

On My Sleeve



fanwriting by John Hertz
collected in honor of Nippon 2007,
the 65th World Science Fiction Convention

published December 2009

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*chiru to mite
arubeki mono wo
ume no hana
utate nioi no
sode ni tomareru*

If only I had
Merely watched as they fell —
The plum blossoms —
But, alas, their fragrance
Still lingers on my sleeve.

Sosei, tr. Donald Keene

with cover art by Eiji Yokoyama illustrating this poem, and drawings from *Vanamonde*

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The Yokoyama first appears here. The Kelly Freas was my year-end greeting card after his death, used there and here with permission. The others first appeared in *Van*; the Foster was its 2008 header, he does a new one each year, bless him.

John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St., Los Angeles, CA 90057, U.S.A. "Westercon" is a service mark of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc., a California non-profit corporation; "World Science Fiction Convention" & "Worldcon", "WSFS" & "World Science Fiction Society", "Hugo Award", "NASFiC", of the World Science Fiction Society, an unincorporated literary association. Published December 2009 by HANA, the Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance.

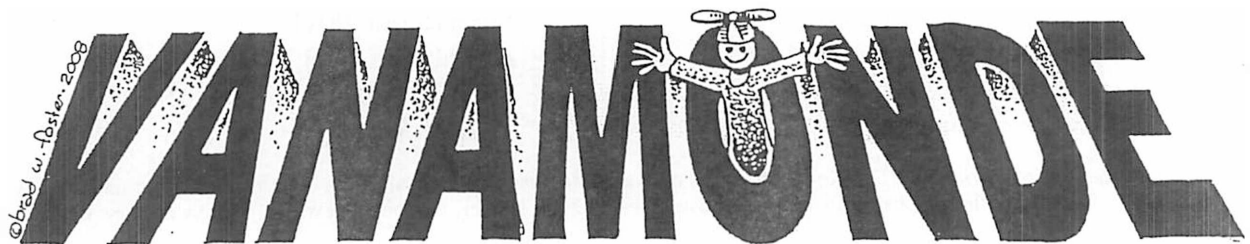
My World and Welcome To It

There are so many interesting things to do in the science fiction community. I feel lucky to take part in a few. At s-f conventions people say I'm a good moderator of panel discussions; I'm often a judge, or Master of Ceremonies, in the costume competition we call a Masquerade; I lead Art Show tours. I'm a judge of the annual Rotsler Award. But let me commend fanwriting.

In our community *fanzine*, a word coined by Russell Chauvenet in the 1940s, means an amateur magazine by fans and for fans; and among us a fan is more likely to read Avram Davidson than to collect his typewriter ribbons. We like the light touch, and the taste of imagination. It is a pleasure and a kind of happy exercise to try to tell tales well, to see what might be worth talking about, and to contribute to the conversation.

This is the third collection of my fanwriting, following *West of the Moon* (2002, after I was Fan Guest of Honor at Lunacon XLIV, New York; produced by local club the Lunarians), and *Dancing and Joking* (2005, after I was Fan GoH at Westercon LVII, West Coast Science Fantasy Conference, Arizona '04, called "ConKopelli" for the dancer-joker god Kokopelli). Our great event of 2007 was the Worldcon at Yokohama; I was able to attend because friends formed HANA, the Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance, which sent and returned me; here you will find my report, in two parts, "The Worldcon I Saw" and "The Residence of the Wind". I could not include here two 2005 pieces from *Science Fiction Chronicle*, "Through the Eyes of Tim Kirk" (*Chron* 262), and the appreciation of Kelly Freas (*Chron* 257), which relied on photographs and color images, nor the original 2006 *Send John Hertz to Japan* flier, designed handsomely (like the entire project) by Murray Moore, which relied on the elegance of the red sun in the Japanese flag; you will find here the second and monochrome version with the Japanese word *hana* ("flower" or "blossom") calligraphed. My own fanzine *Vanamonde* is named for a creature in Clarke's enduring classic *The City and the Stars* (1956), of which you will find here a review from *Challenger*.

The title *On My Sleeve* quotes a poem by the Buddhist priest Sosei (816-910), one of the Thirty-Six Immortals of Poetry, given on the contents page in Donald Keene's translation (see his book *Seeds in the Heart*, rev. 1999 p. 222). To Sosei, growing too entangled in this world, whether through sorrow or beauty, would have been a grave mistake. The cover drawing by Japanese pro artist Eiji Yokoyama, whom I at last met in person at the 2007 Worldcon, shows Sosei wearing a high priest's robes, in a room with *maru-mado* (a circular window), traditional temple architectural style, e.g. for a priest's quarters. His face shows *mujô*, the feeling of impermanence, at this moment melancholy. At left, Daruma (who brought Buddhism from India to China, thus to Japan; he is often shown with mustache and beard) watches in compassionate amusement — or perhaps even he, though immune to everything, is stealing a look at Sosei's poem. The poem touches my emotions about Japan, also my U.S. tendency to wear my heart on my sleeve. The title "Residence of the Wind" quotes another poem by Sosei, No. 76 and "Sleeve" is No. 47 in the *Kokinwakashû* (Book of Old and New Poems, 920; in *Seeds*, "Wind" is at p. 253). The propeller beanie as a sign of fannishness came originally from Ray Nelson.



Everybody attending a Worldcon sees a different one; this was mine. Followers of my convention reports know that quotations of what I've been reading at the time tend to creep in.

The Worldcon I Saw

from *File 770* 152, 2008

Nippon 2007, August 30 — September 3
65th World Science Fiction Convention, 46th Japan Science Fiction Convention
Yokohama

Author Guests of Honor, David Brin, Sakyō Komatsu; Graphic Artists, Yoshitaka Amano, Michael Whelan; Fan, Takumi Shibano. Attendance about 3,000; Art Show sales about \$40,000.

Yokohama, capital of Kanagawa Prefecture, now with 4 million people Japan's largest incorporated city (Tokyo, next door, is not a single incorporated city — in fact it may not really be the capital of Japan — but never mind), and known to history a thousand years ago, soared when Commodore Perry came. It became the Alien Port. Within two decades the first English-language newspaper in Japan started here, the first daily newspaper, the first railway; Phileas Fogg touched here in *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

Of course a city can soar. Don't you read science fiction?

In 2004 we were voting Worldcon sites three years in advance. At that year's Worldcon in Boston, Yokohama beat Columbus, and Nippon 2007 was on. I had been with the Japan bid since 2000. Takumi Shibano had been since 1957 — or perhaps 1927, the year he was born.

With Japanese names — as with Hungarian, incidentally — the first shall be last and the last shall be first. In Japanese custom one first states the surname. Some people when using English adopt the English-language custom of first stating the personal name. Some don't. That can be confusing. Since English has capital letters (Japanese doesn't), some people write the surname in capital letters wherever it comes: AMANO Yoshitaka, Michael WHELAN. Like many such arrangements that makes perfect sense if you already understand it. In this article I put surnames last. Elsewhere I promise nothing.

I also continue my practice of generally mentioning people by surname, a literary familiarity. I mean no rudeness to Mr. Shibano, my senior and my teacher,

nor others entitled to honorifics; nor do I explore here the Japanese practice of names for various purposes — everyone knows the translator Kozumi Rei (incidentally a Japanization of “cosmic ray”) is Takumi Shibano, it is not a disguise, and one refers to the great poet Bashō, that

being a literary name, not his surname Matsuo nor his personal name Kinsaku.

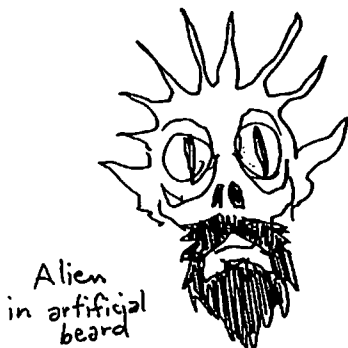
Also that mark over the *o* back there is for the Japanese long vowel. If you know too little of Japanese, dear reader, to care, or too much, forgive me.

Shibano started the first Japanese fanzine in 1957, which was and is called *Uchūjin*, which means “cosmic dust” but sounds like “space man” — punsters, you ain't seen nothin'. Tetsu Yano had already been to the 1953 Worldcon. In the 1960s Shibano met Roy Tackett, then a U.S. Marine serving in Japan. Shibano started the Japanese national s-f convention and began contributing to Tackett's fanzine *Dynatron*. A one-time fund (TOFF, the Trans-Oceanic Fan Fund) brought Shibano to the 1968 Worldcon. He and Yano received the Big Heart, our highest service award, in 1987. The Shibanos, Takumi and his wife Sachiko, were Fan Guests of Honor at L.A.con III the 1996 Worldcon, whose Program Book showed 132 members from Japan, more than any country but the United States, more than all but four of its States.

In 2000, Westercon LIII was in Honolulu. I've told how the Shibanos and their married daughter Miho Hiramoto helped me get and wear Japanese formal clothes to judge the Masquerade (*File 770* 138). Japan was ready to bid. The year 2004 was not too far away; on the contrary, it was terribly soon. I tried to do my part, which included trying to figure out what that was. I will mention the Nippon 2007 *Haiku* Contest, a bid party at Loscon XXX (2003) co-hosted with Geny Dazzo, and a bidzine article “The Strangeness”. Of course there were things too fierce to mention.

We knew the con would be strange. Strange for Japanese, strange for visitors. We looked forward to it; are we not fen? We were not disappointed.

Over the next years wonders came. Japanese campaigned throughout the s-f community. The bid won. Chairman Hiroaki Inoue, a special guest at Cascadia-Con the 2005 NASFiC (North America S-F Con, held when the Worldcon is overseas), judged that con's Masquerade with Marie Cooley and me although we had no Japanese and he had little English (a fine interpreter, Takayuki Karahashi, came too). Even now some don't know Inoue as an *animé* celebrity. North



Alien
in artificial
beard

On My Sleeve

America agent Peggy Rae Sapienza rode atop the ups and downs of an immeasurable and uncertain role with

A seasoning of wisdom unaccountably mixed up with his strangest whims.

Sterne

charm, and if she'd been the United Kingdom agent, or this were Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, I'd also say with bottom — I already mentioned strangeness. I was made an Advisor to the committee, the only non-Japanese. I had no notion how I'd get to the con.

At the 2006 Worldcon my roommate Murray Moore started a one-time fund, HANA (Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance; Japanese *hana* = "flower", a frequent word in poetry). This succeeded, a culminating wonder, there and back again.

My Nippon 2007 roommates were Mike Willmoth and his wife Jean Godden. We stayed at the Rose Hotel, Chinatown. The rose is Yokohama's official flower. That Chinatown is the largest in Japan. The Alien Port. We went to and from the con site by train or taxi to save money or time. In the first taxi I took alone, the driver returned my tip. I found no tipping in Japan.

On the airplane over I had found Greg Benford. He praised the 800-word s-f stories on the back page of *Nature*. At Narita Airport I failed to find Larry Niven. Our confusion was mostly harmless. Dinner at the Rose with Godden and Willmoth; on the menu four grades of Chinese rice wine, six teas; we talked of skill and talent, and Kelly Freas' big heart.

The con site was in the new Minato Mirai ("port future") complex, the Pacifico Conference Center & Exhibit Hall, and two main hotels, the Intercontinental which was adjacent to the Conference Center, and the Pacific. The "Pacifico" — "Pacific" likeness led to confusion, mostly harmless.

Registration had a Japanese side and an everyone-else side because of the way people's names went. Japanese writing is in three sets of characters, mainly Chinese (*kanji*) which are not alphabetical although the two supplements (*hiragana* and *katakana*) are; also most Japanese have one of a very few surnames. Japanese registration methods would choke on a thousand American-European-Australian folk, like foreign methods on that many Japanese. Attendance was half and half. I had been told it would be impossible to get the Program Book half in English with a Whelan cover, half in Japanese with an Amano cover, like an Ace Books double. But it wasn't.

First of the con was the Aardvark Panel, "about aardvarks or whatever other fancy comes to mind." Last was the Zygote Panel. I never learned how translators managed that. I moderated the aardvarks, Paul Cornell, Susan de Guardiola, Jessica Langer. Langer was named for Jessica Atreides in *Dune*; she was a

Ph.D. student from London; it was her first con. She asked about my propeller beanie. We proceeded comfortably to *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. De Guardiola praised *Eifelheim*. Cornell said we were like a Worldcon in miniature. Langer said "Speaking of shoes —" I ruled, "On topic."

The European counterpart of HANA was the Japan Expeditionary Travel Scholarship, not invented for one person but holding an election and choosing Chris O'Shea. In the bustle of Thursday morning Hiroaki Inoue's wife Tamie, the con General Affairs Manager, found me and stuck a ribbon "HANA Delegate" on my name-badge. She had made "JETS Delegate" too. I had gone west, O'Shea east, to meet for the first time in Japan.

That afternoon he and I were on "Fan Funds, What Are They". Michael Liebmann the Filking chief joined us to tell of Interfilk, which sends filksingers where they could not otherwise go, e.g. Franklin Gunkelmann from Germany to the San Francisco Bay filk convention Consonance in 2004. Alan Stewart of *Thyme*, who was the 1994 Down Under Fan Fund delegate, joined us too. Liebmann proved to be a cousin of Stu Shiffman the 1981 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund delegate.

The Art Show, the Dealers' Room, and our exhibits were down an escalator in the Exhibit Hall. I had to mount the Selina Phanara Sampler and build "Fanzine Art". Jerome Scott had printed color reproductions of Phanara's work, not for sale, on a background sheet with a rod at the top. She reminds me of Hans Arp; he made up his "natural shapes" but they seem to have grown. She's one of our most original artists. "Fanzine Art" too was not-for-sale reproductions. I had been told it would be possible to get three panels, with an overall sign and fanartists' names in English, Japanese, and Klingon. But it wasn't. I got one panel and made labels myself. The hours I had spent picking wordless drawings paid off. Japanese looked.

To the Conference Center. I found Flick in the newsletter office. For JETS she had made trading seals, a local fad deriving from the seals Japanese execute documents with; these were colorful stickers to collect in booklets. Also on the ground floor I found the Shibanos, Sachiko carrying her Westercon LIII tote-bag, with its brilliant Jane Dennis design of a fly-

Even though nothing noteworthy took place, there was something peculiarly elegant about the entire scene, which makes me feel bound to mention it.

Sei Shōnagon

ing saucer watching a Gauguin landscape. Seiichi Shirato, who had helped me with "A Look at Eiji Yokoyama" (*S-F Chronicle* 248), found me and brought me to meet Yokoyama in person. He's one of our most original artists. The Dealers' Room had four of his

2007 book covers, a set of *Illuminatus!* (*Eye of the Pyramid* being in 2 vol.) — whose translator, Takashi Ogawa, I do not envy — in a big blue display from the publisher Shûeisha.

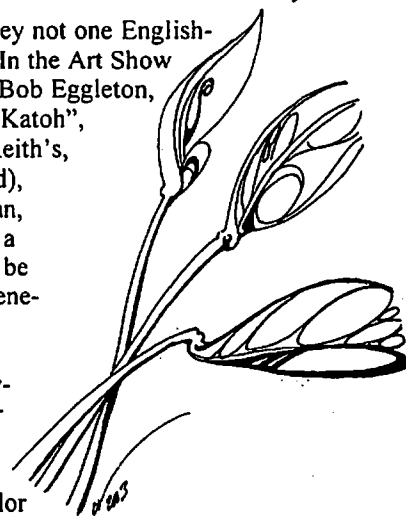
Standing room only at Opening Ceremonies. I'd never seen such a thing. Hiroaki Inoue said his hat (a red inverted frustum — fine word that — and yellow brim, about ten gallons in size, with Mickey Mouse ears) had been sent by Christian McGuire. This was because, at 2006 Closing Ceremonies, when McGuire in his final act as Chairman handed over the official gavel, Inoue in this same hat politely took off the hat, drew a raygun, and killed McGuire. Or so McGuire explained it to me afterward.

Komatsu in his deep baritone joked "The girl in the red shoes was taken away by a foreigner" — actually Baum's book *The Wizard of Oz* gives Dorothy silver shoes — and acknowledged exotic Yokohama, pioneering *Uchûjin*. Brin said "S-F is the literature which represents the possibility that people could be better than we are. You are the people who believe there is a future." Amano joked "It's strange to stand here on land" — the con site was landfill — "this used to be sea, so Yokohama is suitable" — alluding to Komatsu's *Japan Sinks*. Whelan said "This is the pinnacle of my career." Inoue said "Shibano inspired me to bring the Worldcon here," and as Shibano entered, we rose to our feet. Shibano said "I'm honored that I was given the chance to witness this." Inoue banged the gavel.

The bid parties, indeed the big parties, were in the Harbor Lounge, a separate hall in the complex. The Montréal for 2009 Worldcon bid served maple stew, and ice cider from apples deliberately frozen as ice wine is with grapes. Kansas City served *mikan saké* flavored with oranges. Japanese fans knew how little of Komatsu's work was available in English; they had made a helpful exhibit, as I later found. Edie Stern had come to accept a Hugo for *Science Fiction Five-Yearly* in case it won, as she later found. Willmoth said David Nordley's slide show on interstellar travel, across from the Fan Funds panel, was well interpreted. And so to bed.

The Heinlein panel was at 10 a.m. on Friday. This was Heinlein's hundredth birth year. Yano had been a big Heinlein fan. The panel was Keith Kato, Kari Maund, Farah Mendlesohn, Nordley, David Silver. No moderator had been assigned. Silver tried. Maund said, Heinlein showed a generous future. Kato said, his writing inspired technical people, including Kato's Ph.D. dissertation in plasma physics. Mendlesohn said, Heinlein could write stories suitable for an entire family. There came a lot of approval and disapproval of his characters. From the audience I said, he was an artist; had he not been a good one, nobody would have noticed or cared about them. Mendlesohn said, after Heinlein an "invention story" was about the people around the invention.

In Fanzine Alley not one English-language fanzine. In the Art Show a collaboration by Bob Eggleton, Naoyuki Katô (or "Kato", same surname as Keith's, who has Anglicized), and Michael Whelan, three hours on half a dozen canvasses to be auctioned for the benefit of the con. The Komatsu exhibit showed twelve novels, thirteen shorter stories, with notes in English and Japanese, posters, color reproductions of book covers, and screenings of *Japan Sinks* (the 1973 Shiro Moritani version). At the Heinlein Society exhibit I ran into Silver. He said "Well?" so I joined. The Intercontinental lobby had a sign "Welcome Worldcon Voyagers". The Voyager II space probe had just reached the heliosheath, outer reaches of the solar wind. A fan who'd been in the 2:30 p.m. flower-arranging class gave me a lily, which I accepted with joy. There was Sachiko Shibano. Of course I gave the lily to her. At the Art Show reception Lisa Standlee said, Japanese are less disconnected by high tech because they also reach for the timeless.



A message came from Glenn Glazer and Allison Hershey. Of course I went. Outside a room at the In-

Rational and emotional.

Carlo Maria Giuliani

tercontinental was an hour's worth of their friends accumulating. Celebritous persons including the con chair appeared and vanished. At length we were admitted. It was a *tatami* suite, with the woven straw mats that are the foundation of a Japanese room. We unshod. A buzz of guests guessing. An inner door slid open, and there were Glazer and Hershey, who had recently been married, in Japanese wedding clothes from Tamie Inoue's collection. *Saké* appeared and vanished.

I found the Space Force party. It was the 30th anniversary of this Japanese s-f club which included Tamie Inoue, con vice-chair Shouichi (or I could write "Shôichi") Hachiya, and others who had been very kind to me. Space Force contributed more than anyone else to HANA. In packing for the trip I had pondered gifts. Anything breaky, bulky, costly, heavy, was beyond my power. I turned to Marty Cantor and the Rotsler trove. Bill Rotsler, bless him, was so prolific that even today, a decade after his death, previously unpublished drawings of his keep appearing in fanzines. To Cantor had come so many that even after he showered them upon fanziners at Corflu XXI (2004) no few remained. He welcomed me to pore through a pile. At a commercial paper shop I found silver envelopes for them. Now I began giving them away.

On My Sleeve

Some Japanese recognized Rotsler's style, or me as a judge for the Rotsler Award (given by S. Cal. Inst. for Fan Interests, for long-time wonder-working with graphic art in fanzines, see <www.scifiinc.org/rotsler>). To others I tried to explain by likening him to Saikaku, the fluent 16th Century author who — by contemporary report — could compose the 5-7-5 syllable poetry later called *haiku* so fast he once at a festival made 20,000 in a day and a night, scribes unable to keep up and left to count with tally marks.

By 1 a.m. the Australia for 2010 Worldcon party was drained of Cooper's beer and was surreptitiously dealing with other parties. The Kansas City party had sausages and five kinds of barbecue sauce. Richard Man (Chinese name, rhymes with "wan"), the Nippon 2007 official Masquerade photographer, showed me yellow kiwi fruit. We drank Yamazaki 10-year-old single-malt whiskey with smoked salmon. At the Montréal party Linda Mansfield explained her Mondrian badges were for the Montréal Convention Centre, whose colored-glass windows were like him. The maple stew, and tonight's maple cake, were by two Montréal cooks opening a restaurant in Japan. James Peart's Irish face lit when I spoke the magic name of James Bacon.

