

WATT'S OUT

SF&F Book Releases

STEP BY STEP ART SCHOOL: OILS by Patricia Seligman. Hamlyn A4 tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2002. 156 pp. Full Colour. A\$24.95. On sale now. I am running these How To Books for review so that readers who are interested in bettering their artistic ability can find out how. This volume is set up into nine chapters – the Introduction; Equipment (eg Paints, Diluents, Mediums and Varnishes, Painting Surfaces, Brushes and Other Equipment). Other chapters also have sub-chapters. Next is Making the Most of Your Paints; Basic Techniques; Light and Shade; Broken Paint; Texture; Creating Depth and lastly The Human Figure. The book presumes that the artist has the basic techniques of sketching. The volume is what it says it is: How to paint in oils. I found it excellent in both information and clarity of presentation. Well worth obtaining if you are interested in painting in this medium.

TESTAMENT: The Life and Art of FRANK FRAZETTA. Edited by Cathy & Arnie Fenner. Underwood Books h/c, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2001. 160 pp. US4to. A\$95. On sale now. This book contains all the remaining major oils not included in the first two volumes of this trilogy (CON and LEGACY). There are eleven "chapters", many of which are testaments by people Frazetta has known for years. An Introduction by Arnie Fenner is first, Then The Imaginative Years, autobiographical notes by Frazetta; then chapters on Ellie (his wife); Pirates, Testament illustration followed by testaments:- Frazetta by Michael William Kaluta; Ground Zero by Dave Stevens; Dark Wonders by Bernie Wrightson; Frazetta In San Diego by Dr David Winiewicz; Signature by Kenneth Smith and Controlled Ferocity by Bruce Timm. On facing pages there is usually the original work (on the left hand page) – sketch of an earlier work and then the finished work – or a detail from the original work when it was the finished work. For those who love good SF and fantasy artwork.

THE CRIPPLED ANGEL by Sara Douglass. Voyager h/c, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2001. 455 pp incl glossary. A\$39.95. On sale now. Book three of the Crucible. With the fourteenth Century drawing to a close, the supernatural battle between Man and angels is coming to a climax. Hal Bolingbroke, Thomas Neville and their friends and lovers are in for the fight of their lives. One of the battles coming up is when England plans to invade France, and Joan of Arc is ready to defend her homeland. Behind it all the angels are planning to strike down all that the small band of people in the know hold dear. With Margaret and Catherine each fighting to win clear to reach their own goals, things could easily fall apart as the souls of all on earth are lost. Well constructed fantasy fiction.

THE TIGER AND THE STONE by Fletcher Anthony. Voyager tpb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002.

553 pp. A\$27.95. On sale now. The Inheritors book one. Author Anthony has taken on quite an ambitious project with this series. He hopes to tell the tale of how the People, who lived some 50,000 years ago in Java, were thrown out of their forest home and journeyed to Australia. He does the switch back in time by using the "dream" travel method: someone in the present is visited by someone from the past and through this device information is exchanged. The person in the present is Fern Osborne, a part-blood aborigine who lectures for a living. The two who are from the past are shamans. Fern is able to travel back to an ancestor of hers who lived with the People at the time. This promises to be an interesting series of books.

ALTERED CARBON by Richard Morgan. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 404 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

A first novel by an author that this reader will be looking for more from.

Set in the 26th Century, the novel tells of the adventures of Takeshi Kovacs. Kovacs was an ex-Envoy, someone who had been trained by the UN to be both an undercover agent and a highly trained soldier. As with so many of the Envoys, he had dropped out, or had been forced to, and had taken to being somewhat under the law in his actions. When his partner had been killed in their latest mission, Kovacs had woken up lightyears away in another body. In his age, a machine called a stack had recorded his memories, and this could be transferred into another body, either natural or artificial. Kovacs had been acquired by a man who was some three hundred years old to find out who had killed him. What Kovacs found in the course of his investigation would change not only him, but others around him. Fast paced SF adventure.

THE WOUNDED HAWK by Sarah Douglass. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2001. 742 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now. Book two of the Crucible. The story continues with Thomas Neville getting closer to obtaining the casket from Wynkyn de Worde. He has to pay a great price for it however, and his wife, Margaret, will be forever sullied by it. Richard II would also meet his fate in this latest novel, after working his will with Margaret. And his fate is one of the more shocking in the book. Joan of Arc has a slighter role in this volume, as it is focussed on the events taking place in this parallel world of England, where angels of the Lord manifest themselves, as does the demon lord. The machinations of the characters are those of the fourteenth century, but such emotions are with us still. Excellent fantasy fiction.

