

Sol Magazine Projects

September 2008
WRITE NOW Winners



Running with the Shadow of the Night
Volunteers
Door

Tyger Schonholzer
Wendy Serratelli
Joan Mazza

Denise Amodeo Miller
Frances Schiavina
Scott Wiggerman

RUNNING WITH THE SHADOW OF THE NIGHT

FRIST PLACE **Night Watch**

Death, you silent shadow
I can feel you creep through my ward
Last night, I beat you
But tonight, you return for an encore
Did you think, I would not stand ready?
Did you plan to skim past my guard?
It's already close to dawn
My diligence will cut short your time
I will hunt you in the corridors
I will not stop running
Until day breaks through the window blinds
Or I have chased you from my patients' beds
Let's brawl, you and I
I come, armed with life givers
With blood and pain and sweet rage
What do you have to stand against that?

Tyger Schonholzer

THIRD PLACE **A Week Before Equinox**

First cool night of late summer, windows open,
my dog answers barks of hunting hounds
on the next property, and scratches the door.
We go out into country darkness illuminated
by a full moon, high in the southwest,
where the canopy opens over the drain field.
Shadows stripe the mossy ground, stumps loom
larger. In the pond, green frogs and bull frogs
sing with crickets. Michi leaps this way and that,
sniffing for recent trespassing animals
deer, raccoon, a neighbor's cat. The scents
of the world her traffic report. I smell
a whiff of skunk, come and gone.
Autumn calls me as we run. Obedient
and leashed, our shadows follow.

Joan Mazza

SECOND PLACE **Nightshift**

Cast out in the dark,
Its slender limbs creep and leap
Racing after visions of nocturnal delights.
Quiet paws pace pavements
Until a morsel appears clad in fur,
Only to be unfurled like a pocketful
Of lint tossed about, then carried away
Softly by the evening breeze.
Hours of unrest 'til dawn.
The streetwise, fearless form
Sets out to calculate corners and curbs
Shaving off minutes from time
In solitude against the cold.
Adjusting to scenes like a camera,
Flashing its gem-like eyes
To store each image to memory.
The once blackened half-moon sky
Begins to lighten the neutral world.
What seemed still begins to move,
What seemed hostile is now tranquil.
The new routine has gone full circle.
The small companion turned beggar
Scurries away to a vacant space
Ready to call it a day.

Wendy Serratelli

VOLUNTEERS

FIRST PLACE

Boost

blood boost blood
red bubbling energy
flowing in and out of severs
behind green masks
eyes spill and efforts fly
with prayers and proficiency
to rebuild what accident
took in hazard hells
blood boost blood
red bubbling energy
baby born with need
dire for assistance
repair what went wrong in the womb
quickly quickly
for coo cry to sound
sweet in powdered nurseries
blood boost blood
red bubbling energy
for tired cells dying slow
push platelets in bags
to revive some moving
moments of photo album revivals
pallid pinches and laughter
fill sterile hallways
blood boost blood
red bubbling energy
drifts through my good veins
let me share its song with you
and even though I won't watch
your sways and spins
I will feel my own and my loves
and wish you more
sweet simple symphonies

Denise Amodeo Miller

SECOND PLACE

Village to Town— A Volunteer Nostalgia

Surrounded by smoke
of bellowing factories
tied to a promise
I dare not breach
Walking a dream
of evergreen mountains
drinking up fountains
of native springs
A flight of sparrows
a vast blue sky
greetings in dialect
peculiar to town.
On ashes of pines
smoke stacks rise
not even a speck
of light in the sky
Covered by shapeless
unyielding clouds
the stars have fled
the moon has followed
And yet I am singing
in secret smiling
the promise I have kept
has kept me alive.

