

COMPTON CROOK AWARD WINNERS

| Year Awarded | Title of Novel | Author | Publisher |
|---------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| 2022 | <i>A Master of Djinn</i> | P. Djèlí Clark | Tor Books |
| 2021 | <i>The Space Between Worlds</i> | Micaiah Johnson | Del Rey Books |
| 2020 | <i>A Memory Called Empire</i> | Arkady Martine | Tor Books |
| 2019 | <i>The Poppy War</i> | R.F. Kuang | Harper Voyager |
| 2018 | <i>Prey of Gods</i> | Nicky Drayden | Harper Voyager |
| 2017 | <i>Too Like the Lightning</i> | Ada Palmer | Tor Books |
| 2016 | <i>Updraft</i> | Fran Wilde | Tor Books; Reprint edition |
| 2015 | <i>Salvage (Book 1)</i> | Alexandra Duncan | Greenwillow Books |
| 2014 | <i>Fire With Fire</i> (Caine Riordan Book 1) | Charles E. Gannon | Baen Books |
| 2013 | <i>Shadow Ops: Control Point</i> | Myke Cole | Ace Books |
| 2012 | <i>Germline</i> | T. C. McCarthy | Orbit Books |
| 2011 | <i>State of Decay</i> | James Knapp | Roc Books |
| 2010 | <i>The Windup Girl</i> | Paolo Bacigalupi | Night Shade Books |
| 2009 | <i>Singularity's Ring</i> | Paul Melko | Tor Books |
| 2008 | <i>One Jump Ahead</i> | Mark L. Van Name | Baen Books |
| 2007 | <i>His Majesty's Dragon</i> | Naomi Novik | Del Rey Books |
| 2006 | <i>Poison Study</i> | Snyder, Maria | Luna Books |
| 2005 | <i>Ghosts in the Snow</i> | Jones, Tamara Siler | Bantam Spectra |
| 2004 | <i>Way Of The Wolf</i> | Knight, E. E. | Roc Books |
| 2003 | <i>Devlin's Luck</i> | Bray, Patricia | Spectra |
| 2002 | <i>Alien Taste</i> | Wen Spencer | Roc Books |
| 2001 | <i>Murphy's Gambit</i> | Syne Mitchell | Roc Books |
| 2000 | <i>Flesh and Silver</i> | Stephen L. Burns | Roc Books |
| 1999 | <i>The High House</i> | James Stoddard | Warner Aspect |
| 1998 | <i>The Merro Tree</i> | Katie Waitman | Del Rey Discovery |
| 1997 | <i>Celestial Matters</i> | Richard Garfinkle | Tor Books |
| 1996 | <i>The Gatekeepers</i> | Daniel Graham Jr. | Baen Books |
| 1995 | <i>Dun Lady's Jess</i> | Doranna Durgin | Baen Books |
| 1994 | <i>The Drylands</i> | Mary Rosenblum | Del Rey Books |
| 1993 | <i>Fire in the Mist</i> | Holly Lisle | Baen Books |
| 1992 | <i>Reefsong</i> | Carol Severance | E-Reads |
| 1991 | <i>In the Country of the Blind</i> | Michael F. Flynn | Tor Books |
| 1990 | <i>The Shining Falcon</i> | Josepha Sherman | Avon Books |
| 1989 | <i>Sheepfarmer's Daughter</i> | Elizabeth Moon | Baen Books |
| 1988 | <i>Liege-killer</i> | Christopher Hinz | St. Martin's Press |
| 1987 | <i>Doomsday Effect</i> | Thomas Wren (aka Thomas T. Thomas) | Baen Books |
| 1986 | <i>Infinity's Web</i> | Sheila Finch | Bantam Books |
| 1985 | <i>Emergence</i> | David R. Palmer | Bantam Books |
| 1984 | <i>War For Eternity</i> | Christopher Rowley | Ballantine Books |
| 1983 | <i>Courtship Rite</i> | Donald Kingsbury | Pocket Books |



40TH Anniversary

Compton Crook/Stephen Tall Memorial Award

THE AWARD:

The Baltimore Science Fiction Society, Inc. established The Compton Crook Award in 1983. It is presented annually at Balticon to the best English language first novel by an author in the field of science fiction, fantasy, or horror. The award is selected by popular vote of the members BSFS. The winning author is presented with the cash award of \$1,000 and an award plaque. The award also includes an invitation to attend Balticon for two years as the guest of BSFS so the new author has an opportunity to meet other writers, editors, agents, and fans to build the network needed for a successful career.

