

A large, ornate metal structure, possibly a bell tower or a bridge, with a cloudy sky reflected in the water below.

Noctua Review

Noctua Review

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Gentle Reader,

The moment has arrived! This year for Noctua's 9th volume and 4th incarnation as an international journal of poetry and fiction, we've called for writers to set pen to paper in experimental ways hardly suggestive of the antiquated "setting pen to paper."

The contributors in this issue answered our call (by and large—there are always exceptions, and submission "bombers"—you know who you are) by dropping any strong pretense of a lyrical "I" and its shadowy ties to personal narrative, in favor of experiments in language. Herein you'll find poems as word art: "clouds" of words derived from facebook users' responses to pictures of clouds, poems that cannot and should not be read aloud, various "found" poems and other devilish guises of appropriation, "cross-language erasure poetry" (we'll let you puzzle through it!), and more.

We also asked our fiction writers to push the boundaries, and, for the time being, forsake the contemporary paradigm of fiction as a narrative where some trivial change in character is the essence of its oomph (that is a technical term).

Wait—before you turn the page, we would like to thank a few parts of the universe for making the present issue possible.

First, all of the contributors—for without the contributors' contributions we'd have to fabricate the issue whole cloth, which would sit well with no one's conscience.

We'd also like to thank our gracious staff and readers in the MFA program at SCSU—although it was like pulling hens' teeth to get readers to read—last-minute recruits Ben and Molly really stepped up to the plate, and burned the midnight oil on that plate.

Finally, we should thank the graduate student activities committee (GSAC). Considering the ideas for funding we brainstormed: bake sale, impromptu reading in the student union, panhandling, etc. we're fortunate that none of that came to pass.

Dr. David Capps, PhD
Chief Editor, *Noctua Review*

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JOSHUA BERNSTEIN

APPLICATION OF C. MCCARTHY TO THE IOWA WRITERS' WORKSHOP

NAME: What is a name but a spell under which a man lives, a dying emblem of his crumpled mortality, a slate...

BIRTHDATE: Leonids, '33

CURRENT OCCUPATION: Drifter, mason, home-distiller

WRITING INTERESTS: The apocalypse, crime

CURRENT WRITING PROJECT: *NEW COUNTRY FOR HOLED MEN* (a cotemporary zombie novel set in the urban southwest); *BLONDE MERIDIANS, OR THE EVENING WETNESS IN THE EAST* (an adult thriller set in Tampa); *THE GOADS* (a riveting portrait of bestiality); *ALL THE PRETTY WARLOCKS* (a supernatural bildungsroman)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: Once built a barn

ACHIEVEMENTS: MacArthur Grant, marriages

STATEMENT:

See the writer. He's eighty-two. He's tall and frail and wears a plain denim shirt. He crouches by the trailer fire. He holds a Guggenheim. He has a wife in New Mexico whom he will not see again. Twenty months later, he's driving a Ford F-150 to Chicago. The fields long and spiderlike, rumpled, tilled with new corn. He recounts this description to Oprah. She does not hear. She asks him why he rarely grants interviews and he tells her that he is not so inclined. She asks him about God. What is God, he replies, and the crowd stirs uneasily. He returns to his trailer, a nomadic figure on that pastoral land.

Now come the days of reckoning, repentance and greed. He sells a screenplay to Paramount. He dines with Josh Brolin, the Coen Brothers. He talks to Time. He feels himself vindicated, and mankind, as well, though he knows in the cold glowing orb of his heart that another project is brewing and one unencumbered by time, one divested of any fate and callous as chance all alone and yada yadda yadda. He finds it's time to write in more accessible prose, to create a heartwarming bestseller. He applies

to Iowa, where he believes he can hone his craft.

He seeks out Marilynne Robinson. A woman. He has never before written for a woman, or heard one speak much at length. He finds himself curious. He also likes Ethan Canin, though he finds his work frivolous and devoid of any soul, as it does not dwell on death much. In workshops, he finds his work badgered and mocked. He considers hanging himself briefly, alas, he finds David Foster Wallace overrated and a martyr's death trite. He abides Iowa. He likes the cool sun. He finds himself mimicking Hemingway, yet Hemingway sold. He wonders if he can meet Charles Baxter, though Baxter has not sold a film. He finds himself inching towards commas, abbreviations, identifying speaker tags. He begins to employ real quotes. Soon he's conjuring up zombies, vampires, young teenage love, and in the year two thousand and nineteen, diploma in-hand, he moves to Brooklyn to lead a bohemian life. He's overly ambitious, he knows, but he cannot stop selling himself on the thought of giving readings at the KGB bar, of dating a bassist for The Shins, of sipping cappuccino with Auster and discussing the state of French poetry, and yet he wants a contract and cash and the big

money, here he comes, yes. He finds himself conflicted, and he believes Iowa would be the best place to sort this stuff out. He knows he'll never die.

