

**CA/T Community Classes (CCC)  
Columbia Artist/Teacher  
Writing Program, School of the Arts**



**COURSEBOOK  
FALL 2025**

CA/T appreciates the generosity of the Mark R. Robin Memorial Fund for Creative Writing

# INFORMATION

CA/T Community Classes are free, non-credit creative writing seminars taught by MFA Writing Program students in Columbia University's School of the Arts. These classes in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and cross-genre writing are designed to provide structured opportunities for students to write, to explore new approaches and forms, to discuss literature, and to receive feedback on their writing.

These courses are open to **all** current Columbia and Barnard students, staff, and affiliates, as well as all School of the Arts alumni.

Classes meet once weekly for five to six weeks, beginning on Monday, October 20th, through Friday, November 21. This semester, courses will be offered in-person in Columbia University's Dodge Hall and on Zoom.

## HOW TO REGISTER

Classes are first-come, first-served. You may register for up to two (2) CCC courses a semester. The registration period will close on Tuesday, October 14. Classes that fill up will be specified as **waitlist only**.

To choose your classes, please fill out the Fall 2025 [Registration Form](#). The CCC coordinators, Savannah Carren and Lara Waas, will contact you only if you have been assigned a class, or later if you are moved off a waitlist.

More information is also available at our website, <https://arts.columbia.edu/cat/CCC>.

If you have any further questions about registration, please email the CCC coordinators, Savannah Carren ([sec2237@columbia.edu](mailto:sec2237@columbia.edu)) and Lara Waas ([lw3184@columbia.edu](mailto:lw3184@columbia.edu)). If your question pertains to a specific course, please reach out to the instructor.

# COURSE LIST

## FICTION

**YOUR VOICE, YOUR RULES: CREATIVE EXPERIMENTS IN FICTION**

| Aditi Bainss

Wednesday 12:05 pm - 1:55 pm, Dodge Hall 407

**THE SATIRICAL VOICE: ME TALK FUNNY ONE DAY** | Reese Collins

Thursday 5:00 pm - 6:50 pm, Zoom

**CHICK LIT 101** | Heeba Hasan

Thursday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

**CHARGING THE MOUNTAIN; BEGINNING YOUR NOVEL** | Sofi

Ippolito

Monday 9:00 am - 10:50 am, Dodge Hall 409

**FEELINGS 101** | Copeland Jandrisch

Thursday 3:20 pm - 5:10 pm, Dodge Hall 413

**COMPRESSION: READING AND WRITING SHORT STORIES** | Mia

O'Neill

Monday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

## POETRY

**POETICS OF CONTEMPORARY POP MUSIC** | Erin Belle Harrison

Monday 7:15 pm - 9:05 pm, Dodge Hall 411

**WRITING THE RURAL: READING AND WRITING POETRY FROM A  
NON-URBAN POINT OF VIEW** | Lane Devers

Thursday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 409

**SAPPHO: THE MORTAL MUSE | Bems James**  
Wednesday 12:40 pm - 2:30 pm, Dodge Hall 512

**HOW TO GUZZLE THE GHAZAL: A POETIC PRACTICE | Batool Rizvi**  
Thursday 7:00 pm - 8:50 pm, Zoom

**FRUIT AND FLOWER: WRITING WITH SYLVIA PLATH | Natasha  
Wolkwitz**  
Thursday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 512

### NONFICTION

**EVOLVING FROM EVALUATION: CRITIQUE AS CATALYST FOR  
ARTISTIC GROWTH | Alexander Cavaluzzo**  
Wednesday 12:05 pm - 1:55 pm, Dodge Hall 409

**FIVE MAJOR MOMENTS: WRITE THE SPEECHES NOW, DELIVER  
THEM LATER | Erika Casriel**  
Saturday 10:00 am - 11:15 am, Zoom

