

Malahat *lite*

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CONTEST EDITION

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1. 2012 Open Season Awards



Deadline:
November 1, 2011

Prize: \$1000 in each of three categories

Entry fee:

\$35 CAD for Canadians

\$40 USD for US entries

\$45 USD for entries from elsewhere

(entry fee includes a one-year subscription)

One entry to the Open Season Awards consists of either:

- Three poems, 100 lines max. each
- One short story, 2500 words max.
OR
- One creative nonfiction story, 2500 words max.

Full contest guidelines:

http://www.malahatreview.ca/contests/open_season/info.html

Queries: malahat@uvic.ca

2. 2011 Open Season Awards Winners: Where are They Now?

The winners of our 2011 Open Season Awards were **Philip Huynh** (fiction), **Cynthia Woodman Kerkham** (poetry), and **Jessica Hiemstra-van der Horst** (creative nonfiction):



PHILIP HUYNH's short story, "The Investment on Dumfries Street" won in the fiction category. Judge Katherine Govier enjoyed the "stately" yet "colloquial" language, and she described the story as being "poignant without being sentimental." Such control over disparate tone might be seen in the following excerpt:

I know of only one deal he acted on. When I was fifteen, my father told me about a house he'd bought on Dumfries Street, in a tree-laden neighbourhood south of where we lived. He picked me up after school one day and drove me by the house in our Corolla. It was a Vancouver Special, one of those local confections, two stories of vanilla stucco and brick, topped by terra cotta. A unibrow balcony stretched from one end of the house to the other.

On winning the 2011 Open Season Award for fiction, Philip says: "it gave me the encouragement to build on my story, and so I am now working on a novel based on the characters in "The Investment on Dumfries Street". Going through the process of publishing in *The Malahat Review* was a valuable learning experience. My day job is as a lawyer, so working with an editor and reading from my story at the Spring issue launch were all new experiences for me."

On writing contests, he says: "I think contests are great for writers so long as you take both winning and losing in perspective, recognizing that serendipity plays a big role."



CYNTHIA WOODMAN KERKHAM's glosa "Late Summer in Frederick Arm" won in the poetry category. Judge Tammy Armstrong described the poem as lyrical and fluid, and as a consideration of the "cacophony and full run-down of British Columbia's dynamic terrain." The following lines are a pinhole view of Kerkham's complex poetic landscape:

*The Frederick in me wonders this morning how to translate
the preening of herring gulls line on a log—
chatter of croaks and caws, tweets and quacks
that must be about fish, and the obstinacy of tick under wing.*

Cynthia says: “The prize was a thrill, and it gave me a much-appreciated ‘thumbs up.’ I have recently published my first collection of poetry, *Good Holding Ground*, and *The Malahat’s* Open Season Award could not have come at a better time in terms of its promotion. I think that an award from a prestigious magazine opens doors. Since the award, I have had a poem accepted for *Poetry in Transit*, and have had several venues invite me to read at their reading series’. Being able to put the award on my CV has helped promote my work as *The Malahat Review* is a trusted source.”

Cynthia’s thoughts on literary contests: “[they’re] good in that they support the journal with the revenue they generate and the writer with the exposure the award gives. After all, most of us write to be read and awards promote a wider communication. The money helped, too! I spent it to buy boxes of my books which I am now flogging! To be honest, I shy away from writing-contests-as-blood-sport that are on offer sometimes, but this kind of contest, where one sends in anonymously and is blind-judged suits me. I didn’t write to win a contest. I wrote the poem, and the contest gave it a larger voice.”

Cynthia’s current projects include writing about growing up in Hong Kong, exploring the effects of a colonial childhood which is coming out in poetic and creative non-fiction forms—a bit of genre-bending going on.



JESSICA HIEMSTRA-VAN DER HORST’s story “How to bury a yellow toque” won in the creative nonfiction category. Judge Stephen Hume said that her writing “operates at multiple levels, offering a series of palimpsests in which older narratives slowly surface through more recent glossing, yet despite the complexity and depth it never loses its ability to engage.” Such dynamism comes through in the following paragraph:

The most beautiful thing about a marsh-marigold is the space around it. The trick of painting is putting the right amount of dark beside the right amount of light. Light is nothing if it isn’t offset by darkness. It’s obvious why so many of us love Rembrandt, Vermeer. Those of us who once believed in Jesus still lean towards Isaiah. Brightness is mere emptiness if it isn’t situated in negative space, contrast.

Jessica Hiemstra-van der Horst is travelling and unable to answer emails; however she has a substantial internet presence and her website, hiemstra-vanderhorst.com, is interesting to wander through and link from. Her new book of poetry, “Apologetic for Joy” will be out in September and available through Goose Lane Editions.



(How to bury a yellow toque by Jessica Hiemstra-van der Horst)

*All 2011 Open Season Award winners were published in our Spring 2011 issue, #174.

3. 2011 Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction Winner: Zoey Peterson!

Congratulations to **Zoey Peterson** of Vancouver, B. C., whose short story “**Next Year, For Sure**” was chosen from 229 entries to win the \$1000 2011 Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction.

Judge **Gerard Beirne** commented that “‘Next Year, For Sure’ is a great title for a very fine story. A worthy winner of the Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction. The future of the relationship explored in this story is far from certain. Indeed, the doubtful nature of relationships in general and their insistent dependency upon the past provides the impetus for the unfolding narrative. From page to page, the story and its language surprises so that we too remain uncertain of the direction we are headed towards. The strong narratorial voice pulls us uneasily into the unknown. What lies around the bend has yet to be encountered. Be that as it may, the assured and good-humoured tone ultimately provides reassurance. To quote the narrator - ‘It says you are open to possibilities.’”

Zoey Peterson is a grad student in Vancouver and writes fiction in those early morning hours before the library opens.

What is Spoken and What is Unspoken: Heike Lettrari in Conversation with Zoey Peterson

H. L.: Congratulations on winning the *Far Horizons* Fiction Contest! I think Gerard Beirne nailed it when he said, “The future of the relationship explored in this story is far from certain.” We seem to wallow in the unresolved circumstance of uncertainty - Chris and Kathryn bike to camp and kayak on their own, in the absence of the couple whose company they enjoyed in the past and long for. How much did you mean for the uncertainty to feed what seems to be a relatively long-standing relationship? Is this a thought from personal experience?



Z. P.: Oh dear, I assumed we were all living with uncertainty most of the time. I’d hate to think it’s just me.

But yes, I’m interested in uncertainty, and particularly the uncertainty that comes with being interconnected with other people—those mystifying, inscrutable creatures with their confounded inner lives and their unreadable brains.



Read the rest of this interview at malahatreview.ca

Read Zoey Peterson’s story, “Next Year, For Sure” in our Fall 2011 issue (#176), due out in early November.