

95p *Matrix* 89

The Newsletter of the British Science Fiction Association

Publishing

Murdoch takes
Middle Earth

Soapbox

K.V. Bailey on
Cathedrals and SF

Clubs

Starting a Local
SF Group

Fanzines

Czeching Out
Eastern Europe

Conventions

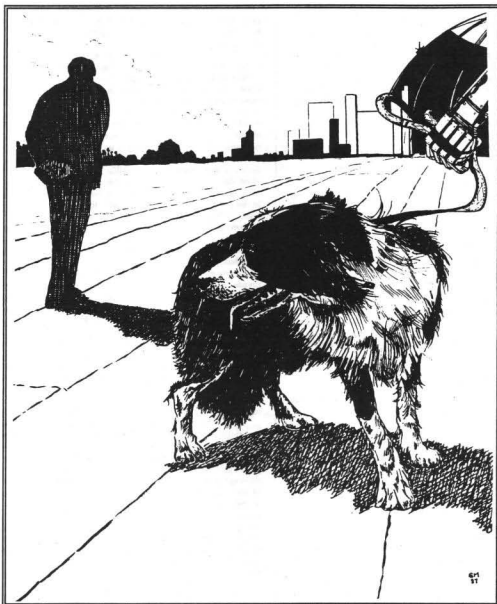
Eastercons
Illuminated?
Carousel

Cry "Fanac"

Book Collectors'
Confessions

Small Press

Showcase or
Workshop?



Reviews of: *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *Tremors*, *Not With a Bang*, *Moon 44*, *Dune*, *The Witches*, *Earthday Special* and *The Punisher*.

Plus Comics News, Competition Corner and Information Service.

August-September 1990

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This issue of *Matrix* set in 8pt Times Roman, with 12pt or 18pt Helvetica Bold for headings.

About the Artists

Cover artist, **Stephen Manderson**, writes that he is an "anti-social terminally shy thirty one year old, who used to read a lot, now tends to vegetate before and during videos when not masquerading as the roadie/lighting technician for an up-and-coming local band ("Where's the bastard who does the lights?")

Scribbling lines on paper does not entitle me to have "influences" (or is that for me to say) but I do greatly admire the work of various artists including M.C. Escher, Virgin Finlay, S. Clay Wilson, Jeff Jones, Max Ernst and others.

Have presently about 2,000 readables give or take a pile (ouch!) so it's difficult to list preferences. My taste is eclectic and questionable, although not in that order.

Other mentionable preoccupations include worrying, hiding from people in loud clothes and keeping a low profile - yes, I do shave beneath the mirror and it does blunt the razor. Now is anonymity cool or what?

Nick Waller continues on himself: "I was born in 1958 in Beirut, where my father, an airline pilot, was based. He liked science fiction: the earliest book I can identify on my shelves is *Best of Sci-Fi 3*, edited by Cordelia Titcomb Smith (stories such as "Nightfall", "The Roads Must Roll", "Pottage"), given to me when I was nine, though I know I was reading of before that. In England in the summers I used to get the comic *TV21*, and I remember liking Frank Bellamy's drawing style. As a child I used to draw quite detailed pictures of war and destruction, probably to compensate for being a completely unviolent sort of person in real life. I also wrote a short story about Platonians trying to invade earth, but suffering from their rubber spacecraft burning up when they got too close to the sun.

In recent years I have read a fair amount of Banks, Cordwainer Smith, Wolfe, Roberts, Shaw, some Gibson and the ilk and some mainstream fiction like Peter Ackroyd and Umberto Eco. Recently I've read all Pratchett's paperbacks, and I keep re-reading Clarke periodically. My next bit of book will be Greenland's *Take Back Plenty*. I subscribe to *Interzone* and read *Private Eye* and *New Scientist* regularly.

Overall, I suppose I like relatively traditional sf, some of it middling-hard, but often of a typically British pessimistic nature, with a sense of loss and alienation and collapse. No doubt this has something to do with Beirut, a thoroughly enjoyable place for a junior expatriot to grow up in during the 60's (albeit somewhat unreal in retrospect), but now barbed and dangerous. I can imagine the rest of the world going that way. Most of it already is. My drawings often express some kind of violence or destruction - crashed spaceships, weapons, screaming people. No change from when I was six!"

A brief note from Georgina Bunce: "My favourite books are the 'barbarian' genre: *Brak*, *Thor*, *Deathdealer*, *Conan*, etc - good old gratuitous sex and violence! I'm training furiously for my first grading in Shotokan Karate and am 106,000 words into a SF novel of my own."

DEADLINE
15th September

Contents

About the Artists	2
Determinants	3
News	3
Paul Kincaid	
Comics News	8
Ian Abrahams	
Information Service	8
Phil Nichols	
Cry "Fancs"	9
Book Collecting	
Roger Robinson	
Chris Bailey	
BSFA Awards	9
Nicolas Mahoney	
Local Phenomena	9
Keith Mitchell	
Noticeboard	10
WriteBack	11
Competition Corner	13
Roger Robinson	
Small Press: Showcase or Workshop?	14
Roger Waddington	
Media File and Reviews	14
John Peters with additional reviews from Bill Longley, Jessica Yates, Joseph Nicholas & Chris Bailey	
The Periodic Table	18
Eastercon Illuminated	
Ivan Towlson	
Chronoclast	
Rhodri James	
Compute for Charity	
Dave Bell	
Carousel	
Chuck Foster	
Contour mappings	
Fire and Hemlock	22
Fanzine Listing	
Czeching out the Eighties	
Cyril Sims	
An Open Letter to Science Fiction Authors	
Egon Cierny & Miroslav Martan	
BSFA Worldwide	24
Soapbox: Cathedrals and SF	24
K V Bailey	

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Determinants

The fascination of suggesting an "ignorable theme" for the artwork is the wide variation of results. The dragon illustrations in *Matrix 88* ranged from a shy chess player to a proud warrior, complete with sword. The alien hands and heads in this issue were equally unexpected - the idea was initially inspired by a Stephen Manderson drawing of a dog looking pensively at a human, his head held by an unhuman hand (cover picture). The extension of the hand was tantalisingly off the picture, but neither dog nor human were showing signs of fright: the dog is panting slightly, its shadow shows the sun is high.

Curiously though, all the aliens submitted had normal appearing hands with a thumb which could swivel and fingers to grasp. This is the most efficient system for holding and lifting things developed by evolution... so far... which begs the question of just how human should aliens be.

The illustrators - Stephen Manderson, Nick Walter and Georgina Bunce - seemed to take the Nicholas Fisk approach whereby aliens were (moderately) humanoid in appearance, where the conflict inevitable for a good story would come through the clash in culture and attitudes. Also, to present humans with a human-type costing increases the shock both to the reader and the other characters when the true self is revealed: as in Nicholas Fisk's *Granny and You remember me!*. There seem to be two sorts of reactions when this happens. Either there is self-disbelief, self-doubt and, to an extent, self loathing and denial, like hot, apocryphal Bunny in *You remember me!* who takes Lisa Threadgold breakfast in bed and finds a pencil of light stabbing into Lisa's brain. Lisa's mouth making mad impossible sounds "like thousands of starlings... all screeching and twittering at once".

The other reaction is to accept that something has happened which transcends normal parameters and must be stopped in a vicious pre-emptive strike. There will be people who recognise a possible interplanetary invasion and suggest a compromise or, as Bocker puts it in John Wyndham's *The Kraken Wakes* "a sympathetic approach... with the aim of facilitating an exchange in science, using the word in its widest sense". But the Bockers and Zellabys of any world are widely outnumbered by those who are willing to conduct extensive post-mortems but who cannot tolerate any infringement to their personal world. Or, more succinctly, as Mallarby puts it: "I'm afraid Bocker's ideas of fraternization never had the chance of a flea in a furnace".

John Wyndham continually reiterates that no intelligent species can afford to tolerate the rise of another intelligent species. In *Web, The Midwich Cuckoos, The Kraken Wakes* and *The Day of the Triffids*, up to a point, he shows that, to survive, no state can "afford to harbour an increasingly powerful minority which it has no power to control" to use the words of the Midwich Children. With *The Day of the Triffids*, the situation is slightly different. There is still the conflict between two widely different species - humans and triffids - but the triffid needs are much more simple. Triffids could move, could scavenge for food and "assimilate" it easily, and although their sting had little muscular strength, it had enough toxins to provide a more than adequate food supply. As a sign of a certain amount of intelligence, triffids go for human heads when they sting, failing that, hands, aiming to blind people. That even the odds considerably, Triffids, as Walter Lucknor comments in *The Day of the Triffids*, are adapted for a sightless existence and humans are not. A triffid is superior to a sightless human any day of the week, as a lot of humans are about to find out - painfully.

At present, today, this year, this century, humans are prepared to patronise and tolerate the "intelligent" species available, the great apes and tea drinking chimpanzees, the cuddly little meo cats in their zoo enclosures, the dolphins who stick rigidly to their marine territory and show no aggressive tendencies. There is no species known at present, intelligent and organised enough to replace humans, but that should not encourage overweening self-confidence and vaulting ambition. Not that man is predator-free - ignoring the tigers, the sharks, the motorway juggernauts, humans are under constant attacks from disease-causing viruses. It often seems that as one disease is conquered, another appears, and while the mortality rate is not statistically high, viruses are the major factor in changing human and sexual habits. This could be seen as a subtle form of extermination, a gradual diminution of the race: though whether this would benefit the viruses is speculative.

Changing the subject, a few simple calculations show that one in thirty of the BSFA membership are involved in producing *Matrix* from the hardworking regular columnists to the letter writers, from the ones who collate, staple and fold the printed sheets into recognisable BSFA magazines every two months to the ones who proofread, provide new word processing systems and create illustrations. It is necessary for all members to consider what sort of association this should be, and how, or if, they are prepared to help it. At Chronoclass in Derby, there was a BSFA desk with back issues of magazines, a specially designed information sheet by Jo Raine and a raffle. Members of Unicornz in Cambridge found BSFA flyers in their registration envelopes. Hopefully, there will be BSFA flyers at as many cons as possible in the future. But, is this the best way to reach the British science fiction readers and enthusiasts? Please send your ideas.

News

Paul Kincaid

with a little help from *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and other sources.

Unwin Sold to Collins

HARPER COLLINS has bought UNWIN HYMAN for an undisclosed figure. The deal was closed at 9.30pm on Monday 9 July, only three days after staff at UNWIN first heard their company was for sale through a report in *The Bookseller*. The effect of the sale upon UNWIN are unclear, but the UNWIN HYMAN name will disappear except on their academic list. It seems clear that there will be many redundancies at UNWIN. One of the most attractive items in the sale as far as COLLINS was concerned was the highly profitable collection of books by and about Tolkien, and it is known that the Tolkien properties will be developed under their own imprint, complete with logos and colophon. There is no word, however, about the remainder of UNWIN's critically acclaimed SF and Fantasy list, and Jane Johnson, SF Editor at UNWIN, is reported to have suspended all operations for a minimum of six weeks.

UNWIN has been the publisher of J.R.R. Tolkien since the beginning, and has used that basis to build a small but highly respected fantasy and science fiction list. Among the writers they publish are Geoff Ryman, Garry Kilworth, Kim Stanley Robinson, Gill Alderman, Colin Greenland, Graham Dunstan Martin and several others. They were also responsible for the *Other Edens* series of original anthologies edited by Robert Holdstock and Christopher Evans. The disappearance of this list would be a major blow for science fiction in this country. However, despite this, UNWIN's financial position is not strong. When ALLEN & UNWIN merged with BELL & HYMAN in 1986, HYMAN was profitable, but UNWIN had just announced losses of £727,000 for 1985. At the time of the merger, it was announced that the new company would increase pretax profit margins to 10% within five years. They had not come anywhere near this figure, the latest figures available, for December 1988, show a pretax profit of £659,000 or under 4.5%. It is this which is apparently behind the sale. In 1986, UNWIN HYMAN was valued at £8.75 million, the figure today is liable to be in excess of £10 million.

COLLINS is one of the biggest publishing companies in Britain, its imprints including GRAFTON and FONTANA, and it is owned by Rupert Murdoch's News International.

Nebula Winners Announced

The winners of this year's *Nebula Awards* have been announced by the Science Fiction Writers of America. They are:

BEST NOVEL: *The Healer's War* - Elizabeth Ann Scarborough
BEST NOVELLA: *"The Mountains of Mourning"* - Lois McMaster Bujold
BEST NOVELETTE: *"At the Rialto"* - Connie Willis
BEST SHORT STORY: *"Ripples in the Dirac Sea"* - Geoffrey A. Landis

At the same time, the juries for next year's *Nebula Awards* have been announced. The jury can add one further nomination in each category to the shortlist chosen by a vote of the members of the SFWA. This year, for the first time, there will be two juries, one dealing with short fiction (under 40,000 words) and one dealing with long fiction (over 40,000 words). It is unclear, but I would guess that long fiction means novels and short fiction the other three categories. The jury for long fiction is Kevin O'Donnell Jr, Adrienne Martine-Barnes, Susan Schwarz, C.L.S. Lowrentown and Tom Perry. The jury for short fiction is Marilyn Holt, Daffydagh Hugh, George Guthridge, Michael Swanwick and Anne D. Jordan.

SF Encyclopaedia to be published by Orbit

John Clute has announced that the second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* edited jointly by Clute and Peter Nicholls, will be published by ORBIT in October 1991. The *Encyclopedia*, first published in 1979, is still recognised as one of the most authoritative reference books on science fiction. At first it was hoped that there would be an accompanying *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, and that the *encyclopaedia* would be updated regularly, but those plans fell through early on. Nevertheless, for the last couple of years, Clute and Paul Barnett have been working hard for a package to handle a revised edition of the SF *Encyclopedia*, and after various setbacks, it looks as if the *Encyclopedia* has now found a much-needed home. The new edition will be expanded by 250,000 words, and should be fully revised and updated.

John Clute has asked that anyone who has used the *Encyclopedia* and has found any error or mistake in it should contact him so that this can be corrected. The copy date for the final copy is March next year, so if you do

have any corrections please write as soon as possible. His address is 221 Camden High Street, London NW1 7BU.

October 1991 is going to be a good month for non-fiction, because ORBIT will also be publishing *The Primeval Screen* by John Brosnan, a revised and updated edition of his history of SF in the cinema.

Paperback Book Club Battle

QUALITY PAPERBACK BOOKS, the American paperback book club, is going to be launched in this country in the autumn. Launched in 1974 under the umbrella of the Book of the Month Club, QPB is the fastest growing book club in America. In Britain, however, it will not be operating as a book club. QPB includes no commitment to buy a minimum number of books and so under British law does not count as a book club. The other unique feature of QPB is that the books it offers will be C-Format paperbacks (trade paperbacks) published by the original hardback publisher at the same size and on the same paper, only the binding will differ. The price will be about half the hardback price, and in 80-90% of instances the books will be available before any other paperback edition is available.

BOOK CLUB ASSOCIATES, Britain's largest book club organisation, has launched a spoiler operation under the title Quality Paperbacks Direct, but it appears that they will only be offering mass market paperbacks that are already available. However, the Bookseller's Association has already charged that QPB is in breach of the book club regulations by offering books within six months of their first appearance in a trade edition, so it remains to be seen how successful this rival operation will be. Nevertheless, it has had some effect on its rival already, since QPB has now decided that it will have to change its name to avoid confusion with QPD. The new name has yet to be decided, but this will not effect the October launch date.

QPB in America has recently launched a specialist science fiction line. At the moment, it is impossible to say how much SF will be available in this country because the list of books to be offered in the launch has yet to be announced. However, science fiction will certainly play a part on the list and it is anticipated that David Hartwell's massive *Treasury of World Science Fiction* will be on the list because it was actually commissioned by QPB in America and published by their associate company LITTLE, BROWN. A British edition of the hardback is believed to have been published by LITTLE, BROWN when they launched their British operation last year, but it was not widely distributed or publicised, and the QPB edition will be the first widely available edition of the book in this country. Other books to be featured in the launch include *The Book of Fantasy* edited by Jorge Luis Borges, Silvina Ocampo and Adolfo Bioy Casares.

Orbit Launch Party Planned for August

ORBIT plan a major launch party in London at the end of August when visiting American authors will be visiting Europe for the Worldcon. Despite being called a launch party, ORBIT (which includes the MACDONALD FUTURA and SPHERE imprints) is not planning a re-launch or anything other than their usual August promotion. The party will celebrate "the first year in which ORBIT is the biggest SF list in the UK" according to John Jarrold, SF Editor at ORBIT. This year, they will publish forty new paperbacks and half a dozen hardbacks, which puts them just ahead of other publishers such as GOLLANCZ. Even so, Jarrold reports that they will be cutting back the list next year because it is simply too big now.

The August promotion, which will be celebrated at the party, will feature *The Boat of a Million Years* by Poul Anderson, his first new solo novel in several years which has already been nominated for both the Hugo and Nebula Awards; *Children of Thunder* by John Brunner, *Orbit SF Yearbook 3* edited by David S. Garnett, *Starfire* by Paul Preuss and *The Gold Coast* by Kim Stanley Robinson.

Other books forthcoming from ORBIT over the next year include *Use of Weapons*, the latest SF novel by Iain M. Banks which will appear in hardback in September and in paperback next March when his first short story collection, *The State of the Art* will come out in hardback. Terry Brooks gets hardback editions of three of his novels, *The Sword of Shannara*, *The Elfstone of Shannara* and *The Wishsong of Shannara* in October, and in November, there's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* from Walter M. Miller Jr, whose latest novel, currently titled *Cardinal Brownson* is due in hardback in November 1991. The remainder of the hardback list so far announced for 1991 is as follows: February, *Sassinak* - Anne McCaffrey and Elizabeth Moon; April, *The Great Hunt* - Robert Jordan; June, *The Peitch* - Robert Holdstock; July, *Stratos* - David Brin; August, *The Ring of Charon* - Roger MacBride Allen; September, *The Brooch of Azure Midnight* - Anne Gay; October, *The New Encyclopedia of SF* - John Clute and Peter Nicholls and *The Primeval Screen* - John Brosnan.

Short Story Markets Drying Up

The recent explosion of short story markets in this country seems to be drying up rather rapidly. Robert Holdstock and Christopher Evans announced last year that they were giving up the *Other Edens* original anthology series and so far there has been no sign that the series will re-emerge with a different editor. Now John Jarrold has announced that there will be no more of the *Zenith* anthologies edited by David S. Garnett, though ORBIT will continue with the *Orbit SF Yearbook* which Garnett also edits.

Other than the MIDNIGHT ROSE shared world anthologies, there currently seem to be no anthologies of original fiction being produced in this country. And though the magazines seem to be continuing, with the second issue of *The Gate* appearing very belatedly, there are unconfirmed reports that the other two new magazines being planned, *REM* and *PsychoKandy*, have had pre-production problems and have merged, though as yet neither has seen the light of day.

Langford & Barnett Launch MJ-Balls Appeal

David Langford and Paul Barnett have launched a defence fund for Jenny Randles, a UFO researcher who is being sued for £10,000 after "disparaging" a theory so bizarre that the only interested newspaper was the *Sunday Sport*. Furthermore, Randles is being sued as a result of a newspaper article which Randles herself has attacked as misrepresenting her words.

One of the lunatic-fringe theories connected with UFO research is centred around the so-called "Majestic-12" or MJ-12 papers, supposedly the proceedings of a super-secret US government body which investigated a crashed flying saucer in New Mexico in 1947. Reputable investigators have long pointed out internal anomalies in these papers which suggest they are forgeries, but the theories persist.

One of their proponents, Stanton Friedman, was due to promote these views at a public meeting in Manchester in October 1989. Randles contacted the local paper, the *Manchester Evening News*, to dispute the MJ-12 theories. The subsequent report, however, made her comments appear like a personal attack upon Friedman. She complained about being misrepresented by the article, but nevertheless Friedman and the meeting organiser, Harry Harris, issued writs to £500 against the paper, and £10,000 against Randles, claiming, among other things, that the article damaged Friedman's scientific reputation. Langford and Barnett state: "Since scientific debates are not supposed to be settled by lawsuit, we feel that this suit damages Friedman's 'scientific reputation' far more than could any newspaper article... We launched this appeal not as UFOlogists, but as writers with an interest in both mainstream and fringe science, and in the right to disagree and publish one's dissent".

Contributions should be made to MJ-Balls at 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU, or at 17 Poliole Road, Exeter, Devon EX1 2HL. They can also be made at any branch of the Britannia Building Society, account number 0 5970 510 6.

Awards

The judges for the 1991 Arthur C. Clarke Award have been announced. David V. Barrett and Cecil Nurse will represent the BSFA with Neil Gaiman and Roz Kaveney for the Science Fiction Foundation and Professor G. Teeling-Smith, OBE for the International Science Policy Foundation. Maxim Jakubowski will continue to act as the administrator of the award.

The winners of the 1990 Ditmars, the Australian SF Awards, are:
BEST LONG FICTION: *Lake of the Sun* - Wynne Whiteford
BEST SHORT FICTION: "The Quiet Redemption of Andy the House" - Terry Dowling
BEST FANZINE: *Ethel the Aardvark* - ed. Andy Stewart
BEST FAN WRITER: Bruce Gillespie tied with Ian Gunn
BEST FAN ARTIST: Ian Gunn

The Compton Cook/Stephen Tall Memorial Award for best first novel has been presented to Joseph Sherman for *The Shining Falcon*.

The Annual Readers' Awards from Isaac Asimov's *SF Magazine* and *Analog* have been announced. The 1989 Asimov's Annual Readers' Awards went to:

BEST NOVELLA:	"A Touch of Lavender" - Megan Lindholm
BEST NOVELLETTE:	"The Loch Moose Monster" - Janet Kagan
BEST SHORT STORY:	"Windwagon Smith and the Martians" - Lawrence Watt-Evans
BEST POEM:	"Old Robots are the Worst" - Bruce Boston
BEST COVER ARTIST:	Keith Parkinson
BEST INTERIOR ARTIST:	Janet Aulisio

The winners of the Analog AnLab Awards were:

- BEST NOVELLA/NOVELETTE: "Labyrinth" - Lois McMaster Bujold
 BEST SHORT STORY: "The Happy Dead" - Amy Bechtel
 BEST FACT ARTICLE: "The Ape Man Within Us" - L. Sprague de Camp
 BEST COVER: "The Gentile Seduction" - Todd Cameron Hamilton

The 1990 J. Lloyd Eaton Award for the best critical work on SF and fantasy from the last two years has been awarded to *Jules Verne Rediscovered* - Arthur B. Evans.

