



Western Writers of America Announces 2023 Spur Award Winners and Finalists

Contemporary, period novels, short fiction, nonfiction works, biographies, juvenile books, children's picture books, poems, songs, screenplays honored

TUCSON, ARIZONA, UNITED STATES, March 4, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pulitzer Prize finalist Megan Kate Nelson and Emmy Award-winning Walter Hill are among the 2023 Spur Award winners, [Western Writers of America](#) announced Saturday.

Nelson's *Saving Yellowstone: Exploration and Preservation in Reconstruction America* won the Spur for Best Western Historical Nonfiction Book. Her *The Three-Cornered War: The Union, the Confederacy, and Native Peoples in the Fight for the West* was a 2021 Pulitzer finalist for history. Scribner published both books.

Hill, an Emmy winner for directing HBO's *Deadwood* (2004) and co-producing AMC's *Broken Trail* (2006), won a Spur for his screenplay for *Dead for a Dollar* (CHAOS a Film Company/Polaris Pictures), which he also directed.

Winners and finalists were announced at the [Tucson Festival of Books](#). Presentations are scheduled during WWA's convention June 21-24 in Rapid City, S.D.

Since 1953, Western Writers of America ([WesternWriters.org](#)) has promoted and honored the best in Western literature with the annual [Spur Awards](#), selected by panels of judges. Awards, for material published last year, are given for works whose inspiration, image and literary excellence best represent the reality and spirit of the American West.

CK Van Dam's *Proving Her Claim: On the Dakota Frontier* by (Pasque Publishing) won Spurs for Best Western Romance Novel and Best First Novel.

Other winners:

Biography: *Before Billy the Kid: The Boy Behind the Legendary Outlaw* by Melody Groves (TwoDot).

Children's Picture Book: *The Rowdy Randy Wild West Show: The Legend Behind the Legend* by author Casey Day Rislov and illustrator Zachary Pullen (Mountain Stars Press).

Contemporary Nonfiction Book: *A Place of Thin Veil: Life and Death in Gallup, New Mexico* by Bob Rosebrough (Rio Nuevo Publishers).

Contemporary Novel: *Beasts of the Earth* by James Wade (Blackstone Publishing).

Documentary Script: *The Battle of Red Buttes* by Candy Moulton and Bob Noll (Boston Productions Inc./National Historic Trails Interpretive Center).

First Nonfiction Book: *American Hero, Kansas Heritage: Frederick Funston's Early Years, 1865-1890* by Clyde W. Toland (Flint Hills Publishing).

Historical Novel: *Properties of Thirst* by Marianne Wiggins (Simon & Schuster).

Juvenile Nonfiction Book: *American Ace: Joe Foss, Fighter Pilot* by Hector Curriel (South Dakota Historical Society Press).

Juvenile Fiction: *Wish Upon a Crawdad* by Curtis W. Condon (Heart of Oak Books for Young Readers).

Original Mass-Market Paperback Novel: *Dead Man's Trail* by Nate Morgan (Pinnacle/Kensington).

Poem: "New Mexico Bootheel: A Triptych" by Larry D. Thomas (San Pedro River Review).

Short Fiction: "No Quarter" by Kathleen O'Neal Gear, published in *Rebel Hearts Anthology* (Wolfpack Publishing).

Short Nonfiction: "Texas Jack Takes an Encore" by Matthew Ross Kerns (*Wild West*).

Song: "Way of the Cowboy" by Randy Huston, released on *Times Like These* (Outside Circle Records).

Traditional Novel: *The Secret in the Wall: A Silver Rush Mystery* by Ann Parker (Poisoned Pen Press).

Finalists

Biography: *Country Never Trod: William Lewis Manly's 1849 Voyage down Utah's Green River* by Michael D. Kane (TwoDot); *King Fisher: The Short Life and Elusive Legend of a Texas Desperado* by Chuck Parsons and Thomas C. Bicknell (University of North Texas Press); *Raphael Pumpelly's Arizona: The Frontier Adventures of a Young Mining Engineer* by C. Gilbert Storms (Wheatmark).

