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WARPF 43

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTREAL SCIENCE
FICTION AND FANTASY ASSOCIATION (MonSFFA)



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COVER UP:

A rare publicity photo for an event you won't see: Claudia Christian on the new TNT season five of *Babylon 5*. Details of the contract dispute/ misunderstanding on page 20.

cover photo © 1997 Turner Broadcasting system, Inc. A Time Warner Company.

1998 MonSFFA EVENTS SCHEDULE

**ALL MonSFFA MEETINGS HELD SUNDAY
AFTERNOONS, 1:00PM TO 4:00PM (SOME
MEETINGS INCLUDE MORNING ACTIVITIES,
WHICH BEGIN AT 10:00 AM), IN THE
ST-FRANCOIS ROOM OF THE DAYS INN, 1005
GUY STREET (CORNER RENÉ LÉVESQUE),
DOWNTOWN MONTREAL**

**EVENT PROGRAMMING*
(MAY - JUNE)**

May 24 - Countdown to The Prequels

1:00pm: The new *Star Wars* Trilogy opens one year from now. What do you expect to see? Discussion of the SW universe time line and continuity. Also, SW costuming/model building and a slide show of the Smithsonian *Star Wars* Exhibition: The Magic of the Myth.

June 14 - Sci-Fi from the Orient

1:00pm: Godzilla and other monsters, Mecha and robots, cyberpunk, and fantasy.

August 16 - The End of The World is Nigh

1:00pm: 1-Threats to our existence and the SF it inspires.
2-The anatomy of a Hollywood disaster movie.
3-Distopian futures/Survival of the fittest.

September 20 - The Epic Space Opera

1:00pm: 20th Anniversary of Battlestar Galactica-commerating its past and speculating about its future.
2:30pm: Modern television space operas and their trend towards continuity and epic story arcs.

October 18 - After The Midnight Hour

1:00pm: Regards from Ravenloft.

November 22 - Points of Contact

1:00pm: 1-We come in peace/The "Prime Directive".
2-The invasion scenario.
3-Are there aliens already among us?

*All programming is tentative, and scheduling is subject to change.

JANUARY

18

FEBRUARY

15

MARCH

22

APRIL

19

MAY

24

JUNE

14

AUGUST

16

SEPTEMBER

20

OCTOBER

18

NOVEMBER

22

DECEMBER

12

Warp is published about five times a year by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA). Address all correspondence to: *Warp*, c/o MonSFFA, P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4. A subscription to *Warp* is a benefit of membership in MonSFFA. MonSFFA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of science fiction and fantasy literature, film and television, comics, fanzines, art, music, costuming, model-making, gaming, etc. The opinions expressed in *Warp* are solely those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Warp* or MonSFFA. The use of copyrighted material in this newsletter is—yes, we know—verboten, but is not intended to seriously infringe upon any of the rights of the copyright holders. Come on, people...lighten up! This is an amateur publication intended for enjoyment only. "Everyone has a photographic memory. Some people don't have film."—unknown.

MonSFFA's Address: P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4
MonSFFA's Web Site is at: <http://www.odyssee.net/~draken/monsffa/monsffa.html>

FROM THE SEAT

EJECTION

Like the portly X-wing pilot in *Star Wars*, I'm trying to hold it together even as I auger in, *desperately* hoping that I'll be able to pull up. But unlike him, I know when to eject. This will be my last issue at the helm of *Warp*.

As you all have no doubt noticed, *Warp* has fallen far, far behind schedule. At the beginning of 1997, I was anticipating that the time I'd have to devote to the newsletter would be at a premium upon the birth of our second child (my wife, Colleen, delivered little Erin into the world on June 20). I had spoken to retiring MonSFFA president Lynda Pelley about her becoming co-editor of *Warp*, with the intention of having her, within a certain time, take over the whole thing. Already a *Warp* staffer (handling the preparation of photos and artwork for the printing masters), Lynda was up for an expanded role.

So far, so good.

I proposed an apprenticeship period, during which time I would familiarize Lynda with the job, relinquishing increasingly more of the work to her over several issues, until she felt ready to go it solo, at which point I'd bow out. Regrettably, this plan has *just not* panned out. The new baby in the house allowed me very little free time while Lynda's new off-hours shift at work played havoc with her availability. When I *did* manage to find the rare afternoon or evening to dedicate to *Warp*, Lynda, often, was not able to join me. So we got together hardly at all over the past year. We *barely* found the time to work on the scheduled issues of *Warp*, let alone any apprenticing!

At a meeting of the club's Board of Advisors in August, I submitted a report in which I indicated that while I was prepared to continue with *Warp*, I *could not*, for many months yet, promise to have the newsletter going out on anything resembling a reasonable schedule. *Eventually*, things would get back to normal, but in the meantime, *Warp* would remain considerably off track. If the BoA, understandably, wasn't comfortable with riding it out, then perhaps, I volunteered in my report, the time had come to consider other options. I was open to whatever course of action the BoA felt was best. After

some discussion, it was agreed that Lynda is in the best position to oversee *Warp*. She is *entirely* equipped in terms of hardware/software to do the job *more efficiently* than ever before. And even though Lynda and I did not manage our apprenticeship period, she expects that she'll be able to pick up the ins and outs of editing, layout, etc. as she goes.

Which brings me to the present. Lynda is already at the controls, having put together much of this issue, and effective next issue, she will assume *full responsibility* for *Warp*.

In view of my many years of experience with the club's newsletter, Lynda has asked me to remain on staff and help her out when needed. I am pleased to do so. As much as my time permits, I will make myself available as a "consulting editor."

The BoA is taking this occasion to mobilize the club's membership *big time* on the newsletter. MonSFFA will be asked to submit *more* articles/artwork/photos *more* often. They'll be encouraged to participate in *Warp* workshops that will be set up at the club's monthly meetings. And, they'll be tapped to help collate and prep the newsletter for mailing. The BoA calculates that all of this will help to streamline the production of *Warp* and provide for its timely distribution.

I feel I must caution that such things have been tried before without much success. *However*, I believe that we came up short in the past because we let apathy overtake us. If, this time, we can stay ahead of apathy, we'll find that there's nothing we can't do.

I've steered *Warp* for a good, *long* time, and while it's sometimes been a real *chore*, it's always been a very rewarding experience. In closing, I wish to thank *all* of the contributors and staff (to numerous to list) who I've had the *great* pleasure of working with over the years. Together, we've made *Warp* into one of the finest clubzines around.



—Keith Braithwaite
Departing Co-Editor, *Warp*

THE TOP 10 REASONS WHY... WARP IS LATE - AGAIN!

THE OFFICIAL WARP EDITOR'S EXCUSE LIST

10. **October:** Slightly disorganized due to change of editors - Those articles are not lost, they're just temporarily misplaced!
9. **November:** Software compatibility problems - How was I supposed to know that I needed "Pasteboard XTerminator" in order to open the master layout file in QuarkXpress?
8. **December:** Postal Strike!
7. **December:** Christmas shopping, Christmas parties, Christmas is family time...I don't do fandom stuff at Christmas time!
6. **December/January:** I was out-of-town photographing the Smithsonian *Star Wars* Exhibition in Washington D.C.
5. **January:** Ice Storm - I live on the South Shore and I don't own a generator!
4. **January:** Printer Breakdown - It's either the fusers or the rollers or the toner cartridge...(?)
3. **January/February:** Cashflow problems - I just got the bills from Christmas, and I have to do an RRSP—I can't afford to pay for the printer repairs. And that new toner cartridge is going to cost \$155.
2. **February/March/April:** Job loss - I needed to research job postings and work on my resume and demo reel more urgently than I needed to work on *Warp*.
1. **November - April:** Time lost answering phone calls and replying to e-mails about why *Warp* is late instead of working on *Warp*.
The ultimate answer to the ultimate question of why *Warp* is late is:
Real life intrudes on fandom from time to time.
Warp is a hobby. You will get it when you get it.
Until then, try getting a life!

—Lynda



MonSFFA and *Warp* welcome letters of comment and inquiry. Mail letters to:

P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada,
H2W 2P4.

Unless otherwise indicated, we assume all letters are intended for publication. *Warp* reserves the right to edit letters where deemed necessary.

From MonSFFA member Stavroula Mourelatos, via e-mail:

Hi Lynda,

I just want you to inform people that there is this great place where *X-Files* fans can go to watch the show. This is great for people who might not have cable to watch the show on Sundays. The place is CHAMPS BAR on 3956 St-Laurent Blvd. They do this "X-Night" every Sunday. It costs \$2.50 to enter but you get to meet other *X-Files* fans and they do a drawing every night after the show. They draw for cool prizes (posters, keychains, etc...all *X-files* stuff). You can eat, drink, and watch the show at the same time. I hardly come to the meetings, but the meetings I've gone to seem to have a lot of *X-Fans*. I would like to pass this on to the other members.

Thanks,
Voula

Thanks for sending us this e-mail. Consider the information passed along to the rest of the members—Ed.



Above: A mockup of the Guardian of Forever from the original *Star Trek* series frames a projection TV showing classic SF films.



Left: The Ghostbusters backpack on loan from the Ackerman Collection.

Below: Props and models contributed by members of the Montreal SF fan community to fill the display cases of the Complexe DesJardins Exhibition.

Photos of the Complexe DesJardins Exhibition by Theresa Penalba and Daniel P. Kenney.



**FROM YESTERDAY TO TOMORROW—SCIENCE FICTION THROUGH THE AGES:
THE COMPLEXE DESJARDINS SF EXHIBITION REVIEWED**

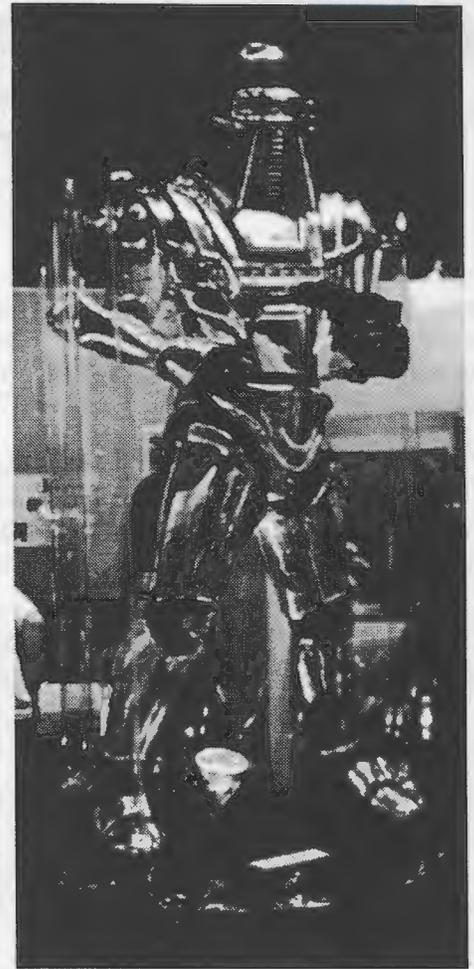
by Keith Braithwaite

The science fiction exhibition that was mounted at Complexe Desjardins in September '97 was probably the finest showcase of the genre that Montreal has ever seen. Kudos all around to the team who put on this show.

Drawing upon mostly local artists, scale modellers, costumers and collectors, organizers put together a marvelous display of sci-fi paraphernalia. The eye candy included display case after display case of model spacecraft, toys and props; numerous panels of striking sci-fi art; collections of vintage pulp magazines and antique Jules Verne books; and latex monster masks and alien costumes. A giant video screen (done up as *Trek's* Guardian of Forever) ran SF fare for those who had a bit of time to sit down and watch, and a series of illustrated informational boards nicely capsulized the history of SF, era by era, year by year.

The highlight of the exhibition for true skiffy aficionados was certainly the selection of items from renowned L.A.-based science fiction fan Forrest J. Ackerman's vast collection of genre memorabilia. These included one of the studio models of the sleek Martian war machine seen in the 1953 film *War of the Worlds*, the miniature Capitol dome and Washington's Monument destroyed by invading aliens in 1956's *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*, one of the ghostbusters' backpacks, a full-scale gremlin, and a gleaming chrome Cylon warrior costume used in the television series *Battlestar: Galactica*.

The exhibition's shopping-concourse location suggested that the whole thing be taken in quickly, on your way back to the office from lunch. But to really appreciate this exhibition required *at least* a couple of hours. No doubt a lot of people were getting back to the office late during the exhibition's two-week run.



Above: Cylon Warrior costume from the Ackerman Collection.

Below: Princess Leia and the BioKnights. Costumed fans mingled with the crowds during the Saturday shopping hours.



MonSFFAandom

"ALL THE CLUB NEWS THAT FITS, WE'LL PRINT!"

Note: Warp has, regrettably, experienced major production delays over the past year. As a result, some of the information contained in this column is dated.

