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HANDICAPPING
THE HUGOS
LAW TANK 372
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SONY

May 2014 -Handicapping the Hugos - The Drink Tank 372 Chris Garcia - James Bacon - Vanessa Applegate

So, *Journey Planet* is on the ballot; *The Drink Tank*, for the first time since 2007, is not. And that's completely OK. I'll talk a lot more about what I think about that in the Best Fanzine section. I'm not up for Best Fan Writer, again first time since 2007, but again, not much of a problem as I expected to not be on the ballot much longer.

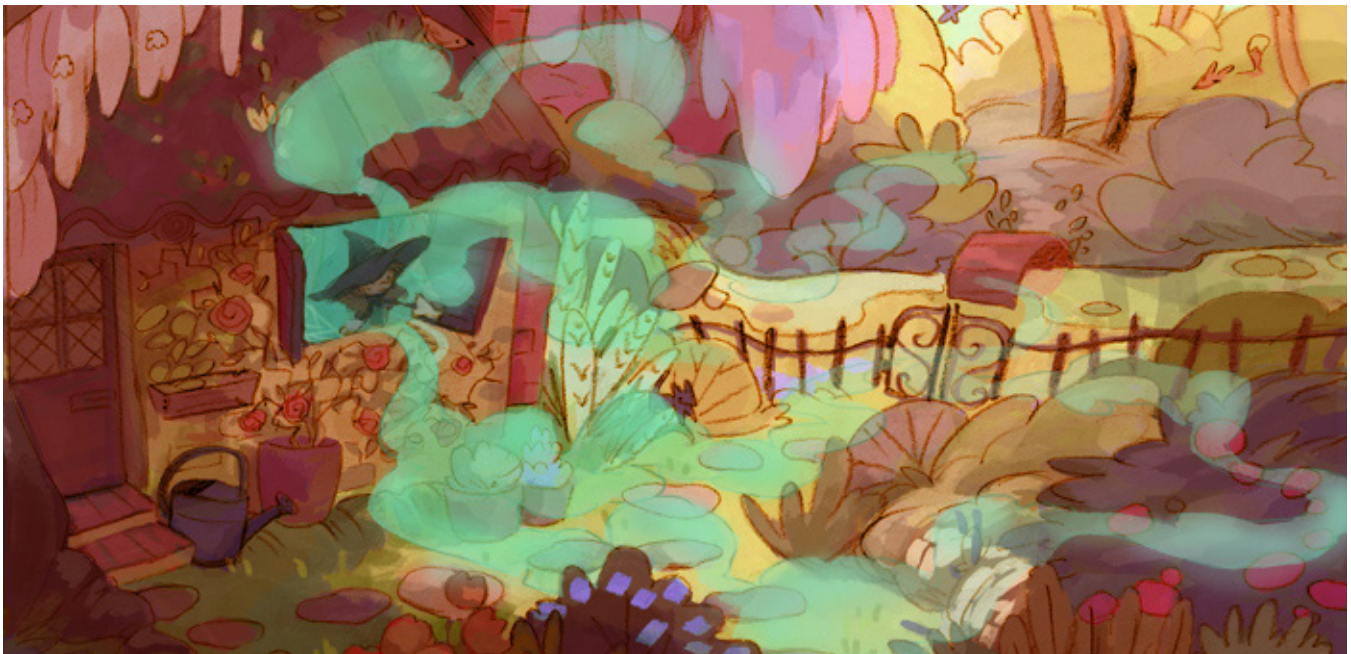
And it was all a little poisoned by the fact that *Vox Day* is on the ballot.

I know, I know, that's letting politics shoulder in on the Hugos, but dammit, the guy's a pig. Flat out. Let me be unequivocal - Fuck him. He's a racist, a misogynist, and most certainly a total asshole. His writing? He can turn a decent phrase, the story that's nominated ain't too bad, but it's only OK. The fact that I've heard people talk about leaving things off their ballots for reasons as simple as someone making a joke about SMOFs leaves me thinking that there is a lunatic fringe in fandom that I REALLY don't want to see have any impact on the Hugos. I didn't want to give him a dollar of my money, so I went and found a site on the net, which didn't take much doin', and read it. Again, fuck that guy.

In other thoughts, this doesn't feel like the ballot for an English WorldCon. Last time - All Brits for Best Novel. This time? Nope, and a couple of novels I'd never heard of. That's kinda rare, but not entirely. There's a feeling that this is the single most across-the-board ballot ever, that it shows the depth and breadth of the field in the English language. The Dram Pres Ballots are interesting, but man, when are we gonna see Short Films get the recognition they deserve? I mean, I put together a program of shorts that blows almost (Almost...) everything else on the ballot. It's a shame because there's more access to them today than at any time in history.

This issue is the last time I'll be doing it for the *Drink Tank*, as next year, it'll go somewhere else, likely *Claims Department*, maybe *Journey Planet*. I dunno. I just love doing this issue, and I'm gonna change it up and re-launch it next year. This whole moving on thing is hard!

All the art for this issue, save for the photos which are by me, and a couple of Vanessa's works, are from our nominees for Best Fan Artist. I love them so!



Art by Sarah Webb

Garcia@computerhistory.org
or
JourneyPlanet@gmail.com



Art by Mandie Manzano

Best Fan Artist

Last Year's Winner - Galen Dara

First Time on the Ballot - Sarah Webb, Mandie Manzano

Not on the Ballot - MO STARKEY!!! Taral Wayne! D West! Sue Mason! Hillary Pearlman! Espana Sheriff! Alan White! Pete Young! Wow, there's a lot of folks who should be on the ballot!

Fifth Place - Steve Stiles

Best finish in the Category - He's come second at least once

Pros - GREAT Artist and Big name in the history of Fan Art with many nominations!

Cons - Not a big name among non-Fanzine fans these days.

Steve Stiles needs to win one of these, though I don't think this is the year. How many times have I said that? He's amazing, has done so much great stuff, and I had him on my nomination list for years! Y'all should vote for him!

Odds - 10-to-1

Fourth Place - Spring Schoenhuth

Best Finish in Category - 3rd

Pros - GREAT stuff and a great name that appeals to non-traditional fanzine fans

Cons - Doesn't appeal to traditional fanzine fans

OK, I love Spring, and I really want her to win one of these years. Sadly, I don't think this is the year. Her work is gorgeous, but not at all traditional when you look at the list of winners or nominees. Maybe that's a big plus this year when so many of the Fan Hugo nominees aren't in the traditional mode. I'd love to see her win!

Odds - 8-to-1

Third Place - Brad W. Foster

Best Finish in Category - He's won or 8 of 'em

Pros - GREAT artist with an instantly recognizable style who is in zines all over the place.

Cons - A traditional fanzine artist, and maybe not in the mode of what voters expect this year.

I love Brad's stuff. I wouldn't mind him winning again because he's not only done amazing work, he's also one of the best guys out there. He's so very generous with his time and his art and you can see throughout this issue how amazing he is. I love his stuff, but this year is the crashing of the wave.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - Mandie Manzano

Best Finish in Category - New to the Ballot

Pros - GREAT and beautiful work in the mode that most non-Fanzine folks would instantly recognize as Fan Art.

Cons - Not a name among Fanzine fans.

I have seen Mandie's work over the years (specifically her *Dr. Who* stuff) and I really love her style. I think she's an absolute star and will be important as time goes by. If it weren't for a slightly bigger name on the ballot, I'd totally say she'd be walking away with it this year. Still, I'm so happy that she's allowed me to use some of her amazing art in this issue!

Odds - 5-to-2

Winner - Sarah Webb

Best Finish in Category - New to Ballot

Pros - She does awesome work that was championed to the ballot

Cons - Again, not a traditional nominee

Sarah Webb, along with Mandie, got a huge boost from the <http://hugoeligibleart.tumblr.com> site. I have no doubt that Sarah's gonna win the thing. While Mandie's is a bit more accessible, largely because it's mostly of recognizable properties, but Sarah's stuff is beautiful and resonates. It's not at all what you'll see in zines these days, which doesn't seem to matter at all anymore. I really like her stuff, she's REALLY young (as in when she wins, I believe she'll be the youngest winner of all-time) and there's nowhere for her to go but up!

Odds - 2-to-1

I like this set of nominees based on the variety of work they do. Stiles and Foster for Traditional Fan Art, the rest for non-traditional stuff. It's somewhat obvious that this is the turning point, that what once could be counted on can no longer be counted on. I'm stunned that Mo Starkey isn't on the ballot. Her stuff is amazing, and to see it passed over really hurts. Like Claire Brialey before her, she went from Winning the Category to off the ballot in two years...



HUGO NOMINEE STEVE STILES SAVES KITTENS FROM BURNING BUILDING!

Art by Steve Stiles



Best Fan Writer (Sort of...)

Last Year's Winner - Tansy Raynor-Roberts

First Time on the Ballot - Abigail Nussbaum, Liz Bourke, Foz Meadows, Kameron Hurley

Not on the Ballot - Me, James Bacon, Guy Lillian, Claire Brialey, Taral Wayne, Leigh Ann Hildebrand, anyone who writes for Fanzines.

I have absolutely no idea how to handicap this one. I am aware of all of these wonderful writers, I think three of them have written for us in one form or another. It's not a bad ballot, because they're well-liked writers, even if most of them aren't at all involved (or interested) in Fanzines. That bothers me a fair bit. I've seen people annoyed by the commentary from folks who prefer Fanzines to blogs that they're out of touch, and it finally seems like the majority of nominators are agreeing with them. It's sad because yes, there are some great bloggers (by numbers, far more than in zines), but the average writing in zines is better (lower numbers help out on that) and the best in the world (Claire Brialey, James Bacon, Guy Lillian, Taral Wayne, etc) are writing for zines. Of course, that's from a guy who wants to read more fannish material than stuff about SF, but what are you gonna do?

So, here's what I'll say - I'm Voting Oshiro first, Nussbaum Second, Foz 3rd, Hurley fourth, and Bourke fifth, though those last three may end up in a very different order now that I'm starting to look into each of them at a great depth. Nothing I've read from any of them has changed my mind that they're all great writers, but really, what bothers me is the fact that we've lost all connection to Fanzines. Claire Brialey is one of the best writers in any arena going today. If she had a blog, would she have made the ballot? Who knows? I'm not on the ballot, but it's always kinda been a miracle that I made it even once. Oshiro is a great guy, a wonderful writer, and worthy of winning. Abigail's great, we had a lovely dinner at Au Pied de Cochon, and is worthy of winning. Liz Bourke's awesome, I've come to her writing through a couple of different forms, and also worthy of winning. Foz Meadows is the one who I largely ignorant of, but what I've seen makes her very much worthy of winning. So, who's gonna win? I've got no idea. Maybe Mark because he's been on the ballot before? I dunno.

Here's a not from one who knows something about the category (and the first of many notes you'll be reading in these pages) from the wonderful Fantastical Librarian - Mieneke van der Salm

Foz made it! Hurrah :) And of course, Liz Bourke and Kameron Hurley. The other two writers I'm not (as) familiar with, but this is a strong and interesting category and it'll be really exciting to see who takes it home this year.





Art by Spring Schoenhuth



Best Fancast

Best Fancast

Last Years Winner - *SF Squeecast*

First time on Ballot - *The Skiffy and Fanty Show, Tea and Jeopardy, Verity!, The Writer and the Critic*

Not on the ballot - *The Fanboy Planet Podcast, Radio Free Skaro, Nerdvana, Leaf & Let Die, SF Squeecast*

Most wins in the Category - Both times won by *SF Squeecast*

Seventh Place - The Writer and The Critic

Best Finish - First time on Ballot

Pros - an interesting, well-produced podcast...

Cons - though maybe not as well-known as the others on the ballot

I've only listened to a few episodes of *The Writer and The Critic*. I really enjoyed them (and listening to it while I was reading *The Meathouse Man* was kinda cool) and I will be rating it kinda highly. I'm hoping it'll do well and end up on the ballot again, because it ain't gonna do it this year.

Odds - 12-to-1

Sixth Place - Tea and Jeopardy

Best finish in Category - First time on ballot

Pros - A REALLY fun little podcast of author interviews and tea

Cons - Not as well-known as a couple of other things on the ballot

Hey, another Podcast that basically does exactly what I'd like *Leaf & Let Die* to manage! They have tea and cake while interviewing someone awesome. The episode with Mary Robinette Kowal is particularly awesome! I can't say that it's as widely-known as others on the ballot (I never heard of it until the ballot was announced), but it's good stuff!

Odds - 10-to-1

Fifth Place - Galactic Suburbia

Best Finish in Category - 4th in 2012

Pros - An AMAZING Podcast that is almost certainly my second favorite podcast in the world.

Cons - Hasn't done overly well in past years.

Galactic Suburbia is amazing. A wonderful set of hosts who are deservedly on the ballot for the third time. The content is spectacular and I can't think of anything that I would mark them down for..... save for the fact that they've never done well.

Maybe this is a Stanley Schmidt situation where they'll do well far down the line, and I hope so, because this is the kind of podcast I hope represents the best that SF Fandom can produce.

