



Ansible® 411 October 2021

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, indentum, Ningis, obs, sequins, sprine, *strakh* or truffle skins.

Man-Size in Marble

Tom Cruise was the subject of an admiring *Guardian* profile, with a pen-portrait that presumably captures his science-fictional essence: 'He is a wisp of stardust blowing across a barren nebula.' (23 August) [PE]

Jim Henson's former London home is now marked with a blue plaque for the 'Creator of the Muppets'. (*Guardian*, 7 September) [AIP] Meanwhile *Slate* published an opinion piece splendidly titled 'We Need a Muppet Version of *Frankenstein*'. (11 September) [RB] With Miss Piggy inevitably cast as Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley.

James McAvoy received 'good advice for starring in projects like *Dune* from *Farscape* actress Claudia Black. "It was at the L.A. premiere of *Children of Dune*, and she said to me, that the thing with this shit, i.e. science fiction, is that you have to believe it more than you believe good writing. [...] Good writing, you can just do. It's easier. But this stuff is hard, because it's so bonkers...." (*IndieWire*, 28 September) [BT]

Graham Masterton has been honoured in Wrocław as the latest of the city's 600-odd bronze dwarf statues, showing him with a pointy hat and a copy of his horror novel *The Manitou* – a Polish bestseller. [HWA]

Nick Park was exceedingly pleased to unveil a new bronze bench/statue in Preston featuring his creations Wallace and Gromit in a scene from *The Wrong Trousers*. (*Lancashire Post*, 10 September; all UK media)

Ian Whates of NewCon Press couldn't attend Fantasycon as a guest of honour in September, owing to 'a medical condition requiring swift attention' in the form of surgery. (23 September) Get well soon!

Concupiscence

ONLINE. 8-10 Oct • **Irish Discworld Convention**, formerly Cork International Hotel, Cork. €30 reg; €40 with extras. See idwcon.org.

15-17 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. £25 reg; £15 concessions. See www.comicartfestival.com.

16 Oct • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), The King's House, Amptill Road, Bedford. Details at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

19-26 Oct • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), Stratford Picturehouse, Stratford, London. See sci-fi-london.com/info/.

SOLD OUT. 21-24 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See tickets link at celluloidscreams.co.uk.

21-31 Oct • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**: Banshee Labyrinth, Edinburgh Dungeon, Lauriston Castle. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

ONLINE. 22-24 Oct • **The Ineffable Con 3** (*Good Omens*). Ticket price: what you will (for charity). See theineffablecon.org.uk.

23 Oct • **TR25** 'celebrating 25 years of *Tomb Raider*', QUAD Centre, Derby. From 11am. Tickets £25. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/TR25.

29-31 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £99 reg. More at fantastic-films.com/festival/.

29-30 Oct • **Frightfest** (film), Cineworld, Leicester Square, London. Tickets at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsandevents.html from 2 October.

HYBRID. 30 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. Now £30 reg; concessions £20 (£35/£25 at door). See www.bristolcon.org.

30 Oct • **Hallowe'en Horrors** (writing workshops), QUAD Centre, Derby. £32 reg. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/HalloweenHorrors.

30-31 Oct • **Surrey Steampunk Convivial**, Epsom. Weekend pass £20 plus fee at bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivial.

5-7 Nov • **ArmadaCon 2021**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; £30 concessions. More at www.armadacon.org.

HYBRID. 5-7 Nov • **Corflu 38**, Mercure Holland Hotel, Bristol. Now £60/\$75 reg; virtual (Zoom) membership free via robjackson60@gmail.com. Hotel booking form etc at corflu.org.

CANCELLED. 11-14 Nov • **Camp SFW**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. This event quietly vanished from www.scifiweekender.com, now listing only 21-24 April 2022 (sold out) and 10-13 November 2022.

26-28 Nov • **UK Ghost Story Festival**, QUAD Centre, Derby. £60 reg; for individual event tickets see www.derbyquad.co.uk/UKGSF2021.

15-19 Dec • **DisCon III** (Worldcon), Washington DC, USA. Now \$275 reg; YA \$140; virtual \$90; supp \$50; other rates at discon3.org.

