

# after hours™

a journal of Chicago writing and art

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Albert DeGenova

P. Hertel

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## Table of Contents

Jan Stojaspal	
<i>Silla</i> . . . . .	7
<b>Seventh Annual Mary Blinn Poetry Prize</b> . . . . .	8
Simone Muench and Jackie K. White	
Bona Plays Her Part in the Revival <i>Winner Mary Blinn Poetry Prize</i> . . . . .	9
Virginia Bell	
Meuse VI <i>Finalist Mary Blinn Poetry Prize</i> . . . . .	10
Molly Sturdevant	
Your Instrument Mouths <i>Finalist Mary Blinn Poetry Prize</i> . . . . .	12
Judith Valente	
What Peace Is <i>Finalist Mary Blinn Poetry Prize</i> . . . . .	13
Santiago Weksler	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	14
Steve Geer	
City Poet . . . . .	15
Nina Corwin	
After Whitman, After Hoover . . . . .	16
Greg Kuepfer	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	18
William Coleman	
Houdini: The Séance/The Underwater Trunk Escape . . . . .	19
Patrick Reardon	
A little time . . . . .	20
Greg Kuepfer	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	21
Caroline Wellman	
Crows . . . . .	22
Jan Stojaspal	
<i>Café</i> . . . . .	23
Nancy Burke	
Thursday . . . . .	24
Santiago Weksler	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	26
P. Hertel	
Under my skin . . . . .	27
Santiago Weksler	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	28
Jean Passarelli	
Sustenance . . . . .	29
Golda Grais	
Edible . . . . .	30
Orianna D'Landazuri	
Bittersweet . . . . .	31
Pamela Miller	
Recurring Dream at Seventy-Five . . . . .	32

## Table of Contents

Santiago Weksler	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	33
Greg Kuepfer	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	34
Gael Granados	
Adolescence Kills Child Actors . . . . .	35
Greg Kuepfer	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	36
Albert DeGenova	
Gliding Toward Retirement . . . . .	37
Dan Campion	
Echo System . . . . .	38
At a Juncture . . . . .	39
<i>After Hours 25th Anniversary Scrapbook</i> . . . . .	40
P. Hertel	
<i>April Snow</i> . . . . .	44
Andrew Byrne	
Love, The Gentle Passion . . . . .	45
Greg Kuepfer	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	55
William Coleman	
Remote . . . . .	56
Nancy Burke	
Moving a Desk . . . . .	57
Siegfried Mortkowitz	
The Storm . . . . .	58
Elizabeth Bush	
<i>Cloud Along the Chicago River</i> . . . . .	60
Caroline Wellman	
Ghost Gardens . . . . .	61
Greg Kuepfer	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	62
James O'Meara	
Camping . . . . .	63
Bill Marsh	
Post-Conjunction . . . . .	65
Kali Cramer	
I don't have a hometown . . . . .	66
D.A. Hosek	
#66 . . . . .	68
Santiago Weksler	
<i>untitled</i> . . . . .	69
Robert Russell	
Men Who Stand . . . . .	70

## Table of Contents

---

<b>John Brzezinski</b>	
<i>untitled</i> .....	72
<b>Jeffrey Wolf</b>	
My Grandfather's House .....	73
<b>Suzanne Cosgrove</b>	
Crumbs .....	75
<b>Santiago Weksler</b>	
<i>untitled</i> .....	76
<b>Bill Marsh</b>	
Missing Person Is Personal .....	77
<b>James Madigan</b>	
Hot Dogs and Hamburgers .....	78
<b>Maira Pujols</b>	
<i>untitled</i> .....	80
<b>Richard Holinger</b>	
Henry Plays Throw-out .....	81
<b>Santiago Weksler</b>	
<i>untitled</i> .....	85
<b>Jan Stojaspal</b>	
<i>Prism</i> .....	86
<b>Paul Freidinger</b>	
In This Reflection .....	87
<b>Contributors</b> .....	88
<b>25 Years of Featured Writers and Artists</b> .....	92

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## In Memoriam

We thought it important at our 25-year milestone to remember some of those contributors who have passed. Their work enriched and uplifted our magazine, and they are deeply missed by the Chicago writing and artist community.

