



**Issue December 2010**

**N  
O  
V  
A  
Z  
-  
N  
E**

## Musings from Under the Mountain

Christmas comes but once a year they say... but why does it have to be so wet? It's the day after the summer solstice and the total lunar eclipse—there were patches of blue yesterday... but it was still mostly cloudy, and not good for a beach outing. I had to go for a Plan B—which resulted in a pleasant social evening and nice views from the top of Mangere Mountain, but no sight of the Moon, hidden behind clouds. It appears that we should have gone to One Tree Hill, where they did see the eclipse. Clouds...

Of course, we have no control over the weather. Or at least, very little. Although we might be the cause of weird weather via global warming. I met a couple of Greenpeace activists outside the supermarket the other day. I've come to the conclusion that they're about the same as religious cultists—out to sell their propaganda, and just as resistant to new ideas. Like the idea that maybe nuclear power, in particular molten salt thorium reactors, might just solve the energy problem. (See here: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Molten\\_salt\\_reactor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Molten_salt_reactor)). No, the Greenpeacers would rather we all used "clean" energy—as long as we don't put the hydro plants or wind farms in their back yards. Of course, any amount of wind farms and tidal power plants are unlikely to produce enough energy to supply the world's ever-increasing energy appetite. Especially while we continue to add more and more to the human population of the Earth, and those humans continue to demand lifestyles that were unattainable by most of us, even in the developed world, when I was young. My son gets far more toys in his Christmas sack than I ever did... although I do try to avoid the ones made in China (we support the Danish economy—Lego is very much the toy of choice at Chez Smith).

Which brings me to talking of Christmas... It was 42 years ago, on December 24, 1968 that Apollo 8 circled the moon, taking those famous first photos of the Earth rising over the lunar horizon. As their spacecraft approached lunar sunrise, the three astronauts read from the book of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...." They ended their reading with this message: "And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas – and God bless all of you, all of you on the good Earth." And that's how I'll end this editorial, by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and blessed New Year.

Jacqui Smith

## From the Cramped Office

It will soon be Christmas, and of course everyone will be giving presents, if only inexpensive ones. Naturally, as we belong to an SF/Fantasy club, people can expect to see genre-related presents from us (if that is their proclivity too). Those that are keen on new fiction are advised to read the reviews in the *Novazine*. If your tastes are different to the reviewer, do take note and learn to calibrate their views against your own. There is also a pile of TV series available on DVD and some are quite inexpensive now. *Babylon 5* has come down in price to something reasonable, and the complete series will only cost a minor body part.

Those not heading out of town are reminded of the usual Boxing Day recovery party – location to be advised, as well as the outing on the 21<sup>st</sup> to watch the lunar eclipse. Warning, it may get dark but we are all experienced with this sort of thing (it's called "night"). Anyhow, I need to prepare a few things, so wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Steve Litten  
President



## Contents

Editorial	2
Presidential Address	2
Book Reviews	3-5
Movie Reviews	6-7
Uncorked	7
Sky at Night	8
Obits	9
Upcoming Events	10



## From Black Rooms

By Stephen Woodworth

Published by Piatkus

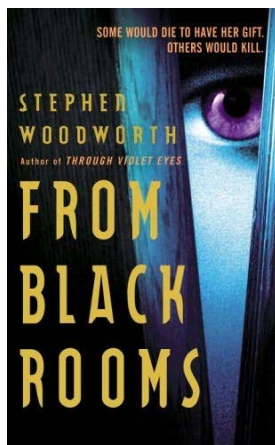
Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Kevin

The NAACC is a nasty organisation. If you've read the earlier books in this series, you'll know that. And they jealously guard their monopoly on the precious Violets, who can be possessed by (some of) the Dead.

Problem is, there just aren't enough Violets to keep the NAACC happy. So what is a sociopathic control-freak organisation to do under these circumstances? If you guessed "Make more!", go to the head of the class. Of course, the method they decide on is both unethical and illegal, so they make sure the guy heading up the project is sociopathic even by NAACC standards, and has zero supervision in order to preserve deniability. When the scientist suborned into running the experiments has an attack of conscience and kills both himself and all their test subjects, our "rogue" operative has a problem — a shortage of henchmen, and a dead scientist who won't talk. Now everyone "knows" that the best person to solve any problem is the person who created it. Enter Evan Markham — the Violet Killer from Book One. And Evan, we may remember, has a particular personal interest in our plucky heroine...

Mr Woodworth is back on his game with this one. New and interesting characters fit seamlessly into the complex interwoven plot, and my writer's brain tells me that at least one is coming back for his own book. So my earlier fears that Mr Woodworth would exhaust the potential of his creation too fast are proving groundless — there's a whole heap more interesting stories here, folks. I, for one, do not intend to miss out.



