

Counterpoint

Counterpoint publishes contemporary and classic works, with particular emphasis on fiction, poetry, letters, natural history, philosophy and contemporary thought, and art. **Counterpoint** authors include Evan S. Connell, Caroline Knapp, Frederick Barthelme, Sybille Bedford, Wendell Berry, Isabel Colegate, M. F. K. Fischer, Michael Downing, Penelope Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Hay, Geoffrey Hill, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, and Mary Robison, among others.

Amy Fusselman

8: A Memoir

Named “It” Discovery Writer of the Year by *Entertainment Weekly*, Amy Fusselman took readers and critics alike by storm when McSweeney’s published her powerful first book, *The Pharmacist’s Mate*. Writer Zadie Smith wrote “Ms. Fusselman’s book, brief as it is, affected me deeply. Not only that, the talent displayed therein was somewhat unnerving.” *Time Out* said, “Fusselman makes the world strange again, a place where dying and making life are equally mysterious and miraculous activities.” In this new memoir, Amy has successfully birthed two children only to start having recall memories of what she calls “my pedophile.” Her efforts to come to terms with the ideas of innocence, time, and the healing power of touch are rendered in elliptical passages that circle around each other much like the figure 8 (she also was a figure skater when she was young, executing countless 8’s on the ice). *8* brings to the genre a breath of fresh air offering, with stunning clarity, wonderful insight into Fusselman’s complex mind. • Amy Fusselman’s writing has appeared in *McSweeney’s*, *Artnews*, and *Jane*. She lives in New York City with her husband and sons.

April 2007 • Memoir • 108 pages
UK & Translation Rights: Counterpoint

Victoria Redel

From The War

In August of 1940 the *Quanza*, a small Portuguese steamship, was chartered to transport 317 passengers from Lisbon to New York and then on to Vera Cruz, Mexico. When the ship landed in New York City, 121 passengers were refused permission to come ashore. The boat continued on to Vera Cruz, Mexico, then went back to Virginia before returning to Lisbon. When it stopped in Virginia, Itzak Lejdel, a seventeen-year-old Belgian who had barely escaped Europe, composed his letters to Eleanor Roosevelt through which we learn his story. Years later, his daughter Sara, on the brink of becoming an adoptive mother, seeks to uncover her father’s past. But it is only through her own research that she finds the hidden truth of her father’s survival, of the elderly parents he was forced to abandon, of the grief that he had not shared with her. Victoria Redel’s novel—based on the true story of the *Quanza*, aboard which her own father arrived in America—is a haunting tale of loss and redemption, of choices made, and of the history that shapes families, whether they know it or not. • Victoria Redel is a poet and fiction writer. She is the author of a collection of short fiction, *Where the Road Bottoms Out* (1995), and her novel, *Loverboy* (2001), was selected as a Borders Original Voice and a BookSense 76 selection. Her work has appeared in numerous journals, including *Bomb*, *The Antioch Review*, *Missouri Review*, *The Ohio Review Story Quarterly*, *Epoch*, and *O, The Oprah Magazine*. Redel has received a fellowship in poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts. She teaches at Sarah Lawrence College, the Columbia University Graduate Writing Program, and the Vermont College MFA Program in Creative Writing.

April 2007 • Fiction • 288 pages
UK & Commonwealth: Counterpoint; Translation Rights: Ira Silverberg

Praise for *Loverboy*

“Redel, author of the story collection *Where the Road Bottoms Out*, writes like an angel about the darkest edge of obsession. This debut is simply excellent. Highly recommended.” —*Library Journal*

