

WATT'S OUT

SF&F Book Releases

THE ISLE OF BATTLE by Sean Russell. Orbit pb, dist by Penguin Books. © 2002. 562 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now. Book two of The Swans War. The journey of Tam and those with him continue along the river Wynnd, with conflict following them wherever they went. When Alaan arrived and upset the then current political climate the four companions had to also fend off the attentions of the Wills and the Renne. Then a powerful sorcerer had taken notice of what was going on and had determined to kill them and Alaan. Russell has written a rollicking quest adventure with this book, and fantasy readers who like their fantasy complete with sword and sorcery will find this an enjoyable read. Easily read and digested.

THE SKINNER by Neal Asher. TOR pb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2002. 583 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now. Set in the same universe as GRIDLINKED, the author this time has of a world outside of the Polity. This world is Spatterjay, a kind of Deathworld, where the native lifeforms are intent on killing and eating each other and any unfortunate humans that they come across. The lifeform that is becoming dominant is the leech, which if it bites a human, transfers a virus to the human which, over time, transforms that human into something nearly indestructible to most day to day happenings. Unfortunately if that human goes without dome (earthly) grown food for any long length of time, they start being changed by the virus to something that can live on Spatterjay – ad that something is not human... The novel follows the adventures of three newcomers to Spatterjay, and what happens to turn the life on the planet upside-down. Excellent space opera. *Recommended* for an enjoyable read anytime.

LIGHT MUSIC by Kathleen Ann Goonan. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 424 pp. A\$17.95. On sale now. The sequel to CRESCENT CITY RHAPSODY. In the opening page Crescent City was a peace, but when Jason Peabody was trying to find another radio station to chat to, it was attacked by raiders. Badly wounded, the city had downloaded some of itself into his brain and then it helped him to escape with a secondary personality which called itself Radio Cowboy. Dania, another inhabitant of the city, had her carefully constructed personality destroyed when the city's guidance had failed. Together Dania and the Cowboy – who was at the time in control of Peabody's body – had left the city and headed out of the Caribbean to shore. Their goal, thought they did not know it consciously, was to travel to Houston to retrieve data that would allow the city to attain transformation. Intriguing SF.

EPIPHANY OF THE LONG SUN by Gene Wolfe. Orb tpb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 1994 & 1996. 720 pp. A\$35. On sale now. An omnibus comprising CALDÉ OF THE LONG SUN and EXODUS FROM THE LONG SUN, which is the second half of The Book of the Long Sun. The continuing story of Silk and Hyacinth as their journey goes on, with its epic adventures that would one day go down in

legend across many worlds. The Long Sun series of novels has made its name in the history of science fantasy as one of the classics. With this reprint in two volumes, the reader has the chance to obtain for his or her own a welcome addition to their library. The language is eloquent and the storytelling engrossing. *Recommended* reading.

CINDERELLA by L. Krutop. Five Mile Press Board Book. First Published 2003. Seven pp. A\$4.95 On sale now. The classic fairy story in a board presentation for small children. At seven pages it has been pared right down to allow for a simple plot line for those under five years old. The bad sisters have been left out, but the story of Cinderella and the shoes is there to show that a person can aspire and reach what they set out to do, and that one can climb out of poverty, both physical and mental. The illustrations are quite fine – not blocky as many of these books are. A good book for a gift to a young person.

SNAIL BOY by Leslie McQuirk. Walker h/c, dist in Aust by Walker Books. © 2003. 24 pp. 23x28 cm. A\$24.95. On sale now. A book for the three to seven year olds. The story concerns the travels of a giant snail who is looking for someone to own him so that the various people who could be after him – snail catchers for instance – won't be able to do him in. He has a bit of a problem as he is a big as a pony, but he is sure that if he looks hard enough he will find someone. In his journey he meets many people, but they all reject him. Eventually he finds a boy who he tried to persuade to take him in. Some of the words are a bit hard for the young ones, but overall they will find the book interesting.

THE COMPLETE WATERCOLOUR SET by David Norman. Reader's Digest set, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2002. A\$55. On sale now. This set has been put together for those who want to try their hand at water colouring. It consists of two books – The Techniques Book, of 96 pages and The Project Book, also of 96 pages – plus material for actually doing the colouring – two brushes, plus a pencil, six tubes of paint and a palette. The Techniques book has chapters on Materials; Watercolor techniques and Making Pictures. The Project Book has five sections – Landscapes; Still Life; Waterscapes; Buildings and Gardens; and Live Studies. Both books are in full colour and are very informative. They form an excellent introduction to their subject, and are an good introduction kit.

