

= World Fantasy Award =

The World Fantasy Awards are a set of awards given each year for the best fantasy fiction published during the previous calendar year . Organized and overseen by the World Fantasy Convention , the awards are given each year at the eponymous annual convention as the central focus of the event . They were first given in 1975 , at the first World Fantasy Convention , and have been awarded annually since . Over the years that the award has been given , the categories presented have changed ; currently World Fantasy Awards are given in five written categories , one category for artists , and four special categories for individuals to honor their general work in the field of fantasy .

The awards have been described by book critics such as The Guardian as a " prestigious fantasy prize " , and one of the three most prestigious speculative fiction awards , along with the Hugo and Nebula Awards (which cover both fantasy and science fiction) . World Fantasy Award nominees and winners are decided by attendees of the convention and a panel of judges , typically made up of fantasy authors . Winners receive a small trophy ; through the 2015 awards it was a bust of H. P. Lovecraft designed by cartoonist Gahan Wilson . The bust was retired following that year amid complaints about Lovecraft 's history of racism ; no replacement has yet been announced . The 2015 awards were presented at the 41st World Fantasy Convention in Saratoga Springs , New York , on November 8 , 2015 , and the 2016 awards will be presented at the 42nd World Fantasy Convention in Columbus , Ohio , on October 30 , 2016 .

= = History = =

The World Fantasy Awards were established at the first World Fantasy Convention , an annual convention of professionals , collectors , and others interested in the field of fantasy , in 1975 . Winners were presented with a trophy in the form of a bust of an elongated caricature of H. P. Lovecraft designed by cartoonist Gahan Wilson , nicknamed the " Howard " , which matched the theme of the first convention , " The Lovecraft Circle " . As stated by Wilson in First World Fantasy Awards : An Anthology of the Fantastic , " The point of the awards was , is , and hopefully shall be to give a visible , potentially usable , sign of appreciation to writers working in the area of fantastic literature , an area too often distinguished by low financial remuneration and indifference " .

At the start of the awards in 1975 , seven categories were presented : Best Novel , Best Short Fiction , Best Collection , Best Artist , Special Award ? Professional , Special Award ? Non @-@ professional , and Life Achievement . Only a few categories have changed since then , and no changes have been made to the rules . 1978 saw the addition of the Convention Award , a special award given for general contributions to the genre , and the only award not given every year since the beginning . The Short Fiction award was split into Short Story and Novella awards in 1982 , and in 1988 the multi @-@ author anthologies , previously eligible for the Collection award , were split into their own Best Anthology category . No changes have been made since .

Winners were presented with the H. P. Lovecraft bust through the 2015 awards ; at that ceremony the presenters announced that future ceremonies will no longer use the trophy . Although controversy had arisen in recent years over Lovecraft 's history of racism , no explicit reason was given for the change and no replacement has been announced .

= = Administration = =

World Fantasy Award nominees and winners are decided by judges and attendees of the World Fantasy Convention . A ballot is posted in June for attendees of the current and previous two conferences to determine two of the finalists , with the two most @-@ nominated selected , and a panel of five judges adds three or more nominees before voting on the overall winner . The panel of judges is typically made up of fantasy authors , as well as other fantasy professionals and is chosen each year by the World Fantasy Awards Administration , which has the power to break ties if the judges are deadlocked . The awards administration is a subgroup of the World Fantasy Convention

Board , which selects sites for upcoming World Fantasy Conventions . Both the board and the judges panel are largely made up of professionals in the field of fantasy . The judges for the 2014 awards , for example , were authors Andy Duncan , Kij Johnson , Oliver Johnson , and Liz Williams , and editor John Klima .

The nominees are announced in July , and final results are presented at the World Fantasy Convention around the end of October . The Life Achievement and Convention Awards do not list nominees , and instead have the winner announced along with the other categories ' nominees . The Life Achievement winner is decided by the judges panel , while the Convention award winner , not given every year , is selected by the convention organizers . The World Fantasy Convention itself is a multi @-@ day event with several hundred attendees taking place in a different city each year , usually in the United States but sometimes in Canada or the United Kingdom . In addition to the awards ceremony , the conventions include an art show , a dealer 's room , autograph receptions , and numerous panels and discussions .

