

BRUM GROUP NEWS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

DECEMBER 2013

ISSUE 507

HONORARY PRESIDENT: **BRIAN W ALDISS, O.B.E.**

COMMITTEE: **VERNON BROWN (CHAIRMAN); PAT BROWN (TREASURER);
VICKY STOCK (SECRETARY); CAROL GOODWIN (NEWSLETTER EDITOR);
DAVE CORBY (PUBLICITY OFFICER); WILLIAM MCCABE (WEBSITE);
VICKY STOCK (MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY);
NOVACON 44 CHAIR: STEVE GREEN**

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CHRISTMAS SOCIAL FRIDAY 6TH DECEMBER



The Christmas Social will be held at The Selly Park Tavern, 592 Pershore Road, Selly Oak from 7 till 11pm. The postcode is B29 7HQ for anyone travelling by car. By bus, from the centre of Birmingham take a 45 or 47 bus from outside Boots, opposite New Street Station's old

January 10th - **THE AGM & AUCTION** - Reports on 2013 and election of next year's Committee. Followed by the **ANNUAL AUCTION**. Please remember to sort out your books to donate to the AGM Auction

entrance on Smallbrook Queensway, or from near Boots in High Street. Bus stops are changing so check the destination sign carefully. Ask for The Selly Park Tavern - it is about 15 minutes ride. The Selly Park Tavern is on the left a few stops past the Edgbaston Cricket Ground and the stop after the Nature Centre. Remember, the Skittle Alley is behind the main pub. Walk down the side of the Tavern into the car park and it is on your right.

COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The January AGM will see as usual the election of the 2014 Committee. If you are considering standing for any of the posts please email the Membership Secretary as soon as possible at bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk to obtain details of what the post necessitates.

THE COMMITTEE OFFICERS DUTIES

The following "Job Descriptions" are outlines of the basic duties of each Officer. However, there is a great deal of interaction and working to common deadlines between the various posts and some reports, such as the Financial Report, are made to an agreed format.

GENERAL DUTIES (and a requirement)

To help organise BSFG Meetings throughout the year.

To attend monthly Committee meetings in the City Centre, usually on the Wednesday evening of the week preceding the week in which the Group Meeting is held.

To assist other Committee members in their duties as necessary.

To present a report at the AGM.

To have email access at home.

OFFICERS' DUTIES

CHAIRMAN

To chair Committee meetings and present a report.

To chair Group Meetings, introduce and thank the Speaker.

To negotiate with hotels and other organisations on behalf of the Group.

To organise, prepare and supervise the annual Christmas Social.

To liaise with the Secretary in arranging the Committee meeting agenda.

SECRETARY

To communicate with Speakers on behalf of the Committee.

To communicate with other persons and organisations on behalf of the Committee.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

To take and circulate ASAP Records of Committee meetings.

TREASURER

To maintain the current BSFG Bank Account.

To attend Group Meetings, arriving early and ensuring that the Meeting room is prepared for Group use.

To collect admission money etc at Group Meetings.

To liaise with the Membership Secretary in the collection of membership fees etc.

To present a detailed current Financial Report at Committee meetings.

To present an Annual Financial Report at the AGM.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (This post and the post of Secretary may be held by one person)

To maintain BSFG Membership records.

To organise the collection of membership subscriptions, renewals etc.

To liaise with the Treasurer as necessary.

To present a report on current membership numbers at Committee meetings.

PUBLICITY OFFICER

To advertise the BSFG by all means possible.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

To maintain contact with sources of potential information for the Group Newsletter.

To edit and produce master copy to an agreed format ready for printing.

To organise printing of the Newsletter, and to distribute it, to a specific timescale.

To liaise with book publishers for review copies.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

ORDINARY MEMBERS – one of whom will be...

WEBSITE MANAGER

To maintain the BSFG Website to an agreed format and to update it as necessary.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

The other ORDINARY MEMBER

To contribute to the efficient functioning of the Committee.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

AND WHAT DID YOU THINK?

THE LETTER COLUMN OF 'BRUM GROUP NEWS

Anything to say about the Group, meetings or SF in general? Email your opinions or queries to me at goodwincd@yahoo.com

NOVA AWARDS

The Nova Award winners were announced on November 10th at Novacon 43 in Nottingham. The Nova Awards are presented to recognize excellence in British fanzine publishing and writing.

