

WARP

76

Autumn 2010



Featured Authors:

- ⊗ Josée Bellemare
- ⊗ Keith Braithwaite
- ⊗ François Ménard
- ⊗ Fernando Novo
- ⊗ Sylvain St-Pierre

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President

Keith Braithwaite & Lindsay Brown
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Sylvain St-Pierre
Treasurer

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Bernard Reischl

Editor of WARP
Cathy Palmer-Lister

Board of Advisors (BoA)

All members in good standing!
Please help us plan our activities!

On the Cover

Colonel Alistair Bigglesworth, Queen's Own Radium Lancers, & Commander Evelyn DeVille, by Keith Braithwaite, who snapped a photo of MonSFFA costumers Mark Burakoff and Lindsay Brown at Polaris this past summer.

Write to Us:

MonSFFA
c/o Sylvain St-Pierre
4456 Boul. Ste-Rose
Laval, Québec, Canada
H7R 1Y6

www.monsffa.com

President:
president@monsffa.com

editor:
cathypl@sympatico.ca



MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Except where noted, all MonSFFA meetings are held
Sundays at 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Espresso Hotel, St-François Room, 1005 Guy Street, corner René Lévesque.

Programming is subject to change, check our website for latest developments.



October 17, 2010

Future's History: The evolution of the Captain Future character over a variety of media.
(*Marquise Boies*)

Commercial Advertising: A look at advertising's use of SF to sell products and services. (*Alice Novo, Berny Reischl*)

November 21, 2010

Weird Sci-Fi Technologies: A review of some of the more bizarre technologies to be found in the annals of science fiction.
(*Sylvain St-Pierre*)

December 4, 2010

MonSFFA's Annual Christmas Dinner & Party

Scores Restaurant, 1432, Ste-Catherine West, 6:00 PM
Reservations are in the name of MonSFFA / Bernard Reischl.
The post-dinner party will take place from 8:00 PM on at the Not So Privateer Bar (Formerly the The Park Place Bar), 1244 rue Mackay (downtown, between Ste-Catherine and Rene-Levesque).



As is our tradition, we will be collecting toys and items of non-perishable food for donation to Sun Youth's Christmas Basket Drive. In the spirit of the season, please give to benefit those less fortunate in our community.

Meeting Dates for 2011

- January 16
- February 20
- March 13
- April 17
- May 15 (Portneuf)
- June 12
- July 24 (BBQ) June 31, rain date
- August 21
- September 18
- October 30
- November 20
- December 3, Christmas Dinner & Party

Dates to be confirmed with Hotel, please check our website!.

The Real Fine Print: WARP is published quarterly by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA), a non-profit organization of fans interested in sharing their love of science fiction and fantasy. The opinions expressed in WARP are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of MonSFFA or the editor. To reprint any article, please contact the writer, or ask the editor to pass on your request. The use of copyrighted material is generally discouraged, but it's hard to talk about Star Wars without stepping on toes; our apologies to the copyright holders, no serious infringement is intended. This is an amateur production, your tolerance is appreciated by your fans.

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MONSFANDOM

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Hi, Cathy:

I just received my copy of WARP 75. Thank you for sending it. Also thank you for the beautiful way you presented my story. Something I can be proud of.

I will pay you for the postage next time I see you.

Best Wishes,

Les Lupien

Hi, Les!

So glad you like the way I presented your story, *For Love of Lois*. Don't worry about the postage, it was my fault for forgetting to bring the WARPs to the meeting!

I do enjoy your stories, keep them coming! Lloyd Penny also enjoyed reading *For Love of Lois* –his comments appear just below in his LOC.

Yours in fandom,
Cathy



December 5, 2010

Dear Cathy and MonSFFen:

I'm making it close to the deadline, but December crept right up on me, and surprised me. I have here Warp 75, many thanks for this issue, and here are some comments hurriedly thought of and transcribed, as best as I can.

I am looking at the calendar, and

last night was the club Christmas party and dinner. Hope everyone had a good time, and the season is coming up for most of us here. Some places, the spirit is lacking, and with the economy still not really recovering, and I hope that everyone can have a good Christmas anyway.

My loc...well, out of the five nominees on the Hugo ballot, I finished...fifth. Oh, well, an honour to be nominated, and what a ride it was. The latest convention here was SFCOntario, and for a first convention, it was very well run, lots of fun, good guests, and attendance of close to 400, from the reports I was given. We had a good time, we got our Aurora pins, there was lots to do, we did things in the masquerade, enjoyed a lot of good parties, and left there looking forward to the second SFCOntario, which will be next year's CanVention. Toronto now has two good literary conventions.

We're on the committee for the Canadian National Steampunk Exhibition, and looks like we will be running the green room. I can relay the

correct URL for the convention, which will relay to you all the information about memberships, guests, hotel and more. Check out www.cnse.ca, and all will be revealed.

Interesting story by Leslie Lupien. It does remind me of the Richard Matheson novel *What Dreams May Come*, which became the movie *Somewhere in Time*. Both deal with impossible travel, an obsessed love, and a determination to go and find out for sure. Plus, when it comes to alternate universes, nothing says that our universe is the baseline...

I still think radio shows are great entertainment. I've been involved with one that dates back to the 1950s, but it was never in post-production. Still, I'd like to do something like the radio show *Afghanada* that the CBC does. It's about the only radio drama left out there. I can jump ahead and see that the play was recorded in March. Looks like a lot of fun; this is why I like voicework. I've done a few more bit of university voicework for student productions, and with some luck, I might be able to do this professionally

soon.

Movies... we go to so few because there's not much out there that interests us. However... the seventh Harry Potter movie was great. The best in a while, and the perfect set-up for the 8th and final movie, this coming July. It opens the weekend of Polaris 25, so be warned. You won't get much sleep that weekend.

All done for the time being, and I will get this out to you, Cathy, asap. From both Yvonne and myself, we wish you all the best of holidays and luck for the science fictional year of 2011. May we all find life, love and full employment. Take care all, have a great time.

Yours,
Lloyd Penney.

Hi, Lloyd!

Indeed, a nomination for a Hugo is certainly an honour in itself, contrats!

Good news about the new con, SF

Contario, in Toronto. I see they have invited John Scalzi to be GoH. He is science consultant for *Stargate*, so will appeal to the media fans as well as the readers. Also good that Convention is being resurrected.

I also listen to *Afhanada*, though not on a regular basis. I am rapidly becoming unable to multitask—I can either type or listen to the radio, not both. Sigh. I hate growing old!

I have not seen a movie since the *Star Trek* movie. Very little appeals to me, and driving into Montreal is getting to be such a pain with traffic jams everywhere. I'm heartily sick of orange construction cones!

Happy holidays to you and Yvonne, hopefully you will make it to Con*Cept next year.

Yours in fandom,

Cathy



SFF Sightings!

EXTERMIKNIT!



Patterns available from <http://www.entropyhouse.com/penwiper/who/externaknit.html>

<http://www.entropyhouse.com/penwiper/who/knittardis.html>

http://wittylittleknitter.com/?page_id=519

Behind the Scenes

Josée Bellemare

Photos by Josée Bellemare

Behind the scenes at a masquerade isn't what you think. On stage, the contestants get caught up in their character and presentation.

Backstage, it's completely different. Where else would you find superheroes checking if their seams are straight or comparing the fabric of their caps, not to forget Wolverine smoothing out the edges of his duct tape costume.

In one corner I saw a scene that reminded me of something from *Gone with the Wind*. One lady was leaning against the wall while another was lacing up her corset as tight as possible.

Then you have Strawberry Shortcake and friends drinking

coffee from Tim Horton.

Not what you would expect.

Anyone who has participated in a masquerade will tell you, the most difficult part is the waiting: to get your paperwork looked over, to get your picture taken, for your turn to go on stage.

Still we go through it. Why? You may ask. Because we have a lot of imagination, a big ego and if only for a short time, we like to be the centre of attention.

So, see you on stage!



Anyone who has participated in a masquerade will tell you, the most difficult part is the waiting: to get your paperwork looked over, to get your picture taken, for your turn to go on stage...



Author Josée Bellemare in her costume

Weeping Angel Best costume ever?



Award-winning costumer Jennifer Jacob made up as a Weeping Angel (Doctor Who) at Polaris earlier this year in Toronto.

Jennifer Jacob as a Weeping Angel, Polaris 24

(Photos by Cathy Palmer-Lister)

So striking was her entirely handcrafted creation that Jennifer literally could not walk more than a few feet down the convention corridors without dozens of folk besieging her and asking her to pose for photographs. She noted that much like the character she was portraying, she became frozen in her tracks when people were looking at her! Convention MC Larry Stewart commented that he hadn't seen such an outstanding costume in twenty years of attending cons.



As Jennifer, out of costume, now, lugged her suitcases to check-out on Sunday morning, the cardboard Angel wings poking out of one bag, she received a spontaneous ovation from the fans milling about the convention floor.

Keith Braithwaite

When I saw the Weeping Angel slowly making her way along the corridor, probably on her way to the Friday dance, I was stunned by how perfectly the costume suited the costumer. As Keith mentions above, Jennifer was a very long time getting to her destination! She was so perfect, that when she stood still, you really could believe she *was* a statue. I've seen some fabulous costumes, some at World Cons that were extremely elaborate, but this one was easily the most breath-taking.

Cathy Palmer-Lister



Star Dracula

François Ménard

Most of the inhabited and advanced systems, those that wanted to regain contact with the rest of humanity at any rate, kept their gate in good repair. The Carpathian gate was abandoned, looked as if someone had tried to tear it apart, and was farther out from the system than it should have been. Another hundred years or so and it would float out into the void. Still, a lot could happen in 350 years...

Captain Jonathan Harker stood on the bridge of the HCSS Demeter as the vessel decelerated to sub-light speed on final approach to the Carpathian system.

The Demeter was his first command and this was only his third re-contact mission. The butterflies still agitated his stomach every time he came to a new system, a feeling he both loved and dreaded. Space was in his blood, that much was plain, and these re-contact missions were the most exciting, or boring, currently being undertaken by the Confederate Space Navy. Jonathan could not get over how incredibly lucky he was to have received this command.

Centuries ago mankind had finally left the Earth behind. Late in the 21st century there had been an amazing discovery that allowed for the creation of what had been dubbed Jump-gates. These immense, cylindrical structures constructed at the edge of a solar system's gravity well allowed near-instantaneous travel between any two by folding the space between them. Unmanned robot vehicles were sent to nearby star systems to construct these Jump-gates and the First Glorious Human Empire was born. For nearly a millennium the Empire grew and prospered as mankind seeded the stars.

Over 350 years ago, everything changed. For reason or reasons still unknown, the gates just stopped working. Hundreds, perhaps even thousands of populated star systems were suddenly cut off from each other. For nearly three centuries inter-stellar travel was impossible and each system developed independently. Some died out, others fell to barbarism or developed along different evolutionary paths, until 64 years ago when scientists on the planet of New London discovered a new way to reach the stars, the super-light drive. A ship outfitted with a super-light drive could accelerate to nearly five times the speed of light, though doing so, as well as decelerating to sub-light speeds took weeks. As the New Londoners made contact with more and more systems, some peaceful, some not, the Human Confederacy was born.

And so, here he was, young Captain Jonathan Harker, leading a mission to expand the Confederacy by re-establishing contact, and hopefully trade relations, with people in star systems that had been cut off from the rest of humanity for so very long. Some even no longer realized that mankind existed elsewhere in the universe. This required a very special training in both leadership and diplomacy, a training Jonathan had excelled in. Unfortunately, so far, the first two missions had met without success. The Sahara and Lantic systems turned out to be dead. Most of the systems in this sector had been found to be lifeless, but still, this was the last stop on the Demeter's tour of duty, and if one played the odds, they would find something here. Captain Harker had already intensely studied the historical records of the system, but still, he brought up a summary on his personal data-screen to refresh himself.

Only one planet had been deemed habitable, Carpathia 4, or New Transylvania as it had been named back then. It's surface was sixty-five percent water, and much of that was atmospheric. There was only one continental landmass covering over half the planet's surface and was actually a meeting of several tectonic plates making it very mountainous, and due to the high moisture content in the air, perpetually cloud covered, damp, and cold. Still, the planet had been colonized, and considering the remoteness of the system, and the harsh conditions, Jonathan believed that the people who had come here would've had to have been strong, resilient, and independent. In short, survivors. He looked up from his personal screen to the large viewport that ran along the entire circumference of the round bridge as the Demeter passed the ruin of the old Jump-gate. First bad sign, he thought, most of the inhabited and advanced systems, those that wanted to regain contact with the rest of humanity at any rate, kept their gate in good repair. The Carpathian gate was abandoned, looked as if someone had tried to tear it apart, and was farther out from the system than it should have been. Another hundred years or so and it would float out into the void. Still, a lot could happen in 350 years. Captain Harker turned to Ensign Morrow manning the sensor terminal,

"Alright, Morrow. We should be close enough for your first scan to have completed, what's your report?"

