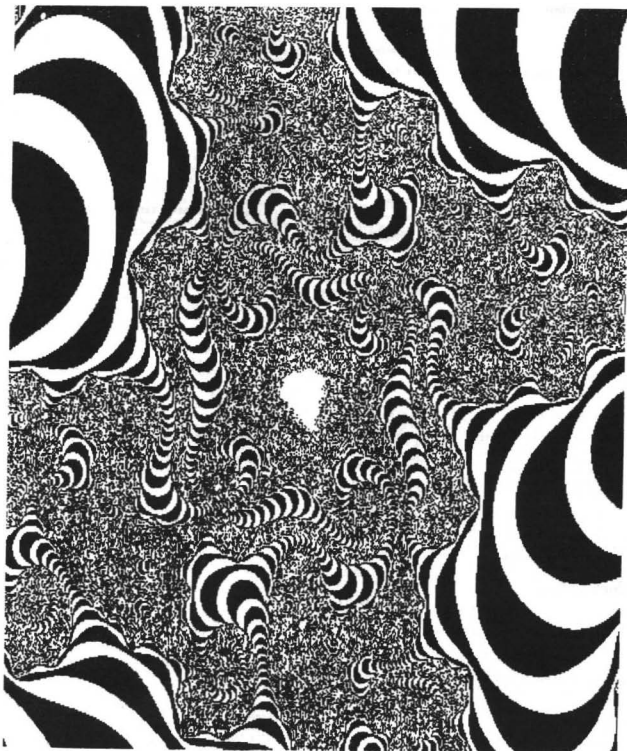


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A·T·R·I·X

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April/May 1990

CONTENTS

DETERMINANTS	Jenny Glover	3
NEWS	Paul Kincaid et al	4
MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD		9
FIRE AND HEMLock: THE FANZINE COLUMN	Nic Farey	9
FANZINE LISTING		11
COMPETITION CORNER	Roger Robinson	12
CRYSTAL MAZE	Pat Brown	13
FILK - WHAT IS IT?	Valerie Housden	14
THE FORBIDDEN PLANET EXPERIENCE	Nicholas Mahoney	14
MEDIA FILE	John Peters	15
MEDIA REVIEWS	Christopher C. Bailey, John Peters, Jessica Yates, Jenny Glover	16
YOU ARE NOT ALONE: Where the English BSFans are		18
SMALL PRESS REVIEWS	Terry Broome	20
THE EASTCON '90 MEDIA PROGRAMME - TO BOLDLY GO	Helen McCarthy	20
CON LISTINGS		21
LOCAL FANORAMA	Keith Mitchell	22
WRITING		22
WRITEBACK	Christopher C. Bailey, Pamela J. Baddeley	23

The cover artist is Kevin Smith from Oxford, with a Mandelbrot image. Some of his favourite sf titles, in no particular order, are:

Helliconia Spring	Brian Aldiss
The Uplift War	David Brin
A Canticle for Leibowitz	Walter Miller Jr.
Code of the Lifemaker	James P. Hogan
Downbelow Station	C.J. Cherryh
The Man in the Maze	Robert Silverberg
The Best of Cordwainer Smith	George R. Stewart
Earth Abides	

In other words, he has a slight bias towards "hard" science fiction, though he says he also reads a fair amount of fantasy. When he is not reading (or programming), he spends his time on philately and hill-walking. He's originally from Aberdeen, where there is rather more in the way of hills than in this part of the country.

OTHER ARTISTS:

Atom	page 6	Les Clewlow	page 11
Neil Allen	page 13	Will Walker	page 14
Stephen Manderson	page 20 and page 31		

COLLATING WEEKEND: JUNE 2-3, 1990

Could you spare some time to help collate Matrix? This takes place every two months directed by Keith Freeman at the Department of Statistics, University of Reading. Tea or coffee is provided, plus you get an extra month on your subscription.

If you come by train, then get a bus just outside the station (No. 7 or 8 to Shinfield Road). By car, take the A4 when you get to Reading, then the Shinfield Road.

You want the Blandford Lodge Annex (aka Applied Statistics). Everyone goes to the pub for an hour between noon and 2pm. Other details from Keith (0734 666142) or Jenny (0532 751264).

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Saturday, May 12, 1990

Thank you for helping me. I was very hesitant about taking on this job as the other person on the short list knows far more about science fiction than I'd ever dreamed (though we share experience in the book trade). I guess I applied because I like challenges. You'll find a few differences from usual - some are because I'm (I confess with shame) barely computer literate and I'm not sure how to get a full line in bold or put on foreign accents and my husband, Steve, who taught me this program (Chivriter) has gone off to do some research in Wantes.

I changed the editorial name as a sign of a new editor and because it seemed more relevant to the actual title of this magazine. I don't think Maureen chose her editorial name as an astronomical reference as she (and I) are keen on the Alan Garner books. One of my last memories of primary school was hearing the teacher read *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen* just after playtime: but I missed the last episode, stuck in an entrance exam for my new school. I looked for it, casually and intermitantly, and found it three years later in the middle of the Central Library, a library so huge and ancient that it had a complete set of John Buchans, down to his very early Don Quixote of the Moors. But my enjoyment of Alan Garner ended abruptly with *Red Shift*.

Of course, in those days, I was too shy to write to the BSFA and say "Dear Editor, what made you call the editorial *Red Shift*?" I was just happy to get the magazines every couple of months and see which fanzines were listed; because, if I HAVE to be classified, it would be as a fanzine person. My involvement with the BSFA was minimal: I was interested in science fiction, so joined automatically. I only wrote to the BSFA if it was something I felt about pretty strongly.

I must admit, confess, just plain say, that although I read science fiction, I read much more "mainstream" literature. Which is one reason why, if I write to you or bump against you at a con, my first question is likely to be a plea for you to recommend some science fiction. However, concerning the thorny question of the definition of science fiction, I was interested to read a review of Oriental science fiction in the current *Locus*. The collection of Chinese short stories is described as being "Campbellian": in praise of technology and the exploration of science. Even allowing for the strained translation, it appears obvious that the fiction is used as a tool to show how desirable the scientific life is, how one must be logical, pay intense attention to detail. By contrast, the collection of Japanese stories are concerned more with science fiction as "speculative", a concern of how technology will affect future existence. The *Locus* reviewer, Scott Winnett, comments how the Chinese are struggling to improve their standard of living, aiming to "romanticize" science, whereas the Japanese, with a high standard of living, can concentrate on individual hopes and fears.

Anyway, when I was looking for books on Richard Burton (not the actor) in the Central Library (different town and now, now that I am adult, it seems strangely shrunken), I came across *The Moon Man*, a biography of Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay. It's fascinating. Maclay, as he was known, mostly because no non-Russian could pronounce the "Miklouho" part, studied sponges in extreme detail. A man of intense perception, he also wanted to map the Red Sea vegetation before the opening of the Suez Canal. I don't really follow his reasoning that the relatively few Mediterranean inhabitants would instantly flood south against the expected strong northern current, but appreciate that there would inevitably be some cross-fertilisation.

Using sponges as his starting point, his next major project was to explore New Guinea (then only coastal strips had been mapped). Just as with the Red Sea, he wanted to observe the society before the expected mass European invasion.

It is interesting to see the difficulties of First Contact on both sides. White men landing on "savage" islands were often perceived as being semi-divine to the local inhabitants, even as late as 1860, when A R Wallace found that he was considered to be almost divine in the East Indies. This had obvious advantages, in a country where all men carried ominously sharp spears and would walk behind one, ready to prick an exposed back. Unfortunately though, walk behind one, ready to prick an exposed back. These inhabitants, being pragmatic, would tend to want some use



DETERMINANTS

from their resident deity: better crops, a cure for elephantiasis, eyes that could spot their fishing traps when torn away by the sea.

But Maclay had major difficulties: how to learn a language literally from scratch. After two months, his vocabulary was limited to parts of the body, birds, food, utensils. He did not know how to say "yes" or "good": a difficulty most of authors evade by inventing impressive sounding gadgets. He knew that he must show no sign of illness: that being obvious weakness. When his servant died, he was buried secretly at sea, with silent thanks to the sharks. When malaria came, savage as a merciless female, Maclay fought silently, saving his strength for the next inevitable bout.

The problem with the local people was that there was no way that they could fix Maclay in their terms of reference. He had no ancestors, he had no descendants: he did not sleep with women, indeed refused when one was sent to lie with him. He was, they thought, male, though they were never absolutely sure. It was a difficult experience having a semi-active god come to stay.

His appearance was "unhuman": it seemed that his eyes were hollow, that there was another sky inside his head. His features were pallid, no one knew his age - for while he often seemed old, heavy with knowledge, he knew no more than a child about how to leave food scraps on the floor for sorcerers or how dangerous it was to travel through the bush at the mercy of malignant spirits.

If these people accepted that Maclay was a new experience, then they would have to alter their attitudes of society: consequently much of their efforts went to finding a place for him. They eventually decided that the women would not be harmed by seeing him. They accepted his presence, though reserved the right to deceive him when expedient. First Contact.

Funally enough, I came across the fear and excitement of First Contact when I picked a book at random to read while the children ran wild in the park. It was about the Roman invasion of Britain in AD43 when the Roman troops practically mutinied. They were scared stiff. The Emperor Galus had tried to invade Britain, but had only built a lighthouse at Boulogne. The soldiers were superstitious, they had heard the travellers' tales of garbled Tacitus describing Britain as a land of sea-monsters, creatures half human, half beast, birds they had never encountered, terrible hurricanes: the Channel was more a psychological than a physical barrier to them. Plus when they did get across they had the Belgic tribes to face, Britons who did not fight fair, in the Roman way, but dived all over the battle field in chariots, flinging javelins, then dashing out on foot, ready to nip back in at a moment's notice...or so Caesar said.

The end of the page is beckoning. Two more sentences, then I can celebrate. I can tell you, wholeheartedly, that I never knew how much Maureen did, issue after issue, never complaining AND getting her university work done as well...I don't know if I will, or can, do as well as she did, but I'm going to do my best.

NEWS

Compiled by Paul Kincaid
(With a little help from *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and other sources)

RYMAN WINS CLARKE AWARD

Geoff Ryman has won the £1,000 Arthur C. Clarke Award for his third novel, *The Child Garden*, published by UMNIN. The Award for the best science fiction novel published in Britain in 1989, was announced at the Broucho Club, London, on March 8.

Ryman, who receives a trophy plus the cheque, was unable to be at the award ceremony. Only a few days earlier, he had been obliged to fly to Ascension Island in connection with his work for the Central Office of Information. The award was collected on his behalf by Jane Johnson, his editor at UMNIN, who read a short message from him. The presentation was made by Fred Clarke, who read out a message from his brother, Arthur C. Clarke.

According to the chairman of the judges, Maxim Jakubowski, the competition this year was very close. The second place went to *A Child Across the Sky* by Jonathan Carroll, and there was a tie for third place between *A Hawk for the General* by Lisa Goldstein and *Desolation Road* by Ian McDonald. The other shortlisted books were *Soldiers of Paradise* - Paul Park, *Ivory* - Mike Resnick and *Neverness* - David Zindell.

The judges were Maureen Porter and David V. Barrett representing the BSFA, and Mary Gentle and Jakubowski representing the Science Fiction Foundation. The International Science Policy Foundation, one of the three groups which helped to found the award, took no part in the judging this year. It is hoped that Maxim Jakubowski will continue to act as administrator for the award, though no longer as judge.

NEBULA AWARD NOMINATIONS

The nominations for the 1989 Nebula Awards have now been announced. They are:

BEST NOVEL

- The Boat of a Million Years* - Poul Anderson (no British publisher)
- Prestige Alvis* - Orson Scott Card (LEGEND)
- Good News from Outer Space* - John Kessel (no British publisher)
- Ivory* - Mike Resnick (LEGEND)
- The Healer's War* - Elizabeth Ann Scarborough (no British publisher)
- Sister Light, Sister Dark* - Jane Yolen (no British publisher)

BEST NOVELLA

- "The Mountains of Mourning"* - Lois McMaster Bujold (Analog/Borders of Infinity)
- "Great Work of Time"* - John Crowley (Novels)
- "Mind Changes His Mind"* - George Alec Effinger (IASFN)
- "A Touch of Lavender"* - Megan Lindholm (IASFN)
- "Tiny Tango"* - Judith Moffett (IASFN)
- A Dozen Tough Jobs* - Howard Waldrop (no British publisher)

BEST NOVELETTE

- "Sisters"* - Greg Bear (Taspests)
- "Silver Lady and the Fortyman"* - Megan Lindholm (IASFN)
- "For I Have Touched the Sky"* - Mike Resnick (F&SF)
- "Fast Cars"* - Kristine Kathryn Rusch (IASFN)
- "Enter a Soldier, Later: Enter Another"* - Robert Silverberg (IASFN/True State)
- "At the Rialto"* - Connie Willis (The Microverse/Omi)

BEST SHORT STORY

- "The Adinkra Cloth"* - Mary C. Aldridge (Marion Zimmer Bradley Fantasy)
- "The Omastid Miniatures"* - Michael Bishop (The Microverse)
- "Lost Boys"* - Orson Scott Card (F&SF)
- "Birds"* - Suzy McKee Charnas (IASFN)
- "Ripples in the Dirac Sea"* - Geoffrey A. Landis (IASFN)
- "Dori Bangs"* - Bruce Sterling (IASFN)

It is worth noting that three of the nominations for the Best Novel have taken advantage of the SFMA rules which allow a book to be held over for consideration for the awards until a later edition in another year. Thus both *Ivory* by Mike Resnick, *The Healer's War* by Elizabeth Ann Scarborough and *Sister Light, Sister Dark* by Jane Yolen were first published in 1988. One of the short stories "Ripples in the Dirac Sea" by Geoffrey A. Landis has also used this device. If the awards do not go to books in their year of

publication, one begins to wonder how they can possibly claim to represent the best SF of the year.

MAUREEN PORTER RESIGNS FROM THE GATE

Maureen Porter, Co-ordinator of the BSFA and former editor of *Matrix*, has resigned as editor of *The Gate* following the continued non-appearance of issue 2.

When the first issue of the magazine appeared in Spring 1989, it was intended to be a quarterly publication, but issue 2 has been continually delayed. Following a meeting between Porter and the publisher, Richard Newcombe, in November 1989, it was agreed that issue 2 would be published at the end of January 1990, and announcements were made to that effect. There is still no sign of the issue appearing.

In the meantime, Porter had continued to read and buy stories, and had material on hand at least into issue 7. The delays, however, meant that a number of writers had been waiting over a year with no sign of their work appearing in print. The final straw came when one author had to withdraw a story because it would clash with the forthcoming appearance of that story in a collection.

Porter has said "I am not prepared to give any further time to reading and editing manuscripts without a firmer guarantee of regular publication and distribution. The current situation is grossly unfair to those authors from whom we have already bought stories, as well as to those currently submitting stories we cannot hope to consider in the light of the current backlog".

The Gate was first proposed by Newcombe, of M Publishing, in 1988, who approached Porter to be the editor later that year. She has since spent eighteen months working for the magazine, without pay, but has had no involvement with the production, advertising and distribution of the magazine. In that time, she was able to build up a very good relationship with her authors, attracting stories by writers such as Brian Stableford, James White, Barry Kilworth, Philip Mann, Storm Constantine, Eric Brown, Richard Paul Russo, as well as many new writers whose work would have appeared for the first time in the magazine. The response, from readers and writers alike, convinced her that there was room for another science fiction magazine in this country, and she is sad that *The Gate* did not take advantage of this gap in the market.

However, she says "one cannot continue indefinitely to edit a magazine which is simply not appearing. I have had no involvement in the production or distribution side of the business and appear to be unable to influence it in any way. In such circumstances, I think one has little, if any, alternative".

At the moment, it appears that Richard Newcombe is still intending to publish *The Gate*, though he is resourced to be contemplating contacting subscribers to ask them to be patient. Anyone wishing to contact *The Gate* should write to Richard Newcombe, M Publishing, 28 Saville Road, Peterborough PE3 7PR.

PAN PREPARES MAJOR LAUNCH

On Tuesday April 10, at a party at the Museum of the Moving Image in London, PAN will officially launch their new SF, Fantasy and Horror list. Although PAN has maintained a small-scale involvement with the genre over the years, this will be its first attempt to make a major impact on SF and fantasy publishing in this country. It will also be virtually their first venture into hardback publishing.

The new list is under the control of Senior Fiction Editor Kathy Gale, and the first books on the list will be *The Barsoom Project* by Larry Niven & Steven Barnes, *Star Scroll* by Melane Rawn, both of which will be published simultaneously in hardback and 'C' format paperback, *Dark Voices*, *The Best from the Pan Book of Horror Stories* edited by Stephen Jones & Clarence Paget which will be simultaneous hardback and 'A' format paperback, and *Bragos Prince* - Melane Rawn, Jason Corso - Dan McGirt and *First Flight* - Chris Claremont, which will be published in paperback. A big marketing push is being put behind the launch, with large displays appearing in many bookshops, and first reports from the sales staff suggest that the launch will be a commercial success. In particular, advance orders on *Dark Voices* are now so high that the book is being reprinted before publication date. Building on this success, PAN are reissuing the Pan Book of Horror Stories series as *Dark Voices*, and it will now be co-edited by Stephen Jones & Dave Sutton, who already co-edit the magazine *Fantasy Tales*.

The launch is being supported by the authors. Larry Niven, Steven Barnes and Chris Claremont (better known as the author of *X-Men* for Marvel Comics) will be in this country on a promotional and signing tour which is being known as the "Pan Galactic Tour". They will be at Forbidden Planet and Fantasy Inn, London on April 7/ Forbidden

Planet, Cardiff and Dilons, London on April 9; Haecks, Kingston on April 10; Smiths and Andros, Birmingham on April 11; Athena and Odyssey 7, Manchester on April 12; SF Bookshop, Edinburgh and Forbidden Planet, Glasgow on April 13; and at Easton in Liverpool on April 14.

