

WHAT'S INSIDE

IT CAN BE HARD TO TELL, as March blows in, that spring is just around the corner. We're settled into the school year, and there are few signs, as of yet, of the warm weather to come. It's a good time to shake things up a bit, to bring some fresh ideas into the classroom, and the pieces in this issue offer just that.

We start with Jason Schneiderman's article on the ghazal, presenting the history of this ancient poetic form and a lively, contemporary approach to teaching it in the classroom.

T&W fellow Carla Ching gives us an inside look at Philadelphia Young Playwrights, an innovative program that introduces K–12 students to playwriting and the theater. She also interviews one of the program's most successful alumnae, Quiara Alegría Hudes, author of the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *In The Heights*; Hudes talks about her first play, her hunger to write, and offers a word of advice for budding playwrights.

Longtime T&W contributor Amanda Leigh Lichtenstein and classroom teacher Luke Albrecht give us a fascinating look at the “word and number laboratories” they created in a Chicago middle school, combining math and poetry to stimulate new ways of thinking and of looking at the world. Their students were especially intrigued by the work of artist Craig Damrauer, whose “New Math” poems—essentially word equations—elicited some of the most inspired work of the residency.

We close the issue with Sarah Dohrmann's meditation on the life of a teaching artist, which takes an honest look at both its trials and its satisfactions.

We hope you find something in these pages to inspire your own work, both in the classroom and on the page. Though these last days of winter are the longest, spring is coming! Or, to quote Damrauer on the subject:

April = March + Optimism.

— Susan Karwoska

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