

Ansible



Ansible® 441 April 2024

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, from 1984. Available for SAE, or average air speed of the solitary oesophagus.

Levitation, the Telford Eastercon, is now over. Good times were reportedly had, both virtually and by 450+ on-site attendees. • **The BSFA Awards:** ARTWORK cover by Leo Nickolls for *The Surviving Sky* by Kritika H. Rao. AUDIO FICTION *The Dex Legacy* by Emily Inkpen. COLLECTION *Best of British SF 2022* ed. Donna Scott. FOR YOUNGER READERS, *The Library of Broken Worlds* by Alaya Dawn Johnson. NONFICTION (LONG) *A Traveller in Time: The Critical Practice of Maureen Kincaid Speller* ed. Nina Allan. NONFICTION (SHORT) *Project Management Lessons from Rogue One* by Fiona Moore. NOVEL *The Green Man's Quarry* by Juliet McKenna. SHORT 'How to Raise a Kraken in Your Bathtub' by P. Djélî Clark. SHORTER *And Put Away Childish Things* by Adrian Tchaikovsky. TRANSLATED SHORTER FICTION 'Vanishing Tracks in the Sand' by Jana Bianchi, trans. Rachael Amoruso. • **Exclusion Act.** One officially unnamed fan, understood to be Dave McCarty of 2023 Hugo infamy, tried to join at the door and was turned away. Why? Chorus: 'The rules we must follow.' For commentary see *File 770* (30 March). • **Eastercon 2026:** a bid from Phil Dyson and the Reclamation 2022 team is taking shape. • **Thirst!** The real ale traditionally ran out circa 4pm on Sunday. • **Doc Weir Award**, causing great bogglement at Ansible HQ: David Langford. Many thanks, kind voters!

The Mysterious Stranger

Natasha Bardon of HarperVoyager and Magpie declined her Hugo nomination – Best Editor, Long Form – largely owing to 'the censorship in 2023'. Other refuseniks are Martha Wells (Novel; see Awards below), Hai Ya (Novelette), Bigolas Dickolas Wolfwood (tweets in Related Work) and Camestros Felapton (Fan Writer, just 'skipping this year').

David V. Barrett looked back to his 2015 triumph when *The Book-seller* ran a quarter-page apology from the author (academic Stephen J. Hunt) and publisher of a book that extensively plagiarized his 1996 *Sects, Cults and Alternative Religions*; all copies were to be destroyed. Alas, he discovered that Routledge had since taken over the offending publisher and reissued the 'forever withdrawn' title in their Routledge Revivals series. 'Emails are now flying around....' (Facebook, 14 March)

Donato Giancola was not happy to find a figure from his *Cyberpunk 2020: Ravens* painting recycled (flipped left/right, crudely modified) on a *Magic: The Gathering* card by Fay Dalton. 'Copied and pasted. This is not about "similarities", this is about direct copying.' (Facebook, 26 March) The card's other character came from a 1958 thriller magazine cover. Wizards of the Coast responded: 'As we have looked into this further, we're now suspending future work with Fay Dalton.' (29 March)

Gregory Manchess received the Chesley life achievement award for his career in genre art. For all Chesley winners see *File 770* (29 March).

Bryan Talbot is one of the 2024 inductees into the Will Eisner Award Hall of Fame for life achievement in comics work.

Consentiency

3-7 April • **Dragons & Mythical Beasts** (exhibition), Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, London. From £14. See tinyurl.com/bp8pjvmp.

SOLD OUT 6 Apr • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), King's House, Amptill Road, Bedford, MK42 9AZ. 10am-5:30pm. Tickets £49.50; under-14s £20. See bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

12-14 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), annual dinner and members-only AGM, Jesus College, Cambridge. Room and dinner bookings at www.tolkienociety.org/events/agm-and-springmoot-2024.

14 Apr • **Stars of Time** (comics), LC, Swansea. 10am-4:30pm. £10 plus booking fee; other rates at www.starsoftime.co.uk.

20-21 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. £30 reg; students £20; 'kids' £10. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

27-28 Apr • **Celluloid Screams** all-night horror film festival, Sheffield. 11pm-9am. £20. See celluloidscreams.co.uk.

3-6 May • **Paracinema Cult Film Festival**, QUAD Center, Derby. £45; £25 concessions. Tickets available at paracinema.co.uk.

