



SOUNDINGS

The Newsletter

*Rainier Writing Workshop
Pacific Lutheran
University*

September 2010

Volume 4, Number 1

IN THIS ISSUE

- Greetings
- To PhD or not to PhD?
- Hilda Raz: On the Future of Literary Magazines
- Publications
- Announcements

Soundings Staff

EDITOR

Emily G. Murphy

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Sidney Brammer

LAYOUT

Karl Lehman

CONTACT

rwwsoundings@gmail.com

Editor's Note

Greetings to the old, the new, and the recently graduated!

Three cheers for our recent graduates as they join the distinguished ranks of RWW Alumni. We are also excited to welcome our newest group of first-year students. Here's to 2013!

Among our newest class is Sidney Brammer, who I am pleased to announce will be joining us at Soundings as the new Assistant Editor. Meanwhile, Karl Lehman continues to manage our layout and design department. In fact, this may be the last issue of Soundings you receive in its traditional format. Over the next few months the Soundings staff will be hard at work on a new layout that we hope will rock your socks.

As Soundings transitions, so do many in the RWW community. In this issue Jill McCabe Johnson (2008) discusses her transition into PhD life after her RWW MFA completion. Also, Editor Hilda Raz shares her retirement from the helm of Prairie Schooner, and the future of the literary magazine.

We'll be back when the snow falls.

Emily

SOUNDINGS

To PhD or not to PhD?

A Recent RWW Graduate Discusses her Decision to Pursue a PhD After her MFA Completion

Jill McCabe Johnson (2008)

That is the question I posed to several respected friends, mentors, and scholars as I considered whether to continue my formal education. The Rainier Writing Workshop had been an amazing incubator for my growth as a writer, and although I knew it could never be replicated, I did feel the desire to continue. The advice I got varied considerably, and sometimes offered conflicting viewpoints, yet it was all good advice:

- 1) Unless you plan to teach, the PhD probably isn't worth the expense and sacrifice. Even one that allows a creative dissertation will have other requirements that may be important for professional development as a teacher, but could distract you from doing what you love: writing.
- 2) If your goal is purely to continue growing as a creative (versus scholarly) writer, you might be better off attending workshops and retreats, or even applying to a second MFA program.
- 3) If you're going to get a PhD, consider taking the literary criticism track. It will open more teaching options, especially since you already have a terminal degree in creative writing.
- 4) If you're going to get a PhD, find one that is purely creative. Learning to analyze text as a literary scholar, especially if that criticism takes the form of identity politics, can taint the creative process, or at least make one too self-conscious to write fluidly and passionately.
- 5) Get in and out as fast as you can. The department will find ways to keep you there longer, for example, with specializations that require more coursework, or research projects that will slow you down.
- 6) Don't rush through, but take advantage of the opportunity to take classes, pursue research, and have the input of your advisory committee while you can.
- 7) Don't teach while you pursue your degree. It will eat up all your time. Your degree will take longer and you won't have time to write.
- 8) Teach while you pursue your degree. This is your chance to get critical experience before going on the job market.

Jill McCabe Johnson



Hilda Raz: On the Future of Literary Magazines

The 2010 Recipient of the RWW Stanley Lindberg Award for Literary Editing discusses her time at the helm of *Prairie Schooner* and the future of the literary magazine

The following is taken from Hilda Raz's morning talk given at the August, 2010 RWW Residency. This is the complete talk as presented, with a few minor edits for formatting purposes.

Here I begin: What IS a literary magazine? Fran Lebowitz said it best, then gave *Prairie Schooner* permission -- and we put it on a t-shirt: "Magazines . . . lead to books and they should be regarded by the prudent as the heavy petting of literature."

The reading aloud of book titles that came from the pages of *Prairie Schooner* -- and other journals - - might fill the rest of your year, and some. And the prizes these writers and their books have won. The next editors of our journals will have the burdens and pleasures of making these lists to use for publicity and development purposes. Certainly WE made use of them! That role is over for me. But wait: I've just heard that Caitlin Horrok's story "Stealing Small" from our Summer issue has been chosen for *The Pushcart Prize Anthology*, 2011. Old habits are hard to break.

Instead I want to talk briefly about the past, present, and future of *Prairie Schooner*.

The Past: 84 years ago, an English Professor and his undergrad students begin a regional magazine. Those students become leaders in the arts and business and brought honor to their alma mater, and the journal, and their philanthropy. Within two years of its beginnings, *Prairie Schooner* was winning national prizes and being read and discussed on both coasts.