Kathy Gale has said that the launch titles have been chosen to be commercial, but from June they will be publishing two titles a month and some of these will be more adventurous. They include the first short story collection by Eric Brown, *The Time-Lapsed Man*; Brian Stablesford's Clarke Award nominee, *The Empire of Fear*; another British newcomer, Graham Joyce, with a dark fantasy, *Dreadside*; they are the first British publisher to bring out the fantasy novels of Charles de Lint, and they have just bought a new novel from Patricia McKillip; while other authors on their list include Isaac Asimov & Robert Silverberg with three collaborations; Joan D. Vinge with *Sasser Dunes*, her long awaited sequel to *The Snow Goose*; Pat Murphy with *The City, Not Long After*; K.W. Jeter with *The Night Hawks*; Barry B. Longyear with a three-novel exploration of Asimov's Laws of Robotics, *Caliban*; and Diane Duane with *Spock's World*.

EDWARDS DENIES VECTOR IMPRINT

Malcolm Edwards has denied that part of his responsibility at GRAFTON will be to launch a new SF imprint called VECTOR BOOKS.

The rumour surfaced in the February issue of *Science Fiction Chronicle*, in a report on Robert Silverberg. There it was reported that Silverberg has joined the exodus from GOLLANCZ to GRAFTON following Edwards' move. Silverberg has signed a contract for five books over five years which will appear, so the report says, as "Collins hardcovers first, then Grafton paperbacks, or more likely Malcolms Edwards' own imprint at Grafton, now likely to be called Vector Books". The report is uncredited.

Edwards is a one-time editor of the BSFA's critical journal, *Vector*, and any such imprint would obviously be the cause of some confusion, not to say friction, between the BSFA and GRAFTON. However, Edwards has said that GRAFTON have no plans to launch a SF imprint. The idea was apparently floated at his first meeting after joining GRAFTON, but was quickly dismissed. And anyway, he said, if they were to launch an imprint, it certainly wouldn't be called VECTOR.

AWARDS

The shortlist for the Philip K. Dick Award for the best SF paperback original is:

Infinity Hold - Barry Longyear

A Fearful Symmetry - James Luceno

Being Alien - Rebecca Ore

Subterranean Gallery - Richard Paul Russo

On My Way to Paradise - Dave Wolverton

The judges for the award are: John Shirley, Gene Wolfe, Tom Moylan and Sheila Finch.

None of the shortlisted titles has a British publisher.

Australia's Ditmar Awards went to: Novel Length Work: *Striped Holes* - Damien Broderick. Short Fiction: *"My Lady Tongue"* - Lucy Sussex.

PEOPLE

Christopher Priest welcomes the publication of his new novel, *The Quiet Host* from BLOOMSBURY, with an interview in the Sunday Times in which he states that science fiction is a genre which no longer interests him. "It's a worked-out form. It was only ever a marketing thing", he says in what sounds remarkably like an obituary for the genre.

Robert Holdstock says that he is at work on a new novel, his first since *Leviathan*. This will be a fantasy/horror novel called *The Fetch* which has been bought by ORBIT.

Brian Aldiss has been busy recently. He has finished *Dracula Unbound* which is being promoted as the "sequel" to *Frankenstein Unbound* (which has just been filmed by Roger Corman). And he has sold an autobiography, *Bury My Heart at W.H. Smith* to HODDER. HODDER is now claiming that they will also be publishing Aldiss's fiction from now on, which makes him yet another refugee from troubled GOLLANCZ.

John Brunner has completed the first draft of his new novel, *A Maze of Stars* which has been commissioned by BALLANTINE/DOLBY, while the UK edition of *Children of the Thunder* has been put back yet again. "They're now talking about September". Meanwhile, thanks to technical details supplied by our own Dave Wood, he produced a story called "When the Phones Went, or the Brief Appearance of Intelligent Life on Earth" for, of all people, a German

telephone company - it appears they gave their customers a SF collection for Christmas. [John Brunner]

Keith Brooke reports that he has just signed a three-novel deal with GOLLANCZ, with CORGI almost certain to do the paperbacks (not the one book deal with CORGI as reported in *Interzone*). "The first, *Keepers of the Peace*, is a sort of experimental anti-militaristic SF thriller; the second, *Expatriate*, is a more conventional post-colonialist story; the third (unwritten) novel has the working title, *Expatriate Incorporated*." [Keith Brooke]

"Ian Watson Discusses the Future of Science Fiction" is the title of a Study Day at the University of Keele on Saturday April 21, running from 11a to 3.30p. Watson will give a talk about his own work, then host a general discussion. The fee is £5.40 (£3.90 for senior citizens, £1.60 for unemployed or disabled) and tickets are available from Adult and Continuing Education, The University, Keele, Staffs. ST5 5BG. Tel: 0782 625116. The closing date for applications is April 12, but Keele say they are willing to consider late applications, so please phone to check!

OBITUARIES

Robert Adams, author of the Horsecranks series, died on January 4, 1990, aged 56.

Adams followed a family tradition by serving in the US Cavalry, and this military background came through strongly in his books. He started writing in the early '70s, and began his most famous series with *The Coaling of the Horsecranks* in 1975. This militaristic and survivalist fantasy set in a violent post-apocalypse world went on to provide eighteen novels and several anthologies. The same militaristic ideas informed his six-part *Cartagays* in *Time* series, and the series he was working on at the time of his death, *Stairway to Forever*, of which two books have been completed.

Phil Austin, the animator who created one of the most popular of all SF animated films, *Skyhales*, died at the age of 38 on January 24, 1990. Co-founder of the production company Animation City, Austin frequently used fantasy as an important element in his work. Besides *Skyhales*, which continues to be a popular feature at SF conventions, fantasy also featured in his student work, *Har Beezer* in his contribution to *The Sex Pistols' The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle* and his last film, the music hall comedy *Binky and Boo*.

Joseph Payne Brennan, 71, author of supernatural short fiction, died on January 28, 1990. Also a poet and a writer of westerns and detective fiction, his first supernatural story, "The Green Parrot", appeared in *Weird Tales* in 1952. He produced several collections of his supernatural stories, including three which feature his psychic detective, Lucius Leffling, and he also published the magazine *Macabre* which first appeared in 1957.

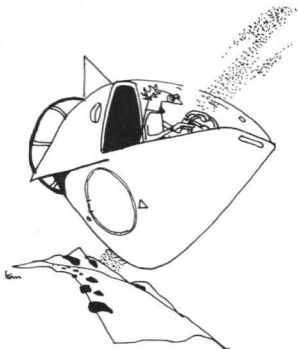
Michael Powell, one of the greatest of all British film makers, died on February 13, 1990, at the age of 84.

After an apprenticeship in film which began in the 1920s, Powell formed a writing and directing partnership with the Hungarian émigré Emeric Pressburger in 1942 and the two produced some of the most distinguished and distinctive British films of their time. Their work often featured a heightened realism which often fringed on fantasy, and on occasion, as in one of their finest collaborations, *A Matter of Life and Death*, went boldly over the edge with an extraordinary sequence set in heaven. In later years, Powell was an advisor for Francis Ford Coppola's Zentrop studios, and though a number of projects were mooted, none came about.

Carl Sherrill, a commercial artist who turned to writing fantasy in the mid-70s, died on February 7, 1990, aged 60. His first book was *Race* (1977), to which a later book, *Straelings* (1987) was a sequel. He also wrote *Arcane* (1978) and *The Space Prodigal* (1981).

Philippe Soupault, French Surrealist poet, died on March 12, 1990, aged 92. One of the original leading lights of the Surrealist movement, he was, at least in part, a model for the character of Robert St. Onge in Lisa Goldstein's *The Dress Years*. The careers of the two parallel each other in several ways. Like André Breton who wounded during the First World War, one of the original triumvirates of Surrealists with Breton and Aragon, eventually expelled from the movement by Breton when he turned to writing realist novels about Paris.

George Selden Thompson, who wrote the classic fantasy novel for children, *The Cricket in Times Square*, under the pen name George Selden, died on December 5, 1989. He was 60.



Arthur (ATom) Thomson 1927-1990

Sadly, Arthur (ATom) Thomson died on February 8, after a lengthy illness.

Arthur first discovered fandom in 1954 and was one of the most active fans of the 1950s and 60s, and after a period of lessened activity came to the forefront of things once more in the early 80s. Though he sold some artwork professionally, to British SF magazines such as *NEBULA*, to which he provided an excellent series of back-cover drawings, and *NEW WORLDS*, he was best known for his cartoons and illustrations; it is not an exaggeration to state that they appeared in practically every major fanzine for the last thirty years, and many of the minor ones, from the days before photocopies when fanzine art was painstakingly traced out with stencils with a stylus. Many illustrations, including covers, appeared in BSFA publications.

He also wrote humorous material, articles, and letters for fanzines, and was a regular attendant at conventions and fan meetings until his recent respiratory illness made it difficult for him to leave his London flat. Also recently, his right hand had become unsteady and he was unable to produce as much art as he had once, though he did illustrate his longtime friend Chuck Harris's account of his trip to America (which was paid for by American fans via a fund) with his left hand.

He visited America himself in 1964 as winner of the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, and from then on maintained contact with many American fans and fanzines which printed his ubiquitous art.

Apart from his impressive record as a contributor to fanzines, Arthur was also a truly pleasant and friendly man, one of the rare breed who, despite the backbiting and vindictiveness which is so often a feature of social fandom, somehow managed to stay on good terms with almost everybody throughout his long period of activity there.

Though I had the pleasure of his acquaintance for only a few years, I shall be one of the multitude that will miss him [Harry Bond].

Paul Kincaid adds: He was one of the most encouraging and supportive of people, and was always ready with a kind word and a ready supply of cartoons for new fanzine editors. He was a very fast artist, and had the ability to produce different drawings with either hand at the same time, but his work was always distinguished by a boldness and sharpness of line. The most important features of his work were oddily-shaped, often strangely organic-looking spacecraft, and tiny, nice-like aliens. Much of his later work has appeared in the pages of *Matrix*, and he continued to work right up to his final illness. He was nominated for a Hugo as Best Fan Artist four times.

Jeann Wallace, the actress who was married to Cornel Wilde

and starred in his film version of *No Blade of Grass*, died on February 15, 1990, aged 66.

PUBLISHING

TITAN are producing a computer-generated graphic novel about a computer-generated Batman. *Batman: Digital Justice* by Pepe Moreno is set one hundred years in the future, when a Joker computer virus seizes the computer systems of Gotham (sic), and Commissioner Gordon's grandson has to resurrect Batman from the computer files left by Bruce Wayne.

W.H. ALLEN, the publishing subsidiary of Virgin, which publishes hardbacks, (mostly for library sale) under its own imprint, and paperbacks under the STAR imprint, has fired half its staff of sixty, and plans to sell off STAR paperbacks.

Alastair Gray has started his own publishing operation. Called DOG & BONE BOOKS, its first list published on April 5, consists of books by four unknown Scottish writers, with the authors chipping in the cost. Gray calls the operation an authors' co-operative, others may consider it vanity publishing.

PENTOS are reporting their selling of selected titles (including a Batsan book) at a discount before Christmas to break the Net Book Agreement. They are now appealing to more publishers to publish books outside the NBA, so they can repeat the offer. However, an analysis of their sales figures in *The Bookseller* suggests that the offer must have made an operating loss.

EDGEWOOD PRESS of California have announced *The Best of the Rest: The Year's Best Small Press Science Fiction and Fantasy* to be edited by Stephen Pasetchnick and Brian Youmans. Their market report reads: "Current needs: Science fiction and fantasy published by small presses in 1990. 'Small press' is being defined as any publishing house that does not support more than one person; small press magazines must have a circulation less than 10,000. No originals. Authors and editors are strongly encouraged to bring material to our attention." The address is PO Box 264, Cambridge, MA 02238, USA.

GRANTON announced that it had acquired two fantasy novels from Julian May. The first book, *Black Trillius*, is a collaboration between May, Marion Bradley and Andre Norton. It will appear in hardback and trade paperback in January 1991, followed by *Blood Trillius* in September. Mass-market editions will appear a year later in each case.

ANTHOLOGIES & COLLECTIONS

David S. Garnett has announced the contents of *Zenith 2*, his original anthology, which will be coming out from SPHERE later this year. The all-British line-up consists of:

"Winning" - Ian McDonald, "The Time She Became" - Storm Constantine, "A Journey to the King Planet" - S.M. Baxter, "X-Calibre" - Gerry Kilworth, "A Passion for Lord Pierrot" - Colin Greenland, "The Death of Cassandra Quebec" - Eric Brown, "The Pill" - Jojo Biling, "The Furniture of Life's Ambition" - Brian Stableford, "Dead Television" - Lisa Tuttle, "Insight" - John Gribbin, "Different Cities" - Simon D. Ings, and "The Cairne Purses" - Michael Moorcock.

In contrast, there are no British writers included in *The Orbit Science Fiction Yearbook 3*, also edited by David S. Garnett and due out from ORBIT in August. Garnett hasn't even chosen any of the stories he featured in his own anthology *Zenith*. The all-transatlantic line-up consists of:

"At the Rialto" - Connie Willis, "The Gates of Babel" - J.R. Dunn, "Bori Bangs" - Bruce Sterling, "Burrhead" - Lucius Shepard, "Chisera" - Jaycee Carr, "Out of Copyright" - Charles Sheffield, "Abel Lincoln in McDonald" - James Morrow, "Dogwalker" - Orson Scott Card, "Lunar Triptych: Embracing the Night" - Richard Paul Russo, "Privacy" - David Brin, "The Asension Solution" - Robert Silverberg and "In Blue" - John Crowley.

After that, it's nice to see that nine British writers feature in the year's Best Fantasy and Horror collection for 1990, *Recess & Dress: The Best Fantasy and Horror 2*, edited by Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling and published by LEISARD. A massive anthology that rivals the Dozsis SF collection in size, it contains forty six stories by forty three writers (Gene Wolfe is distinguished by three inclusions), and one has to say that such a large British showing is unusual and very welcome in such circumstances. Congratulations in particular to Anne Gay, since newcomers don't usually get to

feature in these anthologies. The other British representatives are: Tanih Lee, Ian McDonald, M. John Harrison, Ian Watson, Gwyneth Jones, Ramsey Campbell, Sara Maitland and Joan Aiken. The complete list of contents is:

"Death is Different" - Lisa Goldstein, "The Tale of the Rose and the Nightingale (And What Came of It)" - Gene Wolfe, "It was the Heat" - Pat Cadigan, "The Cutter" - Edward Bryant, "The Forever Jesus" - John DeRufer, "Voices of the Kill" - Thomas M. Disch, "Secretly" - Ruth Ronson, "The Devil's Rose" - Tanih Lee, "Wespires" - Daniel Pinkwater, "Scatter my Ashes" - Greg Egan, "Unfinished Portrait of the King of Pain by Van Gogh" - Ian McDonald, "Shoo Fly" - Richard Matheson, "The Thing Itself" - Michael Blumlein, "The Soft Whisper of Midnight Snow" - Charles De Lint, "Rogan Games" - Anne Gay, "The Princess, the Cat and the Unicorn" - Patricia C. Wrede, "The Book and its Contents" - Robert K. Weir, "The Great God Pan" - M. John Harrison, "Lost Bodies" - Ian Watson, "Two Minutes Forty-Five Seconds" - Dan Simmons, "Preflash" - John M. Ford, "Life of Buddha" - Lucius Shepard, "Appointment with Eddie" - Charles Beaumont, "Fragments of Papyrus from the Temple of the Older Gods" - William Kotzwinkle, "Spillage" - Nancy Kress, "Snowman" - Charles L. Grant, "The Scar" - Denis Etchison, "Lallem Langstrand" - Gwyneth Jones, "The Last Poem about the Boy Queen and Pinocchio" - Sandra M. Gilbert, "Games in the Pope's Head" - Gene Wolfe, "Playing the Game" - Ramsey Campbell, "Faces" - F. Paul Wilson, "Snowfall" - Jessie Thompson, "Seal-Self" - Cara Maitland, "No Hearts, No Flowers" - Barry M. Malzberg, "The Boy Who Drew Unicorns" - Jane Yolen, "The Darling" - Scott Bradfield, "Night They Missed the Horror Show" - Joe R. Lansdale, "Your Story" - Rick DeMarinis, "Winter Solstice, Camelot Station" - John M. Ford, "The Boy who Hooked the Sun" - Gene Wolfe, "Clea's Dream" - Joan Aiken, "Love in Vain" - Lewis Shiner, "In the Darkened Hours" - Bruce Boston, "A Golden Net for Silver Fishes" - Ru Emerson, "Dancing Among Ghosts" - Jim Aikin.

It's been seven years since the last collection of stories by Ursula LeGuin appeared, so a new book *Buffalo Gals and Other Animal Presences*, from GOLLANCZ, has to be an event. It brings together eleven stories and twenty poems, all with an animal theme, and it includes her latest Hugo and World Fantasy Award winner "Buffalo Gals, Won't you Come Out Tonight". The other stories are "The Wife's Story", "Mazes", "The Direction of the Road", "Vaster than Empires and More Slow", "The White Donkey", "Horse Camp", "Schrödinger's Cat", "The Author of the Acacia Seeds and Other Extracts from the Journal of Therolinguistics", "May's Lion" and "She Unnares Them". The poems are: "The Basil", "Flints", "Mr. St. Helens/Daphnos", "Torrey Pine Reserve", "Lewis and Clark After", "Meet Texas", "Last Over", "The Crown of Laurel", "What is Going On in the Oaks", "For Ted", "Found Poem", "Totems", "Winter Downs", "The Man Eater", "Sleeping Out", "Tabby Lorenzo", "Black Leonard in Negative Space", "A Conversation with a Silence", "For Leonard, darko, and Burton Watson and her translation of 'The Eighth Elegy' from the Duino Elegies by Rainer Marie Rilke.

Another major writer with a new collection is Gene Wolfe, who manages to cram over thirty stories into the five hundred and six pages of *Endangered Species* (DORBIT). The stories are: "A Cabin on the Coast", "The Map", "Kevin Malone", "The Dark of the June", "The Death of Hyle", "From the Notebook of Dr. Stein", "Thag", "The Nebraskan and the Nereid", "In the House of Gingerbread", "The Headless Man", "The Last Thrilling Wonder Story", "House of Ancestors", "Our Neighbour by David Copperfield", "When I was King the Merciless", "The God and His Man", "The Cat", "Her Beneath the Tree", "Cybernet", "The HERBARIUM of War", "The Detective of Dreams", "Peritonitis", "The Woman Who Loved the Centaur Pholus", "The Woman the Unicorn Loved", "The Peace Spy", "All the Hues of Hell", "Procreations: I Creation: I Re-Creation: II The Sister's Account", "Lukura", "Suzanne Delage", "Sweet Forest Maid", "My Book", "The Other Dead Man", "The Most Beautiful Woman on the World", "The Tale of the Rose and the Nightingale (and What Came of It)" and "Silhouette".

The fourth volume of the Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick is called *The Days of Perky Pat* (GOLLANCZ) and contains stories from 1954 to 1963. They are: "Autofac", "Service Call", "Captive Market", "The Mold of Yancy", "The Minority Report", "Recall Mechanism", "The Unreconstructed Mr. Explorers", "Mar Game", "If There were No Benny Cewell", "Novelty Act", "Waterspider", "What the Dead Men Say", "Orpheus with Clay Feet", "The Days of Perky Pat", "Stand-By", "What'll We do with Ragland Park" and "On, to be a Blobel".

The Folk of the Fringe by Orson Scott Card (LEGEND) is a collection of interlinking stories about the collapse of civilisation in America. They are "West", "Salvage", "The Fringe", "Pageant Wagon" and "America".

Berserker Base (VBSF) pretends to be a collaborative novel by seven authors, but it is in fact a collection of stories set in Fred Saberhagen's Berserker world and written between 1983 and 1985. They are: "What Makes Us Human" - Stephen Donaldson, "With Friends Like These" - Connie Willis, "Itself Surprised" - Roger Zelazny, "Deathwhorb" - Poul Anderson, "Pilots of the Twilight" - Ed Bryant, "A Teardrop Falls" - Larry Niven, plus "Prisoner's Secret", "Dangerous Dreams", "Crossing the Bar" and *Berserker Base* by Fred Saberhagen linking these all.

L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future Volume IV edited by Algis Budrys (NEW ERA), is the latest collection of stories by finalists in the Writers of the Future contest. The series has already introduced writers like Karen Joy Fowler and David Zindell, so we might be justified in expecting great things from at least some of the following:

"River of Stone" - Michael Green, "The Mirror" - Nancy Farmer, "The Zombie Corps: Nightmares Charlie" - Rayson Lorry, "High Fast Fish" - John Moore, "A Winter's Night" - P.H. MacEwan, "The Troublesome Kordas Alliance and How it was Settled" - Flonnet Biltgen, "Growlers" - Larry England, "What Do I See in You" - Mary A. Turzillo, "The Gas Nan" - Richard Urdiales, "The Fruit Picker" - Jo Beverley, "Black Sun and Dark Companion" - R. Garcia y Robertson, "6770: The Cause" - Mark D. Haw, "Mother's Day" - Astrid Julian, "Buffalo Dreams" - Jane Maitland, "Heretic Measures" - Paul Edwards, and "Old Times There" - Dennis E. Minner.

The collection also contains articles by Algis Budrys, Orson Scott Card, Tim Powers, Ramsey Campbell and Frank Kelly Freas.

The stories collected in *Dark Voices: The Best from the Pan Book of Horror Stories* edited by Stephen Jones & Clarence Paget, and part of the PAN launch are "Baby's Blood" - Alan Ryan, "The Nengler" - Stephen King, "The Speciality of the House" - Stanley Ellin, "Censor Obscura" - Basil Copper, "No Flies on Frank" - John Leonard, "The Streets of Asaph" - Harry Harrison, "Lucy Comes to Stay" - Robert Bloch, "The Fly" - George Langelaan, "The Emissary" - Ray Bradbury, "Pornography" - Ian McEwan, "Ringing the Changes" - Robert Aickman, "The Quiet Girl" - Robert Holdstock and "The Hunter" - David Case. Each story has a separate introduction by: Stephen Gallagher, James Herbert, Clive Barker, Charles L. Grant, F. Paul Wilson, Brian Aldiss, Graham Masterton, David Cronenberg, Dennis Etchison, Shaun Hutson, Peter Straub, Robert R. McCammon and Ramsey Campbell. There's a sinister cover by Herbert Van Thal and an index to the thirty volumes in the series so far.

BSFA member and occasional *Vector* and *Matrix* reviewer Jessica Yates has put together a reprint anthology of heroic fantasy stories by women writers, and published by the teenage imprint LIONS TRACKS. Called *Bragos and Warrior Daughters* it contains: "Dragonfield" - Jane Yolen (1965), "Draco, Draco" - Tanih Lee (1984), "Falcon's Mate" - Pat McIntosh, "The Healer" - Robin McKinley (1982), "Dragon Reserve, Home Eight" - Diana Wynne Jones (1984), "Crusader Daosel" - Vera Chapman (1978), "Joy Molf" - Pat McIntosh and "Black God's Kiss" - C.L. Moore (1934).

Meanwhile, there's good news for charity with the announcement of *Brabble II: Double Century* edited by Rob Meades and David B. Wake and published by BECCON PUBLICATIONS. As the announcement puts it, the new *Brabble* collection contains "100 stories of exactly 100 words each by 100 authors. Published on day 100 of 1990. Cover price is 100 shillings (£5)". As usual contributors receive no payment other than a copy of the book, and all profits go to the Royal National Institute for the Blind's "Talking Book" Library. Contributors to this volume are:

Michael Abbott, Joan Aiken, Suna Aikah, Brian Auering, Margaret Antis, K.V. Bailey, Barrington J. Bayley, Sue Bessley, D.M. Bloomfield, Steven J. Blyth, Frances Bonner, Sydney J. Bounds, Thelma Bradford, Eric Brown, Steve Bull, Chris Blunt, Jonathan Carroll, James Cawthorn, C.J. Cherry, Tony Chester, Arthur C. Clarke, John Clute, Michael G. Coney, Gaynor Coules, Cardinal Cox, Colin P. Davies, Steve Davies, Charles de Lint, Eve Devereux, Betty Dobb, Elsie M.K. Donald, Pauline E. Dunpate, Stephen R. Ealey, Marion Edwards, Ru Emerson, Nicholas Emmett, Serena M. Evans, Christopher Forler, Neil Gaiman, David Garnett, Peter T. Garratt, Jennifer Goss, Mary Gentle, Violet

C. Bouans, Ben Gribbin, Julie Grosvenor, Joe Haldeman, Anne Harcourt, Dave Hardy, Peter Heavyside, Liz Honeywell, Maxie Jakubowski, Steve Jones, David Langford, Sarah Lafanu, Catherine Lilley, John Lydecker, Angus McAllister, Brenda McCallum, Jennifer McGowan, Helen McNabb, Ken Mann, Ken Moyer, Peter Negus, Cecil Nurse, S.V. O'Jay, Jan Palmer, Peace & Love Corporation, Abi Pirani, Rachel Pollack, Elizabeth Rothwell, Andy Sawyer, Alison Scott, Carol Sheller, John Sladek, Kate Soley, Brian Stableford, Jane Stableford, Katherine Stableford, Leo Stableford, Christopher Stashoff, Jia Steel, Bruce Sterling, John Stewart, David Symes, Fay Symes, Steve Tansic, Tom, Phillip Vine, Jonathan Walton, Winifred Wake, Dai Walters, Bridget Wilkinson, F. Paul Wilson, Dave Wood, Jane Yolen and Roger Zelazny.

NEW & FORTHCOMING BOOKS FEBRUARY - APRIL

Poul ANDERSON, Edward BRYANT, Stephen R. DONALDSON, Larry NIVEN, Fred SABERHAGEN, Connie WILLIS, Roger ZELAZNY
Berserker Base (VGSF, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of what is billed as a collaborative novel though it actually consists of seven separate stories

ELIAH ARON *Saraj* (NEL, pbk, £4.50) Reprint (NEL, 1989) of fantasy saga based on the Indian Mahabharata

ISAAC ASIMOV *Puzzles of the Black Widowers* (DOUBLEDAY, hbk, £10.95) 1st UK edn of latest collection of twelve mystery stories; *Asimov's Chronology of Science and Discovery* (GRAFTON, hbk, £10.95) 1st UK edn of a list of key events in the history of science from 4,000,000 BC to the present day.

Richard ARLINSON *Naterdeep* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of boy in the Avatar trilogy based on the Forgotten Realms TPO

Ben BOVA *Cyberbooks* (HARDY, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel about "the greatest invention to hit the publishing world since Gutenberg"

Ray BRADbury *The Yearbook Connector* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Grafton, 1989) of his latest collection of stories

Christine BROOKE-ROSE *Verborive* (CARCANET, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of sequel to her earlier SF novel *Korander*

Algis Budrys *Ed. Writers of the Future Volume IV* (NEW ERA, pbk, NP) 1st UK edn of latest collection of new stories by new writers

Orson Scott CARD *The Folk of the Fringe* (LESEND, hbk, £11.95 pbk £5.95) 1st UK edn of novel composed of interweaving stories

Humphrey CARPENTER Ed. *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* (UNWIN, pbk, £5.99) Reprint (Unwin, 1981) of selection from a prolific letter writer

Jack L. CHALKER *The Shadow Dancers* (NEL, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of 6.0.D. Inc No. 2

M. Lucie CHEN *The Fairy of Ka* (FONTANA, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of "A Magical Tale of Ancient China"

Chris CLAREMONT *First Flight* (PAN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 1st novel by author of *X-Men*

Arthur C. Clarke *Ascending Days* (GOLLANCZ, pbk, £4.99) Reprint (Gollancz, 1989) of his "Science Fiction Autobiography"

Storm CONSTANTINE *The Nocturnal Regiment* (ORBIT, pbk, £5.99) 1st edn novel set on a world colonised by feminists

Ellen DATLOW & Terry WHEELING Eds. *Deans & Deans: The Best Fantasy and Horror 2* (LESEND, hbk, £13.95) 1st UK edn of latest in annual anthology series

Philip K. DICK *The Days of Perky Pat* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £14.95) 1st UK edn of Vol 4 of the Collected Stories

J.M. DILLARD *Star Trek: The Lost Years* (SIMON & SCHUSTER, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of novel bridging the gap between the end of the original TV series and the first of the films

David FEKKING *Korander* (GB, pbk, £4.99) 1st edn of 1st part of trilogy in the Hammer universe

James FOLLETT *Torax* (CETHUM, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of thriller that begins with an attack upon a satellite in Earth orbit

Stephen GALLAGHER *Down River* (NEL, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (NEL, 1989) of urban chiller

Craig Shaw GARDNER *Bride of the Slime Monster* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of 2nd novel in the Cinescure Cycle

Scott GRONMARK *Gods* (Corgi, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of horror novel

Harry HARRISON *Bill the Galactic Hero* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz, 1965) of classic SF comedy

Slomon HAYME *The Dracule Caper* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of latest in the Time Wars series

Barry HUGHART *The Story of the Stone* (CORBI, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Bantam, 1989) of sequel to *Bridge of Birds*

Stephen JONES & Clarence PAGET Eds. *Bark Voices: The Best from the Pan Book of Horror Stories* (PAN, hbk, £13.95, pbk £3.99) 1st edn of collection of horror stories

Garry KILLWORTH *Hester's Moon* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.99) Reprint

(Unwin, 1989) of "A Story of Fosses"

Harry ADAM IONIGHT *The Fungus* (GOLLANCZ, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (W.H. Allen, 1985) of horror novel

Dean R. KOONTZ *The Bad Place* (HEADLINE, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of new horror novel; *Midsight* (HEADLINE, pbk, £4.50) Reprint (Headline, 1989) of his last horror novel

Ursula LeGuin *Buffalo Gals and Other Animal Presences* (Gollancz, hbk, £13.95) 1st UK edn of new collection of stories and poems

Fritz LEIBER *The Knight and Knave of Swords* (GRAFTON, hbk, £13.95, pbk, £7.95) 1st UK edn of "The Climax of the Fafrd and Grey Houser Epic"

James LOVEGROVE *The Hope* (MACHILLAN, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of novel set aboard a ship that is five miles long and a mile high

Brian LUNLEY *Had Room of Dreams* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of Cthulhu story

Dan McGIOT *Jason Cosmo* (PAN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of comic fantasy

Adrienne MARTINE-BARNES *The Rainbow Sword* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy by the author of *The Fire Sword and The Crystal Sword*

Pepe MORENO Batatas *Digital Justice* (TITAN, hbk, £14.95) 1st UK edn of computer-generated graphic novel

Peter MORROW *The Harlow's Dossie* (LESEND, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Legend, 1989) of 4th volume in fantasy series

T.P. NEWARK *The Land of Eternal Fire* (MILLER, hbk, £11.95) 1st edn of 1st vol in fantasy series set in 5th century AD

Larry NIVEN & Steven BARBER *The Barsoom Project* (PAN, hbk, £13.95, pbk, £7.99) 1st UK edn of novel set in a future time park

Frederick POHL *Narabedia Ltd* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £13.95) 1st UK edn of new novel about Earth entertainers being kidnapped to perform for more advanced galactic civilisations

Terry PRATCHETT *Diggers* (DOUBLEDAY, hbk, £8.95) 1st edn of his sequel to *Truckers*

Melanie RAYN *Star Scroll* (PAN, hbk, £13.95, pbk, £7.99) 1st UK edn of 2nd book in Dragon Prince series

PAN, hbk, £4.50) Reprint (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1989) of 1st book in Dragon Prince series

William SHATNER *TekWar* (BANTAM, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of SF novel by the star of Star Trek

Robert SILVERBERG *To the Land of the Living* (VGSF, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz, 1989) of a quest by Gilgamesh in the Afterworld

Allen STEELE *Orbital Decay* (LESEND, hbk, £14.95) 1st UK edn of hard SF orbital set on a space station

Judith TARK *A Wind in Cairo* (BANTAM, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy set in medieval Egypt

TIM UNDERWOOD & Chuck MILLER Eds. *Bare Bones* (NEL, pbk, £3.50) of collection of "Conversations on terror with Stephen King"

Mike D. WEAVER *My Father Is aortal* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of novel children growing up isolated in machine controlled sealed pods

Margaret WEIS & Tracy HICKMAN *Rose of the Prophet* (BANTAM, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 1st vol in new fantasy trilogy by the Dragonlance writers

Walter Jon WILLIAMS *Angel Station* (ORBIT, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of novel of high adventure in space

Gene WOLFE *Endangered Species* (Orbit, pbk, £4.99) 1st UK edn of new collection of stories

Jack WOMACK *Terraplane* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Unwin, 1989) of time travel adventure that begins in 21st century Moscow

Jenny WURTS *Shadowfane* (GRAFTON, hbk, £12.95, pbk, £7.99) 1st UK edn of 3rd part of Cycle of Fire; *Storaeudes* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Grafton, 1989) of 1st part of Cycle of Fire trilogy

Jessica YATES Ed. *Dragons and Warrior Daughters* (LIONS TRACKS, pbk, £2.50) 1st edn of reprint anthology of heroic fantasy stories by women, aimed at teenagers

David ZINDEL *Neverness* (GRAFTON, pbk, £4.99) Reprint (Grafton, 1989) of Clarke Award shortlisted novel

1990 RADIO TIMES DRAMA AWARDS

This is a biennial competition in conjunction with BBC TV and Radio - in 1989, 47 of the radio scripts entered were given a production. The total prize money is £15,000. Entry forms from Room 47, Radio Times, 35 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 4AA. Closing date 14 June 1990.

IAN ST. JAMES AWARDS (in association with Parker Pens)

You need to submit a piece of fiction between five and ten thousand words. Any subject, but you are not allowed to have had anything published. Prizes £33,000 in total and being published. Entry forms from leading bookshops. Closing date 31st May 1990.

MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD

WANTED:

Any publications of Sydney Fowler (Wright) for information that might help local these). Publication period was roughly 1920-1955.

Contact: Jim Parry, 17 Broad Lawn, New Eltham, London SE9 3XB (Tel: 01-657 7498 Evenings).

ILLUSTRATIONS OF DRAGONS:

For the next Matrix, I'd like to have a series of "these" illustrations. I have a few dragon drawings and would like more. Pensive, happy, anatomically correct (?), drunken, in black, white and grey, please to Jenny Glover, 16 Avary Place, Leeds LS12 2NF.

TYPIST VOLUNTEERS:

The latest "Friends of Foundation" newsletter is asking for typist volunteers to type large numbers of catalogue entries for the Science Fiction Foundation library. Also money or, failing that, ideas for fundraising.

Contact: Rob Meades, 75 Hecham Close, Malthamstow, London E17 5OT (Tel: 01-531 1703 (24hour ansaphone)).

SOCIETY FOR FANTASTIC FILMS

Meetings are held at Platt Chapel, Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14, on Friday evenings: admission by ticket only (£3 per ticket in advance) from Tony Edwards, 95 Meadowgate Road, Pendleton, Salford 6 (Tel: 061-789 6324 evenings).

It's a non-political, non-profit making organisation which aims to increase appreciation of science fiction, fantasy and horror film. All films are introduced and discussed, sometimes there are quizzes or talks.

The programme to come should look something like this:

April 27, 1990

THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED (1956) directed by Roger Corman
UNIVERSAL HORRORS, Part 3 of an illustrated talk
THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL Chapters 1 & 2

May 11, 1990

* INFERNO (1980) directed by Dario Argento
THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, Chapters 3 & 4

May 25, 1990

* NIGHT OF THE DEMON (1957) directed by Jacques Tourneur
* 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH (1957) directed by Nathan Juran
THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, Chapter 5

June 8, 1990

THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS (1963) directed by Steve Seely and Freddie Francis
THE WAR OF THE WORLDS (1953) directed by Byron Haskin
THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, Chapter 6

June 22

THINGS TO COME (1936) directed by William Cameron Menzies
INVADERS FROM MARS (1953) directed by William Cameron Menzies
THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, Chapter 7

All titles marked * are subject to confirmation.

