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## Comments from the Chair

By Guy W. Thomas

Hello again, it's me...

Another year, another FOGcon. We are all looking forward to having a great time again. We are excited by our spectacular and thought-provoking Honored Guests: Catherynne M. Valente, Kim Stanley Robinson and our Honored Ghost: Joanna Russ. Our theme this year is The Traveler. When we first decided on this theme, I thought: "Excellent." We can talk about space travel and time travel. Travel is a pretty fundamental science fiction and fantasy trope. I can't even think of many SF & F stories that don't have some kind of travel as an important element in the story. (I know, I know, I hear all of you shouting the great story that has little or nothing to do with travel. Yes, they exist, but I still think travel is a pretty dominant basic theme in a whole lot of science fiction and fantasy.)

As I've lived with the theme over the year, it started to occur to me that travel wasn't just going to exotic places or traveling back in time to meet Mohammed. Travel is a pretty fundamental part of everyone's life. As a person with a disability and an advocate for independent living and civil rights for people with disabilities, it's also true that most of my life has been trying to secure my ability to travel. What is disability access, if not at least in part, the insistence on being able to move through the world? Curb cuts, lift equipped public buses, elevators etc. it's all about being able to move through the world like everyone else.

Travel is pretty important to all of us. After all, what is one of the first things we do to someone proven guilty of a crime? We very often limit or take away their ability to move freely in the world. We put them in home arrest or on probation where they can't leave the county. We confine them to a building, a prison. One of our most important punishments is restricting travel, our ability to move. Heck, we put our children in timeouts where they sit in the corner for a given amount of time. So just thinking about our theme has got me rethinking some ideas about my life's work and the importance of travel.

I'm really looking forward to our programming this year. Lots of old favorites are back like Vylar Kaftan's 75 Minute Writing Workout, ConTention and our UnAward Banquet. We have the distinct advantage of having some amazing regular attendees. You can also check out our Dealers' room, catch a reading, see the game room. Enjoy a nosh and some conversation in our Consuite.

Welcome to FOGcon 5! Thanks for coming and enjoy your weekend.

## **Convention Committee**

Guy W. Thomas, Chair

Wendy Shaffer, Vice-Chair

Alan Bostick, Safety

Keyan Bowes, Writers Workshop

Jamie Buschbaum, Dealers' Room

Michele Cox, Programming

Kerry Ellis, Publications

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John Kusters, Access and Logistics

Theresa Mecklenborg, Childcare Coordinator

Debbie Notkin, Hotel Liaison

Colleen O'Rourke, Hospitality

Shannon Prickett, Baron von FOGcon

Steven Schwartz, Programming

Liang Song, Short Story Contest Coordinator

Aaron I. Spielman, Programming

Michele Welck, Registration

## Honored Guest Kim Stanley Robinson, Traveler

By Beth Meacham

Many fans of Stan Robinson's novels cite his characters as the reason they love his work – rounded, complex, memorable people that readers have come to know well by the end of the story. It's been one of his strong suits as a novelist from the beginning; no cardboard heroes here. From the ambiguous first person narrators in *Icehenge*, far in the future, to the crazy mountain climbers in *Escape from Kathmandu*, through all the First Hundred in the Mars books, from prehistoric shaman Loon to the most recent sure delineations of character in *Aurora*, his people are always complex, always flawed in interesting and unpredictable ways, and always rise to the occasion in ways we can recognize in ourselves and our friends. You can read his novels for the people, or for the environmentalism, or the thoughtful economics, or for the SF adventures or the puzzles or the romances.

But I like to go walking with Stan.



Robinson is, in many ways that count, a travel writer. For as long as I've known him, he has been going somewhere, or coming back from somewhere, or writing about having been somewhere. He has traveled a great deal, through much of Europe, in Nepal, in Antarctica, much of North America, even Australia. And these travels show up in his fiction, in the landscapes his characters inhabit, explicitly or in disguise. And more often than not, his characters are traveling on foot, and so are we — hiking across Antarctica, or the Swiss Alps, or the Martian canyons and highlands, or the plains of Mercury. He is a close observer of the land — the ground underfoot, the processes that created it, how it feels to walk over and through it; the scents and sounds of whatever world his characters are exploring.

He's said that he wrote *Green Mars* because he wanted to go hiking on Mars after the first detailed photos of the planet began being published. His first novel, *The Wild Shore*, embraces a close imagining of what the California coast would be like without industrial constraint. In *Escape from Kathmandu*, Stan memorializes his trip to Nepal, where he traveled through the Himalayas. The

novel *Antarctica* was written after his 1995 visit to Antarctica, and is as much travelogue as it is novel. In *The Memory of Whiteness*, he envisioned a Grand Tour of the solar system, flying down the gravity well from the outer moons to the inner planets; he reworked that journey in the opposite direction, from Mercury back out in 2312 — better, more surely, more beautifully. *Shaman's* journey is through time, but that does not preclude Loon walking across ice-age France, in summer and the depths of the glaciated winter, and taking us along with him to see, feel, understand the world.

But Stan does not limit his travel writing to fiction. He can also take you on walks here on Earth, in the here and now. If you've been lucky enough to see his convention talks about hiking in the Sierras, you know. If you haven't, then seek them out. The pictures are beautiful, even when they're a little bit scary. He's written up some of his adventures in the Alps, and they're little comic thriller gems. And most recently, he published a gorgeous piece in *Slate* about an expedition to name a mountain for Henry David Thoreau in the Sierras.

Lately, Stan has been reading a lot about John Muir, and the history of environmentalism in the Sierras. I hope he'll write more about his visits to the Range of Light. We'll be lucky if he does, and takes us along on the journey with him.

*Beth Meacham is an Executive Editor at Tor Books, working out of her home in Tucson, Arizona.*

## Kim Stanley Robinson on Isaac Asimov's 1964 predictions

In August 1964, Isaac Asimov wrote a piece for The New York Times about what the World's Fair of 2014 would look like. Kim Stanley Robinson tells SciFiNow what Asimov got right, and why the essay reveals more about the author than you might think.

Isaac Asimov's 1964 article predicting the world of 2014 is a great piece of foresight, no surprise coming from one of the smartest science fiction minds ever. It's well worth looking at now in its target year, not just for what the good doctor got right or wrong, but to help us to contemplate what we can get right or wrong when thinking about the future.

Recall that James Cook, one of the most capable and intelligent men of the eighteenth century, predicted that humans would never reach Antarctica. He did not foresee metal-hulled ships, nor food preserved in cans. Thomas Huxley, one of the most important evolutionary scientists of the nineteenth century, predicted that humans would never be able to deplete the oceans of their fish. He did not foresee the mechanization of fishing, nor the sheer number of humans that would soon inhabit this planet.

What did Asimov fail to see in the future? Many things, inevitably; but he did not miss the biggest problem that would be facing us in 2014, which is building a sustainable civilization. That is his article's greatest achievement.

Asimov prefaces his remarks by reminding us that he cannot know the future, but can only guess. This modesty is important, given that there are always people claiming they can tell for sure what will happen, usually for a hefty fee. That kind of futurology reeks of hubris and scam. Science fiction, like Asimov himself, is always more playful and honest.

I love it that Asimov's first three predictions express his agoraphobia. It has become a well-known aspect of his biography that he did not like open spaces, and in later years spent most of his time in his apartment, and would not go out on his balcony overlooking Central Park. This aversion gave extra power to his best novel, *The Naked Sun*, in which going outside was a terrifying act.

So, in the future, "men will continue to withdraw from nature in order to create an environment that will suit them better," in rooms without windows, or maybe underground, or even under the sea: how convenient! How comforting! It's a very human touch, and a good thing to remember: when people predict the future, they very often reveal desires they don't even know they have.

Excerpt of blog post, reprinted with permission.

The original post: <http://www.scifinow.co.uk/blog/kim-stanley-robinson-on-isaac-asimovs-1964-predictions/>

*The lunar flights give you a correct perception of our existence. You look back at Earth from the moon, and you can put your thumb up to the window and hide the Earth behind your thumb. Everything you've ever known is behind your thumb, and that blue-and-white ball is orbiting a rather normal star, tucked away on the outer edge of a galaxy.*

*Jim Lovell*



## Honored Guest Catherynne M. Valente

By Elise Matthesen

I met Catherynne Valente almost ten years ago when I was sitting listening to a panel at Readercon with a basket full of beads and wire on my lap.

After the panel, this young woman came over, fascinated by the necklace that was growing, and intent on seeing it and asking questions about the beads. By the end of the convention, I had traded her the necklace for several of her books and a promise of more. I am pretty sure I got the best end of that deal. Later, after she won the Tiptree for *The Orphan's Tales*, the Tiptree tiara felt so at home on her head that she missed it when it was the next person's turn — so I made her a tiara of her own, one that she could keep. She's equally at home wearing a tiara, wading knee-deep on the shore finding interesting rocks and bits of shell to be turned into curious art, or sitting in a convention talking about everything under the sun and moon and stars.

Two different friends of mine started to read the first Fairyland story and had a moment of fear during the first few pages. "I was afraid it would be twee," one told me. She read on, and found that Valente wasn't twee at all.

"She was ruthless!" she said, with great delight. I discussed this with another lover of Valente's work, and we agreed that this particular ruthlessness is a thing of beauty. She's not ruthless in a mean way.

She's ruthlessly truthful. Her Fairyland has consequences. Choices are made, often with incomplete information. Paths are chosen, and these paths shape later choices. Valente does not take the easy or predictable route, and offers no false comfort. What's won by her characters on the path they follow is won at some cost, and honestly won — and it leads simultaneously inward on that curling path to individual truth, and outward to connect with larger context.



This curling inward and outward is a feature. Her language is that of an explorer and a poet, a chronicler and a lover — of her characters, of her stories, of Story itself. The tales she tells can seem almost fractal: here is a tiny intricate bit of someone's history, a delicate curl. Read on, and that curl is a small part of a lovely leaf, precise whorls and surprising rhythms. Read further, and that leaf is visible as part of a majestic giant fern, a repetition of pattern from small to large that is somehow much greater than the sum of its parts, and much more powerful.

(If a story of hers were in fact a giant fern, a poultice of its leaves would probably have the power to turn you invisible and make you able to understand the speech of seven species of beetles.)

People speak of the richness of her language, soaked in meaning. This is not surprising: she is herself a word, going through translations, shifts in meaning, deepening. Her laugh knows things. She has the eyes to see, the hands to touch, the clever fingers through which the words flow.

Knitting archetypes and descriptions and tales and rumours of streets, of flowers, of pain, of longing, of memory: of finding and losing and getting and giving and all. Whether it's a fairy tale, multiple versions of the life of Prester John, or a retelling of Koschei the Deathless, if you walk the path of one of her stories you will not leave unchanged.

Pamela Dean said that when she was preparing to interview Valente at Minicon she was fretting a bit until she thought, "It's Cat. I can ask her questions and get as esoteric as I like, and it will be fine." And she was right.



You will have the joy of meeting Catherynne this weekend. Listen to her passion and her laughter. Venture through the world of story with her on those paths that curl inward and outward both. Honor the storyteller who honors the story. Ask her some esoteric questions, and follow where the answers lead together. You'll be glad you did.

## Past the Rivers

I sat as if a statue,  
and Hades brushed my hair  
with a comb of iron and asphodel.

I sat as if an icon,  
and Demeter brushed my hair  
with a comb of crocus and water.

On either side of my candled body,  
they held out my hair like wings,  
and ran their fingers through it,  
oars through black and separate rivers.

And Hades' hand was on my knee, saying:

*You are safe here,  
where we have brought you.*

And Demeter's arms were close on mine, saying:

*We only meant the dark  
to be a quiet pool  
where we can whisper  
and remain unheard.*

*The sky is so bright, and so brazen.*

I still clutched shreds  
of daffodils and crabgrass in my fists,  
and warm salt-sweat  
drawn from the well of the sun  
lingered in my lashes. My shoulders,  
still,  
were rosed with sunburn.

