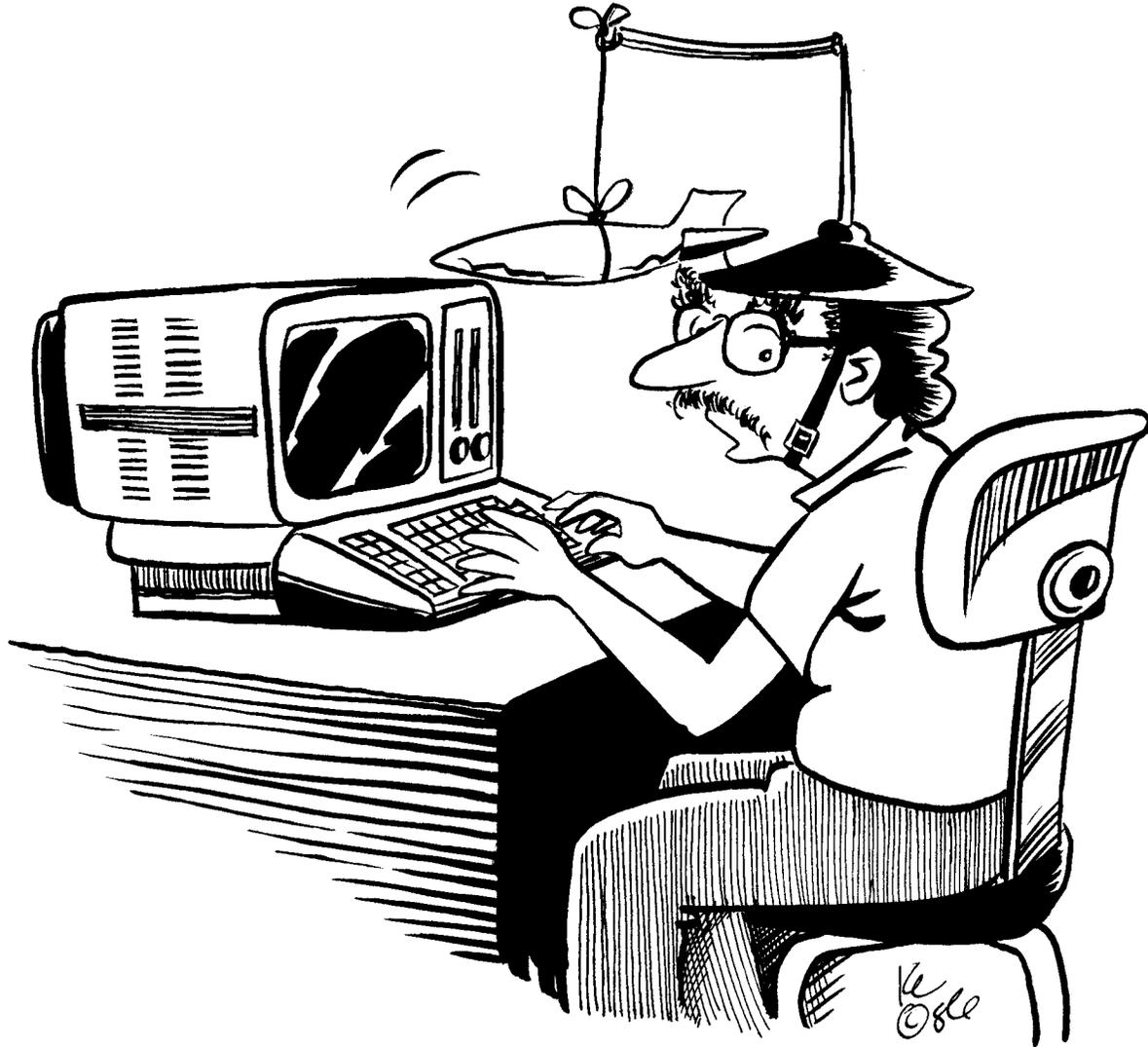


The Drink Tank

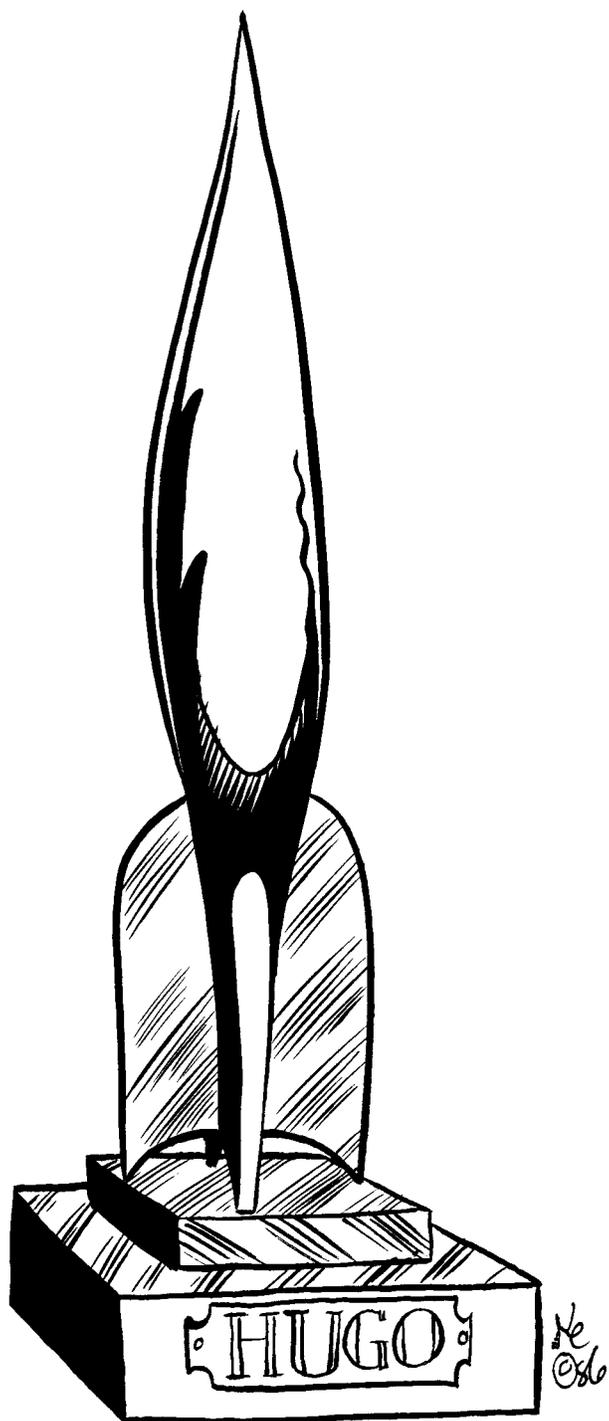
Handicapping
the
Hugos

The Drink Tank



Well ... it keeps me writing.

Alissa—Editors—Chris



The one thing that has been made incredibly difficult by the addition of twin tornados to my family is reading and viewing. I just can't manage. I was never a fast reader, and I seldom had time to read a lot anyhow, but now, it's lucky if I can squeeze in a couple of comics a month. I am now reading *Space Opera* by Cat Valente, and it's marvelous, but other than that, I'm basically reading preview chapters and the occasional short story.

Such is life.

I do get to read a ton of preview chapters, which often are a bit frustrating because they're just a slip, a tiny view. Still, it keeps me a little bit more connected than I'd otherwise be.

So, all that means is that I have to play catch-up to create this issue. I'll be honest, I wasn't sure I was going to bring back the Drink Tank until early this year, and I had almost totally forgotten about HtH. Now, I gotta do it, but luckily I have the wonderful Alissa along to make it a bit easier!

Kurt Erichsen, one of my favorite artists, sent along a ton of images, and I'm so happy to be running 'em in this one! If ever there was a fan artist who deserved to be on the ballot year after year, it's Kurt! You can see his work on pages 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 16, 31, 41, and 43. He's a BOSS!

Alissa and I will be back with another issue shortly (Harlan Stories, most likely, but coming later in the year, MUSICALS!) and so much more.

NOTE No, I have not laid exact odds. Why? I dunno.

Best Fan Artist

Last Year's Winner - Elizabeth Leggitt

Not on the ballot - Mo Starkey, Kurt Erichsen, Alan White, Meg Frank, Hillary Pearlman-Bliss

Sixth place - Steve Stiles

Best placing in category - Won in 2016

Steve is a Hall of Famer, and a great human being. I would love to see him win again, but this isn't the year. He's the only artist on the ballot whose primary output is done for Fanzines, which probably hurts him with younger voters. He finished 6th last year, and I don't see that changing this year.

Fifth place - Geneva Benton

Best finish in Category- First time nominee

I love her work so much! It's gorgeous, and she gets seen in some really good profile places. I don't see her breaking through on her first shot, though. I am really hoping we'll see more from her, and what I would give to get a cover from her for any of my zines!

Fourth place - Grace Fong

Best finish in Category - First time on ballot

Another artist who does work primarily for Uncanny, and it's great work! I love her style, and she's probably the kind of artist who will transition to Best Pro Artist before too long, because her stuff is just so damn good!

