

Sol Rising

Fall 2015 FREE



Issue # 51

Sol Rising

Fall 2015

Issue #51

ISSN: 1199-2123

Sol Rising is a bi-annual zine put out by the Friends of the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy and is published by the Friends of the Merrill Collection, c/o The Merrill Collection, Toronto Public Library.

This newsletter is provided free of charge; see back page for membership application form. All material credited herein is Copyright 2015 (or respective prior publication date) by the author of the piece; all other material is Copyright 2003 by The Friends of the Merrill Collection. All rights reserved. Printed in Canada.

Production

Editor

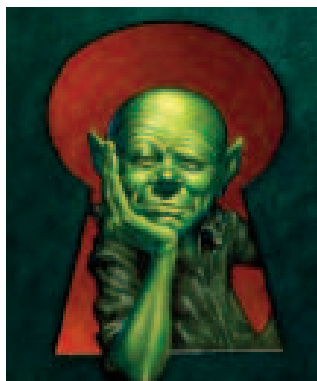
Alicia Freeborn

Assistant Editor

Mary Armstrong

Assistant Editor

Barbara Kwasniewski



The Friends of the Merrill Collection is a volunteer organization to support and promote the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation, and Fantasy, a public access collection consisting of science fiction, fantasy, gaming materials, graphic novels, and other related items.

Collection Head

Lorna Toolis

FOMC Committee Chair

Michael Matheson

Vice Chair

Mary Armstorg

Treasurer

Jana Paniccia

Secretary

Donald Simmons

Manager of Special Collections

Mary Rae Shantz

Members at Large

Barbara Kwasniewski

Alicia Freeborn

Digital

Sol Rising is also available in PDF, please visit our friendsofmerril.org website for more information.



facebook.com/group/s/merrilgroup/



twitter.com/FriendsofMerril

Artwork

Original cover art *Astrolabe Cathedral* is provided by Tyler Gillan. It appears courtesy of the artist, and is used with their explicit permission.

Find more of their work at:
art.tylergillan.ca

Cover image is
©Tyler Gillan

Printing done by
Adfactor
www.adfactor.com

Contents

- 1 Sol Rising & FoM Information
 - 2 Contents & Events
-

The Collection

- 3 Collection Highlights
 - 5 Recommended Series Reading Order
-

The Friends of the Merril

- 7 The Merril Vote - Swords of Sorrow
 - 8 Can you live, knowing that those who loved you never existed?
 - 10 The Friends of Merril Short Story Contest
 - 11 Q&A with Jim Smith, creator of the *I Love You, Judy Merril* play
-

18 The Artwork of Tyler Gillan

19 SF Contario poster

Sol Rising Throwback

20

- 22 Submission Queries & FoM Volunteer Info

Events

September 26-November 28 at 10:30am AMAZING SF AND FANTASY: Saturday Mornings at the Merril

Every Sat. morning starting Sept. 26th
Merril staff will display & discuss items of special interest between 10:30-11am in the Merril Collection reading room.

October 15th at 7pm -Shining a Light on the Dark Side: Horror Writing in Canada

Local horror writers Stephanie Bedwell-Grime, Suzanne Church, Sèphera Girón, Monica S. Kuebler, & Brad Middleton will be discussing horror writing in Canada!
7pm in the Merril Collection reading room

October 17th - Lillian H. Smith branch 20th Birthday party 10am-4pm

Multiple events scheduled including SF show & tell, gigantic book sale, 3D printer demo & more!

Oct/Nov TBD -Diversity Panel

Follow our website/facebook/twitter pages for more info on this.

November 19th - Authors Saladin Ahmed and Peter Watts

(Courtesy of SFContario), 7pm in the Merril Collection reading room

December 5th - Merril Annual Christmas Cream Tea

Annual Christmas Cream Tea for FotM members with special guest Veronica Hollinger be doing a presentation on Chinese SF as seen from an Anglo-American tradition.

The Collection

The ever-growing Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy resides on the third floor of the Lillian H. Smith library and boasts over 75,000 items, most of which are stored on rolling stacks that allow for the Collection's continued expansion. The staff at the Merrill dedicate considerable effort to seeking out and implementing methods to preserve old and/or rare books and other materials that might otherwise succumb to the slow decay of paper (a.k.a. "the death of the book," as Lorna once put it), storing them in the best possible conditions in terms of heat, humidity and light.

