

2025 Cat Writers' Association Communications Contest

*For work published or produced during the
contest year defined as
January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024*



Muse Categories: Rules and Descriptions

Please read and abide by these rules. Any entries that do not comply with the contest rules will be disqualified and the entry fees for them forfeited.

- Entrants must be the authors or creators (in the case of art) of the entered work. An editor may not be listed as an entrant in any category. An entry may be submitted by someone other than the author or creator, as long as the author or creator is listed as the entrant.
- AI-generated content is ineligible for entry into the contest. [View our complete policy on AI here.](#)
- Entries must contain the stated percentage of cat-specific content listed in the categories below. Applicability to cats IS NOT sufficient.
- All Entries must be newly published or broadcast (or, for Fine Arts, completed) between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, and NOT previously published in any medium - the one exception to this is Audiobooks, which may have been published in print, as the award goes to the voiceover artist.
- No entry limits exist in the regular categories.
- Verification of an entry's publication date must be included with the entry (except in cases where the date is provided within the body of the entry).
- All entry materials in the regular categories must be in a digital format.
- Entry fees for Muse categories are:
 - \$30 per entry for non-members of the CWA
 - \$20 per entry for CWA members in good standing (renewed by February 28, 2025)
 - \$10 per entry for Professional CWA members who agree to serve as contest judges (you will only be assigned to judge categories you have not entered)
- You will receive an email confirmation of each entry form you complete. Entries are not completed until payment is made: you must keep a tally of the number of entries you are submitting for your payment. Only one payment platform is being used this year; you can pay by card via Stripe (you do not need a Stripe account to do this).
- Please note that the entry period will not be extended past **midnight on May 4, 2025** under any circumstances.
- If you have questions not answered by this material, please email contest@catwriters.com.

[View the Special Award descriptions here.](#)



The Cat Writers' Association's A.I. Policy for the Annual Communications Contest

Work written or generated by computer software and/or artificial intelligence is ineligible for entry in the CWA's communications contest. Only human-created work is eligible.

Acceptable uses of AI include:

- Brainstorming ideas for stories or artwork
- Refining story ideas
- Finding correct information for citations of quotes
- Finding sources to be interviewed for a story
- Spellchecking or editing
- Assistive software for those with vision, hearing, or mobility impairment

If an AI assistant (e.g., ChatGPT, Perplexity AI, Jasper AI, Quillbot, Elicit, Ryter, etc.) was used to generate ideas or gather information for the entry, the participant must include that information in their reference list. In the art and photography categories, no generative AI content will be eligible to win an award.

We thank you in advance for abiding by this policy.

Here are the categories of Muse awards available for 2025. Ctrl + click on any of the links to go directly to that category.

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A. Written Article

Entries in written articles may be found in newspapers, blogs, websites, magazines, and newsletters, whether traditional print or digital media. Entries must be at least 80% cat-specific. Pieces can range from lighthearted (even containing fictionalized cats) to educational and informative. If the reader is to be educationally informed, the information must be fact-checked and accurate. Appropriate quotations and citations from credible sources must support research and factual information the writer found elsewhere. Photos and graphics must be relevant, enhance the piece, and be properly credited. A word count is required for each written article entry.

“Word count” includes unique content and content integral to the comprehension and cohesiveness of the entry. Unique content EXCLUDES titles/headings, sub-headings, photo captions and descriptions, author biographies, sources, text boxes, and other elements that summarize or restate the contents of the entry. Text in graphics or pictures is excluded in word count, except where the comprehension and cohesiveness of the entry are affected by such exclusion.

For each of these general topics, MUSE Medallion(s) may be awarded for the highest average score in each length category:

1. Best long-form piece (1201+ words)
2. Best short-form piece (1200 words or less)

A.1 Written Article: Health

This category includes pieces written to educate and inform the reader about clear, up-to-date health and wellness information useful to cat owners/cat caregivers. Entries in this category may address but are not limited to cat everyday wellness/preventive health care, breed-specific health issues, diet, nutrition, exercise, and spay/neuter. Topics may also include the understanding and specific compassionate care required for special-needs cats, kittens (kittens covering approximately birth through 12 weeks), and aging and senior cats.

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A.2 Written Article: General Cat Care and Wellbeing

This category includes pieces written to educate and inform the reader about best practices in caring for cats that will be useful to cat owners/caregivers. Entries in this category aim to maximize cats' physical, psychological, and emotional health and well-being by addressing topics such as grooming, feeding, handling, litter box tips, carrier tips, the need for routine veterinary exams, environmental enrichment (including educating readers on optimizing the environment and relationships we share with our cats), care specific to pedigreed felines, etc.

