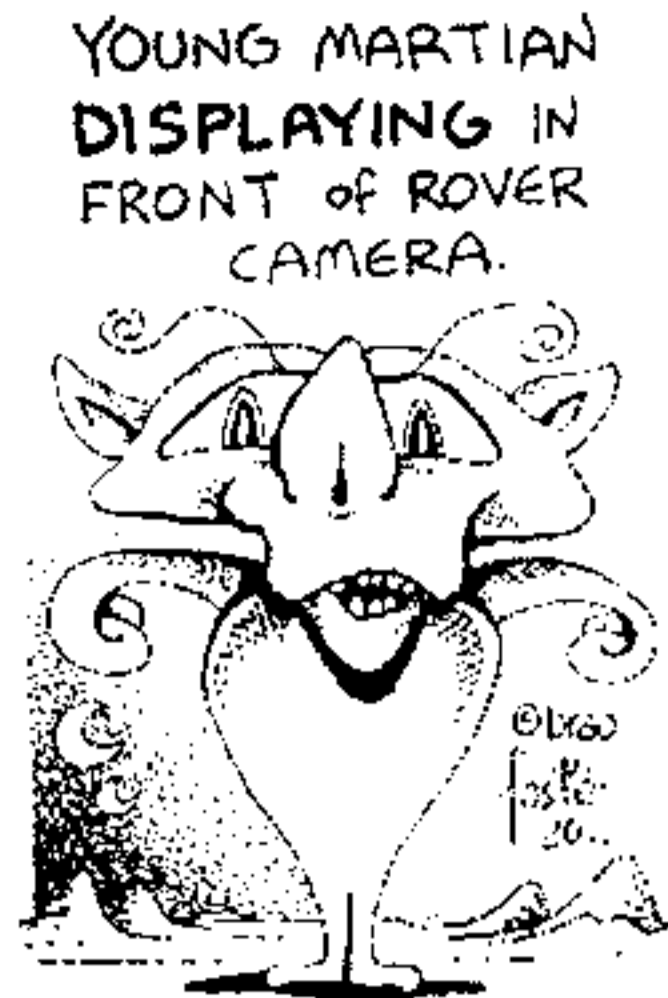


Ansible



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From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE or umbral revelations of sempiternal Galexis.

Scooped! That *SF Encyclopedia* news, embargoed last issue, is now out at www.sfgateway.com and sf-encyclopedia.com. Life is one big panic.

The Final Encyclopedia

Jonathan Carroll, celebrated fantasy author, has turned up in DC's rebooted *Superman* comics continuity as Lois Lane's boyfriend. Tuckerization or just coincidence? No one seems quite sure. [PDF]

Chris Foss remembered the joys of working on the film *A.I.*: "Kubrick used to come in with a page of script and I'd visualise what he was doing. I told him that he'd got me started on my science fiction career when he made *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He said 'Yeah and I'll finish you too' and he damn nearly did. He was a hard taskmaster. I put a sign saying Prisoner Cell Block 8 on my office door." Still, things weren't all bad during that period: "I was bonking [Kubrick's] god daughter at the time, unbelievably. She was this naughty model". (Interview by Matilda Battersby, *Independent*, 29 July) [SG]

Walter Koenig will be honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2012, rather later than his captain and other crew members from the original *Star Trek* series and related films. [NSFC]

Tanith Lee's story 'Snow-Drop' became controversial when its inclusion in a Cairo University fantasy-fiction reading list was denounced, supposedly for the lesbian scene: "Teaching homosexuality at Cairo University", ranted an Egyptian paper. The story was taught for a whole term without complaint; the *Guardian* (29 June) suggests a 'fabricated moral scandal' intended to discredit the CU English department, whose staff is predominantly female and one of whose professors was recently elected as Cairo University's first-ever female dean. [MPJ]

Saci Lloyd's YA thriller *Momentum* is yet another of those books that Transcend Mere Genre despite containing skiffy stuff like 'carbon rationing and environmental meltdown [...] augmented reality, police brutality, surveillance, free running and secret codes hidden in a global communications system called the Dreamline. Oh, and a forbidden love story between privileged citizen Hunter and outsider-on-the-run Uma. / Put baldly like that, it sounds like too much for one book to pack in, too unlikely to be anything other than dystopian science fiction. Yet one of the more exciting and chilling aspects of the book is just how close to reality it comes.' (Michelle Pauli, *Guardian*, 15 July) The author herself caps this with the famous Atwoodian clincher: 'It's not squids in outer space but just slightly removed from today's reality ...' [WP]

J.K. Rowling's split with her long-time literary agent Christopher Little made news headlines; he's unhappy and may sue. JKR switched to a new agency set up by Little's erstwhile business partner Neil Blair, a lawyer rather than a literary agent. (*Independent*, 4 July) [MPJ] Also: the daft *Willy the Wizard* plagiarism claim against Bloomsbury and JKR (see A272) has finally collapsed in the UK, where the judge felt and the Court of Appeal agreed that its chance of success was so low that £1.5m must be paid into court as security for the defendants' expected costs. This was not forthcoming. (BBC, 18 July) [JS] Good result: but a proper drubbing in court—as in the USA—would have been more satisfying.

Steph Swainston decided to cancel her current two-book contract with Gollancz and retrain as an A-level chemistry teacher (*Independent*, 10 July): 'I suffer terribly from isolation while writing. I really need a job where I can be around people and learn to speak again. It's much, much healthier to be around people. Human beings are social animals.' Your editor muses: writing's a lonely business, but teaching ... argh!

Conistry

Until 27 Aug • **Bruce Pennington** art exhibition, Atlantis Bookshop, Museum St, London, WC1A 1LY. 10:30am-6pm, Mon-Sat.

24 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Kim Lakin-Smith.

17-21 Aug • **Renovation** (69th Worldcon), Reno-Sparks Convention Center, Reno, NV, USA. Now \$220 reg; \$500 family (2 adults + n under-17s); \$120 under-21s. Unchanged: \$75 under-17s; under-7s free; \$50 supp. For day rates, see www.renovationsf.org. Contact PO Box

13278, Portland, OR 97213-0278, USA; or info at renovationsf.org.

19-21 Aug • **Festival in the Shire**: Tolkien art/book exhibition, 'mini-festival'. 10am-6pm, Wynnstay Hotel, Machynlleth.

2 Sep • **Heartwood** (Rob Holdstock memorial discussion), British Library. 6:30-8pm. £7.50/£5 concessions. Online booking only? See www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/outof/events (with other events too).

2-8 Sep • **SF Spectacular**, Oxfam Bookshop, Reading: a second promotion based on Brian Stableford's huge donation of sf texts.

15 Sep • **Robert Rankin** evening, Phoenix Square, Midland St, Leicester, LE1 1TG. 7pm. £5.50. Box office 0116 242 2800.

7-9 Oct • **Sci-Fi London Oktoberfest**, Odeon Camden Town and other Camden Town venues. Further details to follow.

15-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Dublin 2, Ireland. €30 reg; under-18s/concessions €20; supp €10; accompanied under-12s free. Contact: Apt 56 Shalimar, Monastery Rd, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

6-9 Apr 2012 • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Heathrow, London. £55 reg, £45 unwaged, rising on 1 September to £65 and £55. £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012.org.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £60 reg, rising to £65 on 1 September 2011; unwaged etc £20 less; £75 at door. £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2015*. An Orlando, Florida bid has emerged to challenge the existing bid for Spokane: see orlandoin2015.org.

Infinitely Improbable

News Headline. *Telegraph*, 29 July: 'Harry Potter dwarf spared jail over juggler's hat sex act'. As usual the story (an everyday saga of, ahem, dwarf-tossing) fails to match up to the headline's promise.

