

# ansible



## Ansible® 417 April 2022

From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Allison Scott. Available for SAE, or a thousand, a hundred, ten and one, black marble steps.

### The Waning Strand

Chris Priest & Nina Allan are moving to a smaller house and have bestowed a vast number of books (including their own author copies) on various Scots bookshops: see christopher-priest.co.uk/downsizing.

Brandon Sanderson's Kickstarter campaign to fund publication of four 'secret' novels written during lockdown transcended its \$1 million goal – and provoked a fair amount of public jealousy – by raising \$15m on the first day. (*Publishers Lunch*, March) [MF] Funding soon passed the previous Kickstarter record of \$20.3m for a smart watch, and hit \$40 million with over six hours still to go before the end-of-March deadline.

SFWA has gone global: the acronym now stands for Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association rather than Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (second F silent in either case), though to avoid a 'monumental effort to change our incorporation status' the company is still Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, Inc. (SFWA, March)

Charles Stross lamented: 'I'm just gonna write space opera from now on. / It's the only way to be sure my present-day SF won't be upstaged when we discover that the Nazi Moon Pandas are paying the Brain Slugs controlling the Russian Oligarchs to accelerate global warming. / (That's next week's headline.)' (Twitter, 3 March)

Jeff VanderMeer mused: 'While Brandon Sanderson's kickstarter is at \$15 million, my kickstarter to provide baby raccoons in the ravine with pants is stuck at \$25 of a \$100,000 goal, with 2 days left to go. Why the hate? What is WRONG with you people?!' (Facebook, 3 March)

Martha Wells declined her Nebula nomination for the Murderbot series tale *Fugitive Telemetry*, declaring that 'someone else could use this nomination better than I could.' Thus the three authors who were tied for sixth place in Best Novella all became finalists. (Blog, 8 March)

### Constringency

7-10 Apr • **LuxCon** (Eurocon), Luxembourg. €30 reg; payment details (IBAN) at [www.luxcon.lu](http://www.luxcon.lu). Contact info at [sfs@sf.lu](mailto:sfs@sf.lu).

8-10 Apr • **Tolkien Society Springmoot/AGM**, Mercure Exeter Rougemont Hotel, Exeter. See [www.tolkien-society.org/events/](http://www.tolkien-society.org/events/).

9 Apr • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), King's House, Amptill Road, Bedford. 10am-5:30pm. £42.50 reg; under-19s/students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at [bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk](http://bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk).

ONLINE. 9-10 Apr • **Compulsion** (games); physical event postponed to April 2023. See [compulsion.org](http://compulsion.org) for the smaller 2022 presence online.

9-10 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Tickets £33.75; day £19.70. See [scifiscarborough.co.uk](http://scifiscarborough.co.uk).

15-18 Apr • **Reclamation** (Eastercon), Radisson Hotel & Conference Centre, Heathrow. £70 reg; £40 concessions; accompanied under-18s £25; under-5s free; £35 supporting. See [reclamation2022.co.uk](http://reclamation2022.co.uk).

SOLD OUT. 21-24 Apr • **Camp SFW**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. See [www.scifiweekender.com](http://www.scifiweekender.com).

ONLINE. 27-29 Apr • **GIFcon 2022** (Glasgow University conference), 'Fantasy Across Media'. More details awaited at [tinyurl.com/ybekrfay](http://tinyurl.com/ybekrfay).

ONLINE. 27 Apr-6 Jun • **Writing Science Fiction** (teaching course) with Adam Roberts. £210 reg. Details at [tinyurl.com/yckhurc4](http://tinyurl.com/yckhurc4).

7-8 May • **Portsmouth Comic Con**, Guildhall, Portsmouth. £25 adult weekend ticket; various other rates at [portsmouthcomiccon.com](http://portsmouthcomiccon.com).

21-22 May • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna, Sheffield. £45 reg; £55 early admission (10am rather than 11am). Day rates at [horrorconuk.com](http://horrorconuk.com).

26-29 May • **ChillerCon UK** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. £130 reg; HWA members £120. See [chillercon-uk.com](http://chillercon-uk.com).

27-29 May • **Satellite 7**, Crowne Plaza, Glasgow. £70 reg (£80 at the door); under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. Day membership £20 Fri, £35 Sat or Sun. See [seven.satellitex.org.uk](http://seven.satellitex.org.uk).

