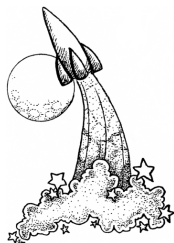


# ansible



## Ansible® 382 May 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website [news.ansible.uk](http://news.ansible.uk). ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Sue Mason**. Available for SAE, stygian haunts or the surly beard of Mrifk.

**Ytterbium.** You read it here last: the 2019 Eastercon has happened! • *The UK in 2024 Worldcon Bid*, chaired by Esther MacCallum-Stewart, announced its venue: the Scottish Event Campus (SEC), Glasgow. Pre-supporting memberships will be taken at Dublin 2019 and thereafter. See [www.ukin2024.org](http://www.ukin2024.org). • *Concentric*, the only serious bid for Eastercon 2020, was confirmed and guests announced: see events list below. • **David A. Hardy** was made an honorary fellow of the British Interplanetary Society (presentation by Gerry Webb) for long service to space art. • *Doc Weir Award* for unsung fannish achievement: **Jamie Scott**. • *Your Editor* was glad to see people but too often unable to hear them. Thanks to all who bought *New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek*, and to the con newsletter *The Daily Drone* for plugs. See [ae.ansible.uk](http://ae.ansible.uk) for paperback and (just released) ebook orders. • **John Clute** broke his femur on the Friday – a misstep on a bus while loaded with books – and attended only in spirit via an emailed x-ray image; he's now recovering at home.

### The Norgolian Empire

**Jean M. Auel** must be less than pleased with Amazon after its email telling a customer that her novel *The Shelters of Stone* had been removed from the catalogue: 'This product has been identified as a Rhino male enhancement supplement. Rhino male enhancement supplements are prohibited for listing or sale by Amazon policy.' [BA] It's back now.

**Michael Davis**, US comics creator, is not dead despite an online announcement of his suicide on 29 April: the perpetrator had hacked Davis's Facebook and other accounts. (Bleeding Cool, 29 April) [MR]

**N.K. Jemisin's** Patreon supporters were privileged to read the somehow familiar opening of her alleged next novel: 'The weather beaten trail wound ahead into the dust racked climes of the baren land which dominates large portions of the Norgolian empire ...' (1 April) [DG]

**Ian McEwan**, according to a *Guardian* interview by Tim Adams, 'has little time for conventional science fiction' but nevertheless knows what sf authors have unaccountably failed to do with AI. In his own words: 'There could be an opening of a mental space for novelists to explore this future, not in terms of travelling at 10 times the speed of light in anti-gravity boots, but in actually looking at the human dilemmas of being close up to something that you know to be artificial but which thinks like you. If a machine seems like a human or you can't tell the difference, then you'd jolly well better start thinking about whether it has responsibilities and rights and all the rest.' Later, on *Frankenstein*: 'There the monster is a metaphor for science out of control, but it is ourselves out of control that I am interested in.' (*Guardian*, 14 April) [E]

**Ken MacLeod** tweeted: 'I have little time for romance fiction, but there could be an opening of a mental space for novelists to explore a situation where two people are attracted to each other but seem deeply incompatible, and the vicissitudes of how this is resolved.' (16 April)

**J.R.R. Tolkien**, in July 1961, sent a letter to young Chris Gilmore (not the late *Interzone* reviewer) which recently sold at auction for over £6,000 in aid of a Somerset hospital. I hope it's safe to quote a bit here: 'I shall not write a sequel to *The Lord of the Rings* because, as is really clearly stated in the course of the story, it is the end of the kind of world about which I write: the twilight in which mythology and history are blended. After that there is only history.' (SomersetLive, 2 April) [PF]

### Condon

Until 15 Sep • **Stanley Kubrick** (exhibition), Design Museum, Kensington, London W8. Tickets £14.50 (£16 with suggested donation); more at [designmuseum.org/exhibitions/stanley-kubrick-the-exhibition](http://designmuseum.org/exhibitions/stanley-kubrick-the-exhibition).

