

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM AT NOCCA|RIVERFRONT  
2018 SUMMER WRITING and READING

Writers write and writers read. As you read challenging and diverse works of literature, you will discover new ways to approach language and storytelling. You are encouraged (required) this summer to read and write. We trust you will pay close attention to what you can learn from the texts, and that you'll experiment with new styles and techniques in your own writing.

**Submit at least ten (10) pages of original writing on the first day of class in August 2018.** Your pages should be typed in a standard 12-point font (single-spaced if poetry, double-spaced if fiction or creative non-fiction, and properly formatted if drama).

**Submit a one-page description of your “arts encounter” on the first day of class in August 2018 (see instructions on page 5).**

**Read *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.** You will be tested on the novel the first week of school so please be sure you have a copy of the book with you.

**In addition to *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, read at least 5 other books from this book list. Please be prepared to introduce one of the books in a brief class presentation on the second day of school (see presentation guidelines on page 7).**

Students entering Level I, please choose your books from the attached list.

Students entering Levels II-IV, if there is a book you would like to include that isn't on this list, please email Lara Naughton at [linaughton@nocca.com](mailto:linaughton@nocca.com) for approval. Be sure to include information about the book and your reason for requesting it.

Everyone is, of course, encouraged to read beyond the required texts!

## **Category I: Books Recommended or Required for Certificate of Artistry**

You are required to read at least one book from this category this summer.

Please note: The Certificate of Artistry (CA) is the highest level of certificate in the writing program, and is earned by seniors who reach Level III or IV. As part of the CA, students submit a list of 12 novels that they feel confident discussing. All the books below can be counted toward the Certificate of Artistry. Levels I and II, choose one book from the entire list below. Levels III and IV, it's a good idea to read your "big book" this summer!

Five Required for Certificate of Artistry:

Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility Or Pride and Prejudice*

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Franz Kafka, *The Trial Or The Castle*

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

Flannery O'Connor, *Wise Blood*

Gabriel García Marquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon*

Choose One for Certificate of Artistry:

Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*,

Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*

Alexander Dumas, *Count of Monte Cristo*

Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*

Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*

George Eliot, *Middlemarch*

James Joyce, *Ulysses*

Pat Barker, *Regeneration Trilogy* (all)

David Foster Wallace, *Infinite Jest*

Elena Ferrante, *The Neapolitan Novels* (all)

Can Be Counted Toward Certificate of Artistry:

Chris Abani, *Song for Night*

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

Samuel Beckett, *Murphy*

Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood*

Julio Cortázar, *Hopscotch*

Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Yukio Mishima, *The Sailor Who Fell From Grace With the Sea*

Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*

Joyce Carol Oates, *Black Water*

Flann O'Brien, *At Swim-Two Birds*

Ben Okri, *The Famished Road*

Merce Rodoreda, *The Time of the Doves*

Mary Shelly, *Frankenstein*

Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*

Jean Toomer, *Cane*

Jesamyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones*

## **Category II: International Literature**

You are required to read at least one book from this category this summer. Unless otherwise noted, the books listed below are novels. The books with an asterisk\* can be used toward your Certificate of Artistry.

Afghanistan: Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*  
Argentina: Adolfo Bioy Casares, *The Invention of Morel*\*  
Bangladesh: Tahmima Anam, *A Golden Age*  
Brazil: Clarice Lispector, *Near to the Wild Heart*\*  
Cambodia: U Sam Oeur, *Crossing Three Wildernesses (memoir)*  
Canada: Michael Ondaatje, *Coming Through Slaughter*  
Chile: Alejandro Zambra, *My Documents (story collection)*  
China: Can Xue, *Blue Light in the Sky & Other Stories (story collection)*  
Colombia: Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *News of a Kidnapping (nonfiction)*  
Cuba: Mayra Montero, *Dancing to Almendra*  
Dominican Republic: Junot Diaz, *This is How You Lose Her (story collection)*  
Egypt: Naguib Mahfouz, *Midaq Alley*\*  
England: Max Porter, *Grief is the Thing with Feathers (novel in verse)*  
Fiji: Peter Thomson, *Kava in the Blood (memoir)*  
Germany: Peter Wohlleben, *The Hidden Life of Trees (nonfiction)*  
Haiti: Edwidge Danticat, *Krik? Krak! (short fiction)*  
Hungary: László Krasznahorkai, *The Melancholy of Resistance*  
India: Amitav Ghosh, *River of Smoke*  
Italy: Primo Levi, *The Periodic Table (memoir)*  
Iran: Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis (graphic memoir)*  
Ireland: Colum McCann, *Thirteen Ways of Looking (novella and short fiction)*  
Jamaica: Marlon James, *The Book of Night Women*  
Japan: Haruki Murakami, *Kafka on the Shore*\*  
Lebanon: Rabih Alameddine, *An Unnecessary Woman*  
Mexico: Valeria Luiselli, *The Story of My Teeth*  
Mozambique: Mia Couto, *Under the Frangipani*  
New Zealand: Keri Hulme, *The Bone People*  
Norway: Asne Seierstad, *The Bookseller of Kabul (nonfiction)*  
Peru: Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Storyteller*  
Portugal: Jose Saramago, *Blindness*  
Russia: Svetlana Alexievich, *Voices from Chernobyl (nonfiction)*  
South Africa: Henrietta Rose-Innes, *Green Lion*  
Spain: Javier Marias, *The Infatuations*  
Trinidad and Tobago: VS Naipaul, *A Bend in the River*  
Uganda: Okot p'Bitek, *Song of Lawino*  
United Kingdom: Zadie Smith, *Feel Free: Essays (essay collection)*  
Vietnam: Bao Ninh, *The Sorrow of War*  
Zimbabwe: Tendai Huchu, *The Hairdresser of Harare*

