

Annalemma, Issue 3

Reviewer: Anna Neiger

Editor: Chris Heavener

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What They Publish: Short fiction, creative nonfiction (“no genre restrictions whatsoever”), interviews, essays, novels-in-progress, lists, “Reviews of Books that Don’t Exist (but Should)”, photography and other art. Almost anything but poetry.

Submission Guidelines: Submissions are accepted by e-mail. Artists and photographers should send 5-10 .jpegs of work at a time. Writers should send no more than 5,000 words and only once piece at a time. Annalemma accepts simultaneous submissions, but would like to be notified if a piece is published somewhere else. Accepted submissions will be paid \$50.

Description of Publication: Annalemma’s cover boasts, “stories, essays, debunked prophecies rekindled.” The journal is beautifully laid out, full of color illustrations and writing. Staff has a good sense of humor and display it proudly. Stories are accompanied by art, which may or may not have anything to do with the story content. Annalemma publishes a wide range of artists, mostly from the Chicago area, but not exclusively. Subscriptions are not offered, but the editor can be easily contacted for back orders.

Prose Per Issue/Amount Published Annually: About 9 stories per issue, now biannual.

Prose Reviews: *The Princess, The Beast, The Ogre and The Woods* by Jesse Jordan is a plainspoken domestic story told in first-person, that could be considered either realistic or experimental. The story opens with Kelly, a victimized fat girl, feeding the dismembered body of a popular girl named Jamie into a wood chipper. As Kelly feeds each new body part into “the beast,” she recalls some of the things that Jamie did to her throughout their lives, such as pulling her skirt above her head in the playground and calling her fat in front of the whole school.

Don’t let the title fool you—this isn’t a fairy tale. It’s a classic “bullied gets revenge on bully” story with a violent twist. Jordan seamlessly moves between the shredding of Jamie and the flashbacks of the horrors Kelly had to endure, touching on how hopeless it all felt to her. The narration is not overly emotional, but it doesn’t have to be; the violence of Kelly’s revenge says it all.

Angel Wings by Alex Ramirez, is a plainspoken personal essay that deals with community and social issues in an eloquent, thoughtful narrative. Ramirez tells of one particular instance that broke the mold of his usual routine. As he was walking home from the grocery store, he encountered two paraplegics in motorized wheelchairs who needed help crossing the street because parked cars were blocking their exit. Ramirez assists both of them, receiving high praises from the woman, and then returns home, wondering what they’d think of him if they knew, among other things, that one of the cars in their way belonged to Ramirez himself.

Ramirez writes with a self-deprecating humor tinged with cynicism. He is unafraid to show how dismal his life was at the time of the encounter. He lightly likens the female paraplegic to Gandalf the Gray, but “as a woman who owned an art gallery that sold seascapes and colorful nudes.” The other, he calls “Stephen Hawking’s doppelganger.” He artfully brings the story full-circle, beginning with a short description of his daily life, then telling the street-crossing instance completely in the moment, and closing with a reflection on the monotony of his life.

Rating: 8. *Annalemma* is a fledgling Literary Journal started by a student of Columbia. They are happy to receive any kind of writing (except poetry!) and don't care whether you're a starting writer or an accomplished one; if your story fits, it's in.