

matrix

The News Magazine of the
British Science Fiction Association

Issue 119

Bob Shaw Remembered

12 Monkeys . . . Hard SF . . . People, People, Everywhere . . . Pop Goes The Fanzine



£1.25

Spring 1996

matrix

the news magazine of the



British Science Fiction Association

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matrix 119 • spring 1996

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The deadline for the next issue is
Friday 31st May 1996

IMPORTANT

As soon as the cabling company gets its act together *Matrix* will have a new phone number. Internet services will also resume at the same time. If you need to call the magazine please do so via Maureen Speller on 01303 252939

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BSFA Membership

This costs £18 per year for UK residents, £9 for unwaged. Please enquire for overseas rates.

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Bob Shaw Dies

The celebrated Northern Irish author and friend of fans everywhere **Bob Shaw** died on 12 February. Last November he moved to America and married Nancy Tucker in Michigan, but his ill health forced their return in February in order to obtain NHS treatment. His last evening was spent with family and friends at his local, the Red Lion, and later that night he died quietly in his sleep.

The funeral was held on 19 February in Stockton Heath. There were many friends and fans present, including Chris Priest, Ramsey Campbell, Birmingham's Ray Bradbury, David Hardy, Rog Peyton, Ian Sorensen, Andy Sawyer and Sue Mason. Bob's family requested that donations in his honour be made to the Hope Hospice for Children via his daughter, Mrs Claire Hutt, at 17 Victoria Road, Stockton Heath, Warrington. Bob's widow, Nancy, has returned to America and messages of condolence can be sent to 695 Judd Road, Saline, Michigan 48176, USA.

See p.10 for a tribute by Paul Kincaid, and *Vector* for appreciations.

McAuley Wins Clarke Award

The 1995 Arthur C. Clarke Award was presented in a ceremony at the Science Museum on 17 April to **Paul J. McAuley** for his novel *Fairlyland*, with **Ken MacLeod's** *The Star Fraction* as runner-up. The other novels shortlisted were:

Patricia Anthony *Happy Policeman*;
Steve Baxter *The Time Ships*;
Chris Priest *The Prestige*;
Neal Stephenson *The Diamond Age*

In his speech the administrator of the award, Paul Kincaid, said that the voting was unprecedentedly close. The judges — David Langford and Steve Jeffery for the BSFA, Maurice Goldsmith and Maggie McDonald for the International Science Fiction Foundation, and Dr David Seed and Ian Watson for the SF Foundation — had great difficulty with such a strong shortlist; any of the books could have won. John Clute presented the award (a cheque for £1,000 and an inscribed bookend) and noted the strength of current British sf — the shortlist contained more UK authors (four) than any previous year — and the diversity of the contending novels.

• After some controversy in previous years, this time there should be little argument: the winner is British (and male), and the book is both indubitably science fiction and published by an sf publishing house (Gollancz) who will take advantage of the award.

Nebula Nominations

The shortlist for the Nebula Awards for best novel this year is:

John Barnes *Mother of Storms*;
Nancy Kress *Beggars and Choosers*;
Paul Park *Coelestin*;
Robert J. Sawyer *Hobson's Choice* (aka *The Terminal Experiment*);
Walter Jon Williams *Metropolitan*;
Gene Wolfe *Caldé of the Long Sun*.

NEWS

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Many thanks to

Brum SF Group, Tony Cullen, Benedict Cullum, David Garnett, Paul Kincaid, Dave Langford, *Locus*, John Ollis, Peterborough SF Group, Mark Plummer, Julie Rigby, Andy Sawyer, Kathy Shiel, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Martin Tudor, Bridget Wilkinson

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• **Brian Stableford** appears on the novella shortlist for his "Mortimer Gray's *History of Death*".

Drinking Wells

Peterborough is now the proud home to an **H. G. Wells** "theme pub". Called "H. G.'s", it was opened on March 4th by, imaginatively, **Jon Pertwee** and two attending Daleks. It has decor celebrating the life and work of H. G., and can be found in Queen Street behind the Central Post Office, next to Argus. (If any members are local to the area and wish to make a visit I'd be very interested in an impression of the place.)

Bits & Bobs

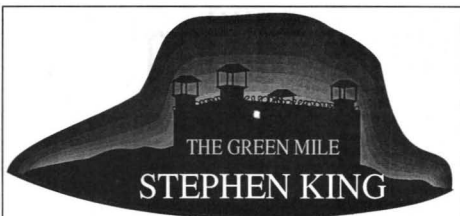
• Films are currently under production of two of **Robert Silverberg's** novels, *Needle in a Timestack* and *The Book of Skulls*.
• The US publisher White Wolf is taking over *New Worlds* magazine from Gollancz.

David Garnett will still be the editor, and the relaunch is scheduled for early next year.

• Switzerland's sf Museum *Maison d'Ailleurs* has gained a temporary reprieve from funding cuts, helped by over 7,000 signatures on a petition of protest.

• Apparently **William Shatner**, the erstwhile Captain Kirk of *Star Trek* and author (alleged), is having the bathroom of his Hollywood home remodelled so as to look like the bridge of the series' starship. Unsatisfied with this, he has commissioned a firm to provide a toilet designed to resemble the *Enterprise*. Please feel free to make up your own jokes....

• Form following Terry Pratchett fans will be interested to hear that there's a horse called "Captain Carrot". It's owned by Linda Ramsden and is doing rather well, which would probably not be the case had she called it "Corporal Nobbs".



Stephen King's latest novel, *The Green Mile*, is being published in six monthly instalments, each priced at £1.99 and containing about 100 pages. This works out at £12 for a normal length paperback, so you can see the appeal to Penguin, the publishers. Publication starts with "The Two Dead Girls" on 28 March, with further episodes available on 25 April, 30 May, 27 June, 25 July and 29 August. King claims that he has not yet finished writing the book: "I like the high wire aspect of it," he says in his foreword. He also reveals that the idea was due in part to Malcolm Edwards (a former editor of *Vector*) who speculated to a friend of King's that the "serial thriller" might be an idea worth reviving (many of Charles Dickens's books were published in this form) and suggested that "someone like Stephen King might make an interesting go of such an experiment". So now you know who to thank (or blame).

... NEWS continued ...

Gone . . . But Not Forgotten

Grania Davis, the widow of the *sf* writer **Avram Davidson**, has proposed an award for the "Best Out-of-Print Works of Imaginative Fiction". When Davidson died in 1993 most of his work was out of print, and the intention of the award is to bring to the attention of readers and publishers works which — through no lack of quality — are no longer available. The precise terms of the award are still uncertain, but Ms Davis hopes that it will stimulate new editions of forgotten masterpieces. Both novels and short stories will be eligible, and the authors can be alive or dead. She is actively encouraging involvement from readers, and welcomes ideas and nominations. So get thinking!

You can get nomination forms from her at 557 Whitewood Drive, San Rafael, California, CA 94903, USA (please enclose an SAE); or by email at g.davis@genie.com.

Birmingham Moves!

The Brum SF Group, one of the oldest local *sf* clubs in the country and sponsor of the annual Novacon conventions, has moved to a new venue following management changes at the previous location. Meetings (held at 7.45pm on the third Friday of each month) will now be at the **Prince Hotel, Station Street, Birmingham**. The BSFG has regular guests — last year they included Tom Holt, David Gemmell, Peter Hamilton, Storm Constantine, Iain Banks, Robert Rankin, and Bob Shaw, who until his recent death, was along with Harry Harrison and Brian Aldiss, an Honorary President and longtime supporter of the group. New members are welcome; the annual subscription is £10 per person (£13 for two at the same address) which includes reduced rates for meetings and a subscription to the excellent monthly *Brum Group News* newsletter. Enquiries to: Sarah Freakey, c/o 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, B66 4SH.

Awards Round-Up

• **Chris Priest** won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for his recent novel *The Prestige*. The award, along with a cheque for £3,000, was presented in a ceremony in Edinburgh on 26 January. The novel was also nominated for the Clarke Award.

• **Steve Baxter's** *The Time Ships* (also a Clarke Award nominee) won the Kurd Lasswitz award for the best foreign language novel published in Germany last year.

• The Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards, presented at Conflu, the annual U.S. gathering of fanzine fans, went to:

- ◻ Writer **Andrew P. Hooper** (r.u. Sharon Farber, Dave Langford, Simon Ounsley);
- ◻ Artist **D. West** (r.u. Ian Gunn, Teddy Harvia, Dan Steffan);
- ◻ Fanzine **Apparatchik** (r.u. *Attitude*, *BLAT!*, *Mimosa*).

Congratulations, especially to the pride of Leeds, D. West, and the *Attitude* team.

• **Greg Egan's** novel *Distress* won the Aurealis Award for excellence in Australian *sf*.

• There was a tie for this year's Tiptree Award; it went jointly to **Elizabeth Hand** for *Waking the Moon* and **Theodore Koszka** for *The Memoirs of Elizabeth Frankenstein*.

• **Greg Benford** won a 1995 Lord Award — a statue and \$2,500 — for his work in astrophysics and popularising science through his novels.

Omni Present No More

The glossy US popular science magazine *Omni*, founded by Bob Guccione in the 1978, has folded. Last year it announced that it would concentrate on its net edition, and reduced the schedule of the printed edition to quarterly; sales dropped substantially, and the winter edition was the last to be printed. *Omni* published *sf* stories too, though rarely more than one per issue. Despite this relatively small output it had an enviable reputation for

quality, and had some excellent fiction editors including Ben Bova, Robert Sheekley, and in particular Ellen Datlow, who, as well as pulling in the big names, promoted new writers enthusiastically and emphasised literary quality; many stories which appeared there won awards and have become classics.

• Another loss to US publishing is the closure of the small-press Pulphouse, an imprint which published a magazine of high-quality *sf* / fantasy / horror, and numerous books. Founded by Kristine Kathryn Rusch and Dean Wesley Smith in 1988, the company specialised in limited editions and republication of classics.

Sale Of The Trifids

The estate of **John Wyndham** has put the writer's papers up for sale. Included are the handwritten manuscript for *The Day of the Trifids*, four unpublished mystery novels, and draft versions of some unpublished *sf* stories. The price being asked is £100,000, and reportedly the SF Foundation at Liverpool University is interested, but may have difficulty paying this much. An application for a grant from the National Lottery has been mooted . . .

Bits and Bobs . . .

• Congratulations to *sf* writer **Anne Gay** and author / interviewer **Stan Nicholls**, who were married in Birmingham on 31 March. David Gemmell was Best Man, and Freda Warrington was Best Vampire.

• . . . and to TAFF candidate, Birmingham SF Group Chairman and *Critical Wave* publisher **Martin Tudor** and **Helena Gough**, who were married in Dudley on 4 April.

• Speaking of TAFF, *SFX* magazine, which employs Martin's arch-rival **M. J. "Simó" Simpson**, has been spotted entering the fray: careful reading of an item in December's issue reveals a reference to a previously unknown trilogy by Michael Kube-McDowell called *Sim O'Fortiff*. February's issue carried a letter from Rob Newman correcting this: the trilogy — comprising *No Way*, *No Chance*, and *Over My Dead Body* — was actually written by one Martin Tudor . . .

Win A Million!

(pesetas)

Every year since 1991 the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya has held an open competition for the UPC Science Fiction Award, given to an *sf* novella. Entries in English are acceptable, and the authors are anonymous until judging is completed. First prize is 1,000,000 pesetas (about £5,200) and publication in an anthology. As the leaflet won't photocopy well I'll reprint the full rules here; if you wish to enter please read them carefully (especially sections 2, 3 and 8).

1. Any unpublished narrative work which comes within the **science fiction** genre may take part in the competition.

2. The works presented may be written in **Catalan, Spanish, English or French**. They must be approximately of 70 to 115 pages (25,000 to 40,000 words), typewritten and double-spaced, and two copies must be submitted. Manuscripts will not be returned.

3. The author must sign his or her narrative with a pseudonym, and enclose a sealed envelope containing the following details:

Full name, personal identification number (identity card or similar) [I would think a passport or National Insurance number would be acceptable. — CT], **full address and contact telephone or fax**.

The **title of the work** and the **pseudonym of the author** must appear on the outside of this envelope. Members of the UPC community [Students and staff thereof, I imagine. — CT] must also state **UPC Member** on the outside of the envelope.

4. Manuscripts must be sent to:

Consell Social de la UPC

Edifici NEXUS

Gran Capità 2-4

08034- Barcelona (Spain)

Tel: (93) 401 63 43 - Fax: (93) 401 77 66

The envelope should be clearly marked:

UPC Science Fiction Award 1996

5. The final date for presentation of manuscripts for the 1996 competition is **September 10, 1996**. The decision of the jury, which will be final, will be made public before the end of 1996.

6. The jury will award a **first prize of 1,000,000 PTA**, and if it sees fit a **special mention of 250,000 PTA**. A further **mention of 250,000 PTA** may also be awarded for the best narrative presented by a member of UPC.

7. The competition, which is held every year, may be declared vacant.

8. The prize and mention winners grant the rights of the first Spanish and Catalan editions to UPC, and waiver their right to any other monetary remuneration from these editions.

9. The winning novella will be published by UPC through Ediciones B, in its collection *NOVA ciencia ficción*.

10. The jury for the 1996 competition will be formed by **Lluís Anglada**, **Miquel Barceló**, **Josep Casanovas**, **Jordi José** and **Manuel Moreno**.

11. The participation in the **UPC Science Fiction Award 1996** involves the acceptance of its rules.

Miquel Barceló is a computer-systems professor and edits the *sf/fantasy* line of the publishers Ediciones B; he was also a contributor to the recent Clute / Nicholls *SF Encyclopedia*.