ICEBONES by Stephen Baxter. Millennium pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2001. 278 pp. A\$17.95. On sale now.

Mammoth book three – the final book in the trilogy.

Mammoths on Mars – a catchy phrase, isn't it? When Icebones, the daughter of Silverhair, woke on a strange mountain, it did not take her long to figure out that she was on the Sky Steppe – the red light point in the sky of Earth. Partly this was because she could see the blue Earth and the moon far off. There were other mammoths there on the mountain – which was a volcano that became more active, forcing them off the summit. Led by Icebones, the small Family had descended to the Lowlands, but not without incident or argument. Icebones had received a message sent from the other side of Mars by a male mammoth – he told her of a fair land in a giant impact crater. The human colony on Mars had failed, and the humans - the Lost - had left for Earth, leaving the animals they had transported on Mars. Whether the animals could live on the again dying Mars was another matter. Well told SF.

A SORCERER'S TREASON by Sarah Zettel. Voyager tpb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 525 pp. A\$27.95. On sale now. Book one of the Kavalla trilogy. When the lighthouse keeper Bridget Lederle woke one stormy night to help a lone sailor land from his smashed boat, she did not dream that she would end up in a faraway land battling evil as a sorceress. When she first arrived in that other world she was lost and fearful. It took some time, but eventually she found powers that would help her and others to fight the evil that was spreading in the land. There were people there she met who she thought were friendly, but turned out otherwise. Zettel has created the first book in what promises to be a most interesting series.

HOW TO DRAW MANGA: Bishoujo Around the World by Hikaru Hayashi. Graphic-sha A4 tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise. © 1999. 127 pp. A\$45. On sale now. This volume could be said to be a companion volume to **Bishoujo: Pretty Gals**. Chapter 1 is titled Bishoujo Around the World Character Drawing Theory and gives background of the three types found in anthropology: Mongoloid, Negroid and Caucasoid. The chapter also covers expressing eye colours, noses, lips, definition of facial features and expressing variations. Chapter 2 is How to Draw Bishoujo From Different Countries and Regions, and covers Asia, Oceania, Europe, Middle East, North and South America and ends with the difference between Bishoujo and Ordinary Beauties. Chapter 3 is about Ancient and Prehistoric Bishoujo – ie Greek, Germanic, Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Japanese, and prehistoric. Chapter 4, titled Learning From the Masters – Manga Artist Case Study Techniques, which is self explanatory. A good basic book for beginners.

HOW TO DRAW MANGA: Occult & Horror by Hikaru Hayashi. Graphic-sha A4 tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise. © 1999. 127 pp. A\$45. This volume looks a bit different interior-wise to others in this series, in that the pages making up the chapters flow more into each other – they are not so defined. There is a short Introduction, and Chapter 1 takes up the Theory of Drawing the Occult: mention is made of Fear as a concept, then discussion of Scary Faces, Frightening Moods, Illustrating (Japanese) Sound Effects, Revulsion: the Effect of Splatter Horror. Chapter 2 continues with How to Draw Things without a Form, then Skeleton Monsters and ends with Small Ghosts and Monsters. Chapter 3's subjects are Spirits, Devils and Fantasy Creatures: Spirit Things; Mountain, Water, Village, Urban, Movie Creatures; Ogres and Demons, Giants and Dwarfs, Spirits of the Four Elements, Monsters Derives from Dogs & Cats, Foxes, Racoons, Serpents, Horses, Beast Men, Dragons, other Fantasy Beasts. Chapter 4 deals with the forces of Good –

Espers, Exorcists and Demon Hunters. Lastly Chapter 5 is a Gallery. Again, another very well done volume and one that will be of great help to the budding artist of this art form.

A FORTRESS OF STONE by J. V. Jones. Orbit tpb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2002. 654 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Book two of the Sword of Shadows. The story continues with Raif Severance searching for Ash March. Jones continues with the characters she introduced in the first volume, A CAVERN OF BLACK ICE, and the reader, who by now has been gripped by the action, can easily follow it. The map at the front of the book is helpful. It is not a complicated piece of work, and thus is easy to absorb. With the action accelerating, Jones is skilful in keeping the reader interested in the many sub-plots weaving throughout the book, by the end of which the reader would be looking forward to continuing the adventure in the next volume. Well-told fantasy adventure.

SCHILD'S LADDER by Greg Egan. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2001. 248 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

Another extrapolation by Greg Egan of present day physics.