25-26 Jun • **Steampunk Weekend**, Belvoir Castle, Grantham. £22; under-17s £10. See [belvoircastle.com/steampunk-weekend/](http://belvoircastle.com/steampunk-weekend/).

13-17 Jul • **Once and Future Fantasies** (conference), Centre for Fantasy, University of Glasgow. £200 reg rising to £225 on 18 April; £98 concessions. See [fantasy.glasgow.ac.uk/index.php/onceandfuturecon/](http://fantasy.glasgow.ac.uk/index.php/onceandfuturecon/).

5-7 Aug • **TitanCon**, Hilton Hotel, Belfast. £35 reg, rising to £40 on

1 May; £45 from 1 July and at the door. More at [titancon.com](http://titancon.com).

25-29 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), Leicester Square, London. Tickets at [www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsandevents.html](http://www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsandevents.html) from 16 July.

26-29 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Tickets were to go on sale in March, but it now says Spring at [asylumsteampunk.co.uk](http://asylumsteampunk.co.uk).

6-7 Sep • **The Past as Nightmare** (conference), U of Reading. See [research.reading.ac.uk/health-humanities/event/the-past-as-nightmare/](http://research.reading.ac.uk/health-humanities/event/the-past-as-nightmare/).

20-23 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror films), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. Tickets £95 (£85 concessions) at [celluloidscreams.co.uk](http://celluloidscreams.co.uk).

29 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. Guests and membership rates awaited at [www.bristolcon.org](http://www.bristolcon.org).

10-12 Mar 2023 • **MinamiCon** (anime), Novotel Hotel, Southampton. Further details circa July at [www.minamicon.org.uk](http://www.minamicon.org.uk).

16-20 Aug 2023 • **Worldcon 2023**, Chengdu, China. Memberships on sale from May: \$120 reg; \$100 first-timers; \$80 students; \$60 virtual; under-12s free. Paid rates \$50 less without WSFS/Hugo voting rights, a perhaps unconstitutional innovation. Special rates for 2023 site selection voters. Prices good to 30 September. See [www.worldconinchina.com](http://www.worldconinchina.com).

**Rumblings.** *Eastercon 2023* will be chosen by in-person and online voting at Reclamation: bids are Conversation at [conversation2023.org.uk](http://conversation2023.org.uk) (venue yet to be announced) and Persistence (Birmingham NEC Hilton?) at [persistence2023.uk](http://persistence2023.uk). • *Worldcon 2024*: Glasgow, the only bid to have filed by the 4 March 2022 deadline, is unopposed. See [glasgow2024.org](http://glasgow2024.org).

### Infinitely Improbable

**As Others Feared Us.** Karen Joy Fowler remembered her publisher's alarm when she switched genres with *The Jane Austen Book Club*: "She thought that a lot of women – and men – who liked Jane Austen wouldn't pick up a book about her if they knew it was written by a science-fiction writer." On the day of publication, she happened to win a big sci-fi award. "And my publisher said: 'Oh f\*\*k, is there any way we can keep that information from coming out?'" (Interview in the *i*, 19 March)

**Awards.** BAFTAs: best animated film was *Encanto*; *Dune* won for cinematography, original score, production design, sound, and visual effects.

• *LFA Distinguished Scholarship*: Farah Mendlesohn. • *Nebula* novel finalists: *The Unbroken* by C.L. Clark; *A Master of Djinn* by P. Djèl Clark; *Machinhood* by S.B. Divya; *A Desolation Called Peace* by Arkady Martine; *Plague Birds* by Jason Sanford. For the remaining categories see [nebulas.sfwaworldcon.org/sfwaworldcon-announces-nebula-award-finalists/](http://nebulas.sfwaworldcon.org/sfwaworldcon-announces-nebula-award-finalists/). • *Oscars*: here *Dune* won in the five BAFTA-winning categories above, plus a sixth win for best editing. [AIP] • *Writers Guild*, original screenplay: *Don't Look Up*. [F770]

**New Scale Unit Introduced.** 'Asteroid half the size of a giraffe strikes Earth off coast of Iceland.' (*Daily Mail*, 14 March)

**As Others See Us (Grimchill Dept).** On Jennifer Egan's novel *The Candy House*: 'His invention – a small, glowing cube, capable of downloading an entire human consciousness – allows for some of the novel's more fantastical themes, though calling it science fiction sounds far too chilly and grim for the winding metaphysical mystery that follows.' (Leah Greenblatt, *Entertainment Weekly*, April 2022) [PL]