Frances Schiavina

THIRD PLACE

Meadow Sweet

I was born from a wish
And a flurry of wings
You did not plant me
I must have traveled miles
Across blue lakes and jagged mountains
To grace your meadow
With a glow of red and gold
I bloom toward the sun
Petals moist with dew
And sweet with fragrance
I, a precious volunteer
In the morning hush
You stand and marvel
And it is payment enough

Tyger Schonholzer

FIRST PLACE
Blood

DOOR

SECOND PLACE
Seconds

Paint my door with blood
Paint it, though Egypt's soldiers threaten
Let my pillars weep crimson
Let them bleed thick and sweet
May fire burn upon my threshold
And scarlet spray adorn the ancient stones
Watch night fall in the city
Behind the ruby door I huddle
In my arms my firstborn son
Pray with silent lips for mercy
in Pharaoh's court the angel reigns
His wrath unleashed in holy vengeance
By daybreak Egypt crumbles
And we, who live behind the lamb's blood
Who painted Pharaoh's palace with our own
We triumph over peril and we live
Tomorrow I will gather up my sons
For the long walk out of bondage
While Egypt weeps
I will eat unleavened bread and sing
Behind my painted door

Tyger Schonholzer

We plod through the wrack and ruin
of these streets, awed by the quiet
since the storm—even the seagulls
are gone. Nothing looks habitable,
everything covered in thick, black muck,
the stench of death having replaced
the salty smells of the Coast.
House by house, we trudge through
the missing pieces of ordinary lives—
a lone shoe, ragged stumps of clothing,
drowned books, a jar of mayonnaise,
a battered doll with mold for hair.
But these are not what we are
searching for. We are tallying X's,
confirming what we think we know
in this macabre game of tic-tac-toe.
When we spot a spray-painted O in red,
surrounded on the left by a crooked S,
on the right by an R, R, Y, that's when
we break the silence and let go.

Scott Wiggerman

THIRD PLACE
Words on Houses, Prophecy for 2009

A drive through my old Lauderdale neighborhood,
looking for landmarks, anything familiar and
estimate the distance of the house from Federal Highway
where I lived for seventeen years. On the corner,
a hollow shell of Carl's Furniture, two wet couches
in the parking lot. Only a foundation and green
pool scum where my white house stood four years ago.
Down that street, the remains of homes
that sold for more than half a million,
on the next block, a million plus. The palm trees
stand and rattle their fronds, a sound like
crumpled paper. Spray painted on doors and walls
ALLSTATE with a number, and
DON'T KISS ME, KATE. One flyer says,
LOST! REWARD! on a photo of a Golden Retriever
curled on a wicker lounge chair,
surrounded by potted plants. In the background,
a little girl floats, blurry, on an orange raft
in a blue pool.

Joan Mazza

ABOUT THE POETS

Joan Mazza has worked as a microbiologist, psychotherapist, writing coach and seminar leader. Author of six books, her writing has appeared in many magazines, including *Writer's Digest* and *Playgirl*.

Denise Amodeo Miller is a poet, teacher, and coordinator of Buffalo Writers. She has won several contests and her work has been published in *Nickel City Nights*, *Trees of Surprise*, and other anthologies.

Frances Schiavina currently resides in Ardmore, PA. Her work has appeared in *Sol Magazine*, *Turbula*, *Offerings*, *Poetry Motel*, *The Shepherd*, *Poetic Voices*, *Freefall*, *3 Cup Morning*, *Progressive Health*, *Soul Fountain*, *So Young*, *Poetic Diversity*, and others.

Tyger Schonholzer is a respiratory therapist and writer who lives in East Texas. She writes fiction, poetry, and articles on current topics. She blogs at Blogspot.

Wendy Serratelli, a former copywriter, now enjoys writing from the heart and observing wildlife in the conservation forest where she resides with visual artist and partner Chuck, and lovable lab Jake.

Scott Wiggerman is a poet, instructor, and editor. He is also one of the two "cats" of Dos Gatos Press, publisher of the annual *Texas Poetry Calendar* and the new anthology, *Big Land, Big Sky, Big Hair*.