

Ansible



Who Remembers Books? 'How useful can a literary history of science fiction be when science fiction hasn't been a primarily literary form for almost a century? Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* came out in 1927.' (Alexi Sargeant reviews Roger Luckhurst's *Science Fiction: A Literary History* [2018] in *The American Interest*, 1 June). [MMW]

The Moth that Ate Peanuts

David A. Hardy had every excuse for late response to *Ansible* 370: 'Your item under Thog was a bit too near the bone for me: "... the carbonised sky howled as the Milky Way cracked its sternum, exposing its galactic heart." A month ago that was just what happened to me—or at least my sternum was sawn in half, exposing I don't know what (or want to know), as I was unconscious at the time. I was having open-heart surgery, to repair my mitral and tricuspid valves.... Back home, I seem to be making satisfactory progress, but still pretty weak.' (6 June)

Kazuo Ishiguro was knighted for services to literature in the Queen's Birthday honours announced in June; Emma Thompson (seen in three Harry Potter films) became a dame for services to drama. Other honorees with genre links include Ken Follett (CBE for literature), Brian Cosgrove of *Count Duckula*, *Danger Mouse* and Cosgrove Hall fame (OBE for UK animation) and Jeanette Winterson (CBE for literature).

Mike McCormack, Irish author whose output includes one sf novel, won the €100,000 International Dublin Literary Award for his 2016 fantasy *Solar Bones*—written as a single sentence spoken by a ghost and covering more than 270 pages. (*Guardian*, 13 June) [JC]

Juliet E. McKenna is another author whose Wikipedia entry has been threatened with deletion for 'non-notability'. No doubt it needed better citations, but it seems some wiki editors actively prefer deletion to such repair work. Juliet ponders the bias against non-US, women and minority writers at www.julietemckenna.com/?p=2945. In comments there, Jo Fletcher remarks that her British and World Fantasy Awards, plus years of having her own trad-publishing genre imprint Jo Fletcher Books, somehow failed to make her notable: her entry was duly zapped.

Adam Roberts 'was one of the latest batch of Fellows elected to the Royal Society of Literature' on 4 June. New inductees are asked to sign the big book used since the RSL began in 1820: 'To sign our name we were offered the choice of: Byron's quill, George Eliot's quill, or T.S. Eliot's fountain pen. I chose the last of these.' (adamroberts.com, 5 June) Other honorees in the same intake included Bryan Talbot and Neil Gaiman, who respectively opted for Byron's and T.S. Eliot's pens.

Cavan Scott, UK author of *Doctor Who* and *Star Wars* spinoffs among others, reports that 'I have had people try to post comments on my website saying they hope I get terminally ill. I am, apparently, a cist on humanity's corpse.' (Twitter, 8 June) The anonymous online hate comes from *Warhammer* games fans because he's working on the forthcoming *Warhammer Adventures* novels for children, which these 'adult' fans know (without needing to read them) are a Bad Thing. [SG]

Consertal

Until 7 Jul • **Nine Foot Nine** (sf play), The Bunker, London. £15; £12 concessions. See www.bunkertheatre.com/whats-on/nine-foot-nine/.

Until 14 Jan 2019 • **Alasdair Gray** exhibition, Viktor Wynd Museum of Curiosities, 11 Mare St, London, E8 4RP. Admission £6.

4-5 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations for published authors only: afternoon of 4th, all day 5th. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, davecl@mac dot com.

6-7 Jul • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. Tickets £80; Friday or Saturday only, £50. More at www.futurefest.org.

7-8 Jul • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit 7**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. GoH Frances Hardinge and Paul Tremblay. Tickets £30. Box office 01332 290 606. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/edge-lit-7.aspx.

19-22 Jul • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. €55 reg, rising to €60 on 15 July; €65 at door. See eurocon2018.yolasite.com.

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, thushol, grethlanth or shleath.

20-23 Jul • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. Cost revealed when you register at continuumconvention.co.uk.

SOLD OUT 3-6 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel, Warwick. You can join a waiting list for cancelled memberships (£74 reg; £59 concessions; £30 supp) at dwcon.org.

