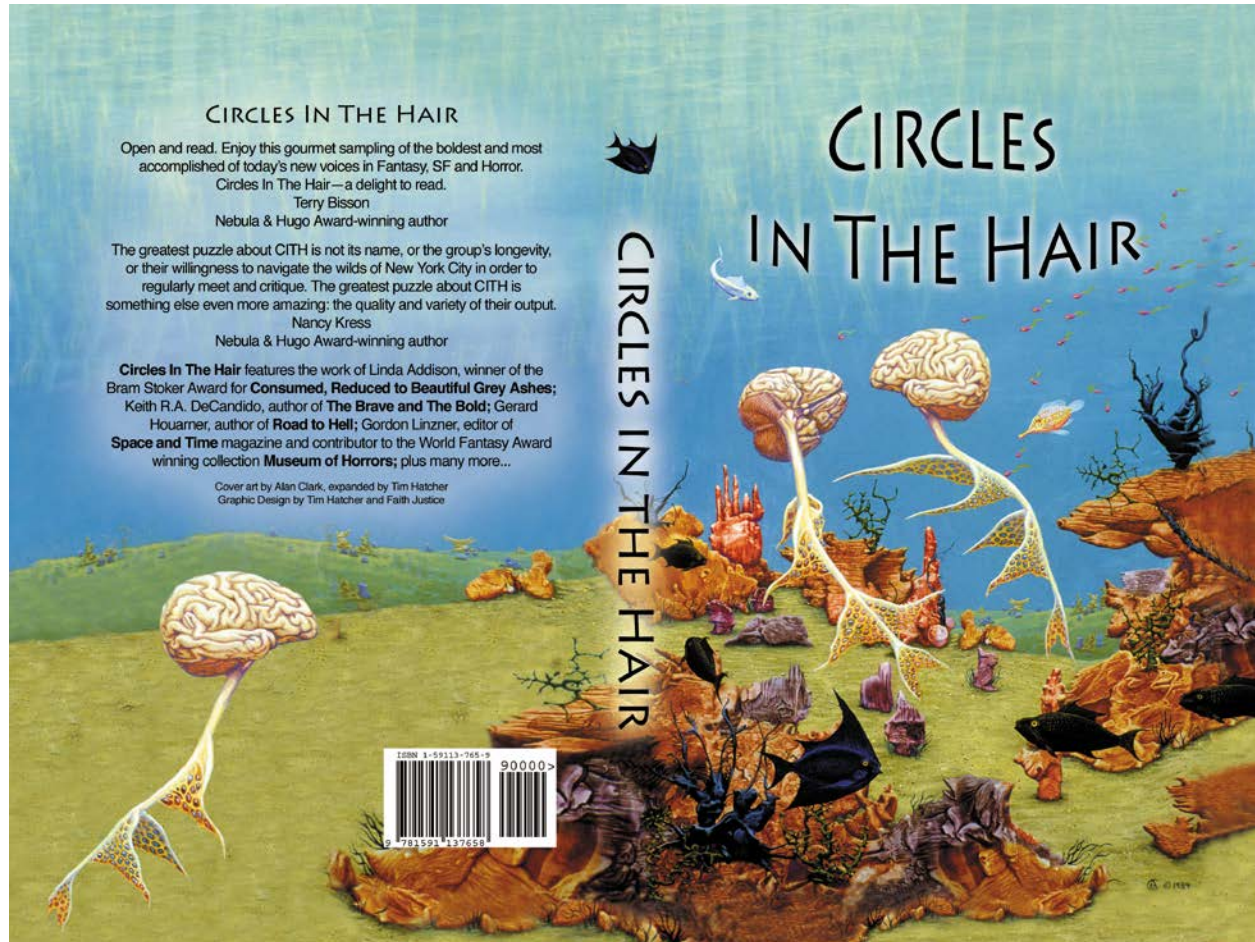


# CIRCLES IN THE HAIR



*CIRCLES IN THE HAIR*, an anthology by the members of CITH, edited by Faith L. Justice and Gordon Linzner, features stories set in times as distant as Bronze Age China and the far flung future; in places as strange as a Brooklyn courthouse and the edge of the universe. These stories and poems evoke laughter, tears, shivers, and thoughtfulness. Forward and Afterword by award-winning authors Nancy Kress and Terry Bisson

**The 25th Anniversary reissue of a print anthology  
by the members of CITH.**

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# CIRCLES IN THE HAIR

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*To Nancy Kress and Terry Bisson—teachers, mentors, and friends. And to Shawna McCarthy,  
the accidental “birthmother” of CITH.*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

### eBook Edition

Thank you for checking out our work. *Circles in the Hair* first appeared in print in 2005. If you like a story, please check out the author's other work—links to author websites are provided where available. Five tales from this anthology were listed as Honorable Mention in the *Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*, 19th edition edited by Ellen Datlow:

"Maternal Instinct" by Tim Hatcher

"Better the Devil" by Faith L. Justice

"Expiation" by Natalia Lincoln

"Now We Must Be Going" by M. P Melnis

"Banshee" by Robert Emmet Murphy

In the ten years since the original print version, several members have gone on to win numerous awards and most continue to write. CITH lost a few folks and gained a couple new ones. The biggest difference is the way we "meet." There are only a handful of us left in New York. The rest have scattered as far away as Germany, Arizona, and Brooklyn, but we continue to critique each other's work and communicate electronically. Twenty-five years. It's been a good run. Thanks for celebrating with us.

—[Faith L. Justice](#)

June 2015

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## ENIGMAS, NEW YORK STYLE

by [Nancy Kress](#)

*CITH is a puzzle.* Or, rather, CITH is several puzzles that reveal themselves one after the other, like those enigmatically smiling Russian dolls you open to discover another doll inside, and then you open that to discover another, and...You start by wondering at the name. “CITH?” What could it possibly stand for? City-wide Interborough Trainee Homers? Chroniclers of Interesting Horror Tales? Then you find out what the acronym does stand for... “Circles in the Hair.”