>>>>Specialty Press Books by Lorna Toolis

Since the Merrill Collection opened, it has offered books published by science fiction and fantasy presses. Often the books published by small, obscure companies become famous and very hard to find as time passes. The Collection offers an opportunity for people to read these rare and expensive books without having to buy them. It holds complete runs of books published by presses such as Arkham House, Carcosa and Cheap Street. The Collection does not buy reprints, but rather original materials purchased from specialty presses whenever possible, which usually have extremely high production values.

Current specialty presses collected include Centipede Press, Cemetery Dance, and PS Publishing. Centipede Press publishes original collections by highly regarded authors.

The largest collection of Fred Chappell stories ever collected in one volume is shown on the right, including original artwork by David Ho and European master Fritz Janschka. Also included is a new introduction by Fred Chappell himself, with photographs of the author and images of old editions of his books.



Fred Chappell: Masters of the Weird Tale

Edited by S.T. Joshi, illustrated by Fritz Janschka & David Ho
Lakewood, Colorado: Centipede Press
2014

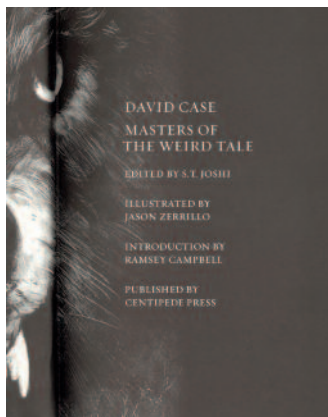


Fred Chappell:

Masters of the Weird Tale

Edited by S.T. Joshi, illustrated by Fritz Janschka & David Ho

Lakewood, Colorado: Centipede Press
2014



David Case:

Masters of the Weird Tale

Edited by S.T. Joshi, illustrated by Jason Zerrillo & introduced by Ramsey Campbell

Lakewood, Colorado: Centipede Press
2015



Edgar Allan Poe

Edited & introduction by S.T. Joshi.

Lakewood, Colorado: Centipede Press
2014



Hannes BOK: A Life in Illustration

Edited by Joseph Wrzos.

Lakewood, Colorado: Centipede Press
2012

>>>>>Recommended Series Reading Order

Staff at the Merrill Collection are often asked in which order the books of a series should be read. Accordingly, the Merrill Collection series list covers pretty much all of space and time.

This issue Terry Brooks' popular Shannara fantasy series has been selected. Wiki excerpt "Shannara is a series of high fantasy novels written by Terry Brooks, beginning with *The Sword of Shannara* in 1977 and continuing through *The Darkling Child* which was released in June 2015; there is also a prequel, *First King of Shannara*. The series blends magic and primitive technology and is set in the Four Lands, which are identified as Earth long after civilization was destroyed in a chemical and nuclear holocaust called the Great Wars. By the time of the prequel *First King of Shannara*, the world had reverted to a pre-industrial state and magic had re-emerged to supplement science."



Word and Void

1. Running with the Demon..... '97
2. A Knight of the Word..... '98
3. Angel Fire East..... '99

Genesis of Shannara (Follows Word and Void)

1. Armageddon's Children..... '06
2. The Elves of Cintra..... '07
3. The Gypsy Morph..... '08

Shannara

- First King of Shannara..... '96
(prequel to Shannara)
- 1. The Sword of Shannara..... '77
 *35th anniversary annotated ed. '12
- 2. The Elfstones of Shannara..... '82
- 3. The Wishsong of Shannara..... '85
- 4. Dark Wraith of Shannara..... '08

The Heritage of Shannara

- 1. Scions of Shannara..... '90
- 2. The Druid of Shannara..... '91
- 3. The Elfqueen of Shannara..... '92
- 4. The Talismans of Shannara..... '93

The Voyage of the Jerle Shannara

- 1. Ilse Witch..... '00
- 2. Antrax '01
- 3. Morgawr '02

High Druid of Shannara

- 1. Jarka Ruus..... '03
- 2. Tanequil '04
- 3. Straken '05

Dark legacy of Shannara

- 1. Wards of faerie..... '12
- 2. Bloodfire quest..... '13
- 3. Witch wraith..... '13

Legends of Shannara

- 1. Bearers of the Black Staff..... '10
- 2. The Measure of the Magic..... '11

The defenders of Shannara

- 1. The high druid's blade..... '14

>>>>>The Merrill Vote by Kate Jeffrey

In each issue of Sol Rising, one Merrill staff member or Friends of Merrill member will recommend a book, or several, depending on what they're reading and think people might enjoy.



