POETRY AND THE HUMAN

HUMA 18200

Spring: object, event, narrative

In the Spring Humanities course (object/event/narrative), we consider the poem first as an object that expresses the processes of writing and the materiality of the body, then as a staged and sonic event, and finally as a way of shaping a life or of conceiving an afterlife.

Books and Course Reader

The following books – in order of when we will be reading them – are available at the Seminary Co-op Bookstore, 5751 S. Woodlawn Avenue or from amazon.com, and have also been put on reserve at the Regenstein Library.

- Seamus Heaney, *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* (W. W. Norton & Company)

All other readings can be found in your Course Reader or on Canvas. Please purchase the course reader from Auxiliary Services, in the basement of Social Sciences.

- Event: In week 8, Professor Franklin Lewis will give a talk on the ghazals, date and time TBA.

Schedule

*object (bodies)*

**Week 1: poetry and page**

Tuesday: from E. Dickinson, *The Gorgeous Nothings: Emily Dickinson’s Envelope Poems* poems and essay (Bervin or Werner)

Thursday: Elizabeth Bishop, “One Art” (as published and drafts)

W. B. Yeats, “Adam’s curse”

E. B. Voigt, “A Moment’s thought”

**Week 2: poetry and objects**

Tuesday: select Greek epigraphs, with introduction

Allen Grossman, “Inscription” from *Summa Lyrica: A Primer of the Commonplaces in Speculative Poetics* (with introduction)
Thursday: select Anglo-Saxon riddle-songs (with introduction and notes)

assignment 1: proposal due for extended paper

Week 3: poetry and the body

Tuesday: John Donne, “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning,” “The Extasie,” “At the round earth's imagin'd corners,” “Death be not proud,” “Batter my heart”

Thursday: Pablo Neruda, “Body of a Woman,” “I Have Gone Marking…,” “Tonight I Can Write…,” “Ars Poetica”


Sunday: first draft of extended research paper due by midnight.

Week 4: poetry and power

Tuesday: Hart Crane, “Praise for an Urn,” “Voyages,” “The Broken Tower”

Thursday: W. B. Yeats, “Ego Dominus Tuus,” “Easter 1916”

W. H. Auden, “In Memory of Sigmund Freud”

event (stages)

Week 5: poetry and presence

Tuesday: Euripides, Bakkhai (trans. by Gibbons)

Thursday: Wole Soyinka, The Bacchae of Euripides: a Communion Rite

Week 6: poetry and rhythm

Tuesday: William Shakespeare, Sonnet 65, 73, 94 and 129

Roman Jakobson, “Shakespeare’s Verbal Art”

Thursday: Gerard Manley Hopkins, “God’s Grandeur,” “As kingfishers catch fire,”

“Spring and fall,” “I wake and feel the fell of dark”

Letters: to Robert Bridges, August 21, 1877, to R.W. Dixon, December 22, 1880,
to Robert Bridges, Oct 18, 1882 (with notes)

Week 7: poetry and sound


Thursday: selected historical and modern ghazals
Sunday: second draft of extended paper due by midnight.

*narrative (lives)*

**Week 8: poetry and feats**

Tuesday: Seamus Heaney, *Beowulf*

Thursday: Seamus Heaney, *Beowulf* (continued)

**Week 9: poetry and age**

Tuesday: Anne Carson, *Autobiography of Red*


**Week 10: poetry and life**

Tuesday: R. M. Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*


Sunday: final extended essay due by midnight.