

CONCOURSE PR2

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E A S T E R C O N 2 0 0 4

55TH BRITISH NATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION (EASTERCON)

9-12 April 2004

Winter Gardens, Blackpool

Guests of Honour:
Mitchell Burnside Clapp
Danny Flynn
Sue Mason
Christopher Priest
Philip Pullman

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WORLD WIDE WEB SITE

<http://www.eastercon.com/concourse>

MEMBERSHIP RATES

£40 attending membership until November 2003 (see web site for other rates).

THE CONCOURSE COMMITTEE ARE:

Marcus Streets – Co-Chair

Programme, Publicity & Promotions

Chris O'Shea – Co-Chair

Publications, Operations, Tech, Newsletter, Security

Jonathan Jones – Vice-Chair

Site, Exhibits, Membership, Web Site

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CONCOURSE PROGRESS REPORT 2

Produced by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer (SRBAS) in March 2003.

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From The Bench: A word from your UnHoly Trinity (UHT)

Well, only a year to go and plans are progressing in leaps and bounds (or occasionally in two steps forward and one step back, but that's true of every great enterprise. And we are at least still going *forwards*).

The Concourse discussion list has been set up on the Internet and already we've got people talking about hotel booking, programme items and even the occasional rumour that we're happy to clear up. We'll also be using the list to make announcements and to request help in particular areas (e.g. if we need a programme participant who's familiar with nano-technology, then the list is probably the first place we'll ask). We've used the automatic features of the list to send an invitation to all Concourse members where we've got an email address for you. If you'd like to use a different email address for the list, or don't want to hear from us by email except for urgent announcements, then just drop us a line and we'll sort things out. Important announcements will be made to the list but will also be emailed out as well as being disseminated in all the usual ways—e.g. on our website, via *Ansible*, and by traditional post either in the PRs or in special mailings—and doubtless also by word of mouth.

Sometimes that last one is not too effective and people get the wrong message. For example, just to quash one rumour, we will indeed be staying in the Winter Gardens until 2 AM every night of the convention. It's the location for the evening programming, the food and bars, and the comfy chairs! There are no plans to put any of the programming or evening events anywhere else. See the articles elsewhere in this PR for details of our programme plans and the convention areas.

Speaking of night-time locations, you should find enclosed with this PR a hotel booking form and a booklet describing accommodation options in Blackpool. Yes, there are over 2,500 hotels and B&Bs in the city, but we don't expect to use all 2,500! Prices vary from the very reasonable to the usual five-star excess, so it's possible to find something that will suit every

budget. There is no 'main/central' hotel for the convention, although the committee have picked a hotel near the Winter Gardens in which we will be staying (for the very few hours every day that we'll get for washing, sleeping, etc.). It's not the cheapest and it's not the most luxurious and it's not even the closest accommodation to the Winter Gardens, but it matches our requirements and has a nice bar area we hope to collapse into after the Winter Gardens closes at 2 AM.

If you want to stay near other convention attendees, we suggest that you contact your friends, pick a price band you're all happy with, and send in a block booking as soon as possible. That will allow you to decide whether you want a hotel with a swimming pool and a gym, or with a children's play area, or the cheapest possible accommodation close to the Winter Gardens, or one with some function space so you can practice your sword-fighting demonstration programme item...

Blackpool is a popular destination all year round and particularly during school holidays (such as Easter), so to guarantee you get the best place to stay, we recommend booking as soon as possible—ideally before the end of the year. The final cut-off date for Concourse bookings is 27 February 2004, but the Tourist Board provide a service for anyone wanting accommodation in Blackpool, even at short notice, so they'll do their best to find places even at the last minute. Obviously, though, you may then end up some distance away—in which case it's good to know that Blackpool has an excellent public transport system (trams and buses, and lots of taxis) so even that shouldn't be too much of a problem.

There is a cloakroom at the Winter Gardens, and Concourse will have storage space for members' stuff, so if you want to change costumes every five minutes and don't want to go back to your hotel to do so, then you can bring a bag in with you and leave it in the cloakroom (or with us) where it will be looked after during the day. But please take it with you each evening when you leave, or else security won't be happy.

The Winter Gardens is located at one end of the pedestrian shopping precinct of Blackpool, with hundreds of restaurants and shops within a very short walk, plus cinemas and all the usual city centre facilities (banks, chemists, book stores etc.) so it is going to be quite a contrast with Hinckley. But don't forget there's going to be a lot of convention going on inside as well.

See you in Blackpool!*

—Chris O'Shea on behalf of The UHT

A brief editorial

In addition to the articles mentioned above about the general infrastructure of the convention and its programme, you'll find in this PR some introductory pieces about some of the work of Concourse's two writer guests: John Clute writes about Chris Priest's most recently published novel, *The Separation*, and Elizabeth Billinger takes an overview of the strong women featured in Philip Pullman's 'His Dark Materials' trilogy.

Some of you may have heard the three-part dramatisation of 'His Dark Materials' broadcast on Radio 4 last winter, or indeed caught Philip Pullman's own appearance on Desert Island Discs last October, shortly after PR 1 went to press. Details of Philip's selection can be found on the BBC website at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/factual/desertislanddiscs_20021006.shtml

Congratulations are due to Chris Priest as *The Separation* has been short-listed for both the Arthur C Clarke Award and the

BSFA Award for Best Novel of 2002. Those of you receiving this PR at the 2003 Eastercon will have the chance to vote for the 2002 BSFA Awards (in the same way that Concourse attendees will be able to vote for the 2003 Awards next year), and the winner of the Clarke Award will be announced on 17 May. Meanwhile, Paul Kincaid's article in this PR explains the process of choosing the best books of the year.

We should also pass on congratulations to Sue Mason, who shared in the *Plokta* cabal's second Nova Award at Novacon 32 last year. And she is a guest of honour at Minicon in Minneapolis this year, so will be getting used to spending her Easter weekends performing guestly duties. Sue again provided the cover for this PR, the second in the series, for which many thanks. Thanks are also due to all contributors, and to Frances and John Dowd for their assistance in liaising with the printers and ensuring that the PRs arrive on time.*

—Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer

Booking Your Accommodation

Due to the non-residential nature of the Concourse site, your friendly UHT looked at a number of possibilities for how members would book their accommodation in Blackpool.

After much consultation with the local hoteliers and the Tourism Department, we decided to use the services of the Blackpool Conference Accommodation Booking Service (CABS), which is operated by Blackpool Borough Council. Carol Hunt and Kelly Walsh of the CABS have been assigned to handle our bookings and their contact details appear at the end of this article. Both Carol and Kelly have vast experience in dealing with accommodation bookings for conferences.

Blackpool is home to a wide choice of accommodation from small B&Bs to large four-star hotels. You will also find a large selection of self-catering apartments as well as caravan and camping sites. The CABS will be able to assist you in booking your stay at any of these.

Due to both the change from the 'normal' Eastercon, where the vast majority of members all stay in one hotel, and the vast range of accommodation available, we have decided to start bookings earlier than the autumn before the convention. Therefore you will be able to book your accommodation now. The Committee will be staying in the Clifton Hotel, which is located on the sea-front a few minutes' walk from the Winter Gardens.

