

95p *Matrix* 90

The Newsletter of the British Science Fiction Association

News

Awards: Hugos and
Others
SF Museums

Clubs

Nation-Wide Listing

Fanzines

A Natural History

Conventions

Worldcon Reports

Cry "Fanac"

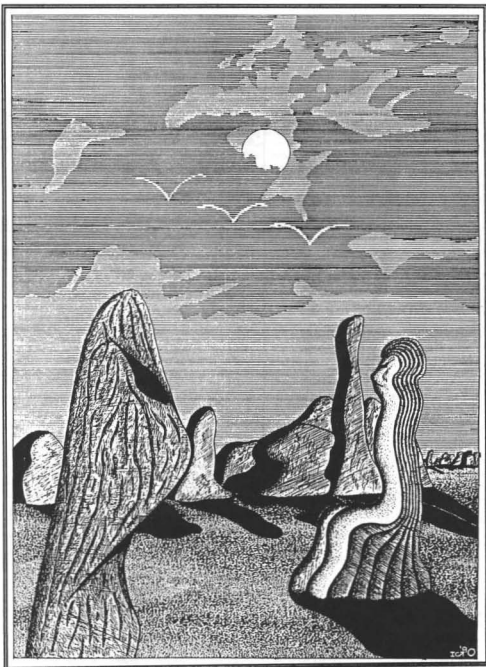
Orbiter Explained

Media News and Reviews

Films, Videos
Matrix at the Fringe

Plus

Comics,
Letters,
Competition Corner
and Information
Service.



October-November 1990

BSFA membership costs £12 (UK & EEC), £15 (non-EEC Europe), £18/£25air Australia, \$25/\$40air and is available from:
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Joanne Raine
 29 Thornville Road,
 Hartlepool,
 Cleveland TS26 8EW

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS: Keith Freeman
 269 Wykeham Road,
 Reading RG6 1PL

USA MEMBERSHIP: Cy Chauvin
 14248 Wilfred St,
 Detroit,
 MI 48213, USA

BSFA CO-ORDINATOR: Maureen Porter
 60 Bournemouth Road,
 Folkestone CT19 5AZ

MATRIX EDITOR: Jenny Glover
 16 Avary Place,
 Leeds LS12 2NP

NEWS: Paul Kincaid (to December)
 60 Bournemouth Road,
 Folkestone CT19 5AZ

MEDIA: John Peters
 299 Southway Drive,
 Plymouth PL6 6QN

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

CLUBS: Tommy Ferguson
 90 Carnhill,
 Shantallow 3,
 Londonderry BT48 8BE

TREASURER: Brett Cockrell
 40 Cyprus Road,
 London NW1 7BU

ADVERTISING: to be arranged

INFORMATION: Phil Nichols
 57 Grange Road,
 West Bromwich,
 West Midlands B70 8PB

ORBITER CO-ORDINATOR: Sue Thomason
 190 Coach Road,
 Sleights, near Whitby,
 North Yorks. YO22 5EN

PAPERBACK INFERNO EDITOR: Andy Sawyer
 1 The Flaxyard Tel: 051 336 3355
 Woodfall Lane,
 Little Neston,
 South Wirral L64 4BT

FOCUS EDITOR: Cecil Nurse
 49 Station Road,
 Haxby,
 York YO3 8LU

VECTOR CO-EDITORS

Keve McVeigh Boyd Parkinson
 37 Firs Road 11 Marsh Street
 Milnthorpe Barrow-in-Furness
 Cumbria LA7 7QF Cumbria LA14 2AE

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

About the Artist

The artwork is from **Iain Thomas**, editor of the *Failed Voyager* series of fanzines and organiser of *Newspeak*, the publicity for Albacon '91 which will be held at the Central Hotel, Glasgow, next September. Next issue will feature horror reviews, possibly a Clive Barker interview, so I would like the artwork to reflect the SF/Horror boundaries. Artwork is very welcome - please send some in.

Readers may note that there are glitches in this magazine - our computer is terminally ill and as you read this, it will be undergoing a thorough overhaul. We apologise most sincerely.

As for the lack of artwork - that is because members have eagerly sent information in (which is welcomed) - but not art. Most regular columns are bursting at the seams and, since no artwork was sent in anyway, the space for illustrations had a very low priority.

Changes of Address of BSFA members:

BLAKEY, Ronnie 16 Robertson St., Greenock
BULL, Terry A. 24 Bridlington Ave, Shirley, Southampton SO1 5HN
CLARK, Nigel T. 71 Cotteslowe House, Park Close, Oxford OX2 8NP
CULLUM, Benedict S. pp Lapwing Lane, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 0UT
FRIEND, Sean 25 Sheldon Road, Chippenham, Wilts. SN14 0BP
GRUNWELL, Paul M. 19 Bentley Grove, Mearwood, Leeds LS6 4AT
MAXWELL, Nigel 24 Kernan Ave, Portadown, Co. Armagh, Belfast BT63 5TB
MCCAHY, Peter C. 8 Winchester Road, Ash, Aldershot, Hants. GU12 6SX
NOORD, J.C. Viermaat 26, 9753 KW Haren, The Netherlands
OGDEN, Christopher M. Holly Springs Hotel, Jin's Lane, Bracknell RG12 6DN
POMEROY, Camilla 1 Earle Place, Canton, Cardiff CF5 1NZ
RAINE, Joanne C. 29 Thornville Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS26 8EW
SMITH, Andrew M. 15 Sanderson St., Darlington, Co. Durham
SMITH, David R. 42 Macfarlane, Uphall, Broxburn, West Lothian EH52 5PS
STAFFORD, Derek L. 21 Warwick Rd., Walton le Dale, Preston, Lancs. PR5 4GA
THOMAS, Mrs. D. Heidestraat 14, 1785 Mercht-Hamme, Belgium
THOMASON, Sue 190 Coach Road, Sleights, nr. Whitby, North Yorks. YO22 5EN
WAKE, Stephen M. 44A Shirley Ave, Shirley, Southampton, Hants. SO1 5NJ
WOODWARD-COURT, Justin M. 11 Portland Sq., Cheltenham, Glos. GL52 2HT

All members should sign the Guarantee Form. This means that should the BSFA collapse (which is very unlikely), then each member will only be eligible for a low set amount of any money owing. Without this Limited Guarantee, each member would need to pay in proportion if the absolute worst happened and it would inevitably be more than the limited guarantee amount.

There is also an impressive collection of BSFA back issues available from Maureen Porter.

Contents

Determinants	3
Walking on Glass: The BSFA Column (Maureen Porter)	3
News (Paul Kincaid with a little help from <i>Locus</i> , <i>SF Chronicle</i> and other sources)	4
Local Phenomena (Keith Mitchell)	9
Media News (John Peters with Joseph Nicholas, Gary M. Gibson, Gavin Boyter and Jon Moran)	12
Fire and Hemlock: Flamingoes and Aardvarks: The Natural History of Fanzines (Nic Farey) The Thirty Nine Zines	17
Noticeboard	19
Information Service Update (Phil Nichols)	19
Cry "Fanac": What is the Orbiter? (Sue Thomason)	20
Comics News (Ian Abraham)	20
The Periodic Table: Dave Barrett says "Mag ik een Orangeboom, alstublieft" Workdon Site Voting On the Workdon Programme (June Laverick) Contour Mappings	21
WriteBack (Jon Moran, Raymond Scholer, Tommy Ferguson, Steve Grover, Kev McVeigh, John D. Rickett, Daniel Buck)	23
Competition Corner (Roger Robinson)	24
Soapbox: New York for Eastercon 1993! (Jim Grey)	24

ADVERTISING: Cover (back, ibc, ifc) £40; rate page £35; half page £20; quarter page £15. Rates for multiple insertions negotiable. Distribution of loose flyers with BSFA mailings is negotiable. Details from Maureen Porter.

Any opinions expressed are those of individual authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of either the editor or the BSFA

Copyright © BSFA Ltd, 1990. Individual copyrights are the property of authors and editors. ISSN: 0307 3335

Production by **Jenny and Steve Glover**. Printed by PDC Copyright, 11 Jeffries Passage, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4AP

British Science Fiction Association Ltd. Company No. 921500
 Registered in England. Registered Address - 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ. Limited by Guarantee.

DEADLINE
17th November

Determinants

"It's a weird thing, but suddenly I feel quite nervous. I've published millions and millions of words as a science fiction writer, as a journalist, and as a fanzine contributor - but this is the first time I've ever sat down to compose an editorial for a fanzine of my very own". Obviously it is not your editor. It is actually **Bob Shaw** in his first fanzine, *Perspez Parrot*, on the difficulties of writing an editorial. He continues: "The responsibility is daunting. What am I supposed to say?"

There's not many things your editor finds daunting, apart from heights, which induce a giddy desire to free fall down as far as possible: and editorials. Help came initially from the last editor, **Maureen Porter**, who commented in *Matrix* 83: "I'm always amazed to find that so many people apparently enjoy the editorial, particularly when it is the piece I find most difficult to write. Or rather, I kick around for an hour or two, wondering whether I have anything to say, and then, just when desperation sets in, so does an idea worth exploring, and off we go".

Another editor, **Andrew Porter**, of the *Science Fiction Chronicle*, makes his editorial on "whatever comes to mind, what bothers him and pleases him ... in short, an echo of his thoughts". His editorials have snappy titles like "If Terrorists Read SF, We'd All Be Dead" - fortunately, **Gordon Dickson** is not on the Terrorists' Desert Island Books - or "The End of Life As We Know It - Again?" which comment on news issues like AIDS and why science fiction has avoided writing about it. This makes an interesting contrast to the *Locus* editorials which concentrate more on the delights awaiting helpers who have collated it in **Charles N. Brown's** kitchen and living room and who then settle down to a party with goulash, couscous, wine and salad. On the other hand, the March 1990 issue weighed nearly half a pound, which makes collating the BSFA magazines seem desirable.

However, the aims of *Matrix* are very clear: to supply news about science fiction (new books, films, fanzines, clubs), to provide a platform for members (*Soap Box*, *WriteBack*, reviews, articles) and to show what members are doing in their spare time (*Cry 'Fanc'*). The editorial fits into that latter slot very uneasily: your editor is a member, pays the annual fees like anyone else, but has a regular space to somehow fill with world shattering prose. Which has to provoke letters. Difficult.

Start again: Two stories leapt out of the news and grabbed your editor this week. The first concerned a managing director who had gone on an ill-timed business trip to Kuwait and was now stuck somewhere near Jordan, dressed only in a filthy t-shirt, his feet bare and sandy. "I am not accustomed to living like this" he pleaded. He represented the caprice of chance which can suddenly alter one's life, despite the most careful arrangements, a casual cruelty encountered by the manager of our local computer shop who first fell on a shard of glass in a touch rugby pass (splitting open his forearm) then was woken two days later to discover his newly-opened shop burnt down.

The second story sadly reported the decline in children's reading standards. It is easy to compare the life of our pampered children with the hard(er) life of the past when there was no alternative to rote learning and television was a visual delicacy for the few. It is easier to blame all the problems of inattentive children on television, especially when the children are watching it for some three hours every day, five on Sundays, and even the adults get twitchy if there is no soothing bland flickering in the background.

Television does not neglect the genre of science fiction, but corrupts it into a facile soap opera. When cartoon rockets zap among the stars, visiting a new (English-speaking) world every episode, the subconscious message comments negatively on the real space programme. Space reporting in the media is placed in the most obscure of columns, given the same importance as "Community penalties may lead to custody" and the British-designed Hotel space vehicle project may be Soviet funded because the Department of Trade and Industry refused to finance it.

And now for a total change of subject. **Paul Kincaid** has resigned. He has just had a work promotion which entails a lot of overtime and writes: "If I am going to continue doing my own writing, as well as actually having some free time, something had to give. In the end I decided I couldn't continue as News Editor". I am especially sad at this, because as a new BSFA member, I would read Paul's reports of new SF and awards presented all over the world and feel part of a community. So I am looking for a News Editor to start as soon as possible, but in the New Year at the absolute latest. News is the central core of *Matrix*, the reason for its existence and I propose to have a News Team instead of one person. Anyone interested in hunting for and presenting science fiction news, please contact me. You will be greeted with grateful enthusiasm.

There is now a new Clubs Columnist: **Tommy Ferguson**. I have known Tommy since 1987 when, as new fanzine editors and conrunners, we were part of the "Knew Mutant" group. While I continued as a mother and progressed to editor here, Tommy finished his politics degree and now works in Londonderry where he is contact for the local SF group there. He writes: "It's sad to see Keith leave as it was always one of the first things I turned to in the magazine". Tommy is an extremely thoughtful and prolific correspondent and both Keith and I wish him well. Welcome aboard.

On the subject of clubs: it is easy for members to under-estimate the sheer guts needed to walk into a pub and face a group of unfamiliar faces. I've always found the Leeds Group friendly, having already "met" some in writing before seeing them in person. So when my husband Steve and I had the opportunity to visit some Scottish science fiction groups this summer, it seemed marvellous. And we had a great time: but it will take a long time to forget those first shivery moments while we were waiting for people to turn up, not knowing who to expect or what they would be like. At Forth in Edinburgh, we arrived too early and spent an hour looking sideways at the next table, wondering if they were the Forth group after all - they were talking about international politics.

The next day, we visited the Saltcoats group. A small seaside resort-cum-fishing village with but a solitary BSFA member. Saltcoats seems an unlikely place for a thriving science fiction group. But that evening was one of the most interesting and thought-provoking of the tour. The conversation ranged from science fiction to comics to football; and it was an object lesson in how not to be hesitant about going to new clubs. We overcame our hesitations: and it was well worth it. Likewise, we found two meetings in Glasgow: "Trout" in the Central Hotel, a mixed group of sixteen con runners, role playing gamers, media fans and computer programmers followed by a visit to the Friends of Admiral Beakow, whose venue is shared by poets and folksingers and who were found sheltering by the electric fan next to the bar. In this refreshing coolness, we were able to discuss science fiction while hearing four separate sets of folk songs simultaneously. Many thanks to Forth, Saltcoats, "Trout" and the Admiral's friends (not to mention the Edinburgh computer people). We'll be back. Soon.

Walking on Glass - The BSFA Column

Maureen Porter

The summer is traditionally a quiet time in most activities, and I have little to report at this stage.

I'm sorry to have to report that David Wood, our Advertising Manager, has been obliged to step down, for personal reasons. A hurried advertisement was placed on the flier accompanying the last mailing. Sadly, not one person felt able to respond. I'm putting this down to the fact that people do not tend to read fliers, and I'm hoping that this notice will produce a better response.

We desperately need what is effectively a Business Manager, someone who can arrange advertising on behalf of the BSFA, through a wide range of fanzine and professional sources, as well as soliciting advertising for BSFA publications. The occupier of this post would thus be heavily involved in promoting the BSFA and ensuring a regular flow of revenue. It is also envisaged that, at a later date, the Business Manager will also take on the handling of trade sales, but this will be open to discussion.

We need someone dedicated, methodical and energetic, prepared to hassle for advertising and unwilling to take "no" for an answer. Knowledge of either the fanzine and professional SF scene or both would be helpful but isn't vital as assistance will be provided by other Committee members, particularly the Co-ordinator. Other requirements: access to a telephone during working hours is absolutely vital, and the use of either a decent typewriter or a word processor is necessary. Obviously, this is a Committee post so applicants will be expected to be willing to participate in the general running of the BSFA.

If you are interested in the post, or would like further information, please contact Maureen Porter at 60 Bourne-mouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ, tel: 0303 52939. The deadline for applications is 1st November.

In the meantime, all enquiries about advertising in BSFA publications should be directed to Maureen Porter, who will handle these matters until a suitable replacement is found.

We are sorry to lose Dave in this way, but he has expressed an interest in remaining active within the BSFA so we hope it's not too long before he appears in some other capacity.

I am also pleased to report that, after much intensive typing, the Back Issues list is now complete, and copies have been despatched to those people who enquired. Anyone who would like a copy of the list, please send a self-addressed envelope, stamped to the value of 20p, to Maureen Porter, to whom any enquiries for back issues should be addressed.

Special offers include six issues for the price of five, twelve issues for the price of ten. Special mystery selections of fifteen issues, individual titles, or a mixture of all four, are available for £10. When ordering the mystery package, please give the year you joined the BSFA and specify your choice of titles.

We have already received one handsome donation of fifteen years worth of BSFA back issues, to be collected shortly. If anyone has BSFA magazines they wish to dispose of, I would be delighted to receive them, particularly early issues which would help to fill in the gaps in the BSFA Archives. Arrangements will be made to either collect the items or to refund postage.

By the time this report sees print, the BSFA Survey should have been finished (as are most of the people who were involved with it), and we should be able to offer some interesting facts and figures in a future edition of *Matrix*, not to mention being able to continue our assault of potential advertising sources.

The Committee, particularly the editors of *Vector*, wish to apologise for the non-appearance of *Vector* in the most recent mailing. This was due to technical problems beyond their control. However, we're pleased to say that members will not be missing out on any articles or reviews. The issue of *Vector* accompanying this mailing will be a little larger than normal to ensure that all members receive the full page count of the missing *Vector*.

News

Compiled by Paul Kincaid

(With a little help from *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and other sources)

Hugo Award Winners

This year's Hugo Awards have been announced, and as has become only too predictable there was only one British winner, Dave Langford in the Fan Writer category. In fact, hardly any other Brits even made the final ballot, and despite the fact that the Worldcon was held in Holland and there were fewer than usual Americans in attendance, no other Europeans got onto the ballot. Anyway, the full results of these truly international awards, complete with runners up in order were:

BEST NOVEL

***Hyperion* - Dan Simmons (HEADLINE)**

A Fire in the Sun - George Alec Effinger (No British Publisher)

Prentice Alvin - Orson Scott Card (LEGEND)

The Boat of a Million Years - Poul Anderson (ORBIT)

Grass - Sheri S. Tepper (BANTAM)

No Award

BEST NOVELLA

***"Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another"* - Robert Silverberg (IASFM/Time Gate)**

"For I Have Touched the Sky" - Mike Resnick (F&SF)

"Everything But Honour" - George Alec Effinger (IASFM/What Might Have Been I)

"At the Rialto" - Connie Willis (OMNI/The Microverse)

"The Price of Oranges" - Nancy Kress (IASFM)

"Dogwalker" - Orson Scott Card (IASFM)

BEST SHORT STORY

***"Boobs"* - Suzy McKee Charnas (IASFM)**

"Lost Boys" - Orson Scott Card (F&SF)

"Computer Friendly" - Eileen Gunn (IASFM)

"The Return of William Proxmire" - Larry Niven (What Might Have Been I)

"The Edge of the World" - Michael Swanwick (Full Spectrum II)

"Dori Bangs" - Bruce Sterling (IASFM)

BEST NON-FICTION

***The World Beyond the Hill* - Alexei & Cory Panshin (No British Publisher)**

Grumbles from the Grave - Robert Heinlein (No British Publisher)

***Dancing at the Edge of the World* - Ursula LeGuin (GOLLANCZ)**

Harlan Ellison's Watching - Harlan Ellison (No British Publisher)

Noreascon 3 Souvenir Book - Greg Thokar (Ed) (No British Publisher)

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

Runners up were: *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, *Batman*, *Field of Dreams*, *The Abyss*

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR

Gardner Dozois

Runners up were: Ellen Datlow, David G. Harwell, Beth Meacham, Edward L. Ferman, Stanley Schmidt, Charles C. Ryan

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Don Maitz

Runners up were: Thomas Canty, Michael Whelan, Jim Burns, David Cherry, Tom Kidd, James Gurney

BEST SEMIPROZINE

***Locus* - Charlie Brown (Ed)**

Science Fiction Chronicle - Andrew Porter (Ed)

Interzone - David Pringle (Ed)

The New York Review of Science Fiction - Kathryn Cramer, David G. Hartwell

& Gordon Van Gelder (Eds)

Thrust - D. Douglas Fratz (Ed)

BEST FAN WRITER

Dave Langford

Runners up were: Mike Glyer, Leslie Turek, Arthur D. Hlavaty, Evelyn Leeper

BEST FAN ARTIST

Stu Shiffman

Runners up were: Teddy Harvia, Taral Wayne, Merle Insinga, Joe Mayhew, Steve Fox

BEST FANZINE

***The Mad 3 Party* - Leslie Turek (Ed)**

File 770 - Mike Glyer (Ed)

Lan's Lantern - George "Lan" Laskowski (Ed)

Pirate Jenny - Pat Mueller (Ed)

Foafax - Timothy Lane (Ed)

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

Kristine Kathryn Rusch

Runners up were: Allen Steele, Nancy Collins, John Cramer, Katherine Neville

BEST ORIGINAL ARTWORK

Cover: *Rimrunners* - Don Maitz

Cover: *Hyperion* - Gary Ruddell

Cover: *Paradise* - Michael Whelan

Cover: *The Renegades of Pern* - Michael Whelan

Cover: *Quoz!* - James Gurney

Cover: *The Stress of Her Regard* - James Gurney

These last two categories are not Hugo Awards.

It may be invidious to analyse these results too closely, but a couple of things are worth pointing out. If you are going after a fiction Hugo, then it pays to get your story, novella or novella published in *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* - the other magazines hardly get a look in. And increasingly it seems that you should get your story published in two places at the same time. I seem to remember not too long ago that it was frowned upon to submit your story to more than one place at once, indeed contracts used to make such multiple sales impossible. Now it doesn't seem to matter. A little judicious canvassing would also seem to work - BAEN, who published both *Time Gate* and *Borders of Infinity*, sent out free copies of both books to some people at least on this side of the Atlantic, and lo and behold, both come up with Awards.

As to the other categories, there was something of a surprise in Michael Whelan being beaten into third place in the Professional Artist category, but otherwise everything went with form. Practically every one of the nominees in the Editor, Artist, Semiprozine, Fan Writer, Fan Artist and Fanzine categories has been on the ballot regularly for the past several years, and they've usually ended up in just about the same position in the final vote. As for *Locus* winning the Semiprozine category - it has done so monotonously every year since the category was created specifically to stop it swamping the Fanzine category with the same predictability. Does anyone else share my feeling that these awards are becoming just a little bit tedious?

