

Winners Announced for the 41st Annual L. Ron Hubbard Achievement Awards

Winners from five countries were honored at the 41st Annual L. Ron Hubbard Achievement Awards held April 10 at the Taglyan Cultural Complex in Hollywood, CA.

HOLLYWOOD, CA, UNITED STATES, April 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On the evening of Thursday, April 10, 2025 at the 41st Annual [Writers of the Future](#) and the 36th Annual Illustrators of the Future

[L. Ron Hubbard Achievement Awards](#) Gala in the genres of Science Fiction and Fantasy, Randyn C.J. Bartholomew from Brooklyn, NY was named the 2025 Grand Prize Writer Winner and Jordan Smajstrla of Boerne, TX was named the 2025 Grand Prie Illustrator Winner. Emceed by

Gunhild Jacobs, Executive Director of Author Services, Inc., the event was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Taglyan Cultural Complex in Hollywood, CA.

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*Randyn C.J. Bartholomew,
Golden Pen Award winner*

Randyn C.J. Bartholomew said: “This is a dream come true! It's hard to imagine; it's wild! I think the most important thing I learned this week is that there's a community of people doing this. It's not you or me sitting alone at laptops anymore. Thank you!”

Jordan Smajstrla said: “I am so honored to have been

chosen to hold this. I wouldn't be here without my writer. His story is the foundation of my illustration. Arts is one of the most important things in life. If you are driven to create: create. Don't let anyone stop you or tell you aren't good enough. Artistic expression brings people together and makes the world a better place. Never stop.”

Winners from this year's competitions hail from all over the United States, as well as from Canada, China, Hungary and the United Kingdom. In the week prior to the Awards Gala, all the winners of the 2025 contests were mentored in seminars led by contest judges in an effort to prepare them for their respective professions.



Winners and Judges at the 41st Annual Writers and Illustrators of the Future Awards Gala.

Joni Labaqui, Director of the Contests for Author Services, Inc. who oversaw the presentations of the Grand Prize Awards, said, "The theme for our awards show this year is 'Creature of the Storm' magical, medieval, naval, ancient navigation as depicted on the cover of our Volume 41 Anthology created by Illustrators of the Future judge, Craig Elliott, to which Writers of the Future judge, Dr. Sean Williams has crafted the story, 'Under False Colours,' about a ship which emerges from the depths of a gas giant."

A capacity crowd of 350 people attended the Black-Tie Gala, which was presented by Author Services, Inc. and Galaxy Press.

John Goodwin, President of Galaxy Press, unveiled Volume 41 of "L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future," as well as the audio book of Volume 41, which was recorded by Jim, Tamra and Taylor Meskimen and Kirby Heyborne. Emily Goodwin, Vice President of Public Affairs for Author Services, Inc., served as Event Producer.

John Goodwin said, "This year, Galaxy Press and Author Services, Inc. are proud to bestow a Lifetime Achievement Award upon Tim Powers, a seminal figure in speculative fiction and a cherished member of the Writers of the Future family." Powers' own literary journey began with the publication of his first two novels in 1976. His works, including the award-winning *The Anubis Gates* and *Last Call*, are celebrated for their masterful blend of historical richness with the thrilling heart of fantasy. His distinctive voice in speculative fiction has earned him three World Fantasy Awards among other accolades.

Goodwin added, "Since Powers' initial role as a guest instructor at the first official Writers of the Future workshop in Sag Harbor in 1987, and his appointment as a Contest Judge in 1993, he has been an integral part of this community. Known for his wit and deep compassion, he has



Golden Pen Winner Randyn C.J. Bartholomew and Golden Brush Winner Jordan Smajstrla and Presenters on stage.



A capacity crowd at the Taglyan Cultural Complex for the L. Ron Hubbard Achievement Awards.

mentored countless aspiring writers, often enriching their experience with tales of little-known Hollywood history during workshop breaks. Powers' unwavering commitment to the craft, his role in finding and nurturing new talent, and his genuine friendship embody the spirit of this award." Powers' Lifetime Award was presented by Contest Director Joni Labaqui, who said, "Our contests promote the arts welcoming diversity, ethnicity, creativity and equality, with no age limits, and blind judging. All are welcome to enter.

