



BALTICON 56

The BSFAN

May 27-30, 2022

Celebrating the **40th** *Anniversary*
of the BSFS Compton Crook Award!



GUESTS OF HONOR

FEATURED GUESTS



ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR
FLOYD NORMAN



DR. EVE L. EWING



FAN GUESTS OF HONOR
**EDIE STERN
AND JOE SICLARI**



GENE HA



GUEST OF HONOR
ERLE KORSHAK



ERIC WILKERSON



**TOASTMASTERS
ANNALEE NEWITZ AND
CHARLIE JANE ANDERS**



chicon.org

A Letter From the Chair



It's been a long time my friends. How are you doing? Are you excited to be at Balticon? I know I am!

Two years ago we were pulling off one of the first virtual cons and now we're using all that we learned to make space for in-person and virtual gatherings. We created an IT department to help with the demands of streaming panels and events. The Program committee has met the challenge of offering in-person only, streaming, and virtual only panels and events. And every single member of the con committee has gone above and beyond in making Balticon happen.

Three years is a long time between in-person events. Thankfully many on the con committee had their fingers in other conventions that happened in-person over the past year. Even so, we're bound to make mistakes, forget things, mess up. Let's remember to be kind to each other. Let's remember why we're really here, to share our love of science fiction and fantasy, to geek out over the old and the new, but most importantly, to be here with each other and spend time together with our quirky, amazing, brilliant, and sometimes irritating-as-hell found family that is fandom.

Putting a con together, virtual and in-person, is a task of Herculean proportions. I am humble in my gratitude to the entire concom and every single volunteer. Each of you has contributed to something special. I am especially grateful to my Rabble Rousers, I love you guys and I could not have asked for better friends.

And, of course, I'm grateful for those of you who are attending, in-person and virtually. Because without you there wouldn't be a reason to have a con.

I am honored to have been entrusted with bringing this convention to life. Together, let's have a great weekend. Remember to be excellent to each other.

Yours,

Yakira Heistand

Chair, Balticon 56

Contents

Cover Design by Nora Echeverria	<i>Outside Front</i>
Chicon 8	<i>Inside Front</i>
A Letter From the Chair	1
Contents & Credits	2
Artwork by Tristan Alexander: "Android Boy"	3
B56 Committee & Staff List	4
The Baltimore Science Fiction Society	7
Nancy Springer, Guest of Honor	8
Nancy Springer Selected Bibliography	9
Artwork by Heidi Hooper: "GRRM"	12
AtomaCon 2023.	13
Chessiecon 2022	16
Jen Midkiff, Music Guest of Honor	17
Steve Stiles, Ghost of Honor	18
Remarks at Steve Stiles' Funeral, by Michael Dobson	19
Kevin Roche, Special Guest	20
The Games Club of Maryland	20
Andy Trembley, Special Guest	21
The BSFS Amateur Writing Contest	21
Confluence 2022	22
BSFS RPG Meetup	22
Nate Hoffelder Web Design	22
Shore Leave 42	23
David Gerrold, 2022 Robert Heinlein Award Winner	24
The Robert A. Heinlein Award	25
Previous Heinlein Award Recipients	25
Seanan McGuire, Special Guest	26
Wen Spencer, Special Guest	27
C.J. Cherryh, Special Guest	28
Orlando 2023 NASFIC	28
P. Djèlí Clark, 2022 Compton Crook Award Winner	29
BSFS 2022 Compton Crook Award Finalists	29
Micaiah Johnson, 2021 Compton Crook Award Winner	30
BSFS and Balticon Videos on YouTube	30
Arkady Martine, 2020 Comptcon Crook Award Winner	31
BSFS Library Holdings	31
The BSFS Compton Crook Award	32
Compton Crook Award Eligibility Requirements	32
Fiction: "Grounded" by Jeff Dunne, 1st Place, BSFS 2021 Amateur Writing Contest	33
BSFS 2021 Amateur Writing Contest Winners	38
About the First Place Winner	38
Albacon 2022.	38
The BSFS Jack L. Chalker Young Writers' Contest	39
Farpoint 2023	40
Fiction: "Dispatch from a Dying Solar System" by Gwendolyn Taylor, 1st Place, BSFS JLC 2022 YW Contest.	41
Balticon 56 Game Rooms.	43
Balticon 56 Rocket Mail	43
Balticon History Notice.	43
Buffalo in 2024 NASFIC.	43
BSFS Nonprofit Notice	43
Winnipeg in 2023 NASFIC	44
Hats and Spats	44
Nate Hoffelder Web Design.	44
Fiction: "Hamilton: Bronze Pioneer" by Roshan Rao,	

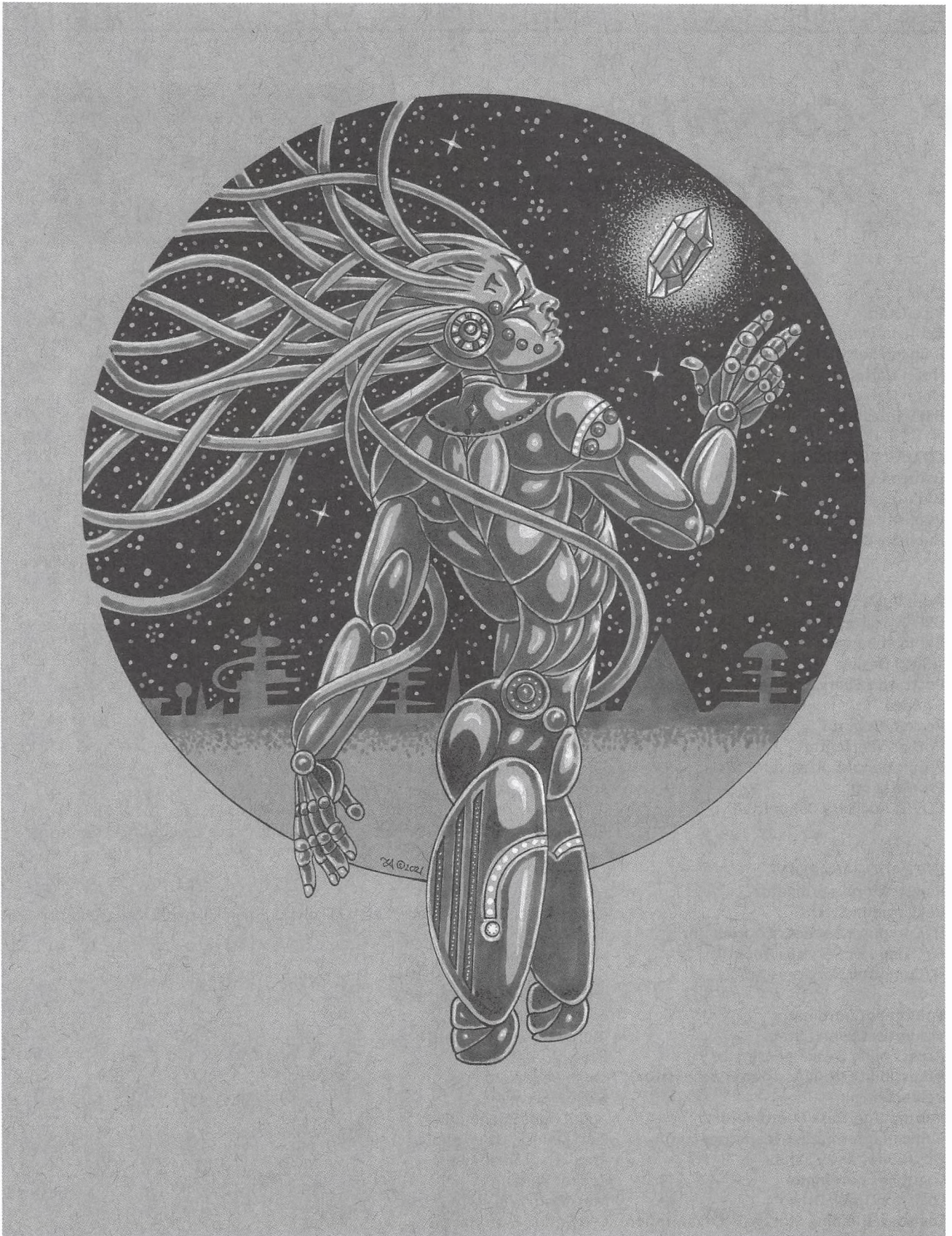
2nd Place, BSFS JLC 2022 YW Contest	45
BSFS JLC Young Writers' Contest Winners	47
Pole to Pole Publishing.	48
Fiction: "Just a Test" by Johan Shattuck, 3rd Place, BSFS JLC 2022 YW Contest	49
Philcon 2022	52
Art by Steve Stiles	53
BSFS Poetry Contest 2022 Winners	54
About the Winning Poets.	57
Annual BSFS Poetry Contest Rules	57
In Memoriam.	58
LARP Announcement	60
Author Website in a Box	60
Balticon DVDs	60
Virtual Action Role Playing	61
The Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild	62
Balticon 56 Program Participants	63
Balticon 56 Program Participant Bios	64
Capclave 2022	68
Boskone 60	76
AlphaGraphics Bel Air	82
The Maryland State Arts Council.	82
Art by Steve Stiles	89
Balticon 56 Hotel Map (Fifth Floor)	90
Balticon 56 Hotel Map (Sixth Floor)	91
Turning Circle.	91
Astronomicon 13	91
BSFS & Balticon Policy Statements	92
Balticon 56 Vendors	95
Artwork by Nora Echeverria: "Just Passing Through Town"	95
Balticon 57.	96
Artwork by Tristan Alexander: "Sacred Stag"	<i>Inside Back</i>
Welcome to Balticon 56	<i>Outside Back</i>

Color Centerfold Pages

Glasgow in 2024	1
Balticon Sales Table	1
"Merman's Treasure" by Tristan Alexander	2
"Cephalopod Bowl Lamp III" by Bruce Blackistone	3
"Collinwood" by Patti Kinlock	4
"Where Narwhals Come From" by Nora Echeverria	4
"Sanctuary" by Charlene Taylor D'Alessio	5
"Alien Birth" and "Skull Cave" by Bonnie J. Schupp	5
"Taking a Sip" by Miguel Mitchell	6
"Docs Playing Poker" by Heidi Hooper	7
"Isaac Asimov" by Heidi Hooper	7
"Tango" by Heidi Hooper.	7
"Scrollsaw Silver Dragon 2020" by Morgan Hazelwood	8
"Rainbow Castle on Earth's Moon" by Miguel Mitchell	9
"Angelcore Series One and Two" by Teagan Twospirit	10
Discover the Magic	11
BSFS Books for Kids Charity Auction	12

Credits

*Pocket Program: "Android Boy" by Tristan Alexander
Badge: "The Chrysalis Gardens" by Nora Echeverria
Assorted space images used for publications, courtesy of
NASA.*



Power Crystal

Committee & Staff List



Chair
Vice Chair
Balticon Treasurer
Balticon Secretary
Hotel Liaison
Hotel Liaison Staff
BSFS Treasurer

Yakira Heistand
Kelly Shannon Pierce
Steven Joel Zeve
Patti Kinlock
Dale Arnold
Art Blumberg
Maria Thompson

COMMUNICATIONS

Balticon Webmaster
Web Team
Publicity and Social Media Coordinator
Publicity Committee

Marilyn Mix
Marv Zelkowitz, Nora Echeverria, Nate Hoffelder
Morgan Hazelwood
Morgan Hazelwood, Megan Allen-Kingsland, Yakira Heistand, Kelly Pierce,
Patti Kinlock, James Boggie, Maria Thompson, Michael Rafferty, Nate Hoffelder,
Sako Tumi

Print Publications
BSFAN Editor/Advertising
Balticon Badges
T-Shirt Design
Postcards, Fliers, Business Cards
Signage
Pocket Program
Rocket Mail Editor
Promotional & Archival DVDs
Promo Loop
COVID Advisory Committee

Patti Kinlock, Nora Echeverria
Patti Kinlock
Nora Echeverria
Nora Echeverria
Patti Kinlock, Nora Echeverria
Chris Mierzejewski
Gwyn Fireman
Sam Lubell
Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer
Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer
Perrienne Lurie, Gary Ehrlich, Megan Allen-Kingsland, Eric "Dr. G" Fleischer,
Allison Brown, Kelly Pierce, Robert Markowitz, Steve Zeve, Maria Thompson

OPERATIONAL AREAS

Registration Coordinator
Registration Staff
IT/Computer Services Coordinator
IT/Computer Services Deputy
IT/Computer Services Staff

Megan Allen-Kingsland
Donna Langley, Jenny Kraus, Sarah Kilkowski, Brian Kilkowski, Greg Seidman
Michael Rafferty
Samuel Kopel
Brad Ackerman, Greg Seidman, Paul Krause, Syd Weinstein, Liana Olear,
Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer

Volunteer Coordinator
Volunteers Senior Staff
Accessibility Desk Coordinator
Accessibility Desk Assistant Coordinator
Berserker Lair
Information Desk Coordinator
Balticon Information Team (pre-con)
Ops/Community Safety
Logistics Coordinator
Logistics: Truck Driver
Logistics: Building Storage & Organization

Bruce Kaplan
Muriel Hykes (Dr. Mom)
Ellen Montgomery
Jamie Peddicord
Mykeal Spivey
Abdul Hadi Sidahmed
Patti Kinlock, Dale Arnold
Abdul Hadi Sidahmed
Rodger Burns
Mark Roth
Eric Gasior, Evan Haag

TECH*

Tech Director
Assistant Tech Director
Tech Director Assistant
Build Captain

Robert Markowitz
Liana Olear, Rhys Benson
Sarah Sexton
Larry Schroeder

Godfather of Tech
 Master Electrician
 Lighting Designer
 Sound Designer
 Video Designers
 Program AV Head
 Head Rigger
 Science Program Tech

Science Program Assistants
 Tech Staff

**BIG THANK YOU TO THE TECH CREW!*

EVENTS

GOH Liaison Lead
 GOH Liaison Staff
 BB4K Charity Auction Coordinator
 Assistant Coordinator
 BSFS Books for Kids Liaison
 Auctioneer
 Masquerade Director
 Masquerade Staff
 Masquerade Green Room
 Den Parents
 Master of Ceremonies
 MoC Assistant
 Judges: Presentation
 Judges: Workmanship
 Judges' Clerk
 Photographer
 Fan Photography Wrangler
 Film Festival
 Concerts
 Writers' Workshop
 Poetry Workshop
 Hall Costume Judges

FIXED FUNCTIONS

Hospitality/Con-suite
 Program Participants' Green Room
 Art Show Director
 Art Show Co-Director
 Art Show Assistants
 Art Show Staff
 Art Show Auctioneer
 Dealers' Room Coordinator
 Dealers' At-Con Coordinator
 Dealers' Room Staff
 Video Room
 Anime Room
 Gaming (Hal Haag Game Room)
 Coordinators
 Game Room Staff
 Role Playing Games (RPG)
 Artist Alley Coordinator
 Fan Tables Coordinator
 Party Coordinator
 Sales Table Coordinator
 Sales Table Staff
 Hall Costume Photography Booth
 Restaurants/Parking Discounts

Marty Gear
 Matt Klein
 Leilani Macomber
 Eric Honour
 Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer, Jeff Poretsky
 Mick Ryder
 Jennifer Logsdon
 Paul Loeschke, Lauretta Nagel, Henry Meier, Ron Taylor, Bob Dutilly, Miguel Mitchell, Carey Lisse
 Lauretta Nagel, Henry Meier
 Techno-Fandom and a cast of thousands.

Debi Chowdhury
 Carole Parker, Frances Andrews Zeve, Chanie Beckman, Paul O'Neil
 Kelly Shannon Pierce
 Jim Wilmering
 Ben Allen-Kingsland
 Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer
 Karen Purcell
 Merrily Wolfe, Serena
 Abigail Welsher
 Joni Dashoff, Michelle Weinstein, Liz Herman
 Kevin Roche
 Andy Trembley
 Kurenai Kiba, Syd Weinstein
 Leslie Johnston, Crystal Tresachia
 Ron Robinson
 DC Photo Shoots
 Bear Field
 Marv Zerkowitz
 Gary Ehrlich
 Steve Lubs
 Wendy Van Camp
 Kevin Roche, Andrew Trembley, Marilyn Mix, Debi Chowdhury

Denise Cutair
 Allison Brown
 Nora Echeverria
 Anna Scott
 Susan Wheeler, Paul Brinkley
 Brad Ackerman, Joni Dashoff, John McWilliams, Dustin Mogavero,
 Eric "hymie!" Hymowitz, Tristan Alexander, Kayla Tamondong
 Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer
 Kelly Shannon Pierce
 Rod Van Blake
 Jim Wilmering
 Thomas "the Red" Horman
 Leona Thompson

Michelle Hymowitz, Eric "hymie!" Hymowitz
 Perrienne Lurie
 Greg Robin
 Anna Scott
 Jasen Stengel
 Jasen Stengel
 Patti Kinlock
 Carol Reynolds
 Patti Kinlock, Denise Cutair
 Miriam Winder-Kelly

PROGRAMMING

Programming Coordinator	Lisa Adler-Golden
Assistant Coordinator	Rodger Burns
GOH Program Liaison	Chanie Beckman
Program Ops	Lisa Adler-Golden, Chanie Beckman, Bugsy Bryant, Rodger Burns, Jennifer Hancock.
Brainstorming Committee	Lisa Adler-Golden, Bugsy Bryant, Rodger Burns, Andrew Feldman, Yakira Heistand, Miguel Mitchell, and Neil Ottenstein. Special thanks to the DisCon III Brainstorming team led by Michael Pederson.

Program Track Leads*

Anime	Leona Thompson
Children's	Eta Hack
Costuming/Makers	Yakira Heistand
Music/Filk	Gary Ehrlich, Emily Lewis
New Media	John Walker
Science	Miriam Winder-Kelly
Science Assistant	Miguel Mitchell, PhD
Video	Thomas "the Red" Horman

**All other tracks led by Lisa Adler-Golden with input from other programming staff.*

VIRTUAL

Virtual Convention	Frank Huminski
Virtual Program Ops	James Boggie
Discord Coordinator	Kristen Seibert

AWARDS ADMINISTRATION

Compton Crook Award Committee	Sam Lubell, Bruce Kaplan, Nora Echeverria
Compton Crook Award Judges	The Members of the Baltimore Science Fiction Society
Jack L. Chalker Young Writers' Contest Coordinator	Miriam Winder-Kelly
JLC YW Contest 1st Round Judges	Miriam Winder-Kelly, Marv Zelkowitz, Zabeth Gallagher, Beth & Geary Mizuno, Amy Kaplan
JLC YW Contest 2nd Round Judges	Perrienne Lurie, Sam Lubell, Paul O'Neil
Poetry Contest Coordinator	Patti Kinlock
Poetry Contest Judges	Vonnie Winslow Crist, Katie Hartlove
Amateur Writing Contest Coordinator	Allison Brown
Amateur Writing Contest Judges	Perrienne Lurie, Sam Lubell, Dale Arnold, Yakira Heistand, Ann Marie Rudolph, Miguel Mitchell
Robert A. Heinlein Award Coordinator	Dale Arnold
Heinlein Award Judges	The Heinlein Award Committee

ADMINISTRATION

BSFS Computer Admins	Michael Rafferty, Nora Echeverria
Grants and Fundraising	Maria Markham Thompson, Steven Joel Zeve
Visit Baltimore! Liaison	Peter Eirich

BSFS Board of Directors:

President	Dale Arnold
Parliamentarian	Paul O'Neil
Board Chair / Corresponding Secretary	Patti Kinlock
Recording Secretary	Sylvan Rosawood
Treasurer	Maria Markham Thompson
Assistant [Balticon] Treasurer	Steven Joel Zeve
Publicity Coordinator	Morgan Hazelwood
Director-at-Large	Eric "Dr Gandalf" Fleischer
Director-at-Large	Michael Rafferty
Director-at-Large	Megan Allen-Kingsland
Director-at-Large	Leona Thompson
Balticon Chair	Yakira Heistand
Balticon Vice-Chair	Kelly Shannon Pierce

Baltimore Science Fiction Society



The Baltimore Science Fiction Society is a 501(c)(3) literary organization for science fiction, fantasy, horror and speculative fiction literature. We exist to promote the creation and appreciation of science fiction and fantasy cultural arts—primarily through literary art forms, but also embracing the many related graphical, musical, and theatrical creations inspired by SF. If you love science fiction and fantasy then BSFS and our projects and programs are a new home for your mind, heart, and soul.

Visit the BSFS Building for:

- **The BSFS Book Club** Meets every 4th Saturday of each month at 6:30 pm.
- **Spec Fic Critique Circle** Writers critique participants' writing every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 6:30 pm.
- **Author Events** Throughout the year.
- **Our Free Public Lending Library** With over 13,000 titles.
- **Film Nights** Indie shorts & feature films on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 7:00 pm.
- **Anime Social** Anime, manga, gaming every 4th Saturday of each month at 2:00 pm.
- **Business Meeting** Help us dream up new projects! Held the 2nd Saturday of each month at 8:30 pm.
- **Table Top RPG** The last Sunday of every month, 1:00-5:00 pm.
- **Digital Gaming** Computer & console gaming on the 3rd Sunday of each month, 2:00-5:30 pm.

All of the events and meetings at our building are free and open to the public. Our headquarters is served by the CityLink Orange and 22 MTA buses and free parking is available on the street. Visit us at:

3310 East Baltimore Street

Baltimore, MD 21224

Phone: 410-JOE-BSFS (563-2737)

Contact Us/Follow Us:

Website w/Calendar: bsfs.org

Facebook: facebook.com/BaltimoreSciFi, facebook.com/groups/BaltimoreSciFi

Twitter: twitter.com/BaltimoreSciFi (or [@BaltimoreSciFi](https://twitter.com/BaltimoreSciFi))

Meetup: meetup.com/Baltimore-Science-Fiction-Society

Tumblr: baltimorescifi.tumblr.com

Instagram: instagram.com/baltimorescifi

Discord: discord.gg/VGHpxwu

YouTube: youtube.com/channel/UCfh75XSMBZ-JXPuzXnKsisA

GoodReads: goodreads.com/user/show/135786020-baltimore-science-fiction-society

Mail: PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686

BSFS proudly sponsors Balticon, the Maryland Regional Science Fiction Convention, on Memorial Day Weekend in Baltimore each year. Check it out at balticon.org. BSFS also sponsors writing contests: one for Maryland students, one for Maryland adults, and one just for poetry. We also sponsor two literary awards, the Compton Crook Award and the Robert A. Heinlein Award.

Guest of Honor

Nancy Springer



Starting way back in 1948, Nancy Springer grew up in what had to be the last rural area *ever* in Livingston, New Jersey. But her real hometown is Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where she went to high school and college and once, in a chance encounter, played violin for Ike and Mamie Eisenhower. She married while still in college, started writing novels shortly after graduation, and simply kept on. She did not stop for the next half-century and/or 60 books. First mythic fantasy, then magical realism, then (upon acquisition of a horse) children's literature, and then contemporary women's fiction, and she was just getting started.

In 1995, her young adult novel *Toughing It* won an Edgar, although she had not realized she wrote mystery. She remained unconvinced until she won another Edgar in 1996. Then the plot thickened, at least in her real life. There was a broken marriage, and almost simultaneously, an empty nest. And two

Arthurian novels, and a series about Robin Hood's daughter, before she finally remembered she wrote mystery.

This, combined with an editor's request for something set in deepest, darkest England at the time of Jack the Ripper, resulted in her creation of Enola Holmes, kid sister of the great Sherlock Holmes. Enola, whose name backwards spells "alone."

Eureka! she thought. This had the feel of a Very Good Idea. She researched hugely and learned to plot as never before. But her efforts to write numerous Enola Holmes novels were frustrated by the obstinacy of her protagonist. Enola insisted on growing, changing, and achieving her goals, concluding the series after a mere six books.

This was annoying, but Nancy Springer shrugged and kept writing. Also, after 46 years of living in Pennsylvania, she finally left. She and her second husband moved to the Florida panhandle—*Holmes* county, of all places. But no sooner were they situated than the recession of 2008 hit, and for the next several years things did not look too good.

So she barely believed it at first when she heard there might be a movie based on her books about her beloved brainchild Enola Holmes. Really?

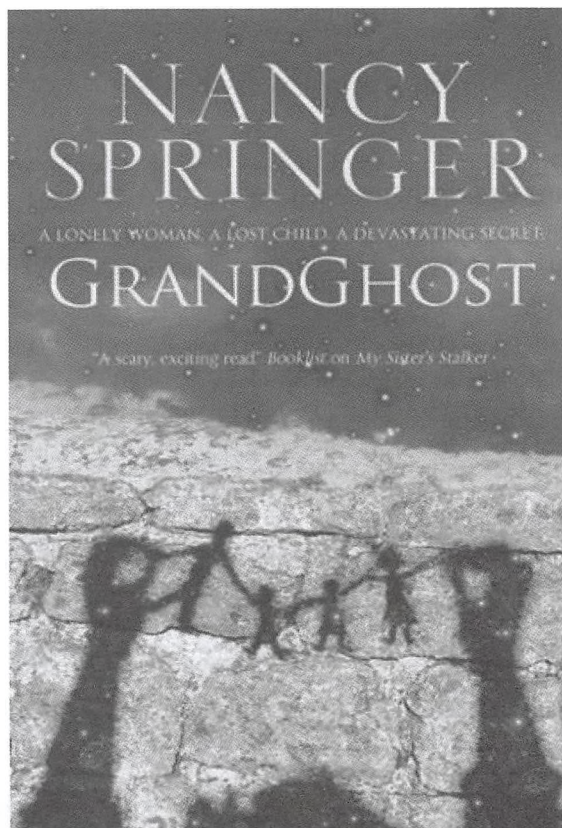
Yes. It has happened. To Nancy Springer, this fairy-tale ending seems almost more magical than those post-adolescent fantasy novels she wrote when she was just getting started. And not to be GoH of her first-ever, hometown sf con Balticon? Nancy Springer is simply enchanted.

Nancy Springer Selected Bibliography

(I've left out stuff I don't like or don't remember writing.)

FANTASY NOVELS

- GRANDGHOST, Severn House, August, 2018
- THE ODDLING PRINCE, Tachyon, May 2018
- PLUMAGE, Morrow, Dec 2000. Russian, Mir Knigi, 2007.
- FAIR PERIL, Avon, hc and trade pb, November, 1996. Science Fiction Book Club edition, 1997. Mass pb, July 1997. Mythopoetic Fantasy Award nominee, 1997. German edition, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998. Open Road Media, 2014
- METAL ANGEL, Penguin, paperback, April 1994. Lambda Literary Award nominee. Japanese edition, Hayakawa, 1997. Open Road Media, 2014.
- LARQUE ON THE WING, Avon, hardcover, February 1994. Paperback, February 1995. Tiptree Award winner. Nebula nominee. Open Road Media, 2014.
- APOCALYPSE, Baen Books, August 1989. Hardcover, Underwood-Miller, October 1989. Nebula nominee. Spanish edition, Ultramar, October 1992. Open Road Media, 2014.
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- GODBOND, Volume III of THE SEA KING TRILOGY, Tor Books, October 1988. British edition, Futura, 1990. Open Road Media, 2014.
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- MADBOND, Volume I of THE SEA KING TRILOGY, Tor Books, June 1987. British edition, Futura, 1988. Open Road Media, 2014.
- CHAINS OF GOLD, hardcover, Arbor House, August, 1986. Paperback, Tor Books, August 1988. British edition, Macdonald, hardcover, August 1987; Futura paperback, 1988. Iowa State Best Books for Young Adults listee. Open Road Media, 2014.
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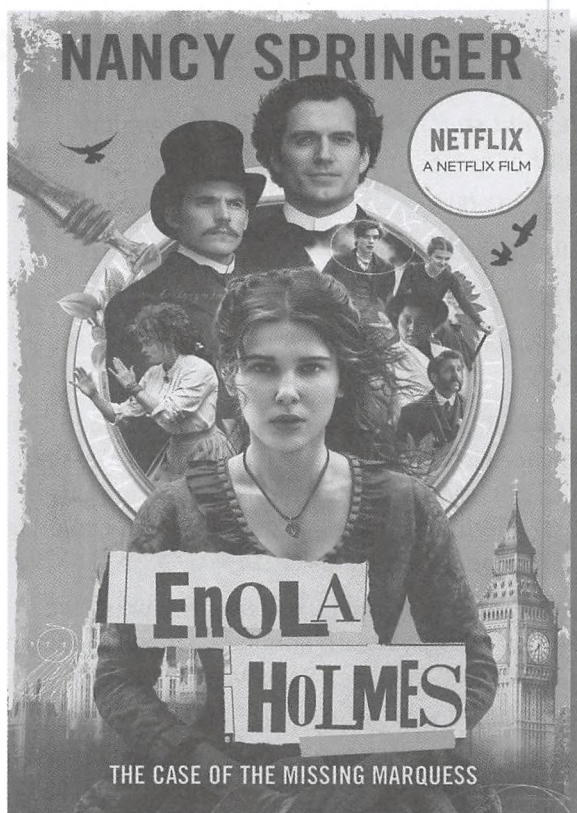
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- THE BOOK OF SUNS, Pocket Books, June 1977.

CHILDREN'S/YOUNG ADULT NOVELS

**fantasy

(Apologetic note: I've lost track of all the Enola Holmes foreign rights.)

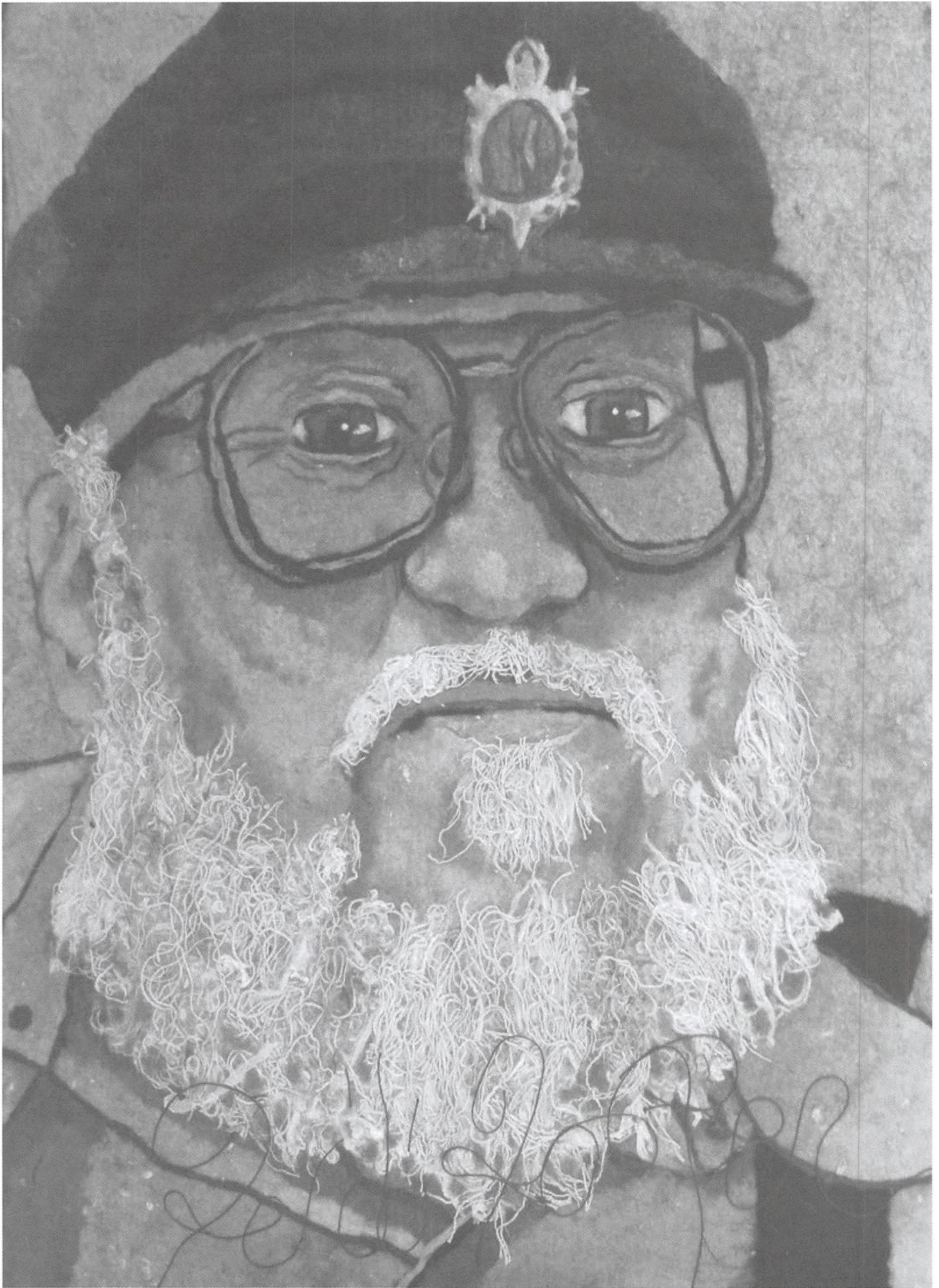
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- MY SISTER'S STALKER, Holiday House, 2012
- POSSESSING JESSIE, Holiday House, April 2010. Open Road Media, 2014.
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- SOMEBODY, Holiday House, April 2009 ALA Best Books for Young Adults nominee. Open Road Media, 2014.
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- THE CASE OF THE PECULIAR PINK FAN: AN ENOLA HOLMES MYSTERY, Philomel, fall 2008. French edition 2011. Japanese 2012. Recorded Books. Junior Library Guild Selection. Brazilian edition 2012 Chinese 2013
- THE CASE OF THE BIZARRE BOUQUETS: AN ENOLA HOLMES MYSTERY, Philomel, January 2008. Recorded Book 2008. Japanese edition 2009. Junior Library Guild. Starred review, [School Library Journal](#). French edition 2008. Brazilian edition 2012, Spanish forthcoming. Turkish 2014. Chinese, 2013
- **DUSSIE, Bloomsbury, October 2007. Mythopoeic Fantasy Award nominee, 2008. Open Road Media, 2014.
- THE CASE OF THE LEFT-HANDED LADY: AN ENOLA HOLMES MYSTERY, Philomel, January 2007. French Edition 2007. Puffin paperback 2008. Czech edition Knizni Klub, 2008, withdrawn because of Marxist references?? Recorded Book, 2008. Japanese edition 2009. French edition 2008. Israeli, Miskal. Brazilian



edition. Spanish, Turkish, Chinese, 2013 French graphic novel

- THE CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS: AN ENOLA HOLMES MYSTERY, Philomel, Spring 2006. Recorded Book. Starred reviews in [Kirkus](#), [Booklist](#), [School Library Journal](#), and [Publishers Weekly](#). Booklist top ten mystery. French edition 2007. Czech edition 2007. WTTV U.K. option, company folded. MWA Edgar Allan Poe Award nominee, 2007. Amelia Bloomer Listee, ALA. Japanese edition 2007. Scholastic edition 2007. Puffin paperback Nov. 2007. Israeli, Miskal, 2010. Brazilian 2012. [Read](#) magazine adaptation. French Book Club. Spanish. Turkish. Mainland Chinese 2013. French graphic novel 2015. Movie, Netflix, Sept 23, 2020.
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 - ROWAN HOOD, OUTLAW GIRL OF SHERWOOD FOREST, Philomel, May 2001. Recorded Books. Scholastic Book Club pb, April 2002. Puffin pb, Sept 2002. Estonian 2006. German. Pennsylvania Young Readers Master Choice List 2003.
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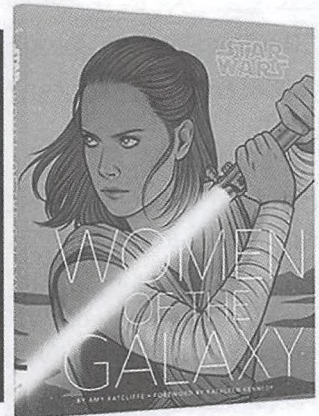
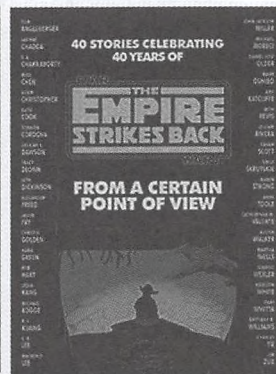
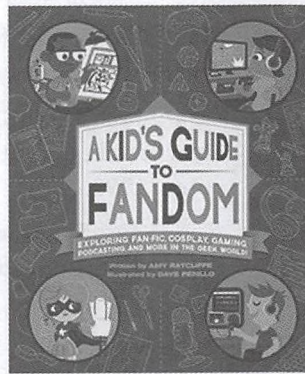
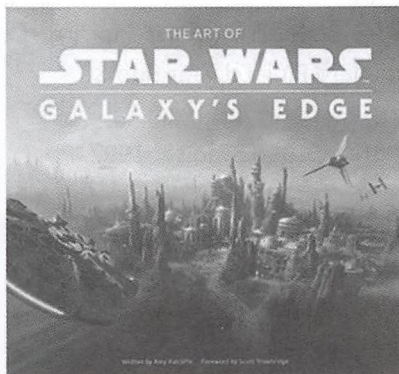
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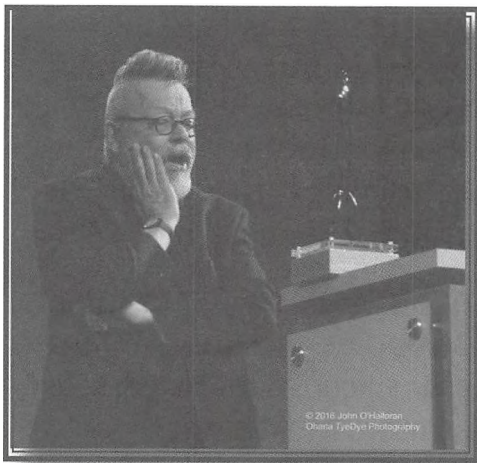
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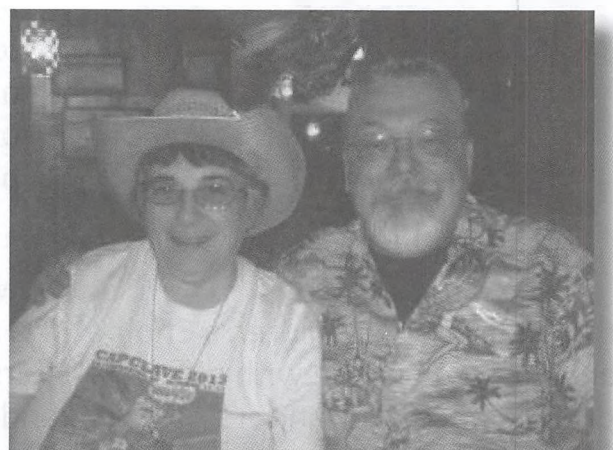
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Ghost of Honor Steve Stiles



Steve Stiles became a science fiction fan in 1957; he'd been illustrating fanzines from then until his death, earning him the first Rotsler Fan Artist Award in 1998, and a Fan Artist Hugo in 2016. Professionally, he worked in numerous comic book genres since 1973 (horror, super hero, science fiction, humor), including the award-winning *Xenozoic Tales* and perhaps the first steampunk graphic novel, *The Adventures of Professor Thintwhistle*, with author Richard Lupoff. His most recent projects included work on an anthology of his underground strips, *The Return of Hyper Comics*, and a 200 page historical graphic novel. A regular at Balticon, Steve will be greatly missed.



