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Whet Appetites: Sexy Storytelling

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Revealing and addressing erotic desires via storytelling creates a powerful lens through which we can view the world. Presented by Whet Productions each month at The Altamont Theatre, “Whet Appetites: Sexy Storytelling” offers an evening of original work by local performers. The next event, set for Thursday, February 18, will focus on erotic relationships and celebrate love, lust, and libido.

“These stories address desires we all have that never get heard, let alone met,” says Judy Calabrese, co-curator with Chris Medrano and Lockie Hunter. “People come to our stage and perform for many reasons: as catharsis, to release things once buried deep, to celebrate, to embrace parts of themselves, to share their joy with others.” She adds, “When you tell your story or hear someone else’s, there is a sense of relief. You know you are not alone.”

The process of writing your own story can also be transformational. "We can't create these stories without digging down deep into ourselves to discover what's most alive for us in the sexual," says Judy.

This spring, Whet Productions will launch a four-week workshop titled "Your Sexy Self: Your Sexy Story" that will focus on telling your story for the stage.

We asked Lockie and Judy for some tips on how to get started in writing sexy stories. Judy shares, "I tell people to start with something that bothers them, or something they are curious about that won't leave them alone ... It can be painful or pleasurable, but the most important thing is that you don't fully understand it. Writing is about exploration."

A writer, editor, and teacher, Lockie says she fell in love with narrative storytelling in graduate school. Whether the stories are emotionally difficult or erotically charged, she gives the following advice to her students:

1. Never censor yourself before you begin. Ignore the little angel on the shoulder saying, "You can't write that!"
2. Write the story as if you were telling it to someone. Keep a voice recorder handy and speak into the device in a natural speaking tone and then transcribe it.
3. Sometimes people worry about the end audience. Will my mother read this? What would my partner think? Your job is to record your story to the best of your ability, and if it's true and it resonates with you, that's all that matters. You can decide if you want to publish it later.
4. Write when the muse strikes! Always keep a notepad or a recorder nearby (even by your bedside), and when your story comes bubbling out, write it down.
5. Don't start editing in the middle of your work. Wait until your piece is complete.
6. Add sensory details that are unique to avoid trite or overworked language.
7. Enjoy the process. What a gift it is to be able to record our extraordinary realities, our shared narratives!