

ansible



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Forty Years On. It was at the Brighton Worldcon in August 1979 that the first issue of *Ansible* appeared, ending with the rash promise that 'future issues will contain news.' Confronted with the evidence of this appalling gulf of years, your editor uttered a heartfelt 'Bloody hell!'

The Plain People of Fandom: And so say all of us.

The Interesting Times Gang

Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments*, her still unpublished sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, is on the 13-book Booker Prize longlist. (BBC, 24 July) So is Jeanette Winterson's Mary Shelley-meets-AI novel *Frankissstein*.

Neil Clarke has for the third time won the Chesley Award for best art director. Full list at file770.com/2019-chesley-award-winners/.

Cressida Cowell, author of the *How to Train Your Dragon* and *The Wizards of Once* series, is the new UK children's laureate. [AIP]

Boris Johnson's notorious alter-ego role as the inept resistance leader in *Agent of Chaos* by Norman Spinrad – revealed by the *Guardian* Diary in 2005 and pondered by me in *SFX* (ansible.uk/sfx/sfx131.html) – was rediscovered in *Private Eye* for 26 July. 'If we save Boris Johnson for no rational reason whatever, are we not remaining true to Chaos?'

Alan Moore has yet again announced that he's retiring from comics writing, his last script being the much-delayed final instalment of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. (*Guardian*, 18 July)

Mike Resnick explained his long recent silence online: 'Sorry to be absent for a month. 4 weeks ago I was walking from one room to the next when I collapsed. Carol called the ambulance, and 2 days later I woke up in the hospital minus my large intestine. Just got home last night. / I don't like growing old.' (Facebook, 3 July)

Neal Stephenson is flattered by *Reason* magazine's joky suggestion that he is Satoshi Nakamoto, the mysterious creator of Bitcoin; but says it isn't so. Well, he would, wouldn't he? (MarketWatch, 18 July) [PDF]

Conversazione

Until 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.

Until 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.

7-11 Aug • **Tolkien 2019** (Tolkien Society), Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham. £125 reg. See www.tolkien2019.com.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. Online registration at dublin2019.com closes at midnight on 1 August; there will be no memberships for sale at the door. Several fan families were annoyed to learn that, for tortuous legal reasons, under-15s in (most of) the main convention centre must be accompanied by an adult at all times. The committee forgot to mention this important point until 17 July.

17 Aug • **Forbidden Planet** screening plus George R.R. Martin in conversation, Irish Film Institute, Dublin: see ifi.ie/worldcon-tickets.

22-25 Aug • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and Hilton Hotel, Belfast. £65 reg; YA (16-25) £40; child (6-15) £25. More details including day membership rates at titancon.com/2019/.

22-26 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), Leicester Square, London. Tickets now on sale at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

23-26 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £40 reg; juniors (5-16) £20. For day tickets etc. see www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

25-26 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsofetime.co.uk.

31 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am (£12) or 10:30am (£8) to 5pm. See www.wonkyrocketevents.co.uk/preston/.

31 Aug • **Whooverville** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Tickets £50; concessions/under-16s £33; under-12s £10; bookings via www.derbyquad.co.uk (no visible link from whooverville.org).

7-8 Sep • **Film & Comic Con Cardiff**, Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff. Tickets £8 or £15 for early entry. See filmandcomicconcardiff.com.

14-15 Sep • **Other Worlds Workshop Weekend**, Nottingham.

£27.50 plus £2.40 booking fee per day. See tinyurl.com/yy7fawgo.

3 Oct - 1 Nov • **London Month of the Dead**, various venues and events, a few of genre interest: see londonmonthofthedeath.com.

29 Nov - 1 Dec • **UK Ghost Story Festival**, Derby – multiple venues, apparently. Details awaited at tinyurl.com/yppqyq37.

11-12 Jul 2020 • **Edge-Lit 9**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Details awaited at www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/.

7-10 Aug 2020 • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. £85 reg; £60 concessions; £30 supporting; accompanied under-13s free. Further details at dwcon.org.

