

WARP 69

Winter 2008 * Volume 22 * 01



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

On the Cover

2 Wacky Pin Guys

Bernard Reischl and Mark Burakoff created this special edition pin for MonSFFA's 20th anniversary.

Photograph by Sylvain St-Pierre



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MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Programming is subject to change.



March 30, 2008

Star Trek Animated
esented by Teresa Penalba

Remastered Star Trek
Presented by Wayne Glover



April 20, 2008

SF Bake Sale & SF Garage Sale

Green Science Fiction
Presented by Cathy Palmer-Lister



May 25, 2008

Evil Trivia Game
Presented by the Two Wacky Pin Guys

Heroes and Villains
Presented by Keith Braithwaite



June 22, 2008

1 Trip to the [Biodome, Botanical Gardens, Insectarium.](#)
*ase RSVP with your payment of 20\$, 10\$ for children
by our May meeting at the latest.*



July 20, 2008

MonSFFA BBQ (July 27, 2008 rain date)
*Moon landing Anniversary Games
presented by Mark Burakoff*



August 24, 2008

BOA: All members in good standing invited to have your say in the running of your club!

The editor wishes to thank [Sylvain St-Pierre](#) and [Charles Mohapel](#) for their photographs of the MonSFFA 20th anniversary party which appear scattered throughout out this issue of WARP. Merci! – Cathy

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

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Dear MonSFFen:

Issue 68 is here, and summer is almost done. Some decisions have been made, and now I can respond to this issue.

One decision was about coming to Con*Cept, and originally, we weren't going to because of money and time. The big decision was about going to Anticipation. I must admit, we didn't pre-support Montréal in 2009 because we felt that [LAcon IV](#) was our last Worldcon, and that even with our preferences, Kansas City would win the 2009 Worldcon. Well, they didn't, and Montréal did. Did we even want to go? If we did, would we want to help? The answer was yes and yes, so we are going to Con*Cept to go to the first Anticipation meeting, we plan to go to Anticipation, and we have already told René what we'd like to do at the Worldcon. It took a while to make those decisions, but we did feel that if we didn't go or help out, we'd probably regret it. So, we're going! And Con*Cept is 3 weeks away as I type...

My letter...Yvonne and I did have a good time at [Polaris 21](#), and as always, it was because of the people attending. I'm afraid I probably stumbled across one or two of the actor guests, and didn't know who they were. Yvonne worked the Ad Astra table, and I was a part of the Sectarian Wave performance.

It seems that our collective attention spans get shorter as time goes by. Victorian literature was flowery and very wordy, and few of us voluntarily plough through nearly

a thousand pages or more to get a story. Today's SF novels are shorter (with some notable exceptions), but movies and television shows give us the gist of the story in 30 minutes to two hours. We'd like nothing better than to join you for your 20th anniversary dinner and dance, but we do not drive long distances in the wintertime, being very distrustful of the 401. That's the reason we don't go to Detroit conventions in the wintertime, too.

We've read how Sylvain prepared for [Nippon 2007](#)...now to find out how it went, and how to prepare for regular life again. The reports I've heard were mixed, but after all the years of musing about it, the Japanese Worldcon was finally a reality, and there are no regrets anywhere.

It looks like Astronomicon in Rochester has been cancelled for 2007. Their website, [www.astronomicon.info](#), is now mere text, indicating that their next convention will be in November of 2008.

With The Lord of the Rings still being in the public spotlight, it's good to see that The Hobbit can still be rediscovered and enjoyed. Ah, if only The Hobbit could have been made into a similar movie...

A shame that [C*ACE](#) had its final curtain call. What does Ottawa do for a convention now? Come to Con*Cept, but there has to be something local.

Our own news...we are planning to go to Las Vegas in the spring for Corflu Silver, the 2008 annual fanzine fans convention. We know the folks who will be running the show there, and it should be a good time. We are going to do the usual touristy things while we're there, but we will also have a good time talking fanzinish stuff. The Aurora ballots are out, and I got a

nomination for fanwriting under Fan Achievement (Other)...I last won an Aurora 10 years ago. I hope I can end the drought.

And finally, the best news for the last...I have found myself a full-time job in my own field, publishing. As of September 24, I will be an Editor, Electronic Publications for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, or CNIB, in Toronto. The pay is great, the office is roomy, lots of light and greenery...I am so looking forward to this. I'll tell you more as time goes on.

I think I'm done for now...take care, and see you at Con*Cept!

Yours, Lloyd Penney

Hi, Lloyd!

WARP 69 was due for the autumn—it's a bit late! [Corflu](#) will be just around the corner by the time this issue goes to print. They have a promotional video on YouTube. Sounds like you'll have a great time there!

Sad news that [Astronomicon 11](#) had to cancel last year, but I see they have announced they'll be back on November 7th, 8th & 9th of 2008, and they have confirmed two GoH already.

In further sad news, our local media fan club, SF Vortex, has come to an end. There was no one to take up the reins after Marc Nadeau had to step down. What with the day job, Con*Cept, and Otakuthon, he felt overwhelmed and needed time to come up for air now and then.

On a happier note, [Con*Cept 2007](#) did very well, and we are preparing for 2008. [David Brin](#) is confirmed as author GoH. I

hope to see you and Yvonne again.

Yours in fandom, Cathy

From Guy Lillian III, editor of [Challenger](#),
quoted from Zine Dump 17
regarding Warp 68, Summer of 2007:

All hail Montreal, newly-chosen site of the 2009 Worldcon! I really look forward to the trip; not only will we get to see Montreal, a city I've always wanted to visit, we'll get to meet Cathy and her cohorts, who produce a right nice genzine and will probably give us a fine Worldcon, too. Here in this issue, Sylvain St-Pierre anticipates Nippon 2007 (can't wait to read the report), Nikolai Krimp and Leslie Lupien offer fiction, Cathy and "the Fernster" review books (the Fernster's choice is *The Hobbit*; tell me, do you think this book will ever become popular?). Cathy notes the final C-ACE, and Keith Braithwaite discusses club activities. As a veteran of a marvellous Worldcon bid – and the taxing, frustrating Worldcon that followed – I must wish MonSFFA well as it faces its own trial by fire. May everyone remain friends once 2009 is past.

Bonjour, Guy!

We look forward to meeting you at



Some of the collection of Warp fanzines on display at the club's December 8 Christmas/20th Anniversary Party. All 68 issues of the 'zine published to date were available for perusal. The first issue of Warp was released in October of 1988. (Photo by Charles Mohapel)

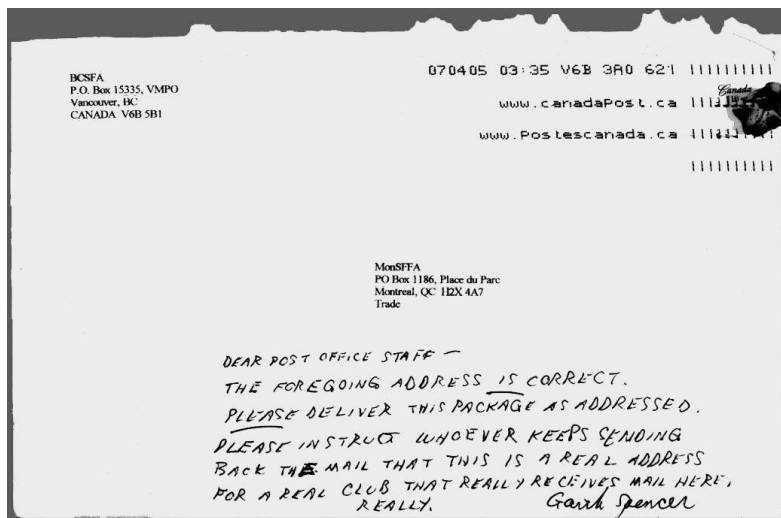
Anticipation! Can't believe it's happening next year! Oh, my!

In December, MonSFFA celebrated its 20th anniversary. How the years fly when you're having fun! Keith Braithwaite, our official archivist, laid out a display of every single issue of WARP published to date. It was fascinating to see the trends in fandom

over the years, not to mention going from cut'n'paste to pdf. At our January meeting, everyone in attendance was roped into writing an article for WARP, and that was quite an experience! Most articles actually made it to the editor, yours truly, and appear in this issue. Enjoy!

Yours in fandom,

Cathy



MonSFFA contacted Canada Post many times re the too-numerous instances of mail addressed to the club being returned to sender, but despite those complaints, and such novel attempts as the inscription on this envelope to highlight the chronic problem to postal officials, the snafu persisted and led, finally, to the club's decision to close its P.O. box.

And so, we take this opportunity to remind readers that all mail to MonSFFA should now be addressed to:

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

Ad Astra, March 28 - 30, Toronto, ON
www.ad-astra.org

Filk Ontario, April 4 -5, Mississauga, ON,
<http://www.filkontario.ca/>

Sci-Fi on the Rock, April 19 - 20, St. Johns, Newfoundland
<http://www.scifiontherock.com/>

ToyCon, May 4, Montreal, QC
http://site.toysonfire.com/montreal_toy_con/montrealtoycon.html

Boréal, May 9 - 11, Montreal, QC
<http://www.congresboreal.ca>

Anime North, May 23 - 25, Toronto, ON
<http://www.animenorth.com/>

Polaris, July 11 - 13, Toronto, ON
<http://www.tcon.ca>

Otakuthon, July 26 - 27, Montreal, QC
<http://www.otakuthon.com/>

A Review of Nippon 2007

Sylvain St-Pierre

It was a very safe bet to assume that Nippon would be different from your average North-American style Worldcon. How different, and in which way, was the question we were all asking ourselves. Here is how it went, at least from my own point of view. (Pictures by the author unless specified otherwise.)

Tuesday, August 28th, to Wednesday, August 29th

They say that getting there is half the fun. Obviously, “they” never had to travel from Montreal to Yokohama... The trip took a gruelling twenty-one hours to complete from doorstep to doorstep. Although I managed to sleep part of it off, I was grateful for the fact that the individually controlled entertainment units had over 81 hours worth of videos, and included several SF&F movies.

Fannish-wise, not much happened today. Rodan did try to buzz our plane, but was thwarted at the last minute by Gamera. The Mysterians might have been tempted to abduct us to perform some unspeakable experiments, but they were too busy fighting Ultraman. I am quite certain that there must be more to Japanese fandom than giant monsters and *animé* – though these are a



A Near Miss...

very good start – and I am quite eager to find out what else they have to offer starting tomorrow. Stay tuned for the next exciting episode of the amazing adventures of Sirban-kun in the Land of the *otaku*. (Sirban being the closest approximation of my name in the Japanese language.)

Thursday, August 30th

In case you are wondering, no I did not forget a day. I had to cross the International Date Line, so I arrived around dinner time on Wednesday in Yokohama.

Finding the Pacifico Convention Centre was easy. All I had to do was to look for ever higher concentrations of poorly dressed overweight foreigners... Ye gods! I am hardly slim, but the local mundanes could be forgiven for thinking that Nippon was an international sumo wrestler competition!



Pacifico Convention Centre

The place is quite stylish and the layout is adequate for the purpose. The meeting rooms are well appointed, there is no need to cover kilometres to go from one point to another and there are plenty of very clean rest rooms.

There is even a built-in convenience store offering cheap ready-to-eat meals. I suspect that a lot of fans are going to live on *onigri* rice balls for the next few days. There is also a drink called Lemon Water that is quite tasty, refreshing and is fast becoming a favourite amongst visitors, most of whom finding the climate quite muggy.



Registration

Registration, by contrast, was a breeze! There were two separate lines: one for the locals and one for foreigners. This had nothing to do with racism, but rather a necessity imposed by the need to deal with two completely different written and spoken languages.

It will surprise none of you that the Dealers' Room was one of the first places that I visited. This tends to be a facet of the Worldcon that suffers whenever the event is held outside of the United States, because the Customs hassle turns off many merchants. The local production being what it is, I expected a breathtaking treasure trove.



Dealer's Room

It was obvious at first glance that it was not very large, but with life-sized – or, should I say, *human-sized* – statues of Ultraman and a Balkan right at the entrance, it did hold the promise of many marvels. *SIGH* Sadly it was not so. To be sure, there were some very fascinating items, but not nearly enough to make the place memorable. It seems that the Japanese can easily fulfill their fannish needs at the local equivalent of Wal-Mart, and the Dealers' Room is not an important fixture at conventions here.

From the point of view of merchandise, the Fan Club Room actually offered more intriguing items. Of particular note were the postcards sold by a club entirely devoted to describing the alternate world of Nyan Ei, where cats rule. I suspect that there must be some truly horrible puns in those titles.



Cat Thunderbirds



Cat Monster Movie

“Of particular note were the postcards sold by a club entirely devoted to describing the alternate world of Nyan Ei, where cats rule.”

The Opening Ceremony was quite colourful. It started in great style with a fan-made animated short, depicting a girl with super-powers defending Yokohama against incoming hordes of monsters and aliens, only to find out that they just want to attend the convention! They must have used just about every *animé* cliché in the book to make this presentation, and obviously had a lot of fun doing it.

We were also treated to the sight of the mayor of Yokohama making an entrance in a rickshaw and welcoming us to his city. Followed a speech by the convention Chairman, Hiroaki Inoué, and the presentation of the various Guests of Honour. The whole thing was fully bilingual, everything being translated into English or Japanese as needed. Quite an auspicious start.

The interaction between and with the Japanese fans is truly fascinating. Obviously I miss a lot because I do not understand the language, but we have here an incredibly complex equation, with a great many factors.

There is the traditional Japanese insistence on knowing your place in society and behaving accordingly, tempered by the fact that the younger generation is starting to question those values. Consider as well that we are dealing here with fans, who tend to be anything but conventional.

The presence of so many like-minded *gaijin* also weight heavily in the balance (no pun intended). On one hand, the Japanese are fascinated by foreigners but do not expect them to understand the local culture. On the other, the foreigners attending this convention are here in great part because they are equally fascinated by Japan, and tend to know a lot more about it than most casual tourists.

The Japanese fans are very proud of the fact that they are holding the very first Asian Worldcon, and want it to be a success. The foreign visitors very much want to show their hosts that not all *gaijin* are uncouth barbarians. Each side is desperate to make a good impression!

This indeed promises to be a very special Worldcon.

Friday, August 31st

The Art Show, sharing the same room as the Dealers, is also

relatively small for a Worldcon, but the excellent quality of the displays more than makes up for the lack of size. The fannish displays are also well worth seeing; one ambitious group has even gone as far as building a working glider based on the *Nausicaa of the Valley of Winds* movie heroine’s aircraft. The exhibit devoted to fan productions is also quite informative. The *otaku* spend as much time as their North American counterparts on their hobby, with often quite impressive results.

Nausicaa Glider, animé, and the (almost) real thing.

A group of us went on excursion to the Akihabara neighbourhood of Tokyo today. The so-called “Electric Town” is everything its reputation implies, even if it no longer is the exclusive haunt of geeks. The place is actually starting to become trendy. What is the world coming to?!

There are loads of second hand electronic shops selling computer parts very cheap, but it’s mostly obsolete stuff. The toy aisles of the department stores are far more interesting, overflowing with all manners of monsters and models. I would have taken pictures to show folks back home all those marvels, but a security guard politely informed us that *shashin* was *kinsi sareta* after the first one.



Sylvain, Ready to Pounce (Picture by Derwin Mak)

For those who are into costuming, there are places entirely devoted to this sort of things, with disturbingly large sections offering maid and cat girl costumes.

And not all purchasers are actual girls...

Back to the con, my first impression about foreigners making an effort to fit in has been spoiled a little today. A few visitors are acting in a totally boorish manner, expecting – nay, *demanding* – to be served in English, and are not too subtle about it. They are but a small minority, but do make the rest of us *gaijin* cringe. Personally, I do not have a lot of respect for people who cannot even be bothered to learn to say “thank you” in the local language.

Not surprisingly, this is the kind of crowd most likely to be found at the Western-style food court in the nearby shopping center, nibbling on such exotic delicacies as hamburgers, fried chicken and pancake. Fortunately, there is also another – much larger – food court in the same complex, offering delicious and varied local dishes. Except for the scrumptious traditional Japanese breakfast available at my hotel, I do not intend to eat twice at the same place for the duration of my stay.

