

From the Editor

“The hero—a not-too-bright adventurer—is looking for the good life in which intellect is at harmony with emotion, intelligence integrated through recollected experience, sentiment tempered by fact, desire directed toward worldly objects and controlled by a sense of humour and proportion.”

—Robertson Davies, *The Rebel Angels*

Over the months of an exceptionally cold winter in New York I heard “I’ve been reading” a lot. Here’s to the onslaught of storms that brought us snow and wind, kept us indoors and opened the books on our shelves, their stories and poems offering exploration, a look at ourselves from different or new perspectives. A look at how we struggle to make sense of what is insensible, at how we grapple with our feelings about ourselves and each other, how at times we can get to just love it, while other times we can feel like the best we can do is try to stay warm.

We turn to writing to take us somewhere. In *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner’s Darl declares “the path runs straight as a plumb line,” but has been “worn so by feet in fading precision.” Faulkner would be happy to know that writing is still precisely with us in our time, and that the warm hum of creation from thoughtful open minds is impervious to the white noise of displaced passion. As long as it is, the compassion of the human spirit will address us like a worn path.

All the exotic travel brochures gleaming in your mailbox this winter couldn’t take you to the enchanting world of our competition-winning poem, “The Death of Soul,” or the innocent and exuberant struggle in the short story “Rebuilding Men.” There’s not a drop of turquoise water in the poem “Crossing Toward X” or a palm frond in our competition-winning short story “Appy Sanksgiving,” but they won’t rip you off on your adventure.

In the pages that follow you’ll hear fresh voices on the small but not insignificant movements of life in balance, unbalanced, eminently flawed, alive and thriving in their pursuit to prevail, measured with wisdom, humor and proportion.

My friend Richard Brown passed on during the production of this issue of *Inkwell*. Diamond Dick—he got the tag after a run of diamond flushes, though anyone who knew him, even friends he beat in poker, will say he was a real gem—taught me a lot about the sea, the critters in it, and the critters who ply it. And he showed me that the stories we seek to take us away also often take us home.

I hope you enjoy *Inkwell* 2003.

—Jeremy Church