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Finding Truth in Words

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Finding truth in words

Ansley Clark '10 finds her passion in the sound of a furious pen depicting everyday life.

An English major and creative writing and French minor, Clark has learned to explore variations of the written word as well as her own strengths. Having always loved to write, she has come to admire poets such as Sharon Olds and Mary Oliver.

"I can't remember a time I didn't want to write," Clark said. "Writing gives me the most satisfaction I have ever felt; finding a new truth in words. However it was not until coming to Linfield that I decided to write poetry."

This discovery of a new genre elevated Clark to a new level as a scholar and writer. This year she was named one of 23 finalists for the Hollins University Undergraduate Poetry Prize. Other student finalists competed from the eastern and southern United States; Clark was the sole finalist from the West Coast.

She also received the Best Imaginative Writing Award at the Northwest Undergraduate Conference for Literature at the University of Portland. "It was really exciting and unexpected; so affirming that I am moving in the right direction," Clark said.

In addition, she shared her expertise with others, serving as student director of the Writing Center and as president of Linfield's Literary Arts Club. At the Writing Center she not only helped her peers through the challenges of the writing process, but she also learned from their work as well.

"It is important to have a writers' community on every campus because one should not be alone in their work," Clark said. "It's necessary to know what your peers are doing and sharing your work is more fun."

Her leadership at the Writing Center and with Linfield's Literary Arts Club has helped build a strong foundation of unity for literary arts on campus.

Lex Runciman, Clark's faculty advisor and Linfield English professor, said her work is dedicated to both personal and academic growth.

"Ansley works hard, cares about her own intellect and imagination, and she seeks out opportunities that challenge her," said Runciman. "It's more than just classes for her; she sees education, self and character as all part of a single interest and pursuit."

Clark hopes someday to earn a master's degree in creative writing, specializing in poetry. 🍷

– Crystal Galarza '13

FOR HUNTER

Hunter is back home, alone. In that house,
in the middle of the black murmur,
black woods.

On those arctic autumn evenings he listens
to the dishwasher hum, smoky creakings
of the wood stove, strange rustlings of the creek,
to the steady, ceaseless drip of rootless northern
rain asking him to take its hand and follow.

He listens to silence.
The last of us home, he will be last of us to leave,
to scatter, to throw himself outward,
as we have already done.

And on nights like these I roam,
against the town's distant lights,
and the country is huge – lengthy sky ablaze –
broad, burning ocean of wandering earth
under unfamiliar trees,
and on nights like these,
the world's immensity is coppery, too bright,
prods a dull, familiar ache.

I don't know how anyone lives
in this world of light and dark, of leaving,
of the human heart,
which is not a whole entity but scattered
in thousands of pieces across the earth.
I only know the memory of rain and woods
and silence,
constantly knotting me
to you.

