

Name of Publication: *The Rag*. Issue #2

Editor: Seth Porter and Dan Reilly

Web Address: <http://www.raglitmag.com>

What They Publish: Short Fiction and Poetry

Submissions Guidelines: Submit pieces online through the website or via regular mail. There is a \$3 fee to submit online, however, if you purchase an issue then that fee is waved. For regular submissions, *The Rag*, offers the industry standard “pro-rate” which is \$0.05 per word. Any remaining funds at the end of the year are distributed to authors as a bonus.

Description of Publication: An online literary magazine that focuses on grittier forms of contemporary short fiction. Their aim is to provide an intellectual and entertaining read for their audience while simultaneously seeking out powerful new voices for biannual issues.

Amount of Prose/Poetry Published: Roughly 12 per issue.

Prose Review: *Zombie Night* by Justin Reed is a short, quirky piece about a couple that move to the small town of Watertown and their days living on East Iroquois Ave. In the piece, the narrator—referred to only as “Bear” by his live-in girlfriend and, ironically, “The Un-Ted” by coworkers—mentions his Great Irrational Fear of Zombies and is constantly wondering about the possibility of an apocalypse.

The story is told in first-person, narrated by the male protagonist and colored with his tongue-in-cheek humor as he relates stories about his job as a Technical Support Technician, as well as elaborates on the zombie themed movie dates he and his girlfriend have once a week. Between Ted’s antics at work ranging from wearing his work headset outside of his cubicle in order “to politely discourage conversation” to advising a customer calling in with concerns about his computer to lay off of porn, this story maintains its comedic quality as well as the uniqueness that *The Rag* looks for in its pieces.

Elegy for the Skid Row Men of Old Portland is a poem written by Nathaniel Hurst. Five lines per five stanzas, this piece is filled with heightened imagery that allows the reader to feel the depth of these men’s despair. With hard-hitting similes like “loneliness called to them like a cheap whore” and “from anywhere in the city you can see the Marquam Bridge cutting across town like a scar on a wrist” the poem manages to tell a sad story with a raw elegance that gives it its power and ability to hold the reader.

Rating: 8. Their website is creatively done as well as the art in their issues. The work ranges from humorous to deep and thoughtful and all of it is really well written. The fact that they pay their writers is a nice bonus.