Upon receiving his Lifetime Achievement Award Tim Powers said, "I'm truly very grateful for this award – after 50 years of writing all sorts of fiction, it's reassuring to have my stories recognized. I'm very proud to have been involved with Writers of the Future since the first Workshop I co-taught with Algis Budrys and Orson Scott Card in 1987. I love the continuity of it – judges and winners alike, we're all equally explorers." Thank you all again!"



Valerie Fang, LA City Council District 2 Communications Director presenting certificates to winners on behalf of Council Member Adrin Nazarian.



Cover artist Craig Elliott, and keynote presenters Sian Proctor and Ron Clements on the red carpet.

During the Red Carpet Arrivals event at the Gala held on Thursday, April 10th, a Certificate of Recognition to Writers of the Future was presented to John and Emily Goodwin from Valerie Fong, Communications Deputy for The City of Los Angeles's District 2 Councilmember Adrin Narzarian.

There were two event Keynote Speakers. The first was, Ron Clements, a renowned storyteller and filmmaker from the Walt Disney Animation Studios, where he has written and directed beloved classic movies like 'The Little Mermaid,' 'Aladdin,' 'The Princess and the Frog,' and the Academy Award-nominated 'Moana,' to name a few. The second Keynote Speaker was Dr. Sian "Leo" Proctor, the first African-American all-civilian commercial astronaut and pilot of Inspiration4's SpaceX Crew Dragon space capsule which launched on September 15, 2021.

During Clements address he said: "In my old age, I can see more clearly now how the future isn't

just something that happens, it's something you create. And the ripples from those creations go on and on—who knows how far? Maybe to infinity... and beyond. In the words of L. Ron Hubbard, 'a culture is as rich and as capable of surviving as it has imaginative artists.' Artists like the ones we are celebrating tonight. So good luck, and may all your dreams come true!"

During Proctor's address she said: "I am so honored to stand before a room filled with storytellers, illustrators, dream-weavers, and visionaries. You are not just creators—you are the architects of imagination. You are the propulsion system that launches us into worlds unknown. And tonight, we celebrate your voices, your visions, and your power to shape the future. Use Your Space to Inspire And by space, I mean your unique perspective—your lived experience, your identity, your voice. I say this as an artist, a poet, and a scientist. As someone who became the first Black woman to pilot a spaceship, but more importantly, as the first artist selected to go to space. I know that when you bring your authentic self to the mission, you don't just go to space—you expand beyond it to a new perspective. And that's what you do when you write, when you illustrate, when you create. You expand the universe and make the impossible feel possible. I can't wait to see the worlds you'll build, the minds you'll spark, and the future you'll make real. Because the future belongs to those who dare to imagine it so go out into the world and let you EarthLight shine!"

This year's event, an Invitation Only function, was streamed live via the website, www.writersofthefuture.com, from 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. PDT on Thursday evening, April 10, 2025. Goodwin added: "According to United Public Radio Network, this year's awards show was seen by 366,488 viewers on Roku and Amazon and was heard by 1,701,423 listeners via the livestream broadcast."

Writer's Contest Coordinating Judge, Jody Lynn Nye and Dr. Sian "Leo" Proctor, announced writer Randyn C.J. Bartholomew as the 2025 the Golden Pen Award winner presenting him a trophy and check for \$5,000, for his story, "Ascii," which was illustrated by Tremani Sutcliffe.

Coordinating Illustrator Contest Judge Echo Chernik and Ron Clements announced illustrator Jordan Smajstrla as the 2025 Golden Brush Award winner presenting him a trophy and a check for \$5,000. Jordan Smajstrla illustrated writer Robert F. Lowell's story, "Kill Swith."

The awards show was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Taglyan Cultural Complex nestled in the heart of Hollywood. Catered by Divine Food, the Gala began with tray passed Hors D'oeuvres and Cocktails, followed by a delectable three-course meal including Filet Mignon and Salmon. The Awards Show was followed a Book Signing and Reception in the plush Foyer of the Taglyan Cultural Complex. Magician Naathan Phan, a star of The CW's "Masters of Illusion," entertained guests.

The 12 Quarterly 2025 Writer Winners who were presented with trophies and cash prizes included: Sandra Skalski of Mullica, NJ; Jefferson Snow of Eagle Mountain, UT; Barlow Crassmont of Tieling, China; Randyn C.J. Bartholomew of Brooklyn, NY and Washington, D.C.; Lauren

McGuire of Senoia, GA; Seth Atwater Jr. of Pierce City, MO; T.R. Naus of Alexandria, VA; Ian Keith of Mesa, AZ; Joel C. Scoberg of Swansea, Wales, United Kingdom; Patrick MacPhee of Binbrook, Ontario, Canada; Andrew Jackson of Leatherhead, Surrey, United Kingdom; and Robert F. Lowell of Marina, CA.

