***Debka Colson***

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***Qualifications Summary***

* Innovative teacher of writing (essays, fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction) and literature.
* Published author: fiction, poetry, essays and creative nonfiction.
* Terminal degree in creative writing. Second terminal degree in architecture.
* Extensive experience working with community groups and nonprofit organizations in creative writing and communications, program planning, administration and evaluation.

***Teaching Experience***

**Teaching Artist for Creative Writing (fiction, poetry and memoir) Workshop for Adults**

Funded by Lifetime Arts, a nonprofit organization that exists at the intersection of aging and the arts. See: http://lifetimearts.wordpress.com/2013/10/15/newrosterartistsfall2013/

*South End Branch Library of Boston (BPL) Feb.-April 2013*

*West End Branch Library of Boston (BPL) Sept.-Nov. 2015*

**Teaching Artist for a Flash Fiction Workshop for Teens & Adults**

Funded by Friends of the Jamaica Plain Branch Library and the Boston Cultural Council, these workshops were part of JP Reads, an annual community-wide literary celebration.

*Jamaica Plain Branch Library of Boston (BPL) Sept. 2013 & March 2015*

**Instructor of Short Fiction & Creative Writing for Urban Scholars**

*University of Massachusetts, Boston Jan.-May 2014*

The Urban Scholars program offers academically talented urban students the skills necessary for achievement at the highest level of their potential. In this advanced after-school class, high school students focused on short story literature and creative writing.

**Instructor of Fiction Writing Workshop**

*Brookline Adult & Community Education Jan.-March. 2014*

**Professor of Creative Writing: Introduction to Fiction (2 sections) for Undergraduates**

*Writing, Literature & Publishing Dept., Emerson College, Boston, MA Jan. 2013-May 2013*

**Teacher of High School Elective in Poetry & Short Fiction: “Writing in the World.”**

*Meridian Academy, Brookline, MA Jan.- May 2012*

**Instructor of Graduate Student Seminar: “Stalking the Wily Insidiae—A Revision Toolkit for When Your Short Story Has No Plot.”**

*Lesley University, Cambridge, MA Jan. 2009*

**Teacher’s Assistant for Undergraduate Seminar: “Writing and the Literary Arts—Literature of Love, Eros, and Desire.”**

*Lesley University, Cambridge, MA Jan.-May 2008*

***Recent Professional Experience***

**Administrator**

*The Writers’ Room of Boston April 2014-present*

Responsible for coordinating events, member and board communications, fundraising, grant research and writing, outreach, and general administration for The Writers’ Room of Boston, a non-profit providing affordable, 24/7 work space for serious writers.

**Writing Consultant** *Sept. 2012-present*

Provide professional services as a writer, translator (Spanish to English) and writing coach to individuals and nonprofit organizations. Recent work includes:

* Development of a proposal for funders describing The Hunger Project’s programs with indigenous women and low-income communities in rural Mexico.
* Editorial and coaching services for a bodywork practitioner working on a series of essays focused on the interrelationship between body alignment and well-being.
* Flash Fiction Contest Coordinator for JP Reads, a literary celebration in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston that engages the local community in reading a single book through discussions and local events, an author reading and talk. Recent authors include Madeline Miller (*The Song of Achilles)* and Junot Díaz (*Drown)*.

**Major Donor Officer**

*American Friends Service Committee, Cambridge, MA 2008-August 2012*

Presented program initiatives to large donors, foundations and the public through written communications, grant proposals, events and personal visits.

**Program Director**

*American Friends Service Committee, Cambridge, MA 1994-2007*

Supervised program staff throughout New England. Responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of focused program plans with measurable goals and achievable budgets tied to clear fundraising strategies. Related accomplishments include the creation and supervision of a community arts program for low-income youth in Boston. The program involved hundreds of young people ages 15 to 30 in socially conscious performance art, including poetry and spoken word, as a venue to explore such critical issues as urban violence, sexism, homophobia, racial profiling, and economic disparity. Also supervised the Help Increase the Peace Project, a youth leadership and alternatives to violence program, in school and community settings with a special focus on immigrant youth in western MA and indigenous youth in Maine.