4-6 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. £119 reg; \$49.99 per day; under-18s free. Book online at nineloworlds.co.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$230 reg; \$115 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. See worldcon76.org. Hugo voting continues, ending in late July.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £75 reg or £65 for TS members, rising to £85/£75 on 1 August. See www.tolkienociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

2-6 Oct • **War with the News** (play, Karel Čapek 're-imagined'), Royal Exchange Theatre, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7DH. £13; £11 concessions; £6 under-16s. Bookings tinyurl.com/yd24tt6x. [AIP]

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2020* site selection voting is open, with New Zealand as the only bid. See www.worldcon76.org/wsf/site-selection. New Zealand has just announced a change of its Worldcon dates: 29 July to 2 August 2020, rather than 12-16 August. (nzin2020.nz, 1 July)

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Fear Us. Flann O'Brien is writing *The Dalkey Archive*: 'Generally I am satisfied with the quality of the material to date, though I have a horrible feeling that some stupid critic (and which of them is not?) will praise me as a master of science fiction.' (March 1963 letter in *The Collected Letters of Flann O'Brien* ed. Maebh Long, 2018)

Awards. *Grand Prix de l'Imaginaire*, translation-into-French category: James Morrow, *Galápagos Regained*. • *John W. Campbell Memorial*: David Walton, *The Genius Plague*. • *Kurd Laßwitz Preis*, translation-into-German category: Nnedi Okorafor, *The Book of Phoenix*. • *Lambda Awards*, sf/fantasy/horror category: Annalee Newitz, *Autonomous*. • *Locus Awards* novel winners: SF John Scalzi, *The Collapsing Empire*. FANTASY N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*. HORROR Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*. YA Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Warrior*. DEBUT Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*. Also NONFICTION Alexandra Pierce & Mimi Mondal, eds., *Luminescent Threads: Connections to Octavia E. Butler*. See locusmag.com/2018/06/2018-locus-awards-winners/ for many more categories. • *SF and Fantasy Hall of Fame 2017*: J.K. Rowling, Stan Lee, *The Legend of Zelda* (videogame), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (tv). • *Theodore Sturgeon* (short story): Charlie Jane Anders, 'Don't Press Charges and I Won't Sue' (in *Global Dystopias*).

Alternate History Masterclass. 'Anthony Ray Hinton (featured) talks about the thirty years he spent on death row with Oprah.' (Seattle Arts and Lectures descriptions of upcoming talks, 30 June) [JDB]

R.I.P. Late report: *Shirley Bellwood* (1931-2016), UK artist and illustrator active from the 1950s in girls' comics—including *Misty*, *Jinty* and the serial 'The Ghost Hunters' in *Sally*—died on 1 February 2016; she was 84. [O] • *Martin Bregman* (1926-2018), US producer whose films include *The Shadow* (1994), *Matilda* (1996) and *The Adventures of Pluto Nash* (2002), died on 16 June aged 92. [AIP] • (*Raymond*) *Reid Collins* (1929-2018), US radio/tv broadcaster who contributed four stories to *F&SF* 1978-1984, died on 19 April aged 88. [TM] • *Peter Eisler*, Australian fan and member of the Futurian Society of Sydney, died in a 26 June fire at the block of flats where he lived; he was only 50. The presence of his high-piled book collection sadly led to his being described in press reports as a hoarder. [CS] • *Harlan Ellison* (1934-2018), US author, anthologist, screenwriter and controversialist whose many trophies include seven Hugos and four Nebulas for short fiction (plus a further Hugo for his *Star Trek* script 'The City on the Edge of Forever'), died in his sleep on 28 June; he was 84. [JDB] His noted anthologies *Dangerous Visions* (1967) and *Again, Dangerous Visions* (1972) both received special Worldcon awards, while even the non-appearance of *The Last Dangerous Visions* became legendary. Among his

