

WARP 92

SUMMER 2015



Keith 2015

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On the Cover

Admiral Nelson's decision to place the resources of NIMR at the disposal of The Discovery Channel yielded an unexpected encounter with Megalodon Titanus, believed extinct for millions of years, resulting in a terrific documentary for *Shark Week*!

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MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Programming is subject to change
Check our website for latest developments.

JUNE 14

Field Trip to Jurassic World

JULY 19

MonSFFA BBQ Parc Angrignon
(July 26 – Rain Date)

AUGUST 23

Paper cut-out stop-motion film project, in which
MonSFFen will form a production team to create a short,
30-second stop-motion film using simple paper cut-out
characters animated against background drawings. We hope to
set-up and shoot the whole thing within a few hours.
Join us and help out!

SEPTEMBER 20

Logan's Run, viewing at noon, followed by discussion of its
merits ● Astronomy: Various types of telescopes and
binoculars on display and their relative merits described ●
Astronomy in the city: Yes, there is a lot to see, even in
Montreal's light-polluted skies ● News from Pluto,
Rosetta, and Philae

OCTOBER 18

The Perry Rodan Universe ● Sports, Games,
competitions in SF ● Tribute to Garu Gyax

NOVEMBER 22

Ridiculous Starship designs ● Thunderbirds are Go! 50 years
of the Thunderbirds ● Urban Legends

DECEMBER 5

Christmas Dinner, details TBD

Really Fine Print: WARP is published quarterly by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA), a nonprofit organization of fans interested in sharing their love of science fiction and fantasy. The opinions expressed in WARP are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of MonSFFA or the editor. To reprint any article, please contact the writer, or ask the editor to pass on your request. The use of copyrighted material is generally discouraged; but sometimes unavoidable; our apologies to the copyright holders, no serious infringement is intended. This is an amateur production, and your tolerance is appreciated by your fans.

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You've Got Mail!

Dear MonSFFen:

I've got Warp 91 here, with fond remembrance of the late and much-missed Sir Terry Pratchett on the cover. I admit I don't have many of Sir Terry's books, but what I do have, I quite enjoyed. He brought a lot of smiles and laughs to the world through his writing. I approve of

Danny Sichel's article; we are less without Terry around to entertain us with his fine writing.

I thought I had all his books, but discovered that I had missed 4 of them, for various reasons like confusing Guards! Guards! With Night Watch. A quick order to Chapters, and I can now say truthfully that I have all the Discworld books. Night Watch was really good, one of the best, in my opinion.

My letter...now nine months at MSR, everything is doing fine. The Toronto International Book Fair failed, as far as I can tell, through lack of interest. I think much of the public now sees paper-based books as a curiosity, and some say it is a waste of resources. We may be part of a shrinking group (age-based, for the most part) that sees value in books. I sure hope I'm wrong.

There is light at the end of the tunnel I was reading in an article recently that sales of e-books are starting to flatten out. The article went on to say that while e-books are a great convenience for travellers, people still appreciate the real paper. They also made a comparison to vinyl records coming back, though I'm not seeing that here.

Yes, I knew that Berny was designing the new Aurora, and I sure would like to see a picture of it when he is done. I wonder

who will be producing them in bulk? Will Berny be doing that, too?

Apparently not. Berny also made the rocket pins for the Hugo nominees, btw, you might have seen a pic on facebook.

I must get the newest list to you. I haven't found a lot more, but the newer stuff is reflected in where we're going for tables for our Steampunk General Store. We will have a table at ConBravo! in Hamilton, and then comes a table at Unplugged Expo 4 in Mississauga.

I still very much miss Polaris! I will be at Sasquan, provided I survive the 3 flights. Watch me get lost in an airline terminal!

Good to see that Sylvain shares our interest in Steampunk. I like the costuming part of it the most, discovering the parts of men's dress that were worn back then, like white gloves and spats. I truly think that as a society, we miss adventure, and steampunk is an indication that we'd like to return to it to explore the unknown.

Yvonne and I have celebrated our 32nd wedding anniversary, and I have marked my 56th birthday. After all this celebrating, it's time to get back on the diet. Everyone, please keep the Auroras in mind, and I'd really, really appreciate it if you could vote for Yvonne. She does work hard at his Pubnites newsletter, and she deserves some recognition for her efforts.

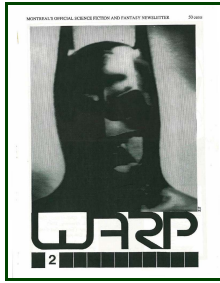
And speaking of awards, I sent in my Hugo vote. There are a few good novels & drama presentations on the ballot in spite of the Puppies.

Take care all, and see you with the next one.

Yours, Lloyd Penney



This is actually the 4th edition of WARP. Until WARP 20, issues were numbered according to the month of publication. The cover features a photo of a television screen, hence the rather poor quality. That's Michael Keaton as Batman, and the photo is nabbed from Entertainment Tonight.



MonSFFA has a new president, a certain **Keith Braithwaite**, whose letter from the president offers thanks to the outgoing president and recently retired VP, Luke Fallon and Geoff Bovey, principal founders of the club: "(We) will continue to

build on this "house" we call MonSFFA. But all this building will take place atop the foundation laid by Luke and Geoff. That foundation will always be theirs." And an excellent foundation it proved to be!

After the election at the January meeting, **Luke Fallon** "rose to address the assembly and was almost immediately interrupted by several members dressed in *Prisoner* garb who 'gassed' him and whisked him out of the room through a back door which, no doubt, let to 'The Village'."

Highlights of the meeting, according to the author of MonSFFAandom (Keith?) were the slide presentation by **Joe Aspler** (Costuming at World Con, a few photos from Joe's presentation were featured further along in WARP) and a spirited

discussion on Star Trek (Does it have a future, and does it deserve one?)

Mike Masella reviewed games, or more precisely, sequels to games: *Might and Magic II*, *Wizardly V - Heart of the Maelstrom*, and *Déjà Vu II*.

Bryan Ekers reviewed Star Trek theme night at Station 10, a club/bar on St-Catherine Street, and found fault with the Romulan's ears. (Has he always had this pointy-ear fetish?)

Berny Reischl has a full page illo he called *Work Shuttle Hangar 1-C1*, Bryan Ekers a great piece of original fan fiction, and to no one's surprise, **Kevin Holden** writes a negative review of ST-TNG.

Earthshattering Trumors looks forward to the new Batman movie (Michael Keaton at Batman and Jack Nicholson as the Joker), the upcoming *Star Trek V*, *Ghostbusters II*, and *James Bond: License to Kill*, *Indiana Jones: The Last Crusade*, and *Aliens III*. (Anyone see a pattern here? And we are STILL complaining about sequels and reboots!)

Publishing News includes a snippet about a rumour that William Shatner had reportedly sold an sf novel to Ace Books. (He did, and many sequels followed.)

Star Trek: The Secret Scripts is a spoof, some of the puns are actually funny.



