Graduate Poetry Workshop

CRWR 511
The University of Montana
Joanna Klink
Wednesdays 3-6 pm
LA 210

…it is a function of poetry to locate those zones inside us that would be free and declare them so.

C.D. Wright

Here, as elsewhere in life, attentiveness only deepens what it regards.

Jane Hirschfield

This is an advanced workshop devoted to critical analysis and revision of poems. We will discuss student work in light of practical issues (craft), and in light of central concerns in poetics, with particular emphasis on the relationship between description and voice.

Required Texts
1. Cynthia Cruz, Wunderkammer
2. Terrance Hayes, How to be Drawn
3. Denis Johnson, The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millennium General Assembly:
4. Poems Collected & New
5. Sandra Lim, The Wilderness
6. D.A. Powell, Repast: Tea, Lunch and Cocktails
7. Brenda Shaughnessy, Our Andromeda
8. C.D. Wright, Steal Away: New & Selected Poems
9. Dean Young, Fall Higher
10. + Weekly worksheets

Office Hours
Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 pm
some Friday afternoons
& always moreso by appointment
LA 231
joanna.klink@umontana.edu
Poems
One poem is due each week on **Tuesday, by 4 pm, in my box** in the English Department office. Most of the time this poem will be based on a prompt. You can always hand in more poems than are assigned. If you miss the deadline, **hold on to your work until the following week**. Please **don’t xerox poems and bring them to class, or email poems to the class.**

- Put your name next to each poem title.
- Do not hand in double-sided copies.
- Do not staple anything.

Worksheets
- Each week in class I’ll hand you a new packet (“worksheet”) of student poems, with a list at the top of who’s up for workshop.
- Read through all the poems on the worksheet and prepare the ones marked for discussion.
- Read and prepare any other assignments.
- Be, in class, present.

Discussion
The quality of our classes depends on your care in reading as well as your willingness to write down comments in advance, to take each other seriously, to approach radically different styles with an open mind, to contribute thoughtfully to discussions, and to sustain a generous manner with one another throughout. I promise to bring the same kind of attention to the class.

Grading
- Your grade will reflect your weekly participation: participation in class is essential. Your final portfolio should include all weekly assignments, revised. For every two classes you miss, your grade will be lowered by one letter grade.
- Collaboration on assignments is not allowed.
- You are responsible for all work whether or not you are in class.

Perhaps poems will continue to illuminate their solitudes, but best of all would be if poems occasioned a greater endeavor, that of sitting around and trying to figure something out together. It is the scholar who, “coughing in ink,” annoys us by pointing
out that “study” derives from the Latin *studia*, or eagerness. This eagerness demands nothing other than a table, a book, and a lamp to gather around. Life itself can be counted on to furnish the solitude and longing in excess. What I wish for my students, as yet strangers to their own deepest eagerness, is what I wish more and more for myself, the lamp, the table, the curious company, and most of all, the conversation that opens our own ignorant ear.

DeSales Harrison, *Boston Review*

### Schedule of Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, September 2</td>
<td>A Beginning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, September 9</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, September 11</td>
<td>Doug Powell reads Distillery 1 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, September 16</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 23</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 30</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, October 7</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, October 14</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, October 21</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, October 28</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Wednesday, November 4</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Friday, November 6</td>
<td>Timothy Donnelley lectures Dell Brown 7 pm</td>
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<td>Wednesday, November 11</td>
<td>NO CLASS Veteran’s Day</td>
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<td>Wednesday, November 18</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, November 25</td>
<td>NO CLASS Thanksgiving break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 2</td>
<td>Workshop + Portfolios due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 9</td>
<td>Last class Students read from their work</td>
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The one connection between us in our work is [...] that we do not know before we complete the poem. Neither of us write what we already know, and of course that’s the life of the poem.

George Oppen, in a letter to Robert Duncan