"More bad news, Capt'n." answered the senior Morrow. Most of the crew were older and more experienced spacers than Harker, but they liked him, for the most part, even if he was a little green and over-zealous, hence the shortened rank nickname, "No ships in system. No artificial satellites. No comm traffic. Looks like another dead system."

"Not necessarily, Nova Constantinople was solely ground-based, as was New Boston. While New Transylvania was rich in common and rare minerals, there was very little silicon and no tungsten which would've made keeping up a space fleet difficult if not impossible," Jonathan turned to his helmsman, Lieutenant Yanna, "How long until we're in range of the planet?"

"We're about four hours out, Capt'n"

"Well then, someone had better wake up Renfield."

 Thomas Renfield lay in his bunk, staring at the ceiling. Over twenty five years as a spacer had pretty much taken the newness out of making system fall. Twenty five years he'd been making re-contact with lost star systems, but the brass put this young upstart Harker in command of the Demeter. Life just wasn't fair. "You're just too good as a First-Contact Op," is what they said. What did they know? How many missions had gone to pieces once command was given the ball?

"FCO Renfield to Lander 2. FCO Renfield to Lander 2." some bridge officer squawked over the intercom.

“One more time,” Renfield said to himself aloud, “One more time, then we head back. They’d better finally give me my own ship when we get home or I’m done.” He then chuckled to himself, having said the same thing more times than he cared to remember. Then he got up, suited up at his locker, and headed down the cramped corridor towards the docking bay.

After squeezing himself into the lander’s cockpit Renfield started the pre-launch check and turned on the comm, “FCO Renfield here. I’ve started pre-launch and should be ready for planet fall in 20 minutes.”

“Harker here,” the comm squawked back at him, “We’ll be in orbit in just under an hour. Still no communication from the planet. There are a few intact structures though. All the mountains and atmospheric interference make infrared life scan difficult. There’s something alive down there, but whether it’s humans or the indigenous fauna, we can’t tell. These conditions should make for an interesting landing at any rate. Be sure to get all the telemetry before you launch. Best of luck, Renfield.”

What did Harper think? This was Thomas’s first landing? He had read the data-brief, he already knew all this and more, “Yes sir, Captain Harker,” no way was Renfield calling him Capt’n, “It’s all in the data-brief. I’ve made worse landings. Thank you, sir. Renfield out.” and with that he shut down the comm and went back to sleep.



Lucy and Mina jogged along Carfax Station’s outermost ring at a brisk pace. Two miles in diameter with a single large viewport running the circumference that offered a spectacular view of docking ships and the planet New London below. It had been the women’s favourite part of the station since they were children and they ran the whole length of it every morning. The staff and citizenry of the station paid them no mind, though newcomers and visitors would often wonder why they didn’t use the station’s gym facilities. Some might have even said something if not for Lucy’s black and silver security arm-badge. They slowed and stopped where their daily run both began and ended, docking bay 21, sweat-covered and smiling, and broke into laughter. Mina recovered first. “Eighteen years, Lucy, and you still can’t outrun me.” she said as she caught her breath.

“Funny,” answered the pretty, red haired security officer, “I didn’t think we were racing anymore. Tomorrow I won’t hold back.” and the two broke into laughter once again. At that point, a large, mustachioed man walked up behind the pair and grabbed both around the waist. Mina yelped in mock-surprise as Lucy pivoted, planted her feet, and threw the large, muscular man nearly twice her size to the steel floor, hard. “Good morning, Quincy,” and she winked at him.

“Damned, Girl,” said Quincy in his thick, Nova Montanan accent as he fought to regain his wind, “Is that any way to treat a superior officer?” he asked light heartedly as he picked himself up with Mina’s help.

“Funny, I don’t see any badge on that left arm of yours, Quincy. Do you, Mina?” Mina just smiled shyly in response, “Maybe we should report him to Arthur? Sexual harassment is punishable by... what exactly, Mister Security Chief Morris?”

“Oh, you little fire-haired hellcat,” growled Quincy in mock-anger. He then checked his chronometer, “Shouldn’t you be—”

“On patrol,” she finished for him. She then pointed to the

armband, “I’m wearing my badge, and just did a full outer ring sweep. One shower later and I’ll be on the inner ring. Which is where I’m going to next. Keep him warm for me, Mina, and I’ll see you both for dinner,” with that, Lucy jogged away, still full of energy.

“I swear,” commented Quincy as he finished straightening himself out, “That girl is just too damned wild, especially for a can-kid... Sorry, Mina, forgot you grew up in the station, too.”

“That’s alright,” she answered in that soft, tiny, mousy voice of hers, “You’re just another dirt-eater, you don’t know any better,” they both laughed.

“Why, Ms. Murray, whatever would you’re beloved Captain Jonathan Harker say if he heard you speaking such language?” he joked. Mina’s cheeks went deep red and she looked down towards the floor as she laughed, “What’s the word on Jon’s ship, anyway?” he asked seriously.

“He should be back in six weeks or so.” she said, “Oh Quincy, I do miss him so. I don’t see why I can’t go with him on these re-contact missions. I’m a good pilot, I should –”

“Now, darling, I know what you’re thinking, but the two of you have been through this already. Your life is here, his is out there. He’ll be back soon, and Navy regs require eight months leave between missions. Besides, without you this station would fall apart and that fire-haired friend of yours would kill me for sure,” he laughed.

“Oh, Quincy...”



The lander shook as it uncoupled from the Demeter, waking Renfield from his nap. With a practised hand, he took the controls and eased the small landing craft into the planet’s atmosphere. The wind shear felt worse than the instruments indicated, but still manageable. Visibility dropped to almost nothing as he entered the cloud cover. Flying with only instruments that seemed to be malfunctioning was not pleasant. Renfield fought with the controls, sweat began to form over his forehead beneath his flight helmet and run down his face. He tried to contact the Demeter for assistance, but it was useless in this soup. He heard and felt ice pellets strike the small ship’s hull as several failsafe alarms came to life, filling the cockpit with even more palpable tension. Gritting his teeth, he continued to struggle with the controls even as the muscles in his arms and legs began to cramp with the strain. The lander fell faster and faster, and began to tumble. Renfield knew if he didn’t regain control soon, he was going to crash. He tried to hold down the panic forming in his mind, with some success. Panic would not save him, only speed him to his grave. His training and experience told him to stay calm, but this was unlike any landing he had ever experienced. Even worst case simulations paled in comparison. He had a feeling this might just be the end.

But as that realization came over him, the ship finally fell beneath the clouds, and while still in danger, he was able to regain control of the craft. Being able to once again see where he was and where he was going was of great help. Once levelled out, he checked his instruments. He had been thrown hundreds of kilometres off course, and his planned landing area was far out of range now. A quick check of the area showed a suitable site, he turned the ship towards it and hit his forward and belly thrusters to try and slow his decent. Then the wind caught him again and threw the ship towards the ground forcing him back into his seat.

The ship dipped and bucked as the ground came ever closer. One last hope, he thought to himself, and hit the emergency landing control.

Outside of the lander, several large panels blew off and from the compartments beneath, bags explosively inflated out, filling with a combination of helium and security gel. The once aerodynamic if blocky craft took on the shape of a large, inflated, orange soccer ball. The compressed air jets spread out evenly over the surface of the emergency bags fired, and the ship hit ground, bounced, the jets fired once more, and after three more bounces, came to rest in a small canyon.

After several long hours, Renfield came back to his senses. The emergency landing system was designed to roll the ship right side up after landing due to its shape and centre of gravity, but Renfield could feel he, and the ship, were upside down. The landing-bag release control blinked red and green alternately, he did not press it as he knew that would most likely further damage the ship.

After removing his helmet that dropped to the top of the cockpit and checking himself for injuries, he eased himself out of the pilot's chair and made his way carefully to the rear of the craft. Walking on the ceiling was disorienting as everything was now upside-down and on the opposite side from where he was accustomed to, but he found his way to the rear hatch and opened it. Taking the back-pack shaped field kit from its housing by the hatch, he exited the ship and worked his way out between the still inflated emergency landing bags. The orange, malleable dura-plast pressed in around him and gave way beneath him making his exit from the ship a most unpleasant experience. He had difficulty getting a good grip to pull himself along and the effort as well as the closed, pressing space made it hard to breathe.

Once outside, Renfield saw why the ship hadn't rolled over, it had wedged itself between the narrow canyon walls. Renfield knew he was not going to get the ship out of there without help. Cursing his luck, he tried the portable comm from his field pack but could find no signal, from neither the Demeter nor anywhere in range on the planet. Standard procedure meant three days until Harker sent someone down in the other lander, then another twelve weeks for the Demeter to get back to New London and return with help if the other lander suffered the same fate as his, or worse. Twilight had fallen, the mountains and thick, gnarled trees of the area seemed to close in around him. He began to set up camp when he heard a most terrifying sound he could never have imagined. Like a blending between a wolf howl and the screeching of metal against metal, it echoed through the canyon. Renfield rummaged wildly through the field kit for the pistol. He found it after what felt like an eternity and pulled it out. Searching wide-eyed in all directions, he couldn't see anything definitive, but more than once he thought he noticed two glowing red eyes from the edges of his vision, only to find nothing there when he looked directly. He nervously pulled the insta-fire from the field kit, set it up, and lit it. The gnarled, twisted, nearly leafless trees of this planet cast eerie shadows that seemed to

move in the flickering fire-light. Renfield curled up in the blankets from the field kit, his back up against the ship's inflated emergency landing bags, pistol held tightly. There were no more sounds that night, but Renfield did not have a single moment of sleep.



Morrow turned towards Captain Harker, who had leaned in close behind her, "I'm sorry, Capt'n. We lost his transponder when he entered the upper cloud cover. I can't get any reading or signal. He's on his own. At least he didn't crash."

"How can you be sure?" asked Harker.

"A crash would have lit up the infrared sensor." the older woman explained, "It may not have been a very smooth landing, but the ship's still in one piece. Should I have Saunders prep Lander One?"

"No, not yet.

Renfield has three days to make contact, either with us or the locals, he knows that. If we send the lander now, he'll take it as an insult, you know

how he is."

"That I do, Capt'n," and we know how you are, she thought to herself, wouldn't want to bend the rules for any reason, would you.

Jonathan could tell he had made a mistake from the sound of Morrow's voice, or that she thought he had. Still, the regulations were clear. They were out here alone, with finite resources. Having both landers planetside at once was a big risk, and FCOs knew the risks when they signed on. Still, Harker couldn't shake the feeling in his gut that told him to go after Renfield in the other lander at once, himself.

Lucy entered her quarters, stripped off her security jumpsuit, and hopped into the shower, Just another quiet, routine, boring day on the station, she thought to herself. She hoped her dinner party tonight would be more exciting. She would often invite her friends over for dinner, and her parties had acquired an almost legendary status on the station, but she seemed less and less interested in that kind of thing over the last few years, since the loss of her parents. Michael Westenra, her father, had been station administrator for nearly forty years and Vivian, her mother, had inherited Lloyd-Tech from Lucy's grandfather, making them the richest family on the station, and fifth richest in the entire Britanic system. Lucy had never wanted for anything growing up, save the attention of her parents. Much of what she had done with her life had been to spite them, including the choosing of her profession, hoping that they would finally give her the attention she so needed, but now, after the shuttle accident had taken them away from her, she never would. Still, though her parents never seemed to give her the attention she craved, there were those who had, and these people she loved dearly.

There was dearest Mina, her childhood friend. Mina had grown up poor, the daughter of dockworkers on the station. They had both loved to spend time on the station's outer ring for pretty much the same reasons, the view and the activity. When they first met, spoiled little Lucy fancied a doll Mina always carried with

her, a home made plush and plastic little girl made by her mother. Lucy grabbed it, and ran. She had always been a natural runner, a gift that had proved useful when being chased by security when she got into trouble, which was often, but little Mina, had given chase. She had stayed right on Lucy's heels the whole length of the outer ring and had steadily caught up until they had both collapsed. Mina then told her if she wanted the doll so much, she could keep it. Lucy still had that doll, it sat in a place honour by her bed to this very day. Of all the things Lucy had, her fine clothes and jewelry, the ornaments and paintings that adorned her quarters, even the security certificate she had worked so hard for, nothing meant more to her than that doll, and the friendship it represented.

