



# The Daily Discourse



Issue 1

newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk

Friday Afternoon

Conversation: the 2023 British National Science Fiction Convention

## Welcome to Conversation

Welcome to Conversation 2023 to our members and to our Guests of Honour: Zen Cho, Niall Harrison, Jennell Jaquays, Kari Sperring, Adrian Tchaikovsky and Ursula Vernon.

I'd like to thank everyone who has helped out with preparing for the convention, and who will help out over the weekend and afterwards. I'd also like to thank the teams for the 2020, 2021 and 2022 conventions, who kept things going during the pandemic and without whose efforts this year's and future Eastercons would not be taking place.

I hope very much that everyone finds enjoyment in the mix of activities here.

—Caroline Mullan, Chair

## To Do List

Please remember to look through the Read Me, in particular the Code of Conduct and Covid policy.

You need to sign up in advance for some items: go to [conversation2023.org.uk/signup](https://conversation2023.org.uk/signup) or speak to the ops hub. If you're looking for kaffeeklatches, note that they are now being called table talks. *[Phew!—Proofreaders]*

## Programme Changes

The 'Writing about Game Universes' panel with Jennell Jaquays and Adrian Tchaikovsky will take place at 6pm today. Rumours of a companion item, 'Writing about Time Zones', cannot be confirmed.

The inevitable changes to the programme will be made automatically in ConClár, so do refresh. Where space and time permit, we'll also list changes here.

## Convention Food

The food trucks will be outside the hotel main entrance from 4pm to 9pm on Friday. On other days, they will be open from noon.

They have a great selection of food, which you can bring into the Princes Suite. Please don't order things like pizza deliveries; support the food trucks!

## Art Show

There will be no art auction this year, so make sure you go to the Art Show before 6pm on Sunday if you would like to buy art.

You can meet the artists and see their work in the art show today, from 6pm to 8pm.

## Want to Help Out?

Even if you didn't volunteer in advance, we still need your help: please go to the ops hub to volunteer for as much or as little time as you can spare. In return, you can earn groats and, if you volunteer for at least sixteen hours, your choice of a t-shirt or tote bag at the same time as giving yourself a warm fuzzy feeling. *[Are we sure that's not just the heating being on too high?—Ed]*

Once you've volunteered, you will get a volunteer form from your team leader. After your shift ends, they should sign off your forms and give you your groats.

You can spend your groats at the food trucks, real ale bar, most dealers' and fan tables, in the art show and at the hotel bars (except for Brightside).

## The Daily Discourse

We'll be publishing every day during the convention, so look out for future editions.

Please leave contributions in the box at the ops hub or email them to [newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk).

Spurious gossip is welcome!

## Programme Highlights

At 4:30pm in Queens, Niall Harrison will be talking about his Desert Island Books. The NewCon Press launch follows on from it at 6pm, including Kari Sperring's *The Book of Gaheris*.

You can join in with The Dark Room, a live action interactive video game, at 6pm in Pavilion.

Tomorrow at noon, Kari Sperring will be interviewed by Juliet McKenna in Queens.

## New to Eastercon?

If it's your first Eastercon, why not pop along to the Tea Lounge at 4:30pm to find out what's going on.

## Parkrun

Sign up at the ops hub if you would like to join the group going to the Babbs Mill run tomorrow.

## BSFA Awards

If you want to vote in this year's BSFA awards, please visit [bit.ly/BSFA2022](http://bit.ly/BSFA2022) before noon on Saturday. The awards will be presented at 6pm on Saturday.

## Cash Machines

Last time we were here, the hotel lobby ATM charged £1.99 but there was a free one at Resorts World, a ten minute walk away around the lake. We believe that this is still the case, but would appreciate confirmation.

I often have long conversations all by myself, and I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I am saying.

—Oscar Wilde

## Access Issues

If you require assistance with anything, please ask a member of convention staff or speak to the ops hub. If you wish to do so, you can pick up an access card with appropriate wording from registration. These can be personalised to fit your personal circumstances if you prefer.

We're sorry, but we only have one access ramp, not two as marked on the map. This means that, while all the spaces on the ground floor are still accessible, the route is rather convoluted.

