



Nine Worlds press pack

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Nine Worlds is your Oyster

8th May 2014

Nine Worlds Geekfest burst out of the woodwork in August 2013 in style.

“So, that was [Geekfest](#), a large-scale convention that came out of nowhere around the beginning of the year, funded itself via Kickstarter, occupied a large chunk of two big hotels at Heathrow and had a mind-bogglingly bewildering variety of panels, lectures, games and activities for fans of just about all tastes. And it was, frankly, wonderful,” said [Adrian Tchaikovsky](#).

The inaugural con took place at Heathrow, London with over 1500 attendees. In March 2013, Nine Worlds ran a Kickstarter fundraising drive that was 232% oversubscribed and raised £23,000 (the second most successful convention launch in Kickstarter's history), demonstrating the huge interest for an event of this kind in London. “If you’re looking for a UK version of Dragon*Con, then this is for you. It’s run by geeks for geeks, and it really showed,” said [Geek Planet Online](#).

“Nine Worlds fills a huge gap in the UK con scene, between the more traditional bookish events like EasterCon and FantasyCon . . . and the less focussed multimedia things like the SF Weekender. Nine Worlds has all the potential to be the UK’s equivalent of Dragon*Con, which we totally don’t have at the moment,” said [Adam Christopher](#).

“You can imagine our excitement when we found out about the Nine Worlds convention – a weekend of ALL the geekery, where expensive signings and meet and greets had been replaced by workshops and talks on a huge range of topics – literature, sci-fi, vampires, skepticism, Game of Thrones, knitting, Joss Whedon, robotics, maths . . . and so on. Sure, there were expensive signings if that’s what you wanted, but the focus of this con seemed to be different – there seemed to be a real focus on discussion and learning. Pair that with a clear commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive space for ALL geekdom, and we were sold,” said [Jessica Lowndes](#).

Innovative and ground breaking, Nine Worlds brings together a plethora of strands, from the more typical sci-fi tracks featuring gaming, comics, literature, fanfic and film, to Queer Fandom, Steampunk, Skepticism and Geek Feminism. Nine Worlds also hosted the UK's first academic conference on geek culture, with scholars gathering from around the country. This year, new tracks include Food Geekery, Whedon, Podcasting, Future Tech and Race & Culture.

“Nine Worlds has a different shape to anything else on offer right now,” said [Paul Cornell](#) The organisers listened to feedback – through an online survey – about the problems associated with spreading the con across two huge conference hotels near Heathrow Airport in 2013, and therefore decided to confine Nine Worlds Geekfest to one hotel in 2014, to preserve the friendly and inclusive atmosphere. The Radisson, Heathrow, is a veteran conference venue and well equipped to deal with the specific requirements of a residential London event such as Nine Worlds.

Traditionally, con-goers are seen as the cliché - white, cisgender men. This can lead to people who don’t fall into that category feeling intimidated, or maybe even at risk. At Nineworlds,

diversity and inclusion are hugely important foundations for the event. Specifically, it aims to dump the sexism that infests many geek spaces and sci-fi cons. There is a strong [anti-harassment policy](#) and Nine Worlds endeavours to maintain a safe space for women, LGBT+ people, disabled people, and other groups that are often marginalised at geek/fandom events.

“I think one of the biggest compliments I can give to the organisers of the event is that it felt like Geekfest had been running for years already. I know it’s really early days for this convention but to me it’s already up there with the best we have to offer to Geeks and the rest of the convention organisers should be worried – there’s a new kid in town and, if you want to stay ahead, you’re going to have to pick your game up massively . . . It’s going to be one of the first conventions I look out for when organising my geek events . . . I can’t stress this enough – if you didn’t attend this year make sure you book up early for next year, you may be disappointed otherwise,” said [Geek Syndicate](#).

- ENDS -

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Geek Academia

8th May 2014

Nine Worlds hosted the UK's first academic conference on Geek culture, with scholars gathering from around the country. The Geek Academia track, headed by Jenni Goodchild, ran a conference within a convention. "This year, we're expanding outwards – instead of holding the track within it, we're bringing the academics out!" said Jenni. "The goal is to get academics from all aspects of geek culture engaging on panels, talking about their work and getting involved with the fandom side of things."

Jenni Goodchild graduated from Mansfield College, Oxford, having spent three years studying Philosophy and Theology. She's currently studying at Bristol, and planning to focus her attention on the intersections between geek culture and religion. It's definitely not an excuse to read science fiction and claim it's for her degree. Beyond this, she writes for the gaming website *Indie Haven*, and helps out with education in museums.

In line with Nine Worlds Geekfest's [policy](#), the programme will be both inclusive and interactive, with diverse programming and guests from all over the world, for audiences of all ages and interests.