Michael Dirda, Pat LoBrutto, Beth Meacham, Peter Straub and Todger Turner have been appointed judges for this year's World Fantasy Award.

The 1990 Readercon Small Press Awards have been announced. The winners are:

- BEST NOVEL: No award
 BEST SHORT WORK: *A Dozen Tough Jobs* - Howard Waldrop (ZEISING)
 BEST COLLECTION: *Richard Matheson: Collected Stories* - Richard Matheson (SCREAM PRESS)
 BEST ANTHOLOGY: *What Did Miss Darrington See? An Anthology of Feminist Supernatural Fiction* - Jessica Amanda Salmonson Ed. (FEMINIST PRESS)
 BEST NON-FICTION: *The Dark-Haired Girl* (ZEISING)
 BEST REFERENCE: No award
 BEST BIBLIOGRAPHY: *The Anubis Gates* - Tim Powers (ZEISING)
 BEST REPRINT: *The Anubis Gates* - J.K. Potter (ZEISING)
 BEST JACKET ILLUSTRATION: *S. Peterson's Field Guide to Creatures of the Dreamlands* - Mark Ferrari and Tom Sullivan (CHAOSIUM)
 BEST INTERIOR ILLUSTRATION: *Richard Matheson: Collected Stories* - Richard Matheson (SCREAM PRESS)
 BEST VALUE IN BOMBCRAFT: *Interzone* - David Pringle Ed.
 BEST MAGAZINE - FICTION: *Science Fiction Eye* - Stephen P. Brown and Daniel J. Steffan Eds.
 BEST MAGAZINE - CRITICISM: *Science Fiction Eye* - Stephen P. Brown and Daniel J. Steffan Eds.
 BEST MAGAZINE - DESIGN: *Science Fiction Eye* - Stephen P. Brown and Daniel J. Steffan Eds.

People

John Gribbin reports that he has two new novels scheduled for 1991, both collaborations and both to be published by GOLLANCZ. The first, *Reunion*, is written with Marcus Chown and is a "sort of sequel" to their earlier collaboration, *Double Planet*. It is scheduled for Spring 1991. Later in the year will come *The Ragnarok Alternative*, written with D.G. Compton, author of *The Continuous Katherine Mortenhaw*, and it will be Compton's first book from a major SF publishing house for some years.

Storm Constantine, speaking as a guest at the BSFA London Meeting on 17 May, revealed that her novel *Aleph* (due in a C-format paperback from ORBIT in April 1991) will fulfil her contractual obligations with MACDONALD, and another novel *Hermes* due in January, will be her first for HEADLINE. After that, she is planning to write another three *Wraeththu* novels.

Mary Gentle has just had her latest novel submitted for the Booker Prize. Each publisher is allowed to submit up to six books for the award, and her new publisher, BANTAM, has decided this year they will include Gentle's *Rats and Gargoyles* among their six.

Clive Barker looks set for a busy autumn. The mass-market paperback of *The Great and Secret Show* is being published by PONTANA in October, and at the same time his new film, *Nightbreed*, is being released. Some time before the release, in August, COLLINS will be publishing *Clive Barker's Nightbreed* which contains the screenplay plus illustrations and early sketches from the film. And during the autumn, Barker is going to be touring the country to promote all these titles.

In the month that her first novel, *Mindtail* is published by ORBIT hardback, we learn that Anne Gay has already sold them her second novel. *The Brooch of Azure Midnight* is scheduled to appear in September 1991.

John Brunner reports that he has just completed his new novel, *A Maze of Stars*. Meanwhile, he is still waiting to see the UK edition of *Children of the Thunder*: "I completed it in June 1987. Ballantine/Del Rey published it

in January 1989. SPHERE bought UK rights. They promised to publish in September 1989. They postponed it to March 1990. Then they postponed it again to August. By the time it appears, no one will believe or care that I predicted Black Monday on the Stock Exchange". (John Brunner)

Kathy Gale, the senior fiction editor at PAN was made a director of the Pan board on July 1st. Her PAN crime list debuts this month. Her title will be Editorial Director (with special responsibility for genre fiction) [Kev McVeigh] British writers are well represented in *The Year's Best Horror #18* edited by Karl Edward Wagner and published by DAW in America (with no British publisher lined up yet, as far as I know). Among the writers featured are: Ramsey Campbell, Brian-cumley, Nicholas Royle, D.F. Lewis, David Langford and M. John Harrison.

Obituaries

Lacy Boston the writer who created the Green Knowe books, died on 25 May 1990, aged 97. Green Knowe developed out of her intense devotion to her own home, the moated Manor House at Hemingford Grey, which she moved into in 1939, and the character of Mrs. Oldknow was clearly Boston herself. *The Children of Green Knowe*, her second book, was published in 1954, and would have been on Faber's adult list if not for the illustrations by her son. It was followed by five more books about Green Knowe, and she also wrote two other fantasies for children, *The Sea Egg* and *Castle of Yew*.

Sir James Carreras, co-founder and head of Hammer Films, financially the most successful company in the history of British cinema noted for the Quatermass films, Joseph Losey's *The Damned* and a host of low budget horror movies, has died at the age of 81 on 9 June 1990.

Georges Dargaud, publisher of the *Asterix* books, died on 18 July 1990, aged 79. He was fond of good food and wine (French, naturally). In 1960, he acquired *Pilote*, which contained *Asterix*'s first appearance, created by Rene Goscinny and Albert Uderzo, and he quickly realised how popular the little hero, taking on the big battalions (and winning) would become.

Jack Gifford, popular character actor who was one of the stars in the two *Cocoon* films, died on 4 June 1990, aged 83.

Sir Rex Harrison, the actor (mostly in light comedy, though he also won acclaim for his serious roles) whose long career included two romantic comedy ghost films, *Blithe Spirit* and *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, as well as *Dr. Doolittle*, died on 2 June 1990 at the age of 82.

Jim Henson, puppeteer, died of a freak *Streptococcus* infection on 16 May 1990 at the age of 53. His most famous creation, Kermit the Frog, was made initially from his mother's old coat and two ping pong balls in the 50's and he went on to create a whole series of characters - Cookie Monster, Oscar the Grouch, Big Bird, Miss Piggy, Animal, the Fraggles - who reflected and reassured the fears and dreams of children. His last full project was *The Witches*, where the masks are fantastic and the mice uncannily realistic, but he also made the fantasy films *The Dark Crystal* and *Labyrinth*. The motto he and his scriptwriters used most was "Simple is Good" and he commented that he never created a finished character - Miss Piggy was originally only a pig puppet until the genius of fellow puppeteer Frank Oz raised her to be a worthy counterpart to Kermit. Even then, her face had to be analysed carefully to show how an eyebrowless pig could (and did) frown. American television was chary of him at first, so *The Muppet Show* was made for British tv, and later *Fraggle Rock* had a different set of characters to reflect each national tv network (whereas the human in the British version is a lighthousekeeper, in France he is a chef, in Germany a professor). But *The Muppet Show*, *Sesame Street* and the others were vastly successful in America too and a measure of the respect paid to him can be judged by reports of his death stealing the first five minutes of the US ABC News from the Baker-Shevardnadze announcements that they were prepared to discuss international arms control [material supplied by Jessica Yates and Jennex Glover].

Alex McCrindle, distinguished Scottish actor who played the Rebel leader in *Star Wars*, died on 20 April 1990, aged 78.

Walker Percy, one of the great literary figures of the American South, died on 10 May 1990, just a few days short of his 74th birthday. Though primarily a mainstream writer, his third novel, *Love in the Ruins* (1971) was subtitled "The Adventures of a Bad Catholic at a Time Near the End of the World" and was set when the Auto Age was defunct, and there are wolves in downtown Cleveland. His hero, Dr Thomas More, patient and psychiatrist in the same mental institution, reappeared in a later novel, *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987).

Herbert Smith, the radio producer who was responsible for the original radio dramatisation of Alan Garner's *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen*, died on 21 May 1990, aged 75.

William Timpay, the artist who created *Bleep* and *Booster* about the alien boy Bleep and his Earth chum Booster, which acquired a cult following on *Blue Peter* during the early 1960s, died on 31 May 1990 aged 87.

Max Wall, the genius comic and actor who appeared as King Bruno in the film *Jabberwocky*, died on 22 May 1990 at the age of 82.

Publishing

ANDRE DEUTSCH, the UK publisher of Stanislaw Lem and of Penelope Lively, as well as various prestigious writers such as Carlos Fuentes, Gore Vidal and John Updike, is about to lose its independent status. Deutsch, one of the last independent medium-sized publishers in this country, is looking for a merger. There are no hints about the company it might merge with, though the likelihood is that, like GOLLANCZ, it will go to a foreign bidder. It is unlikely that any British company big enough to afford such a merger would also be "sympathetic to our aspirations" in the words of chairman Tom Rosenthal, and the deal is being handled by The Business Exchange which handled the sale of GOLLANCZ to HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. DEUTSCH is viable, but not profitable. Despite publishing the *Postman Pat* series, it has no steady, bankable income, and though it had a profit of £198,000 in 1988, it is running an overdraft of around £1 million, which is more or less the fate of Britain's independent publishers these days. They are too small to be able to push for any great expansion, and too big to survive without an influx of capital, hence the search for a merger partner.

BERTELSMANN, the German-based publishing company, has denied rumours that it is planning to sell off BANTAM, DOUBLEDAY and DELL. The President of Bertelsmann's comment was succinct: "Bullshit".

KEROSINA may have cut back its publishing schedule from the four books a year it was producing recently, but it is still going strong. And they have recently announced their plans for the rest of this year. The two books forthcoming are both reprints, though in both cases they will be the first hardback edition. Due at the end of July is *A World Between* by Norman Spinrad which will, in the limited edition, be published with *La Cuisine Humaine*. In the autumn they will publish what is surprisingly the first hardback edition of Gene Wolfe's first short story collection, *The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories*. The limited edition will also include a collection of Wolfe's non-fiction, *Fugitive Essays and Futuristic Reviews*.

Anthologies and Collections

Bruce Sterling's first collection of short stories *Crystal Express*, has now appeared from LEGEND. Its contents are divided into three sections. The Shaper/Mechanist stories are "Swarm", "Spider Rose", "Cicada Queen", "Sunken Gardens", "Twenty Evocations". Added to these are three Science Fiction stories: "Green Days in Brunei", "Spook" and "The Beautiful and the Sublime". And there are also four Fantasy stories: "Telliamed", "The Little Magic Shop", "Flowers of Edo" and "Dinner in Audougnast".

PETER OWEN has taken to publishing some wonderful curiosities recently. After their collection of Gothic Tales from the Marquis de Sade comes *Midnight Tales* by Bram Stoker, edited by Peter Haining and with an introduction by Christopher Lee. Among the items which make this an essential addition to the library of any horror fan is "The Dream in the Dead House", an encounter with a werewolf which was originally intended to form part of the opening chapter of *Dracula*, but which has never before been published, and "The Bride of Death" about the raising of a mummy which formed the finale to his 1903 novel *The Jewel of the Seven Stars*, but which was expurgated from later editions because it was considered too shocking. The other stories, some of which have not been reprinted since their original magazine publication are: "The Spectre of Doom", "The Dualists", "Death in the Wings", "The Gomben Man", "The Squaw", "A Deed of Vengeance?", "The Man from Shorrox", "The Red Stockade", "Midnight Tales" and "A Criminal Star".

The Mammoth Book of Vintage Science Fiction: Short Novels of the 1950s is the full title of the latest collection edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin Harry Greenberg and Charles G. Waugh and published by ROBINSON. It is a collection of ten classic novellas from the 1950s consisting of "Flight to Forever" - Paul Anderson, "The Martian Way" - Isaac Asimov, "Second Game" - Charles V. DeVet and Katherine MacLean, "Dark Benediction" - Walter M. Miller Jr., "The Midas Plague" - Frederick Pohl, "The Oceans are Wide" - Frank M. Robinson "And Then There Were None" - Eric Frank Russell, "Baby is There" - Theodore Sturgeon, "Firewater" - William Tenn and "The Man" - Philip Jose Farmer.

Also from ROBINSON is a massive reprint anthology of fifty ghost stories edited by Richard Dalby. *The Mammoth Book of Stories*. The stories are: "The Unsettled Dust" - Robert Ackman, "How he Left the Hotel" - Louise Baldwin, "Whesoo" - Nugent Barker, "The Shuttered Room" - E.F. Benson, "An Inhabitant of Carcosa" - Ambrose Bierce, "Is there Anybody There?" - Charles Birklin, "The Whispers" - Algeron Blackwood, "Curfew" - L.M. Boston, "I'm Sure it was No. 31" - A.M. Burrage, "The Guide" - Ramsey Campbell, "The Limping Ghost" - R. Chetwynd-Hayes, "Mrs Zant and the Ghost" - Wilkie Collins, "The House by the Tarn" - Basil Copper, "In Kropsberg Keep" - Ralph A. Cram, "The Ghost in All the Rooms" - Daniel Defoe, "The Bagman's Uncle" - Charles Dickens, "The Bully of Brocas Court" - Arthur Conan Doyle, "In the Confessional" - Amelia B. Edwards,

"The Tune in Dan's Cafe" - Shamus Frazer, "Beyond the Bourne" - John S. Glasby, "The Valley of Lost Children" - William Hope Hodgson, "The Sand-Walker" - Fergus Hume, "The Real Right Thing" - Henry James, "The Haunted Dolls' House" - M.R. James, "The Wall-Painting" - Roger Johnson, "They" - Rudyard Kipling, "The Last Laugh" - D.H. Lawrence, "Robin's Ruth" - Margery Lawrence, "The Dream" - J. Sheridan LeFane, "The Sundial" - R.H. Malden, "The Fifteenth Man" - Richard Marsh, "Bronze's Boy" - John Metcalf, "Ukiah Abner's Romance" - Edith Nesbit, "What Was It?" - Fitz-James O'Brien, "The Next Room" - Vincent O'Sullivan, "The Footstep of the Avenite" - Roger Peter, "William Wilson" - Edgar Allan Poe, "Courage" - Forrest Reid, "The Last of Squire Ennismore" - Mrs. J.H. Riddell, "The Gariside Fell Disaster" - L.T.C. Rolt, "The Tears of Saint Agathe" - David G. Rowlands, "The Soul of Laplochia" - Sakai, "The Old Dining-Room" - Sapper, "The Between-Maid" - Montague Summers, "A Ghost Story" - Mark Twain, "The Folly" - Mark Valentine, "Out of the Wrack I Rise" - H. Russell Wakefield, "In the Pines" - Karl Edward Wagner, "Where Angels Fear..." - Manly Wade Wellman, "The House of the Nightmare" - Edward Lucas White, "The Canterville Ghost" - Oscar Wilde, "The Spectre Spiders" - William J. Wintle.

New and Forthcoming Books: June-August 1990

Brian ALDISSE *A Romance of the Equator* (VGSP fbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of his Best Fantasy Stories

Piers ANTHONY *Total Recall* (LEGEND hbk £12.99) 1st UK edn of novelisation of film based on P.K. Dick's "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale"; *Out of Phase* (NEL pbk £3.50) Reprint (NEL 1989) of 1st part of new trilogy set in Apprentice Adept worlds

Isaac ASIMOV *The Bicentennial Man* (VGSP Classic 43 pbk £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz 1977) of collection of stories
Isaac ASIMOV, Charles G. WAUGH & Martin H. GREENBERG *ed Vintage Science Fiction* (ROBINSON pbk £4.99) 1st UK edn of collection of 10 short novels from the 1950s

A.A. ATTANASIO *Wyvern* (GRAFTON pbk £4.99) Reprint (Grafton 1989) of fantasy about pirates

Alexander BALIOL *The Magefire* (HEADLINE hbk £14.95) 1st edn of 1st novel by British writer, 1st vol. in *The Dark Amulet Cycle*

Iain M. BANKS *Use of Weapons* (ORBIT hbk £12.95) 1st edn of new novel set in the world of the Culture

Clive BARKER *Clive Barker's Nightbreed* (FONTANA pbk £9.99) 1st edn of the script of Baker's latest film, taken from his novel *Cabal*

Gregory BENFORD *Tides of Light* (VGSP pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of sequel to *Great Sky River*

James P. BLAYLOCK *The Last Coin* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) Reprint (Grafton 1989) of fantasy built around the coins paid to Judas Iscariot

Octavia BUTLER *Imago* (VGSP pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of *Xenogenesis* III

Ramsey CAMPBELL *Midnight Sun* (MACDONALD hbk £12.95) 1st edn of new horror novel

Jonathan CARROLL *A Child Across the Sky* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1989) of his Clarke Award shortlisted fantasy

C.J. CHERRYH *Rusalka* (METHUEN hbk £14.99; MANDARIN pbk £6.99) 1st UK edn of novel built around Russian folk-tale

Arthur C. CLARKE *Tales of Ten Worlds* (VGSP pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1963) of collection of 15 stories; *Tales from Planet Earth* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1989) of collection of 16 stories

Douglas CLEGG *Goat Dance* (NEL pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of horror novel

John CLUTE, David PRINGLE & Simon OUSLEY *Eds Intertone: the 4th Anthology* (NEL pbk £3.50) Reprint (Simon & Schuster 1989) of collection of stories from *Intertone*, including three stories original to this anthology

Adrian COLE *Warlord of Heaven* (UNWIN pbk £6.99) 1st edn of Star Reunion 3

Richard DALBY *Ed. The Mammoth Book of Ghost Stories* (ROBINSON pbk £4.99) 1st edn of collection of 50 ghost stories from the last 300 years

Samuel R. DELANY *The Motion of Light in Water* (PALADIN pbk £6.99) 1st UK edn of autobiography which won Hugo as best non-fiction

Philip K. Dick *Beyond Lies the Wub* (GRAFTON pbk £5.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1988) of Vol 1 of *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick*; *Martian Time-Slip* (VGSP Classic 424 pbk £3.50) Reprint (1964) of novel playing typical Dickian games with time and reality

Chris DIXON *Winter in Aphelion* (UNWIN pbk £3.50) Reprint (Unwin 1989) of 1st part of *The Adventures of Skarry the Dreamer*

Diane DUANE *Spock's World* (PAN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Star Trek novel

John FARRIS *Shatter* (GOLLANCZ pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of horror novel

Jack FINNEY *Time & Again* (LEGEND pbk £7.99) 1st UK edn of classic time travel novel, beautifully illustrated with period photographs

Christopher FOWLER *The Bureau of Lost Souls* (ARROW pbk £3.99) Reprint (CANY 1989) of collection of 12 stories

Anne GAY Minsail (ORBIT hbk £12.95) 1st edn of 1st novel by acclaimed new British writer

Mary GENTLE *Rats and Gargoyles* (BANTAM hbk £12.99) 1st edn of baroque new novel featuring the lord architect Casabon

Colla GREENLAND *Take Back Planet* (UNWIN pbk £6.99) 1st edn of space opera about Tabitha Jute on the space barge "Alice Liddell"

Ann HALAM *The Skybreaker* (ORCHARD hbk £8.95) 1st UK edn of the 3rd of the Inland books; *Ally, Ally, Aster* (PUFFIN pbk £2.25) Reprint (Unwin 1981) of early supernatural children's novel by pseudonymous Gwyneth Jones

Barbara HAMBLBY *Beauty and the Beast* (UNWIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of novel based on TV series

Steve HARRIS *Adventureland* (HEADLINE hbk £12.95) 1st edn of 1st horror novel by new British writer

Harry HARRISON & Robert SHECKLEY *Bill, the Galactic Hero on the Planet of Bottled Brains* (GOLLANCZ hbk £12.95) 1st UK edn of the latest in the series

Douglas HILL *The Collopy Conspiracy* (GOLLANCZ hbk £12.95, pbk £4.99) 1st edn of sequel to *The Fraxilly Fracas*; *The Fraxilly Fracas* (VGSF pbk £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of his 1st novel for adults

Diana Wynne JONES *Castle in the Air* (METHUEN hbk £8.95) 1st edn of sequel of Howl's Moving Castle; *Wild Robot* (METHUEN hbk £7.95) 1st edn of novella; *The Horned Boudiers* (MANDARIN pbk £2.99) Reprint (Macmillan 1981) of novel about journey through strange worlds; *Fire and Hemlock* (MANDARIN pbk £2.99) Reprint (Methuen 1985) of novel retelling of the Tam Lin story; Ed. *Hidden Turnings* (MANDARIN pbk £2.99) Reprint (Methuen 1989) of collection of children's stories by Pratchett, Kilworth, Tuttle, Zelazny and 8 others

Robert JORDAN *The Eye of the World* (ORBIT hbk £13.95) 1st UK edn of Book 1 of *The Wheel of Time*, fantasy epic

Keith L. JUSTICE *Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Reference* (ST. JAMES PRESS hbk £18.00) 1st UK edn of major reference work, "An Annotated Bibliography of Works about Literature and Film"

James Patrick KELLY *Look Into the Sun* (MANDARIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of highly acclaimed SF novel

Judith KELMAN *White Angels Sleep* (GRAFTON pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of horror novel

Katharine KERR *Dawnrappel* (GRAFTON pbk £4.50) Reprint (Grafton 1989) of Vol 3 of *Deverry* series

Rosemary KIRSTEIN *The Steerswoman* (PAN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel

Dean R. KOONTZ *Night Childs* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99) Reprint (W.H. Allen 1977); *Twilight Eyes* (HEADLINE pbk £4.50) Reprint (W.H. Allen 1987); *The Vision* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99) Reprint (Corgi 1980); *Whispers* (HEADLINE pbk £4.50) Reprint (W.H. Allen 1981) - Headline continue their programme to bring all of his horror novels back into print

