

Poetry and Place: From Black Mountain College, Out

Organized by the Charles Olson Society

ALA Conference 2026

The Charles Olson Society will sponsor a session at the upcoming ALA Conference, to be held in Chicago, May 20th – 23rd.

The influence of place on Charles Olson's poetics is well-documented. His poems consistently explore the local and cultural history of Gloucester, forming an epic that includes varieties of order: personal, environmental, objective, ecological, cosmological. In addition to Olson, other Black Mountain College poets wrote about and were inspired by specific locales: Creeley's poems about Placitas New Mexico, Robert Duncan's San Francisco, John Wieners' Hotel Wentley, and Ed Dorn's visions of the American West, *Gran Apacharia*. The engagement with place (Black Mountain, Gloucester, New York, Buffalo, San Francisco...) and environment was an enduring and consistent concern in the work produced by the Black Mountain Poets.

The Charles Olson Society is interested in abstracts that explore the inter-relations between poetry and place, broadly defined. How did the Black Mountain Poets investigate the relationships between specific environments, towns, or places in their poetics? How did they employ the history or sense-data of specific places to construct, write, and imagine new modes of poetic engagement while crafting poems of environmental care? We will be particularly invested in abstracts that address how the ground beneath the poet's feet made for a poetics that returned, again and again, to the local and global events of the land, the community, and history.

Please send abstracts of no more than 250 words to Joshua Hoeynck (jsh115@case.edu) and Joseph Pizza (josephpizza@bac.edu) no later than January 28th. Please include your academic affiliation (if any) and a brief biographical note with your abstract