How To Draw Manga: PEN & TONE TECHNIQUES by Ryo Toudo. Japan Publications tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 1996. 123 pp. A\$45. On sale now. Another in the continuing series of how to draw manga, which gives techniques from artists who are well versed in it. This volume has chapters headed Pen Techniques; Penning Materials and Tools; Screen Tone Techniques; Screen Tone Materials and Tools; Bonus: Tone Etching Tips; Knowing Tone: All About IC Screen and Knowing

Tone: Letraset's Screentone. The book is set up as a running commentary by the author and is full of black-and-white illustrations to ensure that the message of how to use Tone gets across. A very clear explanation of the techniques.

THE FIGURE IN WATERCOLOR by Mel Stabin. Watson Guptill tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2002. 112 pp. 216x266 mm. A\$49.95. On sale now. The subtitle of this book is "Simple, Fast, and Focussed". The contents include a Preface, Introduction, and chapters on Materials and Equipment; Drawing the Figure; Painting the Figure; Light and Shadow; Treating Edges; Painting Portraits; Painting People in an Environment; Groups of People; Painting from Photographs; and In Conclusion. The author explains the aforementioned topics and gives examples in full colour. He starts off with the materials and equipment needed and then explains simply and clearly the techniques for painting the figure. A worthwhile book for those interested in painting in water colour.

PHOTOSHOP FOR PHOTOGRAPHY by Tom Ang. Argentum tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. 128 pp. 25x27 cm. A\$45. On sale now. Subtitled The Art of Pixel Processing. If you take digital photographs and print them on a computer, then this volume is a definite must. There are three sections: The Background; Pixel Processing, and a Reference Section. The Background is sub-sectioned into Pixel Processing Essentials: eg Software directives. The other sub-section is The Photoshop workspace, where the author explains how to use Photoshop commands. Part Two goes into the steps in processing an image – eg working with Channels. The book finishes with Reference Section, including a glossary and web resources, reading further. The whole volume is in full colour – an excellent choice.

HAL FOSTER Prince of Illustrators by Brian M. Kane. Vanguard tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2001. 208 pp. 212x280 mm. A\$49. On sale now. The sub-title of Father of the Adventure Strip says it all. Edited and compiled by J. David Spurlock, this book has been obviously lovingly put together. It is full of illustrations and black-and-white photographs as well as a 16 page colour gallery of Foster's art. There are fifteen chapters covering Foster's life and the artwork he created. Prince Valliant is the strip he is most well known for, but he did create other strips, including the early Tarzan. The artists of his own era, and those following him owe much to his techniques, and this can be seen in their artwork. This book is well worth the addition to your library.

THE ANGEL'S COMMAND by Brian Jacques. Puffin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2003. 374 pp. On sale now. The sequel to CASTAWAYS OF THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, the novel opens in the year 1628, with Ben and his dog Ned arriving in the Caribbean. When the Angel had cursed the Flying Dutchman and it's crew to not age, and to travel down the centuries, young Ben and Ned had been caught in the backlash. They also had to live out the curse, but they were able to wander the entire world. When they visited the islands of the Caribbean they came across another ship – the pirate ship La Petite Marie. It's captain and crew were nearly as bad as that of the Dutchman, but at least they were mortal. Swashbuckling adventure.

BLOOD TIES by C. C. Humphreys. Orion tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2003. 389 pp. On sale now. The sequel to THE FRENCH EXECUTIONER. The continuing story of Anne Bolyn's six-fingered hand, which because of it's connection to the situation, was considered to be a powerful talisman. Jean Rombauid's family was to be split apart, and there would be a series of crises that would further sunder it. The story goes from the Old to the New

World, and involves some natives of North America. Humphreys has the same gripping style that won him the attention of his readers with his first hit. This latest book continues in its wake – a thrilling read.

PATTERN by K. J. Parker. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2002. 568 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now. Book two of the Scavenger Trilogy. Poldam was still struggling to find out details about himself that had commended in SHADOW. Events had a habit, however, of happening too fast to grasp. One of these was in the opening pages, when he and his wife were nearly burn to death in a house fire. During the subsequent flight men he trusted turned against him and he had, until he found the right man to help him, to guard against everybody. Parker's writing style is forthright and vigorous and his characters revel in action; sword-play is their forte. Well written fantasy.