Annette KUHN Ed. *Alien Zone* (VERSO hbk £24.95, pbk £8.95) 1st edn of serious academic study of SF film, subtitled "Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema"

Richard LAYMON *Resurrection Dreams* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99) Reprint (Star 1986) of horror novel

Tanith LEE *Forests of the Night* (UNWIN pbk £3.99) Reprint (Unwin 1989) of collection of stories

Stanislaw LEM *His Master's Voice* (MANDARIN pbk £4.99) Reprint (Secker 1983) of novel about a message from outer space; *Tales of Pirx the Pilot* (MANDARIN pbk £4.99) Reprint (Secker 1980) of collection featuring his most famous character; *The Chain of Chance* (MANDARIN pbk £4.99) Reprint (Secker 1978) of novel about an astronaut-detective and mysterious disappearances in Italy; *Return from the Stars* (MANDARIN pbk £4.99) Reprint (Secker 1980) of novel about an astronaut who returns to a future Earth

Megan LINDHOLM *Wolf's Brother* (UNWIN pbk £3.50) Reprint (Unwin 1989) of sequel to *The Reindeer People*

Mike McQUAY *The Nexus* (HEADLINE pbk £4.50) 1st UK edn of SF novel about a miracle worker

Phillip MANN *Pioneers* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1988) of latest novel by a writer who is excellent at creating aliens

Anthony MASTERS *Shellshock* (METHUEN hbk £8.95) 1st edn of children's novel about legends come to life

Richard MAYNARD *The Quiet Place* (GRAFTON pbk £3.50) Reprint (Souvenir Press 1987) of SF novel about astronauts who return to a savage earth

Rob MEADES & David B. WAKE Eds. *Drabble II - Double Century* (BECCON hbk £5.00) 1st edn of 2nd collection of 100 stories each exactly 100 words long

MISHA *Red Spider White Web* (MORRIGAN hbk £13.95, special edition £40) 1st edn of novel with illustrations by Don Coyote, forward by Brian Aldiss and postscript by James Blaylock

M.E. MORRIS *The Icemen* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of thriller about Nazi revival in Antarctica

M.S. MURDOCK *Hammer of Mars* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Buck Rogers book

Pat MURPHY *The City, Not Long After* (PAN hbk £12.95) 1st UK edn of novel about art after the collapse by Nebula winning author

Kim NEWMAN *The Night Mayor* (NEL pbk £3.50) Reprint (Simon & Schuster 1989) of 1st novel combining cyberpunk and film noir

Diana PAXSON *Silverhair the Wanderer* (NEL pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of *Chronicles of Westria*

Robert REED *Black Milk* (ORBIT pbk £6.99) 1st UK edn of novel about genetic engineering

Nicholas RUDDICK *Christopher Priest* (STARMONT hbk \$19.95, pbk \$9.95) 1st edn of Reader's Guide to Priest's work up to the Glamour

Geoff RYMAN *The Child Garden* (UNWIN pbk £3.99) Reprint (Unwin 1989) of Clarke Award winner

Fay SAMPSON *Black Smith's Telling* (HEADLINE pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of 3rd part of her Daughter of Tintal series

Hugh SCOTT *The Haunted Sand* (WALKER hbk £8.95) 1st edn of children's ghost story

Melissa SCOTT *The Kindly Ones* (VGSF pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of novel about spread of galactic civilisation to a planet where the old ways are preserved

James SILKE *Lords of Destruction* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of Frank Frazetta's *Death Dealer*

Robert SILVERBERG & MARTIN H. GREENBERG Eds. *The Mammoth Book of Fantasy All-Time Greats* (ROBINSON pbk £4.99) Reprint (Robinson 1988) of collection of 22 stories

Clifford D. SIMAK *Ring Around the Sun* (MANDARIN pbk £3.50) Reprint (NEL 1977) of relatively early Simak novel dating back to 1952

Dan SIMMONS *Hyperion* (HEADLINE hbk £12.95) 1st UK edn of novel in the running for most SF awards; *Phases of Gravity* (HEADLINE hbk £14.95) 1st UK edn of novel about ex-astronaut

James V. SMITH Jr. *Beastmaker* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of horror novel, sequel to *Beastmaker*

Midori SNYDER *Sadar's Keep* (UNWIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of *The Queen's Quarters*

Brian STABLEFORD *The Empire of Fear* (PAN pbk £7.99) Reprint (Simon & Schuster 1988) of Clarke Award nominee; *The Centre Cannot Hold* (NEL pbk £3.99) 1st edn of final part of *Agard* trilogy

Neville STEED *Hallowes' Hell* (HEADLINE hbk £12.95) 1st edn of horror novel by British writer

Bruce STERLING *Cryal Express* (LEGEND hbk £12.99, pbk £6.95) 1st UK edn of his 1st collection of stories

Bram STOKER *Midnight Tales* (PETER OWEN hbk £13.50) 1st edn of collection of horror stories inc. previously unpublished 1st chapter of *Dracula*

Antony SWITHIN *Princes of Sandstare* (FONTANA pbk £5.99) 1st edn of fantasy novel about Rockall, Book 1 of *The Perilous Quest for Lyonese*

Roger Taylor *Into Nasarind* (HEADLINE pbk £4.99) 1st edn of the Fourth Chronicle of Hawkan

Sheri S. TEPPER *The Marianne Trilogy* (CORGIB pbk £4.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy 1st pub. in US as: *Marianne, the Magus and the Manticore*; *Marianne, the Madame and the Momentary Gods*; and *Marianne, the Matchbox and the Malachite Mouse*

J.R.R. TOLKIEN *The Return of the Shadow* (UNWIN pbk £5.50) Reprint (Unwin 1988) of Part 1 of *History of The Lord of the Rings*

Ian WATSON *The Fire Worm* (GRAFTON pbk £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz 1988) of horror novel

LAWRENCE WATT-EVANS *The Wizard and the War Machine* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of sequel to *The Cyborg and the Sorcerers*

Margaret WEIS & Tracy HICKMAN *Dragon Wing* (BANTAM hbk £11.95) 1st UK edn of Vol 1 of *The Death Gate Cycle*

David WINGROVE *Chung Kuo: The Middle Kingdom* (NEL pbk £3.99) Reprint (NEL 1989) of 1st part in 7 volume series

Douglas E. WINTER *Faces of Fear* (PAN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of collection of interviews with leading horror writers, including Barker, Bloch, Campbell, Herbert, King and Straub.

Plus ça Change

The multitude of books is a great evil. There is no measure or limit to this fever of writing; everyone must be an author; some out of vanity to acquire celebrity; others for the sake of lucre and gain.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Table-Talk

Comics News

Ian Abrahams

Though the march of the graphic novel towards public acceptability continues unabated, the approach of retailers remains inconsistent. Bristol's Waterstones revealed little of interest to the comics reader, while the same store in Bath was to be commended for exhibiting a wide selection of populist and experimental graphic novels. Dillons recently started selling graphic novels and comics in selected stores, but on first impression, this looks like failing for the same reason that Virgin's initial attempts at comics retailing did. The store managers aren't familiar with the product or the intricate price structure. However, as more specialist stores get pushed out of the market by the established bookstores swallowing large portions of the market, Dillon's initiative is very welcome in maintaining a supply of mainstream and independent comics to collectors.

David Lloyd, artist of *V for Vendetta*, recently circulated a letter to retailers regarding a production error in the DC editions of the trade paperback of said comic. Despite Lloyd travelling to Canada (at his own expense) to oversee the printing of the book, a colouring discrepancy occurred on the initial run of the book which apparently affected 5000 copies. Whilst it is not known whether returns are going to be accepted by DC (and I would guess this is unlikely), Lloyd has been urging retailers to sell their good copies first in the hope of being able to rectify the situation.

A current fashion within the comics medium is revivals of classic film and TV series in a comics format. *Love and Rockets* publisher Fantagraphics have announced a series of comics published under a "Monster Comic" label which will adapt famous monster films. They kick-off with *King Kong* and a poster by the USA's best "good-guy" artist Dave Stevens will appear in the autumn.

Dark Horse, a leading US independent company, are scoring much success with their assorted *Aliens* comics, including *Aliens vs Predator* and *Aliens: Earth War*. Dark Horse have also added *Terminator* to their range of licensed properties, their version will be presented as a four-part miniseries, so how soon do we get *Aliens vs Terminator*? Whilst other indie publishers are going to the wall, the continuing success of licensed material, coupled with attracting Frank Miller to produce two series for them appears to have placed Dark Horse on a sound financial footing. Finally, Adventure Comics are currently getting a lot of attention with their all-new *Planet of the Apes* comic, the first issue of which is due for a reprint next month.

Followers of Anne Rice's *The Vampire Lestat* may be interested to know that Innovation (publishers of the comic adaptations) are producing *The Vampire Connection*, including unpublished artwork, articles and an interview with Rice.

BSFA readers may be interested in the following up-and-coming projects:

THE NAZZ (DC - Prestige Format): Ponderance on the nature of heroism by the respected Tom Veitch and the wonderfully unique Brian Talbot. Currently touted to be this year's *Watchmen*, which is as risky as being labelled as Mrs. Thatcher's favourite business man. Remember *Sonic Disruptors*?

STEED & MRS PEEL: THE AVENGERS (Acme, P/F): Revival of the cult TV series. You know the form on this one: there's this chap in a classic-cut suit, wears a bowler and carries a broom. A beautiful woman, who mistakenly believes she's a widow, is his deadly partner. Written by Grant Morrison, who seems to have a near monopoly on comics writing these days.

HARD BOILED: Down these mean streets... er, not a detective noir piece as you might imagine, but actually Frank (Dark Knight) Miller's latest offering containing SF, action and, unusually for Miller, some humour. Oh, and a high body count.

BLACK PANTHER: Not strictly SF, but worth mentioning as Don McGregor's first major series for Marvel for too many years. McGregor was establishing levels of excellence in the comics medium when today's stars were still working on their O level English. Check this out.

FOOLKILLER: By one of McGregor's foremost contemporaries during the seventies at Marvel, Steve Gerber. The guy who created *Howard the Duck* and the legendary "Elf with a Gun". Revival of his mega-psychotic character from *Man-Thing*.

BREATHAKER (DC Prestige): Major DC project by Wheatley & Hempel. No, I've not heard of them either, we're all in the same boat on this one. Much of DC's P/F outputs have disappointed lately. Basically it's a succubus (hence "breathaker") against a government sponsored superhero called The Man. Could be interesting.

BOOKS OF MAGIC (DC Prestige): Neil Gaiman's long awaited analysis of the power of magic in the DC universe. Gaiman's been on the receiving end of a lot of praise lately, his on-going *Sandman* title is possibly the best title on the market at the moment. Has to be a buy.

BATMAN PROJECTS: Too many things going batty to list them all, just as you thought the hype was over! Look out for: *Batman* and *Gruesel* by Matt Wagner (who's very popular with a lot of people).

WILD CARDS: Four part series of graphic versions of the successful shared universe books. First issue is written by Lewis Shiner. Love his fiction but was very disappointed with his venturing into comics at DC (*Time Masters*). Probably Okay if you like that sort of thing.

Information Service Update

Phil Nichols

Okay, so the BSFA isn't full of SF experts. Judging by the response to last issue's *Update*, no one out there knows a thing about Alexander Vickers, or the harder-to-get-hold-of novels of Brian Stableford. And only one person knows anything about skin cancers. Maybe *Matrix* isn't the place for these kinds of questions.

In the forlorn hope that anyone has read on this far, I'd like to make an appeal. Many of you will know of the excellent "Market Space" listings prepared by Sue Thomason, giving details of all known publishing outlets for SF. Well, this is now part of the Information Service. I will endeavour to keep up to date lists of UK and US outlets, but this means I must have up to date information. I may delegate responsibility for "Market Space" if I can find a suitable meg volunteer. So here is my appeal - in three parts.

- Anyone who wants market information, please write to me at the usual address - but bear in mind that during the initial stages of my handling of "Market Space", the listings are bound to be a little out of date.

- Anyone involved in a publishing venture - whether for short stories or novels, magazines or books - please let me have some details. I don't just want information on new publications either - if you're involved in an already running project you'd better make sure I know about it!

- Anyone who would like to assist their beleaguered Info Officer by helping to compile and update "Market Space", please write immediately. No qualifications are necessary for this job!

Finally, in my efforts to clear my files of long-outstanding questions, I have a poser to put to you. No excuses now - I know you know the answer to this one, so send me lots of letters.

Remember Erich von Daniken, the man who grew rich by writing the wildest of fictions while labelling them as "fact"? (So rich, I suppose, that he doesn't have to bother doing it any more. I hope.) He wasn't the first to make money by factual packaging of SF ideas, and he certainly won't be the last. But were his writings of ancient astronauts in South America even original? Our questioner believes not; that before Von Daniken there was a SF novel of similar ideas. Trouble is, our questioner can't remember who wrote that novel, or what it was called.

But I'm sure you know. So how about telling the rest of us? Drop me a line to the usual address. The same goes for anyone else who has a SF-related question - or anyone who just fancies volunteering to help solve other members' puzzling problems. The address: Phil Nichols, 57 Grange Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 8PB.



It is a great nuisance that knowledge can only be acquired by hard work. It would be fine if we could swallow the powder of profitable information made palatable by the jam of fiction.

W. Somerset Maugham

Cry "Fanac"

This column describes various activities BSFA members get up to when not actually reading science fiction. This issue, Roger Robinson and Chris Bailey describe the pleasures and otherwise of buying books.

Book Collecting from Scratch... Or Should That be Acquiring...

That is one of the problems that someone starting a SF book collection has - whether to buy indiscriminately and cheaply, or be more selective. A lot depends on your budget and your prior knowledge of the subject.

Whichever of the two methods you decide upon, one invaluable asset is a good reference book - and I heartily recommend the Nicholls' *Encyclopaedia*, for which I am pleased to report that Messrs. Clute and Nicholls have just signed a contract for a second edition.

My suggested method of obtaining a good core collection of novels would be to try and get hold of all the Hugo and Nebula award winners (and if possible a good number of the other nominated novels). If your taste is more for short stories, look out for anthologies - but go for "best of" rather than collections of old rehased stories. Check story copyright dates in the front of the book if you're unsure.

For cheapness, trawl the charity shops and market stalls - if you buy what turns out to be, in your eyes, trash, at least it is inexpensive trash. Once you have become a little more discriminating, it will be useful to get on book-sellers' or dealers' lists for catalogues, especially if you live in the wilds (eg outside the M25!). I suggest Ken Slater at Fantast Medway or Rog Peyton at Andromeda for general new books, with some second hand stock. Specialist second hand dealers include Mike Don at Dreamberry Wines and Simon Gooden in Rayleigh. For the much more specialised "collector", Andy Richards of Cold Tonnage books deals in American imports and limited editions - not necessarily cheap, but if you want that book...

Hereafter comes madness - Chris Drumm (Iowa), Greg Ketter (Minneapolis), Grant Theissen (North Dakota) and many others will queue up to spend your precious money from you...

Confessions of a Book Collector

Or, How to Earn a Headache Trying

I suppose I first started collecting science fiction and fantasy in a general sort of way, back when I was very young and impressionable, probably when I first started primary school. I first cut my teeth on stories by Asimov, Clarke, Heinlein, Wyndham, E.E. "Doc" Smith, A.E. Van Vogt, Herbert and Silverberg, to name but a few, and very soon found myself indulging in a veritable orgasm of reading, re-reading and yet more reading. I just couldn't get enough. I gradually realised that if I wanted to keep my eyes in near-perfect working order, not to mention in their sockets, I would have to start being rather more selective in what I read, and so I decided to only read and collect those "classical" titles that nearly everyone should have read at least once in their life, such as Asimov's *Foundation* series, Herbert's *Dune* stories. After many miles of used shoe leather and dedicated hours of travelling to many an old second-hand book store and open-air market, I came across an address of a science fiction specialist (Ron Bennett), who just happens to produce a magazine called *Skyrack*, which I found to be packed with First Edition paperbacks, hardbacks, not to mention Pulp Magazines, if you like that sort of thing. I had a good look through *Skyrack* and (seriously!) decided to buy a couple of hundred titles, which very nearly left me penniless for a few weeks (as the average book worked out at about £2). You have no idea what my wallet went through - talk about moths, mine emigrated, they couldn't stand the shock! Happiness, I thought, was just a state of mind, and believe me, I was in seventh heaven, driving myself crazy just trying to decide which book to read first, what a nightmare...

But what has all this to do with collecting *Perry Rhodan* adventure sf? Well, I've always had a weakness for "space-opera" type sf, such as E.E. "Doc" Smith's *Lesenmen* and *Sylkari* series, which really gets the blood pumping, as I soar round the Galaxy looking for Aliens to zap and destroy.

People often ask just what is *Perry Rhodan* and in my opinion it is science fiction "space opera" at its very best. It embodies the continuing sagas of a near super-human character called, yes, you've guessed it, *Perry Rhodan*, who has a super-ship called the "Starstard" containing a large "Positronic Brain" which had been crash landed on earth's moon by two characters from an alien race known as the "Arkons". They quickly befriended Perry and accompany him on his many and exciting journeys across the Galaxy (with his crew of "Mutants", who are all either telepathic, or are "sensitive" in other weird ways, due to the after effects from a nearly catastrophic nuclear World War), in search of the gift of "Eternal Life". They constantly find themselves caught up in one dangerous situation after another, and whilst none is actually killed outright, they do come very, very close to it. *Perry Rhodan* novels are rather short (more in the way of novellas), they do possess reasonable consistency in story-line and the individual characters are believable, but this varies from book to book, depending on the author.

BSFA Awards The Australian System Explained Nicholas Mahoney

The BSFA Awards were counted using the Australian system which gave extra fairness. [A detailed analysis of the voting figures is available on request - Ed.] In explanation of the Australian Balloting system:

First place votes are counted first. The nomination with the least first place votes is eliminated. In the Novel category "No Award" was the first to be eliminated with only two first places. The eliminated nomination then has its votes redistributed to the nomination placed second on its first place votes.

In the second round, the nomination with the least votes after this first redistribution is also eliminated. All its first place votes are then redistributed to the highest placed nomination remaining in the ballot together with any votes that were redistributed to it in the previous round.

This process of elimination continues until one of the nominations has a majority. *Red Dwarf* attained a majority with two other nominations still opposing it.

After first place has been decided, the preferences are assessed for second place. First, all the winner's first place votes are redistributed to the second placed nomination on each form. A process of elimination similar to that in the first round then ensues.

If the nominations placed 4th and 5th (or even 8th and 9th) on a form are the only ones remaining in a ballot, then the 4th placed (or 8th placed) nomination will have secured a vote.

The only glitch I was not ready for was the eventuality of having a tie for bottom position in any round of voting. I had the choice of eliminating both nominations or considering the two nominations alone as if they were the only ones remaining in the ballot. The winners were decided without this being an obstructive factor, but in the final analysis I opted for the latter.

(A reminder of the winning results: *Pyramids* in the Novel category, "In Translation" in the Short Story category, *Red Dwarf* in the Media Presentation, cover for *Other Edens III* in the Artwork section. It's time to start thinking about future nominations... Ed.)

Local Fanomena

Keith Mitchell

After my naming him as the person responsible for the University SF groups network in my last column, Ian Brooks wrote to say that he was not (as I had been told) the mastermind of the Eastern meeting after all, merely present. The official co-ordinator is in fact David Wake, Treasurer of the Birmingham SF Group. So if you want to get in touch with the network or find out more about it, you should write to him at 160 Beaumont Road, Birmingham B30 1NY (tel: 021 451 2287).

Ian had more to tell me about his and Mark Slater's plans for starting up pub-based meetings in Manchester in the autumn. Anyone in the area who is interested and has not heard from them by next *Matrix* can get in touch with Ian at his new address in the listing.

This was the only news I have had in the past two months, which suggests things are rather quiet on the local groups front at the moment. In view of this, I have decided to run an updated version of the item that appeared in *Matrix* 79. This was some tips and advice on how to get your own local group started up, and hopefully it will encourage some of those new to the BSFA since then into activity.

How to run your own group is a theme that has often popped up in correspondence, and I thought it might be worthwhile to give a few guidelines which could be of general help. A lot of it is probably common sense and quite obvious, but maybe I'll come up with something you hadn't thought of before.

The first rather obvious point is to make sure no groups already exist in your area. I'm trying to help as much as I can here, and can give you a copy of my most up-to-date listing if you write and ask for it, but some groups can be less than easy to track down. Try looking in all the places you would put publicity yourself first.

Something which is quite important to think about is what sort of meetings you want - do you want a formal programme or just a chat with some like-minded friends? The latter tends to be more common, simply because the effort of arranging speakers, events etc on a regular basis can be quite difficult to sustain.

Venue and frequency should also be sorted out a bit before you start. Informal meetings are usually in a pub, but have also been known to take place in people's homes. Both have their pros and cons - since fans mainly like to chat, it pays not to have a pub which is too busy or noisy. The Good Beer Guide has information on how quiet pubs listed are, and could be a

useful source of venue suggestions. Homes of course, are guaranteed peaceful and comfortable, but can get too small, and can be daunting for newcomers.

For more formal meetings, function rooms can be booked from places like pubs, clubs, hotels and unions. You can do this for informal meetings too, but quite a lot of drink needs to be bought from the bar before your group will get out of paying for the room.

How often you meet is largely a matter of personal preference. Formal meetings are generally once a month. Twice a month or weekly, however, work quite well for the less organised style of meeting. In general, when you want to attract newcomers, given weekdays in each month (eg 1st/3rd or 2nd/4th weeks) are easier to track down than "every fortnight".

The next step is publicity. Effort is best concentrated on bookshops and libraries, particularly those which specialise in SF or have SF departments. Most shops will happily let you put posters up, provided they are not big chains like W.H. Smith, who even if they do agree to it, change their displays so often your poster will be lucky to last a couple of weeks.

Libraries are generally very helpful with this sort of thing, and quite often will circulate material from their central branch to all the others for you if you give them enough. Posters are not, of course, the only way you can advertise your group - leaflets or handbills are also a good idea. One trick is bookmarks - these can be put into all the SF books in a library, and at least one group has had some success with this. However, beware of librarians who don't take kindly to bump in their books. When doing this (or indeed any other) publicity method, it's generally best to get permission first.

