

# Sol Rising

Winter 2021

FREE

ISSUE # 55



Art by Sylvan Parkes

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Winter 2021

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## Artwork

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## Sol Rising Production

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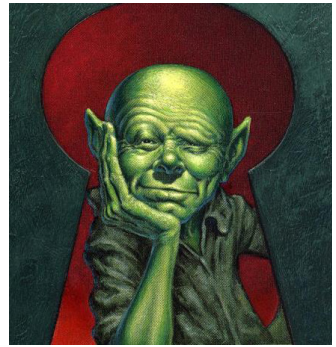
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Sol Rising is also available in PDF at

[friendsofmerril.org](http://friendsofmerril.org).

**The Friends of the Merrill Collection** is a volunteer organization which supports and promotes the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy, a public access collection consisting of SF, Fantasy, gaming materials, graphic novels, out of print materials, and other related items.

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# The Collection

The ever-growing Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy resides on the third floor of the Lillian H. Smith Library and boasts over 80,000 items, many of which are stored on compact stacks that allow for the Collection's continued expansion. Considerable effort is made to seek out and implement the best possible conservation and preservation methods for all materials. The collection includes materials that are old and rare – in some cases one-of-a-kind – and also contemporary items, including books, art, graphic novels, pulps, periodicals, and more. Materials are stored in optimal environmental conditions, controlling temperature, heat, humidity, and light levels. Knowledgeable and dedicated staff are available to assist with inquiries and suggestions.

## Reopening and the 50th Anniversary of the Merrill Collection

By Sephora Henderson, Senior Department Head – Merrill Collection and Osborne Collection

The Merrill Collection reopened to the public on Sept. 14, 2020 after being closed for six months to support the City of Toronto's efforts to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Staff returned to work a few weeks prior, in August 2020, to start preparing the space to welcome customers again. Both staff and customers were happy to be back in the space after such an unprecedented closure.

After the Collection closed in March 2020, staff continued to work from home, creating content to share in blogs and on social media, doing research, participating in professional development, and also to continue work on content celebrating the 50th anniversary of the collection.

Upon reopening, several new measures have been put into practice, in order to provide as safe as possible an environment for both staff and the public, while



allowing us to continue to do what we do best – provide excellent customer service and access to one of the world’s greatest collections of SF/F materials anywhere. Customers are asked to book an appointment in order to use the space, and that can be done in person, on the phone, or by email. Time can be booked in advance or customers can walk in, although there are fewer seats than before in order to allow physical distancing. Appointments can be booked in 2–hours blocks and customers are welcome to stay longer if there is space. Study tables, chairs, and lockers are sanitized after use, and collection materials are placed in quarantine for 4–7 days after use. All visitors are asked to wear a mask, and the staff are wearing them too – and rest assured we are smiling at you from behind them, even if you can’t tell!

Plans were well underway before closure to launch a spectacular exhibit at the Toronto Reference Library TD Gallery, to celebrate 50 years of the Merrill Collection. While those plans have certainly been delayed, we do expect the show to open at some point in the future when it is safe to do so, and in the mean time, staff have been very busy creating content to share virtually, to mark this milestone year. The first in our series of online offerings is a wonderful interview with former head of collection and two present staff members, who share their insights and recollections. <https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/local-history-genealogy/2020/11/merril-collection-at-50-stories-from-the-spaced-out-library.html>

The Merrill Collection page on the Toronto Public Library website has a branch new look, with more streamlined navigation and mobile-friendly formatting. New to the site are some of the finding aids that have previously been available only in-person at the Merrill Collection, including a list of graphic novels and manuscripts, and we are working on making the series and sequels list, and the role playing game list also available. <https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/merril/>

We hope customers will check the website regularly for updates, and visit as they are able. Staff are available for questions and assistance, and happy to help.