Fanzine: *Banana Wings* edited by Claire Briailey and Mark Plummer

Fanwriter: Mike Meara

Fanartist: D West

WORLD FANTASY AWARD WINNERS

The World Fantasy Awards winners were announced at the World Fantasy Convention held in Brighton from October 31st to November 3rd. The Awards for Lifetime Achievement are announced in advance of the event.

Novel: ALIF THE UNSEEN by G Willow Wilson (Corvus)

Novella: LET MAPS TO OTHERS by KJ Parker (*Subterranean* Summer 2012)

Short Story: “The Telling” by Gregory Norman Bossert (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies* November 2012)

Anthology: POSTSCRIPTS No.28/29: EXOTIC GOTHIC 4 edited by Daniel Olson (PS Publishing)

Author Collection: WHERE FURNACES BURN by Joel Lane (PS Publishing)

Artist: Vincent Chong

Special Award Professional: Lucia Graves for the translation of THE PRISONER OF HEAVEN by Carlos Ruiz Zafon (Harper)

Special Award Non-Professional: S T Joshi for UNUTTERABLE HORROR: A HISTORY OF SUPERNATURAL FICTION, Volumes 1 & 2 (PS Publishing)

Lifetime Achievement Winners: Susan Cooper and Tanith Lee

BRITISH FANTASY AWARDS WINNERS

The British Fantasy Society announced the 2013 winners at a ceremony during the World Fantasy Convention in Brighton on November 3rd.

Best Fantasy Novel (the Robert Holdstock Award): SOME KIND OF FAIRY TALE by Graham Joyce (Gollancz)

Best Horror Novel (the August Derleth Award): LAST DAYS by Adam Nevill (Macmillan)

Best Novella: THE NINE DEATHS OF DR VALENTINE by John Llewellyn Probert (Spectral)

Best Short Story: “Shark! Shark!” by Ray Cluley (*Black Static* #29)

Best Collection: REMEMBER WHY YOU FEAR ME by Robert Shearman (ChiZine)

Best Anthology: MAGIC: AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE ESOTERIC AND ARCANE by Jonathan Oliver, ed. (Solaris)

Best Small Press (the PS Publishing Independent Press Award): ChiZine Publications (Brett Alexander Savory & Sandra Kasturi)

Best Non-Fiction: *Pornokitsch* website by Anne C. Perry & Jared Shurin, eds.

Best Magazine/Periodical: *Interzone* by Andy Cox, ed. (TTA)

Best Artist: Sean Phillips

Best Comic/Graphic Novel: SAGA by Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples (Image)

Best Screenplay: THE CABIN IN THE WOODS by Joss Whedon & Drew Goddard

Best Newcomer (the Sydney J. Bounds Award): Helen Marshall, for HAIR SIDE, FLESH SIDE (ChiZine)

DAVID GEMMELL LEGEND AWARDS WINNERS

The winners were announced on 31st October at the World Fantasy Convention in Brighton.

Ravenheart Award for Best Fantasy Cover Art: Didier Graffet & Dave Senior for the cover of RED COUNTRY by Joe Abercrombie (Gollancz)

Morningstar Award for Best Fantasy Debut: John Gwynne for MALICE (Pan Macmillan)

Legend Award for Best Fantasy Novel: Brent Weeks for THE BLINDING KNIFE (Orbit)

FORTHCOMING BOOKS



END OF THE ROAD edited by Jonathan Oliver / Solaris / 384 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-1781081532 / December 5th. New short story anthology of fantasy stories with a travel/road theme.

THE DOOR INTO SUMMER (SF Masterworks) by Robert Heinlein / Gollancz / 193 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0575120723 / December 12th. Dan Davis must return to his past to investigate what happened whilst he was in suspended animation for 30 years.

RESONANCE (Ragnarok 3) by John Meaney / Gollancz / 464 pgs / £16.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0575085398 / December 19th. SF. The hidden darkness fights to limit human development across time.

