

Sol Rising

Summer 2017 FREE

Issue # 53



Sol Rising

Spring 2017

Issue #53

ISSN: 1199-2123

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

This newszine is provided free of charge. All material credited herein is Copyright 2017 (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.

Sol Rising 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 SF, fantasy, gaming materials, graphic novels, and other related items.

FOMC Committee

Senior Department Head
Sephora Hosein

Chair
Alicia Freeborn

Vice Chair
Oliver Brackenbry

Treasurer
Jana Panicia

Secretary
Donald Simmons

**Manager of Special
Collections**
Mary Rae Shantz

**Manager of Rare Books
and Archives**
Gianna Babando

Members at Large
Mary Armstrong
Barbara Kwasniewski
Michael Matheson
Philip Young
Kate Jeffrey

Digital

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



Artwork

Original cover art *Queen's Park 3017* is provided by Quentin VerCetty. It appears courtesy of the artist, and is used with their explicit permission.

Find more of their work at:
www.vercetty.com

Cover image is
©Quentin VerCetty

Printing done by
Adfactor
www.adfactor.com

Contents

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

The Collection

- 4 Dominica's Fantasy Fiction Donation
 - 6 Collection Highlights
 - 7 TPL's Digitization Program
 - 9 A Farewell to Collection Head, Lorna Toolis
-

The Friends of the Merril

- 13 The Merril Vote - Soldier of Charity by Astra
 - 15 Pauline Gedge's Stargate by Diane Haddick
 - 19 The Artwork of Quentin VerCetty of VerCetty Made It Studios
 - 21 BSAM Toronto 2016 – Afrofuturist Explorations at OCAD U by Michael Matheson
-

Sol Rising

- 22 Submission Queries & FoM Volunteer Info

Events

July 19th 7pm at the Cloak & Dagger Pub for Lorna Toolis' Retirement Party

Join us while we celebrate Collection Head Emeritis Lorna Toolis as she starts the next chapter of her life. Cash bar, toast at 8 PM.

Oct 22nd -Black Speculative Arts Movement 2017

The Friends of the Merril will have another booth this year and will be hosting an in conversation panel with award winning author Sheree Renee Thomas. More details to be announced on this soon.

Date TBD -Tabletop Gaming for Beginners

More details on this soon.

November-The Northlander Screening

The Northlander, a 2016 film directed by Benjamin Ross Hayden, is a Canadian Fantasy Adventure inspired by historical Métis figure Louis Riel. More details to be announced on this soon.

December -Holiday & CanCon 150 Celebration

We will be ending the year by celebrating Canadian authors and artists of various media and their contributions to the SF, Fantasy, and Speculative genres. More details to be announced on this soon.

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 82,000 items, most of which are stored on compact 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.

>>>>>Dominica's Fantasy Fiction Donation

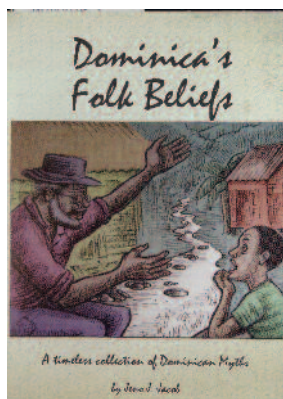


Image courtesy of Annette Mocek

On Tuesday March 7th, 2017, a collection of Fantasy fiction by five Dominican authors (Commonwealth of Dominica), were donated for inclusion in the Toronto Public Library's Merrill Collection. The books were presented under the patronage of Dominica's Trade and Investment Commissioner to Canada, Ms. Frances Delsol.

The books included works of folklore, myth and speculative fiction by five authors who reside in Dominica, or are of Dominican descent, including Roy Sanford, Lionel Levy, Kristine Simelda, Joanne Skerrett, and Jeno Jacob.

The donated books listed below were collected through the efforts of several generous organizations whom the Merrill Collection staff and the Friends of the Merrill Committee would like to thank: The Waitkubuli Writers based in Dominica, River Ridge Press Dominica, Papillote Press, the Canadian Multicultural Inventors Museum and the Piton Noire Dominica Sci-fi/fantasy Writers Collective.

