

A Guide on Submitting to Literary Magazines

A Presentation by *The Raspberry Literary Magazine*

Presenters: Lillian Morpak, Tara Wohlleben, Amelia Watford

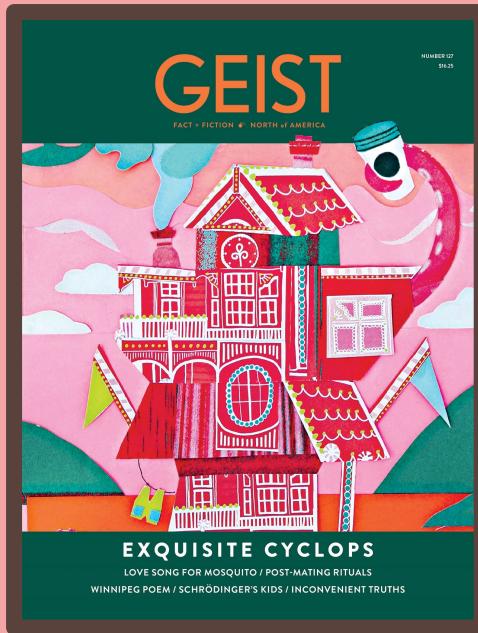


What are Literary Magazines?

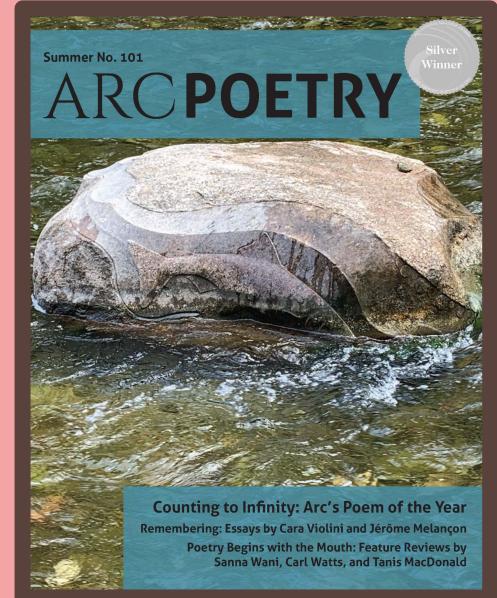
Literary magazines (lit mags) are magazines that publish stories, poetry, scripts, and more.

According to the *New York Public Library*, lit mags “provide a forum for new and experimental writing, nurture important literary developments, and document social and political movements.”

The *New York Public Library* on “American Literary Magazines”



Geist Literary Magazine
<https://www.geist.com/>



Arc Poetry Magazine
<https://arcpoetry.ca/>



Who Are We? Why Are we Speaking to you All?

The Raspberry is a Vancouver Island based biannual digital literary magazine that publishes the refreshing, the cozy, and the unconventional.

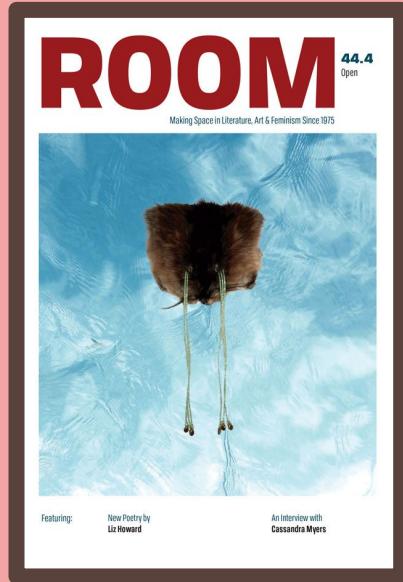
We publish fiction, non-fiction, and poetry from authors currently located in British Columbia. Each of our issues follow a specific theme, such as “Late Summer” or “Cozy Winter” that we ask authors to follow when submitting to us.

This presentation is designed to guide you through the intimidating process of submitting to magazines, providing tips and tricks for getting accepted, and to answer any of your questions.

The First Step: Finding the Right Lit Mag

Finding a literary magazine is the first step. There are so many different magazines, it's hard to know where to start.