- ENDS -

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All of the Books

8th May 2014

All of the Books is just as billed: reading, writing, publishing and, most of all, discussing. This year's track builds on last year's star-studded and diverse list with Science Fiction/Fantasy and Young Adult authors, big and small.

There will be opportunities for professional advice from publishers, artists and agents; varied formats with an emphasis on interactivity - debates, workshops and presentations - as well as plenty of panels, readings and launches.

The [Conville & Walsh](#) team have nobly agreed to spend a day (Friday, 8 August) reviewing manuscripts and offering one-on-one coaching with budding authors. Up to 150 submissions will be accepted via an [online application form](#) and reviewed by Sue Armstrong and Alexander Cochran, after which 20-30 lucky individuals will be selected for face-to-face meetings on the day. Only those selected for one-to-ones will receive feedback/correspondence.

"As far as I know, this is the first instance of a major agency ever doing something like this at a convention and, given Nine Worlds' thriving community of creative writers, it should be a huge hit," said Jared Shurin of [The Kitschies](#), who is running the All of the Books track, together with Anne Perry (Hodder & Stoughton) and Jenni Hill (Orbit).

"Alexander and I are thrilled to be involved in this year's Nine Worlds GeekFest," said Sue Armstrong. "As agents we're both passionate about meeting, engaging and working with new and exciting writers of SFF. It can be daunting taking those first steps towards publication so, through our one-to-one sessions, we hope to offer some friendly advice and editorial feedback to those who may not have access to it otherwise."

Guests for 2014 include Lauren Beukes, Sarah Lotz, Gail Carriger, Nick Harkaway, Paul Cornell, Scott Lynch, Emma Vieceli, Elizabeth Bear, Joanne Harris, Anna Caltabiano, Will Hill, Christopher Brookmyre, Kate Griffin, Kim Curran, James Smythe and over sixty others, including traditional and self-published authors, illustrators, editors and agents.

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Comics Fandom

8th May 2014

“Comics Fandom is about the how, where and why we love comics and, indeed, who we are. Run by people who read fanfiction, draw fanart and question why markers are sold in ‘skintone’ sets consisting solely of shades of peach, this is an interrogation and a celebration of what we love about comics and what they can be. It’s not that we don’t care if you don’t fit the mould for a comics fan, it’s that that makes us want you to be there,” said Hazel Robinson, one of the dynamic duo of comic track organisers.

“We’ll be running panels on costumery, convention history, representation and the things about Thor that no one dare speak of, workshops for children and adults, and talks from comics creators about the works that turned them into fans. We’ll be providing crayons, critique and maybe just a small amount of crying over significant emotional character development, as well as in-depth analysis and serious debate,” said Charlotte Geater, Robin to Hazel’s Batman (or is it the other way around?!).

Hazel Robinson is an IT professional by day and fandom’s mother by night. She writes about comics, fans and feelings, in between podcasting and crafting very long essays for *Freakytrigger*. Her work has featured on the BBC and in *The New Statesman*.

Charlotte Geater is a poet whose work has featured in *Best British Poetry 2014*, *Coin Opera 2: Fulminaire’s Revenge* and *Clinic III*, amongst others. She is currently working on her PhD, when she isn’t giving side-eye to implausible anatomy and investigating which is the best Scott.

(They met in a park in the rain and make comics about teenage girls saving the world together.)

Our VIP guest, Kieron Gillen, is a former games journalist turned comics writer for *Avatar*, *Image* and *Marvel*. Most famous for *Phonogram*, *Uncanny X-Men* and *Young Avengers*, he is currently writing *Iron Man* and will be launching new series *The Wicked and the Divine* in August.

- ENDS -

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Cosplay

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Cosplay is a big part of the geek scene, and costumes are a hugely important facet in creating the atmosphere at sci-fi events. Nine Worlds will be hosting workshops on costuming so everyone from newbies to seasoned cosplayers can learn something new from all aspects of costume creation and design. Sessions will be headed up by Cosplay UK, a two-man (well, one man and one woman) grassroots British business consisting of Rose (the stitcher) and Lee (the mad engineer). “We love taking on new challenges”, said Rose.

There will also be a competition for the best costume.

But costumes are just the beginning. Independent film-maker, Fabby Styles, the Nine Worlds SFX guru, will be running interactive workshops on creating realistic theatrical wounds (on a budget). “Last year, the wound workshops were very popular and a lot of fun. It was great to see such a range of people – friends, families – all coming together to create gruesome fake injuries on each other!”

This year, Fabby is also running new classes on various styles of vampire effects, and how to create medieval fantasy hairstyles, collaborating with the Game of Thrones track. “I love the detail that goes into the production of Game of Thrones, and hairstyling is such an important feature of many characters. I’ll be demonstrating styles for both short and long cuts; you don’t need two-foot-long tresses.”

