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The Proper Boskonian

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The Proper Boskonian is now published almost-live, almost monthly, by the New England Science Fiction Association, P.O. Box G, M.I.T. Branch Post Office, Cambridge, MA 02139. The Editor is J. Mark Anderson, who can be reached c/o Mike Saler, 393 Main Street, Concord, MA 01742. Special Thanks to Claire Graham (Nesfa Clerk) and Dave Anderson (Nesfa Coat Catcher) for their patience and publishing panache.

ANDERSON, MARK: MY WORDS

Welcome to yet another issue of Proper Boskonian, the fanzine that is smaller than a breadbox but contains contents far more nutritious (there, show that sentance to your mother). I hope to bring PB out as close to a monthly schedule as time and my budget permits, and herein you should find all the material you've come to expect from a NESFA fanzine! Committee reports, minutes of meetings, interesting facts about supply-side economics, tasteful typos. Not to mention book and film reviews, feature articles, letters of coment, and anything else you'd care to send me (unsolicited submissions are more than welcome, particularly those that are bigger than a breadbox).

Let me now turn you over to one of our soon-to-be-regular columnists (there, he's been committed in print), a man who is familiar with all aspects of Simenatography, and who s soon-to-be-a-regular-column is entitled:

EMULSION CHRONICLES

which is a contribution to NESFA's "Proper Boskonian" dealing with films, movies, and other cinematic topics. "But that's redundant," you complain. You can say that again. This product comes to you from the mind, files, pen, and computer of Dick Sims, 185 Fremont Street, Apt. 951, Brookline, MA 02146. That handful of humanity which reads APA: NESFA will recognize Emulsion Chronicles as an extract from "Simscrip~~t~~", a semi-regular entry in that eminent journal. Mark Anderson honored this writer by inviting this writer by invitink his contribution of a movie column in PB. I will try to make it as regular as PB becomes.

REVIEW: "Saturn 3"

*Recently shown on HBO, "Saturn 3" is a bad case of "ring around the caller". (Sorry about that) Basically a warmed-over version of "Alien", complete with endless (and pointless) metallic corridors having enough plumbing to keep an entire union local happy for months. There's even the familiar space pet, this one being a "Wizard of Oz"-like dog who gets killed off early so we know for sure that we have a bad robot on our hands. It's

more "Watch out for the killer robot!" for you Radio Ranch fans.

Farrah Fawcett and Kirk Douglas are the sole inhabitants of some sort of agristation logically located on an inhospitable moon of Saturn. Harvey Keitel murders and replaces some space jockey who was assigned to drop in on our duo for some unfathomable reason. Anyway, Harvey takes off from the mutha ship in a vehicle looking like a cross between a lunar lander and a glass phone booth, the launch pad looking more like the main drag in a shopping mall. Why's he running? It seems he's flunked his academy exam and they wouldn't give him the keys to the ship. In case there's any doubt that he's a bad person, he's outfitted in a black suit.

Our flunkee tools around Saturn. The director told him to make sure he didn't miss going through the rings, so we hear "bumpety bump bump bump" as the vehicle saunters through millions of tons of planetary debris. You can tell it's gonna take a lot of Wisk to get that baby clean. He finally lands on Saturn 3 (You were expecting Jupiter 2? Wrong show, bud.) just as it's going into eclipse behind the jovial planet for 23 days. Alighting with a canister, he approaches our happy duo, who are naturally dressed in white. What a great opportunity for Harvey to get off a smart-ass comment, like "Ring around Uranus!". But this guy has no imagination.

Unfortunately, our friends find out too late that the canister does not contain the Diet Popsi they were hoping for. Instead, our dour santa says that he has brought a robot to make one of them obsolete. (Guessing which one is supposed to be part of the suspense.) Farrah complains that they already have two robots, not much good (neither vibrates). Ah, but this guy is no Jawa. When he announces that he has brought them "the very first of the demigod series" neither Farrah nor Kirk bat an eyelash. (Maybe they just watched a rerun of "Scanners".) This is to their advantage, of course, since it's no strain figuring out the serial number to fill in the warranty card.

Harvey may be a dropout, but he gets the robot together in less than three weeks. (Heathkit instructions must be better than ever.) Through subtle advances such as "I want to use your body," Farrah and Kirk suspect that Harvey is getting the hots for the blond. The female one. At this point Kirk cannot contact Spock, or anyone else, for that matter, because they are still eclipsed. It seems by that time their space program people have forgotten all about communication satellites. So they continue their agricultural experiments, working with enough plants to fill your living room. You see, their mission is to help feed a hungry Earth. Boy, would the Teamsters love to get that cargo run.

