1634 11th Ave., Seattle, WA

SPRING 2025

HUGO HOUSE CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES

FICTION POETRY ESSAY MEMOIR MIXED GENRE
SCREENWRITING PLAYWRITING SPEC FIC JOURNALISM



REGISTER February 25 (members) // March 4 (general)

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FAIRLY USEFUL INFORMATION

click the button in the bottom right of any class page to see the class registration page.

the colored tab on the top left of class pages corresponds to a hub on the WRITER'S LIFECYCLE chart.

we offer payment plans for classes 8 sessions and up. scholarship applications open a few weeks after membership registration opens.

in person classes take place onsite at HUGO HOUSE in seattle.

early bird period: feb 25 - mar 9
member registration: feb 25
general registration: mar 4
scholarships open: mar 11

your donations keep us open
click here to donate

LETTER FROM THE TEAM

To our beloved Hugo House family,

Here in Seattle, spring arrives slowly. Rain softens the frozen ground, coaxing life back into the soil. Trees stand bare, waiting, as if uncertain whether winter has truly passed. But then there's our evergreen plants—those impossibly resilient trees and shrubs—that have held on to their leaves. Through the short, dark days of winter, through the cold, wind, and ice. In the Evergreen State, growth doesn't stop when the seasons change. It simply adapts, learns how to continue.

Creative work is like that, too. It doesn't wait for perfect conditions. It happens in the cracks, in the cold, in the stretches of time when we don't feel ready. It happens because we choose to keep reaching, even when possibility feels hazy or far away.

As we open our doors to a new season of creative writing classes, we invite you to join us in this spirit of resilience, curiosity, and play. At Hugo House, art is not only about the final product. It's about the act of making, the process of discovering, the willingness to try even when we don't know what the outcome will be.

For those who want to explore, *Engaging Your Ancestors* with Camellia Freeman and *Reading Across Cultures: South Asian Urdu Poetry* with Shankar Narayan will encourage you to experience, explore, and celebrate our interconnected humanities.

For those who want to adventure, classes like *Experiments in Storytelling* with Ramon Isao and *Experiments in Translation in Adaptation* with Lola Rogers will break open your brain and encourage you to play in surprising, unexpected ways.

For those who want to go deep, classes like *The Revision Workshop: The Novel* with Carolyn Abram and *Reading Deeply: Maidens of the Void* with Christie Valentin-Bati will encourage you to excavate, to investigate, and make connections you never thought possible.

For those who want to see—even when it's uncomfortable—classes like *Crimes and Perversions: Personal Writing with Heroics* with Kimberly Dark or *Beyond Formula: Rethinking Story Structure* with Noah Zanella will encourage you flip the script and reimagine the world as we know it.

In moments when the future feels uncertain, creativity brings us back to the present. It's our way of listening. Of exploring. Of existing and resisting stagnation, even when our world asks us to shrink. It asks us to look closely, ask questions, and embrace the discomfort of not knowing.

To create is to be brave in the face of uncertainty. It asks us to sit inside the unknown without rushing toward an answer. Because the unknown is the glimmering edge of all that is yet to be: we only need to be willing to show up, to ask questions, to follow the thread of possibility and see where it leads.

The most astonishing things come when we loosen our grip on expectation—when we allow ourselves to be surprised, to change and be changed. Everything is waiting for you. You only need to be willing to begin.

What's the class you've always wanted to take but never felt ready for? What's the story that's been waiting inside you, the one that scares you just a little? What's the creative risk you've been putting off?

This is your invitation to embrace the unknown, to step forward without a map, to let the process take you somewhere new. Creativity is not about arriving—it's about becoming.

Spring is here. Let's become, together.

Amy, Aubrey, and Alia
Hugo House Programs Team
February 24, 2025

WHAT LEVEL AM I?

Introductory

This is your first creative writing workshop, first writing class since high school, or first foray into a new genre or form. You're looking to try something new, kickstart your writing, and/or establish yourself in the fundamentals.

Intermediate

You have a strong understanding of writing fundamentals and are eager to deep dive into craft. You're honing your writerly identity and voice through independent projects. In workshop, you look for constructive feedback and are ready to do writing and reading outside of class.

Advanced

You've written a significant body of work and have taken it through several stages of revision. You're getting ready to publish or are in the early stage of publishing, and you're interested in refining the skills that will take you to the next level in the literary industry.

All Levels

You are any of the above and are looking to play with new possibilities.

TERMINOLOGY

Cohort

A group of writers who participate together in a writing course, program, or workshop. These writers write and learn alongside each other, often getting to know each other's work. A cohort provides a supportive community where members can share work, feedback, ideas, and encouragement.

Craft

The skills, techniques, and methods writers use to create and refine their work. It encompasses topics like voice, structure, character, development, dialogue, style, pacing, rhythm, etc.

Generative

Refers to a practice focused on creating—generating—work. Generative classes are generally focused more on creating a lot of work, rather than polishing work to completion.

Workshop

A collaborative environment in which writers share their work with peers and receive constructive feedback. There are many workshop styles that offer various ways for writers to present their work and engage with the work of their cohort.

THE WRITER'S LIFECYCLE
(generally)

playing & exploring
generative, reading, and writer wellness classes

studying craft & experimenting
craft classes, tiered classes, and yearlongs

testing your Idea
workshop intensives; yearlong workshops

killing your darlings
revision, editing, assembling a body of work

sending your work out into the world
publishing, submitting, querying, BOOK LAB

use this chart to locate where you're at in your writing journey.

you may find one primary hub suits you, but feel free to explore multiple hubs simultaneously, especially if you are stuck or work better with a non-linear path

look for colored tabs on each class page that indicate its corresponding hub

when in doubt, **play**

This chart is partly inspired by JOHN CLEESE's work on creativity.

IN PERSON

screenwriting fundamentals

journaling the journey

engaging your ancestors

breaking from realism: stories for the stage

ONLINE

talking to the dead: writing grief and loss

daytime prose workshop

family matters: writing life stories

green expectations: writing our relationship to nature

breaking from realism: stories for the stage

the writer's laboratory: experiments in oulipo

museum as muse: writing alongside exhibits

letters of love

exploring non-human animal perspectives

a ghosting of tanukis: writing with spirit beings

sleight of hand for writers

narrative reclamation: the self & community

experiments in translation and adaptation

build-a-character workshop

well, i am a dilettante – brian eno



CROSS GENRE

TALKING TO THE DEAD:
WRITING GRIEF AND LOSS

with cass donish

ONLINE / All Levels / 10 sessions
Tues. April 8 – June 10 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$605



How can writing convey the contradictions and complexities of loss? How do we hold on and go on simultaneously? Can writing challenge our cultural views on death through radical perspectives on love, time, and art?

This 10-week class is a collective space for learning—together—how to live in unlivable times, how to bear an unbearable world, and how to cultivate joy without casting grief aside. We'll plunge into poetry and prose writing on grief, exploring how writers have grappled with the universal yet painfully specific and often isolating experience of loss. We'll also examine how the grief process shapes craft choices, and how those choices, in turn, might inform—and even transform—the journey.

Then, borrowing inspiration from what we read, we'll write about our own experiences with loss. We'll read and write together in a supportive community that honors the challenges and sacredness of grief.

The goal in this class is not to write grief away, but to write toward it, to write with it, to make more space in our hearts and minds for grief to dwell, so that it can teach us more about life and about what it is to love when our existence is so brief.

Emerge with knowledge of grief literature and related concepts, up to eight new writing experiments, workshop experience, and deep community engagement with fellow writers in a cohort-like environment.

"Come back! Even as a shadow, even as a dream."

— Megara, Herakles by Euripides, translated by Anne Carson

LEARN MORE



SCREENWRITING FUNDAMENTALS

with andrew bell

IN PERSON / Introductory, Intermediate / 10 sessions
Tues. April 8 – June 17 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$605

"This class is just fun. We get close, we fall in love with each other's stories, and we help make them better."

– Andrew Bell, instructor

Have you ever watched a film or TV show and thought, I want to write that... but didn't know where to start?

This 10-week workshop will equip you with all the essential tools of screenwriting. Through guided prompts, scene work, and short scriptwriting exercises, you'll develop your own cinematic stories while learning the fundamentals of format and structure, scene, strong character, and dynamic dialogue. We'll analyze great screenplays, dig into what makes them work, and workshop your writing in a supportive, engaging environment

Perfect for beginners and writers transitioning into screenwriting, this class will leave you with a solid foundation, original scenes, a short film script draft, and the confidence to bring your stories to the screen.

LEARN MORE



DAYTIME PROSE WORKSHOP

with anca szilágyi

ONLINE / Advanced / 10 sessions
Wed. April 9 – June 11 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$605

Feeling stuck? Something in your manuscript not working, but you're not sure what?

Get a fresh perspective on your essays, memoirs, novels, and short stories in this ten-week reading and writing workshop.

Using an adapted version of Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process, we'll hone our editorial eyes: We'll learn how to ask questions about our own work and the works of others, how to have fruitful, fulfilling discussions about the stories we want to wrestle with on the page, and how to discuss writing from a place of curiosity and inquiry in a supportive cohort environment.

Leave with detailed, thoughtful feedback and a better sense of how to move forward on your work in progress.

LEARN MORE

JOURNALING THE JOURNEY

with emma stockman

IN PERSON / All Levels / 10 sessions
Sat. April 12 – June 14 / 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PT
$905

Who are you? Where have you been and where are you going? What does it all mean?

On its own, a healthy journaling practice strengthens the channel between head and heart, mind and body. As we write our personal heroic journeys, our journaling practice can become an archetypal playground—a place to find mythical meaning in the mundane; to find comfort and even creative inspiration in the footsteps of a well-trodden path.

Over ten weeks, we'll use a variety of journey frameworks to structure weekly prompts for emotional inquiry and self-reflection. Whether you're in the middle of a great change, or reflecting on your past, this class will provide the space and context for a deeper understanding of the journeys you've taken and how they've shaped you.

Perfect for anyone who wants to kickstart a new journaling practice, or who are looking for a new perspective on their life/creative practice.

Students will be required to wear face masks while attending this class. Face masks will be available at the Hugo House front desk.

"You are the storyteller of your own life, and you can create your own legend, or not."

— Isabel Allende



FAMILY MATTERS: WRITING LIFE STORIES

with nicole treska & nora lange

ONLINE / All Levels / 8 sessions
Wed. April 9 – May 28 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - $490

"All happy families are the same..."

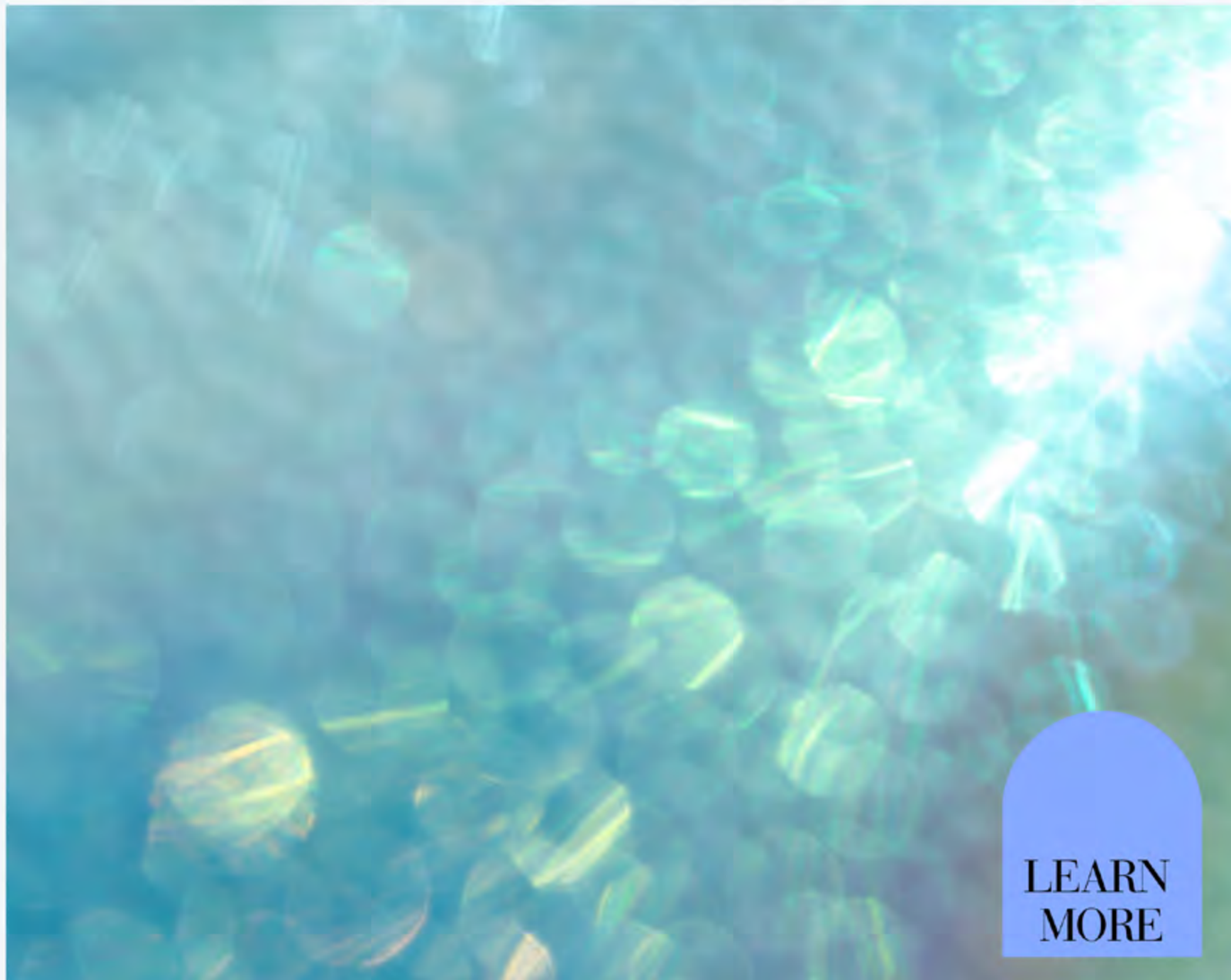
If you know how to complete this sentence, you've probably got a family story in you.

Perfect for writers who want to build stories that draw on their lived experiences and family relationships—either in fiction or creative nonfiction—but may unsure how to start, this discussion-focused workshop will give you the tools you need to construct, clarify, and tell your own family stories.

Over eight weeks, we'll read a sampling of writers who pilfered from their own lives, breaking down how they used formal structure and craft to create compelling narratives. We'll explore the benefits of choosing fiction or nonfiction, and discuss the difficult choices and real-world consequences that come with using life experience as material.

We'll also hold each other accountable through structured practice, embracing the ethos of "getting to the desk" every day. Finally, we'll workshop and work on revision techniques to amplify our language, assess our genre choices, and create a compelling voice readers will love.

Leave with fifteen pages workshopped and revised, and a clearer sense of the story you're telling.



ENGAGING YOUR ANCESTORS

with camellia freeman

IN PERSON / All Levels / 8 sessions
Tues. April 22 – June 10 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - $490

Each of us carries histories—some known, some unknown, some imagined. Through bloodlines, traditions, or lineages we choose to claim, our ancestors shape us in ways we may not fully realize. So, what happens when we invite them into our creative practice?

In this eight-week generative course, we'll explore our connections to ancestry—in whatever way we choose to define it. Through somatic practices, objects, archives, place, and literature, we'll engage with the past, playing with time, space, memory, myth, and imagination to explore ancestral touchpoints and uncover new creative possibilities.

Each session will incorporate optional somatic exercises, such as embodied awareness, movement, and guided reflection, offering an alternative way to access connection and inspiration.

No prior experience with somatic work necessary—only a willingness to explore!

Expect in-class writing, large and small group discussions, assignments to keep you writing between class sessions, and opportunities to share. Leave with new writing, fresh creative insights, and a deeper relationship with the stories that live within and beyond you.

Perfect for writers who are curious about lineage, whether they know a great deal about their ancestors or almost nothing at all; anyone who wants to explore personal or communal history through a creative lens; anyone interested in using the body as a tool for deeper artistic engagement.

Whether you're looking to start a new project, shake up your writing process, or simply seek new ways to connect with the past, this course will provide space, structure, and support for your exploration.



GREEN EXPECTATIONS:
WRITING OUR RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE

with claudia castro luna

ONLINE / All Levels / 8 sessions
Tues. April 22 – June 17 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - 490



Trees and plants are deeply woven into our myths, art, and daily lives. From ancient iconographies to modern environmental aesthetics, they shape the way we think, create, and exist.

