



WOW! WINTER 2012 CONTEST

DECEMBER 1ST — FEBRUARY 29TH

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 29TH MIDNIGHT (PACIFIC TIME)

Prizes

1st Place: \$350.00

+ \$25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW!, 1 Year Premium Membership to AutomatedEditing.com (\$420 value), Interview on *The Muffin*.

2nd Place: \$250.00

+ \$25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW!, 1 Year Standard Membership to AutomatedEditing.com (\$240 value), Interview on *The Muffin*.

3rd Place: \$150.00

+ \$25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW!, 1 Year Standard Membership to AutomatedEditing.com (\$240 value), Interview on *The Muffin*.

7 Runners Up:

+ \$25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW!, Interview on *The Muffin*.

10 Honorable Mentions:

+ \$20 Amazon Gift Certificate, Name and title of story published on WOW!



Guest Judge:

Literary Agent, Elise Capron

Elise Capron is an agent with the [Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency](#), an agency known for establishing and guiding the careers of critically acclaimed fiction and nonfiction authors, including [Amy Tan](#), Lisa See, Maxine Hong Kingston, [Chitra Divakaruni](#), Kate White, Diane Mott Davidson, Luis Urrea, Janell Cannon, and many others. The *Los Angeles Times* dubbed the Dijkstra Agency “the most powerful literary agency on the West Coast” and, in its 27+ years, the agency has developed a reputation for discovering new talent and representing quality work with commercial potential.

Elise has been with the Dijkstra Agency since 2003. In addition to her own agenting, she assists [Sandra Dijkstra](#) and handles first serial sales. She specializes in debut fiction, character-driven literary and offbeat fiction, and short story collections. She is also interested in selected nonfiction if it has a literary edge. She hopes to find fiction with unforgettable writing, terrific narrative voice/tone, and great characters. Elise loves novels with an unusual or eccentric edge, and is drawn to stories she has never heard before. She hopes to work with writers who are professional, have a realistic sense of the market, and who are getting their work published regularly in literary magazines.

Some of Elise’s recent and soon-to-be-published books include Jonathon Keats’ [Virtual Worlds: Language on the Edge of Science and Technology](#) (Oxford University Press) and [The Book of the Unknown: Tales of the Thirty-Six](#) (Random House), Tiphonie Yanique’s [How to Escape from a Leper Colony](#) (Graywolf), Rikki Ducornet’s [Netsuke](#) (Coffee House Press), Cynthia Barnett’s [Blue Revolution: Unmaking America’s Water Crisis](#) (Beacon), Jack Shuler’s [Blood and Bone: Truth](#)

and Reconciliation in a Southern Town, Ali Liebegott's *The IHOP Papers* (Carroll & Graf), Peter Plate's *Soon the Rest Will Fall* (Seven Stories Press), and *Whitney Lyles' Party Games* (Simon Pulse) and *First Comes Love* (Berkley).

Find out more about Elise by reading her interview on WOW! Women On Writing: <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/7-20questionselisecapron.php>

WOW! WOMEN ON WRITING WINTER FLASH FICTION CONTEST 2012 ~ TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND FAQs ~

OPEN PROMPT

This season we leave the contest completely open to you! This means you get to decide the subject matter and story for your flash fiction entry. You have the freedom to be as creative and original as possible. Please make sure that your entry is fiction (not poetry or personal essay) and have fun!

WORD COUNT

Minimum: 250 Maximum: 750

The title is not to be counted in your word count. We use MS Word to determine the submitted entry's word count.

CONTEST DEADLINE

February 29, 2012 at midnight, Pacific Standard Time. You can sprint like Cinderella at midnight, but you run the risk of having your story become mouse food. In other words, you worked hard on the story. Safeguard it! Act like the deadline is a day or so **before the deadline**.

LIMITED ENTRIES

To increase your odds at winning but still enable healthy competition, we've limited the number of entries to **300 stories** for the season. Please enter early to ensure your spot in the competition. If we reach 300 entries, we will disable the PayPal button on the contest page. If the button is still active, it means we haven't reached 300 stories yet. Please visit our contest page <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php> to **ensure that the button is active before you send us an e-mail** asking us if we've reached the limit.

ENTRY FEE: \$10.00

The entry fee is not a reading fee. All fees are used solely and purely for award money, prizes, promotion, and administrative costs. To enter this contest, you must pay an entry fee.

To pay by credit card, e-check, or PayPal balance, go to:

<http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php>. Click on the "Buy Now" button. It will take you to PayPal. From there you have two options:

1. Pay Fast with PayPal (If you have an account, choose this option).
2. If you don't have a PayPal account, click the link that says "Don't have a PayPal account?" and pay by credit card, debit card, or e-check.

