**2023 FIRECRACKER AWARD WINNER**

**POETRY**

*Customs*
by Solmaz Sharif
Graywolf Press

“Sharif pushes into a bold examination of the exhausting uncertainties and irreconcilable conditions of life in exile in the United States. This collection is thrilling to read—scathing, insightful, and original.”

—Judges Kemi Alabi, Jenny Gropp & Komal Mathew
Community of Literary Magazines and Presses / CLMP.ORG

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**CREATIVE NONFICTION**

*Optic Subwoof*
by Douglas Kearney
Wave Books

“Here are a few words that come to mind when reading Douglas Kearney’s *Optic Subwoof*: sonic, polyphonic, urgent in delivery and in truth. *Optic Subwoof* shows us how vital and limitless human creativity is.”

—Judges Cinelle Barnes, Daisy Hernández & Emerson Whitney
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**FICTION**

*Brother Alive*
by Zain Khalid
Grove Atlantic

“*Brother Alive*’s extraordinary writing develops into a propulsive narrative that is a genuine pleasure to follow—one that both surprises and delights. This novel is surreal, complex, puzzling, mind-expanding, imaginative, original, and presciently relevant to our times.”

—Judges Karen Maeda Allman, Kristen Arnett & Vauhini Vara
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