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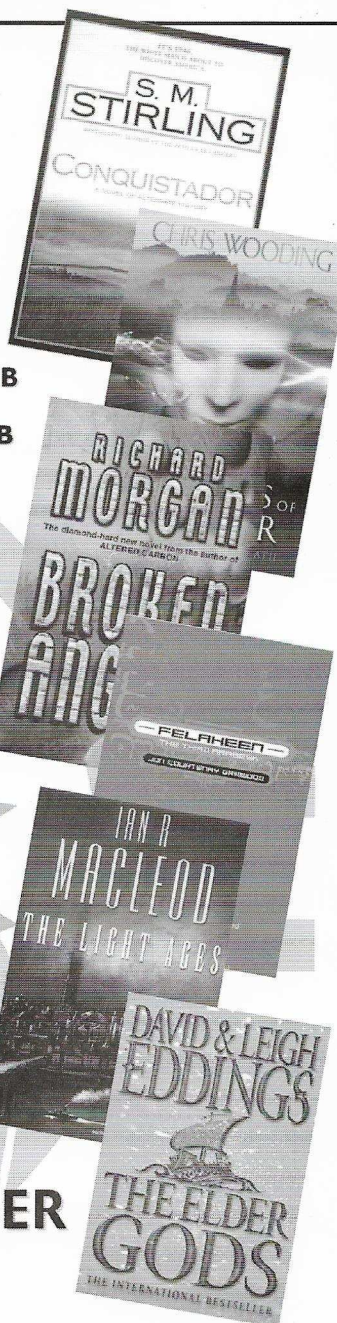
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54TH UK EASTER SF CONVENTION
18TH TO 21ST APRIL 2003
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HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

GUESTS

FANGORN (CHRIS BAKER)

CHRISTOPHER EVANS

MARY GENTLE

TOASTMASTER JOHN JARROLD

SOUVENIR BOOK

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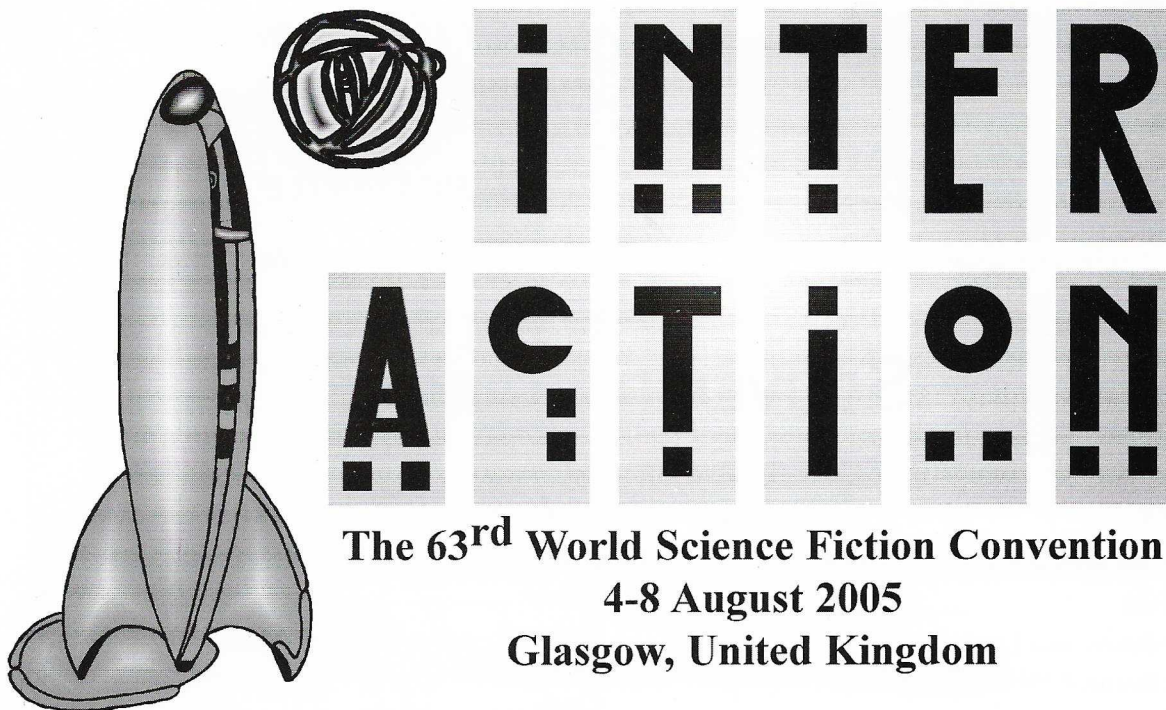
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The 63rd World Science Fiction Convention

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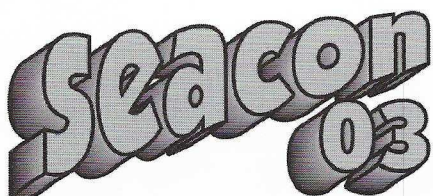
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54th UK Easter SF Convention

April 2003

Dear Member

Hope you had a great convention! If you've opened this at the beginning of the convention hoping to find details of the programme, breakfast times, or when the bar opens, that opening comment will be confusing. Put this book away and pick up the Read-Me which will tell you all of these things and is a lot easier to carry around.

Since most of us follow the tradition of looking at the Programme Book on the trip home, we decided, quite deliberately, to make this a Souvenir Book not a Programme Book. It is designed to be read at your leisure on the way home or indeed two years after the convention.

It contains articles and artwork to remind you of our Guests and to reflect the themes and flavour of the convention. Companion publications to this are the short story collection which contains a contribution from each of our literary guests, and a Fanthology with a difference. One of our aims has been 'fusion' – no artificial divisions – and the fanthology illustrates that, by printing fannish contributions from both literary, artist and fan guests of honour at past Eastercons. Our thanks go to Claire Brailey and Mark Plummer for all the work they put into this. So with these three publications we hope we have given you something lasting to remember us by.

As I write this we're 14 days into the latest Gulf War. Fourteen days ago I couldn't believe that we could be putting on a convention at the same time as the carnage going on in Iraq. Just one week ago the idea of Hollywood running the Oscars at this time seemed in pretty bad taste. Today we're entering Baghdad and it's beginning to feel run-of-the-mill. Bizarrely it looks like TV has decided to treat it like a special event; it feels like the World Cup of video games . . . so Starship Troopers. I'm sure we'll be looking at some of the ramifications of all of this in at least a couple of our programme items.

I would like to personally thank all the people who have worked towards ensuring that the latest incarnation of Seacon has been a success. (It's frightening to think it is nearly twenty years since my involvement with the last one.) We all assist in running conventions for a variety of reasons, but everyone does it as a volunteer. You know who the committee are, and probably the department heads, but of course the entire edifice would collapse without the effort put in by the staff of those departments. So my particular thanks goes to those people who have simply turned up on the day and contributed to the running of the convention.

The committee would also like to thank **Intersection**, and particularly the co-chairs Vince Docherty and Martin Easterbrook, for a substantial donation towards the cost of producing the Fanthology. Thanks also to Vince and this time **Interaction** for sponsoring Cyberdrome. Finally thanks to Alice Lawson and **Paragon** for providing the resources to pay for a new set of Eastercon art-boards.

Hope you had a good time – we tried our best!

Paul Oldroyd

THE 61ST WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION **TORCON**

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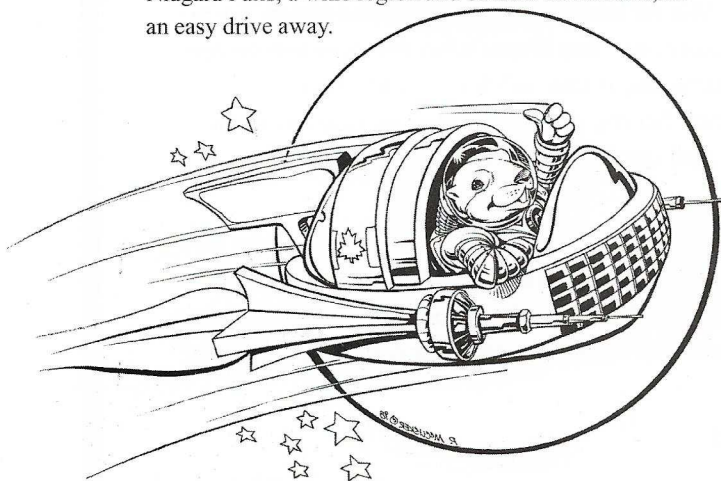
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Pico Iyer, Harper's Magazine

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CHRIS EVANS: AN APPRECIATION

Chris Priest

I've known Chris Evans for most of the quarter-century he has been writing, both as a friend and a colleague. He was born in 1951 in Tredegar, South Wales, and after school went first to Cardiff University (BSc in Chemistry), then to Swansea College for a post-graduate Certificate in Education. By the time he moved to London in the late 1970s he was a qualified teacher, but was doing other jobs for the time being and sharing a grotty flat in Chiswick with some other Welshmen. They were all demented, I discovered, when I started calling round in the evenings for a drink, a bag of fish and chips and a cup of tea, in that order. Being a bit demented myself, we always seemed to get on OK. When we talked about books and science fiction I liked his line in fierce moderation, his aggressive insistence that there was inevitably a middle ground that everyone else was ignoring. We argued endlessly, but the funny thing was that most of the time we were arguing with each other from the same side, not against each other.

By 1980, Faber were publishing his first novel, **Capella's Golden Eyes**, which had a fair success for a first novel – enough, anyway, for Chris to postpone the need to take up a job in a school. For about nine years he tried his hand at freelancing, and for a lot of that time we were neighbours. His flat was directly above mine, and in those days the sound of his typewriter hammering away was a background accompaniment to much of my own work. It probably sounds incestuous to outsiders – these two writers of roughly the same age, both publishing sf with Faber, living in the same apartment block, one on top of the other – but in fact the physical closeness of our living arrangements had an opposite effect. We tended to spend less social time together than we had before. Later, we both moved away – Chris to South London and I, eventually, to Wiltshire – and we saw less and less of each other. It was during that period of change that Chris decided the freelance life wasn't for him. By this time his son Ceri had been born, and parental responsibility does that sort of thing to you. He went at last into teaching, first as a supply teacher, then as a part-time teacher, then finally full time. He still teaches in a state comprehensive school in South London, a physically and mentally gruelling task for anybody, but perhaps more so for someone who has already carved out a writing career, a reputation and a following. In spite of the arduous and time-consuming work at school, both **Aztec Century** and **Mortal Remains** were written while Chris was teaching, and I understand he is in the final stages of a new novel at the moment. He married Fe (Fiona Simpson) about

four years ago, and they now have an infant daughter, Gwen.

In the science fiction world the words "British" and "underrated" seem inextricably joined. Chris is a living definition of the condition, a writer for nearly twenty-five years, yet until now, with his GoH-ship here this Easter, he has been a writer more or less taken for granted. His work has been consistently serious, well crafted and unusual, a quality writer in a field where good writing usually makes itself known. His first novel was memorable: **Capella's Golden Eyes** (1980), a book of quiet virtues and a subtle satirical edge. Quiet and subtle: perhaps a clue to the way some people understand him lies in those two words. They are the sort of qualities that can make good sf great, but they can also make good writers overlooked.

Later he wrote a candid and sometimes shocking novel called **In Limbo** (1985), one of those books which give the reader the disconcerting sense that things are close to the autobiographical bone. So there's a third clue, perhaps, to the way Chris's work is seen. Autobiography? In a science fiction novel? All these are more of the things that go towards making a book good, but some people think they tend to take sf out of the gutter, where they prefer it to stay.

His later books, **Aztec Century** (1993) and **Mortal Remains** (1995) have been recognizably closer to the science fiction heartland. The first of these deservedly picked up the BSFA Award for best novel of its year, and the second, with its elegantly complex noosphere, would probably have swept naturally on to the Hugo shortlist had its author been an American. The condition of Britishness is yet another clue to his lack of wider recognition. That makes a tally of four, which is probably three too many.

Many years ago I wrote a similar introduction to Chris Evans for the 1986 Novacon, where he was Guest of Honour, an early slice of recognition. Looking back over what I wrote then I see that I had a lot to say about Chris's silly qualities (by his own lights shall ye judge a man, and Chris has always maintained that the silliness quotient is one of the first things he looks for in others), less about his work. In those days he had published only his first three. Now there are more, a short story collection I haven't mentioned, a new novel to come, and a fair slew of novels for young readers. (**The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction** lists most of these.) Also buried away in his c.v. is a title he wrote for a publisher of practical books: it was called **Writing SF**, a quiet but declarative title, lacking

show, lacking false claims, yet announcing a steady certainness. In this book you find the authentic Chris Evans voice: the middle ground asserted boldly, the confident drawing on his own experience, the dry wit.

It's a great and wonderful thing that he should be honoured this year at Seacon. Our conventions at Easter have always strongly promoted the best of our British sf writers, and in Chris Evans we can at last give recognition to one of the finest.

CHRISTOPHER EVANS AND ELMER T HACK

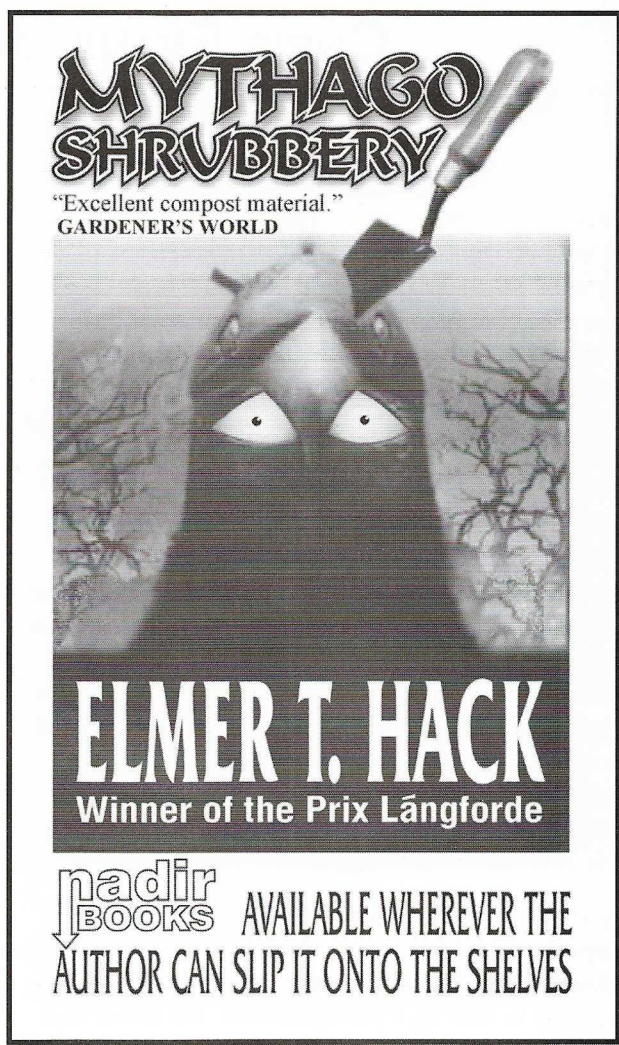
A. Nonymouse

The amazing similarity in looks between Chris and Elmer has often been remarked upon. Also the fact that you never see them in the same room at the same time has been noted by the more observant. I am here today, however, to state once and for all that they are not one and the same person! Beyond the superficial similarities the two have little in common.

