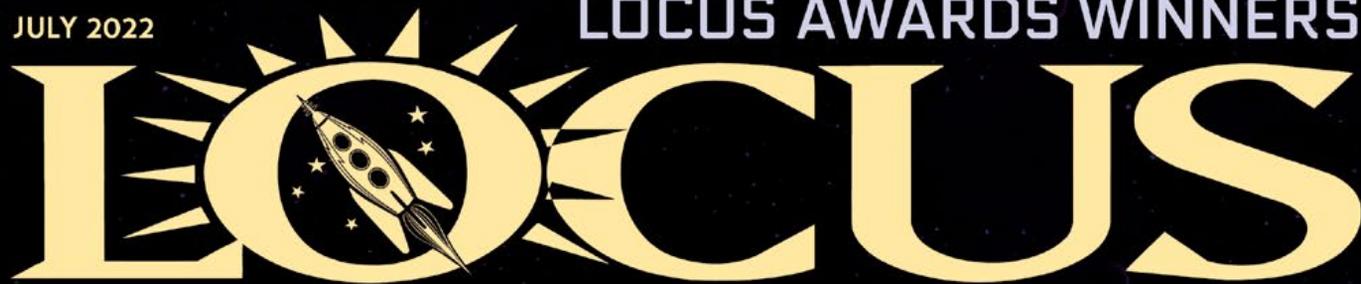


JULY 2022

LOCUS AWARDS WINNERS

LOCUS



THE MAGAZINE OF THE SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY FIELD

ISSUE 738 · VOL. 89 NO. 1 · \$8.99

DANIEL ABRAHAM THE ASPECTS OF EPIC

AUREALIS
AWARDS

WISCON 45

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55th Year of Publication • 30-Time Hugo Winner
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We Are in Trouble

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All opinions expressed by commentators and interviewees are solely their opinions and do not reflect the opinions of *Locus*.

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CORRECTIONS

We mistitled Laura Anne Gilman's forthcoming novel **Uncanny Times** (Saga 10/22) as **Huntsmen** in our June 2022 Forthcoming Books listing.

In the same issue we mistakenly said the winner of the Final Frame film competition at Stokercon was **Becoming Emma Braintree**; in fact the winner was **Inheritance**, written and directed by Annalise Lockhart.

In our May 2022 issue, in Paula Guran's short fiction column, we misspelled author Ray Nayler's surname as "Naylor." We regret these errors.

In the February 2022 issue we said **Accelerate** by Brendan Byrne was self-published; it was actually produced by Temporary Culture in an edition of 50 copies distributed to friends of the author and publisher in advance of the ebook from NeoText. The copyright date is 2020, but publication was delayed to 2021.

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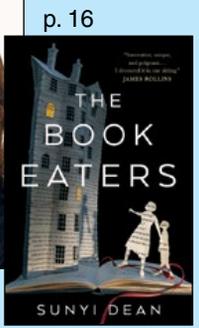
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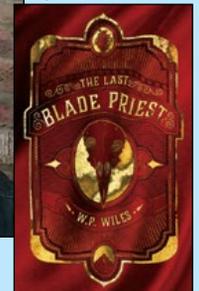
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www.locusmag.com

In July, *Locus Online* features weekly listings of notable new books; periodic listings of periodicals; and "Blinks" to online reviews, articles, and genre e-publications. In addition the site posts breaking news posted by the *Locus* staff; columns, sample reviews, and excerpted interviews from the Magazine; and periodic Roundtable posts from Alvaro Zinos-Amaro.

2022 LOCUS AWARDS WINNERS

Best SF Novel

A Desolation Called Peace,
Arkady Martine (Tor; Tor UK)

Best Fantasy Novel

Jade Legacy,
Fonda Lee (Orbit US; Orbit UK)

Best Horror Novel

My Heart Is a Chainsaw,
Stephen Graham Jones (Saga; Titan)

Best First Novel

A Master of Djinn,
P. Djèlí Clark (Tordotcom; Orbit UK)

Best Young Adult Book

Victories Greater Than Death,
Charlie Jane Anders (Tor Teen; Titan)

Best Novella

Fugitive Telemetry,
Martha Wells (Tordotcom)

Best Novelette

“That Story Isn’t the Story”,
John Wiswell (*Uncanny* 11-12/21)

Best Short Story

“Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather”,
Sarah Pinsker (*Uncanny* 3-4/21)

Best Anthology

**We’re Here: The Best Queer
Speculative Fiction 2020**,
C.L. Clark & Charles Payseur, eds.
(Neon Hemlock)

Best Collection

Even Greater Mistakes,
Charlie Jane Anders (Tor; Titan)

Best Non-Fiction Book

**Dangerous Visions and New Worlds:
Radical Science Fiction, 1950–1985**,
Andrew Nette & Iain McIntyre, eds. (PM)

Best Art Book

**The Art of Neil Gaiman & Charles
Vess’s Stardust**, Charles Vess (Titan)

Best Artist

Charles Vess

Best Editor

Ellen Datlow

Best Magazine

Tor.com

Best Book Publisher

Tor

LOCUS POLL 2022

The 2022 Locus Poll counted 1,564 voters with valid ballots, down from 1,746 last year. Most ballots were received online, with only three coming by mail, down from ten last year. We got poll votes from 301 subscribers, up from 282 last year; they made up 19% of respondents, up from 16% last year.

Results were tabulated using our online voting system put together by Daryl Gregory, with *Locus* staffers entering votes from mail-in ballots. This system makes results available almost as soon as voting closes, though a certain amount of manual checking is done. We double the point value of subscriber votes; this year it made a difference in the winners in four categories: Fantasy Novel, Novelette, Short Story, and Non-Fiction.

We count the votes using the Carr system, devised by the late Terry Carr. A first-place vote gets eight points, a second-place vote gets seven, and so on down to fifth place. This gives equal weight to making the ballot and to the placement on it; a first-place vote is worth twice as much as a fifth-place vote, not five times as much. Nominees need at least 20 votes to make

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CONGRATULATIONS
2022
LOCUS AWARDS
WINNERS
& FINALISTS!

Fireproof Atwood Auction



Margaret Atwood (2022)

Sotheby's auctioned off a unique copy of Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** specially made of fireproof materials, raising \$130,000 for PEN America's efforts to oppose book bans.

To raise awareness about the proliferating book banning and educational gag orders in American schools nationwide, and to raise money to support PEN America's crucial work to counter this national crisis of censorship, Margaret Atwood and Penguin Random House have partnered with the creative agency Rethink to make **The Unburnable Book**, a fireproof edition of Atwood's prescient—and often banned—book **The Handmaid's Tale**, featuring the iconic Handmaid imagery by designer Noma Bar. This single-copy special edition of **The Handmaid's Tale** was produced in Toronto by the graphic arts specialty and bookbinding atelier The Gas Company Inc. The Unburnable Book was manufactured by print-and-bindery master craftsman Jeremy Martin. Fireproof materials and processes were researched and tested by Doug Laxdal.

For more: <www.sothebys.com/en/buy/auction/2022/the-unburnable-book/margaret-atwood-the-unburnable-book>. ■

Aurealis Awards Winners

The 2021 Aurealis Awards winners, recognizing the best in Australian speculative fiction, have been announced.

Best Science Fiction Novel: **Waking Romeo**, Kathryn Barker (Allen & Unwin).

Best Science Fiction Novella: "Preserved in Amber", Samantha Murray (*Clarkesworld* 7/21).

Best Science Fiction Short Story: "Relict: (noun) A Widow; a Thing Remaining from the Past", Alison Goodman (**Relics, Wrecks & Ruins**).

Best Fantasy Novel: **Dark Rise**, C.S. Pacat (Allen & Unwin).

Best Fantasy Novella: **Bones of the Sea**, Amy Laurens (Inkprint Press).

Best Fantasy Short Story: "So-called Bin Chicken", E.J. Delaney (*Curiouser Magazine* #2).

Best Horror Novel: **Holly and the Nobodies**, Ben Pienaar (Hellbound).

Best Horror Novella: "All The Long Way Under", Alf Simpson (**Cthulhu Deep Down Under Volume 3**).

Best Horror Short Story: "Don't Look!", Lisa Fuller (**Hometown Haunts: #LoveOzYA Horror Tales**).

Best Young Adult Novel: **Waking Romeo**, Kathryn Barker (Allen & Unwin).

Best Young Adult Short Story: "Don't Look!", Lisa Fuller (**Hometown Haunts: #LoveOzYA Horror Tales**).

Best Children's Fiction: **Dragon Skin**, Karen Foxlee (Allen & Unwin).

Best Collection: **The Gulp**, Alan Baxter (self-published).

Best Anthology: **Relics, Wrecks & Ruins**, Aiki Flinhardt, ed. (CAT).

Best Graphic Novel/Illustrated Work: **The Curiosities**, Zana Fraillon & Phil Lesnie (Hachette Australia).

Sara Douglass Book Series Award: **Blood and Gold: Crown of Rowan** (2014); **Daughters of the Storm** (2014); **Sisters of the Fire** (2016); **Queens of the Sea** (2019), Kim Wilkins (HarperCollins).

Convenor's Award for Excellence: **Dangerous Visions and New Worlds: Radical Science Fiction, 1950–1985**, Andrew Nette & Iain McIntyre, eds. (PM)

For more: <aurealisawards.org/2022/05/28/1204>. ■

Fletcher to Leave Jo Fletcher Books

Veteran editor Jo Fletcher has announced that she will leave Jo Fletcher Books, the imprint she founded 11 years ago at UK publisher Quercus, on September 30th, 2022. She will continue to edit some of her authors for the imprint, and Jo Fletcher Books will seek to fill a senior commissioning editor role in order to continue the imprint. They plan to keep the Jo Fletcher name.

Fletcher told *Locus*, "I'm tremendously sorry not to be able to continue at Jo Fletcher

Books – it's entirely thanks to my amazing authors and artists and their agents that I've been able to build such a special imprint, and I know they'll go on to do amazing things. As for me, well, the world turns and I'll be waiting with interest to see what comes next." ■



Jo Fletcher (2014)

UTA Buys Curtis Brown UK

United Talent Agency announced the acquisition of UK literary agency Curtis Brown Group. A UTA statement says Curtis Brown is "the first prominent UK literary and talent representation group to join with a major global talent agency."



and to respond to the demands of an increasingly globalised world.

Founded in 1899, Curtis Brown clients include Haruki Murakami, Margaret Atwood, and Matt Haig,

as well as the literary estates of Ian Fleming and John le Carré. For more: <www.unitedtalent.com/news/united-talent-agency-acquire-curtis-brown-group-europes-top-literary-talent-agency>. ■

For UTA, the deal significantly expands its global footprint in one of the world's most important and thriving creative markets. Under the terms of the deal London-based Curtis Brown Group, founded in 1899, will continue to operate under its current name and highly regarded management, including CEO Jonny Geller. This structure will allow both Curtis Brown Group and UTA to continue their fruitful and longstanding relationships with other agency partners in the UK and US.

Geller said of the deal:

UTA's deep understanding of the European market combined with their culture of collaboration and innovation offers our company and our clients many great opportunities. This partnership will allow Curtis Brown to grow

Ladies of Horror Fiction Nominees

Nominees for the 2021 Ladies of Horror Fiction Awards have been announced.

Best Novel: **The Queen of the Cicadas**, V. Castro (Flame Tree); **Cackle**, Rachel Harrison (Berkley); **Good Neighbors**, Sarah Langan (Atria); **The Burning Girls**, C.J. Tudor (Ballantine); **The Last House on Needless** [▶ p. 56](#)

Costa Book Awards End

The Costa Book Awards are ending:

After 50 years of celebrating some of the most enjoyable books written by hugely talented authors from across the UK and Ireland, Costa Coffee has taken the difficult decision to end the Costa Book Awards.

The prizes presented in February 2022, for works from 2021, are the last that will be given. The Awards were known as the Whitbread Book Awards from their founding in 1971 to 2005,



when Costa Coffee became the sponsor.

The awards were presented annually to books "by writers resident in the UK and Ireland" in five categories. Each category winner received £5,000, with an additional £30,000 "book of the year" award given for an overall winner. While not a genre award, the winner and nominee lists often included speculative work. For more: <www.costa.co.uk/behind-the-beans/costa-book-awards/welcome>. ■

THE DATA FILE

Balen Wins Carnegie Medal • October, October by Katya Balen, illustrated by Angela Harding (Bloomsbury), won the 2022 Carnegie Medal for best children's book. Balen's previous work includes 2021 fantasy **Maggie and the Moonbird** (Bloomsbury).

The awards are presented by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), with winners announced during a ceremony at the British Library in London.

Balen will receive £500 worth of books to donate to local libraries, a golden medal, and the £5,000 Colin Mears Award cash prize. For more: <carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/2022-yoto-carnegie-greenaway-winners-announced>.

Glukhovsky on Russia's Wanted List • Popular Russian SF author Dmitry Glukhovsky has been added to a wanted list by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, according to multiple news organizations, for social media statements decrying the war. Russian outlet *Pravda* said, "The writer is charged with committing a crime under Article 280.3 ('Public actions aimed at discrediting the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation') of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation." The law carries sentences up to 15 years for those convicted of intentionally spreading "false" news about the Russian military.

According to *Reuters*, Glukhovsky stands by his social media statements: "I am ready to repeat everything said there: 'Stop the war! Admit that this is a war against an entire nation and stop it!'" For more: <www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-adds-popular-sci-fi-writer-its-wanted-list-2022-06-07>.

SFWA Data Breach • SFWA announced a data breach on May 21, 2022:

We recently became aware that someone using SFWA membership credentials logged into our members-only directory and ran a specialized script to scrape the directory of any member-facing data. This would have been anything you chose to share with your fellow SFWA members including email, telephone, websites, social media accounts, and mailing addresses in your member profile. Members who opted out of sharing information in the directory were not affected.

The individual who scraped these profiles has since released them publicly. Upon becoming aware of this release, we immediately removed all member access to the directory.

No financial data, confidential, or legal information was scraped from the directory as those have always been set to "no access" by our admins or held in entirely different places within our infrastructure.

SFWA says the Board of directors "has launched an investigation and will be working with multiple agencies to find which member login was used and when. We have narrowed down the dates to a specific range and will be forwarding that on to the appropriate authorities." They have now "removed access to the SFWA membership directory entirely and are looking at a better solution to help facilitate communication between members."

SFWA advises that if members "receive any unsolicited or harassing text messages, emails, phone calls, website comments, or physical mail, please forward any information you are willing and able to share about these, including screenshots of text or social media messages, pictures or scans of physical mail, to <directory@sfgwa.org> as these may assist us in our investigation."

They further recommend that members "do not engage with anyone questionable who tries to interact with you via social media or sends you unsolicited communications. Mute and block these senders without responding. If unsolicited communications escalate further, we recommend contacting your local authorities to create a record of the harassment." They also suggest changing passwords frequently.

They conclude by saying, "We take your privacy very seriously here at SFWA and realize that once useful tools such as our membership directory need to be reevaluated in light of the ongoing struggle to control our own personal data on the internet." For questions or concerns, address <directory@sfgwa.org>.

Hunter Apologizes for Inappropriate Behavior • Author Faith Hunter posted an apology on June 15, 2022 regarding her behavior at JordanCon 2022, held Apr 22-24, 2022 in Atlanta GA, where she was guest of honor. Hunter wrote,

First, I want to say that I'm very sorry to the people I offended and hurt at JordanCon 2022. I have a black hole in my memory for that night, but what little I recalled was indeed unacceptable. When one of the people at my table finally got through to me, I left the table and went to find my doctor, who was also attending the con. Dr. Leann Rettell sat with me for over two hours. She stated at the time that she believed I had a reaction with my meds after a drink, and I am still under her care. Regardless of contributing factors, "this was my fault".

The next day, Sunday, I self-reported what little I recalled of that night. I personally wrote apology letters to the few people I remembered seeing. I removed myself from the con permanently, and cancelled all my con appearances for the year. I issued (on May 23) a broadband apology to anyone I insulted or abused.

Again, I truly offer my humblest apologies. There is no place for my actions at any con. I have no more to say publicly.

Her statement is available here: <www.facebook.com/faith.hunter/posts/10228274225391849>. The apology follows a report by Richard Fife posted on June 14, 2022, "Faith Hunter Assaulted Me", in which he recounts how an inebriated Hunter "reached out and touched my hat, hair, beard, and coat" and said, "I didn't touch anywhere that was wrong, so nobody can't say anything."

Those words made me feel uneasy in the moment. I didn't address it, though, and looking back, I'm not even sure what I could have or would have done. As I sat at the table, Faith had several other off-putting moments with people whose story it is not mine to publicly share. After she left, I then learned of even more she had done, and the next few hours were spent processing and

comforting those she had hurt.

I also came to look at her interaction with me in a very new light, of one where she felt entitled to touch me regardless of my consent and had decided she needed to make that clear, especially since I was not the only person that evening where she had ignored explicit pleas for her to not touch them.

His complete statement is available here: <richardfife.com/2022/06/faith-hunter-assaulted-me>.

Patterson Apologizes for Racism Comments • James Patterson has posted an apology for comments he recently made in a *Times* interview:

I apologize for saying white male writers having trouble finding work is a form of racism. I absolutely do not believe that racism is practiced against white writers. Please know that I strongly support a diversity of voices being heard – in literature, in Hollywood, everywhere.

His statement is here: <www.facebook.com/JamesPatterson/posts/10159905513738468>.

The *Times* article, titled "James Patterson: white male writers are victims of 'racism'" was meant to promote the author's new memoir, but drew more attention online for this section:

Today, though, he worries that it is hard for white men to get writing gigs in film, theatre, TV or publishing.

The problem is "just another form of racism. What's that all about?" he muses. "Can you get a job? Yes. Is it harder? Yes. It's even harder for older writers. You don't meet many 52-year-old white males."

According to *Publishers Weekly*, Patterson, 75, also criticized the staff at his publisher Little, Brown for walking out over the company's acquisition of a book by controversial filmmaker Woody Allen, saying, "I hated that.... He has the right to tell his own story." He went on to note that Stephen King was insufficiently grateful after Patterson scrapped plans for a book called **The Murder of Stephen King**: "Nobody ever sent a note to say thanks. I still enjoy King's scary novels. The man can tell a story. But I guess he has trouble with thank-you notes."

Lackey Apologizes for Panel Comment Mercedes Lackey posted the following apology for events at the SFWA Nebula Conference on her Tumblr site on May 24, 2022:

I wish to Apologize

On a panel at the 2022 Nebulas, I had the chance to celebrate authors who wrote positive gay characters long before me.

Chip Delany is obviously a major player in that game. Because there are two Samuel Delanys – there's one from Texas – I wanted to make sure people got hold of the right one. So, in my excitement, I got caught in a mental/verbal stumble between "black" and "person of color," and as best I can remember, what came stuttering out was something like "spcolored."

I'm not an amazing speaker. I stammer, I freeze up, & I get things wrong. I am sorry that I bungled a modern term while bringing attention to an amazing black creator.

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Awards

QUENTIN BLAKE, **SALMAN RUSHDIE**, and **MARINA WARNER** all received the High Award Companion of Honour distinction in the Queen's Birthday Honours. **IAN RANKIN** received the Knights Bachelor distinction, while **JOANNE HARRIS** and **MICHAEL FOREMAN** received the Officer of the Order of the British Empire distinction for services to literature. **JAMES DAUNT**, head of Waterstones in the UK and CEO of Barnes & Noble in the US, received the Commander of the Order of the British Empire distinction for services to publishing.

CADWELL TURNBULL's **No Gods, No Monsters** (Blackstone) won a Lambda Literary Award in the LGBTQ Speculative Fiction category. The "Lammys" celebrate "the best lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender books." **KALYNN BAYRON** won the \$3,000 Randall Kenan Prize for Black LGBTQ Fiction, given by the Lambda Literary Foundation to "a Black LGBTQ writer whose fiction explores themes of Black LGBTQ life, culture, and/or history."

CHRIS HADFIELD's SF thriller **The Apollo Murders** (Mulholland)

is on the six-title shortlist for the £10,000 Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize in the Best Published Novel category. The winner will be announced September 22, 2022.

RACHEL CORDASCO received the third annual Space Cowboy Award, given for "support and excellence in the field of Science Fiction." The award is administered by science fiction bookstore Space Cowboy Books, based in Joshua Tree CA.

IDZA LUHUMYO's SF story "Five Years Next Sunday" (**Disruption: New Short Fiction from Africa**) is one of five finalists for the 2022 AKO Caine Prize for African Writing. The winner will be announced at a ceremony to be

held in London on July 18, 2022.

Genre historian **MALLORY O'MEARA's** **Girlly Drinks: A World History of Women and Alcohol** (Hanover Square) won a 2022 James Beard Media Award, honoring "food authors, broadcast producers, hosts, journalists, podcasters, and social media content creators."

Books Sold

PETER S. BEAGLE sold an updated version of classic fantasy **The Last Unicorn**, featuring "the author's restored text" and an introduction by **PATRICK ROTHFUSS**, to Ace Books. Ace will also publish related collection **The Way Home**, including Hugo and Nebula Award-winning novella "Two Hearts" and a new sequel, "Sooz".

SAMUEL R. DELANY's new novel **This Short Day of Frost and Sun** is being serialized in *The Georgia Review*, starting in the Summer 2022 issue.

Delany explained on Facebook, "It might take them as much as three or four years to finish up the whole thing. I'm fiddling with it as I feed them chapters."

NALO HOPKINSON's fantasy novel **Blackheart Man** sold to Joe Monti at Saga Press via Donald Maass of the Donald Maass Literary Agency. Hopkinson, **STEPHEN R. BISSETTE**, and **JOHN JENNINGS** sold alternate history horror graphic novel **Night Comes Walking** to Abrams via Anjali Singh and Donald Maass.

BETH CATO sold "swashbuckling fantasy adventure" **A Thousand Recipes for Revenge** and a sequel to Adrienne Procaccini at 47North via Rebecca Strauss of DeFiore and Company.

DAVID D. LEVINE sold SF novel **The Kuiper Belt Job** to Lezli Robyn at Caezik SF & Fantasy via Paul Lucas of Janklow & Nesbit.

CHLOE NEILL sold the fifth book in the Heirs of Chicagoland series to Jessica Wade at Berkley via Lucienne Diver of The Knight Agency.

QUAN BARRY sold collection **Daily at the Gate of the Temple Which Is Called Beautiful: Stories** and literary horror **My God Is Godly: A Novel** to Deborah Garrison at Pantheon via Jennifer Lyons of Jennifer Lyons Literary Agency.

NICOLE GLOVER sold **The Improvisers** and **The Starseekers**, latest in the Murder and Magic series, to Jaime Levine at Voyager via Jennie Goloboy of Donald Maass Literary Agency.

GEETANJALI SHREE's epic fantasy set in India and Pakistan, **Tomb of Sand**, translated by Daisy Rockwell, sold to Gretchen Schmid at Harper Via via Julia Sanches at Tilted Axis Press.

ARIEL KAPLAN's **The Pomegranate Gate**, inspired by Jewish folklore, and two more books went to Sarah Guan at Erewhon via Hannah Bowman of Liza Dawson Associates. Amy Borsuk acquired UK rights for Solaris.

MEREDITH MOORING's queer science fantasy **Redsight** went to Amy Borsuk at Solaris via Ernie Chiara of Fuse Literary.

CAIT CORRAIN's **Crown of Starlight**, "an irreverent, snarky, sexy and queer reimagining of the myth of Ariadne and Dionysus," and a second book went to Anne Groell at Del Rey and Amanda Ferreira at Random House Canada via Rebecca Podos of Rees Literary Agency.

AMANDA FOODY's SF novel **The Whisper Between Worlds** and two more books sold to Brit Hvide at Orbit via Whitney Ross of Irene Goodman Agency.

A.K. MULFORD's self-published five-book queer fantasy romance series **The Five Crowns of Okri** went to David Pomerico at Voyager, along with a new fantasy romance trilogy, **The Golden Court** series, beginning with **A River of Golden Bones**, in a seven-figure deal via Jessica Watterson of Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency. UK Rights sold to Natasha Bardon at Voyager UK.

SIM KERN's alternate history **The Free People's Village** sold to Irene Vazquez at Levine Querido via Rebecca Podos of Rees Literary Agency.

REBECCA ROWLAND sold

collection **White Trash & Recycled Nightmares**, with "tales of cosmic, creature, and quiet horror," to Shawn Macomber at Stygian Sky Media.



Nalo Hopkinson (2019)

ANNA BILLER sold **Bluebeard's Castle**, inspired by the story of Bluebeard and "novels such as **Rebecca**, **Dracula**, and **Jane Eyre**," to Cian McCourt at Verso Fiction.

Mexican author **DANIEL SALDANA PARIS** sold post-apocalyptic novel **The Dance and the Fire**, translated by Christina MacSweeney, to Lizzie Davis at Coffee House Press via Maria Lynch and Gabriela Elena Castellotti of Casanovas & Lynch Agency.

PRESTON FASSEL sold horror novel **Beasts of 42nd Street** to Kevin Lucia at Cemetery Dance.

J.L. KIEFER's survival horror novel **That Wretched Valley** went to Rebecca Gyllenhaal at Quirk Books via Lane Heymont of The Tobias Literary Agency.

JOHN MANTOOTH sold **Holy Ghost Road** to Kevin Lucia at Cemetery Dance via Alec Shane of Writers House.

KRAZEKODE sold SF **The 3rd Law of Cultivation: Qi = Mc^2**, and four more books to Rhett Bruno at Aethon.

LINDY RYAN's horror novel **Bless Your Heart** – "Grady Hendrix meets Charlaine Harris" – and a second title sold to Alexandra Sehlster at Minotaur in a pre-empt via Italia Gandolfo of Gandolfo Helin and Fountain Literary Management.

BRAD ABDUL's humorous fantasy **The Devil's Advisor** sold to Don D'Auria at Flame Tree Press via Maria Napolitano of Bookcase Literary Agency.

J.M. DONELLAN sold speculative thriller **Lenore's Last Funeral** and two more books to Shawn Reilly Simmons at Level Best via Cindy Bullard of Birch Literary.

MOUSSA OULD EBNOU's SF novel **Barzakh: The Land In-Between**, translated by Marybeth Timmermann, sold to Kenechi Uzor at Iskanchi Press.

SHEILA CONNOLLY sold SF novel **Black Sails to Sunward** and two more books to Cate Pearce at Hansen. Elizabeth Jeannel will edit.



Cadwell Turnbull (2019)

EMILY MCINTIRE sold *Hooked, Scarred, and Wretched* in the Never After series to Christa Desir at Bloom Books in a pre-empt.

WREN MICHAELS sold *Blood and Thunder*, second in the Thunderbird Brotherhood series, to Lisa Green at Mystic Owl.

ANGELA SYLVAINE's horror novel *Frost Bite* sold to Rob Carroll at Dark Matter Ink.

J.E. MCDONALD's fantasy *Caged Fury* went to Heather McCorkle at Mystic Owl.

MELISSA KARIBIAN's *A Chorus of Ashes and Shadows*, the sequel to *A Song of Silver and Gold*, went to Elizabeth Jeannel at Hansen, for publication in June 2023.

JOSHUA BADER sold fantasy novel *Discord* to Yelena Casale at City Owl Press.

E.M. ANDERSON's fantasy novel *The Remarkable Retirement of Edna Fisher* sold to Cate Pearce at Hansen.

CAMRI KOHLER's fantasies *Peachy, Pared, and Buried* sold to Brittany Weisrock at Lake Country Press.

RENEE LAKE's horror novel *The Infested* sold to Cate Pearce at Hansen. Elizabeth Jeannel will edit.

ADRIAN VAN YOUNG's collection *Midnight Self* sold to Diane Goettel at Black Lawrence Press.

NATALIA HERNANDEZ sold fantasy *The Name-Bearer* to Jessica Arrieta at Nightshade Publishing.

CHAD SMITH's "futuristic urban fantasy" *Killer App* sold to Ally Robertson at the Wild Rose Press.

JOHN MAULDIN sold fantasy *The Orb* to Valerie Mathews at the Wild Rose Press.

TERRY PERSUN's *Biomass: Sky People* went to Valerie Mathews at The Wild Rose Press.

RUTH FOX sold *New Eden*, sequel to *Under the Heavens*, to Sue Arroyo at CamCat Books. Elana Gibson will edit.

KATRINA KWAN's fantasy *The Last Dragon of the East* went to Brittany Weisrock at Lake Country Press.

BEKA WESTRUP's *Song of Dark Tides* sold to Brittany Weisrock at Lake Country Press.

MARIA MEDINA's YA fantasy *Mistress of Bones* and a second title sold to Mara Delgado-Sanchez

at Wednesday Books at auction via Dorian Maffei of Kimberley Cameron & Associates.

MADELEINE ROUX's YA fantasy *Now We Hunt the Doe* and a second book went to Alyssa Miele at Quill Tree via Kate McKean of Howard Morhaim Literary Agency. Roux's tie-in fantasy *Critical Role: The Mighty Nein – The Nine Eyes of Lucien* sold to Sarah Peed at Del Rey.

AXIE OH's YA fantasy duology *The Floating World*, described as "Final Fantasy meets Miyazaki's *Castle in the Sky*," sold to Emily Settle at Feiwel and Friends via Patricia Nelson of Marsal Lyon Literary Agency.

K Y L I E SCHACHTE sold queer pirate fantasy *Hearts of Gold* to Samantha Gentry at Little, Brown Children's via Margaret Sutherland Brown of Folio Literary Management.

KAMILAH COLE's YA fantasy *So Let Them Burn* – a "Jamaican Joan of Arc" inspired by Zendaya's 2018 Met Gala look – and a second title sold

to Alexandra Hightower at Little, Brown Children's via Emily Forney of BookEnds.

REBEKAH BERGMAN sold YA SF novel *The Museum of Human History* to Masie Cochran at Tin House Books at auction for via Alexa Stark of Writers House.

RACHEL MOORE's paranormal romantic comedy YA *The Book of Fades* and a second title sold to Sara Schonfeld at Katherine Tegen Books for six figures via Claire Friedman of Inkwell Management.

M.K. LOBB sold YA fantasy *Disciples of Chaos*, sequel to *Seven Faceless Saints*, to Nikki Garcia at Little, Brown Children's via Claire Friedman of Inkwell Management.

DAVID ARNOLD's YA fantasy romance *I Loved You in Another Life* went to Dana Leydig at Viking Children's via Daniel Lazar of Writers House.

VANESSA LE sold YA fantasy

The Last Bloodcarver and another book to Emilia Sowersby and Emily Feinberg at Roaring Brook Press via Ramona Pina of BookEnds.

CHRISTOPHER HARTLAND's queer YA fantasy *Against the Stars* sold to Joshua Dean Perry at Tiny Ghost Press.

LAUREL THOMAS sold YA fantasy *When Stars Brush Earth* to Ally Robertson at the Wild Rose Press.

SCOTT ALEXANDER HOWARD's literary fantasy debut *The Other Valley* and a second title sold to Loan Le at Atria in a pre-empt via Roz Foster at Frances Goldin Literary Agency. Canadian rights sold to Nita Pronovost, Janie Yoon, and Sarah St. Pierre at Simon & Schuster Canada.

New writer **KATE ROBB**'s alternate-reality rom-com *The Love Cleanse* and a second book sold to Emma Caruso at Dial Press via Bibi Lewis at Ethan Ellenberg Agency.

C H R I S T I N E GRILLO's debut *Hestia Strikes a Match*, set in "an America

that's a worse-but-not-worst case scenario," sold to Jenna Johnson at Farrar, Straus, Giroux in a pre-empt via Naomi Eisenbeiss of Inkwell Management.

CARISSA ORLANDO sold first novel *The September House*, "about a woman who is determined to stay in her dream home even after it becomes a haunted nightmare," and a second book to Jessica Wade at Berkley in a pre-empt via Sharon Bowers and Katherine Odom-Tomchin of Folio Literary Management.

MARK CECIL's first novel *Bunyan*, about Paul Bunyan and John Henry "on an epic adventure in a mythic Gilded Age America," sold to Anna Kaufman at Anchor via Tina Pohlman of Ross Yoon Agency.

BETHANY JACOBS sold debut space opera *These Burning Stars* and two more titles to Priyanka Krishnan at Orbit via Bridget Smith of JABberwocky Literary

Agency.

ALEX WOODROE's debut "horror-fantasy" *Whisperwood* sold to Don D'Auria at Flame Tree Press.

PATRICK BARB's first collection *Pre-Approved for Haunting* went to Ryan Smernoff at Keylight.

KELSEY BLODGET, writing as **KELSEY JAMES**, sold debut historical horror *The Woman in the Castello* and two more books to John Scognamiglio at John Scognamiglio Books via Danielle Egan-Miller of Browne & Miller Literary Associates.

VAN ESSLER's first novel *The Sublime Spectacle*, "a mélange of steampunk and gothic horror," went to Jennifer Barnes at Dog Star Books. Heidi Ruby Miller will edit.

New writer **LEIGH HEASLEY** sold time-travel novel *Kairos* to Fiona Simpson at W by Wattpad via Ashleigh Gardner of Wattpad WEBTOON Studios.

ANN FOX's debut fantasy *The Blood Hours* sold to Brittany Weisrock at Lake Country Press.

ERIN MAINORD's debut fantasy *The Blood That Binds Us* and two more books sold to Brittany Weisrock at Lake Country Press.

First novelist **RACHEL GREENWOOD**'s vampire novel *Like Salt and Ash* sold to Brittany Weisrock at Lake Country Press.

SOFIA SAMATAR sold SF novella *The Practice, the Horizon, and the Chain* to Emily Goldman at TorDotcom via Sally Harding of CookeMcDermid. *The White Mosque: A Memoir* resold to Hurst in the UK at auction via Rachel Clements of Abner Stein on behalf of Marleen Seegers of 2 Sea Agency for US publisher Catapult.

MARISCA PICHETTE's poetry collection *Rivers in Your Skin, Sirens in Your Hair* sold to Justine Norton-Kertson at Android. J.D. Harlock will edit.

Books Resold

ALEXENE FAROL FOLLMUTH, writing as **OLIVIE BLAKE**, sold self-published book *Alone with You in the Ether* to Lindsey Hall at Tor via Amelia Appel at TriadaUS Literary Agency. Bella Pagan at Tor UK bought UK rights via Chris Scheina at Macmillan. Blake also sold three new books, and resold the self-published *Masters of Death, One for My Enemy*, and *Twelfth Knight*.

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Sofia Samatar (2013)

DANIEL ABRAHAM

THE ASPECTS OF EPIC



Daniel James Abraham was born November 14, 1969 in Albuquerque NM and attended University of New Mexico, where he earned a degree in biology. After graduating in 1996, he spent a few months in New York working at a bookstore, then returned to New Mexico and spent ten years in tech support. He now writes full time.

He is probably best known as half of “James S.A. Corey,” the pseudonym for his collaborations with Ty Franck. (The first and last name are Abraham’s and Franck’s middle names, respectively, and the middle initials are those of Abraham’s daughter.) They began their SF series the Expanse with **Leviathan Wakes** in 2011, and the ninth and final novel, **Leviathan Falls**, was published this year. The Expanse won the Hugo Award for Best Series in 2019, and the popular television adaptation recently concluded after six seasons. The two are currently collaborating on a new space opera series.

Abraham’s first story was “Mixing Rebecca” in 1996, followed by sales to various magazines and anthologies. Notable stories include Nebula Award finalist and International Horror Guild Award winner “Flat Diane” (2004) and World Fantasy and Hugo Award finalist “The Cambist and Lord Iron: A Fairytale of Economics” (2007). Some of his short work has been collected

in **Leviathan Wept and Other Stories** (2010). Novella “Shadow Twin” (2004), written with George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois, formed the basis for their collaborative novel **Hunter’s Run** (2008).

Abraham’s debut novel was **A Shadow in Summer** (2006), first in the Long Price fantasy quartet, which also includes **A Betrayal in Winter** (2007), **An Autumn War** (2008), and **The Price of Spring** (2009). The Dagger and the Coin series is **The Dragon’s Path** (2011), **The King’s Blood** (2012), and **The Tyrant’s Law** (2013), **The Widow’s House** (2014), and **The Spider’s War** (2016). As M.L.N. Hanover, he wrote the Black Sun’s Daughter series: **Unclean Spirits** (2008), **Darker Angels** (2009), **Vicious Grace** (2010), **Killing Rites** (2011), and the **Graveyard Child** (2013). He wrote six-issue comic book miniseries George R.R. Martin’s **Wild Cards: The Hard Call** (2008) and the comic adaptations of Martin’s **Skin Trade**, **Fevre Dream** and **A Game of Thrones**.

His new solo series, the unconventional epic fantasy Kithmar trilogy, recently launched with **Age of Ash** (2022).

Abraham lives in Albuquerque with wife Katherine Abraham (married 2002) and their daughter Scarlet, born 2006.

“Age of Ash is the first of a trilogy – a structurally pretty weird trilogy for me. It’s a very different project than things I’ve done before. It’s that epic fantasy that I grew up reading, like *Thieves’ World* and *Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser*, that part of my reading history.

“The story itself is about a fantasy city that rhymes with Lankhmar and Sanctuary and those places. This book is about two young women working through different kinds of grief in the course of this epic fantasy story, with intrigue and violence and crime and all of the stuff you come to fantasy for.

“The original name for the project was *The Aspects of Kithamar*. I’m playing with different kinds of ideas of what ‘epic’ is. The *Kithamar Trilogy*, **Age of Ash** and the next two, are about a different epic than the one that I’m used to playing with. I did a weird version of epic fantasy with *The Long Price Quartet* – that was going over a whole lifetime, which is what gave it the epic feel. Then I did *The Dagger and the Coin*, and that was a traditional epic: big wars, going to the core of the genre. This new series is something I haven’t seen before, where it’s an epic of depth in a place, so it’s a really constrained trilogy.

“It’s set in one city, over one year, with three stories happening simultaneously that sometimes touch each other, but they’re really each their own thing. **Age of Ash** is the one about grief, about the folks who are most on the margins of that city, the ones who are scraping

to get by. It’s about the city that they see, and the city as they see it. I’m almost done with the second book now, and that one is the city as somebody else sees it, and it’s a very different city for them. The third one is going to be from a different perspective, and it’s also a very different city.

“The idea is to acknowledge that sense of being in a room full of people, and everybody in there is part of their own story, and there’s no way, even if you knew everybody in there and you understood as much as we can understand about each other, there’d still be no way to access the depth of experience that’s going on in any person’s mind. Go to any convention, any mid-sized room, and see who’s in the audience, and there are so many stories and experiences in that room that are invisible to us.

“It was really fun hanging out with those characters and being in that story. It’s weird writing epic fantasy and thinking about what epic fantasy stories are, and engaging with that or not engaging with it. There’s an old Fritz Leiber story called ‘*The Price of Pain-Ease*’ that has *Fafhrd* and *Gray Mouser* dealing with grief and memory, and I’m sure that story’s DNA wound up in my book. That I can remember that story and its title when I haven’t read it in two or three decades, that means it was important to me, right?

“We wind up imagining the world through a particular lens, and as writers

we’re imagining a person and imagining those moments and trying to capture them, and trying to transcribe them in a way that other people will understand. That’s the fun part of the gig. There’s this universality of experience, right? Where you think, ‘Okay, well, she’s doing this thing; if I were not my best self, and I were in the same place, how would I fuck up?’ I look back at the earlier stages of my life, when I was inappropriately infatuated with somebody: what kind of asshole did that make me? What vulnerability did I have in that moment? What anger in that moment, and what resentment came out of that? How did my feelings present? As a writer, you mine all of that. The things *Sammish* and *Alys* are going through are not things that I’ve done, but they rhyme with experiences that I’ve had, because they have to. I’m middle aged now; I’m 52, so I’ve done a bunch of stuff, and I’ve got a pretty good toolbox at this point.

“The way that **Age of Ash** is about grief, the second book is about romance. It’s not a romance in the sense of, ‘There’s a boy and a girl and they hate each other and fall in love by the end’ or, ‘They love each other at the beginning and die by the end,’ or any of the other traditional arcs there. It’s about two particular characters going through their particular relationship and informing the city around them, and the

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LOCUS LOOKS AT SHORT FICTION: KAREN BURNHAM

Omenana 4/22

Samovar 4/22

Analog 5-6/22

Clarkesworld 5/22

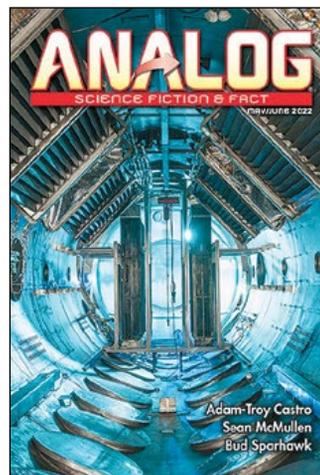
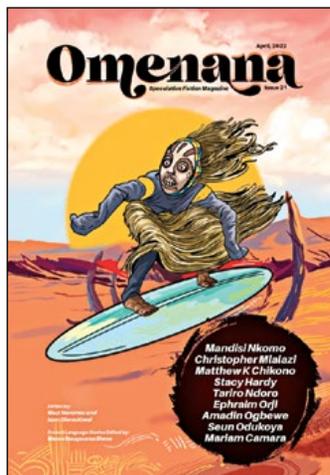
The Sunday Morning Transport 5/22

Future Tense 4/22

In its 21st issue, *Omenana* continues to bring a fascinating mix of fantasy, science fiction, and horror from African writers. “**Madam Aisirhiowen’s Greatest Invention**” by **Amadin Ogbewe** is an interesting story of a woman who transformed herself into a cyborg ruler. When we meet her she is deposed and staying with her great-granddaughter, building something with her minions. It’s pretty ominous, but we only find out what it is after a climactic battle scene. One story that very effectively got my skin crawling is “**How to Acquire a Tongue-eating Louse**” by **Stacy Hardy**. Told in the second person and making the connection to sexuality in explicit detail, this one is not for the squeamish. “**Notes on the Shadow World**” by **Mandisi Nkomo** has the older style of narrative where we learn about the story from someone who is in possession of a manuscript by the main actor, in this case a Professor Nilesh Khota. Khota discovered a portal to another world at a dangerous road crossing. The *Shadow World* he describes has a Lovecraftian flavor.

In April *Samovar* brings us two new stories translated into English. “**Panorama People**” by **Azrin Fauzi** (translated by Ali Aiman Mazwin) is set in Malaysia. The story features three characters and three points of view, and deeply engages with the visual arts as one of the characters pursues a lost painting. The story uses the “rule of three” from visual composition to structure its narrative, and it’s an interesting approach. “**You, Or Dissociation as a Survival Tool in Pursuit of Finding a Mental Haven of Sanity**” by **Diana Barberena-Jonas** (translated by the author) starts as horror. A mother and her newly toddling baby are locked in a house she won’t leave, since something awful is outside. The narration effectively combines a calm, almost soothing narrative interspersed with her deeply emotional, enraged, suffering asides. This condition persists for months, and there’s a metaphorical claustrophobia to it that many new parents might find relatable. At the end the story moves away from stasis towards something new.

As we head into summer, *Analog* arrives with 19 stories, including a novella and four novelettes. **Adam-Troy Castro**’s novella “**Burning the Ladder**” is an interesting tale of interstellar diplomacy in his ongoing series featuring Andrea Cort. Having been banished to a backwater outpost after annoying a senior diplomat, Cort finds an alien child who had been abandoned. As she and her co-workers try to find her home, they’re met with serious resistance and cultural taboos from the local population. They may have bitten off more than they can chew. I often appreciate the care taken in **Eric Del Carlo**’s stories, and “**Boy in the Key of Forsaken**” is no exception. Locke is a kid abandoned by his guardian. He haunts the space docks and becomes fascinated



by the way celestial beings make semi-organic spaceships. He rescues a ship that had been tossed aside as malformed, and together they literally make beautiful music. But there are trials that come even when you’ve made something of a safe haven for yourself. “**Planetfall**” by newcomer **A.C. Koch** features Nadia, captain of a generation starship who has just discovered that she doesn’t actually have enough fuel to slow down and is about to overshoot their destination planetary system. The main plot of engineering crisis is interwoven with Nadia’s relationship with her father, the ship’s only murderer but also possibly key to their success.

I particularly liked the two pieces of flash fiction in this issue. “**Firebreak**” by **Alice Towey** features a Valkyrie firefighting drone and the prisoner it has been paired with. The way the drone has been programmed makes it seem like the prisoner’s life is expendable, and it has to wrestle with an ethical dilemma. Then “**Subsidiary Class 2 Museum Report**” by **Tim McDaniel** is a lovely and very short story describing a museum display that goes through the Precambrian era, extinction of the dinosaurs, evolution of mammals, the Elimination, the Resurgence... and you’ll have to see where it goes from there. It’s not every day you get a taste of Stapledonian scope in five hundred words or less. Also reaching for an extraordinary scale is “**A Hundred Mouths and a Voice of Iron**” by **John Markley**. This is a very dark story about an executioner on board the spaceship *Praxidike*. They go to a system where 100 million people were wiped out by the artificial intelligence Jashub, and they have to interrogate it to judge its fate. Its story is much more complicated than rogue-AI-kills-everyone, and there is real pathos here. Another story I appreciated is “**Proof of Concept**” by **Auston Habershaw**. The narrator is a being with a distributed brain and shapeshifting ability. Unfortunately, enough of it got blown away in an altercation that it lost a lot of memory and now has to figure out what it is and what it’s trying to accomplish. It’s a great way to build up a mystery, and the reveal is satisfying.

Sean McMullen contributes the novelette “**Beacon**”. This has a fascinating premise where Elgin Yang, one of the scientists in charge of the uncrewed exploration mission Hypatia, unbeknownst to him, had his consciousness uploaded

to the ship. After thousands of years of voyage the ship has woken him up for its own reasons. Unfortunately Yang is absolutely phobic of all the vast stretches of space and time that are involved, and a lot of the story is devoted to keeping his brain from rolling up like a defensive armadillo. But if he can survive his disembodied panic attacks, there may be wonders in store. Closer to home, in “**Bounty 1486**” by **Wendy Nickel**, Delia has a regular gig piloting a small spaceship around Earth, reeling in space junk. She’s on duty for three or four days a week and gets to spend the rest of the time with her young daughter. It’s a fine living, although maybe not quite as exciting as the NASA career she originally dreamed of... until a call comes in that, thanks to an unlikely chain of failures, an astronaut is drifting away from the ISS, beyond hope of rescue. Delia is easy to root for in this can-she-save-the-day classic SF story.

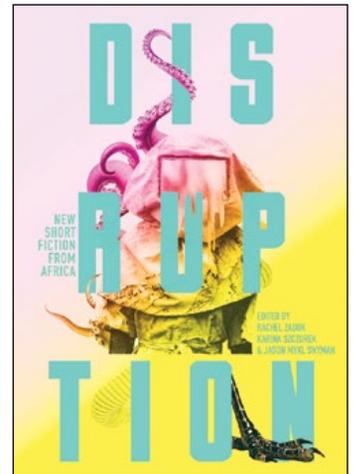
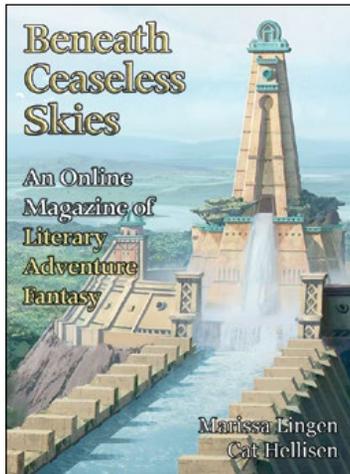
Two of my favorite stories in *Clarkesworld* for May are translated. “**The Possibly Brief Life of Guang Hansheng**” by **Liang Qingsan** (translated by Andy Dudak) features a rather melancholy narrator who becomes obsessed with an early science fiction author, Guang Hansheng, after seeing a snippet of his work in a museum. He begins a course of obsessive research, haunting the microfiche section of the library, trying to both find all the pieces of the serialized story and build up a portrait of the obscure author. Then “**Gamma**” by **Oskar Källner** (translated by Gordon James Jones) imagines creatures orbiting a black hole during the heat death of the universe. Diving down every so often to gain energy from the Hawking radiation, they still manage to have politics and wars. We follow Gamma and Kthelk’tan as they break away to see if there’s anything else they can discover in the ruins of galactic-spanning civilizations. The descriptions, as in McDaniel’s story above, gesture at a Stapledonian reach of space

►► p. 43

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

July 11, 2029. Médecins Sans Frontières opens 12 US clinics. The acclaimed international MDs will provide reproductive healthcare, including abortion, to underserved Americans.

LOCUS LOOKS AT SHORT FICTION: CHARLES PAYSEUR



Kaleidotrope 4/22
Zooscape 4/22
Escape Pod 4/22
Drabblecast 4/22
Samovar 4/22
Strange Horizons 4/18/22, 5/2/22, 5/9/22
Beneath Ceaseless Skies 5/5/22, 5/19/22
GigaNotoSaurus 5/22
Cast of Wonders 5/22
Flash Fiction Online 5/22
Anathema 5/22
Lightspeed 6/22
Fantasy 6/22

Disruption: New Short Fiction from Africa, Rachel Zadok, Karina M. Szczurek & Jason Mykl Snyman, eds. (Catalyst 978-1946395573, \$16.95, 260pp, tp) September 2021.

I'll start off with the Spring *Kaleidotrope*, which does a good job keeping to a few thematic threads throughout the issue. Though the publication often leans into horror, there's more of a focus on grief and loss with this group of stories and poems, with recurring ideas of alternate dimensions/universes and sacrifices of various kinds. **Aimee Ogden** opens the issue with "**The Universe Ends on a Tuesday**", which takes a wrenching look at the death of a universe made achingly intimate. The story explores how a single life can fill up an entire reality, the loss of which is no more or less profound than if our own universe were to blink out. "**A Difference of Opinion**" by **Stewart C. Baker** shifts to looking at a situation not uncommon in science fiction – a world's application for entry into a federation of planets and peoples. The work of the two diplomats at the heart of the story is complicated by both the mechanical/AI nature of the applicants and lingering prejudice that tries to justify not considering AIs as people. And through the diplomats and applicant AIs essentially arguing about the "realness" of people actively participating in said argument the story does sharp work exploring practical criteria for personhood in general, and how we empathize and support others in the context of a diverse and far-reaching federation. Despite the familiar trappings, Baker weaves a powerful and fresh narrative. Artificial beings, rights, and cooperation recur in **Rebecca Framow's** "**Fear-**

fully and Wonderfully Made", where a human consciousness uploaded into an artificial body comes face to face with her past and her possible error about the human soul. The story engages with how science and scientific advancement can be used for great evil, and what responsibility scientists have for the ways their research might be coopted and used to serve violent and corrupt goals. For all it seems that might mean the story deals with clear borders between right and wrong, though, the ending is complex and messy, with all the characters pushed to confront what personal beliefs they're willing to betray in order to avoid a terrible outcome.

Meanwhile **Maria Dong** crafts a story of cultural theft and justice in "**The Repatriate**". Taking aim at **Indiana Jones**-style adventurers and academics looking to cash in (however nobly they frame it) on grave robbing and theft, the story follows one such famous explorer as he seeks a fabled and valuable artifact, returning home with it only to find that he's stepped into a web of forces waiting to hold him to account for his crimes. The story reads as a descent, with the "treasure hunter" trapped by the pull of greed, entitlement, and racism. "**From Here**" by **Grant Stone** continues the trend of subverting genre tropes with a situation reminiscent of the end of **The Lord of the Rings**. A great evil has been defeated, and a broken fellowship faces what to do next, how to move forward. What they choose, though, and how that's received by the general population who have just been saved, is an interesting statement on heroes, exhaustion, and care. There's also a lot of poetry to enjoy in the issue, from **Lauren McBride's** take on burnout and ambition in "**My Summer Retreat**" to **A.Z. Louise's** celestially scorching and sensual "**Hourglass**".

The latest *Zooscape* opens with an editorial linking furry fiction to fairy tales and folktales around the world and the earliest human storytelling. While the editorial also recognizes that many of these stories are often aimed at young readers, there's nothing about furry fiction that's inherently juvenile. To make that point, the issue itself presents a mixture of stories sure to challenge and delight the most seasoned speculative fiction reader, starting with **Marissa James's** "**Coyote Woman Sings the Blues**". Selkie rules apply here in a story

where Coyote Woman's skin has been taken by an ex who left her instead with two children to raise on her own. The piece shows the place that puts her in, caught between her desire for freedom and obligation and love for her children, and caught as well between the world's desire for her and her children to be fully domesticated, and the parts of themselves that are wild and beautifully untamed. James does careful and moving work in building up the character of Coyote Woman and allowing her to be both archetypal and deeply unique. "**My Song Too Fierce**", by **Emily Randolph-Epstein** finds a new angle to examine the story of Snow White, opting away from the human characters and finding perspective instead from a bird first compelled by a young woman to help with chores, and then taken by an older witch as familiar. Through all of that, the flavors of captivity and coercion lend the story a weight and complexity outside of the normal dynamics of good versus evil. Instead, readers are treated to a conflict where no side is without violation, and the narrator, for all they are forced to work for the benefit of others, finds strength and purpose instead in reaching for a home and freedom that has been long denied them.

A rite of passage anchors **Ife J. Ibitayo's** April *Escape Pod* story, "**The Heroine Kokofe**". Kokofe is on the cusp of adulthood, but must first undergo a trial to be accepted by her tribe, who are settlers on a distant world, living near and in harmony with the native population there. The story is tense and punctuated by moments of intense action, with Kokofe forced to think on her feet and overcome a dangerous enemy. Ibitayo manages a lot of world building while keeping the pacing brisk and the character work engaging.

Catching up with *Drabblecast*, April brought "**When the Sun Hits**" by **Nick Mamatas**, in which the narrator is a literal brain in a jar. Caught in a conflict between the aliens responsible for making the narrator a brain in a jar and their massive, capricious enemies, the narrator is left contemplating scale and scope. Realizing that things that are too massive cause a certain level of anxiety and possible madness, the narrator almost unconsciously begins to compartmentalize, making the too-massive into something easier to survive facing, from the aliens who stranded them

to the vast amount of time they spend alone. The result is an interesting take on the mechanics and impact of Lovecraftian horror.

April also saw the release of a new issue of *Samo-var*, the sibling publication to *Strange Horizons* that specializes in speculative stories and poetry in translation. Among the works in the issue, **Azrin Fauzi** (translated by **Ali Aiman Mazwin**) captures a weird and compelling journey of three people on the island of Malaysia in “**Panorama People**”. Indra is on a quest for a landscape watercolor while Noor is on a more personal journey of discovery, and Detective Osbert Teo watches them both for his own reasons. The story incorporates ideas of art, tourism, and the commodification of places and people. The characters are all drawn to beauty in different ways, but are also caught by it, trapped by the tragedies that beauty can mask and cover. It’s a slow and almost dreamlike story, all three characters walking the edge of an abyss they can’t see but seem to feel all the same.

