

FAC. LETRAS UNIV. LISBOA • 28-30 NOVEMBRO 2012 28-30 NOVEMBER 2012



COLÓQUIO FICÇÃO CIENTÍFICA & FANTASIA ■ SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY CONFERENCE

# MENSAGEIROS DAS ESTRELAS

## EPISÓDIO II

MESSENGRERS FROM THE STARS EPISODE II



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS  
LIVRO DE RESUMOS

## ORGANIZAÇÃO / ORGANIZATION

### COMISSÃO ORGANIZADORA/ ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Adelaide Serras, Ana Daniela Coelho, Ana Rita Martins,  
Angélica Varandas, Catarina Xavier, Duarte Patarra, José Duarte,  
Luísa Azuaga e Mónica Paiva.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Sara Didelet for the design work and Miguel Santos  
for drawing our conference poster.

We also would like to thank Ana Luísa Valdeira, Inês Morais  
and Madalena Palmeirim.

Finally we would also like to thank our sponsors:  
ULICES, FCT, DEA, ICA, ICI, LISBON CONVENTION BUREAU  
and ADEGA DO CARTAXO.

## PROGRAMA

### 27 TH THURSDAY / DIA 27 TERÇA-FEIRA

8h30 / 9h30 Registration / Recepção

9h30 / 10h00 OPENING SESSION / SESSÃO DE ABERTURA  
(Prof. Adelaide Serras, Prof. Isabel Fernandes e Prof. Luisa Flora) **ROOM/SALA: 2.13**

10h00 - 11h00 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA **ROOM/SALA: 2.13**  
José Ramos: "O Carro de Deus: metáforas cosmológicas de Deus"  
Chair/Mod.: Isabel Fernandes

11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café

11h30 - 13h00 SESSION 1 / SESSÃO 1

**1A - ROOM / SALA 2.13**  
Session/Sessão: Alternative Spaces, Fiction and History / Espaços Alternativos, Ficção e História  
Chair/Moderador: Nuno Simões Rodrigues  
Todos embalados por máquinas de amorosa graça - a ecologia cibernética de Richard Brautigan (Nuno Marques, FLUL)  
"News from Nowhere": Para uma geneologia dos Espaços Alternativos antes do Cyberpunk (Jorge Martins Rosa, FCSH/CECL)  
Stargate: Vagamente um Deserto Egípcio (Luís Araújo, FLUL/CH)

**1B - VIDEO ROOM / SALA DE VÍDEO**  
Session/Sessão: Philosophy and Fantastic Worlds/Filosofia e Mundos Fantásticos  
Chair/Moderador: Cátia Marques  
A Anestesia do Corpo no Sentir da Técnica (Igor Furão, FLUL/CEC)  
L'Amore Forte Forte: O Cântico da Montanha na Vacuidade do Desejo (Gilda Nunes Barata, FLUL/CF)  
Fantasmas do Desassossego: Dimensões Improváveis do Fantástico em António Tabucchi (Suzana Ramos, FLUL/ULICES)

**1C - ROOM / SALA D. PEDRO V**  
Session/Sessão: Mystery, Fantasy and Sci-fi/Mistério, Fantasia e Ficção Científica  
Chair/Moderador: Duarte Patarra  
Ana Teresa Pereira e os filmes (d)escritos: *Nightmare* (1947), de Alfred Hitchcock, e *The Double* (1982), de David Cronenberg (Amândio Reis, FLUL/CEC)  
*O Sentido Latente*: Entre Ficção Científica e a Detectivesca (Maria João Terenas, FLUL)  
Porque gosto tanto do *Blade Runner*? Uma abordagem sinestésica (Nuno Neves, FLUL)

13h00 – 14h30 LUNCH BREAK/PAUSA PARA ALMOÇO

14h30 - 16h00 SESSION 2 / SESSÃO 2

**2A - ROOM/SALA 2.13**  
Session/Sessão: Vampire(s), Horror and The Others/Vampiros, Horror e Os Outros  
Chair/Moderador: Milan Jovanovi  
Volúpia Vampírica - O Vampiro enquanto revelador da sexualidade "desviante" (Cátia Marques, FLUL)  
De Woman an Alien: o papel e a função da mulher na exploração no Espaço (João Barreiras, FLUL/ULICES)  
"From earth to space and back again": (re)con figurações da imagem do extraterrestre enquanto vampiro (ou vice-versa) na lit. e no cinema de FC (Ricardo Barata, FLUL)