*You would have squatted bent-knee*

*on an island in the sea  
and lightning-infants  
would have torn out of you  
in blue arcs. Your stretch marks  
would have been jagged as thunder,  
so wide,  
and so white.*

They lay me down among the poplars,  
the stalks glower-white,  
white as standing corpses.

And oh--their voices were steam  
rising from black and separate streams.

*We brought you past the rivers  
where no lightning falls.  
The trees here are whole--so tall,  
and so white.*

I closed my eyes--it made no difference  
in the dark. Over one half of me  
she lay wheat warm as scarves;  
over the windward side,  
he draped shrouds thin as gasping

In the corners of the shadows,  
I heard the sound of blackbirds passing.

They let my hair fall,  
and it covered my skin like a dress.  
His hand was shadow;  
her hand was corn-light gleaming,  
and in each they held out to me  
a blaze of wet, red fruit.

Catherynne M. Valente

## Honored Ghost Joanna Russ

By Farah Mendlesohn, reprinted from On Joanna Russ

In a frequently quoted letter to Susan Koppelman, Joanna Russ wrote that she does not trust people who can write without anger. I do not intend to begin with an apology, to explain “this is not what she meant” or to attempt to ameliorate the impact of rage. (*What Are We Fighting For*, 63) Instead, I want to introduce a writer whose angry creativity burns the complacent veldt of narrative.

In the elegiac tale, “Mr. Wilde’s Second Chance” (*Hidden Side of the Moon*, 1987), Oscar Wilde reaches a garden in limbo where he is invited to rearrange the pieces of his life. A lady, “Ada R\_\_\_, the victim of the most celebrated scandal of the last decade” works next to him.

“Of course, it is not easy,” said the lady. “I try very hard. But I cannot seem to finish anything. I am not sure if it is the necessary organizing ability that I lack or perhaps the aesthetic sense; something ugly always seems to intrude.” (72)



Mr. Wilde, the grand arbiter of taste, has no such difficulty. He reassembles his life as a successful Victorian novelist and dramatist, with three times the body of work, and two happy, healthy sons. Russ proceeds:

“Lovely, sir! Such agreeable color. Such delicacy.” ...

Oscar Wilde, poet, dead at forty-four, took his second chance from the table before him and broke the board across his knee. (73)

Beauty can be a lie: it can be the rich green stillness of the stagnant pond under which poison ferments; it can be a delicate silver chain, strung with pearls which ties the wearer to a life that chafes; beauty can be the unchanging landscape of a wild life reserve which masks the poverty of the evicted indigenes. What we call ugly may be the vibrant growth of industrial development or social chaos. Who decides what is beautiful? Is the elegy of Mr. Wilde beautiful, or is it that last rupture? In her writing, fiction and non-fiction, Russ makes clear that she would

choose the rupture, the apparent ugliness of anger and rebellion over the poisonous beauty.

Rupture, or the refusal to go along with the storying of the world, is the core of Russ’s work: we can see it in *And Chaos Died*, in which the gay man does not die ignominiously, or become the side-kick in someone else’s story, but instead goes on into a new future; it is there in *Picnic on Paradise* and in *We Who Are About To...* where the stories individuals tell themselves about who they are, and what their lives mean collapse as the scenery and bit-players are removed. It is most famously there in *The Two of Them* when Irene and Ernst fight: “Sick of the contest of strength and skill, she shoots him.” (203) Burning through each tale are the questions, “whose narratives are these?” “who benefits from this storying of the world?”

Russ’s work is meta-textual: in itself it stands as a body of criticism of the science fiction field. The grey-eyed Alyx destroys many of the tropes of the heroic adventurer as she blithely wanders through the world demonstrating the value of intelligence. *We Who Are About To...* takes on the Robinsonade and leaves it gasping for a suicide pill, worn out on its own ludicrousness. Russ’s work criticises itself: as Lisa Yaszek and Graham Sleight both point out in their very different essays, many of the points one wants to make about Russ, she has already made about herself in her fiction and in her non-fiction. A novel like *The Female Man* dissects the world, the construction of fiction, the assumptions of science fiction, the responses of reviewers and finally the responses of far future readers. It is steeped in genre consciousness.

Russ’s work is intertextual; a reader must be able to follow fleeting references to Fritz Leiber, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, George Sand and Emily Dickinson to follow the archaeology of the text down and down. The reader must be able to follow the stolen and subverted narrative forms, tracing not just the story but the poetics.

Russ's work questions the cosy consensus of author-reader relations. The reader must follow an author whose every book is written in a different form: the straightforward narrative of *And Chaos Died* is replaced with the casual but direct storytelling of *Picnic on Paradise* and then with the detached, almost academic tone of *The Two of Them* and later the fractured, slightly distraught narrative voice of *The Female Man* where, as the visible narrator in Russ's fiction becomes more prominent, the proscenium arch of conventional narrative is replaced with all round vision, angry and mocking, while the narrator becomes a participant in the action. In "The Little Dirty Girl," the narrator's understanding of her own focal position slips and slides. The narrator (named or unnamed) speaks directly to the audience which is only sometimes us. At times, as in *The Two of Them* the text feels as if it is written to be read aloud; the story is framed within the telling of it. This form of narrative is a critical tool in Russ's argumentative structure: stories are no longer neutral, they are the product of character — sometimes named, sometimes not — and in that they are products of a cultural positioning. Russ is always and ever the outsider but she is never a neutral observer.

The observer narrator in Russ's work is one of her most powerful weapons: the observer identifies false allegiances, comments on the words not said, examines the cultural narratives of pink and blue books, of loving relationships, and exposes the muscle and nerve fibres of oppression. It is meet that the body becomes a canvas on which Russ paints resistance, oppression is written on the body. The J's of *The Female Man* share a genotype (perhaps), but they do not share a posture, their bodies do not confront the world in the same fashion. Janet slouches into the world, comfortable, spreading herself to accept space she takes for granted; Jeannine huddles, her body turned inwards away from the world to its own core, while Jaelle's body faces outward in a stance of defiance/invasion. The world may be hers, but she does not fully accept that this is so. And Joanna exists as ghost, the observer narrator in-text who sees the layers of the world.

Russ's writing gets under the skin. It is a burr under the saddle blanket; sharp, uncomfortable, provocative. She is the science fiction writer who most encapsulates Wittgenstein's exhortation that aesthetics is ethics. Reading Russ can be exhausting, emotionally harrowing. Russ challenges your most radical analysis. There can be no excuses, no exceptions; niceness is not a mitigating factor in the structures of oppression. Difference isn't enough. Niceness isn't enough. Niceness merely pads the cell. Only rage is enough. Russ wielded her rage like a scalpel, in reviews, critical essays and in her fiction her purpose was to challenge the agendas of others.

Joanna Russ's career as a writer of fiction spanned thirty years. From her first published story, "Nor Custom Stale" (1959), through seven novels, several short story collections and three non-fiction collections, Russ produced a fierce, intense body of work whose influence has been complex. She is a writer whose work provokes reaction rather than emulation, and serves as an electric shock to the imagination.

*Farah Mendlesohn is a British academic and writer on science fiction and fantasy literature, as well as an active science fiction fan. She edited the critical volume On Joanna Russ, published by Wesleyan University Press in 2009. This portion of her introduction is used by permission*

*"At least one can foretell what will come to pass, if we take this road or that. But it seems to me now clear which is the road that we must take. The westward road seems easiest. Therefore it must be shunned. It will be watched. Too often the Elves have fled that way. Now at this last we must take a hard road, a road unforeseen. There lies our hope, if hope it be. To walk into peril - to Mordor. We must send the Ring to the Fire."*

*Elrond in The Fellowship of the Ring by J.R.R. Tolkien.*

## Hotel

*Debbie Notkin*

The main convention function space is the entire area one (whole) floor below the ground-floor lobby, accessible by both elevators and the stairs to your left as you come in the main doors. Convention registration is in the main lobby on that level. You'll find programming both directly beyond the registration space and also down the hall to your right as you face the registration table.

The UnAward Banquet will be in the Contra Costa Ballroom, on the level halfway between the function space and the lobby.

The hospitality suite (the Santa Monica Room) is on the second floor, close to the elevator lobby. Whether or not you are staying in the hotel, your valet parking will be free if you tell the valet you're with FOGcon; however, we (and the valets) will appreciate it if you give them a tip for their time. Your in-room wireless is also free. Hotel guests have access to the heated outdoor pool and the fitness center (although one or both of these may be closed for repairs during the convention).

The hotel restaurant, Atrio, on the ground floor, is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, including a \$16.00 breakfast buffet. Atrio's prices run from about \$11-13 for salads and sandwiches to \$15-25 for full dinners. On the way in to Atrio, you'll find the bar and lounge, which is open until 12:30 a.m. or so, later if there's enough interest. There is fresh-brewed Starbucks coffee, as well as alcohol, in the lounge. Saturday night there may be live music in the lounge for a few hours, which spills into the function space.

If you have questions or concerns about the hotel during the convention, please find the person on Safety shift, the con chair or vice chair on duty, or your trusty hotel liaison, and we'll do our best to help.

## Registration

*Michele Welck*

Located in the Lobby on the Conference Level.

Thursday:	7pm – 8pm
Friday:	10:30am – 9pm
Saturday:	9am – 6pm
Sunday:	10am – noon

## Consuite

*Colleen O'Rourke*

Santa Monica Room, second floor.

The Consuite is in the Santa Monica Room on the second floor. Come by to grab some refreshments and meet your fellow travelers. We'll have snacks and drinks to accommodate a fair range of diets; we'll do our best to have ingredient lists available and avoid cross-contamination.

Friday:	12pm – 2am
Saturday:	8am – 2am
Sunday:	8am – 4pm
Dead Frog Party:	Sunday 4pm – 6pm

### **Meet and Greet in the Consuite, Friday at 4:30**

Come and meet your fellow attendees – discover a conversation!

## Dealers' Room

Salon D/E

*Jamie Buschbaum*

The Dealers' room will have books, comics, accessories and art! Please note the hours: nothing is more frustrating than leaving a planned purchase for later, after a panel, or when this reading's done — and finding the Dealers' Room locked.

Friday:	3pm – 7pm
Saturday	10am – 6pm
Sunday:	11am – 3pm

## Game Room

Salon F

Come and enjoy a friendly board or card game with your fellow convention attendees.

We plan to have the game room open for the following hours; we may open earlier or stay open later based on interest and available volunteer game room hosts:

Friday:	7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
Saturday:	10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.
Sunday:	10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### *True Travel Story from Debbie Notkin*

*The year was 1974. The Science Fiction World Convention was in Washington D.C., and the hotel had a sticky-fingered employee with a master key. Among the items collected by this person were most of the personal effects of my traveling companion, T, just before we were about to set off on a cross-country journey. Among other things, we planned to visit friends in Saskatchewan. We decided to cross the border in North Dakota, which might not have helped matters. T had no identification, because it had been stolen. The customs people understandably wanted to know what happened to T's identification.*

*I listened in horror as he answered the question. "My pants were stolen at a science-fiction convention." The customs officers' eyes glazed, and their jaws dropped. I jumped in, not letting my fear reach my face, with something intended to make us sound less weird and more reasonable. They then asked us how we knew the friends in Saskatchewan. Somehow, "They're fans!" didn't seem like it would help matters, and neither did "I used to sleep with the man in this couple," so I said firmly, before T could open his mouth, "We're colleagues."*

*That, plus my relentlessly calm and pleasant demeanor, carried the day, and we were allowed into Canada, where we had a marvelous visit with our friends before continuing westward and back into the States.*

## Safety Team

Alan Bostick

The Safety team is here to help FOGcon attendees have an enjoyable and successful convention. If you've got problems, we can help. The situation doesn't have to be a crime or an emergency, although we can help with those as well. If you find yourself in or near a situation which calls for assistance by the Safety team member on duty, look for the person wearing the day-glo vest, or call (510) 520-6067. In case of an immediately dangerous situation, of course, call 9-1-1. If you are using a hotel phone, dial 9-9-1-1.