* All unquoted remarks by Chris Terran. Abbreviations: pb — paperback; hb — hardback; tp — trade paperback; pp — page count; coll. — collection of stories (same author); anth. — anthology of stories (different authors).

HIGHLIGHTS

Ursula K. Le Guin *Four Ways to Forgiveness*; Terry Pratchett *Feet of Clay*; Arthur C. Clarke & Mike McQuay *Richter 10*; Ian Watson *Hard Questions* (Gollancz); Robert Holdstock *Ancient Echoes*; Kim Stanley Robinson *Blue Mars*; Richard Calder *Dead Things*; Marion Zimmer Bradley *Lady of the Trillium*; Stephen Donaldson *This Day All Gods Die*; Isaac Asimov *Magic* (Voyager). Brian Stableford *Salamander's Fire*; Terry Brooks *First King of Shannara* (Legend); Maureen F. McHugh *Half the Day is Night* (Orbit); Harry Turtledove *World War: Upsetting the Balance* (Hodder & Stoughton); Clive Barker *Sacrament* (HarperCollins).

Voyager



... is the new sf and fantasy imprint of HarperCollins.

Janny Wurts *Warhost of Vastmark* (5 Feb; £5.99 pb) — Epic fantasy, volume 3 in the "Wars of Light and Shadows" series.

David Bischoff *Space Precinct 3: Alien Island* (5 Feb; £4.99 pb) — Latest tie-in novel to the weak Gerry Anderson TV series.

Ursula Le Guin *The Dispossessed* (19 Feb; £4.99 pb) — Reissue of the classic utopian novel.

Gill Alderman *The Memory Palace* (4 Mar; £5.99 pb) — First publication. "In Gill Alderman's powerful novel, magic crosses over from the realm of fantasy to the present day, and it is strange, beautiful and deadly."

Katherine Kerr *Daggerspell* (4 Mar; £5.99 pb) — Extensively revised reissue of the first volume of the "Dervery" series. Volume 2, *Darkspeil*, follows in May.

Marion Zimmer Bradley *Lady of the Trillium* (4 Mar; £5.99 pb) — Third in the multi-author "Trillium" fantasy series. The fourth, *Sky Trillium* by Julian May, will be out in July.

Janny Wurts *Shadowlane* (4 Mar; £4.99 pb) — Reissue of the conclusion of the "Cycle of Fire" fantasy trilogy.

Isaac Asimov *Magic* (4 Mar; £15.99 hb) — "The final fantasy collection."

Philip K. Dick *Now Wait For Last Year* (18 Mar; £5.99 pb) — Very welcome reissue of a hard-to-get Dick sf novel. Voyager are also reissuing *Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said* and *The Divine Invasion* in May and July.

Robin Hobb *Assassin's Apprentice* (18 Mar; £4.99 pb) — Paperback of Hobb's debut novel.

Robin Hobb *Royal Assassin* (21 Mar; £15.99 hb) — Fantasy. Follow-up to *Assassin's Apprentice*.

Richard Calder *Dead Things* (9 Apr; £4.99 pb, 201pp) — Sf. First publication of the sequel to the exotic, controversial and highly contemporary *Dead Girls and Dead Boys*. Litpop of a high order.

Isaac Asimov *The Complete Robot* (9 Apr; £5.99 pb) — "The definitive anthology of Asimov's stunning visions of a robotic future."

Robert Holdstock *Ancient Echoes* (9 Apr; £15.99 hb, 344pp) — Continuation of the loosely connected series which includes *The Fetch*, *Necromancer*, and the originally pseudonymously-written (as by "Robert Faulcon") six-volume *Nighthunter* series.

Stephen Donaldson *This Day All Gods Die* (9 Apr; £16.99 hb) — Fifth and final volume in the "Gap" series.

Colin Greenland *Seasons of Plenty* (22 Apr; £5.99 pb) — Paperback of the second Tabitha Jute novel.

Kim Stanley Robinson *Blue Mars* (25 Apr; £15.99 hb) — The long-awaited finale to Robinson's *Mars* trilogy.

Kevin J. Anderson *Ground Zero* (3 Jun; £4.99 pb) — The third *X-Files* tie-in novel. The fourth — also by Anderson — will also be published on the same date but is yet untitled.

Gollancz



... has a very busy schedule in the coming months, with some excellent reissues and two new imprints. Vista (commercial and genre writing) and Indigo ("quality" fiction — apparently "genre" writing isn't — and non-fiction).

Arthur C. Clarke & Mike McQuay *Richter 10* (Feb; £15.99 hb, 341pp) — McQuay's last book; he died shortly after completing it. Clarke's contribution to this is just an 800 word movie outline.

Diana Wynne Jones *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* (Mar; £4.99 pb, 192pp, ill.) — Hilarious A-Z of fantasy clichés, with entries on Beer (always foams, always in tankards), the various types of virgins, and how horses reproduce.

Joe R. Lansdale *The Two-Bear Mambo* (Apr; £8.99 pb, 288pp) — Follow up (and sequel) to the super *Mucho Mojo*. Reportedly David Lynch is set to film this.

D. G. Compton *Back of Town Blues* (Apr; £15.99 hb, 224pp) — Futuristic crime thriller, sequel to *Justice City*.

D. M. Thomas *The White Hotel* (Apr; £5.99 pb) — Reissue. Not strictly sf (though Thomas had his early work — usually poetry — published in *New Worlds* in the 60s), but a wonderful book: read it.

Kurt Vonnegut *The Sirens of Titan* (Apr; £5.99 pb) — Reissue.

Simon R. Green *Deathstalker Rebellion* (Apr; £5.99 pb)

David Langford *Terry Pratchett's Discworld Quiz Book: The Unseen University Challenge* (May; £3.99 pb) — This should be excellent: Langford is one of the funniest writers around, and Pratchett is, er, one of the funniest writers around. Even though Langford reports that he was required to "dumb down" some of the questions.

Terry Pratchett *Feet of Clay* (May; £15.99 hb, 288pp) — The latest Discworld novel, described as a "Howdunit" and "a chilling tale of poisoning and pottery". In an autumnal and fog-bound Ankh-Morpork the City Watch attempts to catch a murderer who can't be seen, while coping with its own problems: a werewolf with Pre-Lunar Tension, Corporal Nobbs hobnobbing with the nobs, and a new dwarf recruit who wears earrings and eyeshadow.

Terry Pratchett *Eric* (May; £3.99 pb) — Reissue.

Daniel Keyes *Flowers for Algernon* (May; £5.99 pb) — Reissue of a genuine, if sentimental, classic.

Jenny Jones *The Blue Manor* (May; £5.99 pb) — Paperback of a superb supernatural novel; recommended.

William Gibson & Bruce Sterling *The Difference Engine* (May; £4.99 pb) — Reissue of what I perversely insist on thinking is the best book by either of them. Recommended.

Ursula K. Le Guin *Four Ways to Forgiveness* (May; £15.99 hb, 192pp) — A new collection of four linked novellas set in the Hainish universe of *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

Phillip Mann *The Burning Forest* (May; £16.99 hb, 272pp) — Volume 4 (the conclusion) in the Roman-inspired alternative world fantasy series "A Land Fit For Heroes".

Phillip Mann *The Dragon Wakes* (May; £4.99 pb) — Paperback of Volume 3 of "A Land Fit For Heroes".

Gregory Benford *Matter's End* (May; £15.99 hb, 304pp) — 21 of Benford's short stories, all collected for the first time.

Arthur C. Clarke *The Snows of Olympus* (Jun; £9.99 pb, 120pp ill.) — Paperback of Clarke's vision of a terraformed Mars, using many computer-generated images.

Ian Watson *Hard Questions* (Jun; £16.99 hb, 224pp) — New novel from one of the UK's real sf treasures. "A new generation quantum computer may hold the answer to life after death — but it may also destroy life as we know it."

Todd Wiggins *Zeitgeist* (Jun; £9.99 pb, 288pp) — "A *fin de siècle* fantasy in which Tom Robbins meets Quentin Tarantino. It's 1999, and one woman is about to get the journalistic scoop of a lifetime: an interview with America's most wanted criminal on the eve of his execution, an event that will usher in the new millennium at 12:01, 2000." Weirdness and mayhem with cyber-junky Internet terrorists, Welsh bisexuals with a taste for sex and violence, an excommunicated priest who is a Jewish schizophrenic, and more. It says here.

Peter James *TechnoTerror Stories* (Jun; £7.99 hb, £3.99 pb, 96pp) — First children's book from a respected horror / fantasy author.

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Orion / Millennium



Why an ant? The only clue is perhaps Millennium's publicity magazine, called *Antivay*.

• **Greg Egan** *Axiomatic* (4 Mar; £4.99 pb, 368pp) — Collection of 18 stories from the current master of speculative hard sf. Most of the stories first appeared in *Interzone*, though there are two unpublished ones. Recommended.

• **Mercedes Lackey & Larry Dixon** *The White Gryphon* (4 Mar; £4.99 pb, 305pp) — Fantasy. Second volume in the *Mage Wars* trilogy, set 1500 years before the events in Lackey's *Valdemar* series.

• **Mercedes Lackey & Larry Dixon** *The Silver Gryphon* (18 Mar; £15.99 hb, £9.99 tp, 305pp) — Final volume in the *Mage Wars* trilogy.

• **C. D. B. Bryan** *Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Alien Abduction and UFOs* — *Witnesses and Scientists Report* (1 Apr; £6.99 pb, 642pp) — A report on the 1992 Abduction Study Conference at MIT, alongside interviews and transcripts of hypnosis sessions of alleged abductees.

• **Michael Moorcock** *Sailing to Utopia* (1 Apr; £6.99 pb, 547pp) — Volume 5 in the handsome 'Eternal Champion' series. Includes three novels — *The Ice Schooner*, *The Black Corridor* and *The Distant Sun* — and a short story, 'Flux'. Moorcock's introduction has spirited defences of the New Wave (as opposed to the output of those 'Angry Young Men who, while they failed entirely to confront any of the issues they raised, succeeded dramatically in lowering the tone and the aspirations of the modern novel'), and of the sf of Lester, Sheckley and particularly Philip Dick, whose work 'seems increasingly to describe our present world, while the world of Heinlein becomes more than ever divorced from contemporary realities'.

• **Sandy Schofield** *Aliens: Rogue* (1 Apr; £4.99 pb, 288pp) — Based on the Dark Horse comic. 'Schofield' is actually the pen name of Kristine Kathryn Rusch and Dean Wesley Smith, under which they write their spin-off books.

• **Sarah Ash** *Songspinners* (15 Apr; £15.99 hb, £9.99 tp, 325pp) — New fantasy with a fine Klimt-like cover from the Beckenham, Kent resident author of *Moths to a Flame* (see below). Ash uses her musical training in this story of a woman's desire to compose and sing against the orders of her father.

• **Sarah Ash** *Moths to a Flame* (15 Apr; £4.99 pb, 296pp) — Paperback of her previous (and debut) novel.

Corgi / Bantam



• **David Gemmell** *The Legend of Deathwalker* (1 Feb; £15.99 hb, 334pp) — Completion of the 'Druss' series begun with *Legend* (Gemmell's first novel, published in 1984) and *Druss the Legend*.

• **Nicholas Christopher** *Veronica* (4 Apr; £8.99 tp, 321pp) — Christopher is a well-known American poet, though he has written one previous novel (*The Soloist*, 1986). This rather self-consciously literary fantasy set in contemporary (though almost an alternative) New York wears its research a little heavily — Elizabethan alchemy, Tibetan mysticism, Chinese 'Feng Shui', black magic — is somewhat uninviting but carries you along well enough. It's mainly a mystery and a love story, though the publicity describes it as 'a multilayered magical quest'.

• **Terry Pratchett & Stephen Briggs** *Mort: The Play* (9 May; £4.99 pb, 171pp)

• **Terry Pratchett & Stephen Briggs** *Wyrd Sisters: The Play* (9 May; £4.99 pb, 158pp) — Both adaptations by Stephen 'CMOT' Briggs originally done for his amateur dramatics group, the Studio Theatre Club in Oxford.

• **Barbara Hambly** *Children of the Jedi* (9 May; £4.99 pb, 395pp + 20pp advertising) — Hambly, current president of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, has a master's degree in medieval history and a black belt in Shotokan karate. The relevance of this to her spin-off *Star Wars* books (this one featuring a planet rejoicing in the name 'Pzob') is mysterious, but it's the kind of thing publicity departments enjoy telling you... I'll just tell you that she wrote the fine vampire novel *Immortal Blood*.

• **Steve Perry** *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* (9 May; £10.99 hb, 340pp) — 'Now, for the first time ever, comes a novel that reveals an untold story that took place between the movies *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*: a novel in which Darth Vader still lives — and battles a new villain every bit as evil and powerful as the Dark Lord of the Sith himself.' One presumes 'Sith' is a devious anagram. Mr Perry lives in the improbably-named Beaverton in Oregon.



Legend



• **David Gemmell** *The Hawk Eternal* (1 Feb; £5.99 pb) — Fantasy.

• **Andrew Harman** *The Scrying Game* (1 Feb; £16.99 hb, £4.99 pb) — Simultaneous hard- and soft-back publication for Harman's new comic fantasy.

• **Deepak Chopra** *The Return of Merlin* (7 Mar; £5.99 pb) — Fantasy.

• **Terry Brooks** *First King of Shannara* (21 Mar; £16.99 hb) — Fantasy.

