



Ansible® 460 November 2025

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, Force-fields, Stealth, Mort-main, Nigromancy, Mopery or Gawk.

The Deep School

Sir Arthur C. Clarke would surely have made some trenchant comment on this recent attribution: 'Asimov said above a certain level technology is indistinguishable from magic.' (*Alien Earth*, episode 4) [BA]

Andrew Cope's 'Spy Dog' sf thrillers for children (Puffin Books) have been pulled from schools and bookshops because they include links to the author's former series website, which has changed hands and is now infested with 'inappropriate adult content'. (BBC, 8 October) [SF°C]

Samuel R. Delany was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences on 11 October. 'It's an honor to be part of that tradition. / (The only members I'd met before were Einstein [when I was ten], and Jacqueline Woodson.)' (Facebook, 13 October)

László Krasznahorkai, latest winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, has had an entry in the *SF Encyclopedia* (by John Clute) since 2015.

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and 1984 have at last been translated into Welsh, by Anna Gruffydd, as *Foel yr Anifeiliaid* and *Mil Naw Wyth Deg Pedwar*. The greatest challenge, says the publisher, was adapting 1984's Newspeak and the 'Principles of Newspeak' essay. (BBC, 27 October)

Oscar Wilde's British Library reader status – cancelled after his conviction and imprisonment in 1895 – was symbolically restored in October and a new reader's card issued to his grandson. Just to make sure no Wilde impersonators can take advantage, the card expires or expired on Wilde's death date of 30 November 1900. (BBC, 16 October) [SF°C]

Consilience

1 Nov • **Sonic Con UK** (Sonic the Hedgehog), Novotel London West. Tickets £35.37 inc fee; other rates at www.sonicconuk.com.

7-9 Nov • **Novacon 54**, Palace Hotel, Buxton. GoH Emily Tesh. £54 reg; under-17s £12; under-13s free. More at novacon.uk.

8 Nov • **Douglas Adams** celebration, Royal Geographical Society, London. 7:30pm. Tickets from £49.95. See tinyurl.com/25ble5tz.

8 Nov • **PictCon1**, Salutation Hotel, 30-34 South St, Perth, Scotland. £30 reg; £20 concessions. See tinyurl.com/2sy4dp8.

15-16 Nov • **Thought Bubble Comic Convention**, Harrogate Convention Centre, as part of comics festival. £38 weekend; £27/day; under-12s, over-65s and carers free. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

15-16 Nov • **YALC: UK YA Lit Con**, Olympia, London, as part of comics con. See londoncomicconwinter.com/YALC/.

22 Nov • **Stars of Time** (comics), Weston-super-Mare. £11.55; under-14s £7.21. See www.starsoftime.co.uk/weston-s-mare-winter.

22 Nov • **Cymera Writers' Conference**, Edinburgh/online. £75, concessions £65; online £55/£45. See www.cymerafestival.co.uk.

22 Nov • **TFN: Mini-Con** (*Transformers*), Reading University. £40; under-18s £25; under-16s free. See tfnation.com/mini-con-reading-25.

23 Nov • **SF, Comic & Toy Fair**, Leigh Sports Village. 11am-4pm. Tickets £3, children £1. See www.mseevents.co.uk/.

28-30 Nov • **MCM Comic Con**, Birmingham NEC. Tickets from £67. See www.mcmcomiccon.com/birmingham/en-us.html

29 Nov • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), London Excel. 9am-11pm. Tickets £19.20; under-18s £12. See www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

5 Dec • **Tolkien Seminar Lecture**, Magdalen College, Oxford. 5pm. 'No registration is required.' See tolkien50.web.ox.ac.uk.

27 Mar - 23 Aug 2026 • **Fairy Tales** (exhibition), British Library, London. See events.bl.uk/exhibitions/fairy-tales.

12 Apr 2026 • **Stars of Time** (comics), LC, Swansea. 10am-4:30pm. £11.55 (under-14s £7.21) at www.starsoftime.co.uk/swanseacomicon.

8-9 May 2026 • **Norncon**, Hilton Lanyon Place, Belfast. GoH Anna Spark Smith, Adrian Tchaikovsky. £35 reg; £20 concessions. Online registration is open at norncon.org.