# Highlights from the Collection



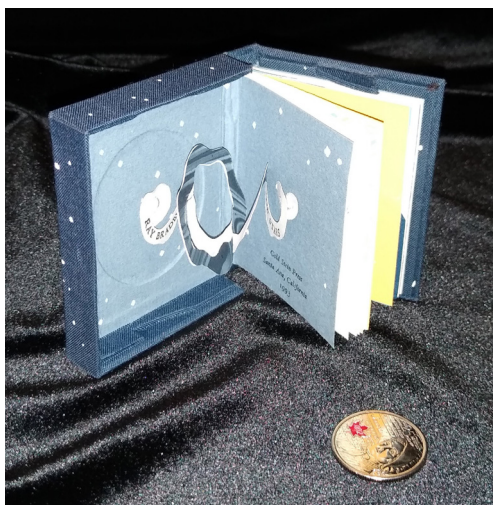
Edgar Rice Burroughs, *A Princess of Mars*, Deluxe Manuscript limited edition, 2019.

*A Princess of Mars* was the first novel in Burroughs's *Barsoom* series and was first serialized in *All-Story Magazine* from February 1912 to July 1912. This leatherbound, hardcover edition of ERB's 1911 novel is illustrated with 20 colour plates by Schoonover, Frazetta, Whelan, Abbott, Manchess, and Miller, which are reproduced from earlier editions,

contains several new paintings. There are also replicas of Burroughs's manuscripts, notes and correspondence, a numbered silver medallion depicting Princess Dejah Thoris, and a replica of ERB's favourite pen.

Ray Bradbury, *The Stars*, a poem, illustrated by Joseph D'Ambrosio. Santa Ana, California: Gold Stein Press, 1993.

This captivating miniature clothbound pop-up book in its tiny clamshell case is one of only 95 copies handcrafted by celebrated book artist, Joseph D'Ambrosio (1934–2009). This is the artist's proof copy. The poem, which ponders the role of the stars in inspiring human thought, is inscribed by Ray Bradbury to the founder and publisher of Lord John Press, Mr. Herb Yellin.



“Shattered”. Original acrylic painting by Joe DeVito, acrylic on gesso-ed artist’s board. Copyright 2020 by the artist. Commercial rights to Doc Savage owned by Condé Nast. Donation of Mr. David Cohen.

This painting, tentatively named “Shattered”, was specially commissioned by Mr. David Cohen, a long-time patron and benefactor of the Merrill Collection. Mr. Cohen’s passion is the Doc Savage stories written by Kenneth Robeson (pseudonym of Lester Dent, Will Murray, and others) and publishing in the pulp magazines. In consultation with Will Murray, Mr. Cohen commissioned a cover for a new story yet to be published. The painting depicts Doc Savage and two companions as seen through a pane of glass riddled with bullet holes.



The donation also includes a folio of concept notes and sketches showing the process of composition, and several signed prints of the painting, with and without the bullet holes.

# Fifty Years, Nine New Martians

The Friends recently decided to create some fun variations on our original mascot, the cover illustration for *Martians, Go Home* from a repainting by Frank Kelly Freas. Nine designs were commissioned from the excellent Peter Violini, who you can find at [www.peterviolini.com](http://www.peterviolini.com) and on Twitter as [@petarvee](https://twitter.com/petarvee).



Each Martian, after the new style version of the classic, represents a genre or activity related to the Merrill Collection's archives - SciFi, Fantasy, Horror, Graphic Novels, Role-Playing Games, Reading, Writing, and Art. The idea is to use them in Sol Rising, online, and in whatever physical formats make sense. To begin with, we've printed some buttons!





Each button is 1.25 inches or a little bigger than a toonie.

A hundred classic design buttons will be given away - first come, first served - at the Merrill Collection front desk, which is also where you can purchase the full set of nine buttons for \$10. All proceeds go toward organizing events, printing Sol Rising, and providing the Collection additional funds for purchasing.