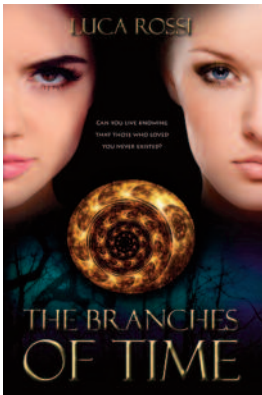
Swords of Sorrow

A major crossover event published by Dynamite Entertainment featuring a cast of female pulp and fiction characters written by a team of all female writers. The main story arc is covered in six issues – the last to be released this September – and is supported by a number of spin offs of one shots and mini-series. The event is headed off by Gail Simone who is not only the writer of the central story but has also curated some of the greatest writers in the business for the many tie-ins, including Marguerite Bennett, Leah Moore, Mairghread Scott, Emma Beeby, Mikki Kendall, Nancy Collins, and G. Willow Wilson.

The event focuses on the characters of Red Sonja, Dejah Thoris, and Vampirella but also include names like Jennifer Blood, Lady Rawhide, Kato, Jungle Girl, Masquerade, Irene Adler, and many more. We see these characters paired off in many surprising combinations as cracks in time throw them into an adventure that spans worlds, eras, and dimensions. These incredible ladies face off against the ultimate evil – a dark prince and a group of female warriors – that threaten to destroy all their worlds. Soon they learn that the only way to save their reality is with the mysterious “Swords of Sorrows” gifted to them by the equally mysterious Traveller.

As someone fairly new to the graphic novel scene, events and cross-overs have always filled me with a certain amount of apprehension. This was my first time interacting with many of the characters in this event and I was worried about my lack of knowledge going into it. But Simone and the other writers do a great job of introducing the characters while simultaneously getting straight to the action. This combined with Sergio Davila's incredible interior art has made this event an immensely fun read that I would happily recommend, whether you spring for the individual issues or wait for the stories to be collected into a trade paperback.

>>>>>Can you live, knowing that those who loved you never existed? by Astra



Have you ever read one of *those* books? You like the story; you like the characters; the plot and dialogue are fine; and then one of the characters, one who has an extra-ordinary power, does something completely counterproductive with that power.

I often wish I could sit down with an author and ask them, “**Why?** Why did you have that character do X when they could have done Y or Z?” I’ve actually sent off a couple of e-mails like that, when I was feeling strongly enough about it. One author wrote back that they didn’t analyze why the characters did things, they just did. I’ve started to think of this folly as a sort of *deus ex machina*. The power is necessary for the story, but if the character does the right thing with it right away, there is no story. At least, not a book length story.

And, yes, in case you’re wondering, I do have a particular book in mind. It’s called *The Branches of Time* by Luca Rossi. It’s self-published, so I don’t have a great deal of information on the author. I do know he’s Italian, and his personal FB page is in Italian. His official author page www.facebook.com/LucaRossiAuthor appears to be a mixture of English and Italian, which leads me to believe that he may be bilingual. If this is the case, his mastery of English, as evidenced in the writing of this book, is impressive.

I first read the book five or six months ago. It was sent, unsolicited, to our illustrious editor, who passed it on to me. I read it and enjoyed it, but decided that it was much too early to write about it for the next Sol Rising issue, so I set it aside to come back to. I wish I hadn't, for two reasons. The first is that I've had a major battle with procrastination. The second is that those "Why" questions always bother me more on the re-read. The first time through, I find it much easier to go with the flow, enjoying the story, perhaps in the hope that the poor decisions will be explained later on. When I come back for the second read, I have no such hope.

The description of the book, from the author's web page:

The population of the island of Turios is mercilessly exterminated by the workings of black magic. Only Bashinoir, badly wounded, his wife Lil, and the priestess Miril have survived. A shadow spreads over their hearts, dividing and destroying them, as their bodies appear to be fading away. ...

In the Kingdom of Isk, wizards and wise men alike must bow before the insatiable King Beanor, whose greed for power and war is matched only by his hunger for sex. ...