22-24 May 2026 • **MCM Comic Con**, London ExCel. Tickets from £97; day rates at www.mcmcomiccon.com/london/en-us.html.

29-30 May 2026 • **Lolly Willowes** centenary conference (Sylvia Townsend Warner Society), University College, London. Call for papers with 30 November deadline at townsendwarner.com/the-society/news.

2-4 Oct 2026 • **Octocon**, Clayton Hotel, Cork, Ireland (*new venue*)

and online. Registration 'will open soon' at octocon.com.

2-4 Oct 2026 • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Bowness-on-Windermere. Ticket sales awaited at www.comicartfestival.com.

26-29 Mar 2027 • **Unconfined** (Eastercon), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. £90 reg, £65 concessions, £25 under-27s, £5 under-13s – *these rates are expected to rise on 1 December*. See easterconglasgow.org.

2-6 Sep 2027 • **Montréal Worldcon 2027**, Montréal, Canada. All rates CAD: adults \$250 (inc \$70 WSFS membership), under-31s \$200 (ditto), under-18s \$90, under-13s \$45, accompanied under-8s free. *Rates are expected to rise in December 2025*. See montreal2027.ca.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2029*: the Dublin bid, aiming for 2-6 August, has a website at dublin2029.ie and another at linktr.ee/dublin2029.

Infinitely Improbable

The Illuminati Brotherhood invites your editor to sign up: 'Whether your goals lie in business, politics, the arts, or personal empowerment, becoming a member of the Illuminati will grant you access to life-changing opportunities. Upon initiation, you will receive countless benefits, including profound knowledge, influential global connections, and an immediate cash reward of \$2.5 million USD to recognize your commitment to the Brotherhood.' (Email from Brazil, 2 October)

Awards. *Elgin* (SFPA poetry book). BOOK *Mexicans on the Moon* ed. Pedro Iniguez. CHAPBOOK *The Inca Weaver's Tales* by Katherine Quevedo.

• *Harvey Hall of Fame* (comics, life achievement): John Byrne, Peter David, Patrick McDonnell, Wendy and Richard Pini, Barbara Sherman.

• *Lambda* (LGBTQ) sf category: *Metal from Heaven* by August Clarke. • *Le Guin Prize for Fiction: Rakesfall* by Vajra Chandrasekera. • *Prix Actus de l'Uchronie* (France), graphic category: the *Grandville* series by 'le très british Bryan Talbot'. (Onirik.net) • *Rhysling* (SFPA poem): LONG 'The Blackthorn' by Mary Soon Lee (*Dreams & Nightmares*). SHORT 'Lost Ark' by F. J. Bergmann (*Space & Time*). • *Sturgeon* (short story): 'The Carcosa Pattern' by Conrad Loyer (*Fiyah*). [F770]

It Happens All the Time. 'The body is a constant construction site that you need to maintain – or you fall apart like in *Death Becomes Her*.' (Sophie Hermann, *London Standard*, 17 September) [PE]

