

BRUM GROUP NEWS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2013

ISSUE 504

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WORLDCON 2014

13TH SEPTEMBER



***ALICE
LAWSON
AND JAMES
BACON***



NB THE MEETING WILL START AT THE USUAL TIME OF 8PM

October 11th - BSGF member and successful author of two YA Science Fiction novels, JANET EDWARDS

Next year the SF Worldcon will be held in London. We are fortunate to have two members of the Loncon 3 Committee, Alice Lawson (Co-Chair) and James Bacon (Head of Programme) who will be talking to us about the trials and tribulations of securing and organising next year's Worldcon, Loncon3.

Alice Lawson has extensive experience of organising conventions, including two previous Worldcons, Eastercons and of course our own Novacon. She was on her first Novacon Committee in the late 80's and only lately stepped down from the Committee in 2011 (to concentrate on Worldcon) after serving continuously since 2001. She is also a recipient of the Doc Weir award for Unsung Heroes of Fandom (2010).

James Bacon has run many conventions including being Co-Chair of Eastercon 2009. He has extensive experience in running the Dealers' Rooms at conferences including the 2010 World Horror convention and Fantasycon 2011.

The meeting will take place in the conference room on the first floor of The Briar Rose Hotel, Bennetts Hill, off New Street.

The doors open at 7.30pm and the meeting will normally commence at 8.00pm so please arrive early, get your drinks from the bar on the ground floor, and be seated in plenty of time. The entrance fee for our January AGM is free and the August and December socials are ticket only events. All other meetings the entrance fee is £3.00 for members and £4 for non-members

DAVID GEMMELL AWARD NOMINATIONS

The nominees for the David Gemmell Awards have been announced. Voting is open until the end of September. Voting is online at <http://gimmellaward.com>

THE LEGEND AWARD FOR BEST FANTASY NOVEL

RED COUNTRY by Joe Abercrombie (Gollancz)

STORMDANCER by Jay Kristoff (Tor)

KING OF THORNS by Mark Lawrence (HarperVoyager)

THE GATHERING OF THE LOST by Helen Lowe (Orbit)

THE BLINDING KNIFE by Brent Weeks (Orbit)

THE MORNINGSTAR AWARD FOR BEST FANTASY NEWCOMER

THRONE OF THE CRESCENT MOON by Saladin Ahmed (Gollancz)

THE RED KNIGHT by Miles Cameron (Gollancz)

MALICE by John Gwynne (Tor)

IRENICON by Aidan Harte (Jo Fletcher Books)

STORMDANCER by Jay Kristoff (Tor)

THE RAVENHEART AWARD FOR BEST FANTASY COVER ART

Didier Graffet and Dave Senior for THE RED COUNTRY by Joe Abercrombie

Dominic Harman for LEGION OF SHADOW by Michael J. Ward

Clint Langley for BESIEGED by Rowena Cory Daniells

Silas Manhood for THE BLINDING KNIFE by Brent Weeks

Colin Thomas for STORMDANCER by Jay Kristoff

Stephen Youll for THE BLACK MAUSOLEUM by Stephen Deas

WORLD FANTASY AWARD NOMINATIONS

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Susan Cooper

Tanith Lee

NOVEL

THE KILLING MOON by N K Jemisin (Orbit)

SOME KIND OF FAIRY TALE by Graham Joyce (Gollancz)

THE DROWNING GIRL by Caitlin R Kiernan (Roc)

CRANDOLIN by Anna Tambour (Chomu)

ALIF THE UNSEEN by G Willow Wilson (Corvus)

Nominees in other categories are available at www.wfc2013.org/wfawards01.html

WORLD SPACE WEEK

The week of 4th to 10th October is World Space Week. The theme this year is “Exploring Mars - Discovering Earth”. There will be various events around the country (and indeed internationally). For example, there will be a lecture by Alan Bean, Apollo 12 astronaut (in Pontefract), “Tweet the Expert” sessions where you can submit questions online to the UK Space Agency (online at Twitter @spacegov.uk) and lots of other activities. Relatively locally, the National Space Centre at Leicester is holding a “Space Lates” evening of experiments, talks from Leicester and Oxford University space scientists), shows etc. on the 5th October. (<https://www.gammabookings.com/NSCSpaceLates/> for tickets. £3 Adult). Events in the UK are being co-ordinated by the British Interplanetary Society and full details of all events are available at their webpage www.bis-space.com/world-space-week-2013