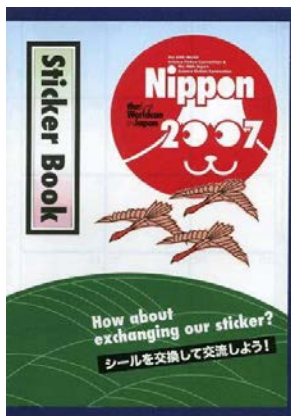


Traditional Japanese breakfast

“Except for the scrumptious traditional Japanese breakfast available at my hotel, I do not intend to eat twice at the same place for the duration of my stay”.

There is one particular local fannish custom that is fast gaining popularity amongst visitors. In Japan,

fans like to exchange their own personalised stickers, and sometimes build huge collections of them. The standard size is about two and a half centimetres long and they range from the very plain to the very elaborate, up to tiny holograms in extreme cases. The con has provided special booklets for that purpose, and many Westerners are gathering stickers with such enthusiasm that I would not at all be surprised if this practice was to become a fad in North America as well.



One North American fannish custom that is not likely to catch on here is the concept of begging crash space to sleep in. Some fans are finding out the hard way that Japanese hotels charge per head rather than for space, and piling up half a dozen people in the same room is a prosecutable offence here!

Saturday, September 1st

The number of Japanese members went up considerably today. This is not too surprising, as the locals do not have a lot of vacation days to spare, and are far less likely to call in sick when they are not seriously so.

What effect this will have on the 2009 Worldcon site selection vote is currently anybody's guess. I keep hearing conflicting reports on this subject. Some are saying that the Japanese are not voting much, others that they are. There is also a rumour to the effect that the Kansas City convention center has registered its staff en masse so that they could vote and sway the result their way.

For all their reputation as technical wizards, the local fans are apparently faced with the same problems as their colleagues from the rest of the world when it comes to setting up. One of the panels that I attended was delayed quite a bit while the crew struggled to get a very fancy sound system working...

Setup Problems



The hall costumes – *cosplay*, as it known here – are quite interesting. They range from simple kimonos, which are more or less the local equivalent of our medieval garb, to elaborate and quite realistic *animé* re-creations. While I can recognize a few, many are from shows that are totally unknown to me, which makes them all the more cool.



Cosplay: A Blast from the Past



Cosplay: The Old and the New



Cosplay: Don't Ask and You Won't be Told



Cosplay: Yummy...err...Yuri and Kei



One particular form of *cosplay* is called *kigurumi*. It means “wrapped in” and involves all enclosing masks meant to make the wearer look like a live *animé* character. You have to be very dedicated to wear those, as they are very stifling.

Kigurumi

I did not attend the Hugo Ceremony because this sort of things does not appeal much to me, which is why I missed the mind blowing battle of a couple of Ultramen against a host of menacing monsters who wanted to take over the con. I'll know better next time. Nippon's version of the mounting for the traditional Hugo award rocket is quite distinctive, and will certainly be readily identifiable a long time from now.



Ultraman Hugo Award

I hear that the filkers are quite unhappy. It is hard to get the details, but it seems that the hotel where they were performing told them to stop. Apparently, the singing of strange rhymes in public areas was spooking the mundane guests.

Sunday, September 2nd

Montreal won the right to host the 2009 Worldcon! And by a very comfortable margin, even. Kansas City was only a few votes behind at the start of the con, but on-site voting swayed massively in favour of our city. A few hours ago, the general opinion was that the new border regulations were going to turn off many Americans; but if that was a factor, it was more than compensated by the vote of the Japanese fans, for



whom it makes little difference and who tend to view Canada as a more exotic and desirable place to visit.

It also appears that the rumour about the Kansas City convention centre registering its employees to vote is false. The one tiny kernel of truth in it is that the director of the facility is indeed registered, but so is the one for the Montreal Palais des Congrès, as is commonly done for Worldcons. It's amazing how things like that can quickly swell out of proportion.

This has made the rest of the day somewhat interesting for me. My badge clearly identifies me as a Canadian, and everybody assumes – correctly, I must admit – that I must be from Quebec. They keep asking me about the food. Obviously, Montreal's reputation in that domain is well established.

I attended a few panels today. The mix of the two languages is very much reminiscent of the way our own Con*Cept convention is run in Montreal, and demonstrates that it is perfectly possible to run a bilingual convention. Much to my surprise, some of the translation is done by non-Japanese, and quite fluently so, apparently. A few people are using fascinating pocket computers to help them to find difficult words, and it makes you wonder how long we will have to wait before we have devices performing as well as those of Star Trek.

As is traditional, the Masquerade started late. There was almost a riot about this, for those of us who had come early were asked to leave the room and join the end of the then already long queue. After some vehement protests, we were allowed to stay in the foyer and got in first when the doors re-opened.

The Masquerade itself was quite short, with only a dozen entries. It seems that *cosplay* has all but killed formal masquerades at Japanese conventions. This probably accounts for the fact that some of the entries had wonderful costumes but rather lackluster presentations. Still an enjoyable show, as we were also treated to a spectacular sword dance by a professional troupe while the judges deliberated.



Masquerade Winners

Evening was pleasantly spent attending Donbura-con (“the convention by the sound of the waves”, in Japanese), a dinner-cruise in the port of Yokohama. I chanced to wait in line next to Robert Silverberg, one of my favourite authors, and had a wonderful conversation with him.



Donbura-con Ship

Monday, October 3rd

Yesterday, donations were asked during an intermission at the Masquerade, for a fan who fell ill during the con and found out that Japanese hospitals do not accept credit cards. Fans have been extremely generous, and the bill – which I understand to be in the thousands of dollars – has been covered. Way to go!

Last day of the con (*SIGH*). Our Labour Day is not a holiday here in Japan, and the number of local attendants has gone down quite dramatically. I wanted to see the Closing Ceremony, and thought I had plenty of time to do so, but the departure hour for the Ghibli Museum Tour has been changed to an earlier one. It seems that the Thursday tour was caught in heavy traffic and the organisers did not want a repeat of that.

I had just enough time to grab the last issue of Changing Tides, the con's newsletter. Aside from the fact that there were separate English and Japanese editions, it was otherwise unremarkable; the relatively few issues being concise and to the point. It is to be noted that the Japanese versions tried very much to be Japanese by using large traditional Japanese digits, which have been mostly replaced by Western characters in everyday life.

The trip actually went very well, and we arrived in advance of schedule. Located in the suburb of Mintaka, the Ghibli

Museum features the works of famous *animé* director Hayao Miyazaki, who gave us such classics as *My Neighbour Totoro*, *Laputa: The Flying Island* and *Spirited Away*. The architecture of the place manages to be whimsical without being cartoonish, and is full of clever and charming details. Even the tickets are actual framed snippets of film strips from the studio's productions.



Ghibli Museum: Bus Stop Sign



Ghibli Museum: Some of the Buildings



Ghibli Museum: the Tenku no shiro no Laputa robot
(picture taken by a fellow tourist)

There are a number of settings based on various movies, including some I had never heard of before. The most popular, the one next to which everybody wants to be photographed, is the giant robot from *Laputa*, a quite impressive sculpture. There are also several interesting rooms, including one where figurines are given life by stroboscopic lights, a beautiful rendering of the classical Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and an "artist's studio" that would make the delight of most fans.

Tuesday, October 4th

Well, the con is over, but that does not mean that I have to stop having fun. I devoted the entire day to a visit of DisneySea, an amusement park unique to Japan. It is right beside the Tokyo Disneyland and, judging from the size of the crowds at the entrance of each park, is a little less heavily attended.

The place is very obviously intended to cater to Japanese visitors first and foremost. The labels in Western script are there mostly because they look cool and exotic to the people of the Land of the Rising Sun. Still, there is a commendable effort to make the place convenient for foreigners. All the explanations and warnings are bilingual, and there appears to be enough English-speaking staff on hand to answer inquiries in that language.

While waiting in line to see the Magic Show, I was politely asked if I wanted to follow the presentation in English, and was given a neat little wireless display screen that ran a simultaneous text translation of the show. Truth be told, it did not require much effort to notice me in the crowd: I doubt that I saw a dozen non-Asian looking faces in the entire park the whole time I was there.

Just as the Magic Kingdom is divided into "Lands", DisneySea is centred around several "Ports" from the real and imaginary worlds. A couple, like Mediterranean Harbor and American Waterfront are rather mundane, but the others are quite interesting from a fannish point of view.

Fortress Exploration is a citadel forever on the verge of being covering by lava overflowing from the central volcano. It is quite labyrinthine in design, and each of the many rooms contains some exhibit related to various branches of science during the Renaissance. This includes a giant hand-powered orrery, an alchemist's laboratory, a basin where you can guide remote controlled miniature galleons and a life-size replica of a Leonardo Da Vinci flying machine.



DisneySea: Fortress Exploration



Mermaid Lagoon replicates the Little Mermaid's undersea kingdom and is quite lovely at night; Arabian Coast takes its inspiration from the tale of Aladdin, and Indiana Jones would feel quite at home in Lost River Delta.

DisneySea - Mermaid Lagoon, Arabian Coast, Lost River Delta



My two favourites places are Mysterious Island, based on the hideout of Jules Verne's Captain Nemo, and Port Discovery, a retro-futuristic extravaganza that shows how our grand-parents imagined that we would live. They got it very wrong, but that is precisely what makes this place fun to visit.



DisneySea: Mysterious Island & Port Discovery

There are quite a few rides in this park, ranging from the very tame to the very wild. The former would include Sinbad's Adventure, an "It's a Small Small World" type of attraction, where Sinbad sings of his exploits in Japanese (I did not catch a single word of it, but it was entertaining nevertheless). The Journey to the Center of the Earth would definitely fall in the "wild" category, with a mad rush through caverns filled with astonishing flora and fauna and a narrow escape from boiling lava.

In between those extremes, you have the 20,000 Thousand Leagues Under the Seas ride, in Victorian pocket submarines making their way close to sunken vessels and dodging attacks from giant octopi. Also in this category, the Storm Rider motion simulator takes you in the middle of storm on board a giant plane sent to deliver a missile meant to disperse it (of course, things get terribly wrong a few minutes after take off).

I can testify that Japanese thrill ride patrons can squeal in mock fright as readily as their Western counterparts, and quite loudly, too. So much for Oriental inscrutability!...

Add to this the fact that the volcano erupts with massive blasts of flames and smoke every now and then; that there are cleverly themed cooling fog machines in every land, myriads of amusing details everywhere and plenty of decent restaurants. Needless to say, I had plenty of fun, and am very glad I chose to come here.

Wednesday, October 5th

The rest of my trip, while very pleasant and interesting, held little from a fannish point of view. One noticeable exception is that I found a shop in Kyoto entirely devoted to Osamu Tezuka merchandise. This worthy *manga* artist is the source behind such classics as *Le roi Léo* (*Kimba the White Lion*), *Prince Saphir*, *Minifée* and *Astro le petit robot*, to use names familiar to most Montrealers.



Osamu Tezuka Store, Kyoto

In conclusion

If I did not manage to convey the fact that I had the time of my life during this trip, then I definitely need to throw away my keyboard and stop writing reviews! I hope that I shall be able to go back to Japan one day, and we really should try to make sure that Anticipation is at least that good when it is our turn to host the Worldcon. *





Dealing with Destructive Deities

Marc Durocher



Written in 2007 after seeing the preview to "[Evan Almighty](#)," a film he scrupulously avoided.

People keep asking me about that conversation. I've repeated the story verbally so many times that I finally decided to put it on paper, that's how bored I get retelling it. So! Here followeth the tale of how I may (or may not) have saved the world.

August 6th, 200_, I sent my annual origami crane floating down the St. Lawrence from my usual launch point on Heron Island (a process that involves a bamboo pole, a piece of string and the Lachine Rapids) when I heard this, well, noise behind me. It wasn't an explosion. I couldn't call it an implosion, either. I discovered later that it was the sound of air being violently displaced by approximately 0.26 cubic metres of solid matter. It sounded like BAMF!

Of course I was startled. I turned and saw this man, about 6' 2", looking very dignified in what looked like the robes of a Sharif of the Hashemi. (Rent Lawrence of Arabia or read his books). He bore no small resemblance to Morgan Freeman and smelled like nothing so much as lavender scented ozone. He spoke.

"DIANE MacGREGOR!" Seriously, the voice sounded that impressive. "Who wants to know?" I replied, remembering the number of unpaid bills left outstanding this month.

"I AM GHODH!"

"Right! Look, tone down the volume a few thousand decibels and avoid aspirating those hard vowels! It makes you sound more pretentious than 'GOD' really needs to be."

"BHUT, REALLY, I AM GOD!"

"Then, why am I alive?"

"HUH!!!!???"

"I *have* read my Bible. If you're **GOD**, the middle-eastern monotheistic scourge of the universe, then the sound of your voice, especially the way it was pitched thirty seconds ago, should have destroyed every living creature between Laval and Chambly. So why am I still alive?"

"Mr. Freeman" paused for a moment, then disappeared with the same **BAMF** and smell of lavender scented ozone that announced his appearance. My skirt and hair rustled in the brief wind caused by air rushing to fill the newly created vacuum.

So the smell dispersed and I decided to settle down to my yogurt and chocolate milk breakfast (it was only 8:25 A.M.) when I heard a sort of doubling of the noise — kind of like **BUH-BAMF**. The lavender-ozone smell was much stronger this time. More than a little annoyed I turned around, about to say something truly prosaic, like "Look! Will you let me have my breakfast in peace!?" when my jaw froze on the half-formed letter "L." This time I was looking at "Alanis Morrissette" dressed in a white, thigh-length Grecian chiton and accompanied by

"Alan Rickman" looking like a depressed neo-goth wanna-be. (I actually **liked** this movie.) "Mr. Rickman's" lips parted. "Is this better?" he said, while "Alanis" started dancing on the water; not in it — *on* it. "Acoustically, yes," I replied. "As for the rest, I find you're referencing of entertainers who've portrayed God, or the Metatron, boringly unoriginal. Are you going to leave me alone?"

"Not until the message has been delivered and your mission completed!"

"Mission!!!!?? You mean this hallucination isn't supposed to end when whatever drug my degenerate brother poured into me last night wears off? I'm supposed to complete a mission?"

"Yes."

"Okay, lay it on me, man!" I said, quietly promising to beat dear brother Bobby up until he tells me exactly what he did to my brain.

"GOD..."

"Whatever! Just tell me what it is you want me to do so I can have my breakfast in peace and go home!"

"BUILD ME AN ARK!"

This was getting really absurd. It had been years since I'd seen the "Freeman" movie. I didn't think much of it then and I was thinking even less of it now. Still, just to get it over with, I decided to go along. "Let me guess," I said. "Same specs as the original?"

"YOU GOT IT!"

"No!"

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'NO!' "

"No! Non! Nyet! Nein! Niente! Iyeh!.....No!"

"YOU CLAIM TO HAVE READ THE BIBLE. YOU DO REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO SAY 'NO!' TO GOD?"

"Well, the one that comes immediately to mind is the pillar of salt. Try to put me where the birds won't be *too* destructive."

"The world is about to be destroyed!" said "Mr. Rickman," his voice sounding a little more normal as "Alanis" continued to perform ballet exercises over the Lachine rapids. **"Every human being will die except you, your spouse and your children and you want to die along with them!"**

"Yup! More to the point, I refuse to be an accessory to genocide."

"That invites a demand for elaboration."

"Look! You claim to be a religious figure of significant importance..."

"You have a gift for understatement."

"Let me finish and you'll see my gift for irony."

"Go on!"

"Where was I?"

"A religious figure of significant importance..."

"...who's pissed off because the world isn't working the way you want it to, so you've decided to destroy as much of it as you can. Does that about sum it up?"

"Except for the fact that the religious figure in question is not me but the 'young lady' currently reversing the flow of the rapids, I'd say that sums it up both generally and succinctly."

"Then how does that make you...er, her...er, it any different from Osama Bin Laden?"

"_____."

Blessed silence! The dancer on the waves stopped dancing.

"Mr. Rickman" tried desperately to untie his tongue. "I beg your pardon?"

"You've just told me that everyone on earth is going to drown because they don't worship her/him/it the right way. Sounds to me like the world according to Osama.

BUH-BUH-BAMF!