Huh?

Someone, probably the irrepressible Linda Addison, explains the name. Then she adds that the group has been together, with a few additions and subtractions, for thirteen years. Your jaw drops. Most writing groups are lucky to make it to one year. Someone gets upset about the critiques of his story. Somebody else decides she’s the only one in the group with any trace of talent whatsoever. A third somebody, intimidated by everybody else’s obvious talent, drops out with the excuse that she’s developed agoraphobia and can’t attend meetings. Someone moves to Phoenix, or says he’s moving to Phoenix. The remaining three people, one of whom can attend only every other month due to baby-sitting considerations, look at each other glumly and disband.

But not CITH. Thirteen years...and they’re still friends. How did they do that?

But the greatest puzzle about CITH is not its name, or the meaning of its name, or the group’s longevity, or their willingness to navigate the wilds of New York City in order to regularly meet and critique. The greatest puzzle about CITH is something else even more amazing: the quality and variety of their output.

Usually a writing group produces one star, one also-ran, and many people who are still trying to figure out what a “point of view” is. But the stories and poems in this anthology showcase an entire group of interesting writers. Nor are they producing “workshop stories,” that dreaded result in which all work begins to sound alike. This anthology includes a fascinating range of writings, including stories about:

an involuntary hairdo that may hold the answers to the deepest questions of the universe

a horrific specter that comes only for certain people...and they know who they are

a macho bully who gets his comeuppance from a creature even stranger than she initially seems

a traveler who acquires a most unusual companion, with a most unusual sexual request

a bar patron with a wild crush on...no, I won't tell you. Read the story.

In fact, read all the stories, and the poems, and marvel at the puzzle that is CITH. You'll certainly have plenty of company...starting with me.

Enjoy.



## BETTER THE DEVIL

by [Faith L. Justice](#)

*Mrs. Marston heard the warning honk as her daughter's rusty Toyota puffed onto the cracked concrete driveway. 7:28. Not bad for her workaholic daughter, but then tonight Abby had a good reason to arrive early.*

“Ten points for punctuality,” Mrs. Marston muttered. According to Mrs. Marston's point system, most of Abby's infrequent love interests barely made the “acceptable human” range, much less scored as a suitable son-in-law.

Mrs. Marston sniffed at the aroma wafting from the aluminum pot on her ancient Chambers stove. Corned beef and cabbage made the traditional way—with corned beef from the can. The mangled container with the key broke halfway (Mrs. Marston kept a screwdriver in the utensil drawer for just such emergencies) nestled in the recycle bin.

She bustled to one of the antique mirrors in the foyer, patted her silver hair into neat waves, and freshened her ‘Perfectly Coral’ lipstick.

Abby rushed through the door, hugged her mother and turned around with a laugh and a wave. “Come on in, Michael. She doesn't bite... often.”

The tall shadow on the porch resolved itself into the image of a Brooks Brothers accountant, fortyish, a bit thin on top and a little thick around the middle. A wave of dizziness swept over Mrs. Marston. She always had strong reactions to her daughter's dates, but this didn't feel right at all. She hadn't even reacted this way to the lawyer.

She wiped a damp palm on her dress, then held it out. “Welcome, Michael. I've heard so much about you, I'm glad we finally get to meet.”

“Oh, Mother.” Abby brushed a blonde curl out of her face. “You act like I've been hiding Michael away. We only met last month!”

“But you've been corresponding over the net for a year or more.”

Michael shook her hand, then put his arm around Abby's shoulder. “Mrs. Marston, I'm equally glad to meet you.” His eyes twinkled with good humor and softened to a warm glow when he looked at Abby. She hugged him, looking up with her angel's face.

Twenty-five points for genuine affection.

Mrs. Marston's heart lurched. It had been twenty-two long years since her husband died and left her with thirteen-year-old Abby to raise. She missed him every day. She wanted the same kind of love for her daughter, but something was naggingly wrong with Michael.

"Come on, you two. No need to stand here in the hall. Come sit in the living room a spell and have a glass of wine."

Michael and Abby settled on the couch draped in a Granny-square afghan. Mrs. Marston took her place on her mother's oak rocker.

"White or red?" She gestured toward the decanters of wine.

"Red, please," Michael replied.

She poured the Lambrusco into the Depression-era glasses and gave Michael an appraising glance. A red and black halo seemed to blur the edge of his features whenever she looked at him from the corner of her eyes. It disappeared with a direct gaze. She fought down a sudden wave of nausea and zeroed in on her target.

"Beherit." She sipped the red wine to settle her stomach. "That's an interesting last name, Michael." The grin on his face tightened. "The databases I checked say it's an ancient Syrian name for the devil. Has that caused you any problems here in the Bible Belt?"

"Databases?" Michael's eyebrows arched upward. "Please forgive me if this sounds rude, but people of your, uh, generation don't generally seem to take to computers. My boss is techno-illiterate."

Minus twenty-five points.

"I warned you Mom is a research librarian." Abby squeezed Michael's knee. "She's been looking up exotica for mossy old professors for as long as I can remember. She's the one who got me hooked on computers."

"Then I have even more to be grateful to you for." Michael beamed at Mrs. Marston. "You made it possible for us to meet."

"What do you do, Michael?"

"I'm an agent."

Mrs. Marston's stomach tightened. "Sports? Literary? Talent?"

“I’m a typical middleman. I find people who have needs, dreams, wishes and put them in touch with people who can help them—for a fee. Actually, I’m looking to get out of the business.”

“Why? Wish fulfillment seems like nice work.”

“Mom, it’s too early to give Michael the third degree.” Abby laughed and pulled her mother out of the rocker. “Come on, let’s have dinner. I smell corned beef and cabbage and I’m starved.”