Odds - 7-to-1

Fourth place - The Skiffy and Fanty Show

Best Finish in Category - First time on the ballot

Pros - Fun Podcast and Stina Leicht!

Cons - Not a huge name podcast

OK, I listen to a few podcasts, and Stina on *Skiffy and Fanty* is one of my fave presenters. Just great stuff. Overall, it's a real good podcast and one that I expect to see on the ballot for many more years. Still, it's not nearly the three big dogs in this race!

Odds - 5-to-1

Third Place - Verity!

Best Finish in Category - New to the Ballot

Pros - a great line-up

Cons - I'd never heard of it before the ballot was announced.

This isn't my favorite, but I can totally see why some folks would really enjoy it. I love Lynne Thomas, and how can you go wrong with Tansy?, but over all, it's not a podcast that overly appeals me to me for some reason. I've listened to four episodes and yeah, I enjoyed them, thought they did some good stuff, but I wasn't clamoring for more. It happens. Still, I think the list of regulars is really strong and it'll do well.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - Coode Street Podcast

Best Finish in Category - Third

Pros - Well-loved podcast from two of the biggest names in the SF Field.

Cons - I'm not personally a fan.

OK, I admit that's a lame reason for a Con, but still, it's not my favorite. I try to listen to a couple of episodes a year, and they just don't appeal to me. I'd rather listen to something a bit more, I dunno, dynamic. Maybe it's just when I was doing the listening for this year I picked poor episodes. It's at least somewhat telling that I only listen after they're nominated for the Hugo. Still, people seem to love it.

Odds -3-to-1

Winner - SF Signal

Best Finish in Category - Second

Pros - BIG name podcast on one of the biggest name blogs

Cons - They've had me on in the past?

I don't see any way in which *SF Signal* doesn't win. After having lost to the blog TWICE for best fanzine, this is one of the biggest no-brainers for me this year. Patrick's a great guy, the podcast is always interesting, and folks love it. I can't come up with a reason it wouldn't win.

Odds - Even money.

Now, this category is great. I really think that it's been a great add to the list of categories and I think that it needs more time to really come into it's own. Three nominees have been on all three ballots, and that's OK, I guess, until you consider that only 2 of the 4 others would have been on the ballot if not for a 3-way tie for fifth (or a 4-way for 4th, I guess) and then it seems a bit more... questionable. Still, it's a good list, and I can say you should listen to all of them...

... but where are the fandom podcasts? Where are the 'casts by folks who want to talk about fandom? *Galactic Suburbia* does some of that, but really, it's almost all stuff about SF instead of fandom. Maybe that's what we're really being told this year - that Fandom in and of itself isn't important. Maybe...



Art by Spring Schoenhuth

Best Fanzine

Last Year's Winner - SF Signal

First Time on the Ballot - *The Booksmugglers*, *A Dribble of Ink*, *Pornokitsch*

Not on the Ballot - **Banana Wings!!!** (and in England, of all places!), *The Drink Tank*, *Challenger*, *Broken Toys*, *Chunga*, *Beam*, *A Meara for Observers*, *Procrastinations*, *Geeky Girl Craft Podzine*

Fifth Place - Elitist Book Reviews

Best Finish in Category - Fifth place last year

Pros- plenty popular blog of reviews!

Cons - I'm starting to think that we'll be seeing an Anti-Correia backlash

It's not their fault. The good folks at *Elitist Book Reviews* aren't Larry Correia. They're good folks, Steve Diamond even wrote a piece for us last year, and the reviews they do are pretty good. The problem is that Larry Correia campaigned for 'em and this year his involvement may backfire for folks. I'd like to see **EBR** do well, I think they're a fun bunch, but I think this is just the wrong year.

Odds - 12-to-1

Fourth place - A Dribble of Ink

Best Finish in Category - New to the ballot

Pros - Aidan's a good guy, writes well, and is hell well-respected.

Cons - Not the biggest name on the ballot, not familiar to traditional fanzine types.

I've even had a piece on *A Dribble of Ink!* It's a good blog, Aidan's awesome (and has written for *The Drink Tank!*) and it's always a good read. It's kinda over-shadowed by the big two on this list.

Odds - 8-to-1

Third Place - Journey Planet

Best Finish in Category - third place last year

Pros - The **ONLY** fanzine on the ballot, and a damn good one (even if I'm one of the editors)

Cons - The **ONLY** fanzine on the ballot.

OK, this isn't my gigantic ego talking - *Journey Planet* is a fucking good zine. I don't really have a lot to do with it, honestly. I do layout whenever we don't have a genii like Pete Young handling that aspect, and I write at least one piece for each issue, but it's really James and our Guest Editors who are the vision and driving force. The last issue that really had my fingerprints on it had to be the James Bond issue at the end of 2012. We do good stuff, and I hold up the Philip K. Dick issue (<http://journeyplanet.weebly.com/uploads/1/5/7/1/15715530/journeyplanet16.pdf>) as the best fanzine of 2013. Go, check it out. I will hold *JP* up against any of the blogs on this list and find it worthy. Others may certainly disagree, but I'm betting traditional-style voters will probably go for it.

Odds - 5-to-1

Second Place - The Booksmugglers

Best Finish in Category - New to the Ballot

Pros - Great site for reviews.

Cons - Not many...

I love *The Booksmugglers* when I read the site. I don't do that very often, but when I do I'm glad I did. I love the way that they look at books, though I seldom look for reviews in blogs (or anywhere, for that matter) so I only rarely read. Thea and Anna have been great and let *The Drink Tank* run a few pieces from them over the years. I could see them winning, they're a beloved site, but I've been hearing about one site a LOT more than about *The Booksmugglers*

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - Pornokitsch

Best Finish in Category - New to the Ballot

Pros - It's the biggest name site for SF-lovers 'round these parts. A good friend of mine even went so far as to say that it was the only site of the five he'd heard of (which is weird as I've given him copies of *Journey Planet*!)

Cons - None, if Not Being a Fanzine isn't a Con

So, this is the 500 pound gorilla as far as I'm concerned. It's a well-loved site, with some folks putting it on-par with *Boing-Boing* (certainly not in number of hits, but in stature) and I'm sure at BayCon there'll be a lot of folks talking about it, like there were two years ago. We've been lucky in that this site has been a major hit, and I think that Jared either wrote something for us a while back, or was gonna but we ended up not doing the issue or something'. Still, it's gonna win

Odds - 3-to-2

Let's start with a brief look at the category from The Fantastical Librarian herself!

PORNOKITSCH! THE BOOK SMUGGLERS! A DRIBBLE OF INK! YAY! They all made it. Journey Planet is the most traditional in the category as it's a traditional fanzine and I'm unfamiliar with them. Elitist Book Reviews is a book review blog mainly, and one I gave up on reading some time ago as their reviews just frustrated me every single time they reviewed a book I might have been interested in, something that became rarer and rarer too.

Now, did you catch what I caught? The idea that a traditional fanzine is something obscure, hidden, unfamiliar. You get that from a lot of folks who are regulars to blogs, and even those who have spent the time to investigate fanzines often dismiss them as feeling dated, old, irrelevant.

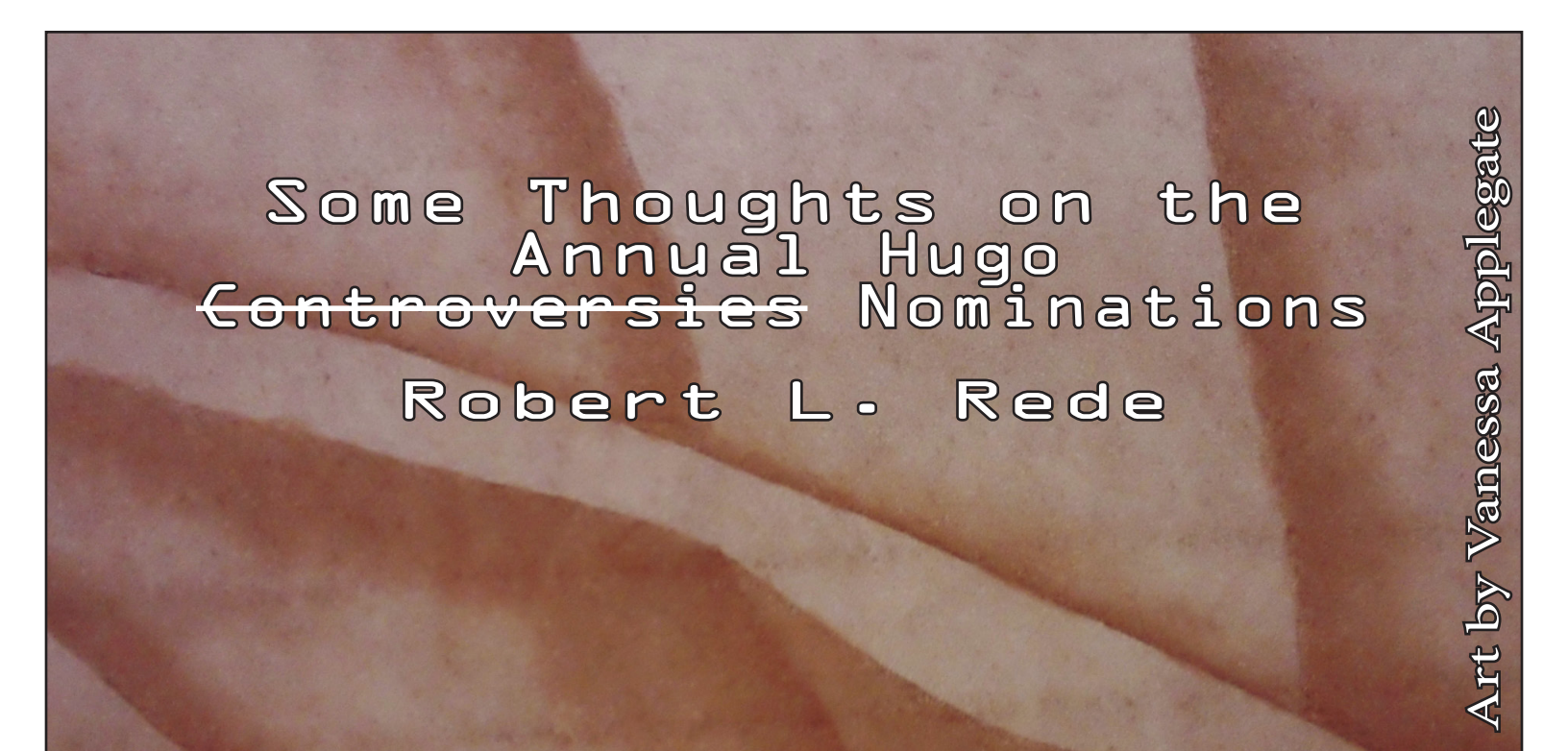
Let's look at Guy Lillian's response to *Journey Planet* from the latest *Zine Dump*

There's a wealth of solid comment here, typical of JP, one reason the zine is racking up deserved Hugo nominations in recent years – and is, I confess, the only 2014 Fanzine Hugo nominee of which I was previously aware.

Now, these both say the same thing, only from different points of view. Both are admitting that they have a limited view, maybe not dismissing, but certainly not searching out, what else is out there. It happens, we all have our comfort zones, though I think it's best for everyone when we move outside of them and open our eyes at least a little to the possibilities.



Art by Mandie Manzano



Some Thoughts on the Annual Hugo ~~Controversies~~ Nominations

Robert L. Rede

Art by Vanessa Applegate

The controversies regarding this year's Hugo Awards began before Loncon 3 even announced the nominees.

While Authors (and others) campaigning for Hugo nominations is nothing new, in the past several years it does seem to have increased in pace. As recently as Torcon 3 (2003), a fan was excoriated when some well-meaning friends, without his knowledge, took out a "For Your Consideration" style ad in one of the con's progress reports. Although that sort of ad hasn't been seen since, the amount of campaigning and log-rolling on-line these days make it look trivial. Similarly, block voting isn't a new phenomenon, either, with the most egregious example dating to 1987, when Bridge managed to get L. Ron Hubbard's *Black Genesis* on the Hugo ballot (it eventually finished below "No Award"). This year, however, does see two cases of concerted efforts to get items onto the ballot which met with success.

The first relied on a reinterpretation of the rules. This is something that has been growing in other categories ever since *StarShipSofa* redefined fanzines to include podcasts in 2010. Since then, blogs have made a similar effort to redefine the fanzine category and podcasts and music have appeared in the best related work category (looking at previous nominations, music had previously been seen to be nominated in the dramatic presentation categories).

Fans of Robert Jordan's (and later Brandon Sanderson's) series *The Wheel of Time* (1990-2013) decided that the complete fourteen volume series (originally planned as a six volume series) should be eligible for the Best Novel Category according to WSFS Constitution section 3.2.4: "Works appearing in a series are eligible as individual works, but the series as a whole is not eligible. However, a work appearing in a number of parts shall be eligible for the year of the final part." This rule was instituted to cover novels which were serialized in the magazines which ran across calendar years, a one-time common occurrence. The most recent time a serialized novel made the ballot was in 2003, when Robert J. Sawyer's *Hominids* was nominated and won.

