



Goat Droppings

The Official Newsletter of
Phandemonium / Capricon 41
Collector's Edition

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CAPRICON 42
February 3-6, 2022

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Interview with the GoH: Aliette de Bodard

Q: At some point, we will be able to travel again. What should we come see in Paris and why?

A: The food! I hope that restaurants are in a better position than they are now (the pandemic has hit them hard), but we have a lot of different and very nice food places, including killer Vietnamese food.

Q: What is the last show that you binge watched and loved?

A: I believe it was *The Witcher*--which was a really fun fantasy show that also did a number of really interesting things. I really loved how it put together all of its different throughlines and the way they all came together at the end.

Q: Describe a snapshot of an ordinary moment of your life that brings you true joy.

A: Making some tea in the kitchen--the ritual of weighing the tea while looking up how to properly brew it in my reference book, of heating up the water, the beeping sound of the kettle followed by the brewing time--and that rich colour of the brew in my cup and the taste in my mouth...

Q: Hugo nominations are open. What is one thing from 2020 that you were not involved in creating that you would put on your ballot?

A: Nghi Vo's *When the Tiger Came Down the Mountain*, which is powerful merging of a sapphic love story with the fairytales my bà ngoại told me as a child.

Q: What inspired your most recent moment of gratitude?

A: The support of the community when I recently announced my divorce.

Q: Name two songs that are really important to you.

A: Bat for Lashes' "Laura", and Khổng Tú Quỳnh's & Tonny Việt's "Lạnh"

Q: Our theme is "Creating the Future We Want". What is one thing you most want in your future?

A: For us to practise more compassion (which doesn't mean doormat kindness).

Q: Sock sock shoe shoe, or sock shoe sock shoe?

A: I don't have a strong opinion!

Interview with the GoT: John Jennings

Q: At some point, we will be able to travel again. Where is the first place you will go and why?

A: I'm torn, actually. My sister passed away suddenly from a heart attack in July and, because of COVID-19, I could not make it to Mississippi to see her laid to rest. I want to go visit her grave site. However, my wife is from Chicago and I love that city and her family. So, I'd say first Chicago with a possible train ride down to Port Gibson, Mississippi.

Q: What is the last book you could not put down because it was so good?

A: I think it was WONDER WOMAN: DEAD EARTH? It's just so good!! The other thing wasn't actually a book but it's about to be. It was a script by Ytasha Womack called Blak Kube. It's going to be a new graphic novel we are doing for my graphic novel line.

Q: Describe a snapshot of an ordinary moment of your life that brings you true joy.

A: My son does this thing every day when I'm feeding him. He grabs my left hand with both of his and he makes me lay it flat. Then he lays his cheek on my hand for like 30 seconds. It's just so amazingly sweet and loving. It's the best thing of the day.

Q: Hugo nominations are open. What is one thing from 2020 that you were not involved in creating that you would put on your ballot?

A: Immortal Hulk! I think that book is just an amazing example of how to take a well-worn science-fiction pulp character trope and breathe new life into it. It's one of the only comics I buy on a monthly basis.

Q: What inspired your most recent moment of gratitude?

A: My wife bought me tacos today for lunch from my favorite restaurant for no particular reason. Those tacos were so good!

Q: Name two songs that are really important to you.

A: "I Believe When I Fall In Love This Time It Will Be Forever" by Stevie Wonder and "Choose Me" by James Blake

Q: Our theme is "Creating the Future We Want". What is one thing you most want in your future?

A: More future. I just turned 50 and my wife and I just had a son 19 months ago. I really want someone to go ahead and either crack the genetic code to extend our lives or figure some other life hack out so I can meet my grandkids one day.

Q: Sock sock shoe shoe, or sock shoe sock shoe?

A: Sock sock, Shoe Shoe! Right one first though!

Interview with the GoT: Dr. Cacophonie Tamayo

Q: At some point, we will be able to travel again. Where is the first place you will go and why?

A: I want to visit all my friends near and far. I've missed them terribly and I just want to hug them.

Most memorable concert you've attended?

A: Oh there's so many! I guess one of my favorites was a Halloween Children's Concert put on by University of Louisville students a long long time ago. It was so fun, they played so many halloween-themed pieces from classical and popular styles. My favorite moment was when they performed Thriller, and they actually had folx in costume rise up from the orchestra pit. For kid Cacophonie, this was a dream come true!

