

# ansible



## Ansible® 367 February 2018

From David Langford, 84 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE or the cake laid by Mayor Snorkum.

**Ursula K. Le Guin (1929-2018)** needs no introduction. She won five Hugos—the first being for *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1970)—six Nebulas and far too many other awards to tally here, including several life achievement honours such as the World Fantasy Award (1999) and SFWA Grand Master Award (2003). She was much loved and admired for many novels, shorter stories and critical essays. Book-length career highlights include the Earthsea fantasies (beginning with *A Wizard of Earthsea*), *The Lathe of Heaven*, *The Dispossessed*, and *Always Coming Home*. She died on 22 January, aged 88. It's hard to add to the extensive and deserved media coverage of her passing, but I particularly valued her sharp sense of humour—see *Ansible* 240—and enthusiastic support for the dark doings of Thog. Thank you, Ursula, for everything.

### The Word of Unbinding

**Peter S. Beagle's** lawsuit against his former manager Connor Cochran would have come to court in January but has been delayed by Cochran's last-minute move of filing for US Chapter 11 bankruptcy. [F770] Much commentary at: fansagainstfraud.com/bankruptcy-conlan-press/.

**Alberto Manguel**, author, fantasy anthropologist (*Black Water*) and translator, was made an Officer of the Order of Canada at the end of 2017. So were William Shatner, for among other things 'his iconic contributions to popular culture', and Denis Villeneuve—director of *Arrival*—for 'his acclaimed work as a filmmaker'. [A1P]

**Adam Roberts** writes: 'The late and genuinely lamented Ursula Le Guin once sent you a Henry James thoggism [see A347]. I'm sure you don't want to start a Jamesian annex to Thog, but in her honour I thought I'd send you my favourite HJ Eyeballs in the Sky moment—it's from 1897's *What Maizie Knew* ch 11. "Mr. Perriam was short and massive—and it would have been difficult to say of him whether his head were more bald or his black moustache more bushy. He seemed also to have moustaches over his eyes, which, however, by no means prevented these polished little globes from rolling round the room as if they had been billiard-balls impelled by Ida's celebrated stroke.'" (28 January)

**John Scalzi** discovered yet another Glittering Prize for sf/fantasy authors: '4chan has declared me a degenerate science fiction writer and I could not be more delighted.' (Twitter, 13 January) 'The 4chan roster of infamy—Degenerate, avoid (interacial sex, homosexuality etc)'—goes: Heinlein 1907, Joe Haldeman 1943, Iain M. Banks 1954, Neal Stephenson 1959, Neil Gaiman 1960, Alastair Reynolds 1966, John Scalzi 1969.' H'mm. Are women writers all too nice to be degenerate?

### Conphaseolin

2-4 Feb • **Enharmonicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £42 reg and £29 unwaged at the door; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See [www.contable.org.uk/enharmonicon](http://www.contable.org.uk/enharmonicon).

3 Feb • **DurbamCon**, DSU, Dunelm House, New Elvet, Durham. GoH Sarah Lohmann, Justina Robson. From 11am. £5; students £4.

5 Feb • **Sci-Feb** (media), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Road, Grimsby. £4 reg. See [www.daydreamevents.uk/sci-feb.html](http://www.daydreamevents.uk/sci-feb.html).

17 Feb • **Picocon 35**, Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College, London. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; picoGoHs free (I do like that bit). See [www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/).

25 Feb • **Digi-Con 3** (sf/comics/anime), Doncaster Deaf Trust, Leger Way, Doncaster. From £10 reg; see [www.digi-con.co.uk](http://www.digi-con.co.uk).

28 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND, 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tade Thompson. Free.

2-3 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. £75 reg or £10.50 per film. See [www.frightfest.co.uk](http://www.frightfest.co.uk). Also 2018 London events: Leicester Square, 23-27 August, and Empire Haymarket, 27 October.

