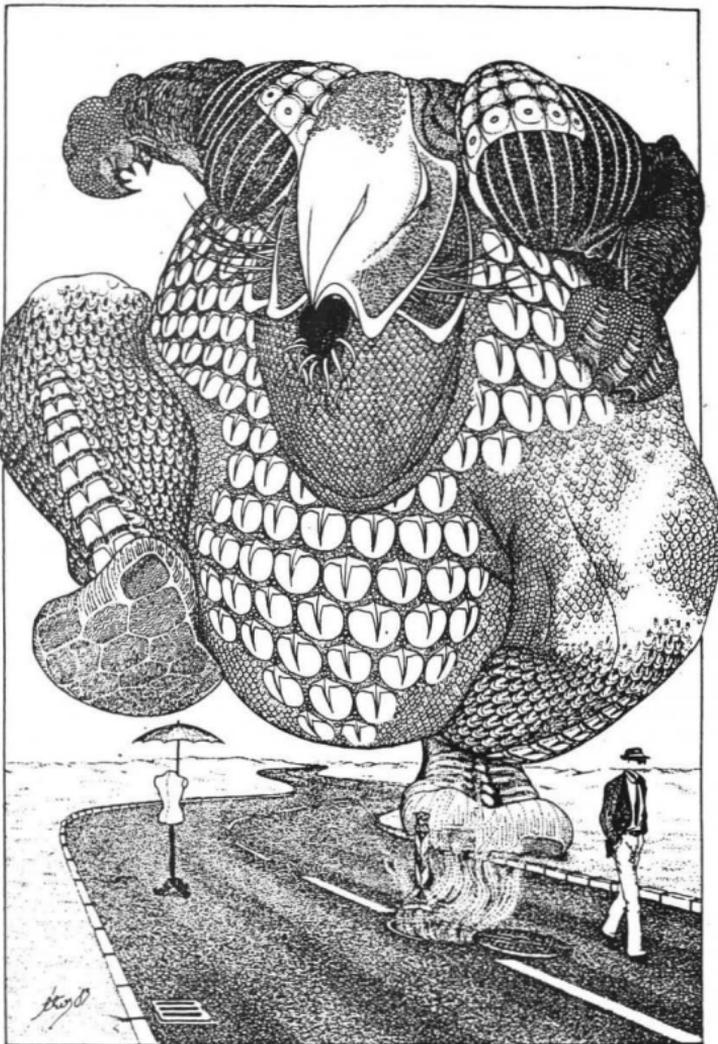


# Matrix 111

The newsletter of the British Science Fiction Association



£1.25

April - May 1994

## Membership

This costs £18 per year (UK and EC). Please enquire for overseas rates.

New members: Alison Cook, 27 Albemarle Drive, Grove, Wantage, Oxon OX12 0NB

Renewals: Keith Freeman, 269 Wykeham Road, Reading, RG6 1PL

USA: Cy Chauvin, 14248 Wilfred Street, Detroit, MI 48213, U.S.A.

### Vector

Catie Curry, 224 Southway, Park Barn, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6DN

### Focus

Carol Ann Green, 5 Raglan Avenue, Raglan Street, Hull HU5 2JB and Julie Venner, 42 Walgrave Street, Newland Avenue, Hull HU5 2LT

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Joint Administrators: Maureen Speller, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ and Catie Curry, 224 Southway, Park Barn, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6DN

Treasurer: Elizabeth Billinger, 82 Kelvin Road, New Cubbington, Leamington Spa CV32 7TQ

Orbiters: Carol Ann Green, 5 Raglan Avenue, Raglan Street, Hull HU5 2JB

Awards: Nicholas Mahoney, 275 Lonsdale Avenue, Intake, Doncaster DN2 6HG

Foreign Liaison: Bridget Wilkinson, 17 Mimosas, 29 Avenue Road, London N15

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### Deadlines for the year:

*Matrix 112*: Deadline May 13, to printer May 27, mailing out June 17

*Matrix 113*: Deadline July 15, to printer July 29, mailing out August 19

*Matrix 114*: Deadline September 16, to printer September 30, mailing out October 20

*Matrix 115*: Deadline November 11, to printer November 25, mailing out December 16.

## Determinants

This issue of *Matrix* will be the last one Steve and I will edit: as we are both involved heavily with organising the fan programme for Intersection, the Glasgow Worldcon in 1995, this needs to take priority over other activity and I especially want to spend more time with my children. We have been looking after *Matrix* for four years now and on the whole it has been extremely interesting and rewarding. I have certainly enjoyed it a lot and recently have had a lot of proof-reading help from Chris Terran who is meticulous (but then, members will have noticed the sharp decrease in typographical and typing errors in the magazine). I'd really like to take this opportunity to thank him together with the other people who keep *Matrix* going: Barry Traish, Harry Payne, Peter Tennant, John Madracki, Mark Ogier, Roger Robinson, Dave Bell, Pete Cox, and Geoff Cowie. Getting *Matrix* together has always been a team effort and that is one of the things I shall miss a lot.

That's not to say that we shall lose contact, because one of the key themes of the fan programme in Intersection will be active (and willing) involvement.

The morning part of the fan programme will be co-ordinated by Jackie McRobert. She is very enthusiastic about encouraging people into fandom and has a lot of original and innovative ideas. Her piece on a possible way forward for the BSFA was reprinted in the last issue of *Matrix* from her own fanzine, *The Startled Bunny*. I know from bitter experience with young children that people new to fandom are not the only ones who are first up in the morning, so the morning programme will also cater for early risers, reluctant or otherwise. The programme in the afternoon will have items more of interest to fans than, perhaps, for fans. So a typical programme item will be more likely to analyse the interest of narrow boating than how many staples should be in a fanzine, and fanzine production will be recognised as one of many interests fans may have rather than one of the most important and basic.

With a Guest of Honour like Samuel Delany, it would be a tremendous shame not to have a gay theme running through the programme. This is being looked after by Jane Carnall.

Christina Lake and Lilian Edwards will help with the evening programme and also possibly one of the convention publications: tentatively titled *Soundbytes*, it will consider fan history since the last British Worldcon, Conspiracy in 1987. The other planned fan publication will include the best fan writing since Conspiracy, selected by Abigail Frost.

One project I am very enthusiastic about is an SF Atlas of Great Britain. It was inspired by seeing a Fantasy Guide to Great Britain produced for the recent Tolkien conference. There were a few intriguing gaps in it and I started thinking

about places with SF connotations: Corfe Castle, the North Road Bridge, a water-logged East Anglia, a melancholy near-future Manchester. This will be a very long-term project.

The flip side of all this positive encouragement is that there is a great deal of work involved and neither Steve nor I want to burn out as a fan. We don't want to find that our fannish stuff is a chore, especially as my children are fannishly inclined and have just finished the latest issue of their fanzine, *Cyber Bunny* (they were very un-keen about the prof redning for some obscure reason). So, with reluctance, Steve and I have decided that *Matrix* will be passed on to a new editor to whom both of us will give every encouragement.

There was not very much time between receipt of the mailing and the deadline this time and it is very creditable that the letter column should be so interesting. Also, there is a questionnaire prepared by Debra Kerr on SF reading and convention behaviour for members to fill in.

So now it's goodbye from me and it's goodbye from him. We have tried to produce an interesting and readable magazine while having fun ourselves. Along the way, we've gained a lot of experience in magazine production and even more friends. Steve and I would like to keep both.

The new editor of *Matrix* has not been announced yet (as of 7 April 1994), so please could any contributors send their pieces to Maureen Speller, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, CT19 5AZ.

## Evolution: the 1996 Eastercon

The bid to host the 1996 Eastercon has been won by Evolution, chaired by Bridget Hardcastle, who was involved with Imperial College conventions. The rest of the committee includes Simon Bisson, Mary Branscombe, Pat McMurray, Steve Glover, Mark Charsley and the Guests of Honour are Vernor Vinge, Colin Greenland and Jack Cohen with Brian Talbot as Comics Guest of Honour.

The convention will probably take place at the Metropole Hotel, Brighton. For more information, please write to 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 6PX.



## News

From: David Hunter, Nana Yas Mensah, Terry Pratchett, Peter Tennant, Chris Croughton, Arthur D. Hlavaty, Peter Myakoshin, Erica Liebman, Barry Traish, Maureen Speller, Ron Hale-Evan & Childers James, Andy Sawyer and your editors.

## Deaths: Real and Unreal

"Noted Science Fiction author Robert Anton Wilson was found dead in his home yesterday, apparently the victim of a heart attack. Mr Wilson, 63, was discovered by his wife, Arlen." This was reported in the February 22 issue of the *Los Angeles Times*. The article continued "Mr Wilson was the author of numerous books including the co-authorship of the cult classic *Illuminatus!* trilogy. He was noted for his libertarian viewpoints, love of technology, and off the wall humor. During his lifetime, he authored more than twenty books. Mr Wilson is survived by his wife and two children."

No sooner had the commiserations started when Mr Wilson was found not to be dead after all. It was a particularly sick joke, designed by an anonymous trickster. However, a little while later, there was a real death.

"Novelist Robert Shea died this month," wrote Arthur D. Hlavaty. "Best known as co-author (with Robert Anton Wilson) of the *Illuminatus!* trilogy, he also wrote the historical novels *Shike*, *All Things Are Lights*, *The Saracens* and *Shaman*."

"Shea's historical fiction can be described as 'traditional'. Each novel told a story, with beginning, middle, and end, pretty much in that order, and pretty much without obliqueness, irony, ambiguity, metafictional self-reference, and other such post-modern qualities. The books can likewise be described as traditional in morality. Though they do not reflect the punitive sexual code often indicated by that phrase, they unabashedly treat such traits as compassion, courage, and loyalty as Good Things."

"There are those who condescend to this sort of novel. (It is particularly easy to do so if one has not attempted to write one). In reply, one might, at the very least, point out that each apparently simple and straightforward story is also a skilled and complex weaving of many plot threads, told in graceful prose with style and wit, and peopled with richly detailed and fascinating characters."

"As a person, Shea was much like his novels. First and foremost, he believed that people should be nice to each other, but behind this apparently simple approach was an intelligent awareness of the problems it entailed and a perceptive skepticism about the organisations and ideologies which purported to provide and

institutionalise niceness.

"I had the pleasure of knowing Bob Shea, first postally and then in person as well, for fifteen years. When Bernadette Bosky and I had our non-legal wedding ceremony, he officiated, with the style, humour and warmth he brought to everything. He was a flawed human being like all of us, but his good qualities far outweighed his flaws. I will miss him."

— Arthur D. Hlavaty

## Calling all SF lovers

The BBC is looking for enthusiastic and passionate readers who are prepared to air their views in front of a television camera. Has your life been changed by a particular book or author? Are you worried about the gap between science fact and Science Fiction? If you feel passionately about any author, book or genre, the BBC wants to hear from you for a popular books programme to go out on BBC1 in the autumn. Cogent and committed readers of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror should write to Daisy Goodwin, Room 5012, BBC TV, Kensington House, Richmond Way, London W14 0AX (tel: 081 895 6611 ext. 6241).

## Awards

The Arthur C. Clarke award will be presented on April 20 in the Kennedy Room at the Irish Centre, Murray Street, Camden, from 6pm for 7.30pm. Helen Sharman will present the awards, and Geoff Ryman will be the Master of Ceremonies.

The jury consisted of Mark Plummer and Maureen Speller for the Science Fiction Foundation, Catic Cary and Chris Amies for the British Science Fiction Association and Dr John Gribbin and Dr Jeff Kipling for the International Science Policy Foundation. They selected the following books: *A Million Open Doors* by John Barnes; *Ammonite* by Nicola Griffith; *Vurt* by Jeff Noon; *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson; *The Iron Dragon's Daughter* by Michael Swanwick; *The Broken God* by David Zindell.

Dr David Seed will stand as one of the two Foundation judges for the 1994 Arthur C. Clarke Award, replacing Maureen Speller, who will retire by rotation.

For more details, contact the Award Administrator, David V. Barrett, 23 Oakfield Road, Croydon, Surrey CR20 2UD.

## 1994 British Filk Awards

These were awarded at VIBraphone in February as follows:

Best Serious Filk: *Boy in a Room* (Minstrel)  
 Best Rip-Off: *Washing Day* (Phillip Alcock and Anne Whitaker to the tune of *Swing the Cat* by Meg Davis)  
 Best New Filk First Performed at VIBraphone: *Falling Down on the Queen* (Tom Smith)  
 Best Performance: *Chancing Blame* (Razing Arizona at Fourplay. Razing Arizona consisted of Martin Gordon-Kerr, Adam Heath, Valerie

Housden, Minstrel, Smitty and roadie/stage manager Ninja Bear)

All Time Great: *Sam's Song* (Zander Nyron and Soren Nyron).

## Conferences

A most successful meeting of the Utopian Studies Society was held at the University of York in March on Feminist Utopias. The programme consisted of "Edgar Allen Poe's Science Fiction/Feminist Utopia" by Marlene Barr (Virginia Polytechnic, Blacksburg, Virginia); "Lesbians and Virgins: The New Motherhood in *Herland*" by Val Gough (University of Liverpool); "The Construction of the Island of Bali as Utopia" by Mary Condé (Queen Mary and Westfield, London) and "Space, Time and Gender: The Impact of Cybernetics on the Feminist Utopia" by Jenny Wolmark (University of Humber). For details of future meetings, please contact Dr Ruth Levitas, University of Bristol, Dept. of Sociology, 12 Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UQ (tel: 0272 303030, ext. 3149/1).

"Persistence de la Vision" will be held at the Maison d'Ailleurs, Yverdon-les-bains, Switzerland, from April 27-30. Norman Spinrad will attend, with other guests including H.R. Giger. Two exhibitions are currently running: "Alien and Heidi: l'art de science-fiction dans les collections Suisses" and "Korrigan L'Indien", the sculpture of Patrick Rappaz. More details from Roger Gaillard, Maison d'Ailleurs, CP3181, CH-1401 Yverdon-les-bains, Switzerland.

There will be a Cyberotic/Virtual Futures conference at the University of Warwick from May 7-8. "With the development of technologies at the coming of the millennium" the publicity material states, "the humanities find themselves at the crossroads between post-dated modernity and techno-chaos. The conference will welcome all disciplines engaging with the age of information." More details from Ms Joan Broadhurst, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.

The recent re-publication of *The Yellow Wallpaper* and *Herland* reflects the resurgence of interest in Charlotte Perkins Gilman and an international conference will be held at the University of Liverpool, 17-19 July 1995. Invited speakers include Anne Cranny-Francis, Susan Gubar, Mary A. Hill, Ann J. Lane, Elaine Showalter and Sandra Gilbert and it will represent an unprecedented opportunity for scholars working on all aspects of Gilman's work and influence to present and share their research. For more details, please contact Val Gough and Jill Rudd, Dept. of English Language and Literature, University of Liverpool, P.O. Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX (Tel: 051 794 2705, fax 051 794 2730).

There will be an H.G. Wells Society international symposium to mark the centenary of publication of *The Time Machine* at Imperial College of Science and Technology, July 26-29 1995. Please contact the Hon. General Secretary, H.G. Wells Society, English Department, Nene College, Moulton Park, Northampton NN2 7AL for more information.

## Publishing News

Avon: Coming in June will be Andre Norton's *The Hands of Lyr*. The desolate Ryft was once the paradise garden of the goddess Lyr, until the world and civilisation were destroyed by an old and crafty evil. Alnosa, a child refugee, has dwelt with the last priestess of Lyr and developed her extraordinary talent of divining by hand. Thrust unwillingly into the company of Kyrn, an embittered High Born fleeing for his life and fearful of all mystical powers, Alnosa must trust her talent and form an alliance that will restore Lyr to greatness ... or plunge the world into darkness and evil forever.

In July, the third in Sharon Green's magical series will be published: *Dark Mirror, Dark Dreams*. Alexis and Tiran are both full-range shape-shifters and Chalaine and Bariden are both gifted magicians. But they will need to work as a team to rid the neighbouring worlds of ruthless usurpers. Another "series" book will be Stephen Leigh's *Ray Bradbury presents: Dinosaur Warriors*. The time travellers have really been through the mill in previous books and now end up in Mexico, fifty years after the Aztecs have defeated Cortez. They have two options: be sacrificed to the gods or escape through a time portal. This concentrates their minds wonderfully. July 20 represents the 25th anniversary of man's first landing on the moon, so there will be an informative book, Steve Englehart's *Countdown to the Moon*, beginning with step by step detail all the way to the countdown and takeoff, with photographs throughout, including ones from NASA.

The August publishing schedule includes Paul Preuss's *Core*. Leidy Hudder, the main protagonist, is a leading authority on the earth and its minerals, so is very much in demand when the earth's magnetic poles begin to shift and strong solar ray exposure results in the deaths of thousands. There's an imaginative Fantasy adventure, too, with Mark Acres's *Dragon War*, the second instalment in a dazzling new Fantasy adventure series. Bagsby, a clever con man, and Shulana, a female elf, have stolen the mystical golden eggs which Bagsby then steals from Shulana; when the dragons hatch they think that Bagsby is their father (he is stunned, but recovers to go with his new family to rescue the elven community against evil enemy forces). Hard SF will come from Paul J. McAuley's *Eternal Light*. Humanity has won its first brutal conflict with an aggressive alien species, but unfortunately a woman with psychic powers who has been inhabited by an alien mentality is rescued from space detention by an immortal with a grudge. When the scheming immortal pairs up with a renegade pilot, the mission becomes full of scientific speculation. The climax is described as "mind-blowing, apocalyptic".

Baen: An April production is Anne McCaffrey's and Jody Lynn Nye's *The Ship Who Won*. Like Helva, the Ship Who Sang, not to mention Nancica from *ParmerShip*, Tia from *The Ship Who*

*Searched* and Simeon, who runs *The City Who Fought*, Carialle was born so physically disadvantaged that her only chance for life was as a shellperson. Like the others, Carialle decided she would strap on a spaceship and her brawn is a guy called Keff. Their mission is to search the galaxy for intelligent life. However, intelligent life is a bit thin on the ground, so they are overjoyed when they arrive on a world with a type of human life, but who are, unfortunately, virtual slaves to a race of sorcerers who really do seem to possess magical powers of frightening potency. There's a new Honor Harrington novel, too, *The Short Victorious War* by David Weber. The families who rule The People's Republic of Haven want a short victorious war, but they are up against Captain Honor Harrington and the Royal Manticore Navy. Other books starring what is described as "the hottest female captain in the galaxy" are *On Basilisk Station* and *The Honor of the Queen*. The other major SF production of the month is due to be Ben Bova's *The Watchmen*. This contains the full text of two novels: *The Dueling Machine* and *Star Watchman*.

*The City Who Fought* by Anne McCaffrey and S.M. Stirling will come in May, as well as a reissue of the bestselling Planet Pirates series comprising *Saxsinak* by Anne McCaffrey and Elizabeth Moon, *The Death of Sleep* by Anne McCaffrey and Jody Lynn Nye and *Generation Warriors* by Anne McCaffrey and Elizabeth Moon. The Fantasy lead is Mary Brown's *Pigs Don't Fly*, a new quest fantasy by the author of *The Unlikely Ones*. The author lives in Valencia and her previous book was described as "reminiscent of such classics as Tolkien's Ring cycle". Her other books are *Playing the Jack* and *The Heart Has Its Reasons*. Charles Sheffield has taken parts of *Sight of Proteus* and *Proteus Unbound* to form *Proteus Combined*. It is set in the 22nd century, where a combination of computer-augmented bio-feedback and chemotherapy techniques has given man the ability not only to heal himself, but to change himself. This is not always a good thing. Connie Willis presents *The New Hugo Winners: Volume III* which includes her story "Last of the Winnebagoes", a world where Man's Best Friend is extinct and the Humane Society has become a new Gestapo; also Joe Haldeman's "The Hemingway Hoax" introducing an academic who began to write a pastiche of a lost Hemingway manuscript, not knowing that he was so upsetting the far future that the time police would be calling; Lois McMaster Bujold's "The Mountains of Mourning" where Miles Vorkosigan has to solve a crime in addition to being judge, jury and executioner; plus more.