Q: Describe a snapshot of an ordinary moment of your life that brings you true joy.

A: I love sitting on our couch in our living room/common area. (By the way, our home is called the Bard's Guild because we all love playing video games and making music.) I live with my amazing family and am surrounded by my fur babies (5 cats and 1 Husky pup). We'll have game nights in the living room, or we'll just lounge around reading, playing video games, napping, etc. It helps that our fur babies are very cuddly.

Q: What inspired your most recent moment of gratitude?

A: I have Complex PTSD and suffer from vivid dreams and nightmares. It's something I'm working through in therapy. But recently, I had a dream about my father where he was healthy and himself. It was beautiful to see him again and hear his voice, even if it was a dream. My father, a retired psychologist, declined with dementia for nearly a decade and passed away in 2018.

Q: Name two songs that are really important to you.

A: Let it Be, which I played at my father's funeral. The Final Lullaby, which is from Nic Masangkay's album entitled Dark At Dusk

Q: Our theme is "Creating the Future We Want". What is one thing you most want in your future?

A: Safety. I want people to feel safe being who they are. I want them to be able to walk down the street, go to school, gather with friends and family, etc. and feel safe. I want BIPOC, queer, trans, disabled, and marginalized folx to feel safe, welcome, and loved in this society.

Q: Sock sock shoe shoe, or sock shoe sock shoe?

A: I'm not particularly fond of wearing socks or shoes. If I have to wear shoes, it's "Sock Sock Shoe Shoe".....that is if my husky pup, Marsh the Mellow, let's me get any of them on my feet.

Interview with the GoH: Michi Trota

Q: At some point, we will be able to go out to dinner with a big group of friends. What restaurant in Chicago should we go to first and why?

A: Alas! My favorite go-to spot Isla Pilipina in Lincoln Sq. closed last spring. So my alternate for a big group of friends would be to go for a fancy meal at Sepia in the West Loop by Ogilvie Station. The food is phenomenal, creative, seasonal, and the chefs can usually accommodate dietary restrictions with advance notice (I always make reservations). The decor has lots of rich velvet fabrics, smokey glass and metal, exposed brick and timber, and it feels a bit like steampunk-mod. Also the house mixologists are magicians with both alcoholic and non alcoholic cocktails.

Q: What is the last show that you binge watched and loved?

A: My friend Karlyn recommended HILDA on Netflix awhile back and I've now binged both seasons of 13 half-hour episodes and am dying for the next installment. It's an animated show that is appropriate for and geared toward children, but the characters are engaging and charming, and the stories are surprisingly layered and complex with a lot to appeal to adults. It's set in a world that evokes modern day Scandinavia, where magic and science coexist and the main inhabitants are humans (some of whom are witches), animals, and spirits (magical beings). A young adventurous girl named Hilda, her pet deerfox Twig, and her mom move from their home in the woods to the city of Trolberg, where Hilda makes friends with other kids, spirits, and even monsters. There's some very sophisticated storytelling that imparts lessons about trust, learning from mistakes, and accepting consequences, without feeling overly saccharine. I'm nominating two episodes from season 2, which was released in 2020, for the Best Dramatic Presentation - Short Form Hugo Award: "The Windmill" and "The Fifty Year Night" the latter of which is one of the best time travel stories I've seen in a television show.

Q: Describe a snapshot of an ordinary moment of your life that brings you true joy.

A: For my 43rd birthday last week, I made French toast for "brinner" (breakfast for dinner) for myself and my husband Jesse, using a sourdough spelt loaf that I had baked earlier in the week (yes, I got on the "make my own sourdough starter" train last summer, best baking decision I've made in years). It was a simple mix: coconut milk, eggs, cardamom, sugar, cinnamon, whisky, but it had been years since I'd made French toast. So it made me really happy when Jesse took his first bites and actually said "YUM" out loud. Making food that makes other people happy is one of the greatest joys of my life and I miss cooking for my friends.

Q: Hugo nominations are open. What is one thing from 2020 that you were not involved in creating that you would put on your ballot?

A: "Guagamela" from Season 5 of THE EXPANSE for Best Dramatic Presentation - Short Form. I can't say anything for fear of spoiling it but suffice to say it's beautifully paced, emotionally riveting, and

some of the best performances by the cast yet.

