

The news magazine of the British Science Fiction Association

# Matrix

Issue 142

Mar/Apr 2000



**A.E. van Vogt 1912 – 2000**

## Matrix

Issue 142 □ Mar/Apr 2000

The bi-monthly news magazine of the  
**British Science Fiction  
Association**

Registered in England, Limited by  
Guarantee, Company Number: 921500  
Registered Address: 1 Long Row Close,  
Everdon, Daventry, NN11 3BE

The BSFA was founded in 1958 and is a non-  
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ISSN: 0307 3335  
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Printed by: PDC Copyprint, 11 Jeffries  
Passage, Guilford, GU1 4AP

Deadline for submissions for next issue:  
5th April 2000

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Illustrated Encyclopedia of Science  
Fiction* by John Clute, published by  
Dorling Kindersley. Original copyright  
holders sought, but not traced).

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## Editorial

I don't intend to make a habit of this, but since this is the dawn of a new era for *Matrix* I thought it was appropriate to make a few comments about the new regime.

First and foremost it's worth emphasising that, though I'm overall editor of the magazine, *Matrix* is very much a team effort and the issue that you hold in your hands wouldn't exist without the input of the contributing editors listed on the facing page (or, for that matter, the numerous people behind the scenes who supply news items, articles and advice). At the risk of sounding like an Oscar-acceptance speech-writer, my thanks to them all.

I'm not expecting to make any radical changes to the magazine, at least in the very near future. Glenda Pringle, Steve Jeffery and Vikki Lee, et al., have done a sterling job of keeping *Matrix* afloat over the last couple of mailings. The keynote for the future is evolution, rather than revolution, but our ultimate aim is to build on all the excellent work done by past editors to produce a magazine that's a worthy companion to *Vector*. As always we can't do that without feedback from you, the readers, so we welcome comments, suggestions and, yes, even constructive criticism.

## Help wanted

Due to personal commitments Yvonne Rowse is, as of this issue, reluctantly having to step down as contributing editor in charge of fanzine reviews. I'm sure we'd all like to thank her for the work she's done over recent issues. Although myself, Steve Jeffery and Vikki Lee have some potential replacements in mind, if anyone else would like to volunteer their services for consideration please contact me at the editorial address.

We're also looking for anyone of an artistic bent to supply quality cover art for forthcoming issues of *Matrix*. Colin Odell has provided some eye-catching creations for us, but he and Mitch LeBlanc have recently succumbed to professional work commitments. If you think you can emulate him, then please contact me, ideally with some samples of your work.

## A.E. van Vogt (1912 – 2000)

Alfred Elton Van Vogt, once of the most popular science fiction writers of his generation, died on 26 January 2000 from complications following pneumonia. He had been suffering from Alzheimer's Disease for the last decade of his life.

Van Vogt was born in Manitoba, Canada on 26 April 1912, he started writing after his graduation from the University of Ottawa in 1928, producing true-life confessions and romances for various low-paying magazines. He also contributed to a number of popular Canadian radio serials of the day.

In 1939 he turned to science fiction with 'Black Destroyer', a story which established his long association with John W. Campbell and with *Astounding*. That same year he married Edna Mayne Hull, with whom he would later collaborate on a number of stories.

Between 1939 and 1950 Van Vogt was prolific, turning out a huge number of stories which tended to have more existential depth than most of the popular genre fiction of the time. This is typified by his first and probably most successful novel, *Slan*, which was serialised in *Astounding* in 1940. This story of a new race of supermen who were feared and hunted by mankind until shown to be the next evolutionary step contains many of the characteristic features of his work, notably the belief that increased mental powers would mark the inevitable next step on the evolutionary ladder. These ideas struck an immediate chord with science fiction fans of the time, shown most readily in the phrase 'Fans Are Slans' which was still current among some areas of fandom as late as the 1970s.

Van Vogt continued to write stories of transcendent supermen, notably in what some consider his major work, *The World of Null-A* (serialised in *Astounding* in 1945) and its sequel *The Pawns of Null-A* (serialised 1948-9, also known as *The Players of Null-A*) – in 1948 *The World of Null-A* was the first science fiction novel to be published in hardback by a mainstream publisher. Other variations on this theme occur, for instance, in the stories gathered as *The Voyage Of The Space Beagle* (serialised 1939-43) in which the poly-

math hero synthesises a wide variety of disciplines in his contact with different alien races, and in *The Weapon Shops of Isher* (1941-2) and its sequel *The Weapon Makers* (1943) with its all-powerful ruler of the 'sevagarm'.

In 1944 Van Vogt and his wife moved from Canada to California, and from that time on he was increasingly involved with Dianetics, as proposed by fellow *Astounding* writer L. Ron Hubbard. The ideas of Dianetics came so close to Van Vogt's own notions of the transcendent superman that in 1950 he stopped writing in order to devote himself full-time to running the Los Angeles Hubbard Dianetic Centre. Such was his devotion to the cause that he continued to run the Centre until 1961, long after others, including its founder, Hubbard, had given up the cause.



In the early 1960s he returned to writing with a non-sf thriller, *The Violent Man* (1962), and followed that with more science fiction, including *The Silkie* (fix-up 1969), *Children Of Tomorrow* (1970) and *The Battle Of Forever* (1971) but none of this was as successful as his earlier work. In 1975 E. Mayne Hull died; he later married Lydia Brayman who survives him. He received the Canadian Caspar Award for Lifetime Achievement in 1980 and was named a Grand Master by the SFWA in 1996.

Paul Kincaid

# News

Books, people and events making the headlines

## Vonnegut hurt in accident

Author Kurt Vonnegut, aged 77, was hospitalised after suffering the effects of smoke inhalation whilst tackling a fire at his New York home. Vonnegut was watching this year's Superbowl match on TV when a fire started in his fourth floor study. Fire department officials said that the cause of the fire has yet to be determined. Although initially reported to be in a 'critical, but stable' condition, Vonnegut was, thankfully, not as badly affected as first feared and is recovering.

## The light fantastic

After the success of their *SF Masterworks* venture, Millennium are launching a new line of classic fantasy reprints, edited by Jo Fletcher of Gollancz SF. Unsurprisingly called *Fantasy Masterworks*, the B-format series launches in March with a re-issue of Gene Wolfe's *Book of the New Sun* in two omnibus volumes, and continues at the rate of one volume a month with welcome re-prints of novels like *The Worm Ouroboros* by E.R. Eddison, *Tales of the Dying Earth* by Jack Vance, *Varconium* by M. John Harrison, *Little, Big* by John Crowley, *The Chronicles of Amber* by Roger Zelazny, *The Complete Enchanter* by L. Sprague de Camp & Fletcher Pratt, *The Land of Laughs* by Jonathan Carroll and *Lud-in-the-Mist* by Hope Mirrielees.

## Like mother, like son

Following in his mother's footsteps, Todd McCaffrey, son of Anne, has signed a six-figure deal with Del Rey to write a new Pern novel, *Dragonblood*. He will be the only other writer allowed to use the Pern universe.

## Ken = fan

Everyone's favourite candidate for London mayor, Ken Livingstone, is apparently an sf fan. According to a survey of mayoral candidates' literary tastes in *Metro*, the free London newspaper, Ken is currently reading an unnamed novel whose plot is not a million miles removed from Orson Scott Card's *Xenocide*. Perhaps someone should give him a copy of Karel Čapek's *War With the Newts*.

## King accident latest

The Press Association reports that Bryan Smith, the motorist responsible for injuring Stephen King in a car accident in June last year, has avoided being jailed under a plea agreement. A more serious charge of aggravated assault was dropped after Smith pleaded

guilty to driving to endanger. His license was suspended for six months, extended to a year, and he was also given a six month suspended jail sentence.

King suffered serious injuries when Smith, who claimed he had been distracted by his dog, hit him on a road near King's vacation home in Lovell, Maine. The author criticised prosecutors for not charging Smith with the more serious crime, calling the plea bargain "irresponsible public business" and said: "What he took from me, my time, my peace of mind and my ease of body, are simply gone and no court can bring them back". It later emerged that Smith has previous convictions for numerous traffic offences, including drink driving.

## Raise the red, green and blue

During its successful mission in December last year to repair the ailing Hubble Space Telescope, the Space Shuttle Discovery carried into orbit a Martian flag endorsed by The Mars Society, the lobby group promoting exploration and eventual colonisation of the Red Planet. The flag, a red, green and blue tricolour, whose design was inspired by Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars Trilogy is also intended to represent the three primary colours of the spectrum, as well as republican values of liberty, equality and justice. Further details can be found at: [www.marssociety.org](http://www.marssociety.org)

## Spring renaissance

Ian Watson, having had his novel *Mockymen* sent to limbo when the Virgin Worlds imprint whimpered to a close as the year ended, is now to have it published by Pumpkin Press in April. It is based on his story 'Secrets' which appeared in *Interzone*, October 1997.

## New role for Datlow

After a brief fallow period following Event Horizon's suspension on Dec 15th Ellen Datlow is now fiction editor of *SciFi.com*, the Sci Fi Channel's website, formerly called The Dominion.

## Beyond the waves

SF writer Harlan Ellison will host *Beyond 2000*, a series of audio dramas based on classic sf stories and novels, which premieres on National Public Radio in the US in April. Says Ellison, who helped select and adapt

some of the stories, "This will be the most ambitious attempt at doing [sf] radio drama since the 1950s, when *Dimension X* and *X Minus One* hit the airwaves."

