

## Short Form Creative Writing Workshop

David Gewanter (Georgetown University) and Margarida Vale de Gato (FLUL)

Class Schedule: Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays: 5 – 7:45 p. m.

Activities outside the class: July 3-5 (Disquiet program)

July 9 – Open Mike in Graça

July 24 – visit and reading at Fernando Pessoa Museum

TBD: visit to a Lisbon exhibition.

### Course Description

What can one discover, what can one make happen on the page? In class we'll read and discuss intensely some influential and experimental poems, creative essays, and short fiction by English and Portuguese authors (translated). You will work over the drafts of your poems and prose; write critiques of published works; study and steal the forms of poems, and the maneuvers of creative prose. You will give and receive helpful criticism of your work in a group setting, and in conferences with the workshop facilitators. Immersion in the Portuguese literary scene and in (inter)national readings will help you to discuss and compare current trends, including incorporating your intercultural experiences into literary forms. We'll also deliver a reading ourselves. This workshop offers you a chance to develop the early promise and challenge of your poems and prose, and to build a longer manuscript in the format of a work-in-progress portfolio, with a framing (or parallel) poetic manifesto.

*Imitatio* will be both a guiding methodology and a struggle. Coleridge used a long name for this: the esemplastic imagination. By this view, we don't draw pictures on a fully blank page, or invent music from silence; rather, we draw images after looking at things, and we play tunes and lyrics based on remembered music and speech. We can learn, copy, imitate, remember, shift, combine, invent...the imaginative actions that Jasper Johns recommends: "take an object; do something to it; then do something else to it; repeat." So what drives much of this course is: free-writing; studying models; stealing from them; stealing from your fellow student-writers; and altering the form of the model (text, received language, memory, 'vision') into something new.

Offered jointly by SiPN and ULICES (University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies), with the support of the Casa Fernando Pessoa, the course will help students put together a manuscript of poems and/or short prose pieces.

Cultural visits and participation in the Portuguese (Inter)national scene will include attendance of literary events (the Disquiet International Literary Program), and participation in an "open mike"/poetry slam night.

### Objectives:

- To practice how the forms of poetry allow for the understanding of the self and the world;
- To write through imitation and revision, using models of some of the best modern poems in the English and Portuguese language, or in translation;
- To analyze and rewrite through "stereoscopic reading" (two or more versions of the same text, including translations);

- To compose, discuss, analyze and edit draft poems and short prose pieces, working towards a portfolio;
- To consider the utility of prose theory on poems, and devise a poetic manifesto for the final portfolio;
- To explore poetry as a public and private art;
- To venture into the (inter)national poetry scene in Lisbon, finding ways to incorporate the experience(s) into the workshop writing process;
- To reflect and elaborate on literary analysis and theory in tandem with the practice individual and collective modes of expression developed within the structure of creative writing workshops, bearing in mind necessary adaptations to the Portuguese context.

### **Evaluation**

20% poems + 20% prose (variable, according to students' options); 30% portfolio and manifesto; 15% editorial comments; 15% participation

### **Bibliography**

Primary:

Gorman, Amanda. *Call Us What We Carry*, Viking Books. 2021.

Heaney, Seamus, and Ted Hughes, eds.. *Rattle Bag*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2005.

Zenith, Richard, ed. *28 Portuguese Poets: a Bilingual Anthology*. Dedalus Press, 2018.

Ziegler, Alan. Short. Persea Books. 2020.

Secondary:

Dana, Robert. *A Community of Writers: Paul Engle and the Iowa Writers' Workshop*. Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1999

Davidson, Chad and Gregory Fraser. *Writing Poetry: Creative and Critical Approaches*. New York. Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.

Retallack, Joan, and Juliana Spahr, eds. *Poetry and Pedagogy: the Challenge of the Contemporary*. Springer, 2016.

Walker, Elaine, ed. *Teaching Creative Writing: Practical Approaches. The Professional and Higher Partnership*, 2012.

**ECTS: 6**

**Students (max. SiPN): 12**

## Instructors' Bios

**David Gewanter** earned a B.A. (Intellectual History) from U. Michigan; an M.A. and Ph.D. (English) from Berkeley. He was teaching associate at Berkeley from 1984 to 1990, then taught at Harvard from 1992 to 1997, where he directed writing programs and initiated two writing degrees: a Masters in Literature & Creative Writing; and a Certificate in Journalism. He was hired by Georgetown in 1997 to increase the course offerings in Creative Writing; he initiated an Introduction to Creative Writing workshop along with a visiting writer series. As Full Professor of English, he designed and directed (2017-2023) the Creative Writing Minor, and integrated the Committee of the Lannan Center for Poetics and Social Practice. He co-edited, with Frank Bidart, *Robert Lowell: Collected Poems* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2003), which was granted the Ambassador Book Award.. He has published four collections of poetry with the University of Chicago Press: *In the Belly* (1997, Zacharis first book prizewinner, *Ploughshares Review*); *The Sleep of Reason* (2003, James Laughlin Award Finalist, Academy of American Poets); *War Bird* (2009); and *Fort Necessity* (2018, "Top Ten Poetry Book," *Beltwaypoetryquarterly.com*).

**Margarida Vale de Gato** teaches and researches in the School of Arts and Letters, University of Lisbon, in American Studies and Literary Translation. In these areas, she has published scholarship, mainly on Edgar Allan Poe — edition and translation of his *Obra Poética Completa* in 2009, or the co-edition of *Translated Poe* and *Anthologizing Poe* (2014 and 2020) — as well as on collaborative pedagogy of literary translation and creative writing. She has translated into Portuguese, among others, Henri Michaux, Nathalie Sarraute, Yeats, Mark Twain, Marianne Moore, Vladimir Nabokov, Jack Kerouac, Iris Murdoch, Alice Munro. She has published the poetry collections *Lançamento* (Douda Correria, 2016), *Atirar para o Torto* (2021), and *Mulher ao Mar* (Woman Overboard, 2010), a work in progress whose latest edition is *Mulher ao Mar e Corsárias* (2023).