



SITHFACTS 2023

"WE HAD SNOW LAST MONTH" DECEMBER HOLIDAY ISSUE



2022 WORLD FANTASY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The World Fantasy Awards winners for works published in 2022 were announced October 29 during the 2023 World Fantasy Convention held in Kansas City, MO.

The Life Achievement Awards, presented annually to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service to the fantasy field, went to Peter Crowther and John Douglas.

The World Fantasy Awards winners are:

BEST NOVEL: *Saint Death's Daughter* by C.S.E. Cooney, **BEST NOVELLA:** *Pomegranates* by Priya Sharma, **BEST SHORT FICTION:** "Incident at Bear Creek Lodge" by Tananarive Due, **BEST ANTHOLOGY:** *Africa Risen: A New Era of Speculative Fiction* edited by Sheree Renée Thomas, Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki and Zelda Knight,

BEST COLLECTION: *All Nightmare Long* by Tim Lebbon, **BEST ARTIST:** Kinuko Y. Craft, **SPECIAL AWARD - PROFESSIONAL:** Matt Ottley for *The Tree of Ecstasy and Unbearable Sadness*, and **SPECIAL AWARD - NON-PROFESSIONAL:** Michael Kelly for Undertow Publications

This year's judges were Dale Bailey, Kelly Robson, Ginny Smith, A.C. Wise, and Ian Whates.

BARNES & NOBLE BEST BOOKS OF 2023

On October 11, Barnes & Noble announced its list of the best books of 2023 in various categories. Titles and authors of genre interest follow.

BEST FICTION OF 2023: *The God of Endings* by Jacqueline Holland, *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang, and *Chain-Gang All-Stars* by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah.

BEST MYSTERY OF 2023: *All the Sinners Bleed* by S.A. Cosby

BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF 2023: *From a Certain Point of View* edited by Anonymous, *Light Bringer* by Pierce Brown, *On Earth as It Is on Television* by Emily Jane, *Translation State* by Ann Leckie, *The Terraformers* by Annalee Newitz, *The Mimicking of Known Successes* by Malka Older, *Fractal Noise* by Christopher Paolini, *Starter Villain* by John Scalzi, *Some Desperate Glory* by

Emily Tesh, and *Star Bringer* by Tracy Wolff & Nina Croft.

BEST ROMANCE OF 2023: *A Soul of Ash and Blood* by Jennifer L. Armentrout, *Happy Place* by Emily Henry, and *Hunt on Dark Waters* by Katee Robert.

BEST FANTASY OF 2023: *Bookshops & Bonedust* by Travis Baldree, *Hell Bent* by Leigh Bardugo, *The Hurricane Wars* by Thea Guanzon, *Starling House* by Alix E. Harrow, *Assistant to the Villain* by Hannah Nicole Maerer, *Thrones of the Fallen* by Kerri Maniscalco, *The Fragile Threads of Power* by V.E. Schwab, *A Day of Fallen Night* by Samantha Shannon, *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros, and *Iron Flame* by Rebecca Yarros.

BEST HORROR OF 2023: *Nineteen Claws and a Black Bird* by Agustina Bazterrica, translated by Sarah Moses, *What Kind of Mother* by Clay McLeod Chapman, *Don't Fear the Reaper* by Stephen Graham Jones, *A Haunting on the Hill* by Elizabeth Hand, *How to Sell a Haunted House* by Grady Hendrix, *The Dead Take the A Train* by Cassandra Khaw & Richard Kadrey, *Lone Women* by Victor LaValle, *Out There Screaming* edited by Jordan Peele & John Joseph Adams, and *Monstrilio* by Gerardo Sámamo Córdova.

For more information, including the complete list, see the B&N website.

2023 HUGO & WORLDCON WINNERS

Winners for the Hugo Awards, the Astounding Award for Best New Writer, and the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book were announced by Chengdu Worldcon, the 81st World Science Fiction Convention on October 21 in Chengdu, China.

BEST NOVEL: *Nettle & Bone* by T. Kingfisher (Mary Robinette Kowal and John Scalzi also were nominated).