The series will feature dramatisations of stories by Isaac Asimov, Fredric Brown, Ellison, Robert A. Heinlein, Ursula K. Le Guin, Robert Silverberg, Theodore Sturgeon, A.E. van Vogt, Jules Verne, Kurt Vonnegut, H.G. Wells, Connie Willis, Roger Zelazny and others. Name actors will include Richard Dreyfuss, Samantha Eggart, and Robin Williams.

The 26 one-hour programs are produced in co-operation with the Hollywood Theater of the Ear and were financed in part with a \$200,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The programs will eventually be released as six cassette tapes by Dove Audio.

## SF at MIT

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are hosting a project entitled "Media in Transition", which features extensive material on science fiction. The site includes transcripts of conversations with SF writers, as well as author sites and commentaries.

Together with solo interviews with Pat Cadigan and Ben Bova, many of the conversations feature discussions between authors, including, from 1997/8: Octavia Butler & Samuel Delany, Michael Straczynski & Alexander Jablokov, Fred Pohl & James Patrick Kelly, Joe Haldeman & Gregory Benford, Orson Scott Card & Allen Steele, and Ellen Kushner & Sarah Zettel; and from 1998/9 Hal Clement & Jeffrey Carver, Pat Cadigan, Michael Resnick & Alexander Jablokov, and Neil Gaiman & Craig Shaw Gardner. Forthcoming in the spring are discussions between Nalo Hopkinson & Connie Willis, and Greg Bear & Gregory Benford.

The site can be found at: [http://media-in-transition.mit.edu/science\\_fiction/](http://media-in-transition.mit.edu/science_fiction/)

## SF at IoP

The Institute of Physics (IoP) in London is holding a series of regular talks on the intersection between sf and physics. In February Dr Nigel Mason of University College London lectured on: 'Star Wars, Phasers and Photon Torpedoes: Myth or Real-

ity?" On Friday, March 10th Dr Jim Al-Khalili will talk on the subject of wormholes, time travel and time paradoxes.

The lectures take place in the Massey Theatre, UCL, Gower Place, London, WC1E 6BT, starting at 6.30pm. Further details from the IoP website at: [www.iop.org](http://www.iop.org), or Alex McDowell, London & South Eastern Branch Media Representative at the IoP, 76 Portland Place, London, W1N 3DH.

## DK menaced by Star Wars

Educational publisher Dorling Kindersley (DK) expect to see profits for last year fall dramatically after grossly over-estimating demand for their range of Star Wars books. DK admitted that they had sold just three million of the thirteen million books that they had printed to tie-in with the release of *The Phantom Menace*. The financial loss to the company could amount to as much as £25 million for the last six months of 1999. Chief Executive James Middlehurst has left the company, who were said to be reviewing their options with advisers. Peter Kindersley, DK's founder and executive chairman, said that the firm's recent performance had "been impacted by a number of specific issues", and hoped that the forthcoming release of *Phantom Menace* on video in April, together with the re-release of the Star Wars classic videos in the autumn, would boost sales of his books.

## Peanutpress stakes e-claim but Microsoft gets there sooner

January saw an electronic reprise of the Oklahoma Land Race – when pioneering homesteaders raced to be first on virgin turf only to find 'sooners' who had jumped the starting pistol already in possession – with publishers, booksellers and software-owners forming alliances and racing to stake-out territory to win over readers downloading electronic books.

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, DAW Books, Inc. and peanutpress.com announced an agreement to make some DAW titles available for the PalmOS hand held electronic reader. Peanutpress.com is a small but significant player owning 'Peanut Reader' their own proprietary reader software. They establish partnerships with major print publishers, obtaining rights to reprint in electronic format. Download time for the average book is less than 30 seconds on a 56K modem. When the customer places the PalmOS device, which can hold five to ten average-length books, in its cradle and pushes the HotSync(TM) Button, the book is loaded on the organiser, ready for reading. Initial titles will include Anne Knight's *Death Storm* and The Trade Pact Universe series from Julie E. Czerneda. Future titles will come from C.J. Cherryh, Charles Ingrid, Elizabeth Forrest and Emily Drake.

A scant twelve days earlier Microsoft had announced its own aggressive campaign to capture readers for the Microsoft® Reader software. The initiative, announced at the 2000 International CES, will provide access to thousands of eBook titles through a partnership with Barnes & Noble.

"The combination of barnesandnoble.com's online strength and Barnes and Noble's dominant retail presence will make Microsoft Reader available to tens of millions of book consumers in a matter of months," said Dick Brass, vice president of technology development for Microsoft. "Barnes and Noble invented modern book retailing. We can't think of any other distribution channel that has such combined power and brand awareness." As the campaign heats up, readers in the UK can expect to see the barnesandnoble.com e-superstore promoted in hundreds of high street bookstores.

## POD person

Print-on-demand is here. For those waiting to invest in hardware until after the battle of the Hand-helds has a decisive winner, January also saw Richard Curtis of US Curtis Agency fame launch his E-reads.com imprint. 2,000-odd titles are available – mostly out-of-print published work, including much sf – in electronic and print-on-demand formats. He hopes that tight editorial screening will attract readers who have conspicuously not flocked to the web sites that publish virtually anything (for a fee). A 5,000-title list is expected by the end of the year.

## LineOne SF zone on-line

The LineOne SF Zone website, edited by Anne Gay, has recently been updated. The current edition includes an art gallery, featuring work by artists Anne Sudworth, Steve Stone and Ruby, an interview with Stephen Lawhead, talking about his latest historical fantasy, *The Celtic Crusades*, and all the latest news from the world of sf, fantasy and horror.

The site also plays host to *The Primal Screen*, John Brosnan's movie news column, book reviews by Barry Forshaw, competitions and an extensive archive of sf-related material.

The LineOne SF Zone can be found at: [www.lineone.net/clubs/entertainment/sciencefiction/sciencefiction\\_front-d.html](http://www.lineone.net/clubs/entertainment/sciencefiction/sciencefiction_front-d.html)

## 1999 Poll of Polls

*Locus* magazine has compiled an overall listing of the 'best' genre-related books of last year as chosen by such diverse sources as the *Library Journal*, on-line booksellers and na-

tional newspapers. At the time of writing the standings were as follows:

11 votes – *Cryptonomicon*, Neal Stephenson.

10 votes – *Harry Potter & the Prisoner of Azkaban*, J.K. Rowling.

5 votes – *Ender's Shadow*, Orson Scott Card; *Hearts in Atlantis*, Stephen King.

4 votes – *Darwin's Radio*, Greg Bear; *Stardust*, Neil Gaiman; *All Tomorrow's Parties*, William Gibson; *Hannibal*, Thomas Harris; *Motherless Brooklyn*, Jonathan Lethem; *A Prayer for the Dying*, Stewart O'Nan; *A Deepness in the Sky*, Vernor Vinge

3 votes – *Rhapsody*, Elizabeth Haydon; *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon*, Stephen King; *Mr. X*, Peter Straub

Books with two votes included: *The Marriage of Sticks*, Jonathan Carroll; *The Sub*, Tom Disch; and *On Blue's Waters*, Gene Wolfe.

## SF books of the Century

Editors at Amazon.com recently voted for their favourite 25 sf books of the last century. The selection was limited to those books in print and available through Amazon. The full listing is available at their website, but the top ten were:

- 1 *1984*, George Orwell (1949)
- 2 *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, Walter M. Miller Jr. (1959)
- 3 *A Clockwork Orange*, Anthony Burgess (1962)
- 4 *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley (1932)
- 5 *Camp Concentration*, Thomas M. Disch (1968)
- 6 *Dune*, Frank Herbert (1965)
- 7 *Ender's Game*, Orson Scott Card (1985)
- 8 *Farenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury (1953)
- 9 *Foundation*, Isaac Asimov (1951)
- 10 *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, Douglas Adams (1979)

## Waterstone's bestsellers

Leeds Waterstones reported their top ten for December 1999 – January 2000:

- 1 Terry Pratchett – *Carpe Jugulum*
- 2 Terry Pratchett – *The Fifth Elephant*
- 3 Raymond E. Feist – *Krondor: The Betrayal*
- 4 Simon Hawke – *The Iron Throne*

- 5 Terry Pratchett and Stephen Briggs - *Nanny Ogg's Cookbook*
- 6 Mervyn Peake - *The Gormenghast Trilogy*
- 7 Robert Jordan - *Path of Daggers*
- 8 Bettancourt - *The Hag's Contract*
- 9 Terry Pratchett - *The Colour of Magic*
- 10 Anne McCaffrey - *Nimisha's Ship*

## Awards

### Arthur C. Clarke Award shortlist

The nominees for this year's Arthur C. Clarke award are:

*Time*, Stephen Baxter (Voyager)  
*The Bones of Time*, Kathleen Ann Goonan (Voyager)  
*Silver Screen*, Justina Robson (Mcmillan)  
*Cryptonomicon*, Neal Stephenson (Heinemann)  
*Distraction*, Bruce Sterling (Millennium)  
*A Deepness in the Sky*, Vernor Vinge (Millennium)

The judges are: Claire Brialety & Gary Dalkin (for the BSFA), Caroline Mullan & Kim Newman (for the SF Foundation) and Doug Millard (for The Science Museum).

The Award will be presented in a ceremony at The Science Museum, London, on Wednesday, 17th of May 2000.

### The Potter and the Pot

The third Harry Potter book *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by J.K. Rowling, was presented with the Whitbread Children's Book of the Year Award on January 18<sup>th</sup> but failed to scoop the £21,000 Book of the Year prize by a single vote. Judges may have felt that enough filthy lucre was enough, since on the night of the Awards rumour confidently had it that the boy wizard was to be Steve Spielberg's next protégé. The prize instead went to Seamus Heaney for his translation of the Anglo-Saxon epic verse *Beowulf*.

