

# Ansible



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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: Atom (Arthur Thomson), from the 1980s. Available for SAE or a dip in the swimming-pool reactor.

**Glasgow 2024.** The third Glasgow Worldcon has happened! Membership figures from its newsletter *The Unicorn* (#8, Monday 12 August): 8,845 WSFS members, 7,240 attendance badges printed, 618 online only.

**Hugos.** NOVEL *Some Desperate Glory* by Emily Tesh. NOVELLA *Thornhedge* by T. Kingfisher. NOVELETTE 'The Year Without Sunshine' by Naomi Kritzer (*Uncanny* 11/23). SHORT 'Better Living Through Algorithms' by Naomi Kritzer (*Clarkesworld* 5/23). SERIES 'Imperial Radch' by Ann Leckie. GRAPHIC *Saga*, Vol. 11. RELATED WORK *A City on Mars* by Kelly and Zach Weinersmith. DRAMATIC, LONG *Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves*. DRAMATIC, SHORT *The Last of Us: 'Long, Long Time'*. GAME OR INTERACTIVE WORK *Baldur's Gate 3*. EDITOR, SHORT FORM Neil Clarke. EDITOR, LONG FORM Ruoxi Chen. PROFESSIONAL ARTIST Rovina Cai. SEMIPROZINE *Strange Horizons*. FANZINE *Nerds of a Feather, Flock Together*. FANCAST *Octothorpe*. FAN WRITER Paul Weimer. FAN ARTIST Laya Rose. LODESTAR (YA): *To Shape a Dragon's Breath* by Moniquill Blackgoose. ASTOUNDING (new writer) Xiran Jay Zhao (eligibility extended by request of sponsor). 3,813 valid final ballots were cast, mostly electronic but five on paper. (Admin report)

**Opening Ceremony Awards:** FIRST FANDOM HALL OF FAME Mary & Bill Burns, David Langford (I am all crogged). Posthumous: Alfred Bester, Mike Glicksohn, Mike Resnick, Peter Weston. MOSKOWITZ ARCHIVE Joe Siclari & Edie Stern. BIG HEART Michelle Drayton-Harold ('Cuddles'). SPECIAL COMMITTEE AWARD *Dungeons and Dragons* on its 50th anniversary.

**Food.** As part of the city's much-mentioned 'vibrant food culture', rumours of haggis pakoras abounded. John Jarrold had the last word: 'I have just eaten haggis wontons. And they were good ...' The default beverage at fast-food outlets was Irn Bru, subtly varied with Diet Irn Bru.

**Site Selection.** The unopposed Los Angeles bid for 2026 received 452 of the 531 votes cast, with 19 ineligible votes for joke bids etc and 60 opting, or not opting, for 'no preference'. See events list below for more.

**Will of the People.** That advisory vote on adding new indie film Hugo categories: 533 for, 727 against. The business meeting agreed.

**Badge Ribbons** noted: 'Déjà Queue', 'No Beer No Life', 'I collect dead people' (for genealogists), 'I should be writing', 'We also walk dogs', 'Elite Shadowy Cabal that Controls the Hugos: 2024 MEMBER'.

**Alfie Awards** were presented by George R.R. Martin to four of those expunged from the 2023 Hugo ballot: *Babel* by R.F. Kuang (novel), *Sandman* (dramatic), Paul Weimer (fan writer), Xiran Jay Zhao (new writer).

**Oops.** In the great tradition of 'Michael Moocock' (Worldcon 1997), the Souvenir Book cover gave the venue as Scotland while the title page listed one fan guest of honour as Mark Plumer. But it was nice that the real ale bar in the Crowne Plaza hotel was called The Fan and Fishlifter.

**Sidewise Awards.** SHORT 'Apollo in Retrograde' (*Analog*, 11/23) by Rosemary Claire Smith. LONG *Cahokia Jazz* by Francis Spufford. [SHS]

**Sick List.** The count of members reporting positive Covid tests via Discord passed 100 on 15 August and 150 on 19 August; announcements elsewhere suggest around 200. Victims, some already recovered, include Lauren Beukes, Pat Cadigan, Aliette de Bodard, Roz Kaveney, Mary Robinette Kowal, Nick Lowe, Charles Stross, Geri Sullivan and Lisa Tuttle.

