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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diverse Writers and Diverse Worlds Grant Winners

November 2022 – The SLF is pleased to announce the winners of our 2022 Diverse Writers and Diverse Worlds Grants, Khalifaziz B. and Ash Huang. Khalifaziz won with their piece *Hidden Black Conjure University: Delinquents*, while Huang won with her piece, “Golden Steppe.”

“It was an absolute joy to get a glimpse inside the works of so many amazing writers. The potential within this group gives one hope for the future of stories,” said juror, Gianclis Caldwell. When reflecting on the submissions this past cycle, Tara Campbell said “I was honored to be a juror for this year’s Speculative Literature grants. There were so many passionate and talented writers in the queue, narrowing down to just one entry in each category was a difficult task. Despite the hard choice, it was exciting to read the work. The speculative ecosystem is diverse, dynamic, and thriving,” an author and teacher, whose work can be found at www.taracampbell.com.

Khalifaziz was born in New Orleans, and would likely have spent their whole life there collecting Yu-gi-oh cards and enjoying life had it not been for Katrina, which destroyed both their childhood home and their beloved card collection. By day, Khalifaziz studies Anthropology as a Ph.D. student at Tulane University. By night, Khalifaziz writes sci-fi, horror, fantasy, and fanfic. Inspired by the Afrofuturist and Afro-Surrealist movements, Khalifaziz writes every story from a Black perspective, drawing upon the lived experience, history, politics, and cultural beliefs of the Black community. One such horror story, *Mitochondrial Assimilation*, has been adapted into audio format by the Nightlight horror podcast.

In the wild, a Khalifaziz is most commonly encountered in the darkest corner of a library, whispering words in a forgotten language to the oldest, dustiest books on the shelves. If you encounter a Khalifaziz in the wild, do not let it meet your gaze. Walk backwards until it is out of sight, throw salt over your shoulder, and spin counter-clockwise three times.

Ash Huang (she/her) is a Chinese American writer based in San Francisco. Her fiction appears in *Alien Magazine*, and her essays are featured in *Catapult*, *Fast Company*, *Offscreen Magazine*, and elsewhere. She is an alum of the Tin House Workshop and the Periplus Fellowship. Her speculative fiction examines themes such as our complicated relationship with social media and technology, inherited and intergenerational stories, nostalgia and misremembering, our shared and conflicting visions of place and home, and her particular slice of Chinese America. She is currently working on a fantasy novel and a short story collection. Find her online at <https://ashsmash.com>, or on Twitter and Instagram as @ashsmash.

Since 2014, the SLF has strived to reward works rich in diversity in two ways. The Diverse Writers Grant supports voices from underrepresented groups that face additional obstacles in a publishing industry still primarily featuring voices from majority populations. The Diverse Worlds Grant seeks to support works that excel in portraying a diverse world and its elements.

Launched in January 2004 to promote literary quality in speculative fiction, the Speculative Literature Foundation addresses historical inequities in access to literary opportunities for marginalized writers. Our staff and board are committed to representing racial, gender, and class diversity at all levels of our organization. This commitment is at the heart of what the Speculative Literature Foundation stands for: equal access to create and advance science fiction, fantasy, and horror literature. We strive to enable writers at any stage of their career and of any age, any ethnicity, any gender expression, from any location and of any economic or social status, who want to learn about, or create within, the speculative arts.

The SLF is a 501(c)3 non-profit, entirely supported by community donations. If you'd like to be involved with our efforts, please consider joining us as a member for \$2/month, at speculativeliterature.org/membership.

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