11-13 Feb 2022 • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Southampton. Tickets from

£145 (£35 child) plus various more expensive options at scifiball.com.

20-22 Aug 2022 • **TitanCon**, Hilton Hotel, Belfast. Guests of Honour Jeannette Ng, Robert Sawyer, Jodi Taylor. 'Early bird' membership £30; £35 from 1 January; £40 from 1 May. More at titancon.com.

16-19 Sep 2022 • **Fantasycon 2022**, Park Inn, Heathrow. £80 reg (BFS members £70) until the end of 2021. See www.fantasycon.org

Rumblings. *Eastercon 2023*: 'Conversation' is a new bid chaired by Caroline Mullan, for an event with both physical and virtual elements.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Reassure Us about the *Foundation* tv series: 'As the Nobel Prize winning economist Paul Krugman writes in his introduction to the Folio Society's edition of the original *Foundation* trilogy, Isaac Asimov's great saga is "not exactly science fiction ... [the] novels are about people, not gadgets".' (Tortoise Media culture digest, September) [CM]

Awards. *Booker Prize* shortlist: of genre interest is *Bewilderment* by Richard Powers. [L] • *Clarke: The Animals in That Country* by Laura Jean McKay. • *Dwarf Stars* (poem 1-10 lines): 'Yes, Antimatter Is Real' by Holly Lyn Walrath (*Analog* 9/20). [L] • *Otherwise* (was the Tiptree Award): 'Ife-Iyoku, the Tale of Imadeyunuagbon' by Ekpeki Oghenechovwe Donald (in *Dominion: An Anthology of Speculative Fiction from Africa and the African Diaspora*, 2020). • *Women's Prize for Fiction* (not genre-specific; £30,000 awarded): *Piranesi* by Susanna Clarke.

The Weed of Crime. 4,996 genre comics, pulps and Big Little Books were stolen from the Robert M. Ervin Jr. Collection at Florida State University between 17 March 2020 and 20 February 2021 (*New Antiquarian*, 14 September). See tinyurl.com/8s3ycmzk for details and full list. [EO]

As Others Sternly Question Us. *Interviewer*: 'Imaginative storytelling is sometimes portrayed as outmoded or even ethically suspect amid the rise of autofiction and concerns over cultural appropriation. Do you feel as if you're defending its virtues?' *Anthony Doerr*: 'I don't live in New York City; I live in Idaho, where many of us are readers and really bright people but just aren't in that literary zeitgeist and so don't deal with those anxieties.' (*Guardian*, 18 September) [GD]

R.I.P. *Douglas (Doug) Barbour* (1940-2021), Canadian academic, poet and critic who wrote *Worlds Out of Words: The SF Novels of Samuel R. Delany* (1979) and coedited *Tesseracts 2* (1987) with Phyllis Gotlieb, died on 21 September aged 81. [BRG] He reviewed for *Algol*, *Foundation*, *NYRSF*, *Riverside Quarterly*, *SF Commentary*, *Vector* and others. • *Graham Garfield Barnard* (1962-2021), Australian producer with credits for tv horror shows *Anthology of Interest* (2006-2017) and *The Schlocky Horror Picture Show* (2007-2019) – hosting the latter as Nigel Honeybone – died on 16 September aged 59. [MD] • *Edward Barnes* (1928-2021), head of BBC children's tv 1978-1986, died on 7 September aged 92; relevant genre shows include *Rentaghost* (1976-1984) and *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1988-1990). [AIP] • *William Beck* (1937-2021) US special effects model-maker with credits from *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) to *The Phantom Menace* (1999), died on 19 September aged 84. [SJ] • *Fran Bennett* (1937-2021), US actress in *Quantum Leap* (1991-1992) plus other genre tv series, *Wes Craven's New Nightmare* (1994), *Crazy as Hell* (2002) and *The Manor* (2021), died on 12 September aged 84. [SJ] • *Ben Best* (1974-2021), US actor in *Land of the Lost* (2009) who scripted *Your Highness* (2011), died on 12 September aged 46. • *Carol Carr* (1938-2021), US fan (active from the early 1960s) and sf author whose work in both capacities appears in *Carol Carr: The Collected Writings* (2013), died on 1 September aged 82. [RL] She was married to Terry Carr until his death in 1987, and since 2000 to Robert Lichtman, to whom all sympathy. • *Nino Castelnuovo* (1936-2021), Italian actor in *The Creatures* (1966) and *Star Odyssey* (1979), died on 6 September aged 84. [SJ] • *John Challis* (1942-2021) UK actor in *Where Has Poor Mickey Gone?* (1964), *Dracula* (1974) and *Doctor Who* ('The Seeds of Doom' 1976), died on 19 September aged 79. [SJ] • *Carlo Chendi* (1933-2021), Italian cartoonist who created hundreds of authorized Disney-character stories for Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, died on 12 September aged 88. [PDF] • *Don Collier* (1928-2021), US actor in *The Cellar* (1988), died on 13 September aged 92. [SJ] • *Michael Constantine* (1927-2021), Greek-US actor in *The Night*

