

# Ansible



## Ansible 348 July 2016

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: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE, quadratic religion or complex defamation.

**Futurology.** 'But Britain was declining. As part of unified Europe—deprived of tools of macroeconomic policy like control of exchange and interest rates, and yet unsheltered by the imperfectly integrated greater economy—the British government was unable to arrest a sharp economic collapse. At last, in 2010, social unrest and climate collapse forced Britain out of the European Union, and the United Kingdom fell apart, Scotland going its own separate way [...] Then in 2019, England, with Wales, ceded Northern Ireland to Eire, packed off the Royals to Australia—where they were still welcome—and had become the fifty-second state of the United States of America.' (Arthur C. Clarke and Stephen Baxter, *The Light of Other Days* [chapter 1], 2000)

### The World Is Quiet Here

**Douglas Adams** was remembered in an 'Inquisitor' crossword (i, 11 June) whose solvers were told to make unspecified thematic changes to eight unspecified answers in accordance with an unspecified book title. Several answers proved to be varieties of fish, and changing all these to synonyms of 'So Long' and 'Thanks' revealed our author's name.

**Brian Blessed** received the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours; his many credits include *Space: 1999*, *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Doctor Who: 'Trial of a Time Lord'*, *Johnny and the Dead* (1995), *The Phantom Menace* (voice, 1999), *Tarzan* (1999) and *Wizards vs. Aliens* (2012-2013).

**Michael Blumlein**, a doctor as well as an sf author, revealed in a 12 June San Francisco 'SF in SF' reading of his essay-cum-memoir 'Unrestrained and Indiscreet' that he is awaiting death from lung cancer, all treatment having failed. ([www.rudyrucker.com](http://www.rudyrucker.com), 13 June) [AIP] Alas.

**Roz Kaveney** won the Transgender Fiction category of the 2016 Lambda Awards with her non-gene novel *Tiny Pieces of Skull*.

**George Lucas's** plan for a vast George Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on the Chicago lake front was abandoned after the 'Friends of the Parks' group—very unreasonably, the mayor conveyed—defended the 1836 regulation that forbids such lakeside development. A federal judge agreed; the *Chicago Tribune* coverage began 'Lucas reaps bitter fruits of arrogance ...' (24 June); the museum is now to be in California. [AIP]

**Barry N. Malzberg** deplored Judith Merrill's 1960s sf New Wave promotional activities in an online column that soon vanished: 'A decent writer and a highly intelligent person, she did the field more damage than Raymond Palmer or Roger Corman, Ed Earl Repp or Ed Wood. The field certainly survived, it had dominated the pre-Lucas capacity to survive anything, but it was irreversibly damaged. [...] She had been on an increasingly evident, now unapologetic campaign to destroy science fiction.' (*Galaxy's Edge* ed. Mike Resnick, June) [F770]

**Robert J. Sawyer** is 'Absolutely thrilled today to be named a member of the Order of Canada, the highest civilian honour bestowed by the Government of Canada.' (30 June) For his sf and futurology.

**A.B. Yehoshua**, eminent Israeli novelist, explains: 'I deeply respect literature and expect to gain insight from a book and to identify emotionally with its characters. I therefore avoid reading suspense novels or science fiction.' (*New York Times Book Review*, 16 June) [MV]

### Conglutarinate

3 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £20. See [www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016](http://www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016).

4-5 Jul • **Global Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. Free to all? See [fantastikaconference.wordpress.com](http://fantastikaconference.wordpress.com).

8-10 Jul • **Anticipations** (H.G. Wells conference), Wells Conference Centre (Fri/Sat) and The Lightbox, Woking, Surrey (Sun). £90; £75 unwaged; £30 day. See [anticipations2016.wordpress.com](http://anticipations2016.wordpress.com).

16-17 Jul • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets from £15/day. See [laveradio.com/lavecon-2016](http://laveradio.com/lavecon-2016).

27 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tessa Farmer. Free.

6 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am-5pm. Adults £12 (£8 from 10:30), under-15s £6 (£4 from 10:30), under-5s free. See [www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk](http://www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk).