**SEC Security Theatre.** 'The queue is only for bags, if you do not have a bag please just walk past ... unless you have suspicious pockets. They search you for suspicious pockets.' (Glasgow 2024 Discord)

## E = mc<sup>2</sup> – Or Bust

**Ian M. Banks's** galactic Culture and its SC executive arm were explained in a Glasgow Worldcon panel: 'The members of the Culture who join Special Circumstances are a tiny, freakish minority. Like Worldcon members who choose to attend the Business Meeting.' [AN]

**Stephen King** enjoyed a classic Zen moment of enlightenment: 'I was in a bookstore and they were throwing my novels around. Couldn't figure out why. Then IT hit me.' (Xitter, 27 July)

**Ian Macdonald**, on another Glasgow panel, put us in our place: 'No sonnet of Shakespeare's is as magnificent as a tiger ... or a tapeworm, just to get away from the anthropocentric view.' (via Discord)

**Ken MacLeod** observed at Worldcon that when US authors invented cyberpunk, British sf still 'sort of smelt of boiled cabbage'. [LE] All sympathy to Ken for the sad loss of Carol, his wife since 1981, on 16 August.

**Terry Pratchett's** biography *A Life with Footnotes*, officially by Rob Wilkins, was co-written by ghostwriter Giles Smith according to a story in *Private Eye* (2 August). The *Eye* calls the book's 2023 nonfiction Hugo 'a prestigious bauble Pratchett himself never managed to secure'. That is, he withdrew *Going Postal* in 2005 to avoid general award stress. (A218)

**Chris Priest** would no doubt have laughed rather a lot if he knew his (excellent by all accounts) Glasgow memorial panel would attract a serious query about whether the author would be present to sign books.

**Nicholas Whyte's** Hugo administrator report contains this deadpan note: '*Northanger Abbey*, by Jane Austen, received a single nominating vote for Best Novel. We did not rule on its eligibility, as it was nowhere near the top six nominees in this category (or even in the top two hundred), but any such ruling would have been negative.'

## Contraposaune

7 Sep • **Edge-Lit 10**, QUAD Centre, Market Place, Derby. £35 reg plus £1 booking fee. See [www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/edgelit10/](http://www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/edgelit10/).

7 Sep • **Fighting Fantasy Fest 5**, Univ of West London, Ealing. £45 reg; YA £20. See [www.fightingfantasy.com/fighting-fantasy-fest-5](http://www.fightingfantasy.com/fighting-fantasy-fest-5).

14 Sep • **Popcorn** (media), Magna, Sheffield. Tickets £12; under-17s £9.50; accompanied under-7s free. See [popcorncon.com](http://popcorncon.com).

14-22 Sep • **Sci-Fi London** (film), Rich Mix, 35-47 Bethnal Green Rd, London (14th only) and online (all days). See [sci-fi-london.com](http://sci-fi-london.com).

20-22 Sep • **Dracula Film Festival**, QUAD Centre, Derby. £60 reg; £50 concessions. See [www.derbyquad.co.uk/season-festival/ukdracula/](http://www.derbyquad.co.uk/season-festival/ukdracula/).

27-29 Sep • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Bowness-on-Windermere. Details to follow at [www.comicartfestival.com](http://www.comicartfestival.com).

28 Sep • **Innsmouth Literary Festival**, Kings House Centre, 245 Amptill Rd, Bedford MK42 9AZ. 10am-5pm. £30 reg; £10 evening only. More at [innsmouthgold.com/innsmouth-literary-festival](http://innsmouthgold.com/innsmouth-literary-festival).

28-29 Sep • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. £17.50 reg (10:30am); £21.50 early entry (9:30). More at [www.nor-con.co.uk](http://www.nor-con.co.uk).

29 Sep • **Fantasy & Sci-Fi Spotlight**, The Nerdy Café, Shrewsbury. 11am-7pm. See [www.fantasyandscifispotlight.co.uk](http://www.fantasyandscifispotlight.co.uk).

3-6 Oct • **Grimmfest** (film), Odeon Great Northern, Manchester. Full pass for all screenings £79.99 plus fees at [grimmfest.com](http://grimmfest.com).

5-6 Oct • **Octocon**, Gibson Hotel, Dublin. €65 reg; concessions €40; YA/virtual/supp €20; under-13s free. See [octocon.com](http://octocon.com).

11-13 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Queen at Chester Hotel, Chester. £85 reg. See [britishfantasycon.org/events-calendar/fantasycon-2024](http://britishfantasycon.org/events-calendar/fantasycon-2024).

26 Oct • **Comic Con Halloween**, Haydock Racecourse. 10am-4pm. £11; ticket link for junior rates at [www.ljeventsentertainment.com](http://www.ljeventsentertainment.com).

