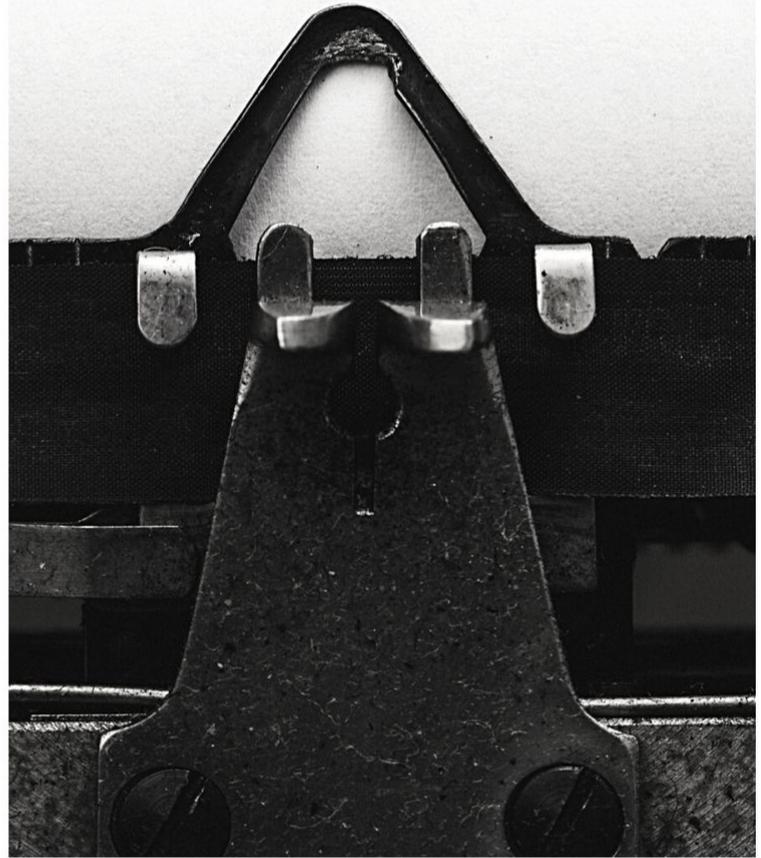


# “How to live. What to do”

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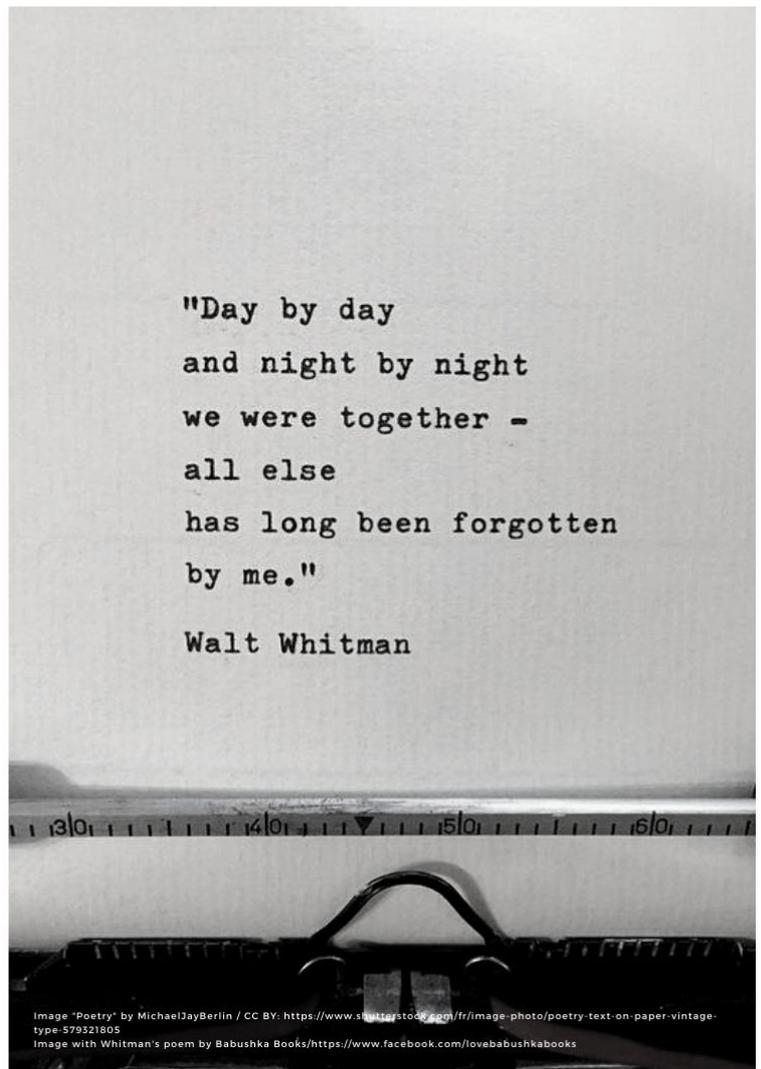
The place of poetry  
in the 21st century

## POETRY



"Day by day  
and night by night  
we were together -  
all else  
has long been forgotten  
by me."

