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SEACON 03. A soothing time was had by all at the Hinckley Eastercon, despite the surprise loss of GoH Mary Gentle, who e-mailed three days beforehand to announce that hideous deadlines would prevent her from coming. Hence much programme redesign and extra work for the other guests Chris Evans and Fangorn, who rose nobly to the occasion. The sf award season was launched with a wondrously silly Tiptree presentation to M. John Harrison for *Light*, and very fetching he looked in the statutory tiara. Bill Burns won the Doc Weir 'unsung good egg' award. • BSFA Awards: NONFICTION my introduction to *Maps: The Uncollected John Sladek*; ARTWORK Dominic Harman, *Interzone 179* cover; SHORT Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*; NOVEL (to wild applause) Christopher Priest, *The Separation*. • It's Hinckley yet again in 2005—see below.

The Potters of Firsk

Mike Ashley is a happy man: 'I've just heard I've won the Edgar for my *Mammoth Encyclopedia of Modern Crime Fiction*. Wheeeeeeeeeee ...'

Margaret Atwood explains the vast gulf between our world and hers: 'Science fiction has monsters and spaceships; speculative fiction could really happen.' (*Guardian* interview, 26 April) [BD; many others]

John Betancourt of Wildside Press has bought up Borgo Press, acquiring all assets including—on a five-year consultancy contract—Borgo's former owner Robert Reginald. Now Wildside has offered to buy the book assets of the insolvent UK small press Big Engine. Dashing the hopes of magazine fans, John B. adds: 'My offer did not include *3SF* magazine. I don't need another magazine; *Weird Tales* and *H.P. Lovecraft's Magazine of Horror* are quite enough for now!' The latter (no unsolicited submissions, please) is being edited by Marvin Kaye.

Jim Burns has been lying low and letting Rowena (see below) take all the flak generated by Saddam Hussein's enthusiasm for bad rip-offs of fantasy art. But he gleefully spotted 'the really crummy copy of my *The Ceremonies* [T.E.D. Klein] painting which hangs in Saddam's love-shack, mirrored bedroom, above the bed (such images it provokes!).'

Charles L. Grant was named as the writer to be honoured with this year's International Horror Guild Living Legend Award.

Christopher Priest is overcome with excitement at the news that his novel *The Prestige* seems set to become a film directed by *Memento* man Christopher Nolan, from a script by his brother Jonathan Nolan.

Rowena (Morrill) had a moment of undesired fame when copies of two of her paintings were found hanging in a Baghdad house allegedly used for naughty purposes by Saddam Hussein. One, the cover for Andrew J. Offutt's *King Dragon*, can be seen on the CNN website. [PB/RK]

Contrayerva

12 May • **Reading at Borders**, Oxford St, London. 6:30pm. With Pat Cadigan, Jon Courtenay Grimwood, and M. John Harrison.

17 May • **Clarke Award**, Science Museum, London. 6:30pm. By invitation. *No open afternoon event this year*; it should return in 2004.

6 Jun • **British Fantasy Society** open night, Princess Louise pub, High Holborn, London. 6:30pm on. Also 5 Sep, 5 Dec. All welcome.

1-3 Aug • **Conjuration** (role-playing games), New Hall, Cambridge. GoH Kenneth Hite. £25 reg; B&B on-site from £33pppn. 'No tournaments.' Contact 48 Bracknoy Road, Cambridge, CB1 3PQ.

1-3 Aug • **Finncon X—Eurocon 2003**, Turku, Finland. Free, but pre-registering helps the committee and gives access to cheap rooms, €5/night. Contact Turku SF Society, PL 538, 20101 Turku, Finland.

27-8 Sep • **Phoenix Convention (P-Con)**, Ashling Hotel, Parkgate St, Dublin 8. Now €30 reg, €35 at door; €10 supp. Contact: Yellow Brick Road, 8 Bachelors Walk, Dublin 1, Ireland.

24-6 Oct • **They Came and Shaved Us**, Fairways Hotel, Dundalk, Ireland. Now £35/£(1)55/€55 reg. Sterling to 13a Bridge Rd, Uxbridge, UB8 2QW; punts/Euro to 123 Carnlough Rd, Cabra West, Dublin 7.