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Our Holiday Gathering with Cook-Off (challenge ingredient "Cheese"). Plus socializing and some video/cartoon shorts.
- **January 12, 2024:** Our Annual Group Book Discussion! What did you read in 2023 & would recommend? Or warn us about?
- **February 9:** Program unknown. Plus the Valentine *ASFacts* (Deadline Mon, Feb 5).
- **March 8:** Club Auction with Bob Vardeman, Patricia Rogers, Mandy Self, Jessica Coyle, Geneva Schult... 2-5 donations welcome, plus cash!
- **April 19 - A Week Late:** Also unknown. *ASFacts*!

Darth Vader, guest editor. **Craig Chrissinger**, normal editor. Send Correspondence to — PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176-7257. Darth Vader's Phone: c/o (505) 266-8905. E-mail: cwraig@nmia.com. *SITHFACTS* printed each December. *ASFacts* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. NEXT DEADLINE: Monday, February 5, 2024. **Club Officers:** Jessica Coyle & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Troy Stull, Moderator. Mike McCommas, alternator. Kris Kringle & Rudolph the Reindeer, Holiday Hosts. **Bubonicon 55 Chair:** Craig W. Chrissinger.

BEST NOVELLA: *Where the Drowned Girls Go* by Seanan McGuire, BEST NOVELETTE: “The Space-Time Painter” by Hai Ya, BEST SHORT STORY: “Rabbit Test” by Samantha Mills,

BEST SERIES: *Children of Time* Series by Adrian Tchaikovsky, BEST RELATED WORK: *Terry Pratchett: A Life With Footnotes* by Rob Wilkins, BEST GRAPHIC STORY OR COMIC: *Cyberpunk 2077: Big City Dreams*, BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, LONG FORM: *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, SHORT FORM: *The Expanse: “Babylon’s Ashes”* (written by Daniel Abraham, Ty Franck and Naren Shankar),

BEST EDITOR, SHORT FORM: Neil Clarke, BEST EDITOR, LONG FORM: Lindsey Hall, BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST: Enzhe Zhao, BEST SEMIPROZINE: *Uncanny*, BEST FANZINE: *Zero Gravity Newspaper*, BEST FANCAST: *Hugo, Girl!*, BEST FAN WRITER: Chris M. Barkley, BEST FAN ARTIST: Richard Man,

LODESTAR AWARD FOR BEST YOUNG ADULT BOOK (Not a Hugo): *Akata Woman* by Nnedi Okorafor, ASTOUNDING AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER (Not a Hugo): Travis Baldree, and THE BIG HEART AWARD went to Bobbi Armbruster, presented by chair Ben Yalow.

THE EXPANSE’S JAMES S.A. COREY ANNOUNCES NEW TRILOGY

by Cheryl Eddy, gizmodo.com 11-9-23

The Expanse book series ended in 2021 with ninth entry *Leviathan Falls*, and the TV series adaptation wrapped up after six seasons in 2022. And while Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck – who write together as James S.A. Corey – have nixed any return to the world of *The Expanse*, they’re still working on sci-fi projects together, as November 9’s big announcement attests.

Fans can look forward to the arrival of *The Mercy of Gods*, the first book of the *Captive’s War* space opera trilogy “that sees humanity fighting for its survival in a war as old as the universe itself” from publisher Orbit next August.

The announcement came with a full plot summary, which you can read below:

“How humanity came to the planet called Anjiin is lost in the fog of history, but that history is about to end. The Carryx – part empire, part hive – have waged wars of conquest for centuries, destroying or enslaving species across the galaxy. Now, they are facing a great and deathless enemy. The key to their survival may rest with the humans of Anjiin.

“Caught up in academic intrigue and affairs of the heart, Dafyd Alkhor is pleased just to be an assistant to a brilliant scientist and his celebrated research team. Then the Carryx ships descend, decimating the human population and taking the best and brightest of Anjiin society away to serve on the Carryx homeworld, and Dafyd is swept along with them.

“They are dropped in the middle of a struggle they barely understand, set in a competition against the other captive species with extinction as the price of failure. On-

ly Dafyd and a handful of his companions see past the Darwinian contest to the deeper game that they must play to survive: learning to understand – and manipulate – the Carryx themselves.

“With a noble but suicidal human rebellion on one hand and strange and murderous enemies on the other, the team pays a terrible price to become the trusted servants of their new rulers.

