



# Western Writers of America Announces 2025 Spur Award Winners and Finalists

---

*Actor Viggo Mortensen Wins for The Dead Don't Hurt Screenplay; Novelist Johnny D. Boggs Receiving Record 10th Spur; Awards Ceremony in June in Amarillo, Texas*

TUCSON, AZ, UNITED STATES, March 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Four-time Academy Award-nominated actor Viggo Mortensen is receiving [Western Writers of America's](#) Spur Award for Best Western Drama Script for *The Dead Don't Hurt*, a film in which he also starred, directed, produced, and wrote the musical score.

Winners and finalists were announced Saturday, March 15, at the [Tucson Festival of Books](#). Spur judges said the screenplay for *The Dead Don't Hurt* (Talipot Studio/Recorded Picture Company/Perceval Pictures/Shout! Studios) "reads like prose fiction, but with distinctive cinematic imagery" and offers a "novel take on familiar immigrant stories centered on a women's perspective and experience."

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 during the previous year, are given for works whose inspiration, image and literary excellence best represent the reality and spirit of the American West.

Johnny D. Boggs extended his record number of Spur Awards to 10 with *Bloody Newton* (Kensington Books) winning for Best Western Historical Novel. Catherine M. O'Connor's *Dust Covered Lies* (TCU Press) won for Best Traditional Western Novel and Best First Novel.

*Power of the Mounds* (Boston Productions/Angel Mounds State Historic Site) gave Candy Moulton a fifth career Spur, her third consecutive and third for Western Documentary Script.

Preston Lewis, with previous Spurs for Nonfiction Article and Best Western Novel, won this time with his cowriter wife, Harriet Kocher Lewis, for *Pint-sized Pioneers: Taming the Frontier, One Chore at a Time* (Bariso Press) in Juvenile Nonfiction. C.K. Crigger also got her third career Spur with *The Woman Who Went for Broke* (Wolfpack Publishing) winning for Best Western Romance Novel.

Presentations to winners and finalists are scheduled for WWA's convention June 18-21 in Amarillo, Texas.

Other winners:

Biography: *The Sugar King of California: The Life of Claus Spreckels* by Sandra E. Bonura (University of Nebraska Press).

Children's Picture Book: *Georgia Jipp: Blizzard Pilot* by author Laura Beth Dean and illustrator Jeanne Bowman (South Dakota Historical Society Press).

Contemporary Nonfiction Book: *No Friday Night Lights: Reservation Football on the Edge of America* by John M. Glionna (Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press).

Contemporary Novel: *Blue Wild Indigo* by James Jennings (Plum Bay Publishing).

First Nonfiction Book: *A Cowgirl's Conservation Journey: Stories from the Dugout Ranch* by Heidi Redd with Larisa Bowen (The Nature Conservancy in Utah).

Historical Nonfiction Book: *Compliments of Hamilton & Sargent: A Story of Mystery and Tragedy on the Gilded Age Frontier* by Maura Jane Farrelly (Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press).

Juvenile Novel: *The Horse Who Carries the Stars: A Companion Novel to On a Good Horse* by Darby Karchut (Owl Hollow Press).

Original Mass-Market Paperback Novel: *The First Day of Eternity* by Charles G. West (Pinnacle/Kensington).

Poem: "The Couldn't's" by Betty Lynne McCarthy, published in *Etchings* (Sunlit Silver Bit Publishing).

Short Fiction: *The Devil's Left Hand* by Michael John Petty (Bright Morning Star Press).

Short Nonfiction: "The Mysterious Death of Johnny Ringo" by Doug Hocking (Wild West).

Song: "Blessed by the West" by Sarah Pierce, Randy Palmer and Merel Bregante, released on Pierce's CD *Blessed by the West* (Berkalin Records/published by Lucylite Music/Veggie Egg Music, BMI).

Finalists:

Biography: *From the Reservation to Washington: The Rise of Charles Curtis* by Debra Goodrich (TwoDot); *Citizen Carl: The Editor Who Cracked Teapot Dome, Shot a Judge, and Invented the Parking Meter* by Jack McElroy (University of New Mexico Press).

Children's Picture Book: *The Horse Who Wanted to Fly* by author Pamela Kleibrink Thompson and illustrator Melissa Bailey (Firefly Books); *The Story: How Billy Thomas Learned the Importance of Being Honest* by author Phil Mills Jr. and illustrator Jean Abernethy (Young Dragons Press).

Contemporary Nonfiction Book: *Impresarios of the Rodeo Arena: The Story of the Beutler Stock*

Contracting Legacy by Randy L. Beutler (Oklahoma Hall of Fame Publishing); A Cowgirl's Conservation Journey: Stories from the Dugout Ranch by Heidi Redd with Larisa Bowen (The Nature Conservancy in Utah).

Contemporary Novel: Mary's Place by Charlotte Hinger (Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press); Sgt. Ford's Widow by Paul A. Barra (The Permanent Press).

Documentary Script: Ellis Trail to Nicodemus by Angela Bates (Nicodemus Historical Society & Museum).

Historical Nonfiction Book: The Western Horse: A Popular History of the Wild and Working Animal by Randi Samuelson-Brown (TwoDot); The Doctor Was a Woman: Stories of the First Female Physicians on the Frontier by Chris Enss (TwoDot).

Historical Novel: Sarita by Natalie Musgrave Dossett (Atmosphere Press); The Reluctant Pioneer by Julie McDonald Zander (St. Helens Press).

Juvenile Novel: The Untamed Sky by Win Blevins and Meredith Blevins (Wise Wolf Books); Nightflower of Comanche Mound by Katlyn Bates (Adventure & Quest).

Poem: "Pickin' Out" by B.J. Buckley, published in Flyover Country (Pine Row Press); "Glass Birds," by Betty Lynn McCarthy, published in Etchings (Sunlit Silver Bit Publishing).

Romance Novel: Cimarron Dove: A Sunset Legend by Madison K. Thames (Madison K. Thames); Under Dragoon Skies by Jane Moor (Jane Moor/Kindle Direct Publishing).

Short Fiction: "Prairie Dog" by Mark Greathouse, published in Hearts of Valor, Voices of Courage (Legacy Publishing/AIM Publishing Group); "That Grief, That Fury" by Rilla Askew, published in The Hungry and the Hunted: Stories (Belle Point Press).

Short Nonfiction: "A Western Pocahontas: Myth, Reality, and Memorialization for Spotted Tail's Daughter, Mni-Akuwin" by Charles E. Rankin (Western Historical Quarterly); "The Wilde Wild West" by Preston Lewis (Wild West).

Song: "Mustanger" by Jim Jones and Mariam Funke, released on Jones's CD Storyteller: Tales from the West (Berkalin Records); "The Saddle" by Dave Stamey, released on Stamey's CD Porch Music (HorseCamp Music/HorseCamp Music, BMI).

Traditional Novel: Legend of Lost Basin by Bruce Hartman (Swallow Tail Press); The Big Dry: A Novel by Patrick Dearen (TCU Press).

No finalists were awarded in the Drama Script, Juvenile Nonfiction and Original Mass Market Paperback Novel categories. Only the winner is recognized for Best First Novel and Best First Nonfiction Book.

Max McCoy

Western Writers of America

+1 620-249-6499

director@westernwriters.org

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[X](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/792388507>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.