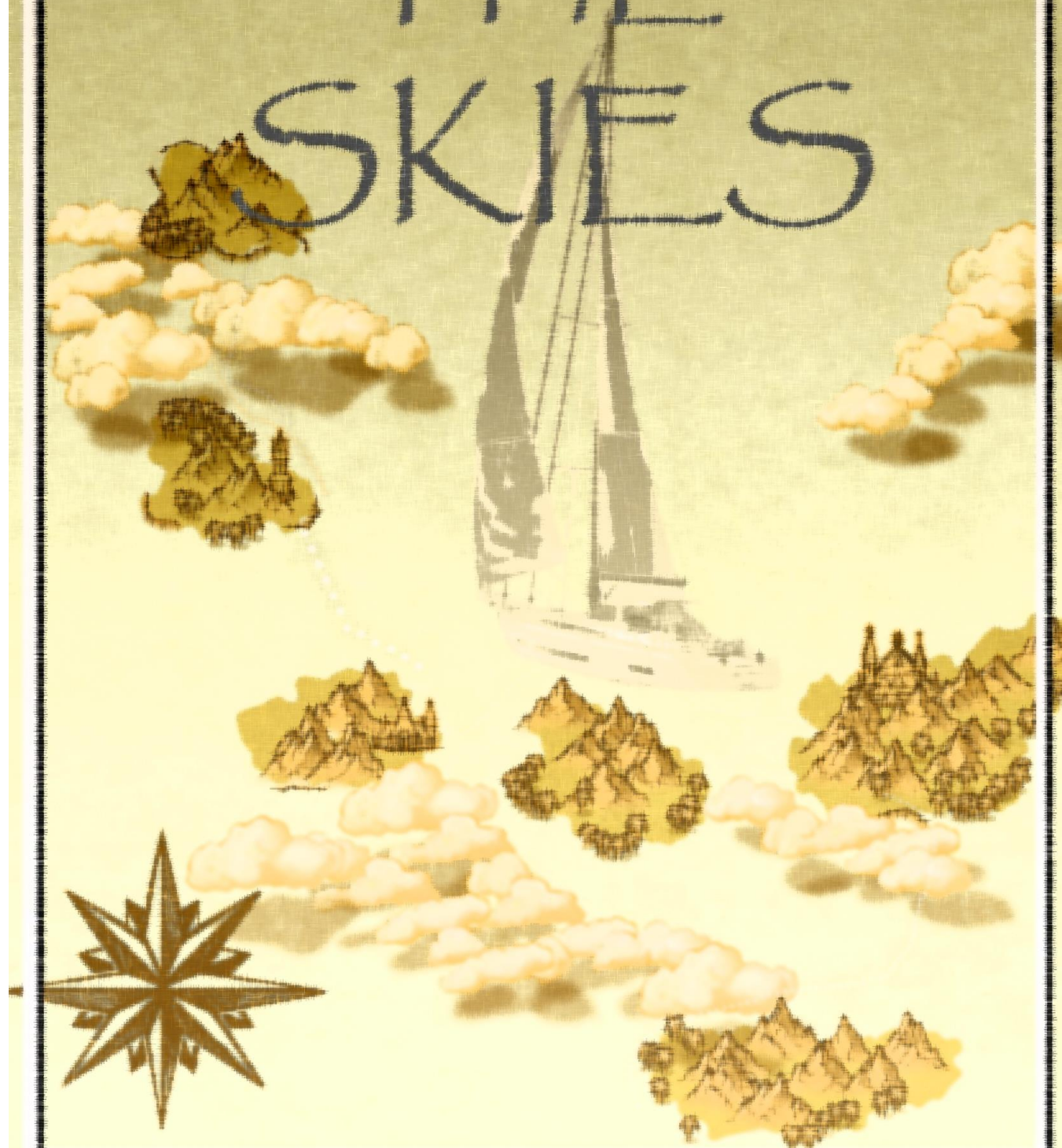


# WATCH THE SKIES





# The Bone Shard Daughter

By Andrea Stewart

## 24.1

The emperor has maintained the peace to save the people from the return of the destructive Alanga with power of his constructs made by bone shard magic – or has he? The floating islands of the Phoenix Empire are as fragile as the peace they experience. Every time the tithing occurs, the shards of bone that are taken from the young place its inhabitant's children at risk. Now the people are less and less accepting of its burdensome presence. A smuggler with a secret mission will gain extraordinary powers and become embroiled in political upheaval. A governor's daughter will have to choose love or duty. A lost woman will struggle to find her missing self and the emperor's daughter will have to discover if she can live with the truth behind her existence. All the while, there are signs that the Alanga are returning – will the Empire survive?

-Welcome to yet another year of Watch the Skies, where WTS after 24 years, is realizing its only one more year to the quarter century mark – wow! Thanks for sticking with this or joining, either way – let's read a book.

