

CMST 4140: Analysis and Performance of Poetry
Spring 2017, TU/TR 12:00pm-1:20pm, 137 Coates Hall

David Terry, Ph.D

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Office Hours: T&R 1:30-3:00pm & by appointment

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(Always e-mail me through Moodle first. Allow 24 hours for a response/ 48 hours on weekends)

Course Description: Advanced study of selected forms, styles, and genres of oral and written poetry through solo and group performance.

Guiding questions:How do cultures create meaning around death and dying?

What are some key differences between prose and poetry as literary forms and as modes of engagement?

What does it mean to think and act poetically around death and dying?

How can we make performances that are aesthetically engaging, ethically sound, and reflect the complexities life?

Objectives: After successful completion of this course you should be able to:

LO1. Describe some key difference between prosaic and poetic aesthetics

LO2. Analyze poetic texts through an embodied performance lens.

LO3 Convert analysis to specific, performable choices; compose and present engaging works of performed scholarship

LO4. Engage in the deep empathy of “world traveling” and experience the world through perspectives other than your own

Prerequisite: CMST 2040: Introduction to Performing Literature

REQUIRED TEXTS:

NOTE: All books are available from AMAZON with free 2 day shipping for students (among other places)

All Students must purchase BOTH of the following books:

ISBN-13: 978-0060924201 The Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart: A Poetry Anthology Paperback (1993) by Robert Bly (Editor), James Hillman (Editor)

ISBN-13: 978-0156005746 A Book of Luminous Things: An International Anthology of Poetry 1st Edition by Czeslaw Milosz (Editor)

All Students must purchase ONE of the following books (for your Final Performance):

ISBN-13: 978-1555976903

Citizen: An American Lyric Paperback October 7, 2014by Claudia Rankine (Author)

ISBN-13: 978-1476708201

The Best American Poetry 2015 (The Best American Poetry series)Sep 8, 2015

by David Lehman and Sherman Alexie

ISBN-13: 978-0143116967
Lighthouse: Poems (Penguin Poets) Mar 30, 2010
by Terrance Hayes

ISBN-13: 978-1556594571
The New Testament by Brown, Jericho (September 16, 2014) Paperback
by Jericho Brown

ISBN-13: 978-1938912481
No Matter the Wreckage Paperback March 18, 2014
by Sarah Kay (Author), Sophia Janowitz (Illustrator)

ISBN-13: 978-1492238287
salt. Paperback September 24, 2013
by Nayyirah Waheed (Author)

ISBN-13: 978-1532913686
the princess saves herself in this one Apr 23, 2016
by Amanda Lovelace

ISBN-13: 978-0061125614
Book of Longing Paperback May 29, 2007 by Leonard Cohen (Author)

ISBN-13: 978-1449474256
Milk and Honey Paperback – October 6, 2015
by Rupi Kaur (Author)

ISBN-13: 978-1449486303
Broken Flowers (Robert M. Drake/Vintage Wild) Paperback October 25, 2016
by Robert M. Drake (Author)

ISBN-13: 978-1499170719
bone June 16, 2014
by Yrsa Daley-Ward (Author)

ISBN-13: 978-0375755217
The Trouble with Poetry and Other Poems Mar 13, 2007
by Billy Collins

Assignments: You will receive a letter grade in each of the following categories that corresponds to the "Interpreting Grades" schema below. Grades will be posted on Moodle in a timely fashion so that you will be aware of your current standing.

Take Home Final (available from the first day of the semester; Due Final Exam Week)- 20%

Performance 1: "Felt Saying" -20%

Performance 2: "Felt but not Said" -20%

Performance 3: "Said but not Felt"-20%

Attendance and Participation-20%

Grading Scale

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| A + 98-100% | A 93-97.99% | A- 90-92.99% |
| B + 88-89.99% | B 83-87.99% | B- 80-82.99% |
| C + 78-79.99% | C 73-77.99% | C 70-72.99% |
| D + 68-69.99% | D 63-67.99% | D 60-62.99% |
| F 0%-59.99% | | |

EXPECTATIONS: The following is a list of what I expect from students in my courses. They are policies based on years of experience in the classroom. I believe that they reflect my commitment to creating an equitable, engaging, and safe learning environment for all students. If you have questions about any of these policies please see me within the first two weeks of the course so that we can discuss them in greater detail.

Cultivate a positive attitude: Embrace this class or drop it. I want us all to have fun and get as much as we can out of our time together. I try and make my courses engaging and avoid "busy work." For your own (and your classmates') mental health, make it the best experience you can or find another course that better meets your needs. If you choose to stay I expect that you will engage the class in a mature way, demonstrate commitment to the learning goals, contribute your thoughts and insights, ask questions, work hard, and challenge yourselves.

Participate with respect: This is a highly participatory course in which you will learn collectively (together and from each other) and kinesthetically (with your whole body, not just your mind). Performance requires that we take risks. Therefore, this course requires an ethical commitment to approach one another with care and respect so that we can collectively create a safe and supportive learning environment. Provide constructive comments for your fellow classmates. Respect diversity and each other. Challenging ideas is encouraged. Challenging people is not.

Be on time: Being late will hurt your ability to learn and is disrespectful to everyone else's time. If you are late for some reason beyond your control, make sure not to interrupt anything as you come in (especially not someone else's performance).

SCREEN FREE CLASSROOM: We will embrace technology outside of the classroom, but in order to facilitate our kinesthetic engagement with the course and each other this classroom will be 100% screen free. Other than a watch to keep us on time we will turn off all laptops, tablets, and phones during the entire class. This means you will need to print out any electronic readings or take suitable notes on them and bring your notes with you to class. If you have a documented disability or other personal circumstances that require exception to this rule, please advise me of the situation in writing BEFORE the class period begins.

Manage your time: Success in a three-unit college course is based on the expectation that students will spend, on average, three hours per week in class and **6 hours per week outside of class** reading, writing, preparing, studying, rehearsing, discussing and otherwise engaging with course materials. If you find that you are spending significantly more time than this on the course, please come and see me as early as possible to discuss better study strategies. If you choose to spend significantly less time than this on the course, please adjust your expectations for your final grade accordingly.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, please meet with me at some point during the first two weeks of class to discuss the provisions of those accommodations. See LSU PS-26 for details.

Do not ask for special deals: In order to maintain a fair and equitable learning environment all students must take the same course. Any opportunities to earn points, or retake or make-up or take late quizzes and assignments must be available to all students in the class (see LSU PS-44). Adding extra credit and other accommodations thus adds significantly to my workload and limits my ability to teach the class as designed. Accordingly:

- Please do not ask for special accommodation for assignments (excluding those requested through the Office of Disability Affairs covered above).
- Please do not ask for extra personalized credit assignments. I will say no (no matter how much I like may like/dislike you personally).
- Please do not invoke “special” cases or circumstances. It is unfair to other students for me to take into account whether or not the grade you earn will prevent you from graduating, maintaining eligibility for sports or other activities, getting financial aide, becoming disqualified, etc.
- Please remember that your actions and decisions have consequences. This isn’t personal. I don’t grade your life choices, I grade you as I grade everyone else, as fairly as possible within the confines of the course.

Do not plagiarize: unless you put something in quotation marks and cite where you got it from I will assume that you are presenting all work you turn in for this course as your own original work. If you try to pass off work done by others as if it is your own work this is grounds for serious repercussions. I will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the office of Student Advocacy and Accountability. For more details see saa.lsu.edu/plagiarism/html.

Discuss grades respectfully: My primary motivation is to help you meet the course learning objectives. I understand that it can be very disappointing to not receive the grade that you desire or feel you deserve. I do not want such disappointment to inhibit your learning. I also know that I do, sometimes make mistakes. Accordingly, I am happy to discuss your grades with you. Please come to see me in person after you’ve had at least 24 hours to consider your response but within two weeks of the grade posting to discuss your grade on any assignment. If you believe you deserve a higher grade than you have received please bring a written statement with you that explains why you think your work on a given assignment is deserving of a higher grade based on the criteria above (e.g. if you believe you deserve an "A" be prepared to help me see how your paper “exceeds expectations in multiple ways”).

Turn in your work when it is due: No late papers. No exceptions. Know when assignments are due and plan ahead. I will NOT extend the deadline for written work for any reason. All papers are turned in to Moodle in electronic form with deadlines announced significantly in advance. In the rare event that Moodle is down during the time frame that the paper is due I will accept a paper copy of the assignment (during the next class period after the due date ONLY) as a temporary stand in until you can upload the paper online. Fried hard drives and the like are no excuse. I expect that you have a redundant back up system for your files (e.g. save them to more than one of the following: Google docs, on your hard drive, in a dropbox, on a flash drive, e-mail it to yourself). I expect that you will plan ahead and have the bulk of your paper done the day before it is due and use those last few hours to proofread and copy edit. That way if something does arise at the last minute you will still have something to turn in for the bulk of the points. You are strongly encouraged to upload early drafts of your major assignments early and then replace them with a more complete versions later. If you turn in a partial assignment by the time the

assignment is due I *may* give you (and all other students) the opportunity to revise the paper for additional points, but I will NOT extend the deadline for written work for any student for any reason.

Be present for in-class exams: As a general policy, I do not give make-up tests. If a make-up is necessary because of an extenuating circumstance, it will be in essay format.

