



**THE MAMMOTH
BOOK OF
BEST NEW**

SF *15*

**PAUL McAULEY
NANCY KRESS
IAN R. MacLEOD
ALASTAIR REYNOLDS
MICHAEL SWANWICK
and many more**

*'Quantity
as well as
quality . . .
every piece
is a treasure.'*
The Times

Edited by GARDNER DOZOIS

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**THE MAMMOTH BOOK
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SCIENCE FICTION**

15th Annual Collection

Edited by
GARDNER DOZOIS

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SUMMATION: 2001

Right here in this space last year I talked about how we were unlikely to do any better a job forecasting what's ahead of us in the twenty-first century than prognosticators at the beginning of the twentieth century did peering ahead at what lay in store for *them*, and made a (safely generalized) prediction of my own: unprecedented and unanticipated horrors *and* wonders both lay ahead for us. The "unprecedented horrors" part has come true with startling speed, with the atrocities of the 9/11 attacks rocking the world just a couple of months after the book hit the bookstore shelves. And it's not impossible that there may be worse horrors yet to come. But the unprecedented and unanticipated (*unpredictable*, really, in the literal sense) *wonders* are out there too, waiting for us in the years ahead. Actually, we already live surrounded by wonders that would have dropped the jaw of anybody from the '50s, or even the '70s, and that would have seemed like supernatural miracles and unbelievable marvels to anybody from earlier periods; wonders large and small that affect almost every aspect of our lives . . . but they've become commonplace enough that we don't notice them anymore. When the wonders that lie ahead – and I firmly believe they *are* out there – come along, we'll soon ignore them and take them for granted, too. But next time things look dark, next time you're shaken by a new tale to add to the "new horrors" category, next time somebody tells you that we've made no social progress in the last fifty years and things are worse now than they've ever been (another lie – *remember* the '50s, let alone more distant and even worse periods, and in spite of all the very real problems we still have to deal with today, today is better in almost every respect – I certainly wouldn't swap today for yesterday, and think that most people who did so would find themselves incomparably worse-off than they are here in the twenty-first century), just remember that those peering into the onrushing twentieth century from the lip of the nineteenth could no more predict the unprecedented progress and the *good* things that the new century would bring than they could predict the tragedies and horrors – and that *we* can't either, except to make a fairly confident assertion that there will indeed be *both*.

For those of you who just peeked into the book to check: No, science fiction isn't dead yet.

Actually, other than the nationwide trauma and upheavals caused by the 9/11 attacks, it was another pretty quiet and stable year, on the genre level of publishing at least, although events like the reorganization of Amazon.com probably affected publishing in ways that are not yet clear. There weren't too many big stories in 2001, as far as direct changes to the genre publishing world are concerned. One story was the demise of the much-hyped and much-talked-about *iPublish*, AOL-Time Warner's e-publishing subsidiary, which failed miserably after spending spectacular amounts of money, leading neo-Luddites to dance around in joy and declare that that was the end of the e-book whose commercial viability had thereby been disproved forever (except, of course, that it means nothing of the sort, as time will no doubt demonstrate; neither e-books nor Print-On-Demand books are going away, and sooner or later somebody will learn how to make money effectively selling them). Another big story was that Betsy Mitchell, editor-in-chief of Aspect, Warner Books's SF and Fantasy imprint, left to become editor-in-chief of Del Rey Books.

Most of the real action this year, though, for better or worse (actually, for better and worse), was elsewhere.

2001 was another generally bad year in the magazine market, although we only lost one magazine

this year, *Aboriginal SF*, as opposed to two in 2000, and there were even one or two minor encouraging signs, with the circulation of *Absolute Magnitude*, *Asimov's Science Fiction*, and *Weird Tales* creeping up a bit – although overall sales were down at several others.

Asimov's Science Fiction registered a 2.9 increase in overall circulation in 2001, reversing several years of decline; actually, subscription sales continued to dwindle, with *Asimov's* losing 2,000 more subscribers in 2001, but newsstand sales were up more by more than 3,000 since last year. *Analogue Science Fiction & Fact* registered a 9.7 loss in overall circulation in 2001, 4,459 in subscriptions, although newsstand sales dropped by only 200. *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* registered an 11.6 loss in overall circulation, more than 3,000 in subscriptions, but only 188 in newsstand sales. *Realms of Fantasy* registered a 13.6 loss in overall circulation (on the heels of last year's 12.1 loss), losing over 1,500 in subscriptions, and over 3,000 in newsstand sales. As they have for several years now, *Interzone* held steady at a circulation of about 4,000 copies, more or less evenly split between subscriptions and newsstand sales.

The new Scottish SF magazine *Spectrum SF* ought by rights to be listed in the semiprozine section, judging it by its circulation rate, but it's such a thoroughly professional magazine, and such a high-quality one at that, that I'm going to list it here with the professional magazines anyway, and let theirate letters fly as they may. *Spectrum SF* managed only two issues this year – they need to work on their reliability of publication – but the quality of the fiction published was very high, including strong work by Alastair Reynolds, Eric Brown, David Redd, Charles Stross, and others, and they deserve your support.

PS Publishing (www.editorial-services.co.uk/pspublishing), a British small-press, brought out another sequence of novellas, in individual chapbook form, edited by Peter Crowther; this year's crop was perhaps slightly less impressive overall than last year's, but featured an excellent novella by K. MacLeod, *The Human Front*, as well as other good stuff, such as *A Writer's Life*, by Eric Brown, and *Diamond Dogs*, by Alastair Reynolds.

Every year I have to address the question in the summation of why magazine circulation has been declining over the past several years, a question also raised on many of the convention panels that I do, and a question I do get tired of answering, since I go over it here every year, and nobody even seems to pay any attention to what I say, so I have to repeat it all again the following year. Everyone seems to love to blame the decline in circulation of the magazines on the **content**, almost as if it's punishment for sin, an idea that's often widened beyond the magazines themselves as indication that science fiction as a genre is dying. And yet, there are technical behind-the-scenes reasons for the decline in circulation of *most* magazines during the last four or five years that have nothing to do with the content of the magazines, and that affect magazines way outside of genre boundaries, not just SF magazines.

Most of these reasons have to do with the chaos in the domestic distribution network over the last few years, where distributors collapsed and absorbed each other with lightning speed, until where you once had more than three hundred such distributors, as recently as 1996, today you have so few that they can easily be counted on the fingers of one hand. This throws the whole physical way that magazines reach newsstands into total disarray, and creates a situation where there are so few distributors that they can afford to be picky and only carry the very top-selling magazines, not wanting to be bothered with the others. The large-scale collapse of the stamp-sheet industry in the last few years, which has cut way into the business that used to be generated by cut-rate stamp-sheet subscription sellers such as Publisher's Clearing House, hasn't helped either (although that may be a blessing in disguise, since those kind of subscriptions looked good on paper, seeming to swell your

circulation figures, but usually cost more to fulfill than the revenue they actually bring in).