-February's meeting is on the 21st, in person, at the Simpson Library, Mechanicsburg (unless otherwise announced) and the book of the month is *The Wanderers* by Chuck Wendig

-Cover art by Eric V. Hardenbrook

Check out the website at: [watchtheskies.org](http://watchtheskies.org) or  
contact us at: [wtsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wtsnewsletter@gmail.com)

# NEW RELEASES

**FEBRUARY 2024**

MELISSA ALBERT - **The Bad Ones**

ROBERT JACKSON BENNETT - **The Tainted Cup**

ANNE BISHOP - **The Lady in Glass and Other Stories**

GWENDA BOND - **The Frame-Up**

YANGSZE CHOO - **The Fox Wife**

NEIL CLARKE, ED. - **The Best Science Fiction of the Year • Volume 8**

PAUL DI FILIPPO - **Vangie's Ghosts**

CORY DOCTOROW - **The Bezzle**

JASPER FFORDE - **Red Side Story**

-ALIX E. HARROW - **Fractured Fables**

CHARLIE N. HOLMBERG - **By of Chaotic Making**

T. KINGFISHER - **What Feasts at Night**

MARKO KLOOS - **Scorpio**

TIM LEBBON - **Among the Living**

JONATHAN LETHEM - **The Collapsing Frontier**

KELLY LINK - **The Book of Love**

GEORGE R.R. MARTIN & MELINDA M. SNODGRASS, EDS. - **George R.R. Martin Presents Wild Cards: Sleeper Straddle**