CLUB WEB SITE BACK UP

Last issue, we informed members of the temporary shut-down of the club's Web site. We are pleased to now report that Mon-SFFA's site is back up and running. MonSFFA's Web site manager, Dominique Durocher, has fixed what needed fixin' and invites members to surf on over and have a look. We are at:

<http://www.odyssee.net/~draken/monsffa/monsffa.html>

Dominique continues to build the site and input from the club membership is always welcome.

LONG-TIME WARP EDITOR RETIRES

As a read of this issue's page-four column will tell you, long-time *Warp* editor Keith Braithwaite is relinquishing responsibility for the club's newsletter to Lynda Pelley. Keith steps aside with a mix of relief and regret: relief because the considerable demands the newsletter places on one's free time are lifted (recently a father for the second time, Keith has *precious little* free time to devote to *Warp*—or much else!—these days), regret because he's helmed *Warp* for many years, has very much enjoyed the job and will miss it.

Lynda has been a *Warp* staffer for a number of years, now, and about a year ago began co-editing the newsletter with Keith. Effective next issue, she assumes the full mantle of editorship.

Keith will continue to contribute to *Warp* on a limited basis, as his time allows. He has accepted Lynda's request that he act as the newsletter's Consulting Editor.

MonSFFA expresses its appreciation to Keith for his many years of service as our newsletter editor. At the same time, we wish Lynda all the best as she begins her new duties.

MonSFFA REMEMBERS ORAN GLEASON

Longtime MonSFFA member Oran Gleason passed away on August 9, 1997 (see page 29). The donations collected at the club's 10th Anniversary party and the Christmas party were sent to the Montreal Gazette Christmas Fund.

MonSFFA MEETINGS, JUNE-OCTOBER '97

June

The June 15 MonSFFA meeting focused on *games*, as utilized in SF, and as based on SF.

Keith Braithwaite, Ernst-Udo Peters and Krikor Ajemian led off with an examination of how games are employed by SF writers. Beyond their presentation as, simply, forms of futuristic recreation, games are often used as metaphors, as a means of revealing something of the emotional make-up of a character, or as a foreshadowing of conflict between protagonists.

The discussion shifted gears to explore games which have as their basis a science fiction (or fantasy) scenario. Many of these, of course, are rooted in a popular sci-fi movie or TV series—the *Trek* role-playing

and space battle games come to mind. Universally panned was Hollywood's penchant for making movies based on games.

Following the mid-meeting break, members were invited to sit down for the rest of the afternoon and play a few sci-fi games which had been brought in.

We thank our panelists, Keith, Ernst and Krikor, as well as those members who supplied the games.

Summer Break

As is our practice, MonSFFA takes a break in July for the summer holiday season. No meeting is held during this month.

August

The August 17 meeting, our Sci-Fi Garage Sale, served as a fundraiser for the club. Tables-full of books, comics and other items were up for sale, and an auction and raffle featured such items as *Star Wars* T-shirts and action figures, a couple of sets of Supermarionation collectible pins, various movie posters, videos and a *Doctor Who* wristwatch. All in all, close to \$400 was raised, this money slated to help fund future MonSFFA activities.

The club wishes to thank *very much* all those members who very kindly donated items to our Sci-Fi Garage Sale. We thank, equally, retailers Nebula Books, Empire Comics, Capitaine Quebec and Blockbuster Video for pitching in a few items. Thanks, also, to Keith Braithwaite and Dave Legault, who ran the auction.

A collectibles swap meet that morning preceded the main event.

September

Our September 21 meeting featured special guest Keith Logan, of Nebula Books, speaking on New Directions in SF/F Literature. Keith gave an overview of what he saw as up and coming in today's SF/F literature and invited comment and discussion. His hot trends included Mars stories and near-future, near-Earth space adventures, stories involving artificial intelligence, cloning, and book series based on popular SF TV and film properties (a publishing trend, says Keith, geared to raking it in).

The second half of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of *Babylon 5*. Keith Braithwaite, Andrew Weitzman and Bryan Ekers first covered the latest *B-5* news, then asked the audience what future they'd like to see for *B-5* following the finale of the series next year. While at least two TV movies are assured, with a spin-off series a reasonable possibility, most of the people in the room, nevertheless, wanted more! A big-screen *B-5*, perhaps. Why not a *Trek*-like film franchise? A spin-off series focusing on Londo was one suggestion. A Psi Corps series was another. A group of TV series or movies was proposed, each dealing with a different piece of the *B-5* story, running independently of each other, but converging periodically to make for a big, must-see television event.

MonSFFA thanks guest speaker Keith Logan for coming in, as well as Nebula Books, which donated a number of the afternoon's raffle prizes. Thanks, also, to our *B-5* panelists, Keith (Braithwaite), Andrew and Bryan.

October

Uncharacteristically thin attendance marked our October 19 meeting as the Days Inn's last-minute change of our meeting room saw MonSFFen relocated to a basement room for the afternoon. While turn-out for the June, August and September meetings was the

usual, healthy 30-35, the October meeting drew considerably fewer people. Arriving early to shoot a couple of brief scenes in the meeting room before the meeting began was the video project's cast and crew. Their mid-meeting departure (they were off for further filming at an outdoor location) thinned the ranks a bit more and the model-building workshop slated for the afternoon ended up being scrubbed. Members remaining decided to make the best of it by holding an informal parley to kick ideas around for future club activities.

MonSFFA thanks members Lynda Pelley, Dominique Durocher and Mark Burakoff for putting in the effort on the model-building workshop. We hope they are not disinclined to giving it another shot sometime in the new year.

Raffle, Snack Table

We take this opportunity to thank the handful of members who, each meeting, run our raffle and our snack table.

SF EXHIBITION AT COMPLEXE DESJARDINS

MonSFFen contributed in no small measure to the successful two-week SF exhibition staged at Complexe Desjardins in September. Not only did many of the club's artists, modellers, costumers and collectors lend items for display, but two of the event's organizers, Berny Reischl and Alain Essiembre, are MonSFFA members!

Berny reports that the Complexe estimates some 200,000 people took in the exhibition. Congratulations to the Exhibition's organizers on putting together a *wonderful* showcase for the SF genre! (See our review of the Exhibition in this issue.)

VIDEO PROJECT II

MonSFFA's second video project

in as many years is proving more challenging an undertaking than was foreseen. Logistical difficulties in assembling the production company over various weekends and evenings during the summer caused production to fall behind schedule. As fall approached, the cast and crew were playing catch-up. Numerous outdoor and out-of-town shoots ended up taking twice the time anticipated, poor weather on at least one occasion further hampering the production. And, as summer became fall and the leaves began to change colour, the group had to resort to a little "creative" tinkering and fudging to try to match outdoor shots filmed in the summer with those they were filming against an autumn background.

A dogged cast and crew continue to work tirelessly to wrap principle photography before *winter* sets in! It is hoped that the video-film, a sequel to last year's successful *Plant 9 From Outer Space*, will be ready to premiere at year's end, or early in '98.

Additional Note:

The MonSFFA video project is currently (Spring '98) in the editing and special effects post-production phase.

Rest assured, the video project is being worked on and you will see it sometime soon this year (1998).

MonSFFA EXTENDS RENEWALS

Due to the serious production problems that *Warp* has been experiencing over the last six months, everyone's MonSFFA membership will be extended by an extra three months. We apologize for the delays and hope to get the newsletter publishing schedule back on track soon.

Please note that if one of your submissions is missing from this issue, it will probably appear next issue. There is still some backlog of articles to be published.

CONVENTION REVIEWS

MonSFFen took in a number of cons in the latter half of 1997, including the '97 WorldCon. We have here —*better late than never!*— a review of that WorldCon, along with looks at Montreal's own Con•Cept '97 and the two Toronto conventions traditionally a part of the summer junket for Montreal fans.

LONESTARCON2 REVIEW by Sylvain St-Pierre

Note: The author did not shoot any still pictures at the Worldcon, but took plenty of video footage. The "photos" for this review were freeze-framed from video by Frederick MacKinnon.

The host city of the 55th World Science Fiction convention was San Antonio, Texas, from August 28th to September 1st, 1997. The novelty of the location was only one of the reasons why I chose to attend this particular Worldcon. I went there by plane, by way of Atlanta, and on the last leg of the trip it was pretty evident that I was not the only fan on board; not too many mundanes wearing Klingon pins on their hat or Chtuluh T-shirts... Sadly, I did not meet anybody from Montreal.

Many fen were somewhat apprehensive about the weather, this area being famous for high temperatures, but it was so dry that even 95 degrees Fahrenheit proved to be quite bearable. The sky remained clear for the duration, and not a drop of rain fell.

The city proper is not worth a trip for its own sake in my opinion, but does justify making a detour if you are in the vicinity (or attending a Worldcon). San Antonio is still very Mexican in outlook, and is pleasantly exotic for a Montrealer. The ninth largest city in the United States, it is all made of suburbs and the downtown area is quite compact and easily walkable. I did not see any graffiti, and the streets were clean,

but strangely devoid of traffic. There were long stretches of perfectly maintained but empty shops; I think the area must have been recently renovated and that they are still trying to rent out the buildings.

The most famous landmark is the Alamo (as in "Remember the Alamo!"), but I found it to be not very impressive. The place receives no government support and is little more than a glorified souvenir shop. Far more interesting was the Riverwalk, a pedestrian path built on both sides of the San Antonio River. That waterway is only about twenty feet wide—a canal, really—but lined with century-old trees, fancy shops and plenty of restaurants. Very crowded on weekends, but part of the fun is to watch all of the people go by, a bit like on Prince Arthur Street in Montreal.

San Antonio boasts a Ripley's *Believe It Or Not* "museum", always good for a laugh, and there are several interesting caverns outside of town. There is also a Planet Hollywood restaurant, the first I ever tried, and I must admit that all those movie props do make a fun dining décor. In the food department, I had mixed experiences; getting bad, average, and superb meals. Texans do lean heavily on spices, and it is quite revealing that the official title of LSC2 was "The Second Occasional

LoneStarCon Science Fiction Convention and Chili Cook-Off"! Some people take a perverse pride in being able to swallow volcanic concoctions, but I have never felt a need to prove my fanliness by eating something that requires an asbestos pot.

I was lucky enough to get the hotel that I wanted, exactly between the main con hotel and the Convention Center, one street across from either. It was not cheap, but made back and forth trips a lot easier, something I am always grateful for as I grow older. The layout of the convention site itself was not the most convenient I have seen, but not the worst either. It was definitely oversized for the con; getting from one place to another took longer than it should have, and a number of exhibits seemed hopelessly lost in all that space. Registration had the worst location, in an enormous room that could be accessed only from the outside, after rounding half of the building.

The con was somewhat slow to start because, I heard, of a serious lack of volunteers. Set-up took longer than expected; and the event, which officially started Thursday at Noon, did not reach its full swing until Friday morning. I must say, though, that once momentum had been gathered, the "con feeling" was

THE 1997 HUGO AWARDS

Best Novel: *Blue Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson
Best Novella: "Blood of the Dragon" by George R.R. Martin
Best Novelette: "Bicycle Repairman" by Bruce Sterling
Best Short Story: "The Soul Selects Her Own Society..." by Connie Willis
Best Non-fiction Book: *Time & Chance* by L. Sprague de Camp
Best Dramatic Presentation: *Babylon 5* "Severed Dreams". Directed by David J. Eagle, Written by J. Michael Straczynski, Produced by John Copeland
Best Professional Editor: Gardner Dozois (*Asimov's*)
Best Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton
Best Semiprozine: *Locus* edited by Charles N. Brown
Best Fanzine: *Mimosa* edited by Dick & Nicki Lynch
Best Fan Writer: Dave Langford
Best Fan Artist: William Rotsler

definitely there and strong. This also affected the con newsletter, *News Bringer/Domino*, that was very dull at the start but got better afterwards.

Let's face it: everybody heads for the Dealers' Room first. Given that this was a Worldcon, this one was medium in both size and quality of merchandise. Some of the merchants

are regular fixtures, so I may be getting a false "same old stuff" impression based on visits to previous events. There were quite a few interesting purchases to be made, but you had to be willing to go through a lot of randomly stacked bins. I grossly exceeded my budget, and enjoyed every minute of it... I

also brought back some freebies, although there were precious few to be had at this con. We did not even get the traditional bag of goodies that comes with the registration package; all you got was your badge, the souvenir book and the pocket program (quite well designed, by the way). The most notable surprise was a nice set of three science fiction/fantasy magazines left at the door of every registered attendee's hotel room. It makes you wonder how the sponsoring company knew where the fans were staying!

Like everything else, the Art Show room was too large for its content, but the organizers had the idea of putting benches and couches in the extra space, and I think that this was brilliant. You could sit in comfort and admire the art while chatting with friends. This exhibit also had more sculptures than any other Worldcons I have attended, and the quality was quite high.