Rumblings. *Eastercon*®: some fans out there are reportedly talking about creating a limited company to run the annual UK Eastercon, while neglecting so far to consult the trademark holders Harry Payne and Tim Kirk. See murphys-lawyer.dreamwidth.org/318759.html. [HP] • *Middle-Earth Festival*: still no date, but on past form the 2019 event could be as early as 31 August. Keep an eye on middleearthfestival.wordpress.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Asked the traditional question about genre preferences, Delia Owens gave the traditional answer: 'I do not read heavy crime books or science fiction. There is too much great, real science to be had.' (*New York Times Book Review* interview, 11 July) [RH]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke: Rosewater* by Tade Thompson. • *Brave New Words: Empire of Sand* by Tasha Suri. • *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovered*: Carol Emshwiller. • *Prometheus* (libertarian): NOVEL *Causes of Separation* by Travis J.I. Corcoran. HALL OF FAME 'Harrison Bergeron' (1961) by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. • *Rhysling* (poem): LONG 'Ursula Le Guin in the Underworld' by Sarah Tolmie (*On Spec*, April 2018). SHORT 'After Her Brother Ripped the Heads from Her Paper Dolls' by Beth Cato (*Mythic Delirium* 4.3). • *Seiun* (Japan) for translations: NOVEL *Mecha Samurai Empire* by Peter Tieryas, trans Naoya Nakahara. SHORT 'The Circle' by Liu Cixin, trans Naoya Nakahara. [F770] • *Shirley Jackson Award* novel category: *Little Eve* by Catriona Ward. • *World Fantasy Award* for life achievement: Hayao Miyazaki, Jack Zipes.

As Others Digest Us. On the heroine of Jackson Ford's novel *The Girl Who Could Move Sh*t With Her Mind*: 'Teagan's jokes, internal monologue and pop culture references are sure to please those looking for an adventure with a digestible amount of sci-fi thrown in.' (Chris Pickens in *Book Page* magazine, July 2019) [GW]

R.I.P. *Ben Barenholtz* (1935-2019), US pioneer of midnight-movie showings who launched David Lynch's *Eraserhead* (1977) thus and became its distributor, died on 26 June aged 83. Cameo acting credits include *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) and *Liquid Sky* (1982). [AIP] • *Artur Brauner* (1918-2019), Polish-born German producer of both respected films and less serious money-earners such as *Vampire Lesbians* (1971) and *The Vengeance of Doctor Mabuse* (1974), died on 7 July aged 100. [F770] • *Richard Carter* (1953-2019), Australian character actor whose films include *The Punisher* (1989), *Babe: Pig in the City* (1998), *Happy Feet* (2006) plus sequel, and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), died on 13 July aged 65. [PDF] • *Valentina Cortese* (1923-2019), Italian actress whose many credits include *Ring of Darkness* (1979) and *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988), died on 10 July aged 96. [PDF] • *Sam Gafford* (1962-2019), US author, editor, critic and publisher (as Ulthar Press) of weird fiction in the H.P. Lovecraft and William Hope Hodgson vein, who co-edited *Occult Detective Quarterly*, died in July. [JLG] • *Lee Garvin*, US games designer who created *Tales from the Floating Vagabond* and wrote for the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* RPGs, died on 29 June. • *Rutger Hauer* (1944-2019), Dutch actor whose many genre films include *Blade Runner* (1982), *Ladyhawke* (1985), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992), *Batman Begins* (2005) and *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* (2017), died on 19 July aged 75. [LP] 'All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain. Time to die.' • *David Hedison* (1927-2019), US actor in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1968), *The Power Within* (1979), *Megiddo: The Omega Code 2* (2001) and others, died on 18 July aged 92. [A-TC] • *Martin Hoare* (1952-2019), long-time UK fan who worked on innumerable conventions, co-chaired the 1984

