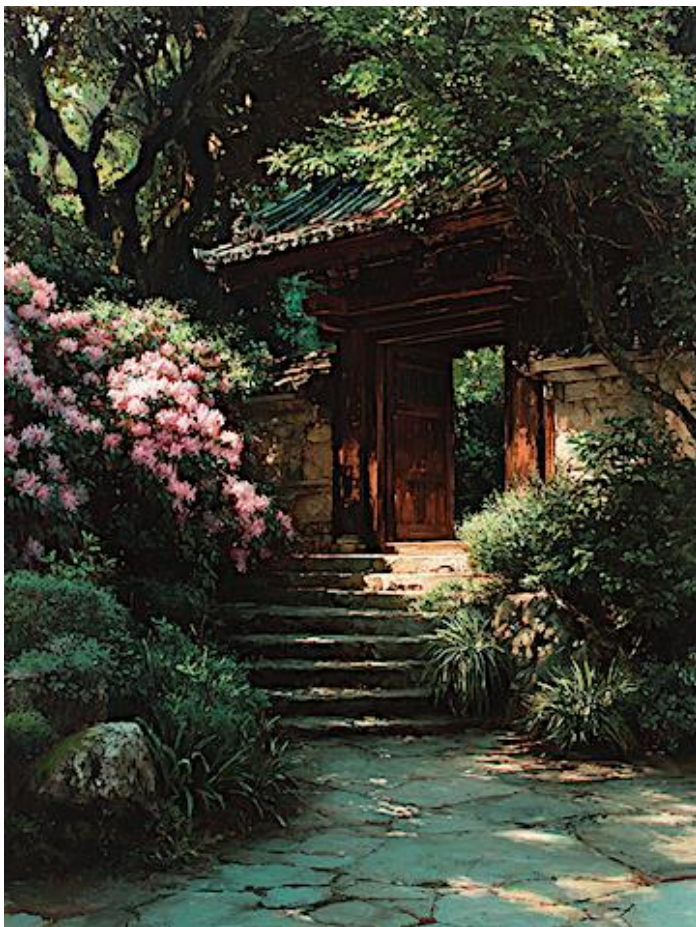

O:JA&L 2025 PAMPHLET SERIES
MIXED FORMS: Haibun & Tanka Prose

A WEEK LATE...

A Writer's Portfolio



CAROLYN MARTIN

BUTTONHOOK PRESS

Copyright © 2025 by BUTTONHOOK PRESS
An imprint of OPEN: *Journal of Arts & Letters* (OJA&L)

All rights reserved on behalf of OJA&L Art Incorporated, OJA&L/BHP/HBP_a/HBP_{ca},
and Carolyn Martin.

Publishing since 2017 as OPEN: *Journal of Arts & Letters* (OJA&L) and its imprints Buttonhook Press,
HOT BUTTON PRESS *Contemporary Issues*, and HIGH BUTTON PRESS *Contemporary Art*,
OAI supports writers and artists worldwide.



BUTTONHOOK PRESS
AN IMPRINT OF OPEN: JOURNAL OF ARTS & LETTERS

Set in Garamond and GARAMOND ALLCAPS and formatted in CreateSpace.

Made available online and/or printed by license in the USA and elsewhere as a novelty and
commemorative document celebrating the publication of Carolyn Martin's PDF pamphlet.

This project was made possible, in part, with support from **Grayling & Wraith**,
a growth marketing company.



Cover Image: *The Rhododendron Gate* (AI-assisted digital image) by OJA&L staff creative.
2025. Public domain via MidJourney AI.

GUEST SPEAKER

SEVEN A.M. IN DENNY'S CONFERENCE ROOM and the annoying clink of silverware. Business suits are prepped to hear me discuss how memories jumpstart creativity. Nothing about style or craft, imagination or muse, just a gentle cajole that their kids and grands deserve to know—in poetry or prose—how they arrived at who they are. I'll quote from eight pages my father sent me thirty years ago. I had no clue the man could write—or why his father beat him up, where he met my mother, how he coped with heart-destroying work. As I ponder the last words he typed before he died, the Chairman introduces the expert on shaping memories. I scan faces—suspicious, smiling, bored. Servers refill coffee cups. I forget what I plan to say.

rush hour
in mizzling rain
Mozart on the radio

DISAPPEARANCE

SUNDAY NIGHT and the last line of my poem finds its period: "...and the feral cat is taming me." Summer rain relieves me from watering, so I bid her an early goodnight and warn, "Keep away from coyotes and cars." She didn't understand.