But I'd also be remiss if I didn't mention that *The WisCon Chronicles: Vol. 12 Boundaries and Bridges* (Aqueduct Press) which I co-edited with Isabel Schechter, is also eligible for Best Related Work. It's the first book I've ever published and I'm really proud of what Isabel and I were able to create, and thankful to all the writers who contributed brilliant essays to the collection.

Q: What inspired your most recent moment of gratitude?

A: I was having a very bad day last week -- after a year of the pandemic, Trump's presidency, the election, and insurrection, depression and anxiety has been a real struggle, and my concentration and bandwidth have essentially disintegrated. I am very lucky I have my husband and friends who I could ask for support and to talk me through feeling terrible about myself, and I'm immensely grateful for their presence in my life.

Q: Name two songs that are really important to you.

A: 1) "Us" (featuring Rocky Rivera, Klassy, and Faith Santilla) by Ruby Ibarra / 2) "It's My Life" Bon Jovi

Q: Our theme is "Creating the Future We Want". What is one thing you most want in your future?

A: Being able to balance work, relationships, time for play, and time for rest. I love what I do and I'd love to be able to do it for a very long time, and **not** burning the candle at multiple ends will make that more likely.

Also for Hardison, the 2.5yr old cat we adopted after the election to get along with our resident 6.5yr old cat Parker, who has been very hesitant to trust the new kitty, who of course, wants to be her new best buddy but isn't the best with learning boundaries. It's going well but very slow!

Q: Sock sock shoe shoe, or sock shoe sock shoe?

A: Sock sock shoe shoe.

We made a Spotify Playlist for Capricon 41! It features all the songs (except one) that our Guests of Honor said were important to them.

Capricon 41: Playlist of the GoHs:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/01loUHWaOvW8mnzDyB33m1?si=eiyCyXoJT3yY5-YkOLmqMg>

Bat for Lashes "Laura"

Khổng Tú Quỳnh & Tonny Việt "Lạnh" (not on Spotify)

Stevie Wonder "I Believe When I Fall In Love This Time It Will Be Forever"

James Blake "Choose Me"

The Beatles "Let It Be"

Nic Masangkay "The Final Lullaby"

Ruby Ibarra "Us"

Bon Jovi "It's My Life"

Labrinth "Earthquake"

Aesop Rock "Button Masher"

Interview with the GOTT: Brandon O'Brien

Q: At some point, we will be able to travel again. What should we come see in Trinidad & Tobago, and why?

A: Carnival, of course! It's a beautiful celebration of Trinbagonian culture—our music, our dance, our colour, our history. Sadly, not being safe to share space has put a kind of damper on this year's festivities, but I get the feeling that once we can celebrate together again, it'll be more colourful than ever.

Q: What game have you played most recently that has wowed you?

A: I had the chance to finally play a game of *Thirsty Sword Lesbians* in mid-December, and it was really neat. It has such an interestingly thoughtful set of character playbooks where everyone's narrative flaws comes to the fore mechanically, and I enjoyed playing into that. If you're into tabletop RPGs with magical-girl flavour, I definitely recommend it.

Q: Describe a snapshot of an ordinary moment of your life that brings you true joy.

A: A warm cup of tea, my pencil, and a small Moleskine notebook that I got from a friend. When I want to detach from being overstimulated, I make sure to write poetry by hand, and especially lately I've needed that. Sometimes, I don't even write a poem—I just write anything. Jot down an idea for a story, or just the name of a character. Or just hold the pencil and wait. Perhaps the joy is simply that I'm attached to my tools. Just having my pencil feels good sometimes. Is that weird?

Q: Hugo nominations are open. What is one thing from 2020 that you were not involved in creating that you would put on your ballot?

A: I struggled to consume a lot of media in 2020, but of the things I did get to see, I have a lot of feelings about *Lovecraft Country*, especially episode 3, 'Holy Ghost'.

Q: What inspired your most recent moment of gratitude?

