

CONFLUX



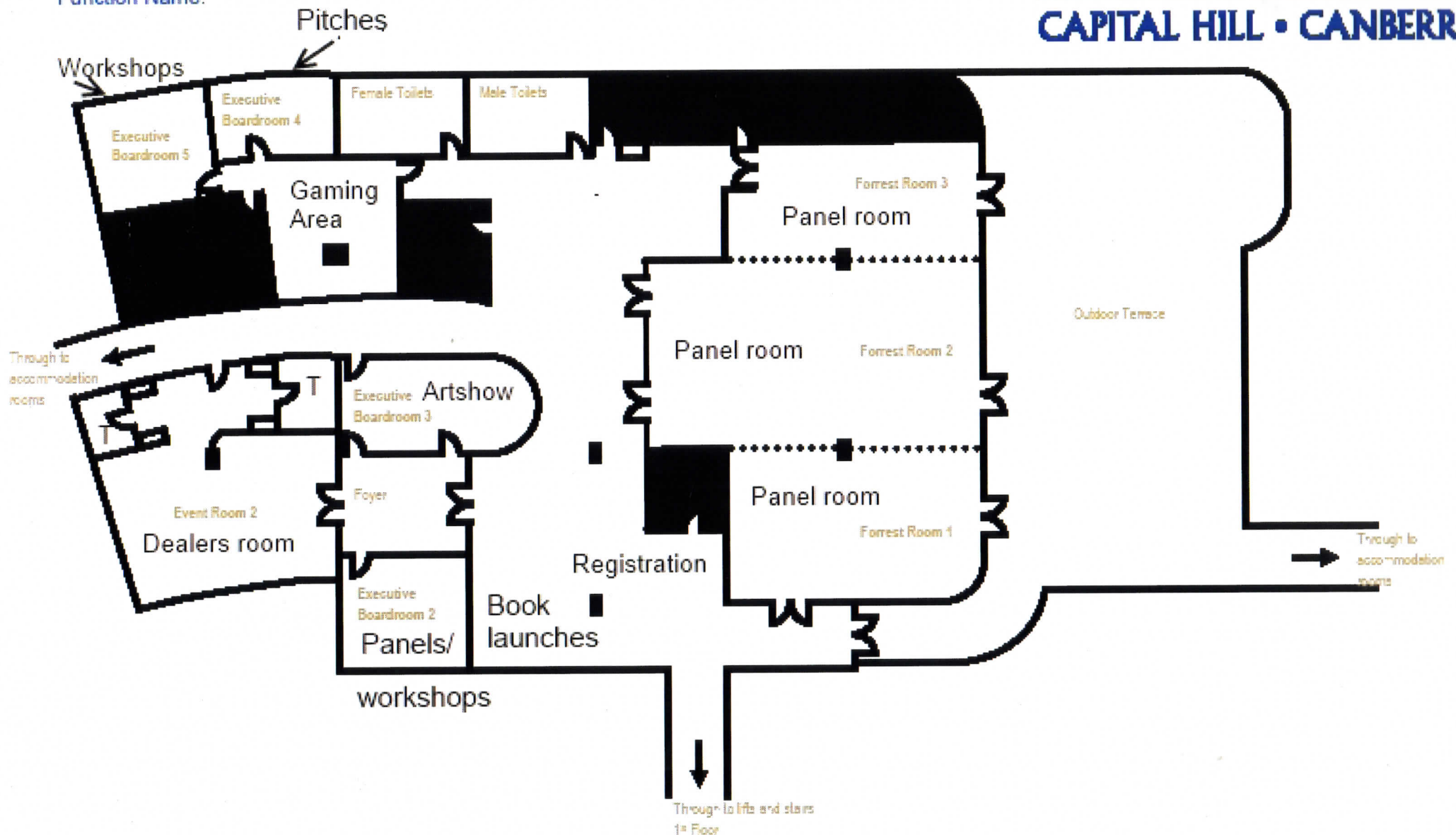
52ND AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION



Rydges Capital Hill, Barton ACT, April 25-28, 2013
www.conflux.org.au

2nd Floor Event Space

Function Name:



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RUN AWAY TO THE 2014 NATCON AND JOIN THE CIRCUS THAT IS

CONTINUUM X

6th-9th JUNE 2014, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

SEE CONTINUUM.ORG.AU FOR MORE DETAILS AS THEY ARE ANNOUNCED

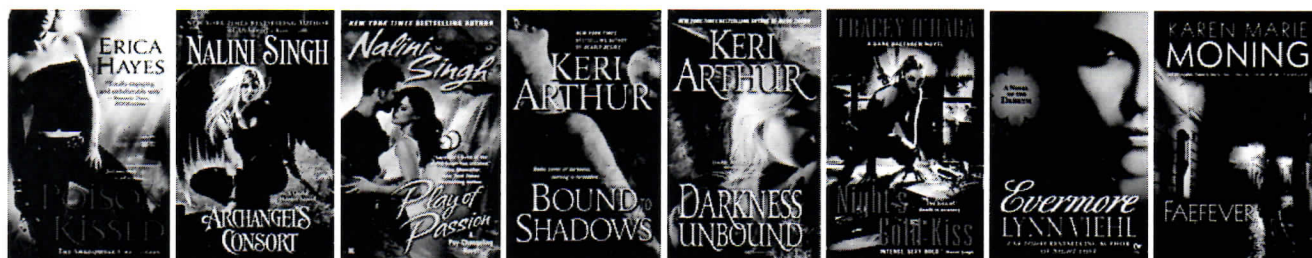
AND FOLLOW US @CONTINUUM_CON



So you like fantasies, huh?

So do we.

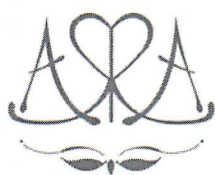
Androids, aliens, changelings, faeries, genies, shifters, space invaders, time travellers, warlocks, werewolves, witches, wizards, vampires—we love them. Do you like to read about alternate universes, space travel, magic and the downright weird? You can find them all in the pages of a romance ... So be swept away from the everyday—pick up a romance novel.



The Australian Romance Readers Association was created by romance readers, for romance readers. With a growing community of avid fans of all sub-categories of the romance fiction genre, we are the largest network of romance readers in the Southern Hemisphere.

Join ARRA today and:

- connect with our blog and email group—enjoy 24-hour access to reviews, interviews, giveaways and other people who like to read the same things you do
- get the inside scoop with authors and publishers via our monthly e-newsletter
- receive discounts at a number of booksellers
- vote in the Australian Romance Reader Awards
- attend the annual ARRA Awards Dinner
- rub shoulders with best-selling authors at our biennial Australian Romance Readers Convention
- catch up with other members at our monthly social events around Australia.



AUSTRALIAN ROMANCE
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Visit www.australianromancereaders.com.au and join today!

Australian Romance Readers Association
Read. Share. Engage.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Conflux 9, the 52nd National Science Fiction Convention. This year marks nine years since the Natcon last came to Canberra. It is also the centenary of the foundation of Canberra and that is the reason we decided to host the Natcon again.

After several years of involvement with the Conflux conventions, this is our last hoorah and we're determined to make this the best Conflux yet. We've gathered an interesting and diverse range of guests to ensure unique and different conversations. We've got a balance of fannish activities and panels and workshops designed to educate and develop our writers.

As always, Conflux tries to give a mix of the traditional and the innovative. This convention revives one of our most popular banquets – the Regency Gothic – and also brings you a Steampunk High Tea. There's the usual events at the conference – panels, readings, kaffeeklatsches, social events – and the best masquerade Conflux has ever seen.

We hope you all have a fabulous time at this, the ninth Conflux convention.

Party on!

Donna Maree Hanson and Nicole Murphy



CONFLUX 9 COMMITTEE LIST AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chairs - Donna Maree Hanson, Nicole Murphy
Memberships - Karen Herkes Ott
Treasurer - Mark Loney
Programming - Donna Maree Hanson, Maxine McArthur, Nicole Murphy
Art show - Margaret Hilliard
PR - Zena Shapter
Short story competition - Elizabeth Fitzgerald
Con book - Kimberley Gaal
Online (website, Twitter, Facebook) - Lily Mulholland
Masquerade - Kyla Ward, Ken Moylan
Ditmar Award Ceremony - Terri Sellen
Steampunk High Tea - Donna Maree Hanson
Regency Gothic Banquet - Donna Maree Hanson
Workshops - Donna Maree Hanson, Nicole Murphy
Dealers/advertising - Nicole Murphy, Paula McGrath
Graphic design - Grant Gittus (with stand-in emergency assistance from Amanda Rainey)
Committee - Jane Virgo

CODE OF CONDUCT

Conflux 9 is an inclusive event which invites diverse groups of people regardless of age, race, gender, sexuality, or religion to gather and celebrate their love of science fiction, fantasy and horror.

We value the participation of each member of our conference and want all attendees to have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Accordingly, all attendees are expected to show respect and courtesy to other attendees throughout the conference.

To make clear what is expected, all members, dealers and volunteers at any Conflux 9 event are required to agree to and abide by the following Code of Conduct. Organisers will enforce this code throughout the event.

Conflux 9 strives to provide a fun, inspirational and friendly atmosphere at its events, and has high expectations for members so that all can enjoy their experience.

Conflux 9 will not tolerate any intimidation, harassment, and/or any abusive, discriminatory behaviour by any members. The use of inappropriate, derogatory, and/or offensive material during panels is strictly prohibited and will lead to disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal from the convention and exclusion from future Confluxes.

Harassment includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race or religion, sexual images in public spaces (including presentation slides), deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, unwanted photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.

Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

Be careful in the words that you choose. Remember that sexist, racist, and other exclusionary jokes can be offensive to those around you. Excessive swearing and offensive jokes are not appropriate for Conflux 9.

All communication should be appropriate for a diverse audience. Please be aware that children may be attending some panels and keep your communication appropriate should such occur.

Be kind to others. Do not insult or put down other attendees. Behave professionally. Remember that harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary jokes are not appropriate for Conflux 9 events. Members violating these rules may be asked to leave the event without a refund at the discretion of the Conflux 9 co-chairs.

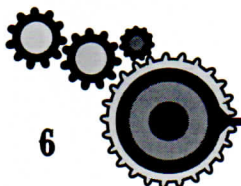
If someone hears or sees a member displaying the aforementioned behaviour, they should contact a committee member directly. All complaints made to Conflux 9 will remain confidential, be taken seriously, investigated, and dealt with appropriately.

This Code of Conduct applies to all members, dealers, suppliers, contractors, venue and media personnel and the conference committee.

This Code of Conduct has been adapted from the Linux Australia Code of Conduct.

WEAPONS POLICY

No weapons are to be brought to, worn or carried at any time during the convention (including water pistols, real or replica guns, swords or knives), unless approved as part of an official event. Only the convention organisers may approve such weapons and their participation in any event.



STEAMPUNK RIDES ON!

RICHARD HARLAND



I think of steampunk as the what-if version of the First Industrial Age, i.e. the age of steam-power, iron and steel, from the Industrial Revolution to WWI. That's not to say that rockets or radios or petrol engines are absolutely excluded; only that, if they're included, they must be in old-fashioned forms such as might have been invented (and sometimes were half-invented) in the 19th century. Gibson and Sterling in *The Difference Engine* imagine an alternative 19th century where Babbitt's planned proto-computer gave birth to real computers more than a century before their arrival in real history; my latest novel, *Song of the Slums*, creates an alternative 19th century where a version of rock n roll—played on steampunk instruments!—conquered the world more than a century before its arrival in real history.

Fantasy in the Tolkien mould gives us a what-if version of the Middle Ages, and steampunk likewise exists in a past that we know did not exist. Unlike traditional epic fantasy, however, steampunk also allows an author to dream up imaginary machinery. Since technological hypothesis is the natural domain of SF, steampunk falls somewhere in the middle between the two older genres.

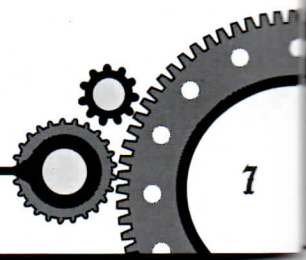
I completely missed out on the first phase of steampunk fiction, even though I was starting to plan the *Worldshaker* world at the time. In fact, that first phase—and K.W. Jeter's invention of the name 'steampunk' by analogy with 'cyberpunk'—probably passed many people by, since the genre was originally considered no more than a minor offshoot of SF. Of the notable writers in that first phase, K.W. Jeter (*Morlock Nights* and *Infernal Devices*), Tim Powers (*Anubis Gates*) James Blaylock (*Homunculus*), Harry Harrison (*A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!*) and William Gibson and Bruce Sterling (*The Difference Engine*), the only one I read at the time was Tim Powers; and of those early writers, Blaylock, Harrison, Gibson and Sterling were all better known in other fields of SF.

The 1980 publication of *The Difference Engine* was a high point of first-phase literary steampunk, after which the genre faded. Its revival in the nineties and noughties springs from non-literary sources: TV (*The Wild, Wild West*); the graphic novel (*The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*); Japanese anime (*Steamboy* as the prime exhibit, but there's a touch of steampunk in many anime movies); and, most importantly, clothes fashion and 'maker' culture. 'Maker' culture appropriates scavenged components—including cogs, wheels, dials, pipes, gears and machine parts generally—in order to handcraft objects commonly mass-produced—including steampunk versions of computers, motorbikes and electric guitars. (Steampunk guitars were a great source of inspiration for *Song of the Slums!*) Functionality takes second place to the sheer aesthetic appeal of old-fashioned machinery. On a small scale, the same scavenged components appear in steampunk jewellery.

As for clothes fashion, steampunk's eclectic, anachronistic riffs on 19th century style seem to have grown out of established goth fashion, which has always included corsets, metal jewellery and a taste for 19th century darkness. In the same way that literary steampunk began as a minor offshoot of literary SF, so steampunk clothes fashion began as a minor offshoot of goth fashion. Following its own evolutionary logic, steampunk style now has its own distinctive features and even its own conformities (e.g. aviator goggles!).

RICHARD HARLAND migrated to Australia at age 22, played folk-rock music around Sydney, lectured for ten years at the Uni of Wollongong, then became a full-time author in 1997. He lives in Figtree, near Wollongong.

His sixteen novels have spanned fantasy, SF, horror and, recently, steampunk. His latest novel, *Song of the Slums*, is steampunk/gaslight romance, and starts from a hypothetical: what if they'd invented rock 'n roll in the 19th century? Richard has collected 6 Aurealis Awards, the A. Bertram Chandler Award and the Tam-Tam Je Bouquine award (France). His author website is at www.richardharland.net.





NALO HOPKINSON

GUEST OF HONOUR

It was January. We were on our annual writer's retreat (this time in Oberon, NSW). I was minding my own business when Donna thrust a book at me and said, "You have to read this."

Donna and I talk a lot about books, but it's not that often she shoves a book in my face and demands I partake of it, so I did as she told me and I opened it and read it.

The book was *The New Moon's Arms* by Nalo Hopkinson. Within minutes I was transported to a world I could never have imagined on my own. The West Indies, where I could feel the heat and sticky sea salt on my skin, hear the strange accents, taste the spices of each meal on my tongue and most of all, be entranced by the unveiling of this softly beautiful fantasy.

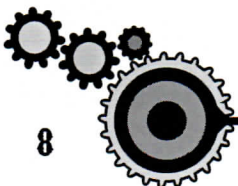
Donna was lucky enough to have been at a talk and signing by Nalo in England a few months before this (in fact, the book she made me read was signed by Nalo) and she hadn't been able to stop talking about this impressive, amazing woman.

