

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/1

Popt Art

Jessican Harman, editor

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Review by Rene Schwiesow

Jessica Harman, the editor of the new literary mag "Popt Art" was born in Montreal, spent some time in Maryland and has currently chosen to reside in Brookline, Massachusetts near the poetic mecca of the Boston/Cambridge/Somerville area. And indeed, her inaugural issue pops with notables such as Marge Piercy, Doug Holder, Irene Koronas, Chad Parenteau, Mike Amado, Zvi Seisling, Bridget Galway, Sean Theall, Michael Kei Stewart, Jessica herself and many more.

This first issue of "Popt Art," centers on the theme of portraits or self-portraits and includes prose that leans heavily upon the inner exploration of self. From the prose blog "What It's like to be Schizophrenic," to "My Mother's Fat," the writing in these two contributions not only offers a glimpse into the issues of mental and eating disorders but draws us into the center of the thought processes of a person dealing with a psychosis or obesity.

And though "Popt Art" showcases a number of worthy Massachusetts' talents, contributors from around the world make their mark in this first issue as well. From Canada, to Malaysia, to Alaska, Tennessee, Minnesota, Maryland, and New York, each contributor offers us insight into another, into the human condition.

But wait; in addition to the poetic/prosaic musings of the writers, visual art bursts with flavor, interspersed between the words. Fine work by Paloma Radcliffe, Adam Ottavi, and Joshua Abelow appear as well as a stunning portfolio by Alisha Naomi Fisher. My only criticism is that the intense black of the black and white prints muddies the visuals.

As an inaugural issue "Popt Art" gives us plenty of opportunities to relish the talent of those published, though the issue does suffer from a few first-time gaffes. For example, the table of contents lists author and title, but omits page numbers making it difficult to go back and find a particular contributor with ease. And this reviewer would prefer to see the name of the author up front, rather than at the end of the work. The issue is also fraught with typos and general layout errors. Growing pains, one would hope, that will be cleared up in the next issue of "Popt Art."

"Popt Art," will be holding a premiere party at Out of the Blue Gallery, 109 Prospect Street, in Cambridge, MA on March 19th at 8:00 pm. Contributors will be reading their work published in this inaugural issue. Visual art will be on display. Each successive issue of "Popt Art," will be themed. You may follow along on the website at:

<http://sites.google.com/site/lieryazinevoll1contributors/Home>.

"Popt Art" can also be found on facebook.