

ENGL 4603-001: FICTION WORKSHOP / Fall 2015

11:20-12:45, Tuesdays & Thursdays / Patterson Hall #317

Prof. Tim Johnston / t.johnston@memphis.edu / Office: PT 304

Course prerequisite: ENGL 3607

Course Overview: *"Writing stories was not easy . . . Fortunately, the masters were there."* —Mario Vargas Llosa

This workshop-style course proceeds on the principle that **reading—and understanding—great fiction is the educational bedrock for anyone who wishes to create it**. Thus we'll be looking, intensively, at the work of contemporary short story masters, as much for the inspiration and stimulation of their art as for the lessons in language, craft, and narrative technique which the *astute and alert* writer absorbs and incorporates into his own work. In short: *we will read as writers*.

Note: The workshop is not a lecture, it is a roundtable. What *you* bring to the class, written and verbal, *is* the class. *Active and continuous participation is therefore essential*. Other requirements include: attendance; weekly readings from texts, hand-outs, and peer fiction; weekly written and verbal responses to all course material; writing exercises; at least two new, original short stories and one revision; quizzes; Individual Story Presentations; mid-term conferences; end-of-semester Writer's Portfolios.

Required (on first day of class) Texts:

- *The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction: 50 North American Stories Since 1970* (Williford & Martone, Editors), 2007
ISBN: 978-1416532279
- *Ron Carlson Writes A Story*, Carlson, 2007
ISBN: 978-1555974770
- *The Art and Craft of Fiction: A Writer's Guide*, by Michael Kardos, 2012
ISBN: 978-1457613906
- The portable dictionary of your choice
- Your personal writer's notebook