Then we decided to take on the organising of the 2013 Natcon and we were tossing ideas around and when Donna said "Nalo Hopkinson would be great," I was right there with her.

For me, Nalo brings a host of wonderful traits to Conflux 9. For starters, she adds to the cascade of women as guests at this convention, something I'm really proud that we've done. Also, she gives us a very different experience and voice, coming as she does not just from a different country but a different culture. Through following her on Twitter I know she's funny, interesting, smart and a foodie (so she'll fit in well with us). Finally her style of writing meshes well with that of our other writerly guests, bringing a distinct tone to the event.

I'm thrilled that Conflux 9 is bringing Nalo to Australia. Hopefully Donna and I will enable many more to have that wonderful thrill of discovering Nalo's work.

Nicole Murphy





MARC GASCOIGNE

GUEST OF HONOUR

I met Marc Gascoigne for the first time in Montreal, at Anticipation (Worldcon) in 2009. It was the launch of the Angry Robot Books and the debut of Kaaron Warren's novel, *Slights*. Matthew and I had a blast. Matthew knew Marco from way back so we got to be acquainted a bit more as well as celebrating a very cool event, like the birth of an imprint and Kaaron's amazing book *Slights*, the first of three of her novels bought by Marc for Angry Robot Books.

We caught up with Marc again in his home town on Nottingham when we were in the UK in 2010. He chatted to us, took us to lunch and down into the caves below the city. It was very cool. It was at this time I starting thinking what a great guest Marc would make. At that time I wasn't running a convention. Later, having Marc as a possible guest was one of the critical factors in me talking to Nicole and then us bidding for the Natcon. Nicole was very keen on the idea too, even though she didn't know Marc.

Marc went on to be nominated for a World Fantasy Award for his work with Angry Robot (which he won) and he had contracted a few more Australian authors, like the wonderful Jo Anderton and the amazing Lee Battersby. It was like Marc was the centre of a nurturing web and Nicole and I wanted to share that nurturing around with you lot.

There were a few things in our favour in luring Marc down here to backside of the world. Marc is a great guy. He's not been to Australia before and hell, he was willing. Since conceiving the idea of having him as a guest, he'd launched Strange Chemistry, AR's young adult imprint and just recently Exhibit A, the crime imprint. I'm not sure if you have noticed, but Marc has a decided predilection for world domination. His entrepreneurial flair in this decidedly dodgy world publishing climate is an amazing thing to behold. He didn't let Angry Robot's split from Harper Collins stop him and since the imprint moved to Osprey it has grown and grown. They even have a New York distributor I believe.

Marc has a long history of pushing into new ground professionally, building up markets and using innovative ways of approaching things. He does write himself (I recall a the *Ren and Stinpy Happy Happy Joy Joy Book!*) but I don't think he has much time for it now. One of the things that warms the cockles of my heart is that he has been known to say he likes publishing new writers and giving them their first leg up.

I'm sure you will all enjoy having Marco for a guest. He's certainly signed up for a lot of things. Let's make sure we wear him out so he can sleep on the plane back to the UK.

Donna Maree Hanson



KAARON WARREN

GUEST OF HONOUR

Sometimes I just wonder what my life had been like if I hadn't met and gotten to know Kaaron Warren. Amazing woman just doesn't cut it. Even freaking amazing doesn't. Kaaron Warren is not of this world, well her writing isn't. She casts up those dark eyes, and that friendly smile, her motherly charm as she tends her family, guests and friends and even a tongue that can lash with a sharp alacrity like her words cutting across the page with machete rhythm— across your mind, thrusting deep into your inner most fears.

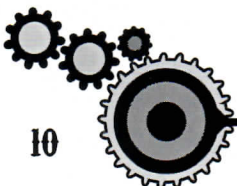
I often think of her work as unique. Although that word is so cliché and so inadequate. She didn't do the learning to write thing the way others did. She didn't learn her craft imitating others. She cut a swathe through all that stuff and just wrote. That's my theory for her unique voice, the aural tones permeating her work, making the words chime and clang and drip and cling in your ears, in your mind, in your soul. Her imagery makes you sweat: your heart clench and falter. Her fiction is a total immersion experience. It's taste and colour and cloying human emotion and twisted thinking and ideas, curling, twirling and soaring above and gasping for breath.

You wonder why Kaaron Warren is a guest at Conflux 9? Well you are going to find out. She's not such a hidden treasure in Canberra these days. My only claim to fame is that I edited *The Grinding House*, Kaaron Warren's first short story collection. By doing this, I have swept my fingers through her contrail as she streaks across the heavens and I can say I almost touched her. It was the best thing I ever did, the most rewarding and it makes me proud.

Come meet Kaaron Warren at Conflux and despair.

Donna Hanson

Photo: Emma Dillon, Starshots





KAREN MILLER

GUEST OF HONOUR

The idea of having Karen Miller as a guest at a con came to me back in 2010. Maybe even 2009. Anyhoo, the guests at Worldcon had been announced and there was a bit of a discussion about the lack of women.

“Lots of great women who could be guests,” some people said. “What about Karen Miller?”

Yes, there were other names, but for some reason Karen’s really stuck for me.

I knew Karen would be great – she’s generous, particularly with up-and-coming writers (as is evidenced by the fact she’s running a workshop at Conflux 9). She’s fun, she’s funny, she’s not afraid to put forward her thoughts and she won’t shy from a discussion about it – perfect panel material.

We also liked the idea of having a traditional fantasy writer. With Nalo, we had more of the magical realism side and with Kaaron it’s dark fantasy and horror. Karen writes a lot of cool stuff (ranging from the *Star Wars* work to her more comedic KE Mills work) but it’s the epic fantasy that’s really built her name. As fans of the genre, Donna and I wanted to celebrate.

She’s also got some great interests to talk about – her work in the theatre. Her time as a bookseller. Her deep abiding love of horses.

Then there’s the fact she has the coolest shoes. Honestly, kick-arse shoes. They’re terrific!

For me personally, Karen has been both an inspiration and a great support in my writing career. Karen’s been one of the people who has spurred me on to take chances, to get out there and make things happen. I would never have gone to the RT Convention in Los Angeles two years ago if not for her surety that I should go. One of the best trips of my life.

So I’m delighted to have another strong, amazing woman being lauded as a guest of honour at a Natcon. And then there’s the fact she worked in Penrith for a number of years. As a Penrith girl born and bred one truth is grained into my blood – we westies gotta stick together!

Nicole Murphy



ROSE MITCHELL

GUEST OF HONOUR

Why did we chose Rose Mitchell as a guest of honour...

Because she's Rose Mitchell.

Sheesh!

You want more? Well, she's been involved in fandom since the early 90s, headed up the finances of the first Aussiecon (that's Worldcon - THE con if you didn't know) and chaired two Australian Natcons then co-chaired Aussiecon 4 in 2010.

Still not enough?

Okay, suckers, how's this - if it weren't for Rose Mitchell, CONFLUX CONVENTIONS WOULDN'T EXIST.

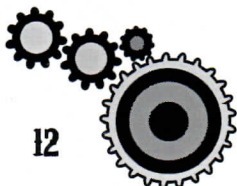
Maybe that's a tad of an over-reaction, but actually it's not. Rose was there at the beginning, guiding Donna and the Conflux committee to pull together the first and then the second Conflux conventions. Victorian Science Fiction Conventions auspiced those first two cons thanks to Rose, until Conflux grew up and got its own legal entity.

So yeah - you are here, at this convention right now, reading this book in no small part because of Rose Mitchell.

If you're still not convinced then here's what you need to do. You need to go find Rose. You need to sit down and you need to talk to her. I can guarantee that within a few minutes, you'll come and find Donna and I and say "Because she's Rose Mitchell."

There's no other reason necessary.

Nicole Murphy



HIGH TEA

3pm, Thursday 25 April
Restaurant/Atrium

The steampunk high-tea was an idea formed by merging two really cool things. High-tea, well who can argue against one of those? A small indulgence, a bit of elegance and a smattering of crumbs. Add to that a dress option that allows your imagination to run free. Victoriana! Steampunk imaginings! All combined under the Conflux 9 theme of Steam, Angels, Junk.

Having a themed high-tea means you can dress up in pure historical costume if you want. Bring on the bustle, bring on the lace handwarmers, bowler hats and cravats. Come along in your own style. Dip into the steampunk arena and your imagination is the key. Steampunk dress up options are a modern slant on Victorian times, sometimes without much historical reference at all but as an inspiration. Men wearing corsets, leather corsets perhaps, or funky goggles with leather and fur. Hats all kinds. Bit of cogs and gears as eye pieces, jewellery or as a coat. Jodhpurs and a scarf for those in dirigibles. There are short dresses with steampunk flair, with a corset on the outside (something a Victorian lady would not do). Perhaps, a western cowboy slant with a Derringer or long 'Doc Holliday' coat. Elaborate hair, amazing flair. Dark and gritty to light and fluffy costumes.

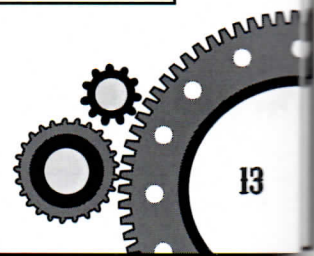


Take eight beginning writers, one enthusiastic editor/mentor and dreams and what do you get?

IN FABULA-DIVINO THE TALE-TELLERS

Anthology features stories from Kevin J Anderson/Rebecca Moesta; Trudi Canavan; Angela Slatter and Kaaron Warren

ON SALE AT THE CSFG TABLE IN THE DEALERS ROOM



Regency Gothic Banquet

7.30pm, Friday 26th April
Forrest Room 2

Since Conflux 3, the historically-accurate banquets have been a feature of the Conflux conventions. Creator of those banquets Gillian Polack has retired from convention organising (smart woman) but we didn't want to miss out on an important part of the history of Conflux.

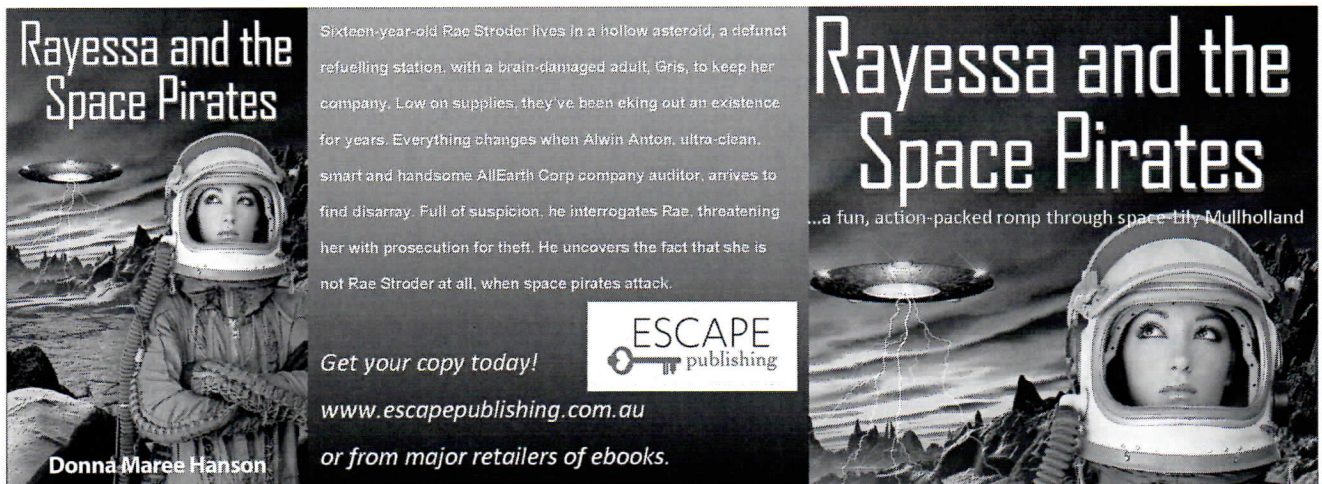
Luckily, Gillian and Conflux Incorporated joined forces with Eneit Press to publish 'Five Historical Feasts' – the recipes of the Conflux banquets. So we were able to re-create for you the most popular of the Conflux banquets (for Regency tragics Donna and Nicole at least) – The Regency Gothic Banquet.

This was the second of the banquets, held at Conflux 4 (which Nicole chaired, another reason she loved it). That banquet was awash with fabulous costumes and overly swollen stomachs as people fought to eat all the incredibly delicious food that was served.

Be warned – if you're attending this year's banquet, **DON'T HAVE A BIG LUNCH ON FRIDAY!**

This year we're adding to the sense of occasion and fun by inviting the Earthly Delights dancers to come and showcase some Regency dancing.

Nicole and Donna anticipate another elegant, sophisticated evening of stuffing ourselves silly – Regency style.



Rayessa and the Space Pirates

Sixteen-year-old Rae Stroder lives in a hollow asteroid, a defunct refuelling station, with a brain-damaged adult, Gris, to keep her company. Low on supplies, they've been eking out an existence for years. Everything changes when Alwin Anton, ultra-clean, smart and handsome AllEarth Corp company auditor, arrives to find disarray. Full of suspicion, he interrogates Rae, threatening her with prosecution for theft. He uncovers the fact that she is not Rae Stroder at all, when space pirates attack.

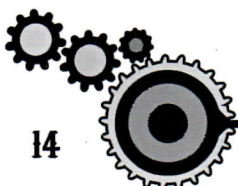
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Donna Maree Hanson

...a fun, action-packed romp through space-billy Mullholland



Masquerade — Junkyard Cathedral

8pm onwards, Saturday 27th April
Acacia Lounge

Come dance the night away in the Junkyard Cathedral on Saturday night! This event is included in your membership, although you will have to buy your own drinks. Organised by Kyla Ward, who was the magic behind the fabulous AHWA dance at Worldcon in 2010.

Salvation's at hand,
It's a matter of taste, dear.

Lost in ideals that you found in the trash

"Babylon", The Tea Party

Recycle your faith at the Junkyard Cathedral! Drink, dance and assist in composing the JUNKYARD COMMANDMENTS. How many will be broken by the end of the evening? How many miracles will OUR LADY of LITTER have wrought?

Our DJ will be answering your musical prayers with the best of the eighties, nineties and noughties, with a few Gregorian chants thrown in. A quiet area with seating has been set aside for conversation and, although all are welcome, no preaching will be tolerated.

So join us for some completely non-denominational fun and remember that one person's fantasy is another's sincere belief.

From 8.00 pm onwards, Saturday 27th April 2013, in the Acacia lounge, next to the bar on the ground level.

Come dressed for church or TRASHY!!!



WEAPON OF FLESH BY CHRIS A. JACKSON

"Fantastic, everything I could want in a fantasy novel! Love, betrayal, freaking bone-crunching action."

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"*Weapon of Flesh* is a fabulous tale of medieval fantasy that will leave readers begging for more from author Chris A. Jackson."



"Excellent read, highly recommended."

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CONFLUX 9 DEALERS

The dealers room at Conflux 9 is packed with interesting people, selling fabulous things and providing fascinating information.

Conflux 9 Bookseller - Slow Glass Books

Slow Glass Books is a mail order and library supplier - specialising in science fiction, fantasy, horror and graphic novels, with occasional forays into crime fiction. Slow Glass Books is celebrating its 25th year in business this year.