**THE ART OF WRITING SHAME | Frances Thomas**  
Monday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

### CROSS-GENRE

**WRITING THE SAPPHIC RESISTANCE | Ioana Barbulescu**  
Wednesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 403

**UGLY WRITING: EXPLORING DISGUST AND REPULSION | Colleen  
Grablick**  
Monday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm, Dodge Hall 512

**MEMORY AND ITS DISCONTENTS | Joongi Andrew Lee**  
Friday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

**FLESH BECOMES HER: QUEER CANNIBALISM IN FILM AND LITERATURE | Forrest Lindsey**

**Friday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411**

**THE AGONY OF EROS | Tania Veltchev**

**Friday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm, Dodge Hall 409**

**GO MAKE ART ABOUT IT: EKPHRASIS AS A WAY OF LIFE | Sahil Verma**

**Tuesday 3:00 pm - 4:50 pm, Zoom**

**(UN)INVITED INTIMACY | Hannah Wederquist-Keller**

**Monday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 409**

**WRITING THE ART, WRITING THE SELF | Kira Weiner**

**Friday 12:00 pm - 1:50 pm, Zoom**

**WRITING SMELL | Anna Nielsen Williams**

**Thursday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm, Dodge Hall 512**

**COOKING WITH WORDS: RECIPES IN FOOD WRITING | Zoe Zechar**

**Tuesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 512**

# FICTION

## **YOUR VOICE, YOUR RULES: CREATIVE EXPERIMENTS IN FICTION**

**Aditi Bainss**

**Wednesday 12:05 pm - 1:55 pm**

**Dodge Hall 407**

Fiction is like a jigsaw puzzle.

Structure, voice, character, scene, time, and setting—they're your puzzle pieces. Some writers build their stories from a corner and go from there. Others dump all the pieces on the floor, throw a few away, whittle a few into unfamiliar forms, and cut new ones from scratch. Some combinations create clarity. Others invite mystery, disruption, or contradiction. The key is that you decide what image you're trying to reveal—or obscure; you get to invent both the pieces and the picture.

This course will function as a craft lab where each week we will pair short, weekly readings with in-class writing exercises. We'll read writers from around the world, then respond to these ideas immediately and creatively—try out new techniques, break habits, or follow a strange impulse.

Students will leave with a portfolio of their original work, developed from in-class writing experiments, along with a personalized anthology of multicultural texts appealing to their aesthetics.

Writers of all experience levels are welcome.

## **THE SATIRICAL VOICE: ME TALK FUNNY ONE DAY**

**Reese Collins**

**Thursday 5:00 pm - 6:50 pm**

**Zoom**

In this class we will look at short stories in which the first person narrator's peculiar voice shapes our reading of their world. We will see how writers show our repeated failure to communicate and be understood. Eloquent language is nice, but how often

is the narrator going to be an English major? We will look at short stories where constrained language adds to an already unique perspective. For example, stories told from the viewpoint of a viking, New York City, a tech bro, etc.

We will talk about how through irony, double meaning, euphemisms, made-up language, metonyms, positionality, and humor these circumscribed voices add to our appreciation of story. We will allow the time to generate our own idiosyncratic characters through writing exercises. Hopefully you will come away from the class with a new consciousness in storytelling, one that lets you be more courageous deciding what you read and write.

Short stories we'll look at:

“The 400-Pound CEO” by George Saunders

“Yeti Lovemaking” by Ling Ma

“Our Dope Future” by Tony Tulathimutte

“Ant Colony” by Alissa Nutting

“Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned” by Wells Tower

“The City Speaks” by Simon Rich

## **CHICK LIT 101**

**Heeba Hasan**

**Thursday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 407**

Ever secretly devoured chick lit in your free time and felt shy to admit it when your friends asked you what you've been reading? Well, it's about time we accepted that, yes, it is important and, absolutely, it does sell!