Their argument is that the fourteen-volumes are a single work, not a series. This actually isn't the first time this argument has been, and the first time it was made, for Connie Willis's *Blackout* and *All Clear* in 2010, the argument held and the work(s) went on to win the Hugo Award. The primary difference between Willis's work and the Jordan/Sanderson work is that both volumes of Willis's novel/series were published in the same year. Although some have claimed that *The Wheel of Time* is the frontrunner for this year's Best Novel Hugo, I have a feeling that many voters who are not already fans will look upon its nomination as gaming the system and vote against it.

Working against this argument is the 1966 Worldcon, Tricon, which added a category for Best Series, indicating that a series of books, even if they could be considered a single story, was different than a serialization. The

series which were nominated in that year were Asimov's *Foundation* (the winner), Burroughs's *Barsoom*, Heinlein's still-at-that-time-incomplete *Future History*, Smith's *Lensmen*, and Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, the selection from that list most akin to the Jordan/Sanderson series. The Administrator should have looked at this year for precedent in the treatment of series.

Another work in the Best Novel category arrived there by dint of active campaigning on the part of the author, which is, by now, an established, if not generally admired, process. Larry Correia has long had a strange relationship with the Hugos, dating back to his Campbell Nomination (he lost to Lev Grossman, who Correia recently, and inaccurately, claimed had not written a book since his Campbell eligibility period). In his writing, Correia seems to alternately desire a Hugo and scoff at any importance of the Hugo, often setting up strawmen to tilt at. To his credit, Correia decided, upon mobilizing his readers, to share the wealth and he recommended several other works and individuals for nominations. Having made twelve nominations (only eleven of which were eligible), Correia's slate managed to place six items on the ballot, an impressive 54.5% success rating. Having done so, Correia has been attacked in ways that other self-promoters haven't been, which he states is due to his personal politics. Correia has also implied that should he lose the Hugo, it is solely due to his political stance (he is also on record as saying he thinks that *The Wheel of Time* will win).

One area where this year's administrators attempted to rectify a past administrative error is in the Best Novella category. Last year, Mary Robinette Kowal's "The Lady Astronaut of Mars" received enough nominations to make the ballot. It was disqualified by the Hugo Administrators who did not believe it was eligible for Best Novelette because it was released as an audio recording rather than in print. Kowal published the text on her website in early 2013, and it was also reprinted on Tor.com. Having again received enough nominations, this year's Hugo Administrators (a different group each year) have confirmed its eligibility and allowed it onto the ballot. Earlier, I mentioned that podcasts and blogs have been trying to redefine the fanzine category for years with some success. Since StarShipSofa's redefinition of the category in 2010, the category has been won by one traditional fanzine (*The Drink Tank*) and a blog (*SF Signal* twice). When the Podcast category was created, its instigator Richard Lynch, specifically stated that he was trying to remove blogs from the fanzine category and that the word "periodical" in section 3.3.13 was inserted to specifically rule out blogs. Looking at this year's slate, Lynch has lost the battle, with only one traditional fanzine, *Journey Planet*, appearing on a ballot full of blogs. Even as bloggers insist that blogs are fanzines, they undercut their own argument with their submissions to this year's Hugo Packet. Only *Journey Planet* includes an issue of itself as a fanzine since it is the only one that can. The other nominees are a collection of individual articles because blogs do not have issues, as stipulated in the rules, they don't even have a defined "equivalent in other media" since these nominees only include a random assortment of articles.

Whether or not blogs are eligible in the Fanzine category (and this year's Administrator seems to have categorically stated that they are), bloggers have always been eligible in the Best Fan Writer category. Since David Langford's most recent Hugo for Best Fan Writer in 2007, Bloggers have won in all except two years (Cheryl Morgan in 2009 and Claire Brialey in 2011). Of course, professional authors who also write blogs also wound up winning in every year since 2007 except for 2009 and 2011 (this year's professional is Kameron Hurley, also nominated for one of her blog posts in Best Related Work). This year is different for a couple of reasons. First, all of the nominees are bloggers, none of them has written for traditional fanzines. Whether any traditional fanzine writers will appear on future ballots remains to be seen, but it is unlikely. Another way it is different is that only a single nominee has appeared on the final ballot in a prior year, notably Mark Oshiro, whose first appearance was in 2013. The last time there were four rookie nominees was in 1979 (and that year's veteran, Richard Geis, had been nominated several times and had a four-win streak going, ended by rookie Bob Shaw).

The Retro Hugos, which have always been a bit of a conundrum, with fans never seeming to agree if they are supposed to vote as if they were living in the year for which they were awarded or if they are supposed to vote with the 75 years (or 50 or 100) of hindsight they actually have, have only a couple of interesting features this year and seem to have produced a strong slate.

The short story category includes two debut stories. Lester del Rey's "The Faithful" was his professional debut, written, ostensibly, in response to a bet by his then-girlfriend. Del Rey's second published short story, "Helen O'Loy," long considered one of the classic robot stories also made the ballot.

The other debut story, "Hollerbochen's Dilemma," is by Ray Bradbury. However, Bradbury's first pro-

fessional sale didn't occur until November 1941, when he published "Pendulum" in *Super Science Stories*. His nominated work was first published in Forrest Ackerman's fanzine, *Imagination!* (also nominated). Bradbury's story isn't the only fanzine-published story included on the ballot. Clarke's "How We Went to Mars," predates his first professional sale, "Loophole," by eight years. Clarke's story originally ran in the Leeds Science Fiction Association's fanzine, *Amateur Science Stories*, and was reprinted in *The Collected Stories of Arthur C. Clarke* in 2001, so it is possible readers have actually read it. The Bradbury story has only been reprinted in a small print run from an academic publisher, so nominators' familiarity with it may only be theoretical.

For the Retro Hugos, familiarity is certainly not a requirement as this year's nominators proved in the Best Dramatic Presentation category. Impinging on the nearly all-Orson Welles slate, a BBC production of Karel Capek's *R.U.R.* managed to make the ballot. This was certainly an historic show, since it was the first time science fiction appeared on television. And, of course, *R.U.R.* gave the English language the word "robot." What makes this nomination problematic is, according to Steven H Silver, who wrote about 1938 on Radio, Television, and Broadway for the booklet *Loncon 3* distributed at LoneStarCon 3's Hugo Ceremony, "Unfortunately, the live performance does not appear to have been roto-scoped and no longer survives." Although it is not known how many people nominated the work, chances are that very few, if any of them, were alive in Britain on February 21, 1938 to watch the show and remember it well enough after 75 years.



Art by Vanessa Applegate



Art by Sarah Webb

Best SemiProZine

Last Year's Winner - Clarkesworld

First Time on the Ballot - None

Not on the list - Locus (Yeah, yeah, I know, but it belongs here...), *New York Review of Science Fiction*, and I'm sure there's more...

Fifth place - Beneath Ceaseless Skies

Best finish in Category - Fifth, last year

Pros - Good stuff

Cons - Did poorly last year, not as high-profile as the other 4

OK, I have really enjoyed *BCS* a lot when I've read it. I read it once a year, right after I hear about it being nominated. I know, I know, but really, I'm not as big into current fiction as I am into the old school stuff I haven't managed to get to yet. Still, I like the thing, and I'm putting it pretty highly on the list of my voting.

ODDS - 10-to-1

Fourth Place - Interzone

Best Finish - It's won the damn thing!

Pros - Still coin' good stuff after all these years.

Cons - I didn't realize it was still coin' good stuff after all these years.

Interzone's big in the UK, I think. I've read a recent issue and it's good, but it doesn't have the world-wide exposure that it might have had when it won last time. In the UK. Hmmm...

Odds - 8-to-1

Third Place - Lightspeed Magazine

Best Finish in Category - Second last year

Pros - In my eyes, the best regular magazine in the genre today.

Cons - Maybe not the biggest market on the ballot?

Lightspeed had a great year. With a down one for *Asimov's*, a slightly up one for *Analog*, and a slightly below-average year for *F&SF*, *Lightspeed* took over as the best magazine in the genre. It's brilliantly edited, has great stories, and most of all, it's smartly put together. I love it and I would love to see it walk away with a Hugo one of these days.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - Apex Magazine

Bet Finish in Category - 3rd.

Pros - A Great magazine with very smart editing

Cons - ?

I love *Apex*, and every time I apply for a job that requires writing samples, I use the piece that I wrote for them in 2012. It's a wonderful magazine, the Rachel Swirsky piece *If You Were a Dinosaur, My Love* alone makes the entire year worthwhile. I'm hoping *Apex* wins it some year, though I wish it could be this year as it's the last year Lynne and Michael Thomas are editors, but I don't see it happening.

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - Strange Horizons

Best Finish in Category - Third place last year

Pros - wonderful, long-running magazine with a strange UK bent

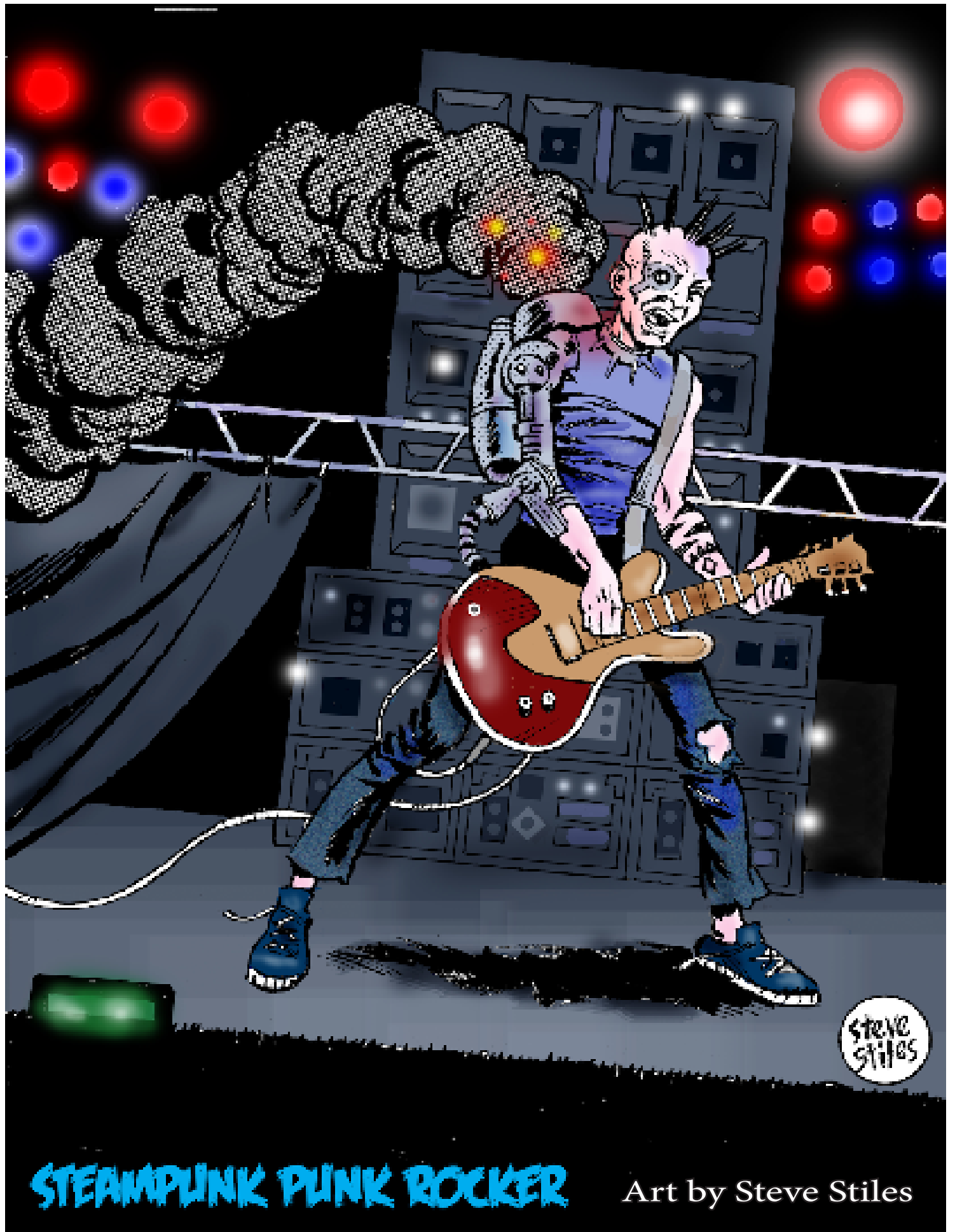
Cons - None, really

Even if just all the listed editors voted, *Strange Horizons* would win! It's a seriously good magazine, a long-runnign one as well that just made the ballot the first time last year. It's got great folks, it's always worth a read, and I think it was in *Strange Horizons* that the great Mark Plummer wrote a wonderful article with me as a central figure that must have confused every other reader of the mag. I think it'll win, and I'm saying' so!

