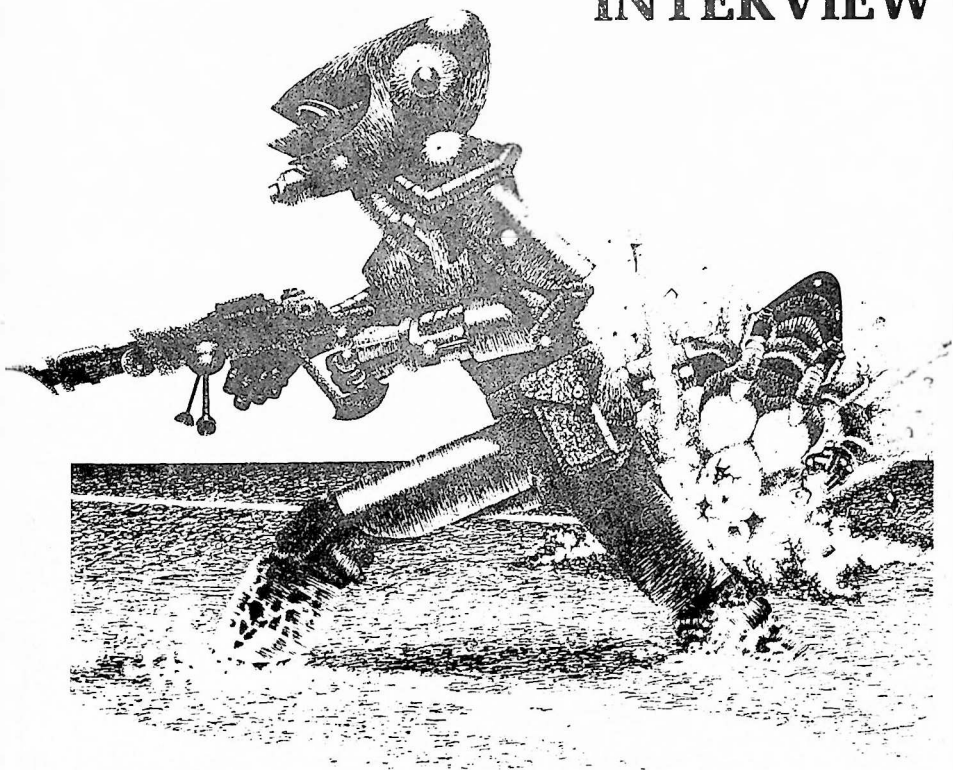


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Exclusive:
BRIAN ALDISS
INTERVIEW





EDITORIAL

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Cover by MARLON HART [NZ]

Interior Art by:

COLIN WILSON [NZ] - pp 5, 7, 14, 16, 22, 24
MIKE POWNALL [NZ] - p 6.
MARLON HART - p 25.
ROD SCOTT [NZ] - p 27.

I've been feeling quite proud of *Noumenon* for well over a year now and finally, this issue, I've at last put together a self-serving advert. I agree with other people's opinions that *Noumenon* is very good, but a little bit more push on my part has not happened until now. So we have copies of most back-issues, they're good issues, and you can see more about them on page 22.

One reason we have quantities of back-issues (besides the intentional stocks, that is) is because book shop sales have not reached the levels I'd expected. We have some very good outlets, which certainly sell plenty of copies, but we don't have enough such outlets in other than the main centres. If you know of a bookshop with a fair selection of sf titles, why not suggest they stock *Noumenon* (even if its only 5 or 10 copies on a trial basis). Alternatively, drop me a line with the name and address of the book shop and I'll write direct.

Carrying on in a business vein, Keith & Rosemary Walker (of *Fanzine Fanatique* fame) have been praising *Noumenon* for some time now. When I recently asked for someone to offer to be European Agent (at their prodding), I was surprised, flattered and glad that they offered to take on the job! Further details will undoubtedly follow soon.

Which brings me to the life blood of *Noumenon*, the excellent taste of all you wonderful subscribers and the superb skills and brilliant perception of all our regular contributors. Long life to you all.

And in particular to Marlon Hart and Mike Pownall, who have both sent in marvelous bundles of art of late and who earn my grateful thanks, as do Colin Wilson and Jim McQuade for their continuing contributions.

In short, welcome to another fine issue. —Brian

EXPLANATORY NOTES

sf is the standard abbreviation used for the term *science fiction* throughout this magazine: *SF* is considered unnecessary, and *sci-fi* undesirable.

WorldCon is the standard abbreviation for the annual World Science Fiction Convention.

GoH is the abbreviation for Guest(s) of Honour at a convention or gathering.

1, *2* (etc) are used as the standard footnote indicators. I feel the asterisk is an under-used symbol and can be used in place of brackets in certain instances.

The following conventions are used in *Noumenon*: The titles of novels or books are in capitals, bold face. The names of films or television programmes are in capitals. The titles of stories or magazines are in capital and lower case, bold face. The titles of articles are in quotation marks. *Record album* titles are in capitals, bold face. *Song titles* are in capitals and lower case, bold face. The names of musical groups are in capitals.

Mailing label: The number after your name refers to the last issue of your current subscription. Please renew at least one issue prior to expiry to avoid unnecessary postage and to simplify accounting. A T indicates a trade copy; C indicates a complimentary copy; E means an 'experimental' copy (are you interested in seeing more, trading, contributing?).

QUIDNUNC'S PAGE

BOVA LEAVES ANALOG...

Ben Bova, who joined *Analog* in November 1971, four months after the death of John W. Campbell, has resigned because he felt he had done as much as he could for the magazine. One reason for his resignation was his disagreement with Conde Nast, the publishers, who seemed content to let *Analog* coast along on its laurels. Despite Bova's urging, they have no plans to expand circulation or to make any changes. They are not perturbed that Isaac Asimov's *SF Magazine* has caught up with their circulation figures.

Bova was the fourth editor of *Asounding/Analog's* 48-year history, following Harry Bates (1930-33), F. Orlin Tremaine (1933-37), and John W. Campbell (1937-71).

... JOINS NOVA

Ben Bova will become the fiction editor for the new *sf/parapsychology/fantasy* magazine announced by Bob Guccione, publisher of *Penthouse* and *Viva* (see *Noumenon* 21, page 4). Although Bova had planned to take up writing full-time, he said *Penthouse* "made me an offer I couldn't refuse".

Nova may not be the title of the magazine however, as the PBS TV program "NOVA" has obtained an injunction against *Penthouse* on the use of the title. Because the magazine is due on the stands on September 19, the title may change, although the legal wrangle is being worked on. *

PIERCE QUILTS GALAXY

John J. Pierce has resigned as editor of *Galaxy* after a year in the position. Various assurances given to him have not been honoured, while *Galaxy's* financial problems have grown again. Pierce does not believe the best is being done for *Galaxy* and its contributors and feels his resignation is the "only honourable alternative." Pierce reports that Jerry Pour-nelle has also resigned as science columnist. *

AWARDS

The 1978 John W. Campbell Memorial Award was presented on June 25 at the Second World Science Fiction Writers' Conference held in Dublin, Ireland. The winner was Frederik Pohl's *GATEWAY*, with second and third place scrolls going to *ROADSIDE PICNIC* and *TALE OF THE TROIKA* by A & B Strugatsky and *A SCANNER DARKLY* by Philip K. Dick.

The "science fiction thriller" *THE TIME OF ACHAMOTH* by Auckland's Professor M. K. Joseph, won the fiction section of the 1978 New Zealand National Book Awards. *

EASTERCON 1979

EasterCon 7 "will be presented for your delectation non-stop from Friday April 13 to Monday April 16, 1979, at the Melbourne Sheraton Hotel, 13 Spring Street." The flyer also promises a cosy, well-run con around the idea that it should entertain members in comfort, at modest expense, and with no hassles or rip-offs. Comprehensive progress reports are promise as well as a number of excellent films, a masquerade a "most unusual GUFF auction", the Stevens report and programme items on Feminism in SF, The SF of Harlan Ellison, Melbourne in 2001, Art in SF, Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind, and Sex in SF.

Guests of Honour will be A. Bertram Chandler (Professional) and Brian Thurogood (Fan). *Yes folks: that's me!* [Lord help them. - CW] Where were we? Membership Rates: \$7.50 attending; \$4 supporting. Room rates: \$29 twin; \$25 single.

