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Tropicon XVII Progress Report November 13th -15th, 1998 Ft. Lauderdale



"Lil' Endless" by Jill Thompson, © DC Comics, featuring characters created by Neil Gaiman, Sam Kieth, and Mike Dringenberg.

Chairman Pete's Message

Welcome to Tropicon XVII: Celebrating Ten Years of *The Sandman*©! As anyone who has attended a past Tropicon can attest, Tropicon is a literary gathering where you can meet and spend time with authors, artists and fellow aficionados in a relaxed, intimate setting. This year we've made a few changes: we've shifted the convention weekend to November 13 - 15; we're still at the same hotel but the Doubletree Guest Suites Cypress Creek has become the Sheraton Suites Cypress Creek; and we've also decided to take a look at that unique union of text and art, the comic book.

If you're an old Tropicon pro, we hope you'll plan on returning. We promise to continue to offer the very best in programming, dealers, art and media that you've come to expect.

If you've never attended a Tropicon we welcome you and hope to make your first experience a memorable one.

In this report you'll find our guests (so far) listed: Some great names in Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror have agreed to honor us this year, including Neil Gaiman, Lynn Abbey, Hal Clement, Caitlin Kiernan, Adam Castro and Mike Resnick. We're adding new guests all the time so be sure to keep checking the official Tropicon XVII web page at:

<http://scifi.squawk.com/tropic/tropic17.html>

Neil Gaiman - Guest of Honor

"The point being: Neil Gaiman's work on *The Sandman* is so excellent, so much a presentation of the new high water mark, that we realize as we read, that it is about something, that it is not merely an amusing entertainment. (Though it is that, of course)" wrote Harlan Ellison in his introduction to the DC Comics collection *The Sandman: Season of Mists*. From his early work on *2000 A.D.* to his most recent novel *Neverwhere* (AVON, 1998), Gaiman has created a distinguished body of work that has resulted in his being named one of the top ten post-modern writer's in America. Among his works are *Good Omens* (with Terry Pratchett), *Angels & Visitations* (Horror Critic's Award), *Don't Panic*, and *Violent Cases* (with Dave McKean). In 1991 Neil turned the world of speculative fiction upside-down by winning the World Fantasy Award for an issue of *The Sandman*.

Charles Vess - Artist Guest of Honor

Besides winning two World Fantasy Awards, Charles Vess has also won an Inkpot Award, a Guild Award and an Eisner Award. While his work has appeared in *Heavy Metal*, *Whispers* and *Epic*, he is best known for his work on comic books, particularly *Swamp Thing* © and *Books of Magic*.©. In 1988 he illustrated versions of *Little Red Riding Hood*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 1993, his cover for *Dark Horse Presents #75* was recognized by the Comic Creators Guild as the Best Cover of 1993. Recently, he has founded Green Man Press to publish his own works, as well as collaborative pieces with Charles DeLint, Jane Yolen, and of course, Neil Gaiman.

Other Confirmed Tropicon Guests

Lynn Abbey (Tropicon's VIII Guest of Honor) is a legend in the field of fantasy. With titles like *The Black Flame* and *Unicorn & Dragon*, Lynn Abbey helped to set a new standard for high fantasy. As the co-creator of *Thieves World* (with Robert Asprin) she helped reshape the face of fantasy for years to come.

Adam-Troy Castro (Resident Author) is a cross-genre phenomenon. Nominated for a Hugo, a Nebula, and a Stoker, his work has appeared in *Science Fiction Age*, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, and the *Year's Best Erotica 1995*. Adam's latest novel is the first in a new Spider-Man trilogy for {gasp!} Marvel Comics.

Hal Clement (Tropicon IX Guest of Honor) is a science fiction institution and the author of the classic novels *Needle* and *The Nitrogen Fix*. His *Mission of Gravity* is considered by many to be one of the classics of science fiction.

Charles L. Fontenay (a Florida west coast author) is the author of *The Drowned World* and several other classic novels. His on-going *Kipton* series for young readers is firmly rooted in the Heinlein tradition.