Odds - 2-to-1

Now, I'm never sure about Semi-Prozine, largely because the rules are a bit weird. I like all the ones nominated, and there's always the *New York Review of Science Fiction*, but I'm never seeking out things because they're a Semi-Pro. And in recent years, it's not been easy to differentiate. Look at *Clarkesworld* or *Apex* or *Lightspeed*. They're just as good, if not better, than the Big Three, only with less ads and such. I love what they're doing in those, and a couple of others, but honestly, I'd rather see them competing against the bigs in a Best Magazine category, because most years, *Clarkesworld* would take it!

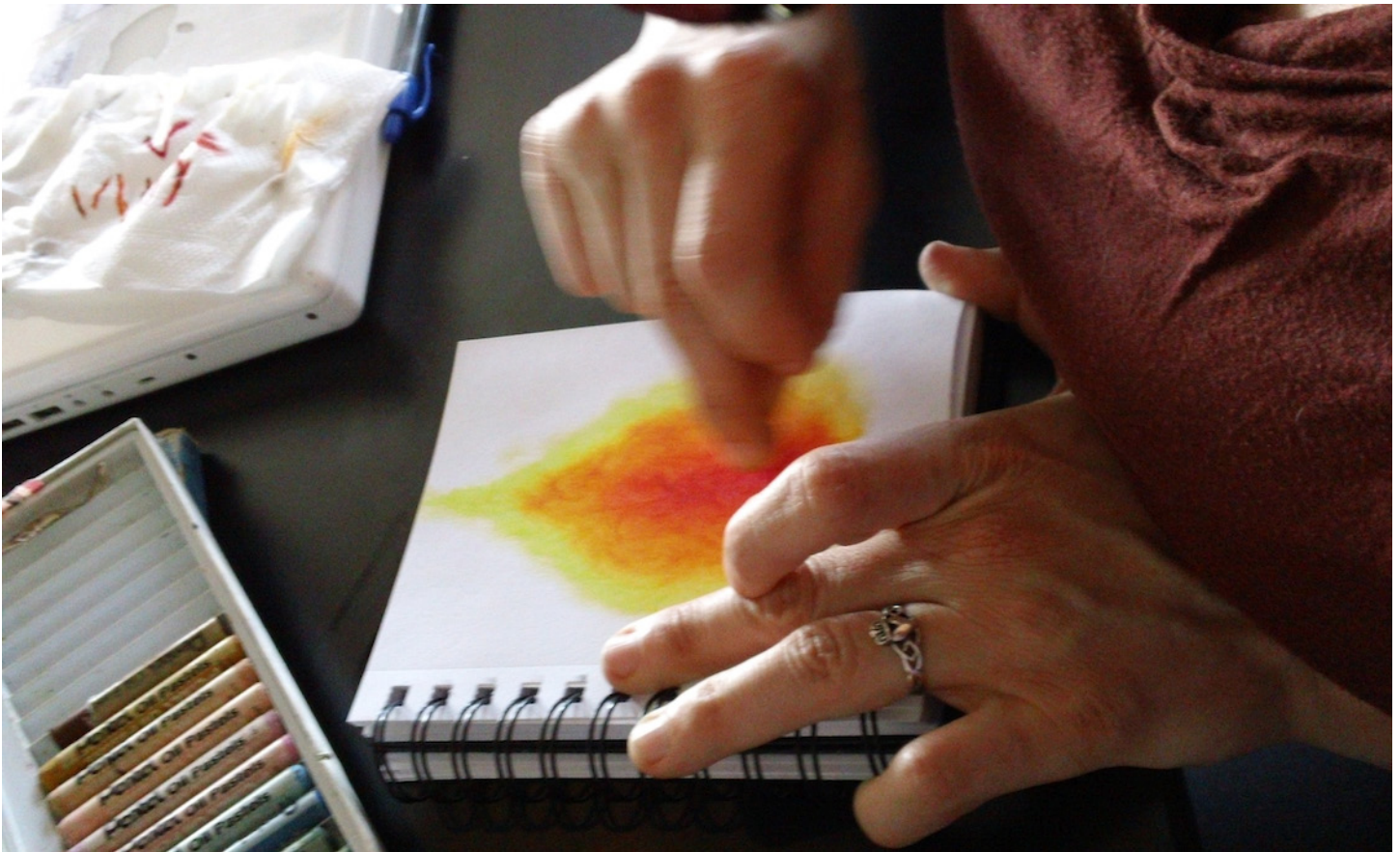




steve
stiles

STEAMPUNK PUNK ROCKER

Art by Steve Stiles



Best Professional Artist

Last Year's Winner - The Amazing John Picacio

Most Wins in Category - Michael Whelen

First time on Ballot - John Harris, Galen Dara, Fiona Staples

Not on the Ballot - Vincent Chong, Howard Chaykin, Bob Eggleton, Michael Whelen, Dave Hardy, The Foglios, Joey HiFi

Sixth place - John Harris

Best Finish in Category - First time on ballot

Pros - Long-time artist who does great covers.

Cons - Not a Huge name

I love his stuff. Harris is one of the most instantly recognizable styles in cover work. I like his stuff a lot, but I'd only heard of him recently, though as soon as I was told what he had done, I could list 20 or so pieces that he had done (including some Sinclair computer manuals!)

Odds - 10-to-1

Fifth place - Daniel Dos Santos

Best Finish in Category - Second last year

Pros - a wonderful artist who has done some very popular covers

Cons - I can't think of many of his 2013 works

I love Danny Two Saints' stuff! I knew him first from the Patricia Briggs books, but you see his stuff all over the place now. I'd love to see him win, but this ain't the year for it, sadly.

Odds - 8-to-1

Fourth place - Galen Dara

Best Finish in Category - New to Ballot (but won Fan Artist Hugo last year!)

Pros - Won the Fan Artist Hugo and is so very visible right now!

Cons - Not biggest name on the ballot

I love Galen's work (and you can see her cover for The Ninth Annual Giant Sized Annual of *The Drink Tank*) and her stuff's always top-notch! I can't think of an artist doing art today whose style is as recognizable to my eyes in an instant who is working in the magazines. I love her stuff, and I'm hoping that she'll do well.

Odds - 6-to-1

Third place - Julie Dillon

Best Finish in Category - Third last year

Pros - an AMAZING artist who does amazing work

Cons - Still kinda new to the world

Julie Dillon's probably going to win this category in the next three-to-five years. She's amazing. I still go back to that because her work has always struck me in that vein of amazing. I'm so glad that she's up on the ballot, and I will be rating her very highly!

Odds - 5-to-1

Second Place - John Picacio

Best Finish in Category - Two-Time and reigning Champion!

Pros - Is right up there with Eggleton and Whelen as the biggest name science fiction illustrators out there today

Cons - won the last two years and maybe folks wanna spread the love?

I love John, both as a dude, and as an artist. I've been so lucky to get to chat with him every few months over the last few years and I'm hoping that he'll get another Rocket in the coming years, but this year, I think that there's a single name that might trump him. Also, you all should look at Lone-boy.com and John's Loteria stuff!

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - Fiona Staples

Best Finish in Category - New to Ballot (Saga won Best Graphic Work last year)

Pros - *Saga*.

Cons - Nada.

Saga is the best comic in the world right now and Fiona Staples is the biggest reason. Her art is amazing, and I love it so much. When I first saw her stuff, in *Mystery Society*, I was blown away and I love it even more today. I can't wait to see what she does next!

Odds - 2-to-1

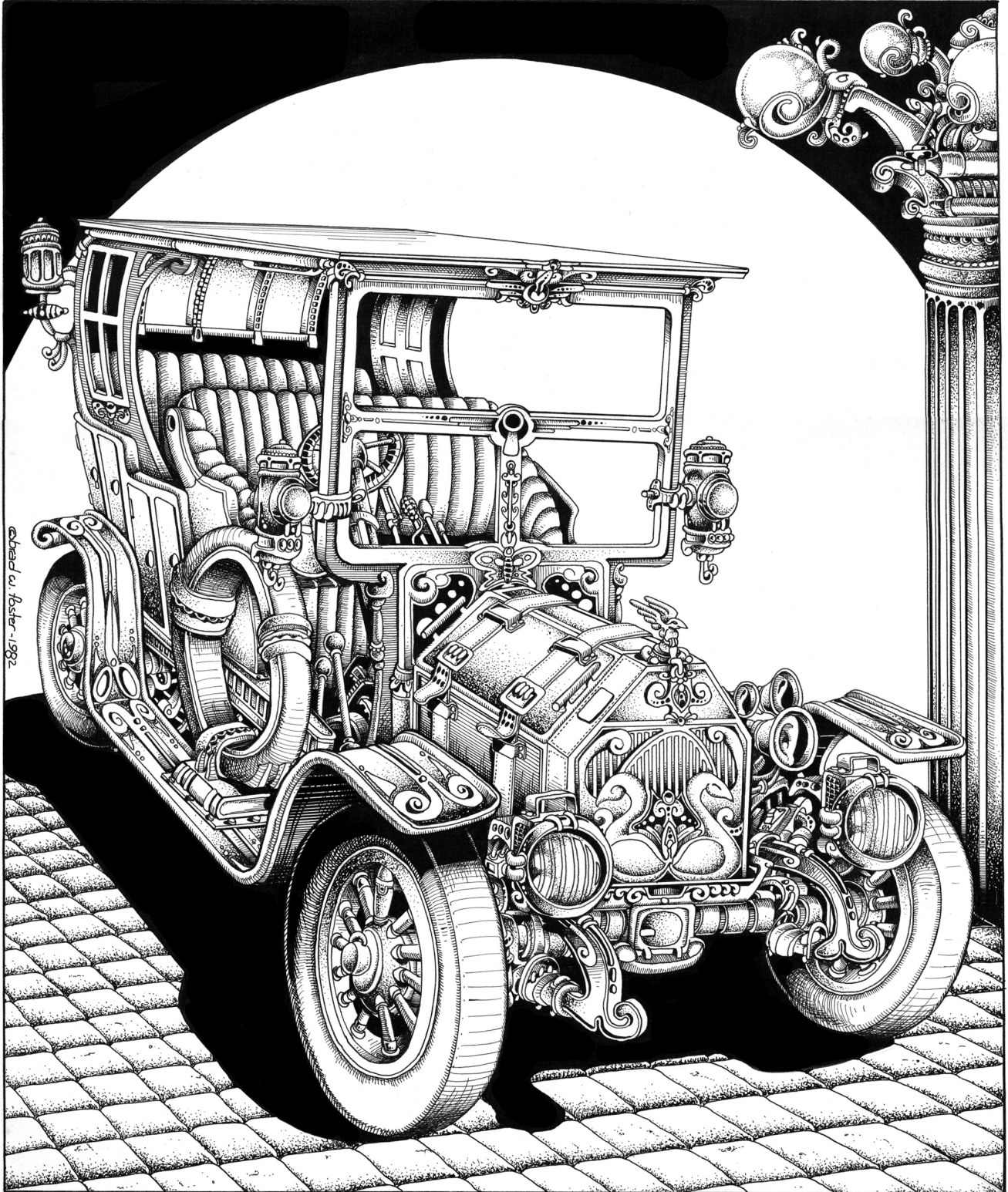
I love this slate of nominees! Julie Dillon and Fiona Staples alone make it worthwhile, but add in Picacio and Two Saints and you've got a great list. I think it also represents the depth of the field right now (Comics artist! Cover artist! Interiors artist! Awesome artists!) and while there are folks I'd love to see on the ballot (the Foglios for example) I have to say that I'm very pleased.

From the Fantastical Librarian again -

YAY! Julie Dillon made it! Hugely disappointed that Joey HiFi didn't though, as I think his work is exceptional. I really like the fact that there are three women on here as well. This will be a fun category to research come voting time.

EXHIBITION HALL

Art by Brad Foster





Best Editor Long-Form

Last Year's Winner - Patrick Nielsen Hayden

Most wins in category - I think it's Patrick with 3

First time on the ballot - Lee Harris

Not on the ballot - Lou Anders, Dave Hartwell

Fifth Place - Ginjer Buchanan

Best finish in category - 3rd, I think.

Pros - Long-standing tradition of excellence

Cons - Bigger names on the list

I've only met Ginjer once, and she was really nice. I've liked many of the books she's edited, and she's a lot of fun, and while she's retiring this year, I don't think she'll be taking it home.

Odds - 9-to-1

Fourth Place - Sheila Gilbert

Best Finish in Category - Third, last year

Pros - <http://michellesagara.com/hugo-ballot-sheila-gilbert-best-editor-long-form/> says it all

Cons - Not her year

DAW has had some good years recently, including a win in this category by the great Betsy Wollheim. Sheila's done some good stuff, and I wouldn't be shocked to see her win in a few years, but this ain't the year.

Odds - 6-to-1

Third Place - Liz Gorinsky

Best Finish in Category - 4th, I think.

Pros - Edits some amazing books and is very popular.

Cons - Not as big a name as others on this list

I am a big fan of Liz Gorinsky's. She's good people, and I've always enjoyed running into her various places. She's also got some great books under her belt, and I would say she's one of the leading lights in Steam-punk editing. Still, bigger fish, bigger fish...

