

Brenda Cárdenas
Course Descriptions for Fall 2021 Semester

English 414-001: Special Topics in Creative Writing: Writing about the Other Arts

As fine artists themselves, it is not unusual for creative writers to become inspired by the other arts or to find themselves working with or alongside other artists. In this class, we will explore, analyze, and create various interdisciplinary (or inter-arts) works, some individually and others collaboratively composed, which involve literary writing in concert with other art forms, such as visual art, music, dance, and performance art.

First, we will consider ekphrasis and write poems, short fiction (including flash fiction), and/or creative non-fiction in response to and in conversation with other works of art. Next, we will consider projects that include both creative writing and another art in juxtaposition, rather than in response, to one another or that completely merge two or more arts. Such projects might include visual and sound poetics, graphic fiction, artists' books, collage, songs, short films (such as poetry films), installations, and performance art pieces. Once we have studied "published" projects of this nature, students will create their own, paying particular attention to the tensions, valences, nuances, and questions that emerge in the fusions of multiple art forms. Students will present their writing and inter-arts projects to class for critique, which will focus on suggestions for how they might best achieve the desired effect(s). Other assignments will include writing short reading responses and a keeping a journal.