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A.3 Written Article: Feline Behavior/Training

This category includes pieces written to educate and inform the reader on how to interpret and understand feline behavior and/or use training techniques. Topics include but are not limited to cat training and proactive behavior modification (training topics are also not limited and could include topics such as therapy cat training, breed traits, cat training for emotional and physical enrichment, such as clicker training to learn tricks for treats, leash training for exercise, as well as behavior training to discourage challenging habits such as jumping on counters or litter box issues), understanding the basics of feline behavior, including evolutionary perspectives that help illuminate why cats do what they do, understanding and addressing "challenging" behaviors; etc.

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A.4 Written Article: Feline-Human Bond Stories

This category includes pieces that are written to examine and celebrate stories illustrating the joys and challenges of sharing our lives with cats, and stories that will help cat owners better understand how cats relate to us and how we can share our lives with them in the most satisfying ways. These true stories must include an emotional tie between the human and the cat. Topics include but are not limited to personal-perspective pieces exploring the human-cat relationship, featuring individual cats and their people and how they enhance each other's lives; profiles of individual cats and their owners and their lives together; memoirs of life with a particular cat or cat family; or stories dealing with the heart-breaking loss of one's cat.

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A.5 Written Article: Feline Veterinary Medicine & Research

This category aims to inform and educate readers with up-to-date, accurate information about the current status of research in feline veterinary medicine, with a practical perspective on how cat owners and caregivers – from home care, to rescue shelters, veterinary practices, and more can use the information to better care for cats and improve their overall quality of life. These pieces will often include direct input (as interview quotes or quotes from published research papers) from active researchers to support the information provided. Topics include (but are not limited to):

- cat health issues from the veterinary medicine and research perspective
- profiles of current research into a particular feline health issue or particular feline breed
- revolutionary new improvements on medicines or practical techniques available to improve a cat's health and wellbeing
- new cures or improvements to existing medicines and practices for cat-related illnesses, diseases, ailments, etc.

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A.6 Written Article: Entertainment

This category includes pieces that are written to entertain the reader. Entertainment diverts people's attention from their demanding lives and engages, amuses, delights, or compels them in their leisure time.

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- An amusing look at cats in our lives and our relationship with them
- Profiles of the lives and doings of a particular cat or cat family
- Enjoyable looks at cats in the larger society and culture
- Interesting perspectives on people who choose to share their lives with cats
- Cat characters, fictional or nonfictional.

Pieces may be entertaining, enjoyable, lighthearted, humorous, or a combination.

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A.7 Written Article: Feline Rescue & Advocacy

This category focuses on educating, informing, and inspiring the audience on topics of cat rescue and advocacy, such as issues of homeless, stray, feral/community cats and kittens; wild cats; and big/jungle cats. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Hoarding and kitten mills
- Early spay/neuter
- Kitten season
- Adoption of senior, black, and special needs cats
- Getting cats into forever homes
- Advocating for adoption
- The issues of feral/community cats
- TNR

- Surrendered pedigreed cats
- Profiles of individual rescuers/shelters/shelter workers
- Successfully managed colonies
- Community cat organizations

Advocacy also includes animal welfare and animal rights topics.

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A.8 Written Article: Feline Product Review

This category features pieces that assess products invented, created, and marketed for cats and cat owners and products that enhance and enrich the human-feline environment. The piece must draw attention to the product and give cat lovers impartial insight beyond commercial advertising regarding its value for both the cat and the cat owner. The purpose of a review is to inform, evaluate, and share personal experiences about a product. Both sponsored and non-sponsored reviews are eligible to enter this category.

Sponsored reviews: if the writer received either free product, paid compensation, or both in exchange for the review, per FTC guidelines, the writer must clearly state at the time of publishing that the post was sponsored. Per FTC guidelines, a disclosure statement must appear at the beginning of a review (or at least before mentioning a product or providing a link to a product). Judging criteria require entrants to follow FTC guidelines, or an entry will be marked down accordingly.

Un-sponsored: If the writer purchased the product themselves and received no compensation from a brand or brand representative, the writer must clearly state that the post was not sponsored at the time of publishing.

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A.9 Written Article: General

This category is reserved for pieces that do not fit into a more specific category (see Written Article Categories A.1 – A.8 for reference), including pieces about our domestic cats' wild relatives (when not relevant to A.7 Feline Rescue & Advocacy); lifestyles of people and their cats [including therapy cats, adventure cats, pedigreed cats and cat shows, and cat models]; cat communication; craft-related (photography, writing, etc.); cats in society, culture, art, history, mythology, and religion; etc. Pieces may be editorial in nature, serious, lighthearted, informative, educational, fictional, nonfictional, and more.

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Poetry

image: Thought Catalog on Pexels

B. Poetry

This category recognizes the best entry that attempts to stir a reader's imagination or emotions by carefully choosing and arranging language for its meaning, sound, and rhythm. The subject of an entered poem or book of poems must be (a) cat(s).

Poetry is usually presented in one of three forms: narrative, dramatic, or lyrical. Types of poetry may include Haiku, Free Verse, Cinquains, Epic, Ballad, Acrostic, Sonnet, and more, in book or individual form.

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Short Stories, Novelettes, Novellas

Image: Muhammad Taha Ibrahim of Planet E Eleven E

C. Short Stories, Novelettes, and Novellas (stories up to 40,000 words)

At least two-thirds of the content of these stories must be cat-specific. They may be submitted as published on their own or as individual entries from an anthology, oeuvre, collection, or periodical. They may also be featured online and be available in print or digital form (eBooks). Stories that portray cats in a negative, inhumane, or irresponsible manner will not qualify.

C.1 Novella or Novelette - *NEW CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category focuses on works of fiction with a word count from 7,500 to 40,000 that showcase the creativity, voice, and skill of a writer in a variety of topics and genres and conserves characters and scenes while engrossing the reader within the plot. It is not required that a cat be the main character, but a cat(s) must be integral to the plot and story, rather than incidental characters or walk-ons.

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C.2 Short Story or Flash Fiction - *UPDATED CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category focuses on fiction or nonfiction stories (under 7,500 words) published in anthologies or oeuvres that showcase the creativity, voice, and skill of a writer in a variety of topics and genres and conserves characters and scenes while engrossing the reader within the plot. A cat or cats need not be the main focus of the story, but must be integral to the plot, rather than an incidental character or walk-on.

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D. Audio and Broadcast

Radio programs, podcasts, audiotapes/narrations, audiobooks, and other audio recordings that are at least 80% cat-specific. The content may be anything related to felines – fictional, nonfictional cats and characters, domestic cats, stray cats, rescue cats, feral/outdoor community cats, wild cats, big/jungle cats, and the like. Entries for this category must be submitted in their original, audio form. Written transcripts are NOT acceptable. Actual audio recordings or links to actual recordings must be submitted (a transcript of the recording is not sufficient). Entries must be submitted in the name of the program host; guests are not eligible to win.

D.1 Podcast or Audio Broadcast - **UPDATED CATEGORY FOR 2025!**

This category recognizes the best radio program (broadcast or digital) or podcast with at least 80% cat content that aired in 2024. The content may be anything related to felines – fictional, nonfictional cats and characters, domestic cats, stray cats, rescue cats, feral/outdoor community cats, wild cats, big/jungle cats, and the like. Entries for this category must be submitted in their original, audio form. Written transcripts are NOT acceptable. Actual audio recordings or links to actual recordings must be submitted (a transcript of the recording is not sufficient). Entries must be submitted in the name of the program host; guests are not eligible to win.

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D.2 Audiobook - *NEW CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category recognizes the **voiceover** work on the best audiobook released in 2024 with at least 80% cat content. The content may be anything related to felines – fictional, nonfictional cats and characters, domestic cats, stray cats, rescue cats, feral/outdoor community cats, wild cats, big/jungle cats, etc. The audiobook may also target an audience of any age, from babies through adults and belong to any literary genre. Entries for this category must be submitted in their original, audio form. Written transcripts are NOT acceptable. Actual audio recordings or links to actual recordings must be submitted (a transcript of the recording is not sufficient). These entries must be submitted in the name of the voiceover (VO) artist narrating the audiobook. (In situations with multiple VO artists, the narrator or lead artist on the book would be the one recognized with the award.)

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Periodical or National Circulation Publication

image: Guð ísa of acruilla on Pexels

E. Periodical or National Circulation Publication

Periodicals and National Circulation Publications appeal to specific readers by matching their content with an intended target audience's special interest. Publications may be print or digital. An online publication functions like a typical print periodical, i.e., posts/articles from numerous authors, a few regular columns, feature segments, photos, feature stories, ads, etc.

The publication must be professionally designed and formatted; attractive in layout; have a compelling cover page; and depending on genre, be entertaining, engaging, informative, educational, or a combination thereof. There must be obvious evidence that the staff of the publication relates to the topic and shares their readers' special interest(s). Special-interest cat publications are often subscription based or found in retail outlets. These publications give readers information they can't find elsewhere. They have a clear editorial purpose for their existence and not simply be a vehicle for advertising or listings. Some may have a singular focus, such as kittens or cat breeds, or others might have a variety of topics pertaining to cats. National publications are published on a regular basis – whether monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.

Periodical or National Circulation Publications must have cat specific content of 80% or more. **Special note:** blogs and websites do not qualify for this category. [See separate categories for those.](#)

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Books

Image: Element5 Digital on Pexels

F. Books

Books' content must be at least two-thirds specific to cats (cats being defined as anything related to cats, which can include nonfictional cats and cat characters, domestic cats, pedigree cats, stray cats, rescue cats, feral/outdoor community cats, wild cats, and big/jungle cats). Books that portray cats in a negative, inhumane, or irresponsible manner will not qualify.

Please note that anthologies are not eligible for entry unless the entire book was written by the entrant. An editor of an anthology may not enter an anthology under their own name. Only the individual authors of the stories may enter the stories they wrote.

Digital versions of the submitted book(s) are required. No paper entries are permitted. Options are:

1. A pdf file of the entire book; OR
2. Some means of enabling judges to read the digital book for free, such as an Amazon.com gift card or a coupon code. FOUR (4) digital copies (in the form of a coupon code or Amazon gift card for the price of the book) of these materials must be provided if one chooses to provide digital copies.

F.1 Book: Fiction – Mystery

A mystery must have a realistic but suspenseful plot with a lot of twists, a shocking crime, foreshadowing evidence, false leads, a crime solver, aka the protagonist or

detective, an unexpected villain, criminal, or culprit, and a last-minute resolution to the plot. Felines must be integral to the plot and story, rather than incidental characters or walk-ons.

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F.2 Book: Fiction – General

This category includes fictional books about cats or cat characters that don't fit into the mystery category. They might be a sci-fi/fantasy, romance novel, adventure story, or fictionalized memoir, just to name a few possibilities. Felines must be integral to the plot and story, rather than incidental characters or walk-ons.

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F.3 Book: Comic, Manga, or Graphic Novel - *NEW CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category recognizes the best cat-themed comic book, manga, or graphic novel, whether fiction or nonfiction, written for any age audience (juvenile, young adult, or adult). The story could fall into any literary genre: mystery, humor, history, horror, manga, nature, romance, sci-fi, or general fiction or nonfiction, but cats must be integral to the plot or theme of the book, not merely incidental characters, and must be portrayed in a positive manner – i.e., not harmed or depicted as villains.

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F.4 Book: Nonfiction – Health, Behavior, Wellness

This category features books that appeal to the general cat-owning/cat caregiving population and offer general care, health, or behavior information specific to cats. These books may be reference books, how-to, or resources read front to back on basic principles of cat care. These nonfiction books must be informational, fact-based, and

well structured (table of contents, index, references, and perhaps an appendix) to ensure readers may find information quickly. Nonfiction books can range from lighthearted and humorous to serious, straightforward, and technical to educate/inform the reader. They may be written in the “voice” of a cat.

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F.5 Book: Nonfiction - General

This category features books and other bound material that appeal to the general cat-owning/cat caregiving population and do not cover general care, health, or behavior. These bound materials may be biographies, autobiographies, profiles of individuals or cats, how-to, calendars, gift books, coffee table books, or other nonfiction books. If books are meant to be informational in nature, content must be referenced and fact-based. If books are meant to entice a reader to “pick up” and flip through the material, the work must have significant visual appeal that draws the reader to the topic (a comprehensive, coherent package of any combination of art, illustrations, graphic design drawings, paintings, photos, and text in some combination). Nonfiction – Other books may be written in the “voice” of a cat. Nonfiction books can range from lighthearted and humorous to serious and straightforward to educate/inform the reader.

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F.6 Book: Children’s Picture Book - *UPDATED CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category recognizes the best picture book about cats written for the JUVENILE FICTION or JUVENILE NONFICTION categories, targeting readers from ages 0 through 11. Cats should be central to the plot or theme of the book, and should be portrayed in a positive and responsible manner. (Comic books, manga, and graphic novels are not included in this category; they now have their own separate one [here](#).)

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F.7 Book: Juvenile or Young Adult: Text-Focused - *UPDATED CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category recognizes the best written word-focused book with a feline theme written for the Juvenile (ages 0-11) or Young Adult (ages 12-17) reader. Both fiction and nonfiction books are eligible. Cats must be integral to the plot of the book, and not mere incidental characters, and must be portrayed in a positive and responsible manner. These books may contain some illustrations, photographs, or cartoons to support the narrative, but the majority of the book's content will be text.

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G. Video, Film or Television Production – *UPDATED CATEGORIES FOR 2025!*

Productions may be entertaining, enjoyable, informational, or a combination. They may be presented in scripted, creative, educational, documentary, live, or other styles, as appropriate. Pieces can range from lighthearted (even using fictionalized cats), to educational and informative. Entries must focus on felines (content must be at least 80% cat-specific). In all instances, if the reader is to be educationally informed, the information must be fact-checked and accurate. Appropriate quotations and citations from credible sources must support research and factual information the entrant found elsewhere. Photos and graphics must be relevant, enhance the piece and be specific to the topic. **NEW FOR 2025:** Films are included in this category, whether short films or feature-length, documentaries or entertainment.

Entrants must provide “run time” (in minutes) for each Produced video entry. Webinars are included in the live video category.

Entries for these categories must be submitted in their original audio/visual form. Written transcripts of radio or television programs or videos are NOT acceptable. Actual audio or video recordings or links to actual recordings must be submitted. Entries must be submitted in the name of the program host; guests are not eligible to win.

For the first two of these video categories, one MUSE award may be awarded for each of the following three sub-categories:

1. Best mini or short production (under 40 minutes)
2. Best feature-length production (over 40 minutes)
3. Best series (multiple episodes of 22-57 minutes)

G.1 Video, Film, or Television Production: Educational/Informative

Videos, films, or television programs in this category focus on educating or informing people about cat-related topics (including health, behavior, lifestyle, and rescue & advocacy). Educational/Informative videos may also include but are not limited to documentary films (including those about big or wild cats), cat-related product reviews, news, interviews, personal feline-lifestyle (such as therapy cats or adventure cats), and stories of life with cats. Information must be fact checked and accurate. Appropriate quotations and citations from credible sources must support research and factual information found elsewhere.

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G.2 Video, Film, or Television Production: Entertainment

Videos, films, or television programs in this category include pieces that entertain the viewer. Entertainment diverts people's attention from their demanding lives and engages, amuses, delights, or compels them in their leisure time. Includes but is not limited to: an amusing look at cats in our lives and our relationship with them; profiles of the lives and doings of a particular cat or cat family; enjoyable looks at cats in the larger society and culture; interesting perspectives on people who choose to share their lives with cats; cats, or cat characters fictional or nonfictional, in nature.

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G.3 Video or Television Channel or Network - *NEW* CATEGORY FOR 2025!

This category would recognize the best cat-focused video channel on any digital or broadcast platform, including YouTube, Rumble, Vimeo, Substack, or any broadcast, cable subscription, or streaming service. The channel's content must be at least 80% cat-focused, and may include programming that is educational, informative, entertaining, inspirational, humorous, or any combination of those. Cats must be portrayed on the channel's programs in a positive and responsible manner and must not be harmed in any of its shows. Entrants will submit a summary of the channel's programming with samples of three shows cast on it.

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Blog or Website

Images: Canva Studio and Tenmautgam, both on Pexels

H. Blog/Website

Blogs or websites must be **two-thirds cat-specific**, attractive and professional in visual content and design, and appeal to the general cat-owning, cat-caring population. Qualifying entries may be on a corporate or nonprofit site or the entrant's own personal Blog/Website.

Blogs and websites can utilize a variety of media, such as articles/posts, photos, videos, cartoons, infographics, and more. Focus can be lighthearted, humorous, creative/artistic, educational, and/or informative. Any information presented must be fact-checked, accurate, and cited.

Bloggers must follow FTC guidelines if a blog includes product reviews or sponsored posts.

This category is judged on the collective content of the site in its entirety, including visual design, visual and written content, structure, navigation, functionality, engagement, and overall experience. Photos and graphics must be relevant, enhance the piece and be specific to the topic.

Sites may vary in nature, as long as at least 51% of the site's content is dedicated to the category entered (education OR entertainment). A blog can only be submitted in one blog category.

The publication date of each entry MUST be readily apparent/visible to the judges when they view your entry online. If the publication date is not obvious, your entry may be disqualified and your entry fees forfeited.

There must be a minimum of two published media per month for the entire contest year. At least two media per month must be newly published content (reprinted or edited content from another year is not allowed), written or created by the entrant. The blog/website is judged collectively, but individuals must submit links to three (3) entities that exemplify their best work as supporting evidence of the quality of the overall site. Failure to provide these three links might disqualify your entry and forfeit the fees paid on that entry.

H.1 Blog/Website: Educational/Informative

Educational/Informative sites are dedicated to educating/informing readers and cat caregivers about a variety of cat-related topics (including health, behavior, enrichment, lifestyle, and rescue & advocacy). Educational/Informative sites may also include but are not limited to cat-related product reviews, news, interviews, personal feline-lifestyle (such as therapy cats or adventure cats), retail sites selling products for cats, and stories of life with cats. Information must be fact-checked and accurate. Appropriate quotations and citations from credible sources must support research and factual information the writer found elsewhere. Photos and graphics must be relevant, enhance the pieces, and be properly credited.

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H.2 Blog/Website: Entertainment

Entertainment sites take an amusing and enjoyable look at cats and our lives and relationship with them. Entertainment diverts people's attention from their demanding lives and engages, amuses, delights, or compels them in their leisure time. Pieces may be entertaining, enjoyable, lighthearted, humorous, or a combination and use fictional or nonfictional cats. Any information presented must be fact-checked and accurate. Appropriate quotations and citations from credible sources must support research and factual information the writer found elsewhere. Photos and graphics must be relevant, enhance the pieces, and be properly credited. This category may also include retail sites that sell cat-themed products for people.

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Column/Series

Image: Cottonbro Studio on Pexels

I. Column/Series

A column is a series of articles about the same subject that are at least 80% cat-specific. Columns may be featured in print or digital publications such as newspapers, blogs, websites, magazines, and newsletters. They typically offer ongoing coverage of a narrow topic or with a humorous theme written by the same author(s) in each issue. Content can range from lighthearted and humorous (even using fictionalized cats), to educational and informative. If the reader is to be educationally informed, the information must be fact-checked and accurate.

Columnists often are responsible for the idea as well as the research and writing. A column/series entered under this category must contain at least 3 published articles in the Contest year. Individuals **MUST** submit links to at least three (3) of their best columns - submitted as a single Entry (failure to provide these three links might disqualify your entry and forfeit the fees paid on that entry).

If an article is part of the submission for the “Column/series” category, it may not be submitted individually in any other category. Please note that the column must be submitted on behalf of the writer, not an editor.

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Social Media Accounts

Image: Tracy Le Blanc on Pexels

J. Social Media Account(s)

Social media account(s) promote cats via a multiplicity of channels, such as Facebook, X, Instagram, Threads or BlueSky, that quickly grab the reader/viewer's attention and educate/ inform/entertain/inspire about specific cat-related topics with photos, videos, graphics, and compelling copy. Excellence is determined by the overall social effort – the quality and effectiveness of the tweets, photos, posts, graphics, narratives, etc., and the professional branding of the social page(s) – both in content and design. Social media excellence is judged in its entirety, but individuals **MUST** submit links to six (6) posts that exemplify their best work and as supporting evidence of the quality of the overall social media (failure to provide these six links might disqualify your entry and forfeit the fees paid on that entry). Social media accounts may vary in nature, as long as at least 51% of the social media account's content is dedicated to the category entered (education OR entertainment). A social media account can only be submitted in one social media category.

Social media entrants must follow FTC guidelines if the entered account includes product reviews or sponsored posts.

Social media categories should focus on a particular theme and may be posted across varying social media channels but must dedicate two-thirds of their content specifically to cats.

For these categories, qualifying entries may either be from Facebook, X, Instagram, Threads, or BlueSky (or a combination thereof) from social media accounts that represent either a corporate, nonprofit, or the entrant's own personal social media

page(s). Preference in judging will be given to social media accounts that provide unique, stand alone content over social media accounts that consistently link to content elsewhere.

J.1 Social Media Account(s): Educational/Informative

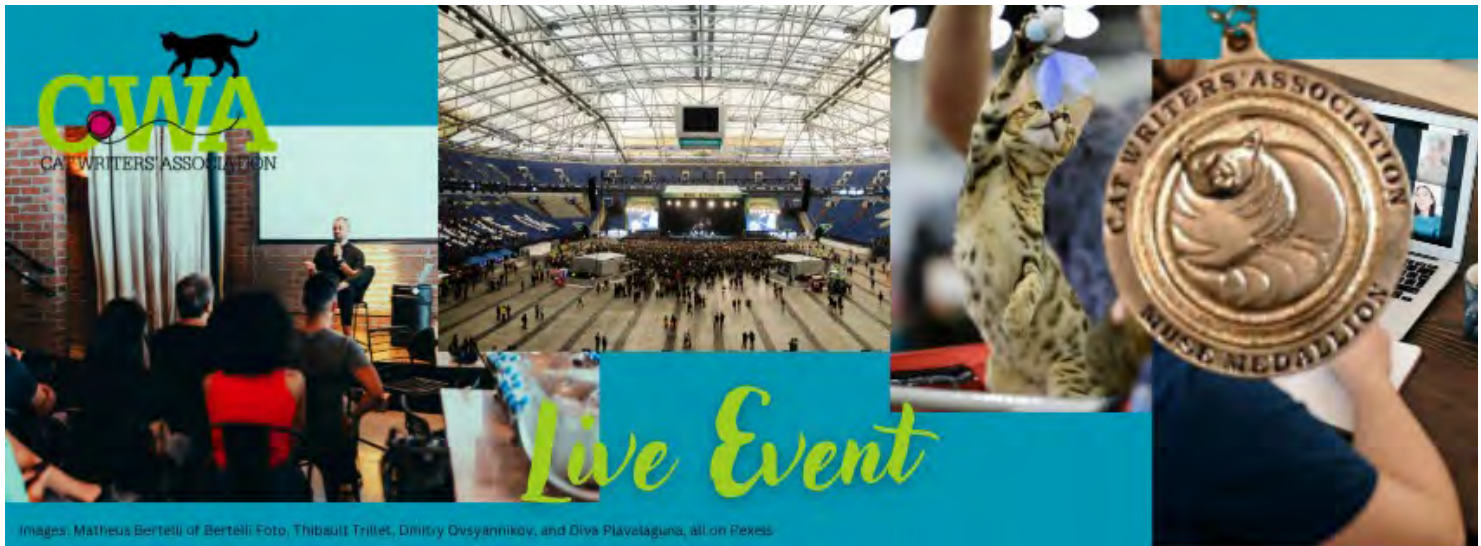
Educational/Informative social media accounts are dedicated to educating/informing readers and cat caregivers about a variety of cat related topics (including health, behavior, enrichment, lifestyle, and rescue & advocacy). Educational/Informative social media accounts may also include but are not limited to cat-related product reviews, news, interviews, personal feline-lifestyle (such as therapy, adventure, or show cats), rescue cats up for adoption, and stories of life with cats. All information presented must be clear, properly cited, and up to date.

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J.2 Social Media Account(s): Entertainment

Entries in this category take an amusing and enjoyable look at cats and our relationships with them using social media platforms. Entertainment diverts people's attention from their demanding lives and engages, amuses, delights, or compels them in their leisure time. Content may be entertaining, enjoyable, lighthearted, humorous, or a combination and use fictional or nonfictional cats.

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K. Live Event - *NEW CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category recognizes organizers of the best in-person or virtual cat-focused event that occurred during the contest period. Eligible events should have a recognizable feline theme and promote cats in a positive and responsible manner. The Muse winner in each category would be the main planner or chair of the event, whose name should be specified in the entry.

Examples of eligible events would be:

- public cat-themed conferences or festivals
- professional conferences or meetings
- exhibits at zoos or cat sanctuaries
- cat-themed museum exhibitions
- digital conferences
- cat-focused webinars
- virtual training classes

Event organizers would submit the promotional material for the event, documented attendance figures, and any media coverage the event received.

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L. Public Relations and Marketing - *NEW CATEGORY FOR 2025!*

This category recognizes excellence in marketing efforts related to cat products, services, programs, and events. The Muse Medallion would go to the lead person in charge of the PR or marketing effort being recognized.

Examples of eligible entries would be book marketing plans, a cat product marketing campaign, a public education campaign on a cat-related subject, a book launch campaign, cat-themed event promotion, cat adoption event promotion, or a cat-themed exhibit at a trade show or event.

Entrants should submit the written marketing plan, images of marketing materials and any displays or handouts, and evidence of results, such as wholesale orders of the book or product, media coverage garnered, number of cats adopted, or ticket sales for the event.

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M. Visual Commercial Arts

Entries in this category must focus on cats. Visual arts entries should adhere to the principles of good design, embody the principles of good artwork, and convey an artistic vision.

Entries in these categories, including photos and illustrations, may be entered simultaneously as an integral part of a writing entry (for example, as part of a print/online magazine article or a book) as well as an image, or series/collection of images, freestanding, in their own right.

All image entries (photos, illustrations, cartoons, photographic art) will be judged solely in their original PUBLISHED form, whether printed or online.

