



Space Cowboy Books Presents: Simultaneous Times Newsletter

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to issue #30 of Simultaneous Times Newsletter! In this issue we bring you an interview with Phoenix Alexander, curator of the Eaton Collection of Science Fiction and Fantasy at the University of California, Riverside and former SF Collections Librarian at the University of Liverpool. We also have a special announcement about our latest album release from Phog Masheeen, one of the composers behind our Simultaneous Times podcast, and of course more 'new from the small press.' As always, we'd love to hear from you, so get in touch at spacecowboybooks@gmail.com

Jean-Paul L. Garnier



As curator and librarian of the Eaton SFF collection what do you find to be your most important duties?

Well, the Eaton Collection encompasses a vast array of texts and archival collections, and I see my

primary goals to be a.) making sure they are as accessible as possible to researchers and to the general public, and b.) spreading the word about exactly what kinds of materials we have. In addition, I'm always on the lookout for ways to support current SFF scholarship, which means growing the collection in targeted ways. For instance: identifying research or authorial 'gaps' in our holdings, and acquiring materials from authors who have been traditionally underrepresented in Special Collections and Archives.

In what respects do the collections at the Eaton and Liverpool differ?

I'll start by answering what they have in common! Both represent some of the largest catalogued collections of SFF in the world, and contain both print materials (books and periodicals) and authors' archives (papers, manuscripts, correspondence, and so on). As you might expect, Liverpool holds more materials from UK authors, whereas the Eaton Collection has papers from mostly US-based folks. The two institutions are also founded on quite distinct collections: the Science Fiction Foundation Collection makes up the bulk of Liverpool's print materials, whereas the Eaton Collection was started by a donation of 7,500 books from Dr. J. Lloyd Eaton in 1959. The Eaton Collection has a particularly impressive collection of fanzines – many of which were donated by Fred Patten – and many other important, scarce materials from fandom, including the Klein photographs (thousands of which are available to view online: <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8bv7nq5/>).

Are there any specific directions you would like to see the Eaton take moving forward?

There is so much exciting contemporary SFF pushing the field in new directions – making space for those who have been historically excluded from the genres - and our archival, as well as our print collections, aim to reflect this. I would love to expand the Eaton's Collection of Afrofuturist and Africanfuturist texts in particular – given the expertise of faculty in our Speculative Fiction and Cultures of Science Program and English Departments, to name just two – as well as build our collections of Indigenous and Spanish-language titles.

Alongside this focus on the present and future of the genre, there are archival collections from twentieth century authors that I would love to program events around and/or increase awareness of. In some ways, being a curator is like spinning multiple plates at once: your eyes, and hands, have to be everywhere!

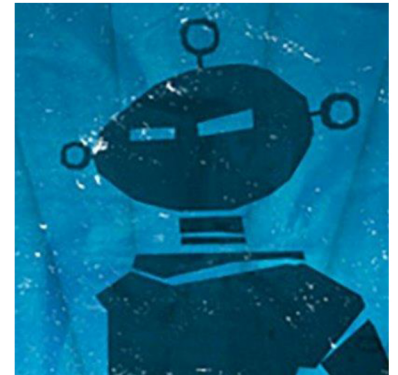
Tell us about the International Consortium of SF Librarians, and how the curators and librarians collaborate to make the collections more accessible?

Absolutely! The Science Fiction Collections Libraries Consortium (SFCLC) is a group of about thirty members who work as librarians, archivists and curators in institutions that hold major collections in science fiction and fantasy. As well as sharing donation opportunities and promoting events, we have also collaborated on a series of online lectures or 'Mirror Talks,' which involved curators presenting their institution's materials in groups of two or three. In this way, we raise awareness for one another's collections, and explore themes and texts in a conversational, complementary manner.

What background did you have in SF before becoming a librarian?

This is a long story, so I'll keep it brief! I was always reading (and writing, and drawing...) sf and fantasy as a kid, and I actually went to fashion school right after high school, training in fashion and textile design for four years. My eye was always drawn to the surreal, and to the fantastical, which manifested in quite bizarre fashion collections! However, the fashion world was not for me, and I retrained in literature where, again, I was drawn to the experimental, surreal or speculative text – particularly in the context of Black and queer literature. I became interested in the political possibilities envisioned by SF, and went on to complete my Ph.D. on the long history of Afrofuturism at Yale University.