## No Mercy: Dark-Hunter Book 18

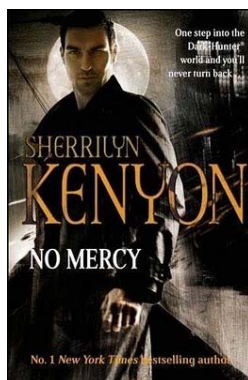
Sherrilyn Kenyon

Published by Piatkus

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jan Butterworth

Live fast, fight hard and if you have to die then take as many of your enemies with you as you can. That is the Amazon credo and it was one Samia lived and died by. Her family slaughtered, she's now one of the elite Dark Hunters - a Dog of War, Samia gained the gifts of empathy, psychometry and telekinesis and can't touch anyone or anything without seeing everything about them. Her feet can't even touch the floor bare without being overwhelmed by past occurrences. This has left her abstinent in her long life and a bit on the prickly side. All her passions go into killing. Dev Peltier is one of the werebears that own Sanctuary. It used to be the bar where anyone, human, Arcadian, Kattagari, Dark-Hunter or Daimon, go and be safe but has been stripped of its status by the Omegrion council.



There's now a new rule to follow — Come in peace or leave in pieces. Restless, Dev was getting ready to roam the world - then Samia speeds into his life. Who can resist a sexy Amazon on a motorcycle?

Dev is the one male she can't "read". He is like her "null". Could it be possible that she has finally found a man that she can touch and be touched by that she can't read? There are a couple of problems though. She's a Dark-Hunter, he's a were. They're not allowed to mix. Second, the daimons are in possession of new sources of powers, mainly the ability to walk in daylight. Samia must find out what is going on.

This book is fast-paced and well-written, like all of the Dark-Hunter books, but it is massively confusing with all the various types of demons, gods, demi-gods, were-hunters, were-animals, animal-weres, dark hunters, daimons, and too many various gods & goddesses to keep track of. Dev and Samia's back stories aren't really explained. I don't know how Sam could've stayed alive for 5,000 years since in this book she was always captured or losing her powers. Hopefully the next Dark-Hunter book holds my attention more.

## Brainjack

Brian Falkner

Published by Walker Books,

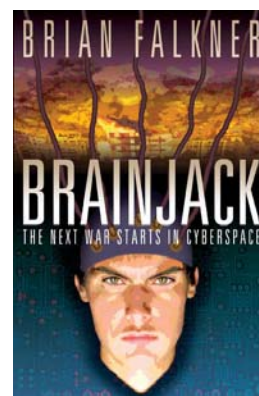
438pp

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

They gave me this book for my 12-year-old son to read, and I regret to say that it is a bit beyond him, both in reading level and also in content — not because of any sexual or violent material, but simply because he wouldn't understand much of the technical material here. Heck, I'm not sure that I do! I certainly don't think I'm qualified to determine if the details of hacking and the technical advances in this novel are truly plausible, even though I've been something of a computer geek for years. They're reasonable enough not to stretch my credibility too far, and Keith didn't complain (and he's much more the expert techno-weenie than I am).

On a more literary level, I have to say this was a very satisfying read, well put together, nicely written, with a very clever introductory hook, neatly reflected in the epilogue. The characters worked, as interesting a collection of junior nerds as you're ever likely to come across in real life — together with some fine adult heroes. I can vouch for the descriptions of the area around the Hoover Dam and Flagstaff — been there, recognised that. Of course, when I was there, nobody had gotten round to dropping a nuke on Vegas (which proves to be quite essential to the plot, not just a bit of random destruction of scenery).

As for that plot — it starts off with the young hacker who goes a mite too far, and finds himself with the usual choice — go to jail or work for the government, getting paid to stop people just like him. It's not so simple when people start dying.... There is a ghost in the machine... or is that an idiot savant? Anyhow, it all comes to a very agreeable conclusion, and I would definitely recommend it to Paul when he's a bit older — say 15 or 16 maybe.



## The Edge of the World: Book One of Terra Incognita

By Kevin J Anderson

Published by Orbit, 656pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

I should know better than to judge a book by its title by now... I was rather looking forward to a "Dawn Treader" style fantasy voyage to the edge of the known world, with visits to strange and bizarre islands on the way. Well, we get one suitably weird island, but then there's a total shipwreck... and that's by page 250, out of 650 pages. So they do build another ship. And that doesn't even get to sail... It's unfair.

But then war is unfair, and that's mostly what this fantasy is really about... a bunch of characters caught up in a bitter conflict between two cultures – the northern Tierrans and the southern Urabans. Exploration seems almost a secondary theme to this – though you have to admire the Saedrans and their on-going attempts to complete their Mappa Mundi. Yes, Anderson steals lots of stuff from real life history, including a devastating accidental fire that reminded me of the Great Fire of London.

That said it's a very readable book. The characters are diverse and interesting enough to hold my attention – if not always my sympathies. The plot is decidedly twisted, wandering off in all directions. It finally ends with plans to build a third vessel, and to resume the great search for lost Terravita, across the serpent-infested Oceansea. Oh well, I suppose I shall have to go and find book two...



