

# PFINGSTSCHWOF

## News from GerFandom

### WorldCon in Montreal, Canada, August 5th to 9th, 2009

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You will find a link to an English blog on the home-page and one to an Esperanto blog, too.

The name of this oneshot came from an English fan, who speaks German and he told me on EasterCon that many German words are nearly unspeakable. So we tried to find a word which is very, very hard to pronounce (for Germans, too): Pfingstschwof. That means: Dance on Whitsuntide.

I think it's a real nice name for a fz, isn't it?

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## Why PFINGSTSCHWOF?

Some English fans asked for details from Gerfandom. There aren't many contacts between the German fandom and the rest of the world. So we agreed upon telling them something in e-mails and a fanzine, which should appear in print on EasterCon 2009. Matthew, a friend of mine, and me weren't successful in finishing it. So we bring it with us to this con. If people find it interesting, we'll start a fanzine with the same name and distribute it on next EasterCon. Why didn't we succeed? The reason is: the last central German SFCD convention in Schwerin that we had to prepare,

## What's SFCD?

SFCD (Science Fiction Club Deutschland) is the club of truefans that exists since 1955. In the meantime the German Fandom got much bigger than it was in 1955. But the SFCD had some 400 members then and has ca. 400 members now. The various other fandoms in Germany are really greater. But the SFCD is rather persistent, that's useful when you search for fans in Germany. History is archived, and we now have the plan to collect books and before all fanzines in a central place. You know how difficult it is to find those ex in other countries.

Another project of the SFCD is „Der Deutsche SF-Preis“, an award for both the best German novel and the best short story of the year. There are two unknown sponsors giving 1.000 € each.

Once in a year a central con takes place, every year in another town in Germany. In 2010 it will be the city of Leipzig. Look for details on <http://www.sfcd.eu>

That home-page is in German. (An English text is planned.) You can send me an e-mail (address look above) and ask what you want to know in the meantime.

## What's SchlossCon?

SchlossCon was the last con of the SFCD in Schwerin. That is the capital of one of the northern countries in Germany: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. We had some guests of honour:

Ken McLeod, a wellknown Scottish author; HD Klein, a prominent German author (novels „Gogool“ and „Phainomenon“); Klaus Beese, although a little older he is a *new* author living in Northern Germany, who wrote some horror stories. Besides we had HJ Mader as a Fan GoH, who was president of the SFCD some twenty years before.

The SF-Preis went to the novel „Das Tahiti-Projekt“ by Dirk C. Fleck and to the story „Weg mit Stella Maris“ by Karla Schmidt.

Look the interesting home-page of SchlossCon

<http://www.schlosscon.de>

You'll find photos in „Bilder vom Con“.

## What's Phonotheke?

A very special collection, which we have in Gerfandom, too, is the „Phonotheke“. Waldemar Kuming, visitor of nearly all World Cons since 50 years and BNF in Germany, put together thousands of SF radio plays since the beginning of German fandom, which you can borrow from SFCD, a real treasure of a worth you can hardly imagine.

Today it is brought into modern media by Thomas Recktenwald, who also is known as a visitor of World Cons in the last 20 years.

## What's AugustaCon and HanseCon?

There are some small cons in Germany which are repeated every year. Both the named cons exist for more than twenty years. AugustaCon is the first German con in the year, location Bavaria near Nördlingen (in earlier times Augsburg), takes place in January. HanseCon ist the last German con in the year, location Lübeck at the Baltic Sea, takes place on the last weekend in October.

They are real fannish cons. You can easily reach Lübeck, because there is an airport in Lübeck-Blankensee with a direct connection to London-Stansted.

## **Bigger German cons**

There are some true sf-cons held in various parts of Germany every second year: Dortmund, Köln, and Leipzig. A bigger con in German sf-fandom has about 200 or 300 visitors. The names of the cons are DortCon (Dortmund), ColoniaCon (Köln=Cologne), and ElsterCon (Leipzig). Mostly we have international and German authors there, who like to come to Germany. Especially Köln and Leipzig are very old towns, very interesting for authors and sf-fans.

BTW: also Schwerin is rather old. This year we had a second high light there: Buga (a huge show of flowers: Bundesgartenshow), a nice addition for all con-runners.

## **Fandom East - Fandom West**

The most interesting development in German fandom in my opinion has political reasons. We had a really „special event“ in 1990 (3<sup>rd</sup> of October): the reunion of Germany. Before that we had the „Fall of the Wall“ in Berlin (Nov. 9th, 1989). The so-called DDR (GDR in English) became part of Bundesrepublik Deutschland, the former only western part of Germany.

In early DDR the item SF was forbidden. Of course there were novels about future or parallel worlds, but they were called Utopic or Phantastic Novel.

Contacts between western and eastern fandom were forbidden. Printed western SF was not allowed to be imported. Some western fans sent books divided into single pages into DDR. But often the Stasi realized it, and the result could be prison.

Eastern fans were often members of the regional culture clubs, and we won't keep secret that they got money from the state - till today. The clubs are still existing and they are advanced by the state, although less from year to year.

In the late years of DDR (after the Brandt policy of opening) many SF groups were founded and they had many members. Main region was Saxony, where they have clubs in Leipzig, Dresden and Hoyerswerda. Nobody knows where Hoywoy (so called not only in fandom) is - near Poland, but it was a very important club with an amateur theatre group making one or two sf pieces every year.

Today the theatre group doesn't exist any more, and all clubs are smaller. We had a similar development in the western fandom twenty years before.

In the very last year of DDR there took place a convention called „DDR SF Con“, the one and only con ever happened in that state. The following cons were all German, and as the conventions of the SFCD wandered from town to town they now wander through whole Germany.

Besides we have conventions in all parts of Germany which are independent from the SFCD, although the visitors often are the same. The next SFCD cons will be in Leipzig (2010), Frankfurt (2011), and Kiel (2012). Often the SFCD is a guest of an existing con, sometimes not (this year in Schwerin).

A very interesting phenomenon in Gerfandom is the attitude of fans: there is no real discrepancy between east and west. Nevertheless there are fewer eastern fans on western cons and vice versa than should be statistically. I think there is a misunderstanding (even by younger fans): the distance between west and east **seems** far. Fans feel longer distances from east to west than from north to south, because just the other part of Germany was not reachable at all for 40 years.

## Getting into contact to Gerfandom

It's a little difficult coming here from overseas. But for English fans it's really easy, if they live near London or often come there. Especially if a fan wants to visit Northern Germany, mainly Lübeck, that old medieval town, Queen of Hanse, one has a good chance to get there quickly and not so very expensive. There is a direct connection from Stansted (near London) to Blankensee (part of Lübeck).

We also know cheap logis in Lübeck. You should combine a visit to Lübeck and its fans with all the beautiful medieval surrounding:

<http://www.luebeck.de>

Homepage in many languages.

Germany is all interesting for fans (and other people). All Germans learned English at school, but many do not like to speak it, because they aren't used to it. (All our movies are translated, so there is not as much customization as in smaller countries of Europe.)

**But we, especially me, have a bid:  
Speak a little slower and use simple words.**

I told other German fans about this oneshot. Nobody sent a contribution, so I fear I had better told them earlier. But maybe I will get some articles for the fanzine that we plan.

Goodbye till EasterCon 2010 in London (Heathrow).

**End of Pfingstschwof**