But all this has nothing to do with the health of the genre as a whole, or whether science fiction “dying.” The mystery magazines, for instance, which started with subscription figures many times higher than any science fiction magazine has ever reached, have suffered similarly drastic falls in circulation over the same period of time, for the same reasons – and yet nobody assumes that this means that the mystery genre is dying. Even huge-circulation magazines far outside of the fiction magazine niche, magazines with circulations far higher than anything ever reached by any sort of genre magazine, such as *Playboy*, have also taken severe hits to their circulation, bad enough for them to be admitting that they need to “cut corners” financially in order to survive. Should we assume that this is because of the content, because the photos of naked women are not as good as they used to be, or that nobody likes to buy skin magazines anymore? And yet, the assumption in the field is always that circulation in genre magazines has been dwindling because the editors are doing something wrong, buying the wrong sorts of stories, stories that people don’t like, or that SF just isn’t as good as it used to be, or that people don’t want to read science fiction anymore, or that people are too busy surfing the internet or playing computer games to read anything anymore, or that the genre is “dying” or “graying” – and none of the other factors are even taken into account. (On an internet bulletin board, there’s been a long discussion going on in recent weeks about how the circulations of SF magazines are declining not because of these technical issues – which they know nothing about – but because the stories that we publish are “too smart” and “too hard,” and that the way for us to survive is to dumb down our fiction and make it as much like a written version of a *Star Trek* episode as we possibly can – although why we would want to *bother* to survive if we did that is a question that is rarely addressed.)

It sometimes seems to me that a certain very vocal segment of the SF audience has a real death wish, that they take gloomy pleasure in claiming that the death of the genre is at hand, that even when shaking their heads and tut-tuting, they are actually looking forward to SF’s demise with something like anticipation and relish. Certainly it seems to be an article of faith among some that the genre is dying, that it’s best days are behind it, that nobody wants to read it anymore, that nothing good is published anymore anyway – and no matter how much factual evidence you provide to the contrary, no matter how many books come out every year or how well they sell, no matter how many really good books and stories come out every year, they cling to their faith and refuse to examine the evidence; they seem to have an emotional investment in the idea that the field is doomed.

The fact that magazine circulation has been dwindling is one of the major bits of ammunition for the SF-is-dying camp – but even there, the situation is not quite as clear-cut as they make it sound. *Science Fiction Age*, for instance, wasn’t killed because it was unprofitable – it was killed because it wasn’t as profitable as its owners figured a professional wrestling magazine would be, if they took the money they’d been investing in *Science Fiction Age* and sunk it into a wrestling magazine instead. Personal issues were as much involved as finical issues in the death of *Aboriginal SF* as well. And, as I’ve pointed out before, these circulation figures may not be as bad as they look, particularly for the digest magazines, which have the traditional advantage that has kept them alive for decades – they are very very cheap to *produce*, so you really don’t need to sell very many of them to remain profitable.

If the slide in circulation continues *long* enough, of course, it must eventually kill the magazine, since if you can’t counterbalance the inevitable attrition of your subscriber base due to death and other circumstances, then sooner or later you’re left with no subscribers at all, or at least not enough to keep the magazine in the black, no matter how cheap they are to produce. The genre magazines haven’t reached such a point yet, though. The fact that newsstand sales have risen slightly for some magazines

is encouraging. And magazines such as *Asimov's* and *Analog* (I can't speak for other magazines, but this is probably true of *F&SF* as well) are getting a steady trickle of new subscribers in through internet sites such as Peanut Press and Fictionwise, which sell electronic downloadable versions of the magazines to be read on your PDA or home computer, a market which can only grow in future years. We've also had some success in using the internet as a marketing tool, to get around the newsstand bottleneck and reach new subscribers who might otherwise never see the magazine at all. And we're now getting in foreign subscribers through internet sites as well, a market that was rarely tapped by us before due to the extreme difficulties involved in subscribing from overseas by snail mail.

I think the use of internet web-sites to push sales of the physical product through subscriptions is going to be increasingly important, and so I'm going to list the URLs for those magazines that have web sites: *Asimov's* site is at www.asimovs.com. *Analog's* site is at www.analogsf.com. *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction's* site is at www.sfsite.com/fsf/. *Interzone's* site is at www.sfsite.com/interzone/. *Realms of Fantasy* doesn't have a web-site per se, although content from it can be found on www.scifi.now.com. The amount of activity varies widely from site to site, but the important thing about all of the sites is that you can *subscribe* to the magazines there, electronically online, with just a few clicks of some buttons, no stamps, no envelopes, and no trips to the post-office required. And you can subscribe from overseas just as easily as you can from the United States – something formerly difficult-to-impossible to do. The above-mentioned “electronic subscriptions” are available for several of these magazines, including *Asimov's*, *Analog*, and *F&SF*, are available at Peanut Press and Fictionwise (www.fictionwise.com).

So things are serious, yes – but whether they are grave remains still to be seen. A lot will depend on whether people who enjoy short SF get out there and subscribe or not – or at least pick the magazines off the newsstands, or download them to their PDAs – and if those wider audiences out there who probably have never even *heard* of any of the magazines can indeed be tapped.

(Subscription addresses follow: *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, Spilogale, Inc., P.O. Box 3447, Hoboken, NJ 07030 – \$38.97 for annual subscription in U.S.; *Asimov's Science Fiction*, Dell Magazines, P.O. Box 54033, Boulder, CO 80322-4033 – \$39.97 for annual subscription in U.S.; *Analog Science Fiction and Fact*, Dell Magazines, P.O. Box 54625, Boulder, CO 80323 – \$39.97 for annual subscription in US; *Interzone*, 217 Preston Drove, Brighton BN1 6FL, United Kingdom – \$60.00 for an airmail one year (twelve issues) subscription; *Realms of Fantasy*, Sovereign Media Company, Inc., P.O. Box 1623, Williamsport, PA 17703 – \$16.95 for an annual subscription in the U.S.; *Spectrum SF*, Spectrum Publishing, PO Box 10308, Aberdeen, AB11 6ZR, United Kingdom, \$24.53 for a four-issue subscription, make checks payable to “Spectrum Publishing.” *PS Publishing*, 98 High Avenue, Drive, Leeds L517 8RE, England, UK – \$17 each for *The Human Front*, by Ken MacLeod, *Diamond Dogs*, by Alastair Reynolds, and *A Writer's Life*, by Eric Brown. Note that many of these magazines can also be subscribed to electronically online, at their various web sites.)

It was another fluid year in the young and still-growing field of “online electronic publishing,” with perhaps more encouraging signs than discouraging ones for a change (although how long some of those encouraging signs will *remain* encouraging is, of course, quite a different matter; things change so *quickly* in this area that half the sites I mention could be gone by the time you actually read this).

The big story here this year was probably the solid success of SCI FICTION (www.scifi.com/scifiction/), a fiction site within the larger umbrella of The Sci-Fi Channel site founded last year, and edited by Ellen Datlow, the former fiction editor of *Omni*, as well as of the now-defunct web sites *Omni Online* and *Event Horizon*. In the two years that SCI FICTION has been up and running, Datlow has managed to make it not only by far the most reliable place on the internet

to find good, professional-level, high-quality fantasy and science fiction short work, but a major player in the field, worthy of being weighed against any other market, print or online. SCI FICTION this year published excellent fiction by Ian R. MacLeod, Michael Cassutt, Simon Ings, Leigh Kennedy, Howard Waldrop, Steven Utley, Michael Swanwick, Susan Palwick, Paul Di Filippo, and others.