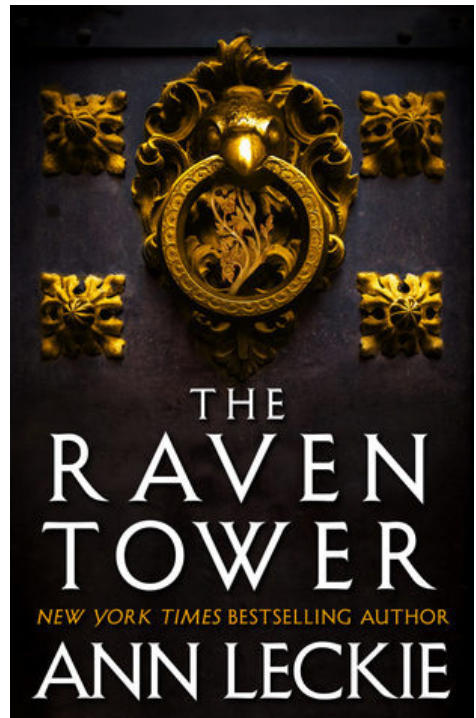
# Staff Picks

Ann Leckie, *The Raven Tower*, Orbit/  
Hachette, 2019.

By Kimberly Hull

Ann Leckie likes to write a twisty tale, and from the utterly unique first-person narrator, to the satisfying but unexpected conclusion, Leckie continues to surprise. Very few characters are as they initially appear. Although it seems to be a retelling of a familiar story, this only overlays and echoes a deeper and more profound narrative. It is a story of primordial gods, betrayals, and the manipulation of mortals.

Our story begins when a young man arrives home to take the reigns of power from his father, only to find that his father has disappeared and his uncle has usurped authority. “Hamlet?”, you say? Well, yes, but the “Hamlet” of this story is *not* the main character. The book is divided into two narrative streams; one set in the “present” and the second in the far past, moving forward at a measured pace. The two narratives braid together at the end of the plot, tying up and resolving the conflicts of both the mortals and the narrator; a deeply sympathetic and compassionate character who is both seemingly wise, and yet naïve. Leckie does not spoon-feed her readers, but rather challenges them with an unusual narrative style and invites them to take a deeper dive into some little-known Norse mythology, and hints at others, even more ancient archetypal links. I found myself thinking about this novel for some time afterwards, and continue to find more complexity within it.

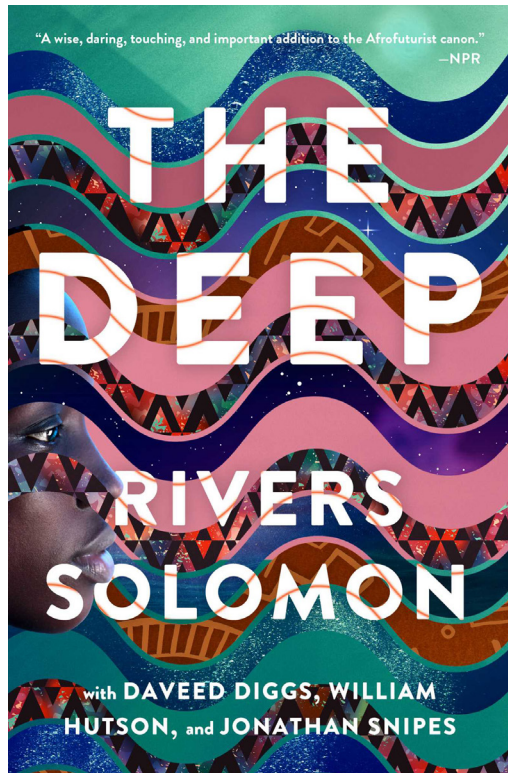


Rivers Solomon with Daveed Diggs, William Hutson and Jonathan Snipes, *The Deep*, Saga Press, 2019.

By Myrna Scully-Ashton

*The Deep* is a rap song turned novella, which imagines a world where the children of enslaved African women are thrown overboard and became mermaids who formed a utopian society. The story started life as a song, which the rap group, *clipping*, (who are credited as authors of the novella) wrote for a 2017 afrofuturism-themed episode of *This American Life*. Solomon skillfully translates and expands upon the song. They manage to pack evocative world-building and a heartbreaking portrayal

of intergenerational trauma into a mere 166 pages. The novella focuses on Yetu, a mermaid or “wajinru”, who is a historian tasked with remembering her people’s painful past. Solomon has a poet’s command of language and manages to lyrically describe Yetu’s struggles and the memories of fellow wajinru. As a fan of mermaid mythos, I appreciated how the book gave new relevance to classic elements of mermaid and siren stories.