Panels were numerous and varied, with every topic you could imagine and quite a few you couldn't. There were the inevitable cancellations, moves and post-phonements, but once you had picked up the correction flyers it was easy enough to find what you were looking for. For those who wanted a souvenir of an especially fine discussion, audio tapes of every panel were available for sale. There was a considerable amount of walking involved if two consecutive panels that you wanted to attend were at opposite ends of the complex but, for once, handicapped fans had it easy. This was probably the most wheelchair-friendly Worldcon ever: there was a fleet of about fifty such vehicles available, three quarters of them motorized.

A frequently voiced complaint regarded the lack of things to do outside of regular convention hours. This con had no such thing as an all-night video room, and precious little official activity after 6:00 pm! It seems that the Convention Center would not grant access at night, but surely something could have been arranged in one of the hotels? The

1997 WORLDCON MASQUERADE WINNERS

Master Class

Best of Class: Samurai from Mars

Best Re-Creation: My Favorite Martian

Best Presentation: Shadows of the Empire

Workmanship

Shaping & Construction: My Favorite Martian

Working with Unusual Materials: Shadows of the Empire

Best Master Workmanship: Fire Dance

Tie for Best Workmanship

Best Workmanship with Unusual Materials: Samurai from Mars

Best Workmanship with Traditional Materials: The Tlokiriqaluyal - The Lords of Chaos

Journeyman Class

Best of Class: In The Enchanted Garden

Most Beautiful: The Ambassadors from Sarquaan

Best Presentation: A Klingon Quiet Night - A Warrior's Softer Side

Most Humorous: Klingon Horror

Judges' Choice: Mel Gibson Girl

Workmanship

Applique & Handwork: In The Enchanted Garden

Best Journeyman Workmanship: The Ambassadors from Sarquaan

Novice Class

Best of Class: Aurora

Most Beautiful - Original: The Messengers of Heaven

Most Beautiful - Re-Creation: Suma, from Eros Ascending

Best Baad Pun: Men in Blackwatch

Most Dramatic Presentation: Delenn of Minbar

Most Humorous: The Cities of Science Fiction

Judges' Choice Award: Bounty Rider

Workmanship

Construction: Klingon Horror

Woven Beadwork: The Queen of the Night

3-D Beadwork: Queen of Wands/Element of Fire

Handworked details: Suma, from Eros Ascending

Modeling & Computer Work: The Cities of Science Fiction

Best Novice Workmanship: The Messengers of Heaven

Young Fans (adult-made)

Most Humorous: A Young Jedi

Most Beautiful: Idyll at the End of Time

Popular Favorite (and "Sick Puppy Award")

A Klingon Quiet Night - A Warrior's Soft Side



The Cities of Science Fiction #1: Aztec



The Cities of Science Fiction #2: King Kong's New York City



The Cities of Science Fiction #3: Batman's Gotham City

videos that were available during the day were rather on the bland side, both the regular movies and the anime being supplied by the commercial dealers. While this kept the costs low, it made for an unimpressive program.

With this in mind, the most popular form of after-hours entertainment was the room party with a vengeance (overheard comment: "fans are pigs!"). The upcoming Worldcon Bids Committees usually throw the best parties, but some groups are known to put forward fake bids just to have an excuse to celebrate. For instance, the "Z'Ha'Dum in 2260" party was acclaimed as being one of the most fun!

Amongst the legitimate bids, Chicago won for 2000; which was hardly surprising since they were the only ones running for that year. This victory is of special importance for Eastern Canadians, because the 2000 vote will decide the site of the 2003 Worldcon, and so far Toronto is the strongest contestant (the others are Cancun, Mexico, and Berlin, Germany). The Toronto Party was extremely popular and standing room only for much of the duration.

All in all, the convention must have been absorbing enough, because on Monday morning there were still fans unaware that Princess Diana had died during the weekend. The outside world did not otherwise intrude much on the event and even Time took it easy; I often saw people reading their program books and wondering aloud: "Which day are we?" We were also spared the usual "Geeks From Outer Space Invade Our Town" type of headlines by the local paper, which only ran a few objective lines in its entertainment section, despite the fact that costumed fans made traffic along the Riverwalk eerie at times.

Hall Costumes were very numerous and enthusiastically worn, which no doubt accounted a lot for the pervasive con atmosphere. It's amazing how popular propeller beanies still remain, even after all these years! The Masquerade proper



Mars Attacks! at Worldcon

managed to stay to the very end, but found it rather depressing to see the dream evaporate until there is nothing left. This time, I left around noon on Monday, while there was still some magic in the air; my mind full of memories and my suitcase bulging with treasures. I am not planning to attend the next two Worldcons, so my next one should be in 2000. What a nice way to end a millennium...

**TORONTO TREK XI:
IMPRESSIONS OF A NEWBIE**
by Ernst-Udo Peters

!Wow! Wow! and more Wow!



was astonishingly small: only thirty-one official entries, and of those, half a dozen did not show up! You could see that many Canadian costumers were *not* in attendance: for an event of that magnitude, the quality was only so-so. Still, there were a number of surprises—the Martian Woman from *Mars Attacks!* amongst them—and it was a most enjoyable way of ending the last full convention day.

The final day of a Worldcon is always a little sad. Some people leave early to catch a plane or drive to distant homes, dealers start packing their wares, clubs fold their tables, much of the Art Show is already gone... In a couple of previous instances I did not have to depart until the following day and

DAY 1

Friday, July 18th 05:45h. The phone rang. Hmm? It rang again. Jiminy, I had overslept. Chantal called to check where I was. I told her to leave without me because I did not want to make the others wait. I would make my own way to Toronto Trek XI.

So I did. At 06:30h I was gone. I made it to the hotel at 11:30h but it looked sort of empty, so I went home to Mississauga. Nobody there, either. Did the earth open up and swallow everybody?

I finally went back to the convention at 16:00h, because I did not want to miss the *Voyager* episode scheduled to start at 17:00h, as I had

not seen *Voyager* before and I still had to register. As it turned out I was not going to see it here either.

The line-up for registration was already considerable but still not too bad and moving forward at a good pace. I ran across a familiar face: Dave Legault, wearing a shirt that should have been burned at he stake as an eyesore. But I digress. The line moved rapidly. Yolande found me and told me that the group, consisting of herself, Cathy, Chantal, Wayne, Lynda, Dominique, plus potentially others, would go to dinner at 17:00h. I registered in time to join them. We went to Kelsey's and the treatment was such that we ended up declaring the place our convention hideout. We went there for almost every meal except breakfast. A dinner like that never happens quickly and we missed the opening ceremonies. So what ?!

Everybody recommended Larry Stewart to me. "Larry is a hoot!" "Larry is a hardcore fan!" "You just have to see him!" So I went. He did a very credible Londo imitation but his antics left me cold. More Hollywood hype I thought. I would change my opinion a few hours later.

Next I went to see the play "Crossed Channels". To call it smashing would be an understatement. I am not going to give a plot synopsis here but I did think, well that's the convention for me. How could it get any better than this play? But that was simply a warm-up.

For obvious reasons I could not bypass the panel on the 20th anniversary of *Star Wars*. It brought back some pleasant memories like watching the trilogy on a 6-storey screen at the former University Cinema on Bloor Street in Toronto. The panelists had constructed some very impressive props. The one that comes to mind is the flight helmet.

Afterwards, I ended up in the panel on *Babylon 5*. This panel also included Larry Stewart. This time he seemed more relaxed and he talked very knowledgeably about the show. He also passed the news that Claudia Christian had been fired. Interesting,

how gossip spreads like wildfire. I checked with my brother, who usually lives on the 'net. But this time, he wanted to come to the convention, too. He said, that apparently, Claudia Christian had refused to sign a contract extension and had only given her commitment to another season verbally. The other stars had all signed. Obviously, Ivanova may be God but she is not going to be President—Bester is.

So, now on to *Mars Attacks!* I love that movie and they were showing it in the video room. It is so wonderfully cheesy that all I need is a bun and I'll be set. After that, it was on to some anime. I held out until about 03:00h but then I had to crash at home.

DAY 2

Curses! Overslept again! Good thing my brother woke me up. So, once more into the breach, dear friends.

The *Space: Above and Beyond* panel was of prime interest and I only missed a little bit. Unfortunately, the discussion was mostly moot, dealing with how the show should be continued. Realistically, I have to say that the fan base for this show is too small to effect a continuation but I would like to see re-runs. This is achievable.

The discussion on the tour of the *B5* sets was absolutely fascinating. We net Yolande and Chantal at this panel. After having visited the dealer area, we all found that we needed money. The ATM across the street was out of money. We were told by the receptionist that there was a bank down the road. Yolande and I took my truck and headed to the bank. The thrice-cursed ATM swallowed my card!! All that was missing was a satisfied burp. I was not a happy camper. There never is a blaster around when you need one!

I went to see Claudia Christian on stage. Cathy did not like her and thought she was nuts. I merely voiced my impression that she was a little high-strung. Of course, she was discussing her imminent departure



Krikor Ajemian as Sir Galahad: favourite colour...blue.

Photo by Dominique Durocher.

from *B5* and urged the fans to support her and get her back on the show.

I had to forego RDM because we wanted to have dinner before the masquerade. The masquerade was probably the best event of the whole con. There were a few costumes that I absolutely have to mention: the first *Men In Black*—Cindy and JJ. I loved the part where they gave the MC some shades before flashing the audience. (I must have dreamed that episode). Krikor's Sir Galahad, whose favourite colour was...blue. The one costume that did it for me was Lynda's Darkside Princess Leia. Villains do have more fun!

After a bit of relaxation in Harry's Bar, I returned to the anime room for some truly disgusting japanimation. The films I saw were guaranteed to turn off anybody who was not into animation off the topic for good. I loved it.

DAY 3



Lynda Pelley as Darkside Princess Leia: favourite colour...black.

Photo by Dominique Durocher.

I fell out of bed again at some ungodly hour. After breakfast I managed to catch another panel. "*B5* Atheist or Religion" was excellent. As the panelists admitted that they were all committed Christians, they regretted that nobody from another point-of-view was on the panel. The discussion, however, was very lively.

When Robert McNeill came on he was very articulate, but rather felt that the gum chewing was unnecessary. He gave some interesting insights into the workings of *Voyager*.

One of the best panels that I saw was "The Worlds of Gerry Anderson". I will not very soon forget Doug, who had pictures for every topic of conversation. I thought; no, I did not think; I was simply ecstatic that someone was even crazier about those models than I was. Larry Stewart, who usually seemed to dominate discussions, had apparently a hard time getting a word in edgewise.

Well, as it was getting closer to

the end of the con, the audience was getting smaller for the panels. So there was only five people left for the discussion on the *Star Wars: Special Edition*. Anyhow, we had some interesting speculation on the upcoming first trilogy. It had better be good or there will be trouble.

As an aside, Yolande managed to convince my brother to cough up some tapes on *Space: Above and Beyond*. As I am writing these lines, he is busy transferring his copies into a watchable form, ie: no commercials. Funny, I've never been able to get him to do that.

After the closing ceremonies, I felt obliged to go up to the sound guys and congratulate them on their good selection of intermission music. I listen to the same stuff on a regular basis.

We closed the convention by going back to Kelsey's and celebrating with a slow dinner.

Well, there you have it folks. I think for Toronto Trek XII I have pre-reg number 13. I am hooked and it is all your fault! I would like to thank everybody who did such an amazing job of keeping me entertained this weekend.

73's and clear skies!

Editor's Note:

Ernst, being a newbie, missed the dead dog. The hotel opened the pool, which included hot-tubs, for T-Trek attendees after hours on Sunday from 11:00pm to midnight, for a private pool party. It was great!

STARCON REVIEW

by Lynda Pelley

Starcon was Canada's first ever *Star Wars* convention. It took place in Toronto's Colony Hotel on Sunday, October 5th, 1997. Run by Fastball Sportscards, the convention was presented in association with the *Star Wars: Men Behind The Masks* tour, a series of conventions which appeared in major U.S. cities throughout 1997 and featured the *Star Wars* actors who played the supporting characters whose faces

were not seen on screen.

A pared-down version of *Men Behind The Masks*, Starcon's only two guests were David Prowse (Darth Vader) and Jeremy Bulloch (Boba Fett). Both gave enthusiastic presentations and were fan friendly. Jeremy Bulloch even invited a few fans up on stage with him in a mock audition for the part of Boba Fett. Dressed in my Princess Leia costume, I was one of the lucky contestants!

Both actors signed autographs for many hours. The very long lineup of fans extended outdoors—it's a good thing the weather was nice! Sadly, the autographs weren't free, even if you brought your own items to be signed. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that I have seen actors charge for their signatures, a bad new trend at media cons.