DOWNLOAD WARP 4 http://www.monsffa.ca/?page_id=389

Upcoming Events & Conventions

Lloyd Penny, Dom Durocher, Lynda Pelley

Abridged, a more complete list can be found on our website: <http://www.monsffa.ca>

August 19-23 - Sasquan/73rd World Science Fiction Convention, Spokane, WA. Guests: David Gerrold, Vonda McIntyre, Brad Foster, lots more www.sasquan.org

August 22 - CoTiCon 2015, Cornwall, ON Comics, gaming, anime. Guests: 501st Battalion, Mobile Gamerz, & others www.coticon.com

September 3-6 - Fan eXpo, Toronto ON Guests: Matt Smith, Nathan Fillion, Patrick Stewart, William Shatner, Stan Lee, Bruce Campbell, & many more. www.comicontoronto.com

September 25-27 - Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition 2015, Fort George, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Guests include Steam Powered Giraffe, Abney Park, Professor Elemental, Jardin Mécanique. www.canadiansteampunk.com

September 26 CapCon 2015 Nepean (Ottawa), ON www.impsottawa.com/capcon

Oct. 24, 2015 Ajax 35 Scale Model Contest Ajax, ON www.ajaxscalemodelcontest.com

October 2-4 - Eeriecon 17, Grand Island, NY. Literary convention, Guests: Kelly Armstrong & Craig Engler <http://www.eeriecon.org/>

October 9-11 - Creation Supernatural, Toronto, ON www.creationent.com/cal/supernatural_toronto.htm

November 7&8 - Geekfest Montreal, Montreal, QC Guests include Lar deSouza www.geekfestmtl.com

ANSWERS to the Sci-Fi Cinema Matinée Trivia Challenge

A. Leonard Nimoy; B. Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea starred David Hedison, born Albert David Hedison, Jr.; C. 2001, 12; D. Distant Early Warning (a system of Cold War-era radar stations stretching across the Canadian Arctic and Alaska); E. Both appeared in adaptations of the Christmas classic *Miracle on 34th Street*, Gwenn as Kris Kringle in the original 1947 film, Descher as skeptical little girl Susan in a 1955 TV version; F. Both appeared in *Playboy* Magazine, he in print, she as a centerfold model (The Fly was based on his short story of the same name, first published in *Playboy* in 1957; a year after *The Black Scorpion's* theatrical release, she shared the magazine's October 1958 centerfold with fellow actress/pin-up model Pat Sheehan); G. Their voices (a recording of bird-voiced tree frogs was the source for the ominous chirping noise made by 'Them!' giant ants, and was reused, augmented by a roar, for the scorpions in *The Black Scorpion*); H. Lionel Lines, exposing the train as but a toy electric model made by the famous Lionel toy corporation.

StarFleet Treachery

Barbara Silverman

The story so far: Captain Janeway is ordered to stop the impending coalition against Starfleet and the Federation. She ambushed the Maquis, and Chakotay was captured, but the rest of his crew escaped. A conversation with Chakotay left Janeway puzzled as to his motives, and the ease with which he was captured.

Then Janeway was assigned to exploring the Gamma quadrant for three months. It appears there may be an alliance between the Cardassians and the Dominion, and if so, the Federation needs to know if it's an alliance of mutual protection, or aggression. Chakotay may hold some answers, so Admiral Janeway was bringing him to Starfleet HQ for a meeting but Chakotay was beamed out of the shuttle craft. The admiral assigns his daughter to search the badlands for the Maquis leader, and she in turn requests the assistance of Tom Paris, who is released from prison for this mission.

Immediately on entering the Badlands, Voyager is detected and scanned by Chakotay's ship. Negotiations are interrupted when both ships are hit by a massive displacement wave, seriously damaging both ships. Heroic efforts bring the engines back on line, but then crew members start vanishing. Janeway orders an emergency lockout, but it is too late. The crews of both ships are transported to what appears to be a cornfield, but is in fact an immense space station. Declaring a truce in the face of a greater enemy, the two captains consider their options, but then Janeway is transported to a laboratory.

Inexplicably returned to their ships, the captains confer and realize they are each missing a crew member and the bodies of those killed by the displacement wave have disappeared. Cavit is increasing belligerent toward Maquis, to the point of becoming a liability to Janeway. The captains, along with Tom Paris, transport over to the Array. Their mission: Bring back the missing crew members and find a way home.

CHAPTER 27

The Array was quiet. An eerie, unsettling quiet! The sun was still shining. The ducks were still swimming, there was still a slight breeze. However, there were no people. No sounds. Nothing. Complete silence.

For an instant a shimmer of light invaded the stillness. Then it was gone. In its place stood five people. Rifles at ready, tricorders searching. It was a strange group, consisting of those who should not be together. One Starfleet captain, one Maquis leader, one Starfleet security chief, one Maquis second-in-command, and one who was ex-Starfleet, ex-Maquis, and ex-con.

Janeway shifted her rifle to a less awkward position. Chakotay turned to his companion. "Evans, anything on your tricorder?"

Evans shook his head. "Nothing, no life signs."

With a very innocent expression, the Maquis leader looked at Janeway. "Hope his tricorder is correct."

The captain glared at him. Janeway was sure she heard a small chuckle from Chakotay's companion.



She was beginning to find that the manner in which the Maquis leader joked about his capture as both amusing and comforting. Most would have felt a degree of resentment, perhaps strong enough to put her at risk in their company. Instead, Chakotay was making her feel as if the two of them had shared some unique venture. Though secretly pleased at his attitude, there was no way she would let him know.

After throwing a very pointed scowl at the Maquis leader, Janeway turned to Tuvok. "You were in the process of tracking the projector?"

Looking down at his tricorder, Tuvok angled slightly to the right. "I believe so Captain. There were a number of interesting readings coming from the barn area. I'm still registering something. However, they are much fainter and slightly irregular."

Janeway nodded. "Check it out. Chakotay, Paris, and myself will search the house. If you find anything contact us immediately, otherwise meet back here in one hour."

She nodded to the man referred to as Evans. "Go with Tuvok. Stay together at all times."

"Yes Captain." Evans replied promptly and politely. Then after flashing Chakotay an amused grin, he turned to Tuvok.

This time, it was Janeway's turn to suppress a chuckle at the look Chakotay sent his companion. The Vulcan, intent on the instrument in his hand, set off in the direction of the barn. Evans followed close behind, tense and alert, his eyes searching all around the area.

Janeway motioned to Chakotay and Paris. "Okay, shall we see what's inside that house?" Handing her rifle to Paris, she took out her tricorder. The captain looked up at the Maquis leader. "This one works!" Chakotay replied with a grin.

Holding the instrument before her, Janeway started walking. Chakotay beside, Paris behind. They had covered a little more than half the distance when Janeway suddenly stopped and turned to the Maquis leader. "You've been very quiet!"

Trying to keep the amusement off his face, Chakotay shrugged. "Nothing to say. You're doing fine."

After throwing him a look that said it all, Janeway continued toward their destination. Slowly climbing the four outside steps, they cautiously opened the front door and entered. A couple of steps inside, they stopped and stared. Paris was the first to speak. "This place is completely empty. Not one piece of furniture. Not even a picture. Just bare wood walls."