EasterCon 7 will be brought to you by Christine Ashby (treasurer & co-chairperson), Derrick Ashby (memberships & co-chairperson), Leigh Edmonds, Carey Handfield (Gestapo & chief of staff), Robin Johnson (hotel liaison) and Paul Stevens. Address: PO Box 175, South Melbourne, Victoria 3205, Australia. (Don't send money for accomodation.) *

SPECIAL SF ISSUE

Pacific Quarterly (Moana) are planning a special sf issue for July 1979 publication. Guest editor will be England's Colin Lester. Dr Norman Simms writes:

"One of our pre-requisites is that each issue contains a reasonable proportion of New Zealand material - writing in an original or critical vein, music, drawings, and so forth. We trust we may call upon



PACIFIC QUARTERLY

— MOANA —

your co-operation in alerting your readers and friends to the project. ... Manuscripts in the first instance may be directed to me (Outrigger Publishers Ltd, 1 Von Tempsky Street, Hamilton, NZ) or sent to Colin Lester (192 Kent House Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1JN, England). Whilst we can only offer payment in terms of free copies of the magazine, we do have an international readership... "

Go it to readers and writers and I hope they come up with a volume as excellent as the *Edge SF Special*. I'll try to get updates as time goes by. *

4 QUIDNUNCS...

THE MAGAZINE RACK

Crawdaddy (June) has an excellent wee article on Anne McCaffrey ("science fiction's Dragon Lady") by Debra Rae Cohen, providing both personal details and background information on the Pern books.

Punch (19 April) had a special "Crank Encounters" section, with suitable cover, with such gems as "Chariots of the Web-Footed Crypto-Men", "Unseen Forces in Your Home", and Alan Coren's fascinating piece on The Torremolinos Rhomboid and the Jersey Trapezium. Plenty of clever jokes too.

Brian Ash, who's been getting into a bit of trouble recently concerning his errors and omissions from WHO'S WHO IN SF and the ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA, really blows his cover in an article in Psychology Today (April) titled "Is Too Much SF A Bad Thing?" Besides being self-serving, it is one of the worst potted histories and, while Ash is perhaps not to blame for TAN ZERO (the new sun-screen?), he is certainly to blame for

"The most familiar item in the SF writer's stock-in-trade is undoubtedly the ubiquitous space-ship.

Psychologically it has been described by some as a phallic symbol."

and for repeating the following gem, attributed to Keith Roberts: "SF crashed what has been vaguely termed the 'fuck barrier'; and suddenly, anything went." Why Ash would repeat such a foolish and unnecessary phrase is beyond me -- his credibility plummets further.

Frederik Pohl's story *The Way It Was* appeared in the April *Viva*

the February *Viva*, a futuristic "Weird Tales" type of thingy. Topical and quite a good tale.

Playboy (March) has an excerpt from Gore Vidal's "New Sci-Fi Thriller" (KALKI) and a rather good overview by Richard Rhodes, "What's New In the Universe" (which has a superb Peter Lloyd illustration). But the *piece de resistance* is a clever and humorous story by Bury St Edmund: "an extra-terrestrial named frog hooks up with a hustler named donna for a night of unearthly delights". Titled *Professional Courtesy* it deserves all sorts of attention. It is accompanied by a brilliant Philippe Drullier illustration.

The second Science Fantasy Film Classics (see Noumenon 21, page 4) has arrived, featuring (of course) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS, and this is a marked improvement on the first issue. Algis Budrys leads with a piece on SILENT RUNNING (a sadly underrated film) and DAMNATION ALLEY, followed by an interview with Bruce Dern. The CE3K section is better than many others I've seen and the issue finishes with a small section on WAR OF THE WORLDS. \$2.55 is still expensive though.

While 75c is far too much for *Outer Space*, a photo-montage rip-off with "Star Wars, Space 1999, Dr Who and Planet of the Apes" 32 pages of old and incorrectly captioned photos (C.P. 30, for instance). *

NEW SF NEWSPAPER

Australian SF News is a Locus-style SF newspaper, sponsored by the Australian SF Foundation and edited by Merv Binns of Melbourne's Space Age Books

The first issue was for June, 8 pages, slightly larger than A4, photo-reduced typewriter script and printed offset. Most of the overseas news is from Locus, with the main items being the Nebula Awards, Hugo Nominations, Publishers Announcements, and the columns: Paul Stevens' "Luncheon Eye", a Convention list, and Leigh Edmonds' Fanzive Reviews

They hope to publish 10 issues a year and subscriptions are \$4.00/10 in Australia. NZ rates are \$5/10 surface, \$7/10 airmail. Noumenon is the NZ agent so you can send subscriptions and details here. *

MINIATURES

Anne McCaffrey has finished the third "Harper Hall" title (see Noumenon 16/17, p 30) which deals with "the adventures of that cheeky scamp, Piemur".

McCaffrey's *THE WHITE DRAGON* is the third of the other series about Pern, the sequel to *DRAGON FLIGHT* and *DRAGON QUEST*. "Jaxom grows to maturity, teaches Ruth (his beautiful white dragon) to fly and fight, and together they soar into another time and another epic adventure."

Harry Harrison's fourth Stainless Steel Rat novel, *THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT WANTS YOU*, is due soon from Michael Joseph and Sphere.

Harrison, following up on the success of *GREAT BALLS OF FIRE*, also has another two illustrated books due from Pierrot: *PLANET STORY*, fiction with original Jim Burns illustrations; and *MECHANISMO*, a non-fiction work on hardware.

SUPERMAN, which is now two films as they realised (two-thirds through the shooting) it would be impossible to edit down to one, has totalled about \$52 million, 30 for the first, 22 for the second so far. \$9 million has gone on salaries: \$2½ million to Marlon Brando and \$2 million to Gene Hackman! The first film is slightly over 2 hours long and the second is due for release in about a year's time. The proposed 3-D holographic effects have been shelved, at least for the first film. Reportedly, great problems with the effect of Superman flying have been overcome. (Peter Hassall). *

STRANGE NEWS FROM ALL OVER

Fred Patten has sent some rather curious clippings of late. First was Zubin Mehta and his "splashy, show-bizzy, otherworldly, popsy-schmaltzy thing, Music from Outer Space". Billowing smoke, green laser beams, erupting fireworks and electronic amplification were the order of the day. Apparently the Los Angeles Philharmonic were okay but couldn't really do much with the John Williams soundtrack scores, suitably described as "weak tea" and "syrupy".

Meanwhile real dogs compete with robot dogs for roles in *CHOMPS* (working title), a comedy about a computerised watch-dog! *



Peter Janssen
Promotions Manager
Associated Book Publishers (NZ) Ltd
PO Box 70, Wellington
NEW ZEALAND

(22 June 1978)

I often notice comments regarding the lack of locally published sf. I would like to point out that we are more than happy to receive manuscripts, which we vet and then forward on to Gollancz, who are undoubtedly the major hardback British sf publishers.

I have also much pleasure to enclose the jacket for the new Frank Herbert book, **THE DOSADI EXPERIMENT**. This is to be published in the UK at the end of July, which means it will be available in NZ approximately October.

Thanks for the letter Peter and I hope you don't get inundated with too many poorly written, poorly presented 'first-time masterpieces'. Budding authors please note: type your manuscripts if at all possible, double-spaced and with good margins both sides.

Eric Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Avenue
Faulconbridge NSW 2776
AUSTRALIA

(10 April 1978)

You really do cover all the news in Noumenon, which is rapidly becoming more immediately useful to me than is **Locus** (which I get seamail and thus much later).

Re Noumenon 19: I hadn't noticed the Chris Foss artwork being on two books, but a link between UK publishers would not surprise me at all. Elizabeth Duke's letter, re the potential of sf for promoting non-violence, is an interesting departure from the usual run of fanzine letterhack style. It seems to me, from the numbers of action oriented novels in sf, that sf is far more likely to promote violence than to cause readers to reflect upon the nature of it.

Rollo mentions more sf illustration books than I knew existed. Recently a local artist mentioned collecting them and it was then I realised that you could have a whole new subfandom, just based on sf art collecting and books on the topic.

***Well, not all the news, which is why I keep saying all people with a serious and/or academic*

interest in sf (as apart from the occasional/frequent/avid reader) should have a subscription to Locus. And, of course, it is partly thanks to Charlie allowing me to reprint snippets, hard news and their survey results that Noumenon has as wide a scope as it does.

From two later letters:

On Noumenon 20: pleased to see more distribution of Jan FINDER's plea for more support by non-North Americans for the WorldCon. Novel sales in NZ seem light, on totals.