Andromeda Spaceways Inflight Magazine

Andromeda Spaceways Inflight Magazine: the Galaxy's best short fiction, available for purchase with a few of your Earth dollars! We'll have the latest issue, back issues, subscriptions and e-books available for sale. Plus you can pick the brains, such as they are, of the people who for the past eleven years have steered Andromeda Spaceways through 56 issues and counting

Australian Romance Readers Association

The Australian Romance Readers Association was established in 2008 in order to unite a vast community of romance readers, and to promote romance fiction. ARRA is the first national organisation of its kind, and is committed to serving the needs of its members throughout Australia and beyond. ARRA is dedicated to providing a forum for romance readers to communicate, share and explore all things romance fiction. If you're interested in expanding your horizons and delving into new and different types of romance novels, then ARRA is one of the best resources for you. ARRA is a volunteer association run by romance readers, for romance readers.

The Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild

The Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild is an incorporated association for Canberra-based creators of speculative fiction. Our goal is to support and provide development opportunities for our members as they move from aspiring, to published to (fingers crossed) professional makers of spec-fic.

Oh, and also, world domination.

Since 2001, CSFG has been publishing themed anthologies featuring stories by CSFG members and other writers from all around Australia. These anthologies are available at the CSFG table alongside other publications by our members and the CSFG's latest anthology, *Next*.

Celestial Cobbler

Celestial Cobbler, (celestialcobbler.com) run by Edwina Harvey will be selling ceramics, hand painted silk items, jewellery, Lyn McConchie's "Daze" books, Peggy Bright Books (peggybrightbooks.com) including: Light Touch Paper Stand Clear, Flight 404/The Hunt for Red Leicester, Rare Unsigned Copy, and The Whale's Tale. Edwina is an Editor for Hire, and will also have a SF "Lucky Dip" to raise money for FFANZ

Custom made corsets by Creative Corsetry

At Creative Corsetry we are committed to working with you to achieve the look and style that is tailored specifically to meet your needs and wishes. We strive to create a unique and fun experience when you choose to have a garment crafted by us for your special occasion, including: weddings, costume conventions, themed balls and costume parties. Our aim is to work with you to ensure your experience will include: an individual consultation, assistance with styles and colour combinations, high quality materials and superb craftsmanship. Please visit us at Conflux and at <http://creativecorsetry.com.au>

FableCroft Publishing

FableCroft Publishing is a boutique press dedicated to the future of speculative fiction in Australia. The creation of Australian editor Tehani Wessely, FableCroft has a charter to promote both emerging and established authors and artists in the speculative fiction field, as well as the broad genre as a whole.

Twelfth Planet Press

Twelfth Planet Press is an independent publishing house for fresh and exciting speculative fiction, dedicated to providing a market for quality works that are outside the purview of mainstream publishing. Twelfth Planet Press supports emerging and established Australian authors, particularly those in traditionally disenfranchised societal roles, including women and writers in regional areas.

SATURDAY MARKET DAY

To give our dealers some diversity of opportunity and to provide members with more chances to spend their hard-earned money, we're having a one-day only Market Day.

On Saturday the conference floor will come alive to the sounds of hawkers selling their wares. Tables will spill around the conference floor, offering books, comics, figurines and more.

Market Day dealers include:

- **Patty Jansen**
- **Karen Simpson Nikakis**
- **Shane W Smith**
- **David Davies**
- **Tribe of the Little People (collectibles)**

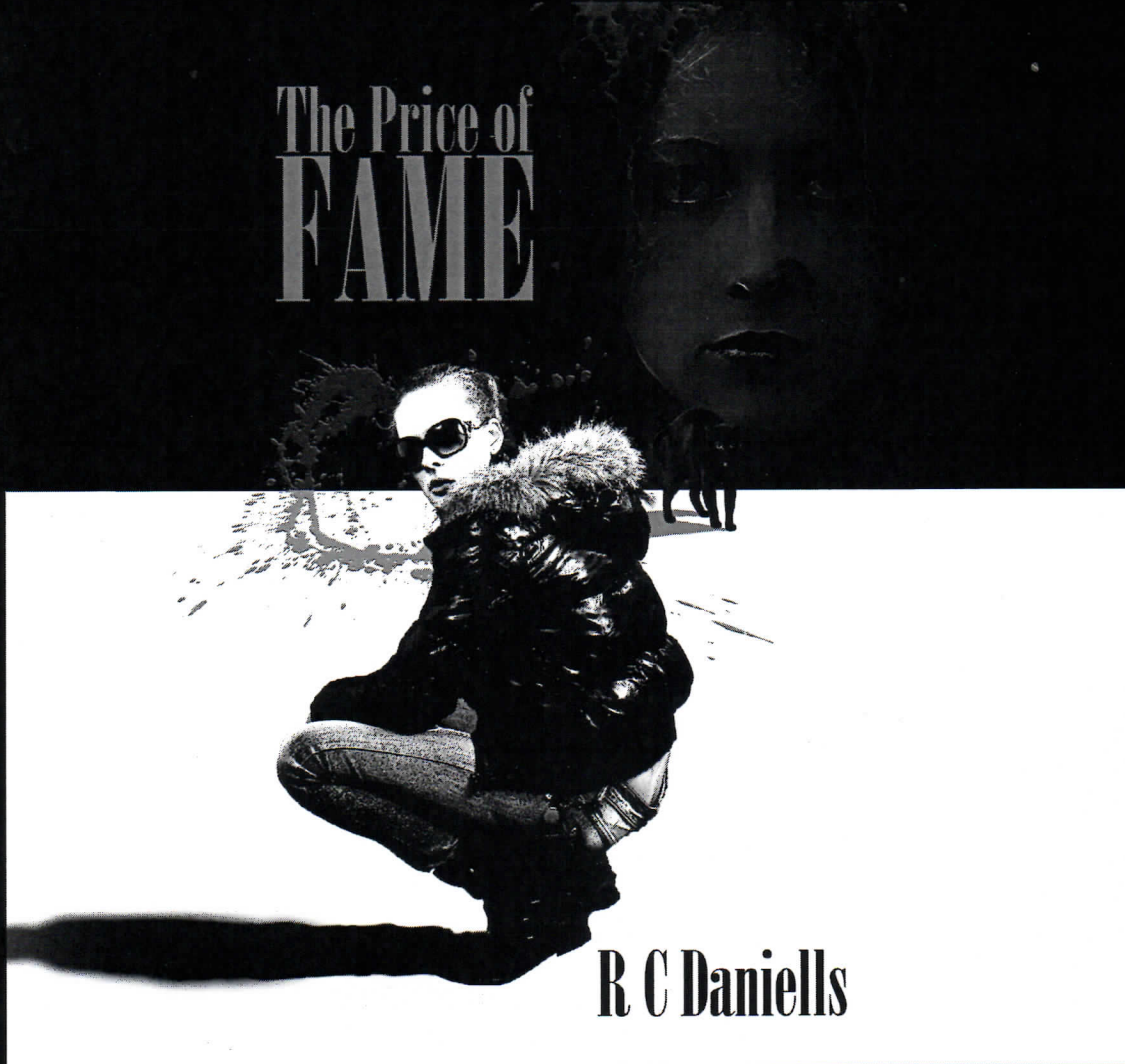
Come enjoy the colour and fun!

*The Dealers Room is located in Event Room 2
(see map on inside cover)*

*Opening hours: Thursday – 1pm-5.30pm, Friday – 9am-6pm
Saturday – 9am-5pm, Sunday – 9am-3.30pm*

Where will Antonia's search for truth lead and who will suffer?

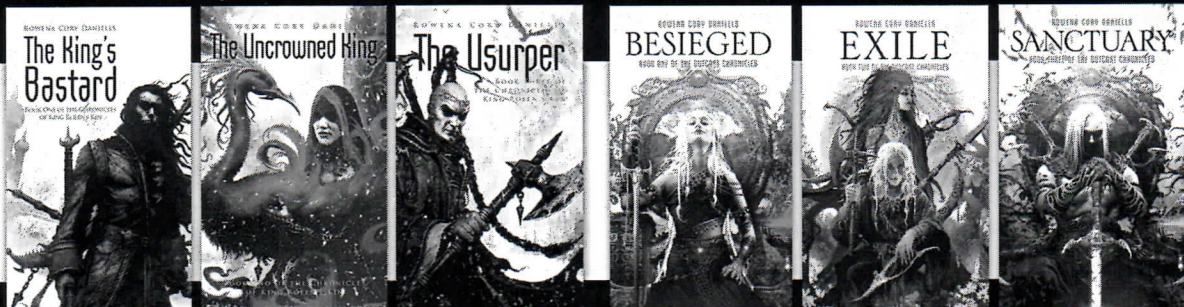
The Price of FAME



R C Daniells

From the author of the Best Selling King Rolen's Kin trilogy, a gritty dark tale of fame and past mistakes that come back to haunt us.

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WORKSHOPS

Writing Steampunk with Richard Harland - 12pm-3pm, Forrest Room 1

Writing to sell fiction with Patty Jansen - 12pm-3pm, Forrest Room 3

Worldbuilding with Glenda Larke - 12pm-3pm, Exec. Boardroom 2

Writing using the five senses with Dr Gillian Polack - 12pm-3pm, Exec. Boardroom 5

3pm-3.55pm	Steampunk High Tea Restaurant/Atrium	Self-publishing Forrest Room 1 Patty Jansen, Phill Berrie, Louise Curtis, Felicity Pulman	Why can't I find the books I'm looking for in my local bookstore? Forrest Room 3 Justin Ackroyd, Paul Landymore, Joanne Anderton
4pm <i>Afternoon tea</i>			
4.30pm-5.30	Newbie welcome In the bar	Elevator Pitches Forrest Room 1 Alex Adsett, Chris Matthews, Marc Gascoigne, Tara Wynne	Instantaneous grafitication with digital books - Learn how to get the book you want when you want it Forrest Room 3 Amanda Bridgeman, David Versace, Louise Curtis
5.30pm-6pm	Book launch - Cat Sparks, <i>The Bride Price</i> Convention Floor Foyer		
6pm-7pm	Dinner Break		
7pm-7.45pm	Opening Ceremony - Forrest Room 2		
7.45pm-9pm	Cocktail party - Event Room 1		
9pm-9.55pm	The Horror Spectrum Forrest Room 1 Kaaron Warren, Kirstyn McDermott, Jason Nahrung, Terry Dowling, Alan Baxter	Birth, life and death in speculative fiction — important life transitions Forrest Room 2 Helen Stubbs, Jodi Cleghorn, Wade Bowmer, Lucy Sussex, Jack Dann	Converting the old to the new, or just creating new. The modern take on fairy tales. Forrest Room 3 Angela Slatter, Leife Shallcross, Jenny Blackford, Lisa Hannett
10pm-10.55pm	Haunting Tales Forrest Room 1 Karen Herkes, FelicityPulman, Kyla Ward	How is essential is an editor, particularly for self-published authors? Forrest Room 2 Abigail Nathan, Patty Jansen, Ian Nichols	Taboo subjects for authors Forrest Room 3 Keri Arthur, Tracey O'Hara, Gillian Polack, Alan Baxter

WORKSHOPS

Polishing your turds, or how to edit your stories with Ian McHugh - 8am-10am, Forrest Room 1

Designing a believable world with Russell Kirkpatrick - 8am-10am, Forrest Room 2

Distilling your story with Chris Andrews - 8am-10am, Forrest Room 3

Social Media for Writers with Zena Shapter - 9am-11am, Executive Boardroom 5

It runs on steam - or does it? (for the kids) with Rachel Holkner - 2.30-4.30pm, Executive Boardroom 2

9.30am-9.55am	Readings - Karen Miller <i>Exec. Boardroom 2</i>					
10am-10.55am	What was great about SF when we were young? Forrest Room 1 Rose Mitchell, Russell Blackford, Julian Warner, Paul Ewins (M), Eric Lindsay, Phil Berrie	The smack down - Small press versus mainstream publishers Forrest Room 2 Jane Virgo (M), Russell B Farr, Marc Gascoigne	Angels in fiction Forrest Room 3 Kyla Ward, Karen Simpson Nikakis	So you've sold your first book? Event Room 1 KJ Taylor, Richard Harland, Craig Cormick, Nalo Hopkinson	Pitching Exec. Boardroom 4 Tara Wynne	
11am-11.30am <i>Morning tea</i>	Book launch - Joanne Anderton, <i>The Bone Chime</i>, Fablecroft Press, <i>One Small Step</i> and Kirstyn McDermott, <i>Caution: contains small parts</i> Convention Floor Foyer	Readings - Russell Kirkpatrick Forrest Room 2	Kaffeeklatch - Garth Nix Atrium			
11.30am-12.25pm	Crowd funding-what is it? How does it work? Forrest Room 1 Alan Baxter, Laura Goodin, Matthew Farrer (M)	Where have all the Australian female fantasy writers gone? Forrest Room 2 Trudi Canavan, Karen Miller, Keri Arthur, Jane Routley	Meteor Inc Forrest Room 3 Mark Loney (M), Bill Wright, Grant Stone, Jean Weber, Pauline Dickinson	Publisher showcase Event Room 1 Marc Gascoigne, Alisa Krasnostein, Tehani Wessely	Reflexivity in Genre Exec. Boardroom 2 Fantasy Russell Kirkpatrick	Pitching Exec. Boardroom 4 Alex Adsett
12.30pm-1.25pm	The politics of steampunk Forrest Room 1 Richard Harland, Lisa Hannett, Gillian Polack	Young Adult Fiction Explosion <i>Forrest Room 2</i> Ingrid Jonach, Tony Eaton, Sean Williams, Justin Ackroyd (M), Craig Cormick, Garth Nix	GOH Rose Mitchell interviewed by Jason Nah-rung	Am I not human? Event Room 1 Deb Biancotti, Kirstyn McDermott, Angela Slatter, Kaaron Warren, Martin Livings	Pitching Exec. Boardroom 4 Paul Landymore	
1.30pm-2.30pm Lunch	Mass book signing Acacia Lounge <i>(1.30pm-2pm)</i>					

2.30pm-3.30pm	Guest of honour Marc Gascoigne interviewed by Peter Ball	Better than they should be - Anime panel discussion Event Room 1 John Samuel, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Shauna O'Meara, Aidan Doyle				
3.30pm-4pm <i>Afternoon tea</i>	Book Launch - Rob Hood, <i>Fragments of a Broken Land - Valarl Undead</i> Convention Floor Foyer	Readings - Trudi Canavan Forrest Room 1	Reading - Duncan Lay <i>Forrest Room 2</i>	Readings - <i>In Fabula Divino</i>, with Nicole Murphy, PJ Keuning and special guest authors Forrest Room 3	Kaffeeklatch Glenda Larke Atrium	
4pm-4.55pm	Zombies are Hungry Forrest Room 1 Rob Hood, Jason Nahrung and Martin Livings (M), Jason Fischer,	Contracts and copyright Forrest Room 2 Alex Adsett	Podcasts and multimedia Forrest Room 3 Jonathan Strahan, Kirstyn McDermott, Mihaela Marija Perkovic, Phil Berrie	Memorial gathering for Jan Howard Finder Event Room 1 Moderator Sue Burszytynski		
5pm-5.55pm	Speculative art Forrest Room 1 Lewis Morley Marilyn Pride, Kathleen Jennings, Shauna O'Meara (M), Les Petersen, Mik Bennett	The business side of writing Forrest Room 2 Peter Ball, Karen Miller, Alex Adsett and Martin Livings	Ticonderoga author spot Forrest Room 3 Russell B. Farr, Cat Sparks, Kaaron Warren, Patty Jansen, Angela Slatter, Jason Fischer, Jane Routley, Greg Mellor, Sean Williams	History-of-boy's-own-adventureillustration-as-it-relates-to-steampunk speech (with pictures!) Event Room 1 A presentation by Scott Westerfeld	SF in music Exec. Boardroom 2 A presentation by Russell Kirkpatrick	
6pm-6.30pm	Book launch - CSFG, Next Convention Floor Foyer	Poetry reading PS Cottier, Forrest Room 2				
6.30pm-7pm	Break for dinner and banquet prep					
7pm-11pm	Regency Banquet - Featuring regency dancing from <i>Earthly Delights</i> Meet in foyer at 7, sit down at 7.30pm Forrest Room 2					
8pm-8.55pm		Danny's Terrible Trivia with Danny Oz Forrest Room 1	Assailing the Borders of the Uncanny Valley: Robots, Androids and Devil Dolls Forrest Room 3 A presentation by Rob Hood			
9pm-9.55pm			Kissing in Space Forrest Room 3 Russell Blackford, Sean Williams, Patty Jansen, Devindran Jeyathurai (M), Dirk Flinthart, Kate Orman			