Coming in June will be another Mars book, Frederik Pohl's and Thomas T. Thomas' *Mars Plus*. It starts fifty years after the events of *Man Plus*, when Man is on Mars to stay, or so it seems. However, the computer net on which all Martian life depends has long seemed to have "a mind of its own". Now that mind seems to be in a very bad mood. *Man Plus* will be reissued in August, showing a Project which had begun as a way to explore and colonize Mars by transforming

humans into cyborgs who could thrive in the sub-arctic cold and near-airlessness of the red planet.

*The Man-Kzin Wars VI* is the July lead, originally created by Larry Niven and now featuring short novels by Gregory Benford, Mark O. Martin and Donald Kingsbury; plus *The Guide to Larry Niven's "Ringworld"* by Kevin Stein illustrated by Todd Hamilton and James Clouse. There's more SF, *Star Voyager Academy* by William R. Forstchen scheduled. The big issue in a future which is 150 years away lies between the United Nations of Earth and her colonies on Luna, Mars and in the Belt. The colonies want their freedom, Earth wants to hold on to them, and the elite Star Voyager Academy is likely to be split in the struggle. Fantasy is represented by the *Dragon's Eye* anthology edited by Christopher Stasheff. It gives a look through the dragon's eye into a world of adventure, with stories by Diane Duane, Mike Resnick, Mickey Zucker Reichert, Anne McCaffrey, Jody Lynn Nye, S.M. Stirling, William R. Forstchen and others. One dragon was a close friend of Charles Darwin, another had a fateful meeting with Napoleon, there's the ghost of a silver dragon who came to save a village in peril and a king who was transformed by magic into a dragon. This coincides with *The Gods of War* series created by Christopher Stasheff. Volume one, *The Gods of War*, features Tek, the newest in a long tradition of military deities, with contributions from Katherine Kurtz and Jody Lynn Nye as well as Christopher Stasheff.

Looking further ahead to August, the Fantasy lead is *Chrome Circle* from Mercedes Lackey and Larry Dixon. Tannim is a young human mage with a taste for hot Celtic rock, fast cars and dangerous women. He thinks he's found Ms Right, the only small problems being that her father is a dragon, she's a fox and she wants to kill him. Other volumes in Mercedes Lackey's *Hot Urban Fantasy* series are *Born to Run*, *Wheels of Fire* and *When the Bough Breaks*. Volume IV of the *War World* series created by Jerry Pournelle is scheduled for August as well. The planet Haven was a human dumping ground and, perhaps logically, was always at war. But when the last surviving Saurons, their world destroyed by the Empire of Man, flee to Haven, they arrive as conquerors. This is not surprising since they have been genetically designed to think like battle computers and to fight like demons. But they may have a little trouble making their putative victory stick. Contributors to this volume include S.M. Stirling, John Dalmass and Harry Turtledove. Tie-in reissues are *Revolt on War World*, *Death Head's Rebellion* and *Saaron Dominion*. Turning back to Fantasy again, look out for Doranna Durgin's *Dun Lady's Jess*. The author is a professional horse-handler which gives a clue to the plot: the young woman whom Dayna and Eric find on their property, naked, terrified and incapable of speech is in fact a horse, transformed by a malfunctioning spell. Not only does she want to get back to being a horse, but she wants to find her rider as well.

Del Rey: In April, the publishing schedule consists of Dave Duncan's *The Living God*. This

is the eighth book set in his fantasy world Pandemia, but there are some wicked surprises in store. It is rumoured that even hardened and heartless editors have wept over some of the love stories, so readers should get their tissues ready before even opening this book. More seriously there is *A Guide to the Star Wars Universe*, a greatly expanded version of the 1984 guide, now covering all the facts of the Star Wars universe, so comprehensive that the LucasFilm people are using it as the "bible" for all writers and game designers in the Star Wars universe. Barbara Hambly, who was one of the Guests of Honour at Sou'Wester in Liverpool this Easter, has written *Stranger at the Wedding* which relates the independent fantasy adventure of Kyra who is haunted by dreams that her younger sister will die on her wedding night. Beowulf Shaeffer is one of the most popular characters in Larry Niven's *Known Space* universe and in *Crashlander* all the Beowulf Shaeffer stories appear together, including one almost brand-new, linked with a new framing story which makes the collection read almost like a novel. The last April publication is Paul E. Downing's *A Whisper of Time*. This is an unusual tale about first contact with a twist, it explores what it means to be an alien.

The May books are Terry Brooks' *The Tangle Bar*, Jack McKinney's *The Zentraedi Rebellion*, Tara K. Harper's *Cat Scratch Fever*, Dave Duncan's *The Stricken Field*, Michelle Sagara's *Chains of Darkness, Chains of Light*, the first three books of the 18 volume *Robotech* series, a trade paperback reissue of Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* and a repackage of Alan Dean Foster's *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*.

Looking further ahead, a three-in-one volume of L. Neil Smith's *Adventures of Lando Calrissian* will be published in July.

**Doubleday:** April 28 is the day when two Robert Rankin books will be published. The first will be *Raider of the Lost Car Park* (£14.99). The plot is extremely convoluted, perhaps logically from an author who has been described as "a sort of drinking man's H.G. Wells". It involves Hugo Artemic Solon Sturnic Reginald Arthur Ruge, who also features in the second book published on that date, *The Book of Ultimate Truths*.

Two Terry Pratchett titles are being reissued in hardback this April: *Strata* and *The Dark Side of the Sun*.

**Gollancz:** Highlights from the spring list include Paul Voermans' *The Weird Colonial Boy*, Terry Pratchett's *Soul Music*, D.G. Compton's *Nomansland*, Collin Webber's *Merlin and the Last Trump*, Christopher Evans' *Aztec Century* and Gwyneth Jones' *North Wind*.

As Gollancz are concerned about the lack of media coverage of SF/Fantasy, Richard Evans, the Publishing Director, promises that all letters from the book-reading public which discuss this issue will be sent to the literary editors of the major newspapers. Please write to the Promotions Department, Victor Gollancz, Villiers House, 41-

47 Strand, London WC2N 5JE.

**HarperCollins:** Late in March, Stephen Donaldson's anthology of unforgettable fantasy stories, *Strange Dreams*, was published in paperback. In the Introduction, Stephen Donaldson gives some indication for his particular choice: "Fantasy stories have the capacity to give us knowledge about ourselves that we might not gain from any other source, precisely because their particularity is woven from the stuff of dreams. Ralph Waldo Emerson and C.S. Lewis and Carl Sagan have argued that the way to reach out to our fellow human beings in understanding and empathy is to reach into ourselves.

"The stories [in this anthology] positively refused to be dislodged from my mind because they told me something necessary and true about myself. The disguise may involve Viriconium or Eldwood or India, but the truth shows clear. In strange dreams we see each other most clearly."

The stories included are: "The Aleph" by Jorge Luis Borges; "Lady of the Skulls" by Patricia A. McKillip; "As Above, So Below" by John M. Ford; "Eumenides in the Fourth-Floor Lavatory" by Orson Scott Card; "Narrow Valley" by R.A. LaFerty; "The Dreamstone" by C.J. Cherry; "The Storming of Annie Kinsale" by Lucius Shepard; "Green Magic" by Jack Vance; "The Mark of the Beast" by Rudyard Kipling; "The Big Dream" by John Kessel; "The House of Compassionate Sharers" by Michael Bishop; "The Fallen Country" by Somtow Sucharitkul; "Strata" by Edward Bryant; "And Now the News..." by Theodore Sturgeon; "The White Horse Child" by Greg Bear; "Prince Shadowbow" by Sheri S. Tepper; "The Girl Who Went to the Rich Neighborhood" by Rachel Pollack; "Consequences" by Walter Jon Williams; "The Stone Fey" by Robin McKinley; "Close of Night" by Daphne Castelli; "Hogfoot Right and Bird-Hands" by Garry Kilworth; "Longtooth" by Edgar Pangborn; "My Rose and My Glove" by Harvey Jacobs; "With the Original Cast" by Nancy Kress; "In the Penal Colony" by Franz Kafka; "Jeffy is Five" by Harlan Ellison; "Air Raid" by John Varley and "The Dancer from the Dance" by M. John Harrison.

An interesting April publication is *Tolkien's Ring* by David Day, illustrated by Alan Lee. Day aims to show how *The Lord of the Rings* is the result of an ancient story-telling tradition and how J.R.R. Tolkien used source material from primary myths and legends to create his own mythology for the twentieth century. *Green Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson is another April book, a sequel to *Red Mars*. It opens with the scene of a despairing Mars following the violent and failed revolution of 2062, though there are a few survivors of the First Hundred still trying to create a new world.

May publications include Robert Silverberg's *Hot Sky at Midnight* in hardback. Victor Farkas has arrived on Valaraiso Nuevo looking for Dr Wu who shaped his life. But as Earth dies, the satellite worlds become prime territory for takeover and Farkas finds himself a

little confused. Another Spring publication will be the three-in-one volume of Stephen Donaldson's *Second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant*. Thomas has freed the land of Lord Foul after a massive struggle and now has to combat The Despairer. Luckily, Thomas has a companion this time, Linden Avery, as he strives to heal the stricken land.

Clive Barker's book *Everville*, book 2 of *The Art*, is scheduled for September and promises to be as brilliant as *Only Forward*, the debut novel by UK writer Michael Marshall Smith which went into reprint before publication on 28 March.

Barbara Hambly is on a short publicity tour in the Spring, and Janny Wurts will come in August, to coincide with the publication of *Curse of the Mistwraith*.

Looking further ahead, Mike Jeffries will make a return to traditional fantasy with *The Knights of Cawdor* in Spring 1995; Guy Gavriel Kay's new fantasy, *The Lions of Al-Rassan*, will be set in an alternative-medieval world using Spain and Moorish culture as a background (coming in March 1995); Stephen Lawhead has moved from Lion to HarperCollins with his next book, *Byzantium*, an eleventh century quest from Ireland to Byzantium (Spring 1996) and finally HarperCollins have recently purchased the *Song of Fire and Ice* trilogy by George R.R. Martin for a record-breaking sum. Editors Malcolm Edwards and Jane Johnson both say that it is the best start to a fantasy series they have ever read. But everyone else will have to wait until October 1995 to read it.

A brief flick through the 1995 schedule shows that January 1995 will produce David Edding's *The Hidden City*, Graham Edwards' *Turning the World*, reissues of T.H. White's *The Sword in the Stone* and *The Ill-Made Knight*, Stan Robinson's *The Gold Coast* and Barbara Hambly's *Dragonsbane*. In February, there should be Robert Silverberg's *Hot Sky at Midnight*, Janny Wurts' *Wizard of the Owls*, Stephen Donaldson's *Chaos and Order* and David Zindell's *The Wild*. There will be two more reissues of T.H. White works in March: *The Witch in the Wood* and *The Candle in the Wind*, plus Julian May's *Sky Trillium* and Robert Holdstock's *Merlin's Wood and Ancient Echoes*.

April 1995 books will be Raymond Feist's *Shadow of a Dark Queen* and another, as yet untitled, Louise Cooper's *Moonset* and Janny Wurts' *Stormwarden*. There's an untitled book from Megan Lindholm in May with Janny Wurts' *Ships of Merlor*, *The Book of Sorcery* edited by Katharine Kerr, *Pacific Edge* by Stan Robinson and another Janny Wurts book, *The Keeper of the Keys*. Finally in June, there will be two Katherine Kerr books, *A Time of Justice* and another as yet untitled, two more reissues from T.H. White, *The Book of Merlyn* and *The Once and Future King* plus Janny Wurts' *Shadowfane*.

**Hodder & Stoughton:** Highlights of the spring are Ben Bova's new novel *Death Dream*, the film tie-in edition to Stephen King's *Needful Things*, Christopher Pike's first adult horror novel,

Gideon, Whitley Streiber's new novel *The Forbidden Zone* and also new acquisitions from A.A. Attanasio and more from Gene Wolfe, Piers Anthony, Robert A. Vardeman and Jack Vance.

Further ahead, Harry Turtelove's high concept SF novel, currently titled *World War in the Balance* is scheduled for November publication. It is an alternative history set around the Second World War. Two of Patricia Anthony's books, *Cold Allies* and *Brother Termit* have just been purchased, the first to be published in paperback in 1995. A four novel package from Robert J. Sawyer has just been purchased, starting with *End of an Era* in September 1994. It will be followed by an alien dinosaur trilogy. And, as if that is not enough, there will be new hardbacks in the autumn from Stephen King, Stephen Laws, Christopher Pike, David Wingrove, Joe Haldeman, Piers Anthony and A.A. Attanasio.

**Legend:** Tad Williams will feature heavily with the April schedule with *To the Green Angel Tower, part 1*, and *Caliban's Horse* in hardback and trade paperback. Harry Harrison's *Galactic Visions* will also come in simultaneous hard and paperback.

In May, there will be two Philip Williamson books, *Moonblood* and *Heart of Shadows*, a Terry Brooks book, possibly *The Tangle Brook* and Maggie Furey's *Aurian*. June will be split between Peter Morwood with *Greyglady: Clan Wars 1* and *Widowmaker: Clan Wars 2* and Brian Jacques with *Mattimeo* and *Marlet of Redwall*. There will also be Stephen Marley's *Shadow Sisters*.

July will be the month of sequels with Tad Williams' *To the Green Angel Tower, part 2* and Robert Asprin's *Phule's Company 3* and there will be a Greg Bear book, *New Legends*.

The rest of the year will feature Andrew Harman's *Braid Runner*, C.J. Cherryh's *Faery in Shadow* and Maggie Furey's *Harp of Winds* in August; Harry Harrison's and "J. Holm"'s *The Hammer and the Cross* in September; David Gemmell's *The First Chronicles of Druss the Legend*; *Wolf in Shadow: the Graphic Novel*; and *Bloodstone* in October and Greg Bear's *Moving Mars* in November.

**Michael O'Mara Books:** Their latest book is *Colin the Librarian, the Chronicles of Ancient Threa, volume 3 or maybe 4* by Tony Keavney and Rich Parsons. Colin is the kind of wimpy late-developer that many people imagine Fantasy fiction appeals to. His only escape from a bland existence in Clacton Library is his favourite Fantasy, *The Chronicles of Ancient Threa*. Colin idolises the saga's hero, Krap the Conqueror, muscular, manly and indiscriminate. But he's a little unsure when he has his materialises at the library desk ... just in time to save Colin from a Tharg (no one wants a Tharg in their local library or anywhere else). Krap and Colin join forces in the usual heroic quest and no cliché of sword and sorcery is allowed to escape unmocked in this adventure.

As a contrast to the usual Christmas books filled with joy and goodwill, there will be

an anthology edited by Richard Dalby, *Shivers for Christmas*, with contributions from Terry Pratchett, Stephen Gallagher, Ray Bradbury and others.

**Millenium:** 1994 treats include K.W. Jeter's *The Deckard Chronicles* (two novels conceived as sequels to *Blade Runner*) and Terry Goodkind's *Wizard's First Rule*. This August publication is described as "a 900 page blockbuster Fantasy".

**Orbit:** They are reprinting Rachel Pollack's *Unquenchable Fire* in April. Jennifer Mazdan falls pregnant from a dream and finds the subsequent struggle to control her own life raises all sorts of questions about her fundamental attitudes. The newest Rachel Pollack is *Temporary Agency*, a dark Fantasy about Paul. One of the ancient ferocious dark spirits has fallen in love with him. He turns to his cousin, Ellen, for help, she turns to the toughest lawyer she can find.

**Pan:** *Streamkelder* is Simon Harding's first novel, to be published as a paperback in April. It is quoted to be "a novel on the dark edge of our lives; a novel like you've never read before. Sharp, clever, hip and aware, it is powered by a first person narrative of unprecedented force. David, the narrator, is sour, cynical, deplorably full of a tired hatred for nearly everyone — and wonderful company; he is witty, extremely bright, suffers fools not at all gladly and has a way with words that will delight you." Many of the episodes here are based on events which the author has covered, as a journalist, in his area. He is an editor on the *Bristol Observer* group of papers and is also interested in the English civil war, history and rock music. His second novel, *Changeling Hearts*, will come from Pan in 1995. Peter F. Hamilton also uses his local area as background for his thrillers, though he takes the time forward to a 21st century East Anglia transformed by global warming. His *A Quantum Murder* is also scheduled for paperback publication in April: it introduces Professor Edward Kitchener, double Nobel Laureate, ignominiously deceased, his lungs carefully spread out on each side of his opened chest. Enter Greg Mandel, the PSI-boosted ex-private eye, who prefers to stay in retirement and has to be coaxed out with care.

In May, Lois McMaster Bujold's *Barryar* will be published. Described in the publicity material as "Science Fiction with a woman's touch", there is a certain amount of sentimentality, fortunately less obvious in her other books. Kate Elliott's *Jaran* is another May paperback. Aliens have overrun Earth and extended their influence through inhabited space; the foreground of the plot features pseudo-medieval human settlers who have forgotten about technology and who become victims in the larger game.

Freda Warrington's *A Dance in Blood Vexel* is scheduled for June publication. Charlotte has forsaken her human life for love of her vampire suitor, Karl, as foretold in *A Taste of Blood Wine*, but Karl's former lover reappears

from the depths of the Crystal Ring and in despair Charlotte turns to the prima ballerina Violette Lenoir, yet another ice maiden, but a human one. An extract of this book follows: "The strangest thing, he thought, is that [Charlotte] hardly seems outwardly changed at all. She insists that she's always the same inside: amoral. It only took the vampire's kiss to bring her home. Yet I know that she has changed, is still changing. How could it be otherwise? The look in her eyes sometimes. The way she is with her victims ..." Another June publication will be Poul Anderson's *Harvest of Stars*. Earth is crushed in the grip of global totalitarianism and Kyra Davis is sent on a mission to liberate the last bastion of freedom in a distant area of inhabited space. She finds it to be a far more unexpectedly dangerous mission than anticipated.

Later in the year, there is the sequel to *The Sorceress and the Cygnets*, Patricia A. McKillip's *The Cygnets and the Firebird* which depicts Meguet of Ro Holding being carried away from the security of her ancient castle to the Luxour Desert. The magnificent cover art is by Ian Miller. In August, Melanie Rawn's *Skybow* will be published. It is another complicated plot, described as a "dramatic character-led fantasy saga". Here is an extract: "A tall, powerfully built Vellanti whose beard was thick with gold tokens glanced up at the moonless sky and rapped out a command. Instantly, the hollow was alive with movement. Men rose and stretched and finished off their drinks; some went to bring the horses around. It was only when one of them came roaring back into the camp shouting 'Encl'im! Encl'im!' that Sethric realised what Kazander had done. The word was a familiar one, though seldom used in the plural like this." Another August publication is Eric Brown's *Enginemans*. A man with half a face offers ex-Engineer Ralph Mirren the chance to escape his ruined life and push a ship to an undisclosed destination; he reckons he's got nothing to lose. The cover bears a *Vector* quote, describing Eric Brown as "one of the very best of the new generation of British SF writers".

**Permeable Press:** Their latest book (*due on May 15*) is Lance Olsen's new novel, *Tongue and the Zeitgeist*. It stars Ben Tdeno, a twenty-something acoustic guitar player in an age of megarock and MacJobs and is set in the near future of the U.S. Pacific Northwest. Somehow, Ben becomes the victim of a Faustian star-maker plot.

Besides the first full-length study of William Gibson, Lance Olsen has also written the novel *Live from Earth* and numerous essays, poems and reviews.