COMFORT ZONE by Brian W Aldiss / The Friday Project / 300 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0007482481 / December 19th. Contemporary (not SF) new novel charting community breakdown when a new mosque is built on the site of a derelict pub



THE CORMORANT (Miriam Black 3) by **Chuck Wendig** / Angry Robot / 384 pgs / £4.93 mass market paperback / ISBN 978-0857663382 / December 31st. Urban fantasy. Miriam Black foresees death but someone else knows and leaves her a message in one of her visions.

EMPRESS OF THE SUN (*Everness 3*) by **Ian McDonald** / Jo Fletcher Books / 400 pgs / £20 hardcover / ISBN 978-1780876719 / January 2nd 2014. Everett Singh must prevent the Empress from controlling his airship *Everness* that is able to cross between parallel universes.

CEMETERY GIRL by **Charlaine Harris** and **Christopher Golden** / Jo Fletcher Books / 120 pgs / £18.99 hardcover / ISBN 978-0857389084 / January 2nd 2014. Fantasy. Battered young girl who wakes in a cemetery with no memory discovers she has a unique ability.

HALF PAST HUMAN (*SF Masterworks*) by **T J Bass** / Gollancz / 272 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0575129627 / January 9th 2014. Nebula nominated SF. The Hive controls the engineered Nebish whilst “normal” humans live hunted lives on the Earth’s surface.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Doris Lessing has died aged 94. She received a Nobel Prize for Literature in 2007. She was born in Iran and grew up in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Her breakthrough novel was **THE GOLDEN BOUGH** written in 1962. She also wrote the five volume science fiction series, *Canopus in Argos* and, unlike some other literary authors was unapologetic about science fiction stating that “... in science fiction is some of the best social fiction of our time” Actress **Sheila Allen** has died. She was married to producer Irwin Allen and appeared in many of his TV series and films, including *Lost in Space*, *Land of the Giants City* and **THE**

TOWERING INFERNO and was a producer on *The Time Tunnel* TV series Writer **Bob Silverberg** suffered a heart attack while in London on his way to attend the World Fantasy Con in Brighton. He was taken to hospital, but released, after insertion of a stent, on October 30th. It is believed that he has now returned to his home in California to recuperate A group of science fiction fans are trying to raise funds via crowd-sourcing on the Internet to build a **science fiction museum** in Washington DC. The initial “preview” room is planned to exhibit paintings and props from popular SF films and TV programmes **L. Frank Baum** (author of *The Wizard of Oz* series of books) will be inducted into the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame. His great-grandson, Bob Baum will be there to represent him **C S Lewis**, author of *The Narnia Chronicles* and the SF *Space Trilogy* (OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET, PERELANDRA and THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH) has been honoured with a memorial stone in Poet’s Corner, Westminster Abbey, 50 years after his death SF and Fantasy author and Brum Group member, **Janet Edwards** has had her novel EARTH GIRL shortlisted for the science fiction section of the Leisepreis prize in Germany Tor.com is launching a **free e-book anthology** of twenty-one stories, SOME OF THE BEST FROM TOR.COM. It can be downloaded free from Amazon. Apple and other major e-book retailers **Eric Brown** will publish his first steampunk novel, JANI AND THE GREATER GAME in Autumn 2014 and the sequel has already been commissioned, to follow a year later The Fox Searchlight Company, who made last year’s HITCHCOCK film are developing a film about **JRR Tolkien** which will focus on his time at Oxford University and as a World War I soldier For the whole of December, **Comet Ison** (hailed by some astronomers as “The Comet of the Century”) should be visible in the eastern horizon of the night sky. Providing it has survived its passage through the corona of the sun (28th November), it is hoped it will have a huge tail and may even be visible in daylight NASA launched its **Mars Maven** probe in November. Expected to arrive at Mars in about 18 months, its mission is to study the atmosphere and try to understand the processes which led to the loss of most of its atmospheric gases. India launched a Mars probe in November which will also examine atmospheric gas loss and sources of methane (some scientists speculate that methane may show subsurface microbes exist). CG



BOOK REVIEWS

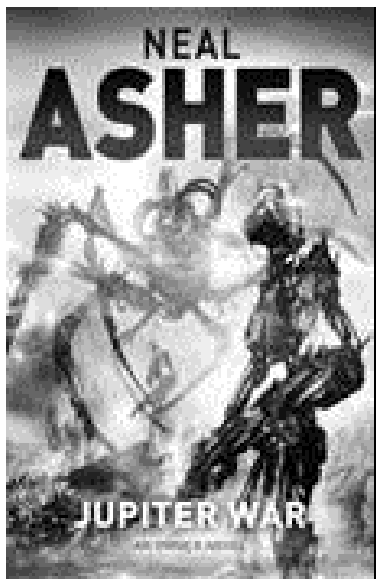


(REVIEWERS please note: - all reviews should be emailed direct to me at goodwincd@yahoo.com Deadline for each issue is 14 days prior to the date of the monthly meeting).

