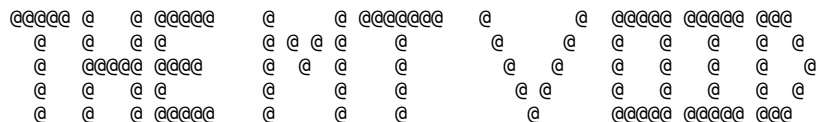


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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society
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An index with links to the issues of the MT VOID since 1986 is at http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm.

Mini Reviews, Part 12 (film reviews by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper):

Here is the twelfth batch of mini-reviews, with movies featuring cars in some fashion.

MANDIBLES (MANDIBULES): In MANDIBLES, two minor criminals find a giant fly the size of a cocker spaniel in the trunk of a stolen car and decide to train it to help them steal things (a la Oliver Twist). The characters are as inept as those in a Coen Brothers film, and the plot is also as strange. It also looks like the filmmakers got many of their ideas from the 1958 version of THE FLY. The film is in French, but with well-done subtitles which are readable on all backgrounds.

Released theatrically 07/23/21; available on various streaming services. Rating: high +1 (-4 to +4), or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10375106/reference>

What others are saying: <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/mandibles>

FIRST DATE: The title is "FIRST DATE" and it is a first date that none of the characters will ever forget. It starts as a mildly vulgar comedy, but you cannot make a funny comedy with just people you detest, and the tone changes to really downbeat and violent as the film goes on. This is a film that has a Quentin Tarrantino vibe. It also has a retro Southern California font for opening credits, which makes it look like it will be lighter than it is.

Released theatrically 07/02/21; available on various streaming services. Rating: high +1 (-4 to +4), or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8897874/reference>

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/first_date_2021

DRIVE MY CAR (DORAIBU MAI KA): This is a very slow-moving film about a experimental theatrical director who has been recently widowed. He is currently doing a multilingual version of "Uncle Vanya", with cast members delivering lines in Chinese, Mandarin, English, and Korean Sign Language. There are lines from "Uncle Vanya" and other familiar plays worked into the plot. There are also tensions among the cast members when they are not acting, as well as between the director and the cast, and the director and his driver, all of which take a long time to be explained. The film is in Japanese, and the subtitles are often useless because they blend into the background.

Released theatrically 11/24/21. Rating: high +1 (-4 to +4), or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt14039582/reference>

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/drive_my_car

[-mrl/ecl]

DANGEROUS VISIONS edited by **Harlan Ellison** (copyright 1967, Doubleday Science Fiction, Book Club Edition, 544pp) (book review by Joe Karpierz):

Many of you who read my reviews may be asking yourself, "You mean he hasn't read DANGEROUS VISIONS before?". Surely he has, and this review is of a re-read of the book. I assure you that's not the case. DANGEROUS VISIONS is fifty-five years old and I have never read before now. This would also imply that I've not read AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS, and that is also true. So why now, fifty-five years after its original publication (and granted, just a couple of years before I became interested in reading science fiction), would I pick up this well known and famous anthology? As readers may know, J. Michael Straczynski, he of BABYLON 5 fame (among other things) and the executor of Harlan Ellison's estate, has decided to put together and publish the one book that Harlan could not: THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS. I decided that since I respect and like Straczynski's work, and I knew he would put together a great anthology, I would read the first two Dangerous Visions books in advance of the release of the final book. A discussion about *that* book coming together is for another day and another writing.

Most of you have probably read DANGEROUS VISIONS and are familiar with the idea for the book and the stories within it. To summarize, the field of science fiction was changing, and in the eyes of many--Ellison and Michael Moorcock just to name two--the change was needed. It was time to break away from the old type of stories, to tell new ones that would break long-standing taboos in the field. Indeed, this book helped usher in the New Wave of science fiction. It contained stories that were outside the mainstream of science fiction, with topics and subject matter that was avant garde at the time. Contributing authors were both new and established. Veterans Theodore Sturgeon, Poul Anderson, Damon Knight and Robert Silverberg (among others) are here, along with relative newcomers to short fiction, such as Samuel R. Delany (and we all know the stellar career he had).

There are thirty-three stories here, and in addition to the authors I've already listed, I'll mention Philip Jose Farmer, Philip K. Dick, Larry Niven, Frederik Pohl, Larry Niven, Carol Emshwiller, and R. A. Lafferty. Some of the authors in the book I read for the first time when I read this book; others are familiar names.