8 May • **FutureFest Lates** (evening talks): Jim Al-Khalili on sf and prediction, 6:30pm at The Vaults, Waterloo, London. Now £15 (students £9): 'early bird' rates ceased in April. See [www.futurefest.org/lates](http://www.futurefest.org/lates).

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](http://horrorconuk.com).

15 May • **Anthony Burgess & A Clockwork Orange**: talk by Andrew Biswell, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. £12: see [acurioussinvitation.com/burgessandaclockworkorange.html](http://acurioussinvitation.com/burgessandaclockworkorange.html).

15-22 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), Prince Charles Cinema and Stratford Picturehouse, London. Further details at [sci-fi-london.com](http://sci-fi-london.com).

16 May - 26 Aug • **AI: More Than Human** (exhibition), Barbican Centre, London. Tickets £15 Monday to Friday, £17 Saturday or Sunday (plus fees). See [www.barbican.org.uk/morethanhuman](http://www.barbican.org.uk/morethanhuman).

18 May • **Lawless** (UK comics – expanded from the *Judge Dredd*-only LawGiver), Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. For ticket purchases see [www.facebook.com/groups/1417073338554565/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/1417073338554565/).

23 May - 26 Aug • **Manga** (exhibition), British Museum, London. Tickets £19.50; under-19s and concessions £16; accompanied under-16s free. See [britishmuseum.org/whats\\_on/exhibitions/manga.aspx](http://britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/manga.aspx).

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

7-9 Jun • **Cymera**: Scotland's Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. From £6.25 per event: [www.cymerafestival.co.uk](http://www.cymerafestival.co.uk).

17 Jul • **Arthur C. Clarke Award** presentation, Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London. Tickets booking link awaited.

23-26 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £40 reg; £21 junior (5-16). For day tickets etc. see [www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk](http://www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk).

3-6 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Manchester Great Northern cinema. Ticket prices awaited at [grimmfest.com](http://grimmfest.com).

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. £25 reg, rising on 1 June; £15 under-18s, concessions and disabled; under-15s free. Full details at [www.bristolcon.org](http://www.bristolcon.org).

10-13 Apr 2020 • **Concentric** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole near Birmingham NEC. GoH Rhianna Pratchett, Tade Thompson, Alison Scott. £70 reg; concessions £40; under-18s £20. See [www.concentric2020.uk](http://www.concentric2020.uk).

16-19 Apr 2020 • **StokerCon** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. Editor GoH Gillian Redfearn. £100 reg; HWA members £90. Further details and online registration at [stokercon-uk.com](http://stokercon-uk.com).

28-31 Aug 2020 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. Now £65 reg until May 2020; concessions £20 reduction; under-18s £25; under-3s free; supp £15. See [redemptioncon.org.uk](http://redemptioncon.org.uk).

**Rumblings.** *Eurocon*: 2021 bids are from Italy ([eurocon2021.it](http://eurocon2021.it)) and Romania ([distopicon.eu](http://distopicon.eu)); 2023, Sweden ([twitter.com/Uppsala2023](https://twitter.com/Uppsala2023)); 2024, the Netherlands ([eurocon2024.ncsf.nl](http://eurocon2024.ncsf.nl)).

### Infinitely Improbable

**As Others See Us.** 'Venturing into outer space, Claire Denis's film has very different concerns from other sci-fi movies.' is the subhead of a *High Life* review that wonders whether interstellar flight is sf: 'Whether or not this movie counts as science fiction, one thing's for sure: the fiction is more plausible than the science. The ship, we learn, whips along at close to the speed of light, although it appears to have been modelled on a large shoebox.' (Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*, 5 April 2019) [LP] If only the budget could have run to fins and shiny streamlining. Claire Denis agrees this is not sf because 'a sci-fi movie, it's a sort of structure that creates other planets, other beings, things like that. I was more interested in what we know.' (*Washington Post*, 23 April) [MMW] Such as everyday life in a convict starship hurtling towards a black hole.

**Awards.** BSFA: NOVEL *Embers of War* by Gareth L Powell. SHORTER *Time Was* by Ian McDonald. NONFICTION 'On motherhood and erasure ...' by Alette de Bodard. ARTWORK Likhain for *In the Vanishers' Palace: Dragon I and II*. • *Compton Crook* (debut novel): *The Poppy War* by R.F. Kuang. [L] • *Faust Award* (media tie-in life achievement): Nancy Holder.

