



The 2nd Annual Friends of the Merril Short Story Contest

The Friends of the Merril Collection are again running our Speculative Fiction Short Story Contest in order to raise awareness of, and funds for, the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy.

The Friends of the Merril Short Story Contest is currently open to entries, the current reading period having begun on Nov. 15, 2012. There are three monetary prizes to be won:

1st place \$200 (CDN) 2nd place \$100 (CDN) 3rd place \$50 (CDN)

In addition to the monetary prizes there are several perks available to be won, to be distributed among both finalists and winners – including opportunities to pitch a novel to ChiZine Publications (who are otherwise closed to submissions until July 2014). See the contest website for full details on all prizes.

We are accepting only original, previously unpublished Spec Fic (SF/F/H, Magic Realism, Slipstream, etc.) short fiction of up to 5,000 words. The hard deadline for submissions is Feb. 15, 2013. International entries are welcome. All submissions judged blind. There is an entry fee of \$5 (CDN) per story.

Entrants are encouraged to visit http://friendsmerrilcontest.com for a full set of entry rules, contest FAQs, and other contest-related information and updates.



Sol Rising

Friends of the Merril Collection Number 47 Winter 2013

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From the Editor

Living in a Shifting Landscape

By Michael Matheson

The publishing industry goes through periodic upheavals. Many of these are reflective of their times. Genre and literary trends rise and fall, short and long form fiction continually vie for dominance (the nature and measure of both shifting from era to era), and even the manner in which we read constantly changes and evolves.

Self-definition, too, is difficult in the changing landscape of publishing. Writer. Editor. Publisher. These terms are far more fluid than one might assume, especially in an era where self-publication in many cases puts the onus of all three on the same individual.

So what surety or constancy is there to be had from year to year? What did 2012 – with its merging of legacy publishers, very public lawsuits, expansion of ebook sales, and in spite of all gainsaying, doom prophesying, and general apocalyptic scenarios was a year that saw a distinct increase in the sale of books in general – teach us?

That the story abides.

Life is entirely about stories. We cannot escape them for they shape and define us, and it is that definition that grounds us. Our lives are, if not the basis of our tales, what they grow out of:

Joy. Grief. Fear. Wonder. Love. Hate. Pain. Death.

The stories in which we live are both intricate and glorious, both tragic and painful. Piece by piece we craft a narrative for ourselves, shaped in concert with others.

And each year is not merely a chapter in that ongoing story, but so complex it is a novel unto itself. So full and so heady with plot and character, form and counter-form, that it can, at times, be difficult to discern exactly the communal story we are shaping.

And yet, the story continues. In spite of everything we do to derail it (and we are getting *really* good at trying to derail, or curtail entirely, our ongoing story) we are continuing to find a way through all the horrors, the failures, and the disappointments, legion though they are.

Now that it's 2013 it's time to close the book on last year. It's time to start fresh, and build this fucker from the ground up.

Go forth and create.

Michael

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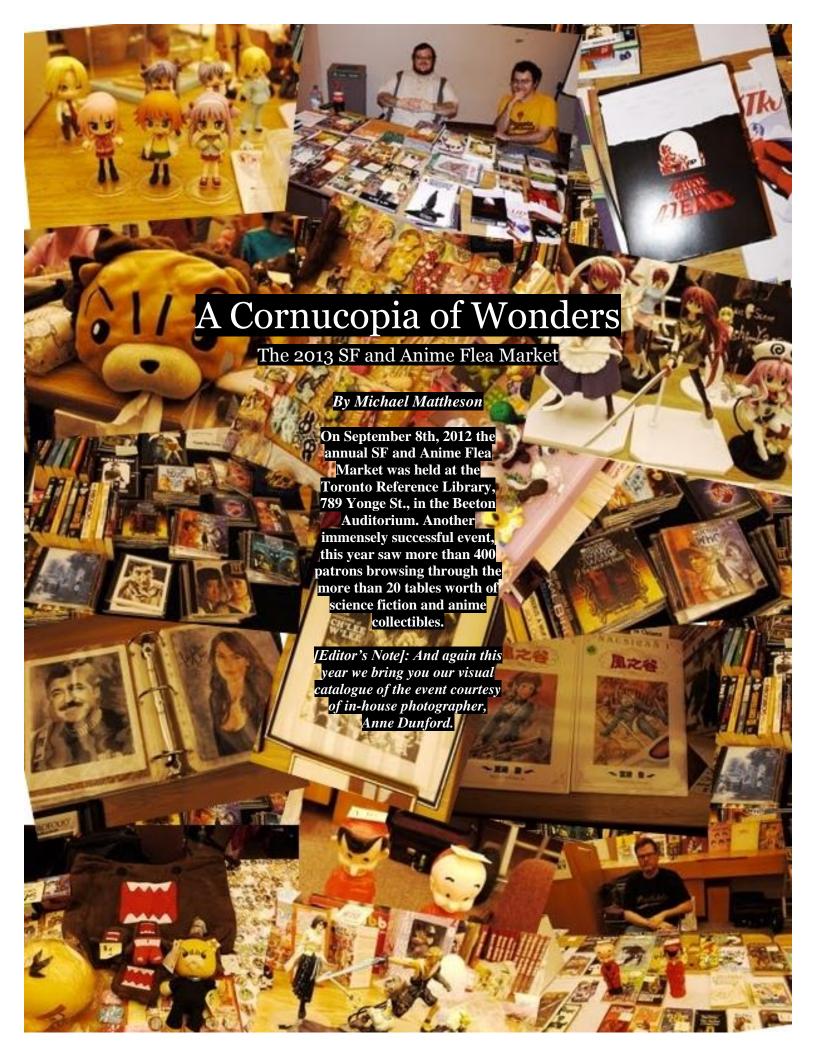
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Exploring the Modus Operandi of Motivation

Post-humanism and Creating and Disseminating Art at ChiZine's 2012 SpecFic Colloquium

By Michael Matheson

On October 28th, 2012, the Gladstone Hotel was host to the 3rd annual Toronto SpecFic Colloquium. With Guest of Honour Robert Shearman headlining the symposium, the topics covered ranged from discourses on humanism and post-humanism, to the way in which cultural or national identity manifests itself in genre fiction, to the act of creating art itself, and to the changing ways in which we not only create, but also how we consume the written word.

I've been attending the SpecFic Colloquia since ChiZine first began holding them back in 2010, and each one is an entirely different experience. That's due in no small part to the different line-up of guest speakers and lecturers whose choice of topics and approach shapes each Colloquium. It also has to do with the year-to-year change in venue, each new locus providing an entirely different, and readily appreciable shift, in the external sensorium in which the Colloquia flourish. And, of course, the nature of each Colloquium is directly affected by the way in which different themes give rise to a wide array of topics unique to that day-long discourse.

This year's topic, *Beyond the Human*, immediately brings to mind the notions with which all aspects of speculative fiction, and science fiction especially, play. However, rather than limiting themselves to the directly post-human, the lecturers on hand used that unifying theme to shape their discussions through the lens of not only who we are, but what we, through our ever evolving humanity – and on a more direct level our intimate selves – *create*. In some ways, that breadth of theme lent this year's discourse a broader scope than the previous two years, though all of the Colloquia have seen lectures ranging far and wide in tone and approach, in style, and in form.

This year's Colloquium was broken up into six lectures, as follows:

Canadian Speculative Fiction in the 21st Century (Robert Runté)



In a lecture that charted early endeavours in Canadian speculative fiction through to more modern approaches, Robert Runté's lecture sought a common ground from which to extrapolate and discuss Canadian identity and intent in genre fiction. Through the

examination of trends native to Canadian fiction, and how they relate to larger genre shorthand – with Robert arguing that

these trends are culturally, or least nationally, distinct – as well as through views of Canadian fiction both international and extranational, Robert examined how Canadian fiction at once explores and subverts the genres it plays in, all while carving out its own literary landscape. Though the lecture focused on Canadian fiction primarily, it managed to create an excellent sense of the wider field through its examination of larger motivations and Robert's willingness to question *why* we write what we do, both on a personal level and as a somewhat non-homogenous national whole.

