

# The Annual Report

clarion west writers workshop • 2018

## Our Mission:



**To provide a high-quality educational opportunity for writers of speculative fiction at the start of their careers.**

Speculative fiction (science fiction, fantasy, horror, magic realism, and slipstream) gives voice to those who explore societal and technological change, along with deeper considerations of the underlying archetypes of human experience. Clarion West brings new writers to the field by providing a transformative experience in the form of an intensive workshop focusing on literary quality, diversity of viewpoints, range of material, and other essential qualities.

Clarion West is a nonprofit literary organization and is committed to equal opportunity. Although there are fine science fiction and fantasy writers of all ethnicities, races, and genders, historically the field has reflected the same prejudices found in the culture around it, leading to proportionately fewer successful writers of color and women writers than white male writers. Clarion West is dedicated to improving those proportions.

As an extension of its primary mission, Clarion West seeks to make speculative fiction available to the public, and thus holds readings and other events that bring speculative fiction writers and readers together. ♦

## Executive Director's Message



MARNEE CHUA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking over the previous year, I am so thankful for all of the support from our community. As we strive to meet the needs of today's writers, I am always grateful for our volunteers: those that offer their time and personal vehicles, sit at information tables, and join committees, as well as the donors and sponsors that help ensure our programs have the funding they need.

Some of my favorite events from 2018 were our **partnerships with other fantastic writing organizations**: [Brewing up Other Worlds](#), held in partnership with [Two-Hour Transport](#); [Writers Under the Influence](#); [Ursula K Le Guin](#), held in partnership with Hugo House; and [Worlds Beyond Here](#), a science fiction exhibit featured at the Wing Luke Museum. And who could forget the multiple exciting and free workshops we held at [Norwescon](#) and [GeekGirlCon](#)?

At the Locus Awards, Clarion West

received the inaugural **[Special Award for Community Building and Inclusivity](#)**, highlighting the contributions of our workshop staff and alumni.

We had some staff changes in 2018 as well. We say goodbye to Katie Sparrow, who is leaving our One-Day Workshops team, though not our hearts. Taking over from her is Tegan Moore, whom we were lucky to recruit last fall. Tegan is coming on at an exciting time, as we look at adding more year-round programming and workshops.



Tegan Moore

Clarion West is helping a new generation of writers and readers, and we are all richer for it. Inside this publication, please find our 2018 financial report, workshop report, and information about our sponsors and alumni. We thank you for your continued support. ♦

# Summer 2018 Workshop Report

## Six Weeks of Serious Work and Serious Fun



NEILE GRAHAM (CW '96)  
WORKSHOP DIRECTOR



JAE STEINBACHER (CW '14)  
WORKSHOP ADMINISTRATOR

This was a year with an international flair, and for the first time in several years we had no Seattleites in the class. Instead, students gathered from five continents and eight countries: Brazil, Croatia, Greece, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Nigeria, the U.K., and the U.S. Our U.S. students came from Alabama, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Despite their far-flung roots, they embraced each other and grew into a tight network over six weeks of producing fantastic work. We're already starting to see their names in print — and one, Natalia Theodoridou, won a World Fantasy Award this fall!

Staff this year were Neile and Jae, our new Workshop Administrator, with Tegan Moore and Huw, our previous Workshop Administrator, as classroom assistants. Joe



2018 Students: Natalia Theodoridou

was back to keep our instructors and students deliciously and nutritiously fed, and Esther returned to keep the house in order. We also had the support of numerous volunteers, who helped us move in and out, get students to and from the parties, and keep things working in the classroom and at all our events. We are so, so grateful to everyone who helps us make the workshop happen!

The weather started off cool — a little uncomfortable for the students from warmer climes — but warmed up to become another sometimes-too-toasty Seattle summer.

Despite the early chill, Daniel Abraham (CW '98) warmed things up with dramatic readings and hands-on exercises. A workshop alum himself, Daniel introduced students to plot, conflict, and voice with panache and a bit of theater. He helped students discover from the first week that they could follow their voices and achieve great heights in their fiction. And the students began on the path to trusting one another in their critiques.

