



Are you the one my book is looking for? The one with the talent to distill in 6x9" the essence of Royal Progress? The prodigy whose cover will attract readers most likely to enjoy my book?

You are? Then I am totally impressed with your creativity, perception, judgment, and marketing savvy, not to mention the technical skills that make it possible for you to put all that to practical use.

You see, the thing nowadays is that you have only a few seconds to grab the interest of book buyers. If your cover doesn't scream "This book is interesting" in a way that accurately reflects the mood and spirit of the contents, the author is in trouble. Either readers who might like the book ignore the cover; or readers drawn to the cover turn out not to like the book and leave those nasty reviews that, I'm told, can stop sales cold.

I've learned that the cover is the book's calling card and introduction rolled into one, and the cover designer's skill is central to a book's success.

Which brings me back to you. Royal Progress needs a great cover. Luckily, September 1 to October 15, 2015, my publisher ArbeitenZeit Media is staging a college-level art contest to find it. There are prizes. There's publicity. There's recognition. Check it out at [StudentArtContest.info](http://StudentArtContest.info).

Pen Fairchild

## Pen Fairchild Talks About Royal Progress

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This is the point at which the new author wants to tattoo her forehead or walk around carrying a sign proclaiming I WROTE A BOOK!

It starts when you have the great idea, or at least what seems like the great idea, that's just begging to be put between covers (metaphorically speaking). That excitement carries you through endless word processing, not to mention becoming way too familiar with a program called Scrivener and whatever beverage of choice gets you through a lot of late nights.

It ends, for the author anyway, when you PDF the manuscript, hoping as you do so that the publisher won't notice that the book you (and they) thought you were writing turned into something different. It's still a Dystopian fantasy, about a distant domain designed to be perfect that falls apart as times and expectations change. The characters who populate it, however, are no longer types you originally saw as necessary to carry the plot. Instead, they've *become* the plot. That bunch of entitled, walking irritants somehow shanghaied your book, cavalierly trashing your nice, neat plan.

So now my book belongs to Bettie, Hugh, W.T., Gloria, Auban, and all the others chased into the dreaded Outlands by rebels who think the "perfect" domain is anything but. To learn more about them, their lives, and what happens to them in a fierce and alien situation, see the "About the Book" section of [StudentArtContest.info](http://StudentArtContest.info), where there's also a Fact Sheet I prepared to share more information about the characters, plot, and setting of Royal Progress. If the contest sounds like something you'd find fun, there's an entry form there as well, plus full rules and a contact form if you have questions.

There are no entry fees, but entrants must be 18 years of age or older and an art student at the college level enrolled in and actively attending classes in an eligible U.S. institution. Take a look and see what you think.