Translators do writing, interpreters do speech. Regency Dancing (see <www.jophan.org/mimosa/m29/hertz.htm>) was scheduled for Saturday noon. I wondered about interpreters. They were worth their weight in gold, or perhaps unobtainium. The Pocket Program showed when and where the dance was, but perhaps not clearly, so on Friday I went round posting signs. Somewhere that night I ran into Sean Leonard, who said he would be there, bless him. I said "Would you kindly write *interpretation provided* in Japanese on the Regency Dance signs?" He said "Sure thing. Where are the signs?" I said "Everywhere." In the Hospitality Suite — or was that Saturday? — I found Micki Yamada, bless her too. In the event I had four interpreters. Bless them all.

Japanese cons often produce a newsletter called *The Timely Times*. That's a good name; it's hourly. Staff are conspicuous in yellow jackets. At Nippon 2007 it asked for English submissions, but to little avail; almost all was Japanese — one notable exception being Tom Becker. The con's own newsletter *Changing Tides* was in both languages, headed by a Sue Mason space ship blasting off behind Hokusai's Great Wave and Mt. Fuji (of which, incidentally, the picture some call "The Great Wave" is a portrait). By Saturday the *Tides* had published five issues, reporting the Chesley Awards, the Golden Ducks, the Prometheuses, restaurants, panels (with photographs!), a dinner cruise, volunteer prizes, and parties. The Business Meeting ratified the Best Pro Artist Hugo eligibility amendment, and struck the "Gaughan Rule" so that, if this is ratified next year, a person may thereafter be nominated for both Best Pro Artist and Best Fanartist.

At eight minutes to Saturday noon the sound equipment arrived. At two minutes to noon it was ready. The strangeness. It was the last day for wearing summer clothes; Japan is season-conscious. I live in Los Angeles, this was strange too. Of several dozen people many were in *yukata* (summer *kimono*). No one could remember the Japanese word for *regent* until

No self-respecting science fiction convention would be complete without some silliness.

The Times

I pointed out that with all the Emperors who had ascended the throne as a boy they had had many. In the United States the hardest thing to learn is English Regency formalism. Here the hardest was that its ladies and gentlemen didn't bow alike. I usually stay afterward for questions, but not if I was to get back to the Rose, change from 1807 costume to white tie, and return for Hugo Night, which began at 6 p.m. for logistical reasons, the strangeness.

Ultraman, the live-action television s-f hero, is big in Japan. He's big himself; he's 130 feet tall. This was his 40th anniversary. There was an Ultraman display in the exhibit hall. Hugo Night began with a live Ultraman display by Bandai Visual, dressed as the various Ultrafolk who appeared in forty episodes, and fighting various monsters. I sat next to Eggleton, who almost burst with delight. George Takei was Master of Ceremonies, which led to interpreter jokes in which he would speak Japanese more or less by mistake, so that Nozomi Ōmori at the other lectern was more or less confused into speaking English. Hugo Night chief John Pomeranz wore Japanese formal clothes, a nice touch.

Sapienza gave the Big Heart Award to Atsushi Morioka and Robin Johnson. Morioka could not attend, so Sapienza showed photos; Johnson was present, and confirmed by his conduct that I'd successfully concealed why I hoped he'd be at the ceremony. I rose to report the First Fandom Awards, as a delegate of that happy band active by at least the first Worldcon (1939); this year's awards had been given at the NAS-FiC (Tuckercon, St. Louis). When I said the 1F Hall of Fame had inducted Algis Budrys, author, critic, publisher, who has done so much for so many, the room almost burst with applause.

The *Seiun* (which means "nebula", a tireless joke) are the Japanese national awards, like the Ditmars in Australia. This was the first Japanese natcon combined with a Worldcon, so we heard them all, not just Best Translated Work. *Japan Sinks, Part Two* won Best Long Fiction. Amano won Best Artist. A Special Award went to JAXA's M-V rocket (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), world's largest solid-fuel satellite launcher, which had been retired in 2006.

Jay Lake gave the Campbell and its traditional tiara to Naomi Novik — Novik in *kimono*, Lake not — and the Hugo for Best Pro Editor, Short Form, to

Gordon Van Gelder. When Lake and his Sweet Siren came home they had, to get forty hours at the con, spent fifty hours traveling. Betsy Mitchell gave Best Pro Editor, Long Form, to Patrick Nielsen Hayden, the first of many 2007 Hugos where the redistribution in our voting system was decisive. The late Jim Baen with the most first-place votes, and the most second-place votes, came in third. Our system counts all the preferences voters express. If you have second through fifth place choices, people, state them. That determined one-third of the Hugos this year. When Edie Stern gave Best Fanartist to Frank Wu, his accepters Kelley Buehler & Daniel Spector were ready with giant color photos of his head. I'm not sure how many they had, probably not more than two, but from that moment he was all over the con, and in the night's group pictures he was over the top.

Gay Haldeman's giving Best Fanzine to *Science Fiction Five-Yearly*, Ben Yalow accepting with Stern, was my favorite moment. Gay has long fanzine connections. If there was a sentimental touch after the death of SFFY's Lee Hoffman early in 2007, that was not decisive, as we'd just seen; and if it existed, it had to come from voters who knew and cared who she was, a fine rejoinder to gloom. For me personally, I had been in the final issue — not knowing that at the time; though my contribution was short, four *haiku*, I had worked intimately with co-editors Randy Byers and Geri Sullivan; and if you want glory, I was on the back cover, in Jae Leslie Adams calligraphy, writing about and surrounded by a trillion trillion suns.

The Awards booklet was in English and Japanese. The *Tides* printed an Issue H with the winners and a full report of voting, and an Issue N with a full report of nominations. These publications for our greatest and hardest night were further wonders.

Denvention III hosted the Nominees' Party, as the next Worldcon does, its chairman Kent Bloom presiding; the Harbor Lounge had fans for us nominees — paper fans — with Rick Sternbach art. In the Intercontinental, the Scandinavia party had a dozen kinds of aquavit. At the Daicon VII party (the 47th natcon next year, at Kishiwada, Osaka; *Daicon* means both "big convention" and a kind of radish) David Shallcross tried to explain our voting system. As I walked in,

Better reasoners, and therefore more disposed to be just.

Louis Simond

my name was shouted out. Cheering. A cup of *sake* was put in my hand. I cried *Kanpai!* The room cried *Kanpai!* When all were satisfied I felt entirely welcome they returned to conversation, watching *animé*, and singing. As I left, yards of Japanese sitting on their heels in the hall gave three *Banzai!* Then "Next guest!"

Keith Kato had been told throwing a chili party would be impossible. But it wasn't. He had help

from Masamichi Osako and a host of others. Whelan spoke of Naoyuki Katô in the collaboration, "the widest imagination since Möbius — space ships I'd never imagined, and they looked like they could fly." Gay & Joe Haldeman spoke of first meeting Takumi Shibano, who'd proved he'd been reading Joe. Whelan said, "Sometimes images come to me in a dream, then I try to paint them; some are intellectual and I have to work them out."

On Sunday in the Art Show I saw a dozen of Eggleton's painting-a-day. "Escape from a Red Giant World" was a ship lifting from vague mountains, a sun four-fifths of the frame. Yokoyama again sold everything he brought. Katsuda Tenada brought an untitled monochrome with a dragon, a tiger, horses, a human baby, in a vortex round a rosebud, like a textile. In the Conference Center, Filthy Pierre's Voodoo Message Board was on the ground floor, "voodoo" because you push pins in, easy and cheap. The Christine Valada portraits were one floor up. Valada, a first-rate photographer, over the years has taken many monochromes of pros, now often shown at a Worldcon. Tom Veal their curator, who could not attend, selected a hundred fifty and shipped them. The labels, not by her or him, had over the years gotten out of hand, varying in substance, uncurrent, and all too long for our project of translating them into Japanese. Veal had set me to boiling them down by half, which I did electronically, gosh. The photos were posted; labels kept arriving from the translators during the con.

Masquerade that afternoon at 3, the strangeness. Our community invented this artform I know nothing else much like anywhere. The Masquerade Director was Yuichiro Sakuta; Mistress of Ceremonies, Reina Yoshimura; judges, Suford Lewis, Essai Ushijima, and me; workmanship judges backstage (workmanship judging is optional, entrants need not invite it), Karisu-sama and Satoshi Shimizu. Sakuta had been at the 2005 NASFiC. We conjoined the Journeyman and Master

classes into "Experienced"; we expected and had a lot of Re-Creation entries; earlier I'd met Miki Dennis, who won Best in Show at the 2005 Worldcon with "The Wind Brings Music to the Earth", so we expected something from her too.

There came a boisterous pink alien blob, and attendant, "Welcome to Japan" (Experienced) from *Galaxy Angel*, winning Most Humorous in Class; we never learned the entrants' names. Best Characterization, Novice, was "Kelly the Gremlin" (Original), Diana Vick, using tools well, too well for humankind. "Cosmic Corsair Captain Harlock", Kenichiro Mera



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(Experienced), won a workmanship award for metalwork and leather design. "Battle of the Flowers", Yuko Niikawa, Mariko Yasu, Kiyoko Katoh (Experienced), won Best Workmanship in Class, a blue stole, red armor and cloak, black armor, a staff, a sword, and a shield. Dennis' "Miss Solar System" (Experienced, Original) won Most Beautiful in Class, also workmanship awards for beauty, attention to detail, and documentation, a paneled gown of planets in purple, blue, red, green, a headpiece of comets. Best in Class, Experienced, also a workmanship award for design, was "Solitude Together" from *Breath of Fire IV*, Sionna & Mark Neidengard, a wing-headed lady and an anthropomorphic dog who quarreled and finally, finely, touched. The show closed with "Dancing Magical Dolls", Haruna Shimakaze, Iie doll, Mikocchi, A3, and Kakkih (Novice), Best in Class and Best Workmanship in Class, larger than life, carefully stereotyped, each personality clear.

Worldcon work is hard. It's exhilarating too. Masquerade judges must compare apples and androids: we have near-limitless latitude dreaming up awards: but we'd better be right. And fast. Here we had the extra of cross-culture complication. Nor, with the awards and applause given, the house emptied, was my part done; the *Tides* waited — another thing impossible — and just as I thought I'd handed all in, I realized I didn't have *kanji* for the Japanese entrants' names, who'd politely filled out forms in *kana* to make sure Yoshimura could pronounce everything. Back to the theater. Of course Sakuta was still there.

Anticipation was in the Harbor Lounge. Montréal had beaten Kansas City 5 to 3, on 900 votes, and decided to keep the name of the bid as the name of the con. They could have decided on Consummation. Among the write-ins were Minneapolis in '73 (2 votes), which yielded to Toronto decades ago but has never been stopped by that, and Peggy Rae's house (1). There was more maple cake. No more ice cider,

If one has to sample every interesting thing that comes along, people are bound to regard one as frivolous.

Murasaki

we drank Canada dry. Strange cries came from the Irish. Outside, two Japanese were demonstrating to Keith Kato, who is a *shotokan* Black Belt, "We call this a strange style of *karate*."

Monday, Monday. The Exhibit Hall had a glider from *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, and Joe Siclari's fanhistory center; biggest display was for the Comiket, world's largest comics market, twice yearly in Tokyo with 40,000 do-it-yourself vendors, 500,000 attendance; Comiket LXXIII was December 2007. In the Art Show, I did not have to take down "Fanzine Art"; the staff knew it was disposable, so gave permission when someone came asking for the dozen or so pieces, a request I thought a fine rejoinder to gloom. In the Dealers' Room, Jane & Scott Dennis had sold

out of tote-bags. Craig McBride said Program Books for non-U.S. overseas Supporting Members had already been mailed.

Closing Ceremonies with the theater jammed. David Brin was given an anti-*Seiun*. Promising to keep it separate from his two *Seiun* trophies he said, "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to destroy the world. Perhaps California will sink." Amano said, "The work of an artist is in solitude, but it's good to be with friends." Chairman Inoue received a standing ovation. A thousand *origami* cranes, and a few monsters, were given to Denvention III. Upon receiving the gavel Chairman Bloom gave Inoue the coveted Former Worldcon Chair ribbon. Bloom said, "You led us to boldly go where no one had gone before."

Supper with Stewart in Queen's Mall near the Minato Mirai. He had never tried Chinese rice wine. Also in the Mall was Pompadour, a French bakery recommended by Kate Yule. Signposts chimed as I passed. Escalators ran one or two floors at a time. All weekend in the throng fans mostly spotted one another, perhaps by our sensitive fannish faces.

At the Conference Center, the Dead Dog Party was in the Green Room. Both the party, and having a Green Room, were strange to Japan. Chance had made the Green Room very large. Tonight no few remained. Those of us with work still to do drifted in and out. After a while pizza arrived. It had shrimp and curry. Willmoth gave it the seal of approval; I did not ask whether an assimilated seal would have cried "borg, borg". *Nigirizushi* arrived. I ran into Niven and Nordley. Niven said, "We're talking about the ultimate destiny of humankind." I said, "Clarke wrote *Childhood's End* and *The City and the Stars* about it, why shouldn't you?"

In the 7th floor elevator lobby of the Intercontinental was a BASFA meeting. "Bay Area S-F Association" is normally understood to mean San Francisco. However, this was Yokohama Bay. I happen to be an honorary BASFA officer. There was a quorum (Meeting 892; *Science Fiction / San Francisco* 50). Andrew A. Adams confirmed that at the Art Auction, under auctioneer Sandy Cohen, the collaborative art raised \$20,000 for Nippon 2007. Pun tax for the meeting was converted to ¥30, which with voting fees, e.g. Rumor of the Week, raised ¥4,000 for BASFA. My rumor lost; the winner was *Although Brin promised to keep his Seiun and anti-Seiun apart, he will, through*

New and old meeting
Imagined by none we know
Hundreds of years past;
Ore that they yet pointed to
Nevertheless glints at us.

from *Peregrine Nations*
vol. 7 no. 3, 2007

fatigue, forget, and they will annihilate each other, perhaps everything. At another party Spector and I toasted the memory of Gary Anderson in 1977 Rayne-Vigneau. It had tension, like the music of Rameau. An hour later it had mellowed. We shared a taxi as far as the Rose. He said "Give my love to the usual suspects."

I had no notion where or how I was going to live the next week. I was not helpless; HANA had raised enough if I was frugal; I had yet made no firm plans because I hoped, instead of turning mundane, to put

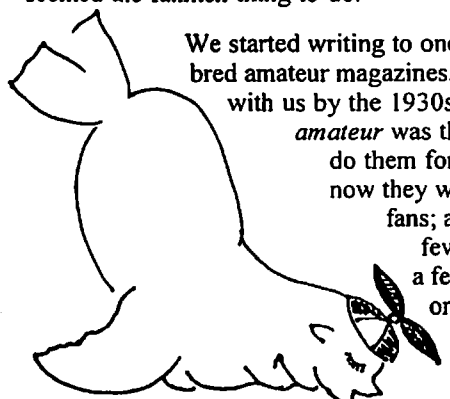
myself in the hands of Japanese friends. I had been told this would be impossible. But it wasn't.

One morning the newspaper under my hotel-room door had an interview with Danjūrō XII. "Why do *kabuki* now?" he was asked. He is the twelfth-generation actor to assume this famous stage name. The interview ran over a page; at its heart he answered with the Japanese proverb *On-ko chi-shin*, "Study the old to appreciate the new." It was what Lisa Standlee said. It was the heart of my visit.

Our Fanzines

from *The Knarley Knews* 120, 2006

Fans have been writers since earliest days. Emerging in the letter columns of commercial s-f magazines, which were themselves emerging, we commented on what we saw, and commented on the comments. It seemed the fannish thing to do.



We started writing to one another. This bred amateur magazines. The first were with us by the 1930s. Then as now *amateur* was the key note: we do them for love. Then as now they were by fans, for fans; a few pages or a few dozen, sent to a few dozen people or a few hundred, periodically or sometimes, briefly or for decades; written by us, enriched by our own graphic art. The word *fanzine* was coined in the 1940s by Russell Chauvenet.

Then as now fans and pros mingled. Some are both. Fanwriting is no junior league for pro writing; you might just as well say that "I breathe when I sleep" is the same thing as "I sleep when I breathe"; but when Aussiecon III the 1999 Worldcon invited Greg Benford as Guest of Honor, he could answer "Are you asking me to be Pro Guest of Honor, or Fan Guest of Honor?" He stood in established custom. Bob Tucker, whose most celebrated fanzine *Le Zombie* began in 1938 (and was not his first), who won three Hugo Awards for fanwriting, and who remained an active fan to his death, published a dozen s-f novels and a bushel of short stories, and was placed into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2003.

We care remarkably little, here in the Imagination, who is old or young, male or female, rich or poor, as we meet in fanzines or in person — s-f clubs and conventions too began around the 1930s. To a remarkable extent, we love you for your mind.

It was an early controversy how far fanzines should confine themselves to s-f. *Not very* won. Perhaps under the influence of fans like Walt Willis, who

wrote wonderfully about hotel bellhops, or losing footgear in the Pacific Ocean while on the U.S. West Coast and having to watch a slow boat to China, we came to publish what had a love of s-f running through like a thread, or resonating like a tone, but not necessarily more apparent.

In the 1960s a surge of interest in other communications media was going to be the end of print. There were, however, many fine fanzines. At the turn of the 21st Century electronic mail and the Internet were going to be the end of paper. So far that has not happened either. It seems truer that any medium has its own strengths, its own character, and calls for adoption in what it does best. Sometimes you want to sing, sometimes you want to dance.

There is a joy in art. Some belongs to the artist, some to the audience. The art may be co-operative — like some singing — some dancing — some fanzines. An artwork may not celebrate joy, it may grieve or protest or a thousand things, but even in presenting a wrong it can have rightness. That may result from thought or instinct or providence or luck.

We have long said fanzines were communication. Art has been called communication. I have proposed a triangle, the artist one point, the intended audience a second, unaddressed bystanders a third, ideally each satisfied and none at the expense of the rest. In the Fanzine Lounge at Chicon VI the 2000 Worldcon, I held in my hands a copy of Chauvenet's fanzine *Sardonyx*, printed in multicolor hectograph, a technology of such annoyance as to disgust even Harry Warner, Jr., in this case yielding a thing of beauty. I was not born when it was made, but it reached me.

To produce what is worth writing, and worth reading, can be demanding, nourishing, exhilarating. That triangle, or something like it, may keep us at honest work.

Fanzines rejoice us with interchange. There is the sending and receiving of fanzines; there is conversation, in letter columns, reviews, essays, where some of us contribute expectedly and others unexpectedly, where a joke will be caught and volleyed over seas or

On My Sleeve

time — in my fanzine, a cartoon from a woman of Hawaii took up one from a man of Yorkshire, neither of whom I've ever seen in the flesh, nor did we think this was odd — where tortoises and trap doors may speak, and talk of whether pigs and even bananas have wings.

Two hundred years ago Sam Johnson said, "Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling

imagination to the help of reason." That is not the language we use today, and the falseness of oppressors has made us touchy about truth, but as with much of this amazing man, it has merit. Another time he said, "Those dogs don't know how to write trifles with dignity."

At the Eaton Collection

The Rivera Library, Riverside campus, University of California, holds the Eaton Collection, world's largest publicly accessible collection of s-f, including fanzines.

The 28th Eaton Conference on S-F

16-18 May 2008

from *File 770* 153, 2008

(with Larry Niven)

The Eaton Conference has been almost annual since 1979. Organized by the Eaton S-F Collection, the Conference has also been held in Texas, Washington, Britain, China, and France. Its Website is <eatonconference.ucr.edu>. This year's topic was "Chronicling Mars". Of your two reporters, Niven was able to attend; Hertz had to ask questions, sometimes of Niven.

About 200 came, triple the usual size. There were more working s-f authors than usual. Another first was an Exhibitors' Hall, with a Mars Rover replica, which roved, and a monolith from the Clarke & Kubrick film *2001*, which drew many to pose for a photo. They may have already been space children. Another first was an Illustrators & Matte Artists display (Local 790, Int'l Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees). Another was a reading and open-microphone session with the S-F Poetry Association.

Ray Bradbury spoke, and sat on an S-F Heritage panel with Fred Pohl, and was given the Eaton Award for Lifetime Achievement in S-F, another first. When Dana Gioia, poet, lover of jazz and Shakespeare, and Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, got wind of that, he got on a plane to introduce Bradbury. Niven and Bradbury met in their doctor's office when Niven was ten. Bradbury gave Niven *The Martian Chronicles*. Later when it was reprinted with a Michael Whelan cover Niven introduced it and Bradbury at Bradbury's high school.

