

Poetry Workshop III

Mid-Term Portfolio

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Workshop Poems

Untitled

The snowman slowly melted.
The sun burnt the skin.
The autumn leaves fell.
The dewdrops drip in silence.

A laughing boy falls.
A clown rolls upside down.
A daughter cries herself to sleep.
A cat walks down the alley.

The stars shine bright upon the beach.
A seal calls out to sea.
The ship rides in the lonely night.
A dog barks in the darkness.

The Most Beautiful Place

The sun peeks over the horizon,
its hair a hazy mess.
A chickadee tremolos in the morning
air, as dewdrops slide down
the foggy window panes.
The trees bask in the golden glow
flowing with the intensity
of fire.
The morning mist burns away, to reveal
the most beautiful autumn day
you have ever seen.

I asked you what the most beautiful place
on Earth would look like. Do you remember?
This is what you told me. And I asked you,
why you didn't mention people? Why
not include your best friend, or perhaps
your lover? Because that seems so lonely.
To which you replied, beauty is loneliness, and
to be the most beautiful, therefore, necessitates
being the loneliest.

Fallen Gaea

I saw the fire of burning,
of crosses,
of lawns.

I felt the waves of bubbles of water
of drowning.

I smelled the sky, of stars
of black, of
emptiness.

I heard the age of Earth, of
death of sunshine.

Partner Poems

The Straight Tree

Do you see the way the leaves flutter in the wind?
Do you hear how it knocks them to and fro
 like wind chimes in the night?
Can you feel the rough and knotted bark?
Do you smell the rich earthly scent buried deep
 within its pines?

At first glance you might think this tree were like
any other.
It stands tall and straight, it's supple trunk
sways peacefully in the wind, the branches
soaring.

But when you stand under
its aching limbs and you see
the stars among the pines you realize,
this tree is sick. It is dying. This tree
is not like any other.

It stands alone.

Its nearby friends are bent over
filled with twists and turns, totally
out of shape.
But this tree. This lone tree. This lone pine tree.

It is the *straight* tree.

A Darker Shade

Fog wraps around the trees.
The setting sun catches
in the evening air.
Purple sinks to blue as
black's despair oozes across the sky.

The stars peek out from behind
the black-iron curtain,
each one a single glimpse
of hope burning 10 million
light years away.

Words whisper in the wind.
An ancient promise glows
brightly,
stuck in the stone ribs of the Earth.

I turned towards you,
tears in your eyes as the dusk
settled over the crumbling dais, trapped
between two fallen pillars:
the last reminder of an immortal
memory.

The Threads of Life

Look at the way they dangle
and drift
in the wind, like the loose ends
of a spider web
built and abandoned by
its mother.

See the way that three
old ladies, spin and weave
ducking and crossing the tender
threads. Together.
And Apart.

Watch as they glint
in the fading fire
light, spinning and crossing;
gossamer shadows on the walls.

Observe the stars emerge
as the light of that day's sun
dies in a final second, as the thread
falls with a single snip,
the grandfather's story is over.

Evaluative Statement

I feel good about the work I have put into the workshop so far this semester, considering: poems, partner work, readings and participation. As for the poems, I have given myself plenty of time to write the poems each week, so that I am not rushed last minute to write the exercises. So far in the semester, I have decided to write a new poem each week, so that for the second half of the semester, I can start to play around with my collection of poems, and figuring out different ways that I want to revise the works.

Because of trying to allow so much time for creating my poems, I have sometimes not left quite enough time to write as many comments on others' poems as I would have liked, even though I have read the poems (usually several times). I realize that this is a significant part of the workshop experience, and with our discussion of what we expect from each other this week, will certainly make sure to deliver what others might learn from best.

In regards to the partner work, I am very happy with the group so far. We have all given each other close attention, closer than we sometimes get in the class, especially given the dialogue between the writer and the partners. I find this particularly valuable, not because it is in contrast to the cone of silence, but because it is complementary to it. We get the meeting to discuss the critiques, then we get the class to listen to them, offering the best of both worlds.

The essay readings are perhaps where I've allowed myself to slip through the cracks the most, to be honest. I read the essays, but I usually don't leave myself enough time to write over them and make notes, which means during class I often forget my precise thoughts and questions I had reading it. I then tend to stay silent therefore, because I'm not able to critically think quite at the same level or the same speed as everyone else. As for the first book we have read, the Parable of Hide and Seek, I really enjoyed the assignment. Reading a collection of poetry all the

way through made me think about the poetry completely differently, and I started seeing patterns in the literary works in ways that I would not have seen otherwise.

The last thing that I want to discuss is my participation in the class. As I already mentioned, I intend to pull myself together a bit more in regards to the essay readings, but in class discussions, I am satisfied with my ability and comfort to jump into the conversation. Back in the start of Freshman year, when I took Poetry Workshop I, I was very quiet and shy to jump into the conversation. Now, especially thinking about just vocally agreeing or disagreeing, I cannot help but feel that my hope back then, to be able to measure my progress in participation, has been met. I feel much more confident, and I sincerely hope that that confidence comes across. Certainly there are times where I find myself falling quiet or not finding much to say without sounding redundant, but overall, I am happy with my participation within this workshop, especially considering how much I have grown as a workshop writer.