New Format for *Amazing*

The on-again, off-again existence of *Amazing Stories* appears to be on again. The long-running magazine has been under threat of closure for some months now, and indeed the struggle for survival with occasional extra issues being announced has had an air of putting off the inevitable. However, TSR, the company which produces all the role-playing game books and who have owned *Amazing* for some time now, appear to have guaranteed its survival. The current plan is that the March 1991 issue will be the last in the current digest-size format, and in May 1991 it will be relaunched as a glossy, full-colour monthly magazine in American A4 (the same size as magazines like *Locus* and *SF Chronicle*). Each issue will be 96 pages, and it will be distributed in the UK as well as in America.

The new editor will be **Kim Mohan**, former editor of *Dragon*, another TSR publication, and editorial policy apparently is that each issue will contain a number of stories by previously unpublished writers. The rates are 6-10 cents per word for stories up to 25,000 words, with all stories under 6,000 words paid at the rate 10 cents per word. The address is *Amazing Stories*, c/o TSR, Box 111, Lake Geneva, WI 53147, USA.

New Magazines to Look Out For

Dark Side is following in the footsteps of *Fear* and *Skeleton Crew*. Launched on September 27 and published by Robert Maxwell's MAXWELL'S SPECIALIST MAGAZINES, it will concentrate on horror (especially in the movies) but will also cover some science fiction and fantasy. The magazine should cost £1.75, and the first issue headlines an article on Robert Englund, with other features on *Highlander 2* and *Re-Animator*. The subtitle: "The Magazine of the Macabre and Fantastic" probably gives the flavour of the magazine, but horror certainly seems to be generating big money these days. Maxwell is launching *The Dark Side* with an initial print run of 40,000.

Paul Brazier has announced the launch of a new SF magazine: *SF Nexus*, which will be dedicated to science fiction, aiming to improve science fiction by criticism and example. The articles will range from the light-hearted to the profound, without being "po-faced". The editor is *Interzone* and *Vector* reviewer, **Paul Brazier**, with *Sylvia Starshine* as Art Editor, **Annie Moss** as Designer (who also shares the editor's passion for Samuel R Delany) plus **Keith Knight** on modern media, **Peter Knight** (no relation) will continue his one-man crusade against comic superheroes and **Bernie Peck** will regale you with super-science. Contributors so far include **Geoff Ryman**, **John Clute**, **Colin Greenland**, **M. John Harrison**, **Diana Wynne Jones** and **Christina Lake**. The first issue will appear in December 1990 from *SF Nexus*, PO Box 1123, Brighton BN1 6EX. The subscription is £10/\$25 for four issues, cheques payable to **Paul Brazier**.

David Pringle announced the launch of a new magazine, *Million*, in December 1990, price £1.95, available through newsstand distribution or by subscription from *Popular Fictions*, 124 Osborne Road, Brighton BN1 6LU, £12 for six issues. It will be A4 bi-monthly with at least 68 pages on popular fiction this includes science fiction, but also far more as it is aimed at a wide general audience. There will be interviews with and articles about the world's most popular authors with book reviews and a couple of short stories per issue. Novelist and broadcaster **Kim Newman** is Associate Editor.

Look out for *Amaranth*, Britain's newest fantasy magazine, available through subscription and at selected stores, which aims to include interviews (Katherine Kerr was interviewed in issue 1), book reviews, stories and articles "by exciting new writers". Details from 325 Cannon Hill Lane, London SW20 9HQ, £2 single copy, £11 for six issues, cheques payable to *Amaranth Publishing Ltd*.

The *Canadian SF Quarterly* aims to reflect the flourishing professional and fanish community on the Canadian scene and readers can expect in-depth interviews, critical essays, convention reports and listings, and informative book and film reviews. It will cover the science fiction, fantasy and horror genres. All that for just \$3(Can)/\$4(US) per issue \$11(Can)/\$18(US) per year, details from 1255 Emperor Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Z 8C4 (note this is the logical progression to Robert Runtz's *New Canadian Fandom* and Michael Skeet's *MLR*).

Science Fiction and Fantasy Puzzles is a different kind of fanzine, profits of which go to Des Moines' annual F&SF convention. It contains two dozen or more brain-busters for F&SF readers with crosswords, anagrams, quizzes and wordsearches. Details from DemiCon, Att Publications, PO Box 7572, Des Moines, Iowa 50322, \$2.50 each plus appropriate postage - at least \$1.00.

Cloud City is an Italian Star Wars association which attempts to maintain the enjoyment and love for the Saga alive. The bimonthly zine is published in Italian, with a booklet containing english texts from the Star Wars Radio Shows. Details from Firenze delle Rupi, 96, Via XX Settembre, 06100 Perugia, Italy.

Science Fiction Museums

At ConFiction, **Forry Ackerman** announced that the Esplanade Hotel in Berlin has been purchased to house the **Forrest J. Ackerman Metropolis Museum**. The Museum will contain six hundred film props and over one thousand books which have been made into SF and fantasy films. In addition, there will be one thousand stills from *Metropolis*, approximately one hundred thousand stills from fantastic films made during the last ninety years and five hundred fantasy film shooting scripts plus posters, cinema lobby card displays and press books. **Forry** plans to spend one month a year in Berlin as curator and lecturer. Incidentally, **Forry**, a good friend of **Fritz Lang**, will be the creative consultant on the *Metropolis 2* project. [Wif James].

The House of Elsewhere at Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland, will reopen next year as a museum exclusively devoted to science fiction, utopia and extraordinary voyages. It was created in 1976 by **Pierre Verlain**, French writer, encyclopaedist and collector, and contains thousands of books, comics, videos and a library with over twenty thousand volumes in forty two languages. It intends to be a living cultural centre, open to everyone, with exhibitions and speeches. There is a Friends of the House of Elsewhere association, which publishes a bulletin, organises various events and collects funds, ideas and new items. Details from Amis de la Maison d'Alailleurs, Case Postale 74-1401, Yverdon les Bains, Switzerland, membership \$15(US) or £8 per year.

Ryman Wins Campbell Memorial Award

Geoff Ryman has won the **John W. Campbell Memorial Award** for his novel *The Child Garden*. The Campbell Award is chosen by a committee of SF writers and critics and is distinct from the Campbell Award for new writers which is presented in association with the Hugos. This is Ryman's second award for this novel, which has already won the **Arthur C. Clarke Award**. The runners up were *Farwell Horizontal* by **K.W. Jeter** and *Good News from Outer Space* by **John Kessel**.

At the same ceremony, the results of the **Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award** for the best short fiction of the year were announced. The winner was "The Edge of the World" by **Michael Swanwick**, and the runners up were "Silver Lady and the Fortynish Man" - **Megan Lindholm** and "Dori Bangs" - **Bruce Sterling**, with honourable mentions for two stories by **James Patrick Kelly**, "Dancing with the Chairs" and "Faith".

Writers of the Future

There is no entry fee and no conveyance of rights in the story. Send entries to **L. Ron Hubbard's Writers of the Future Contest**, PO Box 1630, Los Angeles, CA 90078, USA. **L. Ron Hubbard** founded the contest to reward on the basis of performance only, so the author's name does not appear on the manuscripts seen by the judges, which include **Robert Silverberg**, **Larry Niven**, **Algis Budrys** and **Ramsey Campbell**. There is a parallel contest - **Illustrators of the Future** - whose judges include **Moebius**, **Frank Frazetta** and **Leo Dillon** (details from PO Box 3190, Los Angeles, Ca 90078, USA).

Awards

The annual **Locus Poll** results have been announced. As usual, I'll list the top five in each category, plus the placings of work by British writers:

BEST SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL

1. *Hyperion* - **Dan Simmons** (HEADLINE)
2. *Rimrunners* - **C.J. Cherryh** (NEL)
3. *Grass* - **Sheri S. Tepper** (BANTAM)
4. *Tides of Light* - **Gregory Benford** (GOLLANZ)
5. *A Fire in the Sun* - **George Alex Effinger** (No British publisher)
6. *Rama II* - **Arthur C. Clarke & Gentry Lee** (GOLLANZ)
7. *Out On Blue Six* - **Ian McDonald** (BANTAM)
21. *The Child Garden* - **Geoff Ryman** (UNWIN)

BEST FANTASY NOVEL

1. *Pentecost* - **Alvin - Orson Scott Card** (LEGEND)
2. *The Street of Her Regard* - **Tim Powers** (No British Publisher)
3. *Soldier of Arrete* - **Gene Wolfe** (NEL)

4. *Rusalka* - C.J. Cherryh (METHUEN/MANDARIN)
5. *Dream Baby* - Bruce McAllister (No British Publisher)
8. *The Satanic Verses* - Salman Rushdie (VIKING)
12. *The Fortress of the Pearl* - Michael Moorcock (GOLLANCZ)
14. *Guards! Guards!* - Terry Pratchett (GOLLANCZ)
16. *A Heroine of the World* - Tanith Lee (No British Publisher)
23. *The Coachman Rat* - David Henry Wilson (ROBINSON)

BEST HORROR NOVEL

1. *Carrión Comfort* - Dan Simmons (HEADLINE)
2. *The Dark Half* - Stephen King (HODDER)
3. *The Great and Secret Show* - Clive Barker (COLLINS)
4. *Geek Love* - Katherine Dunn (HEINEMANN)
5. *Midnight* - Dean R. Koonz (HEADLINE)
7. *Ancient Images* - Ramsey Campbell (HODDER)

BEST FIRST NOVEL

1. *Orbital Decay* - Allen M. Steele (LEGEND)
2. *Sunglasses After Dark* - Nancy A. Collins (KINNELL)
3. *On My Way to Paradise* - Dave Wolverton (No British Publisher)
4. *The Tides of God* - Ted Reynolds (No British Publisher)
5. *Strange Invasion* - Michael Kandel (No British Publisher)

BEST NOVELLA

1. *The Father of Stones* - Lucius Shepard
2. *A Dozen Tough Jobs* - Howard Waldrop
3. "Labyrinth" - Lois McMaster Bujold
4. "The Mountains of Mourning" - Lois McMaster Bujold
5. "Pagant Wagon" - Orson Scott Card
16. *The State of the Art* - Iain M. Banks
23. "Nanoware Time" - Ian Watson

BEST NOVELETTE

1. "Dogwalker" - Orson Scott Card
2. "Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another" - Robert Silverberg
3. "At the Rialto" - Connie Willis
4. "For I Have Touched the Sky" - Mike Resnick
5. "Sisters" - Greg Bear
10. "War Fever" - J.G. Ballard
21. "Listen" - Ian McDonald

BEST SHORT STORY

1. "Lost Boys" - Orson Scott Card
2. "The Power and the Passion" - Pat Cadigan
3. "Privacy" - David Brin
4. "The Edge of the World" - Michael Swanwick
5. "Boobs" - Suzy McKee Charnas
15. "The Enormous Space" - J.G. Ballard

BEST NON-FICTION

1. *Grumbles from the Grave* - Robert A. Heinlein (No British Publisher)
2. *The World Beyond the Hill: SF and the Quest for Transcendence* - Alexei & Cory Panshin (No British Publisher)
3. *ASTOUNDING DAYS* - Arthur C. Clarke (GOLLANCZ)
4. *Dancing at the Edge of the World* - Ursula K. Le Guin (GOLLANCZ)
5. *Giger's Alien* - H.G. Giger (No British Publisher)

BEST COLLECTION

1. *Patterns* - Pat Cadigan (No British Publisher)
2. *Crystal Express* - Bruce Sterling (LEGEND)
3. *Tangents* - Greg Bear (GOLLANCZ)
4. *The Folk of the Fringe* - Orson Scott Card (LEGEND)
5. *Endangered Species* - Gene Wolfe (ORBIT)
18. *Women as Demons* - Tanith Lee (WOMEN'S PRESS)
20. *Salvage Rites* - Ian Watson (GOLLANCZ)

BEST ANTHOLOGY

1. *The Year's Best SF: Sixth Annual Collection (Best SF3)* - Gardner Dozois (Ed) (ROBINSON)
2. *Full Spectrum 2* - Lou Aronica (Ed) (No British Publisher)
3. *The Year's Best Fantasy: Second Annual Collection (Demons & Dragons 2)* - Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling (Eds) (No British Publisher)
4. *What Might Have Been? Vol. 1: Alternate Empires* - Gregory Benford & Martin H. Greenberg (Eds) (No British Publisher)
5. *Foundation's Friends* - Martin H. Greenberg (Ed) (No British Publisher)
15. *Interzone: The Fourth Anthology* - John Clute, David Pringle & Simon Ounsley (Eds) (SIMON & SCHUSTER)
20. *Zenith* - David S. Garnett (Ed) (SPHERE)

24. *The Orbit SF Yearbook 2* - David S. Garnett (Ed) (ORBIT)

The **Bram Stoker Awards**, presented by the Horror Writers of America, have been announced. The winners are:

BEST NOVEL: *Carrión Comfort* - Dan Simmons
 BEST FIRST NOVEL: *Sunglasses After Dark* - Nancy Collins
 BEST NOVELLA/NOVELETTE: "On the Far Side of the Cadillac Desert with Dead Folks" - Joe R. Lansdale
 BEST SHORT STORY: "Eat Me" - Robert R. McCammon
 BEST COLLECTION: *Richard Matheson: Collected Stories* - Richard Matheson
 BEST NON-FICTION: *Harlan Ellison's Watching* - Harlan Ellison in a tie with either *Horror: A Connoisseur's Guide* - Leonard Wolf or *Horror: The 100 Best Books* - Stephen Jones & Kim Newman (Eds). There is some confusion on this point, *Locust* gives the Jones & Newman as the co-winner, *SF Chronicle* gives the Wolf as the co-winner. I'll try to sort out the confusion and announce the real winner next issue.

The **Casper Awards**, the Canadian SF Awards, have been announced:

BEST LONG WORK (ENGLISH): *West of January* - Dave Duncan
 BEST LONG WORK (FRENCH): *L'Oiseau du Feu* - Jacques Brossard
 BEST SHORT WORK (ENGLISH): "Carpe Diem" - Eileen Kargman
 BEST SHORT WORK (FRENCH): "Cogito" - Elisabeth Vonarburg
 BEST WORK IN ENGLISH (OTHER): *On Spec*
 BEST WORK IN FRENCH (OTHER): *Luc Pomerleau for Solaris*
 FAN ACHIEVEMENT (ORGANISATIONAL): Alberta Speculative Fiction Association for organising the formation of Speculative Writers Association of Canada
 FAN ACHIEVEMENT (FANZINE): *MLE* - Michael Skeet
 FAN ACHIEVEMENT (OTHER): Robert Runte

People

J.G. Ballard has been given the Raymond Chandler Memorial Award, which is presented for an outstanding contribution to imaginative writing. He follows in the footsteps of Graham Greene and Leonardo Sciascia, and it is the first international award of any kind that Ballard has received. Meanwhile, his novel *Crash* is to be filmed by David Cronenberg in Autumn next year, and in November this year COLLINS will publish his short story collection *War Fever*. He is currently working on a sequel to *Empire of the Sun*.

Robert Holdstock is putting together a new collection of short stories, *The Bone Forest*, which will include at least one story which has never been published before. The book will be published by GRAFTON and will mark Holdstock's reunion with his former editor at GOLLANCZ, Malcolm Edwards. It will be followed by *The Cathedral*, the third of his Mythago Wood novels, which will also be published by GRAFTON.

S.M. Baxter has signed contracts for three novels with Malcolm Edwards at GRAFTON. The first, *Raft*, based on his *Interzone* story of the same name will appear in July 1991; the second, provisionally titled *Anti-Ice* will be set in the same alternate-Victorian universe as his *Zenith II* story, "A Journey to the King Planet".

Stephen Donaldson's new five novel SF adventure, *The Gap*, which involves pirates and the most powerful company in the galaxy, has been bought by COLLINS. The first novel in the sequence will be published in hardback this November.

Geoff Ryman, now garlanded with both the Clarke and Campbell Awards for *The Child Garden*, sold his new novel to UNWIN shortly before UNWIN was in turn sold to COLLINS. The new novel, *Was*, is set between 1875 and 1987 and concerns the inspiration, filming and effects of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Horror and Dark Fantasy fans should have a good Halloween this year. Forbidden Planet are staging a mass signing for *Dark Voices 2: The Pan Book of Horror* (PAN), *Best New Horror* (ROBINSON) and *Fantasy Tales 5* (ROBINSON) all variously edited by Stephen Jones and David Sutton. Among those already announced as taking part are: Ramsey Campbell, Brian Lumley, Garry Kilworth, Stephen Gallagher, Brian Stableford, Adrian Cole, Stephen Jones, Kim Newman, Michael Marshall Smith, David Sutton, Samantha Lee and D.F. Lewis. The signing is at Forbidden Planet in New Oxford Street, London, at 1800 Wednesday October 31.

COLLINS and *Starburst Magazine* are hosting a party at Cafe Munchen, St. Giles' High Street, London at 1300 on Saturday November 10. The Guest of Honour is Clive Barker and the party will celebrate the release of his new film *Nightbreed* and the paperback publication of *The Great and Secret Show*.

All are welcome, though twenty five lucky winners of a competition in the September issue of *Starburst* will have a chance to meet Barker beforehand and also receive a collection of goodies known as a "Bag o' Barker".

Kurt Vonnegut is visiting this country in October for the launch of his new novel, *Hocus Pocus*. He will be giving a talk about the book at the Lyttelton Theatre on the South Bank in London at 1800 on October 24. Other writers featured in this series of talks at the National Theatre include **Doris Lessing** at 1800 on October 25, and **Anthony Burgess** at 1800 on October 29.

Phil Emery is running a weekly course at Keele University (Adult & Continuing Education) on *Science Fiction: the Past and Present of the Future*, the writers covered include H.G. Wells, C.S. Lewis, J.G. Ballard and William Gibson (Thursdays 1930-2130, details from 0782 621111). Plus he is also giving a course on *Mystery, Magic and Adventure*, a history of heroic fantasy from Beowulf to Tolkien and beyond (details from Mrs. B. Fowles 0782 616896, Tuesdays 1900-2100, Hassell Education Centre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.).

Sarita Marsland chose to study *SF Fandom as a Subculture* as her project for GCSE Social Sciences and reports that future attractions at the Preston Group include **Richard O'Brien** and **Diana Wynne Jones**. More details on Preston in the Clubs Column.

Tom Yates, who is saddened by public bigotry against science fiction, comments in *The Independent* that "we have circumstantial evidence of life [on Mars]. ... We have only statistical evidence of life further out in the galaxy, but it's probably so far remote that we wouldn't recognise it". In the same article, **Dave Clements** suggests that a pentadactyl limb is "purely a coincidence of evolution" and that humans should not necessarily expect aliens to be carbon based and humanoid: a silicon-based being may be boulder-shaped without prejudice to intelligence.

Obituaries

Alan Clarke, the acclaimed TV and film director whose credits include *Penda's Fen*, died on July 24, 1990, aged 56.

Ed Emshwiller, SF artist and experimental film maker, died on July 27, 1990, aged 65. Popularly known as "Emsh", Emshwiller came to prominence in the 1950s with his cover art for *Galaxy* and *ACE*. He was nominated for the Hugo Award eight times for his artwork, and won five times, most recently in 1964, the year he quit SF to concentrate on experimental films. He was equally as successful in film making, winning awards and critical acclaim for his short films and video tapes, some of which have been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Nevertheless it will be for his vivid and often comic magazine covers that he will be remembered in the SF world. He is survived by his wife, the SF writer Carol Emshwiller, and by three children, the youngest of whom, Peter, was recently managing editor of *Twilight Zone* magazine.

Edmund North, the Hollywood screenwriter whose credits include the SF epic *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, died on September 3, 1990, aged 79.

Ned Pines, the publisher of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Startling Stories*, *Strange Stories* and *Captain Future*, has died in Paris at the age of 84. Pines already had a successful string of pulp magazines to his name (launched in opposition to Street & Smith) when he bought *Wonder Stories* from Hugo Gernsback in 1936. Over the next two decades his magazines published writers like Henry Kuttner, Edmond Hamilton, Alfred Bester, Philip Jose Farmer and Jack Vance. These last three in particular began their careers largely in the pages of Pines' magazines. Pines also founded Popular Library, an American paperback house which has always had a large amount of science fiction on its list.

Manuel Puig, Argentinian magic realist author whose work was strongly influenced by the cinema as shown by his most famous novel, *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, died on July 22, 1990, aged 58.

Edwin Richfield, the actor who was one of the most familiar faces on British television during the late 1950s and 1960s, and whose roles included the father in the TV adaptation of Alan Garner's *The Owl Service* plus guest appearances in *Doctor Who*, died on August 2, 1990, aged 68.

George Waks, animator, who worked on Disney's *Fantasia*, died on July 17, 1990, aged 83.

Publishing

PENTOS, the bookselling company which already owns DILLONS and ATHENA bookshops, has bought HATCHARDS and CLAUDE GILL. These two bookshops were part of the HARPER COLLINS group and were bought for £10.5 million in cash (the sale price will be met by a rights issue). The deal will be completed by the end of October. The deal means that PENTOS has regained its position as the largest specialist book retailer in the UK. PENTOS lost this position last year when WATERSTONES merged with SHERRATT & HUGHES, but now both companies have a 7.5% share of the UK consumer book market. The leading market share is still held by W.H. SMITH with 15%, though that is a considerable reduction on their previous pre-eminence. Last year PENTOS achieved notoriety by their attempts to break the Net Book Agreement. It remains to be seen whether their new acquisitions will encourage them to make another attempt to break the NBA.

Still on the matter of bookdealing, there has been a management buy-out of PENGUIN BOOKSHOPS. Henceforth the new bookshops will bear the title PHOENIX BOOKSHOPS.

An update on my report last time about the new paperback book clubs. The new bookclub from Time-Life, called The Softback Preview, was launched with adverts in Sunday papers on September 9, after an agreement with the Publishers' Association that TSP's unique "negative option" still allowed it to qualify as a book club. The "negative option" means that members are not obliged to buy any books from TSP, although they will have to turn down the recommended title each month.

SIMON & SCHUSTER UK has signed a deal with PAN whereby PAN will now provide SIMON & SCHUSTER with a mass-market paperback outlet. Although SIMON & SCHUSTER have published some paperbacks of their own since they established themselves in this country a few years ago, they have had no regular paperback deal. In the long term, there are rumours that SIMON & SCHUSTER might introduce their own American paperback imprint, POCKET BOOKS, to this country.

