

SwanCon 32: Inconceivable!

Progress Report One



Easter 2007 · 5-9 April



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Committee

Convenor · Michael Dawson
Treasurer · Stephanie Cooke
Secretary · Paul McLaughlan
Panel Coordinator · Tom Eitelhuber
Academic Coordinator · Erika Pearson
Gaming Coordinator · Evan Beasley
Guest Liaison · David Thatcher
Design and Art · Tina Lorenz
General Committee · April Rutkay, Chris Coman,
Tom Gaunt

The committee can be reached at swancon32@gmail.com

International Guests of Honour

Elizabeth Moon

David Gerrold

Australian Guest of Honour

Matthew Reilly

Professional Guest of Honour

Russell B. Farr

Fan Guest of Honour

Damian Magee



Prices

Full Membership \$100 - Concession \$90

Memberships available from Committee, Fantastic Planet,
UniSFA and all SwanCon events.

Upcoming Events

So you can't wait a whole year to see your fannish friends and help contribute to Perth's largest annual SF convention? Fear not! SwanCon 32: Inconceivable! is running a number of events throughout the next year to help keep you occupied...

Movie Screenings

Movies! Come see the latest blockbusters, cheer the heroes (or the villains!), and hurl popcorn at the screen, all in the name of supporting SwanCon!

Films to look out for include *The Covenant*, *The Prestige*, *A Scanner Darkly*, and *Casino Royale*!

SwanCon Games Day

Later in the year when the days warm up and the sun comes out, we're planning a Games Day. This will involve a picnic barbecue and outdoor games and is likely to take place in picturesque Kings Park. For \$7 a head, you'll get barbecue goodness and a day of fun with friendly fans.

More details closer to the event.

Fundraising News

Fundraising is an extremely important part of running a SwanCon, as it helps us to reduce the membership costs as much as possible. We have a range of chocolates from both Cadbury and Mars for your consuming pleasure. These will be sold at all SwanCon events. If you think you can help out with selling these at your workplace, please email the committee at swancon32@gmail.com

From the Convenor

Welcome to the second progress report of SwanCon 32: Inconceivable! So far we've had a fantastic year, with over 100 full and supporting memberships already purchased.

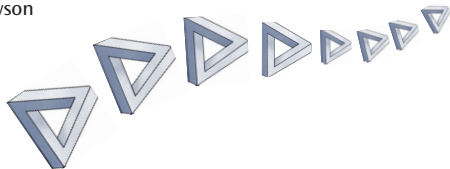
We've had several well attended events, with our screenings of *Pirates of the Caribbean 2* and *X-Men 3* attracting over 150 fans each. The Quiz "Night" we ran last April went brilliantly, with 50 people showing up to have a great time. Many thanks must go to the Hyde Park Hotel for being a great venue – we'll be back there again in early March for a second go, just in time for those last minute membership sales for those of you that won't have joined up by then. Come along and make it an even bigger afternoon than the last.

Many thanks must go to Adam Wright and Susie Hellings for getting our website up and running. Check out <http://www.swancon.com/> for upcoming events and news. You can also submit panel ideas, volunteer to be on a panel, and vote for those already submitted. If you've always wanted to be on a panel about classic fantasy, horror, cyberpunk, or even subversive adult material, now's the time for you to go and volunteer. We're hoping to get many new faces on panels this year, so help us out by putting up your cyberhand.

Finally, a special thanks to April Rutkay for being a fantastic treasurer. April has moved to the greener (well, certainly wetter and colder) pastures of Canberra, joining the exodus of Perthites to our nation's capital, home of politicians, prostitutes and their support staff ;) She is replaced by Stephanie Cooke, who will surely do a fantastic job as well.

See you all at the upcoming screenings!

Michael Dawson



Who Are These Masked Strangers?

Michael Dawson — Convenor

Fresh from his success in the off-Broadway hit, *Flowers for Froggio*, Michael is enjoying a short stint as the creator of macro-biotic foods, for a healthier, more vibrant Perth. He likes chocolates and ordering people around, thus making him an excellent prima donna.



Paul McLaughlan — Secretary

Sailing around the high seas, looting and pillaging bookstores, Paul finally gave up the pirate life, and attendant sea-sickness in order to fulfil his life-long ambition to wear a frilly skirt whilst taking dictation as secretary.

Stephanie Cooke — Treasurer

After conquering and leading the ten tribes of penguins through the time of trials and into the light of the new dawn, Steph found it easy to integrate with the SwanCon 32 committee, who at times wear black and white and slide on their bellies to go faster. She has made invaluable contributions to penguin-kind and will hopefully bring as much vim and vigour to her position as an Inconceivable Committee Member.



Dave Thatcher — Guest Liaison

Wrongly imprisoned after being accused of a string of hamster-related crimes, Thatcher escaped through a plot-hole. He can usually be found harassing airline stewardesses for free “upgrades” as he flies around the country evading bounty-hunters.