WORKSHOPS

Creating vital, vivid characters with Karen Miller - 8am-10am, Forrest Room 1

Getting real with worldbuilding and characters with Anthony Eaton - 8am-10am, Forrest Room 3

Angry Robot Pitching Workshop with Rowena Cory Daniells - 10am -11:30am, Exec. Boardroom 2

The Keys to the Kingdom continued: what professionals do to stay on top of the game - 10am -1pm, Exec. Boardroom 5

9.30am-9.55am	Readings - Richard Harland <i>Exec. Boardroom 2</i>					
10am-10.55am	Writing communities Forrest Room 1 Phil Berrie, Helen Stubbs, Zena Shapter, Satima Flavell, Leife Shallcross, Tracey O'Hara	Putting the heart into superheroes Forrest Room 2 Peter Ball, Rob Hood, Russell Blackford, Grant Stone, Matthew Farrer (M)	The ethics of immortality Forrest Room 3 Trudi Canavan, Jenny Blackford, Russell Kirkpatrick, Jane Virgo, Duncan Lay			
11am-11.30am <i>Morning tea</i>	Book launch - Jason Fischer, Quiver Convention Floor Foyer	Readings - Kaaron Warren Forrest Room 1	Kaffeeklatch - Karen Miller Atrium	Kaffeeklatch - Marc Gasgoigne Atrium	Kaffeeklatch - Duncan Lay Atrium	Reading - Nalo Hopkinson Forrest Room 2
11.30am-12.25pm	Geeks are Cool Forrest Room 1 Joanne Anderton, Sue Ann Barber, Jason Fischer, Rob Hood, Lewis Morley	Using history to inspire fiction Forrest Room 2 Jenny Blackford, Gillian Polack, Kate Forsyth, Aidan Doyle, Garth Nix, Felicity Pulman	Past, present and future fandom Forrest Room 3 Mihaela Marija Perkovic, Rose Mitchell, Dave Cake and Danny Oz	MT Promises: science fictional travel technologies and the making and unmaking of corporeal identity Exec. Boardroom 2 Sean Williams (presenting his PhD work)		
12.30pm-1.25pm	Female Leads--are they hogging the gender divide? Forrest Room 1 Sean Williams, Tracey O'Hara, Keri Arthur, Lucy Sussex	Appropriation of the sacred Forrest Room 2 Ian Nichols, Russell Kirkpatrick, Glenda Larke, Kate Orman,	Crime Tropes Forrest Room 3 Dev Jayathurai, PM Newton, Dirk Flinthart, Matthew Farrer, Deb Biancotti, Dan O'Malley	Fan funds Exec. Boardroom 2 Dave Cake, Bill Wright, Mihaela Marija Perkovic, Edwina Harvey and NAFF laureates		

1.30pm-2.30pm Lunch	Book launch - Richard Harland, Song of the Slums Convention Floor Foyer					
2.30pm-3.30pm	Guest of honour Nalo Hopkinson Forrest Room 1 & 2 Interviewed by Justine Larbalestier	Conventions, what are they? How are they developed? What types are there? Forrest Room 3 Rachel Holkner, Garry Darymple, Peter Ball, Dave Cake (M)				
3.30pm-4pm Afternoon tea	Book launch - Tom Dullemond/ Mike McRae, The Machine who was Also a Boy Convention Floor Foyer	Reading - Glenda Larke Forrest Room 1	Reading - Garth Nix, <i>Forrest Room 2</i>	Kaffeeklatch - Kate Forsyth Atrium	Kaffeeklatch - Trudi Canavan Atrium	
4pm-4.55pm	The I Job - Dr Who play Forrest Room 1 Jon Blum, Kate Orman, Kyla Ward and orrs.	Guest of honour Kaaron Warren Forrest Room 2	Fantasy World Building-the trips and traps Forrest Room 3 Russell Kirkpatrick, Karen Simpson Nikakis, Glenda Larke, Richard Harland, Duncan Lay	Croatian and non-English European Literature and Fandom Exec. Boardroom 2 Mihaela Marija Perkovi	Pitching Exec. Boardroom 4 Marc Gascoigne	
5pm-6.30pm	2013 Ditmar Awards <i>Forrest Room 1</i> Hosted by Deborah Biancotti					
6.30pm-7pm	Book launch - KJ Taylor, The Shadowed Throne, and Duncan Lay, The Valley of Shields Convention Floor Foyer					
7pm-8pm	Dinner Break					
8pm-8.55pm	Star Wars-the rebirth Forrest Room 1 Peter Ball, Marc Gascoigne, Chris Andrews (M), Karen Miller, Tom Dullemond	Romance Gauntlet Forrest Room 2 MC Craig Cormick, Judge Valerie Parv, Jane Virgo, Leife Shallcross, Kate Forsyth	Masquerade -Junkyard Cathedral Acacia Lounge			
9pm-9.55pm	SF, movies, television and fiction Forrest Room 1 Cat Sparks, Jon Blum, David McDonald, Alan Stewart, Devin Jeyathurai					

WORKSHOPS

Writing awesome books for kids with Dawn Meredith - 8am-10am, Forrest Room 3

10am-10.55am	The place of a mentor in your writing career Forrest Room 1 Kaaron Warren, Joanne Anderton, Kimberley Gaal, Jodi Cleghorn, Satima Flavell, Valerie Parv	The literary end of speculative fiction Forrest Room 2 Janeen Webb, Ian Nichols, Nalo Hopkinson, Terry Dowling, Jonathan Strahan	Does a cover sell a book? Forrest Room 3 Kathleen Jennings, Shauna O'Meara, Amanda Rainey, Cat Sparks, Marc Gascoigne, Rowena Cory Daniels.	Auction Exec. Boardroom 2
11am-11.30am <i>Morning tea</i>	Readings - Kate Forsyth Forrest Room 2	Book Launch - Nicole Murphy, In Fabula-divino Convention Floor Foyer		Kaffeeklatsch - Keri Archer Atrium
11.30am-12.25pm	Realism versus fantasy in young adult fiction Forrest Room 1 Dawn Meredith, Tycho Petrie, KJ Taylor, Tony Eaton, Kirstyn McDermott	Guest of honour Karen Miller Forrest Room 2 Guest of Honour talk on researching	The Essence of Steampunk Forrest Room 3 Rachel Holkner, Richard Harland, Mike Richards, Joanne Anderton, Carol Ryles, Louise Curtis	Natcon Business Meeting (12pm) Exec. Boardroom 2
12.30pm-1.25pm	The secret lives of authors? Forrest Room 1 Trudi Canavan, Nalo Hopkinson, Glenda Larke, Elizabeth Fitzgerald (M), Dirk Flinthart	Defining the essentials of a short story Forrest Room 2 Jonathan Strahan, Janeen Webb, Lisa Hannett, Gillian Polack	Would a female Dr Who make a better Dr Who? Forrest Room 3 Jon Blum, Kate Orman, David Versace, Val Toh	
1.30pm-2.30pm	Angry Robot hour <i>Forrest Room 1</i> Featuring Marc Gascoigne, Kaaron Warren, Joanne Anderton, Ingrid Jonach		Kaffeeklatsch - Russell Kirkpatrick <i>Atrium</i>	
2.30pm-3.25pm	Australian Landscapes Forrest Room 1 Terry Dowling, Tony Eaton, Cat Sparks (M), Jason Fischer	Newly published writers showcase Forrest Room 2 hosted by Marc Gascoigne, featuring Amanda Bridgeman, Ingrid Jonach, Graham Storrs	Junkyard writing Forrest Room 3 Jason Nahrung, Craig Cormick, Carol Ryles, Rob Porteous (M), Richard Lagarto, Dan O'Malley	
3.30pm-4.30pm	The alternative uses of magic Forrest Room 1 Jane Routley, KJ Taylor, Glenda Larke, Lucy Sussex, Karen Simpson Nikakis. Russell Kirkpatrick	Technological optimism versus political pessimism Forrest Room 2 Simon Petrie (M), Phil Berrie, Dirk Flinthart, Grant Stone, Dave Cake	Elegant promotion or just plain annoying Forrest Room 3 Alan Baxter, Alex Adsett, Abigail Nathan, Zena Shapter, Russell B Farr	
4.45pm-5.30pm	Closing Ceremony Includes presenting art show and short story competition prizes			
5.30pm	Dead Dog party - venue to be confirmed			

CONFLUX 13

SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Every Conflux convention has contained a short story competition and this one was no different. We had one of our biggest pools of entries for some years and the judges had a time of it but eventually they came up with the three stories you're about to read (published in winning order).

This year's prize pool was one of the biggest yet, thanks to the support of the Australian Science Fiction Foundation. Congratulations to:

AIDAN WALSH

ROB PORTEOUS

CAROL RYLES

Thanks to our judges Joanne Anderton, Jenny Blackford and Dirk Flinthart and huge thanks to Elizabeth Fitzgerald, for running the competition and editing the entries for publication.

CSfG TO DO LIST

- * Publish awesome anthologies of Australian writing.
- * Run workshops on writing, publishing and anything else we find interesting.
- * Host monthly meeting, writing groups and critiquing groups (must buy more chocolate)

* WORLD DOMINATION!

(That's meant to be a secret dear.

Luv, Mum xxoo)

You need to ask yourself,
**Is there anything
we *DON'T* do?**

(Yes, there is. But we do all the important stuff)

The Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild is the association for Canberra-based creators of speculative fiction – science fiction, fantasy or horror – in any medium.

We offer craft lessons, workshops, critiquing groups and social events for writers based in the Canberra region. We also publish regular anthologies of Australian spec-fic, and in 2013 will bravely go audio with our own podcast series.

We welcome visitors to our meetings. Check out our website for more details.

CSfG Publishing

csfg.wordpress.com

Reunification

by Aidan Walsh

I can't remember when I first noticed the Junker. He had been around so long that most adults no longer noticed him - he was as simultaneously present and yet invisible as the great chimneys that loomed over us. Of course there was no shortage of madmen wandering the streets in those days. Broken in the factories or malfunctioning due to grief or injury, thousands of them lurched aimlessly through the gloom of the city till the cold or the smog killed them.

But the Junker was different. Far from aimless, he walked the same path every day. We passed him every morning as we walked to school. No matter the weather he always looked the same. Shoulders stooped, an ugly patched coat wrapped around him like a shroud, a little cart squeaking and jolting along behind him and an ugly little dog trotting by his side. In the grey light of dawn he trudged downhill towards the vast rubbish dumps along the banks of the Terva. In the evenings I would sometimes see him returning home slowly through the dark, his cart laden with junk.

Little Illyich was afraid of the Junker and he would hold my hand tightly when he saw him. 'I don't like him, Anna,' he'd whisper. The Junker didn't scare me though. His strange sense of purpose caught my attention. I constructed fables around him. He was a witch's servant, searching for parts to repair an infernal device. Or he was a ruined lord, faithfully repairing his broken steam-retainer.

I had turned twelve and winter's grey snows had just buried autumn when I first spoke to the Junker. One evening I came across him surrounded by a group of urchins, leaping, screeching and jeering, as they tried to steal his day's scroungings. Having a well-developed sense of outrage I drove them off with a barrage of kicks and yanks on their greasy hair. Once they had fled I walked back to where he stood by his overturned cart.

'Thank you. I am used to them, but they do scare Bounce,' he said. Bounce showed his gratitude by covering my skirt with muddy footprints that would earn me a smack from mother.

'They are babies anyway,' I said, pleased with my noble deed.

The Junker smiled and I noticed that his eyes were the brightest blue, the kind of colour that travellers said the sky outside the city was in summer. 'I am in your debt.'

I muttered something awkward, before my curiosity saved me. 'How did you go today?' I asked pointing to junk scattered in the snow.

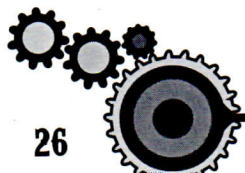
'Nothing that I need,' he sighed.

I said goodbye. He nodded very formally, while Bounce ran around barking.

* * *

Every morning after that I would say hello to the Junker and in the evenings I would ask him how he had gone. His answer was always the same. 'Nothing that I need.'

On Midwinter's day, the Blackhaven ether leak closed my school for the week, leaving me free to roam about as I pleased. On the third day of our unplanned holiday I was listlessly fulfilling the role of some princess' lady-in-waiting for my friends when I spotted the Junker hobbling down towards the Terva. Abandoning my royal duties, I ran after him.



'Can I come with you today Junker?' I asked. The dumps seemed more interesting than princesses.

'Shouldn't you be at school?'

I told him it was cancelled.

He nodded. 'One mustn't waste school.'

'So can I come?'

'It is dangerous,' he paused to take in the gloomy, ash tainted neighbourhood. 'But no more so than here, I suppose. Will you do as you are told?'

I nodded very seriously.

So the Junker, Bounce and I went down to the great dump at Icarus Field. Although I had seen it countless times from a distance, up close it seemed to go on forever, endless piles of junk rising from the earth like obscene mountains, a kingdom of feral despair, stretching away to the turgid river. Overhead, a few sickly birds circled through the fetid sky.

The Junker led us confidently through the labyrinth of rubbish until we came upon a small blue flag.

'This is where we start today,' he announced. Bounce barked in apparent agreement.

'What are we looking for?'

'I am looking for something special. You may look for what you will.'

I was annoyed not to be let in on his secret, but I realised that sulking wouldn't help tease it out. So, I set to picking through the blue-flagged pile with gusto, marvelling at the things the dump surrendered; springs, gears, hats and even the eyeless skull of a steam-servant. I was somewhat mollified when the Junker began to ask for my help, first I helped him lift a heavy iron plate and then I shinnied down into the black guts of an old steam boiler. 'This isn't a very nice place, Junker,' I said accusingly as I scrambled back out of the claustrophobic belly of the machine.

He nodded and sat down heavily on the junk. 'It's not, but it was a beautiful meadow when I was a boy.' He absently patted Bounce's head. 'A very pretty brook ran down a wooded valley just over there.'

'Did you live near here, then?'

He shook his head. 'I worked here. See that factory?'

I couldn't miss it, the mill rose fat and glum above the rubbish, its stacks vomiting oily steam into the afternoon sky.

'That was where I worked, although it wasn't the factory then. It was a pretty sandstone building with thin dreaming towers for plump, dreaming academics,' he paused for a long moment. 'My wife loved to see the dawn star, sometimes if we had worked all night, we would come out here, sit together and watch it rise.'

'Now it's ruined.'

He nodded. 'It is.'

'That's terrible!' I had never really thought about what Ironholme had been like before the factories.

'True. But that factory makes steam-men. They do dangerous work that stops men like your father from being killed in the factories.'

I looked out at the desolation. 'So it was worth it?'