Strange Horizons itself closed April out with **Mae Juniper Stokes**’s “**We, The Enchanted Castle**”, which is told from the point of view of an AI “smart house” tasked with satisfying the needs of those living inside them, in this case the programmer working to complete them for market testing. The house doesn’t stop at dietary or physical needs, though, and begins working on the programmer’s emotional and romantic needs as well. The creepiness and violation of surveillance and manipulation meet the earnest desire to help and the genuine connection fostered by the house, which Stokes navigates expertly into a space that’s neither cautionary nor entirely comfortable with the power of technology to influence humans. Moving into May, **Seoung Kim** reveals a fake medium who turns out to have a bit more real power than she thought in “**Heavy Possessions**”. At least, when a ghost decides to take up residence in her body, she’s pushed right outside of her comfort zone... but maybe also into a place she needed to be. The tone and voice of the characters are great, and Kim does a delightful job showing how they help each other, both through the things they promise and follow through on, and by truly seeing one another, and how vital that can be when so much is hidden, concealed, or fabricated.

On the *Strange Horizons* poetry front, **Ken Haponek** gets a bit metatextual in “**Responding to Poetry and Prose Poems (pg 36 of Practice of Creative Writing)**”, which I can’t resist making more meta by reviewing. The piece is about reading and responding to poetry, while also being a poem itself, bending around the impossibility of capturing the fullness of poetic expression and possibility and the great rewards for trying to do just that. I’d have to mention “**i roll up to the club in a gundam**” by **Eric Wang** for the name alone, but it’s also a rather wonderful piece about space, parties, and friendship. Wang infuses the lines with warmth, painting a rather bittersweet moment of connection and departure, a snapshot of people on the verge of touching the wider cosmos.

Beneath Ceaseless Skies’ first issue of May fea-

tures stories of parents and children, transformation, and sacrifice. “**Anything You Lose Comes Round in Another Form**” by **Jennie Evenson** follows Pilar, a woman who is supposed to give of herself to protect her village, using a ritual to trade years of her life to the sea in return for its bounty. Yet, when weighed against her own happiness – the years that she wants to enjoy with her child, the years she was unable to enjoy with her mother because her mother sacrificed herself in the same way – even providing for her entire village doesn’t seem enough. Evenson confronts readers with the cost of sacrifice, challenging what some might consider selfishness in order to make a deeper point about unfairness and loss. It’s a powerful and beautiful story. The second issue keeps the focus on family but shifts from parents to siblings, with two tales about sisters and brothers. **Cat Hellisen** offers a new twist on “The Little Mermaid” with “**I Will Sing Your White Bones Home**”. The narrator has just lost a brother, but not in the way her mother claims. Not because he was a mermaid, and human hatred claimed him. Rather, it was his forbidden love for a human that sealed his fate, and it’s his story that moves his sister to defy her mother and try to right a festering wrong. The setting is robust, and Hellisen does a great job using the source material as a springboard to tell a wholly different tale, tragic but not resolving in tragedy, where the bargains made are made freely from the start, without deception or betrayal.

May’s *GigaNotoSaurus* story is “**In the Time of the Telperi Flower**” by **David-Christopher Galhea**, which on one level follows the harrowing story of an expedition to see a strange, time-bending flower. The story is framed, however, as an annotated account of that expedition as told by its guide, embellished and published posthumously by an unscrupulous publicist, and annotated by one half of the queer couple that hired said guide to begin with. As such it’s a wonderful example of a nested narrative, all the layers working together to reveal the truth underneath the sensationalized version of the adventure, bringing full circle the loss and grief that began with a quest of love and became instead rooted in selfishness and fear.

Cast of Wonders’ May release was **Beth Goder**’s “**One Day in Infinity**”, which explores a day in the life of Walrus, the patron goddess of supermarkets, indoor swimming pools, and self-service gas stations. While the premise might seem geared for humor, though, the story itself looks bluntly at burnout and exhaustion, at the toll of having to choose to save people or not, knowing that not everyone can be saved. Yet, even as the weight seems crushing, the story shows the power of friendship, care, and vital small acts of kindness, which are their own sort of magic. It’s a poignant and beautiful story about a very tired but ultimately unbroken goddess.

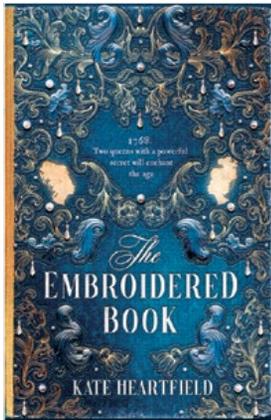
May’s *Flash Fiction Online* features a number of stories that revolve around the power of desire. In “**Bad Taste and Bad Luck**” by **Rosalind Helsinger**, that desire has been twisted into something like a curse for Beccs, a young woman who fears

her love is killing her best friend. The speculative element in the story is ambiguous but no less impactful and magical for it. The core relationship is complex, a bit messy, and wonderfully explored by Helsinger, who uses the idea of the curse to show how people take and abdicate control in the face of setbacks, complications, and losses.

Anathema officially enters 2022 with their May issue, which opens with **Choo Yi Feng**’s strange and haunting “**Plastic Bag Girl**”. In it, said girl recycles trash along the shore and turns it into animated animals to entertain tourists. These brief and almost magical creations, however, bring her to the attention of those who wish to coopt her and translate her into something they can control. Instead of capitulating to that fate and accepting another’s translation of her, though, she resists, and takes charge of translating herself in a way that puts her beyond their reach. It’s a story that mixes beauty and something almost chilling in an effective way, leaving readers to wonder at an ending that seems both sad and profoundly hopeful. This playing with grief, hope, and ambiguity continues in “**My Father Treats Merrill Like All the Women in His Life**” by **Saswati Chatterjee**. The story centers Sheila, a girl whose mother left, whose father is mostly aloof, unsure of how to relate to a child and especially to a girl. It leaves most of the child-raising to Merrill, the house AI. The story explores how Merrill fits into their lives – an artificial mother and wife who is ever-nurturing, never-complaining. She fills a space in both Sheila and her father’s life, one that is both warm and complicated, in some ways an open wound that can never really heal. Chatterjee does a great job of following Sheila as she works through her emotions, her bonds to her father and to an AI who is aging even more rapidly than humans do, with how quickly technology becomes obsolete. The issue closes with **M. S. Dean**’s “**Drowning Songs**”, which introduces Adeline, a young woman who from a very young age has been repeatedly drowned as a sacrifice to help her town prosper. It’s not a role she relishes – being killed every year at the behest of a goddess – but it’s something she’s mostly learned to accept so long as it allows her a certain freedom to express her attraction to other women. When the goddess begins asking more, though, and other innocents seem poised to be sacrificed as Adeline has been, she has to decide whether to accept it as matter of course, or take a stand that risks everything she has. Dean crafts a compelling and wrenching situation for Adeline, balanced on the supposed freedom she wants and the terrible price she doesn’t know how not to pay. The piece hinges not on whether the bargain is fair for the town, but for Adeline herself and anyone else who would be sacrificed.

S.G. Demciri kicks off June’s *Lightspeed* with a science-fantasy novelette, “**The Crowning of the Lord Tazenket, Vulture God of the Eye**”. A sweeping space opera, the story finds Ihuet, daughter of a god and oracle of his empire, trying to save her father from the gravity of patricide perpetrated by her ambitious brother. To that end, though, Ihuet reaches her influence outside of her

[» p. 44](#)



The Embroidered Book, Kate Heartfield (HarperVoyager 978-0-00838-059-5, \$28.99, 672pp, hc) May 2022.

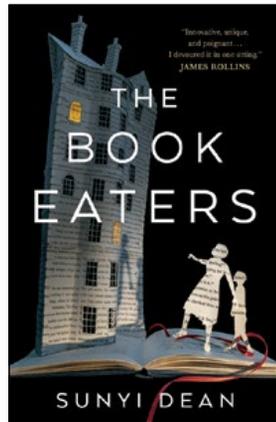
The Book Eaters, Sunyi Dean (Tor 978-1-25081-018-2, \$26.99, 304pp, hc) August 2022.

High Times in the Low Parliament, Kelly Robson (Tordotcom 978-1-25082-302-1, \$14.99, 160pp, tp) August 2022. Cover by Kate Forrester.

The Bruising of Qilwa, Naseem Jamnia (Tachyon 978-1-61696-378-1, \$15.95, 176pp, tp) August 2022. Cover by Elizabeth Story

After reading Kate Heartfield's thoroughly engrossing **The Embroidered Book**, with its account of the secret role of magic in European politics around the time of the French Revolution, I made the mistake of checking out what Wikipedia had to say about such topics as "secret history" or "historical fantasy." Not too surprisingly, the depth and consistency of the articles offered a few helpful insights, all of which reinforced what I'd already suspected: infusing magic into history is much like infusing time travel into anything: the rules should be consistent and rigorously observed, and the rules are whatever the author says they are. And, as with time travel, magical-history fiction ranges along a spectrum from full-blown alternate histories to tales in which the historical record remains pretty much intact. (I've even seen it argued, with some justification, that all historical fiction is to some degree alternate history, since, for example, Tolstoy introduces a whole passel of made-up families into the Napoleonic wars in **War and Peace**).

Heartfield clearly belongs on the conservation-of-history end of the spectrum. Nearly all her central characters are actual historical figures, though only a few are well-known enough to be familiar to most readers. Rather wisely, she avoids the temptation of the celebrity walk-ons that often plague such fiction; her characters may read Montesquieu and Voltaire and recall a vivid performance by the child Mozart, but the only main viewpoint character with an extensive pop-culture résumé is Marie Antoinette, whom we first meet as an 11-year-old girl named Antoine in the household of Habsburg empress Maria Theresa in Vienna in 1767. Along with her siblings –



most notably her older sister Charlotte, who will become Queen of Naples – she is familiar with a richly embroidered book of magical spells left behind by a murdered governess, and the children playfully experiment with these spells to enchant dolls or items of clothing—but each spell requires a sacrifice, which can range from coins and nail-clippings to actual memories. Their mother, however, is less interested in magic, or even in her children's happiness, than in forging political alliances, which eventually results in Antoine being married off at 14 to the French dauphin, and Charlotte to the dissolute Ferdinand of Naples. The bulk of the novel traces their contrasting careers, and their eventual alienation, over the next three decades. In Italy, Charlotte discovers a secret society of "magisters" called the Order of 1326, and eventually joins it with the aid of the occultist Cagliostro, discovering that it has its own mysterious book of spells called the *Reconditus*. But other rogue magisters are at work both in Italy and France, where some of them may be helping to foment the beginnings of revolutionary fervor. Lafayette's involvement in the American war of independence, and a diplomatic mission from Benjamin Franklin, complicate matters further for Antoinette, already distrusted for her Austrian origins and family connections.

Heartfield's major fantasy inventions consist of the variety and ingenuity of the spells the sisters learn to deploy, from portraits that serve as eavesdropping devices or that even physically transform their real-life subjects, to others than can actually double stores of grain (sometimes we wonder if there are any practical limitations on the spells, though the required sacrifices serve to keep them in check). Her novel is rooted far more firmly in its characterizations and troubled family relationship. It might seem counterintuitive these days to focus on the hyperprivileged scions of imperialist royalty, but in Heartfield's telling, even queens need to battle for agency. Charlotte nearly has to blackmail her way into the all-male Society of 1326, while Antoinette faces increasingly scurrilous and even pornographic broadsides about her sexuality and her ambitions – even as she tries desperately to find ways to alleviate the starvation in France caused by grain shortages. Neither of their husbands amount to much – Charlotte's Ferdinand is as incompetent as he is arrogant – though each of the sisters finds some measure of romance, Antoinette with a Swedish



diplomat and Charlotte with a British naval commander. But **The Embroidered Book** is hardly a traditional historical romance, and court politics turns out to be as deadly a game as sorcery. Her main historical characters – as well as many fascinating secondary figures, such as the portraitist Vigée Le Brun – are so persuasively drawn, given Heartfield's apparently meticulous attention to historical research (I'll leave it to history buffs to nitpick), that her feminist revisioning of a crucial period in European history is genuinely provocative. As with all such conservation-of-history fantasies, of course, we're left with the impression that, in the end, all those spells and magisters didn't really make much difference. Heartfield addresses this rather cleverly in a plot line that describes how *preventing* out-of-control magisters from messing up the world became an important goal for both the sisters and their allies. Many of their major achievements, then, are confined to the secret history part of the narrative, and the price they finally pay makes for a heartbreaking, if inevitable, ending to a fabulously immersive novel.

In my distant youth, one of my favorite poets was Mark Strand, and one of his most widely reprinted poems began, "Ink runs from the corners of my mouth./There is no happiness like mine./I have been eating poetry." It was a surreal and somewhat whimsical take on the idea of literature as consumer goods, but even at the time I wondered if you could extend that conceit into some sort of a fantasy narrative. Now someone has, and happiness has nothing to do with it. Sunyi Dean's **The Book Eaters** shares with a few other recent fantasies (Kelly Barnhill's **When Women Were Dragons** is another) a central premise so defiantly absurd, so irreducibly strange, that its causes are barely even addressed, and the author's self-imposed challenge is to embed it seamlessly into a tale with otherwise more familiar structural elements. In Dean's case, these elements include escaping from a terrifying and repressive cult, the power of parental love, and a rather gruesome but original variation on the traditional vampire conundrum of finding something good to eat.

Devon Fairweather is a book eater, a member of one of six ancestral families scattered across England whose peculiarity is that they possess extra sets of teeth specifically designed to chew up books, after which they somehow magically

retain the contents, even if they haven't actually read the books beforehand. (One trade-off is that book eaters themselves are incapable of writing and are limited in imagination.) Though they're clearly not human – they even dissolve into fluttering sheaves of paper when killed – no one knows their origin (although vague rumors of aliens are briefly mentioned). To complicate matters further, some are born as mind-eaters, who satisfy their hunger not by eating books, but by sucking out parts of victims' brains with their long, tubular tongues – and then absorbing the knowledge, memories, and even the speech habits of those victims, who are left nearly mindless. As the tale opens, Devon is on the run with her son Cai, a mind eater, and has to regularly supply him with victims to satisfy his raging hunger. One of a number of moral dilemmas Dean introduces is that Devon feels she must find basically decent people for Cai to absorb, such as the kindly vicar who gets demolished in the shocking opening chapter.

The rest of the narrative is divided between Devon's own life story among the Fairweathers, as oppressive and Brontëan a family as you could ask for, in which women are regarded as little more than baby-makers for the survival of the clan, and whose children are taken away shortly after birth to be raised by the fathers. After having been forced to give up a daughter, Devon learns of another family that has developed a drug that can permit mind eaters to lead comparatively normal lives eating books like everyone else. As the two narratives converge, Devon not only realizes the fierceness of her own protectiveness toward Cai, but begins to find the possibility of her first real romance with a skilled woman fighter who helps her escape from "dragons" – adult mind eaters sent to capture Devon and her son after her escape from the family. While **The Book Eaters** gains considerable power through its themes of parental love and brutal misogyny, and while its contemporary chapters make for a suspenseful and quite satisfactory thriller, the book eating itself seems marginal to the main action, although it occasionally serves specific plot points (like the advantage of eating a train schedule for someone trying to flee). Devon briefly mentions enjoying the taste of George MacDonald Fraser's Flashman novels, and chapter epigraphs offer plenty of clues to Dean's literary influences (especially George MacDonald's odd fairytale "The History of Photogen and Nycteris" – more often published as "The Day Boy and the Night Girl"), but readers expecting a full-scale bibliofantasy packed with arch literary allusion won't find much of it here. No one eats Proust and ends up with a craving for madeleines, for example. Still, it's a gripping tale of hidden supernatural communities battling it out in the shadows, and Devon herself emerges as a complex and conflicted figure negotiating a dark world of daunting moral challenges and toxic misogyny.

It could be that what modern fantasy needs, from time to time, is a good jolt of old-fashioned goofiness. Few ideas I've seen recently are as goofy as the notion of trying to weave a romantic fairy fantasy around the struggles of a legislative body that can't get anything done because of arcane

voting procedures. This is basically the premise of Kelly Robson's delightful **High Times in the Low Parliament**, set in an alternate London of what appears to be the early 18th century. While it shares some history with our own London (such as the great fire of 1666), Robson's city is overseen by a rather testy population of fairies – classic picture-book fairies, complete with glittering wings and pixie dust—who seem to feel it's their responsibility to keep the hapless human citizens from self-imposed catastrophes. The imposing fairy palace is one of the dominant structures of the cityscape, and our protagonist, a talented scribe named Lana Baker, finds herself sent there on an errand for another scribe with whom she enjoyed a brief infatuation.

Infatuations, in fact, sort-of seem to be Lana's thing, and, along with her incompetence at math, are the only things holding back a promising career. When Lana arrives at the palace, though, that career takes an unexpected turn: she's drafted by the fairies to join a cadre of scribes assigned to record the proceedings of Low Parliament, a chaotic body of human legislators, called deputies. Part of the chaos comes from the disparate languages employed by the deputies in their debates – like a cross between EU meetings and a particularly contentious House of Commons – but the main problem involves archaic voting rules that require a two-thirds majority in order to get anything done. Even though the fairies, who impatiently oversee the Parliament, have warned the deputies that they'll all be drowned if they can't get their act together, everyone seems more interested in posturing than in meaningful action – all of which sounds just as familiar as it's supposed to.

After Lana makes a couple of friends among the other scribes and finds an unlikely ally in the cranky fairy Bugbite, she falls into another of her infatuations, this time with the lithe but reticent deputy Eloquentia. As this three-way relationship plays out in classic romantic screwball comedy form, the political gridlock begins to shift toward the apocalyptic, until the plotlines start to converge in an unlikely but quite satisfactory manner. **High Times in the Low Parliament** is, at its best, demented fun and shrewd satire, but along the way Robson has introduced us to a thoroughly engaging rogue in Lana, along with an appealingly grumpy fairy who comes to learn that humans might, after all, be worth saving from themselves. It's a pair we wouldn't mind visiting again.

The Bruising of Qilwa is the first novel by non-binary Persian-American author Naseem Jamnia, who last year received the first Samuel R. Delany Fellowship, sponsored by CatStone Books, to recognize SFF writers from "a community that has been traditionally marginalized in speculative fiction," according to their website. It seems like an excellent choice, not only because of the small but engaging cast of characters and the complex social and political situation Jamnia thrusts them into, but because marginalization itself informs the novella at almost every level. Firuz-e Jafari, a non-binary healer in an ancient tradition called blood magic, is also a refugee in the city of Qilwa, where they have found employment at a free clinic

run by the idealistic Kofi, whose clientele consists largely of immigrants and refugees like Firuz. (Jamnia is careful to maintain the characters' preferred pronouns, which they use as prefixes to their names when first introduced.) While the plight of refugees and a fraught history of colonialism, imperialism, and even ethnic cleansing looms heavily over the narrative, Jamnia's central plot is essentially a medical mystery, complicated by the city's problematic public health policies.

Although a plague in Qilwa has begun to abate, Firuz notices that a number of patients at the clinic are exhibiting strange new symptoms, characterized by bruising, exhaustion, and slow blood clotting. Stranger still, none of the other clinics in the city seem to report any such patients. While Firuz is trying to puzzle out the mystery, they meet a teenage orphan named Afsoneh, who has extraordinary magical powers of her own, but is barely able to control them. Complicating matters further, Firuz and Kofi are summoned before the governor – who determines which clinics will be publicly funded – and face accusations of practicing blood magic, which is associated with the despised refugees from neighboring Dilmun. Many of the refugees, like Firuz, are Sassanians, a once-powerful group who are now outcasts, targeted by an ongoing siege which begins to look uncomfortably like the ethnic cleansing I mentioned earlier. Firuz claims to be practicing only "structural magic," however, while Kofi's practice is based on the medieval theory of humors. With three distinct forms of healing at work, the novel takes on some aspects of a purely medical thriller, and this becomes more evident later in the tale, when Jamnia introduces some actual hematology into the mix, include the possible discovery of immunization and antibodies.

With its complex geopolitical backstory involving Sassanians shifting from colonizers to the colonized and eventually to refugees, its intriguing portrayal of the city-state of Qilwa, its medical puzzles, and its examination of the varieties of prejudice and distrust – especially after a local boy dies from the bruising disease while being treated by Firuz – **The Bruising of Qilwa** has a lot on its rather small plate. It's hardly a complaint to suspect that many readers might hope for a more thorough introduction to this world; some details are barely mentioned in passing. But Jamnia keeps things under control by focusing on a handful of well-drawn characters – not only the thoughtful and humane Firuz, but the apparently kindly Kofi (who turns out to have a few dark secrets of his own), the powerful but immature Afsoneh, and Firuz's younger brother, who provides a kind of reality check on the other characters' preoccupations with magic. Like many of the best novellas we've been seeing these last few years, **The Bruising of Qilwa** is something of a Tardis tale, considerably bigger on the inside than it first appears, and it's a rewarding addition to that growing body of fantastic fiction addressing themes of colonialism, bigotry, gender, and cultural identity. The world of the book is one we'd like to know more about, and Jamnia is a writer worth paying attention to.

—Gary K. Wolfe ■

LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: MAYA C. JAMES

Bitter, Akwaeke Emezi (Knopf Books for Young Readers 978-0593309032, 272pp, \$17.99, hc) February 2022. Cover by Shyama Golden.

The Merciless Ones, Namina Forna (Delacorte 978-1-9848-4872-7, 464pp, \$17.99, hc) May 2022.

A Taste of Gold and Iron, Alexandra Rowland (Tor 978-1-250-80038-1, 512pp, \$27.99 hc) August 2022.

Content warning: sexual violence, anti-Black racism.

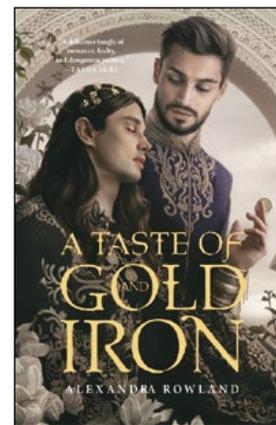
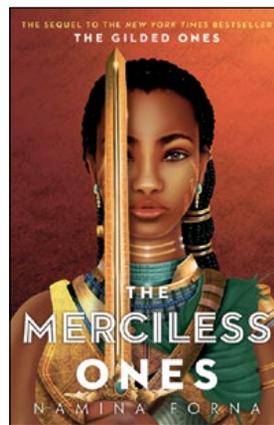
I would be amiss to not begin with the words that Akwaeke Emezi writes in their dedication of **Bitter**: “Still and always, for Toyin Salau. You deserved a better world.” Toyin was raped and murdered by an older man who assaulted her after offering her a ride back to the church where she had sought refuge due to housing instability.

I’m not sure that anyone can appreciate the depth and richness of **Bitter** without this background. Named after the protagonist, Akwaeke Emezi’s fantasy novel is about the Toyins of the world, and how their magical abilities are being used and abused to create a better world amidst social unrest. More specifically, our protagonist **Bitter**, a young woman whose artistic ability may have the power to influence a revolution. Only, she has no interest in it.

The opening conflict of the novel is just that: **Bitter** is a queer young girl who has an intimate experience with violence and loss – first the loss of her biological mother, and then the violence of a foster family that rejected her entire being. All around her, school shootings, police brutality, and the indifference of the adults meant to protect them grates against her patience and sense of self. With housing insecurity, she is not always sure what home looks like, nor can she always appreciate it. Staying out of other people’s business, after all, is how she survives. As the prequel to Akwaeke Emezi’s **Pet**, this novel focuses on the birth of the monsters and creatures that emerge in later novels, with an emphasis on Black radical protestors and their means of survival.

After years of abuse, **Bitter** has found refuge in the artistic haven of Eucalyptus, where she can paint and be herself. Surrounded by her chosen family, **Bitter** can tune out the protests outside, even as her friends stand on the front lines against corrupt millionaires and violent law enforcement. Even though some of her friends are involved in the protests, she feels an intense anger and resentment towards Assata, the mostly-youthful group of people leading protests every night despite rubber bullets, tear gas, and other forms of violence from law enforcement. She’s constantly reminded of this fact, not just because she lives in the heart of Lucille, but because she seemingly can’t stop running into her former girlfriend, Eddie.

Eucalyptus is her haven. Even more, her new-found privacy means she can explore her gift of bringing small drawings to life with just a few drops of her blood. She’s even begun to fall in love again, with a sweet young boy whose mis-



sion in life has become to heal his community from trauma. This comfort makes **Bitter** restless, though: though her friends are supportive of her decisions, she wonders what the cost is to participate, or to sit on the sidelines.

The novel takes an unexpected turn when the revolution hits too close to home. Embroiled in conflicting emotions, **Bitter** makes an abrupt and dangerous choice to do something about her situation. The consequences of her decision and use of her gift change the entire tide of the protests and open the book to a new world of monsters and creatures that prey upon her deepest sense of hopelessness and desire for revenge against those her have hurt her and her friends.

Emezi offers some intense discussions about the politics of revolution through the teenagers of the book. **Bitter** is a small tome, but a mighty one; discussions of the merits of non-violence and personal convictions sprawl across the page in a timely and self-aware manner. As events unfold outside of the characters’ control, they make reckless decisions in the hope of creating a better world. Emezi’s understanding of youthful protestors is both attentive and precise. They are neither idealistic nor are they fully jaded, though they do speak about the exhaustion that plagues many young activists when fighting battles that older generations were supposed to have finished. They center the protestors and radical Black activists, rather than the response of politicians, in a manner that is honest and tender.

The intensity of the plot only increases as more beings and creatures enter the fray. While the leaders of Assata wish to stay non-violent, forces beyond their understanding insist upon righteous destruction. In an unspoken but poignant emphasis, Emezi shows that it is the children of this world who show restraint, despite most of the politicians in their lives showing none. Indifference and burn-out, too, are monsters that **Bitter** and her friends must confront.

I loved **Bitter**’s character – her artistry, voice, and convictions were unwavering, despite her fears and her desires to be left alone. Ube, the leader of the Assata movement, was similar in a way that served as a foil to **Bitter**. As one of the leading voices of the movement, his strength and courage served some of the tensest moments of the novel.

Bitter was an easy read, even with its heavy themes. Like its protagonist, **Bitter** exudes mul-

titudes: honesty, rage, healing, and righteousness delivered in one smooth reading.

Former outcasts turned warriors and liberators, Deka and her friends are back on the battlefield in **The Merciless Ones**, sequel to **The Gilded Ones** (reviewed here May 2021), this time to free the rest of the goddesses and women in Otera. As the Nuru, or only full-blooded daughter of the goddesses, Deka is the strongest of her friends and has been chosen by the Mothers to lead her bloodsisters and male-equivalent jatu into battle. More confident and fully realized after events in **The Gilded Ones**, Deka leads her army against a kingdom that ruthlessly slays anyone sympathetic to her cause.

With the formerly ruined temple of the Gilded Ones as their home base, the girls venture out on missions while the Mothers gather their strength. But even with her growing powers and the support of the Mothers behind her, Deka has a new complication: deathshrieks (violent creatures who are actually alaki-turned monster) that she can’t speak with, and a symbol on the armor of her enemies that repels her powers. Not only that, but a false god named Idugu is gaining power across Otera, threatening her mission to free the kingdom.

The Merciless Ones picks up half a year after Deka and her friends freed the Mothers from their prisons. While Deka knows that she can be whoever she wants to be, the scars of her battles stay with her – she’s still fearful of making the wrong decisions, especially when leading her friends and army behind enemy lines. This leads to terse moments where it seems that one mistake may uproot all that she and her bloodsisters have fought for. Her unresolved trauma follows her, too, which leads to some touching scenes between her romantic interest, Keita, and her friend Britta in particular. The support of her friends is something that Forna delicately crafts in moments of calm between bloody battles, and is where the characters shine. These moments of reflection are where the readers see that the girls, particularly Deka, Belcalis, and Britta, have been forced to grow up quickly, and are now coming to terms with the fact that the older women and mentors in their lives have not. There is one particular scene between Deka and a seemingly minor character from the last book that spoke clearly to these themes: Deka learns the hard

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LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: RUSSELL LETSON

The Dark Ride: The Best Short Fiction of John Kessel. John Kessel (Subterranean Press 978-1-64524-058-7, \$45.00, 582pp, hc) June 2022.

I love big career-retrospective single-author collections, especially when the author provides notes on genesis and biographical context. John Kessel's turn has come with **The Dark Ride**, a gathering of 20 stories from 1981-2021 that shows his command of a wide range of motifs and styles and his recurring concerns in our field and beyond. It adds up to a map of a career that has been interestingly consistent over the four decades covered.

Kessel is a sure-enough science fiction writer, but he is also a (now retired) professor of literature. In fact, he writes, "My career, in retrospect, has been to cross the sensibilities of literary fiction with those of pulp fiction...." The work that emerges from this dual perspective is a bracing mixture of "genre" and "mainstream" sensibilities, themes, and techniques. I would count maybe a half-dozen of these selections as straight-up SF, often with a strong dose of the satirical-dystopian pattern that Kingsley Amis called the "comic inferno." But despite his clear affection for classical SF, in Kessel's hands its materials and machineries get pushed around, turned around, interrogated, ironized, mashed up with modernist takes, and generally transformed into shapes that serve Kesselian agendas, aesthetic, political, and personal.

Thus, when he wrote a story for an anthology of space opera stories (**The New Space Opera 2**, ed. by Gardner Dozois & Jonathan Strahan), what came out was "Events Preceding the Helvetic Renaissance," an exercise in space operatics inspired by, of all things, Ezra Pound's proposal to end WWII by trading Guam for a set of Nōh plays. Kessel also calls "Buddha Nostril Bird" a space opera, but (as the title and his note signal) it's way stranger than that. In fact, I'd say that the science-fiction-y bits are set dressing (AKA furniture) for a loopy, irreverent, one-damn-thing-after-another parable about philosophical posturing. (The punchline depends on a particular physical posture, which I would like to think is a deliberate, sneaky pun.)

Kessel's time travel stories are closer to the SF mainstream, though the trope-set gets two strikingly different treatments. "Some Like It Cold" and "The Miracle of Ivar Avenue" feature future talent scout (or procurer) Detlev Gruber, who recruits show-biz talents from alternate versions of his past so they can have extended careers in his timeline. The Detlev stories also show Kessel's love of screwball comedies and detective fiction ("Miracle" features Preston Sturges and a tough LA cop) as well as history in general (to which we will return). I would happily read a straight-up murder mystery by Kessel, should he ever want to write one with more passages like this, Detlev in a 1962 Los Angeles nightclub:

A thin white guy with a goatee strangled his saxophone: somewhere in there might be a melody. These cutting-edge late moderns thought they had the future augured. The future would be cool and atonal, they thought.

No squares allowed. They didn't understand that the future would be like the present, would be dominated by saps, and the big rush of 2043 would be barber-shop quartets.

"The Pure Product" is a different matter altogether, with a bored, nihilistic time-traveling tourist leaving a trail of arbitrary mayhem on his wanderings, notably tossing a Molotov cocktail at a passerby. The story's pivot is a hectoring speech the narrator delivers to an increasingly terrified hitchhiker:

Think of the violent reactionary movements that could arise – are arising already, Milo, as we speak – from people's desire to find something to hold on to. Paint yourself a picture, Milo, of the kind of man or woman another hundred years of this process might produce! [...] "And you, Milo, are at the heart of this process! [...] ARE YOU LISTENING, MILO? MARK MY WORDS!"

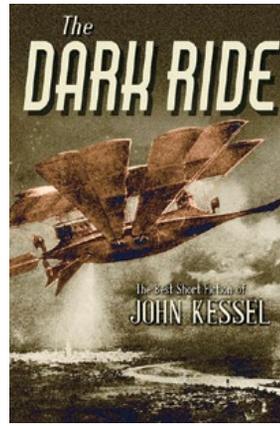
This rant is an example of a common element in Kessel's rhetoric of fiction, what Kim Stanley Robinson in his introduction calls the "epiphanic" passage, "when one character suddenly speaks to another in a hieratic way, in a pronouncement or revelation," and once it has been pointed it out, it's impossible to miss. (Examples to follow.)

The longest story in the volume, "Stories for Men", fits the "comic inferno" model – an inversion of some social-economic-political assumptions or givens that play out to satirical or didactic effect. It is also studded with variations on the epiphanic speech, mostly from a men's-liberation rabble-rouser. Nevertheless, despite its solidly worked-out lunar-environment setting and the systematic parsing of gender-role questions, "Stories for Men" strikes me as a bit schematic. (Though to be fair, it found its way into a novel, **The Moon and the Other**, that provides a number of perspectives.)

Perhaps the straightest of straight-SF stories is "Clean": built on a single speculative idea (a treatment for Alzheimer's that removes layers of personal memory in order to save the person), it is also a portrait of familial relations, in this case of a distant and eventually dementia-diminished husband, an exhausted and exasperated wife, and a daughter who must navigate these domestic shoals and reefs. This is one of the non-genre threads that runs through these stories: parents and children, and especially the reconstruction of family history. It also has one of the book's neatest and most moving structures, beginning and ending in the father's workshop.

Speaking of workshops, "Spirit Level" (one of the most evocative titles in a volume of cleverly-titled stories) features a lovely and dead-accurate catalogue of the contents of a garage workshop:

bottles of solvent, several shelves of old paint cans with the colors dripped down over the labels, shop rags, C-clamps, a pipe clamp, jelly jars full of metal screws, wood screws, and nails of various sizes... a welding helmet, the snowblower, three dented aluminum trash barrels, half a case of Genesee cream ale from forty years ago.



This is not SF but a story of family memories and regrets crossed with a kind of ghost story – except the ghosts are not of the dead, and it is not clear exactly what their nature might be. (Kessel's note cites Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw" as a model.)

In fact, the most striking side of Kessel's work comes from the blurring of lines: between genre and "literary" techniques and tropes; between actual and speculative history; between fiction and memoir – or all these lines at once. One trademark is stories that put SF tropes on collision courses

with non-genre machineries and techniques. Sometimes this operates by subtraction. "The Motorman's Coat" has an entire science-fictional back-story present only in hints and flashes, and the "The Closet" is all effect with no explanation or justification/framework at all. As a result, both are pushed in the direction of parable or allegory. Then there's "The Lecturer", an example of what I have elsewhere called the "naked fantastic": stories in which the impossible is presented without any framework of genre conventions or explanations. This is the territory of literalized metaphors and imaginary landscapes, of Borges's "The Library of Babel", of Pirandello, of Kafka (in whom Kessel has a particular interest).

For this former English teacher, though, there's a special appeal in the stories that revisit, extend, or redesign historical moments or literary classics. "Invaders" deploys most of this armamentarium as it alternates a (fictionalized) straight-historical depiction of the conquest of the Incas with comic-inferno SF segments about drug-addled alien visitors in the 21st century, both of which are interrupted by sections labeled "Today" (1990 when the story was published) in which the author *in propria persona* breaks the fourth wall to discuss what the rest of the story is doing.

Kessel also speaks directly to the reader in "Buffalo", which fictionalizes his own family history by imagining a 1934 meeting between his father, working for the Civilian Conservation Corps, and H. G. Wells. It's a meditation on aspirations and constraints and work and hope and ends with an authorial address to the audience and a reflection about the possibilities offered by art: that it

doesn't have to deliver a message in order to say something important. That art isn't always a means to an end but sometimes an end in itself. That art may not be able to change the world, but it can still change the moment.

The big three of this part of the book are re-
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THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

July 24, 2089. Iran and Pakistan schedule eight-day war. The conflict, to be fought in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley by Kurdish mercenaries, is to settle a maintenance issue aboard the International Space Mosque. No date set.

LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: CAREN GUSOFF SUMPTION

The Girl Who Outgrew the World, Zoje Stage (Lethe 978-1-59021-523-4, \$15.00, 180pp, tp) May 2022.

Darling Girl, Liz Michalski (Dutton 978-0-593-18563-6, \$26, 352pp, hc) May 2022

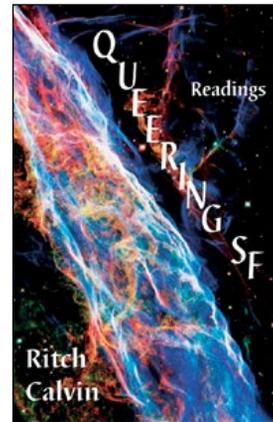
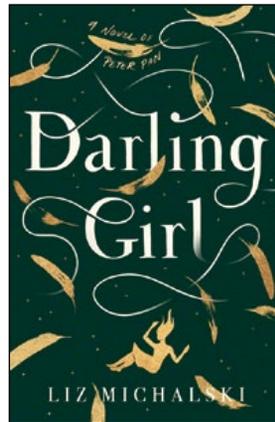
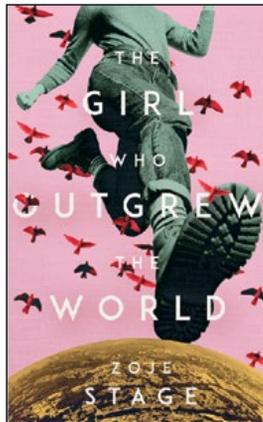
Queering SF: Readings, Ritch Calvin (Aqueduct 978-1-61976-220-6, \$18, 218pp, tp) May 2022.

Eleven-year-old Lilly is having a growth spurt. Only this is no ordinary, normal march towards adolescence. In Zoje Stage's new novella, **The Girl Who Outgrew the World**, the title itself reveals the scale and pace of Lilly's development, a mysterious, monstrous, and inexplicable surge that baffles and frightens her father, her friends, her town, and all the specialty physicians brought in to diagnose the source of her sudden, unstoppable growth.

Aside from Lilly's seemingly-magical increase in size, the world Stage builds seems, initially, familiar. James, Lilly's father, is a single dad doing the best that he can raising his daughter and working in IT. Lilly attends school with her best friend, Rain, and the girls take turns hanging out at one another's houses afterward, eating snacks, playing games, and testing out their proto-teenage gossip skills. But, quickly, we're provided small details that assure us that this world is not our world – birds speak, for instance (and not just the parakeets and cockatoos we know, but wild birds, flying around), and fairy tale worlds are thought to actually exist (though not nearby). In this, Stage deftly moves the book from the magical realism we expect on page one into the uncanny slipstream universe. If you enjoy Karen Russell and Kelly Link, Stage's world will hold great appeal.

Lilly's growth quickly becomes... problematic. Not just for practical reasons, though we are shown those: a seamstress is brought in to tailor the girl a wardrobe; special tables and chairs are procured for Lilly at school; and paparazzi stalk Lilly for sensationalist photos. The emergent issue is that James has begun to fear Lilly, and, while he harbors some guilt and shame over fearing his own daughter, he is enthusiastically in favor of handing Lilly over to the doctors who want to hospitalize her and subject her to risky, experimental radiation treatments to arrest her growth. Even though these treatments are unproven and, the doctors warn, could harm Lilly's brain, James is willing to subject his daughter to any side effects in hope of returning her to "normal."

Herein is the rub. Lilly, of course, overhears the risks and is heartbroken by her father's betrayal. She decides to run away, to find the "village of wrong things," a place where everything and everyone broken and imperfect is welcomed. Though the village exists only in stories, Lilly has no doubt of its existence and that there she will be "normal." However, Stage counts on us, as readers, to understand that there is no such thing as normal – not here, not in folklore – especially when it comes to the bodies of girls and women. Lilly is eleven; she is, magical growth spurt or not, on the cusp of puberty. Puberty is never dealt evenly and fairly across age and gender, in this world or any other – some develop early, some



bloom late. We all get there, but on our own timelines. Lilly's growth has not only increased her height and girth. She has developed breasts as well, so she is privy now to two flavors of gaze – the gaze that she is a "freak" and a new, sexualized gaze – and, due to her father's fears, she winds up with no guidance on how to handle either.

Lilly may be in danger of outgrowing the world, but she is also in danger from the world. On her own, she understands just about as much as any eleven year old would. She initially trusts one of the doctors who studied her, and accepts shelter from him. But he sexually assaults her. She escapes, after killing him, and does finally find true assistance, in the form of a strange logger named Angus who agrees to drive Lilly to "TownTown," the residence of a group of women who, he says, are the ones that can really help Lilly. The women – crones, warriors, priestesses – do, indeed, bring Lilly to the place, or rather, to become the place that she was born to be.

It is a bit jarring to move so quickly from rape to magic in the plot. The book is a novella, and a tightly plotted one, with a lot that needs to happen to deliver Lilly into the care of the magical women who will help her find her true place. And Lilly is young – precociously intelligent, but young – and so she does not have a lot of the skills or emotional development for her to process the assault. But we do. **The Girl Who Outgrew the World**, though it has young narrators and concerns a young adult, is not a YA book. Therefore, though the ending winds up as both beautiful and melancholy, the fact that the assault – in fact, all Lilly's sexualization – goes unprocessed means that the story ultimately feels unresolved.

I have a confession: I've always been a bit creeped out by **Peter Pan**. Some of this is contextual. I read the original **Peter Pan** as a child, and it is rife with a type of whimsy I, by nature and culture, found darkly suspicious (to wit, I also found **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland** full of subtle horrors). I never saw the sanitized, wholesome Broadway version, and I finally watched the Disney movie as an adult – so my personal vision of the boy who never grew up always had a bit of a ghoulish taint.

Apparently, though, I've not been alone in my wariness of Peter Pan as an archetype for pure innocence. Liz Michalski's latest novel, **Darling Girl**, fully fleshes out the vague uneasiness I felt,

as it unblinkingly teases out the unspoken darkness at the heart of Peter Pan, and depicts the messy aftermath of how Neverland affected generations of Darling women.

Holly Darling is a wildly successful skincare entrepreneur. The granddaughter of Wendy Darling (and daughter of Jane), Holly has inherited both generational wealth – thanks to the success of J.M. Barrie's novel, from which all Darlings financially benefited – and generational trauma. Holly is brilliant, distant, and cold, much like her mother, a well-known socialite, and her grandmother, who was described as being completely devoid of motherly instinct (an interesting departure from classic depictions of Wendy). Holly has also survived some serious personal tragedy: Holly's husband and one of her twin sons were killed in a car crash, which also left Holly herself and her surviving son, Jack, with debilitating injuries, and Holly's daughter, Eden, has spent more than 10 years in a coma due to both an accident involving a fall from a tree and a congenital condition which causes accelerated aging.

Soon into **Darling Girl**, we learn that Eden, who has been secretly cared for in England, while Holly and Jack live in New York, has disappeared. This is an immediate crisis because not only is Eden gravely ill, but she is also a bit of a family secret. Few people outside the family know she exists. This is partly because Eden's blood has magical healing properties, which Holly has been covertly harvesting – and cultivating into purified plasma that she injects into Jack and mixes into lotions for herself – using the magic to keep them both healed from their accident-acquired disabilities. It is also because the source of this magic stems from Eden's parentage. She was conceived during a grief-induced affair Holly had after the accident... with, who else, but Peter Pan.

Peter continued to visit the Darling women, though he never reached out to Jane, a source of intense friction and jealousy between Jane and Holly. Jane never went through intense sadness, like Wendy and Holly, and it turns out that Peter is a type of emotional vampire, attracted to suffering. Peter was not into stories. Peter was not into having a "mother" figure. The Peter Pan of Michalski's vision is a monster, willing to kill anyone in his way or, sometimes, just for fun. Though Holly harbors some guilt, feeling like seducing Peter was the point at which he lost his

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LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: IAN MOND

The Daughter of Doctor Moreau, Silvia Moreno-Garcia (Del Rey 978-0-59335-533-6, \$28.00, 320pp, hc) July 2022.

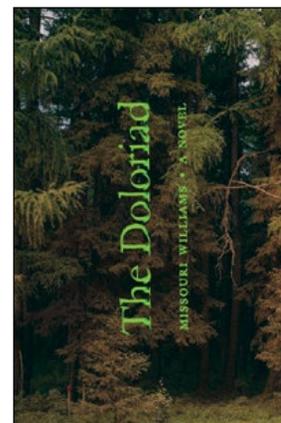
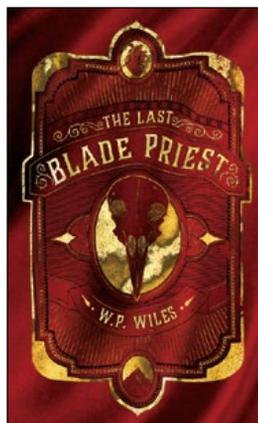
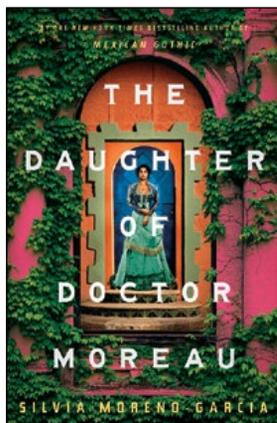
The Last Blade Priest, W.P. Wiles (Angry Robot 978-0-85766-982-7, \$15.99, 400pp, pb) July 2022.

The Doloriad, Missouri Williams (MCD x FSG Originals 978-0-37460-508-7, \$17.00, 240pp, tp) March 2022.

Silvia Moreno-Garcia's **The Daughter of Doctor Moreau** is not a prequel or sequel to H.G. Wells's classic short novel **The Island of Doctor Moreau**. It's a reboot. And like all good reboots, Moreno-Garcia takes the key ingredients – Moreau's "study of the plasticity of living forms," his alcoholic assistant Montgomery, an isolated environment, and, most importantly, the "Beast People" – and reimagines them in a notably different manner but in keeping with the source material. The inclination would be to update the story for the 21st century, to reframe the Doctor as a fringe scientist illegally experimenting with animal and human DNA. Thankfully, Moreno-Garcia goes in a different direction, one that aligns with her undertaking to infuse traditional genre tropes – whether it be vampires, the Gothic, or Regency romances – with Mexican culture and history.

Instead of an unnamed island somewhere between Peru and Chile, Moreno-Garcia situates **The Daughter of Doctor Moreau** amongst the tropical rainforests and jungles of the Yucatán. The bulk of the action takes place in 1877 during the decades-long "Caste War" between the Maya people and the Mexican Government. Against this backdrop, in a hacienda called Yaxaktun, Doctor Moreau, along with his daughter Carlota, continues his experiments on animal/human hybrids with the capacity to talk, walk upright, and manipulate tools. Yaxaktun is owned by Henry Lizalde, a wealthy businessman who funds Moreau's work on the promise that the hybrids will eventually replace the rebellious Mayan people who work on Lizalde's plantations. But for Moreau, the hybrids – of which there are twenty-nine living on the hacienda – are much more than a potential workforce. They are the next step in human evolution.

The narrative alternates between the third-person viewpoint of Carlota and the major-domo of Yaxaktun, Montgomery Laughton (the surname a lovely reference to Charles Laughton, who played Doctor Moreau in the first English-language movie adaptation of Wells's novel, **The Island of Lost Souls**). Like his doppelgänger in **The Island of Doctor Moreau**, Montgomery is a high-functioning alcoholic able to perform his daily duties around the hacienda and, every few months, hunt jaguars (not pumas) for the Doctor's experiments. But unlike Wells's Montgomery, about whom we know very little (aside from him leaving London having made a "young ass" of himself), Moreno-Garcia provides insight into Laughton's past, which includes an abusive childhood, a sister who committed suicide, and a failed marriage. Regarding Carlota, we're told by



Moreau that she was born with a rare condition of the blood, an ailment he cured by fashioning a medication that combines "certain unique elements found in the jaguar with the essential gemmules of my child." Now 20 years of age, Carlota is a charming, beautiful young woman who has spent most of her life tending to the hybrids, especially her close friends Lupe and Cachito. Everything, however, changes for Carlota and the residents of Yaxaktun with the arrival of Henry's son, Eduardo Lizalde, a dashing young man with "lively green eyes" who takes an immediate shine to Carlota, an attraction she reciprocates.

Moreno-Garcia's inspired changes to Wells's novel don't end with the setting, the introduction of Carlota, or the fleshing out of both Montgomery and Moreau (who in this reboot is a citizen of France). The lack of vivisection – the Doctor's experiments, as noted above, involve the commingling of Darwinian gemmules – means there's no animal torture, with Wells's "House of Pain" now a clever reference to the room where the hybrids receive their weekly injections. More profoundly, Moreno-Garcia not only removes any mention of "Beast People," but her hybrids also don't regress like their Wellsian counterparts; they may be genetically flawed, but they maintain their intelligence and sentience throughout. The one theme of **The Island of Doctor Moreau** that Moreno-Garcia does lean into is Moreau's use of religion to discipline his creations. The hybrids are expected to attend weekly services in a makeshift chapel where Moreau piously quotes scripture, setting himself up, in their eyes, as a God-like figure. For both Wells and Moreno-Garcia, this epitomises Moreau's arrogance, his belief that he stands above nature. But Moreno-Garcia also explores how spirituality and God shape Carlota's worldview. Even when faced with Montgomery's atheism, her father's egotism, and the violent events of the novel, she remains a believer in the God she "glimpsed... in between the orchids and vines of Yaxaktun." It's a depiction of faith that's far more subtle and meaningful than Wells's satirical approach.

I know I've spent the entirety of this review comparing **The Daughter of Doctor Moreau** to **The Island of Doctor Moreau**, leaving the impression that you need to have read that book to fully appreciate Moreno-Garcia's fine novel. But that's not the case. With its evocative prose, post-colonial historical setting that drives the

plot, and the introduction of vibrant, fascinating characters, both familiar and new, **The Daughter of Doctor Moreau** very much stands on its own.

Over the last couple of years, I've noticed a trend: literary authors turning their hand to epic fantasy. It began – in my humble opinion – with Marlon James, better known for his Man Booker award-winning novel **A Brief History of Seven Killings**, who, in 2019, penned **Black Leopard, Red Wolf**, labelled as the "African *Game of Thrones*." A year later saw the release of Alex Pheby's **Mordew**, an incredibly imaginative secondary-world fantasy novel from an author whose previous book, **Lucia**, was an experimental masterpiece about James Joyce's daughter. This year has seen the publication of Ottessa Moshfegh's **Lapvona**, which, while technically not an epic fantasy, has all the grimdark qualities of the genre with its fictional medieval fiefdom simmering with violence, debauchery, and magic. And now we have W.P. Wiles, who, when writing as Will Wiles, is known for his dark, edgy, literary books like **Care of Wooden Floors** and **The Way Inn** that play in a liminal, speculative space. In complete contrast, his latest novel, **The Last Blade Priest**, the first book in a planned series, unashamedly embraces the tropes of epic fantasy – the political shenanigans, complex magic systems, and ancient, enigmatic Gods – that make the genre so much fun to read.

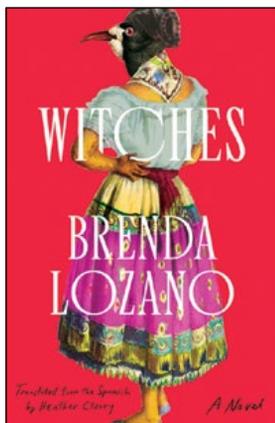
The Last Blade Priest centres on two protagonists, Inar and Anton. Inar is a Master Builder whose father – the Chief Builder – betrayed the Kingdom of Mishig-Tenh to the League of Free Nations, supplying intel on the weakest points in the capital city's defences. Against his better judgement, but with little say in the matter, Inar and his apprentice Lott find themselves in service to the League, specifically a party led by Surveyor General Anzola Stiyitta, the *merite* who breached the walls of the city. In his role as spy, Inar is to

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THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

July 18, 2111. Sandstorm swallows Timbuctu. North Africa's best (and only) tourist attraction since the controlled demolition of the Pyramids of Giza is not expected to reappear. Year-old storm still rages.

LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: GABINO IGLESIAS



Witches, Brenda Lozano (MacLehose Press 978-1-529-41227-7, \$22.04, 271pp, hc) April 2022.

Echo, Thomas Olde Heuvelt (Tor Nightfire 978-1-250-75955-9, \$29.99, 416pp, hc) February 2022.

Hidden Pictures, Jason Rekulak (Flatiron Books 978-1-250-81934-5, \$27.99, 384pp, hc) May 2022. Cover by Donna Sinisgalli Noetzel.

The Damage Done, Michael Landweber (Crooked Lane Books 978-1643859477, \$27.99, 352pp, hc) March 2022. Cover by Patrick Sullivan.

Renowned Mexican author and PEN Award winner Brenda Lozano's fourth novel **Witches** weaves together two parallel narratives that delve deep into the lives of two very different women who live in the same country but inhabit different worlds. This vivid novel, translated from the Spanish by Heather Cleary, almost reads like two separate novellas tied together loosely by one narrative point, but the very different voices and the lives of the two main characters make it work.

Feliciana is an indigenous curandera who lives in the very small town of San Felipe in Jalisco, Mexico. She doesn't speak Spanish and doesn't know how to read or write, but she has been given gifts that allow her to heal people, both physically and spiritually. Throughout her life Feliciana has taken care of locals and international celebrities. There have been documentaries made about her gifts and newspaper and magazine articles written about what she does. Far from Feliciana, in Mexico City, lives Zoe, a journalist who has a very deep connection to her mother and sister. The two women meet when Zoe covers the murder of Paloma, Feliciana's cousin, a trans woman.

More than a novel with a standard narrative arc, **Witches** tells the story of Feliciana and Zoe, exploring the most significant events of their lives and chronicling the decisions and experiences that shaped them. They live in the same country at the same time, and Paloma's story brings them together, but most of the novel is about them, apart, and the ways they understand the world.

While this is a book with two separate stories and two main characters, it possesses a central idea that gives it a sense of cohesion. It's something Zoe's mother tells her after she "sees" something



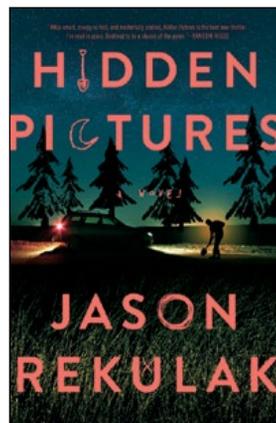
and they both go to rescue Zoe's sister from a man who wanted to abuse her: "All women... are born with a bit of bruja in them, for protection." Zoe's mother has an instinct for things, which is far from the active work – potions, healings, burying of names, rituals, etc. – Feliciana is known for, but they are the same in the sense that both of them embrace their gifts, their sixth sense, that ineffable talent women have for dealing with things, which Zoe's mother calls simply "intuition."

For more than half the novel, Feliciana and Zoe seem to live on different planets. As they recount their lives, the differences are huge and very obvious. However, there is something slightly supernatural that brings them together, even if it's not approached directly in the narrative. Also, both of them narrate their chapters, which alternate, and their voices are very different. However, that difference only makes them more interesting when seen next to each other. Zoe is an educated modern woman with a knack for telling stories about her sister. Feliciana, on the other hand, has a very peculiar voice with a unique rhythm and way of seeing life, death, love, family, and her work through a distinctive, supernatural lens:

And so there are deaths of companionship, there are people who die so they can follow the one who went before them, then death lays its egg in a person's soul because they ask it to and if it doesn't they try to take its egg the way people snatch things in the market, but death is always there to trill its song.

By presenting two women who are so different from one another, Lozano shows readers two cultures, two histories, two ways of living, two Mexicos, and two ways of interpreting the world. Her simple, unadorned prose is deceptive because readers think they are reading about Zoe's childhood or about Feliciana's husband, who went to war and returned an abusive alcoholic who hit their three children, but it soon becomes clear to those paying attention that they are also reading about the way we rarely know someone completely, and that knowing others is impossible until we truly know ourselves.

Witches is about magic, healing, and how your experiences affect the way you process trauma. Lozano is a keen observer who brings two very different worlds to the page with vibrant passages and a lot of heart. Work in translation is crucial because it opens doors to other places, ideas,



identities, and cultures, and that's what this novel accomplishes very well.