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nobel Prize winning writer and poet, **Seamus Heaney** has died. Although most famous for his poetry, he translated and helped raise awareness of the ancient fantasy story of BEOWULF Actor **Gerard Murphy** died. He narrated the BBC radio version of THE LORD OF THE RINGS and appeared in the genre films WATERWORLD and BATMAN BEGINS Cinematographer **Gilbert Taylor** passed away. He won a special award for his work on Star Wars. He also worked on DAMIEN: OMEN II, FLASH GORDON, 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY and DR STRANGELOVE Director **Ted Post** who was best known for his Westerns but also directed BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES and episodes of the *Twilight Zone* Author, publisher and Tolkien scholar **Anne Petty** has died from cancer. Her works include non-fiction ONE RING TO BIND THEM ALL, TOLKIEN IN THE LAND OF

HEROES and DRAGONS OF FANTASY. Other books include fantasy novel THE CORNERSTONE. She was also the founder and editor of Kitsune Books The musician and author **Mick Farren** (aged 69) collapsed onstage and later died on July 27th. His music was said to have influenced Frank Zappa and The Doors. He also wrote for the NME, appeared on the *David Frost Show* (promoting Counter-culture), opened for Led Zeppelin and also wrote several SF novels of which the most well-known was PHAID THE GAMBLER British SF author **Douglas R Mason (who wrote as John Rankine)** passed away at the age of 95. His stories were first published in the 1960's. His first novel was INTERSTELLAR TWO-FIVE followed by more than 30 novels. He stopped writing in the early 80's but after a two decade gap he returned to writing producing two more novels and collections of short works Spokane, USA has been confirmed as the host for the **Worldcon 2015** **Dublin** is bidding for the **2019 Worldcon**. The bid will be officially launched at Loncon 3 in 2014, followed by a second launch at Shamrockcon (Dublin) 2014. The official website is now open at <http://dublin2019.com> The **Sidewise Awards for Alternate History** were announced at this year's Worldcon on August 31st. The winners are Longform: C J Sansom for DOMINION (Pan Macmillan) and Short Form: Rick Wilber for "Something Real" in *Asimov's Science Fiction* (April 2012) **Neil Gaiman** has had a road in Portsmouth renamed "The Ocean at the End of the Lane" which is the title of his recent novel. Neil Gaiman was a former resident of Portsmouth **Iain Banks** was celebrated at a "literary wake" at the Edinburgh Festival, where he had been due to read from his last novel THE QUARRY. Neil Gaiman recalled a night in 1987 at Worldcon in Brighton when an inebriated Iain Banks climbed the front of the Metropole Hotel. Unfortunately a robbery had taken place at the hotel. As police arrived at an upstairs room to investigate, Iain Banks arrived on the balcony to join what he thought was a party and Neil Gaiman and others had to persuade the police that he was a respected author and not a cat burglar! (reported in *The Times (September 1st)*). Iain Banks was also remembered on one of a number of "literary" deckchairs at the Edinburgh Festival with had a quote from CONSIDER PHLEBEAS - "Empathise with stupidity and you're halfway to thinking like an idiot". **SFX Magazine** has also awarded him their 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award The **World Fantasy Convention** has found itself at the centre of some controversy over what is seen as a disproportionate response. Author **Tom Pollock** pledged to step down from any panel that did not have equal gender parity. When he duly stepped down from one panel, he was told by the organisers that he had "just excluded himself from all panels