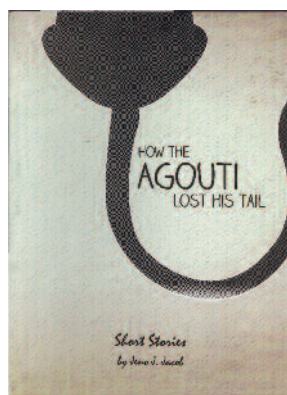


Jacob, Jena J.

Dominica's Folk Beliefs

Commonwealth of Dominica: Cornerstone, Inc.:

Canefield Industrial Estate,
2013

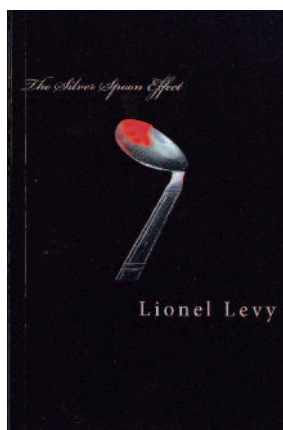


Jacob, Jena J.

How the Agouti Lost his Tail

Commonwealth of Dominica: Cornerstone, Inc.:

Canefield Industrial Estate,
2013



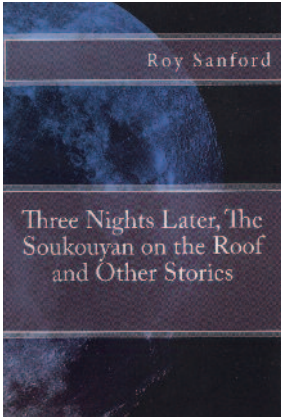
Levy, Lionel

The Silver Spoon Effect

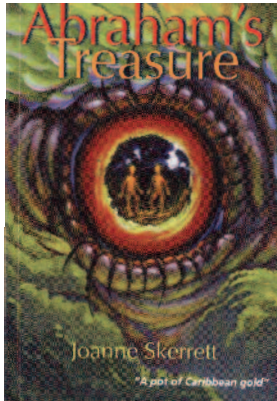
[Place of publication not identified]:

[Publisher not identified],

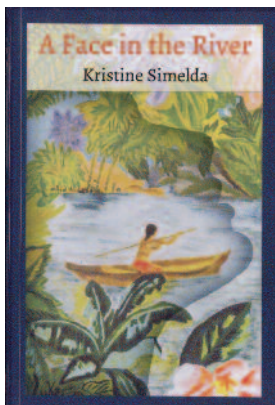
2016.



Sanford, Roy
Three Nights Later, The Soukouyan on the Roof and Other Stories
 [Place of publication not identified]:
 [Publisher not identified],
 2016



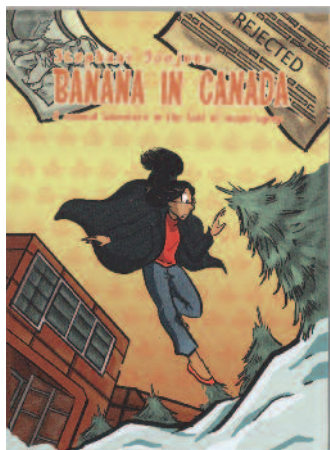
Skerrett, Joanne
Abraham's Treasure
 Roseau, Dominica: Papillote Press,
 2016.



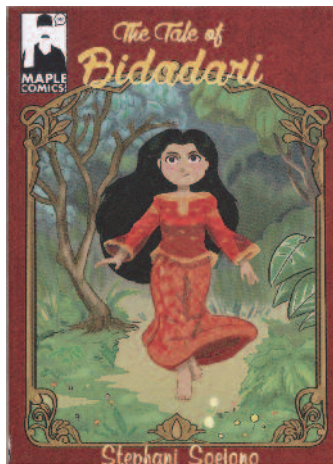
Kristine Simelda
A Face in the River
 Roseau, Dominica: River Ridge Press,
 2016.