• **John Brosnan** *Have Demon Will Travel* (18 Apr; £4.99 pb) — Sequel to the scatalogically humorous fantasy *Damned and Fancy*.

• **Brian Stableford** *Salamander's Fire* (16 May; £16.99 hb) — Second volume in Stableford's very intriguing new sf trilogy, set on a planet where the ultra-fast decay of nearly every material object has many ramifications for the human colonists, whose origins — and the manipulations performed on their genome to enable them to survive — are largely forgotten. Biological speculation at its best,

and recommended. The first volume is:

• **Brian Stableford** *Serpent's Blood* (16 May; £5.99 pb)

• **Greg Bear** (ed.) *New Legends* (16 May; £5.99 pb) — Paperback of Bear's hard sf anthology of all-new stories.

• **Greg Keyes** *Waterborn* (16 May; £5.99 pb) — Fantasy; first publication.

• **Christopher Stasheff** *The Oathbound Wizard* (20 Jun; £4.99 pb) — Gently humorous fantasy.

• **Greg Bear** *Legacy* (20 Jun; £5.99 pb) — Paperback of the latest book in 'The Way' series.

• **Terry Brooks** *Witches' Brew* (20 Jun; £5.99 pb) — Fantasy.

• **Philip G. Williamson** *Citadel* (20 Jun; £5.99 pb) — Fantasy.

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Orbit



- **Maureen F. McHugh** *Half the Day is Night* (Feb; £6.99 pb) — New novel from the author of the much praised *China Mountain Zang*. John Clute calls it "A nearly perfect work," and Asimov's said it has "lived up to the promise of her first superlative book. What emerges is a kind of Graham Greene tropical adventure, a suspenseful narrative of First Worlders trapped in a hostile non-Anglo society."
- **L. E. Modesitt, Jr** *The Death of Chaos* (Mar; £16.99 hb) — Book Five in the 'Saga of Recluse'.
- **L. E. Modesitt, Jr** *The Order War* (Mar; £6.99 pb) — Book Four in the series described by *Interzone* as "a splendid fantasy that grips from the first sentence."
- **Peter Crowther** (ed.) *Blue Motel* (Mar; £5.99 pb) — Horror anthology, third in the 'Narrow Houses' series.
- **J. V. Jones** *The Baker's Boy* (Apr; £6.99 pb) — First UK publication of the first volume in a fantasy series, 'The Book of Words'. Katherine Kurtz calls it "A deliciously intricate tale." Jones (a woman; perhaps her name is Jenny and so needs to distinguish herself) was born in Liverpool and now lives in California.
- **Stephen Palmer** *Memory Seed* (Apr; £5.99 pb) — St. a first novel from a young UK writer. "There is one city left. And soon that will be gone, for the streets of Kray (interesting choice of name — CJ) are crumbling beneath a wave of exotic and lethal vegetation as it creeps south, threatening to wipe out the last traces of humanity. In the desperate struggle for survival most Krayans live from day to day, awaiting salvation from their goddesdies or the government. Only a few believe that the future might lie in their own hands."
- **Shaun Hutson** *Stolen Angels* (Apr; £15.99 hb) — New horror novel.
- **Shaun Hutson** *Lucy's Child* (Apr; £5.99 pb) — Horror from our very own splatter king.
- **Tom Holt** *My Hero* (May; £15.99 hb) — New comic fantasy about a woman writer whose books start writing back...
- **Tom Holt** *Djinn Rummy* (May; £5.99 pb) — Paperback of his previous novel. A "hilarious work of comic genius", it says here.

HarperCollins



- **Paul Preuss** *Core* (Mar; £4.99 pb, 400pp) — "A modern *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* combining the excitement of big science with the tension of imminent global disaster" The planet's magnetic poles are fluctuating wildly, and humanity's Only Hope is to drill a hole to the centre of the Earth! Goodness me. (Actually, I rather liked an earlier 'big science' novel of his, *Broken Symmetries*.)
- **Robin Briggs** *Witches and Neighbours* (Mar; £25.00 hb, 448pp) — Non-fiction. "A revolutionary re-examination of the history of European witchcraft."
- **George R. R. Martin** *A Game of Thrones* (Mar; £15.99 hb, 676pp) — Book One of the 'Song of Ice and Fire' fantasy trilogy.
- **Peter Atkins** *Big Thunder* (Apr; £14.99 hb, 400pp) — A Kim Newman-esque sounding tale concerning Valentine Dyson (I imagine this is a reference to Valentine Dyall, the black-voiced narrator of the *Appointment with Fear* radio series), vicious doaked avenger of the 1930's pulp magazine *Strange Thrills*, who materialises in present-day Manhattan. He saves a girl from a mugger who he then tortures to death, "the while delivering a lecture on the nature of the Universe, of reality before the Fall, the true significance of the Alchemists' Great Work — and the approaching reconciliation of the living with the dead." Sounds intriguing. Liverpool-born (now Los Angeles resident) Atkins wrote the screenplays for three of the four *Hellraiser* films, and this is his second novel: the first was *Morningstar*.

Others

- **John Goldthwaite** *The Natural History of Make-Believe* (OUP: Feb; £20.00, 336pp) — An examination of children's fantasy literature, from Perrault to Sendak. Goldthwaite has some, ah, interesting views; of C. S. Lewis (whose *Narnia* books he regards as deeply blasphemous and misogynistic) he says "the feared women and disliked them categorically... Whenever he sees them in a more threatening rôle, he retreats, interestingly, into the sadomasochistic rhetoric of pulp literature." Hmm.
- **Harry Tuttle** *World War: Upsetting the Balance* (Hodder & Stoughton: Mar; £16.99 hb, 468pp) — Third in the alternative-world tetralogy concerning an invasion by lacertine aliens during World War II.
- **Jagdish Mehra** *The Beat of a Different Drum: The Life and Science of Richard Feynman* (OUP: Mar; £14.99 pb, 600pp ill.) — Biography of the great physicist and bongo-playing, Tuva-obsessed eccentric. If you haven't tried them I can warmly recommend "Surely You're Joking, Mr Feynman!" (Counterpoint, 1986) and "What Do You Care What Other People Think?" (Unwin, 1990), two collections of interviews, stories, reminiscences, anecdotes and autobiographical notes collected by Ralph Leighton. The second has the full story of Feynman's appearances as a member of the committee investigating the Challenger shuttle disaster, and his famous demonstration of how the external tank's O-rings would fail if kept at too low a temperature. An artist. Nobel-winning scientist, devotee of strip clubs (where he would do physics as he watched), raconteur, musician (of sorts), Feynman — who died in 1988 — was an extraordinary man.
- **Sheila Holligon** *Bridestone* (Creed: 25 Apr; £5.99 pb, 246pp) — Erotic horror from the author of the promising *Nightdrift*, also from Creed: this one is considerably more explicit (trans. muckier).
- **Andy Mangels** *Star Wars: The Essential Guide to Characters* (Boxtree: Apr; £14.99 pb, 200pp ill.) — 'Biographies' of all the main characters, including much not shown in the films.
- **John Barrow & Frank Tipler** *The Anthropic Cosmological Principle* (OUP: Apr; £11.99 pb, 726pp) — Reissue of the famous examination of humanity's place in the universe.
- **Sophie Aldred & Mike Tucker** *Ace* (Virgin: Apr; £17.99 hb, 126pp, ill.) — Profusely illustrated look at Aldred's time as Ace in *Dr Who*.
- **Robert Hellbron** *Visions of the Future* (OUP: Apr; £7.99 pb, 144pp) — A philosopher's view of how we have perceived the future throughout history.
- **David Adams Leeming & Margaret Adams Leeming** *A Dictionary of Creation Myths* (OUP: Apr; £10.99 pb, 344pp, ill.) — Surely an essential reference for those writing fantasy novels.
- **Bram Stoker** *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (Oxford: May; £4.99 pb, 256pp) — The original version of a hard-to-get tale of ritual magic, published in 1903 as a successor to *Dracula*. Also includes the alternative ending of the 1912 edition.
- **Marie Corelli** *The Sorrows of Satan* (Oxford: May; £5.99 pb, 496pp) — Only UK edition of an obscure Victorian melodrama. The Devil visits a morally corrupt London in 1895 and searches for someone who can resist temptation.
- **William Horwood** *Wanderers of the Wolfways* (May; £15.99 hb, 400pp) — Second in the 'Wolves of Time' series.
- **Peter Straub** *The Hellfire Club* (May; £15.99 hb, 512pp) — Thriller about a serial killer from Stephen King's past.
- **Raymond E. Feist** *Rise of a Merchant Prince* (May; £9.99 pb, 406pp) — Fantasy, volume 2 in 'The Serpentwar Saga'.
- **Clive Barker** *Sacrament* (Jun; £15.99 hb, 400pp) — Barker turns to ecological issues with this dark fantasy concerning "the mystery at the heart of nature".
- **John Baxter** *Steven Spielberg: The Unauthorised Biography* (Jun; £18.00 hb, 448pp ill.) — Biography of the most successful sf film-maker ever.

Locus Recommended Reading

Every year, like *Vector*, the US sf news magazine *Locus* conducts a poll of its reviewers for their favourite books of the year, and last year's proved particularly good for UK authors and publishers. There's a fair measure of agreement with reviewers on this side of the pond: Baxter's *The Time Ships*, McAuley's *Fairyland* and Stephenson's *The Diamond Age* are all up for the Clarke Award (the others weren't eligible for the *Locus* poll). The new (ish) Rutland-based Peter F. Hamilton is making a mark in the US (unsurprisingly, some might say, given his fairly libertarian — by UK standards, anyway — approach to sf), and Northern Ireland's Ian McDonald — who was first published in the US, some ten years ago — continues to gather praise. There are an impressive number of women in the sf list, giving the lie to the oft-repeated assertion that women only write fantasy, though last year's Hugo-winner Lois McMaster Bujold is notable by her absence.

Amongst publishers, Gollancz did remarkably well: though they don't even appear in *Locus*'s chart of top publishers by volume, they came third in the chart of recommended books. Similarly, Millennium, HarperCollins and Legend all placed well in recommendations despite a small volume of published books. The UK is vastly over-represented here, and the editors — in particular Richard Evans and Jo Fletcher at Gollancz — deserve considerable praise.

On a lighter note, the fantasy list appears to show some evidence for the paucity of fantasist's imagination, at least when it comes to the titles of their books. My keen eye notes a distinct similarity between *Crown of Shadows*, *Harp of Winds*, *Stone of Tears*, *The Tower of Beowulf*, *The Silent Strength of Stones*, *City of Bones*, and others. Or perhaps simply calling a book "[The] *Something of Something*" is sufficient, by sympathetic magic, to get *The Praise of Reviewers*, *The Loyalty of the Public*, and *The Eternal Gratitude of Publishers, of Bank Managers* . . .

— Chris Terran

SF Novels

John Barnes *Kaleidoscope Century*
 Stephen Baxter *The Time Ships*
 Greg Bear *Legacy*
 Gregory Benford *Sailing Bright Eternity*
 David Brin *Brightness Reef*
 C. J. Cherryh *Invader*
 Christopher Evans *Mortal Remains*
 Valerie J. Freireich *Testament*
 Nicola Griffith *Slow River*
 Peter F. Hamilton *The Nano Flower*
 Jonathan Lethem *Amnesia Moon*
 Lisa Mason *The Golden Nineties*
 Paul J. McAuley *Fairyland*
 Ian McDonald *Chaga*
 Sean McMullen *Mirrorson Rising*
 Linda Nagata *Tech-Heaven*
 Rebecca Ore *Gaia's Toys*
 Charles Pellegrino & George Zebrowski *The Killing Star*
 Robert Reed *An Exaltation of Larks*
 Mary Rosenblum *The Stone Garden*
 Melissa Scott *Shadow Man*
 Charles Sheffield *The Ganymede Club*
 Neal Stephenson *The Diamond Age*
 Harry Turtledove *Worldwar: Tilting the Balance*
 Walter Jon Williams *Metropolitan*

Fantasy Novels

Orson Scott Card *Alvin Journeyman*
 C. J. Cherryh *Fortress in the Eye of Time*
 Jules Feiffer *A Barrel of Laughs, A Vale of Tears*
 C. S. Friedman *Crown of Shadows*
 Maggie Furey *Harp of Winds*
 Parke Godwin *The Tower of Beowulf*
 Terry Goodkind *Stone of Tears*
 Elizabeth Hand *Waking the Moon*
 Robin Hobb *Assassin's Apprentice*
 Nina Kiriki Hoffman *The Silent Strength of Stones*
 Guy Gavriel Kay *The Lions of Al-Rassan*
 Paul Kearney *Hawkwound's Voyage*
 Mercedes Lackey *Storm Rising*
 Patricia A. McKillip *The Book of Atrix Wolfe*
 Michael Moorcock *Blood*
 Terry Pratchett *Maskerade*
 Michael Scott Rohan *The Lord of Middle Air*
 Sean Russell *World Without End*
 William Browning Spencer *Zod Wallop*
 Sean Stewart *Resurrection Man*
 Martha Wells *City of Bones*
 Elizabeth Willey *A Sorcerer and a Gentleman*

Horror / Dark Fantasy Novels

James P. Blaylock *All the Bells on Earth*
 Jack Cady *The Off Season*
 Nancy A. Collins *Paint it Black*
 Barbara Hambly *Travelling With the Dead*
 Jenny Jones *The Blue Manor*
 Stephen King *Rose Madder*
 Tanith Lee *Vivia*
 Kim Newman *The Bloody Red Baron*
 Tim Powers *Expiration Date*
 Anne Rice *Memnoch the Devil*
 Alan Rogers *Bone Music*
 Melanie Tem *Desmodus*
 Tom Tryon *Night Magic*
 S. P. Somtow *Vanitas*

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Obituaries

Bob Shaw

1931 - 1996

I REMEMBER MEETING Bob once at a New Year party. As is the way with these things, at one point we found ourselves drinking together in the kitchen. During the conversation I happened to mention that I lived in Folkestone, and he started questioning me about the town for all the world as if he planned to move there. It was flattering, and it was only later that I realised that I had done most of the talking. It was later still that I learned this was a common trick he used; it allowed him to find out about other people while avoiding talking about himself.