Jenny McPhee

A Man of No Moon

Set in late 1940s Italy, *A Man of No Moon* is told by Dante Omerto Sabado, a poet, novelist, translator, and one-time assassin who has fallen in love with a pair of glamorous American actress sisters who are in Italy to escape a scandal in Hollywood. Gladys is the impetuous sister who is mad for sex and even madder for Dante. Prudence is, as her name suggests, quite modest and slightly more beautiful and compelling than her sister. As Dante begins to sleep with both sisters, his memories of what the war caused him to do start to threaten his ability to womanize the way he did before the war. Peopled with the scandalous stories and characters of the Italian post-war movie world, this is a deliciously evocative tale. Part Patricia Highsmith, part Muriel Spark, part Hitchcock, *A Man of No Moon* is a delight of beauty and sensuality; of dark sorrows and ripe pleasures. • Jenny McPhee is the author of *The Center of Things* (2001), which was a *New York Times* Notable Book. Her second novel, *No Ordinary Matter* (2004) received high praise as well. She translated from the Italian Paulo Maurensig's *Canone Inverso* and *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* by Pope John Paul II, and is currently translating a book by Primo Levi for Norton. Her short stories and articles have appeared in *Bookforum*, *Glamour*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and *the New York Times Magazine*. She is the Cultural Programs Coordinator at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia University.

Fall 2007 • Fiction • 272 pages

UK & Commonwealth: Inkwell Associates; Translation Rights: Counterpoint

Praise for The Center of Things

"McPhee's style is lean and frisky, and her novel is teasing, funny and intriguing."
—*Publishers Weekly*

"A smart novel of love, lust, and life's miraculous randomness." —*O Magazine*

"An engaging novel about big ideas in physics and big scandals in show business."
—*The New York Times Book Review*

"A jolly read—McPhee's characters are wonderfully weird... Romance mingles with mind-swelling musings on superclusters and string theory... The end equation is an elegant inquiry into the randomness of love and the glory of fate." —*Entertainment Weekly*

Praise for No Ordinary Matter

"It all sounds convoluted and melodramatic, but this novel reads like a Shakespearean comedy, with mistaken identities, love triangles, realistically flawed characters, and bizarre coincidences all tied up nicely at the end."—*Booklist*

"In her new novel, [McPhee's] dialogue and narrative style are charged with volcanic radiation and she knows how to carry a story along through the intrigues and wonderful mysteries of the lives of two professional women. A daring and charming book." —Muriel Spark

"McPhee's latest is sure to serve as a guilty pleasure for many this summer."
—*Publishers Weekly*

Stacey Richter

Twin Study

From the award-winning author of the story collection *My Date with Satan* comes a new collection of incisive and original stories. Enter Stacey Richter's world, where cavemen roam suburbs, morality is questionable, teens are angsting, and alcoholics abound. Despite the alarming roster, however, Richter's stories are replete with wit, humor, and keen observations about what makes humans tick. She writes with a volatile energy, hurtling through her stories with caustic observances, overturning the regular and mundane. She sees the repercussions of bad parenting and forgotten children. No matter how harsh her language she never disrespects her characters and this equal compassion is a hallmark of her stories. Richter's characters are often lonely, isolated, and clueless—and sometimes achingly innocent. Of her previous book, *Time* magazine said, "Richter covers female rivalry and the gender wars in a manner that indicates she may be in possession of one of the more outlandishly imaginative minds in contemporary fiction." • Stacey Richter received her MFA from Brown University. She is a three time Pushcart Prize winner and has been named a *Village Voice* Writer on the Verge.

March 2007 • Fiction • 256 pages
UK & Commonwealth Rights: Counterpoint

Laureen Vonnegut

Oasis: A Novel

"An unexpected oasis, a Russian beauty, and the odd desert inhabitants who rescue her. These are the elements that conspire in Laureen Vonnegut's fascinating novel, a windswept vista of a dusty, dangerous world."—Jenny McPhee, author of *No Ordinary Matter* and *The Center of Things*

"In her sensual and suspenseful debut, Laureen Vonnegut creates a lush backdrop for her transporting tale of a woman breaking free from life as a captive and kept wife. Lyrical and spare in the tradition of Marguerite Duras' *The Lover*, *Oasis* contains a cast of realistically flawed and tragically human characters struggling in the vast loneliness of the Sahara."—Annie Nigh Ward, author of *The Making of June*

"A surreal and beguiling fever dream of a novel. Vonnegut's characters are indelible, and her talent is undeniable."—Mitch Cullin, author of *Tideland*