Reviewing the work of Thomas Olde Heuvelt is no easy task, and **Echo**, his latest, is no different. Translated from the Dutch by Moshe Gilula, this is a complex, creepy, atmospheric, labyrinthine monster that comes in at more than 400 pages.

Echo by Thomas Olde Heuvelt is a novel about many things; grief, trauma, unconditional love, murder, creatures from the dark, eerie birds, and alpinism. That said, it is also about something else, something stranger than all those things put together: "This is the story of a possession." But we're not talking about demonic entities or evil spirits here, we're talking about a mountain.

Nick Grevers, a travel journalist and talented mountaineer, wakes up in the hospital with his face destroyed and part of it missing. He is confused, unable to speak due to his injuries, and has his entire face wrapped in bandages. Next to him is his boyfriend Sam Avery, simultaneously worried about him and scared about what Nick might look like under all those bandages. As Nick starts to get a sense of where he's at and what happened to him, he learns that Augustin, his climbing partner, is missing and presumed dead. Nick says he doesn't remember much of what went down on the mountain he and Augustin were climbing, a rough, remote peak in the Swiss Alps known as the Maudit, but the truth is he remembers everything. He remembers the journey up the mountain. He remembers feeling like he and Augustin weren't alone up there. He remembers Augustin screaming and plummeting to his death. Once Nick gets back home, things get weird. There's something haunting him, something that makes him want to dwell in the cellar and keep his face hidden. Sam notices and worries about him, but things take a turn for the worse when he tries to get a peek at Nick's face and finds a crevasse there, one full of dark birds and a creature trying to claw its way out of his boyfriend's face.

The preceding synopsis manages to talk through only about 30% of the narrative. **Echo**, which is narrated mostly by Sam and Nick, is expansive and intricate. As in all of Heuvelt's novels, there is a lot going on here: Sam's past, what Nick experienced on the mountain, the way the accident – which wasn't an accident – affects

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LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: COLLEEN MONDOR



Lakelore, Anna-Marie McLemore (Feiwel and Friends 978-1-250-62414-7, \$18.99, 304pp, hc) March 2022. Cover by Carolina Rodriguez Fuenmayor.

This Is Not the Real World, Anna Carey (Quirk 978-1-68369-281-2, \$18.99, 288pp, hc) March 2022. Cover by Silke Werzinger.

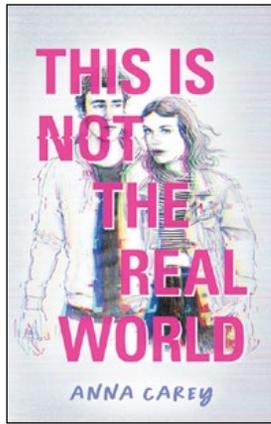
Gallant, V.E. Schwab (Greenwillow 978-0-06-283577-2, \$18.99, 352pp, hc) March 2022. Cover by David Curtis.

The Book of Living Secrets, Madeleine Roux (Quill Tree Books 978-0-06-294142-8, \$17.99, 400pp, hc) March 2022.

The delicate contemporary fantasy **Lakelore** uses author Anna-Marie McLemore's familiar lush language to describe a strange and beautiful world beneath a lake and the two teenagers who explore it. The magic elements are subtle and largely expressed through the papier-mâché construction of alebrije, Mexican folk art sculptures of imaginary creature which come to life in the narrative. The alebrije are created by Bastián, one of the two protagonists, who, along with their friend Lore, is on a personal journey to discover themselves and how they fit in the world.

McLemore's previous books, including **Wild Beauty** and **The Mirror Season**, have showcased the author's deft touch in weaving magic through plots that include mystery and family drama. In **Lakelore** the teens are each on a quest to fully embrace their nonbinary status, while also dealing with ADHD and dyslexia, and these coming-of-age journeys propel the plot far more than the magic elements. While Bastián and Lore try to learn more about what lies beneath the lake, and how Bastián's alebrije fit into that world, their friendship develops into romance, and they each become comfortable in who they are. Along the way there is a fun group of friends, supportive parents, a possibly haunted house, and an intuitive therapist. The alebrije are the most important plot point, however, and are key to the lake's gorgeous secrets.

There are several layers to **Lakelore**, but I think its strongest appeal can be found in the frank conversations between Bastián and Lore, such as when they discuss a personal daily "gender forecast." McLemore does more than just give

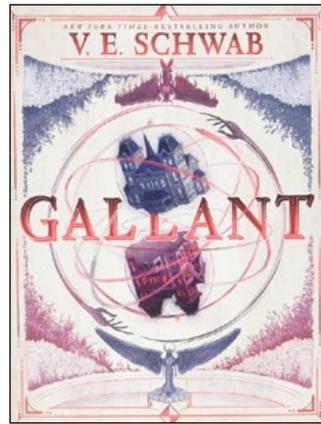


diversity lip service in this novel, and the specific way in which Bastián's ADHD combines with their artistic talent, resulting in the alebrije construction, is a new riff on how magic can unexpectedly manifest through personal struggle. The narrative's multiple coming-of-age aspects can sometimes push aside the plot's magical elements and decrease the suspense, but for all its watery mystery **Lakelore** has no intention of being a thriller. This is a title to savor, and for readers with questions similar to the protagonists, it will be one to love.

Spoiler warning: This review contains spoilers for **This Is Not the Jess Show**.

Anna Carey's **This Is Not the Real World** opens five months after the events of **This Is Not the Jess Show**. Protagonist Jess and her boyfriend Kipps have successfully escaped the reality TV show in which Jess was raised and are hiding out in Maine with their rescuers until Kipps reaches the age of 18 and is no longer bound by the production contract signed by his parents. Jess is adapting to life in the real world and learning more of what she missed in the current year, 2037, while living in a show that was set in the 1990s. Still angry with her parents and the show's producers for lying to her for so many years, she is on a high state of alert about being discovered by Like-Life Productions. When Kipps is found and forced back onto the show, Jess knows she has to go back and get him out, while also revealing the truth to the world about the producers and their nefarious activities.

I was pleasantly surprised to see a sequel to **This Is Not the Jess Show**, as that book ended on a solid note with no cliffhangers. Carey easily continues the story, and it is not hard to believe that the villainous Like-Life Productions would pursue Kipps and make life hard for Jess as well. The company is furious about the people who helped Jess and Kipps and sets out to destroy Charli and Sara, who have become the only real family that Jess now has. Her decision to return to the show and "tear it down from the inside" is understandable and gives readers the delightful opportunity to see the program from the other side. As Jess discovers all the ways in which she was fooled into thinking it was her real life, and how the many actors and producers on the show were able to keep her in the dark, she also finds out who her real friends, and enemies, are. This



makes for some thrilling moments and a lot of suspense as she must put fresh acting skills to the test for some very serious reasons.

This Is Not the Real World succeeds as a romantic near-future thriller, packing plenty of excitement as Jess and Kipps figure out who they can trust while also navigating how they can both get out with the proof they need to take down Like-Life once and for all. The fast-paced plot makes for exciting reading, but Carey also makes a few salient points about the dark appeal of reality television that give the narrative a deeper message. "Nostalgia is a balm for all the world's problems," one of her fellow actors explains to Jess, "Nostalgia as a way to zone out. When everything ahead of you is too terrifying to think about, you start looking back." Carey is giving her readers a warning here, and in the midst of enjoying Jess's adventures, they would be wise to heed it. Kudos to the author for weaving something so prescient into a novel that seems far-fetched and even occasionally funny but is actually far more realistic than we may care to believe.

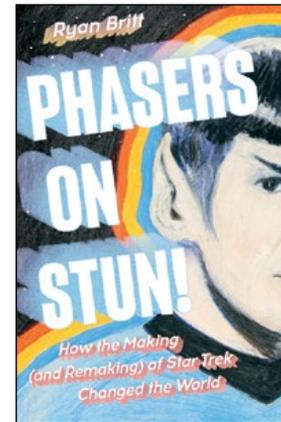
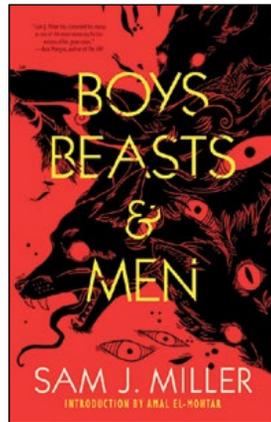
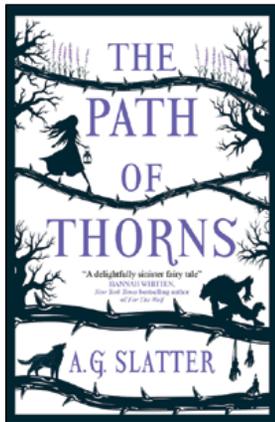
Victoria Schwab's **Gallant** is a dark confection, a tale that shares tropes with gothic classics (a curse, ghosts, a house of faded glamour that is shrouded in mystery) and pins its hope for a happy ending on a tortured heroine who is haunted by the secrets of a past she never knew. There is a terrible orphanage, "The Merilance School for Independent Girls," which is, really, in the words of our heroine Olivia, "an asylum for the young and the feral and the fortuneless." No one wants to be there, and they are all terrified of what will happen when they leave. To pass the time they torment each other, and as a nonverbal girl obsessed with her long missing mother, Olivia seems to be an easy target. That she proves herself to be more terrifying than anything the other girls could dish out is to be expected, as she sees dead people and thus the living are hardly something that inspires

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THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

July 5, 2155. Aloha, South Pacific Gyre! In its boldest move since independence, Hawaii annexes the profitable Plastic Patch. The colorful, bouncy surface attracts both kayakers and jellows, staple seafood of the homeless.

LOCUS LOOKS AT BOOKS: DIVERS HANDS



PAULA GURAN

The Path of Thorns, A.G. Slatter (Titan 978-1-78909-4374, \$15.99, 384pp, tp) June 2022.

With **The Path of Thorns** A.G. (Angela) Slatter returns to the Sourdough world of her smashingly good novel **All the Murmuring Bones**, and this latest novel may be even better than than the previous one. The book begins with our heroine Asher Todd arriving at Morwood Grange to assume duties as a governess, and Slatter packs more dread and suspense into the first few pages than most authors can manage in an entire book. Asher is no ordinary governess, and her intentions for the Morwood family have little to do with the three children's education. She is full of secrets and has made a fateful promise to her dead mother. The Morwoods have twisted secrets of their own, and it is soon apparent that some of Asher's and the family's mysteries are entwined. As Asher contemplates late in the action: "Secrets do not stay in the dark where we put them. Some lie dormant, but others slither beneath doors, over windowsills, through the cracks in the walls, out into the light where everyone can see them." Asher's agenda involves ghosts, solving the disappearance of the previous governess, restoring the sight of the family matriarch, healing the local folk, dealing with a deliciously sexy werewolf, and more. Slatter provides her protagonist and plot with a wonderfully multi-dimensional supporting cast of household and estate staff, residents of Morwood Tarn, the Morwoods themselves, and people from her past. She already knows that a "woman's life is the path of thorns....We walk through it, our feet will always hurt," but like any good heroine, Asher grows and learns from her experiences, and by the end of the book the reader can't help but want to know more about her future adventures. As atmospheric and uber-gothic as **The Path of Thorns** is, there's humor too. Slatter delivers it all in a gorgeously written, deeply dark, deliciously rich, and magical package.

Boys, Beasts & Men, Sam J. Miller (Tachyon 978-1-61696-3729, \$17.95, 330pp, tp) June 2022. Cover by Jennifer O'Toole.

Occasional encounters with Sam J. Miller's novels (**The Art of Starving**, **Blackfish City**) and short stories certainly impress, but only an

assemblage like this can truly display his talent, versatility, imagination, and flat-out uniqueness. Warning: all story descriptions herein are lacking because they cannot come close to conveying the nuance and many layers Miller mixes into a story. His tales invariably strike deep into both a reader's heart and gut. Unabashedly queer, he frequently explores the relationships between parents and children, friends and lovers, and siblings, but those connections often act as an arc for an overall meaning: together we can, collectively, do something about the monsters.

"The Heat of Us: Notes Toward an Oral History" is about Stonewall, resistance, and activism. Collective power is, perhaps, most plainly conveyed in "Angel, Monster, Man", which begins in 1987 when a trio of gay men invent "Tom Minniq" – a synthesis of the many brilliant, queer artists who died before their time. Tom transcends their invention.

A living dinosaur is discovered in "Allosaurus Burgers", but the true story is about the moment a son learns his mother is merely human. The US has become a place to immigrate from in "Calved", but mostly it is the heart-rending story of a man who does a tragically wrong thing in an effort to gain his son's love. In "When Your Child Strays from God" a son is growing into someone his mother does not comprehend. She uses a drug that induces shared hallucinations to pursue him. It's a wild and wacky but still profound story. "Conspicuous Plumage" concerns a young woman who wants to see how her brother was killed. It's a lovely story about a brutal murder.

A gay 16-year-old uses a special power to wreak revenge on six vicious bullies and loses a friend in "57 Reasons for the Slate Quarry Suicides". "We Are the Cloud" is set in the near-future where human brains – inevitably those of the poor – are used for data processing. A cloud-porting gentle giant of a young man in foster care learns that desire is a dangerous thing and that he is more powerful than anyone imagines. "Shucked" explores how one never really knows those one loves. Set in revolutionary Russia, "The Beasts We Want to Be" involves a strange painting and a young man who loses the friend who helped him realize who his is. Lonely In "Ghosts of Home", Agnes appeases household spirits in bank-owned dwellings that are doomed by imminent destruction. She discovers the spirits have a special mission for her and to never take

either love or a home for granted.

Movies are a starting point for a couple of stories. Something of King Kong still survives in "Shattered Sidewalks of the Human Heart". The Things from **The Thing** film take on a wildly different meaning in "Things with Beards". "Sun in an Empty Room", original to the collection, is told from the point of view of a canary yellow Salvation Army sofa.

There is also a story contained in fifteen connecting "chapters" that introduce sections. Among other things, it tells us "the world is way weirder and more full of monsters than any of us ever suspect..." and that "telling stories is a way to feel less like the only creature like me in the whole dark, cold cosmic multiverse." After reading **Boys, Beasts & Men** one can't help but feel Sam J. Miller realizes the truth of these statements more than most of us. Learn from him.

Corpsemouth and Other Autobiographies, John Langan (Word Horde 978-1-956252-01-9, \$21.99, 304pp, tp) May 2022. Cover by Matthew Jaffe.

John Langan explores – as Sarah Langan phrases it in her introduction – "families in peril" in this aptly titled short story collection. In the strong opening story, "Kore", a family's Halloween tradition turns far eerier than expected as a door to a dark cosmos is opened. That entryway into the weird is made accessible again and again in the 10 stories that follow. A bully is defeated by a boy's Godzilla toy in "Homemade Monsters". Reality is altered with Lovecraftian effect in both "The Open Mouth of Charybdis" and "Shadow and Thirst". In the title story, a visit to the ancestral homeland of Scotland brings knowledge of an ancient monster. Another monster is confronted over a lengthy period by a father, son, and friend of the father in "Anchor". Another dimension of cosmic horror is breached – this time through rock music – in "Outside the House, Watching for the Crows". "What is Lost, What is Given Away" tells of an encounter with a dishonored ex-teacher. A mysterious book provides a different and far more pleasant life than the one currently lived – at, of course, a cost – in the poignant "The Supplement". A teen boy in "Mirror Fishing" finds a horrific pathway to what he desires. A mother reveals how, during a WWII bombing

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THE SWERVE

We're all trapped on a bus.
The bus is barreling towards a cliff.
Beyond the cliff is a canyon plunge any of us will be lucky to survive.

Even if we survive, none of us know how we'll climb out of that deep canyon.

Some of us want to yank the wheel.

The bus is going so fast that yanking the wheel could cause the bus to roll.

There might be some broken bones.

There might be *worse* than broken bones.

The driver won't yank the wheel.

The people in expensive front row seats agree.

"Yank the wheel? Are you crazy? Someone could break a leg!"

We say, "But there's a cliff! We're going to go over the cliff! We're going to die!"

"Nonsense," they say. "Long before we go over the cliff, we'll have figured out how to put wings on this bus."

We argue.

They add, "Besides, who's to say we'll fall off the cliff?"

Maybe we'll be going so fast that we leap the canyon. Fonzie did it! Calm down. Hey! Keep your hands off the wheel? What are you, a terrorist? Don't you *dare* do that again. Someone could get really badly hurt."

The climate emergency is real and we are living through it. As I write this, I've emailed some writer friends in the southwest to ask if the fires threaten them or their homes. One hasn't answered yet. The other wrote back to say they're fine, but what about the wildfires near my house?

Oh, I wrote. We're fine. So far. California is in for a hell of a wildfire season. It's dry out there. It's an emergency. Officially.

(It was an emergency before, but that was unofficial)

We're not acting like it's an emergency. In mid-May, *The Guardian* reported a bombshell: a series of planned "carbon bombs" – large-scale oil and gas projects that will "shatter the 1.5C climate goal." The war in Ukraine has the world scrambling for winter heat – for sources of oil and gas, that is, not renewable alternatives.

Of course not. The only way for renewables to replace Russian oil and gas this coming winter is for Europe to have retrooled around sustainable heating: a mix of beefed up insulation, heat pumps, and mass power shortage. Those are long projects. We knew we'd need them decades ago, but we kicked the can down the road, and further down the road, and further.

Incredibly, climate denial still festers. "There's no cliff," they insist. "This bus is on a smooth road that goes all the way to the promised land. Only a fool would swerve now."

The good news is: climate denial is on the wane. The bad news is: deniers have pivoted to incrementalism: "We'll fix the climate. Give us a couple decades to phase out oil and gas. Give us a couple decades to replace the cars and retrofit the houses. Give us a couple decades to invent cool direct-air carbon capture systems, or hydrogen cars that work just like gas cars, or to replace our overland aviation routes with high speed rail, or to increase our urban density and swap out cars for subways and buses. Give us a couple decades to keep making money. We'll get there."

In other words: "We're pretty sure we can get some wings on this bus before it goes over the cliff. Keep your hands off the wheel. Someone could get really badly hurt."

People are already getting really badly hurt, and it's only going to get worse. We're poised to break through key planetary boundaries – loss of biosphere diversity, ocean acidification, land poisoning – whose damage will be global, profound and sustained. Once we rupture these boundaries, we have no idea how to repair them. None of our current technologies will suffice, nor will any of the technologies we think we know how to make

or might know how to make.

These boundaries are the point of no return, the point at which it won't matter if we yank the wheel, because the bus is going over the cliff, swerve or no.

Focus on the swerve.

Believe it or not, the swerve is a happy ending. This is a hopeful article.

Here's what I hope we can do: I hope we can swerve.

A couple decades ago, the swerve might have been avoidable. It was 1977 when Exxon's own scientists concluded that their products would render the planet uninhabitable for humans. Exxon knew. They buried the research and paid for denial.

George H.W. Bush came into office in 1988 as the "Environmental President." He campaigned on "conven[ing] a global conference on the environment at the White House. It will include the Soviets, the Chinese... The agenda will be clear. We will talk about global warming." By 1992, he abandoned the idea of the US retooling to avert the catastrophe. "The American way of life," he told the Rio Earth Summit, "is not up for negotiations. Period."

If we'd started in 1977, we might have paid some civil engineers to build a bridge over the cliff. In 1988, it was still entirely possible. In 1992, the option was still there.

Today, time has run out for bridges.

All we've got left is the swerve.

We've got to seize the wheel of the bus. We've got to plunge past the first-class passengers in the front rows of the bus, and we have to yank the wheel. We have to swerve.

The bus will roll over. It won't be nice. We will probably have to abandon some of our most beautiful coastal cities and towns. We will probably have to retool our industries in haste, and commandeer our factories to build new energy tech instead of consumer tchotchkes – the way we ordered factories to produce vaccines and PPE last year.

I don't know what the first-class passengers were thinking. Some of them will be dead of natural causes before the bus goes over the cliff, and they didn't want to sacrifice any of their material comforts to ensure that the rest of us continued to live once they passed on, I suppose.

Others are just ideologically committed to traveling in a straight line. The swerve is morally bankrupt. It's communism. The only way to get over the cliff – if such a thing exists – is to *floor* the bus. Go as fast as possible. Leap the gorge! The Fonz did it, right?

The swerve is our hopeful future. Our happy ending isn't averting the disaster. Our happy ending is surviving the disaster. Managed retreat. Emergency measures.

In the swerve, we'll still have refugee crises, but we'll address them humanely, rather than building gulags and guard-towers.

We'll still have wildfires, but we'll evacuate cities ahead of them, and we'll commit billions to controlled burns.

We'll still have floods, but we'll relocate our cities out of floodplains.

We'll still have zoonotic plagues as animals flee their disappearing habitat, but we'll apply the lessons of COVID to them.

We'll still have mass extinctions, but we'll save the species we can, and we'll prioritize habit restoration as a way of preserving our horizontal brothers and sisters (as Muir called animals) and as a way of putting the climate back in balance.

We'll swerve. The bus will roll. It will hurt. It will be terrible.

But we won't be dead on canyon floor.

We'll fix the bus. We'll make it better. We'll get it back on its wheels. We'll get a better driver, and a better destination.

That's our happy ending. That's our hopeful future.

We gotta get ahold of that wheel first. You ready?

Let's roll.

–Cory Doctorow ■



Cory Doctorow



NADIA AFIFI

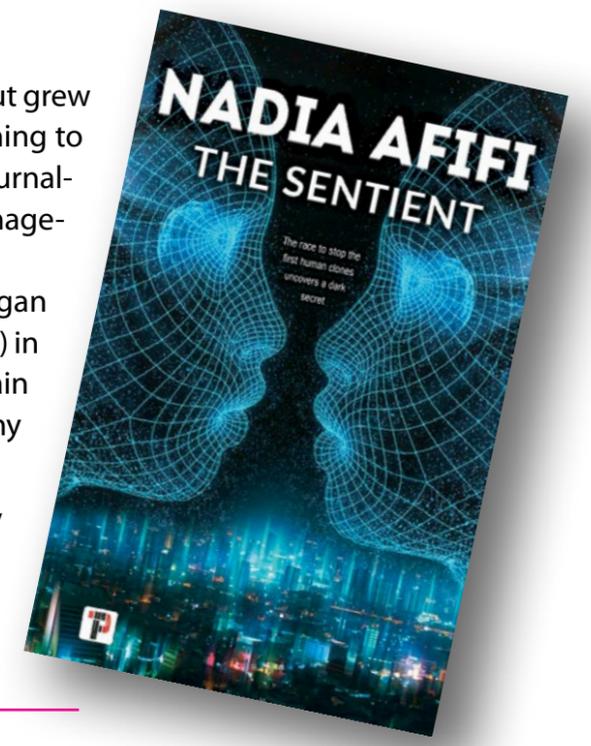
FRACTURED FUTURES

Nadia Afifi was born May 13, 1984 in the US, but grew up in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain before returning to the States for college, where she studied journalism and business. She now works as a program management officer for the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

After publishing a couple of stories in 'zines, she began producing work of genre interest with "Exhibit K" (2019) in *Abyss & Apex*, and has since published stories "The Bahrain Underground Bazaar" (2020) in *F&SF* and "A Thousand Tiny Gods" (2021) in *Clarkesworld*.

Her debut SF novel **The Sentient** appeared in 2020, with sequel **The Emergent** published in May 2022. A final volume in the trilogy is forthcoming.

Afifi lives in Denver CO.



“I’ve always been a big reader, and I wanted to be a writer early in childhood. I discovered I liked telling stories. I liked taking long walks by myself, even just pacing around my room in a circle and creating my own characters and creating my own stories. My family used to say, ‘What are you doing? Why are you walking and humming to yourself around the house?’ That was my early storytelling.

“People ask me where I’m from, and the answer is always long-winded and complicated – but: I’ve got an American mom and a Palestinian dad who is a Saudi national. I was born here in the States, but when we were young we moved back to the Middle East and I lived in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, which was definitely a unique experience growing up: being part ex-pat, part local, and coming back to visit family a lot in the States. It was a mixed-culture upbringing.

“I moved back to the States for college and got a journalism degree because I figured, ‘Well, I’m a good writer, therefore I’ll be a good journalist.’ Surprise, surprise, there’s a little more to being a journalist than knowing how to put a sentence together and write pretty descriptions, so I discovered it wasn’t for me. I got into working for the government after I got my graduate degree, and the writing thing fell by the wayside during those years. I wanted to write, but I never found the time to actually make it happen, beyond writing the occasional short story. Life shifted when

I took a different job and moved to Denver CO. I got out of a rut, into a new experience and a new start on life. I said, ‘I am going to write that SF novel that I have always wanted to write.’ I’ve been a science fiction fan for a long time. It wasn’t the only thing I enjoyed – I was a big literary geek when I was in high school, and I read a lot of classics, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. But I’ve always enjoyed SF, and I realized that’s the true thing I wanted to dig my teeth into and write.

“I started working on a novel in the evenings, and that ended up being **The Sentient**, my debut. I started off as a rookie not really knowing what I was doing. I just got into writing, and along the way, I got smarter about it. I went to writers’ workshops, I went to conferences, and I learned all the craft that I didn’t know. Like a lot of writers, my first draft was complete garbage, and then I worked and cut away and edited until it became not garbage. I went through the usual process of finding an agent and getting rejected a million times, and then finding the right agent, Naomi Davis – they work for Bookends Literary Agency. Then I got rejected for a book deal, and then finally got one. That’s my origin story.

“I had one or two short stories published before the book came out. I had a couple in smaller ‘zines, and then a short story published in *Abyss & Apex*. Then, after my

book deal, I had a story published in *F&SF* that I’m really proud of, ‘Bahrain Underground Bazaar’.

“For **The Sentient** I started off with almost a contrarian mindset. I wanted to tell a cloning story that wasn’t the typical cloning narrative. As a SF consumer, it’s always been a pet peeve of mine that cloning is always framed as this dangerous and deviant thing. You watch a movie, and some grizzled scientists says, ‘This is what happens when you try to play god!’ Cloning is always framed as a disaster, and I wanted to write a story where cloning was part of the plot, but it’s not some inherently wrong thing. The conflict stems from religious and cultural anxieties about cloning, and a perception that clones are not fully fledged people or are a lesser type of person. The story’s conflict comes from outside forces trying to prevent cloning from happening.

“There was definitely a lot of worldbuilding that went on behind the scenes. I started off with that contrarian idea, and then, as I got into it, I had to figure out what else I wanted to do with it. What are my themes? What story do I want to tell? All of this worldbuilding came out of that process as I was writing, and as I was stewing over the ideas in my head when I wasn’t writing.

“My story centers on the main character Amira Valdez. She grew up in a futuristic religious fundamentalist cult in the South-

» p. 54



SFWA President Jeffe Kennedy, Past President Mary Robinette Kowal



GoH: Mercedes Lackey
Colin Coyle, Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. Service to SFWA Winner



"Finding the Right Literary Agent": Samantha Mills, Stina Leicht, Emmeline Duncan, Curtis C. Chen, Kate Heartfield



"Finding the Right Literary Agent": Samantha Mills, Stina Leicht, Emmeline Duncan, Curtis C. Chen, Kate Heartfield



"Finding the Right Literary Agent": Samantha Mills, Stina Leicht, Emmeline Duncan, Curtis C. Chen, Kate Heartfield



"Growing Up Magical": Amber Morrell, Darcie Little Badger, Leslie Vedder, Lisa Stringfellow, Elisa A. Bonnin



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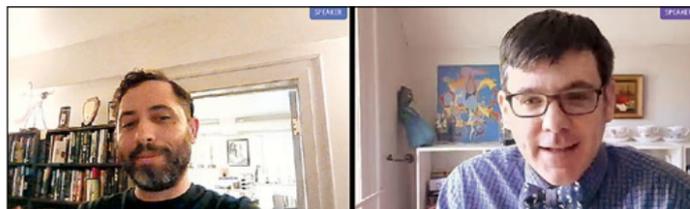


The 2022 SFWA Nebula Conference was an online event, held May 20-22. Of 563 registered members, 556 attended, down from 2021's online event with 812 attending members, but still high compared to in-person numbers. 2020's online event had 808 members and 2019's in-person event in Los Angeles saw a record-breaking 475 registered members.

SFWA Executive Director Kate Baker said one of the changes for programming this year was incorporating suggestions from the SF community. "The programming team received over 300 submissions... While we weren't able to utilize all of the ideas, we do plan on offering some of the panels throughout the year as part of the conference membership." Forty-nine panels were offered over the course of three days, with roughly 232 program participants. Early online programming leading up to the event proper included "Weekly Writing Dates" with notable authors and the Narrative Worlds conversation between Saladin Ahmed and Kate Elliott. The Grand Master Reception for Mercedes Lackey was held May 20 at 5:00 p.m. For the event proper, programming focused on industry-relevant topics. Panels began with "Those Who Can Teach" with Gabriel Ertsgaard, Jen Gunnels, David Hopkins, Sarah Pinsker, and Arley Sorg at 9:00 a.m. Options scheduled included "Combating Misogyny in Romance Writing" with Meghan Ciana Doidge, Jasmine Gower, Jeffe Kennedy, Sarah Loch, and Cecilia Tan; "Unlikeable Narrators Aren't Inherently Bad" with Christopher Caldwell, James Kennedy, Jordan Kurella, PJ Manney, and Zin E. Rocklyn; and "Every Little Thing They Do Is Magic: Latinx Writers Talk Fantasy and Realism" with David Bowles, J.C. Cervantes, Carlos Hernandez, Tehlor Kay Mejia, and Claribel Ortega.

The 57th Annual Nebula Awards Ceremony was held Saturday, May 21, at 5:00 p.m. PST, and was streamed live on YouTube, Facebook, and the Nebula Conference platform. Baker reported 200 viewers on the website, 29 watching the Facebook feed, and via YouTube "an average of 350 people watched the two hour show and since then, there have been over 1400 views." Neil Gaiman and Connie Willis co-hosted.

SFWA president Jeffe Kennedy acknowledged prior president Mary Robinette Kowal, saying she was the only president in SFWA history to not attend a physical Nebula conference while presiding. SFWA honored Kowal with an "Orbiting Moon" trophy. The Damon Knight Grand Master Award was presented to Mercedes Lackey, who said, "This world will beat the crap out of you," and talked about the commonalities of suffering. "Helping the wounded through their worst times was something I really wanted to do because it was something I also needed." She thanked C.J. Cherryh, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Anne McCaffrey, and Andre Norton, as well as agent Russ Galen, editors Betsy Wollheim, Tom Doherty, Melissa Singer, Toni Weisskopf, Jim Baen, and others. She thanked "my partner in everything and a powerhouse in his own right" Larry Dixon. She finished by saying, "I am a single point in a long



"Those Who Can Teach": Arley Sorg, Gabriel Ertsgaard, Jen Gunnels, Sarah Pinsker, David Hopkins



"Those Who Can Teach": Arley Sorg, Gabriel Ertsgaard, Jen Gunnels, Sarah Pinsker, David Hopkins



"Those Who Can Teach": Arley Sorg, Gabriel Ertsgaard, Jen Gunnels, Sarah Pinsker, David Hopkins

line. This award reassures me that I've done my part to light the way for those to come."

Steven H Silver presented the Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. Service to SFWA Award to Colin Coyle, who volunteered time and expertise to SFWA and the Nebula Conferences of the past few years. Coyle credited several people who helped make events happen, saying, "I see this award as an honor to that talented and dedicated team, and the dozens more who helped bring off a conference that we can all be proud of."

Nibedita Sen introduced the Short Story Award, which went to Sarah Pinsker's "Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather". Pinsker thanked family, agent Kim-Mei Kirtland, critiquers, *Uncanny*, other finalists, and more. Excited, she pointed out the numerous anthologies filling her bookshelves, and said, "I love short stories, so to get the award for short story, just means a lot to me!"

In 2009, the second year of the Solstice Awards, there were three recipients, which did not happen again until 2021. For 2022, Amal El-Mohtar presented the first of three Solstice Awards, posthumously to Petra Mayer, who was primarily known for her work with NPR. El-Mohtar described Mayer as "a superb editor and mentor." Elizabeth Graham accepted on Mayer's behalf, saying "If she were here right now, I know she would say *she* was the lucky one."

Henry Lien presented the Andre Norton Award finalists; the winner was *A Snake Falls to Earth* by Darcie Little Badger. Tearful, Little Badger thanked voters, readers, Levine Querido, editor Nick Thomas, agent Michael Curry, and her spouse and family. She spoke about her tribe - Lipan Apache - which comprises "less than 10,000 people living in the Southern US. For us, every day is a fight for survival, basic rights, and visibility in our own homeland." She talked about writing her book and hoping it would connect with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers, as well as giving "young Lipan readers strength and pride, despite all the challenges they face existing in a country that tries to erase us. This recognition from the Nebulas is a sign that my hopes are coming true."

John Scalzi introduced the Ray Bradbury Award, which went to *WandaVision*. Five of the writers accepted, saying "So many of us have been shaped by Ray Bradbury's writing, so to win this award with his name on it is just surreal." They thanked SFWA, the viewers, and more.

Tobias S. Buckell presented the second Solstice Award to Arley Sorg. Sorg said, "There are many people putting out work right now which has a positive impact on genre. I'm not the only one, and I don't know if I deserve an award." He talked about being inspired by J.A. Pitts, "who showed me the potential of this community through his kindness." Sorg dedicated the award to Pitts, and to those "who put love and work into this community. We all make it better together."

Greg Kasavin presented the award finalists for Game Writing; the winner was *Thirsty Sword Lesbians*.



Co-Toastmasters: Neil Gaiman and Connie Willis



Solstice Awards Winners: Troy L. Wiggins, Petra Mayer, and Arley Sorg



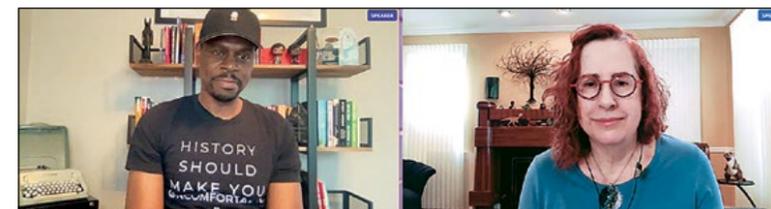
"Publishing Short Stories and Collections": T.R. Napper, Wole Talabi, Mari Ness, Vida Cruz, Eugen Bacon



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"The Appeal of Alternate History and Historical Fantasy": P. Djélî Clark, Rosemary Claire Smith, Sara A. Mueller, Kate JohnsTon, Alex Penland



"The Appeal of Alternate History and Historical Fantasy": P. Djélî Clark, Rosemary Claire Smith, Sara A. Mueller, Kate JohnsTon, Alex Penland



"The Appeal of Alternate History and Historical Fantasy": P. Djélî Clark, Rosemary Claire Smith, Sara A. Mueller, Kate JohnsTon, Alex Penland



"Promotion for Introverts": Kimberly Unger, Elle E. Ire, Jeff Reynolds, Premeem Mohamed, C.J. Lavigne



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“Media Tie-In Writing”: Madeline Ashby, Amanda Cherry, Jeanne Cavelos, Jason Denzel

“System Failure Afro Futurism”: James Beamon, Alaya Dawn Johnson, Maurice Broaddus, Endria Richardson (not pictured)

“The Written and Unwritten Rules of Middle Grade”: Greg van Eekhout, Leah Cypess, Henry Lien, Michael Sterns

Nebula Conference

April Kit Walsh accepted, thanking contributors Whitney Delagio, Dominique Dickey, Jonaya Kemper, Rae Nedjadi, and Alexis Sara. “There’s no one person who can represent all of queer experience; no six people can either, but the game is truer and more welcoming thanks to all of their contributions.” She thanked SFWA, her partner, publisher Evil Hat, her editor Karen Twelves, and more.

Walsh’s speech was followed by the In Memoriam.

The third Solstice Award went to Troy L. Wiggins, presented by DaVaun Sanders. Sanders spoke on Wiggins’s work as a founding editor of *FIYAH*, as well as beyond the magazine. “His efforts in standing up that market created opportunities, visibility, and hope for countless underrepresented Black authors, poets, and artists, building a foundation for Black perspectives to contribute to the conversation, direction, and critique of the larger SFF community.” Wiggins spoke about his drive, “because writers like me, and let’s be clear, I don’t mean just Black, or country, or working class writers, but dedicated, talented, and fierce writers were not being seen in our field.” He spoke about entering the field through the Black Science Fiction Society, founded by last year’s Solstice recipient Jarvis Sheffield. Wiggins noted that “we have a lot of work left to do for the world” and that “the most potent and powerful gift we can bring to the world is our imaginative power to create beautiful new possibilities for ourselves and for those around us.”

A.T. Greenblatt presented the finalists for the Novelette Award; the winner was “O2 Arena” by Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki. Due to connectivity problems, Ekpeki’s speech came last, and he was without electricity in his location so the video was completely dark. “There’s a lack of visibility for Nigerian writers,” he laughed, “I guess it’s kind of literal.” He talked about the particular difficulties of seeing himself winning a major international award, saying, “I would like to hope that more writers like myself would be able to see themselves on this stage, giving a speech, subsequently as things start to change, accommodating more people from certain positions.” He

thanked *Galaxy’s Edge* and editor Lezli Robyn, *Apex Magazine*, the African Speculative Fiction Society, “which had been my backbone for a while,” SFWA, and others. He dedicated the award to Emeka Walter Dinjos.

Martha Wells presented the finalists for Best Novella, which went to **And What Can We Offer You Tonight** by Premee Mohamed. Mohamed thanked SFWA, readers, voters, agent Michael Curry, editor dave ring, and more. Mohamed talked about Gene Wolfe’s “The Fifth Head of Cerberus” as an inspiration “in terms of aesthetic and vibes, but also making me ask myself, do I really want to hear more about the owners of the place, or the people who actually work there.... writing is about the perspectives we choose to suppress, just as much as those we choose to elevate. About what we choose to see as normal and what we choose to see as exotic or other, and in so doing, which messages we choose to reinforce. And which ones we would like to study; and which ones we would like to kick the struts out from under, so they crash to the ground, and we can build something new on top of them.”

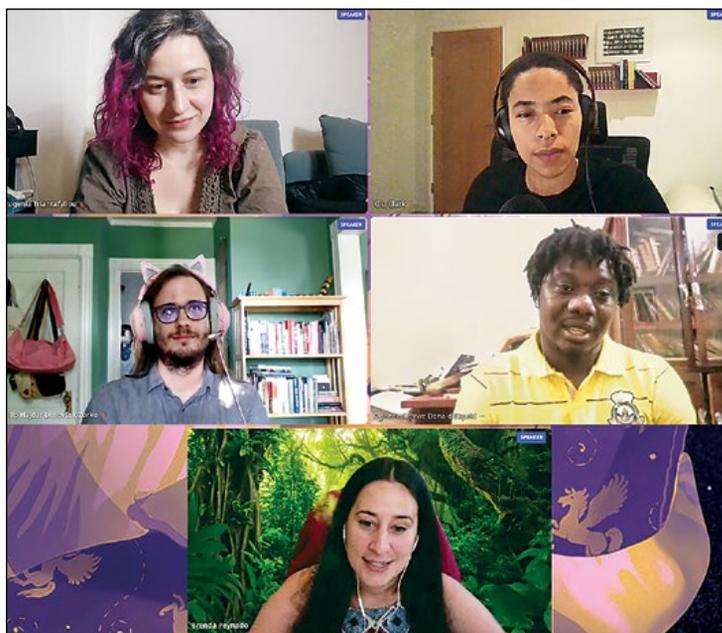
The finalists for Best Novel were presented by C.L. Polk, with the award going to **A Master of Djinn** by P. Djèlí Clark. Clark said, “This novel came out of readers. When I first started writing in this world I didn’t have any clear intention of writing a novel. It was readers who decided that my novelette, **A Dead Djinn in Cairo** in 2016, was worthy enough to ask for more. So I gave more....” He thanked his family, editor Diana Pho, Tordotcom, agent Seth Fishman, SFWA, and more, particularly readers. “If you have these ideas, if you have these dreams, and you’re holding them to yourself, let them out. Because the world wants to see them.”

SFWA plans to make recorded videos of program items available to view on the Nebula Conference event page <events.sfwaworld.org/> until April 2023, and the ceremony can be watched for free on YouTube. Regarding next year, Baker said, “The SFWA Board and staff will be weighing all options for a safe and healthy 2023 Nebula Conference.... We are also considering all options from a hybrid model (in-person/online), to online only, depending on the state of current events. We will be releasing information once details are finalized and appropriate contracts/considerations are in place.”

—Arley Sorg ■



“Tools for Revising Novelists”: Arkady Martine, Mikel J. Wisler, Susan Forest, S.B. Divya, John Appel



“World Building in Short Stories”: Eugenia Triantafyllou, C.L. Clark, Filip Hajdar Drovšek Zorko, Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki, Brenda Peynado

WisCon 45

WisCon 45 was held May 27-30, 2022, in person at the Concourse Hotel in Madison WI, as well as online. Sheree Renée Thomas and Rebecca Roanhorse were guests of honor; Roanhorse participated virtually. Zen Cho and Yoon Ha Lee, also originally scheduled as guests of honor, were unable to participate but were honored nonetheless. There were 763 memberships, with 216 virtual memberships and an estimated 407 in-person attendees. Programming offered 130 items including in-person and online options, such as panels, solo presentations, and readings, focused on SF/F literature, diversity, feminism, disability, criticism, and more. Many of the in-person items were livestreamed, including opening ceremonies and guest of honor readings and speeches.

Some of the usual highlights, such as the popular Dessert Salon (which sells out every year) were modified. This year's Salon desserts were take-away only, parties were not allowed to serve food, and the con suite offered only grab-and-go options – plus vouchers for a local restaurant and the ho-

tel eateries. Parties included a celebration of the Speculative Literature Foundation with the book release for Mary Anne Mohanraj's cookbook, **A Feast of Serendib**; a Vid Party; and a Sunday brunch at a park. The art show featured 11 artists and the dealer's room had 27 in-person vendors, with 3 more selling virtually. There were a handful of workshops, three of which were writing critique sessions with different pros.

Fundraising efforts included the Otherwise Auction, which raised more than \$800. Sumana Harihareswara was online auctioneer and Liz Henry was in-person auctioneer. Funds are utilized for "fellowships that support and recognize new voices who are making visible the forces that are changing our view of gender today," as well as the Otherwise Award prize, the Fairy Godmother Awards, and more.

WisCon 46 is planned for Memorial Day weekend in 2023, with Rivers Solomon and Martha Wells as guests of honor, and more details to come. More info at <www.wiscon.net>. ■



Njeri@ONYXPages, GoH Sheree Renée Thomas



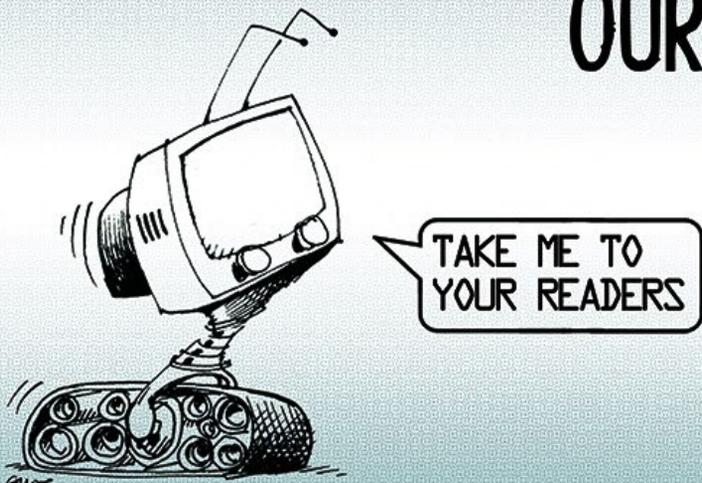
Rhea Ewing & Ezra Miller



"Decolonization in SFF": Kate JohnsTon, Claire Light AKA Jadie Jang, Jenna Hanchey



Caroline Stevermer, Catherine Schaff-Stump



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2022 Locus Poll Results

2022 Locus Poll

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BEST SF NOVEL		Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	A Desolation Called Peace , Arkady Martine (Tor; Tor UK)	H,N	3438	378	162
2)	The Galaxy, and the Ground Within , Becky Chambers (Hodder & Stoughton; Harper Voyager US)	H	2176	260	87
3)	Leviathan Falls , James S.A. Corey (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		1885	217	80
4)	The Echo Wife , Sarah Gailey (Tor; Hodder & Stoughton)		1787	232	61
5)	Noor , Nnedi Okorafor (DAW)		1738	221	51
6)	Klara and the Sun , Kazuo Ishiguro (Knopf; Faber & Faber)		1366	178	51
7)	We Are Satellites , Sarah Pinsker (Berkley; Ad Astra)		1306	148	44
8)	Hummingbird Salamander , Jeff VanderMeer (MCD; Fourth Estate)		1113	146	25
9)	Shards of Earth , Adrian Tchaikovsky (Tor UK; Orbit US)		1050	131	30
10)	You Sexy Thing , Cat Rambo (Tor)		934	111	31
11)	Perhaps the Stars , Ada Palmer (Tor; Ad Astra)		869	102	45
12)	Far from the Light of Heaven , Tade Thompson (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		849	113	19
13)	Termination Shock , Neal Stephenson (Morrow; Borough)		802	93	16
14)	Invisible Sun , Charles Stross (Tor; Tor UK)		712	84	24
15)	Firebreak , Nicole Kornher-Stace (Saga)		655	93	34
16)	Cloud Cuckoo Land , Anthony Doerr (Scribner; Fourth Estate)		631	76	22
17)	Inhibitor Phase , Alastair Reynolds (Gollancz; Orbit US)		611	60	12
18)	The Actual Star , Monica Byrne (Harper Voyager)		475	61	17
19)	The Horizon , Gautam Bhatia (HarperCollins India)		453	59	35
20)	The House of Styx , Derek Künsken (Solaris)		425	48	14
21)	The Second Shooter , Nick Mamatas (Solaris)		315	41	18
22)	Applesseed , Matt Bell (Custom House)		310	39	18
23)	Project Hail Mary , Andy Weir (Ballantine)	H	302	32	13
24)	The Book of All Skies , Greg Egan (Greg Egan)		297	37	8
25)	Bewilderment , Richard Powers (Norton; Heinemann)		295	34	9
26)	Doors of Sleep , Tim Pratt (Angry Robot)		291	31	6
27)	Beyond the Hallowed Sky , Ken MacLeod (Orbit)		256	27	4
28)	The 22 Murders of Madison May , Max Barry (Putnam; Hodder & Stoughton)		247	33	7
*	Out Past the Stars , K.B. Wagers (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		245	33	4
30)	Purgatory Mount , Adam Roberts (Gollancz)		228	27	9
*	Iron Widow , Xiran Jay Zhao (Penguin Teen; Rock the Boat)	A,W,D	219	27	22
BEST FANTASY NOVEL		Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	Jade Legacy , Fonda Lee (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		1830	213	86
2)	Black Water Sister , Zen Cho (Ace; Macmillan)		1687	229	47
3)	The Last Graduate , Naomi Novik (Del Rey; Del Rey UK)	W	1651	192	69
4)	The Witness for the Dead , Katherine Addison (Tor; Solaris)		1574	182	56
5)	Paladin's Strength , T. Kingfisher (Argyll)		1483	186	51
6)	Light From Uncommon Stars , Ryka Aoki (Tor)	H	1452	179	79
7)	The Jasmine Throne , Tasha Suri (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		1367	182	48
8)	Soulstar , C.L. Polk (Tordotcom)		1175	144	33
9)	No Gods, No Monsters , Cadwell Turnbull (Blackstone)		1073	129	44
10)	Under the Whispering Door , TJ Klune (Tor; Tor UK)		1016	125	44
11)	The Wisdom of Crowds , Joe Abercrombie (Orbit US; Gollancz)		820	88	38
12)	The Blacktongue Thief , Christopher Buehler (Tor; Gollancz)		619	71	23
13)	Son of the Storm , Suyi Davies Okungbowa (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		583	74	22
14)	The Memory Theater , Karin Tidbeck (Pantheon)		569	63	17
15)	The Inheritance of Orquídea Divina , Zoraida Córdova (Atria)		525	67	18
16)	The Escapement , Lavie Tidhar (Tachyon)		519	60	20
17)	The Mask of Mirrors , M.A. Carrick (Orbit US; Orbit UK)		517	70	20
18)	Grave Reservations , Cherie Priest (Atria)		491	62	11
19)	Blackthorn Winter , Liz Williams (NewCon)		434	45	17
20)	The Shipbuilder of Bellfairie , M. Rickert (Undertow)		430	44	14
21)	Peaces , Helen Oyeyemi (Riverhead; Faber & Faber)		416	58	14
22)	All the Murmuring Bones , A.G. Slatter (Titan)		407	50	16
23)	The Hidden Palace , Helene Wecker (Harper)		378	46	14
24)	The Hood , Lavie Tidhar (Ad Astra)		363	43	10
25)	Sistersong , Lucy Holland (Macmillan; Redhook)		330	47	4
26)	Cyber Mage , Saad Z. Hossain (Unnamed)		272	35	7
27)	Honeycomb , Joanne M. Harris (Saga; Gollancz)		264	34	6
28)	A Master of Djinn , P. Djèli Clark (Tordotcom; Orbit UK)	H,N	218	23	11
29)	The Book of Form and Emptiness , Ruth Ozeki (Viking; Canongate)		207	28	10
30)	She Who Became The Sun , Shelley Parker-Chan (Tor)	H,D	188	22	9
BEST HORROR NOVEL		Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	My Heart Is a Chainsaw , Stephen Graham Jones (Saga; Titan)	S	2273	249	117
2)	Sorrowland , Rivers Solomon (MCD; #Merky)		1894	207	100
3)	The Book of Accidents , Chuck Wendig (Del Rey; Del Rey UK)	S	1514	185	62
4)	The Final Girl Support Group , Grady Hendrix (Berkley; Titan)	S	1377	166	54
5)	The Death of Jane Lawrence , Caitlin Starling (St. Martin's)		1100	139	36
6)	A Broken Darkness , Premea Mohamed (Solaris)		1031	120	54
7)	Revelator , Daryl Gregory (Knopf)		936	90	40
8)	Later , Stephen King (Hard Case Crime)		856	98	23
9)	Billy Summers , Stephen King (Scribner; Hodder & Stoughton)		742	85	30
10)	Moon Lake , Joe R. Lansdale (Mulholland)		711	82	26
11)	Good Neighbors , Sarah Langan (Atria; Titan)		398	51	10
12)	The Bridge , J.S. Breukelaar (Meerkat)		253	32	8
13)	Getaway , Zoje Stage (Mulholland)		199	30	6

the final list (we make exceptions for those with fewer votes but enough points to place ahead of titles with 20 votes) even though it frequently takes less to make the Hugo or Nebula Award ballots.

The letters after the publishing information in some categories indicate award nominations for the Hugo Award (H), Nebula (N), Stoker (S), Andre Norton (A), the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award (T) and the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book (W). Authors nominated for the *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer are marked (D). The John W. Campbell Memorial Award for Best SF Novel was apparently cancelled once again due to COVID-19 and organizational changes that will see the award administered by the Kansas City Science Fiction & Fantasy Society.

Nominees in the short fiction categories are marked to show appearances in Best of the Year anthologies as follows: 1) **The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy 2022**, Rebecca Roanhorse & John Joseph Adams, eds.; 2) **The Year's Best Fantasy, Volume One**, Paula Guran, ed.; 3) **The Year's Best Dark Fantasy & Horror, Volume 3**, Paula Guran, ed.; 4) **The Year's Top Hard Science Fiction Stories 6**, Allan Kaster, ed.; and 5) **We're Here: The Best Queer Speculative Fiction 2021**, L.D. Lewis & Charles Payesur, eds. We also considered the contents of **The Best Horror of the Year Volume Fourteen**, Ellen Datlow, ed. and **Best of British Science Fiction 2022**, Donna Scott, ed., but none of their contents overlapped with our poll results. We would have included **The Best Science Fiction of the Year, Volume 7**, Neil Clarke, ed., and **The Year's Best Science Fiction & Fantasy: 2022 Edition**, Rich Horton, ed., but the contents lists weren't released by press time. Series listed last year that have been cancelled or are on hiatus include the **Year's Best Hardcore Horror** edited by Randy Chandler & Cheryl Mullenax, eds.

SF NOVEL

A Desolation Called Peace by Arkady Martine won with a hefty lead of 1,262 points; it also had a solid lead in total votes and first-place votes over second-place **The Galaxy and the Ground Within** by Becky Chambers; **Leviathan Falls** by James S.A. Corey followed in third. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the winner; below that subscribers had the Corey second and the Chambers third, while non-subscribers had the Chambers second and **Noor** by Nnedi Okorafor third. Voters nominated 171 titles, down from 180; 31 made the cut, up from 26 last year. One of five Nebula nominees made the list; another three show up elsewhere on our lists. One write-in novel made it onto the list: **Iron Widow** by Xiran Jay Zhao, which also made it onto the first novel and young-adult book lists – first novels are allowed to cross over into other categories, but normally don't make it onto three lists at once. Zhao also got nominations for two major awards for YA books: the not-a-Hugo Lodestar Award and the Andre Norton Award; Zhao was also nominated for the *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer. Three of six Hugo Award nominees are here: the Martine, the Chambers, and **Project Hail Mary** by Andy Weir; the other three are on the fantasy list, two of those also on the first novel list. One of five Nebula nominees is here, the Martine; four more appear on the fantasy and first novel lists.

FANTASY NOVEL

Fonda Lee's **Jade Legacy** won, a modest 143 points ahead of Zen Cho's **Black Water Sister** in second place, only 33 points ahead of Naomi Novik's **The Last Graduate** in third. This was one of the places doubling subscriber votes made a difference; without it the Cho, which had the most votes overall, would have won by just three points, edging out the Lee, which had the most first-place votes. Subscribers

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and non-subscribers disagreed on this one. Subscribers put the Lee first, **The Witness for the Dead** by Katherine Addison second, the Novik third, and the Cho fourth; non-subscribers had the Cho first, the Lee second, and Ryka Aoki's **Light From Uncommon Stars** third. Voters nominated 181 titles, up from 166; 30 made the cut, up from 26. Two write-ins managed to make it onto the list, **A Master of Djinn** by P. Djèlí Clark and **She Who Became the Sun** by Shelley Parker-Chan; both also made the top of our list for first novel (the Clark won), and are two of the three Hugo nominees on this list. The Clark is the only Nebula nominee – and winner – to make the list. Parker-Chan is also a nominee for the Astounding Award.

HORROR NOVEL

My Heart Is a Chainsaw by Stephen Graham Jones snagged first place with a solid 379-point lead, the most votes, and the most first-place votes; **Sorrowland** by Rivers Solomon came in second, with **The Book of Accidents** by Chuck Wendig following in third. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the first two places, but disagreed below that. Voters nominated 73 titles, up from 60; 13 made the cut, the same as last year. Three of five Stoker nominees made the list.