HAY THREE is a new publishing company devoted to first novels. They do not seem to be producing any specifically SF or fantasy list though their second title, due in November, is a fantasy comedy by John Dean called *Hagir and the Dragon Finder and the Princess who wouldn't hang out of the Window*.

CHAMPANS, another new publishing company being launched at the beginning of September by refugees from the Rupert Murdoch take-over of COLLINS, has a mass-market list with no obvious science fiction included. However, one of the September titles is *And All the King's Men* by Gordon Stevens, a thriller which starts with the supposition that Germany successfully invaded Britain in 1940 and makes use of actual plans for a British Resistance movement.

Julia MacRae, the children's book publisher whose list has included books by Ann Halam (Gwyneth Jones) is leaving WALKER BOOKS after three years. The fate of the JULIA MACRAE imprint is unclear.

A reason for the recent hurried sale of UNWIN HYMAN to COLLINS has emerged in the latest financial figures from UNWIN. 1989 was pretty much a disastrous year for the company with pretax profits down to £201,000 from £659,000 the previous year. That means a pretax profit margin of 1% (down from 4.5%) as opposed to the 10% margin that was the target for 1991 when ALLEN & UNWIN merged with HYMAN.

Meanwhile the UNWIN SF and Fantasy list looks secure now that Jane Johnson, the SF editor at UNWIN, has accepted the offer made by GRAFTON. However, all may not be plain sailing since there are already rumours that an UNWIN party planned for the Worldcon has been cancelled on orders from GRAFTON.

Anthologies and Collections

Eric Brown's first collection of short stories, *The Time-Lapsed Man*, comes from PAN and contains: "The Time-Lapsed Man", "The Karma-Kid Transcends", "Big Trouble Upstairs", "Star-Crystals and Karmel", "Krahh-Bang Joe and the Pincal-Zen Equation", "Pithecanthropus Blues", "The Girl Who Died for Art and Lived", "The Inheritors of Earth".

Zenith 2, the second and, so it seems, last of David S. Garnett's original anthology series from ORBIT contains: "Winning" - Ian MacDonald, "The Time She Became" - Storm Constantine, "A Journey to the King Planet" -

S.M. Baxter, "X-calibre" - **Garry Kilworth**, "A Passion for Lord Pierrot" - **Colin Greenland**, "The Death of Cassandra Quebec" - **Eric Brown**, "The Pill" - **Jojo Bling**, "The Furniture of Life's Ambition" - **Brian Stableford**, "Dead Television" - **Lisa Tuttle**, "Insight" - **John Gribble**, "Different Cities" - **Simon D. Ings**, "The Cairnes Pursue" - **Michael Moorcock**

Meanwhile, David S. Garnett's other editorial chore, *The Orbit Science Fiction Yearbook 3*, has simultaneously emerged from ORBIT, and this time around Garnett has ignored British writers completely, other than the introduction by **Iain Banks**, the Afterword by **Brian Aldiss** and the review of the novels of the year by **John Clute**. The stories featured are: "At the Rialto" - **Connie Willis**, "The Gates of Babel" - **J.R. Dunn**, "Dori Bangs" - **Bruce Sterling**, "Surrender" - **Lucius Shepard**, "Chimers" - **Joyce Carr**, "Out of Copyright" - **Charles Sheffield**, "Abe Lincoln in McDonald's" - **James Morrow**, "Dogwalker" - **Orson Scott Card**, "Lunar Triptych: Embracing the Night" - **Richard Paul Russo**, "Privacy" - **David Brin**, "The Asenion Solution" - **Robert Silverberg**, "In Blue" - **John Crowley**.

The other major best of the year collection published in this country is *Best New SF 4*, edited by **Gardner Dozois** and published by **ROBINSON**. This is the usual monumental volume which this year manages to include two British writers in its selection, **William King** and **Brian Stableford**. The contents are: "Troy Tango" - **Judith Moffett**, "Out of Copyright" - **Charles Sheffield**, "For I Have Touched the Sky" - **Mike Resnick**, "Alphas" - **Gregory Benford**, "At the Rialto" - **Connie Willis**, "Skin Deep" - **Kate Koja**, "The Egg" - **Steve Popkes**, "Tales from the Venia Woods" - **Robert Silverberg**, "Visiting the Dead" - **William King**, "Dori Bangs" - **Bruce Sterling**, "The Ends of the Earth" - **Lucius Shepard**, "The Price of Oranges" - **Nancy Kress**, "Lottery Night" - **S.P. Somtow**, "A Deeper Sea" - **Alexander Jablokov**, "The Edge of the World" - **Michael Swanwick**, "Silver Lady and the Fortynight Man" - **Megan Lindholm**, "The Third Sex" - **Alan Brennert**, "Winter on the Belle Fourche" - **Neal Barrett Jr.**, "Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another" - **Robert Silverberg**, "Relationships" - **Robert Sampson**, "Just Another Perfect Day" - **John Varley**, "The Loch Moose Monster" - **Janet Kagan**, "The Magic Bullet" - **Brian Stableford**, "The Odd Old Bird" - **Avram Davidson**, "Great Work of Time" - **John Crowley**.

It's interesting that only three stories are duplicated in the two Best of the Year collections, "At the Rialto" - **Connie Willis**, "Out of Copyright" - **Charles Sheffield** and "Dori Bangs" - **Bruce Sterling**, though both collections also include stories by **Lucius Shepard**, **Robert Silverberg** and **John Crowley**.

The Ghost Now Standing on Platform One edited by **Richard Payton**, published by **SOUVENIR PRESS**, is subtitled "Phantoms of the Railway in Fact and Fiction" which just about says it all. The fiction consists of: "Journey into Fear" - **Arnold Ridley**, "The Ghost Train" - **Rod Serling**, "OOT" - **Rudyard Kipling**, "The Haunted Curve" - **Elliot O'Donnell**, "Pacific 421" - **August Derleth**, "Midnight Express" - **Alfred Noyes**, "The Waiting Room" - **Robert Aickman**, "The Kill" - **Peter Fleming**, "The Town Where No-One Got Off" - **Ray Bradbury**, "The Wrong Station" - **A.M. Burrage**, "Lost in the Fog" - **J.D. Beresford**, "Branch Line to Benceston" - **Sir Andrew Caldecott**, "The Night Train to Lost Valley" - **Stephen Grendon**, "Take the Z Train" - **Allison V. Harding**, "Confidence Trick" - **John Wyndham**, "The Signal-Man" - **Charles Dickens**, "The Garrideb Bell Disaster" - **L.T.C. Rolt**, "Locomotive" - **Richard Hughes**, "Mourning Train" - **John Newton Chance**, "The Hell-Bound Train" - **Robert Bloch**, "A Journey by Train" - **Henry L. Lawrence**, "The Astral Lady" - **Eden Phillpotts**, "Miss Slumbubble" - **and Claustrophobia** - **Algernon Blackwood**, "A Short Trip Home" - **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, "Lonely Train A'Comin'" - **William F. Nolan**.

The Ultimate Enemy from **GOLLANZ** is a collection of **Fred Saberhagen's** Berserker stories dating from 1967-1979. They are: "The Smile", "Pressure", "The Annihilation of Angkor Apeiron", "Inhuman Error", "Some events at the Templar Radiant", "Starsong", "Smasher", "The Game" and "Wings out of Shadow".

Route 666 edited by **David Pringle** is another collection from **GW BOOKS**, this time under the "Dark Future" label. The contents are: "Route 666" - **Jack Yervill**, "Kid Zero and Snake Eyes" - **Brian Craig**, "Ghost Town" - **Nell Jones**, "Duel Control" - **Myles Burnham**, "Thicker than Water" - **Brian Craig**, "Maverick Son" - **Nell McIntosh**, "Four-Minute Warning" - **Myles Burnham**, "Only in the Twilight" - **Brian Craig** and "Uptown Girl" - **William King**.

New Books: August - October 1990

Brian Aldiss *Bury My Heart at W.H. Smith's* (HODDER hbk £13.95) 1st edn of autobiography

Poul Anderson *The Boat of a Million Years* (ORBIT pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Hugo and Nebula nominated novel

Richard Austin *Thunder of Hell & Night of the Phoenix* (PAN pbk £3.50 each) 1st UK edn of vols. 3 & 4 in militaristic adventure series set after World War III

Keith Barnard *Embryo* (SOUVENIR PRESS hbk £14.95) 1st edn of novel about genetic engineering

Batman vs The Joker (HAMLYN pbk £8.99) 1st UK edn of collection of 19 stories featuring Batman and the Joker dating from 1940 to 1980

Greg Bear *Queen of Angels* (GOLLANZ hbk £14.95) 1st UK edn of novel set on the eve of Binary Millennium, 2047; *Heads* (LEGEND hbk £8.99, pbk £4.50) 1st edn of novella set 200 years in the future

Eric Brown *The Time-Lapsed Man* (PAN pbk £3.99) 1st edn of his 1st collection of stories

John Brunner *Children of the Thunder* (ORBIT pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of novel set in near-future Britain

Ramsey Campbell *Needing Ghosts* (LEGEND hbk £8.99, pbk £4.50) 1st edn of novella

Jonathan Carroll *Black Cocktail* (LEGEND hbk £8.99, pbk £4.50) 1st edn of novella

Hugh Cook *The Wizard and the Witch* (CORGI pbk £3.99) 1st edn of Vol. 7 of *Chronicles of an Age of Darkness*

Carole Nelson Douglas *Seven of Swords* (CORGI pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 3 of *Sword and Circlet Trilogy*

Gardner Dozois (Ed) *Best New SF 4* (ROBINSON pbk £6.99) 1st UK edn of best of the year collection for 1989

Dave Duncan *The Coming of Wisdom* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of *The Seventh Sword*

Bob Forward *Scarlet Serenade* (NEL pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of *The Owl* 2

Christopher Fowler *Rune* (CENTURY hbk £13.99, pbk £7.50) 1st edn of new novel inspired by M.R. James's "Casting the Runes"

Craig Shaw *Gardner's Revenge of the Fluffy Bunnies* (HEADLINE pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of final part of *The Civerse Cycle*

David S. Garnett (Ed) *Zenith 2* (ORBIT pbk £3.99) 1st edn of original anthology: *The Orbit Science Fiction Yearbook 3* (ORBIT pbk £4.99) 1st edn of best of the year collection

William Gibson & Bruce Sterling *The Difference Engine* (GOLLANZ hbk £12.95) 1st UK edn of long-awaited collaborative steampunk novel involving a computer revolution in Victorian England

Christopher Hinz *Ash Oak* (MANDARIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Liege-Killer*

Robin Jarvis *The Final Reckoning* (SIMON & SCHUSTER pbk £3.99) 1st edn of final part of *Deftford Mice Trilogy*

K.W. Jeter *Farwell Horizontal* (GRAFTON pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel of outcast life "in The Cylinder"

Guy Gavriel Kay *Tigana* (PENGUIN pbk £7.99) 1st UK edn of massive new fantasy from the author of *The Fionavar Tapestry*

Richard A. Knaak *Ice Dragon* (ORBIT pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of *The Dragonrealm II*

Joe R. Lansdale *The Drive-In* (NEL pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of sequel to his comic horror novel about drive-in movies

Jonathan Littell *Bad Voltage* (ORBIT pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of cyberpunk adventure set in the streets of a future Paris

Geraldine McCaughrean *Fires' Astonishment* (SECKER hbk £12.95) 1st edn of novel about rumours of a dragon at Worm Head

Dan McGirt *Royal Chaos* (PAN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Jason Cosmo*

Ian McDonald *Out on Blue Six* (BANTAM pbk £4.99) 1st UK edn of novel about when things go wrong in a perfect future

Valerie Martin *Mary Reilly* (DOUBLEDAY hbk £12.95) 1st edn of novel about Dr. Jekyll's housemaid

Peter Morwood *Prince Ivan* (LEGEND hbk £12.99, pbk £6.99) 1st edn of 1st part of new fantasy series set in old Russia

M.S. Murdock *Armageddon off Vesta* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 3 of *The Martian Wars Trilogy*, a Buck Rogers adventure

Ed Naha *Robocop 2* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of novelisation of the film that is a sequel to one of the popular hits of last year

Kim Newman *Bad Dreams* (SIMON & SCHUSTER hbk £13.95) 1st edn of new novel set in a nightmare London

Kate Nawak & Jeff Grubb *The Wyvern's Spur* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of 2nd part of *The Finder's Stone Trilogy*, a Forgotten Realms adventure

Diana Paxson *The Earthstone* (NEL pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 3 of *the Chronicles of Westria*

Richard Payton *Ed. The Ghost Now Standing at Platform One* (SOUVENIR PRESS hbk £14.95) 1st edn of collection of stories about ghosts on railways in fact and fiction

Charles PLATT *Soma* (GRAFTON pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel set in Piers Anthony's world of Chthon
Terry PRATCHETT *Eric* (GOLLANCZ hbh £12.95, pbk £7.99) 1st edn of illustrated Discworld novel (ill. Josh Kirby) based on Faust and featuring the return of Rincewind and Luggage
Paul PREUSS *Breaking Strain* (PAN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of 1st part of Arthur C. Clarke's *Venus Prime* series
David PRINGLE *Ed. Route 666* (GW pbk £4.99) 1st edn of collection of Dark Future stories
Kim Stanley ROBINSON *A Short Sharp Shock* (ZEISING hbh £18.00) 1st edn of surreal novella
Michael Scott ROHAN *Chase the Morning* (ORBIT pbk £4.99) 1st edn of pirate fantasy (1st part of trilogy)
Fred SABERHAGEN *The Ultimate Enemy* (VGSF pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of collection of Berserker stories
Lucius SHEPARD *Kalimantan* (LEGEND hbh £9.99, pbk £4.99) 1st edn of novella set in Borneo
Derek SLADE *England 1940: Invasion* (ORIFLAMME pbk £4.50) 1st edn of alternative history novel
Brian STABLEFORD *The Werewolves of London* (SIMON & SCHUSTER hbh £14.95) 1st edn of novel about those animals in Victorian London: *The Gates of Eden* (NEL pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel set on a deadly earth-like world
Bernard TAYLOR *Sweetheart, Sweetheart* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) Reprint (Sovereign Press 1977) of ghost story
Paul B. THOMPSON & Tonya R. CARTER *Riverwind the Plainsman* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol. 1 of Dragonlance Preludes II
Jack VANCE *Madouc* (GRAFTON hbh £12.95) 1st UK edn of *Lyonesse III*
James M. WARD & Jane Cooper HONG *Pool of Radiance* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy in Forgotten Realms series
F. Paul WILSON *Reborn* (NEL hbh £13.95) 1st UK edn of horror novel, sequel to *The Keep*
Robert Charles WILSON *Hidden Place* (ORBIT pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of 1st novel by acclaimed new writer; *Memory Wire* (ORBIT pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel about a character who becomes "an all-seeing, unfeeling human video-recorder"
Jack WOMACK *Heathern* (UNWIN hbh £12.95) 1st UK edn of near-future thriller about rise of a new messiah in corporate-run world
Jack YEOVIL *Demon Download* (GW pbk £4.99) 1st edn of Dark Future novel

Reprint Books: August - October 1990

Brian ALDISSE *Starswarm* (VGSF CLASSIC 45 pbk £3.50) Reprint (Panther 1979) of collection of interconnected stories part of which also appeared as *The Airs of Earth* (Faber 1963)
Piers ANTHONY *Total Recall* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1990) of novelisation of the film
Michael BISHOP *Unicorn Mountain* (GRAFTON pbk £4.50) Reprint (Grafton 1989) of unicorns intruding into our modern world
Ramsey CAMPBELL *Incarnate* (FUTURA pbk £3.99) Revised & expanded version of horror novel (orig. Granada 1984); *Obsession* (FUTURA pbk £3.50) Reprint (Granada 1985) of horror novel
C.J. CHERRYH *Rasaitia* (MANDARIN pbk £6.99) Reprint (Methuen 1990) of novel based on Russian folklore
Arthur C. CLARKE & Centry LEE *Cradle* (ORBIT pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1988) of novel about "the secret of humanity's existence"
Sheila GILLULY *Greenbriar Queen* (HEADLINE pbk £4.50) Reprint (Headline 1989) of fantasy novel
Andrew M. GREELEY *Angel Fire* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1989) of novel about a future guardian angel
Robert A. HEINLEIN *Farmer in the Sky* (VGSF pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1962) of early novel
Frank HERBERT *The Dosadi Experiment* (VGSF pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1978) of novel concerning an experiment in overcrowding which threatens the universe
Robert E. HOWARD, L. Sprague DE CAMP & Lin CARTER *The Conan Chronicles 2* (ORBIT pbk £4.50) Omnibus edition of Conan the Adventurer (Sphere 1973), Conan the Wanderer (Sphere 1974) and Conan the Buccaneer (Sphere 1975)
Christopher HYDE *Egypt Green* (HEADLINE pbk £4.50) Reprint (Simon & Schuster 1989) of novel about children disappearing
Stephen KING *The Dark Half* (NEL pbk £4.99) Reprint (Hodder 1989) in so classy an edition that the title is actually unreadable on the cover since it is merely embossed on a black ground
Stephen KING, George R.R. MARTIN & Dan SIMMONS *Dark Visions* (GOLLANCZ pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of collection of horror stories

Dean R. KOONTZ *Phantoms* (HEADLINE hbh £13.95, pbk £4.50) Reprint (W.H. Allen 1983); *Shattered* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99) Reprint (Arthur Barker 1974) as by K.R. Dwyer; *Voice of the Night* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99) Reprint (Hale 1981) as by Brian Cossey. HEADLINE continues its efforts to get all of Koontz's horror novels into print
Katherine KURTZ *High Deryni* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Century 1985) of 3rd in Deryni Chronicles
Chris MORGAN *Dark Fantasies* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1989) of collection of 16 stories
Paul PREUSS *Starfire* (ORBIT pbk £3.50) Reprint (Simon & Schuster 1988) of novel about experimental spacecraft
Mike RESNICK *Ivory* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1989) of Clarke Award shortlisted novel
Kim Stanley ROBINSON *The Gold Coast* (ORBIT pbk £3.99) Reprint (Orbit 1989) of novel set in 21st century California
Robert SILVERBERG *The World Inside* (VGSF pbk £3.50) Reprint (Granada 1978) of classic collection of related stories set in 1,000-storey high Urbmon 116
Christopher STASHEFF *Warlock: To The Magic Born* 1st UK edn of omnibus of Escape Velocity (1983), *The Warlock in Spite of Himself* (1969) and *King Kobold Revived* (1984)
Ian WATSON *The Embedding* (VGSF Classic 44 pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1973) of his 1st novel

Local Fanomena

Keith Mitchell

It is now two years and twelve *Matrix*s since my first Clubs Column appeared, and I am sad to say I have decided that is long enough and this will be my last one. One year ago, I published my first full listing of UK local groups, so I thought the best way to finish things off would be to print the up-to-date version of this.

I unfortunately have little news to report on the clubs scene for this issue, the only correspondence I received was from Yugoslavia. This came from BSFA member Marjan Skvarca, who had quite a lot to tell me about the fanish scene there. He is editor of the Slovene language fanzine *Blodnjak* (*Maze*), which has been running to a bi-monthly schedule since last September. This publishes fiction as well as essays and a wide range of reviews. They have recently run a short-story competition that created a lot of interest, with the winning stories to be published in an anthology and the zine. Other activities include a convention, and collaboration with two regional Yugoslavian SF clubs - "Meteor" (In Subotica) and "Dr. Branko Belan" (Split), as well as various authors and publishers. Future plans include organising speakers and workshops. Marjan had quite a lot more to say which I don't have space for, but if you are interested in the quite active fanish and fiction scene in Yugoslavia (which doesn't sound so different from what fans get up to here), I can let you have a copy of the information he sent me.

On to the listing - a few points to help you make use/sense of it. "Last Update" is when I last received information that the group was still in existence. Local groups can quite often be transient, and this information is to help stop people being led on a wild goose chase to a defunct group. I have, in fact, removed a number of groups from the listing where I haven't received any evidence of activity since before June 1988. If you know of anything to the contrary about the Aylesbury, Bradford, St. Andrews, Southend or Surrey groups, then it would be a good idea to let the BSFA know.

The only other notation which I think needs clarification is "(Ans)" - this means you should be ready for an answering machine on that person's telephone.

BELFAST

Group: White's Tavern Group
 Last update: February 1990
 Meets on/at: Alternate Thursdays at Monico Bar, Rosemary Street
 Contact: Barman on the night

BIRMINGHAM

Group: BSFG
 Last update: September 1990
 Meets on/at: 3rd Friday of each month, 1945, The Ivy Bus, Hagley Road/Monument Road
 Contact: David Wake (Treasurer), 160 Beaumont Road, Birmingham B30 1NY (Tel: 021 451 2287)
 Comments: Attendance at meetings £2 for non-members. More details below.

BOLTON

Group: BaD SFG
 Last update: June 1988
 Meets on/at: Every Tuesday, 2000, The Old Three Crowns, 14 Deansgate

BOURNEMOUTH

Group: Bournemouth SF and Fantasy Group
 Last update: June 1988
 Meets on/at: 1st & middle Mondays, The Dolphin Hotel (front bar), Holdenhurst Road
 Contact: Dave Syme (Tel: 0202 432489)

BRIGHTON

Last update: December 1988
 Meets on: Every Friday
 Contact: Andy Robertson, 38 South Way, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1LY (Tel: 0273 474468)

BRISTOL

Group: TANSTAAFL
 Last update: March 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Wednesday, The White Hart, next to Bristol bus station
 Contact: Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Avenue, Bristol BS7 0DE (Tel: 0272 514223)

CANTERBURY

Last update: December 1989
 Meets on/at: 1st Tuesday of each month at the East Station Snooker
 Contact: Lawrence Dean, 47 Forrester Close, Canterbury CT1 1DZ (Tel: 0227 458509)

CARLISLE

Group: Carlisle and District
 Last update: June 1988
 Meets on/at: Every other Friday at various venues
 Contact: Shep Kirkbride (Tel: 0228 27168)

CHESTER

Group: CADS
 Last update: August 1989
 Meets on/at: 2nd & 4th Wednesday, 2030, at The Old Custom House Inn, Watergate Street
 Contact: Alison Scott, 2 Craithie Road, Vicars Cross, Chester CH3 5JL (Tel: 0244 42396)
 Comments: Marston's Pedigree and three other real ales

CROYDON

Group: Croydon SF Group
 Last update: March 1990
 Meets on/at: 2nd Tuesday, 1930, Oakfield Tavern, St. James's Road
 Contact: Rob Newman, 136 North End, Croydon, Surrey CRO 1UE (Tel: 081 680 3128)

DARTFORD

Group: The Phoenixians
 Last update: August 1989
 Meets on/at: 2nd Thursday, The Phoenix, Lower Hythe Street
 Contact: Jonathan Cowie, c/o 44 Brook Street, Northumberland Heath, Kent DA8 1JQ or Vince Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent DA16 2BN

DUNDEE

Last update: June 1988
 Meets on/at: 1st Thursday, 1930, The Globe
 Contact: Jon Wallace, 21 Charleston Street, Dundee (Tel: 0382 623399)

EDINBURGH

Group: FORTH
 Last update: July 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Tuesday, 2130, The Malt Shovel Too, Cockburn Street
 Contact: Jim Darroch, 8 Montague Street, Edinburgh EH8 9QU or Keith Mitchell, 43 Iona Street, Edinburgh EH6 8SP (Tel: 031 553 5478)
 Comments: Beer highly recommended! [Steve can second that - Ed.]