Laureen Vonnegut's shimmering first novel, set in a Moroccan oasis just outside of Casablanca, is peopled with a Russian beauty, her dead Moroccan husband, and an oasis full of arms dealers, veiled women, two-timing men, a handful of camels, and a mysterious stranger. Out of these exotic threads Vonnegut spins a thrilling tale of survival and loss. At the start of the novel we find Lily, our Russian heroine who at a very young age was sold as a housemaid, then traded to a pimp who married her off to an Arab, was tossed out of a limo by her "husband" who had brought her to the desert on a business trip. The two argue, he ends up dead, and she lays down to die. But she awakes in an oasis filled with bizarre characters who absorb Lily into their midst without question. When the haze of survival begins to lift, Lily dons a veil to hide her startling beauty and avoid being caught for a murder she did not commit. As she begins to understand who these people are and how they fit together, she also begins to discover that by helping the people that saved her, she can find a way back into the world of the living. Exotic, sultry, and entirely captivating, *Three Times Dead* is a fever dream—a modern tale worthy of Scheherazade. • Laureen Vonnegut is an American writer and award-winning film maker living in Romania. Prior to living in Bucharest she lived in London, California, Mexico, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

October 2006 • Fiction • 236 pages
UK & Translation Rights: Counterpoint

Sarah Thyre

Dark at the Roots

From comedienne and actress Sarah Thyre comes a wickedly funny memoir of growing up in southeastern Louisiana. Thyre leaps into the story of her childhood like she's ripping off a band-aid. She grew up a precociously smart child in a terminally eccentric family. The second of five children, she was branded "little liar" by her father early on—and though she was confused by the nickname, she was eager to live up to it and managed to get herself into some precarious situations. The dark side of her story involves her father's volcanic temper and her parents' ultimate divorce, which turned her middle-class situation into one of shocking poverty. Nevertheless, Thyre tells her story with caustic wit and a wry, irresistible humor. David Rakoff calls *Dark at the Roots* "cover-your-mouth shocking (although strangely and blessedly lacking in gratuitous savagery), [one of the] most delightful and entertaining pieces of writing to come down the pike in a long, long time.... Sarah Thyre just happens to be a marvelous writer, to boot. Hers is a truly distinct voice with a twisted poet's gift for the perfect turn of phrase. She will be much imitated." • Sarah Thyre has been seen and heard on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," MTV, and Comedy Central's "Strangers with Candy." She has performed her work on National Public Radio, *freshyarn.com*, and live onstage at major venues, including New York's Luna Lounge. Her acting credits include "The Real Live Brady Bunch," as well as plays by Amy and David Sedaris, including the Obie-winning *One Woman Shoe* and Lincoln Center's *Incident at Cobbler's Knob*. For many years, she also published her own humor 'zine, "Thyrezine," to which many of her literary friends, including David Sedaris, have contributed.

March 2007 • Memoir/Humor • 256 pages
UK & Translation Rights: Counterpoint

Deborah Schupack

The Opposition Leader's Husband

Paul Way, a professor, lives a happy, settled life in small-town New England with his exotic, passionate wife, Siri, their young daughter, and his wife's teenage brother—until Siri upends their lives by disappearing while visiting her native country of Karatonga (a fictional island in the South Pacific). In this, Schupack's second novel, husband and wife alternately come together and are driven apart in their shared—and very different—desires for family and future. This expansive novel unfolds in a many-layered way, through the intricate, everyday details of family life; a boldly imagined women's revolution on a remote Pacific island; and evocative creation myths that lie at the foundation of this highly original fictional cosmos. • Deborah Schupack began carving out her territory—the intrigue at the heart of family life—in her highly acclaimed first novel, *The Boy on the Bus*, about which the *New York Times Book Review* said, "From beginning to end in this novel, nothing is ordinary, while at the same time everything is. Deborah Schupack's strange, unsettling, lyrical novel defies dimple paraphrase." Deborah has taught writing and literature at Vermont College, The New School, and Yale University. Her articles and short fiction have appeared in numerous publications, including *The New York Times*, *Gettysburg Review*, and *Fiction*. She has lived in the South Pacific, teaching literacy.

