

## SPRING 2022 TERM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

*Meet your instructor by clicking on the Instructors tab on the Home Page.*

*You may view the Project Photo Gallery by clicking on the link on the Courses Page.*

### **20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY PHOTOGRAPHERS: THE GIANTS ON WHOSE SHOULDERS WE STAND**

**New Course!** The Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Oliver Wendell Homes Jr., who was appointed by President Teddy Roosevelt, bestowed the ultimate accolade upon photography: that it is “the Recording Angel, seeing all, even the faintest imprint of a withering vine or the fleeting smile of a bemused child.” Join our instructor, **Jack Daily**, as we follow the great photographers of the last century. We will start by walking in the footsteps of the Storytellers of Paris, as they reveal their city to the viewer: images from Eugene Atget, Andre Kertesz, Brassai, and Henri Cartier-Bresson. Next, we will go to the majesty of the Pacific Northwest and hang out with the f.64 Group—the likes of which includes Ansel Adams, Imogene Cunningham, Ed Weston, and son, Brett Weston. Then we’ll go to the East Coast to the city of New York, where Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen, Paul Strand, and Berenice Abbott will reveal this city’s treasures, and watch as photography becomes a fine art beginning to hang on gallery walls and eventually in the Museum of Modern Art. If you are interested in photography, art in general, or 20th century history, this is a course you will enjoy. In addition to photographers, we’ll hear about Art Movements, Composition and Aesthetics, and artists like Georgia O’Keeffe, Frieda Kahlo, Picasso, Matisse, Rodin, and other modern artists who were intertwined with this elite group of photographers. Oh, and we’ll look at historical events and trivia from the 20th century. There will be lots of still and video images to help tell this story.

**ACRYLICS FOR BEGINNERS** Students will be working with a limited palette, focusing on these painting techniques: blending, layering, glazing, highlighting, and much more! Inexperienced students will receive a supply list at the first class. If you have painted a bit before and have some supplies, bring them with you and instructor **Loran Chavez** will make recommendations on items to add or subtract from your paint box. **Class size is limited.**

### **ALABAMA'S CHEKHOV: SELECTED SHORT STORIES BY MARY WARD BROWN**

**New Course!** In this course, students will read, analyze, and discuss short stories by Mary Ward Brown (1917-2013). These stories, set in Alabama's Black Belt during the 1950s-1980s, a period of rapid social change in the South, show the influence of realistic Russian writer Anton Chekhov and bring alive a wide spectrum of characters and life in small town and rural Alabama. The stories for the first class will be available a week in advance so that the material can be read before class. Small materials fee. The instructor is **Brenda Huchingson**. **Class size limited.**

### **AWAKENING YOUR INNER LIGHT: TOOLS TO RAISE YOUR VIBRATION AND DISCOVER THE HIGHER DIMENSIONS OF SELF**

**New Course!** The seeds of your immortal essence and potential already exist within you in the form of your luminous Lightbody. This course will offer a new awareness and understanding of your Lightbody and provide practical techniques that you can use daily to raise your vibration and consciousness. It offers a new transformative perspective on how to live your fullest potential and deal with life challenges with greater confidence and purpose. The instructor, **Bob Maldonado**, will provide students a copy of his book, *Walking in Your Light: Essential Tools for the Ascension*, which will be used for study.

**BIRDING 101: THE BASICS AND BEYOND** Just in time for Spring migration! Learn how to identify those birds in your backyard and beyond using physical characteristics such as size, shape, and color and how they relate to behavior, diet and habitat. Students will also learn about seasonal variations in plumage and range and become familiar with common bird calls. **Carol Furman** will give instruction on the proper use of binoculars and provide valuable tips for tricky identifications. An optional, free field trip can be arranged and during this time of year there are regularly scheduled Eastern Shore Birders/Mobile Bay Audubon trips. *See examples of the birds you might see there in our Project Photo Gallery, which you can access from the homepage of the Courses tab.* Bring your binoculars and bird guide to class if you have them.

