



Space Cowboy Books Presents: Simultaneous Times Newsletter

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to Simultaneous Times issue 29! In this issue we bring you an interview with Tristan Evarts, editor-in-chief of the fabulous *Utopia Science Fiction Magazine*. It's one of my favorite magazines and well worth checking out. This issue also features speculative poetry from the marvelous poet Pedro Iniguez, as well as new releases from indie science fiction publishers. The worlds of indie science fiction are thriving and there's so many great books being released!

I'm also excited to announce that soon we will be releasing a new book (in paperback and hardback) from Michael Butterworth, *Complete Poems 1965-2020*, along with a musical audiobook featuring selected works from the book. Look out for news of this great release coming soon.

As always, we'd love to hear from you, so please get in touch at spacecowboybooks@gmail.com Jean-Paul L. Garnier



What was the catalyst for starting Utopia Science Fiction Magazine?

I think I really got rather tired of seeing and reading all these post-apocalyptic, dystopian, dark novels and stories. What we read shapes how we see the world. If all we read are dark, dismal gloom-and-doom endings kind of books,

then that's how we see the world – as a cynical, hopeless place. I wanted to try to find the hopeful, the optimistic, the stories that give us a world to strive for, even if that world seems far away today. From that genesis, *Utopia Science Fiction Magazine* was born.

What's the most challenging, and the most rewarding aspects of running a science fiction magazine?

We were privileged enough to be able to have interviews with some of the Greats like James Gurney and Michael Whelan among others, just being able to interview and publish some of their thoughts and ideas is an amazingly gratifying and rewarding experience. The most rewarding aspect of running a magazine though is beyond a doubt being able to showcase all of our amazing authors and artists we publish. Working with a great story and helping the author to refine it to make it even better, publishing new voices for the first time is a great thing.

The most challenging aspects are of course the time commitment it requires, balancing the budget, and the biggest challenge which is

just dealing with limited resources. Not every story or poem or article we want to accept gets accepted. It's quite sad when we really enjoy a story, but just can't find a place for it so we have to reject it.

Tell us a bit about your team?

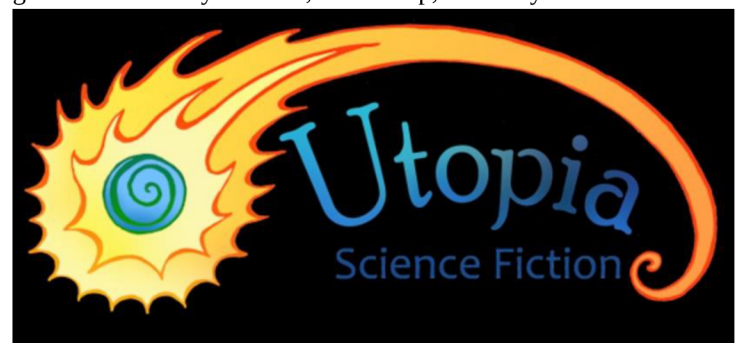
They're incredible, I mean absolutely phenomenal. They volunteer most of their time and energy and talent. Lynne does an amazing job helping us select poetry. Angie and Jess do great helping to select and edit the fiction. Jonathan S, our design editor, is a wonder. He does all of the formatting for the final product and provides some of the cover art and internal art for each issue. J.D. Harlock has been essential to getting interviews and managing our social media pages. They always bring fresh ideas to help the magazine thrive. We owe so much to our readers who buy, support, and read our stories – but *Utopia* would be absolutely nowhere without the hard work that each and every one of our staff puts forward every week to bringing each issue together.

What are the long-term goals of the magazine?

Next year we celebrate 5 years in print (well digital print anyway). I'm hoping by then we'll be able to celebrate by raising our pay for authors to 8c a word for fiction. After that and raising payment for poems, non-fiction, and art the hope is to be able to start to provide compensation for our amazing team of hard-working volunteers. And of course, each issue we hope to provide the best quality stories, poems, etc. as we can.

What directions do you think science fiction is heading, and what would you like to see more / less of?

