

the Headlight Review

Editor's Note

Vol. I No. I, Winter 2022

This inaugural issue comes a full five years after *The Headlight Review* was first created in 2017 by Dr. Loverde-Dropp and her students in the Master of Arts in Professional Writing program at Kennesaw State University. The students opted for a hands-on approach to learning the ins and outs of literary publishing rather than navigating a traditional seminar-style course. Since then, the hard work that many staff members, directors, and others involved have contributed towards reaching the goals of uplifting emerging artists, establishing an internationally recognized literary journal, and pursuing knowledge outside of the constraints of a classroom setting have paid off. In those five years, THR editors, KSU community members, readers, and contributors around the world have traversed what, for many of us, felt like lightyears—through political and social turmoil in our homes and communities; through viruses that invaded our lives and took the lives of many; and through a rapidly changing publishing landscape that continues to ask us to navigate the uncertainty that comes with new technology. We as artists and consumers of art have often been left grappling with questions about the future of our industry and what we should do next.

Though the journey has often felt as if there are monsters waiting around every turn, potentially threatening our very life or livelihood, the light that illuminates the journey for many

of us—those of us for whom art is not a choice, but a reflex much like breathing—has continued to guide us on this path, becoming brighter with each turn, as it brings us closer to each other. By continuing to create and share with each other, we have combined our light to forge a beacon that leads us back to one another, as well as back to the tools that we may have at one point thought we didn't have the strength to use.

Just as each of us has a journey we must follow, we also have a collective journey as artists, writers, and human beings that requires us to turn to each other again and again. Just as one may interpret upon viewing Issue One's cover art, titled, "Journey," by acrylic painter Marvin Hollman, we may find ourselves tossed about in the currents that push us, unconscious to the many obstacles and rewards that lie ahead, struggling to remember the parts of the past that can sustain us and motivate us to action, rather than tell us lies about ourselves and hold us back—much like that which these lines from "Map of Matter" by featured poet Joanna Sitt remind us of: "Those were not the days and I didn't live / through them as much as I slewed / across the surface of their rotten skin / because the decayed hand of the past reaches / for everyone not one finger of truth."

Luckily, we're not riding this wave alone, and our community of artists, writers, and readers has taught us that as submissions from around the world continue to draw us into conversation, reflection, and inspiration. For this issue, we received 120 fiction stories, 273 poems, 39 creative nonfiction stories, and 23 art pieces from an amazing list of creatives and storytellers. THR would like to thank everyone who considered our journal for publication, as well as our amazing group of contributors who unveiled themselves and asked us to come along on their journey. We would also like to thank Chioma Urama (our featured interviewee) for

speaking with us about her poetry collection, *A Body of Water*, her process as a writer, and why we must hold tight to the ties that bond us together, throughout this great journey.

Special thanks to our amazing editorial team who worked tirelessly to finish this issue and to ensure the journal's success in so many ways this past year. We couldn't have done this without all of you and your contributions are what make *The Headlight Review* such a joy to continue creating.

We hope you all enjoy the issue as much as we enjoyed curating it. Happy reading!

Warmly,

Sam Casto and Tyra Douyon

Co-Editorial Directors

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