

**Center for the Writing Arts**  
**Course Application**

*All applications are confidential and processed according to the University's Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.*

The course to which you are applying will be offered only in Spring Quarter 2015:

**301-0 The Art of Fiction**

**Maaza Mengiste      Monday and Wednesday 2:00-3:20 pm**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School and Class Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Area(s) of General Writing Interest (poetry, fiction, nonfiction, playwriting): \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you previously applied to a CWA course? Did you enroll? Please list the course(s) here: \_\_\_\_\_

**Writing Prerequisite:** One writing-intensive course taken at Northwestern. This course must have an announced emphasis on writing (i.e. courses in writing poetry, fiction, or essay; a basic writing course in Medill; a screenwriting course in SoC). Please list the course(s) here: \_\_\_\_\_

**Writing Sample:** Please attach a fiction writing sample 8-10 pages long, printed out double-spaced.

**Personal Statement:** Please describe, in no more than 400 words (a) what you hope to learn by taking this course, and (b) what you will bring as a participant to the class.

**Applications can be found online at: [www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/](http://www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/)**

Please return completed application, writing sample and personal statement to:

**Center for the Writing Arts**

**email: [words@northwestern.edu](mailto:words@northwestern.edu)**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS Monday, February 16, 2015 by 10 am**

*ACCEPTED APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY E-MAIL*

Survey question (please circle one)

How did you learn about this class?

- a) Ad in Daily Northwestern
- b) Positive feedback from a student who already took one of our classes.
- c) Recommendation from your advisor.
- d) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**“THE ART OF FICTION”**  
with Visiting Writer in Residence Spring Quarter 2015  
**MAAZA MENGISTE**  
Monday and Wednesday 2:00-3:20 pm



**Maaza Mengiste** is a Fulbright Scholar and the award-winning author of *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, selected by the *Guardian* as one of the 10 best contemporary African books. Her fiction and nonfiction writing can be found in the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, BBC Radio 4, *Granta*, and *Lettre Internationale*, among other places. Her second novel, *The Shadow King*, is forthcoming. Mengiste writes fiction and nonfiction dealing with migration, the Ethiopian revolution, and the plight of sub-Saharan immigrants arriving in Europe. She has completed a documentary project, *GIRL RISING*, with 10x10 Films, that focuses on girls' education globally and features the voices of several noted actors, including Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Alicia Keys, and Cate Blanchett.

**MAAZA MENGISTE**

This course is open only to undergraduates and only by application.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

We all exist in some form of conflict with another force. We practice large and small acts of resistance daily. Those acts lead to complex situations we sometimes never intended, and things can get messy. Why should the stories and characters we write be any less complicated? This is a course on plot and character development. We will read stories that move beyond the simple paradigm of good vs. bad. We will discuss the differences between “likeable” and “realistic” characters. We will also look at some of the other most pertinent aspects of fiction: pacing, POV, voice, and apply lessons learned to the stories we write for class. There will be regular writing assignments, including revision. With each draft, we will ask each other what it is about *this* story that demanded writing? What is at stake? Why *this* story, now? Readings from course packet will include Sherman Alexie, Thom Jones, Danzy Senna, Hassan Blasim, Nam Le, Uwem Akpan, among others.

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