

Editorial

Welcome to the eighth issue of *Flash*. This issue features new stories from Britain, India, Ireland, Italy, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and the USA. We are especially pleased to open with two flashes extracted from Jon McGregor's first novel, *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* (2002), which recounts in luminous detail a day in the life of a suburban street in England. *If Nobody Speaks* was longlisted for the Booker Prize and in 2003 garnered the Betty Trask Prize and a Somerset Maugham Award. (McGregor's collection of short stories, *This Isn't the Sort of Thing That Happens to Someone Like You* (2012), will be reviewed in *Flash*, 5.2.) We are also delighted to publish a new story by South African writer Shubnum Khan, whose debut novel *Onion Tears* (2011) was shortlisted for the Penguin Prize for African Writing.

'Flash Presents' introduces Irish-American writer Sarah Manguso's *Hard to Admit and Harder to Escape* (2007), an exquisite collection of 81 numbered flashes, and *Loud Sparrows: Contemporary Chinese Short-Shorts* (2006), a fascinating anthology edited and translated by Aliu Mu, Julie Chiu, and Howard Goldblatt, represented here by stories by Xi Xi and Zhou Rui. Readers interested in the flourishing of the flash in contemporary China may also enjoy *The Pearl Jacket and Other Stories* (2008), edited and translated by Shouhua Qi (reviewed in *Flash*, 2.1).

In 'Flash Reviews', Jackie Brien is enthused by Kevin Crossley-Holland's *Short Too!*, a collection of flashes for children, while Vanessa Gebbie enjoys *Sudden Flash Youth*, an anthology of stories about growing up in America, edited by Christine Perkins-Hazuka, Tom Hazuka, and Mark Budman. Formative years, and familial relationships, are also explored in Ethel Rohan's semi-autobiographical *Hard to Say*, admired by Karen Campbell, and in Tiff Holland's *Betty Superman*, which Rosamund Brown finds worthy winner of the fifth annual Rose Metal Press short-short chapbook contest. Campbell and Brown reflect on the tension between stand-alone 'vignette' and integrated 'chapter', while Louisa Yates, who is certain that Meg Pokrass's *Damn Sure Right* gets a whole lot right, ponders the optimum speed at which a flash collection should be read. Randall Brown welcomes the long perspective, and inspiration, offered by Lee Rourke's *A Brief History of Fables: From Aesop to Flash Fiction*. Each review is accompanied by a sample story.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Peter Blair and Ashley Chantler

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