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Creative Writing

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The creative writing track at Nine Worlds 2014 will be putting on workshops for budding and experienced writers of all kinds and flavours. “We have sessions on how to write your own fantasy language, giving the alien perspective, and writing mysteries for the modern age. We are working with a number of other tracks to bring you a rounded and enthralling programme of writing focused activities and talks from across the spectrum of geekery. We are looking forward to inspiring new ideas and helping the next Ray Bradbury or Robin Hobb find their feet. Please come find us at Nine Worlds 2014!” said track head, Hannah Eiseman-Renyard.

Hannah is a writer and editor by day; blogger and performance poet by night. She is the editor of the [Whippersnapper Press](#) for short, sharp, funny creative writing, which runs an annual [Vogon Poetry Slam](#). Hannah has been described as 'fine' by three therapists', 'of good character' by a high court judge, and as 'a rotten brat' by her mother.

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Fanfic

8th May 2014

Fanfiction is a broadly defined term for stories about characters or settings written by fans of the original work, rather than by the original creator(s) or subjects. Fanfiction exists for TV shows; movies; books; podcasts; comics and graphic novels; anime and manga; theatre; music and bands; real people; video games; and other media. Fanfiction fandom is growing rapidly. Archiveofourown.org, one of the largest online fanfic archives, more than doubled its number of registered users in 2013, and now hosts more than one million fanworks.

In 2013, Nine Worlds ran what we believe to have been the first full multi-fandom fanfiction track at a large UK convention. Programme items included a fanfic workshop for pre-teens; panels and a workshop on crossovers and alternate universes, the role of fanworks in representing marginalised sexualities and gender identities, and some of the problematic issues in fanfic. Three professional authors discussed the relationship between their novels and the fanfic they write. We also ran some more lighthearted programme, including a round table discussion on fanfic's effect on real life, which was immediately dubbed 'Fanficcers Anonymous' by the attendees. We also covered fanvidding, and put on an impromptu fanart show.

"The response was overwhelming. Overcrowding caused us to close the room to new arrivals at several sessions, including the popular 'Nine Myths About Fanfic' short talks," said Kate Keen, track organiser. "In 2014 we hope to build on this success with some new ideas. We will be holding a 'Fandom is fabulous' poster session, encouraging participants to get creative and show us the best of their fanfic fandoms. We'll be discussing the nature of the interaction between original creators and fanfiction fans. We intend to bring attendees together in various workshops, and we will discuss some of the problematic issues in fandom in more detail. We will hold a panel discussion on the ways in which we can compare historical fiction to fanfic, and we'll have some academic papers on studying fanfic and fandom.

"Professional authors Elizabeth Bear and Paul Cornell, who are both enthusiastic fanfic writers and supporters, have agreed to take part in the fanfic programme. Gavia Baker-Whitelaw, who is a freelance reporter for *The Daily Dot*, Managing Editor at Big Bang Press, and well known in fandom under the name *Hello, Tailor*, will also be appearing. We expect to have a number of other big name fans in various fandoms, but our programme is open to all fanfic fans, and we will include as wide a range of voices as possible."

Kate Keen has been an avid reader and author of fanfiction for eleven years, beginning with *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR) movies fandom, and moving on to her current obsessions with *Skyfall* and BBC *Sherlock*, via *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Van Helsing*, *The Baroque Cycle*, and *NCIS*. She has also flirted with characters and pairings from pretty much every science fiction and fantasy book she's ever read, and is a member of the *Organisation for Transformative Works*. Kate has been organising, moderating and taking part in fanfic and literary science fiction and fantasy panels at conventions for twelve years. In real life, she has an office job in London, and enjoys all that the city has to offer in the way of classical music, art, and vegetarian food.

Tanya Brown has been reading, writing and critiquing fanfiction for over a decade, having looked afresh at it after the first of Peter Jackson's *LOTR* movies. She's been active in 'big-name' fandoms such as *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Stargate: Atlantis* and *Inception*, but also likes using the framework of fanfiction to play – er, experiment – with writing techniques. Successful experiments include choose-your-own-adventure fics coded in Javascript; works

written entirely in iambic pentameter or faux-Chaucer couplets; randomised Tarot cards with art and drabbles. She has been a regular attendee, and irregular participant, at science fiction conventions since the last millennium.

Tanya and Kate have been fic-writing, beta-reading, appearing on convention panels and running workshops together for more than a decade. Their speciality is clearing coffee-shops, pubs and restaurants of other customers by discussing the finer points of certain types of fiction. Neither of them would still be in fandom without the other to support, encourage, enable, abet, and mock where needed. They also like to hang out together near water (spa, swimming pool, or sea will do).

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- ENDS -

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Nine Worlds Film Festival

8th May 2014

The Film Festival, headed by Andrew Clarke, provides a fun and chilled respite from the hectic schedule of the con, providing screenings, quizzes, talks and workshops, all revolving around genre film-making.