### Baxter is PKD Award finalist

The judges of the 1999 Philip K. Dick Award and the Philadelphia SF Society are pleased to announce six nominated works that comprise the final ballot for the award:

*Code of Conduct*, Kristine Smith (Avon Eos)  
*Not of Woman Born*, edited by Constance Ash (Roc)  
*Tower of Dreams*, Jamil Nasir (Bantam Spectra)  
*Typhon's Children*, Toni Anzetti (Del Rey)  
*Vacuum Diagrams*, Stephen Baxter (HarperPrism)  
*When We Were Real*, William Barton (Warner Aspect)

The first prize and any special citations will be announced on April 21st, 2000 at Norwescon 23 at the Doubletree Seattle Airport Hotel, SeaTac, Washington.

The Philip K. Dick Award is presented annually for distinguished science fiction published in paperback original form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society and the award ceremony is sponsored by the North-West Science Fiction Society.

### 1999 Sapphire Award Winners

The Science Fiction Romance newsletter announced the winners of the fourth annual Sapphire Award for the Best Science Fiction Romance of the Year on January 13th:

#### Novel length

First place - *A Civil Campaign*, Lois McMaster Bujold  
 Second place - *The Godmother Sanction*, Patricia White  
 Third place - *The Quantum Rose*, Catherine Asaro

#### Short Fiction

First Place: "Aurora in Four Voices", Catherine Asaro (Analog, 11/98)  
 Second Place: "Dinner Date", Patricia White (Millennium SF&F)  
 Third Place: (tie) - "A Little Death", Susan Sizemore (*A Dangerous Magic*, from DAW), and "Empire Day", Astrid Cooper (*Stardates: Infinite Celebrations*, from Dreams Unlimited)

Nominated books could be from any genre, provided that they had a first publication date between December 1998 and November 1999, and that both science fiction and romance were intrinsic to the story. The ten books receiving the most nominations advanced to finalist status, and the readers of SF Romance were polled to determine the winners.

The Science Fiction Romance newsletter is an international forum for the readers and writers of the science fiction romance subgenre, and is distributed monthly to subscribers throughout the world. An electronic edition is available through the Internet by visiting <http://members.aol.com/sfeditor>

## Competition

### WoW

Dave Brin, in conjunction with *Analog* magazine is launching the Webs of Wonder contest. This offers a \$1,000 first prize for the best web site that links good SF stories to curriculum needs of teachers in the field. For further details see: <http://www.analogsf.com/wow>.

## Media News

Gary Wilkinson & others  
 round up the latest on film  
 & TV

### Clockwork Orange to return

The BBFC recently announced that the film *A Clockwork Orange* has been classified as '18' without cuts. The film was originally classified as 'X' back in December 1971 but was subsequently withdrawn by its director Stanley Kubrick following reports that it had inspired violent copy-cat attacks. It has been legally unavailable in this country since then but has remained a popular cult movie on both the continent and in the USA. Expect Alex and his friends to be back in British cinemas sometime this year. Also Channel 4 have announced that they are planning to screen *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* which was only given an '18' certificate last year after being unclassified and effectively banned since the 'video nasty' controversies of the early eighties.

### SF dominates millennial poll

The BBC's Film 99 poll of the best movies of the millennium voted by 25,000 of its viewers was dominated by science fiction. The original *Star Wars*, perhaps predictably, topped the poll and with *Blade Runner* in second place and *Alien* in fourth there are a total of five sf films in the top ten alone. Of the one hundred films in the pole, nineteen were sf, with a further fourteen in related genres (horror, fantasy, etc.). The highest placed non-genre movie was *Casablanca* at number three. Full details at the BBC's web site.

### Ka-Pow! Superhero's KO'd

Gale Anne Hurd's *Incredible Hulk* at Universal now appears to be sinking into development hell, although it has been announced that Bruce Banner will be played by Rick Moranis. His big green alter ego will, if the movie sees daylight, probably be a CGI effect. It interestingly has a script by Michael France who also wrote a well-liked script for the supposedly forthcoming *Fantastic Four* movie, which now seems even further away than the Hulk. The eagerly anticipated *X-Men* has again been delayed, and also floundering is the new Superman film. Tim Burton and Kevin Smith are among the many scriptwriters and directors whose names have been attached to the movie. Smith's revisionist script attracted Nicholas Cage to the project, since ditched by Burton who then jumped ship for *Sleepy Hollow* blaming

cowardly suits at Warner Bros for not wanting to be radical enough. With the millennium fifty percent of the rights pass to Supe's creator Jerry Siegel which should make the situation even more complicated, if that is possible. The only light at the end of the tunnel is at Columbia where *Daredevil* has been fast-tracked. Robert Rodriguez was attached at one time, as was Kevin Smith, who has recently written for the new *Daredevil* comic. It now seems he will again miss out to a less dark, more multiplex-friendly script, this time by Chris Columbus, who wrote *Gremlins* (but also directed *Home Alone*) and is also linked to another, different, Fantastic Four project. Matt Damon is the current favourite to appear as the Man Without Fear. Also likely to appear soon from Columbia is *Doctor Strange* scripted by *Blade* writer David Goyer. Another superhero that Columbia is finally green-lighting is *Spider-Man*. Connected with James Cameron for what seemed like forever whilst legal tussles were ironed out, their first choice for director is now Sam Raimi. However as he is committed to the low budget indie, *The Gift*, he may not be available. Among many names, Nicholas Brendon (Xander from *Buffey*) has been mentioned as a possible choice to play the web-slinger.

### Sigourney goes blonde

For her part in the new SF spoof *Galaxy Quest* Sigourney Weaver dons a blonde wig (along with a silicon enhanced bra) to play Gwen DeMarco, star of a TV series not entirely unrelated to *Star Trek*. Complications arise when real aliens, from the Klatu Nebula, show up at a fan's convention thinking the show is real. Weaver has caused controversy, well at least to Ivana Trump, by stating in a US interview - "Once I put that wig on I didn't say an intelligent thing for four months. My voice went up. I walked differently. I'd ask stupid questions." Trump, not quite getting the joke, has leapt to blondes' defence - "It's about your brain function, not hair colour." It cannot all be bad however; Weaver did wear the wig to a recent twentieth anniversary screening of *Alien*.

### Quentin goes to Hell

Quentin Tarantino has again returned to acting in the current king of comedy Adam Sandler's forthcoming *Little Nicky*, cameoing as a blind priest. His stunt-casting all round with an old comrade of Tarantino, Harvey Keitel, playing Satan. Sandler, as Satan's son Nicky, wanting to avoid inheriting the family business, goes looking for his long lost brother Cassius (Rhys Ifans) in New York. Once in the big apple Nicky falls in love with a mortal woman (Patricia Arquette). Hilarity will, no doubt, ensue. Tarantino's next directing project is said to be *40 Lashes* which, like *Jackie Brown*, is based on an Elmore Leonard novel.

### Potter Story Set To Become Spielberg's Next Flick

Steven Spielberg has agreed to make J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* his next movie, the *London Times* reported, citing no sources. The newspaper said that the competition among top directors - they reportedly included Robert Zemeckis, Jonathan Demme and Mike Newell - was so intense that Warner Bros. was able to dictate terms to Spielberg, one of which was that he agree to produce and direct Potter ahead of other projects that he had been considering, including those being mounted by his own studio, DreamWorks. The Potter novels are currently enjoying remarkable popularity among young people.

### Spielberg to resurrect Kubrick

Although cold water had recently been poured on suggestions that Steven Spielberg was going to film his old friend's last project *AI* the latest rumours suggest that Spielberg is actually writing a script himself (his first since *Close Encounters*) based on Kubrick's final 80 page treatment. The film was to be based on Brian Aldiss's short story 'Artificial Intelligence' about a childless mother who adopts an android that resembles a five year old boy. After a huge amount of work on the project, which burnt-out both Aldiss and Bob Shaw, and test shots with both robots and a child actor, the project was abandoned due to its then bank-busting estimated \$100 million budget and the failure of the technology to live up to Kubrick's vision. It is now felt that in an era of mega-budgets and with CGI technology the project could now be achievable. Although some worry that Spielberg's sentimentality will dilute Kubrick's analytic agenda there are reports that DreamWorks have already started casting.

### Wanna star in Star Wars?

Lucasfilm are currently casting for a 19 year with acting experience and who is: 'self-determined, extremely intelligent, and forthright' to replace Jake Lloyd as the proto-Darth Vader in *Star Wars: Episode II*. They are accepting submissions from accredited agents only, but that did not stop a Death Star size flood of unsolicited applications when they recently announced it on their web site. Unfortunately the chosen one will probably be playing alongside the much-reviled amphibian, Jar Jar Binks, who seems set to return. Actor Ahmed Best has been told to keep his schedule open for the mid-year shoot. Hopefully it will be for an early death scene only.

### Martian Summer

Following on from the battle of the asteroid movies, this year will probably see at least two Mars movies hitting the screens for the summer blockbuster season. Brian De

Palma's *Mission to Mars* features Tim Robbins and Gary Sinise as two astronauts, sent to rescue Don Cheadle and his crew after a disastrous first men on Mars mission, who then encounter evidence of life. *Mars and Beyond* features a 2014 mission to (again) investigate the possibility of alien life on the red planet. Also in the pipeline are Val Kilmer and Carrie-Anne Moss in *Red Planet* directed by Antony Hoffman and John Carpenter is reported to be bringing us *Ghosts of Mars*.