## Soul's Reckoning: Book Three of the Broken Well Trilogy

By Sam Bowring

Published by Orbit, 500pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

It becomes rapidly evident that Bowring is happy to be in the third book of the trilogy, as he brings the reader towards the climatic battle at a cracking pace. And then we sit there, two great armies facing each other, as their leaders machinate, unable to proceed with the serious business of more than a bit of fighting around the edges. Bowring then proceeds to rid his world of assorted nasties, before bringing the vital elements altogether. And then, with everything lined up for a satisfactory conclusion, he somehow manages to get it all wrong, at least for this reader. I don't think I've ever felt so strong an urge to rip out the last few chapters of a book, and re-write them myself the way they should have been. For me, at least, it was a total train-wreck of what was a very promising and well-crafted trilogy. And I'm seriously disappointed!



## Tempest rising

Nicole Peeler

Published by Orbit

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Tosca Waerea

Jane True feels that she lives an unexceptional life...but all evidence would point to the contrary. Born to a mother who disappeared as suddenly as she appeared (wandering the town naked after a fierce storm), Jane spends most of her time taking care of her father and, due thanks to a tragedy when she was younger, avoiding the local townspeople. By day she works as a clerk at the Read It and Weep bookstore and the only time she feels truly alive is when she goes skinny-dipping in the ocean. One night while swimming, Jane pulls a body from the ocean, thereby setting in motion a chain of strange and unusual events that lead to discovering the truth about her mother and her identity while meeting a whole host of paranormal creatures far and above anything she could ever imagine.

The cover art for this book is fantastic and, in the way of people who are all about the pretty everywhere, this is what first caught my attention. Jane True, as a character, is smart mouthed, insecure, maybe slightly neurotic and very, very funny. Or at least, what she doesn't say out loud is hilariously funny (if shallow at times). If I have one niggle about the book it's only that it felt like there were too many characters to keep track of. Just as you'd get used to a few added players more came out of the woodwork. Interestingly it does pay off in the end. Overall, a rollicking read that is chocker block full of ribald, quirky humour and an interesting cast of supernatural characters – even the requisite vampire isn't quite what you'd expect (tall, fanged and brooding).



## Tracking the Tempest

Nicole Peeler

Published by Orbit

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Tosca Waerea

Still coming to terms with her part-fey heritage, Jane True is off to spend Valentine's Day with her not-quite-boyfriend Ryu, who just happens to be a vampire. Nobody's perfect, right? But Ryu's well-intentioned Valentine plans don't quite pan out the way they should have, and Jane finds herself investigating a spree of killings...perpetrated by another Halfling. Jane True is back, sassier, funnier, slightly clumsier and with the ability to (almost) control her power. I didn't think it possible but the world building in this title seems to be even more solid than the previous novel. The storyline moves better, too, making for a really good adventure/suspense read. My only complaint is that book 3 is not due to be released for another month or so. If I could ask Ms. Peeler one question, without giving away anything about the story, it would be this: What the heck kind of ending is that?! 'Tracking the tempest' is the second book in Peeler's hilarious 'Jane True' series – you'll definitely want to start with the first one.





## Wireless

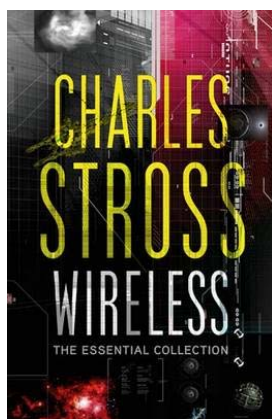
Charles Stross

Published by Orbit, 352pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

Anthologies generally have some of the qualities of a curate's egg – very mixed, some stories being good, some not so good. I'm not going to accuse any of these stories being badly written. It's more than they are an eclectic bunch of styles and subjects, and some will definitely appeal to some readers more than others. The collection is book-ended by two massive award-winning novellas, "Missile Gap" which won the 2007 Locus Award for Best Novella, and "Palimpsest" which won the 2010 Hugo Award for Best Novella (as I predicted – not that means much, since it was the only literary award I picked correctly). I was sure that I'd read "Missile Gap" before, though I can't remember where, and it wouldn't have been another story like it, because you can believe me when I say that this story is absolutely unique – mainly due to the unusual megastructure which acts as the setting. I've already written about "Palimpsest" elsewhere – it's an excellent piece of SF writing and one of those highly complex time travel stories that really make your teeth ache. The other stories include "Trunk and Disorderly" – a strange, yet funny tribute to PG Wodehouse, and "A Colder War" wherein the legacy of Lovecraft meets the Cold War. My personal favourite is "Down on the Farm" one of his "Laundry" stories, set against the same background as "Overtime" which was nominated for the 2010 Hugo Award for Best Novelette. I liked that one too, and so I'm hunting down more.



## Cold Magic

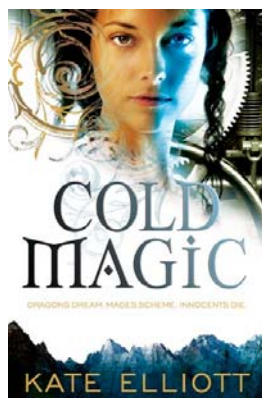
Kate Elliott

Published by Orbit, 502pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

I really should have loved this book. It certainly covered the bases. The setting is beautifully conceived – a fantasy set in an alternative earth where the glaciers have not retreated, and Brigantia is still joined to the rest of Europa. It's the Augustan Year 1837, and there are Zeppelins. There are also temples, and there is magic. So, you can call it steampunk fantasy. It has to be cool... The characters are well conceived, and the plot works – it's very Machiavellian. The Cold Mage Andevai has been sent by Four Moons House to claim the eldest daughter of the Hassi Barahal family in marriage. Of course, when it turns out that she's not whom she appears to be, the Mansa of Four Moons is not amused and orders her killed, so that Andevai can marry the right girl. She escapes, and leads the Cold Mages on a merry chase. However, there was something not quite right... when I put it down, I found I had frequently lost not just the plot, but also the page. The book somehow hadn't grabbed me, and I'm still not sure why.



## Shades of Night

Jackie Kessler and Caitlin Kittredge

Kittredge

Published by Piatkus, 412pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

This is the sequel to "Black and White" and consequently it begins with a very messy situation. More than half of the extrahumans of New Chicago have either gone nuts or turned villain and are now busy doing what supernutters and supervillains generally do. Mostly making a great mess of New Chicago. It doesn't help that security has broken down at Blackbird, the prison for supervillains, and the infamous Dr. Hypnotic is now on the loose. All the more fun for Jet and Iridium, once friends, then enemies, and now having to work on the same side. As I said in my review of "Black and White", the superhero novel is an under-represented sub-genre of science fiction, and I'm glad to be able to say that this is a worthy sequel. In fact, by half way through the novel I was having trouble putting it down, so it's safe to say that there's plenty of action. It's quite well written as well – although the structure is at least as complex as last time, inter-weaving past and present, and using multiple viewpoint characters, not just Jet and Iridium. We do get to learn a bit more of the mystery of the extrahumans, but there is still far more to be told. I would seriously have appreciated a glossary though, ladies – so as I could keep track of who's who, whose alias is whose, and what power they have.



## The Spirit Thief

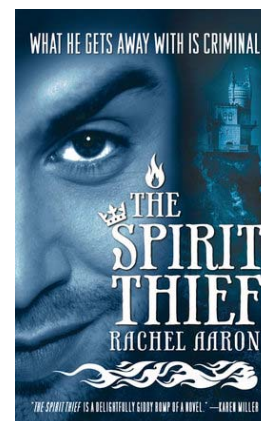
Rachel Aaron

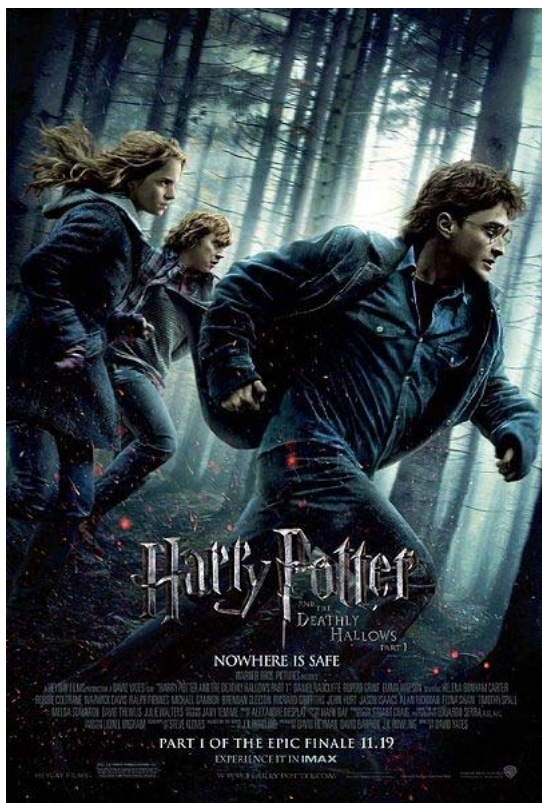
Published by Orbit, 310pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

In contrast to a lot of the fantasy I've been reading lately, "The Spirit Thief" is fun, fluffy, light and a glorious sweet soufflé of a novel. It's still highly original – any novel that begins with the hero in jail, chatting up the door into letting loose of its frame and thus letting him out is at least somewhat fresh out of the box. And then we discover that getting locked up was all part of his plan to steal a king! Unlike many fantasies, which bog down in details, this one keeps the action going. I was particularly pleased with the handling of the climactic sequence. Now, the climax is generally the best reading in any novel, but in a lot of fantasy novels it can be over all too quickly. But here, the climactic action begins on page 230 and keeps going until 286. Now, that makes over fifty pages of the fun bit. It's impressively handled, and followed by a tidy resolution. The characters are interesting and well developed, without too many minor non-entities cluttering up the background. The lady writes a fair sentence, plots neatly, has a cheerful sense of humour, and I'm really rather looking forward to seeing what happens in the next book.