= = Categories = =

The World Fantasy Awards are split into ten categories , including both awards for written works and for professionals in the field . Eligibility requirements are loosely defined : works must have been published in the prior calendar year , and professionals must still be living . All types of fantasy works are accepted , regardless of subgenre or style , though whether a given work is considered to be fantasy is left up to the discretion of the nominators and judges .

Across all categories , Ellen Datlow has both the most nominations and most wins of any nominee , with ten wins out of 42 nominations , primarily for her anthologies . She is followed by Terri Windling with 9 out of 30 and Stephen Jones with 3 out of 28 , both also mainly for editing anthologies . Jeffrey Ford has the highest number of wins after Datlow and Windling with 6 out of 14 nominations , and is tied for the highest number of fiction awards with Stephen King at four .

= = Recognition = =

The awards have been described by book critics such as The Guardian as a " prestigious fantasy prize " , and one of the three most prestigious speculative fiction awards , along with the Hugo and Nebula Awards (which cover both fantasy and science fiction) . In 2010 multiple winner George R. R. Martin described winning the Hugo , Nebula , and " the prestigious World Fantasy Award " as the " triple crown " . Others have also noted the award 's prestige in the field , such as Tachyon Publications and 2014 Best Anthology winner Gardner Dozois . Stephen Jones of the Best New Horror series has said that winning the anthology award for their first volume in 1991 helped " establish the series among readers and some publishers " in multiple countries . Winners such as Nnedi Okorafor ? Best Novel in 2011 ? have described the award as " one of my greatest honors as a writer " . Editor and bookseller Rick Klaw in 2007 , however , noted that the consensus at the time " in the bookselling community " was that winning the novel category did not have any effect on sales and did not help keep the book in print , with 57 percent of prior winners out of print , compared to 23 percent of Hugo Award winners from the same time period .

Two anthologies have been drawn from the World Fantasy Award winners : First World Fantasy Awards : An Anthology of the Fantastic in 1977 , edited by Gahan Wilson and covering stories from the initial award year , and The World Fantasy Awards : Volume Two in 1980 , edited by Stuart David Schiff and Fritz Leiber .

= = Controversies = =

= = = Graphic novels = = =

At the 1991 awards , graphic novel The Sandman issue # 19 " A Midsummer 's Night Dream " ,

scripted by Neil Gaiman and illustrated by Charles Vess , won the award for Best Short Story . A common rumor afterwards was that the rules were subsequently changed to prevent another graphic novel from winning . The awards administration later clarified that comics and graphic novels were not intended to be eligible for that category , which did not require a rule change : " Comics are eligible in the Special Award Professional category . We never made a change in the rules . " No person has won or been nominated for the Special Award Professional category for their work on a comic or graphic novel either before or since the controversy .

= = = H. P. Lovecraft bust = = =

A minor controversy about the trophy occurred in 1984 , when Donald Wandrei refused his Life Achievement award as he felt the award bust was a demeaning caricature of Lovecraft , whom he had known personally . Wandrei 's rejected trophy was later recycled and given to another award winner .

A larger controversy surrounding the bust began in the 2010s , when several authors began to object to using the author H. P. Lovecraft as the symbol of the awards , given his outspoken racism . Winners Okorafor and China Miéville noted in 2011 that they disliked being honored by a bust of a man who would have found many of the winners and nominees distasteful because of their race . Several authors and editors argued for the trophy to be changed , including a petition by author Daniel José Older in 2014 , an editorial by The New York Review of Science Fiction editor Kevin J. Maroney arguing that it should be changed " as a courtesy to generations of writers whom the WFA hopes to honor " , and 2014 Best Novel winner Sofia Samatar 's acceptance speech .

In September 2014 , the administrators of the World Fantasy Award announced they were " in discussion " about the future of the award trophy . In November 2015 , at the 2015 awards , they announced that the Lovecraft bust would no longer be used beginning the following year . Lenika Cruz , associate editor of the The Atlantic , defended the decision , stating that " Lovecraft 's removal is about more than just the writer himself ; it 's not an indictment of his entire oeuvre " . Lovecraft scholar S. T. Joshi , however , expressed anger at the decision , and returned his two World Fantasy Awards and urged a boycott of the convention .