Joseph Green (Travelling Fete Guest of Honor) is a former NASA employee who has always had a taste for writing. His *The Loafers of Refuge* is a cautionary tale of space exploration.

Caitlin R. Kiernan (New Guest) is one of the new breed of post-modern writers. Her short stories have appeared in Year's Best Fantasy and Horror. Her novel *Silk* was released this year. She is also well known for her work on the DC Comics series, *The Dreaming* ©.

Holly Lisle (New Guest) is the author of *Fire in the Mist* which won her the coveted Compton Crook Award. Miss Lisle has collaborated with Mercedes Lackey, Marion Zimmer Bradley and S. M. Stirling. Other works include *Minerva Wakes* and *Sympathy for the Devil*.

Mike Resnick (Tropicon XIV Toastmaster) is best known for his Kirrinyaga stories. The winner of too many awards to mention, Mike Resnick has become one of the most influential and popular authors of the day. His triptych of *Paradise*, *Purgatory* and *Inferno* are fabulous portrayals of the tragic abuse of native populations by colonial governments.

The VIP Party

The Velvet Comet has been overrun by goblins! This year's VIP Party will be transformed into the Goblin Market, complete with new games and new rules. The best part is that there will be lots of prizes (anything from bits of driftglass to hardcover editions of Neil's latest novel and a diverse) for you to acquire from the goblin vendors...that is, if you've got enough money and the right combination of previously purchased items. Sound intriguing? You've got to be there Friday night to meet the guests, play a few games of chance, and try your luck at outwitting the goblin vendors!

Charity Auction

This year's charity auction promises to hold a plethora of wonderful donations sure to encourage a lot of good spirited, enthusiastic bidding from the audience. In recent years, it has become a tradition for the Guest of Honor to choose a charity that will benefit from the proceeds of the auction. This year will be no different. Neil's favorite charity of choice is the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund.

Very simplistically put, Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (CBLDF) is a non-profit organization that helps individuals within the comic book industry to defend their own first amendment rights. Neil is a major supporter and fund raiser for the Fund and he often does benefits to educate others about the CBLDF, what it does, and why it should be supported.

There will also be items auctioned off on behalf of the SFSFS Clubhouse Maintenance Fund. For those of you who don't know, SFSFS has a small clubhouse. We hold mini auctions throughout the year to raise money to maintain the clubhouse.

Both charities are accepting donations at this time. If you have anything that you think would be someone else's potential treasure, please donate it! Make sure to let us know which charity should receive the proceeds of your donation. For more information on making donations, or to volunteer to assist with the charity auction, please contact Pete or Shirlene at 561-844-6336 and we'll put you in touch with Dan Foster.

Gaming

Of course there will be gaming at Tropicon! And, as always, we are looking for volunteers willing to participate as Game Masters for a variety of games.

At this time, Ned Bush, Gaming coordinator, plans to run a Champions/Fuzion scenario with pre-made characters. He welcomes anyone -- from interested beginners to "seasoned veterans" -- who would like to participate. David Guillot has volunteered to run Toon and a second game, still to be determined.

If you are interested in participating as a GM, getting more information on possible games, or suggesting a game that you would like to have run during the weekend, then please contact Ned Bush at 954-584-2140 or send him e-mail at nedbush@gate.net.

Video Room

This year's video room promises to be chock-full of new visual sensory pleasures from the laserdisc library of Joe Siclari, our own Father of SFSFS. Due to copyright restrictions, we cannot mention those films by name, but y'know, it's the one with that blonde girl...and the enchanted thing...then the monster comes along and, well, we all know what happens next!

We're sure that you'll have a hard time deciding between many of the panels and catching a viewing of the eclectic gems that Joe will have running.

Banquet

At this time, final decisions are still being made regarding the banquet. Tickets for the event will be \$25.00. We can assure you it will be a fun-filled event that will take place on Saturday night. Participants will be automatically entered into a drawing for several mystery door prizes. You've got to eat the meal to see the deals!

Dealers' Room

It will be November, those gift-giving holidays will be just around the corner. What better time and place to look for those unique items to give your loved ones? For any interested dealers, there are still spaces available. The going rate is \$45 and it includes: a 6' x 6' space; a 3' x 6' table; and a 3 day membership! An assistant's membership is \$15. There is a limit of two assistants per table space.