What are the essential elements for creating such stories? Main characters that are both swoony but loveable, chaotic but relatable? Plots that are both somehow “fluffy” and emotionally resonant? We will discuss all this but mostly we will workshop so come prepared to write and read in class.

Writers we will explore in class will include Jane Austen, Helen Fielding, Sophie Kinsella, Jennifer Weiner, and more.

## **CHARGING THE MOUNTAIN; BEGINNING YOUR NOVEL**

**Sofi Ippolito**

**Monday 9:00 am - 10:50 am**

**Dodge Hall 409**

Have you always wanted to write a novel but weren't sure where to begin? This course is designed for anyone ready to bring their book idea to life—whether you've been carrying a story around for years, have only written a few pages, or are simply curious about how the process works. With a focus on fiction, we'll break down the daunting task of novel writing into approachable steps, giving you a solid foundation and the confidence to keep going long after the course ends.

Through a mix of lectures, guided writing experiments, and hands-on practice, you'll explore essential tools of craft—such as scene, summary, point of view, dialogue and strategies for revision—while also experimenting with the routines and methods of celebrated authors such as Donna Tartt, Dan Brown, Sayaka Murata, and a few others. The class will culminate in a supportive workshop of your opening pages, where you'll share your work and receive constructive feedback. Think of this course as a tool depot: a place to stock up on strategies, insights, and practices you can return to throughout your writing journey.

## **FEELINGS 101**

**Copeland Jandrisch**

**Thursday 3:20 pm - 5:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 413**

How do we as writers make our reader genuinely feel something?

If you've ever written fiction before, you'll know evoking a genuine emotional response in the reader through words alone, is a difficult, if not deeply frustrating, process. You can spend hours upon hours crafting your characters, honing your

narrative, adding rich details and texture and nuance, hoping it will all add up to something affecting and beautiful...only to find it doesn't.

Worst of all, even you, the writer, might sense that there's something missing in your story—and despite your best efforts, despite pouring a lot of feeling into it, it feels utterly empty.

In this six-week CCC course, we're going to examine and explore when fiction does manage to make us feel more alive and human. Specifically, from a craft standpoint, we'll be looking at the choices a writer can make at the word, sentence, paragraph, and story level that set up a specific emotional and/or psychological experience.

We'll be close reading Jhumpa Lahiri, Raymond Carver, Shirley Jackson, NoViolet Bulawayo, and more. Along the way we'll be drafting, editing, and revising our own affecting short-stories and a 750-word reflection detailing the various decisions we made while crafting these narratives. By the end of Feelings 101, besides analyzing several approaches and authors and emotions, the hope is that you'll discover and develop your own aesthetic values, quietly ask yourself:

What do I find emotional?

What stories do I cry at, do I love?

What sort of experiences and feelings do I want to represent in my own writing—and what tools and devices will I use to do so going forward?

## **COMPRESSION: READING AND WRITING SHORT STORIES**

**Mia O'Neill**

**Monday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 407**

Many writers first learn their craft by studying short stories. The best stories contain the same lyric richness and distilled vibrancy that poems do, but they must also grapple with plot, with scene and summary, with exposition and dialogue. Like poems, stories are also inherently social creatures: they must stand alone, but must also exist within various conversations: a collection, an anthology, a literary magazine, each a unique tapestry and universe unto itself.

How do the great short story writers manage such a balancing act? Compression: the ability to condense and distill the most crucial pieces of information that drive a story in a compelling manner.

Over the semester, we will examine the various ways in which some of today's most innovative short story writers handle compression. Readings may include works by Zadie Smith, Deborah Eisenberg, Jennifer Egan, Jhumpa Lahiri, George Saunders, and others.

Students will engage in brief in-class and take-home writing exercises based on the readings throughout the term. Using the assigned texts and several lens texts as a guide, we will look at how various craft elements can be condensed and sharpened within the short story form to create powerful, persuasive narratives. By the end of the course, each student will write an original piece of short fiction employing techniques of compression inspired by one or more of the assigned course readings.

