

The Bram Stoker Awards® Rules for 2026

Categories

The annual Bram Stoker Awards® for Superior Achievement may be presented in the following categories for specific works:

- Superior Achievement in a Novel
- Superior Achievement in a First Novel
- Superior Achievement in a Graphic Novel
- Superior Achievement in a Young Adult Novel
- Superior Achievement in a Middle Grade Novel
- Superior Achievement in Long Fiction
- Superior Achievement in Short Fiction
- Superior Achievement in a Fiction Collection
- Superior Achievement in a Screenplay
- Superior Achievement in Poetry (Collection and Long Form)
- Superior Achievement in an Anthology
- Superior Achievement in Non-Fiction
- Superior Achievement in Short Non-Fiction

The Partial Jury System:

Prior to the start of each awards year, HWA's President will select a Bram Stoker Awards® Chairperson(s) if the previous year's Chairperson(s) retire or are removed by the President. The Chairperson(s), with the President's approval, will select a Chairperson for each of the Bram Stoker Awards® category juries. The Chairperson(s) will then select a minimum of four further jurors for a total of no less than five jurors per category; all Chairpersons and jurors are drawn from volunteers within the organization. Jurors are required to be Active, Academic, Affiliate, or Lifetime Members, but no jury may include more than two Affiliates. A juror is allowed to sit on more than one jury; however, a juror is ineligible to compete in any category for which they sit on a jury in that awards year. Jurors are asked to commit to:

1) Reading a significant amount of work throughout the year; 2) conferring with other jurors in their category; and 3) being as objective as possible when considering works.

"Spamming" any member of a jury (i.e.: an author making unsolicited requests to have their own work considered) will result in immediate disqualification of that work. Those wishing to bring their work to the attention of jury members may do so only by following the Rules established for that purpose (see <http://www.thebramstokerawards.com/submissions/>).

At the end of each awards year, the five (5) works with the most member recommendations on the Bram Stoker Awards® Recommended Reading list proceed to the Preliminary Ballot. A work must have a minimum of eight (8) member recommendations to qualify. If there are fewer than five (5) works in a category with the minimum required recommendations, only those with the requisite minimum of eight (8) recommendations will proceed to the Preliminary Ballot. When five (5) works from the

Recommended Reading list move to the preliminary ballot, they will be combined with the top five (5) selections from the jury for a total of ten (10) works in each category for the Preliminary Ballot. To comprise a minimum of ten (10) works total for each category on the Preliminary Ballot, any categories in which fewer than five (5) works from the Recommended Reading list have sufficient member recommendations to advance to the Preliminary Ballot, the balance will be drawn from jury selections. For example, if only three (3) works in the Graphic Novel category from the Recommended Reading list receive eight (8) or more member recommendations, then the top seven (7) selections from the Graphic Novel jury will be combined with the Recommended Reading list selections to make the top ten (10) works for the Graphic Novel category on the Preliminary Ballot. In the case of a 5th place tie as described later in these Rules, more than five (5) works from the Recommended Reading may appear in a category. If any or all of the top five works from the Recommended Reading List overlap with the first five jury selections, additional works will be drawn from the jury selections to provide a minimum of five works derived solely from the jury selections.

For avoidance of confusion, the jury selections are entirely independent of the Recommended Reading list and do not need to have received any recommendations at all to proceed to the Preliminary Ballot. Jurors in each category will select their top ten (10) works to be given to the Awards Co-Chairs no later than January 17, 2026. Active and Lifetime Members will vote on this Preliminary Ballot to determine five (5) works to appear on the Final Ballot in that category. The Final Ballot will be voted on by HWA's Active and Lifetime members to determine category winner(s). This ballot will include works selected by the jury for each category (see Section VII – Jury System); along with the five (5) works in each category that have accumulated the most member recommendations above the minimum of eight (8) member recommendations required to qualify.

2026 Bram Stoker Awards® Rules

AUTHORITY

These Rules are effective immediately for all works published in 2026. They supersede and replace all previous versions of the Bram Stoker Awards® Rules. The intent of the Awards rules shall not be altered by any grammatical or typographical errors herein.

These Rules are established to comply with Section IX of the Horror Writers Association Bylaws, as enacted by a vote of the Active Members of the Horror Writers Association. The section reads in full:

IX Awards

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The Horror Writers Association shall present annual awards to honor outstanding creative performance in the field of Horror and Dark Fantasy. These awards shall be known as the Bram Stoker Awards® for Superior Achievement.

IX

The recipients of the Bram Stoker Awards® for Superior Achievement shall be chosen, and the Awards presented, in accord with procedures established by the Bram Stoker Awards® Committee. The Bram Stoker Awards® for each year shall be set by the Board of Trustees no later than February 28 of the year to which they apply and publicly advised to all Members no later than March 15 for the year to which they apply.

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In any year, the Board of Trustees may choose to present Bram Stoker Lifetime Achievement Awards to any individual. No more than three Lifetime Achievement Awards may be given in any one calendar year.

2026 RULES

I. Nature of the Awards

- a. Annual presentation: Each year the Horror Writers Association presents Awards for outstanding writing in horror, and dark fantasy, and dark literature.
- b. Superior Achievement: In recognition of the unique nature of every writer's work and the impossibility of comparing unlike stories and judging one of them "best," the HWA eschews the label "Best of the Year" in favor of "for Superior Achievement."
- c. Name: These awards are named in honor of Bram Stoker, the author of *Dracula*.
- d. The name of the Awards has been trademarked by the Horror Writers Association, and all those using the term should endeavor to include the Trademark symbol so that references will read: The Bram Stoker Awards®. An individual Award should be referred to as in the following example: The Bram Stoker Award® for Superior Achievement in a Novel.

II. Administration of the Awards

The following 'Plain English' summary of the process established by these Rules as governing the Bram Stoker Awards® for Superior Achievement is for informational purposes only. Any difference between this summary and the effect of any Rule(s) is unintentional, and the Rules themselves will apply in the case of any contention.

A Special Internet Mailer will be sent to members with links provided by authors and publishers or a link to an online forum hosted by the Horror Writers Association where members have offered links to download various works appearing on the Preliminary and Final Ballots.

These links are intended for voting members only and are not to be shared by anyone who isn't authorized. Please note that works are copyrighted material and that sharing the links without permission is, in essence, theft, and may result in the member's dismissal from the organization and possible legal actions taken by the offended party(ies).

a. Awards Committee: The Bram Stoker Awards® for Superior Achievement will be overseen by the Bram Stoker Awards® Committee. The Awards Committee includes the following positions:

Co-Chair, Administration
Co-Chair, Jury Coordinator
Co-Chair, Public Liaison
Compiler of Recommendations Verifier
of Eligibility
Trustee Member
At-Large Member(s) (optional)

b. Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee: The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee are appointed by the President of HWA, and may be any member of HWA other than the President themselves. They include Co-Chair for Administration; Co-Chair for Juries; and Co-Chair for Public Liaison. The President may appoint additional Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs are responsible for general oversight of the awards process, for ensuring that the other committee members carry out their assigned duties in the awards process, and for other duties as described elsewhere in these rules. The Co-Chairs serve indefinitely; they may resign at any time, or may be removed by the President at any time.

c. Compiler of Recommendations: The Compiler of Recommendations is appointed by the President of HWA, and may be any member of HWA. The President may appoint Co-Compilers. The Compiler of Recommendations will receive and compile recommendations for the Recommended Reading list on at least a monthly basis. Their duties are further described under Section VI ("Recommendations") below. The Compiler serves indefinitely; they may resign at any time, or may be removed by the President at any time. In the event that the Compiler resigns or is removed, they will turn over all records to their successor as soon as possible and will promptly forward any misdirected recommendations received thereafter.

d. Verifier of Eligibility: The Verifier of Eligibility is appointed by the President of HWA, and may be any member of HWA other than the President themselves. The President may appoint Co-Verifiers. The Verifier of Eligibility is responsible for determining whether works submitted to the juries and to the Recommended Reading list are eligible, and ensuring that no ineligible work is included on the Preliminary Ballot or Final Ballot, in accordance with the rules below, particularly Rule IVd and Rules VIj through VIm. The Verifier serves indefinitely; they may resign at any time, or may be removed by the President at any time.

e. Trustee Member: The Trustee Member of the Awards Committee is appointed by the President and must be a current member of the Board of Trustees. The Trustee Member serves as liaison between the Committee and the Board of Trustees, and is responsible for whatever duties the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee may reasonably assign. The Trustee Member serves until the end of their term as Trustee, or they may resign at any time, or may be removed by the President at any time.

f. At-Large Member: At-Large Members of the Awards Committee are appointed by the President as they may see fit, and may be any member of HWA other than Trustees, including the President themselves. At-Large Members are responsible for whatever duties the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee may reasonably assign (and include the roles of Assistant Verifier and Assistant Compiler). At-Large Members serve until the end of the the end of the Awards season for which they are appointed, at which time, the President may choose to reappoint them for the following Awards seasonAt-Large Members may resign at any time, or may be removed by the President at any time. No At-Large Members are required, and a maximum of ten (10) are permitted.

g. Multiple Positions: One member may hold up to two positions within the Committee. (The Trustee Member cannot be an At-Large Member. All other combinations are permissible.) The positions of Chairpersons, Compiler of Recommendations, Verifier of Eligibility, and Trustee Member must be filled; At-Large Member is optional. Voting within the Committee will be by member, rather than position—that is, a member holding two positions still has only one vote.

h. Eligibility for Awards Committee Members: Members of all HWA committees and all positions on the Awards Committee remain eligible for the Bram Stoker Awards®. However, members of the Awards Committee should be alert to the possible appearance of impropriety, and in the event that any Committee member is under serious consideration for an award, that member should confer with the President about the advisability of resigning or standing down from the Committee.

i. Overlapping Committees: No member of HWA may serve simultaneously on the Awards Committee and the Lifetime Achievement Award Committee.

j. Committee Votes: In the event that a vote of the Awards Committee is called for on any matter, a majority of the membership of the committee will be sufficient to decide, except as under Rule Xc ("Substitution") below. If a vote ends in a tie, the Co-Chairs shall decide the issue.

k. Eligibility Determinations Appeals Process & Final Authority: All initial/preliminary determinations as to the eligibility of a work for these Awards shall, pursuant to Rule II(d) hereinabove, be made by the Verifier.

