

LIBRETTO

Magazine



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CARL SCHARHAG

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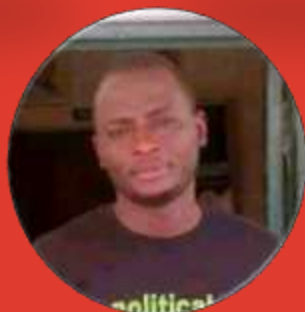
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Temptation

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About

LIBRETTO PUBLISHERS & MAGAZINE

*“An Independent Publishing Company and
Magazine of Arts”*

LIBRETTO is an independent publishing company and online magazine of arts and publishing that aims to publish the works of new/emerged and established writers and artists and all kinds of literary electronic publication and distribution of e-book across Africa and the world at large. We aim to publish fine and qualified works considering race and themes. We so much believe that literature and arts should be celebrated for their aesthetics. We want to inform, educate, exposing morals and ideals. We also define new voices as those with qualities, new theme, style and form. We publish the monthly, biannually and chapbook. Submissions are accepted only via the [submissions-guidelines page/](#). A call for submissions are made in **Monthly** (from January-February & July-August). **Biannually** (from March to April-for June Issue & from September to October-for December Issue) and **Chapbook** (December to February) every year.



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Conversation



Eddie Saint-Jean is an artist who combines his background in moving image and photography to produce original works all influenced by Freudian theories of the Uncanny, which relates to how homely, everyday items and subjects have unhomely, eerie or uncanny elements. His main focus is the urban uncanny and the cinematic uncanny. He believes both of these provide striking imagery layered with elements from the unconscious. Often these two concepts combine - as they do in this latest work *Vertigo* which is currently in an exhibition at Gallery 54, Mayfair, London.

Read: [Interview](#)

Poetry



Award-winning writer **Anne Leigh Parrish** has two new titles coming from Unsolicited Press: *the moon won't be dared*, a poetry collection, October 2021; and *an open door*, a novel, October 2022. Her latest novel, *a winter night*, released in March 2021 from Unsolicited Press, is the most recent installment in her popular Dugan Family story. She is the author of seven other books and lives in the South Sound Region of Washington State. Find her online at her website, Twitter, Facebook, Medium, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Goodreads.

Read: [like a shade of dawn](#)



Lauren Scharhag (she/her) is an associate editor for GLEAM: Journal of the Cadrator, and the author of thirteen books, including *Requiem for a Robot Dog* (Cajun Mutt Press) and *Languages, First and Last* (Cyberwit Press). Her work has appeared in over 150 literary venues around the world. Recent honors include the Seamus Burns Creative Writing Prize and multiple Best of the Net and Pushcart Prize nominations. She lives in Kansas City, MO. To learn more about her work, visit: <http://www.laurenscharhag.blogspot.com>

Read: [Magic Eye](#), [Theoxenia](#)



Lorelei Bacht is a multicultural poet living, loving and dreaming in Asia. Her work has appeared / is forthcoming in such publications as *Visitant*, *The Wondrous Real*, *Quail Bell*, *Abridged Magazine*, *Odd Magazine*, *Postscript*, *Strukturiss*, *The Inflectionist Review* and *Slouching Beast Journal*. She is also on Instagram: @loirelei.bacht.writer

Read: [My mouth, a disputed territory](#)

Visual Art



Martin Došek works in an advertising agency where he spends most of the time working with computer graphics programs. His collage practice is strictly analog and fueled by a surrealist sense of play and experimentation. "I make my collages by hand, from old newspapers with scissors, glue, pencil and paints. I have been doing it for over 30 years and it's still fun for me and a great fantasy adventure," he writes. "I enjoy the lightness with which anything can be composed, at the same time creating stories that I think up. Martin Došek is interested in collage because it is an entirely free form. He paints and writes over the glued images: this is not some pop art décollage, but rather a genuine, properly old-school surrealist obsession.

Martin Došek Artworks: [Amor](#), [Long nights](#).



