

Literary Magazine Tiers

Below is my completely subjective tier system of ranking¹ magazines. As with anything subjective, I'm sure you'll find parts of this problematic, worth quibbling or possibly throwing a chair over. It was formed by my own experiences as a writer submitting my work for the last twelve years, and as an editor of a prominent literary magazine the last four and surely betrays the personal biases and blind spots of each experience. There are also likely some new magazines that I'm not aware of, not hip to, and deserve to be on this list but I'm getting old and just not in the know yet. All of which is to say, this is meant only as a loose guide to help you get going so you have a sense of what's out there and can create your own entirely subjective tier system. Feel free to add, update, and improve/demote magazines to a different tiers as you become more familiar with them.

Tier 1: "Holy shit, I think I just won Powerball"

- 1) The New Yorker
- 2) Harper's
- 3) The Atlantic (publishing less and less fiction; less of a presence than it used to be, but out of respect for the history I'm putting it here in the Holy Trinity)

Tier 2: "I have to split my Powerball winnings with one other person, but I'm still taking home millions"

- 1) Zoetrope
- 2) Paris Review
- 3) Tin House
- 4) McSweeney's
- 5) Granta
- 6) American Short Fiction
- 7) A Public Space
- 8) VQR (Virginia Quarterly Review)
- 9) One Story
- 10) Playboy
- 11) Oxford American
- 12) Esquire

¹ Please note that I only mean ranking in the sense that I've ranked different tiers collectively as stronger or less strong than the others tiers. However, I'm basically saying all those magazines and journals within a tier are pretty much on the same level, which is confusing because I've listed magazines within each tier numerically. Rest assured, however, that the numerals within each tier are not a second form of intra-tier ranking; I used numerals instead of bullet points for mathematical purposes, so you have a sense of the overall number of magazines available to you. Also, this is written by a fiction writer for other fiction writers. Sorry poets and non-fictioners—I'm not as familiar with where to submit for those genres. I suggest asking a senior member of your tribe.

13) n+1

Tier 3: “Hot damn, drinks are on me!”

- 1) Southern Review
- 2) Harvard Review
- 3) Glimmer Train
- 4) Georgia Review
- 5) Fence
- 6) Bomb
- 7) Kenyon Review
- 8) Missouri Review
- 9) Ploughshares
- 10) American Reader
- 11) Prairie Schooner
- 12) Mississippi Review
- 13) Narrative
- 14) Iowa Review
- 15) Conjunctions
- 16) Ecotone
- 17) Electric Literature
- 18) Threepenny Review
- 19) Noon
- 20) The Sun Magazine
- 21) American Scholar
- 22) Ninth Letter
- 23) Subtropics
- 24) Gulf Coast
- 25) Sewanee Review
- 26) Hudson Review
- 27) Hobart
- 28) Epoch
- 29) North American Review
- 30) Chicago Review
- 31) Crazyhorse
- 32) Agni
- 33) Gettysburg Review

Tier 4: “Hot damn, drinks are on me! Oh wait, aren’t you supposed to buy me drinks?”

- 1) New Letters

- 2) Fiction
- 3) Story
- 4) Fiction International
- 5) Columbia
- 6) TriQuarterly
- 7) Quarterly West
- 8) StoryQuarterly
- 9) The Literary Review
- 10) Seneca Review
- 11) Guernica
- 12) Boulevard
- 13) Shenandoah
- 14) Five Points
- 15) The Antioch Review
- 16) New England Review
- 17) Salmugundi
- 18) Black Warrior Review
- 19) failbetter
- 20) Zyzzyva
- 21) FiveChapters
- 22) Colorado Review
- 23) Michigan Quarterly Review
- 24) Witness
- 25) Idaho Review
- 26) Image
- 27) Yale Review
- 28) Mid-American Review
- 29) Third Coast
- 30) Five Points
- 31) Willow Springs
- 32) Cincinnati Review
- 33) Alaska Quarterly Review
- 34) Little Star
- 35) Post Road
- 36) Diagram
- 37) American Literary Review
- 38) Indiana Review
- 39) Midwestern Gothic
- 40) New Orleans Review
- 41) Boston Review
- 42) St. Petersburg Review
- 43) Bellingham Review
- 44) Massachusetts Review

- 45) Fugue
- 46) Carve Magazine
- 47) Bellevue Literary Review
- 48) Arts & Letters
- 49) Hotel Amerika
- 50) Barrelhouse
- 51) Rosebud
- 52) Black Clock
- 53) Barcelona Review
- 54) Salt Hill
- 55) Crab Orchard Review

Tier 5: "I'm gonna take myself out for dinner and buy a bottle of top-shelf bourbon"

- 1) Western Humanities Review
- 2) Southern Humanities Review
- 3) CutBank
- 4) Faultline
- 5) Passages North
- 6) Jabberwock Review
- 7) Antietam Review
- 8) Bitter Oleander
- 9) Artful Dodge
- 10) Texas Review
- 11) Confrontation
- 12) Hunger Mountain
- 13) Tampa Review
- 14) Superstition Review
- 15) Nimrod
- 16) West Branch
- 17) Berkeley Fiction Review
- 18) Another Chicago Magazine
- 19) Event
- 20) Green Mountains Review
- 21) Fourteen Hills
- 22) Southeast Review
- 23) Burnside Review
- 24) Florida Review
- 25) Greensboro Review
- 26) Upstreet

- 27) Sonora Review
- 28) Denver Quarterly
- 29) Seattle Review
- 30) Fiction Southeast
- 31) Southwest Review
- 32) SmokeLong Quarterly
- 33) Grist
- 34) Beloit Fiction
- 35) Hopkins Review
- 36) Pleides
- 37) Drunken Boat
- 38) Blackbird
- 39) Raritan
- 40) At Length
- 41) The Louisville Review
- 42) River Styx
- 43) Briarcliff Review
- 44) The Pinch
- 45) The Journal
- 46) Blue Mesa Review
- 47) Cream City Review
- 48) Laurel Review
- 49) Lake Effect
- 50) Natural Bridge
- 51) The MacGuffin
- 52) Minnesota Review
- 53) New Ohio Review
- 54) Pacific Review
- 55) The Normal School
- 56) Literal Latte
- 57) The Malahat Review
- 58) Chautauqua
- 59) North Carolina Literary Review
- 60) South Carolina Review
- 61) Carolina Review
- 62) The Long Story
- 63) New Delta Review
- 64) Cimarron Review
- 65) Puerto del Sol
- 66) Notre Dame Review
- 67) Sycamore Review
- 68) New Madrid
- 69) New Millennium Writings

- 70) Santa Monica Review
- 71) Arkansas Review
- 72) Gravel
- 73) Chariton Review
- 74) New South
- 75) New World Writing
- 76) Wag's Revue
- 77) The Austin Review
- 78) Memorious
- 79) The Madison Review
- 80) The Brooklyn Review
- 81) Washington Square
- 82) The Baltimore Review
- 83) Claremont Review
- 84) Chattahoochee Review

Conclusion

So far I've listed almost 200 journals and magazines you should be very happy if not thrilled if not borderline ecstatic to have your work appear in. The crazy thing is that this is only a fraction of what's available for you. There are probably another several hundred print and online magazines out there, many of which you should also be thrilled to publish in, but I'm obviously not going to list all of those, as I'm less familiar with them. You can find out about pretty much every magazine in existence here:

<http://www.newpages.com/magazines/big-list-of-lit-mags#a>

But this is just to get you started. I suggest starting at the top with what you know is your best work and keep working down the tiers. Which is what you should do right this second: Go forth and submit, young writer.

I wish you way more than luck.