ELIZABETH MAY - **To Cage a God**

WIL MCCARTHY - **Beggar's Sky**

JACK MCDEVITT - **Doorway to the Stars**

PREMEE MOHAMED - **The Butcher of the Forest**

JEFF NOON & STEVE BEARD - **Gogmagog**

MALKA OLDER - **The Imposition of Unnecessary Obstacles**

SOYOUNG PARK - **Snowglobe**

LILITH SAINTCROW - **A Flame in the North**

A.G. SLATTER - **The Briar Book of the Dead**

FRANCIS SPUFFORD - **Cahokia Jazz**

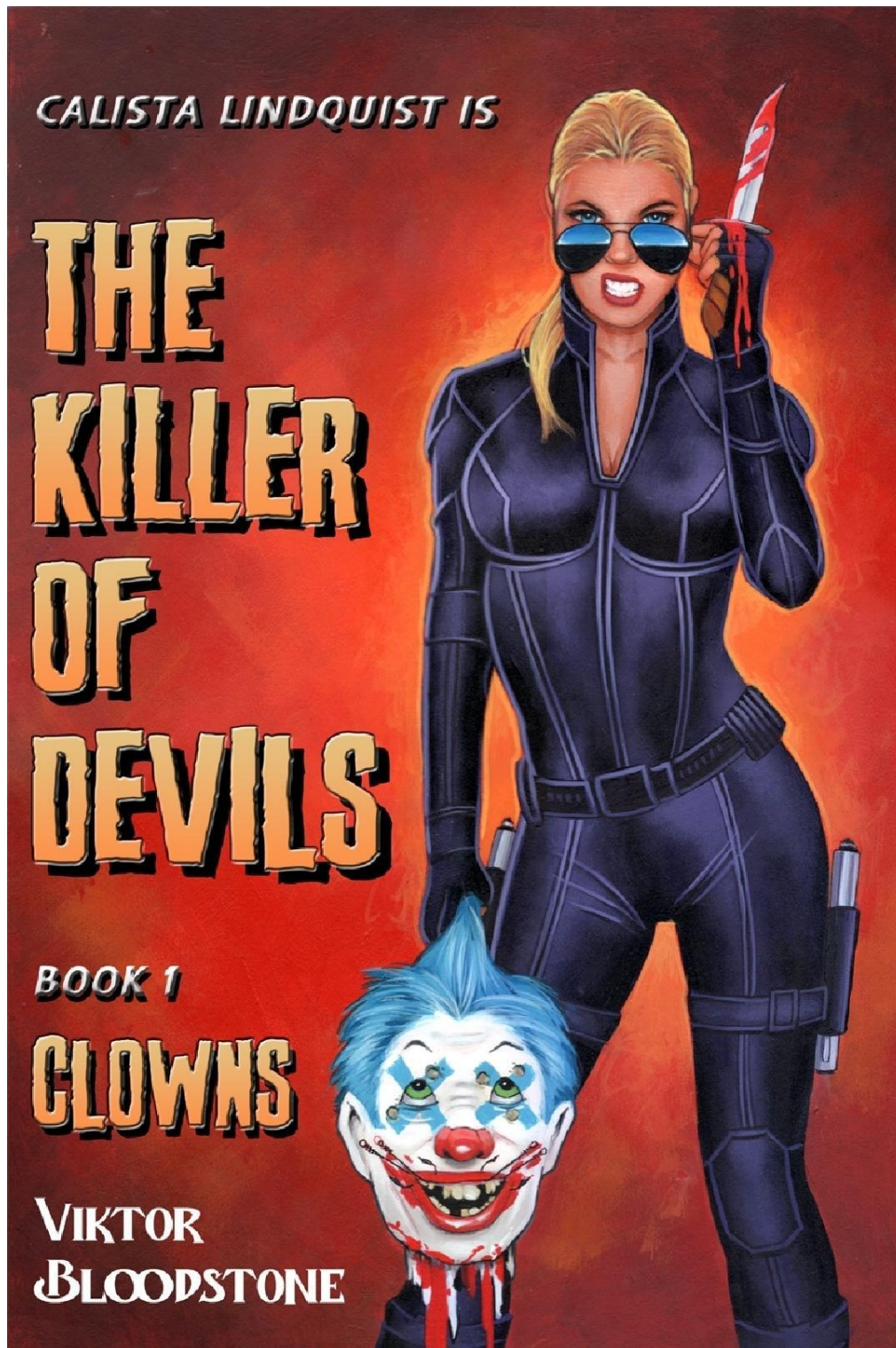
WOLE TALABI - **Convergence Problems**



TAD WILLIAMS - *The Deathless Prince and the Peach Maiden*

CONNIE WILLIS - *Blued Moon and Other Screwball Comedies*

ALVARO ZINOS-AMARO - *Equimedian*



**AVAILABLE NOW**

## NEWS OF THE REALM

-Farpoint Convention is next month, February 9-11<sup>th</sup> at the Double Tree in Pikesville, MD. Featured guests include Tawney Newsome, J.Lee, Erin MacDonald, Cal Dodd as well as many local authors.



-Registration and rooms are now available for Balticon 58 (May 24-27) to be held at the Renaissance Hotel in Baltimore Inner Harbor. Guests of honor L.E. Modesitt, Jr. and Sheila Williams. 300+ hours of programming, filk, film festival, cosplay Masquerade, Art Show and more await you.