# POETRY

## **POETICS OF CONTEMPORARY POP MUSIC**

**Erin Belle Harrison**

**Monday 7:15 pm - 9:05 pm**

**Dodge Hall 411**

Could Wordsworth write like Lady Gaga? Bring your Spotify wrapped to class and take pop music too seriously (or perhaps, just seriously enough).

This course is concerned with perspective and remediation. We will listen to and analyze class members' favorite pop artists through the lens of Romantic poets like Byron, Keats, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. In the contemporary poetry world of English poetry, very few people write with traditional meter and form, but did we ever disavow it entirely? With so much lyric-based music around, it seems unlikely. In this class, we will discuss the similarities and differences between popular songwriting and traditional poetry--studying punctuation, metaphors, and structure. We will also investigate the writing practice, asking about intention, effect, and interpretability.

## **WRITING THE RURAL: READING AND WRITING POETRY FROM A NON-URBAN POINT OF VIEW**

**Lane Devers**

**Thursday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 409**

By reading and writing about rural life, against the pastoral, and from the perspective of the strange, we can begin to better understand what drives poetry about places of small population to be both unusual and worth reading. Over the course of 5 weeks we will open class discussions by reading poems that take place in rural spaces or utilize small-town imagery.

During the first half of class we will open by reading a poem from the syllabus, then in the second half of class we will complete a generative writing prompt based on the selected reading.

We will then read aloud (optionally) and respond to one another's work, as well as discuss how the generative prompt felt. We will be reading the poets: Ada Limón, Diane Seuss, Anne Carson, Richard Hugo, and Jericho Brown.

## **SAPPHO: THE MORTAL MUSE**

**Bems James**

**Wednesday 12:40 pm - 2:30 pm**

**Dodge Hall 512**

Who was Sappho? Why did Plato call her “the Tenth Muse?” Did she invent confessional poetry, queer yearning, and the guitar pick? All this and more!

This course will be centered around “If Not, Winter,” Anne Carson’s translations of Sappho, with an emphasis on what we, as modern writers, can learn from this ancient poet. Topics will include (but are not limited to) love, violence, desire, sexuality, mythology, religion, and their many intersections. To contextualize our reading, we’ll examine the traditions and cultures that influenced Sappho and her contemporaries. We’ll look at both modern and ancient writers in conversation with Sappho to develop a sense of her legacy. We’ll also discuss the impact and importance of her gender, both in her time and our own, as well as what her work means to those of us in the LGBTQIA+ community.

First and foremost, this class will be a space to explore and experiment with our writing. Students will participate in writing exercises, using Sappho to prompt our work. There will be opportunities for students to informally share their work with the class, but doing so won't be mandatory.

We may read excerpts of other ancient works in translation, as well as short essays about Sappho. No prior knowledge of Sappho, mythology, or any other ancient Mediterranean literature is necessary.

## **HOW TO GUZZLE THE GHAZAL: A POETIC PRACTICE**

**Batool Rizvi**

**Thursday 7:00 pm - 8:50 pm**

**Zoom**

If you leave who will prove that my cry existed?

Tell me what was I like before I existed.

— Agha Shahid Ali

Ali brought the ghazal into English; its “gazelle” leaps springing into distinct territory, rhyme, and form. In this course, you will explore the ghazal’s history, understand its signature features, practice writing, and perform your own. We will study Shahid’s approach to carrying the form into English, while also looking at how poets from the West performed at a traditional mushaira — a gathering of poets — in order to bring the ghazal to life. The class ends with our own mushaira where you will step into the role of poet/reciter while your classmates act as an enthusiastic and responsive audience — everyone sharing an original ghazal in the spirit of this living tradition!

Note: students will be invited to recite at the end of semester mushaira at an off-site location.