• *Kitschies*. NOVEL *Circe* by Madeline Miller. DEBUT *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi. COVER ART Suzanne Dean for Haruki Murakami's *Killing Commendatore*. [L] • *Philip K. Dick: Theory of Bastards* by Audrey Schulman. • *Pulitzer: The Overstory* by Richard Powers.

**Eldritch Science.** A many-tentacled ancestor of sea cucumbers found by palaeontologists at a Herefordshire site – 430 million years old, with a terrifying maximum size of 3cm – has been named *Sollasina chulhu*. ([Sputniknews.com](http://Sputniknews.com), 10 April) [SvdK] Take a bow, HPL.

**R.I.P.** **Mark Alessi** (1953-2019), US businessman who founded Cross-Gen Comics (1998-2004), died on 30 March aged 65. [PDF] • **Jonathan Baumbach** (1933-2019), US experimental novelist whose satire *D-Tours*

(1998) plays with many sf/fantasy tropes, died on 28 March aged 85. [PDF] ● *John Bowen* (1924-2019), Indian-born UK author and playwright whose best known sf novel is *After the Rain* (1958; stage version 1966), died on 18 April aged 94; tv credits include seven episodes of the dystopian *The Guardians* (1971). ● *James D. Hudnall* (1957-2019), US comics writer and novelist whose 1986 comics debut was *Espers* for Eclipse and whose *Harsh Realm* (1994 with Andrew Paquette) was adapted for tv – with no creator credit until after a lawsuit – died on 9 April aged 61. [PDF] ● *Edward Kelsey* (1930-2019), UK *Archers* actor whose genre credits include *Doctor Who*: ‘The Creature from the Pit’ (1979), *Danger Mouse* (1981-1992), *Truckers* (1992) and *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005), died on 23 April aged 88. [CM] ● *Kazuo Koike* (1936-2019), prolific and influential Japanese manga writer and novelist whose comics debut was *Lone Wolf and Cub* (1970-1976, with six film adaptations), died on 17 April aged 82. [PDF] ● *Michael Lynne* (1941-2019), US producer, co-chair and co-CEO of New Line Cinema and executive producer of the *Lord of the Rings* films (2001-2003), *The Golden Compass* (2007) and others, died on 24 March aged 77. [AIP] ● *Tania Mallet* (1941-2019), UK model and actress who was the ‘Bond girl’ in *Goldfinger* (1964), died on 30 March aged 77. [PDF] ● *John McEneary* (1943-2019), UK actor whose rare genre credits include *The Land That Time Forgot* (1974), died on 12 April aged 75. [PDF] ● *Tom McGovern*, US fan and long-time member of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, reportedly died on 21 or 22 April. [GL] ● *Vonda N. McIntyre* (1948-2019), highly regarded US author who won Nebula awards for ‘Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand’ (1973), for the novel *Dreamsnake* (1979) incorporating that story, and for *The Moon and the Sun* (1997), died on 1 April aged 70. Other stories are collected in *Fireflood* (1979); contributions to the *Star Trek* universe began with *The Entropy Effect* (1981) and include three film novelizations. A very recently completed novel awaits publication. ● ‘*Monkey Punch*’ (Kazuhiko Katō, 1937-2019), Japanese manga artist best known for the Bondian crime-romp series *Lupin III* (1967-1969), died on 11 April aged 81. He also illustrated superhero comics and the translation of Harry Harrison’s *The Technicolor Time Machine*. [JCI] ● *Mya-Lecia Naylor* (2002-2019), UK actress in *Cloud Atlas* (2012), *Code Red* (2013) and *Index Zero* (2014), died on 7 April aged 16. [MMW] ● *Berto Pelosso*, Italian screenwriter who was assistant director of *The 10th Victim* (1965), died on 6 April aged 85. [PDF] ● *David V. Picker* (1931-2019), US producer of *The Man with Two Brains* (1983) and *Back to the Secret Garden* (2000), died on 20 April aged 87. [MMW] ● *Nadja Regin* (1931-2019), Yugoslavian-born actress in *The Magic Sword* (1950), *The Man Without a Body* (1957), *Goldfinger* and others, died on 7 April aged 87. [PDF] ● *Moirra J. Shearman*, Edinburgh fan active since the late 1970s in fanzines (in particular TWP, the women’s APA) and at conventions, died on 17 April. Kari writes: ‘She was always interesting, friendly and welcoming: one of those rare people who everyone liked.’ ● *Ron Sweed* (1949-2019), US tv horror host as title character of *The Ghoul* (1998-2003), died on 1 April aged 70. [LP] ● *Greg Theakston* (1953-2019), US comics artist who worked for DC, Marvel, Warren, *Mad* and many others, founded the Pure Imagination imprint and gave his name to the ‘Theakstonizing’ process for restoring old comics, died on 22 April aged 65. [SG] ● *Geoff Thorpe* (1954-2019), UK fan, convention-goer and South Hants SF Group member, died in early April. [MC] ● *David Winters* (1939-2019), UK-born actor/director/producer whose genre films include *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1973), *Space Mutiny* (1988), *Deadly Reactor* (1989) and *Future Force* (1989), died on 23 April aged 80. [LP] ● *Gene Wolfe* (1931-2019), much-praised US author of many fine stories and novels – perhaps best known for *The Fifth Head of Cerberus* (1972) and *The Book of the New Sun* (1980-1983), whose second volume *The Claw of the Conciliator* won a Nebula – died on 14 April aged 87. Career honours include the World Fantasy Award for life achievement in 1996, the SF Hall of Fame in 2007 and the SFWA Grand Master Award in 2012. His often deceptively simple-seeming narratives, with fractal labyrinths lurking beneath the surface as in *Peace* (1975), demand and greatly reward careful reading and rereading.

