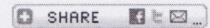


Home: News & Events: BC News: 2010:

Moscow on the Lee: BC Student Wins Award in Ireland

10/27/2010



- ▶ About Brooklyn College
- ▶ Admissions
- ▶ Academics
- ▶ International Education
- ▶ Honors and Special Programs
- ▶ Our Faculty
- ▶ Campus Life
- ▼ News & Events

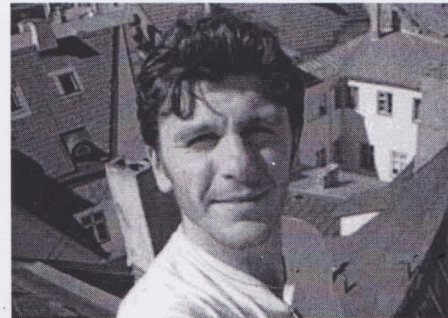
- BC in the Media
- Calendar of Events
- Social Networks
- Multimedia
- Office of Communications and Marketing
- BC News

- ▶ Alumni
- ▶ Brooklyn College Library
- ▶ BC WebCentral Portal
- ▶ Support Brooklyn College
- ▶ Apply Now

Quick Links

Go

When Nikita Nelin found himself at the Frank O'Connor Festival accepting the Sean O'Faolain Award for his short story "Eddie," it was yet another surprising stop on a life journey that has had many. His five-day stay as a guest of honor in Cork, Ireland, astride the River Lee, where the festival takes place, was a little less grueling than the life-changing trip he took in 1989. That was the year Nelin left his home in Moscow, eventually landing in the United States.



Before that move, Nelin was an avid reader. In the U.S., however, he faced the challenge not only of learning a new culture, but also a new language. "I didn't know English at all. I didn't really read for the next 10 years. I may have read two books in that time."

Slowly, Nelin opened up to English, but he didn't consider writing seriously until college. It was at Bard, while reading a transcendent passage in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Demons*, that he was inspired to write his own fiction. He showed his work to a faculty adviser, who encouraged him to continue.

His decision to continue his education seemed equally a matter of fate. "In my last undergrad year, I had two ideas. One, as silly as this sounds, was to move to the Northwest, either Oregon or Alaska, and disappear for a while." But when he ran into a friend who was in the Brooklyn College playwriting program, he decided to go for his M.F.A.

At Brooklyn College, he devoted himself to the craft of fiction. He submitted "Eddie" for award consideration after hearing of the contest in an e-mail from the English Department. His victory and trip to Ireland further strengthened his sense of being a writer. He wrote about his festival experiences for *Electric Literature*: "For a young writer this was an introduction worthy of a hyperbole as our best memories often have to be. Away from the, at times stuffy, at times hypercompetitive world of New York City, an opportunity to be around people with passion and care for the story itself. An opportunity to celebrate."

Back in hypercompetitive New York, Nelin is finishing up a larger piece and teaching classes in his last year at the College. He's looking into residencies for next year and working on taking it one day at a time. "In the M.F.A. program, we have to be really cautious about looking far ahead, either too hopefully or too anxiously."

