

Portland Review (Fall 2006)

Reviewer: Andrew Graf

Editor: Jeff Brewer

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Web Address: www.portlandreview.pdx.edu

What They Publish: Poetry, Fiction, and Art

Submission Guidelines: Standard submission guidelines apply. 8,000 words or fewer. Editors do not read in June, July, or August. Submit by mail only. Simultaneous submissions accepted.

Description of Publication: The professional-looking Portland Review is published three times a year to subscribers and in local bookstores for \$8 per issue. This review publishes several award winning authors in most issues, but still maintains the desire to find quality new fiction.

Percentage of Prose Per Issue / Amount Published Annually: 50% prose, 5 stories a year

Prose Reviews:

You Saw Me Standing Alone by Kris Saknussem is a plainspoken realistic story in a domestic setting. The narrator is a highway drunkard who stops for gas at a small gas station. In paying the blind clerk, he begins to masturbate in front of her, but is suddenly taken down a level when his truck is stolen. In the end, he is told that he will take over the shop and build race cars for the family.

The storytelling is done in a very simple manner. Content wise, the story achieves a nighttime-in-a-deserted-place level of creepiness through place and descriptions of the crickets crawling around like gravel on the ground. The characters are developed quickly as their hobbies and flaws are laid out without hesitation. Conversation is limited, but injected at the perfect moments of time.

Invoice by Joel Weinbrot is a plainspoken realistic story in a domestic setting. The main character is a man who handles daily invoices for local doctors, until his brother comes home from the military and starts sleeping with the narrator's ex-girlfriend. In the end, the narrator's dying friend Ronald finds he has been dead in the heart for nearly two weeks and the military brother disappears without saying a word.

The story is told in a surrealistic manner, inducing the memories with drugs and apparently loony friends. The characters are introduced and developed slightly, but never fully. Neither the place nor the characters are ever seen very well, but the story does provide a wealth of history about the characters and the reader can easily gather what the relationships between most characters are. This story is quirky for sure, but the characters are interesting and it leaves the reader wondering what happened before and what happened after—in a really good way.

Rating: 7. It may be tough for an emerging author to break in based on the small number of stories published each year, but it does publish tri-annually.