CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Hannah Agosta is a freelance illustrator from Philadelphia, currently residing in Denver, Colorado. She graduated from the University of the Arts where she studied Illustration and Art History. She uses mixed media and digital processes to create illustrations for a variety of clients which include The Washington Post, Grid Magazine, Sacramento Magazine, The Writer’s Chronicle, Orlando Magazine, and more. In addition to painting, sketching, and looking at beautiful art, Hannah also spends her time traveling and collecting inspiration from the places she goes. For commissions or art inquiries email hannah@hannahagosta.com.

Anne Babson’s first collection, The White Trash Pantheon, won the Colby H. Kullman prize from the Southern Writers, Southern Writing Grad Conference in Oxford, Mississippi. She is the author of four chapbooks, the newest of which is Dolly Shot. She has been anthologized in the United States and in England, most recently in the notable collection Nasty Women Poets: An Unapologetic Anthology of Subversive Verse. Babson teaches writing and literature at Southeastern Louisiana University. Her first play, Reenactment, was recently published and her latest collection of poetry, Polite Occasions, is currently in bookstores.

Lauren Berry received a BA in Creative Writing from Florida State University and an MFA from the University of Houston where she won the Inprint Verlaine Prize and served as poetry editor for Gulf
Coast. From 2009 to 2010, she held the Diane Middlebrook Poetry Fellowship at the Wisconsin Institute. Terrance Hayes selected her first collection, *The Lifting Dress* (Penguin, 2011), to win the National Poetry Series prize. Currently, she is finalizing her second manuscript, *The Rented Altar*, and teaching AP English Literature for YES Prep Public Schools in Houston, Texas.

**Mela Blust** is a moonchild, and has always had an affinity for the darkness. Her work has appeared in the *Bitter Oleander, Isacoustic, Rust+Moth, Anti Heroin Chic, Califragile, Tilde Journal, Setu Magazine, The Nassau Review, Rhythm & Bones Lit*, and many more. Her debut poetry collection, *Skeleton Parade*, is forthcoming with Apep Publications in 2019. She is the social media coordinator for Animal Heart Press, as well as a poetry reader for *The Rise Up Review*. She can be followed on Twitter at @melablust.

**Anthony Cardellini** is an aspiring fiction writer from Phoenix, Arizona, studying creative writing, physics, and Arabic at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. He is an associate literary editor for Duke’s undergraduate literary magazine, *The Archive*, and has spent time teaching English in Kathmandu, Nepal. Two of his flash fiction pieces have appeared online in *The Drabble*; this is his first publication in print.

**Benjamin Scott Collins** is an emerging writer and an undergraduate student in the Creative Writing program at the University of North Texas. Collins is 22 years old, and will be graduating in the Spring of 2020 to pursue a career in fiction writing. He currently lives in Denton, Texas with three friends.

**Brian Druckenmiller** was a semi-professional wrestler before earning his MA from Coastal Carolina University and MFA from the University of Central Florida. His fiction has been published in
Cleaver and Hawaii Pacific Review, among other journals. Currently, he teaches creative writing at Valencua College in Orlando, Florida.

Lynda Eilers is an art and nature lover, a kindergarten teacher and lifelong learner.

Sabrina English is an occupational therapy student at Saint Louis University in St. Louis, MO. Identifying a passion for art at a young age, English took art classes throughout middle school and high school, and was in the IB Studio Art program at her high school in Newbury Park, CA. Since attending university, she has completed a minor in studio art, and had the amazing opportunity to study abroad in Madrid, Spain where she finished her minor. English is inspired by the work of surrealist artists Remedios Varo, Frida Kahlo, Max Ernst, and Salvador Dali.

Jeff Fearnside lived and worked in Central Asia for four years, first as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Kazakhstan and later as manager of a prestigious fellowship program in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. His essays, short stories, and poems relating to the region have appeared in many journals and anthologies, including Crab Orchard Review, New Madrid, Permafrost, Potomac Review, Rosebud Magazine, and The Chalk Circle: Intercultural Prizewinning Essays (Wyatt-MacKenzie Publishing). A recipient of an Individual Artist Fellowship award from the Oregon Arts Commission, he is author of the short-story collection Making Love While Levitating Three Feet in the Air (Stephen F. Austin State University Press).