New writers try to imitate Bradbury. It's hard. He's concise. He doesn't tell stories, he sketches them and leaves you to fill them in. His theme at the Conference was love, including s-f, and libraries, and loving what you're doing. He remembered looking up to space as a boy and wondering when he could go home. His talk was open to anyone, not just Conference members, at no charge. It drew about 400.

Several presenters were double or triple threats. Greg Benford is an s-f author and an astrophysicist at

U. Cal. Irvine. David Hartwell is a Tor Books editor and publishes *The New York Review of S-F*. Howard Hendrix, an s-f author and published gardener, teaches English at Cal. State U. Fresno, the other California university system; he gave awards for the Student S-F Short Story Contest. Geoffrey Landis is an s-f author with a doctorate in particle physics who works at the NASA John Glenn Research Center. He sat on a Millennial Mars panel with Hartwell and Niven, bravely moderated by Landis' wife Mary Turzillo, another s-f author.

Gerry Williams of the San Diego Mars Society hosted "Mars in the Movies", two hours of film clips. That was fun. Eaton reference librarian Gwido Zlatkes

Sparks in the high night:
To them! to them! with our hearts
Any time we can;
Rest on earth a body may,
Soaring belongs to the soul.

Vanamonde 706

led two tours of the Collection in his famous colorful overalls. There must have been a thousand varieties of printing press, including mimeo. Oregon dealer Robert Gavora brought books for autographing, helpfully arranged with placards by authors' names. Benford in a tribute to Sir Arthur Clarke described visiting Clarke at Sri Lanka near the end of Clarke's life. Identical twin Jim Benford was at the Conference too.

Niven took notes through the Conference but forgot and left them in Riverside. Someone made the usual reference to C.P. Snow's two cultures. Niven said scientists read as much poetry as others; the two cultures are the one that does both languages and the one that doesn't. There was talk of whether in s-f Mars was Heaven. Niven said people who want to design Utopias have been putting them there for a long time. However, Niven wrote *Rainbow Mars*.

The Conference hotel was the Mission Inn. It was sort of a maze, easy to get lost in, but it had lots of space for weddings. The Pournelles get married again

every time they find an interesting place to get married in. Think about it.

A Talk on Fanzines
from *File 770* 156, 2009

In April I gave a talk at the Eaton Collection on fanzines. Eaton is one of the Special Collections in the Rivera Library.

At the 2004 Worldcon, Fan Guest of Honor Jack Speer in presenting a Hugo Award said the fanzine remained the most distinctive product of the science fiction community. He knew; he'd been with us seventy years. It still is.

When Bruce Pelz died in 2002, Eaton already had Terry Carr's and Rick Sneary's fanzines. The Carr zines, thanks particularly to Robert Lichtman, were fairly well indexed. The Sneary zines were indexed. The Pelz zines had been beyond Bruce's powers during his life. Early in 2009 Eaton finished a preliminary indexing. I had put in time — it's only two hours' travel by freeway or rail — bearing a hand.

To the uncivilized mind there are no interests but personal interests. If it doesn't gore my ox I don't care. If the book isn't about me I won't buy. The civilized mind is broader. My question for the day was, what good are fanzines to people who are not part of the s-f community, who may not read science fiction? Dr. Melissa Conway, head of Special Collections, had long been alert to it. What if drinking companions of King James' translators had published amateur journals about the work, and the apple crop, and the latest songs? Kipling's imagined glimpse in "Proofs of Holy Writ" is delightful, but its focus is close on the topic — as many people mistakenly think of fanzines.

And, besides the resonating note of s-f, fanzines are a voluntary world of letters, where people write, and read, for love.

I had no trouble overflowing a display table with fanzines that come in my mail. Mike Glycer had kindly sent with me a few dozen of the latest *File 770*, which I gave everybody. In my audience were students, li-

As I wait to write,
Wash water on my fingers
Evaporating.

Van 660

brarians and staff, and people who didn't speak. Except the library folk, most had evidently never dreamed of such things. Those who knew s-f knew books, films, prozines. Why wasn't there fiction? Why on paper? — as they wrote in paper notebooks. Why wasn't there pay? — as they thought ahead to basketball. The usual. I didn't mind at all. Two plus two made four last year too. We adjourned to fruit and cookies. None of *File 770* was left behind.

Eaton had kindly made a flier which spoke of 50,000 Pelz fanzines. Was this a typo? We had long heard of 250,000. Actually there are about 70,000 — someone rounded down — but indeed something happened. Space. Pelz had a lot of fanzines, like many collectors had acquired others' collections, and had never gone all through to organize the lot. A judicious retention of duplicates, the ideal policy, calls for comprehensive knowledge, beyond the powers of Eaton's staff — I said Space, but it's related to Time. Joe Siclari had always told Pelz he'd take anything Eaton didn't. He and Dr. Conway confirmed this disposition. I asked Siclari "Have you provided for them in your will?" He changed the subject.

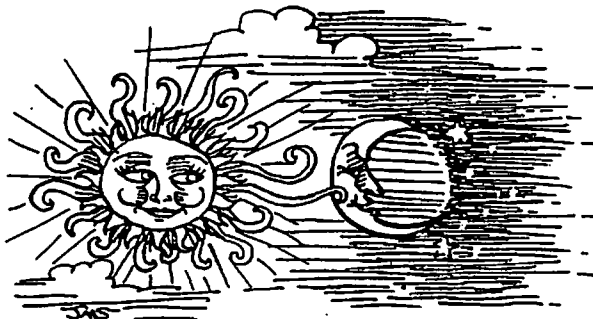
Giants Three and Two

Parnassus

A.J. Budrys 1931-2008

Van 813; reprinted *The Drink Tank* 194, 2008

One of our finest authors, one of our finest critics, his most celebrated novel *Rogue Moon* (1960) he wanted to call *The Death Machine*, his last was *Hard Landing* (1993), he published the collections *Budrys' Inferno* (1963) and *Blood and Burning* (1978), but his unceasing deeds showed us all his big heart. He left us half a dozen novels, ten dozen short stories. He was six



years principal book reviewer for *Galaxy*, eighteen for *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, then resigned to edit *Tomorrow*, and Kristine Kathryn Rusch said letting him go was the biggest mistake she made as editor of *F&SF*. He had eight Hugo nominations, two for the Nebula. He was Author Guest of Honor at

the 1997 Worldcon; in 2007

he received the Pilgrim Award for lifetime contribution to s-f scholarship, and

as I had the honor of announcing at that year's Worldcon, to a theater of applause, he was placed in the First Fandom Hall of Fame.

A.J. Budrys at six taught himself English by reading

On My Sleeve

Robinson Crusoe; his Lithuanian background inspired *The Falling Torch* (1959), which I always liked but he never did; *Michaelmas* (1977) is excellent, *Who?* (1958) a wonder; *Benchmarks* (1984) collects his *Galaxy* reviews, *Writing to the Point* (1994) his advice, *Bicycles* (1976) his expertise in another hobby — he, his wife, and four sons rode high-performance machines of his own assembly, he also directed four-wheel-drive racing teams. He taught at Harvard, Rice, Brigham Young, the Library of Congress, the National Aeronautics & Space Administration, Clarion East, and the Charles Dickens House. For twenty-five years he worked with the *Writers of the Future* and *Illustrators of the Future* contests, long the Writers' Coordinating Judge, teaching the contest workshops, editing the anthologies. When he left *F&SF* Rusch said his wonderful, insightful language made reviews of books out of print worth reading; when he began he said (Nov 75) "You and I and all our other kinsmen are here waiting between trains in a small town on the windward slope of Parnassus.... so let's talk." At Kelly Freas' funeral he said "Kelly was my best man and he still is." A month before his death he said he read every issue of *Vanamonde*. *R.I.P.*

Science Fiction's Best Loved Artist

Frank Kelly Freas 1922-2005

Van 608; reprinted *File* 770 144, 2005

He had vision and he could portray it. He loved life and he portrayed that. He designed the insignia for Skylab I; having won ten Hugo Awards illustrating Asimov and Heinlein, he sat in the Dealers' Room at s-f conventions doing caricatures. We wrote songs about him. Karen Anderson says his portrait of Poul was the best she's ever seen. He served as President of the Association of S-F Artists and was a made a Fellow of the International Association of Astronomical Artists. He was made Artist Guest of Honor by two Worldcons. He won a Retro-Hugo, three Chesleys, the Inkpot, the Skylark, and a doctorate *honoris causa* from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. He did five hundred saints for the Franciscans, five dozen covers for Laser Books, and seven years as the main cover artist for *Mad*. Life with a *Mad* artist was never boring.

His own word was *illustrator*. He relished the task. After he had grown famous he said, to encourage others, "There is a real need for intelligent artists who can understand what has been written and illustrate it in a way that is related to the real world and means something. A piece of art which does that becomes treasure beyond price." Here, while reaching the most ordinary life, is the challenge and inspiration of our field.

He had a Shakespearean zest for holding nobility in one hand and comedy in the other. Like Shakespeare he knew that either could be down to earth or exalted. His people and machines were brave and beautiful, tender and terrifying. We may discuss

whether he was better at color or monochrome; see his two covers and his fifteen interiors for *Double Star*. From first to last he made memorable pictures, "The Gulf Between" and *Martians Go Home* in the 1950s, *Animal Farm* and 1984, *She* and *The Left Hand of Darkness* in the 1990s. As Ulrika O'Brien said, he was a master of reflected light. My doctor, who also died recently, had been Kelly's too; prominent in the office was "Presenting the Bill", with which Jerry Pournelle once cracked up a flight surgeon, and which *The New York Times* thought to have put an air mechanic's Go — No Go gauge in the doctor's black bag by mistake.

He knew to lead and teach. He did it to me. I started leading Art Show tours because a con committee asked me to. "Why me?" I asked, falling right into the pit: "I can't draw!" They said "Well, someone told us you'd be good at it." I said "Maybe you'd better tell me just who that was." They said "Kelly Freas." I said "Gulp," and "Okay, if Kelly thinks I can, I will." When I asked him "Why me?" he said — and I hope I never forget this — "You seem to be able to say what you see." There are a hundred stories of those who could draw, not least since he was the founding Coordinating Judge, and a tireless help, in the *Illustrators of the Future* contest, whose magnanimity he respected. It takes one to know one. May his memory be for a blessing.

Heinlein at his Hundredth

Van 760; reprinted *The Drink Tank* 156, 2007

He approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful; the event which he represents will not happen, but if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he has assigned; and it may be said, that he has not only shown human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be exposed.

Johnson

Preface, *Notes on Shakespeare's Plays* (1778)
A. Sherbo ed., *Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson* v. 7, p. 65 (1968)

This is the centennial year of Robert A. Heinlein (1907-1988), one of the finest writers we've known. In 1939 he entered our field, which he called speculative fiction, and over two decades published six dozen short stories and novels still unsurpassed in quality. He had the gift, or skill, of story. He had a sense of event.

NOVEMBER 2005

Dear Dr. Schmidt,

In the June 2005 *Analog*, the appreciation of Kelly Freas on p. 131, unsigned, must be by you. It's quite wonderful, including the delicious use of "astounding."

So was Kelly.

Thank you, and for the last in the letter column being about him too. "What shall I do without him?" asks the writer, whose name, quite wonderfully, is Gray.

I suppose you get *Chronicle*, and have seen my piece, in the March issue (No. 257). Warren Lapine kindly chose to print the pictures I mentioned, and took my suggestion for the cover—three of five being from your magazine, for which I must also thank you.

Your magazine nourished Kelly. He certainly gave good exchange. Now it remains for us fans, and you pros, to continue; to cherish his work; to go on worthy of his achievement; to find and raise the like again. Somehow. Somehow.

John F. Hertz
Los Angeles, California

BRASS TACKS

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from *Analog*

He was a painter of people, some of whom were aliens. He had invention, which Johnson called the first and most valuable power of a poet. He was entertaining: he used to say "We're competing for their beer money." Born in Missouri, the "show me" State, he at his best, of which there is a bushel, didn't tell us, he showed us; he could make an object, or a word, show prevailing notions or technology, or when the story or people needed more detail, he could dilate. Four years before Heinlein at the first Worldcon in Missouri, in the bi-centennial year of the United States, was Writer Guest of Honor at a Worldcon for his third time, a writer for *The New Yorker* told me s-f made itself obscure. Heinlein had published s-f in *The Saturday Evening Post*. Among his jewels of those years are a dozen books for juveniles, clear, compact, craftsmanly, well worth the attention of an adult. He came to feel these chafed him. He burned for something bigger, which brought him fame and fortune, although beauty and even brilliance are not always bought with ire. At the 2007 Worldcon, the first in Asia, the first in Japan, a display by the Heinlein Society was in the exhibit hall, and I went to a panel about him, where people told how they agreed or disagreed with characters in his works, with whom they could or could not identify. No one would notice or care, I said from the audience, except for his writing so well.

Smooth

Bob Tucker 1914-2006

Van 704; reprinted File 770 148, 2006

His father was a circus man, with Ringling Bros. and with Barnum & Bailey; he was a motion-picture projectionist and a stage electrician. Visiting Los Angeles for the 1946 Worldcon, he dropped by the union hall to ask if there was work, and spent six months at 20th Century Fox, a name which could not have been more suitably chosen. His name was Wilson, but somehow we called him Bob; somehow he called himself Hoy Ping Pong, too. I tried to get the local Hoy Ping Benevolent Association to make him an honorary member. His first fanzine was *The Planetoid* (1932); most celebrated, *Le Zombie*; first appearance of Pong, *The Fantasy Fan* (1933). Arthur Wilson "Bob" Tucker published a million words of fanwriting. As another hobby he published s-f and mysteries; of his first novel, *The Chinese Doll* (1946), he later said "Tony Boucher paid me the highest compliment of my writing career; he wished he had written it"; there and elsewhere so many characters had fans' names that putting one's friends into one's books came to be called tuckerizing.

Toni Weisskopf has the best picture of him, in a sweater and tie, rolled-up striped shirtsleeves, and a pipe, printing fanzine covers at a mimeograph, behind him wallpaper and pin-ups. Okay, the pin-ups aren't pinned up, they're framed. So is the monster. This is the picture in the Harry Warner, Jr., history of fandom during the 1950s, *A Wealth of Fable* (1992); since it

shows Tucker during the 1940s, Joe Siclari put it in his posthumous edition of Warner's first volume of history, *All Our Yesterdays* (1969, rev. 2004). Tucker wrote the introductions to both those unequalled books. He coined the phrase "space opera", which he meant pejoratively — he also thought Warner, who loved classical music, had a marked weakness for opera. Bruce Gillespie put the picture in *SF Commentary* 79, the Tucker issue, also the wonderful Diane & Leo Dillon cover for Tucker's 1970 s-f novel *The Year of the Quiet Sun*.

The comedian Red Skelton, son of another circus man, in a mock television advertisement promoted a fictitious brand of gin. He said it was smooth. Tucker drank Jim Beam bourbon. That was smooth. He got us all saying so. On his way to Melbourne for the 1975 Worldcon he got a whole airplane saying "Smoooooth." He had never flown before. A conspiracy of women, including Joni Stopa, brought him there. Next year at Kansas City he was Toastmaster, with Pro Guest of Honor Robert A. Heinlein, Fan GoH George Barr. We knew the man who could introduce them could introduce Warner.

He brought us the Society for the Prevention of Wire Staples in Scientifiction Magazines and a *Neofan's Guide* and the Tucker Hotel. The Society brought us the Staple War and a hoax that he had died. There were more of those; Art Rapp in *Spacewarp* published a calendar with September 8-15 as Tucker Death Hoax Week. The Hotel was supposed to move from one con to the next; he told us "Save your roller skates"; people started mailing him bricks, and at least one Bible scholar sent straw, with which Tucker eventually built a cathouse. He discovered that the center of the universe was a bar in Columbus, Georgia.

He had an endless two-man act with Bob Bloch. He lost at a pun contest to Harlan Ellison and at poker to Sprague de Camp's teenage son. Of himself he said he was a

greedy reader; he went round the neighborhood gathering news, then trying to sell it to the people who'd given it to him; he prized Frederik Pohl's advice, "If a character is walking down the street to mail a letter, don't describe the street and the mailbox before he leaves the house"; he liked the 1938 film of *Pygmalion*, with Leslie Howard and Wendy Hiller. At the time he arrived, said Weisskopf, the bright possibilities were infinite, but only certain people could see what that meant. He was Fan Guest of Honor at the 1948 and 1967 Worldcons. He was given the Big Heart Award in 1962. He won the Campbell Memorial Award and three Hugos for fanwriting and in 2003 was



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placed into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame. He is survived by children and grandchildren. He had the grace to live past September. I drank a shot of Jim Beam. *R.I.P.*

Sterling

Lee Hoffman 1932-2007

Van 731; reprinted *The Drink Tank* 131, 2007

"I knew her best in the '60s," said Carol Carr, "funny, smart, and a sterling heart." So before and since. *Quandry* (thus spelled) made her famous. *Science Fiction Five-Yearly* continued to her death. Lee Hoffman was Fan Guest of Honor at Chicon IV ('82 Worldcon, Chicago). Besides fanzines, she published

A dot and a line,
My ship and I at morning
When both suns arise.

science fiction, Westerns, historical romances (as Georgia York), the folk-music magazines *Caravan* and *Gardylloo*, and blue-eagle tags for the "New Lost City Ramblers" Appreciators (carefully labeled "NLCRA" and "We do our part" after the blue eagle of NRA, the 1933 U.S. Nat'l Recovery Administration). She was assistant editor of Larry Shaw's prozines *Infinity* and *Science Fiction Adventures*. Her superbly-titled novel *The Valdez Horses* (1967), winning the Spur Award from the Western Writers of America, was made a 1973 John Sturges movie with Charles Bronson and Jill Ireland. As in Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1941), three-quarters through her book we learn what the title means, and never forget.

The best photograph of her, by Dean Grennell, is in Harry Warner's history *A Wealth of Fable*, p. 65 (2nd ed. 1992), which is full of her, as it should be.

Faster-than-light drive
Brings together people who
Now had better talk.

A good photo from the '80s by Andrew Porter is in Peter Weston's *Prolapse*, no. 3 (Nov 06). In that *Lapse* she set Weston straight. She set Dick Eney straight in "The Truth About Steam", reprinted in the Chicon IV GoH book, half hers under the title *In and Out of "Quandry"*, half Pro GoH Bertram Chandler's under *Up to the Sky in Ships*, printed back-to-back like the "doubles" of Ace Books, with two covers by Illus-

trator GoH Kelly Freas (NESFA Press = New England S-F Ass'n: P.O. Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701, U.S.A.; <www.nesfa.org/press>). It has her "Bluffer's Guide to Publishing a Fanzine", and her story from Harlan Ellison's 1972 anthology *Again, Dangerous Visions*, too. "Steam" details the Fort Mudge Steam Calliope Company, which involved — I use the word carefully — Ken Bulmer, Vincent Clarke, Chuch Harris, Walt Willis, and Walt Kelly's comic strip *Pogo*. Each of those names is a shining star.

When she appeared most fan activity outside local clubs was in fanzines. Not only were cons far and few, fanziners realized it's cheaper to send one's fanzine round than one's body; *everything or nothing* is feeble-

We made matter! We
Did it! Our hands open to
Energy, space, time.

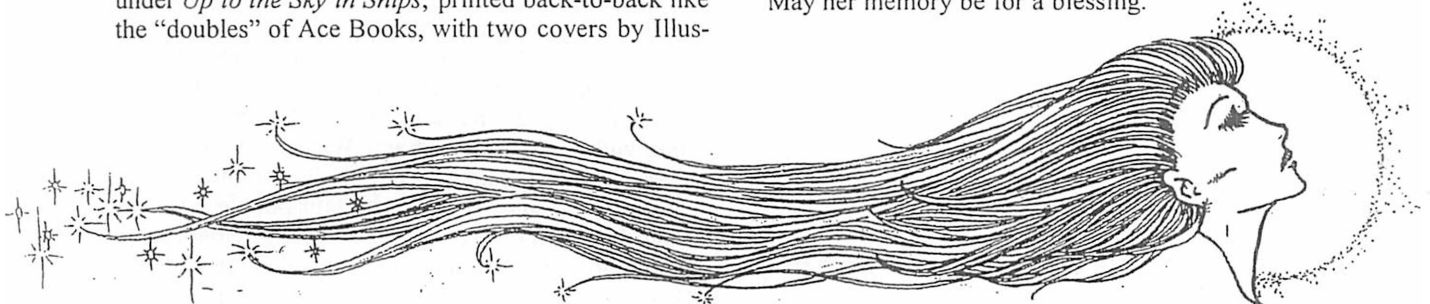
minded. People who hadn't met her in person made assumptions. They were finally shattered by evidence that, as Willis telephoned to Bob Shaw, "Lee Hoffman is a girl!" Bob Tucker was so shattered — for his version and hers, see *In and Out* — he put a character with her name in *The Long Loud Silence* (1952), eaten by cannibals. After this she was Hoffvoman.

