

Literature: Jill Divine

Personal Blog: <http://www.oneyearofopus.blogspot.com/>

Born and raised in Kansas, Jill Divine has lived in Flagstaff, Arizona for fifteen years. Currently, she teaches poetry at Coconino Community College, and has owned a wine shop, driven an ice cream truck, tried to become an actress, and managed an espresso bar. She can't seem to find an occupation that affords a decent pay, so she has turned to poetry.

She received a M.A. in English from Northern Arizona University in 1995 and was awarded a Poetry Fellowship from the Arizona Commission on the Arts in 2001. She has a wonderful son, too many dogs, a stellar family, a topnotch (mostly) sweet-heart, and kind yet goofy friends.

Dear Viola Award Committee,

We would like to nominate Jill Divine for the 2012 Viola Award in literature. We have outlined many reasons why we believe Jill is a worthy contender for this award. Here they are;

- Jill is an exemplary teacher of poetry and English at the Coconino Community

College, and has been for 13 years.

- Jill volunteers in the Exodus Program at the Coconino County Jail teaching poetry to inmates.
- One of Jill's new poems (which follows) was accepted into an on-line Ten Year 911

Anniversary Anthology of essays and writings.

nine one one (the first minute)

A man is putting on his tie, the television flickers early morning. My eyes open slowly like heavy drapes, leaving my ears to do the work of taking in the screen. The man moves back and forth, from bathroom to closet to hallway, and I hear a woman say oh my god. Again, oh my god. The man walks out of the bathroom and stands in front of the tv and says, oh my god. I sit up now, eyes just eyes, seeing the screen as the plane hits the tower. The man, who will leave soon for work (and has left now, forever) is tying his shoes while watching the screen, and all of us are silent. I lie back down, sure I am dreaming and the telephone starts to ring and the woman on the television starts to cry and the man says, wake up, and I do and I watch the tv and say oh my god. Oh my god.

- Seven of her poems were published this year in the literary publication, "Curios."
- Throughout 2011, Jill conducted many workshops on the art of writing the "cocktail napkin poem" to great reception.
- Jill's book of poetry, *Game*, was a finalist for the prestigious Patterson Poetry Prize.
- Jill is a recipient of the Arizona Commission on the Arts Poetry Fellowship.
- She has conducted workshops for the Flagstaff Leadership Program.
- Jill has been a volunteer or board member with the Northern Arizona Bookfest for the last 8 years.

Jill's writing has been applauded as "Heartfelt and always observant, the lyrics, narratives, and dramatic monologues in Divine's *Game* plumb such timeworn subjects as childhood, parenting, and intimacy—lost and found—with voices that are fresh and insightful. Divine's debut accomplishes one of poetry's highest aims: to teach us to pay attention to the fleeting wonder of our lives. 'Now this is a magic time,' the poet reminds us, 'so listen good.'"

-Miles Waggener, author of *Phoenix Suites*

In August of 2011, Jill opened Gallery 113, an art gallery that shows both local and international art, ceramics, metals, paintings, along with books from local authors and CDs by local musicians.

Jill has been a judge in various poetry competitions throughout the county and is encouraging and helpful to all the contestants. She has spent quite a bit of time in the k-12 schools volunteering her poetry and teaching expertise.

Listen to Jill talk about why she writes at www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Tn0V29Bn_I

We are nominating Jill because we believe she is not only an accomplished, accessible, talented writer, but also an incredible asset to this community. She is a teacher, a volunteer, a gallery owner who promotes our local artists, and a poet. She is friendly, and kind, yet also a serious business woman and volunteer who knows how to get the job done. Her creativity is boundless and she loves to share her knowledge with others. Please consider her for this respected award.