

IMPULSE

MonSFFA • A MonSFF

NEWS BULLETIN
OF THE MONTREAL
SCIENCE FICTION
AND FANTASY
ASSOCIATION

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

November / Novembre 2008 (Vol. 12, No./No 9)

NEXT MonSFFA MEETING IS THIS WEEKEND

Sunday, November 16

11:00AM-5:00PM

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

SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING

11:00AM

BOARD OF ADVISORS: We tackle pressing club business, including the finalizing of plans for next month's Christmas Dinner and Party and next year's meeting dates and programming. Input from the club's membership is welcome and encouraged.

12:30PM

LUNCH BREAK: 45-minute break for quick lunch

1:15PM

STAR MYTHS: We examine some of the ancient stories spun around the constellations above.

3:00PM

TO BE ANNOUNCED: Programming originally scheduled for this time slot is unconfirmed as we go to press; substitute programming to be announced at meeting.

DECEMBER 6

**MonSFFA Christmas
Dinner and Party**

Details to be announced

Planning for Club's Annual Christmas Dinner and Party

We've scheduled Saturday evening, December 6th, as the date of MonSFFA's annual Christmas Dinner and Party this year. During the BoA session at the club's November 16 meeting, we'll finalize plans as to exactly where we'll dine and party. An announcement will follow in December's *Impulse* and on the MonSFFA Web site. Stay tuned.

September Club Meeting

MonSFFA's September 21 meeting focused first on spaceship design, then briefly on the upcoming Con•Cept SF/F convention, and finally, on the sexy sirens of sci-fi.

Keith Braithwaite, Wayne Glover, and Dominique Durocher kicked off with a look at some of the many spaceships of science fiction. Keith began with a few examples of the two most common design types featured in science fiction films of the 1950s and early 1960s, the rocket and the flying saucer.

The smooth-hulled, shiny metal rockets of such classic films as *Destination Moon* and *Rocketship X-M* were largely patterned after the real German V-2 rocket in use near the end of World War II. The V-2 and similar models provided the template for the fictional rocketships of sci-fi cinema during the mid-20th century. Hollywood ran with the design, fitting ever more elaborate stabilizer fins and wings to the craft, culminating in such nifty though improbable vehicles as those featured in *Spaceways* or *The First Spaceship on Venus*.

While *Forbidden Planet's* extraordinary C57-D space cruiser was an Earth ship, most saucer-shaped designs of this period were reserved for alien craft, perhaps because the various flying saucers of sci-fi film were inspired by the numerous reported sightings of UFOs at the time, often described as saucer-shaped.

**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*:

BOIES, Marquise
DUROCHER, Dominique
JAMES, David
METHE, Ann
PENALBA, Theresa

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

Ø

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

RUFIANGE, Yolande

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**

Thank you for renewing your membership in MonSFFA, Montreal's premiere SF/F fan club.

MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

AMonSFF FORMULAIRE D'INSCRIPTION

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

Name / Nom: _____ Age / Âge: _____

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Address / Adresse: _____

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The silvery hubcaps spinning through sci-fi skies included those appearing in *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and *This Island Earth*.

Keith screened a selection of clips from these and other movies, showing some of the best-known rockets and saucers in motion.

Wayne focused on the more varied and recent spaceship designs featured in such fare as *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, and *Battlestar Galactica*. The intricately detailed superstructures of these craft, sporting hull plates, snaking conduits, exhaust vents, and all manner of exposed machinery, take after the look of the spaceship *Discovery*, created for the seminal SF film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Wayne offered a size-comparison chart of some of the genre's most famous spacecraft, including the numerous versions of the *Enterprise*, the original and new *Galactica*, and *Star Wars'* *Millennium Falcon*, the triangular Star Destroyers, and the moon-sized *Death Star*.

Dominique closed the presentation with a look at some of the real spacecraft blueprinted and built for NASA and the Russian space program, treating the group to some dramatic documentary footage of launches, crashes, and the test flights of experimental craft. He noted that Hollywood regularly features fictional variations of real spacecraft in the movies, like the space shuttles in *Armageddon*.

Following the mid-meeting break, Cathy Palmer-Lister took 10 minutes to quickly highlight for MonSFFen the upcoming Con•Cept 2008 SF/F convention and encourage folk to attend the event.

Keith was up again to wrap up the afternoon's programming with a slideshow of sci-fi's sexiest screen sirens and a discussion of the many reasons male fans in particular are drawn to these femme fatales.

Clearly, the physical attractiveness of the actresses playing the roles figures considerably, particularly in the case of a young sci-fi fan entering his teenage years

MonSFFA Moment

A Moment in the 20-Year History of MonSFFA

1989 **First Con•Cept:** In late 1989, MonSFFA premiered a one-day SF/F convention it dubbed Con•Cept. The club's aim with this mini-con was to cater to as many fannish tastes as possible, reflecting MonSFFA's own philosophy. John Matthias chaired a concomm made up almost entirely of new-comers to conrunning. Many had not yet attended a sci-fi convention, let alone organized and run one! Con•Cept '89 took place on Sunday, November 12, at the downtown Maritime Hotel. Guests included local SF writer Donald Kingsbury and Ottawa fan Larry Stewart, who served as MC and has attended every Con•Cept since. The successful event drew 300 fans and made \$700.

and beginning to take an interest in girls. Keith noted that the marketers of sci-fi take full advantage of this youngster, invariably splashing illustrations of beautiful, buxom, scantily-dressed women on sci-fi magazine and book covers, exciting in the young lad more than just a thirst for space-faring adventure stories. And it's no accident that the women cast in genre movies or television series come with fashion-model looks.

The total hotness of so many of screen sci-fi's characters, be they male or female, taps into the same idealization—physically, of course, but otherwise, as well—of heroes and heroines throughout history. Comic book superheroines like Supergirl and Wonder Woman, Keith opined, with their impossibly perfect physiques and striking beauty, are drawn that way for the very same reasons that the ancient Greeks carved impossibly perfect and strikingly beautiful statues of their heroes and heroines. These characters are all bigger-than-life fantasies, representations of what we perceive to be the best, most honourable, most desirable attributes of the human race. And we wish we could either be that someone, better than ourselves, or attract the attentions of that someone. In other words, we want to

be or we want to bed the hero or heroine.

It was offered that a character grabs one's attention and holds it only if that character is a well-written, engaging sort. A good character needs more than good looks. True, but with regard to visual storytelling, it doesn't hurt—in fact, it probably helps—if that character is represented by a physically attractive individual. Why would we idealize our heroes and heroines emotionally, intellectually, but not physically? That the vampire slayer and the invincible cheerleader are smokin' hot blondes, or the pistol-packin' tomb raider and the sword-wielding barbarian princess tall, dark-haired knock-outs with legs up to here, or the resourceful FBI agent and the lesbian witch smoldering red-heads open to new things, only adds to the whole bigger-than-life fantasy.

We thank our presenters Keith, Wayne, Dominique, and Cathy, along with all those club members who helped to plan and run this, our September meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: We're a bit short of space this issue, so we'll run a full report on Con•Cept 2008 next issue, along with brief coverage of MonSFFA's bowling outing last month.

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:

www.MonSFFA.com

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

Visitez l'AMonSFF sur internet:

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