Chris is one of those writers who leave you wanting more whereas Elmer ... well let's just say reading one (or maybe part of one) of Hack's books leaves you feeling that nothing could improve on his style.

The two were introduced to each other many years ago by that evil Scottish art genius Jim Barker. In those days Elmer was at his most productive and Jim – a friend to many lost causes – felt that the world needed to be appraised of the exploits of Mr Hack (as he was known to his friends); or at least to serve as a warning to those who came after. So Chris – as many young writers pressed for money and desperate to make ends meet do – sold out. He became the chronicler of the Life and Times of Elmer T Hack.

Excerpts from these chronicles appeared in the BSFA's learned journal, *Vector*, and were later collected into a



single volume, although copies are hard to find these days.

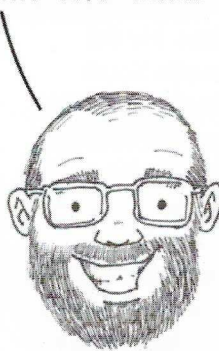
Hack slipped into thankful obscurity during the 80s and 90s. But he was discovered in a Cardiff hide away a year or so before Seacon03 – by that evil Welsh art genius Dave Hicks. Dave persuaded him to return to his celebrate his old triumphs, which have been chronicled in the Seacon03 Progress Reports, and concluded here in this Souvenir Book.

The Return of **Elmer T. Hack**

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IT'S THE M6, ISN'T IT?.

YUP.



CHRISTOPHER EVANS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

Roger Robinson

NOVELS AND COLLECTIONS

(in chronological order, by pseudonym)

as by Nathan ELLIOTT

► the Hood's Army trilogy

a young-adult SF series

- 1: Earth Invaded 1986 - UK: Grafton
- 2: Slaveworld 1986 - UK: Grafton
- 3: The Liberators 1986 - UK: Grafton

► the Star Pirates trilogy

a young-adult SF series

- 1: Kidnap in Space 1987 - UK: Dragon
- 2: Plague Moon 1987 - UK: Dragon
- 3: Treasure Planet 1987 - UK: Dragon

Steven Spielberg's Inner Space

a film tie-in novel 1987 - UK: Dragon

as by Robert KNIGHT

Plasmid

a tie-in to a film that was never made
1980 - UK: Star Books

as by Christopher CARPENTER

The Twilight Realm 1985 - UK: Arrow

as by John LYON

The Summoning

a horror novel 1985 - UK: Arrow

as by Evan CHRISTIE

The Collectors

a tv tie-in novel 1986 - UK: Grafton

Casualty

a tv tie-in novel 1986 - UK: Grafton

as by Alwyn DAVIES

The Practice 1: No Escape

a tv tie-in novel 1986 - UK: Futura

The Practice 2: Consequences

a tv tie-in novel 1986 - UK: Futura

as by Christopher EVANS

Capella's Golden Eyes 1980 - UK: Faber

The Insider 1981 - UK: Faber

In Limbo 1985 - UK: Granada

Who's Who in the Universe

a Novacon chapbook 1986 - UK: bsfg

Chimeras

a collection of linked stories 1992 - UK: Grafton

Aztec Century 1993 - 1993: Gollancz

Mortal Remains 1995 - UK: Gollancz

Ice tower

in the multi-author Dreamtime series of ya sf
2000 - UK: Orion

EDITED BOOKS

Conspiracy Theories

a polemic on Writer's of the Future's involvement
with conventions 1987 - UK: privately published

Other Edens

co-editor Robert Holdstock 1987 - UK: Unwin

Other Edens II

co-editor Robert Holdstock 1988 - UK: Unwin

Other Edens III

co-editor Robert Holdstock 1989 - UK: Unwin

NONFICTION BOOKS

The Guide to Fantasy Art Techniques

co-authored with Martyn Dean (brother of artist
Roger Dean) 1984 - UK: Dragon's Dream

Lightship

an artbook - text by CE, art by Jim Burns

1985 - UK: Dragon's World

Dream Makers

1988 - UK: Dragon's World

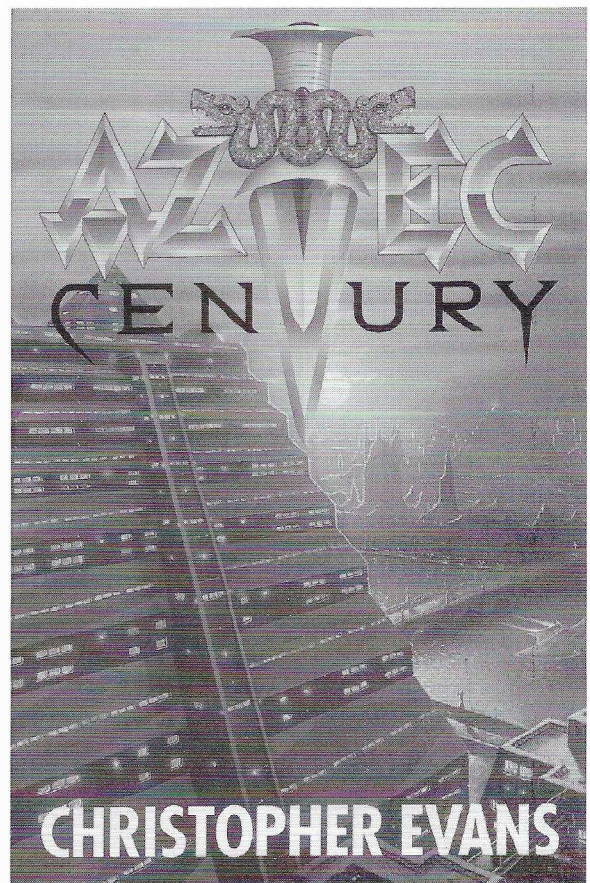
Writing Science Fiction

1988 - UK: Black

Airshow

an artbook - text by CE, art by Philip Castle

1989 - UK: Dragon's World



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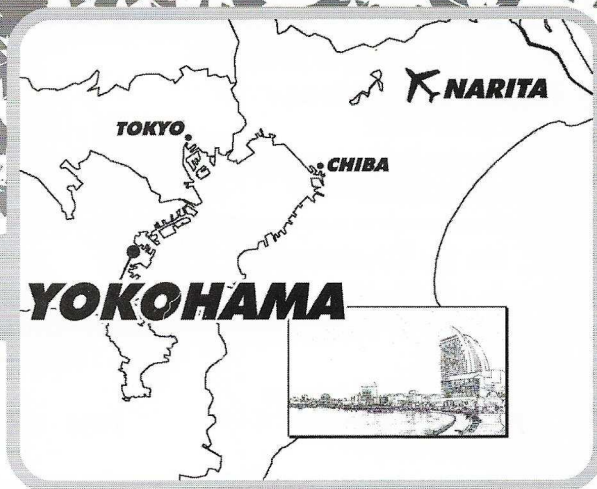
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LOVELY NAME; SHAME ABOUT THE JACKET...

Alex Stewart

A long time ago, in a con bar far, far away (so distant in space and time, in fact, that I can't even recall which convention, hotel, or city this took place in; although I vaguely suspect one of the Mexicons) a joke flyer was circulating for a purported event called 'Tweecon.' It was, as I recall, a satirical dig at the fans of what seemed to us then to be a deluge of badly-written generic fantasy in which everything was ultimately cosy, a Disneyfied take on celtic myth or the middle ages (which most of the authors concerned appeared to think were essentially interchangeable) where indoor plumbing and antibiotics seemed to be lurking just off-stage to keep the smell and squalor at bay and modern American notions of egalitarianism had somehow taken root so that nobody was oppressed, or starving, or even mildly uncomfortable, especially women, who were all empowered by the earth goddess and terribly, terribly nice...

The flyer was written in an appropriately twittery style, and concluded that Mary Gentle was to be the Guest of Honour, even though none of the committee had ever read any of her books because 'it's such a lovely name... Shame about the jacket...'

No one, of course, laughed harder at this than Mary herself. And, if you're in the same position as the poor benighted souls of the Tweecon committee, the point of the joke is that anyone less likely to produce something even remotely safe or cosy is unlikely to be drawing breath today.

I first met Mary longer ago than I care to contemplate, at a Milford workshop where she was suffering from a headcold of biblical proportions. Despite disappearing into her room periodically to be hideously unwell her incisive critical intelligence was still undimmed in the criticism sessions, and surfaced periodically in the evening round of silly literary games whenever she felt well enough to join in. In retrospect, I suppose, it may have been just as well that my first encounter was with a Mary functioning on, at best, half power; if I'd been exposed to the full range of her astounding intellect and zest for life at the outset, I might have been too overwhelmed to continue the contact, and so have missed out on one of the most valued friendships of my life.

Nevertheless we kept in touch, and have continued to see each other all too infrequently since. It helps that we have a similar sense of humour, and a number of interests in common, although it's been far too long since our miniature armies have clashed across the wargames table. And, despite the best of intentions, my wife and I still haven't made it over to Stevenage to visit the pig she persuaded us to adopt.

There, I think, you have the essence of Mary in a

nutshell. She's the kind of person who makes it seem entirely reasonable to adopt a pig; even, in her case, visiting her porcine wards at weekends with a pocketful of apples, like a cross between Lord Emsworth and D'Artagnan's Daughter. (An obscure French swashbuckler she suggested I make the time to watch, and which in turn I commend to you). Livestock has an important part to play in the Gentle household, which seems to be run more for the convenience of the rat part of the menage than for the human, an arrangement which also seems entirely reasonable when she explains it to you.

There's very little Mary doesn't know about any subject which engages her interest, which is another function of that formidable intellect I mentioned a few paragraphs ago; she's the only person I know with a second Master's degree, which she entirely self-financed because the subject (War Studies) fascinated her. But more than that, she's not content merely to know something; she has to *understand* it, and for that there's no substitute for experience. Which explains why, when she started writing about Valentine, it wasn't enough to just read a few books about swordfighting techniques, she had to become an expert swordswoman herself. And that, of course, is why Valentine and Ash spring so readily to life from the page; when her heroines go into combat she doesn't just know what they're doing, she understands how a sword feels in the hand, the way the weight shifts as you move your own centre, how the weapon isn't a weapon at all, it's an extension of your will. As a martial arts student myself I can always tell when an author knows what it's like to defend yourself from a skilled opponent, or is simply parroting some stage choreography, and Mary walks the walk.

At the end of the day, though, it's not just the intellect, the ebullience, the *joi de vivre* which makes me treasure this particular friendship, or the steadfast support she's always offered when my life has been less than rosy, despite far more serious problems of her own; it's simply that, of all my friends, of all the people I've ever known, Mary is one of the most fun to be around.

If you know her already, you'll know precisely what I mean. And if you don't, then pluck up the courage to speak to her; don't let the jacket intimidate you.



Noreascon 4

The 62nd World Science Fiction Convention

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SOME WAYS OF LOOKING AT MARY GENTLE...

Roz Kaveney

First of all, you can look at the places...

*

Orthe is a map, of course, and a set of metaphors for states of mind. It is the place of planetary romance where geography suits plot convenience and where a heroine in trouble is liable to find herself lost in the barrens or trudging through swamps. 'Golden Witchbreed' and 'Ancient Light' are early work and show their influences, but they wear those influences with style and assurance; even then Mary Gentle could write landscapes and cityscapes and Big Dumb Objects left over from sinister past civilizations so that they counted and stayed in the mind past the immediate need for them as settings for a key scene.

Even then, though, there was a passionate sense of all those place's reality. Lynne de Lisle Christie never gets to cheat, even for a moment, and has to walk, or ride, every single mile of those tiring long journeys between desperate adventures, and to put up with every discomfort of insects or food in the places she sleeps along the way. Mary Gentle is a writer who owes comparatively little to Tolkien except for this - not just a sense of place, but a sense of how difficult travel is between places.

*

The places of the White Crow novels are - well - different. They are ideas and mental constructions as much as places, but that does not mean that you can't get splinters from the planks, grazes from the stones, of which they are built. They are Theatres of the Mind; they are Memory Palaces; they are Virtualities - but they are all real places which stick in the mind visually. Which is quite a trick given that some of them are not places it is possible literally to imagine - that fifth point of the compass works perfectly well, but also always gets in the way.

And yet the city we find ourselves in in 'Rats and Gargoyles' is just as solidly imagined as the near-future London of 'Left to His Own Devices', a London set in streets Mary could walk through blindfold and quite possibly has, a London with a Cambridge Circus and a Soho and a Trafalgar Square tube which nonetheless feels estranged from our reality in its politics and its atmosphere.

These are novels about the magic of places in which it is possible for bad structure to be the source of nameless evil, in which intelligent and virtuous modelling can redeem the city from its own worst self. Places are models of memory and memory can remake what imagination by itself cannot - 'Left to His Own Devices' is a complex meditation on precisely what we mean when we describe the construction of a

computer programme as architecture. Only one of the White Crow stories is called 'The Architecture of Desire', but there is a sense in which they all could have been, because they are all soaked in a sense of cities as places of the possible where both utopia and sexual fulfilment lie just around the corner.

*

When Mary and I were working on the shared world anthology 'Villains', we cheated a bit. We decided that the idea of the world was what counted and that people could make up all the locations within it. Writers got the idea of an anthology in which the stock bad guys of fantasy got protagony, and turned in stories that managed between them most of the tropes of sword and sorcery and all of the stock location footage. Mary managed to fit them all into a sneaky little frame narrative which by itself would be worth the price of admission - and we sat down with the stories we selected and filled in a standard fantasy map logically from the evidence in the stories themselves.

Paula Wakefield's sinister variant on Cinderella took place in a cold place, for example, and so did Stephen Baxter's nastily little squib about dwarf armourers - so the locations they mentioned went in the North, up at the top of the map. And the temperate zone stories or the ones with deserts in them found their own place. It was truly disturbing, when we were done, how absolutely similar it looked to all the maps in fantasy novels that we had thought of ourselves as making fun of - some jokes are too dry to be quite comfortable. And so Mary did it again, all over, from the beginning, just so maybe people would get the joke. 'Grunts' is the 'Villains' novella that got away and spilled itself all over that blank map and made it a place of its own.

*

Though 'Grunts' is parody and burlesque, it says some interesting things about the military mind- set which Mary stayed interested in. Her eventual next novel 'Ash' is full of places, but they are places used not just as metaphors for states of mind, or as constructs the intellect can use to make a home for itself, or even just as the sorts of place in which adventures have to happen, but rather as places where applied intellect goes to work in particular and violent ways. For the military mind, which Ash is, and Mary had interestingly trained herself to look through, every place is potentially a killing ground, a last stand or a beach-head.

of its middle, are as solidly imagined places as Mary has ever given us because they are ground over which conflict happens. A siege and a raid in force do not just occur - they are a following through of a

specialized logic which makes the pitch of a roof or the twists of an alley matters of life or death, victory or defeat. 'Ash' is a rich book about the historical process and how events happen, and are perceived - it is also a close-up of the bloody events which are the motor of that process and how they are executed in the constraints of a street-plan or a contour-line.