16-18 Mar • **Starburst Media City Festival** (film), The Landing, Salford. Free. See [starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/](http://starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/).

24 Mar • **Highlighting Horror**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. £35 reg. See [www.derbyquad.co.uk/courses.aspx](http://www.derbyquad.co.uk/courses.aspx), which also has details of QUAD genre writing classes/courses on 5, 17 and 24 February.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate.

£80 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free. Day rates TBA. Credit cards (*preferred*) via [www.follycon.org.uk](http://www.follycon.org.uk).

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £520 for two; 3-day pass £120; more at [www.scifiweekender.com](http://www.scifiweekender.com).

1 May • **Tolkien Lecture**: V.E. Schwab. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6:30pm. *Waiting list* via [tolkienlecture.org](mailto:tolkienlecture.org).

29 June - 1 July • **SF Foundation Masterclass** in sf criticism, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. £225 reg; postgraduates £175. Apply by 1 March. See [www.sf-foundation.org/masterclass](http://www.sf-foundation.org/masterclass).

1 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1. £30 (members £25). See [www.tolkienesociety.org/events/seminar-2018/](http://www.tolkienesociety.org/events/seminar-2018/).

24-26 Aug • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £42 reg; YA (16-25) £30; under-16s £15; under-6s £5; £6 supp. See [titancon.com](http://titancon.com).

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot 2020**: (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £70 reg or £60 for members, rising to £75/£65 in May and £85/£75 in August. See [www.tolkienesociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/](http://www.tolkienesociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/).

2-4 Nov • **Armadacon 30**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at [www.armadacon.org](http://www.armadacon.org).

**Rumblings**. *Worldcon 2020*: the only known bid—Wellington, New Zealand—has filed its paperwork for this year's site selection voting. See [nzin2020.nz](http://nzin2020.nz). Any emerging rival bid must file by 17 February to appear on the site selection ballot. (It's possible to file later and run as a write-in bid, but the technical term for this approach is 'doomed'.)

### Infinitely Improbable

As **Others See Us**. Reviewing *The Last Jedi*, John Podhoretz offers no comfort to fans of low stuff like H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*: 'Now that the Force is just sitcom magic, you can bet that Episode IX is all about time travel, the deadly scourge of all that is good in science fiction.' (*Weekly Standard*, 1/8 January) [MMW]

**Awards**. *Golden Globes* genre winners include *Coco* (animated film), Guillermo del Toro (director, for *The Shape of Water*, which also won for best original score) and *The Handmaid's Tale* (tv drama, with Elisabeth Moss as best tv actress). • **Horror Writers Association Lifetime Achievement**, 2017: Linda Addison. • **Oscars**: best picture finalists include *Get Out* and *The Shape of Water*. • **PEN America Literary Service Award**, 2018: Stephen King. • **Philip K. Dick Award** shortlist: Meg Elison, *The Book of Edda*; Mur Lafferty, *Six Wakes*; Deji Bryce Olukotun, *Over the Flare*; Tim Pratt, *The Wrong Stars*; Alastair Reynolds, *Revenger*; Carrie Vaughn, *Bannerless*; Martha Wells, *All Systems Red*. [GVG] • **SFWA Damon Knight Grand Master Award**: Peter S. Beagle.

**Blurbismo**. Health warning on Gollancz ebooks by Thog's favourite author: 'Do not read too much Lionel Fanthorpe at one go. Your brains will turn to guacamole and drop out of your ears.'—Neil Gaiman. [PR]

