

Ilya Kaminsky Post Visit

By Anne Miller

In wrapping up The Winter with the Writers' 2020 season, Rollins College welcomed 2019 National Book Awards Finalist Ilya Kaminsky to the festival's last event. Ilya Kaminsky opened with a passionate reading from his collection of poems, *Deaf Republic* which follows the narrative of a town using silence to combat the political injustices killing their people: "*You are alive, I whisper to myself, therefore something in you listens.*" Kaminsky brings together lyrical, heart-wrenching, and performative poetry to challenge the power of speech in times of adversity.

During his stay at Rollins College, Kaminsky lead half of a one credit, four-hour course called *The Writing Life* in which he taught on how poetry functions and grows. He encouraged students to play with their writing and always seek to make language perform. In addition to the one credit course, Kaminsky taught a Masterclass in which he whispered that the secret of poetry is to stop time. Here, he compelled students to interact with their language to discover how poetry casts a spell on its readers.

Kaminsky ended the reading with an engaging Q & A, answering the literary community's inquiries on how to write successfully and the mysteries of his work. The 2020 season of the Winter with the Writers festival has come to an end!

Thank you to Rollins College, Winter Park, and literary communities alike for your endless support of great readings and challenging discussions on important literature. Be sure to look out for Winter with the Writers' 2021 season which will be here before you know it!