Janeway walked to the centre of the room. "Well.... I guess they were not planning to invite us in for tea. The whole setting is just a facade. A waiting room meant to give us a false sense of security."

Chakotay, switching the rifle to his left hand, took out his tricorder. "The whole place does appear to be empty, including the upstairs." Slowly he moved in the direction of a wooden staircase at the far end. "I think we should still take a look."

Stopping at the first step, he looked up and to the side, trying to see into the space above. Putting away the tricorder he held his rifle at the ready. With Paris behind, Janeway joined the Maquis leader. "Right with you. Let's make sure."

With Chakotay in the lead, they warily climbed the bare unpainted stairs. It took only one look to verify the single room was indeed empty. Her frustration showing, Janeway put away her tricorder. "Nothing, absolutely nothing! Let's check outside."

Chakotay, tilting his head in a listening attitude, held up his hand. "Do you hear something?"

Paris shook his head. "I don't hear a thing."

For a moment Janeway ceased all movement, concentrating. "I do. Very faint. It sounds like the strumming of some type of stringed instrument." Walking over to a glassless window she placed her hands on the casing. Leaning out she looked around. "The sound appears to be coming from over there." She pointed toward a group of trees, a few yards from the house.

Chakotay took a step back, in the direction of the stairs. "Finally! Perhaps someone who can answer some questions." Quickly descending to the lower floor they exited the house, swiftly moving around to the back. Once again Janeway and Chakotay took the lead with Paris, watchful and prepared with Janeway's phaser rifle, walking behind. Following the soft, almost inaudible sound, they were led to a group of five large leafy trees, sheltering a couple of benches and an old man.



As Janeway and her companions approached, a surprised, craggy face looked up. "What do you want? I'm finished with you. Why don't you leave like the others did?"

The captain and Chakotay exchanged glances. Did he mean Kim and Torres? Not in the mood for riddles, Janeway's voice was sharp. "What others?"

The old man motioned with his hand. "The other ships! They all left the moment I released them. You can go too. I don't need you!"

Chakotay managed to rein in his anger, however, there was a bite to his voice. "We are free to go where? What about the two who are missing? We are not leaving without them!" When the Maquis leader stopped to take a breath, Janeway continued the tirade.

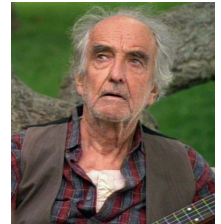
"We're stranded thousands of light-years from our home. Because of you! Unless you send us, we have no way back!" Taking a deep breath to calm herself, the captain continued. "And

we want the two members of our crew that you are still holding!"

The old man ran his fingers over the banjo. A banjo without strings. Shaking his grey, balding head he replied with a tinge of regret, his voice gruff with age. "I'm sorry, sending you back is impossible. The process is long and difficult, requiring too much time and energy, both of which I have very little left."

His body seemed to sag into the bench. "In whatever time that remains to me, I must try to complete my work. The two which you seek, I still have need of." He help up his hand. "They might have what I'm looking for. If not, if possible, they will be returned to you." Energy spent, his hand dropped down to the bench.

Janeway moved closer. "Tell us what you require. Perhaps we can help."



The grey, uncombed head of the old man shook, its owner shocked at the notion. He looked up at Janeway and Chakotay, a touch of arrogance in his voice. "You are a minor biped species, with technologies way behind anything I have. No harm was intended, I regret what had to be done, but I have an obligation." For a moment his voice picked up in strength. "One that must be carried out!"

Chakotay's grip tightened on the rifle by his side. His voice sharp and firm with patience wearing thin. "We too have an obligation! Both the captain and myself have a responsibility to our crews. Which, thanks to you, are far from home. Seventy-thousand light-years to be exact!"

Janeway picked up where Chakotay left off. The Maquis leader was not the only one with tolerance running out. "What happened to our dead crew members? Killed by you!"

The ancient, tired eyes dilated in shock. "It was an unfortunate result of my conveyance emitter. Your species are so delicate. They were of no use, all have been disposed of."

Only by supreme effort and training did both leaders prevent their feelings from erupting.

After several seconds, Janeway managed to bring her emotions under tight rein. She attempted to reason with the old man. "Our species have certain rites and procedures for dealing with our deceased, you have robbed us of that. You talk about obligation, what about the obligation to us. You, and you alone, brought us here. Don't you have a responsibility to undo, as much as possible, the damage already done?"

The old man waved his arm. "I'm sorry, there is nothing I can do. Time has run out."

A flash of blinding light engulfed the away team!



CHAPTER 28

Janeway, Chakotay, and Paris found themselves back on the Starfleet bridge, staring into the astonished faces of Tuvok and the other Maquis. Frustrated and angry, Chakotay remarked dryly. "Well.... I guess he didn't want to continue the conversation."

Feeling the same way as Chakotay, Janeway placed a hand on her hip. "I'm afraid you're right, which doesn't leave us many options. At least we know Torres and Kim are still alive. Now

what? I'm open to suggestions."

Tuvok regarded his captain. "You met with the alien?"

She nodded. "However, other than the fact our people are still alive, we learned little else."

Chakotay uttered a small laugh. "Except.... he considers humans as minor bipeds."

Tuvok raised an eyebrow. "He is then, obviously, non-

human. What form did you see him as?"

Janeway turned to the Vulcan. "As an old man. I'm not sure what his natural form would be. However, I expect he can assume many shapes. You were correct, the alien is looking for something specific." Tuvok, in his non-expression, appeared taken back that the captain had doubted his assessment of the situation.

An agitated Paris waved his arm. "What could he be looking for with Harry and B'Elanna? What is he doing to them?"

Janeway spoke with a reassurance she was not feeling. "Easy, Tom. We'll get them back, safe and sound. Continue working on the conn panel, it's important to have this ship in working order. As soon as something develops I'll let you know."



"Yes Captain." Despite his deep concern for his friends Tom Paris felt a warm glow pass through his body, thankful that Janeway was entrusting him with a major assignment. After handing his rifle to Tuvok he immediately returned to the job of repairing burnt wiring.

Tuvok collected the weapons from the two Maquis. "Captain, I would like to review all log records covering the period when we were on the Array. It's possible the alien came onboard or searched our computer banks."

Janeway nodded. "You could be right. I suspect he obtained information when we were scanned back in the Alpha Quadrant. The farm setting must have come from our data base. However, we were over there for five days, it will take time to review all the logs."

Tuvok looked at Janeway. "Captain, you forget. As a Vulcan I can process information at a much faster rate than humans are able."

Janeway glanced over at Chakotay. "Ummmmm, this is not a good day for human bipeds." Tuvok raised both eyebrows.

Chakotay uttered a small laugh. "Captain, I can vouch for the abilities of your security chief." Knowing to what his commander was referring, the other Maquis did not attempt to hide a deep chuckle.

Janeway was surprised to see amusement dancing in Chakotay's eyes. He certainly appeared to enjoy teasing her about the trap at Syzygie.

Turning back to Tuvok, she shrugged her shoulders. "Go ahead. We need to start somewhere."

With phaser rifles in hand Tuvok headed for the turbolift.

After he left Cavit approached, handing two padds to Janeway. "Captain, here are the damage and repair reports, as well as crew status."

He then gave her a third padd. "We discovered a G-type star system two light-years from here. It's directly in the path of those energy bursts from the Array."

The captain glanced down at the padds. "A G-type system, that is interesting. How are the repairs coming?"

Cavit, wishing he could reply to the question in private, without Chakotay standing a couple of feet away, managed to keep his voice even and professional. "We are still having problems with the warp-core. However, impulse and all main sensors are back on-line. Most of the comm lines are working and

replicators are functioning in main areas, but not in personal quarters. Repair crews are still working on weapons. While we do have basic phaser power, it will be another three hours before they are back to full strength."

Janeway was relieved to have communications and impulse power back on-line, but the rest of the news was cause for apprehension. Especially weapons, if they were attacked.... "Concentrate on weapons and the warp-core. I want progress reports every hour."

She turned to Chakotay. "I have a couple of things to discuss with Cavit. Afterwards, I'm going to review this data on the star system, would you care to join me?"

Chakotay was delighted with the captain's offer. "Certainly! If you don't mind, I would like to contact my ship, see how our repairs are coming."

Janeway addressed the recently promoted lieutenant standing at Harry Kim's station. "Mr. Rollins, open a comm line to the Maquis ship."

She turned back to Chakotay. "After I've spoken to Cavit, join me in my ready room."

Nodding to her first officer to follow her, the captain left the bridge.



Looking up!

I've seen enough lunar eclipses now, that I don't mind missing the odd one. But—

Pray for clear skies on Sunday, September 27, the night of the Harvest Moon, which this year is also the "Super Moon".

This so-called super moon appears only slightly larger than it did in August, but there is a difference in apparent size from the "Puny Moon" of about 30% surface area, because the moon's orbit is an ellipse, and every 14 months it is at perigee. You'll want to see it as it rises, because an optical illusion makes any rising full moon look even larger. (A full moon rises as the sun sets.)

Making this already interesting event more exciting, most of the world will be able to witness the entire lunar eclipse which will last a little over 5 hours. It's also the last eclipse of a fairly rare occurrence, a "tetrad" which is a cycle of 4 total lunar eclipses in a row, each pair separated by 6 months. The next tetrad happens in 2032-33. There have only been 62 tetrads since year 1 AD. Religious lunatics are already predicting all sorts of nonsense about "Blood Moons".

In Montreal, totality will be at about 10:45 EDT. A pair of even very ordinary binoculars will bring out interesting details, but really, all you need is a view to the eastern horizon to see the moon rise. The totally eclipsed moon will be almost overhead, and may appear red, grey, brown, or even bluish, depending on the condition of the atmosphere above us. — CPL



Sunday Sci-fi Cinema Matinée: the “Big-bug” Edition

Keith Braithwaite

On a semi-regular basis, MonSFFA reviews and analyses some of the superlative, influential, and most celebrated movies of the Golden Age of Sci-Fi Cinema for the benefit of, in particular, younger club members unfamiliar with the masterworks that defined science fiction and fantasy cinema, for before George Lucas came George Pal, before Peter Jackson, there was Ray Harryhausen.

Any sci-fi fan who grew up in the 1960s surely remembers following the televised progress of the Apollo moon missions with the same zeal reserved for favourite prime-time genre TV shows like *Star Trek*. The future held such promise in those days and the dreams of science fiction seemed nearer to realization than ever they had been. The space race whet our appetites for sci-fi adventure and many a local television station across the land fed that hunger with afterschool or weekend airings of old, usually black-and-white sci-fi movies. Most of these films were produced during the 1950s.

For we children of the '60s, these old movies, often made before we were born, constituted our introduction to what we know today as the classics of sci-fi cinema, not to mention more than a few of the genre's all-time appallingly inept clunkers! We also include one or two of those clunkers in our Matinée selections, by the way, just for fun!

Some of the best films of this era visualized with great spectacle the wonder and excitement of man's first projected ventures into space and the astonishing possibilities of futuristic technologies, frequently tempered with the anxieties of that early atomic age. It was these anxieties that spawned a subgenre of the Giant Monster Movie that featured insects mutated into fearsome behemoths usually by nuclear radiation, providing us with our theme for this edition of the Matinée.

Reproduced here as part of Warp's ongoing guide, if you will, to the Golden Age of Sci-Fi Cinema are the brief write-ups I penned on each of the films proffered in our second installment of Sunday Sci-Fi Cinema Matinée, the “Big-Bug” edition. The film chosen by club members for review on this occasion was *Them!*; I've added to its entry below a summary of the critiques of MonSFFA.

THEM! (Warner Bros., 1954; B&W): James Whitmore, Edmund Gwenn, Joan Weldon, James Arness, Onslow Stevens, Sean McClory, Sandy Descher, Fess Parker; Gordon Douglas, director



Ants, mutated by residual radiation from the first atomic bomb test in the New Mexican desert nine years earlier, have grown to enormous size and are soon terrorizing the area, and beyond!

First of the “Big-Bug” pictures of the 1950s and the template for its many imitators, *Them!* was initially to be shot in colour and 3-D, but test footage proved unsatisfactory and further, a malfunctioning 3-D camera rig prompted the studio to scrap its original plans for the

production. Studio chief Jack Warner was not particularly enthusiastic about the project and the A-level production was unceremoniously downgraded to something more closely resembling a B-movie, albeit with more of a budget than most such fare. Retained perhaps as a nod to the earlier vision was a vivid red-and-blue title card, now set against a black-and-white desert landscape.

The film opens as state troopers find a little girl wandering in the desert, in shock and apparently rendered mute by some traumatic experience. The officers trace her steps back to a nearby vacation trailer which has been ripped open like a tin of sardines. Blood stains at the scene are ascertained to have been made no more than a half-day ago and a mysterious print in the sand confounds the policemen, one of whom finds sugar cubes among the debris. Suddenly, a weird chirping sound is heard, leaving the troopers to wonder if the wind is playing tricks with their hearing. With the frightened girl dispatched to hospital, the policemen seek possible witnesses to whatever event it was that has so upset the child. They find a local country store in shambles, demolished just like the trailer. A barrel of sugar has been overturned and the store's proprietor is found dead, his shotgun twisted out of shape and, we will soon learn, his body laced with formic acid. One of the officers remains on site to watch over the scene until a forensics team arrives. When he hears again that uncanny chirping noise, he steps off-camera to investigate and meets his end, screaming in terror as he discharges his sidearm.

Half mystery thriller, half sci-fi fantasy, and featuring a collection of well-drawn protagonists, *Them!*'s superb screenplay is measured in its pacing, progressively unveiling clues to the conundrum presented in the opening scenes, until we first cast eyes on one of the colossal ants in an unforgettable encounter in the dust-blown wastelands. Thereafter, it's man versus giant ant as the authorities mobilize across the region, racing to destroy these mutant monstrosities, lest humankind face certain annihilation.

A laudable cast of character actors approach their roles with proper import, eliciting empathy from the audience and lending a level of credence to what is, after all, a pretty outlandish story. Terrific dialogue is compellingly voiced under first-rate direction, and seasoned with just the right pinch of tension-relieving humour.

Regrettably, the large mechanically operated ants, of which two principal and a few secondary models were built for the production, move a little too robotically in some shots, falling a tad short of the film's otherwise top-notch production values. Maybe this was the reason *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* bested *Them!* in the 1954 Oscar competition for special effects.

Them! is fittingly regarded as an originator of the atom-age monster movie and unquestionably, a sci-fi classic.

Summary of Critiques:

This tale of giant ants threatening mankind received high praise from all in attendance at MonSFFA's April club meeting, with many noting that the film held up remarkably well for a



Paleontologist Dr. Ned Jackson is called upon by armed forces authorities to examine the appendage and concludes that it's a spur from the forelimb of a giant prehistoric praying mantis. Before too long, the military are tracking the mantis as it makes its way south, eventually alighting atop the Washington Monument in the American Capital, a shot achieved by positioning a real praying mantis on a miniature model of the D.C. landmark.

Soon airborne again, the mantis heads towards New York City and Parkman pilots one of the fighter jets scrambled to intercept the creature, but loses sight of it in the clouds. Abruptly, the mantis looms ahead of Parkman's plane and crashes into the aircraft. Parkman bails out safely but the mantis has been injured by the collision and seeks shelter in the Manhattan Tunnel, where the movie's final act plays out.

The film's decidedly asinine science, dull plotting, banal dialogue, and abundant use of tired giant-monster-movie tropes is offset somewhat by casting as the monster perhaps the most terrifyingly menacing of predatory insects, providing audiences with a number of satisfying scenes of suspense and destruction, including the towering creature's fog-shrouded assault on a bus and that closing act in the tunnel. Notable, too, are the mantis' early attacks on humanity, in which the sound alone of the giant insect's wings beating at supersonic speed is most effective at portending impending danger. But shots of the creature in flight look far too fake and director Juran wisely kept his monster obscured by darkness or fog in most other sequences so as to mask the fact that the mantis puppet and miniature work, overall, are really only convincing in a tabletop-model-train-layout sort of way. All rather quaint by modern standards, but still fun to watch!

BEGINNING OF THE END (Republic Pictures, 1957; B&W): Peter Graves, Peggie Castle, Morris Ankrum, Thomas B. Henry, Than Wyenn, Richard Benedict, James Seay; Bert I. Gordon, producer/director/special effects

At a government experimental farm, agricultural scientist Dr. Ed Wainwright is employing nuclear radiation as a means of growing oversized fruits and vegetables in a well-intentioned bid

to end world hunger. But when ordinary grasshoppers get into a silo and consume the radioactive grain stored therein, Wainwright's tests prove the inadvertent cause of a plague of locomotive-sized locusts that raze rural Illinois before descending on Chicago!

Produced on a shoestring budget by well-known B-movie mogul Bert I. Gordon, this film was a modest success upon release but was then, as today, slammed by critics as derivative, ludicrous, bottom-of-the-barrel sci-fi rubbish, and a dreadfully poor example of the big-bug monster-movie subgenre. Production values were decried as shoddy and the quality of the acting sub-standard.

There's really no arguing with these assessments, and yet the movie has a charm all its own. In fairness to a few of the principal actors, if not award-winning, their efforts are at least earnest. And some of Gordon's quick-and-easy special effects shots are to be appreciated for their inventiveness, if nothing else. While many of these are less than believable – particularly the process shots of real grasshoppers magnified and sloppily combined with live-action footage – a few are quite cleverly conceived and, shall we say, almost convincing.

Photographs of cityscapes were used as backdrops, against which real grasshoppers were filmed. Foreground elements, like city buses, were tiny close-cut photos stood up on miniature tabletop sets, around which the grasshoppers swarmed. The signature shots of the giant locusts climbing up the façade of a skyscraper were achieved by simply placing the real grasshoppers on a photo of the edifice and prompting the bugs to crawl “up the building” by lightly blowing on them. The result is surprisingly convincing until one of the insects ambles over a part of the photo the perspective of which immediately gives away the trick. Also, instances of grasshoppers stepping off the “building” into the “sky” just a tick before the end of the shot could have been precluded with tighter editing. So a smart, simple, inexpensive effect might have looked a lot more realistic had greater care been taken in the execution. Still kind of nifty, though!



Sunday Sci-fi Cinema Matinée Trivia Challenge

Keith Braithwaite

A. In *Them!*, what Star Trek alumnus appears briefly in an uncredited role as an army staff sergeant in the communications room?

B. *The Fly*'s Al Hedison also starred in what well-known 1960s sci-fi TV series under what better-known stage name?

C. The live grasshoppers Bert I. Gordon procured for the production of *Beginning of the End* were kept in a box for a few days prior to the filming of their scenes, but soon began cannibalizing each other! How many were initially purchased, and how many survived to appear in the movie?

D. *The Deadly Mantis* first attacks a DEW Line station; what does the acronym DEW stand for?

E. What connection related to Christmas do *Them!* castmates Edmund Gwenn and Sandy Descher share?

F. What credit do author George Langelaan, upon whose story *The Fly* was based, and *Black Scorpion* actress Mara Corday share in common?

G. What did a species of frog endemic to the southeastern U.S. lend to both the giant ants of *Them!* and colossal scorpions of *The Black Scorpion*?

H. In *The Black Scorpion*, as the monster scorpions attack a passenger train, what is briefly glimpsed printed across the side of the train's coal tender?

Answers on page 4

Skin Deep
Sylvain St-Pierre

While there are some ways to hunt for specific types of Web Comics, a lot of it is hit-and-miss. To narrow it down, you can browse through the The Belfry WebComics Index (<http://new.belfrycomics.net/>), or might look at interesting links while reading something that you already follow. I discovered *Skin Deep* through the latter means, and a nice find it was.

The premise behind this series by Kori Bing is that most mythological creatures are real, and living among us. A lot of your friends, neighbours, and even relatives may actually be griffins, harpies, minotaurs, gorgons, satyrs, nixies, bugbears or something more exotic, disguised to look human by various magical spells. Many of those creatures do not even realise what



Featuring Eustace Swiftrunne (fox), Gabe (angel), Marshall Cortis (crow), Shade (spirit of Michelle's father), Bloodcarver (Dragon)

they are, and it is not that rare for a bewildered teenager to wake up one morning with a lot more hair – or scales or feathers – than they had the previous day.

The cast of the series is quite extensive, but currently centres around a teenage girl named Michelle Jocasta. She has recently discovered that she is a sphinx, much to everyone's amazement including her own, for that once powerful race supposedly went extinct centuries ago.

Even more than the creatures themselves, it is their social order that I find fascinating. They have kept with the times and have no problem at all with technology or rock music (in fact, a large proportion of rockers are suspected of being mythos). Many creatures born and raised as such are looking forward to the day when they will get a magic medallion that will allow them to freely mix with humans and visit the outside world. Finding out unexpectedly that you are actually a creature can however be quite traumatic, especially if you are part of a family that has been masquerading for so long that they have forgotten that they are not human.

Creatures are pretty much like ordinary people, with all sorts of characters, and there is good and bad even among demons and angels (yes, both are real, too). Of course, there are some rather unique quirks that come with being a member of a given race.

There are a number of havens, called Avalons, set up in seemingly abandoned places all over the world and where mythos have set up thriving communities not all that different from those of the outside, save for the occasional magic shop and the fact that pedestrians are just a tad more colourful. Much of the action takes place in the Liverpool Avalon, safely hidden in a large warehouse. Another of those refuges is called Wonderland, somewhere in rural England, and is populated by the likes of Jub Jub Birds and bandersnatches. That place is considered weird even by the lax standards of the other creatures.

If this sort of thing appeals to you, then you can read the whole thing at <http://www.skindeepcomic.com/>. Personally, I've had my suspicions about more than a few MonSSFans for quite a while, and I would at all be surprised to learn that my great-great-granddad was a Cheshire Cat or something...



REVIEWS: Movies

Jurassic World
Keith Braithwaite

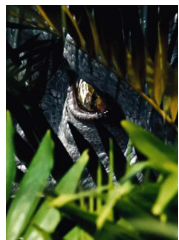
The club's June 14 downtown outing to a matinée screening of *Jurassic World* drew a dozen MonSSFen, myself among them. After the movie, we convened at a nearby food court for a quick nosh and to discuss the film, the fourth in the *Jurassic Park* franchise.

The premise of *Jurassic World* is that some twenty years after the disastrous events of the first film, the dinosaur theme park first envisioned by the late John Hammond is up and running, and

bigger and better than he could have imagined. But the public has apparently become jaded at the novelty of "de-extinction"; living dinosaurs no longer awe and amaze visitors to the park as once they had, "like the space program," offers the park's operations manager, Claire Dearing (Bryce Dallas Howard), by way of comparison early in the film.

In response to declining visitor satisfaction, then, the corporation that owns the park orders InGen's genetic engineers to come up with new marquee attractions, namely bigger, scarier monsters. The first of these is an artificially created hybrid of *Tyrannosaurus rex* and numerous other creatures, including, as we

learn at a critical point in the narrative, Velociraptor. This particularly nasty, clever, and terrifying super-dinosaur is dubbed Indominus rex.



The evil eye

When the Indominus escapes its enclosure, 'Raptor trainer Owen Grady, a dissenting voice as to the wisdom of having created this extremely dangerous monstrosity, is enlisted to save not only Claire's visiting nephews, but the thousands of other tourists now threatened by the free-roaming and indiscriminately-killing Indominus.

There are side-stories involving workaholic Claire's stalled romance with Owen, her relationship with her nephews and sister (mother of the boys), and a military plan to weaponize the 'Raptors, but this is essentially a good old-fashioned giant-monster movie! And it delivers on that score, with excitingly staged albeit somewhat predictable action sequences. All of this action is leavened with a sense of humour and shrewdly, the movie never takes itself too seriously, even poking sly fun at some of the action tropes it embraces, like Claire running around the jungle in high-heels, even outpacing charging dinosaurs without missing a step!

While I initially had reservations about the idea of trained 'Raptors, I've come around to allowing that the notion was handled well by scriptwriters and these prehistoric predators, so terrifyingly brought to life by Steven Spielberg in the original Jurassic Park, pretty much retain their menace in this latest film. Or should I say, regain their menace after less than satisfactory depictions in the second, especially, and third films in the franchise.



Training 'Raptors

Rookie Colin Trevorrow's direction is solid and as expected, the visual effects are top-notch. There are a number of memorable scenes, and that shark-chomping Mosasaurus really rocks! Some of the dialogue, on the other hand, is a bit puerile and a few situations fail the veracity test, like the boys being able to start a jeep that's been sitting idle for two decades, or the park's oddly poor communications environment – you'd think they would have put up a couple of cell towers, for Pete's sake! These details, it seemed to me, were clumsily contrived in order to propel the action forward, but none are so inexcusable as to spoil the fun. I should state that the biggest shortcoming of all, of course, is the impossible science of recovering dinosaur DNA in the first place, however, we gladly suspend our disbelief on that pivotal point in order to welcome back into our world living, breathing dinosaurs!

A couple more than half the folk who attended our movie outing rated this film the best of the four Jurassic Park movies, while the rest of us placed it in the number-two spot, just behind



shark-chomping Mosasaurus

the original. Either way, a splendid recommendation.



Two MonSFen are missing from the shot – the photographer, of course–Sylvain, and Danny who was a bit late in arriving.

Night at the Museum 3: Secret of the Tomb Josée Bellemare

The third, and possibly final, movie in the franchise, *Secret of the Tomb* was also our final farewell to not only Robin Williams, as Theodore Roosevelt, but also Mickey Rooney who played one of the security guards from the first movie. A great film for the whole family with some silly moments as well as deeper ideas.



This time we see the tablet of Ahkmenra starting to go bad, causing the exhibits to go out of control.

It turns out only Ahkmenra's father knew all the secrets of the tablet. After

some research Larry finds that the pharaoh and his wife are in the British Museum so the gang come up with a plan to go to London and set things right.

When the British exhibits come to life things get chaotic: the Roman and the cowboy are trapped in a model of Pompeii with the volcano about to blow, Larry and the gang are being chased by dinosaurs and giant snakes, and statues start to dance.

After a heartfelt family reunion, they learn that the secret of fixing the tablet is simply to expose it to moonlight but before they can do that Lancelot, convinced it is the Holy Grail, steals the tablet to deliver it to Camelot.

Unfortunately, the only Camelot he finds is a musical with Hugh Jackman playing King Arthur. At the theatre, Jackman, who thinks he's dealing with a crazy person, shows Lancelot that it's all fake: the weapons, the scenery and the costumes.

After learning this, Lancelot starts questioning his own existence. When Larry and the other characters catch up with him they make him understand that the quest is not for the tablet and its magic but the opportunity to inspire and help others.

They all return to the museum where they find that the lady security guard and the caveman that looks like Larry have fallen in love.

Seeing Ahkmenra with his family, Larry decides to leave him and the tablet in the British Museum. On his way out Larry tells the lady guard that starting tomorrow night she will have the best job ever.

We skip ahead 3 years to find an exhibit from the British Museum is on loan at the New York museum of Natural History. In the curator's office, the lady guard learns that Larry is no longer

with the museum and that he went back to college and is now a teacher. She then shows him the tablet's magic. The curator walks in the main hall and is stunned when he sees all the exhibits coming to life. We also see a touching, and slightly weird, reunion of the British guard and her caveman.

The last scene is Larry standing outside the museum, smiling at what he knows is going on inside.

A recurring theme throughout the film is destiny and part it plays in people's lives.



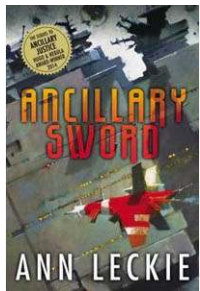
REVIEWS: Literature

From Cathy's Library

Book lovers never go to bed alone. ~Author Unknown

Four of the five novels on the Hugo ballot are in my library. I enjoyed them, but I liked some more than others. I had a hard time deciding between *Ancillary Sword* and *The Goblin Emperor* for first place. In the end, I decided on *The Goblin Emperor* because *Ancillary Sword* is a sequel to *Ancillary Justice* which won last year. I voted *The Three Body Problem* in third; though I know it has many supporters, it just didn't grab me the way the first two did. In fourth place, I put *Skin Game*, though I nearly left it off the ballot. I didn't read *Darkness Between the Stars* by Kevin J. Anderson, not because of it being a puppy nomination, but because it's just not "my thing".

Ancillary Sword, by Ann Leckie



This is the sequel to *Ancillary Justice*, winner of the Hugo, Nebula, and every other award, and it seems likely Leckie will be a winner again. In the first novel, we come to learn that Breq was once the mind of a warship, controlling every aspect of it, and all the other ancillaries on the ship. She is now an individual, and a very angry one at that, determined to revenge the betrayal of her ship.

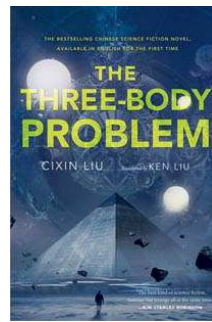
In *Ancillary Sword*, Breq enters a complicated relationship with the emperor. The emperor is also a sort of ancillary, though all the bodies are clones, apparently, since she is always recognized wherever she appears. Unfortunately, Anaander Mianaai is quite possibly insane. She is at war with herself, and the Radch empire is being shredded. Breq, taking a leap of faith on which Mianaai to follow, accepts command of a Sword class ship, but he is not jumping into this mess blindly. He is going to Atheok Station, the better to protect the family of a lieutenant he once knew and respected, and had to kill on the order of the emperor. However, he grows increasingly suspicious of the secretive behaviour of Station and ships that supposedly guard it. Ironically, Breq has a human crew that pretends to be ancillaries, although the use of ancillaries is no longer morally acceptable, and this chaffs him. Ancillaries were human once, mostly prisoners of war whose souls were ripped out, their brains rewired to meld with the AIs of stations and ships.

This is a fascinating universe. Except for growing larger, the

Radch empire hasn't changed much in centuries. The speech of a person who'd been in suspended animation for a millennium or so, is described by ordinary humans as "archaic", but she's easily understood. Breq recognizes her as one of the officers she once served, and of course the emperor has been around longer than that. This stagnation does not bode well for the future; the Radch are not the only race in town. An interesting feature of the Radch, and one much discussed by reviewers, is that gender is of no importance whatsoever, pronouns are gender neutral. Leckie chose to use "she" for the Radch word. I wonder if there would have been any controversy if she had used "he" instead.

I owe thanks to Danny Sichel for recommending this series to me, I'm looking forward to the third and concluding novel, *Ancillary Mercy*.

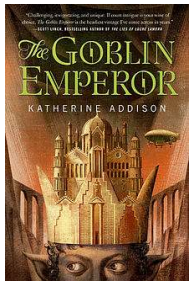
The Three-Body Problem, by Cixin Liu



Translated by Ken Liu, this is the first volume of Cixin Liu's very popular Chinese trilogy *Remembrance of Earth's Past*. It has its start in the horrors of the Cultural Revolution. A young woman witnesses the death of her physicist father, tortured to death in public, and is herself banished to the edge of nowhere: a physicist like her father, working as a lumber jack! Flash forward to the present, we learn there is an international team of investigators studying the mysterious suicides of scientists the world over. Tossed into the mix, a computer game – source unknown – but seemingly related somehow to the suicides. Through the game, humans learn about the *3-body problem*, a study in orbital mechanics. Imagine a planet orbiting a triple star system: sometimes a sun torches the civilization, and sometimes the civilisation freezes over. Sometimes inhabitants survive in hibernation, sometimes all life is wiped out and has to start over again. It doesn't take genius to figure out that the game describes a real crisis faced by an alien civilization desperate to solve the 3BD in order to predict stable and chaotic eras. But obviously, there is another solution to their dilemma, and I know what star system lies closest to a certain triple star system.

This is the sort of book one loves or hates, depending on what you seek from a “good book” Personally, I appreciate strong character development and prose more than plot, so for me, *The Three-Body Problem* didn’t work. The characters were stereotypes made of cardboard, the prose just functional. Maybe it’s the fault of the translation. Maybe the upcoming movie will be better, even dubbed or subtitled.

The Goblin Emperor, by Katherine Addison (Sarah Monette)



Winner of the Locus best novel award, and nominated for a Hugo, a Nebula, and the World Fantasy Award, it’s about a half-Goblin who becomes emperor of the Elflands. Honestly, I only bought it because it was nominated for a Hugo, but I loved it!! The novel is complete in itself, but I really hope there will be more books about Maia, who is a most complex and sympathetic character.

An airship accident takes the lives of Maia’s father and his sons by previous marriages, leaving Maia as heir to the throne. Events move quickly, almost too quickly for Maia, who’s been living exiled to a small estate in a backwater village. His cousin, guardian and mentor also in exile, hates him, and constantly belittles him, even

beating him to the point of leaving scars. Maia seems rather weak at first, but as he learns to navigate the very hostile court politics, he shows unsuspected strengths. In some ways, Maia reminds me of CJ Cherryh’s Bren Cameron in the *Foreigner* series.

Believable characters, superior word-crafting, a mystery to solve, people trying to kill the protagonist, labyrinthine court politics, what’s not to love?

Skin Game, by Jim Butcher



Hilarious! I love Harry Dresden books, and *Skin Game* has some surprising twists and turns, not to mention a lot of very devious people, one of whom is, of course, Harry Dresden.

Mab settles a debt by hiring out Harry to assist Nicodemus Archleone in a heist. Archleone, much hated by Harry and with good reason, has taken it into his head to steal the Holy Grail from Hades.

It’s fun and well-written in a straight-forward sort of way, but it pales somewhat in comparison with the other three Hugo contenders I have read. It was also on the Puppy slate, which won’t do the novel any favours.



REVIEWS: Conventions and Events

Free Comic Book Day Josée Bellemare

As many know, the first Saturday in May is Free Comic Book Day, an opportunity for various publishers to promote their titles. *La Boîte à BD* had several artists on hand, signing autographs. Outside, we had people dressed up in costumes, having their picture taken with the fans. There were some regulars, like The Ghostbusters, some new ones but no Avengers in spite of the movie having opened the night before.

And believe me they came, all ages from 2 to 82, entire families, every comic book geek in the neighbourhood showed up. As usual parking was a problem for everyone, except for Wolverine. He got to park his motorcycle right in the tent for pictures with the fans and collected the occasional donation for breast cancer research. Who’s going to argue with adamantium claws?

Inside, there was a half price off sale of older titles and the customers were buying comic books by the bagful.

