

I M P U L S E

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

May / Mai 2025 (Vol. 28, No./N° 4)

NEXT CLUB MEETING: SATURDAY, MAY 10

1:00PM-5:00PM

Le Nouvel Hotel
1740 Boul. René-Lévesque O
(corner St-Mathieu)

“Salle Faubourg”
(South Tower)

**And Simultaneously on ZOOM
at: www.MonSFFA.ca**

MEETING THEME: During the course of today’s meeting, we will discuss our annual club field trip, upcoming in June! We welcome your suggestions as to which museum, exhibition, or interesting locale to visit this year.

MAY’S AGENDA INCLUDES:

- **THE CARTOONS OF TOM GAULD: SF, FANTASY, AND MORE!**—*We examine the art and humour of prolific cartoonist Tom Gauld, whose work covers a wide range: science, science fiction, fantasy, role-playing games, classic literature, politics, and more.*
- **SECTION 31 (GAME)!**—*How well do you know your sci-fi spaceships, aircraft, and vehicles? As a Section 31 agent, you will be required to identify these as potential targets, and this afternoon, we will test your ability to correctly do so!*

SUMMER EVENTS SCHEDULE

June 14 (Field Trip; Destination TBA)

July 13 (Sunday BBQ-in-the-Park)

August 16 (Fancraft Workshops)

As always, dates may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances

MonSFFA’S SUMMER EVENTS SCHEDULE

During the summer months, MonSFFA eschews its usual monthly presentation/discussion-oriented meetings in favour of events outside of that format.

The first such event, a group field trip, is this year set for Saturday, June 14. In recent years, the club has visited the Montreal Biodôme, the West-Island’s Montreal Aviation Museum (MAM), and Exporail, the Canadian Railway Museum in South-Shore St-Constant. We have also carpooled to Ottawa on several occasions in years past to visit some of Canada’s national museums.

Our field trips offer a chance for club members to visit fascinating museums and together enjoy both an entertaining and educational afternoon.

At our club meeting this month (May), we will select a 2025 field trip destination from the various suggestions put forth by MonSFFen. An announcement of our selection will follow on the club’s Web site, and in the next issue of *Impulse*.

As is our tradition, in July we’ll hold our annual Barbecue-in-the-Park, this year on Sunday, the 13th. MonSFFen, their families, and friends of the club are welcome to join us for an afternoon in the fresh air and sunshine, enjoying the company of good friends, along with delectable grilled hamburgers, hotdogs, assorted snackables, and refreshments.

We have been gathering, these past few years, in Parc Maisonneuve, adjacent the Olympic Stadium and Botanical Gardens.

And finally, on August 16, we plan to revive an old pre-pandemic tradition of the club’s, that of holding a number of “fancrafting” workshops, these running concurrently throughout the course of an afternoon get-together. Our Nouvel Hotel meeting hall will serve as the locale for these hands-on demonstrations of SF/F-themed crafting projects, which we have dubbed “fancrafting.”

In past workshops we have learned how to fold sci-fi origami, for instance, tried our collective hand at stop-motion animation, realistically painted and weathered dollar-store toy guns and plastic swords

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR ANNUAL MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP FEES?

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the club’s normal operation for more than three years! During this period, our regular in-person meetings were suspended, and the payment of annual fees were deferred. The club has now returned to collecting those annual membership fees, this in order to insure positive cash flow, and so cover the monthly costs of MonSFFA’s operations.

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

**MonSFFA, c/o
29 Harold
Kirkland, Québec, Canada
H9J 1R7**

MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

AMonSFF FORMULAIRE D'INSCRIPTION

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

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

ADDRESS/ADRESSE: _____

No. & Street/N° et Rue

Apt./App.

City/Ville

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

INTERESTS/INTERETS: _____

for use as cosplay props, and scratchbuilt model spaceships from assorted household odds and ends.

During this May's meeting, we will line up a few workshops to be hosted from among our own, and slot these in for the August "fancrafting" event.

APRIL MonSSSSSFFA MEETING!

