



Attention, artists and writers--Chromatic Press is looking for talented creators to be part of our monthly online magazine *Sparkler Monthly* at sparklermonthly.com! We're looking for comics and prose for stories that will be serialized monthly online. See more details and submission directions at <http://sparklermonthly.com/about/submissions/>

This document updated for:

Year 4 submissions

Submissions accepted Sept 1st, 2016 - Sept 30th, 2016. We're looking for pitches for:

- **Comics (color or black & white): series of 120+ pages. Some pages formerly published for free (like an existing webcomic) is fine.**
- **Comics (color or black & white): one-shot up to 40 pages long. Some pages formerly published for free is fine.**
- **Prose: short stories 1-3 chapters long (5,000 to 30,000 words total). Formerly published is possible, but we prefer new works.**

Copyright: The work must be original and owned by you (or your team). Sparkler will not buy your copyright, but we will buy exclusive publishing rights of certain elements of your work for a limited period of time.

Workload: For comic series, we expect a chapter of approximately 6 - 12 color pages or 10 - 15 black & white pages each month. For prose: 4,000 - 8,000 words per month.

Payment: We offer a paid advance (against complete ebook and/or paperback royalties) for anything that runs in the magazine. Payment varies depending on the project, but usually starts at a few hundred dollars per chapter.

Number of pitches: Please submit no more than one pitch per category above (so maximum number is 3 pitches per person). However, you can pitch multiple times in the same category if you're pitching something alone AND something as part of a team. **We care more about one good pitch than several weaker pitches.** If your pitch is strong but it's not something we want to publish, *we will often write to you and ask you to pitch something different.* We judge new creators on quality, not quantity.

Please read the following document for more details on what we're looking for/what we need in your pitch. When you're ready to submit, please follow the directions at <http://sparklermonthly.com/about/submissions/>

General guidelines

Please visit our website at sparklermonthly.com to see the sort of work we publish. We list all series with genre and age group on the front page, and 90% of the content is free to read online.

Sparkler Monthly is, first and foremost, looking for engaging, entertaining stories. We're a Female Gaze publication, looking for works aimed mainly at girls and women aged 15-30 who already have an interest in geek media--manga, webcomics, fanfiction, video games. We're primarily interested in works in the drama, romance, fantasy, urban fantasy, and science fiction genres, although we're flexible on genre if you have an interesting proposal.

We're also dedicated to promoting works with diverse casts of characters, and being a platform for stories that aren't heard enough in mainstream media. We want characters of different races, religions, and cultures; gay and straight love stories; complex and sympathetic portrayals of people with disabilities or mental illness. And compelling, complicated female characters!

Chromatic Press is an independent publishing company run by comics industry veterans including Lillian Diaz-Przybyl (HarperCollins, Viz Media, TOKYOPOP), Lianne Sentar (TOKYOPOP, Seven Seas, Hiveworks), and Rebecca Scoble (The Beguiling, Seven Seas, Paper Star Studios). If you're accepted by the magazine, you'll be working with one or more of the above editors to bring out the best in your work, and our team will proofread and format your work for web, ebook, and possible paperback publication.

Audience: Since *Sparkler Monthly* primarily caters to the under-served demographic of women aged 15-30, we don't publish work for children. We do consider Young Adult that contains more mature themes (in the vein of *Hunger Games*), as long as the work also appeals to an older audience--complicated characters, difficult issues of morality, and sometimes, older protagonists.

Focus on characters: Whatever your pitch or setting, we want characters, emotional development, and relationships to be a strong focus, no matter the genre (similar to shoujo and josei comics in Japan). Romance is not required, but we want to see complicated character relationships of all types and personal character development over the course of your plot. In other words, Bring the Feelings. **Make your characters and their issues/relationships/growth the strongest aspect of your story, no matter what type of story it is.**

Accessibility: We'd like stories to be accessible, from a storytelling standpoint--easy reads, even if the story and characters are very complicated. We're not a good match for densely written high fantasy, for example, but if you want to introduce a complicated sci-fi/fantasy society through gentle exposition that's secondary to character interactions? Go for it.

Setting/genre: As mentioned, we're happy to consider any genre, but we're mostly interested in drama, romance, and mild to medium science fiction or fantasy (including urban fantasy). **We've already run a fair number of historical series, so for variety, non-historical will probably have a better shot this round. We would love a modern sports series!**

What to avoid

Fantasy/sci-fi epics with more world-building than character focus. We love complicated worlds, but that should *always take a back seat to your characters*. If you're working in a complicated setting (like a fantasy world or just an elaborate industry/government program/city on Earth), don't let your world-building bog down your story and distract from your character drama, because it's the drama that's going to keep your readers hooked. *Integrate* your unique world into your characters' story. This is probably the most common type of story we reject.

Depressing tragedies or stories where things never get better. We've run some very dark series--including [Knights-Errant](#) and [Tokyo Demons](#)--but those series also contain elements of humor, hope, and/or redemption. We want series where a reader will gasp and clutch her chest, not fall into a funk every time she reads it.

Stories about The Chosen One(s). We're flexible on this one, but beware of long-lost princesses, anything prophesized, or The Child Who Lived--these have been done a LOT in children's books and YA, so they can feel cliché and/or too young for our audience. Just do something interesting with it and you'll be fine. If you want your characters to be the reincarnation of someone else, we want more *Please Save My Earth*, less *Sailor Moon*. (Apologies to the awesomeness that is *Sailor Moon*.)

What to aim for

We're happy to look at pitches that don't fit into any of these suggestions, but these are the things that get us excited:

Something that will feel comfortable but fresh in our line-up. You don't have to read everything on sparklermonthly.com, but we encourage you to take 10 minutes and read the blurbs on each series (just click on any series [listed on our front page](#)). If you have a project that would fit in nicely with that line-up but still feel fresh, that's what we'd love to see!

People with complicated personal problems that aren't (necessarily) supernatural. Family problems, health problems, addictions, unrequited love. The story doesn't have to be serious, but even in comedies, people can have personal stuff to deal with! A great example of this is our series [Orange Junk](#), which is hilarious and light-hearted while also dealing with poverty, family, and the double-edged nature of fame.

Explosive drama and/or comedy. Don't be afraid to go a little melodramatic or over-the-top; it's much easier to scale back and add some subtlety later on than to try to add in emotion later. We want stories that are interesting, involving, and fun to read, that bring people back for the next chapter. Can you surprise your audience and make them scream? That's exactly what we want!

Comic artists

We're currently looking for comic creators who can write and draw their own stories OR established teams of writers and artists who can manage the entire comic-making process among themselves. We'll serialize your story monthly in our online magazine and collect it in ebook and possibly paperback form.

-We need sequential, long-form, color or black & white comics that can be published in graphic novel volumes. We need one chapter per month--approximately 6 - 12 color pages or 10 - 15 black and white pages--plus occasional additional material such as character designs, color promotional art, etc. You'll have a month off approximately 2-3 times per year, although that can be negotiated for health problems, maternity leave, etc.

-We need **series** that will be 120 pages or longer, or **one-shots** up to 40 pages long. **New in Year 4: you can pitch us an existing webcomic, as long as it's not already completed.**

To apply as a comic artist/comic team, please provide:

- At least 3-5 complete, sequential pages (up to one full chapter) of the comic. Format is flexible for submissions, but if you're making something new, your art should translate well to a paperback: vertical page, 6" x 9", 300-600 dpi, for example.
- 1-3 pages of text explaining your story and characters, including a brief outline of events for the first few chapters (or the entire short). **Please don't pitch this as a teaser--we need to know details, including your ending, to make a decision.** There will be an online form for this.
- Your brief resumé, including links to any webcomics, online portfolios, original works, or fanworks that you've worked on. There will be an online form for this.

Writers (prose)

We're looking for writers to serialize prose stories in our online magazine, to be collected in ebook and possibly paperback form. Each project will have an illustrator attached to it, for covers, chapter illustrations, and character designs. Prose pitches do **not** need to come with an illustrator, but feel free to submit an illustrator/illustrations along with your project.

We need **shorts/novellas**, to be released in monthly chapters (5,000-10,000 words per chapter), 1-3 chapters long. The story should be self-contained, ideally with the option to continue.

To apply as a prose writer, please provide:

- 5,000 word (approximate) sample of your story, from anywhere in the story.
- 1-3 pages of text explaining your story and characters, including a brief outline of events for the first few chapters (or the entire short). **Please don't pitch this as a teaser--we need to know details, including your ending, to make a decision.** There will be an online form for this.
- Your brief resumé, including links to any webcomics, online portfolios, original works, or fanworks that you've worked on. There will be an online form for this.

Ready to submit?

Please follow the instructions at <http://sparklermonthly.com/about/submissions/>

For this round, pitches will ONLY be accepted from Sept 1st, 2016 to September 30th, 2016

We can't guarantee a detailed response to every applicant, but we'll email you our decision within a few months. For future open submission seasons, please keep an eye on <http://sparklermonthly.com/about/submissions/> and follow us social media (Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr) @SparklerMonthly (or by clicking the icons on the upper right-hand corner of sparklermonthly.com).

If you have a question or concern, please email submissions@chromaticpress.com or message us on social media. Sometimes we don't get back to someone because they had a typo on their contact info, sometimes a submission fell through the cracks while we were organizing them. **Please message us if you think we missed you. Don't be shy!**

Feel free to post/share this document with your creative community.

Thank you for your time, and good luck!