and 2002 Eastercons and was honoured with the Doc Weir Award in 2015, died on 26 July. See my personal note below. ● **Paul Hugli** (1951-2019), US author of several genre stories since 2010 (see ISFDB), died on 17 March aged 67. [PDF] ● **Charlee Jacob** (1952-2019), US horror and dark fantasy author who won Stoker awards for her novel *Dread in the Beast* (2005; tied award) and poetry collection *Sineater* (2005), died on 14 July. [GVG] ● **Arte Johnson** (1929-2019), US Rowan & Martin's *Laugh-In* actor ('Very ... interesting') whose genre credits include *The President's Analyst* (1967), *Love at First Bite* (1979) and *Evil Toons* (1992), died on 3 July aged 90. [PDF] ● **Ben Johnston** (1926-2019), US composer who scored the opera *Carmilla* (1970, based on J. Sheridan Le Fanu's vampire novella), died on 21 July aged 93. [AIP] ● **Freddie Jones** (1927-2019), UK actor in *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969), *Son of Dracula* (1973), *Krull* (1983), *Dune* (1984) and *The Black Cauldron* (voice, 1985), died on 9 July aged 91. [JM] ● **Jeremy Kemp** (1935-2019), UK *Z-Cars* actor seen in *Dr. Terror's House of Horrors* (1965) and *Conan* (1997-1998), died in late July aged 84. [JJ] ● **Charles Levin** (1949-2019), US actor whose films include *The Golden Child* (1986), was found dead on 12 July. [GF] ● **Josh Lukin** (1968-2019), US academic who published essays on Samuel R. Delany, Philip K. Dick, Kate Wilhelm and other sf authors, died in late July aged 50. [SRD] ● **Robert Mayer** (1939-2019), US journalist who wrote the satirical superhero novel *Superfolks* (1977) and the afterlife fantasy *I, JFK* (1989), died on 23 July aged 80. [AIP] ● **Zanda Myrande** (also known as Zander Nyronnd), UK fan, author and noted filker, following an apparent stroke or seizure that led to a serious head injury on 21 July, died on the night of 23/24 July. [HM/MB] As Jonathan Waite, Zanda was a past contributor to *Ansible*. ● **Denise Nickerson** (1957-2019), US actress in *Dark Shadows* (1968-1970) and *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), died on 10 July aged 62. [PDF] ● **Suzan Pitt** (1943-2019), US animator and director whose short films include *Asparagus* (1979), *El doctor* (2006) and *Visitation* (2013), died on 16 June aged 75. [PDF] ● **Christian Rosenfeldt** (1956-2019), Swedish fan once active in publishing and writing for fanzines, died in late July. [J-HH] ● **Maggie Secara** (1950-2019), US RenFaire costumeur and author of the Harper Errant fantasy trilogy opening with *The Dragon Ring* (2012), died on 27 July aged 68. [PDF] ● **Andi Shechter**, US fan who helped run many conventions including Boskones, Bouchercons and Noreascon 3, and was the long-time partner of Stu Shiffman (they married in 2014), died on 15 July. [LM] ● **Greg Shoemaker** (1947-2019), founder and editor of the pioneering *The Japanese Fantasy Film Journal* (1968-1984), died on 19 July. [PDF] ● **Malaika Rose Stanley**, UK children's author whose works include the sf *Spike and Ali Enson* (2011) and *Spike in Space* (2012), died in late June aged 65. [AIP] ● **Russi Taylor** (1944-2019), US voice actress who played Minnie Mouse in nearly 30 years of Disney cartoons, died on 26 July aged 75. Further credits include *DuckTales* (1987-1990, as Huey, Louie, Dewy and others), *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), many *Simpsons* episodes 1990-2019, *Babe* (1995) and sequel, *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars* (1998) and *The Simpsons Movie* (2007). [MMW] ● **Rip Torn** (1931-2019) US actor in *Men in Black* (1997) and its sequels, died on 9 July aged 88. [PDF]

As Others Recruit Us. 'The French army has said it is looking to recruit four or five sci-fi writers and futurologists to staff a "Red Team" that predicts future threats and how to disrupt or defend against them.' (*The Register*, 19 July) Only established French sf authors need apply.

More on Martin. It seemed to have gone well. Having prepared for his big cancer operation (see A384) by attending a weekend beer festival in Ostend, Martin Hoare posted from the Royal Berkshire Hospital: 'In the recovery unit after four and a half hours in surgery. I have more pipes than the Pompidou Centre.' (Facebook, 9 July) They sent him home on the 16th, but too much bad luck followed: a septic infection and worse. Martin died in the RBH on the morning after an emergency operation late on 25 July; Hazel and I were with him at the last. He was my oldest friend, from early schooldays and the same Oxford college – where I fondly recall him showing me the ropes, and the pubs – to living for decades in the same town. Hard to believe there'll be no more of the Reading Christmas celebrations where he swapped ever-sillier gifts with Hazel and myself. As official Langford Hugo acceptor at many overseas Worldcons, Martin delivered my little speeches with great and entertaining gusto. His tireless work for fandom included putting on memorable fireworks displays with the Skyburst team; driving a massive, lovingly tended sound system to smaller conventions such as Novacons and UK Corflus in his fabled Big Red Van, and then spending more or less the entire weekend operating it; or alternatively he'd organize the real ale bar and spend the con supervising *that*, personally tapping every cask at Ytterbium this Easter despite not feeling at all well. How on earth will fandom cope without him? ● No date has yet been set for the funeral.