If, for some reason, you do not have a credit card, debit card, checking account for e-checks, or a PayPal account, you may send a check or money order if it is early enough. We typically discourage this for it is harder for us to verify and takes time, but if you must, please send to: WOW! Women On Writing LLC, PO Box 41104, Long Beach, CA 90853. Please make sure you put your check number or money order number at the bottom of your e-mail when submitting your entry via e-mail. This would go in place of the PayPal Transaction ID# or unique receipt number at the bottom of your e-mail contest submission. Remember, even if you send a check by snail mail, **you will still have to send your contest entry via e-mail**. We cannot type it for you to send to our guest judges. We also cannot send you guidelines in the mail. That's what this PDF is for.

E-MAIL SUBJECT LINE

Type Winter Contest Submission 2012 in your subject line when you e-mail your submission. Please do this to ensure that we do not miss the story that you will have worked so hard on. **If you have purchased a critique, please type Winter Contest Submission 2012 with Critique** in your subject line. Without the word "critique" in your subject line, our contest manager won't identify your entry as a critique. So if you purchase a critique, please make sure you mention it in your subject line.

SUBMISSION CONFIRMATION

Our Auto Responder will thank you for submitting. It is not a clock-watcher or calendar reader. If your submission is LATE, we humans will note that fact and your story will be disqualified; but our non-prejudicial Auto Responder will simply say thank you.

DISQUALIFIERS

1. Turning in your submission LATE! That means we would have received it AFTER midnight, February 29, 2012. If you read articles concerning your chances of winning a writing contest, they will always remind you to get entries in early rather than late. Please take the advice, including ours, because we have no desire to disqualify anyone's entry.
2. We will reject any submission that MS Word counts under 250 words or above 750 words. **THIS DOES NOT COUNT THE TITLE OF YOUR STORY OR YOUR PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION AT THE END OF YOUR STORY.**
3. You didn't pay for your contest entry.

MUST READ: **THE 14 WOW! GUIDELINES**

1. Your story must be fiction.
2. Your submission must be **Minimum: 250 words; Maximum: 750 words**. This does not count your title or personal contact information that you add at the **END OF YOUR STORY**.
3. You must pay \$10.00 for the entry before making your submission.
4. You must type **Winter Contest Submission 2012** in the subject line of your e-mail. If you purchased a critique, you must type **Winter Contest Submission 2012 With Critique** in the subject line of your e-mail. Failure to do so will disqualify your entry.
5. The **Contest Deadline** is **February 29, 2012, at MIDNIGHT**, Pacific Standard Time.
6. Whet our appetite with a title. It will be the only thing typed above your story in the body of your e-mail. No title means a lower technical score for not following the guidelines.
7. At the **END** of your story, please type on the left hand side the following information:
 - a. Your name.
 - b. Your e-mail address; you may submit more than one to be on the safe side.
 - c. Your mailing address, please give us your street address—**NOT** a P.O. BOX—we use UPS or FedEx to ship prizes to the winners. They don't ship to P.O. Boxes. If you want to win and receive a prize, we need a street address. Please note: if the contest prizes for the season are all digital (e-books, gift certificates) using a P.O. Box for your address is fine.
 - d. Telephone number where we will most likely be able to reach you. If you win, we need your phone number to be able to send your prize via FedEx (if prizes are not digital for the season).