## Harry Potter, Part the Seventh, Part One

Directed by David Yates

Produced by David Heyman

David Barron

Starring Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint  
Emma Watson, Ralph Fiennes etc.

Review by Maree Pavletich

Having been dubious as to how the PTB were going to split the last book in the HP series into two and make it work (apart from generating more income) as the majority of Book Seven is a chase sequence with Harry running and hiding with his friends from most of the action; I was pleased to see that they made much of the bits where the trio interacted with the outside world. The passage of time was alluded to by letting the reader see that the seasons were changing. Christmas was a nice touch.

You definitely had to have seen the other movies and read the books - more so for this movie than any of the others. I had, albeit several years ago. I had to go "back to the stacks" to check on several references made in the movie.

The special effects were everything we have come to expect, as Matthew has said, there is no excuse for bad special effects these technological days. I was wondering where they were going to divide the movie and the end was very abrupt. It does feel like half a movie.

Did it need to be in two bits? No. But the PTB will make a grand job of it and we will get Part the Eight in 3D, which given the raid on Gringotts and the magical battle at the end will enhance the experience, unlike some movies where 3D is just there because some suit thought it was cool and the latest trend.

## Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader

Directed by Michael Apted

Produced by Mark Johnson

Andrew Adamson

Starring Georgie Henley, Skandar Keynes  
Will Poulter, Ben Barnes  
Liam Neeson, Simon Pegg

Reviewed by Maree Pavletich

This was actually the first Narnia book I ever read - I didn't know at the time that it was part of a whole sequence. It's a beautiful movie to look at though I'm not sure it needed 3D. Only slight changes were made to the plot to advance the story - and it all wraps up in case there is no more movies, at the end with Aslan's speech about "knowing him by another name" in our world. I would have liked a little more epilogue as this is likely to be the last time we see Narnia on the big screen.

I had interesting discussion with one of my student librarians who was very irritated that everyone counts the LtW&TW as the first, when chronologically it is the second. I agree, even though a fierce debate ranges on in literary circles, which makes this movie the fourth part of a seven book series. Of course the "Magician's Nephew" only has two children and explains a little too quickly the origins of Narnia, and also takes place at an earlier time in this world's history. It is probably easier for people today to get their head around the Second World War than the Edwardian era.

It is unlikely "The Magician's Nephew" or "The Last Battle" will be made, as one is now rendered unnecessary and the latter too depressing. As for "The Silver Chair", which stars Eustace, would today's audience take to a film without the Pevensie children? I doubt it.

(and you forgot "The Horse and His Boy"—Ed.)







Directed by Brothers Strause  
Produced by Brothers Strause  
Starring Eric Balfour  
Scottie Thompson  
Donald Faison

Reviewed by

If you enjoyed "Cloverfield" or "Independence Day", you will love "Skyline". It is in the same sort of alien invasion movie genre, but with added gore and guns. If you thought bright blue LEDs were a bit spooky your fears will not be assuaged, blue led light is now confirmed to be very evil.

It would really spoil it to let you know why these aliens are here but it is for a very familiar and classic reason! Most of the cast don't last long once all the action starts happening. Some finish up in some quite sticky endings which they usually don't see coming either.

As a bonus most of the special effects mainly occur in daylight and the giant motherships and aliens look great on a big screen. It ends in an interesting way which definitely leaves a possibility of a Skyline II sequel which the creators and directors, the Strause brothers, hope to make as well.

There is also a minor controversy about whether the directors of Skyline had a conflict of interest as they were involved in creating the special effects for Sony's new movie, "Battle: Los Angeles".

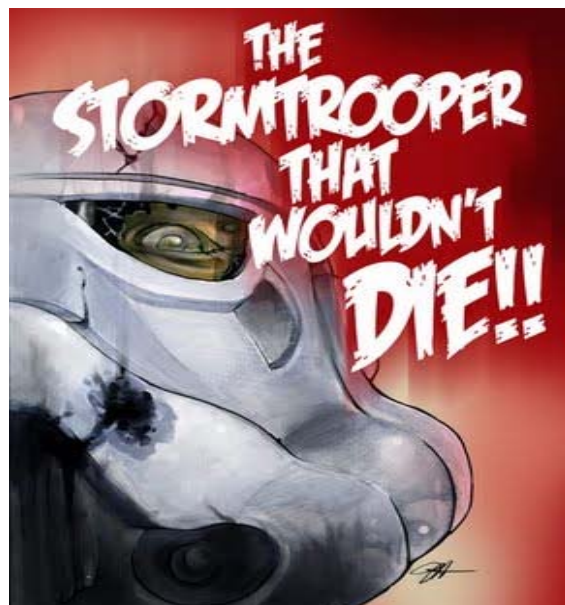
Overall a good movie to see on a Cheap-Tuesday cinema night.