Newcon Press will publish an anthology **LEGENDS** containing stories inspired by **David Gemmell**. It will be launched at World Fantasy Con in October to coincide with the ceremony for the David Gemmell Awards 2013 NASA has found evidence that **water exists in rocks expelled from the Moon's interior** (called magmatic rock) Scientists believe there is evidence **that life started on Mars** and came to Earth via meteorites. The theory states that the minerals essential to the formation of life were only readily available on Mars NASA scientists are following the example of **Robert Heinlein's TIME FOR THE STARS** which had one identical twin in space whilst the other remained on Earth. Unlike the novel, they are not selected as telepaths (!) but to compare the effects of long term space flight on the human body British company **Pocket Spacecraft** is planning to launch thousands of miniature probes to the Moon. They will cost around £199 and can be sponsored and personalised by individuals The Russian Olympic Committee has announced that all the gold medals to be awarded at next year's Winter Olympics will contain pieces of the Chelyabinsk meteorite which exploded spectacularly over Russia earlier this year

NEW CINEMA FILM RELEASES

Listings should not be necessarily taken as recommendations. Release dates are subject to change. View at your own peril!

INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 2 - Release date September 13th. Horror. The Lambert family search for the secret connecting them to the spirit world.

HAWKING - Release date September 20th. Documentary. Professor Stephen Hawking relates his personal story.

R.I.P.D - Release date September 20th. The Rest In Peace Department are police who protect the living from dead souls who won't cross to the other side.

THE BOOKSMITH
NEW, USED & ANTIQUATED BOOKS

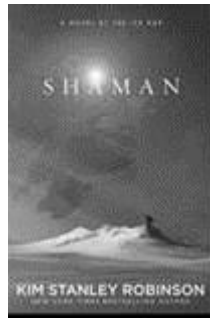
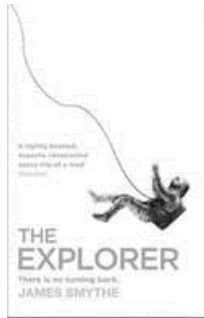
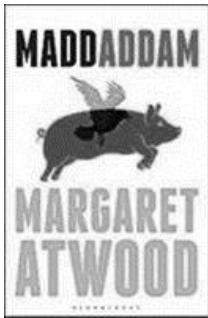
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FORTHCOMING BOOKS

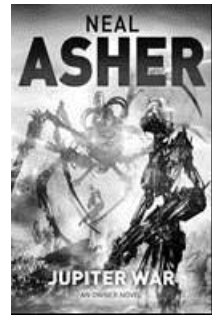
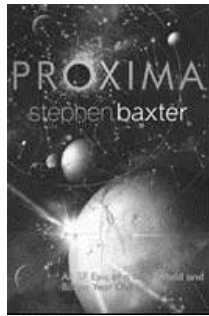
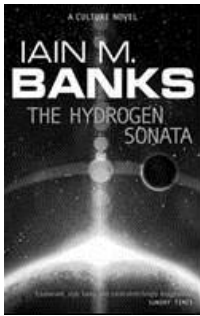


MADDADDAM by **Margaret Atwood** / Bloomsbury / 416 pgs / £18.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1408819708 / August 29th. SF. Conclusion of the *Oryx and Crake* trilogy. After a plague, a few humans share the earth with the genetically engineered Crakers.

THE EXPLORER by **James Smythe** / HarperVoyager / 400 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0007456765 / August 29th. On the first manned deep space mission, the crew awake from hypersleep to discover the captain is dead.

SHAMAN by **Kim Stanley Robinson** / Orbit / 464 pgs / £18.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1841499994. September 3rd. Mainstream novel set in the Palaeolithic ice age

CRUX (sequel to *NEXUS*) by **Ramez Naam** / Angry Robot / 512 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0857662958. The mind-linking drug, Nexus has been available for 6 months and society is splintering into human and “post-human”.



THE HYDROGEN SONATA by Iain Banks / Orbit / 640 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0356501499 / September 10th. First paperback issue of the last *Culture* novel.

PROXIMA by Stephen Baxter / Gollancz / 464 pgs / £12.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0575116849 / September 19th. 27th century mankind colonises Proxima IV, a planet with one face permanently facing its sun.

THE CHICKENS OF ATLANTIS AND OTHER FOWL AND FILTHY FIENDS by Robert Rankin / Gollancz / 352 pgs / £16.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0575086456 / September 19th. Comic SF/Steampunk. Darwin, an educated ape recounts his life story featuring Martians, Sherlock Holmes and Chickens!

JUPITER WAR (Owner 3) by Neal Asher / Tor / 400 pgs / £18.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0230750715 / September 26th. Space Opera. Earth's dictator tries to prevent Alan Saul, the human-machine hybrid leaving the Solar System.