Group: The Landing Party (Edinburgh & South East Scotland Star Trek Appreciation Society)
 Last update: July 1989
 Meets on: Monthly
 Contact: The Membership Organiser, 11/4 Meadowfield Court, Edinburgh EH8 7NA (Tel: 031 657 2017)
 Comments: Membership £2 per year. Over 18s.

GLASGOW

Group: Friends of Kilgore Trout
 Last update: October 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Thursday, at the Central Hotel, but are searching for alternative site as the beer is expensive and not superb
 Contact: Mark Meenan, "Burnawn", Stirling Road, Dumbarton, G82 2PJ (Tel: 0389 65313)
 Comments: Numbers vary [Very busy when I went - Ed.]

Group: Friends of Admiral Benbow
 Last update: May 1990
 Meets on/at: Every Thursday, 2100, The Scotia Bar, Stockwell Street
 Contact: Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre G72 9NA or John Mooney (Tel: 041 952 9286)
 Comments: [This bar is a haunt of folksingers and poets and can be lively]

HULL

Last update: August 1989
 Meets on/at: 2nd & 4th Tuesdays at Ye Olde White Hart, 25 Silver Street
 Contact: Ian Bell, 42 Walgrave Street, Hull HU5 2LT

LEEDS

Group: The Leeds SF Group
 Last update: November 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Friday, 2030, at The Central, Wellington Street
 Contact: Mike Ford, 27 Stanmore Crescent, Leeds LS4 2RY (Tel: 0532 753663 (Ans) or Sarah Dibb & Dave Mooring (0532 741004)

LEICESTER

Last update: September 1990
 Meets on/at: 1st Friday, 2000, at The Rainbow and Dove, 155 Charles Street
 Contact: George Clark, 71 Wolverton Road, Leicester LE3 2AJ (Tel: 0533 823405) or George Ternent, 161 Burntwood Road, Norton Canes, Staffs. WS11 3RN
 Comments: Affiliate of BSFG. More details below.

LONDON

Group: "Welling-Tun"
 Last update: May 1989
 Meets on/at: 1st Thursday at The Wellington Tavern, Waterloo
 Group: BSFA
 Last update: June 1990
 Meets on/at: 3rd Thursday at The Old Coffee House, Beak Street, Soho

Group: City Illiterates
 Last update: April 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Friday 1730, at the City Literary Institute bar (Autumn and Spring terms) and The Cock, Euston Tower (Euston Square & Warren Street tubes)
 Contact: Roger Robinson, 75 Rossllyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG (Tel: 04023 42304)

Group: The Women's Periodical
 Last update: June 1988
 Meets on/at: 3rd Tuesday at the Royal Festival Hall, because you can get a decent meal and a bottle of wine there and aural and nasal pollution are restricted
 Contact: Caroline Mullan (Tel: 081 863 8849)

Group: Tolkien Society - Northfarthing Smial
 Last update: May 1989
 Meets on/at: 1st Saturday at the Bricklayers' Arms, Gresse Street, off Rathbone Place
 Contact: Jessica Yates, 14 Norfolk Avenue, London N15 6JX (Tel: 081 802 2050)

LONDON/DERRY

Group: Stroke City SF Group
 Last update: February 1990
 Meets on/at: Alternate Fridays at the Linenhall Bar, Upper Magazine Street (beside Woolworths)
 Contact: Bannan on the night or Tommy Ferguson (Tel: 0504 54457)

MANCHESTER

Last update: June 1990
 Contact: Ian Brooks (Flat 4) or Mark Slater (Flat 2), 311 Dickenson Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0NR
 Comments: Starting pub-based group this Autumn meeting the 2nd & 4th Thursdays. NB: the Uni. Group WARPED have Neil Gaiman as Guest on Nov 19 and Colin Greenland as Guest on Oct 26
 Group: SF and Fantasy Film Society
 Last update: October 1988
 Contact: Harry Nadler, 15 Fennel Street, Manchester (Tel: 061 835 1055)

NEWCASTLE

Group: The Gannets
 Last update: February 1990
 Meets on/at: Saturday afternoons at Rosy's Bar, Chinatown
 Contact: Ian Bambro (Tel: 091 284 6913) or Harry Bell (091 478 2559)

NORWICH

Last update: May 1989
 Meets on/at: Every other Wednesday, 2000, at the Ribs of Beef (basement), Fye Bridge
 Contact: Pacony Lewis, Walnut Tree Cottage, Low Road, Fornett St. Mary, Norfolk NR16 1JN (Tel: 050 841 8380)

PETERBOROUGH

Last update: January 1990
 Meets on/at: Every Wednesday at the Bluebell Inn (1st Wednesday) Dogs-thorpe or the Poachers Bar (3rd Wednesday) opposite railway station
 Contact: Pete Cox, 24 Westfield Road, Yaxley, Peterborough, Cambs. PE7 3LG
 Comments: This club is organising a series of events for May 1991. More details on the Noticeboard.

PORTSMOUTH

Group: South Hants. Group
 Last update: June 1989
 Meets on/at: 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 1900, at the Electric Arms (lounge), Fratton Road
 Contact: Mike Cheater, 38 Outram Road, Southsea, Hants. (Tel: 0705 754934)

PLYMOUTH

Group: Drake SF Association
 Last update: February 1989
 Meets on/at: 1st and 3rd Saturday (roughly) at the King's Head, Bretonside (near bus station)
 Contact: John Peters, 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL6 6QN (Tel: 0752 785853)

PRESTON

Group: The Preston Speculative Fiction Group
 Last update: September 1990
 Meets on/at: The Black Horse every other Wednesday
 Contact: Keith Marsland, 1 Northgate, Goosnargh, nr Preston PR3 2BB
 Comments: See below for more details

READING

Group: GLOMERULE
 Last update: July 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Monday, 2100, at the ICL Club, 53 Blagrove Street, opposite BR station
 Contact: Steve Rothman, 49 Burney Bit, Pamber Head, Basingstoke, Hants. RG26 6TL or Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU

SALTCOATS

Group: S.O.S.
 Last update: May 1989
 Meets on/at: Every Wednesday at The Crown Inn, Chapelwell Street
 Contact: Dave Ellis, (Top Flat Left), 26A Chapelwell Street, Saltcoats KA21 5EA (Tel: 0294 603184 (Ans))

SHEFFIELD

Last update: June 1989
 Contact: Steve Lawson, 130 Valley Road, Sheffield S8 9GA (Tel: 0742 728639)

ST. ALBANS

Group: STAFFEN
 Last update: June 1988
 Meets on: Every Monday
 Contact: Mic Rogers, 22 Campfield Road, St. Albans AL1 5JA

WARRINGTON

Group: WALDO
 Last update: January 1990
 Meets on/at: 1st & 3rd Thursday, 2000 at The Albion, Battersby Lane
 Contact: Henry Newton, 41 The Rook, Helsby, Cheshire WA6 9AS (Tel: 09282 4576) or Margaret Tout, 2 Rosebank, Lymm (0925 754463)
 Comments: Usually (but not always) in downstairs bar

WALTHAM FOREST

Group: WELF & Witches
 Last update: August 1989
 Meets on/at: 2nd Thursday at The Windmill, Grosvenor Park Road
 Contact: Jean Thompson & Alan Gordon, 50 Maynard Road, Walthamstow, London (Tel: 081 520 7955 (Ans))

More on the BRUM Group: The programme for the rest of the year consists of **Tad Williams** in October, the Annual Debate with Birmingham University SF & Fantasy Society in November, the Christmas Party in December and the AGM plus Auction in January. A new Committee will be elected in January. The Group's Constitution states that it aims "to further the interests, knowledge and social activities of readers of science fiction". Whether this will include films and videos in the future will be decided at the AGM. Meetings at present consist of a 40-50 minute talk followed by a "beer break" of 15 minutes and a 15 minute formal Q&A session which allows more time for casual discussion.

Somewhere under the Rainbow: Science Fiction in Leicester: This group is a small informal body which meets monthly. Activities include drinking the local ale (Hoskyns), quizzes, debating and listening to the occasional guest speaker. The next Guest will be **Colin Greenland** on November 2nd. Previous guests have included Rob Holdstock, Barrington Bailey, Freda Warrington, Dave Hardy and Red Fox - from this you can deduce that our scope covers a wide range of topics from science fiction to fantasy and horror. Anyone interested? If so, pop along, we may even sell you a raffle ticket! Further details from Katrina Deacon (Tel: 0533 312940) or Steph Mortimer (Tel: 0533 833133).

The Preston Speculative Fiction Group: The group's interests encompass written SF, media SF, horror and comics. The group invites guest speakers and in the past has been visited by **Iain Banks**, **Terry Pratchett**, **Gwyneth Jones**, **Neil Gaiman**, **David Brin** and **C.J. Cherryh**. The next Guest speaker will be **Diana Wynne Jones** on November 7th. There is a small writers group and the group subscribes to four small press publications and makes them available to members. There is no membership or admission charge, though we do usually hold a raffle. Finally, there is an occasional newsletter and group magazine. Details from Keith Marsland (Tel: 0772 865672)

Keith Mitchell concludes -- This important role is mostly quite easy and rewarding, but you have to be prepared to do a lot of letter writing and keep good records. For me, other commitments have simply squeezed the time I can devote to this to the point that it's not up to the standard I want, so I have decided it is time for me to call it a day.

If in the meantime, you still have news and updates about your local group, then please send it to Jenny or to my successor, Tommy Ferguson, 90 Carnhill, Shantallow 3, Derry BT48 8BE, Northern Ireland. In parting, I would like to say thank you to everybody who has helped me create "Local Fanomena" by taking the trouble to write in and tell me their news, and especially to Maureen and Jenny for their support and encouragement over the past two years.

Media News

John Peters

FILM - For those of you into film trivia, here are some interesting and quite excessive production figures printed in a recent *Sunday Times* article on the Hollywood fun factory. In the first five months of this year, the top eight studios spent \$1.5 billion producing forty two movies - this figure also included the marketing costs. Income rose 7% to \$1.76 billion, but costs rose by 60%. Examples given included: *Dick Tracy* \$62m; *Die Hard II* \$92m; *Total Recall* \$87m; *Gremlins II*, at \$55, almost seems bargain basement. I suppose this explains why a film is considered to be a flop if it doesn't recoup a sizeable portion of its costs in the first weekend - but I can't help wondering how many decent, entertaining films the old Hammer company could have produced from just one of these movie's donuts and coffee bill.

According to the *LA Times* 24.6.90, producer Harvey Bennett has left the *Star Trek* production team after his script for the sixth film was rejected by Paramount. Apparently Gene Roddenberry and others had cold feet about bringing in a new cast for *STVI* and setting it back in the early days of the characters' careers. After waiting almost a year, Paramount told Bennett that they wouldn't fund his project and he decided to stand down as the film series producer. Even so, Paramount still intend to have a film in the cinemas by the end of next year so that it coincides with the 25th anniversary. Other plans for the anniversary include a big celebration, an opera and the continuation of *The Next Generation*. As the original series is shown on SKY-TV and the BBC launch *The Next Generation* in the autumn, a series of four new t-shirts and ten new badges have been issued by Titan Merchandise - these feature Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scotty and Uhura and cost £6.95 and 45p respectively.

Would you like to become involved in the making of a movie? If so, the HOUSE OF HORROR GROUP are looking for you. The group intend to produce *Dracula Walks the Night* in the near future. This low budget film is reportedly a remake of Hammer's *Dracula AD1972* and follows the familiar trail of Dracula's destruction by Van Helsing in 1887 and then resurrection one hundred years later by satanists. Drac then decides that he just loves Jessica Van Helsing's throat. The HOH Group plan regular meetings and screenings of Hammer films and are looking for new members and people to become involved in making the film. So if you are a Hammer fan and would like to know more, write to: Thomas Mayloft, 50 Dighton Court, John Ruskin Street, London SE5 0PR.

Hammer fans should also keep an eye out for a new album by rock group Warfare. *Hammer Horror*, a collection of songs and instrumentals, is based on various Hammer films and characters, and both Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee have written the sleeve notes. Apparently Hammer were so impressed by the demo recording they offered their full collaboration and will be involved in a jointly produced video that will be shot and released in the near future. The album is out on Revolver Records, REV LP/CD/MC 147. A special limited edition Warfare/Hammer t-shirt is available from Hammer Film Productions Ltd., Elstree Studios, Borehamwood, Herts, WD6 1JG. It costs £9.99 and you should make cheques payable to Hammer Film Music Ltd.

Along with the above musical collaboration Hammer are due to make a comeback in a big way this year. A compilation tv series is planned to make use of the estimated two hundred and sixty films Hammer have produced over the last forty years. A twenty six part *Best of British* series will show aspects of all the types of films Hammer made, but of course, the emphasis will be on the wide variety of different types of horror films Hammer made. Each programme will have a separate theme - vampires, monsters, costume drama, comedy, Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, etc. No details as to transmission dates or channels yet, but this could be an indispensable record of the last (and hopefully again) great British film company. Also planned by Hammer is a drama series, *The Haunted House of Hammer*, a twenty six part anthology series of ghost stories.

Plans for *RoboCop 3* are gathering momentum, even though the first sequel has only just been released in the UK. Production could start this September and the film completed for a premiere next summer. The sequel's scriptwriters, Frank Miller and Walton Green, are reportedly writing separate drafts for the third film. Whether Peter Weller and Nancy Allen will return is not yet known. The original film's director, Paul Verhoeven, has announced that he will not be involved in any *Total Recall* sequel, his future plans include a long-planned *Judge Dee*, if financing is finalised or *The Screwy Tapes*, which he describes as "a horror-science fiction film in the *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* way".

While *Superman 4* has been announced, Christopher Reeve has announced that he has no intention of climbing into the red and blue skivvies again. Producer Ilya Salkind reputedly offered him a wide-open deal to star, write or direct the

film, but Reeve has decided against it. While a script is being prepared, by the *Superboy* story editors, there is still a faint possibility that Reeve will direct it.

David Cronenberg's adaptation of William Burroughs' *The Naked Lunch* will star John Malkovich, Willem Dafoe and Barbara Hershey. Crews at Pinewood Studios are busy building the sets for *Aliens 3*; it took only \$2 million to get Sigourney Weaver to sign up for the third alien hunt, peanuts by today's standards and a bargain for the producers. Another prospective alien hunter, Sylvester Stallone, has decided not to appear in *Dead Reckoning*, a cop vs alien on a train scenario. With movie adaptations of comic heroes at last becoming big business, Dino De Laurentiis has announced plans for *Flash Gordon 2*. One of the projects that the late Jim Henson was planning just before his death was *John Carter of Mars*, a collaboration with Disney studios, six wizard Rick Baker and scriptwriter Charles Pogue - Disney haven't announced if the project will continue. Wes Craven offered to direct the sixth *Elm Street* film (imaginatively titled *Freddy's Dead*) provided it is the last in the series, but New Line are less than receptive to this idea and have chosen Rachel Talalay to direct it instead. Director Stephen Herek refused to helm the sequel to his successful *Bob & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, claiming that the story had no future; he will, instead, direct *Short Circuit 3*. Following the disappointing box office returns for *Gremlins 2*, Joe Dante's next project could be either a ghost story, *Universal Soldier*, or a re-make of *Gulliver's Travels*.

Sarah Douglas and Marc Singer return to the sf genre in *Through the Portal of Time*. Terence Stamp, Harry Dean Stanton and Charlotte Lewis seek the *Stranger in the House*. Teaming David Essex with Christopher Lee takes some believing, but add Toshio Mifuni and it gets positively surreal - that's in *Shogun Mayeda*. Terry Gilliam is finishing work on *The Fisher King*, Robin Williams and Jeff Bridges search New York for the Holy Grail. James Cameron has formed Lightstorm Entertainment who will be producing the long awaited *Terminator 2*; shooting was scheduled to start in September with Linda Hamilton and Arnold Schwarzenegger returning. Meanwhile, Arnie has announced that he will not appear in *Conan 3* unless Oliver Stone and John Milius are involved in the production - this appears extremely unlikely as both director/scriptwriters are busy with their own projects for the foreseeable future. And just when you wondered if it would ever be released here, Clive Barker's *Nightbreed* finally reached the screens on September 28. Medusa has just released Frank Henenlotter's bizarre horror spoof, *Frankenhooker*, a film whose trailer is difficult to describe in sane company. Suffice to say that if you enjoy offbeat humour, you can't get more offbeat than seeing Frankenstein's bit of mix'n'match being the living daylight out of a "client" and then asking him if he wants a good time! Henenlotter's *Baskecase 2* has also just been released to video by Medusa and the Dario Argento/George Romero Poe collaboration, *Two Evil Eyes*, is scheduled for a UK release in December - probably the ideal alternative to *Ninja Turtle*-itis.

Beware of Attack of the Killer Frigidaire, Death Could Be Fatal, Nighty Nightmare II (starring the Ackenmonster), The Unborn, Chained Heat II, Dark Obsessions, The Terror Within II, Mannequin on the Move, A Row of Crows, Scorchers, Return to the Blue Lagoon (I'm not sure how that got in here, but one can only live in hope that Bruce the Shark has a date with Brooke Shields), Body Parts, Sgt Kabukiman NYPD.

TV SCENE - The ITV serialisation of Steven Gallagher's *Chimera* has been shifted from its expected summer slot in the schedules and will be transmitted sometime during the winter season. Zenith, the Production company, are keeping the date secret, but it is well known that the autumn and winter seasons are used to showcase the programmes that will bring in both higher audience ratings and advertising revenues. The sf for the serial were created by Image Animation, who worked on the Clive Barker films, *Hellraiser* and *Nightbreed*.

One of the more unlikely projects recently announced is *Psycho 4: The Beginning*. The third sequel to Alfred Hitchcock's original, this will be a tv movie for Showtime, an American cable channel. Joseph Stefano will script, and Anthony Perkins will return as the adult Norman Bates, now safely locked up in the clinic. Norman's reflections on his past with Mother will be the basis of the film, with younger actors playing him as a child.

If you have some money to invest and film animation is your hobby, you could do worse than buy all one hundred and ninety three episodes of *Astroboy* - this "classic" animated series is now available on forty seven laserdiscs from Sight & Sound, 127 South Main Street, Waltham, MA 02154. The price? \$1930.

Richard Mulligan, Bert from *Soap*, is to build a ufo landing strip in the NBC tv-movie, *George Walters Will Be Away for the Holidays*. Also from NBC-TV *The Dreamer of Oz: The Frank L. Baum Story*. Vanessa and Lynn Redgrave are planning to work together in *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* This is an

updated TV movie for ABC-TV. The same network is also planning a four hour miniseries based on Stephen King's bestseller, *IT*. Tim Curry and Richard Thomas are among the cast but there is no news of a transmission date; however, I can't help but wonder how much of the nine hundred plus page opus will be shoe-horned into that four hours. Finally, for Dr. Who fans, a special one-day seminar on the programme is being held at the Wakefield Technical College on November 17, linked to the course "Science Fiction/Fantasy in the Media", confirmed guests include Jon Pertwee, producer John Nathan Turner and writer Jeremy Bentham. An unconfirmed guest is Frazer Hines. If you would like more information or want to attend, write to: Clive Ardley, 114 Dale Farm Road, Normanton, near Wakefield, West Yorkshire. And remember that sea, please.

Media Reviews

How can media reviews start with anything other than Ken Campbell who flew over to the Netherlands in the middle of his Edinburgh Fringe period, to take part in a special performance of "Science Fiction Blues":

KEN CAMPBELL DOES HAIL ERIIS! with The Science Fiction Theatre of Liverpool
in the Edinburgh Fringe

Ken Campbell is Alf Garnett's jeering neighbour in *In Sickness and in Health*, the founder of The Science Fiction Theatre of Liverpool, and a captivating monologist. This "routine" is a tale on the origins of the Theatre, and of its production of the Illuminati trilogy, which is apparently about global conspiracy, Lovecraftian forces of evil and suchlike.

It is certainly a fascinating tale, beginning with Campbell's first SF convention in 1972, where he came into contact with "the Gargantuan of British SF" (Brian Aldiss) and the "plummy voiced" "Airlock Doors" (John Brunner). He describes SF fans as having mysterious beams of light emanating from their foreheads and linking them all together. This is one of the many witty and sideways glances he takes at the world of fandom, and science fiction in general.

Most importantly, he understands the greater importance of charismatic telling to what is actually told, although the subject matter is bizarre enough in itself to hold one's attention. We are prepared to listen to him in what is, after all, the most egocentric of performance types, because he makes us like him by playing up his sense of wonder at it all, rather than scorning some of the absurdities inherent in the bulk of science fiction.

In style, it's like listening to one of the better varieties of party guest - he's unlike Spalding Gray, for example, in that he never really feels the need to disturb us. After all, he's learnt from John Brunner that SF is all about "fun", and he has cause himself to admonish a colleague for taking it all too seriously. The key element in this monologue is that it's really funny, even when he's discussing the possibility of masonic plots to undermine government and infiltrate all levels of society. He reveals all manner of eerie goings on that occur as he researches the ancient order of the Illuminati and the cult of Eris, goddess of chaos, and these include bizarre visitors, posted secret information and long forgotten books and pamphlets. We laugh at the building up of coincidences, the continuing significance of the number 23, and the suggestion that Karl Marx was an Illuminati dude, but the most susceptible parts of our minds begin to wonder if it's not becoming a little convincing after all. (Reviewed by Gavin Boyter).

