
Queer Creatives FEST

October 25 - 27, 2024

An illustration of two hands, one on the left and one on the right, holding a white rectangular sign. The hands are rendered in a dark brown color with yellow cuffs. The sign is centered in the lower half of the image.

WE'RE
HERE.

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The Queer Creatives Fest is open to writers of all genres and creatives of all types who identify as members of LGBTQIA+ communities. We also welcome folks who are questioning their gender or sexual orientation and those who are in solidarity with LGBTQIA+ communities. Our intention is to center LGBTQIA+ people at the Fest.



Writing Intensives

Intensives are multi-day (two or three-day) workshops focused on genre. This year's offerings include instructors Ashley Cornelius (Poetry), Dino Enrique Piacentini (Hybrid), Sarah Gerard (Nonfiction), and Sarah Elizabeth Schantz (Fiction).

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Craft Seminars

Craft seminars are designed to help writers of all levels break through creative blocks and gain new insight into particular topics, techniques, or genres. This year's seminars will be taught by Kanika Agrawal, Sydney Fowler, Aerik Francis, Sasha Geffen, William Haywood Henderson, Alyse Knorr, Vanessa Mártir, Maura Modeya, and Cipriano Ortega.

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Lunchtime Panels and Evening Events

Stick around after class and enjoy our lunchtime panels, and evening events, including a community dinner, trivia, and more. Evening events are free to all Queer Creatives, even if you do not attend workshops during the fest. Our goal is to create and be in community together and we would love to have you join us!

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Pricing and Passes

A thorough and clear guide of the different passes offered for the fest, their prices, and what each of them will give you access to!

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Schedule At A Glance

A printable schedule so you can see your weekend at a glance.

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Please be sure to check our website for the most up-to-date information, as some classes and events may change.

WRITING INTENSIVES

Intensives are limited to 12 participants per workshop.

Three-Day Intensives Cost: \$375 Members; \$405 Non-members

Two-Day Intensives Cost: \$210 Members; \$270 Non-members

THREE DAY INTENSIVE

FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25-27

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM MDT

Magical Realism—The Queerest Genre? with Sarah Elizabeth Schantz

While Magical Realism is primarily rooted in Latin American literature, the genre has evolved and spread over time from the world of political allegory to more general use. A strange subcategory of speculative fiction, Magical Realism blends the bizarre with the banal, the fantastic with the ordinary, and the magical with the real. Magical Realism squirms away from attempts to clearly define it, yet we will attempt to explore what it is, what it isn't, and how to write it. Participants will be provided the opportunity to engage in a close study of short fiction that falls into this genre by reading a selection of stories that demonstrate both the range of the literary tradition and the changes it has undergone. There will be a further emphasis on how this genre has been adapted by contemporary writers in the United States as a means for expressing the marginalized experience, especially the queer identity.

TWO DAY INTENSIVES

SATURDAY THROUGH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26-27

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM MDT

The Queer Agenda with Ashley Cornelius

In this poetry intensive, we'll reclaim the agenda for what it is, a declaration of queer joy, queer love, and queer life. The series will focus on identifying key elements of each person's own "queer agenda," which we will use to create a list poem to anchor the rest of the sessions. We'll use the list of elements on each person's queer agenda to create multiple poems, diving deeper into each item. We'll work to flush out what experiences of queerness are vital to each person's existence as a joyous being and how to tell a compelling story through metaphor, vivid imagery, and memory. At the end of the workshop participants will come away with at least four new poems and the start of a chapbook. In addition to writing exercises, there will be opportunities for sharing, discussion, feedback, and practice in performing poetry. Whether you are an experienced poet or new to writing, join us as we celebrate queer joy through the power of poetry.

WRITING INTENSIVES

TWO DAY INTENSIVES

SATURDAY THROUGH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26-27
9:00 AM to 12:00 PM MDT

Writing Our Pasts/Presents/Futures with Dino Enrique Piacentini

The world of your characters—whether real or fictional—is built on the turf of the past. Yet the historical record pretty much ignores the lives and stories of queer people. Even when “official” history deigns to consider us, the story is skimpy at best, and usually shaded by the available sources (which tend to condemn our very existence). So how do we recover and/or imagine our past, and how do we write about it in a way that feels authentic and lived? And if we are writing stories set in the present or the future, what are some ways in which we can enrich those stories with a sense of what has come before them? In this two-day seminar, we’ll try to answer these questions. We’ll come up with and consider ways to retrieve our queer pasts. We’ll examine how those pasts might encroach upon our characters’ (and our own) presents and futures. And we’ll consider how these questions might impact our choices around character, POV, milieu, motif, and plot. This seminar is designed for all levels of prose writers (and poets may also find it useful!). Come prepared to read, write, and discuss.