Odds - 5-to-1

Second place - Toni Weisskopf

Best Finish in Category - Second place last year

Pros - BIG name editor/fan as well as a wonderful wonderful editor. Her work for the good people at Baen (and in many ways she IS Baen) is amazing. I'd love to see her win (she had my vote last year, and has been one of my nominees for years) but I'm not sure she can pull it off this year!

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - Lee Harris

Best finish in category - New to Ballot

Pros - British! And AWSUM!!!!!!

Cons - Maybe not as familiar to non-Brits

Lee's my number one choice, without doubt. He's a good guy, a great editor, and the person I think of when I think of Angry Robot Books, which is one of the best imprints out there He's my pick, and not only because he's British at a British WorldCon (which he is), but because he's an awesome Brit at a British WorldCon (which is also true.)

Odds - 2-to-1

Notes from Mieneke van der Salm (who says it better than I can!)

I'm really disappointed that there aren't any more British-based editors on the list, something that goes for the short fiction ballot as well. I'd hoped that with Worldcon in London this year, we'd finally see some more Brits on the list. However, I'm really pleased that Lee Harris made it. And like in the previous category I'll have to do some research on the rest.





Art by Spring Schoenhuth

Best Editor - Short Form

Last Year's Winner - Stanley Schmidt (FINALLY!)

First time on the ballot - None

Most wins in category - I believe that's Gardner Dozois

Not on the ballot - Gordon Van Gelder! Lynne Thomas! Ann Vandermeer!

Fifth Place - Johnathan Strahan

Best finish in category - I think he was second in Australia in 2010

Pros - Edits great stuff.

Cons - not as well-known outside of Oz, maybe?

I really think Strahan is one of the best editors out there. I've got some of his anthologies and I think they're really solid. I think he'll win one of these Rockets sometime.

Odds - 8-to-1

Fourth Place - Ellen Datlow

Best finish in Category - She's won!

Pros - Great editor and HUGE name in the field

Cons - maybe not as big a name as she was a few years ago

I love Ellen's stuff, and she's a star and has two of these things, I believe. Still, this is a big year and I just don't see her winning it.

Odds - 5-to-1

Third place - Neil Clarke

Best Finish in Category - fifth

Pros - Editor of one of the best and winningest mags around

Cons - Didn't do well last year

I think Neil Clarke's probably the future of genre short publishing. Well, Neil and Mr. JJA. He's a star and *Clarkesworld* is one of the best magazines of the last decade. The possibility of it becoming the fourth of the Big Three is there, and I hope it happens. I don't see him winning quite yet, but the fact that *Clarkesworld* isn't there for folks to vote for him means this is the only chance to honor *Clarkesworld*, and I think some'll do just that.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second place - Sheila Williams

Best finish in category - She's won

Pros - Great editor of one of the Big Three who has a ton of Hugo-winning and nominated stories under her editorial belt

Cons - Not many.

I've been chided, in the past, for comparing Sheila to Gardner Dozois and much favorite Gardner. I wasn't a big fan of *Asimov's* this year, but she's the biggest name on this list and she'll at very least come close.

Odds - 2-to-1

Winner - John Joseph Adams

Best Finish in Category - I think he was second last year

Pros - *LIGHTSPEED*!!!!

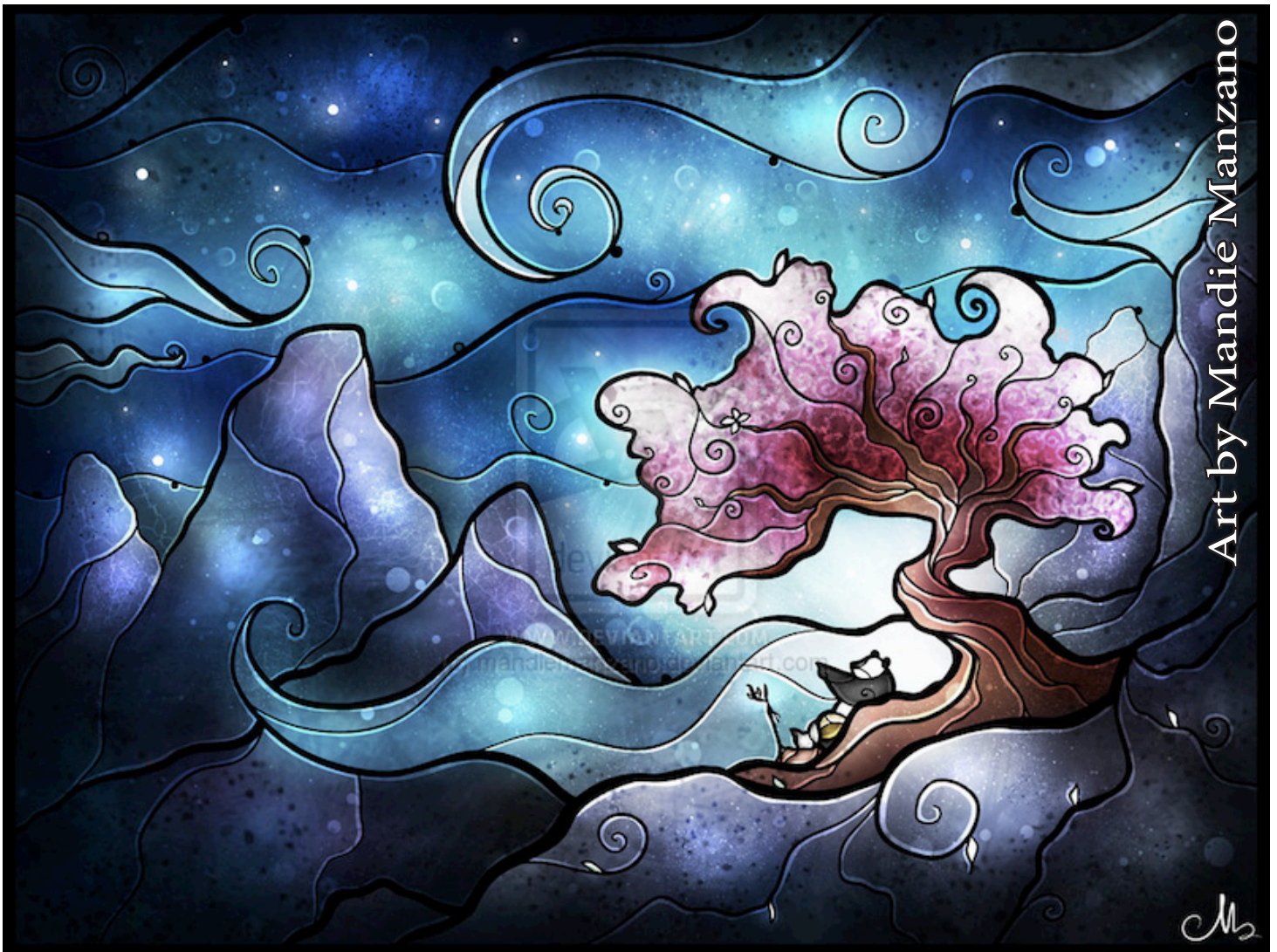
COs - None

JJA (Who I call "Jajadams") is a superstar waiting to explode. He's amazing, *Lightspeed* is spectacular, and he's a good guy who lives near my favorite city in the world. I really think in the future, we're gonna look back at the stuff JJA's been doing with *Lightspeed* and think that was a major turning point.

Odds - 5-to-4

I always have a much easier time with Short Form than I do Long form. This is probably because I understand what a short form editor does better. Hell, I've kinda done it! Still, it's the bigger of the awards to me because I really do prefer the short form to novels, these days.





Art by Mandie Manzano

Best Dramatic Presentation Short Form

Winner Last Year - *Game of Thrones* - *Blackwater*

Most Wins in Category - *Dr. Who*

Not on the Ballot - *Archer* - *Seatunt*, anything from *The Neighbors*, Any episode from *Gravity Falls*, *The Simpsons Halloween Special*, ANY short film (unless you count the *Five-ish Doctors*).

Sixth Place - Orphan Black - Variations Under Domestication

Pros - People seem to love this show!

Cons - It ain't *Doctor Who* or *Game of Thrones*

Now, I have only watched one episode of it, the nominated one it turns out, and I have to say it's very well-done. I like the lead actress, as she has a lot to do and makes the most out of every scene, but it's not *Doctor Who* and/or *Games of Thrones*, and thus it has no chance.

Odds - Exceptionally long.

Fifth Place - An Adventure in Space and Time

Pros - Fun!

Cons - What?

I had no idea this existed, but then I read the description, looked it up and really enjoyed it. It's got Brian

Cox, for God's Sake! It's a lot of fun, tells a really smart story, and while I don't think it has much of a chance because it's not STRICTLY science fiction (or *Dr. Who*, really) it's still a lot of fun and I recommend it to anyone who is even a little bit of a classic Who fan.

Odds - 10-to-1

Fourth Place - Dr. Who - The Day of the Doctor

Pros - One of the most significant episodes of the *Dr. Who* ever with one of the greatest closing cameos, PLUS it was also shown in theaters

Cons - Some found it a bit too chaotic, it seems.

I didn't love *The Day of the Doctor*. It was good fun, no doubt, but it was also kinda lost on me, I think. John Hurt? Awesome. David Tennant? More Awesome! The segment with Queen Lizzy the I - MOST AWR-SUM!!! It's a good episode, and certainly a hugely significant one, but it also wasn't as moving as the following episode, which I adored. Still, it'll do very well.

Odds - 5-to-1

Third Place - Dr. Who - The Name of the Doctor

Pros - GREAT episode with GREAT impact and a GREAT ending

Cons - I don't know.

A wonderful episode, and one of the best of the entire Smith run (I wasn't a huge Smith fan, but how could I be when there's already a David Tennant out there?) but this episode was as good, if not better, than any but the best of Tennant's outings. I wouldn't mind this one winning, not at all, but I don't think it will.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - Game of Thrones - The Rains of Castamere

Pros - *GAME OF THRONES!!!*

Cons - It's not a great episode.

Maybe Red Wedding, the most impacting and wonderful episode of *GoT*, was 2014, but there's no way that *The Rains of Castamere* will be anywhere near as memorable. It's a good episode, and maybe because I only watch selected episode of *Game* that I didn't connect with it, but really, the only reason it's got a shot is that there's a rabid *GoT* fandom out there that rivals *Dr. Who*. Still, I think it'll come up just a bit short.

Odds - 2-to-1

Winner - The Five(ish) Doctors

Pros - Brilliant *Dr. Who* history stuff!

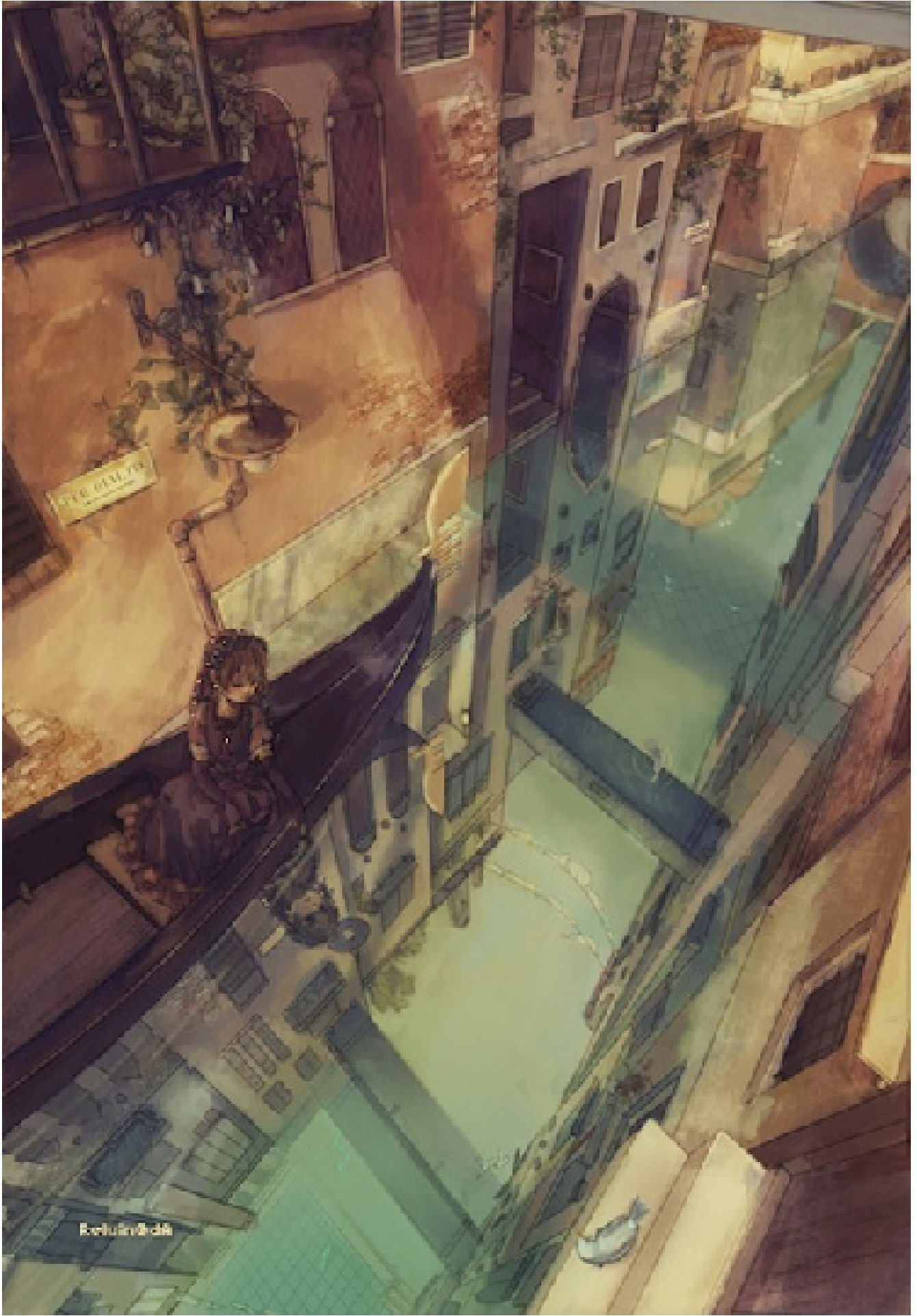
Cons - Might be a bit less mainstream than the others on the ballot.

