

# after hours™

a journal of Chicago writing and art

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## Contributors

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**Mark Baker** is an American writer, journalist, and photographer. He is originally from Ohio, now based in Prague, Czech Republic. His book, *Time of Change*, about the Czech Republic in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was published in 2021. You can read his blog at [www.markbakerprague.com](http://www.markbakerprague.com).

\***Eva Brooks** is a writer from Lombard, Illinois currently living in Iowa City, Iowa. She has poems published in *Catharsis* and *Wild Hyacinth*. Her favorite days involve going into the city.

**Andrew Byrne** was born and raised in Logan Square, Chicago. He is the author of the book of poems, *First Words*. His work has appeared in *The Chicago Reader*, *Oyez Review*, *Poetry Quarterly*, *North Chicago Magazine* and *After Hours*.

**Dan Champion's** poetry books are *Calypso* (Syncline Press, 1981), *A Playbill for Sunset* (Ice Cube Press, 2022), and *The Mirror Test* (MadHat Press, 2024). Ice Cube Press will issue another book of his poetry, *Star Anchors*, in April 2026. 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.

**Esteban Colon**, author of *Things I Learned the Hard Way* and *Hell Creek*, is from the suburb of Chicago Heights. He currently resides in Milwaukee and served as the 2018-2019 Poet Laureate of Kenosha, Wisconsin.

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

**Albert DeGenova** is an award-winning poet, publisher, teacher, and blues saxophonist. He is the author of five books of poetry and two chapbooks. His work has appeared in numerous journals including *RHINO*, *The Paterson Literary Review*, *The Louisville Review*, *Aesthetica Magazine*, *The Café Review* and others. DeGenova is the founder of After Hours Press and co-editor of *After Hours* magazine, a journal of Chicago writing and art which launched in June of 2000. He splits his time now between the metro Chicago area and Sturgeon Bay, WI.

\***Shivani Gupta** is a writer, curator & researcher. Her writing is an effort to hold multiple identities without forcing resolution. Her work has featured globally across BBC, *Forbes*, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Mumbai Poetry Slam, Loyola University Chicago, *Baby Teeth Journal*, *Ranger Magazine*, *The Well* & more. She is a current ISL fellow & serves as the Dev Committee Chair for the Chicago Poetry Center. Her upcoming chapbook *my mother is a mixed metaphor* will be published in 2026 by Rockwood Press.

**William Harrison** is a writer, musician, and visual artist. His memoir, *Making the Low Notes*, was published in 2023. There are links to his other publications on his website <https://www.billharrisonauthor.com>.

\***Janice Kazmier** is a writer and photographer residing in Evanston, IL. A native of the Pilsen/Little Village neighborhood, she spent many years in New Orleans before returning home to the Midwest. Though trained as a lawyer, Janice also studied creative writing, photography, and architecture, including time at the Art Institute, the Chicago Architecture Center, and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. She currently is a storyteller with the Goodman Theatre's GeNarrations program and a volunteer with Chicago Humanities.

\***Joseph Kenney** obtained a Humanities BA at Johns Hopkins, a PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Chicago, and was a Fulbright Fellow at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. Besides scholarly work on Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Thomas Mann, and Arthur Schnitzler, he has previously published poetry in *Chicago Review*, *The North Meridian Review*, and *THINK*.

\***Emily Lozano** is a first-generation Cuban-American, born in the Chicago to immigrant parents who taught her resilience, curiosity, and the value of storytelling. Her stories reflect the sometimes conflicting cultures

that shaped her, inviting readers to question their beliefs, reevaluate their values, and confront their own sense of self.

\***Meghan Malachi** is a poet and writer from The Bronx, New York. She is an Associate Editor at *RHINO*. She is the first-place winner of the *Spoon River Poetry Review* 2022 Editor's Prize Contest and runner-up of the 2024 Princemere Poetry Prize. Her poetry collection, *No Lace Fronts in Iowa City*, was selected by Allison Joseph as runner-up of Madville Publishing's 2024 Arthur Smith Poetry Prize. Meghan has been a finalist for the Lois Cranston Memorial Poetry Prize, the Trio Book Award, the Hilary Tham Capital Collection, and the 2024 Gasher Press Book Award. Her first chapbook, *The Autodidact*, was published by Ethel Zine & Micro Press. She lives in Chicago, Illinois.

\***Robert McDonald's** first book of poems, *A Streetlight That's Been Told It Used to Be the Moon*, is coming from Roadside Press in 2026. His work has appeared in *Allium*, *Disquieting Muses Quarterly*, *Action*, *Spectacle*, *The Tiny Journal*, *Le Petite Zine*, *Hearth & Coffin*, *Pank*, *Sentence*, and *West Trade Review*, among others. He lives with his husband in Chicago.

