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From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon ('Dragon's Eye'): Ulrika O'Brien. Available for SAE, ticholama, hesso-penthol or resilian.

MOVING ON. October 2021 will see the tenth anniversary of the online *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, hosted by Orion and linked to the Gollancz SF Gateway ebook operation. Orion/Gollancz have now decided not to renew the contract on 1 October. The principal *Encyclopedia* editors John Clute and David Langford plan to move sf-encyclopedia.com to their own web server and continue as seamlessly as possible with much the same 'look and feel', perhaps with a new sponsor and certainly with a few improvements that the current platform doesn't allow.

The Army of Unalterable Law

Peter S. Beagle and his current business partners regained rights 'to the vast majority of his Intellectual Property' following bankruptcy court proceedings in the wake of the prolonged 2015-2019 lawsuit against his ex-manager Connor 'Freff' Cochran (see *Ansible* 342, 367, 384), who had strategically filed for bankruptcy in 2018. 'This feels like a rebirth. I'm not only still here, I'm more still here.' (SHP press release, 23 March) Amid general rejoicing for this much-loved author, some fans cringed a little at the release's accompanying corporatespeak: 'Beagleverse® is poised to leverage Beagle's library and spread the Beagleverse® brand across traditional and emerging platforms and consumer markets.'

Octavia E. Butler was honoured by NASA, who named the touch-down point of the Mars rover Perseverance as 'Octavia E. Butler Landing.'

Richard Dawkins plans to take the sf world by storm with a novel whose 'scientist heroine reconstructs the genome of australopithecines. Will she actually bring a new Lucy to life after three million years? The bulk of the novel, of course, will explore the social, political, ethical, theological etc implications of such a resurrection.' Gosh. However, 'This fiction business, it's harder than I thought.' – especially dialogue, for which he's been researching masters like 'Aldous Huxley. His characters go on for page after page like fellows of All Souls ...' No word on whether he's peeped into *Jurassic Park*. (*Spectator*, 13 March) [SF°C]

Vladimir Nabokov made a posthumous *TLS* appearance with a not terribly good poem – firmly rejected by *The New Yorker* in 1942 – in which Superman bewails the potential difficulties and dangers of his love life with a mere human, thus anticipating Larry Niven's spoof essay "Man of Steel, Woman of Kleenex" by 27 years. (*Guardian*, 4 March) [BA/PDF]

Rudy Rucker grumbled about a critique (of a certain AI-themed novel) that seemingly assumed no-one had ever thought of anything like this before: 'Fawning normie review of new AI novel in *New Yorker*. "Only Ishiguro, I think, would insist on grounding his speculative narrative so deeply in the ordinary..." Ever heard of the Ware Tetralogy, dude? Didn't think so. Enjoy your privilege.' (Twitter, 7 March) [WM]

Dr. Seuss was the focus of much routine online outrage following a 4 March announcement by the rights owner Dr. Seuss Enterprises that half a dozen titles, including his debut children's book *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* (1937), would no longer be reprinted because they 'portray people in ways that are hurtful and wrong'.

Confluence

ONLINE. 1 Apr • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

ONLINE. 2-5 Apr • **ConFusion** (Eastercon), former venue Birmingham NEC Hilton. £50 reg; concessions £30. See confusion2021.uk.

ONLINE. 2-5 Apr • **Grimmfest Easter Horror Nights** (film). £38 reg; see easterhorrorinnights.eventive.org/welcome for details.

ONLINE. 9-11 April • **Compulsion** (gaming). 'Early bird' tickets at £5 have sold out; now £7 reg at compulsion.org. £1 booking fee.

ONLINE. 9-11 Apr • **Springmoot/AGM** (Tolkien Society); Exeter hotel booking transferred to April 2022 and dinner bookings refunded. See www.tolkienociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2021/.

CANCELLED. 23-25 April • **Whitby Goth Weekend**, Whitby. See Facebook link at whitbygothweekend.co.uk. Maybe 29-31 October....