I think, above all else, it is this abiding interest in other people that I value most in his books. I love the invention — slow glass is such a perfect idea, and how typical of Bob that he would use it for a story as elegaic as “Light of Other Days” — and the variety of his work. I enjoyed the humour, of course. My earliest memory of a convention is Bob delivering one of his “serious scientific talks” at the 1975 Eastercon, and those exercises in surreal logic, faultlessly delivered in that dry, slightly hesitant brogue, are far funnier than any of his intentionally comic novels. But above all, it is the people in his books that stand out. He wrote what were generally archetypal science fiction adventures — exploring the Dyson sphere in *Orbitsville*, interplanetary travel by balloon in *The Ragged Astronauts*, discovering a neutrino planet in *A Wreath of Stars*, or even, in what I persist in considering his best book, travelling beyond death in *The Palace of Eternity* — stories that in other hands would have been adequately peopled by a decent bit of cardboard. Bob was never that kind of writer, the people mattered which is why they came so vividly off the page; the people mattered in life too, which is why he was always the easiest person to talk to. Conventions will never be the same without him.

— Paul Kincaid

Margaret St Clair

1911 - 1995

MARGARET ST CLAIR died on 22 November 1995, aged 84. During the 1950s and early 1960s, between the heyday of C. L. Moore and the emergence of Ursula Le Guin, Kate Wilhelm and Anne McCaffrey, science fiction was an almost exclusively male preserve. The number of women writers of any real significance could be counted on the fingers of one hand; Katherine MacLean and Kit Reed were certainly of that number, and so was Margaret St Clair. Her best work, notably the Oona and Jik stories that appeared in *Startling Stories* in the late 40s and her first novel, *Agent of the Unknown*, use conventional space opera settings and characteristics, but subtly subvert the conventions to create stories more ambiguous, more humane and more pessimistic than the norm. During the 50s she also wrote a series of highly successful and generally more stylish fantasy stories under the name Idris Seabright.

— Paul Kincaid

G. C. Edmondson

1922 - 1995

G. C. EDMONDSON, a writer who is best known for his elegant short novel, *The Ship That Sailed the Time Stream*, died of cancer on 14 December 1995; he was 73. Born in Mexico — his full name was Jose Mario Garry Ordóñez Edmondson y Cotton — and educated in Vienna, both his science fiction and his westerns (which he wrote under a variety of pseudonyms) show a strong sympathy for Native Americans. He began writing in the mid-1950s and his first collection, *Stranger Than You Think*, was published in an Ace Double with his first novel, *The Ship That Sailed the Time Stream*. He wrote a sequel to this humorous time travel story in *To Sail the Century Sea*, but few of his other novels achieved either the same exhilarating sense of light adventure or the same success. Edmondson was married three times and is survived by his wife Carmen, two sons and two daughters.

— Paul Kincaid

Jack Finney

1911 - 1995

JACK FINNEY, who died on 14 November 1995 aged 84, will probably always be best known as the author of *The Bodysnatchers*, which was filmed in 1956 as *The Invasion of the Bodysnatchers* (and has been filmed again twice since then). A classic story of alien pods which take on all the physical characteristics of human beings, it brilliantly caught the Cold War paranoia of the age. The original Don Siegel film is rightly lauded as one of the most memorable sf films of all time, but it has cast a misleading shadow over Finney's work. The dark, lonely terror which fed *The Bodysnatchers* was actually out of step with most of

his work, which ranged from action-adventure stories such as *Five Against the House* or *Assault on a Queen* to delicate ghost stories such as *Marion's Wall* to perhaps his finest work, the rich, atmospheric, time travel novel *Time and Again*. The thing that, over and above all else, the science fiction world loses with the death of Jack Finney is something that may seem quite minor but which is, in fact, incredibly difficult to achieve in literature: joy. The broad emotions, terror, love, heroism, are easy to convey, but the small, domestic sensation of joy in life, in sex, in friends, in lovers, in good food and drink, is fiendishly difficult to convey without making it seem banal or overblown. Finney managed it time and again with almost negligent ease. The relish with which the four friends explore the nighttime streets of San Francisco in *The Night People*, the way in which the ghost of a silent movie actress brings an unbridled love of life to a modern couple in *Marion's Wall*, the way in which Si Morley takes in every aspect of New York in the 1880s in *Time and Again*, these all convey a genuine and quite wonderful pleasure.

Born Walter Braden Finney in 1911 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and educated at Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois (a town which would feature in one of his most famous short stories, "I Love Galesburg in the Spring"), Finney worked as an advertising copywriter (also something which features in several of his works). He wrote his first story in 1947, when he was 35, and won a special award in a competition staged by *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. From that moment on he was a full-time writer. He wrote in several genres, including crime, mystery, and sex comedy (*The Woodrow Wilson Dime* is an alternative worlds story with a strong hint of Thorne Smith's libertinism; *Good Neighbor Sam* is a comedy about wife-swapping), and for all the leading magazines of the day, including *Collier's*, *Lady's Home Journal* and *Playboy*. But most of his work was gentle, humane fantasy and science fiction. His masterpiece, *Time and Again*, may have been hopelessly romantic in manner and may have featured the corniest time travel device ever, but in its use of period illustrations to aid a careful re-creation of a bygone era it proved to be unforgettable. An instant success when published in 1970, Finney was eventually to write a sequel, *From Time to Time*, his last novel, which recreated much of the magic of the earlier work.

Jack Finney was married, with one son and one daughter.

— Paul Kincaid

Walter M. Miller, Jr

1922 - 1996

WALTER MILLER JR killed himself in January following the death of his wife and his own failing health. He was 74 and had been ill for some time. Though he wrote a number of excellent short stories, and won a Hugo in 1955 for "The Darfstellar", he will always be remembered for his one novel, *A Canticle for Liebowitz*. Until Gene Wolfe wrote *The Book of the New Sun*, this was the most significant and most successful symbolic and thematic use of Catholicism in science fiction. Miller's religious views had already underlaid his short fiction. "The Darfstellar" tells of a world in which actors have been replaced by a machine

controlling mannequins. An actor working as a janitor in the theatre sabotages the machine in order to take the place of one of the mannequins, and his performance becomes freighted with the story of Christ. *A Canticle for Liebowitz*, made up of three previously published novellas, each set 500 years after the last, is about the survival of a Catholic community in the post-holocaust years. Sustained by relics of Liebowitz, the scientist who founded their order, the order stands in contrast to the rise once more of a scientific civilisation, until in the end they set sail for the stars to escape another inevitable holocaust. This cyclical view of history, that events repeat themselves as Christ must continually be crucified and rise again, makes this one of the most unusual works of science fiction of the 1950s or 60s, and it won a well-deserved Hugo. Miller wrote little after the early 1960s, though rumours of a sequel to *A Canticle for Liebowitz* began to emerge during the early 1990s. Long promised and long delayed (largely due to Miller's ill-health) the manuscript remained unfinished at his death. However, it has since been announced that Terry Bisson will complete the novel, which is provisionally entitled *St Liebowitz and the Wild Horse Woman*.

—Paul Kincaid

Confessions of a Neo

Paul A. Rood

Last year Paul found himself in charge of the first Discworld Convention . . .

OF THE POSSIBLE ROUTES into fandom, mine is probably one of the strangest. Until July last year I had never been to a convention; in fact my only exposure to fandom had been hearing about *Star Trek* cons in the USA. Then something unexpected happened, and I haven't looked back since.

Two months on, I found myself the chairman of the Discworld Convention and in the process of catching up on ten years of lost fandom in a year. I have met interesting people, had conversations about a hundred varied topics and find myself fast becoming part of fandom and loving every minute of it. I am not alone: the committee of the Discworld Convention is made up of people in much the same position as myself. Only two of them had been to fan cons before getting involved.

So what did I find upon entering fandom? The first thing that struck me was the close-knit community that exists — everyone seems to know everyone else, and at some point have spent time in a bar having a pint (or six) with them, a fact which became very evident when John Brunner passed away during Intersection. There is the friendliness and the willingness to help. When I took on the task of organising the Discworld Convention, I was advised to contact John Philpots by Terry Pratchett. I was told he would be able to help out with advice on the basics, and help avoid re-inventing the wheel. When I contacted him, he immediately offered advice and assistance and has always had time for me whenever I needed advice or had questions. Without this I would have been lost: I did have some idea of what it involved but lacked a direction, and thanks to the help received from various sources I now know what to expect.

My passage into fandom has been relatively problem free, though there was a heated discussion with a *Star Trek* fan about comparisons between *Voyager* and *Deep Space Nine* at Intersection. I wouldn't have minded, only I was talking to someone else at the time, and I don't watch those programmes so couldn't possibly comment! Still, it was interesting that the person felt able to join in without invitation. It seems to be the norm in fandom — you can sit down at a table and join a conversation and no one minds, so long as you avoid making a fool of yourself. Of course, if you offer to buy a round of drinks they all become your fast friends.

Fandom is, however, a fickle beast that has its own idiosyncracies and can be unforgiving to neos. Fortunately I have avoided upsetting people or making a complete ass of myself so far. As a neo, I have been very careful to listen and not to jump in head first: so far I think I'm doing fine. But to all those fans out there wondering how to induct more neos into fandom, I say this: if you let them open up in their own time, and allow gradual exposure, more will stay, and fewer will wander away wondering, "What the hell was that all about?"

The Discworld Convention will be much like any other, with all the traditional features such as the dealers' room, the fan room, filk and film rooms and of course a Maskerade (spelled Pratchett-style!). Where it differs from traditional cons is that it deals specifically with the writings of one author. Everything is therefore given a Discworld twist or two! There is no shortage of programme items although those attending might see some similarities in the format to tried and tested con events. The underlying factor is a fun time for all, including the committee. We will have people there who have never been to a fan convention before, and will have never spent a whole weekend in such a specialised atmosphere. To ensure they get acclimatised to fandom successfully the con will have a broad mix of activities to suit all age ranges and backgrounds. I know that the established fans will help out wherever they can to welcome neos, and as the organiser of the convention I believe my most important task is to ensure everyone has the opportunity to meet new people and have a good time.

You may see me around between now and June 28th - 30th this year, if not staffing the Discworld Convention table, then propping up the bar. I'm hooked now, and don't think I want to leave.

— Paul A. Rood

More information about the Discworld Convention can be obtained from:

The Discworld Convention
PO Box 3086
Chelmsford, Essex
CM1 5LD

Or via email:

discworld@cmaclod.demon.co.uk

A TWITCH IN TIME



12 Monkeys

Reviewed by **Chris Terran**

Dir. Terry Gilliam. Cert. 15

A type-over at the start of *12 Monkeys* explains that in 1996 five billion people were killed by a mysterious virus; some years later the few survivors must live underground, isolated from the world, which has been reclaimed by the animals. As the film gets under way James (Bruce Willis), an imprisoned violent criminal, is volunteered to take a trip into the past in order to track down the supposed inventor of the plague. The assumption is that the past cannot be changed, so he is not expected to stop the release, just to gain enough information on the virus to enable the future scientists to effect a cure. But time travel is extremely disorienting, and James ends up in a mental hospital. Kathryn (Madeleine Stowe), a psychiatrist, is assigned to this mysterious stranger who seems unsure of what year it is and rambles on about plagues and gathering information. But she is sure that she has seen him before . . .

Gilliam has previously, in the wonderful *Brazil*, presented a dark and gothic future: here he explicitly associates a similarly hideous future with our present by emphasising the dehumanisation of those labelled 'mad'. He draws parallels between the way criminals and patients are treated, the drug obsessions of both the police and the medical profession, and the alienation and lack of affect of those entrusted with others' welfare. This all sounds very Philidickian, but unfortunately *12 Monkeys* lacks the empathy with its protagonists which Dick would have brought to the story. Instead your attention is caught, as always with a Gilliam film, by the *look* of the thing. The future is baroquely elaborate and frightening, the present dark and fearful; both are alienating to humans. But the abundant visual references to *Brazil* and other films, rather than adding to the total effect, seem to suggest parody (and rather tired self-parody at that) rather than invention; it all gets rather too tricky.

This trickiness is well illustrated in a sequence where James and Kathryn are hiding in a cinema. It's showing a Hitchcock all-nighter, and we see clips from *The Birds* — in which animals reclaim the world — and *Vertigo* — where the external world is an alien and frightening place (no *Rear Window* clips that I spotted, though). On the screen-within-a-screen a couple stand in a forest before a cross-section of a tree, the rings labelled with significant dates; a close up, and the woman's black-gloved hand reaches out and hesitantly touches it. This is the shot that Stanley Kubrick echoed (I'm sure consciously) in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, where first a proto-human hand, then an astronaut's glove, tentatively stroke the monolith. And lo and behold, *2001* is itself homaged at the start of *12 Monkeys*, where the isolation-suited James prepares for an expedition to the surface: everything in that sequence, including the sound, derives from the Kubrick film.