Remarks at Steve Stiles' Funeral

Michael Dobson

January 24, 2020, Pikesville, MD. Reprinted with permission.

Mark Twain was known to charge several times as much for a thirty-minute speech as he did for a four-hour speech. "I can talk for four hours off the top of my head," he said, "but cutting it down to thirty minutes is extremely difficult." Elaine has limited me to five.

I was, I have to admit, just a little bit peeved that Steve had the bad manners to die on Monday when I was coming up to see him that Wednesday. I had a good joke all ready—at Steve's expense, of course—and now I won't get to tell it.

I like making fun of Steve because he makes it so easy. Not, mind you, in the sense that he's a target rich opportunity {though he is}, but rather that he welcomed it... and turned it into art.

In some ways, Steve Stiles reminds me of the *Lil' Abner* character Joe Btfsplk, complete with a little dark cloud over his head. (I always thought it was pronounced "Bit-fis-pilk," but according to Al Capp, it's pronounced (Bronx cheer). Steve had the worst luck of anybody I know, and yet his art turned that bad luck along with episodes of deep personal humiliation—the kind the rest of us would bury in our subconscious in hopes it would never see the light of day—into an endless source of humor.

In one of my favorite Stiles cartoons (as usual, based on real life), he's working in a warehouse packing R. Crumb t-shirts. One of his coworkers says, "So, you were an underground cartoonist, eh? So how're you gonna feel about packing hundreds of R. Crumb t-shirts week after week, month after month?"

Suddenly he's thrown into a nightmare, surrounded by a mountain of *Mr. Natural* shirts screaming, "Has-been! You blew it!" But he's nearly saved when the same co-worker finds a comment by Crumb mentioning *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs*.

"I'm really proud of that stuff," Steve says, only to have the co-worker reply, "Crumb threw it in the trash."

On his first acid trip, Steve's guides decides to go have sex while Steve is left alone in the living room. He finds a photo of an ex-love in a bondage magazine. He is invited to an orgy, but the oysters (nudge, nudge, wink, wink) are tainted and everyone ends up at the ER. Steve's response? "All in all, I'd say that my first orgy was a definite anticlimax."

His 11th grade art teacher committed suicide by jumping out a classroom window in full view of the class. (I briefly taught high school; I can relate.) For most of us, a single window jumping episode would be enough for a

lifetime—but not Steve. A few years later, as Steve was walking down the street, another suicide landed (*plop*) just behind him. For most people, "defenestration" is an answer to a trivia question. For Steve, it's a way of life.

Which brings me to the joke I was planning to tell him. When I visit someone who's terminally ill, I figure the last thing they need is someone else moping, so I bring a joke. When my wife's cousin was dying, for example, I went over to tease him about having been in bed once with Angelina Jolie.

It was true—sort of. Actually, he wasn't "in" bed with Angelina as much as "on" it. He was helping Angelina and Brad with their adoption of a Vietnamese child. They're in a hotel room in Saigon, and he sits next to Angelina on the hotel bed while making a phone call. The end. That's the whole story. Not much to it, really.

Now, if that had been Steve sitting on a bed with Angelina Jolie, you can bet that a disaster of biblical proportions would soon follow, whether it was a room-clearing fart or accidentally pushing her out the window. Probably both: the fart driving her out the window. Which would have made three.

But back to the joke. I was going to congratulate him on making a great career move. Dying worked wonders for Van Gogh's career, it worked for Phil Dick—why not for Steve? Maybe the *Lil' Abner* reboot failed, maybe Oliver Stone kept jerking him around, and maybe the comic book industry collapsed just as he was getting somewhere. (I blame Steve, by the way, for the collapse of the comics industry. Joe Btfsplk indeed.) But who cares?

It would, of course, be just Steve's luck for his death to give him the financial success and reputation he kept missing out on during his life.

But it's unfair to say that Steve missed out completely when it came to fame. His fanzine interlineation "Death is nature's way of telling you when to stop" became a national catchphrase after it was picked up by *Pageant* magazine in 1962. Sadly, pre-Internet there was no good way to monetize memes. Today there would be t-shirts, Etsy coffee mugs, emoji sets, and maybe even an app for that.

For that matter, Steve was wrong. While his metabolic processes are now history; while he's run down the curtain and joined the bleedin' choir invisible, he's not an ex-Steve at all. He hasn't really stopped. He and his work now belong to the ages.

It's not a replacement for the real thing, mind you, but let us be grateful at least for that. Thank you.

Special Guest

Kevin Roche



Kevin Roche has been costuming since he was eight, and a conrunner for years. In his secret identity as a scientist at IBM Research Almaden, he's hard at work wrangling giant robot vacuum chambers and electrons in atomically engineered materials, and is an IBM Q Ambassador and Qiskit Advocate, explaining the weird world of quantum computers to audiences around the world. He is also the editor of *Yipe! The Costume Fanzine of Record*.

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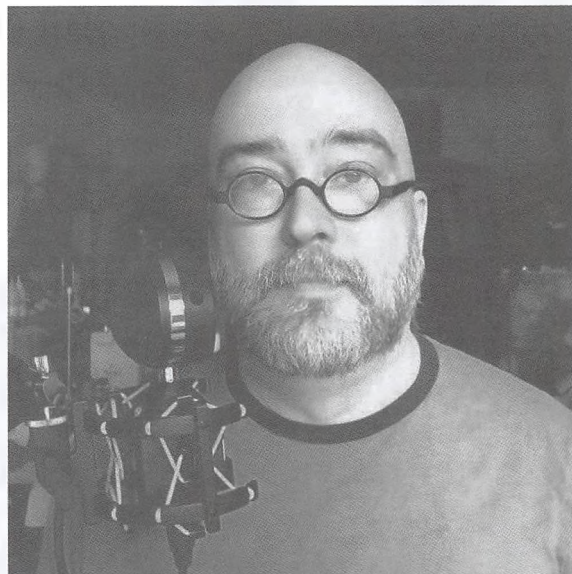
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Special Guest

Andy Trembley

Andy Trembley found organized fandom in semi-rural Wisconsin when he learned of a SCA shire in his hometown. SCA led to costuming, filking and APAs. Costuming, filking and APAs led to conventions, and that led to attending events all over the upper-midwest. Most recently, Andy ran the “San Jose in 2018: Make the Future” campaign to bring Worldcon 76, the 2018 Worldcon, to San Jose. After a few years away from convention running, he and Kevin will be assisting Westercon 74’s hospitality team by planning their bar.



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Then enter the **Baltimore Science Fiction Society Amateur Writing Contest!** No entry fee! You just have to be a Maryland resident or student in Maryland who is 18 or over and has not been published in a professional magazine. You do not have to be a BSFS member to enter!

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Entries due by June 15, 2022, at 11:59 PM.

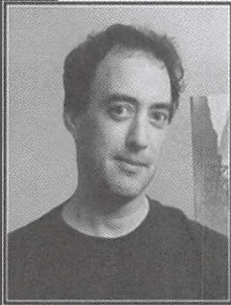
For details, including how to submit, see: bsfs.org/bsfssc.htm.



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Love Tabletop Role-Playing Games?



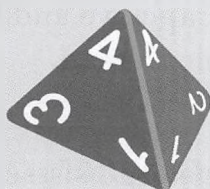
Our Tabletop Role-playing Games (RPGs) meetup usually takes place the last Saturday of the month from 1:00-5:00 PM at the BSFS Building, 3310 E. Baltimore

Street in Baltimore. We will be rotating through various tabletop Sci Fi RPGs. You are welcome if you love tabletop RPGs.

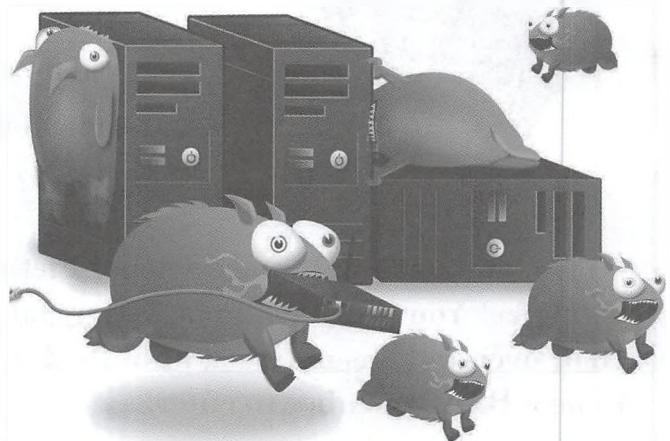
Never played an RPG before? You are most welcome. We will be running for all levels. We have a few experienced GMs, but are always looking for more. Premade characters will be available; we will run as many games as we have people for.

Check the calendar at www.bsfs.org/bsfscldr.htm.

Info: mike@bsfs.org.



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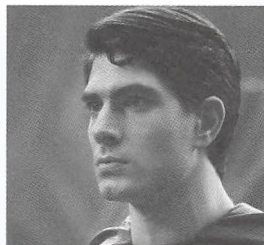
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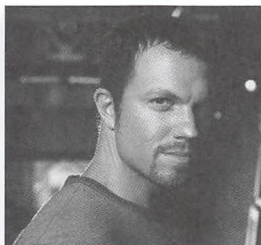
Brandon Routh

Superman Returns – Clark Kent
Arrow – Ray Palmer/The Atom
Legends of Tomorrow – The Atom



Aimee Garcia

Lucifer – Ella Lopez
Dexter – Jamie Batista
Rush Hour – Didi Diaz



Adam Baldwin

Firefly – Jayne Cobb
Chuck – John Casey
The Last Ship – XO Mike Slattery



Sat & Sun only

Summer Glau

Firefly – River Tan
Terminator – Cameron Phillips
Arrow – Isabel Rochev



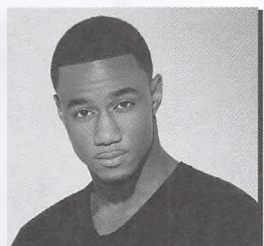
Laz Alonso

The Boys – Mother's Milk
Avatar – Tsu'tey
Fast & Furious – Fenix



Gates McFadden

Star Trek TNG – Dr. Beverly Crusher
Marker – Kimba
Hunt for Red October – Caroline Ryan



Jessie Usher

The Boys – A-Train
Independence Day – Dylan Hiller
Level Up – Lyle



Robert D. McNeill

Star Trek VOY – Lt. Tom Paris
Chuck – Operative
24 – FBI Agent



BarBara Luna

Star Trek – Marlena
Buck Rogers – Koori
Zorro (1958) – Theresa Modesto



Eddie McClintock

Warehouse 13 – Pete Lattimer
Supergirl – Col. James Harper
Agents of SHIELD – Vin-Tak

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2022 Robert Heinlein Award Winner

David Gerrold

David Gerrold's work is famous around the world. His novels and stories have been translated into more than a dozen languages. His TV scripts are estimated to have been seen by more than a billion viewers.

Gerrold's prolific output includes stage shows, teleplays, film scripts, educational films, computer software, comic books, more than 50 novels and anthologies, and hundreds of articles, columns, and short stories.

He has worked on a dozen different TV series, including *Star Trek*, *Land of the Lost*, *Twilight Zone*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Babylon 5*, and *Sliders*. He is the author of *Star Trek's* most popular episode, "The Trouble With Tribbles."

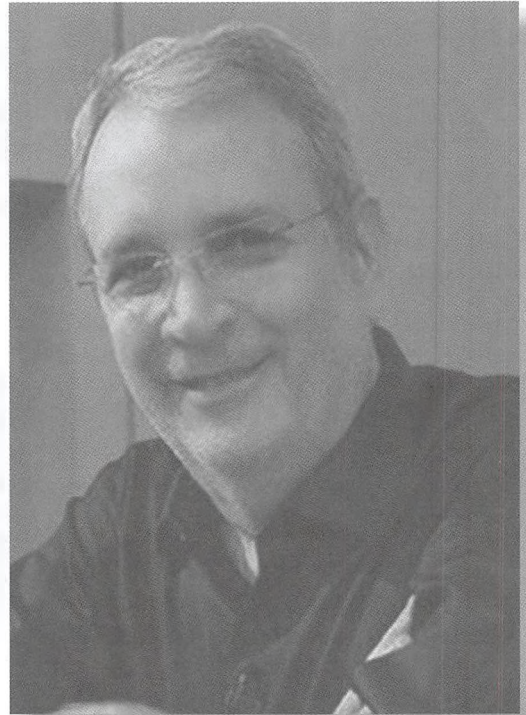
Many of his novels are classics of the science fiction genre, including *The Man Who Folded Himself*, the ultimate time travel story, and *When HARLIE Was One*, considered one of the most thoughtful tales of artificial intelligence ever written. His stunning novels on ecological invasion, *A Matter for Men*, *A Day for Damnation*, *A Rage for Revenge*, and *A Season for Slaughter*, have all been best sellers with a devoted fan following. His young adult series, *The Dingilliad*, traces the healing journey of a troubled family from Earth to a far-flung colony on another world. His *Star Wolf* series of novels about the psychological nature of interstellar war are in development as a television series.

A ten-time Hugo and Nebula award nominee, David Gerrold is also a recipient of the Skylark Award for Excellence in Imaginative Fiction, the Bram Stoker Award for Superior Achievement in Horror, and the Forrest J. Ackerman lifetime achievement award.

In 1995, Gerrold shared the adventure of how he adopted his son in *The Martian Child*, a semiautobiographical tale of a science fiction writer who adopts a little boy, only to discover he might be a Martian. *The Martian Child* won the science fiction triple crown: the Hugo, the Nebula, and the Locus Poll. It was the basis for the 2007 film *Martian Child* starring John Cusack and Amanda Peet.

Gerrold's greatest writing strengths are generally acknowledged to be his readable prose, his easy wit, his facility with action, the accuracy of his science, and the passions of his characters. An accomplished lecturer and world-traveler, he has made appearances all over the United States, England, Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. His easy-going manner and disarming humor have made him a perennial favorite with audiences. David Gerrold was a Guest of Honor at the 2015 World Science Fiction Convention.

His latest novel is *Hella*, an exploration of a world where everything is super-sized.



The Robert A. Heinlein Award

David Gerrold, novelist and screenwriter, is the 2022 winner of the Robert A. Heinlein Award and will attend Balticon 56, May 27-30, 2022. The award is bestowed for outstanding published works in science fiction and technical writings that inspire the human exploration of space. This award is in recognition of Mr. Gerrold's body of work, including his emphasis on young adult space travel novels and inspired creation during *Star Trek* screenwriting. *Hella* (2020) is his most recent YA novel about space colonization.



The award will be formally presented during opening ceremonies on Friday, May 27, 2022, 8:00 PM, for Balticon 56, the 56th Maryland Regional Science Fiction Convention. Balticon will take place at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel. Mr. Gerrold will participate in the Balticon program across Memorial Day Weekend.

Balticon and the Robert A. Heinlein Award are both managed and sponsored by The Baltimore Science Fiction Society, Inc. A grant from the Heinlein Society funds half of the costs associated with the award, and the family of the late author Dr. Yoji Kondo provides additional funding.

The Robert A. Heinlein Award is a sterling silver medallion bearing the image of Robert A. Heinlein, as depicted by artist Arlin Robbins. The medallion is matched with a red-white-blue lanyard. In addition, the winner receives two lapel pins for use when a large medallion is impractical, and a plaque describing the award for home or office wall display.

The Robert A. Heinlein Award selection committee consists of science fiction writers and was founded by Dr. Yoji Kondo, a long-time friend of Robert and Virginia Heinlein. Members of the original committee were approved by Virginia Heinlein.

Virginia Heinlein authorized multiple awards in memory of her husband. Other awards include the Heinlein Prize, which is fully funded by Virginia Heinlein's estate, and a National Space Society award for volunteer projects.

More information on the Robert A. Heinlein Award, including past winners, can be found at: www.bsfs.org/bsfsheinlein.htm

David Gerrold maintains an official website at www.gerrold.com.

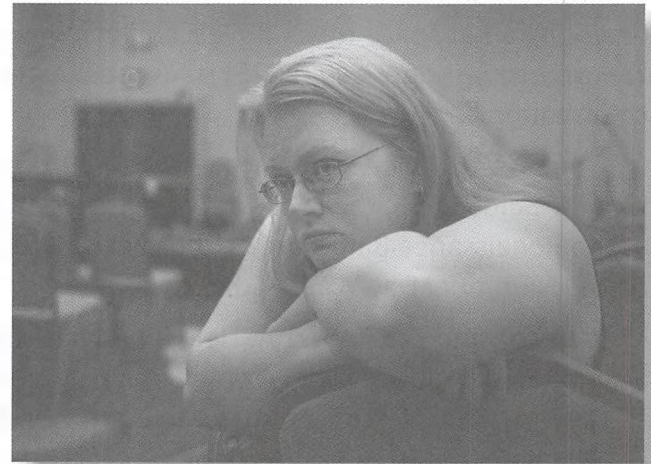
Previous Robert A. Heinlein Award Recipients

- 2021 C.J. Cherryh
- 2020 Vernor S. Vinge
- 2019 Gregory Benford
- 2018 Neal Stephenson
- 2017 Robert J. Sawyer
- 2016 Kim Stanley Robinson
- 2015 Jack McDevitt
- 2014 Geoffrey A. Landis
- 2013 Allen Steele and Yoji Kondo
- 2012 Stanley Schmidt
- 2011 Connie Willis
- 2009 Joe Haldeman and John Varley
- 2008 Ben Bova and Spider Robinson
- 2007 Elizabeth Moon and Anne McCaffrey
- 2006 Greg Bear and Jack Williamson
- 2005 Jerry Pournelle and Larry Niven
- 2004 Arthur C. Clarke
- 2003 Michael Flynn and Virginia Heinlein

Special Guest

Seanan McGuire

Seanan McGuire writes books. Like, all the time. We have tried to make her stop writing books, usually by dangling something else she likes to do in front of her, but all the haunted cornfields, rickety carnivals, and swamps the world has to offer have not been enough to do more than slow her down. At her current rate, we estimate the universe will be half her books by volume by the end of the twenty-first century.



And still, she does not stop.

Seanan lives in the Pacific Northwest, in an idiosyncratically designed old farm house filled with generation one My Little Ponies, books (only some of which she wrote), and abnormally large, fluffy cats. She likes it that way. When not at home or writing, she enjoys travel, and can often be found at Disney theme parks around the world, enjoying the efficient ways they have been designed to part fools from their money (that's her, she's fools, at least in this scenario).

A lifelong science fiction and fantasy fan, Seanan is very pleased with the fact that she's managed to turn her passions into a career, and doesn't understand why people keep saying that she needs to get some sleep. She gets plenty of sleep. Why, she slept just last week! Keep up with her on *Twitter* at @seananmcguire, or online at seananmcguire.com.

Special Guest

Wen Spencer

Wen Spencer is an American science fiction and fantasy writer born in Evans City, Pennsylvania. She attended the University of Pittsburgh, gaining a degree in Information science, and has been active in science fiction fandom.

Her first novel, *Alien Taste*, was published in 2001 and won the Compton Crook Award. She developed the characters in that novel into a four book arc, the Ukiah Oregon series. In 2003, she started the Elfhame series with *Tinker*, which won a Sapphire Award. In that same year, she was awarded the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer.

She has written 12 novels, including three stand alone novels: *A Brother's Price*, *Endless Blue*, and *Eight Million Gods*, as well as numerous short stories. Several of her novels, including *Alien Taste*, *Tinker*, and *A Brother's Price* have been translated and sold internationally in Europe, Japan, and Russia.

Her books are strong character-based works, where ordinary meets the extraordinary. The Ukiah Oregon series is a fast paced mystery in which our hero begins to suspect he may not be quite human. In the Tinker series our heroine, a scrappy girl genius, must deal with dating, extra-dimensional bad guys, and her own unusual past.

After living in Pittsburgh, and Boston, Wen Spencer now resides in Hilo, Hawaii in a home nestled between two volcanoes and a harbor. She is well travelled, having toured through much of the US, Europe, and Asia, and living briefly in Osaka, Japan. Her fondness for Japanese folklore flavors her writing.



Special Guest

C.J. Cherryh

C.J. Cherryh is a speculative fiction writer, editor, and translator. She is best known for the Alliance-Union Universe, the Foreigner Universe, and the Fortress series. She won the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer in 1977 and several Hugo Awards, including Best Novel for *Downbelow Station* (1981) and *Cyteen* (1988). She has a Master of Arts in classics from Johns Hopkins University. Ms. Cherryh taught high school Latin, Ancient Greek, the classics, and ancient history. She enjoys figure skating and has an interest in genealogy, history, and archaeology. She lives in Spokane, Washington, USA. Her current project, with Jane S. Fancher, is working on a sequel to their 2019 novel *Alliance Rising* set in the Alliance-Union universe.



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2022 Compton Crook Award Winner

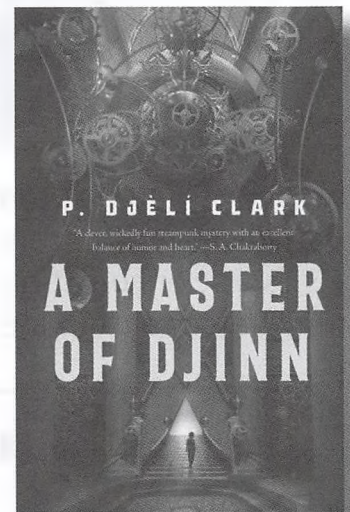
P. Djèlí Clark



P. Djèlí Clark's novel *A Master of Djinn* is the winner of the 2022 Compton Crook Award. Phenderson Djèlí Clark is also the Sturgeon-nominated author of the novellas *Ring Shout*, *The Black God's Drums*, and *The Haunting of Tram Car 015*. His short stories have appeared in online venues such as *Tor.com*, *Heroic Fantasy Quarterly*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, and in print anthologies, including *Griots and Hidden Youth*. You can find him on *Twitter* at @pdjeliclark and his blog *The Disgruntled Haradrim*.

Born in New York and raised mostly in Houston, Texas, he spent the early

formative years of his life in the homeland of his parents, Trinidad and Tobago. When not writing speculative fiction, P. Djèlí Clark works as an academic historian whose research spans comparative slavery and emancipation in the Atlantic World. He melds this interest in history and the social world with speculative fiction, and has written articles on issues ranging from racism and H.P. Lovecraft to critiques of George Schuyler's *Black Empire*, and has been a panelist and lecturer at conventions, workshops and other genre events.



BSFS 2022 Compton Crook Award Finalists

- *A Master of Djinn* by P. Djèlí Clark (*Tordotcom*)
- *Assassin's Orbit* by John Appel (*Solaris/Rebellion*)
- *Nucleation* by Kimberly Unger (*Tachyon Publications*)
- *The Councillor* by E.J. Beaton (*DAW*)
- *The Witch's Heart* by Genevieve Gornichec (*Ace*)
- *We Have Always Been Here* by Lena Nguyen (*DAW*)

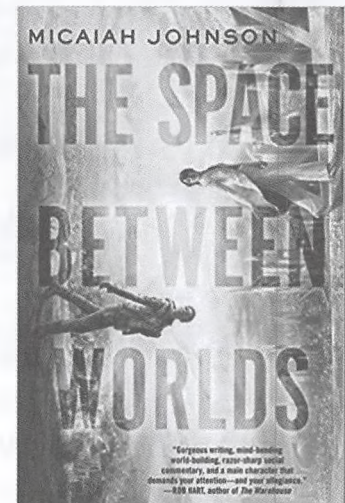
2021 Compton Crook Award Winner

Micaiah Johnson



Micaiah Johnson's novel *The Space Between Worlds* is the winner of the 2021 Compton Crook Award. Micaiah was raised in California's Mojave Desert surrounded by trees named Joshua and women who told stories. She received her Bachelor of Arts in creative writing from the University of California, Riverside, and her Master of Fine Arts in fiction from Rutgers University–Camden. She now studies American literature at Vanderbilt University, where she focuses on critical

race theory and automatons. Her debut novel, *The Space Between Worlds*, from Hodder in the UK and Crown in the US, is a science-fiction novel that uses the concept of the multiverse to examine privilege.



BSFS and Balticon Videos on YouTube

Some BSFS and Balticon panels and presentations are available to view on the BSFS/Balticon YouTube channel (youtube.com/c/BaltimoreSciFi/videos). The recordings will contain automatically generated captions. You can also view videos from Balticons 54 and 55.

YouTube can be used in a web browser or you may download the YouTube app for your device.

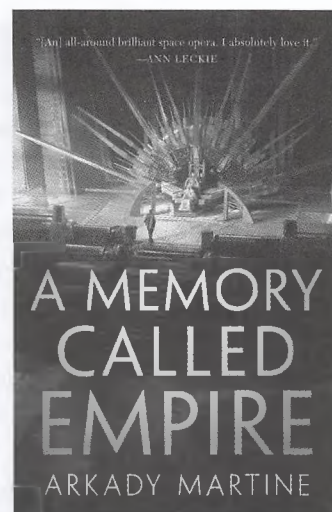
2020 Compton Crook Award Winner

Arkady Martine



Arkady Martine's novel *A Memory Called Empire* is the winner of the 2020 Compton Crook Award. Arkady Martine is a speculative fiction writer and, as Dr. AnnaLinden Weller, a historian of the Byzantine Empire and a city planner. She is currently a policy advisor for the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, where she works on climate change mitigation, energy grid modernization, and resiliency planning. Under both her names she writes about border politics, rhetoric,

propaganda, and the edges of the world. Arkady grew up in New York City and, after some time in Turkey, Canada, Sweden, and Baltimore, lives in Santa Fe with her wife, the author Vivian Shaw. Find her online at arkadymartine.net or on *Twitter* as [@ArkadyMartine](https://twitter.com/ArkadyMartine).



BSFS Library Holdings

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The BSFS Compton Crook Award

The Compton Crook Award is presented to the best of each year's English language first novel by an author in the field of science fiction, fantasy, or horror by the members of the Baltimore Science Fiction Society at our annual science fiction convention, Balticon, the Maryland Regional Science Fiction Convention. Awards have been presented since 1983. The award is also known as the Compton Crook/Stephen Tall Award.

The list of eligible books is published in the monthly newsletter so all club members will have a chance to read and vote. The winning author is invited to Balticon (BSFS pays transportation and lodging) for two years, and presented with the cash award of \$1,000 and an award plaque.

Compton Crook, who wrote under the name of Stephen Tall, was a long-time Baltimore resident, Towson State University professor, and science fiction author. He died in 1981.

Compton Crook Award Eligibility Requirements

1. This must be the author's first commercially available solo (collaborations are not eligible) science fiction, fantasy or horror novel under her/his legal name or any pseudonym. (By "commercially available" we mean available for purchase from one or more internet or brick-and-mortar sellers. This includes direct author-to-reader sales.)
 - a. Please note that a first solo novel is eligible even if the author has already had collaborative novels published, as long as those publications listed both authors on the cover.
 - b. Novels considered must be adult or young adult novels intended for readers ages 13 and up.
 - c. Ebook-only and self-published books count as a first-novel when published, even if the book is later published in print or by a publishing house.
2. PLEASE NOTE: For purposes of this award, the year of eligibility starts November 1 through October 31st of the following year. So Compton Crook 37 books must have been released between November 1, 2017 and October 31st, 2018 to be eligible. (If the release date is a later year than the copyright, we will consider candidacy based on the author's explanation of the date difference.)
3. We accept digital-only novels and self-published novels. However, these must meet the same standards for writing and copy editing as print and traditionally published novels.
 - a. The digital novel must be provided to us in unprotected epub, mobi, and/or pdf format file via email or on CDs or flash drives.
 - b. We will only accept download links for submissions if the link is provided through email to the committee or made available on Google Drive. Otherwise, files must be provided on a CD or flash drive. *Please note: we cannot accept links that will not remain live until the end of the candidacy period.*
4. No title is eligible if the author has previously won any award from any Australian, Canadian, UK, British Commonwealth, former British Commonwealth or US organization for any English language novel in any genre.
5. The Compton Crook committee can, at its discretion, exclude from consideration books that do not meet the award's quality standards. The members of BSFS as a committee of the whole rate the novels to determine the 5-10 finalists and then club members have an additional two months to review the finalists.
6. There is no rule #6.

For more info, including how to submit, please visit: bsfs.org/CCA/bsfscrules.htm.

Grounded

Jeff Dunne

First Place, BSFS 2021 Amateur Writing Contest

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Picture blackness. Now make it blacker. Imagine air so still that the slightest draft would feel like a hurricane. This place makes the emptiness of space sound like front row at a death metal concert.

That is, until now.

A tiny red light appears, accompanied by the soft but growing hum of a small fan ramping up to speed after a thousand years of waiting.

* * *

Isolated. That's how the inhabitants of the village of Kent would describe themselves, and they were quite comfortable with that. It was said that many generations ago the elders of Kent remembered ancestors who had ancestors that came from somewhere else, but modern scholars dismissed such drivel. After all, those very same lunatics claimed that Kent had been the construction site of a mighty ship, which was obviously utter nonsense. The largest body of water in the entire county was Mrs. Bottomley's swimming pool.

Ethan Moore had often visited that pool in his youth, but with his father's health failing, he had little time for relaxation anymore. In the few moments of personal time he could steal, he preferred to take his binoculars to Northside and study the wildlife. The people of Kent were a restless bunch, always scurrying about on scooters and bicycles, shouting out and carrying on, doing whatever was necessary to put food on tomorrow's table. Northside, in contrast, was a brambly, quiescent haven for Ethan, a park grown increasingly unkempt from years of disuse. Disuse by humans, at any rate. Under and within the branches of maples and rosebark, all manner of critters did their own form of scurrying—deer, chipmunks, badgers... and birds.

Birds fascinated Ethan. The very concept of flight, of escaping solid ground and taking to the skies, enchanted this misfit teenager like a siren's song. But unlike birds, the clouds were not Ethan's destination. Stars. Those blinky, twinkly lights that others barely noticed, and then only to say, 'oh, for the Overseer's sake, put those silly tubes away and wash up for dinner.' His parents had little tolerance for his homemade telescopes. His teachers had even less. As far as Ethan could tell, if it was even remotely interesting, adults wanted nothing to do with it.