-SciFi Valley Con, June 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> will be at the Blair County Convention Center, Altoona, PA featuring Billy West, Phil Lamarr, Greg Baldwin, Lauren Tom, Steven Ogg, Ned Luke, and Shawn "Solo" Fonteno.



-Hershey Comicon – the sweetest Comic Con on Earth – will run from June 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn, Grantville, PA. Guests include Mark Morales, Bob McLeod, Scott Hanna, Geof Isherwood, Wayne Faucher, Deegan Puchkors and Chris Ring. Comic Sellers, Exhibitors, Cosplay, and more.

-Also, the same weekend – Horror on Main located at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel, Harrisburg, PA. Guests include Oded Fehr, John Russo, Daniele Serra, Jeffrey Reddick, Jeff Goodwin, Chris Alexander, and Rio Youers.



-Shore Leave 44, July 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> has relocated to the Wyndham Lancaster Resort, Lancaster, PA and features such guests as Amanda Tapping, Teryl Rothery, Greg Grunberg, and Ingvild Deila.



-And at exact the same time - Confluence – Pittsburg's Literary Science Fiction and Fantasy convention will occur on July 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> at the Sheraton Hotel Pittsburgh Airport Hotel in Coraopolis, PA. Guest of Honor will be New York Times Bestselling author, Richard Kadrey. Featured musical guest is Bonnie Gordon.





## The Art of Fandom

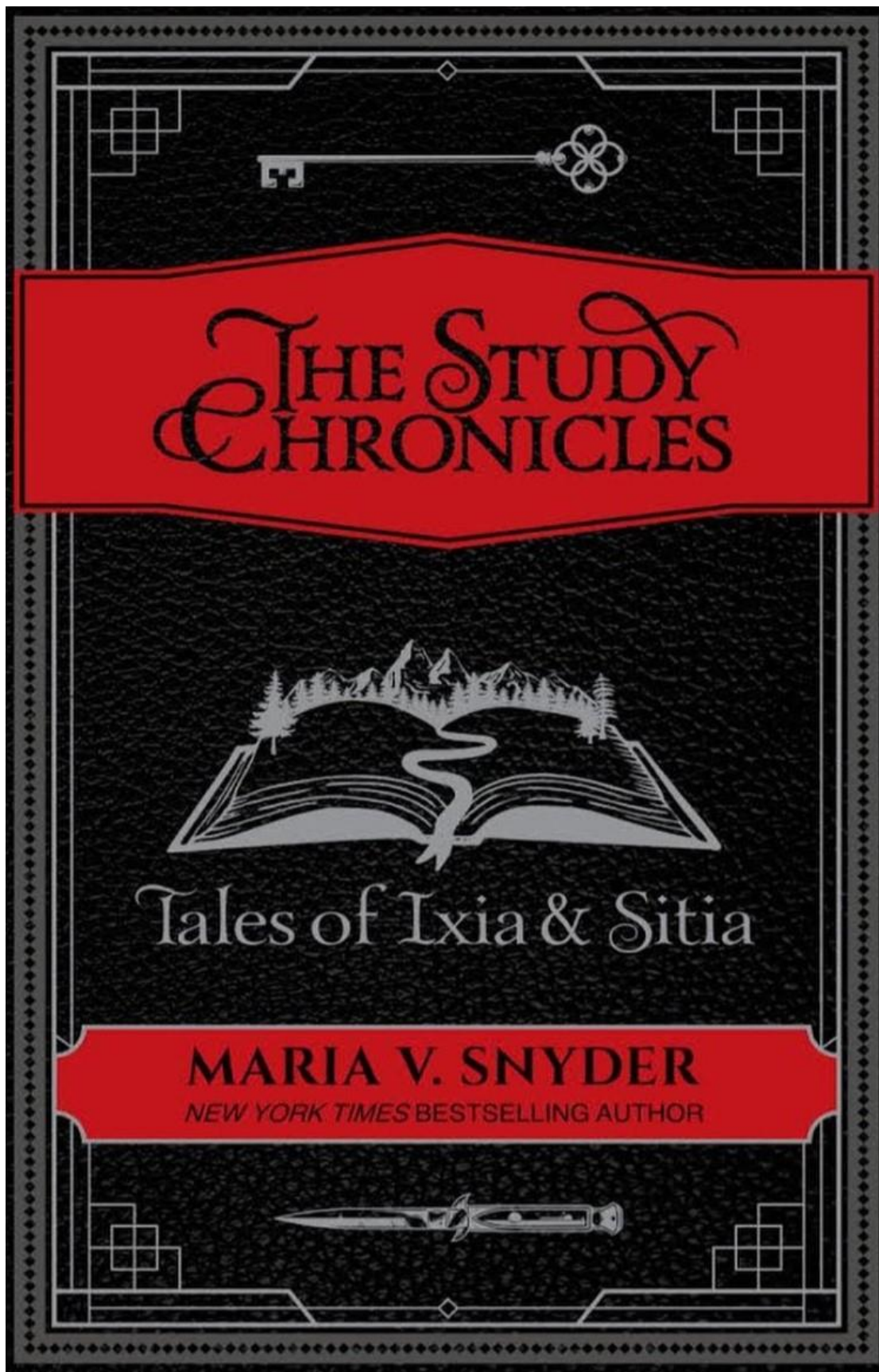
For a couple of years now I've focused my written pieces for Watch The Skies on films and television. While that sort of entertainment is wonderful, I feel that we need to shift from film to other forms of art. As a group, science fiction fandom has some of the most imaginative and talented creators anywhere. If there's a way to create something, they'll find it. If it can tie in with a favorite book or show, so much the better.

