16 - Week #6 Discussion of participant fiction

3/23 - Week #7 Discussion of participant fiction

April

4/6 - Week #8 Discussion of participant fiction

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

In this creative writing fiction workshop offered by Brownstone Books, participants will learn the craft of writing fiction with specific emphasis on character development, perspective, distance and point of view, tense, dialogue, plot, and setting. Participants will workshop their fiction and revise their work based on peer critique and the editorial guidance of the workshop leader. Upon successful completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. apply to their own writing, elements of the craft of fiction writing, such as characterization, dialogue, point of view, plot and setting;
2. compose fiction based on their own ideas;
3. revise their fiction based on constructive editorial feedback from their peers;
4. develop their own aesthetic sensibility.

Required Texts

Nunez, Elizabeth. *Anna In-Between*. Akashic Books , 2009.

Strout, Elizabeth. *Olive Kitteridge*. Random House, 2008.

Recommended Text

Gardner, John. *On Becoming a Novelist*. New York: Harper and Row, 1985.

King, Stephen. *On Writing*. Scribner, 2000.

Dates

Eight weeks, Tuesdays from 7 -9 pm, February - April 2010

Cost

\$25, includes copy of *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout

Workshop is limited to 12 participants.

See the attached application form.

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CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

WINTER 2010
FEBRUARY 2ND - APRIL 6TH

ELIZABETH NUNEZ
WORKSHOP LEADER



ABOUT THE WORKSHOP LEADER

Elizabeth Nunez is CUNY Distinguished Professor of English at Hunter College. She is the award-winning author of seven novels: *Anna In-Between*; *Prospero's Daughter*; *Grace*; *Discretion*; *Bruised Hibiscus*; *Beyond the Limbo Silence*; and *When Rocks Dance*. *Anna In-Between* was a New York Times Editors Choice and received starred reviews from *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal* and *Booklist*. *Prospero's Daughter* was also a New York Times Editors Choice as well as 2006 Best Novel of the Year by *Black Issues Book Review* and 2006 One Book, One Community selection for the Florida Center for the Literary Arts. *Bruised Hibiscus* won a 2001 American Book Award, *Discretion* was short-listed for the 2003 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award and *Beyond the Limbo Silence* won the 1999 Independent Publishers Book Award in the multicultural category. Dr. Nunez is co-editor with Jennifer Sparrow of the anthology *Stories from Blue Latitudes: Caribbean Women Writers at Home and Abroad* and author of several monographs of literary criticism, with emphasis on Caribbean literature. Her audiobooks include *Anna In-Between* (Audible Books); *Grace* and *Prospero's Daughter* (BBC/America) and *Discretion* (Recorded Books). For more information, visit Nunez's website: www.elizabethnunez.com.

Workshop Leader's Philosophy and Guiding Statements

Of all the activities we humans engage in, few bring as much joy and as many personal rewards as writing. However, one does not become a better fiction writer solely through writing alone. It is also reading fictional works, with a keen eye towards an individual writer's craft, technique, and unique stylistic flair, that one discovers, uncovers and strengthens one's own aesthetic sense. Keep in mind there is some truth in that proverbial warning to would-be writers: *Writing is 90 percent perspiration and 10 percent inspiration.*

"The desire to show people proper beliefs and attitudes is inimical to the noblest impulses of fiction. In the final analysis, what counts is not the philosophy of the writer (that will reveal itself in any case) but the fortunes of the characters, how their principles of generosity or stubborn honesty or stinginess or cowardice help them or hurt them in specific situations. What counts is the characters' story...The good young writer, the potentially successful one, knows that the first quality of good storytelling is storytelling. A profound theme is of trifling importance if the characters knocked around by it are uninteresting, and brilliant technique is a nuisance if it pointlessly prevents us from seeing the characters and what they do." **From *On Becoming a Novelist* by John Gardner**

"We are a great people. But where are the novels, the dramas, the epics about [our people]...Where are the monuments to their greatness? We need more literature and celebration of our nobility as a people...Too many of us are afraid to rock the boat." **John Oliver Killens quoted in *Liberation Memories* by Keith Gilyard, (Wayne State UP, 2005) p. 133.**

"Fiction achieves the universal through the specific. It is by telling stories that are plausible, about characters who are believable, that the writer eases us into exploring the many facets of the human condition." **Anna speaking in Nunez' novel *Anna In-Between* (2009)**

"He hates these confrontations with the blank pages, hates them to the extent of beginning to avoid them.

He cannot bear the weight of despair that descends at the end of each fruitless session, the realization that again he has failed. Better not to wound oneself in this way, over and over. One might cease to be able to respond to the call when it comes, might become too weak, too abject. What is wrong with him is that he is not prepared to fail. He wants an A or alpha or one hundred per cent for his every attempt, a big *Excellent!* in the margin. Ludicrous! Childish!" **From *Youth* by JM Coetzee.**

Q: Do you agree with Picasso's quote: "Good artists copy; great artists steal"?

A: Oh, I've stolen from the best. I've stolen from Bergman. I've stolen from Groucho, from Chaplin, from Keaton, from Martha Graham, from Felini. I mean I'm a shameless thief.

Woody Allen, *Time Magazine*, January 28, 2008

"Location is the ground conductor of all the currents of emotion and belief and more conviction that charge out from the story in its course. These charges need the warm hard earth underfoot, the light and lift of air, the stir and play of mood, the softening bath of atmosphere that give the likeness-to-life that life needs." **Eudora Welty**

"Forget inspiration. Habit is more dependable. Habit will sustain you whether you're inspired or not. Habit will help you finish and polish your stories. Inspiration won't. Habit is persistence in practice." **Octavia Butler**

"When you perform, half of the brain has to be in complete control and the other half of the brain has to be at a complete loss." **Maria Callas**

"Prose should have a flow, the forward momentum of a certain energized weight; it should feel like a voice tumbling into your ear." **John Updike**

Brownstone Books 2010 Winter Writing Workshop Application

Dates: Eight Weeks, Tuesdays from 7 -9 pm. February - April 2010

Cost: \$25, includes copy of *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout

Workshop Limit: 12 Participants

Workshop Leader: Elizabeth Nunez

Name

Address

Email Address

Contact Number(s)

1. Briefly describe your reasons for wanting to participate in this workshop: _____

2. Writing Sample: Please attach a 2-5 page writing sample. You may also email your writing sample in the form of a word document to info@brownstonebooks.com.

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JANUARY 23, 2010