1-3 Nov • **Glasgow 2024, Back to Our Futures**, free online for Glasgow Worldcon attending and virtual members: [unyurl.com/2earcc4d](http://unyurl.com/2earcc4d).

2-5 Jul 2026 • **MetropolCon** (Eurocon), 'silent green' Kulturquartier, Berlin. €95 reg; reduced €75; under-12s €5. See [www.metropolcon.eu](http://www.metropolcon.eu).

27-31 Aug 2026 • **Lacon V**, Anaheim Convention Center and hotels in Anaheim, California. GoH Barbara Hambly, Ronald D. Moore, Colleen Doran, Dr. Anita Sengupta, Tim Kirk, Geri Sullivan, Stan Sakai. \$200 reg; \$175 first Worldcon; \$125 YA (18-24); \$100 teen (13-17); \$50 child (6-12); infants free. \$50 WSFS membership only. More at [www.lacon.org](http://www.lacon.org).

**Rumblings.** *Worldcon 2025*. Seattle is adding a one-off Hugo category for speculative poetry. • *Satellite 9* (Glasgow) will be in May 2026. Details to follow at [satellitex.org.uk](http://satellitex.org.uk) • *Worldcon 2028*. The KampCon bid for Uganda has relaunched as ConKigali with a new venue: Kigali, Rwanda.

## Infinitely Improbable

**As Others Research Us.** 'It is Octavia E. Butler (1947-2006), the first Black science fiction author and Afro-Futurist pioneer, who got me interested in actually reading the genre ...' (*The Daily Heller*, 14 August) [AIP]

**Awards.** *European SF Society Grand Master*: Ian Watson. • *Munsey* (pulp): Gene Christie. [F770] • *Mythopoeic*: ADULT *Ink, Blood, Sister, Scribe* by Emma Törzs. YA *Unraveller* by Frances Hardinge. CHILDREN'S *Moth Keeper* by K. O'Neill. SCHOLARSHIP/INKLINGS *Law, Government, and Society in J.R.R. Tolkien's Works* by José María Miranda Boto. SCHOLARSHIP/OTHER *An Introduction to Fantasy* by Matthew Sangster. • *World Fantasy Life*

*Achievement*: Ginjer Buchanan and Jo Fletcher. For the full WFA shortlist see [locusmag.com/2024/08/2024-world-fantasy-awards-finalists/](http://locusmag.com/2024/08/2024-world-fantasy-awards-finalists/).

**Plausible Text Message.** 'Hello friend this is frank herbert who wrote the novel dune. I lost my credit card and need money to finish writing my notes. Can you send me \$1500 in Amazon gift cards.' [CB]