The past was shaped by five editors, all professors: Lowry Wimberly, the founding editor; Pulitzer prize winning poet Karl Shapiro, who had edited *Poetry* magazine before he came to Nebraska; scholar Bernice Slote, who did foundational work on Willa Cather and whose book on John Keats won the Christian Gauss award; and Hugh Luke, William Blake and A.R. Ammons scholar. (I'm the sixth editor, in 84 years of continuous publication and you all know me.)

Hilda Raz



Interesting Links

Rainier Writing Workshop
www.plu.edu/~mfa/

Being Poetry - Erin Coughlin
Hollowell's Blog
www.beingpoetry.net

AWP--The Association of
Writers and Writing Programs
www.awpwriter.org

Artsmith
www.orcasartsmith.org

A River and Sound Review
www.riverandsoundreview.org

About Soundings

Soundings is a quarterly publication of the Rainier Writing Workshop, a low-residency MFA program in Creative Writing at Pacific Lutheran University.

To submit information to **Soundings**, be removed from the **Soundings** email list, or submit a different email address, please contact the editor via email at: rwwsoundings@gmail.com.

SOUNDINGS

Publications

PARTICIPANTS

Lisa Ohlen Harris (2011): Her essay, "Comfort Food," will appear in *Brevity*, Issue 34, Fall 2010. Read it [here](#).

ALUMNI

Kelli Russell Agodon (2009): Her book, *Letters from the Emily Dickinson Room*, winner of the 2009 White Pine Press Poetry Prize judged by Carl Dennis, has just been published. Pre-order it [here](#). Check Kelli's [website](#) for a schedule of upcoming readings.

Barrie Jean Borich (2009): Her essay, "On a Clear Day Catalina," winner of the John Guyon Literary Nonfiction Prize, appeared in Southern Illinois University's *Crab Orchard Review*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (which mailed at last after waiting out a state of Illinois fiscal crisis, which the author wishes to blame on ex-Governor Rod Blagojevich) in August 2010. Also, her essay, "Where We Bump and Grind It: On Resisting Redemption in Women's Memoir," appears on the September relaunch of the *VIDA: Women on Literary Arts* (formerly WILLA) web site, as this month's *State of the Art* essay. Read it [here](#).

Lita Kurth (2009): Her short story, "Marius Martin, Proletarian," based on her MFA reading and fashioned from a chapter of her upcoming novel, *The Rosa Luxemburg Exotic Contemporary Dance Collective*, was published in *On the Clock: Contemporary Stories of Work*. Order it [here](#).

April Ayers Lawson (2008): Her short story, "Virgin," will be published in *The Paris Review*, Fall 2010. Read an interview with April [here](#).

Buzz Mauro (2008): His short story, "Mud," was published in *New Orleans Review*, Volume 36, Issue 1.

Kay Mullen (2007): Her poem, "In Ragged Tide Waters," appears in *Appalachia*, 2010 summer/fall issue. Also, her poems, "Hour After Hour" and "Tiger Moth," appear in *Minotaur*, Issue 56, Summer 2010. Her poem, "After Rains," will be published by *San Pedro River Review*, Fall 2010 issue; watch for it [here](#). And her poem, "Return to Ireland," (excerpt) will be published in *High Places: Journey Through Ireland's Great Mountains*, by Adrian Hendroff, History Press, LLD, on October 30, 2010. Pre-order it [here](#).

Tina Schumann (2009): Her poem, "For I Have Sinned," is in the current issue of *Ascent*. Watch for it [here](#). Her poem, "Seven Ways of Looking at a Corkscrew," was published in *The Raven Chronicles*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2010.

Judith L. Shadford (2009): Her short story, "Sweetwater," was published in *SpokeWrite*, Summer 2010 issue.

Anita Sullivan (2008): Her essay, "Scordatura: Upon Listening to Biber's Rosary Sonatas," has been selected to appear in *The Best Spiritual Writing 2011*. Her first full-length book of poems, *Garden of Beasts*, was published this month by Airlie Press. Order it [here](#).

Josie Emmons Turner (2007): Her poem, "Dear Don Francisco," was included in the *Floating Bridge Review* for 2010, and was read at Jack Straw Studios on July 9.

FACULTY

Suzanne Berne: Her nonfiction book, *Missing Lucile*, will be published by Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill in October 2010. Pre-order it [here](#).

David Biespiel: His nonfiction book, *Every Writer Has a Thousand Faces*, has been published by Kelson Books. Order it [here](#).

