

## TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL READERS' AWARDS' RESULTS

A thanks once again to everyone who participated in the Twenty-ninth Annual Readers' Award poll. While we are proud of all the fiction published in *Asimov's*, it's always terrific to get your feedback about our stories, art, and poetry. Many of this year's most heartfelt comments were about stories that didn't win, or even place, in the top five. All responses were valuable because they showed the wide range of stories you read and enjoy. They were a great way to show the authors your appreciation for their work.

Kyle Rathbun wrote to tell us that, "Troop 9' sent chills down my spine . . . horror stories that seem like they might actually be possible are far more scary than something like Wolfman, which we all know is just childish fun (still fun though)." Kyle also let us know that Allen M. Steele's best novella winner, "Legion of Tomorrow," and "its associated stories, seems to me an expression of how much SF used to look to something positive in the future—it felt good, and there's no saying for sure; sometimes it seems like we've given up on a positive future, but I'd keep looking that way."

Long time reader Soon Lee said, "Thanks for the stories. It's been another good year for *Asimov's*. I thought the novelette category was especially strong this year, but it was in the short story category that I found it hardest to select my three; there was such a diversity. In the novella category, William Preston's 'Each in His Prison, Thinking of the Key' from his Old Man series really hit the spot for me." Marina V. Bueno let us know that her favorite novella was "Anomaly Station" by Tim Sullivan. "I loved the way the story was told mostly in dialogue. The tale was deep and technologically enlightening and stimulating." Dick Harding informed us that he agreed with Soon Lee on one point, "The hardest ones to choose were the short stories. My favorite of all is 'Windows' by Susan Palwick. Although it is definitely a science fiction story, it mirrors dilemmas that are faced by so many today. The protagonist, while not making any remarkable breakthrough, continues to trudge along doing the best she can. Considering the circumstances, this was a remarkable success. The story stayed with me long after I read it."

Jeffrey D. Powell had comments about almost every category, "My absolute favorite story of the year was 'The Plantimal' by Mike Resnick and Ken Liu. I was so excited to see two of my favorite writers working together. . . . As I finished with a tear in my eye, I wanted to scream at the top of my lungs—THAT! is how you write a science fiction story. Speaking of expectations, I was ecstatic to see David Erik Nelson come back with a sequel to 'The New Guys Always Work Overtime.'" Jeff added he was thrilled that "There Was No Sound of Thunder" was as good if not better than the first tale. Am I tempting fate to ask for an equally good third story?" He also mentioned that he'd really enjoyed reading "The Finges Clearing" by Sylvain Jouty. "The competition was too tough for this story to get a vote from me, but I hope to see more stories translated from other languages in the pages of *Asimov's*. I don't know if it was the different worldview or literary traditions or cultural environment, but I found this story the most uniquely voiced tale in *Asimov's* this year."

A couple of readers did have some complaints. Jeff's father, Jeffrey L. Powell, told us, "I recently read an online article that insists that all Sci-Fi stories are based on one of seven broad ideas. If this is true, then why do I have such a hard time selecting my favorite stories for the readers choice awards every year? All this angst is caused



Left to Right: Nancy Kress, Sheila Williams, and Ken Liu

Photo by *Locus*/Francesca Myman

by only seven broad ideas? Must be some darn good writers to weave something so fresh and compelling from such a threadbare bed of ideas. Keep up the good work." Andrew Fink wrote, "Thanks for another great year, so many good stories. Hard to pick the best ones." Joe Koomen took advantage of our bounty of enjoyable tales to maintain a rating system that allowed him to "source out new writers."

Doug Lee also told us to "keep up the good work" and Alan K. Lipton wrote, "You continue to publish stories where the humanity shines through the writing, whether the voice is alive, depressed, confused, or not even human. Voice can even be stronger than story—as long as readers take away the feeling of a gift received. *Asimov's* generally gives me that gift." When he submitted his first-ever ballot, Craig Mackie wrote, "I wanted to say how much I enjoyed going over the past year's issues. I am looking forward to making it an annual event."

The awards were presented in Chicago at a breakfast celebration in conjunction with *Analog's* AnLab Awards on June 6 during the 2015 Nebula Awards weekend. Guests included *Locus Magazine* editor Liza Groen Trombi, *Analog* editor Trevor Quachri, Stanley and Joyce Schmidt, Ed and Ruth Lerner, Connie and Courtney Willis, Jack Skillingstead, and Daryl Gregory. Ken Liu accepted the best short story award for his and Mike Resnick's "The Plantimal," and Nancy Kress accepted her award for best novelette for "The Common Good." Although he couldn't be there, Bruce Boston sent along a lovely speech. "I've been publishing in *Asimov's* for more than thirty years, and it's very gratifying to know that the readers of the magazine are still enjoying my work. My thanks go to all who voted for 'In the Quiet Hour,' and to Sheila and Emily Hockaday for selecting the poem for publication." In addition to Bruce, we were sorry Allen M. Steele, Mike Resnick, and Maurizio Manzieri couldn't join us.

Next year will be the Thirtieth Annual Readers Award poll. We want all of you to participate. Please be sure to vote in the poll and let us know your thoughts about the stories, too.

# READERS' AWARD WINNERS

## BEST NOVELLA

1. **THE LEGION OF TOMORROW;**  
**ALLEN M. STEELE**
2. Of All Possible Worlds; Jay O'Connell
3. Anomaly Station; Tim Sullivan
4. Prodigal Son; Allen M. Steele
5. Each in his Prison, Thinking of the Key; William Preston

## BEST NOVELETTE

1. **THE COMMON GOOD;**  
**NANCY KRESS**
2. Kids These Days; Vernon Hedrick
3. Shatterdown; Suzanne Palmer
4. Bogdavi's Dream; Tom Purdom
5. Schools of Clay; Derek Künsken

## BEST SHORT STORY

1. **THE PLANTIMAL;**  
**KEN LIU & MIKE RESNICK**
2. Scout; Will McIntosh (tie)
2. Windows; Susan Palwick (tie)
4. What Is Sand but Earth Purified?; Jason Sanford
5. The Redemption of Kip Banjeree; Genevieve Williams

## BEST POEM

1. **IN THE QUIET HOUR;**  
**BRUCE BOSTON**
2. Gold Ring; Ruth Berman
3. Picnic at the Trinity Test Site; Danny Adams (tie)
3. Scifaiku; Geoffrey A. Landis (tie)
5. An Answer, At Last; Greg Beatty
5. Stellar Recycling; Peter Payack

## BEST COVER

1. **JUNE;**  
**MAURIZIO MANZIERI**
2. August; Kinuko Craft
3. March; Marta Nael
4. February; Jim Burns
5. September; Michael Whelan