Plan to perform on your assigned dates: There will be NO make-ups for any in class quizzes or performances worth less than 5% of your final grade. In rare circumstances (e.g. university excused absence, communicable illnesses, earthquakes, death in the immediate family), I may offer you the opportunity to reschedule a **major** performance or in class presentation if doing so does not disrupt the schedule for the rest of the class but my priority will always be to provide the best learning opportunity for the entire class, even if doing so inconveniences you personally. If such a situation arises please let me know as soon as possible so that I can make appropriate modifications to the schedule. (HINT: If you know you will be missing class your best bet in preserving both your own sanity and the integrity of the course schedule is to find another student who is presenting on a different day who is willing to switch with you well ahead of time.)

Remember it is your responsibility to be at all class sessions: PS-22 “Student Absence from Class” defines attendance as “the responsibility of the student” and an expectation that if unfulfilled requires the student to not only contact the professor beforehand (if applicable) but also to “[compensate] for what may have been missed.” I expect you to come to class. Period. If you do have to miss a meeting because of a "valid reason for absence" (also defined in the policy) such as a communicable illness or death in the immediate family, please recognize that it is **YOUR responsibility** to obtain the day’s notes and announcements both from Moodle and from communication with another student **before** making an appointment to meet with me. I am glad to help you clarify things that you might have trouble with, but I will not re-teach material I already covered in class until you have shown this good faith effort and communicated with me about your absence in an honest, upfront and conciliatory tone (i.e. make it clear you understand that, even when life events are out of your control, course work is your primary responsibility as a student). Any e-mail asking me "what did I miss in class?" that does not follow these guidelines and does not begin with a summary of what you learned from your conversation(s) with your classmate(s) and your consultation of Moodle will not receive a reply.

Beware the end of semester temporary empathy lapse The last few days of the session are stressful for us all. While I will always do my best to help you learn, please keep in mind that I am significantly more able to help you raise your grade early in the semester than later on. *A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.*

Course Schedule. (Subject to change, please check Moodle regularly)

| Week | | | All readings/ assignments due on TUES unless otherwise noted. |
|------|----------|--|---|
| 1 | 1/19 | Intro to course | Read syllabus; purchase books |
| 2 | 1/24-6 | Selected Readings: What is poetry? | How does a Poem Mean (pdf on Moodle) Syllabus. Selected |
| 3 | 1/31-2/2 | Selected Readings: What is performance? | |
| 4 | 2/7-9 | Selected Readings and Sample Performances: What is performance | |

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|----|------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| | | of poetry? | |
| 5 | 2/14-16 | Performance 1 A and B | |
| 6 | 2/21-23 | Performance 1 C and D | |
| | Mardi Gras | | |
| 7 | 3/2 | Introduce Performance 2 | |
| 8 | 3/7-9 | Workshop Performance 2 | |
| 9 | 3/14-16 | Performance 2 C and D | |
| 10 | 3/21-23 | Performance 2 A and B | |
| 11 | 3/28-30 | Introduce Final Performance | |
| 12 | 4/4-6 | Workshops Performance 3 | |
| | | Spring Break | |
| 13 | 4/18-20 | Performance 3 D and C | |
| 14 | 4/25-27 | Performance 3 B and A | |
| 15 | 5/4 | | Take Home Final Due |

Read the syllabus and the following Poems for Tuesday 1/24

Introduction to Poetry
By Billie Collins

*I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide
or press an ear against its hive.
I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,
or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.
I want them to waterski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.
But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.
They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.*

“What Do Women Want?”

Kim Addonizio, 1954

I want a red dress.
I want it flimsy and cheap,
I want it too tight, I want to wear it
until someone tears it off me.
I want it sleeveless and backless,
this dress, so no one has to guess
what's underneath. I want to walk down
the street past Thrifty's and the hardware store
with all those keys glittering in the window,
past Mr. and Mrs. Wong selling day-old
donuts in their café, past the Guerra brothers
slinging pigs from the truck and onto the dolly,
hoisting the slick snouts over their shoulders.
I want to walk like I'm the only
woman on earth and I can have my pick.
I want that red dress bad.
I want it to confirm
your worst fears about me,
to show you how little I care about you
or anything except what
I want. When I find it, I'll pull that garment
from its hanger like I'm choosing a body
to carry me into this world, through
the birth-cries and the love-cries too,
and I'll wear it like bones, like skin,
it'll be the goddamned
dress they bury me in.

Fork

By Charles Simic

This strange thing must have crept
Right out of hell.
It resembles a bird's foot
Worn around the cannibal's neck.

As you hold it in your hand,
As you stab with it into a piece of meat,
It is possible to imagine the rest of the bird:
Its head which like your fist
Is large, bald, beakless, and blind.

Caged Bird

BY MAYA ANGELOU

A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill

for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn
and he names the sky his own

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Speech: “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow”

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(from Macbeth, spoken by Macbeth)

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,

And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.