Publishers and Sinners. Pan Macmillan is encouraging sf artists! From the promotional email: 'I wanted to flag up the Peter F. Hamilton artwork competition we are running in conjunction with *SFX* magazine. Two lucky winners will see their jacket designs adorn special eBook editions of two stories from the collection.' What rich rewards await the successful creators? From the T&C: 'There are two prizes, the prizes consist of each winner having their artwork used by Pan Macmillan on the eBook format of a short story by Peter F. Hamilton [...] There is no fee, royalty or cash prize attached to this competition.' Because this is austerity Britain and we mustn't encourage talent too much. [DVB]

As Others See Us. On *Another Earth*: 'Mike Cahill's directorial feature-film debut sounds like a science-fiction movie, but it's not. Yes, it features the appearance in the sky of an Earth identical to our own, one populated by doppelgangers [...] And yes, the dialogue sometimes bandies about concepts like synchronicity (sometimes annoyingly so). / But more than anything, the metaphysics function as a metaphor ...' Which is of course unknown in sf. (*Globe & Mail*, 29 July) [AIP]

Awards. *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*. • *Mythopoeic* (fantasy) ADULT Karen Lord, *Redemption in Indigo*. CHILDREN'S Megan Whalen Turner, 'Queen's Thief' series. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Michael Ward, *Planet Narnia*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Caroline Sumpter, *The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale*. • *Prometheus* (libertarian): Sarah Hoyt, *Darkship Thieves*. Prometheus Hall of Fame: George Orwell, *Animal Farm*. • *Rhysling* (poetry): LONG C.S.E. Cooney, 'The Sea King's Second Bride' (*Goblin Fruit* Spring 2010). SHORT Amal El-Mohtar, 'Peach-Creamed Honey' (*The Honey Month*, 2010)—initially announced in third place, after which the winner and runner-up were found to be ineligible (published 2009). • *Sturgeon* (short story): Geoffrey A. Landis, 'The Sultan of the Clouds' (*Asimov's* 9/10). • *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery* (unsung sf/fantasy authors): Katherine MacLean.

Role Model. A rare sf moment in the UK phone-hacking scandal: James Murdoch 'used to have a life-sized cardboard cut out of Darth Vader outside his office'. As one does. (*Independent*, 11 July) [MPJ]

Memories of the Space Age. 'Email from someone who worked on the Shuttle Trajectory Server for Atlantis: "[Navigation Co-worker]

shut down the Traj Server for the final time this morning. I'm told that before doing so he added to the messages the final words of Hal 9000, and then 'Will I dream?' Someone took video of this, and if they get it up to YouTube I'll let you know." (Jonathan Clements, 21 July)

R.I.P. *Hans Joachim Alpers* (1943-2011), German sf author (sometimes as Jurgen Andreas), editor, critic, anthologist, publisher and literary agent, died on 16 February; he was 67. He co-edited the major reference work *Lexicon der Science Fiction Literatur* (1980). [GVG] • *Toyo'o Ashida* (1944-2011), Japanese animator who founded Studio Live in 1976 and presided over the 152-episode sf/martial arts anime series *Fist of the North Star*, died on 23 July. [JC] • *Linda Christian* (1923-2011), US actress who appeared with Johnny Weissmuller in *Tarzan and the Mermaids* (1948) and was the first 'Bond girl' (*Casino Royale*, 1954 tv), died on 22 July aged 87. [MPJ] • *Robert Ettinger* (1918-2011), US cryonics advocate and founder of the Cryonics Institute, who also published some stories (starting 1948) and articles in the sf magazines, died on 23 July and was of course frozen. He was 92. [PDF] • *Sakyo Komatsu* (1931-2011), leading Japanese sf author best known in the West for his influential disaster novel *Japan Sinks* (*Nippon Chinbotsu*, 1973; trans 1976) but also hugely prolific in untranslated works, died on 26 July; he was 80. [JC] He was a guest of honour at the 2007 Japanese Worldcon. • *Anna Massey* (1937-2011), UK actress whose genre credits include *The Vault of Horror* (1973), *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* (1992-1993 tv) and *The Return of the Psammead* (1993 tv), died on 3 July aged 73. [AW] • *Philip Rahman* (1952-2011), co-founder of the World Fantasy Award-winning US weird fiction publisher Fedogan & Bremer, died on 23 July aged 59. [L] • *Theodore Roszak* (1933-2011), US historian and cultural critic who began publishing sf with *Bugs* (1981), gained a cult following for *Flicker* (1991) and shared the Tiptree Award for *The Memoirs of Elizabeth Frankenstein* (1995), died on 5 July; he was 77. • *Googie Withers* (1917-2011), UK-born actress best remembered for Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes* but with a few horror and fantasy credits like *Dead of Night* (1945) and *Miranda* (1948), died on 15 July aged 94. [AW] • *Martin Woodhouse* (1932-2011), UK author of scripts for Gerry Anderson's *Supercar* (1961-1962, with his brother Hugh) and other tv sf including *The Avengers*, died on 15 May aged 78. He also wrote five techno-thrillers full of sf gadgetry, beginning with *Tree Frog* (1966). [CMJ]