The 11 Quarterly Illustrator Winners who were presented with trophies and cash prizes included: Haileigh Enriguez of Rosemead, CA; CL Fors of Lancaster, CA; Daniel Montifar of Sarasota, FL by way of Cypress, TX; David Hoffrichter of Broomall, PA; Tremani Sutcliffe of Washington, UT; John Barlow of Minneapolis, MN; HeatherAnne Lee of Savannah, GA; Breanda Petsch of Englewood, CO; Cam Collins of Chicago, IL (Quarter Four Winner); Marianna Mester of Budapest, Hungary; and Jordan Smajstrla of Boerne, TX.

Celebrities and VIPS in attendance at the event included: Marisol Nichols (Awards Presenter), Jim Meskimen (Award Presenter), Timothy Woodward Jr., Brian Vibberts, Gay Blackstone, Gilbert Smith, Brad Thomas, Alfa Karina Arrué, Jorge Hercules, Taylor Meskimen, Mary Jane Popp, Natalie Burn, Jeff Rector, Tyrone DuBose, Valerie Fang, Darci Stone, Eric James Stone, Kary English, Martin Shoemaker, Leah Ning, Lezli Robyn, Olivia Li and Evans Lam.

Distinguished and renowned Writer Contest Judges in attendance included: Kevin J. Anderson, Orson Scott Card, Nina Kiriki Hoffman, Nancy Kress, Katherine Kurtz, Mark Leslie Lefebvre, Todd McCaffrey, Rebecca Moesta, Larry Niven, Jody Lynn Nye, Dr. Nnedi Okorafor, Timothy Thomas "Tim" Powers, Dr. Robert J. Sawyer and S.M. Stirling.

Other Distinguished Writer Judges who were not able to be in attendance include: Dr. Doug Beason, Dr. Gregory Benford, Brian Herbert, Hugh Howey, Dr. Nnedi Okorafor, Kristine Katherine Rusch, Brandon Sanderson, Robert Silverberg and Dr. Sean Williams.

Distinguished and renowned Illustrator Contest Judges in attendance included: Echo Chernik, Lazarus Chernik, Craig Elliott, Dr. Laura Freas Beraha, Brian C. Hailes, Brittany "Bea" Jackson, Rob Prior and Tom Woods.

Other Distinguished Illustrator Judges who were not able to be in attendance include: Ciruelo, Vincent Di Fate, Diane Dillon, Bob Eggleton, Larry Elmore, Val Lakey Lindahn, Stephan Martiniere, Mike Perkins, Sergey Poyarkov, Irvin Rodriguez, Dan dos Santos, Shaun Tan and Stephen Youll.

About The Contests:

Following the 1982 release of his internationally acclaimed bestselling Science Fiction novel, "Battlefield Earth," written in celebration of 50 years as a professional writer, L. Ron Hubbard created the Writers of the Future Contest (www.writersofthefuture.com) in 1983 to provide a means for aspiring writers of speculative fiction to get that much-needed break. Due to the success of the Writing Contest, the companion Illustrators of the Future Contest was created in 1988.

The annual Contests draw entrants from around the globe and are free to enter. Winners retain full rights to their work and each are given cash awards. Grand Prize Winners receive an additional \$5,000. The Contest flies out all winners to Los Angeles for an expense-paid, weeklong workshop given by Contest judges and culminates in a Black Tie Gala Awards event.

The 599 winner and published finalists of the Writing Contest have published over 8,000 novels and short stories, and their works have over 60 million copies.

The 406 past winners of the Illustrating Contest have created art for over 700 books, 500 comics and 130 major motion pictures, gaming feature films, television shows and documentaries.

The Writers of the Future Award is the genre's most prestigious award of its kind and has now become the largest, most successful and demonstrably most influential vehicle for budding creative talent in the world of speculative fiction. Since its inception, the Writers and Illustrators of the Future contests have produced 41 anthology volumes (with this event) and awarded upwards of \$1 million in cash prizes and royalties.

For more information please visit www.writersofthefuture.com and www.galaxypress.com.

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