Included with this progress report is the Blackpool Accommodation Guide and an accommodation booking form. Once you have selected the accommodation you require from the Accommodation Guide, just complete the form and send it to the CABS. Please indicate on the form what type of accommodation you require and the duration of your stay. Don't forget to select a price range and mention if you have a particular hotel that you wish to stay in. You do not need to send a deposit at this time. If you do not like forms you can phone them up or email or fax them the information—but remember to mention Concourse.

You can also use the form to make a group booking, which will be very handy if you and your friends wish to stay in the same hotel. It is best that one person is designated as the lead name on the booking form to simplify matters. To help co-

ordinate group bookings we have created an email discussion list (more on this below).

If you have specialised accommodation requirements relating to any special needs you may have, please let the CABS know. They are mindful of visitors with varying physical abilities and will be able to reserve suitable accommodation for you.

Once the CABS have received your completed accommodation booking form, they will then notify you of your provisional reservation, which you can consider. If you do not prefer the accommodation selected for you by the CABS (due perhaps to its location or because you wish to stay with friends at another hotel) you should contact the CABS to advise them.

Once you are happy with the accommodation that has been selected, you should forward your deposit to the CABS within seven working days to confirm your acceptance. The CABS will then send you a full confirmation of your accommodation booking. The balance due should then be paid direct to the hotel in accordance with the hotel's own settlement terms, which will be stated in the confirmation letter.

To ensure that you get the accommodation that suits you best, within the price range you require and with the people you'd prefer to share your accommodation, we recommend booking as early as possible. Although Blackpool has a lot of accommodation—there are around 2,500 hotels—we won't be the only people in the town during the Easter weekend and it's best to take advantage of this advance booking opportunity.

We recommend that booking forms be sent to the CABS as early as possible, preferably by Christmas 2003 but definitely no later than 27 February 2004. Members arriving on the day of the convention seeking accommodation should visit the Blackpool Tourism Office at the CABS address. They will make every effort to find accommodation for you.

If you need to contact the CABS at any time with regards to booking your accommodation their contact details are:

Conference Accommodation Booking Service
Tourism Division
1 Clifton Street
Blackpool FY1 1LY

Telephone: 01253 478225 or 01253 478216

Fax: 01253 478226

Email: carol.hunt@blackpool.gov.uk or

kelly.walsh@blackpool.gov.uk*

Email discussion list

To assist members in mutual discussions of any matters relating to the convention, including co-ordinating which hotels you wish to stay in, we have set up a Yahoo! Electronic Mail Discussion Group. If you are not already a member of the discussion group and wish to join please send an email from the address you wish to use in the group to:

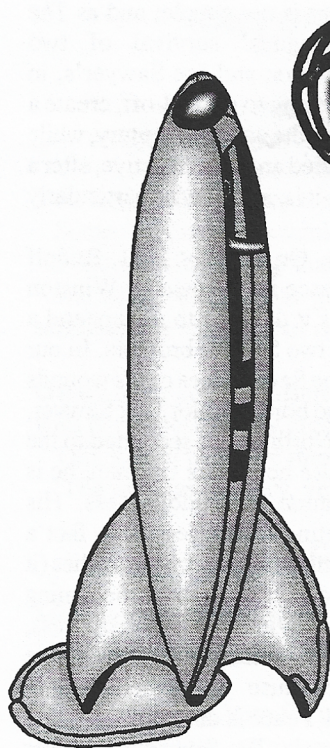
Concourse_Discussion-subscribe@yahoo.co.uk

If you wish to unsubscribe at any time send a blank email to:
Concourse_Discussion-unsubscribe@yahoo.co.uk

To post messages to the list send an email to:
Concourse_Discussion@yahoo.co.uk

If you have any enquiries or problems with regards to booking your accommodation in Blackpool, please do not hesitate to contact the CABS (see above), or contact Concourse direct via email at accommodation.concourse@ntlworld.com or at our postal address. *

—Jonathan Jones



INTER ACTION

The 63rd World Science Fiction Convention
4-8 August 2005
Glasgow, United Kingdom

Guests

Greg Pickersgill

Robert Sheckley

Christopher Priest

Lars-Olov Strandberg

Jane Yolen

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Hundreds of Authors, Artists, Editors

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Membership Type:	Supporting	Attending	Child (7-15 in August 2005)	Infant (0-6 in August 2005)
Membership Rate:	£30/€ 50	£75/€ 120	£32/€ 53	Free
(Rates valid until 21 st April 2003.)				

For further information contact: **Interaction**, 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield S2 3HQ, UK

General Enquiries

info@interaction.worldcon.org.uk

Membership Enquiries

memberships@interaction.worldcon.org.uk

Other Contact Details and Information

<http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk>

"World Science Fiction Convention" and "Worldcon" are service marks of the World Science Fiction Society, an unincorporated literary society.

The world considered as a Moebius strip

There is, of course, something about alternate history that loves a war. Wars are full of describable events, many of which could have had different outcomes, *if only...*; it is a central premise of almost anyone's understanding of times of war that history could have been different, *if only*. This premise does not operate with the same ease—does not so conspicuously liberate the imaginations of writers—during times of peace, when reality seems too fractal to sort, the deeper down you dig the more roots you find. If times of war are like an oak you can split, peace is a banyan. So it is, perhaps, natural that Christopher Priest's first full-throated alternate history should be set at the heart of World War II.

There is something else about war, too. Reality does thin during times of war, certainly for those not for the moment directly involved in combat; events seem simultaneously fragile (because it is terrifyingly easy to envision *something else happening*), and imperative (because a battle lost or won might change the world). Reality during times of war, in other words, rather resembles reality as depicted in most alternate histories: there is an essential staginess about both, a sense that the world is a theatre (like a battle zone), with actors, storylines, intermissions, catastrophes, bugle calls. At times of war, and in alternate histories, it is as though you can see through the world to the engine. It is this sense of seeing the world as though it were transparent—as though it were a lucid dream—that governs the mechanisms of *The Separation*, the process by which alternate histories calve off from one another, like identical twins undergoing the most profound experience of their lives: separation.

Far into the novel, Joe Sawyer, who is the more interesting of the identical twins, speculates on the nature of reality, which seems to him like a series of lucid dreams:

I was convinced that the injuries I had suffered during the Blitz [in his brother's reality, which is ours, those injuries have killed Joe] were driving me mad. The visions were crippling me mentally. I was no longer able to tell truth from fiction. That was the classic definition of insanity, wasn't it? ... Was everything I thought of as real in fact another more subtle and extended delusion, a lucid imagining of forking alternatives, while in reality, real reality, I lay in the back of the noisy Red Cross ambulance, still being driven slowly across benighted England?

Priest plays Moebius-strip games with the forking paths (the reference to Borges is clearly intended) between our World War II and Joe's, in which Britain and Germany end hostilities on May 10, 1941; and we are clearly intended to wonder if Joe is in fact conveying to us a series of lucid dreams about an alternate world that will end abruptly—like the lucid dream of the hanged soldier in Ambrose Bierce's 'An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge' (1891)—with his death. But it would fatally reduce the cognitive strengths and the affective potency of *The Separation* to think of it as presenting Joe Sawyer's reality as a lucid dream. It is a far more interesting conclusion—one amply allowed for by Priest's Moebius-like plot turns—to think of *The Separation* as an exact reversal of Bierce's 'Occurrence', one in which the lucid dream is the reality, though it is a reality profoundly difficult for Joe Sawyer to gain. It is as though he himself, through his painful transaction of lucid dream after lucid dream, is earning the new alternate world for all of us. Less sentimentally, it does seem the case that he is earning it for the book.