**R.I.P.** **Raymond Buckland** (1934-2017), UK-born author long in the USA whose novels include the sf Committee Against Evil sequence comprising *The Committee* (1993) and *Cardinal's Sin* (1996), died on 27 September aged 83. [*Fortean Times*, Christmas] [DL] • **Frank Buxton** (1930-2018), US actor/director who voiced the 1960s cartoon superhero Batfink and directed episodes of *Mark & Mindy* (1981), died on 2 January aged 87. [PDF] • **Bob Carlton** (1950-2018), UK theatre director and writer who created the 1980s musical *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, died on 18 January aged 67. [FF70] • **Peggy Cummins** (1925-2017), UK actress in *Meet Mr. Lucifer* (1953) and the M.R. James-based *Night of the Demon* (1957), died on 29 December aged 92. [SG] • **Bradford Dillman** (1930-2018), US actor in *Escape From The Planet Of The Apes* (1971), *Moon of the Wolf* (1972), *Bug* (1975), *Demon*, *Demon* (1975) and *The Swarm* (1978), died on 16 January aged 87. [PDF] • **Robert Dowdell** (1932-2018), US actor in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1968) and *Wicked Stepmother* (1989), died on 23 January aged 85. [SFS] • **Bella Emberg** (1917-2018), UK actress seen in *Doomwatch* (1970-1971), *Doctor Who* (1970, 1974, 2006) and *The Tomorrow People* (1977), died on 12 January aged 80. [SG] • **David Fisher** (1929-2018), UK tv screenwriter who scripted four *Doctor Who* storylines including

*The Creature from the Pit* (1979) and *The Leisure Hive* (1980)—both of which he novelized—plus part of what Douglas Adams and Graham Williams reworked as *City of Death* (1979), died on 10 January aged 88. [GW] • **Bill Harris**, US comics writer/editor who wrote for Lee Falk's *The Phantom* and edited this and other genre titles for King Features, died on 8 January aged 84. [ME] • **Jack Ketchum** (Dallas Mayr, 1946-2018), US horror author who won four Stoker Awards including the 2014 life-achievement honour, died on 24 January aged 71. Several of his novels were filmed; he received the World Horror Convention's 2011 grandmaster award. [FM] • **Julius Lester** (1939-2018), US author whose books include the fantasies *Time's Memory* (2006) and *Cupid* (2007), died on 18 January aged 78. [FM] • **Dorothy Malone** (1925-2018), US actress whose rare genre credits include *The Day Time Ended* (1979) and *The Being* (1983), died on 19 January aged 92. [PDF] • **Terence Marsh** (1931-2018), Oscar-winning film production designer and art director whose credits include *Scooge* (1970), *Magic* (1978), *Spaceballs* (1987) and *The Green Mile* (1999), died on 9 January aged 86. [AIP] • **John Morris** (1926-2018), US composer of music for many Mel Brooks films including *Young Frankenstein* (1974) and *Spaceballs* (1987), died on 25 January aged 91. [AIP] • **David Dean Oberhelman** (1966-2018), US academic librarian who for many years administrated the Mythopoeic Awards, died on 25 January. [F770] • **Jean Porter** (1922-2018), US actress seen uncredited in *One Million BC* (1940), died on 13 January aged 95. [PDF] • **Donnelly Rhodes** (1937-2018), Canadian character actor in *Battlestar Galactica* (2004-2009, as Dr Cottle) and *Tron: Legacy* (2010), died on 8 January aged 80. [PDF] • **Mark Salling** (1982-2018), US *Glee* actor also seen in *Children of the Corn IV: The Gathering* (1996) and *The Graveyard* (2006), was found dead—apparent suicide—on 30 January; he was 35. [AIP] • **Allison Shearmur**, US film producer and studio executive whose credits include *The Hunger Games* (2012) and sequels, *Clan of the Cave Bear* (2015), *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016) and the coming solo *A Star Wars Story* and *Chaos Walking*, died on 19 January; she was 54. [AIP] • **Jon Paul Steuer** (1984-2018), US actor in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, died on 1 January aged 33. [F770] • **Rick Sullivan**, US fan whose influential horror-film fanzine *Gore Gazette* had 110 issues from 1980 to 1994, died in December. [SG] • **Greta Thyssen** (1933-2018), Danish-born actress in *Terror Is a Man* (1959, loosely based on *The Island of Doctor Moreau*) and *Journey to the Seventh Planet* (1962), died on 6 January aged 84. (*Hollywood Reporter*, 9 January) • **Jerry Van Dyke** (1931-2018), US actor whose main genre credit was *My Mother the Car* (1965-1966), died on 5 January aged 86. (*Hollywood Reporter*, 6 January) • **Mort Walker** (1923-2018), US cartoonist famous for *Beetle Bailey*, whose strips included the Noah-esque fantasy *Boner's Ark* (1968-2000), died on 27 January aged 94. • **Jeremy Wilkin** (1930-2018), UK actor in *Thunderbirds* (voicing Virgil Tracy from 1966) and other Gerry Anderson productions including *Captain Scarlet*, *Joe 90* and *UFO*, died on 19 December; he was 87. Another credit was *Doctor Who*: 'Revenge of the Cybermen' (1975). [S] • **Peter Wyngarde** (1927-2018), UK actor whose genre films include *The Dybbuk* (1952), *The Innocents* (1961), *Night of the Eagle* (1962) and *Flash Gordon* (1980), died on 15 January aged 89. [SG] • **Doug Young** (1919-2018), US voice actor in several animated series including *The Flintstones* (1962-1966) and *Jonny Quest* (1964-1965), died on 7 January aged 98. [PDF]

