



# BRIAN W. ALDISS

## This World And Nearer Ones

This collection of articles and reviews illustrate the versatility which has made Brian Aldiss one of Britain's leading science fiction authors. Here he writes with humour on a variety of subjects, discoursing on music, painting, architecture, the cinema, and, of course, science fiction, ranging from Jules Verne to *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*. You can join him swimming in an extinct volcano

in Sumatra, spend some time listening to philosophy beside the Adriatic, and drink a Buck Rogers with him in a notorious San Diego bar. In other words, you can join Brian Aldiss as he explores this world and nearer ones. 254pp / 8pp illus

**SFBC £4.95**

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## BRIAN W. ALDISS

Recently voted Britain's Most Popular Science Fiction Writer, Brian Aldiss is British Guest of Honour at the World Science Fiction Convention to be held in Brighton this August. His first science fiction novel, *Non-Stop*, was published in 1958 and he has subsequently built up a reputation for innovative and imaginative writing with books like *Greybeard*, *Earthworks*, *Hothouse*, *Report on Probability A*, *Frankenstein Unbound*, *The Malacia Tapestry*, and most recently a collection of tales entitled *Enemies of the System*, the title story of which has been nominated for a Hugo. In 1969 he gained notoriety for his outspoken *The Hand-Reared Boy* and in that same year he was taken up by the apostles of the 'New Wave' for *Barefoot In The Head*. He is also a noted critic, his reputation in this field being enhanced by his history of science fiction, *Billion Year Spree*.

Both *This World and Nearer Ones*, which the Science Fiction Book Club is offering this month, and *New Arrivals, Old Encounters*, a collection of short stories to be published in September by Jonathan Cape, mark my twenty-one years as an independent professional writer. They are designed to a certain extent to celebrate the World SF Convention at Brighton. That great event is always good for the SF fraternity, but in fact both these books form part of longer term projects.

*This World and Nearer Ones* is my favourite. Many SF writers can publish short story collections; few manage a collection of articles. I have produced millions of words for newspapers and journals: this book contains just a representative sample, selected to represent some of my main interests. Science, history, the arts, literature, and science fiction are all repre-



Brian Aldiss and family at home

sented. They come from all sources — one article from a fanzine, the *Somerset Cidereal Times*.

Travel produces some of my best work, to my way of thinking. I am an ardent traveller (USSR two years ago, Australia last year, China later this year), and *This World* contains articles on the Soviet Union, Trieste, and Sumatra, always seen through the slightly oblique angle of SF.

A few years ago, I published a non-fiction book called *Shape of Future Things*. Although it was no best-seller, it elicited more correspondence than even my most popular novels, such as *Non-Stop* and *The Hand-Reared Boy*. Perhaps that was because it was a personal book, as well as dealing with the great thundering external world. Perhaps *This World* will have the same kind of appeal; I believe that readers will find the non-fiction approach gives an insight into the novels written during a long career.

## NEWS BULLETIN

### • HUGO NOMINATIONS

#### BEST NOVEL

*Blind Voices* by Tom Reamy  
(—SFBC £4.50, REF 6351—)  
*Dreamsnake* by Vonda McIntyre  
*The Faded Sun: Kesrith* by C J Cherryh  
(—a future SFBC offering—)  
*Up the Walls of The World* by James Tiptree Jr  
(—SFBC £3.95, REF 8753—)  
*The White Dragon* by Anne McCaffrey

#### BEST NOVELLA

'Enemies of the System' by Brian Aldiss  
'Fireship' by Joan D Vinge  
'The Persistence of Vision' by John Varley  
'Seven American Nights' by Gene Wolfe  
'The Watched' by Christopher Priest

#### BEST NOVELLETTE

'The Barbie Murders' by John Varley  
'The Devil You Don't Know' by Dean Ing  
'Hunter's Moon' by Poul Anderson  
'The Man Who Had No Idea' by Thomas M Disch  
'Mikal's Songbird' by Orson Scott Card

#### SHORT STORY

'Cassandra' by C J Cherryh  
'Count The Clock That Tells the Time' by Harlan Ellison  
'Stone' by Edward Bryant  
'The Very Slow Time Machine' by Ian Watson  
'View From a Height' by Joan D Vinge

#### DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

*Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*  
*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*  
*Lord of the Rings*  
*Superman*  
*Watership Down*

The Dramatic Presentation category has special interest for British fans this year because most — if not all — are eager to see Douglas Adams' brilliant *Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* win a Hugo.

### • LETTERS

Something to say about sf or the SFBC? I'd like to hear from you. Please write to: Paul Begg, SFBC, Brunel House, Forde Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2DW.

In the May News I mentioned the film *Humanoid* (which is about 'a bunch of UFO contactees whose blood turns blue after their experience') and commented that perhaps Blake's 7 wasn't that bad after all.

#### DEAR MR BEGG

I feel I should somewhat defend the film *Humanoid* from your comments. Although this is a Japanese film, it is not by the people who make the giant lizard/moth/turtle/octopus movies, but is directed by Kihachi Okamoto who is something of a cult figure in the US. Also, the film deserves some notice for the appearance of Tetsuya Nakadai, one of Japan's, or the world's best actors. I cannot speak directly of the merits of the film, since it has not been released yet. It may be good or it may be bad, but it will surely be unorthodox, unexpected and honest, which at least puts it in the 'interesting failure' category, and worth more than a glancing groan. MARK OWINGS, WASHINGTON DC.

Quite right. I feel suitably chastised — but blue blood! Can the British nobility have been UFO contactees? Ed.

## NON-FICTION SPECIAL



## INTO THIN AIR

Paul Begg

### People Who Disappear

The enigma of missing people has been a reasonably popular theme in science fiction. Even *Close Encounters* suggested a solution — people are kidnapped by flying saucers! But missing people is a more disturbing and far more mysterious problem than that. Estimates of the number of people who vanish in Britain every year are disturbingly high, between 11,000 and 26,000!

They are ordinary people, people absorbed with the daily process of living. Yet they dis-

appear on the spur of the moment, without making any preparations. To make a distinction, these people seem to have done more than just disappear: they have vanished.

*Into Thin Air* looks at some of the more mysterious cases of disappearing people and examines some of the classic mysteries like the *Mary Celeste* and the Bermuda Triangle. 184pp / illustrated / index

**SFBC £4.50**

David & Charles £5.95 REF 6398