In 2013 the film track boasted both Kirkioke – karaoke but in the style of William Shatner – and Kazooioke – karaoke but with kazoos.

There was a film-making competition, workshops with fan-film makers, midnight screenings and special curated sessions from some of London's leading film clubs such as *Cigarette Burns Cinema*, *Night of the Trailers* and *The Duke Mitchell Film Club* - and all in an area covered in mattresses and bean bags to make the room as comfortable as possible.

“In 2014, the Film Festival will introduce further unique content, bringing even more of the film community of England together for the guests of Nine Worlds, sharing their enthusiasm and knowledge of genre film,” said Andrew Clarke.

And free popcorn.

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And did we mention the free popcorn?

- ENDS -

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Food Geekery

8th May 2014

“The food track is new this year and launching with a bang! We'll be delving into the strangest and most exciting corners of the London food scene to bring some fascinating speakers and demonstrations to the convention,” said alchemist and track head, Ruth Ball. The Robin Collective will be giving an introduction to the world of experiential food, Kerstin Rogers will be telling you how to start your own home restaurant, and the Alchemist herself will be teaching liqueur blending with a tasting. Plus many more guests yet to be announced.

Ruth Ball is the Head Alchemist at [Alchemist Dreams](#), a small London company producing custom handmade liqueurs. She has been creating weird and wonderful liqueurs, cocktails and jellies for three years and is a member of The Experimental Food Society where she has met so many of the most exciting and eccentric faces of food.

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Future Tech

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The Future Tech track, headed by Tiana Sinclair, is for the curious-minded. “It will cover the geekery surrounding all things tech and is designed to stimulate citizens’ involvement in technological evolution process,” said Tiana. “Apart from talks that challenge & amuse, expect interactive quests, virtual reality demonstrations, coding workshops, hands-on hacking, gaming & a cyber rave entertainment programme.”

Ian Peters, whose specialities include cyber security, virtual reality technology and astrophotography, among others, will be bringing an Oculus Rift, a revolutionary virtual reality (VR) headset designed specifically for video games with an incredibly wide field of view, high resolution display, and ultra-low latency head tracking, hopefully with the new DK2 development pack, due for release in July. He will also be bringing new demo games/software.

Tiana is a researcher from a multidisciplinary background. Connect with her on Twitter: @Tiana60s.

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Geek Feminism

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The Geek Feminism Track aims to create a space that is interesting and exciting to existing feminists as well as welcoming and safe to those who are new to feminism, but understand the need to redress the imbalance in much of mainstream geek culture.

“We accept that sexism exists in our culture, but now what? How do we move forward?” said track head, Clara Jackson. “The track will attempt to answer this question and share tools to help us all combat the issue.

“The track will be addressing topics such as the use of rape as character motivation and the impacts of a male dominated creative system. We are looking forward to running cross over sessions with many of the other Nine Worlds tracks, including the Film Track, to discuss the Bechdel Test, the Whedon Track on sex trafficking in the Whedonverse, and the Books Track on heroines in YA literature.”

“We are also excited to have the fantastic Laurie Penny with us throughout the weekend participating on panels and talking about her new book: *Unspeakable Things: Sex, Lies and Revolution*.”

Traditionally, con-goers are seen as the cliché - white, cisgender men. This can lead to people who don't fall into that category feeling intimidated, or maybe even at risk. At Nine Worlds diversity and inclusion are hugely important foundations for the event. Specifically, it aims to dump the sexism that infests many geek spaces and sci-fi cons. There is a strong [anti-harassment policy](#) and Nine Worlds endeavours to maintain a safe space for women, LGBT+ people, disabled people, and other groups that are often marginalised at geek/fandom events.

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Game of Thrones

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As anyone who hasn't been in cryogenic suspension for the past couple of years will tell you, *Game of Thrones* is a massive phenomenon on both sides of the pond, all the more exceptional considering it is not even available on terrestrial TV. Last year, the track boasted the coup of guest [Miltos Yerolemou](#) (master sword-fighter, Syrio Forel), who taught swordplay classes at the convention, in addition to taking part in panel discussions.

"*The Game of Thrones/A Song of Ice And Fire* track celebrates both the best selling series of books, and the smash hit TV series, with panels on gender and magic, gaming sessions, discussion of the highly anticipated next instalment of the series, demonstrations of medieval fantasy hairstyles and more. You can keep up with the track announcements by following us on [Twitter](#)," said track head, Jaime Starr.

There are also cross-overs with other tracks, including the cosplay make-up sessions run by Fabby Styles and the LARP track, and the Irish convention, TitanCon, will be involved: "TitanCon will be joining forces with the organiser of the Game of Thrones / A Song of Ice and Fire track, and together we aim to create a great line up of panels and events for fans of the books and the HBO show. With three days of programming, we'll be able to offer a wide range of discussion panels and topics at Nine Worlds and make the most of this opportunity to promote TitanCon to a large audience of fans that may wish to make the trip over to Belfast for the full TitanCon experience," said Nine Worlds organiser, Ludi Valentine.

