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Press Release #111
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2023 Illustration of the Year Winner

February 2023 – The Speculative Literature Foundation is pleased to announce Sejuti Bala as the winner of the 2023 Illustration of the Year.

“I have always thought of deep sea and deep space as two ends of a vast unknown; as above so below, compelling depths of boundless beauty that humanity has barely explored a fraction of. To an astronaut the vacuum of space is the frontier of setting sail, and in this piece, I imagine a lost astronaut, an untethered explorer and the awe of getting to hold the miracle of a star in your hands, to be one with the particle of possibility, to swim with the fishes. How long has the cosmic sailor been here? Caught in the undertow of a perennial wave? What lives in that shell of a space-suit? I leave the rest to your imagination,” says Bala, on their inspiration for their piece, “Cosmic Swimmers.”

Sejuti Bala is a writer and a student of English Literature who spends their time arranging for and taking care of the older stray animals in their neighbourhood. When not busy tending to the whims of their beloved cat, they can be found reading graphic novels with a copy of Ancillary Justice tucked under their arm. They are an avid fan of horror stories with the hope of publishing their own science-fiction graphic novel someday.

For those looking for more of Bala’s art, check them out on Twitter @fiovske and on artstation.

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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