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Dragon Con 2025

The Daily Dragon

Author GoH T. Kingfisher on Blending Fantasy, Romance, and Horror by Nancy Northcott

This year's Literary Guest of Honor, T. Kingfisher, writes dark fantasy, horror, and fantasy romance. Her alter ego, Ursula Vernon, writes comics and children's books. Under the two names, she has been nominated for or has won the Hugo, the Nebula, the Eisner, the Mythopoeic Award, the Washington Small Press Award, the Eugie Award, the British Fantasy Award, the Dragon Award, the World Fantasy Award, and others. While most of her work is prose, her Eisner nomination was for the Hugo Award-winning webcomic *Digger*. An accomplished artist and illustrator, she has supplied artwork for games and book covers.

Daily Dragon (DD): You published as Ursula Vernon for several years before branching out in the types of books you were writing and inventing T. Kingfisher. Did anything in particular spur you to broaden your reach?

T. Kingfisher (TK): I often say that inside every children's book author is a frustrated horror author. Certainly it was true in my case! My editor kept having to have the talk about, "You are not allowed to straight up murder the villain," and "We do not solve our problems with arson." I would argue that kids would love this, and she would point out that yes, they would, but their parents were the ones who bought the books. (I still think that sometimes arson is the logical solution to a haunted house...)

Anyway, after a few years of all the things I couldn't do, I said, "I'm gonna write a book for adults and it's gonna

have EVERYTHING and no one will be able to stop me!" So T. Kingfisher was born, and it's just kinda gone from there.

DD: What led you to mix romance into the fantasy genre?

TK: I like romance, I like fantasy, they went together like chocolate and peanut butter.

DD: How did you decide to illustrate the novel *Castle Hangnail*, and did you do the illustrations yourself? I also have to ask what inspired that title!

TK: I didn't so much decide as I was under contract at the publisher to do it! But I did the illustrations, yes, and the cover art. I'd been doing illustrated books for them before, and this was just an extension. As for why *Castle Hangnail* was called that... well, it's about a young girl who's officially a wicked witch, but really she's just goth, and she acquires this castle full of not-very-evil minions. So I wanted a name for the castle that was a very mild badness. Hangnails came to mind, and also it was just a funny name.

DD: How do you balance your artistic interests with your writing?

TK: These days, I mostly don't. I wish I had some inspirational words about making art that would inspire people, but in truth, I get the urge to paint or make a weird little comic or something once in a blue moon. I burned out drawing dragons and hamsters, I'm afraid.

DD: Are there particular books you rec-



ommend as starting points for readers interested in exploring your work?

TK: It really depends on what you like. If you like fantasy romance, *Swordheart* is a lot of fun. If you want a romp, *A Wizard's Guide to Defensive Baking*.

Read the full interview on the Daily Dragon website!

DragonConTV

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DCTV LAND

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Streaming Channels and Schedule:
<https://dragoncon.tv>

Dragon Con's Official Charity: NAMI Georgia

by Daily Dragon Staff



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Every year Dragon Con raises money throughout the convention at a variety of events, everything from auctions to this year's first Blind Date with a Book. The funds raised during these events are matched dollar for dollar up to \$125,000. Last year, the Dragon Con community raised over \$300,000 for the Arthritis Foundation with a combination of matching and individual donations.

This year's charity partner is the National Alliance on Mental Health, Georgia. There are 23 affiliates throughout the state of Georgia with the goal of ending the stigma of mental illness. NAMI Georgia empowers affiliates to provide advocacy, education, support, and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives.

NAMI started as a small group of families gathered around a kitchen table in 1979 and has blossomed into the na-

tion's leading voice on mental health. Today, it is an association of more than 500 local affiliates who work in your community to raise awareness and provide support and education that was not previously available to those in need.

