

Guest of Honor: Connie Willis



Described as "one of the best new SF writers," (Publishers Weekly) Connie Willis has been writing science fiction full-time since 1970, when she won a National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Grant. Her short fiction has appeared in *Omni*, *The Missouri Review*, *Asimov's Magazine*, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Twilight Zone Magazine*, and numerous anthologies, including the prestigious *The Universe*, upcoming from

Bantam Books. Her fiction embraces a variety of styles and subjects, from high-tech screwball comedy to psychological horror to more serious studies of free will and loss.

Willis has been nominated consistently for both the Nebula Awards and the Hugos. In 1982, she won both the Hugo and Nebula Awards for her novelette "Fire Watch", and a Nebula Award for her short story, "A Letter from the Clearys". Her short fiction has been chosen regularly for the year's best science fiction collections. This year, her novelette "All My Darling Daughters" will be published in Terry Carr's *The Year's Best Science Fiction*, and her novella, "The Curse of Kings," will appear in Donald Wollheim's *The Annual World's Best Science Fiction*.

Willis's short story collection, *Fire Watch*, published by Bluejay Books in 1984, made the *New York Times* "Notable Books of 1985" list and their "Recommended Summer Reading" list. *Publisher's Weekly* commented, "Willis's range is impressive," and called the book, "an exciting collection by one of the best new SF writers." The *Christian Science Monitor* praised her "tightly constructed stories that highlight plot and character," and *Best Sellers* stated, "I enthusiastically recommend this outstanding collection by an author whose work will doubtless continue to enthrall in a genre which is one of the last remaining strongholds of short fiction."

Willis has just completed a novel, *Lincoln's Dreams*, which will be published by Bantam in April of 1987. The novel is about a modern-day young woman who appears to be having Robert E. Lee's dreams. In 1980, Willis and Cynthia Felice wrote a science fiction adventure novel called *Water Witch* (Ace Books) and are currently completing their second collaboration.

Willis is currently an Artist-in-Residence for the state of Colorado and lectures extensively at high schools and universities, libraries, and book clubs. She lives in Greeley, Colorado, with her husband and sixteen-year-old daughter.

Fan GoH: Avedon Carol

Avedon Carol was rescued from a career singing rock music and political writing at the age of 22 when she was kidnapped by science fiction fans and forced to have some fun for a change and stop being cool. She continued to write for the movement press until she lost her patience and started publishing fanzines instead. She is still out of the closet as a feminist and believes that good gossip is an important art form, Jerry Falwell is anti-family, and Ronald Reagan is a traitor.

Avedon currently lives in London, where she has been studying what it means to be an American. She is also making notes for possible future essays with titles such as "Would Men Have Jobs in a Meritocracy?" "Ronald Reagan: Communist Dupe" "Why are Monetarists So Bad At Capitalism?" "How Industrialism Destroyed the Family," and "Why Do Conservatives Hate Trains."

Special Guest Samuel R. Delany

Delany has been a significant part of the science fiction community virtually from the publication of his first book, *The Fall of the Towers*, (1962). At the time, he was 20 and describes in some of his later essays the enthusiasm he had for literature and his attempts to create a modern american novel in science fiction form. It seems like he has been at the forefront of several developments in SF over the last two-and one-half decades. The novel *Babel 17* (1966) dealt with linguistics and consciousness at a time when structuralism (which focuses on these questions) was virtually unknown in America. This same novel has a female protagonist, an even more rare development in SF of that time. *Nova* (1968) transforms an adventure tale into a unique literary experience, but equally as interesting was his involvement with Marlyn Hacker and the Quark anthologies, introducing SF that displayed experimentation with literary technique, now sometimes called the "New Wave". His longer and most republished novel *Dhalgren* uses parallel narratives, found manuscripts and a geographical free-space identifiable as nowhere but recognizable as a decaying inner-city. The more recent fantasy works, *Tales of Neveryon* (1979), *Neveryona* and *Flight From Neveryon* (1985) and his latest novel, *Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* (1986) resemble each other as little as they do the earlier books. He has recently received the Crawford award for his critical writing to add to the many Nebula and Hugo awards he already possesses. Hopefully, this brief catalog has given you some idea of the breadth of Delany's genius, which, I might add, is often evident in spoken conversation as in his writing. Delany will add other dimensions to WisCon XI. See you there.