

ON OUR LOGO CHANGE

Dear Friends of *SRPR*,

In 1976 David Pichaske, the energetic and historically minded founder of *The Spoon River Quarterly*, named his new magazine after the river in central Illinois that was itself purportedly named for the palm-sized freshwater mussels to which it was home, bivalves whose shells, so the story has it, were used by the region's Native Americans in preparing and serving food. I love the connections thus held in tact by our magazine's name: waterways/ words, poetry/ sustenance, innovating/ naming, observation/ transformation.

And yet this dimension of *SRPR*'s history is, I've found, too often obscured by a nearly ubiquitous association between the Spoon River and Edgar Lee Master's 1916 *Spoon River Anthology*, the best-selling collection of autobiographical post-mortem epitaphs-in-verse from the fictional town of Spoon River, Illinois. Though Master's book (and its wonderful introduction by May Swenson) is well worth the read, *SRPR* in fact has nothing to do with the anthology other than our shared namesake. As we prepared to usher in a new volume number (and to print another year's worth of *SRPR* stationary, postcards, etc.) we decided that the time is right for a new logo, one that will preserve our long-standing dedication to place while signifying our understanding that "regionalism" is more necessary *and* in need of revision than ever.

SRPR's new logo, designed collaboratively by Tara Reeser, Director of our Publications Unit, and Jordan Cox, Production Assistant, was created with just this dual gesture in mind: it is an acronym, a tracking, a kind of map. It is also a non-word, a letter-montage, an invitation to look and look again as we re-read. In partnership with the introduction of our new logo is this month's cover art, a computer-manipulated image of two paintings by Los Angeles artist Kristin James Beininger. Beininger created her pieces, "Loom" and "Small Differences," by pushing paint through the backside of her canvases. The result is a richly textured "terrain" wherein clumped strands of paint take on the appearance, as Jordan Cox pointed out, of stands of trees, grassy fields, valleys, and riverbeds. By blending Beininger's two pieces and enhancing their colors, Cox created an aerial view of Illinois' western border, an image that celebrates our locality as at once familiar and fertile *and* overtly manipulated and exuberantly mongrel.

As always, I am eager to know your thoughts—about this or any other aspect of the magazine. Feel free to email me at krhotel@ilstu.edu. In the meantime, happy reading!

Yours truly,
Kirstin Hotelling Zona, Editor