Roy F. Powell Awards for Creative Writing winners announced

March 5, 2013

The Department of Writing and Linguistics at Georgia Southern University announces the winners of this year’s Roy F. Powell Awards for Creative Writing: In poetry, Jared Sharpe won for his poems “To Grow,” “Sleep Them Off,” and “What Dream he Gave.” Honorable Mentions are Jackson Sharpe and Kyera Swint. The winner in fiction is Efadul Huq for his story “Ghosts.” Honorable Mentions are Matt Lane and Anna Hathaway. Taylor Tyson is the winner in creative nonfiction for “3.5 Pounds.” Evin Hughes and Cady Ennis received Honorable Mention.

Winners of the Roy F. Powell Awards receive $100, a framed award certificate and recognition at the University’s Honors Day ceremonies on April 3. In addition, their work is published in Miscellany, the campus literary arts magazine.

The winning manuscripts were chosen from several highly competitive submissions, according to faculty judges Emma Bolden, poetry; Laura Valeri, fiction; and Theresa Welford, creative nonfiction.

Sharpe, a senior from Vidalia, Ga., is a double-major in writing and linguistics and Spanish and has been influenced by many writers, including Gregory Maguire, who he says “inspires me to be brave in my imagination,” and J.K. Rowling and Suzanne Collins, who he says “make me believe that writing can change the world dramatically.”

“My Aunt Gwen encourages me through her writings to be honest and vulnerable,” Sharpe said.

Bolden said that Sharpe’s poetry “stood out because of the dexterity of language and the gorgeous leaps that beautifully convey a psychological landscape — reading each poem was like entering another mind: original, sparkling, and brilliant.”

Huq, from Dhaka, Bangladesh, is a senior civil engineering major minoring in mathematics and writing and says Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Krishnamurti, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez are his literary influences.

Huq says he writes to “step over the edge and fall, until I disappear into a playfulness of symbols, meanings, and connotations making up human possibilities.”

Valeri said that “the thoughtful and poetic voice of this narrator swept me into a world full of wonders and passions, and I was so deeply and sweetly immersed in it that I did not want to come out.”

Tyson, a sophomore writing and linguistics major from Loganville, Ga., cites Douglas Adams and Terry Pratchett among his literary influences.

About his writing, Tyson says: “it takes a lot — pressure, emotional pain, etc. — to actually start me writing. I must be at a precipice within my own life for it to organically happen.”

Welford noted that “the strong voice, the vivid descriptions, and the startling yet oddly plausible leaps of the imagination made this essay stand out.”

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