OK, here's where I go out on a limb. I think *The Five(ish) Doctors* is the bet *Dr. Who*-related thing ever done. It's hilarious, has something for the new folk, something for the old timers, and John Barrowman. It's hilarious, and Sylvester McCoy is a genius! I really think this'll win because it's both something different and something great!

Odds - 3-to-2

Now, I am always talking about the Short Form category as the place where there should be short films. In fact, the closest a legitimate short film has gotten to the ballot was in 2012, when, if we had declined the nom for our acceptance speech, *The Fabulous Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* would have made the ballot. It's a shame, because I can think of at least five short films that are better than anything on the ballot.

In fact, I'll name them - *Cargo*, *Sorry About Tomorrow*, *Goeddel Incomplete*, *Lullaby for Lucius and Sumat*, *A Conversation About Cheating with My Time-Traveling Future Self*. ANY of those would be incredible on the ballot, and none of them, with the possible exception of *Cargo*, will even show up on the long-list. Yes, many of those are obscure because they can't be on the web because they're still on their festival run, but they're all amazing. I would love for us to look at ways to increase the visibility for short films.



Art by Sarah Webb



Best Dramatic Presentation Long Form

Last Year's Winner - The Avengers

Not on the Ballot - Her, Star Trek: Into Darkness, The Conjuring, Thor: The Dark World

Fifth Place - Frozen

Pros - a good little animated film from Disney.

Cons - Not the right crowd.

Frozen's a good movie, with an awesome song that won an academy award. Still, it's not the sort of thing that the Hugo voters tend to go for, and I don't think it's gonna win.

Odds - 8-to-1

Fourth place - The Hunger Games - Catching Fire

Pros - a really good second film in a series.

Cons - Not the best film, and some hold a grudge against the series.

I really enjoyed both *Hunger Games* movies, and the second one was better than the first considerably. The addition of Philip Seymour Hoffman, Jeffrey Wright, and Amanda Plummer made it so much better the second go-round.

Odds - 6-to-1

Third Place - Pacific Rim

Pros - KAIJU! MECHA! Guillermo!

Cons - Some thought it was lame, and I still can't figure out how you go 60 miles in San Francisco and only go through 3 cities.

Also - KAIJU! MECHA!

If it were up to me, we'd give *Pacific Rim* the Nobel Peace Prize. It's such an awesome movie! It might not be a great movie, but it's so awesome and it never lets up. The characterization is weakfish, the cinematography is a bit muddy, and it's a convoluted plot, but it's also AWESOME!

Odds - 5-to-1

Second Place - Iron Man 3

Pros - Really good entry into the Marvel Universe.

Cons - It's not *Gravity*

I really enjoyed *Iron Man 3*. I saw it several times. It was amazing and I'm so glad that it's on the ballot, and in a slightly less crowded year, it'd be a winner, but here, it's up against stiff competition.

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - Gravity

Pros - Brilliantly made film that won a ton at the Oscars.

Cons - Some will knock it for being un-scientific.

I liked *Gravity* a lot. As I know nothing of science, I had no problem with it, and really enjoyed the acting from Sandra Bullock. I thought the cinematography was incredible, the effects were great, and everything came together to make for an impressive movie.

Odds - Even money.

Now, I liked all the movies that were nominated, though a lot of SF wasn't on the ballot. I really liked *World War Z*, for example, and would have slotted it in instead of *Frozen*, personally. Yes, I know it wasn't the book, but as a thriller goes, it was well worth the time and effort. I really wish we'd see more films of the Indy variety on the ballot. In recent years, great films like *Shuffle*, *Iron Sky*, and *The Ghastly Love of Johnny X* have been passed over. They were better than anything that got nominated, sadly, and because they were on the festival circuit, got no love. I get it, Hugo voters are mainstream viewers, whether they want to admit it or not, but there's so much great stuff that doesn't show up in the Multiplex.





Best Graphic Story

Last Year's Winner - *Saga*

Not on the ballot - *Dial H for Hero*, *The Private Eye* (GO and read this, it's amazing!), *Prophet*, *Hawkeye*, *Batman '66*

Fifth Place - Time by Randall Munroe

Pros - Funny

Cons - Slight.

I dunno. I get it, a 3000+ frame animation is technically a Graphic Story, but it's also not thrilling as far as I'm concerned. Maybe I'm just used to regular animation. I like the concept, but it's pretty simple.

Odds - 15-to-1

Fourth - The Meathouse Man

Pros - George RR Martin!

Cons - Not great, and from a small pub house

I dunno. It's not the kind of thing I enjoy, though I understand that people enjoyed it. It's also not the biggest thing out there, and it snuck up on me and I hadn't even heard of it before I saw it on the ballot. Still, it's George RR Martin being adapted, so it's always got a chance...

Odds - 7-to-1

Third Place - The Girl Who Loved Doctor Who

Pros - Paul Cornell!

Cons - Not many

Doctor Who! Doctor Who! Doctor Who! Paul Cornell did a great job with this title, and IDW is a great imprint. Still, it's not the biggest thing on the list and I don't see it over-coming that.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - Girl Genius Agatha Heterodyne & The Sleeping City

Pros - Great stuff by an incredibly popular team.

Cons - It's won a lot.

SO, I love *Girl Genius* and the Foglios, and I am glad to see that they're back on the ballot. They've won this more than once, and I'm glad to see that fandom is recognizing them again. I think the victories in the past will play against them.

Odds - 2-to-1

Winner - Saga

Pros - It's freakin' *Saga!*

Cons - none

Wow. Just wow. Fiona Staples. She's... wow.

Odds - 3-to-2

There's a lot to say about Graphic sties. While I don't like *Time* or *The Meathouse Man*, I like the ballot. I'd love to see more Capes on the ballot. Why not *Hawkeye*? Or *Batman 66*? Or any superhero? We haven't seen many of them on the ballot, and that annoys me.

The real question is still how do we make this a category that is more inclusive (ie. how do we make it like Best Professional Artist where we're getting stuff from across the board) and how do we reward exceptional writing in many different mode. The Hugos are not the Eisners, and we need to remember that.



Art by Vanessa Applegate



Best Related Work

Last Year's Winner - *Writing Excuses*

Not on the list - *5 Cons: A 21st Century Fandom Documentary, Sword and Laser, The Worlds of Philip Jose Farmer*

Fifth Place - "We Have Always Fought: Challenging the Women, Cattle and Slaves Narrative" by Kameron Hurley (A Dribble of Ink)

Pros - a great and powerful piece

Cons - smaller than some of the other things on this ballot

I was directed to this piece when it happened and it was a solid, solid work. Would I have had it on my ballot? Yeah, it might have made it (as it stands, I only nominated two things, one of which made it) and I thought that it deserves to be on the ballot, but I don't really see it competing with the other stuff up there.

Odds - 10-to-1

Fourth - Wonderbook: The Illustrated Guide to Creating Imaginative Fiction by Jeff VanderMeer, with Jeremy Zerfoss (Abrams Image)

Pros - A good, and pretty darn popular book.

Cons - Not a hugely know one.

I had trouble finding this one. Not sure why, but nowhere near me stocked it, so I had to resort to going on-line. It was a good book, I'm glad I bought it, and I wouldn't mind it doing well, but I don't see it winning.

Odds - 7-to-1

Third place - Speculative Fiction 2012: The Best Online Reviews, Essays and Commentary by Justin Landon & Jared Shurin

Pros - HUGELY awesome selection of writers from all over the world (including me!)

Cons - Not as big an audience as others on this ballot

Yes, I have a piece in here, and the selection of writers is relatively incredible! I'm very much a fan of the way this was put together, and I was kinda surprised that it wasn't a bigger deal when it dropped. I'd like to see it do very well in the voting, but I'm not certain it will.

Odds - 5-to-1

Second - Writing Excuses

Pros - A great podcast by very very very popular folks!

Cons - Won last year?

I called them to win last year, and they did! They're also Guests of Honor with me at WesterCon this year! Have I mentioned that? So, Mary Robinette Kowal, Brandon Sanderson, Howard Taylor, et al. have been kicking ass and taking minds, and I think they'll at least come close this year!

Odds - 2-to-1

Winner - Queers Dig Timelords

Pros - It's Doctor Who and it's REALLY good!

Cons - It's Doctor Who?

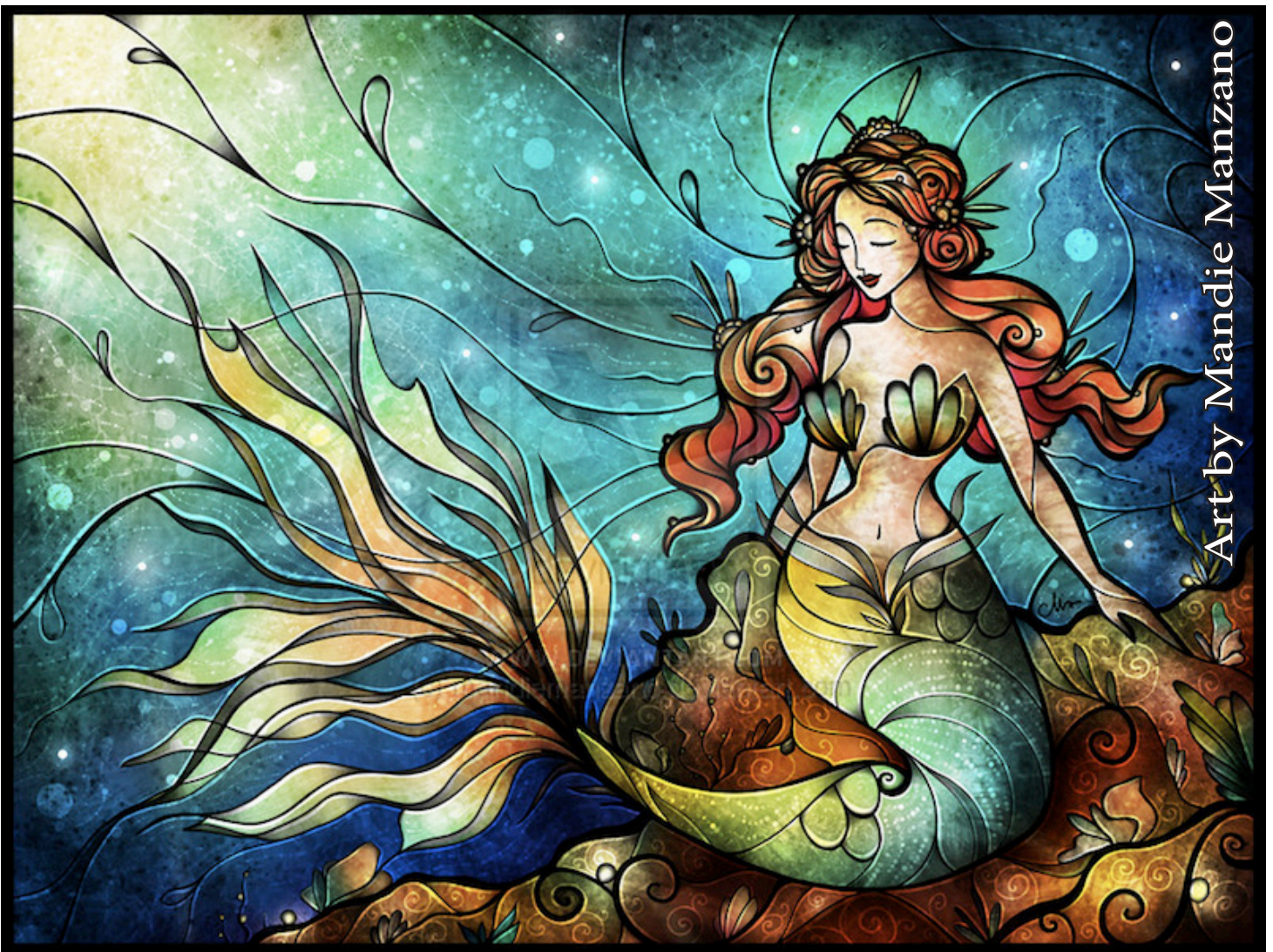
This book is really a whole lot of fun, and when I finally got a chance to read it, I was impressed with the overall style, and the content was AWESOME! SO, THIS IS MY PICK!!!!