>>>>>Collection Highlights

Additional 2016 acquisitions to the Merrill Collection included two comics from Indonesian artist Stephani Soejono. Luckily for us she appears to be a fan of Canada and has dedicated a comic to documenting her experience here in *Banana in Canada: a comical adventure in the land of maple syrup*.



Soejono, Stephani
***Banana in Canada: a comical
adventure in the land of maple syrup***
No publisher, date, location.



Soejono, Stephani
The tale of Bidadari
Purchong, Malaysia: Maple Comic
May 2016

>>>>>TPL's Digitization Program

As part of the Toronto Public Library's digitization program, Merril Collection staff are identifying 50 books per year which are out of copyright and considered significant within the genre. The below books are in the process of being digitized and will be available digitally by the Toronto Public Library later this summer.

Addison, Hugh	<i>The battle of London</i> London: Herbert Jenkins, 1924.
Bierbower, Austin	<i>From monkey to man or society in the tertiary age: a story of the missing link</i> Chicago: Ingersoll Beacon, 1906.
Bisbee, Eugene	<i>The treasure of the ice</i> London & New York: F. Tennyson Neely, 1898.
Bleackley, Horace	<i>Anymoon</i> London & New York: John Lane, 1919.
Bramah, Ernest	<i>The secret of the league: the story of a social war.</i> London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1907.
Burgin, G.B.	<i>The herb of healing</i> London: Hutchinson & Co., 1915.
Campbell, Hazel	<i>The secret brotherhood</i> London: John Long, 1929.
Charles, J.F.	<i>Where is Fairyland?</i> London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co, 1892.
Cher, Marie	<i>The door unlatched</i> New York: Minton, Balch and Co, 1928.

- Clowes, W. Laird ***The Great Peril, and how it was averted***
London: "Offices of Black and White," 1893.
- Collier, John ***Six short stories***
London: Nonesuch Press, 1934.
- Curties, Captain ***Tears of Angels***
Henry London: Sisley's, 1907.
- D'Esperance, E. ***Northern lights and other psychic stories***
London: Office of "Light," 1901.
- de Valliere, George ***Opals from a Mexican mine***
New York: New Amsterdam Book Co., 1896.



>>>>>A Farewell to Collection Head, Lorna Toolis

Lorna Toolis has been a mainstay at the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy (previously named the Spaced Out Library) these past 32 years. She's watched as the Collection grew from a respectable 5000 items, donated by none other than Judith Merrill herself, to its current colossal size of 80,000 and counting.

Lorna oversaw and shepherded the Collection through its renaming, its move to its current location at 239 College street, and its rise to international acclaim.



Lorna Toolis pictured. Image courtesy of Do-Ming Lum

Lorna also built up and nurtured the patrons, authors, and fans into a collection of Friends who have worked hard over the many years to build a community for all who were interested. Without her tireless dedication and sheer love of the genre(s), and community, the Collection would be nowhere near as fantastic as it is today.

We at Sol Rising and the Friends of the Merrill Collection would like to thank Lorna for everything she's done for the Collection and for us. Thank you, Lorna, for always being open and kind to some of the shyest humans to roam this earth. For immediately bringing us into your confidence and in turn strengthening our own. For always being up for any discussion relating to what everyone's been reading. And the rabbit hole that inevitably always followed as you listed off further related resources to consume and seek out!

A few More words from our Friends of Merrill Members

Lorna was always very helpful, thoughtful, and friendly, even towards a nobody like me who would show up with little or no notice for an hour or two after an absence of a year or more, like some small dull erratic object from beyond the Oort Cloud. She would still remember who I was, my name, and what my specialized interests were and would suggest new books in the Collection that might interest me. She made excellent suggestions. I rejoice in her freedom and happiness. **Best Wishes Lorna!**

I also remember her calm and patience in directing the Friends meeting that discussed a new name for the Collection. The meeting was packed, the discussions heated, the room quickly became hot, the back and forth discussions and votes continued for hours. Through it all, Lorna kept things on an even keel bringing things to a successful conclusion with the current official name of the Collection passed overwhelmingly by the attendees. She will be missed.