Ethan nestled into his favorite seat, a nook formed from three branches of two ancient trees grown into one. Binoculars tight against his face, he scanned about.

There. One of the smaller birds had landed upon a distant branch. It was red and black, the kind seen flittering through and about the village, but never landing. They were called Darters for that very reason, and the superstitious claimed they represented change and that was why they never stopped. Seeing two at once meant you would soon be married, or divorced if you were already thus afflicted. Ethan remembered Marcus Thorpe once saying that if you ever saw a Darter at rest, it was an omen of death.

The memory gave him a chill, and he shuddered an exhalation, soft yet loud enough to catch the bird's attention. It turned its tiny head to look directly at him.

* * *

The red light blinked. An Awareness unfettered by physical form stretched out, raced down pathways at the ultimate speed—pathways of metal, pathways of light, and just a hint of ceramic for flavoring.

It found its mark. Gates of logic swung open and closed, and then other gates followed suit.

Then nothing happened.

It opened and closed the gates again. Still nothing.

A thousand years is a long time, but the Awareness was fairly certain that this was not supposed to happen. Or rather, that something very important was supposed to happen.

It opened and closed some other gates. Then more. Then it paused.

Little red lights don't panic. This is a widely-accepted axiom. Little red lights are literally incapable of panicking, even when they want to.

Okay, new plan. The Awareness started racing again. More metal, followed by a long stretch of light, and then a final navigation through yet more metal. There were features here... lever arms to be thrust one way or the other via more gates of logic. It threw one open, realizing too late that it should not have opened it quite that far.

Apparently little red lights can panic under the right circumstances.

* * *

The Darter twitched. Ethan thought it would rush away, but instead it jerked its head around even further. Disturbingly far, in fact. A puff of dark gray smoke erupted from its beak, and then it fell over, head cocked unnaturally as if someone had broken its neck.

When Marcus said that seeing a Darter at rest was a terminal omen, he had not expected it to mean the bird's death.

Ethan fled... except he didn't. He knew he *should* run away, even wanted to run away, but his were the legs of a teenager, and had other plans. They climbed over branches and skirted bushes until the Darter was within arm's reach, at which point his hands joined the mutiny.

He touched the bird with a cautious finger. It was cold and unyielding, even slick—nothing like he expected of a feather. "Metal?" he wondered. Ethan picked it up. The head swung back and forth in his hand, then a wing began to move, slowly... haltingly. A soft grinding noise emerged from the Darter's body, and then a jolt of static electricity shot out, numbing his arm. The bird fell. Looking down, he saw that the head had separated from the body entirely to reveal a maze of hair-fine wires and singed electronics. Not that Ethan Moore knew what electronics were, but one thing was absolutely certain. Either this was very important, or he was in big trouble. Probably both.

* * *

In the utter blackness that one tiny red light could not illuminate, in the solemn silence that one little fan could never hope to fill, an Awareness was flummoxed. This state of confusion lasted for billions upon billions of cycles. Fortunately, such cycles roll by pretty quickly.

* * *

Half-naked, Ethan tromped back towards Kent with the impossible, winged construct safely wrapped up in his shirt. He walked slowly to give himself time to decide just what to say to his father. 'Dad, *come look at this thing you warned me to stay away from and now the Overseer is probably going to condemn our village to death.*' No. Not that.

Tweet.

Ethan stopped. Did he imagine that? He looked around. Saw nothing. Took another step.

Tweet.

It was somewhere to his left. He looked again, saw it a mere ten steps away, perched on a branch.

Tweetbeep, it emitted as their eyes met. A moment later it took off, flying north into the forest.

Was this sensation consternation or disquietude? He wasn't sure, but it didn't matter. He resumed his slow, steady march home.

Tweetbeep.

He turned. This second Darter was studying him from a different branch.

"What?"

The question appeared to startle the creature, and it took off north again.

So again, Ethan turned and started walking south.

* * *

See the little red light? See the exasperation in the way it blinks? Of course not. It's just a little red light. That blinking could just as easily mean it was discovering long-lost digits of pi.

But it wasn't. Not that you would know that, because the light is still in the place of until-recently-absolute-darkness, blinking its frustration in the until-recently-absolute-silence. The whirring of the fan grew a little louder.

* * *

Something struck Ethan on the shoulder blade, a sharp impact neither life-threatening nor pleasant. He spun about. The Darter had returned, and was flitting back and forth.

Second time's the charm. "What!?"

It flew north again, and landed on a branch.

They stared at each other.

Understand that Ethan wasn't an idiot. As young boys go, he was actually rather clever, but one must appreciate that Kent's library was limited to books on subjects like Practical Carpentry and Best Practices in Well-Digging. There were no books of grand heroism, no tales of mysterious happenings. The Overseer had specific notions about what constituted 'acceptable' ideas, and encouraging adventurous behavior wasn't merely at the bottom of that list, it was buried several feet underneath.

The Darter shot toward him. Before Ethan could react, it slammed right into his forehead, and then, satisfied, doubled back to its branch.

What next struck Ethan's head was a thought, and he extended the shirt-wrapped carcass towards the impatient bird.

"Is this what you want?"

Without warning, the Darter flew directly towards him, and at the last moment—to his great surprise—landed upon his outstretched arm. It cocked its head to the left, then right, clearly making up its mind about something. Then it hopped up his arm. Reaching his shoulder, it snapped forward, grabbed a lock of Ethan's hair in its beak, and started trying to fly north. It didn't succeed, disadvantaged as it was by their relative weight ratio, but the point was clear. Even to Ethan.

"You want me to follow you?"

A Darter's eyes are solid black, through and through. Whether it looks up, down, left, or right, all one can see is black. And yet, somehow, defying all rationality and explanation, it rolled its eyes at him before releasing his hair and flapping its way deeper into the forest.

* * *

Some twenty miles north of Kent was the Edge Of The World. Not literally, of course, as no one really believed that, but for all practical purposes it might as well have been. There the forest ended at a towering, sheer, unscalable cliff that rose far higher than anyone would ever dare climb even if they could. The first Kentians to discover it promptly turned around, retreated to the pub, and traded their tale of the Edge Of The World for a free pint. And that's what it's been called ever since.

The real edge of the world was a good five hundred feet further north.

As Ethan approached the cliff, the Darter flittering just ahead, there was a deep rumbling. A large section of rock face sank into the ground, revealing a passage into the darkness. No, not *that* darkness. Just a normal 'really dark' darkness, at least until it wasn't, because as Ethan approached, thin panels along the metallic walls began glowing with a steady white light. The Darter flew inside, landed in the middle of the passage, and stared at him impatiently.

"You want me to go in there?"

Tweetbeep.

"You want me... to go... in there?"

Tweetbeep.

"Oh, hell no."

* * *

The little green dot was perceptible. A human might have described it as a curious yet ignorable ocular fluctuation, but the Awareness understood the nature of geometric growth, and was not at all fooled. It would soon be a little green circle, and then... well... it knew.

Time was running out.

* * *

Ethan hadn't retreated more than five paces before the Darter was pecking at his back. He spun, pointing a very stern finger at it.

"Now listen here—OW!"

The Darter had grabbed his hair again.

"I'm not—OW! Ow ow!! There's no way I'm—OW! Fine. But I'm not happy about this!"

The bird, clearly comfortable with this compromise, flew into the passage. Ethan followed.

* * *

It was definitely a little green circle now. There were variations in the color, too, and one could almost detect a little wisp of whiteness on top.

* * *

The Darter stopped before a pair of metal doors. As Ethan caught up, they slid apart to reveal a tiny room, perhaps six feet on a side. The bird hopped in.

“There’s nothing in there, you stupid bird.”

The Darter stared at him.

“There aren’t even any other ways out.”

The Darter stared at him some more.

“Fine.” Ethan entered, and the doors closed behind him.

An instant later the floor pushed up hard into his feet, accelerating the whole of him upwards significantly faster than his stomach could match.

Then he threw up. It was a spontaneous eruption that took him completely by surprise. Had Ethan been given even the slightest of warnings, the merest iota of a hint, he definitely would have aimed for the bird.

* * *

The little green circle was now a big green circle, and no longer just green. There were more wisps of white, some patches of brown, and even a smattering of blue here and there.

The little red light, which certainly was not panicking thank you very much, blinked faster.

* * *

The elevator doors slid open, and Ethan slid out into a round observation chamber of glass and polished white metal. As he got his feet under him, Ethan saw that the southern windows looked out over an expanse of what could only be the county surrounding Kent. In fact, from this tremendous height, he could easily identify his village beyond the forest. He could even see his house; it seemed so tiny.

He then looked in other directions, and his world fell out from under him. To the east and west, the countryside sprawled but a few dozen miles before ending abruptly in starlit space. To the south, far in the distance, another great cliff bounded his world. It was lower than the northern precipice, however, and he could see a great, shadowed cylinder extending beyond. High above, a glass dome was keeping all that wanderlusty oxygen contained. From this angle the projected images of clouds and the bright yellow sun were so obviously flat that it was hard to imagine they ever looked real.

Tweetbeep.

Ethan spun to face the direction formerly known as north. The starscape was breathtaking, as were the greens, browns, and blues—and even the wispy whites—of the planet they were barreling towards. Even more breathtaking, albeit in a very different fashion, was the realization that they were on a collision course with no hint of slowing down.

Tweetbeep tweetbeep.

The Darter stood in front of another metal-paneled door, smaller than the elevator. It was flapping its wings in agitation.

The message was clear: TWEETBEEP, damn it!

Ethan rushed over, and the door opened.

* * *

Light poured into the room that had known only blackness for a thousand years. Air currents swirled in with it, washing away a staleness so absolute it rivaled a Mesopotamic coffee cake.

The room was long and narrow, and housed bank after bank of black metal boxes, all featureless save the closest. That one had a single, small light next to a whirring cooling fan. The light was red, and blinking so quickly that one could almost believe it was desperate.

Urgently tweetbeeping at Ethan, the Darter rushed to a control panel.

Ethan ran over to join it just as a large screen illuminated, displaying a flashing and red-bordered countdown with mere seconds remaining. Above, glowing letters pulsed: 'Warning—Initiate Emergency Breaking'. It was impossible to ignore the urgency of the situation, unless perhaps—like Ethan—you didn't read that language.

The Darter pecked at a little frame of glass mounted on the front of the panel's base. Next to it was a small hammer. Fortunately, Ethan was fluent in 'hammer', and with a deft stroke the glass shattered. Instantly, the Darter launched forward to smash headfirst into a recessed button.

A deafening roar shook the universe. Ethan was thrown into the panel, his face pressed up against the characters '0:01 seconds'... whatever those meant.

The overwhelming vibration slowly waned into a more moderate level of whelmingness, and eventually stabilized into a steady background rumble.

The red light continued to blink, but now in a calmer, one might even say leisurely, manner.

While he wasn't certain exactly what had just transpired, Ethan was fairly sure it was important. And interesting, which meant the adults would think it was a waste of time. He started to work out how he would explain all this to his father, and wondered if he'd be grounded. He was pretty sure he would... probably for life.

BSFS 2021 Amateur Writing Contest Winners

Second Place
"Imp"
 Steve Lubs

Third Place
"Ghosted"
 Peter Stine

About the First Place Winner



Jeff Dunne is a physicist and philosopher living in southern Carroll County. He has been an occasional writer of poetry, songs, and stories for most of his life, and with a recent addition of stage- and screenplays as well. The genres of science fiction and fantasy have been a passion for as long as he can remember, and drive both his creative writing and his outlook on the world. When not behind a keyboard, Jeff enjoys hiking, traveling, and acting.

The BSFS Amateur Writing Contest accepts stories annually from **April 15-June 15**. Winners are announced at Capclave. For entry rules, see: bsfs.org/bsfsssc.htm.



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The BSFS Jack L. Chalker Young Writers' Contest

1. CONTESTANT REQUIREMENTS:

- a. Contestants shall be no younger than 14 and no older than 18 years of age as of May 29 in the contest year and shall reside in, or attend school in Maryland.
- b. Winners will be required to provide their proof of age.



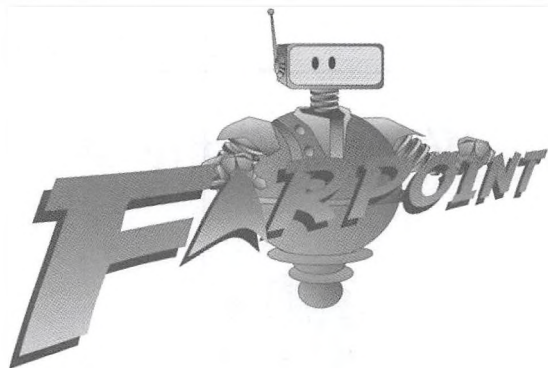
2. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- a. Submissions must be in the field of science fiction or fantasy.
- b. Submissions shall be no more than 2,500 words in length.
- c. All submissions should include a title page with the title of the story, the entrant's name, school, note if home-schooled, home address, evening phone number, and e-mail address, if possible. Also, please include your English teacher's name.
- d. Paper submissions must have numbered pages—all submissions *must have a footer with the title and page number*. They should not have the entrant's name or other identifying information on the individual pages. Paper submissions should be typed or printed, double-spaced, on 8.5" x 11" paper.
- e. Electronic submissions must be sent as an attachment to email in either Microsoft Word or Wordperfect format. Otherwise, they must be printed out and submitted on paper.
- f. One contestant may submit multiple entries, but only one prize may be won by any one entrant.

3. OTHER RULES:

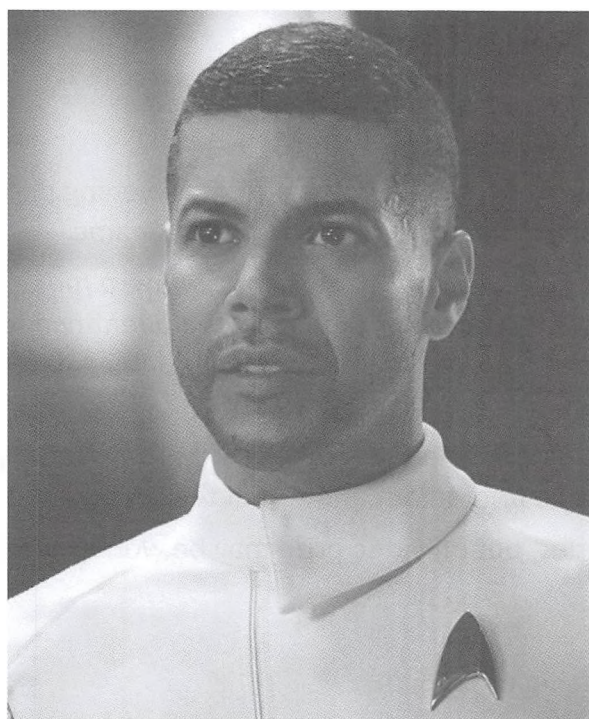
- a. Judges shall be drawn from the membership of BSFS, Inc.
- b. The winners will be contacted before the convention and their names will be announced to the public at the next Balticon on Memorial Day weekend just before the Masquerade at 8:30 PM. Winners need not be present to receive their prizes.
- c. The submissions ranked first, second and third shall receive cash prizes of \$150, \$100 and \$75, respectively. The three winners shall also receive complimentary registrations for Balticon for themselves and their parents or one guest each. They will also receive a free Balticon T-Shirt.
- d. The deadline for all submissions is March 31, in any given contest year.
- e. Paper submissions should be addressed to: **Jack L. Chalker Young Writers' Contest, BSFS, Inc., PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686.**
- f. Electronic submissions should be addressed to: **ywc@balticon.org**.
- g. All submissions become the property of Baltimore Science Fiction Society, Inc. (BSFS, Inc.), and may be published in society publications.

For additional information, send e-mail to: **ywc@balticon.org**. Web: **bsfs.org/bsfsywc.htm**.



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Dispatch from a Dying Solar System

Gwendolyn Taylor

First Place, BSFS Jack L. Chalker 2022 Young Writers' Contest

Richard Montgomery High School—Rockville, MD

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I wonder quite frequently why our people don't spend more time stargazing.

You'd think it would be inherent to our nature. Our ancestors were people of the sky—building telescopes, wishing on meteorites, always gazing upwards. Somewhere along the line, though, we seem to have lost that desire. My neighbors keep their necks bent and their eyes fixed on the ground. *If you don't get your hopes up, they admonish, you'll never be disappointed.*

I can't see the point in that way of thinking. My dad calls me a big dreamer. I make wishes. I keep my eyes skyward.

My mom says I get it from my family. She tells me about them on Saturday nights, when we sit together on the couch and scroll through old photo albums. She shows me Great-Grandma Patty and Great-Grandpa Eric, beaming in their spacesuits, eager to explore new worlds.

Grandma Tiff was a terraformer, making far-off planets suitable for life. Grandpa Charlie was a leading aerospace engineer. They stand with steel in their backbones and starlight in their eyes.

"They were dreamers," Mom tells me, "dreamers just like you. They spent their lifetimes trying to build their children a beautiful future, even if they'd never get to see it themselves."

I like to think the stars that I watch on clear, cloudless nights are the same ones that they wished upon all those years ago. Here on Europa, the constellations are different, but the stars, like the wishes, are the same.

I wish to survive. I wish for a better future. I wish for us to reach the stars.

Right now, of course, I can't see the stars. And our wishes are sounding more and more far-fetched by the minute.

* * *

We're sitting in the hull of a mammoth spaceship, huddled together to protect against the cold. Tear tracks have frozen on Mom's face, mirroring the icy flint in Dad's eyes. Our neighbors, the Ibrahim-Maldonados, are sitting next to us, clinging to their shivering twin eight-year-olds and whispering prayers. A few feet away, my friend Janie Madison tries to comfort her sobbing little brother as her parents watch numbly. Emanating from three hundred other scared, freezing families, tension clouds the air like noxious gas.

We've been waiting here since yesterday night, when our scientists announced that they'd finally found a habitable planet in some distant solar system. They told us that this ship would launch us into space near light speed, saving us from our dying sun before it engulfs our poor moon. It was a pretty silly dream, really. After centuries of trying, who would believe that we'd finally found salvation just days from the end? But still, I'm a dreamer. Maybe everyone is, if they're desperate enough. So we gathered in the hull of our unlikely ark and began to wait.

The pilot announced on the intercom that we shouldn't worry, that our plan was foolproof, that we'd be ready for launch in just ten minutes.

That was eight hours ago.

What else is there to do? We keep waiting.

* * *

The funny thing is, we've known this was coming for millennia. Stars, like everything else, die eventually. Of course our sun is no different.

But the luxury of time made us lazy. We had thousands of years before our dying star made problems for our native Earth, so we bickered, got distracted, watched as time drained away like water through our fingers. It was only when we were down to our last centuries that we began to make advancements, and by then, it was a desperate race against the clock. Our grandparents and great-grandparents clung to hope, flung us skyward, scattered us as far away from the slowly expanding sun as they could reach.

We didn't get very far. The Europa colony was their last-ditch effort, and we'll be burnt to a crisp by next week.

I don't have it in me to be bitter. What's the point, four days from the end of the world? Dad calls me a big dreamer. Mom calls me an optimist. Janie used to call me absolutely insane, back when we still hung out after school. But I like to think this was still worth something. We still pushed the limits of the human experience, didn't we? We built spaceships, traveled the stars, colonized planets far beyond our own. Maybe someone, someday, will find what we left behind. Maybe they'll understand what we tried to do. Maybe they'll be proud of us for dreaming.

* * *

At the end of our second day in the freezing hull, the crew tells us to go home. The ship, evidently, won't be sailing through the stars. It'll remain tethered firmly to our doomed moon, as will we. Mr. Ibrahim swears as Ms. Maldonado clings to her children in shocked silence. Janie and her brother collapse into a cold, exhausted heap. My mom's eyes are glassy with ice crystals, and my dad stands stiff with cold resignation. I can tell what they're thinking: *If you don't get your hopes up, you'll never be disappointed.* For a moment, they had let themselves dream.

Failure stings all the sharper now.

One by one, we file off the spaceship and into the icy night air. Three hundred stunned, silent families cling to the suitcases they packed in a moment of beautiful delusion. The stars twinkle overhead, beautiful and desperately far away. But I still don't have it in me to be bitter. I make a wish anyway, the same wish that my parents and grandparents and great-grandparents made before me.

I wish for us to reach the stars.

If not in one way, then in another.

Then I take Mom's hand and begin to walk home. There's only four days left now. On a cosmic level, that's a blink of an eye.

* * *

On the second day, Dad cooks us a big dinner. He uses the last of our freeze-dried beef, stewing it with onions and garlic and red peppers flown in from the farms on Io. We might as well enjoy the last of our food, he says, before it gets too hot and stifling for us to enjoy anything at all.

They distributed cyanide pills the other week, a painless alternative to an otherwise drawn-out death. Janie's family, I know, took them last week, crushing them into glasses of apple juice and red wine at their last dinnertime. I think the Ibrahim-Maldonados might have taken them too. I haven't heard

any noise from their apartment since we walked home together from the doomed spaceship. Mine are shoved in the back of my dresser. I'm not ready to take them yet, but I guess nobody ever is.

After dinner, we sit together on the roof with our telescope. We don't need jackets; the weather is getting warmer every day. As the sun inches closer, Europa's everlasting winter is starting to thaw. Wind doesn't bite at my cheeks when I step outside. Tears can fall unfrozen down my mother's face. I imagine that this is how spring might have felt back on Earth, back when there was still an Earth. I focus my telescope on Saturn and see that its rings are beginning to melt.

I'm starting to understand how much of a miracle every breath is. The sheer amount of human brainpower that was required to create an atmosphere on Europa is staggering. It took thousands of engineers and astronomers and stargazers and dreamers for me to sit here, breathing cool air and watching a sky full of constellations that they wouldn't even recognize.

They didn't save us. Nothing did. But I'm glad they tried, at least.

I know that there was little point in hoping for a future. The stars never meant to grant me that wish. But still, the night sky was so beautiful. I wish that I could have stayed.

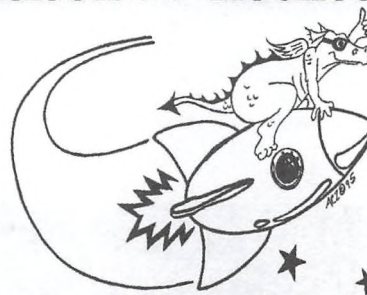


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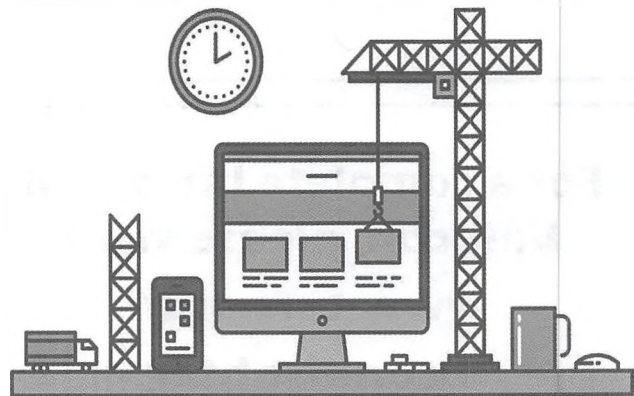
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Hamilton: Bronze Pioneer

Roshan Rao

Second Place, BSFS Jack L. Chalker 2022 Young Writers' Contest

Friends School of Baltimore—Baltimore, MD

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"We shall begin this meeting of the Cabinet shortly. If Secretary Jefferson would like to commence, we shall; upon the issue of autonomous parts for modification of the human form. You may begin, Sir."

Thomas Jefferson stood and cleared his throat.

"Thank you, Mr. President. I believe that the use of autonomous parts (such as arms fashioned from materials such as bronze or steel) are not a wise use of the Treasury's money. I simply cannot advocate for us to walk among our fellow humans with precious metals in our figures. It is unnatural for us to modify ourselves such in a way that Providence frowns upon. All of you here, are good, God-fearing men like myself. None can stand against His word. Likewise, there is no substitute for human labour; there is no manner in which a metal machine can perform tasks such as those involved in the furtherance of our agriculture (which, as you all know, is the very lifeblood of the South) with the precision that a human hand, built of flesh and God-given bone, can."

There was some nodding, some hushed whispers of agreement and disagreement. The President stood once again. "Thank you, Secretary Jefferson. Secretary Hamilton, you are permitted to submit your primary argument."

Alexander Hamilton stood, ignoring the snickers from Jefferson's side of the room. "Thank you, President Washington, sir." He, too, cleared his throat and began to read from his paper.

"My fellow Cabinet members; Secretary Jefferson's stance against the use of autonomous metal parts in manners to fit within the boundaries of our societal norms does not stem purely from his piety, or lack of impiety, but instead from his desire to preserve the system of labour which the Southern colonies use for their 'furtherance of agriculture,' namely, persons from the continent of Africa brought to our shores unjustly. If autonomous parts were given to the common white farmer, he would have no use for his slaves. I present to you all this case: if a white slave-holding man is given an appendage of bronze, that can be fitted with any farming tool known to man, as well as those of a human, the efficiency at which he can perform these menial tasks is increased by nearly a thousandfold." He paused to look at each man sitting. "And not only thus, but these modifications are already working their way into our society. They are especially popular among the youth; young American ladies are having their jaw-bones replaced with sharper, more attractive golden ones; and the young men are opting for the rifle-arm: the humanoid arm that mechanically converts itself into a rifle, complete with ammunition storage and powder. An old man who has gone blind in one eye, can have his sight restored by a mechanical eye. Even a family's dog, having lost a limb, can have it replaced and his youthful exuberance restored. I rest to you, my fellow Cabinet members, that Secretary Jefferson's argument is once again to preserve his own self-interest in slave labor, forcing other human beings to bear the weight of the Southern economy on their backs alone. Thank you."

The Southern side of the room began to whisper again. Thomas Jefferson sat, listening to James Madison say something quietly in his ear—a strategy to counter, perhaps—but did not hear.

Instead, he sat there, thinking. Who was this stupid, little man who dared to accuse him, the Secretary of State, of forcing slave labor? No. He was not forcing slave labor. He was simply preserving what the South stood for. Jefferson bit his lip, trying to convince himself. Yes. Just preserving the South. Keeping Virginia the way it was. And how could these New Yorkers tell him any different? Was Virginia not providing food to their colonies, anyhow? Look at him.

Look at Hamilton. Sitting there, smugly smiling. He must think he could rule the world. He wasn't even a true American—

The muttering and debating were hushed by the President. "We shall reconvene at the noon hour tomorrow," announced President Washington. "I will deliver my judgement then, but for the remainder of tonight, gentlemen, return to your homes; it has been a long evening and I intend to give you all some time to reflect upon tonight's events. You are all welcome to leave, and I bid you all a good night."

Outside the courthouse, the Cabinet members loitered for a good while, smoking their pipes and making casual conversation. Jefferson was the last to leave, though without the air of cordiality the others so delicately held. "Hamilton," said he, approaching Alexander Hamilton and grabbing him sharply by the collar—"you of all men should understand what this will do to the economical state of this country. I will not stand idly by and watch you destroy it under a bravado of freedom; all you seek is to control the means by which my fellow Southerners and I make our livelihoods. And good Sir, it would be within your best interest to not sit upon your throne made of bronze"—he gestured to Hamilton's left arm, a polished bronze mass of gears, wires, and pistons that mimicked the movement of humanoid muscles—"and embrace that which makes you *human*."

Hamilton smiled. "Dear fellow, your manner is most deplorable! Why, we are simply discussing amongst ourselves the new tailor who has just opened his shop just a quarter-mile south of here, in comparison to our own personal tailors. And you grasp me by my collar, accusing me of abandoning my humanity. All of us here have moved past the matter till the morrow; outside the court-house is where we convene to talk of subjects other than politics."

The other Cabinet members had gone quiet, watching the conflict. Clearly still angered, but aware of his surroundings, Jefferson let go of Hamilton's collar. "We shall see. Till morrow, indeed." He collected himself and departed.

* * *

Late that evening, Alexander Hamilton lay awake in bed, staring at the bronze appendage on the nightstand. Every time he attached it to his shoulder in the morning, his nerves flared with memories. Memories of the war, of losing his human arm to a British cannonball, and being fitted for a bronze one. Memories of late nights, writing hundreds of letters and manuscripts and documents with that arm. Of holding his infant child.

Maybe this is why, he thought. Perhaps the reason he argued so vehemently for the use of these arms and limbs was for the value of the memories it stored. In addition to near-perfect craftsmanship, the most skilled artisans of the metal were able to store memories within it. Not everyone opted for it; many of the upper-class elites were content with having part of their faces replaced with gold, purely for use as a status symbol, or for resisting musket balls. Secretary Hamilton thought it important that everyone was deserving of the chance to relive their happiest and most tender moments, while also being able to reflect upon more somber memories.

Satisfied, he turned over to face his wife, already asleep, and himself fell into the moon's embrace.

* * *

At the noon hour the following day, the Cabinet met once again to hear and discuss further the President's judgement. Tensions were about—each side of the room spoke in hushed tones, anxiously anticipating President Washington's final decision. Jefferson looked smug, determined as it was to win. He knew the President's Virginia beginnings would drive him to sympathise with the South. He grew up on a farm just like the ones Jefferson had in Monticello. Perhaps he'd invite Washington to Monticello, to visit the heavenly gardens, as thanks for supporting his initiative against metal limbs. Oh, he could just dream of it.

Hamilton, however, looked calm. Here he hoped that Washington would agree with him—Hamilton had visited the President that morning, convincing him as frantically as he could of the revelation about memories that he'd discovered the night before. Still, he was nervous, but also prepared to lose. Jefferson could very well convince the President otherwise. Whatever will happen will happen.

The President took his stand, once again, in front of everyone. "Thank you all for meeting here once again to receive my judgement upon the issue of artificial limbs for common use. I do not wish to create any more conflict between the two parties concerning this. As such, there will be no more discussion of this following today's session." He paused to verify that everyone understood. "Now then. My position on this matter is thus: I agree that the use of autonomous limbs should be extended towards the common people, fashioned by certain artisans that have been properly trained to fit these for integration with human bodies."

Hamilton smiled. Jefferson frowned. Murmuring broke out amongst the two sides of the room. Washington gestured with his hands to quiet the room, then continued.

"Secretary Hamilton approached me this morning and convinced me of the value these artificial limbs hold as it applies to memory. Given that, with the other numerous benefits surrounding them, I find it best to not limit the artistry and engineering that these men have woven into their webs of bronze. I myself am aware of the benefits these limbs have given us in our warfare, and believe that they may be integrated into other parts of our society. They will also open up new trade pathways with France, and, God willing, perhaps even Britain some day. I have begun to speak with our colonies in Europe and in Southern America. The world will speak of the American Empire with reverence, as they are using our artificial limbs on their own bodies and flying our American airships.

Thank you all, gentlemen, once again, and God bless this great nation."

The two secretaries shook hands with civility, and quitted the chambers presently.