## Uncorked by Broderick Wells

As I write it is 9 office parties 'til Santa. I have yet to photocopy my nether regions and fax them around the world, but there is still plenty of time for that. I hope those who have had to send parcels overseas have not been stung too much by NZ Post. Nothing says "I love you" more than paying first class mail on a heavy parcel (or even a light one). Right now my priorities are figuring out how to justify buying a case of good whisky over a cask of cognac. Times have been a bit tough over the last year and I can no longer afford both. One is good for the heart and the other good for the soul, and I like to both in tiptop condition.

As it is summer, I have not been bothering watching much television – the idiot box is located in a west facing room and the heat has been causing the booze to boil. But I and the good Lady Wells did go and see *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1* the other day. Excellent venue, it had working air conditioning. The story was basically Harry, Ron and Hermione go camping, though why anyone in their right mind would go for a camping holiday in Britain in mid-winter is a bit beyond me. Still, they're young and keen, and Harry got to play gooseberry because nobody invited his girlfriend along. Voldemort and his mob got to be nasty, but only a little, and it appears evil wizards put out more smoke than the Hogwarts Express at high speed. Still, it was a pleasant enough film and the only disappointment was there was no teaser at the end of the credits.

Doubtless next year we will go and see *Part 2* to find out if Voldemort can finally kill Harry, have the girl of his dreams and so forth. If this is different to the book, I will be very much surprised. But maybe they will have made the *Star Wars* zombie movie. I keen on seeing Jar Jar Binks having his brains eaten by an undead Stormtrooper. This does pose two questions: does Binks have enough brains to eat? And has anyone seen a Stormtrooper eat? They must do, right? Your answers on folding money care of Stella Nova, and I'll notify the winner next year.



## The Sky at Night – January 2010

By Keith Smith

Still more clouds and by the time you read this, the December total lunar eclipse has been and gone. Let's hope we saw something. Our next opportunity is on December 11<sup>th</sup> at three in the morning. There is another lunar eclipse in June but that will be over by the time the moon rises here.

Jupiter is still the most prominent object in the evening sky, setting just before midnight. Saturn and Venus are visible in the morning. Saturn rises around half past midnight while Venus starts to appear at 3am.

The evening sky now is dominated by Orion (The Hunter) who is accompanied by his two dogs (Canis Major and Canis Minor) while defending himself from the charge of the Bull (Taurus). Since we're in the Southern Hemisphere, Orion appears to be standing on his head. Also, many people refer to it as 'The Pot'.

Orion is easy to spot. Basically you're looking for a row of three stars framed by four reasonably bright stars. Slightly up from the rightmost star in the row of three is what appears to be a curve of stars. More on those later as one of them is actually (imho) one of the most spectacular sights you can see through a telescope – the Orion Nebula (M42).

Of the four stars that surround the belt stars, two really stand out. Rigel (marking the right foot) and Betelgeuse (the left shoulder). Both are large stars but whereas Rigel is a brilliant blue/white, Betelgeuse is red. The difference between the two is very easy to see.

Getting back to Orion's sword, you may notice that the middle star looks a bit fuzzy. That is because it is not a star but an emission nebula, a place where new stars are being born. A pair of binoculars will start to show the nebulosity but a telescope is required to really bring out the detail.

To the right of Orion is a very bright star. That is Sirius, the brightest star in the sky and marks the head of Canis Major. It's usually known as the Dog Star. In 1862, it was discovered that Sirius had a very faint white dwarf companion which was named 'The Pup'.

Left of Orion is a V of stars including a bright orange one. That is Aldebaran, which is the brightest star of Taurus. The V is the Hyades cluster and it looks like Aldebaran is part of it but it's not. It just happens to lie in the same direction.

Left again and to the north is what probably looks like a fuzzy blob what with all the street lights about. It's actually an open star cluster called Matariki or the Pleiades, otherwise known as the Seven Sisters (although most people can only see six). Many more stars can be seen in a pair of binoculars.

High in the south are two other very bright stars. Looking south and to the left is Achernar, whereas to the right is Canopus. Between the two, and down a bit is the Large Magellanic Cloud with the Small Magellanic Cloud to its left and below Achernar.