Although SCI FICTION is no doubt your best bet on the internet for good short fiction, particularly good science fiction (horror, slipstream, and fantasy are much easier to find online than good original short SF, for the most part), there are other promising new sites as well. Last year, we reported on the stillbirth of a proposed new site called The Infinite Matrix (www.infinitematrix.net), to be edited by SF writer Eileen Gunn – fortunately, reports of its death turned out to be (for the moment, at least) greatly exaggerated, as a grant from an unnamed benefactor has enabled Gunn to get several “issues” of the e-magazine up on the Internet after all. The Infinite Matrix is a jazzy and eclectic site, with a variety of sorts of cool postmodern bells and whistles: a weblog from Bruce Sterling, a daily feature by Terry Bisson, a series of quirky vignettes from Richard Kadrey and Michael Swanwick, reviews by John Clute, novel extracts from Pat Cadigan, Rudy Rucker, Cory Doctorow, Kathleen Ann Goonan, and so forth, and although I think that they should leave all that in place, I think the site could *also* use more actual, honest-to-gosh, stand-alone short stories as well, meat and potatoes to go with the jazzy postmodern gravy. They did publish high professional-level stories this year by Simon Ings and the late Avram Davidson, and it’ll be interesting to see what Gunn can come up with in the months to come. A new site called The Spook (www.thespook.com/) is also running professional-level fiction, although most of it is horror and slipstream, not SF. Strange Horizons (www.strangehorizons.com) is another worthwhile site – although not at the same level of professional quality as SCI FICTION or The Infinite Matrix. It published a number of good stories last year by people such as Benjamin Rosenbaum, Michael J. Jasper, Kim Gryer, Cecilia Tan, and others, although for my money it leans more toward fantasy and mild horror than I’d like, with SF of a relatively soft variety (you probably aren’t going to see much hard SF or space adventures or stuff set in the far-future here; on the other hand, it’s nice to see a site that leans more toward fantasy, and even light fantasy, than toward horror or slipstream, the internet default settings for fiction). Perhaps a step below Strange Horizons in the quality of the fiction so far is a brand-new e-magazine called Future Orbits (www.futureorbits.com), which gets a big gold star from me because they’re concentrating on publishing only science fiction, an internet rarity (they’re still a bit uneven in quality at the moment – although they did publish interesting work by R. Neube, Richard Parks, Keith Brooke, K.D. Wentworth, and others). Future Orbits will very probably improve with age, and I wish them well, as we could use more SF-oriented fiction sites online. Another new site, Revolution SF (www.revolutionsf.com), also publishes some original fiction, including a good story by Neal Barrett, Jr., although much of its content is devoted to media and gaming reviews, book reviews, interviews, and so forth.

Below this point, the brute fact is that there’s little short original science fiction of reasonable quality to be found on the internet. It’s not at all hard to find good short *reprint* SF stories elsewhere on the internet, however, and in fact some sites are bringing back into wide availability (assuming you have a computer and an internet connection, of course) good work that’s been unavailable to the average reader for years, if not decades. One of the best and seemingly most successful of these sites is still seeming to flourish after the much-publicized death of the somewhat similar iPublish site, Fictionwise (www.fictionwise.com). Although they’ve recently started offering downloads of original stories, mostly a half-dozen or so by Kage Baker at this point, Fictionwise is not really an “electronic magazine” at all, but rather a place to buy downloadable e-books and stories to read on your PDA.

home computer, probably the best place on the internet to do this, as far as accessing good science fiction is concerned. For a small fee, you can not only tap into a very large selection of individual “reprint” stories here, you can also buy “fiction bundles,” which amount to electronic collections. Almost all of the stuff available here is of high professional quality and is by some of the best writers in the business (you can also buy downloads of novels here, and, something nearer to my heart, subscribe to downloadable versions of several of the SF magazines here). Another similar site is ElectricStory (www.electricstory.com), a place where you can buy downloadable e-books of various lengths by top authors and also access online for free a large and interesting array of critical material, including movie reviews by Lucius Shepard, a regular column by Howard Waldrop, and other stuff. There’s also some original never-before-published stuff to be purchased at ElectricStory that can only be accessed on the site, including a never-published-in-print collection of Howard Waldrop stories and novels by Lucius Shepard and Richard Wadholm. Similar for-a-small-fee access to both original and reprint SF stories is offered by sites such as Mind’s Eye Fiction (www.tale.com/genres.htm) and Alexandria Digital Literature (www.alexlit.com) as well. One of the best sites on the Internet to read reprint stories for *free* (although you have to read them on the screen) is the British *Infinity Plus* (www.users.zetnet.co.uk/iplus/), a good general site that features a very extensive selection of good quality reprint stories, as well as extensive biographical and bibliographical information, book reviews, and critical essays. Most of the sites that are associated with existent print magazines, such as *Asimov’s Analog*, *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Eidolon*, *Aurealis*, and others, will have extensive archives of material, both fiction and nonfiction, previously published by the print versions of the magazines, and some of them regularly run teaser excerpts from stories coming up in forthcoming issues.

Finding stories to read, though, is not all that the SF community finds to do on the web, by any means. General interest sites that don’t publish fiction but *do* publish lots of reviews, critical articles, and genre-oriented news of various kinds are among the most prominent SF-related sites on the Internet, and are probably my most frequent daily stops while surfing around. Among the best of these sites are the SF Site (www.sfsite.com), which not only features an extensive selection of reviews of books, games, and magazines, interviews, critical retrospective articles, letters, and so forth, plus a huge archive of past reviews, but also serves as host-site for the web-pages of a significant percentage of all the SF/Fantasy print magazines in existence, including *Asimov’s*, *Analog*, *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Interzone*, and the whole DNA Publishing group (*Absolute Magnitude*, *Pirate Writings*, *Weird Tales*, *Aboriginal SF*, *Dreams of Decadence*); Locus Online (www.locusmag.com), the online version of the newsmagazine *Locus*, a great source for fast-breaking genre-related news, as well as access to book reviews, critical lists, extensive data-base archives, and lists of links to other sites of interest (Mark Kelly has given up his short fiction-review column in favor of devoting more time to editing the site in general, but has brought in new reviewers such as Nick Gevers and Richard Horton as partial compensation); *Science Fiction Weekly* (www.scifi.com/sfw/), more media-and-gaming oriented than SF Site or Locus Online, but also features news and book reviews every issue, as well as providing a home for columns by such shrewd and knowledgeable genre insiders as John Clute and Michael Cassut; and SFF NET (www.sff.net), a huge site featuring dozens of home pages and “newsgroups” for SF writers, genre-oriented “live chats,” a link to the *Locus Magazine Index 1984–1996*, and a link to the research data and reading-lists available on the Science Fiction Writers of America page (which can also be accessed directly at www.sfw.org/); the above-mentioned Sci-Fi Channel (www.scifi.com), which provides a home for Ellen Datlow’s SCI FICTION and for *Science Fiction Weekly*, and to the bi-monthly SF-oriented cha

hosted by *Asimov's* and *Analog*, as well as vast amounts of material about SF movies and TV shows. ~~audio-plays can also be accessed at Audible (www.audible.com) and at Beyond 2000 (www.beyond2000.com);~~ multiple Hugo-winner David Langford's online version of his fanzine *Ansible* (www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/Ansible/), which provides a funny and often iconoclastic slant on genre-oriented news, is well worth checking out on a regular basis.