*tomatoes
ripen in a backyard
without fireflies*

TIME OUT

HE SNORES INTO THE TABLECLOTH AGAIN. Five whiskey shots and done. His wife/my aunt scrapes her chair, removes his half-full plate and burning cigarette. She shoots me a warning sign. I want to shout, *What a waste!*—this man who could build and paint and fix anything—when her blue eyes flash, *Let it be. Let it be.*

*twenty minutes
after grace
baseball on TV*

Tomorrow morning, after laced iced tea, he'll set up the vacuum for his in-ground pool and give me a call. Our deal: I skim bugs and leaves for swims in New Jersey heat. Guiding the pole, I'll catch sight of him leaning on the kitchen sink, staring over the dusty baseball field to Meyer's Bar on Highway 9. *What a waste*, I'll shout to the crows flying by and cool my feet in puddles I'll create. When debris disappears, I'll launch myself into the blue. He taught me how to dive.

*double play
seventh inning stretch
reprieve*

THEOLOGY

WHAT IF GOD IS ANOTHER NAME FOR EVERYTHING—
from sand fleas to death row inmates; from the pitapat of rain on
astilbe leaves to souls circling a cloud-abandoned sky? Even
raccoons that upend my flowerpots and every woman I've loved
too much may be divine. Inherent holiness would simplify the way
life works, relieving me of comparisons, judgments, and regret.

*adoration—
the eucharistic sound
of snapping saltines*

On the other hand, I'm not sure about the neighbor who can't
stand my guts and the skunks who ruin evening air. Not to
mention aphids munching my red rose bush or masked faces
ripping people from innocent streets. Maybe the Divine
discriminates? Lilies, figs, sparrows, and righteous tears are in;
coyotes, rats, abusers, and hypocrites are out. Or, does everything
require an ethereal second glance? Tonight, as I walk our
neighborhood—my flashlight ready to pounce on shadows, frogs,
and sagging tents—I'll pay attention more intentionally. The blessed
may be hiding in snags, cracks, tarps, and crevices, needing a prayer
to invite them out.

*penance
a decade of the rosary
under a moonless sky*

A WEEK LATE...

*(Crystal Springs Rhododendron Gardens
Portland, OR)*

...AND I MISSED THEM AGAIN: heady rhodies splitting the sky with their yellows/pinks/blues/whites and multi-hued azaleas cupping scents of early May. My out-of-sync calendar leaves me with scattered blooms and third-grade kids field-tripping with artist-pads and #2s. They don't seem to care about my loss as they sketch left-behinds: curated waterfalls, irises, dogwood, fern, herons, mallards, and geese.

*a swallowtail
on a browned azalea bloom
the silence between thoughts*

"We can't talk to strangers," pigtails rebuff my praise of her woodland scene. Mother-chaperones—weary in the noon-high sun—agree: some lessons take. We share adult smiles just as a flock of boys shouts us toward the lake's edge where seven golden goslings paddle close to shore. A t-shirt and jeans asks me how old they are and, as strangeness dissipates, I offer my best guess and snap a golden photograph.

*across the lake—
let's stay here forever
a child's voice*

ABOUT THE WRITER:

CAROLYN MARTIN is a recovering work addict who's adopted the Spanish proverb, "It is beautiful to do nothing and rest afterwards" as her daily mantra. She is blissfully retired—and resting—in Clackamas, Oregon. Her poems have appeared in more than 200 publications around the world.

THE O:JA&L PAMPHLET SERIES



BUTTONHOOK PRESS

AN IMPRINT OF OPEN: JOURNAL OF ARTS & LETTERS

2020

Safe Spaces: A Pretty Lie

Editorials on Issues of Poetic Practice by Rachel Custer

Against Art as a Radical Subjectivity

Editorials on Issues of Poetic Practice by Rachel Custer

Songs on the Way to God: A Theory of Poetics

Editorials on Issues of Poetic Practice by Rachel Custer

The Artistic Power of Silence: On Letting Art Speak for Itself

Editorials on Issues of Poetic Practice by Rachel Custer

Special Edition: Experimental Discourse

...are serious offenses, and...

A closet drama in two acts by Anthony Hamilton

How to Love a Headstone

Poetry by Sloane Asakura

The Last of the Gallants

Poetry by Atar Hadari

2021

Salt

Poetry by Amanda Leal

Deer in Fog at Twilight Near Squalicum Lake Road

Poetry by Richard Widerkehr

Democracy has Lifted Up Its Voice

Poetry by Mike Puican

2YC Review: The Works

Poetry and creative prose by members of the Two-Year College

Caucus at AWP

Promises

Poetry by Ellis Elliott

Home

Poetry by Amanda Leal

Study of Burkas

A poem by Dana Sonnenschein

The Open Window

Flash vignettes by O.G. Rose

Light in the Cathedral: Russian/English Poems

Poetry in two languages by Andrey Gritsman

2022

Poems for Families

Poetry by Kirby Olson

Mogollon Rim

Poetry by Allisa Cherry

Hanno

Poetry by John-Michael Bloomquist

Poem scrawled on a maize-sheaf for her (last offering)