 As Lucy dried herself off and dressed for this evening's dinner party, her thoughts went from her doll to her security certificate, and the reason she got it, Quincy Morris. Though Mina's friendship had tamed her wild childhood somewhat, she still got into more than her fair share of trouble. Of course, that was until she was sixteen and she met the handsome, dashing Nova Montanan veteran newly transferred to Carfax Station Security. He had arrested her once, for shoplifting or some such. Knowing who she was and who her parents were, most of station security, especially the new recruits, usually turned a blind eye, or let her off with a warning, but not Quincy. Her father ended up having to come get her released. She never forgot the image of then young Officer Morris standing up to her father, something she had never seen anyone do, ever. At that moment, she had fallen head over heels for him. For two years she did everything in her power to make him notice her, getting into as much trouble as possible just so he'd arrest her, which he did, over and over. He seemed to catch on though, and ended up coming in one step ahead of her, stopping her from getting into trouble in the first place and sending her on her way. He did take notice of her, but never in the way she wanted. As a little girl, not a woman. She realized she'd have to earn his respect, first. Show him she was an adult. It was then she decided to enter the Security Academy on New London. Her parents had been less than pleased, her father had even forbidden her to go, which in her eyes was all the more reason to. Though she had signed on for the wrong reasons, a fact she now freely admitted, there she found the thing her childhood had been lacking, discipline. She had to work hard, very hard, as her family name meant nothing here, but in the end, she earned that certificate, and the respect and comradery that went with it. She had not been surprised when her first assignment had been Carfax, figuring her father had pulled some strings. She was surprised to learn it had not been her father, but Quincy, who was now the head of security, who had insisted on her posting to the station. Seems he had noticed her, after all.

Of course, by then her feelings for Quincy had changed, due in no small part to her meeting a medical student during her security training by the name of Jack Seward. Though Jack was a native of New London, he had studied on several new Human Confederation planets, and had only returned to finish his doctorate. He had fallen deeply and passionately in love with her. Though very fond of him, her feelings were never quite that strong. Still, she could never bring herself to break his heart, His appointment to Carfax afterwards had made things difficult as he

continued to carry a torch for her, and she still cared for him, only not in the way he hoped for.

And of course, there was Arthur Holmwood, the current Chief Administrator of Carfax Station. She had known Arthur even longer than Mina as his parents and hers had been close friends. She had, however, hated him, mainly because her own parents seemed to care more for him than for her, especially her father. Michael Westenra had taken young Arthur under his wing, and he had grown up to be very much like Lucy's father. The one difference, he paid Lucy a great deal of attention. A fact she hated until he had been the one to tell her about the accident with her parents shuttle. She had cried in his arms that night, and more than a few nights since. He had been there for her, always, and though it took the death of her parents to realize it, she needed him.

Checking herself in the mirror one last time she turned on the auto-chief. Her guests, her dearest friends would be arriving soon. Least she could do was have dinner ready when they got here. Yes, she thought to herself, tonight was going to be special.

 Renfield began to wonder if the morning ever came on this forsaken planet. The night seemed to go on forever. When morning did come at last, it was a dull, grey, lifeless thing. A flock of bat-like creatures flew past overhead as the grey light slowly replaced the pitch black of night. Renfield's every muscle, every joint ached. His eyes burned and his head throbbed. As he doused the insta-fire he heard what sounded like some large, wheeled vehicle coming towards him, and spotted the strange contraption some ways off when he turned to look. It was twice as tall as it was wide, which was about five metres Renfield guessed and had six large, wide wheels that seemed to each have independent suspension, which made sense given the terrain. The engine popped and whined as dark smoke bellowed from behind the vehicle as it rolled and bounced along. When it came closer, Renfield could see a small, twisted figure driving the thing from an open air cockpit. Renfield holstered his pistol and waved at the driver. The small figure waved back and nearly lost control of the vehicle as it bounced over a large rock. The driver yelled something Renfield couldn't make out in a high pitched, warbled voice, fought with the steering control, and continued his approach.

The vehicle came to stop, bucked, and belched out a massive green-black cloud from it's exhaust. The small driver leaped down out of the cockpit with surprising agility. He was perhaps just over a metre tall but was severely hunched over and deformed, as though his spine had been twisted and bent. His left shoulder was bulky and massive, and his left arm was also large and well muscled. His right arm and shoulder were much lower on his frame as well as much smaller and spindly. His legs were short and bowed. His face was recognizable as human, but his left eye was three times as big as his right. His hair was long, dark, thinning, and greasy. He wore a simple, purple, one piece cover-all with worn, holed boots. He spoke in a language Renfield couldn't understand, but his voice and manner seemed friendly. Renfield tried greeting the small, deformed man in Old Basic, the trade language of the First Glorious Human Empire.

"Hello," said Renfield, "My name is Thomas Renfield, I –"

"Yes-yes," the small man interrupted in halting, thickly

accented Old Basic, “Man from the sky. Come to speak. Come to learn. Come to trade. Master’s been expecting you. Yes-yes. Come now.” and with that he opened a hatch on the vehicle’s side, revealing a comfortable, padded interior with two large bench style seats facing each other. He gestured for Renfield to get in.

“I’m sorry,” Renfield replied, “I don’t understand. I was expected? By your master? Who is your master and how could he be expecting us? Have you had recent contact with people from other star systems? And who are you?”

“Huh,” the small man made a strange face at Renfield, as though looking at a small, ignorant child. He then thumped his chest with his massive left arm, “IGOR,” he grunted. He then waved Renfield into the vehicle once again, “Master is waiting. Long trip. Come now.” Renfield sighed, another backwater

hick-planet, he thought to himself, gathered his field kit, and boarded the vehicle.

The travel time to this strange little Igor’s master was indeed long, taking most of the day. The vehicle’s interior made it almost bearable, even with all the bouncing and bucking that kept him from napping despite his best efforts. Well padded and quite comfortable, Renfield found it strange and somewhat worrisome there were no view screens or even windows. For all he knew, Igor could simply be driving in circles and should anything happen, he had no way of getting back to the lander as he doubted the transponder would work on this damned planet. By late afternoon Renfield had had enough. He opened the hatch to speak with this Igor. What he saw took his breath away.



To be continued in WARP 77!



SFF Sightings! Hallowe'en SF, Josée Bellemare



Stargate Enterprise

Part III

Josée Bellemare

The story so far: After years of waiting, the SGC now has a Starship Enterprise, and requests to be assigned to the Enterprise are pouring in. The project is supposed to be secret, but even General Rostov was swamped with applicants for the job of "Chekov", now filled by lieutenant Pavlova.

Our story opens as the Enterprise prepares for a presidential visit.



It was a bright Monday morning when the president's helicopter landed at Peterson Air Force Base.

The official purpose of the visit was troop inspection but the top brass knew that President Obama was there to inspect the Enterprise in orbit.

The base commander walked up to greet the president

and his entourage as they got off.

"Welcome Sir, I hope you had a good flight. If you'll follow me, we planned a brief presentation to explain a few things then we can go directly to the ship."

"Lead the way general. I've been looking forward to this for a long time."

"Right this way Sir."

The general lead the way to a conference room with a giant screen and a computer technician waiting. Everyone found a seat, eager to learn about the Enterprise.

The general nodded to the technician who typed on the keyboard. The lights dimmed and the screen lit up. They all chuckled when they heard a few bars from the Star Trek theme.

"Sorry Sir, we couldn't resist."

The president just smiled and nodded.

Then came the video presentation explaining the history of the 303 ships, the 304 and the Asgard contribution. The lights came back on and the general started passing out small pins.

"Gentlemen, this is a locator beacon. Keep it on you at all times during this visit otherwise we won't be able to lock on to you when we beam up or when we come back. If you'll all stand together in a small group, we can go up."

Mr. President, would you care to give the order? The frequency is open."

"Enterprise, beam us up Scotty."

In a Scottish accent "Aye Sir."

For a brief moment the president had a shocked and confused look on his face. The bright lights came on and then they were standing in the transporter room of the Enterprise.

"Did I hear a Scottish accent?"

"Aye Sir, you did. (Switching to American) Major Malcolm Scott MacGyver Stuart at your service, Sir."

Scotty saluted and the president saluted back. Colonel Kramer stepped forward.

"Mr. President, it's an honour to have you aboard."

"I see this Enterprise has it's own Scotty."

"My chief engineer. If you'll come this way gentlemen, I'll show you around the ship. I'm sure you'll be impressed."

They spent close to an hour going through the ship before ending up on the bridge. The guests were amazed when they saw the earth out the window. Colonel Kramer spoke up, pointing to the command chair.

"Mr. President, would you care to try it out?"

The president sat down and looked out into space.

"Would you care to trade jobs?"

Colonel Kramer chuckled "I don't think the Senate would like my way of doing things, Sir."

"It was worth a try."

"It's 11:30, would you gentlemen like to stay for lunch? Our chef is very good."

The officials looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders. Finally, the president spoke up.

"We'd be delighted. Lead the way Colonel."

The group made their way to the mess hall and got in line. They picked up their plates and Colonel Kramer pointed to the captain's table. As they started eating their food, several of them were pleasantly surprised at the taste.

"Colonel Kramer, any chance we could steal your chef. This is delicious."

"Not a chance, she stays on board. Nice try though. I'll pass along your compliments."

After lunch they all beamed back to Peterson and flew back to Washington.

That evening, back in the White House, President Obama was in his office, doing paperwork when his wife walked in.

"Welcome back, how was your trip to Peterson?"

"Pretty good."

"That's all. No details?"

"Sorry"

"I get it. It was one of those military secrets you can't tell me about."

"Something like that."

"Well if you say it was pretty good..."

"It was one of those days when it's good to be president."

While no official announcement had been made yet, news of a starship named Enterprise and her crew was spreading like wildfire.

Some were eager to join the crew while some, in lesser number of course, were making fun of the Trekkies among the

ranks.

One such Trekkie was Lieutenant Karin Sullivan. Currently stationed in area 51, she felt she would be perfect for the job. She had the qualifications and training but it would be her name and background that would get her in.

Karin's ancestry was half Irish, half Japanese and one of her hobbies was fencing. But how could she get in? She could request a transfer to the Enterprise but so would hundreds, if not thousands, of other candidates.

Just in case, she started preparing her application. Along with her qualifications she also mentioned her fencing and martial arts training. Karin even included pictures of herself in fencing gear and martial arts uniform. She was ready.

Then it came. The opportunity she needed: General O'Neill was coming to area 51 for an inspection visit. She got everything ready. While she did have all the information on a DVD, she also included paper versions of everything. It was widely known that General O'Neill was old fashioned and preferred paper files over electronic ones.

On the day of General O'Neill's visit, Karin waited for the chance. At lunch she made her move.

"General, may I have a moment of your time? This won't take long." She handed her envelope. "I want a transfer to the Enterprise. I already made a formal request with my commanding officer but I thought it couldn't hurt to go to the top. All the information is in this envelope. If you look it over you'll see I'm perfect for the job. I'll let you get back to your meal. Thank you for your attention, Sir."

Then Karin saluted and left. General O'Neill was a bit shocked. She never gave him the chance to say anything. Curiosity got the better of him and he opened the envelope and started looking over the paperwork while he continued eating.

Her record was spotless, she was highly qualified and then he saw the picture of Karin in fencing gear. He smiled, the gears in his head turning...

The rest of the day went smoothly and the next morning O'Neill called the Enterprise.

"Colonel Kramer here. What can I do for you General?"

"Colonel, I believe I've found a Sulu for the Enterprise. Can you beam down to area 51?"

"I'll be right there Sir."

Sure enough, a flash of light and Colonel Kramer was standing in the conference room with General O'Neill and the base commander.

"Colonel Kramer, welcome. Please have a seat. By the way, how did the presidential visit go?"

"Very well, General. He even tried to steal my chef but I'm not letting her go.

So, you say you have a Sulu for me?"

"Right here." General O'Neill handed Colonel Kramer a file. "Excellent qualifications, good record and her background and training make her the perfect candidate for the job."

Colonel Kramer looked at the file, turning the pages.

"You're right; she is perfect for the job. Can I meet her?"

The base commander reached for the phone.

"Have someone tell Lieutenant Karin Sullivan to report to conference room 1. Thank you."

"How did you find her?"

"She found me. She ambushed me yesterday at lunch, handed me that envelope, saluted and left before I could say a word."

"Bold move on her part."

There was a knock then the door opened.

"You asked to see me sir? General O'Neill."

"Lieutenant Sullivan, this is Colonel Kramer, commander of the Enterprise."

Lieutenant Sullivan snapped at attention and saluted. Colonel Kramer saluted back.

"At ease, Lieutenant. I'm told you want a transfer to the Enterprise. Tell me why I should accept your request."

"I'm a highly qualified electronics engineer, I served six months on the Daedalus as a weapon specialist, while I'm not a combat pilot, I am qualified to fly a 302 and I have a black belt in several forms of martial arts.

"Also, I am aware that several members of the Enterprise crew were chosen because they closely match the crew of the original Star Trek series, yourself included, Sir. My name and background make me the perfect candidate to be Sulu on the Enterprise, Sir."

Kramer looked at a calendar on the wall.