So, there you have it. Greedy, tyrannical king, powerful wizards dancing to his tune, black magic killing off almost the entire population of an isolated island, and—the secret ingredient—time travel. Now, I have a question for you. If, for whatever reason, you, as a powerful magician, found yourself serving an evil, despotic king who wanted you to destroy his enemies (the aforementioned island population), **and** you discovered the ability to travel in time, would you attempt to use the ability to:

- A. destroy the king's enemies
- or
- B. destroy the king?

Since this is the beginning of a series, it's possible that a good explanation for what I consider the wrong decision will come along in time. I'm certainly willing to read the next book to find out.

>>>>>5th Annual Friends of the Merrill Short Story Contest

The 5th annual Friends of the Merrill Short Story Contest is on and open to submissions. Submissions for speculative short fiction up to 6000 words will be accepted until December 20th, 2015 (11:59pm EST). The contest is open to everyone (international) and writers of all levels (published, unpublished, emerging, etc.), without restriction. Both multiple and simultaneous submissions are welcome!

The top prize up for grabs is \$500 CDN with two honourable mentions of \$50 CDN. All entrants will receive a free ebook of *She Walks in Shadows*, a Lovecraftian short story anthology by Innsmouth Free Press.

The three Final Panel Judges for the 5th Annual Friends of the Merrill Short Story Contest are Hiromi Goto, Tanya Huff, and Silvia Moreno-Garcia.

Each entry requires a \$5 CDN submission fee (payable by PayPal) which will be put towards supporting the Friends of Merrill's many activities such as author readings, book launches, panel discussions, and new additions to the collection itself.

To enter, send submissions to fomsscontest@gmail.com and complete the entry fee payment form (payable through Paypal): <http://friendsmerrilcontest.com/entry-fee/>. *Note: Please make sure the name of the story on your payment matches the story you have submitted to us!*

Titles and authors of the winning stories will be posted to the Friends of the Merrill Short Story Contest website after the winners have been notified.

For full contest rules please visit the friendsmerrilcontest.com page.

6507



House of James presents
**I LOVE YOU,
JUDY MERRIL**

A play on memory

WRITTEN BY & STARRING
JIM SMITH
DIRECTED BY
JIM ANNAN

FRI JULY 3 - 8:15
SAT JULY 4 - 8:30
MON JULY 6 - 7:30
TUES JULY 7 - 3:15
WED JULY 8 - 6:30
FRI JULY 10 - 1:45
SAT JULY 11 - 9:45
SUN JULY 12 - 12:30

**THEATRE PASSE MURAILLE
BACKSPACE**

16 RYERSON AVE

THE TORONTO
FRINGE

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR AND FRINGETORONTO.COM

>>>>6 Questions with Jim Smith, creator of the I Love You, Judy Merrill play by Alicia Freeborn

AF: For the readers who didn't get a chance to see the play, can you tell me what sparked the original idea to write the I Love You, Judy Merrill play that you then went on to star in?

JS: Hero worship, and a desire to keep the memory alive of Judy as a fully-rounded, brilliant, argumentative, cantankerous, wonderfully human, career iconoclast. And to say thanks – no, not just thanks, but “I love you”, certainly not something I ever said to her during her life.

The Toronto Fringe is a lottery, so only after you make it in do you have to actually write the show. My director, Jim Annan, and I had wanted to do something together for years. And when it came time to create, Jim put it to me this way – write the show you would love to perform.

And I knew I wanted to talk about Judy and me. I always have. I've told numerous stories about the way I met this science-fiction icon from my youth, at a crazy Writers' Development Trust writers' retreat in 1981. Her stories, and even more so her bounteous anthologies, had saved me from a terrible, dispiriting, completely crappy childhood in Kingston. And when I started working for her off and on after the retreat, on early versions of what way later became the memoir, the inner workings of the science fiction world laid themselves out before me like some Rube Goldberg architecture of heaven through her massive correspondence collection, and her anecdotes. I was so thrilled to learn all this background, I always drove her crazy with questions. But Judy had been everywhere, involved in just about everything, knew absolutely everyone, and had an opinion about it all.