Minus 20 for dodging.

Seated at the fragile drop-leaf table, Michael looked around at the family portraits on the wall. “Is that you, Mrs. Marston?” He pointed to a picture of two people beaming in front of a vine-draped porch.

“Yes, and my husband David.” She looked longingly at the picture. They had both been so young. She never felt the full weight of her seventy-two years as much as when she looked at that picture. Where had all the years gone?

Mrs. Marston returned to the here and now to catch the tail end of another question. “What? No. We were both only children. David taught history here at the university and I worked in the library. We thought the families would end with us. Then, just as we gave up hope, Abby came along to plague our middle age.” She patted her daughter’s hand. “And a blessing she’s been to me since the day she was born. I only wish David could’ve seen what a fine young woman she’s grown into.” Mrs. Marston gave Michael a sharp glance. “She’s dearer to me than my own soul and I wouldn’t take kindly to anyone trifling with her affections.”

“Mother!”

“I thought you said she didn’t bite?” Michael asked with a nervous laugh.

“Normally she doesn’t.” Abby raised an eyebrow at her mother.

“Just a friendly warning. I’m sure I have no reason to worry. Eat up, dears. For dessert we have lime Jell-O salad with carrots and marshmallows.”

Michael turned a little green inside his aura, but dug into his steaming dinner.

Ten points for eating.

\*\*\*

“So what’s the score?” Abby asked as soon as she returned from dropping Michael at his apartment.

“He zeroed out.”

“What? Mom, you can’t be serious. I thought you two would get along wonderfully. Doesn’t he remind you of Pop?”

Mrs. Marston gaped at her daughter. “Your father? How much do you really know about this man, Abby?”

“Enough. We’ve been exchanging e-mails for over a year. You get to know a person pretty well over that time. He’s a wonderful man. Well-read, witty and a terrific cook. You two have a lot in common. He’s a history buff.”

“I bet he’s seen a lot of history,” Mrs. Marston muttered.

“What?”

“I just don’t feel good about Michael. Call it ‘Mother’s intuition.’”

Abby’s face brightened. “Is that all?” She kissed her mother on the cheek. “That’s not good enough, Mom. I know you haven’t approved of most of my men friends. But I wasn’t really serious about any of them. This is different. I love Michael. We’ll all make it work somehow. You’ll see.”

“But, Sweetheart—”

“Michael and I are going to be married.”

“Married! You just barely met the man. He could be an axe murderer or...uh...an insurance salesman for all you know. For heaven’s sake, girl, think this through.”

“I know this seems sudden, but we love each other and don’t want to wait.” Abby’s smile faded. “Mom, you and Pop had something special. Even as a kid, I knew. You loved each other so much and included me in that love. I want what you and Pop had—someone to care for and to care for me in that special way.” The grin returned. “Besides, don’t you want grandchildren?”

“I don’t care if I have grandchildren or not. I just want you to be happy and you don’t need a man for that. You have a good job, friends, me.”

“I know, but this man does make me happy, Mom.” Abby hugged her mother and whispered, “Try to make an effort. For my sake. I don’t know how I’d cope if the two people I love most in the world didn’t get along.” She released her mother, smiled and floated to her bedroom, whistling, “I Could Have Danced All Night.”

\*\*\*

That night, Mrs. Marston dreamed about holding twin grandsons who suddenly sprouted tails and horns.

The next morning, she accessed her networks. Her fingers tapped furiously, cross-referencing “Beherit,” “demon” and “banishment.”

“Gotcha,” she whispered as the files printed. She made a list of the supplies she would need.

She smiled as she pinned on her hat. “We’ll see what kind of answers you have this time, Mr. Beherit.”

\*\*\*

When she got home, there was a message on the machine. Michael wanted to drop by that evening and talk to her. Mrs. Marston called back and made the date for six. Perfect. Abby almost always worked late on Thursdays.

Promptly at six, Michael knocked on the door. Mrs. Marston opened it to see him standing with flowers and a warm smile. “I’m so glad you could see me, Mrs. Marston. I had the feeling we didn’t connect last night. I’d like the chance to make up for it.”

Ten points for sensitivity.

“Well, your instincts are good. I was going to call you, but you beat me to it. Here, let me put these in water.” She took the bouquet of roses and baby’s breath and carefully set it on the mantel. A vase of flowering dogwood graced the mahogany coffee table.

She seated Michael on the sofa and took her accustomed spot on the rocker. She leaned forward and indicated a decanter of red wine. “You liked the red, if I remember right.”

He nodded. Mrs. Marston carefully poured a small amount of the ruby liquid into a cut crystal glass and handed it to Michael. He took a sip. She asked, “So you want to marry my daughter?” and he started coughing.

Mrs. Marston reached over to thump him on the back. “Sorry about that,” he choked out.

“Don’t you like the wine?”

“ ‘Yes’ to your first question—I’d like to marry your daughter. ‘No’ to your second—it’s a little sweet for my taste.” He set the glass aside, wiping sweat from his pale forehead.

“I’m sorry, Michael.”

“About the marriage or the wine?”

“Both. Abby and I are very close, you know. We took care of each other after her father died. I went back to work at the University Library. She worked her way through college. She’s lived with me all her life.”

“I love Abby, Mrs. Marston. I wouldn’t hurt her. She’s the most precious thing in the world to me. I—”

“Then you won’t mind a little test?” Mrs. Marston interrupted.

“A test? What kind of test?” Michael shifted uneasily on the sofa.

Mrs. Marston took a rosewood box from the table, opened the lid and tossed the white crumbly contents on Michael. Where the communion wafers landed, they smoked and burned with a sulfurous stench. He screamed as his form flickered and flared, then resumed a human semblance. He panted and moaned, trying to pat out the smoldering patches.