11-12 May • **Portsmouth Comic Con**, Guildhall, Portsmouth. £37; £19.50 concessions; day rates and more at portsmouthcomiccon.com.

15-17 May • **GIFCon** (University of Glasgow conference), 'Conjuring Creatures and Worlds', online. See tinyurl.com/yfdbvdwj.

18-19 May • **Surrey Steampunk Convivial**, Stoneleigh, Epsom. See bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivials.

31 May - 2 Jun • **FunCon One**, Palace Hotel, Buxton. Now £70 reg; £80 with added 'warm fuzzy feeling'; £40 concessions. See funcon.lol.

23-26 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), London, various cinemas. Details to follow at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsandevents/.

24-25 Aug • **Dublin Comic Con**, Convention Centre, Dublin. Various ticket prices (extra for early entry, etc.) at dublincomiccon.com.

31 Oct - 3 Nov • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, Banshee Labyrinth and Lauriston Castle. More at edinburghhorrorfestival.co.uk.

7-9 Feb 2025 • **Contabile 35** (filk), 'central UK' venue and membership rates to be announced at www.contabile.org.uk/c35/.

7-9 Mar 2025 • **MinamiCon** (anime), Novotel Hotel, Southampton. Registration awaited July/August at www.minamicon.org.uk.

11-13 Apr 2025 • **Corflu 42** (fan), Chequers Hotel, Newbury. £75/\$95 reg; £25/\$32 supp; £10/\$15 virtual. More details at corflu.org.

13-17 Aug 2025 • **Seattle Worldcon 2025**, Seattle, WA, USA. Now \$200 reg; under-25s \$100; under-18s \$75; under-13s free; virtual \$85; WSFS only (Hugo and site voting) \$50. See seattlein2025.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As We Saw Ourselves. John Christopher fretted about sf morality in the 1950s: 'Quite apart from those magazines whose chief and obvious preoccupation is a mixing of sex with science fiction, what should be the honest core of the field is riddled with this form of nastiness. One of the leading science-fiction magazines in America regularly publishes material of an unpleasant nature. In a copy recently encountered of one of the American second-string magazines, there was a story whose theme was simply that of incest. One of the leading British fantasy magazines appears every issue with a "cheese-cake" cover.' (*Authentic SF*, April 1953) [GP]

Awards. *Crawford Award* (fantasy debut): *The Saint of Bright Doors* by Vajra Chandrasekera. • *Hugo* novel finalists: *The Adventures of Amina al-Sirafi* by Shannon Chakraborty, *The Saint of Bright Doors* by Vajra Chandrasekera, *Some Desperate Glory* by Emily Tesh, *Starter Villain* by John Scalzi, *Translation State* by Ann Leckie, *Witch King* by Martha Wells (who declined nomination for her Murderbot novel *System Collapse*). The full list is at glasgow2024.org/hugo-awards/2024-hugo-award-finalists/. 1720 valid nominating ballots were received. • *Nebula* novel finalists: *The Saint of Bright Doors* by Vajra Chandrasekera, *The Water Outlaws* by S.L. Huang, *Translation State* by Ann Leckie, *The Terraformers* by Annalee Newitz, *Shigidi and the Brass Head of Obalufon* by Wole Talabi, *Witch King* by Martha Wells (who declined nomination for *System Collapse*). Full list at www.sfwa.org/blogs/sfwa-blog/. • *Oscars*. Best animated film: *The Boy and the Heron*. *Poor Things* had four wins in the lesser categories; *Barbie* and *Godzilla Minus One* each had one. • *Philip K. Dick Award*: *These Burning Stars* by Bethany Jacobs. • *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Tom Doherty. • *SFWA Infinity Award* (posthumous Grandmaster): Tanith Lee.