Third Place - Maya Hahto

Best finish in Category First time on ballot

I associate the Helsinki WorldCon's imagery with the art that May was doing. She's got a strong, and very intelligent style, and she works in oil paint as well, which is the easiest way to my heart. I am loving that Finns are getting a shot at the ballot, but I'm not sure she'll manage to take it this time.

Second place - Likhain

Best Finish in category - 2nd place last year

I am hoping that Likhain will get a Hugo in this category in the near, and it could happen this year, but just missing that one intangible advantage that would make it a lock. Likhain's Inktober works were phenomenal, and would get a place high on my ballot just for that!

Winner- Spring Schoenhuth

Best finish in Category - 2nd in 2015.

Spring's the nominee who has been on the ballot the longest without winning. That, plus the fact that we're in her backyard, means I'm calling it for Spring! She's good people, and her jewelry is so damn pretty! I think she'll be a fine winner for 2018!



This category is always difficult for me, and while I wish we'd say that Fan Artist work would only apply to non-paid work, I am pretty sure all of these nominees also put work out into the world for free. I am especially happy to see Geneva Benton on the ballot, because her work is phenomenal, and I probably wouldn't have come across it without the nomination!

**Two new-tome Artists nominated
this year**

Above: Grace P. Fong

Over there -> Geneva B



Best Fan Writer

Last year's winner - Abigail Nussbaum

Not on the ballot - Abigail Nussbaum, Chuck Serface, Derek McCaw, Guy Lillian, Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer, Graham Charnock, Randy Byers, Andy Hooper, James Bacon

Sixth place - Charles Payseur

Best finish in category - First time on Ballot

Where you can read - <http://quicksipreviews.blogspot.com/>

I'd never heard of Quick Sip Reviews. It's interesting, not exactly what I am interested in, but I can see the quality and dedication. Still, I don't think penetration for Payseur is as deep as the others on the ballot, so I don't see him taking it home.

Fifth place - Bogi Takács

Best finish in category - First time on the ballot

Where you can read - <http://www.prezzey.net>

Another writer I didn't know until just now. What I've read so far has been pretty decent, though probably not the kind of stuff I'll seek out. I like the poetry I've seen, and I'm kinda digging that more than anything else I'm finding!

Fourth place - Sarah Gailey

Best finish in Category - First time on ballot

Where can you read - <http://www.sarahgailey.com/>

OK, this one is hard for me. I know Gailey's work from American Hippo, which is just so much damn fun! That said, the other stuff I've come across is really good, but hardly to my taste. I can't say I'd have her high on my list, but at the same time, I wouldn't mind seeing her do well, and she has strong name recognition.

Third place - TripleM -Mad Man Mike Glycer

Best finish in category - He's won a few over the years

Where can you read - file770.com

File 770 is to 21st century fannish blogs what Locus was to 1970s fannish reader types. It's the absolute touchstone that everybody goes to. I think Mike's a great guy, I've been a huge fan of his since File 770 was just a fanzine, and I'm still a fan of his today... despite having lost a few Hugos to him over the years. I think F770 will be a great influencer, but I am not sure Mike will be the one to get it. I think he's getting his rocket this year from another category.

Second place - Camestros Felapton

Best finish in category - New to the ballot

Where you can read - <https://camestrosfelapton.wordpress.com>

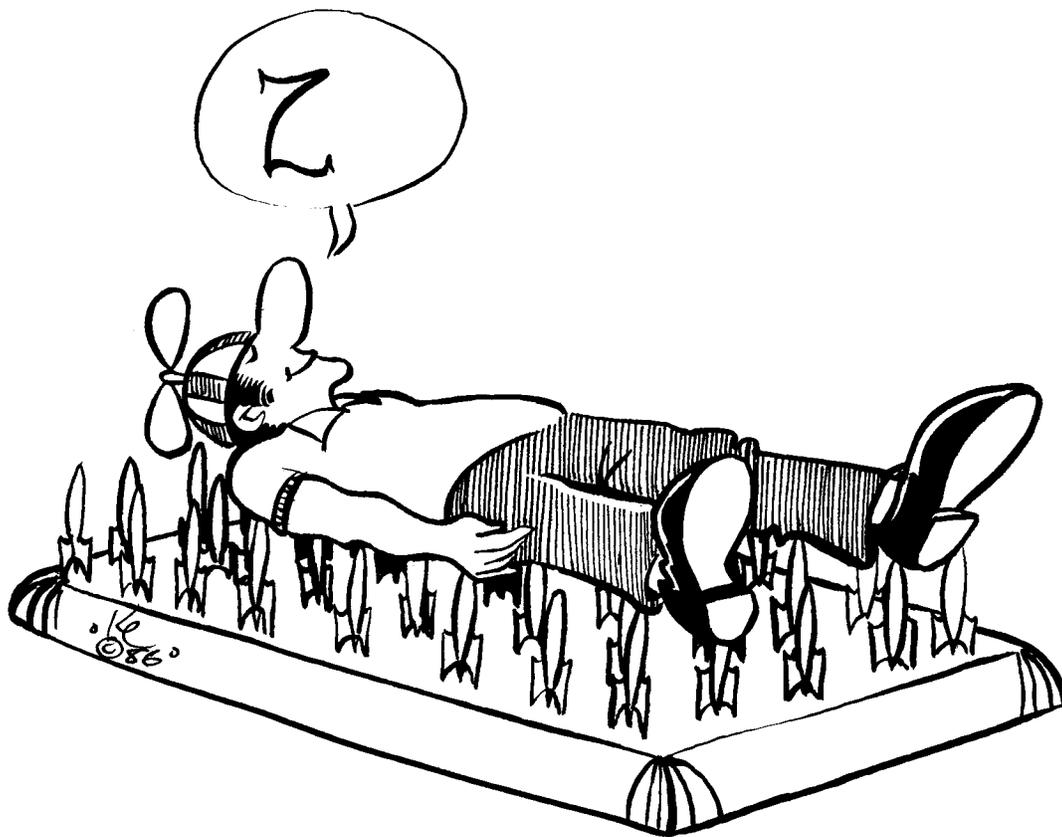
A target of dicketry earlier this year, but a helluva writer, one of the best you're gonna find today. Between large-scale name recognition, and folks being huge fans, it wouldn't be a difficult thing to imagine Camestros winning it all. I think it'll be very close.

Winner - Foz Meadows

Best finish in category - Second last year

Where can you read - <https://fozmeadows.wordpress.com/>

Another one who the dregs of the Puppies attacked this year was Foz Meadows. It's a shame because I love reading Foz's writing, and for a lot of folks, this has overpowered it. I would have said Foz was gonna take it last year, but alas, did not. Still, I am thinking this is Foz's year, and will walk away with the rocket.



Best Fancast

Last Year's winner - Tea & Jeopardy

Not on the list - Fanboy Planet, Nerdvana, Two Minute Timelord, Radio Free Skaro, The Drabblecast

Sixth Place - Verity!

Best finish in category - I think fourth

Where you can find it -

I like Verity! A lot, but I also think it is a bit niche. I've introduced it to folks, and where some of my other recs have taken off (How many True Crime podcasts have begun moving about the iPhones at my Museum?), Verity seems to be quite slow in the move. Still, it's a very good listen and I recommend it!

Fifth place - Galactic Suburbia

Best Finish in Category - Won it all in 2015!

Where you can find it -

I love Galactic Suburbia! I have been listening for a good long time (and one of the thrills of my little fannish life was having them mention me when I won the Hugo in Reno!) and they're still going strong. They've maybe taken a step or two back when it comes to exposure, but they are still among the tops out there!

Fourth Place - Fangirl Happy Hour

Best finish in Category - Third last year

Where you can hear it -

Rena is co-editor of Lady Business, which won the Hugo for Best Fanzine last year. Ana is the co-editor of The Book Smugglers, one of my all-time favorite blogs. Together, they have one of the best podcasts out there if you like a broad look at specific within the lens of overall culture and literature. I think it'll be on the ballot for a good long time, and probably win, but not this year!

Third place - The Coode Street Podcast

Best finish in category - second last year

Where you can hear it -

I've never been a huge fan of Coode Street. It's just not for me. There have been some pretty entertaining episodes, and the few I heard from last year were good, that's for sure. In fact, when I semi-regularly listened in the 2013-14 time frame, I think, it was not as good as it was last year. Still, I can't see it winning this year.

Second place - Ditch Diggers

Best finish in category - 5th last year

Where you can listen -

Mur Lafferty is one of the most important figures in science fiction podcasting and writing today. She's got two other nominations this year, including Best Novel, which I'll talk about later. Her and Matt put on a great series of podcasts, and the episode this year where Mur talks about her noms is the best I've heard in ages. Could they win? Sure, but I put it slightly lower than the winner.



Winner - Sword and Laser

Best finish in the category - 4th last year

Where you can listen -

Veronica Belmont, fellow Emerson College graduate and a woman who has held my little guy JohnPaul (shown left), and Tom Merritt, who is one of the more awesome persons I've only had completely distracted conversations with! They're SF Bay Area based, and they're one of the most popular podcasts out there. I'll be shocked if they don't walk off with a Hugo this year, because they're awesome!