## **FRUIT AND FLOWER: WRITING WITH SYLVIA PLATH**

**Natasha Wolkwitz**

**Thursday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 512**

In this five-week course, we will engage closely with five poems by Sylvia Plath and respond to weekly writing exercises designed to generate new work in conversation with her poetry. Alongside close readings and discussions of Plath’s life and writing, we’ll explore related texts that expand and complicate our understanding of each featured poem.

This class welcomes anyone interested in reading and writing, especially poetry. By the end of the course, writers will leave with a “bouquet” of new poems or short writings, as well as a deeper understanding of some of Sylvia Plath’s work.

# NONFICTION

## **EVOLVING FROM EVALUATION: CRITIQUE AS CATALYST FOR ARTISTIC GROWTH**

**Alexander Cavaluzzo**

**Wednesday 12:05 pm - 1:55 pm**

**Dodge Hall 409**

This course challenges the notion that criticism is corrosive, showing instead how it fuels artistic growth. Together, we'll strengthen our ability to assess artistic outputs by tracing the history, theory, and practice of criticism, and its effect on artists both personally and professionally.

Across five sessions, we'll run the gamut from Aristotle to Taylor Swift, combining lectures, fieldwork, and in-class exercises. We'll read and write reviews worthy of publication, create rubrics to measure success across different mediums, and learn how to give and receive criticism in the moment. By the end, you'll have the tools and vocabulary to better evaluate, contextualize, and deliver criticism with confidence.

## **FIVE MAJOR MOMENTS: WRITE THE SPEECHES NOW, DELIVER THEM LATER**

**Erika Casriel**

**Saturday 10:00 am - 11:15 am**

**Zoom**

In the Columbia community, we seek to deepen bonds with all kinds of others, whether they are world leaders, Wall Street recruiters, lovers, or great-nieces. We yearn to be asked certain questions, such as: What's your big idea? What hard-won lesson can you teach me? Why don't you and Uncle Rodney talk anymore?

We can check our mailboxes for an engraved speaking invitation...or we can prepare the answers in this class. Each session is dedicated to a topic that students can tweak for their needs, including a letter of love, a rant, a big idea, a rave review, and a eulogy (for oneself, for someone else...or for a different kind of loss).

In 75 minutes, we will walk through an ordered series of questions and writing periods of 10-15 minutes. By the end of each session, each student will have a page-long draft. These may be useful:

- as soon as the upcoming holidays, for a hand-written card, a recipe with an attached memory, or a gentle roast of a relative;
- toward giving an emotionally resonant speech;
- to present to an important recipient whenever the student feels ready.

Optional homework will be 10-minute readings that model the week's topic. Each student will be offered a private 30-minute session to refine a draft.

## **THE ART OF WRITING SHAME**

**Frances Thomas**

**Monday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 407**

“I am endowed by shame’s vast memory, more detailed and implacable than any other, a gift unique to shame.”

–Annie Ernaux

Shame is not exactly pleasant to feel, but for writers, it is one of our greatest tools. This course will claim shame as its muse, mining the emotion for its immense narrative potential. We will begin by defining shame as something worthy of serious study, seeking to disrupt common assumptions about the feeling and reclaim it for our own literary purposes. We will then turn to the work of writers who make useful, surprising, and profound use of shame, analyzing their techniques for bringing it to light on the page and innovating our own. Readings may include short excerpts from Kiese Laymon, Melissa Febos, Ocean Vuong, Annie Ernaux, Garth Greenwell, Virginia Woolf, and Roxane Gay, with a focus on nonfiction but a reverence for all genres.

We will be ever mindful of how challenging it is to face shame, both in writing and in life, and to co-create a safe space for stories that tend to get swept under the proverbial rug. Students will gain confidence writing about shame, reading rough drafts aloud, and articulating a dynamic set of preferences—practical, aesthetic, moral,

and perhaps even philosophical—for approaching this gift of a subject. Through close reading, generative writing exercises, and group discussions, we will train our eyes to see shame not as something to be dreaded, but as a powerful instigator of our most urgent and universal stories.