**R.I.P.** John Aprea (1941-2024), US actor in *The Stepford Wives* (1975), *Cyber Tracker* (1994), and *The Manchurian Candidate* (2004), died on 5 August aged 83. [LP] ● Aleksandr Byalko (1952-2024), Russian physicist, tv personality and radio host whose sf novel is *Roman s fizikoy ili Za vsekh otvechayet Lyubov* (*Romance with Physics, or, Lyubov Is Responsible for Everything*, 2008), died on 23 August. [AM] ● Boris Bystrov (1945-2024), Russian actor in *Volshebnyaya lampa Aladdina* (*Aladdin's Lamp*, 1967) who dubbed *Babylon 5*, *Futurama*, *Return of the Jedi* and others, died on 18 August aged 79. [AM] ● Jim Caughran (1940-2024), US fan active in fanzines and APAs since the 1950s, and founding editor of the online *Fan-cyclopedia 3*, died on 6 August aged 83. [CP] ● Barry Coker (1934-2024), co-founder of the Bardot Art agency that represented many Spanish and South American comics artists including Carlos Ezquerro of *Judge Dredd* fame, has died. As a former Fleetway editor/writer, he once scripted a Rick Random space detective comic for their *Super Detective Library*. [SH] ● Charles Cyphers (1939-2024), US actor in *Halloween* (1978 plus sequels), *The Fog* (1980), *Escape from New York* (1981) and others, died on 4 August aged 85. [SJ] ● Alain Delon (1935-2024), French actor in the Poe-based *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* (1968), *Le passage* (1986), *Asterix at the Olympic Games* (2008) and others, died on 18 August aged 88. [SJ] ● Sergio Donati (1933-2024), Italian screenwriter for *Mission Stardust* (1967), *Holocaust 2000* (1977), *Island of Mutations* (1979) and others, died on 13 August aged 91. [SJ] ● M.J. [Mary Jane] Engh (1933-2024), US author best known for her powerful debut novel *Arslan* (1976; reissued as *A Wind from Bukhara*), died on 11 July aged 91. (SFWA) [GVG] ● Karel Heřmánek (1947-2024), Czech actor in *Give the Devil His Due* (1984, as Lucifer), shot himself on 24 August; he was 76. ● Margaret Jones (1918-2024), noted Welsh artist who illustrated the *Mabinogion* legends and created a much-loved map of mythic Wales, died on 23 July aged 105. [LW] ● Kim Kahana (1929-2024), US stuntman in *Planet of the Apes* (1968), *The Omega Man* (1971), *Soylent Green* (1973) and many more, died on 12 August aged 94. [SJ] ● Albert Kallis (1925-2024), US artist who created many lurid posters for such films as *The Amazing Colossal Man*, *Attack of the Crab Monsters*, *Creature from the Black Lagoon*, *I Was a Teenage Frankenstein/Werewolf* and *Reptilicus*, died on 8 July aged 98. [SJ] ● Greg Kihn (1949-2024), US musician/songwriter who published four horror novels beginning with *Horror Show* (1996), died on 13 August aged 75. [SJ] ● Peter Marshall (1926-2024), US game show host and actor in *Rabbit Test* (1978), *Americathon* (1979) and genre tv series, died on 15 August aged 98. [LP] ● Nick Mills, UK fan active since the 1970s, contributing to APA-B and working on Novacons (he chaired the 1991 event) and Eastercons, was found dead at home in late August. [FD] ● Janet Morris (1946-2024), prolific US author and anthologist whose first novel *High Couch of Silistra* (1977) opened a tetralogy, and who was active in military sf and several shared-world enterprises, died on 10 August aged 78. [GVG] ● Zakhar Oskotsky (1947-2024), Russian inventor and author of the dystopian *Poslednyaya bashnya Troi* (*The Last Tower of Troy*, 2004) and *Utrenniy, rozovyy vek* (*A Morning Rosy Age*, 2012), died on 21 August. [AM] ● Peter Pracownik, UK New Age fantasy artist whose work appeared on posters, music albums and card packs including the 1997 *Lord of the Rings Tarot* – and is collected in *The Enchanted World of Peter Pracownik* (2004) – died in August aged 72. [LW] ● Gena Rowlands (1930-2024), US actress in *The Skeleton Key* (2005) and genre tv series, died on 14 August aged 94. [SJ] ● Ángel Salazar (1956-2024), Cuban-US comedian and actor in *Maniac Cop 2* (1990) and *Vamp Bikers Dos/Tres* (2015, 2016), died on 11 August aged 68. [SJ] ● George Schenck (1942-2024) US producer/writer whose script credits include *Superbeast* (1972, also as producer), *Futureworld* (1976), *Deathmoon* (1978) and genre tv series, died on 3 August aged 82. [SJ] ● Robert Sidaway, UK producer, writer and actor, in *Doctor Who* 1966-1968, who wrote and produced the tv series *The World of Hammer* (1994) and the Corman-focused *Cult-Tastic* (2019), died on 16 August. He also co-wrote *Into the Rainbow* (2017). ● Fran Skene (1937-2024), Canadian fan and convention-runner who was GoH at several cons and won CUFF in 2019, died on 15 July aged 86. [BL] ● Carl-Eddy Skovgaard (1951-2024), Danish fan active in conrunning and the Danish Fan Association and Science Fiction Cirklen – for the latter editing 150+ books including the anthology *Lige under overfladen* (*Just Below the Surface*, 19 volumes since 2007), died on 31 July aged 73. [ND] ● Jeremy Strong (1949-2024), UK children's author whose 100+ books include fantasy (*There's a Pharaoh in Our Bath!*, 1995) and sf (*Doctor Bonkers!*, 2010), died on 4 August aged 74. ● Jeff Suter, UK fan and comics expert

whose fanzine was *Periphery* (1979-1984) and who in 1980 co-founded the South Hants SF Group of which he was a stalwart, died on 16 August aged 70. [JFWR] ● Atsuko Tanaka (1962-2024), Japanese voice actress best known for *Ghost in the Shell* (1995 film plus many sequels and spinoffs), died on 20 August aged 61. She also featured in the *Mobile Suit Gundam* franchise. [LP] ● Taral Wayne (1951-2024), major Canadian fan artist who received the 2008 Rotsler award for life achievement in fanzine art and was fan GoH at the 2009 Worldcon, died on 31 July aged 72. [SB] His many fanzines included the newszine *DNQ* (1978-1984 with Victoria Vayne); he co-founded Ditto and ran various other cons; he drew professionally for furry and other comics; I'm grateful for his occasional fine artwork in my own fanzines including *Ansible*. ● Patti Yasutake (1953-2024), US actress in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1990-1994) and its spinoff films, died on 5 August aged 70. [AIP] ● Konstantin Zagorsky (1933-2024), Russian film production designer for the sf *Moscow-Cassiopeia* (1973), *Teens in the Universe* (1974) and *Per Aspera Ad Astra* (1981), plus children's fantasy films, died on 18 August aged 91. [AM]