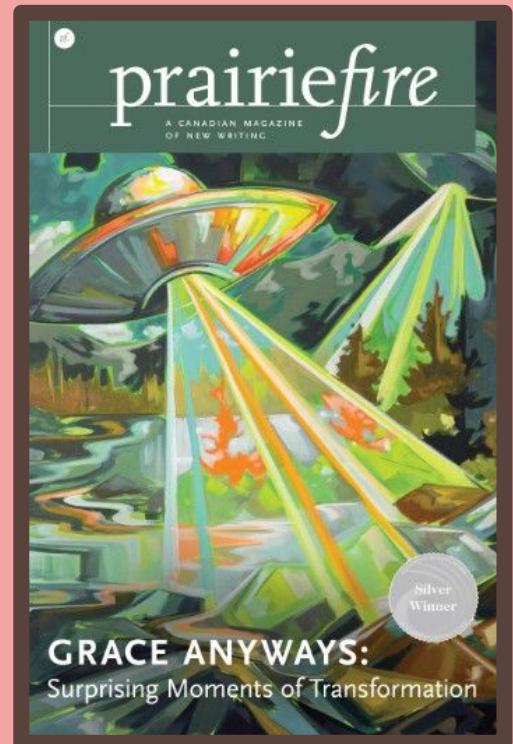
Begin by thinking of a type of magazine that has a theme you're passionate about, or one that has published content that you enjoy that fits with what you write.



Room Magazine
<https://roommagazine.com/>

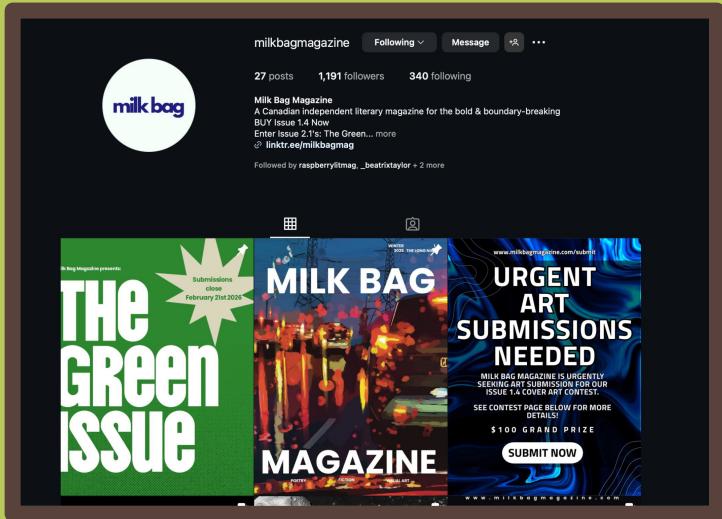


Prairie Fire Magazine
<https://www.prairiefire.ca/>



Where to Find Lit Mags (pt.1)

Instagram is a great place to connect and stay up-to-date with all different types of literary magazines.



Milk Bag Magazine
<https://www.instagram.com/milkbagmagazine/>



Gooey Magazine
<https://www.instagram.com/magazinegooey/>



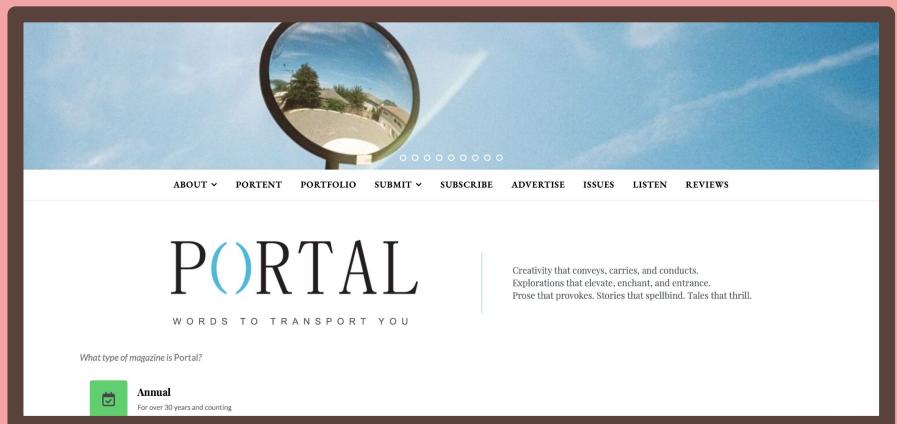
Where to Find Lit Mags (pt.2)

VIU has two literary magazines that students and alumni can submit to:



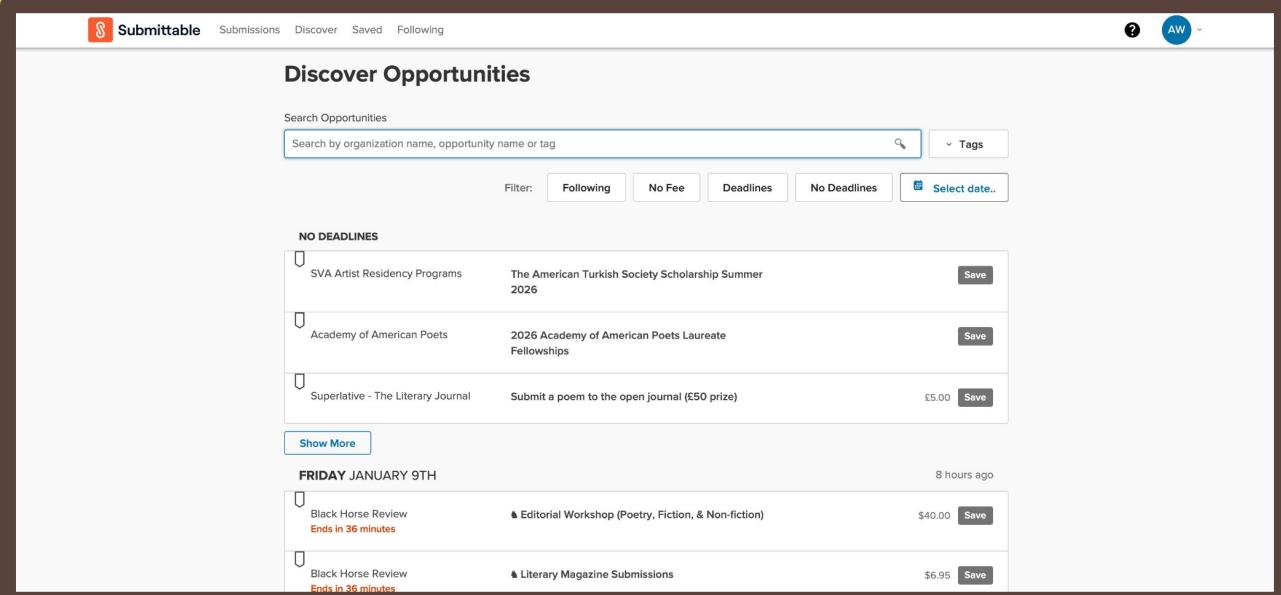
The Navigator
<https://thenav.ca/>

Portal Magazine
<https://portalmagazine.ca/>



Where to Find Lit Mags (pt.3)

Submittable is a great tool for looking at magazines that have a broader audience:



The screenshot shows the Submittable platform's 'Discover Opportunities' section. At the top, there is a search bar labeled 'Search Opportunities' with a placeholder 'Search by organization name, opportunity name or tag' and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar are several filter buttons: 'Following', 'No Fee', 'Deadlines', 'No Deadlines', and a 'Select date...' button. The main content area is divided into sections: 'NO DEADLINES' and 'FRIDAY JANUARY 9TH'. The 'NO DEADLINES' section lists three opportunities:

Organization	Description	Action
SVA Artist Residency Programs	The American Turkish Society Scholarship Summer 2026	Save
Academy of American Poets	2026 Academy of American Poets Laureate Fellowships	Save
Superlative - The Literary Journal	Submit a poem to the open journal (£50 prize)	£5.00 Save

A 'Show More' button is located at the bottom of this section. The 'FRIDAY JANUARY 9TH' section lists two opportunities:

Organization	Description	Action
Black Horse Review	Editorial Workshop (Poetry, Fiction, & Non-fiction) Ends in 36 minutes	\$40.00 Save
Black Horse Review	Literary Magazine Submissions Ends in 36 minutes	\$6.95 Save

Submittable: <https://manager.submittable.com/opportunities/discover>

I've Found the Magazine I Want to Submit to. Now What?

After you've found the right literary magazine, it's important that you thoroughly read through what the submissions call says, the magazines mandate, their editorial policy, and a few of their previously published issues.

After you have an idea of what the magazine is looking for, you can begin writing your piece!

The Raspberry's Mandate

Mandate:

The Raspberry is an up-and-coming literary magazine that adores the cozy, the refreshing, and the unconventional. We encourage writers to submit pieces that give us a glimpse into their worlds. Show us life as you see it: the interesting in the mundane, the chaos in the calm, the niches that appeal to you.

The Raspberry accepts submissions from all authors nineteen-years-old or older currently residing in British Columbia, Canada. We look for pieces within the genres of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Each issue has a specific theme that we kindly ask writers to consider when submitting.

We do not accept AI-generated submissions and will not consider content that reflects hate toward marginalized groups, such as people who identify as LGTBQIA2S+, BIPOC, a person with a disability, or a woman.