The gender neutral toilets have been relocated to be the toilet block outside Monarch.

## No Posters

You are not permitted to put up posters anywhere in the hotel. This includes mirrors, walls and windows, as well as the more traditional toilet doors.

## Masks Optional

Some programme items are explicitly mask optional. You can find which they are by using the 'mask optional' tag in the con guide or looking on the printed errata sheet.

Please remember that some people cannot wear masks for medical or other reasons.

## Hotel Parking

We had previously announced that parking for non-residents was £14 per day.

Unfortunately, we had misunderstood and non-residents will be charged the full commercial rate. Cheaper parking is available in the area, including at Resorts World (£17 for up to twelve hours but reduced to £3 if you spend £20 or more in Resorts World bars or restaurants and have your ticket discounted by Guest Services) and at Birmingham International Station (£12 per weekday, £9 at weekends).

Hotel residents will be charged £10 per day. Please speak to the hotel reception to ensure that you pay this reduced rate, as the code we were given (JAKGS) doesn't appear to be working in the app.

## Scandom Fandom

The FANAC Fan History Project will have a scanning station at Conversation and they are hoping to get hold of some quality UK/European zines to add to the archive. If you've brought fanzines with you that you would like to get scanned, please bring them along to the Craft Lounge from 10:30am to 12:30pm on Saturday and Sunday.

This issue was produced by Flick, with help from Jan van 't Ent, Alison Scott and Mike Scott. Artwork by Sue Mason. Hot tip: if you're a non-resident car owner, you should check if you know anyone who came by train.



# The Daily Discourse



Issue 2

newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk

Saturday Midday

Conversation: the 2023 UK National Science Fiction Convention

## Doc Weir Award

Voting for the Doc Weir award, given annually to one of the unsung heroes of fandom, is now open. There's a link on the convention website under "What's Happening", or go direct to: [www.conversation2023.org.uk/the-doc-weir-award/](http://www.conversation2023.org.uk/the-doc-weir-award/).

## Refreshment Available!

Remember that the convention programme guide and website pages are not immutable artefacts! Please remember to refresh them regularly to get the most up to date information.

## Green Room

Please could programme participants come to the Green Room (Hampton) fifteen minutes before their item is scheduled to begin.

## Pool Policy

For everyone's safety, Hilton policy requires that children under 16 years of age must be supervised and accompanied in the water at all times by an adult over the age of 18. The minimum supervision required is 1 adult per 2 children in the pool at any one time. ~~Do not take glasses into the pool area.~~ [Sorry, wrong Eastercon — Ed.]

## Featured Events

Some of the major programme items today are:

3pm Queens: The Hay Lecture, given by Dr Colin Carson of Georgetown University with an introduction by Graham Sleight.

6pm Queens: The BSFA Awards ceremony, with BSFA Chair Allen Stroud presiding.

7pm: We Look Amazing. There are no hall costume prizes or Masquerade, but at 7pm tonight many of us will be putting on our fanciest clothes and going to the bar.

7:30pm Pavilion: Glasgow 24 Ceilidh.

## Ursula Vernon's Garden

This may be labouring the obvious, but the online tour of Ursula Vernon's garden depends on suitable weather in her area. Based on the forecast, this item has been moved to 1:30pm on Monday in Queens.

Look at her garden journal on DeviantArt, Tor.com ([www.tor.com/2017/01/16/ursula-vernon-on-gardening-history/](http://www.tor.com/2017/01/16/ursula-vernon-on-gardening-history/)) and elsewhere if you want to know why we have a tour of her garden.

## Book Launches

Conversation Guest of Honour Niall Harrison's book *All These Worlds* will be launched at 1:30pm today in Queens. Nina Allen will lead a short interview with Niall about the book, and refreshments are promised.

At 3pm, Sandra Bond is launching her "horrifyingly humorous, or humorously horrifying" second novel *The Devil's Finger* at her table in the Dealers' Room, where there is also likely to be fudge. Although possibly not a devil's finger of fudge.

## Midnight At The Lost & Found

If you lose anything, please check for it in Ops. If you find anything that looks lost, please take it to Ops. We currently have a vaccination card, a Kindle and a cardigan waiting to be reunited with their rightful owners.