The time is 20,000 years in the future. Humankind has colonised a large area of space, with thousands of systems settled. Science has also accelerated, but much of physics was based not only on the basic quantum theory, but on the Sarumpast Rules, which had been composed some hundred years or so from now. When Cass had travelled to a research centre to conduct an experiment in creating a different kind of space, her colleagues had insisted that she use 15 steps to verify its safety. These they had followed. But the "novo-vacuum" stabilised and started to expand at half the speed of light, consuming normal space. The latter part of the novel concerns attempts to penetrate the barrier separating the two vacuums to ascertain if it was morally permissible to destroy the other vacuum.

Cutting-edge science fiction. *Recommended*.

PHILIPPINES HANDBOOK by Carl Parkes. Moon pb, dist in Aust by Bookwise. © 1999. 539 pp incl index. A\$42.95. On sale now.

Over the years I've published articles by travellers; this handbook caught my eye as I am travelling to the Philippines soon.

There is a 53 page Introduction detailing the land's history, government, economy, people, religion, language, society and conduct and customs. On The Road talks about recreation, arts and entertainment, festivals, shopping accommodations and food, getting there, getting around, info and services, health and safety and what to take. The book then looks at the areas: Manila, the provinces south of Manila (eg Cavite Province), then the Luzon areas – the Central Plain, the Cordillera, Northwest Coast, the Northeast, and the Southern region. The Visayas are visited, as well as Mindanao and Palaway. Each area has a separate map, and maps of the main city (eg Davao City). Each area details the topics mentioned in On The Road.

All in all an excellent volume for the traveller. I know I will be taking this along with me when I go.

COMPLETE GUIDE TO DRAWING & PAINTING. Reader's Digest h/c, dist in Aust by Bookwise. 24x30 cm. © 1997. 288 pp. A\$55. On sale now.

As with other Reader's Digest books on most subjects, this book covers just about everything one needs to know about the basics of the subject. There are nine chapters, with the headings Learning to Draw;

Understanding Colour; Composing Pictures; Working from Collected Materials; Drawing with Various Media; Watercolour Painting: Tools and Techniques; Oil Painting: Tools and Techniques; Acrylic Painting: Tools and Techniques; and Working with Pastels. Each Chapter has subchapters; for instance the one titled Composing Pictures has Format – First Things First; Placing Your Main Focal Point; Leading the Eye; Space in Paintings; Perspective Made Easy; and Creative Cropping. All in step-by-step techniques.

The illustrations are in colour and b&w when the subject requires it. All-in-all an excellent volume for the beginning artist or student.

THE BONE DOLL'S TWIN by Lynn Flewelling. **Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2001. 512 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** The first of a trilogy – the Tamir Triad. This first volume sets up the background for the others that follow. There is a long held prophecy that the land of Skala will stand free as long as a daughter of Thelatimos line defends and rules. At the time told, that line does not rule. Erius had taken the throne: his mother Agnalain had proved unsuitable. Events were changing for the worst for the country. Erius, however, had a sister, Ariani. She bore twins, but there were those who were determined that the prophecy would stand and that because they were both born live that it must be ensured that only the female survived. A well written and well told story – female readers will especially like it.

HOUSE CORRINO by Brian Herbert & Kevin J. Anderson. **nel pb, dist in Aust by Hodder Headline. © 2001. 590 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.**

The concluding volume to the Prelude to Dune trilogy.

This book does a good job of tying up the various plotlines that the previous two volumes started: the machinations of Emperor Shaddam IV as his plans for an artificial Spice appear to be coming to fruition; the plans of Baron Harkonnen to corner the natural Spice market, and to avenge his honour against Duke Leto Atreides and gain revenge. The long-term plans of the Sisterhood may be coming up to disarray with the birth of Jessica's son, and the looked-for liberation of the planet Ix seems to be in the offering.

This trilogy is well up to the standard of some of the original Dune novels. All three are *Recommended*.

JUBILEE by Jack Dann. **Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2001. 622 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.**

For those who thought THE MEMORY CATHEDRAL was excellent and want to read more of Dann, this volume is just the thing.

I had not heard of Dann before THE MAN WHO MELTED came out, and did not know that he had this much short fiction published. There are seventeen stories included herein: THE DIAMOND PIT; GOING UNDER; VOICES; FAIRY TALE; MARILYN; THE BLACK HORN; BAD MEDICINE; TATTOOS; CAMPS; DA VINCI RISING; KADDISH; THE EXTRA; A QUIET REVOLUTION FOR DEATH; JUMPING THE ROAD; BLIND SHEMMY; TEA and JUBILEE. Nearly all the stories are fantasy and quite a few are very well done indeed. The two more well known – DA VINCI RISING and JUBILEE have been acclaimed and such is well deserved. Many of the stories have Jewish backgrounds and characters and sometimes this is very obtrusive when one reads the stories consecutively.