A FESTIVAL OF FANTASTIC FILMS

Parker's Hotel, Manchester October 12-14, 1990
A weekend convention and film fair featuring over forty hours of films: classics, turkeys and a '50s retrospective. Attending membership £20 until August 1st, Supporting £5
Contact: The Society for Fantastic Films, 95 Meadowgate Road, Salford, Manchester M6 6BN

STORM CONSTANTINE

Is there anyone with an interest in the work of Storm Constantine, and the ideas behind the Wertheim novels, and in the Thirteenth Key Projects' Paragenesis magazine? If you would like further information or to help with, or contribute to, a newsletter/magazine to take up the ideas explored by Paragenesis, please get in touch with:- Steve and Vikki Lee, 2A Villa Road, St. Bernards Hospital, Uxbridge Road, Southall, Middlesex UB1 3AU.

FIRE AND HEMLOCK: THE FANZINE COLUMN

Wic Farey

Not for the first time do I find myself pondering the relevance of this column's title, previously as were reader but now as the poor fool's hack whose writings may grace it from time to time. The implications would seem to suggest both a passion and a certain amount of cut, edge, if not outright vitriol. It may be that this assessment of fanwriting as some kind of cohesive whole is not only now inappropriate, but in fact downright misleading. Compare and contrast, for example, the gorgeous, pouting Jenny Glover (editrice nouvelle) with the pouting, gorgeous Maureen Porter (editrice vieillesse). While "Fire and Hemlock" may be entirely appropriate for the lovely Maureen, it is a singularly inappropriate phrase with which to convey the insinuating persuasiveness of the softly spoken Jenny. La Glover is, of course, one of the few people who can extract me from my daily bath to leave me dripping on an already tattooed carpet while successfully persuading me to pen the very words you are now reading. In her goodness and wisdom, she even suggested a theme for the column, that of "how to get started in fanzines" although, in Jenny's case, how to stop might be considered more useful advice. I am overwhelmed and not a little confused by it all. On the one hand, our editor is telling me how barren the fanzine market is at present, yet I recall not so long ago no less a luminary than Martin Tudor apologising in "Critical Mass" for the lack of substantial fanzine reviews, instead providing a list of new publications which nevertheless more than sufficed to fill the required column inches.

Perhaps it is the time of year. With Easton but a few weeks away, surely more British fanzine producers (like myself) are currently putting the finishing touches to their latest low-children in preparation for the bar room blitz at that event. As an aside, it has often intrigued me that there seems to be an irrational attachment to "traditional" methods of fanzine production (i.e. the duplicator). The natural absorbent qualities of duplicator paper mean that any publication left in a puddle of beer, or acquiring a puddle of beer, is thereafter unrecoverable, whereas if you catch a photocopied zine quickly enough, it can still be dried out and rendered readable. Perhaps this is the secret of why a photocopied zine has never won a Nova award. The voters must favour zines which come ready soaked in alcohol for their convenience, adding just that right amount of ambience in the critical process. Perhaps they do not even read the contents of these works, but merely rate them according to their alcohol content. I can't say but this would explain a great deal, in that it would tend to favour zines which are left under beer glasses the longest.

Ah, but I see I have strayed from the point. How does one "get into" fanzines indeed? Is it enough to say "read some" and leave it at that? Clearly not. Harry Bond did not leave it at that although there are those who have cause to wish he had. So, I am vaguely interested in fanzines and would like to read one, to see if I might like it. An obvious place to start might be with what the fanzine "peer group" considers the best of its kind, for example, the Nova award winner. For the purposes of this analysis, we can ignore the local Responder, I am assuming as a new reader and therefore it seems reasonable to assume that I will not have read whatever it is that the letter writers are referring to. This is not to say that I won't read the local later, but it will probably be MUCH later. When one finds the relevant manuscript lagging the u bend, one may well be glued to the pen engaged in the interminable manufacture of recycled curry sauce. "VSDP", like most other instances of what my good friend Mr. Bond likes to call "applied fanwriting", is only as interesting as the amount of commonality of experience you can find in it. The erstwhile reader needs very badly to identify with the writer's experience for this type of writing to be successful. There are few exceptions that come to mind. The other advantage the piece must have is an accessible style, encouraging the reader to keep going even where it must already be clear to his or her that his sympathies lie elsewhere. In short, we have to CARE about Jan Drys as a person to care about or has happened to her. This is relatively easy to do (or, at least, to decide about) if the reader knows the writer. If they do not (as I do not), either now or in my assumed role of virgin reader, then the writer's task becomes more difficult.

The best writing should arise from an assumption by the author that this piece will be read by some OTHER than a



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mutual adoration society or a clique of known enemies. If you do not CARE about this (for which there is a valid case), then do not expect "snivelling neos" (love that phrase) to worship with admiration at your feet.

They always tell you to finish on a song. Despite appearances to the contrary, I dislike being particularly negative about things which in other contexts (and with other criteria) may have much to admire about them. For someone who has never read a fanzine in their life, but would be moderately interested in doing so, I can heartily recommend Harry Bond's "Bogus 3" (probably still available from him for the price of a stamp at 64 Paramount Court, University Street, London WC1E 6JP). The main subject matter ("Why I read old fanzines") is as good a justification as I have read for partaking in the joys of this admirable pastime. As an encouragement for others to get into fanzine production, it will suffice. As an analysis of fanwriting, in general, it is accurate. As a self defence against the attacks of others, it is well thought out. One of the things which stands out in Harry's writing here is that if you do not know of whom he scribbles, it does not matter because you will get the idea.

Should've reprinted it here, really, and saved myself a few hundred words on a Sunday afternoon. There's football on the box, you know.

VSDP is edited by Jan Ors, 18 Burchett Place, Leeds LS6 2LN. The Move awards are voted for and awarded at 240M. Which is held annually in Birmingham during late autumn. Nic Farey edits the bi-annual gorgeous Arrows of Desire which, this time, is all about Hate, Fear and Loathing.

"I FOUND A FANZINE WANDERING LONELY" AND LISTED IT

If the fanzine sounds interesting, then write for it. Most, no, ALL, fanzine editors would appreciate some form of feedback, but keep the sushi away from me, please! Some fan editors may have run out of copies of the current issue when you write, if so, you are likely to be first in line for the next issue.

Fanzine editors out there...if you want to be listed or even reviewed, please send me, Jenny Glover, a copy at 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP. When the children are asleep, I shall stretch out and read it with enthusiasm. Please?

BLACK HOLE 29

The Leeds University Science Fiction group fanzine, a LUCONtinued special issue with major emphasis of Goh, Michael Scott Rohan. Pleasant read with brilliant example of "Great First Drafts of our Time" ie Thomas Covenant stared at the doctor. "I's cared?" (available free on demand. All donations, death threats, zines to the Editor, Black Hole, Leeds University Union, PO Box 157, Leeds LS1 1UH).

DINOSAURS AND DISKETTE FAILURES 2 & 3

Jenny and Steve Glover work jointly on this, a brief monthly zine. Fun to do, aiming to have two conversational hooks (minimum) per issue. (Available free on demand from Jenny and Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP).

DOXA

A "modest" fortnightly zine which you might apparently get as part of the need to work off karma from a previous existence. Green sercon from a BUFF contender (ie who hopes you will pay him to fly over from Oz). (Available free on demand, but the more ingenious the better from Roman Orszanski, PO Box 131, Marden, South Australia 5070).

DOXY 2

Monthly news and gossip sheet which would be interesting if you knew the people involved. Perhaps. (Available for news or in trade from John Foyster, PO Box 3086, Grenfell Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000).

DSR

Regular fanzine, this time discussing whether a story set in another writer's reality is necessarily second rate. Is the traditional occasion for the reading of trash a plane ride? (Available from Arthur D. Hlavaty, PO Box 52028, Durham, NC 27717, USA).

FACTSHEET FIVE #34

Fascinating browsing, this bi-monthly zine reviews everything that moves - t-shirts, artifacts, mail art, fanzines with book and record reviews. (Available for bartering wind-up sushi etc. or for the more mundane trading of fanzines or stamps from Mike A. Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave, Rensselaer, New York 12144-4502, USA).

FLICKERS' M' FRAMES

This aims to be a clearing house for news on SF/horror and fantasy film and videos, now includes interviews and fiction. Good browsing. (£1 including p&p from John M. Peters, 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL8 8BN).

FUCK THE TORIES 8

Quality politically active satire with sketches from a Saarkand holiday. (Available on recycled paper from Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH. Please note change of address).

OTHER REALMS

Available as "hard" copy or electronically, it publishes reviews and interviews of horror, science fiction and fantasy with some science. Editorial on first hand experience of the San Francisco earthquake last year. Great read.

(Available for the Usual or by arranged trade from Chuq von Ruspach, 35111-F Newark Blvd, Suite 255, Newark, CA 94560, USA).

SCRATCH ONE

Aims to publish and promote work that contains, reflects, combats, celebrates, opposes, affirms, the good, the bad and the ugly: a fairly wide brief. Plus poetry. (£1.25 per issue from Mark Robinson, 24 Nelson Street, The Groves, York YO3 7NJ, who also uses recycled paper).

STICKY QUARTERS

If I rated fanzines out of ten, this would be twenty. Excellent. Superb article on cowardice from Taral. (Available from Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224, USA).

THE BUG

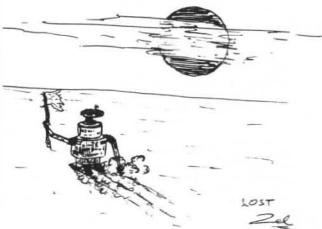
More of a broadsheet than a fanzine. Rev. Bugger amuses on the cult of rudeness and the rest is anecdotes. Recycled paper, ink made from used-up biro's boiled in spittle. (2p per issue, available from Box Bug, 46 Denbigh Street, London SW1).

THYME #77

Bi-monthly newsletter from downunder. Invaluable as counter propaganda to the ubiquitous "Neighbours". (Available for news, reviews, letters, or even money from LynC, PO Box 4024, University of Melbourne, Victoria 3052, Australia. The British agent is Joseph Nicholas, address as at Fuck the Tories).

TRAPDOOR

Useful discussion on fanzines versus apas and a whole lot more. (Available from Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442, USA).



COMPETITION CORNER

Roger Robinson

GENERAL INFORMATION

Before getting onto the results, a few general points about the Matrix competitions. Although the entry for each individual competition is small compared to the readership as a whole, I am pleased to see that a few new names appear each month. I've tried hard to make the competitions different each time - and from your comments I may be succeeding. HOWEVER - I am looking for the magic formula that will increase the number of entries. If you have any ideas or comments please let me, or the editor, know as soon as possible. The address for all competition entries and comments is - Roger Robinson, 74 Rosslyn Ave, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG.

RESULTS OF COMPETITION 86 - FROM BARD TO VERSE

A really impressive high-quality entry - many thanks to all ten entrants for some inventive and (as I hoped) wicked entries.

Between them, the contestants submitted twenty two verses - three each on Herbert, Burroughs, Moorcock and Tubb, two on Harrison and seven on McCaffrey!! The twenty second verse deserves a special mention for Mark Powlson, who encapsulated five plots in one five line verse!!

The winner, by a VERY short margin, of the usual £5 book token, was P T Ross for the following epic of Pern -

DRAGON AWN - P T ROSS (to the tune "Bonnie Dundee")

Now the Red Star has risen Pern's doom is at hand, with
Thread falling silver all over the land -
If we can't find more dragons we'll very soon see that
you won't keep it off with just HMO3.
So buck up your Bronzes and knock up your Golds, the
Harpers will sing as the story unfolds,
and unless Miz McCaffrey should vanish between ----
sure, we'll still see the trill'gy reach Volume 18!

[With apologies to PTH from ye humble scribe who is not as intimate with the word processor as she should be and hasn't yet worked out how to make the 3 of HMO3 a sub script].

Almost everybody else was highly-commended, but equal second place to Madawc Williams, David Mills, K V Bailey and Mark Powlson.

DUNE SAGA - Madawc Williams

"Oh my God, am I God?" said poor Paul.
"I'm not finding this life fun at all."
"I am bound by strange cravings
"To a spice that's worm droppings,
"And my sister's a sand-witch of Dune!"

DRAGON - David Mills

A stagnant aristocracy
Rules Pern with giant lizards.
Thread is their malignancy,
It falls in burning blizzards.
There's one thing to be thankful for :
At least there ain't no wizards.

THE DRAGON BOOKS - K V Bailey

On Pern
we learn
they might all have been dead
as the Thread fell in blizzards,
but, happily, instead,
they'd domesticated lizards.

FROM BARD TO VERSE - Mark Powlson (tune: "American Pie")

High, high, worms in the sky,
Worms in the sand, will the spice supply die?
Searching for earth but the Cyclan are by,
Slipp'ry Jim'll save worlds with a rye,
Beastmen in lost cities vie.

Thanks also to all the other contestants - Malcolm Edwards, Marcus Rowland, Caroline Mullan, Phil Thomas and last, but not least, your new editor, Jenny Glover. It was fun to read ALL your entries.

MATRIX COMPETITION 87 - "BEASTLY NUMBERS"

Many SF book titles contain numbers in either numerical form or in words. All you have to do is find the numbers and complete the simple addition and subtraction sums shown below.

The titles and their authors are indicated by the initial letters of each word, with the number replaced by an *. (For example, W H W * by D G indicates "When Harlie Was One" by David Gerrold - from which the number 1 must be put in the sum).

SUM 1:
W H W * by D G
+ O F F F * by P K D
- C * by W G
- T L O B * by C W
= * D N by J G B

SUM 2:
* A S O by A C C
- * by G O
+ M * by J B
+ * by T H D
= F * by R B

SUM 3:
T B O B * by S R D
- * P I A by R I
+ * J by A G
+ T W I S * by M J H
= * by A B

SUM 4:
T * S O P E by P K D
+ W I * by D L
+ U * by K V
+ * E by S G
= R I * by R A H

SUM 5:
T A * by J V
+ M A * by J V
+ M A * by J V
- W A * by J V
+ T * S by W T
= A * A D by P F W

As usual with this kind of competition I DON'T EXPECT ANYONE TO IDENTIFY ALL TWENTY FIVE BOOKS - so please enter anyway. The usual £5 book token to the best entry, or the first out of the hat in the event of a tie. Entries by Saturday May 12, 1990, to Roger Robinson, address as above.

SPACE FILLER: Has anyone come across J.J. CONNINGTON (aka Professor A W STEWART)? He wrote Nordenholt's Million: and I'd like to know if he wrote any other science fiction books. End of message from Jenny.

CRYSTAL MAZE

Pat Brown

You want me to do what? Take part in a Channel 4 game show? Auditions on Thursday? This IS a hoax, isn't it? You ARE joking? Who IS this? Chatsworth Television? Really? Well, all right then.

Hello, I've come for the auditions for Crystal Maze, Room 214? You mean it's NOT a hoax? Amazing!

Good afternoon, my name is Pat Brown. No, I don't make a habit of standing on my head in hotel corridors. You see, there were these children... Good trick shaking hands whilst standing on my head though, isn't it?

Final auditions in London? Coo! They want me!

I'm late! And there's just been a cloudburst. I'm soaked! No time to comb out the hair. Good afternoon. Yes, I AM Pat Brown. No, I don't usually turn up to auditions with water dripping my plaits. Yes, I DID stand on my head in the corridor in Bristol. All right, I'll show you.

Yippee! They want me! AND I get two nights at the Shepperton Moat Hotel for free too. Coo! Oh dear.

Shepperton studios. The place really does exist. But scruffy though, all warehouse type buildings and portakabins.

Help! My track suit is too long. What do I do with the hair? Hello, Ms. Sound Technician, what's that? How does it work? Isn't that SMALL?? Fascinating. Hello Richard O'Brien. (Wow! Richard O'Brien!!!).

So this is a sound stage. Huge. Cold. Fascinating. Lots of techies for me to bother. Hello, Ms. Controller, can I see your control room please? How does that work? What's that? Can I... all right, I'm here. We're on? I'm scared. Smile for the cameras? Grinace, more like.

We're off! Over THAT? OK, only about ten feet high, then run down into - it's a deserted factory site complete with pool of oily water. Oh. Stop. Set up for new shots and run in again. Continuity. Yes, I was here, he was there, she was behind me. I went THIS way. And again.

I hope I'm not the first to play. Oh good, I'm not. Come on - hooray! We've got a crystal! Oh help. I'm next. Panic! Oh no, running out of time. Get out quick, no crystal. Failed. How embarrassing.

Into the next zone and - it's a medieval castle. All right, back and do it again. And again. It really DOES look like part of a castle. How big is this set? Twenty five thousand square feet? James Dillon did one heck of a design job. HOW MUCH?? Two hundred and sixth thousand pounds? Pink, blue, purple and puce!! (Colourful language courtesy of Diana Wynne Jones).

Hello, Mr. Chief Camera, Mr. Badger, Sir. Can I play with your camera please? I CAN? Hey look, it does this, and this, and this, and what does this switch do? What do you mean, the Director wants me to give you your camera back? The Director can't see us. Yes, I know he can see what the camera can see. Oh. He says it just HAS to be ME. Ah well, here's your eighteen thousand pound toy back, Badger.

We're not winning enough crystals. Gloom. Never mind, next zone coming up. This spaceship looks as though there's been a war in here. My turn again. You mean you want me to crawl around in that maze of mirrors to find the crystal? I'm claustrophobic. I can't! (Yes you can, you coward, go on, only for two minutes). Go! Before I chicken out. Aagh! Don't panic. Disoriented. Help - that's not a mirror at all, that's a transparent panel. Can't get through there. Come on, don't panic. There it is! Ouch! It's a reflection. That means it must be... There. Got it. Get me out of here! Turn around, back here, around here, turn here - Thank goodness, the door. LET ME OUT!!!! Oh but this is making good television though. Breathe, you fool. Uncurl... Look, you lot, I've got the @!%& crystal. Thought so - two cameras close up. Coo! A cuddle from Richard O'Brien! I'll do it again for that!