Fleda Brown: Her book, *Loon Cries: Selected and New Michigan Poems*, had a book launch September 16th at The Watershed Center, Greilickville, MI. All proceeds from the book will benefit the Center, which protects the waters of Grand Traverse Bay. *Loon Cries* will soon be available at local bookstores, but you will most benefit the center if you order it directly from them [here](#).

David Huddle: His essay, "Story Boy," will appear in *Brevity*, Issue 34, Fall 2010. Read it [here](#).

Judith Kitchen: Her essay, "Uncertainty," which she read from at residency, was published in *TriQuarterly Online*, Issue 138, Summer/Fall 2010. Read it [here](#). Her essay, "Thingamajig," which she also read from at residency, was published in *Defunct Magazine*. Read it [here](#).

Dinah Lenney: Her essay, "Playing Gertrude," was published in *The Kenyon Review*, Volume 3, Number 3, Summer 2010. Read it [here](#).

Ann Pancake: Her story, "Me and My Daddy Listen to Bob Marley," has won the Brenda Ueland Fiction Prize sponsored by *Water~Stone Review*, and will appear in the fall issue of the review. Watch for it [here](#).

Lia Purpura: Her essay, "Verb," will be featured on the *New York Times*' "On Language" column's website sometime in October. Watch for it [here](#). Her poem, "Net," appeared in the *New Republic*, May 5th, 2010 issue. Read it [here](#). Her story, "On Being a Trucker," appeared in *Brevity*, Issue 34, Fall 2010. Read it [here](#).

Marjorie Sandor: Her story, "The White Cat," was included in *My Mother, She Killed Me, My Father, He Ate Me: Forty New Fairy Tales*, edited by Kate Bernheimer. Pre-order [here](#).

Announcements

ALUMNI

Holly Hughes (2006) has received an Honorable Mention from the American Medical Writers Association in the Public/Health Care category for her anthology *Beyond Forgetting: Poetry and Prose about Alzheimer's Disease*. Order it [here](#).

Adrian Gibbons Koesters (2007) will serve as the graduate assistant editor of *American Life in Poetry* for the 2010-11 academic year.

Tina Schumann (2009): Her first collection of poems, *As If*, won the Stephen Dunn Poetry Prize in June from Parlor City Press. Order it from Tina [here](#) or go to the Parlor City Press site [here](#).

Anita Sullivan (2008) will be reading from her first full-length book of poems, *Garden of Beasts*, at Wordstock in Portland, Sunday Oct. 10.

FACULTY

David Cates was awarded Montana Arts Council's 2010 Artist Innovation Award for Literary Art in Prose. Read about it [here](#).

Ann Pancake has recently won the Chaffin Award for Appalachian Literature. Read about it [here](#).

Lia Purpura will be on panels at the [AWP 2011 Conference](#) (scheduled for February 2-5) and 2011 [NonfictionNow Conference](#) (scheduled for April 27-29, 2011) with other PLU folks and is looking forward to both.

To PhD or not to PhD?... continued.

Jill McCabe Johnson (2008)

After long discussions with my husband, I decided to get the educational experience that would be most fulfilling to me on a personal level, with my writing as the highest priority, and let the rest fall into place. At the time I began researching programs nearly three years ago, there were about 45 universities around the world offering PhDs with some form of creative dissertation. Placing their information into a spreadsheet helped me compare various components of each program. Some of the biggest factors for me included the faculty, their pedagogies, and a je ne sais quoi quality of the program's culture. I think everyone at RWW will know what I mean by this. Are students and faculty supportive of each other's work, or is there a competitive undertone?

Will I spend my time in classes where they never discuss primary texts? Will I become part of a community of writers? Other influencing factors included whether there was a quality literary journal, what did the faculty and current graduate students have to say about the program, and did I like the location? Although many people could thrive in a big city, a more intimate college town setting seemed more likely to provide a that supportive writing community.

I narrowed down my list and applied to those schools. Then the waiting and worrying began. I worried about getting in, and whether I would be able to cut it as a full-time scholar. My biggest worry, though, centered around the fact that my husband would only be able to join me in the winter months. I could return home for the summer, but spring and fall we would be apart. One close friend informed me she thought it was selfish to move to another state and temporarily live apart from my husband and son. Perhaps. Our son is in his mid-twenties and lives several hours away from us. Mom going back to school didn't seem like an event that would cause much trauma. Still, her comments troubled me. When I mentioned her remarks to my husband, he said, "Oh honey, don't listen to her. Our marriage is too solid to be affected by a little time apart." He was right.

