



LITERATURE

KORE PRESS

PUBLISHING WOMEN SINCE 1993



Kore Press Goes Cross-Country for the AWP

Tucson in the Aftermath: Prose, Politics, & Hope

2011 Open Submissions Revamped

Tucson: Learning to Live with the Discomfort of Unknowing

A Post fom [Tucson, the Novel](#) by Shannon Cain



shannoncain.com

This week, the sort of familiar violence we watch on the news has come home to Tucson, and our hometown seems suddenly unfamiliar.

So I did what used to be done in this country, not really so long ago, when the senseless struck: I consulted a novelist. The writer of stories, the reasoning goes, has spent a good amount of time thinking about the human condition and might have something interesting to say about it. The loss of innocence, says the American novelist Charles Baxter, is partly a recognition that there are depths to things, that what you see isn't always what you get. The loss of innocence leads us to explore, to try to figure out what it all means. To gain insight.

But the mass production of insight in America is

Sweet Home Arizona

An Excerpt by Aurelie Sheehan,
Full Article Printed by [The New York Times](#)



For [Aurelie Sheehan](#) the morning of January 8, 2011 began like any other: she and her husband were chatting, their young daughter was sleeping, and the aroma of freshly brewed coffee was lingering. By mid-morning, the attempted assassination of Gabrielle Giffords at a neighborhood Safeway had changed everything. *Sweet Home Arizona*, an op-ed piece published by The New York Times, gives a thought provoking account of one family's reaction to a senseless tragedy striking too close to home and heart. By giving readers a glimpse into her life in the aftermath, Sheehan skillfully ties her personal account to a broader scope of issues now in the limelight: rhetoric, immigration, and plights of Arizona politics.

"Earlier, over breakfast, my husband and I had shaken our heads to see our adopted city as the dateline of an article on the front page of The Times under the headline "Citing Brainwashing, Arizona Declares a Latino Class Illegal." Arizona has been in the national news a lot lately, and never for the right reasons. Now, as we

a dubious phenomenon, says Baxter, and some of these insights can seem disturbingly untrustworthy. There is a smell about them, he says, of recently molded plastic.

My call today is for reflection, and calm, and a strong yet passive resistance to the demands all around us that we participate, at top volume, in efforts to neatly wrap up this experience. Perhaps, for a while, we should let it dwell in the realm of inexplicability. We should live with the discomfort of unknowing. Soon enough we'll be compelled to make sense of it all, but maybe for now the most appropriate and most dignified response is to sit quietly and reflect.

Let's not allow this tragedy to be commodified for the national and international media. To join in the noise of a debased and thoughtless rhetoric, the kind that people use gleefully without really knowing what it means or understanding its consequences, is fundamentally disrespectful. We ought to give these deaths and grave injuries and indeed our own grief the dignity of their own complexities. We are free to reject toxic public discourse.

We can be grateful that Tucson has a history of investing in the arts. In the months and years to come, we're going to need our artists. The role of the Tucson artist in the wake of these events is the same as it always is, in good times and bad: to consider that which she sees and to reflect it back to us in all its beauty and pain. To show us who we are, and in so doing to help us see ourselves differently. Said James Baldwin on his eloquent public resistance against the pain and struggle of black Americans: "I have never seen myself as a spokesman. I am a witness." In moments like this, when our hearts are broken open, when the familiar seems strange, when a parking lot becomes a killing field, the artist shows us how to expand our vision.



Image [Source](#): Chris Carlson/Associated Press

senselessly hit refresh on our computers, we felt more than ever caught in a place where the tenor of America's political discourse was spinning out of control. The state felt as if it was closing in on us.

Over the weekend, that slowly changed."



Image [Source](#): Reuters

Sheehan is the director of the creative writing program at the University of Arizona and the author of *History Lesson for Girls*, a novel. Visit her website for a full bio and visit nytimes.com to read the full text of [Home Sweet Arizona](#). Excerpt is reprinted here with permission.

