SYLLABUS, SPRING 2018 -- ENGLISH 696, “The Ekphrastic Poem” (+ in field, the Broad Museum, “A Tour of the Imagination”), Wednesday, 2-4:30, Doheny Library, East Asian Collection, Conference Room, 109, Professor Muske-Dukes

“The Ekphrastic Poem”, graduate poetry workshop. The focus will continue as a dialogue between Art & Poetry, but students will write original poems in the workshop, as well as “in the field”.

The “field” for this course is the new Broad museum, which again invites students into its spectacular galleries of post-war paintings, photographs, sculpture and video installations. In workshop, we will seek inspiration in our study of the ekphrastic poem, its history and aesthetic influence re literary realism - then compose poems in response to the prompts of individual imagination. In the field, at the museum, students will write poems inspired by particular works of art – culminating in an invited audience reading (& perhaps a more “public” reading) hosted by the Broad at semester’s end. The Broad has now established a tradition of also publishing a chapbook of “Tour of the Imagination” student poems, designed by the museum staff.

The USC Office of Communications featured last year’s student reading at the Broad on its site – here is a link to the article:

[http://dornsife.usc.edu/news/stories/2354/a-tour-of-the-imagination-art-inspires-graduate-poetry-at-the-br](http://dornsife.usc.edu/news/stories/2354/a-tour-of-the-imagination-art-inspires-graduate-poetry-at-the-br" \t "_blank)/.

From Homer’s poetic hymn to Achilles’ shield to Keats’ Ode on a Grecian Urn to Terrance Hayes’, “How to Be Drawn” - we will investigate the sources of visual representation in art and the ekphrastic connection to the poet-psyche.

THIS SEMESTER ONLY – the focus will be on the new Jasper Johns exhibit at the Broad museum. Students will choose a painting by Johns and respond with a poem that will be presented at each of the Broad readings (public & private) in early April. We will also compose a “group poem” to be presented at the readings.

Note instructions from Darin Klein, Broad ass’t director – re schedule for the Johns opening reception -- plus Wednesday, 2/14 we will hold class at the Broad at our regular classtime.

Also please note that we will have class in the Creative Writing Library on 2/7 only – as the East Asian Library will be closed for an event on that date.

FIRST WEEK - (1/10) Introductions. Discussion of workshop on site and “in the

field” at the Broad. Discussion of schedule for Broad “procedures” and independent time with art works.

We will be concentrating on writing ekphrastic poems throughout the semester. First “free” inspiration poems, then poems inspired by the Johns exhibit at the Broad.

. Ekphrastic poetry has come to be defined as poems written about works of art; however, in ancient. Greece, the term ekphrasis was applied to the skill of describing a thing with vivid detail. One of the. earliest examples of ekphrasis can be found in Homer's epic poem The Iliad.

+ A brief history of ekphrasis –

Also will discuss two poems as “inspiration” for the poem for next week “Epilogue” by Robert Lowell and “Self Portrait as the Mind of a Camera” by Terrance Hayes. Write a poem sparked by each of the poems.

SECOND WEEK - (1/17) Discuss Terrance Hayes and Lowell poems. Reading: Auden’s poem, “The Shield of Achilles”. Discuss Jasper Johns catalogue. (Painter, Sculptor, Printmaker - “Concrete” art – flags, maps – Abstract Expressionism)

THIRD WEEK – (1/24) Discuss poems. “Self Portrait in a Convex Mirror”, Ashbery

FOURTH WEEK: (1/31) Discuss poems. “Debtor in a Convex Mirror”, Wheeler and Rilke’s “Archaic Torso of Apollo”

FIFTH WEEK – (2/7) Meet in CW Library - Complete Poem Discussion. Free Poem -

SIXTH WEEK – (2/14) Meeting at the Broad Museum – re Jasper Johns exhibit

SEVENTH WEEK – (2/21) Back at East Asian Library – discuss choosing poem – Discuss “free ekphrastic poems”

EIGHTH WEEK – (2/28)

Discuss ekphrastic “frees” – and strategy for Johns poem.

NINTH WEEK – (3/7)

New ekphrastic poems, discuss work on Johns poems.

“Canary”, Rita Dove

MARCH 10-18, SPRING BREAK

JOHNS POEM complete - + GROUP POEM

TENTH WEEK – (3/21) Discuss poems. Johns poem. START GROUP “BROAD” POEM! “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, Keats

ELEVENTH WEEK - (3/28) Discussion. + Marianne Moore, Sappho, ekphrastic

TWELFTH WEEK -- (4/4) TWO NIGHTS OF READINGS AT BROAD – TBA

April 3, 4

THIRTEENTH WEEK - (4/11) Final ekphrastic poem, review Broad experience

FOURTEENTH WEEK – Discuss final poems

FIFTEENTH WEEK – Celebrate

My office, Taper Hall 409, 213 740 2808 + cell

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards*<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

## **Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html>provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu/*](http://emergency.usc.edu/)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

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| January 8 | **First day of classes** |  |
| January 10-11 | **[Involvement Fair](https://welcomeweek.usc.edu/spring/students/" \l "/1" \t "_blank)** | Trousdale Parkway |
| January 15 | **Martin Luther King's birthday – no classes** |  |
| January 25 | **[Study Abroad Fair](http://dornsife.usc.edu/overseas-studies-events/" \t "_blank)** | Trousdale Parkway |
| January 26 (5p.m.) | **Last day to add/drop classes for Spring 2018** |  |
| February 8 | **[Spring 2018 Career Fair](https://calendar.usc.edu/event/spring_career_fair_2196" \t "_blank)** | Trousdale Parkway |
| February 19 | **President's Day – no classes** |  |
| March 5 | **Registration begins for Summer 2018** |  |
| March 10-18 | **Spring break – no classes** |  |
| March 19-April 13 | **Advisement and registration for Fall 2018** | Department of English |
| March 26 | **Registration begins for Fall 2018** |  |
| April 16-20 | **Narrative Studies Capstone Presentations** | THH 420 |
| April 27 | **Last day of classes** |  |
| April 28-May 1 | **Study days** |  |
| May 2-9 | **[Final exams](http://classes.usc.edu/term-20181/finals/" \t "_blank)** |  |
| May 11 | **[Commencement](http://commencement.usc.edu/" \t "_blank)** | University Park Campus |

# Canary

By [Rita Dove](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/rita-dove)

*for Michael S. Harper*

Billie Holiday’s burned voice

had as many shadows as lights,

a mournful candelabra against a sleek piano,

the gardenia her signature under that ruined face.

(Now you’re cooking, drummer to bass,

magic spoon, magic needle.

Take all day if you have to

with your mirror and your bracelet of song.)

Fact is, the invention of women under siege

has been to sharpen love in the service of myth.

If you can’t be free, be a mystery.