Aja Gabel’s debut novel, The Ensemble, about the loves and lives contained in a string quartet, is out now from Riverhead Books. Aja’s prose can be found in New England Review, New Ohio Review, Glimmer Train, BOMB, Kenyon Review and elsewhere. She has taught fiction, non-fiction, and literature at the University of Virginia, the
University of Houston, Sweet Briar College, and Pacific University. She earned her BA at Wesleyan University, her MFA at the University of Virginia and has a PhD in Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Houston. Aja has been the recipient of awards from *Atlantic Monthly* and *Inprint*, as well as fellowships from the Sewanee Writers’ Conference and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, where she was a fellow in fiction 2012-2013. She currently lives in Los Angeles with her dog, Bear.

**Gabriela Halas** has published poetry in *Cirque: A Literary Journal for the North Pacific Rim*, *Alaska Women Speak*, and *Wild Resistance*. She has also published fiction in *subTerrain* and has an essay forthcoming in *High Country News*. She interns at *Alaska Quarterly Review* and has been the recipient of two writer’s in residence; most recently at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts in Nebraska City, NE.

**Kira Leadholm** is in her final year at the University of Chicago, studying visual arts and creative writing. She primarily works in oil paints, addressing the ways that the female body is objectified in fine art. In addition to *Silk Road*, her paintings have been published in *Memoryhouse Magazine*.

**Liz Marlow’s** poems have recently appeared in *The Bitter Oleander*, *B O D Y*, *The Carolina Quarterly*, *The Rumpus*, and elsewhere. She currently lives in Memphis, Tennessee with her husband and two children.

**Margaret McFarlane** writes film, television, and the occasional short story. Her work considers LGBTQ+ narratives driven by strong female characters with the hope that their increased inclusion in television and film will normalize queer relationships. McFarlane has worked for the internationally distributed magazine, *Silk Road Review: A Literary Crossroads* as an Assistant Editor. A trained writing tutor, McFarlane...
specializes in fiction and non-fiction revision. She is currently completing a bachelor’s degree in Creative Writing and English Literature at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon.


Martha Petersen writes short fiction and creative nonfiction essays. Her work has appeared in Prime Number, Vine Leaves, Numero Cinq, Segullah Journal, and others. She holds an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts, and she teaches composition and creative writing at Pima Community College. In addition, she presents regular writing workshops for Pima County Library patrons. She writes from the beautiful but prickly Sonoran desert in Tucson, Arizona, where she has raised four children. They bring her loads of joy and worry, and also writing material.

Catherine Quiba lives in Kapolei on the island of O’ahu. She is a senior and is majoring in Integrated Media with a minor in Asian Pacific Studies. Her illustrated work has recently been seen during the 58th Luau of 2018. She is currently illustrating a graphic novel and webcomic Craven for her Senior Project in 2019. The Bloom Duology pieces are digitally painted and combine flower meanings and color in a single composition. Catherine’s goal this year is to push her creativity limits and hope to improve with each piece she makes.

Emma L. Roles is a fiction writer who explores themes such as entrapment, gender, sexuality, and trauma through short fiction and contemporary fairy tales. Roles has worked as an assistant editor of both poetry and fiction on Silk Road Review: A Literary Crossroads
and currently works as a Marketing and Event Coordinator for the Pacific University Visiting Writers Series. She has previously worked as a bookseller at a local used bookstore and volunteers for the Chicas program with Adelante Mujeres in Forest Grove, Oregon. Roles has been accepted as a member into the Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society and is the recipient of numerous grants and awards including the Ford Scholarship from the Ford Family Foundation of Oregon. She is completing a BA in Creative Writing and a minor in Editing & Publishing, as well as a minor in Spanish from Pacific University in Oregon.

Laura Shamas won the 2017 Von Marie Atchley Award for Excellence in Playwriting from Native Voices at the Autry for her short play SEEDS. Author of over forty plays, essays, and a textbook, Shamas holds degrees from UCLA (BA Theater), the University of Colorado at Boulder (MA Creative Writing), and Pacifica Graduate Institute (PhD Mythological Studies). Her playwriting is archived in the Native American Women Playwrights Archive at Miami University Ohio. Born and raised in Oklahoma, Shamas is an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation.

Heather M. Surls’ work has recently appeared or is forthcoming in *Ruminate, River Teeth, Cordella,* and *Relief*. She is a regular contributor to EthnoTraveler and Culture Keeper. She lives in Amman, Jordan, where she can often be found knitting, chasing her six-year-old boy, or sipping tea with women from Palestine, Syria, and Iraq. www.heathersurls.com

Luke Tasker graduated from Arizona State University with a B.A. in English Literature in 2018. He has published creative nonfiction with VOYA Magazine as well as receiving the Honorable Mention for the 2018 Swarthout Awards in Writing (Fiction). He lives in Chandler, AZ and is pursuing a career in publishing.