As in any alternate history, the story is not simple; and as *The Separation* presents the 'simultaneous' survival of two realities—Jack Sawyer's, which is ours; and Joe Sawyer's, in which Britain and Germany, by agreeing to a stand-off, create a world order dominated by Europe for the next half century, while America huddles into herself, wounded and introspective, after a disastrous 1940s invasion of Asia—it is, in the end, a particularly complicated story.

The premise, however, is simple. On 10 May 1941, Rudolf Hess's proposal for a negotiated peace is accepted by Winston Churchill, and the war ends. Nor is it difficult to understand a telegraph version of the role of the two Sawyer brothers. In our world, pacifist Red Cross worker Joe Sawyer dies of his wounds after London is bombed in 1940, and bomber pilot Jack Sawyer, after surviving a plane crash in the North Sea, is seconded to the team surrounding Churchill; because he speaks German, he is directed to assess the state of mind of Rudolf Hess. His conclusion is that the man purporting to be Hess is in fact a ringer. War continues. In the alternate world, Jack Sawyer dies (it may be) in the plane crash, while Joe Sawyer survives, becoming involved in the elaborate peace negotiations instigated by Hess, who has flown to England with official German support. At one point Joe eloquently pleads the cause of peace with an understandably truculent Churchill. Peace is declared.

Which, of course, is much too simple. *The Separation* is over 450 pages long, and each page is packed. The only real problem is with a frame story featuring historian Stuart Gratton in the alternate-history version of 1999—I leave to someone wiser than I how to unpack the peculiarly irritating enigma Gratton presents, for he does not seem to know he is the son of one or another of the Sawyer brothers, but is at the same time researching their (or his) role in creating the peace of 1941—for this frame story peters out. It is, perhaps, a Moebius strip too far.

The rest of the novel is almost pure joy. Almost all of it is comprised of recovered documents of one sort or another, all of them rendered by Priest with unobtrusive but magisterial authority. The first half of the book is taken up with Jack Sawyer's memoirs, which lead us to our own here and now. The second half is taken up mostly—though there are many inserted documents and transcripts—by Joe Sawyer's increasingly bewildered journal, as he transacts lucid dream after lucid dream, earning (as it may be) the new world. One thing is certain: the alternate world does not become reality in *The Separation* at the simple juncture of some Jonbar Point (the point here being Joe's survival; the 1941 peace comes later). The separation of the two potential worlds, like the final separation of the already estranged twins, is not a Jonbar *click*, but a slow climb into lucid reality, which is a dream Joe dreams, or it is not, or it is both.

World War II has become stories within stories. It has become much too complex a part of the Matter of the West for reportage or history to begin to handle. It has become a truth of fiction. There are now four great novels of World War II in the literature of the fantastic: one is a prophecy, *Swastika Night* (1937) by Katharine Burdekin writing as Murray Constantine; and three are alternate histories: Sarban's *The Sound of His Horn* (1952), Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* (1962), and Christopher Priest's *The Separation* (2002). Let us hope that not only in some other world will *The Separation* be found. *

—John Clute

This article first appeared in *Science Fiction Weekly* on SciFi.com (7 October 2002; issue 285; volume 8, #41).

His Strong Women

Philip Pullman's 'His Dark Materials' trilogy was one of the suggestions elicited by a recent request on a children's literature email list for books featuring strong girls. Given its central character, the fierce and indomitable Lyra, the suggestion seems an obvious one.

The Wild Child

Lyra Silvertongue has the courage to do many difficult and dangerous things, not least to approach the bear Iorek Byrnison when everyone else is afraid, and the wit and bravery to hold him back when he is about to take revenge for the theft of his armour. When imprisoned at Bolvangar she is not cowed, but remains sharp-witted and determined to save herself and the rest of the children, even as she discovers the terrible truth of what Mrs Coulter and the Oblation Board are doing.

Lyra's commitment never wavers, although the purpose of her quest changes across the course of the three novels, and it is the relentlessness and resilience of this character that is her most remarkable talent. For me, however, this is somewhat compromised by the alethiometer and by the insistence that Lyra must fulfil her destiny in ignorance.

Lyra is so resourceful and committed that it seems almost to diminish the character to have her persistently relying on the omniscient alethiometer to make her decisions. An element of choice remains, in that she must interpret and accept its oracular pronouncements, but nevertheless it can seem a distraction, a way for Lyra to avoid recognising the strength and insight that is her own.

The Remarkable Lady

Lyra is whisked away from Jordan College and set upon her adventures by Marisa Coulter, a strong woman, cast from the same mould as Narnia's icy White Witch. She seduces Lyra not with Turkish Delight, but with many other things that are pretty and pink and fragrant.

Mrs Coulter's true nature is revealed when Lyra first crosses her: as Mrs Coulter continues to rearrange a vase of roses, her golden monkey daemon tortures Pantalaimon, Lyra's daemon, thereby gaining Lyra's compliance. Neither the woman nor her daemon show the weakness of passion; their acts are cold and controlled.

Like Lyra she always retains her presence of mind and can deceive and dissemble as required, and she can withstand pain and hardships. Captured by Lord Asriel, she ignores the agonising pains caused by the Gallivespian venom in her system; she manipulates Asriel and his commanders, and steals an aircraft. After flying to Geneva and breaking into the Consistorial Court she can expect only to be arrested, but she again dominates and manipulates at the heart of male power.

Metatron, prince of angels, looks into her soul and declares her a moral cess-pit. It is certainly true that she has been cruel and ruthless, without compassion or sympathy. It is also true that she has been as strong and committed as Lyra, although she has chosen a very different path.

The Ex-Nun

Dr Mary Malone, destined to be the serpent that causes Lyra's fall from grace, is a physicist and former nun in Will's world

(our own). Her strength is perhaps not so immediately obvious as that of Lyra and Mrs Coulter, but in a quieter way she is at least as powerful.

As she reveals when she tells Will and Lyra the story of her life—in itself an act of strength, laying herself bare and telling the necessary truth—Mary's memories of her first childhood love are awakened by a chance taste of marzipan, and for her God died on an August evening under a lemon tree in Portugal. The moment is epiphanic but she has to be strong in the face of the disappointment and reproach of her order and her family. More than that she must live constantly with an absence where her faith used to be; she has lost her sense of being connected, via God, with the whole of the universe.

When Lyra walks into her laboratory and her life, we see some of Mary's strength in the way she is able to listen with an open mind, accepting that Lyra is from a different world and following her instructions in order to be able to communicate with Dust. And having learned the true nature of this substance and been told the role she is to play, she has the necessary strength and presence of mind to fill a rucksack for her journey, return to the lab and destroy her equipment, find a window to another world and leave everything behind her with no knowledge of whether she will return.