R.I.P. **Tony Adams** (1940-2025), UK *Crossroads* actor also in *Doctor Who* ('The Green Death', 1973) and *Aladdin* (1986), died on 24 October aged 84. [SG] • **Alicia Bonet** (1947-2025), Mexican actress in *Los jinetes de la bruja* (1966) and others, died on 26 October aged 78. [SJ] • **Martine Brochard** (1944-2025), French actress long resident in Italy who co-starred in *Il medium* (1980) and whose books for children include *Zaffiretto il vampiretto e altri racconti* (1999), died on 18 October aged 81. [SJ] • **Jackie Burth**, US casting director whose many films include *Weird Science* (1985), *The Running Man* (1987), *Judge Dredd* (1995) and *The Hunger Games* (2012), died on 12 October aged 74. [AIP] • **Michèle Burke** (1949-2025), Oscar-winning Irish makeup artist whose films include *Quest for Fire* (1981), *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), *The Cell* (2000) and *Minority Report* (2002), died on 26 September aged 75. [AIP] • **Grant Canfield** (1945-2025), FAAn Award-winning US fan artist whose work appeared in many zines including *Locus* and *Science Fiction Review*, died on 21 October aged 80. He was nominated seven times for the fan artist Hugo in the 1970s and received the Rotsler Award for life achievement in 1999. [LB] • **Tony Caunter** (1937-2025), UK *EastEnders* actor in *The Mind of Mr Soames* (1970), *The Asphyx* (1972), *The National Union of Space People* (2016) and genre tv series including *Doctor Who* (10 episodes 1965-1983), died on 13 October aged 88. [SJ] • **Robert R. Chase** (1948-2025), US author of many short stories since his 1984 debut in *Analog*, and three sf novels beginning with *The Game of Fox and Lion* (1986), died on 20 October. [SHS] • **Ron Dean** (1938-2025), US actor in *The Dark Knight* (2008), died on 5 October aged 87. • **Samantha Eggar** (1939-2025), UK actress in *Dr Dolittle* (1967), *The Brood* (1979), *Prince Valiant* (65 episodes 1991-1993), *The Phantom* (1996), *The Astronaut's Wife* (1999) and others, died on 15 October aged 86, [SG] • **Terry A. Garey** (1948-2025), US fan and poet (some work collected in *The Cat Star and Other Poems*, 2022) who edited two sf verse anthologies, died on 6 October aged 77. [KS] Highlights of my one visit to Minneapolis

included the fine fannish hospitality of Terry and Denny Lien (1945-2023). ● *Barbara Gips* (1936-2025), creator of film advertising taglines – most famously ‘In space no one can hear you scream.’ for *Alien* – died on 16 October aged 89. [AIP] ● *James A. Hetley* (1947-2025), US author of the fantasy series ‘The Summer Country’ (from 2002), ‘Stonefort’ (2005) and ‘Bladesmith’ (2012, as James A. Burton), died on 8 October after a bike crash; he was 78. [JDN] ● *Ronald T. Jones*, US author of short sf/fantasy since 2010 (as well as military adventure novels), was killed in a hit-and-run crash on 11 October; he was 58. [F770] ● *Diane Keaton* (1946-2025), US actress in *Sleeper* (1973), *Finding Dory* (2016), and *Green Eggs and Ham* (2019-2022), died on 11 October aged 79. [LP] ● *Ingar Knudtsen* (1944-2025), Norwegian author and former fan who following his debut collection *Dimensjon S* (1975) published 30 novels – mostly sf or fantasy – died on 24 October aged 80. [J-HH] ● *Toni Korlee* (1975-2025), Finnish fan and conrunner, who worked on many local conventions and the 2017, 2019 and 2024 Worldcons, died on 12 October. [BN] ● *Jerry Leggio* (1935-2025), US actor in *Mothman* (2010), *Quantum Apocalypse* (2010), *The Terror Experiment* (2010) and others, died on 1 October aged 90. [SHS] ● *June Lockhart* (1925-2025), US actress best remembered for *Lost in Space* (83 episodes 1965-1968 plus 1988 film remake), died on 23 October aged 100. Other genre credits include *Strange Invaders* (1983), *Troll* (1986) and tv series. [SG] ● *Patrick Murray* (1956-2025), UK actor in *Haunters of the Deep* (1984) and *Vikings* (2013), died on 29 September aged 68. ● *Keith ‘Doc’ Raymond*, co-founder and fiction editor of the *Savage Planets* sf web platform, died on 21 October. [PS-P] ● *Mark Redfield*, US actor, writer, film-maker and Poe scholar who scripted and played both title roles in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (2002), edited *Poe Forevermore* (2012) and entered the Rondo awards hall of fame (for life achievement in horror) in 2016, died on 19 October. [F770] ● *Maria Riva* (1924-2025), German-born US actress in *Scrooged* (1988), died on 29 October aged 100. [SJ] ● *Patricia Routledge* (1929-2025), popular UK actress whose rare genre credits include *Egghead’s Robot* (1970), died on 3 October aged 96. [AW] ● *Prunella Scales* (1932-2025), much-loved UK *Fawlty Towers* actress whose occasional genre credits include *The Boys from Brazil* (1978), *My Friend Walter* (1992), *Wolf* (1994) and *The Ghost of Greville Lodge* (2000), died on 27 October aged 93. [SB] ● *Nabil Shaban* (1953-2025), Jordanian-UK actor in *Doctor Who* (as Sil, 6 episodes 1985-1986 plus spinoffs), *Children of Men* (2006) and *Morticia* (2009, which he also wrote and directed), died on 25 October aged 72. [NF] ● *Samuel M. Sherman* (1940-2025), US producer/writer whose script credits include *Blood of Frankenstein* (1971), *Raiders of the Living Dead* (1986) and *Dracula vs Frankenstein* (2002), died on 29 September aged 85. [SJ] ● *Drew Struzan* (1947-2025), US artist best known for film posters, especially for Lucas or Spielberg productions, died on 13 October aged 78. Famous posters include *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *The Empire Strikes Back* (special edition), *Back to the Future*, *The Goonies*, *The Thing* and *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*. [SH] ● *Rob Wieland* (1978-2025), US game designer and reviewer who worked on *Shadowrun*, *Star Wars Saga Edition*, *Firefly* and *Vampire: The Masquerade*, died on 12 October aged 47. [SHS] ● *John Woodvine* (1929-2025), UK actor in *Doctor Who* (‘The Armageddon Factor’, 1979), *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), *Knights of God* (1987) and *Dragonworld* (1994), died on 6 October aged 96. [AW] ● *Aleksey Zolotitsky* (1946-2025), Russian actor who dubbed Azrael in *Dogma* (1999) and various male roles in *Babylon 5*, died on 25 October aged 79. [AM]