As Others See Us II. Laurie Penny struggles to find something sinister in the crowds queueing for *Harry Potter 7* part 2: 'Many of the fans have drawn wobbly spectacles and lightning scars onto their faces as they shout in chorus, and I am reminded of Christopher Hitchens' observation that the lightning bolt on the forehead was also the symbol of Oswald Mosley's fascists. Fanaticism, however twee, is always disturbing.' And of course a cigar is never just a cigar. 'There is something clumsily Freudian in the way these young women are clutching their plastic and wooden wands ...' (*Independent*, 13 July) [MPJ]

World Fantasy Award Shortlist. NOVEL Lauren Beukes, *Zoo City*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms*; Graham Joyce, *The Silent Land*; Guy Gavriel Kay, *Under Heaven*; Karen Lord, *Redemption In Indigo*; Nnedi Okorafor, *Who Fears Death*. • NOVELLA Elizabeth Bear, *Bone and Jewel Creatures*; Michael Byers, *The Broken Man*; Elizabeth Hand, 'The Maiden Flight of McCauley's Bellerophon' (*Stories*); Tim Lebbon, *The Thief of Broken Toys*; George R.R. Martin, 'The Mystery Knight' (*Warriors*); Rachel Swirsky, 'The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen's Window' (*Subterranean Summer* 2010). • SHORT Christopher Fowler, 'Beautiful Men' (*Visitants*); Karen Joy Fowler, 'Booth's Ghost' (*What I Didn't See*); Kij Johnson, 'Ponies' (*Tor.com* 11/10); Joyce Carol Oates, 'Fossil-Figures' (*Stories*); Mercurio D. Rivera, 'Tu Sufrimiento Shall Protect Us' (*Black Static* 8/10). • ANTHOLOGY John Joseph Adams, ed., *The Way of the Wizard*; Kate Bernheimer, ed., *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me*; Ellen Datlow & Nick Mamatas, eds., *Haunted Legends*; Neil Gaiman & Al Sarrantonio, eds., *Stories*; S.T. Joshi, ed., *Black Wings*; Jonathan Strahan & Lou Anders, eds., *Swords & Dark Magic*. • COLLECTION Karen Joy Fowler, *What I Didn't See*; Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Ammonite Violin*; M. Rickert, *Holiday*; Angela Slatter, *Sourdough*; Jeff VanderMeer, *The Third Bear*. • ARTIST Vincent Chong, Kinuko Y. Craft, Richard A. Kirk, John Picacio, Shaun Tan. SPECIAL, PROFESSIONAL John Joseph Adams, editing and anthologies; Lou Anders, editing at Pyr; Marc Gascoigne, *Angry Robot*; Stéphane Marsan & Alain Névant, *Bragelonne*; Brett Alexander Savory & Sandra Kasturi, *ChiZine Publications*. • SPECIAL, NON-PROFESSIONAL Stephen Jones, Michael Marshall Smith & Amanda Foubister, *Brighton Shock!*; Alisa Krasnostein, *Twelfth Planet Press*; Matthew Kressel, *Sybil's Garage* and *Senses Five Press*; Charles Tan,

Bibliophile Stalker; Lavie Tidhar, *World SF Blog*. • LIFE ACHIEVEMENT winners: Peter S. Beagle, Angélica Gorodischer.

