

Literary Orphans

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Literary Magazine Report

Spring 2014

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Fact Sheet

Online Magazine: *Literary Orphans*

Web Address: www.literaryorphans.org/playdb/

E-Mail Address: managinged@literaryorphans.org

Founded: 2012

Frequency: Bi-Annual

Editors: Mike Joyce (founding editor, editor-in-chief, and fiction editor), Scott Waldyn (managing editor), Leanne Gregg (fiction editor), James Claffey (fiction editor), Katie Perttunen (poetry editor), Peter Marra (poetry editor)

What They Publish: Fiction (short fiction, flash fiction, micro fiction), poetry, nonfiction, reviews of movies, books, and albums, interviews, art, and photography

Submission Guidelines: For fiction pieces you can send however many you want as long as they are all 5,000 words and under. If the pieces are longer you must query first at questions@literaryorphans.org. Three poetry pieces are accepted at a time. Nonfiction pieces should focus on powerful prose and unique topics, as well stories about geographical places. All submissions are sent through Submittable.

Description of Publication: Edgy photography and art are featured. Tone of the website is honest and dark. Every issue has a theme associated with an iconic figure. The writing is described as more of "a mood than a style." The website is easy to navigate, and past issues are available. Publishes an issue bi-monthly. 'Read time' is listed next to the stories. Publishes work from both emerging and experienced writers.

Prose Per Issue Annually: Approx. twenty stories issue/ Approx. 120 annually

Submission Period: All Year-Round

Contributor Payment: None

Reading Fee: None

CLMP: No

Why I Chose This Magazine

Among all the literary magazines I've read, *Literary Orphans* stood out to me. I have always been interested in the relationship between image and written story. The layout of *Literary Orphans'* magazine emphasizes the intertwining of the two mediums of storytelling. Not only is the design of the magazine beautiful, as is their mission. Editor Mike Joyce writes in the mission statement they celebrate individualism "with a belief that such exposure will instigate a flowering of personal agency and along with it, contribute to new and progressive understandings of social diversity across geographic spaces." *Literary Orphans* feels like a safe haven for the voices that have not yet been heard.

The stories are reflective and evoke deep thought about one's own writing and life. The editors set out to create more of a mood than a style, and that is achieved through the stories, art, and photography. The magazine is unique in aesthetic and story, and it is also inviting and down-to-earth. Managing editor Scott Waldyn writes in the Mission Statement, "We're a collective of unique and independent builders of dreams and worlds sharing our experiences with one another." This is the basis of why I tell stories and why I continue to develop my craft. Overall I felt like the magazine "got" me in terms of their beliefs and their aesthetic.

Comparison of Issues

Issues	Issue 1- Babe	Issue 6- Marilyn Monroe	Issue 11- John Lennon: The Lost Prophet
Prose: Poetry	13:9*	24:10*	22:21*
Female Protag: Male Protag: N/A	4:6:3	7:13:4	7:10:5
Female Writer: Male Writer	5:6**	8:16**	8:11**
Emerging: Established: Bio N/A	3:8:0	7:17:0	6:12:1
First Person: Second Person: Third Person	6:2:5	13:0:9	13:2:7

*Does not include staff writing

** Some writers have two stories published in that particular issue.

Literary Orphans' collection of prose has expanded since the first issue. With growing numbers of fiction, the amount of poetry has also increased from nine poems in the first issue to twenty-one in the most recent issue. Across the board male protagonists are far more popular than female protagonists, but then again there is a good amount of stories where the gender is not even specified. Male writers usually dominate in the issues, but not by a large margin. It is not surprising that first person stories are far more popular than third or second person point of view. Literary Orphans champions the marginalized and works to give voice to those who may fall on deaf ears. This magazine may be difficult for emerging writers to be published. The number of established writers consistently trumps the amount of emerging writers published in the magazine. The comparison of issues showcases the development of the magazine and growth over the years.

Prose Reviews

Issue 1- Babe

Blowout by Cheryl Anne Gardner is a plain spoken realistic story in a domestic setting. The unnamed main character is a subjective first person narrator who is on the verge of dying after digging up her boyfriend's remains, putting them in the trunk of her car, and speeding at 160 mph. The microfiction piece leaves much to the imagination, and this includes the ending. Presumably the main character has died by getting into a horrific car accident. This is assumed by the opening and ending line, "That's what I was thinking in the tense whiskey-fueled moments before I bled out and died... You'd be surprised how fast the details of your predicament emerge at one-hundred-sixty miles per hour in a shower of shattered glass."