Thog's Science Masterclass. 'Looks like the neutrinos from the sun have mutated into a new kind of particle!' (2012 dir. Roland Emmerich, 2009)

R.I.P. *Martin Bax* (1933-2024), UK doctor, co-founding long-time editor of *Ambit* magazine, and author whose sf novel was *The Hospital Ship* (1976), died in March aged 90. [DP] • *Bob Beerbohm* (1952-2024), US comics fan, dealer and valued historian, died on 27 March aged 71. [SHS] • *Viktor Benkovsky* (1959-2024), Russian author of *Anachron* (2000) plus two further novels – all with Elena Khayetskaya – and translator of Dick and Spinrad, died on 9 March. [AM] • *Colin Bennett*, UK actor and writer who wrote the children's sf series *Luna* (1983-1984, in which he acted) and *Captain Zep – Space Detective* (1984), died on 23 February. He was also in the tv *Hitchhiker's Guide* (1981). [NJ] • *Edward Bond* (1934-2024), controversial UK playwright who used sf themes in the post-holocaust 'War Plays' (1984-1985) and elsewhere, died on 3 March aged 89. [JC] • *Roger Noel Cook* (1946-2024), UK comics writer, musician and editor who as a *TV Comic* staff writer (from 1964) scripted many *Doctor Who* storylines, died on 10 March aged 77. [SH] • *Dianne Crittenden* (1941-2024), US casting director for *Star Wars* (1977), *Howard the Duck* (1986), *Volcano* (1997) and others, died on 19 March aged 82. [AIP] •

Michael Culver (1938-2024), UK actor in *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and genre tv series, died on 27 February aged 85. [LP] ● Laurent de Brunhoff (1925-2024), French artist and illustrator who continued his father's now famous 'Babar the Elephant' children's books with more than 45 titles, died on 22 March aged 98. [AIP] ● Tom Digby (1940-2024), US fan, filker and fanzine publisher who was a fan GoH at the 1993 Worldcon, died on 27 March aged 84. ● Mark Dodson (1960-2024), US actor with voice roles in *Return of the Jedi* (1983) and *Gremlins* (1984), died on 2 March aged 64. [AIP] ● Kirk Dougal (1966-2024), US author of the 7-volume 'Tale of Bone and Steel' fantasy series (2020-2022) died on 18 March aged 57. [SHS] ● Max Fellwalker (1966-2024) US artist who worked on comics for DC and Eclipse, and for games companies including White Wolf and WotC, died on 14 March. [SHS] ● Gunnar Gällmo (1946-2023), Swedish fan and translator active since the mid-1970s – translating Asimov, Dick, Harrison, Heinlein, Le Guin, Simak, Tubb and others – died on 8 December aged 77. [J-HH] ● Deb Geisler, US fan and conrunner who edited books for NESFA Press and chaired Boskone 36 and the 2004 Worldcon, died on 23 March aged 66. [GS] She is survived by her husband Michael Benveniste, to whom much sympathy. ● Louis Gossett Jr. (1936-2024), US actor in *Enemy Mine* (1985), *Stargate SG-1* (2005-2006) and the tv *Watchmen* (2019), died on 28 March aged 87. [AIP] ● Ron Harper (1933-2024), US actor in the tv *Planet of the Apes* (1974) and *Land of the Lost* (1976), plus sf films *Venomous* (2001) and *Glass Trap* (2005), died on 21 March aged 91. [LP] ● Mutsumi Inomata (1960-2024), Japanese artist, videogame character designer and former animator whose many credits include *Fist of the North Star* (1984) and *Future GPX Cyber Formula* (1991), died on 10 March aged 63. [JonC] ● Dick Jenssen (Martin James Ditmar Jenssen, 1935-2024), long-time Australian fan active since 1952 (when he was a founder of the Melbourne SF Club), died on 7 March aged 88. Australia's Ditmar Awards are named after him; he won two as best fan artist for his striking computer-graphics covers seen on *SF Commentary* and other fanzines, and also the 2016 Rotsler Award for life achievement in fan art. [EC/BG] ● Bernard Kops (1926-2024), UK author of supernatural plays and the time-travel novel *The Odyssey of Samuel Glass* (2012), died on 24 February aged 97. [JC] ● Malachy McCourt (1931-2024), US-born Irish actor in *Q: The Winged Serpent* (1982), *AfterLife* (2009) and genre tv series, died on 11 March aged 92. [LP] ● Tim McGovern (1955-2024), US visual effects artist who won an Oscar for his work on *Total Recall* (1990) and whose many other sf credits range from *Tron* (1982) to *Shazam: Fury of the Gods* (2023), died on 30 March aged 68. [AIP] ● Sam Mercer, US producer whose films include *The Relic* (1997), *Unbreakable* (2000), *Signs* (2002), *The Last Airbender* (2010) and *The BFG* (2016), died on 12 February. [AIP] ● James A. Moore (1965-2024), prolific US horror/fantasy/sf author whose novels included *Under the Overtree* (2000), *Fireworks* (2001) and *Blood Red* (2005), and whose anthology *The Twisted Book of Shadows* (2019 with Christopher Golden) won a Shirley Jackson Award, died on 27 March aged 58. [CG] ● Eli Noyes (1942-2024), US animator who worked on *Sesame Street* (1973-1995) and directed episodes of *Liquid Television* (1991-1994), died on 23 March aged 81. [AIP] ● Grant Page (1939-2024), Australian actor/stuntman in *Mad Max* (1979 plus sequel), *Son of the Mask* (2005), *Gods of Egypt* (2016) and many more, died on 14 March aged 84. [SJ] ● Chance Perdomo (1996-2024), US actor in *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* (2018-2020), *Moominvalley* (2022) and *Gen V* (2023) died on 30 March aged 27. [F770] ● Alek Popov (1966-2024), award-winning Bulgarian author of the sf parody *Planetata na kauboite* (*The Cowboys' Planet*, 1993) as by Bad Alex, died on 22 March aged 58. [AM] ● Saul Reichlin (1943-2024), South African actor whose many audiobook credits include Peake's *Titus* trilogy and lots of *Warhammer* novels, died on 3 January. [AIP] ● Vikki Richards (1949-2024), Trinidad-born UK actor in *Curse of the Crimson Altar* (1968) and *Zeta One/The Love Factor* (1969), died on 6 March aged 74. [SJ] ● Christian Rodska (1945-2024), UK actor in *The Galactic Garden* (1985), *Doomwatch: Winter Angel* (1999), *The Ghost of Greville Lodge* (2000) and others, died on 21 March aged 78. [SJ] ● Barbara Rush (1927-2024), US actress in *When Worlds Collide* (1951), *It Came from Outer Space* (1953) and others, died on 31 March aged 97. [RH] ● Medeu Sarseke (1936-2024), Kazakh author of four sf novels 1959-1965, died on March 20 aged 88. [AM] ● Peter 'Smudge' Smith, UK fan and convention tech worker who received the 2012 Doc Weir Award, died on 8 March. ● Jon Stopa (1935-2024), long-time US fan who published short stories, co-founded Advent:Publishers in 1955, and with his wife Joni was fan GoH at the 1991 Worldcon, died on 4 March aged 88. [F770] ● Akira Toriyama (1955-2024), noted Japanese manga creator best known for the long-running *Dragon Ball* comic that began in 1984 and was adapted as two popular anime tv series plus many films, died on 1 March aged 68. [SF* C] ● Silvia Tortosa (1947-2024), Spanish actress in *Horror Express*