## The Daily Discourse

Please leave contributions in the box at the ops hub or email them to [newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk).

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## Leaflets

Remember that no posters may be put up anywhere around the convention. Note also that the hotel is being very efficient at removing fliers and leaflets left on tables.

The newsletter is available from the large rack outside the Dealers' Room (Monarch). As you may well already know if you've managed to acquire this issue.

## Overheard at the Convention

Q: What do you call a food truck with no food?

A: A truck.

—*Sandra Bond*

## Zen Cho Signing

There is an extra signing at 2pm today at the Books on the Hill table in the Dealers' Room.

## The Phantom Menace

Rumours of a phantom Tesco abound — the enigmatic anagrammatic phrase “Spiv’s ensign erect hoax” circulates in conversations. Hypotheses and potential theories are bandied about, ranging from the store belonging to the fae, to purported sightings of it being carried off on the back of a giant beetle.

Connections to the Cult Of The Coming Of The Food Truck are yet to be proven.

—*Reiley Daniels*

Surely she had endured enough for one evening without having to listen to intelligent conversation.

—*Stella Gibbons, Cold Comfort Farm*

## Volunteers Needed

Please can more volunteers go to the Volunteer Desk in Ops to sign up for door duty on the Art Show and Dealers' Room for today and/or tomorrow.

## Shortcut

Don't forget that you can go outside to walk directly from the main entrance to the entrance by registration (except between midnight and 6am), and avoid the maze of twisty passages all alike.

## Science Fiction Foundation

The SFF has a table in the Dealers' Room selling books for £1 each, or make them an offer for a bulk purchase.

## Technical Notes

If you're not using a microphone, online watchers can't hear you. Moderators should remember to ask for a mic-running volunteer at the start of panels. If you ask a question, please wait for the mic, speak clearly, and ensure that it has a question mark at the end of it. Moderators please tell Tech when you're about to start so that they can be ready with the microphones.

## Free Drinks!

Soda water is apparently free at the Hilton bar.

## Sleepless In Solihull

Insomnia is a video game con at the NEC and is overlapping to some extent with our interests. You will need make reservations with the restaurants in Resorts World because there are a lot more of them than there are of us. Also, their attitude to peace-bonding realistic weapons is a lot more relaxed than ours, so please complain to them and not to us.

## Food Trucks

We're sorry that the food trucks didn't start serving yesterday. We're promised that they will be here on the remaining days of the con from 1pm (not noon as we claimed in the previous issue). They will close at 9pm today and Sunday, and at 5pm on Monday.

## Evening Filking

Filking will be in the Sussex room from 6pm tonight and tomorrow night.

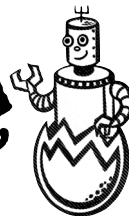
## Journal of the Plague Year

As expected, we have had a report of a member of the con testing positive for Covid, probably from exposure before the convention. Please keep taking sensible precautions, everyone!

This issue was produced by Mike Scott, with help from Jan van 't Ent, Flick, Alison Scott, Giulia De Cesare and Steve Davies. Artwork by Sue Mason. Hot tip: there really is a very large Tesco two junctions south of here on the M42, but it's not in walking distance.



# The Daily Discourse



Issue 3

newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk

Saturday Evening

Conversation: the 2023 UK National Science Fiction Convention

## Bid Session

The bid session to decide the location of the 2025 Eastercon will be held tomorrow at noon in Queens. There will also be an update from next year's Eastercon, Levitation.

## Programme Highlights

Remember that Glasgow 2024 will be holding a ceilidh this evening from 7:30pm in Pavilion. Dress to impress for We Look Amazing.

Adrian Tchaikovsky will be interviewed by John Coxon tomorrow morning at 10:30am in Queens.

Also at 10:30am each day is the feedback session. On Sunday it will be in Sandringham, and on Monday it will be in Pavilion.

## Wifi

Non-residents wanting to use the hotel wifi should look for the "I have a promotional code" link at the bottom of the sign-in page and use the code "Lobby" (case sensitive).

## Disinformation

The newsletter team would like to express out regrets that we were not asked to be on Saturday's Disinformation panel. After all, we have years of experience of misinforming fans.