### X-Files spin-off

After the apparent failure of his latest television series, *Harsh Realms*, Chris Carter may be returning to the *X-Files* for inspiration for his next project. If it goes ahead *The Lone Gunmen* will follow the adventures of the trio of conspiracy nuts who help out Mulder (and the scriptwriters by info-dumping large amounts of information) from time to time in the original series.

### Arnie: "I'll not be back"

*Terminator 3* and *4* may appear but at the moment it seems they both Schwarzenegger and Cameron will not be involved. The producers of *T2* have, fed up with waiting for the big guns, hired two writers to continue the series without them. *T3* will take place during the 2001 apocalypse and *T4* in the post-apocalyptic wasteland briefly seen in the first two movies.

### Victorian SF

Producer of *The Sixth Sense*, Frank Marshall's, new movie, working title *19th Century Alien*, sounds exactly that with a Stan Winston built monster indulging in Jack the Ripper-like murders. Also, DreamWorks are currently developing a new movie adaptation of HG Wells' *The Time Machine*.

### Alan Smithee R.I.P.

Hollywood has decided to retire Alan Smithee, the pseudonym that directors have traditionally used when they don't want their own names attached to a film, generally because of studio interference, the *London Sunday Independent* reported. The newspaper indicated that Smithee was recently replaced in the credits for the MGM film *Supernova* by Thomas Lee, a pseudonym for the original director, Walter Hill. The sf film opened without fanfare over the weekend, earning an estimated \$5.7 million; MGM had already written off losses for it. *The Independent* commented that "the feeling was that Mr. Smithee was getting too well-known for his own good" following Joe Eszterhas' 1997 flop, *An Alan Smithee Film* (1997).

## "Hasta la vista, Satan!"

Gary Wilkinson reviews Schwarzenegger in *End of Days*

How did you spend the last few hours of the twentieth century? At a party? Down the pub? Watching the telly? Battling Satan?

Arnold Schwarzenegger strode through eighties cinema like a colossus. Although not exactly gifted with great acting skills his Teutonic bulk, chiselled cheekbones and sheer charisma along with the odd, carefully placed, one-liner helped to create some great sf films such as *The Terminator*, *Predator* and *Total Recall*, along with a number of memorable, more conventional, action movies. But oh how the mighty have fallen. The rot set in with a move away from his then screen image into self-parodying comedy roles. Whilst some were actually quite good (*Twins*) others were, well to be charitable, not so good (most of the rest). Apart from *Terminator 2* and perhaps the visually impressive, but morally suspect, *True Lies*, the last ten years have seen only wasted opportunities like *The Last Action Hero* or lack-lustre efforts such as *Eraser*. The less said about *Batman and Robin*, his final appearance before *End of Days*, the better.

So what to make of *End of Days*? It is directed by Peter Hyams who has helmed a number of, if not exactly brilliant, at least competent sf films such as *Capricorn One*, *2010* and *The Relic*. However he remains a journeyman director when what this film needs is a spark of manic genius. We start with an ominous prophecy, followed by Vatican intrigue and then a gory 'black' christening. We eventually found out that once every thousand years a woman is born who, if she is impregnated two decades later by Satan himself during the last hour of millennium, will give birth to the anti-Christ, who will then bring about the 'end of days' (not pleasant). It is up to Arnie as Jerico Cane (Jerico Cane, J.C., geddit!) to prevent him. He also have to cope with a Vatican secret society/hit squad who want to murder the woman before the Prince of Darkness can get his hands on her. The Pope meanwhile says we should just put our faith in God. Okay, it makes no sense theologically and even less logically but it could have been good fun. Unfortunately the film loses it way somewhat and we enter the pick-and-mix, spot the movie, territory of an overwritten screenplay. We get the weird sex from *Society*, gory murder victims from *Se7en*, the suicidal cop from *Le-*

*thal Weapon*, etc. - I will leave you to find the rest.

Although this is a partial return to Arnie Mark One, the trademark quips are absent and he even attempts to do some proper acting. He plays a troubled alcoholic ex-cop who we first see starting the day by deciding whether to kill himself before making a milkshake from yesterday's pizza, Pepto Bismol and coffee. However Schwarzenegger is not stupid and he knows that tampering too much with his screen image could see him marooned without roles like Stallone after his indie *Cop Land* (though it has been recently reported that the two are looking for suitable scripts for a joint appearance). Although at first he receives a battering or two from the bad guys we soon see him kicking ass in his usual way. If anything it is the secondary actors who shine. Gabriel Byrne projects both an oily menace and seductive charm as Satan, Miriam Margolyes is fun as a Satan worshipping nanny, but the great Rod Steiger is simply wasted as an info-dumping priest. He would have made a much better JC as Arnie has real trouble when he enters the emotional territory that the script demands. Also of note is the cinematography, especially towards the beginning with its sweeping aerial panoramas of a blue-toned frigid New York.

Towards the end we get the usual pyrotechnics as a tooled-up Arnie goes toe-to-toe with the Dark One. However the ultimate 'spiritual' ending is a complete cop-out, coming on like some movie-of-the-week produced by a tenth rate, deep-south, evangelical satellite station. Maybe the forthcoming clone movie *The Sixth Day* will see a return to form for the Austrian oak, or perhaps it's time for that much-suggested move into politics.

*End of Days* (1999), USA, 110 minutes, Cert. 18.

Directed by Peter Hyams.

Written by Andrew W. Malone

Producers: Arny Bernstein, Paul Deason and Andrew W. Malow

Executive Producers: Marc Abraham and Thomas A. Bliss.

Music: John Debney

Cinematography: Peter Hyams

Film editing: Steven Kemper

Cast: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Gabriel Byrne, Rod Steiger, Robin Tunney, Miriam Margolyes.



## I want my DVD

Gary Dalkin reviews the Alien Legacy box set

Unless you are fortunate enough to live within striking distance of an imaginatively programmed 'art house', your only opportunity to see films past their first, last and only run, is on television, either broadcast, or via video, laserdisc, or now, DVD (Digital Versatile Disc). Television transmissions usually ruin the film in one way or another, while the limitations of video are well known and laserdisc has never, in this country at least, developed beyond an expensive niche in the market. Now comes DVD, which is all but guaranteed to replace VHS video as the sell-through standard for home visual entertainment. This is both good and bad. Good in that the quality of DVD is much higher than video, bad in that, unlike video, where a tape is a tape is a tape, we appear to be in danger of developing into second class consumers: all too often UK 'Region 2' releases of the same title are vastly inferior to the American 'Region 1' release.

This isn't the place to explain the problems of Hollywood taking upon itself to divide the world into six regions and encode discs specifically to individual regions, only to remark that if you are going to enter the world of movies on DVD then that you are very strongly advised to buy a machine which can play US as well as UK discs. Not only are far more titles available from the States, but the discs which are released here are often a pale shadow of their US incarnation. Beyond these considerations, it is generally cheaper to buy from America over the Internet than to pay a visit to your local high street retailer.

Let's start with the best. Not scheduled for UK release until the spring (when the individual discs will be priced at £25 each), *The Alien Legacy 20th Anniversary Edition THX* box-set can be bought on-line for as little as £40 (including shipping). This set contains the four Alien movies to date. The picture quality is outstanding, though not quite up to the very best DVD can manage, and the sound is equally impressive. The films are presented in 'widescreen', which means that *Alien*, *Alien²* and *Alien Resurrection* are at something close to their original panavision (2.35-1) aspect ratio, while *Aliens* neatly fits a 1.77-1 widescreen TV, thus losing only a fraction of the original 1.85-1 ratio. The only film to really suffer is the best photographed, *Alien³*, as David Fincher pushed elements of the composition right to the extremes of the frame, and here the image does appear noticeably cropped at times. Text from computer graphics is even truncated at the edges, but then this is exactly the same as the 'widescreen' video version, so don't expect anything better other than a sharper, more detailed picture.

The best overall disc is clearly the first. *Alien* benefits from a full-length audio commentary by director Ridley Scott, which adds a fascinating new dimension to appreciating the film, and galleries of artwork by various people including H. R. Geiger, Ron Cobb and Chris Foss. Also included are trailers and several scenes deleted from the final print, including perhaps the most famous unused scene in SF film history, the 'cocoon' sequence. Additionally, there are two separate isolated music tracks, making available for the first time Jerry Goldsmith's music score both as it appears edited in the film, and complete as Goldsmith envisioned the music. With almost twice as much score as made it to the soundtrack album, this is a remarkable bonus for those who take film, and film music seriously.

*Aliens* is presented in Special Edition form - the extended 'director's cut' released panned and scanned on video in 1992. It was then announced as 'never to be released again', and now it appears to have taken over as the definitive version of the film. A good thing too, as it is a marked improvement on the already superb original cinema cut. The disc hasn't

had as much work lavished on it as *Alien*, but still offers some interesting behind-the-scenes footage and a 12-minute interview with James Cameron. Whether or not this is the 'best' Alien movie, (that can only be decided in the films' rightful home, the cinema) it is certainly the one which works best on the small screen. Partly this must be due to Cameron favouring relentless narrative and action over atmosphere and artful imagery, but also due to the fact that the 'narrower' aspect ratio ironically results in a bigger, picture on TV.

The *Alien³* disc is comparatively basic, though boasts better sound than the previous titles, and a routine 'making of' documentary which offers little in the way of real insight. The break-taking images really need the full width of the film to be projected onto a massive cinema screen, such that the film loses more than the others on the transition to DVD.