Cecilia Martinez has always had a love for the arts, especially the written word. She is an established and published writer and poet, with her work being recognized all over the world, from New York to the Philippines. But it wasn't until her father's unexpected death as a result of what was later determined to be a homicide in September 2015 that she became completely immersed in the visual arts as a therapeutic outlet and a form of self-expression to cope with his loss. While still relatively new to the art scene, she has already had her work exhibited in a number of venues since October 2016, including LITM in Jersey City and the NAWA Gallery in New York City.

Cecilia Martinez Artworks: [In The Eyes](#), [Corona virus April Showers](#), [Untitled](#), [Rotten Apples](#), [Alone](#).



Jana Charl, a native of Los Angeles and a dual US-Swiss citizen, currently resides on a remote 54,000-acre ranch in Central Oregon where she creates mixed media works incorporating materials salvaged from her surroundings. Her most recent body of work focuses on symbolism derived from the natural world as a representation of the human experience. Jana's installations, paintings, and sculptures are published and exhibited worldwide: shown at art galleries, at SFMOMA, Tate Liverpool, Women's Museum of California, and at venues staged simultaneously with the Venice Biennale, Frieze London, and Art Basel Miami. She has participated in artist residencies in Switzerland (Zürich and Trélex), the country of Georgia (Mtskheta and Tbilisi), and Iceland (Stöðvarfjörður, East Fjords). Jana has been awarded public art projects in California, Oregon, and Massachusetts, and is currently on the Art in Public Places Rosters (pre-qualified artist pools) for the Cities of Palo Alto, Sacramento, and San Antonio. She received a Certificate of Recognition from the California Legislature Assembly. Her artwork is in the collections of the Brooklyn Art Library, City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, Museum of Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Mtskheta Municipality, and Yuko Nii Foundation and in private collections globally.

Jana Charl Artworks: [Yearning](#).



Ira Joel Haber was born and lives in Brooklyn. He is a sculptor, painter, writer, book dealer, photographer and teacher. His work has been seen in numerous group shows both in the USA and Europe and he has had 9 one man shows including several retrospectives of his sculpture. His work is in the collections of The Whitney Museum Of American Art, New York University, The Guggenheim Museum, The Hirshhorn Museum, The Albright-Knox Art Gallery & The Allen Memorial Art Museum. Since 2006 His paintings, drawings, photographs and collages have been published in over 250 on line and print magazines. He has received three National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, two Creative Artists Public Service Grant (CAPS) two Pollock-Krasner grants, two Adolph Gottlieb Foundation grants and, in 2010, he received a grant from Artists' Fellowship Inc. in 2017 & 2018 he received the Brooklyn Arts Council SU-CASA artist-in-residence grant.

Ira Joel Haber Artworks: [Woman in the forest](#)



KJ Hannah Greenberg tilts at social ills and encourages personal evolutions via poetry, prose, and visual art. Her images have appeared in various places, including in: Bewildering Stories, Les Femmes Folles, Mused, Tuck, vox poetica, and Yellow Mama. She uses her trusty point-and-shoot camera to capture the order of G-d's universe, and Paint 3D to capture the chaos of her universe. Sometimes, it remains insufficient for her to sate herself by applying verbal whimsy to pastures where gelatinous wildebeests roam or fey hedgehogs play.

KJ Hannah Greenberg Artworks: [Sneering at Womanizing](#), [Surfing Life](#), [Too Little Time](#), [Wow Posies](#).



Mariaceleste Arena is a Sicilian designer and painter, who works with both digital and traditional techniques. She prefers to experiment with different techniques and different subjects. The main purpose of her art is to express her vision of reality through abstract and surreal figures, as source for thought and as an artistic point of view of life.

Mariaceleste Arena Artworks: [psychedelic vibrations](#), [velvet fragments](#), [velvet remembers](#).



I am **Yohanes Soubirius De Santo**, born in Singaraja on June 24, 1998, I am a young Indonesian artist who is currently working in the world of art, especially the world of fine arts. I come from Bali, and this is where I practice creating art, from 2016 I just started to focus my intention on the world of art by taking art education at the Ganesha University of Education, from here I have started to actively work until now. I have won several arts awards on a local, national, and international scale. My inspiration in working, not far from my surroundings, I always take the topics in my work according to what I experience or I observe what happens in my environment. I take the topic with my surroundings because I feel that everyone's environment must be different, and from this I try to make my work something different and unique with that topic.

