

## **Diversicon 26**

*Diversitopia*

July 26-29, 2018, 2018

Best Western Plus—Como Park, St Paul

### **Firm Ideas and Ideas Seeking Volunteers**

(deadline: June 27, 2018)

Contact Eric M. Heideman ([ehaideman@dhzone.com](mailto:ehaideman@dhzone.com)) and Scott Lohman ([scottl2605@aol.com](mailto:scottl2605@aol.com))

\* = these ideas are still accepting volunteers

Thursday, July 26, 6:30-8:00 p.m., DreamHaven Books, 2301 38th St E, Minneapolis. Diversicon 26 Guests of Honor CHARLIE JANE ANDERS and BRYAN THAO WORRA read from, talk about, and autograph their work. Sponsored by the SPECULATIONS READINGS SERIES. All subsequent Diversicon events take place at the Best Western Plus—Como Park, 1010 Bandana Blve W, St Paul.

Friday, July 27, 7:00-7:30 p.m., Mainstage (Soo Line Room). Opening Ceremonies. Scott Lohman, MC; Bryan Thao Worra, Charlie Jane Anders, Ursula Murray Husted, Eric M. Heideman; Madeline L'Engle, Theodore Sturgeon, Philip José Farmer, in absentia.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Vendor Room, Milwaukee Road. Meet the Vendors. Inspect our dealers' wares. Hear Guest Artist Ursula Murray Husted talk about her work.

\*Saturday, 5:00-5:25 p.m. Massive Autographing: Charlie Jane Anders, Bryan Thao Worra, Ursula Murray Husted, Rob Callahan, et al.

\*Saturday: The SF Minnesota Auction, 7:30-9:30 p.m., supports Diversicon's Sponsoring Organization and its projects, including the Speculations Readings Series at DreamHaven, and *Tales of the Unanticipated*. To donate material, contact Eric and/or Scott, above.

\*Flash Fiction, Round 11! The Flash Fiction Contest, suggested by Diversicon 16 Guest of Honor Ann Frasier, continues at D26 with Judge Charlie Jane Anders. We want stories up to 250 words (firm) related to the Convention Theme, "Diversitopia" Entries will be judged on the creative interpretation of the theme, the quality of the writing, and emotional/intellectual impact. The winner gets a cool certificate, the honor of winning, and the opportunity to read your work out loud at the Auction Halftime Saturday night. Submit no later than 11:59 p.m. Central Standard Time, July 14, 2018, to [Diversicon@gmail.com](mailto:Diversicon@gmail.com). No entry fee, but only open to attending members of the convention. Writers of any experience level may submit. The Diversicon Chair and the Programming Director are ineligible. Authors retain all rights to their stories.

Sunday, July 28, 5:00-5:30 p.m., Mainstage. Closing Ceremonies. Scott Lohman, MC; Charlie Jane Anders, Bryan Thao Worra, Ursula Murray Husted, Eric M. Heideman; Theodore Sturgeon, Philip José Farmer, Madelein L'Engle, in absentia.

Panel: Is Gender Inevitable? As SF authors of all genders grapple with pronouns, they are also working on the role of gender itself in society. SF has for decades turned what is considered "normal" on its head. (i.e. Le Guin's "The king was pregnant.") And why do people get themselves in such a state over it?—Martha A. Hood, mod.. Rob Callahan?

Panel: Of What Use is the Space Opera? Proponents of Mundane SF, which rejects FTL and galactic-side empires say (I think they're saying) that we are better off focusing on what humanity can actually possibly achieve, be aware of just how precious Earth is, that we can't just leave and go somewhere else. Yet, the space opera persists. What does it give us that other subgenres don't?—Martha A. Hood, mod.; Charlie Jane Anders? Rob Callahan?

Poetry Cascade: Diversicon will once again host the Rhysling Awards of the Science Fiction-Fantasy Association (SFPA). We plan to schedule:

\* panel on the state of speculative poetry in 2017 panel, including the presentation of the awards;

\* poetry-writing workshop;

\* and at least two group readings; the number to be determined by how many poets let us know you're coming. Bryan Thao Worra, Eleanor Arnason, Ruth Berman, Phyllis Ann Karr, Sandra Lindow, et al.