While it's undeniably fun spotting things like this, it's soon replaced by irritation: you get distracted, and start worrying about all the references you're missing. And there's another level of self-reference, of course: for where were we but in a cinema, watching a film showing another couple in a cinema watching other films which were themselves echoed and referenced in the film that we were watching? This kind of conscious artiness — at least when done so obviously — is just annoying, and all it achieves is to jerk you out of the experience of the movie. It's the sort of thing that you should notice *after* seeing the film, or on a second or third viewing.

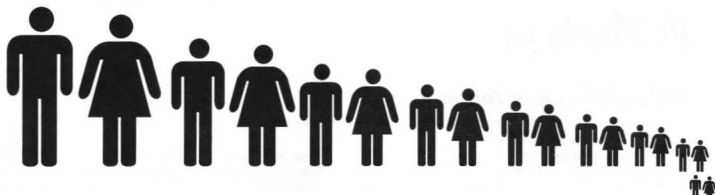
12 Monkeys is a very *twitchy* film, restless and nervous. The main performances appear to rely on tics rather than characterisation: Madeleine Stowe specialises in expressions — smiles, frowns — which occupy a single frame and then vanish; Bruce Willis stumbles bewilderedly through most of the film until you beg for him to stand up straight, just for a minute; and Brad Pitt — who plays an asylum inmate — reminded me of nobody so much as the 60s singer Dave Berry, hands fluttering round his face like demented butterflies. There are few subtleties in the acting, but given the lack of characterisation provided in the script (by David and Janet Peoples; the former co-wrote the screenplay of *Blade Runner*) this is perhaps not surprising: Kathryn appears to have no function in life other than to move the plot along (she has no *history*, even implied), and James's suggested violent past is not explored or explained: why, precisely, was he imprisoned? This is a more important question than it may appear: the violent episodes in the film seem to be the points at which James comes to life and exerts some control over events (though this may be due to Willis's more usual action-hero rôles), and is thus a key part of his character. The repeatedly-shown dreams of a horrific event in his childhood are the only clue; we must guess.

But probably the most disappointing aspect of the film is its predictability. The ending is obvious from the start, so much so that I now suspect it must have been deliberate. There are few plot twists, and none that I didn't guess. But maybe the genre awareness of film audiences is not up to the kind of brain-twisting paradoxes usual in time travel stories, which perhaps require some appreciation of the genre's tropes and conventions in order to work.

12 Monkeys was, according to the credits, "Inspired by Chris Marker's *La Jetée*", a half-hour French film (though it consisted entirely of stills) made in 1963 and described in the *SF Encyclopedia* as "subtle and complex". While I wouldn't apply either word to *12 Monkeys*, it is by no means a *bad* film: I just expected something a little better. It's certainly worth seeing, but don't expect the treat that was *Brazil*.

—Chris Terran

Pass Right Down Inside



ISLE of Wight, Isle of Man . . . what comes next? Sounds like a question from a pub quiz? From the novel *Stand on Zanzibar* by John Brunner comes the following author's preface:

There's a belief still current among British schoolchildren that you could stand the entire human race on the 147-square-mile Isle of Wight, elbow to elbow and face to face.

Well, that may have been true around the time of World War 1 although nobody was keeping records accurate enough for us to be certain. However, right now you would have a tough job packing us on the 221-square-mile Isle of Man.

And by 2010 — the time this book takes place — you would need an altogether larger island, something like the 640-square-mile surface of Zanzibar.

I thought I'd take a closer look at that statement.

I can remember reading that Isle of Wight quote when I was a kid (perhaps in *The Wonder Book of How Many*) but when would it have been possible? Records are rather sketchy before 1945. Allowing each person 2 square feet (I'd need more but a new-born baby would need less) leaves space for 2,049 million of us. That's roughly 1934, the year Brunner was born; that might have been the event that would have knocked someone into the sea off Cowes.

The Isle of Man has space for 3,080 million. By 1960 there were an estimated 2,760 million increasing at just over 2% per annum. By 1970 more than 374 million would have been up to their knees in the Irish Sea. If you'd shunted all 3,454 million a few miles south they would have had comfortably enough space on the 276 square miles of Anglessey.

Zanzibar is almost the same size as Hertfordshire, and has room for 8,921 million. The projection, country by country, of populations to 2010 and beyond, show that

on that basis Zanzibar would overflow sometime in 2025, not too bad an estimate by Brunner, I thought.

By 2050 the people would need to move to the isle of Réunion, west of Madagascar, then in 2070 to Majorca in the Balearic Islands and in 2090 to Trinidad in the West Indies, where many would be slowly cooked in the asphalt lakes.

The first country to fill itself (from the inside, that is) will be Andorra in 2173, followed by the Northern Mariana Islands in 2198. Within the next century six more countries fill, of which the largest is Somalia. The USA does not do so until 4103; Northern Ireland until 5428, Wales until 5492, England until 6053, Scotland until 7308. The Vatican City, the Falkland Islands and three other small countries have no population growth, and Bulgaria lasts until 89486.

In 1995 England is the 22nd most populous country, Scotland the 105th, Wales the 129th, Northern Ireland the 143rd, the USA the 3rd; in 2200 these positions will apply: England 95, Scotland 160, Wales 170, Northern Ireland joint 177, USA 33. China, followed by India, USA, Indonesia, Brazil and Russia, is currently the most populous country. By 2200 the order will be: Somalia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, China, Pakistan, Israel.

Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, will in 2200 be 17,826 times more populous than it is now; Dhaka in Bangladesh will have risen 10,137 times, and Guatemala City 12,038 times. On a smaller scale Leeds by 2200 will have risen 11 times and Folkestone just over twice. The highest increase in capitals across the world will be Addis Ababa in Ethiopia — an unimaginable 3,672,388 times.

In 2130 the world population will need to move from Trinidad to Cyprus, in 2140 up the Mediterranean to Sardinia, and in 2210 across the other side of the world to Java in Indonesia. By 2320 they will be in Borneo and by 2430 in Australia, where they will be able to stay until 2568.

The Car, Please

John Ollis

So, when does the population outgrow the space available for it to stand in? This depends on what the land area of the world is. You'd think that would be quite easy to find out. Not a bit of it. I consulted four sources and each gave a different figure (and did not agree on the size of many countries). Two were quite close to each other, and averaging those two we find: 52,952,000 square miles. The population will therefore exceed the space available in 2667, at which point Asia will have generated, from 1995, just over 91% of the total, and Europe one tenth of 1% of it. Within 75 years every person standing on the ground will have another on his or her shoulders and by the year 3000 five more layers will be up there. The domino effect, already spectacular, gets better and better.

The area above does not include Antarctica (four different figures again). I'm not sure what the effect would be of millions of people standing on an ice-cap. Would it melt? Would it sink? Assuming it wouldn't, and that we utilise Antarctica as well (4,197,300 square miles, average of four wildly differing sources), then the population will cover this by 2672. You will note that it is increasing rather rapidly by then. Asia will burst its boundaries in 2541, Africa in 2771, the Americas in 3773, Europe in 4996 and Oceania in 5196.

13,939,200. Can you imagine it? The number of people in a square mile. I can't. I'll never see a crowd that size. The population of the UK now would fit within the boundaries of Luton, where I live. Wow.

Now — it seems to me, after a happy few days with my slide rule, and practising long-division and multiplication on a slab of 1-part, that the total number of people who will fit on the land surface until the top layer have their heads poking outside the atmosphere (each person standing on the ground having to bear the weight of between 3,265 others — on the summit of Everest — and 8,956 — on the shore of the Dead Sea —, and assuming an average height of 5 feet 3 inches) is 6,489,323,028,984,394,673, and that this target will be reached in 4701. At this point Asia accounts for 99.73% of

the people, Africa for 0.25%, the Americas, Europe and Oceania combined for 0.02%.

Any woman who becomes pregnant is strongly advised to achieve the top level before giving birth so that when she does her baby may immediately stand on Mummy's shoulders.

A couple of newspapers have recently quoted a current population increase of 3 per second. That's an alarmist 259,200 per day. The actual rate is about 211,000 per day. So, if you were thinking we could stabilise the population by expanding into space, forget it. A spaceship carrying 1,000 passengers would need to take off every 6 minutes and 49 seconds to achieve this. If we don't start until 2200 we will need a ship every 37 seconds.

Pass right down inside the car, please. Smoking on the top deck only. Hold very tight. Standing room only.



NOTES

One: The basic working documents were two editions of *The U.N. Demographic Yearbook*, courtesy of the inter-library borrowing system. The UN estimates, in advance, every 5 or 10 years, the population of every autonomous country and many possessions, together with capital and other major cities, provinces, states, counties and departments. The estimates that I used were those for 1990 and 1995 (in the cases of the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union there was no breakdown available for 1990, so I used 1985). The forecasts for Leeds and Folkestone were based on the last two censuses.

Two: The 'four sources' were *Pears' Cyclopaedia*, the *Times World Atlas*, *Whitaker's Almanac*, and *Collet's Geography for Schools*, 3rd edition.

— John Ollis

More and More

Overpopulation in sf

Any look at the way overpopulation is treated in fiction has to start with **Thomas Malthus's** famous think-piece, written in 1798, *Essay on the Principle of Population as it affects the Future Improvement of Society*. This argued that an unchecked population would continually outgrow its resources; the checks Malthus identified were war, famine and plague, and later "moral restraint".

The novels and stories here are only a small selection; items in **bold** are particularly recommended.

Isaac Asimov *The Caves of Steel* (1954)

Isaac Asimov *The Naked Sun* (1957)

J. G. Ballard "Bilenium" (1961)

James Blish "We All Die Naked" (1969)

James Blish & Norman L. Knight *A Torrent of Faces* (1968)

John Brunner *The Sheep Look Up* (1972)

John Brunner *Stand on Zanzibar* (1968)

Lester Del Rey *The Eleventh Commandment* (1962)

Thomas M. Disch *334* (1972)

Philip Jose Farmer *Dayworld* (1985)

Harry Harrison *Make Room! Make Room!* (1966)

John Hersey *My Petition for More space* (1974)

George Clayton Johnson *Logan's Run* (1967)

C. M. Kornbluth "The Marching Morons" (1951)

C. M. Kornbluth "Shark Ship" (1958)

Larry Niven "Bordered in Black" (1966)

Frederik Pohl "The Census Takers" (1956)

Bob Sauer (ed.) *Voyages: Scenarios for a Ship Called Earth* (1971)

Robert Shekley "The People Trap" (1968)

Robert Silverberg *Master of Life and Death* (1957)

Robert Silverberg *The World Inside* (1972)

Kurt Vonnegut "The Big Space Fuck" (1972)

Kurt Vonnegut "The Big Trip up Yonder" (1954)

[Acknowledgements to: *The Encyclopedia of SF* (Clute & Nicholls; Orbit 1993), *The SF Source Book* (Wingrove; Longman 1984), *The Encyclopedia of SF* (ed. Holdstock; Octopus 1978)]

MAILBOX

From **Craig Marnock**
55 Ferry Road N/2
Yorkhill, Glasgow
G3 8QD

Being one of the BSFA's silent majority, my conscience was pricked by your comment about "operating in a vacuum".

I was very pleased to receive the latest issue of *Matrix*, and was sorry to learn that something other than post-Worldcon exhaustion had made it difficult to work on this issue. You have my sympathy, and no apologies are necessary.

As ever, I read the latest issue very quickly — I mean I read it in a short space of time, not that I just skimmed it (see what I mean?). I wish you luck in fomenting debate within the membership. I take it that your juxtaposition of "Why Oh Why Doesn't Anyone Take Us Seriously?" pieces (in both *Matrix* and *Vector*) with a letter column in which fans wax pathetic on the merits of *Star Trek* and *Babylon 5* is a situationist-style first step in that direction?

PS: I don't want to give the impression that I mind these subjects being discussed in the letter column — it is the voice of the membership after all — but some of these people need to be reminded that *they* are just TV shows. ☹

[Thanks for the sentiments; much appreciated. I shall wear your situationist badge with pride: the irony had not escaped me, but I will

publish whatever people wish to write about.

• It's probably time I came clean about where I stand on this. I very rarely watch television — in fact I haven't owned one for more than five years. Neither am I very interested in films. Frankly, I think that nearly all attempts at sf in the visual media are puerile in the extreme: they lack wit, style, imagination and élan, and are obsessed with surface imagery at the expense of depth of analysis or feeling. They are also **safe** to a fault, and here's an example: I've been browsing through a book called *The Physics of Star Trek* by Lawrence M. Krauss, and on page 69 there's a (fairly shallow) discussion of "beaming up" technology and how it bears on questions of identity and the soul. Krauss writes:

If a person were beamed aboard the Enterprise and remained intact and observably unchanged, it would provide dramatic evidence that a human being is no more than the sum of his or her parts, and the demonstration would directly confront a wealth of spiritual beliefs.

For obvious reasons, this issue is studiously avoided in Star Trek.

(Emphasis is mine.) It hardly seems necessary to comment on that astonishing last sentence; confronting such questions is precisely what good sf **does**, of course.

However! My job with *Matrix* is to reflect all aspects of sf and fantasy, and in that respect I take media seriously: I know I'm in a minority here, and, as they say, some of my best friends love *Babylon 5* and *Trek*. — Chris

From **John Ollis**
51 Belmont Road
Luton
LU1 1LL

I never thought I'd agree with Joseph Nicholas on any subject, but I do with his savagery of *Waterworld*. If anything he was too kind. Another wasted evening at the cinema. Surely it's not impossible to write a plausible sf screenplay? There have been several good sf novels depicting human life under water. One that springs to mind is Hal Clement's 1967 novel *Ocean on Top*, which combines a surgical change involving sealing the lungs, and flooding the windpipe with oxygen-rich food. A good screenwriter could ensure that wasn't too "difficult" for the picturegoer.