7-9 Nov • **Novacon 33**, Quality Hotel, Walsall. Now £35 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Rd, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

15-16 Nov • **Wardrobe** (costuming), Kenilworth. £35 reg to 6 Oct; day £25 Sat, £15 Sun. Cheques to British Costume Convention, 7

Church Close, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 1SG.

9-12 Apr 04 • **Concourse** (Eastercon), Blackpool Winter Gardens. Now £40 reg. Contact 479 Newmarket Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8JJ.

29-30 May 04 • **ConVivial** (Victorian sf), Central Hotel, Glasgow. £30 reg. Contact Lowhill House West, Eaglesham, Glasgow, G76 0NU.

25-27 Feb 05 • **Redemption 05 (B5/B7)**, Hanover International Hotel, Hinckley. Now £45 reg, £50 after 1 Sep 04. Contact 26 Kings Meadow View, Wetherby, LS22 7FX.

25-28 Mar 05 • **Paragon2** (Eastercon), Hanover International Hotel, Hinckley, Leics. GoH Richard Morgan, John & Eve Harvey, more TBA. £30 reg until November 2003; £15 supp/junior, £5 child. Contact 4 Burnside Ave, Sheffield, S8 9FR. Phone 0114 281 0674.

4-8 Aug 05 • **Interaction** (63rd Worldcon), SECC, Glasgow. Still £75/\$115 reg, rising to £85/\$135 on 1 June 03. Discounts for pre-supporters etc. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. In North America: PO Box 58009, Louisville, Kentucky, KY 40268-0009, USA.

Infinitely Improbable

More Awards. *Nebulas*: NOVEL Neil Gaiman, *American Gods*. NOVELLA Richard Chwedyk, 'Bronte's Egg'. NOVELETTE Ted Chiang, 'Hell is the Absence of God'. SHORT Carol Emshwiller, 'Creature'. SCRIPT *The Fellowship of the Ring*. • *Dick Award* for sf paperback original: Carol Emshwiller, *The Mount*. • *Prometheus* (libertarian sf) shortlist: Ken MacLeod, *Dark Light*; J. Neil Schulman, *Escape from Heaven*; F. Paul Wilson, *The Haunted Air*; Terry Pratchett, *Night Watch*, Greg Egan, *Schild's Ladder*.

Unclean! Unclean! Booksellers could be ignoring a potentially immense market by hiding fantasy books away at the back of the shop and displaying them together with science fiction, according to new market research undertaken by HarperCollins ...' (*Publishing News*) [KB]

