

The Ken McIntyre Award

The first issue of a "let's get this sorted out" fanzine, dated 15th August 1997, from:
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It's SMS's fault, really. He was presenting the Ken McIntyre award at an Eastercon — I think Speculation, in 1991, but I could be wrong — and spent several minutes criticising the trophy. The old trophy was indeed horrible; thoroughly inappropriate for an award for artwork. I ended up with a strong feeling that something needed to be done about it.

A few years later, I was in a position to do something, and talked to Rog Peyton, who had been running the award. He approved of the idea of a new trophy, so I got one designed and made by Sylvia Starshine. However, the award still hasn't been presented regularly, and I think that it's time to either drop it, or revise the way it's run to make it more likely to happen. This little fanzine is an attempt to present the history and the arguments: write me letters about the issue, and I'll print 'em, until we reach a consensus. If no one cares enough to write, I'll let it drop.

The History (as far as I know it)

The award, as the name says, is in honour of Ken McIntyre, a fan artist from a time before my entry to fandom (or indeed, most current fans' appearance). It is awarded annually, in theory, at the Eastercon, for a single piece of artwork appearing in a fanzine. Artists or editors have to enter their pieces, and both the original and an example of how it was reproduced have to be provided. Judging is by a jury, comprising, in theory:

- A Knight of St Fantasy
- A member of the BSFA committee
- A member of the Eastercon committee
- Rog Peyton
- Someone else, nominated by the group (in practice, by Rog). Usually the Eastercon's art-show organiser, but has been others (e.g., me).

The award has never been awarded regularly. The most reliable information comes from the engraving on it, which says that it was awarded in 1971, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1988 – 1992, 1994 and 1995. Fifteen awards in twenty-seven years is not hugely active.

The horrible old trophy, incidentally, was due to an accident. The plan had been to have a good trophy made by a fan artist, and a fine one was created in some kind of plastic. Unfortunately, it melted when it was lacquered, and a substitute had to be bought at the last minute.

The Problem

The award often doesn't get to happen. The obvious major cause of this is that it isn't publicised and entries aren't solicited; I think it has always been awarded when there were entries. The reason it isn't publicised, as far as I can see, is that it's unclear whose job it is. Eastercon committees have a lot to do; things that may or may not be their job, particularly when it's unclear how much of the responsibility is Rog's, are not attractive for them.

Do we need this award?

The idea of an award for fanart is OK. There is the fanartist Nova, which is for best artist, rather than best artwork. The idea of a memorial for Ken is good, but unfortunately it means little to most people these days; the award has to stand on its own concept these days, or die.

The Eastercon Route

To make the award continue, its administration needs to become part of something that happens naturally, rather than something that can fail to happen because everyone thinks it's someone else's job. The obvious part of the system to attach it to is the Eastercon art show: we can expect this to continue as an institution, and an award seems a reasonable thing to be included in it.

It will mean that the KenM is forever associated with the Doc Weir award for 'good guy of fandom', but that is bearable. Symmetry might suggest that there should be an Ethel Lindsay memorial award for a piece of fan writing, but I don't see any great pressure to create such an award. Novacon have claimed the Shaw Award for 'ultimate good guy of fandom' or thereabouts: it isn't going to be an annual award, but will be done when they want to honour someone.

The BSFA Award Route

An alternative would be for the KenM to become part of the BSFA awards. I don't think this is feasible; the BSFA awards are for professional categories of work, and tacking a fan award onto them is an obvious bodge that will come unglued.

Running the Ken McIntyre

I'd like to suggest a new set of rules for the award, and a set of guidelines for the administrator that are not rules, but suggestions to be followed at their discretion.

Rules

1. The Ken McIntyre Memorial Award is to be awarded for the best piece of artwork published in a generally available British fannish publication. This includes fanzines and convention publications; other forms of publication are eligible or not at the discretion of the award's jury. Non-British artists are eligible, for work published in Britain.
2. Artwork must be entered for the award by the artist and/or the publication where it appeared. If the artist does not wish to be entered, they have a right of veto.
3. The administrator of the award is responsible for:
 - Recovering the trophy from the previous winner, or whoever has it.
 - Arranging with the committee of the Eastercon for the award to be announced, with eligibility conditions, in their publications.
 - Arranging an administrator for the award for the following Eastercon.
 - Arranging with the committee of the Eastercon for space to be available for entries to be displayed to the members of the convention.
 - Selecting a jury to judge the award, and making sure they do so.
 - Communicating the results to the membership of the Eastercon.
 - Arranging for the trophy to be presented.
 - Arranging for the trophy to be engraved.
4. Artists whose work has been entered and editors of publications that published entered pieces are barred from serving on the jury.

Guidelines

1. The eligibility rules have purposely been left vague to allow for evolution in the forms in which artwork is published. The author of these guidelines does not consider that, for example, artwork published only on the Internet should be considered 'generally available' as of mid-1997, but he expects that this will be the case within a few years.
2. Artwork may be submitted as the original and the version that was published, where relevant. This is recommended for artwork published by means that risk substantial alteration (e.g., mimeography). For artwork created on computer, otherwise lacking a displayable 'original' form, or reproduced to the entire satisfaction of the artist in the publication, there is no requirement to display an 'original'.
3. The administrator selects their replacement; we will need a volunteer to start this process. Obviously, the administrator can most easily discharge their responsibilities if they are the art show organiser of the Eastercon. It is recommended that juries contain

an odd number of persons, and that they include as many as possible of the roles that formed the jury under the old rules:

- A Knight of St Fantony (Ask Ken Slater if he'll do it, or for help finding one)
- A member of the BSFA committee
- A member of the Eastercon committee
- Rog Peyton
- The administrator

The current trophy (the second one, made of black perspex) is designed so that the metal plate that bears the names of winners can easily be removed for engraving. It is suggested that the administrator recovers it after the presentation of the trophy, has it engraved (at their own expense, unless they can persuade the Eastercon to pay for it), and then sends it to the winner, who can take the rest of the trophy home in the meantime.

4. This rule was prompted by the occasion on which I was inveigled into acting as a juror in spite of a conflict of interest. It was a most invidious situation, and I don't want anyone else to be placed in a similar one.

Well?

Are these rules any good? How should they be altered? Shall we overhaul this award, or shall we accept it as it stands, or shall we call it dead?

Thanks

Most of the ideas in this fanzine were generated in conversations with Michael Abbott, Pam Wells and Alison Scott. We vaguely considered trying to introduce changes along these lines by *force majeure* at the 1997 Eastercon, but didn't get organised in time. Michael Abbott commented on drafts of this fanzine.

Mailing List

The initial mailing list for this fanzine is:

Rog Peyton (de facto administrator), Keith Freeman (ex-administrator), Tim Illingworth (nit-picker of rules), Maureen Kincaid Speller (BSFA Administrator) Michael Abbott (co-editor, Attitude), Pam Wells (co-editor, Attitude), Steve Davies (co-editor, Plokta and Chair, 1999 Eastercon), Alison Scott (co-editor, Plokta), Claire Brialey (co-editor, Banana Wings), Mark Plummer (co-editor, Banana Wings), Rob Hansen (Historian), Dave Langford (Wise Man), Greg Pickersgill (Fearless Critic), D West (Artistic Genius), Fran Dowd (Sofa, 1998 Eastercon), Pat McMurray (Art show organiser, 1998 Eastercon), Tom Abba (Art show organiser, 1999 Eastercon).

I'll happily send copies to anyone else whom any of the recipients consider should participate in this decision.