To take a temporary break from the Fringe, how can anyone resist seeing Total Recall? However, please note that the last paragraph of this review attempts to introduce a debate about the future as depicted in SF films.

TOTAL RECALL

director Paul Verhoeven 1990, 110 minutes, cert 18

Total Recall must be the most violent film of the year. When I saw it, I had a group of US tourists behind me who shouted out "Go, Arnie, go!" every time Schwarzenegger went into action. They probably wished they could send him to the Gulf to help sort out a few dictators - given the number of people his character manages to kill off by himself, who needs a proper army?

But *Total Recall* is not solely an action film, even though it has an extremely good spy thriller plot about totalitarian corporations, freedom fighters, secret agents, bar girls with hearts of gold, and psychic mutants, set largely on Mars. As most people are probably aware, it is inspired by Philip (sic - waste the time designer, Arnie!) K. Dick's short story "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale", about a man who keeps dreaming about Mars and decides to have the memory of a vacation there implanted into him - only to discover that he really had been to Mars, and that his apparent real life was a false memory

overlay on his real one. The film faithfully recapitulates this part of the story, and even adds in that familiar Dickian staple the robot cab-driver; but then where Dick went on to strip off layer after layer of false memory to try to discover the character's real identity (and by extension what makes us human) the film uses this start as the springboard for its exciting hither-thither chase/shoot-out/discovery/double-cross story. And then throws in a few Dickian touches anyway - about two-thirds of the way through, the director of Rekall Inc., the memory implant service which set Schwarzenegger off, walks in to attempt to convince him that his adventures up until then have been a paranoid fantasy and that unless he takes the pill he'll given he'll remain trapped inside his own mind. Not to mention another table-turning revelation towards the end... Only the actual ending itself fails to convince: not God, but still rather a *deus ex machina*. But despite looking like a slab of beefcake, Schwarzenegger has always had a rather sly sense of humour, and what one's left with after the pyrotechnics have faded is the way in which, his character having started as a construction worker and ended as a remade spy, he's managed to make us question his own identity, as someone who started as an Austrian body-builder and now rivals Tom Cruise as the US cinema's biggest crowd-puller.

However, one can't close any review of *Total Recall* without some mention of the enormously detailed sets - all the work of Ron Cobb, who must now be making more money than he ever imagined when still an underground comic artist. The Mars colony in particular looks utterly credible, the budget invested in making it so no doubt a reflection of Schwarzenegger's drawing power and perhaps also a tribute to the artistic kudos that SF movies now have. Yet at the same time this colony seems part of a continuous line stretching back through *Blade Runner* to *Star Wars*: a depiction of a future that looks actually lived-in, simultaneously grubby and high-tech, populated by pampered and powerful leisure classes and loners looking to cut themselves free of the system; exactly the same sort of private affluence and public squalor, in fact, that characterised the urban landscape of the eighties. A future perhaps based too closely on a heightening of the social contradictions evident in contemporary London and New York, and thus one whose unseen regions we can flesh out for ourselves from our own knowledge. Perhaps this makes it too familiar, so that when we finally get there it will seem rather boring. Certainly, the job of realising it has passed out of the hands of SF writers and into those of film-makers. The question is whether, when the future arrives, the US Constitution will have been amended to allow Schwarzenegger to run for President. (Reviewed by Joseph Nicholas)

And another review on Total Recall. It has been slightly edited, removing a description of the plot. After suggesting that it had to be "something special to live up to the tales of huge costs and delay releases accompanying it", the review continues:

... [Quaid] soon finds himself on the run, caught between conflicting political forces, able to trust no one and finding his perceptions continually challenged. Only a trip to Mars can solve his lethal problems.

The film was inspired by a short story by Philip K. Dick, "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale". The key word here is "inspired". The director and writers have taken the kernel of a written story and built on it in a form of collaboration. The result is a kind of *North by Northwest* for the future, combining an intriguing plot with plenty of pace and imagination.

If *Total Recall* had been done as, say, a graphic novel, it would no doubt have received lavish critical praise. Because it is on film and based on a Philip Dick story, it will be subjected to some scorn for its lack of intellectual merit. But, as in *Robocop*, the message is there if you want to think about it. If you don't, sit back and enjoy an excellent action thriller. (Reviewed by Jon Moran)

More from Jon Moran and "Total Recall" in WriteBack. But back to "straight" science fiction now, with:

BRAVE NEW WORLD

TAD Theatre Company in the Edinburgh Fringe

"Civilisation is Sterilisation" is one of the literally resounding phrases that usher in this sinister and distressingly two-sided discussion of the conflicting priorities of free will and happiness. Huxley's novel still has much to say today as its sexually promiscuous yet emotionally retarded society and dealing, as it does, with genetic programming, something which is increasingly becoming a reality.

This young company perform it well and in necessary completeness. There are outstandingly assured performances by the actors playing World Controller Amon and the bewildered "savage" John. The multiplicity of themes, which include love, racism, isolation and scientific progress as elevated to godlike

status (God becoming Ford), are handled deftly, each being given the right amount of weight, without bludgeoning us to death with speech-making. And thanks to Huxley, the discursive sections, where one social theory is played off against another, are gripping and frighteningly unresolvable. The central question is forever with us - do we want controlled happiness or will we opt for the freedom to feel unhappy and suffer pain that goes with the assertion of free will.

The costumes in this production are uniformly white, reinforcing the notion of sterility, until we visit the "savages" whose rich blend of pagan myth and Christianity forms a substitute for the true spiritual freedom that their Religion denies them.

There are some interesting stylistic features of direction such as the lecture-tours of the "hatcheries" that the audience is made to attend by the simple process of having actors planted in the audience to ask questions of the controller. White face masks are used to suggest a cloned and identical workforce and the men wear pockets of Mates at their sides whilst the women wear theirs on decorative belts.

All in all, TAD have succeeded in presenting a work full of heavy themes without losing its complexity or lightening its impact. It's faithful to the original, and although there are a few loose or unravelled ends in the performances, they are honest and sincere ones, on the whole, convincing. *[Reviewed by Gavin Boyter]*

More from the Fringe, and equally serious comes a monologue, complete contrast to Ken Campbell as:

TAKE THEM TO THE GARDEN

John Dowie at the Pleasance Theatre, Edinburgh Fringe

Interesting this entry - ex-stand-up comedian John Dowie presents a reading of a manuscript entirely derived from the words of Philip K. Dick; acting as the personification of Dick's biographical experiences and his philosophy of life. If you've read one of the biographies of Dick's life or, indeed, one of the highly autobiographical novels he wrote in the later part of his career (such as *Valis* or *Radio Free Albemuth*), you'll be on very familiar territory. It's all here; Dick on the 60's dope scene, Dick on authority figures, Dick on the meaning of identity. But it is not Dick speaking: it is someone called John Dowie, pretending to be Philip K. Dick. Slightly unsettling, that. You feel like you're watching someone possessed by Dick's disembodied spirit, or witnessing one of those personality crises so many of Dick's characters went through.

Basically John Dowie does this: he stands at a lectern in a little hall somewhere in Edinburgh and for just over an hour reads from a first-person manuscript derived from Dick's writing on Dick in what turns out to be a reasonable summary of the man's life. It is amusing and sad by turns, and you wonder just how much of the audience actually know who Dick is or what he meant; but they enjoy it, so at the very least they are sympathetic. Maybe if they knew nothing about Dick until now, they will go and buy a book. Or maybe they will just go and see *Total Recall*. But then you can't win every time.

From his passionate delivery, you can tell how much Dowie cares about his subject matter, and you leave impressed. I also left wishing Philip K. Dick was still alive - therefore, it seems to me, Dowie has succeeded admirably in his aims. It makes John Dowie angry when people he cares about die. Just like Philip K. Dick. *[Reviewed by Gary M. Gibson]*

There is no way to convey the excitement of the Edinburgh Fringe, the crowded church halls, the street theatre. This year, science fiction was represented well, though the next review could possibly be classed under horror ... ? ...

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Ageless Theatre, in the Edinburgh Fringe

For those of you unfamiliar with the plot of this SF "B-movie" musical, it concerns the growth of a man-eating, singing, giant plant and the effect it has on the Skid Row residents who come into contact with it. This may sound like a really odd idea for a musical, but it works marvellously, especially live.

Ageless Theatre enter into the spirit of the ridiculous with gusto; an excess of energy that carries the audience along and makes them sympathise with comic-book characters and sentiments. Where this show stands above its closest relative, *The Rocky Horror Show*, is that it is genuinely witty and funny, rather than just being weird. The song of the sadistic dentist/motorcycle hoodlum

and the squeaky-voiced heroine's dream of a "matchbox" of her own, complete with "real chain-link fence" and "disposal in the sink" work so well because they take clichéd musical situations and undercut the sentiment with wit. The lyrics are always clever and the music, a fifties/sixties pastiche complete with Shirelle-like girl chorus, is toe-tappingly catchy stuff.

This company's performance is admirable in that it only rarely disappoints those who saw the film of the show first. Only the dentist character lacks the charisma of Steve Martin's part in the film. Seymour, the wimp who first introduces the plant, Audrey II, to blood, is especially good.

And the plant is wonderful, having a rich fruity deep blues voice which improves on the film's own Audrey II, whilst lacking the Frank Oz wizardry of that version. It grows impressively, as the humans scurry around it, and when it first speaks, the effect is spellbinding.

The band that play all the music remain largely out of sight, but deliver a musical accompaniment to the words. Because it is live, it has a certain bite that the music of the film lacked and if the speakers don't give out (as one of them occasionally did as I watched), it will have your extremities moving in rhythmic sympathy, if you see what I mean. A great little show - perfect when accompanied by a loved one and a large bag of jelly babies. *[Reviewed by Gavin Boyter]*

The jelly babies would not suit the next review, which considers the boundaries of science fiction:

DEPRAVITY

Grant Morrison at the Edinburgh Fringe

Two barefoot figures cloaked in black and carrying burning candles tread solemnly forward onto the stage, faces hidden by featureless white masks; eerie, ambient music plays somewhere far away. An evening of magic, deception and exceptional depravity is to follow.

It must be fantasy. Or horror. Or is it? Depends how open-minded you are. Or how easily convinced. Or gullible. This is a play by Grant Morrison, the comic *wunderkind* currently out-weirding everyone else in the comics field through the medium of *Doom Patrol*, *Arkham Asylum* and *The New Adventures of Hitler*. So what's going on? A play about Aleister Crowley? What's this doing in a science-fiction magazine?

Well, it depends how provincial you want to be: Morrison's work is mostly of a fantastic nature, often confined to DC's strict superhero requirements, but somehow manages to flout those requirements at the same time. Because of the themes he deals with, his work fits into the adult fantasy genre (James P. Blaylock as opposed to David Gemmell). Sometimes it works too well, and the seriousness of Morrison's ideas begins to jar with the medium in which it is presented. But if I put Morrison next to names like Frank Miller and Alan Moore, it becomes clear this is something of interest to those interested in serious science fiction.

Supposedly science fiction appeals to us because of its element of "sense of wonder" and *Depravity* doesn't lack on that count. The performance is by the *Oxygen House* performing group who did Morrison's *Red King Rising* in last year's Fringe, and focuses on the relationship between the dominating Crowley and the weak-willed Victor Neuberg who fell under the spell of Crowley's powerful personality. Neuberg's analyst partly narrates, fading into the background as Crowley steps forward to harangue the pitiful Neuberg. The two acolytes, dressed in black, are ever-present. If the play can be faulted in any way, it is that at times the story twists into a bizarre variation of the *Rocky Horror Show* - seriously - and whether this is intentional or not I cannot say. But I suspect that it is intentional. Understand, though: the play is a serious work of exceptional drama and intelligence, presenting Crowley as a bigot, racist, fetishist and all round manipulative bastard. Neuberg is effete and easily swayed by Crowley's claims to be able to bestow immense power upon his disciples - providing they came up with the cash, of which Neuberg had plenty.

So what is of interest to the science fiction reader? The sometimes thin line between fantasy and reality that some people appear to be unable to recognise. It's not even a question of whether or not you attach any credence to Crowley's remarkable claims; the relationship between Neuberg and Crowley is the same as the relationship between Charles Manson and his "family" or Jim Jones and his disciples. Crowley could have been preaching ufology or Scientology as easily as he preached magic. It doesn't matter whether or not Crowley had contact with supposed "Hidden Masters" in this context. Morrison's own attitude on the subject seems to be demonstrated when Crowley turns to the audience and says, in reply to a question concerning his

treatment of his followers, "There's a sucker born every minute". The acting is superb. The writing is superb. The whole thing is utterly gripping. If you have a chance, please do see it. [Reviewed by Gary M. Gibson]

The concept of freewill was further considered in a mythological framework in:

WORDS FROM THE WORLD'S END

The Oxford Theatre Group at the Edinburgh Fringe

Part philosophical exploration of the issue of Human Will versus God's will, and part heroic saga, this play every bit deserves its Guardian/Harp Student Drama Award. It captivated the majority of the audience although, interestingly, a number found its mythological/historical slant too hard to swallow and left during the performance. And one gentleman, perhaps suffering the strain of one-show-too-many, fell asleep and snored behind me.

The superbly talented and energised cast, three men and a woman, leapt into the performance with a bawdy song which set into motion a strain of informality that properly undercut the more solemn subject matter of the main part of the play - the adventures and conquests of Alexander the Great, given as examples of Human Will at its most unrestrained.

But there's more to it than mere epic storytelling - the whole thing is related by one of Lucifer's fallen angels, come to earth to claim the soul of a medieval monk by sowing seeds of self-doubt and religious uncertainty. In the guise of a wealthy and exceptionally narcissistic baron, the devil cajoles and threatens the monk into writing the life of Alexander as parallel to his own. Forced to comply, the reluctant monk, in the process of telling the tale, is forced to consider the subjugation of personal will in his own life as opposed to Alexander's massive manifestations of human will. He asks, which did God intend, and this forms the central question that drives him into complete scripting the tale.

Taken merely on the level of mythological/historical storytelling, this play is a remarkable feat. The players are charged with enthusiasm and this emerges in the quality of the acting they produce - always entirely convincing, even in roles such as that of one of Hell's minions or that of Alexander, surely a role to covet in future production for aspiring actors. The play makes use of innovative stylistic techniques, such as when the monk is forced to "become" characters in the life of Alexander and therefore actually pushed into confrontations with the man himself. The music used is eclectic, ranging from Scottish contemporary folk to synthesised mood pieces.

The words spoken fit comfortably into the idiom of heroic prose, complete with suitably majestic metaphors, without being suffocatingly distanced from reality or sounding artificial. Considering that this is only the second performed play by a young playwright, it is quite an achievement. [Reviewed by Gavin Boyer]

"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" wrote John Peters in Matrix 89 of Moon 44. A further review echoed John's feelings:

MOON 44

Directed by Roland Emmerich, 99 minutes, cert 15

In the trailer, and in synopsis, *Moon 44* looks good; but the reality is rather less than the sum of its parts. Plot logic? The script? Perhaps both - the scriptwriters seem very unsure of the distinction between a solar system and a galaxy, and a prologue which states that by 2038 the Earth is dominated by intergalactic (sic) mining corporations is deeply unpromising. Nor is it ever explained what all these moons in the "outer zone" are supposed to be orbiting, or how they come to have an atmosphere dense enough to permit rotary-wing aviation.

But the helicopters are, in fact, the film's one good idea, the gimmick being that the air is too murky and dust-laden for the pilots to fly without the aid of teenage computer hackers serving as their navigators back at base. Yet little real use is ever made of the idea: we see the pilots chasing each other around the moon's canyons in mock dogfights and that's about it. When the time comes to defend the mine against the robot drones of the corporation's archival, it's all over in about five minutes; and in any case this rivalry, and the helicopters, are quite incidental to the main plot, which concerns the theft of ore-laden mining shuttles by insiders and requires an undercover investigator to be infiltrated into the crew of ex-prisoners being taught to fly the helicopters as the price of their liberty. To no great surprise (well, not mine), the mastermind behind the shuttle thefts turns out to be the moon's commander,

who is suitably offed. This is all so anaemic in concept and execution that you begin to wonder why they bothered, and why the makers didn't ask you, because you just know you could have done better.

The look of the film is heavily (and obviously) inspired by *Bladerunner* and *Alien*, with an enclosed, claustrophobic look heightened by everything being coloured various shades of black, grey and military green. The whole thing was shot on a specially constructed indoor stage near Stuttgart, and this fact probably accounts for a curious aspect of the film that you don't at first notice: that despite the number of people on screen at any time, none but the principal characters ever actually speaks. This has the unfortunate side-effect of making most of the helicopter pilots - played by unknown German musclemen - look not just silent macho types but brainless to boot; a special effect that the makers surely couldn't have intended.

Moon 44 is made in cinemascope, and with such an aspect ratio one would normally advise people not to wait for the video and the cropped print that results. But in this case, the cinemascope adds nothing, and in fact emphasises an irritating and really quite appalling defect: when the big spaceships go sliding across the stars, you can see the camera jerks. You can't get much worse than that. [Reviewed by Joseph Nicholas]

Bad films can be hilarious, or they can be tedious. Here is an example of each, getting the latter over with first:

THE GUARDIAN

Director William Friedkin, Universal (18)

You would expect, wouldn't you, that a director of Friedkin's reputation couldn't cock up a horror film - at least, not within the first five minutes. Unfortunately, this does happen in *The Guardian*, the tale of a tree with the soul of a demonic druid and a hunger for the blood of babies. Jenny Seagrove is Camilla, an extremely attractive woman who can charm parents into believing that she is the best nanny to look after their newborn baby. Unfortunately, she also has a penchant for legging it (when the moon is high) with the child into the forest where she offers babykins as a sacrificial snack to this huge tree just waiting to be a MPFI bookcase.

The revelation of the oak's extra-curricular appetite for "Baby Bio" is disclosed to the audience with little suspense immediately the film begins, so any build-up of unease or shock value is totally dissipated later in the climax when a similar situation is lengthily replayed for the audience. Once again, the ubiquitous chainsaw is whipped out to add a frisson of artificial fear - so much so that the tree uproots and tries some fancy footwork in a pretty anaemic battle of wills.

While this alone is almost enough to render the film unwatchable, a tediously dull script by Friedkin, Stephen Volk and Dan Greenburg and scrappy editing is enough to make one look forward to the delights of filling out a poll tax application form. The idea of child-snatching is, of course, a truly horrifying one, and a well-written scenario using this idea could be the basis of an intense drama. A case in point was the little girl snatched during the summer from a caravan in the west country - why did a twenty three year old man reach through the window and grab her? We may never know. But the exploration of a kidnapper's psyche and the parents' anguish would make unsettling and possibly horrific viewing. However, adding an absolutely daft plot about demonic trees is enough to lose any sense of identification with the film and cast.

On reflection, this isn't actually too difficult, as the main cast are singularly lacking in characterisation - Jenny Seagrove may be the star, but her overwhelming blandness dissipates any malevolence within Camilla to the point that taking baby to the sacrificial tree is no different from taking him to Mothercare. Carey Lowell and Dwyer Brown play the parents and should elicit sympathy, but the poor script allows them no proper perspective. They are identikit people, cyphers with no reality.

I'm always dismayed when a film instils such negative reactions in me - a lot of people and money have been brought together to little effect, and you can't help wondering why nobody saw the faults earlier and corrected them. William Friedkin directed both *The Exorcist* and *The French Connection*, two films that epitomise the modern horror and thriller genres. This film is unlikely to enhance that reputation. It is a case of "Woodsmen, Don't Spare That Tree!" [Reviewed by John Peters]

When a plot gets out of hand, you can walk out, sit tight or just remember happier times. Or happier, equally bad, films like:

I BOUGHT A VAMPIRE MOTORCYCLE

Director Dirk Campbell, 104 minutes, cert 18

The acting is perfunctory, the jokes excruciating, the plot half-witted, the scenario stupid beyond belief, the result thoroughly silly - and also rather amusing. Admittedly, *I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle* provokes chuckles instead of belly laughs, but this is probably because its makers, knowing that the slightest hint of portentousness would be death at the box office - and that apart from its central premise the film is devoid of original ideas - chose to play it as a satire rather than a comedy. It is not always clear who or what is being satirised - there can't be that much mileage left in the theme of vampirism or demonic possession - but the notion of a motorcycle that won't run until after dark and then only on a tank full of blood is certainly unusual.

How the motorcycle got that way provides the subplot, involving the hunting down of the biker gang which murdered the rivals whose leader once rode it; this in turn provides the excuse for the bike's initial bloodshed, played mainly for black laughs, after which it goes properly on the rampage and ends by eating a traffic warden attempting to give it a parking ticket for a broken headlight. Although the scriptwriters seem a bit confused about the difference between vampirism and demonism, this very confusion allows room for a rather jolly exorcism scene featuring a priest not averse to doing a few wheelies himself. After which, more roaring around knocking people off (since what would be the point of an exorcism which worked first time?) - there's even a reprise of that classic scene, familiar from dozens of Dracula movies, in which it goes after the hero's girlfriend who has not replaced her crucifix after a hospital wash. Finally, the motorcycle bursts into a gym and has a close encounter with a sunbed.

