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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 origami model of Buckingham Palace.

Stop Me and Buy One. The latest Ansible Editions release, *New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek*, has been finalized at 98,000 words – a 255pp trade paperback now available from Lulu. I will be at Ytterbium with copies at a special convention price of £15 (please let me know if you'll be there and want one reserved for you; it would be useful to have some idea of Eastercon demand). See ae.ansible.uk/?t=newmaps for the contents and Lulu order link. Ebook editions will follow after Easter.

The Lost Nose

David Gerrold and ComicMix scored a success in the court action by Dr. Seuss Enterprises to halt their Kickstarter-funded mashup of *Star Trek* and Seuss in *Oh, The Places You'll Boldly Go!* – which a Federal judge decided was 'highly transformative' rather than plagiaristic, and a legitimate fair use of the right 'to build freely upon the ideas and information conveyed by a work.' (*File 770*, 12 March) DSE disagrees, and with much twirling of moustachios announced that 'defendants developed their book in bad faith' and that DSE was considering such dread options as 'an immediate appeal to the Ninth Circuit'. Onward....

James Gunn, spectacularly fired by Disney last July after long-ago (and certainly ill-judged) social media messages were publicized by Fox News and other right-wing news outlets 'as payback for Gunn being a vocal critic of President Donald Trump', has been reinstated as writer/director of *Guardians of the Galaxy 3*. (*Deadline*, 15 March) James Gunn should not of course be confused with long-time sf author James Gunn.

Philip Pullman has won the 2019 J.M. Barrie award, given by the charity Action for Children's Arts to reward a 'lifetime's achievement in delighting children'. (*Guardian*, 21 March)

Francis Spufford wandered into the sunlit uplands of fan fiction by writing an unauthorized Narnia novel titled *The Stone Table* (sliding into the continuity between *The Magician's Nephew* – whose lead characters Polly and Digory here revisit Narnia – and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*). Having asked the C.S. Lewis estate about the possibility of publication and had no reply, Spufford printed 75 copies for friends including Adam Roberts, who calls it 'superb'. (*Guardian*, 19 March) Don't worry, readers, the series drops out of copyright in 2034!

Jodie Whittaker is to receive the Freedom of the City of London, entitling her by ancient tradition to drive Daleks across London Bridge and be pursued by low-budget monsters through cobwebbed Underground tunnels whenever she so desires. [DWN]

Conplane

5-7 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), Ambassadors Bloomsbury Hotel, London. AGM for members only; dinner with GoH speech £36. Details at www.tolkienociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2019/.

6-7 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult ticket including booking fees: £28. £15/day; students and under-17s £5 day; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

12-13 Apr • **Corroding the Now: Poetry + Science|SF** (conference), Egham, Surrey. Details at corrodingthenow.com.

13 Apr • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), University Theatre, Bedford, MK41 9EA. 10am-5:30pm. Tickets £42.50; under-18s, students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

18-21 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

19-22 Apr • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. Now £90 reg; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; infants under 5 free; £20 supporting. See <http://ytterbium.org.uk/>.

24 Apr • **Philip K. Dick**: talk by Roger Luckhurst, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets £12: further details can be found at acuriousinvitation.com/philipkdick_century.html.

8 May • **FutureFest Lates** (evening talks): Jim Al-Khalili on sf and prediction, 6:15pm at The Vaults, Waterloo, London. £12 (students £9) 'early bird' rates until 15 April. See www.futurefest.org/lates. The next full-scale FutureFest will be held in London in March 2020.

11-12 May • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre,

Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. Tickets £40 for 11am entry, £50 for 10am; accompanied under-17s £16. Bookings at horrorconuk.com.

1-2 Jun • **Film & Comic Con Collectormania**, Birmingham NEC. £10/day; £15 early entry. See filmandcomicconbirmingham.com.

20 Jul • **Avon Valley Railway SF Day**, Bitton Station, 3 Bath Rd, Bristol, BS30 6HD. £8.50; over-60s £7.50; under-15s £6.50; under-5s free. See www.avonvalleyrailway.org/events/sci-fi-fun/.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. Now €235 reg; under-26s and Irish First Worldcon €150; under-13s €70; under-6s €5; supp €40. Hugo Awards nominations closed on 15 March.

22-25 Aug • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and Hilton Hotel, Belfast. GoH George R.R. Martin. £65 reg; 16-25s £40; 6-15s £25; no more supporting memberships. See titancon.com/2019/.

31 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am ('early bird') or 10:30 to 5pm. See www.wonkyrocketevents.co.uk/preston/.

