

WHAT'S INSIDE

Teaching artists bring with them to the classroom a belief that making art is not the privilege of a select few, but a right for every human being. Whether our students write or draw or dance or sing, we believe that each one of them has something important to say. Those who teach at the margins of society—in hospitals and hospices, in juvenile detention facilities and prisons—work with students whose voices have long been ignored. This issue is dedicated to the stories coming out of these “other classrooms,” stories that challenge received knowledge about illness and violence and incarceration and offer the possibility of healing both to those who tell them, and to those who listen to them.

Dennis Goetsch describes the challenges he faced teaching creative writing to students at a juvenile detention facility in the Bronx. David Stoler tells of the remarkable and unplanned collaborative work that resulted from a workshop he ran with young adult cancer survivors. Erick Gordon, Jim Fenner, and Lalitha Vasudevan describe a Student Press Initiative project to publish the oral histories of student inmates at a prison-based high school. The trials and successes of bringing a community-based literacy program into a Virginia prison are the subject of a piece by Jane LeCroy. Evan Cleveland shares the personal struggles he faced teaching creative writing to children with cancer in a Houston hospital ward. And we close the issue with a delightful piece by Michael Morse on the prose poem, a form that also inhabits its own “other” territory, occupying the shifting borderlands between prose and poetry.

— Susan Karwoska

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