Moving on to the interesting Intersection reports, the clipping from the Scottish *Sunday Mail* "defies comment", you say. Not quite. While it is a typical press report, I'm amazed that any Scot has the nerve to call sf folk "weird" in their manner of dress, when Scotsmen are often seen out and about in gaily-patterned skirts. And I wouldn't ride in a Glasgow taxi (from bitter experience) unless I wanted to be charged three times the correct fare (for a tour of the outer suburbs) and get my clothes dirty. ☹

From **"Xane"**
(Name & address withheld)

Intersexon — the unreported

Beneath what passes for sf normality, there is rather more going on than you might gather from reading about the Worldcon in *Matrix*. In Glasgow I lost my convention virginity — and I don't mean it was my first con! So roll on Evolution — or maybe that should be roll over?! ☹

— Xane (originator of Intersection T-shirt: Sex in tandem? Smile if you had it last night!)

BEAM UP CHANNEL 4!

Kathleen A. Shiel
c/o First Floor
5 Walker Terrace
Gateshead, Tyne & Wear
NE8 1EB

30 August 1995

The Programme Controller
Channel 4 Television
124 Horseferry Road
LONDON, SW1P 2TX

Sir / Madam

Channel 4 SF Weekend — Beam Me Up Scotty! (Saturday 26th August 1995)

I have just returned from the 53rd World Science Fiction Convention in Glasgow. During this time I saw **no** Klingons at all and very few people in fancy dress. I therefore fail to see why this programme concentrated so heavily on a group of people who had nothing whatsoever to do with the convention (indeed **no** *Star Trek* video or film appeared throughout the whole weekend).

I also take great exception to the programme's message that the convention delegates spent their entire time in the dealers' room purchasing plastic memorabilia of popular SF shows, and wandering around in weird and wonderful costumes.

Nowhere during the 45 minute programme did it show delegates attending any of the 550 talks, panels or discussions that were the backbone of the convention weekend, and indeed two of the discussions and talks which I attended covered the topics of science and education today and the Soviet space programme (there wasn't a Klingon in sight!).

Why is it that whenever the media attempt to cover an SF event of any kind they are unable to visualise anything beyond rockets and ray-guns? I found the programme gave a totally distorted view of SF and fandom in general, and all I can say is what small, narrow minds the Producer, Gail Birnie and Director, Brian Kelly must have!

Yours faithfully

Kathleen A. Shiel
(Professional Librarian)

The exchange reproduced here took place between member Kathy Shiel and Channel 4 Television following their broadcast of the dire Beam Me Up Scotty! programme on the Saturday of last year's Worldcon in Glasgow; she was kind enough to send copies to me and gave permission to reproduce it, for which thanks.

While one could have wished for a more detailed response (there are signs of stock paragraphs), it's revealing in the attitude it shows towards the programme. Maybe it's foolish, but I would have expected C4 of all people to do a little better than the farrago they produced. As Kathy says in her covering letter, "Not that the Producer or Director went into this assignment with any pre-conceived ideas!"

— CT

CHANNEL FOUR TELEVISION 124 HORSEFERRY ROAD, LONDON SW1P 2TX.
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2 October 1995

Kathleen A. Shiel
c/o First Floor
5 Walker Terrace
Gateshead, Tyne & Wear
NE8 1EB

Dear Kathleen A. Shiel

Thank you for your recent letter concerning **Sci-Fi Weekend: Beam Me Up Scotty!**

Beam Me Up Scotty! unzipped the anorak image of Science Fiction and offered up to the uninitiated an insider's view of the world of Sci-Fi and its devotees. Host Craig Charles sought [sic] to answer many questions which puzzle the non-Sci-Fi fan — Why do people dress up as Klingons, Aliens and fantasy figures — is there more to it than simply the thrill of donning outlandish costumes?

We read your letter with interest and were sorry that you felt the programme gave a totally distorted view of Science Fiction and we have conveyed your comments and criticism to all those involved in the production of the programme.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time and trouble to write to us here at Channel 4 — we always welcome response from our viewers, both critical or otherwise.

Your sincerely

[Squiggle]

DUTY OFFICER

PURE POP FOR WOW! PEOPLE

The usual cry of newcomers to the world of fanzines is "But where's the sf!" And, true to form, any mentions of sf in the fanzines reviewed here are purely coincidental and imply no endorsement on the part of the writers, etc etc. The fact is that an interest in sf is taken as given: the common thread here happens to be music, but all are produced by *bona fide* sf fans.

A brief explanation of terms may be useful, so here's a glossary.

FAN Look in a mirror. Or, a producer of wind.
FANZINE Fan magazine. Amateur magazine produced for love (or some approximation thereof). In this context produced by sf and fantasy fans, but they're also produced by football fans, punks, and other weirdos. But don't worry, we're all normal here. And, by the way, the original: every so often fanzines are reinvented by people convinced they thought of them first. Sf fanzines were first produced in 1930 or thereabouts, and the word itself was coined by a fan in 1941.
GENZINE Fanzine of general interest, containing miscellaneous articles (*Attitude* is a good example).
LOC Letter of Comment: a letter written to a fanzine commenting on a previous issue. The accepted form of 'payment' for fanzines.
PERZINE Fanzine by a single author, concentrating on the writer's life, interests and opinions.
USUAL, THE The means of obtaining a fanzine in this particular culture. They are nearly always free (this does not usually apply to media fanzines or those produced by other groups), but some help with costs is polite. Write a letter

enclosing an SAE (A4 sized, and two or three first-class stamps): send in a contribution (article, artwork, whatever): and when you've read it send in a LoC! Feedback is *always* welcomed: indeed, it's the whole point.

WAHF We Also Heard From. List of the writers of any unpublished LoCs.

ZINE Abbreviation of *fanzine*.

Let's kick off with:

POGONOPHOBIA

a postcard from the edgy
issue one go away

A5, 12pp

Alison Freebairn is one of the very best of the new writers producing fanzines, and this perzine — produced in two days in a fit of enthusiasm (and rage at facial hair, hence the title) — shows why she very nearly won the Best Fanwriter Nova at last year's Novacon (and will probably get it next year if she continues producing). Alison is a music journalist by profession, and the longest article here is a diatribe against the recent Brit Award ceremony and Michael Jackson's ghastly and embarrassing appearance there. She clearly approves of Jarvis Cocker's unscheduled appearance on the set:

It would have taken someone particularly dashing, dry-witted and drunk to dare derail the dancing dipstick from his dastardly, deity-defying deeds (oh for gods sake, dump the t—ing alliteration) and stand up for all that is good and pure about pop music. Step forward a vision in a zip-up cardie.

Jarvis Cocker, Crimplane king of the charts, former photo-love model, Pulp star extraordinaire — a man brave enough to wear synthetic fabric next to the skin.

[...] Jarvis had the guts to do something. Anything. Any ideas? He didn't have any once he was actually on stage among Jackson's melee. But he lifted his shirt, pointed his backside at the audience and made fanning motions with his hands. How apt. How derogatory. The whole thing really did stink — and Jarvis made an arse of the whole proceedings with just the right amount of contempt and humour. Nice one.

Alison goes on to describe Jarvis's subsequent arrest at the request of Jacko's goons, and the consternation when video footage showed that it was the security guards who assaulted the kids fawning round the palefaced one.

Other opinions here show her impeccable musical judgement. Which means, of course, that I agree with her: why didn't Polly Harvey win anything? Where were Garbage, Salad, Stereolab (whoo hoo!), Angel Corpus Christi? But popularity breeds contempt; how dreadful it would be to find you agree with all those pony-tailed record execs. (Instead Alison has to cope with pony-tailed reviewers agreeing with her.)

There's also an editorial and a polemic against Irish 'theme pubs'. Two lists round up the zine, devoted to Alison's current peeve: her "Top Ten Terrifying Facial Foliage" (including George Michael and Greg Pickersgill, who I never thought I'd see together) and her "Top Ten Forgivable Fuzz" (headed by Simon Ounsley, poor man).

Alison's writing is furious, lively, sparky and opinionated. Her quaint elision of swear words — she also does this in the other fanzine I've seen from her, the excellent *From the Kelpie's Pool* — seems almost ironic in context, given the often splenetic words around them. Excellent typography and design; all in all, great stuff.

• Available for the usual from:

Alison Freebairn, 19 Wateryetts Drive, Kilmacolm, Renfrewshire, PA13 4QP

Alison's wonderful phrase "all that is good and pure about pop music" sounds paradoxical: surely it should be anything but! (If it's halfway decent, anyway.) But in the Newspeak of pop music, good = doubleplus-ungood, and pure is decidedly *impure*: it's designed to make enemies, to annoy and enrage ("You call that music!"), but to do it selectively — usually to parents, but basically to anyone you don't like or approve of. It's a genre of exclusion, as sf used to be.

Much of the pop / rock music I hear comes from listening to Mark Radcliffe's superb Radio 1 show (10.00pm - 12.00, Mondays to Thursdays): Alison gives him an approving nod too. The programmes regularly include Kim Newman on cult TV programmes (often of an sf nature), Mark Kermode on cult films (ditto), and — though no longer, it seems — Will Self on cult books (how often do Huysmans' *Against Nature* or Cocteau's *Les Enfants Terribles* get discussed on Radio 1!). There's also poetry, readings from books, and, of course, great music.

Our esteemed Administrator produced a fanzine recently. It also discussed music, though of a rather different kind, and in a rather different way

Snufkin's Bum

A4, 12pp

This tastefully named "small, friendly perzine" comes from Maureen Kincaid Speller; Snufkin is one of her cats, and the cover carries a little illustration of his posterior regions. The zine is aptly roseate in colour, the writing, er, *tight*, though it wanders rather incontinently from subject to subject sniffing suspiciously at some, rubbing up affectionately against others. Written like a long letter, it's a single piece stuffed with reports of cultural life *chez Speller*.

Maureen writes about music — or, more accurately, its social zeitgeist — for much of this zine, starting with the tale of a visit to St John's, Smith Square for a John Eliot Gardiner concert of Beethoven and Mozart. Gardiner is a champion of 'authentic performance', and is one of those steadily pushing forward the bounds of this approach, which was originally confined to baroque (and prior) music. In particular, he staged Monteverdi's extraordinary *1610 Vespers* in the church for which it was written (St Mark's in Venice); among recorded versions, though, I prefer the 1966 version — itself one of the first attempts at an authentic performance — directed by Jürgen Jürgens, where the vocal techniques used emphasise the then still extant (in 1610, that is) connections to Arabic, North African and Indian music. These techniques — very little vibrato and glissando, much improvisational embellishment and ornamentation, and so on — only survive in Europe today in some Eastern European folk traditions (though they're being reintroduced). The mainstream European singing style was devoted largely to producing *volume* as the orchestras got bigger (along with the singers) in the 18th and 19th centuries, and much of this subtlety — and the concurrent openness to other musical traditions — was lost.

It's interesting that Maureen refers to it as a "John Eliot Gardiner" concert, rather than a "Beethoven" one. To my mind, this puts the emphasis where it belongs: on the interpretation, the performance, the *event*. We don't go to hear Beethoven, period: what we get is a singular vision, time-bound and unique, inevitably tied to a particular set of musicians and heard in a particular cultural context. The authentic performance movement has paradoxically helped here; while it puts great stress on the composers' original intentions, it has simultaneously dethroned, demystified, deconstructed the 'composer-as-god' attitude — the star-struck approach to music, as it were — so prevalent until recently.

But perhaps the star is now illuminating Gardiner. Here's Maureen on his appearance:

I assume that he will emerge from the stairway nearest the stage — we are toward the back of the hall — and will thus remain a figure in the distance. Actually, says Tanya, he's over there, look. I hastily turn round, catch sight of my hero, allegedly turn bright red and mutter 'oh fuck'. The blush I can't vouch for but I do remember the rest. As I explain to Tanya afterwards, it's like finding out that unicorns really exist. You think about them, you read about them, you know what they look like, but nothing prepares you for actually seeing one.

She moves from this to musings about audiences and performances, at concerts and theatres, and then to hearing Bach's *Goldberg Variations* at the Wigmore Hall ("just as austere as one might hope"). Solo Bach can be very tiring in large doses, but my experience of playing his music (badly, admittedly) helped greatly to understand it; as far as I know Maureen doesn't play anything, and how people can like Bach so deeply without this experience never ceases to amaze and impress me.

Science fiction (or was it?) makes a late appearance with a report on "H.G.", a very peculiar 'installation' at the Clink Street Vaults in London; her thoughts on this are insightful and very interesting, and she identifies *herself* as being part of the 'artwork'. This is the best part of the zine, and it's a really fine piece of writing.

• Available for the usual from:

Maureen Kincaid Speller, 60 Bourneham Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ

Many years ago, in the early seventies, I played in a folk band. Folk music continues to be important to me, though definitely *not* the roll-neck singalong kind, nor the terribly, terribly socially concerned, save-the-whales and help-the-homeless kind. It's the tunes I mostly love, whether lonely and mournful, stately and untuned, or jolly and sexy. It was a surprise to me to discover that Maureen's partner, Paul Kincaid, shares — or at least used to share — a fondness for folk music. In his first fanzine for many years, produced, like Maureen's, for their guestly status at this year's Eastercon, he talks about his musical history

A Balanced Diet

A4, 14pp

Though Paul Kincaid's wonderfully illustrated — by his father, using drawings done during the Second World War — perzine starts off rather depressingly with the words:

Why the fuck am I doing this?

