



GLCA Announces Winners of the 2014 New Writers Award

The Great Lakes Colleges Association is pleased to announce the winners of the 2014 GLCA New Writers Award for fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction. Now in its 45th year, the New Writers Award confers recognition on promising writers who have published a first volume in one of the three genres. Winning writers receive invitations to visit GLCA member colleges, where they give readings, meet and talk about writing with students and faculty members.

The 2014 winner for fiction is E.J. Levy, *Love, in Theory*, published by The University of Georgia Press. Our GLCA judges note:

E.J. Levy's writing in this collection of ten stories is poetic and seamless. Her characterization is smart, fearless, and, most of all, incredibly compassionate. The stories are complex, surprising in their depth of scope and character, and frequently go in unexpected directions that challenge a reader to think about love in new (very bleak) ways. *Love, in Theory* is a collection of stories that firmly coheres. It approaches the subject of infidelity in a complicated way. Smart, complex, funny, and serious, Levy's stories explore the lives of academics, artists, and laymen (women), lovers all. The language in *Love, in Theory* surprises a reader thoroughly and often. She complicates familiar territory. This is a collection about love, after all, about affairs of the heart, and yet it feels entirely new. While these stories are never repetitive, Levy does mine a few deep, rich veins that create a thematic cohesion throughout the collection, resulting in stories populated with multifaceted people: *real* people.

The 2014 winner for poetry is Natalie Shapero, *No Object*, published by Saturnalia Books. Our judges note:

There is something deeply human about Natalie Shapero's work. Often seemingly prosaic and conversational, these poems are profoundly lyrical, making ample use of enjambment and ellipsis, to create numerous layers of meaning, so the reader is challenged, but never alienated. She can be hip, cool, decidedly playful and witty, but she can be grave, allusive, and capable of measuring the deepest pools of grief. Her syntax is sometimes slippery and fluid, open, but her style can also be chiseled and demanding. This poet is not overly reliant on the first person; refreshingly, "I" is not the first thing on her mind. Communication is key: questions are widespread, the imperative mood abounds. I am awfully impressed by the range, talent, smarts, and artful gumption of this book. The surprising turns in her phrasing and absurd arguments over serious human matters like love and death are indicative of Shapero's methods of keeping the reader always astonished. The poems in this collection are not only smart and funny, but they also have the audacity of trying to make poetry new.

The 2014 winner for creative non-fiction is Joe Wilkins, *The Mountain and the Fathers: Growing up on the Big Dry*, published by Counterpoint Press. Our judges note:

The Big Dry of eastern Montana makes for a subject of rich complexity. Joe Wilkins evokes place like Willa Cather. That is, *place* begins as a kind of raw, wide-open poetry. But Wilkins tells a different story. This is about the author's search for a model of fatherhood, to fill spaces left empty by the death of his father. Wilkins strikes with staggering, melancholy, progressively self-reflective prose that, in part, inhabits the sparseness of the part of Montana where he was born and grew up. Yet his prose also pushes against what might be considered the standard fare of writing fixed in the American West. He addresses memory and the inability to remember in lyrical prose that is, at times, achingly beautiful yet never pretentious or sentimental and never cold. With exquisite control at both the structural and sentence level, he displays both a surety and openness to question, particularly with regard to class and masculinity without theorizing or naming them as such.

Judges of the New Writers Awards are faculty members of GLCA's member colleges.

The judges for the 2014 fiction award were:

Danit Brown, Albion College
Eric Freeze, Wabash College
Azita Osanloo, Oberlin College

Judges for the 2014 poetry award were:

David Baker, Denison University
Eugene Gloria, DePauw University
Katherine Hedeem, Kenyon College

The judges for the 2014 award in creative non-fiction were:

Rhoda Janzen Burton, Hope College
Matthew Ferrence, Allegheny College
Marin Heinritz, Kalamazoo College;

For more information on the New Writers Award, please contact Gregory Wegner, director of the New Writers Award (wegner@glca.org), or Maryann Hafner, coordinator of the New Writers Award (hafner@glca.org). Additional information is available on the GLCA web site: www.glca.org.