Fall 2007 • Fiction • 256 pages
UK & Commonwealth Rights: Counterpoint. Translation Rights: Lippincott Massie McQuilkin

Angela von der Lippe

The Truth about Lou

A compelling novel based on the life of poet Lou Salome—a protégé of Nietzsche, lover of Rilke, and muse to Freud—that brilliantly evokes the *sturm und drang* of turn-of-the-century European society. An old hat box of memories, an inscribed volume of Rilke's poems, and a deathbed promise—so begins a young woman's quest to uncover the truth about Lou Salome, infamous literary muse and poet. From a winter retreat Salome's great-granddaughter plumbs her ancestor's remarkable life, unearthing along the way clues to some long lost secrets. At the novel's close she discovers a startling legacy of shared origins and a birthright. Taking Lou as a modern day muse, her granddaughter imagines how the poet would tell her own story, which opens in the waning years of Imperial Russia and ends in the menacing dawn of Nazi Germany. Lou's tale unfolds through the three major loves of her life: Nietzsche, Rilke, and Freud. The cast of characters includes the Wagners, Tolstoy, Rodin, the Freud circle, Marlene Dietrich, and Hitler, to name a few. Weaving together themes of memory, the hold of religious faith, and the unremitting heart of women, Angela von der Lippe's literary debut reveals what no biography or archive could ever bring to life: the richness of an extraordinary woman from an all but vanished time—a woman whose internal turbulent life and whose era speak to us with peculiar force today. • Angela von der Lippe is a senior editor at W.W. Norton in New York. She holds a Ph.D. in German literature and has translated a book of Lou Salome's poems. She is also a poet in her own right. This is her first novel.

January 2007 • Fiction • 256 pages
UK & Translation Rights: Counterpoint

Stephen Carter

Famous Writers School

This is the very engaging tale of Wendell Newton, a profoundly mediocre writer, who has set himself up as director of a literary correspondence course. His prize student is writing a brilliant, noir-ish novel that Wendell plans to rip off; and meanwhile he must evade the stalker tendencies of one female student while wooing another—all of this told through their letters back and forth. Using the three students' letters and building on each of their novellas-in-the-making as well as his fatuous criticism, Steven Carter creates an intricately woven plot full of all the humor, pathos, and suspense that his anti-hero is so sadly lacking. A graduate of the Center for Writers at the University of Southern Mississippi, Steven Carter currently teaches at Georgetown College in Kentucky. He is the author of *I Was Howard Hughes* (Bloomsbury, 2003). His short stories have been published in *The Antioch Review*, *Tin House*, and *The Mississippi Review*, among other publications. He lives in Georgetown, Kentucky.

October 2006 • Fiction • 256 pages
Translation Rights: Counterpoint; UK & Commonwealth: Old Street Publishing

"A unique, powerful new voice full of passion and power." —Etgar Keret, author of *The Bus Driver Who Wanted to Be God & Other Stories*

Dallas Murphy

The River in the Sea: A Biography of the Gulf Stream

The River in the Sea is a fascinating voyage of discovery as Dallas Murphy examines the history of the Gulf Stream to unravel the clues and conflicts behind the mysteries of this enigmatic strip of salt water. Accompanying him on his journey are the stories of those equally fascinated with its force—from Benjamin Franklin, who spent hours drawing up water samples in a bucket on a return passage from England, to Ponce de Leon, who in 1513 ended up sailing backwards against the force of the mighty Gulf Stream. The tale is given a sudden twist of urgency as the author himself sets sail in a research vessel to discover whether the Gulf Stream is in imminent danger of shutting down. Murphy’s lyrical descriptions are captivating as he surrenders himself to the intimacy of the deep blue Gulf Stream waters and to sudden waves as steep as brick walls. This is a delightful combination of science and seamanship, from a man whose narrative gifts are as great as his love of the sea. • Dallas Murphy is the author of *Rounding the Horn*, “an enthralling book that covers plenty of ground and water” (Associated Press).