Rane Arroyo	Alan Gross
Norbert Blei	Effie Mihopoulous
Robert Blinn	Ron Offen
Mary Blinn	James Paradiso
Tom Cosgrove	Tom Roby
Helen Degen Cohen	E. Donald Two-Rivers
David Hernandez	



*Silla*

## Contributors

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\*Author of *Lifting Child from the Ground, Turning Around* (Glass Lyre Press 2025) and *From the Belly* (Sibling Rivalry Press 2012), **Virginia Bell** won *NELLE Magazine's* Nonfiction Prize in 2020 for the personal essay, "Chicken," and her poetry won Honorable Mention in the 2019 *RiverSedge* Poetry Prize, judged by José Antonio Rodríguez. Her work has also appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. Bell is Co-Editor of *RHINO Poetry* and teaches at Loyola University Chicago and DePaul University.

**John Brzezinski** was born in Chicago in 1951 and has been carrying a camera since the age of fifteen. He is self-taught in the historical and technical aspects of photography, influenced by the many greats, such as Eugene Atget, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Irving Penn, Harry Callahan, et al. He travels the country with his wife photographing the iconic architecture of American universities and displays them on the website [universityicons.com](http://universityicons.com).

**Nancy Burke** is a poet, fiction writer, psychoanalyst and psychotherapy activist from Evanston IL. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Narrative, Story International, Sky Island, Bicoastal Review, Whitefish Review*, and *Alaska Quarterly Review* among other literary journals and has won numerous awards. She has released two CDs of original music and her well-reviewed novel, *Undergrowth*, was published by Gibson House Press. A second novel, *The Box*, is forthcoming in November of 2025.

Generations of **Elizabeth Bush's** family lived, loved, and worked in Chicago, running beauty and upholstery shops on East 79th Street, decorating the windows of Marshall Field's, waiting tables at The Drake and Palmer House, and in the psychiatric nursing department at Passavant Memorial Hospital, currently Northwestern Hospital. Elizabeth lives in Los Angeles and serves as a librarian at Mount Gleason Middle School in Sunland. Her photographs have appeared in the The Palm Beach Photographic Centre and in the lobby of a Hollywood movie theater. She is currently crafting her first novel dedicated to Theodore Bush, a beloved father and Chicago native. Her photograph featured in this issue was taken along the Chicago River last summer.

**Andrew Byrne's** work has appeared in *The Chicago Reader, Oyez Review, Poetry Quarterly, North Chicago Magazine* and *After Hours*. He is also the author of a book of poems, *First Words*.

**Dan Campion's** poetry books are *Calypso* (Syncline Press, 1981), *A Playbill for Sunset* (Ice Cube Press, 2022), and *The Mirror Test* (MadHat Press, 2024). He is the author of the monograph *Peter De Vries and Surrealism* (Bucknell University Press, 1995) and a coeditor of *Walt Whitman: The Measure of His Song* (Holy Cow! Press, 1981, 1998; 2019). His poetry has appeared previously in *After Hours* and in other journals and anthologies. A native Chicagoan, Dan lives in Iowa City, Iowa.

\***William Coleman** is a high school English teacher. His poems have appeared in *Poetry, The Paris Review, Western Humanities Review*, and other publications. He is the co-founder of The Star-Splitter Academy and the former executive editor of nonfiction for *DoubleTake Magazine*.

**Nina Corwin's** most recent collections are *The Uncertainty of Maps* and *Dear Future*. Published in numerous anthologies, *Harvard Review, Hotel Amerika, New Ohio Review* and more, Corwin has been nominated twice each for the Pushcart and Best of the Net awards. Founding Editor for *Fifth Wednesday Journal*, in daylight hours, she is a psychotherapist known for her work on behalf of victims of violence.