Stories of Witness with Sarah Gerard

More than ever, at this urgent historical moment, our lives as queer people depend upon subverting propaganda, refusing authoritarianism, and speaking truth to power. In this two-day nonfiction storytelling intensive, we will practice harnessing our first-person points-of-view as testimony, declaration, and witness, investigating our personal histories and projecting our experiences onto the larger screen of national and global politics. Each day, we’ll draw inspiration from the writings of other queer philosophers and activists, and use a variety of writing prompts to hone our own calls to action, proving that authenticity is power, and vulnerability is strength. Come prepared to research and write in class. There will be time to share and receive first-blush feedback from the group. Writers will leave this intensive with passages to build into a personal essay or memoir.



CRAFT SEMINARS

CRAFT SEMINARS CAN ACCOMMODATE 10 TO 20 PARTICIPANTS.
COST: \$75 MEMBERS; \$85 NON-MEMBERS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

1:30-3:30 PM

Queer Character Development with Cipriano Ortega

Bring to life your beautiful, complex queer story through character exploration. Participants will develop a queer character and place them into a dramatic short scene. This seminar aims to find ways to make our queer voices/stories take flight and find their place on the stage.

Queer Images for Our Futures with Kanika Agrawal

Writer and critic Samuel R. Delany has emphasized that speculative literature gives us images not of but for our futures; its power lies not in prediction but in manifestation. Spec-lit is often dismissed as formulaic or escapist, but as we face imminent existential threats, we can learn a great deal from its most radical visions and thought experiments. In this generative seminar, we will discuss the pleasures and challenges of queer speculative writing; explore how to center historically marginalized images and imaginations; and play with exercises that dare and encourage us to write toward a multiplicity of inclusive futures.

Poetics of Disruption with Maura Modeya

What are the poetics of disruption? What is guerilla poetry? How can guerilla poetry act as a disruption of violence, be it external (i.e., state/systemic) or internal (i.e., personal)? In this generative writing seminar, we will engage with writing prompts, crucial texts, and examples of guerilla poetry as a way of examining our relationships with disruption in language and our environments. After encountering work from Andrea Abi-Karam, June Jordan, José Esteban Muñoz, and Hakim Bey, we'll sort ourselves into writing and find ways the poems disrupt systems and emphasize non-transactional language. Participants will leave with 3 pages of writing and a packet of poems to continue their studies.



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COST: \$75 MEMBERS; \$85 NON-MEMBERS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

1:30-3:30 PM

Writing Queer Love with Alyse Knorr

The story of queer love literature is joyful, tragic, liberating, and always complex. This course will read a sampling of contemporary queer writers on erotic/romantic love as we seek to understand what is unique about queer literature of love. The course will offer space for discussion, and for you to craft love literature of your own in response--no matter your level of experience or the genre in which you write.

The Interesting Stuff—The Obsessions That Make Your Writing Unique with William Haywood Henderson

Denis Johnson said, “The stories of the fallen world lay inside us. That’s the interesting stuff.” At our best, we all write about that slice of experience and knowledge that haunts and obsesses us. Does it have to be dark or fallen? No. But it has to be true to the deepest corners of your consciousness. In this class, we’ll look at what you write about and why. And we’ll find the richest avenues for you to pursue, to set you off from all those other writers (and there are a few).



We're New Here—Writing Your Coming Out Later Story with Vanessa Mártir

We’ve read and heard the often painful stories of young people coming out to family and friends, but what about those of us who came out later, perhaps in mid-life, after being married, having kids, believing for decades that we were one thing only to discover later that we are something else. This generative class is for us with more layered, complicated stories. In this class, we’ll read stories similar to ours, and we’ll discuss and write about why we waited, the stories we internalized that affected our decisions, and how we’re expressing and navigating our authentic selves now.

CRAFT SEMINARS

CRAFT SEMINARS CAN ACCOMMODATE 10 TO 20 PARTICIPANTS.
COST: \$75 MEMBERS; \$85 NON-MEMBERS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

1:30-3:30 PM

Body Poetics with Aerik Francis

This generative writing workshop is an invitation to check in with our bodies and consider our bodies alongside our writing. The workshop will begin with an invitation to free-write, stretch, and engage in a breathwork session to get us physically and mentally in touch with our bodies. We will then spend the workshop discussing poetry related to themes on body poetics. Loosely defined, “body poetics” is poetry explicitly concerned with bodily existence, features, or the whole of the body. These poems ask questions of the body and its relationship to the self, to other beings with bodies, to places and situations. Often, the central question is simply where is the body? Where is the body right now? Participants will generate new work and share it within our collective space. We’ll draw inspiration from work by authors like Audre Lorde, Lucille Clifton, Taylor Johnson, Jasmine Reid, torrin a greathouse, Aracelis Girmay, Natalie Diaz, and Yesenia Montilla. We recognize the diversity of bodies in terms of ability, age, race, gender, class, size, shape, etc. All bodies are welcome in the space.