Walt Whitman





## 'HOW TO LIVE. WHAT TO DO' THE PLACE OF POETRY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

This *Formation Continue* course proposes to envisage the role of poetry in a disenchanted world and explore the pedagogical possibilities that this reputedly difficult literary genre can offer in our classrooms.

It is organised by the English Department as a part of the The Continuing Education program, which was launched in 2013.

Click here for more information:

<https://www.unil.ch/angl/en/home/menuinst/english-at-unil/formation-continue-1.html>

### COURSE ORGANISERS

**Martine Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère** is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, and former Associate Dean of the Humanities.

She has published on various aspects of modern and contemporary literature (including Dickens, Conrad, Nabokov, Carter, Rushdie, Donoghue, Yolen), the international fairy tale tradition from antiquity to the present, and literary translation (theory, practice, reception). She is the author of *Origin and Originality in Salman Rushdie's Fiction* (1999), which focuses on the poetics and politics of cultural translation, and *Reading, Translating, Rewriting: Angela Carter's Translational Poetics* (2013), which traces the interplay of translation and rewriting in Carter's fiction. She co-edited several volumes of essays and academic journal issues, and more are in preparation. She is an international corresponding member for the BCLA, and sits on the Advisory Boards of the Chichester Centre for Fairy Tales, Fantasy and Speculative Fiction as well as the Angela Carter Society. She was awarded an Honoris Causa Doctorate from the University of Angers in 2019. See: <https://martinehennarddutheil.wordpress.com/>

**Boris Vejdovsky** is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Lausanne. His teaching and research focus on the culture and literature of the United States of America. His work focuses on the aesthetic and political formation of American cultural discourse and its influence on the private and public spheres.

His publications include numerous articles on American authors such as Cotton Mather, Herman Melville, but also Wallace Stevens, or Ernest Hemingway. He has also published *Ideas of Order: Ethics and Topos in American Literature* (Gunter Narr, 2009) and *Hemingway, La Vie, et Ailleurs* (Michel Lafon, 2011). He has also edited several volumes of articles, most recently in the *Transatlantic Aesthetics and Culture* series (Peter Lang), which he directs. His current research focuses on the poetic and political forms of the American West and its global cultural influence; the book in the draft is entitled "Framing the American West."

Boris Vejdovsky was President of the Board of the University of Lausanne (2011-2013) and he chaired the International Committee of the American Studies Association (ASA) from 2009 to 2013.



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## 'HOW TO LIVE. WHAT TO DO' THE PLACE OF POETRY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

### COURSE ORGANISERS

**Dr Marie Emilie Walz** is Junior Lecturer in Comparative Literature and Comparative Gender Studies in the English Department at the University of Lausanne. She specialises in cross-period comparative studies and feminist rewritings of medieval and early modern literature, with a focus on allegory, fairy tales, fantasy, and speculative fiction. She was awarded a Faculty Prize for her PhD thesis entitled *Reading Spells Backwards: Allegories of Violence and Love in Edmund Spenser's and Angela Carter's Fairy-Tale and Speculative Fiction*, which she is currently revising for publication.

Her recent publications include 'The "Mundys" Will Never Let You Die. Reproducing Images and Stories of Snow White in Bill Willingham's *Fables*' with Lucia Pozniak (*Etudes de Lettres*, 2019); 'Dora and Medusa Share a Laugh: Angela Carter's Play on Hélène Cixous's Feminist Theory in *Wise Children*' (in *Ludics & Laughter as Feminist Aesthetic: Angela Carter at Play*, edited by Jennifer Gustar, Sarah Gamble, and Caleb Sivyer, 2021); and 'But There Is Magic, Too: Confronting Adolescents' Realities in Francesca Lia Block's *Fairy-Tale Rewritings*' (*Humanities*, 2021).

**Erika Fauchère** is a MA student in the English Department at the University of Lausanne. She is in her last year, and she is also doing a specialization program in Cultural Mediation. She is currently writing her *mémoire* in Sociolinguistics, in which she is investigating language teachers' attitudes to the use of new technologies during the lockdown in 2020.