Another way to publicise your group is, of course, through circulating any fanzines or other publications you do. The most drastic method of pulling in new members is to have a regional convention, but I don't recommend this unless you know what you are letting yourself in for.

If the group you are trying to set up is at University, then life can be quite a bit easier. There will generally be a range of ready-supplied venues and publicity facilities, and a new intake of recruits every year. This can be readily tapped into during Freshers' Week. A group with sufficient members also stands a chance of some funds from the Union, if it can get "official" status.

The disadvantage of groups at Universities, Colleges or Polytechnics is the inevitably high turnover of faces. People rarely stay around for more than three or four years, which can lead to a lack of continuity. The groups of this type which seem to last the longest are those that allow membership from non- or ex-students, though this can sometimes be difficult if Union facilities are used. The University SF Groups Network can potentially be of help here, and may provide some of the continuity otherwise lacking.

My most recent update on the Glasgow venue situation suggests that a resolution of sorts may have finally happened, at least for the "Old Guard" FAB group. They have apparently settled in The Scotia Bar in Stockwell Street, details below.

Next *Matrix* comes round to that time of year again where I publish the full listing of all the UK local groups. So, it would be nice to hear from you before then to make sure I have all the details for your group right. Please tell me as much as you can, even if you think I have it already - it's nice to be reassured groups are still going strong.

Finally, don't forget the BSFA's own London meetings have moved, to The Old Coffee House in Beak Street, Soho. Details on the noticeboard.

Town: Glasgow
Group: Friends of Admiral Benbow
Last Update: May 90
Meets on: Every Thursday 9pm
Meets at: The Scotia Bar, Stockwell Street
Contact: John Mooney 041 952 9286

Town: Manchester
Last Update: June 90
Contact: Ian Brooks (Flat 4) or Mark Slater (Flat 2), 311 Dickenson Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0NR

I have decided to call it a day as far as doing the *Matrix* clubs column is concerned. Come next issue, I will have been doing it for two years, which always seemed like a reasonable cut-off point and I would like to make *Matrix* 90 my last one. The latest listing will comprise most of next month's column, by way of a parting gesture.

Jenny Glover adds: Keith has written a clubs column for the last two years, every issue, which has taken up quite a chunk of time. I am regretful to see him go, but reluctant to insist on him staying when he has other commitments.

I need a CLUBS COLUMNIST. It needs to be someone who is charming, gregarious, patient and methodical. The work involves tracking down local groups, listing them, writing a column regularly for *Matrix* and continually finding a new slant to present the club circuit. I'd like to thank Keith for his work and hope that he remains a reader.

Extra! Late Club News

Polarity Reversed: Is this a Fan Club that I see before me? Does it have a club magazine with show news, cast interviews, competitions, special interest features and more on *Return to the Forbidden Planet*? Details from Polarity Reversed, 43 Heathfield Road, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1TA. See Media Reviews for Bill Longley on why he has (so far) seen *Return to the Forbidden Planet* forty one times.

Fantasia: Media/video meetings at The St. George's Hotel, Liverpool monthly. Information: 051 605 0277.

Red Dwarf: The official fan club with quarterly newsletter *Better than Life* and merchandise. Details from The Official Red Dwarf Fan Club, PO Box 29, Hitchin, Herts SG5 9TG.

Return of the Bunny Dead or Pink Fluffy Bunnies on Elm Street: Not a fan club, no membership, no newsletter. Anyone who tries to force the bunny acolytes to conform to rules will be subjected to tortures only dreamed about in *Waterhip Down*. It does however have a t-shirt, various designs and a tendency to enjoy horror films/books. Details from: Cassandra Petersabbit, 57 Brownhill Road, Catford, London SE6 2HB

DWNet: A computer mailing list for Doctor Who enthusiasts with access to JANET, the Joint Academic Network. Contact Chuck Foster at BARADUIM @ UK.AC.PEL (or BARADUIM @ UK.AC.POLY-EAST-LONDON).

Noticeboard

BSFA COLLATING WEEKEND: This will occur on the weekend of October 6-7 at the Statistics Department Annex (a wooden hut) by the carpark next to Blanford Lodge, which is close to the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading. Keith Freeman will be there and will provide tea or coffee and a pub lunch, plus an extra period on your subscription. For details, please phone Keith at 0734 666142 (home). Apart from making a contribution to the smooth running of the BSFA, this is a good way to meet other BSFA members.

MAGAZINES FOR SALE: Pulp and Digest SF magazines for sale. *Astounding*, *Planet*, *Startling Stories*, etc. Also hardcover books eg *City by Clifford D. Simak* and paperbacks. Send s.a.e. for list, but be quick as a rapid sale is anticipated. Doug Fulthorpe, 10 Bosburn Drive, Mellor Brook, Blackburn BB2 7PA

GERALD KERSH I have been collecting Kersh's books for many years but he was a prolific writer and I know there are more out there somewhere. If you have anything by Kersh which you would like to sell, please write stating titles available and price required. Reasonable condition preferred but minor blemishes not important: I want them to read rather than display. Dennis Thorp, 190 Horton Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 7QF

FOR SALE AMSTRAD PCW-9512 Black Multistrike Film Ribbons (Group 2746/MS). I have 5 of these ribbons. ALL are new and unused, blue-tabs still attached. Asking price: £5 the lot, or £1.50 each.

SHINWA CP-80 Black Multistrike Ribbons (Group 2698M/S). I have 2 of these, both still in original packing. (Longbow Hi-Life Quality Ribbons). Will sell for £3 the pair. **COMMODORE 4023 Black Multistrike Ribbon (2698/ German Gp 629M).** Only 1 of these, selling for £1, still in original box. If you are interested, contact Chris Bailey, 52 Druids Walk, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 7PF. ALL items postage free.

RUSSIAN SF READER SEEKS ENGLISH BOOKS: Alexander Vasilkovsky, Apt 13, 8 Zantovskaya Street, 252001, Kiev-1, Ukraine, USSR asks if there are any British of readers who can spare some books for his club, Zoryany Shiyah. They have a huge book deficit and several English-reading Russians and would welcome any books - physical condition not too important as long as they can lay their hands on them. They are particularly interested in current British of and the English language authors most popular there right now are: Philip K. Dick, Joe Haldeman, Kim Stanley Robinson and Orson Scott Card. In exchange, they would be pleased to trade SF books in Ukrainian and Russian, posters, art albums and any printed material from the USSR.

HYPERTEXT Are there any BSFA members with an interest in using Hypertext systems for writing? It has some intriguing possibilities for more experimental styles of writing, rather than the traditional page-bound structure of beginning, middle and end, allowing the readers (viewers?) to choose their own paths through the work, following different plotlines or characters at will. I don't know whether diskette based novels will ever take off though. Steve Jeffery, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA

FOR SALE: Chronoclam T-shirts, red or yellow, £4; Phonoclam I tapes, £3, Phonoclam II tapes £5. Available from The Iconoclasm, c/o The Garden Flat, 11 Lypiat Lane, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 2SX.

WANTED: Conspiracy Theories (Chris Evans), *Best of Elmer T. Hack*, *The Enchanted Duplicator*, *Warhoon #28* (Walt Willis Special) - originals or copies

suitable. Also CardFeeding Plate for Gestetner 300; Maintenance Manual Hita & Tips for G 300 and G360 (nb not operator's manual but how to get best from machine) Also Cheap Electronic Stencil Cutter. Replies to Eugene Doherty, 78 University Ave, Belfast BT7 1GY, Northern Ireland.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS: Ian Brooks has moved to Flat 4, 311 Dickenson Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0NR. Steve Jeffery and Vikki Lee France have moved to 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA.

BSFA LONDON MEETINGS: Thanks to Helen at the Troy Club, the BSFA London Meetings have found a new place to meet: The Old Coffee House, Beak Street, Soho (despite the name, it is a pub). The next meeting is August 16, when Mary Gentle and Battlegroup will demonstrate their weapons. Nothing is booked specifically for September 20, but on October 18, Tad Williams is the speaker. The next meeting is on November 15 and the year will end with a party at the Troy Club on December 13. By the way, if anyone can think of a more inspirational name for the meetings, please could you suggest it to Maureen Porter, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ.

LEEDS BSFA MEMBERS: Are there any Leeds or West Yorkshire members who are interested in meeting occasionally to see a science fiction film in Leeds or Bradford? The Leeds Film Festival (coming soon) promises some interesting films. If you are interested in seeing what the other local BSFA members look like, please contact Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP.

TAFF: The TransAtlantic Fan Fund is not dead - it's merely sleeping. And it's about to wake up! TAFF, a fanish charity set up to promote links between European (that's us, folks) and American fandom, has just taken a year out from its regular annual schedule of sending European fans to America and Americans over to Europe in order to avoid running a trip to America in the year of a European Worldcon. Instead, the next TAFF race will send a European delegate to the Worldcon in Chicago, Illinois, in 1991. The schedule for the race is as follows:

Nominations open:	November 1st, 1990
Nominations close:	December 31st 1990
Ballots available:	January 15th 1991
Voting deadline:	May 15 1991
Worldcon:	August 29th-September 2nd 1991

Anyone wishing to stand needs to be nominated by three European fans, and two North Americans. They have to provide a 100 word platform, basically saying who they are and what they've done, and a £10 bond to guarantee their good faith. Now is the time to start thinking about who we would like to represent British and European fandom in America next year. If you want any more information about how you go about nominating someone, or what running for TAFF involves, please don't hesitate to contact either of the TAFF European administrators, me (Christina Lake) at 47 Wexham Avenue, Holford, Bristol BS7 0DE or Lilian Edwards, 2 Spring -xley Terrace, Morningside, Edinburgh EH10 4QD. [The editor adds: Hopefully there will be more about TAFF in the next Matrix, maybe even something from the American administrator, Robert Lichtman, in the Cry "Fanac" column. But please start thinking. Talking of fan funds, if you should happen to be at the Worldcon in The Netherlands, you may see Roman Orestanski from Australia, who won GUFF (Get Under/Get Up-and-over Fan Fund) this year and who won in a nailbiting final by one solitary vote].

INFORMATION SHEETS: Following interest in the film article by Valerie Housden in Matrix 87 and the space piece by Ian Bamero in Matrix 88, a series of information sheets are being prepared for BSFA members who want to follow up the topic. At present, there is an a/s information sheet, and two others are being prepared on film and book collecting - available on request from the editorial address.

STANISLAW LEM: Pavel Weigel, the foremost contemporary translator of Stanislaw Lem's work into Czech, has recently founded a Stanislaw Lem society. Its aims are to publicise the work of Lem and other SF writers, collect materials relating to the author, and eventually to publish a magazine (projected title *PIRX*). He is keen to hear from other Stanislaw Lem fans in the West. Write to: Pavel Weigel, Vavrenova 1169, 142 00 Praha, Czechoslovakia.

WANTED: Contributions of any sort for SF society Newsletter. Articles, Letters and Artwork preferably, but spacefilling quotes also accepted with relish. Submissions can always be made on boring old paper, but if you are able to make life easy for us, we can accept plain text on (virus-free) IBM-PC formatted disks, or you can E-Mail articles to Steve's JANet account at BPHSSG @ UK.AC.LEEDS.CMS1 (bphssg@leeds.ac.uk). As an incentive, any floppy disks (5.25" 360k or 1.2M, 3.5" 720k or 1.44M) will be returned with a useful piece of public domain software. The postal address is: 16 Aviary Place, Armley, LEEDS LS12 2NP, West Yorkshire.



WriteBack

Letters are welcome from members on subjects ranging from science fiction down. Please write to Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP, and the deadline is:

**Saturday
September 15
1990.**

Prediction and Total Recall

For Matrix 88, I asked Tommy Ferguson to suggest how Philip K. Dick's short story "We can remember it for your wholesome" would translate to screen as Total Recall. At this stage, Total Recall was not being shown in the United Kingdom cinemas, although it had been out in the States for a while and had been widely discussed on bulletin boards and by UseNet newsgroups, such as rec.arts.sf-lovers. Tommy is familiar with Philip K. Dick the writer, Arnie the actor and how Hollywood treated Bladerunner.

Stuart Falconer writes: I was fascinated to read Tommy Ferguson's article on the film Total Recall in Matrix 88. He shows an admirable degree of perception, not to say prescience, in his assessment of the film's failings. In particular, his comments on the leading actor's performance are most illuminating. I can't wait to see what he will have to say about it when he has had the opportunity to actually watch the film. [70 Willow Way, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne NE20 9RG]

Phil Nichols adds: My one objection to the content of Matrix 88 was the piece by Tommy Ferguson on the film Total Recall. While I don't expect much of the film, I'm a bit dubious about running articles which attempt to guess what a film (or book, or play, or whatever) may be like, and criticising it on that basis. Can't we just wait and see? If the author of the piece had actually read the shooting script, or interviewed the cast and crew, or been present at the shooting, then fair enough, he's entitled to comment. But empty speculation on what it might turn out like is futile and fruitless. [57 Grange Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 8PB].

Predicting what something may be like is often the only way to test a theory (providing you keep an open mind); Tommy has a theory, based on extensive viewing of Bladerunner and reading the original works, of how Hollywood castrates science fiction in general and Philip K. Dick in particular. I note that Phil has already prejudged the film ("I don't expect much of the film"); however, if he, Stuart, Tommy or anyone else feels that Total Recall has been mistreated (after they have seen the film) please write to say so.

The Federation: Ungrammatical Dictator? Or Worse?

Matrix 87 accepted an advertisement for a group called "The Federation" which turned out to be as bizarre as it was idealistic. Kenneth R. Lake wrote for details and sent his results to Matrix 88. He claimed that, given encouragement, this cult may "prove as sinister as Scientology".

Erwin F. Blonk also wrote for details and comments: This organisation seemed interesting in the ad: a platform for discussion. I, too, wrote in. A first sheet told me I was a member (quote "I took the liberty of enrolling you ...") unquote, the second congratulated me with that achievement. The next gave me hints on enrolling (crimping?) new members, sending money (all voluntary of course) and, oh yes, writing articles.

The rules told me I had no right to speak for or in any way represent the Fed's without consent of the Chief Executive (or is it Executive?) For the record I had to fill in and sign the application form, just for the record, nothing more. Was there no escape, no chance for me? One of the rules

said one was only a member after sending in the signed form. Phew, lucky break for me!

Of course I wrote a letter telling them I was no member and had no plans to become one. Because surface mail between Europe and the UK takes a couple of days, they still sent me *Data*, the newsletter. Articles about the effect of the *Matrix* ad, merchandise, policy-formulating on search for E.T. intelligence, support of nationalist movement, recommended reading list (including *Dune*) and they ask if anyone knows the best "martial arts equipment supplier" in the country (what for? equipment?) And so on, by the way.

I won't bore you anymore. Lake's letter pointed out how this Federation works. A little research told me the Fed's have a staggering size of maybe four members, involuntary ones not counted. Oh well, these megalomaniacs had me laughing for a minute or two. Pity about the paper though. [Werkhovenstraat 115, 254 VD Den Haag, The Netherlands].

Kenneth R. Lake asked whether *Matrix* should have carried an advertisement from the Federation. Considering that this is both a news and a club magazine, I think it is reasonable that advertisements should be accepted which are relevant to science fiction (this includes publishers) and preferably by members. The "K. Squire" mentioned in the *Matrix* 88 letter column turned out to be Anthony T. Matthews, not a BSFA member, who asked for a further advertisement to be invoiced through his business account. A further letter came in support of **Kenneth Lake** and the Federation, but veered off on an angle, having spotted a small factual error I should have noticed, having voted in the matter myself.

Jack D. Stephens sighs: Here we go again! In an otherwise unexceptionable distributive among those loony seeming group called the Federation which has advertised in *Matrix* 87, **Kenneth Lake** referred to independence for Scotland and Wales as being "surely backward?" and surely they already voted against all this?"

The "backwardness" I'll leave for now - it's a matter of opinion - except to wonder if he feels the same about Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, etc. independence. (I'll also allow that he does mention Northern Ireland where the Federation apparently doesn't).

However, he is wrong in thinking that Scotland "voted against all this". Scotland and Wales have not been given a referendum on independence but only on devolution, which Wales voted against but Scotland voted for, by a greater percentage of those who voted than has been achieved across the UK and even just in England) by the Conservatives at the last three general elections.

What prevented devolution was Margaret Thatcher's implacable opposition to any diminution of the union (which the people of Scotland didn't vote for in 1979 - there were riots against it in several Scottish towns - and which all subsequent attempts to reverse have been voted down by the UK parliament despite the provisions of the treaty of Union having been broken many times by that same parliament. Wales, of course, was conquered). An example of this voting down was the provision in the devolution bill that only if more than 43% of the whole electorate of Scotland or Wales voted for devolution would the result be binding on the UK parliament - hence dead people effectively voted no. Such a provision at general elections would have meant that the eventual government would not have won in most British general elections, certainly in those since 1959.

I would forgive Ken Lake his lack of awareness of such things. He, after all, does not live in a country forever overshadowed by its more powerful neighbour and is probably not aware of the anger such lack of knowledge, shared by most English people until they come to Scotland and grow to love the place, can produce. Nowadays the English probably know more and care more about Lithuania etc. than they do about their very distinct neighbour to the north. [43 Ava Street, Kirkcaldy, Fife KY1 1PN].

Late result: in the "Devolution Referendum", 33% didn't vote (this may include the above dead people), and those who did vote were split 34:33 in favour of devolution. I must admit that it was a very wet day and I only voted because I was dragged out. My protestation that I was an Englishwoman only living in Scotland was over-ruled by my Northern Irish husband brought up to do his democratic duty on the old slogan "Vote early, vote often!"

Science Fiction (in Literary Terms) is Effectively Worked Out?

The News section of *Matrix* 87 included a brief snippet of a **Chris Priest**. The Sunday Times interview, which implied that **Chris Priest** only con-

sidered as "a marketing thing". This severely upset **Chris Bailey**, but there is a soothing response.

Chris Priest: I'm completely unrepentant about the remark attributed to me in *The Sunday Times* which **Chris Bailey** finds so shocking. (He's normally a sensible lad; I didn't know he was easily shocked). But he ought to take this into account:

Firstly, the snippet of the interview printed in *Matrix* was one line from a half-page article (which he obviously hadn't read). Secondly, the interview itself was severely compressed from a conversation with **Philip Kerr**, which took place over the best part of a day. People who are interviewed in that the offending remark, correctly quoted, was lifted from its context, which was a long explanation of why I think this. I was talking about, for example, an article by **Joanna Russ** called "On the Wearing Out of Genre Materials", which I read years ago in *Vector*.

I don't know why people are surprised by this. I haven't carried the party card for years. I've been saying this in private for as long as I can remember. I said as much as long ago as 1980, in a speech at Novacon. I said it all again in another speech at Seacon, in 1984. Some people thought it was a bit odd hat by then: **Peter Nicholls** berated me afterwards for banging on about old subjects.

Matrix is not the right place to mount the argument yet again, but I believe the first step to creative liberation comes when you acknowledge that science fiction (in literary terms) is effectively worked out. This has never been a popular point of view with the **Peter Nicholls** of the world, because they have placed so much personal investment in the continuance of the genre, with all its rules and bad habits. I don't include **Chris Bailey** in this, by the way, so I hope he's over his shock by now and is starting to feel a bit better. [78 High Street, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5AQ].

The Culinary Approach to Reviewing Science Fiction

Finally, a light-hearted letter to end with. The authors call for reviewers, but the book titles seem to have been distorted by someone who is extremely hungry ...

S. Jeffery and **V. L. France**: In line with **Stanislaw Lem's** pragmatic approach to the field of literary criticism that a well written and argued review should not be handicapped by such minor considerations as the mere nonexistence of the book itself (see: *A Perfect Vacuum* and *Imaginary Magnitude*), and in an effort to break down artificial genre boundaries between SF and other works, we offer up the following titles for the submission of short reviews of one hundred or so words.

THE ROBERT CARRIER GUIDE TO SF AND FANTASY:

Clive Barker	The Grape and Seaford Show
A E Van Vogt	The Prawns of Null A
William Gibson	Mons Lisa Aubergine
Greg Bear	Blood Muesli
Anne McCaffrey	The Chip Who Sang, Renegades of Prune
Freda Warrington	The Rainbow Trout
Gene Wolfe	The Fifth Hand of Asparagus
Michael Moorcock	Garlic of Melinbone, Stealer of Soles, Sailor on the Seas of Pate, The Mad God's Omelette
Frank Herbert	Prune, Prune Messiah, Children of Prune
Robert Heinlein	The Prune is a Harsh Mistress
David Eddings	Prawn of Prophecy, King of the Mangoes

THE FILM AND TV GUIDE TO SF AND FANTASY:

Storm Constantine	The Enchantments of French and Saunders
Ursula K. LeGuin	Gone with the Wind's Twelve Quarters
Samuel Delany	The Guns of Neveryon, Neveryon a Sunday
Greg Bear	The Sound of Blood Music
Freda Warrington	Finnegans Rainbow Gate
Isaac Asimov	The King and I, Robot
Michael Moorcock	Fortress of the Pearl Harbour
Philip Jose Farmer	The Bridge over the River World

There are bound to be a number of titles we have missed, which you may wish to submit, so they can get the full critical attention they undoubtedly deserve. [44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA].

