

FW 2022-23

AP/EN 4163 6.0A (Y)	The Visionaries
Course Director:	<p>Professor B.W. Powe Office: 623 Atkinson College Ext.: 33775 e-mail: bpowe@yorku.ca Office hours, Fridays, 10:00 am to 11 am; and after class on Fridays. Also, by appointment.</p>
Time:	Friday, 11:30 to 2:30
Delivery Format:	<p>ONLINE: (Synchronous Delivery) There are scheduled meeting times for this course. Students must plan to be available for course-related studies during the appointed times.</p>
Description:	<p>EN 4163 examines the visionary tradition - a heretical medley of trauma, trance, introspection, formal innovation, and apocalyptic speculation - in key poets and prose writers from Teresa of Avila and Rumi, to William Blake and Emily Dickinson, to The Beats, Sylvia Plath, Paul Celan, Bob Dylan and Patti Smith.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Writers in the visionary streams develop innovative techniques to express apocalyptic or transcendent moments. Searching for breakthroughs to higher states of consciousness and ultra-sensitivity, they may explore alternative imaginative conditions through Gnosticism, alchemy, hermeticism, and kabbalah. Writers register a sense of transcendental pressures on their minds and sensibilities; this affects their forms and expressions. The prophetic streak in writers can also lead to proclamation and denunciation. We'll also engage the nature of inspiration, what Hildegard von Bingen calls "greening".</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prophetic legacies underscore the mythic, imaginative streams of literature. Some literary artists may rest easily in the spiritual expressions of their day. Others reinvent the expressions of inwardness and inspiration, exploding poetics and religious dogma, the social structures, and repressive political and cultural systems, that they engaged.</p>

	<p>Writers driven towards expressing the ineffable often don't fit into anything other than what they invent for themselves.</p> <p>The visionary streams move through Hildegard, Rumi and Hallaj, and Teresa of Avila, Dante through to Blake, Emily Bronte, Whitman, and Dickinson, and exist in iconoclastic implosions of form and style in Rimbaud, and emerge in fragmented inklings in Eliot, in HD's recollections of the Hermetic codes, in occult twists in the craft-driven Yeats. It becomes masked in ironies in Kafka and Plath, Dylan and Joni Mitchell. It resurfaces reinvented in the questing Beats, sometimes in desperate states. It appears shattered in Celan's holocaust poems. It resurfaces whole in James Baldwin and Patti Smith. We may find the visionary-prophetic stream is charged with artists expressing unorthodox, often enigmatic codes, searching to articulate the sense of heightened existence in a crossroads with matter and spirit.</p>
Category:	B
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	<p>Course Requirements, 4163, Fall/Winter, 2022/2023</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>First Essay</i>—Exploring what the visionary means for an author of your selection from our first readings, Hildegard von Bingen, Teresa of Avila, Dante, Hallaj, Rumi. A short essay of approx. 4-5 pages. Worth: 10% 2. <i>Journal</i>—A mix of essay and creative responses to these authors of the first term, Emily Bronte, William Blake, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman; or do these authors of the first term, Rimbaud, HD, Yeats, T.S. Eliot. Or you may mix these authors for a total of 4 (four) responses. 2.5 pages one for each author, for 10 pages (max). We will discuss this in class. You may use your imagination and your scholarly skills and talents here. Worth: 30%

	<p>3. <i>Journal</i>—A mix of essay and creative responses to these authors of the second term, Kafka, Ginsberg, Di Prima, Kerouac, Plath; or do these authors of the second term, Celan, Baldwin, Dylan, Patti Smith Joni Mitchell. Or: you may mix these authors for a total of 5 (five) responses. Two pages, one for each author, for ten pages. We will discuss this more in class. You may use your imagination and scholarly skills and talents here. Worth: 30%</p> <p>4. <i>In-Class Test</i>—A review of the year’s readings and reflections. The test will consist of of asking you to respond to this phrase: “Breakdown leads to Breakthrough”. Worth: 20%</p> <p>5. <i>Class Engagement</i>, discussions, dialogues, responses, preparations for each reading. Worth: 10%</p> <p>English 4163, Reading List for 2022-2023</p>
<p>Reading List:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hildegard von Bingen, Plainsongs; Teresa of Avila, <i>The Interior Castle*</i>, selections 2. Dante, <i>La Vita Nuova*</i> 3. Selections of poems by Rumi and Hallaj, the Sufi mystical traditions* 4. William Blake, <i>Poems and Prose</i>, selected by Patti Smith 5. Emily Bronte, “No Coward Soul is Mine”, and selected poems in <i>The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Bronte</i> 6. Walt Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1855 edition) 7. Emily Dickinson, “The Soul selects its own Society,” and selected poems in <i>Essential Dickinson</i>, edited by Joyce Carol Oates 8. Arthur Rimbaud, <i>A Season in Hell*</i>, Preface by Patti Smith 9. HD (Hilda Doolittle), <i>Notes on Thought and Vision</i>, selections from <i>Hermetic Definition</i> 10. William Butler Yeats, three poems, “Sailing to Byzantium”, “Byzantium”, “The Second Coming” 11. T.S. Eliot, <i>Four Quartets</i> 12. Franz Kafka, <i>The Blue Octavo Notebooks*</i>, edited by Max Brod 13. Federico Garcia Lorca, <i>In Search of Duende*</i>, an essay on inspiration 14. Allen Ginsberg, <i>The Fall of America</i>, and the short essay, <i>Your Reason and Blake’s System</i>, all to be read in conjunction with Diane di Prima’s <i>Revolutionary Letters</i> 15. Jack Kerouac, <i>The Dharma Bums</i> 16. Sylvia Plath, “Daddy” and “Lady Lazarus”

	<p>17. Paul Celan, "Psalm" and selected poems and prose in Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan*</p> <p>18. James Baldwin, <i>The Fire Next Time</i>/Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man, selected passages</p> <p>19. Bob Dylan, the songs "Like a Rolling Stone", "Desolation Row", "Shelter from the Storm", "I Shall be Released", and selections from his memoir, Chronicles, Vol. 1</p> <p>20. Patti Smith, M Train</p> <p>21. Joni Mitchell, the songs "Woodstock," "Taming the Tiger", "Slouching Towards Bethlehem"</p> <p><i>Asterisks indicate works to be read in translation</i></p> <p>**This is the order in which these works will be read and engaged.</p>
Open To:	Year 4 Honours (English, Professional Writing & Creative Writing Majors)