



# ASFACTS 2020

## APRIL "PANDEMIC QUARANTINE" ISSUE

### 2020 HUGO FINALISTS NAMED

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) announced the nominees Finalists for the Hugo Awards and for the Astounding Award for Best New Writer have been announced by ConZealand, the 78th Worldcon, reported Locus Online on April 7.

Among the nominees are several people with connections to New Mexico and/or Bubonicon, including Arkady Martine, Becky Chambers, James S.A. Corey, John Picacio, and T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon). A full list of Finalists follows -

**Best Novel:** *The City in the Middle of the Night* by Charlie Jane Anders, *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix E. Harrow, *The Light Brigade* by Kameron Hurley, *A Memory Called Empire* by Arkady Martine, *Middlegame* by Seanan McGuire, and *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir.

**Best Novella:** *To Be Taught, If Fortunate* by Becky Chambers, "Anxiety Is the Dizziness of Freedom" by Ted Chiang, *The Haunting of Tram Car 015* by P. Djèli Clark, *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar & Max Gladstone, *In an Absent Dream: Wayward Children Book 4* by Seanan McGuire, and *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon, with Daveed Diggs, William Hutson & Jonathan Snipes.

**Best Novelette:** "For He Can Creep" by Siobhan Carroll, "Omphalos" by Ted Chiang, "Away with the Wolves" by Sarah Gailey, "Emergency Skin" by N.K. Jemisin, "The Blur in the Corner of Your Eye" by Sarah Pinsker, and "The Archontology of Love" by Caroline M. Yoachim.

**Best Short Story:** "Do Not Look Back, My Lion" by Alix E. Harrow, "As the Last I May Know" by S.L. Huang, "And Now His Lordship Is Laughing" by Shiv Ramdas, "Ten Excerpts from an Annotated Bibliography on the Cannibal Women of Ratnabar Island" by Nibedita Sen, "Blood Is Another Word for Hunger" by Rivers Solomon, and "A Catalog of Storms" by Fran Wilde.

**Best Series:** *Winternight* by Katherine Arden, *The Expanse* by James S.A. Corey, *Luna* by Ian McDonald, *InCryptid* by Seanan McGuire, *Planetfall* by Emma New-

man, and *The Wormwood Trilogy* by Tade Thompson.

**Best Related Work:** *Joanna Russ* by Gwyneth Jones, *The Pleasant Profession of Robert A. Heinlein* by Farah Mendlesohn, "2019 John W. Campbell Award Acceptance Speech" by Jeannette Ng, *The Lady from the Black Lagoon: Hollywood Monsters and the Lost Legacy of Militant Patrick* by Mallory O'Meara, *Becoming Superman: My Journey From Poverty to Hollywood* by J. Michael Straczynski, and *Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin*.

**Best Graphic Story or Comic:** *Die, Volume 1: Fantasy Heartbreaker* by Kieron Gillen, *The Wicked + The Divine, Volume 9: Okay* by Kieron Gillen, *Monstress, Volume 4: The Chosen* by Marjorie Liu, *LaGuardia* by Nnedi Okorafor, *Paper Girls, Volume 6* by Brian K. Vaughan, and *Mooncakes* by Wendy Xu & Suzanne Walker.

**Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form:** *Avengers: Endgame*, *Captain Marvel*, *Good Omens*, *Russian Doll: Season One*, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*, and *Us*.

**Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form:** *Doctor Who*: "Resolution," *The Expanse*: "Cibola Burn," *The Good Place*: "The Answer," *The Mandalorian*: "Redemption," *Watchmen*: "A God Walks into Abar," and *Watchmen*: "This Extraordinary Being."

**Best Editor, Short Form:** Neil Clarke, Ellen Datlow, C.C. Finlay, Jonathan Strahan, Lynne M. Thomas & Michael Damian Thomas, and Sheila Williams.

**Best Editor, Long Form:** Sheila Gilbert, Brit Hvide, Diana M. Pho, Devi Pillai, Miriam Weinberg, and Navah Wolfe.

**Best Professional Artist:** Tommy Arnold, Rovina Cai, Galen Dara, John Picacio, Yuko Shimizu, and Alyssa

### UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Friday: April 20:** No physical meeting was held due to pandemic restrictions in New Mexico!
- **May 8:** Devin O'Leary of the *Weekly Alibi* presents his 8TH SCI-FI TRAILER PARK for Summer & Fall (assuming restrictions are lifted in time).
- **June 12:** Puppeteer Michael McCormick visits to talk about his Muppet experiences (rescheduled).
- **July 10:** Portales author Darynda Jones visits. Plus summer's issue of *ASFACTS* (deadline July 6).
- **August 7 (week early):** Bubonicon 52 preview & a short summer-time film.
- **August 14:** Bubonicon 52 Gofer Meeting.
- **September 18 (week late):** Reports on Bubonicon 52, and hopefully DragonCon.

**Craig Chrissinger**, normal editor. **Darth Vader**, guest editor each December. Please Send All Correspondence to — PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176-7257. Phone: (505) 266-8905. E-mail: [cwcraig@nmia.com](mailto:cwcraig@nmia.com). *ASFACTS* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. *SITHFACTS* out each December. NEXT DEADLINE: Mon, July 6.

**Club Officers:** Craig Chrissinger & Jessica Coyle, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Harriet Engle, Moderator. Grant Kuck, Alternator. Coronavirus, stupid interloper. **B'con Con Chair:** Craig Chrissinger (505) 559-0931.

Winans.

**Best Semiprozine:** *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Escape Pod*, *Fireside*, *FIYAH*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Uncanny*.

**Best Fanzine:** *The Book Smugglers*, *Galactic Journey*, *Journey Planet*, *nerds of a feather*, *flock together*, *Quick Sip Reviews*, and *The Rec Center*.

**Best Fancast:** *Be the Serpent*, *The Coode Street Podcast*, *Galactic Suburbia*, *Our Opinions Are Correct*, Claire Rousseau's YouTube channel, and *The Skiffy and Fanty Show*.

**Best Fan Writer:** Cora Buhlert, James Davis Nicoll, Alasdair Stuart, Bogi Takács, Paul Weimer, and Adam Whitehead.

**Best Fan Artist:** Iain Clark, Sara Felix, Grace P. Fong, Meg Frank, Ariela Housman, and Elise Matthesen.

**Lodestar for Best Young Adult Book (Not a Hugo):** *The Wicked King* by Holly Black, *Deeplight* by Frances Hardinge, *Minor Mage* by T. Kingfisher (Vernon), *Catfishing on CatNet* by Naomi Kritzer, *Dragon Pearl* by Yoon Ha Lee, and *Riverland* by Fran Wilde.

**Astounding Award for Best New Writer (Not a Hugo):** Sam Hawke, R.F. Kuang, Jenn Lyons, Nibedita Sen, Tasha Suri, and Emily Tesh.

## SF EVENTS GO VIRTUAL

With so many conventions and events postponed or canceled due to COVID-19, many organizers are moving to online alternatives. *Locus Magazine* is trying to keep an updated list of virtual SF events as they learn about more. Any updates can be sent to [locus@locusmag.com](mailto:locus@locusmag.com).

+ Baen Books launched the weekly *Baen Friday Night Live Reading Series* hosted by editor Christopher Ruocchio on April 3 at 8 pm Eastern, with authors reading and taking questions. They also plan an online version of their *Travelling Roadshow*, highlighting upcoming titles, on April 11 and April 18 at 4 pm Eastern.

+ Online shared world *Second Life* will host the Second Life Book Club, a “virtual world book tour” to be held on the first Wednesday of every month at 10 am Pacific. The inaugural event on April 8 featured S.L. Huang, C.B. Lee, Ken Liu, and Matt Ruff in a panel discussion on “the new reality of writing and selling books in the age of COVID-19.”

+ The Center for Science and the Imagination at Arizona State University has launched *Us in Flux*, “a series of stories and virtual events about community, collaboration, and collective imagination in times of transformative change.” Their first online event, to be held April 13 at 4 pm Eastern, will feature author Christopher Rowe in conversation with Professor Michael Bell.

+ The April installment of the *Fantastic Fiction at KGB* reading series had livestream readings by Michael Cisco and Clay McLeod Chapman on April 15.

+ *The L.A. Times* presented its book awards online beginning at 8 am Pacific on April 17, announcing winners in 14 categories (including the inaugural Bradbury

Prize for SF), “followed by brief video acceptance speeches from award recipients.”

+ The Everywhere Book Fest, a “virtual gathering of kidlit authors, books, and readers that will bring the book festival experience to everyone,” will be held May 1-2.

+ Balticon 54, planned for May 22-25, in Baltimore, MD, has transitioned to a free “virtual Balticon.”

+ Wiscon 44, scheduled for May 22-25, in Madison, WI, is now planning an online conference.

+ The SFWA Nebula Conference, scheduled for May 28-31 in Woodland Hills, CA, is becoming “an entirely virtual conference, which will be live and interactive May 29th-31st,” and will include “panels, solo presentations, conference mentorships, workshops, forums, chats, and virtual room parties (including a dance party hosted by John Scalzi). A portion of the funds we raise will go to assist SFWA members financially affected by COVID-19... The Nebula Awards ceremony will stream live at 8 pm Eastern on May 30th.” Registration is now open.

+ The Texas Library Association Annual Conference, planned for March 24-27 in Houston, TX, has become TLA 2020 Virtual, to be held April 21-22.

+ CoNZealand, the 78th World Science Fiction Convention in Wellington, New Zealand, scheduled for July 29-August 2, will be the first ever “virtual Worldcon.”

## SFWA STARTS COVID-19 FUND

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) has allocated \$100,000 to assist its members with expenses due to COVID-19, reported Locus Online mid-April. “This receipt-based grant will allow members to apply for up to \$1,000 of emergency funding to cover the cost of essential needs, such as housing and food, due to lost income from the pandemic.” They are also implementing a six-month deadline extension for all membership dues, effective immediately.

“These are unprecedented times,” SFWA president Mary Robinette Kowal said. “Many of our members are facing painful and difficult circumstances. For creative artists, in particular, the pandemic has brought the cancellation and suspension of much of our usual access to revenue. Uncertainty about the future is in the air, and bills continue to come due.”

Many SFWA members have seen their income sharply reduced, as publishers delay anthologies and novels, advertising vanishes in the flood of news, and public events like conventions and tours are canceled or postponed. Many bookstores and other distributors have shuttered, and readers have less money for buying books.

For more info or to apply, see [www.sfwaworld.org](http://www.sfwaworld.org).

## 2019 NEBULA AWARDS BALLOT

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) released the final ballot for the 2019 Nebula Awards on February 20, reported Locus Online. The nom-

inees include Santa Fe's Arkady Martine.

**Novel:** *Marque of Caine* by Charles E. Gannon, *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix E. Harrow, *A Memory Called Empire* by Arkady Martine, *Gods of Jade and Shadow* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir, and *A Song for a New Day* by Sarah Pinsker.

**Novella:** "Anxiety Is the Dizziness of Freedom" by Ted Chiang, *The Haunting of Tram Car 015* by P. Djèli Clark, *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar & Max Gladstone, *Her Silhouette, Drawn in Water* by Vylar Kaftan, *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon, with Daveed Diggs, William Hutson & Jonathan Snipes, and *Catfish Lullaby* by A.C. Wise.

**Novelette:** "A Strange Uncertain Light" by G.V. Anderson, "For He Can Creep" by Siobhan Carroll, "His Footsteps, Through Darkness and Light" by Mimi Mondal, "The Blur in the Corner of Your Eye" by Sarah Pinsker, *Carpe Glitter* by Cat Rambo, and "The Archchronology of Love" by Caroline M. Yoachim.