'The Book is Dead; Long Live the Book!': Some Thoughts on the Coming of eBooks (Helen Marshall)



Helen Marshall's glorious romp through the world of publishing – aided by a most delightfully distracting visual accompaniment in the form of a hilarious slideshow – was delivered with her usual wit and humour. Drawing on her own background as a trained

medievalist and scholar, Helen's lecture used her academic pursuits and expertise to frame the coming of eBooks as the inevitable progression of a field in which change and reinvention plays a natural, if still occasionally terrifying, part in the larger evolution of language and the delivery of content in accessible form(s). Helen also covered in her lecture different forms of storytelling and content (with examples), and how altered presentation affects interpretation, leading to a discussion of form *as* content. And because Helen's lecture ranged from the sublimely pithy to the absurdly silly, her talk created an excellent bridge between Runté's more serious, if still warm and engaging, opening lecture and Shearman's far more personal, and almost confessional, humorous discourse that followed.

Writing, and Attempts to Justify It (Robert Shearman)



Robert Shearman's lecture, like his fiction, played with that interstitial space between narrative and character, where both undergo a form of exegesis, and you end up somewhere very different from where you *think* you began. In this case it was

Robert himself who was acting as the character of the piece. Framing his lecture as a way to explore a question put to him by a customs official dubious about his existence as a writer, and then further dubious of his motivation(s) for doing same, and thereby providing the perfect foil for a reflection on the *why* of writing, Shearman delivered a standout performance and delved into some deeply personal territory and history – all done while managing to be gut-burstingly funny throughout. It is a hard thing to be open and honest about oneself while being ridiculously funny, let alone avoiding maudlin reflection, but by turning himself inside out for a deeper look into Shearman's own "why," he provided those in attendance with a fascinating portrait of "why *not*?"

Hive Minds, Mind Hives (Peter Watts)



With his usual dizzying mixture of razor wit and scientific excellence, Peter Watts roved through multiple lines of examination and inquiry, focusing on a diverse range of interconnected subjects that ranged from echopraxia, to groupthink, to

how our brains lie to us, to intellect as a function of opportunity rather than developmental design (i.e. is intellect confined to the brain, or are there other cognitive functions at work throughout the body we're just not privy to?), to cognitive function and dissonance (this last as the inevitable Molotov cocktail Peter, bless him, cannot lecture without lobbing at an organized structure that presents itself in any way shape or form as an absolute or infallible entity). And at this point I have to refrain from attempting to further describe Peter's talk because I will not be able to do it justice. Peter did, however, post an excerpt from his lecture to his blog (http://www.rifters.com/crawl/?p=3665), said portion titled "When Mirror Neurons Go Bad," so you can get a taste of what Peter was doing while we all wait for the recorded lectures to be posted online.

Ender's End? The Modern Reality of Children in War (Karin Lowachee)



A discussion of both child exploitation in conflict situations and child armies, as well as a sustained review of Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*, Karin Lowachee's lecture functioned more as an extrapolation of the ideas underpinning her own first

forays into novel writing and the subjects she felt compelled to explore than as a lecture divorced from her own work. Like other lectures the Colloquium has seen in past years, Karin's lecture was a way of looking at an aspect of the genre through a directly personal lens, and in that respect it reminded me a great deal of the kind of examination of horror as an emotion, rather than a genre, that David Nickle discussed during the first

Colloquium back in 2010. Though, this lecture was, for

this year at least, in some ways the odd one out given its more title-specific approach to its subject, rather than the broader strokes engaged by the other lectures. Still, Karin's lecture fit well with the theme of things more-than- or extra-human, in its examination of children who are forced out of being children, and into being something wholly other, and losing their humanity in the process.

Less Human Than Human: The Cyborg Fantasy Versus the Neuroscientific Real (Scott Bakker)



As a close to the day's lectures Bakker's choice to look at the border between human, post- and trans-human states – and not without some good-natured "you only think this is what you think you're thinking" asides about the nature of human thought,

consciousness, and free will — was an excellent close to discussions on why we create what we do, if and when we do. Scott's thesis revolved, largely, around the notion that the generally conceived version of cyborg existence is inherently a fallacy, and that the human mind is far more complex, inventive, and dis-integrated than we like to think. Indeed, he veered into examinations of how the human brain, when its hemispheres are isolated, is still capable of functioning as two separate entities, each willing to extrapolate — and/or outright fabricate — information concerning, or directly related to, the experiences of the other, in absentia of experience. Like Peter, Scott's mind moves in delightfully subversive ways, and their two lectures created a marvellous set of bookends for the latter portion of the day's events.

Now, having said all this about the foregoing lectures, I feel compelled to admit that in acting as a part of the team that was putting together the Colloquium this year (in a supporting capacity) my understanding of events, and of the lectures themselves, is somewhat biased. So, I thought I would do some digging and look into what other people had thought of the Colloquium. In so doing I came across a rather excellent writeup thereof: (http://sjromm.com/blog/2012/10/28/chizines-spec-fic-colloquium-at-the-gladstone).

I, as always, enjoyed myself immensely at this year's Colloquium, and from the general state of things at the end of the day that sense of enjoyment was a communal experience. And if the goal of an event like this is not only to examine, but to inspire as well, then the 2012 SpecFic Colloquium was a resounding success as it opened up quite an array of topics for further consideration, and forced the attendees to look at not only the how of thought and the act of creating, but much more importantly at the *why*.

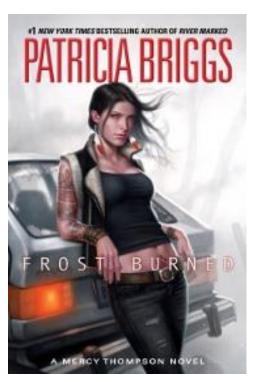
The 2013 Colloquium is currently in the works, with updates to come as things develop. For now, you can find out more about the 2012 Colloquium at http://specficcolloquium.com/.

Patricia Briggs at the Merril

By Lorna Toolis

On Thursday, November 1st, Patricia Briggs read from her forthcoming fantasy novel, *Frost Burned*, the seventh book in her popular *Mercedes Thompson* series.

Ms. Briggs' career began in 1993 with the publication of Masques. She experimented for several years after, writing fantasy involving dragons, hobs, and wizards, all enjoying increasing popularity. In 2006, her novel Moon Called was a massive hit and Ms. Briggs began to reach a much wider audience. Ms. Briggs then began the Mercedes Thompson series, followed by the *Alpha and Omega* books. Patrons at the Merril Collection still ask for her earlier books, such as Dragon Bones. Her web site, Hurog, is named for the hero of that series. Her books are also being turned into graphic novels, beginning with Alpha and Omega.

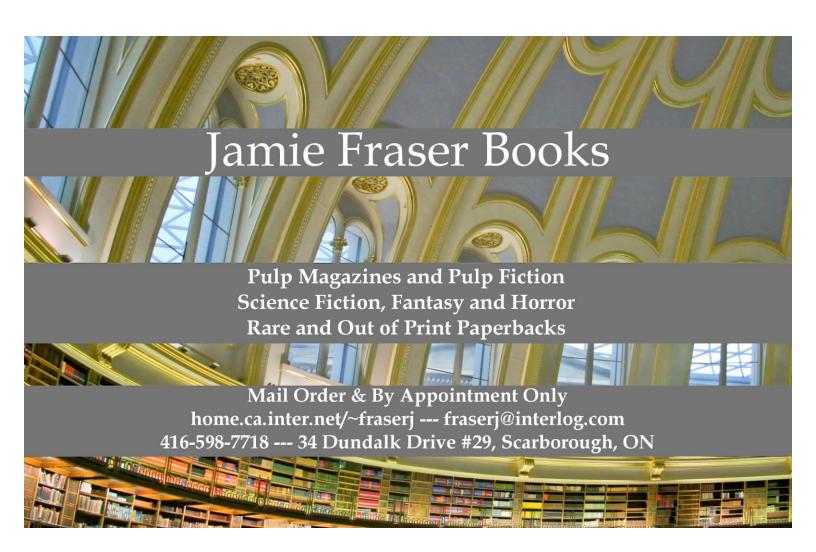


The Friends of the Merril Collection cosponsored Ms. Briggs as a Guest of Honour at the World Fantasy Convention which took place in Richmond Hill on the following weekend.

