



## NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

*Committed to a World Free of Nuclear Weapons*

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### Peace Poetry Award Winners Announced

**Santa Barbara, CA (November 10, 2011)** – The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is pleased to announce the winners of the 2011 Barbara Mandigo Kelly Peace Poetry Awards. Since 1995, the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has made an annual series of awards to encourage poets to explore and illuminate positive visions of peace and the human spirit. The poetry awards are offered in three categories: Adult; Youth 13 to 18; and Youth 12 and under.

In the Adult category, Valentina Gnup was awarded First Place for her poem “The Cries of One Crow.” She has an MFA in creative writing from Antioch University Los Angeles. Her poems have appeared in many publications, including the *Hiram Poetry Review*, *Nimrod*, *Chelsea*, *Brooklyn Review* and *Crab Orchard Review*. She won the North Carolina Writers’ Network May Belle Campbell Book Award for her chapbook *Sparrow Octaves* in 2005, and received the Joy Harejo Poetry Award from *Cutthroat Journal of the Arts* in 2009. Valentina and her husband reside in Portland, Oregon, where she teaches writing at Clark College.

An Honorable Mention in the Adult category was awarded to Olivia Cole for her poem “Boys.” She is a writer at an education company, where she crafts content for educational video games. She is currently working on a science fiction novel that she hopes to finish by the end of the year.

A second Honorable Mention in the Adult category was awarded to Mary Mafofske for “South African Jail, 1961.” She lives in Warwick, NY, and is the author of *The Disappearance of Gargoyles* (Thorntree) and *Eating Nasturtiums*, winner of a Flume Press chapbook competition. Her poem “Museum of Torture, San Gimignano, Italy” won third place in the first William Matthews Poetry Prize, and her manuscript *Traction* won the 2010 Snyder Award and will be published by Ashland Poetry Press this year.

First Place in the Youth 13 to 18 category was awarded to Martin Conte for his poem “Writing Rwanda.” He is a freshman at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY, where he intends to pursue a major in English with a Focus in Creative Writing and a minor in Political Science. He participates in the Benton Scholars Program, focused on promoting global engagement and awareness of international issues. He has taught poetry workshops and participated in various poetry readings. Martin plans to travel to Uganda and Rwanda in the spring of 2012.

For his poem “Cairo,” Jacob Oet of Solon, Ohio was awarded Honorable Mention in the Youth 13 to 18 category. He is a senior at the University School in Hunting Valley, Ohio. His awards include the 2011 Younkin-Rivera Poetry Prize and the 2011 Ohioana Robert Fox Award. His poetry and images appear in *Palooka Journal*, *Cicada Magazine*, *Straylight Magazine*, *Moonshot Magazine*, *Petrichor Machine*, *Stone Highway Review* and *OVS Magazine*, among others. Jacob’s first chapbook, *Metamorphosis*, is forthcoming in 2012 from Kattywompus Press. He is a five-time Ohio Scholastic Chess Champion.

In the Youth 12 and under category, First Place was awarded to Isabella Robarge for her poem “World Peace.” She lives in Carpinteria, CA, where she is currently in the fifth grade, plays soccer for AYSO and spends a lot of time in the ocean. She enjoys gardening, attending church and is a Jr. Lifeguard during summers. Isabella plans to donate the prize money to the Summerland School Fourth and Fifth Grade Astro Camp Scholarship Fund.

Xavion Bishop’s poem “My Peace Place” received Honorable Mention in the Youth 12 and under category. He lives in Mendocino, CA and enjoys writing and illustrating his own short stories, as well as playing soccer and being with his friends.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan international organization with consultative status to the United Nations. For 29 years, the Foundation’s mission has been to educate and advocate for peace and a world free of nuclear weapons, and to empower peace leaders.

Barbara Mandigo Kelly was a poet, pianist and peace advocate. She was married to Frank King Kelly, one of the founders of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

The winning poem in the Adult category for 2011, “The Cries of One Crow” by Valentina Gnuv, is attached. For more information, including the other First Place and Honorable Mention poems in their entirety, previous years’ winners and the 2012 Barbara Mandigo Kelly Peace Poetry Awards Guidelines, please visit the Foundation’s website at <http://www.wagingpeace.org/menu/programs/awards-&-contests/bmk-contest/index.htm> or contact the Foundation at (805) 965-3443.

## ***The Cries of One Crow***

by Valentina Gnuv  
*Adult Category, First Place*

The cries of one crow can destroy a morning—  
somewhere in the world there is always a war.

At Arlington National Cemetery the headstones  
rise like white birch stumps in a ruined forest,

armed guards protect the Unknown Soldier,  
though what human does not go unknown?

In the National Liberation Museum in Groesbeek,  
a Dutch sculptor carves clay soldiers climbing

from their graves, smiling figures offer each other  
a hand. Cutting down a tree will not kill its roots.

One crow can torment an entire neighborhood—  
whose childhood is not scabbled in violence,

each plastic grenade an education in war?  
The tally of the dead rises like snowmelt in a river,

I cannot unwrite their stories, unbury their graves.  
I can only hug the tall tree of my daughter, and

imagine the parents who wait for a soldier who will  
never come home. Somewhere in the world

a forest recovers, a stump is sprouting new growth—  
give one child a branch, he creates a weapon

give another child a branch, he raises his hands  
to conduct a symphony only he will hear.

*Note: The sculpture at the National Liberation Museum in Groesbeek, the Netherlands, is by a Dutch woman, Fransje Povel-Speleers, and is called Resurrection.*

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