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Knitting

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As last year, Nine Worlds 2014 will have a dedicated knitting track. The importance of this manifestation of geek culture warrants more than just a crafts corner.

“This year's knitting track will answer all the most burning yarn-based questions,” said track organiser, Sasha McKenna. “What's the best stitch pattern for knitting high-fantasy style armour? How feminist is the recent knitting resurgence? How do I cast on and, once I've learned to cast on, how do I knit myself a tasty snack?”

Sasha learned to knit several years ago, after failing miserably for most of her life. She now teaches knitting and has just started her own pattern line, Trixie Rocket Designs, which you can find at trixierocket.wordpress.com or on Ravelry.

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Live Action Role Play

8th May 2014

For the uninitiated (where have you been?), theatre-style LARP, or Live Action Role Play, is a live action, non-contact form of role-playing game. “Participants each have a single character which they play in person. In our games, costume is optional but encouraged. Each character has their own background, capabilities, and suggested goals, but there is no script. Players must decide for themselves how their characters would act, and the choices they make will influence the course of the game. Unlike combatLARPs, the emphasis is on talking to the other players, and no weapons are involved,” said Rei Hampden-Turner, one half of the LARP sessions organiser duo.

“At Nine Worlds Geekfest we’re running a two part LARP writing workshop, in crossover with the Whedon track. Part 1 involves guiding a group of people through writing a basic LARP set in the Whedon-verse. At the end of it, we should have notes on characters, complete with goals, relationships, and plots, and a fair idea of where the game is set and how it should progress. Part 2 is where people then get to grab the collated version of this and have a go at playing it for half an hour, then we stop and discuss how it went, what worked and what didn’t work, how the game might be edited, and how to achieve different variations themes and styles.

“The aim,” explained Hanbury, the other half of the team, “is to provide a safe writing environment where participants can see how their ideas work in an actual game.”

“We also have a game called 'Dr. Nefarious and the Paradise Project', where you play minions of a James Bond style super villain, trying to keep the secret base running. Deep beneath Paradise Island lies the secret lair of the infamous villain, Dr. Nefarious. From this underground base he gives the orders that make presidents tremble. Here he makes the plans that will bring the free world to its knees. Well, he will when it’s finished. The lair got relocated to Paradise Island after the Swiss mountain chalet had that accident. And the tunnels aren’t all dug yet, mostly because CIA Agent, Jim Broker, snuck in through the casino and blew up the M.O.L.E. machine. And the power plant isn’t working yet. Still, the revised plans are more or less on schedule. Dr. Nefarious is currently enjoying his regular anniversary holiday. And the satellite death ray had better be ready when he gets back. May contain world domination, cloned dinosaurs, and death without warning by shark tank.

“It’s a good game for a con because a lot of the minions are short lived, so people can just grab a new one and continue playing, wander off if they get tired, or join in part way through,” explained Rei.

The last proposed game is Sword Day, a gritty game of political intrigue and backstabbing inspired by the word of Game of Thrones. “The Mad King Olaf is dead, and his son, the Crown Prince Harold, is to take up the sword Bargash to reign in his place. Harold has gathered his council of nobles for this auspicious day, to make the formal proclamation. However, the great Houses fight amongst themselves, and are merciless in the face of weakness. Will Harold lead his country to civil war, or can he keep the vying Houses from tearing apart his birthright?”

Rei and Hanbury Hampden-Turner have been writing, and running LARPs for almost a

decade. Hanbury was born, at an early age, in California. He was stolen from a medical research laboratory to live in an earthquake zone, where he promptly developed an interest in entymology, rocketry, and positive thinking. He then moved to Europe, where he was carefully trained in riding, fencing, glass blowing, firearms, aerial navigation, philosophy, survival, and unarmed combat and began infiltrating the British aristocracy. Cunningly disguised as a TV celebrity, he has brought down six companies into bankruptcy or takeover, and continues his mission by posing as a writer of theatre style LARPs. He is believed to be partly responsible for at least six theatre style LARPs, and a number of rubber sword LARPs and tabletop games.