Congratulations, and an extremely well-deserved Happy Retirement!

-Hari Shanmugadhasan

Congratulations on your retirement, Lorna! May you enjoy many happy years of not filing things!

-Vicki So (former Merrill Collection Page, 2000-2004)

Approximately 13 years ago, a shy, lonely, depressed woman wandered into the Merrill Collection. Lorna (and the rest of the staff) took that woman under their wing and made her part of the family. Two years ago, I went to my very first con. Last year, I celebrated five years on the Friends exec. Definitely part of the family.

-Barbara Kwasniewski

As a fellow librarian (long retired) and a Sci-fan since discovering the pulps at the beginning of the '50s (I was 15), my very best wishes to Lorna on her retirement and my appreciation not merely for her service as a librarian but especially for bringing the Merrill Collection up to being one of the outstanding science-fiction and fantasy collections in the world, an equal partner to children's literature within the Toronto Public Library System. As a both a collector and a published bibliographer of Popular Culture (criminous fiction) who has begun a bibliography of Canadian science-fiction authors I look forward to Lorna long being a resource to all studying and researching the genre.

-David Skene-Melvin

I had the privilege of being the first writer-in-residence at the Merrill Collection since the great Judy Merrill herself. Lorna called me on January 12, 2003, to offer me the job, and I spent from April 30 to June 20, 2003, in that role, during which I critiqued seventy manuscripts. As I said in my report at the conclusion of my residency, "Working with Collection Head Lorna Toolis and her staff was a treat. Their constant professionalism and good humour were a joy." Of course, Lorna had to fight to get a residency at the Merrill; the whole 100-branch Toronto Public Library system was only going to have one writer-in-residence that year. Some astonishingly great talent emerged from that residency, including subsequent Writers of the Future Grand Prize winner Stephen Kotowych; several who went on to publish novels, such as Jane Ann McLachlin and Ryan Oakley; and future Aurora nominees including Tony Pi. It also spawned a fine local writers' workshop, the Fledglings. Those of us old enough to remember the dilapidated Spaced Out Library and its less-than-inviting atmosphere realize that the world-class institution that the Merrill Collection has become is the result of Lorna's passionate hard work and fierce advocacy. I can't think of an aspiring or professional writer in greater Toronto who hasn't benefited from her support and kindness.

-Robert J. Sawyer

My one frustration with Lorna is that I didn't meet her sooner. About eighteen months ago I became a regular at the Merrill Collection, and it wasn't long after that I was looking for a way to volunteer. Lorna swooped in and had no trouble recruiting me for The Friends of Merrill. I didn't just appreciate the chance to help the Collection, I appreciated the chance to better know someone who so plainly had a warm personality, a memory like a steel trap for all things related to her field, and a deep well of enthusiasm for the very noble cause of preserving & promoting works of fiction, as well as their history. Heck, she even shared my hobby of pen & pencil role-playing games! Later I was blown away by how someone who couldn't have more things on her plate still made time to work closely with the Friends of Merrill, and even – unsolicited – offered to help me spread awareness of my first novel.

It's always tempting to canonize someone whose company you'll miss, but I don't think it's over-the-top to say I find Lorna very inspiring. I reckon I'll have reason to be proud if I can be half as savvy, smart, and sweet in my own career as she has been, just as she has every reason to be proud of what she's accomplished in her time as a librarian & archivist. If it wasn't for the Lorna Toolis' of the world the rest of us would know so many fewer stories, while having a much shallower understanding of them, and what are stories but the way we understand our lives? I consider myself quite lucky to have gotten to spend

the time volunteering under her that I have, and hope she'll swing by once in a while for Friends event – when she isn't enjoying her richly deserved retirement!