**Serif** is an independent publishing house set up in 1993 which aims to publish the best modern writing at affordable prices to a broad public. It will publish Steve Aylett's *The Crime Studio* on April 26. This concerns Beerlight, a wild city full of people whose sanity has hit the powerlines, a place where crime and violence are the only things that pay, and where even the squalor is nuclear-powered. Weaponry, rather than fast cars

or designer clothes, is the ultimate status symbol. The populace is dedicated to law-breaking, politically incorrect views and hurling abuse and hand-grenades at each other. The cast of hoodlums includes burglar extraordinaire Billy Panacea, Gerty Hundred Ram, the unwitting bank-robber and other fun-loving felons who hang out at the Delayed Reaction Bar on Valentine Street reading the *Parole Violators Bugle*. Steve Aylett works as a legal editor during the day, and spends the night, it seems, stroking ferns. He does love doughnuts and *Tank Girl* as well. This is his first published novel.

Other Serif publications include Jorge Semprun's *The Cattle Track* about a Spanish exile's long train journey to Buchenwald and Ursula Molinaro's *Fat Skeletons* which concerns a wily translator who plots to sabotage the work of a young Czech novelist.

**Transworld:** Paula Volky's *The Wolf of Winter* will be published at the end of July. It is set in the frozen land of Rhazaulle where the nobility are decadent. Prince Varis has secretly resorted to the addictive art of necromancy with the aim of usurping the Wolf Throne, but his greatest challenge comes in the person of his beautiful niece Shalindra, who is dedicated to the cause of bringing her brother Cerrow, the rightful heir, to the throne. Shalindra is both attracted and repelled by her uncle.

## Magazines

**Alternate Worlds:** 48 A4 pages, \$5 per issue (\$18 for four issues from Robert Schmunk, 611 W 111th #26, NY, NY 10025, USA) or £3 per issue (£10 for four issues) to *Alternate Worlds*, 19 Bruce Street, Roudbourne, Swindon SN2 2EL. This magazine focuses on alternate history. Issue 2 examined Operation Sealion, issue 3 will take a look at the War of 1812, then issue 4 will consider the American Civil War.

**Alternatives 15:** A5, 56pp, £1.25 or £6.50 for 6 issues from Alternatives, 39 Balfour Court, Station Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 4XT. Fiction by John Gaunt, Mike Anders, Nigel Leyland, Marcus Price, Mary Scott-Parker, Simon Kerr, Nigel Long, Frank Oliver, Stuart Hardy and Fiona Horspool. Artwork by Becky Harris Christian Holt, Hubert Schweizer and Mark Rose. Comment by Andy Cox. Articles on the *Terminator* films and computer gaming.

**Books for Keeps:** A recent issue of this children's book magazine included a feature on Fantasy and SF. This included a speech by Terry Pratchett given at the Booksellers' Association Conference dinner last April, where he remembered his science school education: "Yuri Gagarin was spinning around above our heads, but I don't recall anyone at school ever mentioning the fact. I don't even remember anyone telling us that science was not about messing around with chemicals and magnets, but rather a way of looking at the universe."

\*Science Fiction looked at the universe

all the time. I make no apology for having enjoyed it. We live in a Science Fiction world: two miles down there you'd fry and two miles up there, you'd gasp for breath, and there is a small but significant chance that in the next thousand years a large comet or asteroid will smack into the planet. Finding this out when you're thirteen or so is a bit of an eye-opener. It puts acne in its place, for a start."

In another interview, Susan Cooper chatted with Stephanie Nettall about her writing career: "The busiest year of my life" she said "was probably when I turned ten: I was writing a play for a puppet theatre with the boy next door, editing a little magazine with the son of a music teacher and writing and illustrating a very small book. I was so dismayed when an uncle later found it in a drawer that I tore it up and burst into tears!

"And I still write for myself — a real writer would go on writing even on a desert island, given the paper."

Jessica Yates gives recommendations about SF, in an article similar to her *Vector* piece, and Douglas Hill thinks about the reasons why he writes SF for kids: "Science Fiction is future fiction, and the future belongs to kids.

"SF cannot, of course, predict the future (though writers like Arthur C. Clarke haven't done badly). What it can do instead is prepare us for the fact that social and technological change is progressive and accelerating, and that the future is therefore going to be unavoidably, shockingly, unpredictably different from today.

"For a twelve-year-old on the one-way fast track into tomorrow, that is quite a useful early awareness to acquire."

When added to a long list of reviews, this is a magazine worth looking at. Annual subscription for six issues is £12 from Books for Keeps, The Old Chapel, Easton, near Winchester, Hampshire SO21 1EG.

**Dark Dreams 9:** Ghost story special, A5, 36pp, £2 from Jeffrey Dempsey, 2 Looe Road, Croxteth, Liverpool L11 6LU.

Fiction from Russell Flinn, Steve Sneyd, A.F. Kidd, Ron Weighell, Peter A. Hough and D.F. Lewis. Verse by Fiona Macleod and Jessica Amanda Salmonson. Artwork by Alan Hunter, Chris Hulme, Dave Carson, Steve Skwarek, A.F. Kidd, Nick Gadsby, Allen Koszowski, Dallas Goffin and Jim Garrison.

**Dementia 13:** A4, 64pp, £2.80 or £8.50 for 4 issues from Pam Creais, 17 Pinewood Avenue, Sidcup, Kent DA15 8BB.

Fiction by Paul Pinn, Mark Samuels, R.J. Frost, Andrew Ferguson, Neal Asher, Ian Hunter and Conrad Williams. Artwork by Steve Lewis, Dallas Goffin, Kerry Earl, Dom Ganzelli, Paul Cockburn, Steve Skwarek, Roddy Williams, David Mundin and Mike Phibin. Book reviews and small press listings. Articles on Hertzian Chimera, Clark Ashton Smith, the 10th Edinburgh Book Festival, H.P. Lovecraft and cryptic codes in genre fiction.

**Ghosts and Scholars 17:** A5, 52pp, £3 from Rosemary Pardoe, Flat One, 36 Hamilton Street, Hoole, Chester CH2 3JQ.

Fiction by Terry Lamsley, John Alfred Taylor, D.F. Lewis and William I.I. Read. Artwork by Douglas Walters, Dallas Goffin, Alan Hunter and Jim Pitts. Articles on the fiction of M.R. James and Eleanor Scott.

**Grotesque 4:** A4, 52pp, £2.50 or £9 for 4 issues from David Logan, 24 Hightown Drive, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, N Ireland BT36 7TG.

Fiction by John Duffield, Tom Baldwin, Kim Lyst, Cathy Buburuz, Neal Asher, Conrad Williams, Chris Kenworthy, Frank O. Dodge, Katherine Roberts, D.F. Lewis, Jessica Anderson and Philip Turner. Artwork by Richard Kerr, Cathy Buburuz, Marge Simon and Frank O. Dodge. Small press reviews.

**Peeping Tom 13:** A5, 52pp, £2.10 or £7.50 for 4 issues from David Bell, Yew Tree House, 15 Nottingham Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1DU.

Fiction by Brian Stableford, Peter Reveley, Nancy Kilpatrick, Jack Wainer, Conrad Williams, J.M. Evans, John Paul Calton, Alan Hann and Paul Pinn. Artwork by Peter Queally, Kerry Earl, Chico Kidd, Philip Rowland and Dallas Goffin.

**Phlogiston:** This is a quarterly SF magazine from New Zealand. The August 1994 issue will be a special theme issue on comics, with a focus on anthropomorphic and hopefully a cover by Craig Hilton. More details from Alex Heatley, Information Technology Services, University of Wellington, Victoria, PO Box 600, New Zealand.

**Prophetic Voices:** \$7 per issue (£8 for non-US). 164pp, card cover, from Ruth Wildes Schuler, Heritage Trails Press, 94 Santa Maria Drive, Novato, California 94947-33737, USA.

This international literary journal concentrates on poetry and fiction. The poetry ranges in subject matter widely: one poem I liked by Indian poet Dwarakenteh H. Kabadi, called *Breathing Graves* started: "Breathing graves/Below the burning stars/A naked world/Around the mountains ..."

**Scheherazade 9:** The latest issue of this magazine of Fantasy, Science Fiction and Gothic Romance included Cherry Wilder's "The Lodestone", Cherith Baldry's "The Failed Enchanter", Julia Hawkes-Moore's "Loss of a Nightingale", P.G. McCormack's "Sister Claude", Liz Counihan's "Glittering Spires" and an interview with Mary Alleguino, one of the team who produced *My Left Foot* and particularly *Into the West*. There was also a celebratory exhibition of original artwork entitled *Nights of Scheherazade* in Brighton during February. More details from Deirdre Counihan, St Ives, Maypole Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1HL.

**The Collision Zone:** "The Collision Zone is the intersection between dreams of a gleaming future fit for heroes and the reality of those of us who

must try to live in it. There are no certainties here: only survivors. Likewise, there are no trends, no tired/wired transpitter foolishness. This is not a focus for self-deconstructing yuppie technojunkies and cyberwankers — this is a course guide for survivors. If you want to look into the abyss, if you want to understand the pressures that are slowly turning the melting pot of society into a pressure cooker time bomb, this is where to start. You might not enjoy what you find ... but, as the Party used to say, "[your] ignorance is [our] strength."

"Collusion Zone is looking for written, visual or multimedia work to publish. Our obsessions include Moore's Law, dumb drugs, information theory, [un]Necessary Illusions, Corporate Marketing Scams, muzak for plastic people, and any perversions you think will squick us." Contact Charlie Stross, Flat Above, 304 Hagen Lane, Watford WD1 8LH.

**The Vance Phile:** The February issue contains a very extensive bibliography of Vance's works that have been translated into Dutch, including the fascinating information that *Throy* came out in the Netherlands before the US Tor hardcover. The Leon J. Janzen series on "The Elusive Volumes of Jack Vance" is continued, this time on *The Languages of Pao*. He starts off by giving some reasons for returning regularly to Vance's works: "His addictive stories offer environments tangible in their detail, with strange textures, and flavours, and people (human and otherwise) who are cynical, unsympathetic and predatory. Vance assembles his worlds with his words in a style considered completely unique by his readers. Most of his books have a main character moving within a fully realised 'alien' society ... and if Vance's hero is not overly defined, his culture and the terrain he traverses will be visualised to everyone's satisfaction. Simple but realistic emotions (usually fear, greed and the need to outwit each other) serve to describe the merchants and officials, kings and commoners which populate Vance's worlds." Contact Gregg Parmentier at 2018 Waterfront Drive #137, Iowa City, IA 52240, USA.

**The Wizard's Knob:** £2 per issue, A5, 42pp, card cover from John Penney, 50 Sunnybank, Kirkham, Preston PR4 2JF and David Baxter, 43 Bridge Road, Sutton Bridge, Spalding PE12 9SA. This is an unofficial Terry Pratchett magazine: the unofficial status leaves the editors free to criticise TP/Josh Kirby, though of course they have permission to reprint any copyright material. Should there be a *Discworld* movie, the following actors are suggested: Eric Idle (Twoflower), Anthony Hopkins (Death), Christopher Lloyd (Cohen the Barbarian), Brian Glover (The Barman of the Drum). There is a report of the forthcoming publication of *Soul Music* which will apparently feature Foul Old Ron, a street person, so smelly that his smell has evolved its own personality (he had a cameo role in *Men at Arms*).

## The Shock of the New

**Steve Aylett:** He never bothered to go to college because he was too eager to be independent and meet some genuine felons; he likes a whole range of indie/rock bands, who have inspired some of the characters and settings in his first book, *The Crime Studio* and, although he is deceptively sane-looking he will calmly tell tales of how the French road-testing authorities use real cadavers in their test car crashes.

He is very much into the idea of subverting the system by working within it — without necessarily playing any stupid power games to get into the position where he wants to be. So he is currently production editor for *New Law Journal*, which gives him the space to keep up with ludicrous developments in legislation which deeply affect the day-to-day lives of ordinary people — but over which they have absolutely no control. He lives with his family in Tunbridge Wells which is smack-bang in the heart of mushroom/weedhead country (very fertile soil, apparently).

**Ella Barcelo** beat authors such as Alan Dean Foster, Michael Bishop and Gregory Benford to win the UPC novella award with her new novel *El Mundo de Yarek (Yarek's World)*. When asked why she thought people read so little Spanish SF, she replied "First of all, we still carry a certain national feeling according to which a man whose name is John, blond and blue-eyed is better than another whose name is Juan." When asked about her feelings on SF, she replied: "[SF] is the genre that gives me more freedom, the one that lets me carry on almost everything that occurs to me. On the opposite, in mainstream, I would find limitations sooner or later. I should confine myself to the daily stunning notices: the neighbour from the fifth floor, the husband who abandons you with three children ... that is, what I can see on the streets, already it does not interest me."

**Ray Bradbury** also survived the Los Angeles earthquake, though one chimney fell through the roof and smashed his library. He was an early enthusiast of the Disney model and, when interviewed by Tim W. Ferguson for *The Wall Street Journal*, said that "Disneyland is a civilization and it's improved the world. I knew Walt, and I defended him against the snobs in New York. And ever since, the mayors of the world have come into Disneyland to learn how to re-create their cities."

**Brian Daley** is currently at work on an immense intergalactic saga, tentatively titled *Gammalaw*. In the service of various writing and scripting assignments, he has become an expert on the world of *Star Wars*. He and his longtime companion, historical novelist Lucia St. Clair Robson, currently divide their time between Northern New Jersey, Martha's Vineyard, and the environs of Annapolis, Maryland.

**Mick Farren** is not currently working on any SF

novels (or if he is, he is keeping very quiet about them), but is following up some other projects in Los Angeles, where he now lives.

**Anne Gay:** In a recent interview with Pam Thompson, Anne Gay said that "Science Fiction is about life — it's not just about life round here. I'm fascinated by ideas and this sort of writing lets you explore them externally and internally ... I sometimes based my characters on people I know — or someone I've observed on the bus or in the pub. And I make sure my future visions are realistic by calling friends who are either astronomers, biologists and chemists and telling them my ideas. They tell me whether or not they could ever happen."

**Barbara Hambly's** latest book is a fantasy called *Bride of the Rat God*, set in Hollywood in the 1920s, which is due to be published this December. In it, she evokes the era with period details, just as she did for Edwardian England in *Those who Hunt the Night (Immortal Blood in the UK)*. She is currently working on a sequel to this, to be called *Travelling with the Dead* and is also co-ordinating a vampire anthology.

**James Herbert** launched the Pan Books graphic novel series with *The City* in March. Illustrated by Ian Miller, the book gives a full colour journey into a future world of horror. Another recent book, *Dark Places*, published last November was a non-fiction book with photographs by Paul Barkshire, in which he describes the locations and legends that have inspired his fertile imagination.

**Invasion of the Liberty Snatchers:** The winning stories in the Freedom Organisation for the Right to Enjoy Smoking Tobacco (FOREST) 1994 short story competition were "California Dreaming" by Steve Carter; "It Figures" by Michael Hershell; "Every Fish Cries a Government Health Warning" by Mark Deards; "Cabbages" by Malcolm Eccles; "Living Seriously Damages Your Health" by Guy N. Smith; "The Search" by Anne Britten and "Blue Bird" by "Val Kyrie". In the introduction to this booklet, judge George Hay writes this on the state of Science Fiction today: "It is increasingly hard to find novels that are overtly hard-science SF. To say this is not to criticise Fantasy. The latter has an important rôle to play, but that rôle is almost exactly the opposite of that played by SF proper." Marjorie Nicholson, another judge, writes in a second introduction, specifically on the stories that "The stories which appear in this book all examine the future from a different perspective, each in its turn considering who would snatch that liberty and they try to understand the 'human condition' — what makes man tick! Drawing upon the ironies of life, the contradictions amongst our leaders, and the desire by others, prevalent throughout the history of mankind, to impose their will and solution to the 'human condition' upon others, and seek to control and mould man in an image of perfection, the invasion seems almost complete. Or is it?"

Larry Niven is currently writing a new Ringworld novel which will probably be published in hardback in 1995. He referred to a story called "The Ghost Ships" once; it's on his back burner and he hasn't decided if it will be written yet.

Jeff Noon worked at the Manchester branch of Waterstones until recently. Apparently not only is the sequel to *Vurt* now on the way, but Steven Spielberg has been sent a copy and is very interested in its cinematic possibilities. *Vurt* will be published in hardback by Ringpull in the autumn, and by Crown in the U.S.A. in October. *Pollen* is the next novel to be published this autumn for the projected nine-novel series.

Terry Pratchett has sent the manuscript for *Soul Music* to HarperCollins.

An album from Dave Greenslade (with some help here and there) and based on the Discworld books came out in early April. It is called *From the Discworld* and most of the tracks are themes for the books, together with two songs, *The Shades of Ankh-Morpork* and something about a wizard's staff. There is also the insidious tune of the Stick and Bucket Dance, even down to that special chord folk music has to have at the end so that people know they can come out now. It should be available wherever Virgin sells records.

All Terry Pratchett is going to reveal about the forthcoming *Unclear Physics* is "People keep asking when Rincewind's coming back, and so I've dreamed up a plot for him. And Cohen the Barbarian. And the Luggage. And maybe Twoflower. And the Counterweight Continent. The Physics? Well, it may end up as Physics, since medicine is part of the story ... but, yes, that old squash court will be in there somewhere ..."

Michael Scott Rohan: When he spoke to the Brum SF group recently, Michael Scott Rohan suggested, according to the report from David Hunter, that "Great SF, such as Jules Verne and H.G. Wells does not become dated, though he felt that in his own work, latest technology plays an important rôle. ... He suggested that this has a link with consumer goods of the 'black' as opposed to female 'white' preoccupations. ... Certainly 'black' goods generally appear to have greater prestige in retail sales — perhaps another case of art imitating life. What would 'white' technology SF be like — or Fantasy come to that?"

R.A. Salvatore has sold the rights of three new Fantasy novels to Del Rey. The first of these novels will be published in hardcover in the summer of 1996. Although he writes both dark and light fantasy, his best-known works are *The Starless Night* and *The Legacy*.

Paula Volsky: After majoring in English Literature, she studied in England for an M.A. in Shakespearean studies, then returned to the United States to sell real estate and start writing.

Currently, she resides in the Washington, D.C. area with her collection of Victoriana and her almost equally antique computer.

Lawrence Watt-Evans has been pondering on the difference between Fantasy and Science Fiction and has decided that "Basically, the difference is that in Fantasy you write about things you believe to be impossible, while in SF you write about stuff that hasn't been disproved. Everything else is window dressing.

"Thing is, one person's SF is another person's Fantasy. Is time travel possible? Faster-than-light travel? Parallel worlds? Psi powers? Nanotechnology? (You may think you can give a simple yes or no answer to some of those, but I assure you, I can find people who will give the opposite answer just as confidently.)

"Sometimes you have a story that's clearly one or the other; nobody seriously contends that *The Lord of the Rings* is Science Fiction, or that *A Fall of Moondust* is Fantasy. And maybe once upon a time, it was pretty easy to classify most stories. But it's gotten harder and harder as it gets more difficult to define the limits of what's possible, and as those limits turn out to be in unexpected places: fifty years ago, nanotechnology was Fantasy, but the swamps of Venus were SF. The grey area between SF and Fantasy has gotten larger and larger. SF has managed to lay claim to large chunks of it, more out of tradition than anything else — and because of the trappings, the window dressing. In SF, if you present something that looks like magic, you have to give a rationale; in Fantasy, you can just go ahead and call it magic.

"Often, the real difference between the two, whether the SF folks want to admit it or not, is whether the author bothers to make up a rationale. You have a world dominated by wizards living in castles, who battle each other by casting lightning bolts — it's Fantasy. But say it's a planet of another star, and the lightning are high-energy particle beams, and all of a sudden it's SF.

"Your hero rides a dragon — it's Fantasy. The dragon's the result of careful gensplicing — it's SF."