\*Panel: I am Still Not a Number—50+ Years of The Prisoner. The sets are still old-fashioned, the paranoia still current.—Rich Brown

\*Panel or Discussion: Science Fiction/Fantasy Films: The Year in Review. Our annual look at speculative cinema. Melissa S. Kaercher, mod.; Charlie Jane Anders?

\*Panel or Discussion: Science Fiction/Fantasy TV The Year in Review. Our annual look at SF on the medium sized screen. Scott Lohman, mod. Rob Callahan?

\*Wordplay Seminar. Earn a Bachelor's or Bachelorettes of Wordplay from Dr. Knowledge. This seminar will include

1. Wordfacture. It's often necessary to use a lot of words to describe a thing or situation because we haven't thought of one economic word for it. Let's remedy.

2. Retirement Party for Cliches. We'll identify cliches that that need to be euthanized and think of clever phrases to replace them.

3. Jabberwacky. Identify silly-sounding words that already exist and may or may not be accompanied by silly definitions.—Rick "Dr Knowledge" Gellman, instructor

\*Panel: In Memoriam, including: Ursula K. Le Guin, 1929-2018; Kate Wilhelm, 1928-2018. On two outstanding SF writers who left us within a few weeks of each other.

\*Panel: Wrinkles in Time: Madeleine L'Engle, 1918-2007. On the classic author of juvenile science fiction, mainstream, and, fantasy fiction. Eric M. Heideman, mod.; Ruth Berman

\*Panel: Saucers of Loneliness: Theodore Sturgeon, 1918-1985. On the author of *More Than Human* and an unsurpassed body of short fiction. Eric M. Heideman, mod.; Charlie Jane Anders

\*Panel: To Your Scattered Bodies Go: Philip José Farmer, 1918-2009. On our versatile and provocative Posthumous Guest. Robin Raianiemi, mod.; Eric M. Heideman

\*Panel: Action Films. Our annual tribute to film genres. David Christenson, mod.; Eric M. Heideman. Melissa S. Kaercher?

\*Writing Game: Write Now! "I would conduct a 'Write Now!' writing game. It would take 1 to 2 hours, depending on the size of the group. It is improvizational story writing using prompt cards. People read their masterpieces at the end. Generally a lot of fun."—Terry Faust

\*Lady Poetesses from Hell.—Eleanor Arnason, Ruth Berman

\*Panel: Using Fairy and Folk Tales in SFF—Eleanor Arnason, mod.; Charlie Jane Anders, Ruth Berman, Rob Callahan?

\*Panel: Cozy Club or World Spanning Empire? What did we win and lose with the expansion of SFF?—Eleanor Arnason, mod.; Rob Callahan?

\*Panel: The Disappearance of Women SFF Writers. Why are older women SFF writers forgotten? What can we do about this?—Eleanor Arnason, mod.; Charlie Jane Anders, Martha A. Hood

\*Panel: Building Coalitions in the SFF Community. With the swing right in American politics, it seems like a good idea to build a popular front against prejudice and fascism. How do we do this? And how do we avoid the kind of fights among progressives that we have seen at WisCon and on the Internet?—Eleanor Arnason, mod.; Rob Callahan?

\*“I would enjoy leading a costumed life drawing session for attendees. If there is interest, the session would take two hours, and requires a simple room or convention hall with outlets for lights, a stage/platform, and room for fans to sit and draw.”—Ursula Murray Husted

“I would love to give an egg tempura lecture/demonstration and expect the lecture to take 20ish minutes and the demonstration to take 45ish minutes. It is an original medium and has a fascinating history. For this I would need a projector capable of showing PowerPoint slides and a flat table around which people could sit and watch the demonstration.”—Ursula Murray Husted

“I expect that my time not spoken for would see me painting and talking to folks at one of my tables. Due to that, I don’t feel that a particular time needs to be set aside for me to speak about my work. I love to paint and enjoy talking to folks.”—Ursula Murray Husted

\*Generic Panel. Wide-ranging discussion of various topics. These are usually continuations of topics explored at other panels. New topics will also be considered. Arthur C. Johnson, mod.; Phyllis Ann Karr, Ellen Kuhfeld

Discussion: Diversitopia. A look at Diversicons past, present, and yet to come. Scott Lohman, Diversicon 26 & 27 Chair, mod.