-Oliver Brakenbury

I've been doing research at the Merrill Collection since the 1980s, when it was known as the Spaced Out Library, and its Head was someone with more enthusiasm than expertise as a librarian. The material wasn't always treated with the care it required, and while someone using the library could be sure of a friendly atmosphere, that didn't mean he or she could be equally sure that the books and periodicals were where they should have been.

Then came Lorna in 1986, and the library was immediately, and unmistakably, in truly expert hands. From the beginning, it was clear that the Spaced Out Library would be run by a consummate professional, someone who both loved the collection and knew how to manage it. Throughout her tenure as Head, she has been the library's champion and leader, always determined to protect it from budgetary and other threats, and providing it with the benefits of her knowledge of librarianship and administration and of her passion for the field. Those who have worked for her came to respect as well as love her, and she showed respect and affection for them, too. I can't imagine any institution having a more definite sense of direction and a better working environment.

I have my own reasons for appreciating what she has done for this library. First, I've always been able to count on getting plenty of guidance and advice from her for my various research projects in fantastic literature; she knew both the collection and the field inside out. Second, she offered the library's facilities, staff, and Friends for the Academic Conference on Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy, which I have Chaired since 1996 and which gained a permanent home at the Merrill Collection in 1997. Thanks to her, the conference has been able to survive and to thrive, and for that I and many other scholars in the field (if I dare speak for them) feel and extend the utmost gratitude. The conference celebrated its twentieth anniversary as a Merrill event this past June, and I hereby dedicate this year's ACCSFF to her. As a friend, a walking encyclopedia of science fiction and fantasy, and a librarian of the first rank, Lorna has meant more to me, and done so in more ways, than I can say.

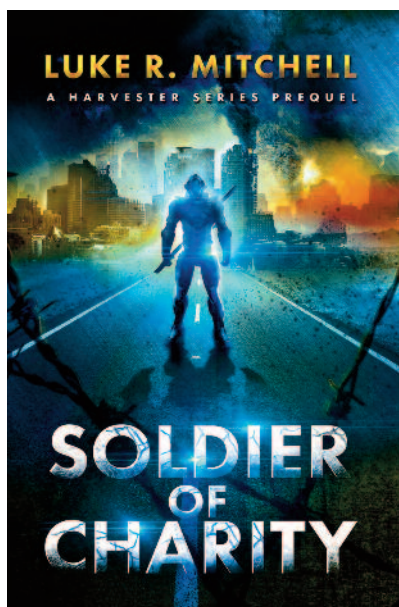
Lorna has made the Merrill Collection the world-class resource that it is, and kept it going and growing through many challenges. Judith Merrill was the source of the library, but for over thirty years Lorna Toolis has been its face, its voice, its heart, and its soul. Thanks, Lorna!

-Allan Weiss

>>>>>The Merrill Vote by Astra

In each issue of Sol Rising, one Merrill staff member or Friend of Merrill member will recommend a book, or several, depending on what they're reading and think people might enjoy. In this issue one of our members has recommended the novel *Soldier of Charity* by Luke R. Mitchell.

Soldier of Charity, A Prequel to the Harvesters Series by Luke R. Mitchell



The blurb: "For six years, young Jarek Slater has wandered the cold remains of a world stricken by nuclear Catastrophe. His only home: a powerful exosuit left to him by a lost generation. His only friend: an artificial intelligence construct named AI.

As civilization has fallen to chaos, Jarek has always survived by keeping his head down. Until he found her.

When Jarek reacts to save one life, he comes to realize the power that's been in his hands all along. Now, in a ruined world, it's up to him to decide who and what is worth fighting for. Because if he doesn't, someone else will."

The world has been in a nuclear winter for 6 years. Our young hero is an orphan, left to fend for himself. With the help of an exosuit containing an AI (Artificial Intelligence) named AI (as in Alfred).