# New Podcast: Unknown Worlds of the Merrill Collection

By Oliver Brackenbury

There's a new podcast in town, *Unknown Worlds of the Merrill Collection*! Made by Friends of Merrill members Chris Dickie (producer) and Oliver Brackenbury (host), each episode features interviews with special guests about subjects related to our beloved collection of science fiction, speculation, and fantasy.

They've recorded an eight episode first season, with new episodes going up each Monday. You can find them at <https://unknownworlds.podbean.com> or by subscribing through any podcast app, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, or Podbean. Episodes will also be shared through the Friends' [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#) accounts.

The first episode is all about the collection itself, as discussed with veteran of the Merrill, Annette Mocek. Listen to learn how acclaimed sci-fi writer Judith Merrill transformed a small "Spaced Out Library" into one of the world's largest collections of genre fiction!

If you enjoy the show, please share it around. If there's sufficient interest then Chris & Oliver will look into doing a second season. There's still so much great stuff to talk about, and so many interesting people to discuss it with!



# Interview with Sylvan Parkes, Sol Rising Cover Artist

Interview conducted by  
Ann Nam-Tran Le

Sylvan Parkes displayed his work at the Black Speculative Arts Movement Convention 2019, in collaboration with the Merrill Collection. My friend gave me his business card from the event and I contacted him. What struck me about his art were his depictions of space and I thought it would suit Judith Merrill's fondness of outer worlds.

## ***Tell the readers about yourself.***

Hey, the name is Sylvan Parkes, but I go by "Bigz Sylver". I'm a local artist in Toronto who love to sketch, paint, etc. (I love art). It's such a great form of self expression - no matter what medium you use or what form of art you do. My art has gotten me through some of the toughest times but also, causes most of them. It can be a double-edge blade at times but I wouldn't have it any other way (on some days). I love how it pushes me to do my best but keeps me humble. Art is something I doubt I could live without, that's for sure.

That's it for me. If you ever wanna check out my work at [www.instagram.com/bigz\\_sylver](https://www.instagram.com/bigz_sylver), I'll be happy to show you.

## ***Why do you make art and how do you approach it?***

I make art because it helps me calm down and it conveys emotions without typical communication with others. It started out as just as something I liked and as I felt more of a connection to my work. It became something more.





***What inspires you to include elements of science fiction and fantasy in your art?***

I've always been into fantasy, science fiction, and the idea of mysteries or mystical things. And giving form to it is something beautiful to me. Not knowing what's out there lets imagination run wild. I like the imagination and creativity that can come from human mind which is amazing.

***What kind of concepts would you like to explore more of in your art?***

I want to put in-depth and detailed designs in my pieces, and more imagination and fantasy. My question was always been "What's out there?" but now, it's "Why couldn't this be out there?" I also want to get into storytelling or graphic novels.

# The Appendix N Reading List

By Oliver Brackenbury

In 1979, TSR Games published the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Dungeon Masters Guide. Way in the back, wedged between monsters to magically summon and the encumbrances of adventuring equipment, is a noteworthy piece of literary history – The Appendix N Reading List.

This list contains authors and works which were “of particular inspiration” to Gary Gygax when he co-created Dungeons & Dragons (D&D). Gary recommends them both as inspiration for creating your own adventures and for the pure enjoyment of reading them. As a lifelong roleplaying game hobbyist who’s been working through this reading list for a couple of years now, mostly by reading at the Merrill Collection, I’d like to extend the same recommendation.

Two of the most noteworthy qualities of this era of fiction, which exists in speculative publications ranging from approximately 1920 to 1979, are *imagination* and *pacing*.

When it comes to imagination, I’ve heard it said by scholars of Appendix N literature that fantasy writing was much more codified after D&D spread across the public consciousness and I’m inclined to agree, though I think everybody - including Gary Gygax - trying to imitate Tolkien played a role as well. This sort of house style where “there are elves with pointy ears because that’s how that goes” and “this guy casts a fireball because that’s what magic is” etc. you see over and over again can be dull and, by definition, limiting. It also tends to create great big door-wedges of books, usually stacked up in trilogies that could break a camel’s back.