### **Category III: Poetry Collections**

You are required to read at least one collection from this category this summer.

Kaveh Akbar *Calling a Wolf a Wolf*

Elizabeth Bishop, *The Complete Poems: 1927-1979*

Jericho Brown, *The New Testament*

Molly Brown, *The Virginia Colony for the Epileptics and Feebleminded*

Victoria Chang *Barbie Chang*

Chen Chen, *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities*

Eduardo C. Corral, *Slow Lightning*

Natalie Diaz, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*

T. S. Eliot, *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*

Joshua Jennifer Espinoza, *There Should Be Flowers*

Tarfia Faizullah, *Seam*

David Ferry *Bewilderment*

Ross Gay, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*

Aracelis Girmay, *Black Maria*

Louise Glück, *Faithful and Virtuous Night*

Terrance Hayes, *How to Be Drawn*

Carolyn Hembree, *Rigging a Chevy to a Time Machine and Other Ways to Escape a Plague*

Marie Howe, *Magdalene*

Tyehimba Jess, *Olio*

Saeed Jones, *Prelude to Bruise*

Bill Knott, *I am Flying into Myself*

Rickey Laurentis, *Boy with Thorn*

Ada Limón, *Bright Dead Things*

Layli Long Soldier, *Whereas*

Jamaal May, *Hum*

Aimee Nezhukumatohil, *Oceanic*

Sharon Olds, *Stag's Leap*

Willie Perdomo, *The Essential Hits of Shorty Bon Bon*

Kevin Powers, *Letter Composed During a Lull in the Fighting: Poems*

Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric*

Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe: Poems 1950-2001*

Vijay Seshadri, *3 Sections*

Solmaz Sharif, *Look*

Warsan Shire, *Teaching My Mother How to Give Birth*

Danez Smith, *Don't Call Us Dead*

Tracy Smith *Life on Mars*

Mary Syzbist, *Incarnadine*

Ellen Bryant Voigt, *Headwaters*

Ocean Vuong, *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*

Javier Zamora, *Unaccompanied*

**Category IV: Student Recommendations** You may choose a book from this category. These book recommendations come from students who completed independent author studies this year.

C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*

*The Four Loves* is a fearless exploration of not only romantic love, but friendship and compassion. Lewis uses theology and metaphor to explain the dynamics between humans and the relations we build with each other, as well as explaining society's stereotyping of love. (Nicholas Burtchaell)

Etgar Keret, *The Seven Good Years*

Keret encapsulates the mundane effects of an overwhelmingly flawed political climate while balancing a blunt and sad reality with a comical tone. Surrealism only emphasizes this political unrest in a way that disturbingly highlights just how real these conflicts are. The conflicts that he discusses within Israel is comparable to how people within other countries cope with political and civil disturbances, which creates a hopeful solidarity among writers and readers. (Abbey Hebert)

Anne Carson, *Autobiography of Red*

A short yet sensual poem/novel that breathes life into an ancient Greek myth, turning it into the rough coming of age of a young boy and his lover. (Pia Mulleady)

Neil Gaiman, *Anansi Boys*

Compared to the rest of Gaiman's bibliography, *Anansi Boys* is a breath of fresh air. Combining dark humor and characters with big personalities, it handles Neil Gaiman's usual themes in widely different ways. (Mary Murphy)

