



The Department of German Studies presents a lecture with

Caroline Sauter

(Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt)

Fall 2026 Distinguished Max Kade Visiting Professor

Poetics of Breathlessness: Desire, Mortality, Silence

Wednesday, Oct 21, 2026 6pm

190 Hope Street, 102

Pre-lecture reception 5pm 190 Hope Street, 103

Beginning with the biblical creation narrative and the evocative ambiguities of the Hebrew *ruach*, this lecture traces the figure of breathlessness in works by Hélène Cixous, Franz Rosenzweig, and Paul Celan. Across these texts, breath is at once life-giving and precarious, erotic and mortal, speech and silence. The lecture concerns the breathless space where desire encounters absence, where language becomes other than itself, and where mortality leaves its trace in the rhythm of the poem.

Jayne Wilton

Drawing Breath (2008), breath and light on colored sensitized paper