BOOK REVIEWS



(REVIEWERS please note: - all reviews should be emailed direct to me at goodwincd@yahoo.com Deadline for each issue is 14 days prior to the date of the monthly meeting).

BROKEN HOMES by Ben Aaronovitch
Gollancz / 357 pgs / £14.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0575134274
Reviewed by Michael Jones

The fourth volume in the acclaimed *Rivers of London* series continues the story of PC Peter Grant, apprentice wizard, as he becomes involved in a series of mysterious cases.

A death in an unexplained car crash leads to the discovery of a mutilated body ineptly hidden in nearby woods and there is an apparent suicide on the Underground which may not be as straightforward as it seems. Then the discovery of a stolen eighteenth-century German grimoire is followed by the obviously sorcerous death of the suspected thief. Investigations soon reveal that these cases



are probably linked to each other and to the twisted magician known as the Faceless Man who has already played a major adversarial role in the previous books in the series. There is also a connection to a German architect who was responsible for a peculiar municipal housing development in Elephant and Castle which appears to be the focus of attention. Events build to a suitably near-apocalyptic climax with a surprising twist to finish.

On the way, a number of characters from the previous books show up from time to time, playing parts of greater or lesser importance. Chief amongst these is, of course, the Faceless Man. Although he suffers a serious setback here he is not finished yet and it is becoming confirmed as increasingly obvious that the series can only end with his downfall and the

revealing of his identity. So this is very much an episode in an ongoing opus and the occasional references to people and incidents from previous episodes limit slightly the extent to which it can be viewed as a standalone story.

Whether deliberately or not, the writing style seems to have changed since the beginning of the series. Although the somewhat light-hearted turn of phrase, particularly when referring to police procedure, still remains, the overall style is less jokey as though a more serious style is intended to reflect the more serious turn which events are beginning to take. Be that as it may, it remains a readable and immensely entertaining book with a complex yet tidily constructed plot and no loose ends – well, perhaps one. Or even two.

Of course, anyone already familiar with the *Rivers of London* will need no encouragement to continue following events: others may find here an introduction to the whole series which will attract their attention to the preceding instalments.

MJ

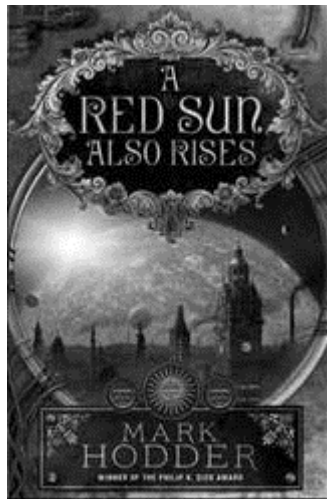
***A RED SUN ALSO RISES* by Mark Hodder**

Del Rey / 288 pgs / £16.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0091949815

Reviewed by Yvonne Rowse

I really enjoyed this book. Not at first. I'm not terrifically keen on Steam Punk, the Victorian style of writing, or Jack the Ripper and I didn't warm to the point of view character, which usually signals the end of my interest in a book. A reminder email from the newsletter editor caused me to plunge back into the book and a combination of excellent writing, a fascinating planet and a steady improvement in the PoV kept me reading, with increasing urgency to the satisfying end at which point I was ignoring my friends in a very rude manner in order to reach the conclusion.

I guess this book could be characterised as a blend of Steam Punk and Planetary Romance with fascinating aliens and a strong ecological message. The point of view character, Aiden Fleischer, followed his father into the church and made a really poor job of it. A weak, ineffectual man, he has none of the abilities necessary to enter the ministry, not even faith. When we meet him he is stumbling towards an embarrassing infatuation with a young woman that is manipulated by her father into blackmail. In truth, I had no desire to get to know this man any better or any sympathy for his predicament. What kept me interested was the entrance onto the stage of Clarissa Stark, crippled, intellectually superior and ultimately Aiden's salvation. His small act of charity, to employ her as his sexton, changes both of their lives.