**Suzanne Cosgrove** is a full-time journalist and part-time poet and photographer who lives in the Chicago suburb of Evanston.

\***Kali Joy Cramer** (he/she) is from the Chicago suburbs. He won a 2024 Ireland Chair of Poetry Student Award while completing an M.A. in Poetry at Queen's University Belfast. She is published in *Querencia Press, Impossible Archetype, Sparks Literary Journal, The Broken Spine*, and *Sunday Mornings at*

*the River*. He also authored a true crime nonfiction *Sinister Chicago: Windy City Secrets, Urban Legends, and Sordid Characters* in 2020.

**Albert DeGenova** is an award-winning poet and teacher, as well as the Executive Director of Write On, Door County. He is the author of five books of poetry and two chapbooks. His most recent book *Human Nature, poems of witness* was published by Kelsay Books in January 2024. He earned his MFA at Spalding University in Louisville. DeGenova is the co-founder of After Hours Press and co-editor of *After Hours* magazine.

\***Orianna D’Ladnazuri** is a Chicago-based writer studying art history and creative writing at Columbia College Chicago. She works as a curatorial assistant at the Museum of Contemporary Photography. She has always had a connection to Chicago, living in the city for two years, and being involved in the Chicago art scene, Orianna has been immersed in everything the city of Chicago has to offer – she is ecstatic to call the city her home.

**Paul Freidinger** grew up in central Illinois, taught school in suburban Chicago, and now lives in the deep South of the U.S., where he also has a long history. He has published widely through the U.S. and abroad for forty years. Poetry continues to be a guiding force in his life. At this point in time, he is grateful to be writing every day with a sense of purpose.

**Steve Geer** is a scientist and photographer living in Chicago. He has exhibited his photographs in galleries in the U.S. and in Europe, has published his work in numerous photography magazines, and is on the board of directors of the Perspective Fine Art Photography Gallery in Evanston, IL. Steve is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society (FRPS). In 2019 Steve was a founding member of the P2 Collective, a group of photographers and poets producing an ekphrastic dialogue in which poems inspire photographs that then inspire further poems, and so on. Steve has recently begun writing poems inspired by his own photographs.

\***Golda Grais** is a writer and artist from Chicago, specifically Lincoln Park. Chicago is home to her, although she has spent stints living in Spain and California. Growing up in this city has shaped her perspective as a poet, specifically its rich literary history and vibrant arts scene. One example of this is "Edible," which was inspired by a visit to the Art Institute. Her works of prose and poetry have been previously published in *Bar-Bar*, *In Parentheses*, *Pink Disco Magazine*, the *Scripps College Journal*, and the *New York Times*.

\***Gael Granados** is a Secondary Education major with a Mathematics focus at DePaul University. Gael has previously been published in the literary journal *Violet Margin*. You can find him drinking too much coffee while cramming for classes.

**P. Hertel** is an artist and writer. She is co-founder and co-editor of *After Hours*. She lived all her life in Chicago except for six years when she lived and worked as a writer and editor in Prague, Czech Republic.

\***Richard Holinger’s** work has appeared in *Chautauqua*, *The Iowa Review*, *Southern Indiana Review*, and has been nominated several times for a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. He lives in rural northern Illinois, retired after forty years of teaching high school English. His most recent release is the poetry chapbook *Down from the Sycamores*; his short story collection, *Unimaginable Things*, is forthcoming from Main Street Rag Publications.

\***D. A. Hosek’s** poetry has appeared in *Hanging Loose*, *Meniscus*, *Great Lakes Review*, *Bronze Bird Review*, *Belt Magazine* and elsewhere. He earned his MFA from the University of Tampa. He lives and writes in Oak Park, IL, and spends his days as an insignificant cog in the machinery of corporate America.

About his photography, **Greg Kuepfer** writes: “Walking the same streets but always different thoughts, light, results. A total fascination with the variety of possibilities that the city offers. I could say more about myself but this is the part I enjoy the most.”

