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# BLR

BELLEVUE LITERARY REVIEW

## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GALA CELEBRATION

*October 18, 2021      7:00pm EDT*



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## HOSTED BY

Kelly AuCoin and Danielle Ofri

## HONORING

Lisa Sanders

## FEATURING

Jill Lepore Abraham Verghese Leslie Jamison  
Edward Hirsch Michele Harper

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## READINGS

Saleem Hue Penny: "Never the Less"

Shanda McManus: "Breathing" (excerpt)

Leslie Jamison: "Letters to Michiko" (excerpt)

Kelly AuCoin reading an excerpt of  
"The Mona Lisa" by Robert Oldshue

## DANCE PERFORMANCE

Dancer: Samantha Figgins (Alvin Ailey)

Poem: "The Beauty of Music Doesn't Have to be Human" by George Looney

Reader: Saleem Hue Penny

Sign Interpreter: Carly Zimmerman

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“No human thing is more universal than illness, in all its permutations, and no literary publication holds more credibility on the subject than *BLR*.”

– NewPages.com



## ABOUT *BLR*

*Bellevue Literary Review* is an independent literary journal that probes the nuances of our lives both in illness and health. *BLR* publishes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry that bring together the perspectives of patients, caregivers, family members, students, healthcare professionals, and the general public. *BLR* is committed to seeking a diversity of voices from all communities and all walks of life.

The first literary journal to arise from a medical setting, *BLR* has published two print volumes of literature annually since 2001. Now a fully independent nonprofit arts organization, *BLR* offers a wide range of events at the intersection of the healthcare and the arts. *BLR* maintains an active online and social media presence, and engages its community of readers and writers by offering public events, newsletters, reading guides, book reviews, literary contests, author interviews, roundtable discussions, and accessible digital content.

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"BLR's contents are at once practically instructive, and yet intangibly inspiring and utterly gripping. I can't imagine my work as a writer, or a doctor, without it."

– Rafael Campo, MD and poet



Rafael Campo speaking at BLR's inaugural reading (October 2001)

## A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Thank you for joining us to celebrate the 20th anniversary of *Bellevue Literary Review*. When *BLR*'s first issue was published in the fall of 2001, we weren't sure if it would even find an audience. It is a testament to this remarkable *BLR* community that we are still going strong, two decades on. Thank you to our editors, board members, reviewers, interns, writers, readers, and donors!

The Covid pandemic has reminded us of the foundational importance of storytelling. When we face existential crises, we turn to the creative arts, not just to grapple with these deep, unsettling issues, but also to find moments of levity, lucidity, and resonance. The arts provide community—something we could use now more than ever.

This two-decade milestone offers a thrumming sense of possibility. *BLR* is eager to seek unheard voices, forge artistic collaborations, and explore new ways of creatively examining issues of illness, health and healing. We hope you'll continue sharing your ideas, your writing, and your support. The next twenty years can be whatever we—the *BLR* community—decide we'd like it to be. And we're thrilled that you are part of this community.

Danielle Ofri  
Editor-in-chief

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# BLR EDITORIAL MASTHEAD



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Editor-in-Chief



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Senior Fiction Editor



Suzanne McConnell  
Fiction Editor



Damon Tweedy  
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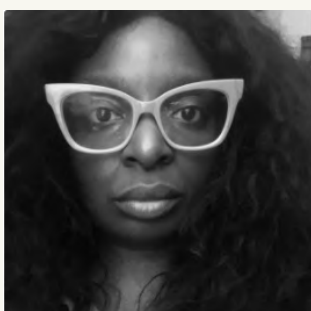
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Associate Fiction Editor



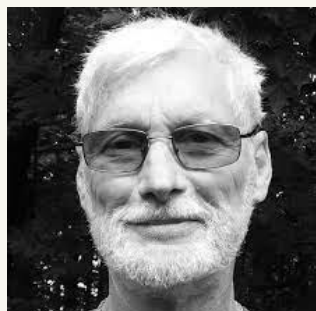
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Anna Falvey  
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Erin Breznitsky  
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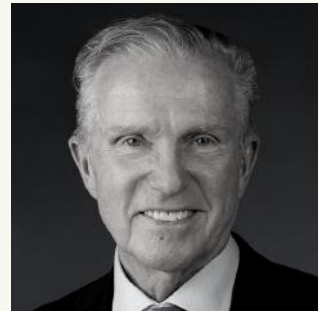
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*BLR* thanks our generous sponsors.

