



## ALPHONSE MATTIA

OH MY... those Haystack breakfasts! A small sea of perfect smiles—Am I the only one with sleep sand still in my eyes and weird hair from the chemical reaction of water-treatment salt and a non-compatible shampoo-ditioner? Was my snoring the loudest in the nocturnal symphony—you know those three-quarter inch pine walls act more like the soundboard than a sound barrier. So, I count my strips and links of pork while eyeing the table layouts. The rolling waves of conversation, the chop of anticipation and the little dark cloud over the ship in the nor-eastern quadrant all make it tricky to decide on which carrier deck I will attempt to smoothly land my overloaded plate.

I first heard about Haystack when I was an undergrad. It's inevitable that when you begin to wonder about summer plans someone, a teacher, mentor, or peer will sing the praises of the summer programs. Haystack's is a sweet and passionate song of anecdotes and pictures. That's how Haystack maintains its fabulous momentum. A continuum of quality in education, Yes but more importantly, a community builder that works it's magic one eighty-person session at the time.

Over the years I've been a student, a teacher, and a board member at Haystack. I've been to just about every other summer program but Haystack is the one that has always touched me most. I have had so many great experiences here. New Works turns out to be yet another enriching offering that has meant so much to me. Haystack is one of a few touchstones for me in my sense of who I am as a craftsperson. To continue the boats, planes and trains theme, Haystack is the Good Ship Lollypop, Enterprise, and the Orange Blossom Special carrying us faster and further along in our journey.