

Competition Results

2013



Katherine Noble, a graduating senior in the Department of English at The University of Texas at Austin, has won the \$50,000 Keene Prize for Literature for her collection of poems, "Like Electrical Fire Across the Silence."

Noble is the first undergraduate to win or place in the Keene competition, which awards one of the world's largest student literary prizes. An additional \$50,000 will be divided among three finalists.

"The judges were impressed by her audacious combination of spirituality with sexuality, by her wide range of literary reference, and her bold experimentation with the form of the prose poem," says Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, chair of the Department of English and the award selection committee.

"I have been affected by images from biblical myths since I was a young girl, and the narrators in my poems often wrestle to understand how God interacts with the physical world," Noble says. "The collection also has a long poetic essay called 'In the Empire of Flesh,' which I wrote after a couple of meaningful, but failed, relationships."



2013 Keene Finalists: Kara Mahajan, Jenn Shapland, Katherine Noble, and Corey Miller

Noble spent this year interning at the Harry Ransom Center. She is also a recent recipient of the George H. Mitchell Undergraduate Award for Academic Achievement, sharing the \$25,000 top prize. Last year, she received the Roy Crane Award for Outstanding Creative Achievement in the Literary Arts, the Ellen Engler Burks Memorial Scholarship, the Bailey Prize in Poetry, and the James F. Parker Prize from the English Department. For her work on her senior thesis, a study of the poet Frank Stanford, Noble won a Rapoport-King Scholarship.



Keene Prize Finalists will receive \$17,000. From left to right, the recipients are Corey Miller, a Michener Center graduate student, for a collection of poems, "The New Concentration"; Kara Mahajan, a Michener Center graduate student, for an excerpt from his novel, "Notes on a Small Bomb"; and Jenn Shapland, an English Department graduate student, for her essays, "Finders Keepers."