Ken MacLeod was a sure and seasoned instructor, despite being a newcomer to the Clarion technique. He navigated the



Dennis E. Staples, recipient of the Octavia E. Butler Memorial Scholarship

challenges of week two successfully, laying a groundwork for the students

and drawing from the roots of speculative fiction in insightful history lessons. The students and Ken found delight in exploring some of Seattle's sights beyond the University District as well.

Week three saw the students digging into the critique schedule and continuing to churn out stories. Yoon Ha Lee showed them how to craft intricately wrought worlds. His playfulness and humor were welcome as students learned how to manage their myriad responsibilities.

By the fourth week, the students were ready to think about the larger elements of their stories, like theme and cohesiveness. As the students' stories matured, Karen Lord's lessons ran the gamut from story unity to writing action scenes — complete with an outdoor sword lesson. She deftly handled the group at a time when exhaustion typically sets in, and we're happy to report everyone kept their heads.



Wen Ma

By week five, the students were still enthusiastically supporting each other and reaching out to editors and writers beyond the workshop for video conferences. We were concerned about week five burnout, but Karen

Joy Fowler's arrival only revealed a deeper dedication to the craft. With Karen they delved further into character motivation and the openings and endings of stories.

Finally, editor Ellen Datlow sent them off in style. Ellen swept in to offer her experienced eye and New Yorker realism to each student's work. She regaled them with industry tales and advice from her many years of editing. Equally importantly, she encouraged them to begin thinking ▶

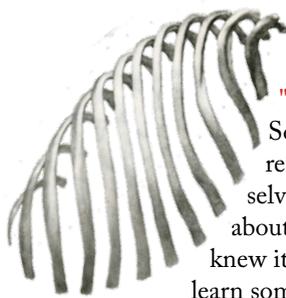


Student Photos by Ted Mahsun

Rafeeat Aliyu

▶ about sending their stories out into the world.

For Neile and Jae, this class was an absolute delight. Despite the fact that Daniel, Ken, Yoon, and Karen Lord were all teaching for us for the first time, we had few bumps and couldn't imagine a better year to introduce so many "newbies." The class continues to interact well beyond the workshop and send out stories (as well as encouragement!). It's been a truly rewarding experience, and we hope this year will bring an equal measure of hard work and play. This summer, we look forward to squeezing seven instructors into six weeks! Liz Hand and Stephen Graham Jones return to teach weeks one and two for us. Then we welcome Amal El-Mohtar, Ibi Zoboi (a CW '01 grad), and a duo of editors, Jack Dann and Jonathan Strahan. Capping off the six weeks will be the inimitable Ann Leckie (CW '05). ♦



## In Students' Words

**"THE WORKSHOP WAS SO WARM AND INVITING AND NURTURING.**

So many other words come to mind. Comfortable. Blissful. Serene. All those outshine the moments where we challenged ourselves, where we were stressed about deadlines, about word counts, about critiques, which were all great in the end anyway because we knew it was all ultimately worthwhile in order to better our craft or learn something we hadn't thought of before.

"I can't think of any other experience in life that would ever come close to what it would feel like to be in a fairy tale." — **Dennis Staples**

**"IT WAS AS IF MY CHEST HAD COME OFF ITS HINGES.** I felt radically open, expanded in my ability to create, but also to love. That kind of emotional vulnerability is created by safety. This summer I was surrounded by people with whom I felt very safe. I felt — for lack of a better word — healthy, as a person and a writer." — **Brittany Pladek**