Rei, on the other hand, was born in a vast industrial wasteland where the sky glowed burnt orange at night and the odd explosion rocked the nearby houses. Rei is descended on one side from a mysterious orphaned farm boy, which may explain the suspiciously Hobbit-like traits and, on the other side, from a fierce war veteran matriarch. Rei's early diet consisted almost entirely of books, and later years involved being inducted into a mysterious local group listed in the phone directory only as a satanic cult, where Rei learned to wage war and perform magic while hordes of people insisted on giving Rei expensive pieces of cardboard. Rei finally escaped, and ran away to spend the next few years in an ivory tower to study the workings of imaginary universes, thankfully well populated with books and fellow cult members. Rei now spends weekdays disguised as a mild-mannered mathematician, and evenings and weekends learning how to fly, poledancing, climbing silks, studying whichever subject seems fascinating this month, making music, sailing, riding, diving, and occasionally hitting people with things, although sometimes Rei gets confused and turns up at work in silly costumes. Rei uses a time machine to fit in freeform writing into this busy schedule, which is the only explanation for the 5 theatre style LARPs, several combat LARPs, a couple of tabletops, and a number of play-by-e-mail games that Rei has nevertheless managed to churn out. Rei's concentration span is often . . . ooh, shiny.

In line with Nine Worlds Geekfest's [policy](#), the programme will be both inclusive and interactive, with diverse programming and guests from all over the world, for audiences of all ages and interests.

- ENDS -

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LGBTQ

8th May 2014

Picture the scene – you are skulking in the shadows, scared to admit the truth to your family, friends, school mates or work colleagues, let alone the wider public. You have a guilty secret: ‘the love that dare not speak its name’. Yes: you’re a geek, and you love all things geeky!

Well, fear no more, you can come out of the shadows: salvation is at hand. [Nine Worlds Geekfest](#) 2014 will provide all the fix you’ll ever need. The LGBTQ track is dedicated to celebrating and exploring the representation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, intersex and queer themes and characters throughout SFF media and fandom. It is the first time that a media event of this scale and scope in the UK has included a dedicated, weekend-long track for queer content. In 2013, discussions included representation in Steampunk, SFF literature, comics, games, fanfic and much more, as well as workshops on creative writing and zine making, and a queer sci-fi themed cabaret and disco. It was described by many attendees as the most inclusive and safe space they’d ever encountered at a convention.

The track is headed by [Tori Truslow](#), a queer speculative fiction writer, editor and creative writing educator, who has delivered workshops on maps, monsters and marvellous worlds for schools, universities, conferences and festivals across the world. Her own writing - on identity, myth and a library at sea - can be found in *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Paraxis*, *Stone Telling* and the anthologies *Breaking the Bow*, *Clockwork Phoenix 3* and *Here, We Cross*. “The organisers got in touch with me with this amazing plan for a new convention,” said Tori, “saying they were looking for someone who could put a programme of geeky queer-focused content together and that my name had come up. I’ve always wanted to see more content aimed at LGBT audiences at sci-fi events so I jumped at the chance.”

Tori has also started up a blog relating to the LGBTQ track:
<http://starshipfabulous.wordpress.com/>

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- ENDS -

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Podcasting

8th May 2014

The Podcasting Track will explore this state-of-the art digital medium phenomenon. “What we’re trying to do with this track is create a platform to discuss some of the pros and cons of podcasting as well as some top tips for people looking to start their own podcasts,” said track head Barry Nugent ([Geek Syndicate](#)). “Talks will focus on its past and origin in the birth of the broadband era, as well as its place in the current world of new media and everyman journalism,” added Steve Aryan, who is running the track with Barry. “There will be live talks and panels, as well as pre-recorded content designed to inform and entertain those thinking about entering the murky world of podcasting.”

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- ENDS -

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Race & Culture

8th May 2014

"The Race and Culture track will be based on the experience of non-white SFF creators and fans. There will be readings from creators whose work centres on a non-white understanding of SFF, panels for non-white fans to share their experiences of SFF fandom and a workshop for writers on 'Writing the Other'", said track organiser, Iona Sharma.

Iona is a writer and editor with a particular interest in politics and science fiction. She lives in Cambridge.

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Retro Fandom

8th May 2014

Retro-fandom, like the Roman god, Janus, is a track which will look both forwards and backwards at the same time, while anchoring itself in the present day, hopefully as an ongoing dialogue between different generations of fans.

“Time-wise, we will be looking at shows primarily pre 2000, though including *New Battlestar* as being the crossover point to the modern era,” said track organiser, David McIntee. “Our three main areas of interest will therefore be the great and received tradition of the ‘Golden Age’ of British sci-fi in the 1960s and 1970s; the glam, glitz and shoulder pads era of *Blakes 7*, and the decade of the emerging story arc in the 1990s with *Babylon 5*. We’ll leap forward into the remaking of *Battlestar* and the revival of the myth of the hero arc with *Da Vinci’s Demons*.”

“In short, this is a chance to share the same passions, discover new gems, offer undisguised nostalgia and a chance for reassessment for the older fans, and for all of us to speculate on some of the exciting new shows and fandoms which owe something to the influence of the old,” said joint track organiser, Lesley McIntee. “Join us for a sometimes light-hearted, and sometimes no holds barred, look at the cool, the not-so cool and the never repeated.”

