

Sun Thief Press Submission Guidelines

COMPLETE UPDATED GUIDELINES



The Specs [For All Submissions]

- 1.) All submissions must include a brief 3rd person bio. A cover letter is optional, but we'd love to get to know you, too! Please don't write a cover letter if you're only going to list where you've previously been published.
- 2.) We accept .pdf and .docx file types ONLY.
- 3.) Please format your documents in 12 pt Times New Roman font, 1.5 line spacing, with page numbers.
- 4.) We accept simultaneous submissions, but please let us know ASAP if you've been accepted elsewhere.
- 5.) We only accept previously unpublished work (unless, of course, it's literary translation).
- 6.) We do not tolerate AI-generated or assisted work. Oppose the death of the human spirit; reject slop.
- 7.) Please email us at sunthiefpress@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.
- 8.) If you're a **literary translator** looking to **pitch us our next title**, read on to the Translation Manuscripts section.
- 9.) If you're a **poet** or **fiction writer** looking to **submit to the Sun Thief Journal**, scroll down.
- 10.) **If you're a visual artist**, we have something special for you: **scroll further**.

Translation Manuscripts

Translation is writing, no ifs, ands, or buts about it. We love it when translators share their personal translation process with the reader, interrogate their practice, and play with the “boundaries” of their languages. We think translation is (and has been) the literary avant garde, so don’t be afraid to send us whatever you’ve got.

We publish full-length works of literary translation, in both ancient and modern languages. We accept translation manuscript pitches at any time. Sun Thief Press publishes 2-3 titles a year. If your work is not selected for publication this calendar year but we still love it, we’ll ask if you’d like to keep your pitch on our waiting list. Pitches are free to submit.

Pitches

In an email to sunthiefpress@gmail.com, tell us about yourself, the book, and its original author. Please include who you think would enjoy the book (target audience), a few examples of other books in the same genre, its page count, and its copyright status.

Don’t worry about including a sample in this initial email — if we like the pitch, we’ll ask you for a sample of 1,000 words, and pay you \$100 for it. After you’ve submitted your sample, wait to hear back from us. We’ll reach out to set a translating timeline, agree on your contract, and then we’re off to the races.

All publishing rights must be secured by the translator. If you are unsure how to secure publishing rights, please contact us at sunthiefpress@gmail.com.

Sun Thief Journal

About the Journal

Sun Thief Journal is a project of Sun Thief Press, a small indie publisher committed to experimental literary translation. We publish 2-3 books of literary translation per year. While we’d like to see more translated work on shelves and give preference to translation for our full-length titles, we still want to support the broader literary community and give space for work that aligns with our vision and aesthetic values, but might not be strictly translation.

We want a flexible environment for both emerging and established writers and artists to publish poetry, short stories, and critical essays that interrogate the act of writing itself and reflect the urgency of the word in difficult times.

The Journal is published twice a year on each solstice. We might have themed calls, we might not, but we’ll always be interested in the language of the question and the question of

language, its contradictions and its challenges. We grasp – we fail – we continue. For us, these general themes reach toward the pith of what makes us writers.

Hélène Cixous writes:

"I advance error by error, with erring steps, by the force of error. It's suffering, but it's joy. I seek truth, I encounter error...In us the storm is always alive, on paper, no."

"That instant which strikes between two instants...which has [only] its own shattering brilliance, the shock of the passage from night to light...This is what we draw, tripping, because, instead of throbbing, we trace. We want to throw ourselves ahead and we go backwards. Do you see these footprints? We are advancing backwards." [*Stigmata: Escaping texts*, Routledge, 2005)

Sun Thief Journal seeks to be a record of the lurching step, the advancing-backwards.

General Info

- 1.) Submissions to Sun Thief Journal are free.
- 2.) Sun Thief is committed to paying artists. We are currently paying \$10 per poem and \$0.05/word for prose. We hope to be increasing these honorariums in the future!
- 3.) Sun Thief Journal only publishes previously unpublished work. We retain First Worldwide Serial rights to your work until publication, after which rights return to the author/translator.
- 4.) We reiterate our formatting preferences: 12 pt Times New Roman font, 1.5 line spacing, with page numbers.
- 5.) Sun Thief Journal is released twice a year. Submissions periods are somewhat set (Aug. 1st to Oct. 1st for the Winter Solstice; Feb. 1st to April 1st for the Summer Solstice.) Our submission review periods last for three weeks, and you will usually hear back from us on the week of the 1st the following month.
- 6.) We reiterate our AI policy: Oppose the death of the human spirit; reject slop.

Poetry

- We accept 3-5 poems with no particular length requirements (though perhaps no longer than 3 pgs) per submission. Please do not submit more than once per reading period.

Short Literary Fiction

- We accept short fiction, no longer than ~6,000 words (we're not a school assignment, we're not checking word counts, but we're generally looking for 12-15 pgs or less).

- We only accept one (1) piece of fiction per submission. Please do not submit more than once per reading period.

Literary Translation

- Sun Thief Journal naturally accepts translated poetry and short fiction as well. It is the translator's responsibility to secure rights from any living authors before submission.
- Please submit one (1) translated short story or 3-5 translated poems.

Creative-Critical Essays

- We accept one (1) essay per submission. This may be a creative-critical hybrid essay, a personal lyric essay, a piece of cultural criticism, or an academic treatise.
- Essays follow the same length rules as short fiction: no longer than 12-15 pgs, or ~6,000 words (whichever comes first.)
- We may call for essays on specific topics or ideas!

Visual Media

Sun Thief only accepts visual media to the Journal on a case-by-case basis. As a primarily literary project, we are much more selective when it comes to visual media for the Journal itself to ensure it thematically resonates with and is complementary to the literary work. We will call for visual media for the Journal in a separately-announced submissions window.

Sun Thief plans to offer alternative opportunities for visual media to be published online via our website and socials, so that we can publish art we love without it being bound up with the Journal's aesthetic standards. This will take the form of independent contests throughout the year, rather than the traditional reading period. Our pay rate for a single photo in those cases will be the same as a single poem (currently an honorarium of \$10). Stay tuned.

Book Reviews

We accept book reviews on a rolling basis for publication on our website and/or Substack.

What We Mean When We Say We Want “Well-Crafted” and “Difficult” Work

[Someone](#) recently pointed out how frequently literary magazines and presses fail to detail exactly what they mean when they use phrases like “well-crafted” to describe the quality of submissions. Here's what we mean:

Difficult: We believe that experimental work is inherently playful, self-conscious, and unafraid of contradicting itself. But we worry that sometimes people read the word “experimental” and associate it with throwing paint at a wall to see what sticks; or they read the word and associate it with a kind of self-indulgent shock value and daring. So we use the word “difficult” as well, to denote a polished experimentality that takes itself seriously, one that proposes a creative angle and tests its approach. We don’t want work that is experimental for experimentation’s sake, but work that stakes a claim, works through a problem, or shines a new light in its risk-taking.

Well-crafted: We like to be reasonably well-assured that each creative decision in the text has been made with intention and deliberate control. For us, well-crafted writing is attention to detail and commitment to aesthetic choices. If the work has kinetic energy, we want the sense that this energy is under pressure, in tension with the writer/translator. If the work is more meditative, we want the sense that there is still movement, deep currents beneath the text. We don’t want work that feels overwrought, endlessly warped, and tinkered with, but literature that feels like a stone worn by the writer/translator’s hand.

AI Content Policy

Sun Thief is strongly opposed to the use of AI in the arts and maintains a zero-tolerance policy for any AI-generated or assisted submissions.

We reiterate: Oppose the death of the human spirit; resist slop culture.