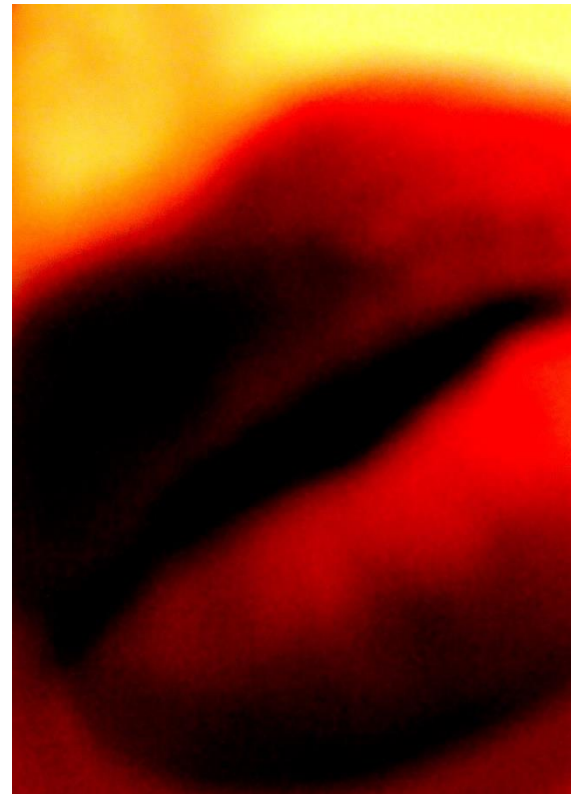


## Editor's Introduction

By Wayne Bradshaw

In March 2019, when the call for submissions for this second volume of *Sūdō Journal* was released, north Queensland had just begun to recover from a deluge of catastrophic proportions. A nation wept as footage of inundated homes, decimated livelihoods and mass graves of drowned livestock were broadcast into its living rooms. Now, as this second volume of the journal reaches publication, it feels as though every other part of the country is caught in a firestorm. Our northern gaze surveys the conflagration with a mixture of pity, horror, and a desire to repay the kindnesses that we experienced less than a year ago. We hope our readers to the south are safe; know that you are in our hearts. How we, as a nation, respond to this disaster will be a test of our character. The hope is that we will come together to face adversity, rather than allowing it to drive us apart as it so often does. We need firebreaks far more than we need the trenches of ideological partisanship.

When it was announced, this volume's theme was intended to conjure notions of passion and lust, even anger. It was, for lack of a better turn of phrase, to be *Sūdō*'s "sex issue." In the light of an ongoing tragedy, however, the prospect of being "Hot under the Collar" has taken on new



layers of meaning. Confronted by such devastation, it is hard to imagine the prospect of a work wholly devoted to the service of pleasure. Perhaps it was inevitable that this volume's approach to its theme is often troubled. There are pieces such as Sue Stevenson's "Snails and Veils," in which a passionate dalliance between two molluscs invites a moment of introspection for a soon-to-be mother-in-law. There is also Emma Maguire's "Ways of Seeing Sex," in which we are provided with an intimate, yet scholarly

introduction to the world of sex museums. In “The Wrath of Kiyohime,” however, we find Adrian McGhie’s depiction of lust transformed into fires of vengeance. It is not the only time that the motifs of fire, rage and tragedy find expression in the pages that follow.

This volume frequently gives voice to the anxieties of an age. In “Archive Noir,” Patrick White races against the clock to save historical documents from destruction by carelessness and the elements. “Career Counselling” describes the emptiness of the modern-day, industrialised university system. In “Take me to Church,” Tina Morganella complicates a search for spiritual meaning. The tone of these pieces shift from playful to horrifying, but they all confront those experiences which set pulses racing.

These pages contain the cloying heat of summer nights, moonlit encounters in darkened gardens, and the rage of injustices past. Together, they are bound between two works that embody an Australian summer marked by fire and loss. The first of these, by Gugu Badhun scholar and activist Janine Gertz, places the trappings of Australian colonialism in the context of the millennia-old practice of *Djiman* [firestick farming]. The final story in this collection, “Release,” is by Samuel Wagan Watson, a poet of German and Wanjaburra ancestry. Its bittersweet portrayal of fraternal love remains, despite the severity of the story’s circumstances, a hopeful one. Taken together, they speak of fire and ashes,

of great loss, but also of reclamation. That this arrangement gives the first and last word to Indigenous voices is, of course, no accident.

On behalf of our small band of editorial volunteers, including Lianda Burrows, Nicole Crowe and Tenille McDermott, we hope you enjoy this, the second volume of *Sūdō Journal*. It has certainly been a pleasure putting it together.

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