



## Editorial 2/2021

*Esko Suoranta, Laura E. Goodin, Essi Varis, & Dennis  
Wilson Wise*

We are pleased to welcome you to this issue of *Fafnir – Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research*.

In our prefatory, Eugen Bacon surveys the context and current state of speculative fiction by black writers, both from various African nations and from the African diaspora. She highlights that not only does this body of work increase the diversity of voices and perspectives in English-language speculative fiction, but it also works – at times subtly, at times more overtly – to subvert the structures of power that have perpetuated injustice and bigotry.

Two of the articles in this issue discuss young female protagonists and their explorations of the liminal spaces between reality and fantasy. Debalina Das's "Confronting Ghosts: History, Trauma and Aesthetics in Guillermo del Toro's *El Laberinto del Fauno*" looks at how the film incorporates elements of magic realism into the fabric of its narrative – specifically from the viewpoint of its young protagonist, Ofelia, as a way of addressing the collective trauma of the Spanish Civil War. Krishnapriya K. and Dr. Sumathy K Swamy examine the relationship between the real and fantasy lives of the eponymous protagonist of Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*, arguing that the characteristics of the fantasy world into which Coraline adventures, as well as that world's relationships with her real world, can provide insight into her personality.

In this issue's third article, "Is there a Woman in this Space Opera? A Gender Analysis of the Aliens of Orion", Dorothea Boshoff and Deirdre C. Byrne examine the depiction of aliens in Marianne de Pierres's *The Sentients of Orion* series, finding that her treatment of these aliens indicates a significant broadening of the gender spectrum as a means for speculative fiction to explore issues of identity and relationship beyond the female/male binary.

We're very pleased to bring you something a little different in this issue. In "A Conversation on AI, Science Fiction, and Work", Daniel Bodén and Michael Godhe interview Jerry Määttä, one of Scandinavia's foremost scholars of speculative fiction, about some of the ways SF has treated the concept and

implementation of artificial intelligence, specifically in the context of labour, jobs, and to what degree the increasing integration of AI into society is (or isn't) accepted.

Eero Suoranta contributes a con report from the Glasgow International Fantasy Conversations conference (GIFCon). He highlights the con's emphasis on reaching beyond the predominantly Anglophone focus of many cons to incorporate works in numerous languages, and perspectives from a wide range of nations and language groups.

As ever, our book-reviews editor has assembled an abundance of fascinating critiques of new works of scholarship. Topics include dystopias; the nature of J. G. Ballard's SF; Irish SF; a wide-ranging study of the work of Arthur C. Clarke; literary Afrofuturism; a new overview of past and current fantastic literature; and two books related to the Inklings: one exploring the tension between progressivism and traditionalism as epitomised by the Inklings' work, and one examining the relationship between J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and classic literature.

We hope you enjoy our contributors' ideas, analysis, and spirit of inquiry over the holidays. All of us at *Fafnir* wish you all the best for whatever celebrations are yours, and for the year to come.

Esko Suoranta, Laura E. Goodin, and Essi Varis, Editors-in-chief  
Dennis Wise, Reviews Editor  
*Fafnir – Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research*