

SHORT STORY AS LABORATORY (Cara Blue Adams, Ramona Ausubel, Marie-Helene Bertino, Gwen Kirby, Sequoia Nagamatsu)

Cara Blue Adams is the author of *You Never Get It Back*, winner of the John Simmons Short Fiction Award, judged by Brandon Taylor. Her award-winning fiction appears in *Granta*, the *Kenyon Review*, *American Short Fiction*, and elsewhere. She is an associate professor at Seton Hall University.

Ramona Ausubel is the author of *Awayland*, *Sons and Daughters of Ease and Plenty*, *A Guide to Being Born*, and the PEN America award-winning novel *No One Is Here Except All of Us*. Her work has been published in the *New Yorker* and elsewhere. She teaches in the MFA program at Colorado State University.

Marie-Helene Bertino is the author of *Parakeet*, *Safe as Houses*, and *2 A.M. at The Cat's Pajamas*. Honors include the O. Henry Award, the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Fellowship, and the Pushcart Prize. Her alien opus novel *Beautyland* is forthcoming from FSG. She teaches at NYU and The New School.

Gwen E. Kirby is the author of the debut collection *Shit Cassandra Saw* and her stories have appeared in *One Story*, *Guernica*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. She has an MFA from Johns Hopkins University and a PhD from the University of Cincinnati. Currently, she is the Associate Director of Programs and Finance for the Sewanee Writers' Conference.

Sequoia Nagamatsu is the author of the novel *How High We Go in the Dark*, and the story collection *Where We Go When All We Were Is Gone*. He is an associate professor of creative writing at St. Olaf College.

OUTLINE

Moderator introduces panel topic and panelists.

Each panelist speaks for roughly 3-5 minutes about experimentation in their own short stories, addressing the following topics: how do you approach generating a short story? In what way does the form of the short story allow you to experiment? What might a story facilitate that a longer work, like a novel, would make more difficult?

Moderator asks questions:

1. What is one of the most successful (or surprising) experiments that you've tried in a story?
2. Is there a time that you tried something in a short story that didn't work? What did this failure teach you, or where did it lead?
3. What contemporary story writers do you most admire for their own experimentation?
4. Could you recommend an exercise to prompt experimentation that those in the audience could try themselves?

Panelists do Q&A with audience.