So imagine how liberating it can be to go back to when short stories and novellas are plentiful, with novels averaging 200 pages. There are long, loosely-connected series of stories starring the same characters, but actual trilogies are rare beyond one featuring a certain fellowship.

There's also a far stronger feeling that *anything* really can happen. Other genres, especially science fiction, are frequently mixed into fantasy without any sense of it being a big deal. These stories also *move*, man, with more events found in, say, an average Conan short story than many contemporary fantasy novels trying to fill out that mandatory trilogy, or the hoped-for seven season television adaptation.

True, "Things were better back then" is by definition a regressive attitude. However, there's no denying different eras produce different cultural products. The Appendix N era's swift, imaginative, and *fun* style is notably different from now and – depending on what you're hungry for – arguably better or worse. It's my argument that they show a greater creative fluidity, expressed with a more impressive sense of economy than most of what's come after.

It's not an era without its common flaws, of course. As you can imagine, it's a very white, male canon. Meanwhile, that same sense of creatively swinging for the bleachers, often combined with writers who were sometimes writing to satisfy their landlord more than their muse, could very well lead to the occasional dud. As one self-deprecating Appendix N giant has said:

*"I think of myself as a bad writer with big ideas, but I'd rather be that than a big writer with bad ideas - or ideas that have gone bad."*

– Michael Moorcock, 1963

It's a fun quote, but I'd argue Moorcock is being hard on himself. Some Appendix N writers are good AND have big ideas, of course. Lord Dunsany, Robert E Howard, Andre Norton – among others – all come to mind. Here is the link to the reading list so you can go exploring and decide for yourself who are the greats.

[http://www.digital-eel.com/blog/ADnD\\_reading\\_list.htm](http://www.digital-eel.com/blog/ADnD_reading_list.htm)

Going beyond Appendix N, you may wish to check out the new sword & sorcery magazine *Tales From The Magician's Skull*. Even the paper itself is high quality and it takes the Appendix N ethos to a novel, logical conclusion by featuring a section in the back with game rules for the monsters, spells, and magic items featured in the preceding stories. *The Appendix N Book Club* podcast is also worth your time, each episode discussing the story and the gaming inspiration possibilities of a book by an author from the list.



# **Can\*Con: The convention everyone wants to attend, even if they don't know it yet**

By Jana Panicia

When a writer friend of mine suggested that we go to Can\*Con in 2019, I agreed. My hope was that the Ottawa convention would give me a big dose of inspiration.

My verdict? Wow. After the convention, I think my exact words were, “I can’t believe I didn’t come to this convention sooner!”

If I had to define it, I would say Can\*Con is the convention that every SF&F writer wants to attend – even if they don’t know it yet. Really.

Here’s why.

First off, the convention was purposely small. They capped attendees at 450, making most panels feel like a gathering of friends. Attendees, panelists, special guests: I saw people chatting everywhere – in the dealers’ room, hanging out in the hotel lobby, going for coffee (or more accurately - trying to find an open Starbucks or Tim Hortons in the dead-zone that is downtown Ottawa on a Sunday morning). I had lots of opportunities to see people I hadn’t seen in ages and to meet many new folks who I am now keeping in touch with.

Second, the convention was impeccably organized. There were panels, workshops, kaffeeklatsches (I dare you to try and spell that without looking it up like I just did). On the Friday, I went to a great workshop called, ‘Draw Your Way Out’, where science fiction author Julie Czerneda shared one way to work through plot issues in a story (a method I’ve found incredibly useful since). Over the course of the October weekend, I attended more panels than I have at all of the other conventions I have been to in five years combined. The panels were thought-provoking and diverse, ranging from worldbuilding with a focus on government and politics to economic structures and literary criticism.

There was even a special track entitled ‘Disruptive Technologies, Disruptive Environment’ aimed at improving science literacy. The track was well curated with top notch subject matter experts talking on several relevant topics, including technology advancements like artificial intelligence and sustainability and climate change. The session I found most illuminating was a discussion of findings related to a study of racial bias in existing AI systems (e.g. facial recognition programs).