I love fancasts, and one of my dreams is to get a nom in the category, but I can only dream! This batch is fascinating in how different it is, how there are podcasts based around media, around writing, and while I wish there was a more fannish podcast nommed, though it may be that there just aren't a lot of what I consider fannish podcasts out there. I can't say that any of these don't deserve the nomination or wouldn't be a noble winner!



I'm so
touched! It's
the first
Hugo for
"Semi-pro
Semi-
lengthy
Semi-writer"

Best Fanzine
Winner last year—Lady
Business
Not on the Ballot—Banana
Wings! Lady Business!
Chunga! My Back Pages!
Inca! Breaking It All
Down!

Winner—File 770.

There needs to be no further discussion. I'm not even mad, the mortal certainty that I will not be going home with a Rocket on the first return to Silicon Valley, my hometown, in fifteen years. It's OK because there is no doubt that F770 is the touchstone, the 800 pound gorilla. EVERYONE looks at File 770, and it's no wonder. No one covers fandom and science fiction like Mike & co., and I can not think of another guy I would mind losing to less. Actually, I've lost to him before! I mean, he's awesome, does awesome stuff, and I will not mind seeing him give his speech.

It will be a battle for second place between Journey Planet, Rocket Stack Rank, SF Bluestocking, Galactic Journey, and nerds of a feather, flock together. I think we have a shot at that, but really, it's a crapshoot at this point.



The Time-Warp Hugos allow everybody to go back in time, and all claim authorship of the same book.
Everybody wins a rocket!

Best Semi-Prozine

Last year's winner - Uncanny magazine

Not on the list - Andromeda Spaceways magazine, Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet, Hypnos, Black Static

Sixth place - Beneath Ceaseless Skies

Best finish in category - I believe third

Where you can read it -

I like BCS, though admittedly I don't read every issue. There's just so much out there! I only read one issue this year, and it was good, but maybe a bit slight. Honestly, it's only because of the nominations for Hugos that I read it, and I don't think it has the name penetration that others on the list do, and thus, sixth.

Fifth place - Fireside Magazine

Best finish in Category - first time on the ballot

Where you can read it - <https://firesidefiction.com/>

I only heard of Fireside when they announced the ballot. I love the design of the site, and the stories are pretty dang good, but it also didn't strike me as something I'll come back to again and again. I will say that the recent animated illustration for a story was absolutely gorgeous!

Fourth place - Strange Horizon

Best finish in category - second

I believe this is the longest-standing nominee in the category, and it's been one of my faves over the years. It's a great mag, and presents fun stories and articles, and pretty much the only place I read poetry these days. I am slightly off of SH these days as my reading time has slacked, but it's still a dang good zine.

Third place - The Book Smugglers

Best finish in category - I believe it's their SemiPro debut

Where you can read it - <https://www.thebooksmugglers.com/>

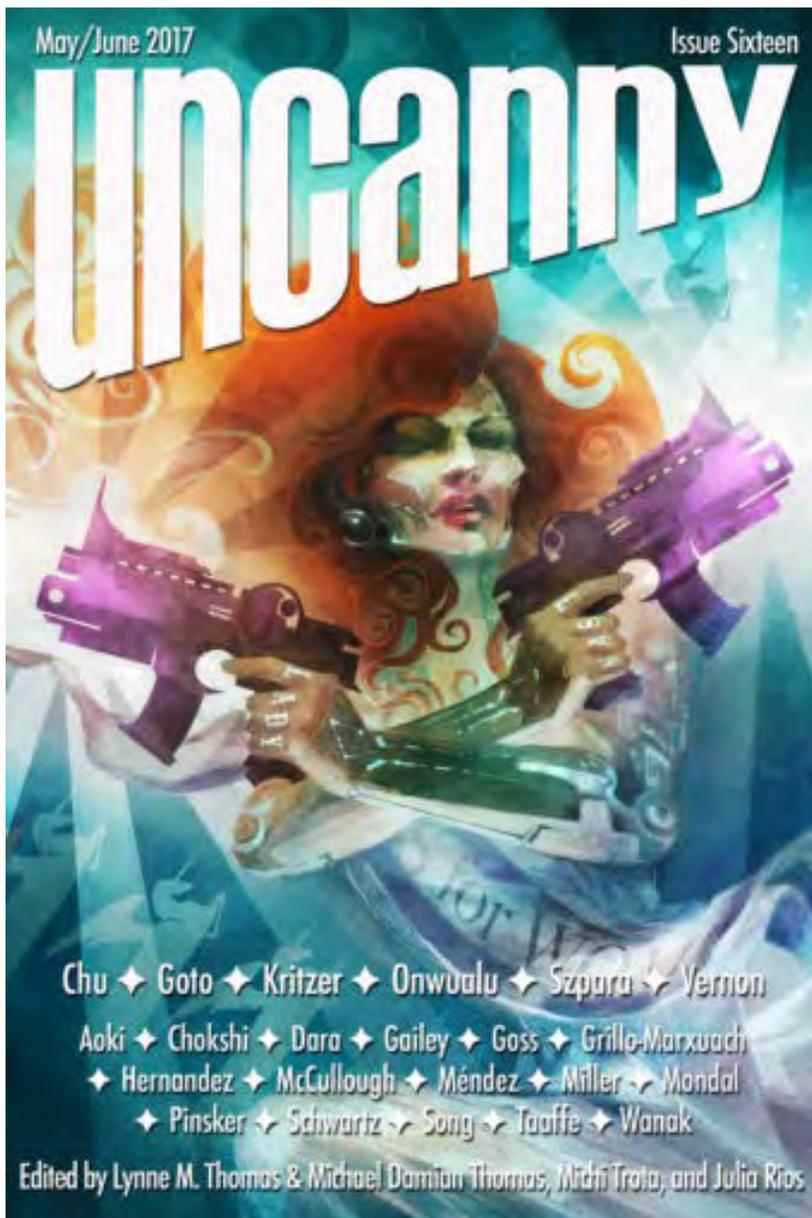
I love The Booksmugglers, and they've been very kind in allowing me to re-run pieces from them, typically in the Handicapping the Hugos issue. I would LOVE to see them walk off with the Hugo, and it could certainly be the cards, but this year might not be the one.

Second place - Escape Pod

Best finish in category - New to the ballot

Where you can hear it - escapepod.org/

Escape Pod is awesome! I don't get to listen as often as I like, but it's only grown in popularity with listeners and especially with writers. Having Mur Lafferty as an editor also helps, as she's transitioning to the role of CONQUERER OF ALL THINGS SCIENCE FICTION!!! Still, I think it's gonna be close, but EP will come up short.



Winner - Uncanny Magazine

Best finish in category - Winner!

Where you can read - <https://uncannymagazine.com/>

Last year's winner, and one of the most impressive magazines of any kind in the world of SF&F these days. I love reading, was incredibly happy to be included in a couple of issues years ago, and there are six stories up for Hugos at the top of the ballot. I'm certain they'll make it to the podium again.

SemiPro is often a great category, and this year it seems like it is where the most impressive writing is happening with the possible exception of Tor.com. I could see this one going to any of the top three, but Uncanny has a major leg-up with the sheer number of stories nominated up-ballot.

Best Professional Artist

Last year's winner - Julie Dillon

Not on the list - Julie Dillon! Stephen Martinere! Daniel Dos Santos! Chris McGrath!

Sixth place - Bastien Lecouffe Deharme

I like his work a lot, it's got that sfumato surrealist sensation that I love. Interestingly, I had never heard of 'em prior to this nomination and I think that's a shame! Their profile doesn't really sing that they'll be taking home a rocket this go 'round.

Fourth place - Kathleen Jennings

Jennings' amazing siloheutte work just stuns me. She's so good!!!! I love it, and I love the style she employs and her techniques, but I also only barely remember having ever seen her stuff before, which is weird as she's 100% in my wheelhouse!

Fourth place - Galen Dara

I love Galen! She was kind enough to do the cover to one of the best issues of The Drink Tank ever done, the Twin Peaks issue, and has won a couple of these things too! Her 2016 Uncanny cover is one of my faves, so why is she down in 4th place? I didn't get the sense that she was as active as most years, and the stuff I've found is phenomenal, but she might not have the across-the-board impact to get her to the podium.

Third place - Victo Ngai

One of my favorite artists who regularly works in commercial ads and so forth. I LOVE his covers, but the stuff that Victo does for ads is what does it for me. I kinda think that will get overlooked by voters, but it really is amazing stuff!

Second palce - Sana Takeda

Second place last year, a comic artist who is phenomenal, and one that we should be giving awards to! She's amazing, and Monstress is one of the most gorgeous titles out there today. Really, it's only because Takeda is a comics artist that keeps me from giving her the win. The fact is, only one primarily comic book artist has won, Fiona Staples, and I think the winner is kinda obvious this yerar.

Winner - John Picacio

It always does me good to write the name John Picacio, he's an amazing artist and a great human being. He also called that the Warriors would be contending for the NBA championship way back in 2013! His Lotteria project is, without a doubt, the most exciting thing going in SF&F art today!