(bit unwise, perhaps: unkind readers will think "And why the fuck am I reading it?"), and goes on to some

agonised navel-gazing:

I am sitting here in front of the PC writing an article about writing an article to start my first fanzine in a decade or more.

it soon picks up speed and interest. There's a brief account of Paul's involvement in fanzines, pointing out their conversational nature (discursive rather than chattersome, I imagine he means), and he expresses a desire to get involved again now that fanzines are in resurgence: true enough, from what I gather, and I hope more will issue from this source.

Like many — most? all? — fanzine editors, Paul uses his zine to convey personal obsessions. The first piece is about the American Civil War and Paul's interest in it, which was sparked off by an American documentary he saw whilst groaning in bed (he was ill!) at the 1991 Eastercon. It's an odd article, more concerned with puzzling out quite *why* he's so interested in something so distant from his heritage than with conveying the obsession itself; as a result it seems slightly unfocused, meandering. Passages work well individually — as when he writes about Civil War photographs — but it reads a little disjointedly as a whole; perhaps it was over-edited?

But the second and final article is about music, and it's superb. It's a journey through his musical life and times, from seeing the Beatles on TV on 12 January 1963 — his musical awakening — to his current obsession with REM, which has gone as far as joining their fan club. The piece, called "A Simple Prop to Occupy my Time", breaks a self-imposed rule he made after an article he wrote about Joni Mitchell (his admiration for whom I share, and I'd love to see the piece) was badly received: namely, not to write about music. I'm glad he did break it.

The reason he gives for the Mitchell article's bad reception — "people didn't share my taste in music" — may apply here, though: he does admit to once liking the Moody Blues. I suppose somebody had to do it. But all is forgiven (and, of course, it doesn't matter at all if you write well enough, and here Paul does) as he moved on to the Fairports, Steeleye Span, and Pentangle through their wonderful theme tune "Light Flight" for the 1969 TV series *Take Three Girls*. (My God; I thought I was the only person who remembered that! Avril was one of them, buck-toothed and common . . . there was a toff — played by Louise Jameson? — and, I think, a middle-class stereotype . . . Polly, perhaps?)

Paul identifies *stories* as vital ingredients of much of the music he likes, which explains his attraction to the narrative and ballad tradition of folk music (and his liking for Joni Mitchell, whose songs tell the story of her life, intimate and self-questioning: do I see a similarity?).

Now Paul's a *fan*, of REM. Unashamed and proud, owner of all the CDs and videos, in the fan club. Blimey, he almost makes me like them, but they're just too smooth, too bland, too — oh dear — *intelligent* for me. It's a problem I've always had with American music, which seems to have had all the stuffing knocked out of it somewhere between the band forming and their first record (exception: Steely Dan, who were also too clever by half). Perhaps part of my problem is that, probably with gross unfairness, I perceive REM — along with Phil Collins, Dire Straits, Simply Red and so forth — as music for the prematurely aged, smooth sounds for smoothed-out lives, and by God I don't want to think of myself that way. Do I?

Paul's article was focussed and cogent, memorios and perceptive. What more can you ask than that a fanzine

makes you think?

• Available for the usual from:

Paul Kincaid, 60 Bournemouth Rd., Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ

The seventh issue of the Nova-winning fanzine *Attitude* starts and ends with music, but there's a lot in between . . .

ATTITUDE 7

A4, 66pp

Edited by the triumvirate of Michael Abbott, John Dallman and Pam Wells, *Attitude* is, like it or not, at the centre of fanzine fandom. This issue has an enviable list of contributors, a fine mix of articles from humorous to analytic, con reports, fanzine reviews, even a long and wonderful transcript of Michael's grandfather talking about his life in war and mine. And, of course, a huge letter column.

But I always read the first and last parts of the zine to start with: the editorial (this time by Michael), and the regular endpiece "Stance, Erudition and Scorn", which consists of all three editors sparking off each other. Mercifully they're off numbers, and here are found looking at music, though in a determinedly backward direction.

There are a couple of particularly depressing observations: the fact that *Bedsit Land* is closer in time to "Hey, Jude" than it is to the present day is wearisome, but the revelation that

a surprising number of SF fans are closet Wagner / Hawkwind fans

is just shocking. Help! What have I got involved in?

Michael notes that at college many of his friends listened exclusively to mid-'70s heavy rock, already five years old at the time; this point would have a little more force if there was a single mention of a group less than five — ten! — years old in the article, but as the lists of favorites show, all three are children of the '80s. And as Woody Allen points out, the music of your youth always has a special resonance for you, which will remain no matter where your tastes subsequently go.

There's also a wonderfully funny and revealing (to a male, anyway) piece on bras from Alison Scott (getting fitted at the Queen's corsetier!), Sue Mason on lingerie and corsets, particularly on pretty boys, Mary Gentle dissecting her Valentine / Casaubon stories, Kari on women in academe, Carol Willis on paganism (religion is a recurrent interest of the zine), and much more. If you don't read *Attitude*, why the hell not?

• Available for the usual from:

Attitude, 102 William Smith Close, Cambridge, CB1 3QF

Four fanzines, full of words, of pictures. Words have evocative power too, as well as music. Sometimes, like the tinnitulation of a perfect wind chime, words — an article, a sentence, a phrase, a single word — will stay with you, affecting later perceptions, changing your world, ringing down the years. They are freight carriers, swollen with meaning, different for everybody.

There are words.

Here are words.

See the words.

See the words *run*.

— Chris Terran

[This article first appeared, in a rather different form, in the fanzine *The Time Traveller's Journal*, available for the usual from:

Julie Rigby, 14 Highwoods Road, Saint James, New York 11780, U.S.A.]

Hard Science Fiction - Its Aims

Rosie Oliver

responds to last issue's article by John Oram, "The Failure of SF"

THE MAIN PURPOSE of hard science fiction (HSF), like any other form of fiction, is to entertain. But even the production and publication of well-written stories does not guarantee the popularity of the genre; it needs something else to make it interesting to the ordinary person living in a suburban housing estate. In answering the questions, "Why has HSF succeeded in the past?" and "What, apart from entertainment, is HSF all about?" we will have a foundation on which to suggest what the future of HSF could be. This article, at least partially, seeks to answer these questions.

Let's take a look at the history first. Here, my experience of HSF for some thirty years has some important lessons. I was introduced to HSF as a child by television programmes such as *Stingray* and *Thunderbirds*. The next step was the inevitable visits to the library to borrow books of HSF. These books let rip on the imagination by showing what the future, albeit in some cases the distant future, could hold in store. But they were also punctuated by humour and dealt with the more endearing traits of human nature. The stories were something we could all understand and we could easily put ourselves in the places of the portrayed characters.

All this would have been a mere fad if something else hadn't been going on. That something was the obvious strides being made in technological progress. In the space of twelve years we went from the launch of the first satellite to a manned landing on the moon. In Britain, we were caught up in the 'white heat of technology' with the first flight of Concorde. Even in the home, we saw more labour-saving gadgets such as dishwashers, as well as bigger and more colourful TV sets.

And then came the coal-miners' strikes and oil crises of the early seventies. Suddenly we felt as if we were no longer building for the future, but trying to solve yesterday's problems. With that, some of the happy futures that HSF envisaged faded in their promise. A lot of people blamed science and technology for their misfortunes, and this deterred them from taking an interest in the subjects. The knock-on effect on HSF was inevitable.

The basic lesson to be learned from the above history is that the popularity of HSF literature does not stand on its quality or artistic merit alone. There has to be some other pull. Occasionally events outside the control of HSF authors and societies provide that pull, such as the moon landings or the revolution in computer capabilities. But these should be taken as welcome bonuses.

Let us now turn to what, other than entertainment, are the rôles of HSF. There are at least five such rôles and are given below in no particular order.

One rôle is to publicise the new technological developments in advance of their becoming a reality. One famous example is Arthur Clarke's use of geostationary orbits for telecommunication satellites, long before space travel became a reality. Another example is the use of tanks in the H. G. Wells

story "The Land Ironclads" of 1903 — tanks first entered the field at the first battle of the Somme in September 1916. The development and manufacture of new life-saving medicines in space seen in Arthur Clarke's 1961 story "Death and the Senator" may yet come into being. The important point about this story is that it was read in evidence to the House of Representatives Committee on Astronautics in 1972. This is a clear example of how HSF may influence the making of governmental policy.

Another rôle is to examine the social consequences of technological developments. A blatant example is found in Asimov's robot series where he explores the interaction between man and increasingly sophisticated machinery. Whilst his was an optimistic view, Harrison and Minsky's *The Turing Option* gave a rather more downbeat prognosis. This difference may very well reflect the prevailing social ethos about science at the time of writing.

A third rôle is to examine the effect of today's social trends on the future. John Brunner's *Stand on Zanzibar* explores the problem of overpopulation. Niven, Pournelle and Barnes' *Fallen Angels* describes the backlash against technology because it is blamed for a forthcoming environmental disaster, in this case an ice age. These and other trends are written about because they are going to precipitate some form of crisis which needs resolution. Differing answers to such crises are offered by several authors and this makes HSF a forum for debate about what we are going to do with our future.

The fourth rôle is one which other genres are also capable of fulfilling, namely it offers a vehicle to clarify social and moral arguments. However, HSF has two unique instruments with which to do this. The first is time travel, where the hero is suddenly set down in an alien world and needs only to concentrate on a particular issue. *The Time Machine*, written by H. G. Wells in 1895, contrasted the effects of industrialisation represented by the Morlocks against the agricultural peace represented by the Eloi. The other is the use of parallel worlds where a contrast can be brought sharply into focus between our world and the one in which our hero is placed. Heinlein explores several such universes in his *The Number of the Beast* including the consequences of alternative penalties exacted by law. This rôle has however been mainly lost to the fantasy genre which can have any backdrop that the author wishes.

There used to be a fifth rôle, that of educating young people in the principles of science. Both Asimov and Heinlein wrote books in the 1950s which were good old-fashioned swashbuckling stories for teenagers, but having some element of science teaching. With the advent of television and computer games, young people today have lost interest in reading books and that includes HSF.

So given all this, where does HSF go from here? It goes without saying that any entertainment literature has to be well written and any story has to be a 'ripping good yarn' to hold the reader's attention.

It is important that any readers of HSF can understand and relate to the people in the story. They must have human failings as well as human strengths. Without that, the reader will give up part way through the story. Also, the story has to be written with the background of today's understanding. It was quite acceptable to write about life existing on the planet Venus in the 1950s, but not now, given that we have discovered what a horrendous inferno it is. Each story should not have too many unusual threads in it, as the reader could easily get lost trying to find his way through it. However, where an unusual aspect of science does exist, the rest of the science in the story should be consistent. For instance, it's no good having faster-than-light travel when clocks are still made of springs and cogwheels.

To some extent, the mood of the prospective audience should be matched. I've seen a lot of short stories recently which have the ring of 'doom and gloom' to them and this matches very well with being in a recession. But people don't want sad endings. Even if the story is generally a miserable one, it should end on an optimistic note. This leaves the reader more satisfied. And it'll encourage him to return for another story.

Of the five secondary rôles mentioned above, HSF has for now lost the battle on the two which other genres and media can fulfill. So let us concentrate on the remaining three, namely publishing new technological developments, examining the social consequences of technological developments and examining the implications of today's social trends on the future. All these areas could have influential effects on our future!

— Rosie Oliver

EVENTS

2 May: London SF meeting

Wellington pub opposite the Old Vic exit from Waterloo Station. 'London Circle' meetings are held on the first Thursday in each month, and usually start about 5pm. No special events but very popular and crowded. **Contact:** Just turn up!

2-6 May: Warp Two

The national *Star Trek* convention at Cardiff International Arena. Membership is £35 attending.

Contact: David Simons, 69 Merlin Cres., Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6JB

22 May: BSFA London Meeting

Jubilee Tavern, York Road (near Waterloo Station). These meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday in each month, and start at 7pm in the upstairs room of the pub. Admission is free and both members and non-members are welcome. Guest this month TBA.

Contact: Mark Plummer on 0181 656 1037 for further information.

24-27 May: Inconsequential V: Inconsequent

The third annual con devoted to humour in sf and fantasy. "We promise that you will enjoy Incon V, or we will give you your weekend back (subject to the invention of a practical time machine, obviously)." Venue is the Scotch Corner Hotel, Junction A1/A66, Darlington and membership is £22 until Easter, £27 thereafter.

Contact: Inconquent, 26 Northampton Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 7HA
Email: incon@carcosa.demon.co.uk

6 June: London SF meeting

See above for details.

25-26 June: Babcom '96

An 'event' based around *Babylon 5* from the (in)famous Stargazer Productions. No rates available. Last year's event caused some controversy due to alleged bad organisation.

Contact: Stargazer Productions International Ltd., 4 Aspenwood House, Ipsley St, Redditch, B98 7AR.

22 June: BSFA London Meeting

See above for details. Guest TBA.

28-30 June: Discworld Convention 1

The First International Discworld Convention will take place at Sacha's Hotel in the centre of Manchester, England. Confirmed guests are **Terry Pratchett, Josh Kirby and Stephen Briggs**, with more TBA. Experience: Unseen University Challenge; First official Cripple Mr Onion All-comers Tournament; Bananana Dakrys on draught; Discworld Karaoke; Unseen University Midsummer Lecture; Reduced Discworld Theatre Company; Exclusive Claretcraft models; the Biker Morrismen (don't miss!); Maskerade (sic) Ball; Filk; Clicks; Dead Monk... sorry, Ape Party. And 1001 Elephants, apparently. Membership rates are now £20 attending (other rates TBA). Twin or double rooms cost £32 pppn.

