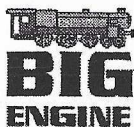


Big Engine

Science fiction & fantasy



The ones that got away

Welcome to Big Engine, a new quality science fiction and fantasy book list run by Ben Jeapes.

Big Engine publishes the best science fiction and fantasy by authors who the bigger, safer publishers have let slip through the net.

We encourage talented new writers who bring a fresh voice to the field and we rescue popular works from out-of-print ignominy.

We use the latest print-on-demand methods to bring books direct to their readers, and to ensure that our titles are always available.

Big Engine is always looking out for new authors. Feel free to contact us to discuss ideas. Otherwise please send hard copy sample chapters and a synopsis in the first instance, with return postage, to:

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The Leaky Establishment, by David Langford

ISBN 1 903468 00 0

£7.99

"I'd rank this book alongside Michael Frayn's The Tin Men, another neglected classic. I've wanted for years to see it back in print. It is one of those books you end up buying several copies of, because you just have to lend it to friends. It's very funny. It's very real."

- from the introduction by Terry Pratchett

Langford's 1984 comedy classic, not at all based on the author's work at a nuclear establishment nowhere near Newbury, with a brand new introduction by Terry Pratchett. Black comedy overtakes the unfortunate defence-scientist hero Roy Tappen when a "harmless" theft of office furniture lands him with his very own doomsday nuclear stockpile at home. Chain reactions of insanely comic escapades follow, with disaster piled on disaster, leading the increasingly desperate Tappen to the borders of science fiction as he seeks a way out of the mess.

The Leaky Establishment was first published in 1984 to great reviews, and has lost none of its charm since. Terry Pratchett has written a new introduction to take it into a new century.

David Langford is a luminary of the British Science Fiction community and editor of the regular Hugo-winning newsletter *Ansible*. He lives in Reading, which thanks to *Ansible* has more Hugos per capita than any other town in the UK.

Reviews of the first edition of *The Leaky Establishment*

- "It's either a gloriously absurd farce or a sober record of The Great British System disguised as a gloriously absurd farce: whichever way round it's the kind of book you can give to spouses/partners who can't stand SF."
Andy Sawyer, British SF Association, *Paperback Inferno*
- "A comic novel with both verbal wit and comedy of situation, that owes something to the tradition of Tom Sharpe, and a great deal more to the Langfordian warped sense of humour."
Mary Gentle, *Interzone*
- "A splendid send-up."
Daily Mail, London
- "How David Langford keeps up his high spirits is a wonder."
The Guardian, London
- "An agreeable romp."
AWRE News, house journal of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment (since renamed), Aldermaston, Berkshire, England

The Ant Men of Tibet, and Other Stories,
edited by David Pringle

ISBN 1 903468 02 7
£7.99

A brand new collection of ten stories originally published in *Interzone*: flamboyant space opera, chilly thrillers, contemplation and comic fantasy.

- Stephen Baxter: The Ant-Men of Tibet
- Alastair Reynolds: Byrd Land Six
- Chris Beckett: The Warrior Half-and-Half
- Keith Brooke: The People of the Sea
- Eugene Byrne: Alfred's Imaginary Pestilence
- Nicola Caines: Civilization
- Jayme Lynn Blaschke: The Dust
- Molly Brown: The Vengeance of Grandmother Wu
- Peter T. Garratt: The Collectivization of Transylvania
- Eric Brown: Vulpheous

Does *Interzone* need an introduction? It is still Britain's best selling SF short fiction magazine, and the only monthly one. All these stories are by authors who had their first or near-first sales to the magazine, and together they are a typical slice of the variety and entertainment that *Interzone* has to offer. Every new story opens up a completely new world with new visions and ideas. Buy this book and bask in the diversity that is British SF.

Swan Songs: The Complete Hooded Swan Collection,
by Brian Stableford

ISBN 1 903468 04 3
£16.99

Brian Stableford's *Hooded Swan* series — *Halcyon Drift*, *Rhapsody in Black*, *Promised Land*, *The Paradise Game*, *The Ferris Device* and *Swan Song* — was first published in the early 1970s and redefined the genre of space opera. Grainger, narrator and anti-hero, is a cynical pacifist light years removed from the typical space jock, who is indentured against his will as pilot of the revolutionary starship *Hooded Swan*. Each novel pits him and the Swan against a new puzzle or menace while at the same time letting him pay off his fine, bit by bit, until he can call himself a free man again.

Here for the first time, all six *Hooded Swan* novels are published in one omnibus edition.

"A quirkily entertaining blend of space opera and hardboiled private eye story".

David Pringle, *The Ultimate Guide to Science Fiction*, on *Halcyon Drift*.

Brian Stableford has written 75 books, including 50 novels. In 1999 he was the recipient of the Science Fiction Research Association's Pilgrim Award for his contributions to sf scholarship, completing his set of the four major awards available in that field — the others being the SFRA's Pioneer Award (1996), the Distinguished Scholarship Award of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts (1987) and the J. Lloyd Eaton Award (1987). His recent non-fiction includes *Yesterday's Bestsellers* and *Glorious Perversity: The Decline and Fall of Literary Decadence*, both published by Borgo Press in 1998. He also works in the field of the popularization of science, in which he is currently producing a series of "LabNotes" pamphlets on recent developments in medical biotechnology for the Education Division of the Wellcome Trust. He occasionally translates obscure 19th century fantasies from the French, his most recent endeavour in that vein being Paul Feval's 1869 account of *Vampire City*, issued by Sarob Press, 1999.