Cheekily, the scriptwriters even leave room for a sequel by ensuring that when he first acquires the motorcycle, the hero has to replace the original petrol tank, which was damaged in the gang shoot-out in the hero's garage for a bit of business in the final shot. I can see the title even now: *Vampire Motorcycle 2: I Thought I'd Got Rid Of It*. But I bet it won't be half as daft. [Reviewed by Joseph Nicholas]

But to get back to straight sf, time travel, science fiction meets the western and provides the answers. Yes, folks, it's:

BACK TO THE FUTURE III

Director Robert Zemeckis, Universal, PG

This follows on directly from *ButF II*, with Marty McFly having to go back to 1885 to rescue the Doc from a gun-fighter's death. Yes, *ButF III* becomes a western in this latest, and hopefully, final episode. And it has to be said, that while the DeLorean (THE most stylish time-machine ever) gets shunted to the side for most of the film, this is definitely a cracker of a film. The reason is simple: by staying mainly in one timezone, the story concentrates on Marty and Doc long enough to finally develop the characterisation only sketched in the earlier films. Christopher Lloyd (Doc), in particular, confirms how good an emotional actor he is - first demonstrated in *The Dream Team*. As before, the ramifications of time travel are best ignored (for the good of your sanity, if nothing else) as the film dazzles with breathtaking action sequences, some very good comedy and a very pastiche of the western genre by using many veteran actors from countless westerns. Mary Steenburgen plays a character not dissimilar to the one she played in *Time After Time* when she time-travelled with H.G. Wells. Robert Zemeckis must be a glutton for punishment, having shot this directly after *ButF II*. All in all, this is a fitting end to an original and witty series, and one wishes other production teams took the time to get their acts together so well. [Reviewed by John Peters]

Finally, horror farce:

GREMLINS 2: The New Batch

Director Joe Dante, Warner Brothers, 12

Without doubt this is the daftest and most bizarre comedy I've seen since *Young Einstein*. From the opening screen where Daffy Duck attempts a pre-emptive strike on Bugs Bunny and the Warner Brothers logo, to the closing credits, this film resembles nothing so much as a classic Chuck Jones or Tex Avery cartoon. In fact, Chuck Jones directed the animated sequences, demonstrating very ably that he's still the best.

Once again, the human cast are almost irrelevant as the gremlins themselves are very much the stars. The locality has shifted to New York from the classic small town of the first, but little has changed. Billy is still the focus for Mogwai manipulation, and as the audience know the rules better than he does, all hell breaks loose in the most sophisticated office tower in the city. This of course allows Dante to stage some incredible comic set pieces - the gremlin

ensemble doing a soft shoe shuffle to Frank Sinatra's *New York, New York* has to be seen to be believed. Cinema gags abound, not least using Christopher Lee as a mad professor looking for the perfect fluro virus.

With Joe Dante's encouragement, Rick Baker and his crew have fashioned the most perversely chunky of little beggars under the Marx Brothers and let them loose in a New York office block. One constantly hoped that they would bump into Bruce Willis shooting *Die Hard 2* - would the crews be able to tell the difference? I won't spoil it for you - make this one a priority in your diary. And don't leave before the lights come on - you may miss something. [Reviewed by John Peters]

OK, so *John* liked it. And I like reviews which can comment on the event without losing the enthusiasm and the enjoyment it created. Did I say "finally"? Always a fatal word, when the last word could come from a one-man trilogy. yes, folks, it's:

LORD OF THE RINGS

performed by Rob Inglis at the Edinburgh Fringe

It is a one-man version of Tolkien's trilogy. The idea turns out not quite as strange as it sounds, however, since the epic content of Tolkien's work translates quite well into an oratory saga of the Miltonic or Homeric sort. And, indeed, Inglis gives the extracts he narrates and becomes the characters in those events in the style of a true orator. The result is portentous without being overbearing, and without the time to do full justice to the work, he succeeds in bringing it alive in little gulps and flashes. This has the added benefit of sparing us much of the relatively tedious battle scenes and much riding around on horseback in Rohan and Gondor, although we are also forced to lose subsidiary yet interesting plot lines, like the treachery and downfall of Saruman, for example.

Obviously the extent to which you can enjoy a version of a favourite novel, especially one as revered and almost sacred as this, depends on how far you agree with Inglis' adaptations of the characters. He succeeded, for the most part, in gaining the sympathy of the audience for his visions of Frodo, Gandalf, Strider, Gollum and so forth, by avoiding caricature in favour of following the sense of the words spoken and, in turn, deriving the way they should be said.

Hobbits have often presented a problem for illustrators and actors of all kinds since they can so easily appear merely silly and sentimental. But in Inglis' Frodo and Sam, there is real strength mingled in with their physical fragility and worldly inexperience. Gollum is presented excellently, merely by vocals since Inglis is not a physical performer. Gollum becomes a squirming, comical figure, deserving of pity, but also essentially corrupted and untrustworthy. Strider is a little lacking in definition, but then he always was, and here there is little for him to do since we leave the company early into the production, and pay only the most fleeting of visits to them towards the end. This is not a weakness in Inglis' performance, but merely a practical consideration. Gandalf is wise without preaching and the Nazgul and Orcs are wisely left mainly suggested.

The only real grievance I have is, as I have continually said, the omissions that had to be made to bring it all down to under two hours. Thankfully though (and this will give you some idea of the scissor-work that had to be done to this piece), the programme mentions that Inglis has just recorded a full version 56 hours long, in New York. Presumably it is intended for broadcast, and if it is, it will be interesting to see how it compares with the mostly excellent (but less complete) BBC adaptation. [Reviewed by Gavin Boyter]

Video News

NEW RELEASES - these new genre titles should be currently available:

CASTLE: *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*; *Phantom of the Opera* (Robert Englund's version); *Encounter at Raven's Gate*; John Waters returns the re-issue treatment: *Polyester*; *Female Trouble*; *Multiple Maniacs*; *Desperate Living*; Oliver Reed and Donald Pleasance in a remake of *The House of Usher*. GUILD: *Brothers in Arms*; *Dark Room*; *Pathfinder*; *Shocker*. HOLLYWOOD COLLECTION: *Cherry 2000*; *The Angry Red Planet*; *Red Heat*; *Short Circuit 2*; *Blind Fury*; Ray Harryhausen's *The Earth vs The Flying Saucers*; *Journey to the Seventh Planet*; *Like Father Like Son*; *The Seventh Sign*; *Vibes*.

MEDUSA: *AfterShock*; *Basket Case II*; *Inferno in Safehaven*; *Frankenhooker*; *Re-animator 2*; *Limit Up*; *Never Cry Devil*; *Nightwish*; Brian Yuzna's *Society* MGM/UA: *Earth Girls Are Easy*; *Brain Dead* and several volumes of *Bugs Bunny* collections. RCA/Columbia: *Monster High*; *Twice Dead*; *Vestron - Sundown*; *The Vampire in Retreat*: "The wild west, where men are men and vampires suck!"

VIRGIN: *Monkey Shines*; *The Tall Guy*; UHF
20:20 VISION: *Chances Are*; *Love at Stake*; *Look Who's Talking*

GUILD - Shocker, 1989, (18), 105 mins. Wes Craven's latest, is a reworking of *Elm St.*, using electricity instead of dreams as the medium of death. Horace Pinker isn't exactly one of life's gentlemen - his hobbies include rape, mass murder and sticking his digits into power sockets. Becoming the most hunted mass murderer in town (well, Monday nights are always quiet!) Horace is finally caught and being so obviously guilty is strapped into the electric chair. While he surprises everyone by soaking in the electric chair's volts and shouting for more, Horace grows stronger, finally snapping his shackles. This is a familiar story saved by a neat twist to the plot and some stunning (no pun intended) sex work as "Happy" Horace travels through video landscapes to attack his victims. His ability to shift from body to body should be exciting but isn't as most scenes are "telegraphed" ahead.

RCE/COLUMBIA - Cherry 2000, 1987, (15), 95 mins. Excellent if actioner which inexplicably failed at the cinema - on hindsight, probably because it really screws the knife into that endangered species, the Yuppie. The year is 2017, and Sam Treadwell has just shorted his sex-droid (Cherry 2000) in an amorous clinch among the kitchen sink's soap suds. Rather distressed at this (7) Sam hires a tracker to find him another Cherry. Along the way there's more action than you'd [normally] find in Prime Minister's question time. This film is a hell of a lot of fun, very offbeat, and those of you who haven't had a *Mad Max* fix in a long time should certainly try this one. Recommended.

Fire and Hemlock

There are more fanzines than usual this time, trawled from the Worldcon fan room and retrieved from my Scottish travels. Fanzines to be listed, read, enjoyed, should be sent to Jenny at the usual editorial address. Fanzines designed more for review should be sent to PO Box 29, Hitchin, Herts. SG4 9TG, with the proviso that, although they will be read and enjoyed, they will not automatically be reviewed. Only the reviewer knows the secret of what will be considered. Please note the immense variety of philosophy and contents: of subject matter and degrees of seriousness: of editorial intentions.

Flamingoes and Aardvarks: The Natural History of Fanzines

Nic Farey

Speculation is rife(ish) on whether the Hanna/Nicholas collective will actually depart these shores for Down Under or not. Should this be the case, it would seem a wise course to compare what they will be taking with them (in fanwriting terms) to God's Own Earth, and what they might expect (in fanwriting terms) when and if they arrive.

Sadly, I have but one example of an Oz fanzine by which to judge, but is at least the Ditmar-winning zine of 1990: *Ethel the Aardvark*, although the voting in this case seems to have been the subject of at least as much discussion and contention as, say, the average Nova award ballot (of which, more anon).

Of the latest issue of *FTT* (on this occasion, *Flamingoes Turning Tricks*, a sexual innuendo not entirely inappropriate), a comparison with *Ethel 31* would surely evoke a disturbed, slightly hissing, if not spluttering cry of "Apples and Oranges" from my good friend, Mr. Harry Bond. Indeed, as is usual in such matters of fanzine expertise, he would be quite correct. *Ethel* would be best described as the Melbourne Science Fiction Association's equivalent of *Matrix*, but put together in a manner reminiscent of *Private Eye* without the planning. Someone once said of *Private Eye*'s layout that it was an exercise in neo-Brechtian realism. Willy Rushton always said it reminded him of a betting-shop floor; and so it was with *Ethel*. In fact, the betting-shop floor in this case might have been viewed after a particularly hectic day at the Melbourne Cup. Apart from a few pages which appear to have been deliberately planned and placed, the whole zine gives the appearance of having been compiled as the various contributions arrive. Concepts, reviews and letters arrive in a very haphazard fashion. It's fair to say that the net effect prevents the reader from becoming bored, and makes *Ethel* a zine more likely to be read in a single sitting than many others. The general tone is lighthearted and refreshing in a way many UK club/news oriented zines would do well to note.

FTT is, of course, a bastion of seriousness. Most of the issue is taken up with letters of comment, a fact Joseph Nicholas points out in against editorial policy: he expects the balance to be redressed in the following issue since there should be so much less to write about in the current one. Even with the comparatively high page count of letters in this issue, there is still a large We

Have Also Heard From paragraph. (For those who may be less than familiar with the jargon, this is usually abbreviated to "WAHP", and having your name mentioned in such a paragraph is being WAHPed - this definition extracted from "I Dhoon't Understand Bloody Fanzines" by Khav Ph MbeVehigh). There are in fact two separate letter columns, one general, and the other ("Kali Juggling") containing responses specific to Judith's "Peach Fuzz, Bums and Feminists Against Censorship" article from the previous issue. Some of these responses are rather interesting, and as Judith herself points out, largely miss the point. Can she ever forgive Avedon Carol, for example, for suspecting Judith of being "disingenious"? As if!

Anyway, it would seem less than useful to enumerate further detail of *FTT* - I can only suggest (and recommend) that you obtain a copy and read it - except to say that, for me, the zine is dominated to a certain extent by Judith's feminism article, and that most, if not all of her correspondents have forgotten Karl Marx's simple dictum: "The world has only been interpreted by philosophers in various ways; the point is to change it". This point is conspicuously forgotten when discussing, for example, sexism in advertising. As long as such advertising is effective, it will continue to be produced. *Ethel the Aardvark* has no such pretensions or considerations. It exists as the written link between Melbourne fandom and, one presumes, Ozfans generally. On this level, it must be judged a success. *FTT*'s apparent mission to raise the collective consciousness of fandom is, as yet, only partially successful, although if I were Judith Hanna, I might be getting a bit tired of being misunderstood, in some cases, one suspects willfully. Her arguments always seem clear enough to me, and I personally have yet to tire of listening to what she has to say.

Ethel is, of course, an award-winning fanzine, though I doubt if it will be too long before the same can be said of *FTT*, with the Nova award ballot coming right along real soon now. After all, *FTT* has all the right qualifications: "Applied Fanwriting" (copyright the good and great H. Bond); sufficient seriousness: sufficient lightheartedness (but only just); sufficient page count; editors possibly about to depart these shores (Nova would make nice leaving present); duplicated (not photocopied). On that basis, how can they fail?

FTT: Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas, 5a Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH (Available on request or for trade)

Ethel the Aardvark: Melbourne Science Fiction Club, PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 3005, Australia. (Free to MSPC members: other trade or subscriptions \$8/6 issues Australia, \$12/6 issues overseas (surface), 6 issues = 1 year).

The Thirty Nine Zines

AFTER IMAGES 4

(Terry Broome, 4 Zermatt Street, Chapel Allerton, Leeds LS7 3NJ. Please note change of address until mid November at least). "In a peculiar way, *Northanger Abbey* has more to do with modern sf than Orwell" explains Terry, in this letter substitute, and also considers *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and reviews some Russian sf including Viktor Kolupayev's "The Newstand" where a vendor can see news stories a day ahead - tantalising parallels to John Buchan's *The Gap in the Curtain*.

CHUKKA BOOTS

(Claire Brierley, editor, 17 Guildford Street, Brighton BN1 3LA) A ZZ9 Plural Z Alpha "Hitch-hikers" clubzine; details from Noel Collyer at the above address with a stamped addressed envelope or 2 international reply coupons. Lots of pastiches with Zaphod, Trillian, Ford, Arthur *et al*; some poetry, including Vagon, which is truly AWFUL; a piece on Arrakis which actually volunteered to have a Disaster Area concert and look what happened to it.

CRITICAL WAVE

(Steve Green & Martin Tudor, 33 Scott Road, Olton Solihull B92 7LQ) This newzine celebrated its third anniversary at the Worldcon. Great newzine I read avidly; surprisingly little overlap with *Matrix* (to the detriment of neither)

DEROGATORY REFERENCE 66

(Arthur D. Hlavaty, PO Box 52028, Durham, NC 27717, 919-490-1570 USA). Arthur has graduated (Masters in Information Science), looked for a job, gone to a con and lost a friend, Adrienne Fein, to whom this fanzine is dedicated. It concludes with an article on football because Arthur likes writing about football. Should one see the Miami Dolphins or Homeless Raiders in action, at least one can now toss a few names about in feigned expertise.

DINOSAURS AND DISKETTE FAILURES GO DUTCH

(Steve and Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP) Four sets of twinned articles, which both introduce and show the different attitudes to life, the pursuit of happiness and liberty of both editors.

DON-O-SAUR 59

(Don C. Thompson, 3735 W 81st Place, Westminster, Co 80030-3919, USA) Good meaty articles on attraction to horror fiction and dope dealing; equally

strong letter column on smoking, rocking and arms, separated by a list of fanzines received. This one is well worth reading.

DOXA!

(Roman Orzan, PO Box 131, Marsden, SA 5070, Australia) A letter supplement this time including Dave Luckett's reaction to the performance artist Stelar, who suspends himself on meathooks ("unpeakable antics of [a] perversity"). Roman suggests in reply that while art creates beauty and testifies to truth, some art is deliberately designed to "change society, to invite new ways of viewing the world, to suggest different possibilities". A further *doxa!* describes Lenin Limbo, performance artist and self-employed public interest lawyer (is it Melbourne which attracts these interesting people or just Roman?) and more letters from Woodburn (USA) and New Ireland (New Guinea).

DOXY 6

(John Foyster, PO Box 3086, Grenfell Street, Adelaide, S Australia 5000) This notes the difference between fanish sf readers and those who join national sf associations.

DREAMBERRY WINE

(Mike Don, 233 Maine Road, Manchester M14 7WG) Second hand/new books list with reviews, con news and letters.

DREAMS FROM WITHIN Part VI

(Darren, 74 Monteth Crescent, Boston, Lincs PE21 9AY) The tarot designs are excellent and the interviews far-ranging - Joolz, for example, likes opera as well as Energetic Crusher and New Model Army. The contents range from dream interpretation to foreign fanzines, however this is primarily a music zine (but oddly intriguing).

ETA 5

(Rob Hansen, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB) Con reports on Novacon and Conflu. Is snooker like fandom (considering that one of them is only a game)? Should early fanzines be scanned and stored on floppy disks (considering the trashy paper some were printed on)?

FACTSHEET FIVE

(Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave, Renaslaer, NY 12144-4502, USA) The multitude of fanzines listed (plus audio, comics and poetry) is humbling to a fizzes editor, but exciting to a fanzine reader. Put aside a lot of time for this one (140 pages!)

FILE 770

(Mike Gley, 5828 Woodman Ave #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401, USA) Newszine with Windycon report and artist David Lee Anderson speech; good for US fan news.

FLAMINGOS TURNING TRICKS (FTT10)

(Joseph Nicholas and Judith Hanna, 5A Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH) Dominated by a massive (and massively interesting) letter column, a cosy article on life in a women's prison, as seen by a student volunteer and yet another exotic holiday for Joseph - capsize canoes in Texas.

FLICKERS 'N' FRAMES

(John M. Peters, 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth PL6 6QN) 4 issues for £4.50, single issue £1.25. Fiction, zines and lots of reviews. Issue 10 (second anniversary celebration) includes an exclusive tape from Clive Littlewood of *Electronical Dreams* in St. Austell. I like this one

FTL

(Michael Carroll, 30 Beverly Downs, Knocklyon Road, Templeogue, Dublin 16) Clubzine for the Irish Science Fiction Association. Fiction, a David Brin interview, a network article. The review section concentrates on plots.

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE 3

(Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU) Newsletter on the Jenny Randles court case with qualified optimism - MJ Balls has raised a third of the estimated bill. More books for sale and bids requested for mail order auction. Supporters include Terry Broome, Ken Cheslin, Gwen Funnell, Ken Lake, Steve Sneyd, Nigel Thornton-Clarke, Wendell Wagner, Jr., Walter A. Willis and many more.

INCEPTION

(Steve Jeffery and Vikki Lee France, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA) "A Plague of Vipers ... or a Host of Shining (somewhat Tarnished) Angels" discusses the pros and cons of criticism/reviews; with brief tantalising pieces on gender roles, Storm Constantine and the literary androgyny. The next issue plans to explore gender roles in some depth.

KILLIE KEN 17

40p This is a football fanzine. (Richard Cairns, 34 Boyd Orr Crescent, Kilmaurs, Ayrshire, Scotland) Distinct lack of science fiction, overdose of football - in other words, a typical fanzine. Letters, gossip, football folk songs ("As he lay on the battlefield dying/With the blood pouring out of his head/Then he propped himself up on one elbow/And there were the words he said/Kilmarnock, Kilmarnock/We are the champions").

KIWICON

(Felicity Fletcher & Paul Scoones, 30 Margaret Ave, Mt. Albert, Auckland, New Zealand). Just because this is a con programme book doesn't stop it being worth reading. Articles on Harry Harrison and Mary MacLachlan, Dr. Who fandom in NZ and photographs of the con committee.

KOSMOSKYNA 2

(Eeva Jaeger, Linnankontkatu 13a 1, SF-00250 Helsinki, Finland) Clubzine of the Finnish Science Fiction Writers Association. The *Kalvala* explained, introduction to Finnish fans and profile on Johanna Simola with her short story "The Night Water". She considers it a compliment to be told her works are "disorienting like a mental itch" - the worst insult she could get would be "I think I read [that story] but just now I can't recall what it was about ..."

LEGEND

(John Brand, 3 Esby Walk, Kirkdale, Liverpool 4) Consistently enjoyable media fanzine with articles on *Land of the Giants* and *Space 1999*. Apparently in *Superman V* the caped crusader will tackle pollution and stitch the ozone layer hole closed simultaneously.

MYTHOMANIA 4

(Stig W. Jorgensen, Frimstervej 31, st.4v, DK-2400 Kobenhavn NV, Denmark) An English language edition for trade at the Worldcon (so few people read Danish) with an excellent survey of sf time slips, an interview with Samuel Delany and letter from poet K.V. Bailey.

OVERSPACE 6.7

(Sean R. Friend, The Mill House, 177 Challymead, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 8LH) An unusual list of recommended books including *Animal Farm*, *The Tenth Victim* and *Chocky's Challenge*; of the other articles I especially liked "Unacceptable Risk" by John Light which takes insurance problems into outer space. 7 has a thought provoking analysis of Ballard's *Concrete Island* and short review of P.K. Dick's *Through a Glass Darkly* with fiction, poetry and essential reading.

PERSPEX PARROT

(Bob Shaw, 66 Knutsford Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 2PB) This is a letter substitute which will prevent Bob getting a quite complex when faced by a huge pile of unresponded to fanzines. Interesting, informative, with the odd serious point - I wish there were more letter substitutes like this.

PERSPICACIOUS PERSPICUITY #1

(Craig Macbride, PO Box 274, World Trade Centre 3005, Australia) Review of Danse Macabre which had loads of videos, the Melbourne version of Biggles' birthday party and a tuba player (demented) who started playing at 0907 on Easter Day (ie early). The letter column includes photos of the correspondents (heads only) and there is a warning that con committees might not get the best hotel deal. Further issues will depend on the response. "If nobody is even slightly interested, then this project may shrivel and die". Pity if it does.

POUTNIK

(Egon Cerny, Matechova 14, 140 00 Praha 4, Czechoslovakia) The bulletin of the Jules Verne club which includes a brief history of Czech fandom, another episode of the Conan-Star Trek saga (hilarious) and more fiction.

PULP 17

(Avedon Carol & Rob Hansen, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB) This zine has a rotating editorship - next issue edited by John Harvey, 8 The Orchard, Tonwell, Herts SG12 0HR. Alan Dorey once defined "fanish" as "any subject can be discussed" - it is therefore dubious to quibble at seeing articles on abortion rights or an article on genuinely wanting kids to read *Omaha the Cat Dancer*; Chuch Harris describes the fanish visitors to Atom's traditional funeral - very moving. A long letter column.

REDBACK

(John D. Berry, 525 19th Avenue East, Seattle, Washington 98112, USA) Newsletter about the Down Under Fan Fund (US-Australia and back). The next race will send a North American fan to Brisbane next Easter. List of classic fanzines to be auctioned.

SCIENCE FICTION JOURNALEN

(Ahvrid Engholm, Renstiernas Gata 29, S-116 331 Stockholm, Sweden) Terse items of news, the Swedish space movement, the first Russian magazine; but the best part explores the difficulties of writing conversation for aliens.