## Contributors

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**James Madigan** was born and raised in Chicago. He spent twenty-five years at the Oak Park Public Library. Upon retirement in 2019, he studied poetry at Carlow College in Ireland, and then graduated from the Writer's Program at University of Illinois Chicago. He was presented the 2022 Michael Anania Award for Poetry. His first book of poetry, *Political Prisoners USA and Other Poems*, published by Broadstone Books, came out in August 2025. He lives in Oak Park, Illinois.

**Bill Marsh** is a teacher and writer living in Chicago. His poems have appeared recently in *After Hours*, *Allium*, *Mudroom Magazine*, *The Waiting Room*, *Timber*, and *Volume Poetry*, among other journals. He was born in Chicago and now lives here and works at Wright College on the northwest side.

**Pamela Miller** is a longtime Chicagoan and *After Hours* contributor. She has published five books of poems, most recently *How to Do the Greased Wombat Slide* (Unsolicited Press, 2024). Her text poetry and visual poetry have appeared in *Ranger*, *Utriculi*, *Word For/Word*, *Otoliths*, *BlazeVOX*, *RHINO* and many other journals. She is also the author of two visual poetry chapbooks, *Mr. Mischief* and *Why Ghosts Come Back*.

**Siegfried Mortkowitz** lives in Prague with a very talkative orange tabby named Joe. He (Siegfried, not Joe) is the author of the chapbook *Eating Brains and Other Poems*, published by After Hours Press. His poems and autobiographical complaints have been published in *Body*, *After Hours* and *The Prague Revue*. He recently hosted a Substack blog called "Offbeat" featuring his poems and short stories. A new book, *Life or Death - Selected Poems Old and New* will be published by After Hours Press this fall.

\***James O'Meara** is from the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois and has been writing seriously since high school. He has written a number of short stories, one of which was shortlisted for The Letter Review Prize for Short Fiction (Jan - Feb, 2024) as well as a novel which was shortlisted by The Letter Review Prize for Unpublished Books (Nov - Dec 2023). He has a Bachelor's Degree from Georgetown University in English Literature with a minor in Music.

**Jean Passarelli** is a proud Chicagoan, which shows up subconsciously in much of her work. She has had previous poetry acceptances in *Muse Pie Press*, *Ocotillo Review*, *After Hours*, *Dark Matter Journal* and others. She is owned by a 6 lb Yorkie and a one-year-old granddaughter.

**Moira Pujols** is a Chicago-based consultant interpreter with years of experience in nonprofit publishing and cultural event production. Originally from the Dominican Republic, she has spent over two decades traveling the world as a conference interpreter, capturing moments through her camera and gathering stories along the way. She is a frequent contributor to *After Hours*.

**Patrick T. Reardon**, a Chicago Tribune reporter from 1976 to 2009, is the author of seven poetry collections. His latest is *Every Marred Thing: A Time in America*, the winner of the 2024 Faulkner-Wisdom Prize from the Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society of New Orleans (Lavender Ink). He is a five-time nominee in poetry for a Pushcart Prize. His poetry has appeared in *America*, *RHINO*, *Commonweal*, *After Hours*, *Autumn Sky*, *Burningword Literary Journal*, *Poetry East*, *The Galway Review*, *Under a Warm Green Linden* and other journals. He is also the author of the history *The Loop: The "L" Tracks That Shaped and Saved Chicago*.

\***Robert Russell** is a recovering economist who lives in Madison, WI, where he coordinated the poetry reading series and group, CheapAtAnyPrice Poets, and hosted the radio program "Radio Literature" for several years.

**Bruce Sharp** received his first camera in the mid-1970s. Since then he estimates that he has shot around 60,000 photos, including eight or nine which were fairly good. He has lived in Chicago since 1981 and quickly changes the subject if anyone asks where he lived before that. His photos have appeared in several books including *Photography in Cambodia (Nicholas Coffill)* *Brother Number One (David Chandler)* and

*Phnom Penh: Capital City* (Michael Waibel). Other publication credits, typically the result of serendipity rather than skill, include the *Washington Post*, *Chicago Reader*, the *Christian Science Monitor* and *Natural History* magazine.

