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## THE WRITERS VOICE OF CENTRAL NEW YORK DOWNTOWN WRITERS CENTER and WRITERS VOICE WRITING WORKSHOPS – SUMMER 2026

### WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

It's hard to believe, but the Arts and Education Branch of the YMCA, and our Writers Voice Program, are 25 years old!

We're celebrating with a special event in combination with this year's CNY Book Awards! Join us at Bellevue Country Club for an evening of food, art, music, and dancing! Festivities will include the presentation of the annual CNY Book Awards, guest speakers, and much more.

Ticket information will be available soon... watch your email. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Email [pmemmer@ymcacny.org](mailto:pmemmer@ymcacny.org) to learn more, and we hope you'll celebrate this important milestone with us!

### KEY TO COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

- BEG** Beginner. These courses are open to all students, but are designed specifically for new writers.
- INT** Intermediate. These courses are for students with writing experience and some familiarity with workshops.
- ALL** All. These courses are for writers of all experience levels--including beginners!
- PRO** PRO/Advanced. Space may be limited in these courses for students not enrolled in PRO. A manuscript review may also be required for new students.
- GEN** Generative. These courses focus on creating new work through exercises and prompts.
- SEM** Seminar. These courses examine literary schools, craft, and/or writing theory in practice; reading is often required.
- WRK** Workshop. These courses focus on peer critique and/or revision strategies.
- MS** Multiple Styles. Classes will incorporate multiple instruction styles.
- DWC** Course will take place in-person at the Downtown Writers Center
- ONLINE** Course will take place online (e.g. Zoom)
- HYBRID** Students can join either in-person at the Downtown Writers Center or online.
- ASYNCH** Students write and share work without a weekly scheduled class.

# SUMMER 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

## POETRY COURSES

### **SUMMERING: A POETRY WORKSHOP**

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Yvonne Murphy. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 6. Write the poems and lyrical short prose that you've always wanted--and many others, too! Celebrate the season with a study of exciting poets and poems from all over the world. We'll have juicy, delicious, summery prompts, activities, and discussions to help us write!

### **STARTING FROM ZERO: RADICAL POETS IN TRANSLATION**

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Tim McCoy. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 6. Six weeks of generative writing guided by visionary poets from Peru, Brazil, Japan, Cuba, Egypt, and beyond. Read work that breaks every rule you know and then write poems only you could make.

### **POETRY IN TRANSLATION FOR ALL LEVELS**

(INT - MS - DWC) with Jessica Cuello. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 7. Explore translation in the language of your choice--fluency not required! We'll read selected essays from *Into English*, participate in creative activities, and share their own translation for feedback.

### **ADVANCED POETRY WORKSHOP**

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Suzanne Frischkorn. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 7. Refine your writing and learn from others in this workshop that studies how great poems work, designed for writers with workshop experience and whose goal is publication. Please call 315-474-6851 x480 or email for more details.

### **POETRY AND ENLIGHTENMENT**

(INT - MS - HYBRID) with Tim Carter. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 4 weeks, starts July 8. Let's test the idea that haiku offers a rich model for writing poetry of change and transformation that is often missing in contemporary lyric poetry. We will talk about haiku's relationship with Zen and try writing some of our own poems.

### **POEMS OF DISCOVERY**

(INT - GEN - ONLINE) with Patrick Meeds. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 9. Using leaps and associations, we'll generate poems that reveal their meanings and after they're complete.

### **CHAPBOOK, BABY!**

(ALL - MS - ASYNCH) with Sherre Vernon. Sundays, 11 AM to 1 PM, 6 weeks, starts July 12. Learn what makes a successful chapbook and help get yours off the ground! Poets will receive feedback on a 15 to 30 page manuscript and submit their chapbooks to at least one publisher. Note: half of the classes will be on zoom.

## NONFICTION COURSES

### **WRITE YOUR BUCKET LIST**

(BEG - MS - ONLINE) with Cheyenne Dorsagno. Mondays, 3 to 5 PM, 6 weeks, starts July 6. This class will workshop each person's bucket list, explore what makes a bucket list rewarding, and write different forms of artistic expression.

# MORE SUMMER 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

## NONFICTION, CONTINUED

### **THE SUMMER FLOW: NONFICTION WORKSHOP**

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with Georgia Pop-off. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM, and Thursdays, 1 to 3 PM, 6 weeks, starts July 15 and 16. Expect to share and receive comments and constructive critique. New members are welcome, so join us if you need a supportive group!