Readers wishing to know more about Patricia Briggs should feel free to visit her website, *Hurog*, at:

http://www.patriciabriggs.com/.

[Editor's Note]: In our last issue we mistakenly referred to Ms. Briggs' appearance at the 2012 World Fantasy convention, which allowed for her subsequent appearance at the Merril, as having been "sponsored" by the Friends of the Merril Collection. As this article rightly notes, Ms. Briggs was in fact "cosponsored" by both the Friends of the Merril and the organizers of WFC 2012.





Toronto North: A Tale of the Urban Gothic

The Heady Days, and Nights, of World Fantasy 2012

By Michael Matheson

From November 1st through 4th, 2012, Toronto was host to the World Fantasy Convention. With its dual focus on Northern Gothic literature and Urban Fantasy – and an attempt to combine and examine those two themes as dual identities of the same literary ground – last year's World Fantasy was a whirlwind of panels, readings, the requisite parties, and a very full couple of hotels. Though World Fantasy is capped at less than a thousand people that's still quite a fair number of attendees. And even with an estimated 30 attendees cancelling their memberships on account of Hurricane Sandy, and another 10% never showing (if Locus' numbers are right), the convention was still seemingly overflowing.

It certainly helps to draw a crowd when your Guest of Honour list includes Elizabeth Hand, John Clute, and Richard Kirk, with Gary K. Wolfe as your toastmaster, and your "second string" of Special guests consists of Charles de Lint, Tanya Huff, Patricia Briggs, Mercedes Lackey, and Larry Dixon. The list of attendees, too, was an ongoing cavalcade of luminaries, as the WFC 2012 photo spreads in the December issue of Locus amply prove.

Toronto's sometimes dismal weather also lent an appropriate atmosphere to a convention about gothic themes and fantastical creatures lurking in the proverbial shadows: a little grey, somewhat drear, and more than a touch overcast with some occasional breaks of blue, if cold, sky. But gothic atmosphere or no the convention itself was highly convivial. With some 50+ panels, over 80 readings, a full and diverse art show, GoH interviews, the mass signing on the Friday – held in what would serve two days later as the hall for the awards banquet – WFC 2012 would have been a full con even without the many organized parties and social gatherings (and by "social" I mean wherever alcohol was readily available).

As this was the first year I've attended a World Fantasy con I'm the wrong person to speak to how this World Fantasy stacked up against others in previous years. Thankfully, I can just cheat and point you in the direction of *actual* con reports.

Noting that there are many more than these floating around, the links below are some of the best con reports I've seen for WFC 2012:

Amal El-Mohtar: http://tithenai.livejournal.com/385172.html

C.S.E. Cooney: http://www.blackgate.com/2012/11/08/world-fantasy-2012-neither-hurricane-superstorm-sleet-nor-hail-candaunt-our-heroine-if-she-wears-enough-chain-mail%E2%80%A6/

Locus (December 2012) – But you saw that coming, didn't you?

Days of "Fighting Evil. With Mixed Results."

An interview with Craig David Wallace, Creator of Todd & The Book of Pure Evil

By Joseph Halpern

Since the mid-'90s Craig David Wallace has been a mainstay behind the scenes of the Canadian film industry. But in 2010 he created the cult hit TV show *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* based on his 2003 short film of the same name. The show's varied influences – heavy metal, H.P Lovecraft, and Arthurian legends – brought it a small but intensely devoted fan base. After two seasons *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* was

cancelled, but its cultural impact and Wallace's continued work with Corvid Pictures ensures that he will have a lasting impact on the Canadian film scene.

This interview was conducted by email.

JH: There seems to be a lot of criticism in the Canadian entertainment industry about not having enough Canadian content. Do you think that this stems from Canadian talent not being given enough exposure? Or is it a matter of Canadian audiences just not being interested?

CDW: I believe it is a bit of both. Canadian broadcasters are required to license a certain amount of Canadian content – if they weren't required to then I doubt we'd even have as much Canadian content as we have. Since Canada is so small, population wise, (in comparison with the US) shows that are able to survive in a niche market in the US aren't able to survive here. In order to survive in Canada, you really

do need to have a significant audience. There's some really solid hit Canadian shows that Canadian audiences do watch, like *Rookie Blue, Flashpoint, Saving Hope....* We even have some real breakout genre hits like *Lost Girl* and *Continuum*. But a niche show like *Todd & The Book Of Pure Evil* proves that even having a hard-core niche fan base just isn't enough to keep a show on the air.

JH: It seems like shows that are more experimental and critically acclaimed like *Pure Pwnage* and *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* (your show) are being let go early on in their runs, whereas shows that look like clones of American TV are renewed year after year. What is your opinion on this matter?

CDW: Looking at American TV, especially on the big five network broadcasters (NBC, ABC, CBS, FOX & CW), you

have a huge amount of shows that get cancelled in the first year, often before all the episodes have even aired. So I'd say that it's not just Canada that is making clones of successful American TV, it's Americans as well. On the whole, I think you can make a gross generalization that most of the audience in the US and in Canada like to watch shows about cops, lawyers and doctors more than shows about heavy metal and

giant penises that turn people to stone. I, however, am not one of them.

JH: You've been in the Canadian film and TV industry since 1996 in one capacity or another. How did you get your start (education and first "big break") and what is your opinion on how the industry in Canada develops (or doesn't) new talent?

CDW: I went to the Vancouver Film School soon after getting out of high school, and then worked in post-Vancouver while production in making my own independent short films and music videos. I was able to attend the Canadian Film Centre in Toronto based on my short film work, and that opened up a whole new world for me as I met a lot of like-minded people who I would work with in the years to come. It was at the Canadian Film Centre where I made the Todd & The Book of Pure Evil short film, so it was getting into that institution that really started it all.

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As far as the industry developing new talent, there are a lot of professional development programs available for emerging artists. There are short film programs, feature film programs, and even TV Series Development programs like the National Screen Institute's Totally TV program that helped develop *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil*. Without the Canadian Film Centre and the National Screen Institute, *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* would not exist. There are lots of opportunities out there, but you have to hustle and work hard to make the most of them. And industry veterans are usually quite open to helping out emerging talent, giving back to the community that helped them out in the first place.

JH: Since your show *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* had been around in short film form since 2003, how did it feel to have your small CFC short film develop into a highly rated show on the Space Channel only to be cancelled after its second

season? And do you think this is the end of *Todd & the Book of Pure Evil* or not?

CDW: Having *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* broadcast on Space in Canada (and FearNet in the US, SyFy in the UK and many other countries...) was about the best thing ever. Having it get cancelled totally sucked. Somehow I have a feeling that this isn't quite the end of *Todd & The Book Of Pure Evil*, but I doubt it will come back in a way that anyone will have expected.

JH: Todd & The Book of Pure Evil seemed to have influences as varied as Buffy The Vampire Slayer, the Mythos of H.P Lovecraft, and heavy metal music and culture. What were some of the things that actually inspired you to create the characters and mythology that informed your series?

