

Rumi and Wine: exploring the 12th Century mystic poet

Sponsored by Moore Brothers Wine Company

3 bi-weekly sessions: Thursdays, October 4, October 18, November 1 | 6:00-7:45 p.m.

Tuition: \$200

Led by Daniel Wolkow, instructor at Penn State Abington and Rowan University

This class will feature wine and is 21 and up only.

Rumi, the 13th century Persian poet, is one of the most widely read poets in the world and one of the top selling poets in America over the last several decades. There have been a multitude of English translations with different interpretations of his work and different takes on both the poetry's literal meaning and what the work has come to mean in the modern world. Although known for heartfelt love poems and dramatic narratives, Rumi's work is spiritual in nature, stemming from the Sufi teachings. In our meetings, we will look at many of Rumi's quatrains and lyrical poems with a wide scope, not setting out to prove or disprove what he meant with his words, but rather what he means to the reader. We will explore the mystical world of Sufism, Rumi's life and motivations, and how wine plays a role in his poetry, as we also imbibe a few glasses ourselves.

Required texts:

Open Secret: Versions of Rumi by John Moyne and Coleman Barks

Rumi: The Big Red Book by Coleman Barks

Week 1, October 4:

This week we will begin by discussing the basics of Islamic Mysticism and focus on Sufism. We will then discuss the historical and family background of Rumi and his relation to Shams al Tabriz, who is most associated to whom Rumi refers to as the "friend" in many of his poems. We will also discuss wine and the debate about its meaning in Sufism and Rumi specifically.

Week 2, October 18:

Open Secret: Versions of Rumi

Week 3, November 1:

Rumi: The Big Red Book

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Daniel Wolkow teaches literature and writing at Penn State Abington and Rowan University. He earned his MA in English with a focus on Poetry from Millersville University and is ABD from the University of Texas at Dallas where he focused on interdisciplinary studies with a focus on aesthetics and history of ideas. He has 18 years teaching experience and has given many lectures on Rumi and sufi poetry.