

Instructor Letter  
The Art and Arc of Narrative Poetry

Dear Poets,

I gather from your interest in this course, *The Art and Arc of Narrative Poetry*, that you are intrigued about the prospect of exploring storytelling in poetry. I hope that you are also eager to read the works of various writers for inspiration and that you will be excited about sharing your work with our group. Course time will be used to generate new poems, to revise, and to discuss various modern and contemporary examples of poems that illustrate particular techniques.

When we write poetry, we tap into a wellspring that is the source of all the arts and that reflects the breadth of our human experience. We will be reading a number of poems that tap into different sources of inspiration. We will also engage in a number of creative exercises to inspire new poems, while focusing, in particular, on the arc of a story and building tension within a poem.

Because students come to a workshop with a variety of backgrounds, styles, and interests in poetry, discussions about lineage and the different schools of thought in poetry and narrative traditions will be a vital element of the workshop. As cultural perspective is an important aspect of poetic discourse, I hope that the readings of poetry from authors of various backgrounds will also encourage discussion about the connections between culture, form and content.

We will use the Rananim online opportunities to workshop poems as a group and provide inspiration and feedback for your work. You will leave the course with several new poems and several pieces that have reached a new stage of development via revision and re-vision, as we explore different perspectives and ways of envisioning narrative in poetry.

I look forward to getting to know you and your work this January and beyond!

Cheers,

Diane Thiel  
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