## It Was 50 Years Ago Today

"The British SF Award was not presented this year due to popular apathy." (*Checkpoint* 37, April 1973, as reported in *Ansible*.)

## Fan Fundery

Sue Mason's TAFF report, *Into the Wide Purple Yonder*, is now published. You can get a print copy from Alison at Eastercon (until they run out) or a pdf copy, in either case for a donation of £5 to the Transatlantic Fan Fund. Only 23 years! That's not too many.

## Living in the Future

If you have the Hilton Honors app on your phone and sign up for an account, you can get a digital key for your hotel room and use your phone to unlock the door. As long as you haven't run out of battery....

## Virtual Art

Remember to check out the virtual art show: [virtualartshow.squarespace.com](http://virtualartshow.squarespace.com)

## Door Dragons

We still need volunteers to check badges at Dealers' and Art Show tomorrow. Please go to the ops hub if you can help. Ops can also always use more help.

## Restaurant Reviews

Karaage fried chicken restaurant in Resorts World is definitely recommended for those looking for something better than burgers. As well as crispy fried chicken with tonkatsu sauce, they also do donburi fried rice, yakitori noodles, sushi and Japanese pickles. There's a cute vending robot and the staff were helpful. Don't try to pronounce the names of Japanese dishes correctly though, it just gets them confused.

—Steve Davies

Fancy dining in Birmingham city centre? Try a restaurant hidden in a pub. The excellent Indian Café Racer is neither café nor pub grub but a full-on restaurant inside the Wellington Hotel pub on Bristol Street. Large servings of great mid-priced modest-strength curries with lovely service. Full-sized motorbike by the fireplace. Lots of fun info in small print on the menus. A true hidden gem. [indiancaferacer.com](http://indiancaferacer.com)

—Arthur Chappell

The hotel's posh restaurant (Brightsmith) only costs a few quid more than the bar food, and is much nicer.

## Food Trucks!

We've heard good things about both of the food trucks that are open today, including from a coeliac who says that he has never had such good gluten free fried chicken before.

## Overheard in the Bar

"My train from London was delayed by goats on the tracks."  
—Jon Baddeley

## Attention, Panellists

Please assume that the mics in all programme rooms are being streamed at all times and modulate your pre- and post-panel conversations accordingly.

Alternatively, do not do this and help us to fill up issue 4.

## Shaggy Dog Story

*If I Had A Dog* is a new illustrated children's book created by Eira and Smuzz. Copies are £10 each or £18 for two: just ask one of them if you'd like to buy, or email [smuzz@smuzz.org.uk](mailto:smuzz@smuzz.org.uk).

The telephone, which interrupts the most serious conversations and cuts short the most weighty observations, has a romance of its own.

—Virginia Woolf

## Crafty

There will be a Glasgow 2024 craft session at 3pm tomorrow in York [*I'd have thought they'd do it in Glasgow—Ed*].

## Classified Adverts

Farah Mendlesohn has two small and old laptops with her, a MacBook Air and a PC. Both work but with problems. The first person to offer her £50 for either can have it.

## Food Shopping

As well as the sandwiches and pizza available in the hotel lobby, there are sandwiches available from Costa and WH Smith in Resorts World. There's also a Lindt shop and one selling very nice macarons.

## Late Night Drinking

The Real Ale Bar will stay open until 1am tonight and tomorrow night, then not reopen until 11am the following morning.

## Wanted, Undead or Alive

The discussion launched by addressing the question of "What exactly do we mean by the undead?" Might it include an AI construct of someone who's died? Is Frankenstein's monster a zombie? OK then, what about Robocop? SF blurs the distinction between those who have crossed the line and those who haven't. Things go wrong when only part comes back.

Ghosts can represent the chasm between us and our ancestors, a past we don't understand, our fears. All cultures have a mythology and rituals to address our fears about the divide and those who don't cross it.

Why are writers drawn to this theme? Trying to deal with death in our lives, trying to communicate over the gulf of generations, grief and love for one who has died.

People used to die at home; now death is removed, sanitised, the rituals associated with it are gone.

Do the dead come back because the living have failed to carry out those rituals that ensure their progression to the next world?

