



Getting Personal:

American Women Poets and the Autobiographical Lyric



When it was announced that Jewish-American poet Louise Glück had been awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize for Literature, Glück became the first woman poet from the United States to win the prestigious honor. Using this “unprecedented” announcement as a launch point, this webinar features three women poets whose work, like Glück’s own, has alternately been described as “confessional” and “personal.” The “confessional” school of poetry originated in the United States in the mid-twentieth-century, and important poets such as Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich, and Anne Sexton have been associated with that school. Yet Glück and her readers have argued that her lyrics are more than merely “confessional” in mode, though they are undeniably personal and autobiographical. Likewise, the three women poets serving on this webinar panel are renowned for their personal lyrics that are more than merely confessional. Each panelist will address the significance of Glück’s being named the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature and share their approaches to the “confessional,” “personal,” and/or autobiographical school of poetry.

Friday, March 19, 2021

Noon–1:00 p.m. EDT via Zoom

PANELISTS:

Natalie Diaz is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Tribe. Her first poetry collection, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, was published by Copper Canyon Press, and her second book, *Postcolonial Love Poem*, was published by Graywolf Press in March 2020 and was named a finalist for the National Book Award. Diaz is director of the Center for Imagination in the Borderlands and is the Maxine and Jonathan Marshall Chair in Modern and Contemporary Poetry at Arizona State University.

Diana Khoi Nguyen is the author of *Ghost Of* (Omnidawn Publishing, 2018) and a recipient of a 2021 fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. In addition to winning the 92Y “Discovery”/ *Boston Review* Poetry Contest, 2019 Kate Tufts Discovery Award, and Colorado Book Award, she was also a finalist for the National Book Award and *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. A Kundiman Fellow, Nguyen is core faculty in the Randolph College low-residency master of fine arts program and an assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

Shara McCallum is the author of six books of poetry including *No Ruined Stone* (forthcoming in 2021) and *Madwoman*, winner of the 2018 OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Poetry. Her work has appeared widely in the United States, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Europe and has been translated into Spanish, French, Italian, Romanian, Dutch, and Turkish. As Liberal Arts Professor of English at Penn State, McCallum is the recipient of a Witter Bynner Fellowship from the U.S. Library of Congress and a Poetry Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

MODERATOR:

Tyler Mills is the author of *The City Scattered* (winner of the Snowbound Chapbook Award, Tupelo Press 2022), *Hawk Parable* (winner of the Akron Poetry Prize, University of Akron Press 2019), and *Tongue Lyre* (winner of the Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award, Southern Illinois University Press 2013). She is finishing a nonfiction memoir-in-essays manuscript titled *The Bomb Cloud*.

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This webinar is part of the 2020–21 CALS “Unprecedented” Webinar Series.

For additional information, please contact Sean X. Goudie, director of the Center for American Literary Studies, at sxgoudie@psu.edu.

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