CDW: Strangely, I had never really watched *Buffy* until we were deep into writing the first season. I heard so many comparisons that I eventually had to watch the show, but then I had to stop because I didn't want to feel like I was constantly holding myself back because my ideas were too much like Buffy. The Evil Dead trilogy was a huge influence, especially Army Of Darkness, but again I didn't really think about how Evil Dead and Todd both revolve around an evil book. The short film was originally a very loose adaptation of Faust called "Young Faust", but as the idea was developed it became Todd & The Book of Pure Evil and had more to do with the Book itself than with Satan who featured prominently in the short film. Once we started really developing the series, then all these '80s influences really came out, especially horror films and teen comedies, all that great De Palma, John Hughes, John Carpenter, Wes Craven stuff....

JH: You had the chance to work with some very talented filmmakers in Canada who inspired you growing up. Which of your contemporaries inspires you now?

CDW: When I really became serious about filmmaking when I was a teenager, it was classic auteur filmmakers like Coppola and Scorsese that really interested me, along with the '90s indie auteurs like Hal Hartley and Tarantino, and some more obscure filmmakers like Alex Cox who made *Repo Man*. But I also had a thing for Bergman and Antonioni, and especially Alejandro Jodorowsky (*Santa Sangre* blew my brains wide open when I was sixteen). When I was developing the TV series, it was Mike Clattenberg (*Trailer Park Boys*) and Mike Dowse (*Fubar*) that inspired me, not so much for their work itself, but for the fact that they were making off-beat cult series and movies in Canada.

I have to add that *Todd & The Book of Pure Evil* may have started with an idea in my head, but it took a lot of other people to get it on screen. Max Reid co-wrote the original short with me. Anthony Leo produced the short and also cocreated the series with Charles Picco and myself. Andrew Rosen, Sarah Timmins, Jamie Brown, Shawn Watson, and Shaun Johnson produced the series along with Anthony and myself. Along with Charles Picco and myself, Garry

Campbell, Ian Malone, Max and Adam Reid wrote the series. Fraser Robinson and Rebecca Dipasquale from SPACE were essential in shaping the series and fighting to get it on the air. And there are so many other people in all stages of production from our cast and crew through to everyone in post-production that all worked hard to make the show their own.

[Editors Note]: Other random reasons Todd & The Book of Pure Evil was awesome? Both Jason Mewes and Julian Richings had recurring roles on the show. And while Todd & The Book of Pure Evil had too short a run for syndication, am I the only one who thinks that the participation of those two actors merits a potential DVD release of the series? Niche market not being attended to, here....



Jo Walton at the Merril

We Promised. We Delivered. Or, Technically, SFContario Delivered and We Said Thank You.

By Lorna Toolis

Montreal-based fantasy writer Jo Walton was a guest at the Merril Collection of Science Fiction on Thursday, Nov 8th, 2012. Ms. Walton read from the stories "Twilight Tales" (originally published in *Firebirds Soaring*) and "The Panda Coin" (originally published in *Eclipse 3*) and answered questions from the large and happy audience.

Jo Walton's alternate universe series, consisting of *Farthing*, *Ha'penny* and *Half a Crown*, received major critical acclaim, and her novel *Among Others* won the 2011 Nebula Award, the 2012 Hugo Award and was nominated for the World Fantasy Award of the same year.



Ms. Walton appeared at the Merril Collection courtesy of SFContario. She was the Guest of Honour of the local convention, which began the following day.

Jo Walton blogs on <u>Tor.com</u> and, occasionally, at Livejournal.

[Editor's Note]: The audience for Jo Walton's two readings included both SFContario organizers and attendees, as well as SFContario's two other Guests of Honour: Christopher J. Garcia (pictured lower left), and Jon Singer (not pictured). All photos in this article are © David Cheater.

Local Flavour and Fan Fun at SFC3

By Michael Matheson

Held November 9th through 11th, less than a week after WFC 2012 in an attempt to piggyback off WFC traffic, SFContario 3's temporal proximity to the larger con may not have had the effect the organizers intended.

Lower turnout than expected was surely due to burnout on the part of all those of us who had attended WFC 2012. Four days of intensive interaction, networking, and partying will do that for you. Still, SFContario 3 made a game try at capturing that energy for itself. There were excellent panels all round – and everything I attended, panelled on, or moderated was well attended for a con of this size, and though I didn't get to any of them I'm told that the filk concerts were excellent as well – but I don't think the momentum ever really got going this year.

The other issue with trying to capture WFC 2012's traffic lay in the fact that the two cons have a totally different type of attendee: WFC is a pro con, frequented by publishers, writers, and editors who come to network and spend time with friends and peers in the industry. There's a fan presence, but it's far slighter than at SFContario 3, which is a dedicated fan con. SFC3 is also possessed of a distinctly local flavour, in contrast to WFC's multinational appeal.

So, a laid-back con SFContario3 was, and even that can work

for a relatively small fan con. It may have lacked the energy of last year, but there were still a good number of excellent panels to be had – and kudos for that rightly belong to Debra Yeung, who was heading up programming for the con, and did a most admirable job.

And there were definitely highlights to the con. While I enjoyed the panels I participated in, and those I attended, two things stand out for me especially: Sandra Kasturi's reading of Richard Curtis' *Skinhead Hamlet* (so *very* NSFW) at the late night Flash Fiction panel that first night of the con, and The Paperback Game panel run by Beverly Bambury. While there were some delightful, more serious-minded panels over the course of the con, it was the humour that did the most to try and infuse some energy into the proceedings.

Ultimately, it was an enjoyable con, if not one of SFContario's best. I never regret going to SFContario, but I'm pretty sure SFContario 4 is going to fare better next year by virtue of operating under its own steam and not trying to capture another convention's energy. There's also a plan to hold it later in the year than this one, at the end of November, so that should help prevent overlap. And, last but not least, the GoH list is helmed by Seanan McGuire, so things are already off to a very good start indeed.





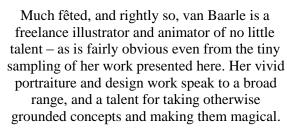
The Artwork of Lois van Baarle

By Michael Matheson



Hailing from the Netherlands, Lois van Baarle has long been one of my favourite artists. From her exquisite use of light and colour, to her whimsical handling of form, to her extraordinary ability to make even the commonplace, the mundane, the utterly real, absolutely beautiful, there is something sublime about her work.

Words dance at the edge of what her art evokes, each piece utterly different, absolutely unique, and yet recognizably hers stylistically. It's a rare gift to be able to maintain consistency of vision across the wide range of work that van Baarle has produced.



We're absolutely delighted to host her work here, and hope you will take the time to explore the work of an extremely talented artist, with a special recommendation to view the 2009 animation showreel on Ms. van Baarle's website (http://loish.net/animation/showreels/).

On the facing page we've reproduced a clean version of this issue's cover art, "Meeting". The art used in this profile is, clockwise from the right, "Submerged", "Velvet", and "Wrapped".

All images used in this profile are © Lois van Baarle, and may not be used without her express permission.





Peering Into the Darkness

Robert Douglas at the Merril Collection

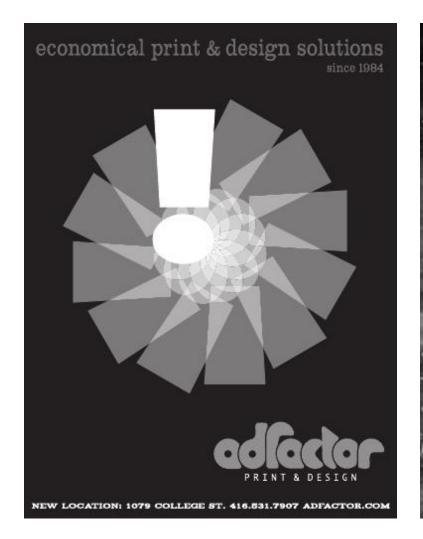
By Lorna Toolis

Mr. Robert Douglas's book, *That Line of Darkness: The Shadow of Dracula and the Great War* explores the anxieties of late Victorian and pre-war England, using themes of the gothic genre as analytical tools. In his presentation on November 15th, Mr. Douglas demonstrated how popular culture always reflects the culture that creates it. The Gothic literary conventions of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* identified the social trends of the late 19th Century and the early 20th Century.