This multigenre generative class invites writers and artists to explore their personal and creative relationships with the natural world. Over eight weeks, we'll study a variety of texts—letters, essays, photographs, drawings, poetry—exploring our selves and our personal relationships to nature.

Leave with an attuned observational eye, a deeper awareness of how trees and plants shape personal and collective human experiences, and several short pieces.

Perfect for writers and creatives of all levels, this class is open to those working in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, painting, photography, sculpture, and beyond. It's also for anyone interested in ecopoetics, deep ecology, ecocriticism, gardening, environmental aesthetics and exploring how nature influences our psyche, inspires our art, and connects us to something greater.

"Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth."

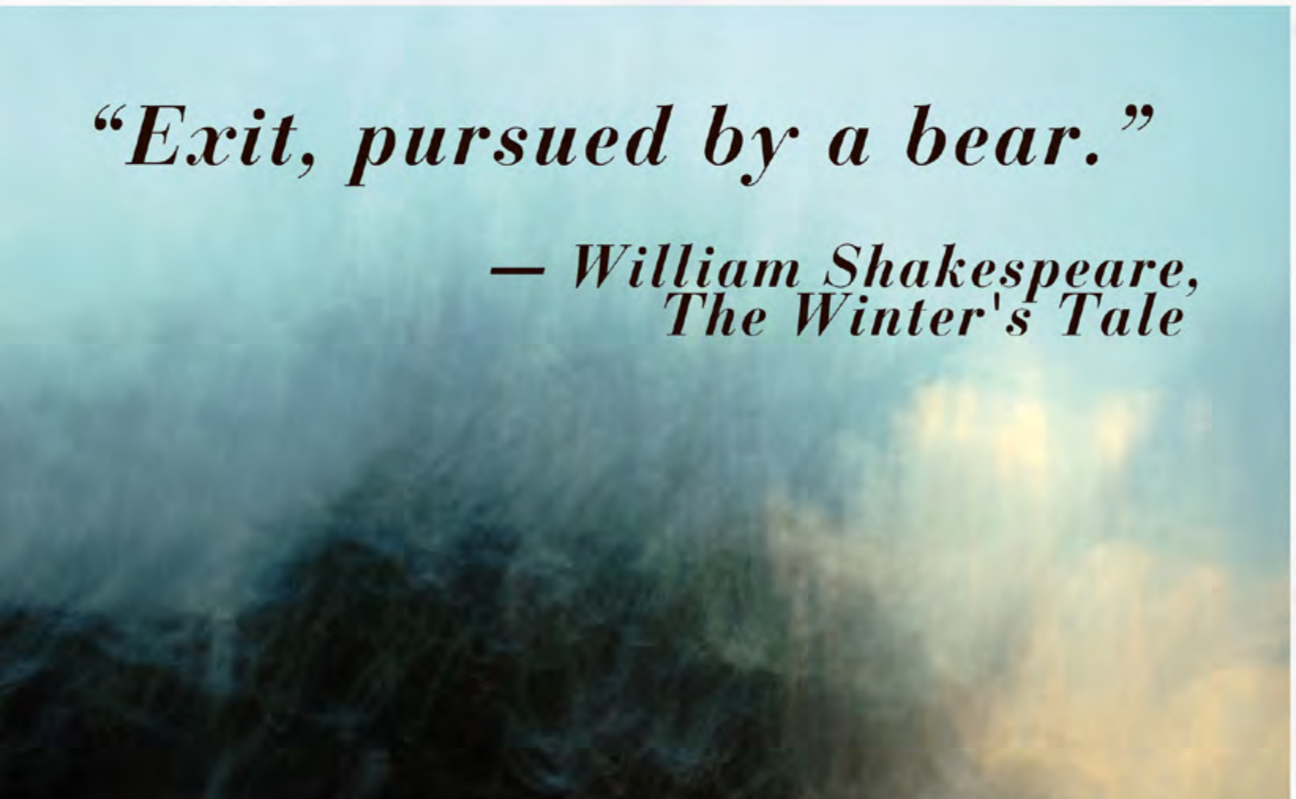
— Herman Hesse

LEARN MORE

BREAKING FROM REALISM:
STORIES FOR THE STAGE

with nat oleander smith

IN PERSON / Intermediate, Advanced / 8 sessions
Sat. April 26 – June 14 / 1:10 – 3:10 pm PT
$441 - $490



In the language of theater, story is constrained to what happens on the stage.

But here's what's so great about theater: it invites audience to suspend disbelief and surrender to new realities. Moving beyond the literal allows us to embrace the fantastic weirdness of story and to push the boundaries of performance.

In this eight-week playwriting course, we'll learn to engage with the delightful wildness within ourselves and bring it to the stage.

Drawing on Michael Bigelow Dixon's Breaking from Realism and playwrights like Marcus Gardley & Quiara Alegría Hudes, we'll examine what realism is, why its pull is so strong, and how we can break free from its constraints—without losing our audience. We'll experiment with new playwriting techniques, learn how to craft dynamic monologues, push dialogue beyond the expected, and ways that acknowledge bias, incorporate multiple perspectives, and layer together to create rich, multi-dimensional narratives.

We'll also examine how to write about taboo topics (personal stories that may carry social stigma or negative connotations) thoughtfully and in ways much deeper than just 'shock value,' forwarding the plot and creating relatability rather than simply evoking discomfort.

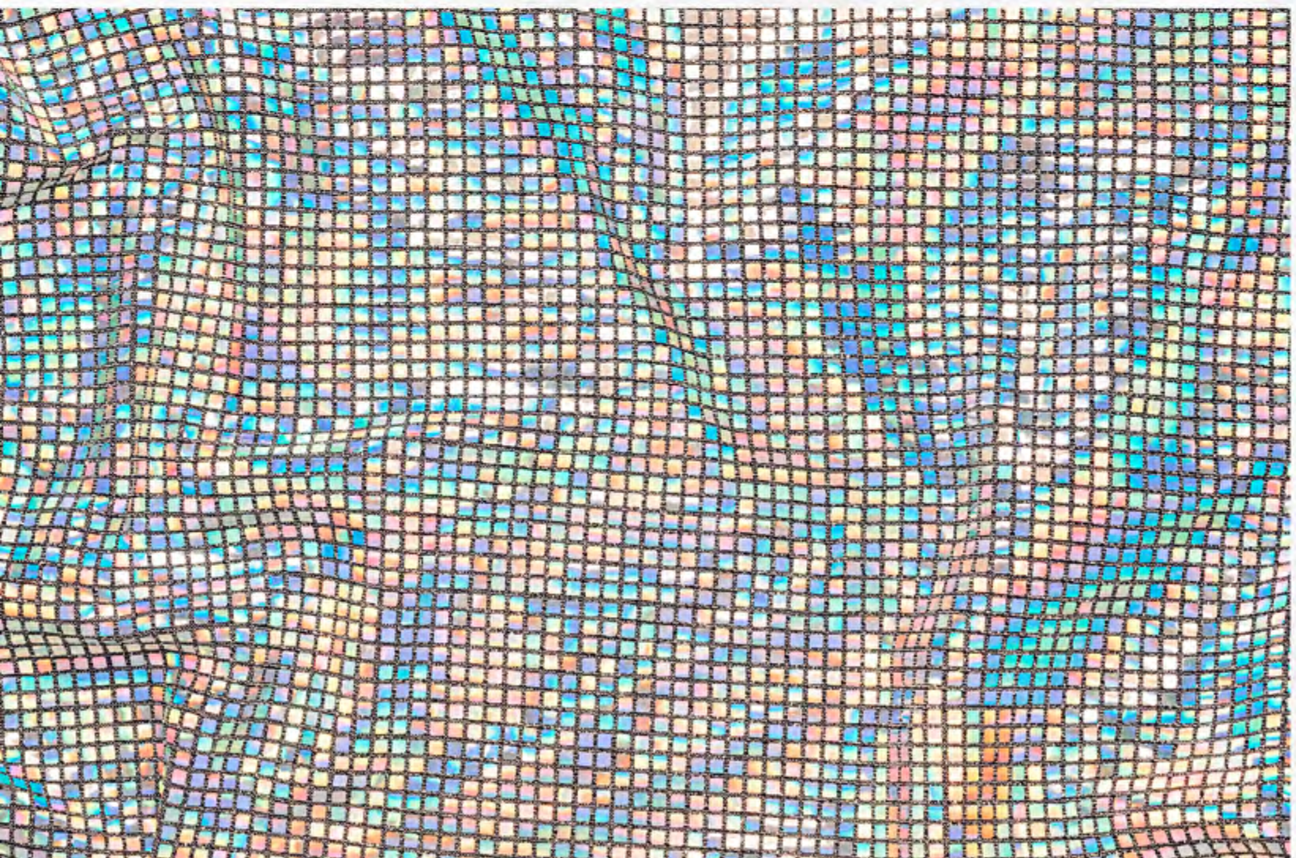
Leave with several fresh writing starts and a toolkit to tackle the tricky realm of perspective and self-portrayal—even when it's not always flattering.

LEARN MORE

THE WRITER'S LABORATORY: EXPERIMENTS IN OULIPO

with gabriela denise frank

ONLINE / Intermediate / 6 sessions
Thurs. April 24 – May 29 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$351 –$390



Looking for new ways to experiment, play, and push your writing beyond familiar patterns?

Inspired by the French literary movement OuLiPo, this class explores how constraints can spark creativity, encouraging unconventional approaches to storytelling, poetry, and language itself.

Each session, we'll study notable OuLiPo writers like Raymond Queneau, Georges Perec, and Italo Calvino, noticing how they used constraints to generate surprising and innovative work. Then, we'll put these methods into practice, trying our hands at lipograms, S+7, snowballs, contrapuntals, sestinas, and more. Through structured play, we'll experiment with new forms, embrace unexpected discoveries, and stretch our creative instincts in ways that might not be possible with an open-ended blank page.

No prior knowledge of OuLiPo is needed—just a willingness to try something different!

Perfect for writers eager to experiment, expand their creative toolkit, and create a renewed sense of playfulness in their writing. Prose writers may find these exercises particularly transformative, as constraint-based techniques encourage unconventional ways of thinking about structure and storytelling.

Leave with a portfolio of surprising, inventive writing starts, along with practical strategies to approach your work with curiosity and play.

What is OuLiPo?

OuLiPo—Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle, or "Workshop of Potential Literature"—is the longest-running modern literary movement still in operation.

Founded by a motley crew of writers, professors, mathematicians, and artists, OuLiPo saw creative constraints as launchpads for imagination and art-making. By setting up unconventional, seemingly impossible challenges, like writing without a certain letter (lipogram) or replacing every noun with the seventh one in the dictionary (S+7), OuLiPo writers cracked open new possibilities for playing with language.

LEARN MORE

MUSEUM AS MUSE:
WRITING ALONGSIDE EXHIBITS

with deborah woodard

IN PERSON / All Levels / 6 sessions
Sat. May 10 – June 14 / 1:10 – 3:10 pm PT
$351 - $390

"Painting is poetry that is seen rather than felt, and poetry is painting that is felt rather than seen."
– Leonardo da Vinci

Art has long been a muse for writers, sparking inspiration through its colors, textures, and the emotions it evokes.

In this immersive workshop, you'll step away from the written word and into the visual world by visiting four or five small, intimate museums around Seattle. Likely stops include the Asian Art Museum, the National Nordic Museum, the Frye, the Henry Art Museum, the Northwest African American Museum, and a new wild card find—The Connections Museum in Georgetown. At each location, you'll write to prompts designed to awaken fresh language and perspective in your work.

Leave with a small portfolio of new work and fresh ideas on how to proceed with your writing.



LETTERS OF LOVE

with naa akua

ONLINE / All Levels / 4 sessions
Thurs. May 1 – 22 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$274.50 - $305

Love is more than a feeling—it's a practice, an intention, and a way of being in the world.

In this 4-session generative class, we will explore love as an active engagement. Through epistolary poems, journaling prompts, and mini memoirs, we'll use writing as a profound tool for self-discovery and connection. We'll unpack emotions, deepen our self-awareness, and honor the many ways love shows up in our lives.

We'll build our foundation on powerful texts, using texts such as bell hooks' *All About Love*, Cheryl Boyce-Taylor's *Mama Phife Represents*, Christina Baldwin's *Life's Companion Journal: Writing as a Spiritual Quest*, among others, to inspire and guide our writing. In each session, we'll practice meditative techniques and breathing exercises as well, exploring holistic approach to love as both a subject and a creative practice.

Leave with a portfolio of letters and journal entries, and a greater of understanding of how love—romantic, platonic, familial, or self-love—can shape and transform your writing.

"A generous heart is always open, always ready to receive our going and coming. In the midst of such love we need never fear abandonment. This is the most precious gift true love offers – the experience of knowing we always belong."

– bell hooks, All About Love

LEARN MORE

EXPLORING NON-HUMAN ANIMAL PERSPECTIVES

with meghan lamb

ONLINE / All Levels / 4 sessions
Wed. May 14 – June 4 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$274.50 - $305

From companion animals to creatures of the wild, non-human beings offer writers a powerful way to explore complex human themes—home, love, captivity, identity, and belonging.

Whether through the gaze of a tank-dwelling amphibian, the mind of a parrot, or the body of a cow, the non-human perspective provides a fresh lens through which we can examine the world.

Perfect for writers of all genres who are fascinated by animals, interested in eco-conscious storytelling or speculative fiction, exploring unique narrative structures, or looking to deepen an existing project or spark ideas for a new one.

This four-week craft class will explore the craft of non-human narration, dissecting the unique advantages and challenges of animal stories.

We'll read works by writers spanning different literary traditions, exploring a diverse range of perspectives and approaches. Then, we'll examine how these perspectives influence narrative strategies, atmosphere, and point of view. We'll also how non-human perspectives can be used as a tool in our writing—depicting themes of behavior vs. instinct, the distance (or intimacy) that non-human narration allows, and how animal stories can reflect the human experience in unexpected ways.

Leave with a fortified understanding of the ways writing craft connects with the process of writing toward the non-human.



"Deer Reeder: First may I say, sorry for any werds I spel rong. Because I am a fox! So don't rite or spel perfect. But here is how I lerned to rite and spel as gud as I do!"

– George Saunders, "Fox 8"

LEARN MORE

A GHOSTING OF TANUKIS:
WRITING WITH SPIRIT BEINGS

with shankar narayan

ONLINE / All Levels / 2 sessions
Sat. April 12 – 19 / 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
$274.50 - $305



Spirit beings are present in cultures across the world: they bring good harvests, help with domestic tasks, wreak vengeance on wrongdoers, mourn the dead, lift the spirits of protagonists, inject quirky mischief into the proceedings, and more.

But why do they exist? How do they come to be? What do they reveal about society's deepest traumas, fears, hopes, and dreams?

In this two-session intensive, we'll explore spirit beings from four cultural traditions: Japanese, old Russian, Pacific North west Indigenous, and Hindu—diving into a parade of yokai, rusalkas, yakshas, chupacabras, and more.

We'll have fun connecting echoes across disparate cultures, using these mythologies to fuel our own rich writing (perhaps directly aided by a spirit being or two).

Leave with a number of new starts or finished pieces, a new appreciation of the mythologies and histories of spirit beings, and a trove of resources for further inquiry and exploration.

Perfect for writers of all levels and genres interested folklore, speculative fiction, and in deeper explorations of culture and meaning.

"Humans have changed. They used to cherish nature much more."

— from Hayao Miyazaki's Pom Poko

LEARN MORE



SLEIGHT OF HAND FOR WRITERS

with kimberly lee

ONLINE / Introductory / 2 sessions
Sat. May 10 – 17 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$135 – $150

What happens when you approach storytelling the way a magician executes a trick?

Subvert, surprise, and have readers hanging on to every word in this generative, two-part workshop. We'll explore Penn & Teller's seven principles of magic (palm, ditch, steal, load, simulation, misdirection, switch). Then, we'll learn to apply these sleight of hand techniques to our own writing!

Learn to craft compelling, unexpected narratives and moments that make your reader gasp and flip back to see the trick again. Leave with a collection of short pieces, a deeper understanding of storytelling techniques, and renewed confidence in your creative voice.

Perfect for new writers looking to break patterns, generate new work, and make writing feel like magic again. Writers working in suspense, mystery, and thriller are especially welcome.