**Random Fandom.** *The British Fantasy Society* pondered the wicked social-media suggestion that it didn't look good for its own secretary David Green to have five BFS Award shortlistings in four different categories, and decided there was no problem. [SJ/F770] ● *The Glasgow WSFS Business Meeting* is not summarized here. From the volume of later commentary, the most controversial motion passed was yet another attempt to define once and for all the difference between Pro and Fan Artist Hugo qualifications. See [file770.com/the-evolution-of-the-art-hugo-categories/](http://file770.com/the-evolution-of-the-art-hugo-categories/).

**Court Circular.** UK comics creator Scott Richold of Superbabies Ltd challenged DC's and Marvel's joint trademark (since 1979/1980) on the term 'superhero' and all its variants, arguing that the companies themselves use it as 'a generic descriptor that fails to function as a trademark'. Since DC and Marvel failed to respond by the legal deadline – as extended by their own request to 24 July – Superbabies has asked the US court for a default judgment in its favour. (Bleeding Cool, 13 August) [MS]

**SFWA** is in upheaval, with two presidents resigning in August, further employee and committee resignations and expulsions, a general lack of communication from the board, and explanations from those in the know blocked by an internal culture of non-disclosure agreements that fail to specify what can and can't be disclosed. [F770] Voting in a special election for a new president and secretary begins in October. No rush then....

**Fanfundery.** The live auction at Glasgow 2024 raised £4,420.20 (£4,390.47 after card fees etc) for League of Fan Funds causes. Gerard Quinn's original cover painting for *New Worlds* 26 (1954) went for £1,500 and a stained glass panel by Bob Shaw (circa 1980) for £250. [SB] With £603.52 from the silent auction and yet more from table sales and donations, the net total was £6,664.48 plus US\$120. Further details in the August LFF newsletter at [lff.ansible.uk/news/LFF-202408.pdf](http://lff.ansible.uk/news/LFF-202408.pdf).

**The Dead Past.** 30 Years Ago, Californian book dealer Barry R. Levin offered "THE MOST HORRIFYING COPY OF ANY VAMPIRE NOVEL" ... Poppy Z. Brite's *Drawing Blood*, which, thanks to the helpful chap who committed suicide by setting himself on fire with a Molotov cocktail right next to a mailbox containing copies of the book's limited edition, can now be offered in the rare state "Odor of burning human flesh otherwise fine in slipcase". Only \$600.00! (*Ansible* 86, September 1994) ● 50 Years Ago, new frontiers were attained: 'EROTICA FROM OUTER SPACE is the title of an article by Brian Aldiss in the June issue of *Penthouse*. It's a bit insipid and goes nowhere near analysing sex in SF.' (*Checkpoint* 53, September 1974)

**Small Press.** Canadian horror publisher DarkLit Press has collapsed, with website and social media accounts dead while authors complain in public about unpaid royalties etc. (*Publishers Weekly*, 12 August) [AIP]

**Thog's Masterclass.** *Fortunately It's a Spaceship.* 'The Eros sent a tentative spurt shooting from its tubes'. (Lester del Rey, *Marooned on Mars*, 1952) [AR] ● *Nominal Determinism?* 'The smile slipped from William Svensen's face, and his eyes darted suddenly toward Jeff Foldingchair.' (*Ibid*) [AR] ● *Neat Tricks.* 'His scrawny, dry fingers dribbled over the sheet edge.' (Richard Matheson, *To Fit The Crime* (1952) [BA] ● *Looking Dagers, Redux.* 'The jade eyes stabbed up, demolishing.' (*Ibid*) [BA] ● 'Brent's knifelike eyes sliced out at Jones.' (Ivar Jørgensen [Paul Fairman], *The Deadly Sky*, 1971) [AR] ● *True Romance.* 'Her chest had equipment that was a haven of rest under trying circumstances ...' 'His vicious denuding gesture left her completely naked.' 'He looked at her naked body, as nude and as hot as a deprived mink.' (*Ibid*) [AR]