

PRESS RELEASE: May 13, 2010

Dylan Days announces 2010 winners of the Rolfzen writing contest

HIBBING, Minn. — Dylan Days has announced the winners of its creative writing contest, now named for the late Iron Range English teacher B.J. Rolfzen, who taught Bob Dylan and thousands of other Hibbing students over four decades. Will Tinkham of Minneapolis won the fiction category. Sandra Dempsey of Toronto, Ontario won the one act playwright contest. Steven Lukas of Minneapolis won the open poetry category and Rachel Dillabaugh of Kettering, Ohio, won the student poetry category.

The winners and finalists in each category will be published in the annual Dylan Days program and literary journal “Talkin’ Blues.” The winning play will be given a world premiere staging at the Hibbing Community College Theater on Friday, May 28 at 3 p.m. for the Dylan Days Literary Showcase. That event will also feature brief readings from several of the 2010 poets and authors. Iron Range author, blogger and Dylan Days co-organizer Aaron Brown will emcee the event.

“Once again hundreds of authors, poets and playwrights from all over the world took the time to enter a small contest in northern Minnesota,” said Brown, who coordinated the contest. “This was, in part, because of the fame and admiration for Bob Dylan, but also I think because the place where Dylan is from holds its own mysteries and mystique, and that people want to support the arts in places like this. Our main goal is to offer publishing and reading opportunities for up-and-coming writers.”

The contest judges this year were Heidi Holtan, Michael Ricci and Mary Palcich Keyes. Holtan is the host and producer of RealGoodWords, a writing program on 91.7 KAXE, Northern Community Radio, in Grand Rapids. Ricci is the director of theater at North Hennepin Community College in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. Keyes is a former English teacher and speech coach who co-owns and operates the Howard Street Booksellers in downtown Hibbing.

In addition to the name change, the contest changed some of its procedures. The fiction divisions were consolidated into one open division. The student poetry division was retained in honor of Rolfzen’s commitment to young and emerging poets throughout his life. A formal plaque honoring Rolfzen will be dedicated at Dylan Days 2010. The names of the winners, who hail from all over the world, will be permanently displayed on the plaque.

“This change allows us to publish more stories and poems, focus on doing a good play and give people who win a sense of connection with Hibbing and the Iron Range,” said Brown. “The winners will always know that their names are on display in Bob Dylan’s hometown in a unique part of the country, Minnesota’s Iron Range.”

Dylan Days will be held May 27-30 in Hibbing, Minnesota. Annual events include the literary showcase, the visual arts contest, constant live music, the Bobby Zimmerman interpretive bus tour including stops at old Dylan haunts and his boyhood home and the Dylan Days singer/songwriter contest. For more information, see www.dyladays.com.

The complete list of winners follows:

Fiction

Grand Prize: “Ghost Stories” by **Will Tinkham** of Minneapolis, Minnesota

Finalists:

“Approximation” by **Sarah Stonich** of Minneapolis, Minnesota
“Bill of Sale” by **Ruby Murray** of Cathlamet, Washington
“The Darkest Evening” by **Lindsay O’Brien** of Cloquet, Minnesota
“Flying Down to Rio” by **Brenda Peloquin** of Virginia, Minnesota
“The God of Elephant Heads” by **Shalene Gupta** of Washington, D.C.
“Louisiana Grin” by **Brenna Daugherty** of Santa Rosa, California (Santa Rosa Junior College)
“Oppa” by **Ayanna Lawson** of Woodbridge, Virginia (Woodbridge Senior High School)
“The Right Place” by **Renee Holland Davidson** of Brea, California
“The Shabiby Express” by **Elise Glassman** of Seattle, Washington

Open Poetry

Grand Prize: “Friends” by **Steven Lukas** of Minneapolis, Minnesota

Finalists:

“If I Came to Mexico” by **Richard Ballon** of Amherst, Massachusetts
“Bird, Bath, and Beyond” by **James Cihlar** of St. Paul, Minnesota
“Confessions of a Freshman” by **Tim J. Brennan** of Austin, Minnesota
“The Legend” by **Tom Knutilla** of Albuquerque, New Mexico
“Word Tasting” by **Cheryl Weibye Wilke** of Bloomington, Minnesota
“To Todd” by **Susan Spindler** of Edina, Minnesota
“Bob Dylan’s Vocal Chords” by **David Cappella** of Farmington, Connecticut

Student Poetry

Grand Prize: “Train-Ridin’ Passengers” by **Rachel Dillabaugh** of Kettering, Ohio (Sinclair Community College)

Finalists:
“Rare Birds” by **Andrew David King** of Hayward, California (Moreau Catholic High School)
“Remembering” by **Mary Liza Hartong** of Nashville, Tennessee (Harpath Hall School)
“Chicago Winters” by **Emily C. Miner** of Naperville, Illinois (Pomona College)
“Hedges Not Edges” by **Kylie Foley** of Lake Worth, Florida (Florida State)
“Dylan the Other Day” by **Aditya Menon** of Northfield, Minnesota (Carleton College)
“A Burst of Yellow” by **Chido Muchemwa** of Denton, Texas (University of North Texas)

One-Act Playwright

Grand Prize: “Armagideon” by **Sandra Dempsey** of Toronto, Canada

Finalists:

“Bricks” by **Ron Radice** of Andover, Massachusetts
“Night Cries” by **David Wright Crawford** of Tyler, Texas
“In A Pickle” by **Karen Hartline** of Oakland, California
“Bob Dylan – Mind Out Of Time” by **Ann Schulman** of St. Paul, Minnesota

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