—Giulia De Cesare



Meg MacDonald (mod), Zen Cho, Garth Nix, Stephen Deas,  
David Thomas Moore: *Wanted, Undead or Alive*

This issue was produced by Flick, with help from Jan van 't Ent, Steve Davies, Alison Scott and Mike Scott. Artwork by Sue Mason. Hot tip: there's a large ASDA and a Boots in the Chelmsley Wood shopping centre, about a ten minute drive away, but it's still not really in walking distance.



# The Daily Discourse



Issue 4

[newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk)

Sunday Lunchtime

Conversation: the 2023 UK National Science Fiction Convention

## 2025 Eastercon Announced

The 2025 Eastercon will be Reconnect in Belfast. Their Guests of Honour will be **Lauren Beukes, Derek Landy, Rebecca Roanhorse, Jeanette Ng, William Simpson** and special Bar Guest of Honour **Ian McDonald**. This will be the first time the Eastercon has been to Ireland and we're all very excited. Congratulations to James Bacon, Tommy Ferguson, Jo Zebedee and all the team.

Join now for the early bird rate of £60 at [registration.easterconbelfast.org](http://registration.easterconbelfast.org)

Commiseration to Catastrophe; we'll just have to wait for another year to have an Eastercon featuring baby space leopards and build-your-own beds.

## BSFA Awards

Congratulations to the BSFA Award winners:

**Novel:** *City of Last Chances*  
Adrian Tchaikovsky

**Short Fiction:** "Of Charms, Ghosts and Grievances"  
Alette de Bodard

**Artwork:** Cover of *The Red Scholar's Wake*  
Alyssa Wynans

**Non-Fiction:** *Terry Pratchett: A Life with Footnotes*  
Rob Wilkins

**Best Book for Younger Readers:** *Unraveller*  
Frances Hardinge

## Sunday Highlights

6pm: BSFA lecture, given by Dr Penny Goodman, Queens

9pm: Performance by comedy duo Prison Biscuit, Pavilion

At 7:30pm, in an addition to our published programme, GoH Kari Sperring will be joining the PG/12A rated fantasy readings in Balmoral.

## Queueing Theory

The food truck queues aren't as long as they look. If you're waiting in a food queue, why not start a conversation with the people around you? Ask them what they've enjoyed so far this weekend and what they're looking forward to.

## Accessing Virtual Programme

We're still getting reports that some of you haven't managed to log into our streams. The full instructions are at:

[conversation2023.org.uk/virtual-programme/](http://conversation2023.org.uk/virtual-programme/)

You need to log in with the email you used to join the

convention. If after you've followed the instructions you're still having trouble, we are helping in the #help-desk channel in the Discord, or ask at the ops hub.

## Catching up with Catch Up

We're sorry we haven't got the catch up video running yet; tech's been a bit busy running all those lovely streams. We're expecting to have catch up working later today. We're getting a lot of questions about how long you will be able to watch for. It will at least be a few days, but please watch for further announcements.

## Covid Roundup

We're continuing to get regular reports of positive covid tests. Please mask where possible for your own and others' protection.

## Overheard at Eastercon

On spotting Levitation chair Farah Mendlesohn's green and yellow hair: "Greater love hath no woman than to dye for her Eastercon".

## A maze of twisty little passages all different

Despite appearances, there are secret stair routes to all floors, which you can use if it would



be convenient for you. Try not to end up in Narnia.

### Active Listening

The Listener phone hasn't been as reliable as we'd like. If you can't get through please message our Access lead, Karen Fishwick, in Discord or go to the ops hub and someone will get straight back to you.

### Why are we special?

Adrian Tchaikovsky was asked what makes SF and Fantasy different from other genres. He explained that the answer is world building. It's what we do. It's why SFF classics stand up: they give us worlds that we want to spend time on.

### Gannet Fandom

You all seem to love the food trucks! So much so that you ate up all the souvlaki by 7:30pm. They're now back with more meat. And more halloumi. And more chips.

People asked about chairs by the trucks; please come into the hotel and eat your food in Princes – the refectory/fan lounge.

### Use Your Groats, Luke

If you're working on the con, remember that you can use your groats at most tables in the dealers' room.

