

THE VERA LIST NEW SCHOOL ART COLLECTION WRITING AWARDS

CALL FOR ENTRIES 2010-2011

The Vera List New School Art Collection Writing Awards are awarded annually to New School students to honor the best critical and creative essays inspired by works in the university's art collection. The award was established in 1996 by the late Vera List, a life trustee of The New School, and is directed by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics.

In 2010-2011, for the first time, the writing awards focus on a specific theme: In conjunction with the university-wide, week-long Noir Festival in April 2011, we seek submissions that in either style or subject matter display a distinct noir sensibility.

The term *noir* itself was coined in 1946 by a French film critic, who, on seeing some American films – *The Maltese Falcon*; *Double Indemnity*; *Laura*; and *Murder, My Sweet* – focused on their similarities, and labeled what he saw *noir*, or “black.” *Noir* thus became the label for a post-war genre of morally-ambiguous crime films and the novels that inspired them. Yet *noir* is as contemporary as the films of David Lynch, as deeply rooted in high modernist sensibilities as the plays of Samuel Beckett or the operas of Alban Berg, and as politically subversive as the art of Ross Bleckner or Adrian Piper.

What is meant by “critical” and “creative” essays? And what is noir?

A **critical** text on a work in the collection treats the art as a site of knowledge and research (as opposed to inspiring thoughts distinct from the artwork itself). It relies on close examination of the work to articulate an argument, which could elucidate a formal, iconographic, or contextual analysis of the work itself or the position of the work within the context of the artist's oeuvre or the New School collection.

In a **creative** response, the judges will be looking for a lively and compelling poem or short story that engages, explicitly or obliquely, a specific work of art in the New School collection. Authors should think of the tradition of the New York School poets such as Edwin Denby, Barbara Guest, Kenneth Koch, and Frank O'Hara, whose work was inspired by art movements.

And what does *noir*, so promiscuously deployed, actually mean? One can start with a set of evocative and emblematic phrases: “darkness visible,” “the imp of the perverse,” “the naked city,” “meaning hidden in the light of day,” “the killer inside me.” Look closely and write. Be as smart, cunning, and formally inventive as you can. Visit veralistcenter.org for a list of suggested art works to chose from.

GUIDELINES FOR ENTRIES

Any student currently enrolled in a New School division is eligible.

Entries should not exceed 2,500 words and must be submitted as an email attachment to vlc@newschool.edu.

Include a cover page with your name, mailing and email addresses, phone number, university program in which you are enrolled and your New School Student ID number.

The artwork that inspired the text must be clearly identified on the entry's first page by the artist's name, the work's title and date, and its location on campus.

Entries must be received by Monday, February 7, 2011.

For the Web guide to *noir* works in the university's art collection, visit veralistcenter.org, or call the Vera List Center at 212.229.2436.

AWARDS

A rotating panel of judges selects a \$400 first-place award and a \$200 second-place award in both the creative and critical response categories. Award winners are announced early in the spring semester online in the *New School Observer*. The winning entries are edited by a professional editor and published in next year's edition of this award newspaper as well as online at veralistcenter.org.

CEREMONY

During the Noir Festival (April 1 to 8, 2011), the winning entries will be featured in a joint celebratory and public reading with the MFA Graduate Writing Program/Riggio Honors Program: Writing & Democracy. Date to be determined.

JURY 2010-2011

Carin Kuoni, Director, Vera List Center for Art and Politics

Joshua Mack, Vera List Center Advisory Committee

Rosemary O'Neill, Associate Professor of Art History, School of Art and Design History and Theory, Parsons The New School for Design

Robert Polito, Director, Writing Program and MFA in Creative Writing

Silvia Rocciolo, Co-curator, The New School Art Collection

Wendy Walters, Assistant Professor, Literary Studies, Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts

VERA LIST CENTER FOR ART AND POLITICS

Founded in 1992 and named in honor of the late philanthropist, the Vera List Center for Art and Politics embodies The New School's historic commitment to the arts. The center organizes public events and forums, online programs, and occasional publications that respond to some of the pressing social and political issues of our time as they are articulated by the academic community and visual and performing artists. It focuses on cultural production that emerges within and outside the traditional art world and seeks to intervene in contemporary political debates. Positioned where scholarship develops into resource, policy, and civic engagement, the center calls on the university community, the people of New York, and national and international audiences. For a list of programs and further information, please visit www.veralistcenter.org

THE NEW SCHOOL ART COLLECTION

The New School has long defined itself as a site for civic dialogue and aesthetic and intellectual experimentation. Sharing these characteristics of its founding institution, The New School Art Collection is an arena where issues and ideas relevant to our times are explored and confronted in a creative and engaged fashion. To date, the collection numbers approximately 2,000 works in different media by emerging and established international, contemporary artists. Installed in the public spaces and offices throughout The New School's campus, many of the works evidence a social commitment to issues of our time.

www.veralistcenter.org