Best Editor Long Form

Last Year's Winner—Liz Gorinsky!!!

Not on the list—Liz Gorinsky, John Joseph Adams, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Toni Weisskopf, Lou Anders.

Sixth Place—Devi Pillai

I gotta say I'd never heard of Devi, but looking at the list of works, she's done good stuff, including what I consider to be the finest novel of 2017—*Six Wakers*. Still, this category, perhaps more than any other, is about name recognition.

Fifth place—Miriam Weinberg

I always have trouble with the Best Editor Long Form consideration. Best editor long form, but here I go! Weinberg's not the biggest name on this list, and while I can say that editing Fran Wilde and Ian McDonald gives her some cred, I don't think it'll bubble up to a rocket.

Fourth place—Joe Monti

Another lesser-known name, though he did edit Kameron Hurley's *The Stars are Legion*. I would rate him higher if he wasn't 1) from Saga, not exactly the largest publisher, and 2) not the only editor from Saga on the ballot and 3) not the best known editor from Saga on the Ballot!



Third Place—Sheila Gilbert

OK, Sheila Gilbert has an impressive list of works edited, though perhaps weaker this year than the last. Still, an editor with Seanan McGuire and Jim Hines on their list ain't gonna do too bad in the voting.

Second Place— Navah Wolfe

There is no book from 2017 that fills me with more joy than *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter* by the amazing Theodora Goss. I've gushed about it over and over and over and still not nearly enough! Navah was the editor for that, plus the very strong *Barbary Station*. She's *Saga*'s biggest name editor, at least as far as name recognition, and I think she'll do very well indeed!

Winner—Diana Pho

Tor's lone nominee, but also the editor of some of the most highly praised books of the year, including *Crossroads of Canopy* by Thoraiya Dyer. She's a widely-known name, and is one of the biggest names who is only a few years into her career at Tor.



While Elaine slaved over the book she *knew* would take the Best Novel Hugo, she cherished her Special Hugo for a Really Fine Cup of Cocoa

Best Editor Short Form

Last year's winner— Ellen Datlow

Not on the list—The Good Folks at Locus, Charles Coleman Finlay

Sixth place—Lee Harris

Gotta say I love Lee Harris! He's one of the most impressive editors in the world at the moment, and I predict he walks off with a Hugo one of these days.

Fifth place—Neil Clarke

I love me some Clarkesworld, but in recent years, it's not reached the heights that it had in the 2010-era. It might have something to do with the explosion of things like Tor.com, ightspeed and Uncanny, but you don't hear as much about Clarkesworld as you used to.

Fourth place—Sheila Williams

I will forever have to eat crow about saying that Sheila was gonna come last the year she won her first Hugo. At the time, it still felt like Gardner Dozois (Rest his soul...) was still looming and that she hadn't broken out yet. She did, and in spectacular fashion! I don't think this is her year, but I do think she'll be on the ballot for ages to come.

Third place—John Joseph Adams

I love me some JJA! Lightspeed is awesome, always worth reading, and he's a regular on the ballot. This year might not be his year, but soon he'll either win this one or Long Form as he's just that awesome!

Second place—Johnathan Strahan

The guy has come close to winning this one, and I think he'll keep coming close! I love the Best Science Fiction and Fantasy of the Year anthologies, and they'll break through for a win, but not this year.

Winner—The Thomaseses

I love Uncanny. I've been in the pages of Uncanny, and the Thomaseses like wrestling! Too Sweet! They've got some incredible stories and are on the forefront of publishing some of the most impressive rising names in the world of science fiction. They shall win and I shall chant "Yes! Yes! Yes!" or perhaps "You deserve it! <clap, clap, clap-clap-clap!>



**The 2018 Hugo Awards:
Best Graphic Story
by**

Chuck Serface

Titles from Image Comics represent a large percentage of my comics reading, so I'm not surprised that this publisher has begun to dominate this category. Image, as you may know, attracts a wide variety of talent by allowing creators to maintain ownership of their products. Beyond the output I discuss below, I wait achingly for trade paperback releases of *Lazarus*, *Sex Criminals*, *Black Magick*, *East of West*, *Manhattan Projects*, and one I never expected to love so deeply, *I Hate Fairyland*. How much more wonderful the world is with the presence of Image Comics.

But unfortunately, this year's offerings from Image, and the one from Marvel Comics, can't compete with the finalist I've chosen as the handsdown victor for the 2018 Hugo Award for Best Graphic Story. Know that I don't handicap in the way Mr. Garcia does when ordering his choices. I merely go with what appeals to me without any consideration of fan-favorite or market trends. Still, even were I to include those factors, nothing could weaken the lead held by who I'm sure will grab the prize.



Sixth Place

Black Bolt, Volume One: Hard Time

Writer: Saladin Ahmed

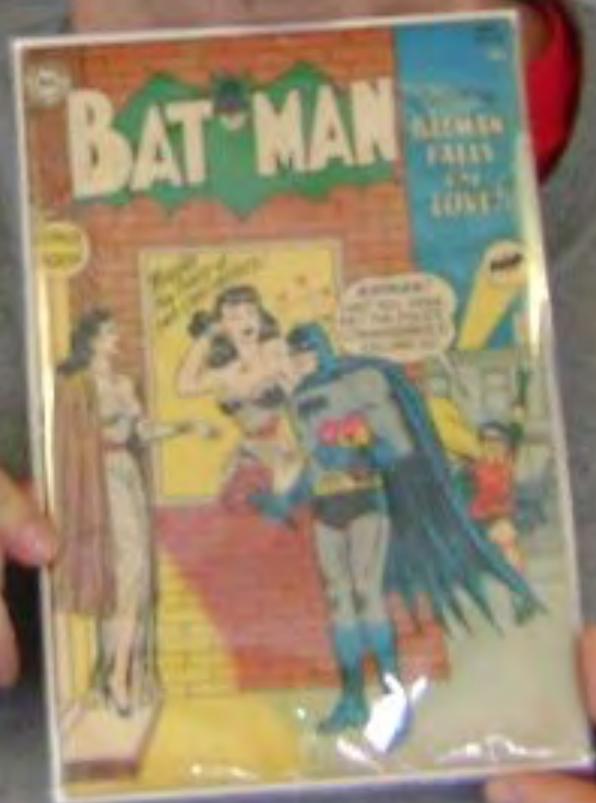
Illustrator: Christian Ward

Letterer: Clayton Cowles

Publisher: Marvel Comics

I first encountered Black Bolt by following the short-lived series *Inhumans* that ran between 1975 and 1977, written by Doug Moench and drawn by George Pérez. Black Bolt had been around for some time by then, of course, having first appeared in *Fantastic Four* #45. Many kings rule with the power of their voices. Black Bolt rules in silence, since his merest whisper can flatten buildings. Yet, Black Bolt had led his Inhuman kingdom, Attilan, through its most difficult times, through encounters with the contemporary world from which it had been isolated, much as another ruler, the Black Panther, has nurtured Wakanda during similar predicaments. Writers at Marvel have portrayed the burdens of monarchy

wonderfully. Saladin Ahmed is no different.



Fifth Place

Saga: Volume 7

Writer: Brian K. Vaughn

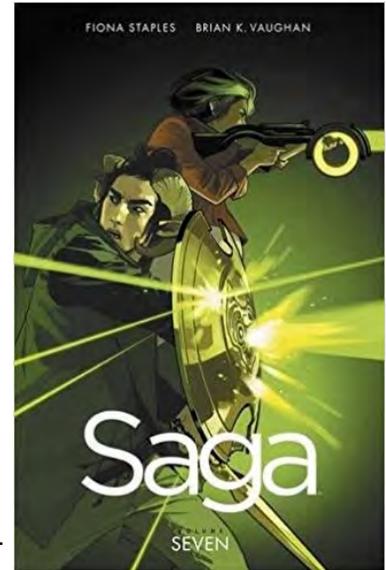
Illustrator: Fiona Staples

Letterer: Fonographiks

Publisher: Image Comics

Brian K. Vaughn has earned the right to pull a Sally Field with Hugo voters, because they love him. They really, really love him. *Saga* already has won in this category and since has appeared more than once as a finalist. If we are in the Age of Image Comics, Brian K. Vaughn and Fiona Staples are leading the vanguard.

I voted for *Saga* the year it won, and while I still enjoy the series I continue to worry that Vaughn, who's at least conceived of an ending, might go too far. I repeat my desire for this series to become a complete whole that I can read again and again like Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*. Please, please don't dilute the wonderfulness.