26-30 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), Cineworld, Leicester Square, London. Tickets available in July from www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsandevents.html; Halloween event at same venue 29-30 October, ticket sales 2 October.

12-14 Nov • **Novacon 50**, Mercure Sherwood Hotel, Nottingham.

£50 reg; under-17s £12; under-13s free. See novacon.org.uk.

SOLD OUT. 21-24 Apr 2022 • **Camp SFW**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. See www.scifiweekender.com. All places presumably taken by membership transfers from the cancelled March 2021 event.

POSTPONED AGAIN. 27-29 May 2022 • **Satellite 7**, Crowne Plaza, Glasgow. £70 reg (£80 at the door); under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. See seven.satellitex.org.uk. Former dates 21-23 May 2021. All existing memberships transferred to 2022; no refunds.

Rumblings. *DisCon III* (Worldcon 2021, Washington DC), with one of its two hotels not only closed but filing for bankruptcy, is unable to tell members whether it will be a physical as well as a virtual convention.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Try Not To See Us. On Kazuo Ishiguro again: '*Klara and the Sun* is just about, technically, a science fiction novel. It's set in an imagined world, different from and more technically advanced than the one we inhabit ...' (*London Review of Books*, March) Adam Roberts: 'This statement is "just about, technically" hoary old bollocks.' (Twitter, 12 March) • In a BBC1 profile of Ishiguro, US novelist Hanya Yanagihara said of his clones-for-spare-parts novel *Never Let Me Go* that 'a lazy or reductive reader might describe it as science fiction.' (28 March) Also in the same programme, Ishiguro himself had a fit of lazy reductiveness and referred to his later works as his fantasy and sci-fi phase. [MJE]

Magazine Scene. Posts at the TTA Press site indicate that *Interzone* is continuing as a print magazine on the same lines as the sister publication *Black Static*: three all-fiction double issues per year and no new subscriptions accepted. The 'Ansible Link' news digest thus follows other nonfiction regulars (such as Nick Lowe's famous 'Mutant Popcorn' film column) into oblivion, after appearing in 228 consecutive issues since 1992. I admit I hadn't been looking forward to concocting a catch-up column that would span the ever-growing gap since *Interzone* 289.

Cosmic Horror Dept. "To try to describe a *SpongeBob Squarepants* movie is to flirt with madness. The narratives jump through so many hoops, turn on such tenuous connections, and are ultimately so surreal that mere words and the earthbound thoughts they describe become inadequate. Watching one of these movies is like having a vision of Cthulhu; you walk away from the experience a changed person, possibly raving about the apocalypse." (*Vulture.com*, 5 March) [RLT]

Awards. *Astrid Lindgren Memorial*: Jean-Claude Mourlevat. [L] • *Crawford* (fantasy debut): Nghi Vo for *The Empress of Salt and Fortune*. • *IAPA Distinguished Scholarship*: Stacy Alaimo. • *John W. Campbell Memorial Award* (or whatever its new name might be): there was no 2020 presentation. • *Nebula* novel finalists: *Piranesi* by Susanna Clarke; *The City We Became* by N.K. Jemisin; *Mexican Gothic* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia; *The Midnight Bargain* by C.L. Polk; *Black Sun* by Rebecca Roanhorse; *Network Effect* by Martha Wells. See nebulas.sfwaworld.org/sfwaworld-announces-the-56th-annual-nebula-award-finalists/ for the other categories. • *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: C.J. Cherryh.