**Jan Stojaspal** is a freelance journalist and photographer based in Prague, Czech Republic. His photographic work is a visual exploration of people and places in and around Europe, with a focus on Mediterranean areas and countries of the former eastern bloc.

\***Molly Sturdevant's** short-prose and poetry have appeared in *Orion Magazine*, *The Dark Mountain Project*, *Crab Creek Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, *About Place Journal*, and elsewhere. Her first novel is due out in 2026, and tells the true story of an 1896 mining strike. Her creative concerns are with class consciousness, love as a revolutionary force, and changing the expected patterns of poetic language. She lives and works in the Chicago area.

**Judith Valente** has published three collections of poetry in addition to six non-fiction books and edited an anthology of poems on finding the sacred in the ordinary. She spent much of her career as journalist and was a staff writer for *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* and an on-air correspondent for PBS-TV and two NPR stations. Mary Oliver selected her chapbook *Inventing An Alphabet* for the 2005 national Aldrich poetry Prize. Her poems have appeared in *After Hours*, *Parabola*, *RHINO*, *Ninth Letter*, *Presence* and other journals. Her other poetry collections include *Discovering Moons* and *How to Be a Contemplative*.

**Santiago Weksler** was born in Lima, Peru. He started studying analog photography in 2007 at Truman College in Chicago, where he became passionate about black and white photography and the study of light. The master painters of chiaroscuro, German expressionism, film noir and street photography are references in Weksler's work. He has exhibited at several literary cafes in Chicago and also at the Truman and Harold Washington Colleges, University of Illinois at Chicago and the Old Town Triangle Gallery. His photos have appeared in *Contratiempo*, *After Hours*, *Hoy*, *Resiliencia*, *Foto Argenta*, *Lamono*, *B&W*, *Smithsonian*, *National Geographic*, *Proyecto 1x1*, *Mundo Foto*, *Ojos rojos y Lensculture*, and *MOLOK* magazines. His exhibition "Santiago de Chuco, tierra de Vallejo" was exhibited in 2018 at the Inca Garcilaso Gallery of the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lima. In addition, he was selected for the Second Cusco Photo Biennial in 2019.

**Caroline Wellman** has poems forthcoming in *The Comstock Review* and *Yearling*. Her poetry collection *Presences* was published by Parallel Press in 2014, and her recent poetry has been nominated for Best of the Net. She holds degrees in American literature and creative writing from the University of Arkansas. She currently lives on ancestral lands of the Sac and Fox Indians in Illinois and works for the US Postal Service.

\***Jeffrey Wolf** is a lifelong Chicagoan, born in suburban Des Plaines and currently living in Edgewater, where he is an active member of the Chicago literary scene. His writing has appeared in *Conjunctions*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Adroit Journal*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, and elsewhere. He currently teaches Creative Writing at the University of Chicago and hosts the award-winning reading series An Inconvenient Hour.