Matrix Competition #88: Results & More Roger Robinson

Little did I know that when I set up a word square primed with 60 or so words what trouble it would cause, both for the solvers and subsequently for me. I had the first inkling of this when the first entry arrived with between 90 and 110 words listed. The count is a little vague because of my inexact definition of what is or isn't SF (now where have I heard that before ... ?) Also listed were words claimed to be character's names in books and stories that I hadn't read (and some by authors I'd not even heard of). Luckily the outcome of this sorry mess was a clear winner, but the margin of victory was (and still is) unclear. I list below all the words claimed by all the entrants although some push the bounds of SF/Fantasy a bit too far. Not even the winner got all the words, and the entrant with the lowest score managed to spot a word that no-one else did. Several words appear more than once (eg SUNS) and several had multiple SF associations (eg CAPELLA), but are listed only once (the list is long enough without complicating matters further!)

n3	ALAN	Author A Dean
Foster		
g4	ALLAIS	Author Alphonse A
g15	ALLEN	Publisher W H A
j5	AMAZING	Magazine
111	ANNE	Author A McCaffrey
19	ANON	Famous author
c9	ARES	Title by Gene Wolfe
114	ARGO	Gas
g3	BALLARD	Author J G B
b6	BANK	Scene of robbery by
b6	BANKS	Stainless Steel Rat II
o12	BILBO	Author J R R Tolkien
o12	BILL	Character by Tolkien
n11	BRADBURY	Galactic Hero by
n11	BRAT	Harrison
16	BRUNNER	Author Ray B
16	BUDRYS	Character in "The
b14	CAPE	Brats" by Chetwynd-
b14	CAPE	Hayes
j1	CAPELLA	Author John B
g11	CARNELL	Author Algis B
j4	CARTER	Superman garment
b8	CHAN	Sun/planet; also race
b1	CHARON	Editor E J C
b1	CHERRY	Author Lin C
b1	CHERRYH	H Harrison character
j4	CHIP	Moon/Ferryman
b14	CORE	Artist David C
b14	CORNER	Author C J C (sister
b14	CORNES	of the above)
a14	CRAP	Nickname of Samuel
Law		R Delany
n8	DARE	Centre of galaxy
n8	DARI	What heroes are
j12	DRAGON	backed into
f6	ELLIS	Bit part actor in Dr
f6	ELLISON	Who episode!!
d12	ENRO	90% of Sturgeon's
b10	ENROL	Character Dan D
b11	EVANS	Character (aka
		Darien in G G Kay
		book)
		All-purpose fantasy
		plot token
		Name of several
		minor authors
		Name of one author
		Van Vogt character
		Join BSFA !!
		Author Chris E

i12	FEARN	Prolific author John
j15	GARDNER	Russell F
m9	GENRE	Author G Dozois
h3	GOLAN	What SF is
H3	GONT	Asimov Foundation
k4	HALO	character
c8	HARES	Island in LeGuin's
f1	HARRIS	Earthsea
f3	HEINLEIN	Character H Jones
f3	HERA	Creatures in Jo
n13	HOBBIT	Clayton book
n13	HOLO	John Beynon's real
c8	HUGO	surname
g10	INFERNO	Author R A H
d8	KNOWE	Ancient goddess
c5	KRONK	Tolkien creature
f15	LAIR	Hologram etc
Herbert		Award
j3	LANA	Dante or Niven &
friend		Pournelle book title
g6	LARS	Place, Cheaping
m3	LAUMER	Knowe in W Morris
g6	LAVIN	book
e15	LENS	Title by Cooper
device		Title by James
i1	LESHY	Superman's lady
spirits		
j3	LOCAR	Luke Skywalker's
j7	MAZER	uncle OWEN LARS
k11	NALL	Author Keith L
d10	NEON	Pohl/Kornbluth
j11	NERNE	character
d14	NICOR	Doc Smith plot
h10	NINE	Cabell's slavic
d7	NIVEN	Prophet in Rose for
19	NIZAN	Ecclesiastes
f10	NONIK	American spelling of
c12	NORN	weapon
h15	NOTE	Original name for
k11	NOVACON	Adrian's NUL
d7	NOWELL	Gals' name
e13	NULL-A	Philip E High
e13	NURI	villains
worms		Sea monster in
h2	O'DONNELL	Donaldson book
k15	ONCE	Planets in Solar
m14	ONLO	System
b13	ORNE	Author Larry N
d6	OWEN	Character in Bloch
c15	PACO	story
b9	PAIN	Delany character
b9	PAINE	One of the Fates
k6	PAST	Method of
c15	PERN	communication in
b9	PILOT	Close Encounters
o2	PLASM	Convention
e4	PRATT	Author Frank F N
		Van Vogt place
		Schmitz's alien

g14	RACE	Human and
otherwise		
n10	RADS	Measure of radiation
n10	RELL	Psionic verb in
k10	RING	Schmitz book
d2	RISK	Tolkien plot device
d5	RUNE	What heroes take
e9	SANE	Fantasy language
a1	SCHENK	Type of men in
g1	SELDON	Janifer book
f14	SLAN	Author Hilbert
d13	SNELL	Schenck/
h8	SONF	Asimov character
a10	SPOCK	Hari S
f14	SUNS	Van Vogt book
f14	SURT	Author Edmund S
h4	TALL	"Son of New
h4	TARN	Futurian" -
h13	TEAR	Rosenblum fanzine
h13	TONAL	Character
e14	UNSEEN	Astronomical
m6	UPLIFT	phenomena
n15	VANCE	Norse fire giant
h12	VEEN	Author Stephen T
e11	VENUS	On Gor
a11	VERNE	Crystal Tear etc
g9	WANE	Occult name for soul
e6	WELL	in Castaneda fiction
m1	WELLS	Pratchett University
e6	WILK	Title "U War" by
e6	WILSON	Brian
g9	WOLF	Author Jack V
112	YANN	Psionic tree's
j9	ZENNA	enemies in Schmitz
j9	ZIRN	story
		Planet
		Author Jules V
		What the moon does
		Chalker plot device
		Author
		Haiblum race
		Various authors
		Author Gary K W
		Author Gene W
		River in Dunsany
		story
		Author Z Henderson
		Place in Heckley
		story

Winner of the £5 book token with approximately 100 words is Dave Langford, both of whose entries were better than the single ones of Caroline Mullan and Sean Friend. Valiant attempts were also made by Gary Noble, Terry Pyle, J D Stephen, Andrew Buchan, C Morris and P T Kentish. The overall average score was 55 (approx!)

Matrix Competition #89 "As Easy as XYZ"

This time I've taken care to limit the number of words required to exactly 23. All you have to do is write a story, review, poem, blurb etc etc of a SF nature in which each word begins with a different letter of the alphabet (excluding XYZ). As an example, I give a 'critique' of the last competition. Although I have used the 23 letters in the "correct" order, you don't need to stick to this. "A beastly competition" declared enraged fan. "Good heavens! I just knew Langford might negotiate orthogonal panel, quickly running straight through uncovering various words". Entries, and any comments on the competition page, to the usual address - Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG, before the closing date of Saturday September 15.

The Small Press: Showcase or Workshop?

Roger Waddington

Generally, it seems to be that the rationale of most fanzines is *ad maiorem meo gloriam*; what's not so clear is the purpose behind fiction zines, the small-press publications appearing in ever-increasing numbers. It must surely take a special breed of fan to launch a zine where the main purpose is to print the efforts of others, to take the criticism intended for them, and still be confident enough to print another story; masochists, might be an apt description.

And what of the writers who submit to such markets, when they could be using their best efforts to submit professionally? Of course, in spite of the recent rise of original anthologies and the like, that market has never been smaller or the competition keener; but is that any reason not to try? Perhaps here, they can gain experience and welcome criticism, more useful and lengthy than the curt rejection slips of the prozines; not so much a showcase, more a workshop where skills can be honed.

Auguries gives that impression; I don't know how Nik's original manifesto read, his statement of intent, but most of those stories aim at a professional standard; it's the little details that let them down. The cover story, 'The Sentient Cloak' by Hilary Robinson, is a case in point. A nice line in snappy dialogue; but of its title character, there's just explanation after and after; the main story is more about how Tynan, the hero, manages to escape from becoming a human sacrifice to the dragon-like Wyrm. Admittedly, with the help of the cloak; but what a professional editor would demand is that a story about a sentient cloak should be only that - the story of how Tynan and the cloak joined forces, which surely can be developed into more than just finding it on a fishing boat. Then, there could be a story about how Tynan escaped being dragon bait; perhaps with the title *The Diet of Wyrms* ... ?

There are times when I wonder about Sydney J. Bounds; with a moderately successful writing career behind him, just why should he be writing for the not-even-prozines; perhaps having come full circle, he's writing as a hobby again? Certainly, his professionalism shows all the way through 'Find the Mage'; but his betraying detail appears in a rushed ending, a climax that turns curiously flat. From the list of forthcoming stories, I see there's another in his Mage series: comparisons might be apt.

Others have more obvious flaws, 'The Lap of the Gods' by Nick Daws, for one. Now, he might have got away just once with explaining GALEN as a contraction of Galactic Mensa, but to scatter GALEN in block capitals right through the story every time GALEN appears, distracts the eye and attention from anything that is not GALEN, spoils an otherwise good GALEN story. In fact, with a quieter GALEN every time, it would have been much more effective.

And 'A Presence in the Spring' by Graham Andrews would have had my vote for first place (just easing out) 'April Showers and Green-Eyed Girls' by Andy Smith, then 'Eggs' by Arabella Wood, the deadening short sentences letting it down) but for the totally distracting way he names all his characters after science fiction authors, such as Haldeman, Masson, Fanthorpe, etc. Either inspiration has let him down, or (the kindlier view) he's been trying to give it an added dimension - (which the story didn't need in the first place). In either case, what was chilling and effective turns into a game of Spot the Author, if not outright farce. Indeed, you tend to wonder, did W.P.C. Jenkins' parents have her christened 'Wilhelmina'? I think we should be told.

The *Edge* asks to be taken more seriously (demands, if the strident tones of the Opinion Page is any indication), and does give the impression of a full-scale professional magazine. That is, if these weren't equally scorned for being safe and boring, for keeping within the boundaries. Apparently, it's now *The Edge* and its companions in the small-press field that are going where the prozines aren't go: *Sacred Cows Slaughtered*, *Rules Floated and Taboos Broken*, a *Specialty* readers their sign. Personally, rather than marching round Jericho, my approach would be to borrow from within, to bring the revolution from the inside. But each to their own.

The *Edge* gives one nod to popularity though, by putting S.M. Baxter first on the cover, recognising that you can't sell the product without the packaging. Indeed, as one of the up-and-coming, future collectors might well covet this issue: who knows what Ray Bradbury's first fanzine story is selling for now?

The rest of the stories try harder; but not all altogether succeed. 'The Shark Equation' by Patrick Whittaker distinguishes itself with a touch of the Ballards (or perhaps his Surrealist ancestors); but look behind the literary devices to the basic story, and it doesn't have quite the same impact. I'm greatly tempted to quote "Once upon Beltane" by Mike Chinn back at him. He suddenly realised how they sounded: like two cardboard characters in a cheap romantic novel which marks most of the story. He redeems himself at the end; but those emotions that last tremendous cry of *Who wants to live!* somehow doesn't come from the Jim Taggart as revealed, or not revealed, earlier in the story. The three vignettes by Lewis,

Graham and Winter-Damon can perhaps be more easily dismissed; maybe not according to Graham Evans, the editor, who asks why should a good story remain unpublished because it's very short? My answer might be, if it's very short, it can't be good; at least for the form of fiction that *The Edge* is trying to publish. They're effective as page-fillers with snapper endings, as the latter-day Drabbles, but to be truly effective, a story must develop, must build. And what that means is length.

'Terminator Zero (and the Dream Demons)' by Andy Darlington perhaps comes closest to what Graham wants to publish, flying in the face of "normal" science fiction. Alas for his hopes, what I see is a story which, if tidied up a little, made less awkward (unless written deliberately that way) would be instantly welcomed by *Interzone* for one or even that equally scorned *Asimov's*. In fact, that might be Graham's fate, to see the writers that he's carefully nurtured and coaxed like some mother hen, run clucking off into the great wide world of professional fiction with scarcely a look behind, or waving goodbye.

One lesson well learned from the prozines is that of mixing the fiction with lighter stuff, with reviews and other non-fiction; indeed, this is one of the great strengths of *The Edge*. There's a useful introduction to Philip K. Dick by Kevin Lyons and a welcome article on the unjustly-neglected Sas Rohmer by Paul Holman; the overview of the films of 1989 by John Martin and a more effective Andy Darlington on why we may never see Dave Britton's *Lord Horror*. And (saving the best until last) 'A Bluffer's Guide to the No-Wave' - though whatever else might be abandoned, apostrophes are still useful. Is it a satire? A parody? A manifesto? I'm doubtful whether it can be taken seriously at all, tempted to give it the Galaxy classification of a Non-Fact Article, but it's great fun to read, and must have been as much fun (if not exhausting) to write. This surely must be the one justification for *The Edge*.

Apart from that, and far from the White Heat Manifesto proclaimed by Patrick Whittaker, I'd class this issue as no more than slowly simmering; but who knows what future issues might bring to the boil?

AUGURIES: Nik Morton, 48 Anglesey Road, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants PO12 2BQ. Rates: single issue £1.30, US \$3, Europe £1.50; four issues £5.20, US \$10, Europe £5.50

THE EDGE: Graham Evans, 56 Writtle Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3BU. Rates: single issue £1.50, US \$4; four issues £5.50, US \$12.

Media File

John Peters

In amongst the hype for *Dick Tracy*, you won't be surprised to learn that the producers are facing litigation from someone who thinks that he deserves some of the lucre Disney are raking in - a New York writer, Harold Steinberg, has filed suit against Mickey Mouse and the gang, claiming that he had the idea for the film back in 1980 and offered it to Disney back then, so he can have \$1,000,000 in damages please? As always, it's the lawyers who'll make the real profit out of this one. And director/star, Warren Beatty, has ordered Disney to withdraw over thirteen hundred life-size cut-outs of him from outside US cinemas - the reason? They are three inches shorter than he really is. At one hundred and thirteen minutes in length, this could be the longest *Dick* on screen in quite some time, and it appears that Disney are releasing it on their Touchstone label due to fears over its violence. Accompanying it will be the new *Roger Rabbit* cartoon, *Rollercoaster Rabbit*.

Last year, it seemed that every other fantasy film was set underwater. This year's Hollywood trend is the supernatural, and in particular, ghosts - Bill Conby stars in *Ghost Dad* - not too unlike his tv show, one hears, Bo Derek and Anthony Quinn find out that *Ghosts Can't Do It* - Quinn is Bubbly Bo's husband who dies on the job, then decides to come back from beyond the grave for more! Also coming are: *Ghost* with Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore and Whoopi Goldberg - Swayze is the recently departed who tries to communicate with girlfriend Moore through the psychic Goldberg; *Ghost Writer* is a murder mystery in which a writer moves into a house previously owned by a Hollywood sex symbol who now uses the writer to solve her own murder; *The Ghost Goes West* is a remake of the British classic, in which a Scottish castle is shipped to America, along with its ghost. These are only the supernatural films using the word *Ghost* in the title!

Casting has been announced for John McTiernan's \$40m *Robin Hood* - the man from Sherwood Forest will be Mel Gibson, whose *Robin Hood* will be a medieval Martin Riggs. Gibson's latest film in the US, the comedy thriller *Bird on a Wire* opened to a \$15m box-office take on its first weekend, it also stars Goldie Hawn and was directed by John Badham. Now that the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles has become the most financially successful independent feature of all time (well over \$100m), you won't be surprised to hear that producer Run Shaw has announced plans for a sequel to be released next spring - we don't see the original until this

Christmas: but the Turtles are heading for censorship problems here because of their extensive use of martial arts weapons, despite being a children's film. Talking sequels, Christopher Lambert could move from *Highland II* to *Greystoke II*... *The Fugitive* has changed - instead of Harrison Ford on the run, Michael Douglas gets to wear the sneakers, Stephan Frears directs. Steven Spielberg has announced his next film - he will direct Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park* a SF fantasy set in a futuristic amusement park; does that remind you of Crichton's own *Westworld*?

Some of the spring/summer hits in the US include *Spaced Invaders*; William Friedkin's *The Guardian*, which grossed over \$14m in its first few weeks; and *Tales from the Darkside* has proved to be the most popular horror anthology film since *Creepshow*; meanwhile, *Back to the Future III* opened to excellent reviews in May, with many critics hailing it as the best of the series you too can believe that Marty can McFly at your cinemas now.

Roger Corman may be moving up to bigger productions with his *Frankenstein Unbound* but his Concorde production company remains with low budget quickies such as two hot off the presses movies like *The Day the Wall Came Down* - a spy story set amid the destruction of the Berlin Wall and *Quake* - a drama that utilises footage of the recent Californian earthquake. Lauren Bacall joins James Caan, Frances Sternhagen and Richard Farnsworth in *Misery*, so look out if someone whistles. Ridley Scott continues to stay away from fantasy yet again - his next feature is a comedy, *Thelma and Louise*. Gregory Hines tap dances his way through the *Bladerunner* clone, *Eve of Destruction* as a bounty hunter out to stop a female renegade android called Eve III, played by Renee Soutenjiic. It had to happen - Sub Standard Productions (!) are all set to pull the plug on last year's "soggy sf" genre with *Divel*, an *Airplane*-type comedy starring Bill Pullman, coxert Vaughan and Roddy McDowall.

Michael J. Fox has not signed a contract to play Robin in *Batman II*, although the character will appear, and Danny DeVito has declined to play the Penguin. Producer Frank Mancuso recently announced that there would be no new *Friday* the 13th opus this year, and possibly for several after that - Part 8's apparent flop has meant a rethink on this long-running series, and could be advance warning to horror buffs that both Michael Myers and Freddy Krueger's days are numbered too. *Arachnophobia* stars Jeff Daniels, John Goodman, Julian Sands and should be released by Disney later this year. George Lucas was recently quoted as saying that he hadn't even started thinking about the next *Star Wars* series of films, and won't for at least five years. Christopher Lee has announced plans for a sequel to *The Wicker Man*. Terry Gilliam has returned as director to the *Watchman* production team, though the film is still looking for studio backing.

Are you ready for *Killer Tomatoes Strike Back*? Can you stand more jive from *Johnny FIVE*? I hope so 'cos *Short Circuit III* is going for input. And if you remember that ode to greenfly, *Flowers in the Attic*, get ready for *Petals in the Wind* - sing hallelujah and pass the DDT! *Aliens III*, *The Fugitive*, and *Terminator II* have all been allocated US release dates for summer '91. Expect sequels to *Transcenders*, *Puppetmaster*, *Deathstalker*, *The Terror Within*, *Pumpkinhead*, *976-EVIL*, meanwhile *The Fly III* is under consideration, as is *Batkrickcase III* and Emilio Estevez joins Danny Glover in *Predator 2* which has been relocated in L.A. instead of New York. Sam Raimi and Bruce

Campbell should begin shooting *Evil Dead III* later this year. Walter Koenig returns with his Lego kit in *Moontrap II: The Pyramids of Mars*. Linda Hamilton, sans monster, joins Michael Caine and James Belushi in *Mr. Destiny*. A future classic - *Breakdancers From Mars: Doin' the Lambada*?

TV SCENE While news about the new Disney tv movie *Plymouth* is still sparse (i.e. they didn't bother to reply to my letter), it does appear that it has been completed and will be shown by ABC in America sometime during 1991 - so it will be quite sometime before we get to see it. The BBC are finally transmitting *Star Trek: The (not quite so) New Generation* this autumn and also David Lynch's acclaimed and controversial series, *Twin Peaks*, which will get pride of place on BBC2. And the BBC are announcing soon (if not by the time you read this) that the series will be sold to an independent producer - so it seems that no new series will appear before 1992, and then it will probably be designed for American audiences, as much as for us. SKY Movies have

bought the screening rights for *Batman*, *Robocop II*, and *Nightbreed*. CMS are producing four telemovies based on Dean R. Koontz's *Eyes of Darkness*, *Face of Fear*, *Night Chills* and *Darkfall*. *Dark Shadows*, the classic gothic soap opera from the 60's is being revived by series creator Dan Curtis - a prime-time version will appear on NBC next autumn. Plans for the Sci-Fi Channel continue, 500,000 subscribers have already signed up - though the channel hopes that 5-7 million homes will sign up by the time transmission starts; programming will include a haunted house game show, a live phone-in show with sf authors and media people, programmes on comics, NASA and books, toys and games; and Isaac Asimov has created a storyline and characters for an animated special.

And that master of the mulch, *Swamp Thing* gets his own half-hour tv show this summer on the USA network. Both *War of the Worlds* and *Friday the 13th*: the series have been cancelled by Paramount TV. Warner Brothers are planning to produce a *Grem-lins* animated series, and despite rumours a *V: The Next Chapter* is on the cards for next year. And next year should see a sixty five episode "junior James Bond" animated series from the movie's production team.

MUSIC After a long illness, composer John Barry is to score the upcoming Chuck Heston SF feature, *Solar Crisis*. Watch out for a series of three imported American soundtracks called, ironically, *London Cuts*, featuring the work of composer Georges Delaure; on one of the albums

will be a suite from his score for *Something Wicked This Way Comes* - this was replaced by a lacklustre score from James Horner shortly before the film's release by Disney Studios, and if it's as good as the unused extract from *Platoon* on vol. 1, it should be worth waiting for. Silva Screen are following up their impressive, but patchy Hammer Films score album with a re-recording of *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), which should be released by the end of the year. Danny Elfman is fast becoming one of the genre's most prolific composers (now that Jerry Goldsmith has shown signs of edging towards more conventional subject matter such as *The Russian House*) - his score for *Batman* was an American chart album last year, while his score for *Nightbreed* is suitably dark and brooding; now Elfman follows these with the score for Sam Raimi's latest, *Darkman*. As with *Batman*, *Dick Tracy* will have two soundtrack albums released - one featuring the score, and the other masquerading as a Madonna album.



by Georgina Bunce

STAGE By now you will probably have seen the marketing hype for *The Rocky Horror Show*, which opened on July 16th; and while Richard O'Brien won't be appearing at the Piccadilly Theatre as Riff Raff this time, he is advising the production while working on a screenplay, *The Revenge of the Great Queen*, a sequel to *Rocky*. Adrian Edmondson, Tim McInerney, Gina Bellman and Edward Tudor Pole star (box office no 071 867-1118).

COMPUTER Computer software company Ocean have released two games that are inspired by *Nightbreed*. The first is a traditional "escape from the underground city" game, while the second is a more intellectual approach to some of the existential questions posed by the film (i.e. "Whatever happened to Suzi Quatro?") and begins in Decker's office with a series of responses to some of his questions.