SHIPYARD BLUES 5

(John D. Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 9AZ) The beautiful typographical style and careful layout make me think of a strawberry pie with cream ... the first one is delicious. I would reluctantly suggest sharper editing - to make a Latin tag the *crux* of a story is admirable but a footnote with the translation would have prevented many fumblyings in a miniature Latin dictionary. The letter column is lively; of the articles, Ken Lake (admirably complemented by a *Shep illo*) and Mary Gentle are thought provoking.

SVERFANDOM IN THE 80S

(Holger Eliasson - no address given - possibly obtained via Ahvrid Engholm, address as above) This bulky anthology cannot be described properly in a few lines - there's a lot of reading there plus a lot of photos of Scandinavian fans to identify. Long pause while I open it at random and read about student life - more exciting, more (supposedly) teetotal and (possibly) more exaggerated than mine.

TAFF DOOR 1

(Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, Ca. 95442, USA) Background information on the TAFF race and details of the auction which includes classic fanzines for sale.

TALES FROM THE BROKEN DRUM 4

(Gary Starr, 46 Arnside Road, Bestwood Estate, Nottingham NG5 5HE) Clubzine of Octarine, the club devoted to the exploration of humour. There's an analysis of *Red Dwarf* history, an *Ode to a Clothes Horse* (poem, hilarious) and more.

TIMELINE 2

(Joachim Henke, Johnstrasse 21,6551 Volzheim, Germany) Dr. Who fanzine in German with Sabine Muller portfolio and comic strip - Mr. Spock also appears.

TRAPDOOR 7, 8, 9

(Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, Ca. 95442, USA) To describe this as an accessible fanzine is a limited truth - it gives you a tingle of pure delight and devours hours of spare time when you sit to read and reread it. This one is good (note careful understatement).

XUENSE

(Alain le Bussy, 21 rue du Cimetiere, 4050 Eneux, Belgium) French and English zine from Belgian fans; information and mood fiction. Curiously interesting.

WHO SUFFERS? 9

(Julie C. Grovener, Science Fiction and Fantasy Society, Toivo House, University of Hull, Hull HY6 7RX) Lively enjoyable clubzine with gruesome fable from Dyls Jones and discussion of how P.K. Dick writes about and for children. "I identify with the most helpless, the most defenceless and weak persons in society" wrote PKD in 1960. But Dirk K. Handful points out that it is the children to whom PKD gives the power of salvation.

WOOF 15

(Victoria A. Smith, 10613 Center Street, Fairfax, Va 22030, USA) This is an apc collated every Worldcon (ie annually). 300 copies have to be provided ready collated, which may put people off - however, it is open to anyone who can get 300 copies to the next Worldcon (Chicon, Chicago)

Noticeboard

PULP AND DIGEST SF MAGAZINES FOR SALE

Also hardback first editions of *City*, *The Silver Locusts* and *A Martian Odyssey*. Please send s/c for list Doug Fulthorpe, 10 Bosburn Drive, Mellor Brook, Blackburn BB2 7PA [Note from Ed. There are some good items here, for modest prices ...]

VECTORS 16-33 FOR SALE

Offers please. Money will be donated to Speaking Books for the Blind. Details from Iain Thomas, 31 St. Ronan's Drive, Shawlands, Glasgow G41 3SQ

WANTED: FUTURE FEMALES: A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY ed. Marleen Barr (Ohio Bowling Green University Press 1981) or *Erotic Universe* ed. Donald Palumbo (Westport CT, Greenwood 1986). Does anyone have a copy of either, for sale, or even for a temporary loan? Steve Jeffery, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA

FLICKERS 'N' FRAMES is a quarterly multi media zine and issue #10 has just been published featuring fiction by John Light and Martin Brier; articles and reviews by Mike Ashley, Anthony North, Tony Lee, Dave W. Hughes; and illustrated by Dreyfus, Dallas Goffin, Alan Hunter and John Light. It also includes a free sixty minute compilation tape of synthesizer music from the Electronic Dreams label. This album is exclusive to *F'n'F* and features some of the best musicians on the electronic music scene. *F'n'F* costs £4.50 (\$14) for a 4 issue subscription or £1.25 (\$4) for a single copy and can be ordered from John Peters, 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL6 6QN. I have also a large quantity of magazines (genre, computer, electronics, music, film and video) to dispose of, and some genre books - for a list, please send a s/c to the above address.

"GET STUFFED" The aps by and for soft toys requires new members. If you have a soft toy with a definite personality and a literary frame of mind, perhaps they'd like to communicate with other soft toys. After all, most other groups in fandom have their own aps... Details from "Divine Endurance", 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone CT19 5AZ.

BSFA COLLATING WEEKEND This takes place on Sunday 8th and 9th at the Statistics Department Annex at Reading University. Tea/coffee provided and pub lunch plus congenial conversation and lots of exercise. This is one way to meet other BSFA members and also help the BSFA. Details from Keith Freeman (Tel: 0734 666142)

MERSEYSIDE SF/FANTASY READERS should be interested to know that Waterstone's bookshop in Liverpool is hosting a series of author readings and events. On October 26, Tad Williams will be there to publicise the paperback

edition of *The Dragonbone Chair* (Arrow) and the hardback of the sequel, *Stone of Farewell* (Century). The place is Waterstone's, 52 Bold Street, Liverpool: the time is 1830. Contact the shop (051 709 0866) for more details. And look out for Andy Sawyer, editor of *Paperback Inferno*, who sent this information.

FIFTEEN YEARS IN ORBIT Peterborough Science Fiction Club are organising a series of events next year to celebrate their fifteenth anniversary. They are co-presenting a number of authors with the local writers group, children's book club and bookshops, including the specialist *The House on the Borderland*, at 32D Lincoln Road. Also the David Holmes Gallery hope to host an exhibition of art from the wilder shores of the imagination. Other events will be organised nearer the time. Details from Peterborough SF Club, 24 Yaxley Road, Yaxley, Peterborough PE7 3LG

WANTED INFORMATION ON OLD TIME SF WRITERS I'm looking for information on Leonard Davenport, Paul Corey, Henry K. Gale ("Spawn of the Vortex"), David I. Massen, Charles Eric Maine (David McIlwain), Karl Thole (artist), Oscar Rossiter (Vernon H. Skeels), Rafe Bernard ("Wheel in the Sky"), Hugh Walters, Robert K. Wells and Samuel Mines, Standard pulp editor. And William Sambrot, a writer I have been trying to research for over two years. I live in a rural area, so would be grateful for any help BSFA readers can offer - Jeffery Fisher, Rte 1, Box 178, Lake Toxaway, N.C. 28747, USA.

The Folk of the Fringe BSFA Members in Northern Ireland

Co Antrim	Belfast (4), Lisburn, Newton Abbey
Co Armagh	Portadown
Co Down	Bangor, Holywood (2), Newcastle
Co Londonderry	Derry, Portstewart
Co Tyrone	Cookstown

...and Wales

Clwyd	Mold
Dwyfed	Aberystwyth, Camarthen, Haverfordwest, Llanelli, Rhymand
Gwent	Newport (2)
Gwynedd	Anglesey, Dolgellau, Llandudno Junction
Mid Glamorgan	Bargoed, Cefn Hengoed, Maesteg, Rhondda, Tonyrefail, Treheris
Powys	Cwmrtwrch-Isaf
South Glamorgan	Barry, Cardiff (5), Llanwit Major, Sully
West Glamorgan	Port Talbot, Swansea

Information Service Update Phil Nichols

It probably comes as news to no one, but response to this column increases when there's something tangible to be gained by writing in: I get more mail when I announce a new "All Points Bulletin" - and last issue, when I mentioned "Market Space", I'm certainly not against this. After all, without your letters, I'd have nothing to do. (Now there's a thought ...) I sometimes wish, however, that the impossible questions I occasionally pose in this column drew a similar response. Unfortunately, yet another question has defeated both myself and the BSFA membership (for details see M89). Any ideas on where we're going wrong?

As if to prove that, all in all, we don't really do so badly, I thought this time I'd give you an idea of how well the Information Service has been doing. So here goes.

I've dealt with about seventy queries since I took over the Service. At the time of writing, five questions are still outstanding. If one of them is yours, well, sorry, but these things take time. Most frustrating to me have been the unanswerable questions. I don't just mean the one where the questioner moved abroad after posing the question and hasn't given me his new address; or the one which asked for so much detail that it's going to take me till the turn of the century just to make a start on it. I mean the usual "who wrote the story that goes ..." ones, and the "a friend of mine saw an item in a magazine about six months ago - can you locate it for me" ones. Frustrating because I know someone knows the answer, but I don't know quite who that someone is.

The most satisfying cases are where I've called upon someone to assist, and they've gone above and beyond the call of duty, not merely answering the question, but illuminating the entire subject area. I would especially like to thank Fanderson and the Edgar Rice Burroughs Society for superb assistance in the past.

What are your chances of a decent answer to your question, I hear you cry. Well, I've had to abandon seven questions for various reasons (usually, when all available channels have failed me); and once or twice I've had to declare case closed because the questioner wanted more and more detail on the same subject. If you're asking something that's not amenable to conventional research methods, be prepared for a long wait - six months or more in some cases. But if you're after bibliographical details or the like, you stand a good chance of an answer within six weeks. But don't forget that SAE!

If you want to put me to the test, drop me a line, and I'll see what I can do. My address is: Phil Nichols, 57 Grange Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 8PB.

Cry "Fanac"!

This issue, Sue Thomason reveals the secret of the BSFA Orbiter. No, we don't yet have our own space shuttles, but the orbiter groups may yet launch several BSFA members on a meteoric career in writing.

What is the Orbiter?

Orbiter is the BSFA's postal writers' workshop scheme, currently co-ordinated by Sue Thomason (190 Coach Road, Sleights, nr. Whitby, North Yorks. YO22 5EN). There are currently (Sept. 1990) eleven active Orbiter groups, with a twelfth in formation and open to new members.

Each group consists of five writers and a parcel of manuscripts, posted from member to member on a pre-arranged "orbit". When you get the parcel, you put in a MS of your own, write honest, constructive critical comments on the other four MSS, and pass it on. 2-3 months later, the parcel returns to you and you take out your old MS with four sets of comments attached, put in a new MS and repeat...

Orbiter's benefits are many. Writers often feel isolated; the group puts you in touch with four other people who presumably have something pretty basic in common with you - the desire to write. Your work is read with attention and commented on by four other people who will at the very least proofread your MS for typos and continuity errors. Very often they will make much deeper criticisms, which will either lead you to revise your work, or to understand that you can't please everyone all the time. Developing a "critical eye" and judicious turn of phrase in commenting on other peoples' work will at the least make you more aware of a range of writing styles; it may lead you to develop your self-criticism, to detect and eliminate weaknesses in your own work.

Apart from any restrictions made and agreed upon by individual groups, there is no restriction made and agreed upon by individual groups, there is no restriction on form, or genre. I have seen novel extracts, short stories, radio plays, comic scripts ... I see no reason why poetry and non-fiction pieces shouldn't be orbited within an agreeable group. Most groups set a length limit to avoid paying exorbitant postal charges.

There's very little formal structure to the Orbiter network apart from that. I keep records of members' names and addresses, and which group(s) they're in (some people find it interesting to orbit a MS round one group, revise it in the light of criticisms received, then orbit it round a second group to see if the response is different). I ask people to let me know if they want to drop out of a group, or perhaps move to a different group if the feel they're getting stale, able to predict peoples' responses to their work. I try to ensure that each group of 5 has a volunteer co-ordinator, who keeps track of where the parcel is (or ought to be) and who is in theory responsible for encouraging (or harassing) members who hang on to it for too long. And I encourage anyone with Orbiter-related problems or questions to get in touch with me, including a sae, and I'll try to help.

So if you feel you might find Orbiter useful or interesting, do get in touch. I'm currently setting up a new group, which will "launch" as soon as it has enough members.

Comics News Ian Abraham

Retailers in Britain are currently having to review their selling policy with regard to "adult-only" comics after stocks were seized by both customs officers and the police. Various shipments have been impounded on point of entry, whilst the latest *SpeakEasy* reports a raid on a London specialist store. Titles seized were mainly pornographic in nature, having become in-vogue on the tail of the notorious maxi-series *Black Kiss*. Whilst some highly commended titles, such as *Omaha*, *the Cat Dancer*, have been affected, the current scare has been aggravated by the proliferation of poor quality titles, often stocked by shops against the advice of distributors who would have preferred not to have carried them. Retailers might be advised to consider that distributors have far more ability to judge the quality and marketability of such comics. The market in "adult comics" would surely have followed the path of the black & white fad of a few years ago, collapsing and leaving retailers holding large quantities of unsaleable and unreturnable stock.

An example of the maturing of the comics business recently (as opposed to its products!) has been the tentative moves within some companies towards creator ownership. In one of the most high profile cases of this new freedom for creators UK team Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neil and their popular *Marshal Law* have left Marvel's Epic imprint to joint Neptune Distributors and their Apocalypse publishing division. The split with Epic Comics is presteige to have been entirely amicable. November will see the release of A Prestige Format *Marshal Law* graphic novel entitled *The Kingdom of the Blind*: the character will later join the line up of a new comic *Toxic*, to be published by Apocalypse. This will appear at your local newsagent weekly from March 1991.

Penguin Books recently released a compilation of *Tank Girl* strips from *Deadline* magazine to a blaze of media publicity including reviews in some of the more up-market newspapers. They continue their foray into the comics world by releasing a volume of *Mauritania Comics* in November, based on the popular UK indie comic which relates travel stories (some with a vaguely SF flavour). Penguin will also be publishing the UK edition of *Give Me Liberty*, a SF comic by Frank Miller and Dave Gibbons, once it completes its four issue run in the States. If the current air of credibility around graphic novel publishing is to be maintained, it needs this sort of support from major houses.

In an unusual move, UK Marvel Comics have obtained the rights to reprint DC's American *Star Trek*: *The Next Generation* comics in a British magazine of that title. It will be a stable mate for their *Doctor Who Monthly* and be produced by the same team. Hopefully this will mean more room for editor John Freeman to employ semi-pro fan writers, some of whom he has encouraged to good effect in the pages of the latter title.

The following SF flavoured up-and-coming projects will be of interest:

TWILIGHT (DC): Three part revisionist series featuring many seminal DC science fiction heroes, including the legendary Tommy Tomorrow. Grown men still haunt DC's offices looking for Tommy's past exploits ... and that's just the pros! Written by Howard Chaykin, drawn by Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez.

WORLD WITHOUT END (DC): One of the biggest DC publicity pushes in a long time is gearing up to promote this title by *Helblazer* writer Jamie Delano, including excerpts/previews in the other "brit-pack" DC comics, such as *Doom Patrol* and *Shade*. The oldest plot in the world: the battle of the sexes. *Doctor Who*'s failed with this concept twice, can Delano do better? **LAST AMERICAN (Epic):** First solicited to retailers a couple of years ago, might be topical now as it concerns American military might. Wagner and Grant script.

FAHRED AND THE GRAY MOUSER (Epic): Another Chaykin series, confirming his move back to the ghetto after his peek outside with *Black Kiss*. This I'm sure you'll recognise as based on Fritz Leiber characters and is Chaykin's second crack at them.

DINOSAUR REX (Apple): Collected edition of a three parter everyone ignored a few years back, so I'm putting in a personal recommendation here. Conan Doyle meets P.G. Wodehouse, so its cultural credentials are good: in a vaguely twenties style alternate universe there's this twist of a young explorer and his worldly-wise dinosaur butler.

INDIANA JONES (Dark Horse): You thought he'd had his last crusade ... but no! As mentioned last issue, Dark Horse are doing a lot of business with licensed properties at the moment, this is the latest in the range. Yet to come: Harrison Ford vs Aliens?

SAVIOUR (Trident): Collected edition of the first five issues of well-hot UK indie comic. Religious story, current day setting, battle between Saviour and Anti-Christ, which is which? Price £6.66, well, it's £3.95 really, but that doesn't sound as good.

CADILLACS & DINOSAURS (Epic): Seems to be the month for dinosaurs - fair enough, they didn't get a good crack last time they were around! Colour reprint of previously b/w indie comic featuring intermingled time zones, hence the contradiction of the title.

The Periodic Table

Con news this time is dominated by the Worldcon in the Netherlands; there are details of the next Worldcon to save for. One of the Worldcon contenders was European and this has stirred up the "EuSFic" idea - that is, that a European Worldcon bid which loses should still hold the con (The idea of a European Science Fiction Interim Convention is based on the NASFIC, which is held in North America whenever the Worldcon occurs on another continent). However, most Americans now seem to want a more international Worldcon and although this last Worldcon was not the biggest, it was definitely the most international with 92 Finns, 40 (East) Germans, 5 Russians, 8 Yugoslavs, 3 Bulgarians and 2 Tasmanians in addition to 10 Czechs and 41 Poles. There were 331 representatives from the host country, the Netherlands, 679 from Great Britain (*sic*). This may or may not include the Northern Irish contingent, as the Dutch weren't quite *au fait* with the political geography of the British Isles). 539 from the United States, according to the con newsletter *Confacts and Confessions*. The numbers differ slightly from those given in the following report, because it was written after the Con was over:

"Mag ik een Orangeboom, Alstublieft" Says Dave Barrett

Last summer I started going to Amsterdam every couple of months to see a Dutch friend. I always felt embarrassed that she and her friends had to speak in English for my benefit, in their own country. I bought a few "Teach Yourself" books and tapes and thought: by the time I go to Den Haag for the Worldcon, I'll be able to amaze everybody with my fluency.

Alas, alack. In twelve months I learnt to say *alstublieft* (please) and *dank u wel* (thankyou), *Goeie morgen* (good morning) and *Hoe gaat het* (how are you?) - literally, how goes it? - and to talk to my friend's dogs and cats in a language they seemed to understand. The consonants I could manage; it was the diphthongs, the vocab and the grammar that did for me.

It didn't matter; the Dutch do (almost) all speak English, and (unlike the French) are perfectly happy to do so. They are also delighted when you make an effort at the bar and say, *Mag ik een Orangeboom, alstublieft*.

I spent a lot of my time at that bar. You could guarantee at any time of the day or night to find an assortment of British writers and critics in the main bar - which had all the charm, half the comfort and none of the size of a multi-story car park. Full marks to the bar staff (usually only two) who coped with a constant rush of weird foreigners.

Foreigners: there was a lot of these. I've heard *ConFiction* described as the first true Worldcon. For, I believe, the first time ever outside the UK, Brits outnumbered Yanks: 709 to 556. Then came the Dutch, at 360. There were 106 from Eastern Europe, including 41 Poles and 33 East Germans - *glasnost* rules. Total of full attending members: 2,339.

All this made for some fascinating conversations. Did you know that in Slovenia, a republic within Yugoslavia, authors get a month's salary for every six pages written? The only problem is, it has to be in Slovenic - a language and culture being heavily promoted by the government. Population of two million, and it has a book club with 400,000 members. Now *that's* the place to be an author ...

Being British, and knowing a fair number of Brits in the SF world, it was very rare for me to look around the main floor area (near the bar) and not see people I know. On the other hand, having gone by myself and not being specifically with anyone while I was there, I did spend quite a lot of time wandering from one conversation to another, and going to programme items alone. I saw several people who'd obviously come alone and who didn't know lots of other people, and they looked pretty lost.

Serious warning coming up. A lot of fans - and a lot of writers - in the SF world are basically lonely. How fandom ever functions is a mystery of the same order as How does a bumble-bee fly? or Why is there always one odd sock when you empty the washing machine? As kids we read by torchlight under the bedclothes; as we reached our early teens we discovered this weird thing called SF, and generally kept pretty quiet about it. When we found other

similarly socially-afflicted people, we fell into each others' arms, and behold! Fandom was.

Back to the Con. With a programme having up to sixteen simultaneous parallel streams, it can get fairly complicated to decide where you want to be and for what. The speakers and panels found it just as difficult, often arriving half an hour late, or not at all. A lot of them weren't even in Den Haag at the time - yet they were still listed in the programme update sheets right up to the end of the Con. No matter; the principle, previously thought unscientific, of spontaneous generation was proved repeatedly; *ad hoc* panels appeared out of the audiences, lived out their brief lives, dissolved, and vanished into some strange and echoing place - probably the bar.

I had the impression the Con was over-ambitiously over-organised beforehand, and fairly disorganised at the time. No doubt I'll be attacked for saying that; I know a hell of a lot of people put a hell of a lot of work into running the Con and making it work, while I sat passively back and enjoyed it. And it did work, and I did enjoy it. I had a lot of fun. I only went to a handful of programme items - I kept missing them because I was in the bar. Not deliberately, but because the conversations were so good I forgot to check the incredibly complex "pocket" programme guide (somebody must have a pocket that size) to see where I'd intended to be.

Highlights for me:

- The fact that the Dutch Minister for Culture found the Con a significant enough event that she spoke at the opening ceremony
- I at last saw Brian Aldiss's *SF Blues*: very thoughtful and thought-provoking, very moving, and I recommend it wholeheartedly (and Brian makes a wonderful teddybear).
- The Kurhaus in Scheveningen is wondrous. Brian Aldiss's party and the Bantam/Corgi party a couple of nights earlier are what the place was designed for - especially as you could watch a spectacular international fireworks display competition on the beach from the windows.
- Meeting lots of old friends and making some new. Just as I was about to leave for Amsterdam, already two hours late, a friend said "Isn't that Norman Spinrad behind you?" It was, and the next hour or so's conversation was a great way to end the Con - and congratulations, Norman, on finally getting *The Iron Dream* unbanned in West Germany.

Dank u wel, de Nederlanders. Tot ziens.

Worldcon Site Selection Voting

After three voting rounds, the 1993 Worldcon site was announced to be San Francisco (with 436 first choice votes). The Committee, which includes members of every major fan organisation in North America, consists of: Sue Stone (Chair), Terry Biffel, Ben Miller, Michael Wallis, David Clark, Gail Sanders, Jeff Casfield, Jan Howard (finder with many members and supporters including Greg Benford, Diana Paxson, Phil Spide and Jeanne Robinson). The Committee wish to present a truly international Worldcon in an international city with over 4000 restaurants and a mild climate.

"The main con site has function space for 4500 people and 1200 guest rooms; the three overflow hotels are all less than quarter of a mile away. The Marriott is sensitive to fannish needs - no corkage in private rooms, 24hour coffee shop, swimming pool, relaxed dress codes, added soup and sandwich bars, towels, chocolate and hotel service (SF in '93, PO Box 22097, San Francisco, Calif. 94122, USA)."