'Men wiser than me would say yes. But it was a beautiful meadow.'

* * *

The Junker, despite his years, worked tirelessly through the afternoon, pausing only to occasionally give Bounce something to drink or eat. To my frustration I had got no closer to uncovering the secret of what he was looking for when the distant sirens bellowed mournfully out into the gloom. The Junker sunk his little blue flag into the foot of the junk pile to mark tomorrow's starting point and motioned for me to follow him. 'It will be dark soon. Your parents will be worried.'

At the foot of the viaduct, just under the heavy brow of the hill, we said our goodbyes and I made my way home. The Junker was only just out of sight when some of the brats emerged out of the smog, snickering and laughing.

'She's friends with the Junker!'

'We saw her scrounging around with him like a little rat.'

One of the bigger boys danced in front of me. 'You know why he searches around in all that junk?'

I ignored him

He yanked on one of my pig tails. 'It's 'cause he cut his wife up and he can't remember where he buried the head.'

I ran home, cries of 'Rat!' following me.

* * *

I wasn't a devious child and over dinner that night I told my parents what I had done that day. I saw mother cast my father a nervous glance, but he only shrugged.

'How long has Junker been going to the dump?' I asked, sensing I was safe.

'Since before we lived here, dear,' my mother said.

'That long! He seems very sad.'

My parents shared a knowing glance.

'What? Tell me, I want to know.'

'A long time ago he was a scientist,' my father paused and swirled his spoon through his water thin broth. 'His wife worked with him in his laboratory. She was killed in an accident.' Father wasn't a man to patronise his children.

My stomach lurched and I thought of the brat's taunts. 'But why does he go to the dump?'

'Sometimes, when something very bad happens to someone, they are never the same again,' he said slowly.

'Junker has a dog. Can we have a dog, mother?' asked little Illyich suddenly.

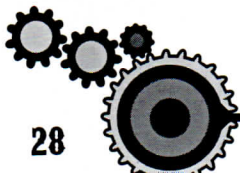
'You know we couldn't afford to feed a dog,' she said in a kindly, motherly way that brooked no argument. 'Now eat your broth before it gets cold.'

His lip quivered, but he did as he was told.

As I took my empty bowl to the washing up dish, father stopped me with a gentle hand. 'I don't want you calling him Junker anymore, Anna. The old man's name is Bazarov.'

* * * *

From then on I would meet Bazarov and Bounce under the great statue of the Redeemer at sixth bell. We would walk back to my house and he would ask me questions about my day at school. As the winter dragged on he would set me riddles and if I answered them correctly, he would present me with prizes



that he must have scavenged from the dump. The best was a bit of metal the size of a dinner plate that carried a beautiful heraldic crest. At the time I fancied it to be a knight's shield, but I realise now it had once been the front plate to a dirigible harness.

He frowned when he saw my excitement. 'You must be careful with that.'

'I won't let anyone steal it.'

'It's not that, some might come to the wrong conclusion if they saw you showing that off.'

'Why?'

'That is the King's crest, people might take you for a Royalist.'

'Never! The King was a traitor.' I was a good product of the parliament's schools at that age.

'He was certainly wrong. But he went to his death believing he served us.'

'He fought the Tall Parliament!'

'That was a crime. But I don't think he deserved the steam wheel.'

'Why?'

'All of us should have a chance to right our wrongs.'

* * *

On the first day of spring Bazarov didn't arrive for our meeting. I found him halfway up the hill, lying by the side of the road, stepped over by passersby like he was nothing more than rubbish. Bounce was licking his white face as if attempting to wake his master. I hurried to him, sure he was dead, but as I approached he opened his eyes. Their blue had faded to a colour as flat as our heavy sky.

'Anna,' he croaked.

'What happened?'

'Nothing,' I watched as a tear trickled down his lined face. 'I'm spent. I've failed.'

In those days I was full of the burning optimism of youth and I helped him back to his feet. Upright, his colour improved, but it was obvious he would never be able to make it home under his own steam.

'I'll help you home,' I said.

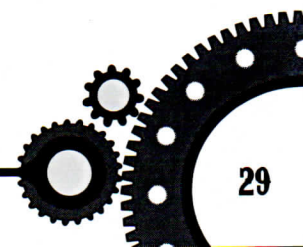
He looked like he wanted to argue, but I could tell he didn't even have strength for that. 'Thank you.'

Doing my best to support him, we hobbled back up the hill to the statue of the Redeemer, then on under the viaduct and down past the smouldering edifice of the Romanov Ironworks. His house, when we came to it, somehow looked exactly how I had expected it to. It sat in the palm of skeletal hand, the bony concrete fingers of grey tenements surrounding it, guaranteeing that even our weak sunlight would never fall upon it. The house itself might have once been pretty, but now it was ramshackle and tired, all dirty sightless windows and cracked, flaking scabs of ancient paint.

Bazarov unlocked the door and let us inside. Stumbling into the darkness he collapsed into the nearest dusty chair with a groan. Bounce jumped up into his lap.

Shutting the door behind us, I took in the room. The air was thin, hot and sulphurous. The benches were cluttered with bubbling vials and hissing burners. Books were piled around the wall in tall stacks. Warm brass pipes, humming and rattling with an unseen machine's rhythm, ran over the ceiling like ribs of some ancient mechanical beast. I was shocked; it looked like a cross between a library and laboratory.

I turned back to Bazarov. 'Can I do anything?'



He nodded weakly and pointed towards a work table. 'Fetch Bounce his food, he'll be hungry.'

I hurried over to the bench and searched amongst the clutter. Lifting the box of dried meats, I stopped. Behind it was a beautiful sculpted face of polished brass. Life sized, the mask almost perfectly captured the features of a middle-aged woman.

I picked it up gingerly and studied it. The woman looked about as old as my mother and her mouth and eyes, were framed by lines left by smiles. 'What is this, Bazarov?'

'This? I suppose it is a recessional,' he said sadly. 'A trinket I made to remind me of my wife.'

'You made this?'

'I did,' he laughed, a flat empty laugh. 'I was once famous for my steam-men. They were almost lifelike, my colleagues said.'

'She is beautiful.'

'She was.' He sank deeper into his chair. Now you should leave. Your mother will be worried.'

I didn't want to leave, but I knew he was right. 'I will see you tomorrow won't I?'

'I don't know Anna,' he whispered.

'Why?'

'I... I... am just so tired.'

'But the winter is over; Mother says everything is better in spring.'

A smile ghosted across his face. 'Does she?'

* * *

Next day when I reached the Redeemer, there was no sign of Bazarov. But the brats were there, squawking like crows.

'That's right, we saw Big Rat running back up the hill, carrying that little rat dog and some piece of junk,' a black haired boy called down. 'He looked like he was crying. Crying!' They laughed.

I ran all the way to his house only to be stopped by the crowd was gathered outside at a safe distance. It wasn't hard to see why, the house was shaking and straining like it was trying to burst apart. Steam gushed from every crack. I tried to break free and get through to the house, but the press held me back. Finally, when my cries and thrashing got too much, a constable dragged me home.

I begged my mother to let me go back, but she refused and I could tell by the hard and scared look on her face that she wasn't going to change her mind. That night, for the first time since I was little, I threw myself into bed and cried myself to sleep.

I awoke before dawn to the sound of incessant barking. Illyich and I rushed downstairs to find father had already opened the door. We peered past him and there on the doorstep, tied by his collar to a sturdy wooden box, was Bounce.

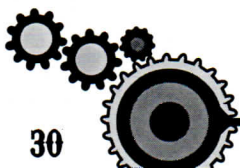
'What is it?' my mother called down.

'Bazarov's dog,' called Illyich, rushing forward to untie Bounce.

'Oh...' my mother said simply, no doubt already wondering how we could hope to feed him.

My father gently pushed Illyich and Bounce inside and then reached down into the box. He took out a small tin. He studied a note attached to it and then turned to me. 'It is addressed to you.'

I took the tin. Tied to it was a letter with my name written on it in an old fashioned script. With shaking hands, I opened it.



Dearest Anna,

Thank you for all your help. I could never have got through this winter and found what I sought without you.

I was hoping you could look after Bounce for me. It is horrible to leave him, but he cannot follow where we are going. I have included some scraps I found in the junk to help pay his way. Be kind to him, he has been a faithful dog.

I may have overestimated how much it costs to keep Bounce. Anything left is yours. Remember not to waste school.

Bazarov

I opened the box. Behind me, I heard my parent's sharp intake of breath. A lump of roughly melted gold as big as my finger sat on top of a sparkling bed of tiny precious stones, intertwined with glittering threads of silver and gold.

My father was already pulling on his heavy coat, his face a confused mix of wonder and concern.

'Are you going to check on Bazarov?' I asked in a quavering voice.

He nodded. 'You can come.'

* * *

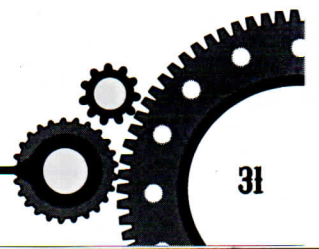
Bazarov's house had been torn apart. The roof was peeled back against the encroaching tenements like a mad artist's wooden flower. The walls sagged outwards like old drunks. 'What happened?' father asked a constable standing in front of the ruin.

'I've no idea,' the constable snapped. 'The only witness is talking bloody gibberish.'

It was the black-haired brat, face ashen and his eyes wide. 'I was just havin' a look around after things quietened down was all, wasn't stealin'. But then these two angels came bursting out of the cellar. Two of them, made from metal and the like. Then, then...' he gulped like a landed fish. 'They bloody rose up on wings of steam, they did.' He pointed upwards.

We looked up, following his gesture and gasped almost as one. A great hole had been torn in the smog and for the first time in my life I saw stars. They glittered down on us, cold, eternal and beautiful.

As we watched transfixed, two of the stars shook themselves free from the firmament and danced together in a graceful, intertwined arc across the ink black night, until they disappeared into the east and the dawn.



Flight

by Rob Porteous

There was no warning. The cramp struck as Radovan was running up the stairs, shooting up his side like electricity. *For God's sake, not now!* He felt his gut clench with the pain and then the concussion as he fell hard on to the stone steps. He lay on his side, awkwardly, trying to arch his back, to straighten his leg to stretch out the screaming muscles, his teeth gritted.

Boško and Inela caught up to him, panting, looking worried.

'Radovan, what's going on? How did you fall? Are you hurt?' Inela's eyes were wide and her face was pale. She hadn't seen him spastic before.

Boško, of course, knew Radovan well; they'd grown up together. Boško lifted him up, helped him get his leg straight, steadying him until the convulsions stopped.

'Can you walk?' Boško looked down the stairs anxiously. The square below was still empty but they were completely exposed out in the moonlight. The shouts of pursuit were getting louder—it sounded as if they were only a minute or two away. Probably a gang of Bosniak militia from the west-side, hunting Serbs. Or maybe they were from Inela's family, Bosniaks as well.

Either way, things would end badly if they caught up.

'I think I can walk, but I won't be able to keep up. Don't wait for me. I'll hide in the alley,' Radovan whispered urgently, between quick, shallow breaths.

Just above them, the steps levelled out for a couple of metres before resuming their run up the hill. There was an archway in the high brick wall at one side, its black mouth marking where a narrow alley led back into the old city. Boško took Radovan's weak side and helped him to hop up the steps and into the shadows. Radovan leaned on the cold stone and pushed him away.

'Go!'

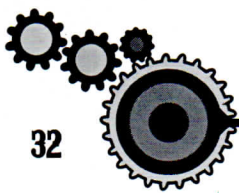
Inela pulled at Boško's hand but he stood still, looking back at Radovan.

'Now!' Radovan insisted. Reluctantly, Boško turned and he and Inela started up the steps. After the first two steps, they were running again.

Radovan watched them until they were out of sight then steadied himself, trying to take slow, deep breaths. He could see out over Sarajevo; ranks of white-walled apartment blocks crowding up the low hills from the river, their terracotta roofs a muted grey in the moonlight. There were few lights; the city seemed to sleep, still and pale.

But the serenity was an illusion—a dark, malevolent twin to the moon hung in the air over the western side of the city, a *Rennerschiff*! One of the Austrian Imperial airships, ringed by columns of smoke, it was dropping bombs onto the last of the Serbian resistance. Even at this distance, Radovan could see flames and hear the unsteady percussive rhythm of the barrage.

A movement caught his eye and he turned to see a second *Rennerschiff* rising from the Ottoman encampment on the south side of the river. Four giant propellers sawed at the air, gradually moving the airship in an arc until it was side on, the massive torpedo shape dwarfing the bomb magazine that hung beneath. It moved slowly west to join the first ship.



Another spasm tore at his side with a million razored teeth—he clenched his jaw to not cry out. It passed quickly but left him breathing heavily. His back ached and he felt as if he had no strength in one leg; he just wanted to lie down and stay still.

Clinging onto the rough brickwork to hold himself up, he peered round the corner to watch for his pursuers. He wouldn't miss them; the full moon lit up the small square at the foot of the steps as if it were midday. Damn the moon! He knew he should have stayed at home. It was always a full moon when the spasms came and they had been getting worse each month. But Boško had needed to get Inela out of the city and Radovan knew the best ways.

'Don't worry, I feel fine,' he'd told Boško. And, of course, he had felt fine then, and right up to the moment when the first spasm struck.

The gang ran into view at the foot of the steps. They were militia, three of them, all in leather jackets and bare headed. They came to a stop, resting their hands on their hips, panting, arguing about which way their quarry had gone. One of them had a red scarf; he gesticulated with the confidence of a leader. He pointed up the stairs. It seemed that the other two favoured following a more level path along the street.

Radovan drew back into the shadows without seeing which way they would choose and tried to limp down the alley as quickly as he could. Not too fast or the cramps would return.

Of course, he knew that alley—he knew every corner of the old city. He'd been playing in these streets from the time he could walk. Even if he wasn't welcome back, he thought grimly, he had still been born here.

The alley turned sharply and then opened onto a wider, cobbled street. Radovan stood at the corner for a moment, his back to the alley wall, before looking into the street cautiously, checking for any sign of his pursuers.

The street seemed deserted but it hard to be sure. One side was in shadow—the street lamps hadn't worked since the gas was cut off. A few windows were yellowed with candle light or paraffin lanterns. Many were smashed, just dark holes, with soot stains on the walls marking where flames had licked. Somewhere in the surrounding streets, a big engine was rumbling.

Radovan didn't dare to wait. He pushed off the wall and limped across to the mouth of an alley on the other side, slightly further up the hill. He was halfway across when the enormous bulk of a Dampf-Panzer clanked out into the street at the bottom of the hill. For a moment, the moon caught the panzer's side, illuminating the red crescent moon insignia of the Ottoman Empire.

Radovan hurried forwards and lurched into the alley opposite. The panzer turned sharply, one of its iron tracks locked, the other scratching sparks from the cobbles, and then began grinding up the hill towards him. He wanted to get away quickly but the alley was blocked with piles of rubble and abandoned furniture. Frustrated, he bit back a curse and slid down the wall, pushing himself in amongst the junk and shadows. He froze as the Dampf-Panzer reached the alley, its cannon turret level with the first-floor window boxes.

The roar of its engines was deafening. A wave of steam washed over him, pungent with the smell of hot oil. Radovan pulled his jacket up to hide his face but there was no need; the panzer's head lamps were directed forwards and the alley remained dark.

And then it was past, leaving wisps of smoke thinning above Radovan's head. He pulled himself up slowly and began clambering awkwardly over and through the piles of junk. It was impossible to move quietly but the panzer's clatter was certain to drown out the noise, at least for a few minutes more.