Outraged Letters. *Harry Bell* on how Radio 4 comedy sees us: 'On tonight's *Another Case of Milton Jones*: "Do you think some aliens who have difficulty forming natural relationships go to conventions where they all dress up as humans?" Maybe you had to be there.' (21 July)

Court Circular. George Lucas's lengthy lawsuit against Andrew Ainsworth, designer of the *Star Wars* stormtrooper armour, was finally defeated in the UK Supreme Court this July despite letters of support in which Steven Spielberg, Peter Jackson, James Cameron and Jon Landau tried to influence justice in Lucas's favour. The upheld decision is that Ainsworth's designs were indeed just props—copyright-protected for only 15 years, making it legal since 1992 for him to sell replicas—rather than artistic creations. Also controversial in some quarters was the court's observation that 'The *Star Wars* films are set in an imaginary, science-fiction world of the future ...' (*The Register*, 27 July) [DKMK] • Marvel Comics won its case against Jack Kirby's family, who claimed to own the copyright on 1958-1963 comics work created by Kirby despite the latter's own admission and signed agreement that it was done on the usual work-for-hire basis. The Kirby estate plans to appeal. [MPJ]

The Sonic Screwdriver of Inescapability. An 'alternative census' poll claims the typical British family watches tv for 9 hours daily, with their favourite show being *Doctor Who*. (*Guardian*, 11 July) [MPJ]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*: 'NEW BRUM BOOKSHOP: Rog Peyton has formed the Andromeda Book Co. and has opened a shop at [...] Reddall Hill Rd, Old Hill, Warley, Worcs. which will be open on Saturdays only from August 7th.' (*Checkpoint* 7, August 1971)

Random Fandom. *Fancyclopedia 3*: this fan project has been revived by Mark Olson and Joe Siclari and is now at the easier-to-update wiki site fancyclopedia.wikidot.com. Knowledgeable volunteer editors are needed. • *First Fandom Hall of Fame* nominees: Jay Kay Klein, Ray Bradbury, Keith Stokes and (posthumous) Oliver Saari. [F770] • *Steve Green* (Nova administrator) momentarily reveals: 'Moves are under way to open voting in the annual Nova Awards up to all fans resident in Britain and Eire, not just those who are members of Novacon. A formal announcement will be made shortly.' • *Matrix* (1975-2011): the death of the long-running British SF Association newsletter (née *BSFA Newsletter*, 1975-1976) was announced by its current editor Ian Whates in *Vector* 267 and a 23 July BSFA website editorial. He blamed general contributor apathy (much increased since the 2007 shift from print to web publication) and competition from rival sf news sites.

As Others Saw Us. 'In her 1969 essay "The Pornographic Imagination," [Susan] Sontag insisted that *Story of O* could be correctly defined as "authentic" literature. She compared the ratio of first-rate pornography to trashy books within the genre to "another somewhat shady subgenre with a few first-rate books to its credit, science fiction." She also maintained that like science fiction, pornography was aimed at "disorientation, at psychic dislocation."' (*Guernica*, June 2011) [BH]

Glittering Prizes. *James White Award*: the current competition is open to short story submissions from new writers until 31 January 2012. Further details from administrator at jameswhiteaward.com. No entry fee. • *Aeon Award*: 2011 submissions are open to 30 November. €1000 first prize; other prizes; €7 entry fee. Send to 8 Bachelor's Walk, Dublin 1, Ireland. See rules at www.albedo1.com/aeon_award.html.

Thog's Masterclass. *Subtle Clues Dept.* 'Inside lay a gleaming sapphire and in its center rested a spider! "This is it!" Nancy whispered excitedly. "The gem's not synthetic! See, the spider has no spinnerets!"' (Carolyn Keene, *The Spider Sapphire Mystery*, 1968. Our researcher explains: 'This is a Nancy Drew novel, and the stolen sapphire was formed around an actual, primitive, and presumably extremely durable spider.')

[PL] • *Dept of Art Appreciation.* 'The magic of this piece of Tom Gainsborough's art never failed to have a profound effect on Professor Moriarty. He often thought that had his brain been equipped with taste buds, it would have been as though his mind had bitten into the most refreshing, deliciously ripe fruit, flooding his brain with juices that brought together all the great, exotic tastes—more than could ever be experienced in a lifetime.' (John Gardner, *Moriarty*, 2008) [BA] • *Amphiboly Dept.* 'Walking the street, Jones slipped on a pair of dark sunglasses.' (Jeffrey Thomas, 'Immolation', in *Punktown*, 2000) [GM]

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