### BOOK DISPLAY

At the end of the workshop at 17:00, we have our book display with **Matthew Wake**, owner of our partner bookstore **Books Books Books**.

**BOOKS  
BOOKS  
BOOKS**

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BORIS VEJDOVSKY  
9:00- 10:00

HOW TO LIVE.  
WHAT TO DO:  
SWEET  
QUESTIONINGS BY  
ELIZABETH BISHOP  
AND WALLACE  
STEVENS



**ABSTRACT**

Poetry is not a complex way of saying something simple. Poetry addresses the complexity of the world and gives the attentive reader a unique access to that complexity. In a few selected poems, this talk proposes to explore the pedagogical and personal benefits of reading poetry and thus addressing core questions that give sense to our lives. I will try to show that these poems give us access to ethical and political questions that may otherwise seem beyond our reach and thus promote our agency in the world in which we live.

**RECOMMENDED READING**

Elizabeth Bishop, "The Map," "The Fish," "The Shampoo," "Questions of Travel," "Sandpiper," "Poem," "One Art."

Wallace Stevens, "How to Live. What to Do," "Sunday Morning," "The Man on the Dump," "Anecdote of a Jar," "The Idea of Order at Key West."

**Boris Vejdovsky** is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Lausanne. His teaching and research focus on the culture and literature of the United States of America. His work focuses on the aesthetic and political formation of American cultural discourse and its influence on the private and public spheres.

His publications include numerous articles on American authors such as Cotton Mather, Herman Melville, but also Wallace Stevens, or Ernest Hemingway. He has also published *Ideas of Order: Ethics and Topos in American Literature* (Gunter Narr, 2009) and *Hemingway, La Vie, et Ailleurs* (Michel Lafon, 2011). He has also edited several volumes of articles, most recently in the *Transatlantic Aesthetics and Culture* series (Peter Lang), which he directs. His current research focuses on the poetic and political forms of the American West and its global cultural influence; the book in the draft is entitled "Framing the American West."

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RACHEL FALCONER  
10:00-11:00

AFFLATIOUS  
ENCOUNTERS: 20-  
21C BIRD POETRY

**ABSTRACT**

This talk explores a threshold between the human and non-human world. Why are we thrilled by encounters with birds? And more to the point for today's discussion, what kind of an encounter between bird and human can take place in a poem about it? What good does it do us to read poems about birds?

**RECOMMENDED READING**

Armitage, Simon. "The Final Straw." *Tyrannosaurus Rex vs The Corduroy Kid*, Knopf, 2006.

Clare, John. "The Thrush's Nest." *The Rural Muse*, 1835.

Dickinson, Emily. "A Bird, came down the Walk." *Poems*, 2nd ed., 1891.

Jamie, Kathleen. "The Dipper." *The Tree House*, Picador, 2004.

Lear, Edward. *A Book of Nonsense*. 1846. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2003.

Macdonald, Helen. "Letter to America." *Poetry Magazine*,  
<http://poetrymagazines.org.uk/magazine/record25dc-2.html?id=15376>. Accessed 13 July 2021.

Oswald, Alice. "Bird-Song for Two Voices." *Woods, Etc.*, Faber & Faber, 2005.

Reading, Peter. "Afflatious." *Faunal*, Bloodaxe Books Ltd, 2002.

Shelley, Percy B. "To a Skylark." *Prometheus Unbound: A Lyrical Drama in Four Acts: with Other Poems*, 1820.

**BIO NOTE**

**Rachel Falconer** is Professor of Modern English Literature at the University of Lausanne. She is author of four monographs including, most recently, *Seamus Heaney, Virgil and the Good of Poetry* (Edinburgh University Press, February 2022). She has also edited six volumes including *Kathleen Jamie: Essays and Poems on her Work* (Edinburgh, 2014), and *A Quest for Remembrance: The Underworld in Classical and Modern Literature* (Routledge, 2020). With a background in Classics and English Literature, her research interests span a wide range of genres and historical contexts. A lot of her fascinations have to do with threshold crossings of various kinds: for example, between ordinary everyday experience and the underworld of myth and memory; or between scientific and artistic thinking; or between childhood and adult reading.