If your image Entry was originally published in paper format, such as in a printed book or magazine, you must submit a digital scan of the original printed form of the Entry (so the judges can view it in its originally published context).

If the image is available for viewing online, include the URL of the online image for the judges' convenience.

M.1 Photography (Single Image)

Without the need for words, a photograph tells a story that delights, moves, amazes, and/or stirs the viewer. A single image, black & white or color, may illustrate a point in a

text or stand alone as with greeting cards, book covers, and posters. On its own, it may enhance a blog/website/social media. The photographic artist has unique challenges using shadow, light, tone, and composition to influence the story and mood in the direction they seek to express.

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M.2 Photography (Series)

Without the need for words, a series of photographs tells a story that delights, moves, amazes, and/or stirs the viewer. A series, black & white or color, may illustrate a point in articles or books, blogs, websites, magazines, or as a series of photos in an annual publication, such as a calendar. The photographic artist has special challenges using shadow, light, tone, and composition to influence the story and mood in the direction they seek to express.

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M.3 Photographic Art

Photographic art starts on film or digital media and uses various digital or manual techniques to alter the photo (including photo editing software, apps, or mixed media). Photographic art may include (but is not limited to) a combination of images, montage, collage, adding or changing background, adding or changing colors, adding overlays or special effects, and colorization of black and white images. Photographic art creates a moment in time and freezes it there, telling a story. It may illustrate a point in a text or stand-alone. You may find photographic art on greeting cards, book covers/backs, posters, or a photograph on a blog/website or social media.

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M.4 Cartoon

This category recognizes the best drawing that may portray a real-life situation, fictional or nonfictional character, or place, often executed in an exaggerated, satirical, or humorous light. Cartoons have many styles, ranging from stylized shapes using simple line drawings to more detailed and illustrative work, with or without color. The result is always the same: capturing an idea, a trending topic, or telling a story. Cartoons often stand alone as a short story in miniature or as an illustration of the text.

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M.5 Illustration (Single)

This category recognizes the best image created with traditional or digital art media that does not fall into the category of photographic art.

An illustration may exaggerate one or more elements to tell a story or direct attention to a particular point. It may portray things that do or do not exist in the real world, illustrating text or standing alone. Some uses for illustration are books, book covers, blogs, online publications, newsletters, and social media posts.

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M.6 Illustrations (Series)

Illustrations are defined as images created with traditional or digital art media that do not fall into the category of photographic art. A series of illustrations all relate in some way to the same subject.

Illustrations may exaggerate one or more elements to tell a story or direct attention to a particular point. They may portray things that do or do not exist in the real world. They may be used to illustrate text or to stand alone. Uses for a series of illustrations include books, blogs, online publications, newsletters, social media posts, and annual publications, such as a calendar.

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M.7 Graphic Design

Graphic design is the art and practice of visual communication to captivate, inspire, and inform a target audience. The designer skillfully merges visual elements such as typography, line, and color, photography, and/or illustration to create layouts for a wide variety of applications. These include (but are not limited to) magazine layouts, newsletters, book covers, calendars, infographics, posters, brochures, logos, web design, marketing, promotional materials, T-shirts, promotional items, and more.

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N. Fine and Commissioned Art

This category differs from all other categories in several ways. “Fine Art” is defined, for purposes of the contest, as multidimensional work, produced/created primarily as a form of artistic self-expression or by commission, rather than as a supplement or accompaniment to another published work, such as a book or magazine article.

Fine Art pieces stand alone as self-contained works. Fine Art includes original paintings, sculptures, fiber art pieces, ceramics, handcrafted jewelry, masks, costumes, other wearable art, and similar works.

Works of Fine Art that qualify for the contest must be devoted to and feature the cat (wild or domestic, realistic or abstract) as primary inspiration and subject matter. Works must have been completed during the contest period (calendar year 2024) and adhere to the principles of good design.

Since Fine Art is generally not “published” in the usual sense, for purposes of the contest, the requirement for Fine Art entries to be “published work” will be modified by a requirement that such works will have been delivered, displayed, and/or offered for sale to the public during the contest period, either in a physical or online gallery or on a sales site such as Etsy, eBay or similar site.

Because of the nature of Fine Art, entries should be composed of a set of full-color photographs or scans of the work, clearly showing the overall work as well as close-up details. For 3D work such as sculpture, photos should show the work from several different angles.

Entries must include supporting documentation of the work's display and/or sales in a gallery or shop (physical or online), including relevant links so judges can view the work online if they wish. If commissioned work, entries must include a copy of the contract or proof of payment.

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[View the Special Award descriptions here.](#)