In the same open and curious way that she accepted Lyra and the Dust, Mary applies her mix of faith and scientific curiosity to what she finds on the other side of the window. In the world of the mulefa she reacts not with fear, but with logic and understanding, to these completely alien people. She learns their language, she learns their skills, she watches and thinks and investigates and eventually comes to an understanding of the nature of Dust and the impending disaster that faces all the worlds of the universe. And she does what she believes she must to avert this disaster: she waits.

The Wise Witch

Serafina Pekkala is three hundred and some years old and a clan queen. Outwardly she is young and beautiful, but her age gives her a knowledge and perspective the short-lived humans can never gain. Despite her detachment Serafina Pekkala does not lack either compassion or the capacity to love: she has loved the ggyptian, Farder Coram, and then kept away from him for forty years in the (vain) hope that he will forget her and find a human wife.

She ends the life of another witch being tortured by Mrs Coulter, but she holds back until the witch is ready to die, crying out to Yambe-Akka the witch goddess. And she smiles as she slides the knife into the witch's heart, because Yambe-Akka is smiling and light-hearted and her visits are gifts of joy. Revealing herself in the midst of the enemy to carry out this deed leaves her requiring all her skills as witch and archer to escape.

Her wisdom and knowledge put her in the position of having to reveal to Will and Lyra the awful truth that they cannot be together (in an echo of her own separation), that it is only possible to thrive in one's own world. She charges the couple's daemons with this task, but not without gifting them secret knowledge about their own nature and giving a name to Will's daemon.

The Final Act

Mrs Coulter, selfish super-bitch, turns out to have a heart after all and is undone by her love for her daughter. I feel a certain sadness over this capitulation; I like my villains to stick to their principles and think more highly of them when they do. What really troubles me, though, is that her love drives her to Lord Asriel's aid, helping him to achieve the destruction of Authority at the cost of both their lives. There is too strong a smell of Hollywood-style redemption in the abyss.

Mary Malone maintains an open and curious mind even when to do so means she has to abandon everything, including her God and her home. Reluctantly, she must at last return to her old world where she has no job and expects to be subject to police investigation.

By way of compensation she takes with her three gifts—the knowledge that there is after all something connecting her with the rest of the universe, the ability to see dæmons, and a friend, Will—but these are arguably insufficient recompense for the sacrifices she has made.

Serafina Pekkala is, appropriately enough for someone with her lifespan, least affected by the events of the books. Part of

her reason for maintaining her separation from Farder Coram was her belief that she was not strong enough to do otherwise. When circumstances bring them together again it is apparent that she does have the strength to deal with this and much more besides.

And Lyra? Lyra seems to have lost everything. Over the course of the three books she learned she had a mother and father after all, she discovered an innate talent for reading the alethiometer, and she found love for the first time. By the end of *The Amber Spyglass* all these things have been taken from her.

Our fierce, gifted heroine, who has demonstrated time after time that she needs no polished manners nor book-learning in order to save the world, is returned to Oxford to face a future in which she will attend a girls' school and then a women's college, and spend a lifetime learning to read the alethiometer by work instead of by grace.

The Applause

Pullman's rich and complex writing provokes debate, demands analysis and rewards each (re)reading of 'His Dark Materials'. *

—Elizabeth Billinger



Programme update

As with just about every previous Eastercon, we're promising you something new and different as well as the tried and tested. One of the things about an Eastercon programme is that you set out full of ideas about how you can impose your vision upon it, then you pencil in everything that you feel *has* to be there and you realise how little you actually have left to play with. Having said that, the Concourse programme is a little different, due to the nature of the Winter Gardens and the rooms we have.

The programme proper will start at noon on Friday—but for those wanting to arrive early there will be a Medieval banquet in the Baronial Hall on Thursday night (see page 12). There is a booking form with this PR.

You'd expect the big set-piece events: we will have an opening ceremony, a masquerade, an awards ceremony, the bidding session for Eastercon 2006 and a closing ceremony. Mr David Wake has promised us another of his famous plays—and this year we have a real theatre for him to stage it. SMS will again host another favourite, Beyond Cyberdrome (see page 11).

The literary discussion will be centred around our two author guests, but obviously we will not just be looking at their work. We will be discussing books old—including our 'Before the BSFA Awards' panel—and new: I am determined to keep at least one panel discussing the books of 2004.

With Danny Flynn and Sue Mason as guests, art and artworks will feature strongly. The science programme has two highlights already pencilled in: one is Mitchell Burnside Clapp's GoH talk about his career in rocketry, the other the annual George Hay lecture. Mitch, of course, will also be the closing act at our

evening filk concert, and there will be other filking items throughout the weekend.

Another strand is our 'After the Watershed' items—not all of which will actually take place late at night! These are items dealing with 'adult' themes which may include sex, drugs, politics, violence and so on, and will be strictly for attendees aged 18 or over.

We have noticed that there have been one or two interesting events in the world of Tolkien, so you can rest assured that we will be having an item on *Beowulf*. I am told that there has also been a magic lantern show based on the Professor's works, and some discussion of this may find its way onto the programme; but this is a literary event so we will try to keep everything in perspective.

That said, there will be some items that are just for fun: quizzes, silly games, fan feuds etc. We are talking to Interaction (the 2005 Worldcon) about a ceilidh.

There is one other item of note: the Reverend Lionel Fanthorpe will be solemnifying the wedding of Mr Jonathan Jones and Miss Sharon Lewis in the Baronial Hall on Saturday afternoon—and everyone is invited to attend a celebratory party and disco that evening.

We're always looking for new ideas and for people who are happy to talk in front of a crowd or organise an event, so if you're the world expert on nano-chemistry or science fiction artwork of the 1940s or Tarot reading or belly-dancing or something else that might be of interest to others, please tell us so that we can try to fit you in. *

—Marcus Streets

(with interjections from the rest of the UHT)

A walk through the Black Forest Winter Gardens

As this is a British convention, let's start in the Windsor bar. The bar is situated on the first floor—there are a number of public bars on the ground floor, and the major programme rooms also have bars built in—so we can serve drinks there for parties and ceilidhs.

Follow me next door into the Spanish Hall, which Concourse will be using as the lounge. Once you have finished gazing at the vaulted roof and the plasterwork village decorating the walls, please give me your attention: there will be snack food available throughout the con in this room. We may also be setting up the real ale bar in here.

Beyond the Spanish Hall lies the Baronial Hall, decorated in the style of the best Hollywood fantasy history. This room is where the Winter Gardens hosts its medieval banquets. If you are interested in attending one of these totally unauthentic evenings, then please let us know on the form provided with this PR. During the convention we will be using this room for evening programming.

The next room is the Renaissance, although the decoration in here is more Georgian than Renaissance in my opinion. Again this will be used for evening programming, so you will not have to stagger far from the bar. There is one more small programme room (the Sir Harold) in this suite.

Now down to the ground floor (there are two sets of stairs, and a lift suitable for wheelchairs. We will of course ask all our able-bodied members to give priority to those who cannot use the stairs). We are now standing in the Floral Hall; this central area of the Winter Gardens is open to the public. It contains the bistro and coffee shop. There is also a small amusement arcade.