Hugo Nominations. NOVEL Michael Swanwick, *Bones of the Earth*; Robert J. Sawyer, *Hominids*; David Brin, *Kiln People*; China Miéville, *The Scar*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *The Years of Rice and Salt*. • NOVELLA Ian R. MacLeod, 'Breathmoss' (*Asimov's* 5/02); Richard Chwedyk, 'Bronte's Egg' (*F&SF* 8/02); Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*; Pat Forde, 'In Spirit' (*Analog* 9/02) Charles Coleman Finlay, 'The Political Officer' (*F&SF* 4/02); Paul Di Filippo, *A Year in the Linear City*. • NOVELETTE Charles Stross, 'Halo' (*Asimov's* 6/02); Gregory Frost, 'Madonna of the Maquiladora' (*Asimov's* 5/02); Maureen F. McHugh, 'Presence' (*F&SF* 3/02); Michael Swanwick, 'Slow Life' (*Analog* 12/02); Ursula K. Le Guin, 'The Wild Girls' (*Asimov's* 3/02). • SHORT Jeffrey Ford, 'Creation' (*F&SF* 5/02); Geoffrey A. Landis, 'Falling Onto Mars' (*Analog* 7/02); Michael Swanwick, "'Hello," Said the Stick' (*Analog* 3/02); Molly Gloss, 'Lambing Seasons' (*Asimov's* 7/02); Michael Swanwick, 'The Little Cat Laughed to See Such Sport' (*Asimov's* 10/02). • RELATED BOOK Justine Larbalestier, *The Battle of the Sexes in Science Fiction*; Judith Merril & Emily Pohl-Weary, *Better to Have Loved: The Life of Judith Merril*; Jerry Weist, *Bradbury: An Illustrated Life*; Bob Eggleton & John Grant, *Dragonhenge*; Cathy & Arnie Fenner (ed), *Spectrum 9: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art*. • DRAMATIC, SHORT Angel, 'Waiting in the Wings'; Buffy, 'Conversations With Dead People'; Firefly, 'Serenity'; *ST: Enterprise*, 'Carbon Creek'; *ST: Enterprise*, 'A Night in Sickbay'. • DRAMATIC, LONG *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*; *The Two Towers*; *Minority Report*; *Spider-Man*; *Spirited Away*. • EDITOR Ellen Datlow, Gardner Dozois, David G. Hartwell, Stanley Schmidt, Gordon Van Gelder. • ARTIST Jim Burns, David A. Cherry, Bob Eggleton, Frank Kelly Freas, Donato Giancola. • SEMIPROZINE *Ansible*, *Interzone*, *Locus*, *The New York Review of SF*, *Speculations*. • FANZINE *Challenger*, *Emerald City*, *File 770*, *Mimosa*, *Plokta*. • FAN WRITER Bob Devney, John L. Flynn, Mike Glyer, Dave Langford, Steven H Silver. • FAN ARTIST Brad Foster, Teddy Harvia, Sue Mason, Steve Stiles, Frank Wu. • CAMPBELL AWARD (not a Hugo) Charles Coleman Finlay, David D. Levine, Karin Lowachee, Wen Spencer, Ken Wharton. • Earlier shortlists included 'Liking What You See' by Ted Chiang, who had declined his novelette nomination, and John L. Flynn's short 'A Gift of Verse', apparently published in 2000; these were replaced by the Frost and Gloss stories. The Flynn short was in his book *Visions in Light and Shadow*, dated 2000 on

the copyright page, which received 7 Hugo nominations as Related Book in 2001: but these, it seems, were from friends and family who saw proofs, and actual publication was delayed to 2002. What a tangle.

As Others See Us. Patrick Gale's review of the new Margaret Atwood novel admires her 'gleeful inventiveness' in imagining unheard-of wonders like 'rats genetically spliced to snakes' or 'pain-free chickens developed to produce only multiple breasts', yet deftly avoids calling this sc**nce f*ct**n: 'In *Oryx And Crake* she makes a welcome return to fantasy. She would probably chuckle at that and murmur "if only" for, like *The Handmaid's Tale*, it is less a fantasy than an imaginative projection with a rational foundation in current facts.' Gale's other acceptable code phrase for the genre that dares not speak its name is 'dystopian myth'. (*Waterstone's Books Quarterly*) [DN]

R.I.P. Peter B.Bell (1932-2003), long-time Glasgow fan, con-goer and collector of sf, died on 23 March; he was 70. • Jacques Chambon (1942-2003), French sf editor and translator, died on 16 April following a heart attack. In the late 1960s and the 1970s he contributed much criticism to *Fiction*, the French *F&SF*; later he translated such texts as Christopher Priest's *The Affirmation*. He was a major editor for 12 years at Editions Denoel, and since 1998 at Editions Flammarion. [J-DB] N.Lee Wood writes: 'It's hard to take in that someone so alive is gone. French publishing has lost one of their finest, and I've lost a good friend.' • Peter Day, veteran Brum Group member and Novacon attendee, died on 23 February; he was 73. [BGN] • Anne Gwynne (1918-2003) US film actress during the 1940s and 50s, died on 31 March aged 84. Her many genre films included *Flash Gordon Conquers the Universe* (1940 serial), *Weird Woman* (1944, based on *Conjure Wife*), *House of Frankenstein* (1945), and *Teenage Monster* (1957, aka *Meteor Monster*); her favourite horror appearance was in *Black Friday* (1940), with Karloff and Lugosi. [DK/PB] • Willis E. McNelly (1920-2003), academic, editor, and compiler of the 1984 *Dune Encyclopedia*, died on 7 April aged 82. [L]

Random Fandom. Dr Kari Maund announced at Eastercon: 'Peter Weston has got the sexiest voice in fandom.' • Harry Payne, after discussion at Seacon 03, is registering 'Eastercon' as a trademark to protect it from outfits like the late Fandom.com. • Roy Tackett: 'i am writing this because one of the stupidest federal laws i ever heard of says i am not to. i am currently in mission manor a nursing home in albuquerque because i cannot walk. please let all fans know where i am and why.' 10101 Lagrima Del Oro Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111-19101, USA.