“Dafyd Alkhor is a simple man swept up in events that are beyond his control and more vast than his imagination. He will become the champion of humanity and its betrayer, the most hated man in history and the guardian of his people. This is where his story begins.”

“I pitched Daniel an idea a couple of years ago,” Franck said in a Crowdfunder announcement of the book. “It might have even been like 10 years ago. But I pitched him this idea of the Book of Daniel, from the Old Testament, but as a science fiction story. That’s ultimately what it is. At some point when I was pitching him the idea, he pointed out that there was a little touch of Ursula Le Guin in it, a little touch of Frank Herbert in it. So we started describing it as the disappointing love child of Frank Herbert and Ursula Le Guin [laughs] as a retelling of a biblical myth.”

Added Abraham, “It was a really interesting place to go after *The Expanse*. *The Expanse* had so much in a particular slice of space opera that was sort of between late *Apollo 13* and kind of early *Buck Rogers* that we spent a lot of time there. This is still space opera, but it’s such a very different place, a very different part of the genre. There’s some things we get to do and play with we couldn’t have done anywhere else.”

The Mercy of Gods will hit bookshelves on August 6, 2024.

TIME MAGAZINE 100 MUST-READS OF 2023

On November 20, *Time Magazine* selected their 100 must-read books of 2023. The list includes *The Future* by Naomi Alderman, *Our Share of Night* by Mariana Enriquez, *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang, *Lone Women* by Victor LaValle, and *Let Us Descend* by Jesmyn Ward, amongst other titles and authors of genre interest.

For the full list, see *Time Magazine*’s website.

SF BOOK GROUP READS ON

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, December 18, inside Jason’s Deli (northwest corner of Louisiana & America’s Parkway NE) to discuss *Rich Man’s Sky* by Wil McCarthy. The group then meets January 15, 2024, at Jason’s Deli to talk about *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* by V.E. Schwab.

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers



on the 3rd Monday each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on them at Page One Books. For more info: Leah at msransom@hotmail.com or Craig at 266-8905.

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For the full list, see *Time Magazine's* website.

AZ's WESTON OCHSE DIES

Weston Ochse died November 18 in Tucson, AZ, after a long period of poor health, reports Locusmag.com. He was 58 years old. Ochse was best known as a horror and military SF writer.

Ochse was born June 20, 1965, in Gillette, WY, and grew up all over the US, graduating from high school in Chattanooga TN. He then enlisted in the US Army, becoming an intelligence officer, and served until 2004. He attended Excelsior University as an undergrad, and earned his MFA in creative writing from National University. He taught writing at Cochise Community College and Southern New Hampshire University, and ran the Guerrilla Fiction Writing Workshop online. He was married to author Yvonne Navarro, who survives him.

Ochse began publishing genre stories with 1999's "Holy Ghost Hit Parade." Some of his short fiction was collected in 2011's *Multiplex Fandango*, and his collections with David Whitman are 2000's *Scary Rednecks and Other Inbred Horrors* and 2003's *Appalachian Galapagos*.

Debut novel *Scarecrow Gods* appeared in 2005, and won a Bram Stoker Award. Other works include the *SEAL Team 666* series, starting with *SEAL Team 666* (2012); the military SF *Task Force Ombra* series beginning with *Grunt Life* (2014); the *Sky* series, starting with *Burning Sky* (2018). Standalones include *The Tomes of the Dead: Empire of Salt* (2010), *Velvet Dogma* (2011), *Ghost Heart* (2014, with Yvonne Navarro), *Halfway House* (2014), *Bone Chase* (2020), and *Red Unicorn* (2022). He wrote *Blood Ocean* (2012) in the *Afterblight Chronicles* shared world, and authored tie-ins, including in the *Alien vs Predator* world. He also wrote *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: A 21st Century Modernization* (2021). Ochse participated at least once at Bubonicon.