"We're Wednesday. Get yourself organized and report to Peterson ready to beam up first thing Monday morning. Welcome aboard Lieutenant. Dismissed."

Lieutenant Sullivan saluted.

"Thank you Sir, you won't regret it, I promise."

She left the conference room calmly.

"She took it well."

Less than 5 seconds later they all heard something that sounded like the happy squealing of a teenage girl.

O'Neill commented, as only he could.

"She took it well indeed."



Note: The name Karin is a Japanese girl's name. It means "Summer Forest".

TO BE CONTINUED IN WARP 77

Answers to The Face Behind the Mask, page 32

A=3 B=1 C=5 D=4 E=2

L'OUVRE TEMPS

Revu par Sylvain St-Pierre

On ressent toujours un petit quelque chose quand une série qu'on aime depuis longtemps se termine enfin. Je me souviens encore de la parution du premier épisode de *Valérian, Agent Spatio-Temporel*, en novembre 1967 dans le numéro 420 de *Pilote*. C'était *Les mauvais rêves*, et j'attendais impatientement le nouveau numéro du journal chaque semaine.

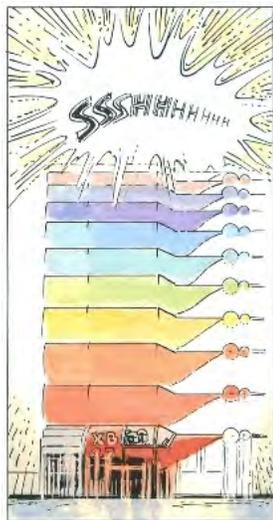
Il y a quelques temps, ce qui sera probablement le dernier album a été publié : *L'Ouvre Temps*. Ses pages contiennent une conclusion très bien ficelée aux

événements commencés dans *Au bord du Grand Rien*. On y appréciera tout particulièrement les très nombreuses apparitions de pratiquement tous les personnages rencontrés au cours des quarante années et plus qu'a duré la série. Il y a les incontournables shingouz, bien sûr, mais aussi plusieurs autres que j'avais presque oubliés. Même l'antique navette spatio-temporelle des débuts, d'avant le fameux astronef, fait son apparition ! Le tout est présenté sous la forme d'un



tableau grandiose au dessin très affiné et une intrigue qui tient bien la route. Les amateurs de longue date ne seront pas déçus par la finale qui, comme toute bonne fin, présage un commencement, sans toutefois s'empêtrer dans les clichés faciles des histoires de voyage dans le temps. Je ne vendrai pas la mèche, mais je crois que l'astuce plaira à tout le monde.

J'ai revu tous mes albums (j'ai la série au complet), et je n'ai pu qu'apprécier toute l'évolution, graphique aussi bien que scripturale, d'un des univers les plus fournis et détaillés dans le genre. Si vous désirez un jour acquérir toute la collection, assurez-vous de faire l'impossible pour vous procurer *Les Habitants du Ciel*, cet atlas cosmique qui révèle de multiples secrets sur la faune fabuleuse



qui peuple le cosmos de Christin et Mézière.

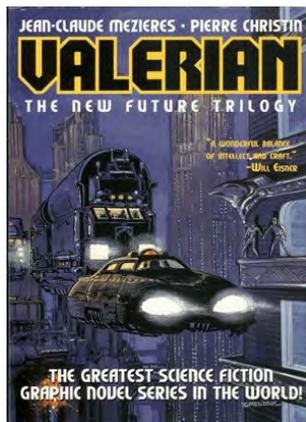
Who?

For those unfamiliar with the names, *Valérian et Laureline* is a graphic novel series that recently concluded after forty-two years and twenty-one albums. Started in 1967, it was originally titled *Valérian, Agent Spatio-Temporel*, as it intended to relate only the adventures of a time-cop from the 28th Century. In the course of the first story, which covered a mission in the Middle Ages, Valérian encountered a young woman named Laureline, who became his assistant, and eventually his partner and – we assume – lover.



That the authors never expected to keep working for so long is evident in the fact that the second story, *La cité des eaux mouvantes*, is set in 1986 and features a world ravaged by an accidental nuclear explosion near the North Pole. When that year actually came by, the series was still going on strong after nearly twenty years, and a complex story was required to explain the fact that our civilisation was still around. Christin and Mézière have also done an excellent job of keeping track with the progress of the real world, and numerous references are made to current events, such as the Tchernobyl incident or the recent economic crisis.





If you do not read French, you will find that sadly only a handful of the 21 stories have been translated into English; both in the *Heavy Metal* magazine and in hard cover albums. While those do make fine reading on their own, the missing parts will make the full picture a bit harder to grasp.

For the authors have over the years created a very rich and complex universe, with a huge cast of recurring races and characters, many of them

colourful in the extreme. One of the strong points of the series is that each civilisation has its own distinctive look, with precise design, customs and psychology.



Consider, for instance, the Shingouz, odd little beings from a desolate planet who are the best spies in the universe; or the Grumpy Bluxte Transmuter, a fist-sized

creature that can excrete just about any currency imaginable; or the Glapum'tians, who can calculate anything with ease but aspire

to nothing more than a good meal. All those people can be met on Central Point, the giant artificial world that serves a galactic United Nations.

Earth is a relative newcomer on the galactic scene, but is respected – and sometimes resented – because of its high technology and mastery of space-time travel. The Terran Empire is ruled the Technocrats of the First Circle and most of the population is content to simply spend their time in holographic dreams. The very last story, *L'Ouvre Temps*, does an excellent job of reviewing all the above, even some rather obscure points, into a rather well tied-up final package.



Despite a few dark moments, the series is resolutely optimistic in outlook, and the single on-page death – a minor henchman disintegrated in *Terres en flammes* – occurred only in the magazine and that image was censored when the story was republished in album form.

SIGH I'll miss that series...



SFF Sightings! Hallowe'en SF, Josée Bellemare



The MonSFFA Radio Players Present:

ZOMBIES

A Series of Radio Fragments Written by Keith Braithwaite

For inclusion in the MonSFFA radio play project

01 – The “Book Rogers” Radio Program

Sound effect: static clears as listener tunes into the program, already in progress.

Nigel (Tone is refined, professorial, and quite British):

...the vampire has, sadly, been defanged, no longer the bloodthirsty fiend of earlier literature but an icon, today, for the romantic imaginings of teenaged girls. He is rather the wimp when compared to his predecessors, holding his vampiric proclivities in check as he pines for the high school girl. The vampires of lore, I dare say, would be embarrassed to have him counted as one of their own. Zombies, on the other hand, retain their malevolence and, in light of contemporary western civilization’s anxiety over everything from swine flu to immigration, become the perfect metaphor. Like the ever more resistant viruses that plague mankind or the waves upon waves of foreigners migrating to the west, zombies are legion and, ultimately, unstoppable. Despite our small victories over them, sooner or later, the zombies will overwhelm us. Our fate is sealed. And so, for the connoisseur of authentic, undiluted horror fiction, this is the delicious attraction, I think, of the zombie story.

Anthony: We’re discussing the burgeoning of zombie literature on bookshelves today on the Book Rogers Show. I’m your host, Anthony “Book” Rogers, and our guest is august science fiction and fantasy scholar Nigel Wentworth St-James. Nigel, could you give us your thoughts on the recently published mash-up of Jane Austen and zombies?

Nigel: Oh, yes. Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* rewritten to include zombies, to some comedic effect. Rather distasteful...for Both Jane Austen aficionados and zombie fans. Once again, we have a classic monster of supernatural literature stripped of his original menace, and in this case, reduced to a joke. The zombie, it seems, is the next traditional incubus to fall. I’d venture that the popularity of the book suggests a developing trend that may well see the zombie watered-down as has been the vampire. Zombies might soon be popping up in all sorts of literary classics. Imagine, a *Tale of Two Zombies*, perhaps, or *Lady Chatterley’s Zombie*, or *The Zombie in the Rye*. And I shudder to think of what Hollywood will do with the idea.

*Sound effect: static as the listener tunes to another station, running *Gone with the Wind*.*

02 – Finale, Gone with the Wind

Swelling music

Rhett: We’re leaving, Scarlett!

Scarlett: Leave Tara! I won’t hear of it, Rhett Butler.

Rhett: Listen to me, Scarlett! The war is lost. Now I’m leaving, with or without you.

Scarlett (Choking back tears): Wait, Rhett! If you leave, where shall I go? What shall I do?

Rhett: Frankly, my dear, I don’t give a – damn! Zombies!

Scarlett: Zombies! Where?

Rhett: There! Coming up the path, towards the house.

Scarlett: I will not countenance the living dead on my land. Hand me that shotgun.

Sound effect: He hands her the weapon, followed by the sound of several shotgun blasts.



Rhett: Good shooting, Scarlett! You got them all. But more will be coming. A lot more. We best get while the gettin’ is good.

Scarlett: Couldn’t we barricade ourselves inside the house? Make a stand?

Rhett: Don’t argue with me, woman! We’ve got to leave. Now! By this time tomorrow we’ve got to be gone with the wind.

Sound effect: static as the listener tunes to another station.

Break, to return after an interval to:

03 – It’s the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown

Light music, jazz piano

Lucy: We’re all going trick-or-treating, little brother. Are you going to sit in this stupid pumpkin patch all night?

Linus: I’m waiting for the Great Pumpkin to arrive. Every Halloween, the Great Pumpkin chooses the most sincere pumpkin patch from which to rise. He’s bound to choose this one!

Lucy: You blockhead! You’ll miss tricks or treats, just like you did last year! Come’ on, everybody.

Sally: I’ll stay with you and wait for the great pumpkin, Linus.

Linus: I’m glad you decided to stay, Sally. Every Halloween, the great pumpkin rises out of the pumpkin patch, flies through the air, and brings toys to all the children.

Sound effect: a rustling in the bushes.

Linus (Excitedly): What’s that? What’s that? It’s the Great

Pumpkin! He's rising out of the pumpkin patch –

Sally: That's not the Great Pumpkin. It's a zombie!

Music: *Peanuts theme*

Sound effect: *The menacing groan of the zombie as it approaches them.*

Linus and Sally: (Simultaneously):
Aaugh!

Sound effect: *Static as the listener tunes to another station.*

Break, to return after a minute to:

04 – It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown (continued)

Music, *up-tempo jazz piano*

Linus: The neighbourhood is crawling with zombies. Sally and I just saw one in the pumpkin patch.

Lucy: All right, everyone. Weapons check!

Violet: I've got an M1 Carbine.

Pig Pen: I've got a pump-action Remington 870.

Freida: I've got a Browning 9mm Hhi-Power.

Sherman: I've got a Ruger Mini-14.

Charlie Brown (Disheartened): I've got a rock.

Lucy: Good grief, Charlie Brown! You're useless!

Charlie Brown: Rats.

Sound effect: *Static as the listener tunes to another station.*

Break, to return after an interval to:

05 – Finale, the Maltese Falcon

Chief: (From other room): Police! Come out with your hands up!

Sound effect: *puppy barks.*

Femme fatale (In a desperate whisper): Keep the puppy quiet, Sam! They'll hear. Hurry, we can slip out the back way.

Sam: Stay put, Sweetheart. (Calling to the police) She's in here, Chief.

Femme fatale: (Flabbergasted): Sam! What are you doing?

Sound effect: The police barge into the room.

Sam: You almost had me believing that you were innocent, Dollface.

Femme fatale: No, Sam. I... I am innocent. I didn't –

Sam: Don't lie to me, Sweetheart. It doesn't become you.

Femme fatale: Please, Sam. I love you.

Sam: And despite my better instincts, I love you. But you stole the diamonds, and when Archer found out, you killed him. Now he's a zombie. The next time I see him, I'll have to put one between his eyes. That's not something a private eye's supposed to do to his best friend and partner.

Femme fatale (Beginning to sob): Please, Sam...

Sam: You're goin' to the slammer, Sweetheart. If you're a good girl, you'll be out in 30 years. I'll be waiting for you, but the puppy... well, you better say goodbye now.

Femme fatale: No, no. Please...

Chief: All right boys, take her away.

Sound effect: *Police hustling the sobbing femme fatale out of the room.*

Sam: This statue's been hollowed out, chief. You'll find the stolen gems hidden inside.

Chief: Huh. How patriotic of her. Hidin' em in a statue of an American eagle.

Sam: It's a falcon. A Maltese falcon.

Chief: Oh. Well... see ya around, Sam. Sorry about Archer.

Sam: Thanks, Chief. One more thing; could you find a good home for the puppy? I can't keep 'er. She'll remind me of her.

Chief: Sure, Sam, sure. I understand. Hey, my kids've always wanted a dog. What's her name?

Sam: Samantha. She named her after me.

Chief: Well, com' on little Sam. I'm takin' you home.

Sound effect: *Puppy yelps, pants.*

Sam: Oh, and Chief...

Chief: Yeah?

Sam: Don't forget to have Sam spayed.

