

Surprise in Repetition



Saturday, February 18, 1-4pm (via Zoom)

Writer Paul Auster adapted his short story *Auggie Wren's Christmas Story* for Wayne Wang's film *Smoke*. In the film, Auggie Wren lives in Brooklyn, where he runs a tobacconist shop on the corner of Third Street and Seventh Avenue. Every day—day in and day out—he takes a picture of the same street corner. *It's my corner, after all*, he tells a friend in one of several lovely scenes in the film. At first glance, the friend sees nothing but the same image, over and over again. *You have to slow down*, says Auggie. On closer examination, Auggie's friend begins to perceive sometimes subtle, sometimes dramatic variations in the series that help him see more clearly the life of his community.

The scene brings to mind Thomas Merton's epiphany on the corner of 4th and Walnut in Louisville, Kentucky: "*It was like waking from a dream of separateness... This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud... I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself became incarnate. As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now I realize what we all are... But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun.*" (Excerpted from Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, by Thomas Merton)

Join the circle for an afternoon of writing in which we will explore several prompts that rely on kinds of repetition to uncover unexpected insight and beauty.

Ahead of the workshop, you will receive a couple of short readings, the clip from *Smoke*, and directions for an attention practice you may want to explore before we meet (though the practice is not a requirement—I offer it for your pleasure).

All writers welcome—from those who never write poetry to those who have been practicing poem-making for a long time—but enrollment is limited to nine writers. First come, first served.

Kimberly Green is a spiritual director, poet, and collaborating artist. A Pushcart Prize nominee, her poems have been published in several literary journals, and she has received awards and fellowships from the Maine Community Foundation, Bread Loaf, and MacDowell. Her full-length poetry collection, *The Next Hunger*, was published in 2013. Kimberly is the 9th Poet Laureate of Portsmouth NH, and the producer and host of the *Rice Pudding Poetry Podcast*. She lives in Kittery Point, ME.

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