And then, one day, he finds himself playing knight in shining armour to a damsel in distress. Which brings him to the attention of a band of mercenaries. Is this a good thing, or a bad thing? This is a novella I got from one of those “get a bunch of ebooks for free” sites.* Generally speaking, anything you get for free is worth it, or, in other words, you get what you pay for. Generally speaking. This book was most definitely an exception.

I’m going to start with either the most or least important aspect, depending on your point of view - the grammar. And I don’t mean “never end a sentence with a preposition” kind of grammar. I’m talking about the kind that lets me read a story without having to stop and wonder who “he” refers to. The kind that lets you ignore it and concentrate on the story.

Soldier of Charity is a story worth concentrating on.

The amount of world building the author managed to get into this novella was impressive, especially since he managed it without resorting to the dreaded info-dump.

The hero is both likeable and believable, the plot moves along briskly, the other characters are as life-like as possible, and it all hangs together extremely well. I’m very much looking forward to seeing what Mr. Mitchell can do with a novel length work.

* I just looked, and as of now, it’s still available through the author’s website: www.lukermitchell.com

Further Reading in [The Harvesters Series](#):

Red Gambit

Hell to Pay

>>>>>Pauline Gedge's *Stargate* by Diane Haddick

Originally published in 1982; reissued in July 2016 by Chicago Review Press. Several years ago, I read a SF/F title called *Stargate* by Canadian author Pauline Gedge. When I first picked it up, I thought it might be the original story behind the movie and TV series of the same name. Of course, I found out it wasn't. Instead, I found an amazingly original, fascinating story. While it demanded my concentration as the reader, my efforts were rewarded with a story unlike any other I'd ever read. It intrigued me enough to contact the author to ask if she would agree to a longhand Q&A (no email for Ms. Gedge!). She agreed and I hope that this short piece will introduce (or reintroduce) a Canadian author and her most unusual and challenging SF/F work to a new audience!

Ms. Gedge is known primarily as a writer of historical fiction - extraordinary novels (*Child of the Morning*, *The Eagle and the Raven*, and many others) that create exotic, distant worlds and evidence, as well, an intense concern with the nature of the struggle between good and evil. Ms. Gedge says that she's "notoriously bad at coming up with titles, but it seemed that calling the novel *Stargate* was appropriate considering the characters are able to leave their world and enter others by gates scattered throughout my imaginary universe. Such journeys took them temporarily outside the restrictions of space and time enclosing their own planets. The gates figure largely in the action of the book and finally become of vital importance, so *Stargate* it had to be." She couldn't know, of course, that a movie and TV series would appear shortly after the publication of her novel. "Many people who knew me or knew who I was offered me their congratulations. The confusion made a bit of a buzz at the time and I was sorry to have to disabuse everyone!"

Although the book shares a title with a major motion picture and its spin-offs, that's where the similarity ends. In Gedge's story, a great, star-spanning civilization is being gradually invaded and its member worlds attacked by their original creator – now an evil entity Gedge names the Unmaker - who wants to destroy his creation. The main characters are immortal; they are Sun-Lords, bound into symbiotic relationships with the stars around which their planetary systems orbit. As such, they are incredibly powerful, but against the Creator even their power may not be enough.

As worlds fall, the surviving Sun-Lords desperately search for an answer to the spreading chaos, and isolating each world seems to be the only solution. Will any of the Sun-Lords survive? Can any of their worlds escape destruction? What will the new human condition look like for the mortals who remain? Is the story ultimately a hopeful one about the will to survive against almost insurmountable odds? Here is the way Ms. Gedge describes how this fantastic story evolved:

"While I was doing something routine in my kitchen one afternoon, my mind was suddenly flooded with a startlingly vivid vision. I saw a man in the act of locking the doors to a vast, empty palace, then walking away from it down a flight of stone steps towards a forest. I knew that the man was more than a man. He was immortal. I knew that he was sad. In fact I was filled with such a sense of grief and loss that I stopped what I was doing, went into my living room, and sat down. The name of the man that came to me was Danarion and I knew that he was waiting for something. Out beyond the palace was a world of mortals over whom he ruled, but 'ruled' was the wrong word because this was a world without the need for morality, a place of complete innocence, harmony, without the slightest taint of evil.

