

Hanging Loose Press
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For immediate release:

**HANGING LOOSE PUBLISHES FOURTH VOLUME IN ITS SERIES OF
ANTHOLOGIES DRAWN FROM THE CELEBRATED HIGH SCHOOL
SECTION OF *HANGING LOOSE* MAGAZINE**

Brooklyn, New York—*When We Were Countries: Poems and Stories by Outstanding High School Writers*, is the fourth in a series of anthologies drawn from the celebrated high school section of *Hanging Loose* magazine.

When We Were Countries is a collection of extraordinary poems and stories by 73 of the nation's most outstanding high school age writers. All the work first appeared in the special high school section of *Hanging Loose* magazine, the standard for cutting-edge work by teenage writers since 1968, offering young writers the opportunity to have their work published alongside that of professionals in one of the country's oldest and most distinguished literary journals. The poetry and fiction in this volume, as in the previous three, has been selected by Hanging Loose editors Mark Pawlak, Dick Lourie, and Robert Hershon. And *When We Were Countries* incorporates a new feature not included in the previous collections. Four accomplished poet/teachers share their perspectives on how they have nurtured teen writers: Marty Skoble teaches at Saint Ann's School in Brooklyn; Kathleen Aguero is a professor at Pine Manor College near Boston and instructs teenagers every summer at the New York State Young Writers Institute; Kip Zegers teaches at New York City's Hunter College High School; and Joanna Fuhrman instructs students at Rutgers University in New Jersey. She is also an alumna of the magazine: Her own early poems first appeared in the *Hanging Loose* high school section 20 years ago, and she has gone on to publish four volumes of poetry, the most recent of which won the prestigious 2009 Kinereth Gensler Award.

Poet and critic X. J. Kennedy concludes his introduction to *When We Were Countries* with these words:

“ . . . any old futzers who assume that teen-agers nowadays spend all their time at video games or texting away on their cell phones will suddenly wise up and find reason to rejoice. To anyone over the age of (maybe) ten, these stories and poems will ring true. To any young writer: as you toil at your computer screen or paper, this book will assure you that you are not alone. Teachers: you'll be heartened and encouraged by what this rich gathering proves possible. Everybody: grab this book, if you know what's good for you. Devour it, digest it, and be regaled.”

The first three volumes in the series, all still available from Hanging Loose press, received high praise from teachers and reviewers. Here's what some critics had to say:

(Continued on back)

Smart Like Me (Volume I)

“The levels of insight and maturity are often astounding.”—*School Library Journal*

“*Smart Like Me* will help to break the stereotype of poetry as something esoteric and removed from ordinary life.”—*Booklist*

“Give *Smart Like Me* to old fogies who maunder on about what the younger generation’s coming to.”—*Village Voice Literary Supplement*

Bullseye (Volume II)

“Their short stories and poems are variously passionate, funny, nostalgic, wise, clever, and, above all, inspiring to other young writers . . . Kudos to Hanging Loose Press for bringing these writings to a wide audience.” *Kliatt*

“Extremely accomplished pieces, some by writers . . . who have since been widely published.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“These young people write not because their parents encourage them (which is fine), not because it is assigned in school (which is fine, too). . . .They write because they *want to*.”—*Ron Padgett, poet and teacher*

“Make sure this volume gets into the hands of creative writing teachers and all those students who like to write for their own pleasure. If one way to become a better writer is to read lots of good writing, then readers should be tremendously encouraged and helped by this collection.”—*School Library Journal*

Shooting the Rat (Volume III)

“All the concerns that course through the lives of young people today have found their way into these terrific poems and stories. This third collection, as the two before it, most definitely should be in high school libraries and in the hands of English teachers everywhere. If public libraries have not added this to their collections they have been remiss.”—*KLIATT*

“All the selections are of high quality and demonstrate a wide variety of poetic forms and themes, making this offering a valuable addition to poetry collections and a great introduction to the craft itself . . . This book may be used in classrooms to introduce poetry or in libraries to celebrate the writing of today’s youth.”—*School Library Journal*

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Hanging Loose Press, founded in 1966, publishes *Hanging Loose* magazine and individual collections of fiction and poetry. The press has received many awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts.

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