"Snakes! Why did it have to be snakes?" Indiana Jones famously sighed with resignation and a hint of annoyance in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. As 2025 is a Year of the Snake in the Chinese calendar, Keith Braithwaite set out to answer Dr. Jones' question.

Noting that in the course of his research on this topic, Keith discovered a surprising number of snakes appearing in SF/F, from monster constrictors like those of the *Anaconda* film franchise to mythological creatures like Medusa to the extraterrestrial, snake-like beings of countless sci-fi space adventures.

He began by examining the presence of snakes in Chinese mythology, and in folklore the world over, spotlighting such supernatural entities as Bai Suzhen, China's legendary White Snake, Egyptian gods Wadjet and Apep, the Greek Scylla, Iranian/Turkish Shahmaran, Mesoamerican Quetzalcōātl, and the Norse "Midgard Serpent," Jörmungandr. India's Nagas—half-human, half-snake—were cited as the stars of several popular fantasy soap operas on the subcontinent, and also appear in a series of erotic SF/F books! The serpent's role in the story of Adam and Eve, it was noted, has tainted snakes in Western culture as dark and evil.

The recently discovered Titanoboa and other giant prehistoric snakes were briefly mentioned as providing horror writers and filmmakers with ready-made monsters.

Snakes were regularly the venomous dangers or deadly jungle goliaths of Victorian literature, featured in Penny-Dreadful adventures and gothic novels. Early SF/F luminaries from Jules Verne to Edgar Rice Burroughs to Robert E. Howard pitted giant snakes, sea-serpents, and a variety of snake-men against their heroes, like Jean-Marie Cabidoulin, Tarzan, Kull, and Conan. Keith explored comic book adaptations of these stories, as well as snake-ridden horror comics like *Hand of Fate*, *Witching Hour*, and *Nightmare*, plus various superhero adventures featuring such villains as DC's Copperhead and Marvel's Serpent Society.

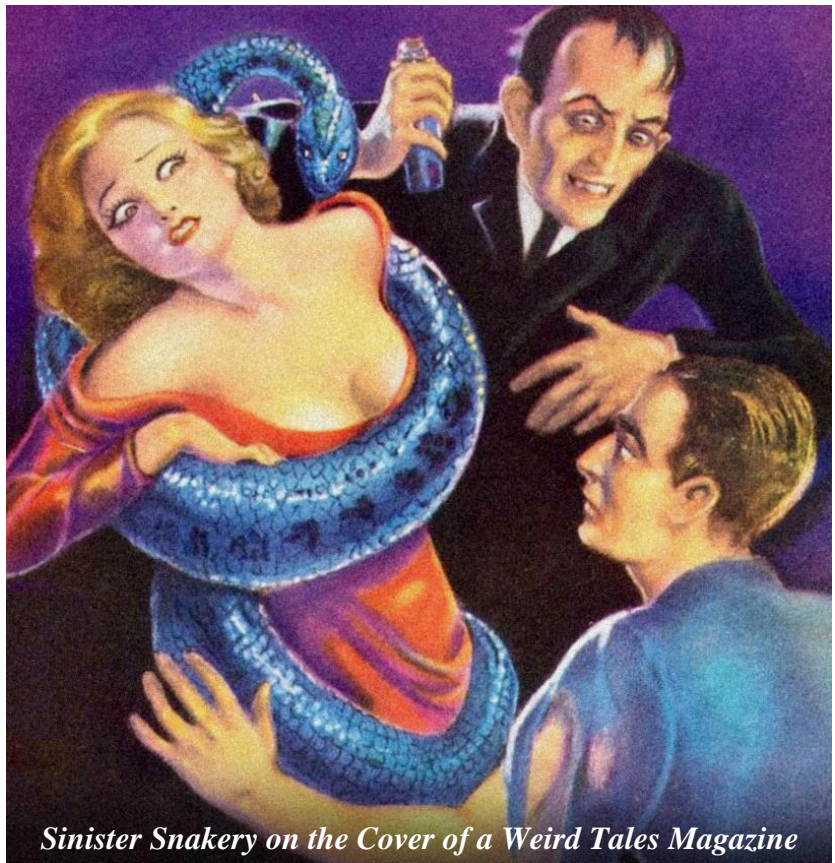
The Pulps of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s were replete with slithering menace, showcasing all manner of lethal serpents and supernatural snake-women!

