

## *Drunken Boat Editorial Statement*

According to Vedic prediction, 2023 was meant to be a transitional year, one that shifted the retrograde of Venus in Capricorn. We can leave it to the astrologers to deconstruct further, but the gist is that the year was meant to be a time of reflection, introspection, and reevaluation, of letting things go so that new roots can grow. This new issue of *Drunken Boat* represents just that, after nearly three years of abeyance, a rebirth imagined by the intrepid minds of the undergraduate journalism students at Tufts University.

I was not much older than the masthead of the magazine is now when I first began the magazine in 1999. And how much has changed in that nearly quarter century that has elapsed. When we got started, online publishing was looked at as a curiosity without the legitimacy or materiality of a print artifact. Because *Drunken Boat* first appeared a mere 4 years after the mainstreaming of the Web browser, it holds works that represent the early Web period, including artworks that were produced with technologies that are no longer accessible to the public (such as Shockwave and Flash).

As an early pioneer of Web publishing, *Drunken Boat* has a duty to keep the works it published accessible to the public, because the works themselves are valuable contributions to the history of art and digital publishing. Moreover, the journal also reveals much about the early Web period of art production and Web publishing. Works that are able to be restored, such as those produced with Flash or that use outmoded formats like .midi, will be, thus, lengthening the life spans of the works.

Therefore, it's with pride and reassurance that we announce that our inclusion into the [Electronic Literature Organization's](#) (ELO) [The NEXT](#). According to their mission statement, the digital curatorial space is "envisioned as a combination museum, library, and preservation space, The NEXT maintains and makes its archives accessible for the next generation and responds to the growing need for open-access, travel-free cultural and research experiences for today's public and scholars." The NEXT incarnates access: it's free, open 24/7, created in open Web languages, and working to make information about the works accessible to those with disabilities and sensory sensitivities, to any language for readers around the world.

As part of the collection of Online Journals, *Drunken Boat* will join illustrious publications such as [The New River](#), [Vectors](#), [BleuOrange](#), and others. Within this collection it helps to contextualize what digital publications have been over the years, from those that specialize in Flash work like [Poems That Go](#), to those that focus on literature like [frAme](#) and [Word Circuits](#), to those that embrace highly experimental approaches to writing like [The Iowa Review Web](#). The ELO will help to debug and bring back to life some of the older work and most importantly provide a safe archive for the work of thousands of writers and artists, plus hundreds of staff over the last quarter century.

Someday the full story of the lacunae in *Drunken Boat's* publishing history will be told with all the receipts, for it's a cautionary tale and a traumatic saga, one that involved intellectual property

attorneys and the brazen, virulent attempt to hijack the journal for identarian purposes by someone still in grade school when the journal was founded and who upon their dismissal tried to steal the site, then vandalized its code, slandering the Board and siphoning funds on the way out for good measure. Thankfully, community forged with the intent of self-interest usually fractures.

I'm particularly excited, then, that this reboot is as far from ruthless ambition as imaginable. The masthead of this issue is comprised entirely of undergraduate journalism students at Tufts University and in the compressed course of a semester, they solicited the work, made announcements on social media, and waded through hundreds of submissions to arrive at this spectacular 25<sup>th</sup> issue, one that we imagined might never arrive. They also wrote features and reviews of their own, which are included, creating a rich tapestry of the emerging with the established, neophyte with maestro, revivifying the possibilities of publishing in an entirely new way.

I encourage you to spend time exploring the new issue, which is international in favor, including poems by T.S. Eliot Prize winner George Szirtes, Khaled Mattawa's timely translations of one of the most important Arab poets, Saadi Youssef, rewritings of Dante by Diane Mehta, excerpts from Peter Zilahy's *The Last Picture -Giraffe*, celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a numbered list for a wedding by Rick Moody, powerful images of black femineity by Rachel Liu- Ballard, a poignant hilarious downer of a film by Sam Barron, an interview with electronic literature pioneer and early social media poet and arts writer, Judy Malloy and a special package on "Bodies" that traverses the corporeal and the digital in multimedia fashion. These are just some of the many gems to be found in *Drunken Boat* #25.

Finally, we wanted to announce the inception of *Drunken Boat's* global series in contemporary classics, a selection of books from the most representative writers from around the world. Our first selection, *Three Indian Poets* will feature the work of Anand Thakore, Arundhati Subramaniam and the late Deepanker Khiwani and be out in 2024. We plan to publish similar anthologies of poets from Greece, Italy, Ethiopia and Mexico in the coming years, ultimately providing a counter-atlas to the nationalistic shaping of culture by the power-hungry and war-obsessed. Keep an eye on our books through [Small Press Distribution](#) and thanks for your support of the journal. All [contributions](#) are tax-deductible and will help us keep publishing.

For those longtime admirers of the magazine, we thank you for your continued support and patience as we untangled and rebuilt; for those new readers, welcome! We will have a call for submissions again in early 2024 and even if archived in [The NEXT](#), we will continue to publish a diverse selection of works of art endemic to the medium of the web alongside more traditional forms of representation. Digital publishing is not a frivolous task and over the last quarter century, we have featured the vanguard of the literary and visual arts, artists who have gone onto feature in the Whitney Biennial, writers who have gone onto win the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. But our ambition has always been much humbler—we want to create a beautiful curatorial space where creators pushing the boundaries of expression can experiment and thrive.

Happy new year and inspired wishes for a creative and rewarding new year.

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