

## Comp Lit 135: Experiencing Literature in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

# RE-IMAGINING THE WITCH

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Online (Asynchronous) • 3 credits • GER (HU) • Fall 2021



The figure of the witch thrives in the artistic imagination as a powerful symbol of difference, particularly in relation to her gender, age, agency, knowledge, and sexuality. As a universal archetype of the outsider looking in, the witch reveals the various norms and taboos of the cultures that have created and condemned her. However, the witch is also an evolving figure, always re-imagined in different cultural and historical contexts and appearing in stories and works of art that raise a broad range of themes, including race, national histories, the environment, and even the digital turn in modern technology. In this online, asynchronous class, we will follow the witch's unpredictable movements and reinventions, across time and space and in a wide variety of literary texts, paintings, performing arts, and mass media. Our survey will tentatively include *Medea* from Euripides; witch-themed folk tales from around the world, including "Baba Yaga," "Snow White," "Hansel and Gretel," and "The Little Mermaid"; a selection of witch-themed poems and paintings; excerpts from the comic book *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* and Japanese manga *Kiki's Delivery Service*; Arthur Miller's classic play *The Crucible*; Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima*; Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*; and Nnedi Okorafor's *Akata Witch*. We will also watch *Häxan*, *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, *Eve's Bayou*, *The Witch Part 1: The Subversion*, and episodes of *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*, *Always a Witch*, *Marianne*, and *Luna Nera*. Satisfies the GER [HU] and L&S International Studies requirements. Affiliated with Cultures & Communities and Digital Arts & Cultures. No prior literature coursework or foreign language training required.