Yohanes Soubirius De Santo Artworks: [Without Virtual Nanny](#), [Switch Function](#), [Ego Hegemony](#).

Although originally trained in Theatre Arts and Portraiture **Ian's** work has developed into various areas such as abstract and landscape. His particular interest in seascapes is born out of his family history which has, through many generations, been involved with marine life. Ian first began his career as a professional artist and designer in the United States, working for two theatrical companies: 'Best of Broadway' in New York, and Creative International in Tampa, Florida. He was responsible for the sets for various television and theatrical productions, including '1776 Opera' (Florida's contribution to their bicentennial celebrations at the Marco Polo Theatre North Miami Beach) the Bette Davis National Tour and the Miss America Pageant in Bush Gardens for CBS television. In addition he has designed lighting and sets for Felicity Kendall's Queen Victoria tour. In addition to his Theatrical work Ian has exhibited his paintings at various galleries both in Europe and the UK and has work on view in Sweden, Japan, China, Australia and Spain.

Ian Artworks: [It's That Time Again Sweetheart](#) & [What are you Looking at](#)

Fiction



Pam Knapp lives in the UK's rolling countryside of the Sussex Downs, close enough to London to feel the heat, far enough away to avoid being burnt. Optimism is her greatest asset. Her writing can be found in Dreich Magazine, Green Ink Poetry, Owl Hollow Press and Lucent Dreaming, amongst others.

Read: [Having The Werewithal](#)



Fabiana Elisa Martínez is a linguist, a language teacher, and a writer. She speaks English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Italian. She is the author of the short story collection 12 Random Words, and the podcast series and grammar book Spanish 360 with Fabiana. Other short stories of hers have been published in Rigorous Magazine, The Closed Eye Open, Ponder Review, Hindsight Magazine, The Good Life Review, The Halcyone, Rhodora Magazine, Mediterranean Poetry and the anthology Writers of Tomorrow. She is currently working on her first novel.

Read: [Realizations](#)



Nwabuisi Kenneth is a student of English and literary studies at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He has works of fiction in online magazine and anthologies such as: Kalahari reviews, Libretto magazine, Boys are not stones anthology II, Rape rages 2019 and elsewhere. You can reach him via WhatsApp +2347015002556 or email at nwabuisikenneth081@gmail.com

Read: [Bird Songs](#)



Vanessa Osei Bonsu is a graduate student of University of Alberta studying Human Ecology. Some of their other work can be found online at ahautemess.wordpress.com

Read: [Melody](#)

Memoir



As an emerging author, **Valerie Anne** has a memoir titled, Caution: Mermaid Crossing—Voyages of a Motherless Daughter. Before entrepreneurship in fashion & decor, she graduated from the Hollywood school of hard knocks where she worked in production and as a story editor. She won writing scholarships to the Santa Barbara Writing Conference and The Prague Summer Writing Program. Valerie Anne was accepted for publication by HerStry for two separate essays, and sponsored on a trip to Italy September 2019 to share her workshop, "Living and Healing Through Color". She lives in Santa Barbara California where she has survived breast cancer.

Read: [He's on Top of the World and I'm Not](#)

Photography



Abubakar Sadiq Mustapha is a poet, storyteller, documentary photographer and community developer. Experienced in using books, photography, and arts in driving social change from girl-child education, gender-based violence to youth participation in politics. He curated the Abubakar Gimba literacy campaign to immortalize the memory, works, and legacies of the late writer and scholar, a program where school students gained experiential exposure in meeting authors, change-makers, works of the late writer, and a library tour. He is project lead for The Lapai Bookclub's mobile library and school, a project that takes reading and arts to grassroot communities in Northern Nigeria. His works has appeared in several print and online publications, including Ebedi Review, The Song Is, The Nigeria Review, The Shallow Tale Magazine and elsewhere. Recently three of his photographs were exhibited by photocare4africa in Abuja Nigeria.