Sound effect: *Static as the listener tunes to another station.*

Break, to return after an interval to:

06 – a Wallace and Gromit adventure

Sound effect: Growling zombies bursting through a door into the room.

Wallace: Zombies Gromit! Use the gatling gun.

Sound effect: *Gatling gun firing off numerous rounds while zombies wail in pain as they are hit.*

THE END

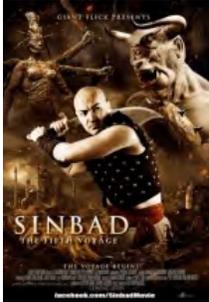


Upcoming Movie Release Schedule

The Fernster

January

1st - Sinbad: The Fifth Voyage



March, continued

11th - Mars Needs Moms!



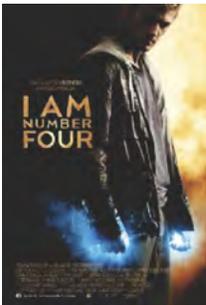
May

6th - Thor



February

18th - I am Number Four



25th - Sucker Punch



13th - Priest



March

4th - The Adjustment Bureau



April

8th - Your Highness



20th - Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides



11th - Battle: Los Angeles



15th - Source Code



June

3rd - X-Men: First Class



June, continued

11th - Red Riding Hood



29th - The Thing



17th - Green Lantern



24th - Rise of the Apes



July, continued

22nd - Captain America



August

3rd - The Smurfs



July

1st - Transformers 3



29th - Cowboys & Aliens



5th - The Darkest Hour



15th - Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows: Part 2



Here's an idea!



Print out these two pages from the on-line pdf and post them up on your bulletin board or fridge!

19th - Spy Kids 4: Armageddon



2011 Shaping up to be a Banner Year for Screen Sci-Fi Keith Braithwaite

A healthy crop of big- and a few small-screen sci-fi projects currently in development or post-production could, in 2011, bring the genre a blockbuster yield. The numerous comic book superhero movies, alone, warrant excitement. But there's more coming soon. Lots more.

Let's begin with those superhero movies, the first of which is scheduled for release in January. Stocky comedic actor Seth Rogan doesn't fit the profile at first glance until one considers the tone of the piece. Previews suggest *The Green Hornet* is an octane-fueled costumed action film liberally dosed with funny moments. Rogan as the titular character just might work.

The Green Lantern's producers took the traditional approach when casting their lead. Fit, handsome, square-jawed Ryan Reynolds stars as test pilot Hal Jordan, who becomes a Green Lantern in a story well known to comics aficionados. The film bows in June and promises more than the usual origin tale, exploring at length, too, Green Lantern lore.



Marvel revisits its popular *X-Men* franchise with *X-Men: First Class*, also in June. Producer Bryan Singer (directed *X-Men*, *X2*, *Superman Returns*) describes the film as a 1960s-set silver-age period piece with costuming closer to the original comic book colours. James McAvoy stars as Charles Xavier with Michael Fassbender playing Erik Lensherr. The story focuses on these two as young friends discovering their powers and features other mutants, Mystique, Beast, Havoc, and Banshee among them. We'll witness Xavier and Lensherr's pivotal parting of ways, which sets them on their path as adversaries, and we'll learn how Xavier became wheelchair-bound. Kevin Bacon is aboard as the Hellfire Club's Sebastian Shaw and January Jones is signed as Emma Frost.

Meanwhile, casting rumours surrounding a proposed *Fantastic Four* retelling have Adrian Brody or Jonathan Rhys Meyers as Mr. Fantastic, Bruce Willis appearing as Ben Grimm and voicing a CGI version of the Thing, Alice Eve as the Invisible Girl, and Kevin Pennington as the Human Torch. *True Blood's* Stephen Moyer is mentioned as Dr. Doom.



Marvel has two fresh comic book adventures coming out within a couple months of each other in 2011: *Thor* in May and *Captain America* in July.

Starring as the Norse god of thunder is unknown Chris

Hemsworth, last seen as James Kirk's father in the opening sequence of the recent *Star Trek* reboot. Director Kenneth Branagh and actor Anthony Hopkins (playing Odin, ruler of Asgard and Thor's father) are among the top-level talents associated with this movie.

Captain America stars Chris Evans (the Human Torch in the two *Fantastic Four* movies of a few years ago) as a less jingoistic, flag-waving Steve Rogers, according to director Joe Johnston, who chose to reinterpret somewhat the original comic book character for modern audiences. Johnson hopes to deliver a classic adventure/love story in the vein of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Hugo Weaving (the *Matrix* trilogy) is featured as the villainous Red Skull.

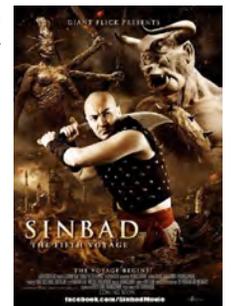


Both of these films are among the Marvel superhero outings building up to the much-anticipated *Avengers* movie, to be helmed by Joss Whedon (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Firefly*). But that one doesn't come out until 2012.

And while we're looking ahead for a moment, a third Christopher Nolan-directed *Batman* movie is expected in 2012, as are reboots of both *Spider-Man* and *Superman*, the former in 3-D with Andrew Garfield as Peter Parker/Spider-Man, the latter under the title *Man of Steel* and produced by Christopher Nolan. Marvel's *Wolverine II* and *Deadpool* are due out in 2012, as well. And Nicholas Cage again fires up his bike (not to mention his skull!) for *Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance*. Also, expect a *Kick-Ass* sequel in the near future.

But back to 2011. Genre fans will also enjoy a number of flicks next year in which none of the characters wear spandex.

Sinbad: The Fifth Voyage, with Patrick Stewart, is inspired by Ray Harryhausen's classic *Sinbad* films. Apparently, the monsters featured are to be stop-motion models, à la Harryhausen, rather than animated CGI creations. An early January release is planned.



Battle: Los Angeles, due out in March, tells the story of a platoon of soldiers battling a nasty alien invasion force in Los

Angeles as similar battles wage worldwide. Stars include Aaron Eckhart and Michelle Rodriguez.

Also due in March is Zack Snyder's (*300*, *Watchmen*) *Sucker Punch*, a burlesque, weapons-laden head trip the trailer for which truly rocks! Snyder's concept blurs the line between reality and imagination



as a young woman, Babydoll, locked away in an insane asylum against her will and scheduled for a lobotomy, convinces her four provocatively garbed girlfriends to join her and fight for their freedom. But what is real and what is flowing from Babydoll's vivid imagination? I'm guessing the mutant World War I German soldiers and the dragon are *not* real. Emily Browning is Babydoll, joined by Vanessa Hudgens, Abbie Cornish, Jamie Chung, and Jena Malone as, respectively, Blondie, Sweet Pea, Amber, and Rocket. Carla Gugino is the villainous Madam Gorski, a nurse, brothel choreographer, and dominatrix all rolled into one. Can't wait!

Johnny Depp takes another turn as Captain Jack Sparrow in a fourth *Pirates of the Caribbean* film, subtitled *On Stranger Tides*. Geoffrey Rush returns, too, as Captain Barbossa. Penelope Cruz and Ian McShane are newcomers to the franchise. Jack Sparrow crosses paths with a woman from his past (Cruz) and isn't sure if it's love or a con game as he becomes involved in her search for the fabled Fountain of Youth, finding himself aboard ship with the legendary pirate Blackbeard (McShane). Opens in May.



J.J. Abrams directs Kyle Chandler and Elle Fanning in *Super 8*, scheduled for an early June release. Circa 1979, the Air Force has closed sections of Area 51 and is transporting top-secret cargo by rail to a secure

facility in Ohio. But when a train wreck occurs, something gets out and a group of kids making an amateur movie with a Super 8 camera capture it on film.

Later in June we'll see the *Rise of the Apes*. This movie is at the same time a *Planet of the Apes* reboot and prequel, focusing on the aftermath of man's experiments with genetic engineering and the resulting development of intelligent apes. The war for supremacy between man and ape has begun! The apes will be CGI creations for the first time in franchise history rather than actors in costumes and Andy Serkis is cast as simian notable Caesar. He'll presumably perform on the motion-capture stage, much as he did for Peter Jackson's *King Kong* remake a few years ago. Jackson's WETA Digital effects company is charged with rendering the primates. James Franco (*Spider-Man* trilogy) plays a scientist who becomes a pivotal figure in the human/ape war.

Transformers: Dark of the Moon is a 3-D outing and in theatres beginning of July, but without Megan Fox. Director Michael Bay has replaced her with one Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, playing a character named Carly.

That same month, the *Harry Potter* franchise wraps up with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part II*.

James Bond and Indiana Jones team up for another July release, *Cowboys and Aliens*. Olivia Wilde is the girl. Set in 1800s Arizona, cowboys and Indians engaged in a battle join forces to fight off aliens when a spaceship crash-lands in the desert and the alien commander decides to enslave the Old West. Jon Favreau (the *Iron Man* films) directs.

Those voracious piranhas are back in August. The oddly titled *Piranha 3 DD* apparently references both another 3-D

chapter for this developing franchise and the cup size of the bouncing bathers beset by the beastly fish.

The Thing, arriving in October, is a prequel to John Carpenter's 1982 remake of the 1951 classic.

Immortals comes out in November, telling a mythological tale of ancient war-torn Greece and pitting the Gods and warrior prince Theseus and his men against the Titans and Barbarians.

The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part I, also releasing in November, continues the story of Bella and Edward and Jacob, to be followed in 2012 by *Part II*.

To briefly look ahead once again, other films scheduled for a 2012 release include: *Clash of the Titans 2*, *Dorothy of Oz*, *Men in Black III*, *John Carter of Mars*, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, *Star Trek 2*, and, unless scuttled by MGM's financial woes, *The Hobbit, Part I*.

The Hobbit, by the way, was to have been directed by Guillermo Del Toro, but he has left Middle Earth to instead helm a big-screen adaptation of H. P. Lovecraft's *At The Mountains of Madness*, with James Cameron producing. Further, plans are moving ahead on a *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* remake (sans Joss Whedon's input) and Karl Urban (McCoy in J. J. Abrams' *Star Trek*) is to play the titular role in a planned *Judge Dredd* redux.

There are many familiar genre series on television this season worthy of viewer loyalty – *Fringe*, *Supernatural*, *Smallville* (in the middle of its swan song), to name a few, along with the brand new and well received zombie apocalypse *The Walking Dead*. But for the purposes of this article, I'll take a minute to zero in on a few fresh shows planned for next year.

Steven Spielberg is behind two coming series, one a survivalist story called *Falling Skies* set in a post-alien invasion world, the other a prehistoric adventure dubbed *Terra Nova*.



Falling Skies stars *ER*'s Noah Wylie and *Terminator: Salvation*'s Moon Bloodgood as two of the few survivors of a globe-spanning genocide perpetrated by invading aliens. The remaining humans must join together to fight their oppressors and ensure a future for mankind. The

series premieres this spring on TNT.



The ambitious and expensive *Terra Nova* takes place initially in the year 2149. Our environmental follies have finally caught up with us and Earth is dying. The story centers on the Shannon family, who volunteer to time travel

back to the prehistoric era as part of *Terra Nova*, a mission to restart civilization from scratch and do it right this time. Dinosaurs will be an element of the promised action and adventure, but the major themes of the piece are family and the idea of starting over. A two-hour pilot is proposed for spring, with the series beginning to air weekly in the fall.



While not new, **Torchwood** merits mention here in that the British show has taken on a decidedly American tone for 2011. This fourth installment is called **Torchwood: The New World** and a stateside influence can be found both in front of and behind the cameras. John Barrowman and Eve Myles are back as Jack Harkness and Gwen Cooper, joined now by a pair of CIA agents. Much of the action is set in the US. The American Starz Channel is co-producing the show with the BBC and former *Buffy* scribe Jane Espenson is one of the roomful of US genre television writers hired to script the thing while series creator Russell T. Davies is listed as executive



producer. The story will unfold over 10 episodes.

In closing, I'll come back to superheroes again. NBC launches a new series mid-season (early 2011) about an honest cop (played by David Lyons) in Palm City who, having lost everything after he was framed and left for dead by a criminal gang, goes underground as a caped crusader to battle the bad guys. **The Cape** aims to walk the fine line between comic book adventure and crime drama, remaining on the "fringe of believability, the fringe of explicability" says series creator Thomas Wheeler. Summer Glau (*Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*, *Firefly* and *Serenity*) And Vinnie Jones (Juggernaut in *X-Men: Last Stand*) are among the cast.

