

## POETRY AND THE HUMAN

### HUMA 18100

#### Winter: crisis, performance, politics

In *Winter (crisis/performance/politics)*, we turn to questions of social rupture, breakdown, and reformation as we consider the ways that poetry revolts, reflects, and rebuilds in political crises. We will also look at poetry in performance, and performance as poetry, to consider how poetry is practiced in non-textual media such as spoken word, film, and dance.

#### Books and Course Reader

The following books – in order of when we will be reading them – are available at the Seminary Co-op Bookstore, 5751 S. Woodlawn Avenue or from amazon.com, and have also been put on reserve at the Regenstein Library.

- C. Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (Graywolf Press, 2014)

All other readings can be found in your Course Reader and on Canvas.

*Please purchase the Course Reader from Auxiliary Services (Social Sciences, basement).*

- **Event:** annual poetry reading for all PATH students past and present

## Schedule

### *crisis*

#### **Week 1: *poetry and manifestos***

- class 1: Gwendolyn Brooks, "Boy breaking glass," "kitchenette building," "the rites for Cousin Vit," "The Bean Eaters," "RIOT"  
Audre Lorde, "Poetry is not a luxury"
- class 2: Adrienne Rich, "Tonight no poetry will serve," "Serve" (epigraph)  
Murial Rukeyser, "Poem (I lived in the first century of world wars)"  
Slavoj Žižek, "The Poetic Torture-House of Language"

#### **Week 2: *poetry and the corrupted world***

- class 1: Charles Baudelaire, "To the Reader," "Spleen (I)," "Spleen (II)," "Spleen (III)," "Spleen (IV)," "Obsession," "The Seven Old Men"
- class 2: T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*

#### **Week 3: *poetry and the fragmented world***

- class 1: T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (continued)
- class 2: Paul Celan, select poems

#### **Week 4: *poetry and the conflicted world***

- class 1: Yehuda Amichai, "My child has the fragrance of peace," "Wildpeace," "An Arab shepherd is searching for his goat on Mount Zion"  
Mahmoud Darwish, "On this earth," "I belong there," "Other barbarians will come," "They would love to see me dead"
- class 2: Dahlia Ravikovitch, "A little woman made the world," "Delight," "Hovering at a low altitude," "A deadly fear"  
Taha Muhammad Ali, "Warning," "Fooling the killers," "The bell at forty: the destruction of a village"

Friday: first essay due by midnight.

### *performance*

#### **Week 5: *poetry and film***

- class 1: Walt Whitman, "I sing the body electric," "Mannahatta," "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"  
[Paul Strand, \*Manhatta\*](#)

class 2: Maya Deren, "Tempo and Tension"  
[Maya Deren, \*Ritual in Transfigured Time\*](#)

**Week 6:** *poetry and art*

class 1: W. H. Auden, "In memory of W. B. Yeats," "September 1, 1939," "Musée des Beaux Arts"  
Marianne Moore, "What are years?" "Poetry" (1924) and (1967), "An Egyptian pulled glass bottle in the shape of a fish"

class 2: Frank O'Hara, "For Grace, after a party," "Meditations in an Emergency," "Why I am not a painter," "Having a Coke with You"

**Week 7:** *poetry and music*

class 1: Bessie Smith, "[Young Woman's Blues](#)"  
Billie Holiday, "[Strange Fruit](#)"  
Nina Simone, "[Mississippi Goddam](#)," "[Strange Fruit](#)," "[Images](#)"  
Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "Theme for English B," "Weary Blues," "Spirituals," and "Song for Billie Holiday"

class 2: Amiri Baraka, "Babylon Revisited," "Legacy," "*An Agony. As Now.*"  
Allen Ginsberg, "Howl," "Footnote to howl," "A supermarket in California"  
Exhibit and materials of Bob Thompson

Visit to Smart Museum – details TBD

Friday: second essay due by midnight.

*politics*

**Week 8:** *poetry and history*

class 1: Robert Hayden, "Middle passage"

class 2: M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!* (excerpts)

**Week 9:** *poetry and new forms*

class 1: Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric*

class 2: Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (continued)  
Tracie Morris, [It all started](#), [Too black](#), [Project Princess](#), [ICE Children](#)

Friday: third essay due by midnight