18-20 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Clydebank, Glasgow. £65 reg; £60 concessions; under-18s £30; all plus booking fees. See www.fantasycon.org. The 2020 venue is Sheffield.

19 Oct • **Gamesfest** (gaming), Victoria Hall, Tring. From 10am. Ticket prices and further information awaited at www.gamesfest.co.uk.

24-27 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. £90; £80 concessions. See celluloidscreams.co.uk.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. Now £39 reg and £25 unwaged, rising again on 1 December; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contable.org.uk/demisemiqvaer/.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. Ticket prices awaited at scifiball.com, whose lapsed security certificate makes web browsers reluctant to visit this site. Just saying.

28-31 Aug 2020 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £55 reg rising to £65 on 1 May; concessions £20 less; under-18s £25; under-3s free; supp £15. See redemptioncon.org.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. 'The nerds have taken over Hollywood, America and the world. It wasn't just superheroes either. Zombies, androids, vampires, wizards, aliens, werewolves, intergalactic sagas, Lego, H.P. Lovecraft, Tolkien, board games based on TV shows – though these things were never unpopular *per se*, they always belonged to children, or to people at the lonelier fringes of the culture. Now they are the culture. President Obama praised the trend: / 'I think America's a nerdier country than it used to be when I was a kid – and that's a good thing!' / Obama, with typical glibness, had forgotten a crucial general point about nerds: they are not happy people. There were good reasons why there was a stigma around being a nerd; those who loved stories about dragons and superheroes into adulthood tended to be nebbish, poorly-tailored and sexually inadequate. They needed to escape into fantasy worlds because the real world was brutal, cruel and completely uninterested in playing tabletop wargames.' (Will Lloyd, 'How nerds smothered American culture' in *Spectator USA*, 7 March) [SC]

Awards. *Carnegie Medal* shortlisted titles of genre interest: *The Poet X*, Elizabeth Acevedo; *The House with Chicken Legs*, Sophie Anderson; *A Skinful of Shadows*, Frances Hardinge; *The Land of Neverendings*, Kate Saunders. [L] • *HWA Specialty Press Award*: Raw Dog Screaming Press. • *Kitschies* novel shortlists: *Circe*, Madeline Miller; *Record of a Spaceborn Few*, Becky Chambers; *Rosewater*, Tade Thompson; *The Smoke*, Simon Ings; *Unholy Land*, Lavie Tidhar. DEBUT *Children of Blood and Bone*, Tomi Adeyemi; *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, Ahmed Saadawi; *Semiosis*, Sue Burke; *Sweet Fruit*, *Sour Land*, Rebecca Ley; *The Poppy War*, R.F. Kuang. • *Tiptree Award*: Gabriela Damián Miravete, "They Will Dream in the Garden" translated by Adrian Demopolos (*Latin American Literature Today*, May 2018). [PM]

