

Course Descriptions

Muse as Dryad (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

In this class we'll write poems from the lungs of the earth, each week approaching the woods from a different angle. We'll consider their science, and explore forest folklore and fairy tales. We'll end in contemplative eco-poetry and with celebration. Each week you'll write new poems born out of a prompt linked to that week's topic, inspired and informed by resources provided for the sake of multiple entry points into inspiration.

Winter Poems Inspired by Mary Oliver (8 wk, Wet.Ink) AND/OR Summer Poems Inspired by Mary Oliver (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

Can be taken independently or together - material is entirely distinct in each of these classes.

In this class, we'll reconnect with the solace and joy that nature can provide, using Mary Oliver's work for thematic inspiration, instruction, and as a starting point to launch our own poems. Each week, we'll consider a brief reading by Mary Oliver (a single poem, essay, or prose poem) placed in conversation with equally brief works from kindred spirit poets and writers in other genres. From these readings, we'll write new poems from a prompt linked to that week's topic. Every week will also include optional viewing/listening assignments, all inspired by Mary Oliver's dictum of "Pay attention, be astonished, and tell about it."

Muse as Mermaid: Poems from the Ocean (8 weeks, Wet.Ink)

**Those interested in a "Sarah feedback" version of this course, I'll open registration for that in late spring. Otherwise, you're welcome to take it independently!*

As Aimee Nezhukumatathil's beautiful "Invitation," says, "Come in! Come in! The water's fine!" We'll consider the ocean of possibilities available to us in writing poems inspired by many aspects of marine life, real and imagined. We'll write poems "from the beach," and dive into the waves for more inspiration, found in shipwrecks, mermaids, and real wonders underwater. We'll find solace and healing watching the waves. Most of our class time will be spent on experiments and prompts geared towards generating new work. By the end of class you'll have several fresh drafts, and will have found a way to dip your toes along the tideline in any season, even those spent on dry land.

Natural Wonder: Poet as Scientist, Part 1, (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

In this class, we'll focus on the necessity of wonder and close observation to the poet and the scientist alike. We'll read and write poems of the universe and the atom, tides and tectonic plates, and we'll consider the many ways we can explore and expand our metaphors through a different scientific field each week, all the while marveling at the intricacy and interconnectedness of life on our planet. We'll read one or two model poems a week by Ross Gay, Jennifer Chang, Carla Duan, Rita Dove, Marie Howe and many others. We'll also consider very short essays by Brian Doyle, Robert Macfarlane, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, and Matthew Devin Frank, and other brief works from Orion, Ecotone, Flyway and Fourth River, along with a few supplemental readings/listening/watching links. By the end of class you'll have several fresh drafts, and a map into new ways to wonder through poetry.

Natural Wonder: Poet as Scientist, Part 2, (8 wk, Wet.Ink)*

**Parts 1 & 2 of this class offering are independent and may be taken out of order.* In this class, we'll continue to consider the necessity of wonder and close observation to the poet and the scientist alike through an entirely different set of fields and materials than in Part 1. We'll read and write

poems of winged creatures and water dwellers, underwater volcanoes and melting glaciers. We'll consider the many ways to explore and expand our metaphors through a different scientific field each week, all the while marveling at the intricacy and interconnectedness of life on our planet.

Extravagant Image: Poems of Deep Delight (8 wk, Wet.Ink)
(formerly Guilty Pleasure: poems of everyday delights)

In this class, we'll lean into our guilty pleasures to write poems of sleeping late, binging bad tv, reading popcorn novels, and sneaking the last brownie at midnight. Each week, we'll read 3-4 model poems, interspersed with short prose from Bored Panda, LitHub, and McSweeney's Internet Tendency. From these readings, we'll write new poems from a prompt linked to that week's guilty pleasure theme. Every week will also include optional viewing/listening assignments in order to give you multiple ways of approaching the prompt. We'll write 7-8 poems of our obsessions, turned "poetry research" to allow indulgence to enrich your writing, even after the class is over.

Night Writer: poems from the darkness (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

As the days get shorter, and the darker hours grow longer, we can lean into the darkness for inspiration and delight. In this class, we'll be inspired by broad explorations of themes well known to poets: the moon, night life, insomnia, dreams and more. We'll read one or two model poems a week along with a few supplemental readings/listening/watching links, all circling different aspects of night. By the end of the workshop, you'll have 5-6 newly drafted poems.

