Course Description

There is a place where words are born of silence,
A place where whispers of the heart arise.
—Rumi

What gives a poem the power to move us, to haunt us, to leave itself burned in our brains? How can a handful of words create feeling? Are poets magicians, practitioners of dark sorcery? Or is there something more human, more commonly learned through a basic attention to craft? In this intermediate poetry class we’ll be picking up where English 92 left off, delving into contemporary poetry and working to establish our own unique voices. In addition to workshop, we’ll be discussing performance options, publication options, contemporary craft issues, and experimenting widely in a variety of styles. Anyone with a beating heart is welcome.

Requirements

Attend every class
Complete assignments on time
3 poems for workshop
Attend 3 readings outside of class
Complete take-home journal assignments on time
Journal response to 1 poem per week (from assigned readings)
Final portfolio to be handed in at the end of the quarter
GRADES
You will be graded on your attendance, your participation in class, your journal assignments, and your eagerness to improve. I will grade your development as a writer and the extent to which you are engaging with the material. You will receive an unofficial midterm grade and a final grade for the course. Grades will be roughly imagined as follows:

40% homework / 10% final portfolio / 50% participation

ATTENDANCE
Attendance in class is mandatory. You are allowed to miss one day of class without it affecting your grade. I expect you to be on time and to complete the assigned readings. Three or more tardies will result in an unexcused absence. It is imperative that you attend all the days of class in which your work is being workshoped. Failure to do so may result in a failure of the class.

TEXTS
Course Packet (from Copy America)
All-American Poem—Matthew Dickman
Look—Solmaz Sharif
I Know Your Kind—William Brewer
Unaccompanied—Javier Zamora
Crush—Richard Siken
Blank Journal

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES
Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL:http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).

HONOR CODE
The Honor Code is the University's statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work:

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.

3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.

4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

All work must adhere to the University's policies on academic integrity. Failure to cite work that is not your own constitutes plagiarism.

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**TIMELINE**

September 25  **Why We Write**: Introduction

September 27  **Storytime** (bring snacks)

October 2  **Love in the Mouth**: Reading Poetry Out Loud

They Feed They Lion—Phillip Levine  
“What Do Women Want?”—Kim Addonizio  
America—Allen Ginsberg  
I Do Have a Seam—Jamaal May  
Tonight in Oakland—Danez Smith  
*Essay: The End of a Golden String—William Stafford*

October 4  **Haunted Importantly**: Obsessions

Another Reason I Don’t Keep a Gun in the House—Billy Collins  
From the Desire Field—Natalie Diaz  
My Religion—Anne Carson  
Daddy—Sylvia Plath  
Sailing to Byzantium—W.B. Yeats  
*Essay: Triggering Town—Richard Hugo*
October 9  
**I Can See For Miles**: Developing a Personal Vision

Sci-fi—Traci K Smith  
The Singing Knives—Frank Stanford  
Sonnet #3—James Franco  
The Forgotten Dialect of the Heart—Jack Gilbert  
The Colonel—Carolyn Forche  
DISCUSSION OF *ALL-AMERICAN POEM*  
MOCK WORKSHOP

October 11  
**Born in a Small Town**: Writing What You Know

Kissing Hitler—Michael McGriff  
Brazilian Telephone—Miriam Bird Greenberg  
Someday I’ll Love Ocean Vaught—Ocean Vaughn  
Degrees of Gray in Phillipsburg—Richard Hugo  
WORKSHOP

October 16  
**Signs and Omens**: Image Sets

Self-Improvement—Tony Hoagland  
The Song of Wandering Aengus—W.B. Yeats  
Laundry and Cigarettes—Dorianne Laux  
Thanks—Yusef Komunyakaa  
Topography—Sharon Olds  
WORKSHOP

October 18  
**While My Guitar Gently Weeps**: Using Sound

Killing at the Neighbor’s—Judy Jordan  
April Snow—Matthew Zapruder  
Three Kinds of Pleasure—Robert Bly  
Nothing Gold Can Stay—Robert Frost  
DISCUSSION OF *UNACCOMPANIED*

October 23  
**Songs of Devotion**: Poetry as Prayer

The Secret—Denise Levertov  
Holy Sonnet 14—John Donne  
Let Evening Come—Jane Kenyon  
Famous—Naomi Shihab Nye  
WORKSHOP

October 25  
**Talking Heads**: Using Dialogue

Cymothoa Exigua—Roger Reeves  
Choke—Eileen Myles  
I’m a Young Cowboy and Know I’ve Done Wrong—Catherine Pond  
Going Wrong—Jack Gilbert  
WORKSHOP
October 30  **The Lives of Others**: Persona Poems

Dream Song 14—John Berryman  
Herbert White—Frank Bidart  
Lighthead’s Guide to the Galaxy—Terrance Hayes  
In the Reading Room of Hell—Roberto Bolano  
DISCUSSION OF  *I KNOW YOUR KIND*

Nov 1  **Those Images That Yet / Fresh Images Beget**: Ekphrastic Poems

The Disquieting Muses—Sylvia Plath  
Voices From Another World—James Merrill  
The Great Figure—William Carlos Williams  
Musee des Beaux Arts—W.H. Auden  
GROUP WORKSHOP

Nov 6  **Making it New**: Contemporary Forms

“next to of course god america i”—e.e. cummings  
Station—Maria Hummel  
The Blue Terrance—Terrance Hayes  
Heat—Denis Johnson  
*Essay: Twenty-two Short Lectures*  
GROUP WORKSHOP

Nov 8  **Odes and Elegies**: Shaping Forms

Litany—Billy Collins  
Elegy—Corey Van Landsingham  
The Truth the Dead Know—Anne Sexton  
Sonnet XI—Pablo Neruda  
DISCUSSION OF  *LOOK*

Nov 13  **Bumper to Bumper**: Creating Tension in Lines

Quarantine—Eavan Boland  
Scarecrow on Fire—Dean Young  
Home to Roost—Kay Ryan  
I Know a Man—Robert Creeley  
WORKSHOP

Nov 15  **Sailing the Paper Seas**: White Space

from Deepstep Come Shining—C.D. Wright  
The Charm of 5:30—David Berman  
Today a Rainstorm Caught Me—Matt Hart  
The Rape Joke—Patricia Lockwood  
WORKSHOP
Nov 20-22  THANKSGIVING BREAK

Nov 27  **Mashups of Epic Proportions**: Writing the Long Poem

Snow White and the Seven Dwarves—Anne Sexton
Sunday Morning—Wallace Stevens
Crossing Brooklyn Ferry—Walt Whitman
Perfection of Solitude—Larry Levis
WORKSHOP

Nov 29  **Shop Talk**: How to Publish Poetry
DISCUSSION OF *CRUSH*
WORKSHOP

Dec 4  **Class Reading**

JOURNALS DUE

Dec 6  **Pizza Party**

FINAL PORTFOLIOS DUE