The book shows how the demonization of the "other" and blood purification were compelling metaphors in literature. The conviction in *Dracula* that blood must be pure played out unpleasantly in later European history and the North American eugenics movement. Addressing this, Mr. Douglas used contemporary images during his presentation to emphasize his points, also referencing Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.



An excellent review of Mr. Douglas's book may be found at: http://www.criticsatlarge.ca/2012/01/gothic-shadow-bob-douglass-that-line-of.html



Give the Gift of the Merril

Memberships in the Friends of the Merril are an inexpensive way to open someone's eyes to the wonders of Speculative Fiction.

At just \$35.00 a year (\$20.00 for a Student membership) the recipient of the gift membership gets a full year's (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31) membership in the Friends of the Merril Collection, a 1 year subscription to Sol Rising, and free access to all Friends events (readings, book launches and signings, panel discussions and more).

And all membership purchases are taxdeductible, so you'll get a gift out of it too.

So what are you waiting for? Make a copy of the membership form on the back cover of this issue of Sol Rising, fill out the recipient's information, include payment and mail it out to the listed address.

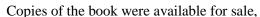
Open someone's eyes to the extraordinary world that is the Merril Collection today!

Remembering Judith Merril's Legacy at the Annual Christmas Cream Tea

By Lorna Toolis

The 2012 Christmas Cream Tea celebrated the publication of *Judith Merril: A Critical Study* (McFarland, 2012). Victoria Lamont

(pictured left), co-author together with Diane Newell, talked about the impact Judith Merril had on the science fiction field as a writer, editor and proponent of the 1960s "New Wave." She polled the audience and was intrigued to learn that fewer than half of the people attending had actually met Judith Merril, although most had read her work. She answered audience questions, giving more detail about Merril's career and life.



however, Ms. Lamont very generously donated the results of all sales to the Merril Collection's book fund. Merry Christmas!

[Editor's Note]: For the first time in the last couple of years, there has not been a Lovecraftian subtext to any aspect of the Merril Christmas Cream Tea. We apologize deeply to our future devouring overlords for this, and hope that our choice to honour another figure in the speculative fiction industry this year will be overlooked when dread Cthulhu rises from his aqueous slumber and the stars come right (which, apparently, was not the "Mayan Apocalypse," so way to go getting us all worked up over nothing, guys).



A small sampling of the crowd present at the 2012 Christmas Cream Tea, where Victoria Lamont talked about Judith Merril's impact and legacy on the field.



On the plus side, it is always a joy to remember Judith Merril's extraordinary (and often not only overlooked, but actively obfuscated) contributions to the field. Also, we have a new donation box (pictured left). It is a miniature TARDIS. It is awesome (it lights up and makes noises and oh my god we are all really six years old ...).

And before you ask: Yes. Yes it is.

An Ever-Shifting Industry: Publishing in 2012

By Michael Matheson

[Editor's Note]: This excerpt originally appeared on Michael Matheson's blog as part of a larger article. Footnotes with links have been provided for the print edition. The online edition contains built-in hyperlinks.

2012 was in many ways a highly combative and adversarial year in the publishing industry, as was evident in the ongoing battle between self-publishing models and traditional publishing models. Both sides have their proponents and their detractors. Both are necessary for the continuation of the publishing industry. Neither are mutually exclusive distribution methods, and so the dichotomy of screen or paper is a false one, perpetuated by people with vested interests in one medium or the other. If the publishing industry is going to survive (and if the 2012 sales numbers are any indication, the industry *is* going to survive) we're going to have to, at some point, stop waging war over how people choose to read.

The other issue that showed up repeatedly last year came in the form of several ugly reminders that an extraordinary number of people are utterly stupid and occasionally also extremely bigoted, and that "Fandom" is not immune to this phenomenon (Con¹ Harassment², "Fake³ Geek⁴ Girls⁵" [this is the original, deeply flawed, article that sparked the controversy⁶-I'm also partial to Genevieve Dempre's "In Defense of Lady Geeks⁷" for a short, but good, counterargument of the original CNN article, also published at CNN], the abuse heaped on Anita Sarkeesian⁸ [video link], and so on). Frankly, the entire notion that Fans are somehow more special/awesome/simply better than anyone else by virtue of being a Fan is bullshit (and, yes, we're discussing a very specific form of Fan who feels an appalling sense of entitlement - we are not discussing all of fandom [kindly note: big F bad, little f good]). Fans are people, the same as everyone else. Fans have never been "Slans", and I will be so very fucking happy when the phrase "Fans are Slans" finally slides into the oblivion it so richly deserves. The entire notion of being better than someone else because you care about something that others do not is patently absurd, as well as deeply offensive: a "Slan" is, by definition, better than everyone else, and claiming that you are better than everyone else because you like/love/lurv/ship (yes, I'm using it in a wider context, move along ...) /idolize that which others do not is violently exclusionary.

1

The same people arguing that Fandom is/should be a refuge are the same people who have a hard time realizing that much of what is deemed "geek" (and frankly I have ongoing problems with that term, but it's the one that gets bandied about most frequently in this discussion) culture has gone mainstream. Speculative fiction? Mainstream (hell, all the lit kids are doing it). Comics? Mainstream (sales are up [saw several estimates over the course of last year claiming as much as a 40% increase in sales numbers across the board between May 2011 and May 2012], partly because they're making blockbuster movies out of the properties ... blockbusters ... and some of them are actually good ...). Fan Fiction? Mainstream (have you seen the fucking piles of money E.L. James is rolling in?). Other aspects of "geek" culture are still less widely adopted. Cosplay is still the realm of the dedicated individual given how much work it takes to pull off good cosplay. Specifically, the investments of time, money, and skill are truly daunting; enough so that it invalidates all the more these bizarre claims that many cosplayers are a form of "Fake Geek Girl" (see the links above). Various forms of gaming (roleplaying [be it tabletop or LARPing], card, and board) are still somewhat sacrosanct, though the more well-known board games have always been mainstream because they were marketed so successfully early on, and videogames have become decidedly mainstream, earning significant windfalls for their corner of the industry.

And why do we talk about "Fandom" when we talk about publishing? The two are deeply intertwined. Both Fandom and fandom has always been the primary support mechanism of speculative fiction. And spec fic gives back to its audience, most notably in recent memory in the form of books like *Among Others* (though I have some deep-seated objections to that particular book, both in terms of the "Fans are Slans" standard-bearing its narrative quite unintentionally reinforces – the novel engaging in some fairly pervasive fan-wank throughout alongside its otherwise excellent message of empowerment – and the structural problems that underpin the book, not the least of which is the painful devolution of the narrative into heavy Mary Sue territory in the final act).

But I digress. The point is that spec fic gives back to its audience. It is, at its best, an inclusive environment that fosters communication and discourse. Argument, also, is alive and well in the spec fic community. And rightly so. Many books and films that fall under the spec fic genre umbrella occupy both best of and worst of lists depending on who is doing the review. I think *Prometheus* is probably 2012's standard-bearer in that particular regard, but the film was certainly not the only media in 2012 to evince a strong ability to polarize audiences.

Moving away from specifics, and back to general terms momentarily, there were fairly serious upheavals all across the

¹ http://blog.bcholmes.org/the-readercon-thing/

² http://glvalentine.livejournal.com/tag/readercon

³ http://www.themarysue.com/psychology-of-the-fake-geek-girl/

⁴ http://whatever.scalzi.com/2012/07/26/who-gets-to-be-a-geek-anyone-who-wants-to-be/

⁵ http://www.apex-magazine.com/all-the-real-geek-girls/

⁶ http://geekout.blogs.cnn.com/2012/07/24/booth-babes-need-not-apply/?hpt=hp_c3

⁷ http://geekout.blogs.cnn.com/2012/07/26/in-defense-of-lady-geeks/

⁸ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZAxwsg9J9Q

publishing industry, occurring in different forms over the year. There's simply too much to cover at the moment (2012 was a ridiculously busy year for changes to the publishing industry), but a quick overview of the changes which most deeply affected the publishing industry (your mileage may vary with this article, but I happen to agree with all the points) can be found in Laura and Helen Marshall's Movable Type blog post "4 Events that Rocked the Book World in 2012" (discussing the fall of Dorchester Publishing, the US Justice Department lawsuit over eBook pricing, the continuing impact of Fifty Shades of Grey, and the proposed merger between Penguin and Random House).