Horror Awards. Extracts from copious shortlists.... *Bram Stoker*: NOVEL Douglas Clegg, *The Hour Before Dark*; Stephen King, *From a Buick 8*; Chuck Palahniuk, *Lullaby*; Tom Piccirilli, *The Night Class*; Alice Sebold, *The Lovely Bones*. FOR YOUNG READERS Clive Barker, *Abarat*; Nancy Etchemendy, *Cat in Glass and Other Tales of the Unnatural*; Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*; Richard Matheson and William Stout, *Abu & The Seven Marvels*. • *International Horror Guild*: NOVEL Ramsey Campbell, *The Darkest Part of the Woods*; Douglas Clegg, *The Hour Before Dark*; John Connolly, *The Killing Kind*; Gregory Frost, *Fitcher's Brides*; Stephen King, *From a Buick 8*; Dan Simmons, *A Winter Haunting*. • IHG nominees also include, though in separate categories, *Abarat* (Graphic Narrative) and the all-conquering *Coraline* (Long Form). • As a contributor, I was ever so pleased to see Richard Bleiler's epic 2-volume *Supernatural Fiction Writers* on both BS and IHG nonfiction shortlists; so is Ramsey Campbell's essay collection *Ramsey Campbell, Probably*.

Another SF Crossword Clue. 'Writer removes them in casual conversation (6)' (*Guardian*, 23 April) [JMcN]

C.o.A. carl juarez, c/o 1013 North 36th St, Seattle, WA 98103, USA. Jon Singer, Joss Research Institute, 312 Laurel Ave, Laurel, MD 20707-4320, USA. Lucy Zinkiewicz, 15 Darnborough St, York, YO23 1AU.

Small Press. *New Scientist* must be on the skids: payment for a 400-word freelance review is now only half what it was last autumn. • The Big Engine creditors' meeting was on 29 April. No report as yet.

Fanfundery. GUFF. A new southbound race is under way: Doug Bell and Pat McMurray are candidates for the 2004 trip to Australia and/or New Zealand (details to be decided). Ballot forms available on line or from administrators: Jean Weber & Eric Lindsay, PO Box 640, Airlie Beach, Qld 4802, Australia; Paul Kincaid, 60 Bournemouth Rd, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ. Voting (£5/A\$10) ends 10 Nov 2003.

Ansible 189 Follow-Ups. Mark Le Fanu of the Society of Authors comments on James Follett's polemic about the Author's Licensing and Copyright Society selling his rebroadcasting rights to BBC7 at knock-down prices without his knowledge: 'Some of what he says is accurate, but much is not. We covered the issue briefly in the last issue of *The Author* (p40). There is no doubt that ALCS acted unwisely. It is not entirely coincidental that the Chief Executive and the Legal Adviser

have now left. We are doing what we can to help to sort things out.' • *Harry Warner* was in fact found shortly after his death in February, although the announcement was delayed by weeks. [RL] • *J.K. Rowling and Time Warner* won their Amsterdam lawsuit blocking publication of Dmitry Yemets's 'Tanya Grotter' rip-off (eight books planned, 500,000 copies sold in Russia)—although Yemets and his Dutch publisher Byblos can appeal. [NV] • *David A. Hardy* isn't the only sf artist whose name adorns an asteroid: astronomer Dr James Scotti named a whole batch from a list including Kim Poor, Don Davis, Chris Butler, Bob Eggleton and Alan Bean, with more to come. [BGN]

Group Gropes. *London First Thursdays*: there was trouble with the Barley Mow on 3 April, but the 1 May meeting there seemed fine. [PT] **Chog's Masterclass.** *Department of Relativity*. 'That mountain's less than twelve thousand feet high—that's only two thousand under Earth gravity ...' (Arthur C. Clarke, 'The Sentinel', 1951) [G]