The convention itself was organized much like a Creation or K&L show. There was a large room for presentations, dealers rooms, and a fan display room. The dealers rooms contained, for the most part, commonly available *Star Wars* merchandise or alternately, rare collectors' items that were way too expensive to buy. So I didn't buy much, other than a few slides taken from a sliced-up movie trailer for the *Special Editions*.

The fan display room was run by some of the same people who did the *Star Wars* display at Toronto Trek, and contained the same items I had seen a few months earlier at T-Trek. (I heard later that there was some friction between the Fastball/Starcon organizers and some Toronto Trek



On stage with Jeremy Bulloch. Photo by Theresa Penalba.

con-com members over the placement of T-Trek flyers on the freebie tables in the hallway. Two very different styles of conventions, with very different types of appeal; surely Toronto is a big enough place for both cons to co-exist—but who can figure Toronto fannish rivalries?! I didn't know about it while at the con and more importantly, it didn't spoil my enjoyment of the con.)

There were fan panels and slide shows both before and after the main guest presentations, as well as a masquerade. It turned out to be a fashion show, rather than the costume contest that was advertised on the convention flyer. About 25 people participated. It was fun, but I would have preferred a competition with prizes.

Overall, I had a good time at Starcon. I knew before I arrived what type of con it would be, one for which you buy a ticket, not a membership—at least it was a front-row, preferred-seating ticket—so I was not disappointed. The organizers did a reasonably good job, considering that it was their first convention attempt. I'll be back, if they bring more good *Star Wars* guests to the area.



Saving the universe from those pesky Klingons. Josée Bellemare (super hero) and Marquise Boise (Klingon), entrants in the Con•Cept masquerade. Photo by Lynda Pelley.



Tatania (Nicola Stoeckert) and Oberon (Krikor Ajemian) from the animated television series Gargoyles. Artisan category entrants in the Con•Cept masquerade. Photo by Lynda Pelley.

CON•CEPT REVIEW

by Lynda Pelley

Con•Cept '97 took place in the Days Inn in downtown Montreal over the weekend of September 26-28. Also running concurrently and in conjunction with Con•Cept was the French-language literary con, Boréal.

I've been to almost all of the Con•Cepts over the years, but this was the first time that I was neither a member of the concom nor a club president. I actually had time to attend panels and other activities, and enjoy the convention for a change. According to my subjective judgement, this was the best Con•Cept ever.

The Guest of Honour was author Lois McMaster Bujold. Additional guests included Jeffrey Carver, John Clute, Julie Czerneda, Josepha Sherman, Larry Stewart, and several other writers, editors, and artists. The Fan Guests of Honour were Lloyd and Yvonne Penney. While Con•Cept does not have the budget to invite expensive actor guests, I was happy to see that the convention attempted to address the interests of media fans by inviting *Star Trek*

author Josepha Sherman (*Vulcan's Forge* and its sequel, *Vulcan's Heart*). She was the guest that I enjoyed meeting the most.

Whether intentional or not, many of the panels seemed like they were part of an overall theme of cross-over between science fiction and fantasy. Perhaps it was just the mix of guests, and cross-over was one of the experiences they all had in common. Many of the panels also touched on the subject of mixed media. One of the best panels that I attended was given by Lois McMaster Bujold, Julie Czerneda, Jean-Pierre Normand, and Larry Stewart, and was about how well the cover art on books relates to the text inside (or not!).

Even with attending all of those good panels, I managed to find some time check out the dealers room. Unfortunately, the dealers room was rather weak this year. There was absolutely nothing in that room that I wanted to buy. This is one of the few times that a convention dealers room didn't cost me any money!

The Con•Cept masquerade, on the other hand, was excellent. While only about 15 people entered, the

costumes presented were of a very high quality. There were quite a few entrants competing at the artisan level. The masquerade was also very well attended, so much so, that the room it was held in was too small.

Con•Cept is well known for its usually excellent post-masquerade dance. Unfortunately, this year the dance was the poorest item of programming at the convention. The DJ was terrible and his choice of music was even worse. Even after a few drinks, I couldn't dance to this crap! I almost always stay until the dance ends in the wee hours of the morning. I walked out of this one in frustration and went to bed early! Yes, it was that bad!

Except for the dance, I had a great time at Con•Cept this year. Many thanks to the concom members and volunteers for all of their fine work in keeping Montreal's longest-running SF convention alive.



Toronto Trek 12: July 10-12, 1998
Science Fiction, Fantasy and Beyond
 Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



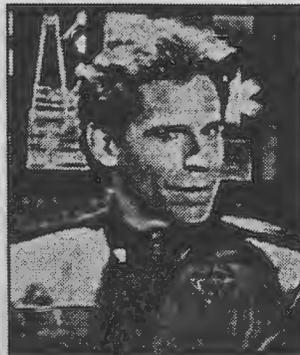
Robert Beltran
 Star Trek: Voyager
 Commander Chakotay



Richard Hatch
 Battlestar Galactica
 Captain Apollo



Anne Lockhart
 Battlestar Galactica
 Sheba



Jeff Conaway
 Babylon 5
 Security Chief Zack Allen

**B5
 MiniCon
 Guests**



Jason Carter
 Babylon 5
 Marcus Cole

*B5 guests
 will appear
 on the
 main stage.*

Author Guest
Julie E. Czerneda
"A Thousand Words for Strangers"

Star Trek: Consultant
Richard Arnold

Master of Ceremonies
Larry Stewart
(Illustrator/Comedian)

Fan Fiction Guest
Novad
"Mistress Jenway"

Comic Book Guests
Leonard Kirk **Terry Pallot** **Tom Wegrzyn**
Super Girl *Star Trek: Voyager* *Star Fleet Academy*

All guest appearances subject to professional commitments.

*This Year's MiniCon
 Canada's Unofficial Babylon 5 Meet Party
 brings you the best of the best of the Babylon 5 universe
 For more information on the many of our exciting events in this city*

For More Information

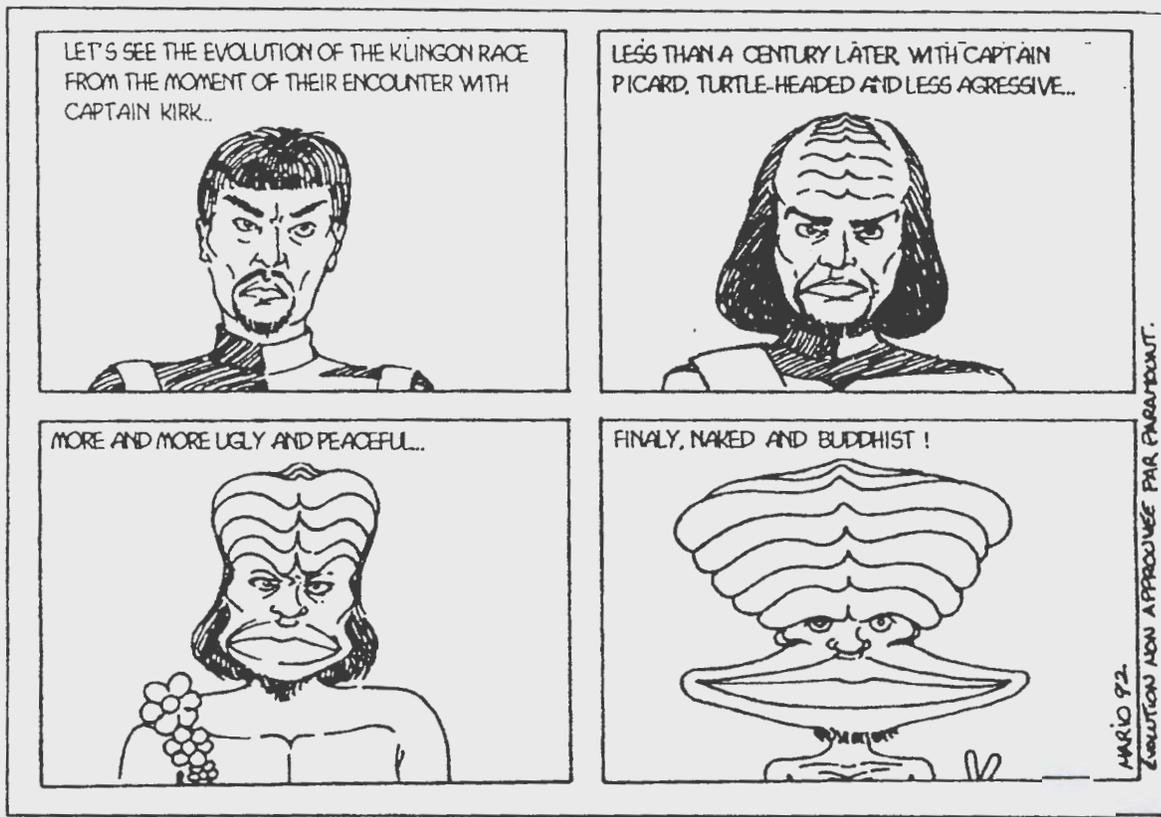
E-mail:
 tcon@icomm.ca
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 www.icomm.ca/tcon/
Phone:
 416-410-TCON(8266)

SASE to:
 Toronto Trek,
 Suite 0116, Box 187,
 65 Front Street West,
 Toronto, Ontario,
 M5J 1E6

Hotel Information
 900 Dixon Road
Reservations
(Remember: mention Toronto Trek!)
 800-268-4838 (7am-7pm)
 416-675-1500 (other times)

CONCEPT

b o r é a l



Montreal's science fiction and fantasy convention hosting 1998's
Convention/Aurora awards

October 2, 3 & 4 1998 at the Days Inn downtown

Guests of honor: Robert J. Sawyer and Yves Meynard

Grand Master fan guest of honor: Forrest J. Ackerman

Artist guest of honor: Mario Giguère

Master of ceremony: Larry Stewart

Con*cept/Boréal 1998 web site: <http://afm.infinet.net/concept>

Membership Rates:

Weekend: \$25.00 before September 15, 1998 by mail and \$30.00 at the door. Daily rates available at the door. Children 6 and under are free, 7 to 12, half price.

Con*cept

P.O. Box 405, Station "H"
Montreal, Qc, Canada H3G 2L1

To pre-register, simply fill out our advance registration form and mail it to the above mentioned address, along with a cheque or money order in the correct amount, made out to Con*Cept. Or, in person at Nebula, 1832 St-Catherine West, Montreal.

Thank you for pre-registering early.

Convention hotel:

This year we are returning to the Days Inn Downtown, 1005 Guy Street, metro Lucien-L'Allier or metro Guy, one block south of Ste.Catherine Street.

room rates are:

\$85 for single and doubles

\$95 for triples and quads

Mention Con*Cept when making your reservations.

Toll Free: 1-800-567-0880

In Montreal: (514) 938-4611

Convention schedule:

Programming will run all week end long and will bring you something different to do every day.

Programming will run:

Friday: 6 pm to midnight

Saturday: 9 am to midnight

Sunday: 9 am to 5 pm

The Dealers Room, the Display Area and Art Show will be open:

Friday: 5 pm to 9 pm

Saturday: 10 am to 8 pm

Sunday: 10 am to 3 pm

Registration will be open:

Friday: 3 pm to 10 pm

Saturday: 9 am to 8 pm

Sunday: 9 am to 3 pm

Some activities, including the Video Room, the Dance and the consuite, will run later.

Programming Activities

Include:

Discussion Panels, Artists workshops, Exhibits, Dealer's Room, Masquerade, Art Show, Gaming, SF&F Model Making Competition, Art, Book & Collectibles Auction, Video Room, Dance and much much MORE!
info : <http://afm.infinet.net/concept>

Panels:

We will have four tracks of programming, with topics ranging from the serious to the whimsical. Subjects will include a mix of literary, media, art, science and humor panels. Boréal will run the track of French programming throughout the weekend. If you have a panel you would like to see and/or participate in, please write to Con*cept, c/o Programming director, or <http://afm.infinet.net/concept>

Dance:

A Con*Cept tradition, our annual Dance will take place right after the masquerade and will last until the last dancer drops from exhaustion or until the sun rises, whichever comes first. Info: reischl@cam.org

Masquerade:

The Con*Cept Masquerade will allow all costumers to show their stuff to all convention attendees. The masquerade will take place Saturday night right before the dance. Masquerade registration will take place at the Con*Cept table in the lobby area. Info : reischl@cam.org

Dealers' Room:

Tables cost \$60.00 for the first table, and \$40.00 for additional tables, with a maximum of three. Space is limited, paid reservations are accepted as received. infos : jp.nor-mand@sympatico.ca

Art Show and Print Shop:

Our art show will once again allow artists to display and sell their work. Panels and tables cost \$10.00 each. There is a maximum of 2 units per artist (2 panels, 2 tables or 1 panel and 1 table) and a 10% commission will be deducted from all sales. There will be no display fee for the print shop, but, again, a 10% commission will be charged on all sales. There will be no handling fee for mail-in art but a \$20.00 deposit is requested to cover return mailing costs. Space is allotted on a first come first served basis and pre-registration is recommended. For more information and/or an artist registration kit, please write to the Con*Cept address c/o the Art Show Director info : sylvst@total.net

Gaming:

Once again we will have a room were gamers will be able to confront ultimate evil armed only with puny pencils and dice! Infos : aa_losie@alcor.concordia.ca

Consuite:

Our consuite will once again allow hungry, thirsty and tired fans to go and fuel up and take a breather, as well as socializing with other convention attendees.

Video and Animation Rooms:

Our Video and Animation Rooms will feature a large variety of film and animation classics as well as some great TV shows. Special programming from the Fant-Asia team as a bonus! A complete schedule will be posted at the convention.

Volunteers:

Volunteers will earn our undying thanks, for seven hours of work, a free t-shirt, for more than 14 hours a free convention membership for the 1999 convention. The greatest reward is the chance to meet other fans and the guests. Ask at the registration desk for all details. Contact: afm@videotron.net

Name: _____

Badge name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov./State: _____ Postal code _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ e-mail: _____

I want to volunteer _____

Send to : Con*cept, P.O. Box 405, Station H, Montreal, Qc H3G 2L1 or Nebula, 1832 St-Catherine West, Montreal
Visit our web site for updates: <http://afm.infinet.net/concept>

COVER STORY: SHE SAID, HE SAID...

The news broke at Toronto Trek (July 18-20, 1997). It started as gossip in the dealer's room, but hardly anyone believed it until Claudia Christian announced it on stage. She would not be returning when Babylon5 moved to TNT for its fifth season!

*She claims she was fired.
They claim she left.*

Babylon 5 fandom is very closely associated with the internet, much more so than any other type of SF fandom. Anyone who has anything to say regarding B5 says it on the net. Here's how this drama played out on the usenet newsgroups.

This is sad. This is stupid. And Babylon 5 has just not been the same without her...

Date: Sun, 20 Jul 1997 20:45:38 -0400 (EOT)
Subject: Statement from Claudia Christian

Claudia Christian has requested that the following be posted on her behalf.

Dear Folks,

Here's my side of the story and I should know because I was there.

On June 20th, I was called into the B-5 office to find out the fate of the 5th season. With three other cast members present we were told that we could make the fifth season (yeah!). We were then asked to give up the residuals for that season (those are the things that pay the rent since syndication isn't exactly lucrative). Well, nonetheless I said okay-I even volunteered to talk the rest of the cast into it. I had expressed my hesitation in extending my contract renewal because I wanted to get their assurance that in the 5th season I could get at least 4 episodes off to do a film. That was the only thing I was asking for. No raise--accepting a paycut--simply less episodes, period. Ask yourself this: why would I have done the TNT promos for the 5th season if I did not want to be involved?

While I was in Europe (I was there for almost a month), I heard about the gossip column in Variety. It is a gossip column, nothing more. I have no idea who planted the gossip and frankly, I didn't think much of it since Hollywood is based on gossip. Because the producers and Joe were in Europe, I

assumed negotiations for the 5th season would continue when we all returned. I was told quite curtly that my request for time off had been denied and that Ken Parks from Warner Bros. had told my agent to tell me to "Find another job, we'll replace her." After four years of working for a substantial paycut because I loved the show and the people involved, and felt that I was portraying a character that people really cared about, this hurt me immensely.

At that point, I was in shock but I still went to Blackpool thinking that they would come around and give me the time I needed off. I knew Ivanova was in the first episodes. I figured we could sit down with my agent and come to a deal. In Blackpool, I was told by JMS that he would give me the episodes off but I could not get anything in writing. I trust him, however I know that he was not writing all of the episodes for the fifth season so I really felt that I had to have something in writing. It turns out my fears were justified because when my agent spoke to John Copeland (producer) and mentioned Joe's offer to write me out of a few episodes, Mr. Copeland responded by saying "That's not possible. If TNT wants her in every episode then she has to do all 22. That's the deal, take it or leave it."

At this point, I was told that I had until Monday to call Warner Bros. to tell them I was on board. Well Folks, an actor does not call a studio. Our union has rules. The producers of B-5 never called my manager or agent to tell them of this deadline. Instead, I was told by Jeff Conaway. I called my agent and left word. We missed each other. On Monday, I found out that on the previous Friday my agent had received a fax stating that the offer for me to be in B-5 was withdrawn. In essence, I was fired. This fax was received on Friday, so what kind of game was being played by giving me false hopes throughout the weekend in England? And by the way, on Tuesday of that week, I was in London promoting the show and doing magazine interviews and TV talk shows for them on my own time. Why would I do that if I did not believe something could be worked out?

If they really wanted me back, they would have accepted my plea through my agent to sit down and have a meeting. He was told by John Copeland that he was "a dollar short and a day late." They simply did not even want to sit down with me!

Once again. I would do season 5...if I had less episodes. I am hurt and disappointed that I have not even received the opportunity to discuss my needs. I was dismissed coldly and simply. I want you to know that I have given my heart to the show and I love Ivanova as much as any of you. I did not "leave" the show. I did not ask for more money. I did not create this mess. Perhaps this is a great lack of communication. I would like to think that. Thank you all for your love and support. I would never abandon you.

Claudia Christian

20-Jul-97 21:11:04

Sb: #685937-#Claudia C fired!

Fm: J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI

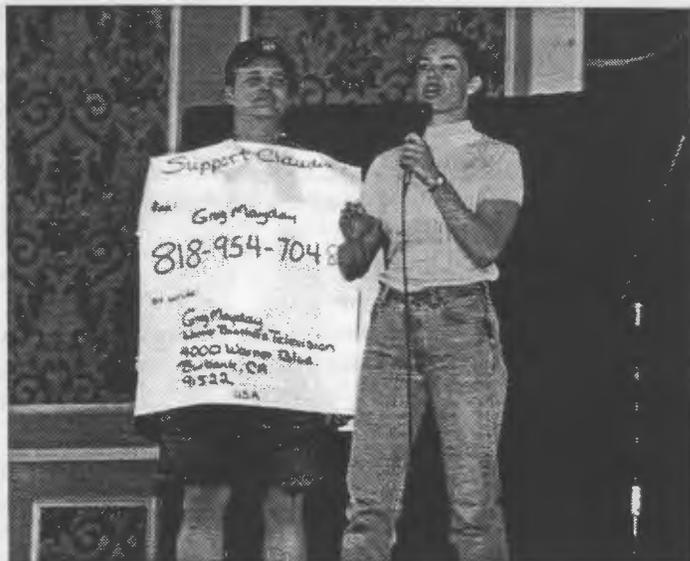
You must understand that Claudia is one of 10 or so actors on the show. The other actors understood and understand that we cannot renegotiate contracts in mid-stream, and they are *supportive of the show*. and gave us extensions on their contracts so that WB could have time to make the TNT deal work. They are all, to a man and woman, on board otherwise.

Claudia opted to not give the extension, where the other cast did, and now wants (or says she wants to) renegotiate, now that all the other castmembers are locked down. To do so in her case, when she did not give us the extension, and deliberately embarrassed WB by having an article appear in the trades saying she was out and looking for other work, would be an insult to all the other cast members who have worked with us to date.

Further, yes, she's right, in that the contract could not be changed so that she could go out and do movies at a moment's notice. By contract, we must have first call on an actor's services. That is a requirement of ANY TV contract with an actor who is a series regular. That cannot be changed for ANY actor, ANYwhere.

That said...I already *told* Claudia that, even though we couldn't put it in the contract, I would be happy to work with her *informally* on this, and that if she said she needed to be gone from X-date to Y-date, I would write her out of those episodes so that she could do the movies. SHE ALREADY GOT FROM ME THAT PROMISE. I've already done similar things for her and other cast members on the show, which is how many of them have appeared in other projects. So this is, for me, a non-issue.

No, from my standpoint, she wanted off the show, and I have no idea why she is running up the fans like this unless she wants to avoid



Claudia Christian (with help from Larry Stewart) campaigns for support from fans at Toronto Trek. Photo by Lynda Pelley.

responsibility for this.

Again, this isn't a case of my word against hers. EVERY SINGLE CAST MEMBER was there when this went down, and MANY of them tried to talk her out of walking off the show. If you don't want to take my word for it, ask any one of them who was there, especially Bruce or Jeff.

I would suggest the fans *not* get into this, because a) you're not getting solid or reliable information from Claudia, and b) it is simply too late. She opted to pass on season 5, whether she wants to admit this or not, whether she's running from responsibility from that. I don't know...but it was her choice. I sat with her on Thursday night at Midnight and told her, flat out, that I would accommodate her request on a personal basis, and that she *had* to either contact WB herself or have her agent do so the next day, or she was off the show, because we HAD to get the show going. The train was leaving, and she could be on it or not as she chose. She chose not to get on board.

What you also don't understand is that we start shooting season 5 in less than one month. We're in the process of writing scripts *right now*. and have been since we got the production order right about the time we went to Blackpool. You can't whipsaw the writing back and forth -- is she in, isn't she in, maybe she is, maybe she isn't -- and hope to have anything in shape to shoot. That was why we had to know at that date. Normally we have a longer lead time; this time we didn't, and this has already put the scripts back a bit. The script with the new character is written and in; if I take it out now I have to replace it, and there isn't *time*.

Claudia knew this. WB knew this. We were up against it. She had to choose to be in, or out. She chose out. It's no longer our responsibility, and it's

flatly too late to bring her back. The door is closed on season 5.

jms

Date: Tue, 22 Jul 1997 09:12:04 -0400 (EOT)
Subject: JMS replies to Claudia's statement
Sb: #685938-#Claudia sez this..
Fm: J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI

1) This confirms what I said in my note to Brian, that I personally assured Claudia of the chance for time off.

2) Neither I nor anyone else in B5 told her that she had until Monday. I sat with her Midnight Thursday and said she had to talk to her agent and get this to WB *the very next day*, Friday, or that was it. Jeff took it upon himself to try and talk Claudia into trying to work it out on Monday, out of his concern and a hope that this could be saved.

3) Her agent was notified several days prior to the deadline that it was in place by WB business affairs.

4) As noted in my other message, there wasn't time to sit down leisurely after Blackpool and discuss this. The first script had to be in on July 6th. The second on July 12th. The third one on July 18th. Those are the hard and fast deadlines in order to meet production requirements for season 5. It is now July 20th. By the time anyone could "sit down" we'd be deep into episode 5 or 6, and then what do we do? Rewrite all 5 or 6 at the last minute?

It's an unfortunate situation. Nobody's denying that. But what happened, happened.

jms

Subject: JMS's last word
Date: Tue Jul 22 15:25:07 1997

Let me put this to you straight-out, because I've now gotten about 75 more emails tonight, not a few of them threatening. Some people have told me that I had better look over my shoulder the next time I come to a convention. I have been called every name in the book. Right now I am about 2 inches away from yanking the modem out of the wall and leaving it out.

Let's get this straight, shall we?

1) We asked Claudia back. We wanted Claudia back.

2) Claudia passed.

3) The time during which she could have come back has expired. The deadline was not put on arbitrarily. We roll film on August 18, just a few weeks from now. We *had* to know by the date given whether or not she would be in so that scripts could be written. There was no longer any time.

4) The boat, as they say, has left the pier. You can't whipsaw scripts back and forth and do it all at the last minute.

5) It is *too late* for anything to change this for season 5. Whether 1 letter or 1 million letters come in, it's too late. It's *done*. She passed, and we've had no choice but to move on. The only thing that will be accomplished by more emails -- threatening or otherwise -- is to piss off me and WB, not necessarily in that order. Harassment usually pushes people in the opposite direction than that intended, and this will be no exception.

This was not a miscommunication. This was not a mistake. There is no time, and no opportunity, for further negotiations. There is no middle ground, there are not three sides or four or seven. Anybody who doesn't want to take my word for this scenario can ask any of the actors. Ask Bruce. Ask Jeff. Ask anyone who was there. (Except Jerry, who came in Monday and missed the fireworks.)

She passed. Not us. The problem is not at this end of the modem line, and the accusations, threats, abuse and intimidations are unmerited and undeserved.

I have been straight with the net community now for going on five years. At San Diego Comic Con, I asked Shane Shellenbarger, a fan and sometimes journalist who has taped my every convention appearance for the last 5 years if he had *ever* caught me in a lie or a contradiction or a misrepresentation. He couldn't find even one. I've told you the truth in this. If five years of telling the truth isn't good enough, then nothing I've done has meant a damn, and I shouldn't be here.

I have to write this show and get it off the ground. I can do that, or I can deal with harassing email. I can't do both. Especially when I did nothing to deserve it except do everything in my power to keep Claudia from passing on the show.

jms



It Came From The Sci-Fi Modeler's Desk

THE FURIES ARE COMING: OFFICIAL BABYLON 5 GAMING MINIATURES AND MODELS

by Dominique Durocher

Just in time for the final season of Babylon 5, we finally get some decent and officially licensed models.