**As Others Gush.** ... through her sci-fi and fantasy Le Guin tackled issues that no other writer had ever attempted, themes like feminism, gender identity, and the inevitable corruption of capitalist societies.' (Tiffany Kelly, *Popular Mechanics*, 24 January)

**Court Circular.** *Playboy* is suing the fan-founded BoingBoing website for linking in 2016 to a since-deleted Imgur image archive of 'Every Playboy Playmate Centerfold Ever'. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has called this suit 'frankly mystifying'. As BoingBoing puts it: 'Rather than pursuing the individual who created the allegedly infringing archive, *Playboy* is pursuing a news site for pointing out the archive's value as a historical document.' (*The Register*, 22 January)

**Outraged Letters.** *Simon R. Green*: 'Apparently Robert E. Howard's Conan is now officially out of copyright. (In Europe, not the US.) So if you ever had a Conan story you wanted to write ... The stories entered European public domain in 2006; the current news buzz is because the French publisher Glénat has announced a series of comics adaptations. (Bleedingcool.com, 17 January) • **James Morton**: 'Just got a copy of Chris Brookmyre's *Places in the Darkness* (2017)—murder mystery set on a space station. The back has an endorsement from Iain M. Banks. "Fascinating, fast-paced but thoughtful," says the late Mr Banks. Is there a section in *Anisble* for author endorsements from beyond the veil?'

**Random Fandom.** *BSFA*: a special issue of *Vector* is planned to mark the 60th anniversary of this mighty organization's founding at the 1958 Eastercon in Kettering. • **FAAn Awards** for 2017 fanzine work: voting is open and continues to 15 March. Email votes to administrator Nic Farey (fareynic at gmail dot com). Details at eFanzines.com/TIR/. • **John-Henri Holmberg** reports that long-time Swedish fan Lars-Olov Strandberg, active since 1956, is in hospital and unable to communicate after a severe stroke. Hopes of recovery are uncertain. Lars-Olov was the first Swede to be a Worldcon guest of honour (Glasgow, 2005). • **TAFF Free Ebooks**: the latest addition to the canon is *You Only Live Once*, a hefty collection of John Brosnan's fanzine and other writing edited by Kim Huett. Expanded from Kim's 2007 PDF edition still hosted at eFanzines.com, this can be found at [taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Brosnan](http://taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Brosnan). Future plans include an enlarged ebook of *Down the Badger Hole: R. Lionel Fanthorpe: The Badger Years* (1995) edited by Debbie Cross. A blurb writer whose name cannot be traced said: 'Strange Weird Eerie'. • **SFWA Announcement.** 'Recently, a science fiction writer made a very public announcement of his application to join SFWA. SFWA Bylaws section VI.1.c.i gives discretion to the membership credentials committee "regardless of qualifications." Based on the behavior of and online statements by this writer over the preceding year or so, which the credentials committee believes is inconsistent with the obligations that SFWA members have to one another, the committee has determined that it has good and sufficient cause to deny this membership.' (Sfwa.org, 20 January) Jon Del Arroz promptly identified himself as this applicant, and seemed surprised that a campaign of self-promotion via online harassment of fans and professionals—including SFWA members and the SFWA president Cat Rambo—could have such consequences.