WASHINGTON POST'S BEST OF 2023

The *Washington Post* in mid-November released its list of the best science fiction and fantasy novels of 2023, as chosen by Charlie Jane Anders:

Rouge by Mona Awad, *To Shape a Dragon's Breath* by Monique Blackgoose, *The Great Transition* by Nick Fuller Googins, *The Water Outlaws* by S.L. Huang, *God-*

killer by Hannah Kaner, *The Deep Sky* by Yume Kitasei, *White Cat, Black Dog* by Kelly Link, *Silver Nitrate* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *He Who Drowned the World* by Shelley Parker-Chan, and *Shigidi and the Brass Head of Obalufon* by Wole Talabi.

GEORGE R.R. MARTIN HAS NO (NEW) PAGES

by James Whitbrook, gizmodo.com 11-21-23

The *Song of Ice and Fire* scribe's latest update in the *Winds of Winter* saga is that he's pretty much where he was at this time last year.

Well, maybe he does have new pages – after all, part of writing a novel as long-in-the-works and expansive as *The Winds of Winter*, the latest novel in the *Song of Ice and Fire* series that gave us *Game of Thrones*, is going back and revising things. But if you were hoping author George RR Martin's latest update on the book he hoped to stop updating us about would come with a shiny new number, then, bad news.

"The main thing I'm actually writing, of course, is the same thing," Martin recently said of *Winds* in an appearance on *Bangcast*. "I wish I could write as fast as [*Last Kingdom* writer] Bernard Cornwell but I'm 12 years late on this damn novel and I'm struggling with it.

"I have like 1,100 pages written but I still have hundreds more pages to go," the Santa Fe writer continued. "It's a big mother of a book for whatever reason. Maybe I should've started writing smaller books when I began, this but it's tough. That's the main thing that dominates most of my working life."

That 1,100 number is familiar to anyone who has now been following the story of *Winds of Winter* being written for a decent chunk of their life – it's the same page count Martin gave roughly this time last year, when he discussed the novel on *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert*. Then, Martin estimated that he had around another 500 pages or more to write, having previously estimated that *Winds* would be the longest novel in the series so far, trumping the approximately 1,500 page manuscripts for *Dance with Dragons* and *Storm of Swords*.

It's perhaps not the update people hoped for when it comes to *Winds of Winter*, but it's an update nonetheless. Re-iteration and revision is part of any writing process, let alone an undertaking as vast and with as high expectations as *Winds of Winter* – and as Martin enters what is, hopefully, at long last the home stretch of bringing his manuscript to an end, maybe a year of working on what he already had is exactly what he needed.

2022 SIDEWISE AWARD WINNERS

The winners for the 2022 Sidewise Awards for Alternate History were announced October 27 at the World Fantasy Convention in Kansas City, MO.

LONG FORM: *The Peacekeeper* by B.L. Blanchard.

SHORT FORM (tie): "A Sky and a Heaven" by Eric Choi and "A Dream of Electric Mothers" by Wole Talabi.

The Sidewise Awards have been presented annually since 1995 to recognize excellence in alternate historical fiction.

MICHAEL BISHOP DIES

Author and editor Michael Bishop died November 13, after entering hospice care in late June, reports Locusmag.com. He was 78 years old.

Michael Lawson Bishop was born November 12, 1945, in Lincoln, NE. He spent much of his youth with his mother in a small town near Wichita KS, while visiting his father at Air Force bases around the country during the summers. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a bachelor's (1967) and master's in English (1968), then joined the Air Force as an English instructor at the Air Force Academy Preparatory school (1968-72) and at the University of Georgia (1972-74), before becoming a full-time freelance writer.

Bishop's first story, "Piñon Fall" appeared in *Galaxy* in 1970. His first novel was *A Funeral for the Eyes of Fire* (1975). Other novels include *And Strange at Ecbatan the Trees* (1976; as *Beneath the Shattered Moon* 1977); *Stolen Faces* (1977); the Urban Nucleus series, about Atlanta in the future: *A Little Knowledge* (1977), fix-up *Catacomb Years* (1979), and *Under Heaven's Bridge* (1981) with Ian Watson; *Transfigurations* (1979); Nebula Award-winning time-travel novel *No Enemy But Time* (1982); horror *Who Made Stevie Crye?* (1984); *Ancient of Days* (1985); alternate world SF *The Secret Ascension* (1987); Mythopoeic Award-winning contemporary fantasy *Unicorn Mountain* (1988); comic superhero novel *Count Geiger's Blues* (1992); Locus Award-winning *Brittle Innings* (1994); and Joel-Brock the *Brave and the Valorous Smalls* (2016). He also wrote two mysteries with Paul Di Filippo under pseudonym "Philip Lawson": *Would It Kill You to Smile?* (1998) and *Muskrat Courage* (2000).