Words for Tucson

Writers & Artists

Respond to Tragedy, Submit by February 6



Tucson Angels protecting a funeral from protesters. Image [Source](#): Getty Images

On January 8th our desert home was rocked by a senseless act of malevolence when a peaceful political gathering was targeted by unthinkable violence. As people throughout Tucson waded through the wake of the shooting that killed six and injured 20, we are finding that words and other artistic expressions have the power to inspire us and deepen understanding in our community. We invite you to **submit your response to the tragedy in the form of poetry, prose, blogs, article, audio, or image** for a **special, online publication**. Please keep prose to about 1,000 words or less and send (no docx files please) to **Lisa Bowden at Lisa@korepress.org by Feb 6**. *Note: new deadline for KP newsletter readers.*

The story of what happened on January 8, 2011 in Tucson, Arizona is a moral mystery. Good storytellers understand that tales over controlled by their meaning, as Baxter says, start to go a little bit dead. When a story hits us over the head with what it's trying to tell us, it can become false to its own shadings and nuances. Perhaps we should take a cue from the artists and try not to explain this right away, but just to see it. Perhaps we ought for now to reject the self-satisfied declarations and false authority of others who are trying to tell our story. Perhaps for now we ought to allow the mystery to unfold without judgment, without attaching a meaning to it, because when we are too busy interpreting, and then yelling out our interpretations, we can't listen.

(Gratitude to Charles Baxter in "Against Epiphany," [Burning Down the House: Essays on Fiction](#) (Graywolf Press, 1997))

[Shannon Cain](#) is a fiction writer and a writing coach. Her collection of short stories, *The Necessity of Certain Behaviors*, was awarded the Drue Heinz Literature Prize for 2011 and will be published by the University of Pittsburgh Press this fall. She is the fiction editor for [Kore Press](#).

Kore Press Heads East to DC 2011 AWP Conference, February 2nd - 5th

Kore Press will represent at the annual [Association of Writers & Writing Programs \(AWP\) Conference](#) in **Washington, DC, February 2nd-5th**. Visit us at the [bookfair](#) and get three hot, new Kore titles. You can find us at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road NW, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday between 8:30am and 5:30pm, in [hall A, table H24](#).

Kore on-site events:

Love and the Eye book signing with First Book winning poet Laura Newbern, 8:30-11:30, **Thurs**.

For Sale By Owner book signing with debut short fiction writer Kelcey Parker, 1pm-2pm, **Friday**.

Concealment broadside signing with author & Jeremy Ingalls Translation Award winner Yasuko Claremont, 2:30pm-5:30pm, **Friday**.

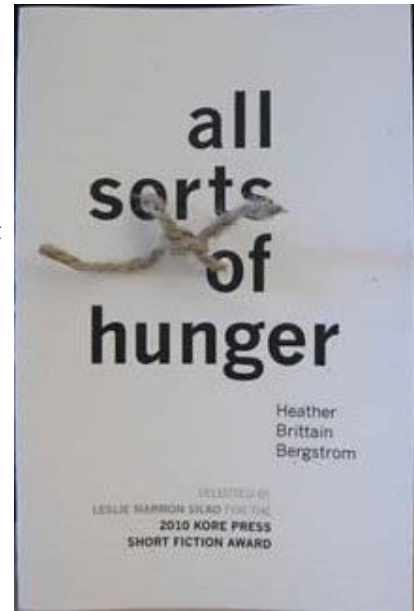
Kore off-site: Women on the Mic

Judges & Winners Reading
With Sawako Nakayasu, Yasuko Claremont, Tayari Jones, Teresa Stores, Laura Newbern. 7:30pm, **Saturday 2/6** @ The [Woolly Mammoth Theater](#).

