

SPEAKER 1: Our guests this morning are Patricia Hampl and James Moore. They're the editors of a poetry magazine called *The Lamp and The Spine*. I have the magazine in front of me. And it's a very impressive little volume, not only with poetry, but with very beautiful illustrations on the cover. How did you get started doing this?

PATRICIA HAMPL: This is our second year, actually, the beginning of our third year doing the magazine. We started in the living room one night, when we decided that we wanted to do a magazine that was different from some of the ones we were reading. We wanted to have poetry, also essays, perhaps some fiction, but mainly a lot of attention on essays, which other magazines don't publish, except in the form of short book reviews.

JIM MOORE: We thought one thing that would be different with this magazine would be that instead of just presenting a group of good poems, we would also try to see how many connections we could make through the essays, with other concerns other than poetry, with politics, feminism, parapsychology, anthropology, and whatever.

SPEAKER 1: Many magazines have a certain coterie of followers that both contribute and author them. And it seems to be a self-sustaining activity. Is that true for *The Lamp and The Spine*? Is there a certain group who finds representation here? Could this be a school of *The Lamp and The Spine*?

PATRICIA HAMPL: I hope not. But I think that there are people who wander in from issue to issue more often than others. We'll have one shot appearances. But sometimes, we publish people more than once. But we have submissions from all over the country, in fact, from Canada, and England, and Ireland as well. And I think that although we may have a few more Midwestern writers, especially in our earlier issues, we have representation from all over.

SPEAKER 1: What do you attribute that to? How can you get such broad international concern from what's started out as a regional magazine?

JIM MOORE: Well, it's not because we pay well because we don't pay anything at all. But actually, we're not quite sure how it happens. We get about 100 poems a week. Last year, we had a notice in *Writers* magazine. And we think we got a lot of submissions because of that. But the poetry community is still fairly small in this country. And when a new magazine is started, word gets around fairly quickly. So I think that's one reason.

SPEAKER 1: I'm interested to note that you pick up things from anthropology and the women's movement. Where is all this going? Do you try and synthesize anything from the diverse sources that you bring to the magazine?

PATRICIA HAMPL: Well, in the last 10 or 15 years, poetry in this country has become a much more vital kind of concern. More people are writing poetry, and more people are reading it. The houses are publishing more books of poetry in New York. And small presses are publishing books which are being read.

So it's natural that with this new concern for poetry, that all the other concerns that have grown up in the '60s and '70s would also be of interest to poets. So that the kind of poetry we think is most exciting is the kind that is attached to all these other concerns. And we're attached to them ourselves. So it makes sense that we would write essays and publish poems that have to do with political and social events as well as literary ones.

SPEAKER 1: Where do you think most of your readership comes from?

PATRICIA HAMPL: Other poets probably. But I think that-- well, I suppose most of them are subscribers who have heard about us, one way or another, through their own writing and reading. We do sell some in bookstores. We have a distributor who puts our magazine all around the country. But it's still a living room kind of business really.

JIM MOORE: This magazine is in a good many libraries too. And I think a lot of young poets who are just starting out, go to the libraries and just will go around the stacks, looking for poetry magazines. And I think that's.

SPEAKER 1: Since your material does have, as its subject, current happenings, both in sociology or politics, do you think it has a better chance of sustaining itself over the years in a magazine which deals with poetry of non-specific topics?

PATRICIA HAMPL: Well, it isn't that we choose the poems according to topics. I didn't mean that when I said that we oftentimes have poems that are concerned with political events. Actually, I think that the way a magazine sustains itself is indicative of the way a lot of things in this country manage to make a go of it. You either become attached to an institution like a university. There are many university magazines. We haven't done that. Or you get grants, or you pay for it yourself.

We have gotten a number of-- well, we've gotten one large grant and are applying for another one. And also, we put money in from our own pocket or from money that other people give us, which is-- well, it kept us going our first year. And the grant kept us going our second year. So it really has more to do with large donations, rather than individual magazines, the sale of individual magazines.

SPEAKER 1: How much does this give you? I notice that this copy sells for \$1. What percentage of your expenses does the cost of the magazine pay for?

PATRICIA HAMPL: Well, the magazine that we're putting together right now, number six, which will cost \$1, if we sell every single magazine for \$1-- and of course, we give many of them away, and many of them are sold in bookstores where we only get \$0.50 on the dollar. If we were, however, to sell all 1,000 copies for \$1, we would hardly make back the printing costs. And of course, we work for nothing. I mean, we don't get any salary for editing the magazine.

JIM MOORE: I think something else that should be said here is that we pay. Every time we mail one issue of the magazine, it costs us \$0.14. We pay an enormous amount just in postal rates alone. In fact, we just about pay for our postage when we get done selling a given issue of *The Lamp and The Spine*, not to speak of the printing costs.

SPEAKER 1: Has *The Lamp and The Spine* given exposure to any up-and-coming young poet that after being published in your magazine has gone on to better and bigger things?

JIM MOORE: Well, we've had several poets who have published in the magazine who've then gone on to publish books. But I don't think it can be attributed to publication in *The Lamp and The Spine*, although it would be nice to think so.

SPEAKER 1: I think some young magazines like this are characteristically a beginning springboard for authors.

PATRICIA HAMPL: We're lucky in this country to have many, many little magazines like *The Lamp and The Spine*, which provide a forum for writers. Because the big magazines only publish a few poems a month, or a week.

JIM MOORE: And usually only by very well-known poets.

PATRICIA HAMPL: Yeah, so it doesn't take care of all the poems that are being written in this country.

SPEAKER 1: Thank you Patricia Hampl and Jim Moore, editors of a lovely poetry magazine, *The Lamp and The Spine*.