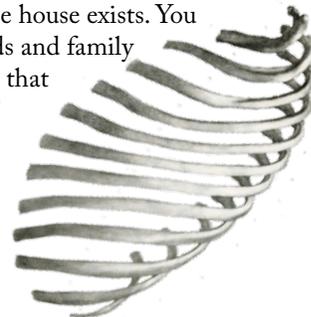
**"THE CLARION WEST WORKSHOP WAS KEY IN HELPING ME REALIZE THAT I CAN BE A WRITER.** It gave me the tools and the networks I desperately needed. I'm eternally grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Clarion West family!" — **Rafeeat Aliyu**

**"CLARION IS AN INEXPLICABLE EXPERIENCE. IT'S FRIGHTENING. IT'S EXHAUSTING. IT'S WILD.** It's the nerd event of the century. It will improve your writing more than you ever thought possible in six weeks. It's heartbreaking to leave. It's the time of your life while you are there. It will make you forget that life outside of the house exists. You will make the best friends of your life. You miss your friends and family back home like crazy. You will join a community of writers that want nothing more than to help you achieve your dreams."

— **Woody Dismukes**

**"CLARION WEST WAS ONE OF THE BEST EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE.** It helped me grow both as a writer and as a person. I hope to be able to pay it forward one day."

— **Natalia Theodoridou**



THE CLASS OF 2018

**L to R, down in the front:** Woody Dismukes, Brittany Pladek. **L to R, back row:** Dennis E. Staples, Joe Schindler (our cook), Jen Sexton-Riley, Wen Ma, Rodrigo Assis Mesquita, Rachel Simmons, Greg Scheckler, Ted Mahsun, E.C. Barrett, N.C. Calder, Ellen Datlow (Week 6 instructor), Natalia Theodoridou, Clay P. Greene, Dora Klindžić, Isabel Cañas, and Rachel Broderick.

# 2018 Financial Statement



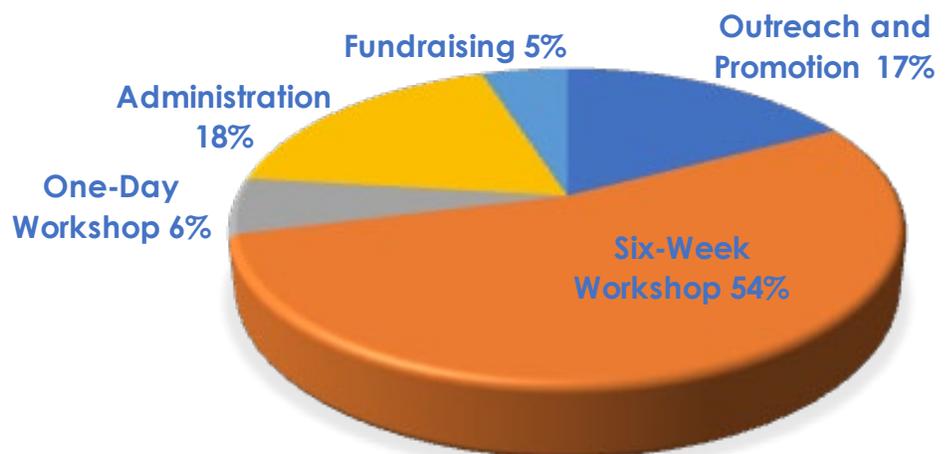
MIRIAH HETHERINGTON  
TREASURER

**We began the year knowing that fundraising would be crucial** to Clarion West's efforts to grow programs and continue to provide high-quality education to speculative fiction writers. To this end, we made the commitment to invest some of our savings, if needed, to help grow program activities and ensure the paid staff time needed to create them. Despite some significant funding challenges, including the loss of four large, anticipated sources of income, **we came through ahead because of our donors, sponsors, and volunteers.**