Mrs. Marston hesitated. She had only half believed her intuition. But the evidence had appeared before her eyes—a two-foot, red-scaled devil complete with cloven hoofs and forked tail had manifested for a brief moment. The rotten egg stench of sulfur still drenched the air.

With renewed vigor, she grabbed a couple of the flowering dogwood branches and approached Michael, mumbling a banishment prayer. He scrambled over the couch, trying to keep the massive piece of furniture between them.

“Mrs. Marston, please listen to me! Stop! You don’t know what you’re doing!” His voice rose to a piercing howl as Mrs. Marston switched him with the dogwood. His human form started to fade, revealing the red-scaled demon.

“Mom, I heard screaming—” Abby rushed in from the hallway and saw the cowering devil. She turned to her mother. “What the hell are you doing?” The diminutive demon ducked behind Abby’s skirts.

“Hell is just where I’m sending this runty aberration. Stand out of my way, Abby, I’ve almost completed the banishment.”

Abby blocked her mother’s swing. “No, Mother, I won’t let you hurt him. I know it’s Michael and I...I love him!”

“Abby, I tried to explain to your mother, but—”

“He’s a demon, Abby. Look at him!” Mrs. Marston reached around her daughter to take another swipe.

Abby grabbed the branches. “I’ve known he was a demon for weeks. Michael told me when we first met. I thought it was a joke until he did his changing act for me. He could have lied or tried to trick me. He didn’t. We were friends long before we were lovers.”

Michael peeked from behind Abby. “I want to retire, Mrs. Marston, settle down with Abby, maybe raise a family.”

“You can’t be serious!”

“He’s the sweetest man I’ve known since Pop died.”

Mrs. Marston slumped into the rocker and rubbed her face with one hand. She looked at her beautiful daughter and the creature she claimed to love. What had she done wrong? The last time it was an actor, and now this!

She finally turned to address the warty apparition. “How can you ‘retire’? Aren’t you under permanent contract?”

“I’ve been a faithful worker, primarily covering the priest, preacher and politician beat. It’s very lucrative. I’ve exceeded my quota every year. Last year the evangelicals really put me over the top and I earned a satantical.”

“A ‘satantical’? I thought there was no rest for the wicked?” Mrs. Marston’s lips quirked into an almost-smile.

“I’m not wicked. In a dimension of trials and tests, I fulfill a needed function. Without temptation, there could be no spiritual growth. But I’m willing to give up my career and try something new for Abby’s sake.”

“What’s the price? There’s always a catch when you deal with the devil.”

Michael took Abby’s hand. She looked down at the demon, her eyes brimming with tears. They both took seats across from Mrs. Marston, Michael’s feet dangling off the edge of the sofa.

“I’m immortal but I have no soul. If I become human, I grow old and die. Because I have no soul, when I die, I cease to exist. Abby will have to go on to the next life without me.” He looked at Abby with such tenderness that it melted Mrs. Marston’s heart. Abby started sobbing.

“Abby, are you sure this is what you want?” Abby nodded, wiping her eyes. Even when she cried, she was beautiful. Mrs. Marston just got red and blotchy. How did she ever get such a perfect child?

“Mrs. Marston, there’s more.” Michael eyed the dogwood in her hand. “Could you please return me to my human form? I don’t like Abby to see me this way.” The demon’s eyes glittered.

Mrs. Marston put the dogwood down, turned counterclockwise and spoke the banishment prayer backwards. Michael resumed his human semblance, with only a few holes in his suit from the communion wafers.

“Okay, what’s the ‘more’?” Mrs. Marston sat down again.

Michael fidgeted. “Well, uh, it’s about your husband.”

“What about David?”

“He made a bargain with one of my colleagues on the tenured professor beat. I looked up the files after I met Abby.”

“What?” Abby whispered and Mrs. Marston shouted. Abby dropped his hand.

“What bargain did David make?”

“To have Abby.”

Mrs. Marston sat in stunned silence, staring at her daughter.

“Your husband loved you very much, and he knew how much you wanted a child. He wanted one almost as badly. But he basically wanted you to be happy. After meeting Abby, I completely understand why he would do that.”

She had said Abby was dearer to her than her own soul, and meant it. Could she fault David for his love? Or Michael for his? Mrs. Marston began to cry. Abby offered an already soggy handkerchief.

“Momma, what are we going to do? Pop gave up his soul so I could be born. Michael is willing to become human and then be extinguished when he dies. Is it too much? Should I refuse?”

Mrs. Marston hugged her daughter. “No dear, Michael obviously loves you and you love him. I couldn’t ask for more. But we can’t have the father of my future grandchildren without a soul.”

“And Pop. I can’t stand the thought that he sacrificed his eternal happiness for me,” Abby sobbed.

Mrs. Marston chewed a thumbnail while she thought. After a few moments, she snapped her fingers. “I don’t know what we can do, but I know where we can get some ideas. Let’s talk about it over dinner. I’ve got a tuna noodle dish planned.”

Michael grimaced at Abby over his future mother-in-law’s head. “Why don’t you let me cook? I’d love to show you what I can do in the kitchen.”



“Thank you, Michael.” She looked up at him then chuckled. “Then I’ll show you what someone of ‘my generation’ can do with a computer.”

Michael turned a nice human red.

Ten points for blushing.

\*\*\*

“This is good,” Mrs. Marston mumbled, looking over the printouts spread across the linoleum kitchen table while nibbling a tuna crepe.

“The crepe or the data?” Michael asked.

“The crepe. The data are awful. The riddle thing has been done to death. There are over 1800 folk tales and songs from all over the world with riddle answers. Fiddling or singing won’t work. I can’t carry a tune in a bucket. Hmmm. No. Daniel Webster did that one. Human sacrifice...no. We’re left with a bargain and we don’t have much to trade except a soul. I’d rather spend eternity with David, anyway.”

