

*Wilderness House Literary Review 3/2*

*review by Doug Holder*

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Well, I have, and my minions of crack reviewers have reviewed many books that have come through the portals of Eric Greinke's PRESA PRESS. I forewarn you I was the featured poet in this issue so I am deliriously biased. But I do have to say PRESA magazine is in the best tradition of small press journals. Eric Greinke has a thoughtful essay titled "Toward A New Eclecticism" where he examines the gaping divide between the academy poets, and the small and independent presses. Greinke, although a dyed-in-the-wool small press doyen, pleads his case for more tolerance between the groups for other poetic forms. He tries to bring down "purists" of both camps. Greinke writes:

"The main problem we face in American poetry is narrow-minded intolerance of various forms taken by poetry itself. The obvious division along social class lines is a symptom of elitism and mutual intolerance, rather than being based in legitimate, fundamental, aesthetic differences."

There is an extensive review section of chapbooks. Greinke recognizes that chaps are the currency of the small press: "Literature owes a great deal to the chapbook. Historically, the first bound books were single signature chapbooks. They are nearly indestructible. They are non-commercial. Every poet first sees his work collected in a chapbook. They are the perfect medium for poetry, the quintessential "slim volume." But it can be difficult to get them reviewed." Well Presa addresses this problem with reviews of chaps by Harris Gardner, Mary Bonina, Ellaraine Lockie, Gerald Locklin, Michael Graves and others...

Also in this edition is an essay on Etheridge Knight by Ronnie M. Lane, as well as poetry by small press notables as Lyn Lifshin, Robert K. Johnson, Alan Catlin, Michael Estabrook,, Hugh Fox, Donald Lev, John Amen and others.

Highly Recommended.