

**GESM 110g: Seminar in the Arts [#35281D]
M/W 3:30-4:50 pm | VKC200 [4 units]
FALL 2018**

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THE POETRY OF TRANSLATION

Poetry is that which is worth translating. — Eliot Weinberger

Languages are many, poetry one. — Andrei Voznesensky

Between the language of the universe and the universe of language, there is a bridge, a link: poetry. The poet . . . is the translator. — Octavio Paz

With over 200 languages spoken inside an area of fewer than 500 square miles, Los Angeles is one of the most linguistically diverse cities in the world. How might such verbal multiplicity and cultural abundance contribute to an art form created of words? Poetry has been said to be what is lost in translation, but what do we gain by the translation of poems into other languages? Can a translation ever achieve the aesthetic and emotional immediacy of a work in its original language? If translation is what gets *carried across*, how might the language of poetry bridge the gap between shores?

These questions (& yours!) will serve as a focal point around which we'll explore, discover, and participate in the rich artistic tradition of literary translation. The course is comprised of two interconnected strands: critical and creative. We'll study and discuss a wide range of international poetry (in bilingual editions), with an eye toward the choices and strategies of translation. We'll also consider critical and personal writing by literary translators, along with film, music, and visual forms of translation. And we will create new works as we practice and experiment with translation in its many manifestations, including invention, homage, and collaboration.

Our study will include poetry in translation from the Chinese, Spanish, Polish, Italian, Persian, Russian, Swedish, Korean, French, Japanese, Sanskrit, and Classical Greek, among others. Students will also have an opportunity to examine in depth a particular poet, language, culture, and/or historical period of their choosing. Knowledge of languages other than English is not a requirement, but be prepared to become enamored of those you don't yet know yet; absolute beginners in poetry of any language enthusiastically welcomed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Aligned with USC's General Education Program Core Literacies for The Arts

1. *Analysis:* You will increase your ability to analyze the parallel creative endeavors of poetry and literary translation by examining their formal elements and engaging in research to better understand the broader cultural, historical, and aesthetic contexts from which particular works have emerged.
2. *Making:* You will expand your knowledge about the creative process of writing and translating poetry by studying specific works and through making your own creative work.
3. *Connectivity:* You will deepen your appreciation of the connections between poetry in translation and concurrent cultural, historical, and political conditions.
4. *Context:* You will enrich your discernment of creative production by increasing your knowledge of theoretical, historical, and aesthetic bases of literary translation across history, cultures, and literary schools/movements.

5. *Engagement*: You will increase your understanding of becoming a lifelong supporter and/or participant in the arts by exposure to creative production in the contemporary literary community.

REQUIRED TEXTS/FILMS:

- Collins, Martha and Kevin Prufer, editors. *Into English: Poems, Translations, Commentaries*. Minneapolis, MN: Grawolf Press, 2017.
- Kaminsky, Ilya and Susan Harris, editors. *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry*. New York: Ecco/Harper Collins, 2010.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *In Other Words*. Trans. Ann Goldstein. New York: Vintage, 2017.
- Paz, Marie José and Octavio Paz. *Figures and Figurations*. Trans. Eliot Weinberger. New York: New Directions, 2008.
- Pizarnik, Alejandra. *Diana's Tree*. Trans. Yvette Siegert. Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling Presse, 2014.
- Swirszczynska, Anna. *Building the Barricade*. Trans. Piotr Florczyk. Portland, OR: Tavern Books, 2017.
- *The Woman with Five Elephants*. Dir. Vadim Jendreyko, 2010. (screened in class)
- *Pina*. Dir. Wim Wenders, 2011 (screened in class)
- Please note: You will also select **one** text from a course bibliography provided early in the semester. Brief, additional readings will be posted on Blackboard or shared in class.

REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Participation**
Each class meeting will focus on thematic concepts and inquiries relating to the texts at hand, along with parallel aspects regarding literary craft. Class is our time together to initiate, explore, and test out ideas, both verbally and through writing. In class and online, **participation is crucial**, and you are expected to be **actively present and constructively engaged**.
- **Response Briefs**
For each of our common texts, you will write a brief critical/analytical response (**300-350 words**) and **post it on the Blackboard blog by noon on Mondays**. These responses will provide a place to begin discussion, and future ideas are likely to grow from them.
- **Creative Portfolio**
Throughout the semester, you will generate a portfolio of creative work that engages with practices, questions, quandaries, and possibilities of translation. **One** creative piece will be **shared formally during class** (bring 20 copies). **Three** additional pieces will be **submitted via Blackboard** (.doc or PDF) and will include a brief written reflection of the process (**300-350 words**). These three pieces and other in-class writings may also be shared informally.