Live online interviews with prominent genre writers are also offered on a regular basis on many sites, including interviews sponsored by *Asimov's* and *Analog* and conducted by Gardner Dozois on the Sci-Fi Channel (www.scifi.com/chat/) every other Tuesday night at 9 p.m. EST; regular scheduled interviews on the Cybling site (www.cybling.com/); and occasional interviews on the Talk City site (www.talkcity.com/). Many bulletin board services, such as Delphi, Compuserve, and AOL, have large online communities of SF writers and fans, and some of these services also feature regularly scheduled live interactive real-time "chats" or conferences, in which anyone interested in SF is welcome to participate, the SF-oriented chat on Delphi, every Wednesday at about 10 p.m. EST, is the one with which I'm most familiar, but there are similar chats on sff.net, and probably on other BBSes as well.

As a lover of short fiction, two sites that I particularly value and visit very frequently are Tangent Online (www.sfsite.com/tangent/), which survived a rocky start early last year to transform itself into perhaps the most valuable SF-oriented review site on the internet, and Best SF (www.bestsf.net), which makes less of an attempt to be systematic than Tangent Online (which makes an insane, difficult attempt to review *everything*), but whose reviews are often equally insightful and useful, not more so. These two sites are just about the only two places on the entire Internet where you can find regular reviews of SF short fiction and the SF magazines, and they're both pearls beyond price. Another review site, more media-oriented than the above two, although they do regularly review novels as well, is SFRevu (www.sfsite.com/sfrevu). Speculations (www.speculations.com) is a long-running (by internet standards) site which dispenses writing advice, but you'll have to subscribe to the site online if you want to access it.

It'll be interesting to see what happens in this market in coming years. As you can see, e-magazines are proliferating at a rapid rate, and some pundits are already saying that they're the future of the genre short story and will be around long after the print magazines have died, but, as has always been true of print semiprozines and even commercially backed SF magazines, the question is, how long are any of them going to last? In spite of much lower production costs and overheads, a significant bonanza (although the money to pay for the stories still has to come from *somewhere*, even ignoring start-up costs), e-zines to date are just as vulnerable to cancellation due to economic factors as the print magazines are; patrons can change their mind or get tired of digging into their pockets, and sponsored sites are vulnerable to the whim of the sponsor, who can pull the plug any time they decide they're not getting their money's worth in one sort of coin or another (publicity, prestige, etc.), just as the publishers of print magazines can decide at any time that they're not getting enough money back to make the expenditure worthwhile. The big question in this market is, as it has been for several years, how can you reliably *make money* "publishing" fiction online? Until someone figures a way to "publish" an e-magazine *and* make a good steady profit from it, so that it's not vulnerable to the whim of a patron or sponsor, I don't believe that e-magazines will really come into their own as "the future of genre short fiction." Until then, e-magazines aren't any more secure than print magazines, even with the very real advantages that they enjoy.

It was not a particularly good year in the print semiprozine market. After returning miraculously from a four year absence with an issue in late 1999 and another in mid-2000, nothing was heard from

the prominent fiction semiprozine *Century* in 2001 – not surprisingly, following the tragic death of the magazine’s coeditor, Jenna Felice, in early 2001. The most recent word, however, is that editor Rob Killheffer does plan to continue the magazine, and promises new issues of *Century* in 2002. Much of the print fiction semiprozine market was in disarray in 2001, in fact. The long-running Australian fiction semiprozine *Eidolon* seems to have vanished altogether, although in 2000 a plan was being discussed to revive it online as an online-only “electronic magazine”; so far this doesn’t seem to have happened, although their website (www.eidolon.com) is still there, there doesn’t seem to be much new content on it. Another distinguished and long-running Australian fiction semiprozine, *Aurealis*, published a final double-issue in 2001 (which we didn’t see; we’ll have to consider the stuff from next year) under longtime editors Stephen Higgins and Dirk Strasser, who then sold the magazine and stepped down; *Aurealis* supposedly will continue, but under the editorship of a new editor, Keith Stevenson. Two newer Australian print fiction semiprozines, *Altair* and *Orb*, suspended publication and went on, perhaps, permanent “hiatus,” never a good sign in the semiprozine market; although the editors usually promise that “They’ll be back some day,” the hard fact is that they seldom are. So the Australian fiction semiprozine scene, which seemed to be booming only a few years back, has been left in ruins. Promising American fiction semiprozine *Terra Incognita* also went “on hiatus” this year. And although I believe they’re still supposed to be in existence, I didn’t see an issue of *Tales of the Unanticipated* or of Irish semiprozine *Albedo One* this year either.

Of the surviving fiction magazines, the titles consolidated under the umbrella of Warren Lapine’s DNA Publications – *Fantastic Stories of the Imagination*, *Weird Tales*, *Science Fiction Chronicle*, the all-vampire-fiction magazine *Dreams of Decadence*; and Lapine’s original magazine, *Absolute Magnitude*, *The Magazine of Science Fiction Adventures* – seem to be doing pretty well overall, with some gains in circulation for *Absolute Magnitude*, *Weird Tales*, and *Fantastic Stories of the Imagination*, although the DNA group lost one magazine this year, *Aboriginal Science Fiction*, which died after a final issue in 2001. Some of the DNA magazines are still having trouble maintaining their announced publishing schedules, with *Absolute Magnitude* only publishing three issues and *Fantastic Stories of the Imagination* only managing two, but *Weird Tales*, *Dreams of Decadence*, and *Science Fiction Chronicle* each published all the issues they were supposed to this year, a big improvement over last year.

Other hearty survivors included the long-running Canadian semiprozine *On Spec*, the lively mixed horror/SF semiprozine *Talebones*, *Fiction on the Dark Edge*, and the leading British semiprozine, *The Third Alternative*. *On Spec* has seemed sunk in the doldrums to me in recent years, with its fiction largely gray and uninteresting, but it seems to have turned the corner in the last year or two, and has been publishing some more interesting stuff, including, this year, interesting stories by James Van Pelt, Steve Mohn, Vera Nazarian, and others; *On Spec* also published all four promised issues in 2001 (although the Winter 2001 issue arrived late enough that we’ll have to consider the contents for next year). *Talebones* remains vigorous and fun to read, and seems to me to be leaning a bit away from horror toward fantasy and even science fiction, which to my taste is all to the good; they only published three issues this year, but featured some strong stuff by Ken Scholes, Steve Mohan, James Van Pelt, and others. The slick, glossy, and handsome *The Third Alternative* publishes little science fiction, leaning heavily toward slipstream, literary surrealism, and soft horror instead, but the literary quality of their stories, whatever pigeonhole you find for them, is very high, thoroughly professional; they managed three issues as well this year, and published thoroughly professional-level work by Alexander Glass, Simon Ings, Danith McPherson, the ubiquitous James Van Pelt, and others.