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. £100 reg (day £45) rising to £115 on 9 July; 5-15s £33 (day £15); under-5s free. Book at [ninemeworlds.co.uk](http://ninemeworlds.co.uk).

12-14 Aug • **Wadfest** (Discworld camp con), Wood Green Animal Shelter, King's Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £25. See [www.wadfest.co.uk](http://www.wadfest.co.uk) for other rates.

17-21 Aug • **MidAmeriCon II** (74th Worldcon), Kansas City, MO, USA. \$210 reg (\$240 at door); \$100 YA/active military service (\$120 at door); \$60 under-16s; \$50 support. Adult day rates (others at door only) \$40 Wed, Sun; \$70 Thu, Fri, Sat. Adult weekend (Fri-Sun) \$150. Advance booking closes on 5 August. See [midamericon2.org](http://midamericon2.org) for more.

20-21 Aug • **Creaturegeddon** (monsters etc), Langley Conference Suite, Watford. £49 reg or £28.50/day. See [www.creaturegeddon.net](http://www.creaturegeddon.net).

24 Aug • **Clarke Award Ceremony**, Foyles Bookshop, Charing Cross Rd, London. Evening. Tickets to be available at [www.foyles.co.uk](http://www.foyles.co.uk).

26-28 Aug • **Starburst Film Festival**, MMU Student Union, Manchester. Now £75 'early bird', then £99. See [www.starburstfilmfest.co.uk](http://www.starburstfilmfest.co.uk).

28-29 Aug • **Stars of Time** (film/comics), The Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5pm. £6; child £3. See [www.starsofetime.co.uk](http://www.starsofetime.co.uk).

24-25 Sep • **Tolkien Weekend**, Newcastle Castle. 10am-5pm each day. Free admission. See [newcastlecastle.co.uk/tolkien-weekend-2016](http://newcastlecastle.co.uk/tolkien-weekend-2016).

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon, The Printworks, Manchester. Tickets now available: £65 from [grimmfest.com](http://grimmfest.com).

27-30 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitley. 4-day pass £125; various extras. See [www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com](http://www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com).

30 Oct • **Paperback & Pulp Fair**, Royal National Hotel, 38-51 Bedford Way, Russell Sq, London, WC1H 0DG. 9:30am-3pm. Admission £1.50. Contact 020 8249 8278; [harry.np@virgin.net](mailto:harry.np@virgin.net).

SOLD OUT: 4-6 Nov • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. €35 reg; under-25s €10, under-16s free. There is now a waiting list for transfer of cancelled memberships: see [www.eurocon2016.org/membership/](http://www.eurocon2016.org/membership/).

**Rumblings.** 2016 Hugos: voting closes on 31 July. Don't forget!

### Infinitely Improbable

As **Others Group Us**. 'The kind of literary criticism [...] which Book Marks collects, represents a relatively narrow swath of what's actually published. Yes, there are tabs for Mystery and Science Fiction and Romance, but the works displayed are comfortably literary, even if some have genre elements. [...] These are, with a few exceptions, books that could be considered as National Book Award contenders. There's no Jackie Collins, no Jennifer Weiner, no James Patterson, no hard sci-fi.' (*New Republic* on Lit Hub 'Book Marks' site, 8 June) [JME]