(1) Initial Eligibility Determinations—Process: The Verifier shall notify, via email, if available, and, if not, via regular “snail” mail, the author of any work other than an anthology, and the editor for any anthology, and in the event that the author or editor is not readily available via email, then notify them via the work’s publisher of record, of any work for which any question as to its eligibility arises, of the existence of such question, that the work’s eligibility is being investigated, and requesting of them any and all evidence and other relevant facts and argument they might wish the Verifier to consider, to be delivered to the Verifier within no more than seven (7) days from the date of the Verifier’s request. The Verifier may also specifically request, within this notice to the author, editor, and/or publisher, any evidence and/or answers to specific questions that the Verifier deems appropriate in reaching such a determination. All such notices and requests by/from the Verifier shall include specific wording notifying the recipient that the party being so notified has seven (7) days from the date of the request via email or, if via snail mail, from the date of the recipient’s receipt of the request, via email, certified, return receipt, or delivery service mail/delivery to respond and deliver any and all documents and written argument that have either been specifically requested by the Verifier, or which they seek the Verifier to consider, and that their failure to provide such requested documents and/or answers to the Verifier, and that failure to tender and deliver such to the Verifier within the time granted for such will be taken as indication that no such evidence or argument favorable to the interests of the person or persons

from whom it is sought exists, when the Verifier is making their determination in the matter. The Verifier shall issue a determination and ruling in a case/matter within no more than one week from the earlier of the date that any such requested evidence and/or argument arrives or from the deadline date for such argument and evidence to arrive. The party or parties responding to a Verifier's notice shall provide the Verifier with a working email address and/or address where real "snail" mail will be accepted on their behalf, and, if possible, a telephone number from which they can be reached. The Verifier's notice must also, in bold or otherwise highlighted wording, warn any party to the determination proceedings that any documentation and/or evidence that they seek to have considered in the matter, whether now, or in any subsequent potential appeal must be submitted to the Verifier for consideration as per these rules. Any and all evidence which a party *could* have presented to the Verifier for consideration in the cause/matter, but which they choose to not submit will be itself ineligible for submission upon any appeal in the matter. The Verifier shall make their determination and ruling based upon all the evidence and argument properly presented in a timely manner, and, again, any subsequent reviewing/appealing body shall not consider any evidence and/or documentation that the party could have presented to the Verifier, but, for whatever reason, chose not to provide for such consideration.

(2) Initial Eligibility Determinations—Rulings: The Verifier shall issue a written determination/ruling within seven (7) days from the date the last argument and/or evidence from the notified party or parties either was received or was required to have been received, whichever is earlier. The written determination shall be delivered by email, or if such isn't available, then via regular "snail" mail, to any and all parties the Verifier deems properly involved as parties to the matter and to the Chairperson or Co-Chairs of the Bram Stoker Awards® Committee. The ruling shall inform the participants generally as to the identity of the work in question, the names of the relevant parties (author, editor, and/or publisher and any other parties appearing in the matter deemed proper by the Verifier), a brief history of the issues, any evidence and/or argument considered by the Verifier, and the basis for and actual decision in the matter. Additionally, every such ruling/determination will inform all parties that they have a right to appeal the Verifier's determination/ruling as provided by this rule, as follows:

(3) Initial Appeal of Eligibility Determination—Process: Any party ruled against by the Verifier in an eligibility determination/ruling, be it the author, editor, and/or publisher, shall have a limited right to appeal, pursuant to this Rule II(k) and Rule III(s), from the Verifier's determination/ruling. The Verifier's ruling shall include notification of this fact, along with the information that the party seeking to appeal must send a written Notice of Appeal via email to the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee (stokerchair@horror.org), the HWA president (president@horror.org), and the compiler (compiler@horror.org) providing both their official HWA email address(es) as well as any corresponding individual email addresses, and that all such notices must be sent to both the official HWA and individual email address(es). The person(s) appealing a Verifier's determination/ruling will have the right to file a Notice of Appeal, as provided for previously within this subparagraph for seven (7) days from the date that the Verifier publishes and emails their determination/ruling. The party seeking to appeal shall have waived all rights to any such appeal if the Awards Committee Chair(s) have not received the Notice of Appeal by 11:59PM PST on the seventh (7th) day from the date of entry of

the Verifier's determination/ruling. It shall be the sole responsibility of the party seeking to appeal to confirm receipt by the Awards Committee Chair(s) of their Notice of Appeal in a timely manner. The Notice of Intent to Appeal shall contain the name(s), email address(es), phone number(s), and relation to the case/appeal of those seeking to appeal the Verifier's determination. Further, the Verifier's determination/ruling will also include informing any party seeking to appeal the ruling that they must, in addition to serving their Notice of Intent to Appeal upon the Awards Committee Chair(s) and Verifier within seven (7) days of the date of entry of the determination/ruling, that any and all information and/or argument, they wish the Awards Committee to consider in making their appellate determination/ruling must be delivered, in writing, via the same email addresses as for the Notice of Appeal within not more than fourteen (14) days from the date of entry of the Verifier's original determination. Any and all such written information and/or argument that has not been received by the Awards Committee Chair(s) by 11:59PM PST on the fourteenth (14th) day from the date of entry of the Verifier's original determination/ruling in the matter shall not be considered by the Awards Committee in reaching their determination in the matter, and it shall be the sole responsibility of the party seeking to appeal to confirm receipt by the Awards Committee Chair(s) of their information and/or argument in a timely manner. A copy of the Notice of Intent to Appeal shall also be sent via email to the Verifier, at both their official HWA and individual email addresses. The Verifier shall also have the same opportunity, deadline, and responsibility to confirm delivery, for any written information and/or argument that they wish the Awards Committee to consider in the appeal. The Awards Committee, on appeal, is limited to consideration of only that documentation and/or evidence that was presented by the parties in and during the original determination proceeding before the Verifier. Any such documentation and/or evidence which could have been presented to the Verifier, but was not so presented may not be considered upon any appeal, unless pursuant to a claim of fraud or concealment of evidence in the original proceeding before the Verifier. If such argument is raised, the appeals determining body shall examine all submissions and argument relating thereto and then make a determination as to allow the admission and consideration of such new evidence within their ultimate determination/ruling in the matter.

(4) Initial Appeal of Eligibility Determination—Rulings: All appeals from the Verifier's determinations as to Awards eligibility shall be heard by the members of the Awards Committee, as such are defined by and within Rule II(a), hereinabove. It shall be the responsibility of the Awards Committee Co-Chairs to timely notify all other Committee members of any and all such eligibility appeals and to forward and provide copies of the Verifier's determination/ruling, the Notice of Intent to Appeal, and any other/further written evidence, documentation, and/or argument properly received by the party(ies) seeking to appeal, and to set a date and time certain for an online discussion and vote upon the appeal. The Awards Committee shall, pursuant to Rule II(j), vote upon the appeal, with a majority vote of the members determining the decision, except in the event of a tie, where the Committee Chair(s) shall then make the final determination. The Award Committee's appeals determination/ruling shall be issued in writing and delivered to all concerned parties and the HWA President no later than fourteen (14) days after the earlier of when the Committee Chair(s) receive the information and/or argument the appealing party(ies) seek to have the Awards Committee consider and the

date upon which such information and/or argument was required to have been received by the Committee Chair(s). The Chair(s) of the Awards Committee shall submit the written appeals determination/ruling within the time specified, which shall include a brief history of the matter, the parties and issues raised, any evidence, documents, and/or argument presented by the parties, and the Appeals (Appellate) determination/ruling.

(5) Final Appeal from Eligibility Determination: The appeals determination/ruling shall also include notice to all parties that the party that has been ruled against upon the appeal has a final right, pursuant to this Rule II(k)(5), to a final appeal to the HWA Board of Trustees. Copies of this appeals determination/ruling shall be emailed to all parties to the just concluded appeals determination and also to the HWA President, via their official HWA email address and their designated non-HWA email address. The exact same timetable shall apply to both the required Notice of Intent to Appeal and any and all supplemental argument that either the prevailing and/or appealing party(ies) wish to present before the Board of Trustees as is set forth in and for the appeal to the Awards Committee—seven (7) days to deliver to the President and other parties the Notice of Intent to Appeal, and fourteen (14) days for delivery of any and all extra argument. There cannot and will not be any new evidence not previously considered by either the Verifier or the Awards Committee in their prior hearings allowed in or for consideration by the Board of Trustees during this final appeal. The determination/ruling of the Board of Trustees in this final appeals review is final and cannot be further appealed. Should any member of the Board of Trustees have either any potential direct conflict of interest, such as having a competing work to that being appealed, they must recuse themselves. Additionally, any Board of Trustees member may choose to recuse themselves for any reason. The Board of Trustees' written determination/ruling shall be published and released within fourteen (14) days of the earlier of the date when the President received the argument the appealing party(ies) seek to have the Board of Trustees consider and the date upon which such argument was required to have been received by the President. This final determination/ruling shall include a brief history of the matter, the parties and issues raised, any prior evidence that was felt compelling, and any arguments presented by the parties, and the final determination/ruling, and which will be delivered via email to all parties to the final appeal.

(6) Category Eligibility—Determination of Category: If any question arises of which category a work belongs in, the Verifier of Eligibility will, after reviewing the relevant rules and the character of the work in question, assign the work to the category they believe most appropriate. The author of the work in question, or any other interested party, may appeal this decision to the Awards Committee, pursuant to Rule II(k)(3) and

(4). The Committee will then rule on the dispute. This ruling may in turn be appealed to the HWA Board of Trustees, pursuant to Rule II(k)(5), whereupon the Board of Trustees, after hearing and considering the facts of the case, will make their decision. The Board of Trustees' ruling is final. The requirements for and manner of submission of Notices of Intent To Appeal and for Written Argument and Evidence shall be the same/identical to those set forth for the appeals processes in the previous paragraphs II(k)(2) through II(k)(5), hereinabove.