BSFS Congratulates the Winners of the Jack L. Chalker 2022 Young Writers' Contest

First Place

"Dispatch From A Dying Solar System"

Gwendolyn Taylor

Richard Montgomery High School—Rockville, MD

Second Place

"Hamilton: Bronze Pioneer"

Roshan Rao

Friends School of Baltimore—Baltimore, MD

Third Place

"Just a Test"

Johan Shattuck

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Honorable Mention

"Rebelling Metal"

Camilla Florence Carrera

Honorable Mention

"He'll Be Here for A While "

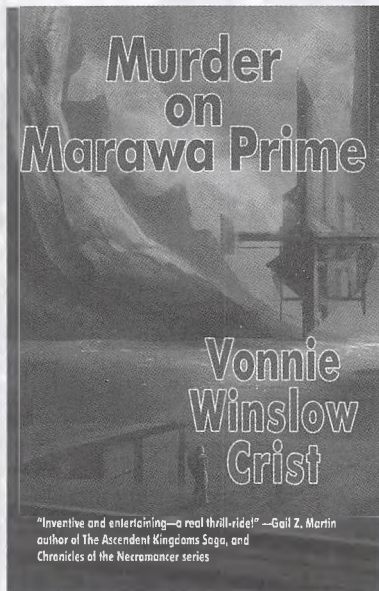
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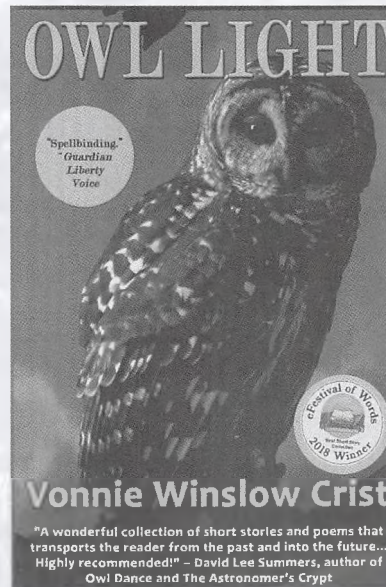
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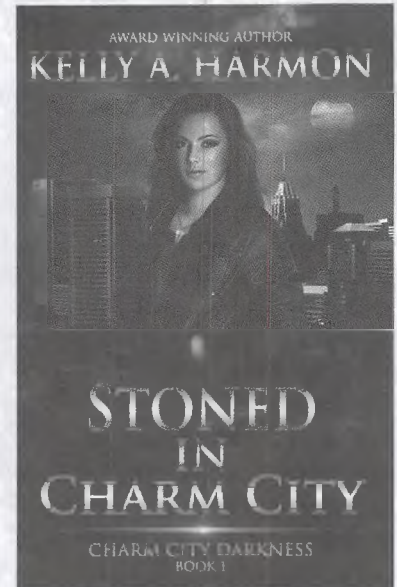
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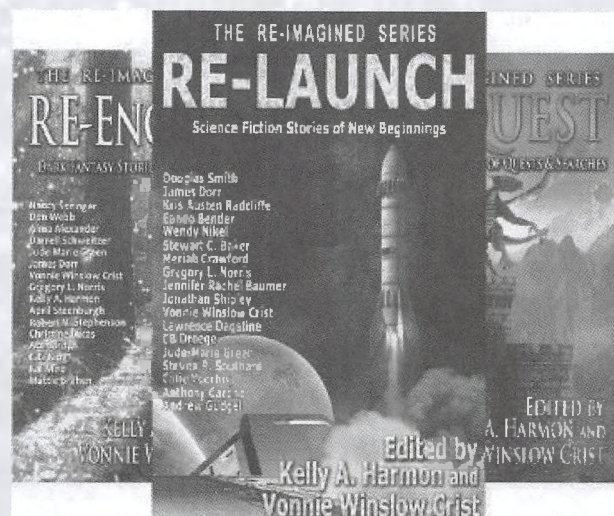
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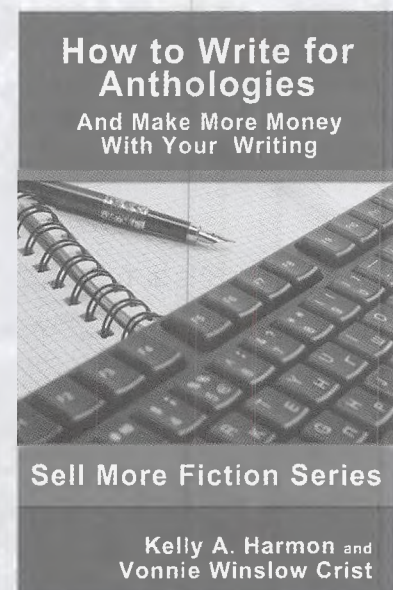
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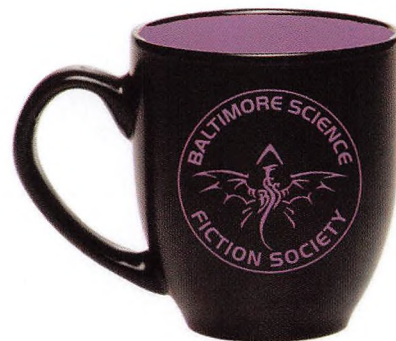
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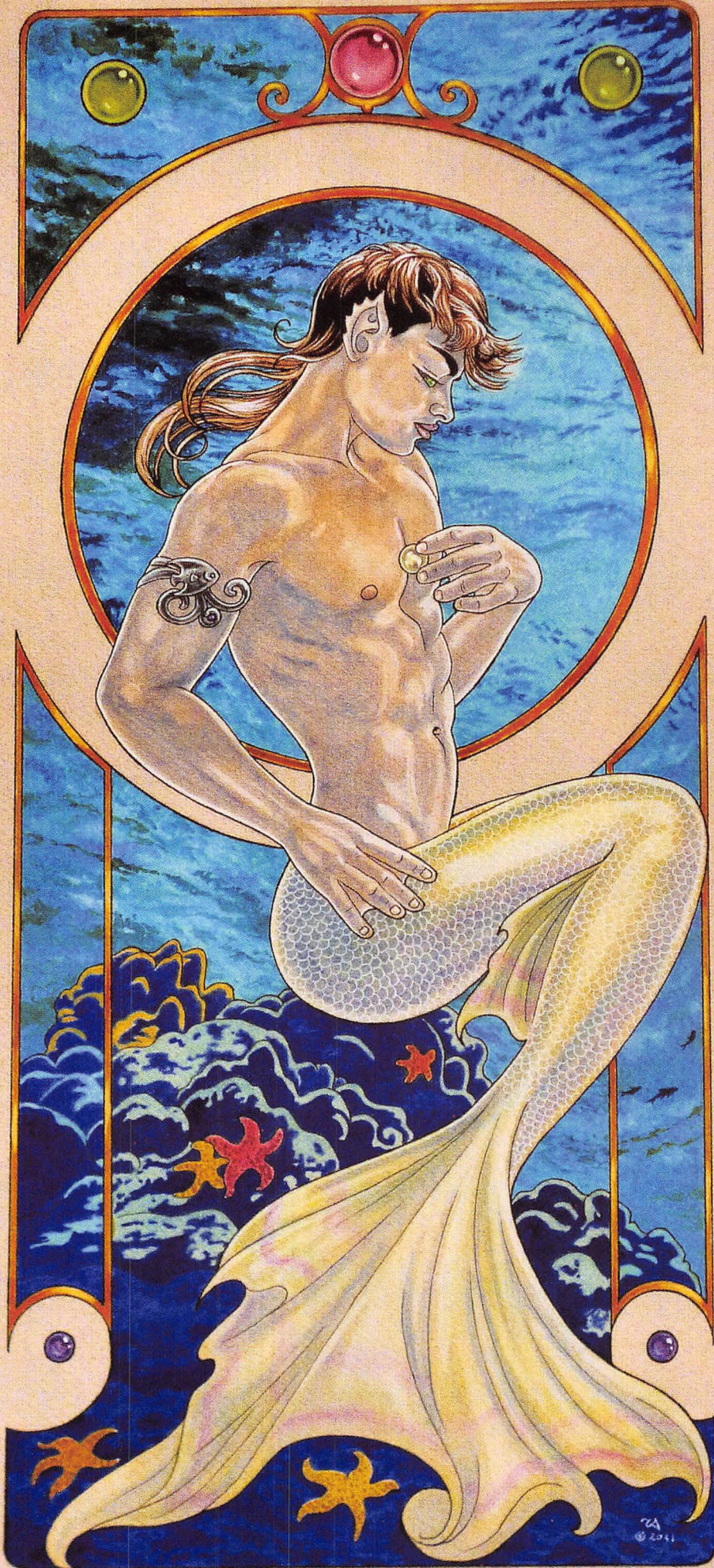
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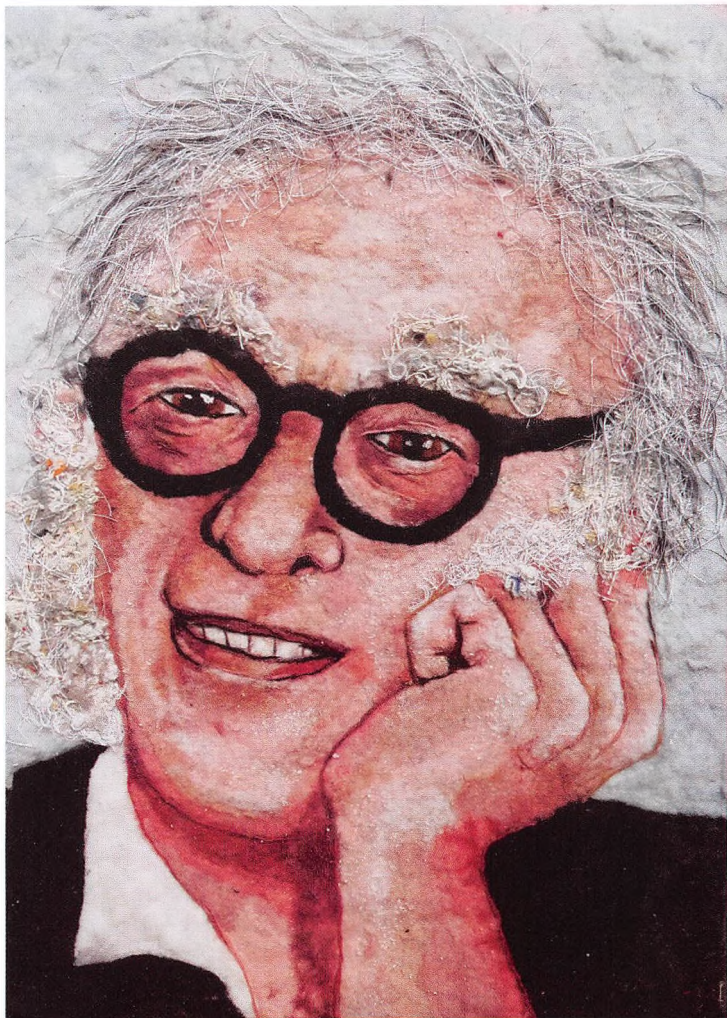




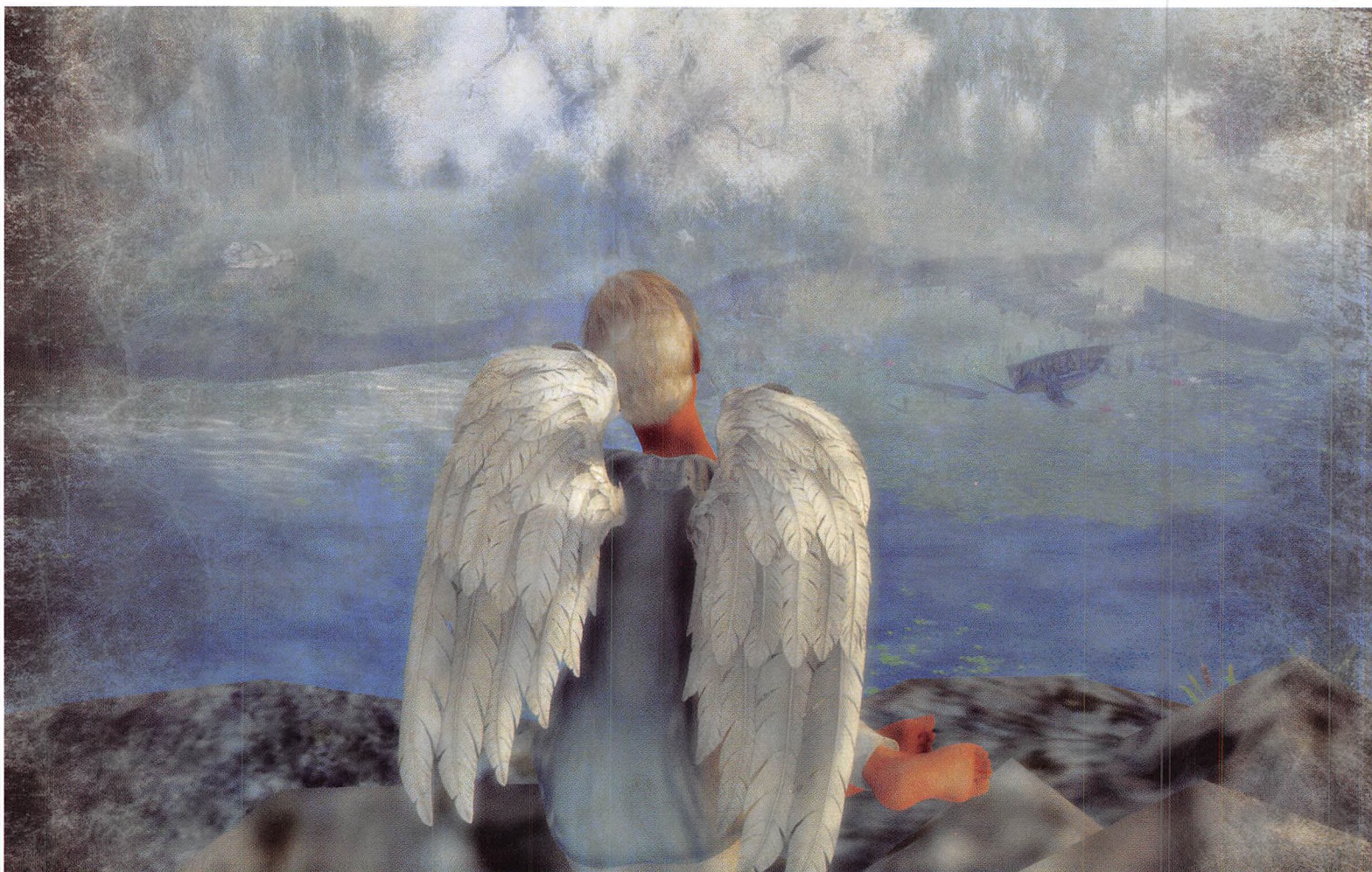




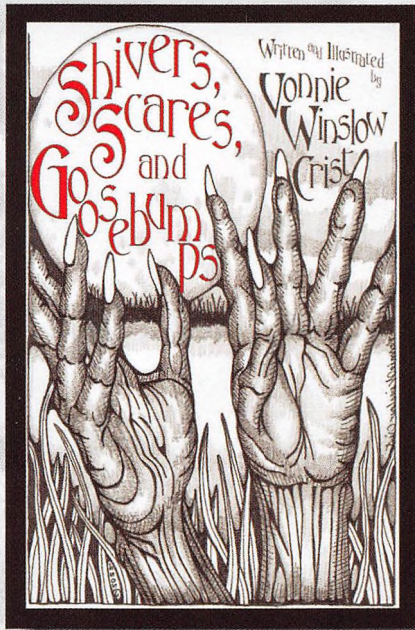




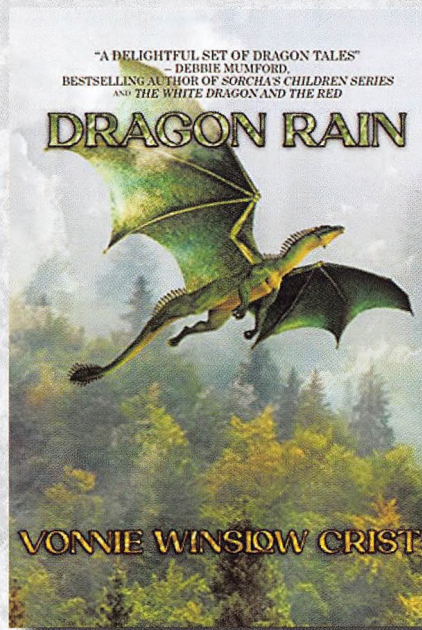




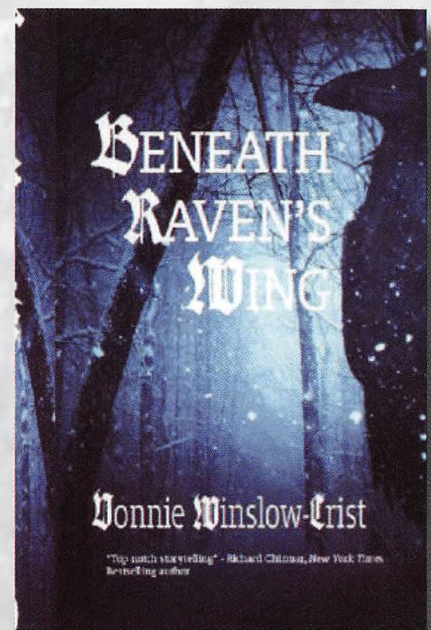
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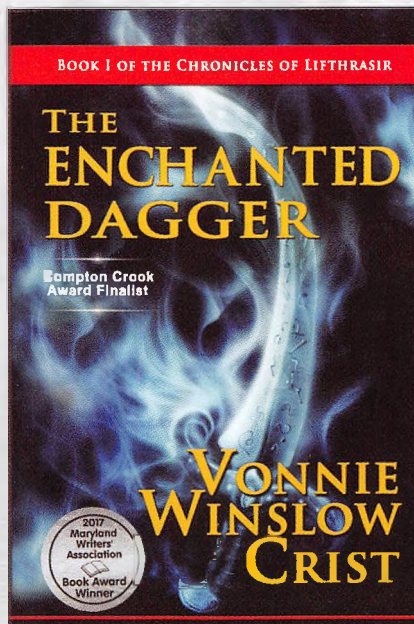


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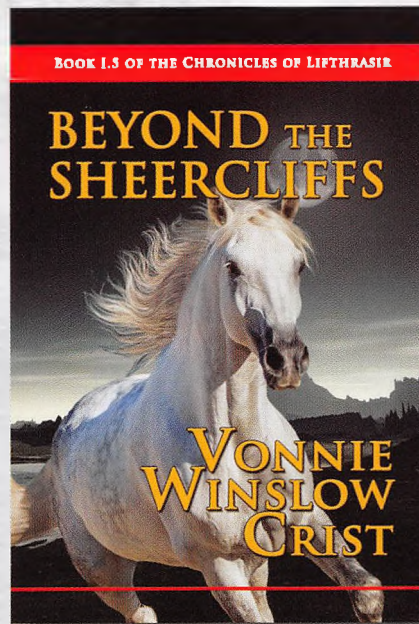


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Imadjinn Award 2022 Finalist

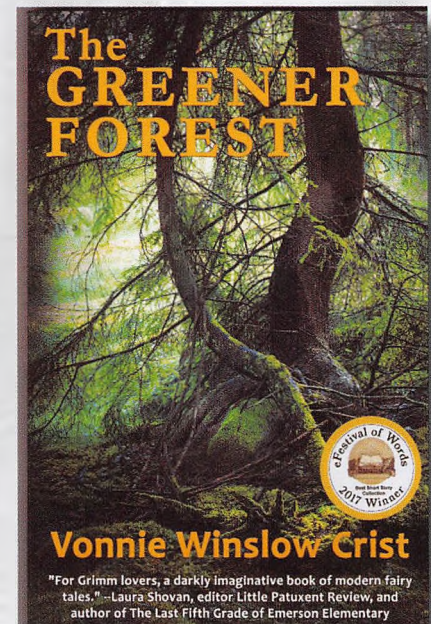
“The world is full of mystery, miracles, and magic. We need to just look, listen, and believe that wondrous things are still possible.” –*Vonnie Winslow Crist*



“delightful coming of age
adventure set in a world intricately
woven through with magic”
– Jody Lynn Nye



Pole to Pole Publishing –
www.poletopolepublishing.com



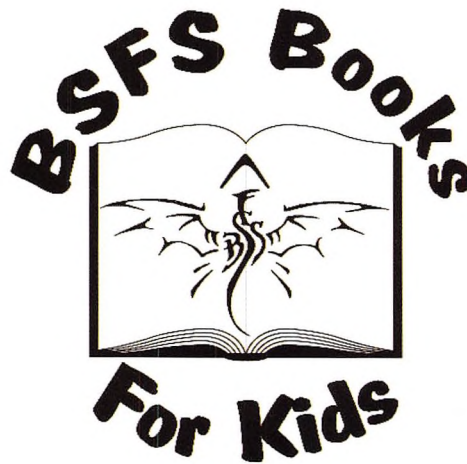
“Read this collection. You won’t
be disappointed.”
– Robert E. Waters

Website: www.vonniewinslowcrist.com

*The Bobby Gear BSFS Books for Kids
Charity Auction 2022*



*Look what we have for you this Saturday night during the masquerade halftime!
(And this is just a small sample. More is on display in the art show.)*



Come join in the bidding!!!



*BSFS is now sponsoring the charity auction.
All of your donations through the auction will be used to buy books for kids.*

Just a Test

Johan Shattuck

Third Place (Tie), BSFS Jack L. Chalker 2022 Young Writers' Contest

Friends School of Baltimore—Baltimore, MD

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The dense jungle air was making me sweat, so I pinched myself. I lifted my head and addressed my surroundings. The thick mud floor was covered in vines, swaying from tree to tree at ankle height. I smirked. Those fuckers are gonna try to trip me.

I continued with caution, lifting my feet high with each step so as not to catch on the vines. I knew the real dangers were still ahead; who knew what those guys had come up with this year.

Just as these thoughts were running through my head, the sound of a far off vine being crushed reached my ears. I stopped and turned. All I could see were the thick brown trunks of kapok trees and the dense green cover along the ground. I let out a deep breath and kept moving forward. After only a couple steps the sound of the vines doubled. I stopped again and this time moved in my high arching gait to the side of one of the large trees and lowered my weight. I waited patiently, my breath held and my heart rate rising. After what felt like forever I rose again, and let out a soft chuckle. What am I scared of? I loped back out and continued through the jungle, legs high and landing soft. An eerie silence accompanied me, and I sped up. The birds that had been singing when I first found myself here had ceased, and all that reached my ears were the soft crunches as my foot impacted with the ground.

After a few minutes of speed walking with no particular plan or direction, a loud crash behind me broke the silence. My head snapped to turn, and about 50 yards back in the direction from which I had come lay a thick brown tree, freshly downed. I froze with one leg raised midstep. Slowly, over the tree, clambered two hands and then a whole body. The figure propelled itself off the log and landed in a crouched position on the ground. Their head turned upwards and reached my eyes.

The person who I was facing was completely covered from head to toe in a jet black body paint. The only clothing was a small, tan loincloth that hung from their slender waist. I couldn't see their face; donned over it was the skull of a ram, complete with arcing horns. Through the eye sockets of the skull an uncomfortably bright green gaze reached me. What appeared to be human teeth were strung in a sash around their neck. In one of their hands was a very short and curved weapon, which was breathtakingly spotless and silver. Both I and the mystery figure were still for a moment, until a second person heaved themselves over the log. They were identical to the first, except a little taller and wore a boar skull instead of a ram. A silver flash came in my peripheral vision, and I turned to see three more of the figures directly to my left about the same distance away. I turned back to the log and now saw five there, all staring at me. I let myself take a long, 180 degree glance in the direction of which I came. The figures were everywhere, stepping out from behind trees in pairs or trios, all their eyes following me. None wore the same skull. My vision flicked past a giraffe, an elk, a pig, and many more I couldn't identify. In a rough estimate I would say there were about 50 in total.

I took a deep breath and reminded myself where I really was.

As of this moment I was still, my body suspended in a gelatinous liquid that was cool to the touch. I was completely naked, save for the wires that were suctioned to different parts of my forehead and the screen that covered my eyes. Outside the little shell where I lay were the test proctors, following my every move and observing what I was seeing in real time. An overexcited proctor tried to explain all the science for me as I prepared myself for the test, talking about how the jello-like substance I was submerged in was able to convert data from the software to trick my body into experiencing different environments and senses. It probably was all very interesting but I hadn't paid him any mind. The nerves to pass the exam were too great.

A data-induced fly buzzed into my hair and brought me back into the reality I was experiencing. All of the animal tribe were extremely relaxed, with questionable posture and some even leaning on nearby trees with their short swords. Their vibrant green eyes shone out from behind their masks. Even though I couldn't see any faces, I had a sense of a collective amused expression coming from them, as if I was a seal at a zoo doing particularly well at balancing a beach ball. I thought hard to recall the research I had done to prepare for the examination; I had to dig deep online to find anything, but a trustworthy source had revealed one phase: the fear test. I had no doubt that this jungle environment I was experiencing was that stage. To pass, I just needed to control my heart rate, stay calm, and avoid panic. My next move wasn't clear; I sure as hell wasn't going to turn my back to the tribe, but I wasn't going to go at them either. Sure, the test proctors admire bravery, but challenging the 50 armed animal people would just be stupidity. I once again scanned the crowd and my eyes fell on the original figure with the ram skull. Unlike the others who were all standing lazily, he had maintained his crouched position and his eyes were sharper, more fierce. His intense gaze froze me, and we stood, locked in each other's beams of vision, a heated staredown. While maintaining eye contact I regained some of the confidence I had lost, and imagined I looked intimidating holding my ground in the presence of so many. The ram must not have agreed, however, as he sprung forward out of his position and began bolting towards me. As soon as he jumped, the entirety of the crowd burst into motion, and the small bit of confidence I had gained left me as I turned to run. Even with only their first few steps I could tell they were fast, so I dipped my shoulder hard and accelerated as best I could. I took a few strong strides and began to find my rhythm, then my foot caught. The damn vines. Shit. I hit the ground hard and slid in the mud to a stop. In my fear I had forgotten to run with high steps and ended up being completely taken out by the foliage. I heard the sounds of crunching vegetation behind me and knew I was done for. I pressed my face hard into the mud and waited for the worst. I waited. And kept waiting. Nothing happened.

After a couple of minutes the adrenaline wore off and I realized my face was no longer absorbed in warm mud anymore, rather a cold hard surface. I pulled my head up and assessed my surroundings.

The humid jungle was gone. I now lay on cold, dusty concrete that was grainy and rough.

There wasn't much light but I could see the concrete extended out only a few feet further on either side of me, then bent up to form the walls and turned once again to form a roof. The whole dim hallway was the same gritty material and it had the stuffy condensed feel of an unfinished basement. I pulled myself back to my feet and tried to regain some composure and some dignity. I guess I had kept my cool just enough to pass the fear phase. The rest of the exam would be a mystery to me; I hadn't been able to scrounge up any information about the other stages.

Just a test. Just a test. Just a test.

In front of me, warm orange light glowed from underneath a wooden door. The light casually grew in intensity and then faded, and I concluded it must have been coming from a fireplace. After a few deep breaths, I felt calm enough to push forward and pull open the door.

No amount of mental training could have prepared me for what I saw. I was correct that the light was flame based, but instead of being from a fireplace, a large fire smoldered in the middle of the room and reached a height of at least five feet. The room wasn't massive, it was about the size of a living area in an average American household. However, the walls extended up for ages to the point I couldn't even see the roof. From floor up to nothingness rose stacks and stacks of books, more than I'd ever seen in a single room in my lifetime.

But that wasn't what caught my attention. Suspended by a chain that reached up into the unknown was a cage that rested approximately six feet above the open fire. The cage was iron and large, comparable to a king sized mattress. Inside the cage, with a blood-soaked rag covering her mouth and tears streaming from her eyes, was my girlfriend of a year, Lily. A bellow escaped my mouth. No, it wasn't real. I stepped forward but as I did a man emerged from the other side of the fire. He wore a sharp suit with a red tie, and a Jason-style hockey mask over his face. As he walked his sportcoat opened slightly and I saw a gun-shaped bulge protruding from an inner pocket. He was armed. I didn't even have to check to know I had no weapon on me.

"You know what I want. Speak or she dies." He stated calmly, with an accent I couldn't quite put my finger on. As he said this, the chain went slack and the cage dropped a foot closer to the fire, then snapped aggressively as the chain gained tension again. Lily let out a muffled yelp, and crawled away from the center of the cage where the iron had started to glow orange with the heat.

Just a test. Just a test. Just a test.

"I don't know what you're talking about." My voice was shaking but I was telling the truth.

"The codes! The damn codes!" The man responded, sounding aggravated.

And suddenly it all came to me clearly. Ingrained in my mind, as if it had been there forever, came a six digit combination. I knew it was important, so important I couldn't tell anyone. The information I didn't know I had 30 seconds ago now felt sacred, as if I had been entrusted to hold this secret for an entire nation.

Just a test. Just a test. Just a test.

"I don't know what you're talking about." I said again, though this time I was lying. The man simply let out a sigh, and I watched as the cage dropped another foot. I shouldn't have let myself look but I did. Lily's clothes had dark lines running across where they had been in contact with the bars, and her hands hung limply out the side of the cage. She was almost unrecognizable, with huge yellow and orange heat blisters covering every inch of exposed skin. Her eyes met mine. They were dark eyes, the color of a deep roasted coffee, and they pleaded to me without words, screamed to me without sound.

Just a test. Just a test. Just a test.

Was it? My memory was shot. All I could process was the code, and now Lily's sad dark eyes and burned skin. I hunched over and yelled. I didn't know who I was, why I was here, or where I had come from. All I knew was I loved the girl in the cage, and in my head was highly confidential information I was to share with no one.

"Are you ready to tell me?" the hockey mask demanded. I didn't respond, simply let out another scorching yell. I was full of frustration and confusion. I tried to only focus on the ground. I

heard the chain snap down again, the cage was only three feet above the fire and soon the bars would burn Lily alive.

"C6ZXW7!" I blurted. I was completely unaware I was saying it until it was leaving my mouth. I had broken down.

* * *

With a gasp I shot upright out of my lying position in the shell. The wires fell off my forehead and I pushed the screen off my eyes. The gelatinous goop oozed off my naked body. In front of me stood a skinny man in an oversized lab coat, the same one who had briefed and prepared me for the test. Under his arm was a steam-pressed towel with a large Navy logo printed boldly on the white fabric. He obviously was uncomfortable with me in my new state, and he let his eyes wander over the ceiling as he addressed me.

"I'm sorry, private. You have failed the cyber torture simulation of SEAL basic training by releasing valuable intelligence to the enemy."

He awkwardly reached to pass me the towel while still averting his eyes. He sidestepped until I was within range and able to take it from him.

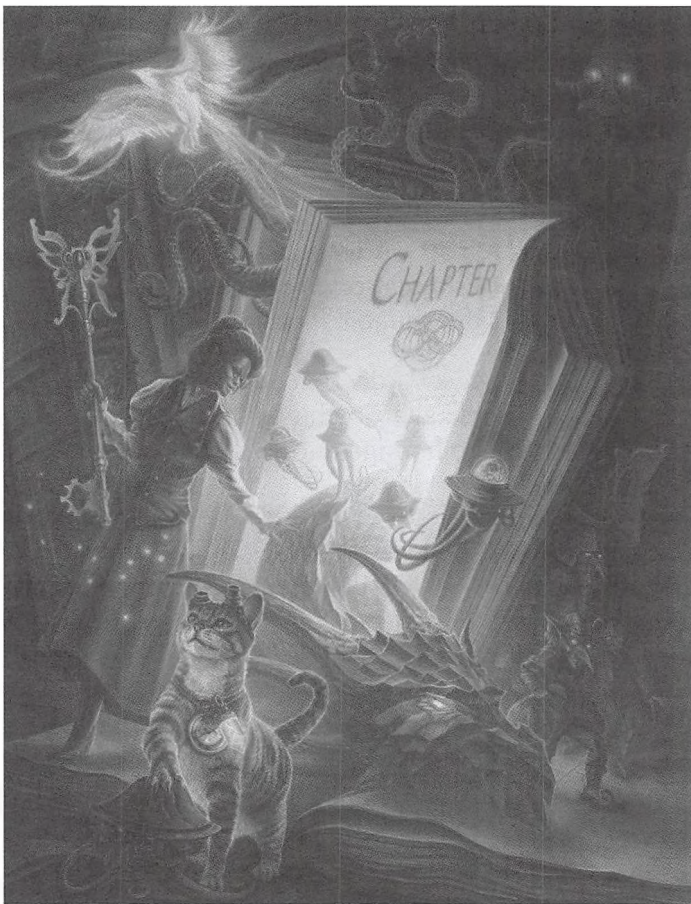
"Dry off, then proceed immediately to your bunk and pack your belongings for departure. The Navy wishes you luck in your future endeavors, whether that be retaking the BUDS program or another path. Studies have shown a 32% increase in success for candidates on their second try."

An excited look flooded his face when he shared the statistic, but when I didn't respond he quickly turned and shuffled off. I removed myself from the chamber and used the towel to wipe off the thick liquid. As I got dressed my mind was twirling between different emotions. The adrenaline from the simulation had yet to decrease, and the disappointment of failing began to seep over me. It had been my dream to be a SEAL since childhood, and I had failed to make that dream a reality. I didn't know what the future had in store for me. Testing again was always an option, but I didn't know if I could put myself through everything another time. I knew one thing for sure, though: as soon as I got home, I was proposing to Lily.

Philcon 2022

November 18-20, 2022

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Cherry Hill, NJ



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Principal Speaker

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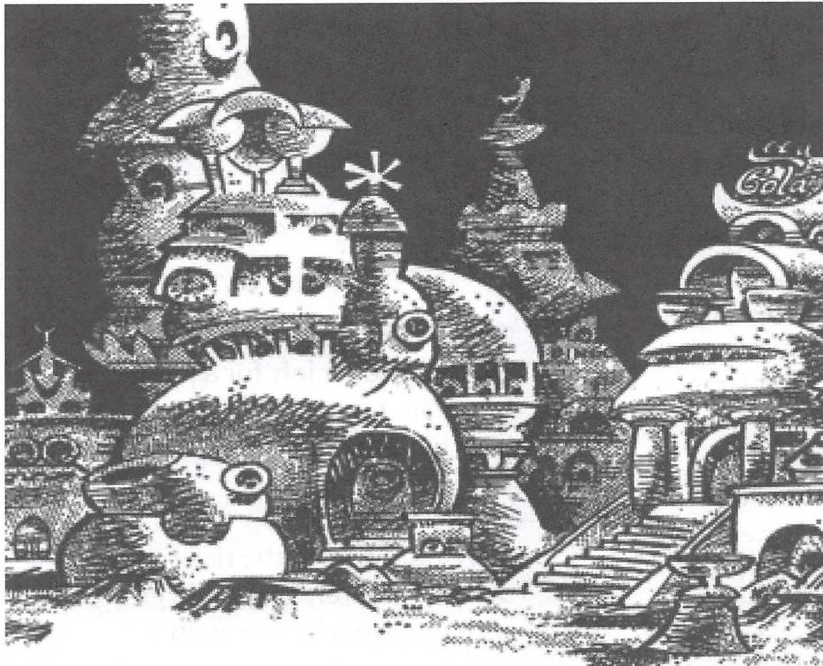
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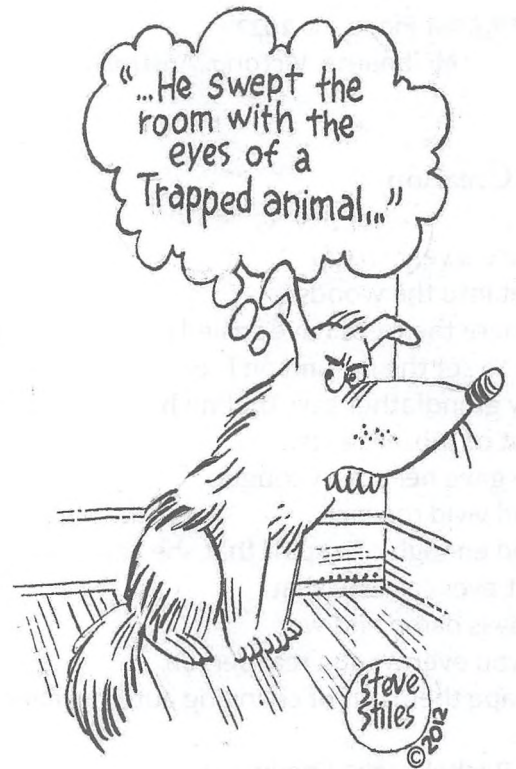
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Art by Steve Stiles



FIRST SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION



BSFS Poetry Contest 2022 Winners

The Hurricane

The hurricane creates accelerated whirls
around a lonely core of domestic violence.
The house entire lifts from its moorings
and spins through skies, plummeting down
to land upon the unfortunate witch,
killing her instantly and creating havoc
amongst the munchkin population
who assumed she was entirely to blame.

And it's only now she's dead that they
begin to ask those proper questions
about whether this was truly accidental
or the consequence of some malign force
far more powerful than ever suspected.
And suddenly her thin protruding legs
in their torn stockings look so vulnerable
sad and forlorn—and they all wonder
if there was more they could have done.

Sharon Rockman
1st Place – © 2022
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Creation

Once a year we go
Out into the woods
Where the trees have spilled piles of leaves
Fit to set the ground on fire.
My grandfather says that he built my grandmother
Out of those leaves.
He gave her a fiery tongue
And vivid red hair
And enough of a spirit that she could leave him
If it ever came to that.
Clay is damp and wet
If you ever want a real person
Shape them out of changing autumn leaves.

Rachel Basha Friedman
3rd Place – © 2022
North Hollywood, CA, USA

Columbine

Oh Columbine, Venus cried
when her lover left for a journey
to a planet much darker
than her apricot veil.

Earth's mountains
were nothing like the rich rocks
of home, merely bleak and gray
with omnivouring occupants.

For days, she called for bees,
luring with sweet relief,
but in this wasteland,
they could not hear.

When the earthlings came instead
and wrapped their hands
around her throat, screams
echoed through abandoned stone.