Fourth Place

Paper Girls: Volume 3

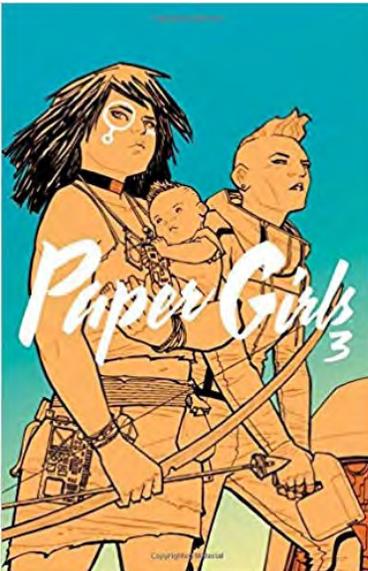
Writer: Brian K. Vaughn

Illustrator: Clifford Chiang

Colorist: Matthew Wilson

Letterer: Jared Fletcher

Publisher: Image Comics



Wow, Vaughn again, this time with Clifford Chiang. I go back and forth with *Paper Girls*, a conglomeration of 1980s nostalgia, weird time travel, and complicated narrative. *Ready Player One* and *Stranger Things* have overloaded me in this regard. No doubt, the 1980s were a fun time for science-fiction fans, but where's it going? Again, I'm quibbling, not condemning. I merely clarify why this finalist isn't my winner.



Third Place

Bitch Planet, Volume 2: President Bitch

Writer: Kelly Sue DeConnick

Illustrator: Valentine De Landro and Taki Soma

Colorist: Kelly Fitzpatrick

Letterist: Clayton Cowles

Publisher: Image Comics

Kelly Sue DeConnick gained notoriety for her work on *Captain Marvel*, for bringing Carol Danvers into the limelight. Critics chimed in with the usual short-sided complaints, and DeConnick responded, “If you want to see angry feminist I’ll give it to you.” Thus, into the world came the hyper-edgy, uber-angry *Bitch Planet*.

The time for titles like *Bitch Planet* is now. With a president who has been recorded preying on women, with a Congress working daily to roll back women’s rights, *Bitch Planet* becomes the perfect statement of societal rage in an era when many have eschewed visions of 1984 and *Brave New World* for *The Handmaid’s Tale*, except DeConnick has given us Atwood with fangs. The revolution is coming, and, oh, will it hurt.

Second Place

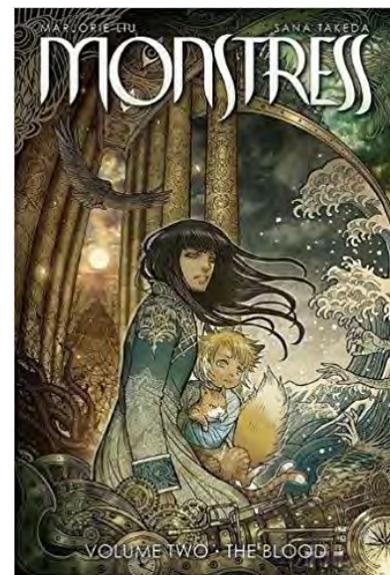
Monstress, Volume 2: The Blood

Writer: Marjorie Liu

Illustrator: Sana Takeda

Publisher: Image Comics

Monstress, Volume 1: Awakening was my pick for winner last year, and for once I predicted correctly. The story continues with *Monstress, Volume 2: The Blood*, and the conflict between the magical Arcanics and the humans who siphon their magic continues. The shaky relationship between the central character, Maika Halfwolf, and the strange, tentacled monster living within her deepens as well. The overall strength of this series resides Liu and Takeda’s worldbuilding which borrows from Asian mythology, steampunk, and, I’m guessing, Art Deco. This remains a story requiring several back-to-back readings to fully appreciate the intricately intertwined detail. *Monstress* isn’t for those wanting a quick comic hit.



Monstress, however, earns runnerup this year, because here comes *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters*, the obvious winner for the 2018 Hugo for Best Graphic Story.

Second Place

Monstress, Volume 2: The Blood

Writer: Marjorie Liu

Illustrator: Sana Takeda

Publisher: Image Comics

Monstress, Volume 1: Awakening was my pick for winner last year, and for once I predicted correctly. The story continues with *Monstress, Volume 2: The Blood*, and the conflict between the magical Arcanics and the humans who siphon their magic continues. The shaky relationship between the central character, Maika Halfwolf, and the strange, tentacled monster living within her deepens as well. The overall strength of this series resides Liu and Takeda's worldbuilding which borrows from Asian mythology, steampunk, and, I'm guessing, Art Deco. This remains a story requiring several back-to-back readings to fully appreciate the intricately intertwined detail. *Monstress* isn't for those wanting a quick comic hit.

Monstress, however, earns runnerup this year, because here comes *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters*, the obvious winner for the 2018 Hugo for Best Graphic Story.





Best Dram Pres Short

by

Alissa McKersie

Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form

Black Mirror: “USS Callister” – Honestly, it’s about time this show got some good recognition! This is a great episode! Amazing SF here! Pros: Great call backs to Star Trek without being too cheesy. Cons: It’s not Doctor Who

“The Deep” [song] – Clipping is amazing! The music in this is fantastic! I almost feel like the song could go longer. Pros: The music! Cons: Where’s the Doctor?

Doctor Who: “Twice Upon a Time” – Some excellent Doctor Who here! The callback to Doctor One is phenomenal! Pros: It’s Doctor Who! Cons: Ummmmm....

The Good Place: “Michael’s Gambit” - This is probably my favourite new network show! I find it hilarious and ingenuitive! Pros: Amazing comedy and great fun. Cons: I can’t quite put my finger on it...

The Good Place: “The Trolley Problem” - I really enjoyed this episode particularly, so I can understand why it’s here. Did you also find yourself wondering what you’d do in the simulation, or was that just me? Pros: This is great shirt! Cons: I’ve got nothing.

Star Trek: Discovery: “Magic to Make the Sanest Man Go Mad” - This is such a good show! Why is it so hard to get this show? Seriously. Everyone should be able to access this show at all times, it’s just that good. Pros: Strong female POC lead character. Cons: You can’t get to this show.





**Best Dramatic Presentation
Long Form
By Chris Garcia**

Perhaps more than any other year in recent memory, the Best Dramatic Presentation Long Form is a complete sampler of what's out there in Science Fiction and Fantasy film. There's comic book movies, horror, cyberpunk, fantasy, a Star War, high-brow, you name it! It's a lot of fun to see a list that so thoroughly looks at film (even if it kinda skips the whole TV season thing)

Sixth Place—The Shape of Water

It's the Oscar winner, so why don't I have it listed higher? Well, it's kinda artsy, which seldom gets votes, sadly. It's also just in there on a year when a lot of great stuff is out and nominated. I think it's a great film to have on the ballot this year, but I just don't see it going their way. I doubt Guillermo will notice.

Fifth place— Thor: Ragnarok

I have to say that it's one of the better Marvel films, and one that makes me smile every time. The music is by the great Mark Mothersbaugh, probably the best score for a Marvel film yet, and it's incredibly well-shot. The only reason it ain't higher is pretty simple—it's not the best comic book movie on the ballot.

Fourth place—Star Wars: The Last Jedi

The film that really upset folks. I finally saw it and I was rather impressed. The most important thing was that it felt like they were trying to break out of the mold they'd created for themselves and it really worked! It's not as good as any of the first three, but I really liked it. Still, it's a tough year.

Third Place—Blade Runner 2049

Without doubt, the most beautiful film of 2017. It's amazing how gorgeous it is, how it took the aesthetic choices of the original and played with them in a way that felt real and lively. It's super-long. Like Boogie Nights long, but it is also super-fascinating, well-paced, and most importantly, it's fresh while still working within an established world. I think it'll do well, but just short of winning.

Second place—Get Out

The material is not quite ground-breaking, but the presentation is polished, the acting phenomenal, and the direction spot-on. Jordan Peale is a damn fine director, and it really made a play for African-American horror (a long tradition that is usually looked at as outside the mainstream) as mass-market commodity. It's the kind of film you would expect to win most years.

Winner—Wonder Woman

It there's ever been a character who has needed a franchise, it's Wonder Woman. She's an amazing character, has a great sense of history, and she's just super cool! I also can not say how much I love Gal Godot. In fact, I've been waiting for her. The film was so much damn fun, and I can't wait for the sequel!





Best Related Work

by

Chris

Tie—Second Place—*Iain M. Banks (Modern Masters of Science Fiction)*, by Paul Kincaid (University of Illinois Press)

Iain M. Banks. I love that guy. The book is really strong too (I only managed to read about 50 pages, sadly) and Kincaid is one of those authors who has never let me down! Still, this is a category where books about beloved authors are gonna bunch up beneath an amazing work.

Tie—Second Place—*A Lit Fuse: The Provocative Life of Harlan Ellison*, by Nat Segaloff (NESFA Press)

Harlan Ellison is a favorite of Hugo types, even if he's still one of the most controversial figures in the SF field. I only managed a few dozen pages, but I totally see why it's nominated. Still, this is a category where books about beloved authors are gonna bunch up beneath an amazing work.

Tie—Second Place—*Luminescent Threads: Connections to Octavia E. Butler*, edited by Alexandra Pierce and Mimi Mondal (Twelfth Planet Press)

I've said for ages that we need a more in-depth look at the works of Octavia Butler, and this appears to be the one that I've been waiting for! I've only just started it, but it's obviously going to be a work I keep referring back to over the years. Still, this is a category where books about beloved authors are gonna bunch up beneath an amazing work.