**Short Story:** "Give the Family My Love" by A.T. Greenblatt, "The Dead, In Their Uncontrollable Power" by Karen Osborne, "And Now His Lordship Is Laughing" by Shiv Ramdas, "Ten Excerpts from an Annotated Bibliography on the Cannibal Women of Ratnabar Island" by Nibedita Sen, "A Catalog of Storms" by Fran Wilde, and "How the Trick Is Done" by A.C. Wise.

**Game Writing:** *Outer Wilds* by Kelsey Beachum, *The Outer Worlds* by Leonard Boyarsky, Megan Starks, Kate Dollarhyde & Chris L'Etoile, *The Magician's Workshop* by Kate Heartfield, *Disco Elysium* by Robert Kurvitz, and *Fate Accessibility Toolkit* by Elsa Sjunneson-Henry.

**Ray Bradbury Award:** *Avengers: Endgame*, *Captain Marvel*, *Good Omens*: "Hard Times," *The Mandalorian*: "The Child," *Russian Doll*: "The Way Out," and *Watchmen*: "A God Walks into Abar."

**Andre Norton Award:** *Sal and Gabi Break the Universe* by Carlos Hernandez, *Catfishing on CatNet* by Naomi Kritzer, *Dragon Pearl* by Yoon Ha Lee, *Peasprout Chen: Battle of Champions* by Henry Lien, *Cog* by Greg van Eekhout, and *Riverland* by Fran Wilde.

Winners will be announced in a virtual celebration of the 55th Annual Nebula Awards on Saturday, May 30.

## INAUGURAL BRADBURY PRIZE WINNER

*Black Leopard, Red Wolf* by Marlon James has won the inaugural Ray Bradbury Prize for Science Fiction, Fantasy & Speculative Fiction. Winners were announced via the *Los Angeles Times*' Books Twitter feed on April 17, with video acceptance speeches on YouTube.

The prize was sponsored by the Ray Bradbury Literary Works and "honors and extends Bradbury's literary legacy by celebrating and elevating the writers working in his field today." The jurors were Kelly Link (chair), Tananarive Due, and Tim Pratt.

Honorees of genre interest were also announced in

additional book prize categories. Walter Mosley received the 2019 Robert Kirsch Award for lifetime achievement. *The Old Drift* by Namwali Serpell received the Art Seidenbaum Award for First Fiction.



## MARTINE WINS COMPTON CROOK AWARD

The Baltimore Science Fiction Society (BSFS) has announced the winner of the 2020 Compton Crook Award: *A Memory Called Empire* by Santa Fe's Arkady Martine, reported Locus Online mid-April.

Other nominees included *Here and Now and Then* by Mike Chen, *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix Harrow, *The Outside* by Ada Hoffman, and *A Song for a New Day* by Sarah Pinsker.

Selection is by vote of the BSFS membership. The award honors the best first SF/fantasy/horror novel of the year, and "includes a framed award document and, for the novel's author, a check for \$1,000 and an invitation to be the Compton Crook Guest at Balticon for two years." This year's Balticon 54 will be held online only May 22-25. For more information, see [www.bsfs.org](http://www.bsfs.org).

## EMEZI WINS 2019 OTHERWISE AWARD

*Freshwater* by Akwaeke Emezi won the 2019 Otherwise Award (formerly the James Tiptree, Jr. Award), given annually to works of science fiction or fantasy that explore and expand gender roles. Emezi will receive \$1,000, original artwork, and chocolate, reported Locus Online mid-April.

The award jury released an "honor list" of other noteworthy works: "Dreamborn" by Kylie Ariel Bemis, *The Book of Flora* by Meg Elison, *Pet* by Akwaeke Emezi, *Meet Me in the Future* by Kameron Hurley, "Of Warps and Wefts" by Innocent Chizaram Ilo, *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal, the *Elemental Logic* series by Laurie J. Marks, *The Lonesome Bodybuilder* by Yukiko Motoya, and *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon.

The 2019 jurors included Mariana Calderon, Debbie Notkin, Trish Salah, and Bogi Takács. For more information, see the Otherwise website - [otherwiseaward.org](http://otherwiseaward.org).

## BOOK GROUP STILL READING

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group is doing book COMMENTS BY EMAIL this month, with submissions needed by 7:30 pm Monday, April 20, on Lodestar-nominated *Minor Mage* by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon).

The group then plans to focus on *The Freeze-Frame Revolution* by Peter Watts on Monday, May 18 — hopefully

at Jason's Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America's Parkway NE - across the street from Bubonicon's Marriott Hotel) if current pandemic restrictions are lifted. If a physical meeting is not possible on May 18, a virtual Zoom meeting may be attempted.

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers on the third Monday of each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on selected novels at Page One Books in the Mountain Run Shopping Center (except during the pandemic as the bookstore is considered a "non-essential business"). For more info, contact Leah at mrsran-som@hotmail.com or Craig at 266-8905.

## 1945 RETRO HUGO AWARDS BALLOT

Finalists for the 1945 Retro Hugo Awards, honoring work from 1944, have been announced by CoNZeland, the 78th Worldcon via their YouTube channel. Locus Online reported on the list, which includes New Mexico's late Jack Speer, on April 7.

**Best Novel:** "Shadow Over Mars" by Leigh Brackett, *Land of Terror* by Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Golden Fleece* by Robert Graves, "The Winged Man" by E. Mayne Hull & A.E. Van Vogt, *The Wind on the Moon* by Eric Linklater, and *Sirius* by Olaf Stapledon.

**Best Novella:** "The Jewel of Bas" by Leigh Brackett, "A God Named Kroo" by Henry Kuttner, "Trog" by Murray Leinster, "Intruders from the Stars" by Ross Rocklynne, "Killdozer!" by Theodore Sturgeon, and "The Changeling" by A.E. van Vogt.

**Best Novelette:** "The Big and the Little" by Isaac Asimov, "Arena" by Fredric Brown, "No Woman Born" by C.L. Moore, "The Children's Hour" by Lawrence O'Donnell (C.L. Moore & Henry Kuttner), "When the Bough Breaks" by Lewis Padgett (C.L. Moore & Henry Kuttner), and "City" by Clifford D. Simak.

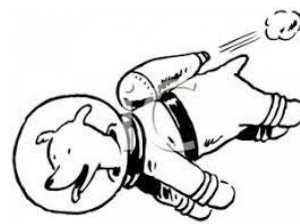
**Best Short Story:** "The Wedge" by Isaac Asimov, "I, Rocket" by Ray Bradbury, "And the Gods Laughed" by Fredric Brown, "Desertion" by Clifford D. Simak, "Huddling Place" by Clifford D. Simak, and "Far Centaurus" by A.E. van Vogt.

**Best Series:** *Pellucidar* by Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Jules de Grandin* by Seabury Quinn, *The Shadow* by Maxwell Gibson (Walter B. Grant), *Captain Future* by Brett Sterling, *Doc Savage* by Kenneth Robeson/Lester Dent, and *Cthulhu Mythos* by H.P. Lovecraft, August Derleth, and others.

**Best Related Work:** "The Science-Fiction Field" by Leigh Brackett, *Mr. Tompkins Explores the Atom* by George Gamow, "The Works of H.P. Lovecraft: Suggestions for a Critical Appraisal" by Fritz Leiber, *Rockets: The Future of Travel Beyond the Stratosphere* by Willy Ley, *Fancyclopedia* by Jack Speer, and '42 To '44: *A Contemporary Memoir Upon Human Behavior During the Crisis of the World Revolution* by H.G. Wells.

**Best Graphic Story or Comic:** *Donald Duck*: "The

Mad Chemist" by Carl Barks, *Buck Rogers*: "Hollow Planetoid" by Dick Calkins, *Flash Gordon*: "Battle for Tropica" by Alex Raymond, *Flash Gordon*: "Triumph in Tropica" by Alex Raymond, *Superman*: "The Mysterious Mr. Mxyzptlk" by Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster, and *The Spirit*: "For the Love of Clara De-foe" by Manly Wade Wellman, Lou Fine, and Don Komisarow.



**Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form:** *The Canterville Ghost*, *The Curse of the Cat People*, *Donovan's Brain*, *House of Frankenstein*, *The Invisible Man's Revenge*, and *It Happened Tomorrow*.

**Best Professional Editor, Short Form:** John W. Campbell, Jr, Oscar J. Friend, Mary Gnaedinger, Dorothy McIlwraith, Raymond A. Palmer, and W. Scott Peacock.

**Best Professional Artist:** Earle Bergey, Margaret Brundage, Boris Dolgov, Matt Fox, Paul Orban, and William Timmins.

**Best Fanzine:** *The Acolyte*, *Diablerie*, *Futurian War Digest*, *Shangri L'Affaires*, *Voice of the Imagi-Nation*, and *Le Zombie*.

**Best Fan Writer:** Fritz Leiber, Jr, Morojo (Myrtle R. Douglas), J. Michael Rosenblum, Jack Speer, Bob Tucker, and Harry Warner, Jr.

## PANDEMIC BOOKSTORE NEWS

Bookstores are suffering during the COVID-19 epidemic, with many forced to temporarily close their physical locations, reported Locus Online in early April. Barnes & Noble shops remain open (except in locations closed by public order), but CEO James Daunt warns his employees that changes are coming, with plans for "substantial reductions in cost," including cuts of personnel already underway at the home office. He says sales continue well, especially online, but, "We have to assume that this is going to go on for a while, and that it is going to be a lot worse than it is now."

Daunt seems to view closures and layoffs as inevitable, and says "when a store is closed, employees will first make use of their Paid Time Off. When this is exhausted, we will pay employees with one or more years of service for up to two weeks based on their weekly standard hours. Temporarily, and with sincere regret, on closure we lay off all those employees impacted with less than six months employment on the day of closure... This is a devastating situation in which to find ourselves and we understand the personal impacts of such action."

Daunt planned to close all 280 branches of Waterstones, the bookseller he runs in the UK, effective March 23. Most of the staff is furloughed without pay, though the UK government is expected to cover lost wages.

Powell's Books in Portland, OR, announced temporary layoffs in mid-March, letting go about 85 percent of



their nearly 600 employees. HR director Michelle Afrosio said, "If sales continue to decrease in the future, we will need to take further action. We will try to avoid additional layoffs by reducing the size of the company over time through a hiring freeze and attrition." The store expects it to take several months for normal operations to resume, and indicated that some of the layoffs are permanent.

About 400 members of Powell's staff are unionized (part of ILWU Local 5), and the union said, "As with most emergencies, those that suffer the most are workers and marginalized communities. We do not believe this to be appropriate or fair and in this moment we continue to urge all Employers, including Powell's Books, to continue to support workers in any and every way possible."

Owner Emily Powell says, "I am doing everything within my power to keep Powell's alive," but notes, "We run on duct tape and twine on a daily basis, every day trading funds from one pocket to patch the hole in another." Powell's is still shipping books online.

McNally Jackson in New York also closed its stores and laid off much of its staff in mid-March, with reports that about 80 people were let go, "to be hired back at an indeterminate date." They will keep health care for the rest of the month. The store had said, "We are paying staff for the week. Beyond that, facing down a massive, unprecedented loss in revenue, in consultation with union we have laid off employees until the store is able to reopen." They are fulfilling phone and web orders.

