"the pleasure which we derive from the representation of the present is due not only to the beauty with which it can be invested, but also to its essential quality of being present."

- Baudelaire

This course explores concrete ways to convert inhabited material into quality art and ways of avoiding traps of literal reality. (Poetry I or the instructor’s permission is a requirement for this course.)

The best way to make something easy is to make it a habit. Impulse has no staying power; step by step survives. Mastery—or even endurance—depends on the habitual exercise of the elemental. Skills are neither process nor product, but the power to carry own one and achieve the other.

Being an Advanced class does not mean we jack up our ambition or aspire to heroics. It simply means we want to me more acutely aware of the elemental.

Each week in addition to presenting work, students will give careful critiques of their colleagues work. There will be brief discussions of poetic careers, the “vision thing,” literary magazines, current critical discourses, and community events.

Course Objectives:

1. Writers will have a very clear grasp of the two frequencies of language and an elemental sense of how they inter-relate.
2. Writers will have a clear understanding and trust working from their own direct observations. Opinions will be clearly differentiated from observations. Students will then be expected to share the work and feedback that transpires with their colleagues in a professional, respectful, and civil manner.
3. Writers will explore and demonstrate their ability to work in a variety of received poetic forms.
4. Writers will sustain 14 weeks of writing prolifically and make all deadlines. All writers work with an eye to the clock. All writers have to be disciplined to set and realize goals. Work habit is important. This is a practicum.
Each writer will be confident in the practice of re-writing. And have some sense of the emergence and differentiation of Style. Each writer in the class will be able to recognize and critic their own unique style and that of others.

I. THE WRITING

Each week a poem will be submitted. Copies provided for everyone at the close of the class. At the beginning of the following class, those papers…with feedback noted on them… will be returned to each colleague.

Instructor’s email is for dialog; not for the submission of late work.

II. READING

Required:

David Tomas Martinez  Hustle  Sarabande
Andy Young  All Night it is Morning  Dialogos
Mark Wunderlich  The Earth Avails  Graywolf

The Poetics of Space,” Gaston Bachelard… this is on-line:


Other Title You Might Consider Reading:

Language and Myth, Ernst Cassirer (Dover, Susanne K. Langer, tr.)

Fortino Sámano, Cynthia Hogue
(a combination of short poems and philosophy)

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Suggested Ancillary Texts:

Triggering Town, Richard Hugo

W. H. Auden’s The Dyer's Hand, Vintage, Random House
(not the whole book, just the opening chapters).
Forewords and Afterwords – “The Christian Mystic”

Recommended Books of Poetry:

Theocritus – The Idyls (Robert Wells translation, Penguin Classics)

Elizabeth Bishop, Complete Poetry

Erin Belieu – Black Box
Deborah Bogen – Landscape with Silos, Let Me Open You a Swan
Catherine Bowman – Rock Farm, Notarikon
Lee Briccetti – Day Mark
Brendan Constantine – Letters to Guns
Peter Covino – The Right Place to Jump
Mark Doty – Sweet Machine
Kathy Fagan – The Charm
Steve Fellner – The Weary World Rejoices
Emily Fragos – Hostage
Vievee Francis – Horse in the Dark, Blue-Tail Fly
Jean Gallagher – This Minute, Start
Jeffrey Harrison – Into Daylight
Scott Hightower – Natural Trouble, Part of the Bargain, Self-evident
Cynthia Hogue – Or Consequence,
Patricia Spears Jones – Femme du monde, Pain Killer
Miguel Murphy – A Book Called Rats
Sean Nevin -- Oblivio Gate
Idra Novey – The Next Country, Exit, Civilian
Matthew Olzmann – Mezzanines
Gregory Pardlo -- Totem
Patty Seyburn -- Mechanical Cluster, Diasporadic, Hilarity

Playwrights: The ancient Greeks, Shakespeare, Chekov, Ibsen, or Tennesee Williams

III. LISTENING

In class, listening--to garner with your ears--is one of the primary skills this class seeks to develop. You are encouraged to attend private and public readings, spend an evening or two being festive and social. Life is hard!

Sept. 9 (Wed.) – 7:00 Poets House, Book launch for Carol Rosenfeld
Sept. 24 (Thurs.) – 7:00 Cornelia Street Café (downstairs), Guillermo Castro
Oct. 21 (Wed.) – 6:00 Jefferson Market Library Horatio reading

Consult: the calendar of Poets House, The Glucksman Ireland House, the NYU Bookstore, the NYU Writing Program Reading Series, The Poetry Project at St. Mark’s Church, Poets-Out Loud at Fordham U, the reading series at Cornelia Street Café and the McNally Jackson Bookstore.

IV. CLASS RULES

No telephoning, surfing, or texting during class. This class is about the shape of one’s attention. It is not about “retrieving information” or about Technology beyond the human Sentence.

Due to the close of semester frenzy, I am not available for meetings the last two weeks of class. If you have end of the semester issues or need any letters of recommendation, please ask for them in a timely advance; not during the last two weeks of class.

Knowing what is going on or has gone on in class is not the responsibility of the instructor. It is the student's job to stay current. Missing one class and then turning around and coming unprepared to the next is unacceptable. Consult your colleagues. Stay current.

Due to the nature of this specific class, attendance is mandatory. It is best to clear all absences in advance with your professor.
If you foresee missing more than two classes, drop this class NOW. You might also want to note: I am an orderly teacher. I loathe tardiness. Eating and drinking during class is permitted, but be a good citizen and clean up and dispose of all trash before leaving the classroom.

Last two days of class: Friday Dec. 4 and Friday Dec. 11 are REQUIRED. Schedule the close of your semester accordingly.

V. FINAL

In lieu of a final, the last two classes are about final work and final evaluation. Each student will submit a professionally finished portfolio of work: a minimum of twelve typed, double spaced pages of poetry. One poem to a page (meaning, do not print front and back. Do not simply start one poem where another leaves off unless it is part of a sequence.

Due. Friday, Dec. 4. No submissions will be taken after the close of that Friday class. Last day of Class symposium is Friday, Dec. 11. Both dates are considered the final and strict adherence to punctuality and turning in work is expected. Those classes are both REQUIRED.

Failing to submit a portfolio or not attending one of the final two classes will cause one full letter grade deduction from the final grade. That is an automatic trigger. The professor does not need to seek out the student for final work... nor compromise on this requirement. NO EXCEPTIONS.

VI. GRADES

More than three absences and frequent tardiness will reduce a grade. Yes, your commitment to the established society of writers is a quantifiable factor.

All work must be turned in on time, with a space-and-a-half copy given to the teacher and to each fellow student. Late papers will be given a reduced grade. Here is the breakdown of how work will affect one’s final grade: Class Participation: 40%. Participation in final two classes: 20%. Quality and expertise of final submitted portfolio of writing: 40%.
VII. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Any plagiarism will result in that work being given an F. Plagiarism is “the unattributed use of work from others.” For further details, check the Gallatin Bulletin or website: [http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/integrity.html](http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/integrity.html)