Odds - 3-to-2

Again, it's a very across-the-board ballot, which is what Best Related Work is meant to do! You got books, a podcast, a post, it's all good stuff! Now, there are folks who don't like the idea of non-like things competing against one another, but you probably can't have a single category for each kind of thing. Now, I'd love to see at least one Documentary on the ballot, but it doesn't seem like that's the way things go.



Art by Spring Schoenhuth



Best Short Story

Last Year's Winner - "Mono No Aware" by Ken Liu

Not on the ballot - "That Fairy Tale Crap" by Rachel Swirsky, "A Brief History of the Trans-Pacific Tunnel" by Ken Liu, "The Road of Needles" by Caitlin R. Kiernan, "The Urashima Effect" by E. Lily Yu, "The Illustrated Biography of Lord Grimm" by Daryl Gregory, "The Knight of Chains, The Deuce of Stars" by Yoon Ha Lee, "Mar Pacifico" by Greg Mellor, "By The Light of the Electric Moon" by Angelica Godorischer, "The Long View" by Von Aaron Hughes, "(R+D)/I=M" by E. Catherine Tobler

Fourth place - "The Water That Falls on You from Nowhere" by John Chu

Pros - Really good story by a really good writer

Cons - might not have gotten as many eyeballs as some others on this list

Opening Line - "The water that falls on you from nowhere when you lie is perfectly ordinary, but perfectly pure."

The story is well-written that I hate to put it last, but the others on this ballot are so exceptional that I can't see it going anywhere else.

Odds - 6-to-1

Third Place - “Selkie Stories Are for Losers” by Sofia Samatar

Pros - WONDERFUL story from the next big name in the genre.

Cons - maybe not as widely read.

Opening Line - I hate selkie stories.

I really thought this one was brilliantly constructed. The way she broke it up and gave us glimpses and moment and then connections. It's well-played, and I am so excited that it made it to the ballot. Sadly, as much as I love Strange Horizons, maybe it's not got the juice that tor.com or Apex have.

Odds - 5-to-1

Second place - “The Ink Readers of Doi Saket” by Thomas Olde Heuvelt

Pros - great story from one of the great younger names in genre today.

Cons - not many

Opening line - “It was during a night in the twelfth lunar month of this year when two strong hands pushed young Tangmoo down into the bed of the Mae Ping River, and by doing so, ironically, fulfilled his only wish.”

Let me say this right here - Ann Vandermeer should have gotten a nomination for her work as a Consulting Editor for tor.com, and the two pieces nominated in this category show exactly why. They're both HUGE and AMAZING stories and this one, this miniature work of mastery, is so very very good. I love Thomas' work, and this might be the best thing I've ever read from him.

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - If You Were A Dinosaur, My Love by Rachel Swirsky

Pros - AMAZING STORY by an AMAZING WRITER!

Cons - none

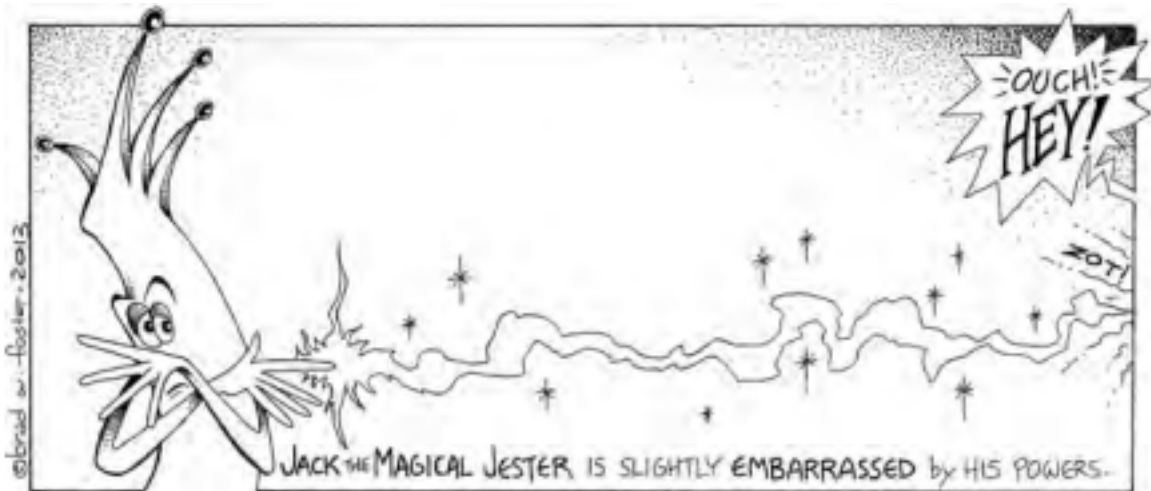
Opening Line - If you were a dinosaur, my love, then you would be a T-Rex.”

This is my second favorite story of 2013 (after another Swirsky “That Fairy Tale Crap” in the December 2013 issue) and it's so good, so beautifully crafted, and I've read it to my darling Vanessa and she loved it, and we both cried and it was a beautiful moment that we shared. I'm so happy it's on the ballot, and I really want to see it win, because she completely deserves the recognition after so many great stories being nominated. She is every bit the short form writer that Ted Chiang or Paolo Bacigalupi are, and I'm so glad it's gonna win!

Odd - Even money

More from Fantastical Librarian

Again, none of the stories I nominated made it, though it would be interesting to see how close they got. I did read and enjoy both the Thomas Olde Heuvelt and the Samatar stories. Also a fellow Dutchie on the ballot for the second year running is pretty cool! I usually like Swirsky's writing and I haven't read Chu before as far as I can remember, so this will be another interesting category come voting time.



Art by Brad Foster

Best Novelette

Last Year's Winner - The Girl-thing Who Went Out For Sushi by Pat Cadigan

Not on the Ballot - The Litigation Master and the Monkey King, The Christmas Show by Pat Cadigan, Paranormal Romance by Christopher Barzak

Fifth place - "Opera Vita Aeterna" by Vox Day

Pros - He's got Larry Correia on his side.

Cons - He's one of the most reviled figures in SFdom today.

I can't even, so I'm going to let Chris Hensley talk about the story for me.

Hugo Nominee for Best Novelette "Opera Vita Aeterna" Reviewed by Christopher Hensley

The title *Opera Vita Aeterna* is Latin for "Labor of the Eternal Life", for some definitions of Latin. The verbs lack conjugation of any form, and the nouns lack the necessary declensions. It has literally been half a life time since I've studied Latin but that oversight stands out like the dead letter in a neon sign. A smart title, reflecting the themes of the work, it does itself a disservice by being broken Latin and ultimately loses its gravitas by virtue of poor translation.

Every creative writing course I have taken starts with one axiom: show, don't tell. As loathe as I am to submit to axioms I find wisdom in this. I only wish Vox Day did. The text tells everything that goes on within the story, but fails to show it. The imagery isn't. Opera is focused on the details. Unfortunately, those details add nothing to the story as a whole. Vox Day relies on micro-info dumps to convey information about the story. There is no doubt dedicated fans of the Selenoth world will love the added details. On a reader not familiar with the setting the emotional impact is lost. In short, Opera fails to stand on its own.

I want to take a moment to talk about the prose of Opera. If this makes me a pretentious sonovabitch so be it. It's clunky. Period. I appreciate the short punchy sentences of Hemingway. Vox Day aspires to this standard, but fails to meet it. The sentence structure is dull and repetitive. What punch his sentences could have is instead lost in spelling out back stories of side characters, and technical descriptions more at home in a white paper than a work of fiction. It isn't bad writing.

Opera takes place in a remote monastery, dedicated to the monotheistic religion of the setting's human population. The plot follows the elf Bessarias, a sorcerer who has made compacts with demons, that comes to the monks seeking a form of enlightenment. Bessarias reveals that he had been defeated by a devout human, and has come to study the ways of the enemy that could defeat him so easily. To do so, Bessarias sets himself to the task of

illuminating the entirety of the humans' monotheistic holy text. In both basic narrative structure and content Opera contains a brand of heavy handed apologism more at home in a religious tract than a work of fiction. Interaction between Bessarias and the monks takes the form of dialogues on issues of theology. The theological discussion itself doesn't bring anything new to the conversation, though beyond that I am not in a position to judge their content.

If I had to sum up Opera in a word, that word would be tedious. There was no joy to be found in this story and reading it was an act of grim determination.

Odds - Over My Dead Body

Fourth - The Waiting Stars by Alette de Bodard

Pros - A wonderful and popular writer and a good story.

Cons - Not the best of her work

It took me a while to find this one, and when I did, it was a good story in a decent anthology (though Cat Rambo's entry was really good) and while not nearly as good as her nominated stories from last year, it's a worthy nominee. I am hoping that it does well, because she needs to win more rockets than just about anyone on the scene right now.

Odds - 5-to-1

Third Place - The Exchange Officers by Brad Torgersen

Pros - a pretty darn popular writer who writes interesting stories

Cons - He's a Larry Correia guy...

Sadly, I read this way back when it was new. I liked it, probably the best thing that showed up in Analog all year, but at the same time, it's not nearly the best thing on the ballot. Also, I'm fairly certain the Correia thing's gonna bite folks on the ass.

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - The Truth of Fact, the Truth of Feeling by Ted Chiang

Pros - The Best Short Form Writer in the World writing at his top form

Cons - Maybe not as widely read as the others

I LOVED CHIANG! I once met him at a World Fantasy and fanboyed all over him. Then, two years later, I was GoH with him at Minicon. It was weird. He's an amazing writer, a Hugo voters favorite, and arguably the writer I most wish I could write like.

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - The Lady Astronaut of Mars by Mary Robinette Kowal

Pros - A finely crafted story that might have been on the ballot last year

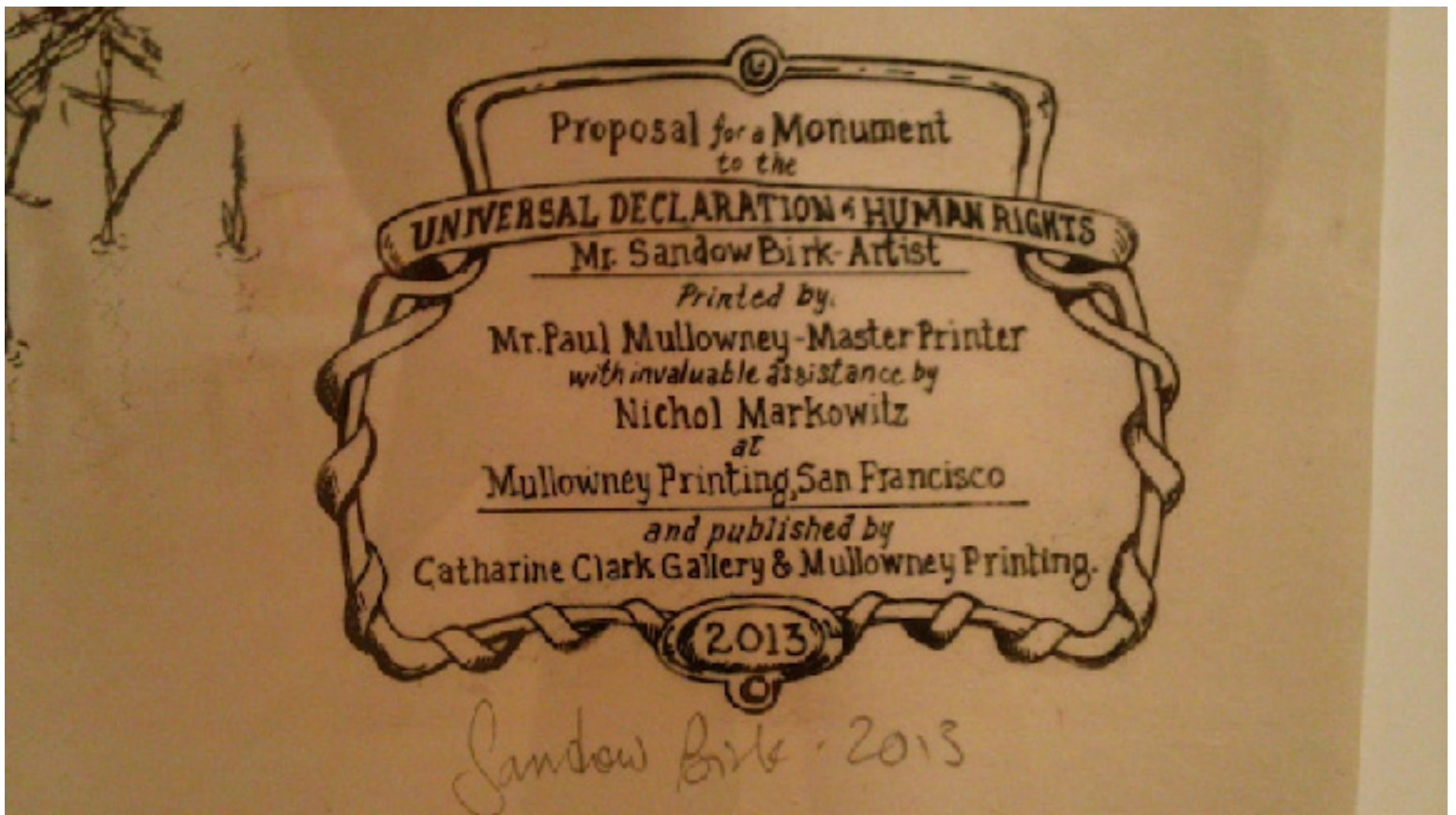
Cons - None, really

This is the easy winner for me. Mary's an incredible writer, and I hope that she eventually gets a raft of rockets for herself, because she deserves it. This story is a lot of fun, and I really wish it had made the ballot as a dramatic presentation, because it was great!