*Alien Resurrection*: the DVD is a routine product, with a perfunctory 'making of' short and some trailers. A bad film with some very impressive moments, *Alien Resurrection* loses little on DVD, but only makes one hope that the next Alien film will be rather better handled.

I haven't listed all the features of all four discs, which for now must stand as the best way to enjoy this remarkable sequence of films at home. The Alien Legacy is certainly the most impressive science fiction release on DVD to date, and perhaps the best excuse to acquire a DVD player. My advice is to trade-in your videos now.

*The Alien Legacy* can be obtained from some specialist UK importers, as listed in various DVD magazines, or from assorted US on-line retailers. Note that some US sites do not ship overseas. However, reel.com (US) and DVD-Boxoffice (Canada) both offer an excellent service to UK customers. By using 'coupons' listed on various web sites such as Bargain-Central (<http://www.bargain-central.com/Coupons.htm>) the price can be brought down even lower.

Gary Dalkin will be back with more DVD reviews next issue.

## Farscape

Gary Wilkinson checks out BBC2's new science fiction offering

Slotting into the early Monday evening BBC2 slot which, on other days, is occupied by *Buffy* and *Star Trek* is the interesting and innovative *Farscape*. When it was first previewed I must admit I wasn't expecting very much, and for the first few minutes it seemed to confirm my expectations as it seemed for the most part very derivative and weak. However by the end of the first episode and certainly as the series hit its stride over the next couple of episodes the wry humour, interesting characters and compelling plotting had won me over. This is good stuff.

In the premier episode astronaut John Crichton is accidentally catapulted across the universe via a wormhole during an experiment to pioneer space travel. He becomes our representative in a strange galaxy, plunging straight into the middle of struggle of prisoners trying to escape from the nasty Peacekeepers. Crichton's unexpected appearance causes one of the Peacekeepers' ships to lose control, killing the pilot, and thus instantly earning the enmity of the pilot's brother, a Peacekeeper captain. Crichton therefore has to flee along with the rest of the prisoners in their 'bio-mechanical' ship Moya. Ben Brower, (Crichton) is American-born but completed his education in England and went on to regional theatre work, including Shakespeare, here. He returned to the USA for various minor television and cinema roles, until picked up for *Farscape*. The other prisoners consist of Ka D'argo (Anthony Simcoe) who is a Luxan, a Klingon-like warrior race and Pa'U Zhaan a statuesque blue-skinned woman who is a zen-like priest, played by Virginia Hey. Her most memorable other sf role was as

the Warrior Woman in *Mad Max 2* although she has appeared in Aussie perennials like *Neighbours* and *Prisoner: Cell Block H*. We also have Rygel XVI a proud and pompous ex-royal, played by a sophisticated glove puppet. They are joined later by Peacekeeper Aeryn Sun (Claudia Black). After she was brought on board Moya by the prisoners the Peacekeeper decided she'd been 'irreversibly contaminated' and subject to execution, so she decides to reluctantly join with the other prisoners. Australian-born Claudia Black has made only a few other film and television appearances, including playing Cassandra in two episodes of *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, but will appear in the forthcoming sf film *Pitch Black*.

*Farscape*, created by Rockne S. O'Bannon, whose previous work includes writing for *SeaQuest DSV* and the film *Alien Nation*, is a joint production between the US Henson Company and an Australian television channel. It is filmed Down Under which enables the use of the country's diverse landscapes for alien locations and that is why many of the aliens have Aussie rather than the usual American accents! The Americans handle the content, whilst most of the cast and crew are Australians, many of whom are from a film rather than television background, lending the show high production values. The wide range of effects includes the usual Henson state-of-the-art animatronics and puppetry from the Jim Henson Creature Shop in London as well as some excellent CGI work. The show has organic looks similar to *Lexx* though without its outright surreal weirdness.

*Farscape* marks a departure for the Henson Company as they are definitely aiming for an older audience, although there is nothing to stop kids watching it. Like the classic *Muppet Show* the programme works on a number of levels to satisfy a wide range of audience. Although a long way from *Pigs in Space* it does have some well placed humour, both arch and pantomime, which is like a breath of fresh air compared to stuffy *Star Trek*.

The characters seem to develop interestingly through the opening episodes, though this has not exactly been helped by the BBC showing the episodes out of order. At first Virginia Hey's Pa'U Zhaan seemed a rather one-dimensional and uninteresting character, but a recent episode has added new spin and hidden depths both to her and to other characters.

Although many of the influences that have gone into *Farscape* are fairly obvious, even in highly derivative episodes it manages to add its own flavour to things to produce something special. This was especially notable in the episode 'I, ET' which reversed the usual alien encounter scenario with Crichton taking the place of the little green men. Though it lacks the grittiness of the best British, and the sweeping majesty of the best American, sf, with at least twenty-two episodes planned this Antipodean hybrid looks like developing into a classic series.

## Being John Malkovich

Andrew M. Butler gets inside the head of the actor, courtesy of a new film

*Being John Malkovich* (1999) USA, 112 minutes, Cert. 15.

Directed by Spike Jonze.  
Written by Charlie Kaufman.  
Producers: Steve Golin, Vincent Landay, Sandy Stern and Michael Stipe.  
Executive Producers: Charlie Kaufman and Michael Kuhn.  
Music: Carter Burwell.  
Cinematography: Lance Acord.  
Film Editing: Eric Zumbrunnen  
Cast: John Cusack, Cameron Diaz, Catherine Keener, John Malkovich

Imagine a Philip K. Dick novel: a craftsman protagonist, actually a puppeteer, who is being pushed by his animal-loving wife to get a better job to support them. This he does, a dead end occupation as a file clerk, made only slightly more bearable by his skill with his incredibly agile fingers. One day he discovers a tunnel behind a filing cabinet, which leads into the head of a major celebrity, which he then exploits for gain with a dark-haired female co-worker with whom he has fallen in love, and who is in love with the celebrity.

Well, don't imagine too hard, just go and see *Being John Malkovich*. Spike Jonze is better known for directing music videos, but this is not the sort of film cut with the thirty second attention span in mind, save for a parade of celebrities which you may blink and miss. Somehow he managed

to persuade the actor John Malkovich to lend his name to the title and his presence to the film, although the depicted John Horatio Malkovich is presumably an alternative to the real actor.

Malkovich is one of those actors who never quite lived up to expectations on screen promised by his role in setting up the Steppenwolf Theatre Company; he was fair enough in *Dangerous Liaisons* or *Empire of the Sun*, but tedious in such portentous fare as *Of Mice and Men*, *The Object of Beauty* and *The Sheltering Sky*. And as for that Russian accent in *Rounders*... it's worth the price of a ticket in itself. But here he is perfect, not least because his shaven skull has the right shape to suggest something is going on inside it. It's a cameo role, more or less, although he has much more to do in the second half.

The film is held together by the three central performances. Cusack as puppeteer Craig Schwartz is unrecognisable from the excellent *Grosse Pointe Blank*: hirsute, round-shouldered, shuffling along. Catherine Keener as the dark-haired seducer Maxine exudes the right kind of exotic eroticism and danger. And after stand out performances as definitely not daddy's girl in *A Life Less Ordinary* and the truly psychotic one in *Very Bad Things*, model Cameron Diaz turns in another performance that borders on insanity.

The film's one liability is its assets: access to stars. Alongside

Malkovich there is his best friend Charlie (Charlie Sheen, whose character is no stranger to detox clinics), Brad Pitt and others, such as David Fincher, who I'd never recognise in a month of Sundays. The plot twist, suggesting that Malkovich is not unique, rather depends – I suspect, although I can't be sure – upon recognising the next star – which, naturally, I didn't. But that is the one bum note in the entire movie; even the rather ludicrous explanation for the existence of the portal into Malkovich can be swallowed.

Along with many incidental pleasures (such as the literal half floor which Cusack's office is on, and the explanation for this), the film is a satire on our relationship to celebrity, to our wanting both to know the stars, intimately, to be with stars, and even in extreme situations, *be* those stars. Cusack's puppeteering both complements and enriches this theme, and the various marionette performances we see are stunning.

*Being John Malkovich* has already been a hit in the United States on positive word of mouth; it deserves to be the same here. Go see it.

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*Being John Malkovich* opens at selected cinemas in the U.K. on March 17th.



## Guest Column



Stephen Baxter meditates on  
science and the media

We science fiction writers, being difficult to categorise, sometimes enjoy the dubious pleasure of access to some of the more peculiar corners of modern society. Thus it was that I was invited, in January 2000, to attend an event called 'Scientists Meet the Media', held in the grand auspices of the Royal Society, hosted by the *Daily Telegraph* and ICI. Being neither scientist (any more) nor media (in the sense the *Telegraph* means), I attended with curiosity.

The Royal Society is a grand and imposing place, set in the imperial splendour of Pall Mall, London. I was struck by how the hearts of our great cities remain shaped by the vision of the Victorians – a bunch of people whose great days are now two centuries into the past, if you think about it – and I also wondered if I should have worn something less Alan Partridge than my purple shirt and crimson tie.

Still, I needn't have worried, once I got past the disapproving glares of the Royal Society cloakroom attendant anyhow. Within the grand Society halls – fuelled by cheap champagne and savoury snacks, and to the strains of a dodgy jazz band – a horde of scientists and media types milled. Many of the scientists seemed to be doing their best to live up to the 1970s OU-lecturer stereotype – think Richard Whiteley – and the media types were generally younger, gaudier, louder and, apparently, a lot more affluent – think a young Carol Vorderman – and, somewhere between, I fitted right on in. It didn't take me long to meet somebody even less smart than me: the crumpled, lovable Colin Pillinger, driving force behind Britain's wonderful Mars-lander project.