Aiden's lack of judgement in his parish results in him 'running away' to become a missionary. Thus, a man who could not enthuse already convinced Christians, goes forth to try to convince the natives of a small tropical island, in particular its witch doctor, to turn to Christ.

Without success. Iriputz, the witch doctor, surreptitiously infects Aiden with a tropical fever. Iriputz persuades Clarissa that a cure is possible in the hills where he performs a 'heathen ritual' that actually opens a portal into an alien world. At the last minute Clarissa flings herself through with Aiden.

This is the point where the book really comes to life for me. What a world! Two small yellow suns hang in the sky and monsters in the shape of giant molluscs speak of potential dissonance, the dissonance of Clarissa Stark. From this point on we become familiar with the Yatsill, the monsters, who turn out to be jolly fine chaps, especially once they learn English. Clarissa is recognised as an 'aristocrat' by the Yatsill and Aiden as one of the working class. To describe the rest of the action would be to spoil the book but as well as the joy of the Planetary Romance there is the fascination of some ecological/biological detective work, the building of a version of Victorian London, its fall, a battle and a satisfactory if open ending. And a red sun also rose. I will keep my eyes open in the hope of a sequel. *(Review copy kindly supplied by Del Rey publishers)* YR

RED MOON by Benjamin Percy

Hodder & Stoughton / 344 pgs / £12.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1444724998

Reviewed by Theresa Derwin

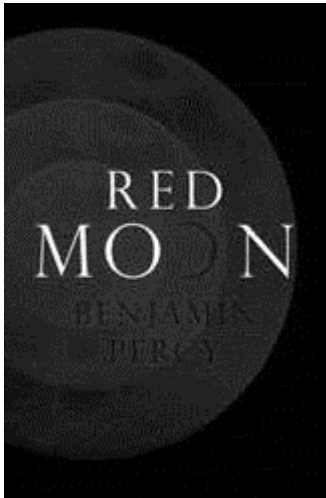
There has been lots of anticipation surrounding the release of this book; an alternative history epic with lycanthropes. The blurb that comes with the book states that this is part of a 'new wave' of 'literary horror'.

Young Patrick Gamble doesn't want to leave his hometown but knows he has to, as his dad has to go away to fight in the Republic for a 12 month stint, so

Patrick is being sent away to live with his mom. Patrick gets on the plane to San Francisco only just noticing the incredibly nervous flyer boarding close to him. Patrick is waiting to use the cramped airplane loo, when a noise that sounds like a growl emerges from the cubicle, followed swiftly by gore and mayhem as a werewolf/lycan dives out and slaughters everyone on the flight except for Patrick who hides under a dead body and is soon given the moniker 'Miracle Boy'.

Patrick had seen lycans before but only in the newspapers or on TV. In this alternative reality, lycans are forbidden to transform, and are medicated with a drug to stop transformation and control the lycan population. There is already a war going on between the lycans and the norms, and the lycans are using guns and claws alike.

The attack on the plane is a terrorist attack, aimed at drawing attention to the subjugation of the lycans, who, in the majority, live in the 'Lupine Republic'. The US troops remain in the Republic to keep order and the Iraq metaphor isn't lost on the reader.



Young lycan Claire Forrester is busy looking at college prospectuses choosing her new college based on distance away from her current home. She isn't from a broken home, but nevertheless she needs to get away; she craves something more, despite her Dad pressurising her to apply to his old college, so she can be 'with her own kind'. Like all teenagers, Claire thinks she is different, and though she wants to get away from home, she never imagined the terror of having to go on the run after her parents are murdered by the government. Forced to run and hide, Claire runs to her aunt Miriam, ex-resistance member who fled her husband and the resistance some years ago.

Governor Chase Williams could very well win election as President, as an ex-soldier of the US troops who toured the Republic in the aftermath of the lycan terrorist attacks. Williams assures his public that swift and severe measures are being taken. But all is not as straightforward as it seems.

As all three protagonists become caught up in the conflict between humans and lycans their previously unconnected lives become entangled.

Early on I got the feeling we were heading for a *Twilight* style romance, but luckily, though there is romance involved it is real and integral to the plot. It is wonderfully visceral from the start, yet the slaughter on the plane is as poetic and lyrical in style as the rest of the novel (although this does become a tad heavy handed at times). The werewolves themselves aren't glamorous. The shifting, which is rarely allowed to happen, is full of pain and tears, yet the drug which the lycans are forced to take, dulls the senses.