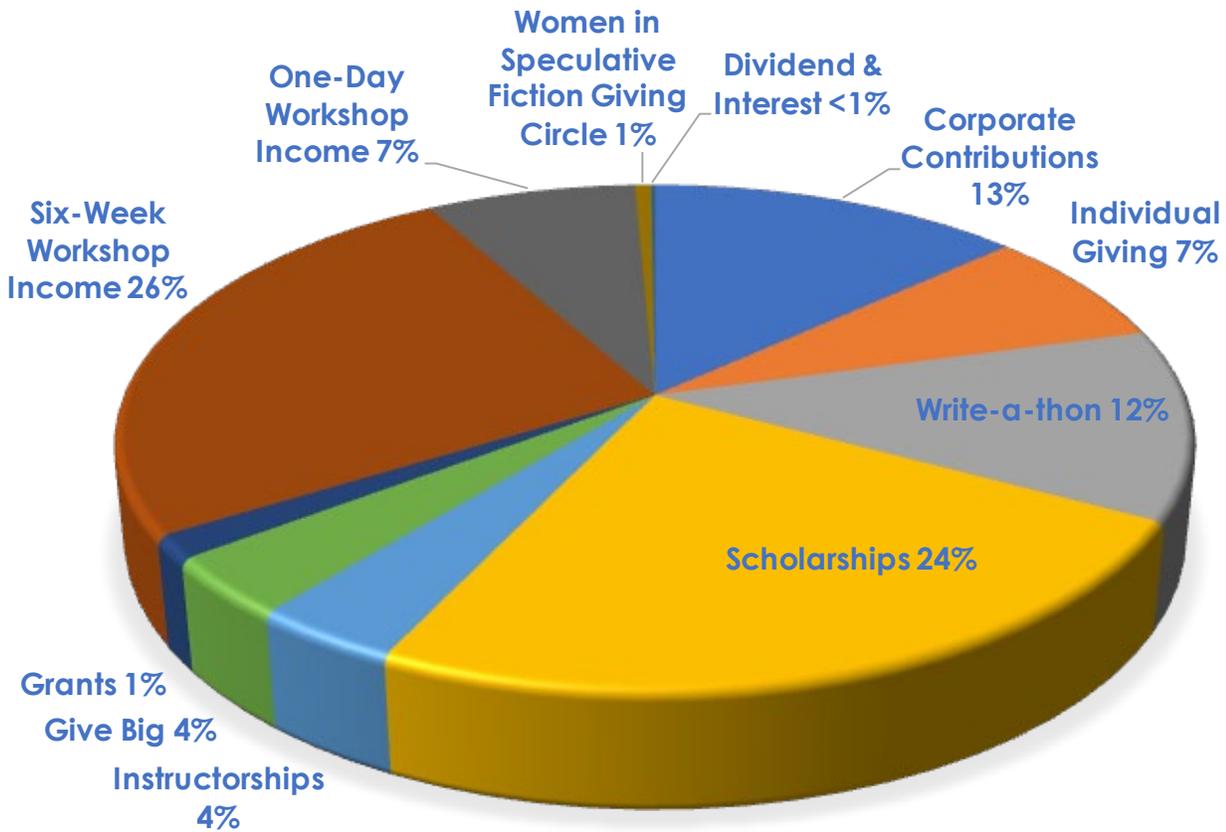
At the end of 2018, Clarion West's cash and investment assets totaled \$201,501, or approximately **one year of operating expenses**. Our development chair and investment manager, Susan Gossman, continues to supervise our investments to ensure that Clarion West can survive a stark year. With the expansion of our donor base, new focus on grant applications, and growth of our investment assets, Clarion West is making the commitment to set aside additional scholarship funding to students in need each year, while maintaining our savings for future funding challenges. ♦

