Introduction to Fiction & Poetry
CRWRI-UA.815.016
Fall 2020, T&R 3:30 - 4:45 PM
Location TBD

Instructor: E Yeon Chang
Email: eyc286@nyu.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description & Objectives
The first 4 weeks of class time will be dedicated to introducing students to a basic vocabulary of craft—technical foundations with which we can discuss creative writing. Students will read works that explain and demonstrate different craft elements and attempt to emulate them in their responses. Thereafter, we will start workshop, the process of sharing, reveling and editing each other’s art. Good times will be had. Friendships will be forged. Rivalries will be nonexistent.

Course Work & Grading

- Participation 30%
  - **Attendance 20%**: This is a very participation-driven class, attendance is mandatory. Absences (health-related, religious, personal etc.) must be properly documented & I must be notified. Students will be given 2 no-questions-asked absences. Any additional absences will result in 5% deductions in grade. 3 late arrivals (10+ minutes) will count as an absence.
  - **Class Participation 10%**: Students will come prepared to class (readings, workshop pieces and critique printed), demonstrate their understanding of reading materials & share their thoughts on workshop pieces.

- Reading 30%
  - **Write Up 10%**: Please bring a half-page response to the readings to each class.
  - **Workshop Critique 15%**: Workshop pieces will be marked. Critique will contain at least 4 full sentences that address what worked, what didn’t work, and what you would like to see. You do not have to submit a critique if you are getting workshoped that class.
  - **Commentary 5%**: 2 pg write-up of a poetry or short story collection of your choosing that reflects an understanding of craft.

- Writing 40%
  - **Final Portfolio/Revision 20%**: Consisting of 3 poems and 2 fiction pieces from either workshop or response weeks. It will serve as a representation of the student’s best work and should demonstrate careful revision.
  - **Workshop 15%**: Graded on completion & (timely) submission, not quality. Due Sunday by noon the week you are getting workshoped.
  - **Response 5%**: Students will turn in 3 writing responses (1 poem, 1 fiction, 1 choice) to the prompts given directly to me for feedback the weeks before workshop.
Academic Integrity
Workshop relies on trust. Do not share work that is not your own from this class without express permission. Plagiarism will result in an automatic fail.

Disability Disclosure Statement
Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980, or at 726 Broadway (2nd floor) or at www.nyu.edu/csd.

Student Wellness Policy
Unless we see explicit evidence in workshop that the speaker of a work is the writer themselves, we assume the speaker is fictional. However, certain content relating to murder, depression, suicide, sexual assault, or severe mental distress, such as seems to be a possible cry for help, will likely prompt the instructor’s attention. Please send an email putting this work in context before submitting work, especially for workshop, that may be interpreted as such. If you do feel you need someone to talk to at any point in the semester, please feel safe to reach out to me and I can guide you to the NYU Wellness Center.

Texts:
* Mary Oliver, A Poetry Handbook
* Viet Thanh Nguyen, The Refugees
* Assorted Readings (available online or on NYU Classes)
* 1 poetry or short story collection of your choosing

Week 1
Thursday, September 3
Hello!
Introductions + Syllabus
Discuss workshop etiquette & assign groups

Week 2
Tuesday, September 8
Instruction, Motivation & Imitation
“How to be a Writer” by Lorrie Moore, “Why I Write” by George Orwell, “Why I Write” by Joan Didion
+ Start thinking about how & why you write. What do you like to write about?

Thursday, September 10
A Poetry Handbook (p.34) by Mary Oliver, “Essay on Craft” by Ocean Vuong, “Ars Poetica” by Dorothea Lasky
+ Respond to Tuesday’s topic imitating the style of one of our readings this week. You do not have to match the length.