### The Groat Redeemer

The Treasurer will be touring the dealers' room at 4pm today to convert dealers' groats into cash. He'll do that again

Sometimes the greatest adventure is simply a conversation.

—Amadeus Wolfe

tomorrow, and can often be found in the ops hub if you need to exchange your groats urgently.

### Fan Fund Auction

The Fan Fund auction will be tonight at 9pm in Balmoral. If you are bidding remotely you should join by Zoom to prevent stream lag. The link to join is [bit.ly/2023-fan-funds-auction](https://bit.ly/2023-fan-funds-auction) and is in the programme item post for the auction in Discord.

### Crypto Fiasco

I know we're all disappointed the panel didn't take place, but as a consolation can I interest you in the next best thing, a very reasonably priced NFT of the panel?

—The Ming in Yellow

### Critical Moose News

Pemmi-Con's raffle has been drawn, and the winners are 39, 34, 13, 42 and 14. Come to our table in the Dealers Hall by 6pm to claim your prize.

### Obvious Joke Removed for Taste Reasons

The Satellite 8 desk has your chance to put life on Earth (according to the Panspermia theory at any rate). So far, only one person has successfully landed three comets on Earth, thus ensuring life started and hence we can all safely exist at the convention this weekend.

### The Easter Egg Hunt

Pick up questions from the ops hub. Hunt till the ops hub closes or runs out of eggs.



*The Catastrophe team [– they were robbed. Ed].*

This issue was produced by Alison Scott, with help from Steven Cain, Steve Davies, Mike Scott, Flick, Giulia De Cesare and Jan van 't Ent. Artwork by Sue Mason. Hot tip: If you stick your head in a bucket of chilli sauce, space leopards will not eat your face. Probably.





# The Daily Discourse



Issue 5

newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk

Sunday Evening

Conversation: the 2023 UK National Science Fiction Convention

## Programme Highlights

This evening, you can see comedy duo Prison Biscuit at 9pm in Pavilion.

Tomorrow at noon, Zen Cho will be interviewed by Virginia in Queens.

Ursula Vernon's Garden Tour will take place at 1:30pm in Queens.

The Closing Ceremony is at 3pm in Queens.

## Getting Ready To Go

Check out time at this hotel is noon. After you've checked out, you can leave your bags in the hotel's luggage store or, if it fills up, the ops hub.

Attaching a luggage tag with full name and badge name, and taking a photo of the bag first to show when collecting it from the ops hub, would both be very much appreciated.

If you've parked at the hotel, you might want to think about going to reception to pay for your parking this evening, to avoid queues tomorrow. This will only work if you leave before you arrived on Friday [*Easier if your vehicle is a TARDIS—Ed*].

Breakfast tomorrow and on Tuesday will close at 10am.

The food trucks will be here from 1pm to 4pm tomorrow, and they take groats.

## Doc Weir

The Doc Weir Award is presented annually at the Eastercon to recognise a significant contribution to fandom which has largely gone unrecognised. You can vote for the person you think deserves to be recognised at: [conversation2023.org.uk/the-doc-weir-award](https://conversation2023.org.uk/the-doc-weir-award) before noon.

The award will be presented during the Closing Ceremony.

## Tea Time

The Tea Lounge has moved to Norfolk for the remainder of the convention. [*Cromer? No, she went of her own accord—Ed*]

## Art Show

Art Show closes at 6pm today. From 6:30pm to 9pm, you can collect your purchases.

## Fan Funds

Voting for the European Fan Fund ends on 10<sup>th</sup> April. See [fandomrover.com/2023/02/02/eff-race-begins](https://fandomrover.com/2023/02/02/eff-race-begins) for more information and to vote.

Voting for the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund ends on 11<sup>th</sup> April. See [taff.org.uk/vote.php](https://taff.org.uk/vote.php).

## Update on Train Disruption

The goats [*NB not groats—Ed*] on the train tracks outside London were part of the emergency repair team heading north to deal with the bridge troll between Oxford and Didcot.

## Check Your Timesheets

Do you still need a few more hours of volunteering to qualify for your reward t-shirt of tote bag? Head over to the ops hub to help out.