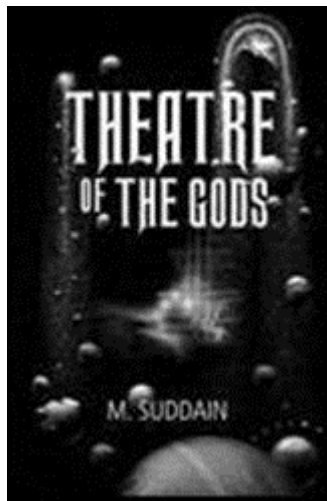
I mentioned earlier that the blurb calls this book 'literary' horror. If by literary horror the publishers mean an excess of adjectives, metaphors and simile, then this is indeed literary horror. However, I would argue it is SF with lycans. Though normally associated with horror, these lycans are investigated by a researcher and we find out lots of feasible scientific facts to explain the creatures. The drug used to control them is part science/part mythology with elements of silver mixed in. And though this is a rather heavy tome; being a hardback coming in over 500 pages, and is heavy at times in the metaphorical sense, the characterisation is strong, particularly Miriam and the world building is pretty solid. Overall a strong and varied addition to the werewolf subgenre. Worth investigating.
(Review copy kindly supplied by Hodder & Stoughton) TD

***THEATRE OF THE GODS* by M Suddain**

Blacklist (Jonathan Cape) / 637 pgs / £12.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0224097062

Reviewed by William McCabe

Matt Suddain could be this generation's answer to Douglas Adams or Terry Pratchett. He's not quite there yet but, given a few more books and a good editor, he could make it in a few years. Considering the commercial potential there, it's no wonder that there seems to be a real attempt to package this right. The book is presented as the work of a separate character (V.V.S Volcannon) who does not appear within the book although he does make comments in the narrative and gets a short introduction to himself between that of the "publisher" (Suddain) and the novel proper. The book is presented as part of the Blacklist imprint with the slogan "The forbidden, the forgotten, the condemned" and the Blacklist website shows covers of half a dozen books in that series. The actual publisher is Jonathan Cape but it is likely that Jonathan Cape may not be mentioned on the copy that appears in the shops. Blacklist is fictional and may not continue beyond this book. All of this could make it difficult to order copies.



The book itself is a whole lot of fun. It takes a little while to get into and it does drift into other stories at times but, once you get the hang of it, it's a very easy read. There are more characters in the central cast than usual and the plot has more than the usual number of twists and turns but it is not really too much for the size of the book.

M Francisco Fabrigas claims to have invented a device that will open a path into a different universe. He claims to be from another universe that is almost identical to the one he is in. Actually, he isn't really sure about any of that but he isn't telling people that. He now has money from the Queen of one of the two largest empires in this universe to lead an invasion into another one. He is being

supplied with information by the Dark Hand (a secret organisation from the other empire). His pilot is "The Necronaut" who can escape an entire army and defeat a space fleet. The ship has a full crew along with hangers on and a couple of very important stowaways. Although they seem to be small children, one is being pursued for the information he carries in his head and the other by a half dozen of the greatest assassins in the universe. Add to this The Pope (the most powerful person in the universe), The Man in the Shadows (representative of a conspiracy that stretches across more than one universe), Carrofax (a "demon" that only Fabrigas can see) and a couple of monsters bigger than planets. That's not all but it's a fair sample.

The story follows the cast across several universes to a moon covered with plant life that will eat almost anything (they have trouble eating whole spaceships), a planet in the belly of a monster, a city under assault from the Pope's fleet, and a few more space battles. Surprisingly, almost everything is tied up at the end. If there's a sequel they'll be dealing with minor cast members and new situations. The characters aren't so much shallow as just thin. So much of the book seems to be designed this way so that the writer can pull some kind of switch to reveal that this character isn't really who you thought they were and is really so much more/less significant. The Necronaut isn't The Necronaut (but only in a Dread Pirate Roberts way). The Vengeance isn't really who all of those assassins were lined up to slaughter but you've probably figured that out right at the beginning. There's even an assassin who is masquerading as something else among the crew of the ship. Fabrigas eventually reveals that his real reason for trying to get to another universe is just to find an alternate of his family who seem to have died or disappeared in the two universes he's been in so far. I suppose this should make the characters inconsistent somehow but the effect is more to prevent too much understanding. This doesn't really matter too much. Parts of the book include the dreams and journals of many of the significant characters – and not necessarily the ones mentioned here. You can get to know them no matter how unreliable their history. The writer (in one of his appearances as Volcannon) believes that his greatest failing is in trying to put in too many characters and different plot lines.