A relative newcomer, *Artemis Magazine: Science and Fiction for a Space-Faring Society* managed

two issues this year, featuring good work by G. David Nordley, Jack McDevitt, and others; I'm pleased to see that they have given up on (or at least loosened up on considerably) their too-limiting policy of only publishing stories about moon colonization, and it's good to see a semiprozine that concentrates on core science fiction rather than horror or slipstream. *Artemis's* biggest challenge going to be to shake the widely held opinion that it's only *Analog*-lite and forge a new identity for itself. Another interesting newcomer, worlds apart from *Artemis* in editorial personality, is *Lacuna*. *Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*, which leans heavily toward the slipstream/literary surrealism end of the spectrum, but which is often entertaining and freshly written, and often features stories of that sort from well-known SF professionals.

Black Gate, a slick large-format fantasy magazine that supposedly concentrates on "Sword and Sorcery" and "High Fantasy," managed two thick issues this year, an encouraging sign, as last year it was rumored to be in trouble, which it apparently has survived.

I don't follow the horror semiprozine market enough any more to make even a partial survey worthwhile, but as far as I can tell, the most prominent magazines there seem to be *Talebones* and the highly respected *Cemetery Dance*.

Little has changed, as usual, in the critical magazine market. Your best bets, and by far the most reliably published, are the two "newszines," Charles N. Brown's *Locus* (which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary this year) and Andy Porter's *SF Chronicle* (which, after an erratic period, has reestablished a reliable publishing schedule as part of Warren Lapine's DNA Publishing Group), and David G. Hartwell's eclectic critical magazine *The New York Review of Science Fiction*. Lawrence Sanders' more freewheeling and playful *Nova Express* managed only one issue this year, although it was fun to read. A new magazine that reviews short fiction, *The Fix*, brought to you by the same folks who put out *The Third Alternative*, was announced this year, and could be a very welcome addition to this market, but we haven't seen it yet.

(*Locus, The Newspaper of the Science Fiction Field*, Locus Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 1330, Oakland, California 94661-\$56.00 for a one-year first class subscription, 12 issues; *The New York Review Of Science Fiction*, Dragon Press, P.O. Box 78, Pleasantville, NY, 10570 – \$32.00 per year, 12 issues; *Nova Express*, P.O. Box 27231, Austin, Texas 78755-2231 – \$12 for a one-year (four issue) subscription; *On Spec, More Than Just Science Fiction*, P.O. Box 4727, Edmonton, AB, Canada T6E 5G6 – \$18 for a one-year subscription; *Aurealis, the Australian Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, Chimaera Publications, P.O. Box 2164, Mt. Waverley, Victoria 3149, Australia – \$43 for a four-issue overseas airmail subscription, "all cheques and money orders must be made out to Chimarea Publications in Australian dollars"; *Eidolon, the Journal of Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, Eidolon Publications, P.O. Box 225, North Perth, Western Australia 6906 – \$45 (Australian dollars) for a 4-issue overseas airmail subscription, payable to Eidolon Publications; *Altair, Alternate Airings in Speculative Fiction*, PO Box 475, Blackwood, South Australia, 5051, Australia – \$36 for a four issue subscription; *Albedo*, Albedo One Productions, 2 Post Road, Lusk, Co., Dublin, Ireland – \$34 for a four-issue airmail subscription, make checks payable to "Albedo One"; *Pirate Writings, Tales of Fantasy, Mystery & Science Fiction, Absolute Magnitude, The Magazine of Science Fiction Adventures, Aboriginal Science Fiction, Weird Tales, Dreams of Decadence, Science Fiction Chronicle* – all available from DNA Publications, P.O. Box 2988, Radford, VA 24142-2988 – all available for \$16 for a one-year subscription, although you can get a group subscription to all five DNA fiction magazines for \$70 a year, with *Science Fiction Chronicle* \$45 a year (12 issues), all checks payable to "D.N.A. Publications"; *Century*, Century Publishing, P.O. Box 150510, Brooklyn, NY 11215-0510 – \$20 for a four-issue subscription; *Terra Incognita*, Terra Incognita, 52 Windermer

Avenue 3, Lansdowne, PA 19050-1812 – \$15 for four issues; *Tales of the Unanticipated*, Box 803 Lake Street Station, Minneapolis, MN 55408 – \$15 for a four-issue subscription; *Space and Time*, 13 W. 70th Street (4B), New York, NY 10023-4468 – \$10.00 for a 2-issue subscription (one year) \$20.00 for a 4-issue subscription (two years); *Artemis Magazine: Science and Fiction for a Space-Faring Society*, LRC Publications, 1380 E. 17th St., Suite 201, Brooklyn NY 11230-6011 – \$15 for four-issue subscription, checks payable to LRC Publications; *Talebones, Fiction on the Dark Edge*, 5203 Quincy Ave SE, Auburn, WA 98092 – \$18 for four issues; *The Third Alternative*, TTA Press, Martins Lane, Witcham, Ely, Cambs. CB6 2LB, England, UK – \$22 for a four-issue subscription, checks made payable to “TTA Press”; *Black Gate*, New Epoch Press, 815 Oak Street, St. Charles, MO 60174, \$25.95 for a one-year (four issue) subscription; *Cemetery Dance*, CD Publications, Box 1843 Baltimore, MD 21237; *Lady Churchill’s Rosebud Wristlet*, Small Beer Press, 360 Atlantic Avenue PMB 132, Brooklyn, NY 11217 – \$12 for four issues, all checks payable to Gavin Grant. Many of these magazines can also be ordered online, at their web-sites; see the online section, above, for URLs.)

2001 proved itself to be an even weaker year for original anthologies than 2000 had been. There were a couple of anthologies with first-rate material in them, but nothing that clearly stepped forward and unequivocally seize the title of “Year’s Best Anthology,” as has been the case in other years. In fact I’d gladly give that title to *Futures* (Warner Aspect), edited by Peter Crowther, which was stronger than either of the anthologies I’m about to consider as the year’s best choices, but as the novellas it contains were all published as individual chapbooks in Britain in 2000, and the anthology as a whole was itself published before in Britain last year, I finally decided it belonged in the reprint anthology section (you can read more about it there).

Discounting *Futures*, the best of the remaining lot, by a good margin, were probably *Starlight* (Tor), edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden and *Redshift: Extreme Visions of Speculative Fiction* (ROC) edited by Al Sarrantonio, although both books were uneven, with as many mediocre-to-poor stories as good ones.

