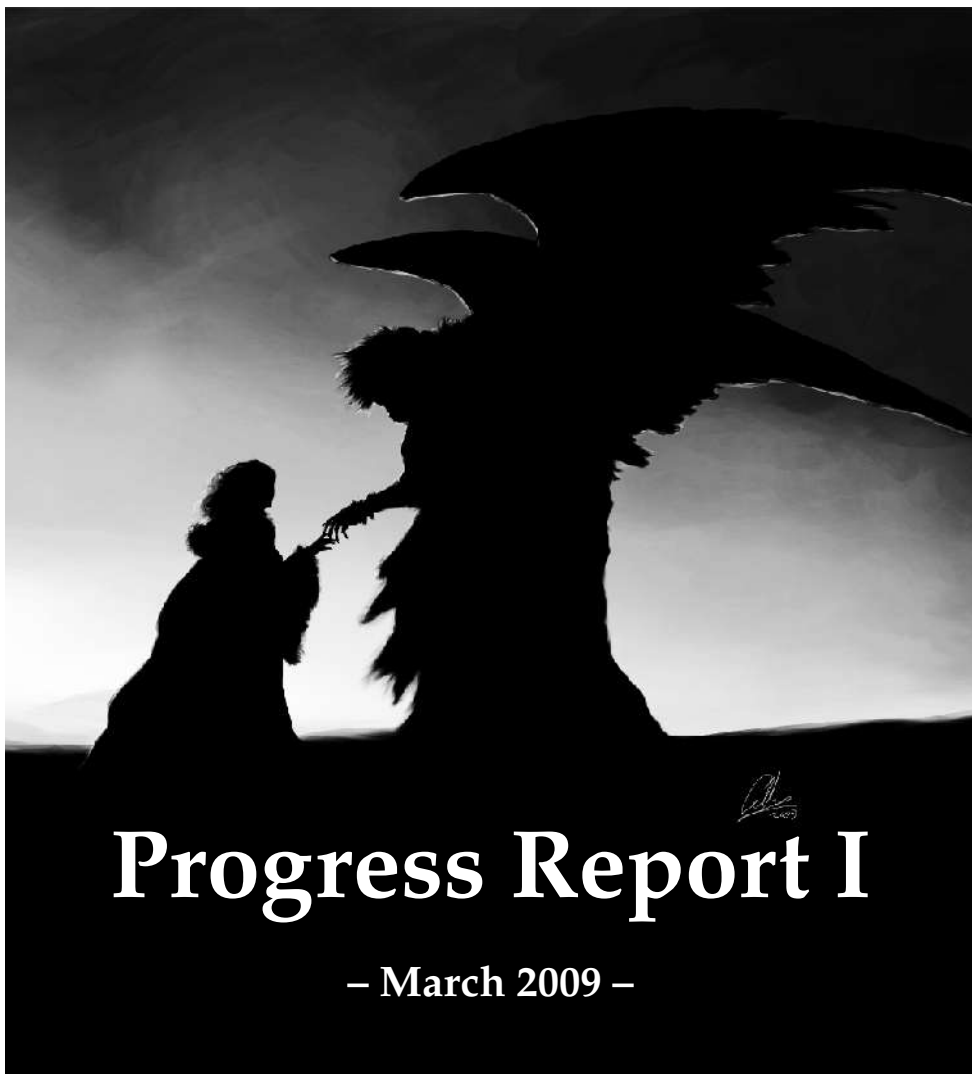


Au Contraire!



science fiction + fantasy + geekery

27-29 August 2010 at the Quality Hotel, Cuba St, Wellington



Welcome

This is the first progress report for Au Contraire, the 31st New Zealand National Science Fiction & Fantasy Convention (aka the NatCon). Plans are well under way for what we intend to be a fantastic weekend. Au Contraire is doing some things a little differently from previous conventions. Our focus is on active fandom – creating things for yourself, not just passively absorbing entertainment. That includes everything from posting Angel vids on youtube to knitting zerglings. We're also endeavouring to make the con as accessible as possible, including low membership rates (see the enclosed registration form or the web site). But as always, if you have any ideas for con events, let us know!

- the ConCom

FAQ

What is an SF convention, anyway?

Essentially it's a weekend long party for SF fans, geeks, and interesting people in general. It's not a commercial event like Armageddon; the focus is social rather than retail.