She was a race-car inspector, an amateur archeologist, a photographer. She never won a triple crown, but she could have; after we established Retrospective Hugo Awards (Constitution of the World S-F Society, Section 3.13), she was nominated in '01 (i.e. for 1950,

We who laugh at time
Wonder at the blaze of a
Trillion trillion suns.

fifty years after the '51 Worldcon gave no Hugos) as Best Fanwriter and Best Fanartist, in '04 as Fanwriter and Q as Fanzine. Ellison said she was the Parthenon. They poled a pirogue through the Okefenokee Swamp hunting water moccasins with crossbows. In the s-f con costume competition we call the Masquerade, she wore a gown of Q covers stenciled on silk.

S-F Five-Yearly came out every fifth November for fifty-five years. I was in SFFY 12 (Nov 06), with a series of four s-f *haiku*, the last on the back cover, gosh. I did not know it would be my last gift to her. May her memory be for a blessing.



An Independent Mind

from *Journey Planet 4*, 2009

An independent mind is a wonderful thing to have. It's a terrible thing to waste.

Perhaps science fiction promotes independence of mind. We are the *what if* art. Perhaps to ask *what if*, and build a story or a painting on it, calls for an independent mind, or strengthens one; perhaps both making the art, and viewing it.

J.R.R. Tolkien said, and so did Larry Niven not knowing Tolkien had, that the art of s-f is harder than art in the mainstream. If a mainstream artist writes about or draws an umbrella, the audience knows. Niven writes about thrints. Tolkien writes (I use the literary present tense) about elves, which not only don't exist other than as the product of his art, but aren't the elves in the previously customary fantasy art.

What do you care what other people think?

Legend says a 19th Century cattleman named Maverick left his calves unbranded; after that, a maverick was a calf lost from its mother; after that, a lone-wolf (sorry, cattlemen) sort of person away from the crowd, an independent mind. There are a lot of mavericks in s-f.

If s-f is particularly strong in Britain and the lands Britain has touched, perhaps that is because these are home to mavericks. The United States may now and then feel the British are stodgy conformists, and Britain now and then (sorry, countrymen) feel *vice versa*, but as Churchill used to say this is a matter of emphasis. Plenty of both go off trails.

Or so say we all.

During my college days revolutionaries were about. I should have considered myself a radical if that had not been seized by others who somewhat self-servingly appropriated it to themselves. I liked to seek the roots of things. The revolutionaries were in the overturning business. It seemed to me I was reading more s-f than they were.

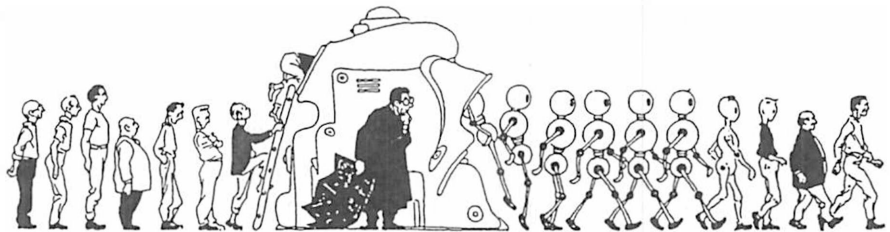
Some time later I saw Lin Yutang had said, some time earlier in his 1947 biography of the 11th Century poet Su Shih, "Hatred is an expression of incompetence." This I pondered. Do I hate what I can improve?

Perhaps as long ago as Su two monks, we are told, who were under strict vows against women, walked in the forest after heavy rain. They came to a swollen stream. A woman spoke. "O monks," she said, "I must get across this water, but with the rain it is deep and wide and fast. I'm too weak. You are each bigger and stronger. Won't one of you kindly carry me across?" The first monk ignored her and began to ford. The second monk said nothing, but picked her up and put her onto his shoulders as he made his way. At the opposite bank the first monk was out of sight. Still saying nothing the second monk set the woman down, wrung out his robe, and trudged ahead. As soon as he was within hailing distance the first monk turned on him. "We're under strict vows!" he cried. "We're not to touch women, speak with women, think of women! But you picked up that woman! You carried her!" "You," said the second monk, "are still carrying her."

Independence, independence — which certainly had been the reason for the vows.

In the world outside our community (which I do not hesitate to call mundane, our old pejorative; being mundane is a state of mind, which one can always give up, unlike, say, being tall) the most distressing thing about s-f seems to be independence. We constantly hear we don't have it. Instead we are "into" s-f (a preposition

I don't accept; if anything, s-f is into me) because we believe, or dream, we are its characters; we like it for its preaching sermons we want to hear; we squander our precious resources upon it for the gratification of seeing it reward our friends and punish our enemies.



Heinlein had a simpler idea. He told his fellow writers, "We're competing for their beer money."

These days Heinlein is wrongly applauded and wrongly attacked. His praisers and blamers keep talking about the opinions of his characters. During his life when asked how he could simultaneously write *Starship Troopers*

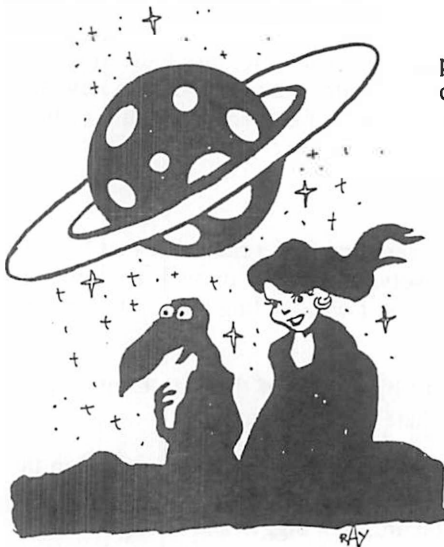
and *Stranger in a Strange Land* he said, "I'm a science fiction writer. I make things up." At a panel discussion during the 2007 Worldcon I said, "Had he not been a good writer nobody would care what his characters thought."

As it happens, many Heinlein characters, like both of those monks, strive for independence.

The notion that good art is what promotes correct opinions is millennia old. This may explain, though not justify, people's falling for it today. Here is Lin again. If I have something to say, shouldn't I say it? If I believe I can't say it well, shouldn't I get better? If I want help saying it, shouldn't I ask? If I believe it's so horrid it must be sugar-coated, shouldn't I review the situation, and think it out again?

If agents of the King say good art promotes loyalty, and revolutionaries say good art promotes rebellion, what's the difference? And are we getting anywhere? And wouldn't you rather have another beer?

The great 20th Century writer Vladimir Nabokov said, "An original author always invents an original world, and if a character or an action fits into the pattern of that world, then we experience the pleasurable shock of artistic truth." Also, "Read books not for the infantile purpose of identifying oneself with the characters, and not for the adolescent purpose of learning to live, and not for the academic purpose of indulging in generalizations, but for the sake of their form, their visions, their art."



We are more mundane than we like to admit. We absorb it through our pores. That isn't very independent-minded. To the mundane mind the only conceivable interest is a special interest. A man's wife is on a baseball team so he follows baseball. A woman's father served on a submarine so she reads *Run Silent, Run Deep*. I hope for less of this from s-f fans, but I've come to expect it.

Fanziners, realizing I may leave the Fanzine Lounge at a Worldcon to go judge the costume competition we call the Masquerade, can't understand it since I don't sew. Costumers, realizing I may leave the Costumers' Guild suite to go hear the home-made music we call filksong, can't understand it since I don't sing. Classically the fannish mind ran, "I don't know what this is, so I'll have a look in case it might be fun." The mundane mind runs, "I don't know what this is, so I'll have nothing to do with it." That isn't very independent-minded.

Here I should note that some fans have been pros, some pros have been fans, neither necessarily excluding nor aspiring to the other. Some of us have ranged so broadly, of whom I shall name just two I have been acquainted with, Bruce Pelz and Bjo Trimble, as to be called omnifans. At the 2008 Worldcon the Fan Guest of Honor, Tom Whitmore, one of few persons who has been both a Worldcon chair and a Worldcon guest of honor, told Teresa Nielsen Hayden who conducted his GoH interview that he was making his internal avatar Rudyard Kipling's Rikki-Tikki-Tavi for "Run and find out." If their achievements must be rare, must their outlook?

On my path, finding much to read, I try to carry a book. If I'm reading while waiting somewhere, it tends to draw mundane comment. "That must be a really good book." "You must be a teacher." After a while I gave these jeers thought. Perhaps for the jeerer's mind to rouse an interest in anything is so extraordinary that it can only occur under compulsion. Who would read unless the book was really good? Who would read that wasn't a teacher?

Let me recommend breadth. It is itself nourishing, a various diet and like that. It's good exercise: cross-cultural contact is homework for science fiction — oh dear, I spoke the dread word "homework", goodbye readers. It's insurance. It may be a better road than rebellion — heresy again — to independence.

Of all these shocking thoughts "a various diet" may least need my leaping to explain. Cross-cultural contact came wonderfully to us with the 2007 Worldcon in Yokohama. Japanese wanted to meet Westerners — for this purpose Australia and New Zealand counting as West, and in fact from the Japanese point of view I had come from the East — because Westerners were strange: Westerners *vice versa*: we were not disappointed. "If we ever meet extra-terrestrial aliens," I said, "it will no doubt be even stranger; let's start now." Just by reading much can be accomplished — although Jon Singer plays *gamelan* and I dance at St. Mary's Macedonian Orthodox Church (being neither Macedonian nor Orthodox). Jane Austen wrote English two hundred years ago in another world. Two hundred years before that, Shakespeare.

In *Freddy and the Baseball Team from Mars* Mr. Hercules Boomschmidt, a circus strongman, is puzzled and asks, "Lumme see, who don't Uh know?" The question is only superficially foolish. Rephrase it as "What haven't I thought of?" and it can be the most important question. It is notoriously hard to answer. We can manage it by

taking out insurance: forming and maintaining contact, carrying on exchange, with different people, places, activities, indeed as different from ourselves as we can bear (actually Freddy is a pig, but never mind). The price is the shock and strain of dealing with these differences. "How could you do that?" and "How could you think of such a thing?" can be fruitful questions if we indeed ask them. More often we do not ask, we only utter the sound by way of telling people they're no good, and of crying in pain. That isn't very independent-minded.

Rebellion, however vital, has the notorious danger that one tends to carry the master with one. In the extreme case if one meets the Buddha on the road and kills him, one is then a Buddha-killer, not good *karma*. Short of murder many wise folk have taught *What you resist you become*. Also we thus invite others to manipulate us. If one is so moved by annoyance with father that one wants nothing more than to oppose him, the door is open for some advertiser to sing "This is not your father's Oldsmobile." What, as the director of that campaign conceded later, if Dad's was better?

Broaden the horizons. Take up motorcycle maintenance as Mom does — why spurn valuable expertise? — but also ice-skating as she doesn't. Work for Uncle Bill in the pin factory but also go to the fair making balloon animals. Write idiosyncratic modern novels, teach 19th Century literature, and pursue a career as an entomologist.

Freedom, let it respectfully be suggested, is the freedom to do or not do, have or not have, be or not be. If one must break rules, or must keep them, what's the difference? And are we getting anywhere? And wouldn't you rather have another beer?

The complement of freedom may be focus. The nexus of both may be noticing. In *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* Polynesia the parrot asks Tommy Stubbins "Are you a good noticer?" Dr. Dolittle has no magic power; he learns animals' language by noticing. It can be exhilarating to study the art another culture regards as great and to make a point of noticing why it is regarded so. What a joy I found at the hands of the great translators Arthur Waley and Donald Keene being introduced to Chinese and Japanese art and seeing how the practitioners reached heights regardless of whether I cared to climb there.

Jane Austen warns us against making windows into mirrors. Shakespeare warns us against gratifying ourselves and calling it love. A woman at a Worldcon told me Shakespeare was an honorary woman. Aside from warnings there is a wealth of joy in these artists. It can be found by an independent mind.

I like s-f and fandom. I have a good time here. I wish we were better. Perhaps we can be. Why be excellent when you can be superb?

Three Classics of S-F

Jules Verne, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870)

from *Collecting Science Fiction Books*, August 2007
an earlier treatment appeared in *Van* 260

Who is the hero of this book? Professor Aronnax? Captain Nemo? Ned Land? Conseil?

It is a classic of science fiction. Full of wonders, it presents them as within reach of science, as precisely for that reason wonderful. It turns on its science. The operation of that science is a story of people.

It is set in the years 1866-68, i.e. before the date of publication, not the fictional future but the past — and for the original readers, recent. For us this is a technique more expected in mainstream literature, where it is employed, as Verne employs it, to provide a sense of realism.

a Reissian (named for Ed Reiss, of Bradford, West Yorkshire; free verse with no ascenders or descenders i.e. no *b d f h i k l t o r g j p q y*)

a new sun
we are come
men women
our row is over
no more war

Van 678; reprinted *Awen* 41, 2006

Aronnax, a French scientist, has been in Nevada collecting specimens, animal, vegetable, and mineral; he also knows the sea; he has practiced medicine; he is what was then called a naturalist. And Conseil is his manservant. We are plunged into the 19th Century.

The story opens with reports of something harming ocean traffic. Maybe it is a sea creature. The reports are not very believable — to the characters. We are plunged into the substance of science fiction.

The reports grow. The U.S. Navy sends a frigate, the *Abraham Lincoln*, to hunt down the sea creature, if the creature exists. Aronnax is invited along. Ned Land is a French-Canadian harpoonist engaged by the frigate captain to complete his armament.

Land's sharp eyes spot the creature. The frigate shells it, in our wonderful language where shelling peas is removing shells from them, and shelling a target is firing shells at it. Aronnax falls overboard,

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Conseil dives after his master, they find Land in the water, and the creature proves to be the submarine vessel *Nautilus*. Nemo is its captain.

People then who could read French — or English, the first translation was in 1872 — would know Nemo as Latin for *No one*. When we meet him that is the only name he gives for himself. He remains a mystery.

Not at all incidentally Abraham Lincoln is one of his heroes. By Chapter 7 of the first half the ship *Lincoln* is gone and we do not see her again. By Chapter 8 of the second half we see an etching of the man Lincoln on a wall of Nemo's room. This is a subtle as well as a dramatic book.

The three companions are passengers of the *Nautilus* while it cruises 20,000 leagues — if you will, 8,000 miles — under the sea. The ship runs by electricity. Let us pause for a moment at that.

This was science fiction when written. It did not seem impossible, but had not been accomplished. By World War I submarine vessels, all too real, indeed used electric power, and *submarine* was a noun. But s-f is not in the business of predictions, neither glorified if something in it comes to pass, nor ruined if history goes some other way.

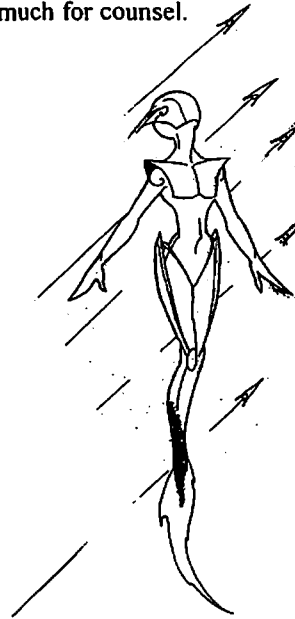
Captain Nemo designed and constructed his *Nautilus*. He had parts manufactured around the world; built from them in secret; then renounced the land to become a lord of the ocean. He brought with him his library of twelve thousand books, his collection of paintings by the masters, his pipe-organ and musical scores. Aronnax dines with him in a room of ebony, porcelain, and glass, or alone in an ample cabin Nemo has given. Nemo's own cabin is severe, no comfort, only necessities.

Outside, captain and crew walk the ocean floor in pressure suits, breathing compressed air, gathering food and fabric from fish, farm, and forest, hunting with electric guns. Inside, a study holds display cases of specimens Nemo has collected himself, surpassing any museum in Europe. Aronnax, our narrator, is fascinated.

Aronnax, Conseil, and Land have the freedom of the ship. Sometimes for days Nemo does not appear. His crew, at least twenty, variously European by their looks, are even more scarce. Otherwise he is a generous host. His conversation is thoughtful and knowledgeable.

The four are well named. Nemo we noted. Land yearns for escape to solid ground — a seaman by profession, among many sly jokes. Aronnax is a peace-maker, like the first Aron (as French spell it), Moses' brother in the Bible. Conseil is such a traditionalist he always addresses his master in the third person (another note of the 19th Century), e.g. "Whatever

master pleases" — to the annoyance of his master; so much for counsel.



One famous joke is in a scene of attempted escape. Land has a scheme to seize the ship's dinghy. Aronnax dresses warmly for the surface of the sea. He runs into Nemo, who says only "Ah, *monsieur*, I was looking for you," and engages him in historical talk — foiling the scheme — not at all incidentally revealing a key to Nemo's character at just this moment — and without a word of how he takes Aronnax' obvious costume.

Adventure made this book famous. Undersea marches, near-crushing by ice at the South Pole, a supply base inside an extinct volcano, fighting a giant squid, a passage 150 feet below the Suez isthmus. The adventures build to a climax. Along the way they reveal character. What about those lists of fish?

There is a viewport in the *Nautilus*. Through it and on excursions Aronnax recognizes creatures of the sea. Naturally he writes down what he has observed, which for a scientist is of paramount importance. Our book, as we come to realize, is his journal.

His writing is of course Verne's writing. A good author can use description both to show us where the characters are, and by pointing out what they notice, to show us what they are. What a viewport upon Aronnax that over thousands of leagues he knows and delights in countless plants and animals by name.

One theme of the book is freedom. Does Nemo have it? Is Land wise seeking to escape, Aronnax to explore, Conseil to endure? Who rises, who sinks, before which challenges, or if you will temptations?

At length we meet Nemo's hostile purpose, long suggested to us. It is not his only purpose. His science and artistry, his bravery and leadership, are genuine. His love and respect for fellow creatures and fellow human beings are genuine too, but they are flawed. In the crisis we remember it is not our first massacre. The meeting with sperm whales and baleen whales comes back to us.

Is Nemo contrite? Does he lead himself to punishment? When the companions escape, did he allow it? Verne's architecture in this book, his coloring, his texture, frame these questions. The greatness in his execution has made this book endure.

The 1872 English version, by Lewis Page Mercier (1820-1875), is still the most widely circulated (sometimes as by Mercer Lewis), possibly because it is in the public domain under copyright law and so does not call for royalties. It omits about a fifth of the text, possibly by order of the publisher, and adds a handful of errors, possibly because Mercier worked from French read aloud to him. The 2007 Franklin Watts edition is a reprint of it.

In the 1960s Walter James Miller began calling attention to Mercier's failings. Miller's translation of 1965 has an afterword by Damon Knight, which alas I cannot recommend. In 1976 Miller published an annotated edition showing all Mercier got wrong. In 1993 he made another translation with Frederick Paul Walker. In 1998 William Butcher made a new translation with copious endnotes. Butcher says the 1991 version by Emanuel Mickel is Mercier's word-for-word, although Mickel restores Mercier's cuts. It is hard to call any of these a model of perception and they all lay on pet theories thick.

The 1962 translation by Anthony Bonner restores Mercier's cuts and adopts 20th Century language. In 2000 Books of Wonder reprinted it with illustrations by Diane & Leon Dillon, which earned them a nomination for the Association of S-F Artists' Chesley award.

The 1954 Walt Disney motion picture is a classic on its own merits. Paul Lukas is Aronnax, James Mason a fine Nemo, Kirk Douglas is Ned Land, Peter Lorre is Conseil; it won two Oscars for Art Direction and Special Effects.

I've led discussions of this book at s-f conventions. For the 2006 Worldcon, I had the honor of choosing four s-f classics, each to be the subject of a panel discussion; one was *Twenty Thousand Leagues*.

This is an adult book. It may be Verne's masterpiece.

Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King
Arthur's Court* (1889)
from *Collecting S-F Books*, June 2009

Six years before Wells' *Time Machine* (1895) this story, operated by time travel but barely exploring it, is placed in the theater of Aristocracy and the Common Man, like *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882), *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* (1896), and perhaps *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884).

It has inspired a dozen versions in film, on stage and television, one a Rodgers & Hart musical (with "Thou Swell"), others featuring Will Rogers, Bing Crosby, Bugs Bunny, and Whoopi Goldberg. I led Classics of S-F panel discussions of it at Westercon LVIII (2005) and Lunacon LII (2009).

Our protagonist Hank Morgan, the Yankee, is so severe against "those transparent swindles, transmissible nobility and kingship" (ch. 28) that his book is often made out to be an attack on them. Perhaps. But let us consider it as science fiction.

"Why 'but'?" you ask. "Isn't science fiction social satire?" Perhaps. In this series of notes we have been looking at other qualities.