(7) Should any other Bram Stoker Awards® Rule, or any portion thereof, conflict with or differ from this Rule, this Rule II(k) shall take precedence.

(8) Breach of Bram Stoker Awards Rules® and/or Etiquette. Should any author breach the rules stated in this document and/or the etiquette guidelines published on the Bram Stoker Awards website (<https://www.thebramstokerawards.com/submissions/>), the Awards Committee shall investigate the occurrence, gather evidence, and assess the extent of the breach. The work of authors who commit such a breach may be disqualified from the Awards. In the interest of protecting the integrity of the Awards and the well-being of members who may observe breaches of the Rules and/or Etiquette, the Awards Committee may, in the presence of clear evidence of a breach and with approval from the Board of Trustees, choose to remove a work from consideration, or from the Preliminary or Final Ballot without a public statement.

1. The HWA Board of Trustees is hereby authorized to establish the Rules for the Bram Stoker Award® Etiquette, which are part of the Bram Stoker Award® Rules and should be treated as such by all parties. The Etiquette Rules define what is acceptable and what is not acceptable when promoting a work for Bram Stoker Awards® consideration, both for HWA members and nonmembers. The HWA Board of Trustees will publicize the Etiquette Rules by posting them on the HWA's official website.
 - m. In the event that individuals, publishers, groups, or other entities breach these Rules, the Board of Trustees is empowered to take action as codified in this clause. If a Board of Trustees member or the Bram Stoker Awards® Committee brings a complaint to the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees should ensure that the complaint has been fully investigated; that the offending party has been given reasonable opportunity to correct their breach; and has either failed to do so, or has committed multiple breaches of the Rule within a twelve-month period. If those requirements are met:
 - a. And the offending party is a member of the HWA, the Board of Trustees will issue a final warning. If the breach is not corrected in a manner agreeable to the Board of Trustees within fourteen (14) days (for instance, the removal of a post, a correction email, a public apology, or other forms of rectification), the Board of Trustees has the following rights: If the breach relates to a specific Bram Stoker Awards®-eligible work and that breach is caused by the author, editor, and/or publisher (or the publisher's representative) of that work, then the work may be declared ineligible for that year's Bram Stoker Awards® and that ruling will be announced to the membership. The Board of Trustees will consider one appeal against its ruling by those affected by any such declaration and if it rules the work is still ineligible, no further appeals will be considered. If a member continues to breach the Rules after one work has been declared ineligible due to their breaches, the Board of Trustees will consider whether it is appropriate to expel the member under its Bylaws, or to take other appropriate actions.
 - b. If the offending party is not a member of the HWA, the Board of Trustees will issue a final warning. If the breach is not corrected in a manner agreeable to the Board of Trustees within fourteen (14) days (for instance, the removal of a post, a correction email, a public apology, or other forms of rectification), the Board of Trustees has the following rights:
 - i. If the breach relates to a specific Bram Stoker Award®-eligible work authored, edited, or published by an HWA member and the breach was not caused by the HWA member, the Board of Trustees will issue a notice to the membership of the details of the breach, sanctioning the party causing the breach; and indicating to

the membership that the breach was not caused by, nor sanctioned by the HWA member. The Board of Trustees will consider one appeal against its notice by those affected by any such declaration, after which no further appeals will be considered.

ii. If the breach relates to a specific Bram Stoker Award®-eligible work that is not authored, edited, or published by an HWA member, then the work may be declared ineligible for that year's Bram Stoker Awards® and that ruling announced to the membership. The Board of Trustees will consider one appeal against its ruling by those affected by any such declaration and if it rules the work is still ineligible, no further appeals will be considered. All Board of Trustees votes under this clause require a two-thirds majority to pass.

III. General Eligibility

- a. Fiction: To be eligible for the Bram Stoker Award® for Superior Achievement, a work of fiction must exhibit intrinsic story values that by general agreement identify it as a work of dark fantasy, dark literature, or horror. A work need not contain any supernatural element to be considered horror.
- b. Non-fiction: To be eligible in the Non-Fiction or Short Non-Fiction category, a work of long or short non-fiction—including but not limited to criticism, biography, autobiography, scholarly analysis, and reference—must be related to one or more of the above-mentioned three facets of the horror field.
- c. Award Year: Awards shall be given on a calendar-year basis. To be eligible for the Bram Stoker Awards® in a particular calendar year, a work must be published *for the first time* in that calendar year, between January 1 and December 31. The Awards for a given year will have that date engraved on the trophy and will be considered that year's Awards, and will be presented the following year.
- d. Book Publication Date: In the case of works first published in book form—novels, fiction collections, anthologies, graphic novels, and non-fiction—the original year of first release of the volume will determine eligibility. Allowances will be made for typographical errors and publisher delays in releasing material printed with earlier dates (for example, the volume is printed with 2025 as the publication year but it was not released until August 2026). If no date of publication or release is listed, the Verifier of Eligibility will make their best effort to determine the date on which the work became generally available.
- e. Magazine Publication Date: In the case of works first appearing in magazines or other periodicals, the date of the issue of publication which appears on the magazine, commonly referred to as the "cover date"—rather than the date of distribution—will determine eligibility. If there is no cover date, the date of first release will apply. If no date of publication or release is listed, the Verifier of Eligibility will make their best effort to determine the date on which the work became generally available.
- f. Anthology Publication Date: In the case of stories first appearing in a hardcover or softcover anthology, the original year of publication for the entire volume, as it appears on the copyright page, will determine eligibility of the individual original works therein. Allowances will be made for typographical errors and publisher delays in releasing material printed with earlier dates (for example, the volume is printed with 2025 as the publication year but it was not released until August 2026). If no date of publication or

release is listed, the Verifier of Eligibility will make their best effort to determine the date on which the work became generally available.

g. Network Publication Date: In the case of works that first appear in a form distributed over electronic networks—including but not limited to the World Wide Web, email, or subscriber online services—the Verifier of Eligibility will use their best efforts to determine the date when the work was first accessible to the public. If the Verifier is unable to find evidence for a date, and there is any question of eligibility, the Verifier will provide a report to the Awards Committee, which will vote on whether the work is eligible for the year in question. A simple majority of those voting is required for a work to be endorsed as eligible.

h. Screenplays: The date a film is first commercially released, or a television episode is first screened publicly, will determine eligibility of the individual works therein. Important note: A film that is not released commercially (i.e., shown only at a film festival or on a free website) is not eligible until it is commercially released. Therefore, solely showing a film at a film festival or on a free website does not make that film eligible for Award consideration; also the release of a film at a film festival in a prior year does not preclude the film from Award consideration at a later date. In the case of direct-to-DVD or streaming or video-on-demand films, the release date will apply. If no date of release is listed, the Verifier of Eligibility will make their best effort to determine the date on which the film, television episode, DVD, streaming, or video-on-demand title became commercially available.

i. Other Publication Dates: If any work is first made available in a form other than those listed above (such as audio), and the work bears a publication date on its cover, outer packaging, or other publicly available publication information, that date will determine eligibility. If there is no cover date, then the date of publication listed on the copyright page, in the indicia, or accompanying a copyright notice will be used to determine eligibility. If there is no cover date nor stated publication date, the date of copyright will determine eligibility. If there is no cover date, stated publication date, or copyright date, the Verifier of Eligibility will use their best efforts to determine the date when the work was first available to the public. If the Verifier is unable to find evidence for a date, and there is any realistic question of eligibility, the date of publication will be assumed to be sixty (60) days prior to receipt by the Compiler of Recommendations of the first recommendation of the work or submission of the work to the jury.

j. Serial Publication: If any work is published in installments, whether in multiple issues of a magazine, or multiple books, or in periodic updates to an electronic work, or otherwise, eligibility will be determined by the date of the *final* installment of the basic work. Revisions, commentary, and epilogues that are not essential and integral to an appreciation of the work will not be considered to be installments of the basic work. Any installment that presents itself as the final installment will be considered the final installment even if other installments do in fact appear, and all such further installments shall be ignored.

k. Withdrawal of Works: Any writer may remove their work from Bram Stoker Award® consideration at any point in the Awards process up to and including the public announcement of the Winner. Only the writer (not a publisher or agent), or editor in the case of an edited work such as an anthology, may issue this instruction. Such instruction should be addressed to the President of the HWA, who will immediately inform the Awards Co-Chairs, who will take the appropriate action, which will include

informing the relevant jury if the withdrawal is prior to the Preliminary Ballot being determined. The writer may request withdrawal of their work from the Recommended Reading List, jury consideration, the Preliminary Ballot, or the Final Ballot, or all of these.

l. Withdrawal of *Limited Editions* Allowed: Works that initially appear in printed limited numbered editions of 750 copies or fewer and do not receive their mainstream publication until the following calendar year may be withdrawn; works that are published in any stated, intentionally limited print format as announced by the Publisher prior to publication such that they are available to less than 33% of HWA's eligible voters may also be withdrawn; in such case, the author, or editor in the case of an edited work such as an anthology, may elect to withdraw the book from Awards consideration in the year of its limited release and have it considered instead in the year of its general release. The writer may request this form of withdrawal of their work from the Recommended Reading List, jury consideration, the Preliminary Ballot, or the Final Ballot no later than October 1. Works published after October 1 may be withdrawn up to December 31. Works that are accessible for purchase to more than 33% of the HWA's eligible voters, but which due to actual sales, whether through retail channels, crowdfunding platforms, or other distribution channels, are produced in a quantity of 750 copies or fewer may not be withdrawn. Works published in e-book or another electronic format are not eligible for withdrawal under this rule.

m. Foreign Publication: The purpose of HWA is to promote horror and dark fantasy on an international basis. In this cause, and in recognition of the fact that the primary criterion for the Bram Stoker Awards® should be quality, work will be eligible for Awards regardless of the author's country of residence, citizenship, or native language. However, in recognition of the actual composition of the membership, the work must be available in the English language to be eligible.