But there were also a few telly-famous faces, notably Peter Snow, now of 'Tomorrow's World', and, for some reason, weathergirl Siân Lloyd. Telly types are always incredibly symmetrical and good-looking, even the likes of dear old Peter Snow; the camera is unforgiving of the merest blemish.

The formal bit of the evening centred on an Royal Society award to Lord Winston for raising public

awareness over genetics. It struck me that, once upon a time the Royal Society, as an arm of the Establishment, would pretty much have represented the summit of power and authority in British science. But tonight things were different. We had to listen to the sponsors – an ICI representative insisting that chemicals are glamorous, really, and the editor of the *Daily Telegraph* who I'd last seen being interviewed by Posh Spice – and even the Royal Society felt obliged to plug their rather stuffy new website. It seemed apparent that for modern scientists the key blessing of modern society is granted by the media – on our behalf. Thus Lord Winston, himself a familiar telly face, was being rewarded for making himself known to, and trusted by, us; and Colin Pillinger, for example, was working assiduously to meet the journalists in order to gain a little more visibility for his Mars project – and thereby, by making us understand and want it, hoping to promote its success.

The process of science isn't democratic. It doesn't matter how many votes a hypothesis wins; if it fails just one crucial experimental test, it is toast. But it did seem to me that the rewards we the public can bestow on the scientists – that is, our attention and (hopefully) understanding, channelled through the media – are becoming just as important, if not more so, than those of the grand Establishment institutions of the Victorians. And that must be a good thing.

I tipped the cloakroom attendant generously, despite a second disapproving glower, and went home rather pleased.

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*Our other guest columnists, John Jarrold and the mysterious Leonard Fell will (hopefully) return next issue (ed.).*

# BSFA Awards

Awards Administrator Chris Hill announces the final shortlist for the 1999 ballot

The final shortlist for the 1999 BSFA Awards has now been compiled. The final list is below, but firstly some general information.

## How to Vote

With this mailing you will find a ballot paper. Each shortlist item is listed on the ballot paper with a space next to it to put a number. In this you should enter 1 if you think it should win in the category, 2 if you think it should be in second place, etc. If you do not feel capable of judging the entry (if you have not read the book, for example) please leave the space blank or put a line through it.

Please put your name on the bottom and, if you know it, your **BSFA Membership Number** (this is primarily for me to trace the source of ballot papers, whether Eastercon or BSFA members). This is very important. If I receive any ballot papers without a name on it I will have to treat it as void.

Unfortunately, I will not be at Eastercon this year. So Tony Cullen has very kindly agreed to count the votes and Andrew Butler has agreed to organise the presentations. Thus, to make sure that I have time to get the ballot papers to Tony, they should be returned to me no later than **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April**. Alternatively, if you are going to be at 2Kon (the 2000 Eastercon) then feel free to deliver the ballot papers to Tony or to the BSFA stall in the dealers room by **12 o'clock mid-day on Sunday 23rd April**.

As always, before moving onto the shortlist itself, a few 'thank you's'.

Firstly thanks to everyone who nominated this year. Despite my earlier worries I had a very strong set of

nominations. Special thanks must go to those individuals who, year after year, excel in passing on their suggestions. I will not embarrass them by mentioning names, but they know who they are. Thanks folks, it really is appreciated!

Secondly thanks to Tony Cullen and Andrew Butler for volunteering to look after the counting and presentation of the awards at 2Kon. I owe you.

Finally, thanks to Colin Odell and Mitch LeBlanc for volunteering, yet again, to construct the physical awards.

## 1999 BSFA Awards Shortlist

### Best Novel

*ThigMOO* - Eugene Byrne  
*Silver Screen* - Justina Robson  
*Children of God* - Mary Doria Russell  
*Headlong* - Simon Ings  
*The Sky Road* - Ken MacLeod

### Best Short Fiction

'Gorillagram' - Tony Ballantyne (Interzone 139)  
 'Hunting the Slarque' - Eric Brown (Interzone 141)  
 'Malignos' - Richard Calder (Interzone 144)  
 'The Lady MacBeth Blues' - Stephen Dedman (Interzone 148)  
 'White Dog' - Maya Kathryn Bohnhoff (Interzone 142)

Again, all the short fiction is from *Interzone*. I had a couple of nominations from other magazines (particularly *The Third Alternative*) but that was all. Maybe more next year...However (he hastens to

add), that does not detract from the stories nominated, all of which deserve it on their own merit.

### Best Artwork

*The Dream Archipelago* - Jim Burns (Cover of 'The Dream Archipelago' by Christopher Priest)  
*Darwinia* - Jim Burns (Cover of 'Darwinia' by Robert Charles Wilson)  
*The Sky-Green Blues* - Dominic Harman (Cover of Interzone 142)  
*Silver Screen* - Steve Stone (Cover of 'Silver Screen' by Justina Robson)  
*Dreaming Down Under* - Nick Stathopoulos (Cover of Interzone 146)

So, that is the line-up for the 1999 BSFA Awards. **Please remember to vote.** Gradually, we are getting better publicity from the general sf press, but it is all a bit hollow if people do not vote. This is your award, so let's show everyone that it is as important as any of the others!

## The 2000 BSFA Awards

Remember that you can now start sending me nominations for the 1999 Awards. More of this next issue, but in the meantime a quick reminder of the rules for eligibility:

**Best Novel:** Novel first published in the UK during calendar year 1999.

**Best Short Fiction:** Fiction first appearing (in magazine or anthology) during calendar year 1999 irrespective of country of origin.

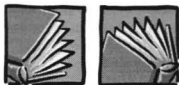
**Best Artwork:** Artwork first appearing in the UK during calendar year 1999.

**So get reading!**

See also the Books of the Year review in the current *Vector* (ed.)

## Books

Forthcoming books and publishing schedules, compiled by Janet Barron



### Key

HB = hardback

TPB = trade paperback

PB = paperback

NOIP Now out in paperback

# = Reissue

## = nonfiction

\*\*\* Watch out for these

All others, first UK edition. Unless references are given, all quotes are from the publisher.

NOIP **John Barnes** *Apocalypses and Apostrophes* (Millennium April PB £5.99)

**Gregory Benford** *The Martian Race* (Orbit April PB £6.99 416pp)  
'A major novel of exploration and discovery in space.'

# **Gregory Benford** *Timescape* (Millennium March PB £6.99)

**Chris Bunch** *The Empire Stone* (Orbit March TPB £10.99 416pp)  
A new fantasy epic from the author of the Seer King Trilogy

\*\*\***Eric Brown** *New York Nights: Volume I of the Virex Trilogy* (Victor Gollancz March HB £16.99 288pp)  
'The... tragic cost of pursuing illusory paradises of virtual reality in a world on the brink of collapse.'

**Richard Calder** *Malignos* (Earthlight April PB £5.99)

##**Gabriel Dover** *Dear Mr Darwin: Letters on the Evolution of Life.* (Weidenfeld Science March HB £20 224pp)  
A slender expensive volume of 'faction' in the form of letters between geneticist Dover, and Charles Darwin, wittily sketching the influence of the theory of evolution on our modern culture.

The Art of **Bob Eggleton** *Greetings from Earth* (Paper Tiger Fantasy Art March PB £14.99)  
Text by Nigel Suckling.

NOIP **Steven Erikson** *Gardens of the Moon: A Tale of the Malazan Book of the Fallen* (Bantam March PB £6.99)  
First book in a planned 10 book epic sequence.

**David Farland** *Brotherhood of the Wolf* (Earthlight April PB £6.99)  
Fantasy saga continues.

**David Feintuch** *Patriarch's Hope.* A Seaforth Novel (Orbit March PB £5.99 336pp)

**David Gemmell** *Hero in the Shadows* (Bantam March HB £16.99 352pp)  
The Third Waylander Novel.

NOIP **David Gemmell** *Midnight Falcon* (Bantam March PB 352pp)

\*\*\***Mary Gentle** *Ash: A Secret History* (Victor Gollancz April HB/PB £19.99 £14.99 1120pp)

NOIP **Terry Goodkind** *Soul of the Fire* (Millennium April PB £6.99)

**Kathleen Ann Goonan** *Crescent City Rhapsody* (Millennium April PB £5.99)

**Simon R Green** *Fear and Loathing in Haven* (Millennium April PB £6.99)

NOIP **Jon C. Grimwood** *redRobe* (Earthlight March PB £6.99)  
'From a corrosively brilliant British writer, comes an extraordinary novel of a world ruled by brutal violence, and political and religious corruption.'

**Barbara Hambly** *The Knight of the Demon Queen* (Voyager March HB £5.99)

ed. **Peter Haining** *Knights of Madness: Further Tales of Comic Fantasy* (Orbit April PB £6.99 416pp)

The Art of **John Harris** *Mass* (Paper Tiger Fantasy Art April HB £20.00)  
Text by Ron Tiner.