Third, the convention was entertaining and, dare I say it, fun! The Aurora Awards ceremony had all the glitz and glamour of the Oscars. Okay, I might be exaggerating a little, but Can\*Con really made it an event to be celebrated, complete with people looking glamorous, a photo wall backdrop, and plenty of appetizers. To offset the more formal Auroras, there was also a packed karaoke party that I am pretty sure drew everyone at the convention at some point.

There’s no doubt that Can\*Con chairs Derek Künsken and Marie Bilodeau earned their Aurora Award for Best Fan Organizational. Huge kudos to them for creating such an exceptional, welcoming, and truly inspiring convention focused clearly on SF&F writing.

If there’s one out-of-town convention you need to attend: Can\*Con is it.

[www.can-con.org](http://www.can-con.org)

# Judith Merrill and the Birth of the Merrill Collection

By Steve Chatterton

In 2020, it was 50th anniversary of the Merrill Collection. What better way to mark the occasion than looking back at the remarkable woman who started it all back in 1970, Judith Merrill?

Merril was born as Judith Grossman in Boston 1923. A year after graduating high school in New York, Merrill married Dan Zissman, who she'd recently met at a Trotskyite Fourth of July picnic. She gave birth to her first daughter, Merrill, in 1942.

Zissman had a hand in sparking his wife's interest in science fiction. She had never been interested in the genre before, being put off by the magazines' gaudy cover art. But then, she was ill for a while and ran out of reading material. Desperate, she turned to her husband's magazines – and was hooked.

She hung around with a notorious group of upstart writers known as the Futurians. Members included Isaac Asimov and Donald Wollheim. Futurians Robert Lowndes and John Michel encouraged Merrill to write fiction herself, and she published her first mainstream story in 1945.

Soon, Merrill separated from Zissman, adopted her penname, edited her first SF fanzine, and started living with another Futurian – prolific SF author Frederik Pohl. About the time, Theodore Sturgeon suggested she should write SF stories, too.

Soon after, Merrill cornered John W. Campbell, the editor of *Astounding*, at a party and told him she'd written a story that was too good for him. He replied that if it was that good, he couldn't afford to buy. But buy it he did, and Merrill's first SF story, *That Only a Mother* was published in the June 1948 issue.

Merril and Pohl started the Hydra Club, a social gathering for SF writers and fans, out of their apartment. They married in November 1948, and Merrill had her second daughter, Ann Pohl, in 1950. Merrill published more stories and began working on novels with C.M. Kornbluth – best known for his collaborations with Pohl, including *The Space Merchants* (1953). Their first book together, *Mars Child*, was serialized in 1951 under the penname Cyril Judd.

Asimov remembered Merrill was the kind of girl who'd pat you right back if you patted her rear end. She remembered him as a man of a hundred hands who wouldn't clue in. She didn't pat Asimov's butt – she grabbed him between the legs.

Merril and Pohl separated in 1952, and Merrill went on to co-found the Milford Writer's Workshop in 1955 with Damon Knight and James Blish. By 1956, she was editing a notable series of *Year's Best* anthologies.

During the 60s, Merrill married again – this time to Walter M. Miller for three years – published several novels and stories, and edited the books column for *Fantasy and Science Fiction*. She also got increasingly involved in the anti-war movement. In Chicago, protesting the 1968 Democratic National Convention, Merrill saw firsthand just how far America had slipped toward authoritarianism.

Returning from Chicago, Merrill took a detour through Canada. While spending a few days in Toronto, she met the poet Dennis Lee, known for *Alligator Pie*, who told her about Rochdale College, the student-run school on Bloor Street. Intrigued, Merrill returned to the states and packed immediately for Canada again. And her extensive collection of SF books and magazines came with her.

In 1969, Merrill was the Resource Person on Writing and Publishing at Rochdale. She helped build a library there, seeding it in part with her own collection, knowing she'd lose some titles in the process. Things seemed to be going well, but within a year, Rochdale was out of money and closed the library. Merrill, who shared a home on Beverley Street with at least five others, had to make room for her collection – over 5,000 titles – in her already cramped bedroom.