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘Which biblical king is featured in Oscar Wilde’s play *Salome*?’ *Contestant*: ‘King Arthur.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) ● *Clive Myrie*: ‘According to legend, King Arthur’s knights were engaged in a search for which object, said to be the drinking vessel used by Jesus at the Last Supper?’ *Contestant*: ‘Excalibur.’ (BBC2, *Mastermind*) [PE]

Jarndyce vs Jarndyce. Chris Barkley’s Hugo recovery lawsuit (see A456, A459) failed to progress at a court-ordered 6 October ‘trial status hearing’ via Zoom, at which his nemesis Dave McCarty once again did not appear. The case continues in person on 24 November, unless McCarty needs to wash his hair instead. [F770] ● But wait! The president of the Chengdu Worldcon holding company DCFCW complained that ‘We have tried to work with Mr. McCarty for over 5 months on this matter’ (including shipping replacement awards and parts to him in August), and announced the revocation of his authority as administrator. DCFCW and the Worldcon will themselves distribute the missing Hugos. (*Locus*, 27 October) ● But wait again! Mere hours later, the DCFCW announcement was withdrawn in favour of an assurance that Honest Dave McCarty has promised to ship all those Hugos to their recipients by 9 November. [F770]

SF Encyclopedia Notes. John Clute is now posting more or less SFE-related material to a promotional Substack thingy set up by Jim Machell: see sf-encyclopedia.com/news/sfe_on_substack. ● The ever rising tide of

AI-generated spam meant to separate writers from their money has slopped over into our email feedback, with fulsome fan letters addressed to authors with SFE entries whose book (title lifted at random from entry, scraped from some other site, or simply hallucinated) desperately needs boosting via ‘Amazon Optimization’, book clubs, etc. Large Language Models are not yet savvy enough to deduce from their dates that, for example, David Drake and Guy N. Smith are no longer with us.

Fanfundery. *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*: Sandra Bond’s final newsletter *Taffluorescence!* 10 – handing over to incoming European administrator Mikołaj Kowalewski – is now at taff.org.uk/news/Taffluorescence10.pdf. Not since the Nielsen Haydens in the 1980s has a TAFF administration published so many newsletters. In this issue, Mikołaj Kowalewski offers a first foretaste of his trip report, and fandom is asked the big question of whether the 2026 eastbound TAFF race should run to Eastercon in the UK (Iridesence, Birmingham NEC, 3-6 April) or to Eurocon in Germany (MetropolCon, Berlin, 2-5 July). ‘Let’s have this public discussion.’