Science Fiction is still pretty dark. I guess it's always easier to write and read about cynical, corrupt, or dysfunctional worlds than it is to try to imagine us being better than we are. It's certainly more cathartic. *Utopia* doesn't mean perfect. It just means that we are able to handle challenges more maturely, with a certain level of empathy, understanding, and enlightenment. I would love to see more stories like that, the stories that show us better in the future than we are today. As to where sci-fi is heading, I think it's becoming an increasingly more popular genre. I was impressed by the number of new books on our local library shelves that fit into the Science-Fiction/Fantasy category. I think science fiction will continue to grow and diversify in voice, authorship, and storylines.



What advice would you give writers submitting to Utopia Magazine?

I always look for stories that challenge the tropes, the stories that show us better in the future than we are today. I'm always looking to accept stories that touch on those themes, but never self-reject. The biggest advice I can give any writer is to be sure of the message and the theme that you're writing and express it as clearly as possible. A story, ultimately, is just a communication – by nature of it being written it says something. So what do you want your story to say to your fellow human beings?

What's next for the magazine, and what are you currently working on?

I think I answered this in an earlier question we are always working on being able to pay our authors more. Each volume I want to expand what the magazine does and what we can offer as well as try to make improvements to our format. By the time this interview is read our August issue should be published and available. I'm really happy with some of the format changes we've made and we're introducing a new section called The Vault, which will feature public domain science fiction and utopian stories from a whole slew of authors. I believe August will feature something by the incredible James Blish and October will feature a story by the early feminist writer Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain.



Learn more at

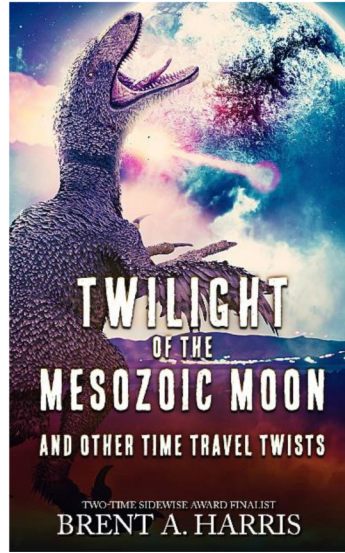
<https://www.utopiasciencefiction.com/>

Poems by Pedro Iniguez

the border wall shrinks
for immigrants on jet packs
as blue skies expand

scaly, winged creature
redistributes its gold hoard
socialist dragon

New from the Small Press



Twilight of the Mesozoic Moon: And Other Time Travel Twists
By Brent A. Harris

Dinosaurs. Time-traveling astronaut dinosaurs. Really, that's all this blurb had to say, right? What else could you want? I know I'd buy it. I mean, that's literally why I wrote it, because who doesn't want stories about time-traveling astronaut dinosaurs?

But if you're hard to please, there's a smattering of other sci-fi stories in this collection by two-time Sidewise Award nominated

author Brent A Harris (that's me!). Most of these stories have been printed in the award-winning Tales of Alternate Earths series, other anthologies, and podcasts. But not all of you have read them (or read them all). So, this is a great place to start.

And! There are a couple exclusive stories within including a dinosaur displaced in Victorian times creating dinosaur-sized problems for his rescuers. If dinosaurs aren't to your liking (then why did you pick up this book, there's a dinosaur on the cover?) then there's time-traveling stories inspired by Star Trek and Quantum Leap that you can ponder over instead all comfy cozy on your couch or oversized chair with your cup of Earl Grey. Hot. So, why are you still reading this blurb instead of the inside of this book? Go on, open it!

<https://bookshop.org/a/197/9781736276044>

The Gods Awoke
By Marie Vibbert

If the Gods were real, could you believe?

Hitra, high priestess of Revestre, already has enough on her hands: political upheaval, a distractingly attractive male servant, and an upcoming harvest festival. But when a column of flame from the heavens sends a city into tumult, it upends more than just her schedule. Now, Hitra must deal with a religious schism, ethnic strife...and a God growing out of control.

"An innovative slant on a fantastic religion, its worshippers and divinities!"

-Mary A. Turzillo, Cosmic Cats and Bonsai
"Creative, quirky, fun, Vibbert delivers a wild new take on divine gods and their petty squabbles in The Gods Awoke!"

-Tobias S. Buckell, Crystal Rain
<https://bookshop.org/a/197/9781951320225>