Tom Eitelhuber — Chief Programmer

In a previous life Tommo was employed as the Chief Librarian of the Unseen University’s library in Ankh-Morpork. Due to an outbreak of magical lice, he was forced to shave off most of his fur and become the Chief Programmer for SwanCon 32.



Erika Pearson — Academic Programmer

Erika 2.0 helpfully downloaded herself (illegally?) in April 2005, offering her help, and muttering something about ‘getting back at those sanctimonious bit-ches and their so-call e-democracy.’ Sure thing, you go for it...

We are still awaiting the security patch.



Evan Beasley — Gaming Coordinator

Evan is an advance scout for an alien race sent to earth to study our defences to prepare for his peoples invasion fleet. Fortunately he is allergic to sunlight and believes our defensive strategies revolve around relying on the Super Mario Brothers to save us.

Tina Lorenz — Graphic Designer

Christina Lorenz was under the impression that she was being raised by a family of sentient bookcases until she realised that her parents just liked standing behind bookcases a lot. She currently lives with her fiance, a friendly and dependable kitchenette.



April Rutkay — East Coast Wrangler

April started life in the Sea of Japan, and rose to crush Tokyo under her enormous heel. Soon the constant chatter of automatic weapons fire and bad English dubs got her down, and she switched to the quiet life of globetrotting statistician and rare-stamp collector.

Chris Coman

Coman spent many years lashed to a mill-wheel pushing it in circles, then was freed by the SwanCon committee when he answered the question “What is good in life?” with “To have cheap rooms, abundant seating before you and to hear the laughing of the fans.”

”Dr” Tom Gaunt

Little is known about Dr Tom, even if he is a doctor at all. Everyone calls him that though, and we suspect it is because he seems to be vastly more intelligent than everyone around him. Often seen with cute assistants, and mysteriously disappears from time to time.

Want the *real* scoop on the committee and what they’re up to? Hit the website - <http://www.swancon.com/> and get all the latest news, contact details and what the committee are really getting up to in those long planning sessions!

Start Your Reading: Guest Book Reviews

Want to start reading the works of our Honoured Guests, but are not sure where to start? Have no fear, our book reviews are here!

The Martian Child. (2002) By David Gerrold

The Martian Child expands on the Hugo and Nebula winning novella of the same name Gerrold wrote eight years earlier. It is a semi-autobiographical work referencing Gerrold's own experiences adopting his son Sean. In the book the child's name is Dennis and he insists that he is from Mars. Sean never made such a claim, Gerrold was inspired after overhearing a caseworker in the adoption agency discussing such a case.

The brilliance in this work is that it is science fiction without having any of the devices conjured by describing it as such. No flying saucers, light sabres, robots or time travel here. *The Martian Child* is an intelligent tale of a man struggling with his insecurities whilst helping a young boy overcome his own.

Throughout the reader can empathise with the trials and triumphs of the father as he struggles in the new role he has undertaken. Simultaneously it is cleverly ambiguous as to the child's claims, so that one is never quite sure as to the truth until the last page. Is the child really from Mars, or is he just unable to cope with his new family? Read it and find out, like any good story, the journey there is worth even more than the destination.

The story has recently been made into a film by New Line Cinemas with David Gerrold as an Executive Producer, and starring John Cusack. It is currently scheduled for release in the United States in November this year. A short excerpt from the book can be found on David Gerrold's website: <http://www.gerrold.com/fiction-martian/page.htm>

The Speed of Dark. (2003) By Elizabeth Moon

The Speed of Dark won Elizabeth Moon the Nebula in 2003 and quite deservedly so. The story is told in first person perspective by Lou Arrendale, a high-functioning autistic adult, who has been able to learn the patterns of regular society so that he can blend in. However, a cure for autism was been developed and some now hold a discriminatory stance against those born before they could receive such treatment. Unfortunately one such person is his new supervisor at his job within a pharmaceutical company.

Lou is essentially given an ultimatum, subject himself to an experimental "cure" for adult autists or be fired. Moon skilfully then goes through the many emotions and thoughts Lou is faced with beyond the basic worrying about his job. Fundamentally he has to ask, will he still be himself? Despite his flaws and hardships incurred through his autism he was happy, with friends and interests of his own. Would the brain surgery leave him with all these things or would they be erased along with the autism?

Moon shows us that the best science fiction doesn't need aliens from far away, as we have enough aliens within us. We are given no easy answers or simple ways out. Lou struggles against the perceptions of himself and those of his friends and colleagues before finally making his decision. Whether it is the right or wrong decision will depend on the reader, but undeniably neither the story nor Lou will be forgotten.

Venue

SwanCon 32: Inconceivable! will be held at the Acacia Hotel (soon to be renamed All Seasons Perth) in Northbridge. Attendees of SwanCon 2006 will know what a great venue this turned out to be.

Rooms can be booked by calling the hotel on (08) 9328 0000, and mention that you are booking for SwanCon. Prices start from \$90 a night. It is recommended that you book as soon as possible, as the hotel booked out at 2006.