So I decided I wanted to write about it – the childhood obsession with science fiction, the way we met, and the decade's long tempestuous friendship marred by arguments and tears and periods of stony silence. Then in 1997 Judy was gone and I had so much more I'd wanted to say to her, to ask her, to explain that she meant so much to me and to others. And thanks to my dramaturge and director, we found a way to cut it down to an hour and dress it up (in a space suit and an abduction context) to make it rather more interesting than just some old codger rattling on about some old writer he'd known. And now my director is a fan of Judy's, and the greatest thing I've heard is that Lorna has had someone come in and ask about Judy's work because they'd seen the show. Mission accomplished!

AF: Judith Merrill's impact on the Canadian and international science fiction community was (and still is) impressive. Her legacy as a writer and master anthologist has offered blueprints for the rest of us to follow. These are the widely known facts; however I got the sense from your play that there were more things to learn from knowing her on a personal level. What of her teachings or mentoring has stayed with you and which do you apply to your own writing/life?

JS: First and foremost, I learned how to pack compactly from Judy. While not a “writing” lesson per se, it has had a surprisingly large impact over the years. That woman lived in some small spaces, and my lord she could tuck things away. She had a sense of space, and what could be most efficiently put in it, which would raise the hairs on the back of your neck. Seriously. I always attributed it to the fact that Judy thought in way more dimensions than most. She explained she’d gotten even better at it after her year in Japan. Moving her around various spaces in and near Toronto’s Kensington Market, I marvelled at the spatial efficiencies she achieved, and she taught me how to do it. I have no idea how, but just like Judy, I can size up a space and can fit so much stuff into it. Not surprising that yearly anthology she started is called *Tesseracts*.

Second, and for which I am eternally grateful, is her instruction (and example) to not be insular. To look outward at the wider world and the wider picture as best as I could. This had a very practical consequence early on. My first poetry book with a spine came out in ’85 while I was working closely with Judy, and I was thrilled to be able to finally join a professional writers association – but of all my mentors and heroes, I trusted Judy when she absolutely definitively told me I should spend my few dues bucks on the Writers Union of Canada rather than stay with my own kind and join the League of Canadian Poets. Her reasoning was typical of her – in the Writers Union, I’d get to meet and be exposed to many different disciplines and ways of writing, from fictioneers to biographers, kids’ writers, to—yes—some poets. I did, and crikey was she right – such a motley crew. And I got to see her shit-disturb year after year, support her in some of her outlandish notions. I’ve definitely tried to take her approach to heart in all of my endeavours (including poetry). I’d even say that her example and advice has had an effect on my approach to legal matters and trials (I law for a living). Thanks for that Judy!

Thirdly, I just wish I was as willing to adopt and accept the role of gadfly as Judy was. From time to time I may have tried, either in the early days in the Writers Union or in the Toronto poetry community in the ’80s, but this woman made it a lifestyle. Or a virtue. Whether it was encouraging speculation about “what if”,

or tweaking the politically correct at a writers' annual meeting by challenging critics of "voice appropriation" by just asking, "Who will speak for the alien?", Judy always insisted on cross-examining the common wisdom. Though I try from time to time, I can never do it with the style, bullishness and sometimes sheer effrontery that I marvelled at, when I saw—or heard—Judy in action. (Am I romanticizing her a bit? Sure.)

AF: In the play you mentioned that as a kid you read Judith's stories and that they transported you into a different (and most of the time, better) alternate reality. What is one of your favourite stories or universes of hers that you can recall visiting and would recommend to our readers?

JS: It's a tie between the longform *Daughters of Earth* (1953) and the much shorter "Dead Center" (1955). Both stories grabbed me back when I first read them, and were just as compelling when I re-read everything of Judy's while preparing for my show.

Daughters of Earth is one of my favourite kind of stories – a long-perspective, galaxy-spanning epic. The story follows the fate of six generations of women, each moving farther in time and space than the last. From those first halting steps to the moon, then further out in the solar system, to other star systems and to the edge of the galaxy, the hunger to explore keeps re-appearing. And, eventually, faster than light travel changes the game, as it always does. In this long, long piece, how the characters feel matters. It's the spine of the story. Which made it stand out then, and I'd say now. I've always loved the idea of generation ships and long voyages, and if this story had continued further, I could see the next daughter taking that long, long step to another galaxy.