Up in a lift and climb though the hole in the wall into... jungle, hot bright. Aztec temple, spectacular. Climb down the wall and wait while they take some shots then move a couple of trees around. The whole thing is made of polystyrene blocks, same as the castle. Smells like it under the lights too.

Yes, I'm Pat. Yes, it DOES make sense that the sound crew are asking me to check mic no. 5. They dropped it in the water yesterday. What do you mean, I'm not supposed to know about the water? Why ask me about mic 5? Because the control room is one hundred and eighty feet away down there and they know I know what I'm doing. Mic 5 - that's Elaine. Let me check your connections! ah, the aerial has come loose. Hello, sound crew, is that better? Say something, Elaine. Thumbs up from the runner. Good.

Yes, that's right, I AM the one who stands on her head. Here? Oh all right, if it makes you happy. Well, it makes the camera crew laugh anyway.

Now to win some more crystals. This is better - we're winning. Look! Nine crystals! Now for The Crystal itself.

Crystal Maze is a Channel 4 game show made by Chatsworth Television. A team of six people make their way through four zones, playing individual games as they go in an attempt to win crystals. Each crystal buys the team five seconds in the Crystal Chamber at the end, where they try to catch tokens for prizes which are blown around in the chamber.

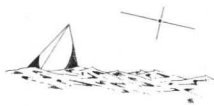
What makes the game from a television point of view is the spectacular sets. The layout is exactly the same as the rather nice graphical representation shown during the programme, occupies 25,000 square feet floor space in the largest sound stage at Shepperton and cost £260,000 to build. I was astonished at what can be constructed from wood, plastic and polystyrene.

People in the film industry often tell how unpleasant it really is and how much sheer hard work goes into the making of films, but you don't really appreciate it until you've been there. Behind the spectacular sets is bare concrete, lots of dust and rubbish (well, scrap wood and plastic), it's cold (YOU try heating an aircraft hanger sized space) and facilities are primitive to say the least. There is a great deal of standing around while different camera angles are set up and filmed interspersed with periods of frantic activity. Nevertheless, there is something vital and exciting about it all.

Crystal Maze was filmed without any major camera tricks or effects. The games were played and filmed in real time; what you see is what actually happened, panic and all. Filming one episode, however, took one whole day (1000-2230 with half an hour for lunch) for the material of fifty minutes of television. What takes the time is stopping and starting between takes, taking different angles etc. On the second day (only five hours this time), we filmed cutaway shots (all right, so I've learned the jargon. That's more different camera angles of the games themselves) and stock shots for the whole series. (Anything you see during the series where faces aren't visible is likely to be stock shots taken of our team).

In case anyone wondered, all the events described above are real. I really DID stand on my head in a hotel corridor (not to mention on the desk of the office manager at Chatsworth Television and on the Aztec set), the conversations with camera men and sound crews are real, and yes, I AM a mild claustrophobe and yes, I DID crawl around in the maze anyway.

I was on the March 29 programme, you might have seen me making a fool of myself at 2030 on Channel 4. Now. Does anybody else want an eccentric polymath to take part in another TV show??



FILK - WHAT IS IT?

Valerie Housden

It is late at night, and the con is in full swing. You are walking down a hotel corridor in search of the bar, when you suddenly hear what might, by stretching the imagination to its limits, be called "music". Perhaps a solo voice is singing tunefully to a gentle guitar accompaniment, or, more likely, a chorus of raucous voices are roaring off-key. By following the sound you eventually stumble into a room where people are sitting around in a circle, playing assorted guitars, harps and banjos and singing from brightly coloured song books. Congratulations, you have found the filksing. Unless you are desperately thirsty, why not stay and listen?

But what have you let yourself in for? What is filk? It is the music of SF. It is the music of SF conventions. It is songs written and performed by SF fans: songs inspired by books, films, TV shows, comics, fandom, conventions, incestuous songs about filk, hyper-incestuous songs known as "Filk Wars", songs about cats and anything else that people care to write about. Nothing, well, almost nothing, is taboo.

The word "Filk" was originally a typing error. A folk concert was organised at a con somewhere, somehow, and an overworked daily newsletter editor inadvertently pressed the wrong typewriter key, and the word stuck.

British filksings usually operate a Bardic circle, in a Play, Pick or Pass basis. When your turn comes, you may perform a song yourself, choose a song for someone else to sing, or simply pass. In the US, the more experienced filkers prefer a Chaotic circle, i.e. jumping in if you have a song that follows on from the previous one. There are usually enough large egos in the room to ensure that no one performer dominates, and such circles are normally very lively.

There are currently three general British filk books available, with another due out in time for the Dutch Worldcon this August, and two books of songs on specific subjects, comics and the Discworld stories, are in the pipeline. Several British filk tapes are available and more should be released Real Soon Now. Con2bile, the second filk con was held over the weekend February 2-4, 1990, at which the first British Filk Awards were voted and awarded.

The MiGgle (there is a story behind the spelling), the local group for filkers based in London and the South-East, meets on the last Friday of the month, usually at the One Tun near Farringdon Tube Station, but occasionally at the Castle, also near Farringdon Tube, where we can hire a room for singing. (The next "singing MiGgle" will take place on Saturday April 28 at the Castle, starting at 3pm). There is a new group called the NiGgle is starting for more northern filk singers and will probably meet in Leeds.

So you are sitting in the circle, knowing that your turn will come round shortly. You would like to sing something, but a) you don't know any filk songs and b) you don't have a guitar. That is not a problem! If you ask, someone will lend you a song book. Or you can sing a song that you know - any song. Guess why it's known as the filk? If you can only sing Joni Mitchell's greatest hits! If you want to borrow a guitar, again, just ask. And if you don't play any instrument at all, then sing unaccompanied. If you would like to request a type of song, rather than a particular title, then do so. If you can't sing, well, that has never stopped anyone in the past! Or you could recite a poem or tell a joke (or a pun...)

The whole point of filk, as with any fanish activity, is to have fun. Most people like to sing. Why not give it a try?

Useful Names and Addresses:

Becon Publications, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex

RM3 0RG for British filk books

At the Sign of the Dragon, 131 Sheen Lane, London SM14 for British and American filk books and tapes

Mail Songs, PO Box 29888, Oakland, CA 94604, USA for American filk books and tapes

DAG Productions, 1810 14th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404, USA, for American filk books and tapes

Rafe Culpin, 12 Tower Haaletts Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4RH for information on the MiGgle

Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP for information on the NiGgle

TREBLE, Britain's third filksinging convention will take place over the weekend February 1-3, 1991, details to be announced. For information, write to 18 Glynde Road, Brighton BN2 2YJ (some British filk tapes are also available from that address).



THE FORBIDDEN PLANET EXPERIENCE

Nicholas Mahoney

Pretty much on the spur of the moment, I decided to visit the all new Forbidden Planet in London. I'd heard rumours and I just had to check it out. I was lucky with the fare, a special ticket got me there dead cheap, but both going and coming back took an age as the overhead lines were short of power.

Finding the shop itself isn't that easy, even if you ask for directions at Murder One, but the trick is to start searching for a Forbidden Planet bag...

71 New Oxford Street is what I was looking for. The first indication after tier of SF books was when a cyberman strolled past me closely followed by a bunch of manic photographers and then there it was, just beyond a branch of the deaf as a post bank.

On reaching the entrance, I was almost trampled by three or four more people in pursuit of the cyberman. I breathed in, squeezed in, and found myself surrounded by...comics. Strange music pervaded the joint and man, was it a deep joint. I started trying to calculate how much bigger it was than Murder One. I honestly haven't a clue, if I could see it without the fifteen hundred crazed inhabitants perhaps I would.

Downstairs, I finally found what I was looking for, tier after tier of SF books. Unfortunately, it was hideously difficult to perform the contortions necessary to eyeball every book. The queue for the counter at this point was winding round and round the bottom floor, leaving very little room for anyone trying to select a few books. I soon found that the books were very precariously perched on the shelves and had to quickly master the art of perching them or else face the back-breaking consequences. Round and round I went getting hot and bothered and soon struggling under an increasingly heavy load of books. In the midst of this, a signing session by Ray Harryhausen was announced. Have you ever seen chaos? At one point with my nose inches from the floor, my weary body near exhaustion, thirty six people simultaneously standing on my feet, I was accosted by a man who, having picked me totally at random, asked me if there was any truth in the rumour that there would be a new Thomas Covenant novel. You don't believe me? Okay, there were slightly fewer than thirty six people standing on my feet, but the rest is true.

When I finally reached the counter, the shop assistant made a humorous sort of 'No' noise at the stack of material I had assembled. Do they want the books? What they want are even larger premises. I'm sure none would miss a branch of the deaf as a post bank...

MEDIA FILE

John Peters

In a recent VARIETY report on the top grossing films of 1989, genre films did very well in the first three quarters of 1989. Revenue from SF/Fantasy and Horror films rose by 38.9% over the previous year's figures for the genre, and genre films took 41.1% (26.5% in 1988) of the total revenue for 1989's new releases. Two hundred and thirty seven films appeared in VARIETY's listings for 1989 - seventy four or 31.2% were genre titles and the top films are listed below. The figures and percentages represent only the U.S. domestic revenue for January to September, 1989:-

BATMAN...\$56m...INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE...\$45.6m, GHOSTBUSTERS II...\$21m...HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS...\$19m, FIELD OF DREAMS...\$16.5m, PET SECRETARY...\$13m, TWINS...\$14.3m, THE ABYSS...\$12.3m, STAR TREK VI: THE FINAL FRONTIER...\$10.65m, THE NAKED GUN...\$9.4m, LICENSE TO KILL...\$9.2m, BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE...\$7.18m, THE 'BURBS...\$7m, THE FLY II...\$5.5m, PETER PAN...\$5.1m.

I have rounded the figures up (or slightly down) to save space - I mean, what's a few thousand between friends, eh? But it's worth bearing in mind that they only represent a quarter of the final revenue each film is expected to make - take into account foreign box-office markets, video sales, Cable/Satellite/Terrrestrial television sales, marketing deals etc., and these figures will increase quite markedly in the next few months.

The BBC took exception to the scene in THE ABYSS where a rat was immersed in the breathing fluid, claiming the animal was mistreated - it's a pity they didn't feel that way about the audience who had to sit through an abyss(mal) script...LEVITAM, another aquatic flop, should finally be in the cinemas during April, but if it isn't, expect it to be on video in the very near future...In what sounds like a rerun of the extremely boring BRAINSTORM, Kiefer Sutherland stars in FLATLINERS - all about medical students exploring the secrets of the afterlife, it's directed by Joel Schumacher...When I hear that Michael Elphick (tv's BOON) is to star in I BOUGHT A VAMPIRE MOTORCYCLE (this year, I'm not sure whether to bang my head against the wall in sheer disbelief or just yell "Typecasting!") And here's another old has - Alice Cooper, veteran rocker, snake charmer and used electric chair salesman, is to play Freddy Krueger's brother in A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 7: THE DREAM MAN, despite fears that the series is running out of steam - though Robert Englund is hinting that this could be the last.

The exhibition of Ray Harryhausen's sfx work on show at London's Museum of the Moving Image has been extended until April 29th, so get there if you can...Timothy Dalton will return as James Bond in the next (untitled) film - but his character will be toned down, and he will have to have a more humorous personality...I hope to God they don't try to turn him into another Roger Moore...ROBOCOP II may be completed, but there have been reports that Peter Weller and Nancy Allen have clashed with director Irvin Kershner several times; the long-awaited sequel has run both overbudget and overschedule - a similar situation to Kershner's last fantasy film, NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN...Hoffgang Petersen's next film will be PLASTIC NIGHTMARE, a thriller starring Sissy Spacek and William Hurt.

Animator Don Bluth also has a new film on the cards - ROCK-A-DOODLE will use the voices of Glen Campbell, Phil Harris, Christopher Plummer and Ellen Green - Bluth also has a computer game out later this year, DRAGONS LAIR II...NAKED GUN II is due for a Christmas release - expect more ineptitude from Lt. Frank Dabney, Leslie Nielsen...Nielsen is also starring in a horror spoof, THE REPOSSESSED, it also stars Ned Beatty and Linda Blair...EXORCIST 1990 has been completed...Author John Saul has sold the rights to his novel CREATURE to Buckeye Entertainment...and Dean R. Kuntz' THE BAD PLACE has been optioned for a script; Kuntz has also just sold four novels and an anthology to Putnam for \$10.5 million.

Recently released films include CREEPSHOW 3, BOB AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE II, MANIAC COP, CLASS OF NUKEM/HIGH II, SUBRAMANIO MILDTRAM, SCANNERS II: THE NEW ORDER, WATCHERS II, THE OUTSIDER...Mary Steenburgen is appearing in

BACK TO THE FUTURE III as Marty McFly's grandma...Warner Brothers will NOT issue LICENSE TO KILL in its \$14.99 sell-through special range, the next two are likely to be BATMAN and LETHAL WEAPON II later this year...Due soon, SECOND SIGHT is a comedy about two detectives, one of them a psychic - early reports say that the trailer is missing one thing - laughs...A low budget horror/comedy film THE REVENGE OF BILLY THE KID, has completed shooting in Cornwall - Bill is half man/half goat creature...Despite showing that only his pectorals had star potential in THE MAN - Dolph Lundgren stars as the DARK ANGEL, a detective hunting alien "crack" dealers who enjoy sucking up supercharged human brains - long thought to be the ingredients of a Pot Noodle!...CLASS OF 1989 stars Stacey Keach and Malcolm McDowell, whose idea of detention is to bump off kids late with their homework...Palace Pictures have produced HARDWARE, an android on the rampage romp directed by first-timer, Richard Stanley.

Sae Ham, scriptwriter for BATMAN, has signed to write the sequel; he's also working on a script for the long-announced THE AVENGERS film and collaborating with Michael Duncan on a script based on Philip K. Dick's TIME OUT OF JOINT...While the final touches are being applied to the Jim Henson/Nic Roeg collaboration, THE WITCHES, Roeg has begun COLD HEAVEN...STAR WARS fever is rising again with rumours that THE CLONE WARS will start pre-production sometime soon...Plans for SUPERMAN V will seem to be active...Both B. MARINER and SPIDERMAN are likely to appear on the big screen soon...Shooting on the \$50m budgeted TOTAL RECALL has been completed, leaving only the sfx shots to be completed - the Martian landscapes are said to be stunning; expect a summer '90 release in the States for the biggest impact, and possibly Christmas here; the script was written by Dan O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett...Arnold Schwarzenegger is unlikely to appear in ALIEN III - a film whose plans seem to change daily; Sigourney Weaver may or may not appear, so too scripts have been written reflecting this and Renny Harlin or Ridley Scott seem to be favourites for the director's chair - The William Gibson script was dependant on Ridley Scott directing, but it's been junked as being too expensive; finally, Kirstie Alley may join the cast as an adult Neut...Future plans for Schwarzenegger could include PREDATOR II, TWINS II, COMMANDO II, TERMINATOR II, GULLIVER'S TRAVELS and CONAN III - Universal have even offered to let him direct, though Arnie is making his directorial debut on an episode of HBO's TALES FROM THE CRYPT.

There seems to be a lot of Phantoms around at the moment - Mickey Rooney has announced plans to produce THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA ON ICE, including self-penned tunes such as "The Phantom Of The Opera is Skating in Your Heart" - could this be the next Eurovision winner?...Pop video director Steve Barron is currently shooting TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, with the assistance of Jim Henson's Creature Workshop...ARACHNOPHOBIA is the directorial debut for Amblin Productions producer, Frank Marshall, and it's a thriller about a breed of aggressive, intelligent and lethal spiders; it's a joint production between Amblin, with Spielberg as executive producer, and Disney's new adult company, Hollywood Films...If you just want gratuitous sex and violence (!) there's always RABID GRANNIES (now out on Virgin Vision), TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE III, STEPFATHER II, ROBOT JOX, COMMUNION, ROCKLA (billed as "a vampire musical comedy about sex, blood and Rock'n'roll"), LIMIT UP (all about a stock trader who sells his soul to the devil)...Warner's and MCA have settled a long dispute regarding THE BLUES BROTHERS, and the video (long deleted) has been rereleased with twenty minutes of extra footage...Disney have two stories in development for the ROGER RABBIT sequel due to start shooting at the end of this year.

James Herbert's novel MAGIC COTTAGE is being adapted by Charles Pogue for filming next year; Pogue wrote the script for David Cronenberg's successful remake of THE FLY...A sequel to John Landis's old hit AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON, is being prepared; while it may be set in Paris this time, there has been no confirmation that Landis will be involved - he is busy reviving THE LONG RANGER, who needs all the help he can get...Whitley Streiber's comedy, COMMUNION, has been filmed in Australia by Philip Mora, it stars Christopher Walken as Streiber and deals with his professional meeting with aliens...Ben Cross is a blond girl, Haryana D'aboo, becomes rather posh - vampires in NIGHTLIFE...Another book due to reach the screen soon is a re-make of John Wyndham's THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS; originally made in 1960 as THE VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED, the new version

which will be shot this year will be updated...William Friedkin returns to the Horror genre with *THE GUARDIAN*, based on Dan Greenberg's novel, *THE NANNY*; it stars Jenny Seagrave and Carey Lowell and will be released later this year...United Artists have cancelled their plans for *CHILD'S PLAY II* "for moral reasons" and it will now be made by Universal...Troma Films promise *THE TOXIC AVENGER PART III: THE LAST TEMPTATION OF TOXIE*...After the failed *MUNSTER* revival a few years ago, it's now time for the *ADAMS* FAMILY to return, a film is being planned which will star Cher and Kevin Kline...*THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW* is being revived in April, Richard O'Brien's musical is returning to the West End, and Alice Cooper and Boy George are being considered for starring roles...O'Brien is also planning a sequel to the film version called *REVENGE OF THE OLD QUEEN*, I'll leave it up to you to come up with a cast for that one!