CONTRIBUTORS

Joel Allegretti is the author of five collections of poetry, most recently *The Body in Equipoise* (Full Court Press, 2015), a chapbook on the theme of architecture and design. His second collection, *Father Silicon* (The Poet's Press, 2006), was selected by The Kansas City Star as one of 100 Noteworthy Books of 2006.

He is the editor of *Rabbit Ears: TV Poems* (NYQ Books, 2015), the first anthology of poetry about the mass medium. His poems have appeared in *The New York Quarterly*, *Barrow Street*, *Smartish Pace*, *PANK*, and many other national journals, as well as in journals published in Canada, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and India.

Robert Annis received his MFA from the University of South Florida, where he works as an advisor at the Office of National Scholarships. He was nominated for the 2013 and 2014 AWP Intro Journals Project, won the Bettye Newman Poetry Award in 2014, and the Estelle J. Zbar Poetry Prize in 2015. His poetry has appeared in *Exit 7*, *Atlas Poetica*, *Sweet: A Literary Confection*, *American Tanka*, *Foothill* and is forthcoming in *Oracle Fine Arts Review*.

Christopher Bell has been writing and releasing literary and musical works through *My Idea of Fun* since 2008. His sound projects include Emmett and Mary, Technological Epidemic, C. Scott and the Beltones and Fine Wives. *My Idea of Fun* is an art and music collective based out of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. (www.myideafun.org) . Christopher's work has recently been published in the *Madison Review*, *Red Rock Review*, *Quail Bell Magazine*, *Commonline Journal*, *Mobius*, *Gesture*, *Crack the*

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J. A. Bernstein's novel, *RACHEL'S TOMB*, won the Hackney Prize and the Knut House Novel Prize. His stories and essays have appeared or are forthcoming in *Boston Review*, *Tampa Review*, *Kenyon Review Online*, and other journals. He is an assistant professor of English at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

Z.Z. Boone is the author of *Off Somewhere*, a 2015 finalist for the INDIFAB Award for Short Stories. His fiction has appeared in *New Ohio Review*, *Berkeley Fiction Review*, *The MacGuffin*, and other terrific places. Z.Z. Boone lives in Connecticut where he teaches writing at Western Connecticut State University.

Kathy Douglas holds an MFA in Creative Writing and Literature from Bennington College and is a career services professional at Yale University. She is also a *Found Poetry Review* PoMoSco Laureate, having completed all poems for the 2015 National Poetry Month project.

Matthew Dulany has previously contributed to *Noctua Review*. Recent work appears in *The Northern Virginia Review*, *San Pedro River Review*, *South Carolina Review*, and *The Worcester Review*. His first novel, *The Quitter*, is forthcoming from Hard Nock Press.

Chris Dungey is a retired auto worker living in Lapeer, MI. He rides mountain bike, feeds two wood-stoves, camps at sports-car races, sings tenor in a Presbyterian choir, watches hours of English football, and spends too many hours in Starbucks. More than 55 of his stories have found publication in print and online. His first collection, *The Pace-Lap Blues and Other Tales from*

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Graphic artist and painter

Allen Forrest was born in Canada and bred in the U.S. He has created cover art and illustrations for literary publications and books. He is the winner of the Leslie Jacoby Honor for Art at San Jose State University's Reed Magazine and his Bel Red painting series is part of the Bellevue College Foundation's permanent art collection. Forrest's expressive drawing and painting style is a mix of avant-garde expressionism and post-Impressionist elements reminiscent of van Gogh, creating emotion on canvas.

Karen George, author of *Into the Heartland* (2011), *Inner Passage* (2014), *Swim Your Way Back* (2014), *The Seed of Me* (2015), and *The Fire Circle* (2016), has work published in *Naugatuck River Review*, *Adirondack Review*, *Louisville Review*, *Memoir*, *Permafrost*, and *Blue Lyra Review*. She holds an MFA in Writing from Spalding University, and has received grants from Kentucky Foundation for Women and the Kentucky Arts Council. She reviews poetry at <http://readwritepoetry.blogspot.com/>, and is co-founder and fiction editor of the journal, *Waypoints*: <http://www.waypointsmag.com/>. Visit her website at: <http://karengeorge.snack.ws/>.

Matthew Grolemund's fiction and poetry has appeared in *The Ampersand Review*, *Permafrost*, *Jelly Bucket*, *Compose*, and elsewhere. A native of Erie, Pennsylvania, and founding editor of Wichita State University's online literary journal *mojo*, he currently writes and teaches in South Korea.