As Others See Us. 'A well-known study from the University of Washington found that when a computer science classroom was decorated with stereotypically man-cave trappings such as sci-fi posters and electronic equipment, college women who entered reported less interest in computer science than those who entered the same classroom when it featured more neutral décor. In short, feeling as though we don't belong has a direct effect on our relationship to our work.' (Sian Beilock, opinion column in *The Washington Post*, 4 March) [PL/MMW]

R.I.P. *David Bailie* (1937-2021), South Africa-born actor in *The Creeping Flesh* (1973), *Son of Dracula* (1973), *Doctor Who* 'The Robots of Death' (1977) and *Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003 plus sequels), died on 6 March aged 83. [SJ] • *Trisha Captain*, UK fan and con-goer since the early Leeds *Star Trek* conventions, reportedly died in late March; she was 64. • *John 'Bud' Cardos* (1929-2020), US actor and film-maker who worked on many genre productions and directed *Kingdom of the Spiders* (1977), *The Dark* (1979), *The Day Time Ended* (1979), *Mutant* (1984) and *Gor II* (1988), died on 31 December aged 91. [SJ] • *Beverly Cleary* (1916-2021), US children's fiction author whose many works include the

Ralph S. Mouse animal fantasy trio beginning with *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* (1965), died on 25 March aged 104. [LP] ● Alan Curtis (1930-2021), UK actor in *Doctor Who* 'The War Machines' (1966) and *Professor Popper's Problem* (1974), died on 18 February aged 90. [AIP] ● Henry Darrow (1933-2021), US actor in *Curse of the Undead* (1959), *Beyond the Universe* (1981), *Halloween with the New Addams Family* (1977) and many genre tv series, died on 14 March aged 87. [SJ] ● Michael Engelberg, producer of the Heinlein-based *The Puppet Masters* (1994), died on 5 March. [DG] ● Jahmil French (1992-2021), Canadian actor in *The Night Before Halloween* (2016) and *At First Light* (2018), died on 1 March aged 28. [AW] ● Richard Gilliland (1950-2021), US actor in *Bug* (1975), *Airplane II: The Sequel* (1982), *Star Kid* (1997) and others, died on 18 March aged 71. [SJ] ● Jeffrey M. Hayes (1953-2021), US producer who oversaw development of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and whose credits include *Time Trax* (1993), *BeastMaster* (1999-2002), *The Lost World* (1999-2002) and *On the Beach* (2000), died on 9 March aged 68. [AIP] ● Tony Hendra (1941-2021), UK screenwriter with credits for *B.C. Rock* (1980), *Mama Dracula* (1980), *The Big Bang* (1987) and *Snow White: The Sequel* (2007), died on 4 March aged 79. [LP] ● Norton Juster (1929-2021), US architect and children's author best known for his classic *The Phantom Tollbooth* (1961), died on 8 March aged 91. [A-TC] Other books include *The Dot and the Line: A Romance in Lower Mathematics* (1963) and *Stark Naked: A Paranomastic Odyssey* (1969). ● Yaphet Kotto (1939-2021), US actor in *Alien* (1979), *The Running Man* (1987), *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare* (1991) and *The Puppet Masters* (1994), died on 14 March aged 81. [CM] ● G. Gordon Liddy (1930-2021) of Watergate infamy, whose later acting career included roles in *Invisible Thread* (Penn & Teller, 1987) and *Super Force* (1990-1992), died on 30 March aged 90. [LP] ● Steve Lines, UK musician and weird fiction author, editor, illustrator and publisher (as Rainfall Records & Books, with many magazines and hundreds of chapbooks with John B. Ford), died on 23 March aged 63. [GOB] ● George Mandel (1920-2021), US comics artist (active before World War II) and novelist whose venture into the fantastic was *Crocodile Blood* (1985), died on 13 February aged 101. [RB] ● Isidore Mankofsky (1931-2021), US cinematographer whose genre credits include *Werewolves on Wheels* (1971), *The Muppet Movie* (1979), *Somewhere in Time* (1980) and *The Arrival* (1996), died on 11 March aged 89. [AIP] ● Alan Marques (1960-2021), Irish-born UK visual/digital effects supervisor whose genre credits include *Space Precinct* (1994), *GoldenEye* (1995), *Lost In Space* (1998) and *Outcasts* (2011), died on 26 March aged 60. [LM] ● Dean Morrissey (1951-2021), US fantasy artist active since the late 1970s who painted many book covers and illustrated his own children's books beginning with *Ship of Dreams* (1994), died on 4 March aged 69. He won four Chesley awards. [SJ] ● Staffan Mossige-Norheim (1962-2021), Swedish fan and singer/lyricist often using sf themes, died on 5 March aged 58. [J-HH] ● Nicola Pagett (1945-2021), Egyptian-born UK actress in *Frankenstein: The True Story* (1973), died on 3 March aged 75. [SJ] ● Trevor Peacock (1931-2021), UK actor in *The Year of the Sex Olympics* (1968), *Merlin of the Crystal Cave* (1991) and *Neverwhere* (1996), died on 8 March aged 89. [CM] ● Ian Penman (1950-2021), UK fan in the 1970s North East SF Group (NESFiG) and Gannetfandom, whose fanzines were *Armageddon* and *Oracle*, died on 16 March. [IW] ● Robert Rodan (1938-2021), US actor in *Dark Shadows* (1968), died on 25 March aged 83. ● Geoffrey Scott (1942-2021), US actor in *Dark Shadows* (1970), *The Secret Empire* (1979) and *Hulk* (2003), died on 23 February aged 79. [SJ] ● Franklyn Searight (1935-2020), US author of weird fiction – some collected in *Lair of the Dreamer: A Cthulhu Mythos Omnibus* (2007) – and verse, died on 8 December aged 85. [DD via MA] ● George Segal (1934-2021), US actor in *The Terminal Man* (1974), *Jonny Quest* (1996-1997) and *2012* (2009), died on 23 March aged 87. [PDF] ● Cliff Simon (1962-2021), South Africa-born actor in *Stargate SG-1* (2001-2007), *Stargate: Continuum* (2008) and *Project Eden* (2017), died on 9 March aged 58. [S] ● Si Spencer (1961-2021), UK comics writer for *Judge Dredd Magazine*, *Books of Magick: Life During Wartime* and *Hellblazer*, died on 16 February aged 59. [S] ● Sylvain St-Pierre, Canadian fan, costumer and convention-goer long associated with the Ottawa SF Society, died on 25 March. [LPen] ● Bertrand Tavernier (1941-2021), French director and screenwriter whose sf film was the D.G. Compton-based *Death Watch* (*La mort en direct*, 1980), died on 25 March aged 79. [GC] ● Frank Thorne (1930-2021), US comics artist active since 1948 and best known for his work on Marvel's *Red Sonja* 1976-1979, died on 7 March aged 90. He also drew *Flash Gordon*, *The Green Hornet*, and *Tom Corbett Space Cadet*. [PDF] ● Jessica Walter (1941-2021), US actress in *Dr Strange* (1978), *Vampire* (1979), *Wildfire* (1986), *Dinosaurs* (1991-1994), *Archer* (2009-2020) and *Star vs. the Forces of Evil* (2015-2018), died on 24 March aged 80. ● Norman J.

