

Corium Magazine Issue: 10

Editor: Lauren Becker

Web Address: www.coriummagazine.com

What they publish: Short fiction, very short fiction, poetry, art.

Submission Guidelines: Corium Magazine uses an online submission management system to receive submissions. The submission period is generally open yearlong, though there may be brief reading periods announced throughout the season. Short fiction should be 1000-4000 words. You may only submit one short fiction piece per entry. Very short fiction should not exceed 1000 words. Poetry should not exceed 50 lines per poem. You can only submit one category per entry (short fiction, very short fiction or poetry). In the case of poetry and very short fiction submissions, you may send a collection of multiple pieces within one file (up to five poems and no more than three very short stories). Simultaneous submissions are permitted. You must include a brief bio alongside a cover letter listing no more than four publication credits. The magazine encourages you to veer away from a sanitized bio, asking you to provide additional interesting details about yourself. "Let us know a little about what's under *your* skin." If you have been printed in Corium Magazine previously, please wait two issues to submit again. Lastly, Corium has a policy not to reject anyone's work on his/her birthday—please include this information.

Description of the Publication:

Corium Magazine, launched in March of 2010, is a quarterly literary electronic magazine featuring a wide range of short fiction, very short (flash) fiction and poetry that beckons for both contributors and readers to engage with what's "beneath the surface." The magazine hopes to leave lasting fingerprints on its audience that not only touch, but prod and scratch along the fibers of the human central nervous system. We are all made up of similar corium: "It includes connective tissue, blood and an elaborate sensory nerve network". Accordingly Corium Magazine presents its readers with incredibly relatable, igniting material with the ability to make even the most stone-faced crack a smile or weep.

Prose per Issue/ Amount Published Annually: 72% prose. Average of 36 short stories published annually.

Prose Reviews:

Kevin Wilson's *The Morons Wallow in a Sea of Girls* is poetic first person narrative in a domestic setting. The story's narrator discovers a serial killer along the banks of the Hudson River, and the two develop an intimate and artistic relationship. The narrator continues to manipulate the face and "visage" of the serial killer like a sculpture, and his psychopathic lover continues to kill prostitutes and critics of the narrator's work. Finally the narrator finds himself being throttled and choked by the serial killer, who he has thus far considered his artwork, after asking him if he plans to change his image. The two both disappear from the ephemeral life after the narrator is killed, and his lover destroys his "sculpture" by suicide.

Wilson gives us a chilling sense that the artist's most precious creation is one that is ugly and indiscernible to anybody who happens to experience it secondhand. What differs from a witty list of writer's sensibilities and advice, is the use of extended metaphor in a dreamlike, dark, metropolitan setting where not only does the artist wield and disfigure his labor of love, but the work itself is personified to the point that it transfigures society and history. "I scraped the sharpest razor I could find across his face, he would say that it was exposure to mustard gas during the war." His voice is almost surgical, describing the psychological pitfalls of creation with finite detail. Wilson successfully portrays society as a single, deciding entity, (often confusing the artist's influence on his work and society's). The story's conclusion leaves the reader with a choice of what the author considers to be immortalized: the portrait of the artist, his art piece or society's prevailing judgment of the two.

Suction by Andrew F. Sullivan is a plainspoken first person narrative in a domestic setting. A transient man and his friend, Last Call Paul, are driving an endlessly icy road stretch to go to Paul's favorite bar. Braving the snow and the sleet, Paul becomes incredibly impassioned about talking about his troubles with his teenage daughter and living a life of blue-collar divorcé mediocrity. When the two reach the bar Paul reveals his expertise on the fundamentals of what makes a good vacuum to some rough looking Oiler fans. When the two return to Last Call Paul's dilapidated apartment, the narrator finds his friend keeps a collection of vacuum cleaners turned on all night so he can sleep.

Suction magnifies the senses while heightening Last Call Paul's dialogue in extreme weather conditions while speeding along the road to an inconsequential dive. The narrator's internal point of view is split between ambivalence and concern, allowing everything he sees to be considered as credible and complex, even when it may be at times unbelievable or just routine. The story's sense of sight and sound is particularly chaotic, creating heightened tension though very little time lapses, such as, "I watch the beers sliding up behind his eyes, little capillaries bursting one by one." Even when the reader feels overwhelmed by the objects and sounds littering the bar, the car or Last Call Paul's apartment, there is the feeling that the characters are also confined to this chaos with little hope. Finally every last detail, whether it's "spools and spools of electric chord" or vacuums in the apartment vibrating the narrator's teeth, becomes almost a compartmentalized novelty, and both the characters and the reader has to make do with the disorder and proceed.

Rating: 7. Being that Corium Magazine is fairly new, it is in search of new work every issue—hence its policy on having an author who has published on their website wait two consecutive issues before submitting again. There is a slighter chance of acceptance, but the quality of work reflects that standard. Additionally Corium seems like a good launching point for material, as you are able to submit without the constraints of a dormant reading period. The magazine's website is incredibly easy to navigate and stylized minimally. The website also states that often times the editors are available to respond with feedback.