



## **QWC RESOURCE SHEET # 14**

### **Writing Speculative Fiction**

#### **What is Speculative Fiction?**

Speculative fiction (or 'spec-fic') is an umbrella term coined to cover genres such as horror, fantasy (historical, dark, epic, quest, urban, contemporary), science fiction (cyberpunk, hard SF, space opera) or mixed sci-fi/fantasy such as steampunk. (For further definitions, see <http://www.sfsite.com/columns/amy26.htm>.)

#### **Where can I find more information about writing Speculative Fiction?**

- ❖ Vision Writers is a forum for writers of spec-fic to meet, critique and write <http://www.visionwriters.org/>.
- ❖ Fantastic Queensland is an organisation dedicated to supporting Australian speculative fiction writers <http://www.fantasticqueensland.com/>.
- ❖ The Aurealis Awards were established to recognise the achievements of Australian science fiction, fantasy and horror writers <http://www.aurealisawards.com/>.
- ❖ Australian Horror Writers Association (AHWA) was formed to help support and develop the dark fiction writing community <http://www.australianhorror.com/>.
- ❖ Clarion South is an intensive writing and development program for writers of spec-fic. It runs every two years in Brisbane, Australia and the next workshop will be held January – February of 2011 <http://www.clarionsouth.org/>.
- ❖ The Australian Science Fiction Foundation <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~asff/>.

#### **Are there any interesting sites for writers of Speculative Fiction?**

You can Google your favourite author – most likely they will either have a personal site or their publisher may run a site devoted to their work. Some publishers with spec-fic imprints have their own websites devoted to the authors published in these imprints, like Tor.com <http://www.tor.com/>, Voyager Online



<http://www.voyageronline.com.au/default.cfm>, and Orbit <http://www.orbitbooks.net/>, and Orion <http://www.orionbooks.co.uk/> both are imprints of Hachette).

There are also general sites like:

- ❖ SF Signal <http://sfsignal.com/index.html>
- ❖ Locus Online <http://www.locusmag.com/>
- ❖ ASif <http://www.asif.dreamhosters.com/>
- ❖ HorrorScope <http://ozhorrorscope.blogspot.com/>
- ❖ Specusphere <http://www.specusphere.com/joomla/index.php>
- ❖ Suvudu <http://www.suvudu.com/>

Writer Nancy Kress regularly blogs about various aspects of writing at <http://nancykress.blogspot.com/>. Author Richard Harland has set up a site comprising 145 free pages of information called *Richard Harland's Writing Tips* at <http://www.writingtips.com.au/>.

There are also conventions you can attend to interact with other fans, listen to your favourite writers talking on various panels and generally learn about the genre first-hand:

- ❖ NatCon is the Australian National SF Convention, which is held annually in a different city each year. In 2010, however, there will be no NatCon as Australia will host WorldCon in Melbourne (which is held all over the world in a different location each year) <http://www.aussiecon4.org.au/index.php?pageNum=0&pageID=hom>.
- ❖ Continuum 5 is an annual Melbourne event <http://www.continuum.org.au/>.
- ❖ Conflux is the annual Canberra con <http://www.conflux.org.au/>.
- ❖ SwanCon is the annual speculative fiction convention and writers festival in WA <http://2010.swancon.com.au/>.

### **Where can I find short story markets or a publisher for Speculative Fiction?**

For short story markets, two excellent sites are Ralan [www.ralan.com](http://www.ralan.com) and Duotrope [www.duotrope.com](http://www.duotrope.com). *The Australian Writer's Marketplace* also lists short fiction markets for spec-fic.



To find a book publisher, QWC has a comprehensive resource sheet about finding and pitching to publishers - go to [www.qwc.asn.au](http://www.qwc.asn.au) and download **Resource Sheet # 2 – Pitching to Publishers**. *The Australian Writer's Marketplace* (AWM) lists publishers as well as competitions and awards, magazines, newspapers, literary agents, manuscript appraisers, editors, literary events, writing courses, etc. AWM is available from QWC for \$43.95 Members/\$49.95 Non-members; or an online subscription can be purchased at [www.awmonline.com.au](http://www.awmonline.com.au). It can also be accessed at most libraries.

**Where can I find an Agent to represent me?**

QWC has a comprehensive resource sheet about finding an agent – go to [www.qwc.asn.au](http://www.qwc.asn.au) and download **Resource Sheet # 6 – Literary Agents**.