LEARN MORE



NARRATIVE RECLAMATION: THE SELF & COMMUNITY

with zain shamoon

ONLINE / All Levels / 2 sessions
Sat. May 31 - June 7 / 1:10 – 3:10 pm PT
$135 - $150

Explore how storytelling can help us to find relief from distress in this two-week class.

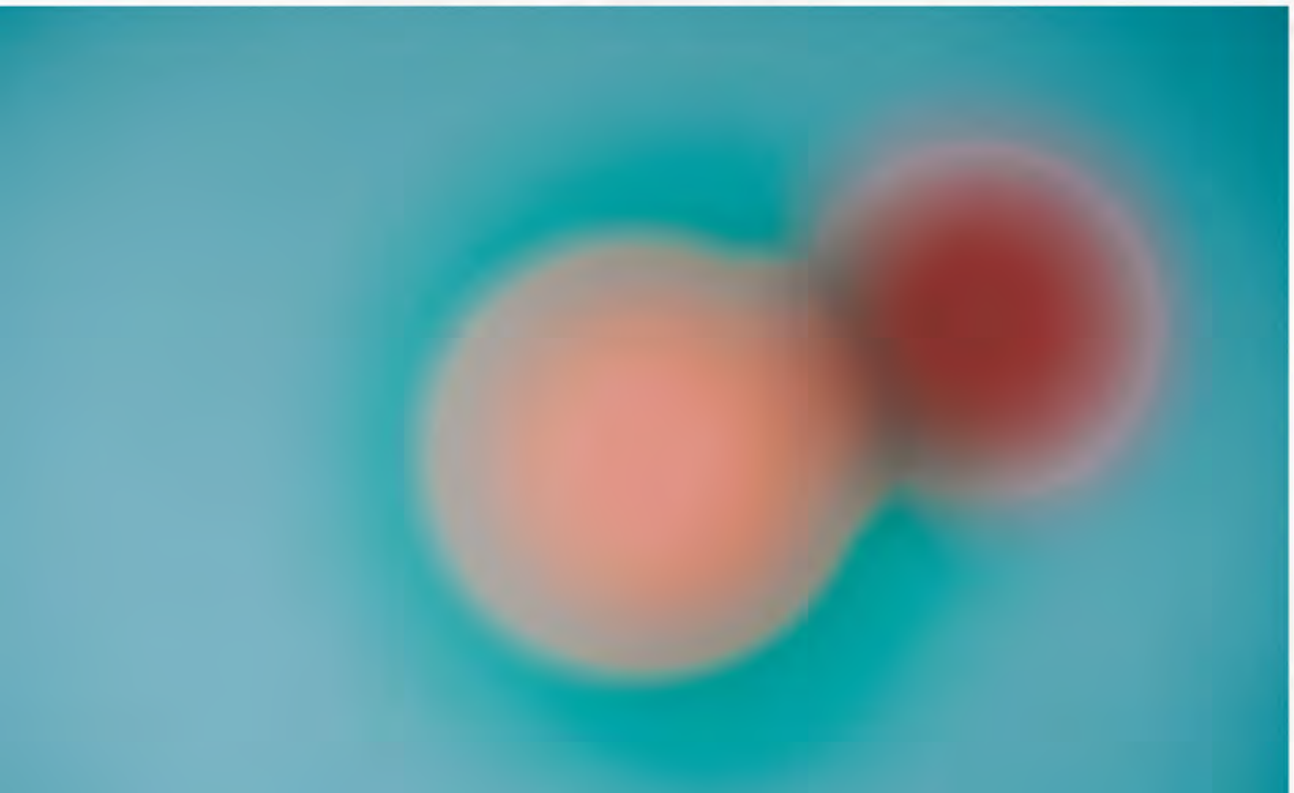
We'll learn to use storytelling for personal and communal reclamation, including in the way we confront socio-historical trauma. Through class discussion and generative writing, we'll explore the role of personal storytelling in counteracting the impact of trauma and learn to use storytelling to empower ourselves.

LEARN MORE

EXPERIMENTS IN TRANSLATION & ADAPTATION

with lola rogers

IN PERSON / Intermediate / 1 session
Sat. April 19 / 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PT
$103.50 - $115



No knowledge of a language beyond English is required to attend this class.

Translation is more than swapping words; it's a form of adaptation: transforming feeling, voice, and meaning for a new audience. It's a creative challenge that can stretch your writing in surprising ways, breaking you out of stylistic ruts and deepening your craft. So, how do we move a story across boundaries —of language, time, or culture?
In this hands-on, participatory class, we'll explore the art of translation and literary adaptation, no second language required! We'll compare multiple translations of the same text and discuss *Demon Copperhead*—Barbara Kingsolver's modern Appalachian retelling of *David Copperfield*—to see how subtle choices shape the reader's experience and how stories shift when reimagined for a new audience.

Then, we'll dive into our own creative experiments. We'll practice translating a short piece from one style of English into another, experimenting with voice, tone, and cultural context. You'll see firsthand how adjusting even a single word can completely change how a story lands.

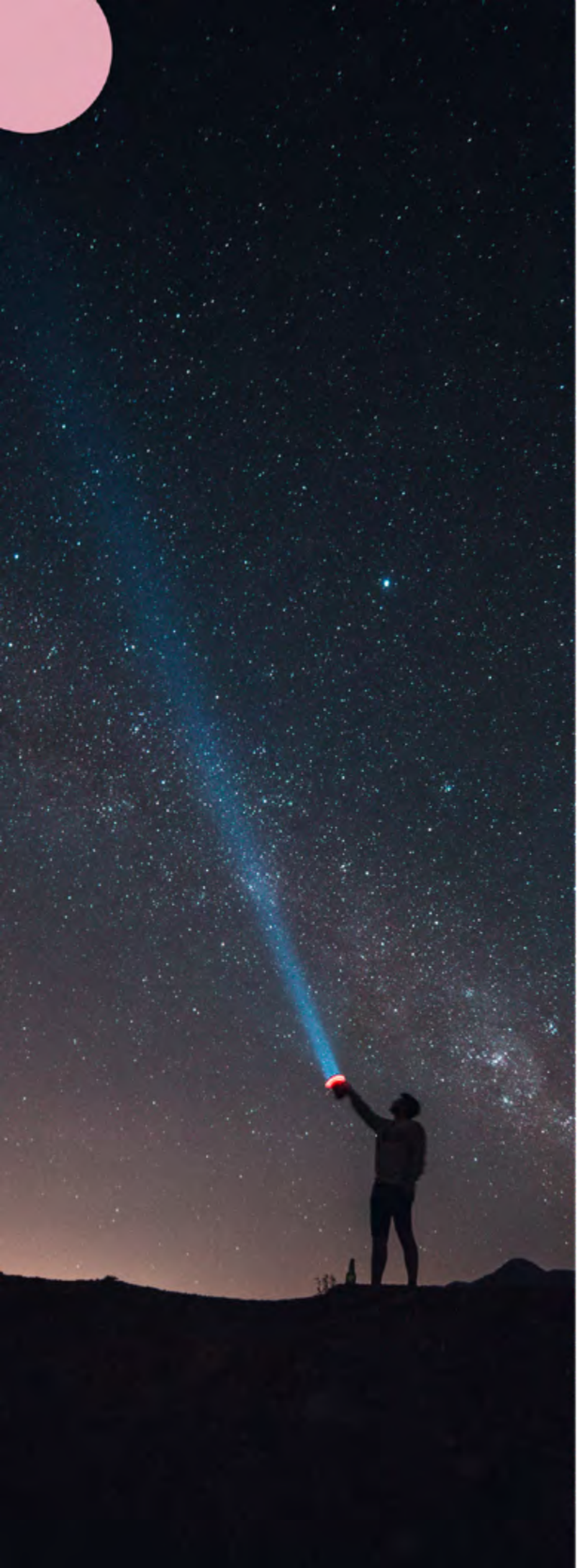
Perfect for writers who want to sharpen their style, explore the creative possibilities of translation and adaptation, or find inspiration when faced with the question, "What do I write?"

Leave with a better sense of how thinking like a translator can inform your own writing, and how sound, tone, and register affect the way your writing is received by your readers.

"The wonder is that you could start life with nothing, end with nothing, and lose so much in between."

– Barbara Kingsolver, Demon Copperhead

LEARN MORE



BUILD-A-CHARACTER WORKSHOP

with geraldine woods

ONLINE / All Levels / 1 session
Sat. May 31 / 1:10 – 4:10 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

"Plot grows out of character. If you focus on who the people in your story are, something is bound to happen."

– Anne Lamott

Observe a family playing a card game: Papa neatly aligns his discards, while Mama drops hers carelessly in the center of the table. One child slaps down her cards; the other checks each card twice before releasing it.

These tiny details don't drive the plot, but they do help us to connect, to bring these characters to life.

Over three hours, we'll expand your toolkit of characterization techniques: we'll practice selecting revealing details: the character's personal possessions (or lack of them), the physical environment the character controls, and the character's reaction to uncontrolled factors. We'll explore the character's verbal style, the company they keep, their thoughts...even their texting style! We'll also look at language choices—how your diction, sentence patterns, symbols, and similes shape readers' understanding of your characters.

Whether you've written ten novels or half a short story, this class is perfect for fiction and nonfiction writers who want to write compelling, multidimensional characters that live on in readers' heads. Writers may work with an existing character from a work in progress or create something entirely new in class.

LEARN MORE



the truth is rarely pure and never simple – oscar wilde

CREATIVE NONFICTION

IN PERSON

from archive to art: writing with research

one-day memoir intensive

ONLINE

creative nonfiction iii

writing about nature

the art of the personal essay

creative cataloging: list making for insight and delight

making meaning from memory

true to life: writing complex characters

crime & perversions: writing about personal heroics

CREATIVE NONFICTION III

with beth slattery

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 10 sessions
Tues. April 8 – June 10 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$605

The third in a three-part fiction series, Creative Nonfiction III offers advanced lessons and workshopping for writers to build upon their creative nonfiction toolkit.

Over ten weeks, we'll continue to read, write, and workshop using skills developed in Creative Nonfiction II. We'll build on craft skills like developing voice, playing with structure, and employing rhythm, and dive deeper into revision tools and techniques.

Expect to generate, workshop, and revise up to 20 pages of work.

Creative Nonfiction I & II are not pre-requisites for taking this class. However, writers should be familiar with both basic creative nonfiction craft principles and have prior workshop experience.

LEARN MORE

WRITING ABOUT NATURE

with gail folkins

ONLINE / All Levels / 8 sessions
Thurs. April 24 – June 12 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - $490

How do you make a place the main character of your story? Whether it's an urban park, a remote forest, or the shifting coastline of a favorite beach, a landscape's personality is shaped by history, culture, memory, and change.

Explore the art of place-based writing, weaving together narrative, research, and observation to create compelling essays that bring the natural world to life in this 8-week generative craft class.

We'll read a variety of writers—including J. Drew Lanham, Ana Maria Spagna, Rick Bass, & Aimee Nezhukumatathil—exploring the spectrum of voices in nature writing and noticing how they connect personal story-telling to larger conversations and con-temporary issues. We'll also develop literary toolkit and research methods (ex. personal observation, interviews), & compose our own place-based essays that integrate narrative and information.

Perfect for writers with some writing background who'd like to explore the role of place and its personal and broader influence in essay writing.

"To help others understand nature is to make it breathe like some giant: a revolving, evolving, celestial being with ecosystems acting as organs and the living things within those places —humans included—as cells vital to its survival."

– J. Drew Lanham

LEARN MORE

FROM ARCHIVE TO ART:
WRITING WITH RESEARCH
with maggie mertens

IN PERSON / Intermediate / 6 sessions
Wed. April 23 – May 28 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$351 - $390

As writers, we're often drawn to stories outside our immediate reach—unearthing forgotten heroes, revisiting historical events, or weaving cultural criticism through the lens of time and place. But how do we craft compelling narratives when sources are scarce, subjects are no longer alive, or turning documents into story feels like trying to juice a rock?

In this six-week course, we'll move beyond the basics of research, exploring practical techniques for finding, interpreting, and incorporating sources into literary nonfiction. We'll learn to navigate digital and physical archives, track down first-hand accounts, and conduct interviews to fill in gaps.

We'll also discuss ethical considerations and strategies for seamlessly integrating research into compelling prose.

Whether you're working on fiction, biography, literary journalism, memoir, or a research-driven essay, this class will help bring any researched topic to life in ways that are vivid, engaging, and narratively rich.

Leave with practical research skills, a clearer understanding of how to shape nonfiction and fiction from research, and 3–5 pages of new writing from your own project.

Perfect for writers who want to develop research-driven projects or enhance their research toolkit.



"What makes essays last is less their argument than the display of a complex mind and a distinctive prose voice."

–Susan Sontag

THE ART OF THE PERSONAL ESSAY

with kate carmody

ONLINE / Introductory, Intermediate / 6 sessions
Mon. May 5 – June 9 / 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm PT
$418.50 - $465

In this six-week reading and writing workshop, we'll learn the fundamentals of personal essay writing.

We'll explore traditional and innovative essay forms and read authors such as Roxane Gay, Hanif Abdurraqib, and Toni Jensen, focusing on techniques they use to leave a lasting impression.

Through reading and writing exercises, students will leave this class with a draft of their own powerful personal essay and a toolkit for many more.

LEARN MORE

CREATIVE CATALOGING:
LIST MAKING FOR INSIGHT AND DELIGHT

with sarah campbell

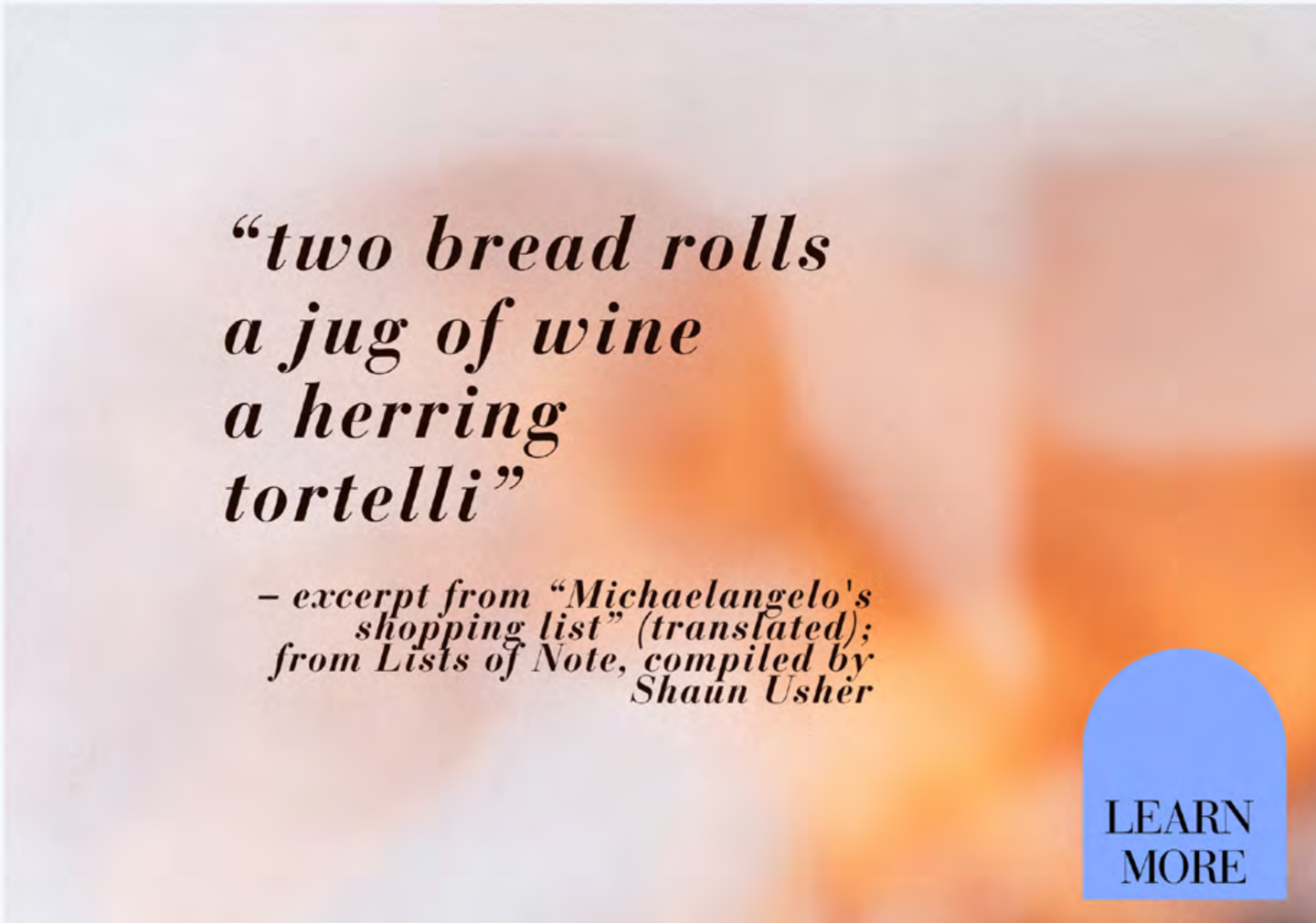
ONLINE / All Levels / 2 sessions
Sat. April 12 – 19 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$135 - $150