Abubakar Sadiq Mustapha Photographies: [Beat and heart](#), [Sound of Life](#), [Sound of Time](#), [Standing the Heat](#)



Carl Scharwath, has appeared globally with 170+ journals selecting his poetry, short stories, interviews, essays, plays or art. Three poetry books Journey to Become Forgotten (Kind of a Hurricane Press) Abandoned (Scars Tv) and Lake County Poets Anthology have been published. His first photography book was published by Praxis. His photography was also exhibited in the Mount Dora Center for The Arts and Leesburg Center for The Arts galleries. Carl is the art editor for Minute Magazine (USA,) has a monthly interview column with the Venetian Bay Neighbors Magazine, a competitive runner, and a 2nd degree black-belt in Taekwondo.

Carl Scharwath Photographies: [Birthplace](#), [Room 43](#), [Abandon](#), [Who is Real](#), [Reflections](#), [Telos](#)

Nonfiction



Paul Lewellan lives and gardens on the banks of the Mississippi River. When the COVID numbers spike, he shelters in place with his wife Pamela, his Shi Tzu Mannie, and their ginger tabby Sunny. He has recently published fiction in *October Hill*, *The Sock Drawer*, *Statement 2020*, *Erozone*, and *White Wall Review*.

Read: [*Marian of Two Minds*](#)

He's on Top of The World and I'm Not

Valerie Anne Burns
USA

While staring through the screen door into the late afternoon spring light dancing on leaves, I fell into a quiet zone. On an oversized sofa in my charming, rustic post-divorce cottage, I sat and reflected on how I'd been running on pure adrenaline. I'd been lying awake in a restless state for four nights with worry through long hours in the dark while adding up debts, listing ways to keep my business going, to pay rent, and find love. There was an Italian whose fervent kisses provided distraction and made me feel alive when not much else did.

In my sofa stupor, I recalled being awake at 3:00 in the morning where thoughts traveled to realizing that networking for my business was the only real social life I had. I was in actress mode when I showed up at events with all the experienced mixers; my props were a glass of wine and a smile. In the ten years since my divorce, I'd had several years of brief romantic and deeply sexual interludes. It was liberating to feel wanton past divorce and criticism. An ache from my groin to heart was happening, and I begged myself to stop that train of thought. No good could come of it.

The travel clock displayed 5:00 a.m. in fluorescent green. Desperate to fall into an unconscious state, I focused on a calming visualization where I envisioned myself at the bow of a sailboat caught in a perfect wind. I was dressed in flowing linen, barefoot, warm, the taste of saltwater spray on my lips. My lover was commanding the boat, sailing us to freedom.

Immersed in recalling a night full of thoughts, the notification of a text message startled me. I refocused on the sunlit leaves as I picked up the phone. I stared at the text. Yes, it was him—The Italian. It had been a month since we'd seen one another. I read the first text, "Ciao," just as the second one arrived: "Do you want to have dinner with me?" And then, "Maybe you're busy or have a date with someone else." He'd always been under the impression that I was in a perpetual state of receiving suitors.

It was always easy to be with The Italian. He got me and my humor. My heart was beating faster. I looked haggard but didn't feel like cooking. How could I refuse his tempting invitation?

I texted back, "Um...who is this?"

"Your Italian lover. I'll pick you up in an hour."

For more than a year, we'd seen each other occasionally during his separation and impending divorce. We'd meet for an espresso in public and stayed at a safe distance because keeping our hands off each

other was difficult at best. When I was convinced that he was legally separated, we'd rendezvous at my cottage and enjoy prize-winning Italian wines from his private stash—liquids infused with dark cherries, exotic spices, and hints of chocolate. Those glasses of wine warmed my bones and stirred up too many dangerous feelings. We kissed for hours and time either stopped or flew. I never knew which because I was lost in ecstasy or delusion—it didn't matter. His masculine hands were all over me—my face, in my hair, in me. I'd climax easy and effortlessly.

On a few hours' sleep, I got ready fast. This was to be our first dinner date. Did it mean his divorce was final? I'd known about The Italian for five years in our small community. He was warm, charming, sexy—and married. I contemplated flying to Italy to find someone like him who was available. We experienced a lurking attraction that we never acted on until his separation. He'd adhered to my rule of no sexual intercourse until he was divorced. Yet, he kept coming back to me, leaving each time hot, bothered, and hard.

I was ten years older than him, but I didn't tell him that. He never asked.

