

SENIOR poetry, short fiction, memoir, play script, novella, satire WRITERS

Monday, May 10 6-7p.m.

• Jessica Kuznicki • Rebecca Mear • Evangelina Opoku-Nyarko • Elizabeth Pence • Constance Tyne •



• Samara Barrett • Maeve Brooks • Sophia Cannistraci • Laura Caron • Achelle Charles • Kylie Cointot •
• Jessica Kuznicki • Rebecca Mear • Evangelina Opoku-Nyarko • Elizabeth Pence • Constance Tyne •

A READING ON ZOOM

This year's **senior creative writers** read bite-sized excerpts from their manuscripts for a vivid hour. If you're interested in applying for the Advanced Creative Writing course some year, come listen, and imagine yourself living the writing life for a semester.

The Writers

Kylie Cointot

My dad's death two years ago left some pretty large shoes to fill. He used every unique gift God gave him to be a blessing to his community. My piece is a memoir about how I saw God work in my dad, and how I am striving to live my own life according to what he taught me.

Elizabeth Pence

Over the past four years, my experiences with faith and mental health have interwoven with my aesthetic delights to form a contemplative science-fiction novella. Three isolated souls, in despair and self-doubt, partake in a nocturnal journey on a sentient earth in the teeming universe, learning to live as more than an existential question, but as flesh and blood; to accept the experienced supernatural; to credit their own bewildering memories in the aftermath; and to do so in front of others at the boundary between the uncanny and the familiar.

Constance Tyne

My project is a series of character profiles inspired by my experience riding public transportation in NYC. By highlighting both the mundane and the noteworthy, the aesthetic and the ugly, from the perspective of the subway itself, I hope to highlight the beauty of humanity as we see it during the brief moments of daily commutes.

Laura Caron

This semester, my goal was in revising a novel that I wrote in high school about ancient Pompeii. My revision process included rewriting, taking a deeper look at characters and plot, as well as taking feedback from workshop comments about my piece. In addition, I also implemented research about ancient Pompeii into my project, which I believe has improved my manuscript as a whole.

Samara Barrett

A study in ekphrasis: using art as a source of inspiration. A collection of memoir, poetry, and fiction. An integrative writing project that brings together different interests of mine and attempts to process the last few years. In many ways, an exploration of loss, uncertainty, and hope.

Evangelina Opoku-Nyarko

In discussing African history someone said, “We can ill afford to amuse ourselves with the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe.” My project, Sankofa, is a novel that recreates life in pre-colonial Gold Coast (modern day Ghana) at the early stages of the transatlantic slave trade. I attempt to retell the African story with an African voice in a way Chinua Achebe described as English “still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings.”

Rebecca Mear

This semester, I wrote a collection of creative nonfiction stories about my childhood, focusing on specific memories from elementary and middle school. In addition to this, I wrote a collection of poems called *Fiddlestix*, which details memories I have of visiting the toy store from my hometown. Together, these stories and poems work to paint a picture of my younger self, and depict the struggles I faced while growing up in a small town.

Maeve Brooks

WONDER PITA is the story of my family, my Iranian heritage, and my own cultural self-exploration. It is part comedy, part identity crisis, and part love letter to the people who made me.

Jessica Kuznicki

I have always hated Santa Claus because I think he takes too much away from the true meaning of Christmas. So, I made him the villain in my Christmas satire called *Let My Elves Go*. Think of Moses and the ancient Israelites in Egypt only at the North Pole with elves instead.

Achelle Charles

This semester has led me to experiment with worldbuilding and antiheroes. I created eight types of curses and decided to write a short story for each of them. This manuscript includes the origin story of a teenaged nymph named Naida whose life changes one fateful night. My project was inspired by the anthology *Because You Love to Hate Me*.

Sophia Cannistraci

Warm Constellations. A collection of poetry and prose evoking conceptual connections, aesthetics, and nuance to delineate daily surroundings. A senior year of college observed with humor, personal vulnerability, and delight in the beauty of life which God has given, amidst the craziness, frustration, and unanswered questions also involved in living.

ENG 419 - Advanced Studies in Creative Writing (spring semester). Personal direction and group critique of a substantial individual writing project in any genre. Proposals for projects are submitted in the fall, two weeks prior to registration for spring courses. Accepted students may also assist in the teaching or critiquing of work from ENG212 (Introduction to Creative Writing). Prerequisite: appropriate 300-level course(s), senior standing, and permission of the instructor.

Hortatory Remarks to Writers

- * Commit to write. You're a writer this semester. This is a great chance, one you'll look back on with envy of your younger self. Avail yourself of the time and obligation, and of the gathered smarts in this room.
- * Commit to get your work posted by our due date & time—midnight each Saturday. Include with your mss a short note alerting us-your-readers what especially to watch for (if you care to do so), and a brief summary of where we are in your story or project.
- * We'll aim to workshop six mss per session in the early weeks. For each class you'll need to read and notate ahead of time the new work (and sometimes re-read some of the earlier work) of three of the evening's writers, two of whom are “ON” for a full-group workshop, plus one who for a small group session. I think you'll find those smaller group sessions are valuable.
- * Commit to read the work of your colleagues and to being of service. Feedback, even what you think is banal, is so often extremely helpful, and can be ignored if it's not. If you can't find precise words in your response, you can say something like, “At the end I think you played the organ a little too loudly, perhaps.” That could connect.
- * Commit to offer your thoughts in our sessions. With 25 minutes per writer, we'll need to be economical, so it'll be important that we're all prepared with both some general, global-type responses, as well as some remarks about specific lines or words. We need to hear from everyone, even if the piece isn't your genre.
- * For your written comments: consider using the “Add Comment” feature in Microsoft Word. Your helpful remarks are due by 3:30 on Mondays.
- * We'll reserve at least 30 minutes for small-group or one-on-one crits.
- * Commit to properly saving/labeling your work before you email it. Include your name and date on the mss, and use your name when you save the doc.
- * Commit to making your reading reports: take some notes on what's useful in your reading, or what occurs to you; these reports should be useful to me and, in the future, to you; they needn't necessarily be in perfect prose. (c.f. KATIE WEBER: “I ended up appreciating the reading reports. Certainly I wouldn't have realized I was learning the things I did without these reports.”)
- * Following on that, when we workshop your stuff, I'd like you to begin by taking one to two minutes to share something useful you learned about your writing through your reading (primary and works on the craft) this week.
- * Looking over the work of the previous classes, folks benefited from having several theoretical texts to sample from. Use the texts to triangulate: you; the greats; the craft.
- * Commit to making a schedule for bringing in snax, and to baking them. In any event, try not to come to class famished. We can order pizza, but you'll need to take charge of that.
- * In class you can use computers to save paper or whatever, but don't FB or Instagram or chitter or surf or snap or email or whatever. Ta.
- * Please: let's have fun and laugh and be energized like at a great concert or play by how well we write and by smart and helpful we can be in our conversations.
- * How to critique: Try to devote time to each piece assigned to you and focus your attention on the big critiquing issues such as clarity, originality of the idea, voice in order to truly provide constructive criticism. Many times pieces may benefit from proofreading as well, concentrate on the big issues over the grammatical tidbits. Try to include a fairly substantial paragraph detailing what is good about the week's installment as well as what needs attention.