Hygge Poems: Poems inspired by the cozy Danish concept (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

In this class, we'll write ourselves into the concept of hygge, warmth from the inside out, keeping winter's chill at bay, and trying to bolster the parts of ourselves that the pandemic has worn thin. We'll write seven to eight poems from the heart of our winter nest, using prompts and course readings to inspire new work using hygge's core tenants to strengthen our creative resilience even after the season has passed. Each week you'll be given one to two model poems and a few supplemental readings/listening/watching links, all circling the theme of hygge, and two prompts, all to serve as invitations to write.

Tarot Poems (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

Whether or not you believe in divination, it's easy to see the appeal of the Tarot's symbolism. The Tarot has been used as a common source of imagery and inspiration in poetry as far back as the 1500s! In this course, we'll use the Tarot to encounter and apply universal themes to our writing. Each week we'll explore a different aspect of the tarot (history, suits, major arcana, ritual, layouts, relationships, and more), and read 1-2 source texts by authors who explore these themes. The readings will be paired with a brief experiment to guide you into the prompt, and help you "draw out" images unique to the deck you choose. Every week will also include optional viewing/listening assignments to provide multiple entry points into new work. By the end of class, you'll have 7-8 fresh drafts and a number of fun ways you can use the Tarot in your writing even after the course has ended. *Please have a deck you can use in the experiments and pre-writes each week before class begins.*

Haunted Poems (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

In this generative workshop, we'll write poems of our haunted-ness and hauntings, of people we've ghosted and the ones that haunt us, places we can't return to and the ones we can't leave, items we'll never get back and

things that seem to multiply or re-appear no matter how many times we try to get rid of them. We'll use prompts with model texts by poets, paired with optional short listening/watching assignments to open up a different way to summon/speak to our ghosts. By the end of the workshop, you'll have 5-6 newly drafted poems.

Very Superstitious: Poems of Everyday Magic (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

In this class we'll write lucky charms, invent horoscope poems, divine lines from Tarot readings, and take inspiration from lucky charms and everyday magic. We'll retell and reinvent old wives tales. Each week we'll read 1-2 source texts paired with a brief example text from the folklore focus for the week. Every week will also include optional viewing/listening assignments to provide multiple entry points into inspiration.

Coming Soon

Emily for Everyone (8 wk, Wet.Ink) *Coming in late 2024 or early 2025!*

Break away from the idea of Emily Dickinson as the model for the cartoonish, cliché versions of “spinster poet,” scribbling away at her desk, arbitrarily quirky, oblivious to the world around her. In this class, we'll re-enchant ourselves with the magic of her wild words, we'll grapple with her love of nature, and her willingness to encounter the unknown. We'll join her at the window, throwing it open and inviting the same winds that inspired her to bring us to the page. Each week, we'll consider a brief reading by our mentor muse (a single poem or letter) placed in conversation with equally brief works from modern kindred spirit poets and writers in other genres. From these readings, we'll write new poems from a

prompt linked to that week's topic. Every week will also include optional viewing/listening assignments, each as an invitation to encounter Emily in a different way.

Free Range: Poems found with your cell phone's camera (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

***Upcoming, Summer 2024**

In this class, you'll use your cell phone's camera to gather poem fodder, and come away with strategies for developing prompts on your own. Video lectures and homework discussion via forums and chat will explore a single focus for both prompts each week. Every week, we will examine a single method of expansion using two step prompts paired with one or anchor poem examples. Weekly homework will circle the same theme/technique, with one photo prompt and a reading of no more than two example poems by modern poets in order to develop skills to explore, theorize and apply creative experimentation beyond the online classroom. Choosing from material gathered in the photo prompt and via the writing prompt, you'll generate a new poem each week.

Poetcore (8 wk, Wet.Ink)

**Coming in 2025 as a "with Sarah Feedback" class.*

What would you consider a defining feature of yourself as a poet? What can poets learn from the pop culture phenomena of cottagecore, goblincore and corvidcore? According to the [aesthetics fandom wiki](#), which has a huge list of these phenomena, "Coming from the French word *"coeur"*, meaning heart, in those aesthetics that end in -core the *suffix enlightens a defining feature.*" We'll consider these questions from a different angle each week, moving beyond the surface and into our values as poets, all the while glorying in the characteristics that make these aesthetics so popular. Expect to read cottagecore poems from flower-loving familiar faces, goblincore delights from poets who aren't afraid to get their hands dirty, and - of

course - who could be more corvid-core than Edgar Allan Poe, along with many other -cores and paired resources. Expect to write 5-6 poems, and glory in things you already love! You'll be encouraged to share your poems for light feedback and positive peer responses, but moreover, you'll be encouraged to connect with the kindred spirits you find in these classes, who share the same appreciation for the things you hold dear in your work.