(1972), *Las garras de Lorelei* (*When the Screaming Stops*, 1973) and *Fratello dello spazio* (*The Brother from Space*, 1988), died on 23 March aged 77. [SJ] ● Vernor Vinge (1944-2024), US author of grand space opera and prophet of the Singularity, died on 20 March aged 79. *A Fire Upon the Deep* (1992) and its prequel *A Deepness in the Sky* (1999) both won Hugos, as did the lighter-hearted *Rainbows End* (2006) and his novellas 'Fast Times at Fairmont High' (2001) and 'The Cookie Monster' (2003). He was always a welcome and illuminating presence at conventions. ● M. Emmet Walsh (1935-2024), US actor whose many films include *Blade Runner* (1982), *Critters* (1986), *The Iron Giant* (1999) and *Monster!* (1999), died on 19 March aged 88. [LP] ● James M. Ward (1951-2024), US game designer active in the early days of *D&D*, who created the first sf role-playing game *Metamorphosis Alpha* (1976) and later wrote fantasy novels, died in March aged 72. [MR] ● Paula Weinstein (1945-2024), US producer of *The Astronaut Farmer* (2006) with executive producer credits for other genre films, died on 25 March aged 78. [SHS]

The Weakest Link. Question: 'The character Big Brother was introduced in which George Orwell novel?' Contestant: 'The BFG.' (ITV, *Ant and Dec's Limitless Win*) [PE]