There is a framing story. Its narrator, who at the end of the book proves to be Mark Twain, tours Warwick Castle and meets a mysterious stranger. The stranger is more interesting than the tour guide. After a surprising remark he is gone. That evening he knocks on the narrator's door at the Warwick Arms. He is welcomed with a pipe, a chair, a hot whisky — a few whiskies — in hopes of a tale. After the fourth he begins, "I am an American." After the day at the Castle this is another surprising remark. The stranger goes on awhile, finds himself drowsy, and takes us to a manuscript called, perhaps by our first narrator, "The Tale of the Lost Land", which at the end of the book the first narrator has just finished.

That inner story, whose title is not at all insignificant, and points to Twain's pioneering treatment of what is now a well-known s-f device, is the story of Hank Morgan and his years with King Arthur — Hank Morgan, born in 19th Century Hartford, and King Arthur, ruling in 6th Century Camelot.

Today's s-f readers presented with time travel are used to explanation. In science fiction we expect to hear about a machine, or some principle of physics; in fantasy, magic or some mystical idea; on the unclear border, perhaps both, or ambiguity, as in Tim Powers' *Three Days to Never*, or Larry Niven's *Rainbow Mars* whose author believes time travel is fantasy but whose characters don't know that and think they're in science fiction.

This is not Twain's chosen subject, and he is far too masterly to dwell on inessentials. The first words we get from Morgan are on the second page.

"You know about transmigration of souls; do you know about transposition of epochs — and bodies?"

I said I had not heard of it. He was so little interested ... that he did not notice whether I made him an answer or not.

Four pages later we are told barely of his travel away: struck on the head in a fight, he falls comatose, to wake an hour's walk from Camelot. Four hundred forty-four pages later we are told barely of his return: stabbed in a fight, amid rampant disease he falls comatose; we are not given his moment of awakening.

Nor is the book history. When Morgan first wakes he meets a knight armored in plate of a millen-

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nium later. When Morgan rises to power he makes use of a solar eclipse for which he happens to have the exact date, but there was no solar eclipse in 528. Throughout he rails against domination by the Roman Catholic Church, which first made an Archbishop of Canterbury in 597, first baptized an English king — of Kent, not England — in 601, and first employed the Interdict, Morgan's doom, in the 9th Century.

We do not need to know Twain's previous achievements to be sure this is no slovenry. Every step shows us what we are in for.

At the start we learn two essentials about Morgan:

My father was a blacksmith, my uncle was a horse-doctor, and I was both, along at first. Then I went over to the great arms factory and learned my real trade ... to make everything: guns ... boilers, engines.... it didn't make any difference what.

I became head superintendant.... full of fight.... with a couple of thousand rough men under one, one has plenty of that sort of amusement. I had, anyway. At last I met my match, and I got my dose. It was during a misunderstanding conducted with crowbars.

and as he wonders what and where he has come to:

if it was still the nineteenth century and I was among lunatics and couldn't get away, I would presently boss that asylum or know the reason why; and if ... it really was the sixth century ... I would boss the whole country inside of three months [ch. 2].

He is no tyrant; he is as benevolent as he is feisty and slangy. In his capacity and character are the seeds of his triumph and tragedy.

He does not start as an antagonist. But the first words he gets upon awakening are "Fair sir, will ye just? Will ye try a passage of arms for land or lady or for —" and, when Morgan retorts "What are you giving me? Get along back to your circus, or I'll report you," the knight charges, Morgan flies up a tree, and the knight takes him prisoner.

By the 21st Century we have innumerable First Contact stories.

Twain mostly sustains the main characters we know from Malory's superb *Death of Arthur*: Arthur, Lancelot, Guenevere, Kay who captures Morgan. Twain makes Merlin a charlatan, but shrewd and vital enough to be potent. We can be sure Twain knows Malory, not only because Twain quotes him, but because Twain wields him: his poetry and drama are the tools of this book.

Among Twain's achievements in *Yankee*, the people we meet are so painted that we see how they could be what we find they are.

By the 21st Century we also have what we call Clarke's Law, although Sir Arthur Clarke formulated more, *Sufficiently advanced technology can be indistinguishable from magic*. That is the matter of this book, before Clarke, before (speaking of Niven) *The Flying Sorcerers*, and a host of others. Morgan finds that the people who without inspection imprison him, and would execute him, are in dread of magic, perhaps because they are poor at inspection, so he seizes his technology and stands as a magician.

The 19th Century performer Robert-Houdin said *A [stage] magician is an actor playing the part of a magician*. Twain grasps this and shows Morgan doing it. That is some of the entertainment of this book. I may never forget the appearance of the Constantinople Bagpipers' Association, with proper complementary details, in the Valley of Holiness (ch. 23).

We love Morgan for his impatience with pretension. We love Amyas le Poulet too, a flippant page whom Morgan finds like-minded, calls "Clarence", befriends, trains, and is almost succeeded by. Merlin is the figure of pretension. Twain knows that neither of these characters is enough to balance Morgan; this must be the King, who is thus seen, at first glance, noble, benign, and pure (ch. 3), then shown generous and faithful (ch. 6), then found hidebound (ch. 25) — a grave flaw to the likes of Morgan — then revealed wise (ch. 27) — then at the smallpox hut, in Morgan's own words, sublimely great (ch. 29). Thus Morgan and the King are in the title.

Tragedy needs sympathy. Morgan finds 6th Century England not only credulous and primitive but unjust and in pain. He determines to right these wrongs. During four hundred pages of adventure, hair-raising, comical, or both, he is, off-stage, building workshops, schools, factories. At last Twain brings him to the pinnacle and he can throw aside the curtain. Three years later he has slavery abolished, taxation equalized, and the telegraph, telephone, railroad, phonograph, typewriter, sewing machine introduced. But we are almost at the end of the book. What is going to happen?

If Hank Morgan were like Dorothy Gale in *The Emerald City of Oz* he could stay in this fairyland — or if Twain were writing what Frank Baum wrote. Instead it all crashes. The land is lost.

We have seen Morgan, the alien with advanced technology, arrive in a benighted world and try to enlighten it. He seems to succeed. Since the world is our past, and our 6th Century did not become the 19th, and Twain does not choose to write an alternative history in which it did and so stayed, the success must collapse. Twain says nothing of what we now

call the time-traveler's paradox; he has bigger fish to fry.

Morgan is gotten out of England. While he is gone, various bad elements of human nature arise, a quarrel flares into war, the King is killed, and the Church shuts down everything with an Interdict — including Morgan — as he learns when he comes home to darkness fallen — it is his home by then — and Clarence tells him Church agents had lured him away. Fifty young men stand by him. Thirty thousand knights attack. High technology destroys them. Disease from their corpses destroys the rest. Morgan's manuscript journal returns with him, as his 19th Century clothes went with him to Camelot.

At the beginning of the end Clarence asks, "Did you think you had educated the superstition out of those people? You may unthink it" (ch. 42). Is this a despondent book? That would be a disaster, not a tragedy. Also the remark is made by a character in fiction, revealing his viewpoint, not necessarily ours.

What kind of teacher is Morgan?

He must be good to have set up all that technology. In his first four years (ch. 10) he has a thousand trained men and fifty brilliant experts; at his height later, surely more. Since Twain puts thousands of men to death so that we see this was not good enough, how was it lacking?

Twain has Morgan tell us.

Inherited ideas are a curious thing.... I had mine, and the king and his people had theirs. In both cases they flowed in ruts worn deep by time and habit, and the man who should have proposed to divert them by reason and argument would have a long contract on his hands [ch. 8].

Old habit of mind is one of the toughest things to get away from in this world. It transmits itself like physical form and feature; and for a man, in those days, to have had an idea that his ancestors hadn't had, would have brought him under suspicion of being illegitimate [ch. 22].



True? Perhaps. But we are in a novel, not a treatise in epistemology; this is a character speaking; and it is, repeated, his confession. The grapes are sour; he could not get them. Yet these are the very grapes at which he set himself.

Great as Morgan is — and he is heroic, or no tragedy — he makes himself the opponent of what he would change, not the ally of the people he wants to improve; he is a fighter, not a lover; and who joins him?

Practicality is the particular care of the s-f author. If the characters and their world are wholly alien, how shall we understand? Not for nothing are there so often youths who must learn as they grow, ignorant or even slow companions who must be explained to. Twain, sending a man from his own day into a distant past, writes a science fiction story from the viewpoint of the alien.

It would be too much to call this a story of an unreliable narrator. Twain's own love of humankind is great enough that he can satirize his hero. So far his tale is timeless.

Arthur C. Clarke, *The City and the Stars*
from *Challenger* 25, 2007

What is a classic? Can we have any in science fiction? I've suggested we can if we make a book, or a painting, or whatever may be s-f, which outlives its own time: in which merit appears even after times have changed, after the currents which may have buoyed up an artwork have passed.

The City and the Stars (1956) has been continuously in print for fifty years. The current Gollancz edition has 256 pages, a nice mathematical fillip. In a 2000 introduction Sir Arthur, as he that year became, called it his best-loved work.

It is a work of marvels great and small. As it opens our hero Alvin is on a far future Earth; the city of Diaspar has been a billion years in the form we meet, a fraction of its age. This immortal city, so encompassing, so big, we rightly suspect is a fraction of this book. There are stars. The story is told so well in so few words as to be another marvel. Clarke never quotes *Quantity of labor has nothing to do with art*; he does quote *No machine may have any moving parts*.

Diaspar was the great port city of Earth. Humankind long traveled among the stars — and drew back. That was given up. Advanced science made Diaspar self-sufficient and eternal. The human span became a thousand years, at the end of which by a kind of re-incarnation one would dissolve, to return millennia later; a rich and happy life. Alvin questions it. Indeed he keeps asking the next question.

Machines in Diaspar do much that men and women do not care to. The machines are routinely commanded by thought. People in Diaspar cannot read one another's minds. Perhaps they could once, but if so that was given up too, long ago. A great deal has been forgotten in Diaspar. Why not? And outside the oceans have dried, the Moon has gone, and the face of the Earth is sand.

This is a *Bildungsroman* — one of those unfortunate technical terms long parted from its root meaning, like *novel*; a story of the growth and maturation of its protagonist. Clarke, the good jeweler, keeps us more with the pearls than the string. They gleam softly. Only the whole is dazzling, as we see how they are graded and matched.

One of my own maxims, I fear, is *Behind the received wisdom is the received iconoclasm*. I have adventured with folk who were non-conformists like everybody else. That is a theme of this book, if it is fair to say a good book has themes, which I doubt. Alvin



meets Khedron the Jester, an office which has been held by others and by Khedron earlier from time to time. The Jester unsettles things. To do this he must know a lot, and get at the hidden ways of Diaspar. His jests may be terrifying, but that is allowed. Alvin

learns from Khedron, and frightens him. Khedron has lived through many millions of years. Alvin is twenty years old.

Alvin visits the Tomb of Yarlán Zey, near-legendary founder of Diaspar. Everyone knows the Tomb, it is in the middle of the central park. With Khedron's help Alvin finds the enigmatic instruction, "Stand where the statue gazes, and remember, Diaspar was not always thus." That was the opening of my senior-year research paper in law school. I called *The City and the Stars* a novel of triumph and fabrication. I was unsure whether to start with an s-f novel, but a professor persuaded me to leave it in. For Alvin this thought is really the beginning of the adventure. He has left his parents, his tutor, and a woman who loves him, behind.

Some of Alvin's discoveries are like a door, some are like a dawn. Theodore Sturgeon, to whom I alluded above, liked to remind us "Science fiction is knowledge fiction"; *science* comes from the Latin word

for knowledge. Alvin is a remarkable scientist. He exercises the ability to observe and to compute. There are computing machines in this book — the Central Computer of Diaspar is quite wonderful; other reviewers have noted that, just as Clarke thought up geosynchronous satellites before anyone could build them, he thought up distributed computing before anyone could build it — a meeting between the Central Computer and a lesser strange computer is also wonderful — but I mean the human ability. Alvin thinks — I am not quoting him — *These data do not align. What else is there? Where might it be?* He does not think, but Clarke does and is alert to it every moment, *Why has nobody asked before?*

With the other greatneses in this story there is, eventually, a great religious figure, a galactic teacher. We are invited to a low regard for him. That may be the reality of religion, but like everything in an artwork it must be viewed in the setting the artist has given. Who admired this teacher? Do we apply Alvin's own method? As with much else in the story Clarke achieves a consummate and subtle treatment of a recurring theme.

All Alvin's answers are waiting for him to find. Something is unearthed which itself raises a new possibility. If you know the book you will recognize Chapter 17, but Clarke makes moments for themselves and as images. Alvin goes on to follow knowledge, undistracted by threat or promise, uncontent with unreasonable comfort. "At every stage he might have turned aside with unseeing eyes" — I quote his thought now — "any man might have found the path his footsteps had traced"; if no others, fourteen like him in a billion years, whose steps stopped before they swung and soared. Here is a sample of Clarke's subtle poetry: "Nothing is more terrible than movement where no movement should ever be again." We are watching the desert. The single last word of that sentence is not only a sound of fear, but a resonant in this book of history.

To find all he can Alvin travels far. What do the vintners buy one half so precious as the stuff they sell? What truth — in an artwork, a fiction — is stranger than fiction — which its wise men and their yet more complacent guardians so permanently maintained? If *To bring home the wealth of the Indies, you must carry the wealth of the Indies with you*, he does not quite have it, so he does not quite get it, but enough. He learns to make friends, and they help. The great goes with the small, and the small with the great, humility with hugeness. As one story ends, another may begin, and a note that rang in fear may sound in hope, but as the author promised this is his last word on the immortal city of Diaspar, in the long twilight of Earth.

Saturn peaches start
The summer. Their light sweetness
Is lonely somehow.

Van 635

The Residence of the Wind

second half of my Japan report

from *Argentus* 8, 2008

hana chirasu
kaze no yadori wa
tare ka shiru
ware ni oshie yo
yukite uramin

Does anyone know
The residence of the wind
That scatters the blossoms?
Anyone who knows, tell me!
I will go there and complain.

Sosei, tr. Donald Keene

The Japanese Worldcon bid began in 2000 — or 1996, when Takumi Shibano was Fan Guest of Honor at L.A.con III — or 1987, when he and Tetsu Yano received the Big Heart, our highest service award — or 1968, when TOFF the one-time Trans-Oceanic Fan Fund brought Shibano to the 26th Worldcon — or 1957, when he started *Uchûjin*, the first Japanese fanzine (its name means “cosmic dust”, and by a pun also “space man”) — or 1927, when he was born. I was one of the con’s Advisors, the only non-Japanese; plenty of time to learn the language, and work out how I could travel to Japan. Ha ha ha, ho ho ho. In fact the Cosmic Joker not only distracted me from those tasks, but deposited me in Japan anyway. Don’t you think the Joker laughs at you?

Nippon 2007 was the most ambitious Worldcon we’d ever held, except for the first one. We knew it would be strange, and it was, strange for Japanese, strange for visitors; we looked forward to that. The con was a great success, in which I include the many things that didn’t work, which was sometimes because they were strange, and the many things that did, which was sometimes because they were strange.

HANA, the friends who sent and returned me, raised enough that I had a week after the con in Japan if I was frugal. Until the end of the con I had no notion how this would be spent. I could have turned tourist, but I hoped instead to put myself into the hands of Japanese fans. I had been told this would be impossible. But it wasn’t.

After Closing Ceremonies, in the crowd around Shibano, who was Fan Guest of Honor — very few have been made a Worldcon Guest of Honor twice — Mikiko Nakamura said she worked at the Bashô Museum. I exclaimed, “The Bashô Museum!” She said, “Yes, does that interest you?” Thus began the second half of my adventure.

Among the Japanese I’d been in touch with was Seiichi Shirato. Like me he was a fan of the graphic artist Eiji Yokoyama; when I’d urged that Yokoyama exhibit in Worldcon Art Shows, Shirato helped; when I wrote “A Look at Eiji Yokoyama” for *Science Fiction Chronicle* 248 (sorry the color pictures were printed in monochrome), Shirato helped. Like me he was a fan of the fermented-soybean dish *nattô*, which is so strange some Japanese won’t eat it. He lived in Tokyo

and had said he’d show me around. We both feared this would be impossible. But it wasn’t.

On Tuesday Shirato arrived, with a friend Jôson Yamamoto, a Buddhist priest. What kind of Buddhist, I asked. Shingon, he said. I offered praise of Kûkai, the Great Teacher, who founded this school twelve centuries ago; many tales are told of him; he is credited with inventing *hiragana*, one of the three writing systems used in Japanese. Yamamoto had brought an automobile. As we drove along, he apologized for its noise. I said it was chanting Buddhist texts. He apologized for its shock-absorbers. I said comfort was an illusion. We passed a snake restaurant. Stopping there for supper was too strange even for these two Japanese. I said Yamamoto was exonerated because on the traditional calendar he had been born in the Year of the Snake.

Shirato arranged a week’s stay for me at an economy hotel, whose name retorted upon me amply. Like other fanziners I’m never sure who reads my fanzine, but quite a few people receive it, and in 2006 when I was nominated for Best Fanwriter someone in the Hugo ceremony projected pages of poor *Vanamonde*, so my association with APA writing, in particular APA-L, the Amateur Publishing Association of Los Angeles where *Van* appears each week before being later mailed to multitudes, must be known. In Japan my second-half home was the Tokyo-Itabashi neighborhood branch of a chain known by the initials of its English name *Always Pleasant Amenities*. I still have my laundry bag labeled *APA Hotel* and emblazoned, under a coronet, within a scroll and leaves, *APA*.

We fulfilled the hope Shirato and I had formed, and in retrospect decided had been a mutual promise, at a restaurant I thereafter called Science Fiction *Sushi*. It had a railroad. *Sushi* and other edibles passed in cars; you took what you wanted, and kept score. This was fun. You could signal the kitchen too. Not much *nattô*. Shirato and I each took some, to the unease of other customers. After years we ate *nattô* together in Japan. Yamamoto wondered at the strange if simple joys of these two men he had innocently gone to dine with.

By railroad the Japanese would take me all over, indeed this tale could be called *Trains Over Tokyo*; the trains were plenty stfnal, to use our old adjective

On My Sleeve

("stef-nal", a relic of Hugo Gernsback's word *scientific-tion*), automated, clean metal and plastic, prompt to the minute, high tech in the stations and the cars, full of readers including sober businessmen with comic books.

Wednesday; to the Edo-Tokyo Museum. Edo was renamed Tokyo ("Eastern capital") when Emperor Meiji moved there from Kyoto. As a fanziner I was impressed by the accuracy of ten-color printing in an exhibit of woodblocks. We saw many pictures of Danjûrô VIII, eighth-generation actor to take that *kabuki* name, a great celebrity in his day. During the Worldcon a newspaper asked Danjûrô XII "Why do *kabuki* now?" He gave the proverb *On-ko chi-shin*, study the old to appreciate the new; the heart of my visit. Yamamoto and Shirato and I took turns hefting a fireman's standard. An Edo fireman in the smoke and flame had to know where his company were. A pole held a large identifier on a crosspiece. It all had to be fireproof. It was heavy. You had to be fit to be a fireman. We snacked in the Museum sweet shop, cubelets of agar, beans, tea.

The Kiyosumi Garden had been Baron Iwasaki's villa. He dug a pond and used his Mitsubishi ships to bring famous stones from every region of Japan. Stone appreciation is an art. After the 1923 earthquake and fire he restored what he could and in 1932 gave the land to Tokyo; the stones had survived. Here were Nakamura, Shigeru Hayashida one of two Worldcon vice-chairs, half a dozen others. We had umbrellas. A flat blue stone three people wide was like waves. A tall red one swirled like a waterfall. The wind made wavelets in the pond. Their patterns had names. Turtles and a dozen waterbirds lived there. Stepping-stones took us across. It is said that setting foot in Japan will leave you lonely for it forever.

Tall red stone, flat blue,
Turtles breathing in Japan.
Sudden rain like pearls.

I asked if we could look at the irises. People said "Why? It isn't their season." Irises are a May flower. As I explained I wanted to see where the irises had been, people realized I was talking about the 14th Century poet Kenkô, who said chrysanthemums are most beautiful when their edges start to brown. I could not remember the famous 8th Century iris poem, or its author Narihira, from the *Kokinshû* (Book of Old and New Poems), but Etsuko Kodama, who had been At-Con Registration, found both on her pocket computer. A stone with Bashô's frog *haiku* carved in as a monument, originally on the bank of the Sumida River, had been moved here. Once water from the river fed the pond, whose water level changed with the ebb and flow of tides in Tokyo Bay. Today the pond is maintained by rainwater.

Upstairs at the Bashô Museum were replicas of his clothes, his traveling-hat, his writing-brush. Paper dolls a foot high showed us. Nakamura asked me

which of his *haiku* was my favorite. I said "Whichever one I re-read most recently." They were all on a wall chart. Another chart showed the schools of *haiku* poets. We were in the Fukagawa district where his cottage was. A *bashô* tree (a kind of banana, no fruit, prized for broad green leaves easily torn by the slightest wind) stood where his had been, a statue of him sat. We watched the Sumida River where he had watched. This 17th Century master who lived before the modern word *haiku*, who only in his last decade was called Bashô, could paint the momentary, the timeless, and their meeting, in seventeen syllables.

