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Come in...and be captivated...

Writers' Craft Box

What this section is intended to do:
Give writers suggested hints, resources, and advice.

How to use: Pick and choose what you feel is most helpful and derive inspiration from it- most importantly, **HAVE FUN!**

What a Writers' Craft Box is: Say you're doing an art project and you want to spice it up a bit. You reach into a seemingly bottomless box full of colorful art/craft supplies and choose only the things that speak to you. You take only what you need to feel that you've fully expressed yourself. Then, you go about doing your individual project adding just the right amount of everything you've chosen until you reach a product that suits you completely. So, this is on that concept. Reach in, find the things that inspire you, use the tools



"Arts and Crafts" N.M.B Copyright 2008

that get your writing going and see it as fulfilling your self-expression as opposed to following rules.

Writing is art and art is supposed to be fun, relaxing, healing and nurturing. It's all work and it's all play at the same time. A Writers' Craft Box is whatever your imagination needs it to be- a lifeboat, the spark of an idea, a strike of metaphorical lightning, a reminder, or simply the recommendation of a good book. Feel free to sit back and break out the crayons. Coloring outside the lines is heartily encouraged.



"Blue Autumn" by C. Michelle Olson; <https://www.instagram.com/carlamolson7/>

About this image: "This photo is a reminder to me that autumn comes as a welcomed seasonal change. Just like seasons change, we as individuals must change in great ways. At any time, anyone can let go of anything that no longer serves beneficially and can embrace new opportunities for change. Change is not always easy but necessary. Why not make it grand? Allow change for the better throughout every season." —C. Michelle Olson

Writers' Challenge!

For this autumn-winter edition of Writers' Challenge, we enlisted the help of regular contributor and past Challenge entrant, Mary K. O'Melveny. When first discussing the prospect of collaboration on the new Challenge, we described what we were seeing in terms of the themes echoed in a number of submissions for the autumn-winter issue: beauty amidst adversity, loss, saving graces, and deep, difficult emotions. The pieces were a mix of dark and light, suiting the autumn season which has a number of such juxtapositions (the gorgeous foliage though the trees and vegetation are withering into slumber for the season, the approach of the holidays with their warmth, interior illumination, and mirth despite the outer cold and fading of daylight to darkness). In literature and poetry, autumn can represent truth, change in the form of beginnings or endings, and can possess bittersweet qualities.

Below, you will see two options for the Challenge featuring Ms. O'Melveny's input as well as our writing prompt instructions.

OPTION 1:

M: "Before being invited to collaborate on the concept of the new Writers' Challenge, I had been looking at works by Van Gogh who did many beautiful paintings of autumn scenes (such as *Autumn Landscape at Dusk*, *Willows at Sunset*, *Fall of Leaves* or *Falling Autumn Leaves*, *Lane with Poplars near Nuenen* or *Poplars near Nuenen*—even his last dark *Wheatfield with Crows*) which capture both the dramatic beauty of the changing seasons and the foreboding sense of loss that inevitably lies ahead. One can imagine standing on these roads or in these lanes or fields and feeling time shift under your feet. As much as we want to feel buoyed by nature's glorious colors—to stay and be mesmerized by the glorious light—we are always conscious that change is inevitable."

Using one of Van Gogh's paintings or the photograph by C. Michelle Olson featured above as visual inspiration, write a poem, flash fiction short, or brief personal essay to explore various personal interpretations of change, the specific seasonal themes of autumnal change, or balances of beauty and darkness.

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/vincent-van-gogh/autumn-landscape-at-dusk-1885>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falling_Autumn_Leaves

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/claude-monet/willows-at-sunset>

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/vincent-van-gogh/lane-with-poplars-near-nuenen-1885>

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/vincent-van-gogh/wheatfield-with-crows-1890>

OPTION 2:

A different take on "change."

M: "In these times of seemingly unending catastrophic events—hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and such—it feels reasonable to believe that 'mother nature' is trying to get us to pay attention to the obvious consequences of climate change. We cannot simply keep ignoring the state of the natural world. Somehow, it seems to me that we should be thinking not solely about the contradictions that come with changing seasons but also about what season of life our planet may be in. So perhaps there is some way to incorporate recent climatic events into writings about fall transformations."

Pen a poem, a flash fiction short, or brief personal essay responding to natural disasters of 2017 or express your thoughts regarding the topic of climate change.

For both options, poems should not exceed 30 lines, and works of fiction and non-fiction should not exceed 1,000 words.

Please send entries to: contests (at) thewriteplaceatthewritetime.org

Deadline: November 20th

The prize will be a donation from us at *WPWT* in the winner's name to hurricane relief efforts. Details will be shared via social media. The winner's work will be published in our winter-spring issue. Work must be original and previously unpublished.



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