

# WATT'S OUT

## SF&F Book Releases

**HUBBLE: the mirror on the universe by Robin Kerrod. Cameron House, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. 192 pp. A\$35. On sale now.** This book showcases the pictures taken by the Hubble Space Telescope. There is a Preface, an Introduction, and then chapters headed Stars in the Firmament; Stellar Death and Destruction; Gregarious Galaxies; The Expanding Universe; Solar Systems; The Heavenly Wanderers; and lastly Background Briefing. There is also a glossary of terms, plus Landmarks in Astronomy and an Index and Acknowledgements. The volume is chock full of full colour photos of both the planets of this solar system, and of other extra-solar objects, including planets. Included is one of the most famous photos ever taken – that of the Hubble Deep Field, showing galaxies more than 10 billion light years away. Awesome. A must have book.

**SHÆDOW MASTER by Justin D'ath. Allen & Unwin pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2003. 268 pp. A\$15.95. On sale now.** A fantasy from another new Australian author. This novel is set in a medieval setting, though not on Earth. The heroine is a young girl named Ora. She is the niece of the king, and thus has some advantage over others. Years before she had escaped the waters of Quickwater Lake when everyone else had perished. It is thought she had some mystical power to have done so. The young Prince has a small part in what is to follow, but the main character, Ora, has to prove that she is able to not only take care of herself, but to save the Land from the drought that had taken hold. Well written fantasy for early adolescences.

**LOAMHEDGE by Brian Jacques. Puffin tpb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2003. 424 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.** LOAMHEDGE is a tale of Redwall, a far-off land where animals such as badgers, rats and others live lives that are as full as those of humans in our own world. One young member of Redwall has a problem of her own – she cannot walk. Martha Braebuck is a young haremaid, and is well known and liked. So much so that Baragoon and Sarobando decided to travel to Loamhedge to try to find a cure for her. Not all is to go smoothly, however, as a band of roughnecks – sea rats – are also on their way there, led by Raga Bol, a nasty piece of work. They all find adventures along the way that will charm younger readers.

**THE HUMAN FRONT by Ken Macleod/A WRITER'S LIFE by Eric Brown. Gollancz double pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. Ea. © 2001. 107+90 pp. A\$17.95. On sale now.** Well, this is a different style to the usual paperback – back to the back-to-back double novel. There are two different genre novels here – one fantasy, the other SF. THE HUMAN FRONT is an SF novel that ties in well with the fantasy A WRITER'S LIFE in that both are written in a style that is peculiar to the British writer, that is, are well written in a literary style. The SF book puts a different slant on the Second World War, and the fantasy tells of writer Vaughan Edwards who had been born in 1930 and who had died in strange circumstances. Quiet enjoyable reading.

**ELFSORROW by James Barclay. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 483 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** Book One of Legends of The Raven. The Raven are a band of elves who have become a legend with their exploits. They are a mixture of fighters and wizards – each one has talents that support the abilities of the others. Possibly their greatest challenge comes within moments of the opening of this novel – thousands of elves are dying, and no-one knows why. There are four houses

of magic in the Elvin land, and those who practice it work to ensure that *their* house is the one that gains from their work. When the Raven set out to find the source of the painful way the elves are dying, they find that their odyssey will not be easy... Well-told fantasy adventure.

**SHADOWHEART by James Barclay. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2003. 421 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.** Book Two of Legends of The Raven. The story continues, with the band of elves known as The Raven diminishing as members are killed. It is a bad time for the elfish people of Balaia as the four houses of magic, Xetesk, Lystern, Dordova and Julatsa fight between themselves. The fight endangers all those in Balaia as armies align themselves and those barons who hold power over those working the land scheme to increase their own power. There is also the dragon Sha-Kaan to take into account in their struggles. The writing is smooth and the action fast and furious. Excellent fantasy.

**Manga Mania: VILLAINS by Christopher Hart. Watson Guptill tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. 144 pp. US4to. A\$49.95. On sale now.** This is a fairly basic book as far as appearances go – each theme is a two page spread. The first page is a pencilled outline/s and the right-hand page is the full-colour illustration. The contents are: Introduction; Evil Basics; Shonen Manga; Beyond Shonen; The Monsters of Manga; Glam Villains; Evil Action! Evil Powers!; Weapons & Robots; Drawing Cool Scenes; and ending with an Index. Hart has produced some other books about Manga before, and there are four other titles you can buy. Even though there are only eight chapters, there are numerous two-page illustrations for the reader to ponder.