How can you tell who is a Safety team member?

The Safety person on duty wears a bright orange vest. However, you can also talk to any member of the ConCom. We'll be wearing badges that identify us as CONCOM.

### What Should I Report to Safety?

Safety isn't just for riots, floods, and zombie attacks. We can help with ANY mundane issues. Here is a brief list of plausible examples:

- You lost your cell phone.
- You left your backpack in a program area that is locked after hours.
- Some people are working out a relationship issue in the Consuite in a way that is making other people uncomfortable.
- People waiting for function space to open are blocking access to a staircase or other doorway.
- The hotel is getting noise complaints about a party, or you have noise complaints about one.
- Something unusual is happening—space aliens landing, volcano erupting in the Consuite, a blocked toilet in the bathroom for silicon-based life-forms—that might affect the safety or satisfaction of convention attendees.
- An attendee is having an allergic reaction to something in the convention environment and needs immediate medical attention. (In that case, you should also call 9-1-1.)
- Someone is paying attention to you that you find unwelcome or excessive. This includes staring, following, touching, standing too close, blocking your exit, and talking suggestively or offensively. If it makes you uncomfortable, please feel free to report it.

If you have been or are being harassed, you have several choices of people you can consult. If you do not feel comfortable bringing a concern to a particular staff member, for any reason, you will be able to work with another member of the convention staff to address your concerns. Perhaps you're uncomfortable talking with the Safety volunteer on duty because you're strangers (or friends), or for any other personal reason. You can always ask for help from a ConCom member or from a Safe Responder. ConCom members are identified by the word ConCom on their badges. Safe Responders will be wearing bright yellow badges.

The Safety team will be on the scene to act as first responder in situations like these, to smooth things on the spot and to bring in the right people — be they convention staff, hotel employees, or outside responders (police, EMTs, etc.) as needed.

*For once you have tasted flight you will walk the earth with your eyes turned skywards, for there you have been and there you will long to return.*

*—Leonardo da Vinci*



## Programming, Friday March 6, 2015

### It's as Much How You Get There...

Salon C • 1:30–2:45 pm

How and in what ways does the mode of travel impact a journey? A road trip in a car is one thing; a generation ship another, a teleport across the universe is another thing. What difference do they make in the stories we tell?

#Itsasmuchhowyougetthere

M: Jamie Henderson, Chaz Brenchley, Kelly Hogan, Phyllis Holliday



### 75-Minute Writing Workout

Sacramento • 1:30–2:45 pm

Hone your fiction-writing skills in a timed environment. All writers are welcome.

#75minuteWritingWorkout

M: Vylar Kaftan



### Tenses for Time Travelers and Other Abominations of Language

Salon C • 3:00–4:15 pm

Travel to a strange place — learn new words for animals, foods, and activities at your destination and along the way. Travel in a strange conveyance — learn new words for fuels, travelers' pastimes, and social structures. How do invented words affect the reader's experience of an invented world? What strange manglings of language feel natural and atmospheric, and what just doesn't work?

#TensesAndAbominations

M: Juliette Wade, Marie Brennan, Sarah Huffman, Heather Rose Jones, Zed Lopez



### Alternate Universes

Salon A/B • 3:00–4:15 pm

The most speculative travel there is: travel between alternate universes. Whether you need a roomful of whirling metal SCIENCE or can whisk yourself away in the blink of an eye, moving between universes is a time-honored way of getting in and out of trouble. What are the best examples of stories using alternate universes? What feels realistic, or at least plausible, in these stories? What can alternate universes do for you that you just can't do with any other plot device?

#AlternateUniverses

M: Cliff Winnig, Alex Gurevich, Kelly Hogan, Theresa Mecklenborg, Andrés Santiago Pérez-Bergquist

## Reading: Brenchley, Brenchley, Stewart

Santa Rosa • 3:00–4:15 pm

#RdgBrenchleyBrenchleyStewart

Chaz Brenchley, Karen Brenchley, Andrea G. Stewart



## When Your Traveler Is My Colonizer

Salon C • 4:30–5:45 pm

Themes of travel, exploration, and colonization are intertwined with one another in genre fiction and are often glamorized as “classic adventure.” But every colonist is also a colonizer. What happens if we remove or subvert the “colonial gaze” when we look at these stories? Which stories offer a post-colonial perspective or critique of the ideology of exploration and colonization? How does a modern fan best interact with the more old-fashioned and unreformed examples of this staple of genre fiction?

#TravelerOrColonizer

M: Alyc Helms, Zed Lopez, Michelle Murrain, Na’amen Gobert Tilahun, Juliette Wade



## Stories within Stories within Stories within Stories...

Salon A/B • 4:30–5:45 pm

Catherynne M. Valente's *The Orphan's Tales*, Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*, Patrick Rothfuss' *Name of the Wind*: some of the most fun stories are stories about stories. How does that work? What tricks can you use when you have a story within the story?

#StoriesWithinStories

M: Sunil Patel, Elwin Cotman, Phyllis Holliday, Andrés Santiago Pérez-Bergquist, Catherynne M. Valente



## The Ghost of Joanna Russ

Sacramento • 4:30–5:45 pm

#TheGhostofJoannaRuss

Joanna Russ (1937-2011) is often described as the most important writer of feminist science fiction. Was she? What else was she? The panel will discuss her fiction, her nonfiction, and some memories of her as a person.

M: Debbie Notkin, Alan Bostick, Jamie Henderson, Lynn Alden Kendall



*“Funny how “question” contains the word “quest” inside it, as though any small question asked is a journey through briars.”*

*—Catherynne M. Valente, Under in the Mere*

## Reading: Jones, Koizumi, Moore

Santa Rosa • 4:30–5:45 pm

#ReadingJonesKoizumiMoore

Heather Rose Jones, Inejiro Koizumi, Nancy Jane Moore



## Meet and Greet

ConSuite • 4:30–5:45 pm

#MeetandGreet

This event has only a few guidelines: See if you can meet at least two new people, mingle, and talk to them. Make a new friend! Everyone who attends is expecting strangers to greet them, so it's the perfect icebreaker if you're shy. You're supposed to chat with strangers here! We will have at least one person hosting who will provide a few icebreaking questions and/or introductions if you need them.



## Focus on Ferguson

Sacramento • 8:00–9:15 pm

What exactly happened in Ferguson? What does it mean for us as a country? Will anything change as a result?

#FocusonFerguson

M: Shayna Cureton, Michelle Murrain, Elwin Cotman, Laurie Toby Edison, Na'amen Gobert Tilahun



## Stories that Break the Rules

Salon A/B • 8:00–9:15 pm

Why are stepmothers always wicked, and talking animals always good? Does the hero really have to face off against the villain in a climactic final duel? And is it ever a good idea to rely on the police? We talk about our favorite stories that successfully break the traditions, and maybe a few of our favorite well-intentioned failures.

#StoriesthatBreaktheRules

M: Aaron I. Spielman, Elsa, Sarah Huffman, Effie Seiberg, Catherynne M. Valente



*“You take people, you put them on a journey, you give them peril, you find out who they really are.”*

*— Joss Whedon*

## ConTention

Salon C • 8:00–9:15 pm

Now a FOGcon tradition, ConTention provides us a framework for doing what many SF fans love to do — argue! We will collect arguments from the audience, let people take sides (and switch sides) and in general have a good (if contentious) time!

#ConTention

Chief Among Arguers: Steven Schwartz



## Reading: Dvorin, Kloster, Mead, Wade

Santa Rosa • 8:00–9:15 pm

#ReadingDvorinKlosterMeadWade

Julia Dvorin, Gary Kloster, Johanna Mead, Juliette Wade



## Polyamory in Spec Fic / Polyamory for Real

Salon A/B • 9:30–10:45 pm

From Robert A. Heinlein's line marriages to the complex social and familial structures of Ursula K. Le Guin or Kim Stanley Robinson, consensual non-monogamy appears in a lot of speculative fiction. Sometimes it reads like a fantasy, sometimes it reads like a metaphor; once in a while it rings true. How is polyamory used in fiction? How does that compare to reality? Can fictional representations of polyamory help or hurt the actual practice, or the practitioners?

#PolyInSpecFicAndReality

M: Alyc Helms, Allan P Hurst, Colleen T. O'Rourke, Lorelei Powers, Na'amen Gobert Tilahun



## And Then My Underwear Went Overboard

Salon C • 9:30–10:45 pm

Tales of traveling drama! What are some of the crazy adventures you've had while traveling around the world? Our panelists will tell their best stories, and talk about how to handle travel adventures that may not be what they intended.

#AndThenMyUnderwear

M: Sunil Patel, Anaea Lay, Effie Seiberg, M. Christian,



*We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.*

—T. S. Eliot

## Karaoke

Sacramento • 9:30–10:45 pm

What it says on the tin!

#Karaoke



### **True Travel Story from Theresa Mecklenborg**

After a convention in Las Vegas, our traveling companion's flight out had been delayed by weather. Once we dropped her off to wait for the replacement midnight flight, we started the drive home, which turned out to be much more exciting than the drive out. First, it was dark, since we were starting out later than we'd planned. Then, it started raining on us, quite heavily. Then we got lost, trying to get to a gas station and going around a detour and all manner of complicated things. The roads at that end of the town don't have curbs, and desert looks quite a lot like road surface, especially in the dark in the rain when you have no idea where you're going, so that was kind of exciting. Eventually, we made it back on to proper interstate, and over the border into California, and the rain cleared up. The stars were gorgeous, very clear and bright and numerous. Shortly before Mojave, my partner suggested we stop for the night, but I wasn't quite tired yet and there was another hotel about 30 more miles down the road, so we planned to stop there.

Then we starting passing trucks, stopped on the side of the road. Dozens of trucks. Hundreds of trucks. All with their lights on, parked lining the highway. It was really, really creepy.

At the turnoff to Mojave, the road was closed, so we spent the night there after all. We learned that the road was closed because the pass through the mountains had gotten six inches of snow, not to mention the terrifically high winds (which we'd noticed coming into town -- if it's windy enough to knock around my Toyota, which is built like a turtle, then it's way too windy for trucks).

It was clear in the morning, though, so we proceeded... very slowly, as all the backed-up trucks had to get through. Not to mention the construction. It took us about two hours to get to Bakersfield, where we had lunch in the Basque restaurant we'd noticed on the way down, and then another four or five hours to get home. Whew!

## Programming, Saturday March 7, 2015

### The Fashion of Science Fiction

Salon C • 9:00–10:15 am

If you showed people from the 1920s pictures of what we wear today, and compare them to what they thought we'd be wearing, they're almost nothing alike. What do we think will change in the future? More skin? Less skin? More decoration? Skintight and shiny? Plain and puritanical? Come discuss and hypothesize with us!

#TheFashionofScienceFiction

M: Steven Schwartz, Brenda W. Clough, Anita Lucia Dubinko, Jay Hartlove



### From the Ice Planet Hoth to Mars: How Can We Write about Real Environments?

Salon A/B • 10:30–11:45 am

Andy Weir's *The Martian* describes how an abandoned astronaut tries to survive on Mars, using accurate science and creating a gripping story. How can you introduce real science into your fiction while still telling a rip-ping yarn? How can your countryside support a damsel-eating dragon? Does it grow sufficient grain to provide sufficient damsels? What about your space station? When space rebels shoot holes in its side, what happens to the air supply?

#HothtoMars

M: Vylar Kaftan, Lauren K. Moody, Michelle Murrain, Jim Pekarek, Kim Stanley Robinson



### Misfit Toys in Space

Sacramento • 10:30–11:45 am

A discussion of the depiction of people with disabilities in S & SF. Are they just symbols of evil or innocence? How realistic are PwD's presented? How about in *Star Trek*, *Game of Thrones*, and other works? What happens when your self-identity is seen as something that can and should be "cured"?