*The Glasgow 2024 ceilidh*

## Devouring History

Gillian Polack, Sidsel and Shana Worthen

Historically, what we ate not only depended on what was available, but also on other factors as well, which writers creating fantasy worlds do not always get right. These considerations include the available technology: there are limits to what you can cook if all you have is an open fire, maybe a wooden spit, and porous unglazed earthenware. People with *Game of Thrones* levels of technology could not have baked lemon cakes.

Historically, religion also placed massive restrictions on what was eaten: some animals were forbidden, leavening could not be used at certain times, religiously-mandated abstinence from certain foods was much more frequent, certain food combinations were not permitted. Many restrictions based on religious beliefs still apply to a lot of cultures today.

The development of trade routes introduced new foods but they were not always adopted quickly due to mistrust of them, or due to their cost. Another thing to remember is that things change over time: an apple or a chicken from the 12<sup>th</sup> century would be very different from apples and chickens today.

—Giulia De Cesare

The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.

—Winston Churchill

## Evening Gaming

You can sign up to play *Blood on the Clocktower* at 10pm this evening in the games room.

## Brain's Brian Teaser

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2050 a generation starship left Earth heading for Proxima Centauri (4 light years away) averaging ½ light-speed. In 2055, on 1<sup>st</sup> October a hyperdrive ship, travelling at an average of 4 times lightspeed leaves Earth for Proxima Centauri. Which ship is closest to Proxima Centauri when they meet?

## Satellite 8 Everywhere All At Once

Satellite 8 has a fine display of posters around the Metropole (in the Alphaverse, where food trucks *are* trucks and beer is just £1 a pint)! Just take a quick 'verse-jump to see them, but avoid the bagels. Stuck in this universe? Then visit our fan table in the dealers' room to find out more about Scotland's biennial (usually!) science fiction convention featuring our unique blend of *Science Fiction*, *Science Fact*, *Science Fun*.

## No Boots

In addition to the vanishing Tesco Express, the Boots near the entrance to the Airport also exists only on Google's maps.

## So You Want To Be A Writer?

Tiffani Angus (previously a senior lecturer in creative writing and publishing and co-author of *Spec Fic for Newbies*) and Trip Galey (also previously a lecturer in creative writing and author of the upcoming *A Market of Dreams and Destiny*) would like to announce that in May they'll be launching the Underhill Academy for SFF Writers, an online platform teaching a variety of pre-recorded and live courses on all aspects of writing, getting published, and surviving as a writer. Please pass the news along to beginning writers in your life!

## Covid News

As you may know, we've had more reports of covid, including some convention staff members.

Please remember that if you develop new symptoms then you should not be attending the convention. Don't assume your symptoms are allergies.

## Old News

You can get electronic copies of all the issues of the newsletter on the Discord and on the website at [conversation2023.org.uk/newsletter](https://conversation2023.org.uk/newsletter).

This issue was produced by Flick, with help from Jan van 't Ent, Steve Davies, Alison Scott and Mike Scott. Artwork by Sue Mason.

Hot tip: If you wear a properly fitted FFP2 or FFP3 face mask, space leopards won't eat your face. Probably.



# The Daily Discourse



Issue 6

[newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@conversation2023.org.uk)

Monday midday

Conversation: the 2023 UK National Science Fiction Convention

## From The Chair

Many thanks to all members of the convention and especially to everyone who helped out and made Conversation a success. Travel safely and we hope to see you again next year in Telford.

—*Caroline Mullan*

## Programme Highlights

Ursula Vernon's Garden Tour will take place at 1:30pm in Queens.

The Closing Ceremony is at 3pm in Queens.

## Plague Flag Needed

Several members of the convention have tested positive for Covid-19, including one of the other newsletter editors. Please wear masks more diligently and avoid crowds. Consider watching items via streaming if you have a cough.

A reminder to attendees who have tested positive and are isolating: you can absolutely phone or text 07761 634655 (+44 7761 634 655) to speak to a member of our listening team, who can help you with getting your items collected or other isolation logistics.

## Time To Go

Check out time at this hotel is noon. After you've checked out, you can leave your bags in the hotel's luggage store.

If you've parked at the hotel, don't forget you need to pay before you can get out through the barrier.

## Fan Funds

Voting for the European Fan Fund ends today. See issue 5 for more information.

