



GLCA Announces Winners of the 2018 New Writers Award

The Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2018 GLCA New Writers Award for fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction. Now in its 49th 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 2018 winner for Creative Non-fiction is **Hilary Plum**, *Watchfires*, published by Rescue Press. Our GLCA judges note:

Urgent and probing, generous and judicious, Hilary Plum's *Watchfires* asks the big questions: what does it mean to be at war, to be sick, to be in love, to be family? This book possesses a beautiful lyricism, a deeply ruminative poeticism, and a steadily building sense of conviction that war and love, disease and health are perhaps more close than might make us comfortable. In this paradoxically expansive and compressed memoir, Plum seeks correspondences between personal pain and public trauma – from chronic illness to terrorism, from the truth-telling of art to the obfuscation of politics. It's a fascinating and intimate work that can be read as memoir, as essay, as poetry, as history, or as meditation. It is important in terms of craft and also in subject. Compelling, moving, and formally inventive narrative, it is a book that bears rereading.

The 2018 winner for Fiction is **Emily Fridlund**, *History of Wolves*, published by Atlantic Monthly Press. Our GLCA judges note:

In this highly inventive first novel, set in remote Minnesota, Emily Fridlund explores the devastating consequences of isolation – both emotional and physical – and how far lonely people will compromise their own morality, turning a blind eye to the obvious, believing delusions, to achieve love and communion. It must be acknowledged how extraordinary the writing. The talent is apparent. The voice is inviting, beguiling, clever, smart, sometimes incantatory. *History of Wolves* presents a strong narrative voice that brilliantly interweaves dramatic actions, emotional upshots, and character development. The subject matter is difficult and significant. Fridlund depicts the beauty of the natural world and the frailty of the human one. Layered, raw, and heartbreaking, *History of Wolves* tells a story that is both intimate and monumental.

The 2018 winner for Poetry is **Chen Chen**, *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities*, published by BOA Editions, Ltd. Our GLCA judges note:

A mix of clever poetic premises and life's abiding promise, Chen Chen's *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities* is a debut collection that cannot be ignored. This collection is by turns comic, dark, self-obsessed, playful, and restless. The poems move into and through and beyond a relationship with his family, particularly his mother, exploring queer identity in the face of familial disapproval. This is a book whose narrator is bursting at the seams with energy because he has *so much to say*. There is clarity and unity of voice, employing simple language across poems that embody very different formal techniques in meditational, lyrical, and/or elegiac modes. His strategies of association allow him to say a lot, connect a lot, and feel fresh. These poems are embracing of our human flaws while also turning to the positive connections we make in our lives.

Judges of the New Writers Award are faculty members of creative writing and literature at GLCA's member colleges.

The judges of the 2018 award in Creative Non-fiction were:

Amy Butcher, Ohio Wesleyan University
Nels Christensen, Albion College
Jaquira Diaz, Kenyon College

The judges of the 2018 award in Fiction were:

Andy Mozina, Kalamazoo College
Robert Olmstead, Ohio Wesleyan University
Lili Wright, DePauw University

The judges of the 2018 award in Poetry were:

Derek Mong, Wabash College
Pablo Peschiera, Hope College
Ann Townsend, Denison University

For more information on the New Writers Award, please contact Gregory Wegner, director of the New Writers Award (wegner@glca.org), Maryann Hafner, coordinator of the New Writers Award (hafner@glca.org), or Colleen Monahan Smith, coordinator of the New Writers Award (smith@glca.org).

Additional information is available on the GLCA web site:

<https://www.glca.org/glcaprograms/new-writers-award>.