Books-a-Million remains open, but is offering curbside pick-up of books at most locations. Half-Price Books has temporarily closed all its stores to the public, but also offers curbside pickup. The Tattered Cover bookshops in Denver, CO, has put most of their 100-plus employees on unpaid leave (which at least lets them keep their health insurance), while keeping on a "skeleton crew" to fulfill orders online; they also offer curbside pick-ups. The 21 brick-and-mortar Amazon Books stores have all temporarily closed.

Here in New Mexico, all bookstores are closed by Governor Lujan-Grisham's proclamation of March 23, which closes all "non-essential businesses" and restricts restaurants to carry out and delivery only. That order is effective through April 30, but could be extended. Many NM bookstores are offering delivery for online orders (often fulfilled by their distributors).

## PINSKER WINS PK DICK AWARD

*Sooner or Later Everything Falls into the Sea* by Sarah Pinsker (Small Beer) won the 2020 Philip K. Dick Award, announced April 10 by Norwescon in an online ceremony. *The Little Animals* by Sarah Tolmie (Aqueduct) received a special citation.

The award is presented annually to a distinguished work of science fiction originally published in paperback form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philip K. Dick Trust and the Philadelphia Science Fiction

Society, and the ceremony is sponsored by the Northwest Science Fiction Society. The judges were Thomas A. Easton, Karen Heuler, Mur Lafferty, Patricia MacEwen (chair), and James Sallis.

For more information, see [www.norwescon.org](http://www.norwescon.org).

## DIRECTOR STUART GORDON DIES

by Jen Yamato, Los Angeles Times – 03/25/20

Stuart Gordon, the film and theater director best known for cult horror classics *Re-Animator*, *Castle Freak* and *From Beyond*, died March 24 in Van Nuys of multiple organ failure from kidney disease. He was 72.

"His wife and children are heartbroken at the loss of Stuart, and we are grateful for all the love and support that has been shown us by his fans and his followers," his family told the *Times* the night of his death.

Gordon made his film debut with 1985's *Re-Animator*, a horror comedy cult classic that starred Jeffrey Combs as Dr. Herbert West, a medical student obsessed with raising the dead.

Born in Chicago, he was also a veteran stage director with a background in experimental theater, and a co-creator, with collaborators Brian Yuzna and Ed Naha, of the 1989 Disney family hit *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*, its sequel and a subsequent TV series.

In his student days at the University of Wisconsin, Gordon created the Screw Theater, staging an antiwar rendition of *Peter Pan* in 1968 that ended in nudity and arrests relating to obscenity for himself and his future wife. The charges didn't stick but the radical streak did. Together they went on to establish the Organic Theater Company in Chicago, which premiered *Bleacher Bums* and David Mamet's *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*.

Gordon's films spanned horror, sci-fi, comedy and drama genres that probed dark human curiosities. He frequently adapted H.P. Lovecraft, turning the author's stories into 1995's *Castle Freak*, 2001's *Dagon*, as well as the *Masters of Horror* episode "Dreams in the Witch-House."

Following *Re-Animator*, he adapted another Lovecraft mad-science tale, *From Beyond*, about researchers whose experiments turn interdimensional, with horrific results.

In his 1985 review, *Times* film critic Kevin Thomas described *Re-Animator* as "a real throat-grabber" and "simply the best, funniest Grand Guignol horror picture to come along in ages."

A year later, *Times*' Patrick Goldstein said that *From Beyond* "takes us back to the glory days of low-budget screamers, when slimy monsters ruled the dimly lit attics of crumbling mansions, terrifying victims old enough to carry a driver's license."

Edgar Allan Poe was another influence in Gordon's film and stage work, from 1991's *The Pit and the Pendulum* and "The Black Cat" for *Masters of Horror* in 2007, to his later one-man play *Nevermore...An Evening with Edgar Allan Poe*, starring Combs.

In film and on stage, he exhibited a flair for the outré. For *Taste*, the 2014 play he directed at L.A.'s Sacred Fools Theater based on a true incidence of stranger-than-fiction cannibalism, he sent a wafting fragrance of onions into the audience that left an indelible sense memory. He described it to *Variety* as both a play and a cooking show. "But not one you'd see on the Food Network."

Gordon's wide-ranging filmography includes *Dolls* (1987), *Robot Jox* (1990), *Fortress* (1992), *Space Truckers* (1996, with Dennis Hopper), *King of the Ants* (2003, based on the novel by Charlie Higson), and *The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit* (1998), adapted by Ray Bradbury from his own play. Even with a cast including Edward James Olmos, Joe Mantegna and Sid Caesar, *Ice Cream Suit*, set in East Los Angeles, was released direct-to-video by Touchstone Pictures.

In December 1998, Gordon visited Albuquerque with Bradbury and Roy E. Disney for the "world premiere" of *Ice Cream Suit* at the Century Rio to raise funds for the Hispanic Cultural Center. At the time, Gordon was happy that *Space Truckers* soon would be shown on HBO.

Gordon's last film, the 2007 thriller *Stuck*, starred Mena Suvari and Stephen Rea in the nightmarish story of a twisted hit-and-run inspired by real events. He also co-wrote *Body Snatchers* for Warner Brothers in 1993 and *The Dentist* for Trimark in 1996.

Reimagining his first film for the stage, Gordon co-wrote the book for *Re-Animator: The Musical*, which he also directed, leading a merry band of cast and crew in exhilarating theatrics that left lucky audience members doused in fake blood.

To many fans and fellow filmmakers, Gordon was a master of horror and a maestro with heart. He is remembered for his iconoclast spirit as well as his generosity to a generation of younger independent horror filmmakers who grew up on his '80s cult classics, many of whom count him as a longtime mentor.

Barbara Crampton, whose career launched with her early co-starring roles in *Re-Animator* and *From Beyond*, saluted Gordon. "An enormous talent, vibrant and boundary-breaking, his work was in a class by himself," she wrote on Twitter. "He gave me my career. I lost a dear friend. I'm heartbroken. No words can do him justice."

And fellow horror director Mick Garris tweeted, "To know Stuart Gordon was to love Stuart Gordon. One of the true *Masters of Horror* and a wonderful, wonderful man. He was brilliant, funny, and always at the top of his game. So hard to say goodbye. We love and miss you, Stuart."

Speaking with the *Times* for a special ode to horror cinema in 2017, Gordon remembered falling in love with the genre as a boy. His parents had forbidden him from watching scary movies. But he couldn't resist sneaking into a showing of William Castle's 1959 classic *The Tingler* just in time for a scene that scared him, literally, out of his seat. "That was the beginning of realizing that was the secret," he said. "To let the audience's imagination do all the work."

The director is survived by his wife and collaborator, Carolyn Purdy-Gordon; daughters Suzanna, Jillian and Margaret Gordon; his brother, David George Gordon; and his four grandchildren.

## NEW PTEROSAUR NAMED FOR *A SONG OF ICE AND FIRE*

*Locus Magazine* reports that George RR Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* has inspired the name of a new genus for several types of pterosaurs: *Targaryendraconia* is named after House Targaryen from the series. Martin declared himself "delighted" and praised the discoverer, paleontologist Rodrigo Pegas, "who is solidly on my side about dragons having two legs, not four, and pfui on those medieval heralds with their wyvern talk. Alas, there is no evidence that the real-life Targaryendraco wiedenrothi actually breathed fire."

Martin originally wrote about the dinosaur naming on his blog on February 25.

## COVID-19 SE/F CANCELLATIONS AND POSTPONEMENTS

### From Locus Online and ASFS reports - 04/16/2020

Numerous upcoming conventions and literary events have been postponed or canceled as part of efforts to slow the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic. The situation remains in flux as the full extent of the COVID-19 respiratory illness remains to be seen. As of April 16, here is what is known:

-Emerald City Comic Con, scheduled for March 14-20 in Seattle WA, will now take place August 21-23 at the Washington State Convention Center.

-INDIGIPOP X (COMIC CON), scheduled for March 27-29 at the Hyatt Regency ABQ Downtown, was canceled with the hope of rescheduling this summer.

-THE (JACK) WILLIAMSON LECTURESHIP, planned for April 2-4 in Portales, NM, has been postponed, likely to sometime in September.

-StokerCon 2020 in Scarborough, UK, planned for April 16-19, is "exploring all options to postpone the convention until later in the year," and has a tentative date of August 6-9 in mind.

-NEW MEXICON 2020, a gaming convention, was scheduled for April 17-19 at the ABQ Hotel Ramada Midtown, but now will take place September 11-13 at the same location on Menaul Blvd.



-ConStellation 11, originally scheduled for April 17-20 in Lincoln, NE, has been canceled. Organizers hope to reschedule for July or August.

-Ravencon 15, scheduled for April 24-26 in Williamsburg, VA, has been postponed to April 16-18, 2021, and will take place in Glen Allen, VA.

-THE 8<sup>TH</sup> ABQ RENAISSANCE FAIRE, scheduled for Saturday, April 25, at the ABQ Balloon Museum, is being postponed to sometime in October.

-The Edgar Awards banquet and symposium, planned for April 30 in New York, has been canceled.

-Free Comic Book Day, a nationwide event at various comic book shops, was scheduled for Saturday, May 2, but now is postponed until sometime in the summer.

-The Bay Area Book Festival, scheduled for May 2-3 in Berkeley, CA, is skipping this year, and will next be held May 1-2, 2021.

-LitFest Pasadena, scheduled for May 16-17 in Pasadena, CA, has been canceled.

-Phoenix Fan Fusion, originally scheduled for May 21-24, has been postponed to September 25-27 at the Phoenix Convention Center.

-Baycon, scheduled for May 22-25 in San Mateo, CA, has been postponed until November 6-8.

-Book Expo in New York scheduled for May 27-29 has been pushed back to July 22-24.

-The 32nd Annual Lambda Literary Awards Ceremony, to be held June 8, 2020 at the NYU Skirball Center for the Performing Arts in New York, has been canceled.

-Denver Pop Culture Con, originally scheduled for July 3-5, has been postponed to November 27-29 at the Colorado Convention Center.

-THE 15<sup>TH</sup> CAN'T STOP THE SERENITY charity event, organized by the ABQ Browncoats, was most likely going to be on Saturday, July 11, but probably is being postponed to sometime in September.

-San Diego Comic-Con International, scheduled for July 23-26 at the San Diego Convention Center, has been canceled. The announcement came Friday, April 17.

-THE 2<sup>ND</sup> NEW MEXICO COMIC EXPO, scheduled for August 21-23 at the ABQ Convention Center, is "at a standstill until the stay-at-home order is lifted and the convention center is allowed to reopen." Its dates will be evaluated at that time.

-BUBONICON 52 is planned for August 28-30 at the ABQ Marriott Uptown, but its fate will not be decided until sometime June to early July based on the progress of the pandemic and any long-term social restrictions.

Smaller events have also been canceled, like the March and April "SF by the Bay" programs at the San Francisco Public Library, and the April meeting of Charm City Spec in Baltimore, MD. The Horror Writers Association Librarian's Day at the Naperville, IL, public library has been postponed from May 7 to November 12. The televised Canada Reads competition, planned for March 16-19, has been postponed.

Some events (mostly those planned for later in the

year) are still scheduled, pending further information, including the Locus Awards Weekend in Seattle, WA (June 26-28), which has suspended ticket sales for now.

Please check the websites of various events and websites for updated information. If you have information about cancellations, *Locus Magazine* is compiling a list so please write to [locus@locusmag.com](mailto:locus@locusmag.com).

## 2019 KITSCHIES WINNERS

Winners for the 2019 Kitschies, awarded "for progressive, intelligent, and entertaining literature with a speculative element," were announced April 6 in a virtual ceremony, reports Locus Online.

