Creative Writing Contest Winners Announced

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Utah State University Creative Writing Contest Announces 2018 Winners

The Utah State University Creative Writing Contest has named the winners in its 25th annual competition, recognizing the best creative work by USU students. Open to all USU undergraduate and graduate students from all departments and disciplines, the contest awards top writers of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction, as well as visual artists in painting and photography. Each category received the blind review of expert judges drawn from the USU and Cache Valley arts community.

The competition this year was very close, with the high quality of work making the judges’ work difficult. “Reading strong student poetry that pulled me in with vivid imagery and emotional connection was an experience that once again proved to me the undeniable talent at USU,” said contest judge Mary Ellen Greenwood.

Judges from the other genres concurred. Judges Michael Sowder and Shay Larsen said that Nate Hardy’s winning nonfiction essay “impresses with exceptionally resonant writing, powerful imagery, and the skillful unfolding of its linked narratives—juxtaposing violence with tenderness and an aesthetic appreciation of the world.” And fiction judge Brock Dethier especially liked that Vivian Gates’ story “Elizabeth” is a rich, complex story without heroes that doesn’t pretend to offer easy solutions to the current plague of eating disorders…. The story ends in both loss and triumph.”

This is the second year the contest has partnered with USU’s new, international undergraduate literary journal, Sink Hollow. The winning entries will be published next month in a special contest issue, giving this work an international audience.

This year’s winners will also get the chance to share their work locally on April 26th, when they will give a reading at Helicon West. “It’s always such a fun night when the winners read at Helicon,” said contest director, Charles Waugh. “It’s a time to celebrate not only the winning work, but also our whole, vibrant writing community here at USU and in Cache Valley.” The Helicon West reading of the contest winning work will be held April 26th on the USU campus in Library 101 at 7pm.

2018 USU Creative Writing Contest Winners

Undergraduate

Fiction

First: Vivian Gates, Elizabeth
Second: Natalie Fjeldsted, Marble in the Rain
Third: Abby Stewart, Funeral Flowers

Nonfiction

First: Nate Hardy, Value
Second: Chelsea Beck, Who
Third: Katrina Funk, Just a Sword

Poetry

First: Donna Metzler, Kingdoms, Syntax, Still Life
Second: Mark Smeltzer, Commonsensical
Third: Nicholas Renshaw, Heavymetalboy, Feather Earrings
Art

First: **Anne Lachmar**, Flower Child


Third: **Anne Lachmar**, Sophisticated Cat

Honorable Mentions: **Tambi Clark**—Fandoms; **Luke Lemmon**—Cold War Shelter, Onyx Arms, Shadow, Tension; **Anne Lachmar**—Firework Pine, Scrap Metal

Graduate

Fiction

First: **Chris Davis**, Dug

Second: **Richard Blake**, The Cavern of the Silver Moon

Nonfiction

First: **Peter Haugen**, On Physics

Second: **Keoki Kemp**, The True Horror of St. Ann’s Retreat

Third: **Camila Sanabria**, Armani

Poetry

First: **Camila Sanabria**, A Sister’s Burden, Hazel, Artemis

Second: **Kathryn Christian**, See Jane Run, The Lilies

Third: **Julia Prince**, Parable of Pig Tails, Synthetic, Lukewarm

Art

First: **Chris Davis**, Ziggy

Honorable Mention: **Chris Davis**, Redwood Fog, Pole, Blown Grass Sunset