Reviews

NOTE: Jessica Yates' name was omitted from her review of the comics exhibition *STRIP SEARCH* in *Matrix* 88, due to a tired editorial pair of scissors. Sincere apologies to Jessica.

THE WITCHES - Directed by Nicholas Roeg (PG) Warner Brothers

Believe it or not, this film actually got castigated by a white witch on the film review page of today's (24/5/90) *Independent* for giving witches a bad press! An off-beat example of just who's taking this children's film seriously. The problem is, I fear, that very few children will watch Nick Roeg's film because it doesn't have any ninja-type turtles in it. This is a shame, because the Roeg/Henson/Dahl collaboration has much to recommend it in terms of visual charm, humour and action.

It's an old-fashioned type of story (remember them? They had people rather than machine guns or fast cars, or Rambo) that lays its wares out in a leisurely way. And what a story - Anjelica Huston's (exuberantly over the top) Grand High Witch wants to turn all the children in Britain to mice, planning to subvert a million Mars Bars to her will to do it. But little Luke and his Norwegian Grandmother thwart her plans by a literal game of cat and mouse - oh, and Rowan Atkinson sulks around a lot, totally wasted as the hotel manager.

Henson's animatronics make come a long way since *The Muppets*, so much so that the puppet mice are almost indistinguishable from the real ones used on the film. At the less subtle end, the witches' makeup is suitably gross, but not really horrible, and is unlikely to impress the kids. Roeg's use of micelle-camera angles, on the other hand, is impressive and you see the world from an alternate perspective.

Yes, I know, he isn't giving away too much - in he, you're thinking. Damn right I'm not - and so see it yourself. Take a chance and watch a film that has style and some excellent (and unbloody) gags; it may be heartwarming and an affirmation of the family unit, it may even have mice running around in their first starring role since *Hitch-Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, but this was one of Jim Henson's last projects, and one of his best. [Reviewed by John Peters].

THE PUNISHER Directed by Mark Goldblatt (18) New World

About as subtle as a stiff cucumber under Benny Hill's trousers, *The Punisher* displays its wares within the first five minutes - half the Mafia are bumped off and a godfather's country "cottage" - all fifty rooms - goes sky-high in some very impressive fireworks. This is just a prelude, of course, as *The Punisher*, Dolph Lundgren takes on the rest of the Mafia, AND a Yakuza/Ninja SWAT team who are also trying to muscle in on the action. As you will no doubt have guessed by now, this isn't *A Month in the Country*, but a Marvel Comics-produced thriller that goes for the jugular in no uncertain terms.

Unfortunately, it wasn't Dolph Lundgren's - here we have an actor with all the charisma of a bowl of Special K and the looks of a piece of steak that's been dragged through some toxic waste. If I tell you that Dolph's monosyllabic dialogue made at least one reviewer at the press show fall asleep - real-time snoring during the 517th or 632nd firefight - you'll begin to get the idea that this is a load of old cobblers that even Hans Christian Andersen's elves couldn't fix overnight, with a pair of Odour Eaters.

Lundgren plays Frank Castle, a supposedly dead cop whose family has been fricasseed in a flashback by the aforementioned Italian fraternal society. Just a little peeved at this *faux-pas*, Frank drags on the leathers, teams up with an ex-thespian grass and fights back. At the start of the film, he's credited with two hundred and fifty unaccounted gangland killings in five years. Dismayed at this lack of productivity, Frank takes to packing a submachine howitzer and the score rises in groups of fifty, thereafter.

While the action sequences and fights are well-staged, this really is a piece of crap. The story is old hat and has no imagination, and the acting is laughably inept. This will probably last a week or two and then be transferred to video, so wait until then - it isn't worth £3. [Reviewed by John Peters].

NOT WITH A BANG ITV sit-com, 6 episodes, March-April 1990; with Ronald Pickup, Stephen Rea, Mike Grady and Joie Lawrence

T.S. Eliot's line about the world ending not with a bang but a whimper was first used as a title for a science fiction story whose author I've forgotten (help, Phil Nichols?) in which the Last Man and Woman on Earth failed to produce offspring, the Last Woman being too prudish to rescue the Last Man from symptoms of germ plague which paralysed him in a Gents W.C. The authors of this sit-com might have known the story, for the tv series also hinged on the inability of males and females to produce the next generation - or of course, there's the slang meaning of "bang" ...

In a *Tomorrow's World* programme, the well-known lady presenter is showing off a flask containing a powder which ages, kills and vanishes people and animals in a moment - and drops it. "Oh B*****!" The human race and land animals are all instantly wiped out, as reshown in the opening credits for each episode. Then the scene changes to the Lake District, where an odd couple Brian (Pickup) and Colin (Rea) are sharing Brian's house. They fish for food, bicker and broadcast on a ham radio to the World - no response! Pickup plays a boring pedant who survived because he was a pub quiz booth; Colin is a normal rugby and beer-loving guy whose wish for a woman is ignored by Brian (neither shows any gay impulses).

By and by, along come Janet (Lawrence) and Graham (Grady), a married couple whose energies have gone into rambling and Brownies, and who were being tested for infertility prior to the Accident. It transpires that the morose Graham needs a lot of coaxing, and is easily flattened through feelings of inferiority, while Janet hasn't realised that he lack of children is now a matter of global concern. Janet and Graham are welcomed into the household. Brian thinks the future of the world is assured, and ignores Colin's hints that Janet needs a Real Man. The remaining episodes develop their reactions to the news of Graham's possible infertility. Janet suggests that she and Brian try artificial insemination (how?) and the series ends with Colin's decision to put the matter to Janet face-to-face. I can't see how another six episodes could be contrived, for the light-hearted atmosphere would be lost if Colin and Janet did have an affair, and childbirth with those three males around would not be a pleasant experience!

The four actors developed the interplay of character as far as it could go. In this post-AIDS world, talking about sex and never doing it, not even as a married couple, has become the subject matter of tv sit-coms - and science fiction. [Reviewed by Jessica Yates].

DUNE Warner Home Video 1984 Directed by David Lynch Produced by R de Laurens

The making of *Dune* must surely have taxed to the limit the capabilities of everyone involved in its early unfinished days. After all, some of the scenes were gigantic sets and the adage that "a good novel makes a bad film and good film makes a bad novel" must surely be bought into perspective as regards this film. (An exception to this "rule" must be noted here, that of Arthur C. Clarke and Stanley Kubrick's novel/film: 2001: A Space Odyssey, as these were, in effect produced alongside each other). I don't think that the film *Dune* lives up to the novel's ideals, and it often varies wide of the mark, with additions to the film that were non-existent in the novel, and this only adds to the fact that the film just doesn't measure up.

The film, loosely based on Frank Herbert's novel, tells the viewer that it is set ten thousand years in our future and that Earth of that time is nothing but a mere legend, a myth in everyone's thoughts, lost in the depths of the space-time continuum, utterly forgotten. *Dune*, known as Arrakis by the native inhabitants, the Fremen, is nothing but a planet wide global desert, a desert such as our Earth could never have known. It is extremely dry with a subterranean water-table securely contained thousands of feet below the surface, by the larval stage of *Dune*'s indigenous life form, known to all as the Worm of Arrakis. The Worm is a massive deadly creature, which is the sole producer of the Empire's longevity drug, the Spice, which, it is said, can prolong a human's life by many hundreds of years, discounting personal accidents.

Actually, David Lynch's feature film is based around events from three of the titles in the *Dune* series, *Dune*, *Dune Messiah* and *Children of Dune*. One can almost immediately pick out scenes and events from all three novels and must stop and think whether the film should in all honesty be renamed as *The Dune Trilogy* or *The Dune Sagas* or something similar. Apparently, there was enough unused material left on the cutting room floor to make several two hour long episodes, or perhaps a mini-series. A reasonable film, but it can't compete with the novel. [Reviewed by Chris Bailey].

TREMORS Directed by Ron Underwood (15)

Do you remember the good old days when monsters were real squiddy little so-and-so's - and not called Freddy or Jason? Yes? Well, rejoice, 'cos the little squiggles are back in force with *Tremors*, a folksy little tale set in Perfection, Nevada (pop. 35 and counting - down) - a place where boredom isn't an occupational hazard, it's a way of life.

Val and Earl (Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward) are a pair of van-driving cowboys, odd-jobsman *par excellence* specialising in septic tank resurfacing. Odd things begin to happen to them as they travel around Perfection - they begin to find blood-stained hardhats, dead old men perched up power pylons, the odd limb, cars buried under the soil. The usual sort of stuff. Having dawdled on them that perhaps Perfection isn't that perfect anymore, they try to leg it as fast as their Dinky convertible can go. And don't you just know it, something stops them for a bite - an arm, a leg, it isn't fussy.

It would be a shame to give away exactly what finds Val and Earl chewable, as this is one of the best "creature-feature" movies to come along in a long time (and I wouldn't want to spoil it for anyone who hasn't seen it yet). Filmed almost entirely on location below the Sierra mountains, the film has a striking visual setting, utilising the scrublands and a specially built town effectively. Shot entirely in daylight, the horrors that unfold make startling viewing. I'll admit that I jumped in my seat a few times, even when I was expecting something to happen. The cast, none of them stellar, play it straight, their performances good enough to attract your interest, and the sfx are very good, with the "Graboids" being extremely realistic looking and malevolent enough to get my vote at an SPD reunion of the "gang of four".

With Gale Anne Hurd as executive producer, *Tremors* is off to a fine start, and though this is Ron Underhill's first feature, he shows a deft hand at mixing action, comedy and thrills in equal parts. This is a fun movie, and with little pre-publicity will probably scuff around the circuit and vanish until video release. That is a shame, if it comes to your town, go and see it, preferably with a tub of popcorn. [Reviewed by John Peters].

Despite John Peters carefully not mentioning the type of monsters, they were revealed in another review. I decided to print both reviews to show two different viewpoints to the film: both agree that it is a film to look out for.

TREMORS directed by Ron Underwood, 95 minutes, 15

It's probably not giving anything away to state that the upsets in *Tremors* are caused by giant subterranean worms attracted to the vibrations caused by human activity, since this much is signalled by the movie poster, the cinema trailer, and the film itself in its first fifteen minutes. The creatures, when they finally break surface to menace the two garbage-collectors-cum-handymen heroes, are actually quite impressive, even if the scriptwriters do edge their way carefully around the problem of where they came from and what they've been doing until recently. At one point, one of the characters speculates that they might predate the fossil record and so be more than two billion years old; the question of whether they've therefore been asleep all that time would destroy the film's scenario, so is never asked. Instead, this scene is followed by one of the two garbage collectors and their geologist girlfriend pole-vaulting across the desert - an image of such magnificent surrealist chutzpah that one promptly abandons all remaining reservations and starts to enjoy the film for its own sake.

Much of the plot is formulaic - it comes as no surprise to learn that the only telephone is out of order, the only road out of town is blocked by rockfalls, and the CB radios don't have the range to reach over the mountains that surround the valley - but as the desert pole-vaulting scene probably indicates, the makers of *Tremors* have their tongues pushed pretty firmly into their cheeks, and by deliberately avoiding all the easy laughs actually manage to generate a fair amount of tension along the way - which one of this desert nowhereville's tiny population will get it next, how rapidly will the worms learn to overcome the obstacles the humans put in their way, what ingenious and unlikely means of escape will the survivors dream up this time... The worms are naturally vanquished and the humans naturally survive (doubtless in search of a PG certificate, the body count is kept fairly low and the dismemberments more hinted at than shown); in addition to the earlier-mentioned desert pole-vaulting scene (my favourite), there's a survivalist shoot-out with quite an extensive arsenal of weapons and some good old boy camaraderie reminiscent of a latter-day western, and this too is surely deliberate - American ingenuity has to have some context in which to operate, and what better than the myth of the frontier?

The cast is full of people you've never heard of before but whose faces are instantly familiar from innumerable bit parts and minor supporting roles in countless films and TV series, and by thus avoiding inflated star salaries but getting solid acting professionalism anyway, the producers have been able to spend their money on the script and the effects, which in consequence are far better than a mere plot summary would lead one to expect. Some of the dialogue, indeed, is instantly classic; the best B-movie lines since - well, since they stopped making B-movies. "These things are treating the valley like a giant morguebord!" "Let's call them graboids!" If any film can be said to have a heart of gold, this one does. You'll leave it grinning. [Reviewed by Joseph Nicholas]

EARTH DAY SPECIAL A television gala broadcast on April 22 in the USA and May 28 in the UK, BBC1

I came to sneer - and stayed, by turns admiring and appalled. A host of American film and TV stars and pop musicians took turns to perform sketches about environmental pollution in a TV spectacular broadcast on "Earth Day", the 20th anniversary of what was now an international festival.

Stars often performed in their fictional personas, with SF/Fantasy contributions from Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis as the "Wastebusters", Kermit the Frog and frog chorus singing about pollution in the swamp; ET entrusting some children with a book explaining how to save the world and Christopher Lloyd as Doc from *Back to the Future*. Lloyd's contribution was to show a film of polluted landscapes: when asked "Is that the future?" he replied "No, it's the present". Of actors playing new roles specially written for this gala, I particularly remember Michael Keaton as a factory owner bemoaning the children's lives he had fouled up by not cleaning up his effluent. And was it Dustin Hoffman as a smooth, sinister Devil's Advocate tempting Robin Williams not to worry about the environment?

I would like to see this again to catch more of the nuances, and it certainly made an impression on my children - pity, because it was made for adults too. The mass breast-beating and resolutions to reform, the essentially populist nature of the programme, recalled fundamentalist religion - and I wonder how the Americans can ever cast off their Worship of the Great God of the Automobile so as to make the difference to the environment which the world clearly needs. Also, how much of the earth's scarce resources were expended to make the programme? Definitely a case for repeating it instead of making a new one next year. [Reviewed by Jessica Yates].

MOON 44 Directed by Roland Emmerich (15) Medusa

The year 2038 sees an Earth controlled by multinational corporations, warring against each other to control the distant planets that supply Earth. For the Galactic Mining Corp, things are not rosy - their ships and robots are being destroyed too easily, so they send in a special investigator, Michael Pare, to protect *Moon 44*, their final mining base. That's the premise - how does it stand up? Not too bad at first, impressive sfx show the usual giant spacecraft, a fog shrouded world and a planetary attack even the Cylons would be proud of. Unfortunately, that's about it. This US-German production takes *Outland* and *Bladerunner* for its "look" and throws in elements from *Blue Thunder* and *The Dirty Dozen* for good measure. But where there should be action, a talky script bogs things down by pitting the defense pilots, a bunch of criminals, against their teenaged "computer whiz-kid" navigators. Much of the plot surrounds these two warring factions who are supposed to work together - and a distasteful buggery scene does nothing to enhance either the plot or film and should not have been left in. It's a shame this film is so disappointing, as it looked so good initially. [Reviewed by John Peters].

RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN PLANET at the Cambridge Theatre, London

After forty-one visits, I still find it difficult to explain why I like this so much. The show is based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, but has taken even more liberties than the film *Forbidden Planet* did. The setting has been changed to the bridge of a scientific survey ship on a routine mission to outer space: aboard it are the ship's captain, a Dan Dare type hero: the Ship's cook, "a simple, home-spun lad": the new Science Officer, a woman with a mysterious past: Bouson Arras, awful pun and petty-minded officer: the Navigation Officer, all-round good girl, and Mike Rheochip, Penny Scyllen, "Bud" Visor and Frank Z. Rocks, the Damage Control Crew. After the cast have taken the audience through the pre-flight safety drill, they check out the ship's shields, dithium crystal rods, gravitational resistors and audio-visual screens, where we see Patrick Moore in an unusual role as narrator. We soon discover the first major difference between this and other West End musicals - there is no orchestra or backing tapes, the cast members play all the instruments! A high-speed "Wipe-out" takes us through the launch. "It's a Man's World!" lets the Captain express his doubts about a woman as Science Officer, and the encounter with the asteroid storm is "Great Balls of Fire" accompanied by much Star Trek style running from side to side. After the Science Officer flees in the last remaining shuttle-craft, a forced landing on a supposedly abandoned planet brings us face to face with the mad scientist Prospero, his roller-skating robot Ariel and the obligatory beautiful daughter, Miranda. The humour isn't just in the deliberate science-fiction clichés - there are still original Shakespearean jokes, slightly twisted Shakespearean lines ("But soft! What light from yonder air-look breaks?"), a wonderful sixties B-movie style set, Gerry Anderson's special effects and several remarkable tongue-in-cheek performances from the cast. The songs are all classics, and, unusually, they advance the plot rather than act as fillers. When the daughter falls in love, it's "Teenager in Love", the Captain's rejection of her is "Young Girl", Cookie's anguish is "She's not there" (complete with a really "evil" guitar solo) and "All Shook Up" sees Prospero at breaking point, summoning up the forces of his mind to extract a horrific revenge on his unfaithful daughter and her lover. The reappearance of the Science Officer and a monstrous attack on the ship leaves the audience in suspense at the interval. Patrick Moore voices the questions the audience are thinking: "Will the ship

be saved? Will the Captain return Miranda's love? Will you manage to get to the bar before anyone else?"

The second half is even better. The songs come thick and fast, the plot twists are resolved, and everyone in the theatre is called upon to help with the *Polarity* Reversal procedure. Particular highlights are "Who's Sorry Now?" with half the cast transformed into a fifties doo-wop backing group and "Shake, Rattle and Roll" where the secret formula for the X-factor drug is passed between Cookie, Miranda and Ariel in a superbly choreographed routine. Throughout the play you have to marvel at the musical ability of the cast who have to play three or four instruments each and keep control of where the microphones have got to. It's a rare audience indeed that stays sitting at the end - the epilogue is pure fun, a wild "Can't Turn You Loose" melds into the "Monster Mash" and "Great Balls of Fire" again. There's even an encore of "Heard it through the Grapevine" and a medley of "Johnny B. Goode" and "Bye Bye Johnny". No other show comes close to the amount of fun *Return to the Forbidden Planet* provides, and only *The Rocky Horror Show* has a more loyal following. Give it a try - then next time wear the t-shirt, take along your friends, your dark glasses and inflatable guitars and make a party of it. See you there - I'll be in the bar trying to sell you membership of "Polarity Reversed". Yes, I enjoyed it so much that I helped set up the Fan Club - for details, please see the Clubs column. [Reviewed by Bill Longley].

VIDEO NEWS

It looks as if the reason that *Batman* and *Lethal Weapon 2* did not go directly to sell-through in Britain was due to disappointing sales in America. Apparently *Batman* undersold by five million units. Likewise, both *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* had disappointing sales. None of this, however, is stopping the Disney organisation from a massive campaign for the July US video release of their biggest money-earning animated feature, *The Little Mermaid*. The film is not released in British cinemas until Christmas, but advance word is that it is something special. Perhaps the sales of this video will decide the future of the straight to sell-through market. Meanwhile, the UK sell-through release date for *Indiana Jones* should be the end of July, and *Batman* should finally make it to the high street in time for Christmas.

The long expected release of James Cameron's director's cut of *Aliens* has been delayed. It seems that 20th Century Fox Video (US) want it released at full price (as in the States), but the UK subsidiary had committed themselves to a low price release, so it is stalemate. An alternative reason could be that with *Alien III* announced for next year, it would make sense to market the video as part of the publicity build-up to that - in fact, considering the popularity of Cameron's sequel, this extended version would probably be worth giving a limited theatrical run, as Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters* was given ten years ago. Cameron also has problems with *The Abyss* - just released here - instead of an extended version, the cinema print was used (excluding the infamous rat scene). There are plans to release the director's version, but it seems these are dependent on the success of *Aliens*. Catch 22?

If you've ever fancied yourself as a future Spielberg or a Hitchcock, or perhaps John Carpenter's low budget shocks are your scene, then grab your camcorder and start making movies - JVC has just announced a competition where you could win £2,000 and a ten day trip to Japan for two. Other prizes include video equipment and smaller cash amounts. JVC are sponsoring the 13th International Tokyo Video Festival and they want to see your work. There are two divisions of entries - compositions in any style or theme, or a videoletter exploring two way communication. For further details and entry forms, contact: JVC (UK) Limited, JVC House, Tokyo Festival Tape, 12 Priestley Way, London NW2 7BA.

VIDEO REVIEWS

CASTLE PICTURES - *The Martian Chronicles* 1980 (TBA) 195 mins.

Just out on sell-through at £12.99, this is the "soap" version of Ray Bradbury's SF classic story collection. A fix-up of the miniseries, this is still pretty dismal stuff, with spaceships made from Fairy Snow bottles. Bradbury's style is so poetic and reminiscent of an American "Never-Never land", it is probably unfilmable, as is demonstrated here.

CASTLE HENDRING - *Dark Star* 1974 (PG) 85 mins.

John Carpenter's first (and best) foray into space. All the classics are here: hippy crew, alien balloon, a talking bomb, frozen captain and that classic all-time hit "Benson, Arizona". As a student film and expanded when a producer realised just how good it was, *Dark Star* should have a place on all sf fans' video shelves. Enjoy!

GUILL - *Pathfinder* 1988 (15) 83 mins.

A Norwegian film that won an Oscar nomination, it was the first film ever shot in the Lapp language. Luckily, this version is dubbed, and some care

has been taken in matching voices to the characters, and synchronisation is very good. Set a thousand years ago, this is a revenge story - young lad returns home to find his family killed by Swedish marauders; seeking help from a nearby village, the boy is rebuffed and he takes on the marauders alone. Simply told, but stunningly shot in the snowscapes of Norway, this is definitely one to seek out. Recommended.

PALACE - *The Evil Dead* 1982 (18) 80 mins.

Back again after six years and fifty or so attempts at prosecution for obscenity - *The Evil Dead* stalk the woods again. Sam Raimi's little band of demons didn't really know what they unleashed when they shot this for what amounted to doughnut money on the *Batman* set, yet if there is a horror film held in high esteem and affection by most fans, it's probably this one. And as far as I can see, though the running time has been trimmed, it hasn't changed much over the years - the gore still looks like *My Little Pony* playdough. One obvious change is the forest rape scene, this has been toned down - possibly even at Raimi's own insistence, as he has admitted on tv that this intense scene reacted badly against the rest of the slapstick violence.