So what's wrong with this? Not much really. There are things that seem like they've been stuck on as running jokes that don't really run that far like the sea shanties that are just re-hashes of pop songs except that there aren't that many of them. I don't think the whole "steampunk" idea really works here. I found the whole thing works better if you just ignore the vague suggestion that they're going into space on something that looks like a 15th century galleon or that this character is a wizard and that a demon. It's not like they really make anything of it. And those times when they forget and put "sea" instead of "space". Those were just mistakes that they ought to correct by the time the book comes out. Oh, and the "homunculus" bit didn't need to be there at all.

WM

(Uncorrected proof copy kindly supplied for review by Jonathan Cape).

NB I am aware that this is the second review that I have published for this book. Some publishers are still sending duplicate copies to Rog (as previous editor) and myself (as current editor). We try to avoid putting out duplicate copies for review,

but this one “slipped through the net” so for fairness I thought it only fair to include both reviews.

DOCTOR WHO HARVEST OF TIME by Alastair Reynolds

Gollancz / 365 pgs / £16.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1849904186

Reviewed by Michael Jones

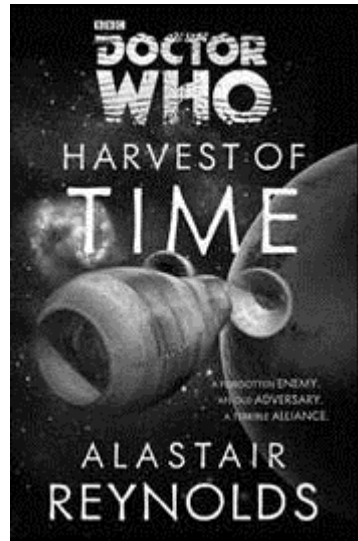
It may be a surprise to find Alastair Reynolds writing about *Doctor Who*, but he is doing no more than join the ranks of many illustrious writers who have preceded him as well as many more who became (justly) famous later.

Following a Prologue set on a planet remote in both space and time, the story begins in contemporary England in the era of the third Doctor, featuring recognisable portrayals of The Doctor himself as played by Jon Pertwee, supported by Jo Grant and U.N.I.T., and The Master as played by Roger Delgado. They are soon up against a planetary invasion by the irresistible Sild, a race apparently known to The Doctor although not one which has previously appeared in the known *Doctor Who* canon. It seems as though the Master, up to his usual nefarious tricks, may be in some way connected with this invasion, although perhaps not intentionally.

The first half of the book is pretty straightforward *Who*, dealing with events on a comparatively mundane level. Reynolds has perfectly nailed the required intellectual level; that is to say undemanding to read whilst at the same time including enough pseudo-scientific jargon to sound almost convincing. In the second half however he gives freer rein to his innate talent, producing a much more complex and imaginative story of time meddling and reality shifts. The Sild are defeated (of course) and the Master ends up done for (or is he?) while there is one final major twist which ties everything together including the prologue - although this was telegraphed in advance for those readers sufficiently observant.

Of the two names on the cover, it is for the individual reader to decide which is the more important. Neither side need feel disappointed. Reynolds fans will find that although it may not be his best it is nearly everything they have come to expect from him, while for *Who* fans it can hardly fail.

MJ



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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All details are correct to the best of our knowledge, we advise contacting organizers before travelling. Always enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope when writing to any of the contact addresses.

