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a magazine of words and culture



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## Logen Cure: December Poet in Residence

Dec 8, 2015 •

No Comments

by Camille Griep

Every once in a great while, a poetry reading can freeze an audience in their seats. This happened to me this past September on a sweltering Fort Worth evening. The fourth annual Arts & Words festival (curated by the fantastic Bonnie Jo Stufflebeam) gathered the work of ten writers and ten visual artists, asking them to create new, collaborative pieces in their respective disciplines. We ranged from contemporary poets to oil painters, collagists to speculative novelists. Some of us had been crafting for years, others were newer to our art.

One thing was certain: when poet Logen Cure had finished with the audience, you could've heard a pin drop. She'd prefaced her reading of her poem "Pareidolia" with the explanation of the phenomenon—wherein the mind perceives patterns where there are none. The inward gaze of the audience, who'd just found

## Hatchlings

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**A sci-fi novel about the pursuit of happiness**



*I loved Katie Williams's debut novel so much that I*

themselves plunged into a tight spiral took several breaths before bursting into serious applause. Afterward, the friend who'd accompanied me leaned over and said, "You know how I said I didn't like poetry? I think I was wrong."

In the pieces we'll be sharing with you this month, Cure is embarking on her latest manuscript—yes, a coming of age narrative, but, as she describes it, a queer coming of age in a super conservative place. She wanted, she told me, to look at typical moments in a typical place through a queer lens. She said:

*I started thinking about Midland. The physicality of the place is remote, there's really not much out there. The closest big town is Lubbock and it isn't anything to write home about. The remoteness is a big part of what makes it the way it is, and there are all sorts of bizarre historical things that have happened. The common thread in these pieces is survival in a harsh environment. Everything about it is so unforgiving—the place that it is, the weather, the history is not easy to talk about. So we don't talk about it. Then there's my own personal experience of a lot of pressure and hostility.*

We talked a bit about coming from spare places, me from the plains of eastern Montana and her from the wide, wilds of West Texas. We agreed that while our love for our homes can be problematic, it's love all the same.

*That love, she says, gives us these stories. Nature poetry isn't something I've ever tried to do, but I don't want to be just one kind of writer. I don't want to only write from my own experience. I've been doing so much research for this project. What makes a coyote tick? Why does the dust storm do the scary thing it does? What happened to Baby Jessica when she fell down the well? Those things are worth turning my poetic eye toward. As artists, our gift is to see things in a different way and render them for others so that they can see them too.*

I, for one, can't wait to see the world she's shaping for our eyes. So without further ado, here's the first taste. Enjoy. —*Camille Griep, Editor*

*read it twice* —Jason Sheehan for NPR

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NBA winner Richard  
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canopy of American  
literature* —Ron Charles,  
Washington Post

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socialite**

*Concise, thoughtful, and  
well-researched* —Kirkus  
Reviews

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**A provocative debut  
about the emotional price  
of success**

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## Flash Floods

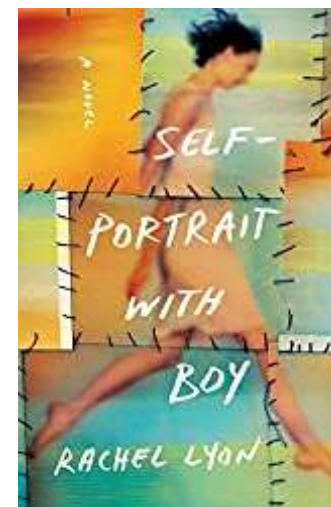
by Logen Cure

After you kissed her it rained  
for three days. Roads  
swelled into rivers, as they do  
in towns built thinking  
flood isn't coming.

Out your window, the broad  
face of the STOP sign whipped  
back and forth, frantic, as if  
checking over one shoulder,  
then the other.

For three nights you dreamt  
sea monsters, shipwrecks;  
you woke salt-stung, lungs  
bursting, sheets twisted  
like tentacles.

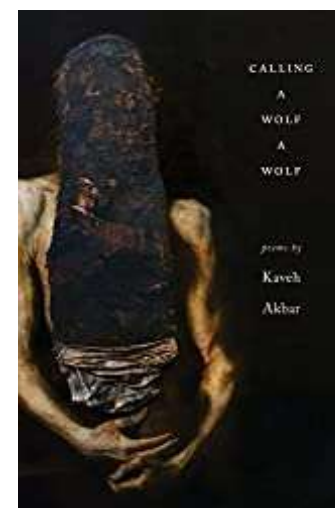
On the fourth night, she parked  
down the block from your house.  
She waited on the sidewalk,  
avoiding the street light reflected  
on puddled pavement.



*Beautifully imagined and  
flawlessly executed —  
Joyce Carol Oates*

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**A poetry debut that boldly  
confronts addiction**



You slipped out the door so quiet  
 she didn't hear. Approaching  
 her dark figure, you did not know  
 the content of her nightmares,  
 what kind of secrets she could carry.  
 You only knew she would kiss you.

Ω



**Logen Cure** is a poet and teacher. She is the author of three chapbooks: *Still* (Finishing Line Press 2015), *Letters to Petrarch* (Unicorn Press 2015), and *In Keeping* (Unicorn Press 2008). Her work also appears in *Word Riot*, *Radar Poetry*, *IndieFeed: Performance Poetry*, *The Boiler*, and elsewhere. She earned her MFA in Creative Writing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She lives in Texas with her wife.

What do you think?

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*An electric current runs  
 through the collection that  
 keeps the reader going —*  
 Library Journal (starred  
 review)

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**A new biography of Ezra  
 Pound**

*A wonderful portrait of Ezra  
 Pound in all his moods —*A.  
 Alvarez

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**From the bestselling  
 author of *Hotel on the  
 Corner of Bitter and  
 Sweet***

*Heart-rending, tragic,  
 disturbing, sanguine, warm,  
 and life-affirming —*  
 Historical Novel Society  
 (Editors' choice)

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 experience of  
 motherhood**