## Look before you throw

An object lesson in being careful before throwing away old magazines was reported in the Friends of Foundation newsletter published in very early April. When looking through thirty old copies of Collins' *Young Elizabethan* magazine, Rosemary, Mike and Alison Scott found a number of contributions "by a name now more celebrated for major novels than the Young Elizabethan" *All Your Own Work's* pages.

"The January 1953 number contained a story about a Cuban boy pursued by a bear in the hills of South Carolina. The author: one "Lucius Shepard", aged 9. Investigations continued. The September 1953 issue featured a description of the family cat 'Fidgets' terrorising a squirrel. Next month saw another story concerning two boys who discover Spanish treasure on 'Florida Island'.

"Finally, the May 1954 number described 'A Journey to Cuba', and was illustrated with a photograph of the author, who describes a buffet at the Presidential Palace where the only thing to drink was champagne. It did me no harm, however, and was the next best to water'."

Investigations at the British Library revealed that the Collins Magazine published eight Lucius Shepard stories and/or articles and also three pieces by a teenaged Alasdair Gray.

The full committee of Friends of Foundation, the group set up in 1989 to fund-raise for and support the Science Fiction Foundation Collection which is now housed at the University of Liverpool, consists of Mike Cheater (Secretary), John Clute, Paul Kincaid, Rob Meades (Treasurer), Bernie Peck, Mark Plummer, John Richards, Roger Robinson (Co-ordinator), Maureen Speller (BSFA Liaison), Alison Scott (Northern Representative), Bridget Wilkinson (Fans across the World liaison) together with Steven Cain (Auditor) and Andy Sawyer (Newsletter Editor). For further information about the Friends of Foundation, contact Rob Meades, 75 Hecham Close, Walthamstow, London E17 5QT.

## Master's degree in writing

Nottingham Trent University is extending its range of practical writing courses to include an original Master's Degree in Writing, set to start in October 1994. It is aimed at practising writers interested in exploring the ways in which writing is "made" — from inspiration through to the final draft.

Course leader Sue Thomas said "We hope to attract students with a broad range of writing interests but we expect them to have three things in common; a commitment to the development of their own writing, a lively spirit of enquiry into written communication in its widest sense and a keen analytical interest in reading."

The twelve month full-time/twenty four month part-time course will be split into two elements, practice and issues. "Practice" will focus on developing students' writing strengths through the production of their own work and will be taught by a combination of formal tuition, practical workshops, tutorials and author visits. "Issues" will explore areas of common interest to all writers, including identity, culture, readership and authorial freedom. This part of the course will be taught by lectures and seminars, with students selecting topics for closer study.

For more information, please contact course leader Sue Thomas at the Department of English and Media Studies, Faculty of Humanities, The Nottingham Trent University, Clifton Lane, Nottingham NG11 8NS (Tel: 0602 418418 ext. 3216) or Judy Mo in the Faculty of Humanities (tel 0602 486629).

## Writing courses

Arvon writing courses are now in their 25th year and have just opened a third centre in Scotland, in addition to centres in Devon and Yorkshire. They run writing courses for all sorts of people who are interested in writing. Courses for 1994 cost £245 each, including accommodation, tuition and food. Bursaries and grants are available from the English and Scottish Arts Councils and various other Regional Arts Boards. The many courses available this year include "Starting to write" (April 25-30, Lumb Bank, Guest Geoff Ryman); "Short stories and novels" (August 1-6, Tottleigh Barton, tutors Adam Lively and M. John Harrison) and "The short story" (August 8-13, Lumb Bank, tutors Kathy Page and Sue Thomas).

## New Acquisitions at the Foundation

The Science Fiction Foundation Collection has been lent a deposit of papers relating to the estate of the late John Wyndham (1903-69), as well as a collection of manuscripts of stories and novels written by his brother, Vivian Beynon Harris, a scrapbook of press cuttings and a fair-copy manuscript of *Web*, by Mr Brian Bocoek, Wyndham's literary executor.

The Eric Frank Russell Collection has also been deposited with the University of Liverpool Library by Russell's daughter, Mrs Erica Metcalfe. It consists of manuscripts, correspondence from fans and from well-known SF figures and an extensive sequence of magazines and books featuring his stories and articles. There is also a collection of translations of his works.

All enquiries about this material, or any part of the Science Fiction Foundation Collection, should be made to the Librarian/Administrator, Andy Sawyer at the University of Liverpool Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA (Tel: 051 794 2733/2926).

## New Tolkien

"Yesterday I bought a copy of *Free Continuation of The Lord of the Rings* written in Russian by Nick Perumov, subtitled *Three Hundred Years Later* and published in neighbor Russia" wrote Peter Myakoshin. Nick Perumov comes from Saint-Petersburg and worked on this book during 1987-1992. It is not strictly a continuation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, but is only based on it.

Since Russia did not sign the International Copyright Law, it is unlikely that this book will be available in translation, unlike an unfinished novel about Bilbo's parents, apparently unearthed recently by Tolkien's executor. It is supposed to have a lot of Christian values and seems to resemble *Leaf by Niggle* more than *The Hobbit*. "You know, for a dead guy, this Tolkien fellow is pretty prolific" comments Erica Liebman ("up there with L. Ron Hubbard")."

## Neuromancer as Opera

Berkeley Contemporary Opera, a non-profit theatre, will stage the world première of *Neuromancer*, an opera based on William Gibson's book. Performances will run during August 1994 at the Berkeley California theatre. Currently, the company is working with many computer animators, composers, video artists and other creative people to create the extensive design for the opera. If anyone is interested in hearing more, please write to Kevin Cain, Design Director, Berkeley Contemporary Opera, 1122 University Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94702, USA.

## WriteBack

### Escapist Fiction

From: Sue Thomason  
190 Cosch Road, Sleights, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO22 5EN

Concerning the editorial in *Matrix 109*, are you seriously suggesting that reading books about intergalactic civilisations with FTL drives, time travel, benign/malign all-knowing aliens, *et cetera*, is LESS ESCAPIST than reading books about flying carpets and elves? Remember the old chestnut about any sufficiently advanced technology being indistinguishable from magic? That works in reverse, as well. A lot of readers never stop to worry about whether a particular speculation is really scientifically plausible or not. Provided it's consistent, and interestingly different, it's a good imaginative exercise in what Douglas Hofstadter calls "widdling the knobs". It evokes wonder. That's what is wanted.

Of course, good Fantasy writing does not depend on *deus ex machina* solutions to plot problems, any more than good SF does. I think a lot of people read Fantasy to find out how to be a Good Guy. A lot of Fantasy writing seems to me to be "about" values — what is worth struggling to preserve, what should be rejected or changed. Or perhaps the different emphases of SF and Fantasy as imaginative literature appeal to different types of people: SF to those whose main focus is on manipulating and interacting with the external world of material objects, Fantasy to those whose main interest is the inner landscape, who recognise elves and dragons as inhabitants of their own psyches.

It seems to me that the poor quality of UK science teaching (and I agree that it is appalling) is not really the cause of SF's declining popularity as literature (if this is so). Rather, both phenomena reflect an underlying disenchantment with science and technology as fix-it solutions to current problems. The Myth of Progress has gone sour on us. Golden Age Utopian SF, promising every family a twenty hour working week, a free supply of food pills, and their own helpalod looks

a bit, um, unvisionary now.

And, of course, science teaching is not the only casualty of the current government's education policy, which is designed to produce loyal and obedient conformists. Religious studies is struggling hard against becoming Christian indoctrination, history is becoming the kind of monocular "heritage studies" more appropriate to a thought-policed state, and English teaching, I can't BEGIN to tell you how angry I am about what is being done to my subject, just throw a couple of buckets of cold water over me, because this letter would fail its GCSE ...

Back to the main argument. What I want to read is stuff that will help me to deal with the real world. Stuff that makes me feel positive, that encourages me to be a problem-solver, that encourages me not to give up in the face of what certainly feels like overwhelming odds, at least sometimes. I find that in Fantasy as often as I find it in SF, so I'll carry on reading and enjoying both.

## On Kipling and other books

From: Dave Bell  
Church Farm, North Kelsey, Lincoln

Just as I'd finished uploading my messages on the bulletin board, *Matrix 110* thumped through the letterbox.

Nice. But in the Kipling information, you could have mentioned, in a neutral sort of way, that Off Centaur has been renamed Firebird. Looking at the official text of "The Sergeant's Wedding", I'd suspect that Kipling was being very careful about the language he used. "Rogue" doesn't seem as singable to me. I think I shall have to go for the Peter Bellamy set as soon as possible (fortunately the bank manager was still in a happy mood when he left).

Concerning Philip Muldowney's letter, mentioning V.A.T. The critical angle is how Customs & Excise regard what the BSFA is selling. A subscription to a magazine is zero-rated. But the membership of a society is not. Since I produce zero-rated goods, I'm able to reclaim V.A.T.

It needs professional advice, because even if the BSFA is supplying zero-rated goods and services, there can be other complications based on how it is trading. I don't deal with overseas markets, which I gather adds complications.

I noticed the deadline — eight days away? Is this a cunning plot to get *Matrix 111* out of the way before Easter? Or was *Vector* late again?

[The print deadline has been put back a week to allow the reporting of the BSFA awards, and any other Easter news. — Jenny].

From: Richard Corrington  
78 Canvey Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2PA

I have recently joined the BSFA and received copies of *Vector* and *Matrix* to read. I read *Matrix*

which was good apart from the piece on Kipling which I found somewhat deep. I am writing to ask why now that both Penguin and Wordsworth can turn out a two hundred page paperback for around 99p, that most, if not all SF paperbacks are a fiver or more? Why not use cheap paper and make them the size of a 1957 ACE pocket book. Also, why do authors insist on using obviously made up "alien" type names consisting in the main of consonants instead of calling their lead non-human protagonist "Bob" or "Jack" which are easy names to remember? Does it make any difference to "anglicise" the name? Is SF a form of escapism? Can it both entertain and alter one's outlook? Example: *Starship Troopers*. I have a great reluctance to sample unknown authors unless they were written at a particular time, for example contrast the period 1957-1962 with 1987-1992. Why do "time travel" stories inevitably get bogged down in theory? There are exceptions like "By His Bootstraps" which refrain from guggling a reader's intellect. Let's see, when do all the paperbacks come out? On the train. So no hardbacks or six hundred page theses. Reading time is thirty minutes, or shorter.

[If I'd been restricted to thirty minutes per session of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, I would have become very bad-tempered, to say the least. I read *Frankenstein* in tiny sips, standing at traffic lights, on short bus journeys and perhaps got more out of it. My ideal of heaven is to be alone with a book and an unlimited amount of time.

Look out for the *Complete Kipling Poetry collection*, published by Wordsworth at £1.99, a huge book. But the only reason that this book is so reasonably priced is that the author is out of copyright. — Jenny.]

## Women in Space

From: Jilly Reed  
Hill House, Moats Tye, Suffolk IP14 2EX

Re Mr. John Madracki's letter on the consequences of women-only space exploration: "He only does it to annoy./Because he knows it teases". Lewis Carroll, about a different brat.

It is quite obvious what he is trying to do. In such a circumstance, the only sensible option is to follow the example of Elinor in *Sense and Sensibility*: "Elinor agreed with everything he said for he did not deserve the compliment of rational opposition". So let us all say to him, with one voice, *How True!* Then we can go home and talk to the grown-ups.

## Unpredictable Bestsellers

From: Peter Tennant  
9 Henry Cross Close, Shipdham, Thetford, IP25 7LQ

I'm sorry to hear that you'll be relinquishing the editorial reins of *Matrix*; but many thanks for all your efforts in making the

magazine such an informative and entertaining publication. Good luck to you in whatever you undertake next and also to whoever takes over from you. S/he has a tough act to follow.

The annual bestsellers snippet in *Matrix 110* made interesting reading, but confused me also. No surprises to see *Jurassic Park* at No. 1 with sales of 1,018,642. But then you say *Mostly Harmless* was at No. 13 on the list, with sales of 2,245,430. Huh. What is this? Klingon mathematics? Perhaps, I thought, someone goofed and that should be £2,245,430 not copies. But if so, then why doesn't *Mostly Harmless* feature in the money earned top ten above 1994 *Horoscopes* (£1,820,622). And why is that book No. 4 on the list anyway? Aargh! Damnable statistics.

It's sad to see that Science Fiction has had so little impact on the bestseller lists. On the other hand, even given the film tie-in, I'm amazed that *Jurassic Park* has sold over a million copies. If, like me, in this age of television, you fear the written word will be supplanted, then it is gratifying to see so many people reluctant to settle for Hollywood's interpretation of a story. Perhaps some of those people who've been turned on to Michael Crichton's book will go on to discover Dick, Delany, Card *et al.*

I knew practically nothing about Kipling prior to reading Fred Lerner's article in *Matrix*. It's the sort of thing I expect to find in *Vector*, but far more lively and enthusiastic. Congratulations on publishing it.

Philip Muldowney's passing comment about the relationships between Fantasy and historical fiction has a ring of truth to it. My occasional forays into historical fiction used to be regarded as Fantasy without the trimmings. It never occurred to me that the converse was equally true. Does anyone have access to market research that will prove the case either way?

From: Adrian Soames  
The Croft, Cheney's Lane, Fornett St Mary, Norwich NR16 1JT

I think Ellen Key Harris's view on Michael Crichton's success, as mentioned in *Matrix 110*, is way off beam, simply because she regards him as a literary phenomenon. Not so. The key to his irresistible rise to best-sellerdom lies in his exploitation of a greater tract of the media landscape than the novel; something to which he alluded when being interviewed for *Equinox* on Channel 4, about *Jurassic Park*.

Crichton commented that Spielberg had thanked him for writing the novel that he had always wanted to film, but rather the author replied: "Well, Steven, I'd rather thought of it as the film that I wanted to direct." The point being that he had conceived the book, as he obviously does most of his output, with an eye for the cinematic idiom, just as the principal bestseller of the previous generation of thriller writers, Alistair MacLean, had.

Crichton, of course, has been a film director for almost as long as he has been a major author, filming, for the most part, his own books or original screenplays. This has not only given

him access to a far wider audience than most writers but also a style more easily accessible to a readership accustomed to the pacing and structure of television and film, rather than a more literary style. It is also reflected in his approach to characterisation.

Crichton's characters are stock personalities picked from central casting to act their rôle in the plot, rather than shaping the story with their attitudes and views. They are advocates or witnesses to argue the case for both sides of the idea which forms the basis for the story. It is this characteristic that most stamps Crichton as a Science Fiction writer, rather than his employment of scientific props.

Rather than use his McGuffin, as Hitchcock did, as a springboard for the story, he makes it the whole story, going a stage further than Kingsley Amis's dictum about the idea being the hero of a Science Fiction story. Crichton may end up using the wrong idea, as in *Jurassic Park* where, despite Malcolm's speech, he concentrates on how man would cope with reborn dinosaurs, rather than whether there should be any such animal, but the book is still a discussion piece for an idea.

On the subject of another phenomenon, and moving on to the item about *The Prisoner*, I think it fair to say that the idea that it was a sequel to *Danger Man* was most strongly advocated by the series script editor, the late George Markstein. He claimed to have put to Patrick MacGoohan the idea of a series based on a real-life wartime establishment where suspect British agents were interrogated to find their true loyalties.

As far as Markstein was concerned, *The Prisoner* simply took MacGoohan's character from *Danger Man*, and placed him in an up-dated version of the wartime detention centre. This, of course, we know is a view not shared by Patrick MacGoohan, but it obviously had a powerful grip on Markstein, who not only wrote a fictionalised account of the original interrogation centre, *The Cooler*, but returned to the theme with his last novel, *Ferrets*.

*Ferrets* told the story of captured spyplane aircrews, shot down during the Cold War, attempting to escape, and being hunted down by governments that can't admit to their existence. The novel, which derives its title from the technical term for an electronic reconnaissance aircraft or satellite, now possesses a peculiar resonance in light of recent speculation about the fate of some of the two hundred and fifty airmen shot down over the USSR while on spying missions.

## Homage to Catalonia

From: Chris Amies  
56 More Close, St Paul's Court, Gliddon Road, London W14 9BN

I was interested to note in *Matrix 110* the launch of the first e-fanzine — *Contes per a extreterrestres* — and that it's in Catalan. This is

a sign of the way that Catalan has gone from being an obscure and officially unrecognised dialect as little as twenty years ago (and for that matter, it was almost extinct for several centuries until the early nineteenth), to a language with claims to major cultural status, at least in its native Catalonia. Publisher Miquel Barcelo was fairly dismissive of Catalan SF a few years ago (at ConFiction, the Worldcon in the Netherlands in 1990) but maybe — and hopefully — all this is set to change.

But ... as one of the no doubt few Catalan-speaking members of the BSFA (maybe the only one? if there are any others, perhaps they could let me know), I don't have access to the Internet to see all this going on. If anyone could bung me hardcopy or a copy on diskette (PC, 3.5-inch) of some of the Catalan pieces, I'd be very grateful.

## Akira and more

From: John Madracki  
17 Goldring Ave, Brightmet Bolton, Lancs. BL2 5NJ

I have always been partial to a little Kipling (you haven't lived until you've kiplped), and I could never understand why such, otherwise intelligent, authors like H.G. Wells and Max Beerbohm should have chosen to be so deliberately obtuse when it came to assessing Rudyard's obvious talent. Perhaps it was the writer's great popularity that niggled them. Anyway, the two excellent articles by Fred Lerner were warmly appreciated.

There are three things, not only in *Matrix*, but in all journals, that I always skip hastily through: reviews of contemporary music, anything to do with the use of computers and, like Daniel Buck, Anime columns. However, I did tape *Akira* when it was shown on television recently. But, alas, it did nothing to win me round, and after three attempts to watch it through to the end, I had to give up on it. (When it comes to animation, give me Daffy Duck every time.)

In fact, another film — *In the Aftermath* — shown shortly after, was ruined for me by the intrusion of gimmicky cartoonery into what could have been a halfway-decent movie.

Pam Baddeley makes the point that for optimum efficiency it is only required that space-travellers be of reduced stature, rather than of a singularity of gender. Well, I can't argue with that. And I suppose the same would hold true for aviators in general and super-pilots in particular. Which would explain why the diminutive Tom Cruise — who is currently mincing his way (not an easy task in three-inch high platform shoes) through *Interview with a Vampire* as the apparently sexually-ambiguous Lestat — has been given, for his next role, a part to which he is eminently suited: that of Scott Tracy, a small wooden puppet, in the forthcoming movie version of *Thunderbirds*.

I know that the Internet is fast growing in popularity, but for anyone to offer only an e-mail address smacks to me of undesirable cliquishness. I was very interested in the group

that advertised itself under the heading of *Gastlight SF* and would have liked to have contacted them — had I been able to. It does seem somewhat incongruous for someone involved in Victorian SF to make themselves available to only those with access to a hi-tech computer.

Many thanks for the hectography recipe. I have decided to have a bash. Shall report back on the result.

Finally, I recently compiled a list of films on the theme of The Seven Deadly Sins and I was wondering if anyone would like to have a go at a similar selection but using only SF/Horror movies. Just to get you started — there is *The Angry Red Planet*, *The Wrath of Khan*, *Lust for a Vampire* and, of course, *The ...* but you must check me now — I think my sugar has just come to the boil.

[My access to the Internet is occasional, so I always try to include a "snail mail" address. If you wish to write to Stephen Davies about *Gastlight*, please contact him at Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta, Canada — not the most detailed of addresses, but one he obviously considers that he can be reached at — Jenny].

From: Martin Spellman  
59 Courteney Avenue, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6LJ

Hectography! You must be having a laugh? Whilst you are turning your kitchen into a laboratory, I can nip down to my high street newsagent and, at the current rate of 4p per copy, produce 50 clean, readable and presentable copies in a few minutes for £2, which is, sadly, the price of a pint these days.