FIRST NOVEL

P. Djèlí Clark's **A Master of Djinn** won with the biggest lead in any category this year, the most votes, and the most first-place votes. Second place went to Shelley Parker-Chan's **She Who Became the Sun**, followed by C.L. Clark's **The Unbroken**. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the first two places; both had **The Unbroken** in fourth place, but it managed to take third place when subscribers and non-subscribers disagreed dramatically on their choices for third: subscribers picked S.B. Divya's **Machinehood**, while non-subscribers went for write-in **Iron Widow** by Xiran Jay Zhao, which only had one vote from subscribers, but still ended up with the second-highest number of first-place votes. We had 71 nominees, down from 89; 22 made the cut, up from 21. Two Hugo nominees made the list, the P. Djèlí Clark and the Parker-Chan. three Nebula nominees are here, including the winner, P. Djèlí Clark's **A Master of Djinn**. Two nominees for the Andre Norton Award for young-adult fiction are here, one the Zhao, which is also the only nominee here for the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book [Not a Hugo]. Three of six nominees for the Astounding Award for Best New Writers [Not a Hugo] are here, all in their first year of eligibility: Everina Maxwell, Shelley Parker-Chan, and Xiran Jay Zhao.

YOUNG-ADULT

Victories Greater than Death by Charlie Jane Anders won with a sizeable lead of over 800 points and the most votes. **Chaos on CatNet** by Naomi Kritzer came in second, and third place went to write-in **Iron Widow** by Xiran Jay Zhao, which had the most first-place votes, and was second in total votes. Subscribers and non-subscribers didn't agree on much here, but both groups had **A Snake Falls to Earth** by Darcie Little Badger in third place. Subscribers had the first two books in their final order, but **Iron Widow** was way down in 16th place. Non-subscribers put **Iron Widow** first and **Victories Greater than Death** second. Doubling subscriber votes didn't affect the winner, but without it the Kritzer would have been third and the Zhao second. Voters nominated 117 titles, up from 111; 21 made the cut, up from 15. Five of six Lodestar Award nominees are here; the sixth ended up on the fantasy list. Four of six Andre Norton Award nominees are here, including the winner, **A Snake Falls to Earth**.

NOVELLA

Martha Wells's **Fugitive Telemetry** took first with

BEST FIRST NOVEL

	Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) A Master of Djinn , P. Djèlí Clark (Tordotcom; Orbit UK)	H,N	3719	393	204
2) She Who Became the Sun , Shelley Parker-Chan (Tor; Mantle)	H,D	2383	302	99
3) The Unbroken , C.L. Clark (Orbit US; Orbit UK)	N	1688	213	66
4) The Chosen and the Beautiful , Nghi Vo (Tordotcom)		1438	181	41
5) Iron Widow , Xiran Jay Zhao (Penguin Teen; Rock the Boat)	A,W,D	1402	176	165
6) Machinehood , S.B. Divya (Saga)	N	1376	153	48
7) Wendy, Darling , A.C. Wise (Titan)		1110	135	40
8) A Marvellous Light , Freya Marske (Tordotcom; Tor UK)		1094	136	38
9) Winter's Orbit , Everina Maxwell (Tor; Orbit UK)	D	1049	133	33
10) The All-Consuming World , Cassandra Khaw (Erehwon)		851	106	28
11) On Fragile Waves , E. Lily Yu (Erehwon)		740	88	20
12) Summer Sons , Lee Mandelo (Tordotcom)		611	77	19
13) Unity , Elly Bangs (Tachyon)		459	52	21
14) Star Eater , Kerstin Hall (Tordotcom)		452	62	11
15) Root Magic , Eden Royce (Walden Pond)	A	421	58	19
16) Bacchanal , Veronica G. Henry (47North)		387	46	10
17) The Unraveling , Benjamin Rosenbaum (Erehwon)		382	39	9
18) The Witch King , H.E. Edgmon (Inkyard)		330	48	14
19) This Thing Between Us , Gus Moreno (MCD x FSG Originals)		319	36	16
20) Mrs Death Misses Death , Salena Godden (Canongate)		251	34	7
21) Blood Like Magic , Liselle Sambury (McElderry)		206	32	6
22) A Girl Called Rumi , Ari Honarvar (Forest Avenue)		191	27	9

BEST YOUNG ADULT BOOK

	Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) Victories Greater Than Death , Charlie Jane Anders (Tor Teen; Titan)	A,W	2434	251	141
2) Chaos on CatNet , Naomi Kritzer (Tor Teen)	W	1578	156	73
3) Iron Widow , Xiran Jay Zhao (Penguin Teen; Rock the Boat)	A,W,D	1494	184	170
4) A Snake Falls to Earth , Darcie Little Badger (Levine Querido)	A,W	1328	146	62
5) Redemptor , Jordan Ifueko (Amulet; Hot Key)	A,W	971	117	47
6) Terriel & Elinor , Garth Nix (Allen & Unwin; Tegen; Hot Key)		763	82	34
7) The Gilded Ones , Namina Forna (Delacorte; Usborne)		682	94	23
8) This Poison Heart , Kalynn Bayron (Bloomsbury; Bloomsbury USA)		518	70	19
9) A Dark and Starless Forest , Sarah Hollowell (Clarion)		400	52	15
10) The Infinity Courts , Akemi Dawn Bowman (Simon Pulse)		367	55	7
11) A Chorus Rises , Bethany C. Morrow (Tor Teen)		341	44	6
12) White Smoke , Tiffany D. Jackson (Tegen)		322	44	3
13) The City Beautiful , Aden Polydoros (Inkyard)		284	37	9
14) The Mirror Season , Anna-Marie McLemore (Feiwel & Friends)		276	33	9
15) Yesterday Is History , Kosoko Jackson (Sourcebooks Fire)		270	36	3
16) Aetherbound , E.K. Johnston (Dutton)		240	35	7
17) The Raconteur's Commonplace Book , Kate Milford (Clarion)		225	24	8
18) Rise of the Red Hand , Olivia Chadha (Erehwon)		217	28	7
19) All Our Hidden Gifts , Caroline O'Donoghue (Walker UK, Walker US)		193	26	9
20) Summer in the City of Roses , Michelle Ruiz Keil (Soho)		166	21	6
21) This Is Not the Jess Show , Anna Carey (Quirk)		160	21	6

BEST NOVELLA

	Noms	Best	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) Fugitive Telemetry , Martha Wells (Tordotcom)			3645	401	182
2) A Psalm for the Wild-Built , Becky Chambers (Tordotcom)	H,N		2590	300	151
3) Fireheart Tiger , Alette de Bodard (Tordotcom)	H,N		1822	220	62
4) A Spindle Splintered , Alix E. Harrow (Tordotcom)	H		1558	192	49
5) Remote Control , Nnedi Okorafor (Tordotcom)			1384	180	33
6) The Past is Red , Catherynne M. Valente (Tordotcom)	H		1183	145	45
7) Comfort Me With Apples , Catherynne M. Valente (Tordotcom)			1180	144	39
8) Defekt , Nino Cipri (Tordotcom)			952	108	24
9) A Blessing of Unicorns , Elizabeth Bear (Audible Originals 10/20; <i>Asimov's</i> 9-10/21)			761	84	25
10) The Return of the Sorceress , Silvia Moreno-Garcia (Subterranean)			757	94	18
11) The Album of Dr. Moreau , Daryl Gregory (Tordotcom)	T		681	72	20
12) "A Canticle for Lost Girls", Isabel Yap (Never Have I Ever)			655	83	19
13) And What Can We Offer You Tonight? , Premee Mohamed (Neon Hemlock)	N		645	82	23
14) The Annual Migration of Clouds , Premee Mohamed (ECW)			615	79	22
15) "Sleep and the Soul", Greg Egan (<i>Asimov's</i> 9-10/21)			504	54	19
16) "The Dark Ride", John Kessel (<i>F&SF</i> 1-2/20)	T		488	43	13
17) The Necessity of Stars , E. Catherine Tobler (Neon Hemlock)	N,T		474	66	11
18) In the Watchful City , S. Qiuyi Lu (Tordotcom)			441	62	10
19) Flowers for the Sea , Zin E. Rocklyn (Tordotcom)	N		420	52	19
20) The Secret Skin , Wendy N. Wagner (Neon Hemlock)			413	56	6
21) This is How to Stay Alive , Shingai Njeri Kagunda (Neon Hemlock)			400	51	16
22) "Submergence", Arula Ratnakar (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 3/21)	4		288	39	15
23) "Philia, Eros, Storge, Agápe, Pragma", R.S.A Garcia (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 1/21)	T		275	34	18
24) "The Abomination", Nuzo Onoh (<i>F&SF</i> 9-10/21)			262	31	8
25) "A Rocket for Dimitrios", Ray Nayler (<i>Asimov's</i> 1-2/20)			258	28	7
26) "The Giants of the Violet Sea", Eugenia Triantafyllou (<i>Uncanny</i> 9-10/21)	N		253	29	11

BEST NOVELETTE		Noms	Best	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	"That Story Isn't the Story", John Wiswell (<i>Uncanny</i> 11-12/21)	H,N		942	113	42
2)	"L'Esprit de L'Escalier", Catherynne M. Valente (<i>Tor.com</i> 8/25/21)	H	1,2	930	112	57
3)	"Mulberry and Owl", Alette de Bodard (<i>Uncanny</i> 9-10/21)			5	793	92
4)	"Unseelie Brothers, Ltd.", Fran Wilde (<i>Uncanny</i> 5-6/21)	H	2	717	76	26
5)	"The Black Pages", Nnedi Okorafor (Black Stars)			654	82	24
6)	"The Red Mother", Elizabeth Bear (<i>Tor.com</i> 6/23/21)		1,2	634	70	26
7)	"Small Monsters", E. Lily Yu (<i>Tor.com</i> 10/20/21)		2	547	68	17
8)	"Skindler's Veil", Kelly Link (When Things Get Dark)		1	540	58	22
9)	"Bots of the Lost Ark", Suzanne Palmer (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 6/21)	H,T		481	53	13
10)	"Broad Dutty Water: A Sunken Story", Nalo Hopkinson (<i>F&SF</i> 11-12/21)	T	1	475	51	11
11)	"We, the Girls Who Did Not Make It", E.A. Petricone (<i>Nightmare</i> 2/21)			471	57	25
12)	"Colors of the Immortal Palette", Caroline M. Yoachim (<i>Uncanny</i> 3-4/21)	H,N	1	452	48	21
13)	"Babylon System", Maurice Broaddus (<i>F&SF</i> 5-6/21)			448	51	15
14)	"(emet)", Lauren Ring (<i>F&SF</i> 7-8/21)	N		422	47	15
15)	"A Spell for Foolish Hearts", Isabel Yap (Never Have I Ever)		2	416	55	11
16)	"I Being Young and Foolish", Nisi Shawl (Sword, Stone, Table)			415	48	11
17)	"The Future Library", Peng Shepherd (<i>Tor.com</i> 8/18/21)		1	403	50	12
18)	"For Sale by Owner", Elizabeth Hand (When Things Get Dark)		3	395	44	13
19)	"Music of the Siphophenes", C.L. Polk (<i>F&SF</i> 3-4/21)			359	44	9
20)	"In the Garden of Ibn Ghazi", Molly Tanzer (<i>F&SF</i> 3-4/21)		3	343	38	12
21)	"Questions Asked in the Belly of the World", A.T. Greenblatt (<i>Tor.com</i> 9/22/21)			337	35	6
22)	"Laki", Eleanor Arnason (<i>F&SF</i> 11-12/21)			322	27	14
23)	"And for My Next Trick, I Have Disappeared", Chimedum Ohaegbu (<i>F&SF</i> 7-8/21)		3	306	40	5
24)	"Dreamports", Tlotlo Tsamaase (<i>Apex</i> 12/21)			268	33	14
25)	"Three Tales from the Blue Library", Sofia Samatar (<i>Conjunctions</i> :76)		2	267	33	9
26)	"Sarcophagus", Ray Nayler (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 4/21)	T		240	28	8
27)	"The Metric", David Moles (<i>Asimov's</i> 5-6/21)	T	4	233	21	12
28)	"Stronger", K.J. Parker (<i>Beneath Ceaseless Skies</i> 10/7/21)			232	22	8
29)	"The Only Living Girl on Earth", Charles Yu (Scribd Originals)			225	26	5
30)	"The Lay of Lilyfinger", G.V. Anderson (<i>Tor.com</i> 5/5/21)			219	25	15
31)	"The Women Who Didn't Win Nobels, and How World Trees Are Not a Substitute", Octavia Cade (<i>Fusion Fragment</i> 5/21)			219	26	12
32)	"Now You See Me", Justin C. Key (<i>Lightspeed</i> 8/21)			184	20	3
33)	"The Ghost Birds", Karen Russell (<i>The New Yorker</i> 10/11/21)			180	21	6
34)	"The Demon Sage's Daughter", Varsha Dinesh (<i>Strange Horizons</i> 2/8/21)		2	174	21	7
35)	"The Last Civilian", R.P. Sand (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 1/21)			159	20	7
36)	"The Ash-Girl and the Salmon Prince", PH Lee & Rachel Swirsky (<i>Lightspeed</i> 10/21)			139	22	3
BEST SHORT STORY		Noms	Best	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	"Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather", Sarah Pinsker (<i>Uncanny</i> 3-4/21)	H,N		833	85	31
2)	"Mr. Death", Alix E. Harrow (<i>Apex</i> 2/21)	H,N	3	754	90	32
3)	"If the Martians Have Magic", P. Djèli Clark (<i>Uncanny</i> 9-10/21)	T	1,2	686	75	30
4)	"Proof by Induction", José Pablo Iriarte (<i>Uncanny</i> 5-6/21)	H,N,T	1	686	81	45
5)	"The Sin of America", Catherynne M. Valente (<i>Uncanny</i> 3-4/21)	H		611	74	36
6)	"Let All the Children Boogie", Sam J. Miller (<i>Tor.com</i> 1/6/21)	N	1,5	540	57	15
7)	"For Lack of a Bed", John Wiswell (<i>Diabolical Plots</i> 4/21)	N		479	62	17
8)	"Crazy Beautiful", Cat Rambo (<i>F&SF</i> 3-4/21)			441	48	5
9)	"Huginn and Muninn – and What Came After", Michael Swanwick (<i>Asimov's</i> 7-8/21)			372	37	13
10)	"An Arc of Electric Skin", Wole Talabi (<i>Asimov's</i> 9-10/21)			366	48	26
11)	"Delete Your First Memory for Free", Kel Coleman (<i>Fiyah</i> Winter '21)		1	356	45	20
12)	"The Revolution Will Not Be Served With Fries", Meg Elison (<i>Lightspeed</i> 9/21)			355	47	13
13)	"How to Break Into a Hotel Room", Stephen Graham Jones (<i>Nightmare</i> 1/21)			349	41	12
14)	"#Selfcare", Annalee Newitz (<i>Tor.com</i> 1/19/21)			329	36	9
15)	"The Wishing Pool", Tananarive Due (<i>Uncanny</i> 7-8/21)		3	329	39	8
16)	"Barefoot and Midnight", Sheree Renée Thomas (<i>Apex</i> 3/21)		3	324	33	7
17)	"I Wear My Spiders in Remembrance of Myself", Kel Coleman (<i>Apparition Lit</i> 8/5/21)			310	41	12
18)	"The Captain and the Quartermaster", C.L. Clark (<i>Beneath Ceaseless Skies</i> 3/25/21)		1,5	299	36	16
19)	"Love, That Hungry Thing", Cassandra Khaw (<i>Apex</i> 1/21)			297	42	7
20)	"We Travel the Spaceways", Victor LaValle (Black Stars)			286	37	4
21)	"Bride, Knife, Flaming Horse", M.L. Krishnan (<i>Apparition Lit</i> 4/26/21)			278	36	9
22)	"I Was a Teenage Space Jockey", Stephen Graham Jones (<i>Lightspeed</i> 11/21)		1	278	38	5
23)	"Masquerade Season", Pemi Aguda (<i>Tor.com</i> 3/24/21)			272	34	15
24)	"We Are Not Phoenixes", John Wiswell (<i>Fireside</i> 3/21)			271	37	9
25)	"Illusions of Freedom", Oluwatomiwa Ajeigbe (<i>Baffling</i> 10/21)			270	34	16
26)	"The Pizza Boy", Meg Elison (<i>F&SF</i> 3-4/21)		1	256	25	7
27)	"RE: Bubble 476", A.T. Greenblatt (<i>Asimov's</i> 3-4/21)			252	27	3
28)	"A Dime", Megan Lindholm (<i>F&SF</i> 11-12/21)			251	22	9

a big lead of over 1,000 points, the most points, and the most first-place votes. Becky Chambers's **A Psalm for the Wild-Built** followed in second place, and Alette de Bodard's **Fireheart Tiger** came in third. In a rare display of accord, subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the top five places. Voters nominated 86 novellas, down from 132; 26 made the cut, up from 19. Four of six Hugo nominees are here, as are six of seven Nebula nominees, including the winner, **And What Can We Offer You Tonight?** by Premea Mohamed. Four nominees for the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award are here; more are on the lists for novelette and short story.

NOVELETTE

"That Story Isn't the Story" by John Wiswell won with the most votes and a slim 12-point lead over "L'Esprit de L'Escalier" by Catherynne M. Valente in second place; "Mulberry and Owl" by Alette de Bodard followed in third. This was one of the categories where doubling subscriber points made a difference; without it, the Valente, which had the most first-place votes, would have won with a 40-point lead. Subscribers and non-subscribers disagreed on first place; subscribers put "Unseelie Brothers, Ltd." by Fran Wilde first, while non-subscribers favored the Valente with a significant lead; when both groups put the Wiswell in second place, that gave it the win. Both groups then agreed on the de Bodard for third place, and the Wilde ended up in fourth. Voters nominated 97 novelettes, down from 126; 36 made the cut, up from 32. Five of six Hugo nominees are here, and three of five Nebula nominees. Four Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award nominees are also here.

SHORT STORY

Sarah Pinsker's "Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather" won with a modest 79-point lead, followed by Alix E. Harrow's "Mr. Death" in second, and P. Djèli Clark's "If the Martians Have Magic" in third. This was another category where doubling subscriber points made a difference in the winner; without the doubling, the Harrow, which had the most votes, would have won by 15 points. Subscribers and non-subscribers differed considerably: subscribers had the Pinsker first, the Clark second, and Sam J. Miller's "Let All the Children Boogie" third; non-subscribers put José Pablo Iriarte's "Proof by Induction" first (with 41 first-place votes), the Harrow second, and Catherynne M. Valente's "The Sin of America" third. There were 228 stories nominated, down from 275; 46 made the cut, up from 38. Four of six Hugo nominees are here, along with all six Nebula nominees, including the winner, the Pinsker. Two Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award nominees are also here.

ANTHOLOGY

We're Here: The Best Queer Speculative Fiction 2020 edited by C.L. Clark & Charles Payseur won with the most votes, the most first-place votes, and a lead of over 100 points. **Year's Best African Speculative Fiction (2021)** edited by Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki came in second, and **The Year's Best Science Fiction Volume 2** edited by Jonathan Strahan was third. Subscribers and non-subscribers disagreed on the winner, subscribers putting the Strahan first, but non-subscribers put the Clark & Payseur first with enough of a lead to win. Both groups had the Ekpeki in second. Voters nominated 56 anthologies, down from 65; 17 made the cut, down from 25. Of those, nine were original anthologies and eight mostly featured reprints. One Stoker nominee is here, their winner, **When Things Get Dark: Stories Inspired by Shirley Jackson** edited by Ellen Datlow.

BEST EDITOR

	Noms	'21	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) Ellen Datlow			1 1327	137	58
2) Jonathan Strahan	H	2	912	79	38
3) Sheree Renée Thomas	H	-	905	100	23
4) Neil Clarke	H	5	645	74	16
5) Silvia Moreno-Garcia	H	8	530	70	14
6) Ann & Jeff VanderMeer		3	502	59	21
7) Lynne M. Thomas & Michael Damian Thomas		9	498	53	20
8) Sheila Williams	H	6	496	50	13
9) Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki	H	13	495	61	19
10) Arley Sorg & Christie Yant		-	487	56	14
11) Mur Lafferty & S.B. Divya	H	12	433	52	17
12) dave ring		20	411	49	19
13) Wendy N. Wagner		-	370	53	7
14) John Joseph Adams		7	361	46	6
15) Diana M. Pho		10	335	39	10
16) Scott H. Andrews		15	283	32	9
17) Ruoxi Chen	H	-	279	36	13
18) Steve Berman		-	276	34	29
19) Jason Sizemore & Lesley Conner		25	254	32	17
20) Patrick Nielsen Hayden	H	11	248	24	8
21) Gavin Grant & Kelly Link		28	231	26	9
22) Paula Guran		19	220	26	1
23) Betsy Wollheim		14	214	19	8
24) Liz Gorinsky		24	196	23	3
25) Julia Rios		16	192	27	3
26) Gordon Van Gelder		22	189	21	3

EDITOR

Ellen Datlow took first place for the third year in a row (her 15th win overall in this category), with a lead of over 400 points, the most votes, and the most first-place votes. Jonathan Strahan then took second place, with Sheree Renée Thomas only seven points back in third. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on Datlow's win and Thomas in third place, but while subscribers had Strahan in second place, non-subscribers gave it to Silvia Moreno-Garcia. We had 89 editors (or teams) nominated, up from 84 last year; 26 made the final list, down from 34. All six Hugo nominees for Best Editor – Short Form are here, plus one of six nominees for Best Editor – Long Form. New or returning to the list are Steve Berman, Ruoxi Chen, Arley Sorg & Christine Yant, Sheree Renée Thomas, and Wendy N. Wagner.

COLLECTION

Charlie Jane Anders's *Even Greater Mistakes* took first place with a lead of 195 points, the most votes, and the most first-place votes. Zen Cho's *Spirits Abroad* came in second, and Isabel Yap's *Never Have I Ever* followed close behind in third. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the winner, but differed considerably below that. There were 70 collections nominated, up from 49; 26 made the cut, up from 22. One Stoker nominee is here.

NON-FICTION

Dangerous Visions and New Worlds: Radical Science Fiction, 1950-1985 edited by Andrew Nette & Iain McIntyre won in a squeaker, just six points ahead of *Roger Zelazny* by F. Brett Cox; *Jewish Science Fiction and Fantasy Through 1945: Immigrants in the Golden Age* by Valerie Estelle Frankel followed in third. This was another case where doubling subscriber points made a difference in the winner. Without the doubling, the Frankel, which had the most votes, would have won, the Nette & Mc-



BEST SHORT STORY, cont.

	Noms	Best	Pts	Vts	1sts
29) "Immortal Coil", Ellen Kushner (<i>Uncanny</i> 7-8/21)			249	30	9
30) "Homecoming is Just Another Word for the Sublimation of the Self", Isabel J. Kim (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 3/21)			244	32	11
31) "When the Water Stops", Eugen Bacon (<i>F&SF</i> 5-6/21)			240	27	7
32) "#Spring Love, #Pichal Pairi", Usman T. Malik (<i>Tor.com</i> 3/3/21)			234	24	7
33) "All Worlds Left Behind", Iona Datt Sharma (<i>khōrēō</i> 2/15/21)			217	29	8
34) "Clap Back", Nalo Hopkinson (Black Stars)			210	23	6
35) "A Bird in the Window", Kate Francia (<i>Beneath Ceaseless Skies</i> 9/23/21)			209	27	18
36) "The Bletted Woman", Rebecca Campbell (<i>F&SF</i> 3-4/21)		3	207	19	5
37) "The Frankly Impossible Weight of Han", Maria Dong (<i>khōrēō</i> 2/15/21)			1	198	28
38) "Laughter Among the Trees", Suzan Palumbo (<i>The Dark</i> 2/21)	N	3	191	24	7
39) "Deep Music", Elly Bangs (<i>Clarkesworld</i> 1/21)			175	21	4
40) "Gordon B. White is creating Haunting Weird Horror", Gordon B. White (<i>Nightmare</i> 7/21)			161	20	4
41) "Space Pirate Queen of the Ten Billion Utopias", Elly Bangs (<i>Lightspeed</i> 11/21)			160	20	7
42) "How the Girls Came Home", Eugenia Triantafyllou (<i>Uncanny</i> 5-6/21)			158	24	2
43) "The Shadow of His Wings", Ray Nayler (<i>Analog</i> 3-4/21)			158	17	6
44) "A Princess of Mars: Svetlana Belkina and Tarkovsky's Lost Movie Aelita", Nina Allan (The Art of Space Travel)			151	14	4
45) "Vampirito", K. Victoria Hernandez (<i>khōrēō</i> 2/15/21)			147	24	2
46) "Gray Skies, Red Wings, Blue Lips, Black Hearts", Merc Fenn Wolfmoor (<i>Apex</i> 2/21)		2	144	22	4

BEST ANTHOLOGY

	Noms	O/R	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) We're Here: The Best Queer Speculative Fiction 2020 , C.L. Clark & Charles Payseur, eds. (Neon Hemlock)		R	1669	202	94
2) Year's Best African Speculative Fiction (2021) , Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki, ed. (Jembefola)		R	1563	179	84
3) The Year's Best Science Fiction Volume 2 , Jonathan Strahan, ed. (Saga)		R	1198	106	55
4) When Things Get Dark: Stories Inspired by Shirley Jackson , Ellen Datlow, ed. (Titan)		S	1085	118	48
5) Unfettered Hexes: Queer Tales of Insatiable Darkness , dave ring, ed. (Neon Hemlock)		O	804	101	33
6) The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy 2021 , Veronica Roth & John Joseph Adams, eds. (Mariner)		R	755	88	18
7) The Best of World SF: Volume 1 , Lavie Tidhar, ed. (Head of Zeus)		R	738	88	32
8) The Best Horror of the Year: Volume Thirteen , Ellen Datlow, ed. (Night Shade)		R	710	81	30
9) Speculative Fiction for Dreamers: A Latinx Anthology , Alex Hernandez, Matthew David Goodwin & Sarah Rafael Garcia, eds. (Mad Creek)		O	692	95	14
10) Sword Stone Table: Old Legends, New Voices , Swapna Krishna & Jenn Northington, eds. (Vintage)		O	689	78	38
11) Body Shocks: Extreme Tales of Body Horror , Ellen Datlow, ed. (Tachyon)		R	539	67	18
12) The Gollancz Book of South Asian Science Fiction: Volume 2 , Tarun K. Saint, ed. (Hachette India)		O	530	65	10
13) The Year's Best Dark Fantasy and Horror: Volume 2 , Paula Guran, ed. (Pyr)		R	463	56	6
14) Sinopticon , Xueting Christine Ni (Solaris)		O	435	55	15
15) Make Shift: Dispatches from the Post-Pandemic Future , Gideon Lichfield, ed. (The MIT Press)		O	244	27	5
16) Relics, Wrecks and Ruins , Aiki Flinthart, ed. (CAT)		O	191	25	6
17) Seasons Between Us: Tales of Identities and Memories , Susan Forest & Lucas K. Law, eds. (Laksa)		O	191	23	6

BEST COLLECTION

	Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) Even Greater Mistakes , Charlie Jane Anders (Tor; Titan)		1362	149	80
2) Spirits Abroad , Zen Cho (Small Beer)		1170	134	53
3) Never Have I Ever , Isabel Yap (Small Beer)		1144	139	47
4) Midnight Doorways: Fables from Pakistan , Usman T. Malik (Kitab)		716	80	34
5) The Ghost Sequences , A.C. Wise (Undertow)	S	702	89	26
6) Belladonna Nights and Other Stories , Alastair Reynolds (Subterranean)		677	65	21
7) The Best of Elizabeth Hand , Elizabeth Hand (Subterranean)		648	66	16
8) Shoggoths in Traffic and Other Stories , Tobias S. Buckell (Fairwood)		620	66	18
9) Alias Space and Other Stories , Kelly Robson (Subterranean)		607	64	21
* Big Dark Hole , Jeffrey Ford (Small Beer)		607	63	18
11) The Best of Walter Jon Williams , Walter Jon Williams (Subterranean)		605	58	17
12) Burning Girls and Other Stories , Veronica Schanoes (Tordotcom)		495	60	15
13) Robot Artists & Black Swans: The Italian Fantascienza Stories , Bruce Sterling (Tachyon)		384	41	17
* The Glassy, Burning Floor of Hell , Brian Evenson (Coffee House)		384	50	18
15) The Truth and Other Stories , Stanislaw Lem (The MIT Press)		361	41	13
16) The Best of Harry Turtledove , Harry Turtledove (Subterranean)		354	39	10
17) The Tallow-Wife and Other Tales , Angela Slatter (Tartarus)		351	44	9

BEST COLLECTION, <i>cont.</i>		Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
18)	The Art of Space Travel and Other Stories , Nina Allan (Titan)		350	36	12
19)	Reconstruction , Alaya Dawn Johnson (Small Beer)		349	39	9
20)	The First Law of Thermodynamics , James Patrick Kelly (PM)		338	34	11
21)	Six Dreams About the Train and Other Stories , Maria Haskins (Trepidatio)		330	42	10
22)	The Complete Short Fiction of Peter Straub Volumes One and Two , Peter Straub (Borderlands)		250	28	7
23)	Everything in All the Wrong Order: The Best of Chaz Brenchley , Chaz Brenchley (Subterranean)		246	25	13
24)	The Burning Day and Other Strange Stories , Charles Payseur (Lethe)		246	29	7
25)	How to Get to Apocalypse and Other Disasters , Erica L. Satifka (Fairwood)		225	25	10
26)	Walking on Cowrie Shells , Nana Nkweti (Graywolf)		187	23	5
BEST NON-FICTION		Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	Dangerous Visions and New Worlds: Radical Science Fiction, 1950–1985 , Andrew Nette & Iain McIntyre, eds. (PM)	H	809	79	31
2)	Roger Zelazny , F. Brett Cox (University of Illinois Press)		803	75	42
3)	Jewish Science Fiction and Fantasy Through 1945: Immigrants in the Golden Age , Valerie Estelle Frankel (Lexington)		747	82	40
4)	Diverse Futures: Science Fiction and Authors of Color , Joy Sanchez-Taylor (Ohio State University Press)		569	73	24
5)	Gothic: An Illustrated History , Roger Luckhurst (Thames and Hudson; Princeton University Press)		536	64	22
6)	Chinese Science Fiction during the Post-Mao Cultural Thaw , Hua Li (University of Toronto Press)		479	62	12
7)	Yesterday's Tomorrows , Mike Ashley (British Library Publishing)		431	47	10
8)	The Young H.G. Wells: Changing the World , Claire Tomalin (Penguin)		407	46	14
9)	After Human: A Critical History of the Human in Science Fiction from Shelley to Le Guin , Thomas Connolly (Liverpool University Press)		406	51	12
10)	You Are Not Your Writing & Other Sage Advice , Angela Slatter (Brain Jar)		384	46	15
11)	The Anthropocene Unconscious , Mark Bould (Verso)		375	38	18
12)	Pocket Workshop: Essays on living as a writer , Tod McCoy & M. Huw Evans, eds. (Hydra House)		361	36	17
13)	Occasional Views Volume 1: "More About Writing" and Other Essays , Samuel R. Delany (Wesleyan University Press)		348	34	15
14)	All of the Marvels , Douglas Wolk (Penguin; Profile)		319	31	17
15)	The Modern Myths: Adventures in the Machinery of the Popular Imagination , Philip Ball (University of Chicago Press)		268	36	10
16)	Michael Bishop and the Persistence of Wonder: A Critical Study of the Writings , Joe Sanders (McFarland)		226	20	5
BEST ART BOOK		Noms	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	The Art of Neil Gaiman & Charles Vess's Stardust , Charles Vess (Titan)		1229	130	62
2)	After the Rain , Nnedi Okorafor, adapted by John Jennings, art by David Brame (Abrams ComicArts/Megascopes)		592	64	26
3)	Spectrum Fantastic Art Quarterly Volume One , Cathy Fenner & Arnie Fenner, eds. (Underwood)		474	44	13
4)	Squad , Maggie Tokuda-Hall, art by Lisa Sterle (Harper Alley/Greenwillow)		471	55	37
5)	1984: The Graphic Novel , George Orwell, art by Fido Nesti (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)		448	56	22
6)	Medusa , Jessie Burton, art by Olivia Lomenech Gill (Bloomsbury)		414	49	24
7)	The Labyrinth , Simon Stålenhag (Fria Ligan Sweden 2020; Simon & Schuster UK 2021; Image Comics US 2021)		412	51	21
8)	Norse Tales: Stories from Across the Rainbow Bridge , Kevin Crossley-Holland, art by Jeffrey Alan Love (Walker Studio UK 2020; Candlewick Studio US as Across the Rainbow Bridge: Stories of Norse Gods and Humans)		407	44	19
9)	Monstrous Mythologies , Michael Bukowski (Lethe)		382	50	16
10)	Clockwork Curandera Volume 1: The Witch Owl Parliament , David Bowles, art by Raúl the Third (Tu Books)		298	34	13
11)	Forgotten Gods, the Art of Yoann Lossel , Yoann Lossel & Psyché Ophiuchus (Yoann Lossel)		247	30	9
12)	Kay Nielsen, An Enchanted Vision , Meghan Melvin (MFA Boston)		247	26	8
13)	A Field Guide to Draco Floris Dragons , Annie Stegg Gerard (Gallery Gerard)		230	28	3
14)	John Howe's Ultimate Fantasy Art Academy , John Howe (David and Charles)		221	25	3
15)	Infected by Art: Volume 9 , Todd Spoor, Bill Cox & Jon Schindehette (ArtOrder)		181	18	4
16)	Campaigns & Companions , Andi Ewington & Rhianna Pratchett, art by Calum Alexander Watt (Rebellion)		177	22	9

BEST MAGAZINE		Noms '21	Pts	Vts	1sts
1)	<i>Tor.com</i> [H]	1	2180	242	85
2)	<i>Uncanny</i> H	2	1628	193	62
3)	<i>F&SF</i> [H]	3	1507	146	45
4)	<i>Fiyah</i> H	4	1372	163	64
5)	<i>Asimov's</i> [H]	5	1034	97	34
6)	<i>Clarkesworld</i> [H]	6	908	106	32
7)	<i>Strange Horizons</i> H	7	830	112	21
8)	<i>Beneath Ceaseless Skies</i> H	8	800	96	25
9)	<i>Analog</i>	10	573	59	15
10)	<i>Lightspeed</i>	9	447	60	6
11)	<i>Apex</i>	12	435	59	22
12)	<i>Nightmare</i>	13	425	59	10
13)	<i>File 770</i>	11	410	42	10
14)	<i>khōréō</i>	-	409	53	30
15)	<i>Fantasy</i>	-	335	39	11
16)	<i>Escape Pod</i> H,[H]	14	260	33	9
17)	<i>Fireside</i>	23	258	35	10
18)	<i>PodCastle</i> H	15	247	33	7
19)	<i>Cosmic Roots & Eldritch Shores</i>	-	244	30	28
20)	<i>Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet</i>	20	228	26	4
21)	<i>Diabolical Plots</i>	-	211	28	7
22)	<i>Interzone</i>	16	187	19	6
23)	<i>Coode Street</i> H,[H]	17	179	17	4
*)	<i>The Dark</i>	21	179	26	5
25)	<i>Pseudopod</i>	18	178	25	1
26)	<i>Daily SF</i>	26	163	22	2
27)	<i>Quick Sip Reviews</i> H	-	151	21	1

MAGAZINE

Tor.com won for the sixth year in a row with a solid lead of over 550 points, the most votes, and the most first-place votes; *Uncanny Magazine* held onto second place, and *F&SF* returned in third. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the winner, but subscribers had *F&SF* in second, *Asimov's* third, and *Uncanny* fourth; non-subscribers had *Uncanny* second, and *Fiyah* third. Voters nominated 78 magazines, up from 68; 27 made the final list, up from 26. All six Hugo nominees for Best Semiprozine are here, plus one of six nominees for Best Fan-cast and one of six for Best Fanzine, all marked H; marked [H] are six magazines with editors nominated for Best Professional Editor – Short Form (counting Strahan for *Tor.com* and *Street Podcast* and Lafferty & Divya for *Escape Pod*).

« 2022 Locus Poll

Intyre would have ended up in third place, while the Cox (which had the most first-place votes) would have stayed in second place. Subscribers had the top three titles in their final order, but non-subscribers had the Frankel first, **Diverse Futures: Science Fiction and Authors of Color** by Joy Sanchez-Taylor second, **Gothic: An Illustrated History** by Roger Luckhurst third, and **Chinese Science Fiction during the Post-Mao Cultural Thaw** by Hua Li in fourth, with the Cox in fifth and the Nette & McIntyre in sixth. Voters nominated 38 non-fiction titles, down from 43; 16 made the cut, the same as last year.

ART BOOK

The Art of Neil Gaiman & Charles Vess's Stardust by Charles Vess won decisively with more than twice the points, total votes, and first-place votes of the closest contender, graphic novel **After the Rain** by Nnedi Okorafor, adapted by John Jennings, with art by David Brame; third place went to **Spectrum Fantastic Art Quarterly Volume One** edited by Cathy Fenner & Arnie Fenner. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the winner and little else on this one. There were 38 art books nominated, up from 34 last year; 16 made the cut, up from 15.

BEST ARTIST

	Noms '21	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) Charles Vess	2	674	74	19
2) John Picacio	1	668	65	19
3) Rovina Cai	H 4	525	57	22
4) Michael Whelan	3	387	42	18
5) Shaun Tan	15	370	41	11
6) Bob Eggleton	6	313	29	15
7) Kinuko Y. Craft	8	297	31	7
8) Victo Ngai	9	266	36	10
9) Tommy Arnold	H -	255	30	14
10) Galen Dara	12	253	28	8
11) Sana Takeda	18	247	27	11
12) Kathleen Jennings	-	238	23	9
13) Julie Dillon	5	233	32	6
14) Brom	19	231	28	13
15) Fiona Staples	-	226	28	12
16) Stephanie Pui-Mun Law	-	199	27	6
17) Maurizio Manzieri	H -	193	17	7
18) Tran Nguyen	16	191	23	7
19) Alyssa Winans	H -	186	18	9
20) Alan Lee	-	182	19	10
21) Yuko Shimizu	14	181	22	6
22) Abigail Larson	20	177	24	12
23) Lee Moyer	H -	158	16	7
24) Yoshitaka Amano	-	156	22	6

ARTIST

Charles Vess won with a six-point lead in a tight race with John Picacio, who ended up in second place; the two tied in first place votes, but Vess's lead in total votes gave him the win. Rovina Cai followed in third place, despite having the most first-place votes. Subscribers and non-subscribers had the same top three artists, but disagreed on placement. Subscribers had Picacio in first, Vess second, and Cai third; non-subscribers had Vess first, Cai second, and Picacio third. Voters nominated 101 artists, up from 77; 24 made the cut, down from 25 last year. Four of six Hugo nominees for Best Professional Artist are here, along with one nominee for Best Fan Artist: Lee Moyer. New or returning to the list are Yoshitaka Amano, Tommy Arnold, Kathleen Jennings, Stephanie Pui-Mun Law, Alan Lee, Maurizio Manzieri, Lee Moyer, and Fiona Staples, and Alyssa Winans.

CONCLUSION

We look at award nominees and Year's Best anthologies to get a better look at how our picks compare with others'. In short fiction, a total of 32 stories on our lists also made it into five Year's Best anthologies, up from four Year's Bests last

BEST PUBLISHER/IMPRINT

	'21	Pts	Vts	1sts
1) Tor	1	3033	315	157
2) Tordotcom	2	1725	185	80
3) Orbit	3	1346	160	34
4) Subterranean	4	1137	120	26
5) Small Beer	5	801	90	20
6) Neon Hemlock	15	591	76	32
7) DAW	6	582	63	14
8) Angry Robot	8	575	77	14
9) Gollancz	7	519	66	14
10) Baen	12	435	40	16
11) Tachyon	13	419	50	9
12) Erewhon	17	356	46	11
13) Saga	9	338	38	8
14) PS Publishing	11	292	32	6
15) Del Rey	10	290	42	2
16) Solaris	18	287	37	7
17) Titan	22	286	32	6
*) Tor UK	-	286	39	5
19) Lethe	-	275	34	23
20) Ace	14	230	24	4
21) Apex	19	220	29	14

	'21	Pts	Vts	1sts
22) Harper Voyager	16	207	24	3
23) Penguin	23	196	26	9
24) Cemetery Dance	20	181	21	6
*) Nightfire	-	181	27	4
26) PM Press	-	175	20	2
27) Centipede Press	25	169	17	5
28) Aqueduct	26	150	15	6
29) Random House	-	130	20	0

BOOK PUBLISHER/IMPRINT

Tor returned in first place with a hefty lead of more than 1,300 points over Tordotcom in second, itself more than 305 points ahead of Orbit in third. Subscribers and non-subscribers agreed on the first two places, but subscribers had Subterranean Press in third and Orbit fourth, while non-subscribers had Orbit third and Neon Hemlock fourth. We had 92 nominated publishers and imprints, up from 82; 29 made the cut, up from 26. New or returning to the list are Lethe, Nightfire, PM Press, Random House, and Tor UK.

year; another two anthologies we looked at had no stories on our lists. We would have included **The Best Science Fiction of the Year, Volume 7**, Neil Clarke, ed. and **The Year's Best Science Fiction & Fantasy: 2022 Edition**, Rich Horton, ed., but their contents lists weren't released in time. Several years back it felt like there was a real glut of Year's Bests, but these days it seems they're barely holding steady, though new ones keep popping up.

There wasn't a lot of duplication of contents between the anthologies. Five of the stories on our lists made it into two anthologies, up from three stories last year; none of the stories on our lists made it into three anthologies, the same as last year. Space limitations mean there generally aren't a lot of novellas in these anthologies, and the fact that so many of the novellas on our list this year were originally published as separate books probably doesn't help, but this year one novella (originally published in an online magazine) on our list made it into an anthology, up from none last year. In novelettes, 16 made it into at least one Year's Best anthology, up from 12 last year; two made it into more than one anthology, the same as last year. We had 15 short stories make it into at least one Best of the Year, up from 11; three made it into two anthologies, up from one.

The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy 2022, edited by Rebecca Roanhorse & John Joseph Adams, had the most stories on the lists with 14, up dramatically from three last year, pos-

sibly due to having a different lead editor. Two year's bests edited by Paula Guran tied for second, each with nine stories from our lists: **The Year's Best Dark Fantasy & Horror, Volume 3**, which had eight stories last year; and new contender **The Year's Best Fantasy, Volume 1. We're Here: The Best Queer Speculative Fiction 2021** edited by L.D. Lewis & Charles Payseur had three stories (we didn't see the 2020 volume in time to count last year), and **The Year's Top Hard Science Fiction Stories 6** had two, up from none last year.

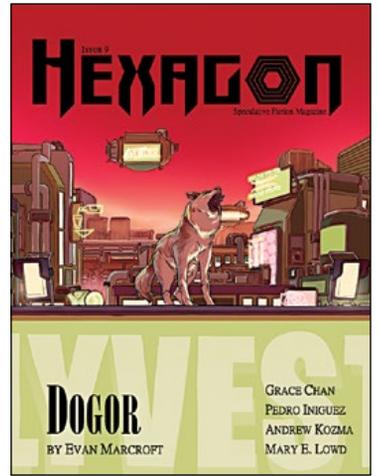
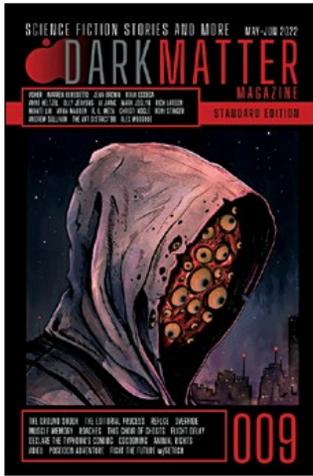
A total of 108 pieces of short fiction made our lists, up from 89, and as usual there's plenty more on nomination lists and Best of the Year anthologies. We also have 116 novels, adult and YA, on our lists, so there's definitely good fiction out there.

The number of voters was down a bit – maybe because things are finally getting back to normal and people are getting back to their lives, with less time for reading and voting. Still, we got plenty of nominees, and as with last year there weren't a lot of categories dominated by the usual big names, with considerable diversity showing as well. There were some fraught moments in 2021, from the controversy over the Presidential election results and a pandemic that refuses to quit, to the realization of just how much supply chain problems were going to complicate publishing. Still, despite some shifts and changes, the field's still feeding readers a veritable banquet of varied books and stories.

–Carolyn Cushman■



MAGAZINES RECEIVED – MAY



Dark Matter Magazine—Rob Carroll, ed. Issue #9, May/June 2022 \$15.00 print/\$4.99 digital, bimonthly, 156pp. Literary magazine exploring the “shadow side of reality”. This issue includes original short fiction by Noah Codega, Rich Larson, Ai Jiang, and others; a reprint from Christi Nogle; part three of a serial by Warren Benedetto; an interview with Anne Heltzler; art features; and reviews. Cover by Olly Jeavons (AKA artofolly). Subscription: \$30.00 per year for digital-only or \$1.00/month or \$10/year basic membership to access stories online at <darkmattermagazine.shop/>. Print subscriptions are available with higher tier membership, as well as single copy print issues; website: darkmattermagazine.com/.

Dreams & Nightmares—David C. Kopaska-Merkel, ed. No. 121, May 2022, \$5.00, irregular, 24pp, 14 x 21½ cm. Magazine of fantastic and speculative poetry, with work by Colleen Anderson, F.J. Bergmann, Pedro Iniguez, Josh Pearce, and others. Cover by Allen K. Subscription: \$25.00 US/\$30 outside North America for six issues, to David C. Kopaska-Merkel, 10055 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge LA 70815. Make checks out to David C. Kopaska-Merkel. E-mail: jopnquog@gmail.com; website: <dreamsandnightmaresmagazine.blogspot.com/>.

Fusion Fragment <www.fusionfragment.com/>—Cavan Terrill, ed. Issue #11, May 2022, online pay-what-you-want or purchase a hardcover copy through Blurb, this issue \$26.99 CAD (price varies by issue), irregular, 128 pp, 21½ x 28 cm. Online speculative fiction magazine. This issue includes original work by Marisca Pichette, Mart W. Tiedemann, Anja Hendrikse Liu, and others, and reprinted work by Jenny Rae Rappaport (each story includes a short Q&A with the author); and reviews. Cover by Carly Allen-Fletcher. Subscription: Available through Patreon <www.patreon.com/fusionfragment>.

Online Magazines

Aurealis <www.aurealis.com.au>—Michael Payor, ed. No. 151, June 2022, \$2.99, 10 times a year (every month except January and December). This issue includes fiction from David Dick, Tania Fordwalker, and Julian Gyll; non-fiction by Nick Sheppard, Sarah Fallon, and Rebecca Fraser; and reviews. Cover by franciscah. Subscriptions \$19.99/year for 10 issues from their website.

Beneath Ceaseless Skies <www.beneath-ceaseless-skies.com/>—Scott H. Andrews, ed. Issue #357, June 2, 2022, free online, biweekly. Online fantasy/adventure magazine. This issue includes original fiction by Aaron

Perry and Evan Marcroft; a reprint by Megan Arkenberg; and podcast from the audio vault from A.J. Lucy. Cover by Andy Lee. Subscription: \$19.99/year from Weightless Books <www.weightlessbooks.com>.

Beneath Ceaseless Skies <www.beneath-ceaseless-skies.com/>—Scott H. Andrews, ed. Issue #358, June 16, 2022, free online, biweekly. Online fantasy/adventure magazine. This issue includes original fiction by Devin Miller (with accompanying podcast) and Samuel Chapman; and a reprint from Bonnie Jo Stufflebeam. Cover by Andy Lee. Subscription: \$19.99/year from Weightless Books <www.weightlessbooks.com>.

Black Cat Weekly <bcmystery.com/>—John Betancourt, ed. Issue #38, \$3.99, weekly. Weekly reprinted SF and mystery magazine. This issue includes four science fiction or fantasy stories by Nisi Shawl & Michael Ehart, John W. Campbell, and others; and classic fantasy novel **Lud-in-the-Mist** by Hope Mirrlees; as well as four mystery or suspense stories and a mystery novel. Subscriptions: \$3.99/month or \$19.99/year (subscriptions include electronic copies of their other magazines also).

Black Cat Weekly <bcmystery.com/>—John Betancourt, ed. Issue #39, \$3.99, weekly. Weekly reprinted SF and mystery magazine. This issue includes five science fiction or fantasy stories by Walter Jon Williams, Henry Kuttner, and others; as well as four mystery or suspense stories and two novels. Subscriptions: \$3.99/month or \$19.99/year (subscriptions include electronic copies of their other magazines also).

Black Cat Weekly <bcmystery.com/>—John Betancourt, ed. Issue #40, \$3.99, weekly. Weekly reprinted SF and mystery magazine. This issue includes four science fiction or fantasy stories by Edmond Hamilton, Nelson S. Bond, and others; as well as three mystery stories and a novel. Subscriptions: \$3.99/month or \$19.99/year (subscriptions include electronic copies of their other magazines also).

Black Cat Weekly <bcmystery.com/>—John Betancourt, ed. Issue #41, \$3.99, weekly. Weekly reprinted SF and mystery magazine. This issue includes three science fiction or fantasy stories by Amy Wolf, Lester del Rey, and Malcolm Jameson; and two novellas by G.C. Pendarves, and Frank Belknap Long; as well as three mystery/Suspense/Adventure stories and a novel. Subscriptions: \$3.99/month or \$19.99/year (subscriptions include electronic copies of their other magazines also).

Black Cat Weekly <bcmystery.com/>—John Betancourt, ed. Issue #42, \$3.99, weekly. Weekly reprinted SF and mystery magazine. This issue includes six science fiction or fantasy stories by Maurice Broaddus, Manly Wade Wellman, Dorothy Quick and others; as well as three mystery/Suspense/Adventure stories and a novel. Subscriptions: \$3.99/month or \$19.99/year (subscriptions include electronic copies of their other magazines also).

Clarkesworld <www.clarkesworldmagazine.com/>—Neil Clarke, ed. Issue #189, June 2022, free online or \$2.99 ebook, monthly. Online SF/fantasy magazine. This issue includes original fiction by Aimee Ogden (with accompanying podcast), Anna Martino, Adele Gardner, Nika Murphy, Chris Willrich, and Marie Vibbert; a reprint from Chen Qian (Carmen Yiling Yan, trans.); an article by Pauline Barby; and interviews with Samit Basu and Sam J. Miller. Cover by Eddie Mendoza. Subscription: Digital subscription \$35.88 for 12 issues at clarkesworldmagazine.com/direct-support/ or issues may be purchased monthly: \$2.99 digital/\$10.00 print (\$14.00 Canada & Europe)/\$12.99 print + digital (\$16.99 Canada & Europe). Also available from third-party sellers.

Cosmic Roots and Eldritch Shores <cosmicrootsandeldritchshores.com/>—Fran Eisenmann, ed. May/June 2022, free online. Online genre fiction magazine; content (generally one illustrated story per month, plus occasional interviews and articles) is posted throughout the month. In May and June, the site posted stories by T.R. Frazier and others; and a review. Subscriptions \$12.00/year.

The Dark <www.thedarkmagazine.com/>—Sean Wallace, ed. Issue #85, June 2022, free online or digital available for \$1.99-\$2.99, monthly. Dark fantasy and horror magazine. This issue includes original fiction by Angela Liu, James Bennett, Tegan Moore, and Kay Chronister. Cover by Alessandro Amoroso. Subscription: digital subscriptions available for \$23.88 for 12 issues from Weightless Books <www.weightlessbooks.com>. Issues can be purchased at a monthly subscription rate from Amazon.com at \$1.99/month or \$1.99/month via Amazon.co.uk; or as single copies at \$2.99 from Apple, B&N, Kobo, and Weightless.

The Deadlands <thedeadlands.com/>—E. Catherine Tobler, ed. Issue #14, June 2022, digital/free online, monthly. “The Deadlands exists in liminal spaces between life, death and elsewhere” with “speculative fiction that concerns itself with death – but also everything death may involve.” This issue’s fiction is guest

edited by Nicasio Andres Reed and includes fiction from Iona Datt Sharma; a reprint from Nikita Deshpande; non-fiction by Amanda Downum; and poetry. Cover by Milena Grzegorzewska. Subscription: \$36.00 for 12 digital issues at <thedeadlands.com/membership-account/membership-levels/>.

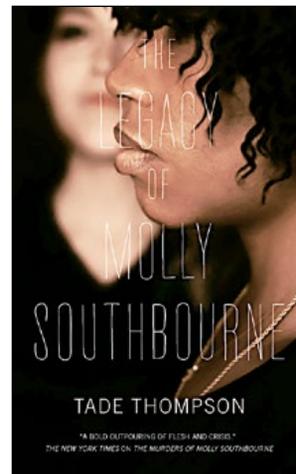
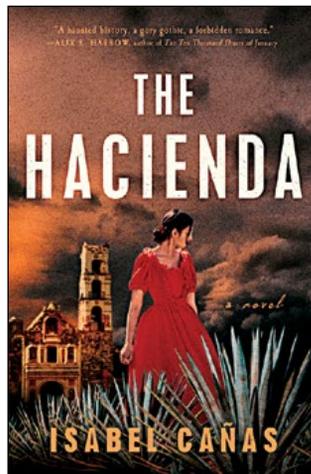
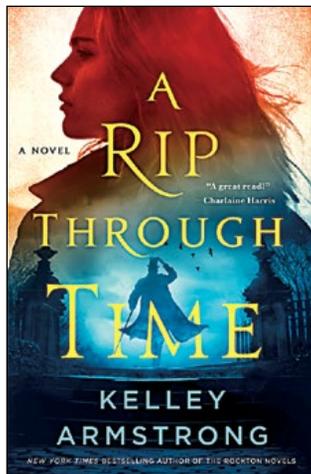
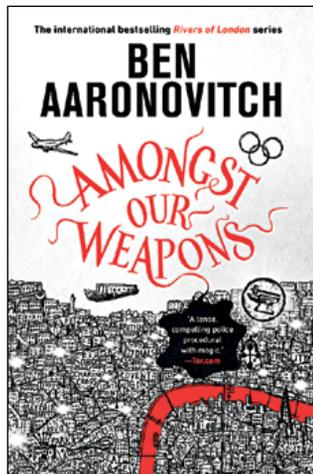
Escape Artists <escapeartists.net/>—produces four weekly podcasts: **Escape Pod** <escapepod.org/> Valerie Valdes & Mur Laffery, eds. (SF), **PodCastle** <podcastle.org/> Shingai Njeri Kagunda & Eleanor R. Wood, eds. (fantasy), **PseudoPod** <pseudopod.org/> Shawn Garrett & Alex Hofelich, eds. (horror), and **Cast of Wonders** <www.castofwonders.org/> Katherine Inskip, ed. (YA). Free online. Genre podcasts of both original and previously published stories with accompanying text. For May/June, **Escape Pod** aired stories from R.S.A Garcia, Arturo Sierra, John Wiswell, and Jeff Hewitt; **PodCastle** aired stories by M.E. Bronstein, Renan Bernardo, Vanessa Fogg, and C.J. Lavigne; **PseudoPod** aired stories from Lesley Hart Gunn, Christi Nogle, Márcio Coelho, Alfred McLelland Burrage, and Liam Hogan; and **Cast of Wonders** aired stories by Louis Evans, Cara Mast, and Avi Burton. Subscriptions: Free.