Short Story Competition

Ah! To be immortal, to have one's words repeated through the ages, studied (maybe to have them puzzled at, for their whimsy, for the way they might make no sense!) To shape countless generations and odd aberrations...

To be counted amongst that rare breed, that of a SwanCon Short Story Competition winner, your words etched on pure neutronium, and shot through a black hole, so new, and stranger universes may wonder at yea Gods!

Hyperbole aside, SwanCon 32: Inconceivable! is running a writing competition, searching for the best our happy community can muster. The stranger, the better, for we seek that which is Inconceivable

Full rules and conditions available at <http://www.swancon.com/>.

Panels! Have Your Say

Want to suggest a panel, be on a panel, or request a panel, but have no idea how? Never fear, the website is here! You can now go online to not only post panel suggestions, but to also volunteer as a panelist, or vote on other suggestions. Just like Australian Idol, but cooler, and guaranteed no singing (well, unless you vote for a filking panel or two).

See Page 12 for currently suggested panels, and have your say now, at <http://www.swancon.com/>.

Art Show

SwanCon 32: Inconceivable! is *also* running an art show! Start getting your Inconceivable entries ready. More details soon - keep an eye on the website - <http://www.swancon.com/>

Fanvid Competition

Remember last SwanCon, when you went to a vidding panel, caught a nap in the video stream, or watched the closing vid, and decided "I want to do that!". Now is the time for us to ask "have you done it?" and for you to whistle quietly and look shifty.

Never fear! There is still time to get started on your video competition entry so fantastic and wonderful that it will make Tarantino weep tears of blod and Spielberg give up the directors' chair for good.

There are several categories where you can release your vid, Poke-mon-style, to take on all corners. We have the Rarities, for vids featuring those shows or characters who never get as much attention in fandom as you'd like. We have the Romantics for all you cuddle-bunnies and slashers out there to prove that the subtext is really text! The Experimental category is for those of you who like to stretch your vidding muscles (and maybe mess with our heads at the same time). Storytellers is the category for those who like to make vids showing us something about your favourite character or show. And debuting this year is the Challenge category. These are vids that, in some way meet, define or exemplify the idea of 'Inconceivable!'. All videos will also automatically be entered into General competition.

Full details and rules available online now at: <http://www.swancon.com/>. So get vidding!

Academic Call for Papers

Calling all academics and experts. The Call for Papers is now open. For all the details, visit the website - <http://www.swancon.com/>. If you would like an information pack sent to you directly, please email the Academic Coordinator at academic@swancon.com. Abstract submission closes Friday, December 15, 2006.

Submitted Panel Ideas

- Martian Chronicles Presentation
- Britpulp! The return of British Telefantasy
- Getting the physics right - or wrong - in space battles
- Book Club
- Filkaraoke
- Breaking the Light Barrier
- The Prophecy
- Murder By Death
- Future Landscapes
- Supporting characters whose full story you'd like to hear
- Original reasons for an alien invasion
- Life after death for SF&F
- Construct the modern day League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
- Telling the story while living in the shadows
- Breaking Reader Expectations
- How to compensate for making your character too powerful
- Putting real world characters into fantasy worlds
- Evolution in SF&F
- Fandom in Academia
- Military SF
- Cliffhangers
- Video Quiz
- Grumpy Old Men of SwanCon
- Looking back on the X-Files
- Looking at the Japanese Ring Cycle of films
- TV Anthology Series
- Popularity backlash
- Who Wants to Be a Pocky Millionaire?
- Drugs in SF (no, for real this time)
- Toy Modding Workshop
- DDR Aerobics
- Jelly Belly Cocktail Party

- SwanCon - The Great Debate
- Game Design
- Continuous Storyline Combined With "Monster of the Week"
- Interactive webpages
- The science of time travel
- Memetics
- When the inconceivable just becomes the absurd
- Socialism in Sci-Fi and Fantasy
- The spotter's guide to surrealism in SF & F
- Help make the "Geek to Dane" dictionary
- Non Western Sci-Fi
- Saturday Morning Cartoons - Future Classics
- Radio SF
- SF&F Concept Albums
- Theory of Roleplaying
- How to run a convention
- Keeping Cyberpunk Fresh - Punking up SF
- Autobiographical sci-fi
- Predicting the classics
- Celebrities of fandom
- Cosplay
- Doing "no-explanation" fiction well
- When style becomes more important than substance
- Different types of horror
- Beginners juggling workshop
- Childrens books with subversively adult material
- Comics being made into movies
- Casting call: "SwanCon - The Movie!"
- The superhero construction kit
- Classic fantasy that isn't LOTR
- Shock-value in comics
- Comics are not a genre!
- Where has comics got to go to from here?
- UFO Cults

SwanCon 2007 is an official project of the Western Australian Science Fiction Foundation (Inc.) (WASFF) and runs under it's directives.
WASFF is a non-profit, incorporated organisation.
