



Momentous

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Momentous are the times in our lives when fate pivots to the left, fakes, and takes a jump shot with all we know to be solid and true. When our definitions change, our roles shift, we take a risk, we sploosh into a puddle, or we simply find a small piece of time for ourselves and we grab it, feed upon it. Nourish ourselves. As you delve into this volume, I think you'll find that the way women deal with the unexpected and uncertain in life is nothing short of momentous.

This issue's commissioned piece and interview deepen our thematic exploration. We are pleased to present "Chance," an excerpt from award-winning writer Nalo Hopkinson's fantasy novel-in-progress, *Blackheart Man*, in which faith provides opportunity where none seems to exist. "Witness and Storyteller," Lorrie Miller's interview of author Cathleen With (*Having Faith in the Polar Girls' Prison*), discusses the importance of bearing witness through art and the challenges that erupt from this process.

Room's 2010 Writing Contest winners comprise the first part of this issue: Fiction judge June Hutton selected Amy Kenny's "Chocolate Season" for first place and "Pill Sorting for Dummies" by Judy McFarlane for second place. Melissa Walker's "i. Pre-med, Preparatoria" and Chantal Gibson's "The Mountain Pine Beetle Suite" took first and second place respectively in the poetry category, awarded by judge Jennica Harper. And in creative non-fiction, judged by Lynne Van Luven, "The Goddess of Light & Dark" by Jane Silcott won first place. In second place we have a tie: Sigal Samuel's "Love and Other Irregular Verbs" shares the prize with Lesleyanne Ryan's "The Visitor."

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Congratulations to all our winners! And for those looking forward to our 2011 contest, wait no more: Amber Dawn, author of *Sub Rosa* (Arsenal Pulp Press) will judge fiction; Susan Juby, creator of *Alice, I Think* and, most recently, the memoir *Nice Recovery*, will judge creative non-fiction; and Governor General's Award Nominee Elizabeth Bachinsky is our poetry judge. Deadline is July 15. Check our website for contest details. (We posted the 2010 Honourable Mentions there too—enjoy!)

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This issue's art by Kumiko Fujinami and Geneviève Pratte examines how we define our relationships with others and with the macrocosmic world beyond. And of course, our issue starts with Teri Donovan's delicious cover art piece, "Blink," which portrays a woman taking time to nourish herself (ironically, with a cigarette break). The image always reminds me to savour those few, spare moments and keep myself front and centre. Maintaining that kind of focus isn't easy, but I've found a source of inspiration—reading other women's stories and envisioning their momentous lives. Enjoy!