

ansible



Ansible® 427 February 2023

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: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or Dr. Kurt Brevis's map of the Unknown Islands (or Lakes).

The Clam of Catastrophe

Margaret Atwood and **Ian McEwan** were among the targets of Italian fraudster Filippo Bernardini's scheme to acquire unpublished manuscripts (reportedly over 1,000) by online impersonation of publishers, editors, agents, talent scouts, etc. He was arrested at JFK airport on 4 January, pleaded guilty in a US court on 6 January, and should be sentenced on 5 April: '15 to 21 months of imprisonment, a fine of between \$7,500 and \$75,000, and restitution of \$88,000.' (*Vulture*, 6 January) [JDB]

Paul Di Filippo was badly bruised in a road accident on 19 January, reports his partner Deborah Newton: 'Last night while on his evening walk, Paul was hit by a woman driving a large SUV. I will not write in all the details, but suffice it to say he was hit at dead center of the front of her vehicle, his body flew through the air and landed on the street.' 12 hours in ER; many bruises but no broken bones; he was soon recovering at home and posting online. All sympathy to both Paul and Deborah.

Jo Fletcher noticed the *New York Times* tantalizing readers with a stupendously cryptic challenge: 'Here's a clue from the Sunday crossword: 37 Down: Literary award shaped like a rocket'. (8 January) One suspects that 'International Fantasy Award' wouldn't fit.

Ben Jeapes does not write only sf, as revealed in an *i* feature (7 January) about celebrity ghostwriters, in the context of a Certain Royal Memoir that he would have hesitated to take on: 'I have friends who have worked for the Royal Family and even the nice ones, in inverted commas, seem to be so demanding.' Just which children's adventure series Ben ghosted for which famous person remains shrouded in deadly secrecy.

Tom Monteleone ranted on Facebook and YouTube about recent winners of the Horror Writers Association life achievement award. From a YouTube transcript: '... the last three years of these awards have been severely skewed towards you know people that have been in the past called quote marginalized or not unquote okay so you know you've been oh wow you've been writing while Indian wow we're going to give you an award you you've been writing while black you get an award no problem and and you're you're a female and you're not a white male you get one right yeah that's evil it's literally what it is that's what's been going on but I'm not allowed [...] to have that opinion...' [SW] And thus: 'The Board of Trustees has voted to expel Mr Monteleone from the Horror Writers Association, thus revoking the benefits of his Lifetime Achievement Award ...' (HWA, 31 January) He's also banned from future HWA events. [TM]

Justin Roiland, co-creator, executive producer and star (voicing both title roles) of the popular animated sf series *Rick and Morty*, has been dropped from the show after US felony charges of 'domestic battery with corporal injury' and 'false imprisonment'. (*Deadline*, 24 January)

Navah Wolfe has joined DAW Books – owned since last year by the Beijing-based Astra Publishing House – as executive editor. [L]

Convolvulaceae

3-6 Feb • **Scotiacon** (furry), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. £100 reg. Other details at www.scotiacon.org.uk.

16-19 Feb • **UK Ghost Story Festival**, Museum of Making, Derby. Talks etc. are separately ticketed: see www.ukghoststoryfestival.co.uk.

17-19 Feb • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Southampton. Tickets from £145 (£35 child) plus various more expensive options at scifiball.com.

25-26 Feb • **Surrey Steampunk Convivial**, Stoneleigh, Epsom. See bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivial.

10-12 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow. Weekend pass £75; for individual tickets see frightfest.co.uk/filmsandevents.html.

10-12 Mar • **MinamiCon** (anime), Novotel Hotel, Southampton. £65 reg. Further details at www.minamicon.org.uk.

11 Mar • **Picocon 40**, Imperial College, London. First GoH Alma Alexander. Details awaited at www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

16-19 Mar • **Camp SFW**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. 3-day pass £130; 2-day £99; more options at www.scifiweekender.com.

