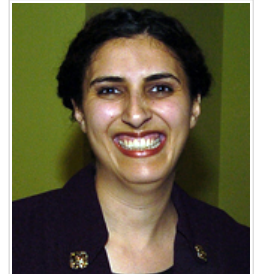


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Rising stars win President's Prizes in creative writing

Priscila Uppal (right) couldn't be happier. As coordinator of York's Creative Writing Program, Uppal introduced this year's recipients of the President's Prizes for the best poetry, fiction, plays and screenplays during York's annual Creative Writing Awards prize ceremony. The March 13 event brought together members of the University community to celebrate and honour the University's rising stars in creative writing. Uppal, professor of English literature in York's Division of Humanities, Faculty of Arts, and a teacher in the program, organized the event in collaboration with York's Office of the President.



"This is a day that people in our program and people in the York community look forward to," said Uppal in her opening remarks. "It's a chance for all of us to celebrate the wonderful accomplishments of our students in the Creative Writing Program." She also spoke about the dedication and commitment of her fellow judges for the President's Prizes. "Judging the awards is wonderful because we [the judges] engage in so many great conversations about the kind of work our students are doing and how proud we are of them," she said.



Front row, from left to right: Tania Franco, Professor Priscila Uppal, donor Seymour Hersch, Lara Stokes, donor Professor Margo Gewurtz, Kristen Rose, Elaine Jackson, Adrienne Grago, Lisa Feinberg, Mellissa Major and President & Vice-Chancellor Lorna R. Marsden. Back row, from left to right: Josh Fagan, Brent Delaney, Mark Stewart and Jennifer Hann.

The President's Prizes are sponsored through the Office of the President and are open to any York undergraduate student who wants to enter the competition, Uppal noted. There are four categories: screenwriting, playwriting, prose fiction and poetry. "There are several winners this year whom I have not met before because they are not part of the Creative Writing Program," she said. "This is a really big competition that draws people from all areas of York's undergraduate student population."

York President and Vice-Chancellor Lorna R. Marsden welcomed students, family and friends of York who attended, and thanked the judges and the donors whose generosity made the event possible. She told the aspiring writers: "We are very, very proud of you. We look forward to reading your work and seeing your work performed and read in a variety of ways. We are extremely proud of York graduates who have gone on and maintained their literary and writing careers and we look forward to seeing your names in print for many years to come."



Special guests included Bronwyn Drainie, editor-in-chief, [Literary Review of Canada](#), who presented Poetry Prize winner Jennifer Hann with a year's subscription to the *Literary Review of Canada*, a prize donated by Marsden.

Left: Bronwyn Drainie (left) presents Jennifer Hann with a year's subscription to the *Literary Review of Canada*

Special guest speaker for the event was Matt Shaw, the 2005 Sylvia Ellen Hersch Memorial Award Winner & President's Poetry Prize winner, who recently received the Writers' Trust of Canada/McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize, worth \$10,000, for "Matchbook for a Mother's Hair," a short story published in *Exile: The Literary Quarterly*. Shaw graduated with a BA in English and creative writing from York in 2005 and is working on a novel, *An Everyday Unhappiness*, and a collection of poetry/short fiction. (See the [March 9, 2006](#) issue of YFile for the full story.)

And the winners are...

Poetry Prize Winner

Jennifer Hann. "Love Song for Antoine Doinel"

Poetry Honourable Mentions

Beverly Ellenbogen. "The Distance"

Tania Franco. "Ganaraska Whale"

Mark Stewart. "On Reading Kafka"

Prose Fiction Co-Winners

Lisa Feinberg. "Becoming Danish"

Adrienne Grago. "Bottles in a Row"

Prose Fiction Honourable Mention

Josh Fagan. "What J.D. Salinger Ate For Breakfast; Or The Five Minutes Before Suicide"

Screenwriting Winner

Josh Fagan. "All of Them Gone"

Playwriting Winner

Melissa Major. "Unicorn Horns"

Playwriting Honourable Mention

Brent Delaney. "Passing Blood"

The [Creative Writing Program](#) emphasizes writing for literary works such as novels, short stories, plays and screenplays, comic books, interactive stories and hypertext documents, to name just some of the genres that involve fictional or imaginative elements. The program introduces students to the forms and styles of writing that authors, past and present, have created and explored in their works. It also exposes young writers to the history of formal experimentation, and specialization in one or two genres, such as fiction and poetry, is encouraged.

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