**Robin Hobb** *Ship of Destiny:* Book Three of the Liveship Traders (Voyager March HB £17.99 688pp)

**Guy Gavriel Kay** *Lord of Emperors* (Earthlight March HB £16.99)  
Second in the Sarantium series.

**John Kearney** *The Second Empire: The Monarchies of God, Book Four.* (Victor Gollancz March HB £16.99 384pp)

NOIP **Paul Kearney** *The Iron Wars* (Millennium March PB £5.99)

**Katherine Kerr & Kate Daniel** *Polar City Nightmare* (Orion April HB/TPB £16.99/£9.99 352pp)

**John Marco** *The Grand Design: Tyrants and Kings, Book Two* (Victor Gollancz April HB/TPB £19.99/£14.99 608pp)

**James Mallory** *Merlin: The End of Magic* (Voyager April PB £6.99)

240pp)

Third, thin novelisation of the TV miniseries.

**Juliet Marillier** *Daughter of the Forest*: Book One of the Sevenwaters trilogy. (Voyager April PB £11.99 560pp)

**Elizabeth Moon** *Rules of Engagement*: Book Five of the Serrano legacy (Orbit April PB £5.99 384pp)

**Anne McCaffrey** *Pegasus in Space* (Bantam April HB £16.99 256pp)

**Jack McDevitt** *Slow Lightning* (Voyager March TPB £10.99)

**Linda Nagata** *Vast* (Victor Gollancz April HB £16.99 352pp) 'Visionary hard SF'

**Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle** *The Burning City* (Orbit April HB £6.99 656pp) 'A major new fantasy tale begins.'

**KJ Parker** *The Proof House*. The Fencer Trilogy Volume Three (Orbit April TPB £10.99 418pp)

**#Terry Pratchett** *Eric* (Millennium April PB £4.99)

**Alastair Reynolds** *Revelation Space* (Victor Gollancz March PB £6.99 672pp) 'A gripping space opera of revolution, alien artefacts of great power, and a race to save humanity.'

**\*\*\*Kim Stanley Robinson** *The Martians* (Voyager March PB £6.99) The essential companion to the *Mars* series. New novellas and short stories supplemented by essays on Martian mythology, scientific extracts and Mars-inspired poetry.

**NOIP R.A. Salvatore** *The Demon Apostle* (Millennium March PB £6.99)

**NOIP Ed. Robert Silverberg** *Legends*: Dark Tower, Sword of Truth, Tales of Alvin Maker, Majipoor, Earthsea, Riftwar Saga. (Voyager April PB £5.99 400pp) Second of anthologies of new stories in popular settings.

**Robert Silverberg** *Lion Time in Timbuctoo*: Volume Six of the collected stories. (Voyager March HB £17.99 400pp)

**#Theodore Sturgeon** *More Than Human* (Millennium April PB £6.99)

The Art of **Anne Sudworth** *Enchanted World* (Paper Tiger Fantasy Art March HB £20.00) Text by John Grant. *Enchanted World* is also available in a limited slip case edition at £75.00 including four additional prints, numbered and signed by the artist.

**\*\*\*Sheri S. Tepper** *Singer from the Sea* (Victor Gollancz April HB/TPB £16.99/£9.99 384pp)

**#Sheri S. Tepper** *The Awakeners* (Voyager April PB £6.99 496pp)

**Harry Turtledove** *Into the Darkness* (Earthlight April TPB £9.99)

**NOIP Harry Turtledove** *Darkness Descending* (Earthlight April PB £5.99)

**NOIP Vernor Vinge** *A Deepness in the Sky* (Millennium March PB £6.99)

The Art of **Ron Walotsky** *Inner Visions* (Paper Tiger Fantasy Art April PB £14.99) Foreword by Joe Haldeman and afterword by Alan Dean Foster

**Freda Warrington** *The Sapphire Throne* (Earthlight April PB £5.99)

## Editor's comments

Whatever your tastes in fiction non-fiction and art, you'll probably find something in Janet's listing to interest you. I'd heartily recommend those books she's marked out for particular attention (especially Mary Gentle's *Ash: A secret history*), but thought I'd make some comments of my own on what's due to be hitting the shops in the near future.

It's good to see Millennium's laudable SF Masterworks series continuing with welcome reissues of Sturgeon's *More Than Human* and Benford's *Timescape*. Both classic novels in their own way.

Alastair Reynolds has been publishing some interesting stories in *Interzone* over the last few years, so his first novel, an action-packed space opera, *Revelation Space*, is bound to attract attention.

Linda Nagata's *Vast* (one of my books of the year for *Vector* in 1998) is finally getting publication in this country. Nagata writes muscularly inventive hard sf that should appeal to fans of both Greg Egan and Vernor Vinge.

Kathleen Ann Goonan is another talented US author who hasn't received the attention she deserves in this country. While we should welcome a UK edition of her new novel, *Crescent City Rhapsody*, it's frustrating that *Mississippi Blues*, the second volume in her trilogy of a world utterly transformed by nanotechnology, has yet to make an appearance on these shores.

Finally, Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Martians* divided opinion amongst fans and reviewers, but is an essential purchase if you enjoyed the *Mars* Trilogy, particularly for its insights into the creative process behind the books.

## PULPitations: Glenda Pringle Down Under

Don't you just love the Australians? They're such friendly, hospitable people. I found this out for myself on a visit to Sydney a few years ago. It was little things, like a bartender looking sceptically at me when I ordered a pint of Fosters. "We only have that on tap for the English...What you want is a good pint of the local brew." He was right – it was better, but then I was more impressed by the fact that he had gone out of his way to tell me about it!

Then there was my visit to an historical theme park with live 18th Century re-enactors. Now this re-enactor stuff is the sort of thing that not every country can pull off. What is often lacking is the innate (I think) ability to carry it off without looking ridiculous or, worse yet, like a manic Mickey Mouse. The Aussies can do it. These re-enactors were chock full of oral history, patient with the little "no-neck monsters" clinging to their muskets or apron strings, and entertaining when speaking to us punters. Funnily enough I didn't squirm once, whereas the mere mention of an outing to an American equivalent would have me gasping in horror.

So what is this – a magazine review or a sociological study? Actually it's an attempt to make sense of something that puzzled me recently. Having been sent issues 23 and 24 of *Aurealis* for review, I settled down for a nice long read. I thoroughly enjoyed myself and it confirmed my previously formed opinion that Australian SF is good. After all, Greg Egan is an Aussie and I think his stuff is good. The stories in both of these issues were, for the most part, excellent both in terms of entertainment value and quality of writing.

*Aurealis* has been around since 1990. This is some achievement considering the fact that the 1993 edition of the

*The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* called it "another brave attempt by an Australian small press to publish an sf magazine in a market that has repeatedly proven itself too small to sustain one." Not having seen the magazine in its earlier incarnation I cannot comment on its development over the years, but I can say that these days it is very well put-together with colour covers and a feast of features and book reviews. The stories were all of the standard we are used to with, say, *Interzone*, in that one could find the weird cheek-by-jowl with the more traditional. Obviously, small audience or not, the editors aren't afraid to experiment.

The magazine also, until the formation of SF Australia at last year's WorldCon, provided a focus (and a venue!) for budding SF writers in much the same way BSFA's own *Focus* does here in the UK. Chimaera, the magazine's publishers, include a manuscript assessment service as well as publications from Writer's Digest in their end-of-magazine catalogue. More importantly, they also include the Australian SF Writers' newsletter in the body of the magazine itself.

In sum, I got the impression of a friendly, hospitable magazine that admirably fills the niche for Antipodean SF fans while, at the same time, providing a fine feast for those of us in the rest of the world. So why have I been left scratching my head in puzzlement? *Aurealis* has two editors, Stephen Higgins and Dirk Strasser. In the editorial for issue 23, Dirk Strasser argues the affirmative viewpoint for the uniqueness of Australian SF. In the editorial for issue 24, Stephen Higgins puts forward the opposite point-of-view. It's all very friendly and well-argued in

both cases – but, why are they (co-editors of the same magazine, remember) having this argument in the first place? Call me naïve, but does such a debate really have anything to add to the quality of the SF they're discussing? Or the saleability of it to the rest of the world, for that matter? Is there someone out there who can enlighten me?

*Aurealis* is available from UK subscription agent Chris Reed, BBR, PO Box 625, Sheffield, S1 3GY (c.s.reed@bbr-online.com) or direct from Chimaera Publications, PO Box 2164, Mt Waverley, VIC 3149, Australia (www.aurealis.hl.net).

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Also received (to be reviewed next issue): *Spectrum SF*, edited by Paul Fraser. The first issue contains original short fiction by Eric Brown, Keith Brooke, Alastair Reynolds, Charles Stross and Garry Kilworth, plus the first part of an unpublished *Kiteworld* novel by Keith Roberts.

mail@spectrumpublishing.com or  
www.spectrumpublishing.com

N.B. *Spectrum SF* is not currently accepting unsolicited submissions.

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Magazines for review, including small press and those generated by fans, should be sent to Glenda Pringle, 22 Mead Way, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 2BJ (chris@kidlington66.freemove.co.uk).



## Fanzine reviews: Yvonne Rowse looks at the latest arrivals

I received two fanzines on the same day earlier this month. One was Debbi Kerr's *Did I Say That Out Loud?* 4, one of my favourite perzines. The other was new to me - John D Owen's *Shipyards Blues* 2000. This is apparently 'the bastard offspring of earlier Shipyard zines, like *The Crystal Ship*, *Rastus* and *Shipyards Blues*, which the editor produced between the late seventies and the mid nineties. In his introduction John writes, 'this is not a 'personal zine', written by me, but a wider 'genzine' seeking and accepting contributions from a range of people both in the form of articles and letters of comment, but also artwork.'