## FICTION COURSES

### **WHO CALLS ME VILLAIN?**

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Alyssa Pfingst. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 8. Learn how to create exceptional, believable villains who will provide true obstacles to your protagonists while remaining grounded and real to readers.

### **OPEN FICTION WORKSHOP**

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with Kelsey Day. Wednesdays, 5 to 7 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 8. In this friendly workshop, open to writers of all levels, you will share work and talk openly about what is and isn't working in each other's writing.

## DRAMATIC WRITING

### **A SHORT COURSE FOR SHORT PLAYS**

(INT - GEN - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 9. One, five, and ten-minute plays are some of the most exciting (and most easily produced) works in the theater today! In this crash course, we'll study the short work of prominent and contemporary playwrights and create our own short plays.

## CROSS-GENRE COURSES

### **HYBRID CRYPTIDS**

(ALL - MS - DWC) with Misha Tentser. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM, 4 weeks, starts July 7. Investigate the strange, provocative, and hybrid forms of life through poems, short stories, and essays that exist outside or in-between genre conventions.

### **STRATEGIES IN REVISION**

(INT - WRK - ONLINE) with Kayla Blatchley. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 8. Learn to revise your work with different approaches, including strategies for structural and line-level editing, responding to feedback, and refining and expanding your work. This class focuses on fiction and nonfiction.

### **MINIMAL WORDS, MAXIMUM IMPACT**

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Ona Gritz and Dan Simpson. Thursdays, 5 to 7 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 9. In this age of short attention spans, how do we hold our readers' interest? One answer is to write brief impactful pieces. Learn to craft short poems and flash prose in this hands-on supportive class.

### **WRITERLY OBSESSIONS**

(ALL - GEN - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Saturdays, 3 to 5 PM. 6 weeks, starts July 11. Kafka had entrapment. Roxane Gay has the dialogue of love and violence. How can we mine our own obsessions into distinctive, original works without getting repetitive? We'll identify our obsessions and acknowledge the unique perspectives that make us who we are as writers.

## SUMMER 2026 INSTRUCTOR BIOS

KAYLA BLATCHLEY is a writer and teacher living in Syracuse, NY. Her short fiction can be found in such journals as *A Public Space* and *NOON*.

TIM CARTER is the Director of Writing Workshops at the Writers Voice of CNY. His books are *Remains* and *The Pigs*.

GEMMA COOPER-NOVACK is a queer writer, playwright, scholar, and writing coach. She's the author of *We Might As Well Be Underwater*.

JESSICA CUELLO's newest book is *Feral*. She is the recipient of a 2025 Saltonstall Fellowship, a 2023 NYSCA Artist Grant, and is poetry editor at *Tahoma Literary Review*.

KELSEY DAY is a poet, novelist, and teacher from southern Appalachia. Their debut young adult novel, *The Spiral Key*, came out in February 2026.

CHEYENNE DORSAGNO is a journalist and autobiography guide, specializing in therapeutic non-fiction.

SUZANNE FRISCHKORN is the author of four poetry collections, most recently *Whipsaw*. She's an editor for *\$-Poetry is Currency*, and is an assistant poetry editor for *Terrain.org*.

ONA GRITZ's memoir, *Everywhere I Look*, won the *Pencraft's* Best Book Award, and was named *StoryTrade's* Nonfiction Book of 2024. A longtime columnist for *Literary Mama*, Ona's work has appeared widely.

TIM MCCOYS's poems have appeared in the *Notre Dame Review*, *BlazeVOX*, and others. He graduated from the Syracuse University MFA program and teaches writing in the Syracuse area.

PATRICK MEEDS is the author of *The Invisible Man's Tailor* (2026). His work has been published in *Stone Canoe*, the *New Ohio Review*, *Guernica*, and others.

PHIL MEMMER founded the Writers Voice of CNY in 2000. His sixth book of poems, *Cairns*, was published in 2022.

YVONNE MURPHY teaches creative writing and studio art at SUNY Empire State University. Her first book, *Aviaries*, won the Carolina Wren Prize in Poetry.

ALYSSA PFINGST is a professional development editor and book coach, who supports authors and graphic novelists as they start, refine, and publish their books.

GEORGIA A POPOFF is the author of five books of poetry, most recently, *Living with Haints* (2024). She is Poet Laureate Emerita of Onondaga County.

DANIEL SIMPSON's most recent poetry collection, *Inside the Invisible*, won the Propel Poetry Prize. He serves as flash nonfiction editor for *Wordgathering*.