Fiction Reading: Bryan Thao Worra

Fiction Reading: Charlie Jane Anders

\*Panel: Diversitopia. Planned communities in SF, ancient and modern, utopian and dystopian. Scott Lohman, mod.

\*Panel: I have become fascinated with the interplay between thought and languages, how each helps shape the other. And, of course, storytelling—including SF and fantasy—interplays with both thought and language. Also and separately, the character-molding tension which affects most of us: between wanting to blend in and wanting to be unique.”—Phyllis Ann Karr, Rob Callahan?

\*Panel: Writing and Religion: A Cup of Coffee with God. “This spring I’ve been mildly engrossed with the idea that novelists and maybe short-story writers might have their own insight into the age-old religious squabble between predestination (aka ‘fate’) and free will. Because of the way we work with our fictional characters, who so often seem to have minds of their own.”—Phyllis Ann Karr, mod.; S.N. Arly?

\*Discussion: Dave & Eric & Anybody Who Cares to Join Them Sit around and Talk About Films for an Hour. Our long-running semi-formal discussion of a wide range of film topics. David Christenson & Eric M. Heideman, co-mods.

\*Panel: The Marvel Live-Action Saga Continues. In which Wanda rises Thanos comes to Earth. Rob Callahan. Lyda Morehouse? Eleanor Arnason?

\*Panel: WTF? Science Fiction and the Stories That Don’t Explain Themselves. From classics like *Neuromancer* and *The Book of the New Sun* to recent Volumes like *The Quantum Thief* and *Ninefox Gambit*, science fiction has long featured books that throw the reader headlong into a strange world with scarcely a word of exposition to guide the way. We’ll discuss favorites, the appeal and possible frustration involved in reading these books, and what that might tell us about the larger experience of reading , and writing science fiction itself.—Greg L. Johnson

\*Panel: Breaking Up is Hard to do. Twenty-first century science fiction has brought a spate of novels from writers so disparate as Paulo Bacgalupi, Alda Palmer, Dave Hutchinson and Malka Older that features near futures where many, if not all nations have balkanized into smaller pieces, historical unions broken apart and dissolved. Are these writers, and others, on to something? Are we headed for a future where the nation-state seems as obsolete as the feudal manor? Greg L. Johnson, mod.; Rob Callahan, Martha A. Hood

\*Panel: The State of LGBTQ Speculative Fiction in 2018. Robin Raiainmi, Charlie Jane Anders?

Suggested by Tessa Johnstone Carlson. Panel: Magic: Is it Both Witchcraft and Science? Tesla and Edison were described as wizards, and many early scientists were self-described alchemists. Technology is approaching what was once considered witchcraft. What is the difference between science and magic?  
S.N. Arly, mod.; Charlie Jane Anders

Discussion of Charlie Jane Anders’ novel *All the Birds in the Sky*. A general discussion with the author of her book, co-sponsored by David Lenander of the Rivendell Group, Don Kaiser of the North Country Gaylaxians, and Eric M. Heideman of Second Foundation.

\*Panel: The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters. In the 11th *Star Trek* film, for a few minutes’ thrills, the Vulcans, champions of reason and the best-developed extraterrestrial species in TV and film SF, have their home-world and all but a few thousands of its people destroyed. Almost no controversy arises in the fan community. In *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, the central Jedi of his generation, Luke Skywalker, proclaims that the Jedi’s use of the Force is a sham. He then destroys the greatest library in the galaxy while mentor Yoda, says it’s no big deal. What’s up?—Eric M. Heideman, mod? S.N. Arly?