In your opinion, what are the greatest differences between SF of today and that of the past?



How far back do we want to go? I think it's fair to say that SF today features a broader representation of characters, in terms of race, sexuality, dis/ability and gender identity. In addition, I would say that (at least to me) some of the experimentalism of New Wave (circa 1970s) SF in terms of prose and narrative structure is somewhat absent from current writing. I think genre boundaries in general are becoming much more porous – particularly between the two camps of literature that can broadly be defined as 'literary' and 'speculative.' Fandoms have also changed drastically, with many conversations now happening online; there isn't as clear a 'paper trail' of developments in the genre, in comparison with, for instance, the 'letters to the editor' pages of twentieth-century periodicals.

What projects are you currently working on and what's coming up next for the Eaton?

At the time of writing, I'm just finishing up my second month in the role, and am still getting to know the collections and UCR's academic community more broadly. In terms of library-related projects: I'm processing collections, looking for new texts and papers to acquire, and participating in national conventions and online events to introduce myself and spread word of the Eaton. On a personal level: I'm working on new short stories (I'm a published author and full member of SFWA, the Science Fiction Writers of America) and querying my novel manuscript!

Thank you very much for these thoughtful questions.

You can view the Eaton Collections holdings at the following website: <https://scua.ucr.edu/collections/eaton-collection-science-fiction-and-fantasy>

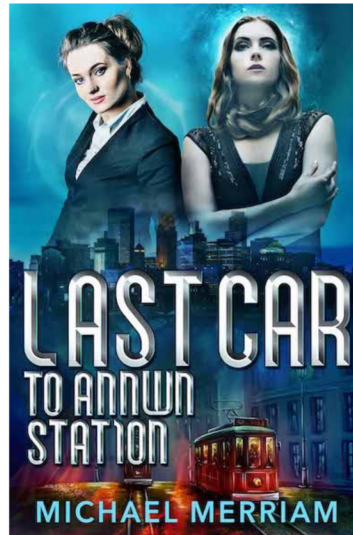
And links to all of my creative work can be found at www.phoenixalexanderauthor.com.

New Release



Phog Masheeen - Music from Simultaneous Times CD/download
Instrumental Remixes from the podcast
available at <https://spacecowboybooks.bandcamp.com>

New from the Small Press



Last Car to Annwn Station by Michael Merriam

One week to save the child, bargain with Death and get the girl...

Child Protective Services Attorney Maeve Malveaux is sure that Chrysandra Arneson needs to be rescued from her rich, powerful and abusive family. But how? Her boss won't listen to her and neither will the judge. But after she gets taken off the case and sent on involuntary leave to get her out of the way, she's determined to find out what's going on.

She's not counting on joining forces with Jill, the gorgeous law librarian from work, and a mismatched collection of fairy folk. Or getting the ghostly assistance of the long-defunct Minneapolis streetcar system. And, perhaps, even a hand from Death himself. Mae and Jill are about to be caught up in a supernatural power struggle that will take them on an adventure from the Uptown neighborhood in Minneapolis into faery realms and beyond. All they need is a dime for the streetcar fare and a little help from their new allies to be on their way. But will it be enough to save a little girl and get them where they need to go? They've only got a week to find out...

Get your copy at <https://bookshop.org/a/197/9781734360387>

Glorious Fiends By Bonnie Jo Stufflebeam

Underland Press is pleased to publish *Glorious Fiends*, a queer femme monster novella from Bonnie Jo Stufflebeam. When infamous hot mess vampire Roxanne resurrects her deceased best friends, she's confronted by a dream-dwelling Guardian of the Underworld, who demands that she replace them in his afterlife with three equally nefarious creatures—or he'll drag her there instead. Reunited with Medusa and Mx. Hyde, Roxanne and her macabre girl gang must



become monster hunters themselves and fight for the future of their friendship. Gory, sexy, silly, touching—*Glorious Fiends* asks who the real monsters are, and if the bonds that we think are solely human are really ours alone. This Hammer inspired odyssey is a nostalgic trip through '80s horror tropes—with modern sensibilities
Get your copy at <https://bookshop.org/a/197/9781630230661>