I ended up accepting an offer from the University of Nebraska at their main campus in Lincoln. The requirements of UNL's PhD contain enough structure to ensure a rigorous and well-balanced education, while the flexibility of the program allows students to pursue their creative and scholarly passions. This fall marks the beginning of my second year of coursework. My current schedule includes an 800-level seminar on 19th and 20th Century American poetry, a 900-level symposium on William Wordsworth, and a one-on-one tutorial with the poet Ted Kooser. Mondays I spend working in the Prairie Schooner offices, and my graduate assistantship eats up another 20 hours each week. In addition, the University of Nebraska Gender Programs has engaged me to edit an anthology of women's writing, which, if all goes well, will be followed by an anthology of men's writing. It's a busy time, but one of the most exciting periods of my life. There are days I miss my husband so desperately, I ache inside. Even when we know it will be months until we see each other, we end our phone calls with the words, "I'll see you in a couple of weeks!" Somehow the humor helps.

While I have found a writing community here, it's not the same as at RWW. The nature of a residential program seems to preclude that sense of accelerated, intensely focused, and deeply cherished time one feels in

a low-res program. Fortunately for me, Adrian Koesters (RWW 2007) was already a PhD student at Nebraska when I arrived, so I had a friend who could show me the ropes. There are many wonderful, talented people in the program, and I feel lucky to call a handful of them friends. The faculty have been enormously supportive and encouraging, too.

Did I make the right decision to pursue a PhD? The teaching market looks dismal right now, and getting published is as competitive as ever. But the cliché to appreciate the journey over the destination did not become a cliché for nothing. There's something to be said, too, about education for education's sake. Even so, yesterday I voiced doubts to my husband about spending this time apart, and wondered if I would regret it later. He said, "Promise me that if I die tomorrow of a heart attack, you won't feel guilty for going back to school." I didn't make that promise because I knew it was a promise I could not keep. Instead, I gently suggested that perhaps the better strategy would be for him not to have a heart attack. Supportive and loving husband that he is, he agreed.

Hilda Raz: On the Future of Literary Magazines... continued.

The present at Prairie Schooner might show a quarterly international journal, with an expanded program, doubled in size to 200 and more pages, and multiple numbers of circulation, fully endowed, with an appetite for publishing special issues as well as the Prairie Schooner Book Prizes in short fiction and poetry, two prize book manuscripts chosen each year from a pool of over 1,000 submissions, with, to the winners in each genre, an advance of \$500 from the University of Nebraska Press and publication under a standard contract. This standard contract from one of the best university presses in the country is no small deal! Another \$1500 is given to each author by the magazine. The story of the PS Book Prizes begins with conversations with Peggy Shumaker and Joe Usibelli in hotel lobbies over years, and their ongoing intellectual and financial support for a series now entering its 9th year with an ongoing contract from the University of Nebraska Press and a continuing commitment from the university and from Peggy Shumaker and Joseph Usibelli.

Prairie Schooner now works for the reputation and as a part of the University of Nebraska, the college of arts and sciences, and the English Dept. The editor is always a professor of English who holds the Luschei Chair. For that ongoing support we owe thanks to the Dean

of Arts and Sciences and the chair of English as well as philanthropist, writer, editor, and publisher Glenna Luschei, who at one time was an editorial assistant in our offices.

Now *Prairie Schooner* is an ever more visible part of the mission of the University of Nebraska: when the Modern Languages Association chose us to represent academic literary journals in their current issue of *Profession*, literary journals were recognized as a central part of the mission of a research one university. Students are a part of our programs, at the graduate and undergraduate levels, as we are part of theirs. The arts flourish locally, nationally, and internationally and we are at the front of that parade.

Prairie Schooner best might be described by three quotes, over time:

Esquire Magazine called us "the roots of literary publishing." More recently, *TIME Magazine* said we were "one of two signature programs at the U.N." Can you guess what the other program was? Yes. Football. And recently, by the *The Huffington Post*, as "on the digital cutting edge of established journals," thanks to the brilliant Timothy Schaffert, our Web Editor.

And the future? During a time of major changes in publishing, *Prairie Schooner* continues to lead national conversations, to win grants even as we move forward. I know that the future will include the new and yet undiscovered seventh editor of *Prairie Schooner*, whose vision and stamina will support change and innovation while protecting and enriching our eighty-four year old legacy in the larger world of literary cultures. This opportunity to provide national leadership and shape publishing will not come again. Watch for job ads in the next weeks. Take it from me: there is no better job in literary America or in academia.

