

Turning the Page: Ada Limon, Natasha Trethewey, Cathy Song, & Patricia Smith

We'll read a selection of poems by these 4 award-winning poets, all published recently, the latest in 2023.

Our class meets in person for 4 weeks on Mondays from 1-3pm, beginning April 1 through April 22.

These are some of my goals for our course:

- to increase your pleasure and confidence in reading and talking about poetry.
- to understand poetry as a series of choices of language and images that give shape and meaning to lived experience.
- to appreciate how poetry does “cultural work” to change our understanding of the past and to enable us to imagine new futures.

Format:

All our readings and discussion questions are posted on our website. Before class, please download the poems, add your notes and questions, and bring to class. Each week we'll focus on one poet (and 6 poems) through informal lectures and class discussion.

Reading a handful of poems with curiosity and careful attention are essential preparation for our classes.

Thinking through weekly discussion questions in advance will make our conversations livelier and more interactive.

April 1 Ada Limon: from Bright Dead Things (2015)

How to Triumph like a Girl

During the Impossible Age of Everyone

The Last Move

The Vine

The Great Blue Heron of Dunbar Road

Salvage from The Hurting Kind 2022

April 8 Natasha Trethewey: from Native Guard (2006)

At Dusk
Myth
What the Body Can Say
Pilgrimage
Southern History
Monument
South

April 15 Cathy Song: from Cloud Moving Hands (2007)

Long before I Enter the Gate
The Day Has Come When My Mother
The Day Has Come as I Knew
Land of Good Intentions
My Mother's Last Gift
Cloud Moving Hands

Smith numbers her poems, instead of using titles. Below I've used her numbers and first lines in brackets

April 22 Patricia Smith: from Unshuttered (2023)

Poem # 2 ['Officially composed. . .]
Poem # 6 ['Bea come. . .]
Poem #7 ['I hold my breath . . .]
Poem #13 ['We ache for fiction. . .]
Poem #16 ['Conjuring a woman . . .]
Poem #24 ['You're driven by your thirsting]