Odds - 2-to-1

More from the Fantastical Librarian!

Here at least one of my two nominees made it, the Ted Chiang story of course. Both Kowal and De Bodard are authors whose work I admire, so I'm curious to see whether they will edge out Chiang or whether he'll remain my top pick. Torgerson seems to be quite conservative and if this is reflected in his writing, I'll probably won't get on with his story that well and if Day's writing even reflects a tenth of his normal screed then I won't get on with it at all. However, I'll be taking a leaf out of John Scalzi's book and at least read the works before judging.



Best Novella

Last Year's Winner - The Emperor's SOul by Brandon Sanderson

Not on the ballot -Success by Michael Blumlein (and this is GREAT!), Lawful Interception by Cory Doctorow

Fifth Place - The Butcher of Khardov by Dan Wells

Pros - A really good little story

COs - Not widely available

Well, I'm not nearly as sure about this one as I should be. I managed to get a copy, but it wasn't easy as NOWHERE around here carried it. I ordered it, and it was a real good read. I have to say that I think Wells is a damn fine writer, but I don't think this is his year.

Odds - 9-to-1

Fourth Place - The Chapalin's Legacy by Brad Torgersen

Pros - Torgersen's a decent writer and the was a good story

Cons - The Correia Thing

You know, I liked this one a fair bit, but I wasn't as thrilled as a lot more people. If there is something to this Correia backlash, and I can see it happening, but lets not argue on anything but the quality of the story for once, shall we (for a change)? This isn't as good as the top three (and maybe not so much as the Wells, either.

Odds - 7-to-1

Third Place - Wakulla Springs by Andy Duncan and Ellen Klages

Pros - A really good story that appeared on Tor.com

Cons - Maybe not overly well-known

There is something about this one that I really enjoyed. A beautiful story and it evokes a beautiful set of images that really stuck with me. Hell, it almost made me want to go to Florida!

Odds - 5-to-1

Second Place - Equoid by Charles Stross

Pros - No one does Lovecraftian Bureaucracy better than Stross!

Cons - Not much

So, he's the only Brit-like begin on the ballot, and I suspect that'll help him. It's a fun story, all of 'em in this series of stories. I love the way he works within the concepts of the world of weird connections and occurrences. It's a lot of fun, and I'd say the second best think on the ballot.

Odds - 4-to-1

Winner - Six Gun Snow White by Cathrynne Valente

Pros - AMAZING Story!

Cons - Maybe not as widely-known as some on this ballot

Here's something from my review from *Exhibition Hall*

There are times I read a story that makes me feel like I'm on that side of the fire, like I'm watching my Great-grandmother, older 'an Tom Parr, calling the characters by their familiar. And reading Six-Gun Snow White by Cathrynne M. Valente, I could feel that from the first page, the first paragraph.

I have always hated the phrase "Show Don't Tell." That might be one of those things that you hear over and over, and then when someone does the Tell so well, makes you feel like you've been duped, been lied to by people who just don't know the joy that is being told a good tale. It's like the 'Thou Shall Not Use Voiceover' things that they push and push at you in Film School. We hear the story from Snow White at first, who has another name, though she no longer remembers what it is. That's a theme in the book: characters that no longer have their names. Some of them are forgotten by our narrators, some are simply not there. We do get some, for the 'dwarves', but mostly, it's identifiers like Mrs. H or Deer Boy.

And...

I recommend Six-Gun Snow White to every reader, but to me, it's a story told to me by someone who is neither reliable or unreliable: they are simply someone who has put themselves into the story, just like Greatgrandma used to do. Even Snow White, the base on which this house was built, admits she's not reliable. Perhaps she has invented the entire thing, even the later narrator. Perhaps we are being lied to, or perhaps it really is the commonest of stories that's being polished up like a dug ruby. The fact is, whoever the narrator is, they're telling us the story and we're sittin' there listenin' and it works.

Dammit, it works.

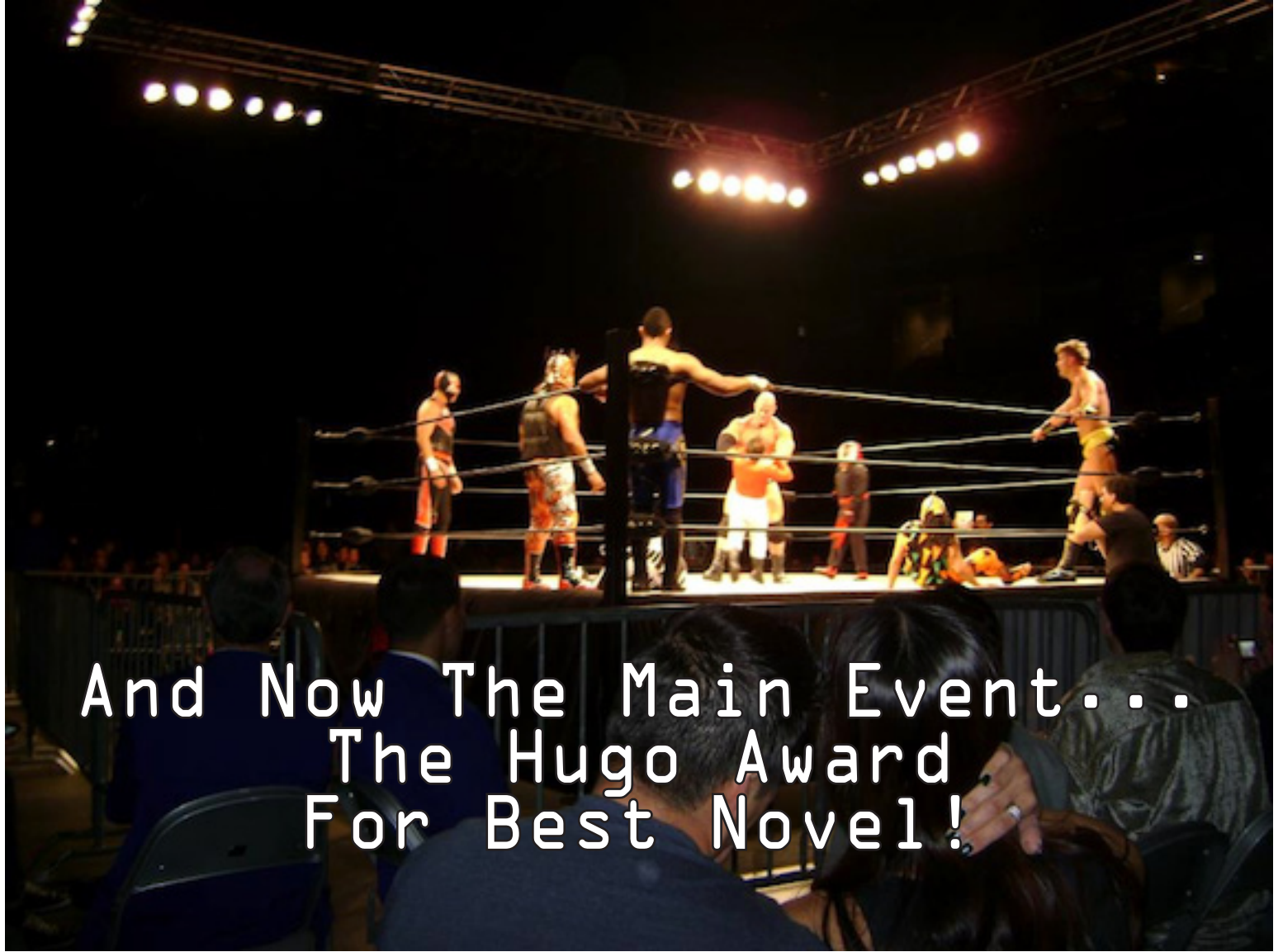
Indeed!

Odds -3-to-1

Novela is a tough length, and these are all good stories. I know where my vote is going, without question, but I could see this going a couple of ways, but really, the best of them is the Valente, and not just because she's my second favorite writer right now. The list of nominees is really interesting as you can see some of the most interesting names in the genre today. Valente is the winner here, and for what I consider to be her finest story.

From Mienneke van der Salm

This was a category where I didn't nominate as I hadn't read any eligible works. I've heard a lot of good things about Wakulla Springs and I love Cathrynne M. Valente's writing, so look forward to that as well. I haven't heard of the first two stories and not much about Stross' Equoid either. So this category is wide open and new for me.



And Now The Main Event... The Hugo Award For Best Novel!

Last Year's Winner - *Redshirts* by John Scalzi

Not on the Ballot - *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman,

Fifth Place - *Warbound, Book III of the Grimnoir Chronicles* by Larry Correia

Pros - Correia's pretty popular

Cons - If anyone's gonna get the Correia backlash, it's Correia.

Now, I'm sure Larry Correia is a good guy, and he'll be a special guest at Westercon this year (and have I mentioned that I'm the Fan Guest of Honor there this year?) but a lot of folks are kinda upset about his campaigning. I didn't manage to get around to reading all of *Warbound*, but the preview seems good, and everything I've read says that it's a good series.

Odds - 8-to-1

Fourth place - *Neptune's Brood* by Charles Stross

Pros - Stross is hella popular and the Brit (for varying values of Brit) on the ballot!

Cons - Not the best of his work

This one was a pretty damn good choice, though not nearly the best thing Stross has ever done. I actually bought it because of a line from the good folks at io9.com who said "Charles Stross's newest novel *Neptune's Brood*, a comedy of banking and manners with some chase scenes and explosions thrown in for good measure."

Odds - 5-to-1

Third Place - Parasite by Mira Grant

Pros - An incredibly popular author with Hugo voters

Cons - Not quite up to the level of her last series.

I love Mira's writing, though I didn't quite cotton to this one. It was a bit clunkier than her last two Zombie works and it took me forever to get through it, but I did and I thought that while it might not have had the impact of the last set, I did enjoy a fair bit of it. Still, I don't see it doing as well as her last novels, which is a shame and I REALLY want Seanan to win one of the Big Ones!

Odds - 4-to-1

Second Place - The Wheel of Time by Robert Jordan & Brandon Sanderson

Pros - One of the most important fantasy series of the last thirty years.

Cons - Of variable quality book-to-book

I would have preferred to see Brandon's final novel in the series nominated rather than the entire series. I know, I know, it's a single work that happens to have been serialized, I get that, but those books after book 5 are all... well, up until Brandon's entry, not very good. And that's OK, as Brandon (who is a Guest of Honor with me at WesterCon, and have I mentioned that?) once said to me "Not every book is for every person." The fact is, there are a lot of *Wheel of Time* fans, and I am betting it'll do well.

Odds - 3-to-1

Winner - Ancillary Justice by Ann Leckie

Pros - Amazingly good novel

Cons - Leckie's not the biggest name, maybe?

This is the best novel I read this year. Period. It's amazing stuff, and I am so glad it's on the ballot and I am so certain it's gonna win. It's weird because I don't usually go for Hard SF, and Space Opera can be a hard sell, but this one, this one's REALLY amazing stuff! Odds - Even Money

The big thing here is what's on, but what is not on. Neil Gaiman. Maybe he turned it down (and when I talked to him at Cinequest, he seemed to indicate that might be the case) and it was a shock to not see it on here. I would have liked one of my other favorites to make the ballot (*Courtsies & Conspiracies*, Cat Valente's newest in the *Girl Who* series) but I can't fault this line-up.

One last time from our Fantastical Librarian Mienneke van der Salm

So NONE of the novels I nominated actually made the ballot. And I know that some of my nominations were a bit out of left field perhaps, but still... I am glad to see Ancillary Justice on there, if only because now I'll actually get to read it (provided it is in the voter packet). Less sure about the Wheel of Time nomination, as I rather gave up on that around book nine. I've never read anything by Larry Correia, so can't judge the merit of his work, even if I don't exactly like his online persona. I haven't read Seanan McGuire's Mira Grant books either, as zombies are definitely not my thing. I love Stross' Laundry Files books, so I'm curious to see how I enjoy this one.

**"So, let me say this about the overall ballot
this year - Vox Day. Fuck that guy."
Chris Garcia**