Starlight 3 struck me as the weakest of the three *Starlight* volumes (although it still featured much worthwhile material), and had the drawback – for me, anyway, with my own particular bias toward science fiction – of featuring more fantasy and horror stories than science fiction stories, and when science fiction stories there were seemed weaker in literary quality than the fantasy stories. The best story here is clearly Ted Chiang’s horrific “Hell Is the Absence of God,” followed by Susan Palwick’s equally emotionally grueling “Gestella,” and Maureen F. McHugh’s “Interview: On Any Given Day,” the only science fiction story to make it into the top slice. A step below these would be Andrew Duncan’s “Senator Bilbo” and Colin Greenland’s “Wings.” The anthology also features interesting stories by Stephen Baxer, Terry Bisson, D.G. Compton, Susanna Clarke, Cory Doctorow, Alex Irvine, and others. Not a bad value overall, for the cover price, but not as substantial as the previous volumes had been, either.

Redshift is a pretty good anthology overall, too, but it shoots itself in the foot with its annoying shrill and overheated self-hype, which bills it as this century’s *Dangerous Visions*, an anthology so revolutionary that it’s going to change the future direction of science fiction forever (and trots out once again the tired old line about how these stories would have been too “dangerous” for the time in the genre magazine market; simply not true, as far as I can tell, although a few of them may have been rejected by science fiction magazines not because they are so “dangerous,” but because not science fiction). Well, even allowing for the changed social context of the times, which makes the appearance

of a true *Dangerous Visions*-like volume much more difficult, if not impossible, *Redshift* is not *Dangerous Visions*; it can't even claim clear title to being the best anthology of the year, and there have certainly been original anthologies in the last few years (such as Greg Bear's *New Legends* anthology, for instance) that were not only better in terms of overall literary quality, but which were more significant indicators of what may be to come for science fiction. And for a cutting-edge science fiction anthology, one that's supposed to point the way to the genre's future, *Redshift* sure contains a lot of mediocre horror stories. *Redshift* is such a large anthology, though, that by even discounting a good half of it (which you *can*), you're still left with some pretty solid and worthwhile material. The best story here is clearly Dan Simmons's "On K2 with Kanakaredes," followed by Neal Barrett, Jr.'s surreal "Rhido Wars" (beneath the bizarre surface of which I believe I can discern a told-by-implication and nearly subliminal actual science fiction story), and James Patrick Kelly's "Unique Visitors." A step below these would be Harry Turtledove's "Black Tulip," a perfectly fine mainstream story about soldiers on different sides of the Afghan/Russian wars that is cheapened by the addition of an unnecessary and intrusive fantastic element; and Elizabeth Hand's "Cleopatra Brimstone," an exquisitely written story about a young girl struggling to come to some psychological accommodation with having been raped, which is also marred by the inclusion of a (rather silly) fantastic element and a well-worn horror-cliche ending that may make you regret the time you put into reading the story over a very well-crafted 20,000 words. *Redshift* also contains good material by Ursula K. Le Guin, Larry Niven, Gene Wolfe, Stephen Baxter, Joe Haldeman, Jack Dann, Gregory Benford, Rudy Rucker, and John Shirley, and others. On the whole, then, a pretty good reading value for the money, even if it doesn't come anywhere near to living up to its own self-hype, and even if a good half of the selections are mediocre-to-bad; there's still a lot of good material left over.

After this point, you pretty quickly run out of options for other really worthwhile original anthologies. The best of what's left is probably *Bones of the World: Tales from Time's End* (sff.net) this year's assembled-online "sff.net" anthology (volume IV in the "Darkfire" anthology series edited by Bruce Holland Rogers). *Bones of the World* may be the best of these volumes yet in terms of overall quality, although there's no real standout story able to compete on the same level with the year's other superior stuff; the best story here is probably Daniel Abraham's "A Good Move in Design Space," followed by James Van Pelt's "The Last Age Should Show Your Heart" and M. Shayne Bell's "Ragnarok of the Post Humans: Final Transmissions, Sam 43 Unit 763," although there is also worthwhile material here by Lois Tilton, David Ira Cleary, Jerry Oltion, Brian Plante, and others. (You won't find this one in stores, so mail-order from: SFF Net, 3300 Big Horn Trail, Plano, TX 75075. \$14.95 for *Bones of the World: Tales from Time's End*; the book can also be ordered online at sff.net and back titles in the *Darkfire* series can be ordered either by mail or online).

After this point, it's mostly minor anthologies that may well be worth their (usually relatively low) cover price to you in terms of entertainment value, but for the most part contain at best only competent, second-rank work, stuff that may be entertaining but will be largely forgotten by this time next year: *Silicon Dreams* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Larry Segriff; *Past Imperfections* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Larry Segriff; and *The Mutant Files* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and John Helfers. And, as usual, *L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future Volume XVII* (Bridge), edited by Algis Budrys, presents novice work by beginning writers, some of whom may later turn out to be important talents.

There was actually a shared-world anthology this year that was a better value for your money: *The Man-Kzin Wars IX* (Baen), edited by Larry Niven, one of the best volumes of this long-running series in some while, featuring four strong novellas, including Poul Anderson's last science fiction novella

“Pele,” Hal Colebatch’s “The Sergeant’s Honor,” and Niven’s own “Fly-By-Night.”

Once again, there was no big standout original anthology in fantasy this year, although a new volume of Robert Silverberg’s bestselling fantasy anthology, *Legends*, has been promised for next year or the year after. What original fantasy anthologies there were this year were the usual pack of pleasant but minor theme anthologies, which you may or may not find worth the cover price, including: *Creature Fantastic* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Denise Little; *Assassin Fantastic* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Alexander Potter; *Out of Avalon* (Roc), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Jennifer Robertson; *Oceans of Magic* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Brian M. Thomson; *Villians Victorious* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and John Helfers; *A Constellation of Cats* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Denise Little; and *Historical Hauntings* (DAW), edited by Jean Rabe.

From what I could tell, the big original horror anthologies of the year seemed to be *Bending the Landscape: Original Gay and Lesbian Horror Writing* (Overlook Press), edited by Stephen Pagel and Nicola Griffith; *Night Visions 10* (Subterranean Press), edited by Richard Chizmar; and *The Museum of Horrors* (Leisure Books), edited by Dennis Etchison. On a less ambitious note, I also spotted *Sing* and *White Vampire Seeks Same* (DAW), edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Brittiany A. Koran, no doubt there were others I *didn’t* spot.

Not a lot to look forward to in the original anthology market next year, except Peter Crowther’s Mars anthology, perhaps (or perhaps not) a new anthology edited by Greg Benford, and perhaps (or perhaps not) a follow-up to Robert Silverberg’s *Legends*. Let’s hope that there are also some (niche) surprises that we haven’t yet heard of.

In spite of persistent (almost gloomily relishing) talk in some circles about how SF is clearly “dying,” the novel market seemed fairly robust again this year, both in terms of how many titles were released and how well they tended to do commercially (sales slowed across the entire publishing industry in the immediate aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks, but picked up toward the end of the year); and in terms of the artistic merit of the books that were published, there were a *lot* of strong novels published this year, as last year – probably more than any one reader is going to have time to read, in fact, unless they devote themselves to doing little else but reading. (The related fantasy genre did even better commercially, thanks in large part to reissues of J.R.R. Tolkien and J.K. Rowling’s books, and the issuing of numerous associational books, most of which sold astronomically in advance of the release of the movie versions of *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*, and even more astronomically afterward.)