Her bitter honey
leaves were ripped apart, crushed
just like her purple petals, chained
in lockets around their necks.

Oh Columbine, Venus cried,
her lover's power to arouse
affection abused to demand loyalty
by creatures of infidelity.

Vanessa Jae
Honorable Mention – © 2022
Germany

BSFS Poetry Contest 2022 Winners

The Unborn and the Dead

The unborn and the dead have tea
in the parlor of autumn cemeteries
steep pomegranate rinds slowly in early greyed tears,
pour out the red leaves swirling from the bone pot
to read pasts and futures that stain the cups like dried blood.

They each take two casket slabs of sugar
to sweeten the pain of mortality
then sip the grief that will come,
the grief freshly brewed.

The unborn and the dead have met
the same ghosts, psychics, mothers and morticians,
and chat about their homes of dark matter and neighbors:
the embryos moving in, the withered corpses moving out—
the tomb of the womb, the womb of the tomb
where your last hour will be someone's first.

At night, they whisper together as you fall asleep
while the clock twitches its cold green numbers at your head:
You began in dreams, say the unborn.
You will end as memories, say the dead.

Lorraine Schein
2nd Place – © 2022
Sunnyside, NY, USA

Heel to Toe

My grandmother put silver
slippers on my feet; she told
me to walk in them, click
my heels.

Her slippers glittered like stars as
I teetered from bed to wall
click click click

Back with her at bed's end
I stepped out and found blood lining
dried brown spots adorning
the heel of one, toe of the other.

I asked her how she cut
her feet inside shoes that always
always fit her perfectly.

She said nothing, said to put
her lovely slippers
on again.

My feet grew to fit—
cover the stains and click
my way to work
—click me home
again.

My grandmother died
when I was twenty-five
lying alone in that bed, gray hair
a veil across her face.

I found her amidst tangled
quilts, unscarred feet
bare

like mine used
to be.

Marisca Pichette
Honorable Mention – © 2022
Deerfield, MA, USA

BSFS Poetry Contest 2022 Winners

Miss Moore's Wallpaper

On a rain-slicked Saturday,
Lily and I were playing hide and seek on the wooded hillside
when Miss Moore invited us into her clapboard house.
The aroma of freshly baked Danish pastries
was too alluring to resist.
Her small gray house perched at the bottom
of the hill, lonely and dismal.
We sat on the carved wood loveseat
and savored the pastry's buttery and flaky texture,
our eyes roaming around.

Something made my heart stutter—
not the dim light, not the musty smell,
not Miss Moore's pointed long nose or her lopsided smile,
but the wallpaper that covered every inch
of the wall—briars woven with strings of brambles
and spiky leaves, as if thorny snakes twisting and crawling.
A fly landed on the wall and was immediately
wrapped in vines, sinking into the floral pattern.
Startled by the sight, I grabbed Lily's hand and we thrust out of the door,
dashing down the rocky road until we had to gasp for air.
I tried to explain what I had spotted,
but Lily swore the wallpaper was only pretty pink roses.

Since that day, nobody had seen Miss Moore—
she vanished inside her own house.
Rumors spread that she was a witch
and one of her potions had gone wrong.
At night, people heard a whispering pitchy cry
with the scratching sound of fingernails echoing from her house.
I knew they must be from behind the wallpaper,
but nobody would believe me.

Allison Xu
Special Young Writer's Award – © 2022
Rockville, MD, USA

About the Winning Poets

Sharon Rockman (*First Place*)—Sharon Rockman is a poet, copywriter and editor. She is currently completing an internship in vet nursing. Her poetry is a direct, acerbic and often humourful evocation of human nature and relationships; how we navigate, celebrate, collaborate, love and lose. Her work has been shortlisted for the ACU, Ros Spencer, Robyn Mathison Poetry Prize, Tasmanian Women's Poetry Prize, and MPU. She was awarded 3rd place for "My Brother Jack" and has been published in *Makarelle*, *Slush Love*, *Palette*, and *The Canberra Times*.

Lorraine Schein (*Second Place*)—Lorraine Schein is a New York writer. Her work has appeared in *VICE Terraform*, *Strange Horizons*, *Enchanted Conversation*, and *Mermaids Monthly*, and in the anthology *Tragedy Queens: Stories Inspired by Lana del Rey & Sylvia Plath*. *The Futurist's Mistress*, her poetry book, is available from Mayapple Press: www.mayapplepress.com.

Rachel Basha Friedman (*Third Place*)—Rachel Basha Friedman writes from North Hollywood, California.

Allison Xu (*Special Young Writer's Award*)—Allison Xu is a high school student in Maryland. Her poetry and short stories have been published in *Germ Magazine*, *Secret Attic*, *Bourgeon*, *Cathartic Literary Magazine*, *The Weight Journal*, *50-Word Stories*, and several anthologies. Her work has been recognized by Scholastic Arts & Writing awards, Blue Fire Creative Writing Contest, Kay Snow Writing Contest, etc. In her free time, she enjoys reading, swimming, and playing with her beagle.

Marisca Pichette (*Honorable Mention*)—Marisca Pichette is a queer creator of monsters and magic. Her work has appeared and is forthcoming in *Strange Horizons*, *Fireside Magazine*, *Fusion Fragment*, *Daily Science Fiction*, *Uncharted Magazine*, *PseudoPod*, and *PodCastle*, among others. She lives in Western Massachusetts, surrounded by bones and whispering trees.

Vanessa Jae (*Honorable Mention*)—Vanessa Jae writes horrifically beautiful anarchies, reads stories for *Apex Magazine* and translates for *Progressive International*. She also collects black hoodies and bruises in mosh pits on Tuesday nights. To read tweets by interesting people follow her at @thevanessajae.

How to Enter the Annual BSFS Poetry Contest!

1. Entries should address the themes of science fiction/fantasy/horror/science.
2. 1st prize: \$100; 2nd prize: \$75; 3rd prize: \$50. Additional awards may be authorized at the judges' discretion.
3. Limit: 3 poems/person, maximum 60 lines each. No entry fee.
4. Winners will receive a cash prize, convention membership and be invited to read their winning entries at Balticon. Attendance at Balticon is not required to win.
5. Please no previously published submissions.
6. Winning poems will be published one time in the *BSFAN*, the Balticon convention souvenir book. In addition, a pdf version of the winning poems as they appear in the *BSFAN* will be available on the Balticon Poetry Contest website. Writers retain all rights to their work. By submitting to the contest, entrants agree to these terms.
7. **Deadline:** Mailed entries must be postmarked, and e-mail entries received, by March 1. Entries that do not meet this deadline will be considered for the following year. Please include your name, address, phone number, e-mail address & a brief bio with your entry.
8. Entries may be submitted via the BSFS Poetry Contest Submission Form at: bsfs.org/bsfspoetry.
9. Entries may also be e-mailed to poetry@bsfs.org or mailed to "BSFS Poetry Contest," c/o BSFS, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686. Info: poetry@bsfs.org.
10. While we would like to respond to each entrant personally, it is not always possible due to the large number of submissions we receive. Please check the Poetry Contest website (bsfs.org/bsfspoetry.htm) periodically for updates and announcement of the winners.
11. Good luck & keep writing!

IN MEMORIAM



Vicky Wyman
1/4/1953 – 8/3/2018



Dave Mantel
9/4/1963 – 11/8/2018



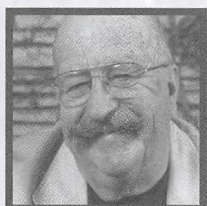
D. Jeannette Holloman
1955 – 2/11/2019



**Janet Asimov/
J.O. Jeppson**
1/16/1926 – 2/25/2019



Ellen Vartanoff
6/15/1951 – 3/17/2019



Gene Wolfe
5/7/1931 – 4/14/2019



Beki Taylor
8/13/2019



Michele Rosenberg
11/17/1943 – 1/8/2020



Mike Resnick
3/5/1942 – 1/9/2020



Steve Stiles
7/15/1943 – 1/11/2020



Priscilla J. Newham
7/22/1953 – 2/2/2020



Aly Parsons
1952 – 2/9/2020



Hugh Casey
4/21/2020



Rorik (Wayne Dionne)
4/27/2020



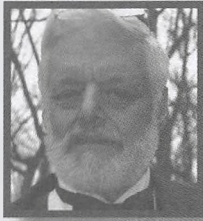
Barry Newton
11/23/1949 – 5/12/2020



Phyllis Kramer
10/23/1952 – 6/3/2020

As long as we remember, their fire remains in the Universe.

IN MEMORIAM



Ted Rosenberg
12/27/1941 – 6/18/2020



Lindy Sears
7/10/1956 – 9/25/2020



Nina Boal
10/31/2020



Ben Bova
11/8/1932 – 11/29/2020



Donna Dearborn
4/6/1947 – 1/25/2021



Rikk Jacobs
10/31/1950 – 1/25/2021



Herman Heyn
1930 – 2/17/2021



Bonnie Schupp
3/11/2021



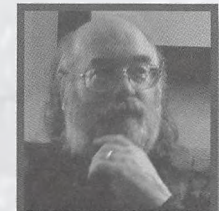
Larry Sands
3/16/2021



Robin Wood
11/1953 – 4/19/2021



Marvin Kaye
3/10/1938 – 5/13/2021



Don Sakers
1958 – 5/17/2021



Mike Hakulin, Sr.
11/29/1943 – 6/7/2021



Petra Mayer
11/30/1974 – 11/13/2021



Dalroy M. Ward
3/12/1955 – 12/14/2021

As long as we remember, their fire remains in the Universe.

LARP ANNOUNCEMENT

Greetings Balticon 56 Participants,

It is with a heavy heart that I have to announce the withdrawal of the LARP from Balticon. For you gamers who are either looking for us or those of you who are interested in learning more about our program, you can contact us using one of the following methods:

LARP Coordinator: larpchick77@gmail.com
Facebook: Balticon LARP (this page will change names in
the next few weeks)
Discord: https://discord.gg/G73t59F

We will have a game running this weekend on our Discord Server. This year's story line is modern urban fantasy inspired by *The Dresden Files* (books). Please come join us.

Karen Miden
LARP Coordinator



Author Website in a Box solves the problem of building an author website. It combines a pre-built home page, bookshelf pages, and more, in one easy-to-install package.
(And did I mention it's free?)

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Many Items On Sale this year!

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(Starting in 2011 the Events & GoH Set includes the Masquerade)

After Balticon 56 order any of the above plus the complete set of the 2022 Masquerade, Events & GoH Presentations

Pick up an order Form at the Sales Table or download it From:
bit.ly/BalticonDVDS



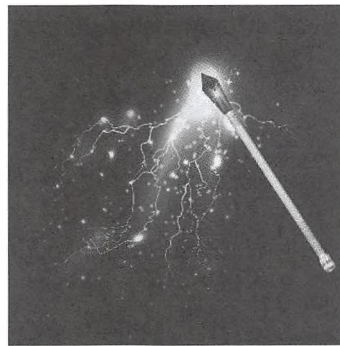
Note: Balticon DVDs are intended as an archival record for members of the convention and not for general sale.

VIRTUAL ACTION ROLE PLAYING

Join us via Discord for our Second Virtual LARP,
Put on by the Mid-Atlantic Role-Playing League
(Formerly the Balticon LARP Group)

Schedule:

Registration-Friday 3-9pm & Saturday 9-11am
Gaming Tutorial Session/Q&A-Friday after 3pm
Opening Ceremonies-Saturday 11am
Game Play-Saturday and Sunday all day until 2am.
Closing Ceremonies-Monday 10:30am



Everything will be provided for you and all players are welcome,
regardless of experience. Play from the comfort of your own
home. And meet new friends.

There is a small Registration Fee of \$5, payable at Registration
via Paypal.

This year's story line...Modern Urban Fantasy...Inspired by the
world of the Dresden Files...Keeping Magic Alive.
Game Masters may be reached via Facebook or Discord.

So come for the fun. Stay for the mayhem.

Calling all Cosplayers & Costumers!



Do you enjoy making, wearing, competing or just looking at
Cosplay/Costumes?

Are you interested in Cosplay/Costuming, but don't where to get started?

Do you want to learn new techniques?

Would you like to meet others who share your interests?

If you answered “**YES**” to any of these questions, the
Greater Columbia Costumers Guild would love for you join us.

Membership benefits include:

- ★ *Meet-ups and workshops to exchange tips and techniques*
- ★ *Field trips to exhibits, lectures and shows*
- ★ *Active online community from across the country*

Please attend one of our meetings to learn more about us. You are under no
obligation to join and we welcome all age and skill levels.

For more information you can reach us at-

- ▶ On the web: www.gcfcg.org
- ▶ Facebook: The Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers' Guild Public Forum
- ▶ E-mail: gcfcostumersguild@gmail.com
- ▶ or by mail at: The GCFCG Inc.

P.O. Box 683
Columbia, MD 21045

The Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild is a 501(c3) non-profit organization.

Balticon 56 Program Participants

Danielle Ackley-McPhail	Kelly E. Dwyer	Dr. Carey Lisse	Dr. Hari Schroff
Lisa Adler-Golden	Scott Edelman	Tim Livengood	Melissa Scott
Rigel Ailur	Meg Eden	Erica Long	Vivian Shaw
D.H. Aire	Gary Ehrlich	Monica Louzon	Alex Shvartsman
Scott H. Andrews	Oghenechovwe Donald	Andy Love	A. R. Siders
Laurence Arcadias	Ekpeki	Sam Lubell	Art Sierra
John Ashmead	Leonardo Espinoza	Steve Lubs	Hildy Silverman
Sarah Avery	Benavides	Perrianne Lurie	Robert L. Slater
Emad El-Din Aysha	Jen Finelli, MD	Shahid Mahmud	Alan Smale
Pat Bahn	Jason Fischer	Gail Z. Martin	Jay Smith
William Balmer	Val Griswold-Ford	Arkady Martine	Angela Yuriko Smith
Rich Barclay	Daniel M. Ford	Rena Mason	Rosemary Claire Smith
Luis Carlos Barragán	Christine France, PhD	Maugorn	Michelle D. Sonnier
Brick Barrientos	John L. French	Bill Mayhew	Wen Spencer
Phoebe Barton	Paige Friedeman	Seanan McGuire	D.A. Xiaolin Spires
Stafford Battle	Dr. Gandalf	Christie Meierz	Craig W. Stanfill
Jim Beall	David Gerrold	James Mendez Hodes	Nancy Springer
Erin Bellavia	Barry M. Gittlen, PhD	Jen Midkiff	Dr. Mark Stollberg
Rand Bellavia	Craig Laurance Gidney	Adeena Mignogna	Erwin S. (Filthy Pierre) Strauss
Joshua Bilmes	Javon Goard	Miguel O. Mitchell, PhD	Ian Randal Strock
Charles Brown	J.T. Greathouse	Lee Murray	Bill Sutton
Bugsy Bryant	JL Gribble	David E. Muñoz Ballier	Brenda Sutton
Stephanie "Flash" Burke	Carol Gyzander	Mari Ness	Beth Morris Tanner
Rodger Burns	Elektra Hammond	Judy Newton	John Tilden
Mildred Cady	Eric Hardenbrook	Chidumebi Njoku-Browne	Andy Trembley
Jack Campbell	Morgan Hazelwood	Hugh J. O'Donnell	Mary Turzillo
ChanieB	Yakira Heistand	Bryant Keith O'Hara	Leigh Tyberg
C.J. Cherryh	Inge Heyer	Ryan O'Nan	Michael R. Underwood
Carl Cipra	Larry Hodges	Tobi Ogundiran	Javier Valderrama Fontecilla
Gwendolyn Clare	Thomas R. Holtz, Jr., PhD	Karen Osborne	Wendy Van Camp
Phenderson Djèlf Clark	Akua Lezli Hope	Ada Palmer	Ryan Van Loan
Denise Clemons	hymie!	Sarah Pinsker	Mark L. Van Name
Brenda Clough	Somto Ihezue	Gillian Polack	Michael A. Ventrella
Doc Coleman	Micaiah Johnson	Jennifer R. Povey	Aparna Verma
Robin Corbet	Leslie Johnston	Diana Raynes	Francesco Verso
Dr. Glenn J. Corbett	Michael M. Jones	Margaret Riley, Publisher	Sabrina Vourvoulias
Sarah Cormiea	A. L. Kaplan	dave ring	David Walton
Elwin Cotman	Anna Kashina	Madison "Metricula"	Jean Marie Ward
Susanne Craig, PhD	David Keener	Roberts	T. C. Weber
Wesley Crowell	Brandon Ketchum	John Robison	Syd Weinstein
Dr. Mary Crowell	Marnen Laibow-Koser	Lezli Robyn	Diane Williams
Leah Cypess	Geoffrey A. Landis	Kevin Roche	Arkady Martine
Dame Dahlia	Grig Larson	Roberta Rogow	John Wiswell
Jonathan Dinman	Mary Soon Lee	Misha Rubanov	L. Marie Wood
Tom Doyle	Chris Lester	Gabriel Saldías Rossel	Sherri Cook Woosley
Mark, the Silver Dragon	Emily Anne Lewis	Christine Sandquist	K. Ceres Wright

Balticon 56 Program Participant & Artist Bios

Danielle Ackley-McPhail

Award-winning author, editor, and publisher Danielle Ackley-McPhail has worked both sides of the publishing industry for longer than she cares to admit. In 2014 she joined forces with husband Mike McPhail and friend Greg Schauer to form her own publishing house, eSpec Books (www.especbooks.com). Her published works include seven novels, *Yesterday's Dreams*, *Tomorrow's Memories*, *Today's Promise*, *The Halfling's Court*, *The Redcaps' Queen*, *Daire's Devils*, and *Baba Ali and the Clockwork Djinn*, written with Day Al-Mohamed. She is also the author of the solo collections *Eternal Wanderings*, *A Legacy of Stars*, *Consigned to the Sea*, *Flash in the Can*, *Transcendence*, *Between Darkness and Light*, *The Fox's Fire*, *The Kindly One*, and the non-fiction writers' guides *The Literary Handyman*, *More Tips from the Handyman*, and *LH: Build-A-Book Workshop*. She is the senior editor of the Bad-Ass Faeries anthology series, *Gaslight & Grimm*, *Side of Good/Side of Evil*, *After Punk*, and *Footprints in the Stars*. Her short stories are included in numerous other anthologies and collections. In addition to her literary acclaim, she crafts and sells original costume horns under the moniker The Horny Lady Custom Costume Horns, and homemade flavor-infused candied ginger under the brand of Ginger KICK! at literary conventions, on commission, and wholesale. Danielle lives in New Jersey with husband and fellow writer, Mike McPhail and four extremely spoiled cats.

Lisa Adler-Golden

Lisa Adler-Golden (she/her) has been the Programming Head of Balticon since 2018.

Rigel Ailur

Rigel Ailur wrote her first novel—all of seven pages!—at the age of seven and hasn't stopped since. Now with twenty-four novels and ninety short stories published, including for *Star Trek* and *Shadowrun*, she writes mostly science fiction and fantasy. Her series include: otherworldly adventures and intrigue in *Tales of Mimion*; Gods and magic in *Sorcery & Steel*; an intergalactic worldship with the most diverse crew in history in *A Little Piece of Home*; enigmatic aliens threatening millions of lives in *Curai'Nal*; and interstellar exiles working together in *Escapes*. Her non-genre work includes *The Vagabonds' Adventures*, about two millionaires living in a luxury double-decker RV; the historical *Last Abbot of Lin Duachail*; the romance *Masquerade*; and the hockey novel *Breakaway*.

She's contributed essays to the *Outside In* series.

Most importantly, she dotes on her astronomically adorable feline kids. For more information including a bibliography and cover gallery, visit www.BluetrixBooks.com.

D.H. Aire

D.H. Aire has published 20 books and is releasing *Bigfoot Hunting* and *Changeling Knight* this year. His love of history and archaeology found expression in writing his epic fantasy/sci fi *Highmage's Plight* and Hands of the Highmage Series, *Knight of the Broken Table & Nowhere to Go But Mars* (a novella). He is a member of SFWA & an Indy author. Follow him at: *Twitter @DHaire15*, *Facebook (Dare 2 Believe)*, and dhaire.net.

Scott H. Andrews

Scott H. Andrews lives in Virginia with his wife, two cats, 11 guitars, a dozen overflowing bookcases, and hundreds of beer bottles from all over the world. He writes, teaches college chemistry, and is Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of the nine-time Hugo Award finalist online fantasy magazine *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*. Scott has taught writing for the Odyssey Workshop, Writefest, Clarion West, Odyssey Online Classes and Cat Rambo Academy for Wayward Writers. He has lectured on short fiction, secondary-world fantasy, editing, magazine publishing, audio podcasting, beer, and heavy metal on scores of convention panels at multiple Worldcons, World Fantasy conventions, and regional conventions in the Northeast and Midwest. He is a nine-time finalist for the World Fantasy Award and won it in 2019, and he celebrates International Stout Day several times a week.

Laurence Arcadias

Laurence Arcadias is a French/American animator working in the United States. She has directed and written several short films including *Tempest in a Bedroom*, which was short-listed for a César Award, the French equivalent of an Academy Award. Her previous work includes being an illustrator and animator for French television programs, and she directed an animation show which was awarded the prize for Best Short Animation TV show at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival. She was subsequently awarded a scholarship from the French government and became Animator in Residence at Apple's Advanced Technology Group. She is a faculty member in the Animation

Department at the Maryland Institute College of Art, and is the co-lead of an art/science collaboration where students produce animations based on NASA astrophysics research.

John Ashmead

John Ashmead has a BA in physics from Harvard, summa cum laude, and a master's in physics from Princeton. For several years he was an assistant editor for *Asimov's SF Magazine* (but has lived an otherwise blameless existence). Since then he has worked as a software and database developer, working in the medical, legal, advertising, financial, scientific, and other areas, with clients ranging from a perinatal laboratory to a cemetery (his company slogan is cradle to grave programming). He currently supports a leading optical switch manufacturer (your web pages and email travel over switches he helped build).

John has stayed part of the science fiction community. Recently he co-edited (with Darrell Schweitzer) *Tales from the Miskatonic University: what evils lurk in the dark reaches of the Dewey Decimal System?* And, he has given talks at NASA, Philcon, Capclave, Balticon, and several Worldcons on subjects such Time Travel, Invisibility, Practical Telepathy, Artificial Intelligence, and the Quantum Internet.

He has published several peer-reviewed physics papers on the relationship between time and quantum mechanics: does quantum mechanics apply along the time dimension? and if so, how could we look for this experimentally? and with current technology? Details (and papers) can be found at his website: *Time and Quantum Mechanics*.

Sarah Avery

Sarah Avery's first book, *Tales from Rugosa Coven*, won the 2015 Mythopoeic Fantasy Award. Her short fiction has appeared in *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Nowa Fantastyka*, *Space and Time*, *Fantasy Scroll*, and *Black Gate*, where she was also a regular contributor on series fantasy and teaching fantasy literature. With David Sklar, she coedited the *Trafficking in Magic, Magicking in Traffic* anthology. Thanks to a hundred-odd (and perhaps also just plain odd) Kickstarter backers, you can read her novella, *The Imlen Brat*. Grants from the Maryland State Arts Council and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County helped her to design and release much of her short fiction backlist in ebook form. An escaped academic, she lives in Maryland.

Emad El-Din Aysha

Emad El-Din Aysha is an academic researcher, author, freelance journalist and translator. He attained his PhD in International Studies in the UK, has taught at universities, and regularly published in academic journals. He has written in the fields of political, economic and energy journalism, movie and literary criticism and translated novels from Arabic to English. He is a member of the Egyptian Writers' Union and Egyptian Society for Science Fiction and has one published SF anthology in Arabic and one non-fiction book (on SF) in English.

William O. Balmer

William Balmer (they/them/theirs) is a PhD student at the Johns Hopkins University and a researcher at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, MD. They use observations from some of the largest telescopes in the world to detect and characterize young exoplanets (planets orbiting stars outside our solar system) and failed stars (referred to as "brown dwarfs"). Observations of young exoplanets and brown dwarfs open pathways to understanding how planets form and evolve throughout the galaxy, and how unique planetary systems like our own are.

Luis Carlos Barragán

Luis Carlos Barragán is a Colombian writer and illustrator of science fiction, and a lecturer in Middle Eastern History. He studied Visual Arts at the National University of Colombia and History of Islamic Art at the American University of Cairo. His novel *Vagabunda Bogotá* won the 10th Medellín Chamber of Commerce award and was nominated for the Rómulo Gallegos award. His second novel, *El Gusano*, received an honorable mention in the Isaac Asimov science fiction novel contest of the Ateneo de Puerto Real. In 2018 he also won the George Scanlon Award for his master's thesis, as well as the first prize in the Peru Ucronías Contest. He was mentioned in the Mirabilia 27+ short story contest. In 2021 he published his first book of stories *Perfect Parasites* with Vestigio editions, with the Idartes publishing grant for independent publishing projects, and the novel *Tierra Contraruturo*, with the Minotauro publishing label. He has published his stories in *PROXIMA* magazines, *Supersonic* and *Cosmocapsula*, among others; and in the anthologies *America Fantástica*; *Paisajes perturbadores*; *Fabricantes de sueños*; *Relojes que no marcan la misma hora*; *Lo sintético: Narraciones sobre robots, seres poshumanos e inteligencias artificiales*; *Ruido Blanco 7*; *Cuentos y relatos de la literatura colombiana Tomo*

III; El Tercer Mundo después del sol and *Antología iberoamericana de ciencia ficción*.

Rich Barclay

Rich Barclay is Director of Fossil Atmospheres Program (Smithsonian Environmental Research Center) and Research Geologist (Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History).

Brick Barrientos

Brick Barrientos hosts the movie trivia game show *Silver Screen Test*. He won a national championship in College Bowl and was a one-day champion on Jeopardy. Brick has been regularly hosting the Balticon trivia contest and can be found all over Maryland winning pub quiz trivia cash. The pandemic enabled him to host academic and trivia contests with participants from elementary school to adult, who were competing in Central America, Europe, East Asia, and Australia. He is the proud father of a daughter who is also a science fiction fan and may also have a cat.

Phoebe Barton

Phoebe Barton is a queer trans science fiction writer. Her short fiction has appeared in venues such as *Analog*, *Lightspeed*, and *Kaleidotrope*, and anthologies from Neon Hemlock and World Weaver Press. She wrote the interactive fiction game *The Luminous Underground*, a 2020 Nebula Award finalist, for Choice of Games. She is a 2019 graduate of the Clarion West Writers Workshop and lives with a robot in the sky above Toronto. Find her online at www.phoebebartonsf.com or on *Twitter* at @aphoebebarton.

Stafford Battle

Stafford enjoys writing speculative fiction. Science fiction, sword & soul, Nubian fantasy, black horror, steampunk, wild weird west, and other strange literary genres. He currently works in a college of medicine where they are changing how medical students are being trained. As an AfroFuturist, he believes that what we read and write enriches our lives today and frames our futures. He writes stories that push beyond the normal. He is a member of the Diverse Writers and Artists of Speculative Fiction writers support group. His books include *Resurrecting the King*, *New African Fables for Adults*, and *Rage of the Mamba*.

Jim Beall

Jim Beall (BS-Math, MBA, PE) has been a nuclear engineer for over 40 years, a wargamer for over 50, and an avid science fiction reader for even longer. His experience began as a naval officer aboard *USS Long*

Beach (CGN-9), then design, construction, inspection, and assessment with a nuclear utility, an architect engineering firm, and the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC). USNRC assignments included senior resident inspector and policy assistant for reactors to three different USNRC Commissioners, earning the agency's Meritorious and Distinguished Service awards. Duties included research into alternative and speculative energy sources, including coal, oil, hydro, geothermal, tidal, solar, wind, fracking, space-based, heavy water reactors, breeder reactors, fusion, and even anti-matter. These studies were a necessary aspect for reviewing energy proposals, assessing technical reports, and drafting speeches. JBIS and Baen Books have published several of his non-fiction articles.

Erin Bellavia

Erin Bellavia's fledgling music career ended when she was cut from her middle school show choir. For a long time, her musical performances were limited to home and the car. Many years later, she met Rand, who brought her to her first filk convention in 2005. At first just a listener, she was gradually convinced by some of her new friends to sing a little in a circle. She and Rand first took the stage together in 2010 and began writing together for their first concert at FilKONtario in 2013. They have since performed concerts at filk and science fiction conventions throughout North America. Together, Rand and Erin are Via Bella, and their debut album *The Way of Beauty* (2018) includes songs about Peggy Carter, *Westworld*, *Orphan Black*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, the *October Daye* books, and *The Princess Bride*. Erin has been nominated for six Pegasus Awards. She also enjoys reading, costuming, calligraphy, taking care of her plants, and watching too much TV.

Rand Bellavia

Rand Bellavia is a singer, songwriter, guitarist in the bands Ookla the Mok and Via Bella. He co-wrote the theme to Disney's *Fillmore* and his voice is the first thing you hear on the Gym Class Heroes hit single "Cupid's Chokehold." A longtime member of the filk community, Rand has been nominated for 21 Pegasus Awards, winning four. His most recent project is the 2021 solo album *The Tips of My Fingers*. Via Bella's debut album *The Way of Beauty* was released in 2018, and includes songs addressing many fandoms, including Agent Peggy Carter, *Westworld*, *Orphan Black*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, the *October Daye* books, and *The Princess Bride*. Ookla the Mok's song "Mwahaha" won the 2014 Logan Award for Outstanding Original Comedy Song. Ookla's songs have appeared on *Dr.*

Demento's Basement Tapes 7 ("Stop Talking About Comic Books or I'll Kill You") and 12 ("F. People"). Ookla the Mok also had the most requested song on *Dr. Demento* for two years in a row: "Tantric Yoda" in 2012 and "Mwahaha" in 2013.

Leonardo Espinoza Benavides

Leonardo Espinoza Benavides (a.k.a. Leo) is a Chilean physician-writer and editor specializing in science fiction. As a doctor, he's a specialist in dermatology and venereology, with studies in psychodermatology. As a writer, he's best known for his short story cycle *Más espacio del que soñamos* (2018), set for a cinematographic adaptation by filmmaker Jorge Zavala, and *Adiós, loxonauta* (2020), recognized as a 'book worth your consideration' by the International Latino Book Awards. He's currently serving as director of the Chilean SF&F Association (ALCIFF) and is an associate member of SFWA, as well as an organizer at the international science fiction convention FUTURE.CON. From 2008 to date, his work has been published in Latin America, Europe, China, and the United States—*Publishers Weekly* highlighted his story "Octobers/October," calling it 'vivid' and rooted in Chilean history. He currently lives in Santiago with his wife Daniele and their little dog Hulk.

Joshua Bilmes

Joshua Bilmes is the President of JABberwocky Literary Agency, which he founded in 1994. His clients include *NY Times* bestselling authors Brandon Sanderson, Charlaune Harris, Peter V. Brett, Jack Campbell, Elizabeth Moon and Simon R. Green, multiple Compton Crook Award winners, Hugo Award winner Suzanne Palmer, and dozens of other top names in the sf and fantasy genres. His first convention as a pro was Balticon in 1989, and his best Balticon might be in 2017, where he first started reading *The Kingdom of Liars* by Nick Martell. Reviewers have gone on to call Nick "the future of epic fantasy." It might not have happened without Balticon. Upcoming debuts to look for from Joshua's roster include JT Greathouse's *The Hand of the Sun King*, Clay Harmon's *Flames of Mira*, R.R. Virdi's *First Binding* and Zac Topping's *Wake of War*. Joshua watches lots of movies and lots of tennis when he isn't reading manuscripts, and he strongly encourages all of you to check out the Vault Comics line-up.

Bruce Blackistone

Bruce Blackistone is a Blacksmith at Oakley Forge Collective. His work, "Cephalopod Bowl Lamp III" (see color centerfold) is recycled and reforged steel (mild

steel garden wickets, excessed decorative ring from fence at Gonzaga High School in Washington, DC [circa 1992], salvaged sheet steel from shelving unit, various nuts and bolts; heat and chemical blueing and beeswax and lemon oil finish.)

Liz Bosarge

I'm a STEM Librarian passionate about eco-criticism, Indigenous justice in the library, and comic books. In my free time, I write book reviews and articles for *School Library Journal*.

Charles Brown

C.D. Brown is a writer and filmmaker from New Orleans. He is the author of the fantasy novels *Fate's Stiletto* and *Vamp City*, along with the literary novel *Looking Back on Sodom* and one short story collection (both as Charles D. Brown). He has made two feature films (as Charlie Brown) and his most recent short "Tick Tock" won Best Rom Com at the Kapow Film Festival. His short fiction has recently appeared in the anthologies *Aeon 2020*, *Generation X-ed*, and the forthcoming *Unicorns vs. Clowns in Hell*. Over the past year and a half, he has directed *Escape From the Secret Lab*, a live streaming musical game show featuring local New Orleans bands. He teaches English and screenwriting at Dillard and Tulane Universities. He has recently become a member of the Horror Writers Association.

Bugsy Bryant

Bugsy has been part of the Balticon programming team for a number of years and writes about narrative and storytelling in games, both electronic and tabletop, at www.neversaydice.co.

Stephanie "Flash" Burke

Have You Been Flashed? Stephanie Burke is a *USA Today* best selling multi-published, multi-award-winning author, master costumer, handicapped, wife and mother of two. From sex-shifting, shape-shifting dragons to undersea worlds, up to sexually confused elemental fey and homoerotic mysteries, all the way to pastel challenged urban sprites, Stephanie has done it all and hopes to do more. Stephanie is an orator on her favorite subject of writing and world-building, a sometimes teacher when you feed her enough tea and donuts, an anime nut, and a costumer. She is a frequent guest of various sci-fi and writing cons, where she can be found leading panel discussions or researching more and varied legends and theories to improve her writing skills. Stephanie is known for her love of the outrageous, strong female characters,

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Capclave is produced by the Washington Science Fiction Association (WSFA)

believable worlds, male characters filled with depth, and multicultural stories that make the reader sit up and take notice.

Mildred Cady

Gaming, writing, costuming, crafting, and cooking. All these drive Mildred Cady. She is also the Librarian for the *Metamor City* podcast and one of the hosts for the new *Lightbulb Rangers* podcast.

Jack Campbell

Jack Campbell (John G. Hemry) is a sailor, and as such he's been known to tell stories about events which he says really happened (but cannot be verified). He's the author of the *New York Times* best-selling Lost Fleet series, Genesis Fleet series, and Lost Stars series, as well as the Steampunk-meets-high-fantasy Pillars of Reality series. John/Jack wrote the scripts for Titan's Lost Fleet Corsair comic series. His YA novel *The Sister Paradox* won the EPIC 2018 ebook Young Reader award. His most recent books are *Boundless* in the new Lost Fleet series Outlands, and *The Empress of the Endless Sea* trilogy (*Pirate of the Prophecy*, *Explorer of the Endless Sea*, and *Fate of the Free Lands*). John's works are currently being published in 13 languages. His shorter fiction is collected in three anthologies (*Ad Astra*, *Swords and Saddles*, and *Borrowed Time*). John is a retired US Navy officer. He lives in Maryland with his indomitable wife "S" and three great kids. Website: www.jack-campbell.com.

