



Literary  
Journal



VOLUME 2

M\_HOLLENBACK



# Literary Journal

VOLUME TWO

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VISION

iō believes that art is derived from one’s experiences and exploration of life. Therefore, anyone is capable of creation. However, not everyone has access to the traditional means for publication. This book aims to provide a platform for these underrepresented voices of our time. Now is your chance to listen and respond.

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DISCLAIMERS

*Fiction:* The pieces of prose labeled fiction are just that. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales, is entirely coincidental.

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# EDITORS' NOTE

Dear Readers,

This past year has been a time of immense growth and redirection. Throughout the process of creating our second volume, we have been astounded by the pieces we read, discussed, and experienced—pieces reflective of the internal and external landscapes we inhabit.

We are truly honored at the works we had the opportunity to showcase in Volume 2, some of which are new to iō. Meg Reynolds' "Everyday" and "Faith" are the first comics we have published, and Lauriel-Arwen Amoroso, Nicholas E. Machuca, and Donna Walker contributed iō's first flash nonfiction pieces.

This volume's breadth spans across genre and subject matter, including pieces such as Gisselle Yepes' poem "Confession: I Wish Puerto Rico Won My Independence," Ailish Annie James' experimental flash fiction piece "The Couple who Planted a Baby in their Backyard," Carly Davis' fiction piece "A Bus Out of Tennessee," and Sophia Burch's 2-D art piece "Strong Pancakes." The pieces within this volume both maintain our founding vision of showcasing inclusionary work and propel this vision into new, uncharted spaces.

We are thrilled with the direction iō is heading and the small steps forward we have taken since our inaugural volume. This year, we completed several projects, such as updating our website and restructuring our online publication, Refractions, to carve a space for themed work. We also recently hosted our first literary event in the Tampa Bay Area to celebrate the launch of Volume 2.

In 2020, we aim to continue shaping iō for you and be shaped by your writing and artwork. We are thankful for every submission we received in the creation of this volume, and we look forward to tending the ground you have built for us.

*Crystal, Isabelle, Laura*

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# Reflection

We wanted to save this last page for reflection, and we've listed some questions to spur your creativity. Feel free to write down any ideas that spring up from reading this volume.

Which pieces did you enjoy? What was particularly interesting about them? (style, tone, medium)

If a theme or artistic technique inspired you, how could you use that in your own creative work?

If you could add a piece to this volume, what would you write about?

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## OUR AUTHORS

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Carly Davis  
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Rakhiy Elder  
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Kaelyn Leonard  
Nicholas E. Machuca  
Jesse McCarl  
Violet Mitchell  
Tunisia Nelson

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Ivan Peledov  
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J. Peter Roth  
David Anthony Sam  
Mervyn Seivwright  
Evelyn Sharenov  
Chutian Shu  
Catherine Eaton Skinner  
Taunja Thomson  
Donna Walker  
Gisselle Yepes  
Cynthia Robinson Young

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## NOTE FROM THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR

It's been a busy year. Among other initiatives in 2019, the journal has relaunched its website, rebranded its image, and organized its first community event in Tampa, FL—not to mention publish this second volume. Each project took months on its own to research, brainstorm, and develop. In other workplaces, I've seen similar projects take years to come to fruition. Part of that speed is due to our small, mobile team; this productivity, however, really stems from the work ethic of the editors who continue to inspire me.

As always, I'm grateful for their support and patience, which has allowed me to explore and grow further in design. I learned this year that the more opportunities you take, the more open up to you. Moreover, it's not about the size of the steps that you take so long as you're moving.