SCHILD'S LADDER by Greg Egan. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2001. 250 pp. A\$17.95 on sale now. A new novel from Greg Egan that will add to his readership. The time is twenty thousand years in the future, and an experiment is about to take place that, if successful, will create a new frontier in physics. It is an experiment in creating a new form of physics in a separate space time. Cass has downloaded an engram of herself to watch in real-time. What happens, however, is that the space created, a "novo-vacuum" becomes self supporting and indeed, starts to grow, converting the ordinary vacuum, and any matter it comes upon, to the new physics. Egan always presents intriguing ideas to the reader. This novel is again full of these.

THE SCAR by China Miéville. Macmillan tpb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2002. 604 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now. Set in the same world as PERDIDO STREET STATION. Leaving New Crobuzon for good, Bellis Coldwine set out on the first part of her journey aboard a ship crewed by people she hoped she would not meet the likes of again. She had built up her credentials carefully, but she was aware that someone might check them thoroughly and find her out. Also on the ship was a group of prisoners taken off one of the stinking prison hulks and bound for a place that would put them to good use. Miéville has carried over, in this novel, the feel of alienness that he created in PERDIDO STREET STATION. This novel reminds much very much of the Gormenghast novels. Outstanding reading.

REDEMPTION ARK by Alastair Reynolds. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 567 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Chasm City is a part of the universe that Reynolds is in the process of creating. Part of that universe is the remains of various alien civilisations that have been found – but so far no living aliens. Why this is is made obvious in this novel – malevolent machines have attacked two ships and subsumed them, but one of the ships comes back to human space, bringing a survivor, as well as some of the machines. They are quickly quarantined. In the meanwhile the war between the Conjoiners and Demarchist factions muddies the water as various characters try to follow their own plans. Excellent space opera.

THE VISITOR by Sheri S. Tepper. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 407 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Sheri S. Tepper is well known for novels that probe at some of the icons of the modern day: its underpinnings, and its idols. This latest is another probe into some of what some people in society think as being sacrosanct. The time is over a thousand years from now, on an earth that has come through devastation and is only now pulling itself together slowly. Dismé Latimer was a woman who is often the protagonist in Tepper's novels –

someone who is very much an ordinary woman, with a core of strength when it comes to when the dice are down. It is up to her to investigate some myths that have come down the centuries, and in doing so, bring an end to some mysteries. A good read.

Legends of Dune 1: THE BUTLERIAN JIHAD by Brian Herbert & Kevin J. Anderson. Hodder&Stoughton tpb, dist in Aust by Hodder Headline. © 2002. 607 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. For those readers who love DUNE by Frank Herbert, one of the events mentioned in it was the Butlerian Jihad, when thousands of years before thinking machines had ruled the human race and kept it under their iron fists. This volume tells of that era, when humankind at last attempted to rebel and free itself from the machines. The men leading the Great Houses were different in those days to those leading them in the time told of in Dune. A Harkonnian was one of the leaders of the rebellion, and an Atreides was one on the side of the machines. The Prelude to Dune novels created more reading for those who loved the original Dune books; this volume continues the background.

PHASE SPACE by Stephen Baxter. HarperCollins tpb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 422 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now. A long awaited anthology of Stephen Baxter's short stories. They are sorted into six sections: *Dreams (I)*: MOON-CALF, *Earths*: OPEN LOOPS; GLASS EARTH, INC; POYEKHALI 3201; DANTE DREAMS; WAR BIRDS, *Worlds*: SUN-DRENCHED; MARTIAN AUTUMN; SUN GOD; SUN-CLOUD, *Manifold*: SHEENA 5; THE FUBAR SUIT; GREY EARTH; HUDDLE, *Paradox*: REFUGIUM; LOST CONTINENT; TRACKS; LINES OF LONGITUDE; BARRIER; MARGINALIA; THE WE WHO SING; THE GRAVITY MINE; SPINDRIFT; TOUCHING CENTURAI, *Dreams (II)*: THE TWELFTH ALBUM. For those who have found Reid Malefant an interesting character, this book will also be of attraction to them. A good example of Baxter's talents.