**23 - VIDEO ROOM/SALA DE VÍDEO**  
Session/Sessão: Sci-fi, Fantasy & Theory/FC, Fantasia e Teoria  
Chair/Moderador: Ana Daniela Coelho  
Towards a Post-Gender World: Transcending the Gender Binary in Science Fiction (Anamarija Šporcic, Univ. Ljubljana)  
Reading books as spaces - Heterotopias against techno-scientific determinism (Daniel Cardoso, FCSH/ECAT)  
Flights of the Fantastic: Mark Strand and the Engendering of Belatedness (Jeffrey Childs, Univ. Aberta/CEC)

16h00 - 16h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café

16h30 - 17h30 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA **ROOM/SALA: 2.13**  
Adelaide Serras: "Dystopia: Denunciation of Sci-Fi Original Sin"  
Chair/Mod.: Luisa Flora

17h45 - 19h00 FILM SCREENING / FILME White Scripts and Black Masculinities, Jonathan Gayles  
Chair/Mod.: Mónica Paiva **VIDEO ROOM/SALA DE VÍDEO**

### 28 TH WEDNESDAY / DIA 28 QUARTA-FEIRA

9h00 Registration / Recepção

10h00 / 11h00 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA **ROOM/SALA ANF. III**  
José Croca: "Space and Chronological Time: Do they really Exist? (as fundamental categories of our understanding)"  
Chair/Mod.: Angélica Varandas

11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café

11h30 - 13h00 SESSION 3 / SESSÃO 3

**3A - ROOM/SALA ANF. III**  
Session / Sessão: Fantastic Heroes on Screen / Heróis Fantásticos no Ecrã  
Chair/Moderador: Catarina Xavier  
"She saved the world. A lot.": The Medieval Hero-Knight in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Ana Rita Martins, FLUL/ULICES)  
*Doctor Who* in the 21st century (Luís Silveiro, FLUL)

**33 - ROOM/SALA 5.2**  
Session/Sessão: Fantastic Universes /Universos Fantásticos  
Chair/Moderador: Teresa Casal  
Do Chaos e do Cosmos: Para uma Ideia de Continuum civilizacional na *Guerra das Estrelas* (José Varandas, FLUL/CH)  
A Civilização Maia em Vários Formatos. A História Revisitada ou Inventada? (Miguel Pimenta-Silva, FLUL/CH)  
Knock, knock! / Who's there? / It's the Doctor / Doctor Who? - A apresentação de um Herói (Mónica Paiva, FLUL)

13h00 – 14h30 LUNCH BREAK/PAUSA PARA ALMOÇO

14h30 - 16h00 SESSION 4 / SESSÃO 4

**4A - ROOM/SALA ANF. III**  
Session/Sessão: Fiction and Identity in Alternative Worlds Ficção e Identidade em Mundos Alternativos  
Chair/Moderador: Teresa Alves  
Doubling in the Fantasy Works of Patricia McKillip (Audrey Taylor, Middlesex Univ.)  
"The Tale of the Three Brothers" by J.K. Rowling - conquering Death and lusting for power (Iolanda Zorro, FLUL/ULICES)  
A Little White Bird (1902) by J.M. Barrie or the impossible birth of Peter Pan (Marijke Boucherie, FLUL/ULICES)

**43 - ROOM/SALA 5.2**  
Session/Sessão: Hubris, Nemesis, Catharsis – The Road to Redemption  
Chair/Moderador: Carlos Gouveia  
Paul Auster's In the Country of Last Things. Hubris before the Fall (Maria Luísa Falcão, FLUL/ULICES)  
In the country of void and shadows. Cormac McCarthy's The Road: Nemesis before Hope (Maria de Jesus Relvas, Univ. Aberta/ULICES)  
The Tree of Life. Art as a Road to Catharsis and Hope (Maria Emília Fonseca, FLUL/ULICES)