MISHA TENTSER is a poet from Tucson, Arizona. He is the author of the chapbook *Born in the Wrong Desert*.

OLIVIA SILVER teaches poetry, fiction, and and drama. She delights supporting the voices of her Syracuse community through her work at the Young Authors Academy.

SHERRE VERNON (she/her) is the award-winning author of *Green Ink Wings* and *The Name is Perilous*. Her debut full-length poetry collection, *Flame Nebula*, *Bright Nova* was released in 2022

# COURSES FOR TEENS

## YOUNG AUTHORS ACADEMY

(ALL - WRK - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack and Olivia Silver. Saturdays, 12 to 2 PM. 10 weeks, starting July 11. YAA is a workshop for students in grades 6 through 12 who are on fire to write! Free for students in the Syracuse City School District and YMCA of CNY members.

Want to know more?

Contact Tim Carter

Email: [tcarter@ymcacny.org](mailto:tcarter@ymcacny.org)

Phone: 315-474-6851 x480

Website:

[ymcacny.org/young-authors-academy](http://ymcacny.org/young-authors-academy)

## WORKSHOP REMINDERS...

**Enrollment is first-come, first-served.**

**Class times are Eastern.**

**We don't call to confirm registrations;**

**however, we'll call you if there is any problem.**

**Refunds are not given after a course begins. (If a course is canceled, payments are refunded.)**

**If a course has a required text listed in its description, you will need to obtain that text before the first class meeting.**

# THANK YOU

The Writers Voice of CNY is supported with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, with the support of the office of the Governor and the NYS Legislature. Additional support by Onondaga County and CNY Arts.



**Council on  
the Arts**



## REGISTRATION FOR YMCA OF CNY MEMBERS

**STEP 1: GO TO [YMCACNY.ORG/MYACCOUNT](http://YMCACNY.ORG/MYACCOUNT).**

Create a new account or enter your valid YMCA of CNY membership email and password.

**STEP 2: REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM.** Click

“Activities” in the upper right-hand corner, and then click “Register for a program.”

**STEP 3: SEARCH FOR PROGRAMS.** Type

“creative writing” into the search bar and use the filters to find the right class for you.

**STEP 4: COMPLETE REGISTRATION.** To take

advantage of your free course benefit as a Y-member of CNY, use promo code “DWCSUMMER26” when you register.

Please note that you must complete your

transaction for your free course, then start a new transaction for any additional courses.

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## REGISTRATION FOR Y-USA and ALL OTHER STUDENTS:

Register by phone with a credit card by calling (315) 474-6851 x480.

Paying by check? Call first to reserve your place, then return to your registration form with check payable to the YMCA to:

The YMCA's Downtown Writers Center, 340 Montgomery St., Syracuse, NY 13202

Members of a YMCA outside of YMCA of Central New York are eligible to take workshops at a discount!

Use promo code “DWCYUSA”.

<https://ymcacny.org/dwc>

# SPRING 2026 WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, 1 JULY 2026

Late registrations, when space is available, are subject to a \$15 late fee.

Courses (Please mark with an <b>X</b> )	Member Level	YMCA	WV	Non-member
_____ Summering: A Poetry Workshop		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Starting From Zero		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Poetry in Translation For All Levels		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Advanced Poetry Workshop		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Poetry and Enlightenment		Free*	\$75	\$100
_____ Poems of Discovery		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Chapbook, Baby!		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Write Your Bucket List		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ The Summer Flow (Wednesday)		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ The Summer Flow (Thursday)		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Who Calls Me Villain?		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Open Fiction Workshop		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ A Short Course for Short Plays		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Hybrid Cryptids		Free*	\$75	\$100
_____ Strategies in Revision		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Minimal Words, Maximum Impact		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Writerly Obsessions		Free*	\$100	\$130

\*YMCA of CNY members are entitled to one free class per season, per membership (a family membership counts as one membership). Additional fees (Book Club, late fees) still apply. All other Y members from anywhere in the country are eligible for "WV Member Rate" discount. Call 315-474-6851 x480 for more information.

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS (city, state, zip) \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

YMCA of CNY MEMBER? YES / NO (If yes, please specify branch) \_\_\_\_\_

WRITERS VOICE MEMBER? YES / NO

Y MEMBER FROM ANOTHER YMCA ? YES / NO (If yes, specify) \_\_\_\_\_

ALL STUDENTS please refer to page 5 for details about registering for classes online.