Voting for the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund ends on Tuesday.

## More Fan Funds

The Fan Funds Auction on Sunday night sold a number of very impressive items, ranging from Adrian Tchaikovsky

special edition hardbacks at £280 to old ZZ9 T-shirts.

The auction took £1,733 – to be split between GUFF, TAFF and EFF. Thanks again to everyone who donated or bought items, and everyone who helped to make it fun. Thanks so much to tech, especially Keith, JT and Herald, for working tirelessly to deliver a unique setup for us.

The Fan Funds table in the Dealers' Room will be having a yard sale today. Go along to get a bargain to take home.

## Abandon Trucks!

The noodle food truck has had to leave the site, but we should still have souvlaki until 6pm today as previously agreed.





However, Resorts World tell us that their contract does not allow their outlets to close for any reason short of total annihilation, so if you want to brave the rain, you should still be able to get food from there.

### **Plague Dogs**

The last surviving members of the convention will be partying this evening in a location to be revealed later.

### **Levitation 2024**

Next year's Eastercon is Levitation, from 29 March to 1 April in the Telford International Centre. Telford is only about 35 miles away from this year's venue, on the other side of Birmingham and close to Ironbridge, Shrewsbury and the Welsh border. Our Guests of Honour are Jackie Burns, Genevieve Cogman, Michelle Sagara (who also writes as Michelle West) and Tade Thompson. You can join at our table in the dealers' room here, or online at [registration.eastercon2024.co.uk](https://registration.eastercon2024.co.uk). We're looking forward to welcoming you all to Telford next year.

### **Reconnect 2025**

2025's Eastercon is Reconnect at the Belfast ICC. Guests in 2025 will be Lauren Beukes, Derek Landy, Jeannette Ng, Rebecca Roanhorse, William Simpson and Ian McDonald (Bar GoH).

[registration.easterconbelfast.org](https://registration.easterconbelfast.org).

Because no matter how hard a conversation is, I know that on the other side of that difficult conversation lies peace. Knowledge. An answer delivered. Character is revealed. Truces are formed. Misunderstandings are resolved. Freedom lies across the field of the difficult conversation. And the more difficult the conversation, the greater the freedom.

—Shonda Rhimes

### **Art Show**

Art show says, please go and collect the items you bought; there are still several pieces awaiting their new owners. They would also like to remind you that the virtual art show will be open until the end of April, please come and visit it at [virtualartshow.squarespace.com](https://virtualartshow.squarespace.com).

Finally, a huge thank you to all artists, buyers and visitors!

### **Reverse TARDIS effect**

Isn't it weird when packing to go home how much your luggage has increased in size? I swear I didn't buy that much stuff in the dealers' room.

### **SFF Thanks**

Thank you all. The SFF book sale raised £205.47 plus 1 Swedish crown and 29 US cents.

### **Imminent Worldcon!**

Less than a year and a half to go until the next UK Worldcon in Glasgow! All membership rates will rise on 1<sup>st</sup> May: that's only a couple of weeks away, so if you haven't joined yet, you can do so via the website: [glasgow2024.org](https://glasgow2024.org)

### **Tech Stars**

In order to provide the Conversation hybrid programme, Tech delivered 6 HD streams with multiple in and out streams, considerably more than any previous hybrid convention.

In particular, the 2022 Worldcon had only four full streams. We're all impressed at the way they've been able to deliver something that would put many professional conferences to shame.

### **Volunteers**

Enormous thanks to everyone who has volunteered this weekend especially the many younger fans who've volunteered for the first time.

### **Feedback**

Post any thoughts about how future Eastercons should be different in the #next-time channel on Discord.

### **Old News**

Electronic copies of all issues of the newsletter are on the Discord and the website at [conversation2023.org.uk/newsletter](https://conversation2023.org.uk/newsletter). It'll be on [efanzines.com](https://efanzines.com) in due course.

This issue was produced by Steve Davies, with help from a few surviving plague zombies including Mike Scott, Alison (Brainzzz!) Scott and Giulia De Cesare. Artwork by Sue Mason. For a spoof issue of the newsletter, go to ChatGPT and enter the prompt "Five Go Mad on Moose, 3 columns, 2 sides, no staples"