TRANSCENSION by Damien Broderick. TOR tpb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2002. 345 pp. A\$30. On sale now. Set in a future that might happen with advancing nanotechnology and AI computers, this new novel of Broderick's is a mind stretching offer. It's reading is not easy, so do not expect it to be so. He makes the reader work. There are plot twists and landscapes that alter as you read. Broderick has made his mark with short stories and novels before, but this new book is the best so far. From the antics of Amanda, an adolescent who's escapist schemes have already disrupted many staid people of her acquaintance, to Mathewmark, the man from whose mind the AI governing the society that Amanda lives in, Broderick weaves his spell. A fascinating read.

LITTLE PEOPLE by Tom Holt. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2002. 374 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now. For those who have not as yet read any of Tom Holt's humorous books, you are in for a treat with the publication of LITTLE PEOPLE. The Little People of the title, are elves, and for those who know about them, they have much the same personality type as leprechauns. In other words, they cause trouble for humans. Michael has seen his first elf when he was eight, playing at Star Trek in his father's garden. He was to meet them much more later on in life. And the one he had to thank was his stepfather George. Tom Holt's brand of humour is typically English, and might not be to everyone's taste, but if he is for yours, then you will love this novel.

CANTATA-140 by Philip K. Dick. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 1966. 188 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now. I suppose there are some readers who have not as yet read any of Dick's novel; at least they would have seen some movies based on them – *Blade Runner* springs

to mind. With Dick's death there will be no new pieces of fiction being published. The reader can only wait the re-publishing of his works. CANTATA-140 is one of Dick's novels that I have not read before, so the receipt of this book was a treat. Set in a world that was straining at the seams with overpopulation, the protagonist, Jim Briskin, had the job of trying to find a solution. When one came up, he presented it. Whether it would work at they all thought was another matter. *Recommended*.

DARK HEAVENS by Roger Levy. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2003. 389 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Roger Levy's second novel is quite an experience. The earth of DARK HEAVENS is not a place to be. It is near the end for humans on it, and the place itself is literally nearly at the end of its life – tectonic forces are tearing the land apart. Cyn Auger has the job of trying to keep the people who apply for Consensual Mass Suicide from doing so against their wish. Said Mass Suicides being arranged by the prophets of the age. On a certain day Auger comes across some findings that do not ring true, and when he investigates, he plot thickens. Many hours of compulsive reading.

How To Draw Manga: MAKING ANIME by AIC and Koyogi Animation Gakuin. Japan Publications tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 1996. 123 pp. A\$45. On sale now. This volume gives the basic rules for drawing anime from the beginning. It starts out with basic premises and ends up with the completed anime. As is usual with the case from this publisher, the chapters cover the various phases, and each chapter has sub-chapters. The text is clear and simple and the artwork that accompanies it illustrates the words to get the message of how to create the anime characters. This volume is meant for those who are only starting out drawing anime characters; but even those more advanced should find some hints here that might help them.

OTHER RELEASES: (awaiting review copies)

HarperCollins: ORPHANS OF EARTH – Sean Williams & Shane Dix
YEARS OF RICE & SALT – Kim Stanley Robinson
NAKED EMPIRE – Terry Goodkind
AIEN EARTH – Megan Lindholm

Pan Macmillan: THE GOLDEN AGE - John C. Wright

Bookwise Intl: THE CALLIGRAPHY KIT

Hodder Headline: THE MACHINE CRUSADE – B Herbert/K Anderson

FUTURE RELEASES:

Pan Macmillan: LATRO IN THE MIST – Gene Wolfe
MORE WHAT IF? – Robert Cowley, ed
VIRTUAL HISTORY – Nial Ferguson
HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE ORIGINAL RADIO SCRIPTS – Douglas Adams
MISSPENT YOUTH – Peter F Hamilton
THOUSAND ORCS by R. A. Salvatore

HarperCollins: JIMMY THE HAND – Raymond E Feist & Steve Stirling

HIDDEN WARRIOR by Lynn Flewelling
THE STORM WEAVER & THE SAND by Sean Williams
THE ELDER GODS by David & Leigh Eddings
FREEDOM by Tony Syllitoe
FOOL'S FATE by Robin Hobb
THE GOLDEN FOOL by Robin Hobb
LORD OF THE SHADOWS by Jennifer Fallon

Walker Books: ALBERT'S IMPOSSIBLE TOOTHACHE – Williams/Cushman

Hodder Headline: THE DARK TOWER: Books 1-5 by Stephen King
STEPHEN KING'S DARK TOWER: A Concordance Vol 1 – Robin Furth

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