	Jan - Dec 2018	Jan - Dec 2017
<b>Revenue</b>		
Corporate Contributions	\$24,650.00	\$17,336.00
Individual Giving	\$13,946.00	\$17,539.00
Write-a-thon	\$22,687.00	\$20,548.00
Scholarships	\$45,125.00	\$36,250.00
Instructorships	\$7,200.00	\$14,955.00
GiveBig	\$6,977.00	\$8,385.00
Grants	\$2,760.00	\$10,500.00
Six-Week Workshop Income	\$47,830.00	\$45,085.00
One-Day Workshop Income	\$13,800.00	\$14,035.00
Women in Speculative Fiction		
Giving Circle	\$1,077.00	\$550.00
Dividend & Interest	\$229.00	\$2,605.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$186,281.00</b>	<b>\$187,788.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Outreach and Promotion	\$30,807.00	\$12,528.00
Six-Week Workshop	\$96,359.00	\$88,929.00
One-Day Workshop	\$10,367.00	\$8,362.00
Administration	\$32,468.00	\$58,071.00
Fundraising	\$8,890.00	\$6,791.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$178,891.00</b>	<b>\$174,681.00</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>7,390.00</b>	<b>13,107.00</b>

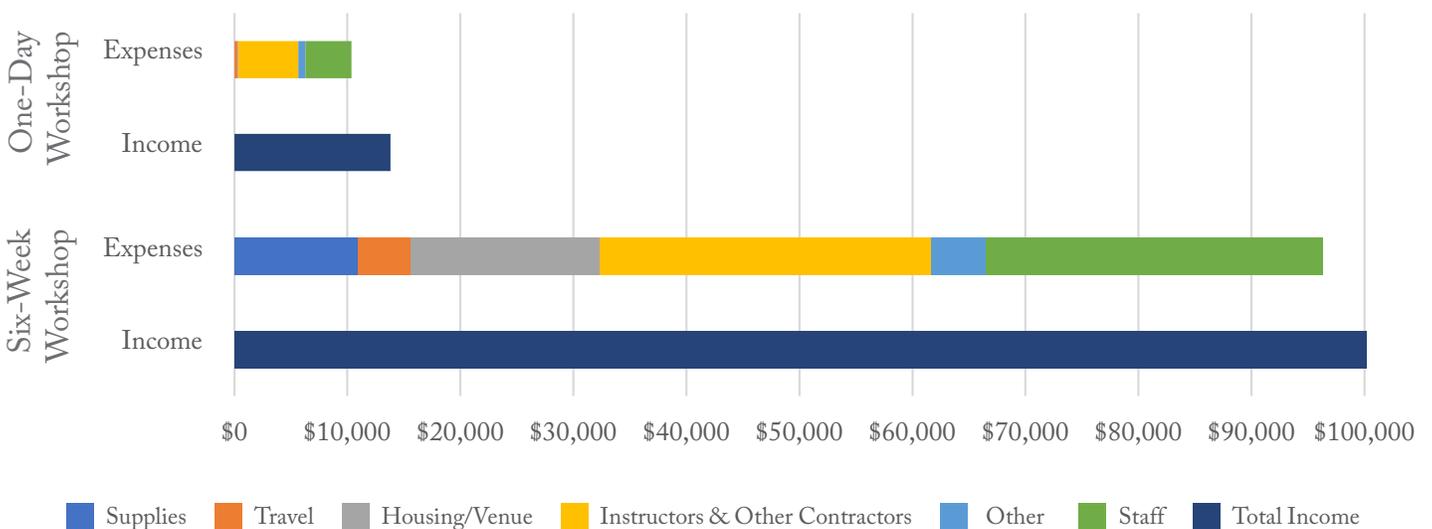
## CLARION WEST 2018 EXPENSES BY PROGRAM



# CLARION WEST 2018 % INCOME BY SOURCE



# CLARION WEST 2018 WORKSHOP INCOME AND EXPENSES COMPARISON



# You're the Best



YANG-YANG WANG (CW '14)  
CW BOARD CHAIR

First year as board chair complete! Nothing's blown up despite the trying circumstances. Instead, we won another award on our way to a number of highlights (see Marnee's letter). Clarion West is in great shape financially and as an organization.

This was achieved through the efforts of our amazing staff and board, our ever-wonderful executive director, and with the support of our outstanding community — and by extension: you.

I invite you to take a moment now to recall how you supported Clarion West last year. Whether you volunteered, donated money, attended an event, mentioned us positively, gave constructive feedback, or simply thought about us and wished us well:

Thank you. We appreciate you. We're lucky to have you.

