

Robert J. Sawyer Wins World's Top Juried Prize for Science Fiction



Robert J. Sawyer, 46, of Toronto, has just won the world's top juried award for science fiction: the **John W. Campbell Memorial Award** for Best Novel of the Year.

The award, which Sawyer won for his latest novel, *Mindscan*, was presented Friday night, July 7, 2006, at a banquet at the J. Wayne and Elsie M. Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction at the University of Kansas.

With this award win—his 38th for his fiction—Robert J. Sawyer now joins the most-select club in all of science fiction: the seven writers who have won all three of the field's top awards for best novel of the year:

- the World Science Fiction Society's **Hugo Award**, which he won in 2003 for his novel *Hominids*;
- the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America's **Nebula Award**, which he won in 1996 for his novel *The Terminal Experiment*;
- and the **John W. Campbell Memorial Award**, which he has now won for *Mindscan*.

(The full list of winners of all three awards: David Brin, Arthur C. Clarke, Joe Haldeman, Frederik Pohl, Kim Stanley Robinson, Robert J. Sawyer, and Connie Willis; Sawyer is the only Canadian to win all three.)

The John W. Campbell Memorial Award was created to honor the late editor of *Astounding Science Fiction* magazine (renamed *Analog Science Fiction and Fact* in 1960). Campbell, who edited the magazine from 1937 until his death in 1971, is often called the father of modern science fiction. Writers Harry Harrison and Brian W. Aldiss established the award in 1973 as a way of continuing Campbell's efforts to encourage writers to produce their best possible work.

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[As a reflection of Campbell's stature, there's also another award named for him: the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer, which is voted on by readers and sponsored by the publisher of Campbell's magazine *Analog*; that award shouldn't be confused with the juried John W. Campbell Memorial Award for Best Novel of the Year.]

The 12 finalists for the John W. Campbell Memorial Award this year were:

- *Transcendent* by Stephen Baxter (published by Gollancz)
- *The Meq* by Steve Cash (Del Rey)
- *Child Of Earth* by David Gerrold (BenBella)
- *Mind's Eye* by Paul J. McAuley (Simon & Schuster UK)
- *Seeker* by Jack McDevitt (Ace)
- *Learning The World* by Ken MacLeod (Tor)
- *The Summer Isles* by Ian R. MacLeod (Aio)
- *Counting Heads* by David Marusek (Tor)
- *Mindscan* by Robert J. Sawyer (Tor)
- *Accelerando* by Charles Stross (Ace)
- *The World Before* by Karen Traviss (Eos)
- *Spin* by Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)

Baxter, McAuley, Traviss, and Ian MacLeod are British; Cash, Gerrold, McDevitt, and Marusek are Americans; Ken MacLeod and Stross are Scottish; and Wilson and Sawyer are Canadians. This was Sawyer's third Campbell nomination. He'd previously been nominated in 2001 for his *Calculating God*, and in 2003 for his Hugo-winning *Hominids*.

Previous winners of the John W. Campbell Memorial Award include such SF classics as *Rendezvous with Rama* by Arthur C. Clarke, *Gateway* by Frederik Pohl, *The Postman* by David Brin, and *The Time Ships* by Stephen Baxter.

The jury consisted of eight major writers, editors, and scholars from the U.S. and Britain:

- Nebula-winning physicist **Gregory Benford**, author of the classic SF novel *Timescape*
- Historian **Paul A. Carter**, author of *The Creation of Tomorrow: Fifty Years of Magazine Science Fiction*
- Hugo-winning author and scholar **James Gunn**, past president of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America

- **Elizabeth Anne Hull**, past president of the Science Fiction Research Association
- **Christopher McKitterick**, associate director of the Center for the Study of Science Fiction
- Hugo-winning scholar **Farah Mendlesohn**, editor of *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction*
- Nebula-winning author and editor **Pamela Sargent**, editor of the *Women of Wonder* anthologies
- **T.A. Shippey**, editor of *The Oxford Book of Science Fiction Stories*

Mindscan is Sawyer's sixteenth novel. It was published in hardcover in April 2005 by Tor Books, New York, and was a selection of the Science Fiction Book Club; the paperback came out in January 2006. Film rights have been optioned by Toronto producer Scott Calbeck.

The novel tells the story of Jacob Sullivan, a young man who copies his consciousness into an artificial body, since he believes his biological body is about to die due to a congenital illness. But shortly after this, a cure is found for his condition, and the biological version must battle the copy for the right to be considered the real Jake Sullivan.

Entertainment Weekly says *Mindscan* "lucidly explores fascinating philosophical conundrums," and *Publishers Weekly* declares: "This tightly plotted novel offers plenty of philosophical speculation on the ethics of bio-technology and the nature of consciousness."

SF Site calls *Mindscan* "a brilliant and innovative novel, with complex and highly entertaining courtroom drama. In Sawyer's capable grasp the story positively sings with humor, insight, and depth." And *Starlog* says *Mindscan* is written "with intelligence and far-reaching vision worthy of Isaac Asimov."

Sawyer's next novel, *Rollback*, will be published by Tor in April 2007, following full-text serialization beginning in the October 2006 issue of *Analog Science Fiction and Fact*—the magazine John W. Campbell himself edited for so many years.

INTERVIEWS with Robert J. Sawyer: sawyer@sfwriter.com

This press release, book cover, and author photo: sfwriter.com/campbell.htm