THE WRITER:

Compton Newby Crook was born on June 14, 1908 in the town of Rossville, TN. The 1910 U.S. Census counted the population of the town as 142 people. When Crook was growing up, Fayette County, east of Memphis, was largely rural and 73% African-American. In the 1920s white students traveled by train to the county seat, Somerville, to attend school, where many stayed in dormitories. The details of Crook's K-12 education are unknown.

After high school, Crook attended the George Peabody College for Teachers, in Nashville, directly across the street from Vanderbilt University, of which it is now a part. He graduated from Peabody with a Bachelor of Science and a Masters of Arts in Biology. After Peabody, Crook studied at Arizona State University and Johns Hopkins University. In 1939, Crook joined the biology faculty of Towson State College, from which he retired in 1973. Crook also is honored with a scholarship from Towson University for outstanding juniors majoring biology or mathematics.

Crook published his first science fiction story in 1955. A second did not appear until 1966. As he was ending his academic career, he became more prolific and published another 18 short stories and novellas in the popular science fiction magazines of the 1970's. "A Bear with a Knot in His Tail," was nominated as the best short story in 1972 for both the Hugo and Locus awards. The Stardust Voyages, a series of short fiction pieces telling the stories of scientists exploring the galaxies are the central part of Crook's science fiction works. The first story appeared in Worlds of Tomorrow in November 1966.

Crook joined the Science Fiction Writers of American in 1968 and was an active member until his death. He was well known to Baltimore fandom and sometimes invited the Con Committee to retreats at his home in Phoenix, MD following Balticons held in nearby Hunt Valley.

Crook married Beverly Courtney in 1939. Together they advocated for the protection of the Loch Raven watershed near their home in Baltimore County. The Crooks had three children: two daughters, Judith C. Knight of Florissant, MO, and Jennifer L. Arkins of Tucson, and Stephen Crook, who predeceased his mother. The name "Stephen Tall" is for the Crook's son, who was tall. Compton Crook died on January 15, 1981. At the time of her death in 2002, Mrs. Crook had three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Sources:

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United States Bureau of the Census. 1930 Census: Volume 3. Population, Reports by States. Part 2: Montana-Wyoming. Tennessee. <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1930/population-volume-3/10612982v3p2ch08.pdf>. Accessed May 8, 2022.

Why We Have a Compton Crook Award

By Sam Lubell

Many people assume all writers make a comfortable living. Or, if not, that the good writers do well even if the inferior books are ignored. Unfortunately, this is not the case, especially for new writers.

On average, publishers pay an advance of \$5,000 to \$15,000 for a first science fiction novel by a new writer with no reputation. Fantasy may average a little higher, but not much. And even the big publishers rarely do a big marketing push for new writers with no track record. Instead, new writers rely on word of mouth, convention appearances, and reviews. Too often that is not enough. Readers intend to gravitate to familiar names with new entries in familiar series. Why chance buying a book by an author you might not like? Consequently, many new writers write good books, but not enough readers find out about them.

Science fiction writers are not immortal. Without new writers, we readers eventually will not have anything new to read. That is why the Baltimore Science Fiction Society created the Compton Crook Award. By recognizing and rewarding debut authors, the Compton Crook Award helps encourage the writing of new science fiction, fantasy, and horror books.