### The Moon:

New Moon – 4<sup>th</sup> January  
First Quarter – 13<sup>th</sup> January  
Full Moon – 22<sup>nd</sup> January  
Last Quarter – 27<sup>th</sup> January

### The Planets:

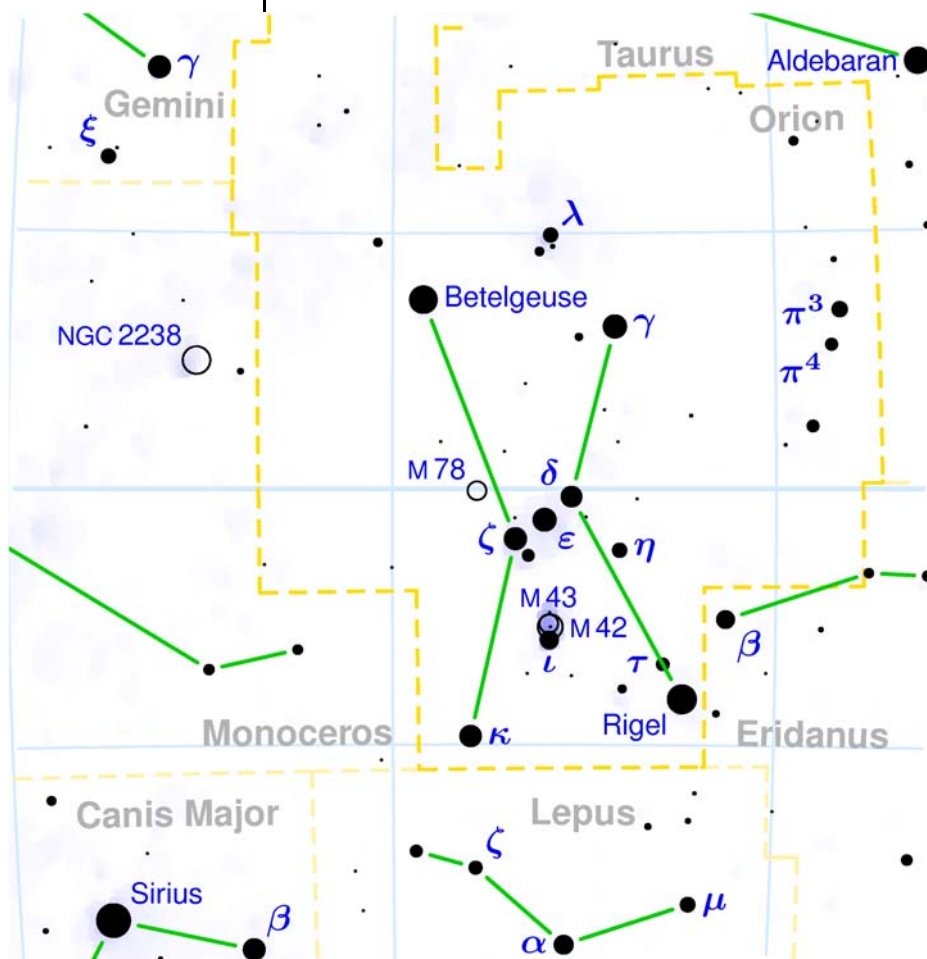
Venus highest in morning sky—9<sup>h</sup> January  
Mercury highest in morning sky—10<sup>h</sup> January

More information can be found at:

<http://www.astronomy.co.nz/pub/home.asp>

<http://www.astronomy.org.nz/>

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/index.html>





# Obits

November 11

**“Baby” Marie Osborne** (aged 99)

American silent movie actress, first child star. Born Helen Alice Myres , she was adopted under dubious circumstances, and debuted in 1914's “Kidnapped in New York” at the age of 3. She later became a costumer.



November 13

**Allan Sandage**, (aged 84)

American astronomer, best known for determining the first reasonably accurate value for the Hubble constant and the age of the universe.

November 15

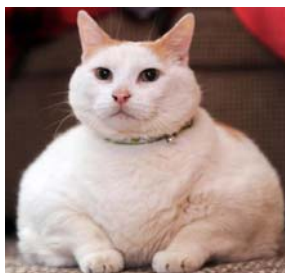
**William Self**, (aged 89)

American actor and television production manager. Executive producer at Fox for 1960's genre shows such as “Batman”, “Daniel Boone”, “Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea”, “Time Tunnel” and “Lost in Space”.

November 22

**Prince Chunk**, (aged 10)

American obese cat, claimed to weigh 44 pounds, just 2 pounds short of the world record, before being put on a diet... (the Guinness World Records people have dropped this category for humane reasons).



November 23

**Ingrid Pitt**, (aged 73)

Polish-born British actress and author. She appeared in several Hammer horror films, often as a villain, in the Doctor Who stories “The Time Monster”, and “Warriors of the Deep”, besides many other roles.

November 27

**Irvin Kershner**, (aged 87)

American film director (“Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back”, “Never Say Never Again”, “RoboCop 2”, and several episodes of “SeaQuest DSV”.

November 28

**Leslie Nielsen**, (aged 84)

Canadian-born American actor most famous for “Airplane!”, and the “The Naked Gun” movies. However, genre fans will also remember him for his first major role as the starship commander in “Forbidden Planet”, and also as the ship's captain in “The Poseidon Adventure”.



**Jon D'Agostino**, (aged 81)

Italian-born American comic book artist, best known for his work with Archie Comics—and as letterer for Marvel comics including the very first issue of Spiderman.