How to Professionally Edit Your Own Work: Developmental Edits

Developmental edits are the first step to editing your work. These questions will help guide your editing process:

- ★ Does the plot make sense?
- ★ Does the story's structure make sense?
- ★ Are there areas that could be strengthened by rearranging them?

TIP: After finishing your first draft, walk away for a bit before returning to edit.



How to Professionally Edit Your Own Work: Developmental Edits (pt. 2)

If you're nervous about sharing your work with others, start by sharing with your peers. The CREW Club meets every week and is a great way to build confidence before submitting.

Creative Writing Club

Campus : Nanaimo

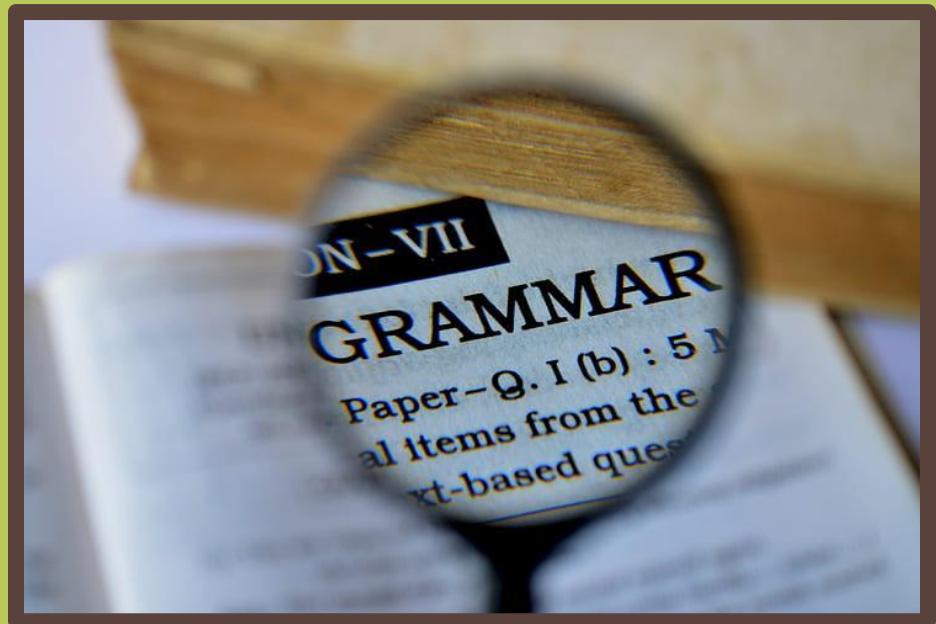
The Creative Writing Club is open to all students at VIU who are passionate about creative writing, inside or outside of the creative writing department. We meet weekly for workshopping and socializing, to provide feedback on stories in all formats and help writers form connections. We determine the day and time each semester via a member survey. Typically, we also host events once a month, like, a writing session or a trivia night (snacks provided).

VIU Creative Writing Club:

<https://www.viusu.ca/clubs/creative-writing-club>

How to Professionally Edit Your Own Work: Grammar

After you complete the developmental edits, it's time to polish your work. Checking for grammatical errors can be tedious, but it's an essential skill to have as a writer, and will help your chances of getting published.





How to Professionally Edit Your Own Work: Grammar (pt. 2)

Here are some resources if you need grammar help:

- ★ **VIU's Writing Centre Online Resources:** <https://services.viu.ca/writing-centre/resources>
 - You can visit the Writing Centre on campus for writing help with your school assignments, but they also have a list of PDFs which you can download or print for free!
- ★ **Purdue OWL:**
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/index.html
 - This resource is entirely online and goes in depth with grammar concepts.
- ★ **The Canadian Style Guide:** <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.646585/publication.html>
 - If you prefer to have a hard-copy reference manual.

How to Professionally Edit Your Own Work: Grammar (pt. 3)

Reading your work over and over again can be overwhelming. Here are a couple tips to make it easier to spot the changes that need to be made:

- ★ Read your piece out loud, to yourself or to a peer.
- ★ Print a copy so you can really see it on the page.



Following Submission Guidelines and Mandates

Within these guidelines you'll find information about:

- ★ What file type they want to see (.doc, .docx, .pdf).
- ★ What the font, sizing, and spacing should be.
- ★ What you should name the file.
- ★ What information they want in the file (name, email, mailing address, word count, page numbers, etc).
- ★ If they want a cover letter and how they want it formatted.
- ★ If they accept simultaneous submissions.
- ★ What kind of bio they want.