that *Panicked America* (1975), *Thinner* (1996) and assorted genre tv series, died on 31 August aged 94. [LP] ● **Robert (Bob) Coultie**, UK screenwriter for *Future War* (1992, in which he acted) and *Doomsdayer* (2000), died on 21 September aged 70. [StS] ● **J. Randolph Cox** (1936-2021), Munsey Award-winning US expert on crime and dime-novel fiction whose *Man of Magic and Mystery* (1989) is a biblio-biography of Walter Gibson – creator of *The Shadow* – died on 14 September. [SL] ● **Stephen Critchlow** (1967-2021), UK actor in *The Infinite Worlds of H.G. Wells* (2001) and *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2017) – plus voice work for videogames and *Doctor Who/Torchwood* audio dramas – died on 19 September aged 54. [SJ] ● **Tim Donnelly** (1944-2021), US actor in *The Death of Ocean View Park* (1979) and *Parts: The Clonus Horror* (1979), died on 19 September aged 77. [LP] ● **Robert Fyfe** (1931-2021), Scots actor in *Cloud Atlas* (2012) and *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016), died on 22 September aged 90. [PDF] ● **Willie Garson** (1964-2021), US actor in *Repossessed* (1990), *Mars Attacks!* (1996), *What Planet Are You From?* (2000) and genre tv series including *Supergirl* (2019-2020), died on 21 September aged 57. [MR] ● **Judith Hanna**, Australian fan in London since the early 1980s, whose fanzines included *Shallow End* with various others and *Fuck the Tories* and *International Revolutionary Gardener* with Joseph Nicholas – her husband since 1983 – died on 6 September. [JN] All sympathy to Joseph. Judith was an old friend. ● **Sondra James** (1939-2021), US actress in *Ice Age: Continental Drift* (2012), *Spider-Man: Homecoming* (2017), *Joker* (2019) and others, died on 12 September aged 82. [SJ] ● **Anne Joliffe** (1933-2021), Australian animator who worked on *The Beatles* (1965-1967), *Yellow Submarine* (1968) and *Grendel Grendel Grendel* (1981), died on 27 August aged 87. [MD] ● **Langdon Jones** (1942-2021), UK author, editor and musician involved with the 1960s *New Worlds*, whose stories are collected as *The Eye of the Lens* (1972), died in late September. [MM] He edited the New Wave anthology *The New S.F.* (1969) and restored the misedited text of Mervyn Peake's *Titus Alone* to definitive readability. Michael Moorcock adds: 'One of the few people of whom it's possible to write: Loved by all.' ● **Irma Kalish** (1924-2021), US screenwriter and tv producer – one of the first women in the latter role – with credits for various genre series, *Ghost of a Chance* (1980) and *I Dream of Jeannie ... Fifteen Years Later* (1985), died on 3 September aged 96. [AIP] ● **Tommy Kirk** (1941-2021), US actor in *The Shaggy Dog* (1959), *The Absent Minded Professor* (1961), *Son of Flubber* (1963), *Mars Needs Women* (1968) and others, died on 28 September aged 79. [LP] ● **Denise Lee** (aka Denise Tyler), US author of 'Sailing the Painted Ocean' (1999) and co-editor of the seven-time semiprozine Hugo finalist *Speculations*, died in late September. [GVG] ● **Elizabeth McCann** (1931-2021), US producer of many Broadway stage shows who won nine Tony awards – two for the long-running *Dracula* (1977) – died on 9 September aged 90. [AIP] ● **Norm MacDonald** (1959-2021), Canadian actor in *The Animal* (2001), *The Adventures of Panda Warrior* (voice, 2012), *Skylanders Academy* (voice, 2016-2018), *The Orville* (2017-2019) and others, died on 14 September aged 61. ● **Catherine MacPhail** (1946-2021), Scots author of children's/YA fiction including supernatural and fantasy tales such as *Dark Waters* (2003) and *Another Me* (2003), died on 1 September aged 75. [PDF] ● **Ugo Malaguti** (1945-2021), noted Italian sf author and editor of *Galassia* magazine whose novels appeared 1963-1970, died on 26 September aged 76. [PDF] ● **George Martin** (1937-2021), Spanish-born US screenwriter and actor in *Island of the Doomed* (aka *Maneater of Hydra*, 1967) and the later 'Three Supermen' superhero films, died on 1 September aged 83. [SJ] ● **Art Metrano** (1936-2021), US actor in *History of the World: Part I* (1981) and several genre tv series including the Marvel-based animation *The Thing* (voice, 1979), died on 8 September aged 84. [LP] ● **Michael Murrin** (1938-2021), US academic scholar of allegory in epic, romance and fantasy – a 'dracologist' specializing in the dragon theme from *Beowulf* to Tolkien – died on 27 July aged 83. [SHS] ● **Peter Palmer** (1931-2021), US actor in *Lil' Abner* (title role: Broadway 1956, film 1959), *Deep Space* (1988) and *Edward Scissorhands* (1990), died on 21 September aged 90. [PDF] ● **Morris Perry** (1925-2021), UK actor in many genre tv series from *City Beneath the Sea* (1962) and *Out of This World* (1962) via *Doctor Who* ('Colony in Space' 1971) to *The Dark Side of the Sun* (1983), died on 19 September aged 96. [SJ] ● **Jay Sandrich** (1932-2021), US producer/director – *Get Smart* (1965-1966), *Captain Nice* (1967), *The Ghost & Mrs. Muir* (1969-1970) – died on 22 September aged 89. [SJ] ● **Tony Selby** (1938-2021), UK character actor in *Ace of Wands* (1970-1972), *Doctor Who* ('Trial of a Time Lord' 1986; 'Dragonfire' 1987) and *Cockneys vs Zombies* (2012), died on 5 September aged 83. [PDF] ● **Matthew Strachan** (1970-2021), UK composer with film credits for *Psychomanteum* (2018) and *Devil Witch Way* (forthcoming 2022), died on 8 September aged 50. [SJ] ● **Bill Taylor** (1944-2021), US visual effects expert, the