"Dead Center" is a poignant account of a tragedy that could well have happened during those first halting steps to the moon. Those that saw my show will recall my vast regret/anger that we (as a species) seem to have just gone and given up on ever getting to the moon (and my scepticism about certain claims we're going to head back up there some decade real soon). This story has an immediacy and a pathos that just grab you. I don't want to give away the ending, but here Judy has a much more emotional punch built in than, say, Heinlein's "The Green Hills of Earth", which was another favourite early-days-of-the-moon story of mine. What really makes this one a story that stands out for me (and I still don't know how exactly Judy accomplished it) but it exudes the fact that when it was written, we really were confident we were going to travel to the moon. But I think the ultimate best way to visit Judy's varied universes remains grabbing any one of her short story collections and just devouring it beginning to end.

AF: When I first took over the role as Editor and was re-designing Sol Rising's format, I had an idea for a column called What Would Judith Merrill Do? or for short, WWJMD. The premise of the column would be to have persons such as yourself, who knew her well, try and imagine how she might react to certain present day situations. The column never got much ground with the FotM members but I thought it might be fun to throw in one such question for this interview. So if you feel up to it, please feel free to imagine WWJMD (or what would she say) if she found out that you had written this play about her?

JS: What an amazing idea for a column – I'd love to see it happen! And funny you should ask this – one of the first email responses to my show from my Writers Union friend Chris (who had known Judy too) included his observation that "Judy would... well, probably grumble and complain and tell you about the show she saw in some bar on the lower East Side, but that's praise too."

I'd like to think my pal was right. But I think the first thing Judy might well do is just get mad at me and wonder why the hell I wanted to do such an outlandish thing as to write a play about her and us and the writers retreat where we met and Gail the poet and the Man From UNCLE libel and failed moon ambitions and her failing health and hero worship. We know that becoming an icon never sat well with Judy.

But the next thing Judy'd do would be to sit me down and grill me—in splendid, exacting, frightening detail—what my thinking was behind it. And then she'd likely suggest two or three or a dozen other ways to achieve whatever it was I told her I thought I was trying to achieve. And she'd undoubtedly know that I was going to ignore them and plow ahead.

Would she get behind the idea? Likely not. Would she want to see the script, to exert some form of control or maybe just quality control over it? Not a chance.

Interestingly, in 1985 Stuart Ross published a terrific book of mine called *Convincing Americans*. Rather than do the boring old standard back cover copy and solicited quotes about the poems, we decided we would just do a list of my favourite Americans. I forget whether Judy was number three or number seven on the list (which I know included Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Geronimo and Ezra Pound). When I gave her a copy, she just laughed and we got back to work on whatever it was we were then occupied with.

But I know one thing – if Judy had come to one of the performances, she would have sat up front, and spoken up whenever she felt it was needed – with a correction, or a dispute, or her own version—likely far more ribald than mine—of the tale. I know I would have invited her to come up on stage, and I think she would have done so.

Given the circumstances we actually faced, I had to imagine her there. And there were moments when I thought she was. Those were the best parts of all of doing this show.

AF: From title to monologue, the play was an emotional and loving tribute to Judy, but it also involved much of your own life and experiences. I was wondering if the experience has been cathartic in the sense that you've now had the chance to relive and share all those memories.

JS: Oh yeah, oh yeah! I was scared as hell laying out the stuff about Judy, my feelings for her and about her, the opportunities I missed to know her better, to do more with her, my regret about the silent stony times when we were mad at each other. One of my real anxieties was that I knew there were many people who knew Judy far better than me, or a different Judy. But I found it relatively easy to get over that species of worry, because I soon came to realize we all had our different Judy, and that I was just trying to put out there who my Judy had been to me. Somehow I felt much less sad about some of the limitations of our relationship, how I hadn't really done many social things with her, how I had been absent for almost all of the Performing Arts Lodge years. And I felt better about what I did share with Judy.

But your reference to catharsis also refers to my having put out there some of the terribly depressing details of a sad, sad youth in Kingston (extreme poverty, social isolation and a demented, detestable father). I was doubly nervous about this – first, I have family I dearly love but don't see near often enough, who might not like reminding of some of that early crap; and, second and more related to the show's heart itself, what the hell did my sad sack childhood have to do with Judith Gol-darn Merrill in any case? But the experience of working through writing and revising the show, and the incredible insight of Jim Annan, the director (who I may as well confess here is, aside from his impressive Second City and Canadian Comedy Awards background, my nephew-in-law!), who saw the connection and the saving of me by Judy's work and anthologies before I did, was nothing short of miraculous (in my humble view). I had never seen it so clearly that Judy and especially her anthologies were a part of the instrumentality that saved me in those dark years.