Ken Ozanne was trying for a computer program to map the night sky from elsewhere -- don't know if he ever got all the bugs out of it, but he did get some graphs out, as well as printouts. Page 7 letter surely codes are easier to establish than ciphers, as well as being just as unbreakable as the best cypher.

Nice review of Piers Anthony **OMNIVORE**. **ORN**, **OX** series, which I enjoyed. He seems neglected to me, despite some fine works such as **MACROSCOPE**. Interesting to see so much comment re **STAR WARS** and relatively little re **CE3K**, altho the latter did not seem to me half the film the former is.

N21 arrived, looking fine as usual. I'm impressed, and wish I could manage half as good -- I can't despite not even attempting your hectic schedule. I wish I could say something sensible about sf music but I just haven't heard it all. Stuff like movie music (**STAR WARS** for example) is much more impressive with the film than are the records (which I generally hear as fairly trashy). Liked your Aust report, altho I think you missed much of the background to the business session. It was disorganised, normally Sydney fans ignore such things, but UniCon was such a mess that it was obvious that in future the constitution must spell out all the things long-time-con-fans took for granted, thus the hasty attempts to patch up the constitution. The whole thing will be revamped at the Sydney con, with appropriate publicity beforehand as to suggested changes. Boy, what a mess!

*I'd also like to mention that Eric spent a couple of days with us recently on a stop-over on the way to America. With any luck we might receive the occasional report on his projected 6-month travels from con to fan to friend to con.***

Milton F. Stevens
14535 Saticoy St. No. 105
Van Nuys, CA 91405
USA

(24 May 1978)

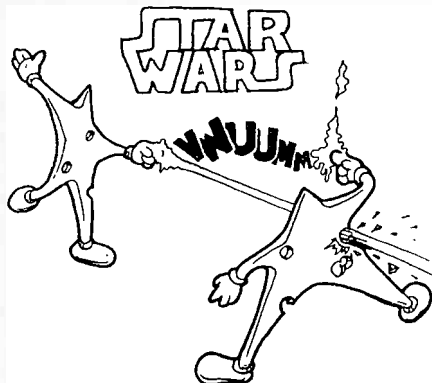
I'm afraid that your publishing schedule is just too fast for lethargic types like myself. By the time I've thought of a comment on one issue of Noumenon, two more issues have arrived. The whole idea of a monthly publishing schedule makes me very tired. It usually makes me far too tired to write a letter.

The **STAR WARS** Debate caught my attention in Noumenon 20. A couple days after I received the issue, I asked Craig Miller (fan relations man for Star Wars Corp) whether he had seen the item in Noumenon. He already had a xerox copy of it in his files. The people at Star Wars seem to be more interested

6 LETTERS...

in fans and fanzines than any pro organization I've ever heard of. During that particular evening, we started talking about how much money Star Wars had made and what one might do with that much money. Craig calculated that it was enough money to place a person-to-person call from Los Angeles to London for 800 years. That led to a discussion of what one might say to John Brunner for 800 years. I imagined that it might be enough money to fill the Grand Canyon with popcorn. Larry Niven wanted to know if that included energy costs to pop the popcorn, and somebody else was worried about the problems of filling the Colorado River with cooking oil. I can imagine a D.D. Harriman type character embarking on a project to fill the Grand Canyon with popcorn. I rather like the idea, because it would really bother future historians and anthropologists.

But as I was about to say about The STAR WARS Debate... Roger de Vere is entirely wrong about what George Lucas would have seen in his



childhood. Up until about 1960 the Hollywood film unions had restrictive contracts which stopped newer movies from being shown on US television. I am two years older than George Lucas and I watched a lot of Errol Flynn movies in the fifties -- I also watched FLASH GORDON every Sunday at 5pm.

As yet, I haven't seen anyone comment on the mythic background of STAR WARS. There is one. In fact, it is outlined in a 1948 book, **THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES** by Joseph Campbell. The book deals with what James Joyce called Monomyth. The Monomyth is a hypothetical story which resides in the human subconscious and is retold time and time again by people in diverse cultures and times. Lucas just happens to hit every point outlined in Campbell's book. People might watch an adventure movie once, but if large numbers of them feel compelled to watch a movie a dozen times over there is obviously something going on.