- e. Word count—this does not include your title, name or your personal contact information. We use MS Word to verify the word count of your story. We will destroy your personal information after we no longer have any use for it. We will not share your information with any other person or company.
 - f. **WE DO NOT PUBLISH E-MAIL ADDRESSES.** Considering all the spammers out there on the Internet, we will no longer publish e-mail addresses, unless specifically asked to do so. If you win and would like to have your e-mail address in your bio, that’s up to you. You’ll have to include it at that time, since we do not publish e-mail addresses.
 - g. Your unique PayPal Transaction ID or receipt number, which is your confirmation number for payment.
8. **WE DO NOT ACCEPT ATTACHMENTS.** Our Auto responder is polite and may thank you for your e-mail. But, we still **WILL NOT ACCEPT ATTACHMENTS.**
 9. Use Verdana 14 pt type or Plain text. If your e-mail provider doesn’t have the option of Verdana or plain text, you can use Times New Roman or Courier New. Just make sure the text is black (no fancy colors please) and readable.
 - 10.No html e-mails accepted, except for the aforementioned font. No tables, pictures, etc.
 - 11.The best way to submit your story is to type your story in the body of your e-mail. This step is necessary because sometimes when you paste your story from a word program, the e-mail garbles characters which it can not understand: for example, “quotation marks,” em—dashes and other characters aren’t friendly with e-mail formatting. So, do yourself and our guest judges a favor, type your story into the body of your e-mail.
 - 12.We accept only one submission per title. We accept only one submission per e-mail. Rewrites are not accepted. Again, our Auto responder graciously thanks you and we, on the other hand, disqualify repeats.
 - 13.E-mail your submission to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com, no later than midnight, February 29, 2012, Pacific Standard Time.
 - 14.**The act of entering this contest constitutes an agreement between you and WOW!, that you agree to EVERY ONE OF THE 14 GUIDELINES and that you acknowledge pleading a case for not following these guidelines will not move WOW! or our Auto responder to nullify the disqualification.**
 - a. In case of disqualification, remember the only serious mistakes are the ones from which we don’t learn.

~~~~~

## WOW! Women On Writing Contest: Critiques!

Due to popular demand, we now have an additional critique option. If you purchased the “Contest Entry with Critique” option, you will receive personal editorial feedback from one of our round table judges. Upon the close of our contest, and **after winners are announced** (typically two months after the contest closes), you will receive a critique of your contest entry from one of our round table judges on three categories:

- ☞ Subject
- ☞ Content
- ☞ Technical

You will be provided with your scores (1-5) in each category, and personal editorial feedback for each category as well. There is also a fourth category that does not get scored. “Overview” is where the reader shares her personal thoughts or comments about your story. Please be patient upon the close of our contest and allow time for our editors to thoroughly critique your piece. **You will not receive your critique until AFTER the contest winners are announced—which is typically two months after the contest closes.**

To purchase a critique with your entry, please visit our contest page: <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php> and choose the button that says, “Buy Entry w/ Critique.” **Please note: this option must be purchased at the time of entry.** This allows us to verify which piece you are receiving a critique for. Please choose your option carefully. We do not issue refunds.

**You must put Winter Contest Submission 2012 With Critique in your subject line when submitting your entry.** This will help us verify that your particular entry is the one you’ve chosen for critiquing. Please remember this step. Without putting the above subject line in your e-mail, our contest manager won’t know that you purchased a critique and you will not receive one. So, please, put Winter Contest Submission 2012 With Critique in your subject line.

~~~~~

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why should I enter the contest?

Contests provide writers with challenges, including a deadline, word count limitation, and editing practice. Writing an entry for a contest means more practice with writing, proofing, and editing.

What should I write about?

Every quarter WOW! offers a new contest, which means a new prompt. The writing prompt provides the storyline to incorporate in the story, in any creative way that a writer chooses. See the Terms and Conditions above for the most current prompt. If it is an open prompt, that means you can write on any topic that you choose, just make sure it's fiction and within the word count.

To whom should I target my writing? Who is my audience of readers?

Gear your writing toward women readers and our guest judge of the season.

How long should my entry be?

Entries must be a minimum of 250 words to a maximum of 750 words. The word count does NOT include your title.

Who is eligible for the contest?

Any person on the planet who can submit their entry in English, via our online means, is eligible to enter. That means: all ages, all genders. Yes, men can enter too.

How do I get my entry published?

If an entrant wins 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Place, or places as one of the 7 Runners Up, then her story will be published on WOW!. 10 Honorable Mentions will only have the title of their story, their name, and city/state published on WOW!

What are the quarterly periods and deadlines?

FALL: September - November 30th Midnight (Pacific Time)

WINTER: December - February 29th, Midnight (Pacific Time)

SPRING: March - May 31st, Midnight (Pacific Time)

SUMMER: June - August 31st, Midnight (Pacific Time)

How long must I wait before I hear the results?

We officially notify contestants one to two months after the close of the contest, depending on the expedience of our guest judges. At that time, if you were chosen in the top 10, your entry will be published in the next issue of WOW! We aim to have all the prizes to the contestants within a week after the contest winners are announced.

Can I submit a piece I wrote for another publication that's posted online?

For open prompt contests: Yes, you can submit a piece you wrote for another publication as long as you own the copyright to the story. Please make sure you do NOT have to give credit to another publication should your winning entry be published on WOW!

Can I submit a story I previously submitted to a WOW! contest?

Yes, you may, but only if your story didn't place in a previous contest—meaning, your story didn't win 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Place, or place as a Runner Up, or win an Honorable Mention. We've had contestants who didn't place in one contest, place in another. It really depends on the guest judges for the season and their preferences. Just make sure you go back and review your story and make sure it is free of typos, spelling mistakes, and construction errors. Identify any problem areas to rewrite. Some contestants who've purchased a critique take the suggestions of the editor who critiqued their story and rework their story for the next contest.