Our other three main areas are off this public area. Let's cross to the Ballroom foyer. Notice the barrier separating the foyer from the public area: during the convention we will have stewards checking badges here. The foyer is home to registration and the convention offices including the convention storeroom. The Winter Gardens runs a cloakroom but for security reasons cannot take boxes. You will, however, be able to leave stuff with the convention.

We are using several rooms in the Ballroom suite. Let's first go into the Ballroom itself. Unfortunately it is down some steps—but, as with all the rooms in the Winter Gardens, there is a lift. This links the Ballroom, the Arena and the Balcony bar to the Floral Hall.

The Empress Ballroom is the main room in the Winter Gardens; you will have seen it on the news as Tony Blair addresses the Labour party or TUC. It is classic Victoriana. It also seats nearly two thousand on the ground floor and more on the balconies. This will be home to the extravaganzas: the Masquerade, the Awards and Beyond Cyberdrome (see page 11 for more information on this).

Behind you on the first floor is the Balcony bar. This is accessible from the foyer and served by the lift. This hundred-seater room will be an alternative programme room during the day and is available at night for parties. If you want to host a party please talk to us.

Let's now walk through the Ballroom to the far corner. Here we have the Diana suite and the dressing rooms. The Diana suite is the 'green room' for the Ballroom and its leather seats give it the air of a gentleman's club. We intend using this room for author

readings during the day. The dressing rooms will be available for the chaos costumers and robot builders and possibly other workshops. There is also another small room (Arena 2) which can seat about 50 people and will probably be the video room.

Follow me through to the Arena. This is the second largest of our rooms and will serve as the main programme room during the day and host the musical events in the evenings—to keep the noise away from the rest of us. This used to be the India Room, with palm trees, but was improved in the 1960s. The lights in the ceiling are set out to map the constellations. Again, this room has a further three dressing rooms that we may use for workshops.

Let's go back up to the Arena foyer. There is another barrier at which we can do badge checks. Follow me round to the left, past another barrier, into the Horseshoe.

The Horseshoe will be the convention dealers' room and art show. The room is lit by natural light from the windows in the roof, which should help to show off the art to its best. In the centre of the Horseshoe is the Pavilion Theatre. This lovely intimate theatre is the home of Danny la Rue whenever he does a summer season; for us it will be another programme room during the day, although of course this whole area will be securely shut after the dealers' room closes.*

—Your tour guide was Marcus Streets

Electrical Eggs

Electrical Eggs UK is a fan-run, fan-funded organisation helping conventions to be safer and more accessible for people with medical conditions or disabilities. Launched at Intersection, the 1995 Worldcon, its aim is to allow more fans to enjoy attending conventions.

Electrical Eggs will be giving us help in service provision to assist people with mobility, hearing or visual difficulties to get the most from the convention. We will also have access to the Electrical Eggs medical alert record system if necessary.

We will be working closely with Electrical Eggs and will be seeking advice on access (such as wheelchair parking bays at programme items and allowing turning spaces for chairs); priority seating for lip-reading or partially sighted members; and pet care for care animals (hello, Faldo).

Our Electrical Eggs co-ordinator, Al Darragh, will have access to the confidential file of medical details for each Electrical Eggs member attending Concourse. This will only be made available to trained medical personnel if called to attend that person. These details are provided by the Egg Head (Michelle Drayton-Harald AKA Cuddles) to the convention's Eggs co-ordinator before the convention. At the end of the convention the records will be destroyed, as the original information is stored on a secure database held by the Egg Head.

Membership of Electrical Eggs is free and each member receives free copies of *The Hatchery*, a free newsletter that includes a listing of forthcoming conventions using the service. Please wear your Eggs badge at the convention to highlight your Eggs membership.

We would heartily urge all fans regardless of circumstances to join Electrical Eggs—especially the alert system if you have allergies etc.—but also to volunteer at the convention to help to man the desk, and generally to assist people in need.

Contact:

Concourse Electrical Eggs co-ordinator: Al Darragh

Email: electrical-eggs.concourse@ntlworld.com*

How to Choose the Year's Best Novel

Imagine you've been given the job of choosing the best science fiction novel of the year. I know, that's something you do every year when you vote in the BSFA Awards or the Hugos. But that's different; that's just choosing one title from a shortlist of five or six. What if you were on the jury of the Arthur C Clarke Award and were starting from scratch? What if you had every science fiction novel published during the year laid out in front of you, and you had to pick one title from forty or fifty, how would you go about it?

You start by reading them all. That's different for a start. Even the most avid fan is unlikely to read every novel published in a year, so there are books we all miss. Particularly if they are by authors we don't normally like, or they're not published as science fiction, or we just don't notice them (it's amazing how many books each year seem to slip quietly out without anyone being aware of it). It's not always easy (I've known a lot of Clarke Award judges who've complained that they'd love to have the time to read something that wasn't science fiction for a change), but it is strangely addictive and does provide an unusual perspective on the current state of the genre (I've known a similar number of former Clarke Award judges who've complained that they feel out of touch with what's happening in science fiction because they no longer see all the books).

Once you've read the books (probably taking notes as you go along; it can be surprisingly difficult to recall the details of the first book you read when you want to compare it with the most recent), you need to cut the list down. Some are easy. The Clarke Award has seen books submitted that are non-fiction, collections of short stories, romances, out-and-out heroic fantasies. These are the first to be eliminated—they just don't fit the criteria—but there's only ever one or two of them a year. Then there are the books which just aren't that good. Another handful of titles are pushed to one side. Then there are the ones that you enjoy—the latest episode in a series you've been following, a rip-snorting old-fashioned adventure, a story that's just, you know, fun—but you wouldn't, in all honesty, want to hold your hand up and say this is the best book of the year.

If you think you're really whittling them down, think again. If past experience is anything to go by, you've still got around half the books that you started with. And there's at least one person on the jury, very possibly you, who really likes every one of them.

At this stage you're simply choosing a shortlist of six, but there are probably seven or more books you'd like to see on the list, and that doesn't take into account the books the other jurors support. Horse-trading isn't really an option: I'll support X if you support Y won't get you very far if the ultimate aim is to choose one single winner, and a winner that every member of the jury takes collective responsibility for. The alternative is argument, and it is in these arguments that the Clarke Award acquires its distinctive character.

Surprisingly, perhaps, the arguments don't often revolve around whether a book is science fiction or not, even though the term has deliberately not been defined and is left to the collective will of each jury. Occasionally, when considering a *Perdido Street Station* or a *Cryptonomicon*, for instance, we might spend a few minutes debating the issue, but it is usually quickly

resolved. More often, the discussion comes down to how we want science fiction to be perceived. We are, theoretically, looking for the best novel, the one we can point to proudly and declare: that is what science fiction can achieve. But we all have different ideas of what constitutes 'best', which is why we have a jury and not just one judge.

A has brilliant ideas, but the writing is awful. B is beautifully written, but it's not doing anything new. C has written something very different from his usual work and you want to applaud the enterprise, but does the book really stand up? D has written a wonderful book, fluent and superbly structured, but in the end isn't it just like all her other books? E has written the beginning of a sequence that could be one of the defining works of contemporary science fiction, but without the books that will complete the story does it really stand up on its own? F has finally produced the long-awaited conclusion to a major sequence of novels, but are you applauding the whole sequence or this individual volume?