JUPITER WAR by Neal Asher

Pan Macmillan Tor / 472pgs/ £18.99 Hardback / ISBN 978-0230750715

Reviewed by Jim Pearce



JUPITER WAR is the third volume in Neal Asher's *Owner* series of novels set in a world where a bureaucracy gone mad rules. Imagine a world where the EU has expanded to the nth degree and the 'Committee' delegates, especially the 'Chairman' have absolute power. One in which there is an enforcement Inspectorate that makes the Gestapo seem like the Salvation Army and that their actions and the excesses of the Chairman makes those of Pol Pot and Hitler seem to be teddy bear picnics.

The previous book in the trilogy, ZERO POINT, finished with Alan Saul the 'Owner' attempting to rescue his sister Varalin Delex from Mars where she and her colleagues

have been abandoned by the Committee as a waste of resources. This is accomplished and the story continues seamlessly and as before there are two main strands. The first follows Alan Saul's attempts to repair the extensive damage caused to his 'ship' by the Committee Chair Serene Galahad's battleship *The Scourge* and then ensure his and his crew's safety. The second chronicles Serene Galahad's continuing efforts to eliminate him and by extreme means revitalise the Earth's ecology. In addition there are many subsidiary strands woven into the tapestry of this richly complex tale, each by itself vital to the story. For instance not only is Alan Saul threatened by Serene Galahad but there is a revolt brewing within his crew as many believe his self-assumed title of the 'Owner' means that they are his

possessions. In one of the climaxes, as the title declaims, there is a battle close to Jupiter which is bitterly fought with the outcome not at all assured in the favour of Saul and his crew. As a minor strand there are a number of interesting observations concerning Enrico Fermi's paradox.

As with the previous books **JUPITER WAR** is pure space science fiction of the best possible kind, full of action and believable science with a great depth of terrific well-defined characters. As in the second book in the series, **ZERO POINT** it provides links in the form of brief flashbacks to the previous volumes. Due to these there is no feeling of loss or bewilderment to new readers that is true with many other series. Also like **ZERO POINT**, **JUPITER WAR** is more than good enough to stand by itself. However if you have not already read the other two books in the *Owner Trilogy* read them as soon as possible as you have missed two great books.

JTP

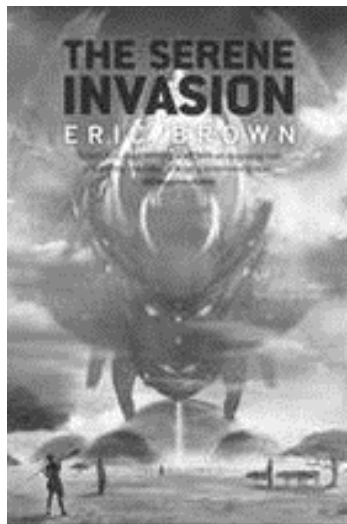
(Review copy kindly donated by Pan Macmillan Tor)

THE SERENE INVASION by Eric Brown

Solaris / 352 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-1781080917

Reviewed by Dave Hardy.

This is by no mean Eric Brown's most original novel (and he has written some corkers). It starts with a transparent dome appearing in Uganda, covering the town of Kallani. It is perhaps unfortunate that the publication of this book coincided with Spielberg's *Under the Dome* serial on TV, which has the same scenario. However, whereas the TV version remains only over Chester's Mill, USA, in this book more domes appear over just about every town and city all over the world. However, these vanish, and vast craft shaped like manta-rays appear in our skies and hover over major cities. Again, one inevitably thinks of Clarke's **CHILDHOOD'S END**, or the movie



Independence Day (which the author does actually mention at one point). Finally, after briefly vanishing, the eight starships come together 'like a giant snowflake' over the Sahara, where, after a flash and a halo of light, they descend on to the sand - transforming the desert into an area of rolling

meadows and lakes, dotted with low-level domes. This is duplicated elsewhere.

