FOURTH PLACE WINNER

Owen Gable
Spanish River High School
11th Grade

Songbird

Nestled on an old tree,
The songbird sings so subtly
Of rising winds to lift above,
While diving down to share the love.
Grasses glimmer to fluttering wings:
Shifting shimmers of wonderful things.
Gleaming down to grace the ground,
And greet the ants atop the mound.
The shine of the sun dances around,
As susurru trees stun and astound.
The songbird lives to enjoy the world;
Every life to see, every sound and word.
It brightens me to know this bird,
To see a smile in the songs to be heard.
No life could compare to what I have seen:
A beautiful bird that loves to sing.

FIFTH PLACE WINNER

Samantha Marshall
A.W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts
12th Grade

Elegy for Evangeline

A slice of light fell through the air and must have seen you standing there, far through the dusky dim of dawn it cleaved the night and bade it gone.
Across your face it cut in two and turned you into something new.
You left your shadow on the floor; you didn’t want it anymore.

From town to town, same place each week—
Carolina, the coast of Crete.
What placelessness pervades the earth!
We’ve searched and searched so long, since birth, for fabled locales once so clear and higher powers to revere.
We should have been two spineless things encased in shells sans dreams of wings.

Through Babylon you lead us east toward the sea, toward the beast.
The light still ringing round your face and all the spectres of this place call, “Evangeline, have you seen? The leaves back home have all gone green.”

All’s bathed in light, without reprieve
e all’s made separate as dawn recedes.
I hold you close, but still you go out where the deep, cold waters flow down so far no light can reach and all is quiet on the beach.

Leave not your shadow on the ground it still needs you to get around.

Our appreciation to Dr. Blaise Allen for all her work with the high school principals, teachers, students, and poets in our community.
A moment

A tall ghost in front of a mirror,
combining the sparse hairs on her head.
In mourning
the great grandmother has sat in her room,
collecting dust since seventy eight.

The grandfather, el abuelo,
El Doctor.
He speaks all the languages of Europe,
a genius among his books and
paper.

In the living room,
my cousin,
beer bellied and drunk,
sleeps of the futbol game.

The maid,
off key, sings along to the music
of a reluctant radio.

In the kitchen,
rice
beans
chorizo
plantains
whiskey.

TO THE BOY IN MY FOURTH PERIOD
DEBATE CLASS WHO, UNPROMPTED,
TOOK IT UPON HIMSELF TO PROCLAIM
“RAPE CULTURE DOESN’T EXIST”

You, Vast Thing, with ferocious mouth and violent jaw and dripping
snarl-
how does it feel to reign over this classroom? Do you enjoy the
scent of prey, of blood?
My breath catches in my throat like all of our daughters’ birthday
candle wishes
as I watch how he lives on the shattered glass of female survival.

You, Shadow Monster of our Light- how does your kind of living
faster? All take, no give.
When I finally regurgitate a defense, spit it on your satisfied shoes,
no storm rages from my throat, no vocal thunder strikes back,
little more than a whisper in the hungry wind of your steam engine
being.

I turn to protect the Mother Earth beneath my skin, or, I crumble
back in on myself
like I’ve been taught to. It all begins to look the same when you
are being toothpicked from a Wolf’s bite.

Now I, self-proclaimed “woman”, am being magic tricked back
into girl sitting in the belly of the throat of the beast.
I reverse rabbit-out-of-the-hat and am suddenly small thing to be devoured,
sitting prettily,
sitting duck, on the fine china.

You breathe in crisp breezes on bare sand.
Crouched in the pure white silk of your wings.
The sand giving way around your body,
Shells tracing your stance.

You rest on land, then join the sea
Gilding into the seamless air currents
With grace
Slowly becoming a silhouette propagated
In the clouds.

The Great Egret

Wings doused in crushed diamonds
Sea spray, stinging
You walk along the ocean that engulfs your
Rhythm. Under a sky sleek and smooth
Soaring Egret, let the wind
Dance around your delicate frame.

You rest on land, then join the sea
Gilding into the seamless air currents
With grace
Slowly becoming a silhouette propagated
In the clouds.

A forgotten vision

Special thanks to Dr. Jeff Morgan, Lynn University, for
serving as our Judge for the twelfth year. We would
also like to thank Lorraine Stanchich-Brown for serving
as our pre-selection committee.