As Others Date Us. A profile of the architect: '[Sir Nicholas] Grimshaw is probably best known for The Eden Project, a froth of bubbly domes across an abandoned quarry in Cornwall. Even in its name there is a hint of a 1970s utopian sci-fi.' (*Financial Times*, 23 February) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Leslie Sternbergh Alexander*, US comics artist whose work appeared in *Mad*, *Twilight Zone Magazine* and the film *Alien Space Avenger* (1989, in which she also acted), died on 27 March. [PDF] ● *Janet Jeppson Asimov* (1926-2019), US author of both adult and children's sf novels – the latter including the Norby series opening with *Norby, the Mixed-Up Robot* (1983), written with her husband Isaac Asimov – died on 25 February aged 92. [BNM] ● *Ken Bald* (1920-2019), US comics artist since the 1940s who worked for Fawcett (*Captain Marvel*, *Bulletman*), Street & Smith (*Mandrake the Magician*, *Doc Savage*), Timely/Marvel (*Captain America*, *The Human Torch*, *Namor the Sub-Mariner* etc) and newspaper syndication (*Dark Shadows* 1971-1972 as 'K. Bruce'), died on 17 March aged 98. [PDF] ● *Charles Black*, UK horror author, editor and publisher whose *Black Book of Horror* anthologies ran to 11 volumes 2007-2015, died on 15 March. [PDF] ● *John Boni* (1937-2019), US comedian, writer and producer whose genre credits include *Space Force* (1978) and *Out of This World* (1987-1988), died on 9 March aged 81. [PDF] ● *John Carl Buechler* (1952-2019), US director and special effects artist whose many genre films include *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4* (1978), *Ghoulies* (1984), *Troll* (1986), *Friday the 13th VII* (1988) and *Bride of Re-Animator* (1989), died on 18 March aged 66. [PDF] ● *François Camoin* (1939-2019), French-born US writer of mostly non-fantastic short fiction who appeared in *Omni* and *Twilight Zone Magazine*, died on 18 March aged 79. [PDF] ● *Larry Cohen* (1941-2019), US producer, director and screenwriter who created the series *The Invaders* (1967-1968) and whose films include *It's Alive* (1974), *God Told Me To* (1976), *The Stuff* (1985) and *Q* (1982), died on 24 March aged 77. [PDF] ● *Allan Cole* (1943-2019), US tv screenwriter and author whose works include the Sten sf series and Anteros fantasies (both initially written with Chris Bunch), died on 30 March aged 75. [PDF] ● *Lawrence G. DiTillio*, US tv writer – credits include *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (1983-1985) and *Transformers: Beast Wars* (1996-1999) – and story editor for *Babylon 5* (44 episodes 1994-1995) died on 16 March aged 79. [F770] ● *Richard Erdman* (1925-2019), US actor who guested in *The Twilight Zone* and many other sf series, plus films including *The Brass Bottle* (1964) and *Trancers* (1984), and voice work in *Further Adventures of SuperTed* (1989) etc, died on 16 March aged 93. [LP/MMW] ● *Gillian Freeman* (1929-2019), UK author perhaps best known for her nonfiction pornography study *The Undergrowth of Literature* (1967), died on 23 February aged 89; her sf novel is the near-future *The Leader* (1965), about fascism in England. [DP] ● *Katherine Helmond* (1929-2019), US actress whose films include *Time Bandits* (1981), *Brazil* (1985) and *Cars* (voice, 2006; also sequels and spinoffs), died on 23 February aged 89. [S] ● *Norman Hollyn* (1952-2019), Hollywood film editor who as Norm Hochberg was prominent in 1970s New York fandom with the fanzines *Xrymph* (with Lou Stathis) and *Big Mac*, died on 17 March. [MG] ● *Rachel Ingalls* (1940-2019), US-born author long resident in the UK whose fantasies include many short stories and her best-known novel *Mrs Caliban* (1982), died on 6 March aged 78. [RR] ● *Frank Johnson* (1954-2019), US fan and con-goer whose first fanzine was the co-edited *Advocates of the Infinite* (1968), died on 19 March. [JZ] ● *Hugh Lamb* (1946-2019), UK editor of many anthologies of vintage horror and supernatural stories, from *A Tide of Terror* (1971) to *Gaslit Horror* (2008), died on 2 March aged 73. [KN via TM] ● *Steve Ogden*, US fan, comics researcher and long-time FAPA member whose publications included *Ouroboros*, *Metaphysical Pornographic Funnies* and a huge checklist of Brad W. Foster's artwork, died on 1 March. [RB via PDF] ● *David Palladini*, US illustrator of books by Jane Yolen, Stephen King and others, who also created two covers for *F&SF*, died on 13 March. [JY] ● *Luke Perry* (1966-2019), US actor whose films include *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992), *The Fifth Element* (1997), *Supernova* (2005) and *Dudes & Dragons* (2015), died on 4 March aged 52. He had voice roles in *The Incredible Hulk* (1996-1997) and other animated series. [MR] ● *Joseph Pilato* (1949-2019), US actor in *Dawn of the Dead* (1978), *Day of the Dead* (1985), *Alienator* (1990), *Empire of the Dark* (1990) and others, died on 24 March aged 70. [PDF] ● *Ace G. Pilkington* (1951-2019), US academic and sf poet/scholar whose books include *The Fantastic Made Visible: Essays on the Adaptation of Science Fiction and Fantasy from Page to Screen* (2015) with Matthew Wilhelm Kapell, died on 20 February aged 67. [A] ● *Wilum H. Pugmire* (1951-2019), US author of much highly regarded Lovecraftian fiction since 1973 – a major retrospective collection being *The Tangled Muse* (2010) – died on 26 March aged 67. [SG] ● *Mike Raub*, US comics fan, publisher, shop owner and later broadcaster at ComicMix, died on 19 March aged 68. [PDF] ● *Shane Rimmer* (1929-2019), Canadian actor who voiced Scott Tracy in *Thunderbirds* (1965-1966 and spinoffs to 2015), died on 29 March aged 89. [FM] His many more genre credits include *Dr Strangelove* (1964),

Rollerball (1975), *Warlords of the Deep* (1978), *Superman II* (1980) and *Batman Begins* (2005). ● *James Rochelle*, US comics colorist since 1994, who worked at WildStorm, at CrossGen and as a freelance, died on 2 February aged 48. [PDF] ● *Sid Sheinberg* (1935-2019), Universal Studios executive who 'discovered' Steven Spielberg and worked behind the scenes on *E.T.* (1982) and others, died on 7 March aged 84. [AIP] His producer credits include *The Devil's Tomb* (2009) and *Creature* (2011). ● *Fuyumi Shiraishi* (1941-2019), Chinese-born voice actress best known outside Japan for the anime *Mobile Suit Gundam* (1979), died on 28 March aged 77. [PDF] ● *Jeff C. Stevenson*, US author of short horror fiction and the supernatural novel *The Children of Hydesville* (2018), reportedly died in March. [PDF] ● *Ellen Vartanoff* (1951-2019), US fan – Scott Edelman's sister-in-law – and long-time attendee of sf and comics conventions, died on 17 March aged 67. [SE] ● *Jan-Michael Vincent* (1944-2019), US actor in *Damnation Alley* (1977), *Xtro II: The Second Encounter* (1990), *Abducted II: The Reunion* (1995) and *Jurassic Women* (1996), died on 10 February aged 74.

Censored. The RPG publisher Sons of the Singularity thriftily had its *Call of Cthulhu/Trail of Cthulhu* sourcebook *The Sassoon Files* printed in China. On 20 March all copies were burnt by order of the Chinese government, the Lovecraftian content apparently being 'problematic'. At least the printer returned the deposit.... (BoingBoing, 25 March)

Random Fandom. *Francis T. Laney's* infamous 1948 fan memoir and polemic *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!* is the latest addition to the free ebooks list at the TAFF site: see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=ASI for details and other material included. ● *Joe Siclari* had heart bypass surgery at the end of February; despite multiple complications in the following weeks he is now recovering well at home. [ES] ● *The Doc Weir Award* for unsung contributions to fandom will be voted at the Eastercon as usual; a collection of past winners' biographies is in preparation, for Easter release and to be hosted at efanzines.com with a downloadable PDF option. ● *Jon Langford* arrived here in Reading on 29 March for a pub breakfast with a crowded tour to follow: www.facebook.com/pg/mekons/events/.

By Crom! The David Gemmell Awards for heroic fantasy, first presented in 2009 for best novel only and continuing with additional categories 2010-2018, have ceased 'with immediate effect' owing to a shortage of volunteers to do the needed work. Sad news; a decision not taken lightly, says awards chair Stan Nicholls. (Press release, 29 March)

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago:* 'Thrilling WONDER Stories is now making plans to sue WONDER COMICS, because of the name WONDER being used. To every reader of Thrilling WONDER Stories, the magazine is, to them, just plain WONDER and it is quite confusing to ask for WONDER and being handed WONDER COMICS. We predict that Thrilling WONDER Stories will win the case without a bit of trouble. WONDER COMICS is also being sued by ACTION COMICS because of the lead cartoon WONDER MAN, which is a direct copy of the cartoon THE SUPER MAN than ran in ACTION COMICS.' (*Fantasy News* 43, April 1939) ● *20 Years Ago:* 'Josh Kirby, interrogated about certain 1960s cover paintings credited to "Ron Kirby", broke down and confessed to having been born Ronald William Kirby. Whence the nickname? "When I was at Art School, some wag thought I painted like Sir Joshua Reynolds!"' (*Ansible* 141, April 1999)

Fanfunder. *TAFF and GUFF 2019* final reminder: voting in both races continues to 22 April 2019, to allow final campaigning and voting at Eastercon and other Easter events. See taff.org.uk for the TAFF ballot, online voting form and the new *TAFF Redux 2* in which the candidates are interviewed; and for GUFF see ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=127.

Thog's Masterclass. *The Future of Swearing.* "Great bouncing Alean eyeballs!" said Andrek softly.' (Charles Harness, *The Ring of Ritornel*, 1968). ● *Inflammability Dept.* "That would be fatal – with such a man," said Lenoir, hurriedly. "As fatal as tossing a naked flame into a container of helium, Robert! ..." (Brian Shaw [Brian Holloway], *Lost World*, 1953) [BA] ● *Searching Within a Solar System.* "... heading on into the blue and still with no sign of any astral body within a kilo-parsec ..." (*Ibid*) [BA] ● *Radiophonic Workshop Dept.* "There were noises: glutinous, coagulant, semi-liquid sounds like vexatious geese being drowned in a slow torrent of treacle.' ... 'Perhaps twenty individual voices predominated over the general babble, and these prime spokesmen rippled across the audible spectrum in a hideously broken yodel, as though their voices were modulated by large bubbles rising through a silo of molasses.' (both Colin Kapp, *The Patterns of Chaos*, 1972)

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