

## 2017 Stiletto Contest Rules and Guidelines

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The Stiletto Contest celebrates and recognizes excellence in the contemporary romance genre for published and unpublished novels. The Contemporary Romance Writers Chapter focuses on the contemporary romance genre and its inception of the Stiletto Contest upholds the chapter goal of bringing awareness to the best work by authors and writers in contemporary romance.

#### **Published Entries & Submissions:**

1. Eligibility: All traditional, small press, e-published, and self-published novels released in 2016 are eligible.
  - a. Predatory press entries are not permitted and will be disqualified without a refund.
  - b. Any re-issue or re-release is *not* eligible for this contest.
  - c. Any previous unpublished manuscript winner of the Stiletto Contest is *not* eligible.
  - d. No anthologies will be accepted.
2. All entries must have a 2016 copyright date, released between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2016.
3. All novels must have a 40,000-word count minimum.
4. Entries may be submitted beginning March 3, 2017. Deadline for entries is 11:59 p.m., April 7, 2017.
5. Entries must be submitted in both ebook formats—mobi *and* ePub files.
6. Entries submitted must use the novel's title as the mobi and ePub file name.
7. Paperback entries may be submitted. A \$10 fee per entry will be added if choosing to enter paperback copies. All paperback copies must be received by April 7, 2017. Please include the novel's entry receipt, along with 3 signed copies and send to:  
Contemporary Romance Writers  
c/o Stiletto Contest  
1921 Shaw Street  
North Huntingdon, PA 15642
8. Entries may be submitted to only one primary category.
9. In addition to the primary category, entries may also be submitted for Best First Book, if qualified.
  - a. Best First Book qualification: The first novel and/or novella by an author, in any format, in any publishing press, released for royalty income by an author in the 2016 calendar year.
10. There is no limitation on the number of submissions per author.
11. Each category has a 10-entry minimum requirement. All entries will be given the option to choose a second category in case the first option does not reach the minimum requirement.
12. Membership in RWA or Contemporary Romance Writers is not required.

#### **Unpublished Entries:**

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1. Writer eligibility: Writers who have not published any work, in any genre, in whole or as part of an anthology, in the past five years, through April 7, 2017, are eligible to submit their unpublished manuscript.
  - a. Ineligible: Any work available for purchase online or in print at any time is considered published and is ineligible, even if revised in whole or in part, renamed, and even if removed from POD or online purchase prior to the last five years.
  - b. Any unpublished entry found to have broken any of the unpublished manuscript rules will be automatically disqualified from the contest without a refund.
  - c. No anthologies will be accepted.
2. All entries must have a 40,000-word count minimum.
3. Submissions must include the first 7,000 words or first three chapters of the manuscript.
4. A 500 word synopsis must be submitted at the end of each entry. This is *not* included in the word count. The synopsis will *not* be judged as part of the entry.
5. Manuscript formatting: Times Roman or 12 pt, or similar legible font, double spaced with 1-inch margins.
6. The title of the manuscript must be at the top of each page in header format, along with the category entered.
7. Do ***NOT*** include your name or any other writer identifying marks on the manuscript. Be sure to remove all identifying file properties. Any manuscripts submitted with their name included will be disqualified without a refund.
8. The manuscript must be sent as a document file, submitted under the name of the manuscript title.
9. There is no limitation on the number of submissions per writer.
10. Each category has a 10-entry minimum requirement. All entries will be given the option to choose a second category in case the first option does not reach the minimum requirement.
11. Entries may be submitted beginning March 3, 2017. Deadline for entries is 11:59 p.m., April 7, 2017.
12. All finalists in the unpublished category cannot be published in any format before the 2017 Stiletto Contest winners are announced on Friday, July 28, 2017. Failure to follow this rule will result in entry disqualification without a refund.
13. If an editor or agent requests a full manuscript from a finalist, the requesting editor and agent's publishing procedures/requirements are to be followed as priority.
14. Membership in RWA or Contemporary Romance Writers is not required.

### **Entry Payments:**

1. All entries and payments are non-refundable.
2. All payments must be made through PayPal.
3. Cost for published and unpublished entries: Contemporary Romance Writers members \$15, non-members \$25. Paperback entry fee: Contemporary Romance Writers members \$25, non-members \$35.

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4. Payment must be made before submitting an entry. Entries without a payment or completed submission form will not be judged and no refund will be issued.
5. If the published submission entered in a primary category is also the first published work by the author, it also qualifies for entry in the “Best New Book” category. There is a \$5 fee in addition to the primary entry fee to enter this category.

### **Judging:**

1. All published and non-published first round entries are judged by RWA General, PRO and PAN members. No judges outside of RWA are permitted.
2. First round judges are given a 1-5 score sheet and are encouraged to use decimal points to help in tie-breakers. Any judge that enters a score under 4 is required to give constructive feedback as to the reason for that score.
3. First round score sheets will be returned to the entrants.
4. Final judges are industry editors and agents.
5. The judges’ decisions are final.

### **Time Line for Stiletto contest activity:**

6. Submissions Open: Friday, 3-3-2017
7. Submissions Close: Friday, 4-7-2017
8. 1st round Judging Opens: Friday, 4-21-2017
9. 1<sup>st</sup> round Judging Closes: Sunday, 5-21-2017
10. Final Judging Opens: Friday, 6-2-2017
11. Final Judging Closes: 6-30-2017

### **Winners:**

1. Finalists for published and unpublished will be notified by May 28, 2017.
2. Winners will be announced the RWA17 National Conference, on Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup> at the Contemporary Romance Writers Stiletto Party.
3. First place winners will receive an award or plaque and certificate and announcement in RWR. Second and third place winners will receive a certificate and opportunity to take one Contemporary Romance Writers workshop of choice for free.
4. All finalists will receive free entrance into the 2017 Stiletto Party held at the RWA national conference.