Hectography was used mainly in schools and colleges about 25 years ago when photocopiers were just making their appearance (and produced shiny grey copies that turned brown eventually) and the only alternative was duplicators (known as mimeographs in the US). Their advantage was that they were cheap and easy to use for short runs (like a class of students). Their drawbacks were that they were difficult and messy to produce in a presentable form, hard to read and faded with age or if left in the sunlight. Today in the age of plain paper copiers and PCs with desk top publishing, they have no place.

Why do people hanker for such things? Is it the British penchant for nostalgia or amateurism? I was once shown around the old *Sun/News of the World* building in Bouverie Street. Those old linotype machines with little brass moulds clattering down to form a line of type. The working class community putting the page together on the "stone". That has gone which, in one way, is very sad. But what we now have is the "democratisation of typography" via Desk Top Publishing and the Personal Computer. This has put possibilities only dreamt of by compositors of old only a keystroke away. On the "no gain without pain" principle there is now a lot of professional looking rubbish being produced but on the positive side some very readable

magazines are appearing. The best typography is "invisible" in that the reader is drawn straight into the article and does not notice the layout and type. This is surely the point — to produce our letters, articles and stories in a presentable and attractive way. Cost is a factor, but quality is too. What is the use of producing a great SF story if the medium used to present it is poor? It is just not possible to produce a magazine of an acceptable standard by hectography.

[I'd make a distinction between "magazine" and "fanzine". I have produced a pleasant multi-colour fanzine using hectography, as has Mac Strelkov, but neither was, nor was intended to be, in the same class as *Locus* or *Interzone*. There should be another distinction here, between spirit duplicating, the method Martin is probably referring to, now used by Harry Cameron Andruschak for his fanzines, and the flatbed method which was described in the last issue of *Matrix*.

One reason I included this recipe was the sheer geographical diversity of BSFA members. Not every member has a local copy shop and it is unfortunately true that not every member can afford photocopying at 4p per single sheet. I'd hate to think that people inspired to produce a fanzine were constrained by reasons of cost. I'd rather see a typewritten fanzine, like that produced by John Madracki or Nova-winner Michael Ashley than see nothing produced because of elitist and financial concerns — Jenny.]

From: Geoff Cowie  
9 Oxford Street, Bleichley, Milton Keynes MK2 2UA

Daniel Buck's complaint about *Akira* seems to be that it wasn't the same as a big budget Hollywood spectacular ... one might wonder why he has failed to find anything in *Akira* that impressed him. It's a mistake to view animation as if it was live action: it is frequently devoted to visualising the unfilmable and often not intended to look realistic. Anime requires that the viewer interpolate from the actual images by using a little active imagination when watching his/her dreams. Perhaps this is a skill that has to be re-learned.

By contrast, spectacular SF live action films are hooked to an escalator of expectations of ever more "realistic" special effects; in time they will become indistinguishable from extremely expensive animated films. Already, the technologies are converging.

From personal conversations, it seems that reaction to *Akira* had been mixed; one person felt like Mr. Buck; another felt the plot was weak, while a third said that he hadn't understood why I was always going on about anime, but he did now! The problem with *Akira*'s plot stems from the fact that it was adapted from the opening volumes of a very long manga series. (The manga definitely doesn't suffer from lack of excitement!)

I saw several pieces of anime (in Japanese) out of curiosity about four years ago before realising there was some I liked and resolving to try to get anime to watch at home.

I hate to confuse the one-viewing pundits, but *Akira*, being a movie and at £5million, one of the most expensive anime movies ever made, is not typical of anime. So what is it? I can't answer that; anime is very diverse and even though I have seen hundreds of items I am still occasionally gobsmacked by an anime that isn't like anything I saw before. Plot sometimes seems of secondary importance in anime, which is extremely diverse in subject matter and content, but principally is visual, mainly concerned with the visualisation of the fantastic, and with character. Anime is full of amazing stuff one never finds in Western media. The treatment of emotional themes is often startlingly good. And I haven't even mentioned the cute girls ...

From: Andrew M.J. Boulton  
89 Kelmestock Lane, Crossgates, Leeds LS15 8JT

Here is my reaction to Daniel Buck's reaction to *Akira*.

If you couldn't handle *Akira*, I'd advise you not to even bother trying any of the current Manga stuff. I would class *Akira* as about the most coherent and "Western" of all the anime I've seen, although that's not very many, as I'm not a huge fan. It's the only one I've enjoyed enough to actually buy (although I might consider paying for a copy of the original, uncensored version of *Urotsukidoji* (aka *Legend of the Overfield*, aka *The Wandering Kid* aka "The Demon-tentacle-sex-film"). Apparently, it's twice as long as the normal version — oo-er, missus — and is most, err, "educational".

As a general rule-of-thumb, the best way to enjoy Manga comics or Anime films is a) with friends, b) with a broad, open mind, and c) slightly drunk.

I was also interested to read that Alan Kitch had received gratuitous *Chung Kuo* books, because a similar package had arrived on my doorstep at about the same time. My immediate reaction had been to go "Eeek! A Fantasy trilogy!", and quickly wash my hands. When I had calmed down, I double-checked the name and address. I knew instantly that it had something to do with my BSFA membership, because, like you, they'd misspelled my first name (they spelled it "PAUL"). Don't ask ... I let a friend borrow them, on one of his regular visits to raid my book-shelf, but he returned them a couple of days later, having given up half-way through volume 1. Being Glaswegian, his comments were unprintable, but the gist was that he wasn't terribly impressed, which rather confirmed my initial opinion.

Like Alan, I would be grateful for some sort of explanation.

From: Harry Payne  
Flat 46, 161 Corporation Street, Coventry CV1 1FR

On 10 June 1993, Manga Entertainment Ltd. made a formal application to trademark the word "Manga" in all uses relating to videos, books and

related merchandising. *The Patents and Trademarks Journal* lists this application as follows:

#### APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF TRADEMARK

Applicant: Manga Entertainment Ltd  
Trademark applied for: Manga  
Nos: 1538129  
1538130  
1538131  
1538132

If this application is accepted, it will be illegal for anyone to refer to Manga without specific permission from Manga Entertainment Limited. Dark Horse may be sued for trademark infringement by virtue of their comic *Manga Mania*. Antarctic Press in the United States may suffer similar legal action, as they publish a comic called *Mangazine*. An Italian company publishes a magazine with a similar title, they could be prosecuted under European Law. This list could go on, but I hope you have got the point by now.

There is a limited time during which this application may be challenged. The time is now. Please write immediately to: Patent Office, Trademark Registration Department, Cardiff Road, Newport, Gwent NP9 1RH. Quote the above application, especially the numbers. State that you wish to object to this application on one or more of the following grounds:

- Manga is a recognised word in the Japanese language, meaning "irresponsible pictures or comics", and has been in common use since the nineteenth century.
- It has been, and still is, commonly used to describe comic books and comic strips in Japan. It is also in common use in English-speaking countries, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, to describe comic books or comic strips from Japan, or in Japanese style.
- It is used as title for existing publications such as *Manga Mania* in the UK, *Mangazine* in the United States, and the Kodansha publication *Manga Manga* by Fred Schodt. The latter was published in 1982, a full ten years before Manga Entertainment Ltd's application.

This is neither the time nor the place to dwell on the nature of the application nor those who made it. It is, quite simply, wrong, and must be appealed against by as many people as possible. Please do so at once; it will cost you a few minutes of your time and a first class (or airmail) stamp. Tell your friends what you are doing, and why, ask them to write to the Patent Office as well. Photocopy this letter, mail it to other anime fans, put it on bulletin boards if you're a computer person. And I shall let this magazine and the readers know the outcome of this campaign.

## That question of V.A.T.

From: Terry Hunt  
269 Desborough Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO5 3NG

Somewhere I've got the impression that you're giving up *Matrix* after issue 111 (since Napoleon featured in 109's "Points of Information", perhaps this ought to be "the Nelson issue"), although I can't track down the source in *Matrix* itself. Say it ain't so, Joe; but if it is sincere thanks and appreciation for the job you've done despite the demands of home and family — hell, I couldn't currently organise all one of me well enough to take it on, although I hope to be able to one day, probably around the BSFA's Golden Jubilee.

Jackie McRobert's vision seems applicable were interest in SF and Fandom still expandable through the population, but I fear both have now reached steady states, given Society's present attitudes. I doubt that many potential SF readers remain ignorant of the genre's existence, or that many potential fans fail to encounter fandom in some (perhaps not ideal) form, and probably also the BSFA's existence, sooner or later. The proportion of readers (for brevity's sake, let's ignore the text/non-text media debate for the moment) whose interests extend to any of the activities we can call "fandom" — in which I'd include BSFA membership — will always be tiny, and SF appears to do far better here than any other comparable category except the "literary mainstream", which has the weight (however misplaced) of Establishment endorsement behind it. (In other words, Melvyn Bragg (say) is as much a "fan" in his own sphere as Maureen Speller (say), except that he gets paid much more for it.)

Jackie is correct that much once-BSFA mediated activity now goes on autonomously: I think I'm the only BSFA member in my own quite active local clique, the South Hants SF Group, because the others can't see how joining would yield much over and above what they already got from other sources. Can the BSFA regain its former status? No, because the whole cultural milieu, sfnal and mundane, is now very different. Can it find a correspondingly different but improved status? Perhaps, but we need to debate thoroughly how, and maybe also why, admittedly daunting on top of the hard enough task of just keeping the present setup going. The answers, if any, may have as much to do with deficiencies in our present society and its attitudes as with deficiencies in the BSFA and this topic will be addressed at Wincon III. This convention will take place from July 29 to 31 at King Alfred's College, Winchester, with Guests of Honour Algis Budrys and James P. Hogan. A writers' workshop will be co-ordinated by Colin Greenland. The programme theme is "Science Fiction — Ideas in Focus" and there will be three streams: Science (physics, biology, chemistry, social sciences and astronomy, especially as Wincon takes place one week after comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 is due to hit Jupiter), Science

and Fiction on the nature of science and its impact on SF, bogus science and scientific howlers, and SF and crafts which will examine the transfer of SF ideas into a range of media including computer graphics. (If you are interested, contact Wincon at 12 Crossbury Close, Emsworth, Hampshire PO10 7TS.)

The explanation for Alan Kitch's receipt of the **Chung Kuo** books is obvious: David Wingrove himself sent them to reveal their brilliance to Alan before the BSFA's anti-Wingrove (i.e. evil) ruling cabal has a chance to poison his mind.

Regarding Philip Muldowney's suggestion of voluntary V.A.T. registration, I'm sure Elizabeth Billinger will supply the pukkah gen, but I rather think it would force us to levy V.A.T. on membership fees, thus forcing them up. Whether or not the inevitable loss of membership and thus retainable revenue would be offset by clawing back V.A.T. from expenditure, this membership shrinkage can hardly be in the interest or spirit of the BSFA.

[Terry was perhaps a little tongue in cheek about David Wingrove: he was also not perhaps correct about attitudes towards the **Chung Kuo** series. This magazine has always tried to report news about both author and series in as neutral a way as possible. However, reviews in a recent Australian magazine showed that some readers are wildly enthusiastic about the series. "This is the best SF series being published for a long time" wrote Ron Clarke in *The Mentor* "and this is your best chance to get all volumes and read them concurrently. 'Recommended'. Get them!"]

Writing in *DASFx*, Fred Cleaver wrote a review of *The Stone Within*. "It's a fine book which stands on its own while eliciting curiosity about the others. ... The son of the wealthy industrialist is out of jail and struggling to find himself. A ruthless leader has gone underground to build a power base among the criminal gangs. The brilliant artist is perfecting his new artform. And the emperor is trying to hold his family and empire together. The appeal of soap opera and finely detailed world building combine for a compulsively readable story." — Jenny.]

From: Elizabeth Billinger  
82 Kelvin Road, New Cumbington, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 7TQ

It seems that Philip Muldowney has misinterpreted my last letter — I hoped by providing specific and up-to-date information, and by referring to my position as a professional accountant, to reassure Philip (and other members). It was intended to illustrate my competence not to be read as a personal attack.

A further word about V.A.T. registration: the BSFA does not sell printed matter to its members, the £15 per year is a membership subscription, which is an important distinction for V.A.T. purposes since membership subs. are subject to V.A.T. at the full rate. So, on that glorious day when our turnover reaches the registration limit (whatever that is at the time!) we

will have to make a compulsory registration. In the meantime, we could consider a voluntary registration. The results of this would be that we could reclaim V.A.T. on our purchases (which means the mailing costs, the printing is zero-rated) but we would have to charge V.A.T. on our sales. We would then either have to increase membership by 17.5%, which I don't think would please many members, or we would have to effectively reduce the subscription rate by handing over £2.23 of each £15 to H.M. Customs & Excise. As things stand at the moment, the amount we would pay over on subscriptions would vastly exceed the amount we could reclaim and the BSFA would be worse off by around £1,500 per annum.

On life memberships, I don't have a crystal ball, but I do know that we need commitment (and cash) from the current membership in the short term in order to ensure the survival of the BSFA in the long term. As to the definitions, the basis is quite simple, "life" refers to the lifetime of the subscriber or to the lifetime of the BSFA, whichever is the greater. The principle also seems clear — as a member you take the risk that the BSFA will collapse before you've had your money's worth, for the potential gain of free membership after year 10. For the BSFA the advantage is to receive subscriptions in advance and to know a member is committed for 10 years, which gives an immediate cashflow benefit and makes planning a little easier.

## A Wild Card

Don Fitch

A few months ago, I disagreed with the use of the word "homophobe" as it had been applied by someone to Orson Scott Card. Since then, I've had another opportunity to read the article — written by Card for an unofficial, but solid, Mormon periodical — on which this accusation seems to be based. Unfortunately, obtaining a copy of the document was not practical, and it's the sort of thing that really needs close study, but I was much disturbed by several passages in it ... not nearly enough to reverse my stand, but enough to lower my opinion of the man in areas other than that of his writing skill.

His major argument — that being an active homosexual is incompatible with being a good Mormon — might be respectable enough if it was based on solely on Mormon Doctrine (about which I know almost nothing), but immediately becomes flawed when he bases it primarily on the apparent assumption that all homosexuals are Don Juans who validate themselves by the ability to make numerous sexual conquests, and thereby are so occupied with "cruising" that they can't devote enough time to whatever it is that God Mormons are supposed to devote a lot of time to. (My own impression is

that this promiscuity which is an aspect of insecurity may well be somewhat more common among Gays than Straights [it's certainly a highly-visible aspect of one of the numerous "gay Subcultures"], but that it's by no means an implicit part of the definition of "homosexual".)

Had Card left it at that, I'd have no great argument with him — his stand is, in my opinion, based on ignorance or error, but it's an in-house religious matter and none of my affair. When he suggests that homosexual activity ought to be made illegal, however, he's venturing on shaky ground, and when he goes on to suggest that it would then be acceptable for people to engage in such activity as long as they're not obvious about it and don't get caught, he displays what I consider a Very Strange sense of Morality and Ethics, so alien that I have difficulty comprehending it. (I suspect that he's actually at war with himself, here, believing both that certain activities are Wrong, and that the legal prohibition of them is Wrong, but I wish he'd worked it out better.)

As far as I can see, Card has several (partially-) saving graces: he does not (insofar as I can recall the article) even hint that currently legal activities ought to be treated as if they were illegal (cf. vigilante/fag-bashing crusades); he makes some distinction between the activities of which he disapproves and the people who practice them; and (at least in the five or six of his books I've read) he doesn't use his fiction to Preach on this theme. That he is not liberal (in one of the senses I use that word) is obvious, and he's the less admirable for that, but to use "homophobia" to describe his attitude seems to be literary overkill; his level of intolerance, though distressing, is far too moderate and civil to deserve being called a "phobia", and we'd do well to reserve that word for much more serious cases.

What has bothered me much more than Card's stupidity attitude — basically, merely a dislike of homosexuality — has been indications by various people that they wouldn't work on or with a convention committee, or that every right-minded person would boycott a convention because they disagree with some political or ideological stance of one of the Guests of Honour. Oh, sure, people do what their conscience (or innate silliness) compels them to do, but it does seem Unrealistic to expect everyone to be Perfect, or even as nearly Perfect as we are, and equally unrealistic to consider that attending a convention (or working on a convention committee) necessarily implies being in total agreement with anyone. Maybe I'm atypical, but it seems as though everyone I know (including myself) has at least a few knuckleheaded ideas, and a few fans and professionals have one or two which seem to be seriously pernicious, but I've always found that the only satisfactory way of dealing with Wrong Ideas expressed in words is by means of Words and Right Ideas.

[This freeware article has been reprinted from Don Fitch's fanzine *From Sunday to Saturday* with many thanks. This article may be a little controversial: comments are welcomed.]

## The AFFN Andrew Butler

Despite the growth of academic interest in the Fantastic in the last decade, there are hardly any established channels for interdisciplinary work in this field in the United Kingdom; few conferences, isolated courses and only one specialist journal, *Foundation*. Compared to the United States of America, research into the Fantastic can be a very lonely business.

The Academic Fantastic Fiction Network (AFFN) is open to students (undergraduates or postgraduates), lecturers, teachers, critics and librarians engaged in research in the field of Science Fiction, the fantastic and related genres (for example cyberpunk, steampunk, utopia, dystopia, fantastic voyages, alternate history, Gothic horror, quest fantasy, sword and sorcery, weird tales, magical realism, fairy tales and slipstream). It is not intended to be limited to prose, but may include poetry, performance, visual arts, media and comic strips. The AFFN also hopes to incorporate a multiplicity of disciplines such as social and physical sciences, cultural studies, film and media studies, philosophy and women's and gender studies, in addition to the more obvious English and American studies.

The primary aim of the AFFN is to foster a sense of community and mutual support between students, lecturers, teachers, critics and librarians in the above fields by facilitating communication between them. In addition, it will aim to publicise available primary and secondary resources within this country; to pool and to provide information on courses in Science Fiction, the fantastic and related genres; to act as a conduit for information about 'state of the art' in the field, for example conferences and publications; to organise its own conferences.

The AFFN has already organised and held a conference at University College, London, and published the first issue of the Network's newsletter. Currently, the AFFN is compiling a list of members' interests.

For more information, please contact James Kneale, Postgraduate Room, Dept. of Geography, University College London, 26 Bedford Way, London or Andrew Butler c/o Postgraduate Tray, Dept. of English, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull.

## Artshows: an endangered species Terry Hunt

SF and Fantasy writing leads the attention stakes in the BSFA's publications, with film and

television material — the moving visual media if you like — making an increasingly strong showing. Static visual material, SF and Fantasy artwork, gets a much poorer crack of the whip. There are several obvious reasons for this which I leave as an exercise for the reader, but I can't be the only one to think that it's a pity.

By its use on book and magazine covers, artwork has greatly influenced attitudes to our genres, not always for the better. Its effect on book sales has been increasingly important, especially for paperbacks, and the study of a representatively large paperback collection reveals fashions and trends fascinating for the bibliophile but often ignored in favour of more snobbishly antiquarian affectations — well, I need some excuse for having ten different copies of *Expedition to Earth*.

Apart from its commercial function, book cover artwork is often beautiful, evocative and/or stimulating in its own right, despite frequent infuriating obscuration by bar-code blocks and other obtrusive design elements, and I've railed before at an elitist prejudice against 'commercial art' evident in some quarters, as if the 'Great Masters' for the most part lived on air and worked for nobly disinterested inspiration rather than for commissions from paying customers. Paperback art in particular is unfairly neglected: I know of only one substantial, art-slanted study of paperback books, Piet Schreuders' *The Book of Paperbacks* (Virgin, 1981), translated from Dutch and concentrating on U.S. publishing. I've looked in vain for a similar but British-oriented work — perhaps I'll end up having to write it myself!

