

# MARTHA SERPAS

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## FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

- 2009-present      CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT,  
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON, Houston, TX.  
*Professor of English.*
- Jointly appointed to BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,  
Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine, University of Houston  
(2022)
- 1999-2009      UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA, Tampa, FL.
- 2004-2009      *Associate Professor of English and Writing.*  
1999-2004      *Assistant Professor of English and Writing.*

## EDUCATION

- 1998      UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON, PHD in literature and creative writing.
- 1994      YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL, MDIV.
- 1989      NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, MA, English, concentration in creative writing.
- 1986      LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, BA in English with honors.

## CERTIFICATIONS

- 2023      BERKELEY CENTER FOR THE SCIENCE OF PSYCHEDELICS.  
University of California, Berkeley. Psychedelic Facilitation.  
(200 hours)
- 2007-present      **CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION** (*4 units + 600 clinical hours*)

## BOOK PUBLICATIONS

- Double Effect.* LSU Press. 2020.  
*The Diener.* LSU Press. 2015.  
*The Dirty Side of the Storm.* W. W. Norton. 2007.  
*Côte Blanche.* Fwd. Harold Bloom. *New Issues Poetry and Prose.* Western Michigan UP. 2002.

## COLLABORATIONS

- Ghost Trees.* Artist book with Michele Burgess. 2017.  
*Reliquary.* Artist book with Michele Burgess. 2016.  
*The Diener.* Artist book with Michele Burgess. 2011.

## EDITED VOLUMES

- Pandemic Poems.* Ed. Martha Serpas. 2021.  
*Improbable Worlds: An Anthology of Texas and Louisiana Poets.* Ed. Martha Serpas. Mutabilis. 2011.

## SELECTED PERIODICAL AND ANTHOLOGY PUBLICATIONS

- "Indivisible." Essay on the work of Brian Teare. *The Ohio Review*. Summer 2023.
- "Double Effect: December 31." Rpt. in *Reflections*. Fall 2021.
- "Nominal Poem." *Plume* 9. June 2021.
- "Conversion," "As If There Were Only One," and "I'll Try to Tell You What I Know." Rpt. in *Passage*. Issue 5. Winter 2021.
- "A Storm Unleashed on Our Hearts." (essay). *Houston Chronicle*. April 3, 2020.
- "Flat Water" and "Original Sleep." *Southern Review*. 56.3. Summer 2020.
- "Poetry and Healing in the Burn Unit." *Reflections*. Fall 2019.
- "*La Pelican Dans Sa Piété*" and "The Morgue Is Closed." *Plume*. 93. 2019.
- "Apostrophe." *Poetry*. May 2019.
- "Just Call Me Beb" and "The Deuce Makes Itself." *The Southern Review*. 55.1. Winter 2019.
- "Don't Drain the Swamp." Essay. *New York Times Sunday Book Review*. May 6, 2018.
- "The Comatose Have No Thermostat." *Plume* 6. Summer 2018.
- "St. Gabriel's Temporary Morgue." *Seminary Ridge Review*. Fall 2017.
- "Incarnation." (essay). *Image: A Journal of the Arts and Religion*. 70.2
- "Unremembered" and "*Né Décédé*." *Plume* 4. Summer 2016.
- "Brack." Installation. Loyola Institute. Trinity College. Dublin, Ireland. March 2016.
- "Ode to the Grandiose." *Fogged Clarity*. Winter 2014.
- "Irrigation." *Bellevue Literary Review*. Fall 2014.
- "The Best of Us." *The New Yorker*. March 3, 2014.
- "*Hirudo Medicinalis*" and "Asperges." *Image: A Journal of the Arts and Religion*. 70.2
- "Our Life, Between Sea and Oil." *Opinion*. *The New York Times*. July 10, 2010.
- "Psalm at High Tide." Rpt. in *The Art of the Sonnet*. Eds. Stephen Burt and David Mikics. MA: Harvard U P, 2010.
- "Aunt Kate Considers the Family Tomb" and "Insufficient, Ineligible Loss." *Christianity and Literature*. (Winter 2009).
- "The Diener." *The New Yorker*. April 7, 2008.
- "The Dirty Side of the Storm." Rpt. in "Re:Print Ten Poems from Ten Remarkable Recent Books" in *American Poet: The Journal of the Academy of American Poets*. Vol. 32. (Spring 2007).
- "As If There Were Only One," "Witness Tree," "Poem Found," and "Psalm at High Tide." Eds. Harold Bloom and Jesse Zuba. *American Religious Poems*. NY: Library of America. (October 2006).

“Poem Found.” *The Christian Century*. November 1, 2005.

“Psalm at High Tide,” “The Water,” and “A Corollary.” *The New Yorker*. September 12, 2005.