"Don't expect me to look like a '10,'" I texted before I accepted his offer. Then I jumped in the shower and thought back on the last year of our lives. We'd put hours into kissing with the taste of Venetian wine on our lips. He said he loved my company; had felt peace and serenity. I was his way station, his refuge, a flashing danger zone.

I glanced in the mirror. Thank God for flawless foundation, it did the trick. I wore sleek black clothing but added a seafoam green coat.

The Italian pulled up in a new dark gray car. He had on a light gray-blue pinstripe suit, open collar blue shirt, with his dark, thick brown hair showing the slightest gray at the temples. Jesus, he was color coordinated.

I slipped into the passenger seat and he said, "You look lovely."

At dinner, he was naturally sophisticated. He ordered the wine with panache. In public, it took every inch of self-will to not throw myself at him. I asked what he'd been up to, and he replied, "Only working." In the past month, I knew he'd been to Hanoi, Hong Kong, and Columbia.

I'd been to Glendale.

Suddenly, I felt fragile and insecure. My life was so confined. I'd not manifested the expansive life I'd envisioned.

I chose to ignore the real signs that told me something was off. I was too dazzled by the attention he gave to me. I basked in his compliments, witty exchanges, and our few commonalities, allowing myself to be in denial.

I wanted him. I missed him when he wasn't around. I wished he could be mine. I thought he was getting a divorce. I thought he was on top of the world in business. He'd told me that soon he'd be rich and planned to move to Los Angeles—a place where gorgeous young women lined the sidewalks like twinkling seductive stars.

He also said he was in no position to start a relationship for he had no time to devote to it.

I felt a lump rising in my throat.

“A relationship has to be nurtured, right?”

I nodded, yes.

I'd known this all along—even when he'd told me he was in love with me on a hot summer night when we put a fan in the doorway to cool us off. We were lying on the couch, being quiet. He had a migraine. I was a comfort to him. We were cuddling and he was resting into my back when he said, “I love you.”

I turned to face him and whispered, “What did you just say?”

He repeated it and then said, “I want you to move to L.A. with me.”

I let that thought wash over me. We would live in L.A. and travel to Italy where his roots were...and where I wanted my roots to be.

During dessert, I moved in next to him. The waitress smiled; she probably thought we were in love. He looked at me and said, “What do you mean you weren't feeling like a ‘10?’ you're a ‘10’ and a half.”

I smiled but felt shy and unsteady. He would soon be traveling to Venice to see his mother and sister. His mama won a beauty contest against Sophia Loren. I wanted to sit in a Venetian café with The Italian and his family.

I worked hard to choke down my desire to shout, “Take me with you.”

Then he said, “The truth is, I'm supposed to be working on two contracts right now, but I wanted to see you.”

Suddenly, I felt lucky to be fitted into his crazy schedule. I also felt angry, envious, and adrift.

It was a fire that would burn out fast. But I wanted to hold onto the words he'd said: "I love you." I wanted to hold onto the taste of dark cherry Venetian wine, to our whispers in the hot night, to a fire burning in the fireplace in winter, to being wrapped in his arms, to climaxing while straddling him, my chest leaning against his, my hands around his neck, his breath against my hair, his whispered Italian words in my ear.

No. I could feel it all lost in the next crashing wave against the shores—the pristine coastal town that held my hurts and secrets.

Dinner was over. We held hands and kissed briefly at my door. What I didn't know was that his betrayal was just around the corner.

I slipped into my worn-out nightshirt and climbed into bed. I had to find a way to sleep, to unburden my mind for a little while. I decided to practice some deep breathing while pushing away lustful desires for The Italian. I silently recited a mantra and visualized the sailboat that carried me away to a place much further than Glendale. I was sailing in aquamarine water to the top of the world.

As an emerging author, **Valerie Anne** has a memoir titled, *Caution: Mermaid Crossing—Voyages of a Motherless Daughter*. Before entrepreneurship in fashion & decor, she graduated from the Hollywood school of hard knocks where she worked in production and as a story editor. She won writing scholarships to the Santa Barbara Writing Conference and The Prague Summer Writing Program. Valerie Anne was accepted for publication by HerStory for two separate essays, and sponsored on a trip to Italy September 2019 to share her workshop, "Living and Healing Through Color". She lives in Santa Barbara California where she has survived breast cancer.

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