Warren (1942-2021), UK cult horror director whose films include *Prey* (1977), *Spaced Out* (1979), *Inseminoid* (1981) and *Bloody New Year* (1987), died on 11 March aged 78. [SJ] ● Joan Weldon (1930-2021), US actress with a starring role in the giant-ants monster movie *Them!* (1954), died on 11 February aged 90. [AIP]

Research Dept. 'Today is Leonard Nimoy Day in Boston, and local WCRB DJ Laura Carlo just asked us to join in honouring "Doctor Spock" with his famous phrase "Go forth and prosper".' (26 March) [PDF] ● 'Star date 2021: William Shatner turns 190 ...' (*i* headline, 27 March)

FAAn Awards associated with the postponed Corflu 38 (Bristol, November): NICKZINE *Portable Storage* ed. William Breiding. PERZINE *This Here...* ed. Nic Farey. SPECIAL PUBLICATION *Outworlds 71/Afterworlds* ed. Jeanne Bowman, Rich Coad, Alan Rosenthal, Pat Virzi. FANWRITER Claire Brialey. FANARTIST Ulrika O'Brien. LETTERHACK (Harry Warner Jr Memorial) Mark Plummer. COVER *Beam #15* by Sara Felix. WEBSITE Fanac.org ed. Joe Siclari, Edie Stern. NUMBER ONE FAN FACE Claire Brialey. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT David Langford. I am thoroughly boggled. Many thanks!

