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BY THE BOOK:
Camera tech Peter A.
Balaskas is now a literary
publisher.

Jon Pasical

LABORS OF LOVE

passion for print

When a chemical allergy sidelined Peter A. Balaskas's career as an environmental chemist, he listened to his creative muse.

A loss for science was a gain for the arts. Today Balaskas works as a camera technician on daytime's *Passions* and, as founder of Ex Machina Press, publishes the literary journal *Silent Voices*.

It all began when Balaskas, a writer of sci-fi and horror short stories and novellas, hired on as a page at NBC. When he submitted a resumé for a vacation fill-in job on *Days of Our Lives*, it launched his camera technician career. He's now worked on *Passions* since 1999, using his earnings to found Ex Machina Press. The first edition of *Silent Voices* appeared last August, while volume two was just released.

"We had 300 submissions from around the world for the first book, from France, Japan, even Bangladesh," says Balaskas.

The eleven entries in volume one are what he calls a "creative mosaic — stories that are diverse in theme and writing style but are put together in such a way that a larger story is being told, of how people survive in ordinary and extraordinary circumstances." The second volume includes a story by noted nonfiction author Stan Corwin and an interview with award-winning fiction writer George Saunders.

Now focusing on volume three, Balaskas lauds NBC Productions and his *Passions* colleagues for their support.

"One actress insisted that every time a book comes out, I save her the first copy and autograph it," he says. "There's a sense of family on this show, a sense of pride, of putting out the best product possible. I've taken what I've experienced on the show and used it for my business." —*Libby Slate*

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