A prolific short story writer for most of his career, Bishop's collections include *Blooded on Arachne* (1982), *One Winter in Eden* (1984), *Close Encounters With the Deity* (1986), *Emphatically Not SF*, *Almost* (1990), *At the City Limits of Fate* (1996), *Blue Kansas Sky* (2000), *Brighten to Incandescence* (2003), *The Door Gunner and Other Perilous Flights of Fancy: A Michael Bishop Retrospective* (2012), *The Sacerdotal Owl and Three Other Long Tales of Calamity, Pilgrimage, and Atonement* (2018), and *A Few Last Words for the Late Immortals: 50 Short Stories & Poems* (2021).

He also published poetry collections *Windows and Mirrors* (1977) and *Time Pieces* (1998). Non-fiction collection *A Reverie for Mr. Ray* appeared in 2005. He edited anthologies *Changes* (1983; with Ian Watson), *Light Years and Dark* (1984), *Nebula Awards 23* (1989), *Nebula Awards 25* (1991), *A Cross of Centuries: Twenty-five Imaginative Tales about the Christ* (2007), and *Passing for Human* (2009, with Steven Utley).

Bishop's other honors include DeepSouthCon's Phoenix Award (1977); Locus Awards for novellas "The Samurai and the Willows" (1977) and "Her Habiline Husband" (1983); the Clark Ashton Smith Award for verse (1978); a Rhysling Award for poem "For the Lady of a Physicist" (1979); a Nebula for novelette "The Quickening" (1981), a Southeastern Science Fiction Achievement Award (SESFA) for short fiction for "The Door Gunner" (2004), and the Shirley Jackson Award for his short

story "The Pile" (2008). He was also nominated for eight Hugo Awards and five World Fantasy Awards.

Bishop was the longtime writer-in-residence at LaGrange College in LaGrange, Georgia, and lived in nearby Pine Mountain. He is survived by his wife Jeri, daughter Stephanie, and grandchildren.

MARTY KROFFT OF H.R. PUFNSTUF DIES

by The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Marty Krofft, a TV producer known for imaginative children's shows such as *H.R. Pufnstuf* and primetime hits including *Donny & Marie* in the 1970s, died November 25 of kidney failure in Los Angeles, publicist Harlan Boll said. Krofft was 86 years old.

Krofft and his brother Sid were puppeteers who broke into television and ended up getting stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Along the way, they brought a trippy sensibility to children's TV and brought singling siblings Donny and Marie Osmond and Barbara Mandrell and her sisters to primetime.

The Osmonds' clean-cut variety show, featuring television's youngest-ever hosts at the time, became a lasting piece of '70s cultural memorabilia, rebooted as a daytime talk show in the 1990s and a Broadway Christmas show in 2010. The Kroffts followed up with *Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters*, which ran 1980-82.

Like the Osmonds, *H.R. Pufnstuf* proved to have pop culture staying power. Despite totaling just 17 episodes, the surreal show, featuring an island, a witch, a talking flute, a shipwrecked boy and a redheaded, cowboy boot-wearing dragon, came in 27th in a 2007 *TV Guide* poll ranking of all-time cult favorites.

More than 45 years after the show's 1969 debut, the title character graced an episode of another Krofft brothers success, *Mutt & Stuff*, which ran for multiple seasons on Nickelodeon.

"To make another hit at this time in our lives, I've got to give ourselves a pat on the back," Marty Krofft told The Associated Press ahead of the 2015 episode taping.

Even then, he was still contending with another of the enduring features of *H.R. Pufnstuf* — speculation that it, well, betokened a certain '60s commitment to altering consciousness. Krofft rebuffed that notion: "If we did the drugs everybody thought we did, we'd be dead today," he said, adding, "You cannot work stoned."