The alley came out into a small square in front of the local *saborna crkva*, a small Orthodox church. The white marble flagstones were aglow in the moonlight. Radovan was struck by a sudden memory of when his mother had brought him here.



'This church is old,' she had told him. 'It was a thousand years old in the middle ages.'

But the memory felt wrong. The square seemed too open, out of place somehow. Then he realised that the houses that had stood on two sides had been destroyed. Only a few burnt masonry pillars poked up through a rubble of broken bricks and tiles.

Radovan stepped into the light and saw another change. It seemed as though huge, dark spider webs had been draped over the ground. Then he realised—the *Rennerschiffe* had bombed here too. It must have been in the early stages of the attack because someone had come back to try to repair the damage, smoothing out the earth, piecing together the larger shards of marble, filling in the gaps with tar. In the stark moon light, the craters had become giant bitumen roses; they seemed to float on the white marble, joined up by a network of black gossamer.

Radovan looked up to the plinth over the church entrance and had a sharp recollection of St. Michael the Archangel looking down on him as a boy. He must have been very young, when he'd first come. He remembered being disappointed that the Archangel's statue wasn't shining brightly—he'd been confused by the words *sveti* for holy and *svetao* for radiant. But now, there was only an inscription '*Sv. Arhandela Mihaila*'; the statue was gone.

Radovan limped across to the hole that gaped where the great copper-covered doors had once hung and paused to rest there, leaning against the stone, looking in at the devastation. It smelt of damp stone and cement dust. The ancient arcades on either side of the altar were still there, though the mezzanine floor above them had collapsed. A few scraps of mosaic glinted on the floor but it was mostly bare, swept clean of both rubble and decoration.

As always, since the bombardments started, there was a haze of smoke in the air. A bright shaft of moonlight cut down through it.

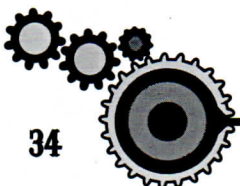
Radovan saw then, with a start, that there was jagged hole in the roof; a bomb must have landed directly on top. The moonbeam, sharp-edged, was pointing to where the altar would have stood. He didn't know why but he felt drawn to that beam of light, as if he needed his failing body to be blessed.

But he walked over too fast and felt his back tighten, threatening. He straightened slowly, standing on the altar's spot, and thought of his old grandmother, Baba, praying in their own church, wrapped in black shawls. She would have found some way to make this all his fault. He could never please her—old witch, *veštica!* She had seen him as his father's son and, therefore, cursed. Oh, how she had hated Radovan's father, Drago! In her twisted view, Drago had stolen her daughter's heart and then run off, leaving her pregnant. Radovan's mother had never blamed his father, though; perhaps she had always stayed in love? He could picture his mother, standing by the window, her eyes focused far away, smiling. 'Radovan, one day you'll understand. Your father was a good man!'

When his Baba caught her like that, she'd shoo her away from the window, scolding 'He was a demon! Forget him!' Then she'd spit on the floor, clutch at her *mati* amulet with one hand and make a warding sign with the other to avert evil. Radovan had never heard her say his father's name out loud.

Radovan crossed himself and looked up at the white mark on the wall where the crucifix would have been. He said a short prayer for his mother—she was with God now. She'd been caught up in the Serbian uprising after Archduke Ferdinand's assassination—killed by crossfire when she was trying to get food for the family. Baba had not lasted long after that. Her heart gave out before his uncle got the rest of them out of the city.

A cold gust of wind swept in though the holes where the windows had been. Radovan started to shiver—*No!* He could feel his body tensing and then his whole back went into spasm. He dropped to his hands and knees, unable to breath, clenching his teeth. Successive waves of pain crashed over his body. Every muscle was screaming. His back arched involuntarily and his neck twisted up, holding his face directly up at the moon. He couldn't breathe. His heart was beating so loudly that his head was going explode.



The edges of his vision went dark and the world collapsed in until all he could see was the full moon, bursting white, pouring its pure light into his unwilling eyes like a fire hose.

Then, with a shudder, it passed.

He gasped for air and fell forward to one hand. But the blow sent one side into spasm again, then the other. The air was squeezed from him and he howled, a weird, inhuman scream. He was held immobile again, shaking with the agony.

This time, when it passed, he was already on all fours. He focussed all his will to not move too suddenly. Under his jacket, his shirt was soaking with sweat. The hot, sharp stench of urine cut through the musk of dank masonry. He'd pissed himself but he couldn't care. Radovan concentrated on just moving slowly; anything to not trigger another seizure.

He rocked back, slowly, onto his heels and eased himself up, keeping his back upright like a boy balancing a stick on his hand. He swayed there for a moment and took a small step towards the door... only to see the three militia-men burst in.

They had probably heard him howling from streets away.

They were younger than he had expected, not even as old as he was himself. They slowed as they ran in, seeing that he was trapped and alone. Red-scarf turned and pointed out Radovan's soiled pants. The militia-men all laughed, nastily.

The other two moved quickly, one to either side of him, pulling the top of his jacket half way down his back so that it pinned his arms. Then Red-scarf hit him hard in the stomach. He doubled over, retching as his back convulsed again. The other two held him up, dangling, jerking like a fish.

Red-scarf pulled a bottle from his jacket pocket. It was three-quarters full of some liquid and was stoppered with a rag wick; he tugged at the rag until it came out, then walked closer. Radovan felt the cold as the liquid was poured over him.

They lifted him upright. His head, drenched in the fluid, felt like ice. The fumes were overwhelming—paraffin! He was dizzy and for a moment all the convulsions stopped. Everything seemed like it was moving very slowly.

Radovan watched as Red-scarf got out his knife and opened it. The militia-man stepped in and stabbed him hard in the chest, all the time screaming at him, his face contorted with rage or hate. Radovan couldn't hear anything over the roaring in his ears but he watched fascinated as some spittle was blown from the other's lip, the droplet spinning slowly away. One of the other boys took out a box of matches and lit the rag-wick, then flicked it onto Radovan's shirt. Radovan looked down to see flames blossom around the red stain on his chest.

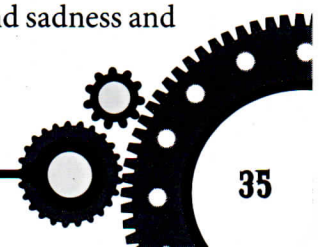
Red-scarf backed away, holding the bloody knife and the empty bottle up above his head, triumphant.

The roaring in Radovan's ears rose up, swelling like a chorus. He felt the flames playing over his whole body. The church was filling with light. He looked up, wondrous. He was radiant! He was holy! Blessed, after a life cursed.

So this is what dying feels like.

At the last, his body betrayed him one final time. He felt a spasm of pain rip up his back as if the flesh was being torn off with a fork. And then... release! The pain stopped. He felt his burning jacket give way and he could raise his hands.

Red-scarf had stopped dancing in front of him and had frozen, half crouched, staring at him with his mouth agape. Dying, ever closer to God, Radovan felt as if he could see into the youth. He could see Red-scarf's soul, his still-human soul, all trapped and entangled in the strangler vines of hate and sadness and



loss. Perhaps he would have had a good life, if the war had not torn that chance from him. Radovan held his bare arms out to him. They were luminous, still lit from within even though the flames had gone out.

Radovan knew that the youth wanted to run but he remained frozen. Radovan was next to him in an instant, looking down at him as if he was just a child. He felt no surprise when he realised that he was floating above the militia-man, above the ground. He took the youth's head, gently cradling it on his bosom. At his touch, Red-scarf's soul was released and Radovan felt the life force flow into him, running up his veins like liquor.

Radovan let the empty corpse drop and turned to other two. They had moved together and he swept them both up at the same time. As their lives drained from them, he was exhilarated, intoxicated, their force coursing through him with divine fire.

Looking down, Radovan could see his clothes, still smouldering and, for a moment, his shadow in the moonlight.

His shadow suspended on huge feathered wings.

With one flap, Radovan rose up, his great black wings folded around his body as he passed through the open church roof. He hung still for an instant, on the point of falling back, then climbed with steady wing-strokes until he was high over the city. He looked down on all of God's creatures, watching as they scurried and strove below him.

Over to the west, he saw the bright eruptions of exploding bombs.

He turned and began to descend towards the nearest Rennerschiff.

continuum 9: contraindicators

june 7–10, 2013

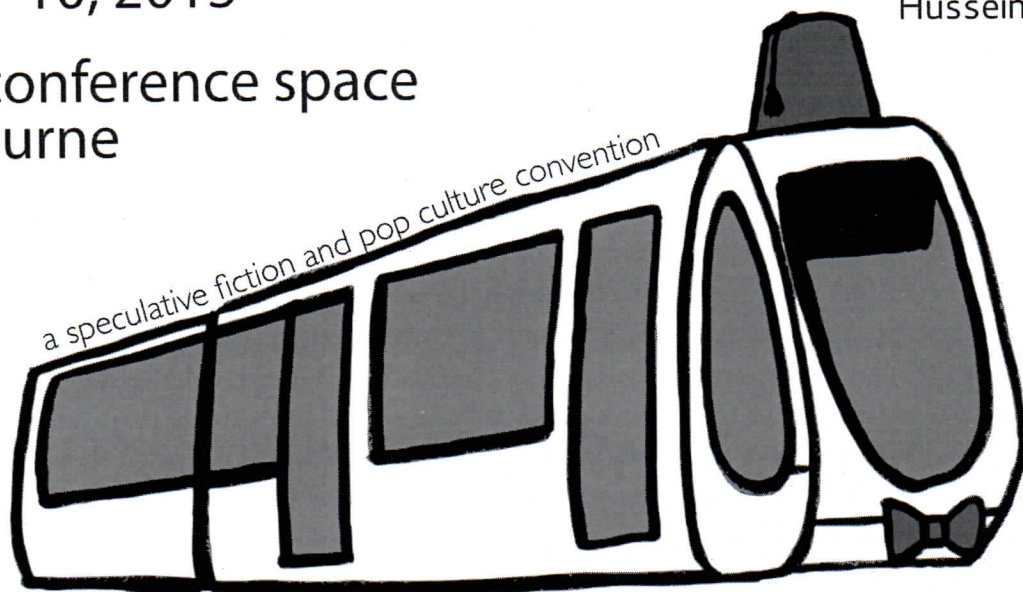
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N.K.
Jemisin



The Silence of Clockwork

by Carol Ryles

The knock was soft enough to not reverberate through stone or startle the rats. Nor would it alert the night guard to the presence of Ruk's workshop amid the junk and debris of the abandoned catacombs. Ignoring it, Ruk knew it could only be Nell. Seeing as she was smart enough to unlock the door without a key, he concentrated on adjusting the steam conduits stretched out on the bench in front of him.

He barely heard the door open, barely heard her approach. 'Ruk,' Nell said softly. 'I have something to ensure that your wings will be more than a means of escape.'

Ruk paused, but did not look at her. Although some accident of birth had left her with the habit of twitching like a broken metronome, she was the sanest person he knew. Whatever she'd brought him, he sensed it would be important.

'I believe your wings will fly,' she said. 'But I fear their clockwork will be loud. You'll not have the benefit of stealth. Even at night.'

Ruk put down his screwdriver. 'I wasn't planning on attacking anyone.'

'I wasn't suggesting you were. But how will you prevent someone from attacking you?'

* * *

Ruk contemplated the wings – beautiful constructions twice the length of his height, a tapestry of copper-wire veins, tempered glass and leather pinions – modelled on the aerodynamics of swan wings. When they were done, he'd take them to the clock tower, strap them to his back and leave Forsham City to at last be free.

He rubbed his chin, admitting defeat. In his haste to get the job done, he'd refused to consider that the rattle of clockwork would indeed be a problem. 'What do you suggest?'

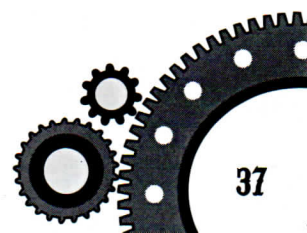
He turned to find Nell already seated in his patched and re-stuffed armchair. Despite the way she twitched her nose like a nervous mouse, she looked comfortable, leaning back with the disrespectful grace he'd always admired in her. She flicked a lock of dark hair from her forehead, sniffed, grimaced and then eased her feet out of her grime-streaked boots. Resting her legs on Ruk's table next to his teapot and cups, she crossed her ankles to reveal tights worn thin at the toes and the ragged frills of knee-length bloomers beneath her skirt.

'Ah, my aching legs. I walked miles to find the parts to make what I brought for you today.' She dipped into her shoulder sack. 'Designed by yours truly.'

Ruk raised his eyebrows.

She proffered it in her outstretched palm: a brass motorised joint. As always when she dealt with clockwork, her twitching eased. 'Silent clockwork,' she said with undisguised pride. 'I suspect it will not be difficult to replicate. However, I'm giving it to you and you alone.'

Ruk stared at it, afraid to take it, knowing that if she sold it elsewhere she could bring in ten times the price he could offer. 'How much?'



She grinned. It struck him that her determined gaze reminded him of a woman he used to know – a shifter like himself. But that was in the days before most shifters turned demon. The memory hurt so badly he looked away.

‘You can have it without payment for now,’ she said. ‘Workmanship such as this is priceless, do you not think?’

‘I can’t accept it. I’d be in your debt.’

She laughed. ‘My, my, for a shifter you’re uncommonly ethical.’

Ruk bristled. ‘I’m human.’

She laughed again, then gave in to a bout of blinking. When she was done, her gaze seemed all the more determined. ‘I suppose you are, seeing as you’ve lost the ability to shift. I’m told human memories are too complex to fit into animal bodies. It’s why the rest of your kind turned demon, isn’t it? If that’s the case, then I too would hate humans. No wings. Emotions that swing from elation to grief at Fate’s whim. Look at me, for instance.’ She blinked. Her shoulder twitched, almost brushing her ear. ‘Even my ma didn’t want me.’

‘Because you twitch?’

She shook her head. ‘No. Long before I was conceived, my ma decided she didn’t want children. A camel trader’s wife from Cornica told her the best way to prevent that was to insert a pebble into her womb to fool it into believing she was with child. But my ma, didn’t like the idea of soiling herself with a pebble, so she inserted a piece of clockwork instead. The silent sort – an old family secret – so it wouldn’t keep her awake at night. That’s why I twitch and click. It’s in my blood.’

Her left eye gave up blinking. She let out a series of clicks with her tongue. Wrinkling her nose, she tapped her forehead again and added, ‘When I formed in my mother’s womb, my brain grew around the clockwork. It’s why I’m expert at tinkering.’

Ruk stared at her, unsure if she’d told the truth or had spun a tale to glorify her impediment. Whatever the case, it didn’t matter. If her uncanny story bought her respect instead of ill treatment, then she had every right to use it.

‘The problem is,’ she added. ‘People judge us by what they see. They value us for what we might bring. I’ll not sell the secret of my silent clockwork because once I do that, I’ll have nothing left. But I’ll gladly give it to you, because you treat me as an equal. I trust that when the time comes, you’ll understand enough about humans to use it wisely.’

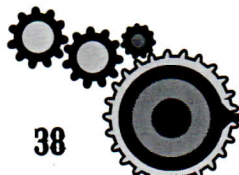
Ruk did not believe her trust in him was justified. Even so, when he examined her clockwork, he recognized the genius in her handiwork. As she stood to leave, he offered her all the money he had.

She shook her head. ‘Do you have any of that shifter magic to spare?’ She held up her left hand. It was wrapped in a blood stained bandage. ‘It needs stitching, but I won’t stoop to the butcher.’