Lesley McIntee has been Con Chair of [Redemption](#) since 2009 and is fascinated by the interface of mythology, folklore, postmodernism and literature as well as being a student of the history of the occult, and Renaissance fencing styles. She completed her MPhil on German Romanticism in 2011, co-wrote ‘Wizards: From Merlin to Faust’ for Osprey and is currently writing about the Brothers Grimm and developing a collection of supernatural stories while trying to resist the siren call of fanfic. She’s been cosplaying Londo Mollari for longer than she can remember and is thus very recognisable, although she is currently considering two-timing him for either Girolamo Riario or a King’s Musketeer. She doesn’t bite but, speak to her for too long, and you will find you have been volunteered for something, somewhere. (You have been warned).

David McIntee is the epitome of a Romantic writer, in that he spends most of his time a courtier to the lord Bacchus, and an unremitting debtor, who duels with swords. David has written more *Dr Who* books than he can remember, an original *Star Trek* novel, several educational non-fiction books such as *We Will Destroy Your Planet* (a practical guide for aliens wishing to invade the earth), and, most recently, *Fortune and Glory, a Treasure Hunters Guide*.

His current passion is historical fiction where he is facilitating the long awaited return of his ex-Templar antihero Guy de Carnac, and writing a Steampunk *Sherlock Holmes*. David has been closely involved with Redemption since 1999 when Lesley made the mistake of waving a plastic cutlass at someone with thirteen years’ experience of bladed combat, and currently holds the dubious title of “Hand of the Chair.” His con alter ego is likely to be the War Doctor or a member of the Assassin Brotherhood – if people will let him get away from being the popular Captain Barbosa. Members of the public should be wary of approaching him without good cause. Or at least rum.

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Skepticism

8th May 2014

The Skepticism track, headed by *The Skeptic* magazine (www.skeptic.org.uk) editor Deborah Hyde, was well-received last year and the team is looking forward to 2014 with excitement.

"We will have a varied programme," said Deborah, "with as much fun as we can cram in. It looks as though there'll be conspiracy theories, vampires, brains and weird experiences, false memories and hypnotism, just to name a few."

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Social Gaming

8th May 2014

Social Gaming is about making and sharing playful experiences with other people – not just sitting around a table, but also running around, haggling over goods, shooting each other with Nerf guns, jousting with lemons, building towers, dodging bloodthirsty villains while blindfolded... that sort of thing.

The track is run by [The Haberdashery Collective](#), a group of friends who design and run pervasive and social games in London every couple of months or so. “Some of our games fit on a pub table, some of them take up a room and, if the weather's nice, we might send you out onto the streets. Our games range from the silly and social to the complex and strategic, and we've run games for events at the National Maritime Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Barbican and the Southbank Centre.”

As well as being part of Nine Worlds 2013, the Haberdashery Collective is very happy to be bringing its brand of active fun to Nine Worlds again in 2014. The main emphasis of the track will be on playing games - providing a space for adults to enjoy their games, have the opportunity to be ridiculous and slightly silly, and laugh about it - without feeling self-conscious. They will also run some workshop and dialogue sessions for those who are interested in how social gaming works - sharing their knowledge on what they've found works, what doesn't, and where the genre is heading in the near future. “Our exact plans for Nine Worlds 2014 are not yet formed. We will certainly run several sessions similar to last year's offering, but there is a high possibility that we may run a wider track on creating social games and providing a platform for other social gaming designers to have a group of enthusiastic players. We will likely still be a 'part time track', but providing more content than we did last year.”

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- ENDS -

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Steampunk

8th May 2014

The Victorian Steampunk Society, organisers of Weekend at the Asylum and more, are running the steampunk track.

Steampunk encompasses, music, art, fashion, games, literature, films and, above all, socialising. In an exercise to 'explain steampunk in a sentence' a group from across the world came up with: "Steampunk is a creative social movement that draws inspiration from Victorian and pre-war history in an anachronistic mix of science fiction, modern values and a sense of fun."

Last year's packed-out programme included a steampunk fashion show, crafting sessions for families, conversations with authors, tea duelling and a gin appreciation masterclass! Expect more of the same shenanigans this year.

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Vendors

8th May 2014

Vendor/Business name	Product
All of the Books	Indie/Small Press
British Science Fiction Assoc.	Society
Canvas and Paints	Paintings
Cheeky Geeky Goodness	Custom geeky clothing
Chimera	Trading Card Games
Eithin	Paper art, literary jewellery
Forbidden Planet	Books, comics, collectables and more
Geekstitch	Cross stitch works
Genki Gear	T shirts
Hula Gaming	Tabletop games
Isala	Books/DVDs
Jenny Haines	Digital art
LeadAche	Macabre and steampunk comics, prints and badges
Newcon Press	Genre Fiction
Profound Decisions	LARP society
Retrogreat	Vintage clothing/retro jewellery
Runesmith	Norse/Elvish jewellery
Ruth Wheeler (Truxxe)	SF comedy novels
Science Fiction Foundation	Society
Soapasaurus	Geek themed soap and bath goods
Stagman Creations	Leatherwork, corsetry & props
Steampunk Market	6 vendors with a wide range of themed goods
Unseen Shadows	Works by Barry Nugent

- ENDS -

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VG Culture

8th May 2014

Video Games Culture is all about the community of players and the industry of making games, rather than the standard games convention format of 'come and play the big budget games you need to buy'.