Upcoming Events

Compiled by Cathy Palmer-Lister

February 5-6, 2011, G-Anime
Gatineau, QC <http://ganime.ca/en/>

February 19-21, 2011, Con-G, Guelph,
ON Anime www.con-g.com

March 5-6, 2011, GeekFest, Montreal,
QC <http://geekfestmtl.com/>

March 18-20, 2011, ComicCon,
Toronto, ON
<http://www.wizardworld.com/home-toronto.html>

April 1-3, 2011, FilkOntario 21,
Mississauga, ON www.filkontario.ca

April 8-10, 2011, Ad Astra, 30th year!
www.ad-astra.org

April 9-10, 2011, HobbyStar ComicCon,
Toronto, ON <http://www.hobbystar.com/>

**April 29-May 1, 2011, Canadian
National Steampunk Exhibition,**
Toronto, ON
www.steampunkcanada.ca/exhibition.htm

April 29-May 1, 2011, Eeriecon 13th,
Niagra Falls, NY www.eeriecon.org

May 8, 2011, Montreal ComicCon,
Montreal, QC
<http://www.montrealcomiccon.com/>

May 20-23, 2011, Gaia Gathering
www.gaia Gathering.ca

May 27-29, 2011, Anime North,
Toronto, ON www.animenorth.com

June 3-5, 2011, What the Fur?
Montreal, QC <http://www.whatthefur.ca>

**June, DTBA, 2011, Grand
Roludothon, Montreal, QC**
<http://www.roludo.ca/>

July 15-17, 2011, Polaris 25, Richmond
Hill, ON www.tcon.ca

July 30-31, 2011, TFCon, Toronto, ON
<http://www.tfcon.ca/>

July 30-31, 2011, ConBravo,
Burlington, VT <http://conbravo.com/>

May 20-22, 2011, KeyCon, Winnipeg,
MB <http://www.keycon.org/>

August 12-14, 2011, Otakuthon,
Montreal, QC
<http://www.otakuthon.com/>

**August 12-14, 2011, When Words
Collide,** Calgary, AB
<http://whenwordscollide.org/>

**August 17-21, 2011, Renovation, 69th
World Con, Reno, NV**
<http://www.renovationsf.org/>

August 25-28, 2011, FanExpo,
Toronto, ON
<http://www.fanexpocanada.com/>

September 2-5, 2011, Dragon Con,
Atlanta, GA <http://www.dragoncon.org/>

September 9-11, 2011, Can-Con 2011,
Ottawa, ON <http://www.can-con.org/>

**September 25, 2011, Word on the
Street,** Toronto, ON
<http://www.thewordonthestreet.ca/wots/toronto>

September 30-Oct 2, 2011, V-Con,
Vancouver, BC, <http://www.vcon.ca/>

October 14-16, 2011, Con*Cept 2011,
Montreal, QC www.conceptsf.ca

**October 27-30, 2011, World Fantasy
Convention,** San Diego, CA
www.wfc2011.org/html/mainmenu.html

November 18-20, 2011, SF ConTario,
Toronto, ON <http://sfcontario.ca/>

December 2-4, 2011, SMOFcon 29,
Amsterdam, Netherlands
<http://www.smofcon29.org/>



Reunion at the Worldcon



LAcon IV in 2006 was a great Worldcon for us...we worked with a great crew, got to enjoy some of California again, and saw lots of old friends again, but there was one friend we never expected to see.

Flashback to the 1980s. Yvonne and I are on the Ad Astra committee. Yvonne goes into a photocopy shop, and asked the young guy behind the counter for about 20 copies of the convention masquerade certificate. As he works away and finishes the order, he asks what an Ad Astra is, and when Yvonne describes the convention to him, he says that this is something he might be interested in. He likes science fiction, and he is a student at the nearby Ontario College of Art. We're always happy to recruit new members, so Yvonne gives him a flyer to keep.

It's convention time, and the photocopy clerk is at the convention. His name is Phil Saunders, and he is enjoying his own goshwow at the proceedings. Yvonne takes him to the art show to introduce him to Elizabeth Pearse, the head of the Ad Astra art show, and the show staff. Kevin Davies is in the art show area, Yvonne introduces Phil to Kevin, Phil's an artist, and he naturally gravitates to the art show and the artists there. After the convention, he moves in with a group of them in a local artistic

fan shack. Phil has really joined local fandom, and in the next couple of years, he submits artwork to the art show, and he starts to sell his artwork to support his studies at the OCA.

I know that some fans can be pretty harsh with new fans, but we've tried our best to be accepting and inviting, and our reward has been to see newcomers not only join in and enjoy themselves, but to launch themselves into a new career. When Phil graduated from the OCA, he immediately took a job with Nissan, designing cars in their design studios in La Jolla, California. We were blown away at how this young man was brought out of a photocopy shop and is creating cars for one of the biggest automotive firms in the world. A couple of years after that, we'd heard that Phil had left Nissan to pursue his dreams, to work in comics. And after that, nothing.

Nothing, until LAcon IV. Yvonne and I are at the Hugos, Harlan is molesting Connie, and the happy, shiny people have been given their shiny, silver Hugos. The winners are being photographed, and we're leaving the auditorium.

"Hey! Hi, guys!"

There, in a suit, is Phil Saunders. He's there with his gorgeous wife. He introduces us to her, and the light of recognition is in her eyes. I think he's told her about us. He hugs Yvonne, and Yvonne can't stop hugging him back. She's missed him, and I think he missed her. Phil left comics to go to Hollywood, and now he is a concept artist in the industry. Check out www.philsaunders.com, and you'll see what he does.

When you see what life has to offer, you hope that some of that lustre might come off on you, and make some closely held dreams come true. Sometimes they do, and often, they don't, but it is as much of a reward to help someone else's dream come true. Yvonne took that young man from the photocopy shop, and gave him the initial push he needed to make his own dreams real. That's a reward we both savour.



Montreal has 6 conventions now, 5 of them fan-run! Don't miss a chance to make new friends!





The New Guys

Josée Bellemare

Editor's note: Yeah, I know, this is supposed to be the fall issue, deadline in November and all that, but since we're already beyond the festive season, I don't think this story should wait for the winter issue. The deadline for that issue could be, ummm, maybe April??

Men of various ages were talking in a locker room, putting on their uniform and getting ready for work.

"Would you believe these colours? This has to be the worst uniform I've ever had to wear."

"Oh, I don't know. One Mother's Day, I had to dress up as the company chicken and stand outside the restaurant trying to lure customers inside. I lost count of how many kids poked my belly to see how plump I was."

"I hear you. One year, I had to wear a fuzzy pink bunny suit for Easter to help sell chocolate at one of those pop-up stores."

"Uniform aside, this is a pretty sweet gig: you get lodging, great food, complete health benefits and the village has all sorts of attractions including a movie theatre, a sports centre and the internet."

"Considering how isolated this place is, the company wants to make sure the employees are happy."

Just then the supervisor came in.

"All right gentlemen, time to get to work. You all know what department you'll be working in but before you start, the Boss wants to say a few words. He does this with all the newbies, so see you outside in ten minutes. Believe me, you don't want to miss this."

Ten minutes later, all the new employees, men and women, were waiting in the courtyard.

"Ok Boss, they're all here."

A large door opened and the company owner came out.

"Ho, Ho, Ho! Welcome to all of you! I hope you'll like it here at the North Pole. I know that some of you find the uniform over the top, but traditions are very important here at Santa's Village. Merry Christmas to all of you!"

St-Nick walked off to check on the toy department while the new employees just stood there, mouths wide open. The supervisor stepped up.

"Ok people, get to work! You'll see plenty of Santa in the days to come."

As the employees went off to their departments you could hear their comments.

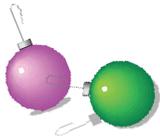
"WoW!"

"It's the big guy himself!"

"I wonder what else is real around here?"

"So that's how I got that red bike!"

The supervisor just chuckled. "Newbies, same reaction every year."



Science Fiction Christmas

Cathy Palmer-Lister

Josée's story inspired me to do some surfing over the holidays. A Google search of the Internet for Science Fiction Christmas came up with some interesting results. However, you know how ephemeral websites can be, especially blogs, so grab these while you still can.



From Tor, Christmas cards featuring the Zombies and Cthulhu as Santa, <http://www.zazzle.com/tordotcom>. What every Zombie wants to find in his Christmas stocking: a foot, of course!

Fans of Golden Age pulp fiction should click their way over to

<http://goldenagecomicbookstories.blogspot.com/2010/12/ed-emshwiller-1925-1990-christmas.html> to see some lovely Galaxy covers by Ed Emshwiller (1925 - 1990) Truly inspired and creative! My favourite is from 1956. Note the rocket

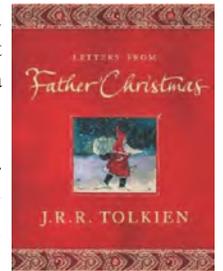


shaped coffee pot, the huge data banks for the Lists. It's all in the details! The January 1957 issue features "The blazing conclusion to The Stars my Destination by Alfred Bester". I was seven years old, sigh.



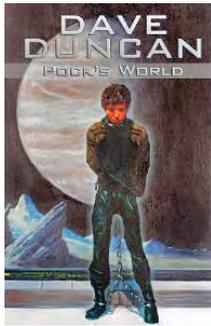
Readers can find Christmas-themed books on both <http://www.chapters.indigo.ca> and <http://www.amazon.com/> It's a bit complicated, but essentially you have to search Books > Christmas > science fiction and fantasy. What a lot of vampires and zombies! (All I Want for Christmas Is a

Vampire: Love at Stake, Book 5 Who reads this stuff?!) But there are a few gems, Tolkien's Letters from Father Christmas, for instance. And who can pass up Terry Pratchett's Hogfather? I must read that one again, it's been awhile.



From's Cathy's Library

"They got the books in Alexandria, they're not getting mine!"



Pock's World
Dave Duncan
Edge, 2010

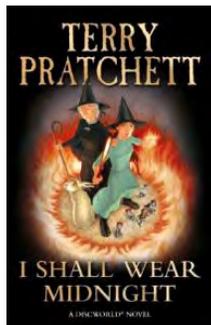
Dave Duncan is better known for his works of fantasy, but he's no slouch at science fiction either. Pock's World has been contaminated by something non-human, and STARS has it quarantined, probably to be sterilized. STARS calls in a priest, a debauched reporter, and a respected

politician from Ayne to judge the evidence.

What is STARS, Inc? Obviously, the organization that manages space travel and trade, but what else? What gives it the right to slag a planet? Who runs this outfit? Only STARS knows. Secretive and monopolistic, they have divided space up into sectors that are isolated from each other, making it even more difficult to understand where they've been and what they've done. Not long after arriving on Pock's World, the commission realizes they've been set up. STARS, Inc is going to do what it wants whatever they decide, so why are they there?

Pock's World raises questions about humanity. What makes us human? The humans of Ayne's Sector have been altered in so many ways to adapt to alien biospheres, at what point is "adapting" crossing the line into something alien? Who has the right to decide?

I have to admit, this is not my favourite Duncan. It strikes me as a little immature compared to other recent works of his. Also, the text has irritating typos. Don't let this keep you from reading it, though. The story, characters, and questions raised by biotechnology are SF at its best – we really do find strange, new worlds, and maybe we don't need to go so very far to find them.



I Shall Wear Midnight
Terry Pratchett
Doubleday, 2010

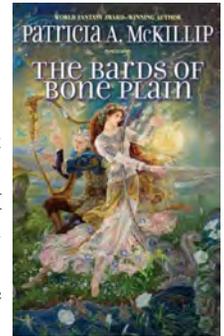
Tiffany Aching is young for a witch of her prowess. She still wears green, the colour of spring. The scouring fair finds her feeling sorry for herself, she feels somewhat alone in the crowd of celebrants. It's normal, thinks Tiffany, she is a witch after all, and there should be some distance

between a witch and her people. But in fact she is experiencing the first signs of Trouble heading her way, a malevolence that's spreading lies and hatred, aimed at witches in general and Tiffany in particular. The Cunning Man has appeared before, and been defeated, but only by witches of superior cunning, and they're nearly as rare as hen's teeth. Furthermore, since he is a Cunning Man, Tiffany has to find her own way of defeating him, what worked for others will not work for her. Complications include

of course the Freegles whose help is usually a mixed blessing, but also a romantic triangle.

Apparently, this is to be the last of the Tiffany Aching books. A witch is not Peter Pan; eternal youth is not in the cards. She wears green at the start of the book, but she shall wear midnight by the end. It's not a sad ending, though, because Tiffany will also know love. And who knows? Maybe someday, she shall have children of her own.

The Bards of Bone Plain
Patricia A. McKillip
Ace, 2010

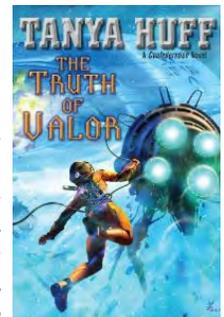


Patricia McKillip writes mostly about magic in words, and she herself uses words magically, almost poetically. Sometimes, I have to reread a paragraph to see beyond the metaphors.