- **Presentations**

You will be responsible for **two** presentations: For the first **(10-15 minutes)**, you will select a poem/poet/commentary from our common anthology, *Into English*. You will introduce the section and provide a brief, focused reading that points to one or two issues and/or questions for the class to consider. Your presentation will then segue into a discussion that you facilitate. You may work independently or with a partner.

For the second **(15-20 minutes)**, you will select a poetry collection or anthology from our course bibliography. As with the first presentation, you will provide a brief introduction of the work and the poet(s), along with a focused reading of a specific section and/or selection of poems. Your presentation will also engage with relevant cultural, political, and/or historical issues regarding the work and its translation. **The grade for this presentation is linked to your Seminar Essay.** Presentations must include a one-page handout (20 copies) for classmates to reference.

- **Seminar Essay**

A substantive essay of 5-6 pages (1,500-2,000 words) that engages with a poetry collection or anthology selected from our course bibliography. Seminar essays will include a critical introduction of the work and poet(s), along with analysis of selected poems and related issues of translation. Format will follow MLA guidelines: 1" margins, double-spaced, Times New Roman font. Essays must be submitted in Word.

- **Final Seminar Project**

You may use any style, medium, or form to create an original project that engages with translation. Projects might include (but are by no means limited to): translation of a sequence of poems (either existing or your own), a musical composition, visual or performance artwork, video, original poems in conversation with translated works, imaginative versions, erasures, centos, and/or other experimentations. **All Seminar Projects will include a brief critical reflection of the process and will be shared in class during the final two weeks of the semester.**

- **IRL Arts Engagement**

Between now and the end of the semester, you'll have a chance to experience several arts events/exhibitions right here in Los Angeles. For **one** of these, you will post a brief write-up to Blackboard as a way of bringing your engagement into the larger conversation. You are encouraged to attend events together and also to invite friends from outside our course; not only can it be more fun to venture out with an ally, but shared experiences frequently generate new ideas and collaborations. Please see Blackboard for a list of possibilities; additional options to be announced.

EVALUATION/DUE DATES:

- Participation (including active presence, in-class writing, and commentary): 20%
- Response Briefs: 18%
- Creative Portfolio (including reflections): 12%
- Presentation #1 (including/discussion facilitation): 5%
- Seminar Essay & Presentation #2: 20%
- Final Seminar Project (including reflection): 20%
- IRL Arts Engagement (including write-up): 5%

95-100 = A	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+	>59 = F
90-94 = A-	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D	
	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-	

- **Please refer to the course schedule for due dates.** Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due electronically **via Blackboard** by **noon on Mondays**. For Response Briefs, please copy and paste onto the Blackboard Blog so that they immediately accessible to the class; all other assignments, upload as a Word document. **Hard copies of Response Briefs are also brought to class, as are various other materials/texts throughout the semester. Please check the course schedule for specific dates.**

COURSE FAQs:

- **What do I do if I miss class?**
Because our class is conducted as a seminar, attendance at all class meetings is **crucial**. Life happens, however. Should you need to miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a classmate and/or Blackboard. Please keep in mind that as an arts course, class time will include direction for the creation of new work and may not be able to be made up. As per USC policy, **missing more than two class meetings may result in a marked lowering of your participation grade.**
- **Can I turn in late work?**
All assignments are due at the time and date specified on the course schedule. Should illness an unexpected emergency arise, you have **one** 24-hour grace period. **Please note this grace period may not be used for in-class presentations, Seminar Essay, or Final Seminar Project.** Those assignments are due on the date given unless a physician's note is provided, in which case it is due the class following. **Final Seminar Projects & Reflections must be submitted to Blackboard by noon on Monday, December 3. No exceptions.**
- **What about using laptop/tablet/phone in class?**
I prefer that you use printed copies of the books so you can mark them up as you read and reflect on them; that will help you contribute to our discussions and generate ideas for your own writing. Should you need your device during class, please use every ounce of willpower to resist personal use. I'll do the same. Please be aware that lap texting will result in a bolt of lightening through the ceiling, rendering your phone vastly un-smart. Okay, that's not true. But such decisions do impact the dynamic of the group, so please note that while I might not say anything in the moment, your participation grade will likely suffer. Please be fully present. You and your ideas are needed.
- **Can I email you a draft of my work ahead of time for your comments?**
I do not edit or proofread work, either online or in person. However, I'd be happy to meet with you during office hours to discuss your work and/or answer any questions you may have.
- **May I go to more than IRL event? Will it count for extra credit?**
Los Angeles is filled with vibrant offerings, and we are lucky to have access to so many fabulous (& free!) ones. Along with upcoming events announced in class, you'll find a listing of possible options on Blackboard. If you are able to attend (& write up) more than one, you'll add 3% to your grade while taking part in the rich cultural life of the city. (Of course, you are welcome—and encouraged!—to attend as many as you like, but the maximum extra credit is 3%.)