“No, Mom, I’ll do it.” Abby’s jaw set in a stubborn line.

Michael took Abby’s hand. “I won’t allow it. I don’t have a soul to give up and I’d rather stay that way than have either of you give up yours.”

Fifty points for selflessness.

“That won’t be necessary, Michael. The light bulb just came on. We’ve been thinking about past solutions, old traps. We’ve got to think about today. Something new. Something creative. I think I’ve got it. Let’s invite your boss over for a little chat. You get to make the hors d’oeuvres.” Mrs. Marston licked her fingers. “I haven’t tasted anything so good since David passed on.”

\*\*\*

To find out how Mrs. Marston “Betters the Devil” and to read all the other great short fiction in this *Circles in the Hair* anthology download the [FREE EBOOK](#) at Smashwords.com. Enjoy!

## THEY SAY YOU CAN'T TEACH WRITING BUT...

by [Terry Bisson](#)

*They say you can't teach writing.*

But what did I know? I took it on as a favor to a friend. Charles Platt, the acclaimed New Wave SF author, asked if I would cover his evening “Writing SF, Fantasy and Horror” class at the New School while he was out of town. Surprise! I enjoyed it. To get paid to sit around a table with a bunch of intelligent thirty-somethings, and talk about the glories of SF and the problems of fiction writing, and be listened to as if your opinion not only mattered but mattered more than any other in the room. What's not to like?

Charles could always count on me to sub when he was indisposed, or otherwise disposed. So when he decided to move permanently to the then-top-secret Inner Earth writers' colony (a whole other story), I agreed to take over the New School class permanently. We ran it by the Dean and he said “Sure, no problem.” As long as I was a published author, with matching socks and no outstanding warrants, what did he care? It was only SF, after all.

They say you can't teach writing. But you can teach rewriting, and that's the only writing worth reading. Of course, you need talented students. I was surprised one semester to discover that all the writers in my class already knew one another. They were in fact veterans of earlier workshops taught by Shawna McCarthy and Nancy Kress—a legendary SF/fantasy editor, and a bestselling author with an uncanny ability to explain how she does it—who had formed an ongoing workshop. They called themselves Circles in the Hair; they even told me why, but I promptly forgot. They had decided to take a chance and see what they could pick up from me. I was at first amused, then interested, then challenged. All were good, some were published, and several (I'll not name names) had that scary touch of genius a writing teacher both dreads and seeks.

Every scribbler has a few tricks to pass on. Mine are as elementary as mud: That every SF, fantasy or horror story must have an interesting, or exotic, or scary idea at its center; that plot is just a way of arranging scenes; that SF storytelling is the controlled release of information; that the writer begins by deciding who is telling the story and why. Stuff like that.

They say you can't teach writing. But where do you suppose Linda Addison got her lusty, lyrical poetic voice? Or Gerard Houarner his deep horrific overtones? Where do you think

Marina Frants learned to chart the changes of terror, or K Loughrey Hasell to toss off such insightful soufflés of anything-but-light romantic comedy? Who do you imagine instructed Robert Murphy in the clammy art of stalking demons with prose, or discovered Roy Post's talent for intelligent action adventure? Under the stern gaze of what modern master did Nancy Allison develop her droll, deadpan humor, or Faith Justice find her soulful way with a modern parable? Yes, you're right. I taught them everything they know. They all got it, every last one of them, every goddam bit of it, from me. Except for the scraps of understanding and technique they retained from Nancy, from Shawna, from one another, from the well of literature itself, from the world; or from the world's round, dark nightmare twin, the human mind.

But enough about me. I hope you enjoyed this gourmet sampling of the boldest and most accomplished of today's new voices in Fantasy, SF and Horror. *Circles in the Hair*. A pleasure to work with, and a delight to read.

## THE WRITERS

**Linda D. Addison** has been in CITH from the beginning (1990) and is the award-winning author of four collections, the first African-American recipient of the HWA Bram Stoker Award®, and the only author with fiction in three landmark anthologies that celebrate African-American speculative writers: the award-winning anthology *Dark Matter: A Century of Speculative Fiction* (Warner Aspect), *Dark Dreams I and II* (Kensington), and *Dark Thirst* (Pocket Book). She has published over 300 poems, stories and articles and is also a member of HWA, SFWA and SFPA. See her site: [www.lindaaddisonpoet.com](http://www.lindaaddisonpoet.com), for more information.

**Nancy Allison** plays blues harp for the Cold Lamb Sandwiches and the Roland Lexington Band. Her black and white photographs have been shown at the Non-Euclidean Gallery and Down There Under the Wire. Her poetry and short stories appear in *WV Magazine* and *Daifuku*.

**Keith R.A. DeCandido** insists that his story isn't at all based on his career as a book editor, and the fact that he has done editorial work on anthologies for which he received no credit is a complete coincidence, and if you know what's good for you, you'll stop asking questions right now. Keith is also an author with fifty novels and dozens of short stories to his credit, a comic book writer, musician, podcaster, critic, essayist, karate student and teacher, and maker of excellent homemade tomato sauce. Find out other lies about him at his website at his cheerfully retro web site at [DeCandido.net](http://DeCandido.net), which is the gateway to his entire online footprint.

Super hero Red Demon, whose alter ego is **Alexa deMonterice**, prowls the night looking for random acts of writing inspiration. Once found, she uses her powers of persuasion to meld them into her repertoire. In their new form, these acts have oozed forth from *Hot Blood: Stranger by Night*, *The Urbanite*, *Nasty Piece of Work*, *Delirium* website. Only her arch nemesis, Decaffeinated Coffee, can slow her down. Connect with Alexa on Twitter (@alexadem666) and [LinkedIn](#).