**The Red Tentacle (Novel):** *The Fire Starters* by Jan Carson.

**The Golden Tentacle (Debut):** *Jelly* by Clare Rees.

**The Inky Tentacle (Cover Art):** Yoko Ogawa's *The Memory Police* designed by Tyler Comrie.

Novel and debut winners were selected by judges Michaela Grey, Kirsty Logan, Claire North, Alasdair Stuart, and Tasha Suri. Judges for art were Kim Curran, Sharan Matharu, Kaiya Shang, and James Spackman.

Winners receive tentacle trophies and a total cash prize of £2,000, sponsored by Blackwell's. For more information, go to [www.thekitschies.com](http://www.thekitschies.com).

## MAX VON SYDOW DIES AT 90

by Jack Guy and Niamh Kennedy, CNN – 03/09/2020

Swedish actor Max von Sydow, who made his name in the films of Ingmar Bergman before featuring in international hits like *Flash Gordon* and *Game of Thrones*, died March 8 at his home in France. He was 90 years old.

Representatives at Diamond Management said, "It is with a broken heart and with infinite sadness that we have the extreme pain of announcing the departure of Max." He was a well-known figure in both European and American cinema, starring in films from Bergman's masterpiece *The Seventh Seal* to international blockbusters such as *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

Born on April 10, 1929, in Lund, Sweden, Carl Adolf von Sydow attended the acting school at Stockholm's Royal Dramatic Theatre before working in theaters in Norrköping and Malmö.

His star started to rise internationally after working with Bergman on a number of movies, with *The Seventh Seal* in 1957 proving a particular catalyst. In it he played Knight Antonius Block, and had an iconic scene in which his character plays chess with Death.

This led to roles abroad, including Jesus in *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965) and Father Lankester Merrin in *The Exorcist* (1973). He was nominated for Oscars for *Pelle the Conqueror* in 1988 and for *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* in 2012.

He also appeared in David Lynch's *Dune* (Doctor Kynes, 1984), *Flash Gordon* (Ming the Merciless, 1980),

John Milius' *Conan the Barbarian* (King Osric, 1982), *Strange Brew* (1983), *Dreamscape* (1984), Woody Allen's *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986), *Judge Dredd* (1995), *What Dreams May Come* (1998), Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002), Julian Schnabel's *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (2007), and Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island* (2010). He later appeared in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* for J.J. Abrams, and in three episodes of HBO's *Game of Thrones* as Three-eyed Raven, for which he received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination.

At almost two meters tall, with a slim build and a distinctive, gaunt face, von Sydow was a striking on-screen presence.

Industry figures including Edgar Wright, writer and director of movies such as *Baby Driver* and *Shaun of the Dead*, were effusive in their tributes to the actor. Max Von Sydow, such an iconic presence in cinema for seven decades, it seemed like he'd always be with us," wrote Wright on Twitter. "He changed the face of international film with Bergman, played Christ, fought the devil...and was Oscar nominated for a silent performance. A god."

## DISNEY CHANGES ENTIRE SUMMER MOVIE RELEASE SLATE

by Diandra Ross, [screenrant.com](https://www.screenrant.com) – 04/03/2020

Disney has decided to change its entire summer 2020 release schedule. From Marvel to *Indiana Jones*, Disney is moving the release dates for many of its films due to the coronavirus pandemic. The spread of COVID-19 has brought Hollywood to a standstill. Production for movies, television and even video games have been delayed as local governments enforce social distancing and mandatory quarantines.

Movie theaters in several countries have closed, and there is no clear timeline as to when they can open again. Several major studios have decided to cut seasons of television short or move movie premieres.

The Coronavirus pandemic has hurt countless industries and businesses, and its effects might be felt long after it has finished. A study was conducted to evaluate how comfortable people will feel about returning to public spaces once the pandemic clears, and the results indicated increased weariness in venturing to movie theaters.

One of the first major releases to be delayed was *No Time to Die*. The 25th film in the *James Bond* franchise, *No Time to Die* now has a November release date instead of its original release in April.

As COVID-19 rapidly spread to different countries, more films moved from their original release dates. *A Quiet Place Part II*, *F9*, and *Wonder Woman 1984* are a few of the major movies that changed their release dates. In late March, Sony delayed all of their summer 2020 releases to 2021. It turns out, not even Disney is immune to the effect this pandemic has had on society.

Disney has decided to move around its entire summer

2020 calendar. *Black Widow*, which was delayed last month, now has a set release date of November 9. Because it took *The Eternals* original release date, several upcoming Marvel films are being pushed. *The Eternals* will now premiere on February 12, 2021, *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* on May 7, 2021, *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* on November 5, 2021, and *Thor: Love and Thunder* on February 18th, 2022. The live-action remake of *Mulan* has been pushed to July 24, 2020. This was the original release date of Dwayne Johnson and Emily Blunt's *Jungle Cruise*, which will now premiere a year later on July 20, 2021.

Other films under the Disney banner that are being moved include *Indiana Jones 5*, releasing in summer 2022 instead of 2021, *Free Guy*, moving from August 3rd to December 11th, and Wes Anderson's *The French Dispatch*, moving from August 24th to October 16th. *Artemis Fowl* is skipping its theatrical release altogether and going straight to Disney+. *The New Mutants*, *The Woman in the Window*, *Antlers* and *The Personal History of David Copperfield* were all slated to come out later this year, but have since been removed from the calendar.

Despite these shakeups, there are some Disney films that have not been affected. MCU films *Black Panther 2* and *Captain Marvel 2* have their respective release dates of May 6, 2022, and July 8, 2022. Despite its summer release date, Pixar's *Soul* is still set to premiere on June 19. *West Side Story* and *The Last Duel* are also keeping their December release dates.

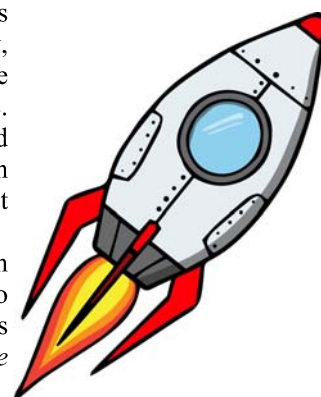
As COVID-19 continues to plague the world, it is difficult to predict the long-term effects that it will have on the entertainment industry. All studios, including Disney, can do is try to adapt and hope for the best.

## ARTIST TIM WHITE DIES

Artist Tim White died April 6, after a long period of poor health, Locus Online has reported. He was 68 years old. White was a prolific SF cover artist from the '70s through the '90s.

Timothy Thomas Anthony White was born April 4, 1952, in Erith, Kent, England. He studied art at the Medway college of Design, and subsequently worked in advertising for two years. He began doing cover paintings for *New English Library* and *Science Fiction Monthly*, and illustrated works by authors including Piers Anthony, Robert A. Heinlein, Bruce Sterling, E.C. Tubb, and A.E. van Vogt. He was nominated for six British Science Fiction Association Awards for Best Artist, and won in 1983.

He largely retired from painting around 2000 due to health problems. White's work was collected in *The*





*Science Fiction and Fantasy World of Tim White* (1981), *Chiaroscuro* (1988), and *Mirror of Dreams* (1994). *Mouches* (1983) is a wordless graphic novel.

## WHAT I DID ON MY PANDEMIC "VACATION"

### Collected from ASFS Sources

We've all been stuck at home for close to a month, pretty much, during this COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing means fewer club meetings and book signings, conventions and film screenings. What has everyone been doing with their potential extra time, we wondered. And what about some of our favorite authors and artists? So, we asked, and here are the responses we received—

STEPHEN R. DONALDSON: I don't have anything to report on except what I've been reading, so... I've really enjoyed *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir. SF with a fantasy feel. Some of the prose is clunky, some of it is brilliant. But the story is gripping, the characters are interesting, and the "reality" of the story is like nothing I've ever encountered before. I also get a lot of pleasure from James S. A. Corey's *Expanse* novels. By now, their strengths are well known. I've just finished *Nemesis Games* (book 5): It's quite a ride. Especially Naomi Nagata's escape from her betrayers. That's remarkable storytelling. Be well! It's a rotten job, but somebody's got to do it.

DARYNDA JONES: I was on a book tour for the *Charley Davidson* books in Australia, and the fires were actually completely extinguished about two days before we got there. Air quality was excellent. The trip was set up by a group hoping for *Sunshine* early, but alas, it did not happen. They were very sweet about it, tho. We got back on March 19<sup>th</sup>, so I guess it's been a month. It doesn't feel like it! LOL

As soon as I got back, I binged Stephen King's *The Outsider* and loved it. Then I had to get back to work. Working on a Charley Davidson novella for *1001 Dark Nights*, book two of the *Sunshine Vicram* series, and waiting for a friend's new book to be released, *Starbreaker* by Amanda Bouchet. Stay safe out there!

JANE LINDSKOLD: *Wolf's Soul* (sequel to last July's *Wolf Search*) is nearly ready to go. We had a few hitches on the first proof or it would be done. I'd say late April at this point.

I'm working writing on the yet untitled fourth book in David Weber and my *Star Kingdom* series (Stephanie Harrington Honorverse prequels). It took me considerable mental gymnastics to switch from wolves to treecats, but now it's going better. Jim is doing some editing of archaeological reports, and taking care of keeping the household running.

We have quail getting ready to nest in both the front and back yards, and are putting in the garden as usual.

EMILY MAH: The biggest change is that my workload is the same, but all of the sudden there are more people

around needing things. I have a couple of novels I hope to get done in the next few months. Trevor's still working, but from home in Santa Fe. The kids started distance learning March 30, and I'm not sure how that will go.

Hope you all are in a good place, well stocked with toilet paper. I went shopping for an elderly friend the last week of March, and it was rather dystopian, having to wait in line to get into the store and seeing the empty shelves. There was plenty of bottled water but no Diet Coke or regular Doritos. I'm not sure I disagree with people's sense of priorities. If we have to stay locked down, we should at least have good snacks.

LEE MOYER: My novel gets back from all the beta readers mid-April, but the early returns are pretty much incredible - from "consumable and intriguing" from someone whose life didn't allow her to get through chapter 3 (It's tough out there for way too many) to the absolutely astounding "If I say that the atmosphere was as convincing as *Winter's Tale*, does that convey my meaning? I thought that novel was a love letter to New York, and I've never even been there."

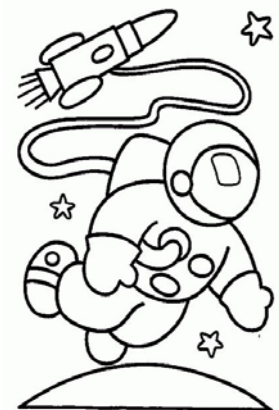
I'm researching the second novel now, doing all my usual work (another bestselling cover seems to be in the offing), and considering how I can make people's lives a teeny bit more diverting. With that last in mind, I plan to restart my *Small Gods* series with new entries (first up - the Small God of Social Distancing) and possibly micro-fiction from an amazing author to accompany them.

I began self-isolation before it was fashionable (we are close to Seattle and I understand how math works). We could not be more snug and well-provisioned. All our larders are full and life is good despite it all. And really, this not so different from my regular life.... Working, staying off the f\*cking internet and away from "news." Caring for those I can.

CHERIE PRIEST: We are fine over here (Seattle). I work from home anyway, and my husband is now, too (two possible cases in his office). My year filled up very suddenly - and now I'm all set up with deadlines through the end of November.