Any information about forthcoming SF/Fantasy/Horror events is always welcome - please send to Carol at goodwincd@yahoo.com

MAGICAL BOOKS - FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO MIDDLE-EARTH, 23rd May - 27th October, Oxford Exhibition at the Bodleian Library (Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3BG) featuring original artwork and manuscripts from JRR Tolkien, CS Lewis, Alan Garner, Susan Cooper and Philip Pullman. Admission Free www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley/whats-on/ (Tel: 01865 287400)

POW-WOW LITFEST 2013, 14th - 15th September, Moseley, Birmingham Held at the Prince of Wales pub in Moseley, this literary festival includes appearances by M John Harrison and Stan Nicholls. Early bird tickets cost £15. Full programme and booking at <http://pow-wow.org.uk/litfest2013/>

SCI-FI SCULPTURES, 16th - 22nd September, Birmingham. Exhibition and interactive workshop in the Pavilion, new Birmingham Library as part of its Discovery season (a series of art events to celebrate the opening of the new Library). Models inspired by Jules Verne, H G Wells and Edgar Rice Burroughs

CONVERSATION WITH KIM NEWMAN, 19th September, Birmingham Author and film critic, Kim Newman will be at Waterstones, Birmingham High Street to talk about his writing and his new book, **JOHNNY ALUCARD** (4th in the *Anno Dracula* series). Tickets £3 available from shop or phone 0121 633 4353

FESTIVAL OF FANTASTIC FILMS, 20th - 22nd September, Manchester. Held at the Manchester Conference Centre, a long-running SF, Fantasy and Horror film convention. Guests include Michael Armstrong (writer/director), Madeleine Smith (actress) and Shane Rimmer (actor). £70 for full weekend. Day memberships available. Registration form and details at <http://fantastic-films.com/festival/>

ANDROMEDA ONE, 21st September, Birmingham. One day SF, Fantasy and Horror convention at the Custard Factory, 11am-10pm. Guests of Honour included Paul Cornell, Jaine Fenn, Stan Nicholls and Anne Gay. Details at <http://terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-one/> Payment by cheque or paypal.

PATRICK AT NIGHT: A CELEBRATION, 28th September, Leicester. To honour the memory of Sir Patrick Moore, the Royal Astronomical Society and the National Space Centre will be holding a celebration in his honour. From 7pm to 10pm including Jon Culshaw unveiling a new bust. Tickets £25 (with meal) at <https://www.gammabookings.com/NSCEvents/>. Booking essential

BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL, 3rd - 12th October, Birmingham Tickets are now available. Lots of different literature themed events at various venues around the city. Includes workshops on “Science Fiction for Beginners” with Alex Davis and “The Horror, the Horror” with Adam Nevill. Details/tickets at www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org/

CONVENTIONS

WORLD FANTASY CON, 31st October - 3rd November, Brighton. Guests of Honour include Alan Lee, Brian Aldiss and Tessa Farmer with China Mieville as Master of Ceremonies. Numbers are limited so book early. Attending membership £125 at <http://wfc2013.org/howtojoin01.html>

NOVACON 43, 8th - 10th November 2013, Nottingham. Guest Of Honour: Jo Walton. Membership is £45. See www.novacon.org.uk for details

E-M CON (EAST MIDLANDS CON), 16th March 2014, Nottingham. First year of one day mixed media convention. Guests to date include Virginia Hey (Farscape), Craig Charles (Red Dwarf) and Sam Stone (horror/fantasy writer). Tickets £8.50/£12 (early bird). Details at www.em-con.co.uk/

LONCON 3 (WORLDCON 72), 14th - 18th August 2014, London. Held at ExCel exhibition centre. Guests of Honour include Chris Foss, and Robin Hobb. £95 Adult membership. See www.loncon3.org

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE BSFG

October 11th - BSFG member and author **JANET EDWARDS**

November 1st - TBA

December 6th - **CHRISTMAS SOCIAL** - Skittles and buffet

January 10th - Annual **AGM** and Book Auction

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ABOUT US... The Birmingham Science Fiction Group meets on the second Friday of each month. Membership is £16 per year per person (or £21 for two members living at the same address). This includes the 12 free issues of the Newsletter plus reduced entrance fee at each meeting. Cheques should be made payable to "The Birmingham Science Fiction Group" and sent to our Membership Secretary, 10 Sylvan Avenue, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 2PG