"The focus was mostly indie games in 2013, and that's increasing in 2014 by devoting all day Friday to an indie developer online conference," says track head Tim Skew. "We're supporting this with a game jam taking place over a couple of months before the convention: anyone who submits a game gets a free ticket for the Friday.

"Classism and accessibility are issues often brought up by struggling indie developers, so the idea behind the free tickets and online presence is to allow anyone to access the convention and meet with their peers (so also avoiding issues of cliquishness) no matter where they are."

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- ENDS -

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Whedon

8th May 2014

As any big fan of the [Whedonverse](#) will know, whether you're a Browncoat, Doll, or avid Scooby Gang enthusiast, Joss and the team are like demi-gods in the storytelling industry. So what better way to celebrate his work than with an entire track dedicated to the man himself?

“The Whedon track at Nine Worlds has more sessions than you can shake a stake at, from panels and discussions, to singalongs and ... well, we don't want to give all our surprises away! We like to think of people as either loving the Whedonverse, or just not having experienced it yet,” said track head and avid Whedon fan, Becky Ford, “so whichever group you belong to, we hope you'll join us over the weekend for lots of Nine Worlds fun, burdened with glorious purpose!”

Outside the Whedonverse, Becky is a professional actor based in Essex, running '[Off the Shelf Theatre Company](#)'. She trained at *East 15 Acting School*, and has since performed in several short films and music videos. Being an only child to parents who met at a *Star Trek* convention left her with very few chances to grow up as anything BUT a geek. And, boy, is she glad of that!

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- ENDS -

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Press Release

By Royal Appointment

8 May 2014

Nine Worlds is delighted to announce that it will be hosting a series of talks and workshops from the team at the Royal Observatory Greenwich at this year's Geekfest, running in London, 8th-10th August 2014.

Astronomers and curators from the National Maritime Museum and the Royal Observatory Greenwich will be running lectures and demonstrations for geeks of all ages, themed around the current special exhibitions running in Greenwich: "Ships, Clocks and Stars: The Quest for Longitude" on navigation at sea; "Stars to Satellites" on the history of satellite navigation; and "Longitude Punk'd", a steampunk showcase of fantastical inventions alongside historical artefacts.

- ENDS -

National Maritime Museum/Royal Observatory Greenwich media enquiries or images:

Royal Museums Greenwich Press Office: press@rmg.co.uk
020 8312 6790 / 6545

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Press Release

Clash of the Titans

8 May 2014

TitanCon is happy to announce that it is joining the fun at Nine Worlds, to assist with running the Game of Thrones track at the London Geekfest.

Nine Worlds is a huge multi-genre convention with over 25 differently themed tracks, covering everything from comics to literature, to Doctor Who, to Whedon. Each track is organised and run by a separate group of individuals or convention organisers: for example, the Steampunk track is run by the Victorian Steampunk Society, and the Podcasting/Zines track is run by Geek Syndicate. Many other conventions use Nine Worlds to offer a taster of what their own events, held throughout the year, will involve.

Entering its second year, Nine Worlds 2014 will run 8th-10th August 2014, at the Radisson Hotel at Heathrow Airport.

One of the main reasons TitanCon is so pleased to join Nine Worlds is that many of its aims and ideals are perfectly aligned. Nine Worlds is dedicated to diversity and inclusion, with a strong anti-harassment [policy](#) promoting a safe space for women, LGBT+ people, people with access issues and other groups that have been marginalised at other events in the past.

All proceeds from Nine Worlds go to its charity partner, English PEN, a charity that supports persecuted writers around the world, and is the UK's oldest human rights organisation.

“TitanCon will be joining forces with the organiser of the Nine Worlds Game of Thrones / A Song of Ice and Fire track; together we aim to create a great line up of panels and events for fans of the books and the HBO show. With 3 days of programming, we'll be able to offer a wide range of discussion panels and topics at Nine Worlds and make the most of this opportunity to promote TitanCon to a large audience of fans that may wish to make the trip over to Belfast for the full TitanCon experience,” said Nine Worlds organiser, Ludi Valentine.

Tickets for Nine Worlds are on sale now and currently cost £80 adults, £40 children (5-15 years old). More information and details are available from the Nine Worlds website: www.nineworlds.co.uk

- ENDS -

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