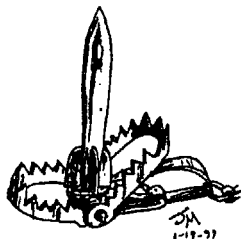


Ansible



Ansible 202 May 2004

From **Dave Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU. <http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/Ansible/>. ISSN 0265-9816 (print) 1740-942X (online). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Joe Mayhew**. Available for SAE or the whereabouts of Nrvsnu the Tsrung.

Concourse. *Ansible* received mixed reports of the 2004 Eastercon.

• **Jeff VanderMeer** was overwhelmed by ambience: 'Blackpool is just one degree away from being *Clockwork Orange*. I've never seen pigeons eating human vomit before. Nor have I seen such a display of flouncing breasts before, and yet been strangely unmoved, given the context. Nor have I ever emerged from a men's room stall before to realize that there were people having sex in the stalls to either side of me before. Nor have ... but the list is too long. I'm in shock.' • **Cheryl Morgan**: 'I need only point out that the first nine author readings had no audience whatsoever because they were not advertised anywhere and the room in which they were to be held was not on the map.' • **David B. Wake** didn't mind: 'I enjoyed it, but then I spent most of my time on the play [*Tartan: restrung*] and thus missed most of the convention. The bits I saw I enjoyed.' • **Julian Headlong** was less grunted: 'I hated Blackpool; the con was badly run (they managed to really piss off Philip Pullman). The only good things were a really amazing building for the venue (making the dealers' room the airiest and lightest I've ever seen), and seeing all my friends. And despite the wonderful design the dealers were unhappy with their location 'cos it was off on its own, only the art show out its way. The programme was a shambles: I was asked to be on items 20 minutes before they started, and there were constant re-schedulings (sometimes to *earlier* time slots). Chris Priest did a pretty good GoH speech, and the Cyberdrome thingy happened. The play was awful but people kept praising it—perhaps we were on different time lines; it was about an hour too long, and the plot was incomprehensible. The masquerade was off, then it was on, then off, then it was scheduled as a kiddie masquerade right after the BSFA awards: toast-master John Jarrold was totally professional in ignoring the screaming kiddies at the back of the audience.' • Some fled Concourse early, Liz Williams with a cry of 'BLEEAAARGGGHHH!' Others contrived to have fun—aided, many said, by a certain Blitz spirit—and the Winter Gardens venue itself was widely admired. See *Ansible's* website for a longer, appreciative report by Greg Pickersgill, and the full text of Chris Priest's well-received guest speech. • **BSFA Awards**: NOVEL Jon Courtenay Grimwood, *Felaheen*; SHORT FICTION Neil Gaiman & Dave McKean, *The Wolves in the Walls*; ARTWORK Colin Odell, cover for *The True Knowledge of Ken MacLeod*; NON-FICTION Farah Mendlesohn, 'Reading Science Fiction'. [CB] • **Doc Weir Award** for unsung good eggs of fandom: Robert 'Nojay' Sneddon. [TK] • **James White Award** for the best unpublished story by a new writer: Deirdre Ruane, 'Lost Things Saved in Boxes'.

The Seeker from Nexo Vollma

Raymond Briggs has had enough of his nicest creation. In an April interview, when discussion got around to *The Snowman*, he grimaced and pleaded: 'Please, don't mention the S-word.' (*Independent*, 7 April)

Gardner Dozois is moving on after more than 19 years in the editorial chair at *Asimov's*. 'Other projects', such as writing more books of his own, await. Executive Editor Sheila Williams steps into Gardner's enormous shoes; meanwhile he'll keep up the *Asimov's* connection as Contributing Editor. See David Pringle, below: *can this be coincidence?*

Michael Moorcock, according to *The Spectator* (24 April), has 'Wonderful news for Europe! Michael Moorcock, the brilliant anarcho-syndicalist science-fiction writer, is planning his escape from Bastrop, Texas, where he has lived for the past ten years.' Old cowpoke Moorcock explained laconically, 'A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do ...' By the autumn, according to plan, he'll be living in Paris or Rome.