First, there are a set of gaming miniatures by Agents of Gaming in support of their game Babylon 5 Wars. These are white metal and quite small. The fighters are all about one inch in their longest dimension, either length or span. As they are meant to be used during games, they are designed to be to the same scale, more or less. That is, the fighters are about the right size to one another, about 1/285; the cruisers all relatively close in their dimensions, although not the same scale as the fighters (the Omega-Class destroyer is said to be 5 inches long with a separate rotating section), and the same goes for the stations, with B5 itself apparently being about 8 inches long.

First is the Earthforce StarFury. It consists of two parts, one being the top wing and cockpit, with a separate bottom wing. The Minbari Nial fighter is also molded in two parts, the fuselage and two lower wings with a separate upper wing. There are also Narn Frazi-Class heavy fighters and Centauri Senti fighters and Raider Delta-V fighters. All of these are cast in a single piece. The last of the small ships is the Minbari Flyer. Although it is not a fighter, it is roughly in the same size class and as such made to the same scale. The only currently available

capital ship is the Minbari Warcruiser. It is made of 16 parts, main and rear bodies, three main and four secondary fins, and 7 antennae/weapons arrays. The small ships come in packs of three and include a hexagonal base and stand. The Warcruiser is a single pack.

Although the detail on these kits is very nice; this Starfury is currently the most accurate and detailed in spite of its small size, but will soon be outclassed; the casting can vary greatly, from very crisp to not so good. I have some fighters on which the leading edges are half missing and the front of one Starfury is completely missing. Some thin detail can be rather crudely cast, particularly the vectoring fins of the Starfury. Check packs carefully before buying them. Fit of the parts is generally good, although again quite variable. The Minbari fighters were quite good and consistent, but some Starfuries fit quite tightly with very little gap while others left an opening behind the cockpit of almost a millimeter. The Warcruiser is not as good. The surface finish is severely pitted and filling will be required around all the fins, but otherwise seems to fit well. One problem is that it lacks instructions.

These are only the first in a series of miniatures, with a total of 72 planned, including just about every ship seen in the series so far and some they designed and might be used in future episodes. Fighter packs retail at about Can\$9, and the Warcruiser should go for about \$5 more, although I haven't seen any in stores here yet.

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA COLONIAL VIPER COCKPIT DETAIL SET

by Dominique Durocher

Along with the re-release by Revell-Monogram of their line of Battlestar Galactica kits, there is now a cockpit detail set for the Colonial Viper. It consists of 7 resin pieces, two photo-etched brass canopy frames, a 1/2" .040 rod, 2"x2" .040 white styrene sheet and a 2"x2" .015 clear styrene sheet.

The cockpit tub consists of a floor and two side panels. The side panels mate very nicely at the front and back, although the back needs to be held properly to maintain a good flat surface, as it tends to bend slightly towards the interior. A front instrument panel glues onto the mating surface at the front of the cockpit halves. The floor piece includes the seat cushion and a forward projection that stabilizes the cockpit in place and plugs the hole in the fuselage bottom. I am told there is currently an error in this and it needs to be shaved by about 1/8" to fit properly (a problem that will soon be fixed for coming batches). These all fit nicely together after a little cleanup. The locating tabs work very well. The instruments on the cockpit sides are nice, although some small bubbles do intrude on some details. The forward instrument panel is bubble-free in the set I have. The seat back is nice and simple with a half round headrest. It has very little detail, but the original didn't have any either. Mine has a couple of large sub-surface bubbles. The control stick looks good, although I think the

trigger is too wide. Again there are a couple of small bubbles in the corners. The last resin piece is the backrest, which replaces the rear part of the canopy projecting into the top intake. The pour tabs seem to have been removed from the cockpit sides, but it is still on the backrest. On the currently available set, one needs to bevel the cockpit tub top outer edges to fit properly in the fuselage halves.

The cockpit frames are photo etched, a last minute change that delayed release. They look to be quite nice from what I've see so far, but I haven't folded mine yet. The clear styrene sheet is provided for the glass, but I'll replace it with .005 stock I already have. Window templates are provided on the instruction sheet. Depending on how the rear tab is folded, the cockpit can be displayed as open or closed, the styrene rod is provided for the cockpit actuator to be placed in the backrest.

To install the cockpit in the kit, one must first plug the current opening, as it is the wrong shape and not even symmetrical. The white styrene sheet is provided for this along with a template to shape it properly. A second template provides the proper shape for the new opening. As I haven't tried this yet, I can't say how accurate it is.

This cockpit is meant to accurately reflect what was seen in the show, and has a shape and layout a decent pilot wouldn't be caught dead in, but it is accurate. Some changes are coming. The side panel detail should soon be changed for photo etch; and another, more functional cockpit is planned. I also saw a test shot of the seated pilot, and it looks nice. Again some changes are in the works here to avoid casting problems and some details (buckles) will be photo etched when ready.

The unpainted build-up on display looked nice, and I can't wait to get this one done.



Dorval 98

Scale Model Contest

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19th 1998

Holiday Inn Airport, 6500 Côte de Liesse, Ville St-Laurent (Montreal) Qc

Cost : Registrations - Adults : \$ 6.00 + \$ 1.00 / Model
 Juniors (16 years of age and younger) \$ 3.00 + \$ 1.00 / Model
 Showroom General Admission \$ 2.00 (from 10:00-13:00)
 ♦♦♦♦♦

Schedule : 07:30 - 08:30 Vendors set-up (closed to public)
 08:30 ————— Model registration opens, Vendors open.
 10:00 Showroom opens to public
 12:00 Model registrations close
 13:01 - 15:30 Judging period
 15:30 Vendors close
 15:31 - 16:30 Awards presentation

First, second and third place awards in 70+ categories. Special Awards for the following themes:
 (see back of page for category and award description)

Special theme Awards

AIRCRAFT : Best Detailed Aircraft ARMOR : Foreign Origin Armor SHIPS : Modern Warships (1950 +)

Regular Grand Awards: Best of show judges choice, Best of show people's choice, Best aircraft, Best Armor, Best ship, Best Diorama
 Best Automotive, Best Science Fiction, Best Figurine and Best Junior.

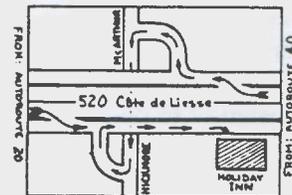
Other Special Awards: Best axis aircraft, Best Canadian Aircraft, Best Canadian Armor.

Directions (or how to get there...)

Bus/Metro : Crémazie Metro, bus # 100 west or DuCollege Metro, bus #202 west

Autoroute 20 : Dorval Airport / Côte de Liesse exit (# 56) ,follow indications for autoroute 520 Côte de Liesse , take Hickmore exit (# 5) and follow service road to hotel.

Autoroute 40 : Côte de Liesse exit (# 65), follow autoroute 520 Côte de Liesse indications until Hickmore exit (# 5),turn right for Hickmore road then turn left to go under Côte de Liesse, take first right after underpass then turn right again and follow service road to hotel.



For additional information, please contact:
 François (Frank) Huot (514) 364-4462

For Hotel info call (514) 739-3391 or 1-800-HOLIDAY

See us on the internet: <http://pages.infinit.net/dragonsd>

MODEL COMPETITION/CONVENTION NOTES

Dorval 98:

See above and on page 25. Note that a "Special theme Award" was added for Science Fiction after the flyer was printed—Best *Babylon 5* Starfury! This show was excellent both last year and the previous year. Don't wait until the last minute - **Start working on your models NOW!**

Kangourou Model Contest:

The Kangourou hobby shop in the Alexis Nihon Plaza is holding their annual model contest the weekend of April 25-26, 1998. Kangourou participates in the MonSFFA discount program, so bring your club membership card.

World Model Expo 98:

July 9-12, 1998 in Toronto, the same weekend as Toronto Trek. This is the "WorldCon" of model building, so if you're interested in models and you happen to be in Toronto anyways for T-Trek, you may want to check out this show too. The hotel is the Inn on the Park, 1100 Eglinton Ave East, in downtown Toronto.

<http://web.idirect.com/~dwc/worldexpo98/main.html>

Dorval 98 Scale Model Contest Categories

1

REGULAR GRAND AWARDS

-BEST OF SHOW JUDGES CHOICE -BEST SPACE/SCIENCE FICTION -BEST FIGURINE -BEST SHIP -BEST JUNIOR
-BEST OF SHOW PEOPLES CHOICE -BEST AUTOMOTIVE -BEST AIRCRAFT -BEST ARMOR -BEST DIORAMA

SPECIAL AWARDS

-BEST WW2 AXIS AIRCRAFT -BEST CANADIAN AIRCRAFT -BEST MODERN SHIP
-BEST SUPERDETAILED AIRCRAFT -BEST CANADIAN ARMOR -BEST FOREIGN ORIGIN ARMOR

Contest Categories

A) AIRCRAFT

- A1 Biplanes and rigged types - 1/48 and smaller
- A2 Single engine prop - 1/72 and smaller
- A3 Multi engine prop - 1/72 and smaller
- A4 Single engine prop - 1/48
- A5 Multi engine prop - 1/48
- A6 Jets - 1/72 and smaller
- A7 Jets, Small - 1/48 (Length and/or span less than 55')
- A8 Jets, Large - 1/48 (Length and/or span more than 55')
- A9 Aircraft - 1/32 and bigger : all types
- A10 Helicopters - all types and scales
- A11 Civil Aircraft, sport, airliners - all types and scales
- A12 Scratchbuilt / Major conversion / Vacuforms

B) ARMOR

- B1 Tracked Vehicles, Closed Top, TURRETED - 1/35
- B2 Tracked Vehicles, Closed Top, NON-TURRETED-1/35
- B3 Armored wheeled Vehicles, Closed Top - 1/35
- B4 Softskins - 1/35
- B5 Open Top and Artillery - 1/35
- B6 Tracked Vehicles - 1/72
- B7 Wheeled Vehicles - 1/72
- B8 Scratchbuilt/Major conversion-all scales and types

C) AUTOMOTIVE

- C1 Cars - all scales and eras
- C2 Racing Cars - all types, scales and eras
- C3 Custom/ muscle cars - all scales and eras
- C4 Motorcycles - all types, scales and eras
- C5 Trucks (over 10000 lbs) - all scales and eras
- C6 Vans/Pick-ups - all scales and eras

D) DIORAMAS

- D1 Aircraft
- D2 Armor
- D3 Ships
- D4 Automotive
- D5 Space/Science-Fiction
- D6 Figurines (5 and/or more figs)
- D7 Collections(5 or more subjects, by theme or type)

F) FIGURINES

- F1 Foot, 70 mm and smaller - all eras
- F2 Foot, 71 mm and larger - all eras
- F3 Mounted - all scales and eras
- F4 Vignettes - all scales and eras (4 figs or less)
- F5 Busts
- F6 Fantasy - all scales(dragons,wizards,orcs...)

N) SHIPS

- N1 Powered Warships- all scales and eras
- N2 Sailing - all scales and eras
- N3 Submarines- all scales and eras
- N4 Civil - all scales and eras (tugboats, liners)
- N5 Scratchbuilt/Major conversion

SF) SPACE/SCIENCE-FICTION

- SF1 Air/Space vehicles, large (Starships)
- SF2 Air/Space vehicles,small(Fighters,Shuttles)
- SF3 Land vehicles - all scales and types
- SF4 Sea vehicles - all scales and types
- SF5 Figures/robots - all scales
- SF6 Meccha/Transformable vehicles - all scales
- SF7 Hypothetical - all types,scales and eras

J) JUNIORS (16 Years of age and younger)

- J1 Aircraft - all types and scales
- J2 Armor - all types and scales
- J3 Ships - all types and scales
- J4 Automotive - all types and scales
- J5 Space and Science Fiction -all scales and types
- J6 Figurines - all types and scales
- J7 DIORAMAS - all types and scales

Category Modification/creations

Head judges can modify (split) categories by types (i.e. P-51 category), theme (i.e. small and large jets) or by scale (1/700 and 1/350 ships) and can also create new categories for entries that have no specific category of their own (i.e. dinosaur category) IF NUMBERS ARE SUFFICIENT. Categories will NOT be combined.

Special Awards Definitions

Best Superdetailed Aircraft: Any aircraft that has extra SCRATCHBUILT detail added. Photoetch and Resin (i.e. buckles/wheels) details can be present but may not be considered. Resin inserts (i.e. Cockpit,engines) will NOT be considered. A MAJOR EFFORT MUST BE DISPLAYED !

Best Foreign Origin Armor: Any vehicle used by any other country than the country of origin. i.e. Canadian Leopard, USMC LAV,Captured Vehicles...