\*Panel: Know What You Write, Write What You Know. The maxim write what you know will show up in nearly any good introductory class on writing, from journalism to fiction. Often we are told to write about things that are familiar to us. But what happens when you get an idea that includes elements that you aren't familiar with - a scientific principle, a culture, or a part of the world? Or in the case of SF/F, you want to write about things that you can't necessarily find good research on (magic and science beyond our current level)? This kicks in the corollary to write what you know - know what you write. How do you learn what's necessary to tell the story or pass along the information that you want to? And how do you stop researching once you get started?—S.N. Arly

\*Panel: Midwest Mythologic Creatures. Why do writers look for monsters and magical critters elsewhere, when we have so many amazing creatures here? The US has all sorts of interesting creatures, and the Midwest is chock full of hodags, hoop snakes, windigo, sprinter cats, and agripelters. S.N. Arly, mod.; Bryan Thao Worra requested

\*Panel: Not My Beautiful Minnesota. It has become fairly common for urban fantasy writers to place their stories in a modern world analogue. What purpose does this serve? What are the advantages? What are the disadvantages and how can you avoid them? Who does it well?—S.N. Arly

\*Panel: Who are your influences? It could be argued that we are all influenced by the things we are exposed to in our lives. For writers, this carries over into our work. Can you see the fingerprints of the artists and events that have influenced you? Where are they most prevalent? If you can't see them, why do you suppose that might be? Are you conscious of the things that influence your writing?—S.N. Arly

\*Panel: Using Diverse Influences Without Cultural Appropriation. It's common for writers and artists to go back to their roots in search of inspiration. So many stories have been influenced by religious, cultural, and social stories and traits. There are few truly new ideas, just new and different (and sometimes not so new and different) mashups of old ideas or combinations of existing things. How does this make fiction more realistic or believable? How can this improve the diversity of your stories and worlds? How do you draw from sources that you aren't familiar with? When taking ideas or elements from cultures other than your own, what's okay to use and how can you use it? At what point does it cross the line into unacceptable cultural appropriation?—S.N. Arly

\*Panel: Writing Diversity Right. Done right, art (including fiction) can give readers a connection with an unfamiliar place, push away stereotypes and further understanding. Done wrong, it perpetuates stereotypes, offends readers familiar with the source material or culture, is tainted by colonialism, and comes off as a cheap and poorly constructed attempt to include diversity.

Panel or Presentation: The State of the Solar System: 2017—Space Exploration. Our annual look at human and robotic exploration of space. How about that Space Force? Hank Lederer, mod.; Ben Huset

Panel or Presentation: The State of the Solar System: 2017—Astronomy. Our annual look at recent astronomic discoveries inside and beyond the solar system. Michael Kauper, presenter

Fiction Reading: Rob Callahan?

\*Panel: Ask an Editor Anything. The inside-skinny-trade-secret ancient knowledge that comes with the Editorial Hat, now passed onto you from Actual Editors, brought in from the wild for your edification, stunned and chained for your safety! Learn the arcane practices employed in editing poetry, fiction, and non-fiction! Useful for would-be submitters and would-be editors!

Media:

Saturday:

9:00-9:55 am Krushenko's Annex (Northern Paacific  
Scott's Diversicon Saturday Morning Cartoons

Sunday:

9:00-9:55 am Krushenko's Annex  
Scott's Diversicon Sunday Morning Cartoons

Parties:

Friday:

Minnesota Spac Frontier Society Party

Krushenko's, 9:00 p.m-1ish. a.m; A Party for Readers and Viewers. Sponsored by Second Foundation, a speculative and science fiction book discussion group that has met about every six weeks since January 1983, most of whose members are also film buffs.

Saturday:

9:00-11:00 a.m. Hospitality Room  
Latte barada nikto!  
Coffee, espresso, and latte sponsored by Rich Brown

9:45 p.m.-2:00 a.m., Krushenko's. *Tales of the Unanticipated* #32 Publication Party. After 32 years we present the 32nd issue of this wide-ranging speculative fiction anthology. Meet staff and contributed. Shake hands with the fabulous new issue and lovely back issues! TOTU #32 is the second one published by SF Minnesota.

Sunday:

9:00-11:00 a.m. Hospitality Room  
Latte barada nikto!  
Coffee, espresso, and latte sponsored by Rich Brown

5:30-5:50 p.m. Railroad Lobby  
Dinner Expedition Prep  
Milling about and fund farewells, followed by...

6:00-7:15 p.m.  
Dinner reservation at Gabe's by the Park, three blocks from hotel.  
Open to all. Please find Eric or Scott to be added.

7:30 p.m.-Late Night. Return to the hotel for the There's Still Life in the Old Dog Party  
Conversation will be had by all.  
Gaming will also be available in the Railroad Lobby.  
Krushenko's will also offer Viewers' Choice.

More to come!