***Thanks for writing Milt and thanks for the opening 'compliments'. Perhaps the gap between this issue and last will give you energy to write more.*

So we're on the files at Star Wars Corp. If they were the ones responsible for a TV documentary screened here recently (THE MAKING OF STAR WARS) they should all be shot, sliced and otherwise disposed of by their own laser swords and guns. All my dislike of the movie was confirmed a hundred times over.

*In short, the only myth the film achieved was transferring mindless and innocuous TV pap to the big screen. The reason the film is so successful is because the pap is leavened by sequences and tricks ripped-off from creative cinema and literature. The audience is delighted by such manipulation. ***

Paul Anderson
21 Mulga Road
Hawthorne, SA 5051
AUSTRALIA

(24 April 1978)

I suppose this is a bit belated but meeting you at UniCon reminded me of the Noumenons at home. I'd like to comment on a few items.

I enjoyed your review of Zelazny's **DOORS OF HIS FACE**... (N2) as that was the first book of his that I bought. As it happened I had ordered another book but this one replaced it for some reason -- it was a much better choice.

The article on Fritz Leiber (N7) was a welcome treatment of an author who is usually ignored in the way of reviews and critiques. I enjoyed reading

the novel **CONJURE WIFE** but for some reason I was as pleased with the film version. Oh well, maybe they will do **OUR LADY OF DARKNESS** soon. That book should be right for a film of the kind around now. Certainly it would have to be better than **THE SENTINEL** by Michael Winner. I had not intended to get the Leiber book when I did but it was sent with my usual order from F & SF. It was the first one I read out of the parcel so perhaps I would have got around to requesting it in any case. A review would be appreciated.

The letter in N 8/9 re Galaxy was amusing considering that, according to the latest Locust, Galaxy improved its circulation over 1977 by over 50% to a figure over 80K -- which is a very good result for an sf zine. If that continues it could well overtake Analog which is still slipping with Bova in charge, although that is probably not entirely his fault.

The Starship Minstrels article listed a great number of varied albums, most of which I found I already had or else had at least looked at. Some of the groups are only given partial listings though and you did miss a few like The Cosmic Couriers, GURU GURU, WALLENSTEIN, NEU, HELDON, etc. After listing the great **KING CRIMSON** it surprised me that you omitted **STARLESS AND BIBLE BLACK** and **RED**. The former in particular is highly recommended for its evocative violin playing. The **NEKTAR** section should have included the fine **A TAB IN**

THE OCEAN and JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EYE concerning an astronaut's ET contact.

TANGERINE DREAM are still one of the groups requiring immediate purchase, but I have noted an unfortunate trend in that, after the success of PHAEDRA, the albums no longer run over 40 minutes. I will be getting CYCLONE soon and the new Froese double-album set, although at present I think I prefer Klaus Schultz. His music seems to be more intense and demanding of total concentration. I found MIRAGE a lot harder to get into than any of the recent TD. I still prefer his music for BODY LOVE though: it seems to be a reversion to the style of MOON DREAM and TIME WIND.

The group for the best electronic soundtracks is POPOL VUH, who work very well with Werner Herzog. COVER DE VERRE is brilliant -- I have it on an expensive French import.

I seem to have barely touched on the subject and the pile of Noumenons, so a further letter will follow.

***Re the prozine sales figures, see this month's Quidnunc's for a few more surprises.*

*On the music side, I did in fact mention the later KING CRIMSON albums in passing, but omitted details because of the lack of explicit sf references. I have not heard the NEKTAR albums, while the other groups are mostly German and thus not distributed in NZ (although I am now familiar with them). And recently, Dave Wingrove's article covers a lot of the gaps in my original Starship Minstrels listing. ***



Don D'Amassa
19 Angell Drive
East Providence
Rhode Island 02914
U.S.A.

(18 June 1978)

Just a note of appreciation for Noumenon, which is always interesting and informative.

For the information of Greg Hills (Noumenon 21) rumour has it that Niven is hard at work on the Ringworld serial, tentatively titled THE RING-WORLD ENGINEERS. I have no idea when it is due to appear.

I agree with Tony Pelvin; THE LONG WAY HOME may not be Anderson's best book, but it's an entertaining novel well worth the time spent reading it.