n. Translation: In the case of work translated from another language, eligibility will be determined not by the year of first publication but by the year of first publication in English.

o. Works Published by HWA: Publications of HWA in sum and in part, including but not limited to the HWA Newsletter, the HWA Internet Mailer, and all works whose publication HWA has paid for or authorized, are expressly ineligible for the Bram Stoker Awards® except as allowed in 4.n.

p. Expansions, etc.: Expansions, updates, new editions, and rewrites of previously existing works are ineligible for a Bram Stoker Award® in categories for which they were eligible when originally published (previous practice notwithstanding and regardless of the number of words that have been added or deleted, or the amount of time that has elapsed since the original publication). For clarity, a revised novel or non-fiction work is ineligible to compete in the same category; also, a revised first novel cannot later qualify in the novel category. The most obvious "expansion" that does qualify under this Rule is from Short Fiction or Long Fiction to Novel, First Novel, or Young Adult novel. Simply changing the title of the work does not avoid the proscription in this Rule—the Verifier will take into account the content of the work when determining whether the republication of a work breaches this Rule. See also Rule IIIq.

q. Adaptations of previously existing works are eligible for the following Bram Stoker Awards® (and no others): Screenplay, Graphic Novel, and Non-Fiction. In the case of

Non-Fiction, the only form of adaptation that qualifies is that of fiction or non-fiction works which are out of copyright and are republished with scholarly commentary, notes, etc., where that additional material also meets the word count nominated in Rule IVo.

r. Claims of Delayed Publication Where a Work Has Been Subject to a Promotional Campaign: Any work that any author, editor, and/or publisher has (A) submitted to any Bram Stoker Awards® category jury for consideration; (B) offered Bram Stoker Award® consideration copies by email or a social media service (Facebook, Twitter, etc.); or (C) posted any link to the work, or ways of accessing the work, on the HWA website for Bram Stoker Award® consideration; within a given calendar year, then such work is deemed to have been published and released in that year for the purposes of Bram Stoker Awards® eligibility. Submitting or offering works in this manner is *prima facie* evidence that relevant parties have ‘campaigned’ for a work to be eligible in the year in which they make such submissions or offerings. Should any author, editor, and/or publisher of the work subsequently discover that the release or publication date is being delayed or postponed until a subsequent calendar year (regardless of whether they were the party that originally “campaigned” for the work) and they desire to change that work’s Awards consideration to the new release year, they are required to send formal written notice of their request to withdraw the work from consideration in the current year. This notice is to be sent to the Co-Chair(s) of the Bram Stoker Awards® Committee and/or to the Verifier and must be received no later than 11:59 PM PST on January 14 of the year following the year of original eligibility. The request must contain the specific reasons for withdrawal from consideration, along with verifiable evidence that the work was not published in the original year. The intent of this rule is to create an affirmative duty upon authors, editors, and/or publishers to properly notify the Bram Stoker Awards® Committee of the need to withdraw a work from consideration in a current year where there is delayed publication; with such notification being received by the Committee prior to the official closing of the Recommended Reading List and of the determination by the juries of their Preliminary Ballot submissions on January 15th. For purposes of clarification, if an author, editor, or publisher has ‘campaigned’ for a work, they have a duty to monitor its publication date. Therefore, claims that the relevant party discovered after January 14 that the publication date had been changed must not be entertained by the Committee. In summary, any request to withdraw the work from eligibility in one year to make it eligible in a following year due to a change in publication date that is made subsequent to January 14, or that does not contain verifiable evidence of the change in publication date, must not be considered by the Committee. Should any other Bram Stoker Awards® Rule, or any portion thereof, conflict with or differ from this rule, this rule shall take precedence.

s. General Eligibility of Works: There are no requirements for eligibility other than those stated in these Rules. Anonymous works are eligible. Works created by committee or by any method whatsoever are eligible. Works need not be professionally published, but must be published in some reviewable form available to at least 33% of HWA's eligible voters (self-published works are eligible but must meet this last criterion). In the event that the facts of a case are in doubt, or the rules are subject to interpretation, and the Verifier's initial determination as to eligibility is sought to be appealed pursuant to Rule II(k), the Awards Committee will review all the evidence provided and then make a Ruling by majority vote.

- t. Works Debuting in an Audio Version: Any work that debuts in audio (physical or digital media) is eligible for Award consideration in the year that the original audio version was released. If a printed version is released in a subsequent year, the work is ineligible for further Awards consideration. Category eligibility is governed by word count and other criteria set forth in section IV of these rules.
- u. This clause is BLANK (the previous clause is replaced by additional language in Rule IIIb).
- v. No work created using generative AI shall be eligible in any category.

IV. Award Categories

(Note: there is no clause a. in this section)

- b. Available Categories: The annual Bram Stoker Awards® for Superior Achievement may be presented in the following categories for specific works:
 - Superior Achievement in a Novel Superior
 - Achievement in a First Novel Superior
 - Achievement in a Graphic Novel
 - Superior Achievement in a Young Adult Novel
 - Superior Achievement in Long Fiction Superior
 - Achievement in Short Fiction Superior
 - Achievement in a Fiction Collection Superior
 - Achievement in a Screenplay
 - Superior Achievement in Poetry (Collection and Long Form) Superior
 - Achievement in an Anthology
 - Superior Achievement in Non-Fiction Superior
 - Achievement in Short Non-Fiction
 - Superior Achievement in a Middle Grade Novel

These categories are defined below.

- c. Each Category Optional: Which Awards are presented in a given year will depend upon the outcome of the Recommended Reading List and jury processes and the voting on the Preliminary and Final Ballots, as described below. There is no requirement that any minimum number of Awards be presented.
- d. This clause is BLANK (the previous clause is replaced by Rule II (k) (6)).
- e. Novel: A novel is hereby defined as a work of prose fiction at least 40,000 words in length. While a novel may be illustrated and may include symbols or representations other than printed letters without being disqualified, the essential prose character of the work is required. Works that meet the definition of graphic novel in Rule IVg below are defined as graphic novels and do not qualify for the Novel category. Nonlinear texts or

hypertext are novels if and only if the central narrative—that is, the shortest telling of the complete story, beginning to end—by itself, without commentary, footnotes, alternate paths, or other optional adjuncts, would constitute at least 40,000 words of prose fiction. If the length of a work is so close to 40,000 words as to make it impractical to determine whether it qualifies as a novel or as long fiction purely on the basis of word count, works initially published in book form unaccompanied by other fiction will be considered novels, while works initially published in magazines, in anthologies, in collections, or in similar formats will be considered long fiction. Any novel that is deemed to be a “First Novel” according to Rule IVf does not qualify for consideration in the Novel category (see Rule IVr). Therefore Members may not recommend such a First Novel as a Novel nor may the Novel Jury submit such a work for the Preliminary Ballot in the Novel category.

f. First Novel: A first novel is hereby defined as a novel, as defined above in Rule IVe (“Novel”); or a Young Adult Novel, as defined below in Rule IVh (“Young Adult Novel”), written by an author who has never before published any novel in any literary genre (to be clear, if an author has published any novel before, whether or not that novel meets the definition of horror, dark fantasy, or dark literature in these Rules, their work does not qualify for an Award in this category). Any previous work meeting the definition of “novel” in Rule IVe will disqualify an author’s second or subsequent novel from this category regardless of whether the previous work met any other eligibility requirements. This includes previous novels written under other names, or as work-for-hire. “Author” is defined as the natural person who created a novel, regardless of who owns the copyright or what name or names may appear on the published work. In the case of collaborative works, a novel must be the first novel by each of the participating authors—a previous novel by any of the authors disqualifies the work from this category. Equally, no previous work that fails to meet the definition of “Novel” in Rule IVe or “Young Adult Novel” in Rule IVh will disqualify a work from participating in this category.

g. Graphic Novel: For purposes of this Award, a graphic novel is defined as any single publication consisting of a work of fiction in comic book form of at least 48 pages; the work may be presented in an electronic form as well, provided the total length is equivalent to at least 48 printed pages. A graphic novel may be original, or may be a collection of previously published individual comic book stories. In that case, the date the collection is released is the year in which it is eligible for Award consideration. Future editions or reprints of collections or collections that include previously eligible works shall not be eligible unless the new work as a whole includes previously unpublished material that significantly alters the story or stories, such as new story pages, chapters, or issues not previously published or included and that comprise at least 51 percent of the new work. Changes to art (such as new or different coloring) or restorations or expansions of artwork are not to be considered as changing the work. Works by multiple writers shall be eligible, and in these cases, each writer shall be considered equally for the Award. In the event that a work has more than four authors (i.e., an anthology), the editor(s) will be listed instead of individual authors. Individual comic book issues under 48 pages are not eligible for this Award. The Bram Stoker Award for Graphic Novel will be awarded to the book as an entity, with the writer(s) of the Graphic Novel receiving the actual statue. The Graphic Novel’s primary storytelling

artist(s) (i.e. penciler(s) or painter(s)) will be listed as Bram Stoker Award winners, and acknowledged through the issuance of certificates for each individual, as well as in any and all promotional announcements, archives, and records.

h. Young Adult Novel: For purposes of this Award, young adult novels are defined as novels (see Rule IVe) intended for the age group 14-21, with word length beginning at 40,000 words. A Young Adult novel that is deemed to be a 'First Novel' according to Rule IVf may qualify for consideration in the 'First Novel' category (see Rule IVr) if the author request in writing that the work be considered for 'First Novel' rather than 'Young Adult' novel; otherwise, said novel will remain in the 'Young Adult' novel category. The work may not be considered for both the 'First Novel' and 'Young Adult' novel categories concurrently in the same awards year.

i. Screenplay: For purposes of this award, feature-length screenplays and episodic teleplays are eligible; screenplays filmed for direct-to-DVD, streaming, or video-on- demand features are also eligible. Unproduced scripts are not eligible, nor are scripts for short films (a feature is defined as a movie with a running time of at least 70 minutes). The Award will be presented to the writer(s) only.