**Marina Frants** was a deep-cover Soviet spy, placed in the U.S. in 1979, at the height of the Cold War. She settled in suburban New Jersey, because she figured no one would expect to find a spy there. Her cover as a teenage mall-rat was successful, but she soon found out that the reason people didn't look for spies in New Jersey was that there was nothing there worth looking at. She left, moving first to New York City, then to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she spent several years acquiring knowledge of cutting-edge U.S. computer technology. Once her intelligence gathering was completed, she returned to New York, and proceeded to put her skills to work for a succession of large, shady organizations, including a Swiss bank. She can frequently be spotted in remote corners of the world, carrying large amounts of specialized photographic equipment.

**K. Loughrey Hasell**, former bass-player for The Functional Geniuses, is an award winning filmmaker and artist who precariously resides in New York City.

**Tim Hatcher** followed Natalia home one day and she kept him. We approve.

**Gerard Houarner** fell to Earth in the fifties and is a product of the NYC school system and the City College of New York, where he studied writing under Joseph Heller and Joel Oppenheimer and crashed hallucinogenic William Burroughs seminars back in the day. He's worked in the mental health field for the past 34 years; his current position might be described as Recovery and Recreation Director at Arkham. He's had over 280 horror, fantasy, and science fiction stories published in the last 40 years, with some assembled in 6 collections, and 66 receiving Honorable Mentions in various St. Martin's Press/Night Shade Year's Best anthologies. He's also had 5 novels published by both the small and commercial press. He has served as Fiction Editor for [\*Space & Time Magazine\*](#) since 1998. At night, he continues to write, mostly about the dark. For the latest, visit him at [www.gerardhouarner.com](http://www.gerardhouarner.com) or connect on [Facebook](#). Gerard's books distributed through Smashwords can be found [here](#).

**Faith L. Justice** writes award-winning novels, short stories, and articles in Brooklyn, New York. Her work has appeared in such publications as *Salon.com*, *Writer's Digest*, and *The Copperfield Review*. Her most recent novel is *Twilight Empress: A Novel of Imperial Rome*. She is a frequent

contributor to [Strange Horizons](#), Associate Editor for [Space & Time Magazine](#), and co-founded CITH many more years ago than she likes to admit. For fun, she likes to dig in the dirt—her garden and various archaeological sites. Check out Faith’s [website](#) for information about, and excerpts of, her novels and collections; or drop by her [blog](#) for articles on history and writing, book reviews, and giveaways. Faith’s books are available in print and eBook at all the usual places. Her short story collections and children’s book are also out in audio. Her eBooks distributed through Smashwords can be found [here](#).

**Natalia Lincoln** made her first professional sale to *Weird Tales*. Her short story “Revival” was awarded the highest Gandalf Grant for Odyssey 2003, the fantasy writing workshop directed by Jeanne Cavelos. An assistant fiction editor and webmistress for [Space & Time Magazine](#), Natalia is also a founding member of CITH. Keep an eye out for her two novels, *Ambassador Orange* and *The Mirror*. Natalia’s evil twin is a songwriter and keyboardist for *Unto Ashes*, a very strange New York City band. Contact Natalia online through [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

**Gordon Linzner** is the author of three published novels and over a score of short stories, which have appeared in such venues as *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* and *Rod Serling’s Twilight Zone Magazine*. He is also the former publisher and editor-in-chief of [Space & Time Magazine](#), the oldest extant small-press genre fiction magazine, having published continuously (if sometimes sporadically) since 1966, and [Space & Time Press](#), which has published short novels and anthologies since 1984. He freelances as a copy editor and a licensed New York tour guide, does story-telling (especially around All-Hallow’s Eve) and sporadic sound work, and can find inappropriate song cues in any spare scrap of conversation. On first meeting he may seem dull, but once you get to know him, he’s really boring. Gordon’s books distributed by Smashwords can be found [here](#).

**M.P. Melnis**—when not donning flamenco shoes and castanets, she enjoys exploring and writing stories with a flavor of the fantastic.

**Robert Emmett Murphy, Jr.**, our CITH resident artist, has published poetry, fiction, non-fiction and art in *Staten Island Magazine*, *Space & Time*, *Tales of the Unanticipated*, and *Poison*

*Apple*. A refugee from Clarion West 1995, BFA from Pratt Institute and associate editor of [\*Space & Time Magazine\*](#). In an earlier life as a criminal investigator, he earned a medal for bravery.

**Tom Pickens** likes to write in the relaxed atmosphere of his comfortable urban oases, accompanied by his faithful companion and loyal sidekick Harvey, who has been known to create short circuits in small networks.

**Roy L. Post** has been lucky enough to travel a few times in the arctic, where he found himself surrounded by the reminders of his own prior lives quietly waiting for his recall. He thanks the friends and guides that took him there, and thanks his mother for teaching him the value and importance of the written word.

**Leigh Riley**, one of the original members of CITH, became CITH's southern member when a job change forced a relocation from the NYC area. Also CITH's token scientist, she now lives in Columbia, MD, with her husband and two children.

**Hanson Wong** is a proud product of New York City public schools. When young, he thought he could write better than Edgar Rice Burroughs. A half century has proven him wrong. But the fun is in trying.

## COVER ARTIST

As a freelance illustrator, [Alan M. Clark](#) has illustrated the writing of such authors as Ray Bradbury, Robert Bloch, Stephen King, George Orwell, Manly Wade Wellman, Greg Bear, and Spider Robinson, as well as his own. His work has appeared in fiction, non-fiction, textbooks, young adult fiction and children's books. His awards in the illustration field include, the World Fantasy Award, four Chesley Awards, the Deathrealm Award, and the International Horror Guild Critic's Award. As a writer, he has sold short fiction to the anthologies, *More Phobias*, *Darkside*, *Dead on Demand* and *The Book of Dead Things*, and to the magazines *Midnight Hour* and *The Silver Web*. Scorpius Digital Publishing released a collection of his fiction, *Hemogoblins*, *Stories to Chill the Blood* in May of 2001. Mr. Clark's publishing company, IFD Publishing, has

released five “picture books for grown-ups;” *Bedtime Stories to Darken Your Dreams*, an anthology edited by Bruce Holland Rogers; *Imagination Fully Dilated Volume II*, the second anthology of stories based on Clark’s paintings; *Flaming Arrows*, a collection by Bruce Holland Rogers; *Escaping Purgatory*, a collaborative collection with Gary A. Braunbeck; and *Pain & Other Petty Plots to Keep You in Stitches*, an anthology of stories set within the “Pain Doctors” environment. In 2002 IFD Publishing released *The Last Halloween*, an interactive CD-ROM “story sculpture.”



## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **1990-2015 CITH members' short stuff can be found in:**

100 Hilarious Little Howlers, 100 Wicked Little Witch Stories, 365 Scary Stories, Aberrations, Aboriginal Science Fiction, Absolute Magnitude, Abyss & Apex, Adventures Of Sword And Sorcery, African Voices, Air Fish, Alternate Realities Magazine, Amazing Stories, Argonaut, Asimov's SF Magazine, Asylum 1 and 2

Bad-Ass Faeries, Bad-Ass Faeries: It's Elemental, Battlecorps.com, BattleTech: 25 Years of Art and Fiction, The Beekeeper, Best Of Palace Corbie, Best Of The Midwest, Best Of The Rest 2, Beyond Science Fiction & Fantasy, Black Bough, Black Lotus, Blood Muse, Blood Songs, Bloodtype, Bohemian Chronicle, Borderlands 4, Bruce Coville's Book of UFO's, Brussels Sprout, The Brutarian, Buzzy Mag, Bygone Days, Byline

Carpe Noctem 20th Anniversary Edition, Catholic Digest, Chicks And Chained Males, The Chronic Rift, Cierge, Cleansheets, The Comic Bible, The Copperfield Review, Cosmic Debris, Cthulhu's Heirs, A Cup of Comfort for Parents of Children with Autism, Cyberpsychos AOD

Dark Acts, Dark Matter: A Century Of Speculative Fiction From The African Diaspora, Dark Matter Magazine, Dark Regions, Dark Testament, Dark Voices: A Collection Of Poetry From The Writers Of Wicked Verse, Darkest Africa, Dead Cats Bouncing, Dead Lines Magazine, Deathrealm, Defending the Future \$: Best Laid Plans, Delirium, Did You Say Chicks!?, Doctor Who: Decalog 3: Consequences, Doctor Who: Missing Pieces, Doctor Who: Short Trips: Destination Prague, Doorways, Dragon's Lure, Dreaming Of Angels, Dreams Of Decadence, Dread

Edgar: Digested Verse, Enigmatic Electronic, Enigmatic Tales, Epitaph, Eros Ex Machina, Extremes 4, Eyes of the Telescope, Fangoria, Fantastic Stories, Fantasy Book, Fantasy Macabre, Farscape RPG, Farscape: The Official Magazine, Fearsmag.com, Feoamante.com, Flesh & Book Magazine, Free Worlds Magazine, Freezer Burn Magazine, Frogpond, Furry Fantastic, The

Further Adventures Of Xena Warrior Princess, Gargoyle Smile, Ghosts, Going Postal, Gothic.net, Guignoir and Other Furies

Haiku Headlines, Hardboiled, Harsh Mistress, Hear Them Roar, Heirs of Cthulhu, Historical Tapestry, Horrorfind, Horror Garage, Hot Blood: Stranger By Night, In These Times, In Udder Words, Indigenous Fiction, Infinity Ltd., Iniquities, Inkspot.com, Inscriptions Magazine, Intertext, Into The Darkness, iUniverse.com, Just Write, Liar Liar, Lore

The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Magic: The Gathering: Distant Planes, Midnight Hour, Midnight Zoo, Millennium Science Fiction & Fantasy, Mocha Memoirs, More Monsters From Memphis, More Tales of Zorro, Murder by Magick, Museum of Horrors, microcosms twitter magazine, Mythic Circle, Nasty Piece Of Work, Nasty Snippets, Nostradamus, Niteblade, Not One Of Us, Nuclear Fiction, Noctulpa

Otherwere: Stories of Transformation, Out of Time, Outer Darkness, Palace Corbie, Pandora's Closet, Pirate Writings, Plot Magazine, Poison Apple, Pulphouse Magazine, Pulphouse Hardback, Quick Chills III, Ragnorak & Roll: Tales of Cassie Zukav, Weirdness Magnet, Redcat Magazine, The Red Red Robin Project, Rod Serling's The Twilight Zone Magazine, Rough Beasts

Scandalous Women, Scars Anthology, SF&F Magazine, Salon.com, Shadowdance, Short Stuff, Show and Tell Magazine, Sinister, Sinestre: An Anthology of Rituals, Skull, Slow Death and Other Dark Tales, Something Wicked, Song of the Siren, Space & Time Magazine., Star Trek: Corps of Engineers: What's Past, Star Trek: Corps of Engineers: Wounds, Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Prophecy and Change, Star Trek: Gateways Book 7: What Lay Beyond, Star Trek: Mirror Universe: Shards & Shadows, Star Trek: New Frontier: No Limits, Star Trek: The Next Generation: The Sky's the Limit, Star Trek: S.C.E. Book 1: Have Tech, Will Travel, Star Trek: S.C.E. Book 2: Miracle Workers, Star Trek: S.C.E. Book 3: Some Assembly Required, Star Trek: S.C.E. Book 6: Wildfire, Star Trek: S.C.E. Book 7: Breakdowns, Star Trek: Seven Deadly Sins, Star Trek: Tales from the Captain's Table, Star Trek: Tales of the Dominion War, Star