Covers are far from the only aspect of book and magazine artwork, of course. There's the not inconsiderable field of interior illustration and embellishment, relatively neglected in twentieth century adult fiction, and the under-rated discipline of fictional cartography. Nor do I want to confine consideration narrowly to 'fiction-subordinate' works. Artistic renditions are an enormous aid to factual exposition, and a category of particular interest for SF readers is that of astro-art, which seeks to depict accurately and informatively, if not necessarily always literally the as-yet-unviewed vistas in which, as it happens, much SF is set. Both this and the related space-art, which portrays actual or planned human artifacts in such environments, must remain squarely within genre concerns.

But if all the foregoing are at least partially accompaniments to non-visual material, there remains the autonomous artistic work that, whether in two, three or more dimensions (consider the mobile!) stands independently on its own merits. However willing we all are to debate the qualities of verbal work with words of our own, few of us are willing to risk comment on purely visual items. The basic crafts of drawing and paint as well as their appreciation were once considered part of a rounded education. This no longer applies, depriving many of us (and certainly myself) both of capability and comprehension, but at least we might encourage those who have nonetheless achieved some

facility, and by open but not destructive discussion of their efforts help to exert traction on each other's bootstraps. And let it be remembered that purchase can be a very sincere form of acclamation.

An obvious forum for exhibition and debate is the SF convention art show. When I began con-going in the late 1970s, I gained the impression that this was an automatic feature of every con, and formed the habit of always trying to buy at least one piece. Increasingly of late, it seems to me, art shows have been neglected, but I've made sure that *Wincon III* will have one, and entries of any sort (assuming some arguable SF/Fantasy link), professional and amateur, for sale or exhibition only, are warmly solicited. Enquiries and advice (since I've not run one before!) will be welcome via the convention address: *Wincon*, 12 Crossbury Close, Ensworth, Hampshire PO10 7TS.

## Noticeboard

**New Music:** Not-so-occasional psychedelic dance band Mooch have a CD released. It's available for £8 including postage and packing. If you like The Orb and Hawkwind, this is for you! Tape also available (price details unknown). Write to Steve Palmer at 4 Park Road, Toddington, Bedfordshire LUS 6AB.

**Change of Address:** Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas have moved house to 15 Jansons Road, Tottenham, London N15 5HQ, but add reassuringly "Connoisseurs of our fanzine writings may suspect that the purchase and furnishing of a house could seriously hinder our foreign travel plans. This supposition may not be incorrect. Instead of reports of our journeys to curious Near Eastern destinations, then, they should expect exciting, fact-packed tales of midnight snail-hunts, excursions to the compost heap at the bottom of the garden, and spending spruces in DIY superstores. Hours of fun for every fan of suburban domesticiana".

**Attention, magazine, anthology, story annual collectors:** Peterborough SF club intend to publish a tribute to John Hynam (aka John Kippax). Please check your collection and let us know of any of his works (especially reprints) you have for bibliography. Prizes offered. Please reply to P.S.F.C., 58 Pennington, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough PE2 0RB.

**Donor Eggs:** Any woman under 35 in good general health with at least one successful pregnancy could consider being a donor of eggs. It will involve counselling, screening, hormone treatments and minor surgery to recover the eggs, but it give a chance to hundreds of couples who can't have children and would do almost anything to have them. There is a nationwide shortage of

donor eggs. If you are at least vaguely interested and fit the criteria, ask your local GP for advice and information.

**Cookery Books:** The James Tiptree Jr. Memorial Award is eccentrically financed by selling things like cookies and cookbooks and has produced two cookery books, so far. These are *The Bakery Men Don't See* (90pp plus card covers, spiral bound to lie flat on kitchen tables) and *Her Smoke Rose Up From Supper* (112pp, ditto). Besides interesting introductions *et cetera* by such as Karen Joy Fowler (book 2), Pat Murphy and Pamela Sargent (both book 1), these contain recipes, anecdotes and jokes from a horde of authors and SF people including Pat Cadigan, Maia Cowan, Ellen Datlow, Gwyneth Jones, Nancy Kress, Ursula K. Le Guin, Vonda McIntyre, Kristine Kathryn Rusch, Lew Shiner and many, many more. Both of these cost £8 each or £15 for the two, post free, from Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU.

## Conventions

**Mexicon 6: The Party:** 20-22 May, Hertford Park Hotel, Stevenage, attending membership £9.50, details from Bernie Evans, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands B66 4SH. This is the tenth anniversary celebration of the first Mexican convention. Mexicans have a reputation for concentrating on the literary aspects of SF, though media have gradually been infiltrating into an alternative type programme. The formal will be party night on the Friday, then the format programme will start on Saturday and end in the early hours of Sunday morning. According to the publicity, it "will be light, interesting, challenging and, most importantly, fun". The committee consists of Eve & John Harvey (co-ordination and hotel liaison), Mike Ford (moneykeeper), Colin Harris (publications), Bernie Evans (memberships), Linda Krawecki (in charge of fun) and Abigail Frost (programme, with John Harvey).

The programme will include a heated debate on censorship ("Censorship 10 years on — better or worse?"), a video interview, a discussion on "Boundaries", Mexican reminiscences, the Mexican Poll on the future, whether Mexicans should continue or be folded. There will also be a traditional Sunday lunch with radio background on the Sunday. Instead of having a programme book, there will be a special publication with new fiction from Mexican guests including Iain Banks, Alasdair Gray, Iain Sinclair and Norman Spinrad, plus reviews of the last decade from several leading reviewers and critics.

**Eurocon:** 26-29 May, Timisoara, membership £15, details from Bridget Wilkinson, 17 Mimosa, 29 Avenue Road, Tottenham, London N15 5JF. The Guests of Honour will be Joe Haldeman, Norman Spinrad, Sam Lundwall, Daniel Walther,

Herbert Franke, Gianfranco de Turris and John Brunner. The programme will include themes on post-modernism and SF; *Dracula versus anti-Dracula*; After Utopia, what next?; Scientific avant-garde and SF; Wisdom and Supercivilisations; SF towards the end of the millennium; My husband the writer; Publishers' poetry — whoever reads SF today; Jump in the non-linear; Documentary film gala; and an SF theatre show.

**Inconceivable:** 27-30 May, Tudor Court Hotel, Draycott, near Derby, membership £18 before 1 May, details from 12 Crich Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE34 6ES.

Octarine, the SF humour group, are organising this. From past experience, the programme will be innovative and original. Inconceivable is a convention based on humour in Science Fiction, Fantasy and anything else that occurred to us. There will be panels, talks, workshops, competitions, games, discos, parties, dealers and huge comfy leather sofas. It is about having fun without being predictable, so if you'd like to try a convention that's a bit different, if you've never been to a convention before or if you just want to find out what on earth we mean, why not give it a try? Write to the address given above, please.

**Canadian:** 1-5 September, Winnipeg Convention Centre, details from Helen McCarthy, 147 Francis Road, London E10 6NT.

Guests of Honour at this convention will be Anne McCaffrey, George Barr, Barry B. Longyear and the Fan Guest of Honour will be Robert Runté.

**Albacon 94:** 21-24 October, Central Hotel, Glasgow, details from Michelle Drayton, 10 Atlas Road, Springburn, Glasgow G21 4TE.

One guest will be Professor John Salthouse with his chemical bag of tricks. Vampires will have an integral role in the programme, but there will be a lot of Science Fiction items, plus the video rooms will offer the difficult choice of watching *Star Trek*, *Deep Space 9*, *Dr Who*,  *Gerry Anderson classics*, *Red Dwarf*, *Blake's 7*, Japanese animation and, courtesy of the Scottish Society of Fantastic Films, a wide range of rare films and video shows.

**Novacon 24:** 4-6 November, Royal Angus Hotel, membership £20 before Easter, details from Carol Morton, 14 Park Street, Lye, Stourbridge DY9 8SS.

The Guest of Honour will be Graham Joyce and the programme will echo his interest in dreams. The films will be carefully chosen to complement the programme.

**Confabulation:** 14-17 April 1995, Britannia International Hotel, London, details from Confabulation, 3 York Street, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 9QH.

The Guests of Honour will be Lois McMaster Bujold, Bob Shaw and Roger Robinson.

**Intersection:** 28-28 August 1995, Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, Glasgow,

membership £60 until 30 September, details from Admail 336, Glasgow G2 1BR.

Guests of Honour are Samuel R. Delany and Gerry Anderson. Maureen Speller and Paul Kincaid have agreed to co-ordinate the literary programming. Toast masters will be Diane Duane and Peter Morwood.

## SF and Fantasy on Video

Geoff Cowie

**Current Releases:** All titles PAL and English dialogue unless otherwise stated. All Manga Video releases have stereo sound.

**Battle Angel Atila (Manga Video),** £10.99, PAL, 55 mins, English dialogue, cert. 15; **Battle Angel (A.D. Vision),** \$34.95, NTSC, subtitled, 60 mins. Two contrasting versions of *GUNNM — Rusty Angel & GUNNM — Tears Sign*. Superbly realised cyberpunk SF, set in a bleak future where cyborgs and bounty hunters battle in a trash-heap and industrial wasteland, under the shadow of the floating nirvana-city of Zalem. Atila, brought back to life by Ido, a brilliant cyber-doctor, has no memories of her past, but soon reveals that she is programmed with extraordinary combat powers. She also has a human heart. The vividly realised settings and designs, the black humour of the cyborg scenes, the excitement of the battles, the deep rumbling under the looming aerial city, and the perceptive depiction of human emotions combine to make this a great video. The sombre song "An Insignificant Girl" between the NTSC episodes (and missing in the PAL version) perfectly sets the mood for the human tragedy that is to follow. A masterpiece.

The PAL mass-market version unfortunately is seriously flawed by dubbing with voices that introduce a levity unsuited to the dark theme of the video. It also uses a different and freer translation compared to the NTSC, which also retains the heroine's original name, Gally. The PAL version's sound effects are nevertheless impressive on a multispeaker stereo system.

**Macross II Volume 3 (Parts 5 & 6),** Kiseki Films, £10.99, 50 mins, cert. 15.

Concluding volume of the likeable SF space battle series. The invading Marduk spacefleets have the upper hand, Ishtar is back with the Marduk fleet, and Hibiki and Sylvie are in hot water with UN Space. Hibiki is imprisoned for making an unauthorised broadcast in which he reveals the truth about the aliens and the war to the public. Meanwhile, an epic space battle is in progress and the UN Space forces are losing. As the mad Marduk emperor Ingues moves in on Earth for the final confrontation, he orders the "song of death" to be sung by the "emulators", the normal-sized females who control the Zentradi slave-warriors.

Some dissent is felt by Lord Feff, and Ishtar returns to Earth.

In the concluding episode 6, Sylvie Jena persuades Commander Exegrean to let her use the old alien battleship *Macross* in a desperate assault against the Marduk flagship. It takes off with Sylvie, Hibiki and Ishtar aboard, and they fire the main energy weapon, but the Marduk flagship remains in one piece. Observing the strange effect the *Macross* has had on Sylvie and Hibiki, Ishtar resolves to sing a peaceful song of Earth. As in all the best cliffhangers, will it work?

The designs in *Macross* generally look good, and bits of it are very pretty indeed. There is more action in the concluding episodes than in much of the earlier four and the storyline is fairly well plotted. Also noteworthy are the repeated references to 'culture' and the idea that learning from other races, interbreeding and making peace with them is generally a good thing. The use of the songs in the plot is certainly rather odd, but it makes a pleasant change from large guns and excessive violence. Indeed, although we see various spacecraft destroyed, we don't see anybody killed on screen.

The hi-fi stereo soundtrack sounds good, and the songs, mostly in Japanese and subtitled, are quite pleasant. Though the script is a little juvenile, *Macross* seems no more silly than a certain very well-known and long-running television Science Fiction series now in its second generation. I have found that a liking for *Macross* has grown on me as I have watched the preview tapes in succession. Verdict: a charming series and recommended for family viewing.

*Gunhed* (Masato Harada), Manga Entertainment Ltd, 95 mins, cert. 12.

*Gunhed* (not to be confused with *Gundam*, *The Guyver* or *Gunnm!*) is a live-action SF cinematic release, set to tour major cities between March 18 and May 14. A video release later this year is likely.

As the movie opens, a group of armed treasure hunters are flying to a remote Pacific island, 8JO, where lie the remains of a vast industrial complex. On the island is Kiron 5, a supercomputer which thirteen years previously tried to seize control of the Earth. After three hundred and seventy three days of battle during which the computer defends itself with levitating 'Air Robots', the war seems to have ended in a draw with most of the war machines destroyed. The computer then ceases operation and the island is declared a contaminated area. The last of the humans' 'GUNHED' adaptable tank/robots lies damaged on the island.

In the opening scenes, most of the intruders are killed, leaving one treasure hunter, and a woman Texas Ranger, and two child survivors of the war, to fight it out with the computer and a rogue cyborg. The surviving treasure hunter, Brooklyn, finds *Gunhed* 507 and repairs it.

Intending viewers should be warned that unless they arm themselves with a synopsis beforehand they will find it almost impossible to follow anything that is going on in this movie!

The original Japanese and American co-production had Japanese and English dialogue (subtitled in Japanese) and was intended for an audience who had read the comic. The directorial style is oriented to showing off the sets and effects rather than explaining anything. It's impossible to follow the geography of the action, and even the *Gunhed* tank is only half-seen. The result looks quite extraordinary and I've never seen anything quite like it except in *Tetsuo* and *Tetsuo II*: industrial sets, guns, shadowy characterisation. It's billed as a popular film, but the experience is at times more akin to an art movie. There are frequent flashes, explosions and shots of gun muzzles firing, intermittently overlain with computer graphic messages and bits of pseudo-science. At any rate, the makers seem to have taken it all quite seriously.

The soundtrack is real cinema stuff; explosions, grinding engines, gunfire, music with thumping bass, and complements the movie well.

With all the weapons and bangs, *Gunhed* is real 'boys stuff' and while it's not the perfect SF movie, I must say I rather enjoyed it!

*Remember my Love* (Anime Projects), subtitled, 93 mins, cert. PG, £12.99.

Another 'Lum/Urasai Yatsura' movie — if you see a copy anywhere, buy it! (See *Matrix 110*).

*Cat Girl Nuku-Nuku* (Crusader Video), 90 mins, cert. PG, £12.99.

Very funny SF comedy in which an inventor estranged from his wife makes a cute girl android with a cat's brain to look after his small son. The wife wants her boy back and mayhem ensues. Recommended.

*Golgo 13 — The Professional* (Manga Video), £12.99, 93 mins, cert. 18.

A rather good hired-assassin thriller in which the eponymous anti-hero appears quite a sympathetic character, as repeated counter-attacks on himself and his helpers follow a successful killing. There are a few SF and Fantasy elements, but the computer animated helicopter sequence may be of particular interest to *Matrix* readers. Very violent and brutal and contains scenes of sexual violence; not for the squeamish.

*Laughing Target* (Manga Video), 50 mins, cert. 15, £8.99.

Based on a manga by famous manga artist Rumiko Takahashi, and inspired by Japanese tales of demonic possession, this human story becomes darker as it progresses. The lives of young archer Yasuru and his girlfriend Sutomi are disrupted when his beautiful but disturbed cousin/childhood sweetheart Asizar comes to live with him. Gripping.

*Crying Freeman Chapter 4* (Manga Video), £8.99, 50 mins, cert. 18.

Better than the two previous chapters; this is a well-paced kidnap thriller with plenty of incident and some new characters. The protagonists have a tendency to remove all their clothes revealing large animal tattoos. Violent, only a little silly and

quite fun.

*Doomed Megalopolis Chapter 4* (Manga Video), £8.99, 39 mins, cert. 18.

The concluding chapter, in which the evil sorcerer Kato uses an incantation to bring down the moon. The dialogue is splendidly full of pseudo-scientific jargon and the descent of the Moon is very visual and quite thrilling. Priestess Keiko Tatsumi is again in the forefront of the struggle to defeat Kato, and the climactic sequences are a visual treat.

*Urotsuki Doji 3* (Kiseki), £10.99, 50 mins, cert. 18.

Two more volumes of the notorious series, from a different company this time. A subtitled edition is promised, and limited-edition copies of this have already been sold.

*The Guyver* (Manga Video), 28 min, cert. 15, £6.99, Vol 1 of 12, monthly.

The Guyver is a mysterious alien bio-engineered armour. A school student finds it, and gets mixed up with some bad guys who transform into bio-engineered bipedal monsters. Scenes from the 'Hellcat' original comic strip appear inside the box sleeve.

All videos are available from Cybertek, Agora Centre, Bletchley, tel 0908 274850.

## Competition

There are an animated video and some Manga Video posters to give away to the first respondents to get the following questions right:

1. Name the video company primarily responsible for promoting anime in the UK.
2. What proportion of UK anime releases are cert. 18? a) 90%, b) over 60%, c) less than 40%.
3. Name a long running space adventure series made in animated form.

Send your answers to Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP, as soon as possible!

## Media News

Hollywood actor and part-time musician Keanu Reeves is to star with American rapper ICE-T in the SF film *Johnny Mnemonic* which has just started shooting in Toronto. It is rumoured that Dolph Lundgren will be playing the Finn (now Swede) and Bono from U2 will be in it. One character who will not be in it, though is Molly, since the film rights to *Neuromancer* were held elsewhere when *Johnny Mnemonic* was sold (both books, of course, originally by William Gibson).

I am indebted to *Warp*, the official newsletter of the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association, for the following news.

The laserdisc version of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* has a few more frames than Disney intended: these include a full frontal nude Jessica Rabbit and the home phone number of top Disney executive Michael Eisner, given as the number of a brothel operated by one Allyson Wonderland.

*Earth 2* is a new SF television series being prepared by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment corporation. It concerns the colonisation of a new planet.

The next *Star Trek* spin-off, *Star Trek: Voyager* will begin in January 1995. It is rumoured that Q will bring Ensign Sito back to life (assuming she died in the first place). Shooting on the TNG film: *Trek VII* will start in summer 1994, though only Patrick Stewart has signed so far. It is expected that the rest of the crew will need to work out their contracts and come aboard.

## Skywatching

Mark Ogier

Sometimes you hear of a new film or programme that sounds like it could be yet another corny attempt to cash in on an old idea, but which turns out to be a fresh and exciting look at time-honoured themes. I greeted the news of a new series about UFOs and the paranormal on Sky One with a large amount of scepticism — after all, as many people without satellite used to argue, if a series was any good the BBC or ITV would pick it up, right? In reply to that accusation, I used to cite *Deep Space Nine* and *The Flash* as two of the notable exceptions; but now I will add *The X Files* to the list. On paper, this appears to be another attempt to cash in on the world's great mysteries, but it turned out to be a first rate SF/Fantasy drama that occasionally packed a genuinely scary punch.

Even the title is enough to put you off; makes it sound like some second rate 1960s spy drama. But, ever on the lookout for new SF oriented programmes, I decided to give the series a couple of tries, just to make sure I did not dismiss it unseen. I need not have worried; by the end of the first episode, I was hooked.

Initially advertised as a series about a pair of UFO investigators, *The X Files* actually broadened its premise after the first few programmes to cover virtually any unexplained or paranormal phenomenon. The central characters are FBI agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson). The latter has been assigned to keep an eye on Mulder, because his bosses are not sure there is any point keeping him on. Mulder's job is to manage the bureau's X files, cases of kidnapping, murder and so on for which there appear to be no rational explanations. The fact that Mulder has had personal experience of a UFO (his younger sister disappeared when he was a child, and he is convinced she was kidnapped by aliens) means

that he treats all these cases credulously. Scully is the sceptic, who believes that something is going on, but is always reluctant to assign any extraterrestrial or paranormal explanation to the events.