**4C - ROOM/SALA 2.13**  
Session/Sessão: Sci-fi, emotions & technology/FC, emoções e tecnologia  
Chair/Moderador: Cecília Beecher Martins  
Being techno-human: Rosa Montero's Lágrimas en la Lluvia (Ângela Fernandes, FLUL/CEC)  
Paul Scheerbart: *Cooling down Emotions On Foreign Planets* (Gerd Hammer, FLUL/CEC)  
Aliens for Friends (Nandita Roy, Univ. of Mumbai)

16h00 - 16h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café

16h30 - 17h30 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA **ROOM/SALA ANF. III**  
James Walters: "Performance and Fantasy Cinema"  
Chair/Mod.: Ana Daniela Coelho

17h45 - 19h00 ROUND TABLE / MESA REDONDA  
"Lisboa pela Máquina do Tempo" com João Barreiros, Luís Sequeira, Octávio dos Santos e Patrícia Reis  
Chair/Mod.: Luís Filipe Silva **ROOM/SALA: ANF. III**

## 29 TH THURSDAY / DIA 29 QUINTA-FEIRA

9h00 Registration / Recepção		
10h00 - 11h00 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA <b>ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Helder Coelho: "AI Goes to the Movies" Chair/Mod.: Adelaide Serras		
11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café		
11h30 - 13h00 SESSION 5 / SESSÃO 5		
<p><b>5A - ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Session/Sessão: Science and Sci-fi / Ciência e FC Chair/Moderador: Júlio Carlos Viana Ferreira</p> <p>"Is science nearing its limits?". An old question in a new society? (Alcinda Pinheiro de Sousa, FLUL/ULICES)</p> <p>From Fantasy to reality: from dystopia to utopia - a reading of A Piece of Wood by Ray Bradbury (Ana Sernadas, E. Sargentos Exército)</p> <p>Blurring boundaries between gothic and science fiction: Ray Bradbury's "The Veldt" and "Zero Hour" (Luísa Feneja, ISLA/ULICES)</p>	<p><b>5B - ROOM/SALA 5.2</b> Session/Sessão: Cinema and Sci-fi/Cinema e FC Chair/Moderador: Teresa Malafaia</p> <p>Some notes on the Nature of Images - Chris Marker, <i>La Jetée</i> (1962) (Mário Avelar, Univ. Aberta/IHA, ULICES)</p> <p>Mars Attacks?: <i>The War of the Worlds</i> (1952) after Wells and Welle (Mário Jorge Torres, FLUL/CEC)</p>	<p><b>5C - ROOM/SALA 2.13</b> Session/Sessão: Fantasy Worlds at the Movies / Mundos Fantásticos no Cinema Chair/Moderador: John Elliot</p> <p>Tim Burton no País das Maravilhas (Elsa Childs, FLUL)</p> <p><i>A herança romântica de Nosferatu</i> (José Bártolo, FLUL/CEC)</p> <p>Harry Potter e As Crônicas de Nárnia: heróis fantásticos na tela (Miguel Ângelo Rodrigues, FLUL/ULICES)</p>
13h00 – 14h30 LUNCH BREAK/PAUSA PARA ALMOÇO		
14h30 - 16h00 SESSION 6 / SESSÃO 6		
<p><b>6A - ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Session/Sessão: The fantastic World through Comics and Books/ O Mundo fantástico através de livros e B.D. Chair/Moderador: Alcinda Pinheiro de Sousa</p> <p>What if Donald had never existed? An alternative fantasy world in Don Rosa's comic "The Duck who never was" (Katja Kontturi, U. Jyväskylä)</p> <p>When reality fails: questions of space and place in C.L. Moore's "Scarlet Dream" (Leila Soikkonen, Åbo Akademi University)</p> <p>Anglo-Saxon Death Rituals in Comics (Luísa Aзуага, FLUL/ULICES)</p>	<p><b>6B - ROOM/SALA 5.2</b> Session/Sessão: Fantasy in Literature and Cinema/Fantasia na Literatura e Cinema Chair/Moderador: Isabel Barbudo</p> <p>Condensing an entire universe: Cinematic trailers for J.R.R. Tolkien's adaptations (Ana Daniela Coelho, FLUL/ULICES)</p> <p>Abducted Villainesses: The amalgamation of Cersei Lannister in The Song of Ice and Fire (Charul Patel, University of Lancaster)</p> <p>Walking the wildlands of the Mind: High Fantasy's Dual Journeys (Karen Nikakis, NMIT)</p>	<p><b>6C - ROOM/SALA 2.13</b> Session/Sessão: Myth, History and Fantasy / Mito, História e Fantasia Chair/Moderador: Angélica Varandas</p> <p>De Reis e de Reinos. A Espada Medieval: Símbolo, Poder e Mito (Inês Meira Araújo, FLUL/CH)</p> <p>As espadas de Westeros: o legado das espadas medievais em As Crônicas de Gelo e Fogo (Diana Marques, FLUL)</p> <p>E Tolkien criou o Mundo... (Pedro Barbosa, FLUL)</p>
16h00 - 16h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café		
16h30 - 17h30 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA <b>ROOM/SALA ANF. II</b> Jonathan Stroud: "Letting the Djinni out of the Bottle: Writing Fantasy for Children" Chair/Mod.: José Duarte a		
17h45 - 18h30 ROUND TABLE / MESA REDONDA "O Universo aos Quadrinhos" com Fil, Miguel Montenegro e Victor Mesquita Chair/Mod.: Pedro Moura <b>ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b>		
20h00 CONFERENCE DINNER / JANTAR DO COLÓQUIO		