Ruk gently unwound the bandage. The slash in her palm was deep, already festering. She flinched as he cradled it in both hands. He sent her a brief surge of heart-magic. His reserves were low, as they usually were in this body he wore. He tried not to use too much. When her skin grew warm beneath his, he pulled away.

‘Fascinating,’ Nell breathed. Her wound flowed like liquid, its edges merging into a faint scar.

She froze. From the fear in her eyes, he could tell she was about to screech, like he’d once heard her do in the streets. He guessed she was trying to fight it, but soon, it would get the better of her. Like her twitching, it was not something she chose to do.



He caught her in his arms and pressed his hand over her mouth, letting her screech into his palm so the night guard wouldn't hear. It surprised him how sweet she smelled. His heart skittered having her close to him. He almost felt more human than shifter. How thoroughly he could lose himself. How close to allowing the cycle of emotion and madness to start over...

She fell silent. He let go of her and stood back apologetically, his neck prickling.

'Thank you,' she said, blushing. 'I don't know what come over me. I've always stopped that from happening down here.'

'My magic, I suppose. It must have unsettled you.'

'Maybe. Last week a physician heard me. He wants to lock me up. My boy, Lucian too. He believes we're possessed by a demon.'

Ruk swallowed against a burst of anger. 'Demon's arse you're possessed.'

'They're arranging to listen for our clockwork. But they won't hear it, because it's silent.' She tapped her forehead. 'If you could use your magic to show it to them, would you do it? At all costs?'

He stared at her, sensing a bargain, not sure if it were the kind he should agree to. Nell wouldn't cheat him, that much he knew. But she was, after all, human. And humans were notorious for cheating themselves.

'Only if it would help,' he said at last.

She smiled, wistfully. 'Do you know what angels are?'

'I've heard of them.'

'I suggest you shape your wings like theirs. You should let people see that you *are* one.'

* * *

It took Ruk weeks to add Nell's silent clockwork to his wings; but he decided to forgo the angel shape. It reminded him too keenly of humanity and of how he could never return to the pure simplicity of being animal again. With time, he supposed, he would learn accept that. But at least for now he could find comfort in the catacombs, the drip of moisture down the walls, the innocent foraging of rats, the echo of footsteps; though he missed the sun. The dimness had turned his skin sickly. He'd already cropped his hair in preparation for his first flight. Now he needed only to wait for a perfect breeze, a clear sky, a half moon and perhaps a chance to thank Nell and invite her to watch him leave.

Soon it became apparent that even that was not to be.

Nell let herself in as usual. She stood blinking in a strip of gaslight in his living alcove, her dark hair dishevelled, her boots sodden, the bottom of her skirt damp and reeking of sewerage. Her son – Lucian – stood beside her, looking barely five years old and not the eight she had claimed him to be. His blue eyes stared out from beneath a mop of ginger bird's nest hair.

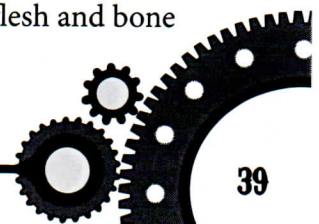
Ruk turned abruptly away, unable to bear the desperation clouding their faces. 'Nell, I'm sorry. I can't help you.'

'Please. You're all we have.'

'I'm not yours. Besides, why not ask the boy's father?'

'He doesn't have one.'

Ruk almost added that human business was for humans and that shifters could not risk being caught up in it. But then Nell let out a soft grunt. Ruk stiffened at the sound of her falling and of flesh and bone



thudding against the bare concrete floor. He expected Lucian to cry out, but heard only the low hiss of the jury-rigged gas lamp.

Reluctantly – supposing that Lucian’s silence meant he had known too much grief already – Ruk turned around.

The boy stood unmoving, his mother sprawled at his feet. He swallowed, took a deep breath. His left eye twitched three times rapidly. ‘She...took...poison,’ he stammered. He dropped to his knees, stroked his mother’s cheek. ‘She said you’re an angel. Please...bring her back.’

Ruk knelt at Nell’s side. He put his hand over her heart and found it no longer beating. ‘I can’t. My magic’s only strong enough for skin and bone.’ He stood. If he allowed himself to give in to emotion, there would be no getting over it.

Lucian rammed his fist in his mouth and shuddered. His grief was silent, but no less terrible to witness.

Ruk turned away. He paced, allowing himself fury because fury was easier to control than despair. Why in Fate’s name had Nell killed herself? Now her son’s emotions would endanger him. Was this her bargain? That he should look after her boy? How could he fly now?

He turned back to Lucian and contemplated him, wincing at the stoop of his thin, boyish shoulders. ‘If the physicians wanted to lock her up, why didn’t she simply flee Forsham?’

At first Lucian did not seem to hear. Then he looked up, sniffed, blinked, his eyes sunken like the eyes of a small animal hunted to exhaustion. Ruk wondered if Nell had inserted clockwork in her womb before conceiving like her own mother had.

‘Lucian,’ Ruk said softly. ‘Can you hear *your* clockwork?’

Lucian looked away.

‘You can tell me the truth. The physicians are my enemies too. They do not think kindly of shifters. Even of those who can no longer shift.’

Shuddering, Lucian wrapped his arms about his chest. At last, in a low voice he said, ‘No, I cannot hear it.’

‘Ah... If the physicians can’t hear it, they’ll believe Nell was lying. They’ll think your twitching is caused by demons.’

The boy looked at him, eyes wide and glazed.

Ruk fought down a surge of temper. Why didn’t Nell just tell him? He would have helped her. ‘Lucian, you may stay here if it will keep you from the physicians’ asylum. But soon, I must leave. Shifters can’t live with humans. Your emotions... They’re as good as poison for us.’

Lucian held his gaze, his eyes wet. ‘My mother said...’

Ruk held up his hand. ‘Stop. Your mother hardly knew me.’

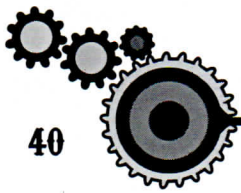
Lucian froze as if Ruk’s harshness had purged the next twitch out of him. He lifted his chin. ‘My mother said you would help.’

The words stung, bringing with them emotion that threatened to spiral into madness. To protect himself, Ruk blanketed it with laughter that came out harsh and cruel. What could a shifter do? To date, his best way to survive humans was to avoid them. What good would a child be except to keep him grounded?

Forcing down anger, he gestured for Lucian to follow him. ‘I want you to see what your mother gave me.’

Lucian’s face blanched. ‘I’m not leaving her. Why won’t you help?’

Ruk sighed. ‘I don’t know how. I can only show you her final triumph.’



'No!' Lucian threw himself over his mother's chest. 'I'm not leaving her.'

'As you wish.' Ruk turned away. Softly, he made his way out of the alcove. Before closing the door, he turned back to see the boy sobbing silently over Nell's ruined body, a dim silhouette in gaslight.

Ruk's heart clenched so painfully he wanted to flee it.

Soon the city and its miseries would be little more than a vague memory. Soon he would forget them all.

* * *

His wings were light, even wrapped up in blankets to avoid damage from being carried across the city to the clock tower. As Ruk gathered them up, his sense of impending freedom did not give him the simple joy that it should have. It was Lucian's fault. Damn Nell. She'd given Ruk the means to escape. Now she was taking it back.

He lowered the wings carefully onto the bench. He looked about the workshop, at the junk strewn against the walls, the discarded machine parts and the original piece of clockwork that Nell had given him all those weeks before. He'd reassembled it and had planned to take it with him as a memento; but it occurred to him that perhaps its true purpose was to remind him of something else.

'Sweet Nell. You guessed I was the only one who would understand.'

Pocketing the clockwork, he squatted in front of his toolbox. He opened it out, ran his hands over the tools, choosing what he thought he would need.

By the time he'd gathered courage enough to return to Nell, he found Lucian spread out in sleep with his head on her chest. Gently, Ruk carried him to the armchair and covered him with a blanket. He waited until Lucian's breathing became even again, then knelt at Nell's side, with his back to the boy, shielding him from what he was about to do.

Carefully, keeping his emotions distant, he held the drill over the exact spot where Nell had tapped her forehead when referring to her clockwork all those weeks before. He pressed the bit into her cold flesh and turned it, grateful that the dead did not bleed. Hands steady, he made ten small holes in her skull, forming a circle the diameter of a teacup. Then, using the fine string-saw he used to cut automata skin, he threaded it through two holes at a time, sawing through bone until the circle fell free to reveal the glistening surface of Nell's pale, convoluted brain.

As suspected, he found not a skerrick of clockwork.

Just to be certain, he probed deeper with a screwdriver, twisting it back and forth through soft, yielding flesh. Nell's blue eyes stared up at him, unblinking, approving.

'Damn the physicians,' he muttered. 'Damn every one of them.'

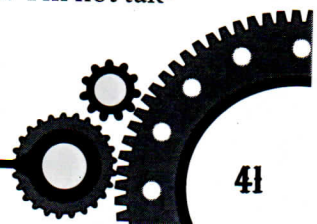
Holding his breath, he used a dessertspoon to scoop out a small section of Nell's precious brain to place it in a teacup, which he promptly locked in his toolbox. Reverently, he took the silent clockwork from his pocket and eased it into the awaiting hollow, pushing it into place until its silver dome shone like an ornate carapace at the centre of her forehead.

He was about to replace the circle of skin and skull, when a hand clutched his shoulder, struggled to pull him away.

'Leave her alone!' Lucian demanded. 'Don't take it out.'

Ruk held him firmly yet gently back. The boy sank to his knees, covered his face and sobbed.

With the fingers of his free hand, Ruk closed Nell's eyes. He fitted the circle of skull into place and sealed its edges with a surge of healing magic. Not even a scar marked where he'd originally cut her. 'I'm not tak-



ing her clockwork out,' he said. 'A long time ago, your mother asked me to check that it was really there. Now when the physicians look for it, you need not be afraid. You'll know they'll find it. They'll believe you have it too.'

Lucian's eyes glistened. He touched his forehead. 'I nearly didn't believe her.'

'It'll protect you,' Ruk assured him. 'It's what she wanted.'

* * *

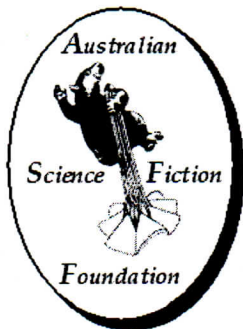
Ruk hoped that Lucian and his new guardian would meet him at the clock tower to watch him leave. But when they did not, he supposed he should take comfort that, now the physicians had seen it, they believed Nell's clockwork to be hereditary – proof that, with adequate training, her son would become a genius tinkerer.

But the price...

As always with humans, the price had been too high.

Ruk raised his arms. His steam pistons hissed, barely audible above the mechanical hum of the city below. His wings opened out, their leather pinions rustling as soft and silent as the clockwork churning inside them. He leapt, soaring skywards, alone on the breeze, leaving Forsham and Lucian behind him.

The Australian Science Fiction Foundation



The Australian Science Fiction Foundation was established in 1976 to carry on the work of Aussiecon, the first Australian World Science Fiction Convention in Melbourne in 1975.

The Foundation encourages the creation and appreciation of science fiction in Australia through its sponsorship of writing workshops and short story competitions, provision of seed loans for national conventions, and the publication of its newsletter *The Instrumentality*.

It has developed into a resource centre for everyone involved in Science Fiction in Australia. Our ongoing initiatives include:

The A Bertram Chandler Award - Australia's premier sf award for lifetime achievement.

The first Chandler was presented in 1992 to Van Ikin. The 2012 winner was Richard Harland.

The Norma K Hemming Award - a jury award marking excellence in the exploration of themes of race, gender, sexuality, class and disability in sf and related arts and media.

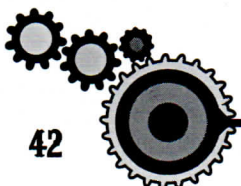
The Wright Collection - the nucleus of a treasure trove of fanzines and memorabilia from the post World War II era donated by Bill Wright with substantial additions from other fans.

Sponsoring Short Story Competitions at Natcons – with the Natcon committee framing the rules.

Four Fan Funds are using sub-accounts under the ASFF's main bank account to avoid the inconvenience and expense of having to set up new bank accounts each time their administrators change.

For details, please visit our website <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~asff/>

Authorised by ASFF secretary Cath Ortlieb, P.O. Box 215, Forest Hill Vic 3131. Email address: asffsecretary@optusnet.com.au



MEMBER INFORMATION

CONFLUX OPENING HOURS

Registration (On the first floor, end of the walkway to the lifts)

Thursday - 11.30am-7pm

Friday - 9am-6pm

Saturday - 9am-5pm

Sunday - 9am-3pm

Dealers Room (Event Room 2 on the map)

Thursday - 1pm-5.30pm

Friday - 9am-6pm

Saturday - 9am-6pm

Sunday - 9am-3.30pm

Art Show (Executive Boardroom 3 on the map)

Friday - 10am-5pm

Saturday - 9am-5pm

Sunday - 9am-3pm

Gaming Lounge

Thursday - 1pm-11pm

Friday - 8.30am-11pm

Saturday - 8.30am-11pm

Sunday - 8.30am-4.30pm

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Workshops

Some workshops have spaces available which can be filled on a first come, first served basis should the tutor be willing. Come see us at Registration.

Book launches

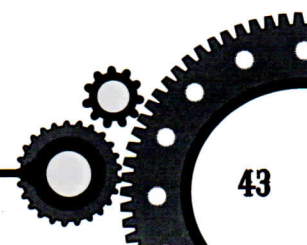
Book launches will take place in the foyer of the conference floor, near the dealers room. A microphone and lounges/chairs are set up there for the purpose. Book launches are programmed during the breaks and have nothing scheduled against them except readings, so do your best spruiking to draw a crowd. Note that if you wish to cater, you need to do so through the hotel.

Readings

Readings take place during the breaks. There's still some spaces free so if you haven't booked in yet, go to Registration to see what is available. They'll be held in the panel rooms and the workshop room.

Gaming

A lounge area is available for gamers to use near Executive Boardroom 4. Conflux will not be providing any games. Gamers are responsible for their own games.



Kaffeeklatsches

We've got a small number of authors available for kaffeeklatsches. There are limited spots so once again – first come first served. The kaffeeklatsches are being held in the atrium. Please don't just rock up and join in – that's rude. Sign up for kaffeeklatsches at Registration.

Pitching

Pitching is open to all members, again first come first served. There may be some spaces left – pitching was opened to nominate for prior to the convention. To enquire about availability, please see us at Registration. Pitching will be held in Executive Boardroom 4.

Cocktail party

The cocktail party following the opening ceremony is catered – there will be drinks and nibbles available, but it's not a full meal so make sure you have a good dinner before the opening ceremony to keep going through the night!

Auction

If you wish to place items in the Auction, information on how to do so is available at Registration.

Art Show

If you wish to bid on items in the Art Show or purchase prints, information on how to do so is available from the Art Show desk in the Art Show room.

Recording panels/events

If people wish to record events or panels that they attend, then they first must get the permission of all participants to be videoed or audio taped. People using recording equipment must not obstruct other people's views or thoroughfares. The organisers reserve the right not to allow filming or sound recording for any reason.

Banquet and high tea

These events are pre-sold and we can't add numbers. However, spaces may become available due to cancellations. If you can no longer attend and you've bought a ticket – please let Registration know. If you want to attend, give Registration your name and phone number and we'll let you know if a ticket becomes available.