Keith explored, too, the role of snakes in the men's adventure magazines of the 1950s and '60s, and the "Jungle Girl" sub-genre of comic books, starring such jungle queens as Rima, Rulah, Nyoka, and Sheena.

The through-line running over all of this snakery: sex and danger, which, Keith noted, sells books and magazines!

Snakes on the screen were covered, as well, from King Kong's spectacular battle with a giant serpent to the impossibly titanic snakes of modern Asian monster movies to mutant monstrosities like the Snakeman and Piranaconda!

Keith, as might be expected, was certain to highlight



Sinister Snakery on the Cover of a Weird Tales Magazine

Ray Harryhausen's cinematic contributions to the genre, screening clips of the stop-motion master's snake-creatures.

On television, meanwhile, Hercules and Xena fought various snake-demons, as did Buffy Summers and her friends!

Depictions of snakes, natural and supernatural, by such genre artists as Hannes Bok, Virgil Finlay, Hugh Rankin, Frank Frazetta, George Wilson, Norman Saunders, and Mort Künstler were featured throughout Keith's comprehensive presentation.

Among the books Keith mentioned: Vonda N. McIntyre's *Dreamsnake* (1978), featuring a healer in a post-apocalyptic world and her genetically-engineered snakes, one an extraterrestrial; David Eddings' *Belgariad* fantasy series (1982-1984), which includes in its cast Salmissra, Queen of Nyissa, who is turned into a snake by a sorceress—a sequel series followed, *The Malloreon* (1987-1991)—Bram Stoker's *Lair of the White Worm* (1911), featuring snake-woman Lady Arabella; Sarah Perry's *The Essex Serpent* (2016), a gothic romance surrounding a legendary English sea-serpent; *Lamia* (1980) and *Ludlow's Mill* (1981), both tapping into the ancient Greek myth of a demon that devours children, and assorted other 1970s-'80s horror paperbacks with titles like *Fangs*, *Venom*, *Rattlers*, and *The Accursed*.

Films highlighted include *Cobra Woman* (1944), *Cult of the Cobra* (1955), *The Snake God* (1970), *Night of the Cobra Woman* (1972), *Sssssss* (1973), *Killer Snakes* (1974), and *Hiss* (2010).

SEATTLE WORLDCON RESIGNATIONS OVER USE OF AI

SF/F fandom's newszine, *File 770*, reports that several members of the Seattle 2025 Worldcon committee have resigned in the wake of controversy over the con's use of ChatGPT to select programming participants. Given that Worldcon members are largely a community of writers and book fans, and that most are, at best, wary of ChatGPT, it's not surprising that the waste product has collided rather forcefully with the ventilation system upon news of this becoming public. While some are defending the con's choice and arguing that the issue has been blown out of all proportion, most are condemning the application of an AI machine at such a decidedly literary event.

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

Impulse is put together monthly by Keith Braithwaite on behalf of MonSFFA and is available on MonSFFA's Web site courtesy Cathy Palmer-Lister. Contact Keith in regards to this publication by any of the following means: In person at a MonSFFA meeting • E-mail: Keith1958@live.ca • Voice mail: 450-692-8831 • Via the Impulse mailing address: 125 Rue Léonard, Châteauguay, Québec, Canada, J6K 1N9

Impulse est préparé une fois par mois par Keith Braithwaite au nom de l'AMonSFF. Il est disponible sur le site internet du club grâce à Cathy Palmer-Lister. Pour toutes questions concernant cette publication, contactez Keith soit: En personne à une réunion du club • Courriel: Keith1958@live.ca • Boîte vocale: 450-692-8831 • Par la poste à l'adresse de Impulse: 125 Rue Léonard, Châteauguay, Québec, Canada, J6K 1N9