18 Mar • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), King's House, Ampthill Road, Bedford, MK42 9AZ. 10am-5:30pm. £49.50; concessions/under-18s £25; under-15s £15. See bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

7-10 Apr • **Conversation** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. £80 reg, rising to £90 on 5 February; £45 concessions; £40 supporting or online- only membership; under-18s £20; under-13s £5. More information at conversation2023.org.uk.

14-16 Apr • **Compulsion** (games), Teviot Row House, Edinburgh. Further details awaited at compulsion.org.

26-28 May • **Satellite 8**, Crowne Plaza, Glasgow. £70 reg; under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. These rates may rise on 1 March. See eight.satellitex.org.uk.

2-4 Jun • **Jodiworld** (Jodi Taylor), Doubletree by Hilton, Coventry. GoH Jodi Taylor, others. £70 reg; £10 supp; see www.jodiworld.org.

10 Sep • **Popcorn** (media), Magna, Sheffield. Tickets £11.22; under-17s £9.09; under-7s free. See popcorncon.com.

18-22 Oct • **Worldcon 2023**, Chengdu, China. New dates (moved from August) and venue: now to be held at the Chengdu Science Fiction Museum, currently under construction as part of a vast sf theme park at Jingrong Lake. (Twitter, 20 January) Hotels have also changed from those first announced. A Chinese fan post expresses concern that such decisions are being made by the marketing planning company of 'Chengdu Business Daily ... a news media organization that has nothing to do with science fiction' rather than by the appointed Worldcon committee. [F770] Hugo nominations open 'soon' and close at the end of April. Online registration is at last accepting non-Chinese credit cards, but it's now too late to join as a Hugo-nominating member. More at en.chengduworldcon.com.

20-22 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £110 reg. For day rates see 'Book Tickets' at fantastic-films.uk.

21 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. GoH TBA. £35 reg; £20 under-18s, concessions, disabled; under-14s free; £10 supp. Registration opened on 1 February at www.bristolcon.org.

Rumblings. *Eurocon 2024* (Rotterdam, August) offers adult memberships for €125 at www.erasmuscon.nl but still gives no exact date. • *Worldcon 2024*: Glasgow published its first Progress Report in January. • *Worldcon 2025*: the deadline for bidders to file their papers is now 21 April 2023. The only definite bid is for Seattle, Washington, USA.

Infinitely Improbable

We Are Everywhere. The newly-elected US representative Robert Garcia announced that he'd take his oath to Congress on the Constitution and (*inter alia*) a vintage 1939 *Superman* #1. (*Raw Story*, 4 January) [JB]

Awards. *Philip K. Dick* finalists: *Arboreality* by Rebecca Campbell; *Widowland* by C.J. Carey; *Ymir* by Rich Larson; *January Fifteenth* by Rachel Swirsky; *The Legacy of Molly Southbourne* by Tade Thompson; *The Extractionist* by Kimberly Unger. • *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: John Scalzi.

• Oscar best-film nominations include *Avatar: The Way of Water* and *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. • *Otherwise* (was Tiptree): *Light from Uncommon Stars* by Ryka Aoki and *Sorrowland* by Rivers Solomon.

Publishers and Sinners. JABberwocky Literary Agency apologized for an error in its POD paperback of Alette de Bodard's *The Red Scholar's Wake*: all copies sold up to 9 January are missing a whole chapter, and will be replaced free of charge. (*Awfulagent.com*, 23 January) [SB]

The Dragon Variation. *Host*: 'In cinema, the 2000 Ang Lee film that was nominated for a best picture Oscar was called *Crouching Tiger, Hidden ... what?*' *Contestant*: 'Cupboard.' (BBC1, *The Weakest Link*) [PE]