SUMMER '97 MOVIE REVIEWS, PT. 2

Summer '97 offered much in the way of genre films. If you didn't catch 'em first-run in theatres, there are always the video releases. *Warp's* reviewers are here to help sort out which flicks are worth a look! Last issue, our critics had a quick word on *The Fifth Element* and *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*. In this issue, we continue our reviews with *more* on these two, as well as opinion on the whack of flicks that followed:

THE FIFTH ELEMENT reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

This flick demonstrates perfectly that good special effects are no longer enough to make a good movie. The FX of *The Fifth Element* are very good, and some—like the swarms of flying cars in the canyon streets of future New York—are even eye popping. There are also some clever story elements; such as apartments equipped with built-in police raid conveniences and a constabulary force always perfectly polite. But sadly, those things are not enough to compensate for a soundtrack so loud that you miss much of the dialog, and a brand of humour that makes *Spaceballs* look Shakespearean by comparison. I do not even recommend renting the video, wait for it to be on cable if you are curious about this one.

THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

Jurassic Park astonished us with its life-like renderings of dinosaurs,

and it kept us at the edge of our seats with a plot full of unexpected developments. The effects of *The Lost World* are just as good—better, even—but the novelty has worn off. Now we know how it's done, and computer animation is everywhere to be seen. As for the plot, it is not quite silly enough that you can ignore its gaping holes, and there are so many people being devoured alive that I quickly lost count. The T-Rex roaming through San Diego is quite fun, but in my opinion does not have nearly the impact of the cruder stop-motion monsters of Ray Harryhausen doing the same thing. It is hard to put exactly into words the reasons why I liked the first movie better than its sequel, but the chemistry definitely wasn't there. I suppose it's like cooking: the end result depends much on how you mix the ingredients, no matter how good they are to start with. In this case, it is not a bad movie, but it could use a little more salt.

HERCULES reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

Do not watch this one if you have an exam in Greek Mythology the following day...This is a *very* liberal interpretation of the demi-god's story, and I have heard some purists condemn it on that ground. In fact, a Greek association of archeologists was so steamed that it barred Disney from using an historical site near Mount Olympus for the movie's premiere. However, if you are in the mood for that old-fashioned Disney look, you will probably find *Hercules* to be light and amusing. From an animation point-

BATMAN
AND
ROBIN:
"SUCKED"

MEN IN
BLACK:
"NOT BAD"

CONTACT:
"INTELLIGENT
SCIENCE
FICTION"

of-view, only the fight with the Hydra is truly spectacular, but the overall design is reminiscent of the *Rite of Spring* segment of *Fantasia*, one of my favourites, and the jokes are just a bit racier than what you would expect in this kind of movie. While it's probably not Oscar material, it is well worth the five bucks. I am also almost certain that a weekly TV series will come out of this one in the not too distant future.

KULL: THE CONQUEROR
reviewed by Lynda Pelley

If you like Kevin Sorbo in the *Hercules* syndicated TV series, you will love him in *Kull: The Conqueror*. He brings charisma, style, and humour to the role. The rest of the cast do a good job in the supporting roles, too.

The film, overall, is light entertainment—campy, but fun. Plenty of effects and stunts, a worthwhile sword and sorcery romp for a Saturday night.

Worth seeing on the big screen, especially if you have a bucket of popcorn.

BATMAN AND ROBIN
reviewed by Bryan Ekers

"Holy *sucked*, Batman!"

Surprisingly, this line or one like it was *not* spoken in the latest, big superhero-and-villain romp, *Batman and Robin*. A Burt Ward reference would have been right at home in a movie that featured lame quips, overblown props, ridiculously improbable fight sequences and goofily named henchmen. This "tribute" to the 1960s *Batman* television series only needed camera tilting on the villains to be complete! Meanwhile, George Clooney (the latest Batman) sliding down a dinosaur's tail in one scene makes for a nice tip of the hat to *The Flintstones*.

I regret that the English language just doesn't provide enough ways to say "*sucked*."

MEN IN BLACK
reviewed by Keith Braithwaite

This movie did fabulously at the box office and is clearly one of the Summer '97 season's big successes, living up to or surpassing expectations. Most reviews have been pretty good, pegging *MIB* as a hip, sci-fi comedy, an original film amongst a summer of sequels and tired rehashes.

I agree that, insofar as Hollywood product goes, at least, *Men in Black* is refreshingly original. On that feature alone it deserves a look, for it is true that much of the competition out there this summer has been of the seen-it-all-before variety. But a hip comedy? I'm not so sure. It certainly does have its moments and its amusing ideas, but overall, its not *that* hip and even less funny.

My kindest remarks are directed at stars Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones, who *make* this movie, in my humble opinion. They do much to carry the concept, strutting their stuff with just the right style and attitude. Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones do a great job with what they were given.

But what they were given, while not bad, wasn't all that extraordinary, either.

MEN IN BLACK
reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

Like *Independence Day* last summer, *Men in Black* has been advertised almost to death for months. I am happy to report that this one is not nearly as stupid as *ID4*. Intended as comedy from the start, it "passes" a lot easier, and I even suspect that some hard core conspiracy theorists are going to be convinced that the events described therein were taken from real life...

Do not expect to be astonished. My greatest disappointment came from the fact that many of the best scenes were seen on *Entertainment Tonight* first, leaving little surprise

when it came to watching the actual movie! Still, the basic concept is a refreshing departure from the stale fare which has been too common in Sci-Fi in recent years and the movie is technically sound. Another strong candidate for television, I hear that a Saturday morning cartoon is already in production.

CONTACT
reviewed by E. G. Holbraith

The cruel irony was almost too much to bear. In the same week that *Contact*, the film based on Carl Sagan's novel of the same name, hit movie theaters, JPL's *Pathfinder* spacecraft had landed on Mars (there, it was dubbed the Carl Sagan Mars Station) and deployed its Sojourner rover, which began crawling around on the sands of the Red Planet. Meanwhile, here on Earth, Sagan's latest books were selling in stores all around the world. All of this only a few short months after the astronomer/author's unexpected death.

Contact is a film that Sagan would have been proud of, had he lived to see it. It is one of the very few *intelligent* science fiction films to come out of Hollywood in recent years. Not since 2010 has a film shown such *respect* for its audience. Finally, an SF film with some SF in it! Add to that characters of some depth, characters that you take an interest in, and you've got something. *Contact* is big on imagination and drama, and makes great use of the few special effects it needs to tell its story. It's been criticized in some circles for being too slow, but I quite enjoyed the more measured pace of the story, and a *darn good* story it was, holding my attention right up to the closing credits.

A couple of minor quibbles: Jodie Foster is a bit too whiny and melodramatic to be entirely believable as the strong character she's supposed to be, and Matthew McConaughey is merely a pretty, boy-toy prat, dumbed down for the

film from the malevolent evangelist foe of the book.

So overall, a *great* film that I can enthusiastically recommend for anyone who is sick and tired of Dinosaurs "R" Us, The Fresh Prince of Saturn or the latest costume party of Überbuffoons.

GATTACA

reviewed by Lynda Pelley

Gattaca is a science fiction film which takes place in the near future. Thematically, it deals with some of the possible dangers of excessive genetic engineering, although in a much subtler way than *Jurassic Park*. The main plot is about a murder investigation, but the film is also a caper about going to great lengths to beat the unjust socio-economic system which results from the advances in genetic science. It's also about self-worth and the mind-over-matter will to succeed against all odds.

Gattaca is a more serious, hard science type of science fiction, which refreshingly does not depend on big explosions and outlandish special effects. Instead, it holds the viewers' interest with an intelligent, well-written story, good acting, and stylish cinematography. The film created enough suspense to hold my attention all the way though. *Gattaca* is a film experience that is deep enough to leave the viewers with something to think about as they leave the cinema.

This film was worth paying full price for on a Saturday night!

SPAWN

reviewed by Lynda Pelley

It's been quite a while since I paid full price for a movie which sucked this bad. (Well maybe not that long - I did see *Batman and Robin*...but this one was worse.)

This film commits the worst offense of all for a big-budget special effects film—it is boring! *Spawn* is a yawn.

The plot (what little there was) was lame and full of holes. The best part of the story was the opening, before the main character dies and goes to Hell.

The main villain, the clown, is played way too over the top. He was obnoxious and gross without being amusing. The jokes associated with his performance just fell flat. I got tired of him very quickly.

Sci-Fi/Fantasy films typically require a suspension of disbelief by the audience. The successful ones bring the viewer into the environment they create, distracting you from reality for two hours and letting you believe in the fantastic or super-natural properties that belong to their universe. *Spawn* was completely unconvincing. It just didn't grab me.

In this type of film the sets and special effects are responsible for creating a convincing environment. The sets were unremarkable and the effects, I was surprised to find out, were done by Industrial Light and Magic. This was not ILM's best performance, by far. The CGI animated effects were poor; the movement looked all wrong, like bad stop-motion.

This film's vision of Hell was one of the few reasonably good effects, but the filmmakers failed to show us what heaven looked like. It felt like the film was missing something without seeing the opposite side.

The best, most memorable and innovative part of *Spawn* was the end credits. They looked like they were shot with a badly malfunctioning camera and were processed in the lab from Hell. Absolutely great! They just didn't come soon enough for my liking.

Don't bother seeing *Spawn* in the cinema - it's not even worth it on a cheap Tuesday. Don't even pay money to rent it on video. Wait until you can see it free on network TV. No amount of editing for television will hurt this film.

Yes, it sucks that bad!

EVENT HORIZON

reviewed by Lynda Pelley

I was lucky enough to get a free pass to the press premiere of *Event Horizon*. The movie was worth seeing, but only once.

The film starts out as a hard-science type of science fiction. This is a refreshing change, considering the number of science fantasy and space opera films made. The premise is that the first faster-than-light drive has been developed. The ship goes on its first test flight and disappears. It suddenly re-appears seven years later. The story is told from the point-of-view of the ship's designer and the search and rescue team that go to salvage the ship and rescue the crew - except the crew is missing and the ship has brought back some sort of "entity"...

Event Horizon reminded me a lot of the first *Alien* movie. It had the same sort of atmosphere and tension. *Event Horizon* has great camera work and excellent special effects. I loved the ship design. The acting is also very good. The interaction between the characters is one of the things that make this film worth seeing. There is a certain British style to the overall film.

The first two thirds of *Event Horizon* are interesting hard science fiction. The film had so much potential, it's too bad that towards the end it degenerates into a slasher/*Hellraiser*-type of horror genre. The film lost my interest when the ship started to spontaneously produce rivers of blood, flames, and the undead scientist. What a waste of such a good set-up!

Event Horizon could have been one of the better sci-fi movies of the summer. The basic premise had so much story potential for a really great hard science fiction film. Even with the poor ending, this film is still worth seeing. Unfortunately, knowing the outcome of how the plot develops doesn't entice multiple viewings.

Oran Gleason had been a fixture at the club's meetings until a couple of years ago, when we began to see less of him. Oran, we learned, had cancer. He passed away on August 9, 1997.

I met Oran some 10 years ago—he joined MonSFFA (back then it was MonSTA, the Montreal Star Trek Association) about the same time I did. I quickly came to know that Oran was not only a big fan of *Star Trek*, but of *Doctor Who* and many other sci-fi TV shows. Anyone who spoke with him could not but know of his devotion to these shows; he knew every character's name and the actors who played them, every episode title and plot detail. He found in these shows a delight akin to that of a child, and he was always eager to share with his fellow MonSFFA members the joy his favourite shows brought him. And while some of us were often ready to rip into a series or an episode that we didn't like, I can't recall Oran ever joining us in our rants. I don't think it was in his nature to tear things down. He never had anything bad to say about his shows. Come to think of it, he never had anything bad to say about *anything*. He was that kind of a guy, choosing to see the best in things rather than the worst. In all of fandom—indeed, in all of my travels—I have met few people who were as genuinely amiable, of good spirit and as warm-hearted as Oran Gleason. He was a very special person, one who I am glad to have known, and one who I will never forget.

Oran, of course, loved *Star Trek* and a line from one of the films comes to mind, either *Wrath of Khan* or *Search for Spock*, I'm not sure which (Oran would have been able to tell me). Spock has died and Kirk offers a simple, heartfelt toast: "Absent friends."

—Keith Braithwaite

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Oran Gleason passed away on August 9, 1997; after a long, hard-fought battle with cancer.

Many know Oran to have been a very strong part of the Montreal Sci-Fi fan community; a very active member of many clubs including Warp 9, MonSFFA, the former High Council of Gallifrey (HCOG), and the British Television Fan Club to name but a few.

Always there with the knowledge of many, Oran could almost single-handedly take on anyone in trivia contests.