We are not sick, and we are all stocked up. In mid-March, I made the rounds collecting booze, weed, and stuff for my animals. (Lots of extra food, meds, etc.) I'm ready to stay close to home for awhile. I even hit up Lowe's the other day and got everything I need to clean up the yard while we're stuck here. I mean, might as well be productive, right?

I grew up in hurricane country, and my dad & stepmom are (now retired) army nurses. We always were prepared for... pretty much anything, and it's a practice I've kept up as a habit. Bonus: We just moved house a few months ago, and I hadn't gone through my "go-bag" and emer-



ASFACTS, April 2020

gency supplies... Past Me left Present Me a 15-pack roll of Scott Tissue! The rolls that last forever! Past Me is the *BEST*.

My hair's gonna look like hell before it's all over. My salon is closed indefinitely, but whatchagonnado? I predict shaggy manes and grown-out roots will be all the rage by fall.

REBECCA ROANHORSE: On March 14th, I returned from the JoCo Cruise with John Scalzi, N.K. Jemisin and Martha Wells. We had left on the 6th before the news was so dire, and barely made it back in under the wire before the Ft. Lauderdale ports closed. I spent my 14-day self-quarantine finalizing the edits on my upcoming epic fantasy novel *Black Sun* (out Oct 13...you should be able to pre-order from Page One). Cover art is by Hugo Award-winning illustrator John Picacio (<https://www.amazon.com/Black-Sun-Between-Earth-Sky/dp/1534437673>).

KEVIN SONNEY: We're good! Just busy. Being part of a distributed/remote-first company means I'm still working my regular hours, recording, keeping up with the chickens, poking at various side projects, and the rest. We are releasing some (NSFW) "Pandemic Chronicle" episode for KUEC (<https://kuec.libsyn.com>). The second one is due out next week.

I've been hearing that COBOL (the language most of the systems are programmed in) programmers are suddenly in demand again. Last time this happened was the late 90's, when everything had to be updated for Y2K. If you happen to know – or want to learn – COBOL, there's some opportunity there. \*grin\* I'm glad to hear NM folks are well, and keeping busy.

LAUREN C. TEFFEAU: Working from home with our newly minted 4-year-old has been interesting. We are and teaching our daughter how to write, taking long walks in the open space with the dog, and watching a lot of PBS kids programming and nature shows. I'm in between projects at the moment. I've spent the last few weeks poking at old novel ideas, spinning up new ones, and contemplating the fate of our post-pandemic world.

ROBERT E. VARDEMAN: Tuesday I was finishing a western short story, "The Night the Stars Fell." And now it's back to writing on book two in the Engineering Infinity series, *Shatter Time* (*The Dust of Stars* is finished, *Crystal Virus* and *The Crown Joule* are on deck to be written – when all four are ready, I'll start publishing as I work on book five). I think I have a cover artist/graphic designer lined up for the series to give a uniform look.

Watching way too much Netflix streaming. *The Death*

*of Stalin* was the last one – I didn't like it very much. It has no idea if it wanted to be a documentary or a comedy, and failed at both. Reading has been sporadic. I finished *Tom Swift Inventors Academy #4 Virtual Vandal* and liked it. Well written (the best so far in this series) and the author



even threw in a few Tom Swifties to amuse us old timers. On the other end of the spectrum I am struggling through Heinlein's *The Pursuit of the Pankera* and remembering, line to line, why I hated his so-called adult bestsellers (except for *Moon is a Harsh Mistress*). Humans, in any universe, don't talk and act this way. I need to reread *Have Spacesuit, Will Travel* to cleanse my eye tracks.

Social interaction (ha!) is limited to Facebook and posting fiction and writing tips and general fun stuff on Patreon ([www.patreon.com/robertevardeman](http://www.patreon.com/robertevardeman)). And petting the cat, of course. He's getting a bald spot from where I pat him.

CARRIE VAUGHN: Working at home is the normal state of affairs in my world so I don't really have extra time to kill. (I've always disliked that phrase... time is a finite resource, use it, don't kill it!) I've got the same deadlines and the same projects I did before the lockdown, so that's still on track. Otherwise, I'm sewing masks with materials from my fabric stash. And I maxed out the e-book holds on my library account so I'll be sure of new reading material for the next couple months. (Next up is *The Glass Hotel* by Emily St. John Mandel.) Wash your hands, stay the f\*\*\* home, hold the line.

URSULA VERNON: We're doing okay! A little stir-crazy, as probably we all are, but doing well. Everybody's healthy, the chickens are fine, I am gardening like a fiend. And *Minor Mage* is up for an award, which is nice. Our buddy Liz who's staying with us got laid off, though her job is waiting if they're ever allowed to reopen, and she hasn't seen any unemployment pay. I think the systems are slammed to the gills. Heckuva stress test on the programs, eh? Stay safe out there! Be well!

## 2020 PROMETHEUS AWARD FINALISTS

The Libertarian Futurist Society (LFS) has released the finalists for the Prometheus Award in the Best Novel category, honoring pro-freedom works published in 2019, reported Locus Online in early April.

Nominees are *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood, *Alliance Rising* by C.J. Cherryh & Jane S. Fancher, *Ruin's Wake* by Patrick Edwards, *Luna: Moon Rising* by Ian McDonald, and *Ode to Defiance* by Marc Stiegler.

All members of the Libertarian Futurist Society are eligible to vote. The award will be presented in a ceremony during the 2020 NASFiC, to be held August 20-23, 2020, at the Sheraton Columbus Hotel in Columbus OH. For more information, see [www.lfs.org](http://www.lfs.org).

## LEVI EAGER TO SUIT UP FOR SHAZAM 2

by Rebecca VanAcker, [screenrant.com](http://screenrant.com) – 04/05/2020

Star of *Shazam 2*, Zachary Levi is excited to suit back up for the upcoming DC sequel. The original film came out one year ago and showed the DCEU was capable of lighter fare. Centered around the popular comics character Billy Batson/Shazam, it tells the story of a boy who turns

into a superhero, played by Levi. It was both a box office and critical success, leading to the announcement of *Shazam 2* in December 2019. However, soon after the first film was released, many assumed it would receive a sequel, especially since the character had yet to meet his nemesis Black Adam.

Luckily, a *Black Adam* movie with Dwayne Johnson is in the works and will release before *Shazam 2*. That movie will serve as an origin story, introducing audiences to Black Adam on his own. This means Levi won't make an appearance as Shazam in that film, with the two instead meeting at a later date, provided the *Black Adam* movie is a success. Levi recently weighed in on Shazam and Black Adam's eventual meeting, revealing he hopes they get "to pay off all of those Captain Marvel/Black Adam epic fights and storylines from the comic books."

Levi took to Instagram the first full week of April to celebrate the one-year anniversary of *Shazam*'s release. He included a photo of himself as the superhero, with a caption mentioning how thankful he was for the role. Levi also shared he's "so damn excited to step back into the spandex as soon as we're ready to rock 'n roll again."

As Levi notes, fans will have to wait awhile longer for that time, as *Shazam 2* director David F. Sandberg recently revealed a production delay due to the Coronavirus. Levi referenced the pandemic again in his caption as well, calling this "a pretty opportune time" for those who haven't yet seen *Shazam* to check it out. "Give it a shot, and fill your life with laughter, heart, and joy," he commented.

Impressively, *Shazam 2* and *Black Adam* are far from the only two exciting movies on DC's upcoming slate. Fans are still looking forward to *Wonder Woman 1984*, which was recently delayed from June 2020 to August. Pending any other delays, 2021 will have Matt Reeves' *The Batman* with its roster of villains, *The Suicide Squad*, which will see James Gunn reinterpret the popular franchise, and of course, *Black Adam*. *Shazam 2* will then be the first DC movie of 2022, with three others coming later that year (*DC Super Pets*, *The Flash*, and *Aquaman 2*).

It may be two years until fans actually see Levi "step back into the spandex" for *Shazam 2*, but his description of *Shazam* as the "little superhero movie that could" makes a lot of sense, as it marked a bit of a departure for the DCEU after the seriousness of the first few movies. Hopefully, fans heed Levi's advice to use this period to check out *Shazam*. At the very least, it should provide a welcome distraction from the current state of the world.

## **STAR-LORD HATED BEING ON EARTH IN *AVENGERS: ENDGAME***

by Ana Dumaraog, screenrant.com – 04/09/2020

James Gunn says that Star-Lord hated being on Earth in *Avengers: Endgame* and reveals the reason for it. *The Guardians of the Galaxy* franchise director recently provided live commentary for the original movie's watch par-

ty where he revealed new information regarding the creative process of making the film, as well as new tidbits about the characters' journeys since they debuted. That includes Peter Quill's abhorrence for finding himself back on his home planet.

The Guardians of the Galaxy finally met the Avengers in 2018's *Avengers: Infinity War* as the teams join forces to stop Thanos' nefarious plan. Unfortunately, they failed despite their best efforts, resulting in the decimation of half of life in the universe, including heroes like Quill. When they were brought back during the events of *Endgame* thanks to Smart Hulk's snap, everyone assembled at the Avengers HQ to fight the Mad Titan for the last time. This marked Quill's first return to Earth since he has abducted by Yondu shortly after his mother died.

Through Twitter, Gunn offered insight during the recent *Guardians of the Galaxy* watch party. He revealed new details about how the movie came to be including how Thanos' involvement made it difficult for them to crack the story, and the importance of the Infinity Stones. He also revealed that in *Endgame*, Quill didn't really like being on Earth and was ready to leave as fast as he could.

"Peter despised being back on earth and got off that planet as fast as he freaking could," Gunn tweeted. "He associates it completely with his mother dying."

Peter's reaction wasn't explicitly shown in *Endgame* since there really wasn't any time for Quill to wander around Earth. Perhaps he didn't even know where he was until after the fight with Thanos and before Tony Stark's memorial. In hindsight, it explains why he told Iron Man he's from Missouri instead of simply saying he's from Earth. He wanted to block the memory of Earth.

While fans didn't get to see Quill throwing a fit about being on his home planet, this explains why Rocket was rushing Thor during his farewell with Valkyrie at the end of *Endgame*. With Quill back as the primary pilot of the *Benatar*, chances are he was making a fuss about why the God of Thunder was taking too long, forcing Rocket to come out and get their new ally.

Not much is known regarding what's in store for the cosmic team after *Avengers: Endgame*. People know they'll be on the path to reunite with Gamora, while Rocket's backstory will be explored in *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*. Regardless of what happens, it's curious if Quill will ever find himself back on Earth.

Then again, with the Guardians of the Galaxy appearing in Taika Waititi's *Thor: Love and Thunder*, it's possible that Star-Lord would have to return once more, potentially to drop off Thor in New Asgard.

## **BRIAN DENNEHY DEAD AT 81**

by Brian Lowry & Sandra Gonzalez, CNN – 04/16/2020

Brian Dennehy, a versatile character actor whose career spanned five decades, died April 15 of natural causes in Connecticut, his talent agency confirmed. He was 81 years old.

Dennehy was a two-time Tony Award winner who co-starred in a wide range of films, often in tough-guy roles. In a tweet, his daughter described him as "larger than life" and "generous to a fault."

Dennehy co-starred in a long list of popular movies, including *First Blood* (as the local sheriff who clashes with Sylvester Stallone's Rambo), the western *Silverado* (shot in New Mexico), the science-fiction classic *Cocoon* (and *Cocoon: The Return*), the 2005 version of *Assault on Precinct 13*, *Semi-Tough* with Burt Reynolds, and the thriller *F/X*. He played Chris Farley's dad in the comedy *Tommy Boy*, and had a regular part in the series *Dynasty*.