But what was his story? Where had the inhabitants of the palace gone? What great tragedy had overtaken them? For I knew that their story was tragic. Could I plot a novel from scratch? I was working blind, relying on intuition. I had no historical figure on whom to hang a plot. *Stargate* became my first sally into pure fiction. I very soon realized as I wrote that I was delving into the nature of perfection, into an uncorrupted universe populated by those whose very innocence made them vulnerable to a powerful being determined to destroy them. I invented a creature I called the Unmaker, who had created this universe but was now bent on destroying it by introducing a dark negative into what was positive and pure. Everything I believe in became distilled in the pages...."

Does Danarion realize that this is the end of the Sun-Lords and what it means for the future...a future that would belong to mortals and how this might be a good thing?

Copyrighted Material

PAULINE GEDGE

"A remarkable blend of gripping entertainment and haunting ideas that linger long after the book has been put down."

—GLOBE AND MAIL



STARGATE

100 CLUB

Copyrighted Material

"The perfection of the worlds before the Worldmaker became the Unmaker was a bland, tasteless state, stale in its changelessness, stifling in its orderedness. I am wounded, my immortality is decaying, and I embrace this wound, I welcome it." Danarion does seem to understand the value of the war he and his fellow immortals had fought to save their universe and, in spite of all the loss, "the end result was a step into a future desired by the one perfect creature above even the Unmaker, and therefore all right." Toward the end, a White Light reassures Danarion that the Sun-Lords have fought well against "a terror that is stronger than anything but me."

"You know who I am. I stand on the edge. I am outside time and beyond all space. For me there is no such thing as a beginning, for beginning and ending are one and the same. There is no future and no past. There is only an eternal now. I have been waiting for you to understand."

I asked Ms. Gedge if this voice - the only power stronger than the Unmaker - is the voice of God? She replied "perhaps." She says she believes in "a Supreme Creator in whose hands everything will ultimately be well. But *Stargate* is not a religious work although it may be seen as having religious overtones. It's about ordinary struggles lifted into a cosmic realm where I had a very wide panorama against which I could have my characters fight and fail and maybe succeed, depending on how one views perfection."

When it was first published, Mary Renault wrote that "*Stargate* is a remarkable and potent piece of mythmaking carried through with sustained fertile imagination. Originality of this stature is rare in its genre." But when asked if she'll write another SF/F novel, Ms. Gedge explains that she "has no desire to unless my head happens to bloom suddenly with another strange and irresistible vision [and that is] unlikely."

Stargate is a unique example of the literary craft in the Scifi/Fantasy genre, and though she describes the process as difficult, Ms. Gedge also "regards it as some of my best work and I'm very proud of it." I recommend this book both for its philosophical content and for the skill with which the author presents her characters and their dilemma. It's a marvelous novel on both levels, and one I'm going to be reading and re-reading for years.

Stargate is part of the "Rediscovered Classics" series from Chicago Review Press. For more information visit www.chicagoreviewpress.com.

>>>>>The Artwork of Quentin VerCetty of VerCetty Made It Studios

The Artist Profile's that have appeared in our past issues of Sol Rising usually include additional thumbnails of their work. In this case however, the cover art titled, "Queen's Park 3017" created by Quentin VerCetty is so beautiful, that I decided it alone should be given the sole focus in this issue (which I encourage you to look at again).

My favourite part about being the Editor for Sol Rising is the opportunity it gives me to seek out new artists, and I know I've said it before but this has to be my favourite piece yet.

The statue presented in the image depicts a black centaurian heroine equipped with baby, battle armour and books, all three of which she is the keeper of. Quentin described the piece as a speculative, afrofuturistic visual metaphor/commentary on the caretakers and nurturers of the Black Community, including a projection on ways of claiming space and decolonization.