j. Long Fiction: Long fiction is hereby defined as a work of prose fiction at least 7,500 words in length but no more than 39,999 words in length. While long fiction may be illustrated and may include symbols or representations other than printed letters without being disqualified, the essential prose character of the work is required. Nonlinear texts or hypertext are long fiction if and only if the central narrative by itself, without commentary, alternate paths, or other optional adjuncts, would constitute at least 7,500, but no more than 39,999 words of prose fiction. If the length of a work is so close to 39,999 words as to make it impractical to determine whether it qualifies as a novel or as long fiction purely on the basis of word count, the criteria given in Rule IVe ("Novel") will be used to categorize the work. If the length of a work is so close to 7,500 words as to make it impractical to determine whether it qualifies as long fiction or short fiction purely on the basis of word count, the work will be considered long fiction.

k. Short Fiction: Short fiction is hereby defined as a work of prose fiction no more than 7,499 words in length. While short fiction may be illustrated and may include symbols or representations other than printed letters without being disqualified, the essential prose character of the work is required. Nonlinear texts or hypertext are short fiction if and only if the central narrative by itself, without commentary, alternate paths, or other optional adjuncts, constitutes no more than 7,499 words of prose fiction. If the length of a work is so close to 7,499 words as to make it impractical to determine whether it qualifies as long fiction or short fiction purely on the basis of word count, the work will be considered long fiction.

l. Fiction Collection: A fiction collection is hereby defined as:

- i. At least four separate works of prose fiction, all by a single author offered for sale or distribution as a single package, whether in book form, an audiobook, an electronic book, or any other means. The single author may collaborate with other writers on one or more of the works in the collection; or;
- ii. Where two authors co-author every story in a collection, the pair will be treated as if they were a single author and cannot write any of the works separately from each other; the collection must also be at least four separate works of prose

fiction offered for sale or distribution as a single package, whether in book form, an audiobook, an electronic book, or any other means.

iii. The aggregate length of the works in a collection must be at least 40,000 words. The package may include additional material, such as verse, non-fiction, or illustrations, in addition to the fiction, but the additional material must not be longer, in terms of words, than the fiction content. The package must be presented by the publisher or distributor as a single work. A series of chapbooks or an online source that happens to carry four or more stories by a single author is not eligible. Individual stories in the collection may have been published prior to the award year, but the work as a whole must be new—new being defined as at least 25% of the stories had not appeared in any of the author's previous single-author collections.

iv. A collection by an author who is deceased by more than two (2) years prior to the collection's release date must meet the requirement of having 75% (by both number of titles and number of words) of the included stories never published together in any prior format. If the Award goes to a book by the deceased author, it is that author who "wins" the Award. The decision as to who will accept the Award on the deceased author's behalf should be made by their Estate as far as is possible (as winners are not known in advance, the Estates of deceased nominees will be asked to indicate who should accept the Award on the deceased person's behalf).

m. Poetry (Collection and Long Form): A poetry collection is defined as 30 pages or more by a single poet, or a collaboration of 48 pages or more by no more than four (4) poets. Each poet must contribute at least 10% of the poems or word count to the whole, with all works sharing a unified genre, theme, or approach. Long-form poetry is defined as a poem of more than 200 lines or a work in verse of more than 2,500 words. Publication must be in a book, single chapbook, or electronic book format—or for long- form poetry only, an electronic magazine. A series of pamphlets or an online source such as a website that simply carry poetry by a single author or authors is not eligible. Individual poems may have been published prior to the award year, but the work as a whole must be new. The package may include additional material, such as fiction, non- fiction, or illustrations. To be eligible for a Bram Stoker Award® in the Poetry (Collection and Long Form) category, the majority of the titles in a collection must be composed of poetry and the fiction content must amount to less than 40,000 words. A single long- form poem published in a collection or anthology may be eligible regardless of the prose content in the same publication.

n. Anthology: An anthology is hereby defined as at least four (4) works of prose fiction by two or more different authors, selected by an editor and offered for sale or distribution as a single package, whether in book form, an audiobook, an electronic book, single issue of a magazine/periodical, or any other means. The aggregate length of the stories must be at least 60,000 words, and at least 60% of the fiction material (based on the number of stories, not wordage) contained in the anthology must be original, that is, unpublished prior to their appearance in the anthology. The package may also include additional material such as non-fiction, verse, or illustrations in addition to the fiction. The package must be presented by the publisher or distributor as a single work. A series of chapbooks, magazines/periodicals or an online source that

happens to carry four or more stories is not eligible. While up to 40% of the individual stories may have been published prior to the award year, the work as a whole must be new. The Award in this category is presented to the editor or editors named in the anthology; if no editor's name appears, the award will be presented to the publisher.

Anthologies commissioned by the HWA or for which the HWA received payment in any form are not eligible for this award, although individual stories from such anthologies remain eligible in other categories.

o. Non-Fiction: Non-Fiction is hereby defined as a work of criticism, biography, autobiography, scholarly analysis, reference, commentary, opinion, or other factual material at least 30,000 words in aggregate length, in prose form and published as a physical print or electronic book. It may be a stand-alone work by a single author; or composed of shorter works (essays, etc.) by a single author; or be composed of shorter works by multiple authors. In the case it is composed of works by multiple authors the Award(s) in this category is presented to the editor or editors named on the cover of the work; if no editor's name appears, the Award will be presented to the publisher. Such a book must be published for the first time in the calendar year, and may contain shorter works regardless of when any of the shorter works were first published. See also Rule IVp.

p. The following formats are not eligible for the Non-Fiction Award: Members and jurors may not recommend an entire website, an entire issue or an entire series of issues of a magazine, an entire issue or entire series of newsletters, a blog, a series of columns, articles, essays, or reviews for this Award (past practice notwithstanding). As a result, there are no circumstances under which the Non-Fiction Award may be given to personal websites or blogs, or entire websites, magazines, or newsletters (prior practice notwithstanding).

q. Multiple Categories: No multiple eligibility is permitted—see Rule IVr in the case of First Novels.

r. First Novels as defined in Rule IVf may only be recommended to the Recommended Reading List; or chosen by a jury for the First Novel category. They may not be recommended to the Recommended Reading List or chosen by a jury for the Novel or Young Adult Novel category. If members recommend a work that is identified as a First Novel by the Compiler or Verifier, that recommendation will be transferred to the First Novel category without need for further reference to the member so recommending. The Verifier will make every effort to ensure that works recommended to the Recommended Reading List or presented by the jury for the Novel and Young Adult Novel Awards are checked to ensure that First Novels are correctly categorized. If the fact that the work is a First Novel comes to the attention of the Awards Committee at any point prior to the announcement of the Preliminary Ballot, it will be categorized as a First Novel; but if that information comes to light after the Preliminary Ballot is sent to Voting Members, the work will not be recategorized. This is to maintain the integrity of ballots that have been released.

s. Short Non-Fiction is hereby defined as a work of criticism, biography, autobiography, scholarly analysis, reference, commentary, essay, or other factual material that addresses a single primary thesis or topic. It must be less than 30,000 words in length with a minimum of 1,000 words, in prose form and published as a chapter or section of a book (either in print or electronic format), an article in a magazine (print or online), an article on a website, or a chapter in an academic monograph. As with the longer Non-Fiction category, there are no circumstances under which the Short Non-Fiction Award may be given to personal websites, newsletters, or blogs (prior practice notwithstanding).

t. Middle Grade Novel: For purposes of this Award, Middle Grade novels are defined as novels (see clause IVe) intended for the age group 8-13 with word length beginning at 25,000 words. A Middle Grade novel over 40,000 words in length that is deemed to be a "First Novel" according to Rule IVf may qualify for consideration in the First Novel category (see Rule IVr) if the author request in writing that the work be considered for First Novel rather than Middle Grade

Novel; otherwise, said novel will remain in the Middle Grade Novel category. The work may not be considered for both the First Novel and Middle Grade Novel categories concurrently.

V. Lifetime Achievement Award

- a. Nature of Award: In addition to the category Awards, on an as-deserved basis a Bram Stoker Award® for Lifetime Achievement may be given to an individual whose work has substantially influenced the dark fantasy/dark literature/horror genre. While ordinarily this would go to an author whose body of work represents an extraordinary level of quality over an extended period of time, it may also recognize influential accomplishments in other creative fields.
- b. Separate Procedure: The Lifetime Achievement Award is the most prestigious of all the Awards presented by the organization. It does not honor the superior achievement embodied in a single work but acknowledges superior achievement in an entire career. Therefore, in order to prevent unseemly competition for this award and to prevent the impression that there are any losers in this category, this Award will *not* be presented by a vote of the membership.
- c. Selection of Committee: Each year, after October 1 but no later than February 1, the President of the HWA shall appoint a five-member Lifetime Achievement Award Committee to be composed of Active and Lifetime Members drawn from widely varying geographic regions. The President will also make a reasonable effort to appoint a group of members whose writing represents the varied types of dark fantasy/dark literature and horror fiction.
- d. Restrictions on Committee Membership: No current elected officer or Trustee of the HWA may serve on the Lifetime Achievement Award Committee. No current member of the Awards Committee may serve on the Lifetime Achievement Award Committee. While members may serve for more than one year, without limit, each Committee must be appointed by the current President, and that appointment announced in writing; no member may be assumed to stay on without presidential confirmation.
- e. Committee Required: If for any reason the President fails to appoint a suitable Committee, or fewer than five members agree to serve, then no Bram Stoker Award® for Lifetime Achievement will be presented that year. No substitute mechanism may be employed.
- f. Chairs: Upon appointing the Lifetime Achievement Award Committee, the president may name one of the five members as Chairperson. If the president fails to name a Chairperson at the time of the initial appointment, the members of the committee may choose their own Chairperson by whatever means they prefer. If they are unable to select a Chairperson, they must

petition the president to name one of them as Chairperson, and the president must fulfill this request in a timely fashion.

g. Recommendations: The Lifetime Achievement Award Committee will consider recommendations submitted by all members of HWA via email to the Chairperson or via the Message Board or social media, but they will not be required to select a recipient from that list of recommendations. They are encouraged only to use it as a guide.

