

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

I am finally, in 2009, full of that dopiest of emotions: hope. That is not to say that the artists contained herein are offering you hope, though there is always something to hope for even when one finds oneself at the bottom of a steep, sheer-faced climb. The honesty of these offerings creates a sense of something beautiful one can recognize, even if it's the prism of an oil slick reflecting off a sea-tossed stone.

Matt Hart and Jason Morris offer up what many call a “new sincerity;” a kind of poetry that is all about the details of our varied lives and the culture we find ourselves in. They do the reader the service of allowing us to critique what they've placed in a blaze before our eyes.

Brandi Walker returns, this time from Bukavu in the Eastern Congo. She now works at Panzi hospital helping survivors of brutal rape in her life long effort to eradicate gender-based violence as a tool of war. She juxtaposes the beauty of the landscape and the people with the utter brutality suffered by the victims of this war for resources. Would you give up your cell phone and computer to stop this suffering? Henry Miller typed all his books on an Underwood typewriter, and we're still reading them. In the me-me-I-I generation we find ourselves in, can we really give up what we've been trained to believe we must have?

Capitalism can never work if we don't want what we do not need. Having just returned from France and Germany, I am filled with the kind of hope that will eventually lead us back to an era where societal needs come before corporate needs. I am still, as Ferlinghetti put it, “perpetually awaiting a rebirth of wonder.”

Marvel at the wondrous works we've gathered for you here.

Maria Garcia Teutsch
Editor-in-Chief