Another change perhaps more significant for writers and editors in the short form category is Duotrope¹⁰'s shift away from a free access system, moving instead to a paid model. It's been a long time coming (it was inevitable, really), and it's by no means a negative impact on the field, it simply changes the lay of the land. It also means, for those like myself who either have ideological issues with supporting an enforced paywall system or who simply can't afford a yearly subscription fee for same, having to go elsewhere for market listings. I hope Duotrope manages to reach their required goal for funding since they do excellent work and have dedicated staff. But, personally, I won't be picking up a subscription (I've encountered enough flaws in their system in the past, and have been dealing with submissions long enough now that I can ferret out the information they provided on my own), though I completely understand the position of those who did pay for one, and those who will do so.

It's also worth noting that though non-subscribers are locked out of the market listings, you can still access all the listing pages linked to from Duotrope's Twitter account (@duotrope). I do not know if this will remain the case, but it works for now. And for those who are not going to be using Duotrope's system, or even those who are, here are some additional resources:

www.ralan.com - Comprehensive, frequently updated, and well run.

Joanne Merriam's market list (personal preferences)¹¹ – This one leans heavily toward lit fic markets, and it's a touch dated (a few things here may be defunct), but still quite comprehensive.

NewPages.com Literary Magazine Listing 12 - Again, a touch dated, but also a good start and reasonably comprehensive. Sarah Hans' Monthly Upcoming Deadlines Listings¹³ – What it says. Almost uniformly paying markets (in some cases royalties only).

<u>Dark Markets</u>¹⁴ – Horror listings only, but updated frequently. Fair warning: I almost never use this site anymore so I can't vouch for its accuracy.

10 http://www.duotrope.com/

Martha Wells' Publishing Information Link Page¹⁵ -Information about Submitting/Querying/Craft. Especially useful for newer writers feeling a little lost. Kristine Kathryn Rusch's "Business Rusch Publishing Articles" 16 – I cannot think of a single better resource for clarity in the publishing industry than Kristine Kathryn Rusch. Writer Beware 17 – Because not everyone plays by the rules, and you should know who is choosing not to.

Some Blogs About Writing You Should Keep Up With (Industry and/or Craft):

Theodora Goss¹⁸, Chuck Wendig [Terrible Minds]¹⁹, John Scalzi [Whatever]²⁰, and others I feel I should remember right now, but can't.

Lest we forget, writers, editors and reviewers (well, some of us, anyway) also take time at the end of the year to do roundups, retrospectives, and just generally infectiously wellwritten and engaging posts. And here I am going to cheat and provide a list of some of the better roundups of notable books/stories from 2012, as well as some end-of-year posts which were worth reading (so that I don't have to do this :p):

Gemma Files – Notable Books 2012²¹ Tempest Bradford – Best Short Fiction of 2012²² Victoria Strauss – Writer Beware 2012 Year in Review²³ Cheryl Morgan – Women to Watch Out For in 2013²⁴ Strange Horizons, All Reviewers – 2012 in Review [As Discussed Individually by All of SH's Reviewers]² io9, Annalee Newitz – Best SF & F Books of 2012²⁶ Ann and Jeff VanderMeer – Fourteen Notable Women Writers of the Weird²⁷

Chuck Wendig – 25 Writer Resolutions for 2013 (And Beyond)²⁸

[The Other Editor's Note]: The market listing websites covered in this article are a sampling of the websites focused on same. Poets & Writers (http://www.pw.org/) is another excellent resource, but there are many others to be had.

⁹ http://movable-type.me/

¹¹ http://www.joannemerriam.com/markets/

¹² http://www.newpages.com/literary-magazines/

¹³ http://sarahhans.com/category/upcoming-deadlines/

¹⁴ http://darkmarkets.com/

¹⁵ http://darkmarkets.com/

¹⁶ http://kriswrites.com/business-rusch-publishing-articles/

¹⁷ http://www.accrispin.blogspot.ca/

¹⁸ http://theodoragoss.com/blog/

¹⁹ http://terribleminds.com/ramble/blog/

²⁰ http://whatever.scalzi.com/

http://www.chizine.com/gemma_files_notable_books_2012.htm#.

²² http://tempest.fluidartist.com/best-short-fiction-2012/

²³ http://www.sfwa.org/2013/01/2012-year-in-review/

²⁴ http://fantasy-faction.com/2012/women-to-watch-out-for-in-2013

²⁵ http://www.strangehorizons.com/reviews/2013/01/2012_in_review

http://io9.com/5969670/the-best-science-fiction-and-fantasybooks-of-2012

²⁷ http://weirdfictionreview.com/2012/12/fourteen-notable-womenwriters-of-the-weird/

²⁸ http://terribleminds.com/ramble/2012/12/31/25-writer-resolutionsfor-2013/

SF&F in Film: Two Reviews

By David Cheater

Cloud Atlas

Speculative fiction is the literature of ideas. Books with big themes are, generally speaking, difficult to translate into movies. As Agatha Christie observed of her own adaptations of her books: sometimes things have to be changed radically.

In *Cloud Atlas*, the Wachowski siblings have taken one unwieldy narrative structure and replaced it with another in order to tell the type of story that they intended as a film. Although the incidents may be the same between each art form

the intention is not. The Wachowski siblings have managed to highlight their own concerns to bring different subtexts to light.

The basic structure is comprised of six narratives that inform and complement each other, with each of the six stories utilizing a different genre. The first story is a Robert Louis Stevenson story of intrigue and betrayal on an ocean voyage from the South Pacific back to England. The second story is a Brideshead Revisited-style story of a young gay composer in rural England in the 1930s. The third story is a Blaxploitation mystery set in 1970s San Francisco. The fourth story concerns an amoral publisher who ends up trapped in an old folks home in modern times. The fifth story is an anime-inspired story of an android rebelling against slavery in a futuristic Korea. The sixth story is a post-Apocalypse story of a "savage" falling in love with a scientist from a culture that has retained high technology. In the book these stories are nested within

one another while in the movie they are interwoven.

One of the things that makes this narrative structure difficult for many viewers is that the movie will often give the ending of each story very early in the movie. One story starts with the suicide of the main character. Other stories are being read or viewed by the future timelines.

The movie allows two techniques which are not possible in the written form. The melodies of the Cloud Atlas Sextet written in the second story are played in the background of the

other stories. It is possible that the music forms some type of time loop as the composer first hears the melodies in his dream of Neo Seoul.

The second technique is the use of casting the same actors to play different roles in the successive stories. It's possible to watch the movie focusing only on the evolution of the soul portrayed by Tom Hanks. His character moves from being a greedy and selfish murderer to a final redemption. The themes

of reincarnation, Karma and Dharma are something that the Wachowski siblings have dealt with before, and by using the same actors to play out differing variants of archetypes they examine how spiritual change can be embraced or rejected. And there are times when one has no opportunity to change; one must merely play out the role given by fate.

The unifying theme underlying the stories is the concept of ownership of other people. In some of the stories this translates as direct slavery. Other stories involve subtler forms of appropriation: a famous composer claims his secretary's creation as his own, illegal immigrants work in a sweatshop, a scientist finds that his company is misusing his research, a publisher claims all the profits from a novel, and a father threatens his daughter with social ostracism if she does not divorce her husband. The right to another person's body even, in some instances, extends to the right to eat it as three of the

th stories involve cannibalism.