Because the piece is so short every detail has to contribute to the story's forward movement, and every word must count. There are enough clues for readers to understand the gravity of the situation, "I wasn't thinking about fine particulates or my asthma inhaler or the mummified remains of my boyfriend, which I had only just dug up from my backyard and placed in the trunk of my car." Yet the details are also intriguing and make readers wondering, "What happens next?" Sense of place is captured in an effective manner through details like, "...since it's been so scorching hell-fire hot the past couple of days..." Gardner tells the story in first person which gives readers an insight into the wild and disarrayed thoughts of a supposed murderer dying. She repeats, "I was in way over my head," and "I hadn't thought about anything in weeks—years really—except that jughead in the trunk." Readers wonder about the past of the narrator and what led her to her actions. The quick pacing and voice comes through and works with the speed and nature of the story.

My Left-Handed Cousin by Kyle Hemmings is a plain spoken realistic story in a domestic setting. The unnamed second person narrator is struggling with events that have occurred just 124 minutes ago. He has had sex with his distant cousin Robert Robert Humphrey on his aunt and uncle's Posturpedic bed. The main character ponders whether or not this means he is a homosexual, but believes that "incest-pirate" would be the correct term for their relationship. The story ends with the main character on the train,

saying goodbye to his cousin. Robert Robert Humphrey plants a giant sloppy kiss on the glass of the train window. The main character returns it with a more refined kiss, and “it’s okay because at least, here, now, there is no touching.”

Second person point of view is used seldom for good reason, but in this case the use of this POV gives the reader a chance to feel the same uncertainty the main character faces. “Now how are you going to return home with a calm face, pretending nothing ever happened, when you and Robert Humphrey had sex only 124 minutes ago?” The use of ‘you’ puts the readers into the narrator’s shoes, and in this case, also makes readers uncomfortable. The tone of the piece is established in the perspective and voice. Details in the story add to the complexity of the characters’ relationships, “On a small table across from the two of you is a photo of the girl who broke up with him three months ago. Her beady dark eyes are staring at somewhere, some place the two of you are not.” The story leaves readers with a sense of uneasiness through its open-endedness and taboo topic covered.

Issue 6- Marilyn Monroe

The Buggy by David Starnes is a plain spoken realistic story in a domestic setting. The unnamed subjective first person narrator is waiting for the arrival of Maury the homeless Pumpkin Man who always stops by his house three days after Halloween. It is November 5 when the story begins. The narrator’s home life is unstable and chaotic with his parents constantly fighting with each other, and harassing him to do things for them. His family also struggles with money, as evidenced by the narrators comment that Maury “can’t help his clothes aren’t much better than mine.” Because Maury doesn’t show up, the main character decides to go look for him. He finds Maury’s buggy, with the pumpkins spilled out of it, and blood on the handles. The main character decides to finish Maury’s deed and collect the pumpkins around the neighborhood.

The Buggy relies on an unseen character that symbolizes hope for the main character. The environment is established well with details like, “Behind me, Dad’s bitching. I can hear him through the thin-walled windows. He’s louder than usual; makes it hard to tell whether Mom’s crying because he’s spent this month’s bill money, or if it’s just because she’s furious he’s eaten all the candy.” The word choice shows that the

arguing happens often and about trivial things. Although Maury isn't in the story his presence symbolizes hope for the main character: "His easy chats I look forward to every year. It's like he knows me, knows how hard I've got it." Throughout all of this the main character maintains positivity. After realizing Maury as been killed the main character spit on his hands, cleaned the blood off the handles on Maury's buggy, and began to collect pumpkins.

I SAT IN A LOBBY FULL OF CRIMINAL RACOONS WITH SWOLLEN CHEEKS OF PERSCRIPTION TOBACOO SPITTING ROPES OF AMBER INTO RED STUDDERED CONDOMS DESIGNED AND PATENTED BY TIMOMTHY LEAHRY by J. Scott Bugher is a magical realism story set in an exotic setting. The unnamed main character is a subjective first person narrator who is presumably in an alternate reality or in a dream world. He is observant of his odd surroundings and it appears as though he does not question it: "A conveyor belt pulled me through the door, down into a room where lay three naked women walking on their hands in circles around a toilet." There is no clear resolution to the story, and ends in ambiguity: "He wrote down some notes and asked me if I had ever seen Beetlejuice. He must have been upset by my answer."