## 30 TH FRIDAY / DIA 28 SEXTA-FEIRA

9h00 Registration / Recepção		
10h00 - 11h00 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA <b>ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Adam Roberts: "SF and Laughter" Chair/Mod.: Teresa Cid		
11h00 - 11h30 Coffee break / Pausa para café		
11h30 - 13h00 SESSION 7 / SESSÃO 7		
<p><b>7A - ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Session/Sessão: Sci-fi and Ecology/FC e Ecologia Chair/Moderador: Isabel Mealha</p> <p>No longer of Woman Born: Early Visions of Ectogenesis (Aline Ferreira, Univ. Aveiro/CETAPS)</p> <p>Nature Abused - Monstrosity in Ecological Perspective in Dawn Land by Joseph Bruchac (1993, 2010) (Ewelina Nowacka, U. Wroctaw)</p> <p>Ecological Emphasis in Risto Isomäki's Science Fiction (Markku Soikkeli, Univ. Of Tampere)</p>	<p><b>7B - ROOM/SALA 5.2</b> Session/Sessão: Portugal, Fantasy and Sci-fi/Portugal, Fantástico e Ficção Científica Chair/Moderador: Eduarda Cabrita</p> <p>As Quatro Mensagens das Minhas Estrelas (António de Macedo, FSCH)</p> <p>O Espelho Diabólico: Incidência do Fantástico n'0 Físico Prodigioso, de Jorge de Sena (Jorge Martins Trindade, ESCS)</p> <p>Portugal pertence ao Futuro/o Futuro inclui Portugal? Breves visões sobre Portugais futuristas ditados pela Ficção Científica portuguesa (Luís Filipe Silva)</p>	<p><b>7C - ROOM/SALA 2.13</b> Session/Sessão: Fantasy, Sci-fi, Identity and History/ Fantasia, FC, Identidade e História Chair/Moderador: Marijke Boucherie</p> <p>A.S. Byatt in Wonderland: 'The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye' or the female Aladdin (Alexandra Cheira, FLUL/ULICES)</p> <p><i>Reframing the Cold War: Indiana Jones in the 21st Century</i> (Fran Pheasant-Kelly, Univ. Of Wolverhampton)</p> <p>Running on Blades - On film adaptation, Through the Lens of Translation Studies (Paulo Furtado, ISLA/FLUP)</p>
13h00 – 14h30 LUNCH BREAK/PAUSA PARA ALMOÇO		
14h30 - 15h30 PLENARY / SESSÃO PLENÁRIA <b>ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Rui Prada: "Videogames as Science Fiction and Fantasy. A Place for Synthetic Characters" Chair/Mod.: Rita Martins		
15h45 - 16h45 SESSION 8 / SESSÃO 8		
<p><b>8A - ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b> Session/Sessão: Place, Fantasy and Sci-Fi/Lugar, Fantasia e FC Chair/Moderador: Igor Furão</p> <p>Searching for the stars: is there a place for SciFi in the collections of the FLUL Library? (Pedro Estácio, FLUL/ULICES)</p> <p>Wounded worlds within our world (Teresa Malafaia, FLUL/ULICES)</p>	<p><b>8B - ROOM/SALA 5.2</b> Session/Sessão: (Post-) Apocalyptic Worlds/Mundos (Pós-) Apocalípticos Chair/Moderador: Luísa Aзуага</p> <p>"You guys getting hungry?" On Leviathans, Consumption and American Politics in Supernatural (season 7) (Angélica Varandas FLUL/ULICES)</p> <p>They're heading West: (Post) Apocalyptic Visions on the road (José Duarte, FLUL/ULICES)</p>	<p><b>8C - ROOM/SALA 2.13</b> Session/Sessão: Vampire Fiction/ Ficção Vampírica Chair/Moderador: José Varandas</p> <p>It's Dracula's Nightout (Mick Greer, FLUL/CET)</p> <p>Who's afraid of Vampire Wolf?: Unearthing the blood-sucking, shape-shifting "Serbian brand" (Milan Jovanovic, FLUL/ULICES)</p>
17h00 - 17h30 Book Launching Messengers from the Stars / Lançamento do Livro Mensageiros das Estrelas <b>ROOM/SALA ANF. III</b>		
17h30 - 18h00 CLOSING SESSION WITH PORT WINE TOAST/ SESSÃO DE ENCERRAMENTO COM PORTO DE HONRA		