**BOGS AND BRANCHES: SELECTED HABITATS OF SOUTH BALDWIN COUNTY AT WEEKS BAY RESERVE** This course offers participants a close look at selected ecologically important habitats in south Baldwin County, all located at Weeks Bay Reserve. The different environments contribute to the value and function of the Weeks Bay estuary, where freshwater and saltwater meet. Participants learn about the habitats, their different roles in the estuary ecology, and how they influence the plants and animals that live there. This course includes lectures, a pontoon boat trip and walking tours on Reserve boardwalks. **Fred Nation**, well-known local botanist, is the instructor. Wear sturdy shoes and outdoor attire and bring insect repellent. It can be cool on the water, so pack a jacket for the boat trip. For students interested in ecological protection, we are offering a single-day course at Weeks Bay Reserve entitled, *The Plastic Pollution Problem* (see below). **Class size is limited.**

**BORDERLANDS IN TRANSITION: THE GULF COAST 1783-1821** *New Course!* With the conclusion of the American Revolution, the Gulf Coast remained a borderland, a world with shifting and colliding political and cultural realities from Florida to Texas. This course will examine the major political players and the most significant personalities from the end of the Revolution until the United States' acquisition of Florida. The instructor is **Rick Byrd**.

**CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF COMPOSER JOHN WILLIAMS** *New Course!* In anticipation of an upcoming Mobile Symphony Orchestra program, this term's classical music appreciation course will turn to an outstanding contemporary composer and explore the linkages between modern popular music and the classical music traditions. The career of John Towner Williams (born 1932) has spanned nearly seven decades, during which he has composed some of the most popular, recognizable, and critically acclaimed film scores in cinematic history, including *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones*, and many other great films of our day that will be featured in the MSO performances on May 21 and 22. Why should classical music aficionados care about all this popular music? Less well-known about Williams are his accomplishments in the writing of classical music - including a symphony, nineteen concertos that featured twelve different instruments in all, and numerous other chamber and orchestral works - and how he infused his cinematic music with classical elements. This course will increase students' listening pleasure by illustrating how the techniques and forms of classical music are used in popular music to give it lasting appeal. **Vincentine Williams** is the instructor.

**CHINA: PERCEPTIONS VS. REALITY** *New Course!* This course will provide an overview of China today, including many aspects of its global position. We will begin with a discussion of the Chinese people and their traditions, the education system and government, and the struggle between these entities. The focus will turn then to the dynamics of China's global position, including treaties, economics, possible conflicts and current military buildup, island building, and their space program. **Kurt Simons** is the instructor.

**CREATIVE NONFICTION WRITING** *New Course!* There are countless decisions that go into every act of writing whether you are a beginner or an experienced writer. In this course, you will work on writing a clear and pleasing sentence. All your clear and pleasing sentences, however, will fall apart if you don't remember that writing is linear and sequential, that logic is the glue that holds it together. Tension must be maintained from one sentence to the next and from one paragraph to the next. The narrative - good old-fashioned storytelling - is what will pull your readers along. The required text is *Tell It Slant: Creating, Refining and Publishing Creative Nonfiction* (third edition), by Brenda Miller and Suzanne Paola, available on Amazon for about \$18. Students should bring a spiral notebook to class. The instructor is **Donna Orchard**.

**DEMOCRACY: THEORY AND PRACTICE** This course examines democracy as a theory and as a working practice, from its origins to the present. We will inquire into what democracy is and how important it may be in our lives. We will look at what democracy meant to the founders of the United States, and how it functions in the modern world. Source material used to assemble the class will be available to individuals who wish to read in depth. The instructor is [Mike Darring](#).

**DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY** *Two New Courses!* Digital Photography can be defined as “creating an image by capturing light with a digital camera.” This is a bare-bones definition, but digital photography has many moving parts and can be broken into many different categories. The **Basics Course** will introduce participants to the concepts of composition, flow, storytelling, editing and formatting files, and provide information about software and apps available in the digital photography realm. Our **Intermediate Course** will continue the study of topics covered in the Basics course and dive deeper into capturing, storing, formatting and printing images. In addition, [Reata Strickland](#) will help students hone the important skills needed to produce successful photographs - including composition, flow and storytelling. The Basics course is a prerequisite (although an override can be made by the instructor). Bring a digital camera (cellphones are digital cameras).

**ENGLISH SIGN LANGUAGE FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS** *New Course!* This course is for those who work or interact with special needs children or adults who are non-verbal or have trouble learning language, including those with Downs Syndrome or autism. It is useful for teachers, parents, caregivers, and childcare workers who may meet or work with persons with such disabilities or special needs. Parents have also practiced this with their pre-verbal infants and toddlers. Most of us are familiar with American Sign Language. While an ASL sign can represent whole phrases, English Sign Language utilizes signs for each specific word, which is a simplified format more appropriate for this target group. Teaching English Sign Language to these individuals becomes a step toward them progressing to verbal English. The text we will use is *Signing Everyday Phrases (revised edition)* by Mickey Flodin, available on Amazon for about \$15. The instructor is [Cheray Bixler](#). **Class size is limited.**

**FAIRHOPE BY FOOT: WALKING TOURS** Whether you just moved in or have lived here for decades, [Alan Samry](#)'s tours are entertaining and educational. His walks trace 125 years of Fairhope's people, places, and events. The two tours included in this course are approximately 1.5 miles long and include time for discussion and Q&A along the way. All walks begin and end at the Fairhope Public Library. In the first tour, *In the Footsteps of Fairhope's Founders*, you will stroll through the center of town following the footsteps and tracing the places of Fairhope's pioneers, local builders, and historic buildings. Later, the *Downtown Businesses to Bay Views* tour will take you past landmark buildings, homes of town founders, early hotels, and along bay.

**GENEALOGY: SHAKING THE FAMILY TREE TO FIND ALL THE NUTS** Researching your family's history can be one of the most delightful, challenging, and sometimes frustrating of activities. Sitting down with Ancestry.com is the common way people get started, but you have the opportunity right now to get in-depth knowledge about how to go about delving deeper and deeper into your family tree. In this course you will learn the who, what, when, and where to find information, and how to document and organize your family history. It will teach you how to navigate through the charting of vital records, including birth, marriage, death and divorce documents; cemetery and courthouse materials; census, church and military records; and land tax records, plats and plots. Whew! Bet you didn't know about all that! This course will be held at the Foley Public Library, where the Baldwin County Genealogical Society's library is located, along with computer access to free genealogical websites, and staff eager to help you on your quest. The library is also equipped with a computer lab so that you can do your research on site. The instructor, [Donna Lewis](#), assists in the Family History department of the Mormon church in Daphne, and has tracked over 2,000 family members over 350 years.

**THE GOSPELS: FOUR VIEWS OF THE EVENTS** *New Course!* We know the four Gospels of the New Testament as loose-knit, episodic narratives of the words and deeds of Jesus, culminating in his trial and death and concluding with various reports of his post-resurrection appearances. Why are their accounts so different? The answer lies in many factors which will be explored in this study. The advantages of having these four distinct perspectives will also be pursued. Scholars recognize that the differences of detail between the gospels are irreconcilable, and any attempt to harmonize them would only disrupt their distinct theological messages. In this course, **Toby Gurley** will lead a discussion in which we will compare and contrast these Gospels. Students are encouraged to bring a Bible.

**GROWING AND PROPAGATING AFRICAN VIOLETS** African Violets have become the favorite houseplant across the world. This course will cover the seven key factors for successfully growing violets: light, watering, feeding, grooming, environment, soil, and potting. Your instructor, **Jere Trigg**, will discuss the procedures for propagating violets from leaves and suckers. Hybridizing your violets will result in the development of new and differently colored flowers, some of which can be truly spectacular. You will learn techniques for cross-pollinating flowers, planting the resulting seeds, and caring for the seedlings to adult blooming plants. There will be demonstrations of grooming, repotting, propagation from leaves and suckers, and cross-pollination of two flowers to produce hybrid seed. *To see the immense size to which Jere's violets can grow, click on the Project Photo Gallery link on the homepage of the Courses tab.* And for a deep dive into the subject of African Violet propagation and Jere himself, see the article that appeared in *Mobile Bay Magazine* at <https://mobilebaymag.com/meet-jere-trigg-the-violet-guru>. Plants will be available for purchase.

#### **A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:**

**HOW OUR LANGUAGE BECAME WHAT IT IS TODAY** *New Course!* This two-part, one-day workshop surveys the development of the English language from its Indo-European past to the present day. The first part of the workshop examines the structure and vocabulary of English through its major periods: Old English (Anglo-Saxon), Middle English, and Modern English, with an emphasis on external influences on the language. The second part focuses on the implications of changes in sounds, in spelling, and in vocabulary on the English we use today. This course is available in person or remotely on Zoom. **Michael K. Renalds** is the instructor.

**INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS IN AMERICAN SHORT STORIES** *New Course!* This course will focus on American short stories that consider the universal questions of “Who is in?” and “Who is out?” We begin with Susan Glaspell’s “A Jury of Her Peers,” written in 1917, that addresses male chauvinism, and move through time to Gish Jin’s 1995 “Birthmates,” which considers discrimination against Asians. Students will buy the paperback *The Best American Short Stories of the Century* edited by John Updike and available from Amazon for about \$18. **Margaret Davis** is the instructor.

**INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE LANGUAGE(S) AND WRITING** This two-part, one-day workshop explores both the Chinese language(s) and the characters used to write it. The course seeks to counter the Exotic East perception of Chinese with the goal of providing an introductory understanding of these topics. The first part of the workshop is a linguistic overview of the spoken forms of Chinese with emphasis on both similarities and differences with English. The second part introduces the nature and principles of Chinese writing and how it relates to the spoken language(s), debunking myths about Chinese characters along the way. This course is available in person or remotely on Zoom. The instructor is **Michael K. Renalds**.

**LIFESTORIES: CREATING A MEMOIR** Learn how to start writing life stories for future generations. Students will be provided inspiration, motivation, and organizational tips for beginning the project and staying on track. They will be guided as to what topics to choose, formatting (chronological vs. random stories), and tips to make their writing sparkle and keep readers interested. Students will be shown how to write the text, include some photos and have the pages bound into a simple, inexpensive finished booklet that will be a priceless gift. **Rosanne Gulisano** will provide handouts containing helpful hints and ideas.

**PLANTATIONS OF BALDWIN COUNTY** *New Course!* Come learn about a fascinating and little-known portion of our local history. Plantations, specifically in Lower Alabama, Baldwin County, were meant for farming that specialized in cash crops. Early French Colonists pushing westward from Georgia, Virginia, and the Carolinas introduced a few French Creole-style plantations and architecture in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Beginning around 1820, other settlers developed over 60 plantations along the major waterways around Mobile, utilizing the type of plantation and architecture that would come to dominate Baldwin County's richest farmlands. **Jeanette Bornholt** will introduce you to many of these Baldwin County plantations, their locations, and their history. *Note: This topic was the subject of a short presentation Jeanette has given at the Foley Public Library. ESILL's expanded two-hour format will provide her more time to go into further depth.*

**THE PLASTIC POLLUTION PROBLEM AT WEEKS BAY RESERVE** *New Course!* This single-day course will highlight the plastic pollution problems facing our coast and waterways. We will look at microplastics, microfibers, nurdles (very small pellets of plastic which serve as raw material in the manufacture of plastic products) and other forms of marine debris. The purpose of this course is to increase awareness of the impact marine debris has on our community. Participants will then be introduced to eco-friendly alternatives to single use plastics. The instructor is **Danielle Davidson**.

**POETRY WRITING 101** *New Course!* In this course, students will study and read a variety of poetic voices and forms. There will be a few fun exercises to get our creative writing mojo brewing, and then we will begin composing in earnest on subjects of personal interest. This is a positive and exploratory writing course and workshop. Writers of all abilities are encouraged to attend and discover the art of poetry reading and writing. The instructor is **Alan Samry**.

**RECONSTRUCTION: PAIN, FRUSTRATION, CONFUSION, REALITIES, MYTHS AND INTERPRETATIONS** Come explore one of the most important and controversial episodes in the post-Civil War U.S. The disruption and pain of the Civil War left little doubt that what followed in the American South would be a turbulent and troubled period. This course will cover the facts, the mythology, and the legitimate historical interpretations of the Reconstruction period, 1863-1877. The instructor is **Rick Byrd**.

**REPOUSSÉ: DECORATIVE METAL TOOLING** *New Course!* Repoussé work is a very old form of art. It is akin to tooling leather, except it uses metal. One can start with a heavy gauge aluminum foil and go on to copper, brass and an even heavier gauge aluminum, finishing with black Indian Ink. Students can trace a design out of child's coloring book or draw their own designs. The tools used are those that can be found around the house—a spoon, nail head bolts, or anything that can make a mark on aluminum. The results are very pretty, suitable for framing, which **Mary Streu** will demonstrate. *To see examples of this wonderful art, click on the Project Photo Gallery link on the homepage of the Courses tab.*

**SIGHTINGS OF THE CIVIL WAR** *New Course!* This course will cover the tumultuous historical period of the U.S. Civil War. We will discuss the events that led to the war and its aftermath. Contrasts will be used to show how the war was viewed in the North and in the South (where it was known as “The War of Northern Aggression”). **Allen Todd** is the instructor.

