

IMPULSE

MonSFFA • A MonSFF

NEWS BULLETIN
OF THE MONTREAL
SCIENCE FICTION
AND FANTASY
ASSOCIATION

LE BULLETIN
D'INFORMATION
DE L'ASSOCIATION
MONTRÉLAISE DE
SCIENCE-FICTION ET
DE FANTASTIQUE

August / Août 2008 (Vol. 12, No./Nº 7)

NEXT MonSFFA MEETING IS THIS WEEKEND

Sunday, August 24

11:00AM-5:00PM

St-François Room, Days Hotel
1005 Guy Street, Montreal

SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING

11:00AM

BOARD OF ADVISORS MEETING:

Agenda includes finances and fundraising, programming of future meetings, and other important issues. All members are encouraged to participate (See also "Call to BoA Meeting", right.)

1:00PM

FANRAFT: For the third year running, we devote our August afternoon to the enjoyment of "fancraft" through a series of demonstrations and workshops. MonSFFen and friends are invited to share their particular hands-on creative hobbies with each other. Learn about and try your hand at SF/F-themed scale modelling, origami, digital illustration, needlepoint, and more. (See "Fancraft Demos at August Meeting", right, for details.)

**NEXT MONTH'S MEETING:
September 21**

Fancraft Demos at August Meeting

MonSFFA's August 24 meeting will largely be devoted to a number of demonstrations of what we have termed "fancraft" (see "Next MonSFFA Meeting," left), meaning fancraft projects. As longtime members will know, we have programmed our August meetings thusly for a couple of years, now, providing MonSFFen with the opportunity to observe the creative talents of fellow club members as applied to SF/F-themed craft projects and learn "how-to" in an informal workshop setting.

This year as in previous years, stations will be set up around the room at which folk may try their hand at a number of crafts, or simply observe as techniques are demonstrated. In addition to the handful of workshops we've scheduled, we're opening the meeting widely to any and all, inviting members and friends to bring in examples of their own SF/F fancraft and share their particular hobby with others. Everyone is welcome to run a demo, should they wish—please supply the necessary materials and tools—or simply contribute a few items to a display of fancraft projects. The idea is to share your hobby with your fellow MonSFFen. We hope to showcase a wide variety of imaginative crafting—scale modelling, miniature-painting, woodcraft, origami, scrapbooking, needlepoint, costuming, creative photography, digital graphics, and more—all under the thematic umbrella of science fiction and fantasy.

Drop club president Berny Reischl a line by e-mail (president@monsffa.com) before this weekend and let him know how you'll be participating.

Call to BoA Meeting

The club's Executive have scheduled a Board of Advisors (BoA) meeting for the morning session of our August 24 gathering, said meeting to begin at 11:00AM and run until about 12:30PM. Numerous important issues are on the agenda, including finances and fundraising, an update on the club's ongoing search for a new meeting hall, programming of future meetings, and member participation in outside-of-meeting activities. All members are encouraged to attend; the Executive wants *your* input.

DOES YOUR NAME APPEAR BELOW? WATCH THIS SPACE TO KNOW IF YOUR ANNUAL MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE.

The annual membership fees of the following MonSFFA members are *overdue*:

BENNETT, Paul
GLOVER, Wayne
JAMSHIDI, Abbas
MINEAU, Sebastien
MORROW, Gordon
PELLEY, Lynda
WADSWORTH, Beulah
WALLING, René

Annual membership fees are due this month, August, from the following club members:

CIASCHINI, Lynda L.
JAMES, David
METHE, Ann
NOVO, Alice

Annual membership fees will become due next month, September, from the following club members:

ASPLER, Joseph
BOIES, Marquise
BRAITHWAITE, Keith
DUROCHER, Dominique
HICKEY, Mark
McCULLOGH, Brian
McCULLOGH, Megan
McCULLOGH, Philip
MOIR, Dorothy
MOIR, L.E.
PENALBA, Theresa
ST-PIERRE, Sylvain

Please renew your MonSFFA membership in timely fashion. Annual dues for a regular membership are \$25. Fill out the application form, below, include payment (cheque or money order made out to MonSFFA), and mail to:

**MonSFFA c/o
4456 Boul. Ste-Rose
Laval, Québec, Canada
H7R 1Y6**

MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please print legibly. Cut out form and mail as per directions.

Name / Nom: _____ Age / Âge: _____

AMonSFF FORMULAIRE D'INSCRIPTION

Complétez lisiblement. Découpez le coupon et postez tel qu'indiqué.

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MonSFFA BBQ 2008

With showers forecast, Sunday, July 20, the day of this year's club barbecue, was typical of the rather wet summer we've been experiencing. But the rain held off until late afternoon and so we were able to enjoy a dry MonSFFA barbecue.

The patch of meadow we have adopted for our barbecue these past few years proved unavailable to us this year. Upon arrival, we discovered that the stage for an outdoor music concert had been set up on the very spot. So,

we migrated some hundred yards or so further into the sprawling Parc Angrignon grounds to settle near a patch of trees along the shore of a small, artificial lake, where the young children present delighted at the appearance of a graceful heron.