Award Shortlists. *British Fantasy Award* novel categories: FANTASY (Holdstock): *The Bitter Twins* by Jen Williams; *Empire of Sand* by Tasha Suri; *Foundryside* by Robert Jackson Bennett; *The Green Man's Heir* by Juliet E. McKenna; *The Loosening Skin* by Aliya Whiteley; *Priest of Bones* by Peter McLean. HORROR (Derleth): *The Cabin at the End of the World* by Paul Tremblay; *Little Eve* by Catriona Ward; *The Way of the Worm*, by Ramsey Campbell; *Wolfs Hill* by Simon Bestwick. Full list with all categories at tinyurl.com/yxuhqc7t. ● *World Fantasy* best novel: *In the Night Wood* by Dale Bailey; *The Mere Wife* by Maria Dahvana Headley; *The Poppy War* by R.F. Kuang; *Witchmark* by C.L. Polk; *Trail of Lightning* by Rebecca Roanhorse. Full list at tinyurl.com/y6qny6fc. ● *ESFS Hall of Fame*: the UK nominees are Charles Stross (author), Dominic Harman (artist) and PS Publishing (publisher). Full list: tinyurl.com/y2bm6pda.

Court Circular. The Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band (of 'Urban Spaceman' fame; see *SFE* entry) found their name had been trademarked by Anglo Atlantic Media Limited, which claimed ownership at the Intellectual Property Office website – no evidence required, just a £200 fee – and then sued them for using their established name. Directors of AAML include the band's former promoter Bob Carruthers. A fundraiser for the Bonzos' legal costs at www.crowdjustice.com/case/bonzodogbanned/ reached its £15,000 target on 26 July, but more would be welcome. [JD] The IPO has scheduled a hearing of the case for 5 September 2019.

Magazine Scene. After rumours that *Mad* magazine was closing down, the big revelation is that it will shamble onward in zombie mode – publishing only reprint material, with just a little original content in the traditional end-of-year special issue. (*Gizmodo*, 5 July)

Random Fandom. *Doris Panda*, Martin Hoare's puppet alter-ego, is to travel the convention circuit forever in memory of Martin. As Terry Pratchett very nearly put it, a man is not dead while his panda is still spoken of. [JA] ● *Escape Pod*, the long-running sf story podcast at escapepod.org, has had a species of wasp named after it: *Zelomorpha effugia*. [F770] ● *Lisa Conesa*, who edited the fine UK fanzine *Zimri* (1971-1976) and the sf poetry collection *The Purple Hours* (1974) but dropped out of fandom in the late 1970s, died in 1991 according to recent online researches; she was 55. [ITB] ● *Retro Hugo Glitch*: ten days before the 31 July voting deadline, an error in the Best Fanzine ballot was revealed. *Fantasy News* ed. Sykora had fewer nominating votes than, and so was replaced by, *Guteto* ed. Morajo. Voters for *Fantasy News* via the online ballot were informed and could alter their choice. [NW]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, the gutter press reported a 'Hugo Award Error': a few days ago, the engraved Hugos arrived complete with creative spelling – the Dramatic Presentation Hugo is a SCIENCE FICTION ACHIEVEMENT trophy. Panic began at once, though the engravers promised corrections by Seacon (SCIENCE FICTION ACHIEVEMENT ...). The Campbell award was marked SEACON 1978.' (*Ansible* 1, August 1979) ● *70 Years Ago*, a newszine tradition that *Ansible* is proud to inherit: 'L. Ron Hubbard, not Robt. Heinlein, has had *Slaves of Sleep* translated into Dutch. We pretend we do these little things just to keep you mentally alert.' (Bob Tucker, *Bloomington Newsletter* 11, August 1949)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: discussion of race directions for the next few years has begun. ● *TAFF Free Ebooks*. The new release is *THEN Again: A UK Fanhistory Reader 1930-1979* edited by Rob Hansen and Vince Clarke, an anthology companion to Rob's *THEN* in which fans who were there tell the stories of UK/Irish fan groups, zines, activities, politics, and more. Over 120,000 words. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=ThenAgain.

Chog's Masterclass. *Simile Dept.* 'Val got the impression that Plumbus was almost offensively inoffensive. He was like a living drop of oil.' ('Bron Fane', *The Intruders*, 1963) [GW] ● *Those Were The Days*. 'Once the information is in the computer it's completely safe!' (Thames Television, *The Sweeney*, 1976) [DH] ● *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'And those eyes – when they raked him they bathed him with ecstasy!' 'She gathered up his eyes and she's still got 'm.' (L. Ron Hubbard, *Typewriter in the Sky*, 1940) ● *As One Does*. 'He felt a brief tingle in his nuts and adjusted his tunic.' (Neal Stephenson, *Fall; or Dodge in Hell*, 2019) [JC] ● *Whatever Turns You On*. "When the train did come, it came in an orgasmic rush of hot diesel-oil odor, trailing a veil of orange blossom like a bride ..." (Brion Gysin, *The Process*, 1969) [BA] ● *The Globes of Gloom*. 'Alana crossed her arms and lifted off her own shirt, revealing small, slightly pessimistic breasts.' (Meg Wolitzer, *The Female Persuasion*, 2018)

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