Fantasy Magazine <www.fantasy-magazine.com/>—Christie Yant & Arley Sorg, eds. Issue #80, June 2022, free online or \$3.99 ebook, monthly. Online Fantasy magazine. This issue includes original flash fiction by Victor Forna and Wen Wen Yang; short fiction by Fatima Taqvi and Sara S. Messenger; an essay by Suzan Palumbo; and poetry. On the website, each month’s contents are serialized throughout the month with new features published on the first four Tuesdays. The ebook edition is available on the first of the month. Cover by Dominick / Adobe Stock Image. Subscription: \$2.99/month via Amazon.com or \$23.88 for 12 issues from **Fantasy** <www.fantasy-magazine.com/subscriptions> or Weightless Books <www.weightlessbooks.com>.

Future Science Fiction Digest <future-sf.com/>—Alex Shvartsman, ed., Issue 15, June 2022, free online/\$3.99 digital, quarterly. SF magazine with a focus on translated and international fiction. This issue includes stories from Henry Lion Oldie (Julia Meitov Hersey, trans.), Kostas Charitos (Dimitra Nicolaidou & Victor Pseftakis, trans.), Volodymyr Arenev, and Li Huayi (Nathn Faries, trans.). Contents from this issue are also posted free online. See their website for release dates. Cover by Kateryna Kosheleva. Subscriptions: \$11.99 for four digital

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BOOKS RECEIVED – MAY



Compiled by Liza Groen Trombi & Carolyn Cushman. Please send all corrections to Carolyn Cushman, c/o *Locus*. We will run all verified corrections.

KEY: * = first edition + = first US edition

*Aaronovitch, Ben **Amongst Our Weapons** (Orion UK, 978-1-4732-2666-1, £18.99, 405pp, hc, cover by Stephen Walter) Urban fantasy/detective novel, the ninth in the Peter Grant/Rivers of London series. Peter faces imminent fatherhood even as he tracks murders involving possibly magic silver rings. Simultaneous with the US (DAW) edition, not seen.

Abercrombie, Joe **The Wisdom of Crowds** (Orion/Gollancz UK, 978-0-575-09598-4, £9.99, 526pp, tp, cover by Sam Weber) Reprint (Gollancz 2021) fantasy novel, the third and final in the Age of Madness trilogy in the First Law world. This is a UK edition.

*Ambrose, E.C. **Drakemaster** (Guardbridge, 978-1-911486-69-5, \$12.00, 487pp, tp, cover by Keith Demanche) Historical fantasy novel of 1257 China under invasion by the Mongols, and a race to find a legendary clockwork doomsday device. This is a UK print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. Guardbridge Books UK, <guardbridgebooks.co.uk>

Anderson, Kevin J. **Hopscotch** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-250-6, \$16.99, 402pp, tp) Reprint (Bantam Spectra 2002) SF novel. A hardcover edition (-266-7, \$25.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>

*Annandale, David **Marvel Untold: Dr. Doom: Reign of the Devourer** (Acorynte, 978-1-83908-094-4, \$16.95, 348pp, tp, cover by Fabio Lustrani) Comics tie-in novel. This is an international edition with US and UK prices, due out two months later in the UK. Ebook also available. Copyrighted by Marvel.

Armentrout, Jennifer L. **Grace and Glory** (Harlequin/Inkyard Press, 978-1-335-42585-0, \$12.99, 456pp, tp) Reprint (Inkyard Press 2021) young-adult fantasy novel, third in the Harbinger series, set in the world of the Dark Elements series. The author has also written as J. Lynn.

*Armentrout, Jennifer L. **The War of Two Queens** (Evil Eye Concepts/Blue Box Press, 978-1-952457-74-6, \$31.99, 619pp, hc) Fantasy romance novel, fourth in the Blood and Ash series. The author also writes as J. Lynn. This is a signed edition; a trade paperback edition (978-1957568232, \$19.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available.

*Armstrong, Kelley **A Rip Through Time** (St. Martin's Minotaur, 978-1-250-82000-6, \$27.99, 340pp, hc) Fantasy time-travel

mystery novel, first in a series. Homicide detective Mallory is attacked in 2019 Edinburgh and finds herself transported to the same spot in 1869 – in the body of a murdered housemaid. Ebook also available.

*Atherton, Nancy **Aunt Dimity and the Enchanted Cottage** (Penguin Random House/Viking, 978-0-593-29577-9, \$26.00, 240pp, hc, cover by Kiki Ljung) Mystery with supernatural elements, 25th in the Aunt Dimity series. A newcomer to Finch is a loner until he gets involved in trying to uncover the identity of children in unmarked graves. This includes one recipe. Ebook also available.

Babalola, Bolu **Love in Color** (HarperCollins/Morrow, 978-0-06-307850-5, \$16.99, xii + 283pp, tp) Reprint (Headline 8/20 as **Love in Colour**) collection of 13 stories retelling myths from around the world.

*Baldree, Travis **Legends & Lattes** (Cryptid Press, 979-8-9856632-1-1, \$12.00, 305pp, tp, cover by Carson Lowmiller) Fantasy novel about an orc barbarian warrior hoping to retire from fighting and open the first coffee shop in Thune. A first novel. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Barclay, David **The Maker's Box** (9 Swords, 978-1734041668 \$6.99, 92pp, tp, cover by Stefanie Saw) Supernatural horror novella. Emily, obsessed with the occult, gets a box (with a beating heart inside) that shows her wondrous things in exchange for her blood. Ebook also available.

*Barnhill, Kelly **When Women Were Dragons** (Penguin Random House/Doubleday, 978-0-385-54822-9, \$28.00, 336pp, hc, cover by Charlotte Day) Feminist fantasy novel/allegory. The Mass Dragoning of 1955 causes thousands of women to suddenly transform into dragons and leave, changing ideas about women's place – but the girl Alex Green is forbidden to talk about it. Simultaneous with the UK (Hot Key) edition. Ebook also available.

Berg, Carol **Guardians of the Keep** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-316-9, \$24.99, 460pp, tp) Reprint (Roc 2004) fantasy novel, book two of The Bridge of D'Arnth series. Print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>

Berg, Carol **Son of Avonar** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-314-5, \$19.99, 429pp, tp) Reprint (Roc 2004) fantasy novel, first in The Bridge of D'Arnth series. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>

*Black, Holly **Book of Night** (Tor, 978-1-

250-81219-3, \$27.99, 304pp, hc) Modern dark fantasy novel. Charlie Hall tries to go straight after making a career of stealing magicians' secrets, but past connections drag her into trouble. Black's first adult novel. Simultaneous with the Del Rey UK edition.

*Bousfield, H.T.W. **The Unknown Island and Other Tales of Fantasy and the Supernatural** (Ramble House, 978-1-60543-951-8, \$16.00, 109pp, tp) Collection of eight weird tales, originally published as part of collections **The God With Four Arms and Other Stories** (1939) and **Vinegar – and Cream** (1941); edited and with a biographical introduction by James Doig. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. Ramble House, 10329 Sheephead Drive, Vancleave MS 39565; <www.ramblehouse.com>

*Brozek, Jennifer & Jeff Sturgeon, eds. **Jeff Sturgeon's Last Cities of Earth** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-253-7, \$34.99, xv + 322pp, tp, cover by Jeff Sturgeon) Shared-world original anthology of 14 SF stories inspired by Sturgeon's art, about life two centuries after the Yellowstone supervolcano erupts. Illustrated with color art by Sturgeon. Introduction by Todd Lockwood. Authors include Kevin J. Anderson, Brenda Cooper, David Gerrold, and Jody Lynn Nye. A hardcover edition (-255-1, \$48.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>

Burke, Sue **Immunity Index** (Tor, 978-1-250-31789-6, \$16.99, 226pp, tp) Reprint (Tor 2021) near-future SF novel.

*Bustamante, Ashley **Vivid** (Enclave Escape, 9781-62184-230-9, \$22.99, 304pp, hc, cover by Emilie Haney) Young-adult fantasy novel, first in the Color Theory series. Ava Locke investigates forbidden Yellow magic and begins to uncover secrets about her world. Ebook also available.

Butcher, Jim **Skin Game** (Subterranean Press, no ISBN, \$100.00, 491pp, hc, cover by Vincent Chong) Reprint (Roc 2014) dark urban fantasy novel, book 15 in the Dresden Files series. Illustrated by Vincent Chong. This is a signed, limited edition of 500; a traycased, lettered edition bound in cloth and leather (\$350.00) is also available. Subterranean Press, PO Box 190106, Burton MI 48519; <subterraneanpress.com>

*Butcher, Jim & Kerrie L. Hughes, eds. **Heroic Hearts** (Ace, 978-0-593-09918-6, \$18.00, xiv + 345pp, tp, cover by Chris McGrath) Original anthology of 12 fantasy stories about heroes, many by authors working in their popular worlds, including Anne Bishop with a story from the World of the Others, a Dresden Files story from

Butcher, a Patricia Briggs werewolf dating story, and an Oberon story from Kevin Hearne's Iron Druid series. E-book also available.

*Butler, D.J. **Abbott in Darkness** (Baen, 978-1-9821-2609-4, \$16.00, 346pp, tp, cover by Dom Harman) SF novel. Accountant John Abbott moves his family to an alien world for a job with an interstellar corporation, but his first assignment uncovers corruption, and the culprits come after him and his family. The author also writes as Dave Butler.

Cambias, James L. **The Godel Operation** (Baen, 978-1-9821-9188-7, \$8.99, 366pp, pb, cover by Kurt Miller) Reprint (Baen 2021) humorous far-future hard SF novel.

*Cañas, Isabel **The Hacienda** (Penguin Random House/Berkley, 978-0-593-43669-1, \$27.00, 342pp, hc) Historical Gothic horror novel set in Mexico after the War of Independence, following a young bride and a haunted house. A first novel. Ebook also available.

Capetta, A.R. **The Lost Coast** (Candlewick Press, 978-1-5362-2301-9, \$10.99, 339pp, tp) Reprint (Candlewick Press 2019 as by Amy Rose Capetta) young-adult fantasy novel.

Carey, Anna **This Is Not the Real World** (Quirk Books, 978-1-68369-281-2, \$18.99, 280pp, hc, cover by Silke Werzinger) Young-adult near-future SF novel, sequel to **This Is Not the Jess Show**. Like-Life Productions tracks Jess down and forces her boyfriend to go back on the show, so she goes undercover to stop the company for good. Ebook also available.

*Carriger, Gail **Crudrat** (Carriger, Gail, 978-1-944751-24-1, \$16.99, 266pp, tp) Young-adult SF novel, the first in the Tinkered Stars series. Maura was a crudrat, one of the children who crawl through a space station's ducts to clean out crud, but now too big, Maura is outcast, trying to survive with the help of her crud-eating pet and an alien stranger. This was originally written in 2009, but has been significantly revised to fit upcoming books in the series, and indicates "Version 2.0." Ebook also available.

*Carriger, Gail **The Heroine's Journey: For Writers, Readers, and Fans of Pop Culture** (Carriger, Gail, 978-1-944751-34-0, \$14.99, 297pp, tp) Non-fiction, a mix of feminist literary criticism and writers' guide looking at the heroine's journey, how it contrasts with the hero's journey, and why funny romances don't get critical acclaim. Includes a section on various works referred to in the body, with occasionally irrelevant commentary. This is dated 2020 but not seen until now. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

◀ Books Received

*Cast, P.C. & Kristin Cast **Omens Bite** (St. Martin's/Wednesday Books, 978-1-250-76566-6, \$18.99, 309pp, hc, cover by Leo Nickolls) Young-adult fantasy novel, the second in the Sisters of Salem trilogy. Grief tears apart twin sister witches Mercy and Hunter, protectors of the Gates to underworlds, and their different paths lead to danger. Ebook also available.

*Castle, Jacqui **The Chasm** (Inkshares, 978-1-950301-33-1, \$15.99, 290pp, tp) Near-future dystopian SF novel, the second in the series *The Seclusion*. Patch struggles to cope with her mental health and unfamiliar life in Canada, outside walled-away America. Inkshares, <www.inkshares.com>.

*Chen, Mike **Star Wars: Brotherhood** (Penguin Random House/Del Rey, 978-0-593-35857-3, \$28.99, 329pp, hc, cover by Laura Racero) Tie-in novel. Copyrighted by Lucasfilm. Simultaneous with the Del Rey UK edition. Ebook also available.

Chiles, Patrick **Frontier** (Baen, 978-1-9821-9194-8, \$8.99, 517pp, pb, cover by Bob Eggleton) Reprint (Baen 2021) near-future military SF novel.

*Choi, Eric **Just Like Being There** (Springer, 978-3-030-91604-6, \$34.99, ix + 302pp, tp, cover by Sergey Nivens) Collection of 15 hard SF stories, each accompanied by an afterword on the underlying science. The author's first collection. Part of the Science and Fiction series. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Clayton, Paul **Escape from the Future and Other Stories** (self-published, 9798435490268, \$9.99, 193pp, tp) Original collection of five stories, one a reprint, about possible futures. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Coates, Darcy **The Ravenous Dead** (Sourcebooks/Poisoned Pen Press, 978-1-7282-3922-4, \$14.99, 293pp, tp) Horror novel, second in the *Gravekeeper* series begun in *The Whispering Dead*. Keira, new groundskeeper at Blighy Graveyard, hears the dead and tries to help them move on, but one, a serial killer in life, has other plans. Ebook also available.

*Cornell, Paul **Rosebud** (Tordotcom, 978-1-250-76539-0, \$14.99, 107pp, tp, cover by Jim Tierney) SF mystery novella. The sentient digital crew of a malfunctioning survey ship investigate a mysterious object. Ebook also available.

*Davidson, MaryJanice **Mad for a Mate** (Sourcebooks Casablanca, 978-1492697077, \$8.99, 320pp, pb, cover by Aleta Rafton) Humorous paranormal romance novel, third in the *BeWere My Heart* series. Verity, a Shifter who can't shift, takes a risky challenge and ends up stranded on an island with an angry bear shifter who wants answers about whoever has been dumping naked mannequins on his property. Ebook also available.

*Davis, G. haron & Cam Montgomery, et al., eds. **All Signs Point to Yes** (Harlequin/Inkyard Press, 978-1335418623, \$19.99, 320pp, hc, cover by Alex Cabal) YA original anthology with 13 stories mixing astrology and romance. The third editor is Adrienne White. Authors include Byron Graves, Roselle Lim, Tehlor Kay Mejia, and Mark Oshiro.

*Dawson, Juno **Her Majesty's Royal Coven** (Penguin Random House/Penguin, 978-0-14-313714-6, \$17.00, 429pp, tp) Contemporary urban fantasy novel, the first in the HMRC trilogy about a group of witches who pledge as girls to join a covert government coven in the UK, only to grow apart until a crisis strikes. Ebook also available.

*Dayle, Dennard **Everything Abridged** (Abrams/The Overlook Press, 978-1-4197-6096-9, \$27.00, 336pp, hc) Collection of 17 satirical stories, seven reprints, many speculative, often offering dark yet humorous takes on the near future. This is framed as a guide to the

Anthropocene, with alphabetical sections of definitions interspersed with the stories. A first collection. Ebook also available.

*Devlin, Malcolm **And Then I Woke Up** (Tordotcom, 978-1-250-79807-7, \$13.99, 164pp, tp, cover by Samuel Araya) Horror novella of a plague that affects how reality is perceived. Ebook also available.

*Dicken, Evan **Legend of the Five Rings: To Chart the Clouds** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-122-4, \$16.95, 345pp, tp, cover by Nathan Elmer) Gaming tie-in novel based on the roleplaying game. Copyrighted by Fantasy Flight Games. This is an international edition with US and UK prices. Ebook also available.

*Dumas, Marti **Wildseed Witch** (Abrams/Amulet, 978-1-4197-5561-3, \$18.99, 345pp, hc, cover by Erick Davila) Upper middle-grade fantasy novel of Black Girl Magic, the first in the eponymous series. Hasani, a social media-loving tween in Louisiana, suddenly develops magical abilities and gets sent to a private witch camp. Ebook also available.

*Duncan, Scott Russell & Jenny Irizarry, et al., eds. **El Porvenir ¡Ya! Citalzazanilli Mexicatli** (Somos en escrito Literary Foundation Press, 979-8409936716, \$10.00, 214pp, tp, cover by Polaris Castillo) Original anthology of 16 stories of "Chicano Science Fiction" – ranging from hard SF to tales with elements of myth or magic realism – by Mexican American authors including Mario Acevedo, Lizz Huerta, and Rosa Maria Villarreal. Preface by Ernest Hogan, who also provides a story; introduction by Duncan. The third editor is Armando Rendón. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. Somos en escrito Literary Foundation Press, <somosenescrito.com>.

*Eagar, Lindsay **The Patron Thief of Bread** (Candlewick Press, 978-1-5362-0468-1, \$19.99, 442pp, hc, cover by Beidi Guo) Middle-grade medieval fantasy novel. Eight-year-old Duck, raised by street urchins, poses as a baker's apprentice to steal – but begins to question her allegiances. Ebook also available.

*Eldridge, Tori **Dance Among the Flames** (Running Wild, 978-1-955062-08-4, \$19.99, 388pp, tp) Dark fantasy historical novel inspired by Brazil's multicultural history and lore. A woman struggles to escape the slums of Brazil through the seductive magic of Quimbanda. Ebook also available. Running Wild Press, <www.runningwildpress.com>.

*Estep, Jennifer **Tear Down the Throne** (Harper Voyager US, 978-0-06-302309-3, \$16.99, 451pp, tp, cover by Tony Mauro) Fantasy novel, the second in the *Gargoyles Queen* trilogy, set in the world of the *Crown of Shards* series. Ebook also available.

*Ethan, Avery **Sword and Sorcery: Frostfire** (Stories By Storytellers, 979-8-9856228-2-9, \$24.99, 440pp, hc, cover by Sarah Hassan) Young-adult fantasy novel, first in the *Sword and Sorcery* series. Four young people – a swordsman, a sorcerer, a spiritualist, and a scholar – all have enemies and need help. A first novel. Ebook also available.

*Evenson, Brian **The Glassy, Burning Floor of Hell** (Coffee House Press, 978-1-56689-611-5, \$16.95, 240pp, tp, cover by Sarah Evenson) Collection of 22 dark stories. This is dated 2021 but not seen until now. Ebook also available. Coffee House Press, 79 13th Ave. NE, Suite 110, Minneapolis MN 55413; <coffeehousepress.org>.

*Farrow, Dylan **Veil** (St. Martin's/Wednesday Books, 978-1-250-23593-0, \$18.99, 385pp, hc) Fantasy novel, sequel to *Hush*. Ebook also available.

*Feehan, Christine **Shadow Fire** (Penguin Random House/Jove, 978-0-593-43912-8, \$8.99, 381pp, pb, cover by Judith Lagerman) Paranormal romance novel, the seventh in the *Shadow Riders* (UK *The Shadow*) series. Simultaneous with

the Piatkus UK edition (978-0349432489, £9.99, not seen). Ebook also available.

Flint, Eric & Dave Freer **The Shaman of Karres** (Baen, 978-1-9821-9192-4, \$8.99, 388pp, pb, cover by Kurt Miller) Reprint (Baen 2020) science fantasy novel, third in a series of sequels to James H. Schmitz's *The Witches of Karres*.

*Flynn, Rebecca **Burning Daylight** (Black Rose Writing, 978-1-68433-895-5, \$18.95, 172pp, tp) Fantasy novel. Pandora releases creatures to wreak havoc, and the more Haydeez fights them, the stronger Pandora gets. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. Black Rose Writing, <www.blackrosewriting.com>.

*Forna, Namina **The Merciless Ones** (Penguin Random House/Delacorte, 978-1-9848-4872-7, \$18.99, 453pp, hc, cover by Tarajosu) Young-adult feminist fantasy novel inspired by West Africa, the second book in *The Gilded Ones* series. Simultaneous with the UK (Usborne) edition. Ebook also available.

Freitas, Donna **The Nine Lives of Rose Napolitano** (Penguin Random House/Penguin, 978-1-9848-8061-1, \$17.99, 369pp, tp) Reprint (Pamela Dorman 2021, not seen) associational novel with elements of alternate worlds as Rose makes different choices about having a child.

*Friedlander, Omer **The Man Who Sold Air in the Holy Land** (Penguin Random House/Random House, 978-0-593-24297-1, \$27.00, 237pp, hc) Collection of 11 stories, six previously published in significantly different form. A first collection. Simultaneous with the UK (John Murray) ebook edition.

Gailey, Sarah **The Echo Wife** (Tor, 978-1-250-17467-3, \$16.99, 252pp, tp, cover by Will Staehle) Reprint (Tor 2021) near-future thriller/SF novel.

*Green, Starr **Sailing in the Sky** (Earthy Info, 978-1-955561-23-5, \$11.99, 202pp, tp) Young-adult fantasy novel, the first in the *Wave Sweeper* trilogy. Piper, an autistic girl being sent to a Home, helps a sea dragon tangled in a net and ends up traveling with the Irish god Lugh in his flying ship. Hardcover (-22-8) and ebook also available.

*Grigsby, Sean & Stewart Hotston **Watch Dogs: Stars & Stripes** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-126-2, \$16.95, 315pp, tp, cover by Martin M. Barbudo) Gaming tie-in novel based on the computer game series. This is an international edition with US and UK prices; the UK is due out in July. Ebook also available. Copyrighted by Ubisoft Entertainment.

Hancock, Karen **Arena** (Enclave, 978-1-62184-226-2, \$26.99, 345pp, hc) Reprint (Bethany House 2002) Christian fantasy novel, winner of the Christy Award. This is a 20th-anniversary limited edition; ebook also available. Enclave, <enclavepublishing.com>.

*Harris, Carrie **Marvel Crisis Protocol: Shadow Avengers** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-102-6, \$16.95, 352pp, tp, cover by Xteve Abanto) Tie-in novel based on the Marvel Comics universe. This is an international edition with US and UK prices. Ebook also available. Copyrighted by Marvel.

*Hoffman, Cara **RUIN** (PM Press, 978-1-62963-929-1, \$14.95, 104pp, tp, cover by David Wojnarowicz & Marion Scemama) Original collection of ten interconnected stories, some with speculative elements; four were previously published in different form. A hardcover edition (-931-4, \$25.70) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. PM Press, PO Box 23912, Oakland CA 94623; <www.pmpress.org>.

Holland, Lucy **Sistersong** (Orbit US/Redhook, 978-0-316-32089-4, \$17.99, 404pp, tp) Reprint (Macmillan 2021) Arthurian/historical medieval fantasy novel.

*Horowitz, Richard **Starseed R/evolution: The Awakening** (Permutated Press, 978-

1-63758-169-8, \$28.00, 433pp, hc, cover by Elizabeth Kelly) Satirical first-contact science fantasy novel of climate change, astrology, beings from other worlds, and more. A first novel. Ebook also available. Permutated Press, <permutatedpress.com>.

*Hudson, Andrew Dana **Our Shared Storm** (Fordham University Press, 978-0-8232-9954-6, \$19.95, 232pp, tp) Climate-based SF novel of five linked stories showing possible futures for attendees at a 2054 Buenos Aires climate conference, from a dystopian hypercapitalist world to an effort at a communal utopia. Technical details scattered throughout and an academic introduction and afterword help explain the modeling on which the futures were based. A first novel. A hardcover edition (-9953-9, \$70.00) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. Fordham University Press, <www.fordhampress.com>.

*Hurley, Kameron **Future Artifacts** (Apex Book Company, 978-1-955765-00-8, \$18.95, 273pp, tp, cover by Mikio Murikami) Collection of 18 stories, many originally published on Patreon. Ebook also available. Apex Book Company, PO Box 23774, Lexington KY 40523; <www.apexbookcompany.com>.

*Ibañez, Isabel **Together We Burn** (St. Martin's/Wednesday Books, 978-1-250-80335-1, \$18.99, 351pp, hc, cover by Colin Verdi) Fantasy romance novel inspired by medieval Spain, where Dragadros battle dragons in arenas. Flamenco dancer Zarela must learn to be a Dragador to save her family legacy, and seeks help from an infuriating dragon hunter. Ebook also available.

*Jacobson, Tyler **The Art of Tyler Jacobson** (Flesk Publications, 978-1-64041-054-1, \$49.95, 160pp, hc, cover by Tyler Jacobson) Art book, showing works from early childhood on, including book cover art and extensive gaming art, notably for D&D and Magic: The Gathering. Introduction by John Fleskes. A paper-over-boards edition. A signed, deluxe slipcased limited edition (-055-8, \$79.95) was announced but not seen. Flesk Publications, <www.fleskpublications.com>.

*Jordan, Tim **Afterglow** (Angry Robot US, 978-0-85766-987-2, \$15.99, 375pp, tp, cover by Tom Shone) Near-future SF novel, sequel to *Glow*. Ebook also available. This is an international edition with US and UK prices.

*Joron, Andrew **OO** (Black Square Editions, 978-1-7363248-7-5, \$25.00, 132pp, tp, cover by Brian Lucas) Original collection of two interlinked novellas reworking various tropes of *New Wave SF*; two excerpts previously appeared elsewhere. BSE Books, <www.blacksquareeditions.org>

*Kay, Guy Gavriel **All the Seas of the World** (Hodder & Stoughton UK, 978-1-529-38517-5, £22.00, 496pp, hc) Fantasy novel set in the near-Renaissance world of *A Brightness Long Ago* and *Children of Earth and Sky*. A young man and woman, hired to assist in an assassination, end up caught in political and religious intrigues that lead to war. Simultaneous with the Berkeley US and Viking Canada editions. Ebook also available.

*Kennon, D. Holden **Blight of the Arachna** (Brain Lag, 978-1-928011-69-9, \$15.99, 249pp, tp, cover by Brooklyn Smith) Fantasy novel, the first in the *New Heroes of Kairodor* series. A young man faces down monsters to save his dying village. Ebook also available. Brain Lag, <www.brain-lag.com>

Kim, Bo-Young **I'm Waiting for You and Other Stories** (Harper Voyager US, 978-0-06-295147-2, \$16.99, 316pp, tp, cover by Damonza) Reprint (Harper Voyager US 2021) collection of four stories, translated from the Korean by Sophie Bowman & Sung Ryu.

King, Stephen **Firestarter** (Simon & Schuster/Gallery, 978-1-6680-0992-5,

\$18.99, 498pp, tp) Reissue(Viking 1980) SF horror novel. This is a movie tie-in edition; ebook also available.

*Koja, Kathe **The Dark Factory** (Meerkat Press, 978-1-946154-75-0, \$17.95, 284pp, tp) Near-future SF novel with possible fantasy elements, about a dance club with customizable reality, where a rooftop rave sets off a strange energy that drives people to the edge. Illustrated with b&w photos. Online material augments the experience at <www.darkfactory.club>. Ebook also available. Meerkat Press, <www.meerkatpress.com>.

*Krauss, Erich **Primitives** (Victory Belt/Briar Road, 978-1-628601-33-6, \$22.95, 419pp, hc, cover by Rodolfo Vanni) Postapocalyptic SF novel set in a world where the cure for the Great Fatigue reduced most of humanity to a primitive state, and two people make discoveries that suggest other survivors are a bigger threat than the primitives.

Langan, Sarah **Good Neighbors** (Simon & Schuster/Atria/Washington Square Press, 978-1-9821-4437-1, \$16.99, 244pp, tp) Reprint (Atria 2021) near-future SF horror novel. This edition is dated 2021 but not seen until now.

*Langmead, Oliver K. **Glitterati** (Titan Books US, 978-1789097962, \$15.95, 277pp, tp) Dystopian SF novel of fashion, family, and feckless billionaires. Two Glitterati feud over who started the latest fashion, and risk starting a war that could destroy their opulent world. This is an international edition with US and UK prices.

*Laure, Estelle **City of Hooks and Scars** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-368-04939-9, \$17.99, 226pp, hc, cover by Joshua Hixson) Young-adult tie-in novel, second in the City of Villains series. Ebook also available. Copyrighted by Disney Enterprises.

*Laure, Estelle **Remember Me** (St. Martin's/Wednesday Books, 978-1-250-26193-9, \$19.99, 260pp, hc) Young-adult SF novel about a teen who tries to recover memories she had erased to avoid heartbreak. Ebook also available.

*Lauria, Cath **Marvel Heroines: Black Cat: Discord** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-134-7, \$16.95, 317pp, tp, cover by Joey Hi-Fi) Comics tie-in novel. This is an international edition with US and UK prices, available in the UK 6/22; ebook also available. Copyrighted by Marvel

*Lee, Sharon & Steve Miller **Fair Trade** (Baen, 978-1-9821-2608-7, 374pp, hc, cover by David Mattingly) SF novel, the 24th in the Liaden universe. Young trader Jethri Gobelyn finds himself tested by challenges to his loyalties, misinformation, and galactic politics. Ebook also available.

*Li, Hua **Chinese Science Fiction during the Post-Mao Cultural Thaw** (University of Toronto Press, 978-1-487508234, \$65.00, ix + 234pp, hc, cover by Chen Wei) Non-fiction, a look at Chinese Science Fiction from 1976-1983, looking at overall developments as Chinese SF went from primarily popularizing science to a 1990s New Wave; this also discusses specific themes and authors including Zheng Wenguang, Ye Yonglie, and Xiao Jianheng. Includes notes, bibliography, index, and a Chinese character glossary. This is dated 2021 but not seen until now. University of Toronto Press, <utorontopress.com>.

*Lichfield, Gideon, ed. **Make Shift: Dispatches from the Post-Pandemic Future** (MIT Press, 978-0-262-54240-1, \$19.95, x + 171pp, tp) Original anthology of ten SF stories drawing inspiration from speculating how the world might end up better after the coronavirus pandemic. This includes an interview with Afrofuturist Ytasha L. Womack by Wade Roush. Story authors include Madeline Ashley, Cory Doctorow, Ken Liu, and D.A. Xiaohu Spire. Part of the Twelve Tomorrows series. Ebook also available.

*Lloyd, Stephen **Friend of the Devil**

(Penguin Random House/Putnam, 978-0-593-33138-5, \$26.00, 225pp, hc) Supernatural hardboiled-detective mystery/horror novel set in the 1980s. Down-on-his-luck PI Sam Gregory searches for a stolen manuscript at an elite boarding school with dark secrets. A first novel by a TV producer/writer. Ebook also available.

Llywelyn, Morgan **Breath by Breath** (Tor, 978-1-250-24535-9, \$16.99, 240pp, tp) Reprint (Tor 2021) apocalyptic near-future SF thriller novel, the third in the Step by Step trilogy.

*M., Kyoko **Of Claws and Inferno** (self-published, 979-8433969353, \$14.99, 376pp, tp) Contemporary fantasy novel, fifth in the series Of Cinder and Bone. The government stages a tournament called The Wild Hunt, requiring Knight Division teams to capture five of the deadliest dragons alive before anyone else in order to keep their jobs. Ebook also available.

*Maberry, Jonathan **Kagen the Damned** (St. Martin's Griffin, 978-1-250-78397-4, \$18.99, 549pp, hc) Dark epic fantasy novel, the first in a new series. Kagen Vale, once captain of the palace guard, loses his way when the royal family is killed, until he hears a rumor that two of the children are still alive. A hardcover edition (-85500-8, \$34.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available.

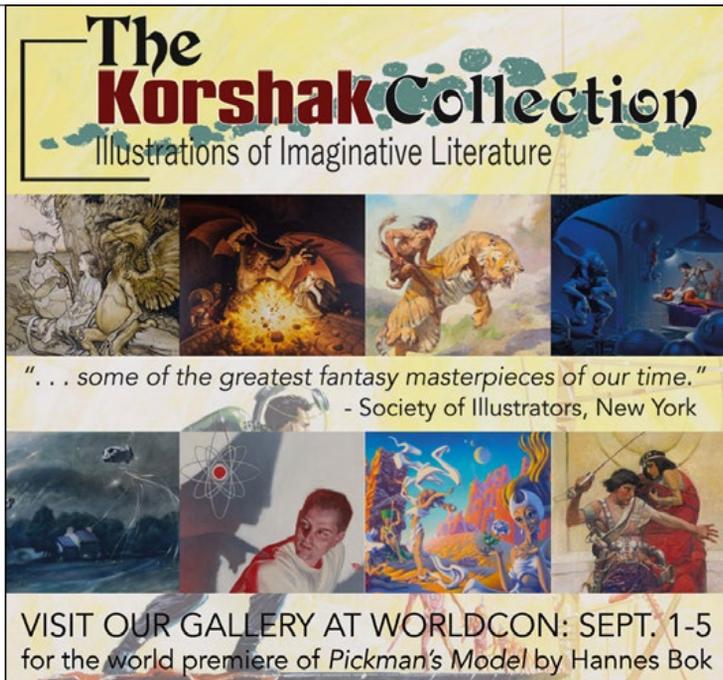
*MacNiven, Robbie **Descent: Legends of the Dark: Zachareth** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-144-6, \$16.95, 344pp, tp, cover by Joshua Cairós) Tie-in novel based on the board game. This is an international edition with US and UK prices; the trade paperback is due out in the UK in July. Ebook also available.

*Mangum, Lisa, ed. **Eat, Drink, and Be Wary: Satisfying Stories with a Delicious Twist** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-292-6, \$16.99, 228pp, tp) Original anthology of 19 fantasy and SF stories (three reprints) about food. Authors include Kevin J. Anderson, Bonnie Elizabeth, Ken Hoover, and Chris Mandeville. Profits support the Don Hodge Memorial Scholarship fund for the Superstars Writing Seminars. Hardcover editions (-294-0, \$34.99, with dustjacket; -295-7, \$23.99, casebound) were announced but not seen; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>.

*Manson, et al. **The Hell Bound Kids: Book One: Wild in the Streets** (No Sell Out Productions, 9798807163868, \$21.99, 253pp, hc, cover by Jason Duke) Horror/crime/dark fantasy mosaic novel, the first in a collaborative series about a street gang in Punk City, an inescapable megalopolis. A member of the HBK learns of a group that may know a way out of the city. Written by series creator Manson, with one chapter each by contributing authors Anthony Perconti, Sebastian Vice & Joe Howard. Issued without a dustjacket; trade paperback (9798425315557, \$13.99) and ebook also available. No Sell Out Productions, <www.noselloutproductions.com>.

*Marshall, William **The Jellyfish Device** (Noremac Publications, 979-8448074394, \$12.99, 240pp, tp) Near-future SF novel. Genius hacker Kevin and gorgeous Chinese ex-gangster Jade search for the kidnapped son of a robber baron, and they end up facing a sinister cult. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Matthews, Mark, ed. **Orphans of Bliss: Tales of Addiction Horror** (Wicked Run Press, 978-1-7366950-4-3, \$14.99, 190pp, tp, cover by Marcela Bolivar) Original anthology of ten horror stories of addiction, third in Matthews's series of anthologies on the subject. Authors include Gabino Iglesias, Cassandra Khaw, Kathe Koja, and Josh Malerman. A print-on-demand edition; a hardcover edition (\$26.99) with different jacket cover art, was announced but not seen; ebook also available. Wicked Run Press, <wickedrunpress.com>.



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*McAllister, Bruce **Stealing God and Other Stories** (Aeon Press, 978-0-9934682-1-6, \$14.95, 258pp, tp, cover by Dominic Harman) Collection of 18 stories and a poem, all originally published from 2008 on. Introduction by Paul Di Filippo. A print-on-demand edition; this has a US price.

*McCabe, Patrick **Poguemahone** (Biblioasis, 978-1-77196-473-9, \$21.95, 602pp, tp) Hallucinogenic fantasy novel in free verse with elements of Celtic lore. A French flap edition; ebook also available. First US edition (Unbound 4/22).

McCaffrey, Anne & S.M. Stirling **The City Who Fought** (Baen, 978-1-9821-2610-0, \$16.00, 379pp, tp, cover by Alan Pollack) Reprint (Baen 1993) SF novel. Copyrighted by Bill Fawcett & Associates. Ebook also available.

*McCaffrey, Tom **Kissing My Ass Goodbye** (Black Rose Writing, 978-1-68433-905-1, \$19.95, 184pp, tp) Fantasy novel, third and final in the Claire trilogy begun in **The Wise Ass**. A new generation of Terran-Centauri hybrid children discover the internet, attracting the attention of Machiavlian twin tech tyrants. A hardcover edition (-906-8, \$24.95) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. Black Rose Writing, <www.blackrosewriting.com>.

*McGee, Katharine **Rivals** (Penguin Random House/Random House, 978-0-593-42970-9, \$19.99, 392pp, hc, cover by Carolina Melis) Young-adult alternate-history romance novel, the third in the American Royals series. Copyrighted by McGee and packager Alloy Entertainment.

*McGuire, Seanan **Seasonal Fears** (Tordotcom, 978-1-250-76826-1, \$29.99, 479pp, hc, cover by Will Staehle) Fantasy novel, second in the Alchemical Journeys series, a companion to **Middlegame**. Ebook also available.

*Mele, Dana **Summer's Edge** (Simon & Schuster, 978-1-5344-9311-7, \$19.99, 325pp, hc) Young-adult horror novel about teen haunted by the death of a friend the previous summer. Ebook also available.

*Michalski, Liz **Darling Girl** (Penguin Random House/Dutton, 978-0-593-18563-6, \$26.00, 337pp, hc, cover by Vi-An Nguyen) Fantasy horror novel, a modern day reimagining of a dark Peter Pan, and Wendy's family decades later, caught up in secrets and the search for eternal youth. Ebook also available.

*Miksa, Matt **Don't Get Close** (The Quick Brown Fox/Crooked Lane, 978-1-64385-

900-2, \$27.99, 341pp, hc) Thriller/horror novel with possible paranormal elements. FBI Special Agent Vera Taggart has an eerie ability to come to conclusions from grisly crime scenes, but her abilities complicate finding the truth about a cult of suicide bombers who believe they've been reborn hundreds of times. Ebook also available.

*Miller, Kirsten **The Change** (HarperCollins/Morrow, 978-0-06-314404-0, \$27.99, 470pp, hc) Fantasy novel. Three older women undergoing menopause develop new powers and take on a murder case involving the wealthiest people in town. Ebook also available.

*Mo Xiang Tong Xiu **Grandmaster of Demonic Cultivation: Mo Dao Zu Shi Vol. 2** (Seven Seas, 978-1-64827-920-1, \$19.99, 402pp, tp, cover by Jin Fang) Danmei fantasy novel, the second in the series. Originally serialized online in Chinese, this has chapters 33-50 from the online version, and follows the Chinese print edition (Pinsin 2016) translated by Suika. Illustrations by Marina Privalova and wenwen. Includes glossary and name guide. A French-flap edition; ebook also available.

Modesitt, L.E., Jr. **Isolate** (Tor, 978-1-250-77742-3, \$11.99, 849pp, pb, cover by Chris McGrath) Reprint (Tor 2021) fantasy novel.

Moesta, Rebecca & Kevin J. Anderson **Crystal Doors, Book 3: Sky Realm** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-244-5, \$15.99, 226pp, tp) Reprint (Little, Brown 2008) young-adult fantasy novel, third in the Crystal Doors trilogy. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>.

*Moore, Christopher **Razzmatazz** (HarperCollins/Morrow, 978-0-06-243412-8, \$28.99, 390pp, hc) Humorous fantasy novel, a sequel to **Noir** set in 1947 San Francisco. Moore's afterword and author's note offer details on the real history of the period. Ebook also available.

*O'Connor, Seán, ed. **Revelations: Horror Writers for Climate Action** (Stygian Sky, 978-1-63951-005-4, \$40.00, 316pp, hc) Anthology of 22 horror stories. Authors include Clive Barker, Tananarive Due, Joe Hill, Stephen King, and Sarah Pinborough. Introduction by Sadie Hartmann. All proceeds go to <www.climateoutreach.org>. A print-on-demand edition. Stygian Sky Media, <www.stygianskymedia.com>.

◀ Books Received

Odle, E.V. **The Clockwork Man** (MIT Press, 978-0-262-54343-9, \$19.95, 177pp, tp) Reprint (Heinemann 1923) SF novel; this follows the Doubleday, Page & Company 1923 edition. Introduction by Annalee Newitz. Part of the Radium Age series of SF reprints edited by Joshua Glenn, who provides a series foreword here. The MIT Press, Cambridge MA 02142; <mitpress.mit.edu>.

O'Donoghue, Caroline **All Our Hidden Gifts** (Candlewick Press/Walker US, 978-1-5362-2526-6, \$9.99, 374pp, tp, cover by Lisa Sterle) Reprint (Walker UK 2021) young-adult fantasy novel. Illustrated by Stefani Caponi.

*Older, Daniel José **Ballad & Dagger** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-368-07082-9, \$18.99, 372pp, hc, cover by Irvin Rodriguez) Young-adult urban fantasy novel, the first in the Outlaw Saints series. A Rick Riordan Presents book. Ebook also available.

*Panofsky, Margaret **Day of the Jumping Sun** (All Things That Matter Press, 978-1-7377-6718-3, \$17.99, 282pp, tp, cover by Margaret Panofsky) SF novel of time travel and apocalypse, the standalone second book in a series begun in **The Last Shade Tree**. Time travelers discover that a million years after the Final War of 2050, the weak human remnants on Baffin Island are ruled by wily, five-foot-tall prairie dogs, and soon a new genocidal religious war breaks out. Ebook also available.

Pargin, Jason **Futuristic Violence and Fancy Suits** (St. Martin's Griffin, 978-1-250-83054-8, \$17.99, 379pp, tp) Reprint (Dunne 2015 as by David Wong) SF superhero novel, second in the Zoey Ashe series. Wong is a pen name for Jason Pargin. This is the second Griffin edition with a new afterword, dated 2021 but not seen until now. Ebook also available.

Pargin, Jason **John Dies at the End: Updated Special Edition** (St. Martin's Griffin, 978-1-250-83056-2, \$17.99, viii + 453pp, tp) Reissue (Permutated Press 2007 as by David Wong) darkly humorous horror novel, the first book in the John Dies at the End series. This follows the 2020 updated special edition with commentary from the characters and the author, under both his pen name, David Wong, and his real name, Jason Pargin. This indicates the second printing of the fourth St. Martin's Griffin edition.

Pargin, Jason **This Book Is Full of Spiders** (St. Martin's Griffin/Dunne, 978-1-250-83052-4, \$17.99, 410pp, tp) Reprint (Dunne 2012 as by David Wong) darkly humorous horror novel, sequel to **John Dies at the End**. Wong is a pen name for Jason Pargin. This is the second Griffin edition and has a new afterword; it is dated 2021 but not seen until now.

Pargin, Jason **What the Hell Did I Just Read** (St. Martin's Griffin, 978-1-250-83053-1, \$17.99, 321pp, tp) Reprint (Dunne 2017 as by David Wong) darkly humorous horror novel, third in the series begun in **John Dies at the End**. Wong is a pen name for Jason Pargin. This has a new afterword by the author, is dated 2021 but not seen until now, and indicates second Griffin edition.

Patterson, James & Brian Sitts **The Shadow** (Grand Central, 978-1-5387-0394-6, \$9.99, 361pp, pb) Reprint (Grand Central 2012) tie-in thriller novel based on the old radio show and pulp character, with an added SF twist. This is a premium tall rack-size edition.

*Pawlowski, Joe **In the Heart of the Garden Is a Tomb** (Glint Media, 979-8-9857407-0-7, \$11.95, 196pp, tp) Original collection of nine horror stories. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Peper, Eliot **Reap3r** (self-published, 978-1-73501651-1, \$35.00, 286pp, hc) Near-future SF thriller novel. A quantum computer scientist, a virologist, a podcaster, a venture capitalist, and an assassin work to untangle an enigma

that could change the future. A print-on-demand edition, copyrighted 2021 but apparently not published until now; a trade paperback edition (979-8818825298, \$17.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available.

+Pinborough, Sarah **Insomnia** (HarperCollins/Morrow, 978-0-06-285684-5, \$27.99, 320pp, hc) Thriller/psychological horror novel with supernatural elements. A woman with insomnia worries she's having a psychotic break like her mother did. First US edition (HarperCollins UK 3/22). Ebook also available.

*Pinkwater, Daniel **Crazy in Poughkeepsie** (Tachyon Publications, 978-1-61696-374-3, \$16.95, 173pp, hc, cover by Aaron Renier) Middle-grade fantasy novel. Mick has to share his bedroom with a supposed guru from Tibet, who sends Mick on a quest of sorts involving ghosts, graffiti, and Molly from **Adventures of a Dwergish Girl**. Illustrated by Aaron Renier. Ebook also available. Tachyon Publications, 1459 18th St. #139, San Francisco CA 94107; <www.tachyonpublications.com>.

*Pratt, Tim **Prison of Sleep** (Angry Robot US, 978-0-85766-942-1, \$14.99, 261pp, tp, cover by Kieryn Tyler) SF multiverse novel, second and final in the Journals of Zaxony Delatree series, about a man who always wakes in a new parallel universe. Zax learns he's host to a parasitic alien that could destroy the universe. This is an international edition with US, Canadian, and UK prices. Ebook also available.

*Rekulak, Jason **Hidden Pictures** (Macmillan/Flatiron, 978-1-250-81934-5, \$27.99, 369pp, hc) Horror novel. A nanny suspects her charge is in danger after he draws increasingly disturbing pictures. Illustrated by Will Staehle and Doogie Horner. Ebook also available.

*Rigolosi, Steven **The Haunting of Kinnawe House** (Black Rose Writing, 978-1-68433-935-8, \$22.95, 369pp, tp) Horror novel. New Kinnawe House caretaker Matthew sees ghosts and suffers from insomnia, and begins to learn about his family's ties to the house back in the 1740s. A print-on-demand edition. Ebook also available. Black Rose Writing, <www.blackrosewriting.com>.

Ringo, John & Gary Poole, eds. **We Shall Rise** (Baen, 978-1-9821-9193-1, \$8.99, xiii + 410pp, pb, cover by Kurt Miller) Reprint (Baen 2021) original anthology of 11 stories of zombie apocalypse, the third anthology in the Black Tide Rising series originated by Ringo.

Riordan, Rick **Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book Four: The Battle of the Labyrinth** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-368-05146-0, \$8.99, 361pp, tp, cover by Victo Ngai) Reissue (Hyperion 2008) young-adult fantasy, the fourth in the Percy Jackson & the Olympians series about ancient gods living in the US.

Riordan, Rick **Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book One: The Lightning Thief** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-3680-5147-7, \$8.99, 375pp, tp, cover by Victo Ngai) Reissue (Miramax 2005) young-adult fantasy novel, the first in the series.

Riordan, Rick **Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book Three: The Titan's Curse** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-368-05148-4, \$8.99, 312pp, tp, cover by Victo Ngai) Reprint (Miramax 2007) young-adult fantasy, the third in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series about ancient gods living in the US.

Riordan, Rick **Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book Two: The Sea of Monsters** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-3680-5149-1, \$8.99, 279pp, tp, cover by Victo Ngai) Reprint (Miramax 2006) young-adult fantasy, the second in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series about ancient gods living in the US.

Riordan, Rick **Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book Five: The Last Olympian** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-368-05145-3, \$8.99, 381pp, tp, cover by Victo

Ngai) Reissue (Disney-Hyperion 2009) young-adult fantasy, fifth and final in the Percy Jackson & the Olympians series.

*Ruthnum, Naben **Helpmeet** (Undertow, 978-1-988964-38-6, \$11.99, 85pp, tp, cover by Caspar David Friedrich) Gothic horror novella. In 1900, Louise Wilk tries to help her husband, who is wasting away from a strange malady – or maybe a transformation. Ebook also available.

Ruvolo, Marc **Creep & Crow** (Alien Buddha Press, 9798415539055, \$10.44, 37pp, ph) Chapbook poetry collection with 19 poems, one reprint, many involving myths and folklore. Ebook also available.

*Ryan, Lindy & Christopher Brooks **Throw Me to the Wolves** (Vesuvian/Black Spot Books, 978-1-64548-117-1, \$17.95, 269pp, tp, cover by Lynne Hansen) Werewolf horror novel, first in the Cry Wolf series. Ebook also available.

*Saint, Adam **The Transfer Problem** (Deixis Press, 978-1-8384987-5-7, £9.99, 248pp, tp) SF technothriller novel. An AI inserted into a global bank's trading program bankrupts the world economy – and the banker involved tries to find a way to fix things. A print-on-demand edition; a hardcover edition (-7-1, £15.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. Deixis Press, <www.deixis.press>.

+Saint, Jennifer **Elektra** (Macmillan/Flatiron, 978-1-250-77361-6, \$26.99, 287pp, hc) Fantasy novel based on Homer and Greek myth, the story of the cursed House of Atreus and three women: Clytemnestra, Cassandra, and Elektra. First US edition (Wildfire 4/28/22). Ebook also available.

Salvatore, R.A. **Starlight Enclave** (Harper Voyager US, 978-0-06-308588-6, \$16.99, 444pp, tp, cover by David Palumbo) Reprint (Harper Voyager US 2021) gaming tie-in novel, the first in *The Way of the Drow* trilogy in the *Drizzt* series in the *Forgotten Realms* world. Copyrighted by Wizards of the Coast.

Sanderson, Brandon **Alcatraz vs. the Evil Librarians** (Tor/Starscape, 978-0-7653-7895-8, \$8.99, 290pp, tp, cover by Justin Gerard) Reprint (Scholastic 2007) middle-grade fantasy novel. This has the 2016 illustrations by Hayley Lazo.

*Saxey, E. **Lost in the Archives** (Lethé Press, 978-1-59021-723-8, \$18.00, 220pp, tp) Collection of 15 speculative stories, one new, a mix including historical oddities, parallel pasts, near future tales, and apocalyptic stories. Lethé Press, <lethepressbooks.com>.

*Serd, Abner **The Legend of Pedestrio** (self-published, 979-8-9853926-0-9, \$16.95, 300pp, tp) Fantasy folk novel with elements of tall tale. A storyteller and a backwoodsman search for a legendary ancient nomad. A print-on-demand edition. Ebook also available.

*Shuttleworth, Ashley **A Cruel and Fated Light** (Simon & Schuster/McElderry, 978-1-5344-5370-8, \$21.99, 621pp, hc, cover by Christophe Young) Young-adult fantasy novel, second in the *Hollow Star* Saga series. Simultaneous with the Hodder edition. Ebook also available.

*Sjunneson, Elsa **Assassin's Creed: Valhalla: Sword of the White Horse** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-140-8, \$16.95, 318pp, tp, cover by Alejandro Colucci) Gaming tie-in novel. This is an international edition with US and UK prices, due out three months later in the UK; ebook also available. Copyrighted by Ubisoft Entertainment.

*Slatter, Angela **You Are Not Your Writing & Other Sage Advice** (Brain Jar Press, 978-1-922479-04-4, \$9.99, 39pp, ph) Chapbook non-fiction collection of six essays on being a writer. This is dated 2021 but not seen until now. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. Brain Jar Press, PO Box 6687, Upper Mt. Gravatt, QLD 4122, Australia. <brainjarpress.com>.

St. Clair, Scarlett **A Game of Fate** (Sourcebooks/Bloom Books, 978-1-7282-6073-0, \$16.99, 407pp, tp) Reprint (self-published 2020) dark fantasy romance novel, first in the Hades Saga series. This is dated 2021 but not seen until now; ebook also available.

*St. Clair, Scarlett **A Game of Retribution** (Sourcebooks/Bloom Books, 978-1-7282-5960-4, \$16.99, 444pp, tp) Dark fantasy romance novel, second in the Hades Saga series based on Greek myths. A hardcover edition (-5963-5, \$25.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available.

*Stage, Zoje **The Girl Who Outgrew the World** (Lethé Press, 978-1590215234, \$15.00, 176pp, tp) Fantasy novella/parable about an 11-year-old girl who has to run away before her father and doctors take drastic steps to stop her inexplicable growth spurt. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. Lethé Press, <www.lethepressbooks.com>.

*Stiefvater, Maggie **Bravely** (Disney Press, 978-1-368-07134-5, \$19.99, 367pp, hc, cover by Charlie Bowater) Young-adult fantasy adventure novel following Princess Merida from **Brave**, on a supernatural quest to change her family and save the kingdom. Copyrighted by Disney Enterprises and Pixar. Ebook also available.

*Stillman, Joe **The Man Who Came and Went** (City Point Press, 978-1-947951-38-9, \$23.99, 225pp, hc) Magical realism novel. Teen Belutha Mariah dreams of leaving the small Arizona town of Hadley, until the local diner's mysterious new cook changes everything with his seeming ability to mind-read orders. Ebook also available. City Point Press, PO Box 2063, Westport CT 06880; <www.citypointpress.com>.

*Stokes, Stacy **Remember Me Gone** (Penguin Random House/Viking, 978-0-593-32766-1, \$17.99, 358pp, hc) Young-adult fantasy mystery novel about a teen whose family has the power to remove peoples' painful memories. Ebook also available.

+Suvin, Darko **Disputing the Deluge: Collected 21st-Century Writings on Utopia, Narration, and Survival** (Bloomsbury Academic, 978-1501384776, \$39.95, 361pp, tp, cover by Utagawa Hiroshige) Critical non-fiction, a collection of 20 essays by the noted scholar of SF and utopian literature, covering a wide range of styles and topics, written from 1999-2020. Edited by Hugh C. O'Connell, who provides a preface. This includes an appendix listing publications after 2000 by Suvin, and an index of names. A hardcover (978-1501384813, \$130.00). First US edition (Bloomsbury Academic UK 12/21); ebook also available.

Szmidt, Robert J. **Easy to Be a God** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-235-3, \$24.99, 388pp, tp) Reprint (Royal Hawaiian Press 2017) far-future SF space opera novel, the first in *The Fields of Long-Forgotten Battles* series. Translated from the Polish **Latwo byc Bogiem** (Dom Wydawniczy Rebis 2014). A hardcover edition (-237-7, \$38.99) was announced but not seen; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>.

*Tamayose, Darcy **Ezra's Ghosts** (NeWest Press, 978-1-77439-047-4, \$16.95, 270pp, tp) Original collection of four linked fantastical stories involving the Canadian prairie town of Ezra. NeWest Press, #201, 8540-109 Street, Edmonton Alberta T6G 1E6, Canada; <www.newestpress.com>.

*Tan, Lianyu **The Wicked and the Willing** (Shattered Scepter, 9780648994848, \$16.99, 416pp, tp) Lesbian Gothic vampire horror novel set in 1927 Singapore. A destitute maidservant is torn between her vampire mistress and the woman trying to save her life. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Thompson, Tade **The Legacy of Molly**

Southbourne (Tordotcom, 978-1-250-82470-7, \$14.99, 147pp, tp) Horror novella, third and final in the trilogy begun in **The Murders of Molly Southbourne**, about a woman whose spilled blood created deadly copies of herself. Ebook also available.

Tokuda-Hall, Maggie **The Mermaid, the Witch, and the Sea** (Candlewick Press, 978-1-5362-1589-2, \$10.99, 357pp, tp, cover by Victo Ngai) Reprint (Candlewick Press 2020) young-adult fantasy novel.

*Toltz, Steve **Here Goes Nothing** (Melville House, 9781612199719, \$27.99, 375pp, hc, cover by Jan Provoost) Darkly humorous near-future fantasy novel narrated by a man in the afterlife obsessed with watching his widow in the real world as a new pandemic develops. Simultaneous with the UK (Sceptre) and Hamish Hamilton Australia editions.

*Turaki, Umar **Such a Beautiful Thing to Behold** (Amazon/Little A, 978-1-54203-466-1, \$24.95, 241pp, hc) Dystopian SF novel about an African village, quarantined and cut off from the world because of a mysterious illness that leaves only children behind. A first novel. A trade paperback edition (-467-8, \$14.95) was announced but not seen. Ebook also available.