**R.I.P.** *Ralph Ahn* (1926-2022), US actor whose credits include *Amityville: A New Generation* (1993) and *Lawnmower Man 2* (1996), died on 26 February aged 95. [AIP] • *Kirk Baily* (1963-2022), US voice actor in *Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex* (English dub, 2002-2004), *Big Hero 6* (2014), *Bumblebee* (2018) and others, died on 27 February aged 59. [LP] • *Lynda Baron* (1939-2022), UK actress in *Doctor Who* (1966, 1983, 2011), *Humpty Dumpty* (1968) and *Fimbles* (2002-2003), died on 7 March aged 82. [SG] • *Lars Bloch* (1938-2022), Danish actor in Italian films including *Atlas Against the Cyclops* (1961), *The Flying Saucer* (1964) and *Fracchia vs. Dracula* (1985), died on 27 March aged 83. [SS] • *Peter Bowles* (1936-2022), UK actor in *The Legend of Hell House* (1973) and various genre tv series, died on 17 March aged 85. [SJ] • *Johnny Brown* (1937-2022), US actor in *Rickety Rocket* (1979) and *Plastic Man* (1979-1980), died on 2 March aged 84. [LP] • *Elguja Burduli* (1941-2022), Georgian actor in the Strugatsky-based *Hard to Be a God* (1989), died on 5 March aged 80. [AM] • *Gianni Cavina* (1940-2022), Italian actor in *Balsamus l'uomo di Satana* (1970), *Thomas and the Bewitched* (1970) and