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS / ORADORES PRINCIPAIS

**JOSÉ AUGUSTO M. RAMOS**

O Carro das Nuvens: metáforas cosmológicas de Deus  
FLUL / CH

Na definição de um tipo específico de divindade, ao longo de toda a margem oriental do Mediterrâneo, são particularmente pitorescas e marcantes as expressões metafóricas relacionadas com aspectos meteorológicos e cosmológicos, traduzidos na imagem de um carro astral em que nuvens, ventos e outros elementos oferecem material metafórico, cujo significado e eficácia incidem em semânticas ligadas com a meteorologia, a ordem cósmica, o papel da realeza messiânica no governo das sociedades e com os mais variados matizes de teologia e de mística.

ADELAIDE MEIRA SERRAS

Dystopia: The Denunciation of Science Fiction Original Sin  
FLUL / ULICES

Utopia is briefly defined as the description of an ideal society, composed of variable factors according to the author's imagination and the contemporaneous issues he believes must be solved or improved in order to live happily. Dystopia, as the other side of the coin, is currently known as the illustration of a nefarious reality, probably derived from specific circumstances: an oppressive political regime, natural catastrophes dooming humankind's fate, the aftermath of a war or some kind of military coup, or even any human misdeed. Dystopia, while displaying an alternative reality, is a step ahead insofar it aims to warn its readers of the results of a foreseeable action.

Time and time again science fiction writing has offered us figments of imagined scientific theories and correspondent devices, or alerted to possible changes in either the human beings themselves and/or their way of living, or alterations in the surrounding environment. It plays with scientific research without the scientist's actual responsibility. Usually, it works as a pretend game; sometimes it may offer a scientist's hypothesis yet unconfirmed, or his/her way of explaining a difficult theory or discovery to the lay public. Whatever the motive underlying the sci-fi work, it always bears a creative drive, the notion of human ability to achieve a higher level of knowledge and performance while inter-acting with the world.

This paper aims to explore the conjunction of science fiction and dystopia, bearing in mind the mistrusting, negative perspective of the latter against the seminal optimism of the former. The amount of written works, movies and TV serials produced in this and the previous century is more than enough to support this approach. However, this paper will not refer to this body of work, but will build up its argument based on nineteenth-century Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* in order to show the prevailing nature of the disenchanted, or frightened, evaluation of the so called scientific and technological progress throughout sci-fi dystopian narratives.

JOSÉ CROCA

Space and Chronological Time: Do they really Exist?  
(as fundamental categories of our understanding)  
FCUL

A brief voyage to the vanguard of science shall be proposed where we shall see that, more than once, Reality goes far beyond our more bold speculations and dreams the most daring they may ever be. In this trip, we shall see some examples taken from science fiction followed by a short presentation of Nonlinear Complex New Physics the Eurhythmic Physics, and of the Physics of Becoming, the physics beyond space and chronological time. The seemingly strange quantum tunneling effect shall be discussed, namely its actual practical technological applications and even more important the fact that this extraordinary effect opens the doors for a true physics beyond space and chronological time.