A fairly familiar sfnal scenario, then, so this novel depends mainly upon the story and characters. The main players are: Sally Walsh, a doctor at Kallani when the story opens; Geoff Allen, a freelance photographer sent to cover the story of the alien crafts' arrival, who is romantically involved with Sally and who has a strange experience with the aliens whilst on an aircraft; billionaire businessman, James Morwell, Jnr., who has some rather unusual sexual preferences but who dispenses millions of dollars to charities and good causes annually; and Ana Devi, an orphan street kid who lives rough on Howrah Station near Delhi, is abused and raped by the gross Sanjeev Vanaputtram, and whose brother Bilal vanishes and later in the book reappears in the USA under a different name in the employ of James Morwell.

The most important theme of this book is the reason for the aliens' arrival on Earth. Called the S'rene, and therefore known as the Serene, they are here to protect humanity from itself. All over the world, any attempt at violence is prevented; from boxing matches and Sanjeev's attempt to beat Ani, to attempted bank raids and anything connected with weapons or war. Faceless golden figures appear and inform people that they are 'wanted', after which they spend a period of days a month apparently helping the Serene in some way of which they have no memory. These people include Sally and Ana, but not Morwell, who instead is later contacted by a different, blue figure who announces that he is a member of the Obterek race, who are opposed to the Serene and wish to give humanity back their free will (but actually have a different but more sinister agenda). While the Serene (or their representatives, some of who appear to be wholly human but live much longer) are physically present on Earth, the Obterek can only contact us briefly and with difficulty, but require humans in order to carry out their opposition. Meanwhile the Serene have set up enormous, kilometres-high black obelisks (2001, but much bigger?) in various places, which is where their human 'helpers' seem to go.

I don't want to give away too much of the plot, but basically after some resistance the human race seems to accept the Serene's interference as mainly beneficial and lives in peace. The Moon, Mars and Venus are terraformed, and many people go to live on these worlds. Titan becomes the site of the biggest black obelisk, and again all the 'chosen ones' go there to carry out unknown tasks for the Serene. By now you will be thinking 'There must be a 'but?''. Well, the fly in the ointment is of course the Obterek, who do their best to disrupt the haven that Earth has become. And some people, like Morwell, do object to the fact that humans, in losing

their aggressive and competitive tendencies, also seem to have lost the ability or desire to innovate, create, invent, explore. . . . True, we are now inhabiting many worlds in the Solar System - but we are not doing so under our own initiative; we cannot claim any credit for this. No spaceships designed and built by us; instead we are transported almost instantly, often to habitats which duplicate the homes we left on Earth.

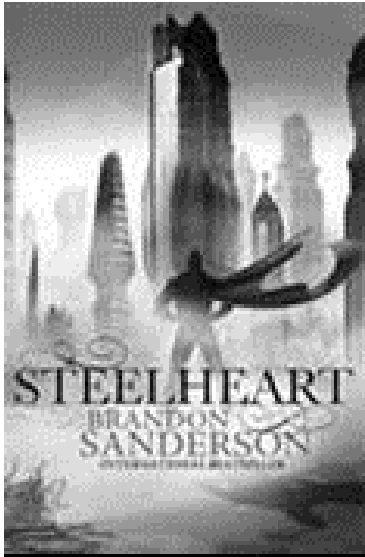
Brown attempts the sort of grand finale, cosmic ending at which Clarke and Asimov, and later Baxter and Reynolds, do so well. But I can't help feeling that in the hands of Clarke some method would have been found for the human race, while staying at peace, still to retain its independence and creativity, rather than mildly living like sheep! *DAH (Review copy kindly donated by Solaris)*

STEELHEART by Brandon Sanderson

Gollancz / 384 pgs / £12.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0575103993

Reviewed by Jim Pearce.

