

## From the Editor

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Ten minutes into my first class with the MFA students who helped produce this inaugural issue of *The Lindenwood Review*, the lights went out. We sat together in the dark, waiting for breakers to be flipped, and discussed the book we were about to create. Our eyes adjusted, and although we somehow felt an instant connection in the darkness of that windowless room, we eventually gathered up our books and went in search of an empty classroom, in search of light.

As the weeks went by and the snow piled up outside, we found ourselves still searching for that light, that flash of beauty or clarity or inventive language that caused a submitted piece to stand out from the rest. We were struck by the lush lyric prose of Irène Mathieu's "The Most Beautiful Woman I've Ever Seen," the strong narrative pull of "Naked" by Jenna Devine, and the concrete pain of "Tying Up the Replacement" by Ryan Stone. We were fascinated by Angie Chuang's glimpse into an Afghan home in her essay "On the Other Side of the Wall." We each championed pieces that affected us as readers, swept away by the manic energy of "The Saddest Tootsie Pop Ever" by Lisa Vaas and swallowed up by the lovely sadness of Christopher Linforth's "Moonbow." We read poetry submissions aloud in class, and each poem we selected for this issue stopped our breath, or made us laugh with joy, or even brought us to tears. Together, we created a book that we love.

This book would not have been possible without the help of many people. Sincere thanks to Lindenwood University President James Evans, Vice President Richard Boyle, and Vice President Jann Weitzel, whose input, approval, and support at the beginning of this process were invaluable. Thanks also to Spencer Hurst and Ana Schnellmann for their support of this new journal, to David Carkeet for his wisdom and guidance, and to Mary Troy and the staff of *Natural Bridge* for their assistance. We are also grateful to those who helped us toward the end of this process: Charlene Engleking for her editing skills and her thoughtful advice, Eve Jones and Julie Beard for their helpful contributions, and Chris Duggan, Public Relations Coordinator, for his tireless efforts on our behalf. Managing Editor Patricia Feeney's expertise, enthusiasm, and hard

work are reflected in every page of this journal. Terry St. Clair provided the remarkable photographs of the Lindenwood University campus that appear on our cover and section headings, and Christopher Mead created a striking look for the journal with his design of our logo, cover, and interior layout.

My most heartfelt thanks go to the Issue 1 editorial assistants, the students in my class: Nickolas Alexander, Cindy Allen, Carol Arnett, John Cunningham, Cynthia A. DuBois, Patricia Feeney, Anthony Clinton Green, Thomas Horan, Megan Ingram, DeAnna Jarrell Massie, Michelle Kehder, Tricia Sankey, and Terry St. Clair. I am incredibly proud of these talented, insightful MFA students, and it was a pleasure to share this experience with them—reading until our eyes ached, fighting for work that we loved, and allowing ourselves to be moved by words, to let the pieces in this journal hit us hard, like a light in the dark.

Beth Mead