**Patricia McMillen** is a musician, community activist, and retired lawyer, with publications in journalism, biography, fiction and poetry. After 73 years in her home state of Illinois – living at some 17 separate addresses in and around Chicago, holding roughly the same number of full or part-time jobs while also earning two graduate degrees from Chicago universities – she relocated to northern California this year. Her first full-length poetry collection, *Running Wild*, was published by Finishing Line Press (Georgetown, KY) in 2024; a prior chapbook, *Knife Lake Anthology*, is currently out of print.

**Pamela Miller** grew up on Chicago's South Side and then kept moving farther and farther north, finally ending up on the Chicago/Evanston border. She has published five collections of poetry, including *How to Do the Greased Wombat Slide* (Unsolicited Press, 2024). Her work has recently appeared in *Third Wednesday*, *Word For/Word*, *Ranger*, *Book of Matches*, *Poetry Super Highway* and elsewhere.

**Siegfried Mortkowitz** lives in Prague with a talkative orange tabby named Joe. He (Siegfried, not Joe) is the author of the chapbook *Eating Brains and Other Poems*. His poems and autobiographical stories 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 full-length book of poetry, *A Matter of Life or Death*, was published in December 2025 and is available to order online from After Hours Press: [www.afterhourspress.com](http://www.afterhourspress.com).

\***Michelle Parker** is a paper collage artist from Chicago, Illinois. In her work, subtle shifts in composition, color values, symbols and text allow open interpretation from the viewer's point of view.

**Binx River Perino** is a genderqueer poet from Texas with an MFA in Creative Writing from Emerson College. A frequent guest reader and assistant editor with various literary journals, their work has appeared in *Humana Obscura*, *Tyger Quarterly*, *Hooligan*, *Door is a Jar*, and elsewhere. Based in Chicago, they serve on the Board of Readers with Sundress Publications and as the Editor-in-Chief of *The Pill Magazine*.

**Joe Phelan** writes from the western suburbs of Chicago, where he lives with his wife, sons, and intrepid rescue mutt. Joe's work has previously appeared in publications such as *After Hours*, *Antiphony Journal*, *Ekstasis Magazine*, *LIT Magazine*, and can be found at [joewhelan.net](http://joewhelan.net).

\***Mari Ramler** is associate professor of English at Tennessee Technological University. She has recently published in *Chiron Review*, *Taco Bell Quarterly*, *Screen Door Review*, *Hypertext Magazine*, *Levitate Magazine*, *Survive and Thrive*, and *The Iris Review*.

**Patrick T. Reardon**, who was a *Chicago Tribune* reporter for 32 years, has published six poetry collections, including *Darkness on the Face of the Deep and Puddin': The Autobiography of a Baby*, *A Memoir in Prose Poems*. His next collection *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, is forthcoming from Lavender Ink. He has been nominated five times for a Pushcart Prize.

## Contributors

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**Jane Richards'** poetry has appeared in numerous publications, including *Gyroscope Review*, *East on Central*, *Willow Review*, *The Best of Choeofpleirn Press*, and *After Hours*. Her chapbook, *The Feather Variations: poems*, was launched in 2024, and she has been twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize. A former piano teacher and social worker, she now pursues her life-long passions for writing, nature and travel. She holds masters degrees in social work and creative writing. She has called the Chicago metro area her home most of her life.

**Jan Stojaspal** is a street photographer based in Prague, Czech Republic.

\***Rachel Singel** is an Associate Professor at the University of Louisville. She grew up on a small farm in Charlottesville, Virginia. She received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Virginia in 2009 and a Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking from the University of Iowa in 2013. Rachel has participated in residencies at the Penland School of Crafts, the Venice Printmaking Studio, Internazionale di Grafica Venezia, Art Print Residence in Barcelona, Spain, Wharepuke Print Studios in New Zealand, Proyecto'ace, an Artist-in-Residence Program in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and AGA Lab in the Netherlands. She has studied non-toxic printmaking at the Grafisk Eksperimentarium studio in Andalusia and recently traveled to Japan to research papermaking with invasive plants. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and represented in private collections and public institutions.

\***John Tracy** attended the University of Chicago Law School from 2011 to 2014. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Southern Poetry Review*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Pictura Journal* and *Midway Journal*, among others.

**Donna Vorreyer** is the featured writer in this issue of *After Hours*, see page 32.

**Santiago Weksler** was born in Lima, Peru. He started studying analog photography in 2007 at Truman College in Chicago. The master painters of chiaroscuro, German expressionism, film noir and street photography are major 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.

\***Jan Wiezorek** (he/him) writes from the Harbor Country of rural Michigan and is author of the poetry chapbooks *Prayer's Prairie* (Michigan Writers Cooperative Press, 2025) and *Forests of Woundedness* (Seven Kitchens Press, 2026). He received a Master of Arts Degree in English: Composition/Writing from Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago.