Téa Obreht, *The Tiger's Wife*

If an author's first book is any indication of the rest of their career, Téa Obreht will be something to behold. Elegantly combining folktale and reality within the past and present, *The Tiger's Wife* is a masterwork in talking about grief and handling mortality. (Mary Murphy)

Vladimir Nabokov, *Mary*

*Mary* is Nabokov's first and, in my opinion, most underrated novel. *Mary* is the story of Lev Glebovich Ganin, a Russian displaced by the Bolshevik Revolution. He moves to a boarding house in Germany and records his story in *Mary*, a novel about social change, love, and memory. It is one of Nabokov's simplest and most poignant novels, written with an eager and innocent talent. It is sentimental and inspires a reflective thought which causes the book stays with the reader long after it is over. (Louise Olivier)

Jesmyn Ward, *The Fire This Time*

This anthology of essays and poems, all inspired by James Baldwin's book, *The Fire Next Time*, will entice your world as you journey through the trials and tribulations of a modern generation's relationship with race. (Kristian Palmer)

Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*

This novel is a surprising juxtaposition of the gruesome, macabre themes of southern gothic fiction, and the sincere tenderness with which Carson McCullers writes about her characters longing for companionship. McCullers also crafts her story with precisely beautiful language; so many of her sentences had me stopping short to re-read them. I'd recommend *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* to anyone looking to laugh out loud and have their heart broken simultaneously. (Ayana Sofia)

### **Category V: NOCCA Visiting Artists**

You may choose a book from this category. The books with an asterisk\* can be used toward your Certificate of Artistry. It is permissible to read any book by these authors.

Dorothy Allison, *Bastard out of Carolina\**  
Jami Attenberg, *All Grown Up*  
John Barry, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*  
Thomas Beller, *J. D. Salinger*  
Lee Connell, *Subcortical*  
Matthew Dickman, *All-American Poem*  
Rikki Ducornet, *Gazelle*  
Dave Eggers, *The Circle*  
Pia Z. Erhardt, *Famous Fathers and Other Stories*  
Richard Ford, *Independence Day\**  
Patty Friedmann, *A Little Bit Ruined*  
Stephanie Elizondo Griest, *All the Agents and Saints: Dispatches from the U.S. Borderlands*  
Yuri Herrera, *The Transmigration of Bodies*  
Etgar Keret, *Suddenly a Knock on the Door*  
Julia Glass, *Three Junes*  
Kiese Laymon, *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*  
Zachary Lazar, *Vengeance*  
Michael Martone, *Michael Martone: Fictions*  
Audrey Niffenegger, *The Time Traveler's Wife*  
Tom Perrotta, *Election*  
Francine Prose, *Lovers at the Chameleon Club*  
Nathaniel Rich, *Odds Against Tomorrow*  
Katy Simpson Smith, *The Story of Land and Sea*  
John Jeremiah Sullivan, *Pulphed: Essays*  
Sarah Vowell, *Unfamiliar Fishes*

### **Category VI: Art Encounters**

You are required to experience at least one live arts discipline. Arts Encounters can include a concert, play, trip to a museum or gallery, dance performance, or any other live artistic event. You might explore the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Ogden Museum, the Contemporary Art Center, first Saturday of the month gallery openings, Summer Shakespeare at Tulane, events in City Park, and more. **Please write a one-page description of your encounter.** You can find listings of local performances and museum exhibitions in The Times Picayune, Gambit, or online at [www.nola.com](http://www.nola.com).

### **NOCCA LIBRARY**

The NOCCA Library will be open this summer, but will not follow a regular schedule. Creative Writing students are encouraged to use the library to check out summer reading material. Books will be due back on the first day of school in August 2017.

Please call or email Mr. Matt Hassebrock, NOCCA's librarian, to check the library's schedule or to set up a time to visit the library.

mhassebrock@nocca.com

(504) 940-2805

**NOCCA|Riverfront Creative Writing  
Summer Reading Presentation Guidelines**

Choose a book from the NOCCA summer reading list that you enjoyed. You will make a 5-10 minute presentation about the book to the class. This form is meant to guide you as you plan your presentation. Your answers should be carefully and thoughtfully written, and will be turned in to the instructor.

Title:

Name of author and short biography:

Two sentence plot or thematic summary:

Choose and discuss a passage, no longer than a page, which impressed you as both a reader and a writer. Why? Be specific and use direct quotes: