VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON TE HERENGA WAKA

International Institute of Modern Letters
Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o Te Ao

CREW 257 CREATIVE NONFICTION WORKSHOP
HE KŌRERO PONO (20 points)

This course is convened by Emeritus Professor **Harry Ricketts** in the first trimester and by **Elizabeth Knox** in the second trimester.

It is a workshop course in writing creative nonfiction (eg memoirs, travel writing) which also involves representative reading in the genre. It involves the writing and study of Creative Nonfiction, sometimes called 'the fourth genre', or the literature of reality. The term refers to any kind of nonfiction writing which uses the techniques of narrative fiction. In practice, this tends to mean the memoir, the personal essay, the biographical sketch, travel writing, and other kinds of prose lifewriting. In this course, students will explore a full range of Creative Nonfiction possibilities - but will also be able to focus on a particular area of interest. Weekly workshops are held for the discussion of both set exercises and student work in progress. The set text is an online selection of characteristic samples and examples and is accessed via NUKU.

Harry Ricketts is an award-winning poet, essayist, literary biographer and editor, who has published around thirty books. He taught for forty years at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington. *First Things: A Memoir* was published in 2024.

Elizabeth Knox is an internationally acclaimed writer of many novels, including *The Vintner's Luck* (1998), *The Dream Hunter Duet* (2005, 2007), and *The Absolute Book* (2019). She is also the author of a collection of personal essays, *The Love School* (2008), a memoir, *Night, Ma* (2026). She has another collection of essays coming in 2027, *The Swaybacked Bed*.

Harry writes:
This year I've had portfolios about growing up Singaporean Chinese, growing up Fijian Indian, being trans, swimming the Foveaux Strait, ghosts, running galleries, journeys all over the world, love gone right, love gone wrong, how to live with yourself, how not to live with yourself. We all have stories but what might they mean (to us, to others) and how to tell them most effectively? These are some of the questions we keep chipping away at."

For more information about Harry Ricketts try http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Ricketts

→ see over

International Institute of Modern Letters
Victoria University of Wellington, P O Box 600, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

ENQUIRIES: Tel (04) 463 6854 Email modernletters@vuw.ac.nz
Website www.wgtn.ac.nz/modernletters

Elizabeth writes:
Creative non-fiction has many available voices, the conversational, the confessional, rumination, dramatic declaration, rhetoric, plain storytelling, the voices of both the scholarly and the curious thinker. It is a polyphonic form where one person talks about the stuff they remember, notice, know, and care about. I'm entranced by the questioning nature of the form. Its first questions and endless follow-up questions. What do I remember? How might I investigate the truth of what I remember? What do I think about this fascinating thing about the world? How can I make other people as fascinated as I am? Is there a 'what I know' behind what I think I know? What to say, and what to leave out? How to get away from making a case and just share an experience? How to bring it all—as it happened—back to life?

How to Enrol
Enrolment in CREW 257 is limited to 12 students. The prerequisite is 40 points and an appropriate standard in written composition. Because of demand for places, however, the quality of the work which accompanies applications is critical in deciding admissions.

Application and enrolment: must be lodged online by going to university home page and follow the links: www.wgtn.ac.nz/

Prospective applicants are recommended to visit the How to Apply page of our website (www.wgtn.ac.nz/modernletters) for more details.

Workshops
Trimester 1: 2-5pm Mondays in Room 102, 16 Waiteata Road, Kelburn Campus
Trimester 2: 10am-1pm Wednesdays in Room 102, 6 Kelburn Parade, Kelburn Campus

Assessment
The course is assessed by a folio of writing which is submitted immediately after the final workshop. This will include at least three short pieces (one both in draft and in finished form), with an introductory essay. Folios are examined on a pass/fail basis by the workshop convenor.

Reading
The course readings will be available online via Nuku. The course convenor may also make reading suggestions based on your individual project. There are, in addition, two books which will give you some idea of what to expect from our workshops as well as providing resources for developing your work. *Mutes & Earthquakes* brings together essays and creative work from a wide range of writers who have connections with the IIML. More recently, *The Exercise Book* presents favourite writing exercises across a variety of genres, including poetry, prose and scriptwriting.

Please note that our workshops are not a classroom version of a writing manual: we do not teach a specific set of predetermined skills. Our aim is to develop the imaginative capacity and individual literary skills of emerging writers in a stimulating workshop environment.