## JAMES WALTERS

'Performance and Fantasy Cinema'  
University of Birmingham

In the British television comedy series *Extras*, Sir Ian McKellen famously explains to a bemused Andy Millman (Ricky Gervais) that, unlike Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, he is not really a wizard. He merely pretends to be a wizard, and that is 'acting'. The comic simplicity of McKellen's words is expertly judged, but his self-parody also raises more sincere concerns regarding our understanding of performance in fantasy films. Knowing that actors including McKellen, Sir Patrick Stewart and Dame Maggie Smith balance more 'serious' work (in film, television and theatre) with their fantasy film output, might we suspect that the matter could be as straightforward as McKellen's tongue-in-cheek account suggests: just unsophisticated pretence? How can we appreciate fantasy performances alongside other genres of cinema when, for example, traditional claims for authenticity and realism can become so problematic? What criteria can be found for evaluating achievement in fantasy acting, and how might it be usefully applied to specific cases? How does performance contribute to our involvement with or immersion in fantasy cinema? And how does the relatively low status of performance in fantasy film relate to the critical reputation of that genre itself?

This paper debates questions of this kind through a series of illustrated examples. Taking as a starting point the fact that performance in fantasy film is not an over-debated area of film studies, I attempt to sketch out some ways in which we might usefully approach the issue and, in turn, how this might lead to a more defined appreciation of the fantasy film genre. As part of this discussion, I address the relationship of performance in fantasy to taste-based notions of high and low art. Perhaps most importantly, I want to suggest that performance is a central and significant pleasure of fantasy cinema, a key facet to our engagement with fictional realities onscreen.

## HÉLDER COELHO

AI Goes to the Movies  
FCUL / AE / ECCAI

In the last three decades, IT technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Computer Graphics and Digital Imaging, start transforming the way of doing entertainment (cinema and computer games). *The Lord of the Rings* and *Avatar 3D* are two good examples, where intelligence was inserted in the artificial actors, the environments, the camera and even the film system, attracting more moviegoers and exciting audiences with special visual effects and magic. In this talk, we focus the great transformations and the role of AI to bring a virtual world (animals, characters, and landscapes) to life on the screen.

## JONATHAN STROUD

### Letting the Djinni out of the Bottle: Writing Fantasy for Children

In recent years, Children's Fantasy fiction has seemed all-conquering. Series such as Harry Potter, His Dark Materials and The Hunger Games have achieved huge international success, and been transformed effortlessly into comics, games and movies. But why does Children's Fantasy have this cultural power, and what relevance does it have to the modern world? Is it mere escapism, or does it reflect a deeper and more essential truth about our societies and the individual's place in them? In this lecture Jonathan Stroud, author of the bestselling Bartimaeus Sequence, gives a personal response to these questions. Beginning with homemade stories he wrote as a child, and taking in inspirations as various as Beowulf, R L Stevenson, Tolkien and Diana Wynne Jones, he considers the special rewards and particular problems of working in this genre, and discusses its ongoing importance to our literature.

## ADAM ROBERTS

### SF and Laughter Royal Holloway, University of London

SF, as a mode, eludes precise definition; laughter—as an empirical fact of human existence—has yet to be comprehensively explained. The two things might seem unrelated, except in a few, marginal instances where writers have attempted to produce 'funny SF'. But I intend to argue that, counter-intuitively, science fiction and laughter are the same thing. Science fiction is a metaphorical literature, one that aims to represent the world without reproducing it. Its relationship to reality is ironic rather than mimetic. These two formal principles also structure the logic of laughter—structurally metaphorical in terms of being a conceptual knight's move, a joyful wrong-footing, and ironic in terms of its profound, liberating unseriousness. The metaphor that is central to SF (often formalised: the spaceship; the robot; the time-machine; sometimes not) determines a mode built around the eloquence of the image, often oblique, fascinated with transcendence (the sense of wonder; the motion up from reality into higher reality, as at the conclusion of *Childhood's End*; the apocalyptic sublime, as in the 'Nine Billion Names'), and at its best actively corrosive of reality (Philip K Dick). It is, to use Jakobson's terminology, a literature that uses metonymic extrapolation from the everyday in order to enable radically disconnected (transcendent) metaphoric effects. And the currency of that transcendence is a joy.