*

Or, then again, you can look at Mary Gentle's heroines.

They are women who want to be perfect and put themselves and everyone round them through hell in order to be so. They are women who forgive other people for slights and sins of which they nonetheless keep a detailed list, but who never forgive themselves a single failing. They are women who refuse to accept defeat, who will claw back any loss that the universe permits them to and, if that doesn't work, will find a way of changing the rules.

Lynne de Lisle Christie is a good heroine for a first novel - an ingenue who is all about learning her trade and learning to be even better than she is in the first place. If one of the things that novels are about is their own composition, Lynne, who is never naive but acquires level after level of understanding of the stack of nuances that make up a whole world is an apt symbol of process.

*

Valentine the Soldier/Scholar, the White Crow, has seen it all, many times over in the subtly different worlds she finds herself wandering through. Some things remain constant - her passion for the gigantic, obese, brilliant and charming Casaubon (who shares his name with one of the greatest of scholars) and the wandering eye for pretty young things of either sex that gets her into the very worst of trouble in 'The Architecture of Desire'. The White Crow novels and stories are the work of an assured writer, who knows who she is and what she wants to do, but they are all of them about exploration as well, about following your talents and seeing where they lead you, into sewers or seventh heavens.

The other fascination which Valentine exerts on the reader is the fact that you never know quite what she will do next. She is a heroine who, in the course of three novels, occasionally acts out of what she had thought of as her character, taking chances or committing serious sins. If I have a particular fondness for 'The Architecture of Desire', it is because an early shorter version of it was on offer to me for an anthology at one time - a version which contained interesting echoes of the personal messes about which I was at the time wailing to my friends incessantly and which somehow transformed my petty concerns into art. Mary then had second thoughts, decided it was a novel, and wrote me 'Black Motley' instead, the Valentine story with no Valentine in it, but interesting

walk-ons by Neil Gaiman, Mary herself and someone who everyone tells me is a precise echo of my verbal mannerisms though I don't see it myself.

*

And then there is Ash, the scar-faced smart-as-mustard mediaeval warrior with a voice in her head that tells her how to win battles, who finds herself up against a double who has bigger armies to play with, and a whole culture to teach her how to be wholly ruthless. 'Ash' is a book not only about playing to your strengths, and Ash certainly does this all the time, but of finding ways to turn your weaknesses, or those areas in which you run in a good second to your opponent, and making them tricksily into even greater strengths. 'Ash' is a novel about paradoxes - Ash uses paradox to win.

Mary Gentle is fascinated by the heroic in women, which usually means bloody-minded obstinacy, fierce intelligence and a passionately pragmatic earthiness. All of her heroines are works in progress, women determined to live up to their own high standards and to be better even than they are.

*

And there is a very real sense in which in all of this they echo their creator.

We are, after all, talking about someone who got herself taught to fight Renaissance sword-and-dagger style so that she no longer had to fake her combats - and those of us who have watched her in action have known fear. Mary did an MA in War Studies when she was writing her book about a female general and whose comprehensive programme of self-education and self-improvement makes most of her generation of fantasy writers look like dilettantes.

As critic and editor, she has always been tough-minded to the borders of brutality, to an extent that is forgivable because she is her own harshest critic and editor. Co-editing anthologies with Mary - as I did three times in the early nineties - was a bracing experience simply because she was determined that each and every one of the stories we published was polished until it was as good as its author had it in them to make it, and then some more.

More recently, as an occasional commentator on the net on television shows, Mary has demonstrated a fierce determination that what she enjoys live up to her own standards of perfection. I often disagree with her more negative judgements on the later series of 'Buffy' and 'Angel' and 'Farscape', but she always makes a case to answer which is to hone one's own view into real usefulness.

The twenty-five years of Gentle's career include heroic fantasy, planetary romance, cyberpunk and wild parodic farce, as well as an early novel for young adults 'Hawk in Silver'. She started off good, and got better because as her career has progressed she has

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STAN NICHOLLS

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 Voyager

found out what in particular she wanted to do in her work

Golden Witchbreed and Ancient Light took place on another planet, which had to be reached by starship, and the dead hand of hard science fiction logic perpetually threatened to close down the author's options. She read Islandia and Ursula leGuin's The Left Hand of Darkness, and between them they gave her the framework of her own planetary romances and taught her a lot about writing.

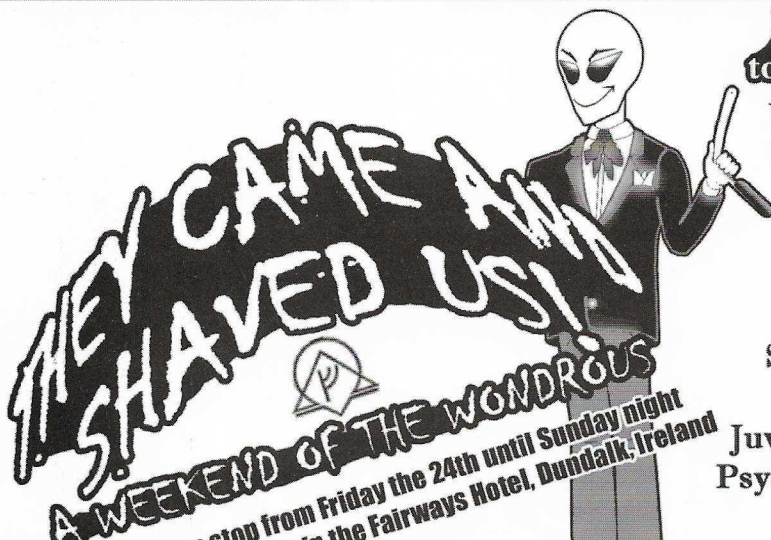
Golden Witchbreed and Ancient Light are also very much books about decolonization - Mary was interested in poitics from her teens and it was important to her to write about the way that bits of cultures get destroyed, or co-opted, by more powerful ones, and about the extent to which in political situations there are no innocent victims. They take place at that interface between anti- colonialism and feminism - the failure of the incoming Terrans, even to some extent of our sympathetic heroine, to get past their view of Orthe as a pre-technical society. Here we have a world with huge relics of its long-ago and disowned high-tech past visible from space, but the Terrans are so obsessed with the idea that the Ortheans are primitives that they ignore the obvious. Mary has rarely made a political point so directly.

They are also very much books of the early 80s - there is no sense in them of the way computers were going to affect all our futures. It is very hard to think back to

the beginning of my working life, when a computer was a huge machine that ate punched cards and took up a room. Science fiction is never predictive; it is a way of writing about where you are when you write it.*SF and fantasy have always been for Mary 'a universe with elbow room, an adventure playground of the mind.' The White Crow books stand on an interesting border between the two, not in the standard mode of science fantasy, where people go to faraway planets in order to have adventures with a sort of science indistinguishable from magic - not because it is so advanced, but because it is so arbitrary. Instead, these are books which celebrate the intellect, which treat a belief system as if it were logical and true and could be worked through by diligence and experiment. Most magic is, of its nature, a sort of glorified cheating - the magic in the White Crow books is not; it is magic done with the habits of the scientific mind.

This has an inherent rightness to it - the distinctions that we make between science and magic of this sort are in large part a matter of hindsight. Kepler found the elliptical orbits of the planets, but what he was looking for was the music of the spheres, the glorious sounds that they made as they ran around orbits described in the interiors of the Platonic solids. Newton believed in alchemy as a way of purifying the soul...

When, in 'Left to His Own Devices', Valentine's operations are moved to a near-future London, where experiments in information technology produce an Artificial Shared Unconscious rather than an Artificial



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Intelligence, there is a logic to this too. The world of Gibson's cyberspace is as much a magical one as a science-fictional one - it is one in which power is compelled by a combination of intelligence and will and where knowledge of true names is all. There is a wryness to the conceit that is typical of Mary's work.

*

It is not often that one is present at the start of something. Mary was part of a crowd of us that, in the mid-80s, when she was busy with the White Crow, used to hang around in the Cafe Munchen, scribbling and plotting anthologies and drinking and talking and taking notes on each other's emotional lives in the hope of finding killer material. We were all so smart in those days and had so much promise - Mary is one of the ones of us who actually did something with that promise which is a lesson to the rest of us.

And one day we got into an interesting conversation about great national myths and how often they are associated with Times of Troubles where there are few records. Arthur is the obvious one - no written sources for years and plague killing people off and this huge hole in history into which Arthur just about fits as the sort of thing which might have happened as later people misunderstood it. The Hood is sort of the same - just about the right time to have memories scrambled by the Black Death.

And we talked about whether they came out of an aporia where two alternate histories collide, or whether they are created by confused memory, and whether that is why there are anachronisms and how it comes that they are at least as important as people who actually existed. This was the sort of conversation we all used to have in the Munchen.

For the longest time, all we knew was that Mary was working on a big book and was more and more involved in mediaeval militaria. Those people who had been around during the early White Rose phase when she was mainlining the works of Frances Yates sort of knew what to expect. What we did not expect was that that conversation several years earlier had borne fruit.

'Ash' is of course hugely more sophisticated in its ideas than anything we thought of that afternoon years earlier - not least because so much of the energy in the book goes into the frame narrative. We spend most of the book with Ash and her mercenaries in what is not quite the Middle Ages as we know them, but we also spend quality time with Piers, the scholar and translator who finds reality crumbling under his feet as documentary sources and mythic narratives change places, and archaeological digs uncover mediaeval robots. This is a book about many things, but one of those things is the pleasure of the text, a pleasure which, you realize in the book's last pages, is consummated when Ash, the woman of action, and Piers, the man who is her ideal reader and audience,

finally manage to meet.

Back in the day, we all used to talk about self-referential metafiction, a lot, and used to be mocked by critics like John Clute for our fondness for temporal adventuresses and for the ultimate immunity that you get when you are fascinated by genre rules and by time and by seeing what happens when you bend the pair of them. It has taken Mary, perhaps, of all the writers who used to hang in the Munchen, to deliver on what we were all playing with.

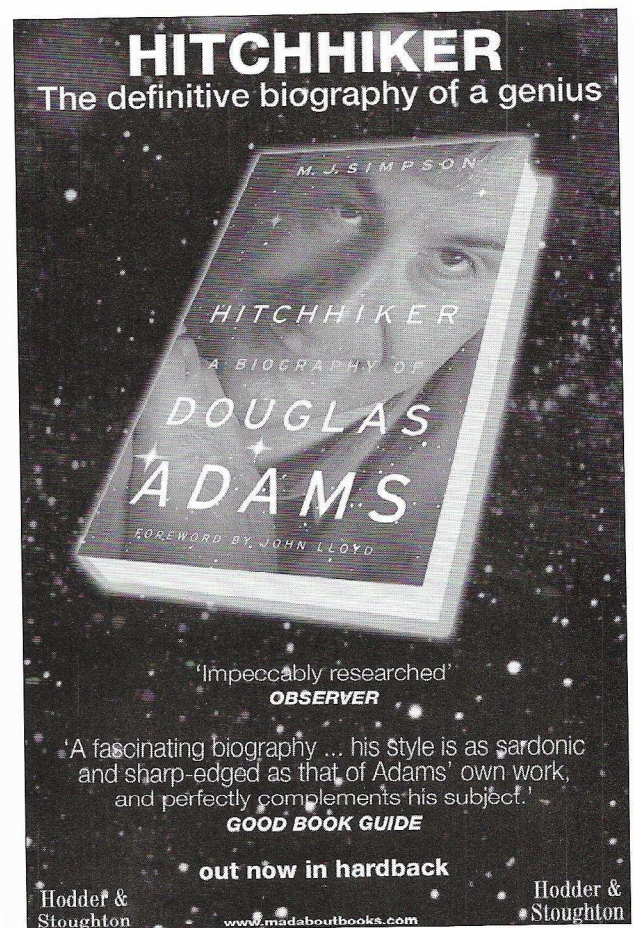
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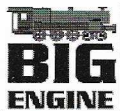
And there is the big new book, of which I know nothing.

Except all the things I already know about Mary's writing - all the themes and tricks which will be developed further in it.

And that it will be good.

The best way to look at Mary Gentle's fiction is to start on page one and just enjoy it.





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MARY GENTLE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

Roger Robinson

NOVELS AND COLLECTIONS

(in chronological order)

- A Hawk in Silver** (MG's first novel: contrary to popular belief, it wasn't revised for the 1985 US publication) 1977 - UK: Gollancz
1985 - US: Morrow
- Golden Witchbreed** (first book in the Orthe series) 1983 - UK: Gollancz
- Ancient Light** (novel in Orthe series - sequel to Golden Witchbreed) 1987 - UK: Gollancz
- Scholars and Soldiers** (collection of 9 stories with an introduction by Neil Gaiman) 1989 - UK: Macdonald
Contents – Beggars in Satin / The Harvest of Wolves / The Crystal Sunlight, the Bright Air / The Tarot Dice / Anukazi's Daughter / A Sun in the Attic / A Shadow Under the Sea / The Pits Beneath the World / The Knot Garden
- Rats and Gargoyles** (novel in the White Crow sequence) 1990 - UK
- The Architecture of Desire** (novel in the White Crow sequence) 1991 - UK: Bantam
- Grunts !** (humorous fantasy novel) 1992 - UK: Bantam
- Left to His Own Devices** (collection of one novel and three short stories) 1994 - UK: Orbit
Contents – Left to His Own Devices (novel) / Black Motley / What God Abandoned / The Road to Jerusalem
- The Book of Ash #1: A Secret History** (part one of four) Oct 1999 - US: Avon Eos
- The Book of Ash #2: Carthage Ascendant** (part two of four) Feb 2000 - US: Avon Eos
- Ash: A Secret History** (originally scheduled for publication in 2 vols in 1998) Jun 2000 - UK: Gollancz
(Note: the proof distributed by Gollancz for this one volume edition was entitled Ash, 1: A Secret History, dated 1998, and contained a different version of the first half of the complete work.)
- The Book of Ash #3: The Wild Machines** (part three of four) Aug 2000 - US: Avon Eos
- The Book of Ash #4: The Wild Machines** (part four of four) Dec 2000 - US: Avon Eos
- Orthe: Chronicles of Carrick V** (omnibus of 2 novels and a short story) Apr 2002 - UK: Gollancz
Contents – Golden Witchbreed / Ancient Light / "The Crystal Sunlight, the Bright Air" (The story was originally published in "Asimov's" in Feb 1983)
- White Crow** (omnibus of three novels and related stories) Mar 2003 - UK: Gollancz
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Desire / Left To His Own Devices / Beggars in Satin / The Knot Garden / Black Motley

Cartomancy (collection of short stories) Autumn 2003 - UK: Gollancz

Includes "The Logistics of Carthage", a short story related to Ash.