R.I.P. *Tim Barlow* (1936-2023), UK actor in *Doctor Who* ('Destiny of the Daleks', 1979), *10,000 BC* (2008) and *Cockneys vs Zombies* (2012), died on 21 January aged 87. • *Jeff Beck* (1944-2023), UK musician with soundtrack credits for *Gremlins 2* (1990) and genre tv series, died on 10 January aged 78. [LP] • *Earl Boen* (1941-2023), US actor in *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980), *The Man with Two Brains* (1983), *The Terminator* (1984 plus sequels), *Alien Nation* (1988) and others – plus voice work for many genre videogames – died on 5 January aged 81. [LP] • *James D. Brubaker* (1937-2023), US producer of *The Right Stuff* (1983), *The Nutty Professor* (1996), *Bruce Almighty* (2003) and others, died on 3 January aged 85. [PDF] • *Wally Campo* (1923-2023), US actor in *Beast from Haunted Cave* (1959), *The Little Shop of Horrors* (1960) and *Master of the World* (1961), died on 14 January aged 99. LP • *Suzy McKee Charnas* (1939-2023),

much-admired Hugo- and Nebula-winning US feminist author who began publishing sf with *Walk to the End of the World* (1974) – first in the ‘Holdfast Chronicles’ sequence – and had particular success with *The Vampire Tapestry* (1980), died on 4 January aged 83. [ED] ● **Inna Churikova** (1943-2023), Russian actress in *Frosty* (1965), *The Cat Who Walked by Herself* (1988) and *The Land of Oz* (2015), died on 14 January aged 79. [LP] ● **David Crosby** (1941-2023), US musician and actor seen in *Hook* (1991), died on 19 January aged 81. [LP] ● **David Gold** (1936-2023), UK publisher and football executive whose Compact Books (an imprint of the family firm Gold Star) published *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy/Impulse* in the 1960s, died on 4 January aged 86. [DP] ● **Håkan Gulliksson** (1956-2022), Swedish physicist whose five interesting sf novels were published 2020-2022, died circa 1 September 2022 aged 66. [J-HH] ● **Piers Haggard** (1939-2023), UK director of *The Blood on Satan’s Claw* (1971), *Quatermass/The Quatermass Conclusion* (1979), *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu* (1980), *The Lifeorce Experiment* (1984) and others, died on 11 January aged 83. [AIP] ● **Stepan Kaymanov** (1979-2023) Russian author of sf/f (four novels) and popular science, died on 17 January. [AM] ● **Roger Kean**, UK magazine publisher who with his partner Oliver Frey (died 2022) published the original *Fear* magazine (1988-1991, ed. John Gilbert), died on 3 January. [JG] ● **Lance Kerwin** (1960-2023), US actor in *Enemy Mine* (1985), *Outbreak* (1995) and genre tv series, died on 24 January aged 62. [LP] ● **Robbie Knievel** (1962-2023), US actor/stuntman in *Ninja III: The Domination* (1984), died on 13 January aged 60. [LP] ● **Elka Konstantinova** (1932-2023) Bulgarian literary critic (and Minister of Culture 1991-1992) who wrote three books on sf, died on 12 January. [AM] ● **Paul LaFarge** (1970-2023), US author of mostly borderline-fantastic novels including *The Night Ocean* (2017) – featuring H.P. Lovecraft and the Futurians – died on 19 January aged 52. [GVG] ● **Chris Ledesma** (1958-2022), US music editor best known for 734 episodes of *The Simpsons*, died on 16 December aged 64; further credits include *The Stepford Children* (1987), *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995) and *Teen Angel* (1997). [LP] ● **Gina Lollobrigida** (1927-2023), famed Italian actress with a genre credit for the tv series *Le avventure di Pinocchio* (1972), died on 16 January aged 95. [AIP] ● **Lisa Loring** (1958-2023), US actress who played Wednesday in the original *The Addams Family* series (1964-1966), died on 28 January aged 64. [O] ● **Sulambek Mamilov** (1938-2023), Russian director of the sf film *Day of Wrath* (1985) died on 13 January. [AM] ● **Maya Menglet** (1935-2023), Russian actress in *Shans* (1984) and the Bram Stoker-based *Burial of the Rats* (1995), died on 19 January aged 87. [AM] ● **Graham Oakley** (1929-2022), UK author and illustrator of the ‘Church Mice’ animal fantasies for children, beginning with *The Church Mouse* (1972), died on 19 December aged 93. [AIP] ● **Sal Piro** (1950-2023), US fan and president since 1977 of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* fan club – a founder of the audience-participation cult, about which he published two books – died on 21 January aged 72. [AIP] ● **Edward R. Pressman** (1943-2023), US producer whose many credits include *Phantom of the Paradise* (1974), *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), *Martians Go Home* (1989), *The Crow* (1994 plus sequels) and *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1996), died on 17 January aged 79. [AIP] ● **Quinn K. Redeker** (1936-2022), US actor in *The Three Stooges Meet Hercules* (1962), *Spider Baby* (1967), *The Andromeda Strain* (1971), *Return to the Batcave* (2003) and genre tv series, died on 20 December aged 86. [LP] ● **Owen Roizman** (1936-2023), US cinematographer whose films include *The Exorcist* (1973), *The Stepford Wives* (1975) and *The Addams Family* (1991), died on 6 January aged 86. [AIP] ● **Jeff Shuter**, US producer/director of *28 Days Later: The Aftermath* (2007), *Invincible* (2008) and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Season 8 Motion Comic* (2010), died on 10 November 2022. [AIP] ● **Aleksey Slapovsky** (1957-2023), Russian author whose 25 novels include adult work with fantastic themes and a pair of children’s fantasies, died on 8 January. [AM] ● **Sylvia Syms** (1934-2023), UK actress with genre credits for *Asylum* (1972) and *Doctor Who* (‘Ghost Light’, 1989), died on 27 January aged 89. [SJ] ● **Svetlana Tulina** (1968-2023), Russian fan, genre anthologist and award-winning short story author, died on 8 January. [AM] ● **Agustí Villaronga** (1953-2023), Spanish director of *99.9* (1997) and *Moon Child* (1989), died on 22 January aged 69. [AM] ● **Fay Weldon** (1931-2023), UK mainstream author who frequently explored sf/fantasy themes – perhaps most famously in *The Cloning of Joanna May* (1989; tv series adaptation 1991) – died on 4 January aged 91. [DP] ● **Hubert Wells** (1934-2022), Hungarian-born US animal trainer with genre credits from *Doctor Dolittle* (1967) to *Babe: Pig in the City* (1998) – in which he also acted – died on 25 December aged 88. [LP] ● **Annie Werschling** (1977-2023), US actress in *The Vampire Diaries* (2015-2016), *Timeless* (2016-2018), *Star Trek: Picard* (2022) and episodes of other genre tv series, died on 29 January aged 45. [AIP] ● **Ted Whitehead** (1933-2023), UK playwright and screenwriter for Fay Weldon’s *The Cloning of*