Rachel Heng's fiction has appeared or is forthcoming in *Prairie Schooner*, *The Minnesota Review*, *The Emerson Review* and *Lunch Ticket*. Originally from Singapore, Rachel

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Trish Hopkinson has always loved words—in fact, her mother tells everyone she was born with a pen in her hand. She has two chapbooks *Emissions* and *Pieced Into Treetops* and has been published in several anthologies and literary magazines, including *The Found Poetry Review*, *Chagrin River Review*, and *The Fem*. Trish is co-founder of a local poetry group, Rock Canyon Poets. She is a project manager by profession and resides in Utah with her handsome husband and their two outstanding children. You can follow her poetry adventures at <http://trishhopkinson.com/>.

Alice-Catherine Jennings holds an MFA in Writing from Spalding University. Her poetry has been published worldwide in various literary journals including *Hawai'i Review*, *Boyne Berries*, *GTK Creative*, *The Poets' Republic*, *First Literary Review East* and *The Louisville Review*. She is the author of *Katherine of Aragon: A Collection of Poems* forthcoming from Finishing Line Press in 2016 Jennings divides her time between Oaxaca, Mexico and Texas.

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Virginia Mallon is a painter, photographer, and blogger with a focus on both human and environmental subjects including urban landscapes, nautical spaces, and personal histories. Her goal is to reflect and comment on the current state of the world and the psychological undercurrents of contemporary society.

Kelly Nelson is the author of the chapbooks *Rivers I Don't Live By* and *Who Was I to Say I Was Alive*. Her cross-language erasures have appeared or soon will in *RHINO*, *Quarter After Eight*, *Hinchas de Poesia*, *RiverSedge*, *Jet Fuel Review* and the *2015 Best American Experimental Writing* anthology. She hasn't owned a car since 1999 and teaches Interdisciplinary Studies at Arizona State University.

Ranjani Neriya has published two collections of poetry. His poems have appeared in several journals.

James B. Nicola has had work appear previously in *Noctua Review*, and recently in the *Southwest* and *Atlanta Reviews*, *Rattle*, and *Poetry East*. His nonfiction book *Playing the Audience* won a Choice award. His first full-length poetry collection, *Manhattan Plaza*, is currently available; his second, *Stage to Page: Poems from the Theater*, will be out in 2016. A Yale graduate, James has been giving both theater and poetry workshops at libraries, literary festivals, schools, and community centers all over the country. More at sites.google.com/site/jamesbnicola.

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In the summer, **Winston Plowe** is a hare chasing bicycles and winning by miles. In winter he categorises found jigsaw pieces and tunes his cutlery. Each night he waits with his cat under starlight for his found poems to return to roost from the pages of journals published worldwide to his floating home in Calderdale, UK. www.winstonplowes.co.uk

Matt Rowan lives in Chicago. He co-edits *Untoward Magazine* and serves as fiction editor of *ACM: Another Chicago Magazine*. He's author of the story collections, *Big Venerable* (CCLaP, 2015) and *Why God Why* (Love Symbol Press, 2013). His work has appeared in *mojo journal*, *Timber*, *MAP Literary Journal*, *Gigantic Worlds Anthology*, *Jelly Bucket*, *Necessary Fiction* and *SmokeLong Quarterly*, among others.

David Sheskin is a writer and artist whose work has appeared in numerous publications over the years. He refers to his most recent work as *Artxt* – which is the creative integration of art and text. His *Artxt* images utilize the format of a Scrabble board or crossword puzzle to provide a unique perspective on a variety of topical and fictional subjects, or alternatively, one of more viewers at a museum viewing one of his *Artxt* commentaries.

Caroline Simpson is a writer, teacher, and global adventurer. She has a BFA in Writing, Literature & Publishing from Emerson College. She currently teaches ESL at Edmonds Community College north of Seattle, WA, after teaching English Literature for five years in high schools in Turkey and Spain.

Ron Singer's (www.ronsinger.net) short stories have appeared in, e.g. *The Brooklyn Rail*, *diagram*, *Evergreen Review*, *The Journal of Microliterature*, *Mad Hatters' Review*, and *Word Riot*. (Two Pushcart nominations.) On February 1st, 2015, his eighth book was published: *Uhuru Revisited: Interviews with African Pro-Democracy Leaders* (Africa World Press/Red Sea Press). This book is now available in about a hundred college and university libraries.

Matt Trease is an artist, IT Administrator, and astrology junkie living in Seattle, WA. His poems have appeared in *Burdock*, *Requited*, *The Cordite Poetry Review*, *filling Station*, *Otoliths*, *small po(r)itions* and other publications. He is the author of the chapbook *Later Heaven: Production Cycles* (busylittle1way designs). His idea of romance is an Exquisite Corpse. He is Temperance crossed with The Hierophant. He also makes good tacos.

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