life achievement honours are the World Fantasy Award (1993), Bram Stoker Award (1996), SFWA Grand Master (2006) and SF Hall of Fame (2011). Ellison's flamboyant, hyperbolic, take-no-prisoners approach to life and literature won him much admiration and some enmity; the sf world is a drearier place without him. ● *Peter Firmin* (1928-2018), co-creator with Oliver Postgate of the much-loved Smallfilms stop-motion animations—including *Noggin the Nog* (from 1959), *The Clangers* (1969-1972) and *Bagpuss* (1974)—died on 1 July aged 89. (BBC) ● *Michael Ford* (1928-2018) UK art director and set decorator whose films included *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981)—for which he won an Oscar—and *Return of the Jedi* (1983), died on 31 May aged 90. [PDF] ● *Eunice Gayson* (1928-2018), UK actress in *The Revenge of Frankenstein* (1958) and the first two James Bond films, died on 8 June aged 90. [MMW] ● *Helen Griffin*, Welsh actress seen in *Doctor Who* (2006) and *The Machine* (2013), died on 29 June. [SG] ● *Bill Lignante* (1925-2018), US comics artist who from 1961 drew and sometimes wrote many issues of *The Phantom* for three publishers, died on 27 February aged 92. He also worked for 16 years on Hanna-Barbera animations. [PDF] ● *Deanna Lund*, US actress best known for *Land of the Giants* (1968-1970), died on 22 June aged 81; her films include *Elves*, *Superstition 2* and *Transylvania Twist* (all 1989). [F770] ● *Robert Mandan* (1932-2018), US actor whose credits include *Zapped!* (1982) and a 1993 guest spot in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, died on 29 April aged 86. [LP] ● *Jerry Maren* (1920-2018), US actor who was the last surviving Munchkin from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), died in late May aged 98. [PDF] He had many more genre credits, most recently *Frankenstein Rising* and *Dahmer vs. Gacy* (both 2010). ● *June Moffatt* (1926-2018), long-time Los Angeles-area fan, fanzine publisher, member of First Fandom, FAPA, LASFS and many con committees, and 1973 TAFF delegate (jointly with her husband and collaborator Len Moffatt, 1923-2010), died on 31 May aged 92. [LG] ● *Tony Morphet* (1938-2018), Australian novelist and screenwriter who wrote and directed *The Last Wave* (1977), died on 2 June aged 80. [PDF] ● Late report: *Luan Peters* (1946-2017), UK actress in *Lust for a Vampire* (1971), *Twins of Evil* (1971), *The Flesh and Blood Show* (1972), *Old Dracula* (1974) and *Land of the Minotaur* (1976), died on 24 December 2017 aged 71. [SG] ● *William Phipps* (1922-2018), US actor whose many genre credits include *Cinderella* (voice, 1950), *Five* (1951), *The War of the Worlds* (1953), *Cat-Women of the Moon* (1953) and *The Snow Creature* (1954), died on 1 June aged 96. [F770] ● *Richard 'Dick' Siegel* (1955-2018), author, comics artist, filmmaker and former head writer for *Weekly World News*, reportedly died in June aged 63. Books include *Alien Creatures* (1978 survey of aliens in sf) with J-C Suarés, the joky *The Extraterrestrial Report* (1978) and one sf novel, *Alien Plague* (1979) as by Shephard Noir. [PDF] ● *Steve Sneyd* (1941-2018), UK sf poet, bibliographer and small-press publisher named as a Grand Master by the SF Poetry Association in 2015, died on 13 June aged 77. [PP via CC] His Hilltop Press published much research into fanzine poems and brought such sf poets as Lilith Lorraine back into print; his crabbedly handwritten newsletter of genre poetry, *Data Dump* (222 issues 1991-2016) remains a valuable though hard-to-read resource. Steve was a long-time *Ansible* correspondent and a good friend. ● *Christopher Stasheff* (1944-2018), US author best known for the long-running Gallowglass/Warlock science-fantasy series opening with *The Warlock in Spite of Himself* (1969) and continuing to 2004, died on 10 June; he was 74. [PDF] ● *Brad Steiger* (Eugene E. Olson, 1936-2018), US author of both novels and supposed nonfiction about UFOs, alien abduction, the paranormal, Atlantis etc., died on 6 May aged 82. [AIP] ● *Shelby Vick* (1928-2018), long-time US fan active since the 1940s (his first fanzine *Confusion* began in 1951) and still publishing *Planetary Stories* online in 2017, died on 9 June aged 89. [PDF] 'SheVv'—his fan nickname—organized the successful 1952 Walt Willis travel fund which was the direct precursor of TAFF. ● *Lucy Zinkiewicz*, Australian fan, fanzine publisher and academic who was the first National Australian Fan Fund winner and conducted the 'Sense of Community in Science Fiction Fans' study at Aussiecon 3, died unexpectedly in June.

As Others Value Us. The most expensive item in a May sf auction at Swann Galleries, New York, was a signed first of *The Man in the High Castle*, sold for \$10,400. Other eye-watering figures included \$9,100 for uncorrected proofs of *The Stand* and \$7,500 for an inscribed *Fahrenheit 451* (limited author's edition; the famous asbestos-bound version went for \$5,200). [JDB] *Ansible* is unable to confirm the rumour that a complete *Mission Earth* dekalogy very nearly reached its reserve of \$1.25.

Random Fandom. *Jeanne Gomoll*, who long ago created the James Tiptree Jr. Award's 'Space Babe' symbol, has now published a 36pp *Space Babe Coloring Book* available from tinyurl.com/y9yoquwp, with all

proceeds helping to fund the award. ● *John Linwood Grant* 'scored some hard-core Enid Blyton', including *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*: 'Internet people tell you why the search engine is called Google, but they lie. I'm not kidding—the word was coined in 1946 by Blyton, who writes of Google Buns on p30 of *Folk*. Aha! I wonder if her estate could sue them?' (5 June) Raymond Chandler's brief but notorious sf spoof in a letter to his agent ('My breath froze into pink pretzels ... I had exactly four seconds to hot up the disintegrator and Google had told me it wasn't enough.') came several years later, in 1953. But *Barney Google* dates from 1919. ● *Steve Sneyd's* funeral: 12 noon on Friday 6 July at the Rose Hill Burial Ground, 161 Birkby Hall Road, Huddersfield, HD2 2BS.