Keep an eye out throughout the convention for opportunities to help this amazing cause! Follow the link via the QR code or text NAMI-GEA to 24251.



bit.ly/DragonConGivesBack

Schedule Changes

The following previously confirmed guests are unfortunately not able to attend Dragon Con 2025: **Andy Belanger, Alex Brown, Olivia Dudley, Maggie Lawson, Jim Shooter, Tom Wilson**

ADDITIONS

***NEW* K.N. Lee** will be on the author "Autograph Session" Sunday 2:30PM, Overlook (W).

***NEW* Guy Dorian, Sr.** will be on "Kickstarting Comic Books" Friday 1PM, 204J (AM2).

***NEW* Charles Kelso and Veronica**

Dashiell will be on "Felt Nerdy's Star-gate Puppet Show!" Monday 1PM, Chastain DE (W).

***NEW* Raymond Carr, Kevin Kelly, Lenore Romas, Hallie Zeller, and Richard Gomez** will be on "Puppet Karaoke" Friday 8:30PM, A704 (M)

***NEW* Mark Zoran will be on "Giant Walkarounds and Body Puppets" Saturday 8:30PM, A704 (M)**

***NEW* Dan Jolley** will be on "15-Minute Mentor Session" Sunday 4PM, Em-

bassy G (Hy).

CANCELLATIONS

***NEW* Andy Belanger** will not be on "Kickstarting Comic Books" Friday 1PM, 204J (AM2).

UPDATES

NEW "What We're Reading" was Monday 10AM, A707 (M) and is now Monday 11:30AM, A707 (M).

NEW "Bring Your Own Book Game" was Monday 11:30AM, A707 (M) and is now Monday 1PM, A707 (M).

Local Author Lauren McGuire Places in the WotF Contest

by Debbie Yutko

Placing in the Writers of the Future (WotF) contest is the dream of many aspiring writers. Last year, Lauren Catherine McGuire, a resident of the quaint Georgia town of Senoia known for its role as the filming set of *The Walking Dead*, fulfilled that dream. McGuire was a quarterly second-place winner and earned the honor of having her story, "Karma Birds," published in *L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future* Volume 41. You can meet her at the "Writers of the Future: Practical Skills/Insider Knowledge for Genre Fiction" panel on Saturday at 1PM in Hyatt International North, along with other winners from last year's contest. McGuire graciously agreed to answer a few questions for the *Daily Dragon* about her writing and her experience as a WotF contest winner.

Daily Dragon (DD): *When and why did you decide to become a writer?*

Lauren Catherine McGuire (LCM): I've had a daily journaling practice for over 15 years now, but I didn't start writing until, probably, 2015. I was in the run-up to 40, which anyone who's crested mid-life knows is a real phenomenon. I hated my job. I was in the throes of a deep and thorough deconstruction of my faith, and we were collectively staring down the barrel of the 2016 election. So yeah, good times. I started writing to make sense of the conflict in myself and the world around me. My initial attempts were nonfiction, and I even got a few publication credits under my belt, but I didn't fall in love with writing until I started playing around with fiction.

DD: *Did you begin with short stories or novels? What story length do you prefer and why?*

LCM: I began with essays! Then I wrote a novel. Then I revised that novel for way too long. Then I wrote the sequel to that novel over a NaNoWriMo month. (That's National Novel Writing Month, for the uninitiated. I wrote three novels with them before they shuttered.) I think I sprinkled some (really bad) short stories in there somewhere, but I didn't get serious about trying short form until listening to the Writing Excuses podcast.

I love novel writing but have really come to appreciate the short story. In a lot of ways, short form is harder.

Read the full interview on the Daily Dragon website!

Parties & Events

Seventh Annual MSFM Onesie Party

So many fandoms...so little time! At the Thursday night MSFM Onesie Mixer, you can meet & hang out with fans of all the different shows in our track as we get to know each other with fun & games! Come break the ice in your favorite onesie, costume, or comfy-casual con couture & chill with us. Thursday 7-9:30PM, Chastain DE (Westin).



Bunny Hutch Party and Costume Contest

Start your Con with an Ode to the mash-up. Put your best spin on the classic Bunny or Hef for the contest, where creativity, process, originality, and construction is considered. Costumes are not required though themed cosplay is encouraged. Thursday 10PM-2AM, Atrium Ballroom (Marriott). Contest pre-judging (advance sign-ups only), Thursday 5:30-9:30PM, A601-A602 (Marriott).