20:20 VISION - *Heathers* 1988 (18) 98 mins.

A demented and extremely black comedy with Winona Ryder and Christian Slater bumping off a gang of obnoxious yuppie prats at their high school. Thought to be suicides, the dead become deified by classmates and suicide suddenly becomes a fashionable accessory to school-life - and the society pages. One up(wo)manship and snobbery get a stiff two-finger job here, as does the American view of a "Caring Society". Not a lot of belly laugh, but well-made and never dull.

Teen Vamp 1988 (18) 86 mins.

Definitely not from the same school, Murphy is one of life's prime nerds - even the jocks can't be bothered to beat him up. Desperate to get laid, Murphy gets picked up by the local town vampire instead. You have to see this one to believe it - Clu Gulager gives a performance of pure 105 degrees proof ham as a vampire hunting priest and Murphy suddenly finds girls just dying to be his victim! If you are into *Killer Tomatoes*, then this one's for you.



by Stephen Manderson

The Periodic Table

At Unicorn, the Unicorn in Cambridge, attendees voted for the next Unicorn, MabingoCon (unopposed), which will be held in Bangor, North Wales, in the summer of 1991. North Wales is apparently delightfully rural: will the con represent "the sheep of things to come"? It seems that the working title will be M-con, as noone can pronounce the proper title the same way twice running.

Attendees at the ConFiction will have the opportunity to vote on the next World Con site, as well as on the Hugos. At present, the choice is between Hawaii (paradise where even the coconuts say "Gerónimo", or so their advertisements imply); San Francisco, in a city full of tourist "musts"; Phoenix

which will be hot, hot, hot; and Zagreb, tempting, European, but are there enough Yugoslav fans to organise and run a con of five thousand people plus?

Although the Eastercon is traditionally a place to meet all those people you have been writing to or telephoning all year, the actual role of the Eastercon is being discussed pessimistically. Ivan Towison is involved with the 1992 Eastercon, Illumination, in Blackpool, and here he describes a personal view of Eastercon futures. It should be noted that this is not necessarily representative of the Illumination committee.

Eastercons Illuminated?

This year's Eastercon - of which this is, appearances notwithstanding, a review - was Eastercon 90, held in the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, on the 13-16th April. I went along and had quite a lot of fun, but that had very little, I'm afraid, to do with the convention itself. For a convention which was supposed to be the main event of the year, Eastercon felt much, much too quiet, more like a small regional con than anything else. Its high points, for me, were messing around with friends from Oxford, and winning the bid for the 1992 Eastercon. That's really not enough, of course, others, for instance the video junkies, might well have loved it. Eastercon's video programme, especially its strong anime element, looked excellent if you liked that sort of thing, and that fact that I happen not to like it shouldn't detract from that. On the other hand, it would be a fallacy to write off my dissatisfaction with Eastercon as purely "Oh, it wasn't my sort of thing". Maybe a lot of other people found it wasn't their sort of thing either, I don't know: but for whatever reason, Eastercon never seemed to me to spark.

To be fair, Eastercon had a lot of problems with committee resignations, changing sites and losing guests, so in some ways we were lucky to have a convention at all. But I still find it rather worrying, not so much because Eastercon itself wasn't inspirational - that's an isolated event, and one that's bound to happen once in a while - but because of the signs I saw there for the next few Eastercons. (No, I can't even lay claim to having spotted some sort of catastrophic downward trend - just rather too many isolated events for me to be entirely happy). After Eastercon, I have to wonder: of the upcoming Eastercons and Eastercon bids, what is there to get excited about? Speculation looks like having a very interesting programme, but may be undermined by a lack of enthusiasm after their appalling publicity and public relations. Helicon, at the time of writing the only confirmed bid for 1993 will be Contrivance II - no bad thing, considering how much I enjoyed Contrivance, but it is going to do anything new? Contrivance didn't, it merely (I) succeeded at establishing a great con atmosphere. I'm forced to wonder whether Jersey could be quite so wonderful the second time round. Their discussion fanzine *HdF sez?* very content to rest on Contrivance's laurels. I would have hoped that having got people's confidence, the committee would have tried to sneak some rather more original ideas in through the back door. In 1994, we are likely to have Follycon II, back at the Adelphi, and the same question arises. Follycon was cute and fluffy, and even vaguely innovative in its embracing of media and film fandom: but do we need another one? Can - or rather will - they do anything new, and if not is their previous format going to retain its interest? Do we really want to be going round in circles?

Which brings me, as it inevitably would, to the 1992 Eastercon, Illumination. I'd like to be able to say that Illumination will cure all the past woes of the Eastercon and point the way into the future, but that would be going a bit far. Besides, as the programme manager, I might be a little biased. [And, as if that wasn't enough, Jenny would probably start charging me advertising rates!] [No, this is interesting so far - Jenny]. What I am prepared to claim is that Illumination is at least trying to do something new. So far that doesn't set it apart from Speculation. The difference from my point of view - and bear in mind I know the whys and wherefores of Illumination, whereas all I have to go on regarding Speculation is their progress reports - is that Speculation seems to be driven by the idea of change for the sake of change. I'd be the last person to dispute the value of tearing down the traditional Eastercon format in favour of something better: my worry is that some aspects of Speculation look too much like plain tearing down. The "progress reports" are a case in point. Ian Sorensen insists that noone reads PRs - a claim to which there is a certain amount of truth - but seems to draw the conclusion that there is therefore no point putting any information in them to make them worth reading. Throwing out the usual PR format is only a positive step if you replace it with one more viable. Speculation's courage in experimenting with the conventional Eastercon is laudable, and I think some of its ideas will be extremely worthwhile - I particularly like the look of their programme - but experimentation need not mean rejection out of hand, and it certainly need not mean content-free progress reports and a publicity strategy which doesn't seem to extend beyond the borders of Novacon.

I think Illumination will demonstrate that this is so. [But then, I would]. I could promise you a dazzling programme, twenty four hour a day fun, exciting new concepts in conning, progress reports that you will treasure until the end of your days, but what would be the point? Every convention promises that sort of thing: you'd just switch off, and quite right too. The only

way that I could convince you of anything like this is if (when) Illumination actually delivers the goods.

More important than that, to plug Illumination at the expense of Speculation (which I see I have come perilously close to doing) would be to make entirely the wrong point. I support both of these conventions, and it's not as if they are in competition. What concerns me are the as yet undecided bids for 1993 and 1994: where Speculation has taken a brave leap in trying to overhaul the Eastercon and Illumination has more cautiously tried to replace tired old warhorses with new ideas and energy within a partially - when I'm feeling boldish I'll say superficially - traditional format. Helicon and Follycon II risk being content to step back from innovation to the heady days of 1988-9, to be as much fun the second time around (and the same will go for Helicon and the de France hotel). What is Follycon II going to do to avoid this? A response along the lines of "Oh, that was Eastercon: we're Follycon, we can make this work" would be dishearteningly ostrich-like: if this review prompts either Helicon or Follycon to avoid that line of thought, then it will have more than served its purpose.

The vitality of a convention is a very subtle beast: not only does it depend on the observed being in the right place at the right time, but it is impossible to control or to gauge before hand. Unicorn was a striking example: on Saturday, things seemed very dead, while on Sunday, they sprang to life seemingly overnight. The main reason for this seemed to be that on Sunday the sun came out. (All you people who, like me, thought Contrivance was wonderful and Jersey was a great place for a convention: would you have enjoyed it half as much if it had rained all week?) What's a poor con committee to do? Well, there are a variety of things, such as having a programme that people want to go to (they won't go, of course: but they'll have great fun complaining about the items they're missing), drawing everybody into the events of the con, priming people with the idea that "this is going to be a fun convention" beforehand, by producing PRs which actually communicate some degree of excitement and interest). While the Eastercon hasn't yet reached the stage of tired people recycling tired ideas, I think that the upcoming bids should take care not to travel in that direction. Eastercon ended up doing so, and that is why Eastercon, for me, failed. It illustrates my worries: no matter that I managed to find fun, no matter that I didn't actually hate it, it was without a doubt sterile. That it should be followed by two conventions that are actively trying to disassociate themselves from the traditional panels and films and silly games Eastercon is an amusing coincidence: that they should, in all likelihood, be followed by two number two in a series of conventions is disappointing. It may be that the Helicon and Follycon II committees will build on the successes and failures of Speculation and Illumination. I fear that they will be more concerned to build on the successes and failures of Contrivance and Follycon. I think that, if they go ahead as I anticipate, Helicon and Follycon II will be good cons - I've already presupposed Helicon. They'll be well run and reliable. I'm just afraid that they won't be good enough.

So much for science fiction as the literature of boldly going where noone has gone before.

Is the Eastercon facing sterility? (God, I must be getting old. Nobody except crusties writes about the imminent death of the Eastercon: surely). I think it may be in for a few years at least of inspiring growth, what with Helicon, Follycon II and the possibility of the 1995 bid being overshadowed by a Glasgow Worldcon: where are the new people and new ideas? Of course, you don't need new people and new ideas to run a great Eastercon, as Contrivance proved, but without them sterility will set in eventually. Perhaps that's Illumination's real strength - it is bringing the small con subculture kicking and screaming into the light (if you'll forgive the pun) of national attention. It would be nice to see Helicon and Follycon challenged by other small con bids, but will the heavy cons scare them off? I hope they don't: they would certainly have scared off Illumination. If 1993 and 1994 don't bring in new blood, where is it going to come from, and in particular, is there a risk of disillusioning people with the image of an exclusive Eastercon-running clique? Am I wrong to take forward momentum as an inherently good thing? Is change for the sake of change justified just to shake things up? Have I really been reading too many Ian Sorensen editorials? I suppose only time will tell.

.. These views are my own and if anybody else on the Illumination ..
.. Committee so much as thinks about agreeing with them, I shall ..
.. be very surprised - Ivan Towison ..

Chronoclasm was the culmination of a year of taking telephone messages from members of the committee: the con would therefore, inevitably, have been an anti-climax. Oddly enough, the part I enjoyed most was meeting the other BSFA members. We constructed a BSFA information desk, near the bar, welcoming, but sheltering us from the younger element who were more concerned with making fun. Rhodri James noticed the younger con attendees less tolerantly: but while they may have affected his enjoyment of the convention, there is no way that a Con committee can refuse to accept memberships from people who want fun, not science fiction.

Chronoclasm

22-24 June, Derby

The "asm" cons do not have a place near my heart. Not far, but not near. They are slightly different from the southern cons I normally go to -- different people, different attitudes, different things going on. This I can survive, even be interested by, but for the fact that the continuing conglom gets in a flap at the slightest excuse. It just doesn't give me any confidence.

So what was wrong with Chronoclasm? Nothing in general, but lots in particular. The lack of anything more substantial than crisps but less substantial than a full meal in the entire hotel (some sandwiches eventually appeared on Sunday). The cramped function space (except for the main programme room) meaning that fans were crashed all over the corridors. ZZ9 getting drunk in the bar. Iain Thomas getting drunk everywhere. The general disorganisation (gophers were supposed to remember that they had volunteered several months before, and somehow know that their rota was in the Ops "room"). The impression that the committee, or at least most of them, didn't know what was going on unless it was under their noses. The tiny shower in my hotel room that I almost didn't fit into. The weird behaviour of the lifts.

What was right with Chronoclasm? Again, nothing in general but lots in particular. Neil Gaiman. Mary Gentle. Colin Greenland ("that famous cyberpiss..."). Geoff Ryman (who was attending, rather than Guesting). The time travel plotting programme strand. The weird behaviour of the lifts. The techies. The Cabaret (particularly the "dead K9" sketch). Watching the lasertag games go past. Watching the hotel staff watching the lasertag games go past. Watching the hotel staff joining in the lasertag games (I think they made some converts :-). Deeply meaningful but very drunken late night conversations.

A lot of both my praise and complaints are on very superficial things, as you may note. Unfortunately, I don't think Chronoclasm had any deeper levels to go on about. It intended much -- guessing what the next decade will bring in various areas, and recording the programme items for comparison in 2000, for example -- but I never felt that they got beyond the stage of colossal concurring hubris. Perhaps it's just me. Whatever the reason, I spent Chronoclasm feeling disappointingly neutral. It wasn't bad, per se, but it didn't inspire me to like it. Worrying, since I am normally hard to get to dislike something.



by Stephen Manderson

Dave Bell found *Compute for Charity* with some difficulty and reports from it.

The Compute for Charity Show

Hull June 30-July 1, 1990

There was a rumour going around that some sort of SF Convention was being put on in concert with an event called Compute for Charity. The major computer magazines never mentioned it. Then one of the weeklies gave it a few column-inches, with an address and mentions of Anne McCaffrey, Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett.

With a couple of days to spare, one of the monthly PC-specific zines also mentioned it, with a completely different location.

Both announcements got the site wrong. It turned out to be at the Humberstone College of Further Education, which is next door to the University. It was not very well sign-posted, even within the site. The computing side was made up of a few companies selling games software for Amiga and Atari machines, a couple of bewildered PC dealers and the computer version of the Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, which also happened to be one-third of the SF convention.

Another third was Terry Pratchett, Brian Stapleford and Dave Langford, sitting in a row with portable computers of various sizes (inversely proportional to their owner's size) and trying to look like writers. Every so often, they solemnly changed places behind the crudely lettered sign. Meanwhile, a bunch of vaguely fanish sorts from Octarine were producing a fanzine, except that they didn't quite call it that.

I looked around, and rummaged through a stall stacked with software. There was a little PC-compatible stuff, but nothing I wanted. A few people supplied a few more entries for the Hitch-Hiker's Guide. I found an isolated room where books were being sold. There was an interesting selection, apparently some of them donated by publishers. I had a feeling that some might otherwise have been long-since remaindered.

It rained, and we got from the SF section to the rest of the event involved crossing a slowly flooding courtyard. Dave Langford refused to carry Terry Pratchett through the rising flood. The Hitch-Hiker's Guide, with colour graphics and digitised sound, attracted all the attention. Dave Langford's computer seemed to be shrinking in the damp, as he struggled with the tiny keyboard.

In all honesty, it wasn't worth crossing the Humber Bridge. It turned out, as I waited at some traffic lights in Hull, that the University Rag Week parade was in full swing. I was left wondering if, considering the site, there had been a bit of student politics involved. And I'm left with the feeling that a good idea has been ruined.

Few con reports consider the Guests - who are, after all, one of the main reasons for going. This con report on Carousel concentrates on their Guests. This has been severely edited, reluctantly, for reasons of space, lack of: A longer version is available from the author, Chuck Foster, who had originally written it for DWNET (see Local Phenomena).

Carousel '90

Cardiff 30th June - 1st July

Carousel was a Doctor Who convention held in aid of the charity *Dreams Come True* (whose aim is to fulfil the dreams of critically ill children) and which raised more than £3000. Apart from *Who*, it also included some *Blake's Seven* and details of the new SF series *Sentinel*, to star Jon Pertwee.

JAQUELINE PEARCE

Not a regular attendee of conventions, at least in this country, Jacqueline comes across as a very kind, warm woman, nothing like her more famous role of Servalan in *Blake's Seven*. She appeared on a number of panels, both on her own and with others, on both days; each of these appearances were witty and interesting.

As might have been expected, many of the questions were directed at her *Blake's Seven* character. She revealed that she had never been overly happy with the way Servalan was portrayed; she found that the production tied her characterisation down, and did not allow her to develop the personality that she really felt Servalan deserved. JP conceived the character as a woman who, not overly evil in herself, nevertheless became woven into the trap that has existed throughout the 'universe' - POWER CORRUPTS.

"The Two Doctors" brings forth fond memories also, and she praises Patrick Troughton highly; she loved working with him, Frazer Hines and Colin Baker. However, she felt that she didn't really have enough time to "get to grips with the character" as it was originally cast for somebody else, and so it came across as merely a facet of Servalan's personality, or at least the BBC's view of her. She felt that much of the "alien-ness" of Chesene was submerged

and didn't really show through - the blood-licking on the step should have come across as more 'non-terran'.

Jaqueline also talked at length upon her role in the children's TV series "Moonchild", where she played an older woman looking after a child who was "marked by the devil" (a birthmark across the face). The series concentrated on the child's role and not so much on her own; both she and the director, however, realised that the woman's role would have been a far more dramatic series. The character could be taken as the child's mother, locked away by the father because of the "sex-out-of-marriage" absence of the 19th Century Victorian idyll. Gradually she would have become senile, with an almost "erotic" (JP's quote!) attraction to her reflection in a mirror.

MICHAEL WISHER & PETER MILES

These two form the perfect double-act. Whenever I have seen them at conventions they have always been fresh and witty. Michael Wisner, during the making of "Genesis Of The Daleks" had to wear a kilt (as trousers are too tight for the casing!); occasionally he would have to go to the canteen in this kilt, still wearing his Davros mask, and, as the mask was highly inflammable and he a notorious smoker, he had to smoke from a long cigarette holder - the pictures are closely guarded...

When asked who should play the Doctor, they said that it should be an older, more authoritarian person, one who is eccentric; ie. back to basics with a Hartnellish Doctor. Suggestions included Ian Richardson and, should the worst ever happen, Beryl Reid; Sylvester McCoy is well liked (hooray!). Michael commented that should Peter Davison's Doctor walk up to Number 10, he would probably be told to "Bog off and go and play cricket somewhere!"

Finally, on conventions, Michael stated: "Wonderful, but hard on the liver!"

CHRIS LEACH & CHA AHPORNSIRI

There is a new series proposed that will take place in the 2050's called *Sentinel* (formerly *Starwatch* or *Project Unicorn*); this is the "baby" of Christopher Leach, who envisages a "real" science-fiction series with no fancy gadgetry (aka *UFO or Space 1999*). Cha is the model designer.

A short trailer involving Jon Pertwee was shown, which was taken to Cannes and well received. Originally the series was offered to the BBC, but they wanted full control over it, so the option has now gone abroad (Japan).

Basically, the story entails a crystal that is based below Stonehenge that controls life on the planet. However, this crystal has now failed, and all life will be extinguished within 10 years. The series concerns a scientist's bid to save the world, with the help of a special force (headed by Jon Pertwee), and the development of craft to travel to where other crystals exist in order to solve WHY the Earth one has failed. The series sounds like it will be really good, though the BBC will probably be the last to show it (very similar to the *ST-TNG* situation!). It series has been developed over the last ten years, and is soon to be produced (13 episodes).

On another note, Chris's production team have also bid for the *Doctor Who* production should it go independent, though the BBC were lukewarm to this bid. In the meantime, an alternative film is currently being produced, starring their own Doctor; apparently they have finished 45 minutes' worth and it has cost them a budget of £200! So much for the BBC!

Other guests included Mervyn Haisman, Paul Bernard, Mark Ayres (one of the incidental musical composers who'll stand out in years to come), Peter Tuddenham (also interested in being in the new proposed series of *Blake's Seven*, either resurrecting Orac, or in the role of new computer voices, his forte), as well as the Marvel Magazine Panel, who were somewhat OTT to say the least! The high point of the auction was £600 going the original first draft script that Mervyn Haisman wrote for "The Abominable Snowman".

Contour Mappings

HOLODECK: [August 31-September 3, Heriot-Watt Congress Centre, Edinburgh, Attending membership £25, from PO Box 628, Bristol BS99 1TZ]

The 30th British Star Trek con has moved from Bradford to Edinburgh. Not only is there now a cheaper room rate, but attendees who venture off the con site may encounter the excitement of the Edinburgh International Festival and Fringe. Guests: **Joe Haldeman**, both *Trek* and if author, comes directly from the Dutch Worldcon; **William Ware Theiss**, *Star Trek*'s original costume designer, will also run a slide show of his work and lead a costume workshop; **Richard Arnold**, Paramount consultant in *Star Trek*, will answer questions and give the latest *Trek* news.

TARDIS IN DURHAM: [August 31-September 2, College of St Hild and St Bede, Durham City, attending membership £22, day membership £12, from Josie Collins, 34 Monks Crescent, Gilesgate Moor, Durham City DH1 1HD]

Guests: **Sylvester McCoy** (on the Sunday), **Nicholas Courtney**; also **Alistair Pearson**, **Peter Wallbrook**. Highlights of the Dr. Who con will be a modelling exhibition, "murder weekend", video programme and charity auction of Peter Davison's smelly socks etc.

ISOCON 4: [September 14-16, Glasgow University Union, attending membership £10, from Isocon 4, c/o Glasgow University Union, 32 University Avenue, Glasgow G12 9LX]

The purpose of this con is fun (having of) including a masquerade ball, ceilidh, folk singing and rpg tournament; inexpensive food is available including vegetarian and halal.

OCTOCON '90: [October 13-14, Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, attending membership slightly more than IR£10, from Octocon '90, 30 Beverley Downs, Knocklyon Road, Templeogue, Dublin 16, Ireland]

The Irish Science Fiction Convention claims to be "fandom at its freshest" and offers guests, panels, films, medieval swordsmanship and Celtic connections.

CONCERT 2: [October 26-28, The King's Manor Hotel, Edinburgh, attending membership £17, from Jette Goldie, 97 Harrison Road, Edinburgh EH11 1LT]

The fantasy writer **Diana Wynne Jones** is a Guest, also artist **Fox** and **Michael Mackenzie**. This con promises plenty of videos, films, a masquerade competition and Film Trivia Quiz.

GHENGIS KHON: [October 26-28, Hatfield Polytechnic Student Union, attending membership £8, but £4 for students, oaps and UB40s, from Chair Being, Student Union PSIFA, Hatfield Polytechnic, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 9AB, Herts]

Guests to be announced, but look out for **Morris Banham**'s art. The policy and even theme of this con is fun and participation with talks on various themes in fantasy and gaming; hopefully there will be a demonstration warfare, art show and, of course, the ubiquitous late night movie shows.

EUROCON - European Science Fiction Convention [November 1-4, Fenyne, Provence, France, attending membership 150FF, from Jean-Paul Cronimus, BP2, 12510 Olempe, France]

A souvenir book with all the participants will be printed, so please send black and white photo and your biography (150 spaces); the con appears to have a high literary learning with various "cocktails" and a discussion on astronomy.