**LEARN TO DRAW & PAINT by Curtis Tappenden. Cameron House tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. 320 pp. 4to. A\$39.95. On sale now.** This volume is subtitled All the Tips and Techniques You Need to Work in Any Medium. This is quite a book – the flyleaf gives the thought behind the book: to provide technical instruction to gradually take you from first principles to real accomplishment. There are three main sections: Drawing; Colour & Tone; and Painting. Drawing has chapters headed Making a picture; Materials; Working with Lines; Turning Line into Form; etc. Colour & Tone has headings Colour; Using colour to create mood; and Tone. Painting covers much the same ground as Drawing, but devotes twice the number of chapters to it. There are 100 B&W and some 300 full colour illustrations and lots of artists hints. An excellent book for the serious beginner.

**PHASE SPACE by Stephen Baxter. HarperCollins pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 422 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** A long awaited anthology of Stephen Baxter's short stories. They are sorted into six sections: *Dreams (I)*: MOON-CALF, *Earths*: OPEN LOOPS; GLASS EARTH, INC; POYEKHALI 3201; DANTE DREAMS; WAR BIRDS, *Worlds*: SUN-DRENCHED; MARTIAN AUTUMN; SUN GOD; SUN-CLOUD, *Manifold*: SHEENA 5; THE FUBAR SUIT; GREY EARTH; HUDDLE, *Paradox*: REFUGIUM; LOST CONTINENT; TRACKS; LINES OF LONGITUDE; BARRIER; MARGINALIA; THE WE WHO SING; THE GRAVITY MINE; SPINDRIFT; TOUCHING CENTURAI, *Dreams (II)*: THE TWELFTH ALBUM. For those who have found Reid Malefant an interesting character, this book will also be of attraction to them. A good example of Baxter's talents.

**TALON OF THE SILVER HAWK by Richard Feist. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 390 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** Book One of the Conclave of Shadows. The novel commences as Talon, a young man, is sent on his vigil for manhood. He is to stay in the wilderness until he understands his place in the world and discovers his grown name. While waiting he is set upon by a silver hawk. He is forced by hunger to return to his village, which he finds under attack. Later, he finds himself the sole survivor and vows to live on to avenge his people's death. This becomes his aim in life. Talon of the Silver Hawk is the name he takes for himself, as it is much the message that he heard in his mind when the hawk's talons gripped his arm. As with all Feist's fantasy adventures, this book is a thoroughly enjoyable read.

**IMAGININGS** edited by Keith R.A. DeCandido. Pocket Book pb, dist in Aust by Simon & Schuster. © 2003. 348 pp. A\$26.95. On sale now. IMAGININGS is an anthology of original SF. The editor includes fantasy, SF and some kinds of horror in his "SF". There are ten stories included: NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM by Harry Turtledove; AMENDS by H. Courreges LeBlanc; TOTEM by Janet Berliner; THE THALATTA THESIS by Charles L. Harness; A PLANET CALLED ELVIS by Craig Shaw Gardner; GREAT WHITE HOPE by Daniel Pearlman; INSIDER by Sarah Zettel; INESCAPABLE JUSTICE by Aaron Rosenberg; WALKING CONTRADICTION by Nancy Jane Moore and OF A SWEET SLOW DANCE IN THE WAKE OF TEMPORARY DOGS by Adam-Troy Castro. This is a book that is well worth reading – you will find that is most unputdownable. An excellent collection.

**THE GATHERING STORM** by Kate Elliott. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2003. 1037 pp. A\$22.95. On sale now. Volume five of Crown of Stars. With a series that will total seven books, the Crown of Stars will indeed be a crown on Kate Elliott's head. This novel, at 1037 pages, is quite a read. Readers who have been following the adventures of Alain and Liath will welcome them again. King Henry is still working at uniting the two countries of Wendar and Varre, and while he is concentrating on this, other events are working to undermine his work and bring his country down. Both Alain and Liath have a destiny that would prove to them both their feelings for each other would transcend mortal things. Very readable fantasy.

**A GATHERING OF SHADOWS** by Russell Davis. ibook tpb, dist in Aust by Simon & Schuster. © 2003. 269 pp. A\$16.95. On sale now. Book two of The Twilight Zone. This series of three novels by different authors (John J. Miller, Russell Davis and John Helfers) tied together make up one supernovel called THE TWILIGHT ZONE. Each separate novel is set in a different time. The first novel, was set some centuries ago, and told of the rivalry of two families – the Noirs and the Derlichts. There were stories of strange happenings back then. A GATHERING OF SHADOWS takes place in the present day, with descendents of the two families still in the area. Mason Noir is planning to grab what he reckons is his inheritance, but a lot of times human planning goes awry. Engrossing fantasy.

