

The Newsletter of Concourse, the 55th British National Science Fiction Convention (Eastercon)

If you aren't a member then this isn't going to make much sense.

Programme Changes

Saturday

The Fan Fund Auction has been cancelled

The Filk Late Night will be starting early at 10.30pm

Sunday

10:00 Arena Masquerade rehearsal

11:00 Arena What the Victorians did for SF

12:00 Arena Eastercon 2006 bid session

16:00 Arena **Masquerade**

with Awards during the judging break

17:00 Renaissance Filk concert (room change)

Monday

12:00 Balcony Designing an alien – drawing

Masquerade Rehearsal

Entrants please to come to the masquerade rehearsal at 10:00 prompt in Arena.

Where were you all?

The Diana room, the theatre Green Room behind the stage in the Empress Ball Room, was scene of a host of authors in search of an audience on Friday and Saturday.

On Saturday Jay Caselberg, Tony Ballantyne, Ian Mcleod, Liz Williams, Freda Warrington, Elizabeth Counihan, Gwyneth Jones, Jeff VanderMeer and Jeff Ford were all there to read from their work but no none arrived to listen. So you missed a treatise on the potential uses of frogs in fiction.

Your next chance to hear the author readings is Saturday night in the Baronial from 9pm onwards or Sunday and Monday at 11 am, till 1 pm, in the Diana again. The final late reading will be 10 pm Sunday in the Renaissance.

Don't miss the daytime readings in the Diana (11am-1pm); they aren't in the programme book or read me.

For Programme Participants Eyes Only

Would all programme participants *please* come to Green Room 15 minutes before their item is due to start. Green Room is up the left hand stairs to the Spanish Hall suite. This way you are sure to get your free drink. Thank you. (*mine's a pint of Guinness – Ed*)

Fleetwood Pub Crawl

Meet in Registration area – sunday at 12 noon.

First Pub – North Euston Hotel near Fleetwood Tram Terminus. [Martin Hoare]

'Smart Girls' wanted for 'Mile High Division'

Head Girl of the Operations Room, 'Bunny' Latham is looking for 'likely girls' to be members of her new 'Sprokkette Air' platoon. Any girls interested in directing entrants of the Beyond Cyberdrome Air Battle are invited. The 'Sprokkette Air' girls are requested to report to the 'SCRAP' (Beyond Cyberdrome) Workshop for 'Scarf making' and 'Silly hat' making workshops. Bunny requests they wear smart black or dark blue skirts and white or light blue blouses. White gloves and barely sensible shoes are an advantage. 'Sprokkette Air' members will be instructed in the complex hand gestures that are so vital to Air Safety during dogfights.

[Wingco 'Whiskers' SMS]



Art For Art's Sake

Art Show will close for the art auction on Sunday (12 midday in the Pavilion) but will reopen one hour after it ends. Items purchased at the auction may be paid for and picked up at any time even while the auction is still running. Fixed Price items may also be picked up at this time, and fixed price sales will continue until the close of the art show at noon on Monday. All items purchased must be collected by that time. There will *not* be an art auction on Monday (just Sunday!) [Mary Burns]

BSFA Awards – Don't forget to vote!

The deadline for voting the British Science Fiction Association awards for the best novel, short fiction, non-fiction and artwork of 2003 is noon on Sunday. Ballot boxes and forms can be found at the information desk and in the dealers' room (at the Cold Tonnage Books table). Copies of the nominated artwork are also on display near the ballot box in the dealers' room. (Non BSFA members can vote here!)

Fan Fundery

Contrary to what it says in the programme, there will be no auction to raise money for TAFF (the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) and GUFF the Going Under/Get Up & over Fan Fund) at Concourse. Instead there are some items on sale (for appropriate donations to the fan funds) in the dealers' room next to the Cold Tonnage Books table, including books, T-shirts, plastic breasts and an inflatable kangaroo.

And you can vote in the current TAFF race to send Anders Holmström or James Bacon to North America. See one of them or Tobes for more details.

Conventions

Beneluxcon 2004

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Blankenberge

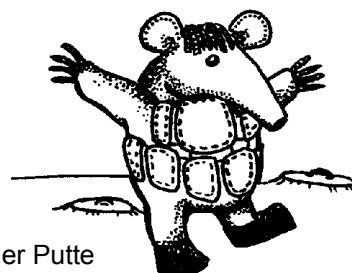
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Belgium

Beer

contact: Larry van der Putte

Interaction is selling off all its UKin05 bid merchandise at bargain rates.