Tie—Second Place—*Sleeping with Monsters: Readings and Reactions in Science Fiction and Fantasy*, by Liz Bourke (Aqueduct Press)

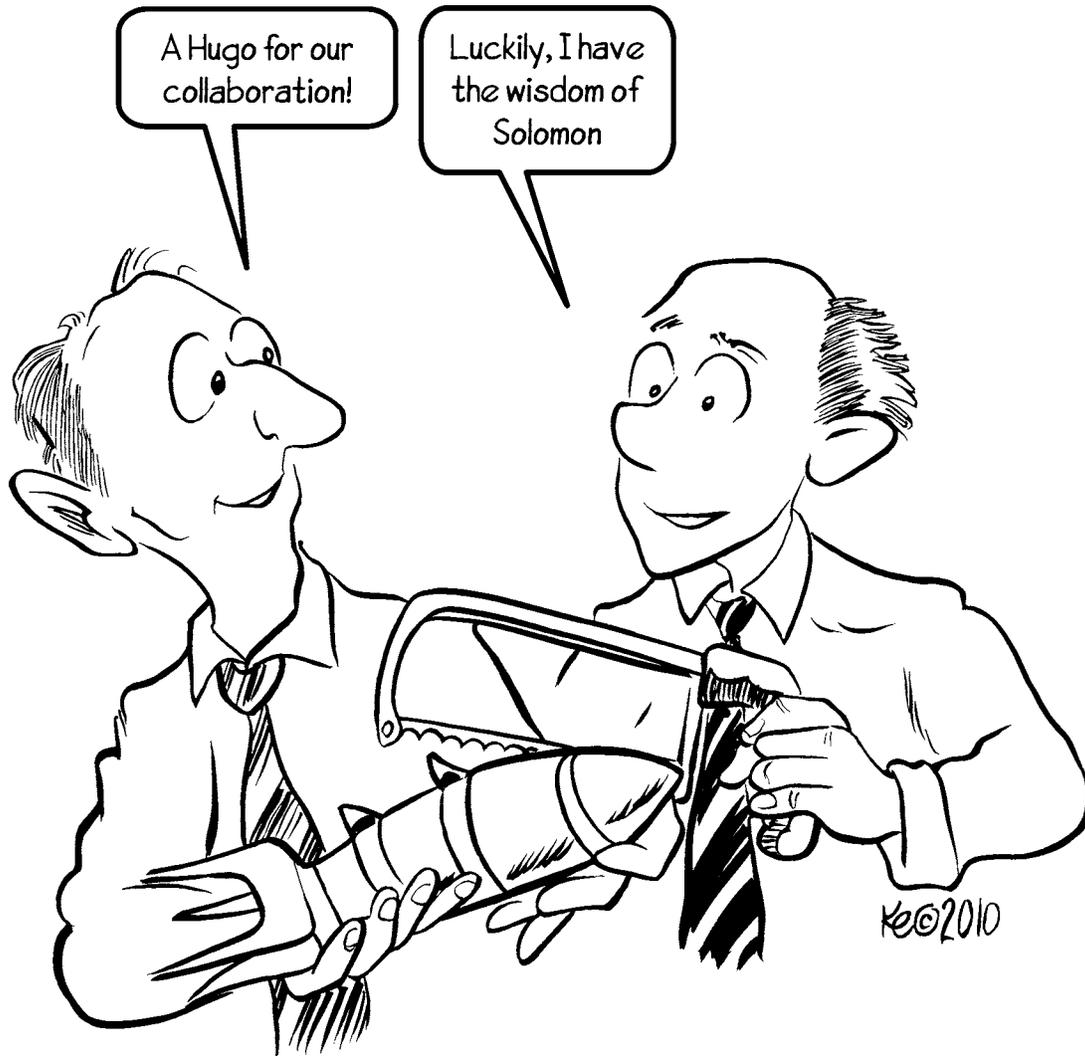
I've only scratched the surface on this one, but Bourke is a personal favorite, and I can not argue that it should 100% be on the ballot, because so far, it's taking the path that I love to read in investigations of genre. Still, this is a category where books about beloved authors are gonna bunch up beneath an amazing work.

Tie—Second Place—*No Time to Spare: Thinking About What Matters*, by Ursula K. Le Guin (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

The passing of Ursula this year has left a gaping hole in the field, as she'd been writing amazing stuff right up until the day she died, it seemed. This last nomination for her fine book is well-earned, but still, this is a category where books about beloved authors are gonna bunch up beneath an amazing work.

WINNER—*Crash Override: How Gamergate (Nearly) Destroyed My Life, and How We Can Win the Fight Against Online Hate*, by Zoe Quinn (PublicAffairs)

Zoe Quinn is the human I most want to sit down and do a full Oral History with. She's been through hell and back dealing with the GamerGate garbage humans, and then she wrote a book that is, without doubt, one of the finest pieces of personal investigation and reporting of the damage that our connected lives can bring. She's an American Hero, far as I'm concerned, and this is an incredible read. The only other non-fiction I've read (well, started to read...) in recent years that hits as hard is *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*, and for completely different reasons.



Best Short Story

Sixth Place—“Carnival Nine,” by Caroline M. Yoachim (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, May 2017)

This might actually be the story on the ballot that I am most interested in reading more of. A sorta-steampunk concept mixed with Toy Story. I love the voice, and the concept world is just so glorious. The biggest knock against it might be the fact that it’s from a smaller, slightly less visible publication, which may mean less now than it did in the days before the Hugo packet.

Fifth Place—“The Martian Obelisk,” by Linda Nagata (Tor.com, July 19, 2017)

Probably my least favorite story, but I can 100% see why it’s nominated. It’s a strong story, one that fills me with a sense of hope tinged with sorrow. I do like the Mars-iness of it, which is a well-trod path, but it also feels like a more post-modern take on it without the bells and whistles.

Fourth place—“Clearly Lettered in a Mostly Steady Hand,” by Fran Wilde (Uncanny, September 2017)

This is a VERY complex story. It’s amazingly dense, maybe better expressed as layered, and I have had to read and re-read it several times. The best part of the story is that Fran Wilde writes the hell out of a story. She’s one of the most engaging writers today, and if it weren’t for three pieces that each have a voter favorite thing going for ‘em,

Third place—“Fandom for Robots,” by Vina Jie-Min Prasad (Uncanny, September/October 2017)

This is the most fun, and strange, story of the lot. I love the way Prasad approaches it, and the focus on concepts of what it is we do when we interact with fandoms. It’s about the distance that fans can find themselves staring at while they are coming to new fandom. It’s a lovely and fun story, and I would vote it second, I think.

Second place—“Sun, Moon, Dust” by Ursula Vernon, (Uncanny, May/June 2017)

Ursula is a Hugo favorite (and I LOVED Digger!) and the story itself is very strong, with a premise that actually somehow combines the best moments of the Stallone film Oscar with the ideas of Intergalactic Space Farming and a damn-near Gilbert and Sullivan-esque magic sword! I love this story, and I can’t say that Ursula doesn’t have a ton of folks who will vote for her, but it might not break through this time.

WINNER—“Welcome to your Authentic Indian Experience™,” by Rebecca Roanhorse (*Apex*, August 2017)

One of the best stories exploring the idea of Appropriation Tourism. This story instantly took me back to reading Chrystos poems back in college, especially with the way that our main character both accepts and dismisses his co-worker’s concerns about the inappropriate version of their ‘Squaw Fantasy’ is to offer to the tourists. I really enjoyed this issue of Apex, and this was easily the best story in the issue. There’s a lot of examination of my Ohlone heritage that I do through fiction, and this is one that I have taken a lot away from. Won the Nebula, and it was 100% deserved.



Best Novelette

Sixth place—“Extracurricular Activities,” by Yoon Ha Lee (Tor.com, February 15, 2017)

This is the weakest story I've read from Yoon Ha Lee, but it's not bad, either. I found myself scratching my head a few times, and it's a bit round-about, but it's also got that sense of prose that means something.

Fifth place—“Small Changes Over Long Periods of Time,” by K.M. Szpara (*Uncanny*, May/June 2017)

This is a strong story, a harsh story, and one that plays with incredible sets of expectations and explores ideas. I'll admit, though I am not always taken out of a story by the directness of the language, but it did manage to do it. I still enjoyed a fair amount of the story.

Fourth place—“Wind Will Rove,” by Sarah Pinsker (*Asimov's*, September/October 2017)

To me, this is a story about history and music, and the history of music, and the music of history. It's an interesting story, and it speaks to the direction in recent years of *Asimov's*. I really enjoyed it, and I think that it's not entirely a satisfying read, it leaves a touch too much to the reader, which I know a lot of folks don't mind. It's good, and should do very well.

Third place—“Children of Thorns, Children of Water,” by Aliette de Bodard (*Uncanny*, July-August 2017)

I can not say enough good things about Aliette de Bodard. She's an amazing writer, her prose absolutely sings, and she's probably the best writer I've read in recent years who can connect shorter works into a cohesive work. This one is not my fave in the series of Xuya Universe works.