h. Discussion: Through debate and mutual consultation, and ultimately by a vote that reflects the will of the majority, the members of the Committee will select a Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Any candidate must receive at least three of the five votes to receive the Award; abstentions will be counted as votes against the person under consideration. The LAA Committee Chairperson shall be responsible for ensuring that all members participate and have a chance to make their opinions known to one another, for conducting the voting, and for reporting the results of the vote to the President. All deliberations of the Committee must be kept in the strictest confidence and should not be discussed with anyone outside the Committee. Multiple rounds of voting may be employed if the Committee so chooses.

i. Multiple Awards Possible: At its discretion, the Committee may bestow two or three Lifetime Achievement Awards in a single year, but only if the Committee is in unanimous agreement that two or three Awards are appropriate. In this regard, members of the Committee would be advised to consider that man is mortal and that the opportunities to say thank you are finite.

j. Award Not Required: At its discretion, the Committee may choose to bestow no Award(s) in its year if a simple majority of the Committee members feel that no deserving recipient remains to be honored.

k. Eligibility: All Lifetime Achievement Award recipients selected by the Committee must meet the criteria for the Lifetime Achievement Award as outlined in Rule Va of these Rules. Furthermore, all recipients must either be at least sixty (60) years of age by March 1 of the year of the Award's presentation, or must have first produced professional work in the dark fantasy/dark literature/horror field at least thirty-five (35) years prior to March 1 of the year of the Award's presentation. All recipients must be alive at the time the President is informed of the Committee's choice. In the event an intended recipient dies after selection, but before the presentation of the Award, the Award will still be presented and will be formally delivered to their Estate.

l. Delivery of Committee's Decision: The Chair of the Lifetime Achievement Awards Committee will inform the President of HWA of the name of the chosen recipient(s) no later than April 1 (or earlier if the Bram Stoker Awards® Banquet is held at a date earlier than April 1, with the deadline at the discretion of the President of the HWA).

m. Preparation of Award: The Chair of the Lifetime Achievement Awards Committee will ensure the pertinent information is provided to the manufacturer of the Awards no later than April 8 or sooner if the President so directs. The engraving on the Bram Stoker Award® for Lifetime Achievement will read, "Lifetime Achievement Award Honoring the Talent of [Recipient's Name in Its Customary Form]."

n. Announcement: Though the names of all other Bram Stoker Award® recipients must remain confidential until the Awards presentation, the name of the recipient(s) of the Lifetime Achievement Award may be announced at the President's discretion any time

after the Chair of the Lifetime Achievement Awards Committee has informed them of the Committee's decision.

- o. Dismissal of the Committee: Once the name of the recipient has been announced, the Lifetime Achievement Award Committee is disbanded, its duties ended.
- p. Unique Honor: No person can receive the Lifetime Achievement Award twice.

VI. *Recommendations*

- a. Who May Recommend, and When: The Compiler of Recommendations will accept recommendations for the Preliminary Ballot from all HWA members regardless of status, that is Active, Lifetime, Associate, Academic, Supporting, and Affiliate, for works published during each calendar year; however, in a Family Membership, only one member may recommend works, unless other family members are also Affiliate, Active, or Lifetime members, in which case they may also recommend works. Recommendations will be accepted from a date no earlier than when the Preliminary Ballot for the previous year is announced, but no later than March 15 of each calendar year; and then through to January 15 of the following year.
- b. Unlimited Recommendations: No limit will be placed on the number of recommendations a member may make in any category. However, no member may recommend the same work in the same category more than once.
- c. Required Information: The Compiler will accept a recommendation only if it is submitted with the following information: 1) the title of the work that is being recommended; 2) the author of said work; 3) the publisher of said work (either the book publisher, the name of the magazine, the name of the anthology, the name of the site where the work can be found, or the equivalent, whichever best applies); 4) the date of publication, as defined in Rules IIId through IIIj; 5) the name of the member recommending the work.
- d. Electronic Publication: For works published electronically, if possible the recommender must provide the Compiler with the URL or a link to purchasing information for the work. If it is *not* possible, for example if the work was distributed on electronic media or over a proprietary system, the recommender must provide the Compiler with a brief explanation of why it is impossible.
- e. Authentication: Recommendations must be submitted via the electronic form provided for this purpose in the Members' Only section of the Association's website—access to that Form must require that the Member enter their username and password. Recommendations will not be received via email or any other form unless the HWA Board of Trustees authorizes this and only then for a date defined period; and such authorization should be restricted to emergency situations, such as the appropriate part of the Association's website being inoperative for any reason.
- f. Documentation: To prevent disputes, the Compiler will keep *all* recommendations sent to them by the members on file until the Awards for that calendar year have been presented, at which time they will archive the recommendations for two years, after which they may dispose of them according to the instructions of the President.
- g. Presentation Upon Demand: The Compiler will be prepared to present to the other members of the Awards Committee or to the President all recommendations received, at the President's or the Committee Co-Chairs' request. No other officer or Trustee may

request this except through the President or the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee, who have the sole right to accept or reject such a request.

h. Recommendations for Lifetime Achievement: These recommendations are either emailed to the Lifetime Achievement Awards Committee Chair or posted at the Association's Message Board or social media. There is no requirement to retain or destroy this information after that year's Awards are announced.

i. Recommending One's Own Work: The Compiler will accept no recommendation from an author for that author's own work. In the case of an anthology or other collaborative work, all contributors are considered to be authors of that work, and are therefore barred from recommending it. The author of a foreword, introduction, or afterword for a work is likewise barred from recommending that work. Further, the Compiler will accept no recommendation from any employee of a publisher for any work acquired or published by that publisher.

j. Accuracy: The Compiler will attempt to determine that the dates of first publication and other information provided by members making recommendations are, in fact, accurate, and that each recommended work, whether recommended works or works submitted to the juries through Submittable, has been listed in the appropriate category. If any question arises that the Compiler cannot readily handle, the Compiler shall notify the Verifier of Eligibility, who will pursue the matter as necessary. The Compiler will maintain a record of every case referred to the Verifier for at least two years, and will present copies of this list to the Verifier, the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee, and the President of the HWA as soon as humanly possible after the close of recommendations on January 15, and under no circumstances later than February 1.

k. Verifier May Act Independently: In addition to acting when called upon, the Verifier of Eligibility will review the lists of recommended works whenever it is convenient to do so, and will investigate any listing that seems questionable, regardless of whether the Compiler or any other member has requested such an investigation. The Verifier will inform the Compiler of any corrections, deletions, or other changes that may be called for, and the Compiler will make any such changes as soon as possible. In the event that the Compiler and the Verifier disagree, the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee will decide how or if a work should be listed. However, as to all questions of category eligibility, Rule II(k)(6) shall apply herein.

l. Questions from Members: If any member, upon reading the published list of recommendations, believes a work to be ineligible or miscategorized, that member should contact the Verifier of Eligibility as soon as possible so that the matter may be investigated. If any other member of the Awards Committee, any officer, or any Trustee is informed of a question of eligibility or categorization, that person must inform the Verifier at once.

m. (i): Removal of Ineligible Works: While the Awards Committee and other parties involved will make their best efforts to ensure that all works on the Preliminary and Final Ballots are eligible and in the correct categories, errors may still occur. The President and the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee will have the authority, jointly or separately, to remove any work determined to be ineligible, or to order votes for an ineligible work to be ignored, at any point in the process before the Final Ballot results are publicly announced. If a work wins a Bram Stoker Award® and is discovered to be ineligible after the announcement of a winner, there are limited circumstances in which such a win would be declared null and void (see subclause (ii) below). If the removal of a work materially affects the composition of the Preliminary or Final Ballot, every reasonable effort must be made to minimize the damage by whatever means the President and the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee deem appropriate—including adding the next most eligible work onto the affected ballot, additional announcements, or other methods—but under no circumstances may a new Preliminary or Final Ballot be issued after that Ballot has been dispatched to voting members or the Final Ballot has been announced. If a work is found to be ineligible after the Final Ballot is announced and for reasons other than those noted in subclause (ii) below, the following

process will apply: After Final Ballot voting has been completed, the votes counted, and the winners determined, if the work that has been ruled ineligible receives the most votes it wins the Award, but the work that received the second highest number of votes and is eligible will also be declared as a winner (in other words, both works ‘tie’). This is so as not to disadvantage the eligible work and to maintain the integrity of our Awards process.

(ii) : If any work is found to be ineligible and the work has been declared the winner (either singularly or in a tie) of a Bram Stoker Award®; and it is declared ineligible for the reasons listed in this subclause (and only the reasons listed in this subclause), the Award may be withdrawn from the work and the author(s) or editor(s) at any time, but only by a vote of the HWA Board of Trustees, in which at least 70% of the members of that Board vote “aye” in a motion to withdraw the Award. The limited reasons that apply under this subclause are: plagiarism of any part of the work; falsely declaring a work to have been published for the first time when it is clear the author(s) or editors(s) should have known the work has been published previously; falsely declaring a work to have been published in the relevant Awards year when it is clear that the author(s) or editors(s) should have known the work had been published in a year other than the relevant Awards year.

(iii) : Except in the circumstances described in subclause (ii) above, no Bram Stoker Award®, once announced, will ever be withdrawn, declared to be in error, or otherwise invalidated; and no future HWA Board of Trustees may make a Rule that overrides that inability to change winners announced in previous years.

n. Publication of Recommendations: The Compiler of Recommendations will update the complete list of Recommendations as new recommendations are received to date for publication on the HWA website at least monthly through June, and thereafter at least twice monthly at a minimum through January 15 of the following year. This list must include at least the title of each work that has been recommended; the author's name for each work; the original venue of each work (either the book publisher, the name of the magazine, the name of the anthology, the name of the site where the work can be found, or the equivalent, whichever best applies); the date of publication. This list will be arranged in alphabetical order in the category where the work exists by the author's, editor's, or publisher's surname/company name. The number of recommendations a work has received will remain strictly confidential until the Recommendations period has ended. Recommendations tallies will not be revealed to members for any reason. Should a conflict arise, only the Awards Committee Members and Board of Trustees would be privy to Recommendation tallies for review and only to those tallies pertaining to said conflict.

o. As names of members recommending the work are no longer published, the Compiler of Recommendations will confirm the receipt of each Recommendation by return email via an automated response from the Recommendations Database (or other

agreed process for any member who does not have email). It is the sole responsibility of members making Recommendations to save these automated responses to avoid making duplicate Recommendations, thus hindering the Compiler of Recommendations' duties.

p. Members submitting recommendations must certify that they did not receive any communication or request from an author to make the recommendation, that they will not share their recommendation with others, and that they are not recommending a Work in exchange for a recommendation of their own Work. Any breach of these rules can result in disqualification of the Recommended Work from Awards consideration as described in Section IIk8.

