

The Open Face Sandwich

Brandi Kleinert Larsen

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Editors: Alan Bajandas and Benjamin Solomon

Web Address: <http://www.openfacesandwich.org/>

What They Publish: Prose. Art. Found writing.

Submission Guidelines: Electronic or postal submissions accepted. Multiple and simultaneous submissions are welcome. E-mail to submit@openfacesandwich.org. No poetry. Response time varies from 2 days to 2 months.

Description of Publication: Yearly American print journal based in Atlanta, sponsored by an art gallery. They define themselves a “cunning and ribald assault upon the bedrock of modern civilization.” They have a good sense of humor, strong writing and a fun, yet solid, aesthetic. The Open Face Sandwich is currently in its first year of publication.

Prose Per Issue/Amount of Published Annually: 22/23 pieces.

Prose Reviews:

This is Why I Live by editor Benjamin Michael Solomon is a plain-spoken realistic fictional story in a domestic setting, told in third person. Yumuna is ten when the story starts. She eats chalk, constantly, secretly, because it helps her live. Then one day she’s introduced to Pradeep, an older boy who sniffs glue. Yamuna tries glue and finds chalk no longer appeals to her. Her habit grows worse and worse, until at the age of fourteen, she is caught by her father. He beats her with his sandal and threatens to kill her if he catches her again. She cannot risk it, but finds herself engrossed in his *National Geographics*, specifically the ones “from ‘73 to ‘76... the adhesive was different, more pungent and memorable, than the years before or after.” At sixteen, her father marries her to Pradeep and they sniff glue on their wedding night instead of make love as is required by their cultures.

I really like the language in this story, as well as the character’s specificity: She doesn’t eat every kind of chalk, only the one with the elephant on the pocket. She draws out her chalk and glue sessions so she won’t be caught. She has a routine for her addiction. The sensibility of this story makes me want to submit to this magazine.

Counting by Deb Olin Unferth is a plain-spoken realistic piece of fiction in a domestic setting. Told in the present tense, both characters are unnamed in this transcript of a phone call. The piece begins: “She’s calling, she says, because she is trying to keep track of how many lies she tells in a day and in order to keep her average low, she decided to call and confess one.” Throughout the rest of the short, the reader finds that the caller was crying, not because of work, like she said, but because her ex had hurt her. In the end, the ex tells her that she should finish counting her lies and start actually crying about “what she ought”: her work.

I especially like the urgency of this piece. The present tense pushes that, but so does the way it looks on the page. It’s all a conversation, but there isn’t a single quotation mark in the entire story. The banter is witty and it feels like a fresh twist on a “Who’s on First” routine. Also, I appreciate the ending and the realization that the caller is crazy.

Publication Rating: 8. I love the punchy attitude, the good design, the great writing. They publish a lot of stories of varied length and theme, many of them penned by emerging writers. The only thing keeping it from a higher rating is that it a fledgling magazine, with only a single volume.