Dennehy won a Tony for his role in *Death of a Salesman*, later playing the part in a TV production of the play. He received another for *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

He had continued to work recently in such series as (Joe Lansdale's) *Hap and Leonard* and NBC's *The Blacklist*. He starred in the popular crime drama *Jack Reed* TV movies, appeared as a recurring character in the NBC sitcom *Just Shoot Me!*, and guest-starred as a Teamster boss in an episode of *30 Rock*. And Dennehy had a voice role in the animated movie *Ratatouille* as Django, father of the rat chef Remy.

Dennehy was born on July 9, 1938, in Bridgeport, CT, the son of Hannah (Manion) and Edward Dennehy, a wire service editor for the Associated Press. A football scholarship paved the way to Columbia University in New York City, where he played football, earned a BA in history, became a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity and played rugby union for Old Blue RFC. He went on to graduate studies in dramatic arts at Yale University. Prior to pursuing acting Dennehy worked as a stockbroker for Merrill Lynch in their Manhattan office in the mid 1970s.

He married twice and had five children including actress Elizabeth Dennehy.

## MATH MAGICAL GENIUS DIES AT 82

by Siobhan Roberts, New York Times – 04/15/2020

John Horton Conway, the English-born Princeton mathematician whose body of work ranged from the rigorously highbrow to the frivolously fun, earning him prizes and a reputation as a creative, iconoclastic and even magical genius, died April 11 in a New Brunswick, NJ, nursing home of COVID-19. He was 82 years old.

Conway's boundless curiosity produced profound contributions to number theory, game theory, coding theory, group theory, knot theory, topology, probability theory, algebra, analysis, combinatorics and more. Foremost, he considered himself a classical geometer.

"His swath was probably broader than anyone who ever lived," said the mathematician Neil Sloane, a collaborator with Conway and the founder of the On-Line Encyclopedia of Integer Sequences. "I've worked with a lot of people, and he was the fastest at solving a problem and would pursue a topic as far as it would go." (The two were co-authors of 50 papers and published the 706-page book

"Sphere Packings, Lattices and Groups.")

During what Conway called his "annus mirabilis," roughly 1969-1970, he discovered what's known as the Conway group, an entity in the realm of mathematical symmetry that inhabits 24-dimensional space. He discovered a new type of number, "surreal numbers." And he invented the cellular automaton Game of Life, which is among the most beautiful math models of computation. He described it as a "no-player never-ending" game.

One of Conway's favorite accomplishments was the Free Will Theorem, conceptualized casually over the course of a decade with his friend and fellow Princeton mathematician Simon Kochen and first published in 2006 (and later revised).

The theorem, simply put, is this: If physicists have free will while performing experiments, then elementary particles possess free will as well. And this, Conway and Kochen reckoned, probably explains why and how humans have free will in the first place.

Conway was born on Dec. 26, 1937, in Liverpool, England, the third child and only son of Cyril and Agnes (Boyce) Conway. His father, with his photographic memory, made a living playing cards. Later he was a technician in the chemistry lab at the Liverpool Institute High School for Boys, setting up experiments for students, among them George Harrison and Paul McCartney.

Math, Conway believed, should be fun. "He often thought that the math we were teaching was too serious," said Mira Bernstein, a mathematician and a former executive director of Canada/USA Mathcamp, an international summer program for high-school students. "And he didn't mean that we should be teaching them silly math — to him, fun was deep. But he wanted to make sure that the playfulness was always, always there."

## FILMS SET IN 2020: EXPECTATION VERSUS REALITY

from Cineworld – 04/06/2020

In a bizarre quirk, it turns out that many movies are set in 2020. So how does each film's presentation match up with the reality we're currently experiencing? In order of release, here are seven films in which fantasy and reality go head to head.

1. *Mission To Mars* (2000): Expectation- That manned missions to the Red Planet would be feasible. Reality- We're all having to negotiate confined spaces on terra firma. Brian De Palma's panned sci-fi drama stars Gary Sinise and Tim Robbins as astronauts who set out for Mars on a 2020 space mission. Playing out to a spiritual and portentous Ennio Morricone score (listen out for those pipe organs), the movie aims for the stars with a philosophical conclusion that doesn't quite stick the landing. Still, the movie's claustrophobic spaceship interiors have something to teach us about self-isolation, right?

2. *Reign of Fire* (2002): Expectation- That dragons



would be flying through the air. Reality- We're all feeling grubby and growing beards. Before he was Batman, Christian Bale was battling dragons alongside Matthew McConaughey in this largely forgotten post-apocalyptic adventure. The movie is set in a devastated 2020 London where people have become very hairy, while somehow managing to retain their impressive abs and pecs. Oh, and every now and then, a firebreather emerges to cause some trouble.

While dragons have yet to emerge in the 2020 we know, it's clear that beards (or, at the very least, designer stubble) are a major conversation point in this era of self-isolation. Could yours become as impressive as Bale's?

3. *Real Steel* (2011): Expectation- We'd be watching robot boxing matches. Reality- We're digging out our old Rock 'em Sock 'em robot toys from the attic to keep ourselves entertained. Between his *X-Men* forays, Hugh Jackman made this likeable movie, set in 2020, about a man who tours wrestling rings with a robotic fighter. The movie is set in an alternate future where humans have been replaced with their robotic counterparts, and along the way, Jackman's character must learn to bond with his estranged son, who's come along for the ride.

Cut to reality: Wrestling rings certainly do exist, but given the circumstances, they're empty at the moment, and distinctly devoid of awesome-looking robots. Time to break out those nostalgic kids' toys that have been gathering dust.

4. *Pacific Rim* (2013): Expectation- Giant robots would be battling giant monsters. Reality- Cities are an altogether different kind of battleground. Guillermo del Toro's smash-em-up action movie is every 12-year-old's dream, pitting human-controlled robots against rampaging kaiju, which emerge from the bottom of the sea. Actor Charlie Hunnam plays central character Raleigh Beckett, and faces a completely different nemesis in the form of a consistent American accent, while Idris Elba rallies the troops with a speech that promises to "cancel the apocalypse."

Rather than being witness to a giant robot smashing a giant lizard over the head with an oil tanker, we're instead being presented with scenes of eerily quiet cities, from the USA to China. Might be time to fire up that *Pacific Rim* DVD to take our minds off things?

5. *Edge of Tomorrow* (2014): Expectation- That Emily Blunt would become a big-screen badass. Reality- Emily Blunt is a big-screen badass. In sci-fi/time travel/action movie *Edge of Tomorrow*, Emily Blunt plays Sergeant Rita Vrataski. She's tasked with steering cowardly Colonel Bill Cage (Tom Cruise) through a mysterious time loop, in which his death at the hands of an invading alien force keeps repeating itself.

At the time of the film's release, it was a refreshing change to see Blunt in the driving seat of the action, her character often having to kill Cage in order to reset the clock. It turns out that the movie was way ahead of the curve, unleashing Blunt's tenacious, resourceful potential that would be repeated in the later, acclaimed likes of

*Sicario* (2015), *A Quiet Place* (2018), and its sequel.

6. *A Quiet Place* (2018): Expectation- The world's population will be hunted by monsters with ultra-sensitive hearing. Reality- We're all having to be quiet, but for very different reasons. Silence is golden in John Krasinski's blockbusting horror flick. Didn't realize it was set in 2020? Well, there's a quick shot of a gravestone belonging to the Abbott family's ill-fated son Beau, who is killed by a rampaging monster at the beginning of the movie. The grave reveals that he lived from 2016 to 2020, which means, at the very least, the opening of the movie is set in 2020.

Given Emily Blunt's character Evelyn later becomes pregnant following Beau's death, that places the main bulk of the story eight to nine months after the boy tragically died. So, maybe the film is set between September and December 2020? Either way, we should all be grateful that we don't have deadly beasts like that to contend with in reality. That said, the film has a lot to teach us about the importance of being quiet. After all, we want to avoid annoying those who are self-isolating with us, short of being cut out of the tea round. And unlike the characters in the film, you might want to skip those Monopoly games just in case the competitiveness gets out of hand.

7. *Terminator: Dark Fate* (2019): Expectation- We'd be battling machines with rocket launchers. Reality- We're using machines to get drunk and stay social. James Cameron's *Terminator* franchise lumbers on with its most recent instalment, which reunites Arnold Schwarzenegger and Linda Hamilton as the T-800 cyborg and mankind's savior, Sarah Connor.

Despite Sarah's efforts, the machines are still gearing to take over in the movie's bleak depiction of 2020. They've even upgraded, and are able to split into two different entities to make life that bit harder. And while 2020 itself is devoid of lifelike killer cyborgs (thankfully), we can now feel the influence of machines in our lives more than ever. After all, those virtual pub nights on Zoom are pretty much keeping us going at the moment. Let's hope the program doesn't become self-aware.

## BUBONICON 52 KIND OF UPDATED

Bubonicon 52 planning is taking place despite the current pandemic way of life ("stay at home"). Because of the need to have participants and build a program schedule, we have sent out invitations to professionals and fans. However, there is a chance that Bubonicon 52 will not be able to happen in 2020, depending on the Coronavirus progress and rules on social distancing.

So, for now we act like it's happening! Weekend passes are \$40.00 through August 7, and then \$45 at the Door. You can purchase your weekend pass by mailing payment to "Bubonicon" with the PDF registration form to 933 San Mateo Blvd NE, Suite 500-208, Albuquerque, NM 87108, or pay online with a credit card.

Celebrating "*A Game of Cards: Playing with a Full Deck*," the con is planned to take place August 28-30 (just



a week after the Ohio NASFiC and the 2nd New Mexico Comic Expo) at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown, 2101 Louisiana Blvd NE (at I-40). Single-Quad rooms are \$99 a night when reserved by August 17.

Any *SOLO OR FAN GROUP REQUESTS* for time & space are needed by 6 pm Friday, MAY 8, at [bubonicon@gmail.com](mailto:bubonicon@gmail.com). We need basic info on what you'd like to do, the person/group responsible, and whether it's 50 or 80 minutes (we will have 10-minute passing periods).

In addition to Co-Guests of Honor Becky Chambers & Keith R.A. DeCandido, Toastmaster A. Lee Martinez, and Guest Artist Chaz Kemp, those confirmed so far include: Lou J. Berger, Gordon Garb, Loretta Hall, Betsy James, Darynda Jones, Carolyn Kay, Jane Lindsfold, Emily Mah, Susan R. Matthews, Benjamin Radford, Joan S. Saberhagen, S.M. Stirling, David Lee Summers, Lauren C. Teffeau, Ian Tregillis, Sarena Ulibarri, Robert E. Vardeman, Carrie Vaughn, Connie & Courtney Willis. More will be added, of course.

Green Slime Mistress Jessica Coyle is taking nominations for "wretched things that should be recognized" and preparing to entertain the masses Saturday night.

While the programming schedule still is wide open, we can say that Geneva Schult is organizing the Costume Contest again, and con suite manager Terri Verrette is planning on the Sunday Afternoon Tea once more.

So far, Bubonicon 52 has given \$400 to the Roadrunner Food Bank, Meals on Wheels America, No Kid Hungry, World Central Kitchen, American Red Cross, and Direct Relief to help feed people and assist medical professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. That also includes a donation to the Locus Science Fiction Foundation, as they are suffering during the pandemic, too. We urge all of you to join in these efforts if you are able - and to stay safe, and wash your hands!