*Vajra, Rajnar **Doctor Alien** (WordFire Press, 978-1-68057-267-4, \$15.99, 210pp, tp) Collection of three linked novellas originally published in *Analogue* about a human psychiatrist given the task of treating three aliens of different, unfamiliar species. Introduction to the "trilogy" by Stanley Schmidt. Two hardcover editions, one jacketed (-269-8, \$34.99) and one casebound (-270-4, \$21.00), were announced but not seen; ebook also available. WordFire Press, PO Box 1840, Monument CO 80132; <wordfirepress.com>.

*Waggoner, Tim **Zombicide Invader: Planet Havoc** (Aconyte, 978-1-83908-124-8, \$16.95, 347pp, tp, cover by Rafael Teruel) Tie-in novel based on the SF zombie board game. This is an international edition with US and UK prices; ebook also available. Copyrighted by CMON Global Limited.

*Walter, Heather **Misrule** (Penguin Random House/Del Rey, 978-1-9848-1868-3, \$27.00, 465pp, hc) Fantasy novel, second in the **Malice** duology, based on the story of Sleeping Beauty, about the sinister sorceress Alyce, trying to free the cursed princess Aurora. Simultaneous with the Del Rey UK edition. Ebook also available.

*Ward, J.R. **The Wolf** (Simon & Schuster/Gallery, 978-1-9821-7987-8, \$28.00, 418pp, hc, cover by Craig White) Paranormal romance novel, the second in the **Black Dagger Brotherhood: Prison Camp** sub-series. This is dated 2021 but not seen until now; simultaneous with the UK (Piatkus) edition. Ebook also available.

Wells, H.G. **The World Set Free** (MIT Press, 978-0-262-54336-1, \$19.95, 252pp, tp) Reprint (Macmillan 1914) SF novel. This follows the Dutton 1914 edition. Introduction by Sarah Cole. Part of the Radium Age series of SF reprints edited by Joshua Glenn, who provides a series foreword and afterword here. The MIT Press, Cambridge MA 02142; <mitpress.mit.edu>.

*White, Kiersten **Hide** (Penguin Random House/Del Rey, 978-0-593-35923-5, \$27.00, 236pp, hc) Dark supernatural thriller. Players start disappearing in a high-stakes competition set in an abandoned amusement park. Ebook also available.

*White, Nathaniel **Conscious Designs** (Miami University Press, 978-1-881163-70-1, \$17.00, 133pp, tp) Near-future SF novella. A wealthy paraplegic man

must decide whether to preserve his consciousness in a digital utopia or continue the pain of his existence. Miami University Press, 356 Bachelor Hall, Oxford OH 45056.

*Wilson, D. Harlan **Alfred Bester's The Stars My Destination: A Critical Companion** (Springer Nature Switzerland/Palgrave Macmillan, 978-3-030-96945-5, \$49.99, 124pp, hc) Critical non-fiction, a look at Bester's work, its distinctive style and influence, and why it is still relevant to the current state of SF (which Wilson sees as an "exhausted" art form of the 20th century). Includes references and indexes. Part of the Palgrave Science Fiction and Fantasy: A New Canon series. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available.

*Wolford, Kate, ed. **Mothers of Enchantment: New Tales of Fairy Godmothers** (World Weaver Press, 978-1-7340545-6-9, \$15.95, 200pp, tp, cover by Edmund Dulac) Original anthology of 12 stories about fairy godparents in many forms. Authors include Kelly Jarvis, Marshall J. Moore, and Michelle Tang. A print-on-demand edition; ebook also available. World Weaver Press, <www.worldweaverpress.com>.

Wyndham, John **The Day of the Triffids** (Penguin Random House/Modern Library, 978-0-593-45008-6, \$17.00, x + 234pp, tp, cover by Anders Nilsen) Reprint (Doubleday 1951) classic SF novel. This has a new introduction by Jeff VanderMeer. Ebook also available.

Wyndham, John **The Kraken Wakes** (Penguin Random House/Modern Library, 978-0-593-45010-9, \$17.00, 239pp, tp, cover by Anders Nilsen) Reprint (1953) SF novel. This has a new introduction by Alexandra Kleeman. Ebook also available.

Wyndham, John **The Midwich Cuckoos** (Penguin Random House/Modern Library, 978-0-593-45012-3, \$17.00, xiv + 213pp,

tp, cover by Anders Nilsen) Reprint (Michael Joseph 1957) classic SF novel. This has a new introduction by Kelly Link. Ebook also available.

*Zepka, Brian **The Temperature of Me and You** (Disney/Hyperion, 978-1-368-06471-2, \$17.99, 409pp, hc, cover by Patrick Leger) Young-adult SF superhero/queer romance novel. Dylan falls for a boy who's literally too hot to handle – and has enemies. A first novel. Ebook also available.

*Zhao, Xiran Jay **Zachary Ying and the Dragon Emperor** (Simon & Schuster/McElderry, 978-1-6659-0070-6, \$17.99, 340pp, hc, cover by Velinx) Middle-grade fantasy novel. Zachary knows very little about his Chinese heritage until the spirit of the first emperor of China gives him powers and sends him on a quest to the underworld. Ebook also available. ■

May 2022		Year to Date	
SF Novels	14	SF Novels	65
Fantasy Novels	27	Fantasy Novels	147
Horror Novels	12	Horror Novels	59
Paranormal Romance	6	Paranormal Romance	36
Anthologies	9	Anthologies	32
Collections	14	Collections	49
Reference	1	Reference	3
History/Criticism	4	History/Criticism	15
Media Related	10	Media Related	15
Young Adult	17	Young Adult	105
SF	3	SF	17
Fantasy	10	Fantasy	65
Horror	1	Horror	14
Paranormal Romance	3	Paranormal Romance	9
Other	0	Other	0
Omnibus	0	Omnibus	4
Art/Humor	1	Art/Humor	15
Miscellaneous	10	Miscellaneous	52
Total New	125	Total New	597
Reprints		Reprints	
Reissues	46	Reissues	238
Total:	171	Total:	835

Karen Burnham

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and time. I also enjoyed "A Manual on Different Options of How to Bring A Loved One to Life" by Oyedotun Damilola Muees. It's a cyberpunk story, where Harafat's sister Azeezat was incapacitated and left body-less. Harafat goes through the criminal underworld to get enough prosthetics to re-embodiment her sister, and of course gets caught up in a criminal enterprise. The ending was not what I was expecting, and I really liked it. A more haunting story is "Tea Parties Around Nebula-55" by Adrianna C. Grigore. We meet a guide robot, Remi, who appears to be caring for a group of children on a spaceship that is slowly falling apart. It's a tough position to be in, and we can easily sympathize with Remi trying to keep the children happy while doing the best they can with what they have left. The real mystery, though, is why they're in this situation, and Grigore paces the reveal quite well.

The *Sunday Morning Transport* weekly newsletter continues to bring excellent fiction to your inbox. "Barnacles" by Cassandra Rose Clarke imagines a world where the Seawall is supposed to be an impassable barrier keeping monsters away from the city. But one family has built their home on the Seawall, and after her mother's death a woman finds water seeping through the hallways. Clarke ratchets the tension up nicely as mysteries of both house and family are revealed. This is one where I would have liked to read beyond where the story ended. Maureen McHugh brings us "No One Knows How This Feels", in which Jebby, the daughter of Guatemalan immigrants, is committing an act of civil disobedience as part of the "anti-cap" (anti-capitalist) movement. It's an ingenious plan that involves infiltrating a shopping mall, and McHugh keeps an excellent

sense of perspective: not overstating the stakes, but also not underestimating the meaning of the act to the individual.

"Hello from Tomorrow" by E.C. Myers is a great science fiction story where Ash is the daughter of the deceased lead scientist on a KARI (Korean space agency) project. When their Mars rover's Twitter account begins responding to Ash directly, the KARI folks bring her in. It looks like her father's consciousness may live on in some form. Although the KARI scientists are desperately worried when the rover autonomously changes course, it may be immensely meaningful for Ash in her grief. Another science fiction entry is "A Body in Motion" by William Alexander. The narrator is a human courier who helps baby bots mature as a side gig. On this run she's traveling with self-named bot Agatha Ponza von Sparkles. On their voyage they find the wreckage, and corpse, of another courier and find themselves in the sights of some larger vindictive force. Survival may require sacrifices. This was both fun and moving. "Itofo fe Queen" by Maurice Broaddus imagines an asteroid being mined by Muungano, an African collective. The story stars *in media res* as an explosion threatens the entire operation. Broaddus interleaves plenty of worldbuilding as Itofo, recently crowned as a Nguni queen, makes her way through the mines on a broken leg to try to keep the damage from getting worse. A nice piece of Afrofuturist vision.

Slate's *Future Tense* project continues to produce thoughtful science fiction stories, one per month, paired with a response essay by a specialist. If you recall my review of *Solarpunk* magazine last issue, the February story by newcomer JoeAnn Hart, "Good Job, Robin", would fit nicely in that category. In this future, some of humanity has survived and is working on restoring the Earth, bit by bit. Married partners Ahimsa and Isaura (the narrator) are doing

a rotation on a cricket farm. But Ahimsa is heading for an existential crisis, thinking that humanity does more harm than good and slowly restricting her diet. The world-building is very well done, and Ahimsa's despairing viewpoint hits home. Luckily the story is told from Isaura's balancing perspective. In April **Cat Rambo** brings us "The Woman Who Wanted To Be Trees". Nefirah is part of a family group that is constructing a generation starship named Love. She has pioneered a way of making neural memorials, and superstar K wants one that will go on the ship. She offers enough money to see the improbable project all the way to completion, but Nefirah worries that allowing K this egotistical monument (she wants her memorial to be in a full sequoia tree) will undermine the overall philosophy of the ship and its mission. Her solution is almost guiltily satisfying.

Recommended Stories

"Boy in the Key of Forsaken", Eric Del Carlo (*Analogue* 5-6/22)

"Proof of Concept", Auston Habershaw (*Analogue* 5-6/22)

"Gamma", Oskar Källner (*Clarkesworld* 5/22)

"The Possibly Brief Life of Guang Hansheng", Liang Qingsan (*Clarkesworld* 5/22)

"Subsidiary Class 2 Museum Report", Tim McDaniels (*Analogue* 5-6/22)

"A Manual on Different Options of How to Bring A Loved One to Life", Oyedotun Damilola Muees (*Clarkesworld* 5/22)

"Hello from Tomorrow", E.C. Myers (*The Sunday Morning Transport* 4/17/22)

–Karen Burnham

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Short Fiction: Charles Payseur

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family's space, to a neighboring galactic power and a general who might be able to stand against a god. Wonderfully told and smolderingly hot, the story shifts between expansive worldbuilding and budding flirtatious romance with equal ease. Demciri's prose sizzles, and the action pops off the page, with a style and aesthetic I'd pay cash money to see on the big screen. **Arden Powell** keeps with the themes of resistance to violent government and the advantages of godhood in "**Zen Solaris and the God-Child**". In a post-disaster world, an authoritarian government controls everything, toward the end of continuing the human species, even or perhaps especially over the objections of people with bodies deemed valuable to the cause. Zen has such a body, but he's also wily and willing to fight to keep himself free. And when he comes across a strange, plant-based power that could rise from the ashes of humanity, it comes down to the relative merits of each that guide Zen forward on his grim adventure. Powell maintains a rather relentless pacing in the story, with Zen jumping from disaster to disaster, pulled between the demands to submit for the good of his species and the allure of embracing instead the good of his planet.

Fantasy enters June with a focus on gods, demigods, and the power of storytelling. **Fatima Taqvi** lingers mostly on the latter in "**Baba Nowruz Gives His Wife a Flower Only Once a Year**", which finds a young storyteller who learned all the stories "wrong," whose fairy tales didn't end with violence or betrayal and whose folklore wasn't full of death and loss. Instead, they learn hopeful stories for hopeful futures, for all that they're chastised because of it. Taqvi shows with clarity and care how, in the face of tragedy, uplifting stories can seem shallow or naïve. But through the action and hope they protect and inspire, having a happy ending to reach for can act as its own kind of spell, its own prophecy, and that is something incredibly powerful. **Wen Wen Yang** doesn't exactly avoid violence in "**The Magical Sow**", as the story is about a woman trying to help her sister escape an abusive marriage. But it also understands the heavy lifting required to overcome injustice and escape corrupt and broken systems. Yang fills the story with the wry and brash voice of a pig who has no time for human hypocrisies, playing him off the narrator's desire for peace but her willingness to stand up against bullies. Ending on poetry, the

issue closes with "**Georgia Clay Blood**" by **Beatrice Winifred Iker**, which finds a narrator connecting to a place, to the soil and earth on the land where their ancestors were tortured and kept prisoner. In their communing with the land, in touching the clay, they acknowledge their part of it and its part of them. Full of powerful and moving imagery, it echoes with a sense of time, and a look forward in a future that's still a work in progress.

Closing out my coverage this month is **Disruption: New Short Fiction from Africa**, edited by Jason Mykl Snyman, Karina M. Szczurek & Rachel Zadok. The anthology is built around the theme of disruption, and more specifically around the ideas of shortage, disaster, and crisis. These recur again and again through the lens of each new story, building into a wonderfully diverse, often grim portrait of a world moving toward ruin or rebirth. The stories in general range from apocalyptic to transformative, casting the planet as moving past a point of no return and showing the effects where they will be felt first and hardest, where climate-driven disaster is already much more than a speculative conceit. The anthology opens with **Alithnayn Abdulkareem**'s wrenching "**Static**", which finds Amira given the opportunity to leave a scorched Earth behind, thanks to her genetic diversity. What she's leaving, though, and what she's entering into are two very different things, and taking the lifeline means separating herself from those she loves. The story shows a stark picture of survival and inequality, where even the end of the world as we know it can't dismantle racism or corruption. It's a sentiment that continues in **Innocent Chizaram Ilo**'s blistering "**Before We Die Unwritten**". Here Melifeonwe is a gay whistleblower at a huge corporation promising to change the world with its revolutions in energy production. A lack of care about safety and environmental impact, though, makes that promise a grim prophecy and Melifeonwe a doomed Cassandra. The piece is intimately about blame, about the refusal to take systemic action against systemic problems and relying instead on "personal responsibility," which is easily manipulated and avoided.

The main character in "**Five Years Next Sunday**" by **Idza Luhumyo** is a Caller, someone whose hair seems to collect the possibility of rain. After five years of growing it out, she might break the drought that seems endless. When a white man takes an interest in her hair, though, and uses his money and influence to help just her and her family, it complicates her role, and makes her important in a way she's not prepared

for and has little defense against. Luyumyo weaves a web of desires and betrayals into a moving tapestry of love, loss, and tragedy. **J.S. Louw** maintains the focus on family and tragedy in "**Laatlammer**", where the narrator is illegal thanks to a one-child rule, and his existence is one of constant danger and fear, even as it's full of the love of his mother as well. The story is suffocating, though, with the need to hide, the looming threat of being reported, of not being able to trust anyone, of being used as a leverage to further exploit the most vulnerable. It finds both strength and futility in defiance, in the trap of injustice that has been laid for those who are deemed illegal through no fault of their own, just by existing. **Mbozi Haimbe**'s "**Shelter**" also finds a family in a precarious situation, but this one authored by a climate change that has unleashed acidic dust on the world, and storms that claim anyone who isn't safely inside. For Lindi, caught out with her infant child, it's a race against nature itself, one that she might survive this time, but that humanity in general might already have lost. The piece shows the power of small kindnesses in the face of huge ecological destruction, but lingers on the momentum of that destruction and the almost inevitable sense that, as things get worse, the power of small kindnesses won't be enough to avoid a grim future. It's a message that the anthology comes back to time and again. That humanity might be redeemed by our love and compassion, but only as those things are allowed to be bigger than the problems we face. And in order to push back against catastrophe, we need to fix the ways that our empathy, cooperation, and innovation have been disrupted by greed and hate. It's a wonderful project.

Recommended Stories:

- "Drowning Songs", M.S. Dean (*Anathema* 5/22)
- "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made", Rebecca Fraimow (*Kaleidotrope* 4/22)
- "In the Time of the Telperi Flower", David-Christopher Galhea (*GigaNotaSaurus* 5/22)
- "Before We Die Unwritten", Innocent Chizaram Ilo (*Disruption* 9/21)
- "Coyote Woman Sings the Blues", Marissa James (*Zooscape* 4/22)
- "Five Years Next Sunday", Idza Luhumyo (*Disruption* 9/21)

—Charles Payseur

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Maya C. James

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lesson that not all women want liberation, and are happy to be tools of empire to secure their safety. Some of them are more aware of this dynamic than others. Forna does an excellent job showing how an oppressive system maintains itself, even if some of the villains are cardboard-esque. Their dialogue still serves to explore Deka's learned values and offer a strong feminist approach to subjects of liberation and freedom to readers.

The cast is comprised primarily of the first novel's characters, including mentors from the first book joining them in battle and handling other conflicts across the kingdom. The jatu, including Keita and the rest of the boys from the previous novel, are now wanted by the Oteran Empire for helping the gilded ones escape. There is some individual character development throughout the novel, but, with the exception of Deka, this is so fleeting it becomes difficult to grasp how these traumatic experiences have impacted them.

With the exception of the main villains we encounter later in the book, most of the enemies in the book

are also underdeveloped on an individual level. The evil priests and false gods remain at the periphery of the novel until they are needed for fight scenes. Even when the primary antagonists gain increasingly complex roles, the henchmen are never fully realized in a way that makes them satisfying opponents. For how often they appear, we never learn how boys are initiated into the priesthood, or if any of them attempt to leave. Some additional development earlier on in the book may have mustered a bit more curiosity from me about their fates, or how the battles would pan out.

While the initial villains of the novel are not fully developed, the book's themes are quite mature despite its young adult rating. Forna discusses ability, chosen family, sexuality, gendered violence, and other themes in a manner that is appropriately nuanced for the audience. In one scene, the issue of wearing a mask, or where women cover part of their faces to show purity, blurred the line between the protagonist's voice and Forna's voice. Similar to the mask discussion, there were other moments of exposition that interrupted the flow of the book, but these were far and few between. Most of the time, Forna's voice is balanced nicely with Deka's, and shone most clearly when the actions of the characters

were allowed to speak for themselves.

Forna's imaginative settings are surreal as well – gorgeous descriptions of abandoned ruins and red cobblestones were both atmospheric and immersive. Melanis, one of the goddesses Deka frees early in the book, is another complex character described in evocative detail, down to her complex emotions and bitter dialogue following years of torture. I enjoyed her interactions with Deka the most, as they tackled the themes of the book in a clever and natural way.

The Merciless Ones is fast paced, and I found myself looking forward to Deka's conversations more than any fight scenes. Those still held peril, did have the same intensity that her dialogues with her enemies did.

The ending of **The Merciless Ones** is where Forna's keen ability to write action scenes and character is most evident: it was a complete shock to me, and threaded in so deftly throughout the book that it seemed as if it should have been obvious. **The Merciless Ones** plays to all of Forna's strengths from **The Gilded Ones**: precise, clean prose, an immersive world, realistic dialogue, and formidable girls ready to take on the empire and gods that nearly destroyed them.

Reputation is everything in Araşt, the setting for **A Taste of Gold and Iron** by Alexandra Rowland. While other kingdoms are plagued with counterfeit coins, the princes of Araşt have the ability to test the purity of metals through touch and taste. Though it does not have the strongest army, its esteemed channels of diplomacy keep their kingdom in good graces with others. When Kadou, the prince of Araşt and brother of the sultan, Zeliha, becomes embroiled in a conflict with the Oissikan ambassador to Araşt at court, he offers to investigate a break-in to one of their guilds to save their reputation and prove his loyalty to his sister. Accompanying him is Evemer, his handsome and aloof bodyguard, who despises the prince for his cowardly actions. This small favor turns out to be more than he begged for – there’s trouble of some sort brewing, and it’s getting increasingly complicated the further he digs in.

What follows is a witty and romantic adventure about a larger conspiracy and palace politics that Kadou has no desire to be a part of. Tip-toeing between anxiety he labels cowardice, and a quiet intellect he keeps mostly to himself, Kadou is full of surprises. We are given the privilege of seeing into his mind and understanding how he came to this point in his life, and how the people around him view him. Kadou is as charming as he is interesting, and doesn’t seem interested in power or domination. Our first scenes of him are praying for his sister’s baby to arrive without complications. Their relationship is one of my favorite relationships in the book: they act like real siblings, only with an unusual amount of power that only one of them seems to care about. Kadou is too shy to be power hungry, but that may end up being his downfall if he isn’t more careful about who he defers to.

We also see the world through Evemer’s eyes. His seemingly strong hatred for the prince isn’t rooted in

lust or love, but an intense sense of loyalty to those he loves and cares for. Rowland’s characters are exceedingly well-developed: not a single character acted unconvincingly, nor are they boring and predictable. They each have a strong sense of ethics and duty that are unique to their experiences and personalities.

I was also surprised that such a passionate, romantic cover with Kadou and Evemer midway to a longing embrace was the prelude to a hilarious book. Scenes from it are funny, with Kadou’s near-comical levels of shyness and awkwardness as baffling to witness as they are funny. Evemer provides us with insight into his behavior in a series of dry observations throughout the near 500-page long novel that are quite funny and entertaining. Amidst this, Rowland humanizes Kadou’s “flaws” as distinct and separate from his mental wellness.

Rowland’s world-building and attention to detail is also quite alluring: Araşt people have their own customs, as do the Oissika, where the ambassador and body-father (see: baby daddy unless otherwise stated) of the sultan Zeliha hails from. Rather than conflict being an innate essentializing matter, Rowland takes the time to explain these differences and reasons for conflict without interrupting the flow of the story. Based on a setting similar to that of the Ottoman Empire, there are clever descriptions that serve the purpose of worldbuilding while also explaining certain misunderstandings between characters.

Rowland’s characterization is worthy of tremendous praise, while the plot is consistently interesting. It was easy to follow without becoming mundane or predictable. I had no clue what would emerge next, and became so confident in Rowland’s storytelling capacities that I chose not to worry about it. Conflict was built into the plot with ease. It’s an easy read in the sense that Rowland has made the reader (and

reviewer’s) experience easy yet enjoyable.

I of course love the romantic aspects of the book – particularly how it built in a tantalizingly slow manner. Like the conflict in the novel, it sits just at the edge of the page, pulling readers along. Rowland offers innovative ways of signaling tension: a stray thought here and there, a lingering suggestion of closeness – the attraction between Kadou and Evemer is obvious to the reader before it is the two men.

The fantasy elements of the novel may seem sparse at times – I felt as if I was watching a Turkish soap opera unfold in the best way possible – but Rowland gave the crowd (at least this crowd of me) what they wanted: drama, intense politics, and sexual tension. Magic, in the form of the ability to taste-test metals, was still present, but not so obviously in the beginning of the novel. As for the unfolding political drama, I’m certain that those deeply interested in finance and financial crimes would find this book even more interesting, but I found Rowland’s explanation of the depth of the conflict and the problems it could cause to be extremely compelling without being overt information dumps.

A Taste of Gold and Iron is impeccably paced and each character is clearly drawn with unique motivations and personalities. Small linguistic choices, such as naming fathers “body-fathers” rather than making a specific claim to a child deepened the subtle gender roles, or lack of gender roles, that Rowland infuses into their created world. While it is a romantic fantasy novel, it’s also a political thriller, heist, and family saga at once. More importantly, as with any good romantic novel, I was shaking the book asking when the characters would kiss already. It was well worth the wait when they finally did.

–Maya C. James ■

Russell Letson

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visionings of and meditations on literary classics. “Pride and Prometheus” is the Nebula-winning Jane Austen/Mary Shelley mashup novelette that was later expanded into the even more impressive novel of the same title. “Gulliver at Home” also brings the fantastic into the ordinary world, as Mrs. Gulliver has to cope not only with her wandering husband’s long absences but with the psychological effects his travels wrought, particularly the despair generated by how he comes to see human nature: “his heart has been beaten closed, not only by the sea and the storms and the mutinies and the pirates, but by some

hard moral engine inside him.”

Kessel’s earlier Nebula winner, “Another Orphan”, is a more radical reworking of its inspirational material, dropping a modern commodities trader onto the *Pequod* and the events – and philosophical riddles – of *Moby-Dick*. In one of those epiphanic speeches, Ahab says to him, “Admit that this is not the tale you think it is! ... Admit that we are both free and unfree, alone and crowded in by circumstance in this world that we indeed did not make...”

The last story in the book is the most recent. “The Dark Ride” mixes history with a kind of literary reconstruction, as the historical Leon Czolgosz not only assassinates President McKinley but also has adventures out of Wells’s **First Men in the Moon**.

Questions of social justice and radical revolutionary action crisscross the two story lines, but, as with “Another Orphan”, there is no explanation for the protagonist’s displacement, nor is there a conventional resolution. And this latter is what strikes me as the most non-genre feature of Kessel’s work: that a story does not need that *snap* of a plot-machine closing, nor do fantastic events require rational explanations – lines drawn under a set of actions, morals drawn, endings arranged happily. As Ahab might put it to some displaced and desperate not-really-Ishmael, these are not the tales we might think they are. Nevertheless, they can make the ride a bit less dark.

–Russell Letson ■

Caren Gusoff Sumption

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innocence, she also remembers the last time they were physically together – the night Holly tried to break it off, the night Eden was conceived – and his pleasure in raping her. So not only does Eden’s disappearance pose a logistical nightmare, cutting off access to her healing blood, but Holly fears that Peter has returned to somehow, for some reason, claim his daughter.

To find Eden, Holly, Jane, and Jack must fully reveal and deal with the secrets and wounds that have festered within the family. They return to England and hire the strangely familiar, one-handed, private detective Christopher Cooke to help try and track down Peter Pan, who is now a man living in the dirty underbelly of London, accompanied by a traumatized, addled Tinker Belle and a bevy of “Lost Boys,” addicted to a drug Peter has synthesized using Tinker Belle’s fairy dust.

Darling Girl is tightly plotted, as befits a novel that toes the lines of urban fantasy, family melodrama, and crime mystery. There’s a lot that needs to be

accomplished – a family has to come together and confront the truth of who they are and how they got that way; the backstory of what ties Peter Pan to the Darling bloodline must be picked apart; and a missing girl, who has been unconscious for most of her life, must be located, soon. It’s remarkable that Michalski manages to keep all balls in the air, and then neatly tie off all loose ends by the end. In that end, while all the Darlings, and the denizens of Neverland, share responsibility for the darkness they’ve unleashed in this realm, redemption is possible when the darkness is brought into the light.

Science fiction, no matter where you sit on the political spectrum, has always been the literature of possibility. Not everyone has had a voice or a seat at the proverbial table, and the genre has weathered growing pains. But at its heart, science fiction is society’s mirror, where we couch (sometimes) painful truths of where we are as humans right now by teasing out what the world can look like in the future. Sure, there are space ships, aliens, fantastic technologies – trappings which do not necessarily

shape our day-to-day existence in 2022 – but science fiction is about us: how we live, how we relate to one another, and what makes humans human, by placing these concepts in conversation with the unfamiliar.

Because science fiction is, ultimately, about us, it is the natural milieu for exploring identity, gender, and sexuality, and academic Ritch Calvin’s **Queering SF: Readings** surveys the recent history and contemporary presence of queer voices in science fiction. Calvin uses broad strokes to define both “science fiction” and “queerness,” in his introduction, which keeps the collection of essays friendly for non-academic readers; he is clear to state that neither science fiction nor queerness is a monolith, but that both serve the same end in different ways. While science fiction as a genre invites the reader to question what they accept as real, queerness, as an identity marker, invites all of us – whether we identify personally as queer – to question what we assume about gender and sexuality.

Calvin has had to make choices. He can’t possibly cover all the historical intersections of science

▶▶

Caren Gussoff Sumption

fiction, gender, and sexuality. Instead, he tries hard to cover one or two pieces in each essay, focused on a particular aspect of cultural gestalt. He opens the collection with a thoughtful analysis of John Varley's 1979 story "Options". It is hardly the earliest, or, in my opinion, best-known (or best-executed) piece that wrestles with gender identity, but Calvin uses it as an opener because of its well-meaning shortcomings. Varley plays with many cultural mores, but is not a writer known for his own personal experience of living outside gender norms (or if he has, this is not publicly known to readers or academics). In "Options", gender is still a binary construct defined by reproductive and sexual anatomy, but the story posits a world in which the inner self and sexuality are separate from the gender binary. For readers only just learning about identity, gender, and sexuality spectra, starting the collection with this piece is a gentle warm-up to the various ways science fiction has interrogated these concepts.

From there, Calvin dives into heady territory. He takes us through how eugenics, fascism, and genocide intersect with identity and sexuality in Katherine Burdekin's "Swastika Nights", the politics of lesbian separatism and gender norms in Joanna Russ's **The Female Man**, and Ursula K. Le Guin's attempt at degenderization in **The Left Hand of Darkness**, all works well-covered in feminist theory, but not always viewed through a queer lens. Then, in no particular order, he tours through SF that has portrayed queer/QUILT BAG family and found-family structures in Octavia E. Butler's "Bloodchild" and the Wachowski sisters' **Sense8** television series, amongst others; "disembodied" sex and identity in Caitlin Sullivan and Kate Bornstein's "Nearly Roadkill"; drag culture in "The Moon Room" by Rosasco Moore; and asexuality and self-love in Sarah Kanning's "Sex With Ghost". I am leaving out many, many essays and intersections; the collection includes a total of 36 pieces, and covers an impressive breadth of authors and topics.

A few things surprised me. I was personally surprised at how infrequently Samuel R. Delany

was mentioned; "Aye... and Gomorrah" is examined, in terms of Harlan Ellison's **Dangerous Visions** anthology series, and some of Delany's essays and scholarship are referenced in other essays (including his work on science fiction and language in the essay on "The Moon Room"). There are other omissions that must have been hard choices to make, given space limitations, of course – Nicola Griffith does not appear in any essay, for example – and the essays are heavy on contemporary work, with only a few (mentioned) from before 2010. I don't think it weakens the collection, necessarily, but readers looking for more historical context won't find it here.

For the most part, Calvin's voice is accessible, breaking down abstract concepts into palatable layperson language. Here and there, however, the voice veers into a casual tone that is... odd. It's far from off-putting, but it does stand out, and usually it is where Calvin is trying to close an essay and lead into another topic. It's a quirk, for sure, and may just be an unavoidable artifact left by the Herculean task of translating complex ideas in approachable ways.

—Caren Gussoff Sumption ■

Ian Mond

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report the League's activities back to Mishig-Tenh's odious Lord Chancellor. In his role as guide, he and Lott will aid the *merite* in surveying the pilgrim route into Edith-Tenh, also known as the Hidden Land. It's the home of the Tzanate, a once-powerful religious order that worships the Mountain and its demigod, bird-like Custodians. Edith-Tenh is also where we find our second protagonist Anton. He is a *ver-tzan*, one of two blade priests chosen at the age of eight to tear out the hearts of sacrificial victims and feed the bloody organs to the Custodians. Unlike his "sister," Elecy, who revels in the practice – and is angered when the Custodians decide they no longer have an appetite for human hearts – Anton has always felt ill-suited to the role, confused as to why he was chosen to be a blade priest in the first place. His destiny, however, is brought into sharp relief when the head of the Tzanate, somewhat surprisingly, chooses Anton as his replacement.

The success of an epic-fantasy novel rests heavily on world-building. Those who do it poorly tend to overwhelm the reader with dense historical detail, a blizzard of weird names and places and a detailed schematic of the world's magic system. W.P. Wiles does not make this mistake. Drawing on his day job – where he's a freelance journalist who writes about modern design and architecture – Wiles elegantly constructs his secondary world. For example, the novel's sedate opening, where Inar and his crew are repairing the walls demolished by the League, and which includes Inar's first encounter with the *merite* and her ward Duna, foreshadows (though we don't know it at the time) the chaos that's to come, the utter destruction of long-standing buildings and institutions. (This is a book blanketed in a coating of dust, sand, and gravel.) Anton's introduction is similarly handled with a level of forethought and sophistication. We're thrown into the middle of a Conclave, an assembly of priests, with little understanding of the event's significance or why Anton is wearing the mask of a bird with a razor-sharp beak. Wiles refuses to interrupt the scene as it unfolds, holding back an explanation of the Tzanate, their rituals, and the growing schism between the head acolyte and the man expected to replace him. When a massive bird with slashing talons appears, to the

horror of the priests in the temple, we're told it's a Custodian and left none the wiser. As strange as the scene is, Wiles leaves us in no doubt that Anton is deeply uncomfortable with his role as a blade priest. All this isn't to say that the world-building is opaque or takes a back seat, but rather, an appreciation of how well integrated it is into the novel's structure.

As the plot heats up, as the death toll mounts, and as Anton and Inar's paths cross, the originality of the world Wiles's has created, a world he hoped would pay homage to the adventures he read as a child, shines through. While the magic system is not especially radical or subversive (what we see is essentially the manipulation of matter at a sub-atomic level), the fact that magic-users are considered abominations (they're called scourges), coupled with the revelation that Duna, Anzola's young, prickly ward, is a ruin scourge, adds a level of tension and drama that's as much about the characters (especially Inar's reaction to Duna's identity) as it is about how the magic functions. I also loved Wiles's delicious twist on the traditional Elf, the novel's antagonists. Kept off-screen for a large portion of the story, when they do appear, they're as violent and unstoppable as they're hyped up to be. That's not what makes the Elves so cool, though. The revelation of their true nature – which I wouldn't dare spoil – is both brilliant and something I've never seen done before.

Because there's so much to read, I'm prone to not picking up the second book in a series (whatever the genre). But that won't be a problem here. While Wiles doesn't end the first volume on a cliff-hanger, the climax, which opens up several tantalising possibilities, promises a sequel that's likely to be as cleverly structured and stylish as **The Last Blade Priest**.

Missouri Williams's debut novel, **The Doloriad**, comes close to pipping Mónica Ojeda's **Jawbone** as the most disturbing book I've read this year (note, I said close; **Jawbone** still holds the crown). It's a post-apocalyptic story where an unknown cataclysm, possibly environmental (though it's never made clear) has wiped out humanity. Well, almost. In a deserted city (the infrequent place names suggest somewhere in the Czech Republic, perhaps Prague), a large family born of incest eke out a hard-scrabble existence. Ruling over them is the Matriarch, scrutinising her children and grandchildren from the dirty window in her apartment.

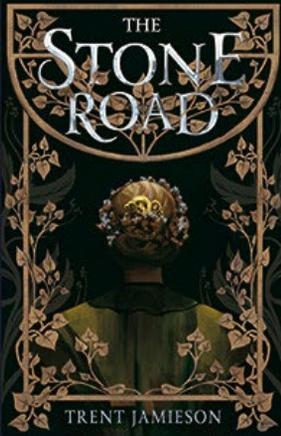
She has become convinced there are others out there and that together they will establish a new society under her guidance. To that end, the Matriarch offers up her daughter, Dolores (described as "droopy, fat" and "legless") for marriage, ordering "Uncle" to transport the girl in a wheelbarrow deep into the forest. But when Dolores, confused and afraid, somehow crawls her way back to the encampment, the Matriarch realises they are alone – a fact that sends a ripple of discontent and anger through her children, especially her eldest son, Jan, the one amongst the siblings who believes he should lead the family.

If I had to summarise **The Doloriad** in five words or less, it would be "the perversion of persistence." Although they have conflicting views on the matter, both the Matriarch and Jan believe humanity has a future. As such, the Matriarch sends Dolores into the forest, while Jan forces his siblings and their children to work the fields, despite the lack of rain. And this persistence, an unwillingness to accept that humanity is facing extinction, leads to acts of violence and cruelty. Dolores, viewed as a symbol of failure, is savagely beaten by her siblings and then raped by Jan, who also brutally murders another sister, Marta.

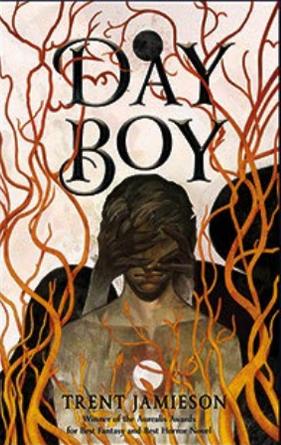
While Williams's depiction of "the perversion of persistence" is extreme, I couldn't help but draw a connection to our recent mini-cataclysm, the pandemic, and the persistent message from corporations and Government that we return to the office. For those of us who do go back, surrounded by so much emptiness, it's clear that the age of the office is slowly grinding to an end (it may still take another decade) and that those in power, just like the Matriarch and Jan, have yet to accept the inevitable.

As bleak as all that sounds, the sheer quality of Williams's prose makes **The Doloriad** an extraordinary reading experience. The novel is narrated as a stream of consciousness, shifting fluidly between the perspectives of the Matriarch, Jan, Dolores, and other siblings like Agathe, one of the younger sisters who suffers from bouts of epilepsy and has a bottomless hatred for Dolores. Like Ottessa Moshfegh, Williams doesn't shy away from the infirmities of the body or the acts of violence that punctuate the story. But there are also these astonishing moments of profundity, beautifully rendered observations that speak to a deeper truth about humanity's autonomic urge to survive at all costs.

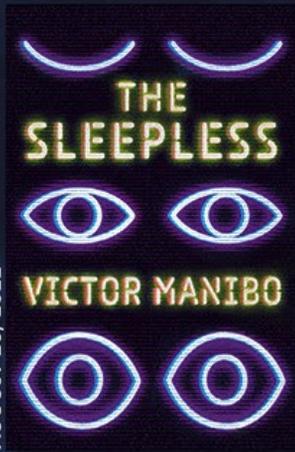
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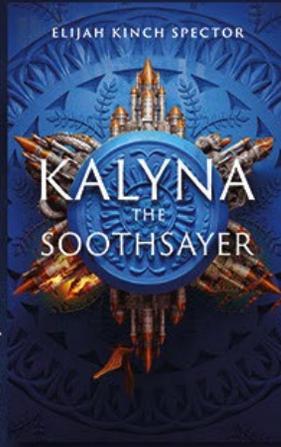


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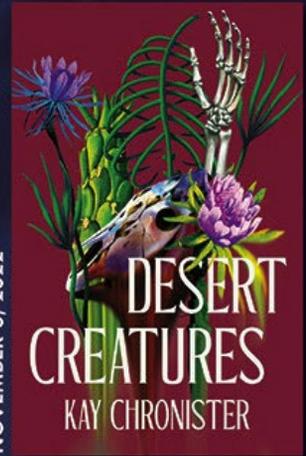
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The departed gods had left their task incomplete; they had neglected to wipe away these last remnants of their great error, and in the vacuum of their intention these things had bred and clung on to a meagre existence in a world more inhospitable than ever simply because “nature hateth emptiness.”

Threaded through all this is a rich vein of surrealism. There’s the schoolteacher, one of the three adults who survived the cataclysm, who spends his days

muttering Greek poetry to a class of dozing, addled children and his night worshipping a mound of cloth inhabited by thousands of moths, who he believes will eventually lead him to salvation. Stranger than this is the one TV show available to the encampment, a cartoon starring Thomas Aquinas (yes, *the* Thomas Aquinas) and his “trusty little sheep” who wander the countryside solving problems where they encounter them. Some of the best moments in the novel involve a recount of the episodes – especially

one involving a cheerleader – that grow increasingly violent and disturbing until someone yells out: GET AQUINAS IN HERE!

In a publishing environment where there’s a glut of post-apocalyptic fiction, it’s always surprising and gratifying to discover a novel, like **The Doloriad**, that is not only wholly original but also provides a unique, albeit grim, angle on the human condition.

—Ian Mond ■

Gabino Iglesias

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their relationships, and much more. Sam is afraid of his future with Nick, but also afraid of Nick himself. After returning home, Nick is a different man. There are plenty of reasons for Sam to be afraid. Things go from Nick being weird and hiding away all the time, to Sam waking up with steel wire wrapped around his face, to Sam being blown out of bed and across the room by an explosion that came from Nick’s face right before dark birds started coming out of it. And these events take place over one or two chapters.

Despite the plethora of events and intertwined narratives and ideas in this novel, which make it a bit of a challenging read, **Echo** triumphs because Heuvelt gives Nick and Sam very unique voices and they carry the narrative well. There is a lot of fear, grief, confusion, and darkness, but also moments of humor that allow readers to breathe, collect themselves, and delve back into the eerie weirdness. There are also lots of elements, like mentions of bags, social media, Chuck Palahniuk, *Inglourious Basterds*, Agatha Christie, *The Cabin in the Woods*, *The Last House on the Left*, that pull the story into the real world from time to time and give the strange stuff even more of a

punch. That’s not the end of it. **Echo** is one of those novels that establishes a dialogue with great horror narratives that preceded it. That happens here with work by Stephen King, Shirley Jackson, William Peter Blatty (of course!), and Clive Barker.

While this is clearly a horror novel that packs in supernatural occurrences, touches of cosmic horror, and possession, it is also mainly a narrative about guilt, grief, and fear that has trauma – both physical and emotional – at its core.

Heuvelt is a great storyteller, and **Echo** might just be his best work yet. For example, Nick is a truly memorable character. He is a victim and a monster, a man forced to live with a horrifying accident and also someone who’s possessed by a mountain. We feel empathy for him, but also fear him because he is what he appears to be but also more...and he might be something even worse, which is a possibility Sam understands very well: “How could I be sure it really was Nick sitting there and not some other being impersonating him, some thing that *looked* like Nick, had the same hands, wore the same sweatpants, but was actually something totally alien? It didn’t use words Nick would use. Didn’t *smell* like Nick. When the mask came off, it wouldn’t even have Nick’s face.”

Echo is a literary maze, and like any other maze, it takes effort to get to the end of it. Fans of horror looking for a quick, easy-to-digest, pulpy read should stay away from this cold mountain of a book, but readers looking to get submerged in a gripping, bizarre narrative should immediately delve – or climb? – this one.

Jason Rekulak’s **Hidden Pictures** is one of those rare horror novels that manages to rake a few tired clichés and turn them into something fresh and incredibly engaging. At once a novel about ghosts, murder, and possession and a narrative that deals with overcoming addiction and finding a way to navigate life once you’ve lost everything, this is the kind of story that shows horror fiction can simultaneously be creepy, pulpy, touching, and smart.

Mallory Quinn has just left rehab and is in the process of rebuilding her life from scratch while trying to keep the demons of addiction away. Part of that process is finding a job, so when she lands one babysitting a five-year-old named Teddy for the summer – a gig that includes a room off the family’s patio in a very expensive neighborhood – she’s both extremely happy and worried. Caroline Maxwell, ■■

Gabino Iglesias

Teddy's mom, works with recovering users, so she's on Mallory's side from the start. Teddy's father is a different story. Despite the tension, Mallory immediately falls in love with Teddy and her work, and falls into a comfortable routine of taking care of Teddy, going for runs around the neighborhood, and watching Hallmark movies on her tablet. Then things start to change.

Teddy is a sweet, shy boy who loves playing with animals, going on walks through the nearby woods, and playing in the pool. He also loves to draw, and his drawings are the first thing that tells Mallory something isn't quite right. Teddy usually draws stick figures and animals, but then his drawings take a turn and he starts drawing beheaded people, a woman being dragged in the forest, and a dead woman. Then they get darker, and they are way more detailed and sinister than Teddy's young brain should be able to dream up. Mallory worries about Teddy, but his parents won't hear of it. When Mallory hears Teddy talking in his room when he's supposed to be alone and then his drawings get even worse, she becomes convinced there is an entity trying to communicate through the little boy's drawings, and she decides to get to the bottom of it, putting herself and her job at risk.

There's a lot to like about **Hidden Pictures**. However, the most immediate element that grabs readers' attention is the art that accompanies the book. Teddy's illustrations are not only mentioned, described, and discussed; they show up in the book. Brilliantly and creepily brought to life by artists Will Staehle and Doogie Horner, Teddy's drawings are the central piece of the puzzle at the heart of the novel, and seeing them add a wonderful layer of creepiness to the reading experience. Also, kids drawing creepy things is a horror cliché, but Rekulak manages to position the illustrations at the center of the book in a way that feels new and feeds the mystery Mallory is trying to solve. Breathing new life into old tropes is no easy task, but Rekulak pulled it off brilliantly here.

While the illustrations are great, **Hidden Pictures** is memorable for two other things: Rekulak's talent for character development and the wonderful way in which he weaves together genre elements from horror, mystery, and thrillers. Mallory is a complex, troubled character. She's trying hard to build a new life, but the guilt of a horrible accident in which her little sister died, the broken relationship with her mother, and the lies she finds herself telling a young man she meets and falls for all haunt her. Also, her past troubles are hard to ignore when she starts hearing things and becomes convinced there's a presence in the house that is possessing Teddy and using his hand

to draw the scary images. Throughout the story, she fails and tries again, she lies and then comes clean, she ruins everything, and, instead of quitting or falling into addiction again, she keeps fighting to make things right.

The second element that makes this a standout novel is the seamless way in which the author weaves together all its elements. This is a tale of ghosts, possession, murder, mystery, and messages from beyond the grave. There is everything in here from creepy drawings and a séance with a Ouija board to strange sounds in the woods and a scary passage involving a baby monitor. However, the narrative is also about Mallory's past and how it affects her present and seems to be the biggest thing keeping her from a great future, the way our psychology can play tricks on us, the way your socioeconomic background seems to dictate the opportunities you receive. There's even a bit of romance. While these are all very different elements, Rekulak mixes them together well and the end result is a strong, engaging novel that's about people and their problems as much as it is about ghosts and a terrible story that took place long ago.

Modern horror is all about mixing genres while keeping its dark heart intact, and that's what **Hidden Pictures** does. This is a horror novel that's also a thriller, a mystery, and a story about overcoming the odds and surviving. Rekulak is a talented storyteller, and this one will be one of the biggest horror books of the summer. It deserves all the attention it gets.

Michael Landweber's **The Damage Done** is a gripping mosaic novel that explores the way violence towards each other seems to be part of our DNA and what would happen to the world if we suddenly found ourselves unable to be violent to one another. At once a narrative about many lives that intertwine together and a novel about big ideas that tackles topics like racism and misogyny, **The Damage Done** triumphs because it shows a lot of darkness while simultaneously imagining some interesting events and putting the human heart at the center of everything.

A white supremacist walks into a synagogue and opens fire on a room full of kids. Many bullets fly and tear through clothes...and the children giggle as the bullets softly tickle their bodies. No one dies. However, strange as that was, the miraculous event is far from the only weird thing happening in the world. The police can't hit protesters. Murder attempts fail repeatedly. People who fight each other do little more than stumble around. A man tries to hit his wife and barely manages to bump his hand into her a few times. Suddenly, the world has changed and committing violent acts against others is impossible. However, that doesn't keep people from trying, and suicide is unaffected. As

people learn to navigate their new reality, violence, the thing that shaped our history, is no longer an option, but the need for it is still there.

The Damage Done follows a plethora of characters as the new reality affects their lives. A Black professor, husband, and father worries about his two young boys growing up Black in this country. A 15-year-old girl travels illegally into the US with her younger sister while fleeing gang violence in her home country. There is a young man whose brother was recently murdered by a local drug dealer. A woman stuck in an abusive relationship. A white supremacist obsessed with becoming either a hero or a martyr. These and other characters are at the center of the story, but after each of their chapters are shorter chapters, which Landweber titles "Excursus" followed by a letter, that add even more layers to the narrative as they discuss how the sudden change affects other people: a pope, a revolutionary, a president, a dictator, and others. While there is a lot going on, Landweber deftly balances all the characters and manages to give the novel a sense of cohesion, even as it moves back and forth in time to show the same events through different perspectives.

There is a lot to like in this novel. There is a lot of action but also many passages in which feelings and ideas occupy center stage. However, the best thing about it is how it works simultaneously on two very different levels. On the first, there is the story in which our everyday world changes in a day and alters absolutely everything. Bullets hang in mid-air. Knives thrown from a very close distance change their trajectory and clatter away without drawing blood. Punches die on their way to their target. People are yanked away from movie cars by unseen forces before they get hit. The list of bizarre events goes on and on, and it all injects a degree of the supernatural into an otherwise very feasible story.

The second level is very different, and is perhaps where Landweber shines most as a storyteller. This novel tackles topics like illegal migration, sexual and physical abuse, racism, misogyny, white supremacy, and gentrification. However, it manages to never sound preachy. Instead, the author exposes the realities of our world in ways that make readers see them for how truly awful they are, and then he wonders what would happen to all of that in a world in which violence is not an option.

Interesting thought experiments don't necessarily translate into good novels, but that's exactly what's happened here. Between the bizarre/supernatural events, Landweber's wide-ranging cast of characters, and the constant question of what happens when violence is no longer an option, **The Damage Done** is the kind of book that's hard to put down and that sticks with you, percolating in your brain, long after you've turned the last page.

—Gabino Iglesias ■

Colleen Mondor

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fear. Even so, life is not all that great for our spooky Jane Eyre. Then she gets a letter from a long-lost family member and is on her way to adventure and happiness! Except this is a gothic novel and that curse is looming large and, well, remember how I described **Gallant** as a dark confection? There is a lot more dark on the horizon for Olivia.

Schwab takes Olivia from the proverbial frying pan into the fire when she arrives at Gallant, the home of her mother's family. It is here that she learns who her mother was, and many of the questions raised in her mother's diary, the only possession Olivia had from her family, are explained. There are the treasured family retainers who are odd but kind, her cousin who is disturbed and frightening, and the house itself, which

is, as expected, the home to many scary things that are all too obvious to our ghost-sensitive protagonist. What happens next involves the curse, a doorway to another world/dimension, revelations about Olivia's parenthood, and a great battle to save the house, the countryside, and possibly the world. (I'm really not sure.) Olivia gets the answers she has been looking for and readers get to know her a lot better. Whether there are enough answers for readers, however, is another issue, as despite the fact that **Gallant** is 350+ pages, just exactly where and when it takes place is never explained and the villain himself, and his motivations, are a bit hard to figure out.

For fans of happy endings, be aware that every page of **Gallant**, including the black and white illustrations by Manuel Šumberac, is tinged with an aura of bleakness that permeates the narrative. Of course, **Jane Eyre** is pretty darn bleak as well, so Olivia

is following in a grand tradition of gothic heroines. On a certain dark and stormy autumn night, **Gallant** could very well be exactly the book of the moment. Just make sure you're ready for it. Olivia, and her family's curse, will be waiting.

If you are looking for a YA take on Lovecraftian horror, then Madeleine Roux's **The Book of Living Secrets** is here to fulfill your needs. The title doesn't start out as a date with Cthulhu however, as Adelle and Connie present themselves as two typical teenagers growing up in Boston with a shared obsession for the historical romance novel **Moirra**. They have memorized passages and developed intense literary crushes on their favorite characters, but for Adelle talking about the book (and researching its reclusive author) is not enough. Bored at home and stressed out over college plans, she is elated when the

rather creepy proprietor of their favorite antique store (where they found **Moira**), invites the girls to an evening of magic that might – if they are lucky – include a journey into the pages of the novel. Humoring her friend, Connie agrees to give it a shot, but it is soon clear they have gotten way more than they signed up for. This is where the Lovecraft elements come in, and the girls learn that fictional Boston of **Moira** is not a place anyone would care to visit.

On one level, Roux has a lot of fun with dropping her two main characters into a whole new world. Arriving separately, they find this 18th-century Boston to be a shock on every level. Not only are none of the book's characters who they seemed to be in the text, but the entire setting is skewed. There is a monster in the harbor preying on the local population, and the only ones who are safe are the wealthy, who have cut

a deal with an austere and dangerous group of cloaked men who are perfectly happy to serve up everyone else in exchange for some cash. **Moira** and her friends continue to enjoy the trappings of high society as portrayed in the book, but the witty scenes from the novel are now much darker in view of the horrors plaguing the city. **Adelle** and **Connie** are first stunned by what they witness, then disturbed and soon furious. They make some friends and get caught up in plans to defeat the monster but then find out what is really going on with **Moira** and how nefarious the magic was that brought them there in the first place.

The Book of Living Secrets works exceptionally well when it is focused on **Adelle** and **Connie**, whose loyalty and friendship is both admirable and, if readers are lucky, familiar. The many supporting characters from the novel, including the malevolent

Moira, are also quite engaging. The horror elements are nebulous and confusing, though, and how the creature in the harbor ties into the book and exactly who is behind the whole plot to capture fictional Boston (and why **Adelle** and **Connie** and a third “real” person are necessary to this plot) is unclear. Also, unless readers are familiar with Lovecraft, they will likely miss some of what Roux is hoping to accomplish. This is an interesting novel that set out to do some interesting things, but it doesn't entirely mesh together. On one level, two teens ripped from their familiar world, it works. But why they are there and what it all means remains unclear until the last page when, frankly, things got even more complicated.

—Colleen Mondor ■

Divers Hands

☞ p. 24

raid, she heard a haunting song in the tome's single original, “**Caoinéad**”. These are intimate weird tales written in storytelling style, often as a first-person narrative. Occasionally some patience is required for what, as one character puts it, might be considered “too much information,” but that never detracts from the overall high standard of the writing.

—Paula Guran

ALVARO ZINOS-AMARO

Phasers on Stun!: How the Making (and Remaking) of Star Trek Changed the World, Ryan Britt (Plume 978-0593185698, \$28.00, 400pp, hc) May 2022.

Star Trek's original series lasted 79 episodes. Amazingly, there are now more non-fiction books about said franchise than there are individual episodes of the classic show. Many of the well over one hundred **Trek** non-fiction books focus either on individual shows and movies or specific themes and subjects, but a handful use their viewcreens panoramically and attempt to give a full sense of **Trek**'s half-century. One such is Ryan Britt's **Phasers on Stun!**, probably closest in scope, and even title, to Marcus Berkman's **Set Phasers to Stun: 50 Years of Star Trek** (2016). Britt doesn't break a lot of new ground with this book, but offers enough distinctive characteristics to avoid becoming a mere transporter duplicate, and will likely prove engaging to modern readers or newbies.

Throughout the book's seventeen chronologically arranged chapters Britt mines over one hundred original interviews to back up his observations. This original primary source material – ranging from comments by William Shatner to recent YouTube reviewers – is the book's biggest contribution to **Trek** non-fiction. The end-notes to each chapter reveal that Britt has dug deep into the dilithium mines of franchise lore and history. Britt's synthesis of countless episodes and movies, not to mention ancillary reference tomes, media tie-in novels, and comics, is impressive, and speaks to his zeal and commitment.

A prolific writer of punchy online articles, Britt approaches his overview in a similarly chatty, profanity-laden way, with hyperbole the default setting. For example: “This hints at the key element to **Star Trek** fandom that everyone forgets: We know **Trek** is a little silly, but if you ask us about it, we'll tell you it's the most fucking intellectually important thing of all time.” Britt's many judgments are unleashed like Ferengi energy whips. “**Picard** yelling at people,” he writes, “constitutes 99 percent of all of Patrick Stewart's best performances.” Or: “[Sean] Connery playing Sybok would have saved **The Final Frontier**.” Yeah, well, you know, that's just like, your opinion, man.