Awakening Ghosts—Drawing Queer Histories into the Present with Sasha Geffen

Queerness is ancient, but so much of the language that informs contemporary queer identity is brand new on a historical scale. As writers, how do we engage with the past in a way that honors its specificity while excavating its living resonance in the present? In this seminar, we’ll call on stories of historical figures and communities whose echoes speak to queer life here and now. We’ll also look to LGBTQ+ authors who have grappled with the prismatic dance between past and present. Writers will have the chance to start new pieces through generative exercises and share drafts with peers.

Writing Utopia with Sydney Fowler

In this generative workshop open to all genres, we will discuss two connected short stories set in a utopia: "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" by Ursula K. Le Guin and "The Ones Who Stay and Fight" by N.K. Jemisin. Then, we will write reflections on joy, community, and inclusive world-building using prompts designed to inspire poetry, creative nonfiction essays, fiction, visual or hybrid pieces. By the end of the workshop, everyone will leave with the foundations of a new piece of writing or artwork. Art supplies will be provided, and participants will read stories in advance.

READINGS & EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

12:30-1:30 PM

"I want to break free"—Queer Storytelling in Music

Music has always been one of the most popular ways for humans to express their emotions and share life experiences. So how can we use music to express our Queer selves and enjoy the catharsis of musically breaking free of societal demands and expectations? Join us for a lunchtime panel at this year's Queer Creatives Fest where LGBTQIA+ faculty and local artists will discuss why music is important to them, what the art form can teach us about identity, and how they use music and writing to share their Queer identities. Panelists will include: Lauren Dennis, Sasha Geffen, and Cipriano Ortega.

3:30-5:30 PM

Meow Wolf Artist Talk

Join us for an illuminating panel featuring trailblazing Queer artists from Meow Wolf Denver. Delve into their creative journeys and explore how their identities and experiences shape their work. From pushing boundaries in art and culture to redefining narratives, these artists will share personal stories, discuss the intersection of Queerness and art, and offer insights into their creative processes.

Whether you're a writer, a fellow artist, or simply curious about the dynamic world of immersive art, this panel promises to be a celebration of Queer expression in the arts. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with visionary artists and explore the limitless possibilities of artistic expression.



5:30-7:30 PM

Queer Art Market and DJ Set

Come one and all—kick off the start of this year's Queer Creatives Fest with a celebration of community and all the art we make as Queer writers and artists! This event will feature local LGBTQIA+ vendors who will have a variety of items available for purchase, and a vinyl DJ set brought to you by the trio, sunhigh. The entire Lighthouse community is encouraged to attend!

READINGS & EVENTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

12:30-1:30 PM

The Top 10 Places to Submit Queer Work

Do you have a piece that you've been nourishing to life and polishing to perfection? Feeling ready to submit that piece to a journal or publication that supports LGBTQIA+ writers? Or maybe you're just curious and want to learn more about where you can submit Queer work! Join us for a panel featuring Lighthouse instructors who will discuss the top 10 places to submit queer work along with what the process looks like and best tips and tricks for submitting. Panelists will include: Nini Berndt, Dino Enrique Piacentini, Alyse Knorr and Annie Krabbenschmidt.

3:30-5:30 PM

Community Dinner

After a full day of classes and community, join us for a community dinner! Registering for this event will get you one dinner ticket. Please register for each person you plan to bring so that we order enough food.

The registration fee for this event helps us cover catering costs. If this fee will prevent you from being able to attend the Community Dinner, please complete our writership tuition assistance form or email our Community Engagement Program Manager, Marissa Morrow at marissa@lighthousewriters.org. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

5:30-7:30 PM

Trivia and Board Game Night

Join us for a casual evening of trivia and community building! [Join our Queer Creatives group on Geneva](#) if you'd like to connect with other Queer Creatives members who might be attending this event so you can build your trivia team. You're also welcome to grab a group and play some board games. BYOBG (Bring Your Own Board Game) or feel free to use one of ours.



READINGS & EVENTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

12:30-1:30 PM

Queer Creatives Fest: Queen City—A Queer History of Denver

A Queer History of Denver

Denver Pride turned 50 this year! Join us as we celebrate Denver's LGBTQIA+ history with a talk from Queer Creatives member and author of “LGBTQ Denver”, Phil Nash. Phil will cover some of Denver's most significant moments in Queer history and share what his process was like on his journey to write “LGBTQ Denver”. Copies of “LGBTQ Denver” will be available for purchase.

