

WHAT'S INSIDE

With this issue we usher in the 40th anniversary celebration of Teachers & Writers Collaborative, and acknowledge this milestone by introducing the magazine's new and longer quarterly format. This change allows us to streamline our production process so that we can focus more of our energy on bringing you dispatches from the front.

This season also marks the arrival of two more sobering anniversaries: the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, and the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina last year at this time. Our work at T&W is an expression of our faith in the value of the written word, but such catastrophes focus sharp attention on the question of what writing—or any art—can offer us in the face of suffering. Each article in this, our third Bechtel issue, addresses this question in its own way.

Sarah Porter, in her Bechtel Prize-winning essay, argues that the words we read and write help us to create ourselves as “bigger, freer, more authentic human beings.” Poet Edward Hirsch, in his remarks at the Ringel Reading, says that “poetry is a way to try to defy death, to speak against it, to say there’s something I won’t let die.” Teaching writer Melanie Goodreaux writes about creating an opera with students in a struggling Brooklyn neighborhood, and Bechtel finalist Chris Malcomb describes teaching fiction behind the walls of San Quentin. Finally, Sarah Fay takes stock, in the “No Child Left Behind” era, of the work of writers-in-the-schools programs across the country, many of which trace their roots back to the early, groundbreaking work of Teachers & Writers Collaborative.

— Susan Karwoska

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