Sometimes the arguments seem to go in circles, constantly hovering around one issue upon which two jurors have diametrically opposed views. Sometimes an issue which seems complex and delicate will produce unexpected unanimity from the jurors and be resolved in moments. Sometimes, as is inevitable in any communal human enterprise, there is an element of compromise: I'm not going to defend this novel to the death when I think that one does it better; how can you criticise Y for such a fault when you're praising Z for doing exactly the same?

Ideally, you soon realise during the cut and thrust, you want a book that does it all: that is novel, that uses science fiction to achieve its effects, that is well-written, that is entertaining and thought-provoking—a book that we, the science fiction community, can be proud of. All the jurors could agree on that (and, to be honest, once in a long while such a perfect work will come along and judging meetings can be over in seconds, but they are rare). What you end up trying to find is a balance: you will accept a book being a little less well-written if its ideas are so much more original; you will choose a book that treads familiar ground if it does so more effectively than others. It is common for jurors to find their ideas about individual books changing during the course of the argument. By the end of the meeting you might be surprised to realise you're espousing an author you normally dislike, or dropping a book you'd previously considered your favourite for the award.

However it works out, the jury arrives at a shortlist of six novels. You may still be arguing about individual works, but you all agree on one thing: the best book of the year is to be found among those six. And then? You go away and read the six books once more, then you come back together and argue about them all over again. You may find the arguments retreading familiar ground, or you may head off in completely new directions. At some point you will certainly ask yourself how to compare chalk and cheese. How, given the most recent shortlist, you can compare *Light* by M John Harrison with *The Separation* by Christopher Priest? *Kil'n People* by David Brin with *The Years of Rice and Salt* by Kim Stanley Robinson? *Speed of Dark* by Elizabeth Moon with *The Scar* by China Miéville? But you do know one thing: having read every science fiction novel published during the year, having argued the pros and cons of them all, you're sure that one of these six is the best book of the year!*

—Paul Kincaid, Arthur C Clarke Award Administrator

Beyond Cyberdrome '04. A whole new dimension.

Never mind about Beyond Cyberdrome for a moment, let's just tell you about the people organising the 2004 con.

You'll find it has a very real bearing on what's happening in '04.

Some con organisers think BC's best organised half an hour before the event (we and Seacon '03 are working to stop that). This lot contacted us *two years* in advance.

We could think of no greater praise... Except: rather inconveniently for the preceding sentence, we can think of *two* greater items of praise.

One: *Most* con organisers, when they find they have use of the Blackpool Winter Gardens with its preposterously high ceilings, would just shut up about it.

This lot *tell* us. More impressively, they say:

'The ceilings are very, very high. Can you think of a way to use this?'

Can you guess what it is yet?

Most con organisers, when asked things like 'Are you insured for aircraft?' would say, 'Ahhh... charming idea, but entirely unworkable,' because that's what common sense *means*.

This lot looked it up for us. And you know what?

It is. Workable, we mean. *Eerily* so.

Nine years after Beyond Cyberdrome was first proposed, they now allow us to take it into a whole new dimension.

That of height.

Ladies and gentlemen, just in case you're very slow on the uptake (that's your *last* clue), we introduce to you the first ever:

Airborne Beyond Cyberdrome

The very thought of that sentence makes us pause and stare in wistful awe at the ceiling in just the sort of way that bright-eyed, clean-limbed young aeronauts used to stare at the central blue in the 1920s.

We're sure you'll be excited about it too.

Practical details:

We'll *still* have ground-based events for this BC. Many entrants are by small children and to expect them to understand aircraft design is a bit much. The same goes for a lot of fans. We suspect they're made by children too, 'cos kids keep bringing them in.

To quote Jonjo: 'The height of the room is 19.35 metres, or 63 feet and 6 inches in old money; plans of the Empress Ball Room are available in PDF format on the Winter Gardens web site: <http://www.leisure-parcs.co.uk/empress.html>'

We can't actually use fixed-wing model aircraft or helicopters. They might damage the frighteningly expensive chandeliers. Instead, we're recommending lighter-than-air blimps.

Now, any *sensible* con organiser would just say, 'We're sure you can work something out.'

Not them. Which brings us to:

Two: They say, 'We would need to supply the helium, but that should be no problem.'

Moreover, they do our research *for* us and say: 'Gadget City web site has examples of Blimps and Flying Saucers, with anti-gravity flying discs: <http://www.gadgetcity.co.uk/blimps/>'

See why we're so impressed? Meanwhile, see our website for further details: www.beyondcyberdrome.org.uk

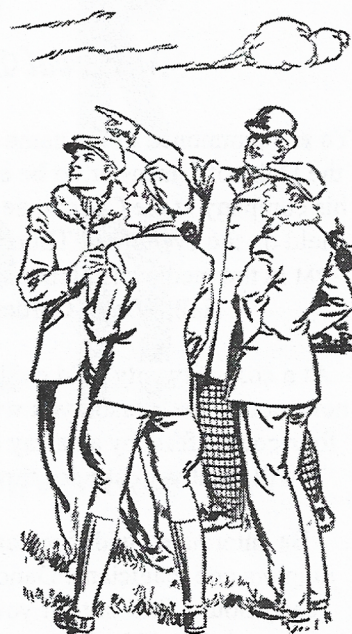
Tally ho.

Luftubercommandant

SMS

We would recommend that people wear some sort of hat during the aerial event.

Reasons for this are covered in Newton's *Principia*. We don't have the space to explain it all here.



Step back in time to an age when feasting and merriment was a way of life (no, not your last convention):

Medieval Banquet

Ye are summoned in the name of Sir Thomas Ludgrove, the Duke of Lancaster, to be entertained and feasted in his company at the Concourse Medieval Banquet, to be held on the evening of Thursday 8 April 2004 at 7:30 PM in the medieval splendour of the Grand Baronial Hall, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

At a cost of twenty gold coins (20 pounds sterling in new money) per person you will be served a sumptuous four-course feast by an array of serving wenches who will be at your service throughout the banquet.

Be entertained with fire-eaters, jesters, minstrels, jugglers and magicians. Dancing will follow until the early hours. Fear not for your welfare, as the good knights of old will be in attendance to protect from evil forces. To book please use the booking form included with this PR. Hurry, as places are limited. Costume is entirely optional. Special dietary requests will be catered for. Please contact us by post or email banquet.concourse@ntlworld.com if you have any enquiries about the Banquet.