STEELHEART is a *Marvel Comic* type novel, but with a difference. In



this world there are persons with superpowers known collectively as Epics. However these are not heroes but are without exception, 'ubervillains' enslaving and preying on the normal mortals that make up the general population. There are no good Epics. This was not always so and until about ten years ago there were no Epics. Then a strange light, now called Calamity, burst into the sky, randomly gifting extraordinary powers to some persons. Not all Epics are equally powerful - some have only minor gifts - so while the most powerful rule cities like old fashioned gangsters or terrorist dictators, those of lesser strength act as their minions. Steelheart who is said to be invincible is one of (if not the)

strongest Epics in the world.

At the time that the story is set only one group resists, fights and kills Epics and they are known as the Reckoners. David, the story's young hero wants to join them as he wants to kill Steelheart, the Epic who murdered his father 10 years ago. Fortunately like 'Superman' each Epic

has a weakness, which if you can discover it could, if you were fortunate or cunning enough, help you overcome them. Both David and the Reckoners have, independently, spent years studying the Epics in order to discover their weaknesses. While David wants to join the Reckoners, they at first don't want him, but he has something they need, not an object like Kryptonite but an experience. He has seen Steelheart bleed!

Describing STEELHEART as a *Marvel Comic* type story does not do it full justice, as there is far more depth to the characters than one would see in a graphic novel, but that flavour is certainly there. This is definitely deliberate by Brandon Sanderson and does not detract one iota from the book's quality. It is very well-written, creating a coherent and believable post-apocalyptic 'world' and interesting participants, both Epics and Reckoners. After starting STEELHEART I had some doubts as to whether I had made a mistake and would not enjoy reading it. But I was wrong and am glad that I persisted and I look forward to reading its sequel FIREFIGHT.

JTP

(Review copy kindly donated by Gollancz)

TOURMALINE by James Brogden

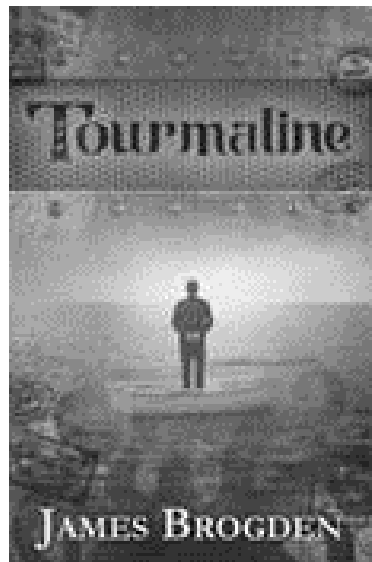
Snowbooks / 319 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-1907777967

Reviewed by Dave Hardy.

Unfortunately I missed James' visit to the Brum Group in March, as I was in Iceland! However, I did read his first novel THE NARROWS, set almost entirely in Birmingham, and thoroughly enjoyed it. This is not a review copy, but I am a Brummie, born and bred, so it is of course now a bonus to read another novel which includes among its settings the Barber Institute and the University, a martial arts centre on the Pershore Road in Stirchley, and even my home suburb of Hall Green etc., rather than London, Los Angeles or Paris. . .

But this is just peripheral. This second novel by James Brogden is even more readable than THE NARROWS. It is original, fast-paced and exciting. As

you probably know I usually read SF, and while I'm sure the author is



embraced by the SF fraternity, it is not SF; nor is it fantasy (in the sense of magic, wizards or dragons). It's the sort of indefinable novel that almost seems in a genre of its own; and in that Brogden joins a select list of luminaries like Christopher Priest and the late lamented Robert Holdstock. (Indeed, Priest has his 'Dream Archipelago' of imaginary islands, and Brogden's Tourmaline Archipelago is certainly the stuff of dreams - quite literally.) Here's what James wrote in his own blog at <http://jamesbrogden.blogspot.co.uk/2013/02/its-all-gone-tourmaline-shaped.html>

'Its full name is the Tourmaline Archipelago, and it's only a small part of a much larger parallel world which we sometimes access when we dream too deeply, become comatose, or enter hallucinatory or psychotic states of mind. So far so standard fantasy trope. The problem comes for the people who live there because our dreams superimpose themselves on their reality, forcing them to become unwilling participants in our fantasies and nightmares. This process is called Subornation. The people of Tourmaline do not like this, and in the country of Oraille they have developed a specialised branch of the police called the Department for Counter Subornation, whose agents are tasked with exorcising us from their world.

