



Contact: [press@speculativeliterature.org](mailto:press@speculativeliterature.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Speculative Literature Foundation Announces Winner of 2023 Older Writers Grant

---

Oak Park, Illinois (October 12, 2023) – The Speculative Literature Foundation is pleased to announce that Jen OConnor is the winner of the 2023 Older Writers Grant.

“Very much enjoyed this, particularly the ambiguity of is this all in the narrator's mind, or are the photos really coming to life? Either way, I'm pleased to recommend it,” says Rebecca Gibson, a member of the jury.

OConnor's winning piece is called “Second Hand Salvation.”

Jen OConnor's poetry and fiction have been published in *Two Hawks Quarterly*, *Saved Objects*, *Imagine Magazine*, *Iris Brown Lit Mag*, *Medusa's Laugh Press*, *Persimmon Tree*, *Impossible Archetype*, *London Journal of Fiction*, *American Writers Review*, *Sinister Wisdom*, *Ravensperch*, *Written Tales Chapbook IX*, *ImageOutWrite!*, and *The Journal of Expressive Writing*. Her work has been featured in many spoken-word performances in Los Angeles. She was just named a finalist in the New Letters magazine annual Robert Day contest for Fiction.

Jen is also a playwright. Her full-length comedy, *The Girl Who Would Be King*, garnered Backstage and LA Weekly awards, was winner of Chicago's Pride Films & Plays Women's Words contest, and is published and licensed by Stage Rights. Jen's short comedy, *Taken For A Ride*, was recently published in *Fresh Words Magazine's Contemporary One-Act Plays*. *Dressing Robbie Temple* was a semi-finalist in the Ashland New Plays Festival and was awarded a reading in the #ShePersisted Festival of the LGBTQ Coalescence Theatre. *Gayby's Playdate*, winner of the LGBT Festival in LA, was produced around the country and in Seoul, South Korea.

Jen holds an MA in English from St. Louis University and an MFA in Theatre from Southern Illinois University. She worked happily for many years as a writer at Walt Disney Imagineering in Los Angeles.

The Older Writers Grant awards \$1000 to a speculative fiction writer over the age of 50, who's just starting out at the professional level.

The SLF awards the grant to one applicant based on interest and merit. Submitted works may consist of poetry, drama, fiction, or creative nonfiction but must be speculative. Grant guidelines cap submissions at ten pages for poetry or drama and 5,000 words for fiction and creative nonfiction. Applications should include a cover letter and bibliography with applicants' previous publishing credits. Applicants without previous publishing credits are encouraged to apply. The submission window spans from May 1st to May 31st, with a winner scheduled to be announced by July 15th, 2024.

###

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](http://speculativeliterature.org/membership).

The Speculative Literature Foundation is partially funded by a grant from the Oak Park Area Arts Council, Village of Oak Park, Illinois Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts and Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation.