Grand Prize winners Park Tae-in (poetry), Kim Hye-jin (short stories), Kim Ji-hyun (essays)

OKA announces 13 winners in three categories: poetry, short stories, essays
OKA Commissioner Kim: 'We will continue to develop awards as platform for sharing
literary talent'



A poster for the 27th Overseas Koreans Literary Awards

Literature by overseas Koreans is a story conveying the longing for a homeland, etched by a pen in Hangeul. Works that capture the lives and culture of overseas Koreans have the power to connect lives separated by time.

The Overseas Koreans Literary Awards, now in its 27th year, is recognized for its profound impact as a bridge connecting the 7 million overseas Koreans and the Korean people.

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Kim Kyunghyup) announced on Aug. 25 the winners of the 27th Overseas Koreans Literary Awards, open to overseas Koreans worldwide, including 13 works (four poems, four short stories and five essays).

The grand prize in the poetry category went to "Work that Bends the Border" (Park Tae-in), the short story category to "Crocodile" (Kim Hye-jin) and the essay category to "Gosari" (Kim Ji-hyun).

The announcement was made through the Overseas Koreans Agency (oka.go.kr), Korean.net (korean.net) and Sotong24 (sotong.go.kr).

The 13 winners will receive a total of 30 million won in prize money and a certificate of merit, and the winning works will be published and distributed as a collection titled "A Window into Overseas Korean Literature."

For first time, all winners will be invited to their homeland for awards ceremony

This year's contest, which ran for the entire month of June, attracted significant interest from overseas Korean writers, receiving over 2,400 entries from 61 countries worldwide, an 89

percent increase in entries compared with the previous year.

Reflecting this enthusiasm, the OKA will invite all winners to their homeland for the first time this year to hold an awards ceremony and various networking events with Korean writers.

The judging panel included leading Korean writers, including Jeong Ho-seung, Na Heedeok and Moon Tae-jun (poetry category); Gu Hyo-seo, Eun Hee-kyung and Pyeon Hyeyoung (short story category); and Park Sang-woo, Kwon Ji-ye and Yoon Seong-hee (essay category).

List of winners of 27th Overseas Koreans Literary Awards					
No.	Category	Award Details	Name	Country	Title of Piece
1	Poetry	Grand Prize	Park Tae-in	Canada	Work that Bends the Border
2		Excellence Prize	Choi Jae-joon	U.S.	Mongdol Beach
3		Honorable Mention	Cheon Bo-rin	Djibouti	Salt Snow
4			Li Yong	China	Apple Pear
5	Short Story	Grand Prize	Kim Hye-jin	Australia	Crocodile
6		Excellence Prize	Jo Hye-kyung	U.S.	Book Hunter
7		Honorable Mention	Im Ok-hee	Australia	Daylight Savings Time
8			Kim Yong-ju	U.S.	Spare Tire
9	Essay	Grand Prize	Kim Ji-hyun	U.S.	Gosari
10		Excellence Prize	Kang Seon-ae	Germany	Identity, and Me
11		Honorable Mention	Kim Myeong-jung	U.S.	Outing in LA
12			Kim Seon-ju	U.S.	A World That People Live In
13			Kang Min-ah	Russia	The Story of a Special Buffalo

"This year's literary awards featured works that captured the diverse lives, conflicts, losses and aspirations of Koreans living abroad around the world," the judges said in a joint statement. "The works fulfilled their original intentions through fully realized aesthetics and showed us a unique level of perfection."

The Overseas Koreans Literary Awards has established itself as a gateway for overseas Korean literary scholars, producing numerous writers, including Park Mikhail, a Koryo-saram author who has won the Kataev Literature Award and the Kuprin Literature Award.

"The Overseas Koreans Literary Award has served as a bridge between our motherland and the compatriot community through literary works," OKA Commissioner Kim Kyunghyup said. "We will continue to develop this award as a platform for our compatriots to preserve their Korean identity and share their literary talents."



Author Cho Seong-guk, who won the grand prize in the short story category of the 26th Overseas Koreans Literary Awards at the 18th World Korean Day ceremony last year, gives his acceptance speech.

Work that Bends the Border

Park Tae-in (Canada)

Every day, my father butchered a cow.

Sharpening knives,
separating bones,
wiping off blood.

Everything proceeded quietly.

Fingers frozen to the joints,
dark streaks of blood trickling down the walls,
until the ripened smell wafted through the warehouse.

finally pushed my back.

My mother not looking back,
my father walking silently.

The border
was a threshold of light that could only be crossed by bending down,
and what was dismantled was
breath, flesh, language, and even names.

Along with the debt that flowed down people's backs, the boundaries collapsed.

The wind that touched the dock



We lived.
The debts were alive,
the balance was also alive,
and all that survival
dripped like blood.

But the immigration officer
didn't ask us what "family" meant.

We didn't answer,
and the red stamp
spoke for us on the paper.

That stamp was the only red thing we carried here with us.

The ink of our homeland didn't dry when we crossed the border.

Crossing a border was said to be the opening of a new door.
But for me it wasn't a door it was time disintegrating like a lump of meat, outside the outskirts of the city, in a place thick with the stench of beasts a crevice of frozen labor.

I remember.

The flesh where my father's knife had cut, the bloodshot spots on my mother's bundle, the slight fever my younger brother left and the remains of a dismantled name that was left behind.