#MisfitToysinSpace

M: Guy W. Thomas, Karen Brenchley, Lynn Alden Kendall



### On The Road

Salon C • 10:30–11:45 am

The "road novel" is both a mainstream and a genre staple. The interplay between the physical journey and the emotional journey of the characters literalizes metaphor in a sf'nal manner, whether the trope map is mainstream or genre. This panel will be an opportunity to talk about *The Road* as a narrative structure, as metaphor, as setting, and to share some of our favorite road novels.

#OnTheRoad

M: Aaron I. Spielman, Marie Brennan, Charlie Byrd, Elsa



## Reading: Hartlove, Marcus, O'Keefe

Santa Rosa • 10:30–11:45 am

#ReadingHartloveMarcusO'Keefe

Jay Hartlove, Daniel Marcus, Megan E. O'Keefe



## Program Your Parents

Note: This item is part of our experimental Kids' Programming Track for FOGcon 5.

Santa Rosa • 1:30–2:45 pm

Kids write short programs for their parents or other adults, playing robots, to execute. Commands can be things like "step with the left foot" or "step with the right foot" or "turn 90 degrees left/right," etc., and the goal is for the robot-parent to move through a specific path and perform a specific task; then it's free-form with the kids inventing and testing new commands. In the past, kids have invented parameterization and grouping (ten sets of step-left step-right), unit testing, and more. Parents are advised to wear comfortable clothes -- your kids may make you work!

See <http://drtechniko.com/2012/04/09/how-to-train-your-robot/> for details.

#ProgramYourParents

M: Theresa Mecklenborg



## The Setting Is Another Character

Salon A/B • 1:30–2:45 pm

Some stories have such a strong sense of place that the setting comes to life, sometimes becoming as important as any other character. What makes a setting more than scenery? How do settings play a role in our favorite stories?

#TheSettingisaCharacter

M: Marie Brennan, Anna Leah Blumstein, Karen Brenchley, Megan E. O'Keefe, Terry Weyna



## It's Not Over Until The Big Spaceship Sings

Sacramento • 1:30–2:45 pm

From E.E. "Doc" Smith to Iain Banks (who famously said he wrote SF to blow ever bigger things up), space opera has been the home of some of the great imaginations and silly concepts of SF. Why does it fascinate us still? What does it give to the field as a whole, and to its readers?

#NotOverTillShipSings

M: Michele Cox, Chaz Brenchley, Elwin Cotman, Cliff Winnig

## Traveling Peoples: Myth, Fiction, and Reality

Salon C • 1:30–2:45 pm

It's hard to discuss the theme of "The Traveler" without bringing to mind tales of wandering people with colorful clothes, painted caravans, and maybe a bit of fortunetelling magic. However, these stories obscure the reality of groups such as the Roma, the Travelers, and other traveling peoples who are misunderstood and discriminated against in many of the countries they inhabit. This panel will look at the reality versus the fiction, and discuss whether there are ways of using "traveling peoples" tropes in fiction that don't perpetuate harmful stereotypes.

#TravelingPeoples

M: Aaron I. Spielman, Madeleine E. Robins, Daniel Aaron Samuelson, Wendy A. Shaffer



## All-Ages Story Time

NOTE: This item is part of our experimental Kids' Programming Track for FOGcon 5.

Santa Rosa • 3:00–4:15 pm

Bring your favorite picture book, and we'll all sit in a circle and share.

#AllAgesStoryTimefamilytrack

Krissy Gibbs, Lauren K. Moody, Sunil Patel



## Wash Your Hands Before Attending

Sacramento • 3:00–4:15 pm

So who's going to die in the next pandemic? Any volunteers? No...? Well, okay, we'll discuss Ebola, SARS, Hendra virus, and other emerging diseases that could be The Big One.

#WashYourHandsBefore

M: Vylar Kaftan, Cassie Alexander, Zak Strassberg



## How to Intervene The Right Way: The Culture, the Federation, and the Future

Salon C • 3:00–4:15 pm

If there's intelligent life out there, and if we humans ever end up more advanced than others, we will probably need to figure out our morals and ethics for intervention in alien cultures. Our history provides us many examples of how not to do it, and our fiction presents us with many other examples, both good, and bad, and also brings up the question, "can this be done ethically at all?"

#HowToIntervene

M: Steven Schwartz, Darrin Barnett, Jed Hartman, Anaea Lay, Nancy Jane Moore

## Kim Stanley Robinson on John Muir as Writer and Activist

Salon A/B • 3:00–4:15 pm

Kim Stanley Robinson will discuss John Muir's career as a writer and activist, giving a biographical sketch and attempting to examine his career by way of actor-network theory, to discover whether lessons from his remarkable environmental successes could be put to use today. The talk will be illustrated by contemporary photos of Muir and those who helped him, and Stan's own photos from the Sierra Nevada.

#KSRonJohnMuir

Kim Stanley Robinson



## Let's Build A Starship -- for Kids

NOTE: This item is part of our experimental Kids' Programming Track for FOGcon 5.

Santa Rosa • 4:30–5:45 pm

The “Let's Build a—” panels are a longstanding FOGcon tradition; this one is explicitly kid-friendly. The first part of the panel will be like any other “Let's build” — brainstorming with the moderator, using pieces of paper and drawings. As that begins to jell, though, we can move on to legos/building toys/boxes and colors, etc., and end with taking pictures of the kids' creations!

#LetsBuildAStarshipforkids

M: Steven Schwartz



## Embracing “The Other”

Salon A/B • 4:30–5:45 pm

Fantasy and science fiction have a long history of asking us to empathize with the Other — the alien, the fae, the one who Isn't Like Us. Sometimes that “not like us”ness is done really well, and other times it's easy to see the human culture under the rubber “alien” suit. How can we present cultures we are not part of with depth and respect? How can we avoid writing yet another \*Fill In The Blank Human Culture Not the Author's\* With Purple Scales story?

#EmbracingTheOther

M: Debbie Notkin, Nabil Hijazi, Anaea Lay, Bradford Lyau, Juliette Wade



*“That is the way we move forward, be responding to problem after problem, step by step. We will never reach the top of the mountain. The summit will always recede. It is not there to be reached. It is there to give us a direction, a goal. It is there to lead us higher.”*

*— John Lewis, Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*

## Internalizing Creative Suppression: Coach Calls a Time Out!

Salon C • 4:30–5:45 pm

"Impostor Syndrome" is the internalized belief that one does not deserve the position of competence or creativity that one holds. Doubt, confusion, despair, and a variety of other negative emotions can interfere with the work; it creates self-deprecatory internal "talk" that is very similar to the language on the famous cover of Joanna Russ' *How to Suppress Women's Writing*. How does impostor syndrome relate to suppression of alternate voices? How can we who are caught in the grip of this feeling avoid colluding with our own silencing? How can we produce fiction even when our minds are screaming how much we suck? How can we develop the patience and long-term vision we need to cope with setbacks? How can we recover from an emotional slide?

#InternalizingSuppression

M: Guy W. Thomas, Krissy Gibbs, Eric William Hall, M. Christian, Andrea G. Stewart



## Hardcore Historical Journeys

Sacramento • 4:30–5:45 pm

Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo, Zheng He, Leif Erikson, and a great many other women and men crossed thousands of miles through strange seas and countries, with neither Google Maps nor an REI tent. What are the best stories from the days when a journey of a thousand miles began with drawing up your last will and testament?

#HardcoreHistoricalJourneys

M: Daniel Starr, Heather Rose Jones, Lynn Alden Kendall, Megan E. O'Keefe



## It's the End of the End, As We Know It

Salon C • 8:00–9:15 pm

What's with all the end-of-the-world stories lately? Are they wish fulfillment? Preparation for our inevitable end? Something else? What makes a good one? Why do we want to read about or see the world end?

#ItstheEndoftheEndasweknowIt

M: Lisa Eckstein, Jay Hartlove, Zak Strassberg, Guy W. Thomas



## Cat Valente Writes on Your Skin

Salon A/B • 8:00–9:15 pm

The con will provide supplies (body paint, temporary tattoo ink, or similar) and Cat – as well as the other panel attendees – write or draw on other, agreeable attendees. No guarantees as to what!

#skin

Catherynne M. Valente

## Reading: Cotman, Robins, Winnig

Santa Rosa • 8:00–9:15 pm

#ReadingCotmanRobinsWinnig

Elwin Cotman, Madeleine E. Robins, Cliff Winnig



## Fake Authentic Folklore Improv

Salon C • 9:30–10:45 pm

With your help, the intrepid panelists will create one or more guaranteed authentic folktales of adventure and discovery. No actual talking animals, plucky orphans, or Brave Ivans will be harmed.

#FakeAuthenticFolkloreImprov

M: Steven Schwartz, Kyle Aisteach, Charlie Byrd, Effie Seiberg



## Memory Landscapes: A Visual Memoir

Sacramento • 9:30–10:45 pm

Photographer Laurie Toby Edison is working on a new digital project called “Memory Landscapes,” a feminist visual memoir. Memory is a form of time travel through your own time line. A visual memoir takes you into the artist's time line and lets you choose your paths through their lives. She says, “I started thinking about memory, and how what is remarkable is not how much we forget, but how much we remember. I realized that my memories are not linear – because ‘inside the head everything happens at once.’” (Penelope Lively) Linear narrative is a useful construct, but it's not how we actually remember. I want to re-engage with the memories of my life, to create an autobiographical visual memoir, to express the poetics of non-linear time. Memories are filtered, by who we are now, who we were then, and what has happened in between. We view our past through layers of memories, and the past is everything that happened except this moment. It will eventually be an iPad app that creates an aesthetic of memory. On the panel, we will look at some of Laurie's work in progress, and discuss the ways panelists and audience re-engage with memories of our own lives.

#MemoryLandscapesAVisualMemoir

M: Laurie Toby Edison, Pat Murphy, Debbie Notkin, Kim Stanley Robinson



## Reading: Helms, Kendall, Nash

Santa Rosa • 9:30–10:45 pm

#ReadingHelmsKendallNash

Alyc Helms, Lynn Alden Kendall, and our short story contest winner, Zachariah Ronan Nash



## Programming, Sunday March 8, 2015

We Are The Ones Who Only Travel -- the Psychology, Sociology, and Literature of Generation Ships

Salon C • 9:00–10:15 am

Imagine journeying when you knew you would never arrive – that’s the tragedy and the wonder of the generation ship, one of the tropes of interstellar travel in SF. What are some classic generation-ship stories, and what would life be like on such a vessel?

#WeAreTheOnesWhoOnly

M: Alan Bostick, Elsa, Jim Pekarek



### The SF/F of Suburbia

Salon A/B • 10:30–11:45 am

There's a lot of fiction set in the City—urban fantasy, cyberpunk, you name it. And quite a lot is set out on the Frontier—whether that frontier have rayguns or be the deep dark forest. But many of us live (or have lived) in the suburbs—that's our experience of the world. And who is writing or has written the SF/F of that environment? *Edward Scissorhands*, J.G. Ballard, and who else? What makes a suburban fairy tale? Or Suburb-punk?

#TheSFFOfSuburbia

M: Karen Brenchley, Kelly Hogan, Mary Anne Mohanraj, Steven Schwartz



### Getting Around the Speed of Light

Sacramento • 10:30–11:45 am

If we never manage to get past the speed of light—and it's more likely than not that we won't—what other possibly workable technologies are available to us that might allow us to actually travel to the stars? If there are, what might they be, and how would they work in practice?

#GettingAroundC

M: Nancy Jane Moore, Darrin Barnett, Michelle Murrain, Alfred Nash, Jim Pekarek



### Honored Guest Readings

Salon C • 10:30–11:45 am

#HonoredGuestReadings

Kim Stanley Robinson, Catherynne M. Valente





## Eat Pray Love Barsoom-style

Salon A/B • 1:30–2:45 pm

From John Carter of Mars to Jake Sully of Pandora, many heroes in science fiction and fantasy travel to an alien world and “find themselves” by becoming the best Martian (or Pandoran, or...) there ever was and saving the day for their new “tribe.” Why does this story remain popular despite having very troubling implications about race and cultural appropriation? Which stories or authors have managed tales of a protagonist immersed in an unfamiliar culture in a sensitive way?