But the overlying arc of the movie is one of the triumph of compassion over cannibalism. An actress who decides to oppose slavery in one story becomes a slave who fights for her own freedom in another story and ends up becoming a goddess.

This movie needs to be watched mindfully. It is beautifully shot and wonderfully acted which makes it an all round delight.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey



The first emotion I felt upon hearing that Peter Jackson was making a trilogy based on J.R.R. Tolkien's book was a surge of violation. It seemed that the source material did not justify so much screen time, but the 'proof of the pudding is in the eating'. And the movie is worthwhile on its own merits.

While the previous *Lord of the Rings* trilogy omitted many sections from the original source material and combined several characters, *An Unexpected Journey* has taken the opposite approach. Essentially, if the scene is in the book it made it to the movie. If Tolkien made any reference to a character or an event that happened during the time period of the story it made it to the movie. And if Peter Jackson felt that Tolkien should have added a scene? It made it to the movie.

Much of the time I found the dwelling upon setting and character development to be delightful. We see enough of Bilbo's home to understand both his deep attachment to it and his desire to go somewhere (anywhere) else where things happen. I gained sympathy and understanding of the Dwarfs (Tolkien's spelling) that I hadn't gained from the books. It's much more interesting to be shown the grandeur of the Dwarfish kingdom and the valour of Dwarfish warriors than to be told about it. Patrons of the movie are treated to the story of the break between the Dwarfs and the Elves, rather than told about it. The director took enough time with Gollum to show

him as both an object of revulsion and of pity. In general, the pacing worked.

At other times, the movie felt bloated. One scene involved three actors from *Lord of the Rings* seated around a table talking while the one female character with a name kept walking in a big circle. The wizard Radagast, who was mentioned in passing in the source material, has almost precisely twice as much screen time as he needed. There's a very long chase scene which felt stolen from an Indiana Jones movie.



The next installment of the trilogy, The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug, (still from same above) releases in December. Only another eleven months to go....

The acting was surprisingly well done for such an enormous cast. Each of the thirteen Dwarfs came across as a distinct character; although some of the characters were more interesting than others. Richard Armitage establishes King Thorin Oakenshield very nicely as a heroic leader with fatal flaws. Ken Stott does a nice job as an embittered cynic who is just barely allowing himself to hope. And Sir Ian McKellen manages to restrain himself from stealing every scene he is in. But the movie belongs to Martin Freeman, who creates a nuanced and charming portrayal of Bilbo Baggins.

All in all, the movie is well worth seeing for fans of speculative fiction. I enjoyed it in 2D; apparently it is not worth the extra money for 3D.

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News and Events for 2013

By Michael Matheson

2012 was a full and interesting year in several respects for both the Merril Collection and the Friends of the Merril, and 2013 is shaping up to follow suit.

From new temporary staff working at the Collection itself, to changes in the Friends executive, to a full slate of Friends-sponsored events, 2013 promises to be a lively year at the Merril. Though the events information covered below is largely fixed, some information may be subject to change. The replacement Friends of the Merril Collection website (http://www.friendsofmerril.org) is in the final stages of construction, and a largely finished version of the site is currently online. Some events information is already listed at the site on the Events page and is available for perusal at your leisure.

Below we've broken down the news and events by category, and the Friends hope to see those of you who are local at our sponsored events throughout the year. Please note that the Merril Collection is housed on the third floor of the Lillian H. Smith branch of the Toronto Public Library, and that the Lillian H. Smith itself is located at 239 College Street, at the southwestern corner of College and Huron.



Merril News

TPL librarian Tom Maragos, who has been working as temporary staff with the Merril since 2012, will continue his tenure at the Collection until May of this year.

Friends News

The coming AGM (see **Friends Events** below) will see the elections for the 2013 Friends Executive. There are minor changes coming to the makeup of the Friends Executive, but as these changes are not yet public the information to be found in the sidebars at the front of this issue are correct as of publication. All changes to the Executive will be noted in the Summer 2013 issue.

Friends Events

AGM (Annual General Meeting): On January 31st, the Friends will hold the AGM in the third floor reading room of the Merril Collection. The AGM is open to the general public and free to attend. Memberships in the Friends of the Merril Collection are available for purchase at the AGM, and this year there will be a book swap at the event. Attendees are encouraged to bring their no longer wanted SF&F titles and invited to browse for "new" titles to take home. The AGM will run from 7 PM to 9 PM.

Brandon Sanderson: *A Memory of Light* (Book Tour): On February 15th, Brandon Sanderson will be at the Lillian H. Smith branch of the Toronto Public Library as part of his book tour for *A Memory of Light*. Bakka Phoenix Books staff will be on hand to sell copies of Sanderson's books, and attendees are welcome to bring their own copies as well. The event will be held in the basement auditorium of the Lillian H. Smith. Doors open at 6 PM, and the event will begin at 7 PM.

An Evening of FILK with Peggi Warner-Lalonde: On March 23rd, the Friends will host a FILK (speculative music and song) event. Further details are forthcoming.

Ray Bradbury's Legacy: Everywhere You Look!: On April 2nd, as part of the Toronto Public Library's Keep Toronto Reading Festival, the Friends will host a panel discussion in the basement auditorium of the Lillian H. Smith. The event will begin at 7 PM.

17th Fantastic Pulps Show: On May 11th the annual Pulps Show will be held in the basement auditorium of the Lillian H. Smith. Admission to same is \$3.00. There will also be a slideshow and talk given in the third floor reading room at 1 p.m. Admittance to the slideshow is free of charge. The Pulps Show runs from 10 AM to 5 PM.

Submission Queries

As the new Friends website is still under construction, we ask at this time that you query directly to the appropriate party for all concerns related to *Sol Rising*. We thank you for your patience and your interest.

We are always interested in considering work from fans, professionals, and any other interested individuals, though at this time it is unlikely we will be able to consider any project of more than 2,000 words. If you are interested in submitting articles, or other projects, for consideration to *Sol Rising*, please query first to confirm that your proposal fits with our mandate.

Please note up front that in order to maintain impartiality we do not accept book reviews, and op eds are evaluated on an individual basis.

Please *do not* send an article(s) in for consideration without querying first.

Please address your queries to:

Michael Matheson, at solrising.editor@gmail.com

Advertising Queries

Sol Rising is now offering ad space for sale.

For a breakdown of our advertising guidelines and fees, please query to:

Michael Matheson, at solrising.editor@gmail.com

General Queries

You can address general queries concerning the Friends of the Merril Collection to

friends@friendsofmerril.org

We will respond as quickly as possible.

If you have not received a response within a reasonable amount of time please contact Lorna Toolis at

ltoolis@torontopubliclibrary.ca

ACCSFF: On June 7th & 8th, the 2013 Academic Conference on Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy will be held in the basement auditorium of the Lillian H. Smith. More information about the conference can be found at: http://www.yorku.ca/accsff/Introduction.html.

OSRCon: On August 3rd & 4th, the 3rd annual Old School Revival Convention will be held in the basement auditorium of the Lillian H. Smith. More information can be found at: http://www.osrcon.ca/index.html.

Flea Market: On September 14th, the SF & Anime Flea Market will be held in the Beeton Auditorium of the Toronto Reference Library, located at 789 Yonge Street. The Flea Market runs from 10 AM to 4 PM, and general queries (including re acquiring table space) should be sent to Donald Simmons at dfs.engineer@gmail.com.

Christmas Cream Tea: On December 7th, the Friends of the Merril will hold their annual end of year Christmas Cream Tea. This event is open only to members of the Friends, and their guests. The special guests for this year's Christmas Cream Tea will be announced later in the year.

As mentioned above, this list of events is subject to change. Keep an eye on the Friends of the Merril website (http://www.friendsofmerril.org) for updates and additions to our slate of events for 2013.

That's a Wrap

This Winter, Too, Shall Pass.

By Michael Matheson

January.