Poetry and art by Arturo Desimone

The Curve of the Open Page

A poem by Bruce Bond

Murder in the House: The "Nutshells" of Frances Glessner
Lee

Poetry by Jessica Purdy

War and Riff

Haibun by Keith Polette

Family Photo of America

Poetry by Lynn Potts

Chester River Reverie

Poetry by Priscilla Long

Salton Sea

A short story by Mike Murray

The Fiddler

Poetry by Tim Hunt

A Balloon Called YOUNG AMERICA

Poetry by Jennifer Clark

High Fashion

Featured Collaboration

Poetry by Adjei Agyei-Baah & Fine Art Photography by Jerome
Berglund

2023

[Rain Comes to the Central Valley](#)

Poetry by Adrienne Pilon

[DECIDUOUS](#)

Poetry by Jean Kane

[Potter's Valley Road](#)

Poetry (Americana) by Richard Widerkehr

[Old Barn OR How Things Go On](#)

Poetry by Penelope Schotte

[Nothing To Be Sorry For](#)

Poetry by Lynn Cohen

[Small Lantern](#)

Featured Haiga Collaborations

Haiku by Hassane Zemmouri and Photography by Megali Bretou
& Bea Bauer

[A Sport and a Pastime](#)

Haiku (Americana) by Ron Scully

[Night Train](#)

Haiku by Jerome Gagnon

[The Aquarian Foundation](#)

Poetry (Americana) by Jeffrey Gray

[Once There Was a Way](#)

Poetry by Steve Myers

[Local Habitations](#)

Poetry by Edison Jennings

[Occasions for Listening](#) (Excerpts from a WIP)

Spencer Silverthorne

2024

[Needful Things](#)

Micropoems by Ronald J. Scully (Americana)

[Designation](#)

Poetry by Wendy Taylor Carlisle

[California Summer](#)

Poetry by Michael Lee Johnson

[Once Is Enough](#)

Formalist poems by Peter Austin (Americana)

Garden

Poems by Jianqing Zheng (Americana)

Let Me Say This Up Front

Poetry by David James (Americana)

GEMS

Poems by Larry D. Thomas

2025

BESTIARY: Far West Texas

Poetry by Larry D. Thomas

WEST Toward Squalicum Mountain

Poetry by Richard Widerkehr

MORE TITLES IN PRESS

O:JA&L'S BUTTONHOOK PRESS MASTERS SERIES

The Buttonhook Press Masters Series: Brian Clements on Prose Poetry

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Masters Series: Mark Budman on Flash Discourse

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Masters Series: Ray Gonzalez on Prose Poetry

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Master Series: Michael Martone on Flash Fiction

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Master Series: Roberta Allen on Flash Fiction

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Master Series: Peter Connors on Flash Fiction

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Masters Series: Maxine Chernoff on Prose Poetry

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

The Buttonhook Press Masters Series: Pedro Ponce on Flash Fiction

With an Interview by Associate Editor Pamelyn Casto

MORE TITLES IN PRESS

OPEN: Journal of Arts & Letters



HOT BUTTON PRESS

Contemporary Issues

2023

Lamentations: Icons of War

Arab-Israeli Conflict image-as-poem collection by Tony Brinkley

In Praise of Columbus

Poetry by Kirby Olson

Perseus with the Head of Medusa

Editorials on Issues of Contemporary Aesthetics by Contributing Editor
Mick McGrath

Democrats by 'Trippin'

Editorials on Issues of Contemporary Aesthetics by Contributing Editor
Mick McGrath

Let's Talk About Female Academics

Editorials on Issues of Contemporary Aesthetics by Contributing Editor
Mick McGrath

Diversophiles Everywhere!

Editorials on Issues of Contemporary Aesthetics by Contributing Editor
Mike McGrath

The End of the "Black Victim" Narrative?

Editorials on Issues of Contemporary Aesthetics by Contributing Editor
Mick McGrath

2024

Woes Innumerable (HOT BUTTON PRESS)

Based Fiction Mick McGrath (Americana)

2025

The Future Is MAO!

Short fiction by Mick McGrath

RULE & INNOVATION

Short fiction by Mick McGrath

SUPERFLUOUS SUPER LOUIS

Fiction by Perry Genovese

Winner: 2025 WEITZ PRIZE for Counter-Revolution Writing

MUSING THE CROSSROADS

Poetry by Larry D Thomas

MORE TITLES IN PRESS

AVAILABLE NOW FROM OJA&L'S BUTTONHOOK PRESS

FLASH FICTION: *Alive in the Flicker*
A Portable Workshop

PAMELYN CASTO

“Pamelyn Casto’s *Flash Fiction: Alive in the Flicker* is insightful, comprehensive, and brimming with inventive prompts and exercises to make your flash truly leap off the page.”

