Editor’s Note: Circulatory Systems

The dictionary defines circulation as “the movement of blood through the body” or “a passage or transmission from person to person or place to place.” But there are circulatory systems all around us: connections to each other, to the external world, and to our internal worlds. What keeps us connected? What do we do when connections break? What makes the movement of a circulatory system vital? How do we enter, leave, or take part in a circulatory system, when they often have no clear beginning or end?

These were just a few of the questions circulating (yes, I really did intend the pun) in the heads of our editors as we came together to discuss themes for the spring issue. We felt sure that we would receive fascinating submissions that would not only cover this territory, but take us on paths we hadn’t even considered.

We were certainly correct. The fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction in Circulatory Systems: Current and Connection are diverse, challenging, and often unexpected. In “The Prescription,” Florence Weinberger describes not only the blood pumping through her body, but the long history of humanity’s relationship to the salt also moving through it. Tara Taylor picks up on the salt motif as well in “Salt Water Myths,” a poem that interlinks stories of salt water and our connections to each other. Joel Peckham asks us to take a journey through a sewer system and to think about the sometimes strange and hidden nature of poetry as we do so.

In Barbara Crooker’s poem “For the TSA Agent,” we get a glimpse of the tiny, fleeting connection of a kind act between strangers. Daniel Hamilton explores what happens when marital connections break down in “The Decline of the American Bison,” a complex story set before a backdrop of science and the ultimately unconnected connections of numbers stations. And fiction author Chris Abani speaks with supreme elegance of the ways in which “we learn how to be human from each other” in his essay, “The Graceful Walk,” first delivered as a the keynote speech at Nimrod’s 2014 Literary Awards Celebration.

All this and more await in this new issue. Join us in what is our favorite form of connection: sharing the work of talented poets and fiction writers with readers throughout the world.