Carl Cipra

Carl started reading F&SF in his pre-teen years and has been hooked ever since. He became involved with Fandom back in the 1970s (by way of the SCA in Southern California) and is one of the founding members of Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians. He really enjoys moderating discussion panels at conventions and is looking forward to participating in Balticon again this year. Mundanely, Carl is the program manager for instructor-training in a much-maligned, three-letter Government agency.

Gwendolyn Clare

Gwendolyn Clare is the author of the young-adult steampunk duology *Ink, Iron, and Glass* and *Mist, Metal, and Ash* (Imprint/Macmillan). Her short fiction has appeared in *Shimmer*, *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *Clarkesworld*, and *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*. Clare has a BA in Ecology, a BS in Geophysics, and a PhD in Mycology, which completes her acronym collection, and she teaches college biology

in central Pennsylvania. You can find her on *Twitter* @gwendoclare.

Denise Clemons

Denise presents talks and interactive workshops at SF conventions and writers conferences on various topics related to food in a speculative context—from feeding your imaginary world to the food of *Star Trek*. She writes a weekly food column for a regional newspaper and her most recent book, *A Culinary History of Southern Delaware*, was published by Arcadia / History Press. She has published fiction, non-fiction and poetry in journals, chapbooks and anthologies. She is a member of the Science Fiction Poetry Association and has appeared in numerous podcasts discussing her work.

Brenda Clough

Brenda W. Clough has been a writer for a long time. Her first fantasy novel, *The Crystal Crown*, was published by DAW in 1984. She has also written *The Dragon of Mishbil* (1985), *The Realm Beneath* (1986), and *The Name of the Sun* (1988). Her novel *How Like a God*, now available from Book View Café, was published by Tor Books in 1997, and a sequel, *Doors of Death and Life*, was published in May 2000. Her latest novels are a time travel trilogy, *Edge to Center*, which came out in 2019. For 2021 she is releasing 11 (not a typo!) volumes in a series of Victorian thrillers starring the redoubtable Miss Marian Halcombe, all available at Book View Café. The first volume is free!

Doc Coleman

Doc Coleman never dreamed of being a writer. He dreamed of being an actor, of making movies. He didn't dream hard enough, and ended up working in IT. But he had a way with words, and still wanted to tell stories. Figuring you don't get better at things you don't do, he set about getting better at writing. Doc's stories appear in *The Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences' Tales from the Archives* podcast, the Bushido Western Anthology *Way of the Gun*, and the anthology *Paradise Found: Tales From the Library*. *The Perils of Prague* is the first novel in the Steampunk Comedy/Adventure series *The Adventures of Crackle and Bang*. The second book, *The Kindred of Kali*, is in progress. He also published *The Shining Cog and Other Steampunk Tales*, a collection of Steampunk short stories. Doc is also a podcaster, narrator, and voice actor. Doc is an avid reader, home brewer and beer lover, fan of renaissance festivals, and frequently a smart-ass. He lives with his lovely wife and two cats in Germantown, MD.

Robin Corbet

Robin Corbet is an astronomer conducting research on binary star systems containing black holes or neutron stars, where the incredibly strong gravitational and magnetic fields result in the production of X-rays and gamma rays. Robin obtained a PhD in high-energy astrophysics from University College London, and continued his astronomical research in Britain and Japan before moving to the United States. He is now a Senior Research Scientist at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, based at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, where he works with the Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope. Robin has also explored new approaches for undertaking the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI). At the Maryland Institute College of Art he co-teaches the astro-animation class, and he seeks ways to build bridges between science and art.

Dr. Glenn J. Corbett

Dr. Glenn J. Corbett is Editor-in-Chief of *Biblical Archaeology Review* magazine and a specialist in the archaeology of the Middle East, with more than two decades of excavation and field experience working on projects in Jordan, Turkey, and Israel. Prior to joining BAR, Glenn was Associate Director of the American Center of Research (ACOR) in Amman, Jordan, where he directed the award-winning Temple of the Winged Lions project in Petra. He received his PhD in Near Eastern archaeology from the University of Chicago, where his research focused on the epigraphic and archaeological remains of pre-Islamic Arabia.

Sarah Cormiea

Sarah Cormiea, PhD, did her doctoral research on perception under the supervision of Dr. Jason Fischer.

Elwin Cotman

Elwin Cotman is a storyteller from Pittsburgh, PA. He is the author of three collections of speculative short stories, *The Jack Daniels Sessions EP*, *Hard Times Blues*, and *Dance on Saturday*. His work has appeared in *Electric Lit*, *Weird Fiction Review*, *Black Gate*, *The Southwestern Review*, and *Buzzfeed*, among others. His debut novel, *The Age of Ignorance*, is scheduled for release by Scribner in 2023.

Dr. Mary Crowell

Dr. Mary C. Crowell writes geeky songs about gaming and mythology. She also teaches music theory, piano, and composition in her private studio and occasionally at a community college in north Alabama as well.

She loves participating in creative challenges

like Soulwriters (for songs) and Start With This (for podcasting/recording.) Mary creates quirky MIDI compositions and arranges instrumental music. She also makes silly music videos with a host of creative people for her patrons on Patreon (patreon.com/drmariycrowell). Two of Mary's short music videos: *I Put My Low Stat* and *M is for Magic Missile* were selected for Origins Game Fair's film festival in 2021.

Dr. Crowell performs with Play It With Moxie and Three Weird Sisters, releasing respectively *Play It With Moxie, Live!* (2012) and *Third Thyme's the Charm* (2012). Both bands formed in Atlanta, Georgia through the GAFIA filk community. She also performs with Dead Sexy, Seanan McGuire's back up band. And that band will be performing here at Balticon! Mary has released three studio albums: *Scattering Seeds on the Pomegranate Tour* (2017); *Acolytes of the Machine & Other Gaming Stories* (2012)—both recorded at Mystic Fig Studio; and an earlier album, *Courting My Muse* (2007). Her latest release, *I Have Missed You at My Table* (also recorded at Mystic Fig), is available at Balticon this year!

Leah Cypess

Leah Cypess is the author of the middle grade Sisters Ever After series, which retells fairy tales from the point of view of forgotten younger sisters. The first book in the series, *Thornwood*, was nominated for the Andre Norton Nebula Award; the second, *Glass Slippers*, was published in April 2022. Leah is also the author of four young adult fantasy novels and of numerous works of short fiction. She lives in Silver Spring, MD with her family.

Dame Dahlia

Dame Dahlia is a cosplayer from central Pennsylvania. She is originally from Dallas, TX, and studied vocal performance at the University of North Texas focusing on opera and musical theater. Dame Dahlia volunteers with the charity groups Central PA Heroes Coalition and the Philadelphia Avengers, volunteer teams of cosplayers who partner with nonprofits, libraries, and other charity groups to bring smiles to kids and adults alike. She is a veteran of the United States Air Force and studied political science at Fort Hays State University, where she focused on civil rights and liberties. As an advocate for the LGBTQ community, she speaks on civil rights.

Tom Doyle

Tom Doyle's latest work for Graphic Audio is the Agent of Exiles series of supernatural spy adventures in the 6th century BCE. His recent SF novel, *Border*

Crosser, follows the far-future journeys of Eris, a psychologically extreme secret agent whose shifting loyalties cause chaos wherever she goes in the galaxy. In the first book of Tom's fantasy trilogy from Tor Books, *American Craftsmen*, two modern magician-soldiers fight their way through the legacies of Poe and Hawthorne as they attempt to destroy an undying evil—and not kill each other first. In the sequel, *The Left-Hand Way*, the craftsmen are hunters and hunted in a global race to save humanity from a new occult threat out of America's past. In the final novel, *War and Craft*, it's Armageddon in Shangri-La, and the end of the world as we know it. Tom has survived Harvard, Stanford, and cancer, and he writes in a spooky turret in Washington, DC. You can find Tom's award-winning short fiction at www.tomdoyleauthor.com.

Kelly E. Dwyer

Kelly E. Dwyer is a writer, mother and instructional designer who lives in the Washington, DC metro area. Kelly works on special projects for One More Page Books, an independent bookstore in Arlington, VA. She also helps run the NoVa TEEN Book Festival, Virginia's largest event celebrating young adult literature, held every March in Falls Church, VA. Kelly has been writing speculative fiction since 2008. She was first published by *Abyss and Apex* online magazine in 2010 and has had stories published with *Lackington's Magazine*, *Escape Collective Publishing*, *Trysts of Fate*, and the *Outliers of Speculative Fiction*. Her first published short story was included as an honorable mention in *The Year's Best Science Fiction anthology #28*, edited by Gardner Dozois and reprinted in the *Best of Abyss and Apex* anthology in 2016. Find her on *Twitter* and *Instagram*, @DeviousDwyer, or at www.deviousdwyer.com.

Scott Edelman

Scott Edelman has published more than 100 short stories in magazines such as *Analog*, *Postscripts*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Dark Discoveries*, and in anthologies such as *Why New Yorkers Smoke*, *Crossroads: Southern Tales of the Fantastic*, and *MetaHorror*. Many of these have been collected in the books *These Words Are Haunted*, *What Will Come After* (a finalist for the Shirley Jackson Memorial Award), *What We Still Talk About*, and *Tell Me Like You Done Before (and Other Stories Written on the Shoulders of Giants)*. His most recent collection is *Things That Never Happened*. He has been a Stoker Award finalist eight times. Edelman also worked for the Syfy Channel for 13+ years as editor of *Science Fiction Weekly*, *SCI FI Wire*, and *Blastr*. He was the founding editor of *Science Fiction Age*, which

he edited during its entire eight-year run. He has been a four-time Hugo Award finalist for Best Editor. He's also the host of the *Eating the Fantastic* podcast, which since February 2016 has allowed listeners to eavesdrop on his meals with creators of science fiction, fantasy, horror, comics, and more.

Meg Eden

Meg Eden is a 2020 Pitch Wars mentee, and teaches creative writing at Anne Arundel Community College. She is the author of the 2021 Towson Prize for Literature winning poetry collection *Drowning in the Floating World* (Press 53, 2020) and children's novels, most recently *Selah's Guide to Normal* (Scholastic, 2023). Find her online at www.megedenbooks.com or on *Twitter* at @ConfusedNarwhal and *Instagram* at @meden_author. She runs the *Magfest MAGES Library* blog, which posts accessible academic articles about video games (super.magfest.org/mages-blog).

Gary Ehrlich

Gary Ehrlich stalks the hallways of Northeast conventions and assorted filk conventions. In mundania he is a mild-mannered structural engineer for a major trade association, representing them on material design standards committees and at building code hearings. At cons he can be found on a stage or in the filk room, offering songs of space flight, lunar colonies and hyperspace hotels. Gary is a three-time chair of Conterpoint, the DC area's incarnation of NEFilK, the Floating Northeast Filk Con, has filled other roles for Conterpoint and for 1997's Second Concerto, and is currently Balticon's Director of Filk and Other Musical Mayhem. In April 2012 Gary was inducted into the Filk Hall of Fame for his contributions to the filk community.

Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki

Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki is an African speculative fiction writer and editor in Nigeria. He has won the Otherwise, British Fantasy award, and Nommo award, twice. He has been a finalist in the Locus, Nommo, Sturgeon and BSFA awards, twice. His fiction and nonfiction have appeared and are forthcoming in *Tordotcom*, *Strange Horizons*, *Galaxy's Edge*, *Apex*, *Asimov's* and more. He edited *Bridging Worlds*, the first ever Year's Best African Speculative Fiction anthology, co-edited the groundbreaking *Dominion* anthology, and the *Africa Risen* anthology forthcoming on *Tordotcom* in November 2022. You can find him on *Twitter* at twitter.com/penprince_.

Jen Finelli, MD

Jen Finelli is a world-traveling scifi author who's ridden a motorcycle in a monsoon, swum with sharks, crawled under barbed wire in the mud, and hiked everywhere from hidden coral deserts and island mountains to steaming underground urban tunnels littered with poetry. She was once locked inside a German nunnery, and recently had to find her way through swamp-filled Korean foothills dotted with graveyards on Friday the 13th under a full moon without a flashlight. On her quest to rescue stories often swallowed by the shadows, she's delivered babies, cradled the dying, and interviewed everyone from prostitutes to Senators. If you want cancer-fighting zombie fiction, dinosaur picture books, scientists jumping into volcanoes, or talking cars and peyote legislation, you might like Jen. You're welcome to download some of her stories for free at byjenfinelli.com/you-want-heroes-and-fairies, or join her quest to build a clinic for the needy at patreon.com/becominghero. Jen's a practicing MD, FAWM candidate, and sexual assault medical forensic examiner—but when she grows up, she wants to be a superhero.

Jason Fischer

Jason Fischer studies visual scene understanding using fMRI, psychophysics, and computational modeling. His research investigates how we isolate the crucial contents of a scene, how we predict what will happen next as a scene unfolds, and how we perceive a stable world in the face of noisy input.

Javier Valderrama Fontecilla

Javier Valderrama (1989) is a Chilean screenwriter and novelist, known for the featured film *Volantín cortao (Kite Adrift)*, which was awarded the Public Choice Award in the 2013 Valdivia International Film Festival, and for his novel *El arca (The Ark)*, winner of the 2021 International Latino Book Award for best Science Fiction novel. He recently published *Animales Salvajes (Wild Animals)*, and was included in *Cyberpunk*, a thematic anthology of the subgenre in Chile, with his short story "Economía Circular." He is currently an active member of the Chilean SF&F Association, ALCIFF.

Daniel M. Ford

Daniel M. Ford was born and raised near Baltimore. He is the author of the epic fantasy series The Paladin Trilogy (SFWP/Podium) and the Jack Dixon novels (*Body Broker* and *Cheap Heat*). His next novel, *The Warden*, is expected in 2023 from Tor.

Christine France, PhD

Christine France, PhD (she/her) is a Research Scientist at the Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute (MCI). She is the principal investigator and manager of the MCI Stable Isotope Mass Spectrometry Laboratory. Her research focuses on biochemical proxies in ancient bones and teeth to indicate past diets, regional origins, and demographics, with a particular focus on archaeological remains in North America. In addition to answering anthropological questions, Christine studies degradation of bones and teeth during burial and fossilization, and the subsequent effects of these processes on biochemical proxies. She obtained her PhD and BS in Geology at University of Maryland College Park, and her MS in Marine, Earth, and Atmospheric Sciences at North Carolina State University. Christine is an avid fan of fantasy literature, reads and listens to fiction as much as possible, and loves watching adaptations and original films/shows of just about any fantasy or sci-fi.

John L. French

John L. French is a retired crime scene supervisor with 40 years' experience. He has seen more than his share of murders, shootings, and serious assaults. As a break from the realities of his job, he started writing science fiction, pulp, horror, fantasy, and, of course, crime fiction. John's first story "Past Sins" was published in *Hardboiled Magazine* and was cited as one of the best *Hardboiled* stories of 1993. More crime fiction followed, appearing in *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*, the *Fading Shadows* magazines, and in collections by Barnes and Noble. Association with writers like James Chambers and the late, great C.J. Henderson led him to try horror fiction and to a still growing fascination with zombies and other undead things. His first horror story "The Right Solution" appeared in Marietta Publishing's *Lin Carter's Anton Zarnak*. Other horror stories followed in anthologies such as *The Dead Walk* and *Dark Furies*, both published by Die Monster Die books. It was in *Dark Furies* that his character Bianca Jones made her literary debut in "21 Doors," a story based on an old Baltimore legend and a creepy game his daughter used to play with her friends. John's first book was *The Devil of Harbor City*, a novel done in the old pulp style. *Past Sins* and *Here There Be Monsters* followed. John was also consulting editor for Chelsea House's Criminal Investigation series. His other books include *The Assassins' Ball* (written with Patrick Thomas), *Souls on Fire*, *The Nightmare Strikes*, *Monsters Among Us*, *The Last Redhead*, *The Magic of Simon Tombs*, *The Santa Heist* (written with Patrick Thomas), and *When the Moon Shines*. John is the editor

of *To Hell in a Fast Car*, *Mermaids 13*, *C. J. Henderson's Challenge of the Unknown*, *Camelot 13* (with Patrick Thomas), *With Great Power ...* (with Greg Schauer), and *Devilish and Divine* (with Danielle Ackley-McPhail). You can find John on *Facebook* or you can email him at him at jfrenchfam@aol.com.

Craig Laurance Gidney

Craig Laurance Gidney is the author of the collections *Sea, Swallow Me & Other Stories* (Lethe Press, 2008), *Skin Deep Magic* (Rebel Satori Press, 2014), the Young Adult novel *Bereft* (Tiny Satchel Press, 2013), and the novel *A Spectral Hue* (Word Horde, 2019). His new collection, *The Nectar of Nightmares* (Stories,) will be released by Underland Press in June 2022. He is a three-time Lambda Literary finalist, and a Carl Brandon Parrallax Award finalist. He lives in his native Washington, DC. Website: craiglaurancegidney.com. *Instagram, Tumblr & Twitter*: [ethereallad](https://www.instagram.com/ethereallad).

Javon Goard

Javon Goard obtained a BA in sociology with honors from the University of Maryland, College Park (2016), and his MS in informatics from Indiana University, Bloomington (2018). Goard's research takes an interdisciplinary approach in studying aspects of video game culture by working in the domains of sociology, informatics, and media studies. His blog, jstonee.wordpress.com, bridges the gap between academic discourse and personal anecdotes, discussing a wide range of topics from gender, race, and economics as they relate to games. Goard is also co-host with two colleagues for the *My Gaming Academia* podcast which is focused on discussing psychological and sociological topics as they relate to videogames. Episodes are available on Spotify. Goard is an advocate of public scholarship and he "goes where the gamers are," thus he attends both academic conferences and anime/comic book conventions which include: Music and Gaming Education Symposium, BlerDCon, Balticon, Indiana Comic Con.

J.T. Greathouse

J.T. Greathouse has been writing fantasy and science fiction since he was 11 years old. He holds a BA in history and philosophy with a minor in Asian studies as well as a master's in teaching from Whitworth University, and spent four months of intensive study in Chinese language and culture at Minzu University in Beijing (Zhongshan Minzu Daxue). His short fiction has appeared, often as Jeremy A. TeGrotenhuis, in *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Writers of the Future 34*, *Deep Magic*, *Orson Scott Card's Intergalactic Medicine Show*, and

elsewhere. In addition to writing, he has worked as an ESL teacher in Taipei, as a bookseller at Auntie's Bookstore in Spokane, and as a high school teacher. He was co-chair of the programming committee for the Flights of Foundry conventions in 2020 and 2021. He currently lives in Spokane, WA with his wife Hannah and several overflowing bookshelves. He is the author of the Pact & Pattern series (*The Hand of the Sun King* and *The Garden of Empire*) from Gollancz and JABberwocky Literary.

JL Gribble

J.L. Gribble writes the urban fantasy/alternate history Steel Empires series, which starts with *Steel Victory* and includes six titles so far. Her other jobs include medical editing, *Netflix* watching, cat snuggling, and book reviewing. Find more info about her and her books at jlgribble.com.

Val Griswold-Ford

Val Griswold-Ford is the author of the Carter's Cove novel *Winter's Secrets*. She is also the author of the Dark Horseman novels *Not Your Father's Horseman*, *Dark Moon Seasons*, and *Last Rites*, all from Dragon Moon Press. She is the co-editor (with Tee Morris) of the memorial anthology *Tales of the Tesla Ranger*. She is also the co-editor of *The Complete Guide to Writing Fantasy: the Opus Magnus* (with Tee Morris) and *The Complete Guide to Writing Fantasy: The Author's Grimoire* (with Lai Zhao), also from Dragon Moon Press, and has self-published the short e-novella *Snow* and, most recently, the short story "Convoy." She has published several short stories in various anthologies online and in print, and is owned by two cats. She lives in New Hampshire with said cats. You can find her at www.vg-ford.com or on *Twitter* as [@vg_ford](https://twitter.com/vg_ford).

Carol Gyzander

Bram Stoker Award®-nominated author Carol Gyzander writes and edits horror, dark fiction, and science fiction. Her latest work is a cryptid novella, *d* (April 2022), from the Systema Paradoxa series NeoParadoxa. Her short stories are in numerous anthologies, including *The Yellow Crown*, which was nominated for a Bram Stoker Award® for Superior Achievement in Short Fiction; and in the weird fiction anthology *Under Twin Suns: Alternate Histories of the Yellow Sign* (also Stoker-nominated, from Hippocampus Press, 2021). Carol co-edited the *Even in the Grave* ghost story anthology with James Chambers (NeoParadoxa, July 2022). She's a lifelong volunteer and was a 15-year scout leader. She's the Horror Writers Association (HWA) NY Chapter Co-Chair and

co-host of the monthly HWA *NY Galactic Terrors* online reading series. As HWA Chapter Program Co-Manager, she helps support chapters in the US. HWA, HNS, MWA, SinC. Visit CarolGyzander.com or follow her on *Twitter* and *Instagram* @CarolGyzander.

Elektra Hammond

Elektra Hammond emulates her multi-sided idol *Buckaroo Banzai* by going in several directions at once. She's been involved in publishing since the 1990s—now she writes, concocts anthologies, and edits science fiction for various and sundry. When not freelancing or appearing at science fiction conventions, she travels the world judging cat shows. Her latest story, "O-Rings," appears in the *Alternate Peace* anthology edited by Joshua Palmatier and Steven H. Silver. Elektra is a graduate of the Odyssey Writing Workshop and an associate member of SFWA. She lives in Delaware with her husband, Mike, and more than the usual allotment of felines.

Eric Hardenbrook

Eric is a fan, an author and an artist, usually in that order. Eric lives in central Pennsylvania with his amazing family. He writes to try to get the stories out of his head. When he's being a fan he helps run *Watch The Skies* and assists in the publication of their monthly fanzine. He can be found (at least some of the time) at *The Pretend Blog*. When not working on those things, Eric enjoys board games and is an old school role player, running *Groves of Inan* on *Twitch* and occasionally appearing as a guest on *Attacks of Opportunity*.

Morgan Hazelwood

Morgan Hazelwood (she/her) writes from her lair in Northern Virginia. She's a blogger, vlogger, and podcaster of writing tips and writerly musings, plus an actively querying fantasy author. Her short story, "Just a Hike In The Woods" was published by the *Dark Recesses Webzine*. When not writing, you can find her devouring book series on her kindle, learning to scroll saw, or feeding her webcomic addiction. She serves on the board for her local science fiction and fantasy convention: Balticon. She is also a voice for *Anansi Storytelling* — a fairytale audio drama podcast. Find her at morganhazelwood.com.

Inge Heyer

Inge Heyer, PhD, has spent decades developing a unique expertise in astronomy communications across a variety of settings, including college classrooms, K-12 schools, informal educational settings, professional

scientific journalism, and SF venues. Born in Berlin, Germany, she earned her Bacculaureate there, then a Japanese language certificate at Tenri University (Japan), a BA in Astronomy and Physics from Smith College, an MS in Astronomy from the University of Hawai'i, and a PhD in Science Education from the University of Wyoming. Inge worked as senior data analyst at the Space Telescope Science Institute, as public information officer at the Joint Astronomy Centre, and as deputy press officer for the American Astronomical Society. She earned Shodan in Judo and Karate. Inge teaches at Loyola University Maryland and co-authored six books, including an astronomy textbook. If you wondered how the Hubble images got into SF series like *Babylon 5* and *Star Trek*, just ask Inge.

James Mendez Hodes

Mendez (he/him) is an ENnie Award-winning analog game writer, developer, editor, professional GM, and cultural consultant. You might know him from *7th Sea*, *Scion*, *Thousand Arrows*, or various articles on the Internet complaining about racism. His content specialties include hip hop, West African and Afro-Atlantic religion, comparative martial arts, and gaming with kids. He studied religion, dance, and English literature at Swarthmore College, and has a master's degree in Eastern classics from St John's Graduate Institute. He lives in the greater New York metropolitan area on traditional Lenape land. Hear him complain about racism at jamesmendezhodes.com, or on *Twitter* at @LulaVampiro.

Larry Hodges

Larry Hodges is an active member of SFWA with over 130 short story sales, including 43 "pro" sales, including ones to *Analog*, *Escape Pod*, *Daily Science Fiction*, *Dark Matter*, and 19 to *Galaxy's Edge*. He has four novels, including *When Parallel Lines Meet*, which he co-wrote with Mike Resnick and Lezli Robyn, and *Campaign 2100: Game of Scorpions*, which covers the election for President of Earth in the year 2100. He's a member of Codexwriters, and a graduate of the six-week 2006 Odyssey Writers Workshop and the two-week 2008 Taos Toolbox Writers Workshop. In the world of non-fiction, he has 17 books and over 2000 published articles in over 170 different publications. He's also a professional table tennis coach, and claims to be the best science fiction writer in USA Table Tennis, and the best table tennis player in SFWA! Visit him at larryhodges.com.

Thomas R. Holtz, Jr., PhD

Thomas R. Holtz, Jr. is Principal Lecturer in Vertebrate Paleontology at the Department of Geology, University of Maryland, College Park. His research focuses on the origin, evolution, adaptations, and behavior of carnivorous dinosaurs, and especially of tyrannosauroids (*Tyrannosaurus rex* and its kin). He received his bachelor's at Johns Hopkins in 1987 and his PhD from Yale in 1992. He is also a Research Associate of the Department of Paleobiology of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and serves on the Scientific Council of Maryland Academy of Science (which operates the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore, MD).

In addition to his dinosaur research, Holtz has been active in scientific outreach. He has been a consultant on museum exhibits documentaries. He is the author of the award-winning *Dinosaurs: The Most Complete, Up-To-Date Encyclopedia for Dinosaur Lovers of All Ages* (Random House).

Heidi Hooper

Heidi Hooper is the Dryer Lint Lady—Believe it or Not. A graduate of VCU's sculpture department, she later studied for her master's at the University of California Long Beach and the Massachusetts College of Art (where she also taught for a year). After cancer ate most of her upper arm, she had to find new ways of making art and has become the nation's leading dryer lint artist. Her work is showing in Ripley's Believe it or Not museums around the world, and Heidi was featured in their books. You may have also seen her recently on ABC TV's *To Tell The Truth* where celebrities like Mel Brooks tried to guess who the real dryer lint artist was, or on *Access Hollywood* where she presented Mario Lopez with a dryer lint portrait. She's a two time Niche Award winner, and a Master Costumer, having won (and judged) at the Worldcon level. She has been the Artist Guest of Honor at Albacon and Heliosphere. Her web page is HeidiHooper.com.

Akua Lezli Hope

Akua Lezli Hope is a creator and wisdom seeker who creates poems, patterns, stories, music, sculpture, adornments, and peace. Published in numerous literary magazines and national anthologies, she's been in print since 1974 with more than 400 poems. A third generation New Yorker, her honors include the NEA, two NYFAs, a SFPA award, and Rhysling, Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net nominations, among others. She has twice won Rattle's Poets Respond. Her first collection, *Embouchure, Poems on Jazz and Other Musics*, won the *Writer's Digest* book award.

A Cave Canem fellow, she created the *Speculative Sundays Poetry Reading Series*. Her speculative poetry chapbook, *Otherwheres*, won the 2021 Elgin Award. Her micro-chapbook, *Stratospherics*, is in the Quarantine Public Library. She edited the first BIPOC speculative poetry anthology *Nombono* (2021) and the historic, largest *Eye to the Telescope issue #42 on The Sea*. She won a grant from NYSCA to create *Afrofuturist*, speculative, pastoral poetry (2022).

hymie!

hymie! is here because his wife is making him. She has involved him in the boardgaming community for over 15 years. She has also forced him to work on the Balticon website and run the Hal Haag Memorial Game Room. Yes, he does indeed spell his name with an exclamation point, and prefers the lowercase 'h'.

Somto Ihezue

Somto Ihezue is an Igbo writer, filmmaker, and wildlife enthusiast. He was awarded the 2021 African Youth Network Movement Fiction Prize. A Nommo Award-nominee and finalist for the 2022 Afritondo Prize, his works have appeared or are forthcoming in *Tordotcom: Africa Risen Anthology*, *Fireside Magazine*, *Omenana Magazine*, *Cossmass Infinities*, *OnSpec Magazine*, *The 2021 Year's Best Anthology of African Speculative Fiction*, *Flash Fiction Online*, *Africa In Dialogue*, and others. He is an Associate Editor at Cast of Wonders and tweets @somto_izehue.

Michael M. Jones

Michael M. Jones lives in southwest Virginia with too many books, just enough cats, and a wife who acquired the remote control in the Marriage Accords of '98. His short stories have appeared in numerous anthologies and magazines, including *F is for Fairy*, *Constellary Tales*, and *Robot Dinosaurs!*. He is also the editor of *Scheherazade's Facade*, and *Schoolbooks & Sorcery*. For more, visit him at www.michaelmjones.com.

A.L. Kaplan

A.L. Kaplan's love of books started as a child and sparked a creative imagination. Born on a cold winter morning in scenic northern New Jersey, her stories and poems have been included in several anthologies and magazines. Her most recent publications are her debut novel, *Star Touched*, and "Hummingbird," a short story. She is the Maryland Writers' Association's President and holds an MFA in sculpture from the Maryland Institute College of Art. When not writing or indulging in her fascination with wolves, this proud mother of

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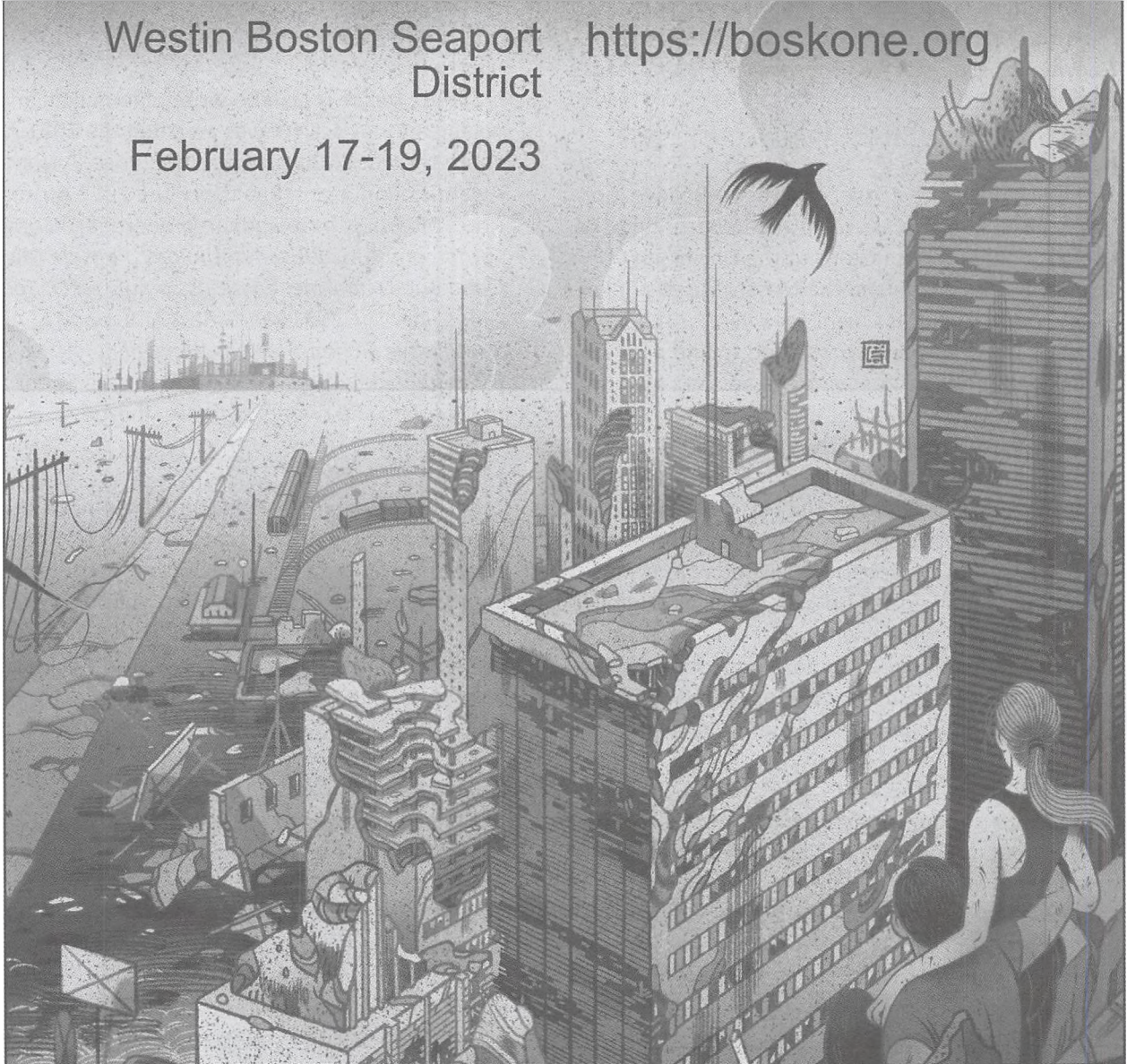
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two lives in Maryland with her husband and dog. Find her at ALKaplanauthor.com.

Anna Kashina

Anna Kashina writes historical adventure fantasy, featuring exotic settings, martial arts, assassins, and elements of romance. Her “Majat Code” series, published by Angry Robot Books, UK, received two Prism Awards in 2015. She is a Russian by origin, and a scientist in her day job, and she freely draws on these backgrounds in her writing. She lives near Philadelphia, PA.

David Keener

David Keener is an author, editor, and public speaker who lives in Northern Virginia with his wife and two, oops, three, inordinately large dogs. He writes SF, Fantasy, and Mystery, but loves the idea of mashing up his favorite genres in unexpected ways. His most recent books are *Road Trip* and *Bitter Days*. He is the grand instigator behind the Worlds Enough anthology series, and co-editor of the first two volumes, *Fantastic Defenders* and *Fantastic Detectives*. His next anthology will be *The Forever Inn*, about a mysterious inn that travels randomly throughout the multiverse. He is a founding member of the *Houblings Podcast Project*, covering writing-related topics. He frequently speaks at conventions, where he often conducts writing workshops. Find out more about him at his website: www.davidkeener.org.