She tried selling her collection, but no one made any serious offers. Then Harry Campbell from the Toronto Public Library suggested she donate everything so the library could build a special SF collection around it.



In 1970, the Spaced Out Library opened on Palmerston Avenue. It later moved to St. George St. in 1976, where it was renamed the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy in 1990, and found a permanent home at the Lillian H. Smith branch in 1995.

Merril spent the rest of her life in Canada. In the late 70s, she hosted *Doctor Who* on TVO, encouraged the formation of the Hydra North writers' group in 1984, and edited the first edition of the *Tesseracts* anthology in 1985. She was also active in the Canadian peace movement, once going to Parliament Hill dressed as a witch to cast a hex in protest of cruise missile testing.

Judith Merrill drew her last breath in 1997 at the age of 74. Later, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America named her Author Emeritus. She was also inducted into the Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame in 2013. Today, she is remembered as a trailblazer who inspired countless women become speculative fiction writers and editors, and her namesake collection has grown to over 80,000 titles. It's one of the largest public collection of fantastic literature in the world.

# Better to Have Loved: The Life of Judith Merrill: A Review

By Ann Nam-Tran Le

Judith Merrill didn't finish a work of herself that she wanted to leave behind. It is a mixture of her own autobiographic writing and a selection of letters and essays which was assembled and edited by her granddaughter, Emily Pohl-Weary. Though it wasn't completed, I believe it shows Merrill who lived life according to her heart. Many thanks to Emily Pohl-Weary for her endeavours.

It's a ride. There is great deal of her opinions on Science Fiction and being a writer of it, but also about her life experiences, which I was drawn to. My favourite parts are her fight for the custody of her children, her realization of the call to become a writer over her life, and her curious view of Toronto as an egg and her home. Her life comprised of her defying roles, defending herself, and identifying her needs and relationships on a whim of her passions. Having that perspective on life, I find it underlies her fiction and her thoughts for the future.

It's weird stepping into New York Science Fiction scene of the 30s and 40s, or reading what Toronto was like in the 70s, because as a first-generation Canadian, I was curious. I was surprised when I read about her views, which still reverberate today - about cooperate structure, harm done to the planet, and repeating history. I have to remind myself it wasn't that long ago, but compared to the speed of many advancements we made in just a few years, it seems so. I can't imagine to have a conversation with her on these topics but her tenacity is imprinted on me.

If you are an SF writer and curious about Judith Merrill, but don't have time for an entire book, I recommend the essay, *A Message to Some Martians*. (Psst... the book is available in the Merrill Collection.) This essay encompasses her message, as a writer and editor, about the history of "future fiction" and the sentiments of space voyage, advancements, and "Martians" and to speculate on with empathy. This essay was recorded on a CD-ROM then sent out to Mars - pretty cool, right?

# The Play: I Love You, Judy Merrill

By Jim Smith

In 2015, I wrote a play about Judy. By that time, Judy had been gone for 18 years, and I felt the danger that fewer and fewer people remembered her. And good god, there was so damn much to Judy – way more than her fiction, her reviews, her anthologies, and her intros and extros to over 100 *Doctor Who* shows (already lost due to a failure to preserve the TVO tapes!). What about the Judy who wandered the halls of many a Writers Union AGM at the height of the cultural appropriation debates asking, “Who will speak for the aliens?” The Judy who had been revenge-caricatured by Harlan Ellison as a “mistress of evil” in an episode he wrote for *The Man From Uncle*? The Judy who held court not just in Free Times Café, but any damn place she was? I wanted to preserve some of the vivid colour and wild fabric that she brought to my life. My play tried to weave together two things – a few snippets of our tumultuous time together and my visceral hatred of my hometown Kingston, where Judy’s anthologies had likely literally saved the sanity of a sad, tormented kid. A play, in which, as I explained Judy to a mixed crew of kidnapping aliens who had plucked me out of the shower for purposes unknown, I could say the one thing I was damned if I would ever have said to her face.