Joanna May (see above), died on 13 January aged 89. [AIP] ● **Cindy Williams** (1947-2023), US actress in *Gas-s-s-s* (1970), *Beware! The Blob* (1972), *The Creature Wasn’t Nice* (1981), *Uforia* (1984) and *The Stepford Husbands* (1996), died on 25 January aged 75. [AIP]

What’s That in Welsh Swimming Pools? ‘2 asteroids the size of 22 penguins to pass Earth this weekend – NASA’. (*Jerusalem Post*, 19 January)

Random Fandom. *FAAN Awards* voting for work published in 2022 opened in early January and will close on 10 March. Details in Nic Farey’s *The Incomplete Register* at efanzines.com/TIR/Incomplete2022.pdf. ● *Chicon 8* (Worldcon 2022) issued an apology for having initially followed the tradition of calling the Worldcon bidders’ Q&A session *The Fannish Inquisition*: ‘This phrase was initially created as a riff off the Monty Python sketch. However, the actual Spanish Inquisition was of course an atrocity against many groups, and the descendants of those groups understandably find this to be an offensive joke.’ (Email, January) I hope no one will call for Jerry Kaufman’s and Suzanne Tompkins’s 1970s fanzine *The Spanish Inquisition* to be removed from Fanac.org and bibliographies. ● *Forrest J Ackerman’s* papers ‘are now fully processed and open to researchers’ at Syracuse University. [PB] See library.syracuse.edu/digital/guides/a/ackerman_fj.htm for the catalogue. Rob Hansen disputes some of the FJA biographical factoids on that page: “‘In 1923, at the age of seven, he was a charter member of the Science Fiction League.’” Since Gernsback didn’t create the SFL until February 1934 that’s quite a feat.’