The actual 2020 con will benefit at least the Williamson Library Collection at Eastern NM University, the Roadrunner Food Bank, and New Mexico PBS through the Friday night auction and a portion of con proceeds.

We're still looking at Dealer Applications for spaces, so go to the website for the google link. And the Art Show will have rules & forms posted on the con's website in late June/early July.

As always, volunteers are appreciated! "Gofers" receive movie promotional swag and other prizes, and are invited to a pizza party after Bubonicon 52 ends (usually late September).

More info available at: 559-0931 (Google voice), by email to [bubonicon@gmail.com](mailto:bubonicon@gmail.com) or [bubonicon.com](http://bubonicon.com).

## BOOK REVIEW ROUND-UP

***A Bad Day for Sunshine* by Darynda Jones, 2020 St Martin's Press, hc \$27.99, 400 pgs. Review by Jessica Coyle**

Darynda Jones, known for her Charley Davidson series of paranormal mysteries, is back with the first in a new series. *A Bad Day for Sunshine* is set in the fictional small town of Del Sol, NM. Sunshine Vicram, a Del Sol native who left years ago, returns to her roots when her parents get her elected as sheriff. With her teenage daughter Auri in tow, Sunshine moves back with the expectation that she will be dealing with a much easier level of crime than she did as a detective on the Santa Fe police force. She is quickly proven wrong when a teenage girl is mysteriously kidnapped, and it is up to Sunshine to find her before it is too late. To add to Sunshine's complications, her childhood crush, Levi, is still living in Del Sol, and she can't decide whether she should avoid him or throw herself at him.

As a fan of Jones' first series, I picked up *Sunshine* fully expecting to enjoy it, and I was not disappointed. The book is full of Jones' trademark humor and sexiness. The town of Del Sol is full of charm and quirky characters, and watching Sunshine interact with them with a mix of love and exasperation is a lot of fun. While this book is being advertised as a straight mystery, there are hints that it is set in the same world as the *Charley Davidson* books. So, I suspect more and more supernatural elements will spill over into this series as it goes along. If you like a good mystery with a lot of humor and a fair dose of romance, then I highly recommend this book.

***Imaginary Numbers: InCryptid Book 9* by Seanan McGuire, 2020 DAW, mmpb \$7.99, 448 pages.**

**Review by Craig W. Chrissinger**

In Seanan McGuire's InCryptid novels, monsters and mythical creatures are real, but hunted down by the Covenant of St. George whether good, evil or just different. One family broke from the Covenant a couple of generations ago, and has been hiding in America while researching InCryptids (and hunting them down when necessary).

*Imaginary Numbers*, the ninth book in this entertaining and fast-paced series, focuses on Sarah, a telepathic humanoid predator who is really good at math and who has been adopted by the Price family. But other members of her species – Johrlac or Cuckoo – want her to stop hanging out with humans, and help their world-changing efforts. Turns out that Cuckoos came from another dimension, and by one member of their species crunching an seemingly impossible long equation they can move on to their next hunting grounds. The question is whether her adopted cousin Artie (an incubi), roller-darby queen Annie Price and boyfriend Sam (a furi who was part of a traveling carnival) and sorcerer James can save Sarah and stop the Cuckoo equation from ripping apart the Earth.

Book 9 may not be the best spot to hop on to the series, but McGuire does a good job of summarizing the basics of the Price family, all their adopted relatives, and what has gone before in their adventures. It's a good romp with challenges, revealed secrets, and insight into various creatures.

However, the book does end on a major cliffhanger (spoiler alert). So, it's a good thing that McGuire has included an extra novella, "Follow the Lady," here about one of the cross-country adventures of Annie, Sam, James, Cylia and Fern. And I can't wait for the next book!

***Sisters of Sword and Song: Queen's Rising Book 3* by Rebecca Ross, 2020 HarperTeen, hc \$17.99, 480 pages. [To be published on June 23.] Review by Roberta Johnson**

Sisters Evadne and Halcyon have grown up in a country called Mithra, steeped in myth and magic. Their people, and their family, know their gods. After all, they are descended from a god named Kirkos, who gave up immortality to marry their ancestor.

The best thing about *Sisters of Sword and Song* is Rebecca Ross' ability to evoke imagery with her vivid descriptions of the land, the magic and the myths. But she also brings up some important truths about sisters, family and the values that can be more important than outward strength.

The sisters' story opens as Evadne's family eagerly awaits a visit from Halcyon, the brave, strong sister who left them eight years ago to become a hoplite, or soldier, for a high commander in the queen's service. They've heard wonderful things about her successes, but they haven't seen her in all that time.

As with many younger siblings, Evadne could never measure up to her adored sister in strength or size or bravery. Halcyon is everything the little sister can never hope to be. As a child, Evadne hoped to compensate by developing magical skills, but eventually realized she had no magic in her. She's had to settle for an ordinary life, working on her family's olive farm.

But then Evadne catches Halcyon, who should have been striding through the front gates with her comrades in arms, sneaking in a window, on the run, desperate, starving and terrified for her life. She won't say what she did, and she won't tell Evadne where she's going, but she needs help, and Evadne doesn't hesitate to do what she can, little as it is.

It's not enough, and Halcyon is shortly caught trying to steal food from a nearby village. The villagers hold her for theft until her commander arrives to accuse her of murdering his son. Halcyon insists it was an accident. She's convicted of accidental manslaughter and sentenced to 15 years at hard labor, which Evadne knows she will never survive.

And this is where it really gets interesting. Evadne pleads to serve part of her sister's sentence, and Commander Straton agrees to let her serve in his household for five years, while Halcyon will spend the next five years working in a marble quarry. Evadne is almost universally despised by the family and other servants, but the commander and his remaining son are oddly supportive of her. Evadne has her suspicions, and sure enough, there's more to Halcyon's supposed crime than meets the eye.

The people are struggling to survive as their Queen Nerine, formerly a loving and just ruler, has gradually distanced herself from them and their needs, passing more and more laws that favor the nobles, raise taxes and take away ordinary people's rights and chances to better themselves.

Straton believes the queen is being magically influenced

by sinister forces. As Halcyon struggles to survive her sentence in the quarry, Evadne is recruited into a conspiracy to find a magical artifact that will rescue queen and country.

She will learn that she has her own strengths and that in some battles, courage, determination and loyalty can be more important than outward size or athletic prowess or magical ability. There will be romance, magic, action, battles with both magic and swords (also spears and shields, of course). And in spite of sibling rivalry, the sisters' unwavering love for each other will decide the outcome.

***The Immortal Conquistador* by Carrie Vaughn, 2020 Tachyon, tp \$15.95, 192 pages.**

**Review by Craig W. Chrissinger**

Colorado's Carrie Vaughn returns to the world of Kitty Norville, the popular Denver werewolf talk-show host, with a compilation of stories exploring the origin and story of Ricardo de Avila, the vampire who eventually will become the Master of the Mile-High City. His story starts long ago when he followed Coronado in the legendary search for Cibola, and continues to modern times when he becomes the renegade vampire known as Rick. Southwestern legend and history are blended from his early days in Mexico to protecting Santa Fe, being a trail guide and meeting Doc Holliday, and eventually being called to a church buried under the Vatican to share his tale.

The stories give insight to Rick and what he has learned during his long existence. Vaughn's stories are well written and enjoyable. For those who like the world of Kitty, *The Immortal Conquistador* is worth picking up.

**And Mini-Reviews by Craig W. Chrissinger**

***The Toll* by Cherie Priest, 2019 Tor, tp \$16.99, 336 pages.**

Cherie Priest's latest Southern gothic horror tale is moody and slowly creeps up on the reader. *The Toll* is set in Georgia along State Road 177, a mysterious road with six or seven bridges - depending on whether you drive east to west, or west to east. And for those who cross the eerie seventh bridge, they often find themselves waking up in the middle of the road and missing hours - with no bridge in sight. And sometimes, the bridge seems to claim a passenger or two. Is the town of Staywater, GA, cursed? Or just the hunting grounds of an unseen monster who needs a sacrifice now and then.

Entertaining horror with good characterization and sprinkles of other mysteries in Staywater. Priest easily could do a series about this Georgia town if she wants.

***Firefly: The Sting* written by Delilah S. Dawson with a team of artists, 2019 Boom Studios, hc \$19.99, 128 pages.**

For those who miss Joss Whedon's *Firefly* TV series famously canceled by FOX-TV, *The Sting* is a fun graphic novel which pairs the women of the spaceship Serenity with Saffron, the enigmatic rogue thief who conned Captain Malcolm Reynolds in a well-loved episode. In this adventure, Saffron recruits Serenity's five women through blackmail and threats to join her on a heist on Carolan.

The story is fun, adventurous, funny, and rings true to the spirit of *Firefly*. It's especially nice to see the internal motivations and monologs of our fave female crew mem-

bers. Bonus points for disguising Kaylee as a waiter during a party on Carolan – it's a delight to see her sneaking in bites of various foods and enjoying every minute of it.

**The Twisted Ones by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon), 2019 Gallery/Saga Press, tp \$16.99, 400 pages.**

When Mouse, a young woman, is asked by her father to clear out her deceased grandmother's home in rural North Carolina, she reluctantly agrees. It turns out the old lady was a hoarder and the house is packed to the rafters with seemingly useless junk. That's bad enough, and then Mouse stumbles across her step-grandfather's journal, which is full of secrets and hints of terrifying creatures living nearby. Things become really creepy when she is taking a walk alone in the woods with her dog, and encounters one of the strange, alien entities. What will Mouse have to do to survive when it turns out that things that go bump in the night are real?

T. Kingfisher builds a horror story that slowly amps up the creepiness and leaves your skin crawling. One moment things seem fairly mundane, and then all the sudden unsettling oddness is all around. A chilling, well-done entry into the Southern gothic horror realm. Recommended.

## **ASFS MEETING REPORTS — JANUARY 2020: BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS**

We started the New Year with 27 people discussing books read in 2019, whether good or bad. A book title mentioned by more than one person is indicated by an asterisk.