Paging the Unknown: Secular Spiritual Poems (8 wk, Wet.Ink) TBD

In this class we'll lean into the idea of mystery. We'll write poems rooted in our spiritual nature, relying on the unseen and ever-present, using meditation, prayer and texts that ask and try to find peace resting in the unanswerable questions that are part of human experience. *While we may use model texts from an author whose background is in a particular system of beliefs, this course is designed to allow for our beautifully diverse way of thinking about our spiritual nature and how it might speak in these pages.

Live Classes

Keep Going: 10 Weeks to a Holistic Writing Practice (10 wks, Wet.Ink, Zoom)

Summer, 2024

In this class, you'll examine your creative process through a series of activities and experiments designed to strengthen your relationship with your muse, to connect with mentor texts, and expand your literary community, whether it's via engagement with our class, or empowering you to seek out more frequent connections with writers outside our classroom. It will bolster your practice using Austen Kleon's book, *Keep Going*,

(required) along with other brief supplemental readings. You'll be encouraged to discuss your process in optional weekly Zoom hangouts (time tbd, class vote), post discoveries and share new work (optional). By the end of class, you'll have a daily plan which dovetails to your schedule, and a handful of new drafts. You'll come away with strategies for sailing your creative ship whether the weather is calm or stormy.

**This class includes two weeks of optional early morning muse meetups M-F from 9 am - 9:15 am - daily 15 minute Zooms using Lynda Barry's Daily Diary format with Sarah guiding you through/cheering you on, followed by a prompt/spark to launch you into your morning pages after a brief write-along.*

***STANDALONE Keep Going Morning Jumpstarts only**

Second week still open for enrollment - April 4-April 8, 9:00-9:15 a.m. Eastern Time, Zoom) (\$50 total)

Early morning muse meetups M-F from 9 am - 9:15 am - daily 15 minute Zooms using Lynda Barry's Daily Diary format with Sarah guiding you through/cheering you on, followed by a prompt/spark to launch you into your morning pages after a brief write-along.

*All who register will receive the prompts and a few extras as a pdf after our final session.

Inviting the Poetic Sequence Through Play

Live Zoom class, meets every other week, slated for Spring of 2025

Have you ever written the last line of a poem, and wished you'd been able to keep writing it because the inspiration was such rich territory? Our poetic obsessions need room to grow! This class is designed for poets at any stage who'd like to develop a poetic sequence. Together we'll explore ways to tap that same poetic wellspring for more material. Every week, we will examine

a single method of expansion (mind mapping, research, deconstruction/remix, masks, abstraction, and strategic revision) using class video lecture introduction, discussion board, and weekly chat which will include prompts and activities. Weekly homework will circle the same theme/technique, with one creative experiment and a reading of no more than three example poems by modern poets. Choosing from material gathered in the weekly experiment and via the prompt, you'll generate a new poem in a sequence. By the end of class you'll have several new drafts in your developing sequence, and many strategies for inviting the muse to stay a while.

Beyond Ekphrasis

Live Zoom class, meets every other week, slated for Winter of 2025

Stepping beyond the “frame” for a piece of visual art can yield rich rewards to our creative processes! Rather than finding common ground with a piece of art’s subject matter (the defining point of inspiration of ekphrasis), we’ll take a peek behind the scenes and consider ways we can apply similar tactics to highlight new facets of our poetry. In this class, we’ll write 5-6 new poems incorporating methods borrowed from visual artists in a variety of mediums. Each week, we’ll examine a single work of art paired with a single poem incorporating a technique we’re exploring, and use that pairing as a jumping off point for poems of our own, via a prompt designed to help you transfer the visual artist’s tools into your poetry toolkit. Supplemental readings, Pinterest boards with extra examples for each week, and further prompts will be provided so that you can work at your own pace, with inspiration to use well after the class is over.

***Please contact me if you are interested in taking Keep Going, Inviting the Poetic Sequence or Beyond Ekphrasis. While I’m not**

offering these as an asynchronous class in 2024, they are available as either an independent study, as a weekly 1:1 with me in 2024-5.