

Press Release # 63

For Immediate Release:

The Speculative Literature Foundation is pleased to announce Senaa Ahmad as the winner of the inaugural A.C. Bose Grant for South Asian Speculative Literature.

Ahmad, who grew up in a sleepy immigrant suburb of a Canadian steel town, crafts well-written, heartfelt, and powerful stories. “My short fiction lives at the intersections of Indian, Islamic, and family history, diaspora poetics, and classic genre fiction,” she says, when describing her work. “I draw influence from the magical realist fiction of Salman Rushdie and Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and the speculative parables of Margaret Atwood, Kelly Link, and Sofia Samatar.”

Those influences commingle in her first short story collection, *The Extra-Terrestrials*, whose 10 stories follow teenage occultists, hijabi girl-wonders, and Persian tricksters. Aptly titled, each story in the collection, Ahmad says, takes on the notion of “the extra-terrestrial—what it means to be on the margins of society, to feel dislocated or disconnected, to feel like you might belong to an entirely different species.”

Ahmad’s short story collection has garnered her a wide range of attention. “Samples from the collection,” she says, “earned me two grants for the purpose of prioritizing my writing, plus an invitation to attend the prestigious Clarion Writers Workshop this past summer where I studied with world-class writers like Mat Johnson, Holly Black, and Kelly Link.”

Jurors for the Speculative Literature Foundation took notice as well. One of her short stories in her collection, “The Glow-in-the-Dark Girls”, was part of her application for the A.C. Bose Grant for South Asian Speculative Literature and won the \$1,000 grant for her.

Honorable Mentions for the 2019 A.C. Bose Grant go to Isha Karki, Lavanya Lakshminarayan, and Geetha Iyer for their unique and thought-provoking submissions, which made the selection of the winner a difficult but enjoyable process for our jurors.

The A.C. Bose Grant for South Asian Speculative Literature was founded in fond memory of Ashim Chandra Bose by his children, Rupa Bose and Gautam Bose. The grant honors the legacy of the worlds A.C. Bose—a lover of books, especially science fiction and fantasy—opened up for his children. The A.C. Bose Grant for South Asian Speculative Literature is announced annually by the Speculative Literature Foundation on A.C. Bose’s birth anniversary, May 26th, to help foster his legacy.