Born in Montreal on April 9, 1937, Krofft got into entertainment via puppetry. He and his brother Sid put together a risqué, cabaret-inspired puppet show called *Les Poupées de Paris* in 1960, and its traveling success led to jobs creating puppet shows for amusement parks. The Kroffts eventually opened their own, the short-lived World of Sid & Marty Krofft, in Atlanta in the 1970s.

Sid & Marty Krofft Pictures became a household name in the 1970s, helping launch them into creating and producing family and kids shows for more than 50 years. Eventually, Marty Krofft would be referred to as the "King of Saturday Mornings."



They first made their mark in television with *H.R. Pufnstuf*, which spawned the 1970 feature film *Pufnstuf*. Many more shows for various audiences followed, including *Land of the Lost*, *Electra Woman and Dyna Girl*, *Lidsville*, *The Lost Saucer*, *The Bugaloos*, *Pryor's Place* with comedian Richard Pryor, and *D.C. Follies*, in which puppets gave a satirical take on politics and the news.

Sid Krofft said on Instagram that he was heartbroken by his younger brother's death, telling fans, "All of you meant the world to him."

The Krofft brothers were awarded the Lifetime Career Award at the Saturn Awards in 2003 for creating some of those most iconic fantastical television shows.

In 2018, they received the Lifetime Achievement Emmy Award from the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. The pair received a star on the world-famous Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2020 in recognition of their "Golden Anniversary."

Most recently, Krofft received the Julie Award at the 2023 Dragon Con in Atlanta.

Marty Krofft is survived by brothers, Harry Krofft and Sid Krofft; his daughters Deanna Krofft-Pope, Kristina and Kendra Krofft; five grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY BEST BOOKS 2023

In early November, Publishers Weekly announced its list of the best books of 2023, divided into 13 categories.

Same Bed Different Dreams by Ed Park was on the overall Top 10 list.

The best books in the SF/FANTASY/HORROR category are: *Chain-Gang All-Stars* by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, *Our Share of Night* by Mariana Enriquez, *The Water Outlaws* by S.L. Huang, *Translation State* by Ann Leckie, *Like Smoke Like Light* by Yukimi Ogawa, *Some Desperate Glory* by Emily Tesh, and *The Circumference of the World* by Lavie Tidhar.

Titles and authors of genre interest listed in other categories follow:

FICTION: *Terrace Story* by Hilary Leichter, and *Let Us Descend* by Jesmyn Ward.

MYSTERY/THRILLER: *Flags on the Bayou* by James Lee Burke, *The Devil's Playground* by Craig Russell, and *The Eden Test* by Adam Sternbergh.

ROMANCE: *I Am Ayah: The Way Home* by Donna Hill, and *A Shot in the Dark* by Victoria Lee.

YOUNG ADULT: *The Blood Years* by Elana K. Arnold, *Blood Debts* by Terry J. Benton-Walker, *Spin* by Rebecca Caprara, *The King is Dead* by Benjamin Dean, *What Stalks Among Us* by Sarah Hollowell, *The Isles of the Gods* by Amie Kaufman, and *A Door in the Dark* by Scott Reintgen.

MIDDLE GRADE: *Simon Sort of Says* by Erin Bow, *The Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, a Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity* by Nicholas Day, *The Eyes and the Impossible* by Dave Eggers, *The Probability of Everything* by Sarah Everett, *Gone Wolf* by Amber McBride, *The Otherwoods* by Justine Pucella Winans, *The Story of Gumluck the Wizard* by Adam Rex, and *Bea Wolf* by Zach Weiner-Smith.

NIGHT COURT'S RICHARD MOLL DIES

by Mike Barnes, [Hollywoodreporter.com](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com) 10-27-23

Richard Moll, the fun-loving actor who portrayed the towering and tenderhearted bailiff Aristotle Nostradamus "Bull" Shannon on all nine seasons of the popular NBC sitcom *Night Court* during its original run, has died. He was 80 years old.

Moll died peacefully October 26 at his home in Big Bear Lake, CA, his publicist announced.

Suitable for his 6-foot-8 frame, Moll played an abominable snowman alongside Ringo Starr and Barbara Bach in the comedy feature *Caveman* (1981), and he was a scary, decomposing Vietnam veteran in the horror film *House* (1986).

Moll also did lots of voiceover work, with a regular gig as the immortal bodyguard Norman on the syndicated series *Mighty Max* and turns as Harvey Dent/Two-Face for three *Batman* cartoons.