As Others Saw Us. An obituary of Betty Willingale (1927-2021) of the BBC TV script unit: '... she turned down the chance to work on *Z Cars* and *Doctor Who*. "I couldn't bear science fiction," she said.' (*Guardian*, 7 March) [AIP] But Angus Wilson's sf *The Old Men at the Zoo* was OK.

The Weakest Link. Ben Shephard: 'Which blind and deaf female American author and educator was the subject of the Oscar-winning film *The Miracle Worker*?' Contestant: 'J.K. Rowling.' (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

The Dead Past. 40 Years Ago, Brian Aldiss wrote: 'Since resigning – more in sorrow than in anger, it's true – from the boards of SFS and the JWC Memorial Award, I have been invited to become one of the four judges under Malcolm Bradbury for this year's mundane Booker Prize. There's a chance for you yet, Langford; slip your book into the NBL with a hefty cheque between pp 100 and 101 and you'll be up there with the Goldings and Murdochs....' (*Ansible* 17, April 1981) ● 50 Years Ago, Kingsley Amis wrote to a fanzine (*Cypher*) and said Amisian things: 'Even the illiterate bards of Anglo-Saxon pre-feudal society needed talent of its sort, or they would soon find themselves demoted to cleaning out the latrines – which is all a steadily growing majority of "writers" inside and outside SF are fit for.' (Quoted in *Checkpoint* 1, April 1971)

Project Northmoor, set up to crowdfund the purchase of Tolkien's old Oxford home for 'literary retreat' purposes that failed to win the support of the Tolkien Society, announced that they hadn't raised enough before the vendor chose another buyer. (Facebook, 23 March) The parody Twitter account 'Project Smaugmoor' had provided helpful FAQ updates on which it would perhaps be unwise to comment: 'How will my donation be spent?' 'It won't be spent. It will be hoarded and sat on.'

Editorial. Another addition to the free ebook library at taff.org.uk: *Creative Random Harris*, collecting more than 276,000 words of hilarious, raucous and generally irresponsible fanwriting by Chuck (alias Chuch) Harris, active in the 1950s as a founding editor of *Hyphen* and again from 1984 until his death in 1999. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=CRH.

Outraged Letters. Mike Moorcock: 'Sorry to hear Ina [Shorrock] finally died. That home-brew kept her going! Ramsey said it. She was a great lady. / Does that make me one of the few survivors of Loncon '57? Bob Silverberg? Who else? Blimey... I wonder what happened to my super-kazoo. It was how we met. / Just finished my last Elric book for his 60th birthday (*Science Fantasy* June 61). He was a question on *Jeopardy* and I got it wrong.... / Did you hear Peter Beagle got last year's JACK TREVOR STORY CUP? [Yes: see A398.] True to the spirit of the award, he spent the money prize giving a party to his friends before the money and cup arrived in the mail. It never arrived. Cheque was redrawn, cup gone. / Life – at least for a moment – goes on.' (Email, 1 March)

Thog's Plasterclass. *Neat Tricks.* 'He suddenly lurched his head to the roof of the bay compartment.' (Phillip G. Cargile, 2013) [JD] ● *Dept of Polite Paperwork.* 'Blaydon stood up, made his way past a couple of piles of paper and shook hands with them both ...' (Peter Robinson, *Many Rivers to Cross*, 2019) [LG] ● *Machismo Dept.* 'I stumbled blindly into the bathroom and turned on the shower. Five minutes later, I realized that I was staring straight up into the hot spray with my eyes wide open ...' (George Alec Effinger, *The Exile's Kiss*, 1991) [BA] ● *Suspiciously Out of Character.* 'For a farmer, you seem very interested in the opposite sex.' (Terence Haile, *Space Train*, 1962)

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