

SPRING 2010 EMESSAGE WINNERS:

SUSAN ANDERSON

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You bring tools to the rocky field and dig, exhume, and plant. The garden - your story - takes root and grows, despite drought and deluge. You hoe, weed, pluck and kill bugs. The story grows hardy, its fruit sweet as sun-ripe gold tomatoes. Harvest is near.

ELISSA BASSIST

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I wish you'd stop believing no one is going to read your writing; this makes your work restrained, lackluster, and full of the hollow fear of what other people think. I wish your anxiety away, but only you can move it, with your hands, with your heart, with the sheer force of your bones.

AMINA HECKSTALL

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Through my words I am able to expose myself in ways deemed unacceptable by a society that has placed restrictions or standards on how I am to be. Through my words I can just Be.

CARRIE NASSIF

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She dared me to look into my own eyes; to tell myself, "I love you" and really feel it. Shame rose bile-like in my throat. I can't even think it and mean it. In the mirror, she takes a startled breath, forgiving my familiar flaws...and speaks. I'd begun.