"Mr. Rickman" was gone. So was "Miss Morrisette." In their place was something that I wish would have been as unimposing as, say, Charlton Heston looking down on a crowd of extras. What straddled the island was a figure that made the Statue of Liberty look like an overdressed hobbit and was immediately recognizable as the image on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, only angry. **Very angry! Extremely angry!** I was beginning to feel as if being turned into a pillar of salt would be an act of mercy.

"I AM WHO AM!" it said.

If this was a practical joke, it was very well executed and was going way too far. If it was a hallucination then I was going to get seriously medieval on my brother and follow that up with a trip to a Jungian

shrink that I knew I wouldn't be able to afford.

"Look!" I said, "I am Diane MacGregor and if you are what you say you are and you intend to kill all my friends, relatives and lovers, then pick me up and throw me in the river now because that is *not* a world I want to live in."

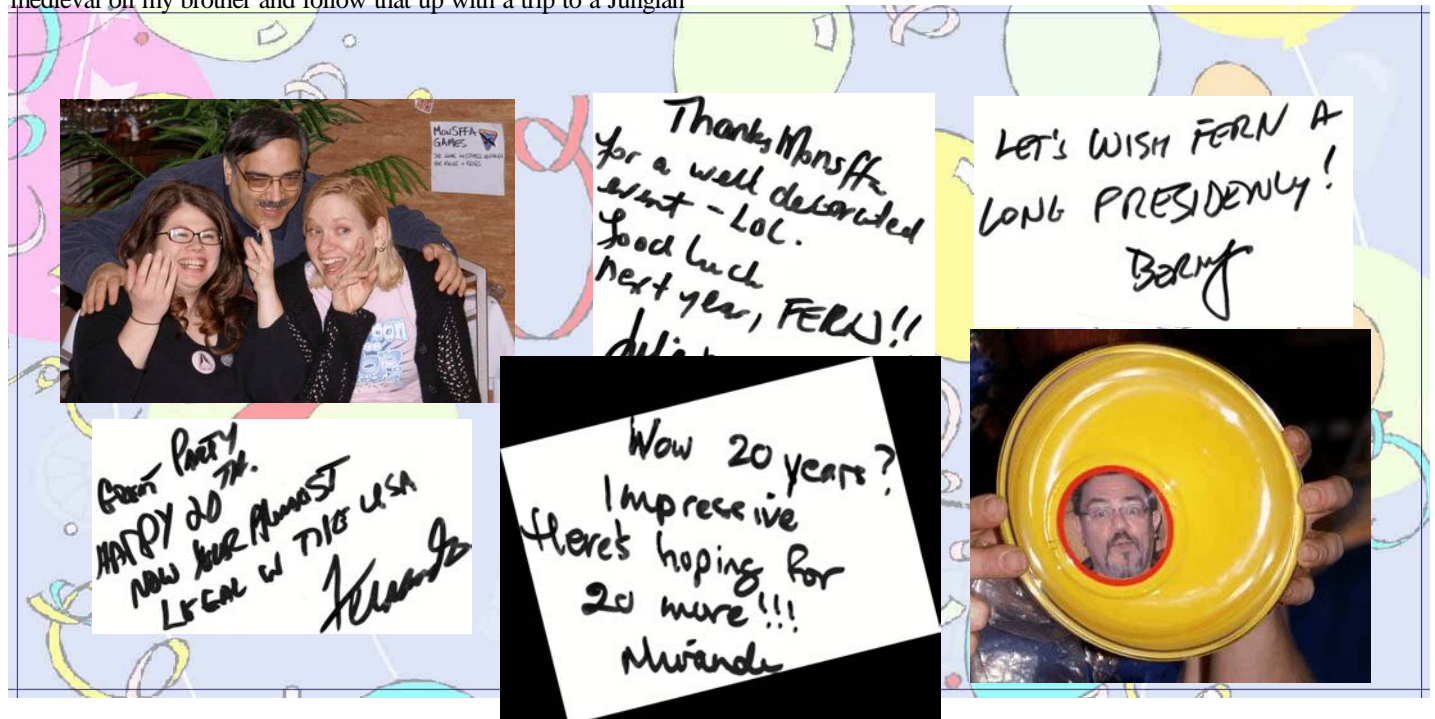
BAMF!

This time the air tried to fill a much larger space, rather embarrassingly lifting my skirt up above my belt and giving me a permanent bad hair day (My locks were *really* long back then). The lavender-ozone smell would have had an army reaching for its gas masks. Fortunately, that wind dispersed it quickly.

I stood there a few minutes, waiting for something to happen. Nothing did.

Later that morning I dropped in on my little brother, already, at 10:00 am, well past his third drink (a Celtic Boilermaker; Glen Fiddich washed down with Guinness) and was only just lucid enough to deny having fed me anything other than alcohol and a little weed at last night's housewarming. The story probably would have ended there but for the sudden intense downpour that turned the Decarie expressway into a canal for the second time in as many decades. That little circumstance is what turned this tale into coffee table fodder for so long. That and the not so idle speculation of some of my more devout friends (I won't insult them by quoting Aristotle/Asimov here) that I may really have convinced God not to destroy the world, his claims of omniscience notwithstanding.

And now, here I am, twenty two years later, a happily married mother of three college age children writing this, looking out at a beautiful sunlit street and tying this story up so I can fold my cranes and prepare my breakfast for tomorrow's Hiroshima commemorative, and never have to repeat this tale again. I seriously doubt that anyone I know ever really believed me anyway. *



ONE ON ONE WITH THE BIG EWOK

Phil Simard & Julia Sinclair

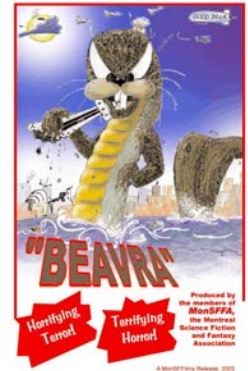
As the club celebrates its 20th Anniversary, Warp wanted to find out how our current VP became a club member.

In the late seventies when they were both students at Dawson College, Keith Braithwaite met Bernard Reischl. After hearing about a Star Trek club that was forming in Montreal in the eighties, they decided to investigate. Keith and Bernard went to that first meeting in 1986 at the Westmount library and have been members ever since. That club, the Montreal Star Trek Association (MonSTA) would later become the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA). Unfortunately, there are no founding members still active with the club today.

Though, originally a Star Trek club, the interests of members expanded with the surge in popularity of other science fiction & fantasy genres and so this led to a name change in 1987. In the early days, members focussed on TV, film and fiction (ex: Gerry Anderson, Star Wars, Dr. Who). In the 1990's up to the present, popular series like the X Files, Babylon 5, and Battlestar Galactica continue to be fan favourites at

the club. But in recent years, the emergence of the Internet has an impact on local fan clubs and attendance is on the decline at local club meetings. Online fanzines have become the trend for a few years now while printed fanzines are disappearing.

Keith's science fiction interests include old 1950's movies & TV shows. From a young age, Keith always had an interest in film and had a 8mm film camera as a child. Many know of Keith today as the director of the MonSFFA films (Beavra, Mooseman). Throughout his time with MonSFFA, Keith has held many positions including President and Editor of Warp. He is currently Vice-President and the Editor of Impulse. *



Hands on WARP MonSFFA Meeting

Sylvain St-Pierre

When it was announced that the topic of the January meeting would be the compulsory production of a WARP article, I scratched my head quite a bit before coming up with something.

It dawned to me that covering the use of technology to produce such material on the fly might be a good subject.

For sure, equipment has improved considerably since the invention of the stylus and clay tablet.

The first device that could deserve the name “computer” is believed to be about two thousand years old. The so called Antikythera Mechanism, found in the wreckage of an old Greek ship, it thought to have been used to predict the planets' positions for astrological purposes.



Left: Scientific American, June 1959, reconstruction by Derek J. de Solla Price. Right: Fragments of the mechanism, <http://www.antikythera-mechanism.gr/>

Had technology gone on a straight line up from there, we would be spending our vacations on the Moon by now...

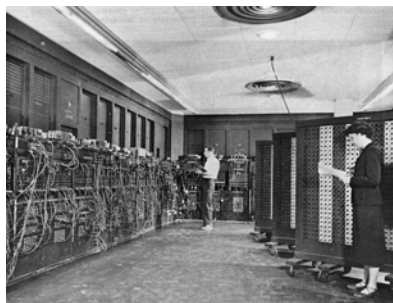


Actual parts of the Difference Engine

Another missed opportunity was the Difference Engine, designed in 1822 by Charles Babbage in England. Babbage did not manage to have the parts machined, but modern engineers working from his plans did produce a working mechanical computer.

How different the modern world would be if the computer had been introduced over a century earlier has conjectured by William Gibson and Bruce Sterling in their 1990 novel, The Difference Engine.

The first computer in the modern sense was the ENIAC, built in 1946 to calculate targeting trajectories. The thing weighed 30 tons, had 17,468 vacuum tubes, 5 million hand soldered joints and cost a cool half million dollars in the days when a dollar went a long way.



ENIAC weighed 30 tons, had 17,468 vacuum tubes, 5 million hand soldered joints .

The early personal computers, which some of you readers might

remember, were also costly, slow and cumbersome by modern standards, but still a major improvement.



Advertisement for a PC, 1978



Sylvain writing this article on a Tungsten Palm Pilot.

This article was written on a Tungsten Palm Pilot, with a neat foldable keyboard, then stored on a USB key the size of a pinky but with far more capacity than score of ENIACs! Even the picture of me writing was taken live.

The other pictures and some of the information were stored in advance, but they could have easily been downloaded from the Internet in a few minutes on Berny Reischl's computer thanks to the hotel's wireless connection.



The iPhone

If we consider that an iPhone can do all of the above and fit in your hand, I think we can safely say that the geeks are going to inherit the Earth – finally. ✨

You know you're a MonSFFan when

- ☆ You know more about [Ray Harryhausen](#) films than everyone you know, except for Keith...
- ☆ When you hear the word, “WARP”, your first “Impulse” is to leave the room so you won't have to contribute...
- ☆ The only friends you can get to help you move don't like SF. The fans know how much stuff you have!
- ☆ Sylvain has more photos of you than your mother has....

Contributed by an anonymous MonSFFan, using pen on Days Hotel note paper.

Je me rappelle...

Marquise Boies



Marquise écrit pour WARP.

Je me rappelle, il y a déjà bien longtemps...à la sortie du Cégep aux bras de mon charmant gascon, né au Québec, avoir été recrutée par quelques Klingons. Par moment, transformée en albinos au crâne chauve et bosselé, mon rire sortit des limites de la terre. En fait, je m'annexai aussi à un autre groupe diversifié qui organisait des conventions et des réunions. Si l'un groupe patrouillait le cosmos dans le futur, l'autre torchait toutes les époques

et d'autre univers imaginaires. Souvent la réalité dépassait la fiction et nous avions à cette Association Montréalaise de science-fiction et de Fantastique quelques réunions avec des scientifiques véritables pour nous inspirer dans nos réunions. Je n'étais aussi plus la seule mutante avec mon super pouvoir d'hilarité monstrueuse; notre coupant président - aussi à cheval avec les Klingons depuis fort longtemps - avait le super pouvoir de ne jamais être seul plus de cinq minutes. Mon compagnon, le gascon, changea définitivement de domestiques - pour ainsi dire - mais je restai,

ajoutant visuellement un peu de folie à ces univers imaginaires et même tentant de créer à L'AMonSFF, un univers original à utiliser pour rejoindre le rang de nos auteurs favoris avec un groupe d'écrivains. Nous créerons quatre planètes et leur habitants..mais ayant trouvé un job pour six ans en dessin animé, vécu des problèmes de santé et de pauvreté, je ne pu me consacrer pour un bout à toute création externe à mes dessins animés et mon propre projet médiéval fantastique. Je renoue cette année avec ces univers et ceux qui les véhiculent et les partagent. Non seulement, en tentant, par vidéos amateurs, d'ajouter aux folies Hollywoodiennes, mais aussi en écrivant, et tous genres pour le fanzine.

Je comprends maintenant dans ce bouillon qui m'est étranger pourquoi le présentateur favoris de Con*Cept se faisait nommer le Docteur. Cependant, moi-même ne comprenant que depuis février 2007, ce qu'un Docteur avec un "D" majuscule est, j'aimerais qu'une certaine boîte de téléphone de police bleue lui soit mise à sa disposition.

Comme mon imagination le voulait au début de cet article, nous aurions pu tous avec lui retourner en arrière 20 ans plus tôt et revenir avec des souvenirs de la MonSFFA (AmonSFF) et avec sa narration si particulière, expliquer cette vie parallèle à notre réalité...passée à la réinventer par espoir pour le futur! *



Hi, folks...happy anniversary to MonSFFA, 20 years of good times and good friends with the common interest. There are many places where clubs have dwindled down to nothing and have evaporated, to the regret of local fans. The clubs disappeared because of apathy and laziness. You have all shown the rest of us that with a little caring, a little work and a little money, you can build more than a club, but a community, and friendships that, with luck, will last a lifetime.

1. I hope you will ask me along to see what the next 20 years of this club has in store. Can't wait.

- Lloyd Penney

A Special Thought for Those Who Want to Live in a Primitive, Alternate, or Earlier World

Joe Aspler

This article was written during the WARP workshop at January's MonSFFA meeting. Joe is on a roll – part II of this article will appear in WARP 70, and Part III is promised for WARP 71.

Hey, folks: Want to live in an alternate world? Do you want to be an inventive sort and relocate to the Middle Ages, just so that you impress the locals with your technological skills? Two words for you: Modern Dentistry.

Last summer, I had an all-natural weekend. I cracked a tooth, which developed an abscess. After a couple of very unpleasant days, my dentist looked at it, and said that it was too far gone for a root canal. The dentist then removed the tooth quickly, efficiently, and (after a shot of local anaesthetic) painlessly. I also learned that when a dentist uses the letters PBS to describe draining an abscess, he is not referring to the Public Broadcasting System! (You don't really want to know what the letters stand for).

Back in the Good Old Days, you would have had three options:

1. Someone (maybe even a dentist) might have removed the tooth properly - without anaesthetic.
2. Someone might have removed part of the tooth, also without anaesthetic.
3. Or the abscess might have spread and killed you. This was not an uncommon ending.

Yes folks, before the days of Modern Dentistry, those were indeed your options. Egyptian Pharaohs, Iroquois Indians who lived in Montreal before the arrival of Europeans, Roman patricians and slaves, and ourselves all have this in common: bad teeth.

While our modern highly-sugared diet hasn't helped, our ancestors had plenty of bad teeth. Your all natural stone-ground bread left you chewing on lots of little bits of all-natural stone. That, plus having carbohydrate material stuck between your teeth, was an ideal recipe for dental problems.

So think of those two magic words before someone tells you how wonderful it would have been to be a medieval knight or his lady:



Medieval dentistry – a good reason to stay out of time machines?

MODERN DENTISTRY



The Fernster Fights Back! *(Also written at the WARPed workshop at the January meeting.)*

Ten Reasons why I should not be voted President of MONSFFA:

- 1) I hate people! Not really, I hate people who want to make me president of MONSFFA! I would make them suffer for their folly!
- 2) All change is not necessarily a good thing! Why change what is working fine now? Who in their right mind believe that I could do things better?
- 3) Hell, I can't even organize a 20th Anniversary Party and you want me to run the whole shebang? ARE YOU GUYS & GALS NUTS?
- 4) I'm not really that big a SF fan to begin with! Who the hell was James Tiberius Kirk anyway?
- 5) All the hassles that we would have getting the signatures for the bank accounts changed – Hummmmm, bank accounts!

6) DO YOU REALLY TRUST ME WITH ACCESS TO ALL YOUR MONEY?????

7) Bernard would miss his job and privileges. I'M NOT THAT CRUEL OF A PERSON!

8) BERNARD WAS ELECTED MONSFFA - KING AND DESPOT - FOR LIFE! Who am I to replace the KING & DESPOT anyway?



(Hmm...There is another Novo...is that Alice rolling her eyes? – Sez Ed, with a wink...)

9) I would cancel all the club meetings and hold Karaoke parties instead! Believe me you don't want to hear me sing!

10) I REALLY DON'T WANT TO BE THE PRESIDENT OF MONSFFA! It's just not my thing!

Star Trek: Back to the Future?