Second place—“The Secret Life of Bots,” by Suzanne Palmer (*Clarkesworld*, September 2017)

I love this story. It's an impressive view of what looks like to be an operating bot, but moreso, about conditioning. The way it's written makes me feel kinda hopeless, because I get it. I feel the things that she's giving us rather deeply, which may say a lot about me, but less about the story.

WINNER—“A Series of Steaks,” by Vina Jie-Min Prasad (*Clarkesworld*, January 2017)

This would be my favorite story of the year, any length, for many of the same reasons that F for Fake is my favorite documentary. It's about forgery, about falseness as a methodology, about what it is to be 'real' and artificial and so much more. It's beautifully written, the kind of crisp and clear prose that I love! I believe that it'll win, and it absolutely deserves it.

An abstract painting featuring thick, textured layers of paint. The colors are primarily vibrant red, olive green, and a muted blue-grey. The brushstrokes are expressive and layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The red is often applied over the other colors, creating a complex, multi-colored surface.

The 2018 Hugo Award for Best Novella

by Chuck Surface

For an i09.com article dated February 2015, Charlie Janes Anders asked Tor.com editorial assistant Carl Engle-Laird why that company is focusing on publishing shorter works in e-format. His answer relates to time:

When the book wars sweep across the galaxy, and the blood of publishers runs down the gutters of every interstellar metropolis, the resource we fight for will not be paper, or ink, or even money. It will be time. For our readers, time is the precious commodity they invest in every book they decide to purchase and read. But time is being ground down into smaller and smaller units, long nights of reflection replaced with fragmentary bursts of free time. It's just harder to make time for that thousand-page novel than it used to be, and there are more and more thousand-page novels to suffer from that temporal fragmentation.

The novella, then, becomes the ideal size for the busy people looking for quick reads between shifts at work, or dropping off their daughters at bassoon practice, or even waiting for that last load to work its way through the rinse cycle. Tor.com began by publishing three to four novellas a month and they've been at it steadily not just in e-format but in traditional hard copy as well.

But while, yes, output from authors has been marketed as novellas, much from the Tor.com catalog fulfills the definition for the serial novel. For example, five out of six of the finalists for the 2018 Hugo Award for Best Novella are parts one or two of an ongoing series of interrelated novellas. In essence, readers await the next volume much as Victorians awaited the next installments of the latest by Mr. Dickens. Additionally, Tor now publishes these series into single-volume collections. Sarah Gailey's *American Hippo* that contains both *River of Teeth* and its follow-up *Taste of Marrow* along with two new short stories. Similarly, the three novellas starring Nnedi Okorafor's *Binti* will appear as one book in February 2019. So, in many cases we have novella, serial novel; to-may-to, to-mah-to. As with fan fiction, the Internet has brought new life to the novella/serial novel. The list of finalists in this category certainly highlights that trend.



Sixth Place

“And Then There Were (N-One)”

Sarah Pinsker

(Uncanny, March/April 2017)

When I was training to work as a suicide prevention counselor, my boss instructed we novitiates to imagine ourselves in any number of roles we never thought we'd fulfill. Could we be adherents to different religions or any religion if we were atheists? How about alternative lifestyles or genders? His aim was to get us to connect with those we were learning to help. Listen, get in touch with aspects of ourselves to enhance our abilities to walk as much as we could in the shoes of others not ourselves. Our trainer's most stunning question: could we envision ourselves as murderers? An uncomfortable exercise, for sure, not one I pursued with opens arms, which is why Sarah

Pinsker who dives deeply into the idea blew my mind.

A murder mystery that reads like the love child of Mur Lafferty's *Six Wakes* and David Gerrold's *The Man Who Folded Himself*, "And Then There Were (N-One)," a title that acknowledges Agatha Christie, happens at a Sarah Pinsker convention where the author meets various versions of herself from realities that diverged based on decisions made at crucial points in her life. These include, of course, a murderer and the closest among her to a detective. I've never encountered Pinsker's writing before, and what a place to start. I mean, I call it a mystery, but we know the murder's identity . . . but which identity from the many . . . you get the notion. Although compelling, this story resides at sixth place among my choices. Honestly, these novellas represent record-breaking scores for each writer, and thus I spent hours determining my placements.



Fifth Place

Down Among the Sticks and Bones

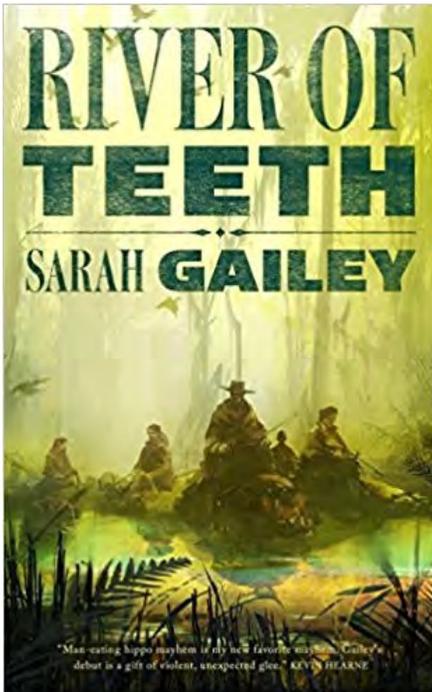
Seanan McGuire

Tor.com Publishing

Months ago, a meme appeared on my Facebook newsfeed that shows a perplexed looking woman above a caption that reads, "That feeling when you don't connect with an author that the world adores." This defines my relationship with Seanan McGuire's oeuvre. While others raved about her zombie novels written as Mira Grant or her October Daye series, I felt only frustration that I couldn't share their joy. Finally, the *Wayward Children* series has changed that for me. I attach quite readily to her theme of returning to some lost facet of childhood.

McGuire offers her take on children tumbling into fantastic realities, tapping into tropes set forward by Lewis Carroll, C. S. Lewis, and, to some extent, J. K. Rowling. We meet each after they've returned from their prolonged journeys and are living in a halfway home of sorts recovering from the shock of returning to our mundane world and longing for where they consider their real homes. Hence the theme of returning to lost moments in childhood. Would that I could visit Bob Sidebottom's Comics Collector Shop in San Jose just one more time, after having stopped off at the Roundhouse Delicatessen in Campbell for a monstrous Italian sub. Each novella takes readers to these imaginary

realms, the one in *Down Among the Sticks and Bones* resembling an old-school Universal horror movie. How can you not love that?



Fourth Place

River of Teeth

Sarah Gailey

Tor.com Publishing

In 1910, Congress seriously considered importing hippos into the United States to address a meat shortage and ecological issues. A Louisiana filled with hippo ranches almost happened, but no, or at least not until Sarah Gailey wondered what if Congress had conceived of this idea earlier and carried it out? Enter the world of Winslow Houndstooth, evocative of Bret Maverick, the James Garner version, and learn why hippo ranching is more curse than blessing. Riverboat, ring your bell and stay clear of the feral behemoths with a decided taste for flesh.

River of Teeth, along with *The Black Tides of Heaven* and *All Systems Red*, also scored a Nebula nod this year, no doubt because it represents a fresh take on Westerns that propels us beyond the Marlboro Man and John Wayne with frank descriptions of character sexual and gender identities while maintaining the heroic tall tale elements of that genre. It's over the top in all the right ways.

Third Place

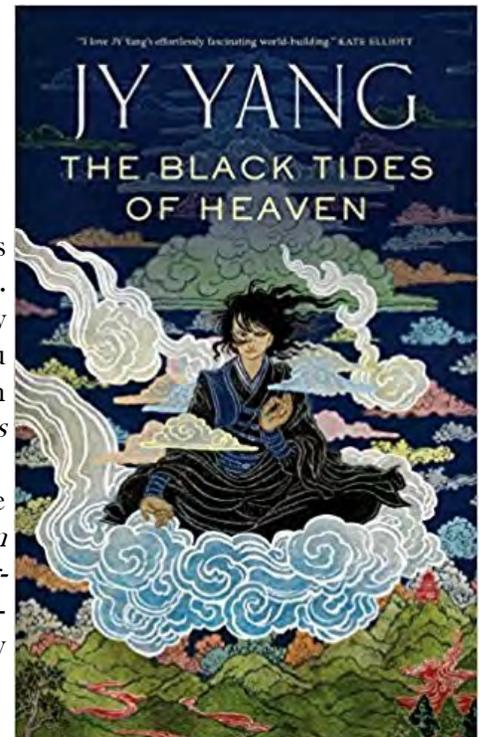
The Black Tides of Heaven

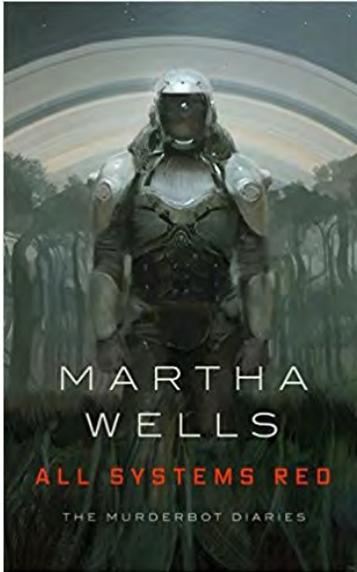
JY Yang

Tor.com Publishing

We're moving into an age where authors are drawing from myths and legends outside Europe to weave robust world-building and narratives. Silkpunk, for example, has grown into quite the thing over the past few years, expanding upon Asian themes and styles with writers like Ken Liu and JY Yang leading the charge. Yang released two interrelated novellas in 2017, the other being *The Red Threads of Fortune*. Read *The Black Tides of Heaven* for the best sense of story progression.