In sadder news, board member Geetanjali Dighe stepped down from her seat. Her intelligence and organizational skills will be missed. To fill her stylish shoes, we had to recruit three new board members. Introducing, in random order:

**Brooks Peck** recovered from writing

TV monster B-movies by sailing around the world. Fashion designer Betsey Johnson used to be his babysitter, so babysit him if you want a career in fashion.

**TJ Berry** grew up in Hong Kong and once wrote (and sold!) an entire novel out of spite. She's an ex-professional baker who still has hundreds of cookie cutters. While she can't whistle, we're still singing about her joining the board.

**Gordon White** once threw and caught a boomerang, performed in Carnegie Hall, and (probably) heard a ghost while staying in a haunted house. House ghost beware — our students are now protected by boomerang!

There are more wonderful things to look forward to in 2019. Accessibility, new programming, and audit-readiness continue to be priorities for our organization. There's also a secret project to unveil later this year. I'd tell you more, but my request for free drinks was ignored last year so I'm staying quiet (#bitterface).

Thanks again for helping Clarion West get through a tough year. ♦

## Accessibility



In 2018 Clarion West created an accessibility committee to address the immediate challenges of ensuring access and inclusivity for disabled people in all of our programs. The committee has focused primarily on the full accessibility of our venues, but is also seeking guidance on

how to address a broader range of disabilities in action, support, and language.

The committee has written a mission statement and seeks to have all programs physically accessible to a broader range of students by 2021. We are immediately seeking opportunities to provide support for disabled people with other accessibility concerns.

Clarion West Writers Workshop's intent is to provide high-quality education to diverse voices in speculative fiction. Students and instructors encompass a broad range of ages, nationalities, cultures, races, genders, and sexual identities, but despite our intent, and to our detriment, the workshop is not yet accessible to many disabled writers and instructors.

We are actively addressing this issue, seeking out adaptive devices and resources for people with sensory and mobility disabilities, along with Workshop housing and event spaces that are wheelchair-accessible. We hope to achieve this for the Six-Week Workshop by 2021, and plan to continuously address and solve accessibility issues as they occur. ♦

## 2018 Board of Directors

Yang-Yang Wang | *Chair*  
Rashida J. Smith | *Vice Chair*  
Tod McCoy | *Secretary*  
Miriah Hetherington | *Treasurer*  
Vicki Saunders | *Past Chair*  
Geetanjali Dighe  
Susan Gossman  
Nisi Shawl  
Misha Stone  
Marnee Chua | *Executive Director* | *ex officio*  
Neile Graham | *ex officio*

## 2018 Staff

### Workshop

Neile Graham | *Workshop Director*  
Jae Steinbacher | *Workshop Administrator*  
Katie Sparrow | *One-Day Workshop Administrator*  
M. Huw Evans | *Workshop Specialist*  
Tegan Moore | *Workshop Specialist*

### Database

Kate Schaefer | *Database Volunteer*  
Suzanne Tompkins | *Finance/Database Specialist*

### Communications

Jeremy Sim | *Communications Specialist*  
Vicki Saunders | *Art Director*  
Tom Whitmore | *Copy Editor/Proofreader*  
Jae Steinbacher | *Copy Editor*  
Erik Owomoyela | *Website Manager*

# Thank You for Your Support of Clarion West

FOR THE PERIOD OF  
JANUARY 1, 2018  
TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Clarion West is grateful to our contributors, whose generous gifts enable us to provide high-quality writing workshops and other events for speculative fiction writers and readers. Please consider making a donation today at [clarionwest.org/donate](http://clarionwest.org/donate).

