

Sonja H. Stone Fiction Contest for Writers of Color



In honor of the late Dr. Sonja H. Stone who died in 1991, Carolina Wren Press is proud to announce its fourth fiction contest for writers of color. Carolina Wren Press, a non-profit publisher of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and multi-cultural children's books in Durham, North Carolina. Designed to encourage and promote quality work among writers of color, this competition is a tribute to the incredible life of Dr. Stone, former Carolina Wren Press board member. Committed to bettering the lives of African Americans and other minorities, Dr. Stone was an African-American scholar, teacher, and activist. Previous contest winners have included William Henry Lewis (*In the Arms of Our Elders*) Linda Brown Bragg (*Rainbow Roun' Mah Shoulder*) and Gloree Rogers (*Love, or a Reasonable Facsimile*). First prize is publication of the winning book-length submission and \$1,000.00 cash. Deadline for entries is March 1, 2000.

The competition is open to writers of color who reside in one of the following states: the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, or Florida. A writer who temporarily resides out-of-state, but maintains his or her residence in one of these states, is considered a resident and is eligible.

Previous competitions resulted in the publication of some of Carolina Wren Press's best-selling titles, including William Henry Lewis' *In the Arms of Our Elders*, Linda Brown's *Rainbow Roun' Mah Shoulder*, and Gloree Rogers' *Love, or a Reasonable Facsimile*. Each of these books was a tremendous success story for the author as well as for the Press. The contest is integral to the mission of Carolina Wren Press, which is to seek out, nurture, and promote literary work by new and under-represented writers, including women and writers of color. Small presses offer the public exciting new work by writers overlooked by commercial publishers focused on celebrities and best sellers.

The importance of nonprofit publishers to new writers is summed up by the most recent Sonja Stone Contest winner, William Henry Lewis, who said, "Winning the Sonja H. Stone prize meant more to me than just receiving an award or the break I needed into the world of published fiction. The Press helped nurture the process of my work as much as display the product of that work. The awareness, care, effort, and dedication that the folks at the Press put into producing my book made me realize that if I were to pursue anything as a writer, it would be the practice of building and maintaining the community of writers and readers engaged in celebrating writing. Carolina Wren Press still honors the art we all first began with: telling a story."

Since the publication of *In the Arms of Our Elders*, William Henry Lewis has received the Special Award for New Fiction from the Fellowship of Southern Writers, was published in *Best American Short Stories of 1996*, received a \$5,000.00 Individual Artist Fellowship from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, read on CSPAN 2's book program, and has been featured on the NPR radio show *New Letters in the Air*. Currently, he teaches writing at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

Writers interested in entering the competition should request a complete set of guidelines by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: **The Sonja H. Stone Fiction Contest, Carolina Wren Press, 120 Morris Street, Durham, NC 27701**. For more information contact Kelley Sassano at 919.560.2738 or carolinawrenpress@compuserve.com. Carolina Wren Press will publish the prize-winning manuscript in a 1000 book print run.

Additional contest sponsors include *Obsidian III: Literature of the African Diaspora*, a literary publication of North Carolina State University, and the Hayti Heritage Center in Durham. Judges include Victor Blue, Ifeoma Nwanko, Sara Bakker, and Olateju Omolodun. The final judge is Edwidge Danticat, author of *Breath, Eyes, Memory; Farming of Bones*; and Krik? Krak! Cary poet Cherryl Floyd-Miller is editor for this project.

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