My hope is to get some of our members to show off their creations here in the fanzine this year. I would love to see what other folks are making and how it's related to their fandom.

I'll go first! Normally our group sees my artwork on the cover of the 'zine each month. That isn't the only form of art I create. I draw, paint, model and craft as well. As part of an online crafting group I was able to enter a contest for the creation of a "magic potion". Using a bottle and a number of other supplies, I was able to create the "magic potion" *Release*. It's a real, full size bottle with sculpted pieces, painted glass and hand sketched parchment. While it didn't win the contest, I was really pleased with the results.

So ~ what are you working on! Let's show it off!





**AVAILABLE NOW**



# Tillyer's News of the High Frontier

January 2024

Vacuum sealed for your protection takes on a new meaning as NASA struggles to unlock the specimens taken from asteroid Bennu. The OSIRIS-Rex mission which captured samples of the asteroid using the Touch-and-Go Sample Acquisition Mechanism, returned to drop off the sample in September last year. In order to properly review the contents, the container had to be kept completely sealed throughout the journey, through the landing, and the resulting travel to a NASA clean room. To make that happen, the sample container has 35 fasteners. Two of which decided they did not want to cooperate. That left the scientists with a problem. Their standard tools didn't work. They had something pretty much irreplaceable in a vacuum box that was of a limited size. So, they had to create new tools to get those last two fasteners off and that took three and a half months. In the meantime, the scientists did get a bonus. There was debris lodged in the scooping mechanism and they could analyze that while waiting on the rest. One of the things that they discovered is that the asteroid contains hydrated clay material which indicates the presence of water. The point of our interest in samples from Bennu is the ability to look back in time to the coalescence of the Solar System. Scientists believe that the water currently on Earth came from collisions with asteroids. The presence of water on Bennu helps to prove their case. Obviously, they are all very interested in the rest of the sample as well. The preliminary samples also indicated a presence of carbon. This element is essential along with water to promote the evolution of life. Later this year, portions of the Bennu sample will be distributed through the scientific community of the world to allow for global study. After completing its 2.8-billion-mile journey to Bennu and back, OSIRIS-Rex is off again. This time its destination is the asteroid Apophis to gather more samples for further investigation.