Random Fandom. FAAn Awards for fanzine activity presented at Corflu 41: LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Joe Siclari and Edie Stern, jointly. LETTER-HACK Jerry Kaufman. SPECIAL PUBLICATION *Beyond Fandom* (Rob Hansen). COVER Sue Mason for *Idea* #13. ARTIST Ulrika O'Brien. WRITER Mark Plummer. PERZINE *This Here ...* (Nic Farey). GENZINE *SF Commentary* (Bruce Gillespie). PAST PRESIDENTS (of fwa) Jen Farey and Jerry Kaufman, jointly. The Artist category is being renamed for the late great Steve Stiles. ● *Old Fans, and Tired.* The First Fandom Hall of Fame living-fans shortlist comprises Mary and Bill Burns (jointly) and, gulp, David Langford. [F770]

The Dead Past. 40 Years Ago, Wm. Gibson regretted the 'indefinite postponement of the fanzine-of-comment promised to British faneditors who so generously posted their product down the black hole of my Professional Activity: I was midway through the more or less final draft of ENDLESS FUCKING NEUROMANCER, and I'd read them and promise I'd Do Something About It as soon as I was through the damn book. Some six months later, having signed two more contracts (*Count Zero* for Ace, *Log of the Mustang Sally* for Arbor), I see where I slipped up.' (*Ansible* 38, Easter 1984) ● 30 Years Ago, an award non-scandal: 'The [UK Eastercon] committee let slip that "Ansible had more Eastercon Award nominations than the rest of the Short Text category put together; we decided you were ineligible 'cos you won it last year.'" (*Ansible* 81, April 1994)

Small Press. Julie Ann Dawson's Bards and Sages Publishing closed down on 6 March, both for health reasons and because of the relentless flood of 'AI-generated trash' submissions. (www.bardsandsages.com)

Fanfundery. *Get Up and Over Fan Fund* (GUFF): the 2024 northbound race from Oceania to the Glasgow Worldcon is now on, with candidates Kat Clay and Ian Nichols, both from Australia. Voting closes on 22 April, 23:59 BST. See taff.org.uk/guff.html for links to the PDF ballot and online voting form. ● *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*: voting in the 2024 race ends on 2 April. See taff.org.uk. ● *European Fan Fund*: voting in the 2024 race ended on 1 April. Results soon at fandomover.com/category/eff/. ● *TAFF Books*. Currently being proofread for taff.org.uk: Rob Hansen's much expanded *Challenging Moskowitz* (see A440) and my new compilation of all the *New Worlds* author/artist/etc profiles published by John Carnell 1952-1963. Many thanks to Mike Moorcock for approving the latter.

C.o.A. Bob Rickard, 168 Winstead Lane, Ilford, IG1 3SW.

Thog's Masterclass. *Simile or Bust!* 'Helen, with the breasts like clouds ...' 'Her breasts are like mounds of chicken fat.' (both Philip K. Dick and Roger Zelazny, *Deus Irae*, 1976) [FM] 'Her breasts were like the bags of sand that keep the scenery in place in the school play.' (Rowan Somerville, *Shape of Her*, 2011) [AR] ● *Male Gaze Dept.* 'She said something to him, but he was not listening, his eyes campaigning over her buttocks.' (*Ibid*) [AR] ● *Escape Velocity.* 'It was for a sum much larger than Fleet had ever seen written on a cheque before, and it took some concentration to prevent his eyebrows flying off the top of his head.' (Chris & Jen Sugden, *High Vaultage*, 2024) [DVB] ● *The Charwoman's Shadow.* '[He] had become enamoured of the dainty Portugese girl, and was making swift love to her daily.' (Robert E. Howard, 'Wolfshhead', 1926) [JO] ● *Deadly Hands Dept.* "'How do you do?'" Zimmer said, and extended his hand. His grip was like a moray eel's.' (Ed McBain, *The Last Dance*, 2000) [PL]

Ansible © 441 © David Langford, 2024. Thanks to David V. Barrett, Sandra Bond Claire Briailey, Jonathan Clements, John Clute, Elaine Cochrane, *File 770*, First Fandom, Bruce Gillespie, Christopher Golden, Rob Hansen, Steve Holland, John-Henri Holmberg, Nicholas Jackson, Eric M. Jones, Steve Jones, Levitation, Pamela Love, Andrey Meshavkin, Fiona Moore, Jonathan Oliver, Lawrence Person, Greg Pickersgill, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, *Private Eye*, Adam Roberts, Marcus Rowland, *SF Concatalanion*, Steven H Silver, Geri Sullivan, and our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 April 2024