This anthology was a big deal at the time, and in many ways set the tone and direction for the field for the field going forward. I decided to do a little bit of digging in the Science Fiction Awards Database to see the honors that stories contained in DANGEROUS VISIONS accumulated. The thing that should be noted is that back in 1968, the year after the book was published, there were only two major fiction awards presented: the Hugo and the Nebula. For the Hugos, stories gathered two winners ("Riders of the Purple Wage" by Philip Jose Farmer for Best Novella--tied with Anne McCaffrey's "Weyr Search) and "Gonna Roll the Bones" by Fritz Leiber for Best Novelette) and five total nominations (the aforementioned winners plus "Faith of Our Fathers" by Philip K. Dick in the Novelette category; and "Aye, and Gomorrah..." by Samuel R. Delany and "The Jigsaw Man" by Larry Niven in the Short Story category. For the Nebulas, there were two winners (the Leiber and the Delany), and two other nominations (the Farmer, and "If All Men Were Brothers, Would You Let One Marry Your Sister?", by Theodore Sturgeon in the Novella category).

My favorite? By far, "Gonna Roll the Bones", by Fritz Leiber. And I really could see that Delany was going to be a force, if he wasn't already, with "Aye, and Gomorrah...". Honestly, I couldn't get into "Riders of the Purple Wage". But six different stories being at least nominated out of a total of thirty-three? That's just under 20% of the stories (if I did my math right) in the anthology and is absolutely amazing. Honestly, there are any number of other stories here that could have been nominated for one of the two awards, but as I look at the stories that did make the nominations list, well, there's no shame in losing out. And, as I've said before, with any anthology there are going to be some stories that make you scratch your head.

I do understand why this anthology was a game changer for the field, something new and different at the time it was published. I'm fairly certain that if this book was published today, it would not garner the attention that it did back then, simply because the stories it contained back then influenced the short fiction that is being written today. What was a dangerous vision back then is simply another vision today. In that respect, the book did what it was intended to do, and the field is better for it. [-jak]

Topical Films (letter of comment by Evelyn C. Leeper):

In response to [my comments on topical films in the 03/25/22 issue of the MT VOID, I want to add THE CONTENDER \(2000\).](#) [-ecl]

This Week's Reading (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

I wrote a couple of months ago about DISCURSO E HISTORIA EN LA OBRA NARRATIVA DE JORGE LUIS BORGES by

Nicholas Emelio Alvarez. To go with this I am also reading FICCIONES and EL ALEPH--or should I say "El Aleph"s? Because there are at least five variant editions (counting both Spanish and English):

- A 1949 Spanish edition with thirteen stories
- A 1952 Spanish edition with seventeen stories
- A 1971 Spanish edition with eighteen stories
- A (sort of) English edition [year unknown] titled THE ALEPH AND OTHER STORIES 1922-1969 (translated by Andrew Hurley) with various stories, but only some from EL ALEPH, and some from FICCIONES and elsewhere,
- A 1970 English edition titled THE ALEPH AND OTHER STORIES 1933-1969, but translated by Norman Thomas di Giovanni

Another English-language collection, LABYRINTHS, contains pieces from a variety of Spanish collections, and has translations by Donald Yates and James Irby. The only two comprehensive works of Borges's fiction are the Spanish OBRAS COMPLETAS (three volumes, plus a fourth of collaborations with other authors, which includes non-fiction and poetry as well), and the English COLLECTED FICTIONS, with translations by Andrew Hurley.

All this makes collecting all of Borges's fiction difficult for an Anglophone. In Spanish, when the publishers assembled non-fiction pieces they had previously missed in the first two volumes, at least they did not re-issue a new, totally chronological set, but just added a third volume.

All this will seem familiar to collectors of Mark Twain. Way back in the day (1957, I think), Bantam issued "The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain". It wasn't. About the same time "The Autobiography of Mark Twain" (both edited by Charles Neider) was published. That was also inaccurate--Twain's true autobiography was just recently published in three thick volumes.

There have been sets of Twain's writings, sets of a couple of dozen books, but even those are probably incomplete. [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

I feel more like when I woke up today than I do now.

Tweet

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