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Winning Cave Canem collection features poems that are riveting, tough and tender

PITTSBURGH—“*Narrative of the Life of the Brown Boy and the White Man* is a riveting interrogation of two men in a relationship. Ronaldo V. Wilson’s prose poems are alternately tough and tender probes into the underbelly of their psyches,” said poet Claudia Rankine.

Rankine selected *Narrative . . .* as the winner of the 2007 Cave Canem Poetry Prize. Established in 1999, this award for a first book is dedicated to the discovery of exceptional manuscripts by African American poets.

“With audacity and wit reminiscent of the work of Hilton Als, bell hooks, Frantz Fanon, and James Baldwin, Wilson decodes sociopolitical narratives around race, sexuality, and class,” Rankine said. “Identity, Wilson seems to say, is only a collection of stories—the ones told about us in battle with the ones we tell ourselves. What we have here is palpable consciousness: a stunning achievement.”

Wilson received his A.B. from the University of California-Berkeley, his masters from New York University, and his doctorate from City University of New York. Wilson’s poetry has appeared in *Beyond the Frontier: African American Poetry for the 21st Century*, *Blithe House Quarterly*, *Callaloo*, *Chroma*, *FENCE*, *Gulf Coast*, *Harvard Review*, *Interim*, *Nocturnes (Re)view of the Literary Arts*, and *The Encyclopedia Project*. His collection *Poems of the Black Object* is forthcoming in 2009.

Among Wilson’s awards are fellowships from Cave Canem, Djerassi, Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center, Vermont Studio Center and Yaddo. Wilson resides in South Hadley, Massachusetts, and teaches Creative Writing and African American Poetics at Mount Holyoke College.

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