

THE SCIENCE FICTION BOOK: An illustrated History by Franz Rottensteiner published by Thames & Hudson @ £2. 50 160pp.

This book claims to provide "a survey of the pictorial aspect of science fiction as well as a comprehensive history of its literature." Sadly it does not live up to that claim. What it does provide is a heap of sf illustrations some good some awful; stills from the cinema, TV etc. Some of the Soviet art is better than most, and I believe, quite rare, but the text is very brief and as disorganised as the presentation of the artwork. No indeed, comprehensive it is not, not when one considers Brian Aldiss' excellent Billion Year Spree - which is now available in paper-back, by the way. There are some niggling mistakes like the one on page 151 for instance: Virgil Finlay's illustration for Cordwainer Smith's "A Planet Named Shagol"! Even Zimri wouldn't be allowed that kind of whopper. Nope, even at £2. 50 this is not a bargain.

2000 A.D.: Illustrations From the Golden Age of Science Fiction Pulps by Jacques Sadoul, published by Souvenir Press @ £4. 50 176pp.

If the previous book was sprinkled with occasional errors this one goes the whole hog (I mean, it's weird!) But let's start at the beginning. 2000 A.D. is a translation of the Hier L'An 2000 published in France in 1973. The translator's name is not given and it is quite obvious that neither he nor the publishers are in the least bit familiar with sf. I was astonished and embarrassed to read A. E. van Vogt's introduction overpraising this effort with phrases like "colossal intellectual effort.." and "the illustrators make use of their profound knowledge of the resonances of human nature." Sadoul's own text is just as inaccurate and more than a little messy. A.E. van Vogt's The World of Null-A is repeatedly titled The World of the A; Planet Stories is credited with "a number of Ray Bradbury's novels / = ! = / which were later to form The Martian Chronicles"; Simak's City is titled Tomorrow the Dogs and Frank Frazetta is referred to as Frank Franzetta... I could go on because these are but few examples; there are many more. At first it was quite fun spotting them but soon the fun turned to disgust, a little more care could've been taken. And to add insult to injury, we are given three pages of "Some Facts About the Universe" at the end of the book, these read like a pompous Patrick Moore or worse! Save your money - this one is a second-rater to say the least.

I wish someone would have sent me Science Fiction Art compiled and introduced by Brian Aldiss to review (I'll bet its not as rotten as the two I got) but they didn't so I won't.

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THE GODWHALE by T. J. Bass, published by Eyre Methuen @ £3. 70 306 pp. Reviewed by Mike Collins.

Straight away let me say that this book disappointed me. It has all the necessary ingredients - The Hive, an underground civilisation; surface dwellers; conflict between the two; Rorqual Maru, a cyborg: part whale, part ship, and a marvellously complex combination of biology and mechanics. Yes, I liked the concept of the Godwhale itself and the story-line had possibilities.

So what went wrong?

In simple terms I suppose I must conclude that, for all his ideas, T.J.Bass has failed at the most basic stage of his craft; namely, his writing. I found his style rather dry and lacking in what I can only term as sincerity. Large chunks of the book were boring, unimaginative, and with an almost 'fairy tale' air.

With my sense of disbelief never suspended, The Godwhale stands no chance whatsoever of making my list for Jack Marsh's asteroid article.

M.C.

10,000 THOUSAND LIGHT-YEARS FROM HOME by James Tiptree, Jr. Published by Eyre Methuen @ £3.60, 312pp.

A collection of short stories first published by Ace Books in 1973. Beautifully presented and a joy to read. There is not a single bad story in the collection and quite few outstandingly superb ones; worth every penny of the price. Highly Recommended.

THE BEST OF CORDEWAINER SMITH edited, with Introduction and Notes, by J.J. Pierce. Published by Ballantine Books @ \$1.95, 377pp (Now available in England).

Here in one volume are 12 most important stories of the unique writer with whom I've been enamoured from the first word I read by him. In his introduction J.J. Pierce tells us that the stories are collected in their proper order for the first time, from part of a vast historical cycle taking place over some fifteen thousand years. This superb collection is no less than a classic book and a must for anyone who appreciates a writer who is able to fuse wonder and poetry into imaginative tales that transcend both science and fantasy.