1610 (novel) Scheduled for Autumn 2003 - UK: Gollancz

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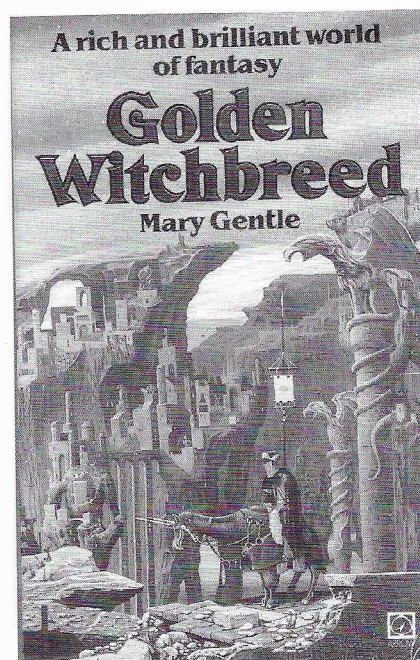
Villains ! (original fantasy anthology of stories from the viewpoint of the Bad Guys, edited in collaboration with Neil Gaiman) 1992 - UK: Roc

The Weerde: Book 1 (shared world original anthology of stories set in an occult underworld, edited in collaboration with Roz Kaveney) 1992 - UK: Roc

The Weerde: Book 2 (shared world original anthology of stories set in an occult underworld, edited in collaboration with Roz Kaveney) 1993 - UK: Roc

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- Dares** 1995 - UK: X Libris
- Bets** 1997 - UK: X Libris
- Game of Masks** 1999 - UK: X Rated
- Who Dares Sins** (retitling of Dares) 1999 - UK: X Rated
2003 - UK: X Rated Omnibus 4
- Sinner Takes All** (retitling of Bets) 2000 - UK: X Rated
- Degrees of Desire** 2001 - UK: X Rated



How I MISSED OUT ON A FORTUNE

Rog Peyton

(Reprinted from PR4)

It goes way back – way back into the very early beginnings of Andromeda Bookshop – oh! come ON now, it ain't been THAT long ago since it disappeared!

For those of you that DO remember those glorious days, imagine those primitive premises set in the heart of Birmingham's red light district? Well, not perhaps REAL red light but we were in a run-down area right next door to a porno bookshop, three doors away from a 'marital harmony' shop and immediately beneath a brothel. Yes, now the truth can be revealed. That's why we had stains down the walls (WATER stains! WATER stains!) from the 'shower' rooms above.

Into our premises in the early 70s, there came one Master Christopher Baker, schoolboy of a mere 13 years old. Did he REALLY come to our shop to buy comics or was he 'perusing the neighbourhood', looking for youthful fun? Get him drunk this weekend and you may find the truth.

Fangorn, or Chris to use his nickname, remembers that he came into Andromeda for the first time in early 1974, a mere 3 or 4 months after we opened. I remember chatting with him about artwork and a few days later he returned with samples of his own work. To say that I was blown away would be an understatement. His work showed more maturity and talent than I'd seen in ANY artist. I could see that here was a talent that would make a big impression, not just on the SF/Fantasy world but, on the art world in general. A couple of pieces he'd done impressed me so much that I asked for permission, and was allowed, to reprint on the cover of Andromeda catalogues. For FREE!!!

A friendship was formed and he regularly showed me sketches and drawings he'd done, until one day he came into the shop looking exceedingly unhappy. He was about to leave school, wanted a career in art, but his father wanted him to go into a factory, into 'a job with security' because there was no money in artwork. What should he do? I had no hesitation in telling him to ignore his father's wishes and get into ANY art job going. Looking back, I feel rather guilty about telling Chris that. Who was I to tell someone to risk their whole future on my taste in artwork?

But Chris DID take my advice and went to work at Cadbury's, designing the wrapper for some new chocolate bar they were introducing to an unsuspecting public. Not exactly the move forward I'd expected!

However, in his spare time Chris painted fantasy scenes and started selling them at Novacons and Eastercons. Dave Holmes and I bought most of those early pieces. WE could see the future!

After getting commissions for cover art from several publishers, Chris was asked to do the comic-strip (Oh! All right, GRAPHIC novel) version of David Gemmell's LEGEND. Scripted by Stan Nicholls, this turned out to

be a gem! Planned as a paperback only book, I'm proud to admit that I pushed (persuaded) the publishers to do a limited edition hardcover. They didn't think it would sell. It sold out before publication and now sells on the second-hand market for well into three figures!

A certain person – one Stanley Kubrick – saw this graphic novel, was greatly impressed and eventually contacted Chris, asking him to work on his planned movie A.I. from Brian Aldiss's short story. Kubrick, along with Stephen Spielberg, was Chris's favourite movie director. Can you imagine how he must have felt? Stanley told Chris that he could recognise, from his work on the graphic novel, that Chris was a frustrated movie director. How true! Chris ended up working for Kubrick for several years.

After Kubrick's untimely death, Chris thought that his movie work was over. Until several months later, one Friday afternoon, he was working in his office, when the phone rang...

"Hello, is that Mr Christopher Baker?"

"Yes, I'm Chris Baker."

"Oh, good. This is Mr Stephen Spielberg's secretary. I'll just put you through to Mr Spielberg. Just hold a second."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. We seem to have a problem with Mr Spielberg's phone. We'll ring back in a few minutes."

At this point, Chris started going through the list of 'friends' who would be likely to wind him up.

But, a few minutes later, this lady rang back saying that the problem was solved and she would put him through to Mr Spielberg. But the same fault happened again. Chris was convinced it was a hoax, but later admitted that he didn't leave the house all weekend!

Then, on Monday, Mr Spielberg's office rang again and Chris found himself talking to The Man. Spielberg wanted him to finish work on A.I. and would he like to come to Hollywood and work there? I would LOVE to have seen Chris's face at that point!

Chris went out to Hollywood, worked with Spielberg and finished the movie. He came home and then found himself inundated with offers from American film directors. On his return, he came into Andromeda and thanked me for all the encouragement I'd given him as a teenage artist and said that none of it would have been possible if I hadn't told him to defy his father – he owed it all to me.

You've never seen me cry have you? Hey, I wasn't getting mushy about Chris's thanks. Look at the title of this article. How rich would I be if I'd gotten this young innocent kid to sign me as his agent with me taking 75%. I REALLY missed out! Still he's promised to buy me a pint at this con.... No, I'll buy you one Chris – you deserve it – one HELL of a talent that I'm proud and honoured to have known all these years. Help I can give for free – but you have a talent second to none.

FANGORN: AN APPRECIATION

It's been said that a picture is worth a thousand words so here's four thousand words in praise of our artist Guest of Honour - Fangorn



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JAMES TIPTREE JR. MEMORIAL AWARD

Pat Murphy

The 2002 James Tiptree Jr. Award has two winners: M. John Harrison's novel, *Light* (Victor Gollancz, U.K., 2002) and John Kessel's novella, 'Stories for Men' (*Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, October/November 2002). Harrison and Kessel will each receive \$1000 in prize money and an original artwork created specifically for the award.

The James Tiptree Jr. Memorial Award was created in 1991 to honor Alice Sheldon, who wrote under the pseudonym James Tiptree, Jr. By her chance choice of a masculine pen name, Sheldon helped break down the imaginary barrier between 'women's writing' and 'men's writing'. Her insightful short stories were notable for their thoughtful examination of the roles of men and women in our society.

The Tiptree Award is presented annually to a work that explores and expands gender roles in science fiction and fantasy. The aim of the award organizers is not to look for work that falls into some narrow definition of political correctness, but rather to seek out work that is thought-provoking, imaginative, and perhaps even infuriating. The Tiptree Award is intended to reward those women and men who are bold enough to contemplate shifts and changes in gender roles, a fundamental aspect of any society.

Each year, a panel of five judges selects the Tiptree Award winner. The 2002 judges were Matt Austern (chair), Farah Mendlesohn, Jae Leslie Adams, Mary Anne Mohanraj, and Molly Gloss.

The judges found *Light*, by M. John Harrison, to be a stunning work that's part space opera and part Something Else. Some of the judges thought that the protagonists (a physicist and serial killer; a mass-murdering pirate; a VR addict) were unlikeable; others found the protagonists to be brutal, cruel, self-deluded, but completely real people about whom the judges cared deeply. All the characters are shaped in ways that very specifically have to do with the structuring and exploration of gender. The male characters are in love with ostentatious masculinity as a thing that's sometimes joyful and sometimes horrifying; the female characters are often consumed with fierce denial of their bodies and their own femaleness. Hanging over all of this is the enigmatic figure of the Shrandar, whose gender identity, like so much else, is ambiguous and complicated. *Light* is rich, horrible, sad, and absurd, and says a lot about how the body and sex inform one's humanity. It will reward rereading.

'Stories for Men' is a story about masculinity, about how individuals define themselves in the context of kinship and community, and about how we construct gender roles by telling ourselves stories. The story begins with a female-centred society that mirrors some of our assumptions about social power relations between men and women, and then explicitly refers to our own society's assumptions (in the main character's encounter with a twentieth-century fiction anthology) in a way that makes those assumptions seem new and strange. It re-examines those tales of outcasts and lone heroes and manly individualism within the context of a story of community. It raises questions about the links

between connectedness and exclusion, consensus and stifling conformity, patriarchal protectiveness and sociopathy. 'Stories for Men' is a short work, one that's more subtle than it first appears.

In addition to selecting the winners, the judges have compiled a 'short list'. This is not the list of fiction from which the judges picked the winners. Rather, it is a list of works that the judges found interesting, relevant to the award, and worthy of note.

The 2002 short list is:

Eleanor Arnason, 'Knapsack Poems' (*Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, May 2002)
Ted Chiang, 'Liking What You See: A Documentary' (*Stories of Your Life and Others* (Tor Books, 2002)
John Clute, *Appleseed* (Tor Books, 2002)
Karen Joy Fowler, 'What I Didn't See' (*scifi.com*)
Gregory Frost, 'Madonna of the Maquiladora' (*Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, May 2002)
Shelley Jackson, *The Melancholy of Anatomy* (Anchor Books, 2002)
Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl* (Thomas Allen & Son, Ltd, 2002)
Peter Straub (ed.), *Conjunctions 39: The New Wave Fabulists*

You can receive an annotated copy of this list, and lists of fiction honored in previous years, by sending \$3.00 to James Tiptree, Jr. Literary Award Council (address below). *Flying Cups and Saucers*, an anthology of short fiction that won or was shortlisted for the Tiptree Award, is available from the same address for \$18 plus postage and handling (\$2.50 within the U.S. and Canada, \$5.00 overseas sea mail, and \$20 overseas airmail).

Since its inception, the Tiptree Award has been an award with an attitude. As a political statement, as a means of involving people at the grassroots level, as an excuse to eat cookies, and as an attempt to strike the proper ironic note, the award has been financed through bake sales held at science fiction conventions across the United States, as well as in England and Australia. Fundraising efforts have included auctions conducted by standup comic and writer Ellen Klages, the sale of t-shirts created by collage artist and silk screener Freddie Baer, and the publication of two cookbooks featuring recipes and anecdotes by science fiction writers and fans. *The Bakery Men Don't See*, a collection of recipes for baked goods, and *Her Smoke Rose Up From Supper*, a collection of main dish recipes, are both available from the James Tiptree, Jr. Literary Award Council. The cookbooks are \$10 each (plus \$1 postage in North America; \$3 postage outside North America).

Reading for the 2003 Tiptree Award has begun. The 2003 judges are Maureen Kincaid Speller (chair), Michael Levy, Vicki Rosenzweig, Lori Selke, and Nisi Shawl. The judges welcome recommendations for the award. Please submit recommendations via the Tiptree Award Web site at www.tiptree.org.

In addition to presenting the Tiptree Award annually, the James Tiptree, Jr. Literary Award Council occasionally presents the Fairy Godmother Award, a



Judges for the 2002 Award

Matt Austern (chair)
 Joe Leslie Adams
 Molly Gloss
 Farah Mendlesohn
 Mary Anne Mohanraj

2002 Tiptree Short List

Note: This is not the list from which the judges picked the winners. Rather, it is a list of works that the judges found interesting, relevant to the award, and worthy of note.

- Eleanor Arnason, "Knapsack Poems," *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, May 2002
- Ted Chiang, "Liking What You See: A Documentary," *Stories of Your Life and Others*, Tor Books
- John Clute, *Appleseed*, Tor Books
- Karen Joy Fowler, "What I Didn't See," *scifi.com*
- Gregory Frost, "Madonna of the Maquiladora," *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, May 2002
- Shelley Jackson, *The Melancholy of Anatomy*, Anchor Books
- Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl*, Thomas Allen & Son, Ltd.
- Peter Straub (ed.), *Conjunctions 39: The New Wave Fabulists*, conjunctions.com

Annotated Tiptree lists, including short lists, can be found at <http://www.tiptree.org/>

The Tiptree Literary Award Council congratulates

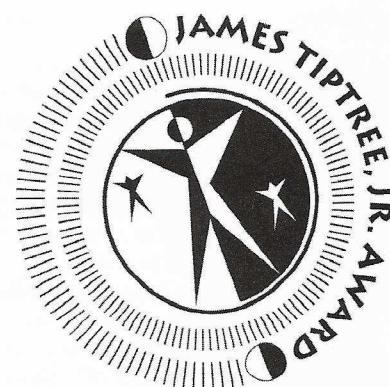
M. John Harrison and John Kessel —

winners of the 2002 James Tiptree, Jr. Award. Harrison's novel Light and Kessel's novella "Stories for Men" will be honored at the Tiptree Ceremony at Season, April 18, 2003.

James Tiptree, Jr. Award

An annual literary award for science fiction and fantasy that explores and expands the roles of women and men, ...for work by both women and men

<http://www.tiptree.org/>



special award in honor of Angela Carter. Described as a 'mini, mini, mini, mini MacArthur award', the Fairy Godmother Award strikes without warning, providing \$1000 to a deserving writer in need of assistance to continue creating material that matches the goals of the Tiptree Award.

For more information on the Tiptree Award or this press release, go to the Tiptree Award Web site at www.tiptree.org, or write to the James Tiptree, Jr. Literary Award Council at 680 66th St, Oakland, CA 94609, USA.

The reviews of the two Tiptree-winning works are reviewed below by two members of the 2002 Tiptree Jury, Molly Gloss and Farah Mendlesohn. These essays are adapted from email discussions conducted among the Tiptree judges.

ABOUT 'STORIES FOR MEN' BY JOHN KESSEL *Molly Gloss*

'Stories For Men' is written in clear, descriptive prose about people who are, in just about every way, unchanged from the people we are now. In a year in which everyone seems to be writing in abstruse and ambiguous ways about throw-away bodies and human beings living in the interstices of quantum space, this makes Kessel's story a rather odd duck, and perhaps even a bit old-fashioned. But the style in which Kessel writes is integral to the question his novella explores.

What Kessel is interested in, it seems to me, is the meaning of story, its power and place in our lives; and also the importance and life of communities; and the place where these things intersect.