#EatPrayLoveBarsoomstyle

M: Bradford Lyau, Darrin Barnett, Sarah Huffman, Sasha Pixlee



## Science, Fiction, and Politics: Shaping Reality

Salon C • 1:30–2:45 pm

Our daily lives depend on the laws of nature, and also on political choices we may or may not be able to influence. Stories give us a way explore the effects of science overlapping or failing to overlap with politics, for good or for ill. Stories can warn us about neglected dangers, or promise us a better way, or both. Stories can make us aware of things we would have overlooked without them. What stories have shaped our reality? What stories do we want, for shaping our future?

#ShapingOurReality

M: Debbie Notkin, Bradford Lyau, Alfred Nash, Kim Stanley Robinson



## Reading: Johnson, Patel, Seiberg

Santa Rosa • 1:30–2:45 pm

#ReadingJohnsonPatelSeiberg

L.S. Johnson, Sunil Patel, Effie Seiberg



## The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Salon A/B • 3:00–4:15 pm

FOGcon 5 Retrospective! Come tell us what you loved, what you hated, what we might want to do differently next time, what we definitely want to do again!

#TheGoodtheBadandtheUgly

M: Guy Thomas, ConCom Members Still Standing



## Program Participants

### Kyle Aisteach

Kyle Aisteach lives in Fresno, California, where he writes short fiction and teaches writing.

### Cassie Alexander

Cassie Alexander is a registered nurse and author of the Edie Spence urban fantasy series.

### Darrin Barnett

Swordsman, priest, computer technician and sometime armchair politician.

### Laura Blackwell

Laura Blackwell is a writer, editor, and journalist. She edits for various business, tech, and science publications and copy-edits for *Shimmer*.

### Alan Bostick

Alan Bostick has been by turns a physicist, editor, baker, poker pro, writer, and chocolatier. Equally at home in the salon privé of a Las Vegas casino resort and the slums of Haiti, Bostick is the very model of a real-life Heinlein protagonist. Pour him a shot of single-malt scotch, and ask him about exploring the ruins of ancient civilizations, probing the secrets of gravity with laser light, or working with the vexing polymorphic crystalline structure of cocoa butter.

### Chaz Brenchley

Chaz Brenchley has been making a living as a writer since the age of eighteen. He is the author of nine thrillers and five fantasies. As Daniel Fox, he has published a Chinese-influenced fantasy series, beginning with *Dragon in Chains*; as Ben Macallan, two urban fantasies, *Desdaemona* and *Pandaemonium*. A British Fantasy Award winner, he has also published books for children and more than 500 short stories in various genres. He recently married and moved from Newcastle to California. His most recent publication is the standalone novella *Being Small*.

### Karen Brenchley

Karen has had science fiction, steampunk, and fantasy stories appear in various anthologies both alone and with her husband, Chaz Brenchley. She is a defunct aikido black belt, and has a clubhouse full of books and Star Trek memorabilia. She lives in Sunnyvale with her husband, two squabbling cats, and two polite turtles. See more at her website, <http://www.karenbrenchley.com>.

### Marie Brennan

Marie Brennan is an anthropologist and folklorist who shamelessly pillages her academic fields for material. She most recently misapplied her professors' hard work to the Victorian adventure *A Natural History of Dragons*. She is also the author of the doppelganger duology of *Warrior* and *Witch*, the urban fantasy *Lies and Prophecy*, the Onyx Court historical fantasy series (*Midnight Never Come*, *In Ashes Lie*, *A Star Shall Fall*, and *With Fate Conspire*), and more than forty short stories. When she's not obsessing over historical details too minute for anybody but her to care about, she practices shorin-ryu karate and pretends to be other people in role-playing games (which sometimes find their way into her writing).

### Charlie Byrd

Charlie is a queer, poly, geeky poet posing as a tech geek. You can follow him on Twitter @shadow\_bird.

### M. Christian

M. Christian's stories have appeared in over 400 magazines, anthologies and sites in genres from mystery, horror, romance, science fiction, and erotica. He is the editor of over 25 anthologies, author of 12 collections and seven novels. He is also the Publisher of Digital Parchment Services (exclusive publisher for authors such as Ernest Hogan and Arthur Byron Cover ... as well as for the estates of William Rotsler, Jerome Bixby, and Jody Scott) and an Associate Publisher for Renaissance E Books.

**Brenda W. Clough**

Brenda W. Clough spent much of her childhood overseas, courtesy of the U.S. government. Her first fantasy novel, *The Crystal Crown*, was published by DAW in 1984. She has also written *The Dragon of Mishbil* (1985), *The Realm Beneath* (1986), and *The Name of the Sun* (1988). Her children's novel, *An Impossumble Summer* (1992), is set in her own house in Virginia, where she lives in a cottage at the edge of a forest. Her novel *How Like a God*, forthcoming from Book View Café, was published by Tor Books in 1997, and a sequel, *Doors of Death and Life*, was published in May 2000. Her latest novels from Book View Cafe include *Revise the World* (2009) and *Speak to Our Desires*.

**Michele Cox**

Michele Cox found fandom in her teens and never left. Since then she has earned an MA in Church History and Theology, become a poet, and taught herself technical writing and business analysis by observation and practice. She is a polytheistic pan(en)theistic mystic working in web security. Among her favorite SFF authors are Edgar Pangborn, Lois McMaster Bujold, M. K. Wren, Madeleine L'Engle, and Theodore Sturgeon. Presented with any given either-or choice, her likeliest answer is "Yes, please!" She is dependent on her very tolerant partners, not-so-tolerant cats, and a vast number of inanimate objects.

**Karl Gustav Dandenell**

Karl Gustav Dandenell has been an active reader of SF/F since his awkward teenage years, and wrote a lot of bad fiction in his awkward undergraduate and grad school years. Eventually, he published several good stories in semi-pro and pro markets, and gleefully attended Viable Paradise XVI in 2012. When he is not supporting websites for an immense software company in San Francisco, he tries to write better stories. He lives on a quaint, flat island with 3 cat lords and a hard-working spouse.

**Anita Dubinko**

An allegedly awesome person.

**Julia Dvorin**

Julia Dvorin is a woman of many hats and little sleep, who combines writing with parenting two young boys and directing an ongoing art project called "Fly Your Freak Flag High" (FYFFH). In 2010, Julia's novelette "Cupid For a Day" was published in the *Renaissance Festival Tales* anthology from Hadley Rille Books. Her debut fantasy novel *Ice Will Reveal* was published by Hadley Rille Books in November 2012. Find out more about Julia on her website: [www.parentheticals.com](http://www.parentheticals.com).

**Lisa Eckstein**

Lisa Eckstein writes novels and blogs about reading, writing, and revising at [lisaeckstein.com](http://lisaeckstein.com).

**Laurie Toby Edison**

Laurie Toby Edison has been an artist making jewelry and sculpture forever. Retrospectives of her work have been displayed at LACon, Noreascon and ConJosé. She is also a photographer. Her books of photographs are *Women En Large: Images of Fat Nudes* and *Familiar Men: A Book of Nudes* (both edited by Debbie Notkin). Her most recent completed project was *Women of Japan*, clothed portraits of women from many cultures and backgrounds. She is an activist on body image and related issues. She blogs with Debbie Notkin at Body Impolitic ([www.laurietobyedison.com/discuss](http://www.laurietobyedison.com/discuss)), talking about body image, photography, art and related issues. Her very new project is a complete departure from her previous work.

**Krissy Gibbs**

Krissy Gibbs will be there with two short people so her attention will be difficult to hold at any point in time. But meeting people is fun.

**Alex Gurevich**

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia. Moved to the USA in 1989 at the age of 19. Received Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Chicago. Worked in financial markets in New York. Recently retired from Wall Street and lives in Sausalito, California, focusing on writing SF/F.

**Ian K. Hagemann**

Ian K. Hagemann is a mixed-race fan and writer in Seattle. He helped start Potlatch and the Carl Brandon Society, and is currently doing and leading personal work with The Mankind Project and Inward Journey.

**Eric William Hall**

Eric William Hall is an SF Bay Area native with an interest in science, gaming, creative fiction, and their intersections. Now that he has achieved a number of educational and career milestones, he wants to use this year as one for growth in his creative endeavors. He has yet to publish anything, but has written a number of stories for exercise and fun.

**Marty Halpern**

Marty Halpern edited for Golden Gryphon Press from 1999 through 2007 and for Night Shade Books from 2004 to 2013. His edited works have received the Hugo, World Fantasy, International Horror Guild, and William L. Crawford awards. Marty's authors included Kage Baker, Jay Lake, Alastair Reynolds, Lucius Shepard, Charles Stross, among others. Marty now freelances for Ace Books, Tachyon Publications, Word Horde, and he also works directly with authors. He has edited anthology ALIEN CONTACT (NSB). He blogs at "More Red Ink": [martyhalpern.blogspot.com](http://martyhalpern.blogspot.com); Twitter: @martyhalpern; Facebook and Google+: Marty Halpern

**Jay Hartlove**

Jay Hartlove has been writing professionally for over 30 years. He writes banking compliance procedures by day, blogs about spirituality, and he teaches seminars on the craft of writing. He is working on a musical sequel to the Grimm Brothers' Snow White, called *Snow White and the Mirror's Revenge*. His novel *Daughter Cell* is the second of the Sanatha Mauwad mysteries about the rise of occult powers in the 21st century, to be followed by the third and concluding volume, *Isis Rising*. Jay is also writing and releasing a fantasy romance called *Mermaid Steel* online.

**Jed Hartman**

Jed Hartman is a technical writer and former *Strange Horizons* fiction editor whose extracurricular interests include logodaedaly, interdigitation, sesquipedalia, and lapsus linguae. His fiction and nonfiction have appeared in *All-Star Zeppelin Adventure Stories*, *Clean Sheets*, *Fishnet*, *Flytrap*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Wet*. For more about him (or to read his blog), see his website: <http://www.kith.org/logos>.

**Alyc Helms**

Alyc Helms fled her doctoral program in anthropology and folklore when she realized she preferred fiction to academic writing. She dabbles in corsetry and costuming, dances Scottish Highland and Irish Ceili at Renaissance and Dickens fairs, gets her dander up about social justice issues, and games in all forms of media. She sometimes refers to her work as "critical theory fanfic," which is just a fancy way to say that she is obsessed with liminality, gender identity, and foxes. She's a graduate of Clarion West 2012, and her short fiction has appeared in *Daily Science Fiction* and *Crossed Genres* and will be appearing in *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet* and *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*. Her first novel, *The Dragons of Heaven*, will be published by Angry Robot Books in June 2015. She can be found on Twitter @alychelms or at [www.alychelms.com](http://www.alychelms.com).

**Phyllis Holliday**

Phyllis Holliday: Poet, Writer, Performer and Sketch Artist; Author of fable, "Ickitwick" which became a musical, *Johnny and the Thinking Machine*, Queens, NY, 2012. Also 2012, Poets 11, 2014, poems for children in *Feather Floating on Water*, winner of best story (magic realism), in 2014 *Soul Making/Keats*. Still peddling epic novel, *Fairy Country*, many other stories for sale, and working on a Young Adult fairy tale. Member of Laborfest Writers in San Francisco. Favorite oddity: My Geology professor sent a poem I wrote on a bet, about one of our trips, to The Oregon Geological Journal.

*"What saves a man is to take a step. Then another step. It is always the same step, but you have to take it."*

—*Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

**Sarah Huffman**

Sarah has spent her career spent bringing internet access and good food to activists and researchers in some of the farther flung corners of the planet, building robots to do research on other planets, and keeping servers happy and healthy. Born and raised in the vortexes and canyons of Arizona, her superpowers include knowing all the words to way too many songs, knowing which glue suits the situation, and being able to MacGyver anything into working with minimal tools. A dedicated world traveller and generally crafty monkey, Sarah fills her spare time reading books, knitting, and inventing new tasty treats - all while wearing Muppet hats.