Kore Women Make Waves

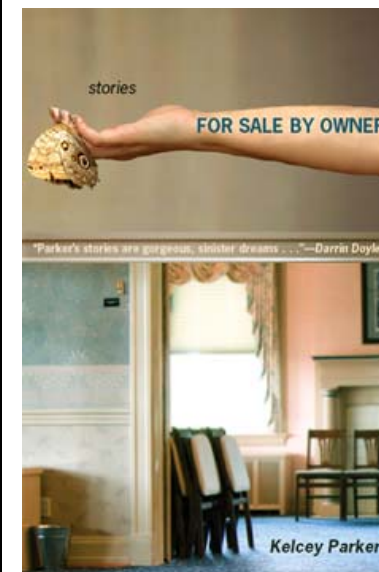
Heather Brittain Bergstrom & Kelcey Parker titles

All Sorts of Hunger, by [Heather Brittain Bergstrom](#), is now available! Set in eastern Washington, linked tales capture the dusty Interior West and its often wandering characters who no longer seek furs or gold or large parcels of land, though their desires, in some ways, are just as unattainable: sleep, warmth, food, forgiveness, family, and clarity. Click [here](#) to order your copy of the 2010 Short Fiction Award winner selected by Leslie Marmon-Silko. **\$10, 28 pgs, staple bound with twine knot tied on the cover.**



Kelcey Parker's *For Sale By Owner* is now available!

In Parker's tales of twisted domesticity, a woman gives her family up for Lent; a mother finds redemption at Chuck E. Cheese; a former best-friend-forever wrecks baby shower havoc; a bride swallows a housefly at the altar; and a suburbanite's obsession with



"memory books" puts her family in jeopardy. These stories offer a contemporary and dryly funny view of marriage, parenting and loss. Fans of Lorrie Moore and Antonya Nelson will find kinship in Parker's wit and generosity of spirit. **\$16, 5.5 x 8.5," 144 pgs, trade paper**

New Open Submissions Period

Manuscripts Reviewed by New Editorial Team through February for Quick Turn Around

Kore Press is accepting unsolicited work from through **February 28th** to be considered for

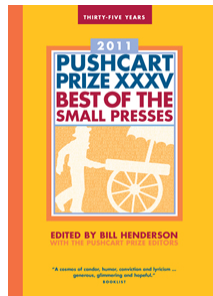
Kore Publisher Lisa Bowden Nominated for *YWCA Women on the Move Award*

Eliminating Racism, Empowering Women



The YWCA established the *Women on the Move Awards* Banquet in 1982 to honor Tucson women for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the community and to the mission of the YWCA. The 29th Annual event will take place on Sunday February 20, 2011. See the full list of nominees [here](#).

A round of applause goes out to this year's [Pushcart Prize](#) nominations from



Kore Press: [Caroline Forche](#) for her poem "What Comes"; [Laura Newbern](#) for her poem, "The Walking Stick," from *Love and the Eye*; [Heather Brittain Bergstrom](#) for her short story "All Sorts of Hunger"; [Teresa Stores](#) for her short story "Frost Heaves"; [Yasuko Claremont](#) for her translation of Tada

Chimako's poem "Concealment"; [Becca Klaver](#) for her poem "The Mexico it Would Take" (From LA Liminal). Good luck gals!

publication during an extended annual open submissions period. **\$35 reading fee. Work will be reviewed by a member of our new editorial panel and considered for publication or returned to you with thoughtful, professional feedback by April 1.** All manuscripts must be submitted through our [online submissions system](#) to be eligible. Please click [here](#) or visit our website ([korepress.org](#)) for guidelines.



Grrls Make Sparks Fly

Zamzam Hirsi works with language and metal arts during a rich welding and meditation experience at Kuzu Gallery in Tucson. This month Grrls left poems on novena candles at the 1-8-11 Memorial in front of University Medical Center, wrote new works off of Elizabeth Alexander's Inaugural Poem, and are plotting their presentations to the City Council. [The Grrls Civic Action & Literary Activism](#) program is empowering the next generation of leaders and writers by engaging young women and trans youth in civic/art action and democracy through the art.

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Kore Press | kore@korepress.org | P.O. Box 42315 | Tucson | AZ | 85733