Andre Norton fell and badly broke her hip on 8 April, underwent surgery on the 10th (involving screws and a metal plate), and was able to return home on the 14th. A full recovery is hoped for. No gifts or foodstuffs, please, but her fans suggest that a small contribution to medical bills wouldn't come amiss: checks to Ms Andre Norton, c/o her carer Sue Stewart, 1007 Herron St, Murfreesboro, TN 37130, USA. The Norton house and much property will be sold by auction on 5 June, at the house: 114 Eventide Dr, Murfreesboro, TN 37130, USA. Sue Stewart writes: 'There will be custom made jewelry ... fantasy/sci-fi art work.

Several pieces of antique glassware ... Even her personal computer will be sold.' Andre Norton will be living at 1007 Herron St from mid-May.

David Pringle, weary of business hassles after 22 years of editing and publishing *Interzone*, is stepping down and transferring control of the magazine to Andy Cox of *The Third Alternative*. His swan-song editorial should appear in the delayed issue #193 for January/February 2004, now expected in May with a Spring 2004 dateline. Existing subscriptions will be honoured by TTA Press. The *Interzone* era has been a remarkable one for British SF, and—we all hope—is far from over.

Robert Silverberg announced his latest 'retirement' from sf, to the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*: 'I've struggled back and forth between my desire to make science fiction into a visionary literature of great emotional and literary intensity, and the publisher's desire to make a lot of money. Every decade or so I've walked out in anger saying I can't cope with this dichotomy anymore.' And therefore: 'I'm just removing myself from that whole commercial battlefield,' he says. 'I've moved toward relatively small publishing houses. And I'll write what I please ... without commercial prodding.' (16 April)

Concentus

8-9 May • **Odyssey 2004**, 'Official Arthur C. Clarke Convention', Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre, School Rd, Taunton. £38.00 reg (+£3.50 for concert, Sat). Bookings through T-M Arts Centre, 01823 414141.

9 May • **Fantasy Fair**, The Cresset Exhibition Centre, Bretton, Peterborough. 10:30am-4pm. Contact: 01477 534626.

12 May • **Clarke Award Presentation**, in a new venue: English Heritage Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London. By invitation.

22-23 May • **Fantastic Films Weekend**, National Museum of Photography, Film & TV, Bradford. Contact 0870 70 10 200.

26 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, White Hart pub, 119-121 Bishops-gate, London. 6pm on, fans present from 5pm. With Ken MacLeod.

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

4 Jun • **British Fantasy Society** open night, Princess Louise pub, Holborn, London. 6.30pm onwards. All welcome. Next: 3 Sep, 10 Dec.

4-6 Jun • **SFX: The Event** (media), Hilton Metropole Hotel, Edgware Rd, London. £75 (child £45) plus SAE to London Expo (SFX1), PO Box 38727, London, E10 7YH. Bookings 020 8523 1074.

16-17 Oct • **Octocon 2004 with changed venue**: Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland. Now £30/€40 reg. Contact Basement Flat, 26 Longford Terrace, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Sterling cheques to 'Dave Lally #2 A/C', 64 Richborne Tce, London, SW8 1AX.

5-7 Nov • **Novacon 34**, Quality Hotel, Walsall. Now £36 reg to 26 Oct; £40 at door. Contact 379 Myrtle Rd, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

13-14 Nov • **P-Con 2**, Ashling Hotel, Parkgate St, Dublin 8. No post-Easter rates rise after all: still £15/€20 reg. £7/€10 supp. Contact: Yellow Brick Rd, 8 Bachelors Walk, Dublin 1, Ireland.

14-17 Apr 06 • **Concussion** (Eastercon), Glasgow Moat House Hotel (near the SECC—not being used). GoH M. John Harrison. £30 reg, £15 supp until 7 Nov. Contact 103 Rustat Rd, Cambridge, CB1 3QG.