Or, for some of you, that paragraph probably reads more like "Ugh, *January*...."

I feel your pain. Though, I am, actually, quite fond of winter, myself (please refrain from throwing fruit).

And while January can rightly be categorized as that month whose sole purpose is to crush your soul beneath its frigid boot heel and freeze the very marrow in your bones, it also marks the start of Aurora season.

Well, technically, January is awards season in general (though, really, it's always awards season somewhere – also happy hour, but that's a different article), but chances are that if you're reading this then you're Canadian, and consequently have some form of potential interest in the Auroras. Perhaps you have work eligible in one or more categories? Or perhaps you do not create eligible work, but your investment lies instead in wanting to nominate work that you loved.

Stores Carrying Copies of *Sol Rising*

The Friends of the Merril are currently partnered with several stores in the GTA in our effort to make physical copies of *Sol Rising* more accessible.

You can find copies of our latest issue at any of the following locations:

Bakka Phoenix Books

84 Harbord St. (416)-963-9993 www.bakkaphoenixbooks.com

The Beguiling

601 Markham St. (416)-533-9168 www.beguiling.com

The Friendly Troll

5298 Yonge St. (416)-221-5004 http://friendlytroll.com

The Hairy Tarantula

354 Yonge St., 2nd Floor 416-596-8002 www.hairyt.com

If you run an establishment that deals with the community we cater to and would be interested in carrying copies of *Sol Rising* in-store we'd love to hear from you.

For information about stocking physical copies of *Sol Rising* please contact

Michael Matheson at solrising.editor@gmail.com

Please be advised that *Sol Rising* is a free publication and as such cannot be either sold or resold.

Volunteers Needed

If you would like to help with any of the following please contact Lorna Toolis at ltoolis@torontopubliclibrary.ca

Event Setup

In the hour or two before every Friends of the Merril event (readings, Xmas Tea, etc.) there are minor jobs which need to be done (moving furniture, picking up catered snacks, etc.).

Event Notification

Before Merril events it is necessary to email notifications to members, contact local weeklies (*Eye*, *NOW*) and local event websites (The Torontoist).

Staff the Tables

Help staff the Merril promotional table(s) at events such as local sf / fantasy conventions and Word on the Street.

Merril Mailings

Help organize and carry out occasional mass mailings to members of the Friends (generally two to three a year).

Sol Rising

Write articles for our semiannual newsletter, or help with proofreading, ad sales and/or graphic design.

Marketing/Promotion

Help the Marketing and Promotion Committee look at ways to increase the profile of the Friends and the Collection (among both individuals and corporations) and promote Merril events. Requires being able to schedule attending periodic meetings and followup work to investigate options.

Fundraising

The fundraising committee looks at ideas to raise money to support the Friends and the Collection itself through merchandising sales, fundraising events and the encouragement of donations (personal and corporate). Attendance of periodic meetings and follow-up required.

Whatever it is that prompts you to want to participate in the process, the process is there to be had (crazy, right?). Many of you already know how the Auroras work. Hell, at least *some* of you nominated *Sol Rising* for the Auroras last year. We didn't win, but, hey, it was an honour just to be blah-de-blah-de-blah....

You all know how that speech goes.

And it's *true* that it is an honour just to be nominated, but, god, saying it just feels *so cliché* at this point.

We here at *Sol Rising* (and when I say we, what I really mean is *me*, 'cause these proverbial offices are, um, kind of empty ...) are not fans of clichés. Except when they're subverted. Or reinvented.

Anyway, my *point* (often misplaced, never lost) is that the Aurora Awards are open for nominations, and there's this *huge* body of work to choose your nominations from. This speaks to the fact that there are a hell of a lot of Canadian members of the international speculative fiction community creating content across various fields and in various capacities. And we're doing a damn good job of it to boot.

Granted, there are enough changes to the Aurora Award categories this year to set one's head spinning, but the redefined category distributions are manageable. I say this after having been tracking these changes over the course of the last year, in addition to curating an archive of Canadian speculative fiction content from 2011 onward over at the Can Spec Fic List (http://canspecfic.com).

Actually, one of those changes – the ruling that the fan or volunteer work of content creators deemed professional becomes professional in turn – has changed the status of *Sol Rising* itself, moving it into the "Best Related Work – English" category. Given that (which now means *Sol Rising* has to compete with anthologies, single author collections, magazines, and every other piece of professional critical non-fiction *ever* – well, everything produced in 2012, anyway) I don't really expect *Sol Rising* to pick up another Aurora nomination for my tenure as editor. When someone else takes up the editorial mantle somewhere down the road, *Sol Rising* may rise again to achieve an Aurora nomination.

I certainly *hope* it does again. It's excellent exposure for the newsmagazine, sure, but more importantly it's excellent exposure for the Friends, and thereby the Merril – said exposure for, support of, and promotion of, the Merril Collection being the mandate of the Friends.

So, given that so many of you helped us toward that goal with the 2012 Aurora nomination for *Sol Rising*, I'm going to take the opportunity, once more, to thank everyone who was awesome enough to nominate *Sol Rising*. It turned out to be the gift that just keeps on giving.

See you all again come the summer.

On Display in the Reading Room

The Merril Collection is open Monday - Friday 10:00 AM -6:00 PM, and on Saturdays between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM

The Merril Collection's current display in the reading room is Weird St.: Urban Fantasy Fiction. This exhibit will be on display for the next several weeks from the time of this printing, concluding at an as yet undetermined date sometime in February.

The next display slated to appear in the Merril Collection reading room is an as yet untitled exhibit focusing on a celebration of genre luminaries lost to the field in the last 5 years. Though no fixed date has been set for its unveiling at the time of this issue's printing, the display is likely to be available to the public before the end of February.

For more information on what is currently on display in the Merril Collection Reading Room please see the Friends of the Merril Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-the-Merril-Collection/102556649836415 or visit the TPL's Merril Collection website at: http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/detail.jsp?Entt=RDMLIB137

Upcoming Events

2013

In this issue we've taken the opportunity to cover in relative detail the coming events scheduled for the 2013 year in the article "News and Events for 2013," which can be found on page 20.

For additional information on the list of Friends of the Merril Collection events slated for 2013, please visit:

http://friendsofmerril.org/?page __id=41





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The Merril Collection, originally the Spaced Out Library and later renamed for the late Judith Merril, is the foremost North American public assemblage of Speculative, SF and Fantasy Fiction and is an invaluable tool for enthusiasts, researchers and authors.

The Collection houses a comprehensive array of over 72,000 (and growing) items. The reference stacks include hardcover and paperback fiction, first

and rare editions, TPB graphic works and comic collections, pulp and later era magazines, fanzines, research material and critical essays/reference works and compendia – as well as donated original manuscripts from authors such as Phyllis Gottlieb and Guy Gavriel Kay.

The Friends of the Merril Collection is a volunteer organization that provides support and assistance to the Merril Collection through paid membership in the Friends, through donations, the sponsorship of related events such as readings, book launches and signings, panel discussions, and the publication of the newsletter *Sol Rising*.

Donations made to the Friends go directly toward the above services and the purchase of books for the Collection itself. We invite you to support the Merril by joining or donating using the form below.

I wish to become a member of the Friends
of the Merril Collection. I have enclosed
payment (if choosing a cheque or money
order please make it payable to "The
Friends of the Merril Collection") for a
year's membership fee as indicated
(memberships run from January to
December):

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□ Student (under 18) \$20.00

□ Institution \$37.50

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Phone	□ Fax
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Please mail to: The Friends of the Merril Collection

c/o The Merril Collection, Toronto Public Library 239 College Street, 3rd floor, Toronto, ON M5T 1R5

☐ In addition to my membership fee, I would like to make a contribution to the Friends. I understand that tax receipts will be issued for both my membership and contribution and that my contribution will go towards funding the Friends' activities \$ _____

All information provided on this membership form is strictly confidential. The FOMC does not share/sell membership lists or email addresses.