No experience needed! Writers of all backgrounds and genres are welcome.

# CROSS-GENRE

## WRITING THE SAPPHIC RESISTANCE

Ioana Barbulescu

Wednesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm

Dodge Hall 403

Amid book bans and literary pinkwashing, sapphic writing is exhaustingly under threat, shedding light on our societies' retreat into patriarchal heteronormativity. When the world seems to be closing in on us, we set ourselves free by turning to the page, in search of community. This class will provide a generative space for writers to imagine and experiment outside of binaries, against power structures and towards liberation. What is it that you've always wanted to write, but thought would be misunderstood, judged, or weaponized against you? What boundaries have you been taught not to break, just to realize they've been stifling your craft? What were you told was great representation, though it privately felt diminishing and harmful? In this class, we'll read excerpts of visionary work that ground us in sapphic lineage (Akwaeke Emezi, adrienne marie brown, Zaina Arafat, Carmen Maria Machado, Julia Armfield, among others). We will then allow ourselves to write in ways our bodies, minds and souls yearn to write when no one is watching. Through various exercises, we will spend four weeks attempting to write from/towards ANGER, PAIN, PLEASURE, and JOY. We will celebrate our efforts in a fifth and final class, dedicated to archiving the bits and pieces of sapphic art coming out of our collective work, in the form of a zine. We will make space for lamenting, despair, but also, hopefully, laughter, comradeship, and healing.

This class is open to all who feel their reflections, imaginations, and writing (could) embody sapphic resistance.

## **UGLY WRITING: EXPLORING DISGUST AND REPULSION**

**Colleen Grablick**

**Monday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 512**

If you've ever seen a "feeling wheel" or the children's movie *Inside Out*, you know disgust is one of our most basic emotions. We experience it dozens of times a day: watching a rat carry a pizza crust up subway steps, fishing mushy food out of the sink with our fingers, cleaning up our animals' (or our human babies') poop. So how do authors translate repulsion onto the page? What can we do with language to compel the reader toward a topic, idea, or image that they want to run away from, and invite thoughtful engagement, critique, and feeling?

In this class, we'll consider the role disgust plays in art, our lives, and our own writing. We'll discuss the psychological, sociological, and cultural underpinnings of disgust, how it can marginalize or attract, and where we can thoughtfully employ it in our work. Using sample readings from across genres and mediums (including film and visual art!) we'll practice translating this difficult emotion into language that's effective and sharp – and not simply provocative for provocations' sake.

All readings will be done together in class, and we will reserve time in each class for a writing prompt (sharing optional). If you currently have a "disgusting" project you're working on, feel free to bring it to class.

SELECTIONS FROM AUTHORS LIKE: Stephanie Grant, James Joyce, Octavia Butler, J.M. Coetzee, Georges Bataille, Ottessa Moshfegh, Sarah Ahmed, Tony Tulathimutte, Mona Awad, Carmen Maria Machado, Jiayang Fan & more... open to suggestions and to take the conversation where it makes most sense for the interests of the class!

## **MEMORY AND ITS DISCONTENTS**

**Joongi Andrew Lee**

**Friday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 407**

“Memory is quite central for me. Part of it is that I like the actual texture of writing through memory.” – Kazuo Ishiguro

What do we remember in the act of remembering? Or, phrased another way, what things do we actually not remember? In many ways, navigating memory is no easy endeavor. There is so much scientific and philosophical literature about memory, regarding how it works, yet we also cannot deny the subjectivity of remembering. In this class we will explore how novelists such as Proust, Ishiguro, and Sebald portray memories in unique ways, crafting acts of remembrance that are textured uniquely and that evoke atmospheres ranging from the nostalgic to the melancholic.