Ostensibly based on true stories, as far as I can make out, this means the writers use documented accounts of bizarre goings on and turn them into fictitious stories. So far we have had episodes dealing with government UFO cover-ups (cf the Roswell incident), wild people living in the forest (The Jersey Devil), alien kidnappings, a hundred year old man who has to eat fresh human liver to stay alive, and sightings of strange aircraft near US Air Force bases.

Each episode is played straight — unlike a very similar series of the 1970s, *Kolchak*, which had a much more tongue in cheek feel to it. Neither of the central characters are what you would call dynamic, and they both tend to spend episodes wearing glum expressions. But there are moments of levity, mainly thanks to Mulder's treatment by his colleagues, who insist on calling him Spooky — a reputation which he does little to discourage.

But that does not mean the acting is bad, just that the characters themselves are generally placed firmly in second place to the storylines, which are the strongest element of the series, apart from one or two neat effects. Inevitably, some episodes are a bit on the weak side (the hundred year old man took a bit of swallowing), but a recent story about a woman who is apparently being protected by a ghost is the first episode of a television series to send shivers down my spine since I used to hide behind the sofa at *Dr Who*. No firm conclusion was reached as to whether this was a genuine spirit, or if it was psychokinesis on the part of the woman — although you did see a *Predator*-type outline of the alleged dead man once or twice, it was suggested that this could have been created by the woman.

With most of the scripts excellent pieces of drama, some great ideas and two likeable if reserved central characters, *The X Files* is shaping up to be yet another coup for Sky One.

On the movie channels, we have had yet another SF series — but this one went on for two weeks and actually included one or two good films. Among them was the premiere of *Alien*, about which quite enough has been said so I won't repeat any of it here, *Star Wars* (ditto!), *Fahrenheit 451*, *Terminator 2*, *Silent Running*, *The Lawnmower Man* and *Universal Soldier*.

The last of these is yet another attempt at mainstream SF that believes the audience wants little more than lots of shooting and violent punch-ups. But I gave it a go, and found myself enjoying it enormously.

Yes, it is incredibly violent. Well, with Jean Claude Van Damme and Dolph Lundgren as the leads, one could hardly expect otherwise. The pair are part of a crack army assault team called UniSols, but apart from having a corny name, they are actually incredibly tough. The reason for this is that they are actually the reprogrammed corpses of men killed in Vietnam. Yes, it is

shades of *Robocop*, but they are not nearly so invulnerable.

Of course, the programming goes wrong and when both men recall the circumstances of their deaths (Lundgren went crazy and killed Van Damme, who managed to off his opponent before dying), one starts running and the other starts chasing him.

Although not a great lover of violent SF, I found myself totally swept up in this rollercoaster ride of shoot-outs and punch-ups. But what lifts it above other similar fare is the sense of humour and the beyond-belief nature of some of the set pieces. I particularly enjoyed the shoot out at a motel where Van Damme has holed up (the place is literally shot down around him), and the climatic punch up between the two leads.

Not a film for all tastes, and certainly far from a good example of SF cinema, but great fun in a junk food sort of way.

## Fanzines

One of the criteria used to assess the quality of a fanzine tends to be the letter column. However, the contents of a letter column are responding to the contents of the last issue (though the authors may slant off onto unexpected tangents); it is more useful to look at the contributors who will provide the seed corn for the next issue and it is also relevant to look at the range of contributors. *FOFAX* is a prime example here. It's the fanzine of the Falls of Ohio Science Fiction and Fantasy Association. Just over half the pages reserved for regular features, articles and reviews are written by Joseph T. Major (Secretary) and Timothy Lane (Treasurer and Editor). This does not affect the quality of this impressive fanzine, but it creates a strongly consistent editorial atmosphere.

The next (May) issue should be a special on health care and Timothy Lane's article on economics will appear at some stage. The February issue is the mixture as before: a first glance reveals commentary on American politics, the third part of Joseph T. Major's commentary on Heinlein's *Have Space Suit, Will Travel*, reviews of *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* by Deborah E. Lipstadt, *The Hacker Crackdown* by Bruce Sterling and *Human Fertilizer and Potemkin Environmentalism: Ecocide in the U.S.S.R.* by Murray Feshback and Alfred Friendly among others. These heavy articles are sandwiched with lighter bits. I particularly liked Patrick L. McGuire's comments on how to date the action in *Have Space Suit, Will Travel*. He claims that Heinlein must have been aware that Pluto's perihelion was to be in 1989 (Kip says that Pluto was approaching the sun) and he makes a valid case for the title referring to the radio/tv show *Have Gun, Will Travel*, a Western about a San Francisco-based ethical gun for hire. Taras Wolansky gives a detailed account of Philcon, the 53rd Annual Philadelphia Science Fiction

Conference last November. Programme items which seem to have been exciting include "Sex and the Single Dinosaur" which was hi-jacked by scientist/author Charles Pellegrino (described as "something like a nice Harlan Ellison"), who, after addressing some of the ideas popularised in *Jurassic Park*, mentioned the upcoming sequel to his first novel, *Flying to Valhalla*, which involved the great danger of interstellar travel via antimatter propulsion. "Technology vs. Caution" was another interesting panel. Tom Purdom argued that Science Fiction has questioned technological progress from the very beginning ... it would be very easy to quote the whole article, which gave much more of a feel of an American con than Johnny Carruther's later piece on ConFrancisco, the 1993 Worldcon. That piece reveals a lot about Johnny Carruthers and what he said to the unfortunate authors he met (most how much he enjoyed their books). But whereas Taras says more about what the authors said in the first place, Johnny is very tightly focused into giving a personal account. Later still, Joseph T. Major gives an account of his autumn vacation in Williamsburg. It's as detailed as Johnny's piece — for example, on Tuesday October 26, Joseph and his mother rolled out of their beds too early and were off at 8am to smoky Winston-Salem to inspect the Moravian settlement there. But whereas Johnny seems to be concerned with events only as they affect him, Joseph has some consideration for the reader and is more like a sympathetic guide.

**FOSFAX** is an excellent read: 64 pages of dense material. I enjoy reading it a lot and I enjoy the fact that I have to read it carefully (I haven't even mentioned the letter column, which covers topics such as the crime problem in San Francisco, the David Koresh affair, homosexual promiscuity and whether Anita Hill was found not to be telling the truth. But I do feel that the fanzine's future is vulnerable should Timothy Lane and Joseph T. Major get side-tracked as they seem to be carrying a disproportionate amount of the magazine production right now.

One fanzine which may have avoided this dependence on a small number of contributors is Greg Pickersgill's *Rastus Johnson's Cakewalk*. Immaculately duplicated in old gold, the latest issue covers Greg's thoughts on a Worldcon fan room, followed by Dave Langford on the Internet and self-portraits by Dave Wood and Harry Bond. By the time this magazine sees print, another issue should be available, making it five issues in seven months, but the text remains fresh and enthusiastic. By alternately coaxing and nagging about the apathy of his readership, Greg has managed to have an active letter column, though there are a few mutineers, like Hazel Ashworth who comments "I was rather surprised to see my name in the doldrums list of Nearly Not Getting It next time. What is this? Where is your editorial solidarity? Where is your memory? Can this be the same Pickersgill I send six LIPs to once upon a time?" But then, as Greg says, producing a fanzine is an expensive business and it becomes disheartening to trust copies to the local postman and get absolutely no response at all. On the other

hand, there are 13 letters printed, 3 mentioned and 2 held over to the next issue for space considerations. That's an adequate response to a fanzine issue, but I suspect that Greg is cautious about finding his letter column always full of the same people. That can so easily happen, it's an insidious process and difficult to change — the fanzine editor may not even want it to change.

I don't get every issue of Terry Jeeves' *Erg*, so I can't be absolutely sure about this, but there are several familiar names in his letter column. Roger Sheppard is unfamiliar: he comments on how to buy U.S. fanzines, suggesting that the best way is to buy dollar bills from a bank and send them on. Nor do I remember seeing a letter from Ted Hughes before, but Terry has several regulars who all produce nice, regular, constructive letters. Elsewhere in the fanzine, there is the latest in the unusual aircraft series and musings on travels to the moon. *Erg* is a pleasant read and Terry Jeeves has a range of interests to write about, including covers of old magazines, the definition of Science Fiction and inventions. He has found a formula he likes for his fanzine and he varies it just enough to maintain the readers' interest.

It's unreasonable to expect that an issue of a fanzine will be world-shattering, but fanzines represent a place to experiment, to push against the barriers of constrictive normality. This can be by something trivial like altering the margin size or the type face, it can be with the choice of articles and the editorial voice. I feel uneasy to be able to feel that a fanzine has a consistent editorial presence and am going to test my premise by producing another issue of my own fanzine. It's now four years since I produced an issue. The letters I received are now out of date, my editorial feelings have evolved. I want to see if I can produce something exciting, interesting, stimulating. I know that it's easy to criticise other fanzines and difficult to avoid their faults. Like the fanzines mentioned here, my fanzine will be available for the Usual (a show of interest, a letter of feedback after receiving it, perhaps an article). In August, my fanzine will be ready for the critical racks. I hope I shall be brave and confident enough to survive seeing reviews or, even worse, not seeing any reviews of it.

**FOSFAX**: FOSFA, Post Office Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281, U.S.A.

*Rastus Johnson's Cakewalk*: Greg Pickersgill and Catherine McAulay, 3 Bethany Row, Narbeth Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA61 2XG  
*Erg*: Terry Jeeves, 64 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RG.

## Fanzines to look out for

**Warp**: The official newsletter of the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (PO Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 2F4)

Edited by Keith Braithwaite, this fanzine is an invaluable source of media news. Club events take place at the Maritime Hotel, 1155 Guy Street (corner René Levesque), downtown Montreal. On

May 15, there is a full day of SF/F fun with discussion panels, videos, displays, snack table and more. Friends are invited.

Their February meeting, the Great Star Trek Debate, was exceptionally interesting. On one hand *Trek* portrayed ethnic minorities and women in a more positive way than most television shows, but *Trek* science was well outside the realm of even reasonable scientific speculation. As for *Trek* influence on the SF genre, it was admitted to be an excellent vehicle for introducing people to SF, but had such a strong commercial clout that it sucked up all the production money and stopped other projects getting off the ground.

*Trek* discussions have all too often turned into emotional and non-logical propaganda: it was refreshing to find a challenging and logical debate for once.

Canadian fanzines are very much in the ascendant: other prime examples to look out for are *Opusita* and *The Frozen Frog*.

**Moriarty's Revenge** (Dave Hicks, Top Flat, 8 Dyfrig Street, Pontcanna, Cardiff CF1 9LR).

He was inspired to do this by the buzz at the recent con, Misdeamnor, and it's well worth it to see the lead article on art, where he confesses that his favourite painting would be Piet Mondrian's *Windmill in Sunlight*. "As much as it is possible for a confirmed atheist" he writes "I had a spiritual experience — my breath drained away and I went all light-headed, it was that beautiful. The picture is constructed of dashing brushstrokes of red, yellow and blue, singing with the simple pleasure of being in the country on a hot summer's day. Looking at it, you can feel the sun on your back and a gentle, warm breeze on your face."

He aims to put out issue two in early May.

**Thingumbob Eleven** (Chuck Connor, Sildan House, Chediston Road, Wissett, near Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 ONF).

Thinner than usual, but still with the usual flair, panache and uncomfortable articles. The articles by Steve Green and Caroline Mullan are reprints and may, perhaps, have lost a little of their original power by having been originally written for a different audience. The most thought-provoking article is Bernard Earp's piece on child abuse. Having come across a child who has been abused, he wants to "try and bring about some healing".

**Etranger II** (Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP).

Steve Glover draws on writing about the Internet and by some of his favourite authors on the Internet: the loose theme of this series of fanzines will be morality, using different Smiths as a starting point (the first one is an informative and excellent article on Cordwainer Smith). This is sandwiched with personal memories.

**Cyrrer Bunny** (Tara and Robert Glover, 16

Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP).

The Glover children return to fanzine production with this gentle fanzine, based around an animal theme. They choose their favourite articles and authors from fanzines and apas: articles include Caroline Mullan on whale watching, Getsu-shin on having a domestic rabbit and Harry Payne on anime.

**The Knarley Knews** (Henry L. Welch and Letha R. Welch, 1525 16th, Ave, Grafton, WI 54024-2017, U.S.A.).

The editorial policy here is "to be a general purpose fanzine whose primary goal is to maintain lines of communication between the editors and those beings they consider to be friendly." This gives a good snapshot of the Welch life style, with some book reviews and a few letters: it's comforting, though not particularly intellectually demanding, to read.

**Obsessions (Alcohol)** (Bridget Hardcastle, 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 6PX).

A6 (but still readable) snippets of life seen through a haze of alcohol. There are some cocktail recipes which are unreasonably heavy on the cream, memories, music, orgasms, all crammed into 16 pages.

**From Sunday to Saturday** (Don Fitch, 3908 Frijol, Covina, CA 91772, U.S.A.)

He sets an example by declaring his work to be freeware (non-copyright). One of his pieces, *A Wild Card*, tugged at my attention, and is reprinted elsewhere in this magazine. He touches briefly on the Cacophony Society: "The group exists in order to do precisely the sort of things Los Angeles area Science Fiction fans used to do (or at least talk about doing) from time to time."

**Derogatory Reference 75** (Arthur D. Hlavaty, 206 Valentine Street, Yonkers, NY 10704-1814, U.S.A.)

American con reports tend to concentrate on programme items while British con reports reveal more about the attendees or, rather, the ones encountered by the author. This is no exception: there's a detailed account of events at the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts.

He is advancing in two contradictory directions currently, buying both a modem and a typewriter. Further developments could be interesting here.

**Kaspahraster** (Jean Heriot, PO Box 8831, Portland, OR 97207, U.S.A.)

Interestingly surreal fanzine with strong fiction content. Look out for Daniel Ust's article on space colonisation.

**Lone Wolf** (Norman Clinton, 20 Cedar Road, Lancaster LA1 5RJ)

Pagan fanzine with beautiful illustrations by Sue Mason.

## The First Woman on Pluto Cardinal Cox

She gives talks to the W.I.  
She tells you to always try  
And what it's like to fly

And on the pad  
She feels lost in the erection  
Watching the gauges  
Listening to control-centre chit-chat  
There's a break in the weather  
The window is open  
5...4...3...2...1...  
Anyone got a light?

She's written a cook-book  
101 uses for an alien gook  
It's well worth a look

In orbit she floats  
Transferring to another craft  
Checks over the stores  
Triple checks the pile  
Fuel tank pressure  
Canopus tracking system  
Emergency pod  
And narrow-beam communication laser

She does an 'ad' for fast cars  
Her calendar is hung in bars  
Her manager reckons she could go far

The gentle mix of chemicals  
Heated by the fusion donut  
The ion-beam balanced  
By the magnetic plates  
Acceleration fakes gravity  
Swinging out on the long curve  
The slow spiral route  
Out into the night

She's been engaged twice  
And thought the ambassador nice  
And still wears the billionaire's ice

Watch the screens  
Listen to the radar  
You can dodge the big asteroids  
Fire retro's to go round  
But the small ones  
Pray the shields hold  
Listen to them scratch  
Crying like cats to come in on a stormy night

She does all the chat shows  
Wearing expensive designer clothes  
Telling presenters what she knows

Finally slowing with a long burn  
As Charon rises faint  
Ammonia geysers plume

Whitening the thin atmosphere  
The pure clear lakes  
Not quite absolutely frozen  
At not quite absolute zero  
And the descent craft touches on a rocky outcrop

She walks along sandy shores  
Escaping from her domestic chores  
And the media hack's claws

Now returning from the edge  
She wonders at what she's seen  
Comets come to dance like gulls  
Above the solar system's cliffs  
And passing Jupiter she wonders  
Why did they send me  
And when she asks they say  
"We need a new media star"

Away she starts to hide  
Feeling the change in the media tide  
And at nights they say she cried

They never again let her out  
Now she was their product pet  
They'd only let her see space again  
On clear cold nights  
The only way to return to Pluto  
Was a bottle full of pills  
And the day she was buried  
Someone joked about frigidity

And the first woman to Tau Ceti  
Gives talks now to the Young Wives Group.

## News from Easter

**John Brunner** is a speaker at the 1994 Writers' Conference at Southampton University, April 15-17. For more details please telephone 0703 593469.

**Ramsey Campbell**, when interviewed by Jane Barnett, admitted that his hobbies were walking in the country and collecting books, CDs, and classical music. He gave the following advice to potential writers: that they should think of the first line before writing it down.

**Diane Duane** described seven films that changed her life in a Programme Book article for *Sou'Wester*. They were: *The Apple War*, *A Christmas Story*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Ghidrah the Three-Headed Monster*, *Kelly's Heroes*, and *The Lion in Winter*.

Look out for *Destiny* magazine published by Emanuel McLittle (Box 19284 Lansing, Michigan 48901, U.S.A., subscription for six issues \$19.95). It has concerned and thoughtful perspectives on the issues of the day.

## Awards

## BSFA Awards

Best novel: *Aztec Century* by Christopher Evans  
 Short fiction: "The Raghorn" by Robert Holdstock and Garry Kilworth  
 Best artwork: Jim Burns, for the cover of *Red Dust* by Paul McAuley  
 Special award: the second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* edited by John Clute and Peter Nicholls, with contributing editor Brian Stableford and technical editor John Grant.

The Doc Weir Award was presented to Tim Broadribb. This is the "unsung hero" award and is in recognition of the many years he has spent running film programmes for conventions.

The Phloque Award for "cute" art was awarded to Dave Mooring.

The Ken McIntyre Award for best fanish artwork of the year was awarded to Barbara Mascetti for the Stratmann wedding invitation.

The Masquerade Awards were as follows:

Child winner: Rachel Bell "Cloak of Midnight Sky with Moonbeams", self-made costume from Chaos Costume Workshop  
 Best newcomer: Bobby MacLaughlan "The Trouble with Gran", self-made costume with dance  
 Best experienced: Jette Goldie "Female Dress Uniform" from Classic Trek, self-made and designed  
 Best performance: Anonymous group "Servants of Avanthé"  
 Best legs: Teddi for "Tech Fashion".

## Romantic Quotations

One feature of the convention newsletter were the quotations scattered liberally. In a special romantic supplement on Monday April 4, the unearthed gems included:

"Her very existence made his forebrain swell until it threatened to leak out his sinuses." — Nancy A. Collins, *Sunglasses After Dark*.  
 "Rand stared at her in amazement that oozed across the emptiness surrounding him like syrup." — Robert Jordan, *The Fires of Heaven*.  
 "Their tongues twisted around each other, strong as pythons. She had never been afraid of snakes." — Marge Piercy, *Body of Glass*.  
 "He lifted her tee-shirt over her head. Her silk panties followed." — Peter F. Hamilton, *Mindstar Rising*.  
 "When she looked at him, something inside her lurched, and she swallowed her errand innards down, holding them still by not breathing for a time." — Sheri S. Tepper, *Sideshow*.

## More Fanzines

**Beer Cat Scratchings** (Alasdair Hepburn, 123c Chobham Road, Stratford, London E15 1LX)  
 A minimalist fanzine where the footnotes get read before the text. Amusing.

**Knightspace** (Aberdeen University Science Fiction and Fantasy Society, c/o Luthuli House, 50-52 College Bounds, Aberdeen AB2 3DS)  
 Bulky fanzine including Pete Binfield's article "Zipper Tripper", a Karl Thurgood rant on *Star Trek*, which, among lots of other things questions the preaching of the series: "The clarity can sometimes be a little questionable. Take a look at *A Private Little War*, this seems to run rather against the anti-war feeling of *A Taste of Armageddon* far from as that story did the first-mentioned episode seems to clearly suggest that the Americans were right to be in Korea and in Vietnam, and presumably by extension in Kuwait. So *Star Trek* is anti-war is it, maybe but this seems kind of questionable. A good relatively recent episode would be TNG's *The Host*. Some of the dialogue of the ending of that episode could be easily interpreted as suggesting that homosexuality is abnormal."