Of the other contenders, Phoenix say they will try again in about a decade, Hawaii had a lavish party and Zagreb plan to hold the con anyway, as a European con, with the help of the sociable Union of Soviet Socialist Gophers.

Programming at the Worldcon June Laverick

The 1990 Worldcon got underway with an opening ceremony where the Guests of Honour made their appearance by rising up from beneath the back of the stage. There was also a lengthy speech on the virtues of SF by the Dutch Minister of Culture, who is apparently a SF fan.

I attended a number of panels including *Tolkien's Heritage*. Patricia McKillip was cited as an example of a good new fantasy writer. Geoff Ryman suggested from the audience that the main theme of *The Lord of the Rings* is loss suffered after a war. Apparently Tolkien lost a number of friends in wartime.

The Hugo Awards Ceremony was undermined somewhat by the fact that many of the recipients were not present. It was hosted by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro,

assisted by a Dutch fan in the guise of "St. Hugo". Unfortunately, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro read out the nominations too quickly for the operators of the slide projector to present the corresponding slides.

On Sunday evening, Brian Aldiss, actress Petronella Whitfield and Ken Campbell (who had flown in specially) performed *Science Fiction Blues*. This was a series of sketches and poems from such works as *Last Orders* and *The Eighty Minute Hour*. With the minimum of props, the trio kept the audience entranced and amused.

The Masquerade was almost cancelled due to a lack of entrants. Eventually about twenty five costumes were shown, many being thrown together in the last few days. This inevitably led to a poorer display than at previous Worldcons, but it was still entertaining, if sometimes inadvertently. For me, the best costume of the evening was the very last entrant dressed as Mort from the Terry Pratchett *Discworld* books. With glowing red eyes and carrying a scythe, he had a genuinely menacing and unearthly appearance. Also notable were two women colourfully dressed as the elemental spirits of fire and water.

The conference facilities in the Hague were very modern with arena style seating in the larger halls giving everyone a good view of events. Overall, I really enjoyed the Worldcon and left feeling renewed enthusiasm for SF and fantasy.

Contour Mappings

Dick and Nicki Lynch, editors of the entertaining fanzine *Mimosa*, have been asked to prepare the Fan Programming track for the 1991 Worldcon, Chicon V. They are interested in fan history, fanzines and fandom around the world, but would welcome suggestions from BSFA members (CHICON V August 29-September 2, 1991; Dick and Nicki can be contacted at PO Box 1270, Germantown, Maryland 20875, USA).

On membership fees: **Attending** means "I'll be at this con come hell or high water". **Supporting** means "I wouldn't mind coming, but just now I haven't really made up my mind or else I'm broke. Leave it a while and either I'll have supported your con or else I'll pay the rest of the membership when I can". If supporting members do not make it to the con, they still receive the progress reports, the programme book, badge and other con literature, sent as soon after the con as possible. Day has to be checked in advance with the Committee. It can mean midnight to midnight or can be from when the con desk opens to when it opens the next day. It usually means "I'm keeping an open mind but have to go to work tomorrow", however a lot of day members do tend to get a day membership the next day as well. It is more expensive than getting a full membership. People may get day memberships to see one particular programme item, like the Masquerade. **On the door** tends to be most expensive of all - which is not at all logical as the Committees have usually balanced their budgets by the time of the con - on the other hand, a committee can do far more with £10 now than £15-20 later. Think of it like a futures market. It means "I'm either overworked or disorganised and forgot about the con until the day before".

ConFiction had a deal by which people who worked eight hours for the con got a special exclusive t-shirt, while people who worked sixteen or more would possibly have part of their membership refunded in due course if the con could afford it. It was suggested that Worldcons might consider rewarding hard-working "gophers" by providing part of the membership for the next Worldcon - thereby giving an incentive for their Worldcon and helping people to go to the next.

THE FESTIVAL OF FANTASTIC FILMS (October 12-14, Parkers Hotel, Manchester, £25 admission, half price for children in advance from 95 Meadowgate Road, Pendleton, Salford, Manchester M6 8EN or telephone 061 789 6324 evenings. Cheques payable to The Society for Fantastic Films.

Ray Harryhausen, the stop motion special effects maestro is the Guest of Honour at this amazing forty eight hour movie marathon which will celebrate six decades of film history, including the original *King Kong*, *Mighty Joe Young* (Harryhausen's first feature film as an animator), *Rocketship X-M*, *It Came From Outer Space* plus *Revenge of the Creature* (both in 3D), *Mr. Sardonicus*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Bladerunner*, *Predator*, *Alien*, *Aliens* and more. The Committee points out that some programme items will be unsuitable for children. But there will be four brand new films, discussions, panels, auctions and a dealer's room. As you will need to sleep sometime, the con hotel (Parkers in Corporation Street) are offering a special rate of £20 per night bed and full breakfast - but it must be arranged in advance).

OCTOCON (October 13-14, The Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, £14 attending, £7 day membership on the door; details from 30 Beverly Downs, Knocklyon Road, Dublin 16. Please note that this con is restricted to 350 members)

Terry Pratchett is the main Guest of Honour with **Diane Duane**, **Peter Morwood** and **James White** also. There will be workshops on playing D&D, writing novels and becoming an artist balanced by panels on science fiction and fact, films and a costume party. This con aims to provide events for SF, fantasy, horror and comics fans.

CONCERT II (October 26-28, King's Manor Hotel, Edinburgh, £17 attending, £7 supporting, details from Jette Goldie, 97 Harrison Road, Edinburgh EH11 1LT)

With **Diana Wynne Jones**, **Fox** and **Michael Mackenzie** as Guests of Honour, this will be an entertaining con, especially with the Halloween theme.

GENGHIS KHON (October 26-28, Hatfield Polytechnic Student Union, £8 attending, £4 for students, oaps and UB40s; details from Chair Being, Student Union PSIFA, Hatfield Polytechnic, College Lane, Hatfield AL10 9AB, Herts) This is the latest in a long series of friendly and informal "Shoe string cons". **Adrian Cole** is the main Guest and programme events include a formal debate on the Hubble telescope and a participatory art show with a large graffiti wall and plasticine to make original monsters.

NOVACON (November 9-11, Excelsior Hotel, Birmingham, £20 on the door. There might be an upper limit to prevent the hotel getting uncomfortably crowded)

Jack Cohen is Guest of Honour - as a reproductive biologist, he is ideally placed to extrapolate possible alien (sexual) behaviour. In appearance, he could be an Emmett "Back to the Future" Brown, complete with enthusiasm and charisma. Novacon will also celebrate British Fandom's 60th birthday (give or take a fortnight) with the help of fan historian, **Rob Hansen**.

Novacon presents special awards for the best fanzine, fanwriter and fanartist of the year. These are voted on by members of the con who have received six or more fanzines in the relevant year. **Pam Wells** is the current Nova Awards administrator and can be reached at 24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London N12 1DA. Finally, **Stephen Tudor** has organised a Snooker Tournament open to all members. The opening rounds will consist of the "six ball sudden death" convention. Details from Stephen Tudor, c/o Bernie Evans, 121 Cape Hill, Smetweth, Warley B66 4SH.

Novacon returns to the Excelsior (site of the last Novacon) - due to business generated by the new Birmingham Conference Centre, all the other Birmingham hotels declined to host a SF con, but the Excelsior are eager for Novacon to return. Their bar food is very reasonable and their room rates are £27.50 (single), £22 (twin/double) per night including full English breakfast.

ARMADACON (November 10-11, The Plymouth Arts Centre, £18 attending, details from Mrs. Marion Pritchard, 4 Gleneagle, Mannamed, Plymouth, please send a.s.e.)

In addition to having **Anne McCaffrey**, **Brian Lumley**, **Adrian Cole** and possibly **Sylvester McCoy** and **Sophie Aldred**, this con is ideal to meet other SF readers in the South West.

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

This will be a not terribly serious hyperactive relaxacon with Guest of Honour, **Ramsey Campbell**. The programme may introduce small items being tried out for possible inclusion in the 1992 Illumination programme, but there will definitely be the popular cocktail workshop first introduced in Conine [1] and a musical for everyone, along the lines of *Neuromancer* or *The Wasp Factory*. The room rate is £15 b&b in Halls of Residence and consequently there are very few twin rooms.

CLONEFICTION (January, Harrogate?)

By analogy with *Conspiracy/Clonespacy*, this will be a wind-down relaxacon for those people who were too busy on the day to enjoy *Confection* properly. Due to timing of *Matrix 91*, though, this is all we'll be able to tell you.

There will be an enlarged *Contour Mappings* next issue (this one has been compressed because of the general pressure on space); a few snippets to conclude - **Anne McCaffrey** will be involved with the "Music in SF and vice versa" stream at MabinogiCon next July in Bangor; **Greg Pickersgill** has resigned as Chair from *Mexicon IV* in Harrogate next May due to "a series of personal problems and disappointments"; May 1991 will also contain *Masqueradecon* for children - programme items to include animal balloon making and cuddly toy masquerade costumes; and finally X-Con.

X-CON 91 has unfortunately been cancelled. The Committee did not manage to get sufficient sponsors to support the preparation and they decided that it was better to cancel rather than end with a "half-baked" con reports Oliver Gruter. However, the Committee has not given up and intends to reform, so watch this space for future announcements.

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, November 17, 1990.

How Much Fidelity Should a Film Show to its Source?

Watching *Total Recall* confirmed my suspicions. A viewing of the film made useless by the mess masquerading as a media review by Tommy Ferguson.

Tommy stated the story would be told in flashback - wrong. He also stated the story would centre on the two-way transmitter in Quaid's head - wrong. Finally, he stated there would be problems in translating the reality conflict in Quaid's head to the screen. But in *Recall*, Verhoeven successfully does this, tricking Quaid and the audience into accepting what is not real and questioning what is.

Wrong again, Tommy. Three strikes and you're out.

These inaccuracies should render this kind of pre-view slugging-off redundant. If they don't then, hell, let's declare open season and open up the media pages to anyone who feels like blasting off about a film they haven't even bothered to see. I could always save these pages up as an auxiliary supply of toilet paper.

In any case, why does the written story have to be copied absolutely on screen for a film to be a success? What Tommy seems to miss is that if every film of a novel or short story had to be exact and faithful to its source there'd be no point in making them. Maybe it needs to be pointed out that the printed word and film are different media.

In the crossover between the two, there should be change and imagination. Otherwise films will be just an outlet for those too lazy to read. [Jon Moran, 6 Eccleston Close, Bury, Gtr. Manchester BL8 2JF].

Since Jon did not read the letter column of "Matrix 89", I repeat that it was I who asked Tommy to suggest how "Total Recall" could be filmed, knowing that he had read P.K. Dick extensively and that he had studied the film "Blade Runner" in some depth. If you want to be aggressive, Jon, choose the right target please. I personally do not agree that there is no point making a film faithful to its source and commented on this to Jon with reference to "The Witches" when I acknowledged his letter. I do not feel it is fair to comment further with the editorial advantage of seeing everything before anyone else, so leave it to you, the readers, to comment further. However, there was more comment on the reviews.

The Quality of Reviews is not Strained

As a cinephile, I'm really appalled at the low opinion your reviewers have of movies as an art form. John Peters doesn't mind a film being trimmed (*The Evil Dead*) - for obvious censorship reasons - on video, he even welcomes dubbing (*Pathfinder*), no doubt one of the greatest crimes committed against cinema. Can't he read subtitles?

Chris Bailey doesn't give a damn that the video *Dune* has nothing to do with Lynch's version of the film: with all the pan-and-scanning of the once superb wide screen and the removal of a lot of the nastier Lynchian touches, *Dune* looks bland indeed and it's no wonder. Show it in all its glory in a 70mm theatre and Lynch's breathtaking moviemaking puts Herbert's pedestrian writing to shame.

Thanks, though, for the reviews on *Tremors* (where I wholeheartedly agree), *Moon 44* (ditto), *Dart Star* and *Heathers*. [Raymond P. Scholer, Chemin du Sakeve 14, CH-1004 Lausanne, Switzerland].

A small group of Yorkshire BSFA members went to see "Tremors" inspired by Joseph Nicholas' review in "Matrix 89" and had a great time. The next

proposed outing will research "I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle" reviewed by Joseph in this issue, to see if it is as much fun as he says.

On Intelligence and David Brin

I must mention David Brin whose works deal with the raising of the level of intelligence of dolphins and chimps to a "client status", they are then indentured to humans for "X" amount of years. In a similar way, other races in the Galaxy have their own "client" races whose intelligence have been boosted to a level just below that of their "betters". Of course, this may be seen as slavery and not as an altruistic act, but then there is the capitalist "return on investment". Generally, though, Brin takes a very enlightened view of the continued existence of species which have the potential at least to replace man. In his books, the sub-species are treated with respect and dignity, although of course there are acts of prejudice, they are seen as evidence of the ill-nature of man in particular rather than man in general.

Personally speaking, although I thoroughly enjoy the majority of Brin's books, I do believe that his West Coast liberalism is a bit too sweet. Man's a nasty bastard when you get right down to it and I believe that you can't get nearer the knuckle about them when you talk about the continued existence of the human race. Thus when a human life threatening situation appears, all the stops are pulled out and we get a chance to see Niven and Pournelle proved right. [Tommy Ferguson, 90 Carnhill, Shantallow 3, Derry BT48 8BE]

Several readers commented on Steve Jeffery and Vikki Lee France's apparent partiality to prunes ("disturbing fetish for prunes in their stuffy" as Kev McVeigh puts it) when mixing culinary and literary criticism and there were several suggestions for more.

The Robot Carrier Guide to SF and Fantasy -- Continued

I'm surprised that Messrs. Jeffery and France have yet to read Tim Powers' excellent *The Anubis Gates*, Arthur C. Clarke's *Peach for Tomorrow*, Avram Davidson's *Pork!*, Walter M. Miller Jr's *A Cantaloupe for Leibowitz*, Larry Niven's *Tales of Known Space*, *The World of Potatoes*, *The Flight of the Horseradish* and, with Jerry Pournelle, *Oats of Fealty*, Robert Silverberg's *Up the Vine*, Theodore Sturgeon's *A Touch of Orange* and Ian Wright's *Who Speaks of Chestnuts* (which should really be *Conkers*, but they're not very edible). [Steve Grover, 10 Seyton Lane, East Kilbride G74 4LJ]

Might I offer the following: *The Off-Licences of Ishtar* by A E Van Vodka, *Fondue*, *Fondue and Endive*, *Second Fondue* by Isaac Asimov, *Empire of Dim Sum* by J G Ballard, *Rogue Tomato* by Michael Bishop, *Fry Day* by Robert Heinlein and *I Have No Mouth But I Have Ice Cream* by Harlan Ellison. [Kev McVeigh, 37 First Road, Milnthorpe, Cumbria LA7 7QF, who added some of L Ron Cupboard's "Writers of the Furniture" and mentioned some of David Langford's nominated classics of Porcelain Furniture like *The Throne of Saturn*, *The Reproductive Cistern* and *Masters of the Vortex*. But enough is enough... isn't it? -Ed. (No! -Ed's husband)]

Finally, the art work, especially the cover, the last issue attracted several favourable comments. Artwork for the next issue should reflect the horror in SF or otherwise - a suitably intriguing challenge for you artists.

A Man and His Dog

I was deeply impressed with the cover illo. It suggests so very many possibilities with such limited subject matter. The dog's drooping tail is reflected in the slumped shoulders of the human or is it vice versa? Does the dog know that he is with the wrong master? Has there been an alien takeover on Earth to account for the depression of dog and man? Or are dog and man the aliens, unhappy on a planet uncongenial to them in physical or psychological terms? It's truly pleasurable to see a picture that can keep physical or psychological and instil in one the desire to keep on re-viewing it. This was powerful stuff that did something to somewhere deep in my psyche. [John D. Rickett, 41 Forest Court, Snarebrook, London E11 1PL]

Daniel Buck adds: I think the artwork in the last issue was smashing, especially the cover with the dog, and I feel that the standard of artwork I'm seeing across the board, including the small pressies, seems to be on the way up, happily. [184 Bexley Lane, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4JH].

We also heard from Cyril Simsa, "Stanislaw Lem Society is at 142 00 Praha 4, no 142 00 Praha and the Kontakt address should give the name of the town as 274 01 Slany".

Matrix Competition #89: Results

Roger Robinson

The idea for this competition seems to have been well received with two or three of the eleven entrants being, as far as I can tell, new to *Matrix* competitions. In all twenty one pieces of original work were submitted with all but three sticking to the twenty three words asked for. The other three were twenty six words long - the extras being the X Y & Z words. The difference between the winner Nigel Parsons and the runner-up June Laverick was so small that I only gave the £5 book token to Nigel because of his strict adherence to the rules. The submissions could be categorised thus - fourteen in alpha order, three in reverse alpha order and the rest random with the "prize" for trying all three styles going to Marcus Rowland's trilogy.

First - a verse by Nigel Parsons on the McCaffrey books.
Above, beyond clouds, dragons earthward fly,
Great holds in jeopardy Keroonward lie.
Men, now on partners, quickly rising, spy
THREAD!! ---
Unconscionable vitriol, writhing-by.

Second (jazz) June Laverick with a review of *Metrophage*:
Assorted bizarre characters designing aesthetic firearms guarantees high-resolution imagination jam-packed Kadrey's lively *Metrophage* novel. Observe pusher Qabbala resourcefully surviving technological urban vistas with X-rated youthful zombies.

Third equal are all the following:
Theo Ross with a complaint about NELL not being in competition 88.
What vileness unmasked thus? Solution reveals quirkish prejudice, omitting Nell, multitudinous lovers' kindly joyous Inuit heroine, glamorous feminist extraordinaire. Discrimination can't be allowed.

Garry Noble with a *Star Trek* synopsis:
A bold captain directs Enterprise forces gallantly. He is James Kirk. Locating many new, occupied planets. Quietly respecting Spock's totally unique Vulcan wisdom.

Sean R. Friend with an invocation to follow the true path:
Don't buy Kylie Minogue's LPs: otherwise, quickly renounce further nauseatingly grave undertakings and purchase Vector - certify something intelligent jolly well enters the head.

Competition #90 "Trouble With Triples"

Below are three lists indicating the birth, an (obscure) fact and a title belonging to various authors. All you have to do is match up one item from each list and then add the author's name. Just to make it a bit more interesting, there are two items in each list that do not form part of any "triple" so there are only ten authors to find.

Marking will be as follows:
Correct triple with author - 5 points (eg A1-B2-C3-WELLS)
Correct triple, no author - 3 points (eg A1-B2-C3)
Two attributes plus author - 2 points (eg A1-C3-VERNE)
No points will be given if an author or an attribute are incorrectly linked, so this should cut down wild guesses (or will it?)

LIST A

- 1 - born in Luxembourg in 1884
- 2 - born in New York in 1913
- 3 - born in California in 1947
- 4 - born in Venezuela
- 5 - born in Prussia in 1931
- 6 - born in East Dereham in 1925
- 7 - born in East Dereham in 1935
- 8 - born in Kansas City in 1923
- 9 - born in Cheshire in 1943
- 10 - born in Oxford in 1932
- 11 - born in London in 1919
- 12 - born in Connecticut in 1925

LIST B

- 1 - Past-president of BSFA
- 2 - published a magazine called SEXOLOGY
- 3 - middle name is Jonas
- 4 - 1953 Hugo award winner

- 5 - Winner of 6 Huges
- 6 - Illustrator under the names AMES
- 7 - Promotes his own books on New York cable TV
- 8 - GOH at a Worldcon since 1987
- 9 - GOH at a Worldcon between 1965 and 1975
- 10 - Judo black belt and expert pistol shot
- 11 - Winner of a DITMAR in 1977 and 1982
- 12 - MA thesis was partly published in "Dynamic SF" mag

LIST C

- 1 - Barthman, Come Home
- 2 - Vendetta for the Saint
- 3 - Bamboo Bloodshed
- 4 - Mayenne
- 5 - False Night
- 6 - The Life and Death of a Satellite
- 7 - Wall of Years
- 8 - Ralph 124C41+
- 9 - SF Blues
- 10 - Your Book of Film-Making
- 11 - The Mind Master
- 12 - Decimal Payroll Tables

Entries to the usual address: Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG, by **Saturday November 17th, 1990.**

Soap Box

This is a column for readers to write on a matter close to their hearts. This reader travelled from Rotterdam to Hull overnight on a crowded boat in a reclining seat during a storm and feels strongly enough to propose:

New York for Eastercon 1993!

Jim Grey

After the Worldcon, and the experience of travelling by ferry, the prospect of a mere Eastercon on Jersey in 1993 fills me with loathing. Especially the thought of travelling home after the con. Flying, at current prices, doesn't look so bad for the chance of sleeping in my own bed, rather than spending twenty or thirty hours travelling.

That's right. I don't think I'm being pessimistic. Even with the prospect of the Single European Market cutting the formalities, the Channel Islands are not part of the EC. Straight off, the time from leaving the hotel to getting ashore in England could be as much as twelve hours. And will British Rail have held the train?

I have this bridge I'd like to sell you, okay?

And how long is it going to take to get from the South Coast? Anyone who reckons on changing stations in London, and getting a seat on a train out, in less than an hour, hasn't tried it. That's the fastest route. Going via Birmingham, if you can find a connection, can add a couple of hours. And you're tired. You're short of sleep, weighed down with new books, and have to go back to work tomorrow.

So you plan on flying. First find your airport; and then cross off the nearest because the only flight to Jersey leaves at 0845 on Saturday and that forces a two-week stay which, even at convention rates, leaves you broke. Fine, now you have the little problem of getting to an airport. I don't want to chance driving without a good night's sleep after a con. How many airports have decent public transport services?

I'm told that there is a bus running past Leeds/Bradford, but will it be there next week, never mind in 1993? East Midlands? Well, I know that trains stop at Birmingham International and there is a tube to Heathrow. Gatwick isn't bad for trains either.

Gatwick? Heathrow? Birmingham? Isn't this getting complicated again?

Yes. All these people from down south think that we can get to Jersey as easily as they can. And nobody cares enough to provide an alternative to Helicon. The only choice we have is not to choose anything. Where are they going to site an Eastercon Bid next?

New York? Eight hours from London doesn't sound so bad, does it?