



## The Record **BROADENING AMERICAN LITERATURE**

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### BROADENING AMERICAN LITERATURE

By LAURENCE CHOLLET

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Take the word "emphatic," mix it with "attitude," and the result is phati'tude, a new literary magazine.

The second issue, which hits the stands this month, is devoted to Native American writing and features selections from 47 writers.

"I wanted to explore the writings of different nationalities and cultures, so I figured to begin with Native Americans," said publisher and editor in chief Gabrielle David last week. "They, after all, were the first creative people in this country."

The issue, "Indian Summer," is in reference to summer as a season when many Native American tribes celebrate cultural renewal.

The issue features a range of Native Americans -- from Simon Ortiz, an Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico, to Joseph Bruchac, an Abenaki, based in New York.

The articles include poems, interviews, stories, histories, and essays that address a broad scope of topics -- including Native American storytelling, life on the reservation, and homosexuality in the Indian community.

The articles are arranged, David said, to tell a historical narrative: They start with ancient Native American storytelling and continue with stories of today.

"I think that pulling all these people together and seeing their work in one book, under one cover, opens up a whole window of opportunity," David said. "And debate."

Giving voice to those traditionally not heard in mainstream publishing is one of the guiding themes behind phati'tude, which is based in Palisades Park.

The first issue of the magazine, which is privately funded, came out a year ago. It was designed to highlight writers of Native American, African-American, Hispanic-Latino, and Asian descent, and explore a range of writing styles, subject matters, and perspectives.

Future issues will be devoted to the Asian and African diaspora, Latino writing, and gay and lesbian poets and writers.

"I believe that the term 'American Literature' should not be limited to one solitary voice," David writes in the current issue. "Rather, it should encompass the voice of all Americans -- in particular those of indigenous and ethnic minorities."

That, of course, is easier said than done. When David first began searching out Native American writing, she ran into a stone wall.

"It's a different country [for Native Americans]," said David, who is African-American. "They don't trust white people. They don't trust black people. And for good reason -- just look at their history."

But all that changed when David hooked up with Geary Hobson from Oklahoma, a member of Native Arts Circles of the Americas, an organization of Native American writers.

Hobson put David in touch with a network of Native American writers, and in less than a week, she was swamped with submissions from all over the country.

"The juxtaposition of Native writers expressing Native thoughts in a language that has been forced upon them," David notes, "is quite striking."

For copies of phati'tude (\$10), call (201) 814-1812 or e-mail at [phatlitmag@al.com](mailto:phatlitmag@al.com).

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