VII. The Bram Stoker Award® Jury Process

- a. Reason for Jury: We acknowledge that no matter how good our intentions or how diligent we are in our reading, we will sometimes overlook works of merit that deserve a spot on the Preliminary Ballot. Therefore, the Membership agreed by Referendum to establish a jury process to supplement the Bram Stoker Award® process.
- b. Contacting the Jury: Authors, editors, publishers, or any person acting as agent promoting a writer of a work should not contact the jury or its members directly *under any circumstances*. If an author or publisher wishes to have a work considered, they may contact the Chairperson(s) of the Awards Committee for details on how to send an electronic copy of that work to each jury member for consideration. The electronic copy will be uploaded via Submittable, enabling jurors in that category only to download and review the work. Only authors, publishers, publicists, agents, or others directly involved with the publication of the Work or legal representatives of the author may submit a work to the jury. A token on an ARC site such as NetGalley or similar services is permissible. Anyone in need of assistance in uploading a work may contact the Committee Co-Chairs for assistance. Sending hard or soft copies is not permitted.
- c. Spamming the Jury: “Spamming” any member of a jury (e.g., an author, editor, publisher, or promotional agent making unsolicited requests to have their own work considered) will result in immediate disqualification of that work from jury consideration. Jury members will report said spamming to the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee, who will immediately disqualify the work. The only avenue of appeal will be to the Board of Trustees, whose decision will be final.
- d. Prior to the start of each Awards year, HWA’s President selects the Awards Committee Chairperson(s) if the previous year’s Chairperson(s) retire or are removed by the President.
- e. The Chairperson(s) select a Jury Chairperson for each category with the President’s approval. Jury Chairpersons are required to be Active or Lifetime Members of HWA.
- f. The Chairperson(s) then select at least four further jurors for each of the Bram Stoker Awards® categories (for a total of at least five jurors per category); those jurors are drawn from volunteers within the organization, and are required to be Active, Lifetime, Academic, or Affiliate (only two per jury) members. The Chairperson(s) initially determine whether to re-appoint any of the previous year’s jurors who are willing to continue, noting that they have no obligation to reappoint any individual juror and do not have to provide reasons for not doing so. If there are any remaining vacancies, they will issue a call to other qualified Members who may be interested in joining the jury. The final selection is entirely at the discretion of the Chairperson(s). In the case of a dispute about jury appointments, the President will act as mediator and has the authority to make a final disposition if so required.

- g. A juror is not allowed to sit on more than one jury. A juror is ineligible to compete in any category for which they sit on a jury in that awards year.
- h. Jurors are asked to commit to: 1) Reading a significant amount of work throughout the year; 2) conferring regularly with the other jurors in their category; and 3) being as objective as possible when considering works.
- i. Each jury is required to submit ten (10) works to the Awards Committee Co-Chairs, which in their opinion, deserve to be listed on the Preliminary Ballot in their category. This must be done no later than January 17.z
- j. Chairs of each Jury: The Chairperson of each category jury is responsible for leading discussion of works under consideration by the jury, and for conducting votes on works under consideration and reporting the results of those votes to the members of the jury and to the Awards Committee Co-Chairs. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Co-Chairs to ensure, in consultation with the Verifier of Eligibility, that each work proposed for inclusion on the Preliminary Ballot is, in fact, eligible for the Award and correctly categorized.
- k. Duties of Jurors: It is the responsibility of each juror to remain in contact with the other members, whether by utilizing notes in Submittable, e-mail, or other means, and to participate in discussion and voting. It is the responsibility of each juror to read as many of the works under consideration as possible. Jurors who find themselves unable or unwilling to carry out these duties should resign, and in the event of such resignation the Awards Committee Co-Chairs may appoint replacements, or may ask the remaining members to carry on short-handed.
- l. Voting within the Jury: Members of each jury, including the Chairperson, will have an equal vote in all decisions. In any vote, an abstention shall be counted as a vote against any motion or proposal. In the case of tied votes, the vote is lost.
- m. Jury May Vote Externally: Members of the Bram Stoker Awards® juries may participate in the Recommended Reading List process, like any other HWA members, and are in fact strongly encouraged to do so. Members serving on the jury may vote on the Preliminary and Final Ballots.
- n. Works by Jury Members: No jury may add to the jury sub-ballot any work written, edited, or purchased for publication, in whole or in part, by any of its members. However, works by members of each Category Jury are eligible for recommendation and Award consideration in other Categories, through either the jury or the Recommended Reading List, assuming the work is eligible for that year.
- o. Each jury has the right to determine by majority vote if a work qualifies for their category as to genre as defined in Rule Ia: Each year the Horror Writers Association presents Awards for outstanding writing in horror, and dark fantasy, and dark literature.
- p. If the jury determines a work does not qualify as dark fantasy, dark literature, or horror, it has no impact on the eligibility of that work from recommendations of members submitted to the Recommended Reading List, and thus appearing on the Preliminary Ballot (for avoidance of confusion, this Rule explicitly supports the separate rights of the jury and Members to make their own assessment of whether a work qualifies as to genre). Such jury decisions are not subject to appeal.

- q. Dissolution of Jury: Once the Preliminary Ballot for an Award year has been sent to Active and Lifetime members, each jury for that year is dismissed.
- r. Jurors may not serve more than two (2) consecutive years on the same jury. A juror may serve a third year only if they are stepping up into the Jury Chair role for their third consecutive year of service.

VIII. *Preliminary Ballot*

- a. Composition of Preliminary Ballot: Following the close of the Recommendations process on January 15, the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee will prepare a Preliminary Ballot.
- b. This Ballot shall include at least five (5) or more works selected by the jury for each category along with the five (5) or fewer works in each category that have accumulated the most member recommendations. To appear on the ballot from the Recommendations process, a work must have received a minimum of eight (8) member recommendations. If there are less than five works with eight (8) member recommendations, only those with the requisite minimum of eight (8) recommendations will proceed to the ballot. For avoidance of confusion, the jury selections are entirely independent of the Recommendation process and do not need to have received any recommendations at all to proceed to the ballot. To comprise a minimum of ten (10) works total for each category on the Preliminary Ballot, any categories lacking sufficient recommendations to advance will be drawn from jury selections.
- c. Ties: In the event that there are two or more works with eight (8) or more member recommendations apiece tied for fifth place in a given category, then all works receiving that same number of recommendations will be included. In the event of a tie, more than 10 works may appear in a category.
- d. Preparation of the Preliminary Ballot: The Awards Committee, as well as the Awards Web Team, are collectively responsible for the preparation, production, and electronic mailing of the Preliminary Ballot.
- e. The Chairs of each Category Jury are responsible for delivering the details of the ten (10) works selected by each Category Jury to the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee no later than January 17.
- f. The Compiler of Recommendations will deliver the complete list of works qualified via member recommendations to the Co-Chairs of the Award Committee as soon as feasible after January 15.
- g. Form of the Preliminary Ballot: The list of qualified works will be arranged into categories (Novel, First Novel, and so on). Within each category the qualified works will be listed alphabetically by author/editor's surname, and no indication of the number of Recommendations, whether it came from a jury or the Recommended Reading List, nor any other form of ranking, will appear. The spaces to indicate votes will be included on the list of qualified works. The ballot must include the date by which it must be returned, and the manner in which it should be electronically delivered. The ballot must include clear instructions for how it is to be used and shall contain this note: *Members are not required to vote in each category and if they choose not to vote in one or more categories, the ballot is still valid for the votes cast in other categories. Members choosing to vote in a category may cast as few as one and as many as five (5) votes in*

that category. Each of the works they vote for will receive one point per vote when the votes are counted.

h. Mailing: An electronic link to the complete Preliminary Ballot will be sent to all Active and Lifetime members by February 1. The complete list of qualified works will be posted on the HWA website no later than when the ballot is released.

i. Release of Contents: The content of the Preliminary Ballot is not secret, but no official effort need be made to publicize that content. Works on the Preliminary Ballot are not “nominees,” nor have they been “nominated,” and efforts should be made to discourage any such mislabeling. Any writer making the claim that a work appearing on the Preliminary Ballot is “nominated” is subject to having their work disqualified from the ballot. Said disqualification is the sole province of the HWA Board of Trustees, whose decision is final and may not be appealed.

j. Voting: Only Active and Lifetime Members are permitted to vote on the Preliminary Ballot. To vote in any category, the member selects up to five (5) works in each category (Novel, First Novel, etc.). Members may choose not to vote in a category or to allocate one, two, three, four, or five votes in any category. Note: In previous years voter’s choices were “ranked,” but from the implementation of this Rule onward, each of up to five (5) votes in each category carries an equal weighting.

k. Members may vote for their own work.

l. A list of eligible voting members will be finalized as of January 31st and include only Active and Lifetime Members in good standing on that date. This will be the final list of voters on both the Preliminary and Final Ballots that year. For avoidance of confusion, any Active or Lifetime Member who joins, renews, or upgrades their membership status after the database is compiled on January 31st may not vote in that year’s Preliminary or Final Ballots.

m. Returned Ballots: Completed Preliminary Ballots will be returned electronically to the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee, or to other members of the Awards Committee designated by the Co-Chairs, by February 15.

n. The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee or their designee from among other members of the committee will verify that each ballot has been submitted by an Active or Lifetime member, disposing of any ballot that is not. This verification may be achieved electronically if the HWA Web Team provides an appropriate method and that method is approved by the President.

o. Tabulation of Votes: The results of the Preliminary Ballot will be tabulated as follows:

1. Each vote for a work counts as one point.
2. The top five (5) works with the highest point totals in each category will be placed on the Final Ballot.
3. In the event that two (2) or more works are tied for fifth place in a given category each will be placed on the Final Ballot in that category. The number of works in a category may exceed ten (10) in such an event.