**Awards.** *Kate Greenaway Medal*: Chris Riddell (his third win) for illustrating Neil Gaiman's *The Sleeper and the Spindle*. [NG] • *Kurd Laßwitz Preis for Best Foreign SF*: Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, translated into German as *Amalthea*. • *Lambda* (LGBT etc) sf/l/horror category: Kirsty Logan, *The Gracekeepers*. ANTHOLOGY (not genre-specific): *Beyond: The Queer Sci-Fi & Fantasy Comic Anthology* ed. Sfé R. Monster with Taneka Stotts. • *Lucius*: SF NOVEL Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Mercy*. FANTASY NOVEL Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. YA NOVEL Terry Pratchett, *The Shepherd's Crown*. FIRST NOVEL Ken Liu, *The Grace of Kings*. NOVELLA Alastair Reynolds, *Slow Bullets*. NOVELLETTE Neil Gaiman, 'Black Dog' (*Trigger Warning*). SHORT Naomi Kritzer, 'Cat Pictures Please' (*Clarkesworld* 1/15). ANTHOLOGY George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois, eds., *Old Venus*. COLLECTION Neil Gaiman, *Trigger Warning*. MAGAZINE *Asimov's*. PUBLISHER Tor. EDITOR David G. Hartwell. ARTIST Michael Whelan. NON-FICTION Alisa Krastnoe & Alexandra Pierce, eds., *Letters to Tiptree*. ART BOOK Julie Dillon, *Julie Dillon's Imagined Realms, Book 2*. • *Rhysling* (poetry). SHORT Ruth Berman, 'Time Travel Vocabulary Problems' (*Dreams and Nightmares* 100). LONG (tie): Krysada Panusith Phounsiri, 'It Begins With A Haunting' (*Dance among Elephants*); Ann K. Schwader, 'Keziah' (*Dark Energies*). • *Stephen Hawking Medal for Science Communication*: inaugural winners include composer Hans Zimmer (*Gladiator*, *Lion King*, *Dark Knight* trilogy) for his *Interstellar* film score.

**Bulbismo.** 'A most exciting and thrilling science fiction novel full

of sensible philosophy which makes the reader feel less of a cretin than some science fiction would make us.' (from the cover of Clifford D. Simak's *Ring Around The Sun*, 1960 WDL Books paperback) [TB]

**R.I.P.** *Daniel Atterborn* (1959-2016), Swedish fan, journalist and comics expert who edited the comics journal *Bild & Bubbla* and two books on the subject, died from cancer on 4 June; he was 56. [J-HH] • *Rhoda Blumberg* (1917-2016), US author of many historical books for children plus such 'non-fact' works as *The First Travel Guide to the Moon* (1980)—addressed to 21st-century kids and assuming space tourism from 1995 on—died on 6 June aged 98. [AIP] • *James H. Burns*, US fan and writer for *Starlog*, *Fantastic Films* (as contributing editor), *Cinefantastique*, *Starburst*, *Heavy Metal*, *Twilight Zone* and (regularly since 2012) *File 770*, was found dead on 2 June; he was about 56. [MG] • *Michael McCurdy* (1942-2016), US publisher and illustrator whose artwork appeared in more than 200 books—his first for children being *Asimov's Please Explain* (1973); another was the Centennial Edition of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*—died on 28 May aged 74. [PDF] • *Marina Malfatti* (1933-2016), Italian actress seen in the fairytale *More Than a Miracle* (1967) and such Gothic horror films as *The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Grave* (1971) and *All the Colors of the Dark* (1972), died on 8 June aged 83. [PDF] • *Michu Meszaros* (1939-2016), 29' Hungarian-born actor with midget roles in *Waxwork* (1988), *Freaked* (1993), *Warlock: The Armageddon* (1993) and others, died on 13 June aged 76. He was best known as the furry Alien Life Form of the sf sitcom *ALF* (1986-1990). [SFS] • *Gordon Murray* (1921-2016), UK creator of the well-loved BBC children's puppet series *Camberwick Green*, *Trumpton* and *Chigley*, whose earlier *A Rubovian Legend* (1955-1961) is fantasy, died on 30 June aged 95. [SB] • *Willis Pyle* (1914-2016), US animator who worked on Disney's *Pinocchio* (1940), *Fantasia* (1940) and *Bambi* (1942), plus the Dr Seuss-based *Gerald McBoing-Boing* (1950, Oscar winner) and *Halloween Is Grinch Night* (1977, Emmy winner), died on 2 June; he was 101. [SFS] • *Gregory Rabassa* (1922-2016), noted US translator of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and many other major works by Latin American authors, died on 14 June; he was 94. [PDF] • *Richard Selzer* (1928-2016), US surgeon and author whose works include some short horror fiction, died on 5 June aged 87. [AIP] • *Yumi Shirakawa* (1936-2016), Japanese actress whose sf credits include *Rodan* (1956), *The Mysterians* (1957) and *The H-Man* (1958), died on 14 June aged 79. SFS • *Robyn Sisman* (1955-2016), US-born author and editor who published J.G. Ballard reprints and the first *Interzone* anthology while at J.M. Dent, plus sf titles including Kim Newman's *The Night Mayor* and Brian Stableford's *The Empire of Fear* at Simon & Schuster, died on 20 May. [DP] • *Trevor Steedman* (1954-2016), UK actor and stuntman whose credits include *Aliens* (1986), *Superman IV* (1987), *The Tomorrow People* (1995), *Children of Men* (2006) and *Johnny and the Bomb* (2006), died on 25 June aged 62. [BB] • *Alvin Toffler* (1928-2016), US writer whose futuristic works—especially *Future Shock* (1970)—influenced much contemporary sf, died on 27 June aged 87. [JC] • *Janet Waldo* (1920-2016), US actress who voiced many Hanna-Barbera cartoon characters including Judy Jetson in *The Jetsons* (1962-1963, 1985-1987) and Penelope Pitstop in *Wacky Races* (1968-1969), died on 12 June; she was 96. [PDF] • *Anton Yelchin* (1989-2016), Russian-born US actor who played Chekov in the rebooted *Star Trek* (2009) and its sequels, died in a freak car accident on 19 June; he was just 27. His other genre credits include *Terminator Salvation* (2009), *Fright Night* (2011) and *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2013).