I did not go to Kyoto, but some of it came timelessly, or timely, to me. "Zen Treasures from the Kyoto Gozan Temples", an exhibit about to end at the Tokyo National Museum, honored the 600th death anniversary of Yoshimitsu Ashikaga, who while Shôgun (military ruler of the Empire, in an administration that lasted four centuries until Meiji) confirmed the Gozan ("five mountains") system of top-ranked Zen Buddhist temples. He made a sixth by founding Shôkokuji, Nanzenji remaining highest. Many exhibits were outside their temples for the first time. The monk Dai-e Chikotsu (14th Century) in a painting and a statue was portly and fierce; anecdote says he challenged his master Enni; maybe his expression said "Stop fooling around, get Enlightenment now!" Of calligraphy by Soseki Musô (14th Century), garden designer, advisor to the Shôgun and the Emperor, teacher, poet, monk, our curator said "The vigorous and self-confident brush strokes suggest that this was written in the later years of his life."

During the typhoon I was safe in my APA Hotel. I didn't know it then, but my counterpart was wandering in the rain. I had been brought from the U.S., Chris O'Shea from the U.K. by JETS, the Japanese Expeditionary Travel Scholarship. We saw each other in person at the Worldcon for the first time.

As I was going my way west
Farther than ever one day,
I met a traveler going east.
The world is round, they say.

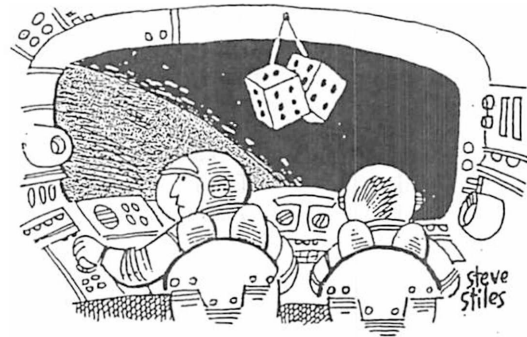
On the Saturday morning train we saw a Japanese woman wearing a dark top with sequins in English *Beauty Again*. We went in another friend's automobile to Kawago-e. Its fame is purple sweet-potato. We walked through streetsfull. Sweet-potato chips. Sweet-potato ice-cream along with shops dating to the Edo period. *Yokan*, a dense gel good with tea, elsewhere other flavors, here potato. Banners, elsewhere red, here purple. "Hello Kitty" dolls here in purple with slogans *I love potatoes*. Vending machines had run out of potato soft-drink; should we write to the Mayor? There was a baseball team; when its batters connected, had they hit the old potato? When they missed, did they turn purple? After this to the Tokyo Imperial Palace. The cherry trees were beautiful outside. In its museum, modern ceramics from the Emperor Shôwa's collection donated at his death.

I was invited to a *kimono* club, another good deed by Shibano's married daughter Miho Hiramoto. In Tokyo they met on its great street the Ginza. Once a year was a *kimono*-con and a *kimono*-zine. I had seen *kimono* everywhere, though prevailing dress was Occidental. Here they were a cloud of glory, some understated, some ablaze with color. It was the second week of autumn by the traditional calendar. *Kimono*, like other Japanese tradition, are very seasonal. The big Matsu-ya department store, named for pine trees at the front, had a crafts exhibit. Two quilted appliqué carp on blue cotton swam up a waterfall to become dragons. Another fabric picture, which I thought a space ship, was the point and ribs of an umbrella. In the men's section of the *kimono* department a *kimono* fan unerringly picked what I'd have bought if I were to get exactly one, in *kon*, a dark grayed blue. On a side street we visited a used-*kimono* shop.

Noriko Maki, wife of translator Shinji Maki, was a *kimono* expert and s-f fan. She and I had practically no words in each other's language, but fans' minds meet. She is at my right in the picture on page 49 of *Uchūjin* 201; her report starts on p. 48, mine on p. 45. She steered me to the Akihabara district where a monthly s-f club (not, I believe, the one she had been president of) was meeting over dinner. I happen to like fish, of which there was plenty in Japan. Also guidance in *saké*. In three hours I tried Tengumai, Urugasumi (least dry), Ginban (made of famous Yamada-nishiki rice), Denshu, and Dewazakura (unpasteurized), which I did not think a heroic quantity but perhaps my friends were readily impressed.

On Sunday another s-f club met at a coffee shop in Shinjuku, a district celebrated for its congeries of old and new, cheap and costly, neat and garish, large and small. I ate the house special, toast wrapped in seaweed. Before and at the Worldcon had been controversy about John Scalzi's being nominated for the Best Fanwriter Hugo. Now I was asked to explain. No one knew he would win in 2008, or would when accepting

fail his shining opportunity to utter only the word "Whatever". He was certainly eligible, I began. When



the shop chased us out we adjourned to a *karaoke* bar. Here I had honey toast, made six inches thick, served under ice cream with caramel sauce. We had come as far as letters of comment. "So your fanzines are for communication!" a Japanese fan exclaimed. Afterward four or five stayed to sing. "This next one is from Heinlein's *Door Into Summer*," someone said; "you'll recognize the names Rikki-Tikki and Pete."

It was my last night in Japan. At a *sukiyaki* and *shabu-shabu* house we groped at borders. One fan said, "If you meet a ghost, and investigate, that's science fiction; if you make friends, that's fantasy." I felt I had not had enough *saké* so drank Masumi. From the s-f point of view, we agreed, "pseudo-science" was a wholly literary problem; we were in the storytelling business, not the engineering business; if a thing should later prove possible, it was not retroactively science fiction, or if impossible, retroactively fantasy. We spoke of the Masquerade at s-f conventions; watching and judging I had seen little that drew upon *nô* or *kabuki* — Masquerades even called stage helpers *ninja* (really strange to a Japanese) instead of *koken*, the established term in *kabuki* where they were invented; perhaps someday some entrant would portray an alien *geisha*. My friends confessed descending on restaurants in gangs, buying little food or drink, talking s-f until all hours, and eventually having to find other restaurants. Some things are international.

Two of Today

Larry Niven, *The Draco Tavern* (2006)
from *Emerald City* 131, 2006
reprinted *Collecting S-F Books*, May 2007

Niven is short. Brief. With his brush he touches in bright colored points. We see the people and the landscape. He has an eye for the telling detail.

The Draco Tavern is two dozen stories, the most recent from 2006, the earliest from the 1970s, some anthologized before.

In the near future — "say two years from whenever you're reading any given story," offers his introduction — star-traveling aliens take up orbit round the Moon,

and set up a spaceport in Siberia. Rick Schumann builds an interspecies tavern. (Incidentally, it rhymes with "wacko"; I've heard Niven say it.)

Now and then humans arrive. Look at Alan Webber:

Some customers wear a slack and gaping grin the whole time they're here, like everything they see is new and different. He wore that grin as if sketched by a drunken artist with a shaky hand. "Offered me a wish."

Even if I don't quote a word more, you know what kind of story this is, don't you?

On My Sleeve

Niven gives good alien names. Schumann the human meets a Joker, recognizing the Batman reference: tall, spindly, with dead-white skin, a triangular man-like face and a permanent grin, voice like someone dancing on a bagful of walnuts. There are also Warblers, Low Jumbos, and the Wayward Child.

Some aliens don't take names in our language. This one, being tested by a female to see if he's worth mating with, is a Pazensh; he explains accepting help with the test:

If I can trust a companion, it speaks for my intelligence. If I choose one who will mock me, or a fool who will lead me astray, that speaks too.

Niven is a comedian. I'm not sure whether that comes with deftness. Shakespeare is a comedian, and Nabokov, and Issa — I use the literary present tense, their work is alive, like any classic. Sometimes Niven makes you laugh. Sometimes in a tense moment you have enough breath to smile. Here's Schumann:

We must be a common thing to the Chirpsithra. A civilization is only beginning to learn the structure of the universe, when interstellar liners appear and alien intelligences blurt out all the undiscovered secrets.

The Chirps have been civilized, capable of space travel, for billions of years. They run the liners. We only meet the officers — almost — who are all female.

One piece in the collection was a Masquerade entry at the 1984 Worldcon. Decades ago the Masquerade was a costume party. Since the late 1960s it's been an on-stage competition, with lights and sound, judges, a big audience. I've judged them. Marvels appear.

For the 1984 entry "One Night at the Draco Tavern" costumer Kathy Sanders built a dozen Niven creatures, some not seen in the Draco Tavern world but Niven wrote the script. He put himself in as a helpless "Larry" who never quite understood what was going on. A four-foot-high telepathic monster from Niven's first novel controlled Schumann and got Niven's drink. They won Most Humorous, Master class.

Another story was first published in *Playboy*. Niven's work is a big tent.

Here's a Gray Mourner:

We think the Old Mind almost stopped manufacturing new elements, long ago, and we think we know why. It would have become the dominant natural force in the universe. Nothing interesting could happen after that.

Three-fifths into the book Niven has this creature ask, "Have you ever wondered if there are entities older than Chirpsithra?" The Old Mind may have been alive for ten billion years. Sometimes it converges. The

Gray Mourner ship, *Chimes in Harmony*, is going to look. Don't let me forget to mention the Arthur Clarke joke.

A lesser author would have quit "The Convergence of the Old Mind" at the climax — it's quite good enough — and left off the last four paragraphs. Niven put them in. They're worth it, they tell a lot about Rick Schumann, and you'll need them a hundred pages later.

Along the way another creature says something surprising and Niven has Schumann tell us *the word sat in my head like a time bomb*. Of course it did. That's almost the end of a story too. Now and then Niven waves at us as we go by. He's a big-hearted man and a good host. Some of us who know him in person have been party guests in his house. He treats his readers likewise.

You can hear, and sometimes you can buy, peculiar nightmares in the Draco Tavern.

Nightmares for guests? Well, a barkeep does ask, "What'll you have?" We want tales and meetings in a tavern. Niven serves them. Fiction writers do interesting things with reality. Nabokov used to say that calling a story true is an insult to art and to truth. *The Chirpsithra could be the greatest liars in the universe, and how would we ever know?* There's Niven waving again.

The time bomb and the nightmares are in "Storm Front". It isn't the only storm, or the only front — or the only contagion, I mention in case you've read *Draco Tavern* already and are here to see how I manage, a time-honored motive for following a review. The book is wonderfully integrated, a feat in itself when you consider the making.

The visitor rolled in like a big lamp, a five-foot-tall sphere glowing yellow-white.... That glow must be riding-lights, I thought.... the refugee gestured at the nova in Earth's sky.

The gesture is with a tendril of light.

The Chirp was amused. She asked me, "Did you think the steady weather in your star was an accident?"

Schumann has more to ask in return.

But the Chirpsithra officer and her fiery refugee had gone off to another table.

There's plenty of depth in these stories. That can be done in few words. An artist chooses. Perhaps I may say they're sweet like Irish coffee, richness you drink through, touched with sour and bitter, *a jolt to change your viewpoint*.

And the opening story is called "The Subject is Closed". He's a comedian.

Tim Powers, *Three Days to Never* (2006)
from *Collecting S-F Books*, March 2007

In the 17th Century we thought drama should be governed by three unities, of place, time, and action. A hundred years later we were already wondering how valid they were as laws, but as guides they could strengthen focus in the theater, a main virtue there.

The novel rose, with its huge sweep; eventually s-f, with its measureless extension of the seemingly possible and even impossible. Today we are less likely to think a rule will be a help than a tyranny. Imaginative artists find use in disregarded tools. In *Three Days to Never* it is remarkable how far the unities are observed, particularly considering its huge sweep, its measureless extension.

The place is Greater Los Angeles, a neighborhood today, San Bernardino, Pasadena, Hollywood, Palm Springs. People arrive, or their predecessors did, so there are reflections, or repercussions, of Germany — Switzerland — Israel — and a ranging universe so vast and strange the characters think of it as a freeway to their local lives, or God.

The time is 1987: three days of it: hence the title — with a look at 1967 — the days of Charlie Chaplin and Albert Einstein — Pope Innocent III — Moses — and a man from 2006 who can't stand the crude technology.

The actors are a preteen girl and her father who teaches literature — and her great-grandmother — and her uncle — and two teams trying to undo place, time, and action, one from the Israeli intelligence service, one vast and strange.

The focus of these forces keeps this story strong. Powers has set us at their nexus, holds us there. The careful painting of their operation, almost prosaic in the midst of poetry, almost mundane in the midst of the mystic, keeps this world weird. He makes it shock and shimmer. Its spine is his imagination. Its sinew is his understanding. He is unafraid of good or evil, of comedy or crime.

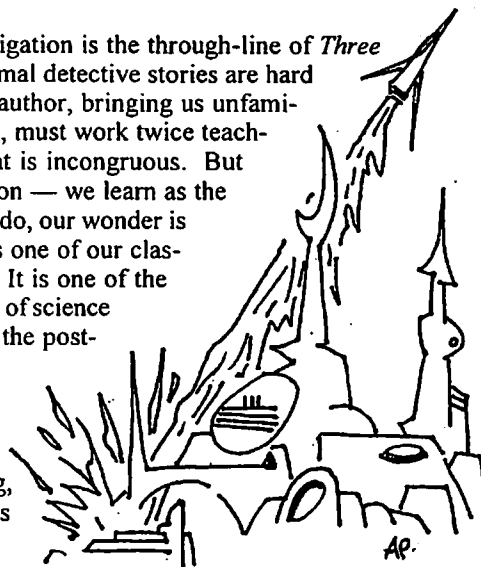
C.S. Lewis is whom I remember for the one-strange rule. *An ordinary person, he said, meeting extraordinary things, or an extraordinary person meeting ordinary things.* It's a good rule; it can be a help and not a tyranny; it can strengthen focus. Look how well it has been used in s-f, by which I include both science fiction and fantasy. Indeed *Three Days* is both.

Daphne Maritty is the first person in the book we meet by name. The first we see of her is ordinary, or as ordinary as any twelve-year-old girl with an observant mind and a quick wit. She worries about things an adult wouldn't. She is with her father as they look

round her great-grandmother's house in Pasadena. Later, much later, we understand what had just been happening when they arrived.

Such is investigation. As you start looking there are mysteries. If you keep looking, especially if you don't panic, reasons begin to appear. Daphne's uncle Bennett is a panicker. This is not quite why we dislike him. Powers carefully invites us to suppose he is a bad guy. He is that, though we meet worse, much worse. Powers also invites us to suppose this is why Bennett is jumpy. The invitations Powers gives us are good.

Investigation is the through-line of *Three Days*. Formal detective stories are hard in s-f; the author, bringing us unfamiliar worlds, must work twice teaching us what is incongruous. But investigation — we learn as the characters do, our wonder is theirs — is one of our classic forms. It is one of the resonances of science fiction. If the post-modernist sensibility is, as Bob Dylan sang, "Nothing is revealed," that is not true of a Powers story. The strange may however stand revealed as stranger.



At Westercon LIV, the 2001 West Coast Science Fantasy Conference — not only have I said s-f here, but over fifty years we've hedged our bets by sometimes saying *science fantasy* — Mike Glycer was Fan Guest of Honor, Powers was Writer Guest of Honor. Glycer interviewed Powers. Lest Powers close the circuit by interviewing Glycer, which as any Powers fan would fear might have had unimaginable consequences, I interviewed him, but that's another story. Powers said, "Some people write books with a message. *Brush your teeth.* I hate that."

There are no sermons in *Three Days*. The characters are what they are, and do what they do. Powers knows *Show 'em, don't tell 'em.* We have never met these people, and if as he says himself he is writing fantasy, we cannot meet them. But we believe that if we did, they would be as he portrays. Such is the art of fiction.

If I talked about balance in this book you might think it static. I could take you there; it is, at crucial points, outside time and space. But I mean a sense of event, of weight in motion. Powers' characters grope and hurl and hurtle. But he, the architect, has poised them — no — he, the choreographer, directs them. Or, if he merely gets out of the way, his instincts

On My Sleeve

are sound. There is economy in *Three Days*, a breathtaking achievement when things seem fearfully complicated, as, outside time and space, they may.

Rules get exceptions, and counter-rules. A counter to *one strange* I remember as the derg rule. In Robert Sheckley's classic story "Protection", a man by an extraordinary contact hears a validusian derg, a creature able to perceive dangers and warn how to avoid them. The man gradually realizes that his involvement with the derg is drawing in extraordinary dangers. Powers knows this too. Characters who grow involved with the extraordinary are colored by it. There is a reason why, in *Three Days*, two men row a boat on Echo Park Lagoon with a collection of mechanical toy animals,

some of which they must keep winding up as they talk of allegiance and death.

Shakespeare is a theme in *Three Days*, mainly his great play *The Tempest*. An illegitimate daughter of Einstein calls her father Prospero. He tries to drown his book. The parallel is not close, but there are reflections. Shakespeare is the poet of love. In *The Tempest*, as elsewhere, are people who seek power hatefully, people who seek freedom in slavery, people who will not repent — and people who are redeemed. There are no sermons in Shakespeare. He never says, but he shows, that love is not in the nature of imposition; it can be community. With these lights *Three Days* searches. It shines. It is the novel of the year.

What the Thunder Said

from *Banana Wings* 36, 2008

Strange and wonderful Canadians come to mind. Glenn Gould, the pianist whose performance of classical music was so idiosyncratic the great conductor George Szell muttered "That nut is a genius." A.E. van Vogt, the s-f author who dazzled our minds, whose stories ended, and who was praised as a stylist by no less than Harlan Ellison. Marshall McLuhan, the student of communications media who included money and clocks, whose *Understanding Media* was one of those books everyone talked about but no one had read, and who dedicated its paperback edition to Jack Paar. I've praised these famous men, I've found fault with them.

In the best tradition of 16th Century England, and incidentally Japan, Shakespeare the comedian was likely to say *Sit on my shoulders so I can understand you*. McLuhan didn't say communications media stood under us; he was more interested in our noticing we stood

Thirsty L.A. plants
Love December rain. I'll have
Another whisky.

Van 604

under them. His famous sentence *They became what they beheld* stood on *when they didn't notice*. He was not a determinist. It was possible, though people might not trouble, to avert the stern decree.

McLuhan had no trouble understanding the thunder of James Joyce, who was, he said, a comedian. In the rumbling of *Finnegans Wake* he found discharges of modern potential and a lot of good jokes. To him it was not a waste land.

T.S. Eliot in the last part of "The Waste Land" also alludes to the Hindu parable of gods, humans, and demons begging their Creator to speak. The thunder rumbled *da*. They each heard their own message. The

gods heard *datta*, give. The humans, *dayadhvam*, sympathize. The demons, *damyata*, govern the passions. This is not bad advice. Two thousand years after the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the Muslim poet Rumi put six men in a dark room trying to perceive an elephant. Two hundred years after that, John Saxe said the six men were blind. He and Rumi both said the men were Hindus. In Rumi's version any of them could have struck a light.

McLuhan rumbled that each medium has qualities of its own. When a new medium emerges, it only appears to supersede another. In fact it is more likely to free a previous medium from the pressure of being the latest thing. The previous medium shines in this fresh light. People come to it less faddishly than for itself. What is done with it will ring truer.

In fact the word "oldfashioned" is oldfashioned. We build musical instruments Henry Purcell would have used so we can play his music. We discuss them across the planet by electronic mail, or by paper mail carried on jet airplanes. If we prefer his music, or what we write ourselves, it is not because one is older or one is newer.

McLuhan's theory says the rise of the Internet should be good for paper fanzining. And it is so. My mailbox is freer of crudzines than ever. There is no need to do them. Those who wish to make paper fanzines are free to. Call it an artisan revolution.

Passion is hip these days — incidentally, the opposite of action. The wisdom of governing the passions is to rise above enslavement by them. Some of us may think to live by sympathy. Alas for the decay of this thought into a search for people to feel our pain; what do they feel? Some of us may have to improve how we receive, but many sages have said it is better to give. A fanzine is a gift.

Five Moments

The Moon

from *File770.com*, 17 Jul 09

Today was the 40th anniversary of humankind's launching its first trip to the Moon. Tonight I had nothing better to do — when you have something better to do, you should — than attend the 3,753rd meeting of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, oldest s-f club on Earth.

LASFS business meetings — monkey business — are so mad they usually outdraw the program. I stayed for the program tonight, a screening of the December 1955 *Disneyland* television program "Man and the Moon". Walt Disney introduced his animator Ward Kimball, who introduced Wernher von Braun. Kimball had created the Cheshire Cat in Disney's version of *Alice in Wonderland*, and Jiminy Cricket in *Pinocchio*. Von Braun in two years would see his work launch Explorer I, and in less than fifteen, Apollo XI.