Infinitely Improbable

Hugo Nominations are out again. NOVEL (462 ballots cast) Lois McMaster Bujold, *Paladin of Souls*; Robert Sawyer, *Humans*; Dan Simmons, *Ilium*; Charles Stross, *Singularity Sky*; Robert Charles Wilson, *Blind Lake*. • NOVELLA (215) Catherine Asaro, 'Walk in Silence' (*Analog* 4/03); Kage Baker, 'Empress of Mars' (*Asimov's* 7/03); Walter Jon Williams, 'The Green Leopard Plague' (*Asimov's* 10/03); Connie Willis, 'Just Like the Ones We Used to Know' (*Asimov's* 12/03); Vernor Vinge, 'The Cookie Monster' (*Analog* 10/03). • NOVELETTE (243) Jeffrey Ford, 'Empire of Ice Cream' (*Sci Fiction* 2/03); James Patrick Kelly, 'Bernardo's House' (*Asimov's* 6/03); Jay Lake, 'Into the Gardens of Sweet Night' (*Writers of the Future XIX*); Robert Reed, 'Hexagons' (*Asimov's* 7/03); Charles Stross, 'Nightfall' (*Asimov's* 4/03); Michael Swanwick, 'Legions in Time' (*Asimov's* 4/03). • SHORT (310) Michael A. Burstein, 'Paying It

Forward' (*Analog* 9/03); Neil Gaiman, 'A Study in Emerald' (*Shadows over Baker Street*); Joe Haldeman, 'Four Short Novels' (*F&SF* 11/03); David D. Levine, 'The Tale of the Golden Eagle' (*F&SF* 6/03); Mike Resnick, 'Robots Don't Cry' (*Asimov's* 7/03). ● RELATED BOOK (243) John Clute, *Scores*; Cathy & Arnie Fenner, *Spectrum 10*; John Grant, Elizabeth L. Humphrey & Pamela D. Scoville, *The Chesley Awards for SF & Fantasy Art*; Brian Herbert, *Dreamer of Dune*; Jeff Vandermeer & Mark Roberts, *The Thackery T. Lambshead Guide ...*; William J. Widder, *Master Storyteller ... L. Ron Hubbard*. ● DRAMATIC—LONG (363) *28 Days Later, Finding Nemo, The Return of the King, Pirates of the Caribbean, X2: X-Men United*. ● DRAMATIC—SHORT (212) *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, 'Chosen'; 'Gollum's Acceptance Speech'; *Firefly*, 'Heart of Gold'; *Firefly*, 'Message'; *Smallville*, 'Rosetta'. ● PRO EDITOR (319) Ellen Datlow, Gardner Dozois, David Hartwell, Stanley Schmidt, Gordon Van Gelder. ● PRO ARTIST (241) Jim Burns, Bob Eggleton, Frank Frazetta, Frank Kelly Freas, Donato Giancola. ● SEMI-PROZINE (199) *Ansible, Interzone, Locus, The New York Review of SF, The Third Alternative*. ● FANZINE (211) *Challenger, Emerald City, File 770, Mimosa, Plokta*. ● FAN WRITER (260) Jeff Berkwitz, Bob Devney, John L. Flynn, Dave Langford, Cheryl Morgan. ● FAN ARTIST (190) Brad Foster, Teddy Harvia, Sue Mason, Steve Stiles, Frank Wu. ● JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD (192 ballots; not a Hugo) Jay Lake, David D. Levine, Karin Lowachee, Chris Moriarty, Tim Pratt.

SF Predictions. Slavishly imitating the title gadget of Jonathan Lethem's *Gun, With Occasional Music*, there's now an MP3 player ('AK-MP3') designed to fit the ammo clip slot of a Kalashnikov. [TW] I'm now taking bets on how many of these will be bought by the Plokta cabal.

Nebula Awards. NOVEL Elizabeth Moon, *The Speed of Dark*. NOVELLA Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*. NOVELETTE Jeffrey Ford, 'The Empire of Ice Cream' (*SCI FICTION* 2/03). SHORT Karen Joy Fowler, 'What I Didn't See' (*SCI FICTION* 7/02). SCRIPT *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*.