Medieval Menu

by order of the Duke of Lancaster

Goblet of Wine at your banquet table

From the gardens of his Lordship:

Home-made vegetable soup

Freshly baked bread



A serving of the Duke's fine ales

Provided by the vast Royal estate:

Succulent roasted chicken, Barbequed ribs

Cut of pork, Baked jacket potato

Crisp fresh salad



Cheese & fruit platter

(Special dietary requests will be adhered to)

Concourse Membership List

(Members as at 16 March 2003)

Mitchell	Burnside Clapp		G
Danny	Flynn		G
Sue	Mason		G
Christopher	Priest		G
Philip	Pullman		G
Michael	Abbott	1	A
Dawn	Abigail	177	A
Andrew A	Adams	167	A
Paul	Allwood	3	A
Brian	Ameringen	98	A
Meriol	Ameringen	99	I
Diane	Anderson	4	A
John	Anderson	5	A
Johan	Anglemark	7	A
Linnea	Anglemark	8	A
Andrew	Armstrong	9	A
Helen	Armstrong	10	A
Mark	Bailey	162	A
John	Bark	11	A
Andrew	Barton	131	A
Covert	Beach	12	A
Chris	Bell	27	A
Michael	Bernardi	218	A
Paul	Blair	93	A
Jaap	Boekestein	13	A
Duncan	Booth	14	A
Judy	Booth	15	A
Clare	Boothby	16	A
Jill	Bradley	18	A
Phil	Bradley	17	A
Bridget	Bradshaw	19	A
Simon	Bradshaw	20	A
John	Bray	21	A
Claire	Brialey	22	A
Christopher	Brooks	211	A
John	Brown	34	A
Edmund	Buckley	172	A
Bill	Burns	24	A
Jim	Burns	26	A
Mary	Burns	25	A
Roger	Burton West	28	A
Simon	Callan	29	A
Diane	Capewell	194	A
Stuart	Capewell	195	A
Jane	Carnall	30	A
Arthur	Chappell	31	A
Elaine	Coats	196	A
Ethan	Coats	198	I
Joel	Coats	197	I
David	Cochrane	204	A
Malcolm	Cohen	123	A
Noel	Collyer	32	A
Stephen	Cooper	33	A
Gail	Courtney	159	A
Dave	Cox	35	A
Arthur	Cruttenden	64	A

Rafe	Culpin	36	A	Helen	MacNeil	80	A
John	Dallman	37	A	Justin	MacNeil	79	A
Martyn	Dawe	81	A	Keith	Martin	185	A
Guy	Dawson	39	A	Ian	Maughan	82	A
Sue	Dawson	38	A	Janet	Maughan	178	A
Peter	Day	40	A	Robert	Maughan	179	A
Chantal	Delessert	41	A	Rory	McLean	83	A
Vincent	Docherty	43	A	Scotty	McLeod	84	A
Chris	Donaldson	103	A	Alex	McLintock	169	A
Paul	Dormer	44	A	Pat	McMurray	86	A
Frances	Dowd	210	A	Hazel	Meades	89	C
John F	Dowd	209	A	Leo	Meades	90	I
David	Drysdale	45	A	Rob	Meades	87	A
Steve	Dunn	46	A	Farah	Mendlesohn	203	A
Roger	Earnshaw	47	A	John	Meredith	91	A
Martin	Easterbrook	187	A	Judith	Miller	92	A
Sue	Edwards	48	A	Cheryl	Morgan	94	A
Herman	Ellingsen	49	A	Chris	Morgan	193	A
Udo	Emmerich	50	A*	Pauline	Morgan	192	A
John	English	51	A	Tim	Morley	95	A
Lionel	Fanthorpe	219	A	Carol	Morton	206	A
Patricia	Fanthorpe	220	A	Tony	Morton	207	A
David	Farmer	52	A	Steve	Mowbray	96	A
Mike	Figg	53	A	Caroline	Mullan	97	A
Colin	Fine	54	A	Ronan	Murphy	171	A
Brian	Flatt	55	A	Hazel	Newman	216	A
Susan	Francis	160	A	Robert	Newman	215	A
Anders	Friagon	56	A	Andrew	O'Donnell	100	A
Gwen	Funnell	57	A	Roderick	O'Hanlon	104	A
Carolina	Gomez Lagerlof	58	A	Chris	O'Shea	23	A
Barbara-Jane	Grahame	212	A	Paul	Oldroyd	102	A
Urban	Gunnarsson	59	A	Arwel	Parry	105	A
David A	Hardy	184	A	Brian	Parsons	106	A
Colin	Harris	60	A	Andrew	Patterson	107	A
Eve	Harvey	62	A	Mali	Perera	182	A
John	Harvey	61	A	Tommy	Persson	108	A
Julian	Headlong	63	A	Mark	Plummer	109	A
Valerie	Housden	65	A	Silas	Potts	161	A
Tony	Ibbs	191	A	Thomas	Recktenwald	110	A
Marcia	Illingworth	67	A	Peter	Redfarn	111	A
Tim	Illingworth	66	A	John Campbell	Rees	163	A
Ian	Jackson	68	A	Patricia	Reynolds	113	A
Rhodri	James	69	A	Trevor	Reynolds	112	A
Wilf	James	217	A	Julie Faith	Rigby	168	A
John	Jarrold	174	A	Roger	Robinson	164	A
Ben	Jeapes	202	A	Tony	Rogers	114	A
Jonathan	Jones	42	A	Steve	Rogerson	115	A
Tony	Keen	70	A	Howard	Rosenblum	116	A
Peter	Kievits	71	A	June	Rosenblum	117	A
Tim	Kirk	72	A	Michelle	Rosenblum	118	C
Alice	Kohler	88	A	Stephen	Rothman	119	A
Dave	Lally	6	A	Marcus	Rowland	120	A
David	Langford	165	A	Yvonne	Rowse	121	A
Alice	Lawson	74	A	Marjorie	Sachs	122	A
Steve	Lawson	73	A	James	Samuel	214	A
Sharon	Lewis	101	A	Mike	Scott	124	A
Rom	Logger	213	A	Janet	Shepherd Figg	125	A
Marisa	Lohr	75	A	Gavin	Shorrock	201	A
Gavin	Long	77	A	Ina	Shorrock	200	A
Caroline	Loveridge	76	A	Mike	Simpson	170	A
Peter	Mabey	78	A	Mark	Sinclair	188	A

Sally	Sinclair	189	A
Mark	Slater	190	A
Anthony	Smith	126	A
Frank R	Smith	183	A
Dan	Smithers	127	A
Lucy	Smithers	128	A
Nathaniel	Smithers	129	I
Robert	Sneddon	199	A
Kate	Soley Barton	130	A
Janice	Sorrell	85	A
Christopher	Southern	133	A
Jennifer	Southern	132	A
Douglas	Spencer	186	A
Michael	Spiller	134	A
Jesper	Stage	135	A
James	Steel	136	A
Susan	Stepney	137	A
Alastair	Stewart	138	A
Christine	Stewart	139	A
Lars	Strandberg	140	A
Gary	Stratmann	142	A
Linda	Stratmann	141	A
Marcus	Streets	173	A
Lesley	Swan	143	A
Lorna	Sweetman	166	A
Alison	Taylor	144	A
Dave	Tompkins	145	A
Paul	Treadaway	146	A
Cristina Pulido	Ulvang	147	A
Tor Christian	Ulvang	148	A
Tobes	Valois	205	A

Jan	Van 'T Ent	149	A
David	Wake	176	A
Nick	Walker	208	A
Peter	Wareham	150	A
Alan	Webb	181	C
Gerry	Webb	180	A
Eileen	Weston	152	A
Peter	Weston	151	A
Charles	Whyte	153	A
Colin	Wightman	154	A
Sarah	Wightman	155	A
Anne	Wilson	2	A
Alan	Woodford	157	A
Anne	Woodford	156	A
Ben	Yalow	175	A
Mark	Young	158	A

A: Adult Attending

C: Child Attending

I: Infant (under 7 at the convention)

S: Supporting

Some members asked to have their details excluded from any published membership list.