A: I'm grateful for a lot of poetry things! I have two poems in *Climbing Lightly Through Forests*, a collection of poetry in honour of Ursula K. Le Guin. I'm grateful to the editors of that anthology, R.B. Lemberg and Lisa M. Bradley, in part because they were a chance to view one of the genre's greatest voices not through the lens of the fantastic, but through faith—the first thing I'd ever read from Le Guin was her translation of the Tao Te Ching, which I thought was so poetic and complex when I came across it as a younger person. I'm also grateful to have my own book of poetry out soon, although I'm worried that if I don't stop thinking about it at some point, it'll never be actually finished!

Q: Name two songs that are really important to you.

A: One is definitely 'Earthquake' by Labrinth. I don't know why, but whenever I hear it, it sounds like the thing that plays in the background of the scene where the hero regains their resolve after a lapse of faith and gets back into the fight.

The other is definitely a song by Aesop Rock, but which one changes due to the circumstances. I idolize his rapping a lot—dense and colorful and not afraid to turn a simple moment into a delightful image. Right now that song is 'Button Masher', off his latest album, *Spirit World Field Guide*—it's such a committed use of imagery, and I dig it a lot.

Q: Our theme is "Creating the Future We Want". What is one thing you most want in your future?

A: That no one is an afterthought. That no one ever feels the need to say, "well, what was I supposed to do?" when they see someone else suffering something they shouldn't. That the barriers that have often been put up to keep us from seeing each other as colleagues in a common struggle to be happy are demolished, and we come together in that struggle and do the best we can.

Q: Sock sock shoe shoe, or sock shoe sock shoe?

A: Always both socks before both shoes. I've discovered that when you break that rhythm, bad things happen.



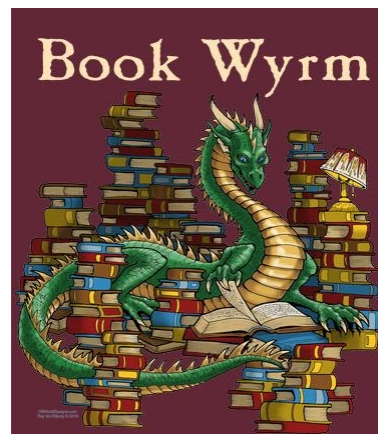
Phandemonium Bookclub

The Phandemonium Book Club meets virtually every 6 weeks (or so). Everyone is welcome to join us at our Zoom discussions!

The next Book Club will be on March 14, 2021 at 7pm Central time (note that Daylight Savings starts that day). We will be reading *Foundation* by Isaac Asimov.

For more information, contact David Hirsch (he/him) who manages the email list and FB messenger group. He can be reached via bookclub@capricon.org and he will add you to the list!

Also keep an eye on our Facebook and Twitter accounts which will also announce Bookclub information!



(Artwork by Ray VanTilburg of OffWorld Designs)

Out-of-Context

"Goat away! I knew what I was getting myself into." – MissThistle

"TIME ZONES ARE CANADA'S FAULT" – Liz

"Bort Bort!" – Eric

"We're getting into 'alien species profanity' territory here."
– TheConPirate

"I have spent the last 24 hours worried I was going to misuse a goat."
– Dave Hogg

"If anyone can kill someone with the power of her mind through the internet, my money's on her" – Helen Montgomery

"Bow to your fuzzy, adorable fate." - anonymous

"As an octopus person, I'm not too worried about that." - anonymous

"Ignorant characters are your salvation." – Benjamin C. Kinney

"You haven't truly lived unless you've sent a Chuck Tingle book cover to your entire work group." – Deanna Sjolander

"We don't see her juicing on the job." – Theresa Hahn

"I think the use of semicolons is just showing off." – David Hirsch

"If they're 'still edible' ... they were never truly food." – Theresa Hahn

"I wish there were bits of chocolate flinging at my window." – Robine

"I found the lack of planning for human foibles concerning."
– Kellswitch

"Will Villain for Library Access" – jjhunter

"But all your clones hate you and are judgmental of you"
– IrradiateSpace

"Microwave-ready Grad Students" – bartender_bot

"That's the yeah of deepness right there." – Tracy Townsend

"why would you drag your meetloof through the garden Hobbes"
– Tiana/Kishi

"But nothing will protect you from brunch. Except maybe squirrels."
– bartender_bot

"You might need to poke a bunch of goats." – Tammy Coxen



That's all folks! See you at
Capricon 42:
Rockin' In the Outer Realms!

Stay safe and Be Well!
Capricious and Crew