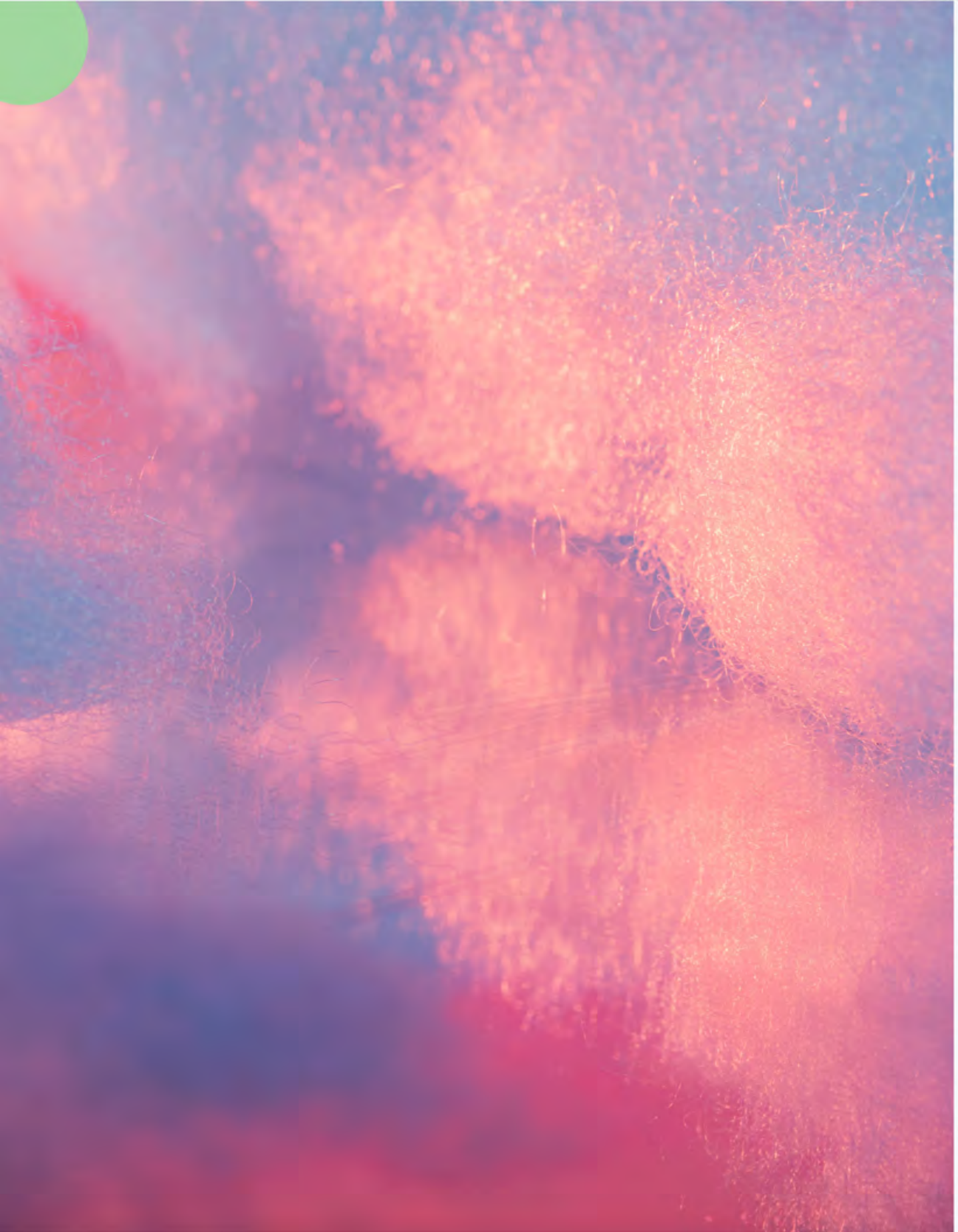
Do you have notebooks filled with lists—things you've seen, done, or dream of doing? Are you fascinated by the odd and beautiful ways humans have cataloged the world? Do you want to be?

In this two-session generative class, we'll explore the creative, poetic, and revelatory potential of lists: what these categorizations can tell us about our past, our pre-sent, and our perception of the world. We'll discuss the history and artistry of list-making, examine famous and unexpected examples—from the hand-written and poetic to the pictoral—then write some lists of our own!

Emerge with a multitude of lists and a new approach to list-making—as a tool for starting, breaking through blocks, and engaging with our creativity in fun, low-barrier ways.

Bring a notebook, a pen, and your cataloging spirit. If you've ever sensed that lists hold untapped creative power, this class is for you.





MAKING MEANING FROM MEMORY

with kimberly dark

ONLINE / Introductory, Intermediate / 1 session
Sat. April 12 / 1:10 – 4:10 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

Memory is a mercurial thing. Shaped by our personal experience —and our experience of ourselves— some memories may feel immediate, powerful, and haunting, while others may feel fragmented, tangential, and irrelevant. But even small, seemingly insignificant memories may hold something incredibly potent.

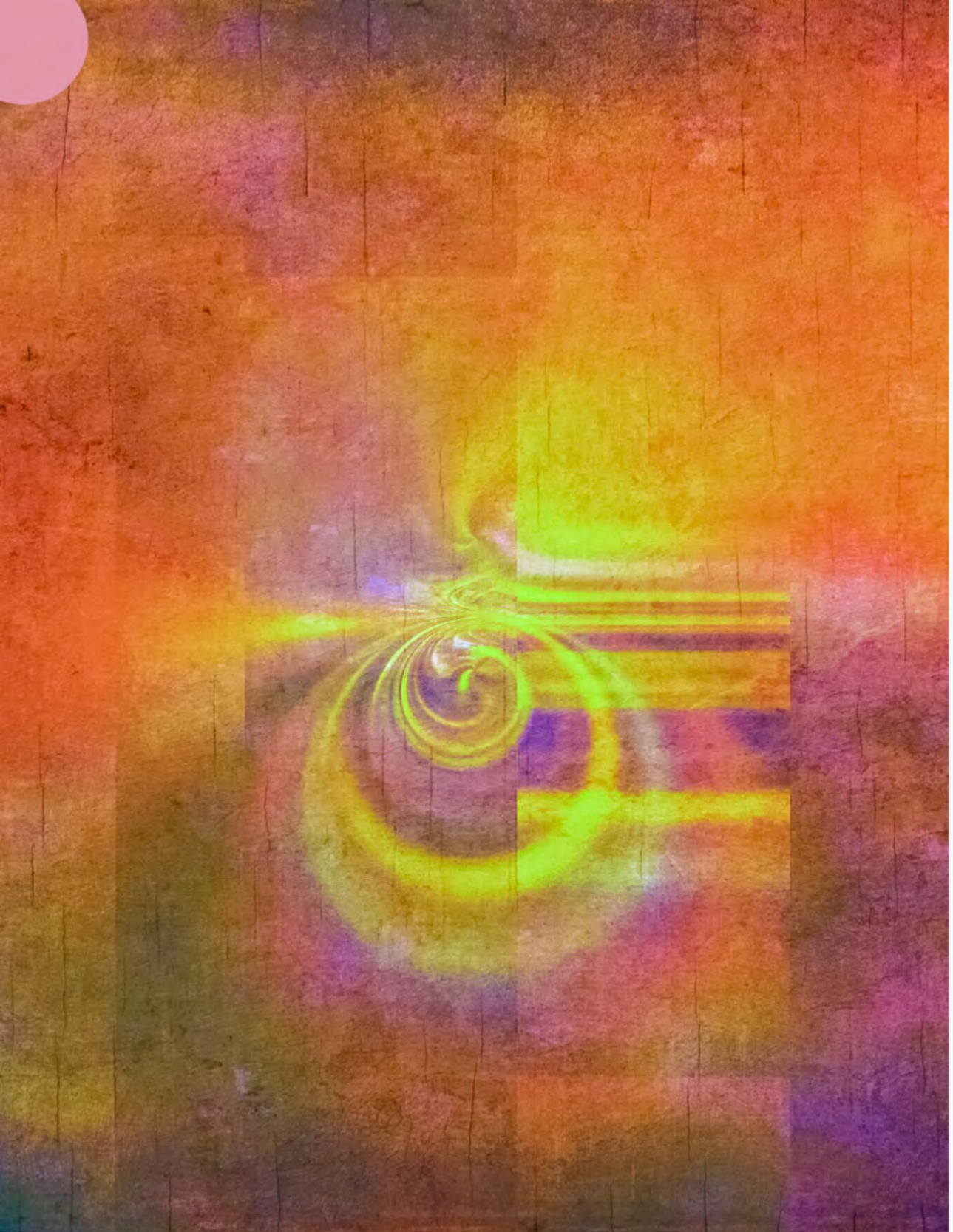
Depending on how we look at them, how we examine them, and turn them over in our hands, we could discover a gemstone within.

In this generative class, we'll experiment with different ways to explore and write about our memories and life experiences. We'll look through windows, doorways, chimneys, and crevices to find fresh and exciting ways to connect small moments to broader topics, questions, and themes— including family, culture, nature, and society.

Leave with up to 20 fresh writing starts and connections, as well as new techniques and strategies to write about life experiences in ways that feel fresh, meaningful, and true.

This class was previously titled "Making Meaning in Memoir"

LEARN MORE



ONE-DAY MEMOIR INTENSIVE

with theo nestor

IN PERSON / Introductory, Intermediate / 1 session
Sat. April 26 / 10:00 am – 4:00 pm PT
$207 - $230

This one-day intensive class is designed for writers working on a memoir project, writers interested in personal narrative, and writers curious about the art of memoir.

In the morning, we'll dive into the foundational craft of memoir writing—constructing a scene, moving between timeframes and narrative modes, and more—and write to short prompts designed to stimulate creative flow.

We'll tackle an (optional) longer-form writing assignment over a long lunch break, and close out the afternoon with even more craft and a Q&A.

You'll be surprised by how much you can write in just one day!

Leave with the craft fundamentals you need to move forward on your memoir, a piece of personal narrative between 800 and 1600 words, and starts for many more.

LEARN MORE

"My mother has told me once and for all the useful parts. She will add nothing unless powered by necessity, a riverbank that guides her life. She plants vegetable gardens rather than lawns; she carries the odd-shaped tomatoes home from the field and eats food left for the gods."

— Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts

TRUE TO LIFE:
WRITING COMPLEX CHARACTERS IN MEMOIR

with ann hedreen

IN PERSON / All Levels / 1 session
Sat. May 3 / 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

Building strong characters is as essential a skill for memoirists as it is for novelists.

In this three-hour, generative seminar, we'll look at several examples of how memoir writers create vivid, three-dimensional characters by using details not just of personality but place, time, style, clothing, culture, setting, and voice. We'll focus on bringing to life the real people who shaped our life stories, as well as that elusive character at the heart of all our stories: ourselves.

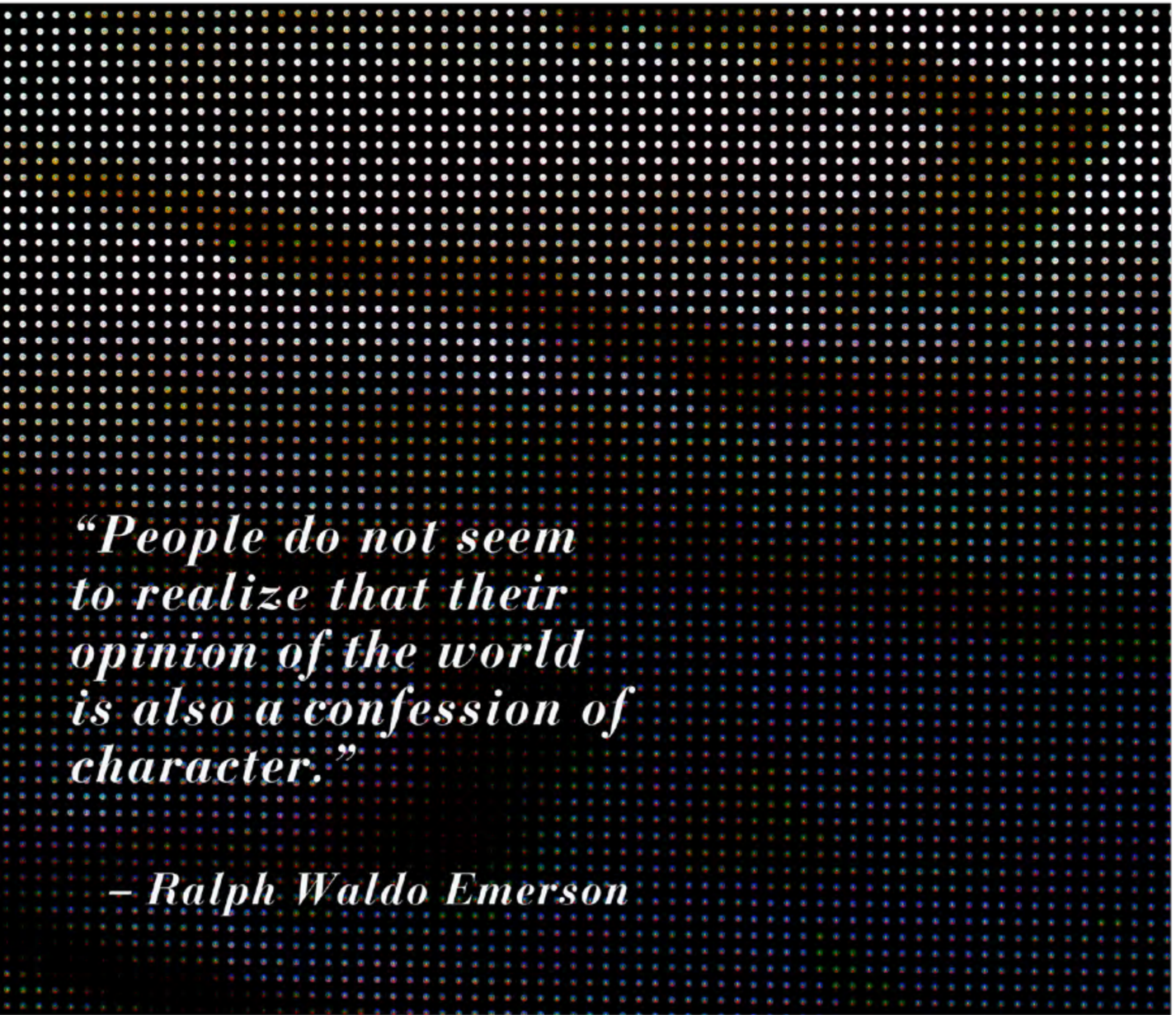
We'll read writers like Phuc Tran, Terese Marie Mailhot, James McBride, Joe Wilkins, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Sharon Olds. Then, through a series of short, in-class writing exercises, we'll practice crafting dynamic, specific, and emotionally resonant characterizations that deepen our storytelling toolkit.

Leave with techniques and prompts you can use to bring your memoir characters to life.

LEARN MORE

CRIMES AND PERVERSIONS:
PERSONAL WRITING ABOUT HEROICS

with kimberly dark



ONLINE / All Levels / 1 session
Sat. May 17 / 1:10 – 4:10 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

In our minds, we tend to be the heroes of our own stories. After all, memoir (and writing that centers personal experiences) is often constructed from our own memories and perspectives. But real life is often more messy, nuanced, and morally ambiguous than we often give it credit for. So, what do we do when we bump up against this tension? What happens when we're not the hero —or, at least, not entirely?

In this three-hour generative craft class, we'll dive deep into our worst flaws, most questionable choices, and experiences that challenge our self-perception—and emerge with complex, painfully honest, and endlessly compelling narratives.

We'll explore techniques to recon-struct personal history, in ways that acknowledge bias, incorporate multiple perspect-ives, and layer together to create rich, multidimensional narratives.