In *The Bards of Bone Plain*, she tells three stories simultaneously. I was almost halfway through the book when I realized the italicised text was actually Phelan's thesis, the one he writes to graduate from the bardic school. Tales of the bard, Nairn, who failed the tests of Bone Plain, haunt Phelan, who suspects the story is not only true, but maybe much closer to home than he finds comfortable. If he really did fail the test, if the poems are more than metaphor, then is Nairn still living a thousand years later?

Phelan's father is digging up the past, leaving dusty holes everywhere in the city in odd, random places. One of his assistants, to her mother's chagrin, is Beatrice, the King's daughter. A strange medallion with runes from a far distant past is turned up at one of the digs. It's not all that uncommon a find, but its meaning is shrouded in mystery and legends. She feels strangely drawn to the Circle of Days. When her father's bard decides to retire, frightened by achrismatic bard who seems to know a lot more than he should, a competition is called to select the next bard of Belden. Bards are coming out of the woodwork, and history is coming to life, raised by the poets, the magic in the heart, and the songs.

The Truth of Valor
Tanya Huff
Daw, 2010



Gunnery Sergeant Torin Kerr walked away from the Corps, disillusioned on learning the truth behind the war the Confederation had been fighting for years. She joins her lover, Salvage Operator Craig Ryder, in the very cramped quarters on his Promise. Learning a new trade is

challenging, toss in pirates and her future begins to look about as messy as her past. Craig is kidnapped, she is left for dead. A bad mistake, that, not making absolutely sure Kerr is dead. (Once a gunnery sergeant, always...) And she still has a couple of loyal soldiers willing to follow her into hell, or in this case, a space station that doesn't exist, run by a pirate with aspirations that go well beyond stealing cargoes, and who has a code-locked marine armoury he needs opened. Presit is recruited, too. Kerr can see potential weapons in just about anything, and the press in the shape of a small Katrien can light fires under any number of civil or military authorities. As long as there is an award-winning story in it for her, of course, but Kerr will take care of the providing that.

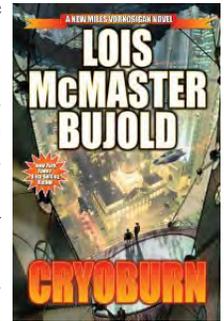
Cryoburn
Lois McMaster Bujold
 Baen, 2010

Like ancient Egyptians, the living of Kibou-daini spend their lives preparing for death, but unlike the Egyptians, modern technology gives them the hope of being revived sometime in the future in this world rather than the next. WhiteChrys, one of the

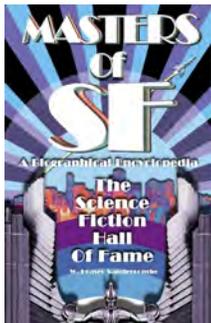
huge chryocorps, wants to expand into Komarr. Laisa's great-aunt considers an investment in the venture, but something smells fishy to her, though she can't quite put a finger on the fish. A word to Laisa is a word in the emperor's ear, which is why Miles is on Kibou doing what Miles does best – solving a mystery while in a maelstrom of mayhem, much of said mayhem being of his own creation.

Which is why, when this adventure begins, Miles is stumbling in alleyways while angels keep sleeting down all around him. He's been kidnapped, drugged, and gotten lost among the subterranean cryotombs. He's only been on Kibou five days and already total strangers are trying to kill him! In a moment of clarity, he sadly realizes that five days isn't even a record.

In his own way, Miles has been cheating death, too. Fate is about to step in, forcing a change as devastating as the one that saw him giving up the mercenaries, maybe more so.



Masters of SF by W. Fraser Sandercombe Reviewed by Lloyd Penney



Some of you might remember from the Toronto Worldcon in 2003 that a series of vintage science fiction books were republished and sold by Apogee Books, the world's largest publisher of space-related books. Apogee now returns to science fiction with *Masters of SF: A Biographical Encyclopedia – The Science Fiction Hall of Fame* by W. Fraser Sandercombe.

This single-volume, biographical encyclopedia is a fairly comprehensive desktop reference book, with details on all the members of the Science Fiction Hall of Fame, in the order in which they were inducted, from 1996 onwards to 2010.

Each entry contains a comprehensive and well-written biography, a history of each inductee's career, a list of awards, a full bibliographical list of novels, collections (stories within), anthologies that contain their short stories, non-fiction, related works and magazine articles, plus works that were rewritten for television, movies and other film, and even radio. Scattered throughout are black-and-white reproductions of their book and magazine covers.

There's plenty of details on the various members of the Hall of Fame... Asimov, Clarke, Heinlein, Verne, Pohl, Silverberg, Wells, Sturgeon and so many more, including latter-day big names from television and movies, like Lucas, Roddenberry, Serling and Spielberg, and SF artists like Frank Kelly Freas and Michael Whelan. You can find out what novels and stories were written and published under what pseudonyms, which may reveal

how they got their start, especially in writing soft-core porn for some of them. There are notes for collectors on which books by each author may be the most valuable, and to keep track of how the inductees interacted with each other, all HoF members' names are set in bold type. Even the bibliography at the back will lead you to other fine books the SFnal researcher just can't do without.

If you are a researcher, this book provides a good start into your subject matter, and if you're an essayist, this is enough to get your essay written and done. Collectors will like the comprehensive listings, as will completists, and general readers will like to find out where particular stories can be found, and which books are in which series. How many times have you found Volume 2 of a trilogy, or a middle book in a long series? Those with any interest can read the entries, and learn so much more about their favourite authors. That's what I did, filling in gaps on Samuel R. Delany and Poul Anderson.

I will say that the whole book is set in relatively small type, there's a lot of information to jam into 434 pages, but with that in mind, I'd say jump into it and learn so much more about our favourite genre. It could be among the most valuable books on your SF reference shelf.

Masters of SF: A Biographical Encyclopedia – The Science Fiction Hall of Fame by W. Fraser Sandercombe is available from Apogee Books, an imprint of Collector's Guido Publishing, Box 62034, Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7R 4K2.

<http://www.apogeospacebooks.com/Books/ScienceFiction.html>

JULY

Perfect Weather for 2010 MonSFFA Barbecue (Photos courtesy of Sylvain St-Pierre, photo of Sylvain by Bernard Reischl)



Conditions were sunny and dry as a brisk breeze moderated temperatures on Sunday, July 25, the date of MonSFFA's 2010 Summer Barbecue. Some two dozen club members and friends enjoyed the event, held at Parc Angrignon in suburban Lasalle.



Our group occupied a tree-shaded spot adjacent the park's shallow artificial lake, the fish and waterfowl therein drawing the interest of the youngsters in attendance. Several picnic tables were commandeered and folk were soon sampling our buffet of various salads, finger foods, etc. while conversing on any number of topics and quaffing a cold beverage. Before too long, the barbecue was lit and a selection of hamburgers, hotdogs, and chicken wings grilled up and served. Conversation continued well into the afternoon while the kids scampered on a nearby set of monkey bars and took to the park's swings, slides, and teeter-totters.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed a fine and most relaxing summer afternoon in the park.

A nod of thanks is due MonSFFA's president/Emperor, Berny Reischl, who supplied our cooking grill and charcoal.

AUGUST

August MonSFFA Meeting (Photos courtesy of Bernard Reischl)

The club's August meeting, held on the 15th, was devoted

entirely to fancraft. Several workshops ran throughout the afternoon, at which MonSFFen could learn about or try their hand at a particular fannish craft.

Berny Reischl, a professional graphic artist by trade, offered a primer on digital photo retouching, with an emphasis on costume photography, showing how to compensate for underexposure, eliminate "red-eye", soften skin tones, and other means of enhancing one's digital snapshots.

Mark Burakoff and Dominique Durocher, meanwhile, held court on scale model building, effectively



continuing with the workshop they had hosted at MonSFFA's May meeting. They provided insight on all aspects of building traditional plastic kits as well as modelling in paper. There have been a number of quality sci-fi kits released of late.

Finally, **Lindsay Brown's** demonstration of jewelry-making showed folk how to fashion unique, imaginative, skiffyish pieces employing nothing more than a variety of hardware-store items like nuts, bolts, and washers.



After the mid-meeting break, **Keith Braithwaite** began setting up a photography area for our planned **MonSFFA calendar** photo shoot. Club members had been asked to bring in on this day a sampling of their finest fancraft – scale models, props, sculptures, costumes, etc. – so that these might be photographed for inclusion in the club's proposed 2011 calendar,



which is to highlight the creative work of MonSFFA's members. By meeting's close, Keith and Berny Reischl had photographed a wide variety of submissions. These, coupled with digital reproductions of members' drawings and paintings also collected at the meeting, will provide the calendar's editors a pool of artwork from which to select. We hope to have our 2011 MonSFFA calendar available for sale at Con*Cept this year.

A final note: attendance at our August meeting was, regrettably, lighter than usual, perhaps because many of our off-island and suburb-dwelling members, who drive in to meetings, found that

they could not procure parking on this particular day, let alone get anywhere near the Hôtel Espresso, at which our gatherings are held. The police had closed all of the surrounding streets to vehicular traffic to accommodate the local gay pride parade, which, unfortunately, had been scheduled to take place at about the same time as our meeting. At least one MonSFFAn later reported having turned around after trying unsuccessfully to reach the hotel and driven home in frustration.

We thank our workshop hosts and all those MonSFFen who helped to plan and run this meeting.

SEPTEMBER

Second Garage Sale

Wayne Glover and Keith Braithwaite were recently able to peddle some of the items leftover from our June Garage Sale Fund-Raiser.

Wayne arranged for a booth at a community garage sale organized by the Lion's Club in the town of Deux-Montagnes, north of Montreal. He and Keith were up early Saturday morning, September 18, laying out a variety of sci-fi books, videos, and other items. By the end of a pleasant, sunny day, more than a quarter of our stock of bargain books and videos, plus a number of other treasures, had been sold, bringing the total revenue raised for the club this summer via garage sales to \$184.75.

As garage sale season has ended, we intend to offer our remaining books and videos to a few of the second-hand bookshops around town in hopes of breaking \$200 in total funds raised. Any leftover after that will be added to the club's book exchange.

Wayne donated the nominal fee he paid for the table space to the club and we thank him and Keith for their action on behalf of MonSFFA.

September MonSFFA Meeting (Photos courtesy of Bernard Reischl)

Unfortunately, the guest speaker we had invited to our September 19 meeting, special effects make-up artist **Olivier Xavier**, was a no-show. As Olivier is right in the middle of a film project at present, we understood as we booked him for our meeting that professional commitments might well call him away at the last minute. It appears that this is what happened. We will communicate with him again and hope to reschedule; stay tuned.

The Executive regrets that MonSFFen were not able to enjoy what certainly would have been a fascinating presentation on make-up effects in both the low-budget, independent film arena and in Hollywood's big-budget sandbox.

Luckily, our lead-off panellist, **François Menard**, had prepared plenty of material for his talk and was able to almost double his scheduled hour-long primer on computer gaming. François covered computer gaming from its infancy to the modern day, augmenting his talk with numerous screen shots of the many games he spoke of and video clips of the action.

From early, simple games like Pong to the kinds of hyper-realistic sports games available today, François traced the evolution of the gaming industry. MonSFFA being an SF/F fan club, he focussed mostly on SF/F-themed games, including early examples such as Space



Wars and Asteroids, and the popular, graphics-heavy warfare simulations of today, like Halo. He spoke of the various licensed games that unfold in the Star Trek and Star Wars universes, among others, of early text-based role-playing games, and of quest adventures like the iconic Myst. Whether on the desktop PC, laptop, console, or hand-held device, there's something for all tastes in computer gaming, stated François, from first-person-shooter scenarios that test one's dexterity to complex simulations that demand strategic thinking on the part of players.



When asked if today's kids spend too much time in front of a screen flying around in spaceships and shooting at aliens, and not enough time outside in the fresh air running and jumping and climbing trees, François offered that some probably do. Parents, he admonished, certainly have a role to play with regard to the time their children spend computer gaming. As with anything, moderation is key.

In the hour prior to the start of the meeting and again after the mid-meeting break, we were able to record a considerable bit more of our ongoing radio-play project, committing many pages of dialogue to "tape". Eternal thanks to our actors and actresses, in particular those who came in especially on this day to record their parts.

As the meeting drew to a close, **Warp 75** was distributed and the group had time to discuss a few items of club business.

Thanks to everyone who helped to plan and run this meeting.

OCTOBER

*Con*Cept Bounces Back* (Photos courtesy of Con*Cept)

After a couple of particularly difficult years for Montreal's only annual, fan-run SF/F convention, during which time attendance dropped acutely and finances dipped into the red, Con*Cept 2010, held over the weekend of October 1-3 at Hôtel Espresso, downtown, marked something of a recovery for the con. Not only were there noticeably more folk on the convention floor, but there were a good many fresh faces on concom and among the volunteers. The latter is perhaps the most important and encouraging detail to be gleaned from Con*Cept 2010.