MonSFFA started life as MonSTA, the Montreal Star Trek Association. It's interesting to note that two of the articles written in the WARP workshop at the January meeting concerned Star Trek. The first notes some of the changes made to the classic series in the remastered Trek, and the second looks forward to the movie scheduled for release in December of 2008.

Star Trek Remastered Wayne Glover



This project was conceived for the 40th anniversary of the show. They started airing in the United states in 2006.

All the special effects were replaced with CGI effects. They also enhanced or replaced background mattes by computer. They cleaned up the video negatives and restored the colour.

The music was redone with the original music sheets.

The DVD release was on November 22, 2007. The DVDs are being released by season.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.startrek.com/startrek/view/news/article/23775.html>.



Star Trek XI Theresa Penalba

Production officially began on November 7, 2007 on the 11th movie in the Star trek franchise. This is the first movie to be directed by J.J. Abrams and is also the first to "re-imagine" a prior Star Trek by casting new people in the roles defined by the actors from the orinal series.

The movie has no official title as of yet, but the casting is complete. We now know for certain that Kirk, Spock (both young and old), McCoy, Scotty, Sulu, Uhura, and Chekov will appear in the film as well as Sarek and the much talked about Christopher Pike character. Unfortunately, the story is, and will remain, under wraps. The characters seem younger, presumably not long out of Starfleet Academy

be about one of their early missions. We'll have to wait and see on December 25th, 2008, when the film officially opens.

I should also mention that any pre-production shoots aside – for trailers, test footage, etc – the filming of the movie comes during a time in Hollywood when the Writers Guild of America (WGA) is on strike.

The release date has indeed been postponed – to May of 2009. - Ed

Official site: <http://www.startrekmovie.com> is under construction, but while you wait, check out wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Trek_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Trek_(film)).



CROSSOVERS

Josée Bellemare

Doctor Who X ?

The Tardis materialized in the countryside. The door opened and the Doctor and Martha walked out.

“Where are we Doctor? Or should I say, *when* are we?”

“Japan, just outside of Tokyo. As for when, the date is September 10th, 1671.”

“What’s so special about this date?”

“Nothing really. Last week they had a total eclipse of the sun. Oddly enough though, the Tardis found a temporal anomaly.”

“You mean something around here is in the wrong time.”

“Exactly, and we have to find it, or them, before the fabric of time is damaged.”

By now they were entering the city and walking around a marketplace. “If we’re going to save the world, can we do it on a full stomach? I’m starving. All these food smells are making me so hungry, I could eat a Big Mac.”

Hearing this, a young man chuckled and when he made eye contact with Martha they both understood the implications. “You time travelers, like me. We talk, come, follow me.”

He led the Doctor and Martha out of the marketplace, thought several streets to a small residence on a second floor. “Please, come in. This is my home, sit, get comfortable. I make tea and food. My name is Hiro Nakamura.”

“I’m the Doctor and this is Martha Jones. Tell me Hiro, how did you come to be here, in the past?”

“I have special powers: I freeze time and travel anywhere, anytime.”

Hiro comes back to the sitting area with a tray of pastries and tea.

“If you can go anytime, anywhere, what are you doing here?”

Martha asked.

“It was accident. Got thrown in battle to save New York from bad man. Landed here last week. How did you get here?”

The Doctor looked at Martha. “I travel in a time ship called the Tardis. My ship detected a temporal anomaly that was you.”

“Anomaly, what that?”

The Doctor thought for a moment, carefully choosing his words. “A hiccup in time.”

“Ah. Possible to see your ship Please? science-fiction fan.”

“I think that can be arranged. The Tardis is in the woods just east of town.”

“I take you when you finish food.”

The three of them ate while Hiro told the Doctor about the others with special powers and what happened in New York. When they finished eating Hiro stood between the Doctor and Martha, putting his arms around their shoulders. “Hold on, time to go.” Hiro squeezed his eyes shut and in less than a second, they were outside the city, about 20 feet from the Tardis.

“That was incredible, how do you do that?”

“Don’t know, just concentrate and it happens. Is that your ship? Looks small.”

“Don’t judge a book by its cover. Tell you what Hiro, I’ll make you a deal; I’ll show you the inside of my ship and you go back to your own time.”

“Okay. Leave tomorrow, need to say goodbye to people.”

“Fair enough.” The Doctor used his key to open the door.

“Martha, ladies first, Hiro welcome aboard the Tardis.”

Hiro walked in followed by the Doctor. His face was like a kid in a toy store.

“**WOW!**” ❁



Meeting the New Guy



Two celebrities were relaxing on the beach. “Have you met the new guy?”

“No, can’t say that I have. What about you?”

“No, heard about him though. Supposed to have potential.”

“Potential! Ha! I’ve been causing a sensation in Asia for decades and you took New York by storm. Apparently he swept across Canada and plans to start a new show in Vegas. Here he comes now.”

A dark haired character walked up to them.

“Oh wow! It’s you. I am such a big fan of both of you. You’ve been such an inspiration.” Turning to the Asian “You gave me the idea for my Canadian Tour,” turning to the other “and you, my Vegas show is a tribute to you. Thank you, thank you both. See you around.” He left the way he came.

“Not bad for a rookie.”

“Guess so, as long as he doesn’t shed too much.”

King Kong and Godzilla both laughed. ❁

Supernatural X ?

Sam and Dean drove to the camp ground, opened up the trunk of the car and took out their guns. They then rummaged around to find the silver bullets.

"The werewolf should be easy to track. He leaves enough of a mess when he feeds."

"It's the last night of the full moon; if we don't get him tonight we're going to lose his trail for a month. Let's go, bro."

The brothers started into the woods towards the lake. Soon they found the remains of a rabbit with a blood trail leading away from it. "He's fed, now he'll want to drink. The lake is east of here, let's go."

On the water's edge they ran into an old man. "Sir, you have to get out of here. There's a wild animal on the loose. It's not safe."

"I know, I saw it run off in a northern direction and it's not an

animal, it's a werewolf, gray fur. I hope for your sake those guns are loaded with silver."

"I'm Sam Winchester and this is my brother Dean. You seem to know a lot about this sort of thing."

"I do. Chased down quite a few strange things in my time. You boys had better hurry before the trail gets cold."

"Thanks for the tip, Mister..?"

"Kolchak, Carl Kolchak. Good luck with your hunt." ✨

The answers to the previous crossovers (WARP 68) are:

Monsffa X Monster Warriors, Smallville X Man from Atlantis, Bones X Quincy.

Answers to this batch of crossovers next time, in WARP 70.



The Last Mage: The Dragon's Mouth

Nikolai Krimp

The story so far: Jennifer Wells worked for a bio-hazard lab located deep inside a mountain just south of Seattle, Washington. Following a car accident during a mysterious storm, she awoke in the body of a young elf named Shannon. In the company of Shannon's friend, Roma, and a hobbit, Treymane, she finds herself caught up in events resulting from the finding of a box in the ruins of the "Cave of the Ancients" – Jenny's former laboratory. When the companions reached the safety of Shannon's home, they learned that they must now journey on to find Teagan, Shannon's aunt, and the only one likely to be able to explain what's been going on. A forced detour through the Shadow Forest results in their being captured by elves. Jenny convinces the council that she is indeed Shannon, but Kirin who has volunteered to be their escort demands the truth, and Jenny tells him who she really is and what she suspects is in the Demon Box – a biological weapon. The village comes under attack, the companions are given magical gifts and make their escape through a secret passage. When they finally reach their destination, Teagan informs them she has lost contact with Shannon, leaving her to conclude that Jenny will never be able to return to her own time. However, because Jenny is in Shannon's body, and Shannon was a mage, she is capable of magic. Teagan begins teaching her the skills she will need in the world which must now be her home. The companions set off to the Dragon's Mouth, hoping to destroy the Demon Box before it falls into the hands of Malodor. We pick up the story as the company arrives at Bellow's Falls, weary and saddened by the loss of three friends.

Chapter 9

I see we have arrived just in time for the Hunter's Festival!" shouted Duncan, over the noise of the festivities that were going on as they entered the fortress city of Bellow's Falls. Passing through the three-foot thick ironwood gates, they entered a city that was surrounded on three sides with twenty feet thick and one hundred feet high walls. No one had ever conquered this city before. Blick explained that this city could withstand a siege indefinitely. The storage caves, deep inside the mountain, could feed the people and the livestock for at least two years. Two thirds of the population lived inside the mountain, including the Royal Family. Outside the mountain, only the not so well off had their homes. They had to withstand the rigors of winter, while the others enjoyed a constant temperature all year around.

They passed the many inns, where games of all sorts were taking place. Here and there they saw someone sleeping it off on the ground, or in a corridor. They didn't remain there long, for as soon as the guards found them; they were loaded onto wagons and hauled off to some out of the way place, until they were ready to continue their celebrations.

Blick showed them the two farms that grew food for the city's populace. One grew vegetables of all sorts, while the other raised sheep and goats, the main staple of dwarfs. The homes they passed were all made from stone roughly cemented together, with thatched roofs. They all had a grayish appearance, with hardly a trace of colorful paint. Some had their own gardens, but most of the spaces were too small to support anything other than a few flowerpots.

Just past the houses, they came to the base of the mountain. Here they entered another world. High above them hung a ten-foot thick stone slab, designed to drop into place and locking anyone out should the outer walls ever be breached. It would take about fifty men just to drop the counterweight, which would seal off the entrance. Farther into the vast cavern, on both sides, were the homes of the wealthier merchants. Here anyone of stature lived. Even farther up the ten man wide tunnel, Blick explained, lived the king and more of his troops. But today most of the people could be found outside indulging in the festivities.

Blick invited them into his home as they reached the house

where he lived. It had been chipped out of solid rock. There was plenty of space in the front room to hold a party of twenty or thirty people. The kitchen, also spacious, had a table set for ten, standing in the middle of the room. Each of the guests was shown to a bedroom where they could freshen up and rest for a while. Shannon was surprised to find such comfort inside a cave. The bed was big and soft. A chair off in a corner was large enough for her to curl up and fall asleep in. Along one of the longer walls stood a dresser with a wash bowl that was made out of solid stone. The mirror, which hung above the dresser, was made from a highly polished metal. This was the first time that Shannon stood there and really saw herself in full length. She didn't dislike who was staring back at her, but it would take some getting used to. After shaking the dust from her clothes and splashing some water in her face, she redressed and joined the others. They were all eager to check out the festival, so Blick led the way back to the festivities.

The squealing of happy children's voices, were the first sounds to reach their ears as they exited the mountain. Some were playing tag, while others played a game of tossing around a ball. Anyone who dropped it was out of the game, until there was only one person left and he or she was declared the winner.

It was already late in the afternoon and everyone in the group was hungry. So Blick suggested that they have supper at the Valley Inn.

"The food is very good there," he said. "And their pies are freshly baked every day."

"I've tasted dwarf food before," Shannon stated, "and they put far too much spice in it."

"Then don't order the spicy stuff," Blick answered with a smile looking back over his shoulder as he continued towards the inn.

As they entered the seemingly overcrowded inn, Shannon noticed that many of its patrons gave way to Blick and his guests. In one corner next to the standing bar stood an empty table.

"We kept it for you, because we knew you would show up," said the dwarf woman as she recognized Blick. "I see you've brought some friends with you."

Dropping a few pieces of copper into the serving girl's hand,

Blick asked her to find a couple of chairs for his friends. At the same time he ordered a round of ale and wine. Before the drinks arrived all six were seated around the tiny table. The first flagon of ale disappeared in minutes, as the two dwarfs washed the dust from their parched throats. The other four sipped their wine. They waited for the girl to return so they could order something to eat. That night they dined on roast mutton with a rich and thick gravy, boiled potatoes, cooked carrots and peas grown in the inn's own garden out back. For dessert, each had a large piece of raspberry pie, which came straight from the oven and onto their plates. Then another round of drinks was ordered and the conversation turned to tomorrow's events.

Since the next day was the last day of the festival, all the main events, such as archery, horseback riding, ax throwing and spear throwing would be held in the training area behind the merchants guilds. In these events the top three finishers could win prize money, consisting of pieces of gold or silver.

All were having a good time in the noisy tavern, when Shannon noticed a man standing at the bar. A tall dark-haired man dressed in forest clothing and with a large brimmed hat covering his eyes was standing alone and drinking from his flagon. Every so often he would glance in their direction. Not wanting to draw the group's attention, he turned and began to watch them in a large mirror that was attached to the wall behind the bar. After a while the stranger finished his ale, turned to Shannon and smiled. Bowing his head and tipping his hat, he left the inn. Shannon watched as he left and then shrugged it off as just another human in the dwarf city. She would not let it worry her at this time.

By the time they left the inn, night had fallen. The city was lit up with all sorts of colorful lanterns. Some were mounted on sticks and some attached to the sides of the buildings. Though dark, the light from the lanterns made it as bright as day. They passed fire-eaters, jugglers, and minstrels singing either news or songs that they had written. They passed children eating candied apples and cotton candy cones. They entered the mountain and made their way back to Blick's home. Here too, it seemed that every household had a party going on. Shannon knew that she needed sleep. Tomorrow they would plan another day. Right now her only thoughts were of that soft comfortable bed.

That night again she dreamed of her home, now back in ancient times. Again she dreamed of her family. She tried to tell them that she was all right, but it was as if they didn't see her. She felt quite alone. Then the scene changed. Again she found herself on a dusty old field, with her feet stuck ankle deep in mud. She tried to pull herself free, but the ground held her fast. A cloud of dust was heading towards her. She could just make out that it was the same rider from her last dream. As the horse neared her, the rider pulled sharply on the reins, making the animal rear up on its hind legs.

"I'LL HAVE YOU SOON!" yelled the rider. "YOU'RE COMING STRAIGHT TO ME!"

Shannon woke up drenched in sweat. She didn't know what to make of the dream. Only, that whoever this rider was, he knew that she was coming. The girl lay back down, but couldn't fall asleep. This dream was too real. So she made up her mind to ask someone in the morning. Maybe one of her friends would know.

Morning came soon enough. Though Shannon managed to

fall back to sleep in the early hours of the morning, she was wide-awake when Roma came knocking on her door to tell her that breakfast was ready. She let her friend in and told her about her reoccurring dream.

"You say he was dressed in black?" asked Roma.

"Yes, and riding a black horse," Shannon added.

"Did they have red glowing eyes?" Roma asked.

"Yes," answered Shannon. "Now that you mention it." It had not occurred to her before, but both the rider and horse's eyes glowed like hot flaming embers.

"Anyway," Roma said with a calming voice, "we'd better not say anything to the others until we can gather more information. Speak with Kirin when you are alone. Maybe he can shed some light on this.

Shannon nodded and the two left the room to meet the others in the kitchen. There was hot tea waiting and fresh-baked biscuits on the table for anyone to take.

Stuffing a few into his pockets, Treymane smiled and nodded his head as the girls entered.

"Today we will see just how good we are," announced Blick, "I have entered us into several of the skilled games. Maybe some of us will collect a few coins today."

"What kind of games?" asked Shannon.

"I've entered you in the archery contest," the young dwarf answered. "You Treymane, will do your best in the riding competition; Kirin, sword fighting; Roma, spear throwing; Duncan, in ax tossing; and myself, in the hammer throw. These contests will be held throughout the day, so we'd better get going."

"It is the last day of the festival," added Duncan "and the time when the best meet the best."

Laughing, they left the house and headed to the training area.

It was a warm, cloudless late summer's day as they emerged from the mountain. Kirin walked next to Shannon as they looked about at all the people amusing themselves in one way or another. Duncan was checking the sharpness of his ax and mumbled something to Blick, but the younger dwarf pretended not to hear. He just kept on walking, ignoring the grumbling old man.

"Did you hear me?" asked the old dwarf.

"Did you say something?" Blick answered back with a question.

"I said," harrumphed Duncan, "whose lame-brained idea was this to enter us into these contests?"

"I just thought that it would do us all some good to have some fun, for a change" Blick answered. "We've been chased, caught and chased some more since we met. So I thought, a fun afternoon couldn't hurt."

"Yes, but," said Duncan, "couldn't you have left me out of it?"

Shaking his head and smiling, Blick continued down the road to where this morning's festivities were being held. He dropped off each of his contestant friends at their designated spots and assured them he would come to collect them when the games were over. The first was Kirin, who was ushered into a smaller area, where the sword fighting competition was to take place. At the same time, Roma took up her position near the starting line, for the spear throwing competition. These were the first events of

the day.

