

Poetics of the *sotto voce*

Class meets in 907 Edu Building on Tuesdays from 6-9.
Office hours in 904 / Rosa Alacalá's office on Tuesdays from 3-5:30.

Poetry of the *Sotto Voce*: When we hear whispers, what kind of attention does it command from us, what exchange takes place between the murmur and the leaning in to listen? In this course, we will step into the poetics of the *sotto voce*, and in it explore notions of secrecy, ghostliness, what is ephemeral though intimate, and what is inaudible though leaves traces. Together we will read work by Aracelis Girmay, Emily Dickinson, Inger Christensen, and the performances Cecilia Vicuña, among other poets, as well as consider the films and photography of Ken Gonzales-Day, Ana Mendieta, Chris Marker, Víctor Erice, and Abbas Kiarostami. Our meeting times will be divided into discussion of the texts, in-class writing and sharing, and presentations. You will produce a short chapbook, performance, or video, along with a 5-8 page introduction, for a final project bearing a relationship to the forms of the whispering voice.

Texts

- Each week, I will upload pdf's and links onto Blackboard, which are required reading.
- Books

alphabet by Inger Christensen, transl Susanna Nied (New Directions, 2001)

Crosslight for Youngbird by Asiya Wadud (Nightboat Books, 2018)

The Black Maria by Aracelis Girmay (Boa, 2016)

*Rain of the Future** by Valerie Mejer Caso (Action Books, 2013)

*You'll more easily find Mejer Caso's book through Small Press Publishing.

- Films (in full)

El espíritu de la colmena (1973) by Víctor Erice

We'll have to watch in class, and might have to stay longer as a result.

Sans Soleil (1983) by Chris Marker

You'll access this film through UTEP's Kanopy.

Participation

Aside from engaging in discussions and writing exercises each week, you'll also sign up to introduce one of the main texts listed above. There will be about 2-3 people per text

One on one meeting

We will meet up to 40 minutes, one on one, to talk about anything concerning your current project outside of class. You can show me up to 5 pages of poetry. I will send a list for you to select a slot.