Our writers, most of them, from Thoreau to Mailer, and certainly including the several writers represented in *Stories For Men* (the very real anthology from 1936 which is a pivotal artefact in Kessel's novella) are focused on the individual – on isolation and loneliness and solitary heroism and dying alone in a seedy hotel room or shot down in the dusty streets of a Western town. Our writers have given their sympathies and their interest to the one who's misunderstood or mistreated by the community, as in *The Scarlet Letter*; or to the outcast, the gadfly, the mountain man lone hero, as in Hemingway and his many successors.

What interests Kessel, I think, as it does few writers, and especially few science fiction writers, is the individual within the context of his kinships. He is interested in the way communities carry the weight and memory of the past inside them, and the way that past lies like a pattern on the landscape of the community, and on its people.

He is particularly interested in how the stories we tell ourselves are an important part of the process by which we determine who we are, as individuals and as a people. Erno is struggling to find his place in his world, his community, and *Stories For Men* seems to him to be a text to help him understand himself, a way of making his life sensible. 'Stories for Men', on the other hand, reimagines and re-examines those stories of outcasts and lone heroes and manly contests, within the context of a community richly and unsentimentally brought to life in Kessel's clear, vivid prose.

Questions are often more important than answers, and

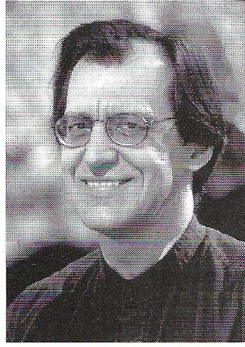
Kessel offers no easy answers. He asks how we can find a proper balance between individual needs and obligations, and the needs and expectations of the community. He asks about the paradox of the small community – how it can be a place of suffocating proprieties and gossip and self-righteousness, and also a place of fundamental decency and connectedness. He raises the difficulty of defining community without saying who is excluded. And he looks at the dark edges of communities, where they grow from consensus toward authoritarianism. And because he has chosen a female-centred community as the context for exploring these questions, and because his central question seems to be the way in which the (very male) 'cowboy' myth explains and defines and acts upon the American experience, this is a story particularly relevant to the Tiptree, and particularly apt in these times.

ABOUT LIGHT, BY M. JOHN HARRISON *Farah Mendlesohn*

Light is a space opera. It works on three tracks. Four hundred years in the future, Ed Chianese, a 'twink' who has spent a lot of time in a VR tank but keeps telling everyone he meets that once he had a life, once he was a space pilot; Seria Mau, a cyborg, embodied in the K-Ship the White Cat; and in the year 2000 Kearney, mathematician, occultist and serial killer (mainly of women). Just to make it worse, Kearney is the man who will discover the route to the future. And the route to the future is as much through identity and the struggle for self-definition as it is through mathematics. Kearney and his colleague Tate search for an abstruse mathematical formula that will open up new avenues of physics but Kearney is falling apart and Tate is on the edge of a breakdown. Seria Mau looks for ways not to be herself and to explore the Ketahuchi Tract opened up by the Kearney-Tate equations. Ed Chianese simply seeks to escape his past and the threat of the Cray Sisters, secretary-blouse wearing gangsters, tusked cultivars and kiddie gangs, groups of gun-toting eight-year-olds. Through all of this wanders the figure of the Shrandar, horse-skull head, elderly woman's body. Years before, Kearney stole its dice, and since then he has been killing to keep it at bay. What the Shrandar is, and what it wants, shapes the book.

None of the protagonists are likeable and they are often unlikeable in ways that are precisely to do with the structuring and exploration of gender. Seria Mau and Anna Kearney consumed with fierce denial of their bodies and their own femaleness. As with a lot of Harrison's work, his male characters are in love with ostentatious masculinity. It is Kearney's obsession with a particular ideal of masculinity, enamoured of a particular idea of what it is to be a man and the way in which women interact with his own personal fears that lead to his killing. All his choices are structured by his belief that killing women can somehow keep at bay his private fears. He is so blinded by a gendered interpretation of the world that he cannot see beyond it, can only look for more mathematical ways to 'justify' what he is doing – a term I use hesitantly because he is also sickened by it. But each wrong choice carves his road deeper and it is at all points made clear that this is his choice. The only thing driving him to these killings is himself and his own refusal to ask for directions.

John Kessel – Biography



John Kessel is a professor of American literature and director of the Creative Writing program at North Carolina State University. He holds a B.A. in English and Physics from the University of Rochester, and an M.A. and Ph.D in English from the University of Kansas. His novella 'Another Orphan' received the 1982 Nebula Award from the Science Fiction Writers of America, and his short story 'Buffalo'

won the 1991 Theodore Sturgeon Award and the Locus Poll. His novels include *Freedom Beach*, written in collaboration with James Patrick Kelly, and *Good News from Outer Space*, a finalist for the 1989 Nebula. His story collection, *Meeting in*

Infinity, was named a notable book of 1992 by the *New York Times Book Review*. His play *Faustfeathers* won the 1994 Paul Green Playwrights' Competition and, with sf writer Bruce Sterling, he plays a small role in the independent film *The Delicate Art of the Rifle*. Writer Kim Stanley Robinson has called Kessel's most recent novel, *Corrupting Dr. Nice*, 'the best time travel novel ever written' and *Sci-Fi Weekly* has called him 'quite possibly the best short story writer working in science fiction today.'

His criticism has appeared in *The Los Angeles Times Book Review*, *Science Fiction Age*, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, and other publications. With Mark L. Van Name and Richard Butner, he has run the Sycamore Hill Writers' Conference, which recently produced the anthology *Intersections*. He lives with his wife and daughter in Raleigh, North Carolina.

A bibliography can be found on John Kessel's website – www4.nscu.edu:8030/~tenshi/index2.html

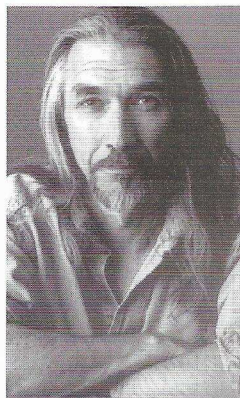
But Harrison believes that the energy of masculinity can be wonderful. To be in love with the myths of masculinity can be both tragic and poetic. Four shadow boys have a fight and kill one of their number. They cradle his head tenderly, knowing that 'you can do it all again. Tomorrow night you can do it all over again' in yet one more of the 'one shot cultivars' or modified bodies that can be created for pleasure or business. The cultivars offer new avenues of exploration. Of the several books this year which introduce the idea of disposable bodies, this is the only one which hasn't settled for a simple murder mystery. Cultivars allow people to be who and what they want. New bodies can be 'carved' or cultivated – short- or long-term body changes – so that Annie, a huge rickshaw woman with the muscle fibres of a horse (literally) and enhanced with cafe electrique, swaps her hyped muscles and fibres for the body of a 'Mona', a creature designed as a male sex fantasy but which she adopts not for the protagonist, Ed Chianese, but for herself, because she wants to know what it feels like to have a lover bigger than her. 'This isn't for you, it's for me,' she says in the face of his loss and bemusement. But the other side of this is that cultivars and clones can be exploited. The tool is not intrinsically evil, but there is a crucial difference between Annie in the body of a Mona, and the cloned Mona we meet on Seria Mau's ship. One is her own person, the other a live doll taught that any attention, no matter how awful, represents love. But the marginalisation of a person within their world is not the same as the marginalisation of characters within the text. One of the things I like about this books is that Harrison's anger at exploitation and damage is reflected in the way he treats minor characters. There are no red jerseys here. Minor characters are protagonists in their own stories which leak off the edge of the page. Even the Mona clone is given a sense of herself so that her death, when it comes, is meaningful.

Bodies are crucial to the book. Kearney's ex-wife Anna is anorexic, a common theme in Harrison's work as is illness generally, but this time Anna works through and becomes something more, stops punishing herself before even Kearney realises that his behaviour too is

about punishment – what he does sickens him. It's a profound study of perversion and the dialectic of power and impotence - Kearney has to let go of his fantasy, and of his power over the female body, before he can have either intercourse or understanding. If Anna starves her body, Seria Mau has gone a stage further, rejecting her body to become part of a K-Ship. There is no question that Seria Mau, the White Cat, is a comment on the utter sentimentality of 'The Ship Who Sang'. Where Helva revels in her ship-body, Seria Mau is coming to realise that she has sacrificed too much and that her decision to become a K-Ship was as much a desire to punish herself as it was to realise the desire of flight. Seria Mau is brutal, ruthless, her ship brutally ugly (a battle Harrison appears to have lost with regard to the cover) and her behaviour laughs in the face of Helva's altruism. She spaces her passengers, rescues someone for a whim and kills them when they bore her. *Light* is a mourning for all illusions of gender: that men must be in control or that women must be gentle are demonstrated as damaging myths with a rare tenderness whether in the grief of the shadow boys for their fallen comrade (even if they did kill him themselves) or the tenderness of Kearney for Anna which cuts across his self actuated fear and psychosis.

Choices are the key to Harrison's agenda. There are no miracles. All solutions originate with oneself. Kearney's understanding of the Shranders turns out to be profoundly wrong. Seria Mau and Ed Chianese, in uncovering their pasts, find new futures. *Light* rests continually on that liminal moment, the choice not made, the door which the protagonist never enters. Ideas and manifestations of identity are the centre of the plot. I don't know whether *Light* expands gender roles, but it is a profound and ruthless exploration and expansion of understandings of gender. There is a real sense of process here: characters finish in a very different space from where they begin and crucial to the shift is their changing understanding of the weight of gender identity. The physics is as rigorous as the psychology, in that the causality violations of FTL are precisely mapped on the revisiting and reworking of the past which is central to healing.

M John Harrison – Biography



M John Harrison was born in the UK in 1945, in Rugby, Warwickshire.

At school he studied aeronautics and technical drawing but preferred to read W.H. Davies. He left school in 1963, without much in the way of qualification, and worked briefly as a groom, a teacher and a clerk before his first short story was published in 1966. Shortly afterwards he moved to London, where, in 1968, he

joined Michael Moorcock's magazine *New Worlds*, as books editor. There, he published articles in which he argued that the fantasy and science fiction stories of the day were ill-written, politically naïve and aimed at people who refused to grow up. He continued to be involved with *New Worlds* and the New Wave for the next ten years, during which time he wrote and published *The Committed Men*, *The Pastel City*, *The Centauri Device*, and a collection of short stories, *The Machine in Shaft Ten*. Increasingly dissatisfied with writing, he took up rock climbing.

In 1976 he left London for the north, where he became briefly involved with the Manchester-based Savoy Books, wrote for the *New Manchester Review*, and pursued his obsession with rock.. His contribution to the new routes spearheaded by Brian & Paul Cropper and the legendary Loz Francombe was minimal but determined. (Harrison fell off Lethal Dose in Cheedale seven times and spent the rest of the

afternoon sitting in a tree.) In 1982 his third Viriconium novel, *In Viriconium*, was nominated for the Guardian Fiction Prize. He began his autobiographical novel *Climbers*, and published two collections of short stories, *The Ice Monkey* and *Viriconium Nights*.

By 1987 he was back in London, where he ghost-wrote the autobiography of Ron Fawcett, a leading British climber. In 1989, *Climbers* was published, to considerable notice, and won the Boardman Tasker Memorial Award, which was given only for non-fiction mountaineering works. Harrison collaborated with the artist Ian Miller on a graphic-novel version of his story 'The Luck in the Head', and began to research a soon-to-be-abandoned nonfiction follow-up to *Climbers*, called *The Drop*, set in the roped-access engineering industry. *The Course of the Heart*, perhaps his most accomplished novel, was published in 1992.

Since then, Harrison has published a further novel, *Signs of Life*; and a collection of short stories, *Travel Arrangements*. He has reviewed fiction and non-fiction for the *Spectator* and the *Times Literary Supplement*; and taught creative writing – with a focus on landscape and the autobiographical novel – with Adam Lively and the biographer Jim Perrin. He was involved with Beulah Land, a mixed media performance piece devised by Claire McDonald and Lucy Bailey, put on at the ICA in 1994; and collaborated with the director Simon Pummel on a short animated film for C4 called *Ray Gun Fun*. He has written short fiction with Simon Ings.

A bibliography can be found on M John Harrison's own website: www.mjohnharrison.com.

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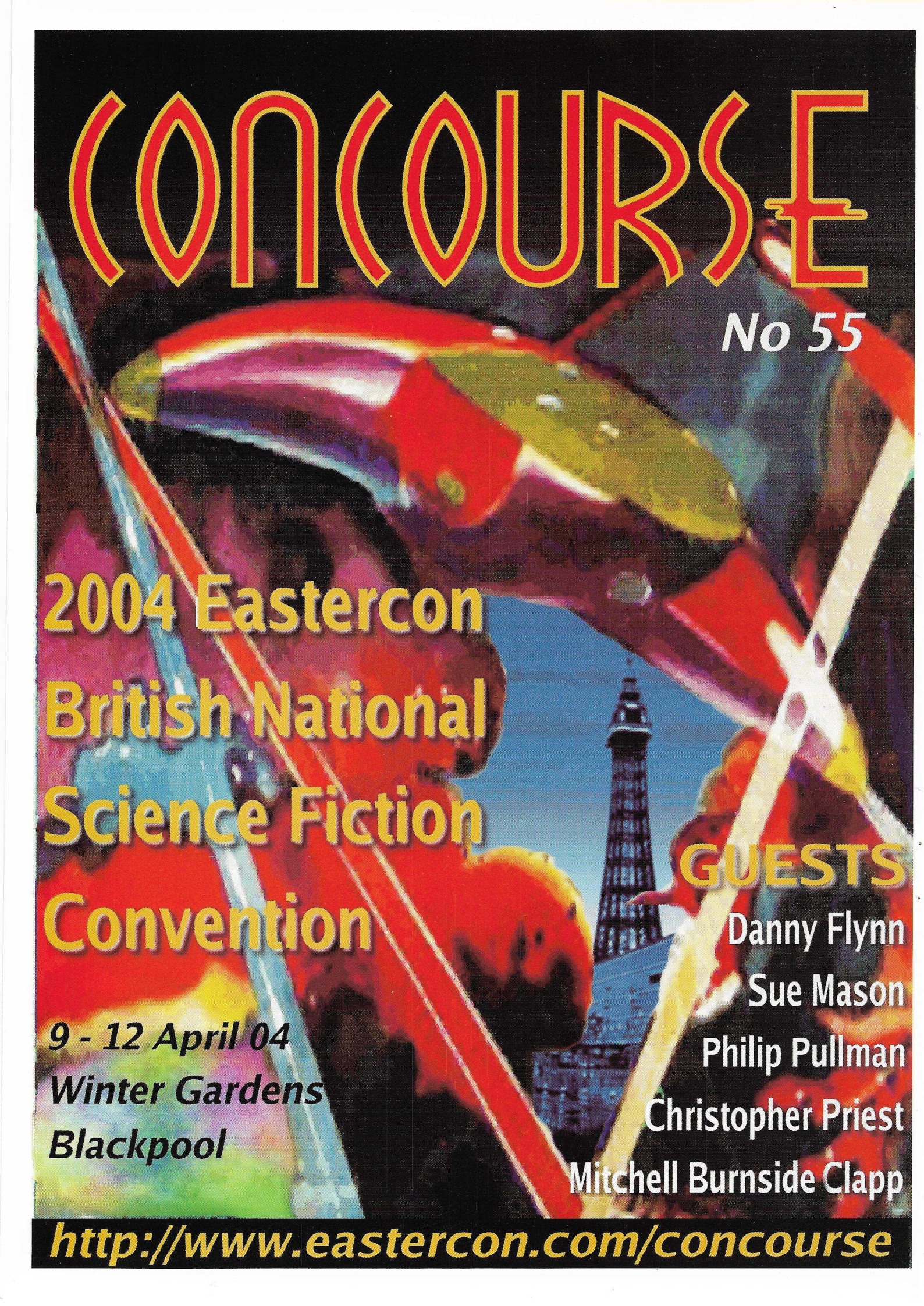
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A CENTURY OF SCIENCE AND SCIENTIFICTION

Julian Headlong

1903 – THE WRIGHT STUFF

With a scream of ultra-high velocity exhaust, and a bone-crushing acceleration, the Bell X-1 “Glamorous Glennis” rocketed up into the sky above the USA’s Mojave desert. It was the 14th October 1947, and on that day Chuck Yeager became the first man to break the sound barrier.