co-founder of *Illusion Arts* (1983-2009), with many genre film credits from *Dark Star* (1974) via *Blade Runner* (1982) to *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor* (2000), died on 28 August aged 77. [SJ] ● **Mikis Theodorakis** (1925-2021), Greek composer with genre film credits for *The Shadow of the Cat* (1961) and *The Day the Fish Came Out* (1967), died on 2 September aged 96. [SJ] ● **Melvin Van Peebles** (1932-2021), US director of *Watermelon Man* (1970) and actor in *Last Action Hero* (1993), died on 21 September aged 89. [MMW] ● **Joan Washington** (1950-2021), Scots voice/dialogue coach with many genre credits from *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes* (1984) via *102 Dalmatians* (2000) to *The Witches* (2020), died on 1 September aged 71. [MMW] ● **Charlie Williams**, US fan artist whose cartoons appeared in many fanzines including *Challenger*, *File 770* and *Mimosa*, died on 3 September. [GHL] ● **Michael K. Williams** (1966-2021), US actor in *The Devil Goes Down* (2013), *The Purge: Anarchy* (2014) and *Lovecraft Country* (2020), died on 6 September aged 54. [AIP] ● **Andy Yanchus** (1944-2021), US colourist for hundreds of Marvel comics including *Alpha Flight*, *Incredible Hulk*, *Doctor Strange* and *X-Men*, died on 11 September aged 77. [PDF] ● See also the overflow section **R.I.P. II** in digital/online editions only.

