

Press Release #40

IMPORTANT NEWS UPDATE: SPECULATIVE LITERATURE FOUNDATION READING PERIOD FOR 2012 OLDER WRITERS GRANT EXTENDED

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SPECULATIVE LITERATURE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES OLDER WRITERS GRANT WINNER

The Speculative Literature Foundation is pleased to announce that its ninth annual Older Writers Grant is to be awarded to K.C. Ball. The \$750 grant is intended to assist writers who are fifty years of age or older at the time of the grant application, and who are just starting to work at a professional level.

Born on New Year's Day, Ball has, in her own words, been a story junkie since she was six years old. Retired librarian Emma Huber first kindled Ball's love for stories with *The Hardy Boys* and *The Black Stallion* in 1953, but Ball's exposure to the written word didn't end there. Before she was nine years old, Mrs. Huber introduced Ball to Stevenson, Defoe and Dickens, and by the age of eleven, Ball was reading Faulkner, Steinbeck and Hemingway.

But nothing satisfied Ball's reading "jones" like Heinlein and Niven, Pournelle and Silverberg, whom she discovered all by herself.

As Ball grew into adulthood, she found herself writing non-fiction in various paid roles: reporter, public information officer, and even media relations coordinator. But, as Ball puts it, "I yearned to write fiction." So she did. But her efforts were, admittedly, somewhat of a hobby. And for Ball, that wasn't enough.

So in 2008, she began to write speculative fiction full time. Soon after, she made her first sale, "The Mixture," a flash fiction piece. In May, 2009, Ball made her first professional-rate sale with *Coward's Steel*, a first-time entry in the Writers of the Future competition, the same year she became an active member of the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America.

A 2010 graduate of the Clarion West Writers Workshop, Ball was also invited to attend Launchpad in 2011, a NASA-sponsored week-long writers workshop at the University of Wyoming.

Now retired, the sixty-five-year-old full-time writer says, "I haven't lost my love of story, particularly as it is manifested in the written word."

The judges for the Older Writers Grant can see that love in her writing. Grant Administrator Malon Edwards said of Ball's entry, "Snapshots I Brought Back from the Black Hole": "There is a good building of tension that is well-paced. I was excited and nervous to find what happens next. This is a well-written story with solid, believable science fiction – a very enjoyable read."

Honorable Mentions for the Older Writers Grant go to D.K. McCutchen, Catherine Holm, Rumjhun Biswas, Ada Milenkovic Brown, and Sabrina Vourvoulias for their diverse, thought-provoking and entertaining submissions, which made the selection of the winner a very competitive but difficult process.

The Speculative Literature Foundation is a volunteer-run, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the interests of readers, writers, editors and publishers in the speculative literature community.

"Speculative literature" is a catch-all term meant to inclusively span the breadth of fantastic literature, encompassing literature ranging from hard and soft science fiction to epic fantasy to ghost stories to folk and fairy tales to slipstream to magical realism to modern mythmaking -- any literature containing a fabulist or speculative element.

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