Week 3
Tuesday, September 15
Structure & Form
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readingisations</th>
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<td>+ Respond. Write either a poem/prose piece after setting a rule/restriction for yourself. You can imitate but cite your inspiration!</td>
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<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Self &amp; Characters</th>
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<td>Thursday, September 24</td>
<td>“Emergency” by Denis Johnson, “When We Were Happy We Had Other Names” by Yiyun Li, “Love and honour and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice...” by Nam Le</td>
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<td>+ Respond. Create a portrait of a character and/or yourself. (eg: “Double Jackson” by Major Jackson)</td>
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Grief, Body &amp; Yearning</th>
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<td>Tuesday, September 29</td>
<td>“Facing it” by Yusef Komunyakaa, “The Lady Lady Died” by Frank O’ Hara, “For You” by Sharon Olds</td>
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<td>+ Group AP1</td>
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<td>+ Group BP1</td>
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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Art &amp; Allusion</th>
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<td>Tuesday, October 6</td>
<td>“Dinosaurs in the Hood” by Danez Smith, “After Summer Fell Apart” by Yusef Komunyakaa, “Breaking Bad Aria”</td>
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<td>+ Group CP1</td>
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<td>Thursday, October 8</td>
<td>“The Shield of Achilles” by W. H. Auden, “Landscape with Fall of Icarus” by William Carlos Williams “Archaic Torso of Apollo” by R.M. Rilke, “Untitled (Blue, Green, and Brown) : oil on canvas: Mark Rothko: 1952” by Ocean Vuong, “Saturn” by Sharon Olds</td>
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<td>+ Bring in an image to write about.</td>
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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>The Real &amp; The Fantastic</th>
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<td>Tuesday, October 13</td>
<td>“The Folklore of Our Times” by Haruki Murukami, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wing” by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, “The Tiger Guest” by Pu Songling,</td>
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<td>+ Group AF1</td>
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Thursday, October 15
“The Journey of the Eyeball” by Katherine Vaz, “Hello, Otto” by Nnedi Okofor, “If a Book is Locked There’s Probably a Good Reason For That Don’t You Think” by Helen Oyemi
+ Group BF1

Week 8
Tuesday, October 20
Youth, Memory & Time
“Bullet in the Brain”, “Say Yes” & “Powder” by Tobias Wolff
+ collection acquisition deadline
+ Group CF1

Thursday, October 22
+ Group AP2

Week 9
Tuesday, October 27
Address, People & Persona
“What It Look Like” by Terrance Hayes, “how many of us have them” by Danez Smith, “Please” by Yusef Komunyakaa, “Don’t Touch Me” by Emily Jungmin Yoon
+ Group BP2

Thursday, October 29
+ Group CP2

Week 10
Tuesday, November 3
Place, Country & History
The Refugees (first 3 stories) by Viet Thanh Nguyen
+ Group AF2
 *optional: “American Sonnet for My Past and Future Assassin I lock you in an American sonnet that is part prison” by Terrance Hayes, “Self Portrait with Exit Wounds” by Ocean Vuong, “We Lived Happily During the War” by Ilya Kaminsky

Thursday, November 5
The Refugees (second 3 stories) by Viet Thanh Nguyen
+ Group BF2
 *optional: “Aubade with Burning City” by Ocean Vuong, “Alabanza” by Martin Espada, “Mercy, Mercy & Me” by John Murillo”, “News” by Emily Jungmin Yoon

Week 11
Tuesday, November 10
Identity & Family
The Refugees (last 2 stories) by Viet Thanh Nguyen, “Baba” by Annesha Mitha
+ Group CF2
Thursday, November 12
+ Group AP3

Week 12
Tuesday, November 17
“The King of Sentences” by Jonathan Lethem, “The Season of Phantasmal Peace” by Derek Walcott, “On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous” by Ocean Vuong, “Happiness” by Yusef Komunyakaa, “Peanut Butter” by Eileen Myles
+ Group BP3

Thursday, November 19
+ Group CP3

Week 13
Tuesday, November 24
No readings
+ Commentary on your chosen collection

Thursday, November 26
SCHEDULED GIVING OF THANKS BREAK

Week 14
Tuesday, December 1
Your Choice Workshop
+ Thank you letters for Group C
+ Group C

Thursday, December 3
+ Thank you letters for Group B
+ Group B

Week 15
Tuesday, December 8
Reading
+ Thank you letters for Group A
+ Group A

Thursday, December 10
Salon
+ Final Portfolios due

Terrance Hayes, American Sonnets for My Past & Future Assassin
Marty McConnell, Gathering Voices;
Emily Jungmin Yoon, A Cruelty Special to Our Species;
Ocean Vuong, Night Sky with Exit Wounds