All Your Base ... Jason Sanford warned of a new power grab: 'I'm surprised more people aren't talking about this. Someone named William M. Gaines applied for a trademark on the words "Weird Fantasy." Trademark would apply to fictional works, books, comics, plus LOL leather, collars, whips, & "playthings."' (Twitter, 26 June) The actual filing is by 'William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.', which presumably claims ownership of the defunct (since 1956) EC Comics titles published by William M. Gaines (1922-1992) of *Mad* magazine fame, including *Weird Fantasy* and *Weird Science*. There are trademark applications for both.

Editorial. This has been the special disaster issue of *Ansible*, owing to the failure of the ancient laser printer required by the even older software platform. Many thanks to Steve Davies of *Plokta* fame for donating another printer, which greatly helped the rescue work. ● I was sorry to hear that John Julius Norwich (1929-2018) had died on 1 June aged 88. Though his numerous history and travel books had no sf connection, he was a long-time *Ansible* subscriber who used occasional *Ansible* items in his *Christmas Cracker* commonplace-book selections (1970-2017) and was particularly fond of Thog's Masterclass—to which he devoted a page of the 2017 *Cracker*. ● The May release of a Foxtel tv mini-series based on *Picnic at Hanging Rock* caused a new flurry of interest in the *Ansible* Editions ebook of Yvonne Rousseau's splendidly erudite *The Murders at Hanging Rock*: see ae.ansible.uk/?t=murders. (Advt.)

Magazine Scene. *Shimmer* magazine will cease with the November 2018 issue. See www.shimmerzine.com/2018/06/18/the-end/.

The Dead Past. 40 Years Ago, Andrew Stephenson reported from the Dublin SF Writers' Conference: 'The World Sf Association, a loose, mutual-bonhomie group hopeful of enhancing international literary relations, got itself organised, more or less, at the Dublin conference. Nine people from various countries (USSR, Hungary, France, USA, Sweden & Brazil, I think) were voted-in to coordinate the consolidation of its aims during the first year.' (*Checkpoint* 90, July 1978) World SF officially ceased operation in 2002. ● 20 Years Ago, no one had heard of doxxing: 'Dave Wolverton wasn't quite outraged to be outed as the writer behind David "Runelords" Farland—"This is one of those loosely kept secrets"—but hopes the leak won't affect sales. For a small fee, *Ansible* will announce that its story was hopelessly wrong and that Farland is really Lionel Fanthorpe.' (*Ansible* 132, July 1998) ● 10 Years Ago: 'As Others See Buckminster Fuller.' "Fuller's themes often had the hallucinatory quality associated with science fiction (or mental hospitals)." (Elizabeth Kolbert, *New Yorker*) (*Ansible* 252, July 2008)

C.o.A. *Nic & Jennifer Farey*, 2657 Rungsted St, Las Vegas, NV 89142, USA. ● *Vicki Rosenzweig*, 270 Highland Avenue, Apt 31, Somerville, MA 02143, USA. ('I expect to be here for another year or so.')

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: Donna Maree Hanson's 26,000-word report of her 2017 *GUFF* trip to Worldcon 75 in Finland is available as an ebook for \$7 (Australian) at donnamareehanson.com/guff-trip-report/.

Thog's Masterclass. *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'My eyes bound around the sterile room.' (Mary Kubica, *Pretty Baby*, 2015) [PB] ● *Mysteries of Anatomy*. 'She's built like a lamp-post, tall and thin, with a sphere at the top that glows.' (*Ibid*) [PB] 'When she looked at him, something inside her lurched, and she swallowed her errant innards down, holding them still by not breathing for a time.' (Sheri S. Tepper, *Sideshow*, 1992) ● *Dept of PR Problems*. 'When a man takes off some three hundred square miles of territory spang in the center of Europe in an atomic explosion, you can't blame the rest of the world for being a bit skittish about atomic power research.' (John W. Campbell Jr, 'The Brain Stealers of Mars', December 1936 *Thrilling Wonder Stories*) ● *Male Gaze Dept*. 'Loghu had a beautifully rounded posterior; her buttocks were like two eggs.' (Philip José Farmer, *To Your Scattered Bodies Go*, 1971) [SM-G]

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