Arc Poetry

MORE
SUBMISSION
GUIDELINES

Arc accepts unsolicited submissions from poets at all stages of their writing careers.

sub-Terrain

Home

Issues & Samples

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Shop

Writer's Guidelines & Submissions

Arc Poetry

- Submissions must include the poet's biography, which should be two to three sentences or approximately 30 words long.

The Ampersand Review

Tell us about yourself or share a short bio (100-250 words): *

Cover Letters



Ref: <https://tnq.ca/cover-letter-guide/>

Generally:

- ★ Your contact information.
- ★ The names of your piece(s).
- ★ A small bio about yourself.

Read their guidelines for what they want. Some places want to get to know you, and some just want the basic info above. Make sure you tailor your Cover Letter to fit what they want.

TNQ also gives three good rules:

- ★ Have good grammar.
- ★ Be personal but professional.
- ★ Keep it brief.

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Fiction Editors
The New Quarterly c/o St. Jerome's University
290 Westmount Road North
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G3
September 3, 2020

To Pamela Mulloy and the Fiction Editors of *The New Quarterly*,

I am submitting "My Cat Won't Stop Stepping On Me," a 2500-word story for your consideration. I was inspired to submit after reading Rover Terrier's story "Cats are F(r)iends" in your latest issue.

My story is a part of a larger collection concerning family pets and their baffling behaviours. I began work on this collection in Dominic Shorthair's creative writing course "How to Write a Great Story for Your Cat" in 2012. I have since benefited from ongoing creative writing mentorships from Tabby Manx and Calico Bobtail. I hope to one day publish my complete collection.

This is a simultaneous submission. I will notify you immediately if it is accepted elsewhere. Thank you for considering my work.

All best wishes,
Emily Bee

Bio: Emily Bee's work has been published in many publications, such as *Cattitude*, *The CanLitCat* and *Poetry Paws*. She received a Bachelor of Arts in English at the University of Hard Knocks and is working towards an MFA in Creative Writing. They currently live in Little Town, ON.

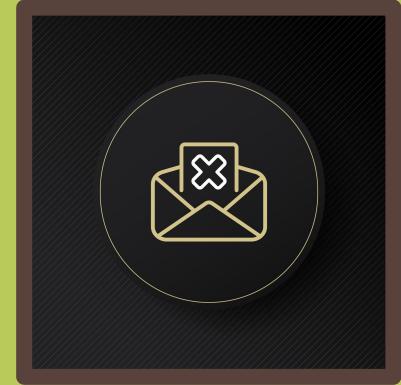
Waiting For Acceptance or Rejection

- ★ Don't dwell on your submission(s) and refresh your inbox every hour.
- ★ Most magazines will have a timeline on their submissions page that will let you know how long you should be waiting for a response.
- ★ Forget about it until you hear back .
- ★ Set a reminder to check back after the timeline.



What Happens When You're Rejected?

- ★ Rejection is not a reflection of how good or bad your story is.
- ★ Writing is subjective and lit mags can get a lot of submissions.
- ★ Everyone gets rejected! Your favourite authors have been rejected.
- ★ It can be easier if you have a group of peers to lean on. They'll understand how it feels to get rejected and might even have stories to share about their own rejections.



What Happens After Your Work is Accepted?

The Raspberry's editing process:

1. **First Edits** - developmental edits.
2. **Second Edits** - fine-tuning changes.
3. **Copy Edits** - inline edits and scanning for grammatical errors.
4. **Managing Editor's Review** - final scan before the author signs off and the story goes to publishing.



Other Magazine's Editorial Process



Portal: Student magazine, part of a class- Editing can be very intense as it is part of a learning experience so it can be more strict than other magazines.

OnSpec: The editors were allowed to edit how they saw fit, with the managing editor trusting them to work with the author and only involve the managing editor as a last resort if things weren't going well.

Larger magazines that get thousands of applications will tend to do less editing, because they don't need to.

This is why you want to make sure that your piece is edited and polished before sending it out. Make sure you're always putting your best foot forward.



So, Why Should You Submit to Lit Mags?

★ **Writing practice!**

- Practice makes perfect. The more you write, the better your writing will become!

★ **Experiment with your writing!**

- Literary magazines are the perfect place for you to experiment with different styles, approaches and techniques.

★ **Build your portfolio!**

- Big publishers often look for writers who have been previously published, so it's important to build up your portfolio.

Any Questions?

QR Code to More Resources:

(slides plus resources also available on our website)