Multiple streams of events run throughout the con, dealing with every imaginable aspect of SF/F - panels, discussions, workshops, games, and so forth, with plenty of opportunity for active participation.

Will there be Guests of Honour?

Yes, but most likely not international guests. We've chosen to focus on the fans rather than big names, and staying affordable for everyone.

Can children attend?

The convention is open to all ages, but it is aimed at adults, and will feature language and concepts that may be considered unsuitable for kids. Young children must be supervised.

What are your contact details?

info@aucontraire.org.nz

<http://www.aucontraire.org.nz>

PO Box 10104, Wellington 6143, New Zealand

Competitions

Au Contraire is all about exercising your creativity, so our competitions are going to be big. Prizes are still to be finalised, but we promise they'll be well worth the effort of entering. Our first two competitions are now open; note the deadlines, which are significantly before the con itself. Any NZ citizen or resident may enter these competitions, and Au Contraire membership is not required. See the web site for more details.

Short Story – Deadline 31 January 2010

We've come up with something extra special for the short story competition - the best entries will be included in an anthology of New Zealand science fiction and fantasy to be published by Random Static Press. The anthology will be launched at Au Contraire. All stories accepted for the anthology will be paid for, and there will be an additional prize for the overall winner.

Entries should be connected in some way to the convention theme "the future is a foreign country: they do things differently there". "The future" is of course a relative term – be creative! A New Zealand setting or link is a bonus, but not compulsory. Stories should be under 7000 words, and fanfic is not eligible. Submission details are on our web site.

Calendar Artwork – Deadline 31 August 2009

Au Contraire intends to publish a 2010 calendar featuring SF/F artwork to raise funds for the convention, and we need your art! The subject can be anything you like, as long as it doesn't violate copyright – so no daleks or Xenas, sorry. Black & white /greyscale only, please.

Entries should be emailed to calendar@aucontraire.org.nz, or posted to PO Box 10104, Wellington. NB we are unable to return artwork, so please send a copy if you don't want to lose the original. Email submissions must be under 5MB in size, but keep a higher-resolution backup if applicable. Prizes will be given for all entries selected for the calendar.

Stay tuned for more competitions in Progress Report 2.

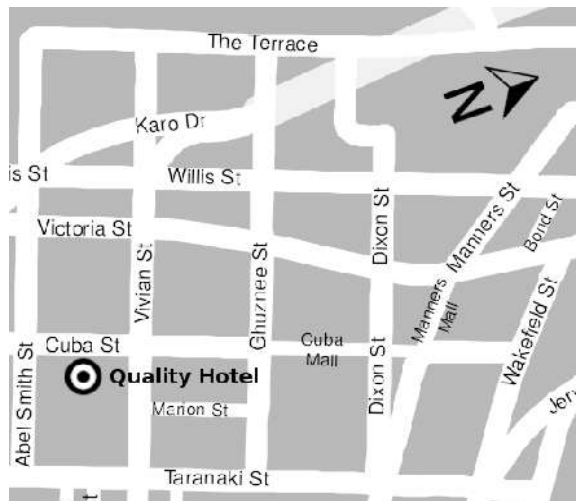
The Venue

The convention will be taking place at the Quality Hotel on Cuba St in the heart of Wellington. The hotel features a private conference level with a boardroom and a main hall that can be split into up to five function rooms by high quality soundproof dividers. There's also plenty of social space to hang out in between events.

A huge range of dining options are just a short walk away, as are most of the city's bus routes. On-site parking is available for hotel guests, and there are several public parking lots in the vicinity.

The hotel has two accommodation wings – the Quality Hotel and the Comfort Hotel. The Comfort wing offers good basic rooms for just \$99 per night (twin or double), while the Quality wing's rooms are spacious and well-appointed for \$155 per night (a surcharge applies for 3 or 4 people). Book your room online via the convention website, or use the form included with this progress report.

Alternatively, backpacker accommodation is available nearby at Lodge in the City.



The Charity

Au Contraire is a non-profit event run by unpaid volunteers. Our primary charity is the Cats Protection League Wellington, and all proceeds from our charity auction will be donated to them. Any funds remaining after the convention will be split between the Cats Protection League and SFFANZ (the Science Fiction and Fantasy Association of New Zealand).