On any ballot that is marked improperly or unclearly in a given category, the votes in that category will not be counted, but votes in other categories, if otherwise valid, will be counted.

- p. Records: The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee or their designee will keep safe all Preliminary Ballots until thirty days after the Awards are presented, at which time they may destroy said ballots, or dispose of them as directed by the President.
- q. Presentation on Demand: The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee or their designee will provide copies of all ballots to other members of the Committee or the President upon request.
- r. Secrecy: The Awards Committee will in all good faith take whatever measures are necessary to keep secret the results of the Preliminary ballot until the Final Ballot has been emailed to Active and Lifetime Members.

IX. Final Ballot

- a. Contents of Final Ballot: The Chairperson(s) of the Awards Committee and the Awards Web Team will oversee the preparation of the Final Ballot. Said Ballot will include the aforementioned preliminary winners in each category as determined in accordance with Rule VIII.O ("Tabulation of Votes").
- b. Form of the Final Ballot: The Final Ballot will list the finalists ("Bram Stoker Award® nominees") with a Ballot for each Category. Within each Category the finalists will be listed alphabetically by author's surname, with no indication of the number of recommendations or votes received, no indication which works were originally listed by the Bram Stoker jury (if any), no indication of which works were originally listed on the Recommended Reading List (if any), nor any other ranking.
- c. The Ballot must include the date by which it must be returned, and the process to be used. The Ballot must include clear instructions as to how it is to be used.
- d. Verification: The Awards Committee shall use the same database of voting members that was used for the Preliminary Ballot (see Rule VIII.L).
- e. Mailing: The Final Ballot will be sent only to Active and Lifetime Members. An electronic link to the Final Ballot must be emailed by the Awards Committee no later than February 28. The committee will make every effort to ensure the timely distribution and receipt of the Ballot.
- f. Contents Publicized: Once the Final Ballot has been issued, the Secretary of HWA, or such other person as the President designates, will prepare and issue a press release listing the finalists. The contents of the ballot will be reported in the HWA newsletter, and by any other means convenient to the organization, including but not limited to email bulletins and a listing on the Association's website and the Bram Stoker Awards® website.
- g. Notifying Finalists: The President will ensure that the authors/editors of those works on the Final Ballot are notified promptly in writing of their inclusion, and that all finalists are invited to attend the Awards ceremony. The HWA is not responsible for any costs of finalists attending the ceremony, including tickets to the Awards Banquet (if any).
- h. Voting: Active and Lifetime members will have up to thirty (30) days to read whatever works are on the Final Ballot that they have not already read. They may vote for only one work in any category. They need not vote in every category. Choices must be clearly marked. Finalists may vote for their own work.
- i. Receipt of Ballots: In order to be counted, Final Ballots must be received no later than March 15.

j. In years where the Bram Stoker Awards® Banquet is scheduled to be held on a date that precludes the use of the Timetable for Recommendations, jury listings, Preliminary Ballot, Final Ballot and Awards Manufacturing processes listed in these Rules; then and only then, the President may issue alternate Timetables for any or all steps in the process.

k. Tabulation of Votes: The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee and the Awards Web Team will tabulate the results and determine the winners in every category according to the following rules:

1. No person nominated on the Final Ballot for any Category Award may tabulate votes for any Category that year (even if that person is the Chairperson of the Awards Committee – in that case they should nominate a replacement from the Awards Committee or another Active Member agreed by the President).

2. The work with the greatest number of votes in each category will be declared the Award's recipient.

3. In the event that each of two works receives at least 33.34% of the vote in a category, both will be declared Award recipients in a tie; the exact numerical count will not be revealed, and both recipients will be listed as if they had in fact received precisely the same number of votes.

l. Informing Manufacturer: The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee or their designee from among other members of the Committee will present a list of the Award winners, complete with all necessary information, to the manufacturer of the Awards or other party responsible for the engraving of the trophies no later than April 10, in order that the Awards can be prepared in time for the public ceremony at which they will be presented.

m. Reporting Results Elsewhere: The Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee will inform the President as to the identities of the Award recipients no later than the day on which they inform the manufacturer of the Awards. Where a member of the Awards Committee is a nominee, the Co-Chairs shall not inform that person of the result of the ballot; and other members of the Committee and any other person who is aware of the ballot result should take care not to reveal the result to that nominee. The Co-Chairs will be prepared to provide copies of all ballots to Committee members (other than nominees) at their request, prior to the Awards ceremony and to the President *subsequent* to the awards ceremony up to a period of thirty days thereafter. At the end of said thirty-day period, the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee may destroy the Final Ballots, or otherwise dispose of them.

n. Secrecy: All members of the Awards Committee will strive to keep secret the results of the Final Ballot until the Awards are presented. Advance revelation of the winners' names or the names of the winning works in any category other than the Lifetime Achievement Award to anyone not on the Awards Committee and who has no legitimate need to know the results (this particularly includes Final Ballot nominees) will be considered grounds for expulsion from the Horror Writers Association.

o. Vote Counts: The exact vote counts are purely the concern of the Awards Committee, and need not be published or released in any form; however, should any question arise, the Awards Committee *may* release the counts to the Officers and Trustees of HWA. However, the Awards Committee cannot be *required* to release the information.

X. The Physical Awards

- a. Recipients: The Bram Stoker Awards® are presented to the *writers* of works winning the Final Ballot (as per the Rules in Section IX), with the following exceptions: The Bram Stoker Award® for Superior Achievement in an Anthology is presented to the editor whose name appears on the anthology's cover, or if no editor's name appears, then in accordance with these Rules. The Bram Stoker Award® for Superior Achievement in Non-Fiction may also be presented to an editor or publisher in certain circumstances.
- b. Trophy: All recipients, including those who are presented Lifetime Achievement Awards, will receive the same award. In the event a collaborative work is chosen, each collaborator will receive a separate trophy. Normally, this will be the traditional haunted- house sculpture, as designed for the HWA by Steven Kirk. Only the inscription on the affixed brass plate and the inevitable minute variations inherent in manufacture will differentiate one Award from another.
- c. Substitution: If the traditional sculpture becomes unavailable or impractical, another appropriate award may be substituted by unanimous vote of the elected Officers, the Awards Committee, and the Board of Trustees. This vote must be *unanimous*; abstentions will count as votes for retaining the traditional sculpture, and any such vote requires that the traditional sculpture be used.
- d. Recognition of Finalists: Every author of any work listed on the Final Ballot will receive a scroll, certificate, plaque, or other token indicating their status as a finalist. It is the responsibility of the Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee and the Secretary of HWA to ensure that these tokens are prepared and delivered.

XI. The Awards Ceremony

- a. Presentation: The Bram Stoker Awards® will be presented at a public ceremony, open to all members and their invited guests. This ceremony will, if feasible, be in conjunction with a formal Awards Banquet. The form and content of the Awards ceremony will be determined by the President or by HWA members working under the President's direction. Whether nonmembers other than invited guests will be admitted to the ceremony will be determined by the President. It is hereby recognized that any such Ceremony will be held in a venue which inevitably will have limited capacity. Tickets should be offered to all Members, and once the capacity of the venue is "sold out," no other tickets will be made available.
- b. Location: The Awards ceremony will be held at whatever time and place the President may deem appropriate, except as noted below. The President must choose the date and location and inform the membership of their choice no later than March 1; it is strongly recommended that the decision be made and announced much earlier. If the President fails to designate a time and place for the ceremony by March 2, the Board of Trustees may act by majority to designate a time and place for the ceremony.
- c. Limitations on Site Selection: In recognition of the fact that the Horror Writers Association is primarily a professional writers' organization, the President may not, without the consent of the HWA Board of Trustees, hold the Bram Stoker Awards® annual ceremony in conjunction with any convention or other event that can reasonably be considered either a fan or academic function other than StokerCon. The Awards ceremony must always occur at StokerCon except in the event that there is no StokerCon in a given year. The Board of Trustees may then vote to approve the

President's decision to hold the Awards ceremony in conjunction with another event or on a virtual platform, or may, if they choose, put the issue to a vote of the membership—either the Active and Lifetime membership or all of Active, Lifetime, Associate, Academic and Affiliate (but not Supporting), as the Board of Trustees sees fit. Furthermore, even with the consent of the Trustees or members, no President of HWA can compel their successor to hold the ceremony in conjunction with any convention or other event.

d. Site Considerations: In selecting a site for the Awards ceremony, the President is required to weigh the following considerations before making their decision:

1. Convenience of the membership: The location should be accessible to a large portion of the membership, and not excessively remote.
2. Appropriate to the event: The location should be held in connection or association with writing, publishing, horror, the occult or other matters of interest to HWA. This ceremony is an opportunity for HWA to display itself, and an attempt should be made to present itself as professionally and appropriately as possible.
3. Cost: The Awards ceremony should not cause undue financial hardship for HWA or for members who wish to attend.
4. Independence: The Awards ceremony is HWA's premiere annual showcase, and must remain under the organization's control at all times. Organization of a Banquet, including ticket sales may be allocated to an outside person(s) or organization *but* the President, Board of Trustees, or Membership must not allocate responsibility for the content of the Awards ceremony (in particular choosing the MC, Awards presenters, and any ancillary content) to any outside person(s) or organization. Should the Awards ceremony be held in conjunction with an outside event, such as the World Horror Convention, the Organizers of that event must sign a declaration in advance acknowledging that only the HWA may organize the content of the Awards ceremony and that they have no influence or rights to be involved in developing that content.

XII. Modification of these Rules:

- a. See clause X 2 of HWA's Bylaws as listed at the header of these Rules.