*Featured Writers and Artists*

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Issue #1, Summer 2000

Featured Writer: David Hernandez

Featured Artist: Herb Nolan

Cover Photo: Albert DeGenova

Issue #2, Winter 2001

Featured Artist: Greg Kuepfer

Cover Photo: Greg Kuepfer

Issue #3, Summer 2001

Featured Writer: E. Donald Two-Rivers

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #4, Winter 2002

Featured Artist: Dean Chipman

Cover Image: Dean Chipman

Issue #5, Summer 2002

Featured Writer: Cherie Caswell Dost

Featured Artist: Hagen Dost

Cover Photo: Robert Klein Engler

Issue #6, Winter 2003

Featured Artist: Faith Bowman

Cover Photo: Faith Bowman

Issue #7, Summer 2003

Featured Artist: Joseph M. Giordano

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #8, Winter 2004

Featured Writer: Martha Modena Vertreace-Doody

Featured Artist: Stewart Kenneth Moore

Cover Image: Stewart Kenneth Moore

Issue #9, Summer 2004

Featured Writer: Larry Janowski

Cover Photo: Joseph M. Giordano

Issue #10, Winter 2005

Featured Writer, Stuart Dybek

Cover Photo: Hagen Dost

Issue #11, Summer 2005

5th Anniversary

Retrospective Previous Features

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #12, Winter 2006

Featured Writer: Judith Valente

Cover Photo: Jennifer Bisbing

Issue #13, Summer 2006

Featured Writer: Kristy Bowen

Cover Photo: Jennifer Bisbing

Issue #14, Winter 2007

Featured Writer: Rane Arroyo

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #15, Summer 2007

Featured Writer: Andrew Byrne

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #16, Winter 2008

Featured Writer: Nancy Burke

Cover Photo: Jason Patrick Miller

Issue #17, Summer 2008

Featured Writer: Mary Blinn

Cover Photo: Jennifer Bisbing

Issue #18, Winter 2009

Featured Writer: Marc Smith

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #19, Summer 2009

Featured Writer: Patricia McMillen

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #20-21, Summer 2010

10th Anniversary Double Issue

Cover Collage

Issue #22, Winter 2011

Featured Artist: Santiago Weksler

Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #23, Summer 2011

Featured Writer: Barry Silesky

Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #24, Winter 2012

Featuring Chicago Latinx Writers

Special Editor: Mary Hawley

Cover Photo: Max DeGenova

Issue #25, Summer 2012

Featured Writer: Nina Corwin

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #26, Winter 2013

Featured Writer: Charles Rossiter

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #27, Summer 2013

Featured Writer: Mike Puican

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #28, Winter 2014

Featured Writer: Donna Pucciani

Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #29, Summer 2014

Featured Writer: Pamela Miller

Cover Photo: Max DeGenova

Issue #30, Winter 2015

Featured Writer: John Vietnam Nguyen

Cover Photo: Rafael Franco

Issue #31, Summer 2015  
Featured Writer: Quraysh Ali Lansana  
Cover Photo: Jan Stojaspal

Issue #32-33, Summer 2016  
Special Double Issue  
Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #34, Winter 2017  
Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #35, Winter 2018  
Featured Writer: Billy Lombardo  
Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #36, Summer 2018  
Featured Writer: Marty Mc Connell  
Cover Photo: P. Hertel

Issue #37, Winter 2019  
Featured Writer: Mark Turcotte  
Cover Photo: John Brzezinski

Issue #38, Summer 2019  
Featured Writer: Jenene Ravesloot  
Cover Photo: John Brzezinski

Issue #39, Winter 2020  
Featured Writer: Jacob Saenz  
Cover Photo: Lenka Capounova Konopaskova

Issue #40, Summer 2020  
20th Anniversary  
Featured Writer: Donald G. Evans  
Featured Artist: Moira Pujols  
Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #41, Winter 2021  
Featured Writer: Marci Rae Johnson  
Cover Photo: Mark Baker

Issue #42, Summer 2021  
Featured Writer: Carlos Cumpian  
Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #43, Winter 2022  
Featured Writer: The P2 Collective  
Cover Photo: Jan Stojaspal

Issue #44, Summer 2022  
Featured Writer: Viola Lee  
Cover Photo: Mark Baker

Issue #45, Winter 2023  
Featured Writer: Kurt Heintz  
Cover Photo: Jan Stojaspal

Issue #46, Summer 2023  
Featured Writer: Haki R. Madhubuti  
Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #47, Winter 2024  
Featured Writer: Yolanda Nieves  
Cover Photo: Santiago Weksler

Issue #48, Summer 2024  
Featured Writer: Brenda Cárdenas  
Cover Photo: Jan Stojaspal

Issue #49, Winter 2025  
Featured Writer: Stephanie Trenchard  
Cover Photo: Bruce Sharp

Issue #50, Summer 2025  
25th Anniversary Issue  
Cover Photo: Bruce Sharp