others, died on 26 March aged 81. [SJ] ● Sorapong Chatree (1950-2022), Thai actor in *Out of the Darkness* (1971, the first Thai sf film), *Headless Ghost* (1980) and others, died on 10 March aged 71. [SJ] ● Jeremy Child (1944-2022), UK actor in *Doomwatch* (1972 film), *Sapphire & Steel* (1981) and *Vice Versa* (1981 tv), died on 7 March aged 77. [SJ] ● Marvin J. Chomsky (1929-2022), US tv director whose credits include *The Wild Wild West* (1967-1969), *Star Trek* (1968-1969) and *Dr Franken* (1980), died on 28 March aged 92. [LP] ● Denise Coffey (1936-2022), UK actress and writer fondly remembered by Brits of a certain age for *Do Not Adjust Your Set* (1967-1969: the Bonzo Dog Doo-dah Band! Captain Fantastic vs the Blit Men!), died on 24 March aged 85. Credits include *Dark Towers* (1981) and *The Tomorrow People* (1994). [SJ] ● Tim Considine (1940-2022), US actor in *The Shaggy Dog* (1959), *Monster Makers* (2003) and *Frankenfish* (2004), died on 3 March aged 81. [LP] ● Lawrence Dane (1937-2022), Canadian actor whose many genre credits include *Scanners* (1981), *Bionic Showdown* (1989), *Darkman II* (1995), *Bride of Chucky* (1998) and several tv series, died on 21 March aged 84. [SJ] ● Farrah Forke (1968-2022), US actress in *Brain Twisters* (1991), *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1993), *Lois & Clark* (1994-1995) and others, died on 25 February aged 54. [SJ] ● Paul Herman (1946-2022), US actor in *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985) and *Big* (1988), died on 29 March aged 76. [LP] ● Alan Hopgood (1934-2022), Australian screenwriter who co-wrote *The Man Who Saw Tomorrow* (1981) and actor whose films include *Knowing* (2009), died on 19 March aged 87. [SJ] ● Joël Houssin (1953-2022), noted French sf author who won the Grand Prix de l'Imaginaire for *Les Vautours* (1985) and his zombie novel *Le Temps du twist* (1990), and the Prix Apollo for *Argentine* (1989), died on 23 March aged 68. [PDF] ● Shirley Hughes (1927-2022), UK author who wrote and illustrated many children's stories – including fantasy such as *Angel on the Roof* (2019) – and twice won the Kate Greenaway Medal, died on 25 February aged 94. [SJ] ● William Hurt (1950-2022), Oscar-winning US actor whose credits include *Altered States* (1980), *Lost in Space* (1998), *The Simian Line* (2000), *A.I.* (2001), *Humans* (2015) and *Avengers: Endgame* (2019), died on 13 March aged 71. [LP] ● Conrad Janis (1928-2022), US actor in *Quark* (1977-1978), *Mork & Mindy* (1978-1982) and *Bad Blood* (2012), died on 1 March aged 94. [AIP] ● Bill Johnson (1956-2022), US author active from 1977, whose novelette 'We Will Drink a Fish Together ...' (1997 Asimov's) won a 1998 Hugo, died on 17 March aged 65. [GvG] ● Violetta Kolesnikova (1938-2022), Russian animator known for her work on Russian adaptations of *The Bremen Town Musicians* and *Winnie-the-Pooh*, and for the children's film *The Mystery of the Third Planet* (1981), died on 26 March aged 83. [AM] ● John Korty (1936-2022), Oscar-winning US director of the Zenna Henderson-based *The People* (1972), died on 9 March aged 85. [AIP] ● Leonid Kourits (1954-2022), Ukrainian fan who attended several UK and US cons and in 1988 organized 'the first truly international SF convention in the USSR' (Borys Sydiuk), died from a stroke on 6 March during a Russian attack on his city. [MKI/SF²C] ● Richard Labonté (1949-2022), Lambda-winning Canadian writer, editor and book dealer whose many LGBT-themed anthologies include *The Future Is Queer* (2006 with Lawrence Schimel), died on 20 March aged 72. [SHS] ● Alan Ladd Jr. (1937-2022), US film executive who was president of 20th Century Fox and produced *Braveheart* (1995), *The Phantom* (1996) and others, died on 2 March aged 84. [AIP] ● Garry Leach (1954-2022), UK comics artist who worked for 2000 AD and was the first to draw Alan Moore's 1982 *Marvelman/Miracleman* reboot, died on 26 March aged 67. ● Pavlo 'Pasha' Li (1998-2022), Ukrainian actor in *Unforgotten Shadows* (2013), with voice roles in dubs of *The Lion King* and *The Hobbit*, was killed by Russian shelling on 6 March; he was 23. [AIP] ● Mariÿn Malin, UK publisher and agent who for many years was MD of Methuen Children's Books (Kenneth Grahame, A.A. Milne and others), died in late February aged 86. [AIP] ● Pepper Martin (1936-2022), Canadian-born actor in *Superman II* (2006) and others, died on 18 March aged 85. [SJ] ● Harri Miekka (1958-2022), long-time Finnish fan, promoter and convention organizer who fundraised for many local sf events including Worldcon 75, died in late March. [JH] ● Ted Mooney (1951-2022), US author best known for *Easy Travel to Other Planets* (1981), died on 22 March aged 70. [PDF] ● Ron Pember (1934-2022), UK actor in *The Crimson Cult* (1968), *The Land That Time Forgot* (1974), *The Invisible Man* (1984) and others, died on 8 March aged 87. [SJ] ● Igor Revva (1965-2022), Azerbaijanian sf writer who published 11 novels in Russian, died on 8 March. [AM] ● Ralph Riach (1936-2022), Scots actor in *Braveheart* (1995) and *Cloud Atlas* (2012), died on 20 March aged 86. ● Mitchell Ryan (1934-2022), US actor in *Dark Shadows* (1966-1967), *Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers* (1995) and *Judge Dredd* (1995), died on 4 March aged 88. [AIP] ● Anneli Sauli (1932-2022), Finnish actress – often as Ann Savo – in *Moonwolf* (1959), *The Terror of Doctor Mabuse* (1962)

and others, died on 15 March aged 89. [SJ] ● John Stahl (1953-2022), Scots actor in *Loch Ness* (1996), *Being Human* (2010), *Frankenstein* (2011) and *Game of Thrones* (2012-2013), died on 2 March aged 69. [AIP] ● Akira Takarada (1934-2022), Japanese actor in Godzilla films from the original *Gojira* (1954) to *Godzilla* (2014), died on 14 March aged 87. [LP] ● Kunt Tulgar (1948-2022), Turkish director of the Turkish films *Tarzan the Mighty Man* (1974) and *The Return of Superman* (1979), died on 16 March aged 74. [SS] ● Don Tumasonis, US-born Norwegian author of short weird and supernatural fiction since the late 1990s – winning two International Horror Guild Awards – died on 12 February aged 76. [SJ] ● Tony Walton (1934-2022), Oscar-winning UK production and costume designer whose credits include *Mary Poppins* (1964), *Fahrenheit 451* (1966) and *The Wiz* (1978), died on 2 March aged 87. [AIP] ● Toti Yusupova (1936-2022), Uzbek actress who starred in the sf comedy *Abdullajon* (1991), died on 15 March. [AM]

**Author! Author!** On a new role-playing game: 'Dark Nation takes inspirational cues from the likes of [...] *The Man in the High Castle*, a comic book series and television show about an alternative future in which the Nazi regime conquers the USA'. (Dicebreaker.com, 29 March) [RBW]

**Magazine Scene.** *Fireside* is 'still losing a lot of money each month' and will cease publication this autumn. (Firesidefiction.com, 3 March)

**Urban Renewal.** George R.R. Martin's general hugeness continues, with the new Charlemont suburb of Geelong (Victoria, Australia) taking street names from *Game of Thrones*: 'Greyjoy Road, Stannis Street, Winterfell Road and Baelish Drive. (Lannister Road was changed to the more prosaic Precinct Road after it caused offence due to the Lannister siblings' incestuous relationship.' (*Sunday Age*, 6 March 2022) [DLR]

**C.O.A. Writer Beware** blog (Victoria Strauss): writerbeware.blog.

**The Way Things Were.** 'Now people don't just carry masks around with them, and you don't find them hanging on lamp posts late at night.' (Erle Stanley Gardner, *The Case of the Baited Hook*, 1940) [AL]

**Random Fandom.** *Fansine Activity Achievement Awards*: FANZINE COVER *Littlebrook* #11 (Ulrika O'Brien). LETTERHACK Jerry Kaufman. FANARTIST Ulrika O'Brien. FANWRITER Mark Plummer. ONE SHOT/SPECIAL *Dangerous Visions* ed. Sandra Bond. PERZINE *This Here...* ed. Nic Farey. GENZINE *Portable Storage* ed. William Breiding. #1 FAN FACE Nic Farey. More, with longlists, at efanzines.com/TIR/Incomplete2022results.pdf.

**We Are Everywhere.** 'Ain't No Party Like an Octavia Butler Writer's Workshop' (Gabby Rivera, *Juliet Takes a Breath*, 2018: chapter title). [PL]

**The Dead Past.** *20 Years Ago*, Thog admired the power of futurology: "In 1975 Ed Roberts, the founder of MITS, a calculator company based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, put a microchip in a box with a screen and called his invention Altair, after a character in *Star Wars*." (John Cassidy, dot.con, 2002)' (*Ansible* 177, April 2002) ● *50 Years Ago*, Alfred Bester was in a frisky mood: 'Science fiction is no profession for a grown man. It can be a delightful hobby, but never to be taken seriously. Those who devote themselves to science fiction full time are often cases of arrested development. You have only to read the letters written by authors to the *SFWA Bulletin* to take my point. So many of them are completely childish.' (Interview in *Luna Monthly*, April/May 1972)

**Fanfundery.** *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*: a final reminder that the 2022 race closes on 19 April. See taff.org.uk. ● *TAFF Free Ebooks*: latest is *The Incomplete Burbee Volume 2*, expanding Terry Carr's second selection of fanwriting by Charles Burbee (as published by Jeff Schalles in 1996) with further notable and funny pieces. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Burb2.

**Thog's Masterclass.** *Hard-Boiled Dept.* 'The bartender, a stocky man with eyes like dead illusions, patted a head which looked as if it had once carried a crew cut, only now the crew had baled out.' (Douglas Enefer, *The Avengers*, 1963; yes, it does read 'baled') [BA] ● *Faulty Zoom Sessions Anticipated.* 'Louis Rocco, lying on his back on the couch-bed ... felt like a disembodied spirit in a great black void, holding conversation with three other disembodied and quite invisible spirits. At least he would have felt thus, if he could have expressed himself in this way.' (Harry Stephen Keeler, *The 16 Beans*, 1945) [RGJ] ● *Dept of Ultraviolet Prose.* 'Long had the wasting summer pastured its suns, like fiery red stallions, on the dun hills that crumpled before the Mykrasian Mountains in wild easternmost Cincor.' (Clark Ashton Smith, 'Xeethra', December 1934 *Weird Tales*) [LP] ● *Where the Dark Matter Hides.* '... because of the brilliance of the Sun's light, many astral bodies beyond it have never been seen from the Earth ...' (Arnold Brede, *Sister Earth*, 1951) [BA]

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