And only 44 years before, on the 17th December 1903, at 10:35 in the morning Orville Wright became the first man to fly a mechanically propelled, heavier-than-air, flying machine – the prosaically named “Flyer” – at Kill Devil Hill, Kitty Hawk, NC. With his 12 horsepower engine and twin 8 foot propellers, he covered a distance of 120 feet and stayed aloft just 12 seconds. But he flew.

And on the 20th July 1969 Neil Armstrong landed on the moon.

There was but a single, ordinary, lifetime between Orville Wright and Neil Armstrong. A man born when Orville first flew would have just been eligible for his pension when Armstrong walked on the moon.

And 2003 is his centennial year.

The “Flyer” can still be seen in the main atrium of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, right next to Chuck Yeager’s Bell X-1, and close to Neil Armstrong’s Apollo 11 capsule. The sense of wonder in that one building can hurt.

My favourite place in the world.

1928 – THE ADVANTAGES OF AN UNTIDY LAB

Scientific progress isn’t always nice and tidy. Sometimes it’s a thing of procrastination, messy laboratory benches and contaminated glassware.

In 1928 in St Mary’s Hospital, Paddington, a rather untidy man made an interesting discovery while throwing away some smelly agar gel. He noticed that the glass plates he was growing bacteria on had also started growing mould. Nothing strange there, the plates had been sitting around for a while. But he noticed an odd thing – the bacteria next to the areas of contaminating mould had all died.

A simple observation, but an acute one made by a gifted and enquiring mind, that gave the world penicillin, and a certain Dr Alexander Fleming fame, a Nobel, and a knighthood. Not bad for a mouldy plate. A little later he commented “One sometimes finds what one is not looking for”. Something I try to bear in mind whenever I work at St Mary’s, and spend ages not looking for a parking space.

As well as kick-starting the biotechnology business, 1928 also saw the birth of space opera, that Buck Rogers stuff, the publishers Gollancz, Philip K Dick, Kate Wilhelm, Jim White and Robert Sheckley. A pretty good year.

The first space opera was published in *Amazing* – EE “Doc” Smith’s “The Skylark of Space”. Before the Skylark, most spatial adventures took place within the confines of our solar system, as did the first Buck Rogers story – “Armageddon 2419” by Philip Frances Nowlan, again in *Amazing*, again in 1928.

Smith used the whole galaxy for his stage. And sometimes one or two others. And sometimes had fun smashing them together. One little solar system was way too small for the ambitions of a high-flying chemist like Smith.

The Skylark starts in a surprisingly earth bound manner, in the laboratory of a rather untidy government scientist working at his messy laboratory bench with his strangely contaminated glassware. The gifted and acute scientist, Dr Richard Seaton, notices something odd about his glassware when his apparatus lifts off from his bench, flies out the window and leaves the earth heading for outer space.

He, of course, observes this singular event with the pair of binoculars that all good chemists keep close at hand for occasions like these.

Having discovered a working faster-than-light reactionless spacedrive in his electrolytic bath, the acute Dr Seaton goes on to acquire in quick succession: a super-explosive, a starship, and an arch-enemy. And all without the use of a government grant.

Those were the were the days.

1953 – THE DEMOLISHED WOMAN

When Rosalind Franklin needed some pure DNA for her X-Ray experiments in her lab at King’s College, London, she first tried oranges, which turned out to be a mistake. All it led to was a rather messy food fight with her assistant. After some experimentation Kiwi fruit proved to be best suited to making pure DNA, because it was a soft fruit, easily pureed, because it contained protease enzymes which stripped away contaminating proteins, and because there wasn’t enough left to throw at anyone.

First put a small bottle of methylated spirits into a bowl of ice. Then make a salt/detergent mixture by adding 3 grams of salt and 10 ml of washing up liquid to 100ml of water. Stir thoroughly, without frothing, to dissolve the salt. Peel and chop finely one Kiwi fruit. Put into a small bowl and add 100 ml of the salt/detergent mixture. Stir gently. This breaks up the cell walls and frees the cell contents.

Put the bowl containing the mixture into a saucepan of hot water (60°C) and leave for 15 minutes, then pour the mixture into a coffee filter, and catch the liquid that filters through in a tall glass. You will need about one fifth of a glass. Very carefully drizzle an equal volume of the ice cold methylated spirit down the inside of the glass so that it forms a purple layer on top of the green layer.

After a few moments you should see a white layer beginning to form at the boundary between the purple and the green layers. This layer is made up of filaments of DNA from the Kiwi fruit. The green layer is full of DNA as well as lots of different proteins, sugars, etc. When the cold methylated spirit is poured onto the green layer, it forms a region near the boundary which dehydrates the DNA dissolved in the aqueous layer. This forces the DNA out of solution, causing the solid strands to appear between the two layers. Pull the white gooey stuff out of the boundary layer with a loop of thin wire.

You have just purified Deoxyribo Nucleic Acid, DNA, the molecular basis of the genetic code.

Now all you need is a good source of X-Rays, some photographic film and a darkroom, and you are well on your way to discovering the secret of life – the actual structure of the DNA molecule. Unless you happen to be a woman that is, in which case I'm afraid you are right out of luck, and about to have your research hijacked by a pair of wide boys from Cambridge.

In 1953 Francis Crick and James Watson came up with the key insight in the search for the structure of DNA while playing with their scientific Lego set. DNA wasn't a triple helix like Linus Pauling thought. DNA was a *double* helix. This was great. This was wonderful. This was the breakthrough of the century.

However they were only able to make this breakthrough because a certain Maurice Wilkins (who later shared the Nobel Prize with them), showed them Rosalind Franklin's research results without her knowledge. According to her research notes she was well on the track of the double helix before Crick and Watson, but they published first, and so get the credit. *That is the secret of life.*

In that same year the SF community managed a much more mannered achievement, creating the Hugos, the Science Fiction Achievement Awards, at the 11th World SF Convention in Philadelphia, PA, to honour the great and the good of the SF world. Those first Hugos were an interesting bunch, the categories being somewhat different to those used today.

There was Best Professional Magazine – a tie between *Galaxy* and *Astounding*; Best Cover Artist – a tie between Emsh and Hannes Bok; Best Interior Artist – a tie between Virgil Finlay and Virgil Finlay; Best Science Feature Writer – Willy Ley; Best New Author/Artist – Philip Jose Farmer; Number One Fan Personality – Forrest J Ackerman; and Best Novel – Alfred Bester's "The Demolished Man", a great work, still readable and relevant today.

However if you were a female author, artist or fan you were still right out of luck. The first woman to appear in the Hugo winners list had to wait until 1960, when Elinor Busby got a co-editor Hugo in the Best Fanzine category. The first woman to get a Hugo award for Best Novel was Anne McCaffrey – in 1968. It wasn't until after 1988 that the Hugo awards for Best Novel became statistically evenly balanced between male and female authors. And there has as yet been only one female winner of Best Professional Artist – Diane Dillon in 1971, honoured along with her husband Leo.

Perhaps the outlook of an age that refused to honour Rosalind Franklin hasn't yet been altogether demolished.

Perhaps we need a "Tiptree" award for artists too.

1978 – BACK TO THE FUTURE

It's about 10 in the morning. I stare at the glass, all I see is distorted double reflections of myself in the black mirror of the tube trains window. It's been a painful trek from there to here, from the decaying Victorian resort on the south coast to this stainless steel tube tunneling under the estates of west London. The window zips into brightness, a voice reminds us where we are, and to take all our luggage with us, and we all scramble out into the white fluorescent cavern.

Later, as we ride the slidewalk towards the arrivals hall and the swarming hotel shuttles, it seems that I have achieved my dream, I've finally made it, I'm here, in the future, and it has all come true, SF has won. I'm very happy. I've got my passport in my pocket. It has "Don't Panic!" written on it in large friendly letters (actually, in black felt tip).

The first person I see as I cross the lobby's van der graaf carpeting is John Brunner. I don't recognise him, obviously. It's 1978 and I'm at my first ever SF convention, Skycon, held at the Heathrow Hotel, London.

And I don't know anybody here, in this bright electric future.

But that would change.

Of course I knew I was living in the science fiction age. I read *New Scientist* cover to cover every week (still do), and my favourite comic made it clear I was living in the World of Tomorrow.

Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe had just upset the scientific establishment (and badly strained Clarke's First Law) by claiming viruses came from outer space. The Taito Corporation of Japan had gone one better and presented to us evidence of actual Space Invaders – the first massively popular electronic videogame had landed in our pubs with an unearthly green glow and a strange beep beep noise. The first Z80 processor was shipped. Clive Sinclair launched the MK14 computer kit – a harbinger of things to come.

And Louise Brown was born.

Louise Brown was born in Oldham General Hospital on the 25th July 1978. She shares that birthday with Rosalind Franklin, the subject of my last historical piece. Rosalind was a world-class scientist, Louise is a nursery nurse in Bristol. Her claim to scientific fame is as the world's first human being to be conceived by *in-vitro* fertilisation. Since then there have been a third of a million more test-tube babies.

1978, three quarters of the way through the 20th Century, and already you could see the shadow of the Singularity. It would come as a result of the advances underway in biology and medicine, electronics and computing, hard materials science and immaterial software, and strange new economics and politics. It would reshape the world. Tomorrow would be

different, there would be new things under the sun. There *would* be lemon flavoured tooth picks.

Because 1978 was also the year of The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy. And I seemed to be the only person at the con with a tape of it in my pocket. Now all I needed to do was to find a cassette player. Damn. No Walkmans yet. But I managed. It was a very popular tape, as I recall, a good icebreaker. I've still got it somewhere.

Meanwhile the seeds of H2G2 were being sown in Palo Alto, where Xerox had just invented the TCP/IP protocol for electronic messaging over a network. And in Chicago the worlds first BBS opened. It was called, with stunning originality, the Computerized Bulletin Board System, and was run by Ward Christensen and Randy Suess. Their BBS ran on a system with two 8 inch floppy drives and with a 300 bps modem. Christensen was the system operator, soon shortened to *sysop*, he was the first. There would be more.

During all this world shaking stuff, the background sound track was playing *very loudly* – Blondie's "Parallel Lines", Tangerine Dream's "Cyclone", Kate Bush's "Kick Inside" and "Lionheart", Warren Zevon's "Werewolves of London" and Gerry Rafferty's "Baker Street", plus The Tourists, and *cough* the Hawklords. Sorry about that.

That year saw the first publication of "Up the Walls of the World" by James Tiptree Jr, "Vertigo" by Bob Shaw, "White Dragon" by Anne McCaffrey, and "Dreamsnake" by Vonda McIntyre (this last book would go on to win the Hugo and Nebula awards the following year).

While in 1978 the Hugo and the Nebula awards were won by the novel "Gateway" by Fred Pohl; novella "Stardance" by Spider and Jeanne Robinson; short story "Jeffy is Five" by Harlan Ellison. The novelette split, the Hugo going to "Eyes of Amber" by Joan D Vinge, and the Nebula to "The Screwfly Solution" by Raccoona Sheldon (otherwise known as James Tiptree Jr, aka Alice Sheldon).

It was quite a good year for science fiction. And for SF cinema. The Hugo and Nebula awards both went to a little known art house film, called "Star Wars".

And the Singularity was only eleven years away.

2003 – THE POST-SINGULARITY BLUES

It's been fourteen years since the Singularity. Not many people bother to remember it now, or what life was like *before*. Many people didn't even notice it when it happened, phase changes can be very quiet affairs. This one wasn't. But people still don't seem to care.

I remember where I was. For me it was like the Kennedy Assassination, or the Death of Diana. I was in London, my last New Years before relocating to the States. We drank and we partied. We did the "Time Warp" at midnight, after listening to the chimes of Big Ben. We watched them put the Ceausescus up against a wall and shoot them. We saw the Wall come tumbling down. We saw the world change.

OK, those things didn't happen all at once on New

Year's Eve 1989 – or even in that order, the Wall came down on the 9th November 1989, the Ceausescus died on the 22nd December 1989, the Czechoslovak "Velvet Revolution" took from 17th November to 29th December 1989, there were months, even years of confusion and revolutions and counter-revolutions, but by the end of it the Soviet Empire was gone. And nobody saw that coming. Suddenly whole libraries of SF and near-future action thrillers became alternate-world fiction, without even trying.

No Soviets.

No convenient bad guys. The spy fiction writers were distraught. Science fiction writers were caught with the trousers of time well and truly stuck around their ankles. American politicians were completely flummoxed.

Who were going to be their bad guys now? Well, we found out the answer to that one.

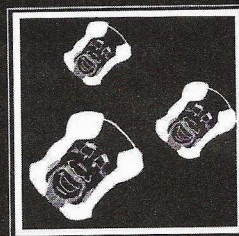
There have been other Singularities. Kitty Hawk on the 17th December 1903, Trinity on the 16th July 1945, Tranquility on the 20th July 1969, the Twin Towers on the 11th September 2001. Some have terrified us, others have exalted us, or caused us great grief. But they all changed the world.

You can never go back to the way it was before.

And now here we are, waiting for the next Singularity.