Since completion of *THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER*, Sean Connery has also done his cameo stint on *HIGHLANDER II* (for a cool \$1m) in Buenos Aires and is staying Russian by starring in John De Carre's *RUSSIA HOUSE*, which also stars Michelle Pfeiffer - director Ken Russell will also appear...Tobe Hooper has completed *SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION*, his first film since the awful *INVASIONS FROM MARS*...Having completed his acting stint on *NIGHTBREED*, David Cronenberg has announced plans to film William Burroughs' *THE NAKED LUNCH*...Richard Christian Matheson and Nick Garis has written *RED SLEEP*, a vampire film set in Las Vegas - Garis will direct...Another fanpuffer is Bo Derek who is to star in *COUNTRESS DRACULA*...John Cleese returns with *HEAVEN ON EARTH*, where he will team up with Steve Martin in a Neil Simon scripted comedy - Cleese will play a butler trying to save his dead master's estate...Along with *DIE HARDER*, Bruce Willis's plans include a thriller based on a character he's created, cat burglar *HUDSON HAWKE*...The old Quality Comics comic strip *V FOR VENDETTA* is to be filmed soon...And another old stripper, *CAPTAIN AMERICA*, is currently in production; Albert Pyun directs and Matt Salinger flexes his pecks in this World War II escapade.

Harrison Ford could be starring in a big screen version of *THE FUGITIVE* - then again it could be Kiefer Sutherland, director Steve Minor has to choose...Ford is also favourite for *PRESUMED INNOCENT*, based on Scott Turow's novel...*ALMOST AN ANGEL* will be Paul Hogan's next film, a fantasy to be made for Paramount...Meanwhile, that studio's latest anthology film, *TALES FROM THE DARK SIDE* has been completed - Debbie Harry, Rae Dawn Chong, William Hickey and James Remar star...Frank Oz has been replaced as director of *MERMAIDS* by Richard Benjamin - Bob Hoskins, Cher and Winona Ryder star...Tom Cruise has left the cast of Tim Burton's *EDDIE SCISSORHANDS* and has been replaced by Johnny Depp...David Carradine goes oriental in *THE SECRETS OF FU MAN CHU*...Finally, after last issue's *STUFF STEPHANIE IN THE INCINERATOR* got the award for the dullest title, try this one spotted in *FANBOY* 888: *WALDO WARREN: PRIVATE DICK WITHOUT A BRAIN*, described as being "a mélange of naked voodoo freaks, insane sex fiends, big-busted terrorists and strange witches" - and you thought that only *POSTMAN PAT* could reach such levels of depravity!

TV SCENE

The most anaemic programme on ITV, *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* (even worse than *BLIND DATE*), has been experiencing censorship problems from the IBA; they have reportedly cut out scenes of martial art violence, voodoo worship, plus an episode about an IRA terrorist on the run! The programme is also having problems in the States - because Linda Hamilton is/was pregnant, her character is killed off after she has given birth to Vincent's son; little Winnie is then kidnapped by Pop's arch enemy, and big Winnie goes on the hunt...HBO's *TALES FROM THE CRYPT* has been given the go-ahead for a second series, which means that Bob Zemeckis, Richard Donner and Walter Hill will return to direct further shows...Palace Productions and Atlantic Films, who produced the *TWILIGHT ZONE* and *RAY BRADBURY THEATRE*, are to develop a twelve part tv anthology series based on Kurt Vonnegut's short story anthology, *WELCOME TO THE MONKEYHOUSE*...H.G. Wells' *THE TIME MACHINE* is about to get the tv pilot treatment with a series forthcoming if successful...More importantly, Jeremy Brett returns as *SHERLOCK HOLMES* - Granada have decided to film six new stories for a 1991 transmission slot and there are rumoured prospects of a film later this year (it's also available on Warner video); he also has a new film due - *WILD AT HEART* stars Isabella Rossellini, Laura Dern, Nicholas Cage, Harry Dean Stanton, and Milos Forman.

COMICS

Eternity Comics have plans to turn Herschell Gordon Lewis' *BLOOD FEST* into a graphic novel; drawn by Stan Timmons and scripted by Jack Heeran, it follows on from Eternity's *PLAN NINE FROM OUTER SPACE*, and the forthcoming *DRACULA*...Meanwhile, Adventure Comics have hired Timmons to collaborate with writer Steve Jones on *ALIEN NATION*, a forthcoming comic based on the barely successful film...Marvel have cancelled their *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* comic...The Clive Barker onslaught continues - Epic Comics have announced a *NIGHTBREED* adaptation, and Eclipse's *TAPPING THE VAIN* adaptation of his short stories has now sold out.

The SCI-FI cable channel goes on the air in America this December and it has signed an agreement with Bantam/Doubleday/Dell Books to develop programmes based on their authors' books - in return, the publishers will be able to market tie-ins based on the channel's own programmes...Japanese tv channel, NHK, are making an eight part science programme and a film, *SOLAR CRISIS*; Charlton Heston and Tim Matheson will star in the film and Syd Mead is to design the spacecraft and space station - the sfx alone has a budget of \$7 million...Meanwhile, the Disney organisation have teamed up with Italian tv, RAI-Uno to make *PLYMOUTH*, a two hour s/f film about the first space colony; a tv series may follow...Richard Carpenter is currently writing scripts for a new series of *ROBIN OF SHERRWOOD*, and he hopes that most of the original cast will return - Michael Praed will become Robin once more...The BBC have been invited by MCA/Universal to collaborate with them on their plans to build a theme park in Essex, utilising rides based on *DR WHO* and *BLAKE'S 7* - local reaction has been less than enthusiastic.

RE-ANIMATOR's Stuart Gordon has completed *DAUGHTER OF DARKNESS*, a vampire television starring Anthony Perkins...*ROBOCOP* is to be animated for tv - funny, I always thought he walked that way on purpose...The Charles Dance/Burt Lancaster version of *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* will be directed by Tony Richardson and shot on location at the Paris Opera House, utilising the cellars and hidden passages there - oh, and unlike Michael Englund's version, it will have no gory sfx - as it's for NBC, you see...*QUANTUM LEAP* has defied its critics and been renewed for a second series; Dean Cain will win a best actor award for his performance as a hologram...The *ROGER RABBIT* rip-off series *THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR* has been cancelled after less than one series in the States.

MUSIC

After completing the score for *TOTAL RECALL*, Jerry Goldsmith moves onto *GREMLINS II*...Meanwhile, John Williams again works with Spielberg, providing him with the score for *ALWAYS...*...and *THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER* has been scored by Basil Poindouir.

MEDIA REVIEWS

THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE
Produced and Directed by Val Guest
Black and White. Made in 1961.

Earthquakes, heatwaves, fires, floods, storms and famines, all on a massive global scale! The Apocalypse revealed at last? sounds vaguely familiar? Well, it should, scientists all over the world have been predicting similar happenings since the A-Atom was first split and the "Hydrogen Bomb" invented. In *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*, we are shown precisely what could happen if we vent ahead and continued Test-Expanding Nuclear Bombs around the World: GENOCIDE! Set in London, the film depicts just how "Joe-public", (from the viewpoint of the press), is coping with the drastically changing world climate, due to the ever increasing effects of the Fall-out from the bombs. Heatwaves and droughts are rampant, making drinking water scarce, and everyone's tempers flare as it gets hotter and sore dry, causing mass riots, famine, disease and many deaths. As if things weren't bad enough, Russia and America both simultaneously explode their A-bombs and cause more mayhem, as it is gradually realised by everyone that the tragic result of this is an eleven degree shift in both the Earth's axial tilt and in its orbit, thereby changing the world climate PERMANENTLY. It is revealed that SpaceShip Earth has about four months to live, before it grazes the Sun's outer atmosphere, and destroys itself. Scientists and

politicians are now realising just what they have accomplished, in their "mad" desire (folly!!) to be top dog in the arms race, and come together in a last minute attempt to save the world by exploding four A-bombs in strategic locations.

In many ways, this film reminds me of what today's scientists, politicians and industrialists are doing to our fair green planet (would like to do!) in the name of "progress". One only has to look at the many ways that "progress" has resulted in the decimation of our rivers through mass pollution by toxic chemicals. Even though this film was made very nearly thirty years ago, it still carries a sharp, clear message to us all, concerning how we, so-called masters of the earth, can go wrong, if we do not racially grow-up and stop this madness...*[Reviewed by Christopher C. Bailey]*

BLACK RAIN (18)
Directed by Ridley Scott.
Paramount

Ridley Scott has returned to his Hi-Tech landscape in this thriller by using the neon and steel of the now equally Hi-Tech Japan, and it has done him a disservice by reminding the viewer of *BLADERUNNER*. This story of corruption, forgery and murder is pretty standard fare, and Scott seems to have lost some of his visual flair, seemingly using rejected storyboards from the above mentioned classic to reproduce images and incidental scenes throughout *BLACK RAIN*. The juxtaposition of American and Japanese cultures is novel, but flawed by a muddied sounding audio track so that dialogue is inaudible at times and information is lost. Visually, and dramatically, there's little to complain of - the cast is good (though I'd be interested to know how Michael Douglas kept the same amount of stubble on his chin all the way through production!), but something doesn't quite jell. Where a Ridley Scott film was original and different from the pack a few years ago, it now doesn't stand out - this is just a *LETHAL WEAPON* II clone, and that saddens me. *[Reviewed by John Peters]*.

HONEY, I SHRUNK! THE KIDS
Directed by Joe Johnston, starring Rick Moranis

Moranis, the "fifth" Ghostbuster, plays a mad scientist working on a shrinking machine which hasn't, so far, worked. His wife maintains the family income by working in real estate, a job she loves, and so their two children are somewhat neglected and live in their own fantasy worlds, the teenage daughter obsessed with boy-friends and the young son devising his own weird inventions. Meanwhile the house becomes a tip...Next door lives a more conventional family, a sportsman Dad whose younger son is a baseball fanatic, but whose elder son isn't too keen on sport, and is bullied by Dad in consequence.

When a baseball from next door smashes the attic window, it sets the shrinking machine going as it never did go before, and the four kids are duly zapped, soon to be hurled into a garbage sack as Moranis decides to clean up his attic and smash up his machine (so how will he ever enlarge them?). The four miniature children escape from the sack and begin the trek back to the house through a "jungle" of grass. Brilliant switches from house and garden scenes at adult's eye view, and as experienced by the kids a quarter of an inch high. Eventually Moranis realises that his machine works, breaks the news to his wife - hence the title - then follow hilarious scenes as he searches for them in a harness suspended above the lawn. Meanwhile in the jungle, the children fight off hazards like a bee, lawn sprinkler and motor-mower, tame an ant to ride on it, and fight a scorpion.

Thanks to the techniques of Industrial Light and Magic and a script which demands that all the characters have individual flawed personalities, especially the dads, the name of Disney stands once more for good family entertainment, despite the made-for-TV rubbish of years gone by. My children (aged five and eight) were totally enthralled, while I couldn't relax for a moment, such was the suspense. *[Reviewed by Jessica Yates]*.

ROBOCOP (18)
Directed by Paul Verhoeven, 1987
Virgin Video, 98 minutes.

Now released on sell-through video, *ROBOCOP* was probably the biggest seller last Christmas, yet on watching

it again at home (as opposed to seeing it at the cinema), I can't help feeling its excessive violence and bad language will shock many parents who will have bought the tape as a gift for their children, probably after seeing them play the computer game. *ROBOCOP* has an 18 certificate and it certainly deserves it - the slow dismemberment of Peter Weller's character, Murphy, by multiple shotgun blasts lingers in the mind uneasily. In Verhoeven's vision of the future, life is cheap, probably worth less than a can of Coke, and the police of Detroit are being decimated. Murphy is the latest statistic - one that returns as *ROBOCOP* after his body is turned into a "Bionic" machine. I'm sure you know the rest - more bodies than the total count of Jason, Freddy and Michael. I have no problems with violence on the screen, providing it is an inherent part of the plot - though I find the obsessive use of the word "Fuck" in modern films proof that scriptwriters have a distinct lack of imagination when it comes to using language. Visual violence, in films, is an amalgam of various special effects and Verhoeven, like the late Sam Peckinpah, is an artist who turns violent sfx into an almost "balletic" artform. But in *ROBOCOP*, that violence became so sadistically portrayed, the camera so involved in the act that I find the film unsettling to watch at times. The bland tv clips and ads used in the film make the future a fun place to live, yet the news bulletins unfeelingly show only violence in the rest of the world.

ROBOCOP is arguably one of the best films of the late '80s - but did it have to be so sadistic to become that? And what does that make the millions of viewers who made it so successful? *[Reviewed by John Peters]*.

SCIENCE FICTION
Yorkshire Television eight part series from February 13, 1990 (or from February 15, 1990 in Thames and Central ITV regions)

The format - and the weaknesses - of the *SCIENCE FICTION* series on ITV result from its slot in the twilight zone when *EASTENDERS* is reflecting "real" life on the other side. However, all the eight stories would have been considered as speculative fiction, if only there were not actually true. All were modern. Duncan Dallas, YTV's Head of Science, tried to move away from the traditional way of presenting science on the box and explained that "the story was paramount - [we] didn't make it unless it was a good one".

The first two programmes showed how a minute discrepancy can have unforeseen consequences. Clifford Stoll was worried about a missing seventy five cents in the departmental telephone bill; Jocelyn Bell was concerned about a piece of "scruff" on her computer output. Stoll found that hackers were browsing through his astronomy files in search of Star Wars info, Bell found that certain sorts of stars were emitting regular radio pulses.

This "scruff" from the newly christened pulsars had been spotted several years ago by a student who had assumed the equipment was defective and given it a good thump. That stopped the scruff...it is a pity that Professors Pons and Fleischmann didn't consider defective equipment before announcing the breakthrough of nuclear cold fusion in a blaze of publicity.

Cold fusion could have solved the world's energy problems immediately, but unfortunately Pons and Fleischmann were premature. Their initial equipment burnt out suddenly after it had been switched off and their interpretation of the spectra eventually published in "Nature" was optimistic to the point of deception. They wanted the results so much that they convinced themselves and the bright optimism of fusion faded sadly.

The fourth programme in the series on the hole in the ozone layer, showed how "pure" research can be vitally topical. Scientists working for the British Antarctic Survey established the existence of this hole, then, following Professor Rowland's theories, suggested that the depletion of the ozone layer was connected with the widespread use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

After this international threat, the series switched to sentimentality as two parents frantically scoured medical literature for some possible treatment for their terminally ill son. Pure tear-jerking stuff, marred by the background opera type music.

This is an enjoyable series, provided you can overlook the scientific stereotypes of a pip-clenching scientist in a white lab coat (immaculate!) being worn at every

inappropriate occasion. I wish the characters did not have to explain the basic science laboriously to each other, just for the viewers. Another series is planned for next year: my possible ideas would include the serendipitous discovery of cis-platin as an anti-cancer agent or crystallography and snowflakes. I'm looking forward to it a lot. But then I don't like the "realism" of EASTENDERS. (Reviewed by Jenny Glover).

QUANTUM LEAP

At the moment, any new SF tv show from America is rare, and the recently shown pilot for QUANTUM LEAP shows that if nothing else, producers still have their eyes on the box office for their inspiration.

It's probably due to a healthy strain of cynicism running up (or down) my back, but this pilot episode did seem reminiscent of BACK TO THE FUTURE and THE RIGHT STUFF? Produced by Donald P. Bellisario, the man who ripped off BLUE THUNDER with AIRWOLF and gave Ernest Borgnine a sappy grin to give it "heart". QUANTUM LEAP is equally groundbreaking stuff. A scientist (Scott Bakula) becomes lost in time during an accident and ends up being cast wherever the fates (and the scriptwriters) decide, nominally at some point of his life where he has a chance to right any previous wrong decisions that affected his life.

As with all tv adventure shows, there is a "buddy", Dean Stockwell as a hologram hovering like a guardian angel at his shoulder, wisecracking his way through a Telecom bar mitzvah! Cast back into the mid 1950's, our hero finds himself at Edward Airforce base, in the body of a test pilot about to fly an "X" plane more antiquated than a George Bush speech. Obviously, things go wrong - firstly he can't fly, secondly, he falls for the wife of his "host". And things just get worse.

QUANTUM LEAP is neither better nor worse than much of the genre material that comes from the States. It has some snappy lines, good sets and clever integration of stock footage, and Dean Stockwell at least looks as if he's enjoying himself and not just there for the money. Only time will tell if things improve or deteriorate into the usual load of old tosh; but as the second episode was set in 1972 and in a very 'improbable' way linked itself to the Watergate break-in, I'm hedging my bets. (Reviewed by John Peters).

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: PRINCE CASPIAN/THE VOYAGE OF THE DAMN TREADER.

Produced by Paul Stone.

BBC Children's tv, November-December 1989.

All media adaptations of C.S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia have begun with THE LION etc. and stopped, the exception being the plays produced at London's Westminster Theatre, where THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW AND THE VOYAGE... have been added to the repertory. This BBC project conceived by Anna Howe and produced by Paul Stone would present an annual six part serial for three years, using the same children and production team. Michael Grade, TV Controller, obtained the funding from BBC Enterprises to be additional to the children's TV funding, and they expect the money to be recouped via foreign sales of the serial and videocassette sales. Thus the production boasts lavish costumes, location filming and special effects, and Stone has commented that advances in FX have improved fantasy scenes from what was possible a year ago with THE LION...

Given that they had to start with THE LION..., the next two featuring the Pevensie children were PRINCE CASPIAN and THE VOYAGE... but this would leave out THE SILVER CHAIR, which stands well on its own and was Paul Stone's favourite Chronicle. PRINCE CASPIAN, with its tricky flashback plot, isn't one of the best-loved Chronicles, so Stone ruthlessly decided to reduce it to two episodes and leave out the walking trees and Dionysian revels, thus showing Caspian regain the throne simply by winning a battle with the Telmarines after Miraz's death. This left four episodes for THE VOYAGE, gaining a full six episodes for SILVER CHAIR next autumn.

The strength of this new series lay in the realistic acting by adults, who took their roles seriously, especially Robert Lang as Miraz and John Hallam as Drinian, and of course Harwick Davis (who played Willow previously) in the part of Reepicheep, while Kenny Baker turned up as a Dufflepud. The child actors improved on their stiff

performances in THE LION, with Eustace quite as nasty as we'd expect; it isn't easy to get '80's children to act as if they had grown up in the '50's.