**Allan P Hurst**

First non-picture books as a child: *Rocket Ship Galileo* and *The Rolling Stones*, both by Robert E. Heinlein. Warped him for life. Wrote one truly terrible SF story at age 12, never published, and decided that he was better off reading SF&F than writing it. Computer network architect/engineer, square/contra dancer and square dance caller, editor of a technical journal for square dance callers, erotic writer, and sex educator...generally not all at the same time.

**L.S. Johnson**

L.S. Johnson lives in Northern California. Her fiction has appeared or is forthcoming in *Strange Horizons*, *Interzone*, *Long Hidden*, *Fae*, *Lackington's*, *Strange Tales V*, and other venues. Currently she is working on a fantasy trilogy set in 18th century Europe.

**Heather Rose Jones**

Heather is an industrial discrepancy investigator for a major biotech company, which has surprising amounts of overlap with writing fantasy novels, though not in the way you might think. Her first novel, *Daughter of Mystery*, was published by Bella Books in Jan. 2014: a Ruritanian regency lesbian romantic adventure with swashbuckling and magic.

**Vylar Kaftan**

The founder and creative genius behind FOGcon, Vylar Kaftan has published about four dozen stories in places like *Clarkesworld*, *Lightspeed*, and *Asimov's*. Most recently she won the Nebula Award for her alternate history novella in *Asimov's*, "The Weight of the Sunrise," in which the Incan Empire survives into the 19th century. She blogs at [www.vylarkaftan.net](http://www.vylarkaftan.net).

**Lynn Alden Kendall**

Lynn Alden Kendall grew up in the backwoods, reading everything she could get her hands on, from Reader's Digest Condensed Books to "When It Changed" by Joanna Russ. Her work has appeared in *American Writing* and *80! Memories and Reflections on Ursula K. Le Guin*. Under various pen names, she has published a novel, a collection of short stories, and four nonfiction books. At her house, the cat-to-lap ratio is greater than one and the book-to-human ratio hovers around 5000:1.

**Gary Kloster**

Gary Kloster's short fiction has appeared in *Clarkesworld*, *Fantasy Magazine*, *The Intergalactic Medicine Show* and on *Podcastle*. When he's not writing, he's either chasing small children, trying to kick something held over his head, playing an RPG or doing someone else's homework. He also occasionally cleans, but only when desperate.

**Inejiro Koizumi**

Inejiro is a synesthetic reclusive native of the bay area. The ideas for his writings came over 10 years ago while commuting to San Francisco on BART. What began as a poorly written 50-page short story is now a living universe of unending possibility. Major influences include: Nikola Tesla, Ai Wei Wei, Beat-o Takeshi, Tanaka Hisashige, PKD, Orson Welles, Zhang Hang, and Zheng He (Sanbao).

**Anaea Lay**

Anaea Lay lives in Madison, Wisconsin, where she sells real estate under a different name, writes, cooks, plays board games, spoils her cat, runs the *Strange Horizons* podcast and plots to take over the world. The rumors that she never sleeps are not true. She has no comment on the rumors about the disconcerting noises emanating from her basement. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Apex*, *Strange Horizons*, *Lightspeed*, *Nightmare*, *Penumbra* and *Shock Totem*.

**Bradford Lyau**

Bradford Lyau has been a program participant for over 25 years. After teaching at universities in California and Europe, he now works for start-up companies and is also a political consultant. He publishes academic articles on American, British, and European SF. His book-length study analyzing French popular science fiction, *The Anticipation Novelists of 1950s French Science Fiction: Stepchildren of Voltaire*, was published by McFarland and Company. This book has received positive reviews from the leading academic journals dealing with science fiction.

**Daniel Marcus**

Daniel Marcus is the author of two novels and many short stories. Salon.com described his short story collection, *Binding Energy*, as "a cross between Raymond Carver and William Gibson". Recent publications include "Bright Moment" (*F&SF*, Sep/Oct 2011), "After the Funeral" (*F&SF*, Sep/Oct 2013), and "Albion Upon the Rock" (*F&SF*, Mar/Apr 2014). After a spectacularly unsuccessful career attempt as a saxophonist, Daniel earned a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from U.C. Berkeley. For the last 15 years, he has built and managed systems and software in a variety of problem domains and organizational settings.

**Heather McDougal**

Heather McDougal is a writer and educator living in Northern California. She has an MFA in sculpture but went back to her childhood love of writing, winning her a place at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program in 2002 and a Writers of the Future award in 2009. Her fiction has appeared in a number of venues since then, and she has received high praise for her eclectic blog, Cabinet of Wonders. *Songs for a Machine Age*, her clockpunk adventure novel, is out now from Hadley Rille Books.

**Johanna Mead**

Johanna has been writing on topics as diverse as costuming, gaming and history for nearly twenty years. A survivor of the dot-com roller coaster, she lives in Oakland with two cats, three sewing machines and approximately a thousand books.

**Theresa Mecklenborg**

Theresa never knows what to put in these bio slots.

**Kaylia Metcalfe**

Kaylia credits her lifelong passion for reading and writing to her parents. She wrote her first short story in third grade and was an active participant and award winner in numerous reading programs as a child. She grew up in the Silicon Valley (CA) where she attended high school and junior college. She contributed to a few poetry anthologies and studied writing for film and television. In 2005, she graduated with honors from Sacramento State University, receiving her Bachelor of Arts in English with an emphasis in Creative Writing. Her short story collection, *Links*, was published in October of 2009. She is currently writing her first novel. She writes for Community Alliance, Blade California, and the GCV blog as well as her own personal blogs

*"Tourists don't know where they've been, travelers don't know where they're going."*

— Paul Theroux



**Mary Anne Mohanraj**

Mary Anne Mohanraj is author of *Bodies in Motion* (HarperCollins) and nine other titles. *Bodies in Motion* was a finalist for the Asian American Book Awards, a USA Today Notable Book, and has been translated into six languages. She founded the Hugo-nominated magazine, *Strange Horizons*. She received a Breaking Barriers Award from the Chicago Foundation for Women for her work in Asian American arts organizing. Mohanraj is now Clinical Assistant Professor of fiction and literature and Associate Coordinator of Asian and Asian American Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She serves as Executive Director of both DesiLit ([www.desilit.org](http://www.desilit.org)) and the Speculative Literature Foundation ([www.speclit.org](http://www.speclit.org)). Mohanraj's newest book is a Kickstarter-funded science fiction novella, *The Stars Change*, November 2013 from Circlet Press. She lives in a creaky old Victorian in Oak Park, just outside Chicago, with her partner, Kevin, two small children, and a sweet dog.

**Lauren K. Moody**

Twice published and many times more hopeful, Lauren is a writer, a bookseller, and an amateur comic book historian.

**Nancy Jane Moore**

Nancy Jane Moore has a novel, *The Weaving*, forthcoming from Aqueduct Press. Her books include the collection *Conscientious Inconsistencies*, published by PS Publishing, and the novella *Changeling*, available in print from Aqueduct Press, both also available as ebooks from Book View Cafe. She is a member of the publishing co-op Book View Café, SFWA, and Broad Universe. In addition to writing fiction, Nancy holds a fourth degree black belt in Aikido and is working on a self-defense book.

**Pat Murphy**

Pat Murphy is a writer, a scientist, and a toy maker. Her novels include *The Wild Girls*, *Adventures in Time and Space with Max Merriwell*, and *The Falling Woman*. Her fiction has won the Nebula, the Philip K. Dick Award, the World Fantasy Award, and the 2002 Seiun Award. Until mid-2014, Pat worked for Klutz, a publisher of how-to books that come with cool stuff. Her books with Klutz include *The Klutz Guide to the Galaxy* (which comes with a telescope and a sundial), *Paper Flying Dragons* (which comes with dragons to fold and fly) and *Star Wars Folded Flyers* (which comes with 30 foldable starfighters). She now works for a small educational technology start-up in San Francisco. Pat enjoys looking for trouble. Her favorite color is ultraviolet. Her favorite book is whichever one she is working on right now.

**Michelle Murrain**

Michelle Murrain has been writing science fiction since 2006, and has been an avid reader and fan since she started to read. Because she has been both a scientist and a technologist by trade, she went to seminary, and she's a polymath, her interests span a wide range of topics, including science, technology, religion and spirituality, philosophy, history, culture, politics, race, gender, and sexuality. She brings all of these to bear in her science fiction writing. She specializes in stories of culture clash and/or first contact, and her work has numerous strong female protagonists and characters, as well as a lot of diverse characters. She lives in Sonoma County, California, with her spouse and two cats.

**Alfred Nash**

Lead Engineer and Study Facilitator for the Advanced Projects Design Team (Team-X) at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Professional Track Cycling Race Announcer for local and national championship events. Professional MC for fundraisers, including moderating discussions with celebrity guests. Bronze Medalist at the 2013 National Beard and Moustache Championships. BS in Physics from Stanford University and Ph.D in Physics from UC Santa Barbara. Father of a science fiction author.

**Zach Nash**

High school student & science fiction writer. Winner of the FOGcon 5 high-school short story contest.

**Debbie Notkin**

Debbie Notkin has been at various times a science fiction editor, book reviewer, bookstore owner, convention organizer, fanzine publisher, award administrator and more. She is the chair of the motherboard for the James Tiptree Jr. Award, which recognizes works of science fiction and fantasy which explore and expand gender roles. She also does body image activist work with Laurie Toby Edison, including blogging together at Body Impolitic ([www.laurietobyedison.com/discuss](http://www.laurietobyedison.com/discuss)). She also works with Strike Debt Bay Area to bring visibility and organizing power to the ways debt controls our society. For a living, she works as a contracts manager for a medium-sized publishing company in its San Francisco office.

**Megan E. O'Keefe**

Megan is a professional soap-maker and speculative fiction author living in the bay area of California. She is a first place winner in the Writers of the Future Contest, vol. 30. She feels rather strange writing about herself in 3rd person.

**Colleen T. O'Rourke**

Colleen has a Masters of Science in Biology and is currently working as an educational science writer. Since last attending FOGcon, she has been working seriously on her writing and currently has a couple of stories out for submission. Her other hobbies include cooking, hiking, yoga, and bellydancing.

**Sunil Patel**

Sunil Patel is a Bay Area fiction writer and playwright who has written about everything from ghostly cows to talking beer. His plays have been performed at San Francisco Theater Pub and SF Olympians Festival. His fiction will appear in *Genius Loci: The Spirit of Place*, *Fireside Magazine*, and *The Book Smugglers*. When he is not writing, he is consuming stories in all forms in order to extract their secrets and put them to use. Plus, he reviews books for *Lightspeed*. He also likes nachos.

**Andrés Santiago Pérez-Bergquist**

Andrés Santiago Pérez-Bergquist is a recovering roboticist, father, amateur author, game designer, lapsed mathematician, and Unicode support test case. He currently works on creating the Star Trek future, which you will find both creepy and awesome, and there is a 4% chance his software is in your pocket. Writing real stories is hard, so instead he posts microfiction on his website.

**Sasha Pixlee**

Sasha Pixlee's cat is adorable and she is named Rupert because gender is a human construct.

**Lorelei Powers**

Lorelei Powers, also known as Mistress Lorelei, is the author of the BDSM how-to classics *The Mistress Manual* and *The Charm School for Sissy Maids*. She is a bisexual polyamorous sadist and lifestyle Domme. By profession Lorelei Powers is a writer and editor. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area, the only place where she can be her flamboyantly kinky self and still be normal. Her hobbies include reading, cross-stitch, and baking bread. She blogs about BDSM at <http://mistressmanual.com/blog> and about sex, feminism, politics, and naked men in bondage at <http://mslorelei.tumblr.com>. Follow her Twitter feed at <http://twitter.com/#!/MsLorelei>. She does not own a single corset.