Court Circular. The full legal might of DC Comics is now directed at Lise Sobéron of France, who created the family advice app *Wondermum* – represented by a trousered lady bearing no resemblance to Wonder Woman except in the eyes of DC lawyers who say this terrible infringement must stop. Sobéron: ‘As far as I’m aware, DC Comics doesn’t own the word “wonder”.’ Expensive discussions continue. (*Guardian*, 14 October) J.B. Priestley, author of *Wonder Hero* (1933), is trembling in his grave.

The Dead Past. 10 Years Ago, due respect was shown: “‘Tickets for the new *Star Wars* film go on sale today, so we’ll be talking to assorted oddballs in the queue later.” (BBC Radio 5Live, 19 October)’ (*Ansible* 340, November 2015) ● 20 Years Ago, the Ig Nobel Prize for Peace was presented ‘for electrically monitoring the activity of a brain cell in a locust while that locust was watching selected highlights from the movie *Star Wars*.’ (*Ansible* 220, November 2005) ● 30 Years Ago we learned about the Avram Davidson Award: ‘this, established by the late great man’s estate, has a certain ironic appropriateness in being for “the best-beloved out-of-print works of imaginative fiction”.’ (*Ansible* 100, November 1995) ● 60 Years Ago, Robert Bloch spilled the beans in an address to a Los Angeles LASFS anniversary meeting: ‘Fandom was born in New York as the result of an illegitimate liaison between Sam Moskowitz and Don Wollheim.’ (*Ratatosk* 23, November 1965, ed. Bruce Pelz)

Doctor Who was dumped by its co-producer Disney for a variety of reasons, reportedly including ‘too woke for Trump’s USA’ (*Deadline*, 30 October). The BBC will carry on alone, though with a long gap before the next episode, a Christmas 2026 special. (*Hollywood Reporter*, 28 October)

Outraged Letters. On A459 obits: *Evelyn C. Leeper* insists that Robert Redford’s major genre films include the baseball classic *The Natural* (1984) – not listed as fantasy at IMDb, but it seems that opinions differ. ● *Marcus Rowland* notes that *Dr. Goldfoot and the Bikini Machine* ‘was released as *Dr. G and the Bikini Machine* in the UK because there really was a Doctor Goldfoot, who happened to be our local GP at the time and was not happy at all – don’t think he actually sued, he just made enough fuss that they changed the title for the UK release to shut him up.’

Random Fandom. *Prince Andrew*, according to the grapevine, has been asked for his resignation from the Knights of St Fantony.

Magazine Scene. *Julia Rios’s Worlds of Possibility* closed down with its June 2025 issue. [L] ● *On Spec*, says managing editor Diane L. Walton, will cease with the upcoming issue (volume 35 #4). Shadowpaw Press plans to revive the title as an anthology series. [P-SP/GVG] ● An ominous message on the website of ebook distributors Weightless Books: ‘New subscriptions to *F&SF* have been placed on a temporary hold at the request of the publisher.’ – with a purchase button saying ‘Sold Out’.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Wild Hair*. ‘The beginnings of a beard, like a forest fire, spread itchily on his face.’ (Lavie Tidhar, *The Bookman*, 2010) [BA] ● *The Hard-Boiled Vernacular*. ‘Yeggman, boxman, peterman, ironworker, blaster – there are more names for the racket that has kept wrinkles out of the lining of my interior for a good eight years than there are fleas on a cat’s ear when he’s being dipped to his whiskers in insecticide.’ (Harry Stephen Keeler, *When Thief Meets Thief*, 1938) ● *Science Dept.* ‘... at that altitude, it was impossible to bring water to a boil ...’ ‘... the semirigid inflatable domes, each half an acre in diameter ...’ (Allen Steele, *Coyote Rising*, 2004) [BA] ● *Without Comment*. ‘... it feels like a personal attack on my genetic potential, the dark rotting tumour waiting to flower in my gut, like my father.’ (Lauren Beukes, *Moxyland*, 2008) [BA]

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