

Lit 6934 (227B)
Tuesdays 6/8

Instructor: John Cech
CBD 224

Reading and Writing Sendak

The Artist, The Art of the Picture Book,
The Golden Age of American Children's Literature
and the Archetypes of Childhood

This seminar focuses on the art of Maurice Sendak, one of the key, shaping figures of American and, indeed, world children's literature for more than half a century. Sendak's influences on the art of the picture book, as well as on our thinking about childhood, has been ubiquitous and profound. The seminar will explore books and other art forms created by Sendak, paying special attention to the rich historical sources of his works, his archetypal poetics, his revisioning of the form of the picture book, and his redefinition of the role of the artist creating works for young people in contemporary culture. Along with discussions of Sendak's core works, participants in the seminar will be asked to respond to these works imaginatively, through a series of creative projects and a final, longer work.

Readings

Krauss, Ruth. *I'll Be You and You Be Me.*

Krauss, Ruth. *A Hole is to Dig.*

Krauss, Ruth. *A Very Special House.*

Sendak, Maurice. *Caldecott & Co.*

_____. *Higglety-Pigglety Pop!*

_____. *In the Night Kitchen.*

_____. *The Nutshell Library.*

_____. *Outside Over There.*

_____. *Where the Wild Things Are.*

_____. *We're All in the Dumps.*

Cech, John. *Angels and Wild Things.*

Jarrell et al. *The Juniper Tree.*

Internet: <http://www.terriblyyelloweyes.com/>

<http://weloveyouso.com/>

Seminar Assignments

A series of short, bi-weekly creative works and a final project.

Office Hours

Mondays 11:00 - 1:00

Tuesdays 10 - 12:30

Thursdays 11:00 - 4:00 and by appointment.

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Schedule

August 29 Belated Introductions. "Tell Them Anything You Want."

September 5 Digging Holes and the Child. Sendak's First Definitions.

Read: *A Hole is to Dig, A Very Special House, and I'll Be You and You Be Me. Angels...* pp. xix - 35.

12 Blake, Nursery Rhymes and Childhood's Rhythms.

Readings: TBA, *Caldecott & Co*, pp. 11 - 20. **Project #1.**

19 *A Visit to the Baldwin Library. Finding Caldecott.*

Read: *Caldecott & Co*, pp. 3 - 27, 45 - 86.

26 Rosie and the Nutshell Kids.

Read: *The Nutshell Library, Angels ...* 37-107.

Caldecott & Co, pp. 145 - 156, 161 - 164, 179 - 184. **Project #2.**

October 3 Wild Things: "A Permanent, Perfect Book."

Read: *Where the Wild Things Are. Angels ...* 109-141.

10 High Fantasy and a Hungry Pooch.

Read: *Higglety-Pigglety Pop! Angels...*143-173. **Project #3.**

17 Among the Alchemists: Comics, Mickey, Dreams.

Read: *In the Night Kitchen. Angels...*175-211.

24 The Romantics (again). Mozart, Runge, Grimm, et. al.

Readings in *The Juniper Tree. Project #4.*

31 The Outward Voyage Inward.

Read: *Outside Over There. Angels...*213-241.

November 7 In the Dumps, Bumble-Ardy, Death, and the Rest.

Read: *We're All in the Dumps. Angels...*243-257. **Project #5.**

14 Sendak on Stage, in Film, in Media. Viewings TBA.

21 Sendak's contemporaries: Seuss, Steig, Ungerer, Van Allsburg, et al.

28 Sendak's Legacy.

December 5 Final Projects Due.