**TEMARI – JAPANESE EMBROIDERED THREAD BALLS** Temari began as a Japanese kick toy constructed from the remnants of old kimonos bundled into a ball and stitched. Later, stitching became more decorative and detailed with intricate embroidery, and temari transitioned into an art. **Blair Heald** will teach you how to prepare temari for sewing and to use the Spindle, Interlocking Diamonds, Chrysanthemum, and Rose Garden patterns. Past students are encouraged to return to learn new techniques. *To see examples of this wonderful craft, click on the Project Photo Gallery link on the homepage of the Courses tab.* Materials fee is \$35, or past participants may bring their own supplies. **Class size is limited.**

**TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF ESTATE PLANNING** Comprehensive estate planning often requires using several estate planning documents interactively, i.e., Will, Trust, Durable Power of Attorney, Alabama Health Care Directive, and the (often misunderstood) Beneficiary form. This course will acquaint you with the ins and outs of each of these documents and will include suggestions for how to use them collectively to achieve your estate planning goals. It will examine several real-life situations where estate planning went terribly wrong...and why. It will be interactive, and you will be provided several estate planning checklists that you and/or your family will find useful in various situations. **John Brown** is the instructor.

**WALKING THE JEWISH BIBLE SERIES: MODERN TOPICS** *New Course!* How might people of faith take hold of Scripture when addressing modern challenges? This course will evaluate modern topics including Abortion, Euthanasia, Civil Rights and other topics from the point of view of Hebrew Scripture and Jewish tradition. The intent is to promote a respectful give-and-take while studying sacred text in a reverential manner. People of Christian and other backgrounds are invited to share alternate views on these subjects. Please note that **Rabbi Steven Silberman** will be evaluating Hebrew Scripture on these topics only from Jewish perspectives. All who attend are requested to bring a Bible.

**WATERCOLOR** **Loran Chavez** offers two watercolor courses. In *Watercolors for Beginners*, you will gain confidence in watercolor basics using a limited palette. The course concentrates on types of washes, paint, paper, and brushes, and all their uses. You will practice such techniques as dry brushing, masking, lifting, washes, glazes, bubbles, and more. After creating and completing paintings on your own, you will take home a paint palette, paper, and four brushes. In the *Intermediate* course, you will take your watercolors further than you ever imagined with new techniques and tips, and you will work more with masking, using fluid, fabric and paper, bruising the paper, multiple layers, Chinese white as a resist, wax, nails, and more. See what you can do with this wonderful medium we call watercolor! The Beginners course or a working knowledge of the basics of watercolor is a prerequisite for this course. **Class sizes are limited.**

**THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY** This course provides a non-faith based and non-denominational investigation into Christianity. The heritage which believers share today has developed over three millennia, from its roots with the descendants of Abraham to the earthly ministry of Jesus and his disciples, down through 20 centuries of development and strife, to the place it occupies in our times. The course will cover, among other topics, the first century church, the Roman and Orthodox churches, Reformation, European religious conflicts, and the coming of Christianity to America. Woven throughout this study will be the developing history of the Bible. The instructor is **Toby Gurley**.

**WRITE RIGHT NOW!** This is your opportunity to scratch that writing itch you have always had with in-class prompts and visual imagery. Bring your notebook, laptop, or tablet because this is a *workshop*. It is time to answer that creative call and stretch out of your comfort zone. We will write in class and get ideas for a longer piece to complete at home. Sharing and positive critique will help improve and nurture that spark you've been hiding. The instructor, **Rosanne Gulisano**, declares, "*Gonna be fun!*" **Class size is limited.**

**YOGA** *Two New Courses!* The benefits of yoga include reduced stress, improved mental health, increased flexibility, and strength. This term **Diane Zills** is offering two courses, appropriate for all levels.

- **Restorative Yoga** focuses on breath and holding postures for longer periods of time. Holding postures in this way targets deep connective tissues and triggers the body's natural repair response. This course will leave the student feeling relaxed and calm. It is a fantastic complement to our Yoga Flow course.
- **Yoga Flow** focuses on slow movement of the entire body through floor and standing postures. It improves strength, balance, and flexibility. Students will leave this class feeling invigorated and empowered to tackle daily activities. This course pairs well with the Restorative Yoga course.

In both courses, props such as blocks, bolsters, and straps may be used and will be provided as needed. Please bring your mat, water, and a towel (if needed) to class.

**YOU CAN PUBLISH YOUR BOOK FOR UNDER \$100! *New Course!*** In just two class sessions, this course will give students the resources and real-world examples of how to professionally publish e-books and paperbacks. All resources and websites will be provided. In addition, students will be given a free half-hour consultation to help them achieve their goals. The instructor, **John O'Melveny Woods**, is President of Intellect Publishing, LLC, and has published over 150 books for himself and numerous clients. You can reach the website at [www.IntellectPublishing.com](http://www.IntellectPublishing.com).