The rest found themselves a seat in the grandstands that had been erected just for this day. Everyone was looking forward to the games, except for Duncan and Treymane. The hobbit had gone with Blink to the stables to find which horse he drew for the riding competition. Duncan, still muttering to himself, sat down beside Shannon and looked at the masses that had gathered to watch.

"Pretty good crowd we have here today," he said to Shannon.

"Yes," she agreed, as her eyes panned over the many people standing behind a rope barrier, designed to keep them off the playing field.

The games were about to begin, when she saw a familiar face in the crowd. Right behind the barrier, stood a man; the same one she had seen, standing at the bar, at the inn last night. She turned her head and poked Duncan in the ribs to get his attention, but when the two looked to where the stranger had stood; he was no longer there. He had vanished into the massive crowd.

"I'm sure it was him," Shannon said to the dwarf. "I'll never forget his face."

"Well, do not worry," Duncan reassured her. "Here you are amongst friends and we will protect you."

Once again their attentions focused on their friends, who were already into the first round of their events. Roma had already thrown her second spear. Each contestant had three throws and the farthest of the three would be counted. Her first throw had been seventy-six feet, but her second throw fell short of that mark. She was given a two-minute rest before her third and final throw. She then stood and grasped the spear loosely in her right hand, to balance it as she strode up to the throwing line. There Roma paused for a moment. Then she stepped back five paces and took a deep breath. With her right hand she raised the spear to her shoulder and raised her left arm for balance. Then with a running start, she stopped at the line and heaved the missile with all her might. The spear sailed up into the air and arched its way back down. It came to rest some eighty-two feet down range. A roar went up, as her distance was calculated. Now, she would have to wait until the other competitors had thrown their spears. Then, the three best would be picked as the finalists and would have to face-off against each other.

Meanwhile, Treymane's event was much harder than he had expected. Although the dwarf ponies were smaller than horses, hobbits were also smaller than dwarfs. This made picking up an object from the ground, while in full gallop, more difficult. It felt good sitting aboard his mount and when the starter dropped the banner, he spurred the pony. It shot forth, almost sending him off its rear end. Recovering quickly, the hobbit slid down the right side of his saddle, hooking his left foot in the left stirrup, to keep him from falling off and getting trampled. He then swooped with his right hand and grasped the handle of a dagger stuck in the earth. While still in full gallop, he transferred the object to his left hand and quickly reached down again to seize a small piece of wood, with a red ribbon attached to it. Reaching the other side of the fenced in corral, he righted himself and turned the pony around. Flat on the ground, someone placed a red scarf. Taking a couple of deep breaths, he urged his pony into a full gallop. Sliding back down, he extended himself as much as he could, but his fingers couldn't reach the ground. Stretching to the limit, he

made a grab for the scarf and missed. Treymane knew that he was out; disqualified for failing to retrieve the third and final object. Even the applauding audience couldn't lift his spirits. He had failed. Dejected, he walked off the court and sat down next to his friends.

Kirin, on the other hand, won his first round easily. His opponent had never fought with a sword. Most dwarfs didn't. War hammers and battle-axes were more to their style. He blocked and parried with such lightning speed that he soon had his opponent defenceless, by knocking the sword from his hands. He too came and sat down next to Shannon. She told him of the stranger from the inn, but he seemed far off in his thoughts.

"Probably thinking of his next opponent," she thought.

When the spear-throwing round was over, Roma found herself pitched against what looked like two battle-hardened dwarf warriors. One of them had thrown his spear nearly ninety feet earlier. This concerned her more than the other, who hadn't come close to her mark. But she had time, for they wouldn't square off until after midday.

"I guess it's our turn," Duncan huffed as he looked to Shannon, as the last of the ponies were led back to the stables.

The targets were quickly set up and Shannon was in the first group to shoot. Each had three arrows. The idea was to group the arrows as close to the centre of the target as possible. She watched as the first contestant drew back on his bow. Pointing straight up into the air, he slowly lowered the arrow tip until the target came into his sight. Then without hesitation, he let loose the arrow. Dead centre. The crowd roared, for this was their favourite and their best. All bets were on him to beat the elf girl. Again he repeated the shot with his second arrow. He placed the arrow next to his first. The crowd roared again. A tiny smirk appeared on his face as he notched his last arrow. Once more he repeated his warm up aim and let loose the missile. But it was not to be. He left it a few inches from the other two, much to the dismay of the onlookers.

Now Shannon stepped up to the line and took a deep breath. Her opponent was good even if he was a bit off his mark with the last shot. This was going to be hard to beat. She was now going to find out just how accurate her new bow was. Taking all the time she was allowed and aiming her first arrow, she let it fly. The crowd was silent as she hit the centre of the target. Concentrating, Shannon became oblivious to anything around her. If the crowd roared or booed she didn't notice. She notched her second arrow, took aim and let it fly. The onlookers jumped up and applauded her, as her second missile literally shaved the first, landing in the same spot. Looking over at her opponent, who was now sweating, she notched her last one. Then she glanced over to her friends. There she saw a dejected hobbit, loyally applauding her efforts. She took aim, remembering when she was home and on the archery range, where she had won so many competitions. "This one is for you, my little friend," she thought of Treymane, as she let it fly. The boisterous crowd was silenced, when the arrow split the two other ones and stuck itself right between her first and second shot. She had won her group. Elated, she left the range and joined her friends.

Over at the ax-throwing range, Duncan wasn't faring too well. He had won his first group of events easily, but this second group was much better than he had expected. All of his opponents

were much younger than he was and had more strength. The ax was a heavier one than in the first round. Though Duncan managed to hit the target on all of his three throws, they were spaced so far apart that on the completion of his last throw, he turned and disgusted with himself, walked off the field.

One of the judges stood and announced that they would break for two hours, when all the contestants should return for the completion of the games. The prizes would be given out tonight at a banquet, in honor of all the contestants, at the Dragon's Tooth Inn. This, explained Blick, was the largest inn in Bellow's Falls.

The six left the area and mingled with the crowd. They passed some of the puppet shows for children and walked around listening to minstrels singing their songs. One had put some news to music and was singing of the orc attacks in Maitland and Enderby. This was all old news for the group, but to these people here it was fascinating. They had never been under an attack, for even the orcs knew that this fortress city was not to be taken. Not even by the mighty orcs.

While walking around, they stopped at a stand where Blick paid a few pieces of copper and bought everyone a piece of roast, which had been turning on a spit next to the stand. That, along with a flagon of wine and ale to wash it down, cured some of the hunger pangs. Now with food and drink in them, they were ready to continue the games. With time to spare, they headed back to the games arena. On the way Shannon stopped at a soothsayer's tent. The old woman beckoned her into her tent.

Holding out a gnarly-fingered hand, the old woman spoke. "Read your palm, deary?" she said as she gazed into the elf girl's eyes. Shannon offered a few pieces of copper to the old one, who quickly pocketed it and, with her other hand, grasped the elf's wrist. Amazed at the strength of the old woman, Shannon opened her palm. The old one began to trace the lines on Shannon's hand, when suddenly she stepped back, letting go.

"You are not who you are!" she stated out loud. "I see great danger about you. You must be very careful."

That's all she said as she turned and left her tent. Shannon wanted to follow, but Blick grabbed her by her arm and shook his head. "Eccentric, this old one is. Do not believe everything she says."

His words did little to calm Shannon after what the soothsayer had said, but she knew that Blick was right. Even in her home world, these fortunetellers were phonies and just after people's money.

By the time they reached the games area, Shannon had put the old woman's words out of her mind. Each went to their respected area and waited for the contest to start. Treymane and Duncan found themselves a couple of seats where they could view all the events without having to move, since they were out of the entire competition.

The hammer-throwing event was first. Since there were only five contestants, one round was enough to determine a champion. Round balls, made from clay, resembling heads, were placed at a distance of ten feet apart, making the first one ten feet away, the second twenty feet and so on. Each contestant was given three hammers and, from a standing position, had to fling them at the clay balls. If there was a tie at the end, then a tiebreaker would be held at the end of the other competitions. Blick was third in line to throw.

The first man stepped up to the line. Standing feet wide apart, grasping the hammer with both hands, he held it out in front of him and took aim. Then he swung the hammer straight back, almost touching his own rear; then threw the hammer. End over end it tumbled, hitting the first clay target. The clay ball burst apart, shattering it to bits and pieces.

All the contestants were successful on their first throw. The second round eliminated two dwarfs, leaving Blick and two others for the last and final throw. Blick was first, a position he didn't like. He preferred last, when the pressure was the greatest.

He walked up to the line and took up his throwing position. Taking an extra breath, for the target was now some thirty feet away, he aimed and threw. The ball shattered as the hammer hit it squarely. Breathing a sigh of relief, he walked off and stood at the side where he could watch the rest of his opponents.

The second man stepped up to the line and threw. His hammer missed the target and almost reached the crowd of onlookers. Hanging his head in disgust, he walked off the field. Then the third dwarf took up his place and threw. The hammer glanced off the pole on which the target had been placed, knocking the ball to the ground. He had scored a hit, but not a direct hit, making Blick the overall winner in the hammer throwing contest and the first of the group to win some money.

At the same time, Kirin was enjoying himself, by beating opponent after opponent, in the sword-fighting event. There was just no competition for him. Before walking off the field, one of the judges asked him if he had time to teach some of his warriors in the art of swordplay. Graciously declining, he promised to return one day and give the dwarf's men some pointers.

Roma, on the other hand, was pitted against some of the best spear throwers that this city had to offer. When it finally came for her turn to throw, she needed to surpass ninety-seven and a half feet. Her first throw was short by five feet and her second throw was a foot and a half short. Standing there, Roma began to concentrate. This was her last chance and she knew she could do it. Stepping back from the line, she balanced the spear in her right hand. A few deep breaths and she trotted forward. With a yell, she launched her spear. Up, up it sailed, higher than her first two tries. Then reaching its apex, the spear began its descent. Holding her breath, Roma watched as it stuck into the soft ground. The judges called for a measuring string and took measurements of the two longest throws. After a few moments of silence, the judge called out, "ninety seven feet, ten inches!" And the crowd roared. Roma was the new champion.

Shannon was the last to start, for they had to wait until all the other targets from the ax-throwing event were removed and the archery ones erected. It was late in the afternoon by now and the sun created long shadows that danced on the grass, near the targets, as the people moved about. Two more elimination rounds were played out, until the four winners of each round were left. Finally, each competitor drew a number from a hat, which represented their starting position. Shannon drew number four, making her start last. She watched as the first archer placed all three arrows in the centre circle. Proud of his marksmanship, he walked off the field and waited on the side. The second man didn't fare as well. His second shot just caught the rim of the center circle, eliminating him. The third competitor must have had a few ales too many during the midday break, for none of his

arrows struck the centre. But showing good sportsmanship, he laughed and walked off the field, losing himself in the crowd.

Shannon knew that she had to win. Losing just wasn't in her. Her first two arrows landed dead centre. This time she didn't look at the crowd of people cheering her on. She notched her final arrow, took aim and let it fly. What came next is still talked about today in Bellow's Falls. On her last shot the arrow split the first one and lodged itself halfway down the shaft. Shannon couldn't contain her feelings of happiness, as she walked off the range. She shook hands with the remaining competitors, who were both still in shock, and offered to buy each of them a flagon of ale tonight. When they nodded their approval, Shannon turned and left to meet her friends.

Out of the corner of her eye she spied the stranger once more, but when she turned to look straight at him he disappeared. This time she told Blick about him and the dwarf promised to have some of his men find out who he was. Relieved at his words, Shannon joined the party as they returned to Blick's house to freshen up for the celebration at the Dragon's Tooth Inn.

Just before leaving for the inn, there was a knock at the door. One of Blick's men entered and whispered something to him. The young dwarf, after dismissing his man, walk over to Shannon and said, "It seems that your stranger is no stranger at all. He is well known to the authorities. He is a member of a band of rogues who roam these foothills and relieve weary travellers of their valuable possessions. Tonight, after we return from the inn, we will change our plans for leaving. I don't like the idea of having to deal with the likes of him. He may be working for someone and could be laying a trap for us. In any case, we will let it be known that we are leaving tomorrow morning when the gates open. I will leave now and make plans for our departure. Duncan will take all of you to the inn, where I will meet you later.

It was already dark when they reached the open part of the city. Shannon, for the first time, noticed that the streets were all well lit by what appeared to be stone street lamps. Along with all the lanterns in windows and in the hands of the festive populace, making one's way around was quite easy. There were no dark corners for someone to be lurking. Also, everyone noticed that there was an increase in security. There were more of the palace guards out and around tonight.

The walk to the inn didn't take them long, for Duncan led them straight to the Dragon's Tooth. As they entered the overcrowded tavern, a serving girl led them to another large room, off to the side, where tables had been set up for the evening's banquet. Some of the other contestants had already arrived and were seated together drinking and laughing. They fell silent as the party entered the room. Duncan glared over at them and questioned them rather rudely.

"Is this how you treat guests in this town? Even if they did beat the pants off of you?" The others just sat there staring at the old dwarf and then burst into laughter, when a tiny smile crossed Duncan's face. Suddenly there was nothing but friendship in the room. Shannon and her friends took their seats next to the other dwarfs and lifted flagons of drink to toast each other. Slowly the room began to fill, as the other contestants arrived.

With almost all the chairs occupied, the tavern girls began to bring in the food. Trays and trays were brought in, filled with roast lamb, pork, venison and even wild boar. Others were filled

with different types of fish and vegetables. Barrels of beer and wine were rolled in and set up on a separate table. Here, everyone could help himself or herself to whatever they desired. When one barrel was empty, another was put in its place.

As the party sat down with their plates overflowing with food, Blick entered with a smile on his face. He went straight for the barrels and tapped himself an ale before sitting down next to his friends.

"All has been taken care of," he said softly. "Word has been put out there that we are leaving in the morning when the gates open. You should have seen your friend hurry," looking at Shannon, "to pass the word along to the rest of his people. We will talk more about this later, when we get home."

Tossing back his drink, Blick stood up and went over to the food table and filled his plate up with a large chunk of roast venison.

Everyone was enjoying their food and drink when the Master of Ceremonies stood and banged a small wooden gavel on the table. He kept up the pounding until he had everyone's attention. Finally, when the room was quiet and all eyes were upon him, he spoke.

"I'd like to welcome all of you here tonight," he started. "We've had a very good contest this year, even if most of the prizes went to the guests of our friends. We hope that all the winners will be back next year, to defend their title." Looking around the room he continued to speak. "Now we would like to give out the prize monies to those who won their events and extend our thanks for their valiant efforts to those that didn't win."

Applauding the words of the speaker, the room quieted as he began to call out the names of the winners. One by one, they approached the head table, to retrieve their prize.

Looking around at all the faces staring at the M.C., Shannon noticed that one chair was not occupied. The archer, who had too much to drink at noontime, was missing.

"Probably too drunk to show up here," Shannon smiled, as she thought to herself. "Well, he was going to miss out on his share of the winnings."

Kirin was the first to accept his prize of fifty gold pieces, for winning the sword-fighting contest.

"Will you return next year to defend your title?" the M.C. asked.

"Yes, I will," the elf answered as he collected his winnings and returned to his seat.

Next, came the ax-throwing winner, who solemnly promised to return next year. Then came the riding event winners, the hammer throwers and spear throwers.

"I have kept the archery event for last, because of the tremendous third and final shot made by our winner, Shannon Brightstar. Would she please come up and say a few words?"

Shyly, Shannon rose from her chair and approached the head table. A small sack was pressed into her hand and she turned to face the room.

"I don't know what to say," she began. "But for me, it was a lucky shot. I've never done that before. All of my opponents were terrific and very skilled. It would be an honour to return next year and defend my title. Thank you."

The room applauded her as she made her way back to her seat. With her cheeks flushed, Shannon sat down next to her

friends.

Once all the prizes were handed out, everyone continued with their dinner. More barrels of ale and wine were rolled in and replaced the empty ones.

The party stayed for a while longer, not wanting to seem too anxious to leave so early. Blick insisted that they have a few more flagons, before calling it a night.

“We don’t want anyone to think that we are party poopers,” he laughed as he tossed back and emptied another flagon of ale.

A short time later, some of the contestants got up and left. This was the sign that Blick was waiting for. Now they could leave without raising any suspicions, in case there were still some people watching the group. The young dwarf had stationed his men at certain intervals, so that they wouldn’t be disturbed, should the stranger and his friends try to make their move before the little band could leave the city. Once inside the mountain, they were safe again from prying eyes.

Outside, the crowds of people began to thin out. With the festival officially over, they began to go home. Some stayed to help with the cleanup, but most left, because they were either too drunk to help or too tired from the week-long party. Street lamps were still burning and lighting the way home, but the lanterns, in windows, were extinguished and put away for another year.

They joked amongst themselves as they made their way back to Blick’s house. Once inside the mountain, the conversation changed. Now they spoke about continuing their trek when the gates opened in the morning.

“Won’t those men be waiting for us somewhere out there?” asked Shannon.

“Oh, they’ll be waiting alright,” answered Blick, “but we will not be there. We will talk more of this when we get home.”

Not wanting to sound too confused, Shannon walked along in silence. When they arrived at Blick’s house, a few of his men were already there, waiting for them. They, Blick explained, had procured some of the supplies they would need for the trip. As soon as they entered the house, the young dwarf lit a fire in the old stove, to make some tea. When this was done, he gathered his

friends about him and said. “We will leave just past the middle of the night, but we won’t be leaving by the gate. Instead of going over land, we will be going under the mountain, until we reach the Teufel’s Tahl. Hopefully, we can escape undetected, until we are in the hobbit’s homeland. The trip through the tunnels will not be without perils, for there are many creatures that live in the numerous caves that we will have to pass through. Therefore, I have asked for twenty volunteers, from my own personal guard, to accompany us the rest of the way.”

“Won’t that many people attract some attention when we leave?” asked Treymane.

“Yes, it would,” Blick replied. “So that is why I sent most of them ahead to meet us in the tunnels later tomorrow morning. So for tonight, I might suggest that we check our gear then get as much sleep as we can. The morning will be here soon enough and we have a lengthy walk ahead of us.”

Everyone went to his or her respective sleeping area. Roma came into Shannon’s room and dropped her backpack in the corner.

“It seems that since we have some of Blick’s men sleeping over tonight, I’ve lost my room,” said Roma. “Could I bunk in with you?”

“Why not?” answered the young elf. “As long as you don’t snore.”

Roma stared at Shannon, not knowing what to make of what she had said, but when she saw the smile on Shannon’s face she broke out laughing.

The elf girl grabbed her pack and opened it. The tiny ornate box was still safely tucked into the bottom of the backpack. She put some of the clothing that she had washed out the night they arrived into her pack and the rest, she hung over the back of the chair. These, she would wear for tomorrow’s journey. She then placed her backpack beside her friend’s and gave Roma a place to sleep next to her. The bed was wide enough for the two of them. The two talked for a while longer and then Shannon extinguished the candle. Sleep came to the two almost immediately. ✨

The Last Mage continues in WARP 70



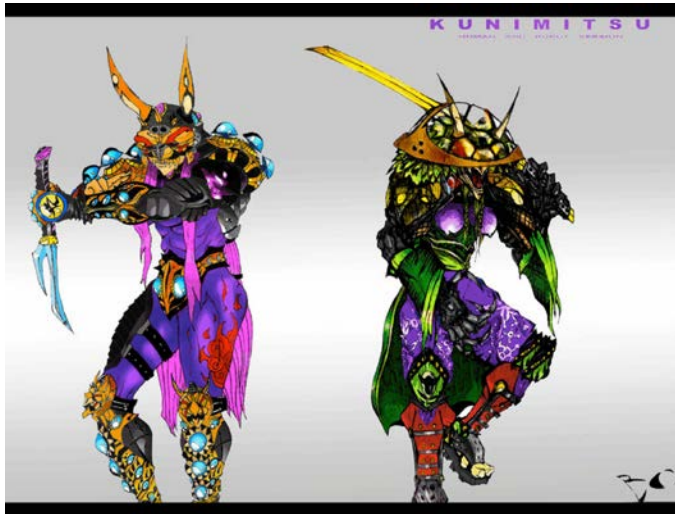
I have always enjoyed being a member of MonSFFa. Though I don't get a chance to be at many of the meetings, I do enjoy reading the Impulse every month and I just sit back and read the Warp from cover to cover. Even that long story "The Last Mage". He! He!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, MonSFFa!

Nick

ARTISTS' ALLEY

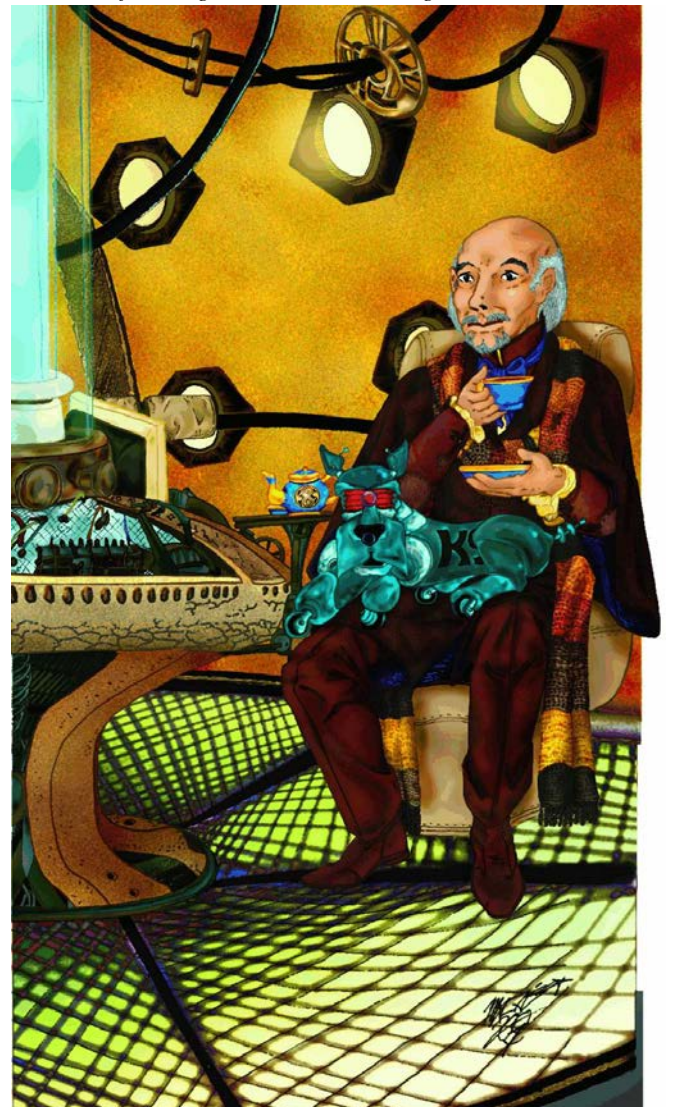
A new feature in WARP, Artist's Alley hopes to encourage the artistic talents of our members. This issue features work by two members, Marquise Boies and Bazayochit who is also known as Esfandiar Jamshidi.



To see more of Bazayochit's work, go to:
<http://bazayochit.deviantart.com/gallery>



The Logo for Marquise's anthro parodies of Dr Who, which WARP has started featuring on the MonSF Fun Page.



The Next Regeneration! To see more art by Marquise, go to
<http://marquise.deviantart.com/> or visit her on Facebook.

REVIEWS: MonSFFen are never too shy to speak their minds!

TRADES , reviewed by Keith Braithwaite Reviews of Some of the Fanzines Received by MonSFFA in Trade for Warp (Part IV of a Series on Fanzines)

Keith Braithwaite's series on fanzines resumes with this article. Previous installments:

- Part I: Fanzines: *The Fourth Phase of Fanac*, Warp 63 (2006)
Part II: *Trades*, Warp 64 (2006)
Part III: *Trades (continued)*, Warp 65 (2006)

A copy of each issue of *Warp*, MonSFFA's clubzine, is mailed regularly to a number other SF/F fan clubs, organizations, and individual fanzine publishers in exchange for copies of their respective 'zines. To date I have reviewed clubzines. With this installment of my series, I offer opinion on two first-rate "genzines," content being of general interest. In that both are published by individuals, they might also be considered "perzines," if the broadest definition of the term is applied. A perzine is a personal fanzine; that is, a 'zine published by a single fan ed, reflecting the interests and opinions of that person.

Challenger, Genzine / Perzine

Editor: Guy H. Lillian III, 8700 Millicent Way, #1501
Shreveport, LA, USA 71115
URL: <http://challzine.net>

Nominated numerous times for the fanzine Hugo but, alas, yet to win the coveted prize, *Challenger* is nevertheless an award-worthy publication, one of several 'zines put out by Guy H. Lillian III, a public defender by profession, who regularly includes in the 'zine anecdotes from the courtroom. Editorial pieces on American politics, along with various convention and trip reports feature prominently, not the least of which are Mike Resnick's perennial Worldcon diaries. Resnick, fellow pro Gregory Benford, and others are regular contributors to *Challenger* editor Lillian has dubbed "Chall Pals."

As per the genzine model, subject matter is varied but here leans to examinations of vintage SF and recollections of fannish days gone by. Particularly enjoyable are these accounts of the doings of fans in decades past, transporting contemporary readers to fandom's fabled days of yore to meet the always fascinating folk who populated the fanzine, convention, club, and party landscape of the time.

A sizable section of *Challenger* is devoted to LoCs (letters of comment) and the discourse, here, can be quite spirited. The 'zine typically succeeds in spurring dialogue. It's a tribute to *Challenger* that its readers are such an interactive bunch.

Challenger is available as both a printed and online publication. No doubt the introduction of an online version has made the distribution of the 'zine easier and much less costly for Mr. Lillian while also likely increasing its reach. For traditionalists, the printed version remains available.

Challenger is printed on 8.5X11-inch stock and stapled. Recent issues have featured full-colour covers showcasing top-notch examples of fan art. The *Challenger* nameplate and issue number is set across the top of the cover page. Interior layout is clean. Page-wide and double-column body text—about 12-point, easy to read—is set under large, decorative- or bold-type title headers, sometimes accompanied by line drawings. Many articles are illustrated with well-reproduced photos or filler art. Page-count varies some but is usually well

north of 50.

The online version of *Challenger* faithfully reproduces the chapters of the printed edition, exhibiting each as a Web page and featuring little extras like colour photos in place of black and white, and access to back issues.

Kudos to editor Guy Lillian III on producing a 'zine that is, quite simply, a delightful read. Contact Mr. Lillian at: GHLIII@yahoo.com

Printed issues of *Challenger* are available for \$6 US each. To get the 'zine online, surf to: <http://challzine.net>

Opuntia, Genzine / Perzine

Editor: Dale Speirs
P.O. Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7

Opuntia editor Dale Speirs is an unabashed fanzine enthusiast, or more accurately, a "Papernet" enthusiast. Speirs is not sold on the Internet as a medium for 'zine publishing, noting that e-zines created and stored in a given format are, before too long, rendered largely inaccessible as a new format is introduced and the old one falls by the wayside. But a fanzine printed on paper, he argues, remains easily accessible whether five years or 50 have passed since its publication. In any case, suggests Speirs, blogging seems lately to have supplanted e-zine publishing.

An issue of *Opuntia* arrives in MonSFFA's mailbox about every month or two, although the 'zine lists no specific production schedule. Interestingly, editor Speirs assigns a rotating series of themes to his publication with each of the 'zines within an issue number devoted to one of these. Thus, whole-numbered issues—dedicated to sercon (serious and constructive) writings—are followed by several suffixed editions focussed on, for example, Speirs' APA contributions (he is a member of FAPA, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association) or his 'zine reviews. I don't have an accurate count at hand, but *Opuntias* published over the years must number in the hundreds.

Emblematic of *Opuntia* is Speirs' fondness for history, fannish or otherwise. His writing—lean, precise, no-nonsense, leavened with a dollop of dry humour—is entirely readable. One

always learns something perusing an issue of *Opuntia*. Invariably, major articles are thoroughly researched and run the gamut of topics from philately to palaeontology, petroleum to politics. Anecdotes often centre around Speirs' days growing up in rural Alberta, or on his adventures today in Calgary and environs, often while on the job as a supervisor for the city's parks department.

Opuntia is produced in a digest-sized format, calendar-style, so that pages are flipped up rather than right to left. Layout is simple—two-column body text, capitalized bold headers, very few if any illustrations. *Opuntia* nameplate and issue number appear in large, bold text, rarely positioned other

than in upper left hand corner of cover page, under which is printed release date and publishing information. Cover illustrations—as likely to be featured as not—are always line drawings of a cactus (*Opuntia* derives its name from a type of cactus) and occupy the rest of the cover page. In the absence of a cover illo, content begins on cover page. Page count: 16.

Opuntia is a well-written, erudite publication deserving of far more recognition than its single fanzine Aurora of a few years ago. Unquestionably one of Canada's finest fanzines and well worth a look.

Sample copies available for \$3 each; offered in exchange for other 'zines, or letters of comment. ❄

CONVENTIONS / EVENTS

Otakuthon 2007

Reviewed by Maureen Whitelaw



Montreal's anime convention, Otakuthon, was held this year at Concordia University. The Guest of Honour was Venus Terzo, the voice of the female Ranma Saotome in the popular Ranma ½ anime series. There were five floors with lots of things to see and do. There were many people going to and fro, dressed in the outfits of their favourite characters. I wore my Con*Cept T-shirt to advertise Con*Cept.

The Artists' Alley was on the first floor. There were many pieces to buy: buttons, big and small, bookmarks of all kinds, prints, glasses and bottles with pictures on them. They were ever so cute! There was also jewellery and card games, drawings, posters, and comics. There was also what they called a Cosplay café, with Japanese treats of all kinds and drinks and juices.

On the fourth floor there were panels, workshops, and screenings, while on the sixth floor there was much gaming going on and video gaming, too.

There was a masquerade competition and a cosplay contest, and even an Otakuthon Idol contest. Saturday evening, there was a J-Pop Concert & Show: Irulanne with 8 singers and dancers performed Japanese music, anime hits and classics.

Panel Highlights included how to create your own cosplay group, boots & wings, crazy game shows of Japan, and intro to APO role playing games. There were workshops on how to dub your own anime, Japanese calligraphy, and origami. ❄



Polaris 21 Josée Bellemare

We started out on Thursday and had an uneventful trip. The weather was good and the traffic easy until we got to Toronto. Getting through town took a while.

On our way we listened to various CDs. It was like a scene from a road movie: three women driving cross country, singing, laughing and having fun. The Beach Boys and other surf tunes make excellent road trip music.

On Friday, the Montreal Marauders, in limited number, went shopping. First Michael's, then Square One Mall. Needless to say, we came back with bags of stuff.

On Saturday morning I attended the KAG assembly. There were very few of us and I was the only representative from the eastern Quadrant to show up. It turned out well for me though: I got a hall costume ribbon and after five years, I was finally promoted to first lieutenant.

Throughout the day I attended various panels, and put in time at the Monsffa and Con*Cept tables, but a great deal of my time was spent trying to find a volunteer to help me with my masquerade presentation.

First my friends, then a notice at the Stargate club table, and finally asking every Stargate soldier that crossed my path.

Finally, late in the afternoon, I found someone, or so I thought.

My costume was the Egyptian cat goddess Bastet and I needed a Stargate soldier for my presentation. Unfortunately, Joe (last name unknown) never showed up forcing me to do a last minute improvisation to my presentation. As far as I'm concerned this puts him in the litter box.

I did manage to take several pictures of behind the scenes at the masquerade. The contestants lounging around, practising their presentation or making last minute adjustments to their costumes.

Sadly, the dance wasn't as good as previous years. There was a new DJ this year and she didn't have the right groove. The vibe just wasn't happening. This was also the opinion of several other dance veterans.

Sunday was more of the same: panels, time at the tables and celebrities on stage. In the evening a few of us went out to dinner at The Outback where we celebrated Keith's birthday.

Monday morning, after a large breakfast, we got ready to leave. As usual the hotel had problems figuring out the bills. Eventually they got it straight and so we left for home. ❄

Spamalot
A New Musical Lovingly Ripped Off from the Motion Picture Monty Python and the Holy Grail
Reviewed by Joe Aspler

On a recent trip to London, I found myself wandering through the West End theatre district on my one free evening. My choices for the evening's entertainment came down to two shows: MacBeth starring Patrick Stewart, or Spamalot starring Peter Davison. I chose Spamalot – the Doctor over Captain Picard; Monty Python over the Scottish Play.

The show is the brainchild of Python Eric Idle, who wrote the book and lyrics. Idle also collaborated on the music with John Du Prez.

The plot (such as it is) needs no introduction to those familiar with the movie. King Arthur (played by Peter Davison as the straightest of straight men) rides through Dark Age England with his faithful steed/servant/coconut banger, Patsy. He is ordered by the voice of God (played by the voice of John Cleese) to search for the Holy Grail.

And they're off; complete with Terry Gilliam animations, rude French Knights and their catapult cow, the Black Knight, the Killer Rabbit, Tim the Enchanter, the Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch, the Knights who say Ni, neurotic Knights of the Round Table, Brave Sir Robin and his minstrels, and the usual collection of peasants. The man who claims "I'm not dead yet" gets a name (Not-Dead-Fred), and his own song-and-dance. Even Sir Not-Appearing-in-This-Show puts in a brief appearance – looking very much like The Man of La Mancha.

We find out that King Arthur's servant Patsy is half-Jewish – but after all, "that's not really the sort of thing you say to a heavily-armed Christian".

And what musical would be complete without a chorus of scantily-clad young ladies – in this case, The Lady of The Lake (played by Hannah Waddingham) and her Laker Girls. In a plaintive song in the middle of Act II, the Lady steals the show by breaking the fourth wall and asking the audience, "What ever

happened to my part?"

The lines are familiar – as the title says, ripped off from the movie – and the show follows the old English music hall and Pantomime tradition – "no joke too old; no gag too forced". There is the traditional audience participation and sing-along at the end. You just have to follow the bouncing foot for "Always Look at the Bright Side of Life", borrowed from the Life of Brian. There was even a special treat for the person sitting in Row D, seat 1 – say no more!



*The official killer rabbit
slippers!*

We all know the ending (such as it is). But my two-hour voyage made for the funniest show that I've seen

since the Reduced Shakespeare Company performed the complete works of Shakespeare in less than two hours.

And what major theatrical production would be complete without a souvenir stand – Ye Olde Rippey-Offey Shoppe. I purchased the programme and T-shirt. I did not, however, buy any of the following: the official coconut shells, the official killer rabbit hand puppet (of which there were more than a few in the audience); the official killer rabbit slippers; the official Karaoke CD; the official Black Knight doll (with removable limbs), or the official toy catapult set (with cow, other livestock, and wooden rabbit – not for children under 3). Those feeling peckish during the show could also buy the souvenir Monty Python Spam can, from the actual makers of Spam.

The road tour played Toronto last fall. So what happened to the Montreal stop? ❁

MOVIES

Jumper

Reviewed by Mireille Dion



These are just my thoughts upon coming out of the movie theatre, but...

My advice about this movie is to save your money and wait for it to come to you on TV. Yeah... it is very ordinary...

It is a special effects movie and, aside from a few cool elements about the fact that they can teleport (along with what they can carry) from one place to another just upon thinking about its sites, there really isn't much to that movie, the story... and not even the actors. They obviously try to do as much as they can with the script, (which is full of forced elements so that there will be a movie and even a trilogy), but none of their characters have charisma and reach us in any way, except to leave us unsatisfied or sometimes even annoy us. There is also a religious, fanatical thing in play that gets old the moment that it is mentioned, and Samuel ends up wearing an almost Jedi-like tunic and wields a

handle that has the same shape than a lightsaber... This, too, doesn't help it to conquer us.

As for the forced elements and lack of details, the problem is not that the story doesn't reveal all the secrets all at once, but rather that, except for a single tidbit, it doesn't reveal any meaningful secrets, and that the characters' special abilities are repeatedly used in ways that make us wonder (as viewers) why they wouldn't simply woosh very rapidly to a few and distanced places so that they can't be tracked down for another few years... But then, of course, if they did that, there wouldn't be a movie, let alone a trilogy on its way, or would there... Still, the way this element is exploited in the movie... the viewers just don't buy into the action... It is no less spectacular, but without a real reason to exist.

To me, this movie just doesn't compare in any good way to *The Bourne Trilogy* and *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*. The humour is not

there, nor are the intense drama and mystery/intrigue.

As for how the movie builds toward the sequel, well... it should come across as the revelation of a huge conflict between two characters, but when it came on screen and that the lines were told by the actors... the audience started chortling and snorting... and we were all regular viewers who had won tickets in one contest or another... We were not pros at criticism or blasé

viewers the way professional critics tend to be sometimes...

After the movie, I talked about those thoughts with fellow viewers, and we were on the same wavelength, which is why I thought it might interest you to know about those before paying a full-price ticket to see that movie. It is sad, but it doesn't look like this will be a good addition to Hayden's filmography... nor Samuel's for that matter. ❄

Enchanted

Reviewed by Josée Bellemare

Over the holidays, I went to see *Enchanted*. It would be best described as a date movie, or a chick flick: not much to interest the guys, but the ladies will love it. It's cute, romantic, sentimental, and so sweet it'll make your teeth rot.

Without giving too much away, all the good guys get a

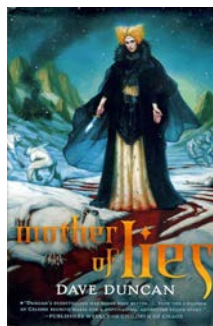
happy ending and the villain goes splat on the sidewalk.

So if you're looking for a couple of hours of light entertainment, *Enchanted* is the movie for you. ❄



BOOKS

Reviewed by Cathy Palmer-Lister



Mother of Lies

(Conclusion of Children of Chaos)

Dave Duncan

Fantasy, Tor, 2007

The Children of Chaos are the four heirs to the throne of Celebre. Taken as hostages while so young that only one of them actually remembers home, they discover their heritage and reunite to fight their way home to a city on the brink of despair. In *Mother of Lies*, we learn what

15 years of Werist rule has done to Celebre. The Doge is near death. Oliva, his wife, is struggling to keep some sense of order and calm in a city about to become a battleground between the Werists of Vigaelia and those of Marno, the Mutineer. And there is Chies, Stralg's son, conceived when he raped Oliva. The doge raised him as his own child, and now he is a spoiled adolescent. Stralg's mad sister, Saltaja, is following the four heirs over the Edge, into Celebre, and she will have vengeance for the death of her son, whatever the cost to herself and others.

From his deathbed, the doge names "the winner" as his heir, but which one? There are 5 heirs now, plus Marno, the wild card, and they are all winners, each in his or her own way. In spite of their merits, however, they also each have given cause to be disqualified for the job offer.

Dave Duncan is a wonderful writer, and his readers know to expect unusual twists and turns, not to mention his wicked sense of humour. Going a step or two beyond fantasy, he has created a world which is literally impossible, but as he says in his after word, he hopes the technical quibbles don't spoil your visit to Dodec. Didn't spoil my visit in the least!

M is for Magic

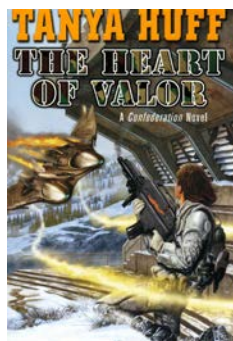
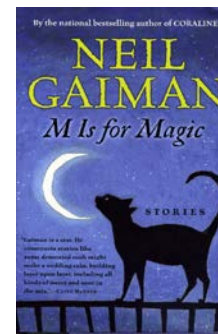
Neil Gaiman,

Fantasy, Harper Collins, 2007

11 short stories by one of the best in the genre! As you

would expect from Neil Gaiman, no two stories are even remotely alike, and all are way off the beaten track. The first story, left me cold. I like a good mystery, but a Philip Marlowe type of detective solving a case involving nursery rhyme characters didn't work for me. The last story, however, was totally fabulous, and I was so delighted to read that it is a chapter from an upcoming book. It's called, "The Witch's Headstone". The main character is a live boy, Bod, short for Nobody Owens, who is being raised by the ghosts in a graveyard. Another story I quite liked was "Chivalry", an amusing off-the-wall tale concerning an elderly lady who finds the Holy Grail in the Oxfam Shop. "It had a little round

paper sticker on the base, and written on it, in felt pen, was the price: 30p." Mrs. Whitaker brings it home, cleans it up, and sets on her mantelpiece between a small soulful china basset hound and a photograph of her late husband, Henry. A sensible, unshakeable old lady, she is quite unimpressed when Galaad, Knight of the Table Round, shows up to claim the Sangrail. "No, I don't think so," said Mrs. Whitaker. "I rather like it there. It's just right, between the dog and the photograph of my Henry." Galaad isn't about to give up on his quest, and the bargaining begins.



The Heart of Valor

Tanya Huff

Military SF, Daw, 2007

A training exercise goes wrong, recruits find themselves fighting real battles – not the most original plot line, so it takes a more than competent author to make it something new, different, exciting. Tanya Huff, like her hero,

Torin Kerr, now gunnery sergeant, is well up to the challenge in this sequel to *A Confederation of Valor*. It begins with an odd mystery when Valor begins to realize that people seem to have forgotten the existence of the alien ship's escape pod, which her lover, Craig Ryder is trying to claim as salvage. Are minds being wiped of the memory? And if so, then why do she and Craig remember it? Is this the work of the Elder Races?

Major Svensson's body has been rebuilt from practically nothing, and he is going to Crucible to prove himself fit for combat. Kerr is assigned to be his assistant, and his medic is going along as well to monitor his physical condition. Crucible is a planet set up to simulate different combat situations, but the orbiting platform is destroyed almost immediately after the recruits arrive, so there is no way to communicate their problem to their superiors, nor even the recruits assigned to other parts of

the planet. The simulated battle programmes have obviously been tampered with, since they are making every effort to *really* kill the marines. Staff sergeant Beyhn is behaving very oddly, too; the di'Taykan recruits appear to be both confused by his behaviour, and yet strangely protective. What do they know that they won't confide in Kerr? The medic's presence is a mixed blessing since she is a civilian, and never was expected to have to cope with real warfare. Who is reprogramming the simulations? The Others are a likely suspect, they are after all the enemy they are training to fight, but why would they bother to harass recruits on a training mission?

I'm not a big fan of military SF, but I did very much enjoy *The Heart of Valor*. There is a lot more to it than space warriors with futuristic weaponry. Indeed, survival in Kerr's universe depends far more on wits than guns. ✱



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



LEGENDS ACTION FIGURES: 10% off all merchandise (7104 St-Hubert)
<http://www.legendsactionfigures.com>

MÉLANGE MAGIQUE: 15% off all merchandise (1928 St-Catherine West)
<http://www.themagicalblend.com>



MILLENNIUM COMICS: 15% off all merchandise (451 Marrriane-est)
<http://libmillenium.com>

Appearing in each issue of *Warp*, "MonSFFAndom" collates abridged versions of the news and activities reports published over the last few months in [Impulse](#), [MonSFFA's monthly news bulletin](#).

With this installment of "MonSFFAndom", we cover the period August-mid-November, 2007. We'll hold the MonSFFA meeting reports until last and begin with the absence of an issue of *Impulse* in August, for which an explanation was offered in the September *Impulse*.

Absent August 2007 Impulse

We take a moment to offer our apologies to the club's membership for our failure to produce an issue of *Impulse* last month, August, as scheduled. Editor Keith Braithwaite had suffered an unfortunate back injury that felled him for several weeks and prevented him from completing an August 2007 issue of this news bulletin. We trust that club members will understand that because of these circumstances, the planned issue was cancelled. Keith is much better, now, though still feeling some occasional lower-back discomfort. We wish him a complete recovery soon.

Thus, [the September issue](#) had to squeeze in more than the usual volume of reporting, beginning with some really big news:

Montreal Wins Worldcon!

Montreal will host the 67th World Science Fiction Convention in 2009!

As most *Impulse* readers know, the Montreal Worldcon was dubbed **Anticipation**, a name that works in both English and French, and further, references the common tag given science fiction books in French-language bookshops.

News of the successful Anticipation bid came out of Yokohama, Japan – site of Nippon 2007, the 65th Worldcon – over the Labour Day weekend. Montreal beat out friendly rival Kansas City by a convincing margin of votes: 507 to 341. Apparently, it was the on-site voters who put Montreal over the top as the mail-in tally had Kansas City trailing by just a half-dozen votes. Montreal rather spontaneously entered the competition a couple of years ago as something of a dark horse and it is a tribute to the Anticipation bid committee that the venture succeeded in this, our city's first attempt at securing a Worldcon.

MonSFFA's own René Walling, who chaired the bid, will co-chair Anticipation with Robbie Bourget, a long-time fan and con-runner, once of Montreal and now residing in the UK. The depth of Worldcon-committee experience attached to Anticipation is significant; other committee members include Bruce Farr, Brian Davis, John Mansfield, Linda-Ross Mansfield, Peter Jarvis, Terry Fong, and Eugene Heller.

Early reaction to Montreal's successful bid has been largely positive, with many Internet postings noting our city's reputation for good times, fine food, and the many first-rate festivals and events scheduled during the summer months. If initial feedback is any indication, fans overwhelmingly approve of Anticipation's list of announced guests: Neil Gaiman (Guest of Honour), Élisabeth Vonarburg (Invitée d'honneur), Taral Wayne (Fan Guest of Honour), David Hartwell (Editor Guest of Honour), and Tom Doherty (Publisher Guest of Honour).

Anticipation will mark the fifth time a Canadian city has hosted the Worldcon. Torcons 1, 2, and 3 were held in Toronto in 1948, 1973, and 2003, respectively. Winnipeg hosted ConAdian in 1994.

There have been a few concerns aired south of the border regarding passport issues, Québec's French-only signage, and the

perceived difficulty and cost for dealers and artists of clearing inventories through Canadian customs. Having anticipated (no pun intended) such worries, the committee is reportedly, for instance, already working with the appropriate authorities to smooth as much as possible entry into Canada. Another fear expressed was that Anticipation might very well repeat some of the organisational errors that plagued [Torcon 3](#), regarded by many to have been one of the worst run Worldcons in decades. It seems, however, that the Montreal crew is alert to the kinds of mistakes made in Toronto and is undertaking to keep on top of things.

Anticipation will take place August 6-10, 2009 at the Palais de congrès. The Delta Montreal has been designated the official convention hotel; room rates are quoted at \$169.00 per night, single/double occupancy.

We have planned a visit to a MonSFFA meeting soon by René Walling in his capacity as Anticipation co-chair, at which time further information regarding the Montreal Worldcon will be made available.

Of importance as well, to MonSFFA members and correspondents in particular, was news of an address change:

MonSFFA P.O. Box Closes, New Mailing Address Introduced

After repeated problems with the delivery of mail to our post office box, the club has opted to close its P.O. box and take delivery of MonSFFA mail via the address of club treasurer Sylvain St-Pierre.

We have been aware that for a few years, now, periodically, mail addressed to our post office box has been returned to sender despite letters and packages having inscribed on them the correct address. We have, on numerous occasions reported the trouble to Canada Post, who have assured us of a resolution to the problem. Everyone can make a mistake, of course, Canada Post included, but these delivery errors have become chronic in the past year or so and the post office seems unable to fix the problem.

Closing the club's P.O. box in favour of receiving mail by way of Sylvain's address, we expect, should solve our problem satisfactorily. And, this action will save the club over \$130 per year in P.O. box rental fees, not an unsubstantial quantity of wampum given the club's current cash crunch!

And so, effective immediately, all mail directed to MonSFFA should be addressed as follows:

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

We have arranged for any mail received at our P.O. box to be forwarded to this new address for a transition period of a few more months.

As there had not been an August Impulse to report on the club's July barbecue-in-the-park, the September issue briefly covered the event,

for the record:

MonSFFA BBQ

Some two dozen MonSFFen and friends turned out at Parc Angrignon in Lasalle for the club's 2007 Summer Barbecue on Sunday, July 29th. The group enjoyed a tasty barbecued lunch, snacks, and drinks under warm, sunny skies. Relaxing conversation ensued with water-gun fights breaking out periodically, serving to cool off folk. A fun and frolicsome time was had by all. Thanks are due club president Berny Reischl for organising the event.