NEW WORLDS--9, edited by Hilary Bailey. Published by Corgi Books @ 50p, 219pp.  
Ten stories, by: Michael Moorcock, John Sladek, Brian Aldiss, Charles Partington, M. John Harrison and others.

NEW WRITINGS IN S. F.--25, edited by Kenneth Bulmer. Published by Corgi @ 50p, 189pp.

Nine stories and an introduction from Ken; authors include Keith Stall, Charles Partington, John Rackham, Martin I. Ricketts and others.

THE WRONG END OF TIME by John Brunner. Published by Eyre Methuen @ £3.25 185pp.

A novel about America of the future dominated by fear and cut off from the rest of the world by massive defence system. Plutonians - a newly discovered superior race - aim to destroy human civilisation. The only one able to provide a solution is a young American clairvoyant outcast who cannot be found.

THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH by Walter Tevis. Published by Pan Books @ 60p 170pp.

This book has had, justifiably, no reputation in the science fiction field since its original publication in 1963, and its only appeal could be to ill-informed film producers who's knowledge of the genre has not advanced since they left public school in 1952. And what of the plot? Well, you've read it all before a million times; an alien race send a saviour to earth to show us the error of our ways...etc, etc. The lightweight nature of the book makes it an ideal choice for such pretentious 'pop' stars as David Bowie (in the tradition of Adam Faith's 'Mix Me A Person'). With the promotion that the film will bring to the book, another chance has been lost to writers of real merit to capture a wider audience. Stand up and be shot the man who recommended this rubbish to Bowie!

#### ALSO RECEIVED FROM PAN BOOKS:

NATURAL STATE AND OTHER STORIES by Damon Knight - 60p

TOMORROW LIES IN AMBUSH by Bob Shaw - 50p

FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND by Brian Aldiss - 60p

THE EIGHTY MINUTE HOUR by Brian Aldiss - 60p

FARTHEST STAR by Frederick Pohl & Jack Williamson - 60p

RHAPSODY IN BLACK by Brian Stableford - 50p

HALCYON DRIFT by Brian Stableford - 50p

#### FROM SPHERE BOOKS:

INCONSTANT MOON by Larry Niven -

CONAN OF CLIMERIA by Robert E. Howard - 30p

CONAN THE FREEBOOTER by Robert E. Howard - 30p

SPEHER BOOKS continued:

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE by Philip Wyler - 50p  
THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL ANTHOLOGY Edited by Harry Harrison - 65p  
THE BEST OF ARTHUR C. CLARKE - 65p  
THE ICE SCHOONER by Mike Moorcock - 35p (Superb novalthis'n)  
UP THE LINE by Robert Silverberg - 50p  
CONAN THE BUCCANEER by Robert E. Howard - 40p  
TACTICS OF MISTAKE by Gordon R. Dickson  
SOLDIER ASK NOT by as above - 60p  
DORS&I ditto. - 50p

FLOW BY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID by Philip K. Dick. Published by DAW @ \$1.50, 208pp.

Jason Taverner, a top-rated television star wakes up one fine morning to find himself in some near future world, completely unknown and without the required I.D. papers. It soon becomes obvious that Taverner had become 'the pea in some sort of cosmic shell..' This is a pretty gloomy, even horrifying future, but Dick is as ever absorbing, he also seems to care more for his characters this time.

Also by Philip K. Dick OUR FRIENDS FROM FROLIX 8. Published by Panther @ 60p, 211pp.

A novel set in the 22nd Century. Earth is dominated by genetic freaks--telepaths, precogs, 'New Men' with IQs which went off scale--and ordinary men don't stand a chance. Thors Proveni goes to the stars to seek help and comes back with friends from Frolix 8. But there is a price to pay for the help.

NO DIRECTION HOME by Norman Spinrad. Published by Pocket Books @ \$1.25, 238pp.

A collection of short stories from one of the better sf writers today. There are eleven stories in all and I've only read four of them before, even those four were a pleasure to re-read.

THE LIVES AND TIMES OF JERRY CORNELIUS by Michael Moorcock. Published by Allison and Busby @ £3. 50 - 176pp.