**Odd Volumes.** *Transvestite Vampire Biker Nuns from Outer Space*, a genre contender for the 2016 Diagram Prize for oddest book title, was beaten into third place by *Too Naked for the Nazis* (#1) and *Reading from Behind: A Cultural History of the Anus*. (The Author, Summer)

**Award Shortlists.** *British Fantasy* (novel categories): FANTASY Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Guns of the Dawn*; Joe Abercrombie, *Half a War*; Jen Williams, *The Iron Ghosr*; Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Signal to Noise*; Zen Cho, *Sorcerer to the Crown*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. HORROR Alison Littlewood, *A Cold Silence*; Sarah Pinborough, *The Death House*; Adam Nevill, *Lost Girl*; Catriona Ward, *Rawblood*; Tim Lebbon, *The Silence*; Joseph Fink and Jeffrey Crano, *Welcome to Night Vale*. NEWCOMER Becky Chambers, *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet*; Zen Cho, *Sorcerer to the Crown*; Peter Newman, *The Vagrant*; Steven Poore, *The Heir to the North*; Marc Turner, *When the Heavens Fall*. • *John W. Campbell Memorial Award*: Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Eleanor Lerman, *Radiomen*; Ian McDonald, *Luna: New Moon*; James Morrow, *Galapagos Regained*; Linda Nagata, *Going Dark*; Nnedi Okorafor, *The Book of Phoenix*; Kit Reed, *Where*; Adam Roberts, *The Thing Itself*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *Aurora*; Neal Stephenson,

*Seveneres*. • *Mythopoeic*: ADULT Holly Black, *The Darkest Part of the Forest*; Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Buried Giant*; E.K. Johnston, *A Thousand Nights*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*; Daniel José Older, *Shadowshaper*. CHILDREN'S Cassie Beasley, *Circus Mirandus*; Robert Beatty, *Serafina and The Black Cloak*; Sarah Beth Durst, *The Girl Who Could Not Dream*; Terry Pratchett, the entire 'Tiffany Aching' series opening with *The Wee Free Men*; Ursula Vernon, *Castle Hangnail*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Verlyn Flieger, ed. *The Story of Kullervo* by J.R.R. Tolkien; Grevel Lindop, *Charles Williams*; Alistair E. McGrath, *C.S. Lewis—A Life*; Abigail Santamaria, *Joy, Poet, Seeker, and the Woman Who Captivated C.S. Lewis*; Christopher Tolkien, ed., *Beowulf: A Translation ... by J.R.R. Tolkien*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Stefan Ekman, *Here Be Dragons: Exploring Fantasy Maps and Settings*; Daniel Gabelman, *George MacDonald*; Melanie Keene, *Science in Wonderland: The Scientific Fairy Tales of Victorian Britain*; Heather O'Donoghue, *English Poetry and Old Norse Myth*; Jamie Williamson, *The Evolution of Modern Fantasy*.

