

I M P U L S E

LE BULLETIN D'INFORMATION DE L'ASSOCIATION MONTRÉLAISE DE SCIENCE-FICTION ET DE FANTASTIQUE, L'AMonSFF

March / Mars 2020 (Vol. 24, No./N° 3)

**NEXT
MonSFFA MEETING
IS THIS WEEKEND!****Saturday, March 7
1:00PM-5:00PM****St-François Room (second floor)
Hôtel Espresso, 1005 Guy St.
Downtown Montreal**

*MEETING THEME: Costuming! With
Costume-Con in Montreal this year, we
encourage MonSFFen to bring in their
best costumes and accessories (or
photos thereof) for display!*

PROGRAMME**1:00PM-2:30PM**

COSTUMING SHOW-AND-TELL NO. 1:
Today is a good day to DIY! Moulding
your own Klingon forehead prosthetic—
see how it's done!

2:30PM-3:15PM

COSTUMING SHOW-AND-TELL NO. 2:
We welcome two talented costumers from
among our ranks for a brief "show-and-tell"
on some of the cool, award-winning genre
costumes they have fashioned over the years!

3:15PM-3:30PM

MID-MEETING BREAK: Fund-raising raffle;
brief discussion of club business, including
proposal for an early (April) field trip

3:30PM-4:15PM

**CALLING OCCUPANTS OF INTERPLANETARY
CRAFT!:** How likely is it that we will make
contact with an advanced extraterrestrial
civilization one day? Or have we already?

4:15PM-5:00PM

WORKSHOP: Learn how to paint plastic
dollar-store toy "weapons" and
paraphernalia to appear
more realistic!

**UPDATE: MonSFFA's
SEARCH FOR A NEW
MEETING SPACE!**

As MonSFFen know, financial considerations
have compelled us to, reluctantly, soon depart
our familiar meeting room at the Hôtel Espresso,
our long-time home. Rental rates at the hotel
have jumped dramatically, well beyond the
club's ability to pay.

And so, we have put together a list of
potential meeting halls, some suggested to
us by club members, and over the past couple
months, begun exploring these possibilities.
Some proved inadequate to our needs or
unavailable to us for one reason or another,
others too expensive, but a few seemed viable
at first blush. These were short-listed and in
recent weeks, we have been in communication
with the managers of said venues. As of this
writing, a promising auxiliary room in a
Westmount church proved a tad more expensive
to rent than we anticipated—our high-end offer
was rejected, and so we have crossed that option
off the list.

At the moment, we are in communication
with a community center on Bannantyne
Avenue in Verdun, a short walk from the
Verdun Metro station. Talks continue as we
seek to iron out a couple issues; we will keep
members updated on our progress via social
media, and in these pages.

Until a new venue has been secured, we will
continue to meet at the Espresso, as last year's
very successful book sale has afforded us a bit
of a financial cushion. But of course, we don't
want to burn through any more of the club's
cash reserves than is absolutely necessary!

For this reason, we are also thinking of
holding the club's annual field trip early this
year, in April rather than June (see final item),

**DOES YOUR
NAME APPEAR BELOW?
CHECK THIS SPACE TO KNOW
IF YOUR ANNUAL MonSFFA
MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE**

*The Annual Membership Fees of
the Following Club Members are...*

Overdue:

DUROCHER, Marc
HAMMOCK, Christopher
JANSSEN, Steven
NOVO, Alice
PICARD, Shawn
RUFIANGE, Yolande
TOUSIGNANT, Yves

Due This Month, March:

MÉNARD, François
WALLING, René

Due Next Month, April:

NADEAU, Marc
NOVO, Fernando

Standard membership is only \$25
annually. We offer a family rate of
\$40. Add \$10 to either of these to
enjoy our premium "Platinum"
membership level. Please complete
the form below, include payment
(cheque or money order made out to
"MonSFFA"), and mail to:

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

*Thank you for your
patronage*

MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please print legibly. Cut out form and mail as per directions.

AMonSFF FORMULAIRE D'INSCRIPTION

Complétez lisiblement. Découpez le coupon et postez tel qu'indiqué.

NAME/NOM: _____ AGE/ÂGE: _____ TEL./TEL.: _____ - _____ - _____

ADDRESS/ADRESSE: _____
No. & Street/N° et Rue Apt./App. City/Ville

Province _____ Postal Code/Code Postal _____ E-MAIL/COURRIEL: _____

INTERESTS/INTERETS: _____

so that we may avoid the expense of another costly room rental charge at the Espresso while at the same time lending us a little more time to finalize negotiations for our new meeting room.

Again, please note that our previously published 2020 Events Schedule may—though not necessarily—require revision once our move to a new venue is settled; meeting dates might be changed, including, perhaps, the switching of some or all meetings from Saturdays to Sundays!

February MonSFFA Meeting

The club held its well-attended February meeting on the 8th, with Danny Sichel opening proceedings. By broadening our definition of what counts as science fiction by just a little, Danny began, much of what is not generally thought of as SF, we can label *as* science fiction!

Sesame Street, for example, is not regarded as an SF show, despite its human characters interacting with the decidedly non-human Muppet characters. Several of these Muppets are monsters, or animals having the amazing capability of human speech; one is even a vampire!

The whimsical creatures of Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears a Who, meanwhile, inhabit Whoville, a city that exists on a spec of dust! These Whos also appear at Christmas, annoying the green-furred, mountain-dwelling Grinch with their noisy, festive cheer. Both the Whos and the Grinch are something other than human, as are the Once-ler and Lorax, characters in Seuss' celebrated story about the plight of the environment. In *The Cat in the Hat*, the titular anthropomorphic cat releases two beings—Thing One and Thing Two—to wreak playful havoc in the home of two human children before employing advanced technology in the form of an amazing machine to clean up the mess made!

And so, consider: a city of microscopic proportions, assorted bizarre, sentient creatures of varying types, a machine of astounding robotic capabilities—this is all science fiction!

Even when speaking of live-action dramas like the numerous CSI crime-solving series on television, the forensic science employed to positively identify a murderer—and in record time, at that!—is often so wildly exaggerated as to be, effectively, science fiction when compared to real-world procedures and technologies. These CSI shows, then, are science fiction, if interpreted from a certain point of view!

Few would consider *The West Wing* science fiction. But a story about the travails of a President Josiah “Jed” Bartlet might be viewed as taking place in an alternate universe, and therefore, as SF. Historically, we know that there was no President

Bartlet, and so he and his administration *must* exist in an alternate reality!

Danny approached his subject with a mischievous sense of humour but convincingly argued that science fiction, *really*, when you think about it, can be found practically everywhere you look.

René Walling followed with a look at the interesting trends in genre publishing an examination of statistics can reveal. René is in the middle of a project collecting data on who was writing what kind of “scientific romance,” “planetary romance,” “weird menace,” and fantastic “hero pulp” tales over the decades, and what themes emerged and were revisited dating back to the earliest days of what we now classify as science fiction and fantasy.

For instance, the number of books about space flight, and trips to the moon and beyond, in the first half of the 20th century seems to correspond with the development of rocket science and, ultimately, the space race and moon landing.

René explained his methodology, and noted certain gaps in publishing's historical record that have hindered his research, and will require that he dig deeper, or perhaps engage in a little bit of educated guessing.

It was interesting to see how events like World War II impacted the genre publishing industry, as illuminated by René's data—fewer books published during the first half of the 1940s, presumably because many authors went to war. Also, the number of female genre authors as compared to male is pretty close to equal today, but the data showed that, even though women had been present since the very beginning, the number of female writers in the field only began to rise noticeably in the late-1960s, perhaps in conjunction with feminism's second wave. Science fiction and fantasy had been a predominantly male-dominated field until then.

The afternoon's agenda was a busy one but club president Cathy Palmer-Lister took the time, during the mid-meeting break, to update the gathered MonSFFers on the progress of our search for a new meeting room (see lead item). We also held our usual fund-raising raffle, awarding lucky winners a number of cool prizes.

Danny stepped forward again to close the meeting with a game of Bluf/SF, a bluffing game in which players, given the title of an actual published fantasy or science fiction story, first try to score points by bluffing their opponents with a false plot summary, then try to identify the genuine story synopsis, included among the phony outlines read aloud by Danny. We've played this game before; always fun!

We thank Danny, René, and all others who contributed to the planning and successful staging of this, our February meeting.

Briefly:

- ▶ Costume-Con 38 will unfold March 13-16 (next weekend!) right here in Montreal, at the Hôtel Bonaventure, downtown. Costume-Con is a 4-day celebration of costuming in all forms—cosplay, re-enactment, original creation, etc! Visit the con's Web site for more information: costumecon38.org
- ▶ Print copies of *Warp 106* (Winter 2020) will be available for pick-up by members at the club's March 7 meeting.

Field Trip Options Under Consideration

While we work out details regarding our move to a new meeting hall, we're thinking about scheduling our annual group field trip early this year. Should we so proceed, here are a few options under consideration: the Botanical Garden's exhibition of odd plants; the Egyptian Mummies exhibition, Museum of Fine Arts; the “Imagine Van Gogh” immersive exhibition, Arsenal Contemporary Art Montreal; the *Journey to Space* exhibit, Montreal Science Centre (Old Port); the Cosmodome, Laval; or the recently updated fossil gallery at the Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa. If we opt for an early group field trip, it will be scheduled for late-March or sometime in April. We'll discuss all of this and make a decision at our March 7 club meeting.

Visit MonSFFA on the Web / Visitez l'AMonSFF sur internet: www.MonSFFA.ca

Impulse is put together monthly by Keith Braithwaite on behalf of MonSFFA and is available on MonSFFA's Web site courtesy Cathy Palmer-Lister. Contact Keith in regards to this publication by any of the following means: In person at a MonSFFA meeting • E-mail: keith1958@live.ca • Voice mail: 450-692-8831 • Via the club's mailing address, to the attention of “Impulse”: MonSFFA c/o 4456 Boul. Ste-Rose, Laval, Québec, Canada, H7R 1Y6

Impulse est préparée une fois par mois par Keith Braithwaite au nom de l'AMonSFF. Il est disponible sur le site internet du club grâce à Cathy Palmer-Lister. Pour toutes questions concernant cette publication, contactez Keith soit: En personne à une réunion du club • Courriel: keith1958@live.ca • Boîte vocal: 450-692-8831 • Par la poste à l'adresse du club, à l'attention de “Impulse”: AMonSFF a/s de 4456 Boul. Ste-Rose, Laval, Québec, Canada, H7R 1Y6