According to the newsmagazine *Locus*, there were 2,158 books “of interest to the SF field,” both original and reprint, published in 2001, up by 12 from 2000’s total of 1,927 – and no doubt there were many Print-On-Demand books in the recent flood of such titles that were overlooked and not even reflected in this total. Original books were up by 18 to 1,210 from last year’s total of 1,027; reprint books were up by 5 to 948 titles over last year’s total of 900, a new record. The number of new SF novels was up slightly, with 251 new titles published as opposed to 230 novels published in 2000. The number of new fantasy novels was also up, to 282, as opposed to 258 novels published in 2000. Horror, another genre that had been pronounced “dead” by pundits a few years ago, made significant gains in 2001, with 151 novels published, as opposed to 80 novels in 2000 (and that’s not even counting “media tie-in” books with horror elements, such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel* novelizations).

For some perspective on the “SF is dying” theory (almost more of an article of faith than a “theory”

in some circles, seemingly impervious to factual rebuttal), keep in mind that, like last year, the number of original mass-market paperbacks published this year, 347 (up 7 from 2000), is alone higher than the *total number* of original genre books, of any sort, published in 1972, which was 225. Nor do I see any indication of overall decline in literary quality, or the percentage of worthwhile books still getting into print – rather the opposite, in fact.

As usual, I don't have time to read many novels, with all the reading I have to do at shorter lengths. I have read a few novels this year, I usually find time to squeeze a few in, but few enough that I probably shouldn't endorse anything personally without having read a lot more of the rest of the competitors out there. So instead I'll limit myself to mentioning novels that received a lot of attention and acclaim in 2001 include: *Nekropolis* (Eos), Maureen F. McHugh; *Passage* (Bantam), Conn Willis; *The Secret of Life* (Tor), Paul McAuley; *Whole Wide World* (Tor), Paul McAuley; *The Other Wind* (Harcourt), Ursula K. Le Guin; *Metaplanetary* (Eos), Tony Daniel; *Probability Sun* (Tor), Nancy Kress; *Fallen Dragon* (Warner Aspect), Peter F. Hamilton; *Declare* (Morrow), Tim Powers; *Mother Kings* (Tor), Poul Anderson; *Ares Express* (Earthlight), Ian McDonald; *Chasm City* (Ace), Alastair Reynolds; *American Gods* (Morrow), Neil Gaiman; *Cosmonaut Keep* (Tor), Ken MacLeod; *The Graveyard Game* (Harcourt), Kage Baker; *Ship of Fools* (Ace), Richard Paul Russo; *The Spheres of Heaven* (Baen), Charles Sheffield; *Shadow of the Hegemon* (Tor), Orson Scott Card; *The Chronoliths* (Tor), Robert Charles Wilson; *Return to the Whorl* (Tor), Gene Wolfe; *Manifold: Origin* (Del Rey), Stephen Baxter; *Manifold: Space* (Del Rey), Stephen Baxter; *The Cassandra Complex* (Tor), Brian Stableford; *DeepSix* (Eos), Jack McDevitt; *Empty Cities of the Full Moon* (Ace), Howard V. Hendrix; *The King of Dreams* (Eos), Robert Silverberg; *The Hauntings of Hood Canal* (St. Martin's), Jack Cady; *The Wooden Sea* (Tor), Jonathan Carroll; *Angel of Destruction* (Roc), Susan R. Matthews; *The Pickup Artist* (Tor), Terry Bisson; *Kingdom of Cages* (Warner Aspect), Sarah Zettel; *The Merchants of Souls* (Tor), John Barnes; *Defender* (DAW), C.J. Cherryh; *Limit of Vision* (Tor), Linda Nagata; *Time of Time* (HarperCollins), Terry Prachett; *The Treachery of Kings* (Bantam Spectra), Neal Barrett, Jr.; *The One Kingdom* (Eos), Sean Russell; *Terraforming Earth* (Tor), Jack Williamson; *Malestrom* (Tor), Peter Watts; *Bold as Love* (Gollancz), Gwyneth Jones; *Going, Going, Gone* (Grove Atlantic), Jack Womack; *The Curse of Chalion* (Eos), Lois McMaster Bujold; *A Paradigm of Earth* (Tor), Candace Jane Dorsey; *Children of Hope* (Ace), David Feintuch; *Angel of Destruction* (Roc), Susan R. Matthews; *Eyes of the Calculator* (Tor), Sean McMullen; *The Onion Girl* (Tor), Charles de Lint; *Otherland: Sea of Silver Light* (DAW), Tad Williams; *The Beyond* (Eos), Robin Hobb; *Child of Venus* (Eos), Pamela Sargent; *The Shadows of God* (Del Rey), J. Gregory Keyes; *Past the Size of Dreaming* (Ace), Nina Kiriki Hoffman; and *Black House* (Random House), Stephen King and Peter Straub.

It didn't seem to be a bad year for first novels, although none of them were quite as prominent as last year's first-novel leader, Alastair Reynolds's *Revelation Space*. The three first novels that seemed to attract the most attention this year (although, of course, this is a subjective call, based largely on the number of reviews they drew, and how positive the reviews were) were *The Ghost Sister* (Bantam Spectra), by Liz Williams; *The Ill-Made Mute* (Warner Aspect), by Cecelia Dart-Thornton; and *I Met by Moonlight* (Ace), by Sarah A. Hoyt. Other first novels included: *Illumination* (Tor), by Terry McGarry; *Archangel Protocol* (Roc), by Lyda Morehouse; *Alien Taste* (Roc), by Wen Spencer; *Swing the Moon* (Tor), by Paul Brandon; *The Love-Artist* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), by Jane Alison; *The Eye Affair* (Viking), by Jasper Fforde; *Divine Intervention* (Ace), by Ken Wharton; *Inca* (Forge), by Suzanne Alles Blom; *Kushiel's Dart* (Tor), by Jacqueline Carey; *Eccentric Circles* (Ace), by Rebecca Lickiss; *Enemy Glory* (Tor), by Karen Michalson; *Children of the Shaman* (Orbit), by Jessica Rydill; and *Dance of Knives* (Tor), by Donna McMahon. And of course, all publishers who are willing to take

a chance publishing first novels should be commended, since it's a chance that must be taken by ~~someone~~ if the field itself is going to survive and evolve. Tor, Roc, and Ace seem to have published a lot of first novels in particular this year. (This year, most of the first novels were by women; last year most of the first novels were by men. What does this mean? I don't have a clue!)

Tor and Eos obviously had very strong years, with Tor in particular coming close to dominating the list in science fiction as far as number of titles is concerned (it wasn't as one-sided in fantasy although Ace, Del Rey, and Roc also had pretty good years as well. Although it's largely a subjective judgement, it seems to me that this novel list is at least as substantial as last year's crop. Looking over the lists, it seems clear that once again the majority of novels here are center-core science-fiction, in spite of the usual complaints about how SF is being "forced off the bookstore shelves" by fantasy, even omitting the fantasy novels and the borderline genre-straddling work from the list, you're still left with the McHugh, the two Baxter novels, the Daniel, the two McAuley novels, the MacLeod novel, the Stableford, the Kress, the McDonald, the Reynolds, the Hamilton, the Wilson, the Cherry, the Baker, the McDevitt, the Nagata, the Wolfe, the Sheffield, and half-a-dozen others (or more) are clearly and unmistakably science fiction, many of them "hard science fiction" as well. So much for being forced off the shelves!