Contact: SAE to The Discworld Convention, P.O. Box 3086, Chelmsford, CM1 6LD

Email: discworld@macaloe.demon.co.uk

Web: http://vangogh.ca.tod.ie/cbuckley/DWCon96/

Liserver: Send message 'get Disc96.Info' to discserver@flyhnmstr.demon.co.uk

4 July: London SF meeting

See above for details.

11-13 July: Speaking Science Fiction

Academic conference at the University of Liverpool. Membership is £130, but that includes the hotel.

Contact: Andy Sawyer, SF Foundation, Sydney Jones Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool, L69 3DA

24 July: BSFA London Meeting

See above for details. Guest TBA.

26-29 July: Albacon '96

Scotland's annual convention at the Central Hotel in Glasgow (scene of the excellent evening programme at Intersection). Guests are **Harlan Ellison, Terry Pratchett** and renowned space artist **David A. Hardy**. Added attractions are a *Babylon 5* blooper tape and exclusive previews of selected new episodes, courtesy of *B5* creator J. Michael Strazinski. Full membership is £30 (£35 on the door), £15 supporting, with special rates for children and single days.

Contact: Albacon '96, Flat 1/2, 10 Atlas Rd., Springburn, Glasgow, G21 4TE

26-27 July: SFCD-Con

The annual German national convention, the SFCD-Con, will be held in Saarbrücken, close to the border with France and Luxembourg. This convention is interesting for foreign fans because its main tracks are East European fandom and the history of fandom (not only German). Some of the panels will be held in English. The organisers intend to invite a large number of fans from East Europe instead of two or three professional GoH, and currently have representatives from Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Czechia, Slovakia, Romania, and of course our own Bridget Wilkinson. Also planned are an RPG theme and production of a radio play which will be regionally broadcast.

The membership rate until 31 Dec 1995 is 30 DEM. Payment by credit card (only VISA accepted) is possible.

Contact: Juergen G. Marzi, Scharnhorststr. 27, D-56073 Koblenz
Tel: +49-261-48259

Email: 1101121.352@compuserve.com or jmarzi@texbox.lahn.de

1 August: London SF meeting

See above for details.

16-18 August: Portmeiricon '96

The 19th annual 'Six of One' (*The Prisoner*) convention, as always in Portmeirion, North West Wales.

Contact: (UK): SAE to Six of One, PO Box 66, Ipswich, UK.

Contact: (US/Can): 2xIRCs to Six of One, 871 Clover Drive, North Wales, PA 19454, USA

23-24 August: Contraptions

Gaming and rôle-playing con at the Moat House Hotel, Northampton. GoH is Steve Jackson. Membership is £25 until Easter, rising thereafter.

Contact: Contraptions, 12 Cartersmead Close, Horley, Surrey, RH6 9LG

28 August: BSFA London Meeting

See above for details. Guest TBA.

Members' Noticeboard

Advertisements and announcements are free to BSFA members. Send your ad to the editorial address.

M. P. SHIEL, author of *The Purple Cloud*, *The Lord of the Sea* etc. The **Redondan Cultural Foundation** promotes discussion of his work and his remarkable island kingdom. Free newsletter from: Mark Valentine, 40 Ash Grove, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, LS29 8EP.

BOOKS WANTED: Original Ace paperback editions of the following books by Megan Lindholm: *Harpy's Flight*, *The Windsingers*, *The Limbreth Gate*, and *Wizard of the Pigeons*. Any copies in any condition of *The Unicorn Treasury* edited by Bruce Colville, published by Doubleday in 1988, and *Strategies of Fantasy* by Brian Attebery, published by Indiana University Press in 1992. Please contact Michael Braithwaite, 27 Marsh Drive, West Hendon, London, NW9 7QE or phone 0181 202 9018.

COLLECTION FOR SALE New review copies of SF and Fantasy fiction and related nonfiction (criticism, books about film / TV, author studies etc.), plus my personal collection of fiction, related nonfiction, American magazines about fantastic literature. Hardcover and paperbacks, most in excellent condition. Some collectables. All very reasonably priced from £1 up. US \$1 brings complete lists. Please contact Neil Barron, 1149 Lime Place, Vista, CA 92083-7428, USA.

SILENT GNASHING of teeth over my inability to find various books. If you have a copy of any of the following which you don't mind parting with, I'll happily press (reasonable amounts of) money into your hot and sticky hand: *Sorcery* and *Cecelia Patricia Wrede*; *Caroline Stevermer*; *Maireland the Magician Patricia Wrede*; *The Porcelain Dove Delia Sherman*; *The White Pipes Nancy Kress*; *Bordertown* ed. Terri Windling; *War for the Oaks Emma Bull*. Please contact Jilly Reed at: Hill House, Moats Tye, Suffolk, IP14 2EX. Tel. (01449) 612272.

COLCHESTER SF / HORROR / FANTASY GROUP. We meet on the third Saturday of each month at 12:30pm in The Playhouse pub in St. John's Street. We are mainly a discussion over a few beers kind of group. If you

fancy coming along either give **Des Lewis** a ring on 01255 812119 or you can just turn up.

WANTED. One copy of *The Shadow of the Torturer* by Gene Wolfe, the original Arrow paperback with the Bruce Pennington cover. I don't mind paying a couple of quid or so. Please write to: Steve Palmer, 4 Park Road, Toddington, Bedfordshire, LU5 6AB. Or phone 01525 876094.

BOOKS WANTED, must be hardback first editions in fine condition with dust wrappers:
David Eddings: *Magician's Gambit*; and *Castle of Wizardry*
Raymond R. Feist: *Magician*; *Silverthorn*; *Darkness At Sethanon*; and *Prince of the Blood*.
John Brunner: *Telepathist*; *The Stone That Never Came Down*; and *The Jagged Orbit*.
Contact: John Oram, 3 Oatlands Avenue, Bar Hill, Cambs., CB3 8EQ

WANTED: Brian Aldiss's 'Horatio Stubbs' trilogy, *A Soldier Erect*, *The Hand-Reared Boy*, and *A Rude Awakening*.
Contact: Alan Fitch, 21 Kesteven Way, Bitterne, Southampton, SO15 5RJ or email alan@cycle.demon.co.uk

CAMBRIDGE MEETINGS: If you live in the Cambridge area and would be interested in getting together for regular Sunday meetings, **John Oram** would like to hear from you. Contact: John Oram, 3 Oatlands Avenue, Bar Hill, Cambs., CB3 8EQ or phone 01954 781797 after 6pm.

CRUCIFORM VARIATIONS, a collection of 12 science-fictional cryptic crosswords (including annotated solutions) by *Matrix's* very own **John English** is now available! Price £2.00 from Becon Publications, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex, RM3 0RG.

GADZOOKS! Studies in swashbuckling fiction. Orczy, Sabatini, Farnol, Thorndike et al. New fanzine seeks contributors and readers. Details: Mark Valentine, 40 Ash Grove, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, LS29 8EP. Enter the last great unexplored genre.

29 August - 2 September: LACon III

54th World SF Convention in Anaheim, California. Guests include James White and Roger Cornman.
Contact: LACon III, c/o SCIFI, PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409, USA

8-10 November: Novacon 26

The Birmingham SF Group's annual convention. Venue is the Hotel Ibis, Ladywell Walk (off Hurst St.), Birmingham. Guests include David Gemmell. Attending membership is £25, supporting £10 (rates rise after Easter).

Contact: Novacon 26, Tony Morton, 14 Park St., Lye, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 8SS

14-17 February 1997: Attitude: The Convention

The influential and Nova-winning fanzine *Attitude* (edited by Michael Abbott, John Dallman and Pam Wells) has sprouted its very own convention. Venue is the Abbey Hotel, Great Malvern, Worcs.; "a friendly hotel with a lovely, old-fashioned atmosphere - the sort of place where you might meet Bertie Wooster in the bar, or Miss Marple in the restaurant". The entire hotel has been reserved by the con, so no extraneous weddings or salesmen. Rates are £33 pppn single, £29 pppn double, twin, triple or quad. Membership is currently £23 attending (there is no supporting membership rate).

Contact: David T. Cooper, 51 Meersbrook Avenue, Sheffield, S8 9EB
Tel: 0114 281 0697
Email: Attitude@bitoh.demon.co.uk

28-31 March 1997: Intervention

The 1997 Eastercon, themed around 'Communication'. Venue is the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Guests are **Brian Aldiss**, **Octavia Butler** and **David Langford** (note that Robert Silverberg has had to pull out).

Membership is £20 attending, £10 supporting.

Contact: Intervention, 12 Crowsbury Close, Emsworth, Hants, PO10 7TS
Email: intervention@pompey.demon.co.uk

24-26 May 1997: Fantasticon UK

General convention at the Harrogate International Conference Centre. Guests include **Harry Harrison**, **David Gemmell**, **Lisa Tuttle**, **Ramsey Campbell**, **Jack Cohen** and **Rog Peyton**, proprietor of the Andromeda Bookshop in Birmingham and stalwart of fandom. Events include items on cult radio sf and a comprehensive video programme. Rates until 1 Sep 1996 are £40.50 attending, £13.50 supporting, with reductions for individual days. Children aged 5 and below are free, children under 14 half price.

Contact: SAE to Fantasticon UK, 38 Planetree Ave., Fenham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 9TH
Email: mir95@aber.ac.uk

24-27 October 1997: Euro-Octocon '97

The 1997 Eurocon and Ireland's national sf con combined.
Contact: Euro-Octocon '97, 211 Blackhorse Avenue, Dublin 11, Ireland.
Email: mmchugh@td.ie
Web: http://arrogant.ltc.ie/10/OctoCon.html

31 October - 2 November 1997: World Fantasy Convention

1997 sees the centenary of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and the WFC will be celebrating this (which doubtless explains the interesting contact address). Venue is the Britannia International Hotel in London's Docklands. £30 reserves your membership, with the balance payable at a later date.

Contact: PO Box 31, Whitby, North Yorks., YO22 4YL

COMPETITION CORNER

Roger Robinson

COMPETITION 118 — "WIND ME UP"

Two word squares for you to solve — but with a difference. Each square contains an author's name and the title of one of his / her books. To unravel them you need to follow the path that a chess knight might follow, visiting all 25 squares either from one corner to the centre or from the centre to a corner.

For example, if you decide that the first square is an outside-in one and that it starts with the "N" in the bottom left hand corner, then the next letter must be either "D" or "Y", which are the only two squares a "knight's move" away.

J	E	H	N	H
E	E	O	K	A
H	D	S	N	W
K	K	Y	M	R
N	T	A	A	W

SQUARE 1

Y	R	H	T	A
S	H	L	K	A
A	O	B	N	I
G	B	N	W	N
T	D	I	O	D

SQUARE 2

RESULTS OF COMPETITION 117 — "ACTING UP"

A satisfying competition in that I reckon I got the difficulty about right — only one entrant got full marks, but three others got eleven out of twelve. The clear winner, with no need for the hat, was **Andy Mills** of Leeds. Congratulations — the token is in the post!

Answers:

1. *The Creature From the Black Lagoon*: Ricou Browning and / or Ben Chapman
2. *Barbarella*: Jane Fonda
3. *The Abominable Dr Phibes*: Vincent Price
4. *Goldengirl*: Susan Anton
5. *The Man with the X-Ray Eyes*: Ray Milland
6. *The Bionic Woman*: Lindsay Wagner
7. *Alex deFarge*: Malcolm McDowell
8. *Nurse Christine Chapel*: Majel Barrett
9. *Commander Adama*: Lorne Greene
10. *Chewbacca*: Peter Mayhew
11. *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935): Elsa Lanchester
12. *The Cat from Outer Space*: Rumble(r) and Amber

Please send all entries, together with any competition correspondence, to the usual address:

Roger Robinson
75 Rosslyn Avenue
Harold Wood, Essex
RM3 0RG

by Friday 31st May 1996.

α and ω

Chris Terran

Last issue's crossword competition was won by **Dave Langford**; the solution will appear next time. My apologies for the lack of a crossword this issue.

Instead of a crossword we're running an extra competition, inspired by an article written by Bob Devney in *The Proper Boskonian* 35, the magazine of the New England SF Association.

A **Jane Chord** — the provenance of the term is obscure — is defined as:

"The outcome obtained by juxtaposing the first and last words of a given book or other written work to create a two-word phrase or sentence."

The hope is to get some humorous or appropriate comment on the work or the author. You wouldn't have thought that this would give much to play with, but among the books on my desk at the moment is *Red Dust* by Paul McAuley, the first and last words of which are

Mars kiss.

which seems apt enough. And here's Karen Joy Fowler's *Sarah Canary*, which reveals the bizarre message:

The Fleas!

Alfred Bester's *Tiger! Tiger!* provides this comment, presumably on Gully Foyle:

This awakening.

and *The Demolished Man* gives:

Explosion again.

Devney gives some examples of his own: Heinlein's *The Number of the Beast* provides

He's sure.

which was certainly true of RAH. And *A Matter for Men* by David Gerrold tellingly has

McCarthy way.

Enough examples: the competition is to root amongst your book collection and come up with Jane Chords yourself, if necessary with a short explanatory comment. There will be prizes for the best ones, so start looking! Send your entries to Roger Robinson at the address opposite.

Incidentally, the Jane Chord of Devney's article is, of course, "Hidden message". Much meaning can be extracted from two words!

— Chris Terran