All in all a very representative collection of his talents.

THE WINDSINGERS by Megan Lindholm. **Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 1983. 392 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** One of a trilogy, the others being HARPY'S FLIGHT and THE LIMBRET GATE. The world of the Wingsingers is a strange one. Apparently in the far past creatures known as the Gatherers had plucked from various worlds some of their higher lifeforms and placed them on planets that had been set aside for the purpose. The worlds had been linked by "gates", but these could only be used with difficulty by the creatures marooned on the planets, which after hundreds of years they looked upon as home. Some of the Powers are not human, especially the Windsingers, who though born as female children, were spirited away to acquire the alien powers of a dead race. Why there were no male Wingsingers is not mentioned. A quiet afternoon's read.

THE WYRDEST LINK by David Langford. **Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 213 pp incl Afterword. A\$19.95. On sale now.** The second Discworld quizbook. To take a direct quote from the book: "...the quiz themes come from Discworld's many guilds, societies and organizations, from long established ones.... to others that came to prominence much later...." For example, the chapters are Guild of Fools and Jocularators; The Lancre Witches; Offler's League of Temperance; Guild of Engravers; Minor Guilds and Societies; The Librarians of Time and Space; etc etc. The questions are wide ranging and it really helps if you have either the Discworld books in your library or have memorised them. A good gift for a Discworld collector.

REMNANT POPULATION by Elizabeth Moon. **Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 1996. 360pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.**

From what I can remember about this author, she usually writes fantasy. REMNANT POPULATION is pure SF.

When the colonists are pulled out of the failed colony world by the Sims company, one old woman, Ofelia, defies the order and hides out in the jungle till the last ship leaves. She then returns to her families house in the village and begins a lone life. That is, until another colony lands a continent away and is destroyed by natives for an inexplicable reason. A year or so later, the natives turn up in her village and so begins an episode in Ofelia's long life that could have dire consequences not only for her, but for the human race. When the natives find the white-haired old woman, they approach her gingerly, hoping to learn more of the invaders and destroyers that had landed elsewhere. When another ship arrives from Earth with First Contact professional they are in for a surprise... An enjoyable read – and shows that the old still have a lot to contribute.

ORTHE by Mary Gentle. **Millennium pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 1983, 1987. 985 pp incl maps. A\$29.95. On sale now.** This volume consists of the SF novels GOLDEN WITCHBREED, ANCIENT LIGHT and the short story THE CRYSTAL SUNLIGHT, THE BRIGHT AIR. GOLDEN WITCHBREED was Gentle's first novel for adults and was excellently received. Set on the newly discovered world of Orthe, the diplomatic post falls to a young Terran, Lynne de Lisle Christie, who after presenting her credentials as envoy to the crown of the local continent, manages to get permission, which had hitherto not been given, to get across the Hundred Thousand. The reason, she found out, was for the authorities to see the reaction both to her and by her before the question of opening up the planet for any type of trading was discussed. The envoy's adventures and her reactions to the aliens – who though looking much

like humans, are *not*, is well thought out. Excellent SF.
* Recommended*.

GUARDIANS OF THE LOST by Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2001. 676 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now. Book two of the Sovereign Stone trilogy. The time is many years after the destruction of the Vinnengael. There are some still fighting the evil Prince Dagnarius, however. One was the warrior Gustav. When at last he came to the end of his time, he gave the most precious thing in his possession – a portion of the sovereign Stone that had been lost for ages and which Dagnarius had been seeking – to Bashae, a young man who, with his companions, would have to fight his way to the altar in New Vennengael where it would be laid in the place that had been created for it, to keep it out of Dagnarius's hands. A volume that has both fast action and lots of it.

THE NOVICE by Trudi Canvan. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 528 pp. A\$17.95. On sale now. Book two of the Black Magician Trilogy. The continuing story of Sonea as she is accepted into the magician's guild as a novice. At the opening ceremony there are two others who are taken in by an existing magician to help their training, and both these young men will feature more in her upcoming training. The first novel in this series – THE MAGICIAN'S GUILD – received good reviews, and reading this volume I can only say that I am looking forward to reading the concluding volume in the series. A well-written fantasy.