Art Show

A consistent crowd pleaser for Tropicon has always been the visual pleasures that the Art Show has to offer. This year promises to have more of the same. In addition to the display by our Artist GoH, we will have works from a variety of artists from around the country, as well as a few locals!

For artists interested in displaying their works the prices are as follows:

Panels:	4 x 8 = \$25.00
	4 x 4 = \$15.00
Tables:	2 x 6 = \$25.00
	2 x 3 = \$15.00

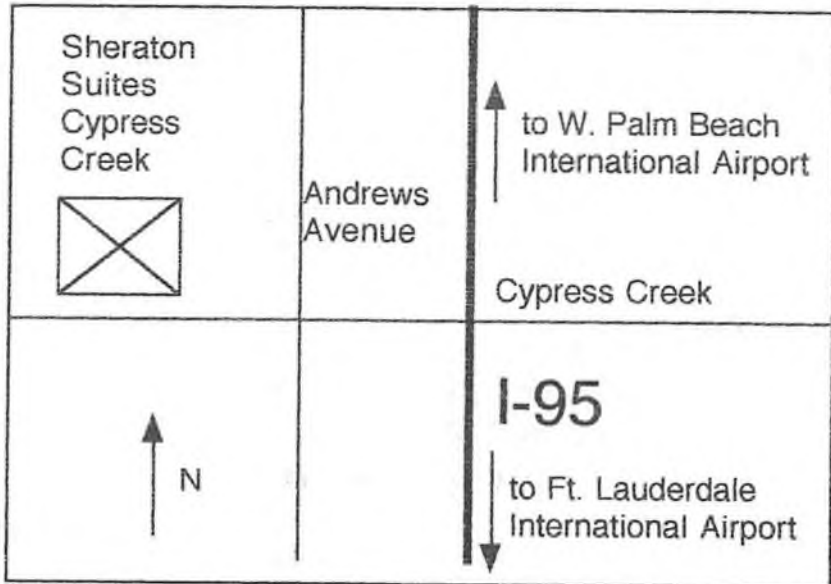
Please contact Becky Peters at the SFSFS address for details.

Hotel

Yes, the rumors are correct. Our hotel has changed management from the Doubletree Guest Suites Cypress Creek to the Sheraton Suites Cypress Creek. Our original contract is being honored, so the rates have not changed. Room rates are as follows:

Single/Double occupancy: \$84.00 a night
Triple/Quad occupancy: \$94.00 a night

The Obligatory Nifty Map to the Hotel



Registration

What?! You haven't sent in your registration yet?! C'mon, what are you waiting for? In addition to having a really spiffy looking pre-printed badge, there will be other goodies awaiting the first 130 sentient beings who send in their completed registration forms with a check or money order!

The rates for a single 3 day membership are:

\$25.00 until October 31, 1998
\$28.00 thereafter

And, of course, children under 8 years old will be free with a paid adult membership.

In case you decide to wait until you actually show up to Tropicon to register, the registration hours are as follows:

Friday: noon to 8 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Sunday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

One day memberships are as follows:

Friday only = \$13.00
Saturday only = \$18.00
Sunday only = \$13.00

TropiconXVII Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone No.: _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ for:

- _____ 3 Day Membership(s)
 \$25.00 until Oct 31, 1998
 \$28.00 thereafter
- _____ Dealers' Room Table: \$45.00 (includes 1 membership)
- _____ Dealers' Room Assistant Membership: \$15.00
 (limit 2 per table)
- _____ Art Show Panel/Table: full=\$25.00; half=\$15
- _____ SFSFS Membership(s): \$15 .00
- _____ Contribution to Charity Fund
 (please specify which _____)
- _____ Special rate Tropicon XVII Membership AND
 1 year membership to SFSFS (offer valid
 until Oct. 31, 1998 \$35.00

Please send more information on:

- _____ Dealers' Room Table _____ Art Show
- _____ SFSFS _____ Gaming
- _____ Advertising in the program book
- _____ volunteering

PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: SFSFS