Okay, enough history.

Here's my favorite joke:

A writer died and went to heaven. St. Peter met her at the gate, bowed low and said, "Since your work extends the vision of humankind, you have a choice between Heaven and Hell. Which do you choose?"

"Oh," said the writer, "I can't decide without the tour."

"Okay," said St. Peter and snapped his fingers. Presto, they're in a landscape of billowing smoke and flaming pine trees. Chained to each tree is a person bent to her computer, typing away.

"Eh, what's next," says the writer, a little nervous. St. Peter snaps his fingers and presto, they're in a landscape of tall pine trees and a cool wind off the sea. But

chained to the tallest trees are banks of people at computers, bent to their keyboards.

"Here's heaven," says St. Peter, smiling big.

"What's the difference," says the writer.

"Big difference," says St. Peter. "Here, you get published."

Writers hope their work will be published. Why?

Jacques Derrida said that "poetry and literature are the main place for a new political agenda," for change. So, as a long-time activist, my life has included a long stint as the keeper of some portals to publishing. You know also that I'm a writer, of poetry and literary nonfiction. I want to be published.

Benjamin Disraeli said, "An author who speaks about their own books is almost as bad as a mother who speaks about her own children." So I won't. But some of you know that my most recent book of nonfiction was collaboration with Aaron Raz Link, a book, *What Becomes You*, about his sex change. Frank O'Connor's famous quote that "Two of the most difficult tasks a writer can undertake, to write the truth about himself and about his mother," adds to my discomfort as a writer. My recent work not only tried to tell the truth about myself -- and my child -- it required my child to tell the truth about me!

But thank goodness, you've asked me here today not as a writer or a teacher but as an editor, and in the name of Stanley Lindberg, long-time editor of *Georgia Review*. To be honored in Stanley's name is a great coincidence -- or an act of God. When I was appointed editor of *Prairie Schooner* in 1987, my experience had been confined to the critical and literary side of the job. The magazine was deeply in the red, we'd lost our distributor, the best in the business, because we couldn't seem get to press in time to meet our own deadlines. And the person now holding the reins -- me -- was a poet who could barely write the monthly checks for her own household. What did I do? Using the strength of the *Prairie Schooner* name and a new dedicated WATS line, as well as some invisible chutzpah, I called the editor of another venerable journal, one we all admired, the *Georgia Review*, on the telephone. Stanley Lindberg answered his own phone. I told him our troubles. He said, okay, what can I do for you today? Then, over many months, and through many phone calls, Stanley revealed himself as the person you all know he was: kind, smart, articulate and patient, a new friend, willing to teach this stranger how to manage everything from bills to budget, from deadlines to irate authors, from overwhelming numbers of submissions to dealing with deans. With Stanley's help -- and the help of George

Core, at Sewanee -- I managed to put on the garb of my profession and enter the world of literary publishing. Without Stanley Lindberg's vision, collegiality, and courage in solving problems, *Prairie Schooner* as well as *Georgia Review* might not be here today as we embrace and enter the digital age of literary journals.

What do YOU think are the important jobs of an editor?

For me, one of the main jobs is to give place to new engagements with difficult materials. Bernice Slote, the fourth editor of *Prairie Schooner*, used to calm her young assistant -- me -- by saying that the health of literary publishing is measured by the numbers of magazines publishing new work. Our loss of one writer's work is another journal's gain. New journals appear every day, often online, like the excellent *Octopus*, which now has a print chapbook series. The editors of the special section of *MLA's* magazine *Profession* wrote, "The literary editor is keeper of the pulse of the contemporary production of creativity."

How do editors of journals keep this pulse? Behind my desk, the practice of editing creativity means arranging accepted manuscripts as a conversation--with each other and in national discourses about life in our time in the context of history, cultures, and art. My nephew, Jeff Raz, teaches circus. He can juggle twenty plates while holding in balance ten human bodies over a bike. Sometimes I feel like Jeff, holding aloft four stories, sixty pages of poetry, two essays, and six book reviews to make a lively magazine four times a year. To edit creatively may mean that one winter morning I answer the telephone, yes, the same telephone I used to call Stanley for help, to discuss a new project that may include archival photographs of families not necessarily the author's, in a mixed-genre work that pairs these photos with written prose accounts. By doing so, I may seize opportunities for innovation--in form, design, and content--and become again an active partner with a writer. When I choose to publish a cover by graphic artist Chris Ware, I push against audiences' expectations. To entertain the poems of a famous novelist, to consider a sonnet cycle written by six different poets, to ask for an alternative ending for a powerful new story--I've got to be confident that *Prairie Schooner* will continue if the project falls through, the writer refuses to revise, some letters from readers suggest failure, and the enterprise for that issue seems to falter. We trust our long history of success, our keen interest in diverse voices, our commitment to reinventions, revisions, and restorations. To edit creativity, we editors must trust our passion for the enterprise of publishing a hybrid journal that brings belletristic and scholarly/critical work into