SOVEREIGN by Simon Brown. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 567 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now. Book three of the Keys of Power. The end is coming for the kingdom of Grenda Lear one way or another. The outlaw prince Lynan Rosetheme is invading with what appears to be a superior force of Chetts and Queen Areava is bereaved, both by the death of her husband and child. With many forces on the march it will be not too long before the end comes and one of them is deposed or killed. Who it will be depends on many things, not the least being luck. The author has created a fitting ending to this trilogy – first rate fantasy adventure.

How To Draw Anime & Game Characters: MASTERING BATTLE & ACTION MOVES by Tadashi Ozawa. Graphic-Sha A4 trade pb, dist in Aust by Bookwise. © 2001. 167 pp. A\$45. On sale now. The fourth in this anime series. As with the other books this volume is broken up into chapters and subchapters. These are (chapters in caps): KNOW THE BASICS, What is motion; Structure of the human form; Head movements; RUNNING AND WALKING: THE BASICS OF MOVEMENT; Walking; Running; Running towards the Viewer; Running away from the Viewer; Downward Perspective of a Running Figure; Running at a Slower Gait; ACTION; Arm Action; Leg Action; Ultra action. Then comes Advice from a Young Creator and lastly A Look at the Professional Workplace: Studio 4°C. Each subchapters has separate paragraphs breaking down the figures even further. Another excellent book for those looking to further their interest in anime.

THE EYES OF GOD by John Marco. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2001. 789 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. This large book is quite a read – don't look to read through it in one sitting. There are four main characters, although the power is shared between three: King Akeela of Liiria, his faithful bronze knight Lukien and Cassandra, the daughter of the King of Reece, whose hope was that one day she would reach

her childhood dream and become queen of some realm. King Akeela had fought against her father and demanded peace, and surprisingly her father had accepted – offering his daughter's hand to seal the pact. Thus all three's dreams seemed to be coming true – except, of course, this was just the start of the troubles. Engrossing fantasy.

THE VEIL OF A THOUSAND TEARS by Eric Van Lustbader. Voyager tpb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 624 pp. A\$27.95. On sale now. Volume two of the Pearl Saga. The story of Riane, the one who legend has it would keep Kundala from imminent invasion from the forces of evil, and her fight to keep herself and her close friend and comrade, the sorceress Giyan, from being captured by the invading forces of Nith Batoxxx and also try to find the long missing Veil of a Thousand Tears, whose power would help them defeat the invaders. Before Riane has found the Veil, Giyan is taken over the a demon and tries to defeat Riane behind her back. Lustbader has created a well-written work with Veil, and the fantasy reader will enjoy it.

ABARAT by Clive Barker. HarperCollins h/c, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 419 pp incl appendix. A\$39.95. On sale October 1. To quote from the author's notes on the novel – "ABRAT is planned to be a quartet of short novels – all in the region of 50000 words – which of which will tell an independent story, but when read in sequence will unfold into an epic story about a world..." The four parts to the novel are in addition to the Prologue. The parts are Morningtide; Twilight and Beyond; Where is When; and Four-wicked Strange. Scattered throughout are many black-and-white illustrations by the author. Commencing in the modern day Chickentown, the reader follows Candy as she goes about her school project of finding ten interesting facts about the town. Her journey however, took her into another world which was a very dark shadow of this world. A very different fantasy novel from by this author.

FUTURE RELEASES (Copies received):

Pan Macmillan: DO WHAT THOU WILT - A Life of Aleister Crowley by Lawrence Sutin
SKINNER by Neal Asher &
RETURN TO THE WHORL by Gene Wolfe
HarperCollins: ECHOES OF EARTH by Williams & Dix
PHASE SPACE by Stephen Baxter
Allen & Unwin: MINORITY REPORT by P K Dick.
THE OTHER WIND by Ursula le Guin

FUTURE RELEASES (Copies requested):

Pan Macmillan: SCAR by China Mieville
BIOGRAPHY OF LENIN by Robert Service
SPIKE by Danian Broderick
HarperCollins: ORIGIN by Stephen Baxter
VITALS by Greg Bear
Allen & Unwin: REDEMPTION ARK by Alastair Reynolds
Penguin: Star Wars Ep 2: ATTACK OF THE CLONES
HodderHeadline: THE BUTLERIAN JIHAN by Brian Herbert & Kevin Anderson.
Random House: NIGHT WATCH by Terry Pratchett
THE AMAZING MAURICE by Terry Pratchett

NOTE TO PUBLISHERS: I may be overseas later this year. I will let you know by email when my plans come to fruition, and any instructions for release lists and requested books.

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