

The Siskiyou *Nonfiction* *Anthology*

APRIL 1ST 2025

Highlighting
Creative Nonfiction
in and about
Southern Oregon

2025

Edited By:
Rebekah Hopp,
Desiree Remick
and Nathaniel Brame

The Siskiyou Nonfiction Anthology 2025

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and Nathaniel Brame

Featuring Creative Nonfiction by:

Sascha Meier,
Kenyon Mayers
and Craig Stillwell

VIOLET BLUR

By Sascha Meier

Explorers, we're back.
Flip the map for the impossible.

Chasing rainbows between the Siskiyou and the Cascades?
In this Valley, a double appears in its own time
like so many things.

View it once with indifference
Later with reverence
again, with rapture.
Blood violet at the bottom.

From this river to that sea in Cascadia, you say?
This freedom and that freedom have nothing to do with each other
Some slogans belong, others are unscholarly.
In the end, we remember the silence of our friends
The illusion between the sunshine and rain.

I TOLD MY SISTA SHE'S BEAUTIFUL

By Kenyon Mayers

I remember when I discovered the band Stereolab. The song “The Flower Called Nowhere” from the album Dots and Loops. Brain said, “Ah yes, exactly what I’ve been searching for.” Except I didn’t know I was seeking it until it found me. That’s exactly how it felt when I told my sista she’s beautiful.

The mountains, on all sides, are colossi. In 1844, 1849, and 1857, the wise mountains were put under a spell. In 1995, I was born. I always respected them, but I always knew there was a spell. Even when I didn’t know, I still knew. There are things you just know even when you don’t know. I didn’t even know her, but I told my sista she’s beautiful.

Daylight was forced upon an owl. Anyone would agree how crazy that sounds, but we get used to crazy things. We get so used to them that nature becomes a seminal event. You may realize one crazy thing, and the dominoes will fall. Then you see that somebody put glue under everyone else’s dominoes. One of the craziest things to realize. After all, you’re still an owl. You can see well. You’re tired, though, because you haven’t slept. So, you sleep in. After you wake, it feels...well, that’s how it felt when I told my sista she’s beautiful.

We all love seeing green. We are valley dwellers. Many fear seeing red. Maybe it is a new color to them. I have always seen red. It’s not blinding. If you don’t pretend it’s not there, it won’t blind you. Those who fear red are also extra proud of seeing blue. Especially in a school like this. A town like this. It’s funny how spectrums are real but trendy. If you think about it, blue is just another shade of red. Vice-versa. When you see black, you will see pink, yellow, turquoise, violet, verde, aka, and yourself. It is nothing and everything. I saw black when I told my sista she’s beautiful.

I’m not sure if I like how we use the word “rogue.” They didn’t choose that. I didn’t even know they existed until a random google search in my mid-20s, and I was born here. An all-powerful fairy materialized and asked what steps we could all take to solve some deeply rooted issues.

When asked about potential “business, money, grants”, she waved her magical wand and said “no.” The problem is always space. To be who you are and to do what you do. Space is stolen, monopolized, and underutilized. Creativity hides away in a community that doesn’t know itself. Are we rogue? What does that mean? I don’t know. I felt like I knew myself as I told my sista she’s beautiful.

I never got good at double dutch because my sisters would tell me to join and then drop the rope as soon as it was my turn. I had to go elsewhere to feel the difference between being bad at something and something being bad at me. It was Northern California. Not Oregon. Very close, but borders and laws, and history can turn an inch into a mile. I was on a trip when I told my sista she’s beautiful. I don’t know why I did. It just felt right. Not in a moral way. In a linguistic way. I could not as easily speak this way to Jane Austen or Regina George or Taylor Swift or Carolyn Bryant without the baggage of fear and romance cliches. Her face was beautiful, but so was the face that her face wears and the face under her face. I didn’t have to explain that. She knew what I meant. She thanked me and said, “You’re beautiful too.”

R_xive
by Craig Stillwell

You must get rid of this stuff, she says.

In the garage stands a wall of thirty banker's boxes filled with what I had once studied and taught in the 20th century.

Not hoarding.

Archiving.

Within these boxes is order—beige file folders with carefully written labels: subjects, authors, titles.

As I scan through their contents, the photocopies evoke old memories of standing for hours before hulking, humming machines.

Xeroxing.

Palms pressing hardbound journals firmly onto the glass plate--their pages splayed out, their spines creaking under pressure--a supernova flash, a whirring from within, and a sheet of paper spat out. Flip over, turn the page, push down, feed the beast another piece of silver, repeat.

So many nickels!

Despite the decades, these cheap reproductions have held up quite well. Be they periodical articles or book chapters, the words, sentences, paragraphs, pictures, and pages are accurately facsimiled on faded white paper in black and gray but also made personal through my pen and pencil marginal scribbles.

One folder holds mimeographed papers, handouts of blurry blue-printed information circa 1992. Another is stuffed with transparencies—clear plastic sheets capturing black outlines of photocopied images or hand-drawn diagrams: what causes the seasons, how prisms refract light, what Mendel measured in peas, what Darwin saw in finches, how DNA replicates.

Surprise—I uncover something different: a grad student paper--my take-home exam on Aristotle's interpretation of Platonic forms--typed using a MacIntosh, and dated "5 November 1984." I skim it—amazed that I once understood Aristotle's metaphysics so well that "Prof. S. Brennan" penciled praising marginal notes in neat cursive throughout.

Sadness—I recall reading she had recently passed away.

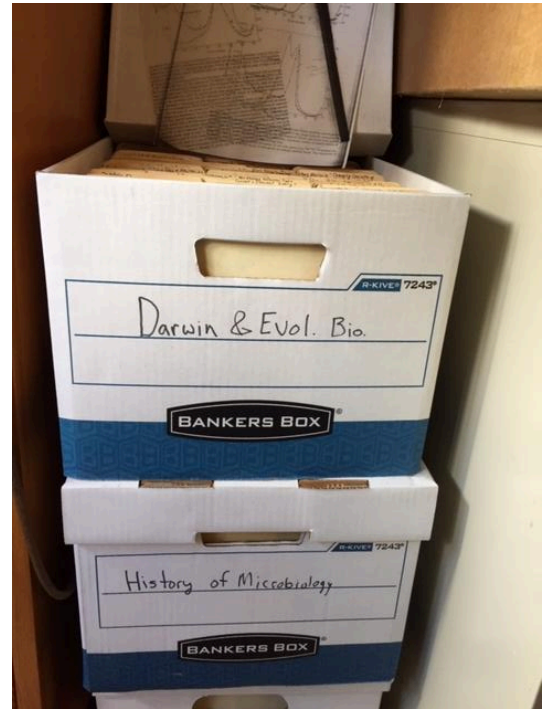
It's taken two hours to sift through one box.

At this rate....

Nostalgia and depression urge me to pause.

I want to continue, but I'm concerned that rooting through two decades of these artifacts will only remind me of how much I've forgotten.

A question nags: what is the psychic cost of revisiting and tossing away these remnants of my life?



MEET OUR AUTHORS AND EDITORS:

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