

Editor in Chief: Thomas Beller and Joanna Yas

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Web Address: www.opencity.org

What they Publish: Fiction, Poetry, and Essays

Submission Guidelines: Simultaneous submissions are accepted but contact them if work is published elsewhere.

Does not receive submissions through e-mail. Essays and stories that are shorter than 5,000 words should be mailed to: The Editors/ Open City/ 270 Lafayette Street, Suite 1412/ New York, NY 10012. If interested in sending book manuscript, send an excerpt of story and the editors will contact you if they want to read more.

Description of Publication: Fiction, Poetry, and Essays magazine and Internet site. Founded in 1990. The magazine is sturdy and has a cover that is strong and soft to the touch. Bound nicely. Contributors range from published authors (one was a finalist for the National Book Award) to emerging writers (3 of 7). Publishes three magazines and books each year. It's a quality magazine that displays work simply. The site works as a place to find and order from the archives, learn info about events, writer's guidelines, and how to support Open City. To read stories one has to purchase the magazine.

Prose Per Issue/Amount of Published Annually: 46% of each issue is Fiction. 21 out of 45 works a year are fiction.

Prose Reviews:

The Privileges by Jonathan Dee is a third person, plainspoken, realistic story set in a domestic setting. Cynthia is a young mother (29 years old) that tries to re-enter work life. She interviews for the job she had before she was pregnant and gets drinks with a girl friend that is trying to have a family. Cynthia doesn't get the job and the story ends with Cynthia realizing how "She knew that, every day, some woman somewhere did exactly what now seemed so impossible to her."

The third person voice does a nice job of presenting Cynthia and her husband, Adam, as social outcasts that feel out of place with their peers and with the older mother and fathers they see when they attend school events. Dee does a nice job of showing how Cynthia is driven to feel like she has joined "the underworld of women with nothing vital to do" and, as he does this, he keeps Cynthia an interesting character that is driven to do something somewhere but, sadly, she doesn't feel like she found what she wants to do, or where to do it.

We Loved the World But Could Not Stay by Gary Lippman is a third person, magic realist piece in a domestic setting. Thor Yabowitz is about to have a quickie with a neighbor when he is interrupted by a phone call from a genealogy firm. The caller tells Thor that all the first-born males in his family died at the age of 38. Thor is 38, nearing 39. The phone call forces him to confront his age and death—a death that could come sooner than he thinks. At the end, Thor's new fear of age and death makes the screams he hears from a porno starlet (his neighbor is watching a porn because he answered his phone) to sound "more like an old widow's lament."

This is a funny story where a man learns that fate may only allow him another month to live, while his neighbor chides him to hurry up and have sex with her already (She is on a schedule: "I've only got, like, ten minutes!"). The phone call from a genealogist whose wife is superstitious adds an element of fantasy but it's never verified. This allows Lippman to have his character examine fate, doom, life, and sex with a skeptic, yet alert eye.

Rating: 5. This looks like a nice place to be published. In each issue the editors like to include emerging writers with those that are established and widely published. It is edited well (my reading wasn't disrupted by editing mistakes). One of the fiction pieces was a novel excerpt from a writer that has published stories in the magazine and a book of stories with the book press.