

Smokelong Quarterly

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Editor: Dave Clapper

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Web Address: www.smokelong.com

What They Publish: Flash fiction

Submission Guidelines: Fiction stories with maximum of 1,000 words, with preference to 400-700 words. Two returns between paragraphs. Take submissions all year, simultaneous accepted, multiple submissions up to three an issue accepted, but discouraged. Fill out application for submission online.

Description of Publication: Very well designed with individual graphics for each story. Extremely easy to navigate. Publishes quarterly.

Prose Per Issue: 100% prose. Twenty stories.

Prose Reviews:

When the Toasts Stopped Being Funny by Steve Almond is a lyrical, analytical story in a transitional setting told in a close third person. It is about four people drinking in an airport bar during a snow delay. They toast one another, Valium, vibrators, and many other trite aspects of life. It ends with the four people drifting to opposite directions to the gates and planes that swallow their bodies and their dreams.

The flowing, elongated sentence structure lends a quiet, dreamy sense to this piece of flash fiction: "throwing toasts like punches: to leather jackets and chardonnay and potato skins and snow delays and new friends and old flames and every sin rearranged to seem romantic, less mistaken." A great deal of emotion is evoked from this very short piece where every word carries significance.

Renoir Responds to Aline Charigot's Charges of Painting Her Ugly by Daniel Bailey is a simply-spoken story in a domestic setting and written in third person. The story revolves around a painting that Pierre has done of a social setting that includes his wife, Aline. Aline complains that Pierre has painted her ugly. Pierre tries to pacify Aline with little lies and distractions of how pathetic all the other women in the painting look. Still at the end Aline repeats that she has been painted ugly, and Pierre agrees.

Told almost completely in dialogue, the conversation flows quickly and clearly with the simple language Bailey has chosen. This glimpse of interaction tells a much grander story of the inner workings of the couple, her catty need for attention, and his waning interest in placation.

Rating: 5. Smokelong publishes the highest caliber work and a writer would be honored to be in their issue. The contributors are accomplished in field of literature, but Smokelong encourages submissions from the unknown. An emerging author stands a fair chance at publication as long as their work is highly polished.