What is the entry fee?

\$10.00 per entry, per e-mail.

What is the critique fee?

An additional \$10.00 for a critique, per entry, per e-mail. \$20 total.

How do I pay for my entry?

Go to the contest page: <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php>. Click on the "Buy Now" button. It will take you to PayPal. From there you have two options: 1. Pay Fast with PayPal (If you have an account, choose this option); 2. If you don't have a PayPal account, pay by credit card, debit card, or e-check (If you'd rather not create a PayPal account, you can pay by credit card here).

What if I don't have a credit card, debit card, checking account with e-check capabilities, or a PayPal account? Can I send you a check or money order?

Although we discourage this, yes you can. We discourage this because we have to manually look for your check, match it up with your entry, and verify funds. So, if choosing this option, please make sure you send your check early in order for processing.

WOW! Women On Writing, LLC
PO Box 41104
Long Beach, CA 90853

Please make your check out to "WOW! Women On Writing" and **please include a note of which contest it is for, as well as your entry's title**. Also, **please include your check # at the bottom of your e-mail entry when submitting**. If you are mailing in a check, please **DO NOT mail your story in print form**. You must enter by e-mail. Our guest judges will only read e-mails, and we cannot type them for you. Also, please **do not** include an SASE and ask for contest guidelines. We only provide them with this PDF and do not mail them. Plus, it's eco-friendly ☺

Can I enter more than once?

Yes, but please submit each entry in a new e-mail with a new PayPal Transaction ID at the bottom, to facilitate tracking and organization. You can enter as many times as you like as long as you follow the guidelines.

I live outside the United States, can I enter?

We welcome entries from all over the world. But contest entries must be submitted in English. Also, please note, if you live outside the U.S., WOW! will provide you with an Amazon gift certificate in place of a gift package. This is due to extra shipping costs and other fees such as tariffs (which are out of our control) incurred to the contestant in the past.

Can you explain the judging process and who judges?

We have a roundtable of 4-6 judges who blindly score submissions based on: Subject, Content, and Technical. If an entrant scores well in the first round, she goes to the second round of judging which averages out scores to narrow down the top 20 entries. Afterward, it's up to our guest judge to submit her 10 Honorable Mentions and her Top 10. From the Top 10, she ranks the 7 Runners Up, and then the Third, Second, and First Place Winners.

What do you mean by "blind judging"?

Blind judging means we remove all your contact info (name, e-mail address, address, city, state, phone number, etc.) before we send your entry to our guest judge of the season. This is to ensure fairness; so that all stories are judged equally.

How should I submit my entry?

Please submit your entry with "Winter Contest Submission 2012" or "Winter Contest Submission 2012 With Critique" (if you purchased a critique) in the Subject heading, your story in the body of your e-mail, and your PayPal Transaction ID or PayPal receipt number at the bottom, below your name, address, and contact information. Read our 14 Guidelines above for more details.

Submit to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com **after** reading our guidelines.

I entered, but I didn't receive an autoresponse: help!

Please check your e-mail and make sure you sent it to the correct e-mail address. **The only e-mail address for contest entries is contest@wow-womenonwriting.com.** It's also the only e-mail address that you'll receive an autoresponse from. The most common mistake we see is contestants sending their stories to our PayPal e-mail address. Please make sure you send it to the e-mail address above only. If you are sure you sent your entry to the e-mail address above and didn't receive an autoresponse, you are welcome to send us an e-mail to verify your submission, but please check your bulk mail folder to

make sure it didn't end up there. Also, if you enter more than once in a row, you probably won't receive an autoresponder for each submission. Our autoresponder is set up to only reply once or twice to the same e-mail within a short period of time. This protects our server against the multitude of spam sent to our contest e-mail address. When in question, feel free to contact us: contestinfo@wow-womenonwriting.com. Please put "contest question" in the subject line.

If I win the contest, can I go ahead and enter the next one?

Yes. Previously, we didn't allow contestants to enter if they'd placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, but now we are opening up each contest to allow previous winners to enter again. Make sure you submit a new story.

What about rights?

If your entry wins and is published on the WOW! website, first electronic rights or reprint rights are used with the right to archive indefinitely. It may be republished. You retain all copyrights, such as first print rights and any other rights such as anthology rights.

Can I send my entry to another contest?

That depends. Be sure to check their guidelines. It's fine with us, but many contests want only original entries.

Is there a particular format I should use to submit my entry?