Eurocon 07 Bid

Irish fan David Stewart is putting together a bid to host the 2007 Eurocon in Ireland. The vote to decide that particular Eurocon takes place at Interaction in August 2005 in Glasgow. Do you think an Irish Eurocon is a good idea? Then find David and give him £1.50 (or 2 Euro in real money) for a pre-supporting membership.

Keeping Score?

The geographical and temporal proximity of "I'm Sorry, I Haven't An SFing Clue" and the classic childrens' literature panel was, at least for participants in the latter event, annoying in many respects, but it did throw up a few interesting audio-visual combinations. This reporter was particularly moved by the sight of John Clute forcefully intoning his latest piercing insight to the strains of "Also Sprach Zarathustra" (spell that after a few pints!)

Security Alert Sat 14:20

Squaddi, aka Neil Johnstone, arrived at registration. "Can you make me a badge please. I've lost mine." It might have been embarrassing if our head of security wasn't allowed into his own convention!

We don't need no stinking badges

Perhaps security should be given photos of convention guests as Francis Spufford (the George Hay Lecturer this year) tried to get in to his own talk without his badge – and was stopped at the door.

Time is an Illusion

"Filthy Pro" M J Simpson turned up to his first programme item with just ten minutes left before its end. To make up for it he then proceeded to say more in the last ten minutes than the rest of the panel had for the last forty.

Not the Clarke Awards

This year's "Not The Clarke Awards" panel (consisting of four former judges and noted Person Francis Spufford) saw much hedging of bets with respect to what was felt to be an idiosyncratic shortlist. Quoth one panelist: "It is impossible to second guess the jury that picked this shortlist". In the end Tricia Sullivan's "Maul" was appointed the likely and most deserving winner, not least because it was unique on the list as a standalone novel, and a proper science fiction novel, dammit. The panel also listed what they felt were the significant omissions of "Felaheen", "Natural History" and "The Light Ages".

Complaints

Do make constructive complaints to the organisers of the convention at the time, or later on at a gripe session. Don't bother telling the newsletter unless it is funny! We have received a lengthy report that the Ceilidh was too loudly amplified but also another report that Jonjo's mother (67) enjoyed it greatly. If you have a suggestion please speak up at the time! I fear that there is nothing we can do about the carpet on the stairs, Susan, or the fact that you find it hard

to focus on it with your varifocals. There are lifts! They are just hard to find.

As for the Ceilidh I have reports of lovely ladies Pepper and Sharon dancing together but having difficulty remembering who was supposed to be the boy and who the girl.... and exactly the same problem with Dave and Silas.

The Future Of Fandom

Dear Old Fogies, You'll never take us alive!

Love and kisses, the third row.

[an anonymous note left in the newsletter room]

Classic SF Panel

The panel was torn between two definitions of classic. On the one hand we have "classics of the genre" - works which shaped the development of science fiction. On the other hand we have "quality classics" - works which stand up to re-reading and which we would be prepared to recommend to anyone to read.

A lot of the discussion focussed on "Golden Age" SF and the panel tended to agree that, though a lot of the "Golden Age" stories are unreadably crap, at least in the eyes of us modern SF fans, they are "classic" in that they form the foundation of the genre.

Bondage Workshop

At four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, a little knot of dedicated fannish bondage enthusiasts gathered in a small room on the edge of the convention to study the noble art of tying people up. We started by talking around some important issues surrounding safety and consent, and then we watched as our tutor showed us a simple tie. He called for a volunteer from the audience and from the sea of hands chose one lucky fellow to have his wrists tied, a demonstration which was enthusiastically copied (in pairs, both ways) by the company there present. A very picturesque piece of work with cling-film was followed by the construction of some rope panties, once again with a demonstration followed by audience participation. I found Anders Holmström a model Model.

Finest comedy moment of the convention to date occurred just as the clingfilm was about to be deployed. Our model was engaged in the very act of removing her top when James Bacon, renowned lecher, entered the room. The man has a great gift for timing.

Norwegian room party

Without a convenient hotel room the party is now to be held in a corner of the main bar at 10pm Sunday. There will be a small amount of suitable drink (cleared with the bar staff by the way of corkage).

[Anders Frihagen - organizer of the third kind]

"LieJournal" has been brought to you by Alex McLintock with help from Jan van't Ent and folks who dropped by.

