

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Virgin Islands Writer Wins \$10,000 Prize For Fiction Work

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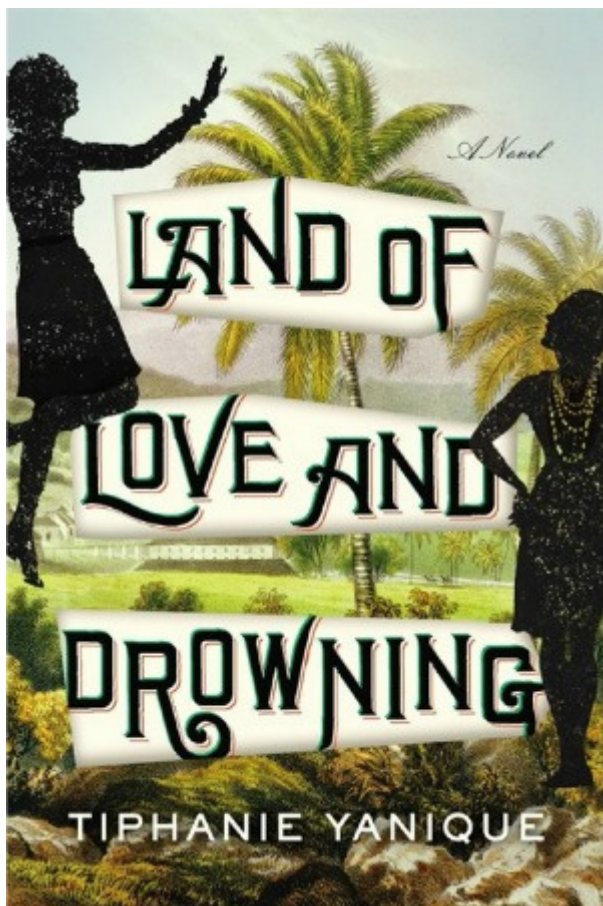
Cynthia Graham **December 18, 2014**



Tiphonie Yanique, assistant professor of writing at The New School in New York City and a graduate of All Saints Cathedral School in St. Thomas, is the recipient of the 2014 Flaherty-Dunnan First Novel Prize presented by The Center for Fiction for her 368-page debut novel, "Land of Love and Drowning."

Yanique's work was selected from among 25 other first-time novelists and she was awarded a \$10,000 prize at an awards ceremony held on Dec. 9.

"It feels incredibly gratifying that the Virgin Islands is being noticed and lauded on a national level in this way," the writer said of the national recognition. "Yes, we are a place



es, hiking trails, but we are also a place where beings who call the Virgin Islands home. I hope y hard working and talented writers, painters, 'irgin Islands."

The novel by Tiphany Yanique titled, 'Land of

Love and Drowning'.

"Land of Love and Drowning" is set in St. Thomas and chronicles three generations of a local family from 1916 to 1970. Of the book, commentator Brooke Obie describes it in the Los Angeles Review of Books as "a love letter to the Virgin Islands, both the land and spirit of the place." The Boston Globe says, "Yanique succeeds in evoking the panorama of the Virgin Islands in a voice all her own."

Yanique is no stranger to hard work. Her children's book, "I Am The Virgin Islands," was commissioned by her aunt, First Lady Cecile de Jongh, as a Christmas gift to the territory's children in 2012. In 2011, her work was featured in the Virgin Islands Humanities Council's "We the People" initiative. Yanique has also authored many other works, including "How to Escape a Leper Colony: A Novella and Stories" as well as short fiction, essays and poetry.

The writer's roots are far-reaching across the Virgin Islands. She is a member of the Smith and Galiber families of St. Thomas and St. Croix.

Her academic background sees her earning a bachelors of arts degree at Tufts University and a master's degree in creative writing at the University of Houston. She has been the recipient of other prestigious awards, including a Fulbright Scholarship and she has held a Cambor Fellowship at the University of Houston.

Of Yanique's accomplishment, Mrs. de Jongh said, "John and I are incredibly proud of my niece, Tiphane, and all her accomplishments. She is a wonderful wife, mother, sister, niece along with being a talented and prolific writer."

According to information on the organization's website, the Flaherty-Dunnan First Novel Prize is awarded to the best debut novel published between January 1 and December 31 of the award year. The Prize is in honor of Center for Fiction board member and non-fiction author, the late Nancy Dunnan, and her journalist father, Ray W. Flaherty.

Image Credit: *Brooklyn Book Festival*

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