Gailey and Yang explore sexuality and gender openly, but while *River of Teeth* overflows with boisterous glee, *The Black Tides of Heaven* moves with a choreographed grace I've not experienced since reading *Journey to the West*. This is Fantasy as high art. The third volume in this sequence will appear on shelves and in electronic format at the end of July 2018. I'm waiting, waiting.





Second Place
All Systems Red
Martha Wells
Tor.com Publishing

I went into Wells's *All Systems Red* expecting a story about an android, or a cyborg, or an artificial intelligence bearing malice toward human masters, since the description informed me that the central narrator hacked its behavioral governor and subsequently self-identified as "Murderbot," but so much for expectations and assumptions. Instead, readers experience the beginnings of psychological growth, of movement toward humanity. "Murderbot" stems from guilt regarding this unit's massacre previous owners, a situation about which we'll learn more in future entries to this series.

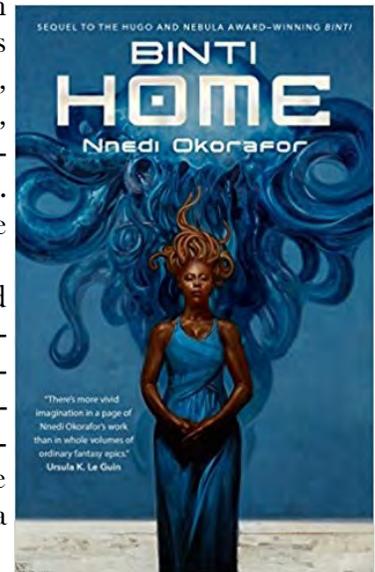
I love that Wells challenged my expectations. Simultaneously, she provides an action-packed adventure that doesn't slow for a moment, a difficult feat given the amount of inner pondering on the part of Murderbot. Wells won the 2018 Nebula Award for Best Novella, but I predict she'll lose the Hugo to a writer who didn't make that list this year.

My Winner

Binti: Home
Nnedi Okorafor
Tor.com Publishing

Not until adulthood did I think to ask why aliens always visited Washington DC, or New York City, or London when arriving on Earth. The obvious answer is that these are our centers of power, but in whose estimation? What of Beijing, Mumbai, and Tehran? Science fiction extends beyond Europe and North America, and writers all over the globe have been bringing their visitors to other cities of interest, and it's about time. In her novel *Lagoon*, Okorafor's alien visits Lagos, Nigeria. With the *Binti* cycle, the two species have been in contact for some time and the setting at first is Namibia, specifically with the Himba from whom Binti descends.

A coming of age story that involves communications between earthborn and extraterrestrial civilizations, Okorafor's narrative deftly mirrors the bumps and successes of intercultural communications between peoples in the real world. Experiencing the "other" is rife with expectations, incorrect estimations, and flat-out manipulation through stereotypes, wherever such processes occur. But if science fiction models methods for dreaming about better futures, the author's spin on the genre provides hope. Okorafor's previous novella won both the Hugo and Nebula Awards. I long for a repeat at least with the Hugo.





***The Main Event
Best Novel
by Chris***

Best Novel

Not on the ballot—Autonomous by Annalee Newitz, Bannerless by Carrie Vaughn, Artemis by Andy Wier.

Sixth Place—*Raven Stratagem*, by Yoon Ha Lee (Solaris)

OK, all of these are based on two things—the first chapter or two and buzz. Yoon Ha Lee has a fair bit of buzz, and the first 30 or so pages were OK, but this is a tough year with HUGE names, great writing, and novels that have a bit more of an impact.

Fifth Place—*Provenance*, by Ann Leckie (Orbit)

I like Leckie, though not everything. I bounced off this one after about 20 pages, but looking around, it's a beloved novel! The pitch of the novel totally had me thinking about *Monuments Men*, but it didn't come across in the early pages. I can see it doing pretty well, but I know we'll see Leckie accepting another one of these in the near.

Fourth Place— *New York 2140*, by Kim Stanley Robinson (Orbit)

Love me some KSR! This is a wonderful book, but it's also not an easy read. That's often the case with Stan's novels, and this one deals with climate change in a very intelligent way. I was interviewing Chip Lord, one-half of the art team Ant Farm, and he was incredibly interested in the story because "he gets it."

Third place—*The Stone Sky*, by N.K. Jemisin (Orbit)

OK, I like a lot of Jemisin's works, and this one I would have tried to go further than the 50 pages I managed when I ran out of time. I can get into Jemisin's prose, though I can find myself wandering off of it, which happened a lot in *The Obelisk Gate*. I would normally rank this higher, but the buzz up top is pretty heated!

Second place—*The Collapsing Empire* by John Scalzi

I've been writing these Top 25 Lists for a contract for the last year, and when I had to do the best of Recent Space Opera, *The Collapsing Empire* was one of the top five. It's a solid novel, and the idea of the Interdependency is awesome! The far-future stuff tends to be REALLY difficult for me to get into, but this one just flat out works. Scalzi's got a huge fanbase, and the book's been sold to TV, but it falls slightly short of the winner's circle...

AND THE WINNER IS...

SIX WAKES by MUR LAFFERTY (Orbit)

OK, I'm a mystery guy, and I think Mur is one of the finest writers in the world today. This is a version of the locked room mystery, but it's so much more, and it's so beautifully written, and the flow of the story rivals everything else I've read from any of the masters of both mystery and science fiction. In fact, her prose reminds me a bit of John MacDonald. Mur makes it endlessly readable, and I can not see anything else walking off with the Hugo!

A chocolate Hugo?

The next award's for "Best Juvenile SF." It's made out of bubble gum.





Letter Graded Mail

Let us begin with the great Mark Plummer!

Chris!

New Drink Tank and it's almost like it's 2015 again. As a non-Facebook user -- I rely on increasing infrequent visits from James for the occasional bulletin -- I wasn't entirely up to speed with all the recent instalments of the CeeGar story. I didn't know you'd moved and gone to live up a mountain. I now envisage you living in a wooden cabin precariously tottering on a snow capped peak. Obviously you need Benji and JohnPaul to keep it balanced.

Actually, a small practical point. We're still sending you fanzines at 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd -- the Museum, I think. Are they still reaching you?

'So, why issue 401?' you imagine us asking. Ooh, I think I know this one. Sir, is it because the previous issue was #400? Perhaps fatherhood has instilled a sense of numerical constancy. Anything is possible from The Drink Tank 2.0 and indeed All New Chris Garcia. I mean, who would ever have imagined Classic Chris Garcia uttering the words 'slower schedule'? Classic Chris would already be on DT v2.1 by now. Or v2.2. Can its reinvention as The Drink Tank Five-Yearly be far behind?

But anyway, good to see you again -- I don't think I've actually seen you since 2012 -- and thanks for the catch-up. And I'd better not delay too long over this email just in case you're aspiration for a slower schedule falls prey to your enthusiasm.

Best...

Mark

Croydon, UK

Always great to hear from ya, Mark! Yep, the Zines are still coming (I think I have a few unsent, mostly begun LoCs for Banana Wings in my mailer) and I'll never leave this museum! Benji enjoys BW, by the way. In the proud family tradition, he's taken to coloring in them. He's a bit of a handful, don't you know!

It's slower, yes, but far from glacial scheduling! Alissa and I are thinking about 10 to 15 issues over the course of the year (for example, this one! Musicals, which we're doing for the Fall, the Heavy Metal issue (can't wait to get that one out!) and a few others! With James all-in on Dublin 2019 (and it's gonna be a great con, and I'm hoping that we'll be able to make it out!) Journey Planet has slowed a bit (though there are a few on the docket that are going to be pretty awesome!) and Drink Tank's gonna get a lot of the time I typically spend on working on JP!

Thanks much, Mark! You're the man!!!

!





And Now... Alexander Case!!!

Glad to see the Drink Tank back - though I've learned my lesson from LL Cool J and I will not call it a comeback, as you've been here for years. I will also definitely be adding the Match of the Year Podcast to my list of podcasts to listen to - I've been looking for a good wrestling podcast to listen to, and having something to go with Canadian Sketch Comedy troupe LoadingReadyRun's "Sidewalk Slam" podcast is great.

-Associate Editor for Bureau42.com

Host of "Breaking it all Down" & "The Nintendo Power Retrospectives" on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/)

I need to listen to Sidewalk Slam! The best wrestling podcasts I listen to right now are the Wrestling Observer Podcast, Bahu's History of FMW, but it's the true crime cross-over Crime in Sports that's got my attention at the moment. They did episodes on Gentleman Chris Adams, Sunny, Jake the Snake, and even Joe Son. It's a bit dark, and at times pretty problematic.

I've got a few unfinished LoCs on Breaking It All Down to send... someday.