Moll had a shaved head — he did that to play the warrior Hurok in the sci-fi film *Metalstorm: The Destruction of Jared-Syn* (1983) — when he auditioned for the role of Shannon on *Night Court*, created by Reinhold Weege.

"They said 'Richard, the shaved head looks good. Will you shave your head for the part?'" he recalled in a 2010 interview. "I said, 'Are you kidding? I'll shave my legs for the part. I'll shave my armpits, I don't care.'"

With *Night Court* being nominated three times for the Emmy for outstanding comedy series, Moll came up with a catchphrase — "Oooo-kay" — as he appeared on all but one of the show's 193 episodes from 1984-92 alongside the likes of Harry Anderson, John Larroquette, Charlie Robinson and Markie Post.

Moll was not involved with the Larroquette-toplined *Night Court* reboot that returned to NBC for the 2022-23 season.

Charles Richard Moll was born in Pasadena on January 13, 1943. His mother, Violet, was a nurse and his father, Harry, a lawyer.

A history and psychology major at the University of California at Berkeley, he graduated in 1964, then worked as a deputy probation officer in Alameda County and in ladies' hosiery at a store in San Francisco.

He came to Los Angeles in 1968 to pursue acting but found the going tough at first. He got to play a cannibal in a Hertz commercial opposite Don Adams and then Joseph Smith in a 1977 biopic about Brigham Young before landing parts in episodes of *Welcome Back, Kotter*, and *The Rockford Files*.

In 1979, Moll was cast as a gangster in the two-part *Happy Days* episode "Fonzie's Funeral," and that led to appearances on two other Garry Marshall-created shows, *Laverne & Shirley* and *Mork & Mindy*.

He filled out his résumé with work in films including *Hard Country* (1981) and Ralph Bakshi's *American Pop* (1981) and on such TV shows as *The Misadventures of Sheriff Lobo*, *B.J. and the Bear*, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, *T.J. Hooker*, *Alice* and *The Dukes of Hazzard* before landing on *Night Court*.

Moll also played himself in 1987 on a two-part epi-

sode of NBC's *The Facts of Life* and recurred as The Drifter on the 1999-2002 Nickelodeon comedy *100 Deeds for Eddie McDowd*.

He also showed up on *Highlander*, *Babylon 5*, *Murder...With Children* and *Anger Management*, and in the films *The Flintstones* (1994), *But I'm a Cheerleader* (1999) and *Scary Movie 2* (2001).

An avid bird watcher and nature lover, Moll was married and divorced twice; his second wife, Susan, was a daughter of Milton Berle's third and last wife, Lorna Adams. Survivors also include his children, Chloe and Mason, and his stepchildren, Cassandra and Morgan.

WHITTAKER REFLECTS ON LEAVING *DR WHO*

by James Whitbrook, gizmodo.com 11-22-2023

It's been a long time in the making, but as *Doctor Who* celebrated its 60th anniversary Thanksgiving weekend, it entered a new era – one that will, at least, close the book on the recent tenure of Jodie Whittaker's 13th Doctor. But as she begins to launch her own next chapter, she is still fondly looking back on her time as a Time Lord.

Speaking to *Radio Times* the week of November 20 as part of its celebration of *Doctor Who*'s 60th anniversary, Whittaker – who, the day after *Doctor Who*'s anniversary, was set to premiere her next drama series, *One Night* – touched on the bittersweet nature of the timing of it all. "What a thing to be part of," Whittaker noted, adding that there were no regrets she herself isn't a part of *Doctor Who*'s upcoming celebrations. "I'm never fired from it. I'm always the Doctor."

Instead, she gets to participate in a past Doctor tradition – watching along as a fan for the first time, rather than someone in the know. "Now I get to see the joy in someone else's eyes. I can't wait," Whittaker added. "I'm new to this as well, because I didn't really watch it before. So now I get to be a proper audience member and I get all the references! Now I understand it!"

Doctor Who returned Saturday, November 25, on the BBC in the UK and Ireland and Disney+ internationally with "The Star Beast," the first in a trio of weekly specials celebrating the series' 60th anniversary.

