

## *Editor's Note: Awards 36*

Every fall, *Nimrod* presents the winners of the *Nimrod* Literary Awards: The Katherine Anne Porter Prize for Fiction and The Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry. It's the culmination of a process that begins in January, as manuscripts for the Awards begin to trickle in. Over the course of the spring that trickle becomes a deluge (writers are, after all, notorious for their procrastination) that ends with our offices being, quite literally, piled high with stories and poems. Our 42 editors discuss, argue, and exclaim over them, reading and rereading them to make the selection of the finalists, which are then sent off to the judges. We then wait . . . and wonder with anticipation just whom the judges will select as the winners.

With the publication of *Awards 36*, we're excited to share this year's selections by fiction judge Chris Abani and poetry judge W. S. Di Piero. The winning stories and poems display a breadth of style and creativity, each one unique in its approach to its subject. First-Prize winner Mary-Alice Daniel's poems teem with muscular language, tackling the complex intersection of family history and self-identity with a mix of devastating realism and hallucinogenic metaphor. Second-Prize winner Christopher Buckley also engages with big ideas, moving from 1950s Americana to sempiternal molecules to the recycling of souls, in a breathless, interwoven poem. The rich language and tightly-observed details of Shobha Rao's First-Prize-winning story, "Kavitha and Mustafa," thrust us headlong into one woman's experience during a train robbery in Pakistan, which unexpectedly promises to provide her with freedom for the first time. Finally, Jill Logan's Second-Prize-winning story, "Little House," gives us an updated twist on *Little House on the Prairie*, one that delves deeply and carefully into the timeless relationships between parents and children and the modern conundrums of divorce.

And those are just the winners! The work of the Awards honorable mentions, finalists, and semi-finalists, as well as work accepted from our general submissions, continues to astound us. From Japan to Greece, from the inner thoughts of Ophelia to those of Esther Williams, from the nebulous place before birth to the final sickroom, the stories and poems in *Awards 36* take us on thought-provoking journeys, journeys of thrilling and compelling discovery.