*“Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends.”*

— Maya Angelou

**Madeleine E. Robins**

Madeleine Robins is the author of 11 novels, including three Sarah Tolerance alternate Regency-noir mysteries: *Point of Honour*, *Petty Treason*, and *The Sleeping Partner*; and *Sold for Endless Rue*, a retelling of Rapunzel in a medieval setting. She is currently working on a new Sarah Tolerance novel. In addition, she has been, in no particular order, a nanny, a teacher, an actor and stage-combatant, an administrator, a comic book editor, a baker, typist-clerk for Thos. Cook's Houses of Parliament office, a repairer-of-hurt-books, and an editorial consultant. She is a founding member of the Book View Café, where her early Regency romances are available as e-books. All of this leads to a bizarre set of interests and bits of expertise (medieval medicine; cake decorating; urban infrastructure) some of which informs her writing. A native New Yorker and lifelong and passionate fan of cities and all things urban, Madeleine Robins now lives in San Francisco with her family, dog, and one hegemonic lemon tree.

**Steven Schwartz**

Steven Schwartz is a writer of spec fic, smut, and poetry both formal and informal, a letterpress printer, and a firm believer in experimenting with programming. He lives in Oakland with a significantly greater than 1:1 ratio of CPU cores to mammals, and more books than he can count. Short Story Most Often Forced On Other People To Read: "The Man Who Painted The Dragon Griaule", Lucius Shepard. Novel most copies owned of: Samuel R. Delany, *Nova*, eight and counting, mostly given away for other people to read.

**Effie Seiberg**

Effie Seiberg is a science fiction and fantasy writer from San Francisco. She's a graduate of Taos Toolbox and a slush reader for Tor.com. Her stories can be found in the "Women Destroy Science Fiction!" edition of *Lightspeed*, *Crossed Genres* magazine, the anthology *Fierce Family*, and upcoming in *Stupefying Stories*.

**Wendy A. Shaffer**

Wendy Shaffer began her literary career as the subject of her babysitter's Ph.D. thesis in child psychology. (She has never dared read the dissertation.) These days she works as a technical writer. Wendy's poetry has appeared in *Strange Horizons* and short fiction has appeared in *Paradox* and *Realms of Fantasy*. Her current ambitions are to run a half marathon and watch every episode of Doctor Who in existence. (Not concurrently, alas.)

**Alex Shvartsman**

Alex Shvartsman is a writer and game designer from Brooklyn, NY. Over 60 of his short stories have appeared in *Nature*, *InterGalactic Medicine Show*, *Galaxy's Edge*, *Daily Science Fiction*, and many other venues. He's the winner of the 2014 WSFA Small Press Award for Short Fiction. He edits *Unidentified Funny Objects*, an annual anthology of humorous SF/F. His fiction is linked at alexshvartsman.com and his short story collection, *Explaining Cthulhu to Grandma*, releases on February 1st, 2015.

**Aaron I. Spielman**

Longtime fan, conrunner and artist. Not a scary monster, despite rumors (and a nickname) to the contrary. Aaron makes his living in keeping computer servers running and use the proceeds to help fund conventions, buy books, ride motorcycles and make abstract pen & ink drawings, graphic designs and rather odd tattoo flash. Borderlands Café displayed over 100 of his drawings in a solo exhibit in 2014. He lives on a very steep hill in the San Francisco Bay Area with his wife, one of his brothers and a loud, whiny cat.

**Andrea G. Stewart**

Andrea G. Stewart lives in Northern California and gardens year-round in her tiny backyard. Her fiction has appeared in *Writers of the Future Volume 29*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Daily Science Fiction*, and *Galaxy's Edge*, and is forthcoming from *Intergalactic Medicine Show*. When she's not writing, working her day job, or chasing chickens out of her vegetables, she hangs around the house with her trusty dog, her loud cat, and her endlessly patient husband. She is represented by Juliet Mushens of The Agency Group.

**Rachel Swirsky**

Rachel Swirsky holds an MFA in fiction writing from the University of Iowa. In 2014, she won her Nebula for best novella with “The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers Beneath the Queen's Window.”

**Guy W. Thomas**

Guy Thomas is a writer, actor and wannabe director with his BA in Dramatic Arts from UC Berkeley, although it's been a while since he's been paid for any of these activities. A Mars One reject, a disability rights advocate, part-time pain in the butt. He's willing to disguise himself as Stephen Hawking, if it will get him on Virgin Galactic. He also loves dogs.

**Na'amen Gobert Tilahun**

Na'amen Gobert Tilahun is a big ole geek whose writing has appeared in *Faggot Dinosaur*, *StoneTelling*, *So Speak Up*, *The Dead Animal Handbook*, *Collective Fallout*, *Full of Crow*, *io9*, *The Angry Black Woman*, *The WisCon Chronicles*, Vol. 2: *Provocative Essays on Feminism, Race, Revolution and the Future*, *Fantasy Magazine* and most recently the Hugo-nominated *Queers Dig Time Lords: A Celebration of Doctor Who by the LGBTQ Fans Who Love It*. He's always working on a novel, it's finishing them that's remained elusive.

**Juliette Wade**

Juliette Wade writes science fiction and fantasy inspired by her studies of linguistics and anthropology, and by her years living in Japan. Her work has appeared in *Analog* magazine, where she has been featured on the cover twice, with art by Bob Eggleton and Michael Whelan. She blogs at [TalkToYoUniverse.blogspot.com](http://TalkToYoUniverse.blogspot.com) and runs the 'Dive into Worldbuilding!' video hangout series on Google+.

**Terry Weyna**

Terry Weyna reviews science fiction, fantasy and horror at *Fantasy Literature* (<http://www.fantasyliterature.com>), including columns on short fiction published most Mondays. In 2013, Terry read more than 120 books and magazines and published an average of two reviews and columns every week. Terry particularly enjoy SF/F/H that is literary in nature, or tending toward the surreal, taking great joy in what has variously been called the New Weird or just the Weird, as well as what has been variously called slipstream or cross-genre work. Terry reviews books that are not SF/F/H for *Like Fire* (<http://www.openlettersmonthly.com/likefire/>): mainstream fiction, mysteries and thrillers, memoirs and biographies, and the occasional work of nonfiction; and publishes a column called Sunday Links on most Sundays, assembling a list of articles of interest to those who love books. Terry's personal library exceeds 15,000 volumes, about 6,500 of which are SF/F/H.

**Cliff Winnig**

Cliff Winnig's short fiction appears in the anthologies *That Ain't Right: Historical Accounts of the Miskatonic Valley*, *When the Hero Comes Home: 2*, *Gears and Levers 3*, *Footprints*, and several other places. The twitterzines *Outshine* and *Thaumatrope* have published his very short fiction. Cliff is a graduate of the Clarion Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers' Workshop and a three-time finalist in the Writers of the Future Contest. He also plays sitar; dances ballroom, salsa, and Argentine tango; and does tai chi and aikido. He lives with his wife Debby and their two children in Silicon Valley.

*“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”*

— Mark Twain

## Access Information

We at FOGcon take accessibility seriously. We take the approach of universal design: making schedules, communications, and the physical environment usable by as many people as possible. Detailed, up-to-date information will be posted at our accessibility web page: <http://fogcon.org/about-fogcon/policies/accessibility-policy/>. You can always email [access@fogcon.org](mailto:access@fogcon.org), if you have questions, special needs, or requests.

Unfortunately, finances, volunteer availability, and the cussedness of reality all prevent us from making the entire con barrier-free. Sometimes the accommodation essential to one person (a helper animal, for example) is a barrier to another (those allergic to animals). Let us know, please, if you encounter difficulties or if you can offer suggestions or help.

At a minimum, we offer these accommodations:

- A highly accessible, nonsmoking hotel with a number of handicapped access rooms
- Reserved seats in meeting rooms to help those who need to see or hear
- An effort to reduce perfumes for those with scent sensitivities
- Lists of ingredients wherever possible for those with food allergies
- A wide array of edibles to maximize your chances to find food that is both safe and luscious
- Signs at different heights because not everyone's eye level is the same
- An electronic version of the con schedule
- Accessible website design

## Minimizing Stress and Maximizing Comfort

The weather both inside and out varies a lot. Bring layers to add in chilly program rooms, subtract in hot ones, and ensure you're comfortable in the wide range of weather both inside and outside the hotel.

## Reading

FOGcon provides information in various formats. Our most important publications are the pocket program and this Program Book. In addition to regular print, the FOGcon web site hosts PDF and HTML versions of both publications, and we offer Android and iOS apps. A printed pocket program and the Program Book are both included in the membership packet.

## Listening

For the convenience of speech-readers and anyone else who has trouble hearing, we set aside blue stripe seats front and center in every program room. Program participants may be able to use microphones in the larger program rooms. Contact us at [access@fogcon.org](mailto:access@fogcon.org) to request other accommodations, and we'll see what we can do.

## Breathing

Our "zoned" fragrance policy balances two needs. For some members, fragrances trigger asthma, migraine, or illness. Other members need to use fragrance to manage pain and mood. Please leave scented products at home if you can do so without detriment to your own health. The Dealers' Room wares may include incense and dusty books. The hotel uses scented cleaning products. Those of us who react strongly to fragrances, dust, and particulates should bring an N95 mask.

Pets are allowed in the Walnut Creek Marriott Hotel.

## Eating

If you feel safer or more comfortable bringing your own food, you'll be pleased to hear that every room at the Walnut Creek Marriott Hotel features a mini fridge.

The menu for the UnAward Banquet has been chosen to allow a broad spectrum of delicious foods. You should be able to find gluten-free, dairy-free, vegetarian, and vegan options. Sorry, not kosher (except for the vegetarian choices). We will try to post ingredient lists and avoid cross-contamination, but we cannot guarantee either of those things.

The Consuite is open Friday from noon to 2AM; Saturday from 8AM to 2AM; and Sunday from 8AM to 4PM. Every attempt will be made to supply ingredient lists and avoid cross-contamination.

## Potential Barriers that Remain

We don't want to make promises we can't keep. We want you to know about these potential barriers so you can make informed decisions. "Sorry, we can't" does not mean "we don't care" or "we don't believe you" or "we're comfortable ignoring your needs." The Concom has and will continue to wrestle with these issues.

Contact [access@fogcon.org](mailto:access@fogcon.org) for background on these remaining barriers:

- Most of the programming rooms are illuminated with fluorescent lighting.
- Members bring a lot of reading materials only available in regular print. The "freebie" tables groan with info on events, zines, books, con bids, art shows, political theater, and much more. Party announcements and such decorate the walls.
- FOGcon is not scent-free.
- The toilet facilities are labeled "Men" and "Women," although humans don't divide that neatly.
- We cannot guarantee microphones in all program rooms.
- We have not yet found volunteer interpreters or captioners, and FOGcon just can't afford paid ones.

### **True Travel Story from Kerry Ellis**

*My friend S. and I rented a car for the weekend on the island of Crete. Having a couple of hours of daylight left on a Friday night we set out to go to a nearby Venetian period village to explore a bit.*

*Our first error was getting onto the major freeway out of town. It turns out that there are few posted turnings off of this road. So we overshot where we were going. Then we figured out how to get off the road so we could navigate on the side roads. But first, we had to figure out where we were. Before we knew it we were in the middle of a village with a signed name that was nowhere on our map.*

*The road kept getting narrower and narrower. All of a sudden we were in an alley with barely a hands width of space between the car and the walls. And we were headed straight for a guy sitting in a roadside taverna. He calmly reached out and moved the chair next to him which was in the roadway so that I could get through. No one sitting at the tables nearby on the square where the road widened a bit seemed taken aback. Happens every day I guess. But we were a little shaken. By Sunday we stopped counting the number of tavernas we had driven through.*

## Allies: How Every Member Contributes to an Accessible Con

Thoughtless behavior and inaccurate assumptions about people with disabilities can create significant barriers. FOGcon's committee strives to create a con that is accessible and a community that supports accessibility issues.