The book's early chapters deal with **Star Trek**'s

inception, production challenges, and initial reception, often via catchy introductory hooks, like the quality of Spock's prosthetic ears. Writers like Isaac Asimov and Theodore Sturgeon are introduced thusly: “A divisive figure in literary science fiction history, with a troublesome reputation for arrogance and misogyny, Asimov” and “Theodore Sturgeon, an eccentric science fiction writer who was the real-life basis for Kurt Vonnegut's infamous *fictional* sci-fi writer Kilgore Trout.” Britt gives us a good sense of the complexities of Gene Roddenberry's character, and spends welcome time on the contributions of other key players like Gene L. Coon. When discussing the original feature films, Britt uses the journey of the character Saavik as a connective line that reveals the movies' predilection for nostalgia, and in a later chapter he likewise zooms in on **Picard**'s Earl Gray contrasted with Janeway's coffee as a “microcosm” to reveal the differences between **The Next Generation** and **Voyager**. Chapter nine makes commendable use of a deleted episode scene to comment on therapy. When discussing LGBTQ+ representation, Britt's deep knowledge of his subject matter shines through in his references to the 1996 Marvel comics series **Star Trek: Starfleet Academy**. In Chapter 16, Britt makes the important observation that “in **Star Trek**, adolescent tales of heroic quests are mostly backstory. And that's because working adults – complete with regrets and family angst – tend to dominate the narrative.” Yes, though I think this understates the importance of these adults' highly developed competencies. Chapter 17, which wrestles with the question of what **Star Trek** really is, contains this thought-provoking idea: “in some ways this cycle of backlash and acceptance not only defines the history of **Star Trek**, but also presents the real reason why it endures as such a hopeful, and nearly secular, religion.” The volume concludes with a handy franchise summary.

One of **Phasers on Stun!**'s draws is that it covers post-2009 **Trek** within a broader continuity of analysis and appreciation. “If **Deep Space Nine** was ‘hope through darkness,’” Britt comments, “then **Discovery** Season 1 was hope as an abstract concept while also inside a pitch-black room in which the lightbulbs have been broken.” Regarding two other series, he says, “**Picard** and **Lower Decks** might seem like totally different Trekkie beasts, designed for completely disparate audiences, but they're both forms of contemporary, fully sanctioned fan fiction, primarily spun out of **The Next Generation**.” Britt opines that these shows “provide the same warm-blanket-on-a-cold-night feeling people think about when they remember the best of **Star Trek**.” But as he himself is quick to point out about **Picard**: “From Seven of Nine shooting up seedy bars with her phaser rifle, to **Picard**'s new Number One, Raffi (Michelle Hurd), battling drug addiction, to **Starfleet** admiral Clancy (Ann Magnuson) dropping the f-bomb, **Picard** Season 1 drew plenty of criticism from long-time **TNG** fans who felt betrayed by the darkness of

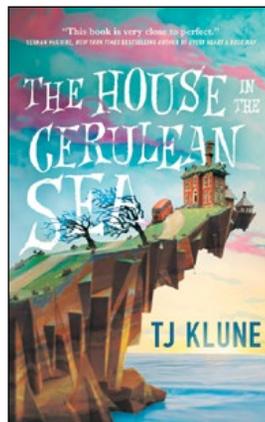
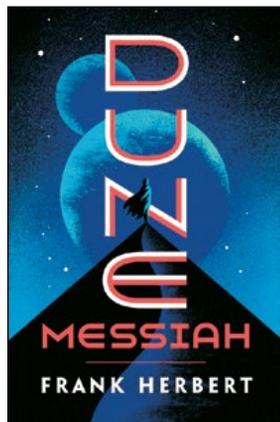
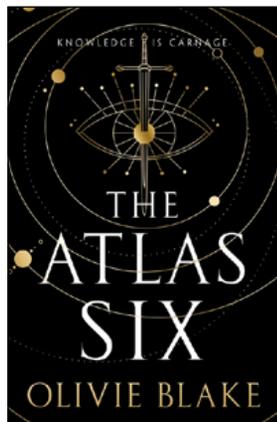
the new show.” Dude, where's my blanket?

Britt's poppy writing style makes for breezy reading, but his penchant for simplification is sometimes misleading. Consider: “Even in 2016, George Takei was filmed watching a trailer for **Star Trek Beyond**, reacting with disgust to spaceship explosions, and saying, ‘This is not the peaceful vision of the future Gene Roddenberry created.’ Now, Takei is a wonderful and smart person, but even he still leans into the false narrative that all good **Star Trek** comes from Gene Roddenberry's vision.” I invite curious readers to seek out that reaction video online. Takei remains impassive while watching the trailer and then offers a quick but thoughtful reaction. He does reference Roddenberry's name, but he doesn't actually use the word “peaceful.” Britt is paraphrasing and slightly distorting what Takei actually says (“I didn't in the preview note anything of the substance of what made Gene Roddenberry's **Star Trek** so engaging, and it was the commentary on social justice, political reality at the time,” among other things), yet citing Takei in quotation marks. This is a small example of Britt's buttressing a belief by sacrificing nuance and accuracy. Ironically, Britt's own assessment of the earlier 2009 feature film largely mirrors Takei's critique of **Beyond**: “**Trek** 2009 succeeds at being ‘for everyone’ because it's not actually about anything **Star Trek** is really known for. It's only a character piece, and mostly just about Kirk and Spock.” Later, Britt offers this generalization: “True fans of **Star Trek** know that to love **Star Trek** is to love something that is deeply flawed.” It seems circularly self-defeating to use the phrase “true fans” in the context of discussing series reception. At one point, Britt suggests that fans may be “inherently conservative,” but a few pages later he celebrates that fans are “primed to embrace change.” In Chapter Nine, Britt notes: “At the height of **Trek**'s '90s renaissance, Pocket Books was publishing six different original novels a year.” In fact, from 1995 through the early 2000s, Pocket Books published over 20 original novels a year. I noticed a few other minor gaffes, like the title of the **DS9** episode “Rejoined” being accidentally substituted for “Attached” (a **TNG** episode) in Chapter 15, but hopefully these exist only in the uncorrected pre-publication proof.

Towards the start and the end of the book, Britt twice quotes **Picard**'s reflection on humanity (though both times Britt attributes it to the pilot, “Encounter at Farpoint”, the line actually derives from the time-traveling series finale, “All Good Things”): “We are what we are, and we're doing the best we can.” I like Britt's notion that “after 800 hours of episodes and movies,” fans believe that “maybe this time they'll get it right. Maybe this time it will be *perfect*.” That's emblematically hopeful. Anyone picking up the latest history of **Star Trek** may understandably feel the same way.

—Alvaro Zinos-Amaro ■

LOCUS BESTSELLERS



HARDCOVERS

	months on list	last month
1) The Atlas Six , Olivie Blake (Tor)	2	3
2) The Kaiju Preservation Society , John Scalzi (Tor)	2	5
3) Dawnshard , Brandon Sanderson (Tor)	3	1
4) Sea of Tranquility , Emily St. John Mandel (Knopf)	1	-
5) House of Sky and Breath , Sarah J. Maas (Bloomsbury US)	3	4
6) Memory's Legion , James S.A. Corey (Orbit US)	2	2
7) Amongst Our Weapons , Ben Aaronovitch (DAW)	1	-
*) A Court of Silver Flames , Sarah J. Maas (Bloomsbury US)	10	8
*) Fevered Star , Rebecca Roanhorse (Saga)	1	-
10) Nettle & Bone , T. Kingfisher (Tor)	1	-

PAPERBACKS

1) Dune Messiah , Frank Herbert (Ace)	15	3
2) Dune , Frank Herbert (Ace)	63	1
3) Foundation , Isaac Asimov (Bantam)	12	-
4) Mistborn , Brandon Sanderson (Tor)	18	2
5) The Way of Kings , Brandon Sanderson (Tor)	34	7
6) The Color of Magic , Terry Pratchett (Harper)	5	-
7) The Last Wish , Andrzej Sapkowski (Orbit US)	14	-
8) The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy , Douglas Adams (Del Rey)	2	-
*) The Name of the Wind , Patrick Rothfuss (DAW)	88	10
*) A Wizard of Earthsea , Ursula K. Le Guin (Clarion)	5	-

The Atlas Six by Olivie Blake climbed to the top of the hardcover list, followed closely by John Scalzi's **The Kaiju Preservation Society**. Our new runner-up was **The Memory Librarian** by Janelle Monáe, *et al.* (Harper Voyager), an anthology based on Monáe's album **Dirty Computer**. We had 48 nominated titles, up from 47 last month.

Frank Herbert's **Dune Messiah** and **Dune** took first and second place

TRADE PAPERBACKS

	months on list	last month
1) The House in the Cerulean Sea , TJ Klune (Tor)	16	1
2) Gideon the Ninth , Tamsyn Muir (TorDotcom)	15	4
3) The Priory of the Orange Tree , Samantha Shannon (Bloomsbury US)	10	2
4) The Three-Body Problem , Cixin Liu (Tor)	46	-
5) House of Earth and Blood , Sarah J. Maas (Bloomsbury US)	9	6
6) Piranesi , Susanna Clarke (Bloomsbury US)	6	-
7) A Court of Thorns and Roses , Sarah J. Maas (Bloomsbury US)	3	-
8) The Only Good Indians , Stephen Graham Jones (Saga)	3	-
*) This Is How You Lose the Time War , Amal El-Mohtar & Max Gladstone (Saga)	12	-
9) The Ministry for the Future , Kim Stanley Robinson (Orbit US)	6	10
*) The Once and Future Witches , Alix E. Harrow (Redhook)	5	7

MEDIA & GAMING Related

1) Star Wars: Queen's Hope , E.K. Johnston (Disney Lucasfilm)	1	-
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on our paperback list, with the sequel coming out on top of the original by a respectable margin. There were no new runners-up. We had 53 titles nominated, down from last month's 64.

The House in the Cerulean Sea by TJ Klune held onto the top spot on the trade paperback list, while Tamsyn Muir's **Gideon the Ninth** moved into second place. Ghost story/fantasy mystery **The Library of the Dead** by T.L. Huchu was our new runner-up. There were 70 nominated titles, up from last month's 68.

Only **Star Wars: Queen's Hope** by E.K. Johnston received enough votes to make our media and gaming-related book list. There were no new runners-up. We had 18 nominated titles, up from 11 last month.

Compiled with data from: Bakka-Phoenix (Canada), Book Moon (MA), Borderlands (CA), McNally Robinson (two in Canada), Mysterious Galaxy (CA), Orca Books (WA), Toadstool (NH), White Dwarf (Canada). Data period: April 2022.

GENERAL BESTSELLERS

HARDCOVERS

	NY Times	Bk Review	Publishers Weekly	Los Angeles Times
One Italian Summer , Rebecca Serle (Atria)	4/3	10	17	24
The Midnight Library , Matt Haig (Viking)	5	8	6	13
The Atlas Six , Olivie Blake (Tor)	7	9	8	7
House of Sky and Breath , Sarah J. Maas (Bloomsbury US)	8	-	-	-
Sea of Tranquility , Emily St. John Mandel (Knopf)	11	14	14	-
The Candy House , Jennifer Egan (Scribner)	-	-	-	2
The Stranger in the Lifeboat , Mitch Albom (Harper)	-	-	-	4
Abandoned in Death , J.D. Robb (St. Martin's)	-	-	-	18
Cloud Cuckoo Land , Anthony Doerr (Scribner)	-	-	-	22
World of Warcraft: Sylvanas , Christie Golden (Del Rey)	-	-	-	24
Lover Arisen , J.R. Ward (Gallery)	-	-	-	25
Shadow Fallen , Sherrilyn Kenyon (Tor)	-	-	-	15
Pure Colour , Sheila Heti (Farrar, Straus, Giroux)	-	-	-	7
Moon Witch, Spider King , Marlon James (Riverhead)	-	-	-	22

PAPERBACKS

The Song of Achilles , Madeline Miller (Ecco) •	9	9	11	10
Circe , Madeline Miller (Back Bay) •	14	14	-	-
Book of Dreams , Nora Roberts (Silhouette)	-	-	-	7
Forgotten in Death , J.D. Robb (St. Martin's)	-	-	-	19
The Library of the Dead , T.L. Huchu (Tor) •	-	-	-	20
Cell , Stephen King (Pocket)	-	-	-	16
Klara and the Sun , Kazuo Ishiguro (Vintage) •	-	-	-	1
Never Let Me Go , Kazuo Ishiguro (Vintage) •	-	-	-	1
Mexican Gothic , Silvia Moreno-García (Del Rey) •	-	-	-	10
The House in the Cerulean Sea , TJ Klune (Tor) •	-	-	-	9

My Dearest Darkest by Kayla Cottingham, **These Violent Delights** by Chloe Gong, **Star Wars: Queen's Hope** by E.K. Johnston, **A Magic Steeped in Poison** by Judy I. Lin, **So This is Ever After** by F.T. Lukens, **Gallant** by V.E. Schwab, **Anatomy: A Love Story** by Dana Schwartz, **Hotel Magnifique** by Emily J. Taylor, **You've Reached Sam** by Dustin Thao, and **Iron Widow** by Xiran Jay Zhao made the hardcover YA list. **Midnight Sun** by Stephenie Meyer and **House of Hollow** by Krystal Sutherland appeared on the mass market/trade paperback list. See *Locus Online* for weekly charts of genre books on these and other general bestseller lists.

• trade paperbacks

NEW & NOTABLE

Ben Aaronovitch, **Amongst Our Weapons** (Orion; DAW 4/22) Time is tight in this ninth urban fantasy detective novel in the Rivers of London. DC Peter Grant has to stop a series of murders involving possibly magical rings, even as his river-goddess partner Beverley prepares to give birth to twins any day. The basic magical mystery is, as usual, delightfully strange and occasionally horrifying, while the pending births add a ticking deadline and some amusing bits, such as explaining why having a river give birth in a hospital is a bad idea, all adding up to a fun romp with some unexpected consequences in the end.

Kelley Armstrong, **A Rip Through Time** (Minotaur 5/22) A female homicide detective in 2019 gets attacked while visiting Edinburgh and ends up in the body of a murdered housemaid in the same spot in 1869 in this intense fantasy time-travel mystery novel, the first in a series. With the killer her only clue to getting home, Mallory Atkinson decides to track him down – while keeping her future knowledge secret. Striking characters, a twisty plot, and dealing with the sexism and racism of Victorian Edinburgh make this a stand-out among time-slip tales.

Holly Black, **Book of Night** (Tor 5/22; Del Rey UK 5/22) Black's first adult novel is a gritty dark urban fantasy about a reformed thief who specialized in stealing from magicians for magicians who use shadows to get secrets and kill, and gets dragged back into the business by people searching for a secret to great and terrible power. With a novel world of shadow magic and tarot, high stakes adventure, and some real surprises, this is a treat for older fans of Black's hugely popular YA books and readers of dark urban fantasy in general.

Isabel Cañas, **The Hacienda** (Berkley 5/22) A young

bride deals with a haunted house in this tense gothic horror novel set in Mexico just after the Mexican War of Independence. Beatriz marries to claim her inheritance and escape cruel relatives, only to find something is terrifyingly wrong with her new home, and no one will help her. A first novel getting major buzz.

Paul Cornell, **Rosebud** (Tordotcom 4/22) Cornell spins a complicated web in this far-future SF novella about the survey ship **Rosebud** and its digital crew, who can take wildly varied forms. Things start amusingly strange and just get stranger, as the crew take new physical bodies to investigate a mysterious sphere in space. It's a tricky tale to follow, with mysteries and lost memories and twists on first contact, but "no word is wasted here, and it builds into a moving story about what it means to be human, even after you have been transformed into a form that decidedly isn't." [Adrienne Martini]

Juno Dawson, **Her Majesty's Royal Coven** (Penguin 5/22) This delightful contemporary urban fantasy novel follows a group of witches, childhood friends who once pledged together to join a covert government coven but instead went their separate ways, until a magical crisis strikes. The first adult novel by a noted UK young-adult author, this not only offers a thrilling plot and amusing banter but also explores feminism, gender, transphobia, and the special magic of friendship.

Scott Russell Duncan, Jenny Irizarry, and Armando Rondón, eds., **El Porvenir ¡Ya!: Citlalizanilli Mexicatl** (Somos en escrito Literary Foundation Press 1/22) An important anthology of 16 stories of speculative fiction by Mexican-American authors, from hard-SF to magic realism, centering Chicano

characters (usually sidelined in SF), by authors ranging from veteran Ernest Hogan, who includes a powerful preface, to new voices. "A surprisingly comprehensive look at what contemporary Mexican-American science fiction has to offer." [Gabino Iglesias]

Guy Gavriel Kay, **All the Seas of the World** (Berkley 5/22; Hodder & Stoughton 5/22; Viking Canada 5/22) Kay returns to his near-Renaissance Europe first introduced in **A Brightness Long Ago** for this largely standalone fantasy novel focused on two young people hired to assist in a simple assassination, but end up tangled in high-level intrigues that lead to war. "A model of clarity and focus, and... as rich a tapestry as we've come to expect from Kay – perhaps one of the richest." [Gary K. Wolfe]

Tim Pratt, **Prison of Sleep** (Angry Robot 4/22) Zaxony Delatree returns in this SF adventure novel, second and final in the Journals of Zaxony Delatree series. Tension builds as Zax learns he's infected by an alien parasite; it's what makes him jump between worlds when he sleeps, and it's weakening the fabric of the multiverse with each jump – and a cult is spreading the parasite. Stopping it requires a frantic, high-stakes scramble to save the all the worlds, however weird or terrifying. A strong conclusion to an entertaining duology.

Tade Thompson, **The Legacy of Molly Southbourne** (Tordotcom 5/22) The horror trilogy begun in **The Murders of Molly Southbourne** comes to a bloody, but satisfying, conclusion in this final novella. The last copies of Molly thought they could finally escape their past, but old enemies turn up, willing to do anything to unearth their secrets. ■

SMASHWORDS (EBOOK)*

SCIENCE FICTION

- 1) **The Lattice Trilogy**, Erik E. Hanberg
- 2) **Zombie Fallout 17: The Lost Journals**, Mark Tufo
- 3) **Psycho Electric**, Randolph Lalonde
- 4) **The Survivalist: Anarchy Rising**, Arthur T. Bradley
- 5) **The Survivalist: Judgment Day**, Arthur T. Bradley
- 6) **Another Failed Attempt**, Khalil Akil
- 7) **The Survivalist: Madness Rules**, Arthur T. Bradley
- 8) **The Survivalist: Last Stand**, Arthur T. Bradley
- 9) **The Survivalist: Battle Lines**, Arthur T. Bradley
- 10) **Riker's Apocalypse: The Plea**, Shawn Chesser
- 11) **Spinward Fringe Broadcast 16: Hunters**, Randolph Lalonde
- 12) **Sundiver**, David Brin
- 13) **Mylomon: Warlord Brides**, Nancey Cummings
- 14) **Last Measure of Devotion**, Britt Ringel
- 15) **The Wrong Side of Space**, Britt Ringel
- 16) **The Survivalist: Dark Days**, Arthur T. Bradley
- 17) **Spinward Fringe Broadcast 15: Pursuit**, Randolph Lalonde
- 18) **First Contact**, Kaitlyn O'Connor
- 19) **Crank Palace**, James Dashner
- 20) **Spinward Fringe Broadcast 13: Warriors**, Randolph Lalonde

FANTASY

- 1) **Shadow Lands**, Stacey Marie Brown
- 2) **Shadows of Discovery**, Brenda K. Davies
- 3) **Wild Lands**, Stacey Marie Brown
- 4) **Dead Lands**, Stacey Marie Brown
- 5) **Shadows of Betrayal**, Brenda K. Davies
- 6) **Crown of Chaos**, Amelia Hutchins
- 7) **Ashes of Chaos**, Amelia Hutchins
- 8) **Shadows of Fury**, Brenda K. Davies
- 9) **Bad Lands**, Stacey Marie Brown
- 10) **Blood Lands**, Stacey Marie Brown
- 11) **Savage Lands**, Stacey Marie Brown
- 12) **The Wizard's Crown**, Michael G. Manning
- 13) **Taunting Destiny**, Amelia Hutchins
- 14) **The Hundred Halls**, Thomas K. Carpenter
- 15) **Seducing Destiny**, Amelia Hutchins
- 16) **Bones of Faerie**, Janni Lee Simner
- 17) **The Pennymores and the Curse of the Invisible Quill**, Eric Koester
- 18) **Queen**, Karen Lynch
- 19) **The Primal Dragon**, Laura K Millar
- 20) **Convergence**, TurtleMe

* **About this list:** Every month, Smashwords reports the Top 20 Bestselling Science Fiction and the Top 20 Bestselling Fantasy titles based on gross dollar sales. Sales from the previous month are aggregated across Smashwords's global network of ebook retailers and public library platforms, including Apple Books, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Scribd, Gardners, OverDrive, Odilo, Baker & Taylor, the Smashwords store, and others. Visit the Smashwords Store at <www.smashwords.com>.

AUDIBLE.COM (AUDIO)

SCIENCE FICTION

- 1) **1984: New Classic Edition**, George Orwell, narrated by Simon Prebble (Blackstone)
- 2) **Project Hail Mary**, Andy Weir, narrated by Ray Porter (Audible Studios)
- 3) **Star Wars: Brotherhood**, Mike Chen, narrated by Jonathan Davis (Random House Audio)
- 4) **Dune**, Frank Herbert, narrated by Scott Brick, Orlagh Cassidy, Euan Morton, Simon Vance, Ilyana Kadushin, Byron Jennings, David R. Gordon, Jason Culp, Kent Broadhurst, Oliver Wyman, Patricia Kilgarriff & Scott Sowers (Macmillan Audio)
- 5) **The Midnight Library**, Matt Haig, narrated by Carey Mulligan (Penguin Audio)
- 6) **Last Contact**, Jason Anspach & Nick Cole, narrated by R.C. Bray (Podium)
- 7) **The Kaiju Preservation Society**, John Scalzi, narrated by Wil Wheaton (Audible Studios)
- 8) **The Stand**, Stephen King, narrated by Grover Gardner (Random House Audio)
- 9) **Dune Messiah**, Frank Herbert, narrated by Scott Brick, Katherine Kellgren, Euan Morton & Simon Vance (Macmillan Audio)
- 10) **Brave New World**, Aldous Huxley, narrated by Michael York (Blackstone)

FANTASY

- 1) **Impact Winter**, Travis Beacham, narrated by full cast (Audible Originals)
- 2) **The Druid**, Jeff Wheeler, narrated by Kate Rudd (Brilliance)
- 3) **The Butcher's Masquerade**, Matt Dinniman, narrated by Jeff Hays (Soundbooth Theater)
- 4) **Defiance of the Fall 5: A LitRPG Adventure**, TheFirstDefier & JF Brink, narrated by Pavi Proczko (Aethon Audio)
- 5) **The Fellowship of the Ring**, J.R.R. Tolkien, narrated by Andy Serkis (Recorded Books)
- 6) **A Game of Thrones**, George R.R. Martin, narrated by Roy Dotrice (Random House Audio)
- 7) **Heroic Hearts**, Jim Butcher & Kerrie Hughes, narrated by James Marsters, Alexandra Harris, Cassandra Morris, Maggi-Meg Reed, Luke Daniels, Travis Baldree, Suzanne Elise Freeman, Sean Patrick Hopkins, Johanna Parker, Daniel Henning, Nancy Linari, Holter Graham & Jim Butcher (Penguin Audio)
- 8) **House of Sky and Breath**, Sarah J. Maas, narrated by Elizabeth Evans (Audible Studios)
- 9) **Book of Night**, Holly Black, narrated by Sara Amini (Macmillan Audio)
- 10) **The Way of Kings**, Brandon Sanderson, narrated by Kate Reading & Michael Kramer (Macmillan Audio)

city informing them. That ties in with the magic system that I hint at in the first book, and I get to explain some more, and it ties in with the idea of relationships and of being in community.

"In the first book, you meet both of the characters who are featured in the next book, and you'll see some of the critical things that happen in that story in the background of the first book. Almost no point-of-view character in the first book is a POV character in the second book, though. Each book covers the same year, and they happen at the same time. When there's a windstorm in one book, there's going to be a windstorm in the other. When a boat sinks in one, the boat's going to sink in the other, and when there's a plague scare in one, there's going to be a plague scare in the other. Where those events fit into the foreground or background of a given book depends on who is telling the story.

"I had to think about balancing that: 'Okay, here's a scene where all the protagonists of all three books are in the same space at the same time. How much are they going to overhear of the other person's conversation? What are they going to misunderstand about each other?' There are some lynchpin moments all throughout the books that are made up of these critical moments. When I was talking to friends about this, people kept talking about *Rashomon*, which is not actually what this is, because *Rashomon* is about taking one central question and then seeing it from all different points of view. This is about seeing things from all different points of view, but it's not about the same central issue. The questions that come up with Alys and Sammish are related to their story, and I hope they come to an ending that is satisfying in book one. The issues that come up in the next book are going to come to their own endings, and they're going to touch the stories on the other sides of them. Then the third story is going to have these other characters, and the stories and the issues they're dealing with are going to be informed by what you know, and informed by the same city and the same events, but they'll mean something different because they're part of a different story.

"Ideally, it's not going to matter what order you read these books in. There's a story about grief, a story about love, and a story about history – whatever order you read them in, they should all stand by themselves. If you don't read *Age of Ash*, and you pick up the second book, it should work as a standalone, and if you don't pick up the first two, the third book should work, too. Then when you go back and read the others you'll

still have the same experience: 'Oh, this is deep; oh, I remember that; oh, this would be confusing if you saw it from the other perspective.' Ideally, it's three standalone books that tell their own stories, and when you fit them all together they tell a different story. They don't rely on each other, but inform each other, and then form part of something bigger. Writing these was really challenging, but I don't want to get bored.

"My original plan was for a five-book series, and they cut it down to three because it seemed unwieldy. I was going too big. Three is fine, but it was always the idea of standalone stories that echo against each other. It's hard for me. My experience reading it is not the same as anybody else's experience because I have a different experience with the text, but until you've read at least two of them, you can't see what the project is. And that's why it's important that each works by itself. There's a really interesting craft conversation about accessibility that I don't hear a lot. I don't go to conventions as much as I used to these last few years, but when I was in that scene, the idea of how to make a story accessible – just from the perspective of an artist – that's a really deep and complicated question.

"I'm not a fan of Lars von Trier – I think he's an asshole – but he did this movie called *The Five Obstructions* that is a real study in what obstructions do to the creative process. He has an old film professor who did this incredibly pretentious short film back sometime in the '60s, and Von Trier pulled him out of retirement and made him redo the movie over and over with different sets of obstructions. Every different version is a better movie than the first one. It's a better movie than the source material because he had to ask, 'How am I going to get around that? This is impossible, you can't...' and then the guy goes, 'Oh! Well, maybe you could...' It's visually amazing because he was given an impossible task.

"The Expanse is done, but Ty Franck and I are under contract with Orbit for a different space opera series. It's an idea Ty has been kicking around since I met him. It's at a very different point on the space opera spectrum, and has a different set of philosophical considerations informing it. If we make our deadline – which I think we will – we'll turn in the first book this October and it will come out next year.

"For the first few books Ty and I wrote together, we were alternating. We each had an assigned viewpoint character that was ours for that book, and then we would trade the writing back and forth. That broke down later in the series as we got better at mimicking each other and finding the voice of James S.A. Corey as separate from the voices of Daniel or Ty. It got to be more, 'Who's good

at this chapter?' instead of 'Who is assigned this character?' Ty has always been better than me at stuff like action. He's got an amazing talent for telling a story in an action sequence. I do romantic failure better than him, so if it's about someone feeling bad for themselves, I'm that guy! That's my chapter.

"Our process varies to fit the constraints of the day, but the basic structure never changes: we outline together; whoever writes the first draft of a chapter, the other guy edits it; when we have a complete story, one of us goes all the way through, makes any changes he wants, hands it to the other guy, and the other guy makes all the changes he wants; whoever does the copy edit doesn't have to read the galleys....

"We went into the project understanding that it wasn't going to be what either of us would have done if we did it by ourselves. The point of the collaboration is that it's not a Daniel Abraham book, and it's not a Ty Franck book. Sometimes you have to let go of things. Well, you can make an argument – and often we will – and then we have a metric by which we judge the arguments. If something is really emotionally important to the other guy, you say, 'Yeah, that's fine, that's cool. Let's do that, we'll try.' Ty's had to talk me into some things, but it's never been like, 'No, by God, I am right, and you are wrong, and I will die on this hill.' It's a no-hill-dying partnership, and it works out fine. It's playing improv.

"Every structure is different, too. How you gamify your process varies with every project. The collaboration with Ty has worked beautifully, and it's clearly pretty robust. I did a project with Gardner Dozois and George R.R. Martin back in the day that was a completely different process, but you can't really judge one collaboration or tell how a collaboration works by the structure of the novel. They're all different games.

"Ty and I were more involved in the adaptation of *The Expanse* than anybody has been involved in an adaptation before, I'm pretty sure. We were in the room before the room existed, we were going with the showrunner Naren Shankar to interview writers for the room, and we consulted with casting decisions.... We were in there from the beginning, and by the end we were both executive producers and writing scripts and rewriting other people's scripts. Ty spent a tremendous amount of time doing on-set production work – he was actually on set every season but the last one, and the only reason he wasn't on the last one was because of COVID; it was all remote. Ty clocked a tremendous number of hours as a producer. I got into the editing bay, and was part of editing the episodes. I'm still learning that. We're television professionals now. We could, in theory, at this point, run a show. It's a bad

dream, though: showrunning is a day job.

"Editing a show is the part that's most like writing a book. When I'm writing a book, the relationship is: I'm going to make this object, and it's going to go to the audience. Writing a script is not like that at all. You write a script, and then it goes to all the department heads, and then we have a three-hour meeting about it and everybody asks questions. Then the actors come, and they take a look at it, and they ask to change some stuff. And then, whatever we wind up making from that, we're going to get the editor and they're going to re-cut it in some way, and that cut is the thing that's going to get smoothed a little bit – color correction and sound and all of the things on that end – but it's the last step of telling the story. When I'm writing a novel, it's the last telling of the story, but when I'm writing a script, it's more like making clay for the potter.

"Deciding how to cut a scene is fascinating. When you decide to cut away, when you decide to show the camera on somebody's face instead of the person talking – you play it on the reaction instead of the line – all of that is analogous to deciding where a paragraph stops or where a chapter breaks. It's the same level of storytelling, and I just love it.

"In prose, in film, and in music there's this analogy about rhythm, right? The rhythm of the project, the speed of the project, and the speed of the story – that, clearly, isn't the same thing in all cases, because they're completely different media, but, structurally, there's something very similar in the bones of them. There's a reason we talk about rhythm in all those art forms.

"I always thought of creative work as being two separate games: there's the game where you make a beautiful object, and there's a game where you sell it. The one where you make it is like chess because there's no chance involved – it's all in your control, and you can decide what happens. For the other part, well, you go to the casino and you see what happens. There are so many people working in the field right now, and there's so much good work right now, it's an honor just to fall through the cracks, really.

"Back to accessibility as an issue of craft: the sweet spot, for me, is having something that is as accessible as it can be, but not *more* accessible than it needs to be. Make it as simple and as straightforward as it can be, but if you get too simple, it's not the right project anymore, and you're doing something else. **Riddley Walker** by Russell Hoban is one of my favorite books, and the whole novel in fallen English – it's absolutely broken, I mean; it's harder to read than Shakespeare. But after two or three chapters you start picking it up, and you can follow it and hear it, and you're okay. Hoban wrote it that way for a structural reason that pays off about two-thirds of the

way through the book. If you hadn't gone through the effort of learning his language and engaging with that – which is a lot of effort – it wouldn't work, because you'd hit the point where it pays off, and you wouldn't have that experience. That was a really inaccessible book, but it had to be the way it was. You may have to accept, 'Okay, this book will light up maybe 12 people, and that'll be what I get.' But I feel accessibility is a craft issue. There was a period there, in science fiction more than fantasy, where being difficult to parse was high-status. I think that did a real disservice to the genre. Some of them are great books – if you understand them. I like **Riddley Walker**, and I like some things that are hard to understand, but there are some things where I think, 'Okay, you're smarter than me. I'm the dumb one in this relationship. I'm going to go read somebody else now.'

"I was a biology major, but the physics stuff was like, 'Uh... okay.' Finding that sweet spot with every project is hard work. All craft is hard, and people who get a little successful are more difficult to edit, and it's not because they're assholes. It's just because they're successful, and you don't want to be the editor who gets Stephen King and gives him the piece of the advice that fucks up a book, and then everyone thinks it's his worst book. Nobody wants to be that guy – nobody wants to do that. There's a hesitancy that has to come in when you're dealing with someone at a certain level.

"I've blown past some deadlines myself. The *Expanse* project went through, like, five editors. We burned through them – it was one thing or another. Darren Nash is the guy who bought us first, and then he left Orbit. DongWon Song picked us up until going off to be an agent. We're on our fifth guy now, and he's perfectly cromulent – he's fine and does his thing. We kept having to say, 'Look, we know we're a big dog, but you really need to edit us. You need to take the knife to this. If you fuck it up, we promise we'll push back.' I was always aware of the huge names who became uneditable and shortly after became unreadable.

"Ultimately, one of the beautiful things about working in Hollywood is I'm working with Naren Shankar, who is a really amazing showrunner, just great to work with. We'll get sheets of notes – and there are a lot of folks who offer notes – and Naren will go, 'That's dumb, that's dumb, that's dumb; there might be something we can do with that one, let me think about it.' I think people worry that being edited means loss of control, and it's true that the power dynamics of publishing are weird. I have the reflex to accept any job offer that I get, even now. 'Oh, this might be the last thing I ever do!' Even though I'm probably not in that position now. The idea of not pleasing your editor? That's intimidating.

"One of my favorite lines is, 'The defining quality of power is that it can be abused.' There have been editors who let the power go to their heads. I'm thinking of one in particular whose name I will not say... except that you don't hear much about them anymore.

"The thing that I'm struggling with now, and that I will share with other writers, whatever part of their career they're in is this: we are trying to make art in a distraction-driven culture. We are in a culture that is actively trying to make us shallow all the time. Trying to cultivate quiet in your life and cultivate depth in your thinking changes how you think and changes how you understand people, and changes how you understand art and your process in a way that is really valuable – and becomes more valuable as it becomes rarer. We're in a world of streamers and websites and clickbait and ubiquitous information and ubiquitous interruption. The thing I'm struggling with – and that I think other people are struggling with – is how to step back from that and have some time to become a deeper, more interesting person, and then bring that back to the work.

"The internet turned out to be toxic in ways we didn't foresee in the '90s. I started working tech support in '96 or '97, so I was doing it when we were on Windows 3.1 with initialization strings for 28.8 modems. That's where I started, and flame wars were going on then. Flame wars started way before ubiquitous internet – it was always part of the machine, and now it's the whole culture.

"The thing that has fucked the reading population more than anything else is amateur reviews. Those little reviews you write on Goodreads and Amazon? I think they broke us. It's an invitation to everybody to come into the book as a critic, and not as a reader. Reviewing changes your experience of reading. Criticism is hard, and reviewing is hard. One of the things I'm trying to do as I get older is be an audience instead. Focus on the experience I'm having instead of what I'd post about it later.

"I don't know if we talk about it enough with the new people coming out. I had this feeling – and I'm showing my age here – that when self-publishing started coming up, a lot of the conversation began shifting toward how to be a publisher. There are only so many hours you get to talk to your peers, only so many conventions you can attend, and the more that discussion of publishing and marketing and strategy expanded, the more the deep talk about craft had to suffer, just for sharing the stage.

"One of my favorite quotes from Michael Swanwick is, 'Consider greatness as a career strategy.' Maybe if you just do your best work? Maybe you should try that and see if it works."

–Daniel Abraham

west. It's a very fractured future, and very fractured society. I started writing it around 2012 or 2013 when I started noticing how polarized our politics had become in society at large. Even in my own family, you have the liberal camp and the conservative camp, and it felt like everyone was forming an identity around one of those two things. I started thinking about a future where society began to progress in a certain way, but you've got a minority, a subset of the population that feels left behind and can't really adapt. As that group becomes smaller and loses its institutional power and influence, those people become more frightened and more extreme.

"The world of **The Sentient** is set in the aftermath of that situation. The extreme fundamentalists had a big conflict, and there have been world wars and environmental issues and a period of turmoil. My book takes place after that, when the majority of people live in modern cities, with all of the cool technology and futuristic trains and synthetic plants and environmental consciousness.... You've also got these walled-off religious compounds in certain parts of the world that are living in a different time.

"This story is set far in the future, so religion has evolved in its own way, but the fundamentalists are shut off and living in a very antiquated way. The outside world doesn't really want to deal with them, because they don't want to be forced into a confrontation. My main character escaped from one of those compounds, hopped over the walls – literally – and got onto a train and sped off to the big city. She became – through her own hard work, and also a lot of luck – a very talented neuroscientist who specializes in the reading of memories. She can get into a person's layers of consciousness and pull out their memories, project them onto a holographic platform, and help her patients work through them. There's a personal connection to that work for her, because she's running from her own past, and doesn't want to be defined by her background and traumatic memories. She starts off the novel very intent on showing that she is not the sum of her past and her original identity. She ends up getting assigned to a controversial cloning project that is being run by a scientific corporation. My futuristic world has a city within a city – I almost see it as a Vatican City of science, where you've got all these scientific corporations that have a lot of autonomy and power. They do some good, and they do some bad, and a lot of it is for profit.

"This cloning project has not gone well because they've essentially been exploiting women like Amira from the compounds – for

both scientific and social reasons; they're able to use their power over them – to attempt to clone the first human being. They've failed to successfully clone a person, and these compound women have all been dying in their third trimester under mysterious circumstances. Amira is brought in, partly for optics, but also in the hope that she can resolve the problem if it ends up being a psychological one. Of course, as she gets assigned to this, she develops a relationship with the last surviving subject of the experiment, who's from one of the more powerful and dangerous compounds. Amira gets embroiled in a more elaborate conspiracy to subvert the project and to prevent the cloning from succeeding. There's a lot going on.

"I definitely wasn't setting out to write YA, so I wanted to age Amira outside of that, but still have her coming into her own and figuring out where she was in life. Also, it is the future, so people tend to live a little bit longer. She's got a couple of degrees under her belt and she's gone through quite a bit of life. A couple of my main characters are a bit of a fill-in for me at different points of my life. Amira is me when I was younger and a little less sure of myself and trying to reconcile my own past and my identity. Rozene is more of what I could have become, without support and guidance. Valerie Singh, the more cynical and calculating scientist, is a little bit more of where I'm at right now – at work, especially. I like to put a little piece of myself into different characters, without, hopefully, creating a Mary Sue-type character that projects everything onto the page.

"In **The Sentient** I knew I was going to have to write about sexism in some form, because of the nature of the religious compounds, and also the nature of cloning – especially that type of cloning where it's a person who can get pregnant giving birth to a clone. That misogyny was going to be there, because there was the threat of one type of person being able to create life. I did want to bring nuance into that part of it, because the compounds have a very obvious form of misogyny, and other types of prejudice as well: homophobia and transphobia. It's a very patriarchal social structure, but it doesn't mean that the wider society at large is perfect, either.

"Amira gets a hard lesson in that as the novel goes forward. She has a black-and-white view of her past versus her present, and then there's a scene in **The Sentient** where a prominent woman scientist, Valerie Singh, is interviewed about the cloning project and she's made into the public figurehead. She experiences a very sexist takedown during an interview, which shows that ugliness in wider society. Amira doesn't react well to that – it's a very harsh reality check that challenges her worldview. In book two, Amira starts off in a

rough place, because she's gotten a cold dose of reality about how imperfect her immediate surroundings are and how she is going to have to navigate that.

"The racism was a little more challenging to explore because I'm Middle Eastern, but I'm also a white person, and I've got a lot of white privilege. It's not really my lane to dive, in a really deep way, into racism, but I wanted the issue to be there, and to reflect how a lot of our current, very in-the-forefront problems could linger in the future.

"I started writing this before the era of Trump, but Obama got elected around the time I was writing it, or trying to get it published, and editing it. You could see the early stages of that divisiveness and extremism with Fox News and all of that back then. And when we got Trump, and that backlash, my book definitely felt unintentionally prophetic. I don't want it to be, but it's like, 'Wow, we're not that far from the compounds with some of the extremism that we've got now.' With voting rights and all of that slowly being shifted away, it feels like we're on the edge of a dystopian future. I don't like to be negative, but we're living in interesting times.

"I pitched **The Sentient** as the start of a series. Pretty early into writing the first book, a couple of chapters in, I knew I wanted to make it a series with a wider story. I actually knew the ending of the series pretty early on, as well – I knew where I wanted it to go, and it was just a matter of how I got there. This interview is timely, because I'm actually working on finishing up the third book now – I've got a deadline at the end of June. The second book, **The Emergent**, came out last week.

"There's a plot arc within each individual book, but book two definitely ends, not with a cliffhanger, but with a clear setup for the conflict ahead in book three. I always intended this as a trilogy, and book three is a very definitive ending. I did that on purpose – there's really nowhere to go from book three. I'm keeping myself from trying to do an endless series.

"Talking about the challenges of writing a sequel versus an initial novel.... With my first draft of the sequel, I had plot-mapped books two and three to make sure I covered all the key things that needed to happen, and to close off everything I had set up in book one. In a way, it was the easiest book I've written – I breezed through it. I knew exactly where I was going, I had all my world-building done, and I knew the characters very well, so it was just like revisiting old friends and moving a story forward that's been in my head for a long time. The challenge came with striking the balance of covering the events of book one and also setting the stage for book three, and planting things that would pay off down the road. My editor did an excellent job of

'IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE ON THE EDGE OF A DYSTOPIAN FUTURE.'

steering me. You can't assume that everyone has read book one, or that they remember it, so you've got to throw in just enough tidbits to bring people back, or tell them what they need to know. That part is hard for me, and it's the same issue with book three that I'm writing now – making sure I'm giving the reader what they need.

"I go back and forth on whether I prefer writing series or standalones. I want my career to have a little bit of both. I want to put out standalone novels where I feel like I've told the story and spent time with these characters, and now it's time to move on. I have other ideas that I definitely want to be series. My next idea is going to be a series, and that terrifies me a little bit, but I'm also excited to see where it goes.

"Writing a new novel almost feels like dating somebody new, or meeting a new person, where it's all excitement and discovery and uncovering things. I love the worldbuilding aspect of science fiction above all other things, and doing that worldbuilding process is always exciting. There's also a lot of comfort in doing a series, and that's more like a long relationship: you've gotten familiar, and it's less exciting, but you've also spent enough time with the characters that you get to explore new facets of them, and take them in different directions. I've enjoyed that part of sequels. I don't want to drag things out indefinitely in a series. I'm a big fan of a lot of good British TV series, where they know to end it after two or three seasons – here in the States, we'll drag it on to like 16 seasons if we can get away with it.

"I was published by Flame Tree Press, and it's been a really great experience. They are a smaller publisher, so you definitely don't feel like you're lost in the forest of Big Five publishing, like I've heard from other authors. There are pros and cons both ways – getting the extra exposure and visibility that a Big Five can give you is also great, but you have to know what you're getting into. My publisher has been great for me as a baby author. With my debut, I didn't really know what I was doing, but you can tell that the marketing team and all of the people involved believed in the

book and supported it. They were getting me podcast interviews, and reviews, and they have a great network of book reviewers.

"My debut went about as well as a release could go during the pandemic, because my book was published in 2020 in September. I did podcasts and interviews and that sort of thing – whatever I could, given the constraints of the time. I mean, we still have active strains now; I had COVID two weeks ago. I did a virtual book launch with a St. Louis bookstore, Left Bank Books, last week. We had talked about doing an in-person event and me going down there, but it actually worked out for the best that it was virtual, because I was COVID-positive at the time, and that would not have worked out well.

"Since I signed with my agent, I've been very prolific in churning out the books. I've actually written two other standalone novels between these books. The first one I wrote after **The Sentient**, quite frankly, died on submission. Hopefully it has a future at some point. Then I wrote another book that's also a standalone, set in Lebanon, in a futuristic Middle East, and it also has a consciousness theme of pharmaceuticals and biotech and all that. The main character is a parkour racer. My agent has that book out on submission, so fingers crossed on that one. Once I finish the third book in the trilogy, I've already got my next idea ready to go, and that's going to be another series. It's more of an ensemble cast, with shifting perspectives from different characters, which will be a new thing for me – I tend to have a tough female protagonist and I follow her all the way to the end, and I wanted to do something a little bit more varied. I'm really excited to start writing that one.

"I read everything. I read non-fiction, I read genre fiction, and I read literary, little bit. A couple of years ago, I was knocking out a hundred books a year, really reading a lot, and that was almost too many – they tend to go in and out of your brain a little bit. I couldn't recall half the books I'd read, so now I'm trying to be a little more targeted. My latest kick is reading SF and fantasy with really rich worldbuilding. I just finished **Black Sun** by Rebecca Roanhorse, and absolutely loved

that, because it was unlike anything I'd ever read before, and I love the different perspectives. I read **Harrow the Ninth**, the follow-on to **Gideon the Ninth** by Tamsyn Muir, and it's just so wildly creative. I finished **The Three Body Problem** series, the Remembrance of Earth's Past, by Cixin Liu, which is such good hard sci-fi. I'll never be what I consider a hard-SF writer – I do the research I need to in order to make the science sound plausible, and then I move on. I don't really want to linger on the specifics, but I really respect authors who can dig into interesting scientific ideas and go wild with them.

"I've met some people at writers' conferences, but attending a convention just feels like a different level. I haven't done it yet. My challenge is my high-demand day job, and figuring out what time I can take off. I work for the Veterans' Affairs as a program management officer, and it's a full-time day job. I'm over-extended, and I'm also turning out a novel a year, so it's a lot. It's probably unsustainable – at some point, something's gotta give. But then, I'll be there, writing.

"Talking about big ideas and current events and politics is an important part of writing for me, and I definitely see all of my novels as political books, to a certain degree. I do like fiction that doesn't shove a particular opinion down a writer's throat, and you know it when you read it. Paolo Bacigalupi is really great at that – he presents futures that have a lot going on. He writes about climate issues, and you have all the stuff going on in **The Windup Girl**, but he doesn't tell the reader what to think about it, and he presents characters who are not perfect and who don't always make the wisest decisions or navigate their worlds perfectly. A lot of the conflict and the tension comes from the fact that the characters have to live in the world, and do what they can to survive. You can get a message across effectively by creating a complex but relatable world, and showing the issues by depicting what the characters have to deal with. Having characters who always say and do the right thing and present like a perfect, unproblematic model doesn't really make for interesting situations, and it doesn't present the world as it really is.

"One of my favorite SF shows of all time was **Battlestar Galactica**, the newer version of it, and they definitely got overtly political for a long time, with the insurgency on the planet and all of that. You've got people on either side of the political spectrum who are fans of that show, because it was great at raising questions without necessarily giving answers. I've always liked that approach and aspire to do the same thing, to a certain degree."

–Nadia Afifi

Ladies of Horror Fiction Nominees

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Street, Catriona Ward (Nightfire).

Best Young Adult: The Dead and the Dark, Courtney Gould (Wednesday); **White Smoke**, Tiffany D. Jackson (Katherine Tegen); **Bad Witch Burning**, Jessica Lewis (Delacorte); **Our Last Echoes**, Kate Alice Marshall (Viking); **Girl in the Walls**, Katy Michelle Quinn (CLASH).

Best Middle Grade: The Dollhouse, Charis Cotter (Tundra); **The Collectors**, Lorien Lawrence (Amulet); **Ghost Girl**, Ally Malinenko (Katherine Tegen); **Cece Rios and the Desert of Souls**, Kaela Rivera (HarperCollins); **Root Magic**, Eden Royce (Walden Pond).

Best Debut: The Other Black Girl, Zakiya Dalila Harris (Atria); **When the Reckoning Comes**, LaTanya McQueen (Harper Perennial); **Queen of Teeth**, Hailey Piper (Strangehouse);

The Forest, Lisa Quigley (Perpetual Motion Machine); **Tidepool**, Nicole Willson (The Parliament House).

Best Collection: The Dangers of Smoking in Bed: Stories, Mariana Enriquez, translated by Megan McDowell (Hogarth); **Sometimes We're Cruel, and Other Stories**, J.A.W. McCarthy (Cemetery Gates); **Unfortunate Elements of My Anatomy**, Hailey Piper (The Seventh Terrace); **The Ghost Sequences**, A.C. Wise (Undertow); **SEEDS**, Tabatha Wood (Wild Wood); **Never Have I Ever**, Isabel Yap (Small Beer).

Best Poetry Collection: Strange Nests, Jessica McHugh (Apokrupha); **Tortured Willows: Bent. Bowed. Unbroken**, Angela Yuriko Smith, Lee Murray, Christina Sng & Genevieve Flynn (Yuriko); **Exposed Nerves**, Lucy A. Snyder (Raw Dog Screaming); **The Smallest of Bones**, Holly Walrath (CLASH); **Monstrum Poetica**, Jezzy Wolfe (Raw Dog Screaming).

Best Novella: Goddess of Filth, V. Castro (Creature); **Transmuted**, Eve Harms (Unnerving); **& This Is How to Stay Alive**, Shingai Njeri Kaganda (Neon Hemlock); **Waif**, Samantha Kolesnik (Grindhouse); **Salvation Spring**, T.C. Parker (Self Published).

Best Short Fiction: “Sister Glitter Blood”, Gwendolyn Kiste (**Violent Vixens: An Homage to Grindhouse Horror**); “A Cold Grip”, Christi Nogle (**Boneyard Soup**); “The Sharps”, Sonora Taylor (**Someone to Share My Nightmares: Stories**); “Eating Bitterness”, Hannah Yang (**The Dark 7/21**); “Syringe”, Isabel Yap (**Never Have I Ever**); “First Harvest”, April Yates (**Blood & Bone: An Anthology of Body Horror by Women and Non-Binary Writers**).

Winners will be announced online in July. For more: <www.ladiesofhorrorfiction.com/?s=nominees>.

The Data File

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Too often, I am called a pioneer, but I'm not – I'm just who some readers heard of first. I wanted to make sure Delany got all the proper credit that he is more than due, and maybe new readers would be inspired to read his work.

For more: <mercedeslackeyblog.tumblr.com/post/685121410657566720/i-wish-to-apologize>.

As we covered last month, Lackey was reported for using a racial slur on the “Romancing Sci-Fi & Fantasy” panel at the Nebula Conference. SFWA subsequently removed her from the conference, in accordance with their Moderation Policy. SFWA's original statement is here: <www.sfwaw.org/2022/05/22/statement-removal-mercedes-lackey-nebula-conference>.

Canadian SF News • The Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Association (CSFFA) announced three inductees to the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame for 2022: Julie E. Czerneda, Ed Greenwood, and Hayden Trenholm. The inductees were selected from a group of 12 nominees. Hall of Fame inductees are usually honored during the Aurora Awards ceremony, to be held online August 13, 2022, hosted by When Words Collide. Voting for the Aurora Awards is open to CSFFA members until July 25, 2022. For more: <prixaurorawards.ca>.

The CSFFA also announced the CSFFA Writers' Grant, which awards a total C\$1,500 “given or divided as per the successful applicant or applicants.” To apply you “must be a member of CSFFA and submit a 500-word proposal of what the endeavor is and how these funds will help achieve your goal. The grant will cover up to 75% of the costs, while the applicant must cover the remaining 25%. The applicant must also include a description and weblink for endeavour being covered. All applications will be considered and reviewed by CSFFA. The successful applicants will be announced at this year's Aurora Awards. Upon completion, the successful applicants are required to submit all receipts and a 500-word essay on the benefits of the grant.” Applications close July 2, 2022. Send applications to <PublicityCSFFA@gmail.com>.

Announcements • SF magazine *Omenana* has announced a call for submissions for an upcoming Special South African edition, created in partnership with Science Fiction & Fantasy South Africa, “the premier club for fans and connoisseurs of sci-fi and fantasy books, film, and art.” The editors are seeking submissions “from speculative fiction writers from across Africa and the African Diaspora” for “a special issue that will focus on the

over-50-year history and bright presence of South African science fiction and fantasy writing. The issue will feature non-fiction, essays and analyses and a crop of brand-new stories by established and new writers.” They want stories of 1,000-5,000 words by July 30, 2022. For details: <omenana.com/2022/06/08/call-for-submissions-special-south-african-edition-of-omenana-speculative-fiction-magazine/>.

World Conventions News • Chicon 8, the 80th World Science Fiction Convention, to be held September 1-5, 2022, at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Chicago IL, has announced Steven Barnes & Tananarive Due as guests of honor. They join previously announced guests of honor Floyd Norman, Joe Siclari & Edie Stern, and Erle Korschak (posthumously), plus special guests Eve L. Ewing, Gene Ha, and Eric Wilkerson. Toastmasters are Charlie Jane Anders and Annalee Newitz. As previously announced, Charles de Lint stepped down as guest of honor.

Chicon 8 also announced that voting is open for the 2022 Hugo Awards, the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book, and the *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer. Supporting or adult, young adult, teen, child, or virtual attending members of Chicon 8 are eligible to vote. Ballots must be received by August 11, 2022 at 11:59p.m. PDT. For more: <chicon.org/home/whats-happening/hugo-awards>.

Inaugural Utopia Awards Nominees • Nominees for the first Utopia Awards, presented in association with the Climate Fiction Conference (CliFiCon22), to be held online October 1, 2022, have been announced.

Utopian Novella: The Impossible Resurrection of Grief, Octavia Cade (Stelliform); **A Psalm for the Wild-Built**, Becky Chambers (TorDotcom); “Submergence”, Arula Ratnakar (Clarkesworld 3/21); **The Necessity of Stars**, E. Catherine Toller (Neon Hemlock); **After the Dragons**, Cynthia Zhang (Stelliform).

Utopian Novelette: “#buttonsinweirdplaces”, Simon Kewin (*Abys & Apex* 9/8/21); “The Future Library”, Peng Shepherd (*Tor.com* 8/18/21); “A Song Born”, Remi Skytterstad (*Reckoning* 5).

Utopian Anthology/Collection: *Reckoning* 5, Cécile Cristofari & Leah Bobet, eds. (*Reckoning*); **Speculative Fiction for Dreamers: A Latinx Anthology**, Alex Hernandez, Matthew David Goodwin & Sarah Rafael Garcia, eds. (*Mad Creek*); **Multispecies Cities: Solarpunk Urban Futures**, Christoph Rupprecht, Deborah Cleland, Norie Tamura, Rajat Chaudhuri & Sarena Ulibarri, eds. (*World Weaver*).

Utopian Short Story: “All We Have Left Is Our-

selves”, Oyedotun Damilola Muees (*Reckoning* 5); “Superbloom”, Lynne Peskoe-Yang (*Metaphorosis* 1/21); “Epicenter”, Jennifer Lee Rossman (*Hexagon* Winter '21); “Dandelion Brew”, Ana Sun (*DreamForge Anvil* 6); “Blood Ties”, Jade Wilburn (*FIYAH* Spring '21).

Utopian Poem: “when the coral copies our fashion advice”, Ashley Bao (*Reckoning* 5); “Mythic Book Emporium”, Mary Soon Lee (*DreamForge Anvil* 2); “If”, Bruce McAllister (*Analog* 1-2/21); “We Must Believe the Road Ahead is Full of Light”, Lisa Timp (*Utopia Science Fiction* 10-11/21); “Terraformer of Bigotry”, Dawn Vogel (*Utopia Science Fiction* 4/21).