To ensure we do Quentin and his work justice, please see an excerpt from his website's bio:

“Quentin VerCetty is an award-winning contemporary griot (story-teller), new media artist and art educator who knows no boundaries when it comes to his artistic expression. His work includes holographic projections, digital printed sculptural work, painting, illustration, mural works, photography, graphic design, spoken word poetry and West African Drumming and he is still learning other creative outlets to express his ideas and feelings...

Recently obtaining his Bachelors in Fine Arts from Ontario College of Art Design University, his current body of work is around the motif of activism and using futuristic lens and science fiction narratives to address issues of representation, youth generation inclusion, immigration, mobility and alienation and numerous other social justice issues

Using semiotics as visual metaphors his work also explores the usage of memory and technology (including the body) in alternative realities and spaces from the contemporary or from the past. Always drawing from in depth researching and making cross references. He makes connections from different African and Caribbean cultures, traditions and personalities while utilizing aesthetics from classical European art often from the Baroque and Rococo era. The narratives in his work although speculative is meant to speak to ways we can advance towards an anti-oppressive, anti-racist and xenophobic free future.”

The Friends of Merrill are hoping to further explore these topics with Quentin in some future programming, including partnering again this year with the Black Speculative Arts Movement annual convention scheduled for this fall, of which he is the organizer. For more information on VerCetty Make It Studios and Quentin VerCetty’s many projects please visit:

To read and see more of Quentin's work you can visit the below sites:

www.vercetty.com

www.facebook.com/qcetty

www.instagram.com/qcetty/

www.facebook.com/blackSpeculativeArtsMovement/

>>>>>BSAM Toronto 2016 – Afrofuturist Explorations at OCAD University by Michael Matheson

On October 21 and 22, 2016, Black Speculative Arts Movement: Toronto transformed OCAD University into an Afrofuturist forum. Primarily an American series of conventions focused on Afrofuturism, Afrofuturist art, black comics and film, and held in academic institutions throughout the United States, BSAM Toronto brings the movement more local. Billed as a “Toronto/Canadian centred dialogue around the improvement of Black and Afrocentric presence in Speculative and Science Fiction and all creative roles and outlets,” as per BSAM:

Toronto’s Eventbrite page, the Toronto expansion of BSAM is helmed by Quentin VerCetty (BSAM Toronto’s Executive Coordinator), and the Friends of the Merrill Collection had the pleasure of acting as one of the event’s many excellent sponsors.

The Friends had the opportunity to engage with attendees and watch the event unfold, attending panels, short film screenings, and talks (keynote and otherwise) as able around our own stints in the vendors area – another lively and much welcome aspect to the fest. If this year’s gathering is anything like last year’s, then we can only look forward to seeing where the Canadian expansion of the BSAM arts convention goes next.

BSAM: Toronto’s extraordinary lineup of artists, writers, creators, booksellers, cosplayers, and academics included international and local names, and was far too voluminous to list here. But for a visual record of attendees and participants, the following [link](#) has you covered.

And for those seeking a better understanding of the formative elements and history of BSAM, Amanda Parris’ “[Marvel’s Black Panther is Just the Start. Why a New Movement in Black Arts is Coming to Canada,](#)” is an excellent primer and examination of both.

BSAM 2017 is currently calling for submissions for cosplayers, art installations and vendors for the event. Email Quentin VerCetty for more information at qvercetty@gmail.com.

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 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 and libraries 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, 319 College St.
(416)-533-9168,
www.beguiling.com

Toronto Reference Library
789 Yonge St., 416-395-5577
torontopubliclibrary.ca

Volunteer with the Friends

The FoM are always looking for new volunteers. If interested, please check out the positions listed below and contact friendsofmerril@gmail.com

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 newszine, 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/Programming

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



Friends of the Merrill member & volunteer Donald Simmons celebrated his 20th year on the Executive Committee. The Friends would like to thank him for all of his time and effort over the years!

Memberships and 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