Brandon Ketchum

Brandon Ketchum is a speculative fiction writer from Pittsburgh, PA who enjoys putting a weird spin or strange vibe into every story, dark or light. Brandon is a member of the Horror Writers Association. His work has been published with Air & Nothingness Press, *Perihelion*, *Mad Scientist Journal*, and many other publications. Brandon leads the Pittsburgh Writers Meetup Group and coordinated the 2019 PARSEC Short Story Contest. Find Brandon on social media at twitter.com/BrandonTKetchum, www.facebook.com/brandon.ketchum.5, and www.instagram.com/ketchum_brandon.

Geoffrey A. Landis

Dr. Geoffrey A. Landis is a science-fiction writer and a scientist. He has won the Hugo and Nebula awards for science fiction. He is the author of the novel *Mars Crossing* and the story collection *Impact Parameter (& Other Quantum Realities)*, and has written over 80 published science fiction stories. He spends more time on writing science papers than science fiction

these days, but still writes an occasional story now and then. As a scientist, he works for NASA on developing advanced technologies for spaceflight. He was a member of the Mars Exploration Rovers Science team, and is a fellow of the NASA Institute for Advanced Concepts. He received the Robert A. Heinlein Award “for outstanding published works in science fiction and technical writings that inspire the human exploration of space,” awarded at Balticon in 2014. In his spare time, he stabs strangers with a sword at fencing tournaments. More information is at his very out-of-date web page: www.geoffreylandis.com.

Mary Soon Lee

Mary Soon Lee was born and raised in London, but has lived in Pittsburgh for over 20 years. Her latest books are from opposite ends of the poetry spectrum: *Elemental Haiku*, containing haiku for the periodic table, and *The Sign of the Dragon*, an epic fantasy with Chinese elements, winner of the 2021 Elgin Award. She hides her online presence with a cryptically named website (marysoonlee.com) and an equally cryptic Twitter account (@MarySoonLee).

Chris Lester

Chris Lester has tried his hand at many trades: marine biologist, title insurance officer, high school science teacher, writer, editor, clinical researcher, microbiologist. Through many ups, downs, derailments, and right-angle turns, two things have remained constant: a passion for storytelling, and the drive to change how people see the world. Whether behind the microphone, at a keyboard or in front of a classroom, Chris never feels more alive than when he’s introducing others to new perspectives and new ideas. Chris has been podcasting his fiction since 2007, when he debuted *The Metamor City Podcast* (www.metamorcity.com). An innovative show that combined Chris’s writing with a full voice cast, musical score, and immersive sound effects, the *Metamor City Podcast* garnered a Podcast Peer Award for Best Production and two Parsec Awards for Best Audio Drama. Chris ended the show in 2011 after 58 episodes. He returned to podcasting in 2015 with a new show, *The Raven and the Writing Desk* (www.chrislester.org), which used a more streamlined production and solo narration, occasionally interspersed with interviews with other authors. This proved to be a more sustainable format, and after seven years and more than 300 episodes, *TRATWD* is still going strong. Born in Michigan, trained as a scientist in California and Montana, Chris now makes his home in Madison, WI. When he isn’t writing, he enjoys hiking trails, paddling down rivers, exploring

national parks, reading through an ever-growing pile of books, and playing the piano. He lives with his partner Melanie, their dogs Cedar and Marco, and three deranged but adorable cats.

Emily Anne Lewis

Emily got hooked on filk as a member of Sassafrass. Having played Baldur in Sassafrass' production *Sundown* at Balticon 2012, Emily has come back to Balticon ever since then, now serving as the second in command for the music track. Emily is an avid sci-fi/fantasy fan and songwriter/singer.

Dr. Carey Lisse

Carey Lisse is an astronomer studying the formation and evolution of solar systems, from their beginning through the formation of present day life. With backgrounds in chemistry, physics, and biology, Lisse studies the clues left behind during the growth of solar systems—the comets, asteroids, gas, and dust left orbiting around stars as they age. He is best known for his work on the Nobel prize winning COBE (Cosmic Background Explorer) Mission, his discovery of x-ray emissions from Comet Hyakutake in 1996, and the Deep Impact mission.

Tim Livengood

Tim Livengood is a planetary scientist who measures the composition, temperature, and wind velocity in planetary atmospheres. He has been using the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter to investigate where water may be hidden on the Moon, and using other tools to determine how much atmosphere Mars used to have. He was a co-investigator of NASA's EPOXI mission, and was the education and public outreach team leader for the EPOCH component of the mission. Although a Hoosier by birth, Tim graduated from Towson Senior High School in Towson, MD, in 1980 and from Washington University in St. Louis in 1984. He finished a doctorate in physics and astronomy at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore in 1992, measuring properties of aurora on the planet Jupiter in ultraviolet light. He has not killed any rats with radiation in more than 30 years. But less than 40.

Monica Louzon

Monica Louzon (she/her) is a Spanish-English speculative fiction translator, an editor, and a writer. Her translation of "Lamia" by award-winning Spanish author Cristina Jurado appeared in *Apex Magazine* in January 2022, and her translation work has also appeared in *Constelación Magazine*. Monica has been the Acquiring Editor at *The Dread Machine* since

November 2020. She recently co-edited the horror anthology *Mixtape: 1986* as well as the forthcoming speculative anthology *Darkness Blooms*, and she was lead editor for the anthology *Catalysts, Explorers & Secret Keepers: Women of Science Fiction* (2017). Monica's short fiction has appeared in *Curiouser Magazine*, *The Dread Machine*, and *The Internet Is Where The Robots Live Now*, while her speculative poetry has been published by *NewMyths.com*, *Octavos*, *Quatrain.Fish*. and others. She also founded the Museum of Science Fiction's peer-reviewed, open access *MOSF Journal of Science Fiction*. Follow Monica on *Twitter* @molo_writes.

Andy Love

Andrew Love has master's degrees in Electrical Engineering and Physics and works as an engineer in Maryland. He has given talks about the science of science fiction, reasoning skills, general relativity, the likelihood of alien life and other topics to a wide range of audience; many of his talks are available online at www.larryniven.net/menu/features_menu.shtml. He's married to the children's author, Pamela Love (author of last year's *A Staircase for the Sisters*, *A Loon Alone*, and several other books). In recent years, Andy has been published at *Daily Science Fiction* and James Gunn's *Ad Astra*.

Steve Lubs

Member of Balticon Writers' Workshop since 1983/ Leader of Workshop(off & on) since 1990. One story published in *Analog SF*(1988); other articles and columns in various electrical engineering magazines.

Perrienne Lurie

Perrienne Lurie is a long time fan who ran the Green Room for Balticon for many years. She was the Hugo Ceremony director for Torcon 3 and the Email Liaison and Deputy Program Division Director for BucCONeer. She is active in strategy (Euro) board gaming and has GMed at Euroquest and other gaming conventions. She watches way too much television and (mostly art house) movies (or at least she did, preCOVID, now she streams them when she can). She retired from the Pennsylvania Department of Health in 2020, where she was a public health physician and infectious disease epidemiologist. She now lives in suburban Maryland.

Shahid Mahmud

Shahid Mahmud created Arc Manor Publishers in 2006, with an SF/Fantasy imprint called *Phoenix Pick*. He started publishing *Galaxy's Edge* magazine in 2013, which also sponsors the annual Mike Resnick

Memorial Award for Short Fiction, in partnership with Dragon Con. Arc Manor's new imprint, CAEZIK SF & Fantasy, published the last novel by Robert A. Heinlein (a rediscovered manuscript), *The Pursuit of the Pankera*. CAEZIK SF & Fantasy also published Ben Bova's final novel, *Power Challenges*, in 2021 after the author's unexpected death due to Covid-led health complications. Prior to becoming a publisher, Shahid was a bond portfolio manager working for the City of San Diego. The acting mayor of San Diego declared November 7, 2005, to be "Shahid Mahmud" day for services rendered to the City.

Mark, The Silver Dragon

Computer professional, lifetime fan, now published writer, two stories in Eric Flint's *Grantville Gazette* (and another coming in the next issue), and a novel, *11,000 Years*, published by Ring of Fire Press.

Gail Z. Martin

Gail Z. Martin writes epic fantasy, urban fantasy and more for Solaris Books, Orbit Books, and Falstaff Books. Series include Darkhurst, Assassins of Landria, the Chronicles of the Necromancer, the Fallen Kings Cycle, the Ascendant Kingdoms, Deadly Curiosities, and the Night Vigil. The Spells Salt and Steel, Joe Mack Adventures, and Wasteland Marshals series and Iron and Blood are co-authored with Larry N. Martin. She also writes urban fantasy MM paranormal romance as Morgan Brice, including the Witchbane, Badlands, Treasure Trail, Fox Hollow and Kings of the Mountains series.

Rena Mason

Rena Mason is the three-time Bram Stoker Award® winning author of *The Evolutionist* and *East End Girls*, as well as a 2014 Stage 32 /The Blood List Search for New Blood Screenwriting Contest Quarter-Finalist. She writes horror and dark speculative fiction. She recently co-edited *Other Terrors: An Inclusive Anthology* for the HWA Presents series to be released July 19 by Mariner Books. She is a member of the Horror Writers Association, Mystery Writers of America, International Thriller Writers, The International Screenwriters' Association, and the Public Safety Writers Association. An avid scuba diver, she enjoys traveling the world and incorporating the experiences into her stories. She currently resides in Olympia, WA. For more information visit her website: www.RenaMason.ink or follow her at: *Facebook*: [renamason](https://www.facebook.com/renamason) *Twitter*: @RenaMason88 *Stage 32*: Rena Mason *Instagram*: [renamason](https://www.instagram.com/renamason).

Maugorn

Maugorn The Stray (Mundanelly known as Steve Haug) is a part time mad scientist and full time musician. His strays have taken him to many worlds and times where he collects songs to share. He sings these songs as he accompanies himself on an arsenal of many instruments, sometimes several simultaneously.

Bill Mayhew

I come from a family of storytellers. I mostly tell folk tales but also do some classic stuff, Homer and the like. Much of what I tell has humor in it, even the Ghosties. I love jokes. Due to some weirdness of my brain, I can tell over 1800 jokes. I can't remember my phone number, but to be fair, I never call myself. When I left my job defending the sky in England, I went to my first con—a World Con, held in DC. It was back in an earlier century. Got hooked. I have done many jobs at various cons, registration, green room etc. Happy to help in any capacity.

Christie Meierz

Award-winning author Christie Meierz writes space opera and science fiction romance set in a future where she explores how empaths might live together and what can happen when empaths and normal humans collide. Her published works include her PRISM Award-winning debut novel, *The Marann*, and her most recent work, *Farryn's War*. Her fifth novel, *Rembrandt*, releases in 2022. Christie lives in upstate New York with her mathematician husband and the two parlor panthers who own her. When she's not writing, she can be found on *Facebook*, where she welcomes comments and friend requests.

Adeena Mignogna

Adeena is a physicist and astronomer (by degree) working for over two decades in the aerospace industry as a software/systems engineer and team lead—by day. By night, early mornings, and any other time she can squeeze in, Adeena is a science fiction writer. She is author of the Robot Galaxy series, with much more in the pipeline. Adeena is also a passionate science fiction fan and blogs routinely about sci-fi and science and is one of the co-hosts of *The BIG Sci-Fi Podcast*. Find her at Adeenamignogna.com.

Jo Miles

Jo Miles writes optimistic science fiction and fantasy. Their stories have appeared in *Strange Horizons*, *Analog*, *Fireside*, and more. Jo lives in Maryland, and you can find them online at www.jomiles.com and on *Twitter* as @josmiles.

Miguel O. Mitchell, PhD

Miguel O. Mitchell, PhD (he/him) is a science content editor for post-baccalaureate exams, a retired chemistry professor (after 23 years of teaching biochemistry, medicinal chemistry, and organic chemistry), and an expert on infectious disease treatment. Miguel is also an SFF author (“The Revenant Saga”, *Scarlet Leaf Review Aug-Sep 2021*), speculative poet, and an award-winning visual artist. Exhibiting in the metro DC area. Two of his poems, “A Descendant’s Gift” and “Becoming,” were nominated for the 2022 Rhysling Award for Long Poem by the members of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Poetry Association (SFPA).

Lee Murray

Lee Murray is an author, editor, and poet from Aotearoa-New Zealand. A *USA Today* Bestselling author, she is the recipient of multiple literary awards (Bram Stoker, Sir Julius Vogel, Australian Shadows, and Shirley Jackson) and numerous nominations. Her work includes military thrillers, the Taine McKenna Adventures, supernatural crime-noir series *The Path of Ra* (with Dan Rabarts), and fiction collection *Grotesque: Monster Stories*, as well as several books for children. Her debut poetry collection, *Tortured Willows*, is a collaboration with Geneve Flynn, Angela Yuriko Smith, and Christina Sng. She is co-founder of Young NZ Writers and of the Wright-Murray Residency for Speculative Fiction Writers, HWA Mentor of the Year for 2019, NZSA Honorary Literary Fellow, and a Grimshaw Sargeson Fellow. Read more at leemurray.info.

Mari Ness

Mari Ness is the author of *Resistance and Transformation: On Fairy Tales*, from Aqueduct Press; *Through Immortal Shadows Singing*, from Papaveria Press; and *Dancing in Silver Lands*, the 2021 Outwrite Fiction Chapbook winner, available from Neon Hemlock Press. Her fiction and poetry have also appeared in *Tor.com*, *Clarkesworld*, *Lightspeed*, *Nightmare*, *Uncanny*, *Nature Futures*, *Apex*, *Baffling*, *Fireside*, *Diabolical Plots*, and *Daily Science Fiction*; a poetry chapbook is forthcoming from Porkbelly Press. She lives in central Florida, near a large lake haunted by alligators. For more, follow her on *Twitter* at mari_ness, or visit her website at marikness.wordpress.com.

Chidumebi Njoku-Browne

I have been a researcher of African History since 2011. I have a bachelor’s degree in Political Science and History along with a master’s degree in Public Administration and Public Policy. I have been on several paleontological digs and volunteered as an educator

for the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC. I have been a lobbyist, teacher, amateur paleontologist, city policy planner, IRS agent, tax agent and now, panel speaker. I have presented at two previous Balticons and I run a podcast going in depth about West African history and mythology.

Hugh J. O’Donnell

Hugh J. O’Donnell is a writer and podcast producer living in Western New York. You can find his work online at HughJODonnell.com.

Tobi Ogundiran

Tobi Ogundiran is a writer of Yoruba extraction whose dark and fantastical tales have appeared in journals such as *Lightspeed*, *Podcastle*, and *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*; and in several *Year’s Best* anthologies, including *The Year’s Best Fantasy*, edited by Paula Guran and *The Year’s Best African Speculative Fiction*, edited by Oghenechovwe Ekpeki Donald. His story “Isn’t Your Daughter Such a Doll” was a finalist for the British Science Fiction Association and Shirley Jackson Awards. His story “The Goatkeeper’s Harvest” was a finalist for the Nommo Awards. When he’s not crafting wondrous tales, he works as a physician. Find him at tobiogundiran.com and @tobi_thedreamer on *Twitter*.

Bryant Keith O’Hara

Bryant Keith O’Hara is a programmer, poet, and musician—not always in that order, sometimes all at once. His poetry has been published in *Pandemic Atlanta 2020*, *Star*Line Magazine*, and *Eyedrum Periodically*, as well as recognized in the Science Fiction Poetry Association’s Poetry Contest, long form division. Bryant’s debut poetry collection, *The Ghettobirds*, was published by Frayed Edge Press. Bryant lives in Stone Mountain, GA, with his wife Alice, two out of seven children, and one out of six grandchildren. To listen to more of Bryant’s poems and other audio pieces, please visit soundcloud.com/bryant-ohara and intimateandintricate.com.

Ryan O’Nan

Ryan O’Nan is a TV writer, actor, producer, director and author. He’s currently a writer/Co-Executive Producer on ABC’s *Big Sky*. Before that he wrote on *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, *Queen of The South*, *Legion*, and *Skins*. He recently sold a pilot to Disney+ / Amblin which Barry Sonnenfeld is directing. Ryan wrote the indie film *Albion* starring John Cleese, Stephen Dorff, and Debora Messing. He also wrote/directed the film *Brooklyn Brothers Beat The Best*. In 2016 Ryan was

selected for the Young and Hungry: Top 100 writers on the Verge. As an actor, Ryan played “King George” on *Queen of The South*. Other credits include, *Fargo*, *Ray Donovan*, *The Last Tycoon*, *Blacklist*... He has starred in films alongside Michael Shannon, Chris Evans, Winona Ryder, Robert De Niro, Forest Whitaker, Nicholas Cage and John Cusack. He recently filmed the lead in Kevin Smith’s *Killroy Was Here*. Ryan’s debut novel is *Winders*, and his debut graphic novel *Creatures* is set to be published by AfterShock Comics.

Karen Osborne

Karen Osborne is a Nebula-nominated writer, visual storyteller and violinist. Her short fiction appears in *Uncanny*, *Fireside*, *Escape Pod*, *Robot Dinosaurs*, and *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*. She is a member of the DC/MD-based Homespun Ceilidh Band, emcees the Charm City Spec reading series, and once won a major event filmmaking award for taping a Klingon wedding. Her debut novel, *Architects of Memory*, is forthcoming on August 25 from Tor Books. Karen lives in Baltimore, MD, with two violins, an autoharp, five cameras, a husband, and a bonkers orange cat. You can find her on Twitter at @karenthology.

Ada Palmer

Perhaps the Stars, the fourth and final volume of Ada Palmer’s Terra Ignota series (*Too Like the Lightning*, *Seven Surrenders*, *The Will to Battle*) came out in September 2021, completing her exploration of how Earth culture might evolve in a future of borderless nations and globally commixing populations. *Too Like the Lightning* won the 2017 Compton Crook Award and was a 2017 Best Novel Hugo finalist, while Ada won the 2017 John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer. She teaches history at the University of Chicago, studying the history of radical ideas such as atheism, materialism, radical science, deism, atomism, and magic, mainly in the Italian Renaissance, and the Enlightenment. She composes fantasy, SF and mythology-themed music, and performs at conventions with the folk group Sassafrass. She also researches anime/manga, especially Osamu Tezuka, and consults for many anime and manga publishers. She blogs for *Tor.com*, writes the philosophy & travel blog *ExUrbe.com*, and her Patreon supports these projects and the hope to soon launch a podcast with author friend Jo Walton.

Sarah Pinsker

Sarah Pinsker’s first novel, *A Song For A New Day*, won the 2020 Nebula Award, and her Small Beer Press collection *Sooner or Later Everything Falls Into the Sea*

won the Philip K. Dick Award. Her short stories have won the Nebula and Sturgeon awards, and have been finalists for the Hugo, Locus, and World Fantasy Award. Her second novel, *We Are Satellites*, was published in spring 2021. She is also a singer/songwriter with four albums on various independent labels, including 2021’s *Something to Hold*. She was born in New York and has lived all over the US and Canada, but currently lives with her wife and two dogs in Baltimore in a hundred-year-old house surrounded by sentient vines.

Gillian Polack

Dr. Gillian Polack is an award-winning Jewish Australian speculative fiction writer. She was the 2020 recipient of the A. Bertram Chandler (lifetime achievement in science fiction) award. Her most recent novel is *The Green Children Help Out*. She is an ethnohistorian with a special interest in how story transmits culture, both Medieval and modern. Her current research examines how contemporary speculative fiction novels serve as vectors for cultural transmission: *Story Matrices: Cultural Encoding and Cultural Baggage in the Worlds of Science Fiction and Fantasy* was released in April. She is an Ambassador for Australia Reads. Of her 14 published books, eight were award finalists or winners. Gillian and her books can be found at linktr.ee/GillianPolack.

Jennifer R. Povey

Jennifer R. Povey lives in Northern Virginia with her husband. She writes a variety of speculative fiction, whilst following current affairs and occasionally indulging in horse riding and role playing games. She has sold fiction to a number of markets including *Analog*, and written RPG supplements for several companies. Her most recent novel is *Araña*, a space opera romp that echoes *Star Trek* and golden age science fiction.

Margaret Riley

Margaret Riley is Publisher / Submissions Editor for ChangelingPress.com. Submissions Guidelines: We publish Sci-Fi/Futuristic, Dark and Urban Fantasy, Paranormal, Action Adventure, BDSM, and Guilty Pleasures (Contemporary) Women’s Erotic Romance. All submissions must be targeted for at least one of these genres and must be Women’s Erotic Romance, and must include a HEA(Happy Ever After) or, in the case of serials, a HFN(Happy For Now). Multiple partner stories are acceptable. We do not accept serial monogamy and or cheating stories. Content must be legal for an over 21 audience and geared toward a primarily female readership. We do not accept

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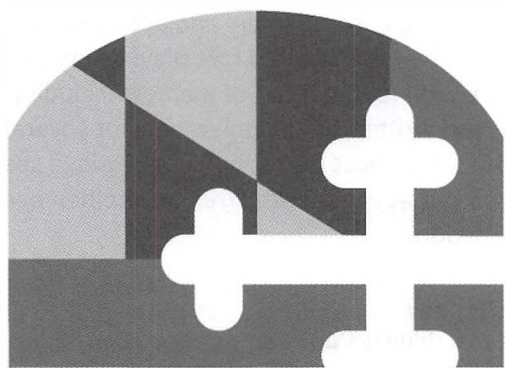
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dave ring

dave ring is a queer writer of speculative fiction living in Washington, DC. He is the author of *The Hidden Ones* (2021, Rebel Satori Press) and numerous short stories. He is also the publisher and managing editor of Neon Hemlock Press, and the co-editor of *Baffling Magazine*. Find him online at www.dave-ring.com or @slickhop on *Twitter*.

Madison “Metricula” Roberts

Madison “Metricula” Roberts (she/her) is a singer-songwriter, clown, guitarist, and entertainer from Raleigh, NC, with sets of material tailored to both all-ages or 18+ audiences. Her music ranges from pop-folk, Americana, and Peter, Paul & Mary style campfire classics and has been featured on *The FuMP*, *Marc Gunn’s Geek Pub Songs*, and more! Metricula is a regular fixture as a guest and performer at sci-fi and fantasy conventions like DragonCon, RavenCon, illogiCon, ConGregarate! You can cozy up with her at the Nerd Music Campfire and relive the summer camp nights of your youth with sing-a-longs and smores, but nerdier! Stream tunes from her debut EP, *Songs for Gamers*, for free online or pick them up via Bandcamp. Metricula is also a founder of the Social Justice Bards, a group of live-streaming musicians and artists on *Twitch*. You can catch her live (for free!) online doing music or hosting *Nasty Woman Knitting Circle*, where she knits... adult novelty items. In her muggle life, Metricula is a scientist, DIY enthusiast, and avid coffee-drinker. She’s totally not mad that the cat loves her spouse, Richard, more than her. Follow her online basically everywhere as @metricula or find her hub at metricula.com.

John Robison

A native of Maryland, John is a lifelong fan of science fiction and fantasy. He loves *Star Wars*, both versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, and anime. He holds degrees in History, and Philosophical Theology, with a particular interest in the history of ideas, and paradigm shifts in thought. He is sarcastic, opinionated, and has a deep dislike of a particular long running television program.

He is also a Priest in the Old Catholic Church, Provence of the United States, a Progressive denomination, with roots in the Netherlands. No, he doesn’t say Mass in Latin. Unless you ask really nicely and promise not to make fun of his pronunciation.

Lezli Robyn

Lezli Robyn is an Australian author, as well as editor and Assistant Publisher of Arc Manor, who lives in Myrtle Beach, SC, with her blue-eyed chiweenie, Bindi. Since her first short story sale to *Clarkesworld*, Lezli has sold shorter-length fiction to over a dozen countries, to professional markets like *Asimov’s* and *Analog*. She is the Assistant Publisher of Arc Manor, the current editor of the science fiction/fantasy magazine, *Galaxy’s Edge*, and the developmental editor for the Caezik SF & Fantasy and Caezik Romance imprints. Lezli Robyn has been an Aurealis Award finalist for Best SF Story, a finalist for the Spanish Premio Ignotus Award for Best Foreign Short Story, as well as a finalist for the prestigious Astounding Award for Best New Writer. She has also won the Catalan Premi Ictineu Award for Best Translated Story twice. Her first solo short story collection, *Bittersuite*, and first novel, *In Her Wake*, will be published in 2023.

Roberta Rogow

Roberta Rogow is a long-time Fan and Filker, who also writes mysteries, often twisting history. Her most recent book, *Eyes of Lorr*, is a noir mystery set in a far future, somewhere Out There, where humans cling to a small sector of a distant planet. Roberta was inducted into the Filk Hall of Fame in 2013. When she is not writing, filking, or attending conventions, Roberta is a retired children’s librarian, living in New Jersey.

Gabriel Saldías Rossel

Gabriel Saldías Rossel (1985). Chilean SF writer and academic. He holds a PhD in Literary Theory and Comparative Literature and has written extensively on the topic of utopian studies and Latin American science fiction. His main areas of research are current Latin American and Hispanic utopian and dystopian fiction, post and transhumanism, hope and the study of subjectivities, punk literature, politics of the imagination, catastrophe and post-apocalypse. He is the author of two short stories volumes: *Fricciones (Frictions, Nadar, 2016)* and *Cobarde y viejo mundo (A Coward Old World, Puerto de Escape, 2019)*. A third volume is already completed and should be published in the near future. He lives in the city of Temuco, Chile, with his wife and three-year-old mystic daschund, Runa.

Misha Rubanov

Misha (he/him) is a PhD student in the DNA Nanotechnology and Intelligent Materials Group at Johns Hopkins University.

Christine Sandquist

Christine Sandquist is an NYC-based sensitivity/developmental editor and author assistant to writers such as Hugo Award Winner Mary Robinette Kowal, World Fantasy Award Winner Tobias S. Buckell, and SOVAS Award Finalist Cadwell Turnbull. They specialize in analyzing and providing feedback on works that include diverse, queer casts, representations of sexual trauma, and broader gender-based violence. They volunteer as part of the team behind *Reddit r/fantasy*, the internet's largest discussion forum for the greater speculative fiction genre, and with the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA).

Melissa Scott

Melissa Scott was born and raised in Little Rock, AR, and studied history at Harvard College. She earned her PhD from Brandeis University in the comparative history program. Since then, she has published more than 30 original novels and a handful of short stories, most with queer themes and characters, as well as authorized tie-in work for *Star Trek: DS9*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Stargate SG-1*, *Stargate Atlantis*, *Star Wars: Rebels*, and Rooster Teeth's anime series *gen:LOCK*. She has won four Lambda Literary Awards, four Spectrum Awards, the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer, and been shortlisted for the Otherwise (Tiptree) Award. Her most recent novel, *Water Horse*, was published in 2021. Her latest short story, "Sirens," appeared in the collection *Retellings of the Inland Seas*, and her text-based game for Choice of Games, *A Player's Heart*, came out in 2020. She is currently working on *Fallen*, the sequel to 2018's *Finders*.

Vivian Shaw

Vivian Shaw wears way too many earrings and likes edged weapons and expensive ink. She was born in Kenya and has lived in Cardiff, Oxford, and Baltimore. She has a BA in art history, an MFA in creative writing and publishing arts, and currently works as a professional freelance editor and proofreader. She writes about monsters, both in and out of classic horror literature; machines, extant and fantastical; disasters and their causes; and found family. She is the author of the Dr. Greta Helsing contemporary fantasy trilogy, *Strange Practice*, *Dreadful Company*, and *Grave Importance*. Her short sci-fi/horror fiction has appeared in *Uncanny* and *Pseudopod*. In her spare

time she collects terrible vintage cookbooks and very nice fountain pens, and writes fanfiction (pen name: Coldhope). She lives in Santa Fe with her wife, the Hugo-Award-winning author Arkady Martine.

Bonnie J. Schupp

Artist/photographer Bonnie J. Schupp died last year from pancreatic cancer. She left behind dozens of photos printed and framed for future exhibitions, including these found by her husband, BSFS co-founder David Ettlin. They have never before been exhibited. They are available for purchase at the art show, and also available as cover or magazine art, by arrangement with Ettlin, who is executor of Bonnie's estate, and photographic and literary legacy.

Alex Shvartsman

Alex Shvartsman is the author of *The Middling Affliction* (2022) and *Eridani's Crown* (2019) fantasy novels. Over 120 of his stories have appeared in *Analog*, *Nature*, *Strange Horizons*, etc. He won the WSFA Small Press Award for Short Fiction (2014) and was a two-time finalist (2015 and 2017) for the Canopus Award for Excellence in Interstellar Fiction. His translations from Russian have appeared in *F&SF*, *Clarkesworld*, *Tor.com*, *Asimov's*, etc. Alex has edited over a dozen anthologies, including the long-running Unidentified Funny Objects series. He's the editor-in-chief of *Future Science Fiction Digest*. Alex resides in Brooklyn, NY. His website is www.alexshvartsman.com.

A.R. Siders

A.R. Siders is Assistant Professor in the Biden School of Public Policy and Administration. Her research focuses on climate change adaptation policies with an emphasis on managed retreat (relocation of people and assets away from risk) and environmental justice.

Art Sierra

Art Sierra (1987), Santiago, Chile. BA in Philosophy. Writes hard-SF. Publications include short stories and a novelette in Spanish, and in English a short story in *Sci Phi Journal*, March 2022 edition, and a short story to appear in *EscapePod* by mid May.

Hildy Silverman

Hildy Silverman primarily writes short stories for speculative fiction anthologies. Her most recent stories include "ROI" (2022, co-authored with Russ Colchamiro, *Phenomenons: Every Human Creature*, ed. Friedman), "The Bionic Mermaid vs. The Sea Demons" (2021, *Devilish and Divine*, eds. Ackley-McPhail and French), and "Raising the Dead" (2020, *Bad Ass Moms*,

ed. Fan). Her story, "The Six Million Dollar Mermaid," was a finalist for the 2013 WSFA Small Press award. She is a frequent panelist on the East Coast convention circuit, former publisher of *Space and Time Magazine*, and a past president of the Garden State Speculative Fiction Writers. For more information, please visit her website, www.hildysilverman.com.

Robert L. Slater

Robert L. Slater is an author, singer-songwriter, teacher, actor-director-playwright, gardener, house-builder, poet-bard. The apocaloptimistic Deserted Lands books, starting with *All Is Silence* in 2012, tells stories of survivors of a Bat-Flu pandemic that eerily echoes Covid 19. *Analog's* Don Sakers calls Lizzie, our anti-hero with a heart of gold, "so compelling, she grabs you by the heart and pulls you along until it's three in the morning, the story's over and you just want to read more."

Alan Smale

Alan Smale writes alternate history, historical fantasy, and hard SF. His novella of a Roman invasion of ancient America, *A Clash of Eagles*, won the Sidewise Award for Alternate History, and his novels set in the same universe, *Clash of Eagles* (2015), *Eagle in Exile* (2016), and *Eagle and Empire* (2017), are available from Del Rey. Alan has sold 45+ pieces of shorter fiction to *Asimov's*, *Realms of Fantasy*, *Abyss & Apex*, and numerous other magazines and original anthologies, and his non-fiction science pieces have appeared in *Lightspeed* and *Journey Planet*. His alternate history collection with Rick Wilber, *The Wandering Warriors*, came out from WordFire Press in 2020, and *Hot Moon*, his alternate-Apollo thriller set entirely on and around the Moon, will be launched by CAEZIK SF & Fantasy in mid-2022. Check out his website at www.alansmale.com, or follow him on *Facebook/AlanSmale* or *Twitter/@AlanSmale*.

Angela Yuriko Smith

Angela Yuriko Smith is a third-generation Uchinanchu-American and an award-winning poet, author, and publisher with over 20 years of experience in newspaper journalism. Publisher of *Space & Time* magazine (est. 1966), a three-time Bram Stoker Awards® Finalist and HWA Mentor of the Year for 2020, she offers free classes for writers at angelaysmith.com.

Jay Smith

Hi, there! I'm podcasting's Jay Smith and you may know me from some of your favorite pod-faded shows like "Let's Talk Endlessly About Star Wars" or "Our

Favorite In-Jokes" and "Now, What Does This Old White Guy Think?" Thank you for your interest in connecting to me at this year's Balticon and congratulations on an excellent choice of pop culture experiences. Since 2009, I have provided hours and hours of aural pleasure to long-haul truckers, THC enthusiasts, insomniacs, and weird randos with stories of zombie horror, pulp heroes, and other weird tales. While most of my audio library is available to you for free, I cannot say the same about my college education, so please check out my books on *Amazon* or at my website, jaysmithaudio.com.

Rosemary Claire Smith

Rosemary Claire Smith is an award-nominated queer writer whose fiction, articles, and essays are available or forthcoming in *Analog*, *Amazing Stories*, *Fantastic Stories*, *Digital Science Fiction*, *The Reinvented Heart*, *99 Tiny Terrors*, SFWA's blog, and elsewhere. Her single-player interactive adventure novel, *T-Rex Time Machine*, is also loose in the world. She draws on her background as an archaeologist to create alternate timelines, explore the galaxy, and travel back to the heyday of the dinosaurs. Rosemary has been blogging at rwordsmith.com/blogging-the-mesozoic/ for the past 156 million years. Visit her online: @RCWordsmith on *Twitter* and *Instagram*; Rosemary Claire Smith on *Facebook*.

Michelle D. Sonnier

Michelle D. Sonnier writes dark urban fantasy and gaslamp fantasy fiction. She uses fairy tale and folklore to inform her work, and enjoys working in the gray areas of human behavior with her characters. She is hard at work on the third novel in her Clockwork Chronicles series from eSpec Books (Book #1: *The Clockwork Witch*, Book #2: *The Clockwork Solution*). She is also working on a new surprise with werewolves.

Bud Sparhawk

Bud Sparhawk's short works have regularly appeared in *Analog SFF* and anthologies published by eSpec. His novels include *Shattered Dreams*, *Distant Seas*, *Vixen*, and *Vixen II*. His print collections are *Non-Parallel Universes*, *Sam Boone: Front To Back* and *Dancing With Dragons*, all available on *Amazon*. He has been a three-time novella finalist for SFWA's Nebula award. A complete bibliography can be found at budsparhawk.com. Bud also writes an occasional blog on the pain of writing at budsparhawk.blogspot.com.