This is a nicely produced A5 zine, 28 pages long and not an uninteresting page among them. John begins with 'The Rastus Eye', a jaundiced look at the last millennium, with opinions on the tactical error Vladimir Putin is making by using the Chechen war as a means of elevating his own popularity, a bit about Gary Glitter, and cyberslackening (something everyone I know does). He thinks about the implications of Thomas Disch's quote, 'Creativeness is finding patterns where none exist' and comments on the synchronicity of John Brunner's 'mukkers' turning up in all areas of the world. Brunner's 'mukkers', from *Stand on Zanzibar*, were people who ran amok, driven mad by the pressures of the crowded city environments. Modern mukkers include the guy running wild with a sword in the church in Croydon.

David Bateman writes about Stanislaw Lem and in particular, his classic SF novel, *The Invincible*. This is an interesting article, whetting my appetite sufficiently for me to want to find a copy of this book. The action, he says, 'is driven by bafflement and investigation', and 'to an extent, *The Invincible* is a SF detective story', and 'it is to do with how intentions can become merged with natural forces, and how consequences of actions can persist through the years far beyond the point where any talk of

blame ceases to make sense.'

I find it refreshing to discover someone in fanzines writing intelligently and thoughtfully about SF (apart from in *BananaWings*).

Robin Floyd contributes a long article about *Babylon 5*, with a kind introduction to the series for those media illiterates like myself, which has, at last, caused me to succumb to temptation and decide to beg or borrow the videos. One hundred and ten episodes? Someone I know must have them all! Again, the article is serious and thoughtful and finishes with a list of references. Finally my favourite part of the zine is four pages of CD reviews. (I still have the tendency to refer to them as LPs). I've never been one for reading music magazines but much of the music I now listen to has been bought following a recommendation in a fanzine. This series of short reviews has left me with a list of nine CDs to buy.

I enjoyed this zine for its enthusiasm, its good writing and its clear layout. I hope we see more editions Real Soon Now.

Debbi's zine is very much a personal zine. It's a 'special year 2000 fairly meaningless big round number issue' with a cover by the wonderful D West. Debbi describes a small fannish gathering which I found hilarious, having met at least some of the people she writes about at Novacon:

'Driving off into the dark we launched into a chorus of 'Are we there yet?', 'She's hitting me', 'I feel sick', 'I'm cold', 'Are we there yet?', 'My tongue's stuck to the window.' Our sturdy driver calmly ignored us and turned the radio up.'

Perhaps the most fascinating article in the zine is 'Stranger In Her Own Land', detailing the experiences of Debbi and her colleague Krista, as

they tried to create a graphic novel based on the folklore of the East European communities living in certain areas of Leeds. 'This is the theory: the groups of Ukrainians, Poles and Latvians would welcome us with open arms, tell us their tales and become our friends.' After telling us how they made contact she describes their meeting with a group of Ukrainian women. 'But their stories were all of oppression and hatred, for the Germans, the gypsies, the Russians, the Poles. Women raped and forced to abandon children born of shame, and left, despairing, for other families to bring up, not knowing the true origins of the child's parentage. And they all ended the same way. The heroine died.'

I like the clear-eyed way Debbi looks at the world. I like the way she is honest about her naivety or discomfort. This article took me to places I would never go, thought processes alien to me, from a point of view that is almost mine. I think it's truly wonderful. I also like D West's cartoons, of which there are four in this zine. Wow. And, having read that it was typed to the music of Belle & Sebastian, I went out and bought the CD. Expensive hobby, reading fanzines.

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*Shipyards Blues* 2000 can be obtained for the usual from:  
John D Owen at 4, Highfield Close,  
Newport Pagnell, MK16 9AZ.

*Did I Say That Out Loud?* 4 can be obtained from:  
Debbi Kerr, 38 Bankfield Terrace,  
Urley, Leeds, LS4 2RE.

## INTERNUT EXPLOITER

*Untangling the World Wide Web with Avril A Brown*

"Mars has been known since prehistoric times. It is still a favourite of science fiction writers as the most favourable place in the Solar System (other than Earth!) for human habitation. But the famous "canals" "seen" by Lowell and others were, unfortunately, just as imaginary as Barsomian princesses."

[seds.lpl.arizona.edu/nineplanets/mars.html](http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/nineplanets/mars.html)



[www-personal.umich.edu/~cerebus/mars/folks.html](http://www-personal.umich.edu/~cerebus/mars/folks.html)



[www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)

Apparently the Mars Polar Lander has started talking to NASA again...



## exploring mars

*the starting point for exploring mars on the internet*

[www.exploringmars.org](http://www.exploringmars.org)

This site has some great stuff on the Red Planet and what the scientists expect the Lander to find.

[members.aol.com/rahweb/](http://members.aol.com/rahweb/)

All about the author's work, including his Martian books.



Do you know where your towel is?

That 'orrible lot from the Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy are at it again ....

Not content with organising some of the zaniest fan events, they've escaped into cyberspace. The internet will never be safe again.

[www.arcfan.demon.co.uk/sf/clubs/zz9](http://www.arcfan.demon.co.uk/sf/clubs/zz9)

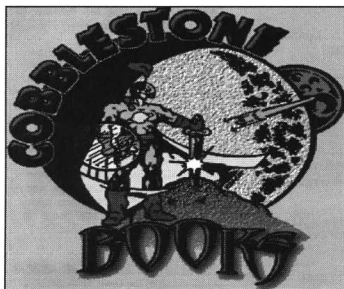
An American friend of mine complained to me recently that the Internet was rapidly killing off the fan community. It's certainly true that there is no longer the proliferation of 'zines that I remember from my early years in fandom (here's where I start doing my impression of an aged crone), but fandom is still alive and well and kicking. Despite the influx of big business, advertising, buy, buy, buy, etc. that's been hitting the Internet in recent months, the wonderful online community spirit is still there. You just have to look a bit harder.

# ANDROMEDA

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## JO's Timewasters Matrix Competition 142

**Competition 140:** First entry still awaited!

*The Editor says: come on quiz fans! Just to remind you, JO's fiendish puzzler ran as follows:*

Idly toying with my lunch last week, I found the names of a famous administrator and three authors, all with that popular modern fashion accessory, three names. The letters to unscramble were:

AAAAAABBBCCDDDEEEEEEE  
HHIIKKLLLLMMNNNOOOOP  
RRRRRRRRSSSSSTTUUYYYZ.

**Competition 141:** An Editor for *Matrix*

'Dear Sirs,

I wish to apply for the position of *Matrix* editor advertised in your latest issue.

My qualifications include the ability to work faster and tirelessly; a wide knowledge of science and literature, constantly updated; a thorough understanding of computer technology; and a robust sense of humour. Contributors over-running their deadlines may expect an escalation of encouragement from reversed plumbing, to having 100 tons of moon-rock dropped on their heads.

I enclose detailed refs and look forward to joining the team.

Yours faithfully,

Mycroft Holmes

Encl.: *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* - R. A. Heinlein.'

As JO is allergic to quantities of moon-rock, the prize goes (again!) to Theo Ross.

*The (real) new editor says: nice one, Theo. Sadly, none of it matches mine (apart, of course, from the references to plumbing and moon-rock - keep watching the skies contributors!).*

### Competition 142

Fantasy writer Ambrose Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary*, compiled up to 1911, is a collection of ironic, satiric and malicious definitions ('Prince': a young gentleman who...bestows his affections...on his friends' wives. 'Bore': person who talks when you wish him to listen.).

What would Bierce have made of more modern words? What can YOU make of them? (e.g. robot, television, Internet, bonk, etc.). Prize to best single definition and best few printed.

Competition answers to:

**John Ollis**, 49 Leighton Road, Corby, Northants NN18 0SD

## Mail Order Catalogues

### Dreamberry Wine

Mike Don, 233 Maine Road, Manchester M14 7WG  
0161 226 2980.  
mike.don@btinternet.com

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01945 773576.  
ken@opfantast.demon.co.uk

New and used ('previously enjoyed') hardbacks and trade and mass market pbs, including a listing of the highly recommended Liverpool University Press series of SF publications (see *Vector* 204 onward for reviews of several of these).

### Andromeda

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01827 281391  
j.davies@midian-books.demon.co.uk

Mostly occult, weird fiction and horror, incl. cult and film. Some rare/collectable.

### Porcupine Books

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020 8554 3799  
brian@porcupine.demon.co.uk

Second-hand science fiction, fantasy and horror.

## Stop Press

**Sunday 21st May 2000**

### Tenth Cambridgeshire Fantasy Fair

The Cresset Exhibition Centre, Bretton, Peterborough, Cambs. 10.30am - 4.30pm. Demonstrations of role-playing and wargames, plus sales tables. Guest appearances by fantasy and comic authors. To book stalls, and for further information, contact Bruce King 5, Arran Close, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, CW4 7QP.

## Credits issue 142

*Matrix* 142 was edited and produced by **Andrew Seaman** using MS Publisher 98 (and a great deal of patience).

Thanks to my fellow editors: Janet Barron, Avril Brown, Glenda Pringle, Yvonne Rowse (good luck for the future!) and Gary Wilkinson. Extra special thanks to Steve Jeffery & Vikki Lee for advice and support during this time of transition.

Thanks also to all the *Matrix* newsgatherers and contributors: Tony Cullen, Elizabeth Billinger, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Paul Kincaid, Carol Ann Kerry-Green, Colin Hill, *Ansible*, Gary Dalkin, Andrew Butler, John Clute, Steve Holland, Mark Plummer and anyone else I've forgotten.

Printed by PDC Copyprint of Guildford (with thanks to Jon Davis for technical advice). Collated and mailed by Bramley Mailing Services.

That's a wrap - See you in two months!