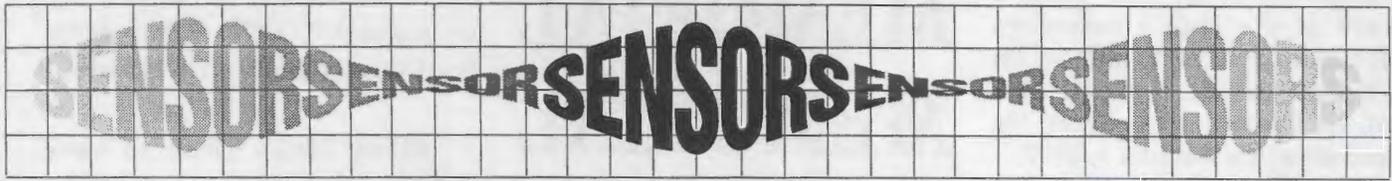
I knew Oran to be a great lover of not only sci-fi, but of television in general.

I sit here re-assured knowing that somewhere in that great Cosmos of ours sits Oran, in maybe a little cafe; perhaps he's chewing the fat or even playing cards. But at that table I see some of his favourites sitting with him: Jim Backus, Alan Hale, Mark Lenard, Gene Roddenberry, William Hartnell, Patrick Troughton, John Pertwee, and who knows who else.

Oran's contributions to meetings, events, and just plain phone calls, will be missed. It hasn't been the same since his battle started, and now we have our memories.

—Chris Chartier,

On behalf of everyone
who's life Oran touched.



FACT, RUMOUR AND SPECULATION FROM AROUND SF/F-DOM

Information for this column reaches from the inner mind to the outer limits.

NEXT TREK FLICK

Version 1:

The next *Star Trek* movie is in the works, a Fall '98 release planned. All of the *TNG* regulars have signed on, Patrick Stewart reportedly for \$12 million (he'll co-produce, too). The story involves a reactivated (and supposedly psychologically stable) Lore and his bid to settle a score with brother Data and the *Enterprise*. Expect lots of explosive action as Lore seizes control of a new, highly advanced and powerful Federation warship (designed to battle the Borg and the Dominion), out-gunning the *Enterprise* and leaving Picard and his crew in something of a no-win scenario. Rumour has it that a climactic moment will see a major sacrifice made by Data. And look again for a cameo appearance by either a *Voyager* or *DS9* regular.

Version 2:

Star Trek: Prime Directive seems to be the most recent working title of the ninth movie. Filming will be starting soon, with a tentative release scheduled for November 20, 1998.

All of the cast from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* will be returning and there is likely to be cameo appearances by some of the *Voyager* and *Deep Space Nine* actors.

One of the main guest starring roles in the new *Star Trek* movie reportedly goes to veteran actor Gene Hackman. Hackman is to play a renegade Starfleet Admiral (kind of sounds like his character in *Crimson Tide*, in a way). Wilford Brimley (the Quaker Oats man himself) will get one of the other guest roles,

although the character he will play is still a mystery to us. John Delancie is strongly rumoured to be in this film as well. There is also supposed to be a female guest star, yet to be cast.

One version of the script seems to involve the conflict between the Federation and the Maquis, with some meddling from Q. Perhaps it will be an *Apocalypse Now* type of storyline, including a renegade Starfleet Admiral operating from a base in the Badlands...

NEW SUPERMAN MOVIE

More on the new Superman movie:

We reported, last issue, that writer Kevin Smith procrastinated for a month and more after he was commissioned to pen a script and ended up turning in something that he'd banged out in one week. It must have showed, for he was summarily dismissed by the project's director, Tim Burton, and extensive rewrites are underway.

INDY 4

George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, Harrison Ford and Sean Connery are said to be discussing getting the stalled forth Indiana Jones movie going again. The proposed story is about how Indy's younger brother (to be played, possibly, by Kevin Costner) turns bad.

STAR WARS PREQUELS: DISTRIBUTION DEAL

In a move predicted by many industry insiders, 20th Century Fox acquired the worldwide theatrical and video distribution rights to the upcoming *Star Wars* prequel trilogy. The deal continues Fox's

longstanding relationship with Lucasfilm Ltd., which began 21 years ago when Fox released the original *Star Wars* movie to record box-office results.

As part of the deal, Fox Broadcasting Co. picked up the network broadcast rights to the first of the prequel films, tentatively titled *Episode I*. That film was shot last summer in England under the direction of *Star Wars* creator George Lucas—his first stint behind the camera since shooting the original movie in 1977—and is currently in post-production, with a planned release date of May 1999.

The new *Star Wars* trilogy takes place a generation before the events in the 1977 film and focuses on the origins of Darth Vader and Obi Wan Kenobi. In the first of the three films, Darth Vader is seen as a hopeful nine-year-old boy named Anakin Skywalker who pursues his dreams and confronts his deepest fears in the midst of a galaxy in turmoil. The second and third films in the prequel trilogy are tentatively scheduled for release in 2002 and 2005 respectively.

GUNFIGHT AT THE E.T. CORRAL

The science fiction and Western genres are about to cross-pollinate in the form of two movies, now in development. *Cowboys and Aliens* will ride into theaters from Universal and DreamWorks SKG, with producers hoping that the project will ripen into a major film franchise. Fox, meanwhile, will counter with *Ghost Riders in the Sky*.

TWO MORE ALIEN MOVIES

There are plans afoot for at least two more *Alien* movies. *Alien 5* and *6* may be filmed back-to-back like the

second and third *Star Wars* prequels.

The scripts aren't finished yet and nothing's been really started. If these films happen, it's likely *Alien 5* will be in theatres between early Summer and Fall 1999, depending on where the first *Star Wars* will be placed. *Alien 6* will be out sometime in the year 2000 or early 2001.

20th Century Fox does not want to cover old ground. They hope to give the fans what they want—*Alien 5*: set on Earth, and *Alien 6*: on the Alien Homeworld. There is no discussion yet of an *Alien 7*.

Sigourney Weaver does not plan to direct *Alien 5*. Michael Biehn will not be returning as Hicks, nor Bill Paxton as Hudson. However, it is rumoured that Lance Henrikson will be back as Bishop.

THE TRUTH WILL STAY OUT THERE FOR TWO MORE YEARS

X-Files stars sign on for another two seasons but filming moves to L.A.

After enduring weeks of palm-sweating uncertainty, fans of the *X-Files* can finally relax: both David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson have re-upped their contracts for another two seasons of the hit TV series.

Unfortunately for Canadians, one of the costs of that deal is an agreement by the show's producers to relocate from Vancouver—where the series has been shot since its inception—to Los Angeles next season.

Despite that concession, getting Duchovny and Anderson to sign on the dotted line was far from a done deal when FOX-TV originally announced that the series would indeed continue through the year 2000 but hinted that it might do so without one of its stars.

While it has been common knowledge that Duchovny was demanding the move to L.A.—to be closer to his wife, actress Tea Leoni—Anderson should also be pleased with the shift. She is said to be dating *Pensacola* star Rod Rowland, who is based in San Diego. (SF fans are

familiar with Rod Rowland's work on *Space: Above and Beyond*. He played Cooper Hawks.)

EARTH: FINAL CONFLICT TO RETURN

There were rumours going around that the new Gene Roddenberry series *Earth: Final Conflict* had been cancelled, leaving fans with an unresolved story arc in a similar fashion to *Earth II* or *Space: Above and Beyond*. These rumours are false; the show has been renewed for another season.

Apparently CJOH is having trouble with their supplier, Baton/CTV who placed the show on hiatus and decided to replace it with some new cop show for some unknown reason (not because of ratings, the show was doing well). Expect *Earth: Final Conflict* to return sometime in May.

Of course, the rest of Canada is getting to watch the new episodes now...If you're lucky enough to be in the Videotron West area, you can see the current episodes on WGN right after *Highlander* on Saturdays.

STARGATE SG-1 GETS EPISODE EXTENSION

MGM announced that it had signed an exclusive agreement with Showtime for the first-run rights to its first-season sci-fi series *Stargate SG-1* and has extended the number of episodes ordered from 44 to 88. This move insures four full seasons of *Stargate SG-1* which will begin its syndicated run this fall.

BABYLON 5 NEWS

TNT announced that the third full-length *B5* movie, *The River of Souls*, will feature series stars Tracy Scoggins, Jerry Doyle, Richard Biggs and Jeff Conaway.

The movie deals with an ancient relic that may be the key to the eternal life of the immortal aliens known as the Soul Hunters.

TNT also announced *Crusade*, the new *Babylon 5* spin-off series.

With the threat of the Shadows gone, all is quiet on Earth—too quiet. An alien race vows revenge for the loss of the Shadows and aims its wrath at humans, unleashing a deadly biogenetic plague.

Only five years remain for the inhabitants of Earth unless an Alliance ship, the *Excalibur*, succeeds in its quest to find a cure for the mutating plague. *Crusade* launches with the spectacular two-hour TNT original film *A Call to Arms*.

Douglas Netter and series creator J. Michael Straczynski will executive-produce both projects for Babylonian Productions.

MIR 'N' MARS

While last year's American *Pathfinder* mission to Mars went just swimmingly, cosmonauts and astronauts aboard the aging Russian space station, *Mir*, have been experiencing a lengthy streak of bad luck.

Pathfinder's tiny Sojourner rover vehicle performed superbly, crawling across the Martian terrain snapping photos and collecting data on the composition and texture of the planet's surface. Scientists are reporting discoveries that could rewrite the book on Mars.

Mir's troubles began last May with a fire and continued in June when an unmanned cargo vessel veered out of control during a docking manoeuvre and crashed into the space station, rupturing it's hull. The crew quickly closed off the damaged section and began working to restore lost power and steady the station, which went into a slight spin as a result of the crash. The situation was described as "very serious." Further, in the weeks that followed the collision, station commander Vasily Tsibliyev developed a heart condition and was deemed unfit to carry out planned repairs. Fresh crews have since come aboard, contending with a variety of continuing—almost daily, it seems—systems failures.

—“Sensors” was put together by Keith Braithwaite and Lynda Pelley

MonSFFA Membership Benefits

The Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA) is a Montreal-based non-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of all activities which engage and support the interests of science fiction and fantasy fans. The benefits of membership in MonSFFA include:

Membership Card

Your MonSFFA membership card identifies you as a MonSFFA member, allows you free admittance to the club's monthly events and entitles you to certain discounts at SF/F-oriented retailers participating in MonSFFA's discount program!

Monthly Events

Attend MonSFFA's regularly scheduled events, held about every month (except during the summer), and meet other SF/F fans! Share interests, exchange ideas, view current and classic SF/F movies and TV shows, enjoy guest speakers and special presentations, participate in workshops and discussion panels, get involved in various club projects, and more!

Discount Program

As a member of MonSFFA, you are in a position to save on your SF/F purchases, and your membership pays for itself within the year! If you buy an average of only \$4.00 worth of SF/F books, comics, collectibles, gaming and hobby items, etc. per week, your yearly MonSFFA membership will pay for itself in discount savings within the year! Full details of the discount program are printed in each issue of MonSFFA's newsletter.

Newsletter

You will receive a one-year subscription (six issues) to MonSFFA's newsletter, *Warp*! Produced by our

members for our members, *Warp* keeps you up to date on club activities and brings you general news from around the greater SF/F community! *Warp* is also a forum for you, the members—we want your book and movie reviews, opinion columns, short fiction and humour, artwork, etc! And, as a MonSFFA member, you are entitled to place (non-commercial) ads in Warp at no charge—sell your old SF book collection, announce that you're looking for gaming partners, or whatever!

As a MonSFFA member, you'll enjoy these benefits and more!

MonSFFA is administered, on behalf of all of its members, by an executive committee, who are empowered to appoint officers and advisors to assist them with the operation of the club. Executive committee members are elected annually by vote of the general membership; any member in good standing may run for office.

The fee for a one-year membership in MonSFFA is currently \$20.00.

Please address all correspondence to: MonSFFA, P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4.

MonSFFA Discount Program

Listed on this and the next page are the SF/F-oriented retailers/dealers participating in the **MonSFFA Discount Program**. *We encourage members to frequent these establishments.* A valid MonSFFA membership card must be presented in order to take advantage of the discounts offered under this program. (Note: Certain exceptions with regard to the MonSFFA Discount Program may exist at some of these establishments. Conditions subject to change.)

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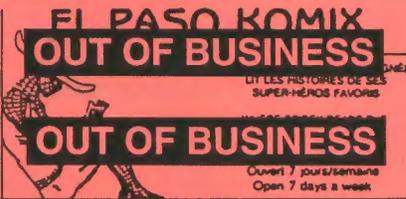
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If you would like to join, please fill in the membership application and mail it to **MonSFFA**, along with a cheque or money order made out to **MonSFFA** for the amount of \$20.00. Feel free to write us for more information.

MonSFFA

P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc
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Name _____
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We are sometimes approached by other organizations interested in soliciting our members. Please indicate whether or not you give your permission to pass on the information contained in this application to any such organizations.

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