The Nude Past. *20 Years Ago*: ‘Jim Battista charmed me with his revelation on Usenet that the great Forrest J Ackerman “had a bit part as Judge Reinhold in *Nudist Colony of the Dead*. Of all the musicals I’ve seen about zombie nudists who kill only fundamentalist Christians, it was the most recent.’” (*Ansible* 187, February 2003) ● *30 Years Ago*: ‘Patrick Nielsen Hayden sends a flyer about *Nude Trek 2: The Wrath of Klothes*, the first nudist Trek convention, run by The Slugs Nudist Club in chilly Washington State (22 Jan). Perhaps the most macabre aspect is his covering note: “NOT A HOAX”.’ (*Ansible* 67, February 1993)

Magazine Scene. *Daily Science Fiction*, in the 9 January email of its daily story to subscribers, announced that ‘*Daily Science Fiction* is officially on hiatus.’ The web archive remains at dailysciencefiction.com. [IN] ● *Interzone* emailed subscribers and contributors on 30 January to assure us all that ‘*Interzone* #294 is now out in all its forms’ and being shipped.

Court Circular. Fox News is in trouble for an almost science-fictional reason: they played the US Emergency Alert System attention tone for three seconds as part of an NFL tv ad. Broadcasting this is ‘prohibited to prevent people becoming desensitized to something you should only hear in the most dire circumstances’, such as imminent nuclear attack or multi-penguin asteroid impact, and the Federal Communications Commission is talking about a \$504,000 fine. (*The Register*, 27 January)

Doomed Enterprise. *80 Years Ago*, an ambitious cat-herding scheme was launched by ‘Chief Futurian Attorney Vol Molesworth of the Futurian Society of Sydney: “I am preparing a standard Futurian Law text-book. To do this I need a copy of the rules and constitution of every fan club in the world, past and present. It is a big long task, but I intend to tackle it, for if all fan clubs adopted a standardised law it would make Futurian intercourse easier. Briefly, I want a complete set of data on a Society – copy of its policy, constitution and rules in toto, full list of decisions and precedents that are within the scope of the word ‘jurisdiction’. When I get this from all fan-clubs, and after comparison, sift out the common parts, I intend to renege it off, bind it, and send a copy to each fan club.”’ (*Futurian War Digest* 26, February 1943)

Fanfunderly. *TAFF* voting continues at taff.org.uk/vote.php. Further *TAFF* trip reports released as free ebooks are *A Fake Fan in London* by Bob Madle (1957), *Epitaff* by Eric Bentcliffe (1960), *The Squirrel’s Tale* by Ron Ellik (1962) and *The Moffatt House Abroad* by Len & June Moffatt (1973); also in the pipeline is *Colonial Excursion* by Ron Bennett (1958). For the full list of ebooks, newest first, see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?all&chron.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Raconteur Dept.* ‘I am going to tell you the story of Madame Bertaux, and that the powder of instruction may be properly balanced by the jam of amusement I am going to ...’ (H. de Vere Stacpoole, ‘The Ten-Franc Counter’, *Munsey’s*, 1926) ● *A Moustache Worth Twirling.* ‘... and above his thin lip, more dark hair falling in waves inelegantly to his shoulders...’ (Steven Brust, *Athyra*, 1993) [BA] ● *Hairy Eyeball Dept.* ‘Private Walsh swung his glower, beard and all, across Roan ...’ (Theodore Sturgeon, ‘Granny Won’t Knit’, 1954) [VS]

Ansible © 427 © David Langford, 2023. Thanks to Brian Ameringer, Peter Balestrieri, John D. Berry, Sandra Bond, John Boston, Ellen Datlow, Paul Di Filippo, *File 770*, John Gilbert, John-Henri Holmberg, Steve Jones, *Locus*, Todd Mason, Andrey Meshavkin, Ian Nichols, Omega, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, *Private Eye*, Vernon Speed, Gordon Van Gelder, Sean Wallace, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 February 2023