

Fiction Fix is fully staffed by volunteers from a University of North Florida fiction workshop. It would never have come about without the inspiration, encouragement and assistance we've received from our professor, Ari. A few paragraphs in our publication hardly do justice to his talent and contributions, but we hope it will give him an inkling of how much he means to us.

If you're ever looking for Ari, he's pretty easy to spot. He's the one who looks like he's on the wrong university campus – the guy in tattered jeans, green fishing vest, Bogartian Casablanca hat, cowboy boots, with rather unkempt salt and pepper hair. But don't depend on catching him for long. At last count, he's teaching five classes in addition to juggling his family life and artistic interests in painting, music, reading, and writing (not to mention keeping up with his incredible webpage, www.arifiles.com).

This whole thing started when Ari walked into class one early fall evening and asked if any of us had considered publishing a literary magazine. He suggested that we see him after class if we were interested. Most of us stayed after that class, and have stayed after every class since. We're a pretty diverse group. Many of us work full time in addition to coursework and all of us are involved in a number of things other than school. In spite of our tight schedules, we've devoted a great deal of time, effort and other resources, essentially just because Ari believed in us.

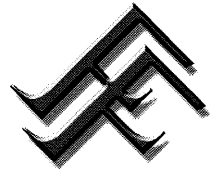
In addition to what he did for our morale, he also set up an online discussion board for us, gave us technical and professional advice, encouraged us to talk to the English department and to professors of other creative writing programs around the country, sending us to them to get more advice and support. From him, we learned about devotion – to each other and to the written word. He has listened to us cry, yell, and pour our hearts out with understanding and patience - no matter how busy he was. He's shared in our lives and in our dreams, and we are better because of it.

There aren't sufficient words to thank him for what he taught us, nor for what he gave us: faith in our talents and the ability to just try – even when we had no idea and were scared to death.

Many other people deserve thanks, too. We would like to thank several instructors, Ari, Joe Flowers, Pam Hnyla, and Eileen Maguire for ordering our publication for their classes. We are extremely grateful for their support of us. We would like to offer a special acknowledgement to Professor Kaplan. She has been incredibly helpful and supportive, assisting us many times and giving wonderful suggestions. It was Dr. Hassall's brainstorm to have a fiction workshop in the first place. Without her, we wouldn't have had this opportunity. Dr. Slaughter's information and suggestions on electronic literature magazines and the creative writing and publication process were invaluable. Dr. Wiley's support and encouragement on improving graduate offerings in Writing as a Fine Art for those of us interested in continuing on for masters degrees has been much appreciated. We would like to thank Chair Tilley for his guidance, support and contributions. We really feel like we've been supported by the entire English department. The enthusiasm we've been met with at every turn has done much to keep us motivated and engaged.

Many thanks to all of you. This has been a tremendous learning experience for us. Without you, we could not have done it.

Sincerely,



The Crew of Fiction Fix