John Foyster (1941-2003)

BRUCE GILLESPIE WRITES. John Foyster: 13 April 1941 to 5 April 2003. He entered fandom in 1958, joined the Melbourne SF Club in 1959, and in the early 1960s was one of the few Australians publishing fanzines that were sent overseas. Titles included *Satura*, *Gryphon* and *The Wild Colonial Boy*. He was the main organizer of the 1966 Melbourne Easter Convention, the first Australian con for eight years, that relaunched Australian fandom after a lull. • Foyster, John Bangsund and Lee Harding began *Australian SF Review* in July 1966. It quickly became popular overseas, and helped to launch new fan groups throughout Australia, including Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane. Foyster as an acerbic non-academic sf critic and fannish writer was a major contributor to *ASFR*, and his special issue on Cordwainer Smith (*ASFR 11*) continued to be reprinted for many years. • In 1968 with Leigh Edmonds he was a strong influence on starting ANZAPA (Australian and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association), in 1970 he began the Nova Mob (Melbourne's sf discussion group, which still meets monthly), and in 1972 he was the major force behind the start of DUFF (Down Under Fan Fund). In 1970 Foyster appointed a team to bid to hold a world sf convention in Australia; this quickly became the Aussiecon I bid for 1975, which we won in Toronto in 1973. Meanwhile, Foyster was publishing such fanzines as *exploding madonna*/*Journal of Omphalistic Epistemology* (which won a Ditmar Award in 1970), *Norstrilian News* and *Chunder!*. The titles changed rapidly—the high quality of writing and editing continued unabated, ending only with *eFNAC*, of which Foyster published 30 issues on the Internet. • In 1979, John gathered a collective, including Jenny and Russell Blackford, Yvonne Rousseau, Lucy Sussex and Janeen Webb, to revive *Australian SF Review*. It continued until 1986, and is credited by David Hartwell as a major influence on the shape and editorial setup of the *New York Review of SF*. • Foyster's one attempt at fiction, 'Let It Ring' under the pseudonym John Ossian, won a Ditmar. • John was the first winner of GUFF, the Get Up and Over Fan Fund: he attended Seacon, the Brighton Worldcon in 1979, with Jennifer Bryce, and visited fans all over Britain and Europe. In the 1980s John revived the Nova Mob when it faltered for a few years, then led the initial stages of the bid for Australia in 85. He could not attend that convention, but in the 1990s he strongly supported the bid to hold Aussiecon III in Melbourne in 1999, where he opened the convention. John's lifelong interest in fan history culminated in his organizing the FanHistoricon stream at Aussiecon III. • Meanwhile, he continued to write and publish a wide range of material, fannish, sf and on educational and mathematical subjects. He moved to Adelaide in 1987, where he began Critical Mass, Adelaide's equivalent of the Nova Mob. In 2002 he was awarded the A Bertram Chandler Award for services to Australian sf and fandom. • John was partner to Elizabeth (now Elizabeth Darling) until 1976, to Jennifer Bryce until 1987, and to Yvonne Rousseau until his death. Yvonne has been constantly at John's side since he was first diagnosed with a stroke (September 2001), then correctly diagnosed as having contracted a brain tumour (late December 2001), until his death. • There is much else I could say about John—often charming and funny, sometimes acerbic and upbraiding, he was like a father figure (in both a positive and negative sense) to me since 1967. It really is impossible to imagine life without his presence and influence.

Ansible 190 © Dave Langford, 2003. Crossword answer: Asimov. Thanks to Paul Barnett, Jean-Daniel Breque, Keith Brooke, Brum Group News, Barbara Davies, Gag, Steve Green, Dan Kimmel, Richard Knowles, Locus, Rich Lynch, Joe McNally, Darren Nash, Paul Treadaway, Nico Veenkamp, and Hero Distributors: Rog Peyton (Birmingham SF Group), Janice Murray (North America), SCIS, and Alan Stewart (Thyme/Australia). 2 May 03