The *Hooded Swan* series was written while he was a postgraduate student at the University of York, initially in the Biology department and later in Sociology. He taught Sociology for 12 years at the University of Reading before becoming a full-time writer in 1988.

Shadow Black, by Tom Arden

ISBN 1 903468 05 1

£7.99

"Rebecca in the House of Usher (with touches of Sunset Boulevard)."

England, 1955. Harriet Locke accepts an invitation to the seaside mansion of Shadow Black and looks forward to joining her fiancé Mark Vardell, the handsome avant-garde artist who is painting the reclusive Lord Harrowblest. Her life is about to change, and change forever, in a household of bizarre characters bound together by ties of deceit, lust and half-truths.

At Shadow Black, Harriet meets Yardley Urban, faded Hollywood goddess, and Cora Van Voyd, elderly, seven-times-married gossip and grande dame. There is crippled, embittered media mogul Lord Harrowblest and his faithful servant Collidge; pathetic, drunken songwriter Jellicoe Travers; Milly, the hare-lipped parlourmaid; and Toby Chance, the lonely fifteen-year-old science fiction fan who somehow links them all together.

And then there is Mr Vox, mysterious agent of a force that will tear away the veils of deceit from Shadow Black, and from Harriet too, in a climax that boldly mingles fantasy, social comedy and gothic horror.

Tom Arden, who grew up in Australia, has worked as a university lecturer in Northern Ireland and now lives in England. His first novel was *Moon Escape*, written when he was seven, but it was with *The Orokon* series that he hit the public eye when it began appearing in 1997: a five-volume fantasy epic set in a Ruritanian world halfway between Jane Austen and Mervyn Peake. Now a full-time writer, he reviews regularly for *Interzone* and is a columnist for the sf, fantasy and horror website *At the World's End*.

Bad Timing and Other Stories, by Molly Brown

ISBN 1 903468 06 X

£7.99

"Watch out! Molly Brown's Bad Timing And Other Stories is not so much a short story collection as an explosion of parallel universes and provocative ideas. Wow!"

- Connie Willis

"Molly Brown is the best company imaginable. If you can't get a date with her (and you probably can't), the next best thing is reading her stories — which are funny, creepy, sweet, touching and wicked in equal parts. If you buy this book, you won't regret it in the morning."

- Kim Newman

"One of the most popular contributors to Interzone, Molly Brown's short stories are extremely crisp, clever and a joy to read... a collection is long overdue."

- SFX

That long overdue collection is here!

An Earthman's stranded spaceship is besieged by thousands of cuddly aliens whose idea of war is to commit ritual suicide; a teenage princess is kidnapped by an army of undead skeletons; a Chinese demon rides through the streets of Soho; and Toni Fisher tells Joanna Krenski, "I'm working on a calculation that will show density of shoulder pad to be in directly inverse proportion to level of intelligence. I'm drunk by the way."

From the satire of the award-winning *Bad Timing* to the horror of *Feeding Julie*, via the mind twisting paradoxes of *Women On The Brink Of A Cataclysm* and the out-and-out comedy of *Agents of Darkness*, these stories from the first 10 years of Molly Brown's writing career show her range and her versatility, and never fail to enthrall. Several of the stories have been specially updated for this collection.

Molly Brown has been everything from an armed guard to a stand up comic. Her work has been translated into more than a dozen languages and she writes in a wide range of genres. Her short stories have been included in such "Best of" collections as: *The Best of Interzone*, *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*, *The Mammoth Book of Comic Fantasy*, and *The Best Time Travel Stories Ever Written*.

Dead Ground, by Chris Amies

ISBN 1 903468 01 0

£7.99

*"The palm-tree shall grow,
the coral shall spread,
but man shall cease"*

- Tahitian saying

Chris Amies makes his debut with a dark fantasy set in the South Pacific: the tropical ease of W. Somerset Maugham combined with echoes of the dark worlds of H.P. Lovecraft.

The Condals are the smallest of the Pacific island groups, a few hundred miles south of the sea lanes; the back end of the British Empire. Now an archaeological expedition is here to open a ruined temple, and even before they begin, people start dying. Sun, sea, palm trees and a modern feel of imperial exhaustion and decline which merges seamlessly into the much darker forces at work.

Chris Amies lists his interests as Books, Bikes, Buildings, and Weird Stuff Generally. He also likes country walking, real ale, and riding recumbent bicycles; is on the committee of the Fulham and Hammersmith Historical Society; and is also a member of the London Cycling Campaign. For a day job he works in IT Support and Systems Design for the Government Office for London. He shares his flat with two rodents.

Feather and Bone, by Gus Smith

ISBN 1 903468 03 5

£7.99

Gus Smith's dark fantasy debut mixes the look and feel, the light and air of the Northumberland moors with a force of evil that hits you like a slap in the face. What connects BSE, an electively mute young girl, some 21st century witches and a shapeless dark force at large in the Border countryside? Gus Smith tells his story with the rhythm and plausibility of a folk tale.

Gus Smith is a very ordinary character — former English teacher, Chairman of the Ecology Building Society, folk musician/songwriter (he has had four full-length musicals performed), smallholding farmer and restorer of old buildings (currently a cottage on the Isle of Arran). He writes for kids as Gus Grenfell and has a fantasy trilogy at present under consideration by a major publisher.