

The Art of Poetry

Why do poems look or sound the way they do? Why do they make us feel or incite us to action? This module will give you practical and technical tools which deepen your ability to close read. This includes methods like scansion, rhyme and diction. We will focus on poets of the mid-20th Century, with attention to writings related to the rise, politics and after-shocks of American Confessionalism. How does such a landmark movement, whose stresses on immediacy and emotion, continue to inform our contemporary expectations of poetry and its process of creation? We will interrogate the role of the reader and the I-speaker amidst the larger questions of poetry’s ethical or social consciousness.

Please note that all texts listed in this provisional syllabus are subject to change due to availability.

Students are expected to borrow/access/purchase their own texts. All editions welcome.

Wk	Topic	Texts
1	What are Poems? A. An Introduction to Rhythm, Rhyme and Diction B. The role of Poetry in Society	John Lennard, <i>The Poetry Handbook</i> [Excerpt] Adrienne Rich, “[Poetry and Experience: Statement at a Poetry Reading (1964)]” Sappho. Poem TBD Sylvia Plath. Poem TBD Rupi Kaur. Poem TBD
2	Poetic Intent: Lives and After-Lives	Adrienne Rich, “Blood, Bread and Poetry: The Location of the Poet” Paul Celan. “The Meridian”
3	Creative Project and Final Essay Briefing	N/A
4	Rhythms and Rhymes of the Past	John Lennard, <i>The Poetry Handbook</i> [Excerpt] William Shakespeare. “Sonnet 130: [My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun]” William Wordsworth. “We are Seven” and “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”.
5	Modernism: Transatlanticism	T.S Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” Ezra Pound. “In a Station of the Metro”.

		<i>Cathay</i> [Excerpts TBD]
6	Confessional Poetry: An Overview	M.L Rosenthal. "Poetry as Confession" (1959). [Excerpt] Robert Lowell. <i>Life Studies</i> . [Excerpt]
7	Health vs Hysteria (Mid-Term Essay Due)	Sylvia Plath. "Tulips", "In Plaster", "Ariel", "Daddy", "Lady Lazarus", "Fever 103°", "Munich Mannequins", "Cut", "Edge", Various Artwork TBD Hélène Cixous. "The Laugh of the Medusa"
	Recess Week	N/A
8	Health vs Hysteria Cont'd	Sylvia Plath. "Tulips", "In Plaster", "Ariel", "Daddy", "Lady Lazarus", "Fever 103°", "Munich Mannequins", "Cut", "Edge", Various Artwork TBD Hélène Cixous. "The Laugh of the Medusa"
9	North Vs South: The Poet as Traveller	Elizabeth Bishop. "In the Waiting Room", "At the Fishhouses", "Manuelzinho", "Song for the Rainy Season", "Arrival at Santos".
10	The Rise of the Celebrity Poet: Lives and After-Lives/Archives	Anne Sexton "Music Swims Back To Me" < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ht7DLXlyTH4 > Anne Sexton & <i>Her Kind</i> Sound Recordings "Performance at Emmanuel Church , Boston, Massachusetts (June 24, 1970)" < https://mps.lib.harvard.edu/sds/audio/495827631 > See for an overview of the archive collection: < https://library.harvard.edu/collections/anne-sexton-and-her-kind-sound-recordings-1968-1971 >
11	"First Thought, Best Thought"?: Counter-Culture and the Beats	Jonah Raskin. "Allen Ginsberg: Irreverent, Reverentia, and Apocalyptic American Poet" <i>Cambridge Companion to American Poets</i> , pp. 366-378. Allen Ginsberg, "Howl" incl. "Footnote to Howl",

		"A Supermarket in California".
12	Counter-Cultures: Other Voices and Mediums	Yayoi Kasuma. Various Artwork. "Yayoi Kusama - Obsessed with Polka Dots" <i>Tate</i> , Youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRZR3nsileA "Yayoi Kusama: Great Art Explained", <i>Great Art Explained</i> , Youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgSBtXNJjhs
13	Counter-Cultures: Immigration and Identity (Creative Projects Due)	José García Villa. Poems TBD.
<p>Coursework Components:</p> <p>10% - Participation 10% - Presentation (Informal) 40%- Midterm Essay 40% - Creative Project (Poem, Essay Analysis)</p> <p>There is NO Final Exam Component.</p> <p><i>AI Course Policy: The use of generative AI is not allowed during assessments. Should AI be used in individual cases with specific approval, you must follow the citation rules and regulations as set out by the university.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Additional critical theories/secondary sources may be included at points during the semester as a tool for furthering learning.</i></p>		