**A FOREST OF STARS** by Kevin J. Anderson. Earthlight tpb, dist in Aust by Simon & Schuster. © 2003. 706 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Book two of The Saga of the Seven Suns. The action that began in Book two of the series, HIDDEN EMPIRE, continues in this novel. The same characters that featured in that book also continue their adventures, which many times place them in great danger. Alien races again prove that they are not to be trusted, as do some humans. The war between the humans, Ildrians and crystalline Hydrogues continues, hotting up. The humans are denied their usual starship fuel, which up till then had been taken from the atmospheres of gas giants. On an ancient alien world the discovery of archaeologists Margaret and Louis Clicos of a practically instantaneous interstellar transportation system was to prove their undoing. Exciting space opera and entertaining reading.

**JOURNEY INTO THE VOID** by Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman. Voyager tpb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2003. 484 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Book three of The Sovereign Stone trilogy. Shadamehr did not realise just what his destiny was to be. To be sure he did not have any idea that the fate of the world would rest on his shoulders. With the dark lord Dagnarus roaming the countryside with an army of darkness conquering as he went, the people of New Vinnengael did not think it would be too long before he stood before them. They were not wrong. In the meanwhile the Dominion Lords had put together the broken Sovereign Stone, but one piece still eluded them... Weis and Hickman have quite a number of trilogies under their belts – this volume winds up another. Active fantasy adventure.

**THE GOLDEN FOOL** by Robin Hobb. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2002. 712 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now. The Tawny Man book 2. The series continues, with Prince Dutiful again showing that being royalty has its problems, especially when one is in line to the throne and the future wife that has been picked for

you has ideas of her own. Said idea is that the prince must prove himself before she will consider the idea. The quest is formidable – he must slay one of the Outislander dragons. For Fitz, who has been given the job of protecting the prince, it complicates matters even more. He has to find others to help him do the job, and some of those who apply he has doubts about, doubts that would prove right.... A nice thick volume that ensures a good read.

**LORD OF THE SHADOWS by Jennifer Fallon. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2003. 672 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** Book three of the Second Sons trilogy. Those who have read *THE LION OF SENET* and *EYE OF THE LABYRINTH* will have been looking forward to this novel's publication. Many of the characters, as usual with this author, have personal problems with others that are the source of much woe. Tia Veran has ideas about the faithfulness of Dirk Provin to Ranadon and does not believe that Dirk is what he seems. Dirk himself is still working to spread his belief about the second sun, but others do not share this belief. Alenor has her own problems with Kirsh and his adventures apart from her and is determined to do something about it. Well written fantasy.

**WHILE I LIVE by John Marsden. Macmillan h/c, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2003. 300 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.** The *When The War Began* series made quite a hit several years ago and brought many young readers into the SF fold. John Marsden has now written a sequel series: *The Ellie Chronicles*, about what happened when the war had drawn to a stalemate and half the country had been seceded to the invaders. The townspeople had returned home, at least those who survived, and Ellie and her friend had gone back to school. Things were almost normal at first, except for the border. Then small events began to escalate and Elle found herself in the thick of the action again. Another \*Recommended\* novel from this author.

**EVOLUTION by Stephen Baxter. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2002. 760 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.** Another novel from the author who has been rapidly expanding his works to include expeditions into the far past as well as the far future. Baxter has written novels that are wildly differing in their subject matter. This time he has presented a book that covers much of the story about the rise of humans on earth. Beginning in the near future some thirty years hence, he expands his story to the far past. As usual the author draws upon recent scientific theories to back up his speculation for the background of the novel. This is a most enjoyable and entertaining novel to read.

**ILIUM by Dan Simmons. Gollancz tpb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2003. 570 pp. 32.95. On sale now.** Some years ago now, Simmons created a world, Hyperon, that still lives in many readers memories. With this novel he has created another world that will also live on in his readers. Simmons says in the introduction that, using the *Iliad*, he has build up the background and characters to produce ILIUM. Other writers have used classics to base their science fiction novel on, notably Donaldson with his Gap series of novel. I will leave you to read ILUM for yourselves to see if Simmons has succeeded in creating something which is greater for this. It is pure space opera, as was the Hyperon series. Read and enjoy.

#### OTHER RELEASES:

<i>Bookwise</i>	Science Fiction Poster Art – T. Nourmand The Complete Guide to Dinosaurs – S. Parker Spectrum 9 – C. Fenner Draw Your Own Manga: All the Basics – H. Nagatomo How to Draw Anime & Hame Characters v5 – T. Ozawa
<i>Allen&amp;Unwin:</i>	Absolution Gap – Alastair Reynolds Light – M. John Harrison Ilium – Dan Simmons Evolution – Stephen Baxter
<i>Simon&amp;Schuster:</i>	Jarka Ruus – Terry Brooks Morgawr – Terry Brooks
<i>Hodder&amp;Stoughton:</i>	The Machine Crusade: Herbert & Anderson

