The Art and Craft of Poetry  
K30.1560-002, Fall 2012  
The Gallatin School, New York University  
1 Washington Place, room 501  
Professor Stacy Pies  
Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30-4:45 p.m.

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"Poetry is an act of mischief." Theodore Roethke

"Talking becomes poetry as walking becomes dancing." Josephine Miles

Course description: In this class, we will write, read, and discuss poems to sharpen our sensibilities and skills as writers, readers, listeners and observers. The final assignment will be a short manuscript of revised poems, and we will have an end-of-term Best of Workshop reading.

Required Texts:  

The titles of these texts are abbreviated in the syllabus as PC (The Poet's Companion) and MP (The Making of a Poem). These books contain assigned readings and are also meant as sources of inspiration and reference. Please feel free to read widely in them apart from assigned pages!

Requirements:  
* Every week: One poem or serious revision due each week. I will give you suggestions for assignments and examples for work due the following week. Some assignments are springboards; for those, you are free to write from a different angle. Assignments later in the term on rhythm and form are less flexible because struggling with those may be a good exercise.

* Every meeting: Observations, both in class and in writing, of your colleagues' work (we'll do this together and you'll understand what to do).

* Occasional treats: Bring in a poem by another poet whom you are reading that you would like to read aloud. Please let me know in advance if you'd like to read one of these poems, and I can try to make copies for the class, too.
* There are three assignments besides reading widely, writing poems, listening, observing and writing your weekly observations to your colleagues:

a. September/October assignment: Memorize a poem from your reading or from the chapter on the stanza in Strand and Boland (pp. 136-153) with a rhythm that compels you that you will recite. Due in the first part of the course; students will sign up for dates.

b. November assignment: Make an anthology of three poems by another poet or other poets and briefly write what you observe and love in these poems. Then, pick one of the poems and write your own poem under its influence, perhaps imitating the form or responding to the ideas. Allow your poem to be inspired by, or in response to, or in dialogue with that poem. Look at the section in PC on Voice and Style, pp. 115-28. Due: November 15.

c. Final assignment—portfolio of eight, typed, double-spaced pages of poems.

* I encourage you to attend readings, and we can exchange reading news and info. An important reading to attend is the Gallatin Review reading on Wednesday, October 10, 6:30-8 pm in the Labowitz theatre at Gallatin. Also go to bookstores and libraries and read as much poetry as you can.

* Finally, a word about format and organization: All work must be typed and carefully proofread. Carelessness counts against you. Please keep copies of all work that you submit and that we discuss.

**Academic Integrity**

As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website for a full description of the academic integrity policy

www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html

**SCHEDULE**

9/4   Introduction
     Letter poem

9/6   Letter poem due—Readings/Observations
     Reading due: poems in handout.

9/11  Readings/Observations of Letter poem
9/13 **The Line**
Assignment 2 due. Reading due: PC, pp. 104-114 and poems in the handout.
Readings/Observations
Poem recitations

9/18 Readings/Observations of poem 2
Recitations

9/20 **Images and Stanzas**
Readings/Observations/Recitations


10/2 **Music**
Assignment 4 due. Readings/Observations/Recitations


10/9 **Syllables and Syllabics**
Assignment 5 due. Readings/Observations/Recitations

10/10 *Gallatin Review* Reading, 6:30-8 PM, Labowitz Theatre

10/11 Readings/Observations of poem 5.

10/16 NO CLASS

10/18 Readings/Observations of poem 5. Reading due: PC 151-60.

10/23 **Rhythm and Meter**
Assignment 6 due. (Halloween poem? Scary poem?). Reading due: MP 159-161.
Readings/Observations


10/30 **Sonnets**
Assignment 7 due. Readings/Observations.

11/1 Readings/Observations of poem 7.

11/8 Sestinas/Villanelles
Assignment 8 due. Readings/Observations.

November Assignment due!

11/15 Assignment 9 due. Readings/Observations of poem 9 and
of November assignment poems.

11/20 Readings/Observations of poem 9 and
of November assignment poems.

11/22 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

11/27 Assignment 10 due. Readings/Observations


12/6 Revisions due. Readings/Observations

12/11 **Manuscript due**
Best of Workshop Reading

12/13 **Manuscript due**
Best of Workshop Reading

The Greek word poesis conveys two kinds of creation: the inspired creation that resembles a god-like power and the difficult material struggle with making that is human labor. This kind of making cannot proceed by spontaneity alone and it cannot proceed by following rules; it is rather a process that unfolds with all the transport of music and all the deliberation of laying down one sentence, one utterance, one word at a time. In the end there is no visible difference between the act of creation and the act of apprehension; a poet must be ready to take the reader's stance and the reader must be ready to anticipate and identify the intentions of the poet. This is the reciprocity between "I" and "you," the hinge upon which all lyric poetry revolves and recurs in time--and across time.

Poetry helps us to cross thresholds--to traverse the distance between speaker and listener, between the unconscious and the conscious, between the generations of the dead and our own.