**Great Matters: Zen, Literature, and the Southwest**

**Schedule**

**July 24**

5:30pm: Opening Reception at Santa Fe Prep

**July 25**

We will spend our first day campus reading and discussing introductory works on mindfulness and Zen Buddhism in tandem with works of poetry, fiction, and essays that engage with questions of life, the mind, language, and nature. We may begin the day with a short walk or hike in the nearby trails to get to know one another and establish our norms and expectations for the course.

**July 26**

We’ll begin the day with a trip out to Pecos National Historic Park and the ruins of a Spanish mission church, which we will explore while reading and discussing William Wordsworth’s masterwork, “Tintern Abbey,” a lyrical reflection on the way that the intersection of nature, ruins, and the mind can lead to “a sense sublime/ Of something far more deeply interfused.” Returning to campus in the early afternoon, we will write and reflect on the experience, and if there is time, look at another masterpiece of Romantic nature poetry, Percy Shelley’s “Mont Blanc” or “Ozymandias.”

**July 27**

On our third day, we’ll explore the mountains of Northern New Mexico, possibly the Valles Caldera or Abiquiu, possibly Taos Pueblo, reflecting back on Shelley’s “Mont Blanc” and its evocation of the enormity and seeming indifference of nature and comparing it to the more reverential nature poetry of Native writers, Japanese haiku masters, and Chinese “rivers-and-mountains” poets. There will be time for quiet reflection and writing while exploring the landscape, as well. This will likely be a full day excursion.

**July 28**

Ideally, part of our last day will feature a guest speaker. The exact agenda for the day will be finalized later, but it will most certainly include time for reflection and processing of the previous three days, the works we read, the lines we wrote, the landscape we explored (both inner and outer), and the interplay of all of these.