This is complicated by the fact that sometimes people from their world get caught up in this exorcism and end up back in our world, trapped inside the bodies of the dreamers. A kind of possession, if you like. They too have an ability to impose their reality on ours - albeit to a much more limited degree. They in turn are hunted by an organisation called the Hegemony which wants to exploit them for their powers.

In a doldrum region of the Archipelago called the Flats, there is an island-sized raft called Stray, populated by people from our world who for one reason or another have never woken up. Bobby Jenkins finds himself there with no memory of who he is or how he got there - all he knows is that he's in love with a woman from Stray who can't leave, and somehow they have to defend themselves against forces in both worlds that want to do 'orrible things to them.'

If I had to say anything negative (as reviewers are required to do, if honest) I'd say that it is very complex, and one needs to concentrate! There are many characters, and when a name pops up after 50 or 70 pages you have to think "Now who is that? Where did they come in?" Especially if a surname is used and we are used to a first name. . . And it takes place in two worlds: our own, and the one of dreams - and nightmares - in which people also have different names, so again you need to keep track of these. But overall I strongly recommend this book. *DAH*

NEW CINEMA FILM RELEASES

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

THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG - Release date December 13th. Second instalment where Bilbo and the Dwarves cross Mirkwood without Gandalf.

THE INNOCENTS - Release date December 13th. Re-release of 1960's Horror film based on *TURN OF THE SCREW* starring Deborah Kerr.

WALKING WITH DINOSAURS 3D - Release date December 20th. CGI Animation where an "underdog" dinosaur triumphs against the odds.

47 RONIN - Release date December 26th. Fantasy action about 18th century Samurai avenging their master

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY - THE MARKED ONES - Release date 3rd January 2014. Horror. Jesse is pursued by mysterious forces after being "marked".

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 goodwinced@yahoo.com

CHRIS HADFIELD ON TOUR, 14th - 18th December, Various venues Astronaut and author of *AN ASTRONAUT'S GUIDE TO LIFE*. Venues include Waterstones branches at Picadilly (15th December. Tel: 0207 851 2400), Oxford (16th December. Tel: 01865 790212) and the Science Museum London (16th December. Tel: 0870 870 4868) or via www.sciencemuseum.org.uk or www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/events/

CONVENTIONS

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/

SCI-FI WEEKENDER (formerly SFX Weekender), 27th - 30th March, Hafan Y Mor, North Wales Commercial multi-media convention. Various prices depending on level of access/accommodation. See www.scifiweekender.com

SATELLITE 4 (EASTERCON), 18th - 21th April 2014, Glasgow Guests of Honour include John Meaney, Juliet McKenna, Alice & Steve Lawson, Jim Burns, Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell and Sir Terry Pratchett (limited appearance subject to health). £65/50 concessions. Membership form at www.satellite4.org.uk

LONCON 3 (WORLDCON 72), 14th - 18th August 2014, London. Held at ExCel exhibition centre. Guests of Honour include Chris Foss, and Robin Hobb. £115 Adult membership. See www.loncon3.org

SHAMROKCON (EUROCON), 22nd - 24th August, Dublin. Guests include Hugo Award nominated Seanan McGuire, Andrzej Sapkowski (THE WITCHER also now a TV series and game) etc. Price is £30 until 30th December (then £35) at www.shamrokon.ie

ANDROMEDA TWO, 20th September 2014, Digbeth, Birmingham. Guests of Honour are Sam Stone and Dave Hardy. Other guests include Stan and Anne Nicholls, Tom Fletcher, Jaine Fenn, etc. Early Friday registration will include movie double bill at the venue. £20 until 31st December (£18 for Brum SF Group members). Price from January 1st is £25 (£20 Brum Group)

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE BSFG

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

February 14th - Annual **SF Quiz**.

March 14th - **Stan and Anne Nicholls**.

April 11th - writer **Gavin Thorpe**.

May 9th - Senior lecturer in robotics, **Dr Nick Hawes**.

June 13th- sf and fantasy author **Stephen Hunt**

July 11th - **tbc**.

August 8th - **Summer Social** meal.

September 12th - **tbc**

October - date and guest **tbc**

November - date and guest **tbc**

December 5th - **Christmas Skittles Social**

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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