

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Discipline: English Writing

Fall 2008

ENWR 240Z-1/ENWR 240Z-2: Toward the Interior – Writing Poetry and Short Fiction

Lower Division

Instructor Name: Joseph Chapman

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a creative writing class. You will need to approach the readings of the class and the classroom discussion a little differently. Instead of asking yourself, “What might the author intend to say here?” you will ask, “What technique has the author mastered?” Of course I want you to be changed by the readings. To be changed requires that you know, in the simplest terms, what the books are *about*. But we cannot stop there: we’ll need to know not only what the author says but *how* she says it. You will read a selection of world fiction and poetry; and your readings will match your port stays. You will write a journal and original poetry and prose. You will revise and collect your original writings twice during the semester. We want to travel “toward the interior”: a place not always deeper inside ourselves, but certainly deeper inside our writing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

I want you to leave the course writing better poetry and prose. I also want to provide you with a vocabulary with which to discuss poetry and prose. So we will, throughout the course of the semester, articulate what we love and hate about the readings, and the methods with which the author elicits our responses. I also want you to find a suitable means of expressing yourself within written words, whatever that means is: journal entries, short stories, or poetry. By the end of the course you should have a sharpened sense of the written word: how one goes about reading literature, and how one goes about writing it.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

CLASS 1: Introduction

CLASS 2: CARIBBEAN POST-COLONIAL WRITINGS
Selections from Linton Kwesi Johnson, Andrew Salkey, Frederick Seidel, and
Derek Walcott
“The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?” Derek Walcott (1974)

CLASS 3: Workshop

CLASS 4: COUNTING TO A HUNDRED: ELIZABETH BISHOP
Selections from *Geography III*, Elizabeth Bishop (1976)
“Counting to a Hundred: Elizabeth Bishop,” Seamus Heaney (1995)

- CLASS 5: Workshop
- CLASS 6: Selections from *Questions of Travel*, Elizabeth Bishop (1965)
- CLASS 7: Workshop
- CLASS 8: SUDDEN VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT STORIES OF PAUL BOWLES
Selections from *The Stories of Paul Bowles*, Paul Bowles (2006)
- CLASS 9: Workshop
- CLASS 10: Selections from *The Stories of Paul Bowles*, Paul Bowles (2006)
“The Subject of Paul Bowles,” Wayne Pound (1986)
- CLASS 11: **Midterm Portfolios Due**
Conferences
- CLASS 12: Workshop
- CLASS 13: QUESTIONS IN INDIA: AGHA SHALID ALI
Agha Shahid Ali, *The Country Without a Post Office* (1998)
- CLASS 14: Workshop
- CLASS 15: Agha Shahid Ali, *The Country Without a Post Office* (1998)
- CLASS 16: Workshop
- CLASS 17: AUTHENTICITY IN ASIAN-AMERICAN POETRY
Rose, Li-Young Lee (1986)
“Working to Hear the Hum” Li-Young Lee (2006)
- CLASS 18: Workshop
- CLASS 19: *Rose*, Li-Young Lee (1986)
- CLASS 20: Workshop
- CLASS 21: THE IMAGE IN HAIKU
Selections from *The Essential Haiku* (1994)
“Images” Robert Hass
- CLASS 22: Workshop
- CLASS 23: Selections from Robert Hass
Final Portfolios Due

FIELD COMPONENT

Each student is required to complete THREE practica (either Faculty Directed or Independent). You are required to participate in TWO FDPs under my direction since they are central to the material covered in this class. The third practica can be an Independent Practicum developed as part of a regularly-offered SAS trip, or it may stand alone. If an Independent Practicum is selected, then the student must meet with the instructor prior to arriving in the port-of-call to discuss his or her approach and objectives.

I want you to use the field component mostly as a chance to gather raw material for your poems and short stories. With this goal in mind, you will complete a journal entry for each port stay. I will check up on the progress of your journal entries throughout the trip. Your journals should not only engage and chronicle your port adventures, but also create a dialogue *between* ports. In addition, your journals will be graded for the quality of notes taken while in the field. Additional instructions will be provided before each field trip

SUGGESTED PRACTICA:

BRAZIL:	Sacatar: International Artists' Residency/Community (FDP)
NAMIBIA:	Salt Mines (FDP)
SOUTH AFRICA:	Authors in Cape Town (FDP); Township Visit and District Six Museum
INDIA:	Temples of India; Women Writers of India
CHINA:	Suzhou (FDP)
JAPAN:	Poetry Reading; Rokko Mountain Hike and Public Bath; Japanese Tea Ceremony; Takarazuka Review

METHODS OF EVALUATION

This is a writing course, so you will not take a Midterm or Final exam. However, you will write quite a bit of poetry and prose (we will hammer out the due dates of the individual assignments as we go along). You will turn in revisions of your work twice during the semester. Every other class meeting, we will workshop your poems and/or short stories. Participation will be essential. You are expected to carefully assess your classmates' writing and critically respond to the course readings. Do not be late to class. Do not miss class. You will get two free passes. Your grade will drop by a letter for every subsequent absence. Two tardies equal one absence.

POETRY AND PROSE: 20%
MIDTERM PORTFOLIO (REVISIONS): 20%
FIELD COMPONENT: 20%
FINAL PORTFOLIO (REVISIONS): 30%
PARTICIPATION: 10%

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Elizabeth Bishop
TITLE: The Complete Poems 1927-1979
PUBLISHER: Farrar, Strous and Giroux
ISBN #: 0374518173
DATE/EDITION: 1984
COST: \$14

AUTHOR: Paul Bowles
TITLE: The Stories of Paul Bowles
PUBLISHER: Harper Perennial
ISBN #: 0061137049
DATE/EDITION: 2006
COST: \$15

AUTHOR: Li-Young Lee
TITLE: Rose
PUBLISHER: Boa Editions Ltd.
ISBN #: 0918526531
DATE/EDITION: 2000
COST: \$15

AUTHOR: Junichiro Tanizaki
TITLE: In Praise of Shadows
PUBLISHER: Leetes Island Books
ISBN #: 0918172020
DATE/EDITION: 1980
COST:

AUTHOR:
TITLE: Course Pack
PUBLISHER:
ISBN #:
DATE/EDITION: