

# MAGIC, MADNESS, AND MEANING

## RECLAIMING OUR POWER

**Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>**

**3:30-5:30 Eastern Time, Via Zoom**

We invite you to join us for a Saturday afternoon literary exploration of the potency of madness through memoir. Join us as Herstory's Coalition for Community Writing and Regional Economic Development/ New York State Council on the Arts fellows, Jessica Lowell Mason, Shahrzad Sajadi, and Janelle Gagnon, share the magic and meaning they make of madness, for a feast of vibrant images, wisdom, and deep meditation on the human condition in all of its variation, complexity, sorrow, and beautiful resilience.



- Join Jessica Lowell Mason as she invites us into a moment of terror that becomes a palpable call for awakening, compassion, and wonder at the strength of the human spirit.
- Join Shahrzad Sajadi, who draws upon the magic of her namesake to weave a web of the colors, shapes, and stories of intensified “being” that some might categorize as mad.
- Join Janelle Gagnon in her search for mad forebears who knew what she knows, as she chooses survival and strength in a language so starkly simple, and at the same time so lush that it takes your breath away.

Following these readings, we invite the community to join us in imagining a Page One Moment around experiences, reclamations, and reconfigurations of the ways we think about madness and mental illness. In this exercise, community members are passed the virtual microphone to share a moment or image in which they ask listeners to meet them as they begin composing their story, in a process that is magical in and of itself.



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