Meanwhile, Harvey is programming his huge erection, often resorting to direct mind link. The robot, now called Hector, is not impressed with Harvey's mind and refuses to talk to the bozo. But Hector has learned to kill, and tries out his kill-skill

on the dog. Success! He nearly does Harvey in, but all three characters, temporarily united by a common foe, lock Hector in the lab. Hector wears himself thin ripping the door to pieces and goes to recharge. Our heroes see this and give him a big charge. Hector fall down. Heroes enter lab. Expecting rational people to smash the thing to pieces, the viewer is disappointed to find that the script writer has come up with a brilliant ploy to give Heavy Metal the opportunity to revive: the two males enter into a name-calling contest.

Thus we are given a number of improbable events, bad physics, and missed opportunities to extend this vacuous movie to an 85 minute length. Hector kills Harvey. Kirk sacrifices himself to blow up Hector. Worst of all, Farrah returns to Earth. End credits.

Now that's "sci-fi".

MIKE JITTLOV

On Thursday March 12 Mike Jittlov, animator extraordinaire, appeared at MIT. A minority of NESFA got the word verbally in time to attend. There were enough, though, so that it looked like Boskone supplemental programming.

As the 8 pm starting time approached, a large elfish figure bounded to the front of the overgrown lecture hall to set up camera upon tripod to photograph the audience. Wearing a lime-jello colored windbreaker, the familiar trademark told us it was none other than Jittlov himself. He was soon surrounded by the bane of celebrity, the autograph hounds.

Extricated by the student committee, Jittlov returned to the rear of the room to man the projector. Thence began a chronological presentation of most of his collective works, including GOOD GRIEF, SWING SHIFT, THE TURTLE JOAK, ANIMATO, TIME TRIPPER, the Mickey Mouse 50th anniversary tribute done for Disney, and of course THE WIZARD OF SPEED AND TIME. Also included were some commercials he did, some amusing leaders, experimental stuff, and terrific out-takes from the Mickey Mouse film and "Wizard". It was essentially the same presentation he did at Noreascon Two, except for a few short flicks omitted this time around. Also, the Noreascon showing was without the electrical problems which marred the beginning of the MIT presentation. Whereas the Noreascon workload prevented many from getting to see Jittlov at their own convention, it was good to see that so many of those unfortunates got this second chance.

After the presentation Jittlov bounded to the front of the room for the inevitable ovation, and a question-answer period. We got more information on the SF features he has always wanted to do, one of which is in production. He eschews television (the "electronic fireplace" as he refers to it) because its structuring around commercials makes it nearly impossible to

achieve the audience effects he desires. He related the difficulties of working with union rules and crews, and the legendary attitudes of mass-market producers, who are primarily concerned with audience-grabbing effects ("Anyone can write a story"). A thorny problem is obtaining the financial backing needed without jeopardizing present and future artistic freedoms. He mentioned that the sale of his films helps in this regard.

When it was all over I approached the front of the room, where Jittlov was already surrounded by another (?) squad of autograph seekers. I got close enough for him to hear me utter magic words, asking about the purchase of his films. He immediately suspended autographing and flew to the back of the room (just as in his films) to retrieve pamphlets giving details.

That income is obviously very important to him, and to those of us who want to see him produce more films in a manner as free as possible from external manipulation and artistic pollution. To that end I will conclude with a transcription of the text of the pamphlet:

MIKE JITTLOV'S FILMS FOR SALE

GOOD GRIEF (4.5 min.) - An award-winning (m'gawsh, EVERYTHING's award-winning) cartoon about a child's bedtime fears. And fears like this you shouldn't want. Monsters lurk and noises cackle and threaten as a mystical narration takes a shivering little kid, and the film-viewer to a bizarre climax. Begun as a UCLA student project, it got to the professional finals for Academy Award nomination. Jittlov did everything except process the film.

INTERVIEW, and SWING SHIFT (1 and 4 min) - Two for the price of one! First, a powerful, terrifying, and oft-chucklesome interview of Da Fantum (aka Jittlov), the black-cloaked demon who flies and speaks like a Jupiter-C. And Second, a midnight miraculous for a department store guard (at Hollywood & Vine's Broadway Store), who gets caught up in the revelry as dozens of suits (no people, just suits) and shoes and stuff do a rousing hoe-down (in stomp-motion) to Bernard Hermann's "Devil & Dan'l Webster".

ANIMATO (3 min) - A showcase of kinestasis (photo cut-out) animation, bounced to the beat of a Petula Clark/Tony Hatch song, "I Know a Place"...visuals pop and swirl, from dancing fashion models in multi-plane backgrounds, to increasingly realistic sci-fi-esque scenarios over Los Angeles landmarks. For those who like to gasp at such info, the film has 3889 frames, with most multiply-exposed (up to 23 times), bringing the total number of picture set-ups to 10,183 - and these took over six months to film, on the artist's homemade animation machine (glimpsed at film end), with every effect done in-camera. The artist will not repeat this film for love or money.

TIME TRIPPER (2 min) - And the star of the show is one of the most beloved motion picture props of all time: The Time Machine

from the George Pal movie of that name, and restored to operation by Bob Burns and Tom Schermah. A museum custodian (Jittlov, in a rare cameo) dares to sit within, and innocently trip a few lights...and is launched into a glittering, dazzling flight of fantasy. A very special little film.