**The Critical Heritage.** ‘By conjuring a 1980s that is more technologically advanced than our present, Ian McEwan has established a promising new genre of fiction: futurist nostalgia.’ (Janan Ganesh reviewing *Machines Like Me* in the *Financial Times*, 12 April) [MMW]

**Ansible 380 Updates.** *Nora Roberts* is suing the Brazilian author Cristiane Serruya aka ‘#CopyPasteCris’ for multiple plagiarism, and lawyers are already smacking their lips. (AP, 24 April) [F770] ● *Amélie Wen Zhao* will release a modified version of her novel *Blood Heir*, withdrawn after an excess of online outrage. (*NY Times*, 29 April) [PY]

**Random Fandom.** *Terry Carr*’s 1986 fanwriting collection *Fandom Harvest* is the latest addition to the TAFF site’s free ebooks page: see

[taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=FanHarvest](http://taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=FanHarvest). ● *Flick*’s biographies of past Doc Weir award winners appeared in booklet form at Ytterbium and online at [efanzines.com/DocWeir/history.htm](http://efanzines.com/DocWeir/history.htm), to be updated yearly. ● *David Pringle* reports excitedly that one scene of *Avengers: Endgame* features a security guard visibly reading *The Terminal Beach* by J.G. Ballard.

**Award Finalists** (novel categories). HUGOS: *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal; *Record of a Spaceborn Few* by Becky Chambers; *Revenant Gun*, by Yoon Ha Lee; *Space Opera* by Catherynne M. Valente; *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik; *Trail of Lightning* by Rebecca Roanhorse. ● HUGO BEST SERIES: Centenal Cycle by Malka Older; Laundry Files by Charles Stross; Machineries of Empire by Yoon Ha Lee; October Daye by Seanan McGuire; Universe of Xuya by Aliette de Bodard; Wayfarers by Becky Chambers. ● LODESTAR (young adult): *The Belles* by Dhonielle Clayton; *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi; *The Cruel Prince* by Holly Black; *Dread Nation* by Justina Ireland; *The Invasion* by Peadar O’Guilin; *Tess of the Road* by Rachel Hartman. ● PROMETHEUS (libertarian): *Causes of Separation* by Travis Corcoran; *Kingdom of the Wicked* by Helen Dale; *State Tectonics* by Malka Older; *The Fractal Man* by J. Neil Schulman; *The Murderbot Diaries* (*All Systems Red* and three sequel novellas) by Martha Wells. ● RETRO HUGOS for 1943 work: *Conjure Wife* by Fritz Leiber; *Earth’s Last Citadel* by C.L. Moore and Henry Kuttner; *Gather, Darkness!* by Fritz Leiber; *Das Glasperlenspiel* [*The Glass Bead Game*] by Hermann Hesse; *Perelandra* by C.S. Lewis; *The Weapon Makers* by A.E. van Vogt. ● For the complete list of Hugo and Retro Hugo categories, see [dublin2019.com/hugo-finalists/](http://dublin2019.com/hugo-finalists/).