But I was still anxious about putting that all out there and making the connections. However, it felt true and right. And I was nervous as hell about it all being so raw.

I came away from this having learned a lot about my relationship with Judy. I just feel I understand it a bit better now. And about the horrible childhood – well, without it I may not have fallen so hard for science fiction. And so even that gave me a gift in a way. And the final interesting thing about that is that I feel that by telling this stuff, by working it into a narrative, it's lost a bit of a hold on me. Story therapy, I guess.

AF: So what next, have any further plans for this show or something of the like?

JS: Funny I should ask myself that! In fact, the director and I have had some desultory conversation about maybe trying to do a longer form version of this show, dropping the artificial Fringe 60-minute limit. The idea is out there. And there is a video that was shot of the last performance. When I get that from the videographer who is doing it as a gift, Lorna has already said she would like a copy for the collection archive.

The most exciting thing (though it is entirely speculative at this point) is that next year the Writers Union of Canada, the Playwright's Guild of Canada, and the League of Canadian Poets are all combining their annual meetings into one perfect storm, here in Toronto in June, 2016, which I believe they are calling the Writers Summit. I have contacted the Writers Union and their Executive Director, John Degen, is taking my proposal to the planning committee, that I stage a free one-night performance of *I Love You, Judy* Merrill for the Writers Summit as a gift and a remembrance of Judy, who played such an important role in the Writers Union. I'm waiting eager as hell to know if they'll take me up on it, I'll foot the bill, so I've got my fingers crossed.

Would be great to break out the old space suit, table, chair and reams of torn up paper (not to mention the slides, soundtrack and animation of Judy and me) once again.

And I'm always free to discuss other possible initiatives, should anybody reading this dream up something.

Thanks for this Alicia!
JIM

The Artwork of Tyler Gillan

by Alicia Freeborn

I was recommended Tyler Gillan's artwork from a fellow FotM volunteer. His stunning paintings have so much depth that I feel I see something new everytime I view them.

He uses a combination of both abstract and figurative elements. His process begins with selecting existing architectural forms and objects from photographs or life that he feels work together compositionally. Using these forms as a starting point he then creates paintings of abstracted environments that exist in imaginative spaces, where scale is impossible to determine. Is this a view of something at an atomic scale or perhaps something much larger? This idea of macro vs. micro is something curious to think about, as the worlds of both provide plenty of mystery and awe to the observer.

The paintings to the right were specifically inspired by astrolabes, tools used by astronomers, navigators and astrologers for predicting the movements and positions of celestial bodies.

All images used in this profile are ©Tyler Gillan, and may not be used without their express permission.



Above: Astrolabe Cathedral

Below: Astrolabe by Tyler Gillan



SFContario 6

TORONTO • November 20th to 22th, 2015

CANVENTION 35

• PRIX AURORA AWARDS •

CANVENTION GUEST OF HONOUR • PETER WATTS

AUTHOR GUEST OF HONOUR • AHMED SALADIN

FILK GUEST OF HONOUR • TOM SMITH

• PLUS SIGNINGS •

• PLUS DEALERS •

• PLUS ART •

*A celebration of the best of
science fiction, fantasy, and
speculation in books and
other media, and of
fandom with filking, gaming,
costuming and more!*

**Ramada Plaza Hotel
300 Jarvis Street
416-977-4823**



www.sfcontario.ca

Sol Rising Throwback

Sol Rising, formerly known as SOL Rising, has been a free volunteer publication since the late 80's. Now in its 28th year, it has seen many Friends of Spaced Out Library/Merril Collection members, formats, and guest writers and authors come and go during its lifetime. To commemorate them, we have dedicate a column to spotlight a past contribution that is still interesting to read to this day.