BUBONICON 55 AWAITS HOTEL CONTRACT

As a hotel contract has not been signed by all parties as of the beginning of December, weekend passes for Bubonicon 55 will not go on sale until early January 2024, at the earliest. Per the norm of the last few years, we will be keeping an eye on Covid, Flu & RSV numbers. Most likely, the August 23-24 convention soon will be confirmed to be at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown.

Special guests for Bubonicon 55 are Mur Lafferty and TJ Klune, Ursula Vernon & Kevin Sonney as the Toastmaster Duo, and Dale Ray Deforest as Guest Artist. Con chair is Craig Chrissinger, with Jessica Coyle and Mandy Self again acting as assistant chairs.

Perry & Terri Rodent want to remind fans to have a great winter holiday season – stay safe and be well. Updates will be posted on www.bubonicon.com, of course, and in this newsletter.

REVIEW ROUND-UP

***Bookshops & Bonedust* by Travis Baldree, 2023 Tor, tp \$17.99, 288 pages. Review by Craig W. Chrissinger**

In this prequel to *Legends & Lattes*, we find Viv, battle-hungry orc, younger and still becoming the character who will eventually open a coffee shop and find love. Here Viv has been injured while fighting for a mercenary company, and packed off against her will to recover in the sleepy beach town of Murk. While hobbling around, she discovers a bookshop run by foul-mouthed rattkin Fern and a bakery run by Maylee the dwarf. Both will become friends and confidants.

While Travis Baldree's second book is another cozy fantasy - and just what readers need right now - there is a threat brewing after a suspicious traveler in gray appears. Murk and its change of pace may be just what Viv needs to grow as a person, but adventure is not too far away.

This book is enchanting, heartwarming, and delightful. Baldree has written a beautiful prequel that adds layers and character knowledge to the original's lore. *Bookshops & Bonedust* is highly recommended!

ASFS MEETING REPORTS — SEPTEMBER 2023: BUBONICON REPORT

A group of 22 people listened as Craig Chrissinger & Jessica Coyle gave a report on Bubonicon 54. The 2023 convention had 632 people (more than in 2022), raised the most money ever for charities in Friday's auction, and had a "profit" of approximately \$2,800-\$3,000. No one at the meeting went to Dragon Con this year (and the China Worldcon did not happen until October).

EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE

• WELL, OCTOBER 2023 WAS INTERESTING... Jessica and I finally contracted Covid. Luckily, we both had the head cold version, as opposed to the stronger flu variety with high fever. Still, it wasn't very fun. It took me 10 days to go negative again, and then my post-Covid symptoms lasted a good month (especially the fatigue). Jessica had milder symptoms than I did, but still suffered. We had to skip out on Milehicon as a result, and I didn't work for 3 1/2 weeks. So finances are tight at the moment. Jessica started a new job with the NM Historic Sites division on October 30, working at the Coronado Historic Site in Bernalillo (and sometimes at Jemez). And Gizmo Cat, who came into our lives last December, turned a year old sometime in late October. He's healthy, sweet, cute and sometimes a punk.

We did get out to see *The Lion King* at Popejoy (fascinating for the puppetry), *Pippin* at Rodey Theatre (enthusiastic students made it a fun show), and *Hadestown* this week at Popejoy (very well done, good music, great voices, solid story). Movie-wise, we managed to get out to see *The Marvels* (fun & entertaining - Captain Marvel, Ms. Marvel and Flerkens) and Disney's *Wish* (about keeping hope alive). And we went to Connie Willis' signing event at Bookworks and out to two dinners with the Willis Clan around Thanksgiving.

• TRY TO ENJOY your Christmas, Hanukkah, Midwinter, Kwanzaa, Boxing Day, and/or New Year's. We've already had a small snow storm along with rain, and might see more before December 25. And let's hope peace can be found in the Middle East and in Ukraine. The wars and the hate we're seeing are horrible and sad.

• IT'S BEEN 43 YEARS since John Lennon's murder, and I soon will be 62 years old. Still of importance: "Happy Xmas (War Is Over)," "All You Need Is Love," and "Give Peace A Chance."

• SUBMISSIONS really needed! I did this issue all on my own. See you all in February 2024. Happy Holidays! Be well. -- Craig C.