With the beautiful weather, it was a great event for everyone.



Josée, with Wolverine



A familiar face, Sv Bell



A crowd invades la Boîte à BD in Laval



Cosplayers



Photos by J. Bellemare



APRIL

(If you experience déjà vu, it's because the April meeting was also covered in WARP 91)

MonSFFA's April gathering took place on the 26th, offering to early-birds our second installment of Sunday Sci-Fi Cinema Matinée, and then the meeting's two presentations, on dinosaur art and cyber security for the home.

From the Matinée's usual list of five films – all of them on this occasion “Big-Bug” monster movies – folk chose the classic *Them!*, a tale of giant irradiated ants wreaking havoc across the countryside!

The movie received high praise from all in attendance, with many noting that the film held up remarkably well for a movie more than 60 years old. *Them!* is considered one of, if not the best of the Big-Bug flicks of the 1950s. (See page 8)

Keith Braithwaite followed with a detailed slide show on the history of prehistoric illustration, commonly called dinosaur art or paleo-art. Tracing the ever-changing interpretations of the fossil record from the days of the earliest finds to the present, Keith showcased the works of the world's most celebrated paleo-artists,

like sculptor Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins, who created the famous Crystal Palace Dinosaurs in the mid-1800s, and the influential Charles R. Knight, a giant of the field during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, whose murals grace natural history museums across the U.S., and whose images inspired early fantasy filmmakers like Willis O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen.

More recent masters of paleo-art include Douglas Henderson, John Gurche, John Sibbick, Gregory S. Paul, Mark Hallett, and William Stout.

The afternoon's capper was **Steven Janssen's** talk on protecting one's home computer from “cyber-sharks”. Detailing common oversights that leave our computers vulnerable to malicious attack, Steven offered simple, easy solutions to help mitigate unwanted cyber intrusions, like selecting hard-to-guess passwords and changing them regularly. (Steven's 10 steps to protecting your home computer appear in WARP 91)

MAY

MonSFFA held its third fund-raising sci-fi book sale in conjunction with the club's May 31 meeting, which featured a presentation on visions outlined many decades ago of the future in which we now find ourselves living, followed by a review and discussion of the sci-fi TV shows of the late Glen A. Larson.

A crew of book-sale worker bees arrived early to help unpack boxes of books, comics, and magazines, and stock our sales

tables. We take this opportunity to thank all of those bees so very much; we couldn't have done it without you guys!

Once underway, the book sale carried on through much of the afternoon while the regular MonSFFA meeting unfolded. Our so-called “Big Bulk Bargain” – a banker's box full of books for only \$10! – proved extremely popular, with most shoppers taking full advantage of this astonishing deal.

This sale has added just over \$150 to the club's coffers! In all, then, over the past 12 months or so, our three sales have moved thousands of books and raised a total of about \$850!

Since the theme for the April meeting had been “April Showers”, it followed that the theme for the May meeting would be “May Flowers”. There were flowered shirts, flowers pinned to shirts, cupcake flowers (Yummy, thank you **Linzy!**), and **Danny** pointed out that there were flowers on our money, so all of us qualified for the participation draw in December.

By the beginning of the 30th century, foretold astronomer Camille Flammarion (1842-1925), the transmission of sounds and images by “téléphonoscopie” will be perfected, along with the capacity to relay touch and smell! **Sylvain St-Pierre** opened the afternoon's programming with this and other predictions of the future made throughout human history. Sylvain took his audience from the forecasts of the Oracle of Delphi and other early prognosticators to the sometimes remarkably prescient speculation of Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and others, to the predictions offered by Popular Science Magazine in the mid-20th century.

Bullet trains, debit cards, television, and equal rights for women were all foreseen as much as 100 years before they came to be, while erroneous predictions included rocket-propelled mailmen and fully automated barber shops!



Keith Braithwaite moderated our review and discussion of the sci-fi oeuvre of television producer Glen A. Larson, best known to our cohort for the original *Battlestar Galactica*. Larson's shows, it was agreed, are unlikely to ever be ranked among the genre's finest, but the best of them were usually entertaining, if sometimes rather derivative. His worst –



Manimal, Automan, Galactica 1980 – were pure rubbish, however, and mercifully short-lived.

High-quality production design and visual effects served shows like Battlestar Galactica and Buck Rogers in the 25th Century well, and offered sci-fi fans of the late-1970s and early-'80s something cool to look at, at the very least.

Larson's most successful creation, both in terms of longevity and critical appraisal, was Night Rider, a very '80s sci-fi actioner starring a charming David Hasselhoff and a talking sports car! The show spawned several sequels, the most recent of which aired in 2008.

The printed version of Warp 91, marking the passing of Terry Pratchett, was made available at the May meeting. We remind MonSFFen that the 'zine is available online, and that they may also pick up a printed copy at club meetings, if they so desire. Members who wish to have a printed copy mailed to them are asked to please contact club VP Keith Braithwaite with their requests: keith1958@live.ca

For supper, we journeyed up to the *Belle et la boeuf*. The hamburgers and poutines were devine, the decor featured a wall of books, LPs, and magazines from the past, which was rather apropos given the book sale and the two presentations which both featured a nostalgic aspect. It was fun picking out the old stuff of our memories, and some stuff even older like wooden farm implements. The menu was terribly funny with names like Capitaine Flam and Pac Mac. The drinks were hilarious, Linzi's drink (the Miss Piggy) came with a twist of bacon!

A good meeting! Thanks to all who wrangled the boxes and furniture, gave presentations, donated drinks and snacks, and packed up the books again at the end.

Extra content, photos and video, available for download on our website: <http://www.monsffa.ca> . In the left menu, look for the meeting recap category, and members will find even more stuff in members' section of our site.



MonSFFun!

Sylvain St-Pierre

EXPIRY DATE / DATE D'EXPIRATION
2015.06.14 - 12:49

INSTRUCTIONS
IN CASE OF
VELOCIRAPTOR ATTACK
**1: OPEN BOX OF
RAPTOR KIBBLES.
2: THROW CONTENT
AS FAR AS YOU CAN.
3: RUN VERY VERY
FAST.**
**WARNING: DO NOT
KEEP ONCE
OPENED!**

**EN CAS D'ATTAQUE DE
VELOCIRAPTOR**
**1: OUVRIR LA BOÎTE
DE RAPTOR KIBBLES.
2: LANCER LE
CONTENU AUSSI
LOIN QUE POSSIBLE.
3: COURREZ TRÈS
TRÈS VITE.**
**AVERTISSEMENT:
NE PAS GARDER
UNE FOIS OUVERT!**

**WIN
GAGNEZ**

A TRIP TO ISLA NUBLAR
OFFER NOT VALID IN QUEBEC
UN VOYAGE À ISLA NUBLAR
OFFRE NON VALIDE AU QUÉBEC

**RAPTOR
KIBBLES**
**VELOCIRAPTOR
BAIT - APPATS**

**RAPTOR
KIBBLES**
**NOW
HUMAN SCENTED!
MAINTENANT
AVEC ODEUR
D'HUMAIN!**

MONSFFA

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