**The Dead Past.** *80 Years Ago*, a tale of ragged horror: ‘The July Unknown hasn’t even edges! Some have the top and side edges trimmed, while a good many of them aren’t trimmed at all. The reason for this is that the ad on the back cover has writing too close to the bottom edge to trim it. This was done by Street & Smith without Editor Campbell knowing it. [...] Mr. Campbell wants it known that it will absolutely never happen again ...’ (*Fantasy News Weekly* 49, 28 May 1939) ● *20 Years Ago*: ‘In a simple yet profoundly silly ceremony after my talk at Reconvene, Cheryl Morgan and Kevin Standlee presented *Ansible* with a Californian car licence plate bearing the word ANSIBLE. This came “From The Automobile of Galen A. Tripp”. Er, thanks to all...’ (*Ansible* 142, May 1999) It still has pride of place on the office notice-board.

**Magazine Scene.** After ten years of publishing, says editor Jason Sizemore, ‘*Apex Magazine* will go on an indefinite hiatus’ with the May issue, #120. He needs a rest, but *Apex* may yet return. (Blog, 15 April)

**C.o.A.** *Jack Cohen*, Waterloo Care Home, Ringwood Rd, Three Legged Cross, Dorset, BH21 6RD. Letters from fan friends are welcome.

**Fanfundery.** TAFF: 211 ballots cast. Geri Sullivan, with 136 votes, won by a first-round majority and will represent North America at Dublin 2019. [JP/JA] Full voting details at [taff.org.uk/news/2019-PR.pdf](http://taff.org.uk/news/2019-PR.pdf).

● GUFF: 73 ballots cast. Simon Litten was the winner by one vote in the second round (after eliminating the trailing candidate) and will represent Australia and NZ at Dublin 2019. [DMH/MK] ● *A TAFF Guide to Beer* edited by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer collects writing and artwork about fandom’s favourite fluid by many past TAFF winners and all four 2019 candidates: see [taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Beer](http://taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Beer). ● The Fan Funds auction at Ytterbium raised over £1000, with further sales, donations and voting fees taking the weekend total well past £2000. [CB]

**Thog’s Masterclass.** *Just the Older Stuff Dept.* ‘... not much progress had been made in installing modern sewage.’ (Iain Pears, *Stone’s Fall*, 2009) [PB] ● *Dept of Double Entendre.* “We’ve got all night, remember?” she said, and headed across the shag rug to the small fieldstone fireplace.’ (Natalie West, *The Girls in Publishing*, 1974) [PB] ● *Wrinkly Dept.* ‘A pair of blue eyes sparkled with intelligence, and wrinkled charmingly as she smiled hello.’ (*Ibid*) [PB] ● *Dept of Unique Skills.* ‘Ayoola is wearing dungarees – she is the only person I know who can still pull those off.’ (Oyinkan Braithwaite, *My Sister, The Serial Killer*, 2018) [PB] ● *Method Acting Dept.* ‘His thoughts were etched as almost visible manifestations on the pale fire which writhed on his countenance.’ (Basil Copper, *The Great White Space*, 1974) [BA] ● *Mainstream Metaphor Mastery.* ‘Unable to push her tongue against the word, Briony could only nod, and felt as she did so a sulky thrill of self-annihilating compliance spreading across her skin and ballooning outwards from it, darkening the room in throbs.’ (Ian McEwan, *Atonement*, 2001) [LS]

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1 May 2019