We'll also examine how to write about taboo topics (personal stories that may carry social stigma or negative conno-tations) thoughtfully and in ways much deeper than just 'shock value,' forwarding the plot and creating relatability rather than simply evoking discomfort.

Leave with several fresh writing starts and a toolkit to tackle the tricky realm of perspective and self-portrayal—even when it's not always flattering.

LEARN MORE

IN PERSON

the revision workshop: the novel

fiction iii

case closed: creating a mystery series

between the lines: style & subtext

experiments in storytelling

ONLINE

fiction iii

beyond formula: rethinking story structure

the long short story

writing short fiction: from blank page to last page

flash fiction generator



FICTION

art is the lie that makes us realize the truth – pablo picasso

THE REVISION WORKSHOP: THE NOVEL

with carolyn abram

IN PERSON / Intermediate, Advanced / 16 sessions
Wed. April 30 – August 20 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$965

So, you've finished a draft of your novel. Woohoo! But now what? How the heck do you revise this behemoth of a story?!

Instead of letting your novel rot in your bedside drawer, let's tackle revision together, making decisions about what goes, what stays, and what changes—all in service of your overarching vision.

We'll think critically about the art and theory of revision, taking advice from craft writers of all stripes. We'll look structurally at modern revisions and their source materials, noticing what decisions authors made and how those decisions served their stories. Then, we'll experiment with in-class writing assignments designed to push our thinking and creativity.

Over sixteen weeks, you'll get to know your peers and their writing, sharing short samples and workshopping longer excerpts.

Expect to workshop three major pieces—your first chapter, another chapter of your choosing, and a story synopsis—and receive feedback from your peers and instructor.

Emerge with a clearer sense of how your work is landing, fresh approaches to revision, and the confidence to move forward with draft two (or three, or four).

Perfect for novelists of all genres with a completed (or nearly completed) first draft of a novel-length work.



LEARN MORE

"[One] of the best ways to improve your own writing is to have to analyze and comment on someone else's writing."

– Alma García, instructor

FICTION III

with alma garcía

IN PERSON / Intermediate, Advanced / 10 sessions
Thurs. April 3 – June 12 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$605

Writers, get ready to bring serious focus and attention to your writing in this advanced fiction course.

Over ten weeks, we'll go beyond the mechanics of fiction as we read and analyze ambitious sto-ries that break writing rules. We'll zero in on the particular writerly character-istics, strengths, weaknesses, quirks, and obsessions that help you to write the stories only you can tell.

You'll also get some revision practice: after workshopping a complete draft of your work, you'll revise and resubmit it, all in a supportive environment.

Finally, we'll cover the basics of the publishing process, readying you for the next phase of the writing journey.

Perfect for writers with a steady writing practice and workshop exp-erience who are at the revision stage. Bring a draft of a full short story or novel chapter by the start of class or one that you can complete by the halfway point of class (15 pages or less).

Completion of Fiction I & II (or equi-valent writing, craft knowledge, and workshop experience) required.

LEARN MORE

CASE CLOSED:
CRAFTING A MYSTERY SERIES

with wendy kendall

IN PERSON / Introductory, Intermediate / 10 sessions
Wed. April 9 – June 11 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$605

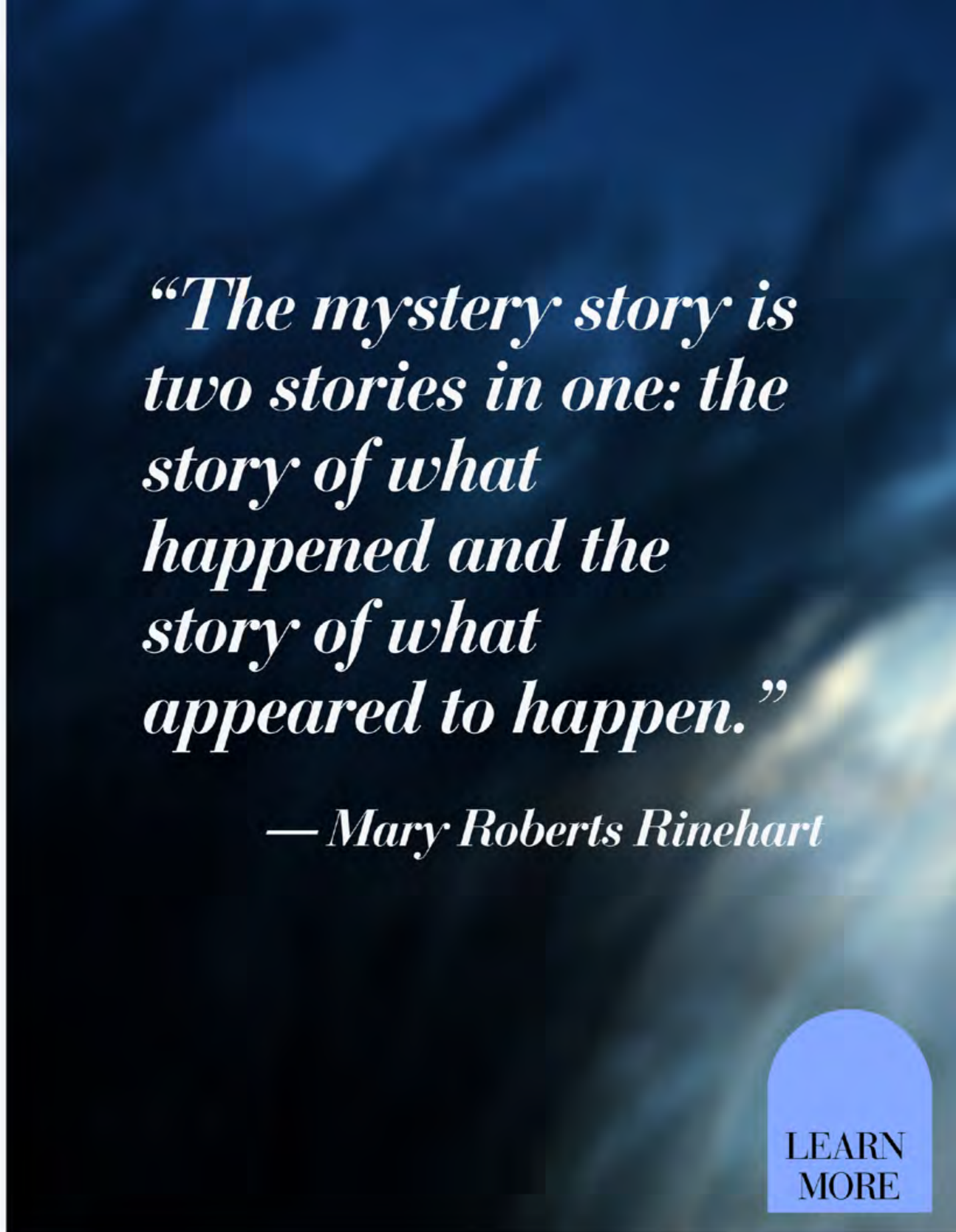
A great mystery series keeps readers coming back for more.

Whether you're just beginning your first mystery novel or refining a work in progress, this course will guide you through the core elements of writing a compelling series, from intricate plotting to character development to the art of suspense.

Over ten weeks, we'll explore essential mystery techniques like pacing, foreshadowing, and plot structure while learning how to weave engaging settings and memorable characters into your story. We'll also cover series-building techniques, ensuring that your first book lays the groundwork for future installments.

Leave with an outline of your full mystery series, a publishing plan tailored to your goals, and a marketing strategy to reach your ideal readers.

Perfect for writers who dream of writing, publishing, and promoting their own mystery series. Whether you're just start-ing or seeking structure and support to finish your draft, you'll leave with practical tools, creative confidence, and a thrilling story ready for the next stage.



FICTION III

with peter mountford

ONLINE Asynchronous / Intermediate, Advanced / 10 sessions
Mon. April 21 – June 23 / Asynchronous
$605

The third in a three-part fiction series, Fiction III offers advanced lessons, peer feedback, and additional resources on publication and building a writing community.

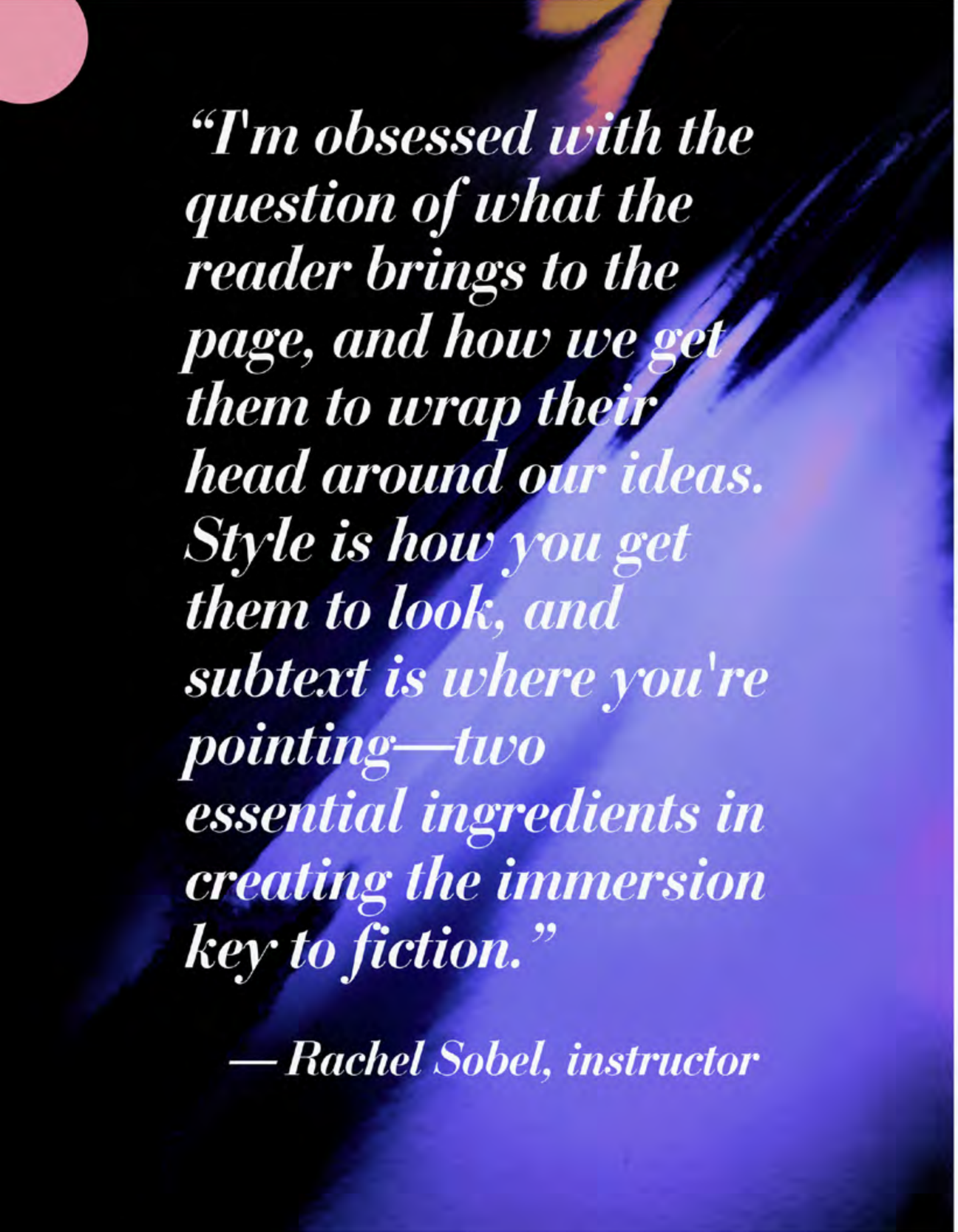
After a brief review of character, plot, and setting, we'll dive deeper into the complexities of point of view, scene construction, and dialogue. The first half of the course will focus on close reading and discussion of published stories, exploring advanced craft techniques. The second half will focus on student work: in which students and the instructor will provide in-depth peer review of full short stories or novel excerpts and complete shorter reading & writing assignments.

Perfect for writers familiar with fiction fundamentals, who are looking to deepen their understanding of craft—particularly in areas like narrative distance, third-person POV, and dialogue—and to receive feedback on their work in a supportive cohort environment.

Leave with deeper confidence in your writing, as well as one or two polished stories or novel chapters.

Fiction I & II are not pre-requisites for taking this class. However, writers should be familiar with both basic fiction craft principles and have prior workshop experience.

LEARN MORE



BETWEEN THE LINES:
STYLE & SUBTEXT
with rachel sobel

IN PERSON / Intermediate, Advanced / 6 sessions
Thurs. April 10 – May 15 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$351 - $390

The text is what you say, the style is how you say it—and the subtext is what you don't say, but still manage to convey.

Great fiction pulls the reader in, making them an active participant in the story. But how do you get readers to look where you want them to? How do you plant questions in their mind and sustain that deliciously taut tension?

In this six-week intensive, we'll explore the attributes that hook a reader, and how we can wield style, subtext, and tension to capture that immersive, dynamic experience in which fiction thrives.

We'll read and dissect master texts that do it well and experiment with different stylistic approaches. Through a mix of practical tools and creative exploration, we'll dissect how readers interact with text, learn how to embed subtext beneath the surface of our prose, and guide the reader experience—without them even knowing it! You'll master techniques for raising questions that linger and build suspense.

Leave with analytical tools to identify what's going on in your writing, and creative craft tools to help you raise questions that linger, build suspense, and keep your reader glued to the page.

LEARN MORE

BEYOND FORMULA:
RETHINKING STORY STRUCTURE
with noah zanella

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 6 sessions
Mon. April 14 – May 19 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$351 - $390

"I have been thinking a lot over the past few years about how, as a culture, we have become obsessed with stories in a really insidious way. The contemporary world presents itself to us as a net of narratives and ideologies from which we must despair of ever disentangling ourselves. All the misinformation you see in politics right now, for example, is all wrapped up in this obsessive construction of narratives. The world as it is falls away, and stories position themselves between us and the possibility of contact with the real. I want to advocate for stories that instead help lead us out from under this net."

— Noah Zanella, instructor

We know the conventional wisdom on story structure: conflict must be established early on, the reader must be properly oriented, every element has to fit together, there must be a certain rise and fall of action. It goes on.

But look at some of the best stories ever written: so many of these rules are already being broken within the first few pages. Is it possible that a 'good' story is different from what prescribed wisdom tells us to believe?

This is the question this class aims to explore. We'll start with the three-act, hero's journey into the unknown and (possibly) back, then we'll move beyond.

Over six weeks, we'll explore how disruption, disjunction, and unpredictability shape great fiction, and how stories can act not as pre-packaged narratives but as something more alive—something that leads us toward a deeper engagement with reality.

We'll also look at literary expressionism, tone, atmosphere, and unconventional plotting to better understand how stories can operate outside traditional frameworks and examine how form and content interact in unexpected ways.

Emerge with a new lens for looking at fiction—one that moves beyond formula and into the freedom of depths, confidence, and artistic intention—as well as five new short stories, each inspired by readings and discussions that challenge the limits of conventional storytelling.

Perfect for writers who are familiar with basic story structure but feel ready to break the mold —to move beyond formula and write stories that feel urgent, alive, and uniquely their own.

LEARN MORE

"I'll give you the whole secret to short story writing. Here it is. Rule 1: Write stories that please yourself. There is no Rule 2."

– O. Henry

THE LONG SHORT STORY

with rachel attias

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 6 sessions
Tues. April 22 – May 27 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$351 - $390

Literary magazines may love brevity, but not every story can (or should!) be squeezed into a handful of pages. Some ideas demand space and expansion.

Enter the long short story or novelette, a form that's longer than a short story but shorter than a novella: rich, immersive, and still capable of leaving your reader breathless.

Over six weeks, we'll read a variety of long short stories and examine the craft elements that give them their structure, expansiveness, and momentum. We'll do in-class writing to generate ideas, play, and write toward whatever length our stories need to be.

Leave with the beginnings of at least one long short story and the momentum to continue exploring big ideas.

Perfect for fiction writers looking to play and push beyond the constraints of the short form. Writers currently working on long short stories may find this class helpful, but are encouraged to come ready to play with fresh ideas and be open to new projects.

LEARN MORE

WRITING SHORT FICTION:
FROM BLANK PAGE TO LAST PAGE

with holly day

ONLINE / All Levels / 6 sessions
Wed. April 23 – May 28 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$351 - $390

Full of fun, fantastic stories, but have no idea where, or even how, to start?