In the end, we will develop our own answers to the following questions. How might we go about exploring our own memories? How can we navigate around parts of our memories we do not remember? How do we write about these memories with authenticity and vividness, using memory’s unreliability not as a setback but as a force that propels our writing?

The class will center around in-class writing exercises and discussions of the above authors (and many others), crafting a narrative that explores memory in a way that is both informed and uniquely personal. There will also be a workshop component to the course.

## **FLESH BECOMES HER: QUEER CANNIBALISM IN FILM AND LITERATURE**

**Forrest Lindsey**

**Friday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 411**

“Love is when you suddenly wake up as a cannibal, and not just any old cannibal, or else wake up destined for devourment... I beg you, eat me up. Want me down to the marrow.”

— H el ene Cixous, *Stigmata: Escaping Texts*

To consume or to be consumed? Who do we become when we devour the beloved? The zeitgeist has been fixated with all things cannibalism for the past decade or so. What has given rise to such a cultural interest? This course intends to explore cannibalism as both an action and a symbol that dissects power, class, race, oppression, reclamation, queerness, capitalism, and all consuming desire. We will explore human monstrosity within film and literature to deconstruct the way that horror plays with our understanding of societal norms and rules, and the themes that arise when said norms are subverted.

We will examine texts such as Agustina Bazterrica’s *Tender is the Flesh*, Lucy Rose’s *The Lamb*, Claire Kohda’s *Woman Eating*, Chelsea G. Summer’s *A Certain Hunger* and Kayla Cottingham’s *This Delicious Death* as well as cinematic pieces including *Jennifer’s Body*, *Yellowjackets*, *Raw*, *Fresh*, *Bones* and *All*, and the like. We will also peek into musical exploration of cannibalism, including Ethel Cain’s *Preacher’s Daughter*.

This is a course for students with an interest in horror, intersectional political discourse, queerness, and contemporary media. Students will engage with course materials analytically and have the opportunity to collect a media response journal or produce a cumulative creative piece. Together, we will look our deepest fears in the eyes, utilizing horror to alchemize said fears into art.

## **THE AGONY OF EROS**

**Tania Veltchev**

**Friday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 409**

Byung-Chul Han's short book of philosophical essays, *The Agony of Eros*, acts as a frame for this class on eros in contemporary literature. We take the lens of Han's theory as to what threatens love today – with concepts like the “erosion of the other”, “narcissification of the self” and the “inferno of the same” – and use them to analyse the representation of love (and especially its failures) in contemporary literature.

Readings may include works from Carmen Maria Machado, Tony Tulathimutte, Garth Greenwell, Raven Leilani, Maggie Nelson, Ling Ma, Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, Lauren Groff, Ottessa Moshfegh, and Alexander Chee.

## **GO MAKE ART ABOUT IT: EKPHRASIS AS A WAY OF LIFE**

**Sahil Verma**

**Tuesday 3:00 pm - 4:50 pm**

**Zoom**

Ekphrasis is the use of a detailed description of a work of visual art as a literary device. In this course, we will explore the importance of art in our daily lives and how an ekphrastic approach can help romanticize our lives in a time period where escapism is one of the many needs of the hour. Each week, we will pick a different art form and see how we can interact with it. We will explore Hip Hop music (Joey Badass, Drake, Kendrick Lamar, and more) as an art form, classic and contemporary paintings (The sad clown, Do Ho Suh), film media (Brassai, Se7en, Dredd), sculpture (Daniel Arsham), and literary art. This course will NOT require any readings but places heavy importance on active participation in discussions.

## **(UN)INVITED INTIMACY**

**Hannah Wederquist-Keller**

**Monday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 409**

It's in sex that I become most aware of my own impulse to tenderness, but also to cruelty, my own daring, but also my failures of nerve, my own lack of daring, my own timidity. And I'm aware of these things in myself and also in my partner. In that sense, sex lays us bare.