We all learn contradictory messages about people with disabilities. Disabled people are the archetypal "other": the fate-worse-than-death, the sainted and spiritual, the cursed and amoral, the sub-human, the super-human, the sexless and the over-sexed. These conflicting stereotypes support a weird stew of fear and fascination. All members help to create a universally accessible con by paying attention to our own behavior and attitudes.

**Some guidelines for allies:** Offer help—don't assume it's needed. Most of us are taught to "help the handicapped" but not to ask "does this person want or need help?" If you think someone may need assistance, just ask. If they say yes, don't make assumptions; instead listen to the details of what they tell you they want. If they say "no thanks," don't be offended. What might look overly complicated or inefficient to you can be the best way for the person with a disability.

Don't assume people with disabilities want or need fixing. Members with disabilities are here for the same reasons non-disabled members are: to think and talk about speculative fiction.

Bad ways to start (or continue) a conversation:

"My nephew cured his fibromyalgia with a yak-milk diet."

"What's wrong with you?"

"Don't they have a wonderful new medicine for that?"

"Why take drugs? Don't you know a positive mental attitude and yoga will take care of that?"

Better ways to start (or continue) a conversation:

"Have you read Cat Valente's Fairyland books?"

"I see you've got an Android. How do you like it?"

"Don't I know you from LiveJournal?"

**Privacy.** Respecting other people's physical and emotional boundaries includes their assistive devices. Do not lean on someone's wheelchair or move it without permission. Don't hug, tickle, or touch someone from behind unless you know them personally and know that they welcome that kind of approach. Don't thrust flowers or scents into someone's face unless you know they don't have sensitivities or allergies.

When in doubt, ask the Access Team.

**Respect Blue Zones.** Chairs marked with blue are reserved for those who lip-read, and those who hear better if they sit up front. Wheelchair spaces are also marked in blue. Blue zones must be kept clear for people entering or leaving. Don't create traffic jams, please.

**Maintain clear paths.** FOGcon provides fantastic opportunities to talk, but clogged doorways and hallways make navigation time-consuming for all of us, and impossible for some. Tuck your belongings in front of your feet or under your seat. Remind members gathered in doorways or hallways to move their conversation out of the way.

*"What you've done becomes the judge of what you're going to do - especially in other people's minds. When you're traveling, you are what you are right there and then. People don't have your past to hold against you. No yesterdays on the road."*

— William Least Heat Moon

**Share the air.** Smoke and scents travel quickly, and air won't move if you ask it to. Washing your hands after smoking makes a difference. Please limit your use of scented products if you can do so without negatively affecting your health.

**Spread the word.** Universal Design simplifies life by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities. The Access Team is delighted to discuss how you can incorporate universal design into your conventions, buildings, instruction, publishing and lives: contact us now via [access@fogcon.org](mailto:access@fogcon.org) or in person at the con.

**Speak up!** You don't need to have a disability to advocate for access. If you see barriers, feel free to suggest how to clear them—whether this means talking respectfully to other members, alerting Safety, or contacting the Access Team or another Concom member.

**Many thanks to the WisCon Access Team, who very kindly gave us permission to use and adapt their fine document on accessibility.**

### **True Travel Story from Theresa Mecklenborg**

*On a trip to Hawaii, we bought this artwork that turned out to be just a tiny bit too big to fit in our large suitcase -- it was the same length, and the same width, but the suitcase has rounded corners and the art does not. So we bought a slightly bigger suitcase at Sears to take it home in.*

*At the airport, we found that the handle on the suitcase wouldn't extend, which made it a pain to haul around. When we got home and unpacked, we discovered that one of the tubes that the handle extends into had a dent in it, so the handle couldn't fit past that point. We had the receipt and the suitcase had a 10-year warranty, so we took it to the local Sears to see what they could do for us.*

*They didn't have the same model of suitcase, so they couldn't replace it. They gave us our money back instead. Great! We didn't really want another suitcase anyway. In fact, because the tax rates in California and Hawaii are different, their system actually resulted in our getting back more money than we had spent. We wound up renting a suitcase for just the time we needed it for -5 dollars. Whoo!*



## Anti-Harassment Policy

FOGcon is committed to offering a convention experience as free from harassment as we can make it for our members regardless of characteristics such as gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, race, religion, nationality, or social class. We do not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form. FOGcon attendees violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the convention without a refund at the discretion of the convention organizers.

Harassment includes offensive verbal comments related to such characteristics, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, unwelcome photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome attention. Attendees asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

If a FOGcon attendee engages in harassing behavior, the convention organizers may take any lawful action we deem appropriate, including but not limited to warning the offender or expelling them from the convention with no refund. If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have similar concerns, please contact a convention staff member immediately. While we are primarily concerned with preventing harassment in FOGcon space during the convention, we will also respond to FOGcon-related situations that might occur outside that space, for example in local shops, bars, restaurants, or on the street, or in online contexts.

Convention staff will help attendees contact hotel security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel less unsafe for the duration of the convention. We value your presence.

## Photography Policy

Video and audio recording and photography for personal archival use only is generally okay, unless individuals make it clear that they do not wish to be photographed or filmed, in which case any photography or recording of them is expressly forbidden.

Please be polite and ask before taking photographs or recordings. We suggest that photographs be taken before or after a program event to avoid distracting panelists and audience members from their discussion.

You agree to be solely responsible for clearing any and all rights and permissions for any use(s) you might make of the photographs, recordings, transcripts and similar material you take from the convention. Such material may not be posted to any commercial website or commercially operated streaming server including but not limited to YouTube, nor used for any commercial purpose whatsoever. Please ask permission of the subjects before posting to any generally available web sites including unlocked Flickr, Facebook, DreamWidth, or LiveJournal accounts. Your participation in FOGcon does not permit you to make use of FOGcon intellectual property. Other than for your purely personal, archival use, you may not use any FOGcon intellectual property for any purpose without the express written consent of FOGcon.

**Thanks to our friends at WisCon for graciously sharing their policy with us.**

*“All told, perhaps the most significant measure of the Great Migration was the act of leaving itself, regardless of the individual outcome. Despite the private disappointments and triumphs of any individual migrant, the Migration, in some ways, was its own point. The achievement was in making the decision to be free and acting on that decision, wherever that journey led them.”*

— Isabel Wilkerson,  
*The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*

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# **Westercon 68 will be combined with Conjecture 13 and ConChord 27**

**Author GoH: Spider Robinson • Artist GoH: John Picacio**

**Fan GoH: Seanan McGuire • Special Guest: William F. Nolan**

**Conjecture GoH: Steven Brust • ConChord GoHs: Vixy & Tony**

**Interfilk Guests: Morva Bowman & Allan Pollard**

**Everyone but Nolan and Picacio will be on stage singing**

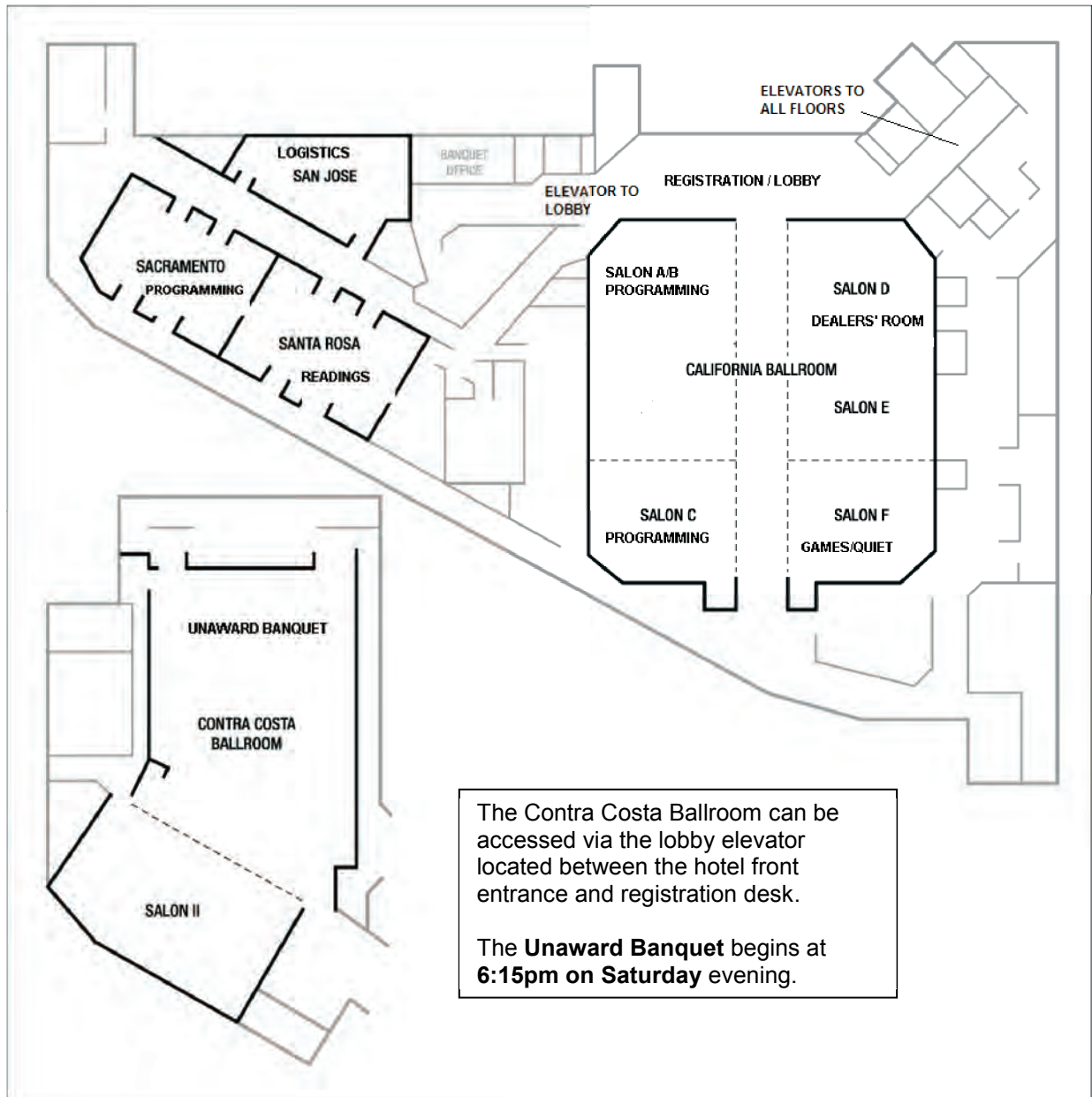
**Partial recreation of The Place from Spider Robinson's**

**Callahan's Key and Callahan's Con**

**Through March 31, 2015: \$65 Attending • \$15 Supporting**

**\$50 Upgraded from Supporting to Attending**

# FOGcon 5 – Where and When



## Registration

Thursday: 7pm – 8pm  
 Friday: 10:30am – 9pm  
 Saturday: 9am – 6pm  
 Sunday: 10am – noon

## Dealers' Room

Friday: 3pm – 7pm  
 Saturday: 10am – 6pm  
 Sunday: 11am – 3pm

## Consuite (second floor, Santa Monica room)

Friday: noon – 2am  
 Saturday: 8am – 2am  
 Sunday: 8am – 4pm  
 Dead Frog Party: Sunday 4pm – 6pm

## Childcare

Friday: 1:30pm – 5:45pm  
 Saturday: 9am – 11:45am  
 Sunday: 1:30pm – 5:45pm  
 Sunday: 9am – 11:45am

## Valet Parking

Is free to all FOGcon members, just tell the valet you are with FOGcon!

## Important Numbers

Convention Safety Team: (510) 520-6067  
 Walnut Creek Marriott hotel security: Dial "0"  
 Police and medical help: 911 (emergencies only)  
 National Sexual Assault Hotline: (800) 656-4673  
 Yellow Taxi in Walnut Creek: (925) 934-1234