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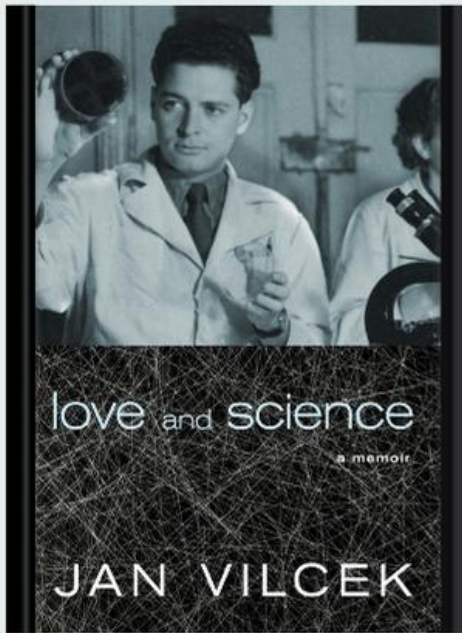
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*BLR* thanks  
*Jan & Marica Vilcek*  
for their 20 years of support  
and encouragement.

We are so delighted that Jan's memoir,  
*Love and Science*,  
is now available in paperback,  
from Seven Stories Press.

"Jan Vilcek's extraordinary book sets a new standard in science writing  
and will inspire generations to come."

—**Eric R. Kandel, MD**, Nobel Laureate, author of *In Search of Memory* and *The Age of Insight*

"I could not put it down." —**Siddhartha Mukherjee, MD**, author of *The Emperor of All Maladies*

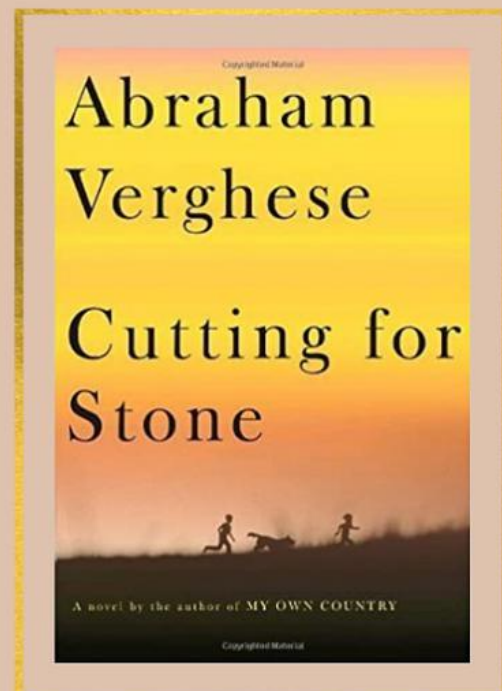
*BLR* thanks  
**ABRAHAM VERGHESE**  
for his many years of support.

We invite you to check out

Abraham Verghese's  
*Cutting for Stone*

Available on Amazon.com

*New York Times* bestseller  
Amazon's Best Books of the Year: 2009 (#16)  
*Publishers Weekly's* Best Books: 2009 (Fiction)  
*Indies Choice Book Award* (Adult Fiction, 2010)  
*Wellcome Trust Book Prize* shortlist (2009)  
International Dublin Literary Award





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## Northwell congratulates BLR on its milestone anniversary



We are proud to support the *Bellevue Literary Review* on its 20th anniversary. The journal continues to distinguish itself amongst health care professionals and all individuals who appreciate superior writing about the human body, illness, health and healing.

Michael J. Dowling  
President & CEO



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Congratulations Dr. Ofri  
and the writers and editors of *BLR*  
on your 20th anniversary.  
Looking forward to the next chapter!

— *Bettina & Michael Klein*

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Penguin  
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On Its 20th Anniversary,  
We Proudly Celebrate  
**Bellevue Literary Review,**  
& Honor Our Author,  
BLR Board Member  
**Perri Klass**

## Why Support BLR?

"Ask any healthcare worker, ask any patient who has come back from illness and fear, and you will hear stories that might change your life. That's what *BLR* offers."

- Cortney Davis, nurse & poet



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**Our future is bright. We're so happy  
you are joining us as we look ahead.**

Our Goals

- Bring BLR to even wider audiences
- Increase print and digital publishing
- Expand our reach through creative programming
- Establish BLR Artist Fund
- Enhance collaborations with arts, health, and educational organizations



**Thank you for your support!**

**Online**

[www.tinyURL.com/BLR20Gala](http://www.tinyURL.com/BLR20Gala)

**Email**

Zelle to BLReview@gmail.com

**Phone**

Text BLR@20 to 44321

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