

The Mississippi Poetry Podcast Supplement

Ep. 18: Melissa Ginsburg

1. Listen (12 minutes). Play *The Mississippi Poetry Podcast w/ Melissa Ginsburg*

2. Write (10-25 minutes, as time allows)

Materials Needed: notebook, pen/pencil

Writing Exercise: A New Lens

When writing her poem “Genealogy of the Garland,” Melissa Ginsburg thought about how a paper doll might view paper objects like receipts and maps in a way very different from how a human might regard these everyday things. Poetry offers us a chance to look at something through a new lens—to examine something familiar and re-see it from a fresh perspective.

For this exercise, invite participants to write from the perspective of an object (like a paper doll, an old cast iron pan, a maple tree), and describe something familiar as they imagine their chosen object might see it. How, for example, would a cast iron pan view the stovetop? How would a maple tree regard a squirrel?

Remind writers of Melissa Ginsburg’s advice to “play around with poetry”—have fun with this imagining, and focus on the process rather than on a “perfect” final product.

3. Share (5-10 minutes)

If time and comfort levels allow, invite participants to share their poems!

Related Materials:

Making of a paper doll garland: youtube.com/watch?v=MpPYk0K56hw

Melissa Ginsburg’s website: melissaginsburg.net

Doll Apollo on LSU Press’s website: lsupress.org/9780807177396/doll-apollo/