If there has been a single thing plaguing Con*Cept above all of late, it has been the dearth of vital personnel to plan, organize, and run the event. The situation had reached so critical a point last year that con chair Cathy Palmer-Lister warned of the inevitable demise of the convention should folk not be



found to fill the vacant posts on concom.

It was heartening, then, to see that this year, at least half if not more of the people running the show were new to the job, including vice-chair/dealers' room manager **Jean-Phillippe Cardin**, art show director **Chris Pilgrim**, and programming chief **Howard Picaizen**, all of whom shone. There seems to have developed a fresh enthusiasm for the organizational side of Con*Cept from some of the younger fans in this city. And so now may the old guard, exhausted after too many years at the helm, step down or relax their involvement as they see fit, confident in the knowledge that there will be someone to take over and carry the con forward into the next decade. By that measure alone, Con*Cept has bounced back with vigour.

But further, with this year's healthier attendance – pre-reg was reportedly the highest it has been in some time! – the various activities were, with few exceptions, very well attended. An awards ceremony for past Aurora winners and nominees was packed with the many Montreal and area fans – including a good number of MonSFFen – eligible to receive the special lapel pin designed and manufactured for the occasion by our own **Berny Reischl and Mark Burakoff**. (Similar ceremonies are scheduled to take place at conventions across the country.) Representatives of two separate sci-fi film festivals, meanwhile, were on hand to promote their events and screen a sampling for Con*Cept's attendees. Panel rooms were full or near-full for most of the weekend, some even during the usually quiet periods of the con.

The dealers' room was sold out, we are told, and rather busy for most of the weekend, markedly more so than in recent years. Con*Cept's innovative Sci-Fi Garage Sale, in which the con's



*MonSFFan Josée Bellemare, initiated and still runs the Con*cept garage sale.*

staff sell your collectibles for a cut of profits while you run off and enjoy the con, did quite well, by all reports. There were more room parties Saturday night than have been seen in a while and no one seemed to mind all that much the absence of Con*Cept's unique con suite, normally

situated on the convention floor, conveniently amidst all the activity. This year, unfortunately, a deal could not be reached with the hotel's food services people to allow Con*Cept to set up the con suite. We may see this popular canteen return next year, but it will probably have to be situated upstairs in a standard hotel room, as are the hospitality suites of most conventions.

Con*Cept has always put on a good show, even in those years when the organization struggled, but this year's party had that certain something more. Everyone was having just the greatest time, from the headlining guests on down.

The genial **Alain Ducharme** handled MC duties throughout the weekend and principal guests **Tad Williams** (author, Shadowmarch series), **Nicki Clyne** (actress, Battlestar Galactica), **Denise Gendron** (folk singer), **Véronique Dumas** (special effects make-up artist, who hosted a really cool hands-on workshop demonstrating her craft), energetic **Lar de Souza** (cartoonist, Looking for Group), and award-winning Montreal-based vampire writer and editor **Nancy Kilpatrick** (Evolve: Vampire Stories of the New Undead) could not have been a more friendly and

charming bunch.

Con*Cept 2010's concom and volunteers are to be congratulated on staging a first-rate convention. We await the official attendance figure but it's safe to say that the con increased that number over those of the past couple years and, we hope, correspondingly boosted revenues, perhaps enough to put the operation back in the black.



Programme cover by Lar de Souza

MonSFFA Calendar Delayed

We had planned to release our 2011 MonSFFA calendar at Con*Cept 2010 (October 1-3) but unfortunately, production delays have pushed that release into November.

Impulse readers will recall that we recently scanned or photographed a variety of "fancraft" – artwork, costumes, scale-model spaceships, etc. – fashioned by our own club members to be featured in the calendar. **Berny Reischl** has outlined a layout of the calendar but a heavy work schedule at his day job frustrated his attempts to complete the project in time to have a few copies available for sale at Con*Cept. Sometimes, as we all well know, real life gets in the way of our fannish pursuits.

We now expect to have the calendar ready in time for our November 21 meeting. While serving to raise funds for the club, this, our first MonSFFA calendar, will highlight the creativity and artistic talent of our membership. It'll make a nifty Christmas gift!

October MonSFFA Meeting

The busy agenda for the club's October 17 meeting was eased a little in that one of our scheduled presenters had to depart early due to family obligations and was unable to give his talk. (**Sylvain St-Pierre** will return in November with his exploration of *Weird Sci-Fi Technologies*.) The MonSFFolk gathered still had plenty to interest them, however, with, first, a presentation on the history of the Captain Future character across a variety of media, followed by a fascinating look at the use of SF in television advertising. The group also had opportunity to discuss at length several items of club business, providing valuable feedback to the club's Executive.



Marquise Boies began proceedings with her extensively researched presentation detailing the journey of the Captain Future character from the pulps to a proposed feature film.

Super-scientist Curtis Newton, alias Captain Future, fought interstellar villains in a space opera magazine series, circa 1940s,

aimed primarily at teenaged boys. Dubbed the “Wizard of Science”, he was aided by three sidekicks: Grag, a giant metal robot; Otho, an android; and Professor Simon Wright, a living brain in a box. The idea for the character originated with one Mort Weisinger, an editor at Standard Magazines at the time, but it is SF writer Edmond Hamilton who penned most of the Captain Future tales, many of which were later released in book form. Captain Future’s adventures were adapted as an animé series in the 1980s, a French translation of which aired in Québec, resulting in the popularity of the character locally.

Marquise outlined the biographies of the various players featured in the stories and touched, as well, on the science depicted. She covered Captain Future’s influence on later sci-fi properties and screened a number of clips from the animated series, offering, too, a few variations on the show’s theme music.

Marquise closed with talk of a planned live-action Captain Future movie. Expect a “big, fun space opera for the whole family,” says German director Christian Alvar (Pandorum), who has secured the rights to the character. Financing is apparently in place and a script is in development.

Next up was **Alice Novo**, who, with an assist from **Berny Reischl**, put together an interesting collection of vintage and contemporary television commercials that employ science fiction themes and imagery to sell everything from automobiles and electric shavers to beer and breakfast cereal. Many of the ads were humorous – a time-tested sales technique – and folk chuckled at

the variety of comical astronauts, space aliens, and robots shilling product. The stars of popular sci-fi TV series popped up as pitchmen, too, cleverly referencing their shows as they sang the praises of some commodity or other. A number of 1960s-era ads tapped into the keen public interest at that time in the space program.

Perhaps the most celebrated television ad of all drew upon George Orwell’s famous novel of a dystopian future, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, to make the sale. The spot, which aired only once, during the Superbowl, introduced Apple’s then brand new Macintosh computer by symbolically shattering the home PC environment of the day, represented in the Ridley Scott-directed commercial as a bleak world of drones in thrall of a grim, all-powerful overlord. The ad is capped by a voiceover, intoning that, with the arrival of the Macintosh, the year “1984 won’t be like *Nineteen Eighty-Four*”.



Thanks to our presenters and to all who helped to plan and run this meeting.

A World Without MonSFFA Speculation by Keith Braithwaite



With all of the discussions at Con*Cept this year of alternate history, I got to thinking of how things might have differed had Luke Fallon, Geoff Bovey, Kevin Holden and the other founders of what is today MonSFFA not launched the club 20-plus years ago?

First of all, most of the friendships that have formed throughout the years and endure to this day amongst the members of MonSFFA would almost certainly never have been established. A number of those friendships developed into romantic relationships, a few resulting in marriages and children. None of that would have happened and those children would never have been born had the club not come into being.

But given the shared interest in SF/F of the people involved, it is possible that some of us may have run into each other at one or the other of the king-sized sci-fi events held in Montreal over the past couple decades, like Creation Entertainment’s *Star Trek* conventions, staged during the 1990s. But would any of us have connected? I think it more likely that we would simply have passed each other strolling through the dealers’ room, remaining strangers.

Keep in mind, too, that Creation and other such large-scale genre events may not ever have come to Montreal in the first place were it not for a local, fan-run SF/F convention dubbed Con*Cept, the first edition of which took place in 1989. Con*Cept demonstrated in that and subsequent years that there were a good number of folk in this city interested in science fiction and fantasy.



Montreal had, for decades previous, exhibited little sign of organized fannish activity other than the small-scale diversions of French-language literary fandom, a few comic book shows, and a handful of low-key and often short-lived CEGEP- and university-based science fiction and gaming clubs. Yes, there was a Worldcon bid initiated in the mid-1970s, but it came to naught, probably because Montreal was not viewed by fans in other cities as a particularly robust outpost of fandom. The success of the first few Con*Cept conventions changed that perception and probably drew the attention of the big procons, who saw a new market opening up and acted.

But wait a minute! Con*Cept was founded by MonSFFA, and had MonSFFA never come to be, nor would have Con*Cept.

Of course, following on MonSFFA’s heels, other genre clubs sprang up in Montreal at the time and perhaps one of these might have launched a convention like Con*Cept. Indeed, Warp 9, principally a club for fans of televised sci-fi, did organize the Science Fiction Festivals in the mid-’90s. But these ran for only a couple of years before collapsing from lack of funds. Warp 9 itself continued for some years afterwards but eventually dissolved, as well. None of the genre clubs active alongside MonSFFA in those days survived much past the end of the ’90s. However, MonSFFA and Con*Cept, the convention by now a fully autonomous operation, endured.

In any case, had MonSFFA not paved the way, the question

is raised: would any of these other clubs have begun their own conventions, or for that matter, ever gotten started themselves? Maybe, but Montreal's fannish landscape would have most likely been rather less notable.

Which brings us to the 2000s. The existence of Con*Cept was almost certainly of influence in the success of Montreal's bid for the Worldcon, which unfolded as Anticipation to much acclaim last year. It is unlikely that international fandom would have put much faith in a city hosting a Worldcon sans the presence in that city of an established local convention. Even taking into account the attractiveness of Montreal as a tourist destination, without Con*Cept's 20-odd-year track record, Anticipation would have been a much harder sell for bid organizers.

In fact, they might never have been motivated to launch their bid in the first place, for had it not been for the intervention of MonSFFA, Con*Cept, in all likelihood, would have folded in 2000. The club was called upon that year to take control of the then faltering convention and revive it. From 2001 through 2003, MonSFFA rebuilt the event so that when the Anticipation bid was launched in 2004, Con*Cept was still a going concern. Anticipation conceivably might never have taken place were it not for Con*Cept, and Con*Cept would surely have gone under in 2000 were it not for MonSFFA.

Finally, consider this: in a world without MonSFFA, there would be no Beavra to rival Japan's Godzilla and America's King Kong!

Tentative 2011 MonSFFA Meeting Schedule

January 16

BoA/Elections (MonSFFA)
2012 Calendar Planning (MonSFFA)
MonSFFA Radio Show (MonSFFA)



February 20

SF Couples (Josée Bellemare)
Calendar Shoot (MonSFFA)



March 13

Guest Speakers: Future of the Space Program
(David Schulman & Paul Simard)
Spaceballs - Avoiding the doomsday rock (Cathy Palmer-Lister)



April 17

How to sell SF & F Collectables on eBay (Theresa Penalba)
Pets in Science Fiction (Danny Sichel)



May 15

Harry Potter Discarded SF & F TV & Movie concepts
(Sylvain St-Pierre)
Harry Potter and his Royal Rip-offs!



June 12

No meeting - Saturday garage sale / Sunday extracurricular activity

July 24

MonSFFA BBQ (July 31 Rain Date)



August 21

Craft workshops / Games / Sci-Fi Fair



September 18

Exploring Steampunk (Josée Bellemare & Mark Burakoff)



October 30

SF Toys (Sylvain St-Pierre)
Fan Film Theatre (The Emperor)



November 20

Sci-Fi Telephone (Sketch & Kvetch - Keith Braithwaite)



December 3

MonSFFA Christmas Party



**The Face behind the Mask # 11
The Fernster**

Okay time to stop monkeying around and get serious about bananas! Guess who is behind the makeup!



A

B

C

D

E



1

2

3

4

5

A – Ari

B – Dr. Zira

C – Jillia

D – Lisa

E – Nova

1 – Kim Hunter

2 – Lisa Marie Smith

3 – Helena Bonham Carter

4 – Nathalie Trundy

5 – Eileen Dietz Elber

Answers on page 13



Use your MonSFFA membership card and save at these fine stores!

LEGENDS ACTION FIGURES: 10% off all merchandise (7104 St-Hubert)

<http://www.legendsactionfigures.com>

MÉLANGE MAGIQUE: 15% off all merchandise (1928 St-Catherine West)

<http://www.themagicalblend.com/>

MILLENNIUM COMICS: 15% off all merchandise (451 Marrriane-est)

<http://www.millenumcomics.com>