**Random Fandom.** *Chuck Tingle* commemorated recent upheavals with a new sf epic titled *Pounded by the Pound: Turned Gay by the Socioeconomic Implications of Britain Leaving the European Union*.

**Outraged Letters.** *Jonathan Cowie* of *SF2 Concatenation* pounces on the MidAmeriCon II press release saying Alan Dean Foster's novel *Shadowkeep* was the first ever book adaptation of an original computer game'. *SF2C* says: 'Actually the first ever book adaptation of an original computer game was the late great Rob Holdstock's *Elite* game story *The Dark Wheel*, published in September 1984.' *Shadowkeep* (arguably the first such novel, TDW being a 48pp chapbook) was in November 1984.

**Wisdom of the Ancients.** Time travel may be a lost art, but ... '1611: English explorer Henry Hudson, his son and several other people were set adrift in present-day Hudson Bay by mutineers aboard *Discovery*.' ('Today in History', *Tampa Bay Times*, 22 June) MH

**Group Gropes.** *Birmingham Horror Group*: the new venue from 2 July is The Anchor Inn, Digbeth. See [www.birmingham-horror.co.uk](http://www.birmingham-horror.co.uk).

**The Dead Past.** *60 Years Ago*: 'I can only say that anyone with the faintest interest in imaginative literature must at least sample *The Lord of the Rings*. Not everyone will find it to his taste; it will never appear on any bestseller lists ...' (Anthony Boucher, *F&SF*, July 1956) • *50 Years Ago*: 'In recent months, *The Lord of the Rings* has been at the top of college best-seller lists across the country, and although the Tolkien people wince at the word "fad" as if it were sheer blasphemy, even they will admit that their enthusiasm has gone—perhaps inevitably—beyond all reason. The Tolkien people may be less noisy than the LSD-heads, but there are more of them. / At the Harvard Coop, the Tolkien books occupy an honored place next to the cash register, where, like cigarettes, they are readily available in large quantities.' (Harry Resnik, 'The Hobbit-Forming World of J.R.R. Tolkien', *Saturday Evening Post*, 2 July 1966) [MMW] • *20 Years Ago*, in the wake of the first Disworld Convention: 'Terry Pratchett, despite earlier misgivings, allotted measured praise to the chairman: "I am now prepared to say that Paul Rood can leave very high marks on tall buildings."' (*Ansible* 108, July 1996)

**Fanfundery.** *DUFF Statistics*: Clare McDonald-Sims, with 33 first-place votes, defeated old-timers No Preference (2) and Hold Over Funds (1) in the race from Australasia to Worldcon as reported last issue.

**Whog's Masterclass.** *Dept of Neat Tricks*. 'He sat cross-legged before the Prisoner's Pillar, a smile held to his face only by the fortitude of his small flat ears.' (Anne Edwards, *Haunted Summer*, 1972) [SS] • 'One of the sailors, who must have been about forty, had only one hand and a star tattooed on the back of the other.' (Patrick Leigh Fermor, *The Broken Road*, 2013) [AR] • *Hard-Boiled Dept*. 'A cold front was sticking its tongue out at New York, tasting the edges of it, and—not liking what it found—spitting it back in a short, chilly blast: (Mickey Spillane and Max Allan Collins, *Murder Never Knocks: A Mike Hammer Novel*, 2016) [RF] • *Dept of Sedentary Posture*. '... she sat down beside him, unmindful of the gravel beach that cut into her knees.' (Donald Kingsbury, *Courtship Rita alias Geta*, 1982) • *Future Business English Dept*. Context: Van is annoyed because his stockbroker has failed to sell some shares. "No buyers? Hop down, father, and jest me not! I'm in no mood for—" "Bible stuff, Van, s'help me. I've been shagging since yesterday. The market's dim." "Then you haven't been shagging hard enough." (Evan Hunter, 'Malice in Wonderland', January 1954 f) [CN]

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