Missing Persons:

We have lost one of members and are seeking an up-to-date postal address for Udo Emmerich. If you are in contact with Udo please ask him to contact our Membership Secretary, Sharon Lewis (membership.concourse@ntlworld.com), to whom all membership enquiries should be directed.

Helping out with Concourse

Like all fan-run conventions, Concourse is organised by fans for fans. The list of committee members and staff on page 2 shows some of the people who have already agreed to help out with the convention, and also indicates some of the different areas of work which need to be undertaken to make the convention a success.

If you are interested in helping out with the convention, in advance or especially on the day, do get in touch (contact details are also set out on page 2). There are two main ways in which your help would be appreciated.

Firstly, we'd like volunteers to help with the programme, both as a participant on the day and by contributing ideas in advance. You'll have seen our main ideas for programme taking shape on page 8; we're keen to build the programme around our guests and their interests, but there's plenty of room for other items of interest to science fiction fans generally – including those that could help to interest people in areas of fandom they might not have tried before. You don't have to be an experienced programme participant in order to get involved, but we want to make sure that we're asking people to play to their strengths in order to make the programme enjoyable for everyone. So if you're volunteering to be a programme participant, it would be helpful if you could give us an idea of your areas of interest (and of any particular expertise you have).

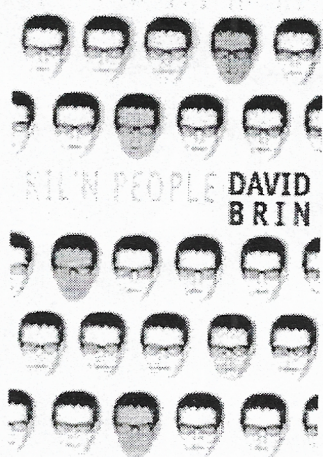
Secondly, we need your help to make the convention work behind the scenes: in specific areas like registration, the programme 'green room', Ops (operations), stewarding, tech, the newsletter – and also in a general capacity if you are willing to work for a few hours as a 'gopher', helping with any organisational or physical tasks which need to be done at the time. Again, no experience is necessary – and if you're particularly interested in learning about how one or more areas of an Eastercon works, please tell us – but experience that you do have could be very helpful to us and we'd be grateful if you could make clear what you've done before.

We'll check with all volunteers nearer the time whether there are any days or times when you know you won't be available; in particular, we'll come back to potential programme participants to make sure they're happy with the items we're proposing to involve them in. But if you already have clear commitments or strong preferences that's useful to know in advance.

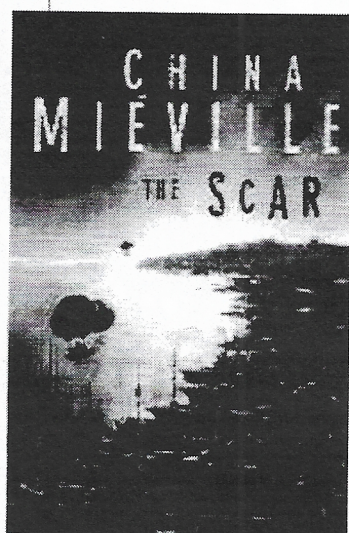
Advertising rates: progress reports

	Full (professional) rates	Fan (convention and club) rates
Full page	£60	£35
Half page	£35	£20
Quarter page	£20	£10

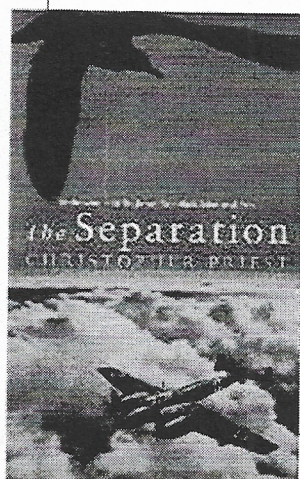
These rates may rise in subsequent progress reports. Black and white camera-ready copy must be supplied. Contact Paul Hood at the convention address for details of deadlines, dimensions etc. Reciprocal advertising arrangements may be available.



KIL'N PEOPLE
David Brin
Orbit



THE SCAR
China Miéville
Macmillan



THE SEPARATION
Christopher Priest
Scribner

THE

Arthur C Clarke

AWARD

The year's best science fiction

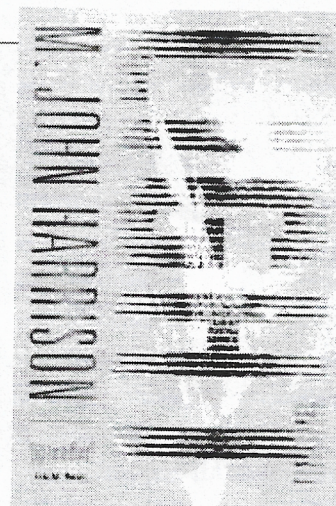
One of these six books will be
declared the best science fiction
novel of 2002.

The judges of the UK's most
prestigious science fiction award
will announce their decision
on 17th May 2003.

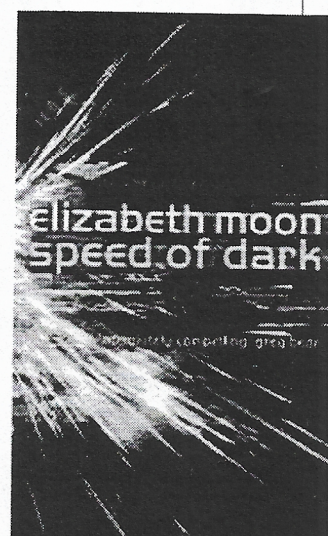
Decide for yourself which is the best
science fiction novel of the year!

The Arthur C. Clarke Award is jointly
supported by
The British Science Fiction Association,
the Science Fiction Foundation and the
Science Museum.

science
museum

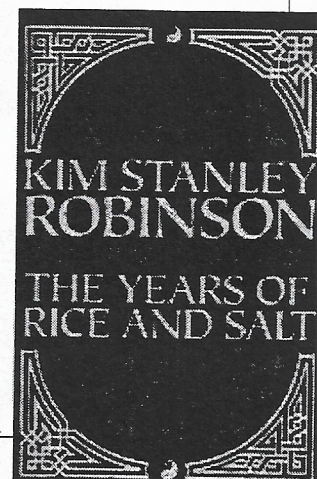


LIGHT
M. John Harrison
Gollancz



SPEED OF DARK
Elizabeth Moon
Orbit

THE YEARS OF RICE
AND SALT
Kim Stanley Robinson
HarperCollins



POCTSARD



Having fun
here in sunny
Blackpool
Wish you
were
Green

Jophan
Plotka Towers
Ansible Lane
CAMBRIDGE
CB1

BLACKPOOL
PIER

Blinkin' 'eck!
I DIDN'T KNOW
THEY MADE **FANS**
THAT BIG!

BAR

BLACKPOOL
5 MILES

Sue 2003

ARTWORK
FRAGILE
THIS WAY UP

BE A
GOOD
IMPORTANT
STUFF