It's been a good couple of years for the reissuing of long-out-of-print classic novels, helping to alleviate a problem (books going out-of-print and never coming back *into* it) that had grown to crisis proportions by the mid-'90s. The *SF Masterworks* and the *Fantasy Masterworks* reprint series, from English publisher Millennium, brought forth another slew of classic reprints this year (of particular note, although they're all worth having, are Jack Vance's *Emphyrio*, Alfred Bester's *The Demolished Man*, Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, Philip K. Dick's *Martian Time*, Olaf Stapledon's *Last and First Men*, Fritz Leiber's *The First Book of Lankhmar* and *The Second Book of Lankhmar*, and Jack Finney's *Time and Again*), and in these days of online internet bookstores, where it's no more difficult to order something from amazon.co.uk as it is from amazon.com, and doesn't take significantly longer for you to receive your book, there's no reason why you can't order them to fill long-unfillable slots in your basic SF and fantasy libraries; in fact, that's just what you should do before these titles become unavailable *again*. On this side of the Atlantic, the year's classic reprint included: Keith Roberts's *Pavane* (Del Rey Impact); Edgar Pangborn's *West of the Sun* (Old Earth Books); Robert A. Heinlein's *Orphans of the Sky* (Stealth Press); Roger Zelazny's *The Dream Master* and *Entities: Selected Novels of Eric Frank Russell* (NESFA Press). Print-On-Demand publishers are also having a big impact on making classic work available to readers again. Wildside Press (www.wildside.com) seems so far to be the most SF-oriented of these publishers; check their site for lists of what's currently available. Another such site to check is Big Engine (www.bigengine.com), as well as internet sites such as Fictionwise (www.fictionwise.com), *ElectricStory* (www.electricstory.com), *Peanut Press* (www.peanut-press.com), *Ereads* (www.ereads.com) and others where you can buy novels, both original and reprint, in the form of electronic "downloads" for your PDA or home computer. A new, never-before-published-and-unavailable-in-other-forms novel by Lucius Shepard, *Colonel Rutherford's Colt*, was available from ElectricStory and Fictionwise this year, for instance. Another new Lucius Shepard novel, *Valentine*, was available this year from a more traditional small press, Four Walls, Eight Windows.

It's probably futile to try to guess which of these novels are going to win the year's major award, especially as SFWA's bizarre and increasingly dysfunctional "rolling eligibility" rule meant that only one novel from 2001 (*Passage*, by Connie Willis) made it on to the ballot for an award to be given out in 2002. It's hard to call a clear favorite for the Hugo as well, although *Passage*, Le Guin's *The Other*

Wind, Wolfe's *Return to the Whorl*, Daniel's *Metaplanetary*, Reynold's *Chasm City*, McHugh's *Nekropolis*, and Williamson's *Terraforming Earth* all have a chance to be in the hunt (as do other titles, though, so it's still probably anybody's game).

Borderline or associational novels by SF writers this year included *Lust* (HarperCollins), an erotic fantasy by Geoff Ryman, and *Hardcase* (St. Martin's Minotaur), a hardboiled detective novel by David Simmons.

It was perhaps a bit weaker year for short-story collections overall than last year, but there were still some strong collections to be found. The year's best collections included: *Tales From Earthsea* (Harcourt), by Ursula K. Le Guin; *The Collected Stories of Vernor Vinge* (Tor), by Vernor Vinge; *Jubilee* (Voyager Australia), by Jack Dann; *The Other Nineteenth Century* (Tor), by Avram Davidson; *Impact Parameter and Other Quantum Realities* (Golden Gryphon), by Geoffrey A. Landis; *Stories from an Enchanted Afternoon* (Golden Gryphon), by Kristine Kathryn Rusch; *Strange Trades* (Golden Gryphon), by Paul Di Filippo; *Supertoys Last All Summer Long* (St. Martin's Griffin), by Brian W. Aldiss; *Quartet* (NESFA Press), by George R.R. Martin; and *Stranger Things Happen* (Small Beer Press), by Kelly Link.

Other good collections included: *Skin Folk* (Warner Aspect), by Nalo Hopkinson; *Claremont Tales* (Golden Gryphon), by Richard A. Lupoff; *Futureland* (Warner Aspect); *Darkness Divided* (Stealth), by John Shirley; *Redgunk Tales: Apocalypse and Kudzu from Redgunk, Mississippi* (Invisible Cities Press), by William R. Eakin; *City of Saints and Madmen: The Book of Ambergris* (Cosmos Books), by Jeff VanderMeer; *Meet Me in the Moon Room: Stories* (Small Beer Press), by Ray Vukcevich; and *Bad Timing and Other Stories* (Big Engine), by Molly Brown.

The year also featured strong retrospective collections such as *The Collected Stories of Arthur C. Clarke* (Tor), by Arthur C. Clarke; *Coup de Grace and Other Stories* (The Vance Integral Edition), by Jack Vance; *Agent of Vega and Other Stories* (Baen), by James H. Schmitz; *Trigger and Friends* (Baen), by James H. Schmitz; *The Hub: Dangerous Territory* (Baen), by James H. Schmitz; *The Complete Science Fiction of William Tenn: Volume One, Immodest Proposals* (NESFA Press), by William Tenn; *The Complete Science Fiction of William Tenn, Volume Two, Here Comes Civilization* (NESFA Press), by William Tenn; *The Essential Ellison: A 50 Year Retrospective* (Morpheus International), by Harlan Ellison; *The Jaguar Hunter* (Four Walls, Eight Windows), by Lucius Shepard; *50 in 50* (Tor), by Harry Harrison; *The Devil Is Not Mocked and Other Warnings* (Night Shade Books), by Manly Wade Wellman; *Fearful Rock and Other Dangerous Locales* (Night Shade Books), by Manly Wade Wellman; *The Complete Short Stories* (Flamingo), by J.G. Ballard; and *From These Ashes: The Complete Short SF of Fredric Brown* (NESFA Press), by Fredric Brown.

Noted without comment: *Strange Days: Fabulous Journeys with Gardner Dozois* (NESFA Press) by Gardner Dozois.

It's worth noting that several of the year's collections contained never-before-published material. For instance, Le Guin's *Tales of Earthsea* featured three excellent original fantasy stories, and Vinge's *The Collected Stories of Vernor Vinge* showcased a strong original science fiction novella.

It's encouraging to see regular trade publishers such as Tor, Baen, and Warner Aspect publishing more collections these days, but, of course, as has been true for over a decade now, small press publishers remain vital to the publication of genre short story collections. Golden Gryphon Press is becoming particularly important in getting the work of new and relatively new writers out before the public, as was Arkham House before it in the days when the late Jim Turner was editing it, while NESFA Press continues to provide invaluable service by publishing retrospective collections of past

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