proximity. Hybridity is the special mark of the contemporary world, isn't it? In a century and more of diasporas, of one art calling to another across borders, of friendship and passion merging identities and commitments, what better means than a hybrid journal to discover new energies for the making, definition, and dissemination of art? The editor-in-chief of a major journal may be an administrator, writer, teacher, or scholar, and a member of multiple communities that both overlap and exclude each other; so her journal, *Prairie Schooner* for example, publishes essays by polymath Alfred Corn in the guise of book reviews; collaborative poems by duos and even groups of writers; comic book panels as covers; and short-shorts whether prose or poetry--or even amalgamations of photographs and paragraphs, by Judith Kitchen for example. A new critical anthology on the work of Loren Eiseley appeared first as a special issue and a recent issue contains an anthology of work by Portuguese writers in translation. We are, it seems to me, we journals of contemporary literature, a kind of salon, a café, where writers meet to talk to each other and their audiences. Scholars are poets, physicians are essayists, and chemists write fiction. And politics is everywhere a kind of binder.

Prairie Schooner, like many journals, receives well over six hundred manuscript submissions each month. Our book series submissions have been in the neighborhood of a thousand per year. We keep a library of about fifty other current literary journals for student and faculty use, to help us understand and participate in published conversations about literature and cultures. The avant garde as usual bivouacs in journals.

Literary publishing as we all know is undergoing major changes. How do journals survive? Some don't. Others go digital. How does *Prairie Schooner* survive in print? We have outside support, of course. Our subscribers have supported us for many years. Library subscriptions have been the heart of this support; we receive ever-increasing income from Project Muse which bundles digital copies of the journal with other major magazines for library sales, and other distributors. And we've recently joined JStor where back issues of the magazine are available to larger audiences in digital form.

What will the future bring? Here we must open a new national conversation. Certainly digital publishing is and will be part of the mix. Our costs have been reduced by electronic production. We do many more jobs in-house now, and we take bids every other year from contractors who are more competitive than before. We cut costs in every way we can and offer additional pages and subscription discounts where we can. And *Prairie*

Schooner's Digital Initiative is an ongoing online e-literature supplement/annex to Prairie Schooner (and its other online entities: the website and blog) that we hope to have up and running soon. This project will feature work that is designed specifically for online publication, using the tools unique to electronic literature (featuring animation, audio, interactive text etc.). It will develop/curate an edition of digital literature--six separate multimedia projects--inspired by material published in Prairie Schooner, as well as build the technical foundation, in partnership with the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at UNL, for a continuously developing online project accessible by all, and archived. The project will bring the principals of e-literature to a new audience, while also expanding Prairie Schooner's readership and influence, globally and across generations. Just as Prairie Schooner has shaped and reflected the print literary culture for decades, the Prairie Schooner Digital Initiative, working in collaboration with emerging and established print authors and artists, can contribute to, and help define, the global conversation about electronic literature.

If the past has been glorious, and it has been, the future offers challenges. I am deeply honored to be here with the editor of Georgia Review, Stephen Corey, who shares with me the commitment of a lifetime to a single journal. As he is part of your core faculty, your commitment to creative pedagogy and publishing is made visible. And I call up here the memory of State Street Press, a chapbook series published in the 1980s and beyond, that served as the primary seedbed for all of literary America's great poets in the next decades. That series and its list of writers is the true matrix, the example I've followed in my work, the goal to which I've aspired. Thanks to Judith Kitchen and Stan Rubin for their presence and vision as the editors of State Street Press. I with so many others owe my writer's life to them.

Literary journals will survive their challenges; they have always done so. Venerable examples will morph and change; and new students, artists, and writers will collaborate to bring new journals to market. We hope always to be able to expand and enrich our vision to approach the frontiers, however they appear to us as we go. We trust and believe that Prairie Schooner, among others, will move along on that great highway so soon to be repaired for our good futures.

SOUNDINGS