

***Hobart: a Literary Journal***

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Editor: Aaron Burch; some issues have guest editors

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Web Address: www.hobartpulp.com

What They Publish: Fiction, nonfiction, artwork; prose 1,500–8,000 words

Submission Guidelines: Submit online or by snail mail; online attach as Word or .rtf document with “print submission” on subject line. No word limit, but prefer 1,500–8,000 words. (Shorter works should be sent to *Hobart* online magazine, which is currently on hiatus.) Response time 2-3 months. Some issues have themes.

Description of Publication: Nice looking book-like literary print journal; published twice a year, \$10/issue, \$17/year. Contains both black/white and color artwork on glossy pages. Very few unpublished writers. Several stories nominated for Pushcart Prize. Lots of variety in length of pieces. Currently sponsoring a mini-book contest (15,000-35,000 words).

Percentage of Prose Per Issue / Amount of Prose Published Annually: About 25 pieces per issue; 50 pieces per year.

Prose Reviews:

*Continental Divide* by Matt St. Amand is a plainspoken, realistic story in a domestic setting. The subjective first person narrator and his buddy Leo are on a road trip. The two young men, friends since childhood, are experiencing some friction in their relationship. This is brought to a head when they pass a backpack by the side of the road; the narrator wants to go back to check it out, Leo does not. The narrator almost crashes the car and beats up a hobo to get the backpack. They take it to the sheriff but he doesn't seem to care. There is some question at the end whether the guys are still friends even though Leo assures the narrator they are “best buddies.”

This piece reads like someone's travel journal. It is structured with subtitles of the various towns they pass through on their trip. I am not sure whether it is fiction or creative (and embellished) nonfiction. There is a lot of material that causes the story to drag since it does not support what seems to be the main idea here: the state of the young men's friendship. Even the climactic event in the story – stopping the car to go back to check out this backpack, makes me go, “so what?” This *Hobart* is a themed travel issue. I wonder if this piece would have been chosen otherwise; it does not seem particularly strong.

*Nowhere Near Far Away* by Dorothee Lang is a plainspoken realistic story in a domestic setting. It is told from a subjective third person point of view from the perspective of the main and only character. The character, known only as “she,” is possessed by her chores and her to-do lists. She goes to the grocery store so early that the doors are locked. Because she cannot stand to

wait, she gets on the road and enjoys the sensation of driving nowhere fast. She realizes she could just keep going. She questions whether she will pursue this unplanned freedom.

This is a very short piece with no intricate development of character or plot, just an exploration of this one possibility of rebellion or release from the bound-down life of have-tos and shoulds. It is interesting that the piece is told in third person, when we are entirely inside the character's mind. In my opinion, this makes the story stronger, similar to Larry Brown's *Kubuku Rides (This Is It)*. The end of the story leaves us not knowing whether she will grab her weekend of freedom or turn around to return to her chores. I was satisfied with the writer's choice to leave the question unanswered.

Rating: 5 out of 10. *Hobart* would be a quality journal for an emerging writer's first publication. It has a professional appearance. I was particularly impressed with the color glossy photos and the number of stories nominated for Pushcarts. However, I did note some typos and not all the work was strong. The main problem for emerging writers is that there are very few unpublished writers whose work is featured. *Hobart* published its fifth issue in the summer of 2005, so it has not yet established a substantial track record.