Trek: Voyager: Distant Shores, Star\*Line, Stargate SG-1/Atlantis: Far Horizons, Strange Horizons, Stygian Articles, Swords Against Darkness IV and V

Tales from Dragon Precinct, Tales from the House Band Volumes 1 & 2, Tales by Moonlight, Tales From Zothique, Tales of the Unanticipated, Tiger Moon Press, Tomorrow SF, Tooth And Claw, Time Again and Other Fantastic Stories, The Ultimate Hulk, The Ultimate Silver Surfer, The Ultimate Spider-Man, Untold Tales of Spider-Man, Urban Nightmares, The Urbanite, V-Wars, V-Wars: Night Terrors, Virginia Adversaria, Voyage Magazine, Weird Tales, Wetbones, White Knuckles, With Great Power, Without a License: The Fantastic Worlds of Keith R.A. DeCandido, Writing World, The Writer, Writer's Digest, Writer's Voice, The X-Files: Trust No One, X-Men Legends, Xizquil, Zero Gravity Freefall, Zone 9

**Members' published novels, collections, comics, e-books and everything else:**

*(links to Smashword.com editions provided)*

60 Black Women in Horror

Animated Objects

[The Bard of Sorcery](#)

[The Beast That Was Max](#)

Being Full of Light, Insubstantial

Best of Necon

[Black Orchids From Aum](#)

[A Blood of Killers](#)

Buffy The Vampire Slayer: The Xander Years, Vol. One

Buffy The Vampire Slayer: The Watcher's Guide Vol. 1

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Blackout

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: The Deathless

Cars: The Adventures of Tow Mater #1-4

Command & Conquer: Tiberium Wars

Consumed, Reduced to Beautiful Grey Ashes

CSI: NY: Four Walls

Dark Dreams I

Dark Dreams II (Voices From The Other Side)

Dark Duet

Dark Faith

Darkness Falls

Dead Cat Bounce

Dead Cat Poet Cabal

Dead Cat Traveling Circus of Wonders and Miracle Medicine Show

Doctor Who: Short Trips: The Quality of Leadership

Dragon Precinct

Dungeons & Dragons: Dark Sun: Under the Crimson Sun

Farscape (Vol. 1) #1-4

Farscape (Vol. 2) #1-24

Farscape: House of Cards

Farscape: Strange Detractors #1-4

Farscape: Gone & Back #1-4

Farscape: D'Argo's Lament #1-4

Farscape: D'Argo's Trial #1-4

Farscape: D'Argo's Quest #1-4

Four Elements

Gargantua

Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda: Destruction of Illusions

Genesis: An Anthology of Black Science Fiction

Goblin Precinct

Gryphon Precinct

Guilt in Innocence

High Stakes

How Geek Girls Will Rule the World

How To Recognize A Demon Has Become Your Friend

[Hypatia: Her Life and Times](#)

I Love You and There Is Nothing You Can Do About It

Imaginings: An Anthology of Long Short Fiction

Leverage: The Zoo Job  
Mermaid Precinct  
Mothership: Tales from Afrofuturism & Beyond  
The Oni  
Original Van Gogh's Ear Anthology  
Painfreak  
Poe Little Thing  
Prince of Stories: The Many Worlds of Neil Gaiman  
[The Reluctant Groom and Other Historical Stories](#)  
Resident Evil: Genesis  
Resident Evil: Apocalypse  
Resident Evil: Extinction  
[Road from Hell](#)  
[Road to Hell](#)  
Sci Fi Fan 2 chapbook  
SCPD: The Case of the Claw  
[Selene of Alexandria](#)  
Sleepy Hollow: Children of the Revolution  
Slices of Flesh  
[Slow Death and Other Dark Tales](#)  
Spider-Man: Venom's Wrath  
Spider-Man: Down These Mean Streets  
Spooks  
The Spy Who Drank Blood  
Star Trek: A Singular Destiny  
Star Trek: A Time for War, a Time for Peace  
Star Trek: Alien Spotlight: Klingons  
Star Trek: Articles of the Federation  
Star Trek: Captain's Log: Jellico  
Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Gateways Book 4: Demons Of Air And Darkness

Star Trek: I.K.S. Gorkon Book 1: A Good Day To Die and Book 2: Honor Bound and Book 3:

Enemy Territory

Star Trek: The Klingon Art of War

Star Trek: Klingon Empire: A Burning House

Star Trick The Lost Era: The Art of the Impossible

Star Trek: S.C.E. #2: Fatal Error

Star Trek: S.C.E. #6: Cold Fusion

Star Trek: S.C.E. #7–8: Invincible Books 1–2

Star Trek: S.C.E. #10: Here There Be Monsters

Star Trek: S.C.E. #21–22: War Stories Books 1–2

Star Trek: S.C.E. #28: Breakdowns

Star Trek: S.C.E. #54: Security

Star Trek: S.C.E. #66: Many Splendors

Star Trek: Tales from the Captain's Table

Star Trek: Tales of the Dominion War

Star Trek: The Brave & The Bold Books 1–2

Star Trek: The Next Generation: Diplomatic Implausibility

Star Trek: The Next Generation: Perchance to Dream #1–4

Star Trek: The Next Generation: Q & A

StarCraft: Ghost: Nova

StarCraft: Ghost Academy #1

Stargate SG-1: Kali's Wrath

Supernatural: Nevermore

Supernatural: Bone Key

Supernatural: Heart of the Dragon

[Sword of the Gladiatrix](#)

[Time Again and Other Fantastic Tales](#)

[Tokoyo, the Samurai's Daughter](#)

[The Troupe](#)

[Twilight Empress: A Novel of Imperial Rome](#)

Unicorn Precinct

Visions Through a Shattered Lens

[Waiting for Mister Cool](#)

World of Warcraft: Cycle of Hatred

Young Hercules: The Ares Alliance

Young Hercules: Cheiron's Warriors