**"Once I put this book down,
I could not pick it up again."**

TAUPE MARS



ELMER TARQUIN HACK

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BOOKS ARE REMAINDERED**



KANSAS CITY IN 2006

A BID FOR THE 64TH

WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

LABOR DAY WEEKEND

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 4, 2006

SOME REASONS TO COME TO KANSAS CITY IN 2006

- ✦ **Tradition.** 2006 will mark the 30th anniversary of Kansas City's last Worldcon, MidAmeriCon. Fandom followed the Republican National Convention and the Shriners and outpartied them both. While that kind of challenge can't be guaranteed, we think the time has come to do it again.
- ✦ **Great New Facilities!** Overland Park's new state-of-the-art convention center includes:
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 - **Convention Hotel Room Rates from \$65.99 to \$99.00**
 - **All hotel and convention center parking will be free**
- ✦ **People.** Our Bid Committee includes fans from the midwest and throughout the country with experience working local and regional cons, as well as WorldCons. Our local group hosted the Nebula Weekend in 1997 and 2002. ConQuest (now in its fourth decade) is renowned as one of the finest (and most fun) cons in the midwest. Members of our committee are also part of the group hosting the 2003 World Horror Convention in Kansas City.
- ✦ **Convenience.** Kansas City is a major transportation hub with easy travel connections and a modern, spacious airport. The convention center is located directly adjacent to a major interstate and is easily accessible from any direction.
- ✦ **Attractions.** There are many activities awaiting your discovery, including the Kansas City Zoo, the Harry S Truman Library and Museum, the Nelson-Atkins Museum, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, the City Farmer's Market and the Steamboat Arabia Museum, Union Station/Science City, the Liberty Memorial, Westport nightclub district, the Toy and Miniature Museum, Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun amusement parks, several riverboat casinos, the world-renowned Country Club Plaza shopping district and much more, all within thirty minutes of the convention center.

The Bid Committee believes we can make Labor Day weekend 2006 one of the most memorable in WorldCon history. We invite you to join us in the effort by presupporting our bid at one of the four levels explicated in the chart to the right. Support levels can be upgraded any time prior to the vote at this year's Worldcon in Toronto. Look for parties sponsored by "The Redheads from Hell" (it's not just a hair color, it's an attitude) at conventions across the North American continent until Labor Day to sign up. You can also presupport using PayPal at our website. We thank you for your support, encourage you to vote (for more information, see the Torcon3 website: www.torcon3.on.ca) and look forward to seeing you in 2006.

Presupport: \$20 US
£13, \$30 Can, €18, ¥2348
supporting membership
1/2 credit for conversion

Preoppose: \$25 US
£16, \$37 Can, €23, ¥2935
supporting membership
1/2 credit for conversion

Yardbird: \$50 US
£32, \$74 Can, €46, ¥5870
attending membership
listing in program book

Count Basie: \$100 US
£64, \$148 Can, €92, ¥11750
attending membership
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EASTERCONS PAST AND EASTERCONS TO COME

As compiled by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer

Name	Location	Year	Guests
	Leeds	1937	Unknown
	London	1938	Unknown
	London	1939	Unknown
Midvention (Easter)	Leicester	1943	None
Eastercon (Easter)	London	1944	Professor A M Low
Eastercons all held at Easter unless marked W when held at Witsun			
1 Whitcon (W)	London	1948	A Bertram Chandler
2 Loncon	London	1949	No GOH
* Festivention (W)	London	1951	Forrest & Wendayne Ackerman, Lyell Crane
3 London SF Con (W)	London	1952	No GOH
4 Coroncon (W)	London	1953	No GOH
5 Supermancon (W)	Manchester	1954	John Russell Fearn
6 Cytricon	Kettering	1955	No GOH
7 Cytricon II	Kettering	1956	No GOH
8 Cytricon III	Kettering	1957	Unknown
9 Cytricon IV	Kettering	1958	Unknown
10 Brumcon	Birmingham	1959	Kenneth F Slater
11 London	London	1960	E J 'Ted' Carnell, Don Ford
12 LXIcon	Gloucester	1961	Kingsley Amis
13 Ronvention	Harrogate	1962	Tom Boardman
14 Bullcon	Peterborough	1963	Edmund Crispin
15 Repetercon	Peterborough	1964	Ted Tubb
16 Brumcon II	Birmingham	1965	Harry Harrison
17 Yarcon	Yarmouth	1966	Ron Whiting
18 Briscon	Bristol	1967	John Brunner
19 Thirdmancon	Buxton	1968	Ken Bulmer
20 Galactic Fair	Oxford	1969	Judith Merril
21 Scicon '70	London	1970	James Blish
22 Eastercon 22	Worcester	1971	Ethel Lindsay, Anne McCaffrey
23 Chessmancon	Chester	1972	Larry Niven
24 OMPAcon	Bristol	1973	Samuel R Delany
25 Tynecon	Newcastle	1974	Bob Shaw, Peter Weston
26 Seacon	Coventry	1975	Harry Harrison
27 Mancon 5	Manchester	1976	Peter Roberts, Robert Silverberg
28 Eastercon '77	Coventry	1977	John Bush
29 Skycon	Heathrow	1978	Roy Kettle, Robert Sheckley
30 Yorcon	Leeds	1979	Graham Charnock, Pat Charnock, Richard Cowper
31 Albacon	Glasgow	1980	Jim Barker, Colin Kapp
32 Yorcon II	Leeds	1981	Tom Disch, Dave Langford, Ian Watson
33 Channelcon	Brighton	1982	Angela Carter, John Sladek
34 Albacon II	Glasgow	1983	Marion Zimmer Bradley, Avedon Carol, James White
35 Seacon '84	Brighton	1984	Pierre Barbet, Waldemar Kumming, Josef Nesvadba, Chris Priest, Roger Zelazny
36 Yorcon III	Leeds	1985	Greg Benford, Linda Pickersgill
37 Albacon III	Glasgow	1986	Clive Barker, Joe Haldeman, John Jarrold, Pete Lyon
38 BECCON '87	Birmingham	1987	Chris Atkinson, Keith Roberts, Jane Gaskell
39 Follycon	Liverpool	1988	Gordon Dickson, Gwyneth Jones, Greg Pickersgill, Len Wein
40 Contrivance	Jersey	1989	Avedon Carol, Rob Hansen, M John Harrison, Don Lawrence, Anne McCaffrey
41 Eastcon	Liverpool	1990	Iain Banks, Anne Page, SMS
42 Speculation	Glasgow	1991	Rob Holdstock
43 Illumination	Blackpool	1992	Paul McAuley, Geoff Ryman, Pam Wells
44 Helicon	Jersey	1993	John Brunner, George R R Martin, Karel Thole, Larry van der Putte
45 Sou'Wester	Liverpool	1994	Diane Duane, Neil Gaiman, Barbara Hambly, Peter Morwood, Thog the Mighty
46 Confabulation	London	1995	Lois McMaster Bujold, Roger Robinson, Bob Shaw
47 Evolution	Heathrow	1996	Jack Cohen, Colin Greenland, Paul Kincaid, Maureen Speller, Bryan Talbot, Vernor Vinge
48 Intervention	Liverpool	1997	Brian Aldiss, Jon Bing, Octavia Butler, Dave Langford
49 Intuition	Manchester	1998	Ian McDonald, Martin Tudor, Connie Willis
50 ReConvene	Liverpool	1999	Peter S Beagle, John Clute, Tom Holt, Jeff Noon, Thog the Mighty, Ron Tiner
51 2Kon	Glasgow	2000	Bob Harris, Guy Gavriel Kay, Katherine Kurtz, Dr John Salthouse, Deborah Turner-Harris
52 Paragon	Hinckley	2001	Stephen Baxter, Claire Brialey, Lisanne Norman, Mark Plummer, Mike Scott Rohan
53 Helicon 2	Jersey	2002	Brian Stableford, Harry Turtledove, Peter Weston
54 Seacon 03	Hinckley	2003	Chris Baker, Christopher Evans, Mary Gentle
55 Concourse	Blackpool	2004	Danny Flynn, Sue Mason, Philip Pullman, Christopher Priest, Michell Burnside Clapp
56 ??????	You decide this weekend!!		

The term 'Eastercon' is fannish shorthand for what is effectively the 'British National SF Convention'. This would seem to imply that it cannot legitimately be held in the Channel Islands but fandom consists of free spirits who will not be constrained by rules, as is exemplified by the fact that the first conventions to be held at Easter don't count as Eastercons while the first 'Eastercon' was in fact held at Whitsun.

The history of Eastercons has been subject to some revision over the years – as Conventions were forgotten and then rediscovered. This list is as produced by Mark and Claire for last year's Eastercon in Jersey. It is substantially Rob Hansen's listing as produced for his history of UK fandom in 1989 with a few amendments by Pat McMurray in 1999.

THE SEACON03 COMMITTEE EXPOSED!

*Lies, rumours and some absolute truths
disclosed by Tony Berry, Julian Headlong and John Harvey*

A rare picture of the 'punk-father' of Seacon, Paul Oldroyd, and his 'moll' Chris Donaldson. Paul has ruthlessly co-ordinated Seacon03 since its inception during a moment of madness at Paragon. He is also in charge of the literary stream at this convention but what you have



to remember about Paul is, he collects Dr Who books. Also 2000AD comics. And Star Trek novelisations. And Star Wars, and Babylon 5, and Buffy, and, and... So despite his sensitive fannish features, impeccable conrunning history, and deeply sercon demeanour, remember – He's a *media* fan. He even likes Episode One.

Chris Donaldson is a woman of many parts – most of them on loan from the V&A. Little is known of her early days apart from rumours of an exotic dance routine – renowned to have involved a large python, a bicycle and a garden gnome. Unfortunately all that remains to support this story is the snake she keeps in her office – and he's saying nowt.

Pointing the way forward with Julian Headlong, the man in charge of science at Seacon03. He'll be making sure that no natural laws are broken this weekend – so keep that anti-gravity belt well hidden and if you were thinking of doing a bit of FTL travel just forget it! Despite his devotion to the cause of pushing forward the boundaries of science, Julian is rightly considered a connoisseur of waistcoats – his collection is one of the largest in the country or was that a collection of the largest And who else can say they inspired a comic strip by Jim Barker? OK everybody put your hands down.



What can you say about Margaret Austin that hasn't already been said, seen by Margaret, carefully corrected, then revised a half dozen times, finally being proofread by her coterie of committed copy editors, and given one last going over by



Margaret herself, just to make sure no mistakes were made, and no possible chance of missconstruction exists, before being allowed to be put into print. Well, what, I ask you?

Margaret is *meticulous*. That's a good word. And it even means what I think it means. Margaret is *thorough*. She will make sure it *all* gets done. And done properly. This is a good thing. Honest. We all think so, and none of us would dare argue with Margaret. She might be forced to put us right. And none of us want that to happen! (Note to editor: Can she have her passport photo back, please?)

What's the hardest job at a convention? Hotel liaison. So who did we get to do it? A 6 year old Tony Berry! The logic is impeccable – if a child can assemble an MFI wardrobe then he can surely argue with a dictatorial bar manager. At least he can stamp his feet and sulk, that might just do it!



Eve Harvey does her renown impersonation of Benny Hill when on tour with the Nigel Lythgo Dancers. Her experience there meant she was a natural choice to provide a firm financial hand



over those spendthrifts on the committee.

John Harvey began his career in Science Fiction while studying for a degree in window cleaning at Leeds University. He failed his degree (no language skills) but did go on to do a fanzine and attend his first convention dressed as K9. Despite the ridicule he persevered and became a regular feature at Dr. Who cons before discovering proper SF. He now comes dressed as a can of Ubik and is still ridiculed, but by a more discerning crowd.



That well-known Lothario, Noel Collyer is caught here with two of his

concubines. Known affectionately as Mr 'No, No, No, oh all right then Collyer' he is a dangerous man to cross. He may be smiling in this picture, but catch him the wrong way and he'll be laughing on the other side of his face. Back in his home town of Croydon, he's a force to be reckoned with – buses stop for him, shop assistants sell him things and his front door opens



when he turns the key. Yes, he knows how to get things done.

The demure, shy and retiring Ms Rowse was a natural choice when we wanted somebody to provide a sense of balance on the committee. She is the 'good example' to those of us who would party all night long. We picture her here at a committee meeting laying down the

law about the need for a sensible dress code at Seacon03. By day she is a farmer's wife, milking the chickens, mucking out the elephants and other farm yard type things – by night she is a lady.

PARAGON FINAL ACCOUNT

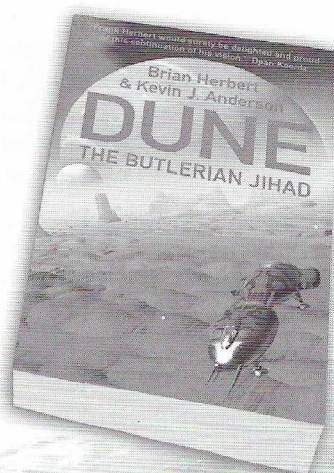
INCOME		
Memberships		£ 21,356.50
Interest		£ 307.07
Merchandise		£ 327.00
Dealers' tables		£ 1,525.00
Advertising		£ 1,529.25
Auctions		£ 518.01
Other		£ 190.89
Total		£ 25,753.72
EXPENDITURE		
Programme		
Green Room	£ 1,361.75	
Film Programme	£ 40.00	
Art Show	£ 27.73	
Fireworks	£ 1,000.00	
General	£ 1,143.49	£ 3,572.97
		£ 44.98
Publicity		
Publications		
PRs	£ 1,118.49	
Programme Bk	£ 910.96	
Read Me	£ 262.60	
Atcon newsletter	£ 526.03	
Pocket programme	£ 58.90	
Postage etc	£ 694.28	£ 3,571.26
		£ 2,021.60
Guests		
Tech/Ops		
Hotel		
Room Hire	£ 5,000.00	
Gratuity	£ 200.00	
Creche	£ 270.00	
Staging etc	£ 390.00	
Wheelchairs	£ 40.60	£ 6,125.70
Finance		
Insurance	£ 808.50	
Bad Debts/Losses	£ 684.59	£ 1,618.18
		£ 994.36
Registration		
Merchandise		
Administration		
		£ 1,013.59
		£ 269.70
TOTAL		£ 24,953.72

The profit made was rounded up due to donations to £800. This is being split three ways - £300 has gone to Seacon 03 to purchase new Art Boards, as the existing ones have reached the end of their lives. The rest is to be split between Foundation and Books for the Blind.

David Cooper
Treasurer of Paragon

'Those who long to return to the world of desert, spice and sandworms will be amply satisfied'

The Times



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DOC WEIR AWARD

The Award was set up in memory of fan Arthur Rose 'Doc' Weir who died in 1961. He'd been a dedicated worker for the BSFA, and the 'Doc Weir Fan Recognition Award' was instigated at the 1963 Eastercon, Bullcon. The Award has been presented in the most subsequent years, when it's usually been seen as the 'Good Guy' award: something for 'the Unsung Heroes'.

1963	Peter Mabey	1981	John Brunner
1964	Archie Mercer	1984	Joyce Slater
1965	Terry Jeeves	1985	James White
1966	Kenneth F Slater	1987	Brian Burgess
1967	Doreen Parker	1989	Vinç Clarke
1968	Mary Reed	1990	Roger Perkins
1969	Beryl Mercer	1991	Pat Brown
1970	J Michael Rosenblum	1992	Roger Robinson
1971	Phil Rogers	1993	Bridget Wilkinson
1972	Jill Adams	1994	Tim Broadribb
1973	Ethel Lindsay	1995	Bernie Evans
1974	Malcolm Edwards	1996	Mark Plummer
1975	Peter Weston	1997	John Harold
1976	Ina Shorrock	1998	Andy Croft
1977	Keith H Freeman	1999	1/2r Cruttenden
1978	Gregory Pickersgill	2000	Tim Illingworth
1979	Rog Peyton	2001	Noel Collyer
1980	Bob Shaw	2002	Dave Tompkins

(The list of past winners has been copied from the Award itself, so it should be definitive. Historical information derived from the third volume of *Then...*, Rob Hansen's history of British fandom.)