**The Dead Past, 40 Years Ago:** 'The first couple of issues of *Dez Skinn*'s new British prozine, *Starburst*, have been published: contents are pretty lively with cartoon strips (including *Jeff Hawke*), material by Harrison and Bradbury, *Star Wars* stuff, film and tv material, and a lot of garish artwork. It appears, in other words, to be aimed at the teenage market. // Meanwhile, in the sercon strongholds of The Sf Foundation, Malcolm Edwards has replaced Peter Nicholls as boss, and David Pringle has moved in as an Igor figure.' (*Checkpoint* 86, February 1978) • **50 Years Ago**, the announced winners of the 4th Annual 11-Foot Poll included 'Lin Carter, *The Star Magicians* as Worst Novel; Lin Carter, Worst Pro Writer; *Amazing, Worst Prozine*; *The Retief Series* by Keith Laumer, Worst Series ...' (*SF Weekly* 216, 5 February 1968) • **75 Years Ago:** to help voters in this year's 1943 Retro Hugos, Fanac.org has scans of some eligible 1942 fanzines at [fanac.org/fanzines/Retro\\_Hugos.html](http://fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos.html).

**Fanfundery.** *GUFF 2018* reminder: nominations must be in by 15 February. For full details of the race see [ozfanfunds.com/?page\\_id=92](http://ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=92). • **TAFF 2018:** TransAtlantic Fan Fund voting is still in progress and continues to 3 April. See [taff.org.uk](http://taff.org.uk) for the ballot and platforms. For no very logical reason the TAFF webmaster has also registered [taff.info](http://taff.info).

**Thog's Masterclass.** *Classic Crab Moments.* 'What a beautiful night ... If only we didn't have to worry about giant crabs!' 'Every so often he felt the striking claws missing him by inches.' 'There's a colossal crab which leads them. I've named him King Crab.' 'The big crab shambled forward ... His revolting features appeared to crease into a lusting grin.' 'The giant crabs had grossly mistimed their attack on the Blue Ocean Holiday Camp.' 'The crabs were spoiling everybody's holiday....' (Guy N. Smith, *Night of the Crabs*, 1976) • **Love Among the Crabs.** 'She reached down and fondled him, her fingers demonstrating their expertise even on a morning following a night which had seen one of the most terrifying battles in history.' (Guy N. Smith, *Killer Crabs*, 1978) • **Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc Dept.** 'Laura ran her fingers through her hair and raised her breasts.' (Robert Rankin, *The Suburban Book of the Dead*, 1992) [JC] • **The Smile That Wins.** 'He smiled at me coldly, and the rotten stains on his teeth stood out like the craters of the moon.' (Norman Kagan, 'Four Brands of Impossible', September 1964 *F&SF*) [BA] • **More True Romance.** 'He flung himself on her and embraced her enthusiastically and she clung to him in return, her famous breasts squashed against his chest, her hair, scented like some tropical fruit, tickling his nose so that he had to smooth it down....' (K.K. Beck, *Revenge of Kali-Ra*, 1999) [BA] • **She Sleeps with the Fishes Dept.** 'As children Princes William and Harry fed the koi with their mother, Diana, Princess of Wales.' (*The Times*, 16 December) [PE]

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