

THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL READERS' AWARDS' RESULTS

Asimov's reader Jeffrey David Powell says in his 2019 Readers' Awards comments about the fiction published in our 2018 issues, "Where did the year go? Another year gone, another ballot that brings me to tears over what gets left off." Christopher Douglas Leonard expressed his thoughts similarly when he wrote, "Another year come, gone, and I still can't stop reading. *Asimov's* tales are abound with emotional characters and unique inward, outward journeys. In large part, I can attribute my growing love of poetry to the thoughtful stanzas in every magazine. Looking forward to more of everything!" Jeffrey and Christopher were among the nearly two-dozen readers who added comments to their 2019 Readers' Awards ballots. I love getting feedback from readers and am delighted to have the opportunity to share some of those comments with all of you.

Many readers echoed Jeffrey's complaint about how incredibly hard it is to narrow down all the material published in *Asimov's* to a top three. Michael Mayotte wrote, "Another great year. I found it very difficult, this year, to pick favorites in all categories." Philip and Jill Baringer told us, "While choices in all the categories were difficult as usual, 'Best cover' was surprisingly difficult. We really liked all six!" Philip Crawford said, "Excellent novelettes and short stories in 2018. Nearly impossible to pick top three in each category." Of his favorite tale, he added, "I loved 'Bubble and Squeak.' I will remember this story for a long time." Kristine Dunn concurred, "Really hard to choose with so many fantastic stories last year. 'Bubble and Squeak' by David Gerrold and Ctein was so intense that I forgot to get off my train going to work. Keep up the great work!"

Some people disagreed over which categories offered the hardest choices. Unlike the Baringers, Ken Papai thought that "Short story is always the most difficult to pick. Cover art is easy; poem, too. Overall—'In the Lost City of Leng' by Rudy Rucker and Paul Di Filippo was the best." For Austin Chapman, the novelette category was strong, requiring difficult decisions. Still, he did have a favorite: "Tom Purdom's 'Parallel Military Cultural Evolution in a Non-human Society' was truly outstanding." On the other hand, Garrison Kammer wrote, "This year, the poetry really stood out to me. Fantastic work!"

Alan K. Lipton said, "It's so hard to decide, but I always relish the challenge." Yet, he added, "Sean Monaghan is surely the next big thing. Suzanne Palmer is just plain amazing." Readers were not shy about discussing their favorite stories, poems, and art. In addition to his aforementioned comments, Jeffrey D. Powell said: "This year had the strongest set of covers in the fifteen plus years I've been subscribing. They all deserve to win. The spooky September/October issue was my favorite this year, and David Erik Nelson's 'In the Sharing Place' was my favorite story of the year. The title alone still sends chills down my spine. The Cixin Liu story, 'Sea of Dreams,' was a real treat, and I hope to see more translated SF in coming years." Joseph Keierleber, who enjoyed "3-adica" by Greg Egan said, "Let's have more mindbenders!"

R. Keith Garner reserved his compliments for our covers. "I can't help it, but I'm a creature of the past and of comparison. The cover art by Mycoolsites/Dreams time.com made me think of covers by Hannes Bok from the early fifties. Eldar Zakirov's cover art has a distinctive Maxfield Parish flavor. By the way, Wikipedia lists Maxfield Parish as Hannes Bok's mentor." Shirley Meech's comments were for a category that

gets no award: “Best Editorial—Silverberg! All! Especially ‘Do Androids Dream of Electric Cats?’”

Several readers offered us overall remarks about the year. Jeffrey L. Powell said, “I was worried that the change in format would have unintended consequences. A Murphy’s Law—anything that can go wrong, will go wrong—kind of thing. Shouldn’t have worried. Another great year of great stories. The old familiars and the soon-to-be old familiars. Keep up the good work. Sign me up for another year. The check’s in the mail.” Doug Lee included these lovely words of encouragement: “Thanks to Ms. Williams and crew for another awesome year. Keep up the great work.” Piet Nel agreed with Doug, “Thank you for another stellar year of novellas, novelettes, short stories, and poems.”

First place in short story, novelette, and cover went to repeat finalists Rich Larson, Kristine Kathryn Rusch, and Eldar Zakirov respectively. Although David Gerrold is well known and has had previous publications in *Asimov's*, “Bubble and Squeak” was Ctein’s first tale for the magazine. Their co-authored novella represented a first win for both authors. Suzanne Palmer noted that with her win for best poem, she now has at least one award in all four literary categories—poem, short story, novelette, and novella. If she plans to corner all the awards, we told her she’d better start working on a second career as a cover artist!

We thank the readers who left comments for their thoughts and are grateful to everyone who voted. We hope to hear from many more readers next year. Take the time now to consider your favorite 2019 stories. Remember to nominate the stories you most enjoyed for other awards as well. In early January, I’ll do a round-up of *Asimov's* 2019 tales and cover art and will post it on our website (asimovs.com). Be sure to make your opinions count by submitting a ballot, either through the mail or via the website’s form. Can’t wait to hear from you!

READERS' AWARD WINNERS

BEST NOVELLA or NOVEL

1. **BUBBLE AND SQUEAK;**
DAVID GERROLD & CTEIN
2. Joyride; Kristine Kathryn Rusch
3. (tie) 3-adica; Greg Egan
3. (tie) In the Lost City of Leng; Paul Di Filippo & Rudy Rucker
4. (tie) Bury Me in the Rainbow; Bill Johnson
4. (tie) The Rescue of the *Renegat*; Kristine Kathryn Rusch

BEST NOVELETTE

1. **LIEUTENANT TIGHTASS;**
KRISTINE KATHRYN RUSCH
2. Ephemera; Ian R. MacLeod
3. Cost of Doing Business; Nancy Kress
4. The Wrong Refrigerator; Jean Marie Ward
5. Barren Isle; Allen M. Steele

BEST SHORT STORY

1. **IN EVENT OF MOON DISASTER;**
RICH LARSON
2. Mother Tongues; S. Qiouyi Lu
3. R.U.R.-8?; Suzanne Palmer
4. Rules of Biology; Dale Bailey
5. Theories of Flight; Linda Nagata

BEST POEM

1. **THIS IS WHY WE CAN'T HAVE NICE THINGS;**
SUZANNE PALMER
2. Synesthesia; Bruce Boston
3. Palate of the Babel Fish; Todd Dillard
4. Room with a View; G.O. Clark
5. When Time-Travelers from the Future Finally Reach Us;
Darrell Schweitzer

BEST COVER

1. **JANUARY/FEBRUARY;**
ELDAR ZAKIROV
2. July/August; Mycoolsites/Dreamstime.com
3. November/December; Donato Giancola
4. March/April; Jeff Brown
5. September/October; Eldar Zakirov