***Education***

**M.F.A. in Creative Writing**, Fiction *Lesley University, Cambridge, MA*

**Certificate in Spanish & Mexican Cultural Studies** *UNAM, Mexico City, Mexico*

**M.A. in Architecture**, Social & Cultural Issues in Design *University of California, Berkeley, CA*

**B.A. in Human Ecology**, Environmental Design *College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, ME*

***Contests and Awards***

* Third Place Award for 2015 Folio Literary Magazine Fiction Contest.
* Fiction Finalist for the 5th Annual Normal Prize (2014).
* Scholarship awarded in 2014 for a 2015 residency at the Vermont Studio Center.
* Short List for the anthology *Out of the Many: Multiplicity & Divisions in America Today.*
* Scholarship awarded for the 2014 Writers in Paradise writers’ conference at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida.
* 2013 Ivan Gold Fellow at the Writers’ Room of Boston.
* Finalist for the 2013 Nancy D. Hargrove Editor’s Prize for Fiction from *Jabberwock Review.*
* Short List for Finalists for Novel-in-Progress in the 2013 Faulkner-Wisdom Creative Writing Competition.
* Honorable Mention for short fiction in *Open to Interpretation: Fading Light,*an anthology and juried book competition of photography, poetry & prose, 2013.
* Short List for 2013 *Arcadia* Short Story Contest
* New England Writers’ Network (NEWN) 2005 Flash Fiction Contest Winner

***Partial List of Publications***

* “A Brush with the Past.” *GAMBAZine,* Issue 4, June 2015. *(creative nonfiction)*
* “New Shoes.” *Folio Literary Magazine,* Volume 30, Issue 1, 2015. *(fiction)*
* "One Coffee to Go." *GAMBA Zine,* Issue 3, February 2, 2015. (fiction)
* "Namaste." *Passing Through Journal*, Issue 1, January 2015. (creative nonfiction)
* “A Distant Landscape.” *Slab Literary Magazine,* Issue 9, Spring 2014. *(microfiction)*
* “Healing in Oaxaca.” *Sol: English Writing in Mexico,* October 2013. *(fiction)*
* “Mariachis of Garibaldi.” *Construction Lit Magazine*, July 12, 2013. *(poetry)*
* “Stew and Roses” *(fiction)* and “These Skies” *(poetry)* appeared in *Open to Interpretation: Fading Light,* an international juried book competition of photography, poetry & prose published by Taylor & O’Neill, 2013.
* “Healing in Oaxaca.” *Roar: A Journal of Literary Arts by Women*, Issue 2, Summer 2012. *(fiction)*
* “Following After Williams’ Nantucket” in *Poetry Cram: The Ultimate Chicago Poetry Anthology,* CJ Laity, Editor, June 2, 2012. *(poetry)*
* “Raul Matta: Leading by Example.” *Quaker Action,* Volume 92 Number 2, Summer 2011. *(nonfiction)*
* “Following After Williams’ Nantucket.” *Poetry Cram 11=Poetry²*, ChicagoPoetry.com Press, April 2011. *(poetry)*
* “Giving Back: Robert Naka.” *Quaker Action*, Volume 92 Number 1, Spring 2011. *(nonfiction)*
* “Mature Fruit.” *North American Review*, Volume 291 Numbers 3-4, May-August 2006. *(poetry)*
* “Hospitality.” *NEWN*, Volume 12 Number 1, Summer 2005. (Winner of 2005 Flash Fiction Award). *(fiction)*
* “Cutting Like a Knife.” *NEWN*, Volume 12 Number 1, Summer 2005. *(fiction)*
* “Tibet: The Untold Story of Chinese Genocide.” *The Maine Progressive*, March 1990. *(nonfiction)*