3:30-5:30 PM

Closing Party

Wrap up the end of this year's Queer Creatives Fest at our closing party! This party will feature free headshots (one 5-minute session per person at Lighthouse) by Marissa Morrow, tarot readings with Sydney Fowler, and other activities. This is a great opportunity to celebrate all the work you've created and connections you've made during this year's Fest! Light appetizers and drinks will be provided.



SEE YOU SOON!

Pricing & Passes

GOLD PASS

COST: MEMBERS \$625; NON-MEMBERS \$715

Includes a three-day intensive, three craft seminars, three lunchtime panels, and a community dinner ticket

SILVER PASS

COST: MEMBERS \$385; NON-MEMBERS \$485

Includes a two-day intensive, two craft seminars, two lunchtime panels, and a community dinner ticket

BRONZE PASS

COST: MEMBERS \$285; NON-MEMBERS \$350

Includes three craft seminars, three lunchtime panels, and a community dinner ticket.

PLATINUM PASS

COST: MEMBERS \$270; NON-MEMBERS \$325

Includes three craft seminars, and three lunchtime panels.

À LA CARTE

(MEMBER RATE/NON-MEMBER RATE)

Three-Day Intensive — \$375/\$405

Two-Day Intensive — \$210/\$270

Craft Seminars — \$75/\$85

CANCELLATION POLICY

If you need to withdraw from an intensive or craft seminar for any reason, the following refund schedule applies:

- Before September 1: A cancellation fee of 10% of the total workshop cost applies.
- September 1 and after: 35% cancellation fee applies.
- 48 hours or less before the start of Queer Creatives Fest: No refund is available.

Registrations for craft seminars and intensives are nontransferable, and purchases of retreat passes, are non-refundable and non-transferable.

NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?

Simply put, we want you here. If you need financial assistance, including payment plan options, please apply at www.lighthousewriters.org/content/writership-tuition-assistance.

BECOME A MEMBER

Memberships start at \$60/year and include discounts on workshops, access to Member Writing Hours and special events, and more! Visit www.lighthousewriters.org/membership to learn more.

QUEER CREATIVES FEST



Friday,
October 25

Saturday,
October 26

Sunday,
October 27

INTENSIVES

9:00 AM
to
12:00 PM

MAGICAL REALISM—THE QUEEREST
GENRE?
with Sarah Elizabeth Schantz — RM 204

MAGICAL REALISM—THE QUEEREST
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with Sarah Elizabeth Schantz — RM 204

MAGICAL REALISM—THE QUEEREST
GENRE?
with Sarah Elizabeth Schantz — RM 204

THE QUEER AGENDA
with Ashley Cornelius — Zoom

THE QUEER AGENDA
with Ashley Cornelius — Zoom

WRITING OUR
PASTS/PRESENTS/FUTURES
with Dino Enrique Piacentini — RM 216

WRITING OUR
PASTS/PRESENTS/FUTURES
with Dino Enrique Piacentini — RM 216

STORIES OF WITNESS
with Sarah Gerard — RM 315

STORIES OF WITNESS
with Sarah Gerard — RM 315

BUSINESS PANELS

12:30 PM
to
1:30 PM

QUEER STORYTELLING IN MUSIC
Beacon Hall

THE TOP 10 PLACES TO SUBMIT
QUEER WORK
Beacon Hall

QUEEN CITY—A QUEER HISTORY
OF DENVER
Beacon Hall

CRAFT SEMINARS

1:30 PM
to
3:30 PM

QUEER CHARACTER
DEVELOPMENT
with Cipriano Ortega — RM 204

WRITING QUEER LOVE
with Alyse Knorr — RM 204

WRITING UTOPIA
with Sydney Fowler — Zoom

POETICS OF DISRUPTION
with Maura Modeya — Zoom

WE'RE NEW HERE—WRITING
YOUR COMING OUT LATER STORY
with Vanessa Mártir — Zoom

AWAKENING GHOSTS—DRAWING QUEER
HISTORIES INTO THE PRESENT
with Sasha Geffen — RM 204

QUEER IMAGES FOR OUR FUTURES
with Kanika Agrawal — RM 216

THE INTERESTING STUFF—THE OBSESSIONS
THAT MAKE YOUR WRITING UNIQUE
with William Haywood Henderson — RM 216

BODY POETICS
with Aerik Francis — RM 216

EVENTS

3:30 PM
to
5:30 PM

MEOW WOLF ARTIST TALK
Beacon Hall

COMMUNITY DINNER
Beacon Hall

CLOSING PARTY
Beacon Hall

5:30 PM
to
7:30 PM

QUEER ART MARKET AND DJ SET
Beacon Hall

TRIVIA AND BOARD GAME NIGHT
Beacon Hall