>>>>Nothing But 'Net: Websites Of Interest

By Jim Pattison, SOL Rising Issue #27, December 2002

"Every so often I stumble across a website so fascinating that I immediately want to send the URL to everyone in my address book. The Pitch Drop Experiment, located at www.physics.uq.edu.au/pitchdrop/pitchdrop.shtml, is a perfect example. In 1927, Thomas Parnell, a physics professor at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, decided to perform an experiment to demonstrate unusual properties of a common substance. He chose pitch, a tar-like material used to seal joints in the hulls of ships. Pitch exhibits some of the properties of fluids, even though it is quite brittle at normal room temperatures. Prof. Parnell took some pitch, heated it and poured it into a funnel that was sealed at the bottom. After letting the pitch settle for three years (!), he cut the seal, allowing the pitch to drip into the beaker below. The first drop fell eight years later, in December 1938, and drops have been falling at more-or-less regular intervals ever since. The most recent—the 8th—fell in November 2000. The website contains a description of the experiment, and a link to a webcam that provides a live video image of the funnel and beaker, which are currently in a display case in the foyer of the university's physics building. If you check out the video feed at the right time of day—taking into account the 14-hour time difference between Toronto and Brisbane—you can see students walking by in the background. Because the building is now air-conditioned, the average temperature of the pitch is lower than it was when Parnell started the experiment. As a result, the interval between drops is increasing, so I'll make a note to check back in on this sometime in, say, 2010."

Update: The Pitch Drop Experiment is still ongoing with a handfull of webcams dedicated to record it's every *drop* (currently working on #10). To watch a 10-second time-lapse video that captures the half-descent of the 9th drop in the experiment (between the period of April 28th 2012 - April 10th 2013) follow the link: <https://vimeo.com/63712180>



1079 College St., Toronto • 416.531.7907
www.adfactor.com

adfactor
PRINT + DESIGN

Submission Queries

We are always willing to consider work from members, fans, professionals, and all other interested individuals for inclusion in Sol Rising!

If you are interested in submitting articles or other projects to Sol Rising for consideration, please get in touch with us first to make sure that your proposal fits our mandate.

Sol Rising also offers ad space for purchase. For a breakdown of our advertising guidelines and fees, please use the contact information listed below.

Please address queries to:
Alicia Freeborn, at
solrising.editor@gmail.com

Copies of Sol Rising

The Friends of the Merrill are currently partnered with several stores in the GTA (listed below) in an effort to make it easier for people to get physical copies of Sol Rising:

Bakka Phoenix Books
84 Harbord St., (416)-963-9993
www.bakkaphoenixbooks.com

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

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

Volunteer with the Friends

The FotM are always looking for new volunteers. If interested, please check out the positions listed below and contact Lorna Toolis at
ltoolis@torontopubliclibrary.ca

Event Setup, Notifications, & Staffing the tables

The Friends of Merrill put on some events each year that may require furniture setup, contacting local weeklies, or helping staff the Merrill promotional tables.

Sol Rising

Write articles for our semi-annual zine, or help with proofreading, ad sales, graphic design etc.

Marketing/Promotion

Help spread the word by promoting Merrill events via Facebook, Twitter, and in-store listings.

Fundraising

An *ad hoc* fundraising committee looks at ideas to raise money to support the Friends and the Collection.

The Merrill Collection, which was originally called the Spaced Out Library and later renamed for its founder, the late Judith Merrill, is one of the world's foremost open-access collections of Speculative, SF, and Fantasy Fiction & pop-culture, all made available to the greater public.

The Collection houses an astonishing 75,000 items, and is always growing. In the stacks you will find century-old and modern-day fiction; first and rare editions, original artworks, TPB graphic works and comic collections; 1930s pulps and this month's magazines; fanzines; authors' correspondence; critical essays, reference works and compendia—and original manuscripts donated by authors such as Phyllis Gottlieb and Cory Doctorow.

The Merrill Collection was recently chosen as reason #42 to visit the Toronto Public library. To view the video for Reason #42 and all the other reasons to visit TPL please visit www.tpl100.ca



Collection Head Lorna Toolis holding a first edition of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Photo courtesy of Do-Ming Lum.

The Friends of the Merrill Collection is a volunteer organization providing support to the Collection through paid memberships, donations, sponsorship of related events such as readings, book launches & signings, panel discussions, and the publication of *Sol Rising*.

Memberships & donations to the FotM underwrite events and help the Collection acquire materials it otherwise could not afford. We invite you to support the Merrill Collection by joining or by making a donation on our website: friendsofmerril.org/donate