BSFS uses a multistage process to select the winners. First, our Compton Crook committee researches and compiles a list of debut science fiction, fantasy, and horror novels published between November of the previous year through October. For the 2022 winner, we examined books published from November of 2020 through October of 2021. Then, the members of the committee read book previews, reviews, and books sent to BSFS to winnow out the bad books that are not worth considering. We contact publishers and authors requesting that they send us print copies, galleys, and ebooks for consideration.

Next, the club members read the books. Usually, we keep potential Crook books in a special bookcase at the BSFS Building. During the Covid years we relied on ebooks. BSFS members rate the books 1-10 and the committee computes the top five or six finalists. Then the club has two months to read and rate the finalists. The committee performs the calculations again and declares the top-rated book to be the winner.

This year's winner, by an overwhelming vote, is *A Master of Djinn* by P. Djèlí Clark. Note that most BSFS members rated the book before it became a Hugo Finalist.

The Works of Compton Crook Writing as Stephen Tall

Awards:

Nominated. 1972 Hugo Best Short Story. "The Bear with the Knot on His Tail."

Nominated: 1972 Locus Best Short Fiction. "The Bear with the Knot on His Tail."

The Stardust Series

The Stardust Voyages (collection, 1975)

The Ramsgate Paradox, Berkley Medallion, 1976.

Novels

The People Beyond the Wall, DAW Books (DAW Collectors #386). 1980.

Short stories (in chronological order)

"The Lights on Precipice Peak," Galaxy Science Fiction, October 1955, pp. 113 – 125.

Reprinted in The 11th Science Fiction MEGAPACK®. Wildside Press. Kindle format.

"A Star Called Cyrene," (aka "Seventy Light-Years from Sol") Worlds of Tomorrow, November 1966, pp. 123 – 154.

Reprinted in "The Stardust Voyages, Berkley Medallion. 1975.

"The Angry Mountain," The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, June 1970, pp. 56 - 67

"Talk with the Animals," Analog Science Fiction/Science Fact, September 1970, pp. 87 – 96.

"Allison, Carmichael and Tattersall," Galaxy Magazine, April 1970, pp. 4 – 31.

"The Mad Scientist and the FBI," Galaxy Magazine, December 1970, pp. 76 -92.

"This is My Country," Galaxy Magazine, February 1971, pp. 4 – 34.

"The Bear with the Knot on His Tail," The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, May 1971, pp. 4 – 3

Reprinted in "The 1972 Annual World's Best SF.," Arthur W. Saha and Donald A. Wollheim, eds. DAW Books (DAW Collectors #5), 1972.

"Birds Fly South in Winter," Galaxy Magazine, November-December 1971, pp. 2 – 45.

Reprinted in "The Stardust Voyages," Berkley Medallion. 1975.

"The Gods on Olympus," Worlds of If, September-October 1972, pp. 6 – 49.

Reprinted in "The Stardust Voyages," Berkley Medallion. 1975.

"The Invaders," Worlds of If, July-August 1973, pp. 42- 70.

Reprinted in "The Stardust Voyages," Berkley Medallion. 1975.

"Space Bounce," Worlds of If, September-October 1973, pp. 160-178.

"Mushroom World," The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, November 1974, pp. 5 – 49.

Reprinted in "The Stardust Voyages," Berkley Medallion. 1975.

"Chlorophyll," The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, June 1976, pp. 4 - 25

"The Roc Books and the Pool," Galaxy, December 1976.

Reprinted in "Science-Fiction-Stories 91," Michael Nagula, ed., Ullstein Science Fiction & Fantasy #31033, December 1981. (German).

"The Man Who Saved the Sun," The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, January 1977, pp. 134 – 153.

"The King is Dead. Long Live the Queen!" Amazing Stories, January 1978, pp. 40 – 49.

"Home is the Hunter," Analog Science Fiction/Science Fact, August 1979, pp. 142 – 156.

"The Hot and Cold Running Waterfall," Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine, May 1980, pp. 44 – 63.

Reprinted in Fantasy Annual IV, Terry Carr, ed., Timescape / Pocket Books. 1981.

"The Merry Men of Methane," The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, May 1980, pp. 122 – 164.