FAN FUNDS

TAFF The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF) was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring well-known and popular fans familiar to those on both sides of the ocean across the Atlantic. Since that time, TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and European fans to North American conventions. TAFF exists only through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted on by interested fans all over the world, and each vote is accompanied by a donation. These votes, and the continued generosity of fandom, are what makes TAFF possible.

Previous trip winners (⇒ indicates an eastbound trip and ⇐ a westbound trip)

1954 ⇐	A. Vincent Clarke ¹	1982 ⇐	Kevin Smith
1955 ⇐	Ken Bulmer	1983 ⇒	Avedon Carol
1956 ⇒	Lee Hoffman ²	1984 ⇐	Rob Hansen
1957 ⇒	Bob Madle	1985 ⇒	Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden
1958 ⇐	Ron Bennett	1986 ⇐	Gregory Pickersgill
1959 ⇒	Don Ford	1987 ⇒	Jeanne Gomoll
1960 ⇐	Eric Bentcliffe	1988 ⇐	Lilian Edwards & Christina Lake
1961 ⇒	Ron Ellik	1989 ⇒	Robert Lichtman
1962 ⇐	Ethel Lindsay	1991 ⇐	Pam Wells
1963 ⇒	Wally Weber	1992 ⇒	Jeanne Bowman
1964 ⇐	Arthur (ATom) Thomson	1993 ⇐	Abigail Frost
1965 ⇒	Terry Carr	1995 ⇒	Dan Steffan
1966 ⇐	Tom Schluck	1996 ⇐	Martin Tudor
1968 ⇒	Steve Stiles	1998 ⇒	Ulrika O'Brien
1969 ⇐	Eddie Jones	1998 ⇐	Maureen Kincaid Speller
1970 ⇒	Elliot Shorter	1999 ⇒	Vijay Bowen
1971 ⇐	Mario Bosnyak	2000 ⇐	Sue Mason
1973 ⇒	Len & June Moffat	2001 ⇒	Victor Gonzalez
1974 ⇐	Peter Weston	2002 ⇐	Tobes Valois
1976 ⇒	Roy Tackett and Bill Bowers (tie) ³	2003 ⇒	Randy Byers
1977 ⇐	Pete Roberts		
1979 ⇒	Terry Hughes		
1980 ⇐	Dave Langford		
1981 ⇒	Stu Shiffman		

Footnotes

- 1 Unable to make trip
- 2 Declined funds
- 3 Election tied; funds insufficient to send both; Bowers withdrew

GUFF The Get Up and Over Fan Fun/ Go Down Under Fan Fan (depending on your direction of travel) was motivated partly by Chris Priest's visit to Australia and by the British 1979 Worldcon. Originally intended as a one-off for Seacon 79, it was initially administered by Leigh Edmonds and Dave Langford.

Previous trip winners are (↑ indicates a Europe-bound trip and ↓ an Australia-bound):

1979 ↑	John Foyster
1981 ↓	Joseph Nicholas
1984 ↑	Justin Ackroyd
1985 ↓	Eve Harvey
1987 ↑	Irwin Hirsh
1989 ↓	Roelof Goudriaan
1990 ↑	Roman Orszanski
1992 ↓	Eva Hauser
1995 ↑	Ian Gunn & Karen Pender-Gunn
1999 ↓	Paul Kincaid
2001 ↑	Eric Lindsay & Jean Weber

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SEACON 03 MEMBERSHIP LIST

as at 31st March 2003

21	Michael Abbott	52	Bill Burns	152	Lynn Edwards
333	Dawn Abigail	184	Roger Burton West	258	Lilian Edwards
185	Andrew A. Adams	494	Marion Byott (S)	521	David Elder
406	Jae Leslie Adams	205	Simon Callan	96	Herman Ellingsen
269	Iain Alexander	149	Kim Campbell	656	Sean Ellis
531	Lissa Allcock	402	Diane Capewell	567	Stephen Elves
532	Phillip Allcock	403	Stuart Capewell	273	Udo Emmerich
663	Charlie Allery	651	Mark Chadbourne	318	Iain Emsley
25	Paul Allwood	232	Arthur Chappell	251	Andy England
29	Brian Ameringen	664	Graham Charnock	312	John English
377	Chris Amies	376	Mike Chinn (S)	GoH	Chris Evans
580	Simon Amos	590	Ewan Chrystal	288	Tim Evans
142	Kevin Anderson	528	Graham Clark	662	Emiliano Farinella
168	John Anderson	557	Andy Claydon	276	David C Farmer
169	Diane Anderson	558	Carol Claydon	540	Richard Fennell
467	Kevin Anderson	386	Norman Clinton	115	Janet Figg
568	Tina Anghelatos	266	Rich Coad	116	Mike Figg
202	Linnéa Anglemark	191	Cat Coast	245	David Allan Finch
203	Johan Anglemark	76	Elaine Coates	54	Colin Fine
517	Ariel	463	Michael Cobley	311	Brigit Fischer
213	Andrew Armstrong	246	Eddie Cochrane	639	Roger Fishwick
442	Helen Armstrong	331	Paul Cockburn	69	Brian Flatt
250	Erik Arthur	33	Felix Cohen	345	Jo Fletcher
503	Neal Asher	238	Peter Cohen	286	Lynn Fotheringham
504	Caroline Asher	279	Peter Coleman	482	Karen Joy Fowler
501	Katharine Atkin-Wright	2	Noel Collyer	411	Vikki Lee France
502	Toby Atkin-Wright	63	Chris Cooper	167	Susan Francis
530	Sandy Auden	94	Steve Cooper	156	Alison Freebairn
22	Margaret Austin	117	Jane Cooper	46	Anders Frihagen
537	James Bacon	118	David T. Cooper	31	Gwen Funnell
601	Ped Badlan	119	William Cooper	486	Sabine Furlong
82	Mark Bailey	189	Baby Cooper	487	Nigel Furlong
GoH	Chris Baker	274	Kate Cooper	488	Karen Furlong
147	Barbara-Jane	151	Del Cotter	231	TJ Furniss
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REGISTRATION**
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brow, downcast
manner and poor
penmanship of this
belaboured wretch.*

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*"I am quite restored."
Viscount G_____
"Just the tonic."
The Dowager Lady
van B_____*

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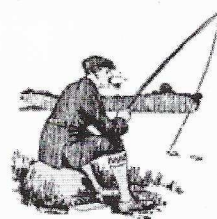
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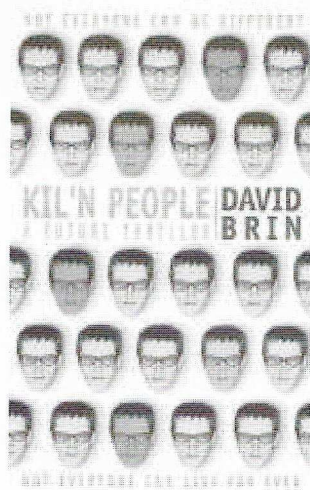
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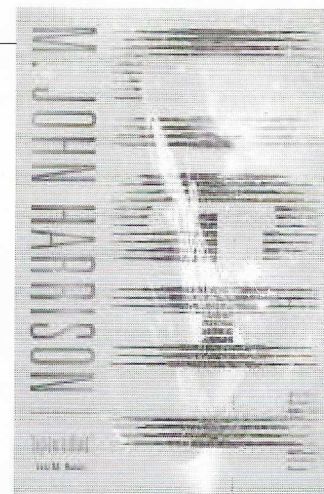


**FOLLOWING
REGISTRATION**
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are restored, thus
allowing a return to
Society and more
Genteel Pursuits.*

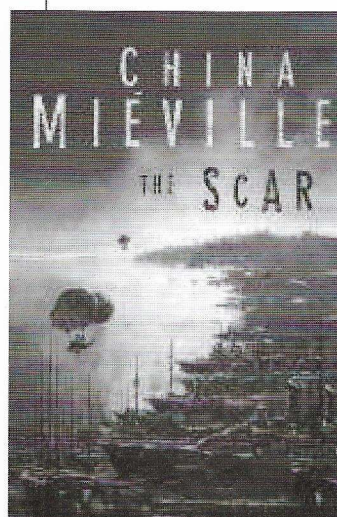
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Improves Mental Acuity,*
Increases Beard Growth,*
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Repels the Vulgar,*
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etc. etc.



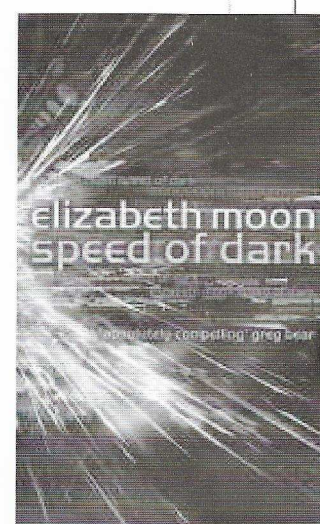
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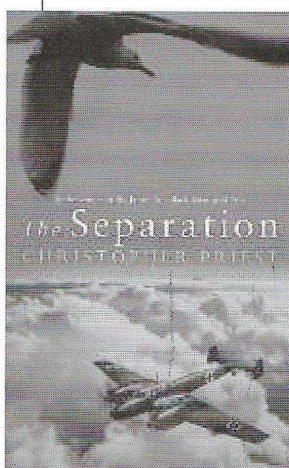
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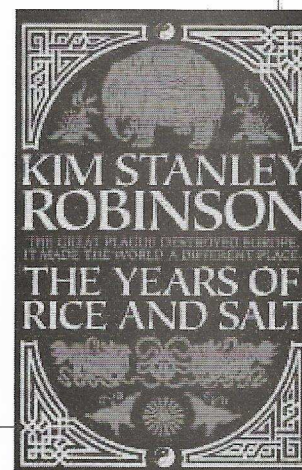
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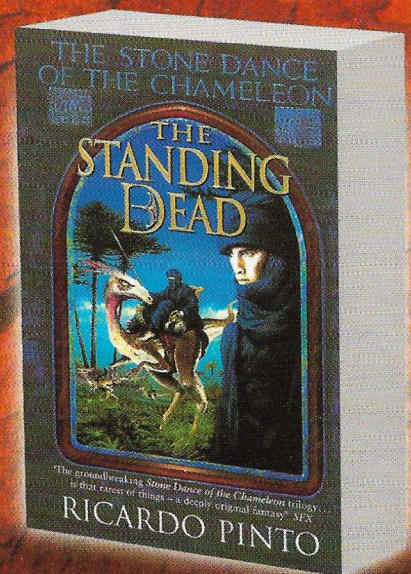
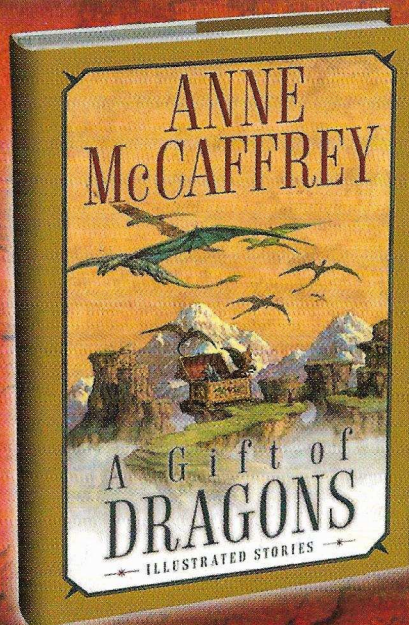
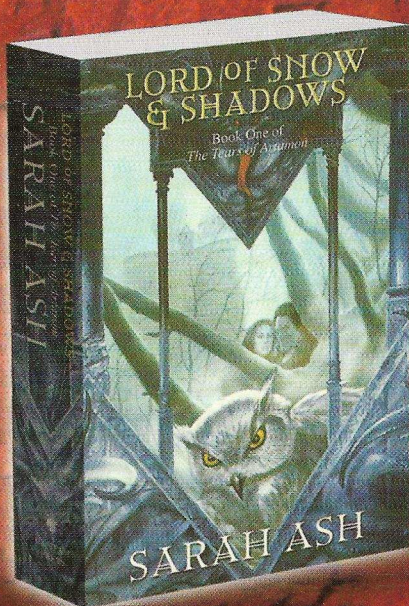
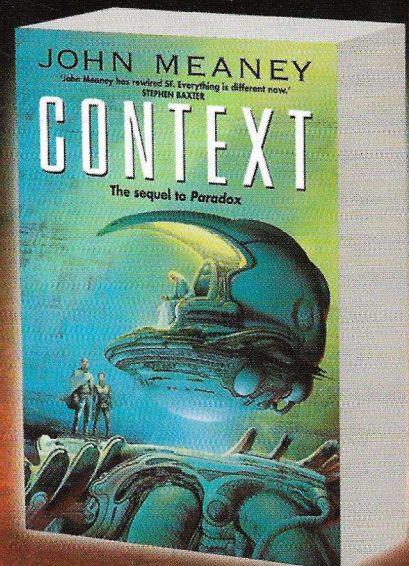
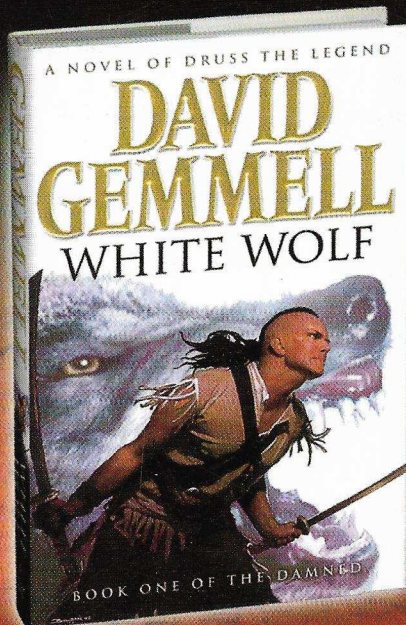
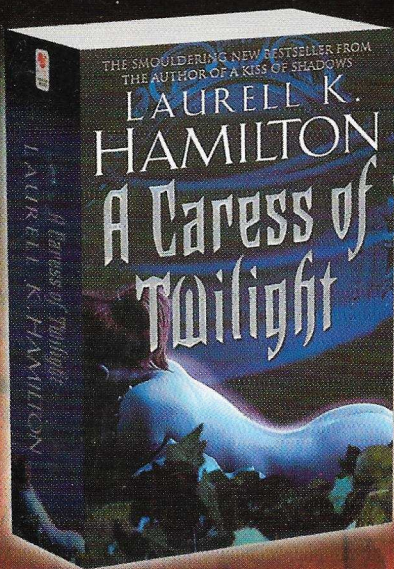
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