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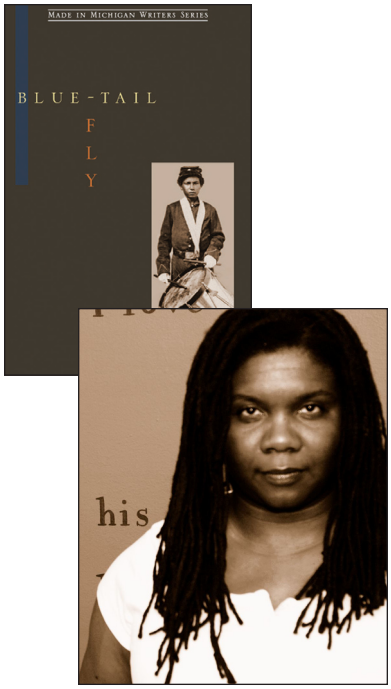

Vievee Francis Chosen as a Rona Jaffe Foundation Award Winner!

In recognition of the special contributions women writers make to our culture and society, The Rona Jaffe Foundation awards prizes of $25,000 each to emerging women writers of exceptional talent. Among the winners of the 2009 awards is Wayne State University Press author and local poet Vievee Francis!

Francis is the author of *Blue-Tail Fly* (Wayne State University Press, 2006), described by her nominator as a "remarkably compassionate and clear-eyed debut that is a masterly poetic sequence rooted in mid-19th-century American voices and history. It is confident and utterly compelling." Her poems have also appeared in *Callaloo, Crab Orchard Review, Rattle,* and in the forthcoming *Norton Anthology of Contemporary African American Poets.* She was a Cave Canem Fellow in 2005 and 2007. Next year, with the help of her Rona Jaffe Award, she will complete the research for her new collection of poems on the Wendish region of Texas, where her family has lived since the 1800s when the slave holding region was settled by German immigrants seeking religious freedom.

Vievee Francis lives in Detroit, Michigan, where for 15 years she has been instrumental in fostering a literary community for youth and young-adult poets. She received her B.A. from Fisk University and will receive her M.F.A. from the University of Michigan in 2009, where she is the Alice Lloyd Hall Scholars Program Poet-in-Residence.

Rona Jaffe (1931-2005) established The Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Awards program in 1995. It is the only national literary awards program of its kind dedicated to supporting women writers exclusively. This unique program offers grants to writers of fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry to make writing time available and provide assistance for such specific purposes as child care, research, and related travel costs. Since the program began, the Foundation has awarded more than $1 million to emergent women writers. The other 2009 winners are Krista Bremer, Janice N. Harrington, Lori Ostlund, Helen Phillips, and Heidy Steidlmayer.

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For more information on this book or to interview the author, please contact Sarah Murphy, Promotions Manager, Wayne State University Press, (313) 577-6077 tel; (313) 577-6131 fax; murphysa@wayne.edu. To learn more about the Press, please visit wsupress.wayne.edu.

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