Overcome your fear of the blank page in this short fiction workshop: over six weeks, we'll throw perfection to the wayside, experiment with over a dozen ways to lower the barrier between pen and paper, and embrace the creative, often chaotic process of writing.

Using the basic building blocks of fiction to guide us, we'll develop characters and worlds that fascinate us, craft vivid scenes and situations that challenge us, and write a story from beginning to end.

Leave with a solid story draft and a toolkit to keep your creativity flowing.

"I would also suggest that any aspiring writer begin with short stories. These days, I meet far too many young writers who try to start off with a novel right off, or a trilogy, or even a nine-book series. That's like starting in at rock climbing by tackling Mt. Everest. Short stories help you learn your craft."

– George R.R. Martin

LEARN MORE



EXPERIMENTS IN STORYTELLING

with ramón isao

IN PERSON / All Levels / 5 sessions
Wed. April 30 – May 28 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$310.50 - $345

Crazy times call for crazy stories.

Experiments in Storytelling is a supportive space for like-minded lunatics to study and write pieces of untamed writing that rely less upon the usual molecules of story: plot, character, interiority, and even syntax.

Each week, we'll read and discuss an artifact of writing—a short story, a comment thread, or an extremely bitter obituary. Then, we'll work together to craft a prompt based on that piece of writing. Between classes, we'll take the week to write to that prompt, then share it in class the following week.

For the weirdos, mad scientists, and wild-at-heart interdisciplinary and cross-genre writers interested in exploring new frontiers in storytelling. Leave with a crop of experimental starts, a broader sense of narrative possibility, and a sharper eye for finding inspiration in the world around you.

LEARN MORE

FLASH FICTION GENERATOR

with ruth joffre

ONLINE / All Levels / 1 session
Sat. May 3 / 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

One of today's most exciting and innovative literary forms, flash fiction can tell an entire life story, dissect the exact moment a relationship fell apart, or even introduce readers to fantastical new worlds—all in 1,000 words or less. Concise, revelatory, and endlessly adaptable, the super-short form lends itself to fun experimentation for writers of all levels.

In only three hours, this class will introduce you to the flash fiction form. Through craft lessons and fast-paced generative prompts designed to spark ideas and get you writing, you'll experiment with different flash techniques and discover how to distill powerful moments into tight, compelling stories.

Leave with drafts of at least three new flash pieces, a greater understanding of the form and its possibilities, and even more at-home exercises to keep the creativity flowing.



IN PERSON

catching fire with poetic forms and freedoms

ONLINE

poetry iii

breaking down history: remixing poetic narratives

contemporary experimental poetry

finding the poet within

forming form: shaping free verse poetry

don't blink: nightmare poetics forming form: shaping free verse poetry

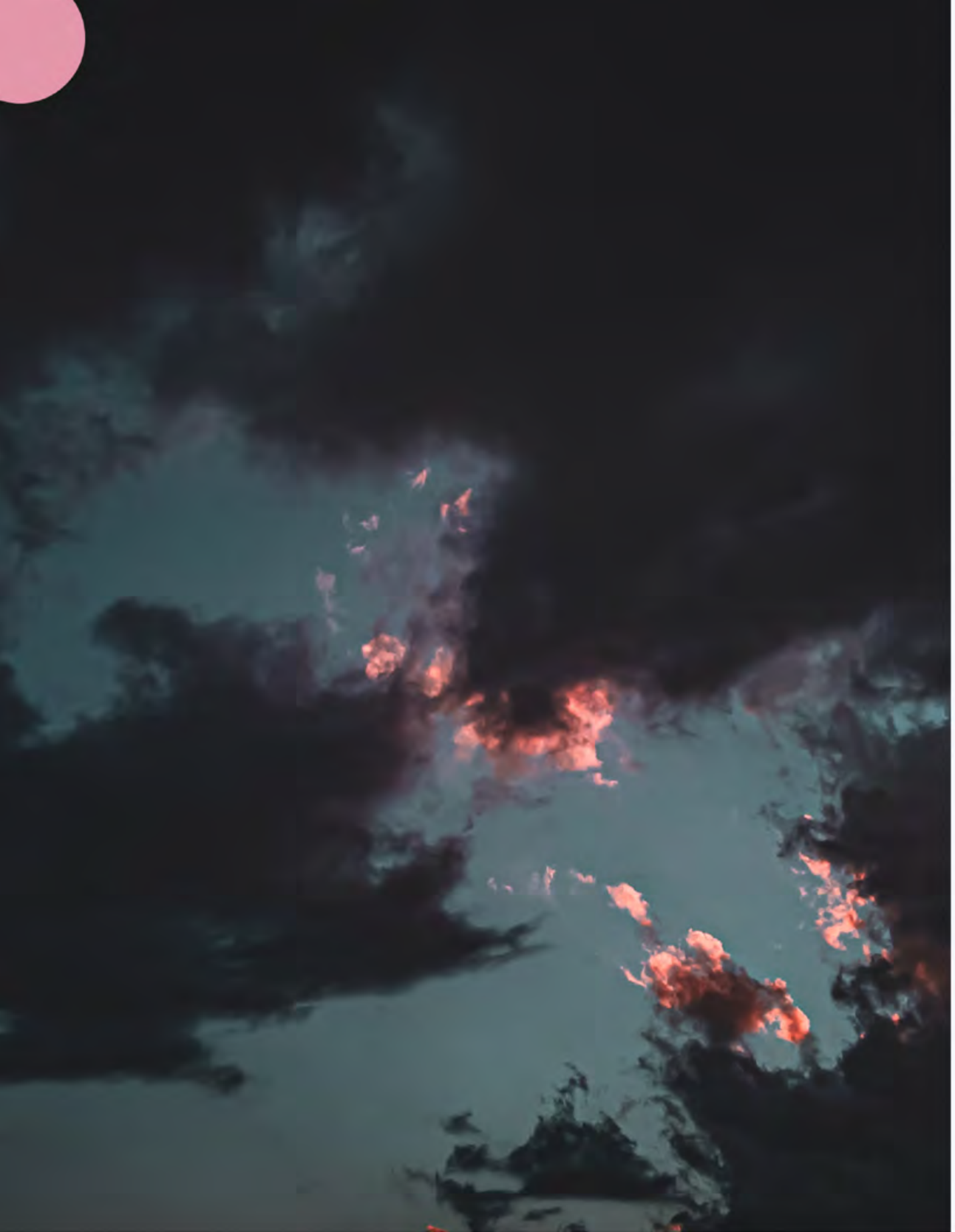
hey, you: adventures in poetic second person

poem plus prompt: the wolf's postscript to 'little red riding hood'



POETRY

poems come out of wonder, not out of knowing – lucille clifton



POETRY III

with jeanine walker

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 10 sessions
Wed. April 9 – June 18 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$605

In this 10-week workshop, we'll read and study poets Natalie Diaz, Camille T. Dungy, Franny Choi, and more, examining their rhetoric and learning new techniques to apply to our own work.

As we continue to build our poetry toolkit, we'll produce some new poems of our own. We'll also workshop our & our classmates' writing in a supportive workshop, in which everyone's work is appreciated for what it is and writers are creatively encouraged to grow.

Poetry I & II are not pre-requisites for taking this class. However, writers should be familiar with both poetry craft fundamentals and have prior workshop experience.

LEARN MORE



CATCHING FIRE WITH POETIC FORMS & FREEDOMS

with carolyne wright

IN PERSON / Intermediate / 8 sessions
Tues. April 15 – June 3 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - $490

Sonnets may have triggered groans in high school, but poetic forms have a delightful ability to draw poetry out of us—to make our work glow in the dark of the creative process, and catch fire!

Whether you've worked with traditional forms before or are new to the practice, this class will introduce you to the liberating power of poetic constraints. Over eight weeks, we'll mine our own natural language patterns to discover the inherent poetic diction within it, explore the rich tradition of received verse forms—such as ghazals, pantoums, sestinas, sonnets, triolets, and villanelles—and explore more inventive and descendent structures such as abecedarians, acrostics, anaphoras, duplexes, rounds, and the Golden Shovel. Then, we'll practice writing in these forms—and even inventing our own variations!

Emerge with a sheaf of new poems that will creatively engage with your own sensibilities and extend your own range of poetic possibilities.

LEARN MORE

BREAKING DOWN HISTORY:

REMIXING POETIC NARRATIVES

with daemond arrindell

ONLINE / Intermediate / 6 sessions
Mon. April 14 – May 19 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$351 - $390



When poets write about history—whether personal, collective, or both—how the story is told changes the way it's experienced, understood.

Whose version is being told? What details get highlighted or buried? How can breaking a story apart reveal new ways of understanding what happened?

In this 6-week craft class, we'll explore how poetic techniques like line breaks, pauses, and enjambment can disrupt traditional storytelling, create tension, and reveal hidden layers of meaning. Whether you're looking to push the boundaries of form, rethink how words move across the page, or approach revision in a new way, this class will help you experiment with structure and perspective.

Leave with new tools to remix and reimagine familiar stories. Plus, revision techniques that engage white space, tension, and structure.

Perfect for poets eager to reflect on and analyze history—whether it be on a micro or macro level—and to engage with the visual and sonic possibilities of a poem.

LEARN MORE

CONTEMPORARY EXPERIMENTAL POETRY

with christie valentin-bati

ONLINE / Intermediate / 6 sessions
Tues. April 29 – June 3 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$351 - $390

This course is an invitation to play, subvert, and redefine what poetry can do.

Over the last 40 years, as the poetry landscape has globalized, poets have invented new forms, expanded into visual and musical formats, and otherwise pushed the art form into new and exciting territory. Ever evolving, poetry continues breaking and remaking itself in response to the world around it.

In this 6-week reading and generative writing class, we'll read experimental work by poets like Anne Carson, Monica Ong, and Tracie Morris, closely examining contemporary tools of experimental poetry—lyricism, hybridity, visual poetry, sound poetry, mise-en-page, use of white space, the poetic line, new ways of meaning-making, and subversion of traditional poetic forms.

Leave with an expanded sense of what poetry can do, new approaches to explore timeless themes like identity, love, politics, family, and a series of fresh poem drafts.

Perfect for poets who are familiar with poetry basics, who are ready to push the boundaries of play and experimentation.

"There are no new ideas, only new ways of having them be felt."

– Audre Lorde

LEARN MORE

"A poem begins as a lump in the throat, a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a lovesickness."

– Robert Frost

FINDING THE POET WITHIN

with holly day

ONLINE / Introductory / 4 sessions
Thurs. April 17 – May 8 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$274.50 - $305

This class goes out to all the late-night bedroom poets, bus ride lyricists, and stairwell scribblers splashing big salty tears on verses dashed off in secret, who are ready to take their poetry to the next level.

How do you write a poem that sings, cuts, and swells like the flush of first love, leaving you and your reader forever changed?

Perfect for writers exploring poetry for the first time, as well as poets who love reading and writing poetry but are seeking more formal instruction.

This 4-week craft class will dive into the fundamentals of poetry. Through discussion, guided exercises, and in-class writing, we'll in-class writing, we'll experiment with ways to pull poetry out of prose, refine imagery and sound, and explore how line length, repetition, stanza structure, and rhythm shape both how a poem looks and how it resonates out loud. We'll also touch on different poetic forms, drawing inspiration from regional and historical styles to fuel our own creative explorations.

Leave with 2-3 poems you feel excited about, with opportunities to share work and receive feedback.

LEARN MORE

FORMING FORM:
SHAPING FREE-VERSE POETRY

with lisa gluskin stonestreet

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 2 sessions
Sat. April 19 – 26 / 1:10 – 4:10 pm PT
$207 - $230



What is the shape of a poem? How does it affect the way the poem is read? How can playing with space and shape affect the reader's experience of the poem?

Perfect for poets who are curious about craft, open to new ways of thinking, and eager to expand their poetic repertoire, this 2-session craft class will explore techniques for developing and refining poetic form. We'll consider how choices in lineation, stanza structure, and spatial arrangement affect voice, tone, and meaning. We'll consider how formal choices affect voice, tone, overall impact, and the possibilities they enable.

Bring three poems in progress. Through discussion, reading, and formal experimentation, we'll help each poem find the shape it wants to take. We'll experiment with elements of form—including but not limited to line, stanza, caesura, indentation/alignment, page field/position, and typography—and investigate opportunities within a draft, letting each poem show us what it wants to be.

Leave with greater confidence in your form choices, an expanded toolbox of techniques, and a deeper understanding of how form serves content in your work.

LEARN MORE

DON'T BLINK:
NIGHTMARE POETICS
with marci calabretta cancio-bello

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 1 session
Sat. April 26 / 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

Why do we return to haunting and vengeance, war and violence, terror and torment?

This generative workshop is a space to break open, take creative risks, and to write through what haunts us, together. We'll explore nightmarish poems by various writers—Ai, Jericho Brown, Lena Khalaf Tuffaha, and more—examining how they write about difficult topics. Then, we'll write into the darkness together: finding ways to face uncomfortable topics with intention, ethical awareness, and personal safety in mind. We'll explore the role of poetry in processing pain, witnessing without exploiting, and unearthing light even in the most tormented spaces.

Leave with a series of raw, exploratory poem drafts and tools to continue working with difficult subject manner in ways that feel sustainable.

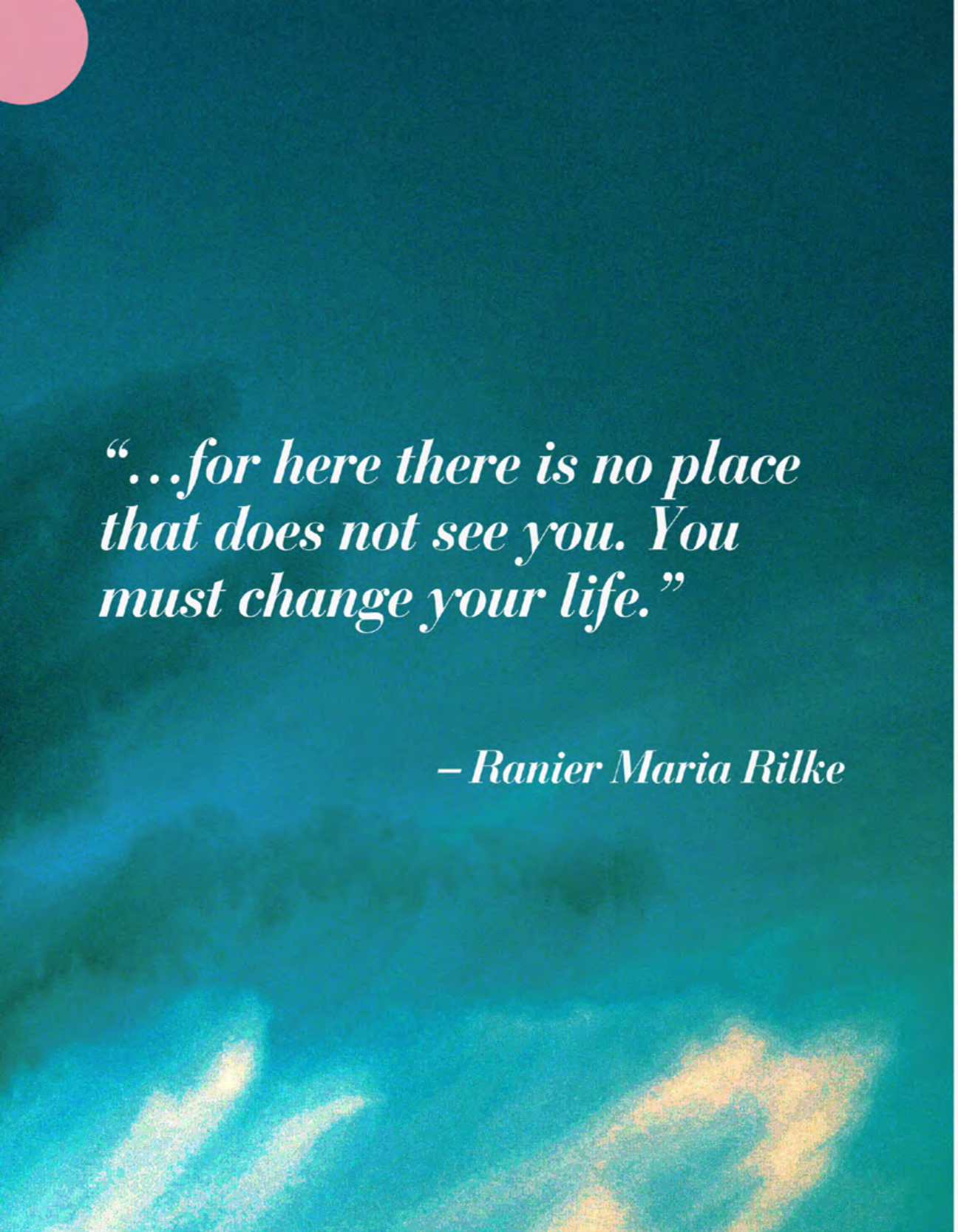
Perfect for writers familiar with poetry fundamentals, who want to push beyond their comfort zones.



"Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness. It took me years to understand that this, too, was a gift."

– Mary Oliver

LEARN MORE



HEY, YOU:

ADVENTURES IN THE POETIC SECOND PERSON

with lisa gluskin stonestreet

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 1 session
Sat. May 24 / 1:10 – 4:10 pm PT
$103.50 - $115

The poetic you can be notoriously slippery—pointing to speaker, reader, or beloved, to “one” or the Other. Combine this with the ability to change and be changed by the poem’s voice and syntax, and you have a powerful tool to shape, twist, and reframe the speaker’s relationships with reader, self, and other.

In this three-hour craft intensive, we’ll use discussion, close reading, and writing to explore the many possibilities (and a few pitfalls) of the second person. We’ll investigate how shifts in address, pronoun use, and diction can alter a poem’s energy and impact, noticing when the “you” creates immediacy and when it distances, when it invites and when it commands, when it hides and when it reveals.

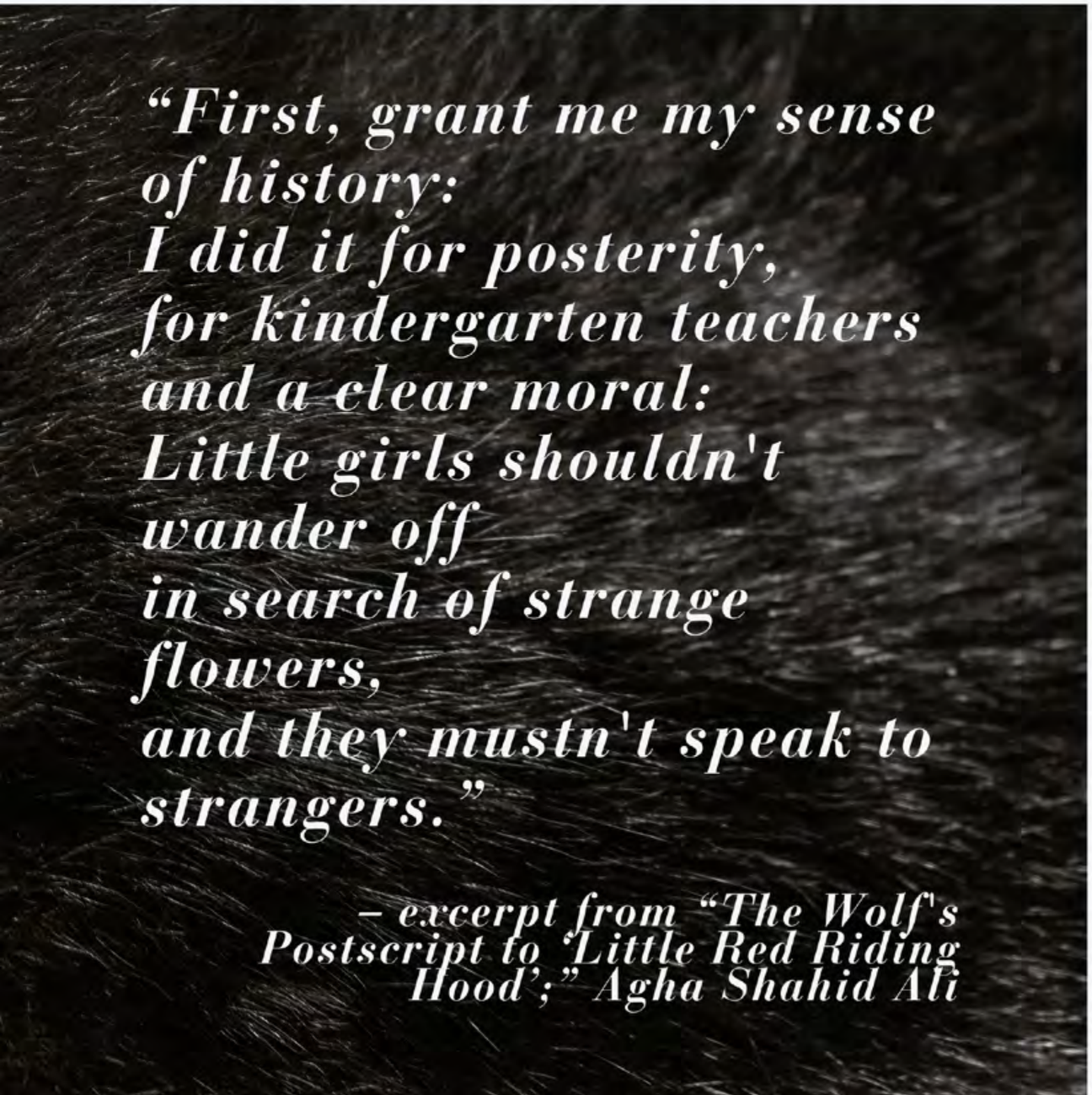
We’ll emerge with fresh drafts, deeper insights into our own poetic voices, and new ways of thinking about the relationships between speaker, audience, and self.

This class is perfect for poets who’ve been writing for a while and are eager to experiment with craft in new ways. If you’re curious about how pronoun shifts can expand your poetic repertoire, if you’ve ever wrestled with who’s speaking in your poem and to whom, or if you’re ready to rethink the conventions of voice and audience, this class is for you.

LEARN MORE

POEM PLUS PROMPT:
THE WOLF'S POSTSCRIPT TO 'LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD'

with dilruba ahmed



ONLINE / All Levels / 1 session
Mon. June 9 / 5:00 – 6:00 pm PT
$12 - $40

In this session of PPP, we'll unpack "The Wolf's Postscript to 'Little Red Riding Hood'" by Agha Shahid Ali, exploring both persona and fairy tales as sources of inspiration.

How can donning a "mask" help us convey emotional truths and create reader engagement? How might fairy tales inspire and inform the physical, emotional, and intellectual contexts of such poems? When we slip into the skin of a secondary character, how might we illuminate, complicate, or subvert traditional understandings of well-known fairy tales?

In each session of Poetry Plus Prompt, we'll close read a poem and respond to specific discussion questions to help us unpack significant craft elements. Then, we'll do some writing of our own, responding to a prompt inspired by the poem. We'll close with some time to reflect on a small, achievable personal writing goal to help to sustain our individual writing practices.

Perfect for poetry-curious creatives eager to explore the magical world of verse and writers looking to expand their reading list with contemporary voices.

LEARN MORE

— read before you think – fran lebowitz

READI NG

ONLINE

reading deeply: maidens of the void

reading across cultures: south asian urdu poetry

reading across cultures: asian diaspora & defiance

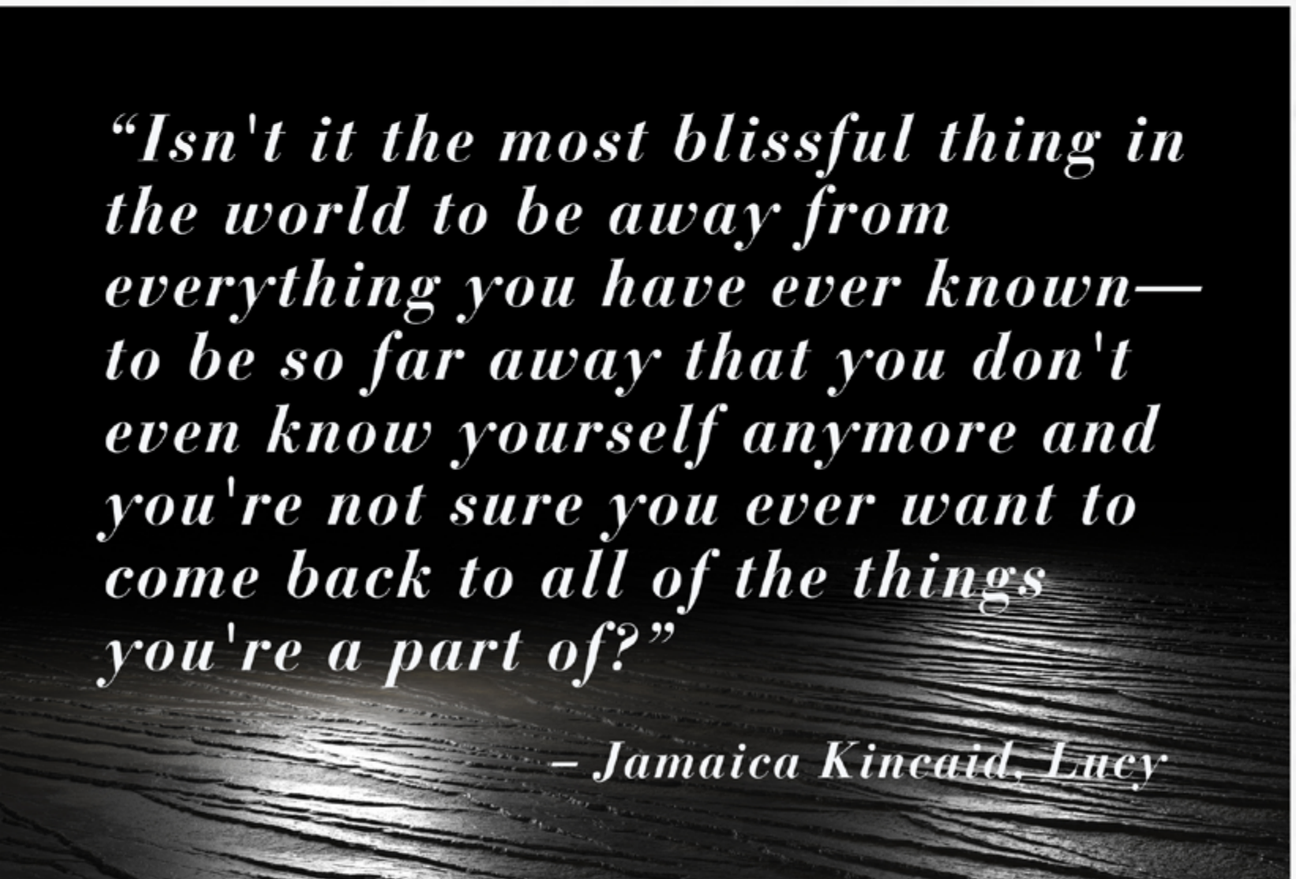


READING DEEPLY:

MAIDENS OF THE VOID

with christie valentin-bati

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 12 sessions
Mon. May 5 – July 28 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$725



How do women writers plumb the depths of longing, existentialism, desire, and the unknown?

What happens when they turn their attention inward—writing into uncertainty, fracture, and the juicy, enigmatic waters of the self?

In this twelve-week reading intensive, we'll explore woman-centered and women-made literature, film, and art that move beyond one-dimensional frameworks of gender politics to embrace the complexity and fullness of the human experience.

We'll analyze how craft techniques shape narratives of memory, identity, and the search for fulfillment. Through reading and experiencing works by Virginia Woolf, Clarice Lispector, Jamaica Kincaid, Zora Neale Hurston, and more, we'll explore how women across time and place have engaged with existential questions, transformed language, and redefined storytelling. Be it through experimental prose, surrealism, modernism, magical realism, or poetic experimentation, we'll dissect how each text invites us to consider new ways of seeing and being in the world.

Perfect for intermediate and advanced readers eager to engage with complex, experimental texts and expand their understanding of how craft and content inform each other. Expect to refine your critical lens while finding inspiration for your own writing.

Leave with a few (or more!) new favorite writers, as well as a deeper ability to analyze literature, quest-ion narrative conventions, and explore new creative possibilities in your own work.

WRITER'S WE'LL READ:

- Vanessa Bell
- Don Mee Choi
- Hélène Cixous
- Cheryl Dunye
- Renee Gladman
- Zora Neale Hurston
- Jamaica Kincaid
- Donika Kelly
- Clarice Lispector
- Amy Lipman
- Sabrina Orah-Mark
- Toni Morrison
- Gertrude Stein
- Eudora Welty
- Virginia Woolf

LEARN MORE

READING ACROSS CULTURES:
SOUTH ASIAN URDU POETRY
with shankar narayan

ONLINE / All Levels / 8 sessions
Wed. April 23 – June 11 / 7:10 – 9:10 pm PT
$441 - $490

Urdu stands among the world's most flowing, mellifluous, and poetic languages, and South Asia's Urdu poetry stands among the world's greatest bodies of literature.

Over the course of nearly a millennium, South Asian writers working in Urdu have represented diverse traditions, from Sufism to court poetry, from Marxism to modernism, from the poetry of independence movements to anthems of political resistance.

Writers from the past, such as Amir Khusrau and Mirza Ghalib, are always in dialogue with more modern writers such as Faiz, Meeraji, and Kishwar Naheed, and classical forms such as ghazals, rubais, nazms, and qatas share space with modern free verse and prose poetry.

In this part-generative, part-analytic course, we'll explore with these diverse works as part of a single, coherent body of literature, recognizing and engaging with counter-currents and echoes. Then, drawing inspiration from this impressive poetic lineage, we'll create our own pieces infused with the resounding beauty of one of the world's oldest and most storied literary traditions.

Perfect for writers of all genres and levels who are seeking new inspiration, who are looking to enrich their craft through close reading and writing, or who simply love to poetry and reading.

No prior knowledge of Urdu is required—only a willingness to be moved, inspired, and challenged by the beauty of its poetry.

Leave with several new poems and pieces, new and/or finished pieces, a deeper appreciation for Urdu's poetic legacy, a wealth of resources for further exploration, and a community of fellow writers exploring this extraordinary literary tradition together.

"I give my life to you, Oh my cloth-dyer,
You've dyed me in yourself, by just a glance.
I give my whole life to you Oh, Nijam,
You've made me your bride, by just a glance."

– excerpt from "Chaap Tilak Sab Cheeni,"
Amir Khusro

LEARN MORE

READING ACROSS CULTURES:

ASIAN DIASPORA AND DEFIANCE

with susan nguyen

ONLINE / All Levels / 8 sessions
Thurs. May 8 – June 26 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - $490

"I can't be alone when every person in my life is a galaxy, a world on a world in themselves."

— Fatimah Asghar, When We Were Sisters: A Novel

Asian American identities have often been reduced to narrow stereotypes—the model minority, the tiger mom, the heavily-accented punchline, the hypersexualized exotic woman. Yet the Asian American experience, like all lived experiences, is vast, multifaceted, and deeply personal.

Today's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) writers are redefining these narratives, crafting luminous, complex, and subversive stories that reflect the depth and diversity of their experiences.

In this generative workshop, we'll explore the works of contemporary AAPI writers, engaging with themes of food, silence, resistance, memory, joy, rage, desire, and grief across genres. Then, drawing inspiration from our readings and discussions, we'll create our own writing, opening space for new perspectives and personal storytelling.

Leave with several fresh writing starts, a deeper appreciation for the vibrant storytelling coming from AAPI authors, and an expanded vision of where your own writing can go.

Perfect for writers looking to reclaim their own stories, move beyond prescribed cultural narratives, or simply draw inspiration from the bold, innovative voices shaping today's literature.