Utopian Art: “Solarpunk”, Dustin Jacobus (*Sci Phi Journal* Autumn '21); “Erewhon and Other Strange Utopias”, Roger Legee (*The Fabulist* Spring '21); “Cephalopod Heart” cover art, Dante Luiz (*Hexagon* 7); “Longing of Hope”, Jane Noel (*DreamForge Anvil* 4); “The Leaves”, Tracy Whiteside (*Reckoning* 5).

Utopian Nonfiction: “On the Destruction and Restoration of Habitats”, Prya Chand (*Reckoning* 5); “On Solarpunk”, Eric Hunting (*Sci Phi Journal* 9/30/21); “You've Got the Future All Wrong. We All Do.”, Scot Noel (*DreamForge Anvil* 3); “Our Winter's Tales”, Joshua Wilson (*The Fabulist* 12/21/21).

Utopian Curator: *DreamForge*; *Hexagon*; *Imagine* 2200: Climate Fiction for Future Ancestors; *Reckoning*; *World Weaver*.

Voting for winners will be open to the public from August 1-21, 2022 on the Utopia Awards page. Winners will be announced at the Utopia Award ceremony on October 1, 2022 at CliFi-Con22. For more: <www.android-press.com/2022-utopia-award-nominees>.

Scribe Award Nominees • The International Association of Media Tie-in Writers (IAMTW) announced the nominees for the 2022 Scribe Awards, honoring excellence in licensed tie-in writing. Nominees of genre interest follow.

Original Novel – Speculative: Rebels of Vanahheim, Richard Lee Byers (Aconyte); **To Chart the Clouds**, Evan Harker (Aconyte); **Witches Unleashed**, Carrie Harris (Aconyte); **Oblivion's Gate**, David Mack (Gallery); **Star Trek Picard: Rogue Elements**, John Jackson Miller (Pocket/Star Trek).

Original Novel – General: Patient Zero, Amanda Bridgeman (Aconyte); **Shootout at Sugar Creek**, Mickey Spillane & Max Allan Collins (Kensington); **Debonair in Death**, Terrie Farley Moran (Berkley).

Adapted Novel: Alien 3, Pat Cadigan (Titan); **Freshwater**, Julian Michael Carver (Severed); **Halloween Kills**, Tim Waggoner (Titan).

Graphic Novel: Doctor Who: Missy, Jody Houser (Titan); **Star Wars: Darth Vader**, Greg Pak (Marvel); **Life Is Strange: Coming Home**, Emma Vieceli (Titan).

Audio Drama: Doctor Who: The Lost Resort, A.K. Benedict (Big Finish); **Doctor Who: The Annihilators**, Nicholas Briggs (Big Finish); **Doctor Who: Monsters in Metropolis**, John Dorney (Big Finish); **Doctor Who: The Truth of Peladon**, Tim Foley (Big Finish); **Doctor Who: The Curse of Lady Macbeth**, Lizzie Hopley (Big Finish); **Doctor Who: Girl Deconstructed**, Lisa McMullin (Big Finish).

Young Adult / Middle Grade: Crimson Night, Jennifer Brozek (Catalyst); **Friendship Feature**, Stacia Deutsch (Albert Whitman & Company); **The Legends of Forever**, Barry Lyga (Amulet); **Roman Holiday**, E.C. Myers (Scholastic); **First Team**, Robbie MacNiven (Asmodee); **The Bear King**, Steve Saville (Dream Realm).

Short Story: "Bon Temps", Harlan James (**Tales of Wakanda**); "Kid Omega Faces the Music", Neil Kleid (**School of X**); "All My Friends Are Monsters", Davide Mana (**The Devourer Below**); "Distress Signals", Jean Rabe (**Voices of Varuna**); "Stepping Stones", Marsheila Rockwell (**Voices of Varuna**).

Winners will be announced at San Diego Comic-Con July 22, 2022. For more: <iamtw.org/the-2022-scribe-awards-nominees>.

Workshop News • Walter Jon Williams, founder of the Taos Toolbox workshop, announced that this year's event (held June 5-18, 2022) was forced to relocate from Taos NM to Albuquerque NM due to fires in the area. The workshop "has been held at the Angel Fire resort for the last decade or more. Except this year we have the Hermit's Peak Fire, the largest wildfire in New Mexico history, over 300,000 acres and currently only 60% contained. It's ten miles from Angel Fire, and when it gets a wind behind it, a fire can race along at 5 miles per day. Angel Fire has been at the 'prepare to evacuate' stage for weeks now... We've got a nice place now, and I can guarantee 99.99% that it won't burn down." For more: <www.facebook.com/walter.j.williams.54/posts/10227815017817160>.

HWA News • The Horror Writers Association (HWA) has launched a Mental Health Initiative, a "coordinated roll-out of events, resources, and activities intended to promote positive mental health, foster the concept of hope, and challenge the stigma of mental illness in the horror genre." Plans include "a dedicated webpage for resources on the HWA website, publication of **Of Horror and Hope**, a downloadable anthology of poems, flash fiction, and personal reflections on mental health by HWA members, 'Holistic Horrors' a monthly column in the organization's newsletter, several panel sessions, as well as articles and blogs published in the wider genre community." For more: <horror.org/hwa-mental-health-initiative>.

HWA also announced that the submission window for HWA scholarships, grants, and endowments is open from June 1, 2022 to August 1, 2022. You do not need to be a member of the organization to apply. Available programs include The Horror Writers Association Scholarship, The Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley Scholarship, Diversity Grants, The Dark Poetry Scholarship, The Rocky Wood Memorial Scholarship for Non-fiction, The Dennis Etchison Young Writers Scholarship, the Young Adults Write Now endowment program, and The Scholarship From Hell (for StokerCon). For details: <horrorscholarships.com>.

History of Fantasy Illustration Exhibit • The Hunter Museum of American Art in Chattanooga

TN has opened **Enchanted: A History of Fantasy Illustration**, an exhibition exploring "a thoughtful appraisal of how artists from the early 20th century to the present have brought to life myths, fairy tales, and modern epics like **Lord of the Rings** and **Game of Thrones**."

Artists showcased include Bob Eggleton, Kinuko Y. Craft, Victo Ngai, Charles Vess, and Michael Whelan, among others. The exhibition is open from May 20 – September 5, 2022. For more: <www.huntermuseum.org/exhibition/enchanted-a-history-of-fantasy-illustration>.

Mythopoeic Awards Finalists • The Mythopoeic Society has announced the 2022 Mythopoeic Awards finalists.

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature: The Witness for the Dead, Katherine Addison (Tor); **Light from Uncommon Stars**, Ryka Aoki (Tor); **A Master of Djinn**, P. Djèlí Clark (Tordotcom); **Piranesi**, Susanna Clarke (Bloomsbury); **Terciél and Elinor**, Garth Nix (Katherine Tegen); **Or What You Will**, Jo Walton (Tor).

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature: The Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond trilogy, Sayantani DasGupta (Scholastic); **The Coming Storm**, Regina M. Hansen (Athenium); **Pahua and the Soul Stealer**, Lori M. Lee (Rick Riordan Presents); **Root Magic**, Eden Royce (Walden Pond).

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies: Charles Williams and C. S. Lewis: Friends in Co-inheritance, Paul S. Fiddes (Oxford); **The Worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien: The Places That Inspired Middle-earth**, John Garth (Princeton); **A Sense of Tales Untold: Exploring the Edges of Tolkien's Literary Canvas**, Peter Grybauskas (Kent State); **Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages**, Holly Ordway (Word on Fire).

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies: The Modern Myths: Adventures in the Machinery of the Popular Imagination, Philip Ball (University of Chicago); **Fairy Tales of London: British Urban Fantasy, 1840 to the Present**, Hadas Elber-Aviram (Bloomsbury Academic); **The Dragon in the West: From Ancient Myth to Modern Legend**, Daniel Ogden (Oxford); **The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games**, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas (New York University); **George R.R. Martin and the Fantasy Form**, Joseph Rex Young (Routledge).

Winners will be announced during Mythcon 52, to be held July 29 - August 1, 2022, in Albuquerque NM. For more: <www.mythsoc.org/news/news-2022-05-17.htm>.

Prix Imaginales Winners • Winners have been announced for the 2022 Prix Imaginales, honoring the best works of fantasy published in France.

French Novel: Capitale du sud, tome 1, Le Sang de la cité, Guillaume Chamanadjian (Editions Aux forges, Vulcain).

Foreign Novel Translated: Notre part de nuit [Our Share of Night], Mariana Enriquez, translated by Anne Plantagenet (Sous-Sol).

Young Adult: Les Voleurs de fumée, Sally Green (J'ai lu).

Illustration: L'Homme qui voulut être roi [The Man Who Would Be King], Rudyard Kipling, illustrated by Arnel Gaulme (Caurette).

Short Fiction: Féro(ce)cités, Eyméric Amselem, Fran Basil, Edouard H. Blaes, Jeanne Mariem Correze, Kevane Demillas, Delphine H. Edwin, Thomas Fouchault, Jason Martin, Pauline Sidre, and Xavier Watillon (SilleX).

Special Jury Award: Excalibur, Durendal, Joyeuse: La Force de l'épée, Martin Aurell, ed.

(Presses Universitaires, France).

Picture Book: Les Idées sont de drôles de bestioles, Isabelle Simler (Courtes et longues).

Winners are selected by a jury of critics and experts, and were announced at the 21st Imaginales Festival, held May 19-22, 2022 in Épinal, France. For more: <site.www.imaginales.fr/prix-litteraires/prix-imaginales>.

Amazon's Best of the Year (So Far) • Amazon.com has announced "The Amazon Editors' Best Books of 2022 So Far," with an overall Top 20 and numerous category lists. **Sea of Tranquility** by Emily St. John Mandel (Knopf) and **The Kaiju Preservation Society** by John Scalzi (Tor) both made the Top 20.

Sea of Tranquility is their "pick for the best science fiction and fantasy book of the year so far." The rest of the SF/Fantasy list is: **The Final Strife**, Saara El-Arifi (Del Rey); **The Kaiju Preservation Society**, John Scalzi (Tor); **The Memory Librarian: And Other Stories of Dirty Computer**, Janelle Monáe, ed. (HarperVoyager); **Siren Queen**, Nghi Vo (Tordotcom); **Daughter of the Moon Goddess**, Sue Lynn Tan (HarperVoyager); **Ordinary Monsters**, J.M. Miro (Flatiron); **In the Shadow of Lightning**, Brian McClellan (Tor); **The Starless Crown**, James Rollins (Tor); **Where the Drowned Girls Go**, Seanan McGuire (Tordotcom); **Moon Witch, Spider King**, Marlon James (Riverhead); **Eyes of the Void**, Adrian Tchaikovsky (Orbit); **Goliath**, Tochi Onyebuchi (Tordotcom); **The Atlas Six**, Olivie Blake (Tor); **All the Seas of the World**, Guy Gavriel Kay (Berkley); **Mickey7**, Edward Ashton (St. Martin's); **How High We Go in the Dark**, Sequoia Nagamatsu (Morrow); **When Women Were Dragons**, Kelly Barnhill (Doubleday); **Hide**, Kiersten White (Del Rey); **Book of Night**, Holly Black (Tor).

For more, including all the selections in a dozen categories: <www.amazon.com/b/ref=fst_h1_st_2?node=3003015011>.

Legal News • *Book Riot* has reported that Virginia state delegate and lawyer Tim Anderson and Republican Congressional candidate Tommy Altman are suing Barnes & Noble in Virginia Beach Circuit Court to stop sales of fantasy **A Court of Mist and Fury** by Sarah J. Maas and **Gender Queer: A Memoir** by Maia Kobabe, calling passages that include sexual language "obscene." Anderson claims the court found "probable cause that the books... are obscene to unrestricted viewing by minors." He seeks an injunction to stop B&N, and Virginia Beach schools, from selling or loaning those titles to minors without parental permission. This may not be the last such legal challenge; Anderson says, "We are in a major fight. Suits like this can be filed all over Virginia. There are dozens of books. Hundreds of schools." For more: <bookriot.com/barnes-noble-being-sued-in-virginia-beach-over-gender-queer-court-of-mist-and-fury>.

A Maryland law that would have forced publishers to allow libraries to lend their ebooks has been ruled unconstitutional.

Deborah L. Boardman, a federal judge, granted a declaratory judgment in favor of the Association of American Publishers, who challenged the law. Boardman said the law was "unconstitutional and unenforceable because it conflicts with and is preempted by the Copyright Act." The AAP had requested a permanent injunction, but the judge declined, ruling that "such declaratory relief obviates the need for a permanent injunction.... [The] State never enforced the law and represents it will not enforce it in the future.... The Court has declared the Maryland Act unconstitutional and may reasonably assume the State will abide by the declaration."

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She did impose a temporary injunction in February 2022, pending her final ruling.

The employees' union of Pen America, Pen America United, has been voluntarily recognized by management, and will now go on to negotiate a contract. The union demanded recognition on December 9, 2020. The union wrote, "We want to work towards a Pen that commits to providing fair and equitable compensation, including clear and consistent policies around salary minimums, increases, and promotions.... A Pen that adequately addresses the root causes of burnout and secondary trauma, and promotes an organizational culture of transparency, equity, and responsiveness." Pen America, founded in 1992, is a non-profit that "stands at the intersection of literature and human rights to protect free expression in the United States and worldwide. We champion the freedom to write, recognizing the power of the word to transform the world. Our mission is to unite writers and their allies to celebrate creative expression and defend the liberties that make it possible." For more: <medium.com/@penamericaunited/daring-to-speak-how-we-won-our-union-and-why-collective-action-is-needed-at-nonprofits-c53b9b34c9a5>.

Publishing News • Disney Publishing Worldwide is shifting its global sales and distribution services to Penguin Random House Publisher Services (PRHPS), effective April 1, 2023. Disney will also expand their subsidiary Marvel Publishing's existing partnership with PRHPS. Disney is leaving their partnership with Hachette Book Group, which has distributed Disney books since 2013.

French media conglomerate Vivendi now owns just over 55% of Lagardere, parent company of Hachette Book Group, having purchased 11 million shares, and may acquire more. The European Union's antitrust department, the European Commission, is still reviewing the terms of the deal.

Book wholesaler Baker & Taylor UK has been acquired by the Little Group, which also owns wholesaler Gardners, Browns Books, and the Hive. The B&T executive chairman Gareth Powell and managing director Annette Burgess will serve on the board of directors and continue to run daily operations with existing senior management. No staff changes are planned, and the operation will keep the Baker & Taylor name. B&T was sold by a private investment group that purchased it from Follett last year.

Amazon News • Amazon has stopped selling Kindle ebook readers in China, and will stop selling ebooks there in June 2023. The Kindle app will be removed from Chinese app stores in 2024, and readers who previously purchased Kindle ebooks will no longer be able to access their libraries. Customers who bought a Kindle reader this year may receive refunds. Amazon is reportedly "adjusting the strategic focus of its operations," and will continue other businesses in China: "Amazon China's long-term commitment to customers will not change. We have established a broad business base in China and will continue to innovate and invest." According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Kindle "dominates the market for e-reading devices in China," with 65% percent of the market, though sales have declined recently.

Bookstore News • Tracy Taylor purchased Seattle's **Elliott Bay Book Company on June 1, 2022**, after serving for 32 years as general manager. Taylor partnered with Murf Hall & Joey Burgess, who own other businesses in the neighborhood. Previous owner Peter Aaron said, "It has been an honor

and a privilege to serve as steward of this unique and wonderful haven of literature and civility for the past 23 years," and declared Taylor and partners "ideally suited to ensure that the bookstore will continue to thrive and to maintain the standards and traditions which have been hallmarks of the business throughout the years." Taylor says they have no impending changes in mind.

Awards News • The 2021 Ladies of Horror Readers' Choice results have been announced. The top ten winners are: "Become a Flute, Become a Spy Glass, Become a Knife", Elou Carroll (**Grimm & Dread: a Crow's Twist on Classic Tales**); **Earthly Bodies**, Susan Earlam (Speleorex); **Till We Become Monsters**, Amanda Headlee (Woodhall); **The Night Library of Sternendach**, Jessica Lévai (Lanternfish); **Bad Witch Burning**, Jessica Lewis (Delacorte); **The Sound of Breaking Glass**, Christine Makepeace (Son of the Land); "A Study in Ugliness", Hache Pueyo (*The Dark* 4/21); **Lady of the House**, Grace R. Reynolds (Curious Corvid); **Within Me, Without Me**, Sumiko Saulson (Dooky); **The Last House on Needless Street**, Castriona Ward (Nightfire). For more: <www.ladiesofhorrorfiction.com/2022/06/17/2021-readers-choice>.

PulpFest has announced the nominees for the 2022 Munsey Award, given "to an individual or institution that has bettered the pulp community." Nominees are selected by the general pulp community, with the winner selected by a vote of past Lamont, Munsey, and Rusty Awards winners. The nominees are Airship 27 Productions; John Betancourt; Richard Bleiler; Gene Christie; Henry G. Franke III; Chris Kalb; Rick Lai; William Patrick Maynard; Gary Phillips; Sheila Vanderbeek; Howard Wright; and Dan Zimmer. The winner will be announced August 6, 2022 during PulpFest 50, to be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh – Cranberry in Pittsburgh PA, and will receive limited-edition art by David Saunders. For more: <pulpfest.com/2022/06/the-2022-munsey-award-nominees>.

The Book of Form & Emptiness by Ruth Ozeki (Viking) won the 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction. The prize celebrates "excellence, originality and accessibility in writing by women throughout the world." Ozeki will receive £30,000 and a bronze "Bessie" trophy. The 2022 judges were Lorraine Candy, Dorothy Koomson, Anita Sethi, Mary Ann Sieghart (chair), and Pandora Sykes. For more: <womensprizeforfiction.co.uk/2022-prize>.

Cresida Cowell's audiobook **The Wizards of Once: Never and Forever**, narrated by David Tennant (Hodder Children's), won the Audiobook Fiction category of the 2022 British Book Awards, announced May 23, 2022 at Grosvenor House in London. For more: <www.thebookseller.com/awards/the-british-book-awards>.

Natalia Theodoridou won the 2022 Moniak Mhor Emerging Writer Award (previously called the Bridge Award). Established in 2015, the award is for "unpublished prose writers (fiction) living and working in the UK with a collection of short stories or novel in development." The winner receives "a tailor-made package worth up to £2,000 including tuition via open courses, retreat time and/or mentoring at Moniak Mhor." Lucy Steeds took second place, and will receive "a course or retreat." Sally Hughes, Gabrielle Johnson, and Andrea Mullaney were all "Highly Commended." For more: <www.moniackmhor.org.uk/writers/awards-residencies/the-bridge-awards>.

Light Perpetual by Francis Spufford (Faber & Faber; Scribner) won the £10,000 Encore Award, given by the Royal Society of Literature to the best second novel of the year. For more: <rsliterature.org/award/encore-award>.

The £25,000 Walter Scott Prize went to **News of the Dead** by James Robertson (Hamish Hamilton). The prize "celebrates outstanding historical novels published in the UK, Ireland and the Commonwealth." For more: <www.walterscottprize.co.uk/2022-wsp-winner-announced>.

The 2022 PEN America Emerging Voices Fellows have been announced: Natáhné Arrowsmith, S. Erin Batiste, Sarah Chaves, Julian Iralu, Iris Kim, Jane S. Kim, Monica Mills, Doreen Oliver, Connie Pertuz-Meza Edythe Rodriguez, Shakeema Smalls, and Christina Tudor. Each recipient will receive \$1,500 and "a five-month immersive mentorship." Mentors include SF writer Tochi Onyebuchi, and the fellows "represent varied identities and backgrounds, and work in genres from poetry, fiction and fantasy to general non-fiction, science fiction, and memoir." For more: <pen.org/press-release/pen-america-2022-emerging-voices-fellows-selected-from-largest-applicant-pool-ever>.

The Robert E. Howard (REH) Foundation has announced the winners of the 2022 Robert E. Howard Awards. **The Atlantean – Outstanding Achievement, Book (non-anthology/collection): Renegades and Rogues**, Todd Vick (University of Texas). **The Valusian – Outstanding Achievement, Book (anthology/collection): Robert E. Howard Changed My Life**, Jason M. Waltz (Rogue Blades). **The Hyrkanian – Outstanding Achievement, Essay (print): "Robert E. Howard and the Later *Weird Tales*"**, Rob Roehm (**The Weird Tales Story: Expanded and Enhanced**). **The Cimmerian – Outstanding Achievement, Essay (online): "The Conscience of Solomon Kane: Robert E. Howard's Rhetorics of Motive, World, and Race"**, Gabriel Momola (*Mythlore* Vol. 40 No. 1). **The Venarium – Emerging Scholar (tie):** Brian Murphy; Willard M. Oliver. **The Black Lotus – Outstanding Achievement, Multimedia:** Howard History. **The Costigan – Literary Achievement: *Whetstone: Amateur Magazine of Pulp Sword and Sorcery***, Jason Ray Carney, ed. **The Rankin – Artistic achievement in the depiction of REH's life and/or work:** Bill Cavalier for 2021 Howard Days Poster. **Crom Award:** Lee Breakiron. **Black Circle Award:** Charles Hoffman. For more: <rehfoundation.org/winners-of-the-2022-reh-awards>.

Winners for the Roswell Award for short science fiction have been announced. The five finalists had their stories read by celebrity guests during LitFest Pasadena in June 2022. **First Place:** "Astronomology; or How Elon Musk Killed Neil deGrasse Tyson", Ed Marsh. **Second Place:** "Dr. Harriet Hartford's Home for Aging AIs", Paul Martz. **Third Place:** "Heart to Heart", Susan Wachowski. Other finalists were "Beauty is the Beast" by Ven Pillay and "Tyrannosaurus Mechs" by Gregory Norris. Honorable mentions include "Falling Giants" by Camilla Linde, "The Seventh Day Is for Resting" by Florencia Hain, "Bob's Your Uncle" by Larry Herbst, and "Meat Ships Are the Worst" by Addison Marsh. For more: <litfestpasadena.org>.

Finalists for the 2022 Colorado Book Awards have been announced, including the Science Fiction/Fantasy category: **Khyven the Unkillable**, Todd Fahnestock (New Mythology); **The Reincarnationist Papers**, D. Eric Maikranz (Blackstone); **Magic and Misrule**, KM Merritt (Blue Fyre). Other finalists of genre interest include **My Heart Is a Chainsaw**, Stephen Graham Jones (Saga) in the Thriller category; **Noah McNichol and the Backstage Ghost**, Martha Freeman (Paula Wiseman) in Juvenile Literature; and **Shadow Atlas: Dark Landscapes of the Americas**, Carina Bissett, Hillary Dodge & Joshua Viola, eds. (Hex) in Anthology. Winners will be announced June 25, 2022. For more: <coloradohumanities.org/programs/colorado-book-awards>.

Winners of the 2022 Kurd Laßwitz Preis for the

best German science fiction works and translations have been announced. **Best German SF Novel: Nanopark**, Uwe Herrmann (Polarise). **Best German SF Short Story: "Utopie27"**, Aiki Mira (**Am Anfang war das Bild**). **Best Foreign SF Work Published in German: Das Ministerium für die Zukunft [The Ministry for the Future]**, Kim Stanley Robinson (Heyne). **Best SF Translation Into German: Das Licht der Hohlwelt [Una nueva consciencia]**, Carloas Suchowolski, translated by Pia Biundo (Solar-X). **Best Cover Art or Illustration: Hubert Schweizer** for the cover of **Exodus 43**, René Moreau, Heinz Wipperfurth, and Hans Jürgen Kugler, eds. (Exodus Selbstverlag). **Special Achievement Award for One-Time SF Activities: Hans Jürgen Kugler and René Moreau**. **Special Achievement Award for Long-Term SF Activities: Franz Rottensteiner**. The winner for Best SF Radio Play has not been decided yet. The award ceremony will take place as part of the 16th ElsterCon, September 16-18, 2022 in Leipzig, Germany. For more: <www.fksfl.de/page147/index.html>.

Finalists for the 13th annual Xingyun Awards for Chinese science fiction were announced by the World Chinese Science Fiction Association. **Best Novel: Reset**, Qidaojun (Qingdao); **The New New Newspaper Press: Shadow of the Enchanted Metropolis**, Liang Qingsan (New Star); **Travel with My Dear Android**, A Que (Aviation Industry); **The Times of Great Antiquity**, Su Xuejun (China Broadcast, Film & Television Publishing House); **Secrets of the Lost Town**, Qi Yue (People's Literature). **Best Novella: "The Eye of Saishiteng"**, Wanxiang Fengnian (**The Eye of Saishiteng: A Collection of the 4th Lenghu Award Winning Stories**); "The Candle Shadow Killer", Zhao Lei (*Non-Existing SF WeChat Account* 10/21); "The Silence of Ever-Peace", Liang Qingsan (**The Silence of Ever-Peace**); **Alea Iacta Est**, Xiao Xinghan (Baihua Literary & Art); "A Letter to the Other World", Wang Yuan (**Nebula XI: A Letter to the Other World**). **Best Short Story: "2039: The Era of Brain-Computer Interface"** (*Science Fiction World* 11/21); "Sky Towards", Wanxiang Fengnian (**Galaxy's Edge 008: Sky Towards**); "The Man Who Fought against Time", Pan Haitian (**The Eye of Saishiteng: A Collection of the 4th Lenghu Award Winning Stories**); "Lunar Bank", Liang Ling (**Lunar Bank**); "Hummingbirds were Stopping over Honeysuckle Flowers", Yang Wanqing (*Science Fiction World* 4/21). **Best Non-Fiction: "Chronicles of Collegiate SF Societies: In Search of Lost Memories of the Early SF Communities"**, He Liu (*GCores.com* 10/21); **Modernity and the Unknown: Research on Late Qing Science Fiction**, Jia Liyuan (Peking University); "Science Fiction as Method: Parallel Universes Crossed", Song Mingwei (*Foreign Literature & Arts* 6/21); "Workshop Report on 'Sci-Fi China: Avatars, Aliens & Anthropos'", Regina Kanyu Wang (*42 History WeChat Account* 4/21); **A Study of Beijing SF Gaming Industry**, Liu Yukun & Yao Lifan (*Beijing SF Industry Development Research*). **Best Translated Fiction: Inherit the Stars**, James P. Hogan, translated by Qiu Chunhui (New Star); **Solaris**, Stanisław Lem, translated by Jing Zhenzhong (Yilin); **Zima Blue and Other Stories**, Alastair Reynolds, translated by Chen Qiufan, Liu Huiying (Hunan Literature & Art); **Star Maker**, Olaf Stapledon, translated by Baoshu (Sichuan Science and Technology); **Project Hail Mary**, Andy Weir, translated by Geng Hui (Yilin). **Best New Writer: Lu Ban; Fenxing Chengzi; Tian Rui Shuo Fu; Wei Mo; Liu Qi**. **Best Review: "The Person Who Forgot Worries"**, Li Guangyi (*Dushu*, 2/21); "Retrofuturism and Steampunk: The Postmodernist Parody in **The Difference Engine**", Lyu Guangzhao (*Inquiry and Criticism*, No. 4); "Conversations on Chinese Feminist Science Fiction Literature", Yao

Haijun, Zhao Haihong & Cheng Jingbo (**She – A Collection of the Classic Works of Chinese Female Science Fiction Writers**); "What do We Expect When We Read Fantastic Literature? Notes on Reading Sunlight Trilogy", Regina Kanyu Wang (*New Star Press WeChat Account* 9/21); "The Love for Science Fiction, the Profoundness of Meditation: A Review of **Meditations on Chinese Science Fiction Literature: Wu Yan's Self-selected Academic Works**", Guo Wei (*Popular Science Times* 1/21). Winners will be announced at the Xingyun Weekend in November 2022.

Financial News • The US Census Bureau's preliminary report for April 2022 shows bookstore sales of \$633 million, up an impressive 31.6% from April 2021 – and only \$6 million behind April 2019, suggesting that bookstore sales are finally starting to catch up to pre-pandemic levels. For the year-to-date, bookstore sales were up 19.4%. All retail was up 6.6% for the month and up 9.4% YTD.

The AAP's StatShot figures for the first three months of 2022 showed children's/young adult trade sales up 10.2% compared to the first quarter of 2021, while adult trade sales fell 0.6%, for an overall 2.6% increase in trade sales. The increase in children's/YA trade sales was powered by a big jump in paperbacks, up 23.5%, while hardcovers rose 1.9%; digital formats were down, ebook sales dropping 18.8% and downloadable audio down 12.5%. Adult sales saw print sales up 1.1%, with trade paperbacks up 9.9% but hardcovers down 4.4%. The increases were also offset somewhat by a 20.2% drop in mass market paperback sales, which at this point are only a small part of overall print sales. Adult digital sales fell 2.9% with ebooks down 8.6% and downloadable audio up 5.3%. Looking beyond just trade, total sales grew 1.1% in all but one category (results were delayed for K-12 instructional materials) for the 1,366 publishers reporting. *Publishers Weekly* notes that unit sales tracked by NPD BookScan were actually down 8.9% for the quarter, and speculates that higher prices may have boosted the StatShot sales figures.

Canadian chain Indigo Books & Music reported sales up 17.4% in the fiscal year ending April 2, 2022. Sales were C\$1.06 billion (about \$816 million), with an operating profit of C\$29 million (\$22 million), a major improvement over the previous year's loss of C\$31.9 million (\$24.6 million). Superstore sales of C\$595.5 million (\$458.5 million) were up 35%, and small store sales rose 29% to C\$93.1 million (\$71.7 million). Online sales fell 13% to C\$321.5 million (\$247.6 million), but were still 98% higher than in fiscal 2020, which ended just as COVID lockdowns started to go into effect. Indigo said much of the improvement in sales was due to their "omnichannel approach" which mixes online and in-store sales; not only have they boosted online sales since COVID started, they're now seeing more customers doing online research before buying books and other items in stores. Book sales alone gained 8% in the year, notably boosted by TikTok. Non-book sales in the lifestyle and baby product categories grew more than 30%.

Bloomsbury Publishing saw record sales in the fiscal year ending February 28, 2022. Sales came in at £230.1 million (around \$283 million), a 24% increase over the previous year. Profits also hit a record high at £26.7 million (\$32.8 million), up 40%. Chief executive Nigel Newton credited the increases to the pandemic surge in reading, and higher digital sales. Three acquisitions, including Head of Zeus in the UK, also increased revenue by £17.4 million (\$21.4 million); in the nine months since its acquisition, Head of Zeus added £9.0 million (\$11 million) to adult trade revenue. Overseas sales also grew during the year; currently, US sales provide around 30% of total revenue. Consumer group

sales saw a 25% increase, coming in at £148.2 million (\$182.2 million); adult sales rose 26% and children's sales grew 25%. Samantha Shannon's **The Priory of the Orange Tree** was noted as a big seller in US adult sales; the children's group got a big boost from Sarah J. Maas, whose sales for new and backlist titles rose 86%. Sales for Harry Potter titles grew 5%; special marketing for the 25th anniversary of the first book is expected to boost sales further this year.

International Rights • Chinese rights to **The Best of R.A. Lafferty** went to Dook at auction via Gray Tan of The Grayhawk Agency on behalf of Susan Velazquez of JABberwocky Literary Agency.

Italian rights to **Undersea Quest, Undersea Fleet, and Undersea City** by Frederik Pohl & Jack Williamson's sold to Mondadori via Roberto Santachiara Literary Agency on behalf of Sarah Perillo of Curtis Brown.

Azerbaijani rights to **Behold the Man** by Michael Moorcock sold to Nebula via Danny Baror of Baror International on behalf of Howard Morhaim of Howard Morhaim Literary Agency.

French rights to Guy Gavriel Kay's **Under Heaven and River of Stars** sold to L'Atalante via Corinne Marotte of Marotte et Compagnie, and Bulgarian rights to **A Brightness Long Ago** sold to Bard via Kamelia Emilova of Andrew Nurnberg Associates, all on behalf of John Silbersack of the Bent Agency.

Italian rights to **Nona the Ninth** by Tamsyn Muir sold to Mondadori via Stefania Fietta of Donzelli Fietta Agency in association with Jennifer Jackson of the Donald Maass Literary Agency.

Chinese rights to Catherynne M. Valentine's **Space Opera** went to Science Fiction World via Gray Tan of The Grayhawk Agency on behalf of Heather Baror-Shapiro of Baror International in association with Howard Morhaim Literary Agency.

French rights to Leigh Bardugo's **Demon in the Wood** went to Milan via Donatella d'Ormesson of Donatella d'Ormesson Literary on behalf of Veronica Grijalva of New Leaf Literary & Media for Joanna Volpe.

Korean rights to Emily St. John Mandel's **Sea of Tranquility** went to Open Books via Korea Copyright Center, and Czech rights to Argo via Kristin Olson Literary Agency, all on behalf of Katherine Fausset and Sarah Perillo of Curtis Brown.

Chinese rights to **The Art of John Harris: Beyond the Horizon and The Art of John Harris II: Into the Blue** sold to Chongqing via Jennifer Lee of The Grayhawk Agency on behalf of Jenny Boyce at Titan.

Turkish rights to **Mistborn: The Lost Metal** by Brandon Sanderson sold to Arkadas via Cansu Akkoyun of Anatolialit Agency, and Bulgarian rights went to Studio of A via Katalina Sabeva of Anthea Agency, on behalf of Susan Velazquez and Christina Zobel of JABberwocky Literary Agency. Spanish rights to **Defiant** and the fifth Stormlight Archive book sold to Ediciones B via Sandra Biel Piera of International Editors' on behalf of Velazquez and Zobel.

Italian rights to Nathan Ballingrud's **North American Lake Monsters** sold to Hypnos via Chiara Piovani of The Italian Literary Agency, and Polish rights went to MAG via Diana Hasooni-Aboud of Book/lab Literary Agency, both on behalf of Hana El Niwairi of CookeMcDermid for Gavin Grant at Small Beer Press.

Brazilian rights to **Dolores Dolly Poppedijn** by Thomas Olde Heuvelt sold to Raquel Mortiz at DarkSide Books via João Paulo Riff of Riff Agency on behalf of Hana El Niwairi for Sally Harding of CookeMcDermid.

Serbian rights to Peter V. Brett's **The Desert**

The Data File

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Prince went to Laguna via Petra Olah of Katai & Bolza, and Romanian rights to **The Core** sold to Nemira via Marina Adriana of International Copyright Agency, all on behalf of Susan Velazquez & Christina Zobel of JABberwocky Literary Agency.

Bulgarian rights to **How Rory Thorne Destroyed the Multiverse** and **How the Multiverse Got It's Revenge** by K. Eason went to Studio of A via Katalina Sabeva of Anthea Agency on behalf of Susan Velazquez and Christina Zobel of JAB-

berwocky Literary Agency.

Swedish rights to **Blade Breaker** by Victoria Aveyard sold to Modernista via Lester Hekking of Sebes & Bisseling on behalf of Veronica Grijalva of New Leaf Literary & Media for Suzie Townsend.

German rights to Scott Alexander Howard's **The Other Valley** and a second book sold to Diogenes at auction via Roz Foster at Frances Goldin Literary Agency.

Audio Rights • Audio rights to Kathe Koja's **Dark Factory** went to Daniel Totten at Tantor Media via Linda Migalti of Susan Schulman Literary

Agency on behalf of Meerkat Press.

Audio rights to Hailey Piper's **Queen of Teeth** sold to Aaron Piccirillo at Tantor Media via Lane Heymont of The Tobias Literary Agency.

Audio rights to **Alien Warrior Unleashed**, **Alien Warrior Untamed**, **Alien Warrior Unbeaten**, and **Alien Warrior Unclaimed** by Marty Mayberry writing as Ava Ross sold to Kate Runde at Podium Audio via Amanda Jain of BookEnds Literary.

Audio rights to Iori Kusano's novella **Hybrid Heart** sold to Kim Budnick at Tantor Media via Jennifer Jackson of the Donald Maass Literary Agency. ■

People & Publishing

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to Hall at Tor for seven figures via Appel.

CESCA MAJOR resold time-loop novel **Maybe Next Time** and romance **If I Were You** to Tessa Woodward at William Morrow via Kristyn Keene Benton of ICM on behalf of Alice Lutyens of Curtis Brown UK. HarperCollins has UK rights.

TRAVIS BALDREE sold US rights to **Legends & Lattes** and another book to Lindsey Hall at Tor via Jon Mitchell of Pan Macmillan.

Publishing

BELLA PAGAN has been promoted from publishing director to publisher at Tor UK, and will now report to Pan Macmillan publisher Lucy Hale. **GEORGIA SUMMERS** has been promoted to editor from assistant editor.

CLARA MADRIGANO has joined **SEAN WAL-LACE** as co-editor of horror magazine *The Dark*.

CHIMEDUM OHAEGBU is



Bella Pagan (2018)

stepping down as managing and poetry editor at *Uncanny* at the end of 2022. Current assistant editor **MONTE LIN** will take over as managing editor with the January/February 2023 issue.

Media

Film rights to **LIZ HARMER**'s SF novel **The Amateurs** were optioned by Jason Charters and Liam Romalis at Riddle

Films, for development with Elevation Pictures, via Samantha Haywood and Laura Cameron of Transatlantic Agency. Harmer and Charters will co-write the screenplay.

MICHELLE JABES CORPORA sold **Bring Your Dollies Three** and another title in "a Holly Horror series" created in association with CloudCo Entertainment to Gabriela Taboas Zayas at Penguin Workshop via Allison Hellegers of Stimola Literary Studio. ■

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Artist **KEN KELLY**, 76, died June 3, 2022. While best known for his album art (including famous covers for rock band Kiss), Kelly was also a prolific SF/F artist who did work for numerous publishers starting in the '70s.

Kenneth William Kelly was born May 19, 1946 in New London CO. He served in the Marines until 1968, and soon became a professional artist. He got his start doing covers for comics and magazines, notably *Creepy* and *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. In the '70s he began creating artwork for musical albums and book covers for Ace, DAW, Berkley, and other genre publishers. He also did collectible trading card art and product art for toys. Some of his work is collected in **The Art of Ken Kelly** (1990), **Ken Kelly Fantasy Art Trading Cards** (1992), **Ken Kelly Fantasy Art Trading Cards Collection 2** (1994), **Ken Kelly Colossal Cards** (1995), and *Escape* (2004).

KEN KELLY
by Bob Eggleton

At a younger age Ken knew what he wanted to do in art, and many of his heroes were comic book artists and paperback artists of the 1960s. After a stint in the Marines until 1968, he was determined to go into art professionally.

He was, by birth, the nephew of Ellie Frazetta, and Ken received encouragement and a bit of instruction from her husband Frank Frazetta, who was at the time the master of heroic fantasy art. Ken approached and was hired by NYC publishers

OBITUARIES

and comic book houses, doing his most well known work with Warren Magazines, including art for *Creepy*, *Eerie*, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, and *Vampirella*. At one point, Warren Magazines paid him to produce five covers in less than a month. He sometimes (as was the case then) did not get his artwork returned, and years later would re-create it for collectors. It was a halcyon time for this sort of work, and he was sought out immediately by many. One fan of his Warren covers happened to be Gene Simmons of the rock group Kiss. One

thing led to another, and Ken was hired to do several covers for their later 1970s albums, including two huge ones, *Love Gun* and *Destroyer* (which he did two versions of). Later in the 1970s he was hired by Donald A. Wollheim of DAW Books, as well as Berkley Publishing and Ace Books, for a number of their sword-and-sorcery paperbacks by Robert E. Howard, Karl Edward Wagner, Robert Adams's Horseclans series, and others. Later in the 1980s and into the '90s Ken did album covers for rock and heavy metal bands, Ritchie Blackmore's *Rainbow* being a significant one. He also did a bestselling series of trading cards with FPG Publishing in the mid-'90s and two books of his work, one via FPG and one self-published. Ken also did package art for many toy companies, including the famous Masters of the Universe toys. His work was prolific and diverse. He also went to many comic and media conventions.

Personally speaking, I grew up with Ken's work, and it left a mark. His iconic cover to *Famous Monsters* #114 (1975) depicting Godzilla and Rodan was a fan favorite and in 2014 I kind of emulated his palette for a Godzilla cover for the latest incarnation of that magazine. Ken had a vocal opinion, that was for sure. I did not agree with much of his politics, but I made a point of not bringing that up, so we got on fine just talking art. In 2015 a Czech publisher, Gallery Nemesis, published lavish portfolios of our (and other artists') works.

—Bob Eggleton ■



Ken Kelly, Bob Eggleton (2015)

Magazines Received

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issues from King Games <www.kinggames.com/online-store/Future-Science-Fiction-Digest-ANNUAL-SUBSCRIPTION-p297358304>. Quarterly digital issues are available through Patreon. Individual copies available to purchase from Amazon, Nook, Kobo, iBooks, Google Play, and Weightless

Hexagon <hexagonmagazine.ca/>—JW Stebner, ed., Issue #9, Summer 2022, free online, quarterly. Speculative fiction magazines specializing in the “weird, the wonderful, and the whimsical!” This issue includes short fiction by Mary E. Lowd, Grace Chan, Andrew Kozma, and Evan Marcroft; and poetry. Cover by Will Tempest. Subscription: \$1.00 per month/\$12.00/year via Patreon.

Lightspeed Magazine <www.lightspeedmagazine.com>—John Joseph Adams, ed. Issue #145, June 2022, free online or \$3.99 ebook, monthly. Online SF/fantasy magazine. This issue includes a genre-defying novelette by S.G. Demciri; original science fiction by Arden Powell; original SF flash fiction by Jo Miles; and reprinted SF by C.C. Finlay; original fantasy from PH Lee; original fantasy flash by Susan Palwick; reprinted fantasy by Stephen Graham Jones; and book reviews. On the website, each month's contents are serialized throughout the month with new features published on the first four Tuesdays. The ebook edition is available on the first of the month with exclusive content not available on the website. This month's exclusive paid content is an excerpt from a novel by Brian McClellan. Cover by Grandfailure / Dreamstime. Subscription: \$2.99/month via Amazon.com or \$35.88/year from *Lightspeed* <www.light-

speedmagazine.com/subscribe/> or Weightless Books <www.weightlessbooks.com>.

Lost Colony <lostcolonymagazine.com/>—M.E. Pickett, ed. Vol. #1, Issue #3, July 2022, free online or digital available for \$0.99, quarterly. *Lost Colony* publishes one piece of “mid-length” (10,000 to 25,000 word) speculative fiction per issue. This issue's piece is by Subodhana Wijeyeratne. Cover by WandererDream via Shutterstock. Subscription: \$3.99/year.

Luna Station Quarterly <lunastationquarterly.com/>—Jennifer Lyn Parsons, ed., Issue #50, June 2022, \$11.95 print/\$2.99 digital/free online, quarterly. Online and print magazine displaying “the vast and varied talents of women-identified speculative fictions writers.” This issue includes stories by Elou Carroll, Altaire Gural, Tisha Marie Reichle-Aguilera, and others. Cover by Theodora Capat. Subscription: unavailable. Single print issues available from Amazon.com. Digital issues available through their website and Weightless.

Metaphorosis <www.metaphorosis.com>—B. Morris Allen, ed. July 2022, \$7.00 print/\$4.00 digital/free online, monthly. Online and print speculative fiction magazine. This issue includes original stories by Samuel Parr, Mahmud El Sayad, Daniel Ausema, and others. New stories are posted online every Friday. Cover by Carol Wellart. Digital subscriptions available at \$3.00/month through Patreon <www.patreon.com/metaphorosis>. Single issues available from Amazon.com and IngramSpark.

Metaphorosis <www.metaphorosis.com>—B. Morris Allen, ed. August 2022, \$7.00 print/\$4.00 digital/free online, monthly. Online and print speculative fiction magazine. This issue includes original stories by

Rachel Ayers, Ian Donnell Arbuckle, Mia Ram, and Hope Davies. New stories are posted online every Friday. Cover by Carol Wellart. Digital subscriptions available at \$3.00/month through Patreon <www.patreon.com/metaphorosis>. Single issues available from Amazon.com and IngramSpark.

Nightmare Magazine <www.nightmare-magazine.com>—Wendy N. Wagner, ed. Issue #117, June 2022, free online or \$2.99 ebook, monthly. Online horror/dark fantasy magazine publishing both original and reprinted fiction as well as poetry. This issue includes fiction by Alex Saint-Widow, Isabel Cañas, and Lavie Tidhar; an essay by Daniel David Froid; poetry; and book reviews. On the website, each month's contents are serialized throughout the month with new features published on the first four Wednesdays. Cover by ddraw / AdobeStock. Subscription: \$1.99/monthly from Amazon or \$23.88/year from Nightmare or Weightless Books <www.weightlessbooks.com>.

SFRevu <www.sfrevu.com/>—Gayle Surette ed., June 2022, free, monthly. Online SF review site. In the June issue, the site posted reviews of non-fiction, short fiction, and books; and various columns. Subscriptions: Not available.

Strange Horizons <www.strangehorizons.com>—Gautam Bhatia, et al., eds. May/June 2022, free, weekly. Online speculative fiction magazine publishing fiction, poetry, essays, reviews, and interviews. New issues are posted each Monday. In May and June, the site posted short fiction (with accompanying podcasts) by Michelle Kulwicki, AnaMaria Curtis, and Bryce Baron-Sips; weekly poetry (with accompanying podcasts); an interview with Petra Kuppers; a column by Mame Bougouma

Diene, an article by Noemi Arellano-Summer; and reviews; as well as a special issue on “visual art and its relationship to speculative fiction”, edited by Dante Luiz and Heather McDougal and posted on May 30, 2022. This issue included an article by Heather McDougal; art and fiction by G.G. Diniz & C.A. P. Ward and E.A. Petricone & Racheal Bruce; art and comics by Fernanda Castro & Sumni and Nadia Shammass & Isabel Burke; art and poetry by Nicky Russell & Garden and Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li & Palloma Barreto; and art by Daniela Viçoso and Galen Dara; Covers by Tahlia Day and Daniela Viçoso. Subscription: unavailable.

Tor.com <www.tor.com>—Tom Doherty, Irene Gallo, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, et al., eds. May/June 2022, free online. Macmillan publishing house site specializing in genre fiction. Each month Tor.com publishes free fiction and articles including original works, reprints, novel excerpts, and comics; re-reads/re-watches of novels and television shows; an artist gallery; original reviews; articles and commentary; interviews; as well as providing a forum for the genre community. New material is posted throughout the month. May and June's posts include novel excerpts from books by Alex Livingston, Zoe Hana Mikuta, Rosaria Munda, Becky Chambers, T. Kingfisher, Jason Denzel, Shveta Thakrar, Emily Thiede, Bridgid Kemmerer, Adalyn Grace, Alexandra Rowland, J.M. Miro, Elayne Audrey Becker and Brian McClellan; reprinted fiction from Tamsyn Muir; and original fiction by Anjali Sachdeva and Amit Gupta

The Outer Limits

Wired (June 2022) includes a profile of Janelle Monáe in “Dreams of a Black Futurist”. ■

I have been told I am not being direct enough about this, so here it is, out loud, or at least on paper. We are in trouble.

When I started in 2003, I was told that Charles, the original editor in chief of *Locus* and my boss at the time, wanted to shut it all down with issue #500. The magazine hadn't broken even in a long time, and Charles was worried as it was eating into the savings he was relying on for retirement. But he never was very good at retiring, having threatened to do it a number of times and never being quite able to let go of the reins. Also no one wanted to see *Locus* go away, so it kept going, making just enough to seem like it could turn around at any moment. However, we never saw another profitable year. We were hanging in there right up until the recession in 2009.

I took over in 2009. When Charles died he left the magazine his retirement, so we had a small cushion, but what a time to take over a dying industry, not to mention another person's life legacy. Yet here we are. *Locus* is still the magazine for the field, still promoting new authors and talking to artists and covering conventions and reviewing all that fiction. We think what we do is useful and important. And we are not ready to stop.

We are, however, in trouble. The magazine, the website, the awards... all in jeopardy. In about 2012 the disintegration of print advertising as an income source started its slow glide

EDITORIAL MATTERS

downhill, and this year we are watching the last vestiges of print advertising go away. For years we've been trying to figure out the solution. We apply for grants: SFWA, Amazon, Whiting, Newmark, CLIR, NEA, NEH, anything that might work. We ask for donations. We hope for an angel investor. Nothing is meeting the mark. We need a miracle, or what I like to call an endowment, to cover the shortfall left as advertising goes away.

You don't know how many times people have said to me, "I had no idea *Locus* was in trouble." Part of that, I realize, is that every change we have made in the last 13 years has been about expanding our coverage, making a better magazine, and doing as much as we can to cover and promote the wonderful work people in the field are doing. More short fiction, more artists, more color in the magazine (remember when it was black-and-white inside?), spotlights, polybagging, new cover designs. We've added a *Locus* Online YouTube channel talking about new books, and we've upgraded our *Locus* Awards events and trophies. We've added author workshops. We've had a foray into publishing Lafferty books which we don't really have staff hours for. Daily we get suggestions for awesome new things to do, and sometimes we even take those suggestions on – all without any increase of staffing hours

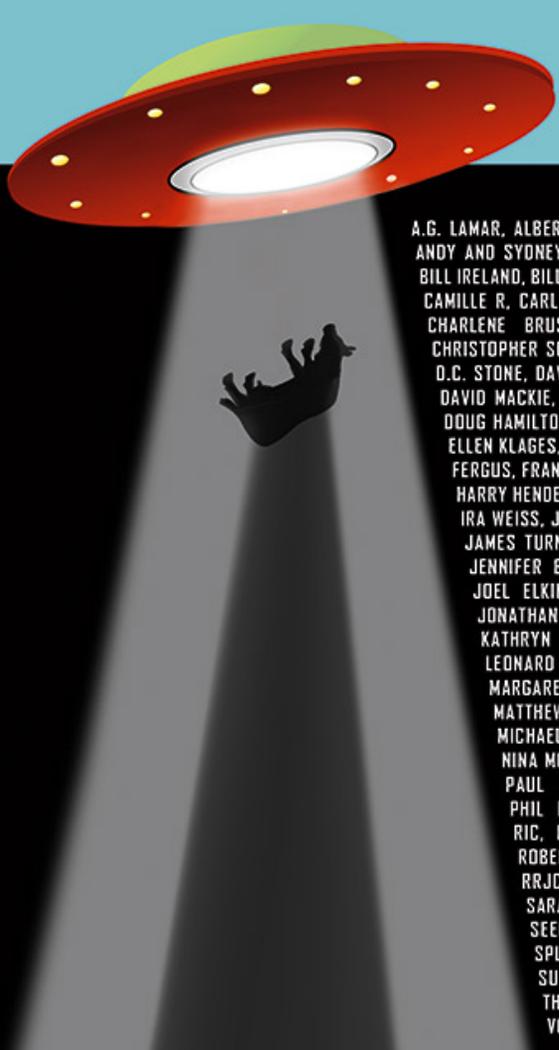
or available resources. The strain is showing! Online we built a new website, started publishing digital issues, film reviews, the online Roundtable, and pushing all the magazine content online, so much good stuff. Twitter. Facebook. Now YouTube.

But we are in trouble. For the first time since I took over the magazine, we will be making some changes to shrink the magazine. You've seen this in every magazine, every paper you read.

This month we are dropping the UK Book Received section – or rather folding it into the main Books Received. We are dropping the label page and printing addresses directly onto the magazine. And there are more changes, some visible, some not, happening. We will be restricting word counts, saying no to articles, looking at bimonthly print options. Pricing out POD. Considering letting go of print, which previously was always a priority. If you are interested in helping, please go to <locusmag.com/donate>, and look at different ways to support the magazine. We are open to suggestions, at least honest and kind ones. To those of you who have donated, thank you so much! Your support keeps us going.

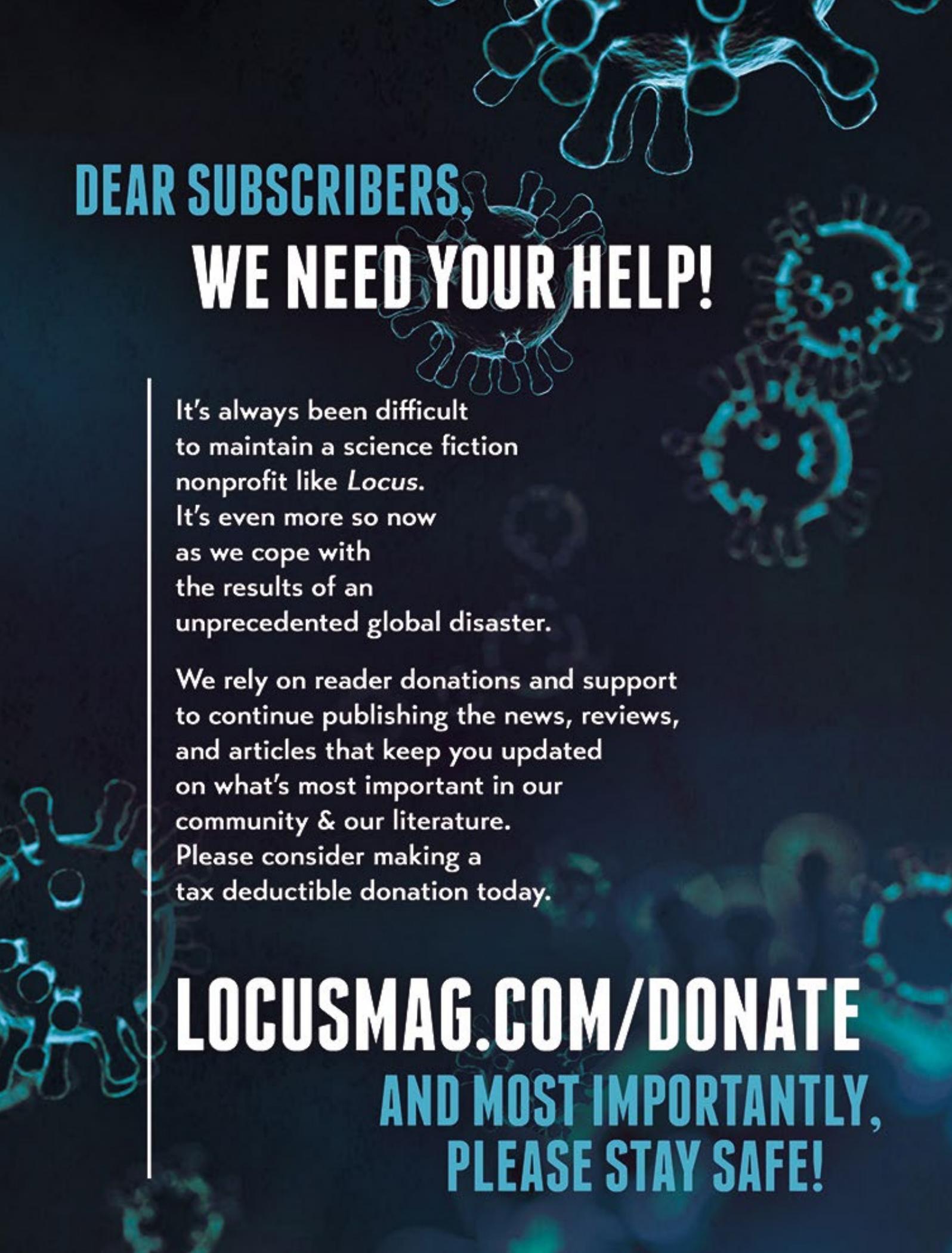
We are in trouble. We are on issue #738. And we aren't ready to stop.

–Liza Groen Trombi ■



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