From Juke Joints to Hip Hop Dance!

Kick off Dragon Con 2025 at the ultimate Juke Joint & Hip Hop Dance Party! Celebrate the Year of the Dragon with bold beats, big energy, and great vibes throughout the rich and

colorful history of dance music. Show your moves, meet fellow fans, and start the con with your unstoppable spirit! Thursday 10PM-2AM, Imperial Ballroom (Marriott).



80s Prom Dance Party

Get ready to relive the '80s at X-Track's ultimate throwback prom! Dress up, strike a pose, and dance all night to your favorite retro hits. From big hair to synth-pop, it's gonna be totally rad. Let's Dance—this is one nostalgic night you won't want to miss! Thursday 8PM-12AM, Grand Ballroom A-F (Courtland Grand).



Comedy for a Cause: NAMI Georgia

Let's kick off Dragon Con with some stand-up comedy for a great cause! Bringing you a selection of the best local comics in Atlanta, this show features seven comics giving their best 10 minutes to raise funds for NAMI! Thursday 8:30-10PM, Crystal Ballroom (Hilton).



Geek Singalong!

The best possible way to kick off Dragon Con. Sing along to TV show and movie themes and songs with hun-

dreds of your closest friends. Thursday 8:30-11PM, Grand West (Hilton).



Freestyle Crocheting, Idea Swap & Relaxed Hangout

Unwind with Crochet at Dragon Con. Spend quality time with others and you'll get 'hooked' on crocheting. From loops to masterpieces, this offers something from beginners to pros. The Yarn Swap will 'keep you in stitches'! Bring your gently unused yarn or new yarn to trade with a new friend. Thursday 5:30-8PM, Atlanta 1-2 (Courtland Grand)



Karaoke—Digital Media Style

Whether you love singing karaoke or can't carry a tune in a bucket, you're sure to have fun at this party. Everyone gets involved. This modern experience does away with three ring binders and slips of paper and puts the power of karaoke on your phone. Thursday 10PM-12:30AM, Galleria 7 (Hilton).



Check out the Parties/Events pages on the *Daily Dragon* website for more!

Daily Dragon Social

Don't miss the latest Dragon Con news and announcements. Follow @daily-dragon on BlueSky!



Just the FAQs

Registration Hours

THU: 10AM-10PM

FRI: 8AM-10PM

SAT/SUN: 8AM-9PM

MON: 8AM-4PM

Pre-registration and Disability Services are located in the Courtland Grand. VIP Badge Pick-up is located in the Marriott: room L503 for Eternals, room L508 for other VIPs.

Vendor Hall and Comic & Pop Artist Alley Hours

FRI/SAT/SUN: 10AM-7PM

MON: 10AM-5PM

Walk of Fame and Art Show Hours

FRI: 1-7PM

SAT/SUN: 10AM-7PM

MON: 10AM-5PM

Dragon Con Store Hours

Marriott Store

FRI/SAT/SUN: 10AM-7PM

MON: 10AM-5PM

Courtland Grand Store

THU: 8AM-10PM

FRI: 8AM-5PM

SAT/SUN: 8AM-4PM

Blood Drive Hours

Hyatt Conference Level (LL3)

WED: 11AM-8PM

THU/FRI/SAT/SUN: 10AM-7PM

MON: 9AM-3PM

Parade Check-In

Courtland Grand Georgia Ballroom

THU: 9AM-9PM

FRI: 9AM-8PM

Check the mobile app, the Quick Start Guide, or the *Daily Dragon* website for more information on hours and locations!



Arcade Gaming with Joystick

Come get your "game on" at the pop-up from our friends at Joystick Gamebar, Atlanta's official retro arcade. Classic arcade cabinets and pinball machines are on FREE PLAY, located in the old Benihana space of our beloved food court in Peachtree Center Mall. Live long and party on! Wednesday 6PM-4:30AM; Thursday-Sunday 10AM-4AM; Monday, 10AM-5PM.