Among reading materials named were the *Morganville Vampire* series by Rachel Caine, *That Ain't Witchcraft: Incryptid Book 8* by Seanan McGuire, *Warlock* by Andre Norton, the *Soulwood* series by Faith Hunter, *The Lady from the Black Lagoon: Hollywood Monsters and the Lost Legacy of Milicent Patrick* by Mallory O'Meara, *Becoming Superman: My Journey From Poverty to Hollywood* by J. Michael Straczynski, *The Sidekicks Initiative* by Barry J. Hutchison, *The Twisted Ones* by T. Kingfisher, the *Murderbot Diaries*\* by Martha Wells, *Andrea Vernon and the Superhero-Industrial Complex* by Alexander C. Kane, *Firefly: Sting* by Delilah S. Dawson, *Brave New World*\* by Aldous Huxley, the *Iron Druid Chronicles* by Kevin Hearne, *Fevre Dream*\* by George RR Martin, *Warm Bodies* and *The New Hunger* by Isaac Marion, *The Fireman* and *NOS4A2* by Joe Hill, *Fated: Alex Versus 1* by Benedict Jacka, *The Name of the Wind* by Patrick Rothfuss, *White Wolf: Druss the Legend 1* by David Gemmell, *Doctor Who: Shada* by Douglas Adams, *Salvation Lost* by Peter F. Hamilton, *The Hidden World: Imperials 3* by Melinda Snodgrass, *Wellington* graphic novel by Delilah S. Dawson, *The Goblin Emperor* by Katherine Addison, *The Last American Vampire* by Seth Grahame-Smith, *Sevener*\* and *Snowcrash* by Neal Stephenson, *Nightflyers* by George RR Martin, *The Queen's Gambit* by Walter Tevis, news-oriented items online, *Black Holes & Time Warps: Einstein's Outrageous Legacy* by Kip Thorne, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* by Edward Abbey, *Auberon: An Expanse Novella* by James S.A. Corey, *The Long Way to a*

*Small, Angry Planet* by Becky Chambers, the *Charley Davidson* series\* by Darynda Jones, the *Odd Thomas* series by Dean Koontz, the *Lucas Davenport* series by John Sandford, *History of the St. James Hotel Cimarron, New Mexico* by Kevin McDevitt, the *Dresden Files* by Jim Butcher, *Firefly: Big Damn Hero* by James Lovegrove, *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* by Charles Seife, *Impersonations: A Story of the Praxis* and *The Praxis: Dread Empire's Fall 1* by Walter Jon Williams, *Theater of Spies: Black Chamber 2* by S.M. Stirling, *Chronicles of Dasnaria* series by Jeffe Kennedy, *Medieval Warfare Magazine*, *Doctor Who: A Brief History of Time Lords* by Steve Tribe, *Fall; or, Dodge in Hell* by Neal Stephenson, *The Burning White: Lightbringer, Book 5* by Brent Weeks, *Warrior of the Altai* by Robert Jordan, *The Collapsing Empire* and *The Consuming Fire* by John Scalzi, *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal, *The Fifth Season* by N.K. Jemisin, *Infinite Stars: Dark Frontiers* edited by Bryan Thomas Schmidt, *Wild Cards 1* edited by George RR Martin, *Good Omens* by Neil Gaiman & Terry Pratchett, *Star Wars: Resistance Reborn* by Rebecca Roanhorse, the *Night Watch (Discworld)* books by Terry Pratchett, Tony & Anne Hillerman mysteries, *Song of Ice and Fire* series by George RR Martin, *In an Absent Dream: Wayward Children 4* by Seanan McGuire, *Aunt Dimity* mysteries by Nancy Atherton, *Thanks a Lot Mr Kibblewhite: My Story* by Roger Daltrey, *What Does This Button Do?: An Autobiography* by Bruce Dickinson, *Wayward Children* series by Seanan McGuire, *Silver in the Wood* by Emily Tesh, *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir, *Middlegame* by Seanan McGuire, *Pip and Flinx* series by Alan Dean Foster, *Charlie Parker* series by John Connolly, *Artemis Fowl* series by Eoin Colfer, *Updraft* by Fran Wilde, *The Andromeda Evolution* by Daniel H. Wilson, *The Institute* by Stephen King, *Quantum* by Patricia Cornwell, and *Change Agent* by Daniel Suarez.

## **FEBRUARY 2020: CLUB AUCTION**

Robert E. Vardeman and Patricia Rogers auctioned off various items to 34 people at this annual club fundraiser. Assisting with money, tab piles and showing items to the audience were Mandy Self, Geneva Schult, Jessica Coyle, Craig Chrissinger, Luke DeProst and Roberta Johnson. Just about \$500.00 was raised to assist with church rental, this newsletter, and the December holiday party.

Vardeman said that for 3 1/2 weeks (which ended St. Patrick's Day) a steampunk bundle was being offered on [www.storybundle.com](http://www.storybundle.com), including one of his books!

Items of higher interest/bidding include: Bundle of Daniel Abraham/MLN Hanover signed books \$9, Vic Milan hardcover book with dinosaur tote bag \$14, *Star Trek* bundle \$25, Egyptian bundle \$15, *Squirrel Girl* comics \$15, *Annotated Sherlock Holmes* boxed set \$15, Manga pack \$25, *Hobbit* 75th Anniversary Celebration swag bag \$20, Shawl by Yvonne Coats \$29, long row of books \$20, *Binti* hardcover \$15, three pieces of fractal art by Kaade \$20, *Moon Girl & Devil Dinosaur* comics \$10, tiny piece of art (a plant) \$10, *Star Wars* pack \$5, another row of books \$6, last stuff on the table \$15, and donation \$17.



## EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE

• **IT'S A WEIRD TIME...** No March or April club meetings, no Williamson Lectureship, all of us staying at home as much as possible and (hopefully) wearing masks when we're out hunting "wild" toilet paper (though we hear Clorox Wipes are more exotic). Some are working from home or still going to the workplace, while others find themselves laid off from "non-essential businesses." I've been unemployed for four weeks now, doing yard work, going through stuff, reading, napping, watching TV (*Star Trek: Picard*, *GLOW*, *Night Court*, *The Flintstones*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *The Rookie*, *The Munsters*, *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, PBS cooking shows, *Antiques Roadshow* and such), and writing lots of emails.

I have a feeling businesses won't reopen until mid-May, and social distancing will be going on long after that. We're not out of the COVID-19 woods yet. It would be insane to rush a return to "normal." There is no such thing any longer.

This is *My Column* and these are my personal opinions. No matter what you hear, there is no cure at present. Different treatments appear to possibly work, but there is no scientific proof yet. Don't believe a snake-oil salesman. Science and Logic must be our heroes. Not Failed Leadership, and squabbling between politicians. Why are states having to bid against each other for basic medical needs? We need cooperation right now, and a return to Respecting Science. All Hail Dr. Fauci!

• **PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY RESTRICTIONS** or New Social Rules will affect whether we have Bubonicon this year. San Diego Comic Con finally canceled their July 2020 dates, and we're watching the situation every day.

• **I WANT TO ENCOURAGE** everyone to consider donating money, supplies and/or time to efforts to feed people and assist First Responders/Medical Staff. Give blood if you can. Jessica and I have volunteered every week at the Roadrunner Food Bank, which is working hard to get food to people and

food pantries across NM. They need our help. Jessica also has made masks for the Navajo Nation & ABQ first responders.

• **JESSICA STILL IS WORKING**, though from home as her employment at the ABQ Museum is a city job, and they're planning exhibitions into next year. She often is asked about the Jim Henson Exhibition's end date, and the answer is nothing can be decided until the Museum is reopened. Check out Brian Jay Jones' exhibit tour on their FaceBook page.

• **REALLY ENJOYED** *Extra Ordinary* at the Guild Cinema mid-March. It's a fun horror comedy. You can help our independent cinema by streaming it from [www.guildcinema.com](http://www.guildcinema.com). We also watched *Phoenix, Oregon* the same way (quiet comedy drama). Another awesome film we saw at the Guild Cinema was *Guns Akimbo*, an entertaining, crazy videogame-energy action thriller with Daniel Radcliffe. And we got to see a sneak screening of *Onward* before theaters closed. It's another sweet, charming and fun Pixar film. You can see it on Disney+, along with *Frozen II*, *The Mandalorian*, Marvel Cinematic Universe films, and *The Simpsons*.

BTW, Comet-TV (4.3 in ABQ) recently started showing *Sliders*, *Quantum Leap*, the rebooted *Battlestar Galactica*, and *The Night Gallery*. So, that's a lot of nerdy TV to enjoy!

• **WE'RE GOING TO LOSE** authors, artists, actors, directors, musicians, comedians, fans & more during this crisis. It's a scary, depressing time, but We Will Get Through This Together - All the People of NM, the USA, and the World...

• **THIS IS THE LONGEST CLUBZINE** I probably will ever do, but there was a lot of news to cover, and I kept tweaking it. If nothing else, congrats to all the Award nominees & winners. And special thanks to Roberta and Jessica for book reviews, and to all the authors & artists who responded for the "What I Did On My Pandemic 'Vacation'" piece. Let's hope we can actually hand out the July (Summer) issue at a club meeting! Deadline Monday, July 6. Stay safe, stay home, stay strong, take care. Wash your hands and hang in there. - Craig C



## MUPPET COLORING AREA!

Hope you all got to see the Jim Henson Exhibition at the ABQ Museum...



## **The Coronavirus Outbreak**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ADVICE**

New York Times – Updated 04/11/2020

#### **1. WHEN WILL THIS END?**

A lot depends on how well the virus is contained. A better question might be: "How will we know when to reopen the country?" In an American Enterprise Institute report, Scott Gottlieb, Caitlin Rivers, Mark B. McClellan, Lauren Silvis and Crystal Watson staked out four goal posts for recovery: Hospitals in the state must be able to safely treat all patients requiring hospitalization, without resorting to crisis standards of care; the state needs to be able to at least test everyone who has symptoms; the state is able to conduct monitoring of confirmed cases and contacts; and there must be a sustained reduction in cases for at least 14 days.

#### **2. SHOULD I WEAR A MASK?**

The CDC recommends all Americans wear cloth masks if they go out in public. This is a shift in federal guidance reflecting new concerns that the coronavirus is being spread by infected people who have no symptoms. Until now, the CDC, like the WHO, has advised that ordinary people don't need to wear masks unless they are sick & coughing. Part of the reason was to preserve medical-grade masks for health care workers who desperately need them at a time when they are in continuously short supply. Masks don't replace hand washing and social distancing.

#### **3. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FEEL SICK?**

If you've been exposed to the coronavirus or think you have, and have a fever or symptoms like a cough or difficulty breathing, call a doctor. They should give you advice on whether you should be tested, how to get tested, and how to seek treatment without exposing others.

#### **4. HOW DO I GET TESTED?**

If you're sick and you think you've been exposed to the new coronavirus, the CDC recommends that you call your healthcare provider and explain your symptoms and fears. They will decide if you need to be tested. Keep in mind that there's a chance - because of a lack of testing kits or because you're asymptomatic, for instance - you won't be able to get tested.

#### **5. HOW DOES CORONAVIRUS SPREAD?**

It seems to spread very easily from person to person, especially in homes, hospitals and other confined spaces. The pathogen can be carried on tiny respiratory droplets that fall as they are coughed or sneezed out. It may also be transmitted when we touch a contaminated surface and then touch our face.

#### **6. IS THERE A VACCINE YET?**

No. Clinical trials are underway in the United States, China and Europe. But American officials and pharmaceutical executives say that a vaccine remains at least 12-18 months away.

#### **7. WHAT MAKES THIS SO DIFFERENT?**

Unlike the flu, there is no known treatment or vaccine, and little is known about this particular virus so far. It seems to be more lethal than the flu, but the numbers are still uncertain. And it

hits the elderly and those with underlying conditions – not just those with respiratory diseases – particularly hard.

#### **8. WHAT IF A FAMILY MEMBER GETS SICK?**

If the family member doesn't need hospitalization and can be cared for at home, you should help him or her with basic needs and monitor the symptoms, while also keeping as much distance as possible, according to guidelines issued by the CDC. If there's space, the sick family member should stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom. If masks are available, both the sick person and the caregiver should wear them when the caregiver enters the room. Make sure not to share any household items and to regularly clean surfaces like counters, doorknobs, tables & toilets. Don't forget to wash your hands frequently.

#### **9. SHOULD I STOCK UP ON GROCERIES?**

Plan two weeks of meals if possible. But people should not hoard food or supplies. Despite the empty shelves, the supply chain remains strong. Remember to wipe the handle of the grocery cart with a disinfecting wipe, and wash your hands as soon as you get home.

#### **10. CAN I GO TO THE PARK?**

Yes, but make sure you keep six feet away from people who don't live in your home. Even if you just hang out in a park, rather than go for a jog or a walk, getting some fresh air, and hopefully sunshine, is a good idea.

#### **11. HOW CAN I HELP?**

You can give blood through the American Red Cross, and World Central Kitchen has stepped in to distribute meals in major cities.

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