RUI PRADA

Videogames as Science Fiction and Fantasy.  
A Place for Synthetic Characters.  
IST-UTL / INESC

Videogames are a new media for science fiction and fantasy. In videogames players often experience fantasy worlds where they explore different places, play with strange gadgets and meet people of imaginary races. Videogames are also communication artifacts that can offer narrative experiences that give coherence and meaning to everything the players can do. The main advantage of videogames is the fact that they foster players' agency, given them choices and putting them in the centre of the action. This, usually, enhances the emotional impact of the whole experience.

As mentioned before, players may meet other people while playing a videogame. These can be other players but also synthetic characters driven by Artificial Intelligence. To build such characters is still a main research challenge, because to perform well these characters must be believable and display human-like behaviour. This means that the synthetic characters need to display human qualities, such as, affective behaviour and cognitive social skills to understand identity and moral values.

JONATHAN GAYLES

Film Screening "White Scripts and Black Supermen:  
Black Masculinities in Comic Books"  
Georgia State University

As a young boy, the filmmaker loved comic books and the escape that they provided. However, as a young BLACK boy, his ability to truly escape was limited by the fact that many of the heroes were White. This documentary critically examines the earliest representations (1965-1977) of Black masculinity in comic books and the troubling influence of race on these representations. Within the last several years, many scholars have critically engaged comic books as a legitimate source of scholarly interest and critique. Indeed, comic books represent a genre within popular culture that is older than the television. Thinking critically about the manner in which Black men were first portrayed in hero serials provides insight into broader societal conceptions of the Black man as character, archetype and symbol. Through interviews with prominent artists, scholars and cultural critics along with images from the comic books themselves, it becomes clear that the Black superheroes that did eventually emerge are generally constrained by stereotypical understandings of Black people and Black men in particular. From the humorous, to the offensive, to the tragic, early Black superheroes never strayed too far from common stereotypes about Black men.

The documentary addresses more than forty years of representation of Black men in comic books. The characters included in the documentary are as follows: Lothar (First appearance in 1934), Whitewash Jones (First appearance in 1941), Waku, Prince of the Bantu (First appearance in 1954), Gabriel Jones (First appearance in 1963), The Black Panther (First appearance in 1966), The Falcon (First appearance in 1969), John Stewart (First appearance in 1971), Luke Cage (First appearance in 1972), Tyroc (First appearance in 1976) and Black Lightning (First appearance in 1977).

The documentary addresses the following topics within the broader theme

- A general history of early Black male superheroes
- The manner in which these characters are generally constrained to the “ghetto”
- Evidence of the “Black Buck” stereotype
- The manner in which their powers are limited and qualified in comparison to White heroes
- The influence of Blaxploitation films on these representations
- The impact of racism, racial thinking on the publishing and distribution of titles featuring Black heroes
- The influence of ethnicity on the creation of superhero characters
- The distinction between African and African-American representations of Black superheroes

## ALEXANDRA CHEIRA

### A.S. Byatt in Wonderland: 'The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye' or the female Aladdin FLUL / ULICES

A.S. Byatt's story is about a female narratologist, Gillian Perholt (wink to the famous French fairy-tale writer Perrault) who is going through a midlife crisis sparked by the fact that her husband has left her for a much younger woman. However, from storyteller in a conference in Turkey she will become the heroine of an Arabian wonder tale of her own, complete with a djinn (genie) in a nightingale's eye (a Venetian glass bottle) who will grant her three wishes: first she wishes for her body to be like it was when she last really liked it; then she wishes the genie would love her; and finally... you'll have to read it to find out. Gillian Perholt is thus a female Aladdin who rewrites her male predecessor's story by asking quite for quite different things and partly Scheherazade as she tells and explains tales, but she is also a real woman.

Both ancient and modern, spiced with references from *A Thousand and One Nights* and flavoured with Byatt's own recurrent leit-motifs such as the (apparent) dichotomy between ice and fire and their relation to glass or the symbolic use of colours, 'The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye' captures the texture of the Arabian story while creating a whole new world. Part realist story, part wonder tale, this is indeed a tale which escapes categorization: in this paper, I argue that Byatt writes an old-new tale in a an old-new style by artfully intertwining realism and fantasy.