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION:

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. 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>.

Support Systems

- *Student Counseling Services (SCS)* - [\(213\) 740-7711](tel:2137407711) – 24/7 on call. Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>
- *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* — [1-800-273-8255](tel:18002738255) Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- *Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)* - [\(213\) 740-4900](tel:2137404900) - 24/7 on call. Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>
- *Sexual Assault Resource Center* For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>
- *Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance* – [\(213\) 740-5086](tel:2137405086) Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>
- *Bias Assessment Response and Support* Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>
- *Student Support & Advocacy* – [\(213\) 821-4710](tel:2138214710) Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>
- *Diversity at USC* – <https://diversity.usc.edu/> Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students.
- *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* — <http://dsp.usc.edu> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.
- *The Writing Center* — 213-740-3691 Offers one-on-one support for academic writing. Appointments for individual consultations can be made online. <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/> Students whose primary language is not English may also check with the *American Language Institute* <http://ali.usc.edu>.
- If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <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.

Course Schedule

Week	Class Meetings • M/W 3:00-4:50 PM	Focus	Readings • Screenings • Listenings Important: Bring all texts under discussion.	Assignment DUE • Electronic: Mon. noon Hardcopy: Bring RBs to all relevant discussions
1	August 20 & 22	Making & Carrying Across	Caroline Bergvall, "Via"; Paul Ricoeur, "Linguistic Hospitality" (provided in class)	Letter of Introduction * e-mail to marcivog@usc.edu by noon on Fri., Aug. 24
2	August 27 & 29	Encounters & Correspondences	<i>The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry</i> : In-class discussion of student selections.	Response Brief 1: <i>EAIP</i> . (Introduction & one poem/poet.)
3	September 3* & 5 *Labor Day	Affinities & Crystallizations	Alejandra Pizarnik: <i>Diana's Tree</i> (Trans. Yvette Siegert) & "Forgetting Language" by Siegert	Response Brief 2: <i>Diana's Tree</i> & "Forgetting Language"
4	September 10 & 12	Comparison & Commentary	<i>Into English</i> : Presentations & student-led discussion of selections.	Presentation #1. Have all listed sections read for discussion.
5	September 17 & 19	Faithful & Free	<i>Into English</i> : Continue presentations & discussion	Creative Portfolio: A
6	September 24 & 26	Witness & Resistance	Anna Świrszczyńska: <i>Building the Barricade</i> (Trans. Piotr Florczyk)	Response Brief 3: <i>Building the Barricade</i>
7	October 1 & 3	Desire & Determination	Jane Hirshfield: "The World Is Large And Full of Noises" (Blackboard) <i>The Woman with the Five Elephants</i> (class)	Response Brief 4: Hirshfield; also post Seminar Essay choice (by noon Friday, 10/5)
8	October 8 & 10	Vision & Embodiment	Octavio & Maria Paz: <i>Figures & Figurations</i> , Pina (class)	Response Brief 5: <i>Figures & Figurations</i>
9	October 15 & 17	Imagination & Invention	Creative Portfolio: In-class discussion of piece B (bring 19 copies) Jack Spicer: <i>After Lorca</i>	Creative Portfolio: B (19 copies) also : Post Project idea by noon Fri., 10/19.
10	October 22 & 24	Collaboration & Homage	Presentation #2 Bring class copies of 1-page handout	Creative Portfolio: C
11	October 29 & 31	Reading & Response	Continue: Presentation #2 Presenters provide class copies of 1-page handout.	Seminar Essay Due posted to BB by noon, Friday, Nov. 2
12	November 5 & 7	Multiplicity & Discovery	TBAs provided in class/online; begin Lahiri	Creative Portfolio: D Due by noon Friday, November 9
13	November 12 & 14	Silence & Voice	Jhumpa Lahiri: <i>In Other Words</i> (Trans. Ann Goldstein)	Response Brief 6: <i>In Other Words</i>
14	November 19 & 21* * Thanksgiving	Connection & Celebration	Final Seminar Projects shared in class.	Reminder: IRL Write-Up due to Blackboard by noon Fri. Nov. 30
15	November 26 & 28	A New Shore	Final Seminar Projects shared in class.	Projects I Reflections DUE to Blackboard by noon Mon. Dec. 3.

Please note: Elements of this schedule may change. Be sure to check e-mail/Blackboard for updates and/or readings to be announced (TBA's).