The FX were great: Eustace-as-a-dragon was actually played by Ailsa Berk, who also played Aslan; there were good flying effects, plus the Sea Serpent, Island of Dreams, Magician's Book, and several scenes appeared to be inspired by Pauline Baynes' original illustrations. The series was nominated for several BAFTA awards as well as the BSFA award for drama. (Reviewed by Jessica Yates).

THE BLOB AND BEWARE! THE BLOB

Both issued by BraveWorld Video

The recent release of THE BLOB (at £9.99) movies, dating back to 1958 for the Steve McQueen version and 1972 for the Larry Hagen directed sequel makes for interesting viewing. Now over thirty years old, the original runs for a brief eighty one minutes, yet seems to tell a good story in an economical way.

Alien gunk lands on Earth, infests a hermit, and then bumps off anyone it can. McQueen plays a "good" teenager, and his gang fights the grating jello to a standstill. Made during the early days of Rock 'n' Roll, there is no swamping aura of nostalgia for the time as there has been in recent films, and the parent/young adult gap is nicely played. It was a joy to see a "legendary" film actually live up to expectations.

Which is more than can be said for BEWARE! THE BLOB - the galactic gunge is brought out of Arctic retirement and let loose out of someone's thermostat flask! Shot at the tail-end of the Hippy era, the characters are into illegal substances and loud rock parties, so they don't know what's going on half the time - but then, nor does the Blob. The film is shot loosely, and reminds me of ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATOES, mainly as nothing much happened, and there's no fun watching that. THE BLOB has attained a kind of schlocky immortality, and of the two, the original deserves that. (Reviewed by John Peters).

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

I never knew how many BSFANS there were in Leeds until I became editor of Matrix, I was quite surprised. As I happen to like scurrying through lists and making maps, I prepared one for the BSFANS in England (the rest of the world will follow soon, I promise). If I've missed you out, I'm sorry - a lot of you live in tiny villages which are not in my map. So here goes:

AVON:		CHESHIRE:		CORNWALL:	
Bath	2	Altrincham	1	Newquay	1
Bristol	6	Bowdon	1	Redruth	1
Clevedon	1	Chester	7	St Austell	1
Hallisea	1	Congleton	1	CUMBRIA:	
super Mare	1	Holmes Chapel	1	Barrow in	1
		Little Neston	1	Furness	1
		Lymm	2	Bowness on	1
BEDFORDSHIRE:		Macclesfield	3	Windermere	1
Bedford	2	Northwich	3	Brigham	1
Briggleswade	1	Stockport	2	Carlisle	1
Dunstable	5	Warrington	3	Grange over	1
Leighton	1			Sands	1
Buzzard	1	CAMBRIDGESHIRE:		Kendal	1
Luton	3	Cambridge	7	Milnthorpe	1
		Caster	1	Windermere	1
BERKSHIRE:		Cherry Hinton	1	DERBYSHIRE:	
Aldermaston	1	Histon	1	Chesterfield	1
Ascot	1	Huntingdon	1	Derby	1
Bracknell	3	Kington	1	Ilkeston	1
Maldenhead	1	Orton Goldhay	1	Littleover	1
Pangbourne	2	Peterborough	1	Matlock Bath	1
Reading	11	Wisbech	1	Newton	1
Slough	4			Tideswell	1
Windsor	1	CLEVELAND:			
Wokingham	3	Egglecliffe	1		
		Hartlepool	2	DEVON:	
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE:		Middlesbrough	2	Barnstaple	1
Aylesbury	3	Redcar	2	Exeter	6
High Wycombe	3	Stockton on	1	Noniton	1
Milton Keynes	5	Tees	2	Holsworthy	1
Newport Pagnell	1	Thonaby on Tees	1	Plymouth	1
Taplow	1				

DORSET: Blandford 1 Forum 2 Boscombe 2 Bournemouth 1 Christchurch 1 Dorchester 2 Poole 1	DIDSABURY: Mancaster 13 Preston 2 Southport 1 Stockport 4	HAMPSHIRE: Alton 1 Aldershot 2 Alverstoke 1 Andover 1 Basingstoke 5 Cove 1 Eastleigh 1 Fareham 2 Farnborough 1 Fleetwood 1 Goosnargh 1 Haywood 1 Lancaster 3 Littleborough 1 Morecambe 2 Preston 3 Rawtenstall 1 Salford 2 Thornton 1 Warton 1 Wigan 2	LANCASHIRE: Bolton 3 Burnley 1 Bury 1 Chorley 1 Elton 1 Fleetwood 1 Goosnargh 1 Haywood 1 Lancaster 3 Littleborough 1 Morecambe 2 Preston 3 Rawtenstall 1 Salford 2 Thornton 1 Warton 1 Wigan 2	KING'S LYNN: Norwich 3 Oxbridge 1 Thetford 2	NORTHANTS: Abington 1 Davenport 1 Higham Ferrers 1 Moreton Pinkney 1 Northampton 1 Rusden 1 Towcester 1	NORTH HUMBERSIDE: Griffith 1 Basington North 1 Hull 9 Willerby 1	NORTH YORKSHIRE: Harrogate 1 Knaresborough 1 Malton 1 Selby 1 Settle 1 Skipton 1 Thirsk 1 Whitby 1 York 7	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: Alwrick 1 Ashington 1 Aspley 1 Brinsley 1 East Mansfield 1 Mansfield 1 Nottingham 6 Ravenshead 1 West Bridgford 2	OXFORD: Abingdon 1 Banbury 2 Bicester 1 Cowley St John 1 Didcot 2 Grove 1 Henley-on-Thames 1 Kidlington 1 Oxford 8 Wallingford 1 Wantage 1	SOMERSET: Bridgewater 1 Cleford 1 Shepton Mallet 1 South Petherton 1 Street 1 Taunton 3 Yeovil 2	SOUTH HUMBERSIDE: Grimsby 2 Humberston 1 Scunthorpe 1	SOUTH YORKSHIRE: Barnsley 4 Doncaster 2 Sheffield 7	STAFFORDSHIRE: Burton-on-Trent 2 Cannock 1 Codsall 1 Lichfield 1 Newcastle-under-Lyme 1 Stafford 1 Stoke-on-Trent 3 Tamworth 1 Upper Longdon 1 Uttoxeter 1 Walsall 1	SUFFOLK: Ipswich 1 Stowmarket 1 Woodbridge 1	SURREY: Camberley 3 Cranleigh 1 Chertsey 1 Croydon 4 Egham 3 Esher 1 Farnham 2 Guildford 2 Kingston-upon-Thames 3 Thornton Heath 1 Surrey Heath 2 Tadworth 1 Twickenham 1 Woking 3	SHROPSHIRE: Church Stretton 1 Shrewsbury 1 Telford 2	ESSEX: Basilston 1 Billericay 1 Brentwood 2 Buckhurst Hill 1 Chelmsford 3 Colchester 4 Dagenham 1 Greys 1 Harlow 2 Harold Wood 1 Hockley 1 Hornchurch 2 Ilford 3 Loughton 2 Maldon 1 Manningtree 1 Rayleigh 1 Romford 2 Shenfield 1 Upminster 1 Wickford 1	HERTFORDSHIRE: Barnet 1 Bishop's Cleeve 2 Borehamwood 1 Harpden 1 Hemel Hempstead 1 Hertford 1 Hitchin 3 Hoddesdon 1 King's Langley 1 Letchworth 1 Potters Bar 1 Rickmansworth 2 St. Albans 3 Stevenage 2 Tonwell 2 Watford 4	ISLE OF MAN: Port Erin 1	ISLE OF WIGHT: Brightstone 1 Wootton 1	GLoucestershire: Cheltenham 7 Dymock 1 Gloucester 1 Greyfriars 1 St. George 1 Tewkesbury 1 Winchcombe 1	KENT: Appledore Heath 1 Beckenham 3 Biggin Hill 2 Bromley 5 Canterbury 2 Chatham 1 Chilham 1 Chislehurst 2 Dover 2 Folkestone 3 Gravesend 3 Hayes 2 Herne Bay 1 Maidstone 2 Orpington 3 Rochester 1 Slidcup 1	Greater London: Ashford 2 Croydon 1 Enfield 3 Harrow 4 Isleworth 3 North Greenford 1 Northolt 1 North Wembley 3 Pinner 3 Southall 1 South Harrow 1 Steines 2 Twickenham 2 Wembley 1	Greater Manchester: Atherton 1 Bolton 2	Market Rasen 1 LONDON: 101 MERSEYSIDE: Birkenhead 1 Grays 3 Heswall 1 Kirkby 2 Liverpool 7 St. Helens 1 NORFOLK: Fornett St. Mary 1	Map of England and Wales with county numbers: 1 (Wales), 2 (North Yorkshire), 3 (West Yorkshire), 4 (Yorkshire), 5 (North Yorkshire), 6 (Lincolnshire), 7 (Nottinghamshire), 8 (Derbyshire), 9 (Leicestershire), 10 (Greater London), 11 (Greater London), 12 (Surrey), 13 (Surrey), 14 (Surrey), 15 (Surrey), 16 (Surrey), 17 (Surrey), 18 (Surrey), 19 (Surrey), 20 (Surrey), 21 (Surrey), 22 (Surrey), 23 (Surrey), 24 (Surrey), 25 (Surrey), 26 (Surrey), 27 (Surrey), 28 (Surrey), 29 (Surrey), 30 (Surrey), 31 (Surrey), 32 (Surrey), 33 (Surrey), 34 (Surrey), 35 (Surrey), 36 (Surrey), 37 (Surrey), 38 (Surrey), 39 (Surrey), 40 (Surrey), 41 (Surrey), 42 (Surrey), 43 (Surrey), 44 (Surrey), 45 (Surrey), 46 (Surrey), 47 (Surrey), 48 (Surrey), 49 (Surrey), 50 (Surrey), 51 (Surrey), 52 (Surrey), 53 (Surrey), 54 (Surrey), 55 (Surrey), 56 (Surrey), 57 (Surrey), 58 (Surrey), 59 (Surrey), 60 (Surrey), 61 (Surrey), 62 (Surrey), 63 (Surrey), 64 (Surrey), 65 (Surrey), 66 (Surrey), 67 (Surrey), 68 (Surrey), 69 (Surrey), 70 (Surrey), 71 (Surrey), 72 (Surrey), 73 (Surrey), 74 (Surrey), 75 (Surrey), 76 (Surrey), 77 (Surrey), 78 (Surrey), 79 (Surrey), 80 (Surrey), 81 (Surrey), 82 (Surrey), 83 (Surrey), 84 (Surrey), 85 (Surrey), 86 (Surrey), 87 (Surrey), 88 (Surrey), 89 (Surrey), 90 (Surrey), 91 (Surrey), 92 (Surrey), 93 (Surrey), 94 (Surrey), 95 (Surrey), 96 (Surrey), 97 (Surrey), 98 (Surrey), 99 (Surrey), 100 (Surrey).
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TEESIDE:		WEST SUSSEX:		Keighley	2
Gateshead	2	Ashington	1	Leeds	20
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	6	Bognor Regis	1	Linthwaite	1
Wallsend	1	Burgess Hill	1	Morley	1
		Chichester	1	Pontefract	1
		Crawley	1	Pudsey	2
WARWICKSHIRE:		East Grinstead	1	Wakefield	1
Leamington Spa	3	Hambrook	1		
		Horsham	1	WILTSHIRE:	
WEST MIDLANDS:		Lancing	1	Martham Park	1
Birmingham	4	North Bersted	1	Marlborough	1
Coventry	4	Shoreham-by-Sea	1	Melksham	1
Halesowen	1			Pewsey	1
Kingstanding	1	WEST YORKSHIRE:		Salisbury	3
Kingswindford	1	Bradford	2	Swindon	1
Noseley	1	Burley-in-		Trowbridge	1
Sollihull	1	Wharfedale	1		
Stourbridge	1	Devsbury	2	Worthing	1
Walsall	1	Flockton	1		
West Bromwich	1	Huddersfield	3		
Wolverhampton	1				

SMALL PRESS REVIEWS

Terry Broome

ICONS OF STARCHASM, SF POETRY FROM THE ICONOCLASM EVENTS (16 pages, A5, photocopied, availability?) Edited by Steve Sneyd, 4 Nowell Place, Almondsbury, Huddersfield HD5 8PB).

KRAX 26 (76 pages, laser-printed, £2; after No 26 £5/810 for three issues) Edited by Andy Robson, 63 Dixon Lane, Leeds LS12 4RR

Two small press poetry magazines in green card covers, one - ICONS - is illustrated with four Ken Cheslin Olaf cartoons (his best), but Ken, no artist, sits incongruously with the other contributors' pretensions to greatness. It's particularly unfortunate because two of them are used for covers and they really don't do the poems inside any justice.

The workshop page is interesting mostly for the participants' obvious inexperience with the form, and Steve's editorial, curiously omitting to mention anything about the atmosphere and attendance of the reading session by British poets at Iconoclasm '89, is marred by unhappy typographical and grammatical errors.

Steve claims that ICONS reflects the way sf poetry "continues to develop" though it is hard to see how without examples from previous years to act as a yardstick. He quotes Arthur C. Clarke "Verse is probably a better medium than prose for expressing the ideas of Fantasy and Science Fiction" even though few of the poems bear this out. That's not to say they're mostly bad, it's just that they simply don't deal with the ideas of f and sf in any profound way.

There are nineteen poems by eight writers covering a wide range of styles and subjects (not all sf), most competent but unremarkable, a couple which made me wince ("You can cross the Jungles of Venus/It's better than a ten inch penis" from "Power Amour" by Pete Cox, for example) and several enchanting ones, the best being by Andrew Darlington ("Buroshima mon Amour/Radical Kisses"), Dave Hughes ("Rust") and Andy Robson ("Another Finland Job"), regrettably ruined in the final three lines). An entertaining acquisition, generally and a good idea I hope Steve will continue in future.

Andy Robson's own bumper issue of KRAX (usually about forty eight pages long) is visually more impressive, being printed and lavishly illustrated with photos and art, but conforms more to my general impression of poetry, professional or not - that I don't like most of it (ICONS is unusually appealing). There are over sixty poems by writers worldwide, including the ubiquitous Steve Sneyd, as well as other poems, stories or articles by WORKS regulars, John Light, John F. Haines and D.F. Lewis. Most are capable, but uninspired, some with a tendency towards thin jokes, others over-reliant on a too-regular rhyming scheme, few of them f or sf in content (not that it matters), but one of them (David Horner's "Men Only", a set of song lyrics rather than a poem) highly enjoyable.

The main interest for me, however, is the review section: thirteen pages of small print on underground tapes, fanzines and the small press of all varieties worldwide, a number sadly dated and at least one widely inaccurate. But small press poetry devotees will love it.



THE EASTCON '90 MEDIA PROGRAMME - TO BOLDLY GO

Helen McCarthy

The most famous split infinitive of modern times is an apt, if predicable, way to introduce this outline of what we are trying to do. Stuart Andrews works in tv and has used his professional contacts and wide knowledge of the field to put together a programme of the best of British telefantasy and sf over the last thirty years. "A" programme is perhaps the wrong way to describe it - Stuart has collected enough material for at least three con programmes, and the hardest part is deciding what to omit.

I've had the same problem. My first aim was to show media fandom in action and three groups - Six of One (Prisoner fandom), Horizon (Blake's 7 fandom) and USS Intrepid (Trek fandom) will be there to "show and tell" - show why their particular fandom exists and tell what it does.

My second aim was to introduce Japanese animation, one of the great popular art forms of the twentieth century, a treasurehouse of experimentation and ideas sprung from the imagination of a people with a long tradition of visual storytelling and a total lack of technophobia. The Japanese approach life from a different angle to that of the average Westerner and this, combined with the influence of an ancient culture and a social structure still surprisingly cohesive, produces frank, strong and polished work which challenges many perceptions and prejudices. The freshness, vitality and wide range of subject matter means that anime is accessible to all ages and every level of education, and the use of comedy is frequent, even for "heroic" characters who would not normally be considered laughter-fodder by Western writers and animators.

There IS a language barrier, but much of the storytelling works without language, and thanks to the enormous generosity of American and Canadian fandom and of one of the few English companies interested in the field, we have some dubbed and subtitled material. Again, there's an embarrassment of riches, but, for the present, come and see it. You may be shocked, you may be confused, but if you have any visual imagination at all, I can promise you won't be bored!

Finally, we are using a small part of the programme to take a look at how the media have treated animals as metaphors for human concerns. It should be fun. Are you coming along?

CON LISTINGS

SPACE CITY April 28-9, 1990

Chester, Abbot's Hall Hotel

Membership £28 full weekend, £15 one day

Blake's 7 convention

Contact: Sue Christian, 14 The Carters, Copy Farm, Netherton, Merseyside L30 7DW

CORFLU May 4-6, 1990

New York City

Attending membership £22

Small intimate, high fanish get-together for people interested in fanzines

Contact: Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 5a Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6QA

INCLINATION May 26-27, 1990

Chequers Hotel, Newbury

Attending membership £8, Supporting £5

Small highly participatory con, intended as an interface between the newcomers and the hardened congoers

Contact: Linda Toal, 11 Oakfield Avenue, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow G12 8JF

FANDERSON 90 May 26-27, 1990

Mount Royal Hotel, Marble Arch, London

Attending membership £25 (£22 to Fanderson members),

Supporting membership £12

Con for fans of Gerry Anderson programmes

Contact: Barbara Heywood, 50 Albion Road, London N16 9PH

CHRONOCLASM June 22-24, 1990

Pennine Hotel, Derby

Guests: Mary Gentle, Neil Gaiman

Attending membership £12, supporting £7

Will include major workshop strand on "World Enough and Time"

Contact: Neil Curry, 24 Peartree Road, Enfield, Middlesex

UNICONZE July 6-8, 1990

New Hall, Cambridge

Guests: Barrington Bayley, Ian Watson, Dave Langford, Lionel Fanthorpe, Bill Sanderson

Attending membership £9.50, Supporting £5

This is the 11th Universities' Science Fiction Convention. There will be a real ale bar under the expert guidance of Ye Gerbilish

Contact: Uniconze, Clare College, Cambridge CB2 1TYL

CONJUNCTION July 27-29, 1990

New Hall, Cambridge

Attending membership £12, Supporting £5

This con aims to be run in the style of a traditional sf con

Contact: Conjunction, 25 Wycliffe Road, Cambridge CB1 3JD

CONFABULATION

Brian McGee and Yoma Megarry regret that Confabulation has had to be cancelled due to pressure of work and lack of support

CONFICTION August 23-27, 1990

The Netherlands Congress Centre, The Hague, The Netherlands
Guests of Honour: Joe Haldean, Wolfgang Jeschke, Harry Harrison, Fan Guest of Honour: Andrew Porter. TM:
Chelsea Quinn Yarbro

Attending membership £25 to July 15, 1990

This is the Worldcon, marvellous opportunity to meet people interested in science fiction from all over the world. It might, no, will, be expensive, but the Worldcon is very rarely held in Europe and I reckon it is worth it. The last European Worldcon was Conspiracy '87 and the next is unlikely to be within the next four years.