Alternative biographies of Michael Moorcock's most famous character where history shifts, the past transforms the future - rules don't in fact exist in Cornelius' world. Here too Jerry encounters Bishop Beesley, Miss Brunner, brother Frank, sister Catherine, mother Mrs Cornelius and many other familiar characters from the Cornelius novels The Final Programme, A Cure for Cancer and The English Assassin. The book has illustrations by Mal Dean, Richard Glyn Jones and Harry Douthwaite.

OUT OF THE STORM by William Hope Hodgson. Published by Donald M. Grant @ \$10.00 (Available in England @ £5.00) 304pp.

Seven stories by Hodgson, collected for the first time in hardcover; with a long critical biography of WHH by Sam Moskowitz. Interior illustrations are by Stephen Fabian. Dust jacket by Hannes Bok.

GODS OF AIR AND DARKNESS by Richard Mooney. Published by Souvenir Press @ £3. 50

Richard Mooney challenges the theory of evolution: man, he argues is a descendant of extra-terrestrial visitors, who came and stayed. As supporting evidence he draws on the world myths and mysteries of archeology which have been largely aired by so many writers in this popular genre.

However, he is not content merely to requote quotations that have almost become cliches ; in the last chapter he has some critical remarks to make on fellow writers such as Daniken and Charroux, especially for the ideas they have derived from the writings of Madame Blavatsky. He has some interesting ideas to put forward, but with so many of his contemporaries appearing in paperback the price of this book seems rather high.

ON SEMANTIC POETRY by Stefan Themerson. Gaberbocchus Press, 42a Formosa St., London, W.9. £2.40 (paper) £3.60 (cloth) 128pp. Illustrated by Franciszka Themerson.

The book opens with a delightfull introductory essay On Semantic Poetry and is followed by some relevant extracts from Bayamus and eight other books by Themerson. To start with Mr T discusses Poetry in general; would that I had room enough to quote the whole introduction, but I will quote a little something out of context anyway:

"...the poetry of a poem is not in the poem.  
Nor is it in what the poem is about.  
It is in us."

Its a fascinating book and for anyone who is in the least bit interested in words and or poetry, its more than a must.

SOUTH LONDON MIX by David Miller. Gaberbocchus Press (address above) 80p. 16pp This is a collection of short poetic prose, statements, observations thoughts concerning the nature of reality. As in life, there are no easy solutions; nothing is really resolved. The writing is open, almost simplistic on the surface, yet the subjects are complex and compelling. Recommended.

HOME & DRY? by Gordon Ellis with drawings by David Russell. Published by David Russell, 10 Hall Bank, Buxton, Derbyshire. £1. 50, 42pp.

Beautifully produced hardback book of poems and illustrations. The title conveys the genral atmosphere of the poems: quiet contemplative, unpretentious. There's a sort of stillness about the poems and the illustrations. A retrospective glance back on life; somehow the urgency of life itself (and death) seems to be missing, there's an air of rocking-chair resignation about the poems - in a pleasant, warm-summer-afternoon kind of way.

STRANGER SIT AT MY TABLE by Thomas Lands. Published by Alpha-Bellers Press 107, Highgate Road, London NW5, @ 95p. 79pp.

This is the first volume of verse or 'private notes of a foreign correspondent' about crime: political, sexual - and legal. Thomas Orszag-Lang, Poetry Editor of Resurgence is possibly better known for his articles in The Observer, The Daily Telegraph etc. The blurb also tells me that this copy may well gain in value - well, I'd better hang on to it then.

TYPES by Jim Burns. Second Aeon Publications, Peter Finch, 3 Maplewood Court, Maplewood Court, Llandaff North, Cardiff CF4 2NB. No price given. 12pp.

Small booklet of stories and poems by Jim Burns who never fails to delight me. Sharp, witty poems, one of which I just must quote in full here and now:

The Bohemian Girl

She was once fucked  
by a famous poet, and  
forever after was  
accepted as an authority  
on the arts. "One has  
to feel it", she'd say,  
and we'd sit silent,  
knowing that she spoke  
from experience.

SUCCESS edited by Kate Dean, 17 Andrews Crescent, Peterborough PE4 6XL Annual sub £1. 80 - 6 months 95p. Quarterly mag "For all Creative Writers". Poetry, stories, articles and competitions. Friendly and regular little mag.

-That's it folks. I'm afraid that I haven't been able to include everything received, more goodies next time. All uncredited comments/revs by the editrix.=