

ENG 510, Fall 2014
Poetry as Difference
Professor Lauri Ramey
Thursdays, 6:10-10:00 pm

You are welcome to contact Professor Ramey for further information. Please be sure to request the first assignment from the professor or department in August. All course materials will be electronic or provided to you in class. There are no required textbooks.

Course Description:

Throughout its history, lyric poetry's "difference" from other types of communication—even from other literary genres--has been considered an integral part of its identity. As a genre that has consistently defied expectations and reinvented itself, two hotly debated questions are: "What is poetry?" and "How do you read a poem?" We will focus on a wide range of British, American and world poetry in translation from the origins of the genre to the present. Students will be encouraged to arrive at their individual answers to these two questions and ask others. Drawing on many world cultures and historical periods—in addition to the Anglo-American canon—we will read and consider song lyrics, oral and spoken word poetry, concrete and visual poetry, political and protest poetry, poetry by those who have been marginalized, inter-media and digital poetics, experimental and innovative poetry, and more. We will combine creative and critical approaches to focus on poetry's ability to represent difference in meaningful ways. We also will discuss canon formation and marginalization as we create our own poetry canon as a class project. Participants will gain broad exposure to the past and present of poetry and poetics, actively contribute to the course's direction, and gain tactics and confidence to engage with poetry that seems "different. "

Teaching Methods:

Teaching methods will include readings in poetry and poetics, manifestos and criticism, seminar discussions, class activities, presentations by visiting poets and performers, lectures, primary source research, student presentations and intensive writing experience.

Grading:

Evaluation methods and criteria, which will be fully explained, are inquiry-driven, based on student-centered learning formats, and oriented towards fulfilling individual goals in a collaborative environment.

Special Events and Activities:

Visiting poets and performers will be an integral part of the curriculum. Some highlights will be a musical performance and workshop on modern British poetry related to the World War I Centennial; focus on the historic Furious Flower African American Poetry Conference; a poetic symposium on the 50th anniversary of the "Freedom Summer" and international civil rights movements; a class poetry and jazz performance; and events sponsored by *Statement Magazine* and the Center for Contemporary Poetry and Poetics.

Assigned and Suggested Materials May Come from Some of the Following Resources, Among Others:

You will be provided with websites, and online and print journals, such as *aufgabe*, *Writers' Chronicle*, *American Poetry Review*, *Fences 2*, electronic poetry center, PENN Sound and Ubuweb.

Algarín, Miguel and Bob Holman. *Aloud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Café*. New York: Henry Holt, 1994.

Adams, Hazard. *The Offense of Poetry*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007.

Attridge, Derek. *Peculiar Language: Literature as Difference from the Renaissance to James Joyce* (1988). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Benson, Stephen and Clare Connors, eds. *Creative Criticism: An Anthology and Guide*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2014.

Bruns, Gerald L. *The Material of Poetry: Sketches for a Philosophical Poetics*. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2005.

Caddel, Richard and Peter Quartermain. *Other: British and Irish Poetry Since 1970*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1999.

Chang, Tina et al, eds. *Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia and Beyond*. New York: Norton, 2008.

Ferguson, Margaret et al, eds. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, 5th ed. New York and London: Norton, 2005.

Kaminsky, Ilya and Susan Harris. *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry*. New York: Ecco/HarperCollins, 2010.

Leitch, Vincent et al, eds. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001.

Luria, A.R. *The Man with a Shattered World: The History of a Brain Wound*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Mukařovský, Jan. "Standard Language and Poetic Language" (1932), *A Prague School Reader on Esthetics, Literary Structure, and Style*, ed. Paul L. Garvin. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1964.

Nielsen, Aldon Lynn and Lauri Ramey. *Every Goodbye Ain't Gone* (2008) and *What I Say* (2014). Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Noland, Carrie and Barrett Watten. *Diasporic Avant-Gardes: Experimental Poetics and Cultural Displacement*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Ramazani, Jahan. *A Transnational Poetics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Rankine, Claudia and Lisa Sewell. *American Poets in the 21st Century: The New Poetics*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2007.

Rasula, Jed and Steve McCaffery, ed. *Imagining Language: An Anthology*. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1998.

Rothenberg, Jerome and Pierre Joris, ed. *Poems for the Millennium, Vols. 1 and 2*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995.

Shklovsky, Victor. "Art as Technique" (1917), *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, ed. Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.

Sloan, Mary Margaret. *Moving Borders: Three Decades of Innovative Writing by Women*. Jersey City: Talisman House, 1998.

Silliman, Ron, ed. *In the American Tree*. Orono, ME: National Poetry Foundation, 2001.

Stallworthy, Jon, ed. *The Oxford Book of War Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Von Hallberg, Robert, ed. *Canons*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Zeki, Semir. "The Neurology of Ambiguity," *The Artful Mind: Cognitive Science and the Riddle of Human Creativity*, ed. Mark Turner. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.