USU Creative Writing and Art Contest announces 2019 winners

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The Utah State University Creative Writing Contest has named the winners in its 26th 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 drawing, painting and photography. Each category received the blind review of expert judges drawn from the USU and Cache Valley arts community.

Narrowing their selections to just three winners in each category was particularly difficult for the judges, with the contest having attracted so many excellent entries from across campus.

“The quality of poetry submissions was really impressive, especially in the diversity of styles writers used,” wrote poetry judge Terysa Dyer. “It was great to see the ways this year’s poets played with form.”

Creative nonfiction judge Brock Dethier marveled at the erudition of undergraduate first place winner, Marie Skinner. According to Dethier, her work “was unusually intellectual. I was learning all the time as I read, and I felt I was being led along by a true scholar.”

This is the third 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.

The winners will also get the chance to share their work locally on April 25, when they will give a reading at Helicon West.

“The Helicon reading of the contest winners’ work is always one of the best nights of the year on campus,” said contest director Charles Waugh. “We get 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 25 on the USU campus in Merrill Cazier Library, room 101, at 7 p.m. As always, Helicon is free, uncensored, open to the public and will include an open mic session.

2019 USU CREATIVE WRITING AND ART CONTEST WINNERS

FICTION

Undergraduate

• First: Abby Stewart, “Stung”
• Second: Jonah Allen, “Dead End Job”
• Third: Madison Silva, “Strawberries and Lemon-Lickers”

Graduate

• First: Alyssa Witbeck Alexander, “Pink Carnations”
• Second: Cree Taylor, “Bottleneck”
• Third: Brady Maynes, “A Strange Occurrence”

POETRY

Undergraduate

• First: Ashley Thompson, “Everybody Apologizes Too Much (Or Not At All),” “Sexy Sale,” “She Reads Me Walt Whitman”
• Second: Nate Hardy, “Bluegrass,” “Caught,” “Moved Through Today Like A Basquiat Painting”
• Third: Justyn Hardy, “Letting It Go,” “Avalanche,” “Fold”

Graduate

• First: Stacie Denetsosie, “No End the Trail,” “Sinkolva, Prague,” “Apricot”
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• Second: Christopher Davis, “Stung While Sanding the House,” “Having Cut Someone’s String on the Bus,” “A Tick Off”
• Third: Emily James, “Surrogate Mother”; “Tobacco”; “If, Like Mario, I Recorded the Poetic”

CREATIVE NONFICTION

Undergraduate

• First: Marie Skinner, “The Substance of Memory”
• Second: Kylie Smith, “Dearest Mother”
• Third: Kayla Berryman, “Walls”

Graduate

• First: Shaun Anderson, “Debriefed”
• Second: Emily James, “Drowned by Blue”
• Third: Alyssa Witbeck Alexander, “Moments of Impact”

ART

Undergraduate

• First: Mary Folsom, “Growth”
• Second: Marcus Crapse, “Love”
• Third: Kimberly Rimington, “A New Beginning”
• Honorable Mention: Marie Skinner, “Monkey”
• Jessica McCulloch, “Yellowstone Sky”
• Rylee Jensen, “Mine,” “Bask in Stardust,” “Succumb”
• Adriana Castillo, “Capture My Good Side”
• Kimberly Rimington, “Pipes”
• Luke Lemmon, “Overhang”
• Mackenzie Garrison, “Purple Gray”
• Mary Folsom, “Home”
• Sydney Thomas, “Abandoned”

Graduate

• First: Michelle Jones, “Urban”
• Second: Christopher Davis, “Framed”
• Third: Michelle Jones, “Scream”
• Honorable Mention: Christopher Davis, “Backlit”

Writer:

• - Charles Waugh, Associate Professor, Department of English, 435-797-3481