At the time von Braun's best estimate was that we'd build a space station first, and go to the Moon from it. In this program he showed models, drawings, and charts of the station and ships and how it would be done. Disney gave him more. There was a live-action story of the fictional first rocket to leave the station, ellipse round the Moon, and fall back, manned by a crew of four, powered by blast and gravity. The costumes, sets, timing, and acting, the balance of science and fiction, were remarkable, and this was television. We gave no Hugo for Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form, of 1955.

I hope you celebrated too.

A Very Merry Unbirthday

from *File 770* 154, 2008

The unbirthday party for Forry Ackerman that Ray Bradbury hosted on Saturday, November 22nd, at Bookfellows (also called Mystery & Imagination bookshop) in Glendale was full of people, books, a cake, Ray, a theremin, and a giant card we all wrote good wishes on. Forry's 92nd is Monday, November 24th.

We sang Happy Birthday to Forry by phone, for which he thanked us from his home, the mini-Ackermansion. He is physically weak but his mind is sharp.

The cake was chocolate. It had a big photo of Forry in a blazer with his First Fandom badge, and a big photo-montage of monsters. Ray spoke eloquently. So did George Clayton Johnson and other friends.

That night was a small unbirthday party for another member of First Fandom, Len Moffatt, who was only 85 on Thursday, November 20th. I asked Ray if he'd like to sign a card for Len, and he said certainly, so I went across the street and made one at a copy shop.

Len's wife June had contributed a 1972 photo of Len for the cover of APA-L 2271 last Thursday, so I used that. APA-L has been published every week for only 44 years.

The photo was from Westercon XXV where Len was Fan Guest of Honor. It shows Horrible Old Roy Tackett, Len as the clown Pike Pickens, Stan Woolston, and in back Dan Alderson. After Ray, I went over to Forry's so he could sign it. A nurse's aide let me in.

Forry said "I've always enjoyed you over the years," which I told him was mutual. I took the card to Len's party and confessed it was another ruse to dodge the no-presents rule. At his 80th it had been a balloon.

Karen Anderson

from *Van* 748

Another Anderson birthday party, for Karen Anderson's 75th (no relation I know to Janet, other than the terminological similitude of each coming into the

Fleet minds too can win.
Ease, speed, whether gifts or fruits,
Each light flesh and spirit through
This great dance; the soul suits.

Van 808

name by marriage), kindly hosted by Lee & Barry Gold and combined with their annual Mushroom Appreciation [J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* bk. 1 ch. 4-5 (see particularly p. 112, 2nd ed. 1965)].

At these feasts Barry in the kitchen turns out one mushroom achievement after another, not objecting to contribution. After six or ten dishes a first-time guest realized he'd eaten too much too soon: there was plenty more: but he and we others happily managed. I brought some 2-inch portobello mushrooms and a bottle of 2003 Clos du Bois Shiraz. In the U.S. a 75th being a diamond anniversary, I gave Anderson a block of Black Diamond cheese. She'd brought a concoction of portobellos, kumquats, and basil, with potatoes, onion, and parsley. The Shiraz grape probably was

For this form based on Chinese "regular verse" see e.g. James J.Y. Liu, *The Art of Chinese Poetry* (1962). In the original scansion below, — is the first of four voice-tones in literary Chinese, x any other; / a caesura, R rhyme; I try — as sentence-stress on substantial words (Chinese poetry implies our insubstantial words, has no stress accent).

— / — x x
x x / x — — R
x x / — — x
— / x x — R

On My Sleeve

named for the Persian city, long ago, and the inspired touch of sweet with savory is one of many I associate with Persia, and it with her, one of the most cosmopolitan people.

This was the first time I'd seen Larry Niven since we each returned from Japan. He had tales. Across the room Laura Brodian and Matthew Tepper exchanged classical-music stories, and when I joining them quoted Glenn Gould, Tepper at once sang the next line of "So You Want to Write a Fugue".

Ashura from *Van* 718

A Turkish friend invited me to a picnic, which proved to be in honor of Ashura, a great day in Islam, on which among other things Noah and his Ark were relieved from the Flood, so Turks have a kind of sweet soup, or stew, itself called *ashura* or in English sometimes Noah's Pudding, with wheat and white beans and chickpeas and apricots and raisins and figs and sugar and rice and almonds.

Noah to celebrate cooked up everything he had left to eat in the Ark (no, I don't know how he got sugar if as I think it's only about 2,500 years old even in India, and I don't know any *ashura* recipes with honey). You wash the wheat and soak it in water half a day and boil it and leave it overnight, and soak the legumes overnight, and next morning boil each some more, and eventually mix all with the fruit and rice and sugar and nuts — more boiling comes in too — and garnish with chopped walnuts, and pomegranate bits if you have any, and serve it to your neighbors, so I ate three bowls.

Ashura means "tenth"; it's on the tenth of the month (of Muharram in the Muslim calendar) and a fast-day so you eat the *ashura* afterward. I've left out

plenty about Ashura and *ashura* but that's how things go in this fanzine.

The Kirov Ballet from *Van* 648

The Kirov Ballet of St. Petersburg was here with *Sleeping Beauty*, the Tchaikovsky music and Petipa choreography (1890; chor. rev. Sergeyev 1952), fine sets and costumes by Simon Virsaladze. Director Ma-

O Moon you are red
As the clouds part to show us
We have eclipsed you.

Van 770

khar Vaziev said some venues on tour were too small for the original, so he used the Sergeyev revision, whose forty dancers filled the Chandler Pavilion, largest stage in the Music Center.

This coruscating performance, glorious in itself, is of particular interest to us for portraying fantasy. So must our Masquerade entrants, although ballet costumes, sets, and music center on dance, while the Masquerade centers on costume. What shows that a *Sleeping Beauty* man is the King, or a woman is a fairy? What shows the Lilac Fairy to be protectress of Princess Aurora, and Prince Desire's guide? For the Kirov, whose achievements are breathtakingly difficult, this is paradoxically easy; we must manage without their resources of time, and money, and athleticism. Yet Rotzler's Last Rule *Quantity of labor has nothing to do with art* applies to all. A ballet company, like a film studio, is tempted to rely on special effects, but vision, focus, marshaling of detail are supreme. I wish all the monarchs, magicians, monsters — and for that matter machinists, since we do science fiction — whom I see as a Masquerade judge, or an audience member, the benefit of such a spectacular example.

An Essential Book

Vincent Di Fate, *Infinite Worlds* (1997)
from *Collecting S-F Books*, November 2008

One of the panel discussions I could not attend at Denvention III, the 2008 Worldcon, third in Denver, was "Twenty Essential Books of the Past Twenty Years". I sent a note to the moderator suggesting *Infinite Worlds*. She answered "I see what you mean."

For this spectacular survey of s-f art, coffee-table size, 9x12 inches, 320 pages, the selecting of images (and getting permissions) is astounding even to think of; there are nearly seven hundred, most in color, the rest monochrome, as they originally appeared.

The main parts are a hundred-page historical perspective, and a two-hundred-page examination of a hundred leading artists one at a time. There is a foreword by Ray Bradbury, an introduction by Di Fate, and just after the first part a study of how a Stanley Meltzoff picture influenced three others, one of which is by Di Fate, one of which is the Paul Lehr picture on the front cover. If you are historically minded you will be pleased to find the editorial director was W. John Campbell. You may know the fame of Meltzoff — Lehr — W. John Campbell and John W. Campbell, Jr. — Bradbury — or Di Fate. Maybe not. Fame is relative in this wide wide world. The best work has something for the expert and for the novice.

Di Fate was the man for this book. He was Artist Guest of Honor at the 1992 Worldcon, which started it; he won the Chesley Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Association of S-F Artists just after, in 1998. He had won the Hugo Award for Best Professional Artist in 1979. He had commissions from International Business Machines, the National Geographic & Space Administration of the U.S. Government; he chaired the Permanent Collection Committee of the Museum of American Illustration; he was consulted by Universal and 20th Century Fox and United Artists; he was an Adjunct Professor at the State University of New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, where he taught the history of illustration, and s-f art.



I recount these things to show, — what do you care what other people think? — but his breadth and reach. Note in particular his conjoined activity in the worlds of making, teaching, commerce, and museums. Talking about art is itself an art. He had the talent for the task, and by 1997 his thirty-year career had been like a refiner's fire.

not how Di Fate was approved

In its history *Infinite Worlds* names the right artist at the right moment. It makes the right point with the right picture, there and in the one-by-one review. Its words are right. Novices, you are in good hands; experts, see how exactly Di Fate applauds.

The masterful brush of Chesley Bonestell speaks to us with such commanding authority that it doesn't occur to us to question what our eyes behold.... essential in validating the use of astronomical art as an alternative to the garish and meretricious.... no matter how focused Bonestell was on scientific fidelity, his paintings were never less than works of illustrative art.

I can remember studying Kelly Freas' work for long hours — his superlative draftsmanship and exquisite design sense, his exceptional use of color and his superb mastery of black & white techniques.... bold, facile pen strokes ... meticulous rendering of images on scratchboard.... a sentimentality and a gestalt that make the whole far greater than the sum of its parts.

Richard Powers' surreal and largely abstract images.... opened the floodgates to using a greater diversity of styles.... raised the aesthetic standards of the field.... might well be the most prolific illustrator.... Although one is powerless to know with certainty what the shapes represent, they capture the spirit and mood of SF.

Illustrator was always Kelly Freas' word. In our field, to the elusive demands of realism upon any fiction, we couple the elusive demands of unrealism. Our authors meet both, and our illustrators meet the result. Certainly they are artists.

When technical knowledge is helpful Di Fate brings it.

Widely recognized as one of the most exquisite black & white drawings ever done for the genre, this work on scratchboard [by Virgil Finlay] illustrates Wilson Tucker's classic tale of immortality, *The Time Masters* (1954). Careful observation ... reveals that the woman's face in the foreground is drawn on the board in a series of crosshatches, while the background textures and details are scratched out of the ink in finely etched stipples (dots) and undulating lines.

The intense drama created by light and composition in John Schoenherr's work reveals an aesthetic sophistication.... the art for "Goblin Night", one of his best *Analog* cover paintings, uses values [degrees of lightness and darkness] to great effect. The bold, triangular silhouette of the animal contrasted against the starry night sky is most dramatic.... an early step by the artist toward brightening his palette.

Michael Wheilan's art is character-based, intensely rendered, and beautifully colored.... His careful manipulation of values and ... analogous color schemes [all principal colors having one component in common] are highly effective in creating mood.... often uses airbrush ... fastidious in bringing every aspect ... to a high level of finish.

There are famous pictures here; to name only six by artists I have not yet mentioned, Frank R. Paul's magazine cover for *The War of the Worlds*, Edd Cartier's magazine interior for "The Crossroads", Hubert Rogers' magazine cover for "New Foundations", the Hildebrandt brothers' poster for *Star Wars*, Diane & Leo Dillon's cover for the

Caedmon Records *Foundation and Empire*, Ron Walotsky's book cover for *Temporary Agency*. They were made to illustrate s-f stories; they are here to illustrate the story of s-f.

To this extent, in fairness to Di Fate, we must realize his book is backwards. The contents of *Infinite Worlds* are aesthetically successful, characteristic (or interestingly uncharacteristic), striking — pictures in themselves worth looking at, with less regard for their publisher or for what they illustrate. That is the reverse of what the men and women who made them had as their task. I do not propose it as a fault; I consider it an achievement.

So is the beauty of his book.

Within Us, Without Us parochial and other notes

Ellington called Oscar Peterson (1925-2007) the Maharajah of the Keyboard, high praise from a Duke. Many thought O.P. the musical heir of Art Tatum, including Tatum, which could be higher praise. The poll reported in Gene Rizzo, *The Fifty Greatest Jazz Piano Players of All Time* (2005), put O.P. at the top; the Foreword says choice was for "creativity, degree of influence, and command of the instrument ... emphasis on artists in whom those factors converge." He was born in Montréal, died in Mississauga; the Canadian jazz magazine *Coda*, No. 338, commemorating him, called him a supreme communicator. He was a virtuoso of vitality and power, a sensitive and responsive accompanist.

O.P. made two hundred records: among the finest, *The Oscar Peterson Trio at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival* (1956), Ray Brown on bass, Herb Ellis on guitar; *Night Train* (1962), Ed Thigpen on drums, Brown; *My Favorite Instrument* (1968), solo; *Ella and Oscar* (1975), Ella Fitzgerald singing; *"Porgy and Bess"* (1976), O.P. on clavichord, Joe Pass on guitar; *The Very Tall Band Live at "The Blue Note"* (1998), Milt Jackson on vibraphone, Brown; *A Summer Night in Munich* (1998), Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen on bass, Ulf Wakenius on guitar, Martin Drew on drums; study, *Dimensions* (2003; 4 discs of 1953-86). Once he met Bösendorfer pianos, he played them the rest of his life. He was made a Companion of the Order of Canada (1984) and Chancellor of York University (1991); he won the Glenn Gould Prize (1993) and Japan's Praemium Imperiale (1999).

He read and wrote at three; he had absolute pitch; he loved cameras, fly-fishing, and practical jokes. His memoir is *A Jazz Odyssey* (2002). Benny Green said of *"Satch"* and *"Josh"* (1974), a wonderful record with Count Basie on piano and organ, Freddie Green on guitar, Louie Bellson on drums, Brown: "Peterson's technique is prolific and flawless, Basie's sparse and flawless.... common cause ... in ... the sense of Time.... rhythm section ... the last word in tact and foresight.... when it came to the blues tracks I began humming and striding around the room ... and my notes were forgotten." *R.I.P.* [Van 804]

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On Saturday 27 Sep at a Moon Festival, South Pasadena High School (this year's actual date corresponding to the Chinese calendar being 14 Sep), were acrobats and jugglers, the S. Cal. Chinese Historical Society, the Huntington with brochures about its fine new Chinese garden, the Cal. Ass'n of Rat Enthusiasts because 2008 is the Year of the Rat, opera-mask making, and moon cakes. I asked "What about next year?" (it will be the Year of the Ox) and when a committee member said "Oh dear" I suggested the Ten Oxherding Pictures (which the Ch'an Buddhist master K'uo-an Shih-yüan perfected about 1100 by adding, after the 8th in which ox and rider have both vanished, a 9th *Returning to the Source* and a 10th *Re-entering the Market with Giving Hands*). A lady from the Pacific Asia Museum, which opened a Confucius exhibit 18 Sep, told me of two birthday observances on Sunday (his 2,559th had been on Friday): a presentation of flowers at his statue on the Cal. State Univ. Los Ang. campus in the morning, and an assembly at the Taipei Culture Center, El Monte, in the afternoon. Saturday night at the St. Nectarios Greek Orthodox Church fes-

I am the child of shape and time.
I play with sound; I play in mime.
Reach when I ask you to take hands,
Or go alone, in other lands.
Laugh or weep your best with me,
Slow or quick, constrained or free;
Fit for a farmer, fit for a king,
I will make your walking sing.

(dance)
Van 626

tival, Covina — a beautiful church, whose patron saint lived 1846-1920 — with dancing, and drinking, and eating, was Don Fitch, who should write more for APA-L. "You're all doing the same step," he said; "that isn't like American Indian dancing." On Sunday morning I was the only non-Chinese at the statue, which has been there since 1987. It's in the Luckman art complex (propitious name!) near the Student Union. That afternoon I think I was the only non-Chinese except for a man from the Pacific Asia Museum who came to invite people. I sat next to the President of the California Chinese Calligraphy Association. [801]

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The cover of the Apr 08 issue of Mark Strickert's *Mark Time*, No. 85, is a 1993 Charles Schneider drawing of Sadakichi Hartmann (1867-1944) toward the end of his life. This Japanese-German man of letters, who had read all of Goethe and Schiller by the age of nine, who worked with Alfred Stieglitz and was among the first to publish serious photography criticism, who wrote fiction for Emma Goldman's *Mother Earth* magazine and seems the first to have written English poetry in the Japanese *haiku* and *tanka* forms, whose two-volume *History of American Art*, published 1901, revised 1938, was long a standard, who has a fine appearance as a court magician in the fantastic Douglas Fairbanks silent film *The*

Thief of Bagdad (1924), had by the end such woe Guy Lillian in that month's *Zine Dump*,

No. 19, on the strength of that portrait called him the saddest sack he'd ever seen. Sadakichi's health was in ruins, he had a beggar's wealth, and although as it happens he was a superb pickpocket he could only on high occasion rise to stealth. The face is sad and bitter.

George Knox, Professor of English at the University of California, Riverside, introducing *The Life and Times of Sadakichi Hartmann*, the book for the 1970 exhibition there, where Sadakichi's papers are, does not like Gene Fowler's 1954 memoir *Minutes of the Last Meeting*. I do. But *The Life and Times* is vital. Its sixty pictures show that this man was, as Knox says, painted by the great and near great, and as he himself said, photographed by everybody. "The Two Hamlets", a photo of John Barrymore and Sadakichi in 1940 (*L&T* p. 66), is the other side of the Schneider; with its help you can see in John Decker's 1940 painting (*L&T* p. 42) that Decker was right about Sadakichi, as was Fowler, no fools for his faults but by his sparks inspired. In Jane Weaver's 1991 collection *Sadakichi Hartmann, Critical Modernist* you can read him upon Cézanne and Picasso, Winslow Homer and Whistler, Sergei Eisenstein, Rodin, Saint-Gaudens, Steichen. In 1897 he said art waited for "The woman who can paint men as we have painted women, and paint women as we have painted men" (*Critical* p. 77). By 1939 he was living on an Indian reservation. "One evening late in January of 1944," tells Fowler (*Minutes* p. 237), "Sadakichi left the reservation to get a drink at a Banning bar. As he was crossing the road an automobile almost ran him down.... [he asked the driver] 'Where are you going?' 'Just along the highway.' 'All



life is a highway,' Hartmann said. 'And I want to go with you.'" [788]

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"Is *mandarin* a word?" Roger Hill asked me at a meeting of the Bread Pudding Club. "I mean, other than as a proper noun?" I said, "Certainly, it means a person of importance, especially an official, with a suggestion of self-importance [my *Webster's Second* derives it from Sanskrit *mantra* "counsel", but I hear it's really Pidgin English = English *man* + Chinese *ta jên* (so written in the Wade-Giles system I use; in the Yale system, *da run*) "big man", a redundancy not uncommon]; why?" Ed Buchman showed me this list: *coin, coal, rims, scar, pail, coil, pain, pact, lain, near, dear, deal, vain, paid, arcade, code, florid, arid, ride, mine, demand, almond, mandarin, or, vane*. The order, he said, was insignificant. "They all have an even number of letters," I tried. "Yes, but that's a side effect. Would it help if I wrote some of the pairs in capitals?" They were all formed from U.S. Postal Service abbreviations for the States. I was able to add *arms*. [761]

- o O o -

As a boy Hank Reinhardt (1934-2007) began a tradition of lying under the Christmas tree reading *Planet Comics*. By 1950 he had co-founded the Cosmic Legion, later known as ASFO, the Atlanta Science Fiction Organization, in the town where he was born. By 1959 he was all but unknown in fandom; he told Jerry Page he'd gone off stirring up trouble, looking for the sort of adventures he'd read about; some of those years he served honorably in the U.S. Army; everyone saw he was outspoken, a few saw he was modest. Not all who wander are lost. He was given Southern Fandom's Rebel Award in 1973. Besides the first s-f club in Atlanta, and the first in Birmingham, he co-founded the historical-weapons firm Museum Replicas, and started chapters of the Society for Creative Anachronism in Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana. With Page, for DAW Books, he co-edited *Heroic Fantasy* (1979), which opened with Andre Norton and closed with Manly Wade Wellman. He wrote for *Blade* magazine and at the 2006 Blade Show in Atlanta won the Industry Achievement Award.

He could throw axes thirteen yards; one, the Singing Axe, was made by a blacksmith friend, after a medieval technique, so that it rang when struck with metal, then sang as it flew; the name alluded to the Singing Sword of Hal Foster's *Prince Valiant*, an adventure comic he loved almost as much as Alex Raymond's *Flash Gordon*. He played Hearts with, or against, Lon Atkins. Greg Benford said he believed in our future and wanted to live there. Guy Lillian said he chose joy. He was five years married to Toni Weisskopf, his widow, to whom I wrote "*Sans peur et sans reproche*." One Christmas he gave Page, framed, the last installment of Bill Watterson's *Calvin and*

On My Sleeve

Hobbes: "It's a magical world, Hobbes, old buddy. Let's go exploring." *R.I.P.* [761]

- o O o -

At Vermont Ave. and Santa Monica Bl., in a parking lot across from the Red Line station, is a row of two dozen street lamps, assorted shapes and sizes, mostly working. North of there I drove by the *Music Box Steps*. I've walked them too. Seventy-five years ago Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy released the only film for which they won an Academy Award, *The Music Box* (J. Parrott dir. 1932), "and Stan Laurel's personal endorsement of it as the best picture they ever made," J. McCabe, *Mr. Laurel & Mr. Hardy* (1961; 1968 ed., p. 120; most recent printing 2004; John McCabe 1920-2005, *R.I.P.*); 2007 is, incidentally, the centenary year of Laurel's start in show business (p. 21). The steps, a hundred thirty of them, run from the west side of Vendome St. south of Del Monte Dr., up to Descanso Dr., in Silver Lake, almost my neighborhood. There's a plaque on a step near the bottom, and white-on-blue Los Angeles landmark signs standing on the sidewalk at the bottom and top; near the top is a jade plant of two main trunks almost as tall as I.