– Garth Greenwell

Have you ever taken a class on how to write sex? A class about the erotic in literature? Whether this is new or familiar terrain, you may have noticed that most conversations center around writing pleasure – basking in the linguistic and stylistic challenges of describing intimacy without cliché, without evasion. But where are the classes that widen that aperture to include the array of sexual experience? From pleasurable to uncomfortable to coerced?

Here is such a class. We will be reading both fiction and non-fiction – discussing excerpts from authors such as Neige Sinno, Kathryn Harrison, Eimear McBride, and Edouard Louis. Reading closely, we'll discuss how these writers treat time, embodiment (disembodiment), and syntax to convey the complexity of sexual encounters.

Each week, there will be a free-writing exercise and an opportunity to share the experience of trying to write such scenes. Please come prepared willing to take risks and create a compassionate atmosphere for a difficult subject.

Students will turn in one final assignment at the end of the course.

## **WRITING THE ART, WRITING THE SELF**

**Kira Weiner**

**Friday 12:00 pm - 1:50 pm**

**Zoom**

“I wanted to tell you about all this, because it connects in a hundred places with a great deal that surrounds us, and with ourselves.” - Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters on Cézanne*

In this course, we will write about the life and work of another artist, engaging with elements of biography and criticism alongside self-reflection. How do we connect with the work of another artist? What does this connection reveal about ourselves?

Whether you're interested in writing a biography about an underrated filmmaker, a poem about your favorite band, or a series of letters about a painter after visiting their gallery every day like Rilke did with Cézanne, there will be a place for your individual projects and ideas to be supported in this course.

Together, we will engage in biographical research, explore the ethics of writing about another person, and reflect on our own perspectives and responses to their art. Assignments will build toward a project of your choosing shaped by your engagement with your selected artist.

Short readings may include work by writers such as Hanif Abdurraqib, Marie Darrieussecq, Larissa Pham, Lynn Steger Strong, Lili Anolik, and Christine Smallwood.

## **WRITING SMELL**

**Anna Nielsen Williams**

**Thursday 4:20 pm - 6:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 512**

“Nothing is more memorable than a smell.” - Diane Ackerman

The five human senses and their description, manipulation, and perception are essential to fostering a sense of atmosphere in our written work. What often resonates with the reader is the vicarious sensory experiences that they undergo through a character, and how that impacts both parties mentally and emotionally. There are infinite possibilities when we explore the sensory experience of a character, and their reactions to these senses—internal or external—contribute significantly to the character’s persona. Likewise, the “world” a writer builds lies in these sensory details.

In my personal experience, I have taken niche courses centered on sight, touch, and hearing, but I have yet to see a creative writing course that focuses on smell. Scents can conjure memories, create new links, elicit shocking reactions, provoke insight, and the list goes on. What happens when we focus on scent, or the sense of smell, as an indicator of atmosphere or character identity? How does beginning with smell affect how we write the other four senses? What do we learn about ourselves as writers and humans in the process?

In this course, we will focus on our sense of smell and see where it takes us. The course will begin with a basic sociological and psychological exploration of scent, followed by a closer examination of scent in writing. These readings will be brief and completed in class, and then we will unpack and discuss them. Every class will include a writing prompt and time to work on it; sharing is not mandatory, but encouraged! We will be focusing more on generative writing and less on workshopping or critiquing.

## **COOKING WITH WORDS: RECIPES IN FOOD WRITING**

**Zoe Zechar**

**Tuesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm**

**Dodge Hall 512**

Everyone eats — so how do we write about our experiences with food? In this 5 week course, we will investigate how individuals use different forms and genres of food writing to speak not just to the universal experience of eating, but also their own lives. Through discussions, informal chats, and testing their own hands at mini food-related writing prompts, students will generate an idea of what ingredients create the food writing that we want to gobble up. In-class readings will include works by Anthony Bourdain, William Carlos Williams, Marcel Proust, Sylvia Plath, Ruth Reichl, Sandra Cisneros, and more.