June 2007 • History/Travel • 288 pages
UK & Translation Rights: Counterpoint

Robert Finch

Iambics of Newfoundland: Notes from an Unknown Shore

“Robert Finch is one of our finest observers...I admire [his] essays very much for their strength, subtlety, and above all their geniality.”—Annie Dillard

Beloved nature writer Robert Finch spent the greater part of a decade traveling around the island of Newfoundland, at “the edge of North America.” In these evocative sketches, stories, and essays, he explores the people, geography, and wildlife of a remote and lovely, but often dangerously inhospitable place. Between the icy cliffs and the Atlantic ocean, the lush valleys and barren drifts, he collects the intimate stories of birds and moose and foxes—and the people who share their space. He evokes a landscape of raw beauty in detailed essays that ebb and flow as we make the journey with him, straining to hear the waves. A wide array of characters—fishermen, hunters, and hitchhikers, newcomers and old-timers—bring to life an island tucked between provinces, languages, and cultures, a land of ancient hardship and stirring beauty. • Robert Finch is the author of *Death of a Hornet*, *The Cape Itself*, and *Common Ground*. He is an essayist for National Public Radio, and Winner of the 2006 New England Edward R. Murrow Award for best Radio Writing.

June 2007 • Essays/Nature/Travel • 320 pages
UK & Translation Rights: Counterpoint

John Salter

A Trout in the Sea of Cortez

“Expertly written dialog flows easily and brings us right into the compelling action. A perfect beach read.”—*Library Journal*

Dennis Pratt will soon be forty. He has a dead-end job, a frigid marriage, a distant daughter in college, and an incredible lack of enthusiasm for anything in his life. In addition to his wife planning a trip to Mexico for the couple, he believes she is having an affair with a dentist. Meanwhile, he is falling in love with a mysterious artist, establishing a friendship with a shifty father and daughter who live in a camper, as well as trying to reconnect with his daughter who has taken up smoking and lesbianism. When Pratt hits rock bottom he seeks help, only to be misguided into internal turmoil over the reality of his world. When in Mexico, on the Sea of Cortez, the pieces begin to fall into place, however, disaster results in a riveting mid-life crisis murder mystery. Salter’s *A Trout in the Sea of Cortez* is an absorbing ride through the back roads of North Dakota, the beaches of Mexico, and the deteriorating mind of a man. John Salter’s sarcastic and smart work is full of obsession, adultery, revenge, murder, fatherhood, and love. • John Salter is the author of the short story collection *Alberta Clipper*, with stories appearing in *Florida Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, and *Best American Mystery Stories 2001*.

September 2006 • Fiction/Mystery • 256 pages

UK Rights: Counterpoint; Translation Rights: Susan Ramer

Robb Walsh

Oysters

In this irreverent and comprehensive book, gastronomic guru Robb Walsh takes us on a grand tour of oysters, from their beginnings as a gourmet war spoil in ancient Rome to their present identity crisis as two simultaneous oyster cultures—the “blue collar” native oyster lovers and the so-called “oyster snobs”—square off. In the vein of Jeffrey Steingarten’s *The Man Who Ate Everything*, *Oysters* is a quirky look at one of the world’s oldest, most unique, and most misunderstood foods. In the course of the book, Walsh, a self-described “culinary thrill seeker” and author of *Are You Really Going to Eat That?*, visits, among other places, the cutting edge oyster beds of France, the Colchester Oyster Feast in England, and the first oyster house in America, in order to examine the mollusk’s colorful past and hopeful future. At the end, Walsh challenges himself to see how many oysters he can eat, hoping to beat oyster aficionado Brilliat-Savarin’s 36 dozen. This book is peppered with mouth-watering recipes from all over the world and promises to give anyone a new admiration for the under-appreciated shellfish. • Robb Walsh is a two-time James Beard winner for his writing about food and is the lead restaurant reviewer for the *Houston Press*. The author of many books, he delivers weekly comments on food and culture on National Public Radio’s “Weekend Edition.”

Fall 2007 • Food & Wine • 256 pages

UK & Chinese (complex characters) Rights: Counterpoint

Translation Rights: Collins McCormick Literary Agency LLC