Please avoid fancy and odd-sized fonts. In the body of your e-mail, use a standard-size font, like Verdana, Times New Roman, Courier, or plain text. Please don't indent paragraphs and don't double space after periods, either. Single space your entry beneath your title. Please note: we recommend typing your story into the body of your e-mail. This is the best way to ensure that we don't receive odd characters that occur from copy-pasting a word document.

Here is an example of what your entry should look like:

E-mail Subject Line: Winter Contest Submission 2012 (or Winter Contest Submission 2012 With Critique)

Title of your story

Story goes here. Remember, no indents please, and no double-spacing after periods. Use single spacing only with margins flush left. Please do not center your text or title. This is called "block formatting."

Hit the return key a couple times to indicate paragraphs (like how this paragraph is spaced from the one above). Type your story into the body of an e-mail to ensure the best outcome. If you want to use em dashes, please use your hyphen

key like this--it will help eliminate odd characters. You can also use asterisks to indicate scene changes. These do not count in the overall word count. Please make sure they are flush left (as below), not centered.

* * *

At the end of your story, remember to include all the information listed in our 14 guidelines. Hit the return key a couple of times and then enter your information below your story.

Your Name

E-mail addresses

Your mailing address

Telephone number(s) with area code

Word count

PayPal transaction ID# or Receipt# (or check number if mailing a check)

Can I use a pseudonym?

Yes, you may. Please make sure you include both your real name (so if you win we know who to make the check to), and your pseudonym.

Does my entry have to be light-hearted or funny?

No. You may write in any style or genre that you choose to. Please keep in mind our guest judge for the season.

Can I receive feedback on my entry?

We get this question a lot, so we've recently offered an additional critique option when purchasing your entry. Please read above where it says, "WOW! Women On Writing Contest: Critiques!" To receive a critique, you must purchase it at the time of entry.

What style guide do you use for the critique?

We use *The Chicago Manual of Style* for technical; the same style guide we use for WOW! Women On Writing. We also use *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers* for content. Both are great guides that every writer should have in her library. ☺

Do you notify me if I don't win?

No. Unfortunately, we can't personally respond to contestants that did not place, but you can see the results online on our contest winners' page.

I received an e-mail that says I passed initial judging. I entered more than one story, can you tell me which story passed the first round?

No. Informing you that your story passed the first round is a courtesy. Almost every contestant enters more than one story, and we don't have the staff available to look up

each and every contestant's story and answer hundreds of e-mail questions. But, if your story places in the contest, we will certainly notify you and let you know which story placed. And, if you purchased a critique, you will receive a critique for each story you entered that will include your scores.

How many people enter the contest?

We've limited the number of entries to 300. If we receive 300 entries, we will close the contest early.

What if I have another question that doesn't appear here?

If you have a different question, not answered in here or by the Terms and Conditions, feel free to e-mail us at contestinfo@wow-womenonwriting.com. Please put "Contest Question" in the subject line.

Submit to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com after reading our guidelines.

**LET'S HAVE FUN THE WRITE WAY!
ENJOY WRITING AS MUCH AS WE WILL ENJOY READING!
THANKS FOR VISITING WOW! AND ENTERING (Y)OUR CONTEST.**



Useful Links:

Make sure you sign up for our e-mail newsletter to receive the latest news and contest updates from WOW! Women On Writing. The sign up box can be easily spotted on any page of the site, upper right hand corner gray box. We also post interviews with contest winners on our blog, *The Muffin*, every Tuesday. Read the interviews to get tips from previous winners!

WOW! Women On Writing: www.wow-womenonwriting.com

Contest Page: <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php>

The Muffin: <http://muffin.wow-womenonwriting.com/>

Workshops & Classes: <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/WOWclasses.html>

Freelance Job Board: <http://jobs.wow-womenonwriting.com/a/jbb/find-jobs>

Twitter for WOW!: <http://twitter.com/womenonwriting>

Twitter for Books: <http://twitter.com/WOWBlogTour>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/WOW-Women-On-Writing/135164411877>

Featured Article:



The Contest Conundrum: What Are Flash Fiction Contest Judges Looking For?

Using the WOW! Flash Fiction Contest rubric, LuAnn Schindler defines flash fiction, critiques a sample flash fiction story, explains each set of criteria, and shows you what works—and what's missing—from a submission.

Read the article here:

<http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/40-FC-FlashFictionCritique.html>

A Helpful Issue:



The Fiction Writer's Toolkit

This issue covers writing strong fiction, creating scenes, setting and description, voice, dialogue tags, pacing, plot and plot holes, using law in your story, self-editing, and writing flash fiction.

Read the issue here:

<http://wow-womenonwriting.com/40-issue.html>