PHILIP LINDHOLM  
11:30-12:30

## A TASTE OF ROMANTIC POETRY

### ABSTRACT

How do poems bring pleasure to the eyes and ears of readers, and how are we, as sentient readers, to make sense of these bodily sensations? Can we taste or smell a poem, and does this allow us to share our feelings of joy and suffering with others? This paper explores the role of the senses, and the related notion of pleasure, in the conception and reception of English poems of the Romantic period (ca. 1760-1830). By examining a selection of poems by authors such as Mary Robinson, William Wordsworth and John Keats, among others, my paper explores how poetry engages the various senses and contributes to somatic meaning-making by mobilising the body and exercising the embodied imagination. Drawing on my experience of teaching poetry to university students, this paper illustrates how Romantic poetry, which has long been praised – and often criticised – for its sensuous characteristics, relies on strong sensation in order to counter the sensory chaos of the modern world. Combining theoretical discussions of aesthetics, including Romantic poetic theory, with close reading, this paper examines how Romantic poetry remains relevant in contemporary culture and how “reading” a poem can be both a personal and communal event which makes us aware of our individual bodies and shared emotions. If, as Susan Stewart has argued, “poetry makes tangible, visible, and audible the contours of our shared humanity [and] sustains and transforms the threshold between individual and social existence” (*Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*), then we must examine how Romantic poetry, often accused of being subjective or solipsistic, contributes an understanding of the social dimension of the senses and how it reminds us that reading, performing and producing poetry is not only a matter of trying to make sense, but of sensing.

### BIO NOTE

**Philip Lindholm** completed his Ph.D. dissertation, entitled *Synaesthesia in British Romantic Poetry*, in June 2018 at the University of Lausanne, where he is currently employed as a temporary lecturer and a postdoctoral researcher participating in the creation of the “Online Critical Compendium of Lyric Poetry”, an international and multilingual digital project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). His work is located at a mid-way between Romantic science and literature and focuses on the senses and the embodied imagination.

### RECOMMENDED READING

Bennett, Andrew, editor. *William Wordsworth in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Haggarty, Sarah, editor. *William Blake in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.

McLane, Maureen N. *The Cambridge Companion to British Romantic Poetry*. Edited by James Chandler, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

O'Neill, Michael, editor. *John Keats in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Tuite, Clara, editor. *Byron in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.

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**AGNIESZKA SOLTYSIK-  
MONNET**  
14:00-15:00

## HOW 'NEVERMORE' BECAME 'EVER MORE': POE'S 'THE RAVEN' AND ITS POPULAR RECEPTION

One of the most popular poems of American literature is Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Raven' (1845). This long poem about grief, self-torment and psychic collapse – written in a nursery rhyme-style metrical rhythm that contrasts with the dark subject matter -- catapulted Poe to literary stardom in his day, but not for long.

### ABSTRACT

After his death, Poe's reputation in the U.S. declined for many decades and he was considered a hoaxer by most American scholars, an immature writer for juvenile readers. In contrast, after being championed and translated by Charles Baudelaire, Poe was widely read and admired in France and the rest of Europe. Poe's reputation has risen once again in the late 20th century and now he is possibly the most well-known American writer of all time, widely read and anthologized and with a huge influence on literature, visual art and even music around the world. This presentation will focus on the 'The Raven' and examine how its curious mix of tragic and comic – of pathos and irony – has made it a quintessentially 'popular' poem. I hope to end with a discussion about how to approach teaching this poem to young people.

### RECOMMENDED READING

#### Primary

Poe, Edgar Allan. *The Raven*. 2018.

#### Secondary

Weinstock, Jeffrey Andrew, and Tony Magistrale, ed. *Approaches to teaching Poe's Prose and Poetry*. Modern Language Association of America, 2008.

### BIO NOTE

**Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet** teaches American literature at the English section and has published a monograph on nineteenth-century Gothic fiction with a focus on race and gender in several authors including Herman Melville, Henry James and Edgar Allan Poe. Her most recent book is on war narratives in American culture but she continues to teach, research and publish on the American Gothic.

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RACHAEL STANLEY  
15:00-16:00

## STUDYING POETRY AT UNIL



### ABSTRACT

In this workshop, teachers will have an introduction on how to approach poetry in the classroom, with an opportunity to see how practical criticism works at university level.

### BIO NOTE

Having studied at the universities of Cambridge and Nottingham, **Rachael Stanley** joined UNIL after teaching at the University of East Anglia. Her current research explores articulations of the erotic in the short stories of four female modernist authors - Djuna Barnes, Mary Butts, Katherine Mansfield and Jean Rhys. 'Kissing Statues', an article on eroticism and satire in the work of Rhys, is forthcoming in *Modernism/Modernity*. Alongside this project, she has also recently written a chapter on 'Orwell and Sexuality' that is forthcoming in the new *Oxford Handbook to George Orwell*. Her previous research examined the legacies of French literary naturalism in twentieth-century British fiction. She has previously held a fellowship at the Huntington Library, California and published in *Textual Practice* and the *Journal of Katherine Mansfield Studies*.

### RECOMMENDED READING

Texts will be provided during the workshop, so no prior reading is necessary.