**Samuel T. Cohen**, (aged 89)

American physicist, inventor of the neutron bomb.



November 29

**Sir Maurice Wilkes**, (aged 97)

British computer scientist, builder and designer of the EDSAC, the first practical stored-program electronic computer. EDSAC ran its first programs on 6 May 1949.

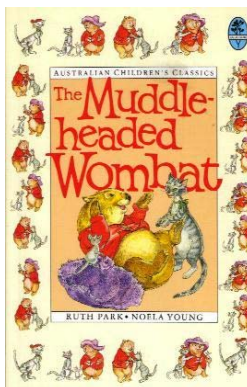
December 8

**Walter Haeussermann**, (aged 96)

German-born American rocket scientist, member of the “von Braun rocket group”, one of the German scientists recruited by the US after WWII.



*Walter Haeussermann, right, and Wernher von Braun, center, studying part of a Saturn rocket., in the 1960s.*



December 14

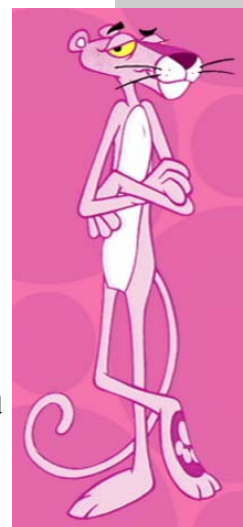
**Ruth Park**, (aged 93)

New Zealand-born Australian writer, mainly of children's books, including the series “The Muddle-headed Wombat”.

December 15

**Blake Edwards**, (aged 88)

American film director, producer and screenwriter of “The Pink Panther” movies, “Breakfast at Tiffany's”, “The Great Race” and several others.



compiled  
by  
Jacqui  
Smirh

# ConText 2011

## New Zealand National SF Convention

ConText will be held over Queen's Birthday weekend in Auckland, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> to Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June. The venue has been changed to the Quality Hotel Barrycourt, 10-20 Gladstone Road, Parnell.

Catherine Asaro, an American author of both science fiction and fantasy novels, will be the GoH. The fan GoH will be Lynelle Howell, editor of Phoenixine and an active Wellington fan. Also attending will be Helen Lowe, the Christchurch based author of the Heir series, of which the first 'The Wall of Night' was released earlier this month. The crew are also in negotiations with other potential guests.

This is a marvellous opportunity for anyone who enjoys science fiction to participate in 4 days of sharing their hobby with other fans. There will be discussion panels, organised gaming, costuming events, the Quiz, a video stream and a chance to buy science fiction related items. The winners of the 2011 Sir Julius Vogel Awards for Excellence in New Zealand Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror will be announced on the Sunday night at the Conjunction Banquet.

Full and day memberships will be available if you wish to attend for one or two days only. Organised events will be going into the early evening. The bar will be open all day until late.

The Barrycourt Hotel is holding a block of rooms for convention attendees. Book directly and quote the reference number 64913 to ensure you receive the rates.

Phone: +64 9 303 3789

Facsimile: +64 9 377 3309

[http://www.barrycourt.co.nz/  
reservations@barrycourt.co.nz](http://www.barrycourt.co.nz/reservations@barrycourt.co.nz)

### Standard King Room

King bed, ensuite bathroom, coffee & tea facilities. LCD TV, DVD, writing desk. Some rooms with amazing city & harbour views. Rate includes car parking & daily newspaper (on request). \$109.00 per night including GST (maximum 2 pax)

### Double Room

1 Queen & 1 Single bed, ensuite bathroom, coffee & tea facilities, private balcony. LCD TV, DVD, writing desk. Some rooms with amazing city & harbour views. Rate includes car parking & daily newspaper (on request). \$129.00 per night including GST (maximum 2 pax)

### Stella Nova Wiki:

[http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/  
Main\\_Page](http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)

### Nova Zine Back Issues:

[http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/  
StellaNova:Novazine-new](http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/StellaNova:Novazine-new)

### Postal Address:

Stella Nova  
PO Box 74-013, Greenlane  
Auckland 1543

### President:

Stephen Litten  
[president@stella-nova.sf.org.nz](mailto:president@stella-nova.sf.org.nz)

### Editor:

Jacqui Smith  
[editor@stella-nova.sf.org.nz](mailto:editor@stella-nova.sf.org.nz)

### This Month:

BOXING Sunday 26 December starting 2 pm.  
DAY DO at the Pavletich Place in Papakura  
Escape the relies...

SPACE 31st December  
6 pm till midnight  
at the Presidential Palace

### Next Meeting:

Wednesday 15 January, 2010 at 7:30pm  
Auckland Horticultural Centre,  
990 Great North Road, Western Springs  
Topic:



## Upcoming Events:

**June 3-6th 2011 Context**  
2011 New Zealand NatCon in Auckland  
[http://context.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://context.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)