

Contributors



Nils Blondon is a writer from Toronto, Ontario. His work explores the tragicomic themes of addiction, recovery, and loss.



Tim Chapman is a former forensic scientist for the Chicago police department who currently teaches writing and tai chi chuan. He holds a master's degree in creative writing from Northwestern University. His fiction has been published in *The Southeast Review*, *Chicago Reader*, *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*, *Printers Row Journal*, and *The Rich and the Dead* anthology. His first novel, *Bright and Yellow, Hard and Cold*, (rereleased as *A Trace of Gold*) was a finalist in *Shelf Unbound's* 2013 Best Indie Book competition. His short stories have been collected under the title *Kiddieland and Other Misfortunes*. His latest novel is *The Blue Silence*. In his spare time he paints pretty pictures and makes an annoying noise with his saxophone that he claims is music.



Mark Halpern has lived since 1993 in Tokyo, where he runs his own law firm and writes stories about foreigners in Japan. He was born in America, grew up mostly in Canada, and has spent substantial time in the UK and France. As for Japan, Mark has, like some of his characters, found a way to be both an outsider and an insider.



Leanne Hoppe holds an MFA in poetry from Boston University and works as a teacher, editor, and translator in Cleveland. Her work has appeared in *Bayou Magazine*, *Gravel*, *Asymptote*, *This Is Not Where I Belong*, *Driftwood Press*, *spoKe*, and elsewhere.



Donald Illich's work has appeared in literary journals such as *The Iowa Review*, *LIT*, *Nimrod*, *Passages North*, *Rattle*, and *Sixth Finch*. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and received a scholarship from the Nebraska Summer Writers Conference. He won Honorable Mention in the Washington Prize book contest and was a *Boston Review* 2008 Poetry Contest semifinalist. Gold Wake Press named his full-length manuscript a finalist during their 2015 open reading. He self-published a chapbook, *Rocket Children*, in 2012, and published another chapbook in 2016, *The Art of Dissolving* (Finishing Line Press). His full-length manuscript, *Chance Bodies*, was published in 2018 by The Word Works. He is a writer-editor who lives and works in Rockville, Maryland.



Paul Luikart is the author of the short story collections *Animal Heart* (Hyperborea Publishing, 2016) and *Brief Instructions* (Ghostbird Press, 2017.) His work is included in the 2019 Best Microfiction anthology from Pelekinesis Press and his story “Barclay Station” won the *Nassau Review’s* 2019 Writer Award for Fiction. He studied fiction writing at Miami University, the University of Chicago, and Seattle Pacific University, where he earned his MFA. Currently, he serves as an adjunct professor of fiction writing at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia. He and his family live in Chattanooga, Tennessee.



Clark Merrefield writes about economics for a living. He grew up in New York City and now lives near Boston with his wife and two kids. His fiction has appeared in *Origins*, *34th Parallel*, *Manque Magazine*, and *So it Goes*, the literary journal of the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library. Follow him on Twitter: @cmerref.



Malia Nahinu is a Bay Area native who is passionate about creativity. Her goal in life is to live an expression that is authentic to herself. She graduated from San Diego State University (go Aztecs!) earning a bachelor’s in women’s studies and double minoring in communications and religious studies. She was also a key member of a record-setting women’s basketball program. Nowadays, she writes sarcastic, sad-girl poetry books, pursues acting, creates abstract art, and attempts to live in the present moment. Her published writings can be found on *The Feminist Wire*, *The Internet Void*, and *The Bold Italic*, as well as on Amazon/Kindle worldwide. She is also an advocate for body positivity as a six-foot-six woman.

Instagram: @tallwomanpowermaliaarrayah.



Khalilah Okeke was raised in the Pacific Northwest and now resides in Sydney, Australia, with her husband and two children. Her work has been published in *Crack the Spine*, *CaféLit*, *The Drabble*, *The Plum Tree Tavern*, *Down in the Dirt*, *The Red Eft Review*, *The Orissa Society of the Americas Journal*, *50-Word Stories*, *Scarlet Leaf Review*, and *Meow Pow Pow*.



Duke Stewart in his own words: I have had numerous publications in various literary magazines including *Cimarron Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Passages North*, and *Shenandoah*. Before beginning my writing career I worked as a psychotherapist for the state of Georgia. One summer I had the challenge of working with a group of Vietnam Veterans. A number of stories I wrote (including this one) are very loosely patterned on that experience. Struggling for a title I settled on “The Life You Take is Never Alone” in homage to Flannery O’Connor. For most of the ’80s and ’90s I lived forty minutes from her farm—Andalusia—while the

pastor of a small church in the wilds of her “Christ-Haunted” South.