## These organizations provided significant grants to support Clarion West, its writers, and its public reading series:

- \$10,000 — National Endowment for the Arts (2-year period)
- \$5,000 — Amazon Literary Partners
- \$2,760 — Civic Partners Grant, Office of Arts & Culture, City of Seattle
- \$2,700 — 4Culture

## A sincere thank-you to our 2018 named scholarship donors!

Scholarships made in memory of the following honored individuals:

- [Elliot Alexander Memorial](#)
- [Michael Alexander Memorial](#)
- [Elliot and Michael Alexander Memorial](#)
- [Mark Bourne Memorial](#)
- [The Poul and Karen Anderson Memorial International Travel Fund](#)
- [Gordon R. Dickson Memorial](#) (supported by the Midwestern SF community)
- [The Donald A. and Elsie B. Wollheim Memorial Scholarship Fund](#)
- [Susan C. Petrey Memorial](#)

## Full and partial scholarships are generously supported by the following:

- [The Class of 2013 Anniversary Scholarship](#)
- [Norwescon](#)
- [Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America](#)
- [The Travel Assistance Fund, Anonymous](#)
- [The Women in Speculative Fiction Giving Circle](#)

## The following distinguished scholarships were awarded in 2018:

- [The Octavia E. Butler Memorial](#), awarded to Dennis E. Staples.
- [The Worldbuilder Scholarship](#), awarded to Isabel Cañas.

## A sincere thank-you to our 2018 named instructorships donors!

Instructorships given in honor of the following individuals:

- [Leslie Howle](#), Week One
- [Sally Klages Memorial](#), Week Four, sponsored by Ellen Klages
- [Susan C. Petrey](#), Week Six

## Thank you to the businesses that sponsored our 2018 Write-a-thon!

- \$1,000 — Bill Speidel's Underground Tour
- \$500 — Dr. Thomas Bridgman, DDS
- \$250 — Third Place Books
- \$250 — Brick & Mortar Books ♦

103 students attended One-Day workshops • 19 CW alumni short stories published in genre anthologies, including Gardner Dozois' Very Best of the Best  
108 CW alumni short stories published in genre anthologies, including Gardner Dozois' Very Best of the Best  
640 attended our free readings  
30 CW alumni stories attended One-Day workshops • 19 CW alumni novels and novellas released  
13 major industry awards won



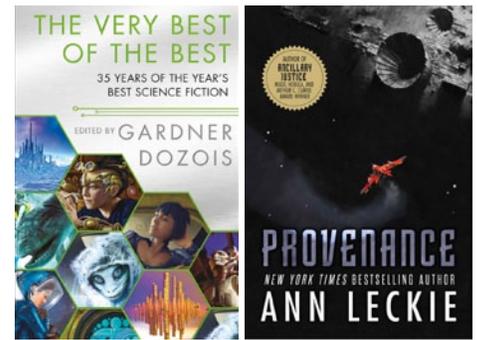
Instructor Karen Lord, right, signs a book for Rashida J. Smith ('05) after a free reading at the Downtown Seattle Public Library.



Clockwise from top: Daryl Gregory, Tina Connolly, Scott H. Andrews, Seanan McGuire, Elsa Sjunneson-Henry, Henry Lien.

# List of Award-Winning Alumni

ALUMNI AWARDS AND MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS ANNOUNCED IN 2018



Clarion West alumni are making significant contributions to the world of speculative fiction — a literary genre that is well-known for critical thinking skills, building greater empathy, and inspiring the next generation of scientists, community activists, engineers, and writers. Their stories impact readers around the world from all different backgrounds.

Clarion West alumni achieved a huge number of important publications, novels, and prestigious award nominations in 2018. Note that this is only a partial list.

## One-Day Workshops

Our [One-Day Workshops](#) provide excellent educational opportunities to the writers' community in the Pacific Northwest. These are all-day classes focusing on specific topics or skills which attract writers from all stages in their careers.

Instructors Tina Connolly and Caroline Joachim taught a class on character-building, which student feedback described as “jaw-dropping.”

Jesse Bullington's workshop on monster-making delved deep into bestiaries and ancient fears, helping illuminate what monsters really mean.

