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California Polytechnic State University

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Contact: Kevin Clark
(805) 756-2506

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winners of Cal Poly Creative Writing Contest To Read April 26

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Some of Cal Poly's best student poets and fiction writers will read from their award-winning works at 7 p.m. April 26 at the Sandwich Factory on campus.

The reading, by winners of Cal Poly's recent Creative Writing Contest, is in conjunction with the university's Open House.

"As always, the Creative Writing Contest Reading is a dynamic literary event," said Kevin Clark, poetry writing professor and director of the Creative Writing Contest. "Not only do the best student writers of the year read from their work before a crowd of students and family members, but the award-winning journal Byzantium is unveiled and sold at a special one-day discount price.

"Many of the students who appear in Byzantium go on to pursue careers in writing and teaching. The reading is a chance to see the future writers and teachers of California," Clark said.

English graduate student Marc Cohen, first-place winner in the fiction category, will read an excerpt from a novel titled "Flapper." His work focuses on a teenage girl who falls in love with a troubled young man.

"The unfinished novel is a superb comic rendering of the power of self-determination," Clark said. "Marc Cohen employs a remarkably persuasive voice to pull you into his characters immediately. Despite their weirdness, we like the strange folks who populate the story."

Cohen is in his second quarter at Cal Poly. He wrote the excerpt while living in San Francisco.

English senior Mike Clearwater, who took first in the poetry category,

will read "Combustion Engine," an impressionistic depiction of the way motor vehicles hold a critical place in our psyche.

"Both Cohen's and Clearwater's works are exceptional for their imaginative power and their odd comic sensibility," Clark said

In the fiction category, Garrett Milner, an English senior and second-place winner, will read from "Find Rest, O My Soul," and Nicole Biggers, also an English senior, will read from "Christmas in the Californios, 1833," which won third place.

Marnie Parker, who earned second place in poetry, will read from her entry, "The Splitting of Coral," and third-place winner Bethany Thomas will read from her poem "Virgil Among the Bees." Both Parker and Thomas are graduate students in English.

The public is invited to the free reading. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Clark at 756-2506 or kclark@calpoly.edu

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Cal Poly Public Affairs

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

805.756.7266

polynews@calpoly.edu