Children's Picture Book: *A Place for Harvest: The Story of Kenny Higashi* by author Lauren R. Harris and illustrator Felicia Hoshino (South Dakota Historical Society Press); *Buzz the Not-So-*

Brave by author Dani Nichols and illustrator Kristin McNess Moran (Punchline Publishers).

Contemporary Nonfiction Book: Wilted Wings: A Hunter's Fight for Eagles by Mike McTee (Riverfeet Press).

Contemporary Novel: Blind Eye by Martha Burns (Atmosphere Press); River Woman, River Demon by Jennifer Givhan (Blackstone Publishing).

Documentary Script: The Unlucky 13 by Rob Word (A Word on Westerns/YouTube); Wagon Master: Hansen's Hand Crafted History by Travis Boley (Knowledge Tree Films/Oregon-California Trails Association).

Drama Script: Under the Banner of Heaven: (Episode Five) One Mighty and Strong by Brandon Boyce (Aggregate Films/FX/Imagine); Desperate Riders by Lee Martin (Feifer Worldwide/Milestone Studios).

Historical Nonfiction Book: The Earth Is All That Lasts: Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and the Last Stand of the Great Sioux Nation by Mark Lee Gardner (Mariner);

The Widowed Ones: Beyond the Battle of the Little Bighorn by Chris Enss and Howard Kazanjian with Chris Kortlander (TwoDot).

Historical Novel: Pony Boys by Richard Prosch (Five Star Publishing); Justice for All: The Search for Big Poker Tom: A Historical Novel by Wayne E. Purcell (self-published).

Juvenile Nonfiction Book: Chili Time, Y'all! How Texas Found Its State Cuisine by Jennifer Coleman (Pelican Publishing Company).

Juvenile Fiction: Where Duty Calls: Rebels Along the Rio Grande, Book 1 by Jennifer Bohnhoff (Kinkajou Press); Tenmile by Sandra Dallas (Sleeping Bear Press).

Original Mass-Market Paperback Novel: The Unlikely Lawman by Steve Kelton (Forge).

Poem: Finalists: "XP Pony Rider" by Quackgrass Sally (Pony Express Gazette); "The Last Request" by Frederick McDonald, published in Dreams and Journeys (Harbour Publishing); "No Roof but Sky: Roberts Mountains, Nevada" by Susan Cummins Miller, published in Making Silent Stones Sing (Finishing Line Press).

Romance Novel: Yet I Will Love Him by Carla Kelly, published in When We Meet Again: Two Stories of World War II (Camel Press); Hearts and Mountains by Lynn Eldridge (Wolfpack Publishing).

Short Fiction: "Lizzie Noel" by Charlotte Hinger, published in Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine;

"The Cobbler of Spanish Fort" by Johnny D. Boggs, published in The Cobbler of Spanish Fort and Other Frontier Stories (Five Star Publishing).

Short Nonfiction: "Apostles of Disorder: Montana Merchants, Vigilantes, and the Interconnectivity of Extralegal Violence" by Patrick T. Hoehne (Montana The Magazine of Western History); "A Sacred Refuge: The Comanche Medicine Mounds Are a Rare Vestige of the Mighty Tribe That Once Controlled Texas" by W.K. Stratton (Texas Highways).

Song: "Prairie Passages" by Patty Clayton, released on The Real West (Cimarron Wind Music); "Cowboy Picture" by John Fusco, released on Borderlands (Rocket 88 Records).

Traditional Novel: All My Sins Remembered by Peter Brandvold (Wolfpack Publishing); A Man Called Justice by John Deacon (self-published); The Wonder Stone: And Other Stories About an Early African Settlement in Central Texas: March 1845-November 1864 by Butch Denny (Bent Sun Productions).

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