

RIP Ray Bradbury

Written by Michael Gingold
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The genre of the fantastic has lost one of its legends: Celebrated author Ray Bradbury has died at age 91.

Born in 1920 in Waukegan, IL, Bradbury was a voracious reader and science fiction fan in his youth, and began publishing short stories in the late '30s (including in his own fanzine, *Futura Fantasia*). His first short-story collection, *DARK CARNIVAL*, was published by August Derleth's Arkham House in 1947, and was soon followed by the classic novels *THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES* in 1950 and *FAHRENHEIT 451* (which he considered his only science fiction novel: "Science fiction is a depiction of the real. Fantasy is a depiction of the unreal. So *MARTIAN CHRONICLES* is not science fiction, it's fantasy. It couldn't happen, you see?" he told [Weeklywire.com](#)) in 1953, and a slew of other books and short tales.

It wasn't long before film and TV producers took notice of Bradbury's work, and adaptations appeared in such '50s anthology series as *TALES OF TOMORROW*, *SUSPENSE* and *ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS*, among others. Two 1953 big-screen landmarks were inspired by Bradbury: *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS* has a key scene derived from his story "The Fog Horn," and the author's screen treatment *ATOMIC MONSTER* was developed into *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE*. Francois Truffaut filmed *FAHRENHEIT 451* in 1966, and Jack Smight's *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN* followed three years later. *THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES* was filmed as a three-part 1980 NBC miniseries, and Jack Clayton directed a big-screen version of Bradbury's carnival-horror tale *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES* in 1983. The writer hosted his own series, *THE RAY BRADBURY THEATER*, from 1985-1992, and scripted *THE WONDERFUL ICE CREAM SUIT*, based on his story "The Magic White Suit" and directed by Stuart Gordon, in 1998. The most recent Bradbury adaptations were the misbegotten 2005 *A SOUND OF THUNDER* and the 2008 indie *RAY BRADBURY'S CHRYSALIS*.

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Bradbury's many honors range from lifetime achievement citations from the Pulitzer Board, the World Fantasy Awards, the Stoker Awards and others to a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame to having an asteroid named after him in 1992. His masterful and hugely influential work will live on well into the future he was always imagining.