WRITER'S WE'LL READ:

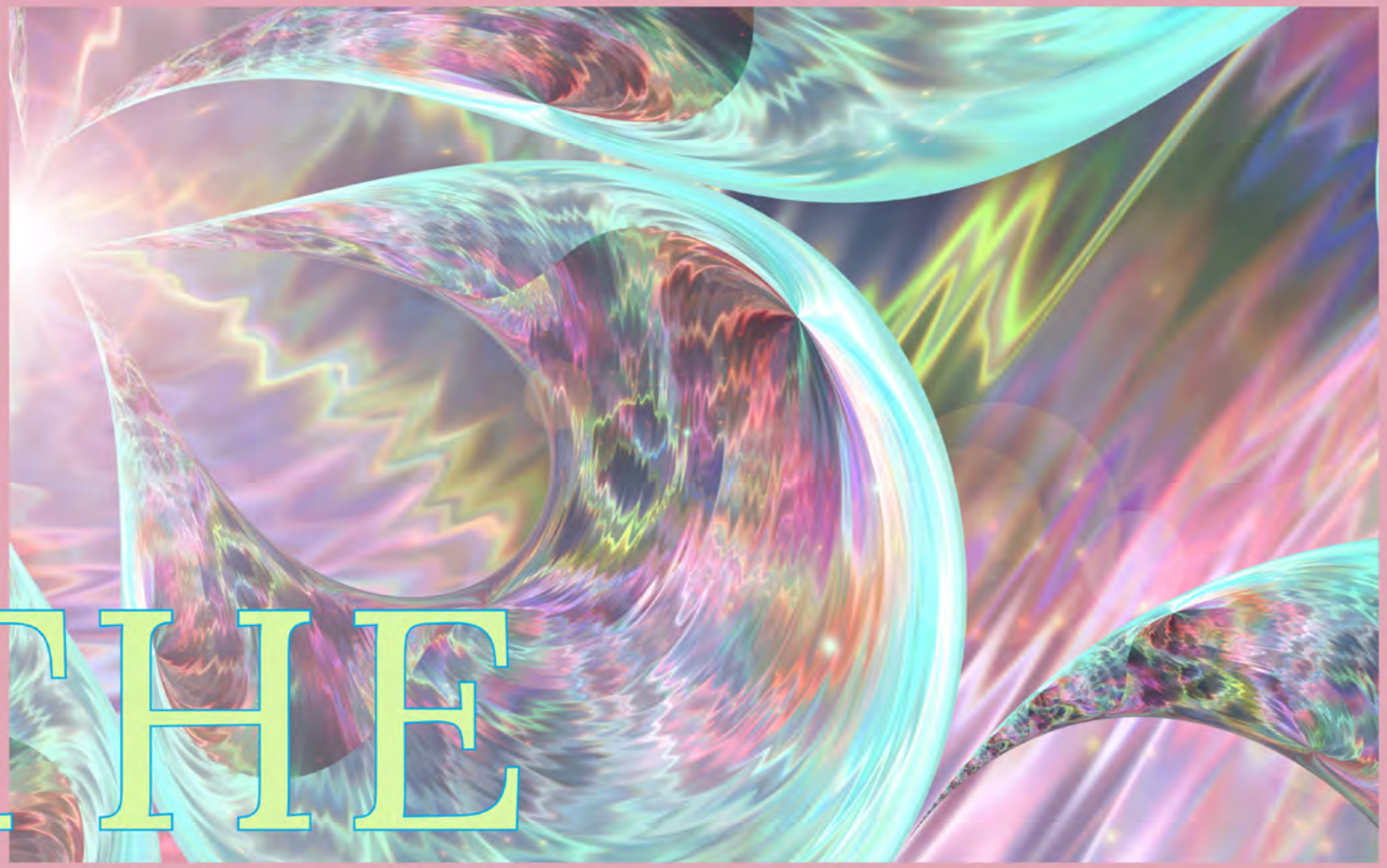
- Cathy Park Hong
- Fady Joudah
- Viet Thanh Nguyen
- Michelle Zauner of Japanese Breakfast
- Fatima Asghar
- Diana Khoi Nguyen
- Saba Keramati
- Charles Yu

Students will need access to *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (streaming on MAX and more) and *Interior Chinatown* (streaming on Hulu). All other materials will be provided.

This class is open to all writers, but AAPI and BIPOC writers are especially encouraged to join.

LEARN MORE

i want to do it because i want to do it – amelia earhart



THE WRITING LIFE

ONLINE

the artist's way: reconnecting with your creative self

publishing your personal essay

the fearless pen

starting the search for a publisher

book contract basics

submissions support group

how to arrange and publish your poetry book

start submitting: poems, short stories, essays

freelance fundamentals

THE ARTIST'S WAY:

RECONNECTING WITH YOUR CREATIVE SELF

with sanjukta shams

ONLINE / All Levels / 12 sessions
Mon. April 7 – June 30 / 6:00 – 9:00 pm PT
$1,085



"No matter what your age or your life path, whether making art is your career or your hobby or your dream, it is not too late or too egotistical or too selfish or too silly to work on your creativity."

– Julia Cameron

Too often, self-doubt, fear, and perfectionism stand in the way of artistic expression. Give your creativity permission to flourish. Give yourself the space to explore, to make mistakes, and trust the creative process.

Using Julia Cameron's The Artist's Way as a model and guide, we'll forge a path through creative barriers and learn to connect with our imagination, curiosity, and confidence. Each week, we'll engage with core themes—uncovering your creative self, reclaiming your artistic power, embracing possibility, and more.

Through Morning Pages, Artist Dates, guided exercises, discussions, and self-reflection, we'll explore ways to break through creative blocks and develop sustainable artistic practices.

This class is open to everyone, regardless of artistic background or experience. Writers, visual artists, musicians, performers, creative professionals, and personal development seekers are all welcome.

Whether you're looking to ignite new creative sparks or rediscover long-buried artistic dreams, this is the structured, supportive space to dive deep and awaken your creativity.

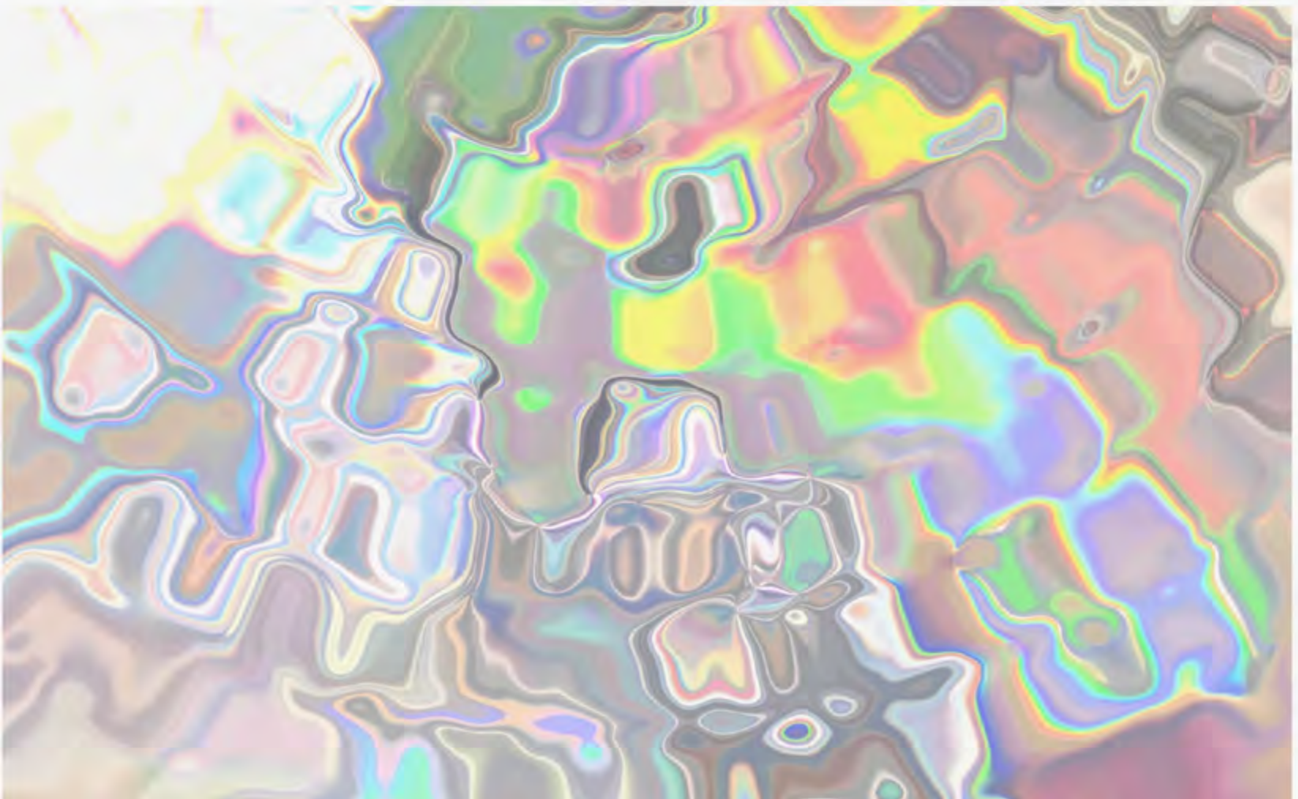
Leave with a daily writing habit, a stronger sense of your artistic identity, a personalized plan for sustaining your creative practice, and—most importantly—a renewed connection to your creative self.

LEARN MORE

PUBLISHING YOUR PERSONAL ESSAY

with kaelie giffel

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 8 sessions
Tues. April 15 – June 3 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$441 - $490



You've written a personal essay that matters to you...Now the questions start rolling in: How do I revise it into something ready for publication? What journals do I submit to? Pitch packet—what's that? What the heck are editors looking for?!

The leap from writing for yourself to sharing your work with the world can feel overwhelming. But never fear! This 8-week crash course will give you the tools, confidence, and strategy to take that next step.

For the first three weeks, we'll focus on preparing personal essays for publication through revision. We'll cover how to make personal essays meaningful and how to make them standout to editors and journals.

The last five weeks will focus on the publishing side: we'll develop a "pitch packet"—a document describing yourself, your unique perspective, and the heart of your personal essay—discuss typical lengths for publication, explore different types of publishing venues (paying versus non-paying, popular versus literary, and so on), and learn to face the inevitable beast that is rejection.

Emerge with at least one submission under your belt, plus a wealth of resources to support you as you submit many more!
Perfect for writers with personal essays (1,000–3,000 words) they'd like to submit for publication.

LEARN MORE

"Any writing exposes writers to judgment about the quality of their work and their thought. The closer they get to painful personal truths, the more fear mounts—not just about what they might reveal but about what they might discover should they venture too deeply inside. To write well, however, that's exactly where we must venture."

– Ralph Keyes,
The Courage to Write: How Writers Transcend Fear

THE FEARLESS PEN

with beth slattery

ONLINE / All Levels / 8 sessions
Mon. May 5 – June 30 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$441 - $490

For many of us, there is nothing as anxiety-inducing as the blank page. But worry not: you don't have to do it alone!

This 8-week cohort is designed to help fearful writers find the courage needed to begin (or finish!) a project. We'll look at writers who admit to anxiety, uncover reasons why we are fearful, and practice techniques that will help us face those fears and produce. Also, we will write—a lot.

Leave class with 25 pages written towards a project. Plus, you'll receive encouraging and constructive instructor feedback.

LEARN MORE

STARTING THE SEARCH FOR A PUBLISHER

with elise mchugh

ONLINE / All Levels / 4 sessions
Sat. April 26 – May 17 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$274.50 - $305

How do you find a publisher? What lies beyond the "Big Five" publishing houses? How do you figure out what kind of publisher is best for your work? And how do you go about submitting your work?

This class answers all these questions and more. We'll talk about the many options available to you, from large commercial houses to independent publishing houses to self-publishing. By the end of this course, you'll know the publishing path best suited for your manuscript and have the resources you'll need to navigate the tricky terrain of submission and publishing.

LEARN MORE

BOOK CONTRACT BASICS

with elise mchugh

ONLINE / All Levels / 4 sessions
Sat. May 31 – June 21 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$274.50 - $305



Publishing contracts are notoriously full of legalese, and there is not one standard template all publishers use. Understanding the terms and clauses in a book contract is one of the most valuable skills an author can develop, whether you're working with an agent or negotiating on your own.

In this multi-week course, we'll break down common contract terms, rights clauses, royalty structures, and key negotiation points so you can approach publishing with confidence.

Designed to help you understand the business of publishing and how contract terms affect your book, we'll explore why publishers include certain clauses, how marketing and sales factors shape their decisions, and what questions you should ask before signing. While we won't review individual contracts in class, there will be plenty of time for reviewing real-world examples, in-depth discussions, and Q&A sessions.

Whether you're actively seeking a publisher, currently negotiating a deal, or simply preparing for the future, this course will give you the foundation you need to protect your work, advocate for yourself, and navigate the business side of writing.

LEARN MORE

"I love my rejection slips. They show me I try."

– Sylvia Plath

SUBMISSIONS SUPPORT GROUP

with grace bialecki

ONLINE / Intermediate, Advanced / 3 sessions
Mon. April 28 – June 23 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm PT
$207 – $230

This course is for writers who want accountability, support, and a structured space to navigate the submissions process. Whether you're new to submitting or struggling with consistency, you'll get the tools and confidence to put your work out into the world.

We'll start by honing your submission skills—crafting cover letters, finding literary magazines, and managing expectations—and exploring the emotional side of publishing, from healthy striving to bouncing back from rejection. Then, we'll have one hour of actively sending work out before regrouping for questions and next steps.

Designed for writers of all genres with publication-ready work. This class focuses on submitting to literary magazines and independent presses rather than seeking literary representation. If you're tired of letting your work sit in a folder, this is your chance to take action.

Expect to leave with work submitted, a clear plan for continuing to submit your work, a deeper understanding of the process, and the confidence to keep sending your work out—year after year.

LEARN MORE

HOW TO ARRANGE AND PUBLISH YOUR POETRY BOOK

with marci calabretta cancio-bello

ONLINE / All Levels / 2 sessions
Sat. June 7 – 14 / 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PT
$135 - $150

Whether you're assembling a full-length poetry collection or a **chapbook, mixtape rules apply: the progression shapes the audience experience.** But how do you decide the order of what goes where, especially if you're submitting for publication?

In this 2-session lecture and hands-on workshop hybrid, you'll learn how to shape a manuscript for maximum impact. You'll learn why poem order matters, how editors and award judges assess collections, and what recent publishing trends reveal about the business of poetry. You'll also gain insight into the industry, practical strategies for sequencing your work, and a clearer understanding of what makes a manuscript stand out.

Leave with several sequencing techniques, a new perspective on your own manuscript-in-progress, and an additional resources packet for continued learning.

Perfect for writers with a completed poetry manuscript who are interested in publishing a poetry book or chapbook. While the focus is poetry, fiction and essay writers assembling collections may also find this class useful.

"Because I have learned so many things the hard way and made so many mistakes, I am all about paying it forward by demystifying the industry to make it less daunting, more accessible, and more welcoming."

– Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello, instructor

LEARN MORE

"By the time I was fourteen... the nail in my wall would no longer support the weight of the rejection slips impaled upon it. I replaced the nail with a spike and kept on writing."

– Stephen King, On Writing

START SUBMITTING:
POEMS, SHORT STORIES, ESSAYS

with tina tocco

ONLINE / All Levels / 1 session
Sat. May 3 / 1:10 - 3:10 pm PT
$67.50 - $75

So you've written a few pieces you're proud of—woohoo! But how the heck do you get started (or restarted) in submitting and publishing your work? Where do I start? What do I avoid?

Get started submitting your poems, short stories, essays and more in this 2-hour seminar. Learn where to find publications, how to properly format your manuscript, and follow submission etiquette. We'll even talk about what to do and how to handle those dreaded—and inevitable—rejections.

Leave with a cover letter you can build upon as you get pieces published, as well as the knowledge and tools you'll need to jumpstart your publishing journey.

Perfect for writers of all genres who want to submit their short work (fiction, poetry, essays, etc.) to literary journals and magazines. This class focuses on submitting short-form work (poetry, short stories, essays) rather than long-form work (novels or memoir).

LEARN MORE

"There is a lot of gatekeeping in journalism and I am excited not only to share how I got started, but to help others learn some tips and tricks for how to navigate this world and its opaqueness."

– Danielle Hayden, instructor

FREELANCE FUNDAMENTALS

with danielle hayden

ONLINE / Introductory / 1 session
Sat. May 10 / 1:10 – 3:10 pm PT
$67.50 - $75

DInterested in writing for newspapers, magazines, online publications or businesses but not sure where to start? This class will demystify the freelance world and give you the tools to pitch, publish, and build a sustainable writing career.

In this two-hour seminar, we'll cover how to develop strong story ideas, research the right outlets, craft compelling pitches, and navigate the editorial process. You'll also learn best practices for negotiating pay, handling edits, and leveraging your network to secure consistent freelance work. Expect real-world insights, examples of successful pitches, and practical steps to help you land your first (or next!) publishing opportunity.

Leave with a personalized roadmap for getting published, a curated list of submission-friendly outlets, insider tips on how to approach editors, and the confidence to step into the world of freelance journalism.

LEARN MORE

Writing is a journey into the unknown.

- Charlie Kaufman -