#### **CHAPLAINCY EXPERIENCE**

- 2015-2018 TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL. Tampa, FL.  
*Pool Chaplain.*  
Trained in trauma response; patient and family care; end-of-life issues; and confidential documentation. Certified in palliative care.
- 2014 TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL, Clinical Pastoral Education Program. Tampa, FL.  
*Resident Chaplain.* (1 unit)
- 2012 TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL, Clinical Pastoral Education Program. Tampa, FL.  
*Resident Chaplain.* (1 unit)
- 2009-2010 MEMORIAL-HERMANN HOSPITAL, Houston, TX.  
*Contract Chaplain.*  
Responded on-call to crisis, trauma, bereavement, end-of-life, and spiritual care situations.
- 2007-2009 TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL, Clinical Pastoral Education Program. Tampa, FL.  
*Pool Chaplain.* (2 units)

#### **OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

- April 2018 LSU CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE.  
*Presenter and panelist.*  
“Drain the Swamp?”
- May 2016 TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL. Poetry and Pastoral Care.  
*Didactic Presenter.*
- November 2015 BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE. Houston, TX.  
*Panelist.*  
“On Death and Dying.”
- October 2015 WRITING FOR MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS. Inprint. Houston, TX.
- October 2015 AUBURN UNIVERSITY. Auburn, AL.  
*Visiting Writer.*  
“Literary Harvests: Creativity and Sustainability.”
- October 2015 YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL. New Haven, CT.  
*Featured speaker.*  
“Poetry and Prayer.”
- September 2010 UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON. Scranton, PA.  
*Visiting Poet.*  
Lectured in Catholic Tradition and Theology of Birth and Death.
- March 2010 SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY. Whidbey Island, WA.  
*Writer-in-Residence.*  
“Perichoresis and the Poet.” (craft lecture)

- March 2008 UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA. Lafayette, LA.  
*George Rodrigue Lecture.*  
“The Paradox of the Swamp: Poetry and Divinity.”
- June 2006 YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL, New Haven, CT.  
*Visiting Professor* (Summer Institute).  
“Poetry as Theology,” an intensive studio course.
- Fall 2005 YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL. New Haven, CT.  
*Visiting Associate Professor of Religion and Literature.*  
Taught two studio creative writing courses, Contemporary Poetry as Theology and Spiritual Autobiography.
- September 2005 YALE UNIVERSITY. New Haven, CT.  
*Panelist.*  
“Teach-In on the Mississippi Delta, New Orleans and the Gulf Coast: Deeper Knowledge for a Broader Response.”  
Joined faculty from the History, American Studies, and African-American Studies Departments, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
- September 2004 DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL. Durham, NC.  
*Stuart C. Henry Lecturer in Religion and the Arts.*  
“The Paradox of Witness: Moral Agency and the Elegy.”
- June 2000 UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—MEDICAL BRANCH. Galveston, TX.  
Sealy Center for Environmental Health and Medicine.  
*Educational consultant.*  
Curricula design and teacher training in integrated environmental science and writing program for at-risk youth.

### **SELECTED READINGS**

- September 2018 PORDENONELEGGE BOOK FESTIVAL. Pordenone, Italy.
- October 2017 OCTAVIA BOOKS. New Orleans, LA.
- March 2016 MOUNTAINS TO SEA, March 2016. Laoghaire, Ireland.
- March 2016 LOYOLA INSTITUTE, Trinity College. Dublin, Ireland.
- October 2015 LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL. Baton Rouge, LA.
- April 2015 CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION. Houston, TX.
- October 2012 LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL. “TX and LA Poets on the Sacred.”
- April 2011 SACRED ARTS FESTIVAL. St. Thomas University. St. Paul, MN.  
(*The Dirty Side of the Storm*, first-year common reading.)
- March 2011 *Front Row*. KUHf. Houston, TX.
- August 2010 POETRY SOCIETY OF AMERICA/TULANE UNIVERSITY.  
*Katrina Anniversary Reading.*

### **REFERENCES**

Sandra Alcosser, Director, Creative Writing Program, San Diego State University

Edward Hirsch, President, Guggenheim Foundation

Fady Joudah, M.D., Internal Medicine, Baylor-St. Luke's Medical Center

Winston Liaw, Chair, Health Systems and Population Health Sciences, Tilman J. Fertitta College of  
Medicine, University of Houston

Wayne Mabery, Former Director, Spiritual Care, Tampa General Hospital

Emilie M. Townes, Dean, Vanderbilt Divinity School

Rosanna Warren, The Hanna Holborn Gray Distinguished Service Professor,  
John U. Nef Committee on Social Thought and the College, University of Chicago