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Literary Arts Patron- Anita Solick Oswald



Anita Solick Oswald is a Chicago native. She's written a collection of essays, *West Side Girl* (working title), that are written from the point of view of her younger self and chronicle the colorful, diverse and oftentimes unpredictably eccentric characters and events that populated Chicago's West Side neighborhood during the 50s & 60s.

Her essays have appeared in *The Write Place At the Write Time*, *The Faircloth Literary Review*, Fullosia Press, *The Fat City Review* and *Avalon Literary Review*.

She studied journalism at Marquette University, earned her B.A. in Economics from the University of California at Los Angeles and her M.S. in Management and Organization from the University of Colorado.

She is a founding member of Boulder Writing Studio, where she has been generating and editing essays over the past 2 years.

Anita lives in Boulder, Colorado, with her husband, Ralph, and her cats, Figaro and Clio.

1) What led to your decision to become a writer? How has it affected your life?

I would say that the encouragement of my family sparked my decision to become a writer. I told them stories about growing up in Chicago in the apartment above my family's Bohemian restaurant, and they kept asking me to share them. Eventually, I wrote one and the floodgates opened.

Through my stories, I've connected with so many wonderful writers and old friends. Many people from Chicago follow my essays now. It's been a way for me to celebrate a great time and place and all people who were part of the diversity. For me, it will never be gone. And, most importantly, my essays have brought my readers joy.

2) Beyond the written word, what other creative mediums inspire you and why?

I love all forms of creative media, but I have to confess to being unable to resist a painting I like. I saw a photograph once of Gertrude Stein's salon in Paris – ceiling to floor paintings – and I thought, "I want my home to look just like that." I've been collecting over the years and now, I have very little wall space left. I like to think of myself as a patron of the arts in my small way.

I love the paintings I've collected because, like my essays, each artist shares a story.

3) Why do you feel the arts (written, visual, performance, etc...) are such an important part of our past, present and future?

32,000 years ago, man painted the walls of the Caves at Chauvet, and we are still painting, and writing, and dancing, and making music. It's how we communicate, how we interpret and record our environment, and how we leave a record that says, "We were here, we lived, we loved, we are like you." The arts have incredible power to communicate our dreams and

hopes for now and the future, and to bring us together. Art makes life worth living.