

Clay Stafford

Clay Stafford is a bestselling author, award-winning filmmaker, and magnetic speaker whose work explores the depth of human resilience, identity, and hope. With nearly four million books sold and translations in sixteen languages, his career spans novels, screenplays, stage plays, essays, poetry, and nonfiction— each known for emotional depth, moral complexity, and timeless resonance.

A master of story across mediums, Stafford crafts gripping mysteries, heart-pounding thrillers, and poignant dramas that immerse audiences in vividly drawn worlds. His voice on the page, screen, and stage challenges, heals, and transforms.

As a filmmaker and producer, Stafford has collaborated with major studios including Disney, Warner Bros., and Universal, and networks such as ABC, CBS, and NBC. As a publishing consultant, Stafford has worked with the likes of Rutledge Hill Press, Thomas Nelson Publishers, and more. Publishers Weekly, Frankfurter Buchmesse (Frankfurt Book Fair), and the American Booksellers Association have called him “One of the Top 40 North American publishing industry professionals to watch!” Stafford has served as a story consultant, developer, and creative force behind numerous cross-platform projects, guiding narratives from concept to distribution.

A respected educator and publishing thought leader, Stafford holds an M.F.A. in writing and film production, co-designed the original film program at Miami Dade College, and is the founder of the Killer Nashville International Writers’ Conference, named the #1 writers’ conference in the U.S. by Writer’s Digest. He also founded The Balanced Writer educational platform and publishes Killer Nashville Magazine.

Known internationally for his insight, clarity, and creative vision, Stafford is a sought-after interview guest, mentor, and keynote speaker. He has lectured at major universities, advised publishing boards, and served on literacy and arts education initiatives around the world.

Clay Stafford brings a rare combination of intellectual firepower, emotional intelligence, and on-camera ease. Whether discussing storytelling, creativity, the publishing world, or the heart behind the work, he shows up fully, speaks with purpose, and leaves audiences leaning in.

When not writing or speaking, he enjoys exploring the outdoors with his family across Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida.

Discover more at ClayStafford.com.