Elsa Sjunneson-Henry led a workshop on worldbuilding for disabled characters that included a great deal of interesting conversation among students. And Henry Lien taught on creating original story content, employing extremely creative strategies for bringing unique themes into your work.

If you're interested in our spring One-Day Workshops, sign up quickly, as they're filling up fast. We kicked off 2019 with award-winning author Seanan McGuire and the dynamic Daryl Gregory. March brings the singular Scott H. Andrews, editor of *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*.

We're already making decisions about our Summer Six-Week Workshop 2020 instructor lineup, and soon we'll have some amazing fall one-day workshops to announce! ♦

### Anthologies

*The Year's Best Science Fiction: Thirty-Fifth Annual Collection*, edited by Gardner Dozois  
*Best Science Fiction and Fantasy of the Year: Vol 12*, edited by Jonathan Strahan  
*Gardner Dozois's The Very Best of the Best*, which draws from 35 years of *The Year's Best Science Fiction*. These anthologies include stories by:  
 Indrapramit Das (CW '12)  
 Richard William Larson (CW '14)  
 Vina Jie-Min Prasad (CW '17)  
 Caroline M. Joachim (CW '06)  
 Ian McHugh (CW '06)  
 Daniel Abraham,  
 as James S.A. Corey (CW '98)

### AWARD WINNERS

**World Fantasy Award, Short Fiction category**  
 "The Birding: A Fairy Tale," by Natalia Theodoridou (CW '18)

**Locus Award, Non-Fiction category**  
*Luminous Threads: Connections to Octavia E. Butler*, by Mimi Mondal (CW '15) and co-editor Alexandra Pierce. Essays by:  
 K. Tempest Bradford (CW '03)  
 Stephanie Burgis (CW '01)  
 Christopher Caldwell (CW '07)  
 Indrapramit Das (CW '12)  
 Stephen Gold (CW '05)  
 Alex Jennings (CW '03)  
 Cat Rambo (CW '05)  
 Jeremy Sim (CW '11)  
 Nisi Shawl (CW '92)  
 Rachel Swirsky (CW '05)  
 Sheree Renée Thomas (CW '99)

**2018 Crystal Kite Award from the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators**  
*Will You Read My Book With Me?*, Lawrence Schimel (CW '91)

### Neukom Institute Speculative Fiction

### Award, open category

*On The Edge of Gone*, by Corinne Duyvis (CW '11)

### 2017 VOYA Top Shelf Fiction Award

*The Dragon with a Chocolate Heart*, by Stephanie Burgis (CW '01)

### Scribe Award for Best Speculative Original Novel

*The Librarians and the Mother Goose Chase*, by Greg Cox (CW '84)

### FINALISTS

### Hugo Award Nominations

Best Novel: Ann Leckie (CW '05)  
 Best Novella: JY Yang (CW '13)  
 Best Novelette: Vina Jie-Min Prasad (CW '17)  
 Best Short Story: Vina Jie-Min Prasad (CW '17), Caroline M. Joachim (CW '06)  
 Best Related Work: Mimi Mondal (CW '15)  
 John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer: Vina Jie-Min Prasad (CW '17)

### Tiptree Award Honor List

*The Devourers*, by Indrapramit Das (CW '12)  
*The Black Tides of Heaven* and *The Red Threads of Fortune*, by JY Yang (CW '13)

### Tiptree Award Longlist

*The Stars Are Legion*, by Kameron Hurley (CW '00)  
*Provenance*, by Ann Leckie (CW '05)  
 "Her Sacred Spirit Soars," by S. Qiouyi Lu (CW '16)

### Bram Stoker Award for Superior Achievement in a Fiction Collection

*The Carp-Faced Boy and Other Tales*, by Thersa Matsuura (CW '15)

### Sunburst Award for Excellence in Canadian Fantastic Literature Longlist for Short Story Fiction

"On Highway 18," Rebecca Campbell (CW '15)  
 "Spiked," Rich Larson (CW '14) ♦