D.A. Xiaolin Spires

D.A. Xiaolin Spires steps into portals and reappears in sites such as Hawai'i, NY, various parts of Asia and elsewhere, with her keyboard appendage attached. Her work appears or is forthcoming in publications such as *Clarkesworld*, *Analog*, *Strange Horizons*, *Nature*, *Terraform*, *Uncanny*, *Fireside*, *Galaxy's Edge*, *StarShipSofa*, *Andromeda Spaceways* (Year's Best Issue), *Diabolical Plots*, *Factor Four*, *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*, *Grievous Angel*, *Toasted Cake*, *Pantheon*, *Outlook Springs*, *Robot Dinosaurs*, *Shoreline of Infinity*, *Lontar*, *Mithila Review*, *Reckoning*, *Issues in Earth Science*, *Liminality*, *Star*Line*, *Polu Texni*, *Argot*, *Eye to the Telescope*, *Liquid Imagination*, *Gathering Storm Magazine*, *Little Blue Marble*, *Story Seed Vault*, and anthologies of the strange and beautiful: *Deep Signal*, *Ride the Star Wind*, *Sharp and Sugar Tooth*, *Broad Knowledge*, *Future Visions*, and *Battling in All Her Finery*. Select stories can be read in German, Spanish, Vietnamese, Estonian, French, and Japanese (forthcoming) translation. She can be found on *Twitter*: @spireswriter and on her website: daxiaolinspires.wordpress.com.

Dr. Mark Stollberg

Dr. Mark Stollberg received his bachelor's degree in physics from the Lawrence Institute of Technology (now Lawrence Technological University), in Southfield, Michigan, in 1980. Dr. Stollberg then went on to receive his master's degree in physics from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan in 1983 and his PhD in physics from the University of Alabama, Huntsville, Alabama in 1997. After being employed briefly by Raytheon Corporation as a contractor to Goddard Space Flight Center (1998-1999), Dr. Stollberg joined the staff of the US Naval Observatory in 2000. His work in the Nautical Almanac Office has focused on producing data on the planetary satellites for publication in *The Astronomical Almanac*. He also produces data and maps for solar eclipses which are published in *The Astronomical Almanac* and two other of the four main books the Observatory publishes annually.

Erwin S. (Filthy Pierre) Strauss

Filthy Pierre (Erwin S. Strauss) got into fandom at MIT in the mid-1960s. He published the *Index to the SF Magazines 1951-1965*. He caused a stir by publishing the MIT SF Society's collection of underground campus songs, and trying to import pirated textbooks. He became a fixture at East Coast cons, playing the piano at filksings. From 1974 to 1996, he published *The SF Convention Register*. From 1979 to the present, he's

done the "SF Conventional Calendar" for *Asimov's SF*. From 1975 to 1983, he published the *Microfilk*, a compendium of filksongs in ridiculously tiny type. Erwin is in the Filk Hall of Fame, has received the Big Heart service award, is a Fellow of the New England Science Fiction Association, and received a Special Noreascon Four Award for contributions to the fan community. He can be recognized by his iridescent "Filthy Pierre" badge, and his mouth-powered organ.

Ian Randal Strock

Ian Randal Strock (www.IanRandalStrock.com) is a writer, editor, and publisher. He is the owner and editor-in-chief of Gray Rabbit Publications/Fantastic Books (www.FantasticBooks.biz). Previously, he edited and published *Artemis Magazine* and *SFScope*. He also worked on the editorial staffs of *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *Science Fiction Chronicle*, and many others. He considers himself a science fiction author, even though 98% of his published words have been non-fiction. He is the author of three books of presidential history and trivia. His fiction is highlighted by a dozen appearances in *Analog* (from which he won two AnLab awards), several stories in *Nature*, and several in recent anthologies. He has also worked on Wall Street, and as a tour guide at Niagara Falls. He is currently the national Secretary of American Mensa.

Beth Morris Tanner

Beth is a long-time fan and occasional writer living between DC and Baltimore. She works in higher ed IT and has a random selection of hobbies including genealogy, photography, cooking and brewing.

John Tilden

You usually see John Tilden (or JT as he gladly goes by) as the coordinator for the Heinlein Blood drive, but he is sometimes moderator or panelist on Heinlein or related panels. John is the current President for the Heinlein Society and recognized as a Charter and Lifetime Member. He has enjoyed attending and participating with BSFS at Balticon since the mid-90s, and became a Lifetime Member of BSFS in 2020.... possibly the only good thing to come out of that year! John has published several poems in small press and had a poem used in the PBS show *Earthscape*. He works for the federal government to pay the bills. Please stop by the Heinlein Society fan table during the con however it is set up and donate blood in your community if you can!

Mary Turzillo

Mary A. Turzillo won a Nebula award (*Mars Is No Place for Children*, 1999) and two Elgin awards (*Sweet Poison*, with Marge Simon, 2014, and *Lovers & Killers*, 2012, solo). Her novel *Mars Girls* (Apex) features young Martian women rescuing themselves from Face-on-Mars crazies. *Victims*, a poetry collection with Marge Simon, appeared last fall from Weasel Press and is on the Stoker ballot. Her story collection *Cosmic Cats & Fantastic Furballs* appeared March 22 from WordFire. She fenced foil, representing the US, at Veteran World Championships in Germany, 2016. She lives in Ohio, with scientist-poet-fencer Dr. Geoffrey Landis and she will not stab you unless you first say “en garde!”

Leigh Tyberg

Leigh worked in comic book retail and distribution from 2002 to 2021. Since the pandemic started in 2020, she has started to write Filk and other music with her co-conspirator in the band The Salacious Crumbles, Metricula.

Michael R. Underwood

Michel is the author of the Ree Reyes books *Geekomancy* (2012), *Celebromancy* (2013), *Attack the Geek* (2014), *Hexomancy* (2015), *Genrenauts The Shootout Solution* (2015), *The Absconded Ambassador* (2016), *The Cupid Reconciliation* (2016), *The Substitute Sleuth* (2016), *The Failed Fellowship* (2016), *Genrenauts: The Complete Season One* (2016). *The Wasteland War* (2021), *Shield & Crocus* (2014), *The Younger Gods* (2014), *Born to the Blade* (2018)—written with Malka Older, Cassandra Khaw, and Marie Brennan—and *Annihilation Aria* (2020). His selected short fiction includes: “The Unlikely Turncoat” (a Genrenauts story) in *Hath No Fury*; “Can You Tell Me How To Get To Paprika Place?” in *Upside Down: Inverted Tropes in Storytelling*; “There Will Always Be a Max” (a Genrenauts story) in *Tor.com*, April 2016; “Last Tango in Gamma Sector” in *Crossed Genres #19*; “Kachikachi Yama” in *Escape Pod 266* and *Soundproof Escape Pod #2* (audio and epub versions, respectively).

Wendy Van Camp

Wendy Van Camp is the Poet Laureate for the City of Anaheim, CA. Her work is influenced by cutting edge technology, astronomy, and daydreams. A graduate of the Ad Astra Speculative Fiction Workshop, Wendy has won Honorable Mention at the Writers of the Future Contest, is a twice nominated finalist for the Elgin Award, and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and Dwarf Stars Award. Her poems have appeared in *Starlight Scifaiku Review*, *Quantum*

Visions, *The Junction*, and *Far Horizons*. She is the poet and illustrator of *The Planets: a scifaiku poetry collection*, and editor of the annual *Eccentric Orbits: An Anthology of Science Fiction Poetry* by Dimensionfold Publishing. Come discover her books on *Amazon* and her illustrated poetry prints on *Etsy*. Hear her as a semi-regular panelist on *Sci-Fi Roundtable Podcast* and on the *Con-Tinual Podcast*. Find her online at wendyvancamp.com.

Mark L. Van Name

Mark L. Van Name is a writer, technologist, and spoken word performer. He has published five novels (*One Jump Ahead*, *Slanted Jack*, *Overthrowing Heaven*, *Children No More*, and *No Going Back*), as well as an omnibus collection of his first two books (*Jump Gate Twist*); edited or co-edited four anthologies (*Intersections: The Sycamore Hill Anthology*, *Transhuman*, *The Wild Side*, and *Onward, Drake!*), and written many short stories. Those stories have appeared in a wide variety of books and magazines. As a technologist, he is the CEO of a fact-based marketing and learning services firm, Principled Technologies, Inc. He has published over a thousand articles in the computer trade press, as well as a broad assortment of essays and reviews. As a spoken word artist, he has created and performed five shows—*Science Magic Sex*; *Wake Up Horny*, *Wake Up Angry*; *Mr. Poor Choices*; *Mr. Poor Choices II: I Don't Understand*; and *Mr. Poor Choices III: That Moment When*.

Ryan Van Loan

Ryan Van Loan is a fantasy author who served six years as a Sergeant in the United States Army Infantry (PA National Guard) where he served on the front lines of Afghanistan. His debut novel, *The Sin in the Steel* (Tor Books), Book One in the Fall of the Gods series came out in July 2020, followed by the sequel, *The Justice in Revenge*, in July 2021. The series finale, *The Memory in the Blood*, brings things to a close this summer, July 13, 2022.

Michael A. Ventrella

Although Michael A. Ventrella tends to be best known for being “that guy who predicted the Hodor plot,” he’d rather be known for his witty novels, including *Big Stick*, *Bloodsuckers: A Vampire Runs For President*, and the Terin Ostler fantasy series. He’s the editor of the *Baker Street Irregulars* anthologies with *NY Times* Bestseller Jonathan Maberry as well as a dozen other anthologies, including *Release the Virgins!*, *Across the Universe* (with Randee Dawn), and *Three Time Travelers Walk Into....* His short stories

have appeared in other anthologies, including *The Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences Archives*, *Rum & Runestones*, and *“Heroes in Hell*. On his web page (MichaelAVentrella.com), he interviews other authors, editors and agents. In his spare time, he is a lawyer.

Aparna Verma

Aparna Verma was born in India and immigrated to the United States when she was two years old. She graduated from Stanford University with Honors in the Arts and a BA in English. *The Boy with Fire* is her first novel. When she is not writing, Aparna likes to ride horses, dance to Bollywood music, and find old cafes to read myths about forgotten worlds. You can connect with Aparna on *Twitter* and *Instagram* at @spirited_gal.

Francesco Verso

Francesco Verso is a multiple-award science fiction writer and editor: three Europa Awards, two Urania Awards, one Golden Dragon Award, and two Italy Awards. He has published: *Antidoti umani*, *e-Doll*, *Nexhuman*, *Bloodbusters*, and *I camminatori* (*The Pulldogs and No/Mad/Land*). *Nexhuman* and *Bloodbusters*—translated into English by Sally McCorry and into Chinese by Zhang Fan and Hu Shaoyan—have been published in the US by Apex Books, in the UK by Luna Press, and in China by Bofeng. He works as editor of Future Fiction, a multicultural project dedicated to scouting and publishing the best World SF in translation from more than 30 countries and 12 languages with authors like Ian McDonald, Ken Liu, Liu Cixin, Vandana Singh and others. Since 2019 he has been the Honorary Director of the Fishing Fortress SF Academy of Chongqing and a literary agent of Future Wave, an SF literary agency based in Beijing. He may be found at www.futurefiction.org.

Sabrina Vourvoulias

Sabrina Vourvoulias is an award-winning Latina journalist whose work has appeared at PRI's *The World*, *The Guardian US*, *Philly.com* and *Philadelphia Magazine*, among others. Her short fiction has appeared at *Uncanny Magazine*, *Tor.com*, *Strange Horizons*, *PodCastle*, *Apex Magazine* and *Apparition Lit*, among others, as well as in numerous anthologies. She is the author of *Ink*, a near-future, immigration-centered dystopia which draws on her memories of Guatemala's armed internal conflict, and of the Latinx experience in the United States. It was named to Latinidad's Best Books of 2012, and was reissued by Rosarium Publishing in September 2018. She lives in Pennsylvania with her husband, daughter, and a dog who believes she is the one ring to rule them all. Follow

her on *Twitter* @followthelede and on *Facebook* @officialsabrnavourvoulias.

David Walton

David Walton hails from Philadelphia, where he lives with his wife and eight children. An engineer by day and an author by night, David has won both the John W. Campbell Award and the Philip K. Dick Award for his novels, which have been translated into seven languages. Coming in October, his newest book is *Living Memory*, the first book of a globe-spanning thriller series about paleontologists and an ancient genetic technology.

Jean Marie Ward

Jean Marie Ward writes fiction, nonfiction and everything in between. Her credits include a multi-award nominated novel, two popular art books, and editing *CrescentBlues.com*. Her short stories have appeared everywhere from *Asimov's* to the anthologies of *Zombies Need Brains*. She is a frequent contributor to *Galaxy's Edge* and ConTInual, the convention that never ends. Find her on the web at JeanMarieWard.com, Facebook.com/JeanMarieWardWriter, Twitter.com/Jean_Marie_Ward, and ConTInualConvention.com.

T.C. Weber

T.C. (Ted) Weber has pursued writing since childhood, and learned physics, filmmaking, and ecology in college, along with a little bit of physics. His first published novel was a near-future cyberpunk thriller titled *Sleep State Interrupt* (See Sharp Press). It was a finalist for the 2017 Compton Crook award for best first science fiction, fantasy, or horror novel. The two sequels, *The Wrath of Leviathan* and *Zero-Day Rising*, are also available. His alternate history novel, *Born in Salt*, was released in 2021, and more books are on the way. Mr. Weber is a member of Poets & Writers and the Maryland Writers Association, and has run numerous writing workshops. By day, Mr. Weber works on climate change adaptation for Defenders of Wildlife, and has had a number of scientific papers and book chapters published. He lives in Annapolis, MD with his wife Karen. He enjoys traveling and has visited all seven continents. For book samples, short stories, and more, visit www.tcweber.com.

Diane Williams

Diane is an experienced technology professional, writer, facilitator, technical trainer, web developer, as well as a creative and innovative problem solver. Her experience includes developing two Internet

startups and several of her own, adhering to Lean Startup models. She created KMG Consulting & Training in 1990, which provided information technology contracting services, course development, and training. Years of writing and editing technical manuals, newsletters, articles and curriculum guides culminated in the creation of two new entities in 2007: 22nd Century Press, LLC, a publisher of multicultural literature and non-fiction emphasizing creative diversity; and the Black Author Showcase, a cooperative learning, teaching, and supporting community for anyone who helps bring a book to life. She is a member of the Diverse Writers and Artists of Speculative Fiction writers support group.

John Wiswell

John (@Wiswell) is a disabled writer who lives where New York keeps all its trees. Growing up, he frequently visited Baltimore to see his grandmother, and it is still one of his most beloved places. He is a Nebula Award winner and Hugo Award finalist. His short fiction has appeared in *Uncanny Magazine*, *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Nature Futures*, *Lightspeed*, and *Podcastle*, as well as other fine venues. He dreams of hugging a kaiju.

L. Marie Wood

L. Marie Wood is an award-winning psychological horror author and screenwriter. She won the Golden Stake Award for her novel *The Promise Keeper*. Her screenplays have won Best Horror, Best Afrofuturism/Horror/Sci-Fi, and Best Short Screenplay awards at several film festivals. Wood's short fiction has been published in groundbreaking works, including the Bram Stoker Award Finalist anthology, *Sycorax's Daughters*.

She is also the founder of the Speculative Fiction Academy, a professor, and horror scholar. Learn more about L. Marie Wood at www.lmariewood.com.

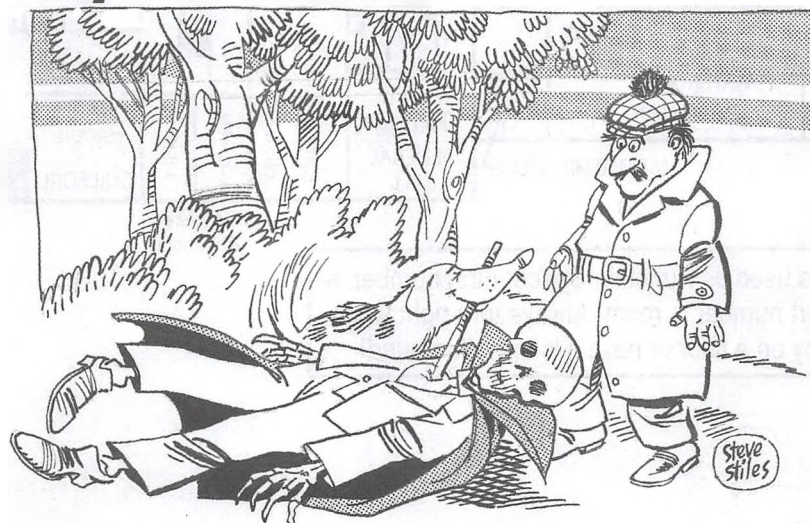
Sherri Cook Woosley

Sherri Cook Woosley has a master's degree in English with a focus on comparative mythology from the University of Maryland. She has short fiction most recently published in anthologies: *Musings of the Muses*, *Cryptids Emerging: Blue Volume*, and *Thrilling Adventure Yarns 2021*. Her debut novel, *Walking Through Fire*, features a mother and her son in the middle of a war between reawakening Mesopotamian gods...in Baltimore. It was long-listed for the Booknest Debut Novel award and Baltimore's Best 2019. The second book in the series, *Ashes of Regret*, is forthcoming Summer 2022. *Instagram*: @Sherri. *Woosley*. *Twitter*: @SherriWoosley. *Website*: www.tasteofsherri.com.

K. Ceres Wright

Ceres received her master's degree in Writing Popular Fiction from Seton Hill University in Greensburg, PA, and her thesis novel for the program, *Cog*, was published by Dog Star Books in 2013. Wright's stories, articles, and poems have appeared in *Strange Horizons*; *FIYAH Literary Magazine*; the Hugo Award—nominated *Luminescent Threads: Connections to Octavia Butler*; Bram Stoker Award Finalist *Sycorax's Daughters*; *The Museum of All Things Awesome and that Go Boom*; *Many Genres, One Craft*; and many others. She is founder and president of a writers support group, Diverse Writers and Artists of Speculative Fiction.

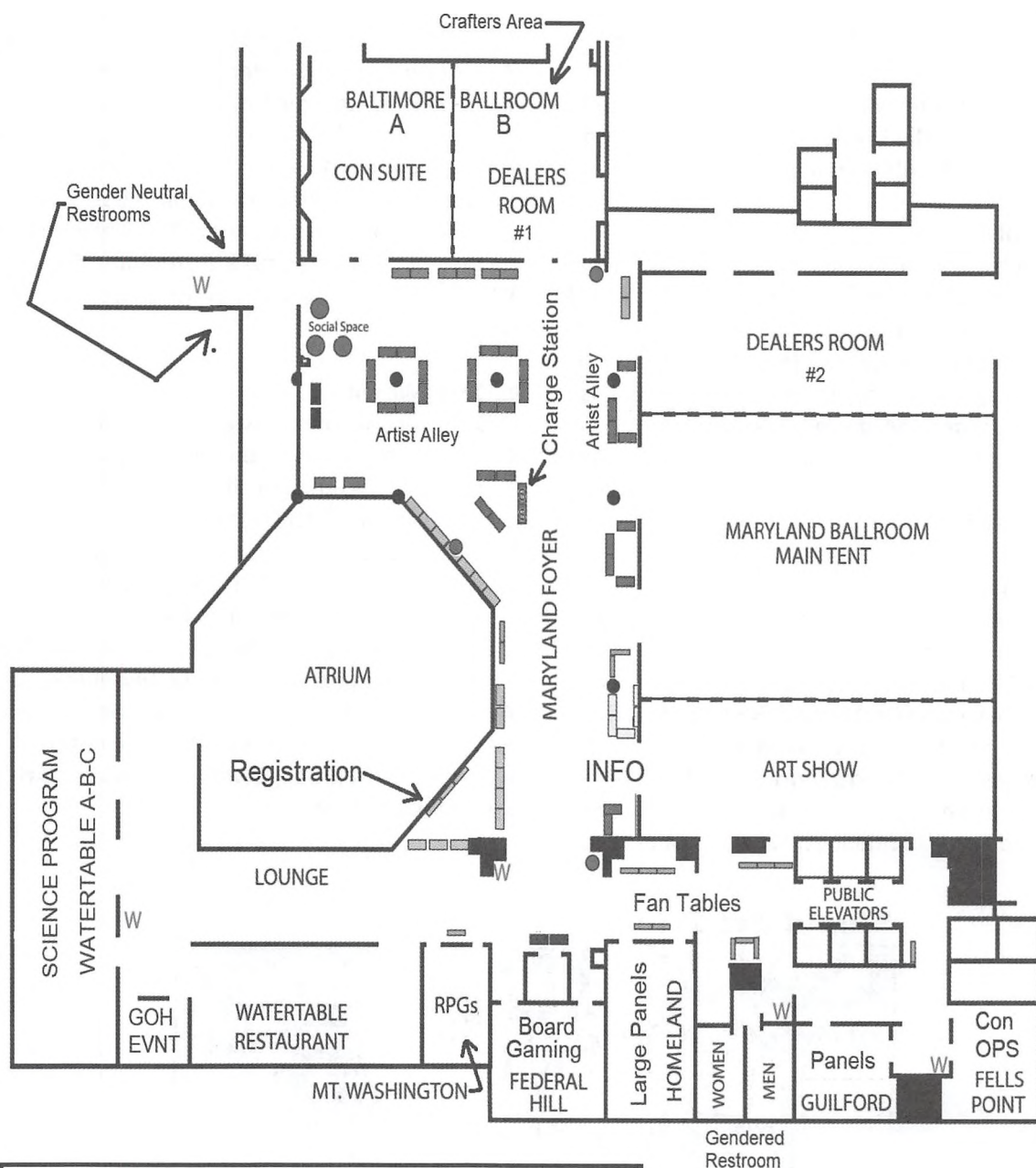
Stupid Pet Tricks



RENAISSANCE BALTIMORE HARBORPLACE HOTEL Balticon 56

FIFTH FLOOR Hallways and Foyers

Water setup = W
 Charging Station tables at electric socket = \$
 Promo Loop Monitor = ●



For Parlor-Suites used as Function Space: First number is floor. Second part number is room. Always turn right when exit elevator lobby on a floor or have a long walk around!

SIXTH FLOOR



Turning Circle

An Eclectic Pagan Community
turningcircle.org



**UUCU at Owen Brown
Interfaith Center**
7246 Cradlerock Way
Columbia, MD 21045
indigo@turningcircle.org
(443) 374-8633

ASTRONOMICON 13

YOUR PERSONAL SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

NOV. 4-6, 2022

RIT INN AND CONFERENCE CENTER
ROCHESTER, NY

GoH's:

<i>Allen Steele</i>	<i>Sara Felix</i>	<i>Chris Barkley</i>
<i>Wendy & Richard Pini</i>	<i>Adrienne Kress</i>	
<i>Tom Smith</i>	<i>The Skiffy and Fanty Show</i>	
<i>Neil Clarke</i>		

Events:

<i>Panels</i>	<i>Writers Workshop</i>	<i>Comics</i>
<i>Tiara Workshop</i>	<i>Cosplay Ball</i>	<i>Masquerade</i>
<i>Dance</i>	<i>Filk Concert</i>	<i>Con Suite</i>
<i>Gaming</i>	<i>Dealers Room</i>	<i>Artists</i>
<i>Editors</i>	<i>Publishers</i>	<i>Banquet</i>

Early Bird Membership:

\$25.00

www.astronomicon.info



BSFS & Balticon Policy Statements*

* This information may be subject to change. Please check the BSFS and Balticon websites for the most current info.

Baltimore Science Fiction Society Code of Conduct and Implementation Plan

(Updated January 15, 2019)



The Baltimore Science Fiction Society (BSFS) is dedicated to providing a comfortable and harassment-free environment for everyone at Balticon and other BSFS-sponsored events, as well as spaces managed by BSFS, such as digital platforms. By attending a BSFS event, all individuals are required to abide by BSFS anti-harassment rules, venue policies, and all municipal, state, and federal laws.

Harassment Policy

Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Slurs and derogatory comments about a person, group, or category of people. This includes comments based on characteristics such as, but not limited to, actual or perceived race, national origin, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, physical appearance, age, religion, ability, disability, family structure, marital status, and/or socioeconomic class.
- Stalking, intimidation, and/or coercion of a person or persons.
- Physical harm and/or endangerment and/or threats of physical harm and/or endangerment of any person and/or their personal effects.
- Touching of a person and/or their personal effects—including, but not limited to, hair, clothing, assistive devices, bags, and service animals—without an express invitation.

Sharing space with other people requires active demonstrations of respectful conduct. Good examples can be leaving other people a clear path to an exit, moderating the volume of one's voice, limiting the expansiveness of one's gestures, and/or maintaining an appropriate physical distance.

Examples of maintaining appropriate conduct at an in-person event could include the following:

If physical contact is wished, a person could express this verbally or with a friendly gesture but is to avoid proceeding without a positive verbal or physical response. For example, extending a hand for a handshake and waiting for the other person to reciprocate.

In general, people should be aware of receiving and maintaining consent such as observing non-verbal and verbal clues that the other party may wish to end the in-

teraction. If there is any question as to whether the other party wants to end the interaction, end the interaction oneself.

Social Media and Digital Platforms

This policy also applies to all social media and/or digital platforms managed by BSFS. Violations of the policy may result in being banned from BSFS-managed social media, digital platforms, and/or in-person events.

BSFS may also investigate and take actions it deems appropriate based on events that occur on digital platforms outside of those managed by BSFS if BSFS believes it necessary to meet our goal to provide a safe environment.

Activities Outside of BSFS Property or Events

BSFS may also investigate and take actions it deems appropriate based on events that occur outside of BSFS-managed spaces or events if BSFS believes it necessary to meet our goal to provide a safe environment.

Threats and physical violence anywhere are unacceptable and BSFS reserves the right to take actions to protect the safety of the attendees of any BSFS event.

BSFS will take reasonable efforts to support any law enforcement requests or court orders.

Criteria for Investigation

BSFS will investigate potential incidents that fit one of the following four criteria:

1. The potential incident occurs at events managed by BSFS or in spaces owned by BSFS.
2. The potential incident involves individuals in a position to represent BSFS or a BSFS event.
3. A party to the event files a complaint with BSFS.
4. The BSFS Board of Directors becomes aware of any relevant allegations.

BSFS Implementation

The BSFS Harassment policy applies to all BSFS events. Event leads are responsible for the investigation and enforcement of any complaints during their events.

Individuals may contact the BSFS President, the Balticon Chair, or any other member of the BSFS Board of Directors to report potential violations of the Code of Conduct at any BSFS event. BSFS will document the information provided, and take those actions BSFS may deem appropriate. If the individual filing the report requests no

action be taken, BSFS will not take action unless a clear threat is identified.

Individuals who have other safety concerns based on events outside of Balticon or another BSFS-sponsored event (including but not limited to other conventions or conversations on social media) may also contact the BSFS President, the Balticon Chair, or any other member of the BSFS Board of Directors. The Board will document the information, investigate concerns that fall within the criteria for investigation, and take what action the board deems appropriate.

BSFS reserves the right to consult outside legal counsel.

Contact Information

BSFS Board of Directors:

Full Board of Directors: bod@bsfs.org

BSFS President: president@bsfs.org

Chair of the Board of Directors: cbod@bsfs.org

Harassment Reporting Address:

harassment@bsfs.org

Phone: 410-JOE-BSFS (410-563-2737)

Postal Mail: PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD,
21203-0686

BSFS Events

BSFS event leads are responsible for enforcement of the BSFS Harassment policy and other policies event leads decide are appropriate for their event. The event lead will report any potential incidents and any actions taken to the Board of Directors for review after the incident.

Changes

BSFS Reserves the Right to update this policy at any time and without notice.

Collections Policy: The Baltimore Science Fiction Society, Inc. (BSFS) maintains collections of books, periodicals, visual media, games and gaming materials, and art related to speculative fiction, including works of and about science fiction, fantasy, horror and similar ideas, as well as works by or about noted authors of works in these genres.

The holdings are subdivided for organizational purposes as:

- the Library, primarily containing literary works and periodicals;
- the Media Collection, consisting of visual and audio recordings on tapes, disks and similar storage devices;
- the Games Collection, containing copies of board and other tabletop games;
- the Role Playing Game Reference Collection;

- primarily containing gaming manuals; and
- the Art Collection, consisting of two and three-dimensional presentations of human imagination and creative skill appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.
- With the exception of the Art Collection and designated items in other Collections, the materials are available to the public for reading, researching and borrowing without charge.

(Updated 1/25/2020.)

Donation Policy: Donations of items for the Collections are accepted by appointment. Donations are reviewed for accession by appropriate committee for additions that will improve and enhance the Collections. BSFS generally does not accept donations of unbound issues of comic books.

Donated material not added to the Collection may be donated to other not-for-profit organizations or exchanged for monetary donations to support the direct care of the Collections. Direct care is defined as providing storage, conservation, and preservation of the Collections.

Donors are requested to label containers of donated material with counts of the items they contain. BSFS will acknowledge the quantity of material received, but will not assign a value to it.

Accounting Policy: In accordance with Financial Accounting Standards Board Statement 116, BSFS does not capitalize the value of the Collections in its financial records.

Material is only removed from the Collections ("deaccessioned") when the designated committee determines the material does not meet the criteria for continued inclusion as part of a Collection or a better item becomes available to replace an item already owned. The proceeds of materials deaccessioned from the Collections are reserved and held for a) acquisition of material to add to the Collections, or b) the direct care of the Collections, as defined above. Purchases of materials are expensed in the period of acquisition.

The designated Collections committees track the number of items received in donations and the number of items donated to other nonprofits without recognition of revenue or expense. Due to the high level of uncertainty about the existence of value in donated items not added to the Collections, revenue is not recognized unless such material is exchanged for a monetary donation. The value of items received when items are exchanged for monetary donations is recognized as revenue in the period in which it is received and added to funds reserved for direct care of the collections.

COVID-19 Safety Policy: At Balticon we aim to provide a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment for everyone, including members, volunteers, hotel employees, and the community at large. In support of that we are taking steps to mitigate risks from COVID using vaccination and behavioral measures.

The following is the official Balticon 56 policy related to preventing the spread of COVID-19 as of February 18, 2022.

1. Mandatory: Completed Vaccination

To attend any aspect of Balticon 56 in person, members and guests of Balticon 56 must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before the convention with a course of vaccination approved for human use as a COVID vaccine in the country in which the vaccine was received, including authorization for emergency use.

This means you must have received all required COVID vaccination doses no later than 14 days prior to the day you arrive at Balticon 56 to allow them to reach full efficacy before arrival. For people arriving on Friday, May 27th that will be Friday, May 13th.

2. Mandatory: Masks must be worn

Properly worn masks covering nose and mouth are required for all convention members and guests in all convention spaces, except when actively eating or drinking in designated areas. Failure to comply is a Code of Conduct violation and may be subject to disciplinary action. The CDC recommends N-95, KN-95, or KF-94 masks.

Convention Members should bring sufficient masks with them for the weekend. Balticon anticipates having a limited supply of masks available during the Convention.

3. Recommended: MD COVID-19 Tracker App

To help make people aware if a COVID-19 exposure is discovered at the convention, members and guests with Android or iOS devices are encouraged to download and install the MD COVID Alert app. More information can be found at <https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/mdcovidalert/>

4. Refund Policy

Members who will not be fully vaccinated by the time of the convention may request that their current attending membership be converted to a virtual membership or rolled over to Balticon 57, consistent with Balticon's existing refund policies.

We understand some individuals may still have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine. We recommend visiting the CDC's page [Myths and Facts About COVID-19 Vaccines](#) for more information.

This policy is based on guidance provided by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and created in consultation with epidemiologists who are familiar with conventions and fandom. In addition, we will comply with applicable laws and regulations. We will continue monitoring announcements from the CDC, Maryland, and local government health resources. We will revise our policy as necessary and communicate any updates or changes to our members. To be alerted to updates, please subscribe to our COVID mailing list. It will be used for updates to the COVID policy only.

Please visit our FAQ (www.balticon.org/wp56/faq/#covid-faq) if you have any questions about this policy, or contact us at covid@balticon.org if you have questions not answered by the FAQ.

Balticon would like to thank DisCon III for allowing us to use their COVID policy as a model for ours.

Thank you for joining with us to keep our community and those around us safe.

Fog Machine Policy: Fog machines are banned from Balticon unless their presence and use has been approved by the hotel in writing prior to the start of the convention. *(Updated 7/11/2016.)*

Alcohol at Balticon Open Events: No alcohol is allowed in open room parties or events at Balticon unless the alcohol is dispensed by a hotel employee (presumably sold by hotel as well) to ensure compliance with regulations of the local liquor board. *(Updated 7/11/2016.)*

Balticon Pet Policy: No pets (except service animals) are allowed in Balticon function space.

Badge Policy: This badge represents a Balticon membership. In accepting this membership, the holder agrees to comply with all convention rules and regulations. Balticon reserves the right to deny entry to or remove from convention facilities any person who, in Balticon's sole and absolute discretion, is behaving or threatening to behave in a manner disruptive to the convention. This badge is non-refundable, non-transferable, nor exchangeable for any reason.

In case of harassment or a code of conduct violation, reports can be filed with Con Ops in Federal Hill, by email to harassment@bsfs.org, or by phone, using the number posted at Ops. Reports can be made in order to inform or ask Balticon to take action.

Balticon is sponsored by the Baltimore Science Fiction Society, Inc. bsfs.org *(Updated 5/15/2022.)*

Balticon 56 Vendors

Arc Manor	Mahali Pengine Ent/Ancient Illumination
Arcane Pastimes	Nate Hoffelder, web designer
Author Patrick Thomas	Old Earth Books
D.H. Aire	Omnihedral
David Gerrold, Guest of Honor	Pendragon Cove Press
David Harten Watson	Rance D. Denton - Author
Devil Dog Studios	Sign of the Unicorn
Editorial Freelancers Association	Sugar Daddy's Fudge & Candy
eSpec Books	Tales of Charles Island`
Fantastic Books	The Hornie Lady Custom Costume Horns
Firesighted	The Mind's Eye Book Store
Flying Koala Publishers	Tigereyes Press
Greek Gods Giggling, LLC	Tivshe Publishing & Ryan D. Gebhart
Henderson's Books	Undiscovered Treasures
KeyLime Creations	Walt's Cards
Larry Smith Book Sellers	



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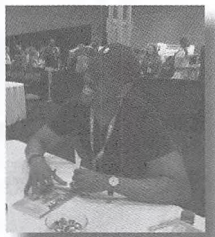
**Artist Guest of Honor
Ariel Burgess**



**Music Guest of Honor
Brad Lee Howard**



**Fan Guest of Honor
Bryan "Bellz" Jordan**



**2022 Compton Crook
Award Winner
P. Djéli Clark**



**2021 Compton Crook
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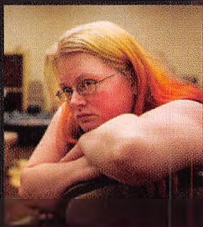
Guest of Honor
**NANCY
SPRINGER**



Music Guest of Honor
Jen Midkiff



2022 Heinlein Award Winner
David Gerrold



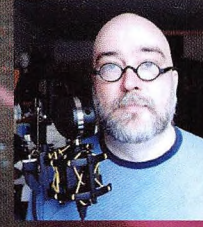
Special Guest
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