THE WIZARD OF SPACE AND TIME (3 min) - From a mountain cave blasts the incredible: the GREEN WIZARD, running along a highway at 500 mph. He transports a startled hitchhiker to Hollywood, races trains, leaps over a blockade of screaming girls, and takes off in a wild roar around the world...until he slips into a world-record pratfall. Then, from beneath the record of a shattered movie studio, he magically resurrects all the equipment, and whirls to celebrate in song and sparkles with marching tripods, dancing cameras, bouncing lights, and hundreds of animated film cans. Technically astounding, it is a mini-masterpiece of super-charged live-action and life-sized lip-sync stop-motion, with more visual trickery than entire features.

Authorized
film-maker
and Seller

MIKE JITTLOV PRODUCTIONS
902 North Waltman Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90026

Not Sold in
Stores or on
K TEL TV Ads

I hereby solemnly affirm that the above-named films are really good (four in nomination finals for the Academy Awards), may even become downright classics (not to mention rare - I can only get 100 perfect prints from the interneg) (*gad*...only one out of 8,000,000 people can own a print), and are really worth the price... I could go on and on, but I shan't because of deep humility and the nearing bottom of the page. 16mm copies of each of the above are for sale, while they last, at \$100 apiece (I know they're different lengths, but it balances out), plus \$10 if I must package and address and drive over to the post office and wait in their lines to insure everything, (Pick it up at 902 and save!) Checks are fine (but there's a ten day pause for clearance...not that I don't trust everybody on Earth), money orders are faster (please don't mail cash - though that's perfectly acceptable at the door). Finally, and in conclusion... for speedy answers to most any questions, please send a letter with a S.A.S.E.; for a most immediate response, you may actually call the Green Wizard (prior to the midnight hour) at my secret Hollywood numbah: (213) MOJANOX. And there you go!

Dick Sims here again. In a postcard received from Mike Jittlov around April 10th, Mike reports that Murphy has struck with typical aplomb. Mike ran out of copies of all films except WIZARD. He had placed an order for further prints, but got a call saying that the lab just went out of business. So now he has to drive to Santa Monica, pick up all the internegatives, find a new lab, have everything color-tested, etc. Just at the time when he has to prepare a presentation on his proposed feature for some studio executives - and of course file a tax return.

I had asked if he had played the additional role of the "Cameo Wizard" on the Disney "Major Effects" show which aired his now-famous film. Mike reports that, yup, that was he. He mentions

that WIZARD was shown with a different soundtrack than is had on the film, and that the whole story is in issue 39 of "Starlog" magazine.

Probably not many people have seen Mr. Jittlov's handwriting. The guy certainly has style. If you did not already know, you would strongly suspect that the writer was an artist. And so teeny-weensy!



The Intrusive Editor reappears: Dick will be back next month with more film news and reviews (right, Dick? DICK?!), including an examination of cinematic processes, past and present. Also oh hand will be an essay by Chip Hitchcock on the flaws in "Scanners", and perhaps reviews of "Outlands", and "DragonSlayer" (the movie & book versions). In the meantime, let me try to slip in one or two brief book reviews, to give this issue proper balance and scope and all that jazz...

Caverns by Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. (Book I of the Journeys of McGill Feighan). Berkely Science Fiction, \$2.25

Reviewed by Thomas Beeckum

McGill Feighan is a Flinger, a member of an elite corp who can fling themselves across the galaxy in an instant just by thinking themselves to their destination. But McGill's Talent doesn't distinguish him nearly as much as the mysterious event which occurred four days after his birth; at that time he was swallowed by an amiable gastropod who claimed to be an emissary of the mysterious Far Being Retzglaren. O'Donnell's first volume of what promises to be an entertaining series concerns McGill's search for the Far Being; a search that is complicated by the Organization, an insidious group who fear the powers of the Far Being and therefore wish to capture McGill in case he has been imbued with latent powers by the F.B.R. McGill's travels and travails lead him to a number of planets and cultures, and O'Donnell details these adventures with flair and a deft touch of humor. The book has echoes of The Stars My Destination and The Amazing Spiderman (we reviewers love to show how erudite we are), and yet is a singular achievement by the author of the equally entertaining Mayflies. Caverns is fast-paced and fun, and while the first novel of a series, it can stand on its own as an enjoyable and recommended novel.

The Entropy Effect by Vonda N. McIntyre. Pocket Books, \$2.50

Reviewed by Mark Anderson

Although initially put off by the bland cover illustration and the fact that this was yet "another Star Trek novel"; I was quickly captivated by the strong plot and excellent characterizations with which McIntyre weaves her tale. This is the finest of all the Star Trek novelizations, and one of the better SF books which has appeared this year. The plot? A mad scientist tampers with the fabric of time, leaving gaping holes which portend the end of the universe. Kirk gets killed. Highly Recommended.