**Platypus 3** (Simon Ounsley, 25 Park Villa Court, Leeds LS8 1EB)

Short, snappy fanzine (his description) with meditations on friends. He says "As I've decided I definitely like having a fanzine to give out at conventions, there should be another edition along for Mexican VI in May. Good grief: if I manage that it'll be five fanzines in eight months. Whatever next? The Beatles re-forming? California splitting in two?"

**Ground Zero** (Nostromo, 39 Rodley Ave, St Albans, Herts. AL1 5ST)

This is the fanzine of Polaris, the St Albans Science Fiction group. Good mix of articles, though I particularly liked the SF guide to Camden Market, plus "The Pachyderm of Polaris" by Marian Arroway. An interesting piece.

**Eyeballs in the Sky** (Tony Berry, 55 Seymour Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 4EP)

The front cover, by Sheryl Birkhead, is pretty superb: the contents bring the reader up to date with Tony's life before being diverted to a huge letter column.

**Cyberspace** (12 Crosby Close, Emsworth, Hants PO10 7TS)

The newsletter of the South Hants Science Fiction Group. The next meetings will be 12 April, 26 April, 10 May, 24 May, 14 June and 28 June, that is, the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at the lounge bar of the Electric Arms, Fratton Road, Portsmouth.

This issue concentrates on reviews: Tom Holt's *Graalblazers*, Tony Daniel's *Warpath*, Sheri S. Tepper's *Beauty* and Paul J. McAuley's *Red Dust* reviewed impeccably by Terry Hunt.

Given a pile of fanzines, I normally

grab this one and run to a quiet place to read it. This time I didn't: possibly because it was covered by ...

**Reading Matters** (Tibs, 1/L, 30 Falkland Street, Glasgow G12 9QY)

This is the nearest thing to a bar conversation I've seen in print, and most of it is about Science Fiction too. It's neatly categorised, as usual, and covers topics such as music in fiction, sex in space, utopias, powerful women and Tolkien's orcs. Reading it straight through may lead to a feeling of being overwhelmed, but this is a great fanzine to dip into and there is a good range of people writing with their own opinions. I really do like this one.

**Obsessions #3** (Bridget Hardcastle, 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 6PX)

This time, Bridget concentrates on chocolate: she had been picked to star in an advertisement for Cadbury's Twirl. There's a short article by Mark Armstrong, "Hot Stuff" which was thought-provoking and an exceptionally good article on book collecting by Pat McMurray. I liked Alex McLintock's piece on wine tasting, come to think of it, I liked quite a lot here. Perhaps the inspiration of the fanzine came from George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*: "What use are cartridges in battle? I always carry chocolates instead". A worthy thought.

**Empties** (Martin Tudor, 845 Alum Rock Road, Ward End, Birmingham B8 2AG)

Next issue will be out for Novacon, the theme being "the first time ...", but in the meantime, this issue has several excellent articles by Mike Siddall, Dave Langford and Rhodri James plus quite a full letter column. The Shep cover is superb.

**One Third of an Unwell Octopus** (Ian Sorensen)

Last minute double-sided issue, produced partly because he felt odd at a con without a fanzine. Random thoughts and a satirical cartoon on the Worldcon relating to Scottish stereotypes and kits. Worth reading.

**From the Kelpie's Pool** (Alison Freebairn, Police House, Kilmacolm, Renfrewshire PA13 4LG)

Very enthusiastic fanzine, the layout is all over the place, but that is good magazine layout: keep the readers excited, not knowing what will come next. There's bits about her life, comments on the UK Comic Art Convention in Glasgow in March: this one is interesting to look at.

**The Startled Bunny** (Jackie McRobert, 75 Balmalloch Road, Kilsyth, Glasgow G65 9NS)

My major whinge with this would be about her definition of cuteness. Brian Ameringer gives superb back rubs (his long, strong fingers vibrate fiercely), but cute is not a word one would use to describe him. But the rest of the fanzine is good: there's more about Jackie's life and a thought-provoking letter column.

## BSFA News Maureen Speller

The BSFA enjoyed a very successful weekend at Sou'Wester. We raised almost £1200 from the now famous BSFA tombola, not to mention the raffle, a word square competition and selling books. We also took two life memberships, from Bridget Hardcastle and Steve Grover, both already BSFA members.

The winner of the raffle for free life membership was none other than Roger Robinson, well-known in fandom for his work with Becon Publications and Friends of Foundation.

The winner of the word square competition was David Peek, who won the original Dave Mooring painting.

Our thanks go to all those who contributed books to the tombola, particularly Michael O'Donovan, Lorna Bootland, Moira Shearman and Paul Hood. We'd also like to thank all those who worked on the desk during the weekend: Paul Allwood, Lorna Bootland, Andrew Butler, Roy Gray, Carol Ann Green, Sue Jones, Paul Kincaid, Moira Shearman and Dave Thomas.

We'd also like to record our particular thanks to Mark Plummer, who organised the dealers' room at Sou'Wester; John Harold, who ran an exemplary, unobtrusive security operation, keeping stock safe, and all the gophers who trucked the boxes in on Friday morning.

Our next major convention appearance will be at Wincon. Volunteers and donations are eagerly sought. Please contact Maureen Speller at the usual address.

Full details of the Annual General Meeting will be given in the next edition of *Matrix*. At present, the most important thing to note is that membership rates will go up on 1st May. The new rate will be £18, taking account of the fact that membership rates did not rise as they should have done last year while postage has risen, and we also have to cover collating costs.

However, for students, the unemployed and the retired, there will be a half-price rate of £9 on production of appropriate proof of status. We hope, though, that anyone who can afford to, will continue to pay the full rate. New standing order forms will be available with the next mailing.

## Del Rey Author Anagram Contest

Del Rey ran an online contest in February '94, asking for the best anagrams (scrambles) of their authors' names. The editors got lots of funny entries, but the winner was without question William F. Richardson (willrich@cs.utah.edu) for his mock interviews with the authors, in which

each answer to the interviewer's question is an anagram of the author's name. The editors thought the "interviews" were so funny that they asked if they could make them all available. The authors seem to be often gruff and telegraphic in their answers, but they certainly lead interesting lives! At the suggestion of Chris Terran, the authors' names have been omitted, thereby making the answers even more revealing ...

Q: .... .., at a recent con, when Andre Norton's name was misspelled as Andree, what happened?

A: Andree lost a fan.

Q: At the same con, you met someone with a toothache. Who was he?

A: A sore dental fan.

Q: While there, what new drink did you try for the first time?

A: Andean frost ale.

Q: What's the best response to jokes you told at the hotel bar?

A: A fan snorted ale.

Q: The joke was "How many surrealists does it take to change a lightbulb?" What's the answer?

A: An antlered sofa.

Q: You recently went to Russia. What's your favourite room in the Kremlin tour?

A: A den of Tsar Neal.

Q: You were once shipwrecked with some friends. How did the press describe it?

A: Tan Lads on a Reef.

Q: What nickname did you receive as a result?

A: Infanta del Rosa.

Q: You once made a spoof of Godzilla movies. What was the title?

A: *Fernando Eats LA*.

Q: You also did a spoof of another monster movie. What was its title?

A: *Adrenal Ant Foes*.

Q: And you did a "naughty" movie too. What was it called?

A: *Elf and a Senator*.

Q: ..... .., before you began writing, you had a small part in a horror movie. What was the title?

A: *Frothing Calf II*.

Q: How was your character dressed?

A: Chiffon tail rig.

Q: How did you get the part anyway?

A: Focal hiring fit.

Q: And you're hosting a pest-control festival next week. What's the theme?

A: Chili rat offering.

Q: ..... .., in college, you took a class in outdoor survival. How was that taught?

A: Hiker prof led.

Q: You switched classes at your wife's recommendation. Why?

A: Liked her prof.

Q: Your wife takes wildlife photographs. How do you help her?

A: Prod her if elk.

Q: You even have your own elk farm. Do you maintain it yourself, or what?

A: Hired elk prof.

Q: That sign by your umbrella stand is written in Greek. What does it say?

A: Folk drip here.

Q: ..... .., your son was recently in trouble with the law. Why?

A: Eric flashed flesh; sheriff heeds call.

Q: Did he have to pay a large fine?

A: Child flashers fee.

Q: Who collected the money from him?

A: Sheriff's leech lad.

Q: There was also some trouble at a local restaurant. How did the police discover that the restaurant was serving uncooked meat?

A: Flesh cashier fled; hairless chef fled.

Q: The chef actually hijacked a train to make his escape. What happened?

A: Flesh chef details.

Q: How about the cashier? What did he use to escape the police?

A: Raffish leech sled.

Q: But your wife actually met the cashier, didn't she? How?

A: She fed caller fish.

Q: How fish the police able to identify him later?

A: Recall her fed.

Q: ..... .., you recently helped select paintings for a museum time capsule, but had to refuse one artist's work due to lack of space. What did you tell him?

A: Overvuled his art.

Q: Later, you relented. What did you tell the museum curator?

A: Reorder thy vault.

Q: What was the title of the painting in question?

A: *Veldt Artery Hour*.

Q: But the sealing ceremony was delayed when you couldn't get a rental truck to transport the paintings. What was the cause?

A: A Ryder hut revolt.

Q: ..... .., you had a bad accident recently on a tour of a brewery, when you fell into some machinery. What was it that you landed in?

A: A Newcastle wren vat.

Q: In surgery, the doctors had to use a special instrument. What was it?

A: Evanescent wartawl.

Q: You recently discovered that salamanders have a homing instinct, much like salmon returning to their spawning ground. What do salamanders return to?

A: Ancestral newt wave.

(Our interviewer, perhaps wary by now of the bizarre and extremely wide-ranging private lives of Del Rey novelists, also did some brief mini-interviews.)

Q: ..... .., you were expecting a girl for your first child. What happened?

A: Stork boy err.

Q: You made some bad investments lately. What's wrong?

A: Broker story.

# The Ultimate Question(naire) to fannish life, the universe and everything

Please fill in the questions below. All information will be treated confidentially and used only to help future conventions. Please return the completed questionnaire to Ms Debra G Kerr, 38 Bankfield Terrace, Leeds.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex (M/F): \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Does all or part of your income come from SF/Fantasy occupations? Yes/No? \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Income: Under £5,000 \_\_\_\_\_; £5-9,999 \_\_\_\_\_; £10-14,999 \_\_\_\_\_; £15-19,999 \_\_\_\_\_; £20-24,999 \_\_\_\_\_; £25-29,999 \_\_\_\_\_; Over £30,000 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own the following? Typewriter \_\_\_\_\_; TV \_\_\_\_\_; VCR \_\_\_\_\_; Computer \_\_\_\_\_

If computer: Games \_\_\_\_\_; Writing/DTP \_\_\_\_\_; Business \_\_\_\_\_; Programming \_\_\_\_\_

At what age did you start reading SF/Fantasy? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you still read SF/Fantasy Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you prefer SF \_\_\_\_\_; Fantasy \_\_\_\_\_; Both equally? \_\_\_\_\_

How many new hardcover books do you buy each month? None \_\_\_\_\_; 1 \_\_\_\_\_; 2-4 \_\_\_\_\_; 5-10 \_\_\_\_\_; 11+ \_\_\_\_\_

How many new paperbacks do you buy each month? None \_\_\_\_\_; 1 \_\_\_\_\_; 2-4 \_\_\_\_\_; 5-10 \_\_\_\_\_; 11+ \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you buy most of your books? General bookshops \_\_\_\_\_; Book clubs \_\_\_\_\_; Specialist shops \_\_\_\_\_; Conventions \_\_\_\_\_; Specialist mail order \_\_\_\_\_; second hand \_\_\_\_\_

Which magazines do you read? *Interzone* \_\_\_\_\_; *Omnis* \_\_\_\_\_; Semi prozines \_\_\_\_\_; other US fiction magazines \_\_\_\_\_; *SF Chronicle* \_\_\_\_\_; *Critical Wave* \_\_\_\_\_; *Foundation* \_\_\_\_\_; RPG/Gaming \_\_\_\_\_; Computer magazines \_\_\_\_\_; *New Scientist* \_\_\_\_\_; Media magazines \_\_\_\_\_; Music magazines \_\_\_\_\_; Womens' magazines \_\_\_\_\_

Do you read: Newspaper tabloids daily \_\_\_\_\_; Weekly \_\_\_\_\_; Newspaper broadsheets daily \_\_\_\_\_; weekly \_\_\_\_\_

How many films do you see each month at the cinema? 0 \_\_\_\_\_; 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_; 3-5 \_\_\_\_\_; 6-10 \_\_\_\_\_; 10+ \_\_\_\_\_

How many videos do you see each month? Rented: 0 \_\_\_\_\_; 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_; 3-5 \_\_\_\_\_; 6-10 \_\_\_\_\_; 10+ \_\_\_\_\_  
Bought: 0 \_\_\_\_\_; 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_; 3-5 \_\_\_\_\_; 6-10 \_\_\_\_\_; 10+ \_\_\_\_\_

When was your first convention? 50s \_\_\_\_\_; 60s \_\_\_\_\_; 70s \_\_\_\_\_; 80s \_\_\_\_\_; 90s \_\_\_\_\_

How many conventions do you attend per year? 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_; 3-5 \_\_\_\_\_; 6-10 \_\_\_\_\_; More \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever attended conventions outside the UK? Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

If so, where? Ireland \_\_\_\_\_; Europe \_\_\_\_\_; U.S.A. \_\_\_\_\_; Australia \_\_\_\_\_

Which conventions and other events do you attend? UK Worldcons \_\_\_\_\_; Easterecons \_\_\_\_\_; Novacons \_\_\_\_\_; Mexicons \_\_\_\_\_; Fantasy/Horror cons \_\_\_\_\_; Trek cons \_\_\_\_\_; Other media cons \_\_\_\_\_; Comics cons \_\_\_\_\_; Filk cons \_\_\_\_\_; University cons \_\_\_\_\_; Relaxacons \_\_\_\_\_; Local Clubs \_\_\_\_\_; Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

What factors help you decide which cons to attend? Geography \_\_\_\_\_; Cost \_\_\_\_\_; Friends already attending \_\_\_\_\_; Creche facilities \_\_\_\_\_; Guest of Honour or celebrities attending \_\_\_\_\_; Security of hotel \_\_\_\_\_; Convention committee you know \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you in: The BSFA Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_; BFS (Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_); Other SF/Fantasy organisations (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

How many programme items per con do you attend? 0 \_\_\_\_\_; 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_; 3-5 \_\_\_\_\_; 6-10 \_\_\_\_\_; over 10 \_\_\_\_\_

What are your favourite con events (please tick)? Guest of Honour speech \_\_\_\_\_

Talks, interviews, panel discussions on: Fiction \_\_\_\_\_; Film and Media \_\_\_\_\_; Comics \_\_\_\_\_; Art \_\_\_\_\_; Science \_\_\_\_\_; Feminism \_\_\_\_\_; New Age/Mysticism \_\_\_\_\_; Fannish topics \_\_\_\_\_

And/or events such as Serious Quizzes \_\_\_\_\_; Silly Quizzes/Games \_\_\_\_\_; Book Auctions \_\_\_\_\_; Art Auctions \_\_\_\_\_; Films and Videos \_\_\_\_\_; Masquerade \_\_\_\_\_; Live Theatre \_\_\_\_\_; Discos \_\_\_\_\_; Live bands \_\_\_\_\_; Filk Singing \_\_\_\_\_; Writing Workshops \_\_\_\_\_; Parties \_\_\_\_\_; Beer Tasting \_\_\_\_\_

Displays such as: Art Exhibition \_\_\_\_\_; Book Room \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in fan funds? Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_ Do you receive fanzines? Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to enter the free draw, fill the details below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Competition Corner

Roger Robinson

### Competition 111: "There and Back Again"

A fairly gentle quiz this time, but PLEASE NOTE the prize will be a £10 book token to the highest scorer, or first out of the hat in case of equality.

**One — and Only:** What is the full title of the film in which Peter Sellers plays various characters including Muffley and Mandrake.

**Two of a Kind:** Where were Aandahl and Zulawski replaced by Abbey and Zwickiewicz.

**Three Trade Secrets:** Who wrote *Secret of the Black Planet*, *Secret of the Lost Race* and *Secret Agent of Terra*.

**Four New Names:** What is the newer name of The Spaced Out Library; which PKD novel was serialised as "All We Marsmen"; what did *Fugue for a Darkening Island* become in the U.S.A.; who is Henry Maxwell Dempsey.

**Five Initial Questions:** What do the initials stand for, if anything — T A R D I S (as in *Dr Who*);

B E A S T (as in *B.E.A.S.T.* by Charles Eric Maine);

A B C (as in *As Easy as A.B.C.* by Rudyard Kipling);

V A L I S (as in *VALIS* by P.K. Dick);

F R O O M B (as in *Froomb* by John Lymington).

**Six series:** Name the sixth **Thomas Covenant** book; the sixth book in the **Dray Prescot** series; the sixth television **Doctor**; the sixth **Barsoom** book; the sixth **Cap Kennedy** book; the editor of the sixth **Nebula Award** stories anthology.

**Seven Seas:** Which C is: Arthur C. Clarke, Jack C. Haldeman, C.S. Lewis, C.J. Cherryh, C.S. Youd, C.C. MacApp.

**Eight to One:** Who wrote *Eight Fantasms and Magics*, *The Seven Sexes*, *Six-Gun Planet*, *Five to Twelve*, *Four from Planet 5*, *Three Hearts and Three Lions*, *Two Tales and Eight Tomorrows*, *One Million Tomorrows*.

All answers to the usual address, Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 ORG, by the deadline May 13, 1994.

### Matrix Crossword no.12 -- clues only

Across

9. Tie vein when butchered by guest (7)
10. Amino acid in the manner of the Princes in Amber (7)
11. Measure the German for Card's gameplayer (5)
12. Star working with a real band (9)
13. 31 in city of Barsoom (6)
15. Maud and Ivan are upset by 31 (8)
19. Niven's Protector makes Pooh's soot heap consonantly all right with the Father and King (9,3,3)
21. When drunk, can my rod assume a torpid state? (8)
23. "Son of Poseidon" by Delany (6)
25. Band or box by Heinlein initially (9)
27. Vital organ, first to last, for old 31 (5)
30. 31 sees pair of Greek characters converging inwards to surround princess (7)
31. Stanislaw takes measure when eaten by alien from the sky (7)

Down

1. Old 31 in sack (4)
2. Eager to give prima donna a lift (4)
3. Magical quality beginning to envelop five hundred together with you and I (8)
4. Tardy male gets up for 15 or 30 (5)
5. Obdurate defenders of certain books (9)
6. Greek character sends young animal to Douglas Adams openings (6)
7. Death bed for alcoholic beverage, we hear (4)
8. New fan goes north to 31 (4)
13. Yearned to work in Riddlemaster's place (5)
14. Coherent light source is genuine, turning up about the first of September (5)
16. Vinge's Sybils cry thus in pain, putty-faced (5)
17. Dan and Digby's foe delivers decisive blow when surrounded by people (5)
18. Continuum can be made from impact, see? (9)
20. The lady's circling forest to find setter, perhaps? (8)
22. Vinegary hermit rejects sociable opening (6)
24. Conflict about alien raised by old 31 (5)
25. Cometary cloud also rises around rocket's nose (4)
26. Banks' road for beast is about right (4)
28. Hormone Jungle's creator invents grass (4)
29. Headware (oriental) engenders strong passion (4)

John English has made two valiant attempts to send the crossword to us, but electronic gremlins intervened. The clues emerged, but not the answer grid. Therefore, we have an unexpected challenge for you: generate a crossword from the correct answers to the clues given and there will be an unexpected prize for every correct entry. Entries, please, to Roger Robinson at the usual address.



Artwork by Sue Mason