A week or two later I was there in daylight, figs and lemons still green along Garcia Walk, rosemary



FEAR OF BEING TICKLED • ROSSIAK

and lavender, a bright orange rose, a woman reading who smiled at me. In the park was Charlie Cox amidst two dozen stringed instruments and some other kinds, mostly guitars and banjos. He pointed out banjo history as some grown-ups and some children listened, and after a while found himself playing, and singing, "Shady Grove my true love, Shady Grove my darlin', Shady Grove my true love, I'm goin' back to Harlan." I had another one on my mind, the protagonist of Asimov's *End of Eternity* (1955); my note on it for Alan Chudnow's *Collecting Science Fiction Books*

<www.collectingsf.com> was due, and I had to go back to Harlan myself. [753]

- o O o -

Marius Jókai, or in Hungarian style with family name first Jókai Mór (1825-1904; "yo-kah-ee"), is a light of literature. He was a son of noble families, reared to the law and winning his first case, who published a play, fled to Pest, was introduced by the poet Petöfi, and edited the leading literary periodical. Much involved with the revolution of 1848, politically suspect over fourteen years after the war ended, he led the Magyar language revival, publishing thirty recognized masterpieces, and when the constitution was re-established in 1867 resuming active politics, sitting in Parliament, and editing the Government periodical.

In 1897 the Emperor appointed him to the upper house, "where he distinguished himself in debate.... his productiveness after 1870 was stupendous ... hundreds of volumes. None of this work is slipshod.... Among the finest ... the unique and incomparable [novel] *A Man of Gold* [1872]"; *Eyes Like the Sea* (1890) won the Academy Prize. He has been called a blend of Sir Walter Scott, the elder Dumas, and Dickens, "an arch-romantic, with a perfervid Oriental imagination, and humour of the ... rarest description", *Encyclopædia Britannica* (14th ed. 1929).

I read *Eyes* in an undated translation by R. Nisbet Bain (1854-1909), the British Museum librarian who produced ten books of Jókai and once said the Magyar sentence was a miracle of agglutinative ingenuity; his 1895 biography of Hans Andersen was reprinted in 2002. *Eyes* is strung on a thread of autobiography so circumstantial that all but the most acquainted with Hungary wish annotation for help with what's fictive. It's a first-person novel that isn't about the narrator — perhaps. What is independence of mind? What should a *fin de siècle* lady do? What a comparison to Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* (1933)! *Man* I read as *The Man with the Golden Touch* (Kennard tr. 1888 as *Timár's Two Worlds*, rev. West 1963; 3rd ed. 1973, intr. Kálmán Ruttkay of Eötvös Loránd University), a tale of riches, deeds, success, remorse, duplicity, submersion, unexpected strength, temerity and timidity, understatement as bombs burst, searching examination pursued largely by silence. [698]

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On classical-music Radio Station KUSC, announcer Jim Svejda is one of the best in the country, his remarks knowledgeable, thoughtful, articulate, a pleasure to agree with or disagree. During his evening program he has been interviewing musicians, who are in town to give a concert or otherwise at hand. I was innocently listening to Sibelius' *Sixth Symphony* (1923) and some *Penitential Psalms* of Lassus (1570) — he of A. Conan Doyle's "Bruce-Partington Plans" (1908) — when Svejda announced a guest: Carlo Bergonzi. Here was a name to conjure with. This su-

preme Italian tenor — who began as a baritone — now 82, had been conducting a master class in Long Beach, at the Angel Vocal Arts Center, produced by Teng Hsiao-chun who had studied with Bergonzi in Bussetto. Bergonzi had sung with both Renata Tebaldi and Maria Callas. He and Tebaldi were students together; then he was a prisoner of war in Germany. In Tebaldi he loved the beauty of her voice, pure and perfect; in Callas, an interpretive gift he never saw again. Callas once had twenty-five curtain calls for the Mad Scene in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835). Backstage to her husband Bergonzi said "When can I sing?" Finally, covered with honor and sweat, she could cease. In the wings her husband said "I'll take you to your dressing room." She said, "No, I'm staying in this chair until I hear Carlo finish his aria." Svejda played Bergonzi with Tebaldi in "O Soave Fanciulla" from Puccini's *Bohème* (1896), and with Callas in the final scene of his *Tosca* (1900), recorded at the end of her career. [680]

- o o o -

While innocently doing something else at Santa Fe Dam park, Irwindale, I heard whooshing. When occasion served I went to see. The Southern California Rocket Association was holding its twice-monthly controlled and supervised public launch. There were not quite a million, of every shape and size, but there

were lots, and the rocketeers were various too. Model rockets under National Association of Rocketry rules can have gross launching mass up to 1.5 kilograms,



Mark Shuttleworth
first African citizen
in Space

solid propellant at launch up to 125 g, up to three consecutively fired stages; re-usable, "provided with a means for retarding its descent to the ground so that its structure may not be substantially damaged, and so that no hazard is created", and air-frame of wood, paper, rubber, plastic; beyond that is high-power rocketry, with Fed'l Aviation Adm'n clearance, but that's plenty. The Saugus High School rocket club was working

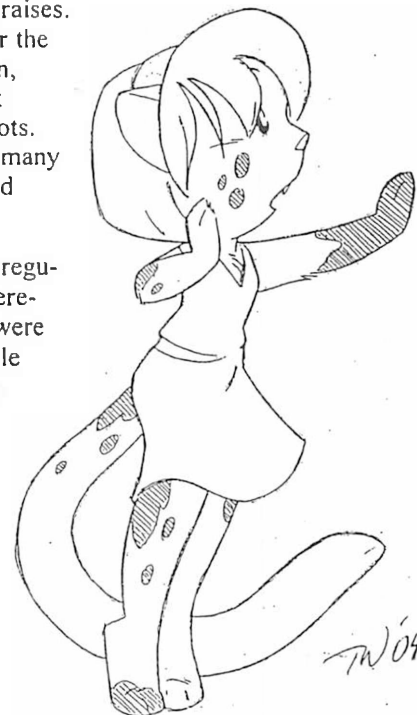
on the Team America Rocketry Challenge, this year to get exactly 60 seconds in the air including descent so much concerned with breezes and parachutes. I asked, "Why are the fins swept forward?" They said, "That way they don't break when the booster lands, and besides, it looks cool." [621]

A Thing Lonely and Proud

from *The Resplendent Fool* 62, 2007

Fifty years ago Bob Bloch made "It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan" the punchline of "A Way of Life", *Fantastic Universe* October 1956. If it takes one to know one, he was and did; for decades he was both a successful pro writer and an active fan. That story features a Bloch-headed future with fans in strange form, but aside from joking — "cut the comedy" is not a response to Bloch, you might as well try to stop a Bandersnatch — there is a look at a world in which everyone is chanting our words and singing our praises. At the 1956 Worldcon, where as it happens Bloch was Toastmaster, not for the first time, nor for the last, attendance was about 800; at the 2006 Worldcon, about 6000, a lot of people to chant and sing. The Hugo Awards, for Best Fanzine, Best Fanwriter, Best Fanartist of 2005, each drew about 200 ballots. I don't bemoan that number; some of those votes were for me; also it's as many as attended our first Worldcon in 1939: but is you is, or is you ain't, proud and lonely?

The 2004 Worldcon awarded Retrospective Hugos for 1953 as well as regular Hugos for 2003, the third time we've done them. At the Retro-Hugo ceremony Jack Speer holding up a mimeograph stencil told the audience "We were rugged then." In early days it seems fanzines were self-evident to the people who arrived among us at all. Where others said "Let's put on a show," we said "Let's put out a fanzine." At the 2000 Westercon in Honolulu, Fred Patten, between moments of acquiring the color of a lobster, said fandom was widening as s-f grew more acceptable, thus including people who never before showed up: the reverse of a Barbarian Invasion. What could be more natural than for them to disregard fanziners, and for fanziners to disregard them? Let me take this occasion to say that is, as it happens, the nature of the mundane world, which in principle we take lonely pride at not following so closely. In the way of that world things not known, people not known, are disregarded. "No other sheep there, I'm not going." It was to us that calling a magazine *Unknown* was attractive.



On My Sleeve

For some while in recent years I had breakfast three or four times a month with a man in his eighties. "All my friends are dying," he said one day. We were blunt with each other. I said, "When was the last time you made any new friends?" He was not a fan.

Through history the writer's joy has been known to a minority. Everyone who can read loves good reading — through most of history only a larger minority. To master reading takes some trouble itself, aside from its having been in various times and places forbidden or required, aside from its having had teachers wondrously bad or wondrously good. Yet asider is the art, science, or mystery of writing. Some find it. Mark Twain said "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between *lightning* and *lightning bug*." It can be electrifying to get the lightning to strike. The amazing astounding thrilling wonder is that fanzines are amateur, in the highest and best sense. We write for love. We are not even a home of fiction; that has prozines. We write, colored or resonant with our interest in s-f, about life, the universe, and everything. Sam Johnson said "No one but a blockhead ever wrote except for money." But we are Bloch-heads.

Walt Willis observed in *The Enchanted Duplicator* (1953) — "duplicator" in the sense then current, a machine to publish fanzines with, e.g. a mimeograph — that the road to fandom lay over the Mountains of Inertia. That also was said fifty years ago. It is true today. Though the road may be smoother, the easy riders now coming along still have to climb, never doubt it. If they need not struggle through brush and thicket like those who came before them, that may leave them less exhausted whether or not it is good for their character. If they halt along the

Under the Influence of Marty Helgesen *Van* 789

Hard but Not Too Hard Knox

From my father the Bishop of Manchester
I was led by a remarkable man, Chester-
Ton. He converted me,
And I converted he.
So just laugh with us all that you can, jester.

(Ronald Knox 1888-1957)

To Achieve Frankness

A law degree
Did not stop me
From the fascinating study of simplicity.
What I could make clear
That I held most dear
Unsurprisingly went ringing through the atmosphere.

(Frank Sheed 1897-1981)

way, or travel lamely, even so, gentle reader, too often have we. In Willis' fable poor Jophan does not of himself start on the road; he is inspired by the touch of a magical creature. We amateur magicians can sometimes give that touch. Jophan's loneliness is not for lack of numbers; he is always in a crowd. Nor are those only minds of the mundane world. As he wins through to the heights of fanzining, he meets many who hardly know where or why he is going, and cry "Isn't *this* fandom?"

Perhaps we have a new kind of loneliness, where we are in a throng of people who have found pleasure in reading, but not yet in writing; who have perhaps only started out of the mundane mist in which one is either a professional or a spectator, a seller or a buyer, a zealot or indifferent; in which there may be special interests but there is no general interest, in which one might get a book about a redhead if one is oneself redheaded; in which one will delight to watch a miracle but not yet think of bearing a hand. Perhaps it is not so new. Or perhaps it is mundane to fuss over whether or not one is lonely. I was going to continue, but with these words I happened to look out the window, and there is the dawn.

237 Talking Statues, Etc. remarks, from *Vanamonde*

Vanamonde is published in APA-L, the Amateur Publishing Association of Los Angeles. Amateur journalism, a hobby unrelated to s-f, originated apas in the late 19th Century; we fans started the first s-f apa in the mid-1930s to exchange fanzines; since then, many, some lasting a little while, some for decades; our first, FAPA (Fantasy Amateur Press Ass'n), still goes on. FAPA is quarterly; APA-L appearing weekly was breathtaking when it began four decades ago, is extraordinary today. Over several years *Van* has also acquired a much wider circulation, which presents an interesting challenge. In an apa, comments on what other contributors publish are indispensable. An issue of *Van* has to reply to the previous distribution of APA-L, maintain the quick interchange of good apa writing, and at the same time be worthwhile for readers who don't see the other side of the conversation. Less than half

of *Vanamonde* is apa comments (the rest, reviews, essays, verse, things I've been reading, drawings & letters people send); if I do my work, they may be the best part.

2008

Happily many of us are not too inhibited to enjoy things created before we were born. [812]

I think language best used lovingly, like any artistic medium. Good English, I keep saying, is a composite of usage, etymology, history, reason, and aesthetics, which I regard as a resource not a burden. [810]

When falsehood gives warning, its unpleasant display may be worth the annoyance. [807]

There's truth in *If you have to ask, you'll never understand*; some questioners ask when they should be looking. It can also be abdicatory, contrary to the spirit of *There are no foolish questions, only foolish failures to ask* or, for that matter, the spirit of the essay: Montaigne (1533-1592) hardly did anything but ask, and although he kept saying he'd never understand, no one believes that of him. [804]

A magical poetry mill, in which we're all grain for the grinding, a strong subtle substance whose loosing and binding, whose coarseness, refinement, all merit our minding, whose playfulness, earnestness, fill ears eyes hearts of our seeking and finding. [798]

[John DeChancie had written "The bars on Mars stay open at all hours."]

The bars on Mars stay open at all hours.
We are so thirsty, driving
In our hovercars,
Over empty desert
Under lonely stars,
Through the haunted decades.
Were there Martian wars?
Were those giant brains
That filled dusty jars?
Why was it we came here?
Who on Earth still cares?
Still we follow knowledge.
Hope's a gorgeous flower. [793]

A nice question how much realism belongs in fantasy — or even what it is. [787]

What of Johnna Klukas' wooden space ships against dark reaches whose stars she made from nails? [786]

I think a story needs event. Tension, or another of the things often said, conflict, may be special cases, like Newtonian physics. [783]

A teacher should leave students less confused and more able than if he had not come. [783]

How essential is it that a protagonist should change? Not to be contrary, but suppose the author holds the protagonist unchanged and causes the reader to change? Is this anyhow another Romanticism, a touchstone only of today's sentiments? [781]

I recommend the demanding, engaging, nourishing exercise by which one finds what may be worth writing, and worth reading, in response to what other fans write, and in reflection upon life the universe and everything. [779]

To create a new kind of game which earns popularity and rouses interest is no small feat. [773]

Would you call "All You Zombies" a Heinlein time-dilated romance between a grown-up man and a girl who becomes a woman? [771]



On My Sleeve

Georgette Heyer (1902-1974) knew there was more to comedy of manners than snarky comments, if I understand the word correctly, or perhaps it does mean “meager and hollow, but crisp” (*Complete Works of Lewis Carroll*, Mod. Lib. ed. 1936, p. 763). [769]

2007

If it came to the U.S. Supreme Court, when the Court heard it that would be National National Gorilla Suit Day Suit Day. Presumably a lawyer arguing it would wear a National National Gorilla Suit Day Suit Day suit. If obtained for the occasion, that would be National National Gorilla Suit Day Suit Day Suit Day. Imagine people all over the country wearing gorilla suits then in sympathy with that lawyer. We’d have National National National Gorilla Suit Day Suit Day Suit Day Gorilla Suit Day. [759]

Your willingness to discuss what you’re reading I consider a mark of civilization. [756]

Perhaps a teacher could teach a pupil everything the teacher knew if the teacher brought the pupil not only to a familiarity with data, but to the wisdom, skill, and acuity of good study. [753]

Thanks for “No comment hooks glimpsed so nothing to bite on,” which I’ll take as a reminder I should be suitably chewy but not bait you. [752]

The people I have bitten in the neck have been female. It was peaceable and seemed like a good idea at the time. I have never crawled thirty miles anywhere. I have known women about whom I felt I should gladly crawl through thirty miles of tropical jungle to bite them in the neck, but this has never been put to the test, perhaps fortunately. [749]

Can we learn from mistakes of fictional people? [746]

It occurred to me that art is two-ended, at best to the contentment of sender — maker, artist — at one end, and also receiver — customer, viewer, listener, diner, addressee — at the other end, neither at the expense of the other. In this I could include variations by which A employs B to make art for C to give D. But I still was not satisfied. What about Shakespeare, or Lady Murasaki? I began thinking that the greatest art is triangular, or tripodal. Besides the artist and the audience before him there may be bystanders, people whom he may not have addressed his work to, but through his imagining them also, or his touching the timeless whether he had them in mind or not, he reaches. Perhaps achieving this is what makes art great. [740]

A rule *End off when it’s no fun anymore* is probably good and wise so long as, like other cousins of *Withdraw from pain*, it’s guided by some cousin of *Get the big picture*; otherwise one can e.g. leave what one unwittingly spoiled for oneself and could as well repair as quit, or be manipulated into departing from what one might really prefer to cure. [736]

Commerce is strange when the buyer and user are different. Gifts. Children’s schooling. Pet food. [727]

By never trying the unusual or trying only the unusual we can starve. [725]

Too little history is about quartermasters, too little s-f. [721]

It isn’t a message makes art, however in earnest your heart. If your pieces won’t stand without showing your hand, you will cloy us. Is that really smart? [718]

Lembke thinks he barely made enough of that honey drink, but I think there’s plenty. One man’s mead is another man’s foison. [715]

2006

Westerns with zap guns is our criticism of some weak s-f, but Westerns are instructive for us: simplicity, handling of alien culture and technology. [709]

Here again is *al-Sirat* the Muslim bridge to Heaven, credulity on one side, skepticism on the other, the bridge a razor’s edge. [707]

I remember that Wil Wright’s ice-cream shop and others too. I’ve told of racing after folk-dancing to the Los Angeles one near 6th St. and Vermont Ave., just barely arriving before closing time with a batch of ice-cream lovers, consuming Swiss Chocolate sundaes and Nesselrode Bula, and singing “I’m bringing home a baby armadillo.” [705]

Perhaps in art generally the audience member takes part in the creation. In music there are tones, beats, which are implied to us and which we supply by our own imagining. In writing the corresponding procedure is, as you observe, essential. I believe that film and television too call upon the viewer. (With film we are in fact imagining motion as we watch a rapid series of still pictures; with television and personal computers we are in fact imagining motion as we watch a rapid series of bright lines on a cathode-ray tube; that may be not at all trivial, e.g. in understanding the fascination of these media, but I am willing to think it inessential to the point at hand.) Writing is wonderful at showing thought; it implies appearance: drawing, painting, are wonderful at showing appearance; they imply thought. Film and television, the stage, can present what is said but even then we must deduce the rest. The comic book with its convention of the thought-balloon, the Elizabethan theater with its convention of the utterance aside, the Asian puppet theater with its convention of the narrator, are hybrids; even there, as with writing, we are not given all, and a great deal of the artist's work lies in electing what to imply. [703]



Mimeo made miracles, made mud. Mind marvels, man. [698]

To me true love seems much more contributing to someone's creations than hurting when she hurts, although the greater includes the lesser. [691]

The history of technology knows — and s-f does too — much that was very cheap after the costs to develop and establish had been borne. [687]

With Germany hosting the World Cup soccer games, Spanish-language newspaper street-vending boxes here bear the legend *Alemania*. But it means something different to me. [685]

The pro writer knows better than I whether plotting is hardest. It may come easy to some. I give due respect to the exceptional cases where fiction manages without it. But I who just talked of characterization, and who last week insisted upon language, am here to recognize, in plotting, the overarching vault, the sustainer of the weight of the structure. Written fiction being a composite of static and dynamic (such thoughts may send a man to re-read *Tristram Shandy* — oops!), plotting is vault and motor. [683]

For a set of U.S. 1st-class postage stamps portraying great names in s-f (and deceased at least ten years), how about C. Bonestell, A. Boucher, J. Campbell, R. Heinlein, C.L. Moore, A. Raymond, two writers, two illustrators, two editors? [681]

To publish one's own work wields a two-edged sword. One's work becomes available, free of any publishers more irritating than oneself, but one has not met the challenge of satisfying both one's own and their judgment in order to appear. One has neither hindrance nor help. [675]

As an s-f fan I read your comment about a gas man and got strange ideas. [671]

2005

Conceivably the universe is far simpler than we imagine. I'm not prepared to suggest how that might be: in fact, I can't imagine it: but we'd be weak philosophers not to bear it in mind. [654]

There is wisdom in knowing whether or not to report a badness. [647]

I hope I don't write purple prose. I hope I never write it. But I can tell you, these and those who do, don't seem to right it. [644]

Your poor Percy didn't know he had a hero's name. The north of England could tell him. Or Wolfram von Eschenbach could. Or Andromeda. [639]

Don't you think "self storage" sounds like a Van Vogt novel? [622]

A limerick, how do I do it? I could say "I set my mind to it"; but actually I have to struggle and try, and if thought won't fit then I hew it. [611]

Send John Hertz to Japan



Japanese character *hana* • calligraphy by Seihou Mikado

HANA

Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance

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The Japanese word *hana* ("flower") is much used in poetry. Yes, the calligrapher's family has heard jokes for a long time about their name *Mikado*.

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