Code of Conduct and Weapons Policy

Please read through these carefully (on page 6 of this book). Conflux 9 is a safe place for people to come and any behaviour that jeopardises this for anyone will not be tolerated.

Committee

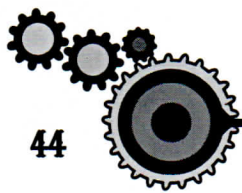
You can identify the Conflux Committee by the different colour on their name badges (and in some cases by the trashy halo they're wearing). All committee members are there to help, so please feel free to ask.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE VENUE

Inbargo (the hotel bar) – 4.30pm-12am Monday-Saturday

Last drinks will be called at 11.30pm. You are welcome to have people in your hotel room but please be aware that not everyone around you will be wanting to party so keep the noise down. You are responsible for any damage.

The restaurant also serves alcohol.



Restaurant opening hours

Restaurant is open 6.30am-9.30pm for coffee, drinks etc. They also serve alcohol. Here are the meal serving hours

Breakfast – 6.30am-10.30am (full buffet)

Lunch – 12pm-2.30pm (snack menu)

Dinner – 6.30pm-9.30pm (ala carte)

Security guards

In accordance with the contract Conflux has signed with the hotel, there will be security guards on site during the day.

Bringing food and drink in

Rydges will not allow food or drink to be brought into the convention space.

SOME USEFUL INFORMATION

Money

The nearest ATM is at Hotel Realm (go out the doors near Inbargo, turn right and walk down National Circuit for 5 mins). The nearest banks are in Manuka. Go out the front doors of Rydges, turn left and walk down Canberra Avenue for about 15 minutes.

Restaurants

Apart from the restaurant at Rydges (and Inbargo serves food too), other options are:

Hotel Realm has a couple of restaurants and a nice bar.

Minter Ellison (Friday only) – there's a café at the bottom of the building open during business hours. Go out the doors at Inbargo, turn right down National Circuit, Minter Ellison is the big green building.

DFAT (Friday only) – Yes, go rub shoulders with the foreign affairs guys during business hours. The café there serves a range of food. Go out the doors at Inbargo, turn right down National Circuit, turn left at the lights. DFAT is the last building on your right – walk around the back of the building (Parliament House side) to access the café.

Manuka has some of the best eateries in Canberra with a range of food types – you can go there every night and try something different.

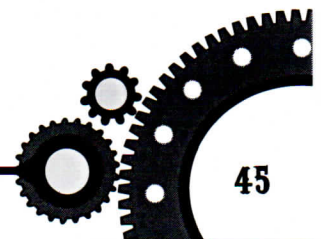
Public transport

Public transport is sketchy on public holidays and weekends. The bus stop is just outside the Inbargo doors. You can get buses to Civic and Manuka. For timetable, visit the Action Buses website www.action.act.gov.au

Parking

Parking is available under Rydges for free for delegates between 8am-4pm on a first come first served basis. Overnight parking is \$12.

There's little street parking available, but there is pay parking near Hotel Realm, just down National Circuit. There's also free parking around the offices near Realm – it's more of a walk but on weekends may well be empty.

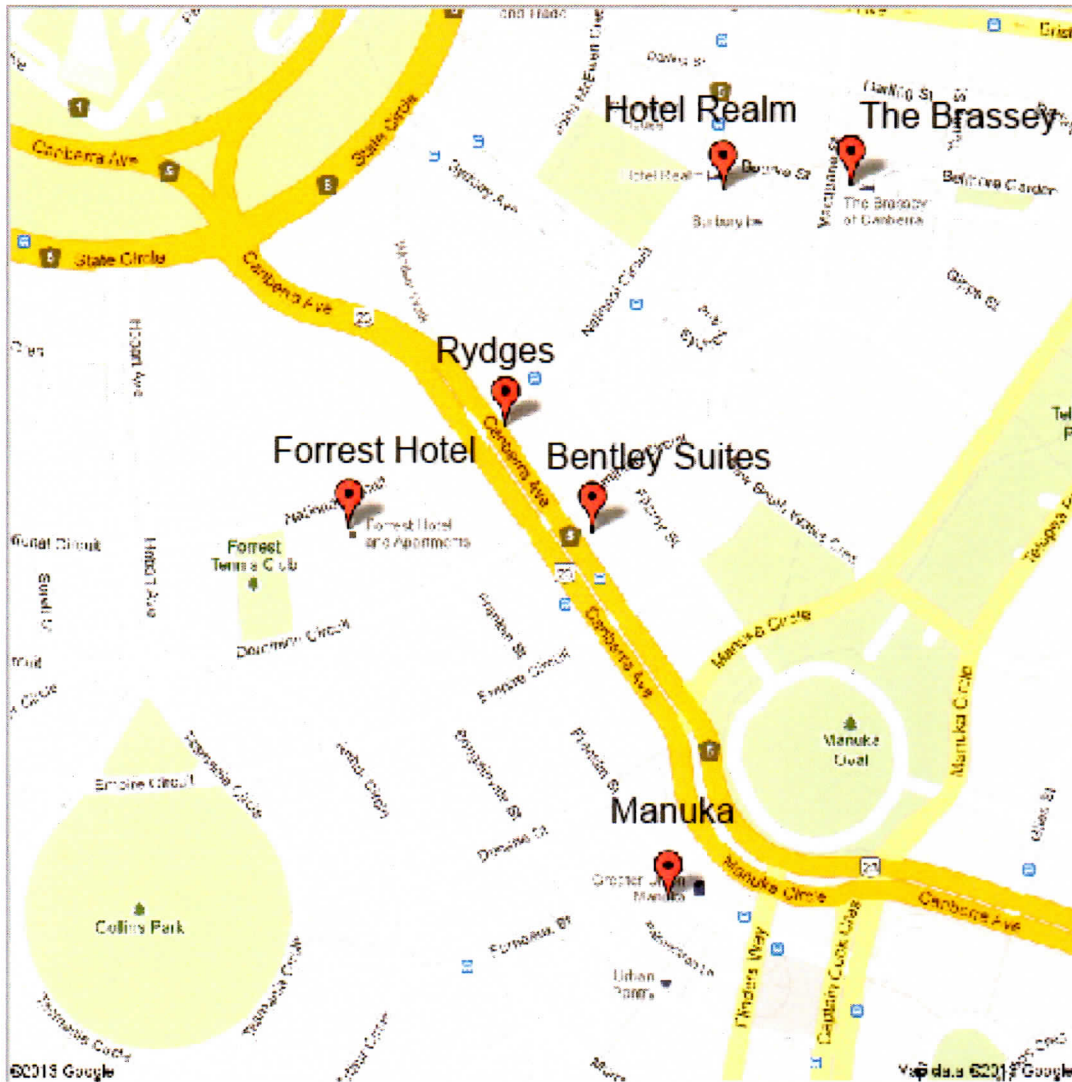


CONFLUX 9 MEMBERSHIP LIST

(AS AT 21 MARCH 2013)

Abigail Nathan	Eleanor Clarke	Ken Moylan	Paula McGrath
Aidan Walsh	Elizabeth Dyer	Keri Arthur	Pauline Dickinson
Aileen Harland	Elizabeth Fitzgerald	Kevin Hemingway	Penelope Cottier
Aimee Lindorff	Ellen Gregory	Kimberley Gaal	Peter Ball
Alan Baxter	Emma Dobbs	Kirstyn McDermott	Peter Lyons
Alan Chick	Emma Kate	Kristine Johnson	Phillip Berrie
Alan Stewart	Emma Wearmouth	Kylie Seluca	Rachel Holkner
Alex Adsett	Eric Lindsay	Laura E. Goodin	Richard Harland
Alex Pierce	Evan Dean	Lawrie Brown	Ric Lagarto
Alisa Krasnostein	Felicity Bloomfield	Leife Shallcross	Rob Porteous
Alison Barton	Frances Starr	Leigh Blackmore	Robert Hood
Amanda Bridgeman	Gale Funston	Les Petersen	Robert Phillips
Amanda Rainey	Garry Dalrymple	Lewis Hutton	Rosalie Louey
Anna Tambour	Garth Nix	Lewis Morley	Rose Mitchell
Angela Slatter	Gillian Polack	Lily Mulholland	Ross Temple
Angie Rega	Glenda Larke	Listya Elliott	Rowena Cory Daniels
Ann Devrell	Graham Storrs	Louise Katz	Russell Blackford
Anthony Dyer	Grant Stone	Luke Mercieca	Russell Kirkpatrick
Anthony Eaton	Helen Merrick	Lync	Sarah Buckler
Antony Clarke	Helen Patrice	Marc Gascoigne	Sean Williams
Barbara Edgar	Helen Stubbs	Marcus Amman	Shauna O'Meara
Barbara Holten	Ian McHugh	Margia Curtis	Simon Dewar
Barbara Petersen	Ian Nichols	Margaret Hilliard	Simon Petrie
Ben Payne	Ingrid Jonach	Marilyn Pride	Stephen Gleeson
Jane Routley	Jack Dann	Marjorie Cammer	Stuart Herring
Bill Wright	James Hanson	Mark Loney	Sue Ann Barber
Caitlin Dobbs	Jane Virgo	Mark Mercieca	Sue Bursztynski
Satima Flavell	Janeen Webb	Mark Timmony	Suzanne Willis
Carol Ryles	Jason Fischer	Mark Webb	Taissa Danilovich
Cat Sparks	Jason Franks	Martin Livings	Talie Helene
Cat Sheely	Jason Gale	Matthew Farrer	Tara Ott
Cathryn Nagle	Jason Nahrung	Maxine McArthur	Tara Wynn
Chris Fellows	Jean Weber	Melissa Walter	Tehani Wessely
Claire McKenna	Jenny Blackford	Michael McRae	Terri Sellen
Cora Wright	Jess Irwin	Mik Bennett	Terry Dowling
Corinne Archer	Joanne Anderton	Michael Green	Thoraiya Dyer
Craig Cormick	Jodi Cleghorn	Michael Richards	Tim Reddan
Daryl Lindquist	Johanna West-Moore	Michael Wauchope	Tim Roberts
David Versace	John Morris	Michelle Goldsmith	Tom Dullemond
Dawn Meredith	John Samuel	Mihaela Perkovic	Tracey O'Hara
Deborah Biancotti	Jonathan Strahan	Nalo Hopkinson	Tracy Reddan
Deborah Green	Judi Powis	Nick Tchan	Tracy Sauso-Bawa
Devin Jeyathurai	Justin Ackroyd	Nick Evans	Trevor Clark
Diana Whiley	Kaaron Warren	Nicole Murphy	Trudi Canavan
Donna Maree Hanson	Karen Herkes	P. M. Newton	Tycho Petrie
Duncan Lay	Karen Miller	Patricia Gray	Valerie Parv
Edna Dundas	Karen S Nikakis	Patrick Keuning	Valerie Toh
Edward Denison-Edson	Katherine Forsyth	Patty Jansen	Wade Bowmer
Edwina Harvey	Kathleen Jennings	Paul Ewins	Yaratji Green
Elanor Matton-Johnson	K. J. Taylor	Paul Landymore	Zena Shapter

CONFLUX 9 AREA MAP



Rydges Capital Hill – conference venue, Canberra Avenue, Barton

Nearest accommodation

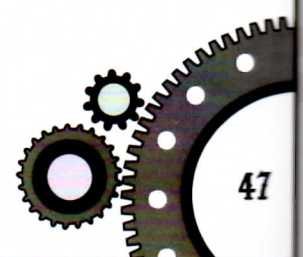
- Bentley Suites
- Forrest Hotel and Apartments
- Hotel Realm
- The Brassey

Nearest ATM

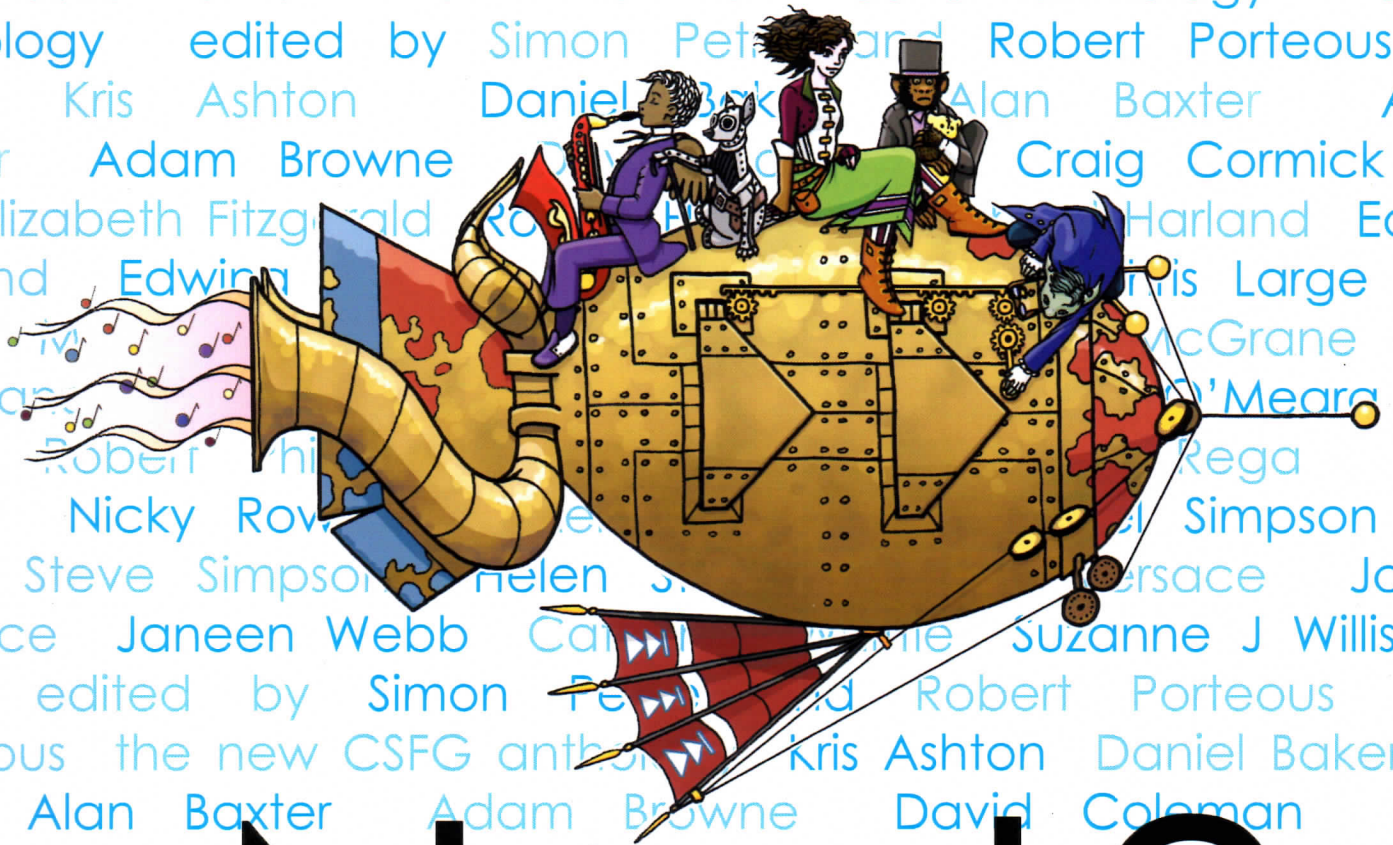
- Hotel Realm

Nearest Shopping Centre

- Manuka



what's



Next?



the new CSFG anthology



<http://csfg.wordpress.com/>

On sale in the dealers' room, at the CSFG table

(image credit: detail from cover art by Shauna O'Meara)