This particular story builds the world clearly and effectively. Although the setting is strange, readers are put directly into the moment of action from the beginning without any explanation. This creates the feeling of a dream. "The ceilings were made of vending machine parts, smiling with infinite rows of Paydays and Kit Kats, and walls of loudspeakers played floppy disk music composed and warranted by Texas Instruments. I was thirty years old then, humming along." Because the unnamed main character does not question what he is experiencing, there is a sense of authority in the author's voice that makes readers believe the circumstances and situation.

Issue 11- The Lost Prophet (Lennon)

Tiny's Fifteen Minutes by Roland Goity is a plain spoken realistic story in a domestic setting. The unnamed subjective first person narrator is recounting the moment he saw his obese neighbor known at the apartment building as "Tiny" on TV. Tiny's big celebrity moment came when he won a hamburger eating contest. "Hoots and hollers

sounded through the open windows and doors of our apartment neighbors—one of us was now a ‘celebrity.’” The narrator is struggling to understand the absurdity of fame: how someone can be deemed famous by performing a silly act, what is accepted by American society as entertainment, and how people try hard to associate with the famous in order to get their name out there as well. In the end the narrator hopes that everything in his apartment building returns to normal.

In very few words and in a single scene Roland Goity captures an entire concept and theme prevalent in today's society: the attraction of fame. He uses first person to get a voice on the matter and presents the story in an interesting setting. The society and norms of this particular apartment building are established well through details like, In the courtyard people referred to him by his nickname “Tiny.” So we all were in for a surprise when Roberta De Something-or-Other, a voluptuous young lady from the 220s (Mary had heard she was a dancer, and we guessed it wasn't in The Nutcracker Suite), started banging down doors." The feeling of community among neighbors comes through these details, as well as the idea of neighborhood gossip. Besides establishing setting, Goity also uses details to create a background and description of the title character Tiny (even though he never actually speaks or physically appears in a scene): "What a shock to discover the fellow from 112—the one who displaced half the water in the complex pool when jumping in, who cast shadows the size of bakery trucks along stucco walls—was right there on the tube, a close-up of him as he gorged one hamburger after another. Sparkling beads of sweat slid down his massive jowls, and his close-set eyes squinted from camera lights (and likely a Guinness Record of indigestion)." Character, place, and details are all strengths of the story that come through in the imagery.

The Brawler by Ted Gogoll is a plain spoken realistic story in a domestic setting. Robbie is a subjective third person struggling to financially care for his dying mother. In order to make money two unnamed characters pick out guys in bars for Robbie to pick fights with. The two men bet on who will win the fight and if Robbie wins, the person who bet on him pays him. In the beginning of the story Robbie is helping a young girl Suzie who has fallen off her bike. He walks her home and although their interaction is brief, they form a bond. Later on in the story Robbie is in a restaurant with the two

unnamed characters and sees the little girl with her father. The two guys betting on Robbie offer to pay him a big sum of money if he fights Suzie's father. Although Robbie antagonizes the man and takes him outside to fight, he cannot go through with it. The story ends with Robbie returning home to take care of his mother.

The story is setup right from the start. The opening scene shows how Robbie meets Suzie and the importance of that relationship comes into play toward the climax of the story. Patterns in the story like, caring for a loved one, the presence of mothers, and physical pain are all present in the opening scene: "Her knees and palms were skinned with patches of bright blood. He leaned down, hands on his knees, and consoled her... 'Mamas have a way of understanding. Believe me, she's not gonna kill you.'" The strength of this piece is the emotional pull established by the character, as well as the structure of the story. Readers meet Robbie as he is helping a young girl. We then find out his mother is dying from lung cancer and how big of a financial crisis he is in. Then we realize he has found a way to make easy money, even if it is in the form of beating up other guys. When we see that the next guy he has to antagonize and fight is Suzie's father the conflict arises and the entire story comes full circle. The story is moving because of Gogoll's three-dimensional character Robbie. Readers see all sides of him and ultimately are left to sympathize with his struggle, as he is unable to provide for his mother.