[October's Impulse](#) opened with a reminder of the club's address change before highlighting MonSFFA's upcoming 20th Anniversary/Christmas Dinner and Party, encouraging members to buy their tickets to the celebration in advance:

Tickets for MonSFFA's 20th Anniversary/Christmas Party On Sale Now

We encourage MonSFFA's members and friends to purchase tickets to the club's 20th Anniversary/Christmas Dinner and Party in advance of the event, scheduled for Saturday evening, December 8, 2007.

Tickets are \$35 each and pay for one's meal and cover charge. The at-the-door cost will be more so don't wait until the last minute!

Festivities will take place at the familiar Days Hotel (1005 Guy Street, downtown). We'll enjoy a hot buffet, cash bar, DJ, raffle prizes, and more.

Dinner/Party tickets will be on sale at this weekend's October 21st MonSFFA meeting.

We are pleased to report that the club sold a stack of those tickets at that October club meeting, and a number more at the November MonSFFA meeting. An advertisement for the Dinner/Party ran in both the October and November-December issues, too.

The October Impulse also noted the official launch of MonSFFA's new schedule of membership options and fees, providing details:

MonSFFA Introduces New Membership Options

The club officially introduced its new membership options at Con•Cept 2007 this month. Here's the dope:

The regular MonSFFA membership remains available at \$25 per year. MonSFFA has established a student membership at \$15 yearly, with proof of student status. The features of both the regular and student membership are identical.

The \$35-per-year piggyback membership is discontinued, replaced with the club's new family membership at \$40 annually. This plan delivers to the household with each MonSFFA mailing a copy of Impulse or Warp to share amongst the family members while providing each with a membership card and other benefits of membership.

For an additional \$10 on the above quoted rates, members may upgrade to the club's Platinum level and enjoy a few extra benefits. Platinum members, for example, receive a special thank-you gift, may purchase raffle tickets two-for-one at MonSFFA meetings, and

get first crack at any film-premiere passes the club receives.

Finally, the club has also included a 6-month trial membership at \$15. Note that the Platinum upgrade is not available on trial memberships.

Capping the October issue was a quick overview of Con•Cept 2007, including mention of the valuable contributions made by club members to the con, and of the club's "fruitful weekend":

MonSFFA at Con•Cept 2007

The club was in attendance at this year's [Con•Cept SF/F convention](#), which ran over the weekend of October 12-14. Many MonSFFen served the con as concom members, volunteers, or program participants.

Feedback suggests that the con was another success with fans, the guest-of-honour line-up proving particularly popular – authors David Weber, Tanya Huff, and Jean-Louis Trudel, and Star Wars actor Jeremy Bulloch.

We have no firm attendance numbers to report at this time but the panel rooms and hallways seemed full for much of the weekend. A well-stocked con suite kept everyone fed and watered and Saturday night's dance, coupled with the room parties running upstairs, kept things rollicking into the wee hours of Sunday morning.



[The Anticipation crew](#) was in attendance to promote the upcoming Montreal Worldcon – as you've no doubt heard, Montreal's bid for the 67th World Science Fiction Convention, to be held in 2009, was successful. There was a great deal of interest in the event as evidenced by the packed room Saturday afternoon

for Anticipation's information session and Q&A. Con•Cept had devoted programming time to Anticipation so that organisers could explain their plans, answer questions, and recruit volunteers.



MonSFFA, meanwhile, enjoyed a fruitful weekend selling club memberships, back issues of Warp, and DVDs of our popular fan films. Our principal promotional team for the weekend included Keith Braithwaite, Fernando and Alex Novo, and Sylvain

St-Pierre; we thank these and others for staffing the MonSFFA table. Member Mireille Dion deserves special mention for having donated all the proceeds from sales of her self-published novel, Atlantis 2: A Question of Survival, to the club – over \$200! Thank you, Mireille.

A [November-December Impulse](#) was released shortly before the club's November meeting, running the following brief note off the top of the issue:

No Impulse Next Month

Note that Impulse will not publish next month, December. This edition, therefore, has been designated our November-December 2007 issue. Information on our 20th Anniversary/Christmas Dinner and Party, scheduled for Saturday evening, December 8, is published herein.

That information package consolidated Dinner/Party details published previously and added that after the November 18 club meeting, the \$35 ticket price “rises to \$40 so don’t wait until the last minute!” If purchasing tickets after November 18, the article continued, “we ask that you please make payment in cash at the door on the evening of the party. Also, please let us know by no later than December 1st if you plan to attend so that we may advise the restaurant as to expected numbers re the buffet...” Finally, it was announced that Con•Cept DJ Andrew Gurudata would be spinning discs at the event.

Another quick notice/reminder of the club’s recent mailing address change closed the November-December issue, but not before an outline of the club’s annual election procedures was published, serving to set up the coming 2008 elections of the club’s Executive Committee:

2008 Club Elections

BERNY SPEAKS OUT!

By

ROLIE POLLIE, the MonSFFA Roving Reporter

Asked how he felt upon hearing that a new MonSFFA bylaw had been secretly passed, proclaiming that any president who fulfills four consecutive mandates automatically becomes KING, Bernard Reischl had this to say:



(I am reliably informed that Berny will find this amusing...in a year or two...)

As the club convenes for its first meeting of the New Year in January (date yet to be determined; watch for announcement, January Impulse), the first order of business will be the selection of MonSFFA’s 2008 Executive Committee. All club members in good standing are encouraged to participate in this process.

MonSFFA elects annually a president, vice-president, and treasurer – who together form the Executive Committee – and charges them with the responsibility of running the club on behalf of the membership. The three executives recruit advisors and appoint officers to assist them in carrying out this responsibility.

Any MonSFFA member in good standing who is responsibly and reliably able to carry out the duties of office may run for any one of the executive posts. Candidates may nominate themselves or accept nomination from another member in good standing. Nominations are received by the chief returning officer, or CRO, usually just before the commencement of voting on election day.

All MonSFFA members in good standing are eligible to cast a ballot. Members are asked to be present at the designated place and time in order to exercise their right to vote. Proxy voting is not permitted.

And so, we now close this edition of “MonSFFandom” with the complete MonSFFA meeting reports, in chronological order, as published in the September, October, and November-December issues of Impulse:

Workshops at August Meeting

For the second year running, the club scheduled a series of hands-on hobby and craft workshops at its August meeting. Last year’s sessions proved quite popular with club members and the room was again packed with MonFFen this year, trying their hands at scale model-making, scrapbooking, desktop publishing and computer graphics, video-game play, and belly dancing, all having an SF/F or fancraft theme. Several of MonSFFA’s skilled hobbyists staffed tables set up in the four corners of the meeting room and welcomed questions regarding their specialities posed by fellow club members keen to learn more about a given interest. Examples of various fancraft projects were on display, both works-in-progress and finished pieces. MonSFFen were free to circulate and give any of the hobbies a try.

We were pleased to include in our roster of hobbyists and crafters guests Miranda Feenstra (scrapbooking) and her friend, James (video gaming). MonSFFA’s own Mark Burakoff, Dominique Durocher, and Wayne Glover covered scale model-making while Berny Reischl demonstrated the art of desktop publishing and computer graphics. Finally, Cathy Palmer-Lister hosted a belly dancing workshop. We thank all of our specialists for their contributions to our August hobby and fancraft workshops. And as always, a nod of appreciation to the usual suspects who regularly help to plan and run our meetings and events.

The club’s BoA—Board of Advisors—convened just before the meeting to deal with several pressing issues.

September Club Meeting Welcomes Guest Speaker, Raises MonSFFunds

MonSFFA welcomed fantasy and SF writer and poet [Jo Walton](#) to our September meeting as guest speaker. Jo was first published professionally in 2000 and was soon collecting prestigious honours like the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer and the World Fantasy Award. Her novels include *Tooth and Claw* (2003), *Farthing* (2006), and its sequel, *Ha’Penny*, just released.

Perhaps the question most often posed to genre writers, Jo

speculated, is “From where do you get your ideas?” She thus spoke of her own influences and sources of ideas. The germ of a story concept, for example, might have been provided by a non-genre book she had read. Jo fielded a number of audience questions on her various novels before the mid-meeting break arrived and her talk concluded.

Following the break, the club held a fund-raising auction. Keith Braithwaite served as auctioneer, assisted by runners Berny Reischl and Mark Burakoff, while club treasurer Sylvain St-Pierre acted as cashier. The many lots on the block included SF/F books, comics, toys, DVDs and CDs, and several interesting collectibles imported from Japan by Sylvain, who had recently returned from the 65th Worldcon in Yokohama.

By the end of the afternoon, the club had added \$382 to its coffers!

Our thanks to all who donated items to the cause, as well as to those who bid on said items.

We thank, too, our guest speaker, Jo Walton, for her most entertaining colloquy. Thanks to our above-mentioned auction crew, and as always, a nod of appreciation to the usual suspects who regularly help to plan and run our meetings and events.

October MonSFFA Meeting

MonSFFA's October 21 meeting featured a busy agenda, beginning with an information session on [Anticipation](#), the recently announced Montreal Worldcon, to be held in August of 2009. A comprehensive presentation on advertising and science fiction followed, with a brief talk on animal motifs in ancient mythology capping the afternoon....

Our own René Walling, co-chair of Anticipation, led off, briefly

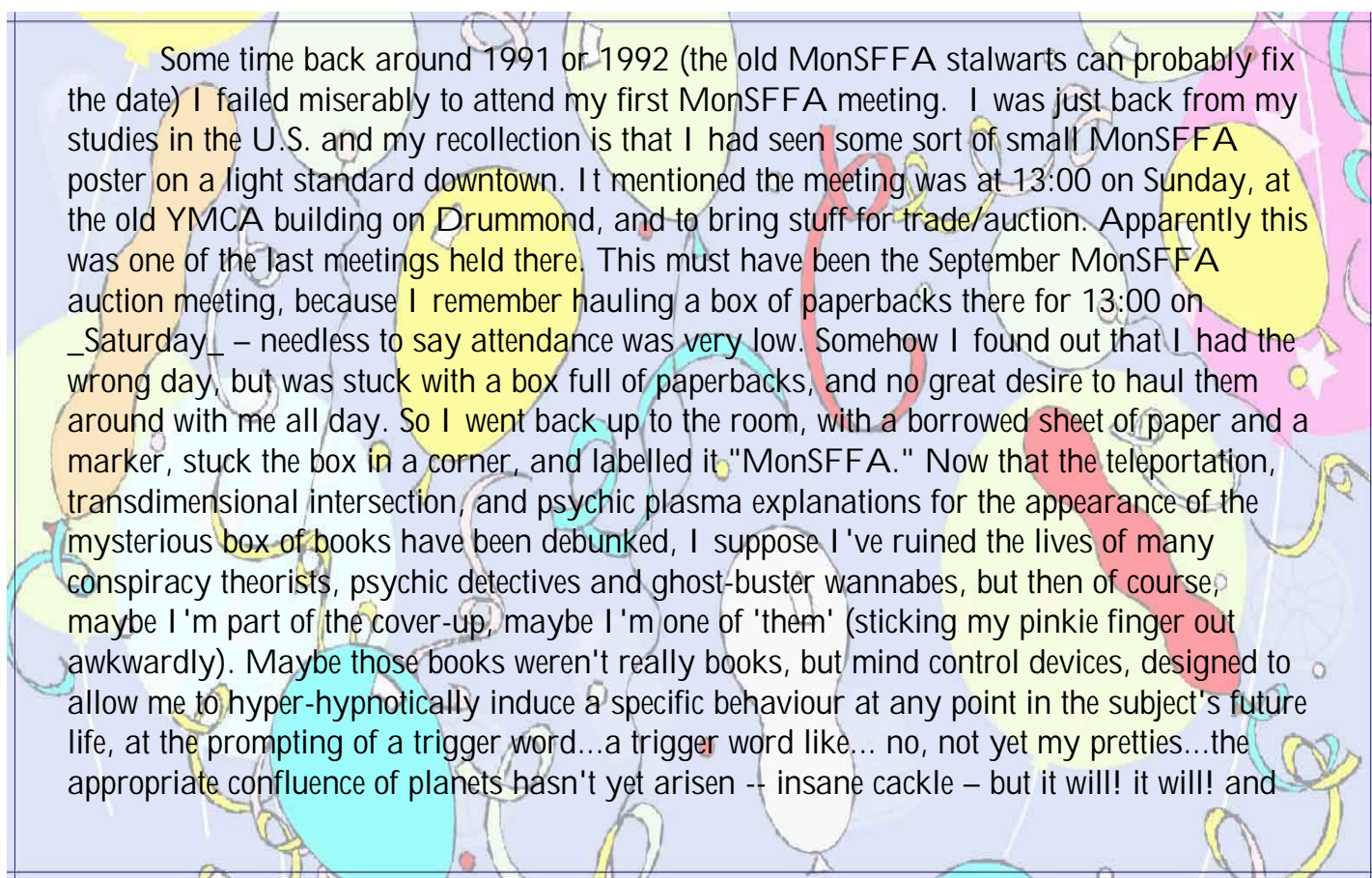
taking his audience along the road which has resulted in Montreal successfully winning its bid to host what will be the 67th Worldcon. He spoke of the plans his committee has put together for the event, and progress to date. There were many questions from the assembled MonSFFen and René dutifully fielded them all, detailing how things run at the Worldcon level, where the operating budget approaches \$1 million! As always when running an SF convention, even a Worldcon, volunteers are needed and welcome, and René explained how folk could become involved.

Sylvain St-Pierre was up next with a detailed slide and video-supported presentation on advertising in SF, and the flip side, SF in advertising. Screening numerous images illustrating the look of advertising in the imagined futures of the genre, Sylvain took MonSFFen from 19th-century SF stories featuring giant airships sporting ads on their hulls to the “blipverts” of Max Headroom. The other side of the coin sees advertisers using science fiction themes and imagery to promote everything from automobiles to snack foods. Sylvain had a number of examples on hand for all to see – newspaper ads, promotional calendars, etc.

Closing the meeting was Barbara Silverman's panel on animals in ancient mythology – the cat in Egyptian legend, for example. The ancients invested in their various deities the attributes of certain animals – bulls, snakes, bears – and left for archaeologists many wonderful artefacts replete with animal iconography. Barbara showed the group slides of some of these as she spoke of the different cultures and their gods.

We thank our panellists for their contributions to our October meeting and as always, offer a nod of appreciation to the usual suspects who regularly help to plan and run our meetings and events.

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Some time back around 1991 or 1992 (the old MonSFFA stalwarts can probably fix the date) I failed miserably to attend my first MonSFFA meeting. I was just back from my studies in the U.S. and my recollection is that I had seen some sort of small MonSFFA poster on a light standard downtown. It mentioned the meeting was at 13:00 on Sunday, at the old YMCA building on Drummond, and to bring stuff for trade/auction. Apparently this was one of the last meetings held there. This must have been the September MonSFFA auction meeting, because I remember hauling a box of paperbacks there for 13:00 on Saturday – needless to say attendance was very low. Somehow I found out that I had the wrong day, but was stuck with a box full of paperbacks, and no great desire to haul them around with me all day. So I went back up to the room, with a borrowed sheet of paper and a marker, stuck the box in a corner, and labelled it "MonSFFA." Now that the teleportation, transdimensional intersection, and psychic plasma explanations for the appearance of the mysterious box of books have been debunked, I suppose I've ruined the lives of many conspiracy theorists, psychic detectives and ghost-buster wannabes, but then of course, maybe I'm part of the cover-up, maybe I'm one of 'them' (sticking my pinkie finger out awkwardly). Maybe those books weren't really books, but mind control devices, designed to allow me to hyper-hypnotically induce a specific behaviour at any point in the subject's future life, at the prompting of a trigger word...a trigger word like... no, not yet my pretties...the appropriate confluence of planets hasn't yet arisen -- insane cackle – but it will! it will! and

The Face behind the Mask, # 4

The Fernster

The Romulan Women, Part 2

So, do you think this is an easy challenge? Well, in that case, try your hand with this issue. Here are some of hottest Romulan women around! Guess who the actresses behind the mask are!



A Sela
B Tallera

C Sub Commander T'pol
D Senator Talaura

1 Robin Curtis
2 Shannon Cochan

3 Martha Hackett
4 Denise Crosby

Answers:

2, D = 3
A = 4, B = 1, C =



Marquise Boies



Colour the picture, and write a story for WARP 70! All entries by MonSFFolk under the age of 15 will be published! Comic strips are welcome, too! (Please be sure to include your name and age.)