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: 'Which of these famous people was born in the twentieth century? A: Orson Welles, B: Orville Wright, C: Oscar Wilde.' *Contestant*: 'I think Orville Wright might be something to do with Orville the Duck...'. (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

SF Encyclopedia Latest. The official parting from Gollancz (*SFE* hosts since the October 2011 online launch) came on 29 September, and *sf-encyclopedia.com* is moving from Hachette's web server to its own with, we hope, some improvements. Special thanks to the Dublin 2019 Worldcon for a generous, well-timed donation to the *SFE* in September.

As Others ... 'Rep. Madison Cawthorn (R – North Carolina) tweeted "1984 is a great fiction novel to read but it seems like it is becoming the reality we are currently living under."' (*The Week*, 27 August) [MMW]

British Fantasy Awards. FANTASY NOVEL (Holdstock): *The Once and Future Witches* by Alix E. Harrow. HORROR NOVEL (Derleth): *Mexican Gothic* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia. NOVELLA *Ring Shout* by P. Djèlí Clark. SHORT 'Infinite Tea in the Demara Café' by Ida Keogh (*London Centric*). COLLECTION *The Watcher in the Woods* by Charlotte Bond. ANTHOLOGY *Dominion* ed. Zelda Knight and Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki. INDEPENDENT PRESS Luna. NON-FICTION *Women Make Horror* ed. Alison Peirse. MAGAZINE *Strange Horizons*. ARTIST Daniele Serra. COMIC/GRAPHIC NOVEL *Die Vol. 2: Split the Party* by Kieron Gillen and Stephanie Hans. AUDIO *The Magnus Archives*. FILM/TV *The Boys: 'What I Know'*. NEWCOMER (Bounds): Kathleen Jennings. SPECIAL (Wagner): Alasdair Stuart.

Fun in Milton Keynes! The UK 'National Film and Sci-fi Museum' has opened – adult tickets £12 from *nationalfilmmandscifimuseum.com*. Knowing that miserable old *Ansible* would allow him only four lines, James Bacon wrote a long appreciation for *File 770* (11 September).

Auction News. An 1818 first edition of *Frankenstein* (500 copies only) sold for \$1,170,000 at Christie's, breaking the world auction record for a printed text by a woman. (*Guardian*, 20 September) [AIP]

As Others Discover Us. From a review of *AI 2041* by Dr Kai-Fu Lee and Chen Qiufan: 'Together, Lee and Chen have invented a new genre: scientific fiction.' (*The Week*, 1 October) [MMW]

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: the TransAtlantic Fan fund thanks FANAC (Florida Association for Nucleation And Conventions) for its \$500 bounty rewarding the publication of John Coxon's trip report *Best. Trip. Ever.*

Thog's Masterclass. *Neat Tricks*. 'Cascor's brow congealed.' (Matthew Hughes, 'The Forlorn', Sep/Oct 2021 *F&SF*) [SaS] ● *Mysteries of Female Anatomy*. 'There was no ring on her left hand, and the flatness of her breasts had already suggested that she was unmarried.' (Edmund Crispin, *The Moving Toyshop*, 1946) ● *Lockdown Hair Redux*. 'U'len was a massive chunk of middle-aged woman, comfortably homely from the wart on the side of her nose that had three wiry black hairs projecting from it down to her preposterously battered toes ...' (Joel Rosenberg, *Not Exactly the Three Musketeers*, 1999) [BA] ● *Now Wash Your Hands*. 'This rectum of the alien ship curved rightwards, aslosh with steaming cloacal fluids, banded with slowly pulsing purple peristaltic sinew.' (Ian Watson, *Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine*, 1993) [BA] ● *Unfortunate Name for a House*. 'I'm going to find her if I have to shoot up Sperm like a fellow in a Wild West show.' (Garnett Radcliffe, *The Great Orme Terror*, 1934) [ME]

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