R.I.P. *Johannes Henrik Berg* (1956-2004), popular and highly active Norwegian fan, died on 29 April from cancer diagnosed last November; he was 48. Johannes was famous for hosting lavish Norwegian room parties at overseas cons. [BTS] ● *Ward Botsford*, Grammy-winning record producer and classical music expert, died on 1 April aged 76. According to his paid *NY Times* obituary, sf friends who dedicated works to him included Asimov, Clarke, Heinlein and Herbert. [AIP] ● *Roger Dee* (Roger D. Ayrcock, 1914-2004), US sf author who wrote chiefly for magazines from 1949 to 1971, died on 5 April aged 89. [L] ● *Peter Diamond* (1929-2004), UK actor, stuntman and stunt arranger who choreographed lightsabre duels (and had bit parts in) the original *Star Wars* trilogy, died on 27 March. Other film credits include *Raiders of the Lost Ark, The Princess Bride, Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* and *Highlander*. [UJ] ● *Johan Springborg* (1946-2004), Danish doctor of chemistry who published two 1990s sf novels, died on 13 March aged 58. [L]

Publishers and Sinners. *Prometheus Books*, best known in fan circles for sceptical nonfiction, is launching a new sf line in Spring 2005, with Lou Anders of *Argosy* as editorial director. The imprint name is Pyr (not, alas, PyrE). ● *Jonathan Weir*, who in late 2002 moved from Amazon.co.uk to run Voyager sf publicity at HarperCollins UK, was made redundant by the latest HC 'restructure' on 15 April.

What the Papers Say. *The Herald's* story about the fabulous Charlie Stross's Hugo nomination ('A little known Scots writer hopes to follow in the footsteps of JK Rowling ...') mentions an illustrious past winner: 'Issac Asimov, the legendary Russian author.' (19 April) [CS] ● *The Sun* paid homage to *Interzone* with its 15 April headline 'Universe "Is giant pringle"'. ('The universe is curved—like a giant ...') [JE]

Random Fandom. *LiYi Brunner* seeks a rich collector who might wish to acquire the elderly typewriters and word processor pounded by the late John Brunner's Hugo-winning fingers: enquiries c/o *Ansible*. ● *Bruce Gillespie & Elaine Cochrane* are being driven at last from their Melbourne home, by an unfixable, Usheresque crack in the wall: 'The board for the forthcoming auction (15 May) went up today—its heading is "Let's Be Brutal! Tear down and rebuild ..." An honest estate agent!' (23 April) ● *Terry Jeeves* published his 164th *Erg* in January: 'I am now thinking of giving up on putting out the old mag after 45 years. I am 81 and have sundry complaints including arthritis and prostate cancer so pubbing isn't easy.' ● *Tim Kirk* plans a 250+km sponsored bike ride from York to Hinckley for Paragon2 next March, raising money for the York hospice where KIM Campbell and Tim's mother spent their last days. Pledges and further info: ride[at]wobbegong.demon.co.uk. ● *Andrew Wells* joins our list of interestingly diseased fans: 'Eighteen months ago, I was diagnosed with Peutz-Jeghers Syndrome. Bizarrely, its two main symptoms are polyps in the intestines and freckles on the lips. The ongoing tests include, every two years, swallowing a capsule

containing a camera. It transmits images to a receiver worn on my belt, which then records them on tape. (Cool or what?)'

Yet More Awards. *Philip K. Dick Award* for best US original paperback: Richard K. Morgan, *Altered Carbon*. ● *Pilgrim Award* for sf criticism: Edward James. ● *International Horror Guild Awards*. NOVEL Peter Straub, *lost boy lost girl*. FIRST NOVEL Matthew B.J. Delaney, *Jinn*. COLLECTION (tie) Glen Hirshberg, *The Two Sams*; Michael Marshall Smith, *More Tomorrow*. ANTHOLOGY Ellen Datlow, ed, *The Dark*. FICTION: LONG Lucius Shepard, *Louisiana Breakdown*. MID-LENGTH Glen Hirshberg, 'Dancing Men' (*The Dark*). SHORT Brian Hodge, 'With Acknowledgments to Sun Tzu' (*The Third Alternative*). PERIODICAL *All Hallows*. ILLUSTRATED NARRATIVE *The Goon* 1-4. NONFICTION Erik Larson, *The Devil in the White City*. ART Caniglia. FILM *Spider*. TELEVISION *Carnivale*.