**An excerpt from I Love You, Judy Merrill, written and performed at Theatre Passe Muraille during the Toronto Fringe Theatre Festival in 2015 by Jim Smith**

...

And now we’re getting closer. Judy hired me to help her avoid being sued by TVO, or was it CBC Ideas? She’d had something like a \$20,000 advance to do a documentary on Dream Cities – Cities of the Future and she was so disastrously late with it that she was certain they might demand the advance back. Only one way

to deal with this, which was to grab someone with the right characteristics and work them like a dray horse.

34 years ago, I thought that what she saw was my unique encyclopedic knowledge of sci-fi, my poetic enthusiasm, my left-wing political charm. Now I think that what she saw was someone, anyone, a warm body with energy and enthusiasm.

And so almost before I knew what was happening, I was over in her cabin, I don't know how she had wrangled one of the only cabins at the resort from the Writers Trust, but rather than getting on with my little poems about this and that, my slavish attempts to write like Burroughs and Chris Dewdney at the time, I was basically sleeping on Judy's floor, typing from varying piles of torn pieces of typescript, interviews with scientists and writers, transcribing parts she wanted taking dictation from her ideas or trying to interpret her notes and torn up pieces of paper, handwritten notes, and learning script format on the fly by way of a cryptic occasional command from Judy, like "NO, Indent!" And we'd listen, or I would listen to tapes of her interviews with futurists like Stafford Beer, no idea who he was, trying to catch and transcribe what he said or at least the gist of it and the tape counter numbers. Days and days and days of this, Judy plowing through this morass of stuff with coffee, nicotine and miso-fuelled energy.

Did the episode air? No idea. I can't even remember if she paid me, or how much if she did. I think she did. Otherwise it's there on her tab, which is still running as I speak.

And only now that I think about it, I seem to recall that Judy seemed to enjoy showing up at the main lodge almost late for supper, or breakfast, with her bleary-eyed, exhausted younger man in tow. Or maybe I'm just imagining that she may well have knowingly intended to reap the envy of some of the other older women writers there. Would Judy do that?

...

Jim Smith  
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# 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.

Please address queries to:  
Ann Nam-Tran Le  
[solrising.editor@gmail.com](mailto:solrising.editor@gmail.com)

# Volunteer with the Friends

The FoM is always looking for new volunteers. If interested, please check out the positions listed below and contact [friendsofmerril@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmerril@gmail.com).

## Event Setup, Notifications, and Staffing the Tables

Each year, we host events that may require furniture setup, contacting local weeklies, or helping staff the Merrill promotional tables.

## Sol Rising Zine

Write articles for our zine and help with proofreading and graphic design etc.

## Marketing/Promotion

Help spread the word by promoting Merrill events via social media and in-store listings.

## Fundraising/Programming

The FoM Executive committee looks at ideas to raise money to support the Friends and the Collection.

# Copies of Sol Rising

The Friends of the Merrill is 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](http://www.bakkaphoenixbooks.com)

The Beguiling  
319 College St.  
(416)-533-9168,

[www.beguiling.com](http://www.beguiling.com)

Toronto Reference Library  
789 Yonge St.  
416-395-5577

[www.torontopubliclibrary.ca](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca)



# The Friends of the Merrill Collection

is a volunteer organization that provides support and assistance to the Collection, one of the world's foremost, open access largest collections of Speculative, Sci-Fi and Fantasy Fiction & Pop-Culture in North America and all made available to the greater public.

The Friends is an entirely self-funded organization, existing through the generosity of its members and donors. All the money goes to the publication of Sol Rising, the purchase of materials that the Collection could not otherwise afford and hosting events, such as readings, book launches, and signings, and panel discussions by prominent members of the Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Speculation community.

The Friends of the Merrill Collection would like to thank all generous supporters and volunteers. Without them, this would not be possible.

**If you would like to support the Collection**, you can become a member or donate at [friendsofmerril.org](http://friendsofmerril.org) or at the Merrill Collection, 3rd floor of Lillian H. Smith Library.

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## The Pulp Show in 2019