Turn-out was healthy despite the overcast skies and MonSFFolk and friends gathered to partake in a relaxing afternoon of football and frisbee, among other activities. While the adults engaged in casual conversation and grilled burgers or hotdogs, the kids explored the surrounding terrain, played on the swings

and slides in an adjoining park, and later, took turns at the controls of an RC airplane. That there wasn't much of a breeze failed to discourage the youngsters, who ran back and forth across the field in their repeated attempts to launch a kite skyward.

Having enjoyed a most pleasant afternoon in the park, the group packed up and headed for home at about 4:00PM, just as the rain began to fall, too late to spoil the fun.

Our thanks to club president Berny Reischl for organizing the event.

X-FILES 2 AND OTHER DISAPPOINTMENTS by Keith Braithwaite

For X-philes who may not yet have caught the new *X-Files* movie, be warned that the return of Mulder and Scully proves a big disappointment.

In a nutshell, the story is disjointed and lacks any particularly compelling element. Further, audiences may find it difficult to sympathize with a serial pedophile. As the film unspools, we find that the relationship between Mulder and Scully has progressed some since last we saw them, but actors David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson seem not to have entirely recaptured the essence of the characters they made famous on TV.

I do applaud producers for steering clear of the kind of alien/conspiracy plot that defined the TV series but had, unfortunately, become so convoluted towards the end of the show's run as to cause viewers to lose interest. But the stand-alone story they present here instead proves a lukewarm retread of themes far better handled during the run of the series.

I wanted to believe, but alas, I simply could not.

I'd have to rank *The X-Files: I Want to Believe* as one of my

biggest let-downs at the cineplex. And that got me to thinking about movies that fell really short of my expectations, films that sucked worse than the Canadian Olympic team in Beijing. Now I'm not talking about flicks that you're not especially pumped for but it's half-price night at the theatre and there's nothing else to do anyway so what the heck. Or about movies you just *know* are going to be bad but were dragged to by a friend who now owes you one. I'm talking about films for which you had high hopes going in. It's a real drag when *these* movies blow.

And so, in no particular order, here are a few more of the movies I found most disappointing:

The Phantom Menace >

I suppose this long-awaited return to the beloved *Star Wars* universe couldn't possibly live up to the hype. With the publicity machine cranked up to eleven and fans in a near-religious fervor as the film's premiere approached, this was going to be the biggest thing *ever* in sci-fi! Hard to satisfy those kinds of expectations.

That said, this first of the *Star Wars* prequels was burdened with hackneyed dialogue and lacked the spark that made the

original *Star Wars* such fun. And the idea that the volume of so-called midi-chlorians in the blood determines one's aptitude with the Force, it seems to me, pulls the rug right out from under the Jedi. Guess Yoda and the boys are not *really* all that special. Presumably, a simple injection of these microscopic organisms would cause any fool who happens along to become strong with the Force. Even the insufferable Jar Jar Binks! And that's just *wrong*.

Godzilla > I'm talking the 1998 American remake, here, of course. Reinterpreting a cinematic icon is always risky and while this big-budget effort features what is a quite serviceable big lizard, the beast is just not, by any measure, *Godzilla*. A weak story and poor casting didn't help sell the thing, either.

Hollywood take note: nobody does giant monsters like the Japanese; in future, leave the *Kaiju* to them that know how.

The Lost World: Jurassic Park > Despite all the cool CGI dinosaurs, this second *Jurassic Park* film was pretty lame. The plot serves as nothing more than a means to loosely string together a series of action sequences. But the worst thing

about it is that the velociraptors so menacingly contrived as a deadly threat in the original are here subdued by a kid performing gymnastics. *Com' on!*

Rent *Jurassic Park III* instead.

Cloverfield > Borrowing heavily from *Godzilla* for its monster, the real-life 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York City for its tone, and *The Blair Witch Project* for its visual style, this cleverly marketed effort comes in as rather less than the sum of its parts. *Way* too derivative.

Alien 3 > The original *Alien* begot in *Aliens* that rarest of animals, a follow-up worthy of the original. One could be optimistic, then, regarding number three.

But the third film begins by unceremoniously dispatching all but Ripley of the heroic survivors of the second. Now these were audience favourites, engaging characters that had come through a terrifying close encounter with a whole nest of this film series' frightfully nasty title critters. Written out. Just like that. And before the opening credits were even done!

The writers then proceeded to introduce a new roster of thoroughly unlikable characters, shave the resolute and resourceful Ripley *bald*, and finally, off her, too! What were they thinking?

Impulse is put together monthly by Keith Braithwaite on behalf of MonSFFA. An e-version is available on MonSFFA's Web site courtesy Kurt Schmidt. Contact Keith in regards to this publication by any of the following methods:

- In person at a MonSFFA meeting
- Via the club's mailing address, to the attention of "Impulse":
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Visit MonSFFA on the Web:

Impulse est préparé une fois par mois par Keith Braithwaite au nom de l'AMonSFF. Il est aussi disponible en version électronique sur le site internet du club grâce à Kurt Schmidt. Pour toutes questions concernant cette publication, contactez Keith soit:

- En personne à une réunion du club
- Courriel: bigewok@total.net

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Visitez l'AMonSFF sur internet:

www.MonSFFA.com