~ Dinty W. Moore

co-editor of the *Best of Brevity: Twenty Groundbreaking Years of Flash Nonfiction*

“Pamelyn Casto has been the most useful person in flash for years. This “portable workshop” proves it. *Flash Fiction: Alive in the Flicker* is an amazing flash compendium of everything for anyone who is interested the form. It’s also a writers’ workshop from prompts to where to send flashes. What’s not to like?”

~ Robert Shapard

co-editor of many Flash and Sudden Fiction anthologies, the latest are *Sudden Fiction Latina: Short Stories from the United States and Latin America* (2010) and *Flash Fiction International: Very Short Stories from Around the World* (2015)

“Pamelyn Casto’s valuable book *Flash Fiction: Alive in the Flicker* is an astonishing illumination—a total history of the form with essays, strategies and exercises; lessons, examples, how-to’s, markets, marketing, contests, anthologies, prompts, advice from pros, new directions (flash film!), reader psychology even—it is all here, with hundreds of internet links. There will never be a fuller single resource, with a good teacher’s encouraging tone about it, to boot. You can say flash fiction begins with Aesop; with Casto you can begin anew.

~Kent H. Dixon

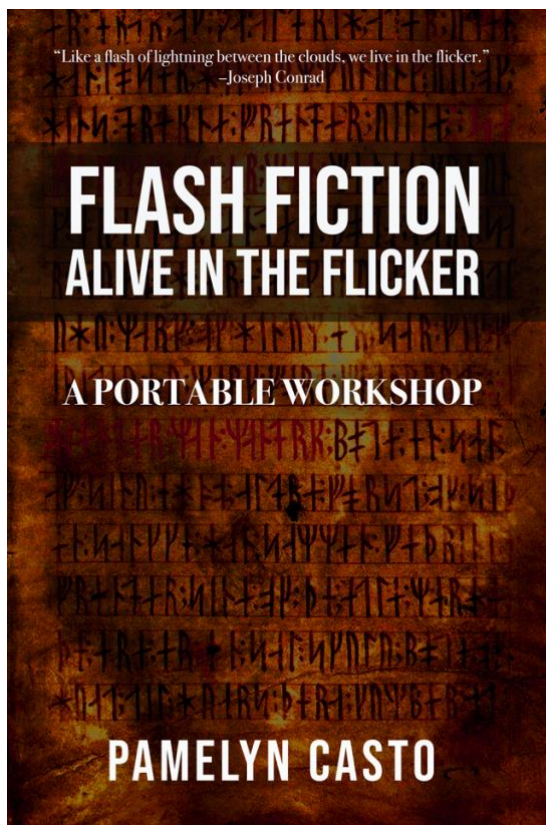
translator of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (2018) and co-editor of *Stone Wall Book of Short Fictions* (1976)

"Pamelyn Casto is a deep font of flash knowledge, and this portable workshop is a thorough, indispensable resource for writers and instructors who want to know more about what this thing called "flash" is, how to write it, and more important, how to read and understand it."

~ Tara Lynn Masih

editor of *The Rose Metal Press Field Guide to Writing Flash Fiction* (2009)
and founder of *The Best Small Fictions* (founded 2015)

Buttonhook Press titles on Amazon
available now



AMAZON REVIEWS

for Pamelyn Castos's *FLASH FICTION: Alive in the Flicker*

Daniel J. Nicholas

Reviewed in the United States on August 26, 2024

Verified Purchase

If I were to teach a class, this book would be required reading or a course outline for discussion. Bravo, Pamelyn! In addition, I look forward to your monthly blog to start up again.

David Lignell

Reviewed in the United States on November 23, 2022

Verified Purchase

Pamela Casto's new text, *Flash Fiction: Alive in the Flicker*, is a must have "portable workshop" workbook for anyone who desires to learn and practice the many forms of flash fiction.

W.R. Rodriguez

Reviewed in the United States on October 5, 2022

Verified Purchase

An authoritative overview of the genre, combined with practical advice on the writing process and an abundance of writing prompts.

Norman Jensen

Reviewed in the United States on April 2, 2024

Reading is great but hands-on prompts are even better.



BUTTONHOOK PRESS
AN IMPRINT OF OPEN: JOURNAL OF ARTS & LETTERS

Supporting artists and writers worldwide

O:JA&L'S 2025 PAMPHLET SERIES

\$4.95 (USA)

\$7.95 (Canada)