Contact: Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Road, Cambridge CB5 8HD

NICON VS THE SURVIVORS September 21-22, 1990

Students' Union, Queen's University of Belfast

Guests: James White, Ian McDonald, Conon na Braienn

Attending membership £5, £2 non-attending

A very informal con with the emphasis, as ever, on having a good time. Minimal programming, audience participation and new fans are very welcome. Cheques payable to "QUB".

Theme: Irish sf authors

Contact: Tommy Ferguson, 90 Carnhill, Shantallow 3, Derry BT48 8BE, Northern Ireland.

HOLODECK August 31-September 3, 1990

Stakis Garden Hotel, Bradford

Guest: Joe Haldean

Attending membership £25, supporting £10

This is the 30th National Star Trek con

Contact: PO Box 628, Bristol BS99 1TZ

PORTMERCON 90 August 31-September 3, 1990

Portmerion ("The Village"), North Wales

This is the annual Prisoner/Six of One Convention

Contact: Six of One, The Prisoner Appreciation Society, PO Box 60, Harrogate HG1 2TP OR PO Box 172, Hatfield, PA 19440, USA

NOVACON November 9-11, 1990

Excelsior Hotel, Birmingham

The Brue group organise this annual convention

Guest: Dr. Jack Cohen

Attending membership £15

Contact: Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7UY

ARMADACON November 10-11, 1990

The Arts Centre, Plymouth

Guests: Anne McCaffrey, Adrian Cole, Brian Lumley, Sylvester

McCoy and Sophie Aldred

Attending membership £15, £5 supporting

Contact: 4 Gleneagle Avenue, Mannamead, Plymouth PL3 5HL

1991 CONVENTIONS

RECONNAISSANCE February 22-24

Cardiff Park Hotel, Cardiff

Attending membership £15, £8 supporting

Contact: 5 St. Andrews Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 2DY

SPECULATION March 29-April 1

Hospitality Inn, Glasgow

Guest: Robert Holdstock

Attending membership £15, supporting £10 (but please check these)

Contact: 35 Buller Road, London N17 9BH

MEXICON May 24-27

Harrigote

A convention for people interested in sf as a written genre

Attending membership £15, £13 to members of Mexican 3

Contact: Greg Pickersgill, 7a Lawrence Road, South Ealing, London W5

CONGREGATE 2 June

This is an intimation that Congregate 2 is being planned as a sequel to the highly successful Congregate 1 in 1989

PROTOPLASM June

The Chronoclasm committee are planning another con in June. Date, hotel, guests to be arranged.

SOUPCON October/November

Hotel de France, Jersey

Membership £15

Seall relaxacon

Contact: 63 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey

VOLGACON September 8-14

The con is being organised by the SF Club "The Winds of Time" and the Youth Association ATOM. There will be seven days on or around the River Volga, with talks, meetings, discussions, story telling, fancy dress and a great Universe Banquet. Definitely the most exotic con of '91.
Contact: Igor A. Tolocomicov, CPD, Poste Restante, Volgograd-66, USSR

Волга—кон это:

СЕМЬ НЕЗАБЫВАЕМЫХ ДНЕЙ, ПРОВЕДЕННЫХ НА БЕРЕГУ ВОЛГИ!



LOCAL FANOEIA

Keith Mitchell

Ian Brooks, currently Secretary of WARPED, the Manchester SF & F Society, wrote just too late for last issue, to tell me about his plans to diversify beyond the confines of the University of Manchester. WARPED itself seems to be doing very well. Ian reports that they managed to at least double their attendance with the new student influx at the start of the year. Ian, and the current President, Mark Slater, will both be leaving University this year, but have plans for the future. WARPED's future appears to be guaranteed by the many...first years ready to take over the reins of power... There are also plans to try and revive Manchester fandom in general, as at least Mark and Ian plan to remain in Manchester for the foreseeable future.

While they have put notices in the local specialist bookshops with open invitations to WARPED meetings, what Ian really wants to get organised are regular pub meetings for Manchester fandom in general. Whether this happens soon, or later, will depend how much time they have after worrying about their finals. I have not heard of any local group activity in Manchester for some time now, so if you are one of the fifteen BSFAns in Manchester, contact either of them (before June) at the addresses below.

It's starting to look as if the Friends of Admiral Benbow might have more luck in finding somewhere to meet if they were exiled to Siberia instead of gathering in central Glasgow every Thursday. The latest change of venue is to Sloan's, just off the Argyll Arcade, but once more, is not likely to be a permanent one. It's probably a good idea to check before you go. There's no information on the similar fate of FOKT, Glasgow's other group.

Although the Peterborough SF Club has been on the go since 1976, I was beginning to think things had gone a bit quiet with them recently. However, Pete 'Cardinal' Cox has put me right on this misconception. Their major event last year was a multi-media art exhibition, at which twelve talented local artists were promoted and in November, they had a talk from author Josephine Saxton. There is quite a strong emphasis on writing fiction within the group. They print Fantasy, Horror and Surrealistic as well as SF short stories, and have Ian Watson running a writers' workshop in March. PSFC is fairly catholic in its SF tastes, and welcomes book, film, television, comics and board roleplaying games fans, plus it also publishes its own zine. They meet every Wednesday, but the first and third weeks have a fixed location and format. The Bluebell Inn meetings take the form of an organised debate, while the meetings in the Great Northern are a social night. See below for more details.

I am indebted to Tommy Ferguson for writing with comprehensive details of Northern Irish events. It's great to know about no less than FOUR groups that are new to me, for the two Universities in the Province, and the local groups in Belfast and Londonderry.

Tommy says REAL Guinness and a hearty welcome are to be had at all of these gatherings, and all except his local Londonderry group have been going for a while. (James) White's Tavern group has had more than a few professional authors as members in its time. Note that the nights mentioned for these group meetings are on alternate weeks - the Belfast group will be meeting on April 5th and 19th while the Londonderry group fills in the other weeks, so should meet on the 13th and 27th.

Rob Newman wrote with updated information about a Croydon group recently. In its present incarnation, the Croydon SF Group has been meeting for about a year now, and gets over a dozen people each month. Members include founder Dave Barrett, other BSFA members, and local Hitch-hiker, role-playing and comics fans. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday each month, in the Oakfield Tavern, which Rob reliably informs me has Real Ale.

Finally, CRITICAL WAVE reports that the Newcastle group, the Gannets, now meet in Rosy's Bar (formerly the Darn Crook) in Chinatown on Saturday afternoons - more details from Ian Bamro.

BELFAST: White's Tavern Group
Meets alternate Thursdays at the Monica Bar, Rosemary Street
Contact: Barman on the night

BELFAST: Queen's University
Meets alternate Thursdays at the Students' Union, University Road
Contact: Notice Board, Porters' Corridor OR c/o Students' Union

CROYDON: CSFG
Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm at the Oakfield Tavern, St. James Road
Contact: Rob Newman, 136A North End, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1UE (Tel: 081-680 3128)

GLASGOW: Friends of Admiral Benbow
Meets every Thursday 9pm at Sloan's, off Argyll Arcade
Contact: Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre G72 9NA OR John Mooney (Tel: 041-952 9286)

JORDONSTOWN: University of Ulster at Jordonstown UUU
Contact: Damien Kearney, c/o Clubs and Societies Officer, Students' Union, UUU, Jordonstown, Northern Ireland

LONDONDERRY: Stroke City SF Group
Meets on alternate Fridays at the Linenhall Bar, Upper Magazine Street (beside Woolworths)
Contact: Barman on the night OR Tommy Ferguson (Tel: 0504 54457)

MANCHESTER:
Contact: Ian Brooks, 2 Fairbank Avenue, Rusholme, Manchester M14 4PX (Tel: 061-226 7489) OR Mark Slater, 28 Denham Street, Victoria Park, Manchester M13 0FJ (Tel: 061 225 9148)

NEWCASTLE/TYNE: The Gannets
Meet on Saturday afternoons at Rosy's Bar, Chinatown
Contact: Ian Bamro (Tel: 091-284 6913)

PETERBOROUGH: Peterborough SF Club
Meet every Wednesday at the Bluebell Inn, Dogsthorpe, on the 1st Wednesday and at Poachers Bar, Great Northern Hotel, opposite the Railway Station, on the 3rd Wednesday
Contact: Pete Cox, 24 Westfield Road, Yaxley, Peterborough, Cambs. PE7 3LS

WRITING

There are lots of residential writing courses at the Arvon Foundation, Lumb Bank, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 6DP (Tel: 0422 843714). The only entrance qualification is a strong desire to write. The course fee is £155 which includes food, tuition and accommodation, and many grants are available, details from the Arvon Foundation. Courses in the near future are:

FICTION Led by Bertie Doherty and Helen Flint, Guest Barry Hines. April 30-May 5. For experiments with short stories and novels

POETRY Led by Hilary Llewellyn-Williams and Robert Minhinnick, Guest Amanda Eason. May 7-12. For both beginners and those with some experience of writing poetry

WRITING FOR THE THEATRE Led by Cindy Artiste and Charlotte Kealey. May 21-26. For those who have already made an attempt on a play

YOUNG POETS WORKSHOP Led by Gillian Allnutt and David Daybenden, Guest John Barnie. May 28-June 2. A practical week of workshops and tutorials, for poets aged 16-30

DRAMA FOR BEGINNERS Led by Liana Aukin and David Spenser. June 11-16. The course will focus on the similarities between radio, TV, theatre and film drama.

THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN FEDERATION AMATEUR SHORT STORY CONTEST is for original stories of up to 7,500 words; first prize is £25, second prize £15, third prize £10. Entry fee is £1 for NSF and BSFA members, £2 to non-members. Deadline is December 1st, 1990 and an entry form can be obtained from Maureen Porter (60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ)

MOBIL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION (in connection with the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester). First prize for an original full-length script is £10,000, with a second prize of £5,000, three prizes of £3,000, a special prize of £1,000, and a chance of an £8,000 bursary as writer-in-residence for a year. Deadline is August 3, 1990, and for details contact: The Mobil Playwriting Competition, Royal Exchange Theatre Company, St. Ann's Square, Manchester

WRITEBACK

Kick off with more recommended science fiction. Christopher claims that there is no fantasy in this list, which all depends on his definition of fantasy...

Christopher C. Bailey
52 Druids Walk, Didcot, Oxon OX11 7PF

Regarding AT THE CORE in Matrix 85 on essential science fiction reading, I would like to dispute some of what Paul Kincaid claims to be "Essential Sci-Fi Reading". Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to put Paul down, or anything, as I respect other people's opinions. (I have also included SOME of what Paul put in his list, as there are certain titles that we are "bound" to agree on).

Titles that are BOLD are what I consider "Vital", in order to have a "reasonable" knowledge in and of, Science Fiction. No Fantasy in this list. At least, as far as I'm concerned, there isn't...

ALDISS, Brian W: Non-Stop, Helliconia Trilogy, The Canopy of Time
ANDERSON, Paul: The Avatar, Trader to the Stars, Tau Zero
ANTHONY, Piers: Macroscopic
ASIMOV, Isaac: Foundations I, II, III, The Gods Themselves, I, Robot
BAYLEY, Barrington: The Soul of the Robot, The Rod of Light
BEAR, Greg: Eon, Hegira, Blood Music, The Forge of God
BENFORD, Gregory: Timescape, In the Ocean of Night, Across the Sea of Suns, Against Infinity
BESTER, Alfred: Tiger! Tiger!, The Deceivers
BOVA, Ben: Voyagers I & II
BRUNNER, John: The Shockwave Rider, Into the Slave Nebula, The Stardroppers
CLARKE, Arthur C: 2001: A Space Odyssey, The City and the Stars, Rama, The Songs of Distant Earth, Childhood's End
COOPER, Edmund: The Tenth Planet, Seed of Light
DELANAY, Samuel R: The Einstein Intersection
DERMOTT, Vern: Planet Finders
DICK, Philip K: The Man in the High Castle, A Maze of Death, Valis
DICKSON, Gordon: "Dorsai" series, The Far Call, Ancient, My Enemy
FORWARD, Robert: Dragons Egg, Starquake
HALDEMAN, Joe: All My Sins Remembered, Mindbridge, The Forever War, Worlds, Worlds Apart
HARRISON, Harry: Skyfall, Deathworld Trilogy, In Our Hands the Stars
HEINLEIN, Robert: Farnham Freehold, Time for the Stars, Red Planet, Time Enough for Love, The Day after Tomorrow, Starship Troopers
HERBERT, Frank: Dune Trilogy, Destination: Void, The Dosadi Experiment, Whipping Star, The White Plague, The Green Brain, Eye, The Eyes of Heisenberg, The Godmaker
HOGAN, James P: Inherit the Stars, The Genesis Machine
MEREDITH, Richard: The Timeliner Trilogy
MORRIS, Michael: The Rituals of Infinity
NIVEN, Larry: Footfall, Ringworld, Ringworld Engineers, Neutron Star, The World of Plavus, A World Out of Time, The Mote in God's Eye, A Gift from Earth, The Legacy of Heorot, Limits, Lucifer's Hammer, Protector
POHL, Frederick: Gateway, Beyond the Blue Event Horizon, Heechee Rendezvous, Annals of the Heechee, Demon in the Skull, The Merchant's War, The Space Merchants, Jem
SHAW, Bob: Other Days, Other Eyes, Orbitville, Orbitville Departure, Ship of Strangers, Who Goes Here?, Fire Pattern, The Two-Timers
SILVERBERG, Robert: Across a Billion Years, The Man in the Maze, Nightwings
SIMAK, Clifford: City, All the Traps of Earth, Ring Around the Sun, Way Station, A Heritage of Stars
STABLEFORD, Brian: The Walking Shadow, To Challenge Chaos
STERLING, Bruce: Involution Ocean
VOGT, A.E. Van: The Anarchistic Colossus, Children of Tomorrow, The Universe Maker, Slan, Planets for Sale, The Silkie, Rogue

Ship, The Voyage of the Space Beagle

WHITE, James: Star Surgeon, All Judgement Fled, Open Prison, The Watch Below, Dark Inferno
ZEBROWSKI, George: The Omega Point, Macro-Life
Zelazny, Roger: The Dream Master, Lord of Light, This Immortal, My Name is Legion.

Pamela Baddeley asks to what extent scientists are the victims of the current attitudes of society with a few more comments on the "Scientist" debate:

Pamela J. Baddeley
55 Union Street, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7PX

I recently came across some interesting observations by palaeontologist/evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould in his book EVER SINCE DARWIN. Firstly, he comments that he advocates the general argument that scientific "truth" often tends to be simply the prejudice inspired by prevailing social and political beliefs. In the essay on validating Continental Drift, he remarks: *Most scientists maintain - or at least argue for public consumption - that their profession marches toward truth by accumulating more and more data, under the guidance of an infallible procedure called "the scientific method"...During the period of nearly universal rejection, direct evidence for continental drift - that is, the data gathered from rocks exposed on our continents - was every bit as good as it is today. It was dismissed because no one had devised a physical mechanism that would permit continents to plough through an apparently solid oceanic floor...The data that seemed to support it could always be explained away.*

He goes on to explain that with new information from the ocean floor and a heavy dose of creative imagination, a new theory of plate tectonics was formed and the old data from continental rocks has now been exhumed and hailed as conclusive proof of drift. He concludes that: *Most facts, collected in old ways under the guidance of old theories, rarely lead to any substantial revision of thought. Facts do not "speak for themselves"; they are read in the light of theory. Creative thought, in science as much as in the arts, is the motor of changing opinion. Science is a quintessentially human activity, not a mechanised, robotlike accumulation of objective information, leading by laws of logic to inescapable interpretation.*

Basically, I think we have to conclude that scientists are at the mercy of their cultural upbringing, prejudices etc. as much as anyone else; the only different is that the less aware or honest ones would have the rest of us believe they are completely objective and logical. This can lead to misuse of scientific methods in areas of life where they are not applicable (such as so-called Social Darwinism, which was used to justify racist prejudices) or even to a tendency to exclude inconvenient evidence or to keep repeating experiments until they come up with the "right" result. (I used to work with an ex-chemist who had worked in the pharmaceutical industry but quit in disgust because of these methods being used in drug safety tests). I think the "ivory tower" myth of objectivity has led a lot of scientists in the past to feel they were "above" social considerations - a scientist's view of science's sake view of experimentation - but I think this is changing and more people are becoming aware of the responsibility they have regarding the uses and possible abuses to which their research can be put.

Letters are very welcome. I LOVE getting letters. I've just been reading THE HOBBIT for the umpteenth time and realised after the riddle scene that no one seems to know any riddles any more - I only know that hoary old chestnut about thirty white horses on a white hill to represent teeth. Is it possible to make riddles for more modern things - rockets, space flight, the noise of Concorde passing overhead? Let's give it a try. All correspondence, riddles, everything to Jenny Glover, 16 Avary Place, Leeds LS12 2NF, West Yorkshire, UK. The Earth....Goodbye for now.

Next deadline:

Saturday, May 12, 1990

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