Fanfundery. *Bring Bruce Bayside* is a one-off fund to transport the great Bruce Gillespie from Melbourne to San Francisco, for Corflu and Potlatch, in Feb/Mar 2005. Dollars to Joyce M. Katz at PMB 152, 330 S Decatur Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89107, USA. PayPal option to follow. ● *GUFF* nominations are open for the race from Australasia to next year's Glasgow Worldcon. Candidates need \$25A/NZ bond, a 100-word platform and 5 willing nominators (3 A/NZ, 2 Euro). Apply to Down Under administrators Eric Lindsay & Jean Weber: guff[at]jeanweber.com.

Small Press. *Four Walls Eight Windows* is to be acquired by Avalon Publishing on 31 May and merged into their Thunder's Mouth Press imprint, with 4W8W publisher John Oakes becoming an Avalon vice-president and publisher of both this imprint and Nation Books. [GVG]

Outraged Letters. *Ramsey Campbell* grumbles: 'Reviewers should be warned that if they give a less than favourable account of anything published by the British small press Haunted River, the proprietor Christopher Barker is likely to post their work on the Internet. He apparently believes in copyright only when it suits him.' ● *Harry Harrison* declares a Thogglewhack: two finds on one page, although 'I gave up on page 4....' Thus, from page 3: 'They walked up the drive, Buchanan's long legs striding ahead of them.' 'Saafeld turned and glared from under bushy eyes at the men.' (Colin Forbes, *The Vorpall Blade*, 2001) ● *Jane Yolen*: 'I think I managed to break some kind of world record the other day. Had 12 book rejections on Thursday, a 13th on Friday, and a short story bounced on Saturday. (Though 8 of the books were 2 editors turning down the same 4-book projected limited series.) ● The next week though some sort of karmic balance was restored when I won two awards for two different books, the 2003 Aesop prize given by the American Folklore Society, and some sort of humane society honor for another book.' (2 April)

Still More Awards. *Retro Hugo* novel list for 1953: Isaac Asimov, *The Caves of Steel*; Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*; Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood's End*; Hal Clement, *Mission of Gravity*; Theodore Sturgeon, *More than Human*. (9 more categories; space forbids. UK Fan Chauvinism Dept: *Hyphen* and *Slant* are shortlisted for fanzine, James White and Walt Willis for fan writer.) ● *Bram Stoker Awards* for horror also have too many categories. Novel finalists: Stephen King, *The Dark Tower V*; James A. Moore, *Serenity Falls*; Stewart O'Nan, *The Night Country*; Tom Piccirilli, *A Choir of Ill Children*; Peter Straub, *lost boy lost girl*. ● *Orange Prize*. Margaret Atwood's oft-mentioned *Oryx and Crake* made it on to the shortlist of this UK award for fiction about talking squids in outer space ... I'm sorry, I'll read that again ... for writing by women.

C.o.A. *Naomi Saunders* (until 30 September), 2 Market Place, Woburn, MK17 9PZ. *Alice Turner & Dave Field*, 30 Charlewood Rd, Whitmore Park, Coventry, CV6 4ER.

A201 Updates. Peter Ustinov died at age 82, not 88 (my typo). ● The Italia Awards release failed to credit translators; the award-winning translation of Iain M. Banks's *Inversions* was by Anna Feruglio Dal Dan.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Settlement*. 'The unsettling potential of the situation settled hard in Susan's stomach.' (Dan Brown, *Digital Fortress*, 1998) [BM] ● *True Romance Dept*. 'Still, it wasn't her mind that Martinez was admiring at the moment. Simply gazing at her was like being hit in the groin with a velvet hammer.' (Walter Jon Williams, *The Sundering*, 2003) [ST] ● *Swinging Sixties Dept*. 'Blake had a tantalizing glimpse of two impudent little breasts which made up in quality what they lacked in quantity.' [Later:] 'Blake noticed that when she was angry her bust measurement was fully adequate.' (J.T. McIntosh, 'Planet on Probation', *Science Fantasy* 42, 1960) [JB]

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