ARMADACON II: [November 10-11, Plymouth Arts Centre, attending membership £18, from Mrs. Marion Pritchard, 4 Gleneagle Avenue, Mannam, Plymouth PL3 5HL]

Guests **Anne McCaffrey**, well known for her dragon books; also (subject to work commitments) **Adrian Cole** and **Brian Lumley**, writers of fantasy and **Sylvester McCoy**, most recently known for his *Dr. Who* role.

CONCUSSION: [December 1-2, Diplomat Hotel, Cardiff, attending membership £28, from Dougie, c/o 32B Ballards Lane, Finchley, London N3]

Multi-media event with games room, auction, Christmas banquet with Santa time fun

SPAWN OF CONINE: [December 14-16, Oxford Polytechnic, attending membership £9, from Adrian Cox, St. John's College, Oxford OX1 3JP]

To enliven the fanish deadzone, this con offers fluffiness and literary cred plus a theme of SF in Society or the way in which SF relates to the culture which perpetuates or generates or propagates it. Guests will include **Ramsey Campbell**.

Wincon II is scheduled for August 16-18, 1991 at King Alfred's College, Winchester. It will not be a *Wincon* (as *Wincon I* was), though it will continue the tradition of not having a Guest of Honour talk from Patrick Tilley, who was a Guest at *Wincon I*, but proved to have bizarre ideas of what constitutes suitable behaviour. *Wincon II* has chosen **Gore Wolfe** and **Brian Stablesford** as Guests and are negotiating a further male British Guest and possibly (if the Arts Council agree), a European one too. Details from John Richards, 59 North End Avenue, Portsmouth, Hants PO2 9EA.

Ian Watson is the confirmed Guest for *Soupçon* in Jersey, October 25-27, 1991, details from 83 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey; and the Birmingham (Bram) group are planning 20con in June or July 1991, where they intend to offer a twenty four hour creche, run by a male nurse. Contact **Bernie Evans**, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley B66 4SH for more details.

Fire and Hemlock

Despite continuous rumours of a dearth of fanzines, there were plenty to list, all so very different. There is, however, a lack of communication between the fanzines, no bouncing of ideas off each other, no discussion which overflows from one letter column into another. Nic Farey, our intrepid fanzine reviewer, is trekking to Edinburgh, his con, Holodeck, only twenty seven days away and counting... Instead, Cyril Simsa offers a guide to some Eastern European fanzines, as background to the Open Letter from Czechoslovakia.

16 Fanzines Wedged in Letterbox (The story to fit this sensational headline has not turned up yet)

All fanzines listed here have arrived, been ambushed or kidnapped to the editorial address of 16 Avary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP. Fanzines specifically for review should be sent to: PO Box 29, Hitchin, Herts SG4 9TG. There is no guarantee that they will be reviewed, but they will definitely be read. If the listing for a particular fanzine intrigues you, then write to the editor requesting a copy. Fanzine editors are interested in communication and are always looking for new readers. It is polite to send a stamp, but not essential.

DINOSAURS AND DISKETTE FAILURES 5, 6 [Jenny and Steve Glover, 16 Avary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP]

General con discussion and consideration of Wyndham's imagery in 5; the problems of hitching and evolution in 6

DOXA! [Roman Orzanski, PO Box 131, Marden, SA 5070, Australia].

Consideration of an electronic fanzine and admiration of performance artist Stelarc, who explores "suspensions" by which he can float, held in place by meat hooks

DOXY [John Foyster, PO Box 3086, Grenfell Street, Adelaide, S. Australia 5000]

Australian form of satire; probably fascinating to real Australians

FACTSHEET FIVE [Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave, Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502, USA]

If a zine swims into Mike's orbit, it gets reviewed. Though disappointingly few British fanzines can swim, this is a treasure trove of information on US fanzines

GIG REPORT [Mike Richards, The Asylum, 92 Yarbrough Street, Whalley Range, Manchester M16 7EH]

Glossy play by mail zine - could be very interesting, but aimed at the already active phn-er

GROSS ENCOUNTERS [Alan Dorey, 7 Conway Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5SB]

Stylish chat, trans-Atlantic flavour and anticipation of visit to Corfu, the US fanzine con

LEGEND [John Brand, 3 Easby Walk, Kirkdale, Liverpool L4 1UX]

Readable media chat with Sylvester McCoy interview and considerations on time travel televised. This is the place to find that Flux and Law are developing an Asterix the Gaul series or that subtle Van der Valk will return to detect on ITV

LHYFE [Roger Weddall, PO Box 273, Fitzroy 3065, Australia]

Hopefully this conveys the feeling of Australian cons which are hot in all senses of the word; interview with Bruce Gillespie as a bonus

MARVIN THE LEHTI [Ari Veintie, Harjakuuta A6A2A, SF-00500 Helsinki, Finland]

Finnish fandom in English. Finnish fans are drunk as rats, sit on the floor yelling Huorn-rraaa and, quite often, read science fiction. It says

NEW ALCHEMIST [S. Jeffery and S. Fairgrieve, c/o 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA]

Scientific spoof where the opinions of Technical Manager Heisenberg will always be "uncertain" and where Pratchett, T gets quoted concerning his theories on the independent existence of ideas

OTHERREALMS [Chuq von Rospach, 35111-F Newark Blvd, Suite 255, Newark, Ca 94560, USA or (until issue #30) from chuq@apple.com]

Reviewzine in a state of flux: losing reviews, gaining what? Also changing from computer network to paper version. "For a fanzine to survive, it has to meet the needs of its owner" he writes. Chuq's changed, now *OtherRealms* must alter as well.

SHATTER [Phil Teunon, 4 Reigate Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8QZ or zmack13@uk.ac.ic.doc although how you send £1 by email...]

ShatterNet is a bulletin-based computer organisation based on Michael Reaves' *The Shattered World*. It aims to attract people interested in sf and fantasy plus rpg with reviews, articles, commentary and campaigns. Good for people who have always wondered what happens on those bulletin boards, but don't have a modem to find out.

SPKTRA AFTER THE KIPPLE [John Annas and Lars-Arne Karlsson and David Griffin, Mullbarnsigen 7, 196 31 Kungsängen, Sweden]

This reviews the Nebula nominations intelligently: the bad news is that it is in Swedish

TASH [Tommy Ferguson, 90 Carnhill, Shantallow 3, Derry BT48 8BE, N. Ireland]

Uneasy mix between personalzine (life during financial consultancy) and clubzine (minutes of various meetings planning Northern Irish cons) duplicated with minimal ink

THE HARDCORE [Scott Dorward, 212 Croydon Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4DE] costs £1

The print size varies wildly, unfortunately the margins are meagre, often non-existent. Or is it just the collating? It's nice to see *Vector* being praised in the fanzine column; would have been nicer had the editor's name been correctly spelled. Very interesting Eric Brown interview.

THYME 78 [LynC, PO Box 4024, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3052]

Bimonthly Australian magazine with realistic comment on *Alien(s)* i.e. how a Low Intensity Conflict could have been significantly reduced by reasoned analysis. Also fiction supplement. Challenging

Czeching out the Fanzines - Czech Fanzines in the Eighties

Cyril Simsa

For the last ten years or so, a large part of Czech fan activity has centred on fanzines and fan publishing. Exploiting a loophole in the law which allowed recognised social clubs to issue documents for their own "internal use", SF clubs were able (even under the old regime) to publish relatively uncensored material - so long as their print runs remained small, and so long as the materials they produced were not made available on the open market [note 1]. The SF fanzines that resulted from this loophole thus occupied a grey area somewhere between *samizdat* and the official media, and though the print runs they were permitted were sometimes mind-bogglingly small, each copy was widely circulated, swapped by clubs and individuals, so that their total readership was much larger than their official status as "internal" documents might suggest.

Because of the scarcity of outlets in the official media for SF in general, and new writers in particular, fanzines also came to assume a significance for the development of Czech SF far greater than that of their western counterparts. In effect, for much of the last decade, fanzines were the principal medium where up and coming SF writers displayed their work. Consequently, many Czech fanzines are devoted wholly or partly to publishing short fiction, in a way that would be quite unthinkable to most fans in the west. By presenting amateur translations of key SF writers from abroad, fanzines also provided many fans with their only access to what was being written in the west. (Translations of English and American writers in the official media were rare). Nor did the SF clubs' fan publishing activities stop with fanzines: many also published book-length anthologies (such as the annual anthology series *Kocaz* published in association with the national SF convention, *Parson*), chapbooks containing individual stories, and even (occasionally) complete short novels, in print runs varying from about twenty up to (sometimes) several hundred.

Literally hundreds of short stories have been published in this manner. Jaroslav Olša Jr. (founder-editor of the award-winning fanzine *Itarie*, and author of many English-language articles on Czech SF) recently compiled a four-volume bibliography of Czech fan publishing to 1988. The first two

volumes (i.e. about half the total catalogue) were devoted to short fiction! [note 2].

Over fifty different fanzines have appeared over the years, some for only an issue or two, others for continuous runs of forty issues or more. Amongst the most successful of these were:

IKARIE (ed. J. Olša). Now defunct, but a ground-breaking fanzine in its day, well-designed and well printed by Czech standards, containing a mixture of solid criticism and short stories from both home and abroad.

INTERKOM (ed. Z. Rampas). Invaluable newzine. Rampas has also been responsible for several fan anthologies.

POUTNIK (ed. E. Cierný). Very basic duplicator reproduction, but large and frequent. Specialises in translated stories from other languages (which doesn't just mean those written in English). Voted best fanzine of 1988.

Poutnik has also produced an English-language edition for export to fans abroad (two issues to date). The latest (numbered "special 1990") has some interesting book reviews (of *Enemy Mine* and *Chekhov's Journey*), an article on the Czech SF cinema, and a four-page comic strip scripted by the award-winning SF writer Ondřej Neff, amongst other things. The English is a little stilted in places, but - I'll wager - a lot better than most English readers' Czech. 33 pp, A4, duplicated (except comic, which is a litho insert). Available from Egon Cierný, Matechova 14, 14000 Praha 4, Czechoslovakia.

Kontakt, is the other English-language fanzine currently available. It is a newsheet (no. 1 dated Spring 1989, no. 2 dated sometime around Christmas last year, no. 3 due any week). Lots of very informative articles on Czech SF, cinema, fandom, etc., again in somewhat broken English. 8pp, A5, xeroxed. Write to: Ladislav Peska, Na dolíčkach 503, 27401, Czechoslovakia.

Now that the political situation in Czechoslovakia has improved, many new opportunities are presenting themselves to writers and artists who formerly had difficulty finding work. The SF community has not been slow to take advantage of these creative freedoms. Already last December, a new professional body, the Syndicate of SF Writers, was organised under the leadership of Josef Nesvadba and Ondřej Neff, and there are also moves afoot to create a national organisation of SF fans. Meanwhile, it seems likely that the defunct fanzine *Ikarie* is about to be revived as a prozine, to be published by the newly-founded Syndicate, and other fanzines also have ambitions to become fully-fledged professional publications.

In addition, several SF writers have featured prominently in the events that followed the "velvet revolution", and have revealed themselves to be supporters of the liberal wing of Czechoslovak politics. Jaroslav Veis in particular emerged as a very vocal critic of the old (communist-backed) writers' union, and was among the founder-members of the new non-aligned professional writers' body, Klub '89. He has also become one of the two deputy-presidents of the Czech PEN club (the other deputy is the science poet, Miroslav Holub). Ondřej Neff has become head of the PEN club's overseas committee.

These are exciting times for all who live and work in Czechoslovakia. The SF community there is no exception.

NOTES

1. This is the same loophole that was exploited by the Jazz Section of the Musicians' Union in the early '80s, which eventually led to the show trial of their leadership in 1987.

For a more detailed account of how the loophole works, I strongly recommend the essay "Hipness at Noon" in Josef Skvorecky's *Talkin' Moscow Blues* (Faber 1989) pp 109-130.

2. A copy of the bibliography is available for reference at the Science Fiction Foundation.

An Open Letter to Science Fiction Authors from the Editors of *Poutnik* Magazine

Dear Sirs,

For many years, science fiction clubs have been working in Czechoslovakia trying to let their members and the public know about the development of world SF. The clubs have been able to act on a half-legal basis only. They have had no material or moral support from the official authorities and they have only been able to issue their fanzines in numbers of ten to two hundred copies. The clubs had no possibility to work in public although the total number of SF and fantasy fans in our country goes up to tens of thousands.

All totalitarian regimes have persecuted science fiction as one of their enemies in the domain of culture. Hitler and Stalin, Mussolini and Franco, all did the same. And in the last thirty years, Stalin's heirs continued to suppress science fiction as their ideological adversary.

Now we have broken the power of one political party at last. When we look around, we can see the damage caused by that party in their forty years of rule and that means developments in science fiction too. When a translator and editor managed after painful efforts to publish a well-known piece of SF, the public often did not understand it and it sold badly. And that dissuaded the publishing houses from publishing any further SF works.

Now we would like to rejoin the main trends of world culture, but we are afraid that it could still take a long time. That is why our Jules Verne Club wishes to go on publishing its fanzine *Poutnik/Pilgrim*. Over the last six years, we have published forty issues, without any remuneration for our work. In the new conditions, we would like to issue the *Pilgrim* in an increased print run of ten thousand, but we have to do it on a commercial basis to pay for the publishing. Even now, we won't ask any reward for our work. We are going to invest the money we will earn into improving our fanzine.

The main purpose of the *Pilgrim* as we see it is to get readers in Czechoslovakia acquainted with the works of SF and fantasy authors from around the world. In this way, we hope to get the names of those authors into the Czechoslovak readers' subconscious. When great publishing houses appear in the market on a pure commercial basis, they'll have to adapt to the readers' views and demands, supplying the public with authors known to them, maybe even their favourite ones.

The economical situation of our country isn't of the best; that concerns especially the amount of convertible currency that it owns. We can hardly expect the new government to free currency for our club to pay fees to SF and fantasy writers in other countries.

That is why we are addressing you, Dear Sirs, and other writers too, to be so kind and give us a permission to publish some of your stories or novels (according to our propositions or to your choice) in our fanzine *Poutnik/Pilgrim*. For the time being, according to our national legislation, we can pay you only in Czechoslovak crowns or you could let us publish them free of charge. All of them would be published only once.

Every story or novella would be preceded by the author's biography or by a text selected by the author himself. We would publish also annotations about his other SF and fantasy works. We believe this co-operation to be advantageous both for the Czechoslovak reader and for SF and fantasy writers around the world, because it would mean an entry on the Czechoslovak market for them. We are sure that the economic situation of our country, now freed of the chains which have bound it for forty years, will improve rapidly and in the future it shall enable us at *Pilgrim* - but also great commercial publishing houses - to pay the fees in hard currency.

Our Jules Verne Club, the whole of Czechoslovak fandom and our readers address you and ask you for understanding and co-operation.

With many thanks...

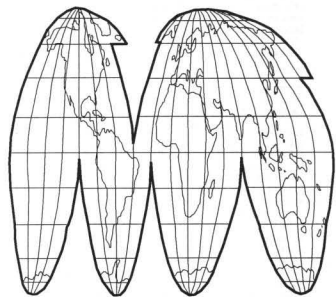
Egon Cierný and Miroslav Martan

Matechova 14, 140 00 Praha 4, Czechoslovakia.

There's One Round Every Corner:

BSFAns World Wide

In this Worldcon edition, it is good to know that there are scattered BSFA members worldwide. BSFA members turn up in the most unexpected places...



AUSTRALIA:	Canberra, Joslin, Kenmore, Seven Hills, Sydney, Toowoomba
AUSTRIA:	Linz, Vienna
BELGIUM:	Brussels (4)
BRAZIL:	Rio de Janeiro
BULGARIA:	Rousse
CANADA:	Downsview, New Brunswick, Regina, Toronto
CHANNEL ISLANDS:	Alderney, Guernsey
CYPRUS:	Paphos
DENMARK:	Esbjerg, København
EIRE:	Bodyke, Clondalkin, Dalkeny, Drogheda, Ennis, Killybegh, Knockvicar Boyle, Stillorgan
FINLAND:	Helsinki, Lipen, Nummela, Tampere, Turku, Uppsala
FRANCE:	De Nain, Marseille
GERMANY:	Berlin-Gatow, Bonn, Bremen, Gernersheim, Karlsruhe, Nuernberg, Worth am Main
GREECE:	Anagiri
HONG KONG:	BFPO (2), Happy Valley, Hong Kong
ITALY:	Omegna, Venice
JAPAN:	Chiba
LUXEMBOURG:	Esch-Velzecht
MALTA:	Pieta, Ta' Ibrag
NETHERLANDS:	Buissum, Den Haag, Lisse, Groningen, Leiden, Zoetermeer
NEW ZEALAND:	Aotearoa, Auckland
NORWAY:	Haapset, Oslo (2)
SAN SERIF:	Friz Quadrata
SOUTH AFRICA:	Cape Town (2), Transvaal
SPAIN:	Baleares, Barcelona, Salamanca, Sant Cugat Valles
SRI LANKA:	Columbo
SUDAN:	El Obeid
SULTANATE OF OMAN:	Ibri
SWEDEN:	Johanneshov, Linkoping
SWITZERLAND:	Lausanne
USA:	California (5), Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois (2), Indiana, Maryland (3), Michigan, Missouri, Minneapolis, New York (3), Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas (4), Wisconsin (3)
USSR:	Volograd

Soap Box

If you feel a primal scream coming on at any subject in the world (and that does, by the way, include science fiction), then why not send it in the direction of Soapbox? This time, K.V. Bailey responds to Roy Gray's Soapbox in Matrix 88 on cathedrals of the present and future.

Roy Gray's *Soap Box* opens up a question of some interest. I don't believe that such a project as "restoring lost species" or clearing the seas of pollution, although meeting his expressed criteria, would match-up to the more properly and generally accepted criteria for the function of a cathedral. If, from the past, we cite, as he proposes, henges, temples, as well as the magnificent western churches that actually bear the name, we have a variety of architectural artefacts, their building certainly made possibly by a (comparative) "excess of affluence" but constructed, not so much as he suggests to gain good opinion, or to show faith in the future, as to accommodate rituals expressive, as the buildings themselves were expressive, of a particular cosmic order, hierarchically conceived. In origin many were monastic churches. As its name states, the cathedral was an edifice containing the "cathedra" or throne of the bishop, the local or regional link in a chain of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Through the media of diffused light and colour, of a complex iconography, of plainsong and polyphonic music, and of a theologically symbolic structure, the medieval Gothic cathedral fulfilled a unique cultural function. It was, in addition to being a "theatre" of ritual, a dynamic centre of communal and participatory activity. Although in a secular age that role is quite attenuated, the cathedrals remain artefacts of inspirational beauty, even to the in-and-out swarming tourists, now their chief population.

There were mega-structures of the present age which are functional in ways that meet economic needs, but they reflect no cosmic order: they impress, but don't inspire - for example, the Hong Kong National Bank, Bost's Nottingham factory, New York's Trade Centre, the Lloyds Building in London. "Cathedrals of Industry and Commerce" is no more than a cliché, and inappropriate, description. When Roy Gray mentions A.I. and "chaos" theory as possibly future motivators he adds "There may be something underlying all this we do not comprehend". Here he touches on relationships between mind/consciousness and the "substance" of quantum physics; and on implications of the hypothetical Anthropic Cosmological Principle or of Fred Hoyle's equally hypothetical "Intelligent Universe". If they will be portals to Gaia, avenues to a heightened planetary and solar consciousness, architected, as is the geodesic dome, both to enclose and to be interfaced with space. Geometric variations, the labyrinthine spiral, juxtaposition of square and circle in mandala shapes - all of them expressed as structures, sometimes integrated with landscape, may well provide the form of future cathedrals. Pointers may well be Jellicoe's moving symbolic Kennedy Memorial, at one with a hillside above Runnymede; or the spherical auditorium designed by Stockhausen for the playing of such of his works as *Himnen*. As the Gothic cathedral was designed to be filled with a special music, so will be some of these - perhaps manifested as what Stockhausen has metaphorically termed "musical spaceships and time machines".

Writers of SF and fantasy have not been slow to exercise their imaginations along such lines. Silverberg's many-terraced Isle of Sleep (*Lord Valentine's Castle*) mirrors pilgrimage, monasticism; and in star-like structure, in music and ritual, its Inner Temple proclaims itself the numinous core of Majipoor. In Dan Simmons's *Hyperion*, the journey of Chaucer's pilgrim to St. Thomas a Becket's tomb in Canterbury is model for his pilgrims' interstellar journey to the Time Tombs and to the cathedral of the cult of the Shrike, carved into the body of that eponymous labyrinthine planet. As the pilgrims approach the cathedral they make music by voice and balalaika. Somewhat antithetically (though in context relevantly), it is that of *The Wizard of Oz*. Music which moves to ecstasy or sadness is carried through the solar system in Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Memory of Whiteness* and is produced within Holywelkin spheres on wireless satellites and asteroids; but the real "cathedral" which it fills is the solar system itself, bound about and energised by Holywelkin "whirltines" and "whitsuns" - or it may even be the entire Holywelkin universe, seen in vision as a vast column of spirally interlacing stars and galaxies. The concept of a "cathedral" enclosed by a sub-planetary body occurs in the Brin and Benford novel *The Heart of the Comet* where, deep in the nuclear ice, below the "crystal cathedral" of Lani, is Ould-Harrad's tomb, the rock of his "altarlike bier" holding the fossil that is revelatory of the solar system's origins.

It is true that SF writers may, as Stanislaw Lem does in *Fiasco* in respect of his huge "Digla" land-striders on Titan, describe the machines of technology as "like Gothic cathedrals"; but their function is different. To apply the word properly, the numinous function must be there, and there must be a combination of place - of locus - and architecture. But in maintaining that Roy Gray's archives, information banks, SETI and ecological projects don't themselves qualify, I'm far from saying that they could not be integral to a future ethos, or even a religiously orientated ideology, for the expression and enshrinement of which a great "cathedral" architecture may emerge.