I disagree with the review of HUNTER OF WORLDS, which was the first Cherryh book I haven't enjoyed. GATE OF IVREL is still my favorite, although there are at least two new ones I haven't read yet. I disagree with the review of CALLAHAN'S CROSSTIME SALOON as well. In small doses, the Callahan stories are ok, but as a whole, they are too repetitive and the use of puns becomes a bit too cutesy for me. And I like puns.

Bert Chandler
Flat 23, Kanimbla Hall
19 Tusculum Street
Potts Point, N.S.W. 2011
AUSTRALIA

(24 June 1978)

Thanx for N 22/23. Lynne Holdom's letter was interesting and recalled pleasant memories. I shall be writing to assure her that I have not forgotten her.

The Empire State Building... that was, I admit, a certain wallowing in nostalgia. During World War II I always used to make the ascent every time I was in New York. It was better then -- if you were in uniform you didn't have to pay. Everybody, from admirals on down, availed themselves of this privilege.

You used to be able to get away with quite a lot in New York if you were in uniform. Shopping for example. Such luxuries as nylon stockings for one's womenfolk in severely rationed England, even when these were rationed in the USA (nylon was increasingly used for military equipment, such as glider towlines). I always used to purchase nylons in a certain shop in Fifth Avenue. The assistants got to know me. One time I went in and ordered two pairs of this colour, two pairs of that, etc. etc., about two dozen pairs in all. While I was completing my purchase a little, middle-aged lady came in and ordered two pairs. An assistant told her, "I'm sorry, madam, but it's only one pair to a customer. There's a war on, you know." The lady cried, pointing, "What about him?" "Oh, he's one of our brave allies." I grabbed my parcel and fled.

But to return to the Empire State Building... I was amused by some of the posters on sale.

8 LETTERS...

showing King Kong not climbing it but standing beside it and overtopping it and with Miss Liberty, not Fay Wray, clutched in his hairy hand.

Looks like we shall be joint GoHs in Melbourne next year. I have no doubt that their SataniCon will be far, far better than the UniCon of evil memory.

I'll close now, hoping that Deb has a good time in San Francisco. It's one of my own favourite cities.

****And while on the subject of humour as a tonic ****

Eleanor Moyles
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Murrays Bay
Auckland 10
NEW ZEALAND

Having read the STAR WARS debate (Noumenon 20) and as a member of the older generation I would like to express agreement with the opinion of George Lucas, who hoped it supplied entertainment for younger sf fans.

In this sense I thoroughly enjoyed the fun aspects of STAR WARS -- and it was obvious that so did many very young children in the audience. Older sf fans mustn't be greedy when it comes to such entertainment. We are bound to get what we are looking for in sf entertainment, along the way. Meanwhile STAR WARS, obviously intended as a happy spoof for the younger generation, served this purpose admirably. If it means that on such occasions older sf fans must go back into their own childhoods, then they should enjoy the time trip while they can and thank their lucky stars they can still make it.

Some aspects of sf for adult moviegoers, however, could contain elements of terror for children who are not fortunate enough to have the sort of parents or guardians inclined to take the trouble to explain the difference between fantasy and reality.

I'm hooked. I'm off to see STAR WARS again. The cafe scene and the delightful tune which changed the pace, that's for me.

Humour is the saving grace of this planet -- and neither we nor sf can survive without it.

(From a later letter): Although a member of the older generation, I have been an interested reader of Noumenon since its first issue.

In this respect, I would remind readers that, judging by the present value of various publications from years past, it might pay them to retain copies of Noumenon for, in the future, there could come a time when collectors may be prepared to pay a worthwhile price for bygone copies.

Thus a subscription to Noumenon might well be regarded as a form of investment.

****People are saying the nicest things, though I wonder if paper will be more valuable than the ideas presented thereon? ****



Zak Reddan
The Reptile House
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NEW ZEALAND

Like your correspondent Bruce Ferguson (sf columnist for "Salient") I am an avid reader of the *Women's Weekly* and see in the April 17 issue that S. Spielberg's next film is to be *I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND* detailing "The impact of the Beatles' arrival in the States as seen through the eyes of 6 young Americans." However, the *Listener* of June 3 describes his next project as *AFTER SCHOOL*, based on his experiences as a schoolboy in a small town in Arizona.

Which sets me wondering -- why in *CLOSE EN-COUNTERS* were the deaf signs adopted? Mmm!

A KiwiCon is a spiffing idea, except could it be called something else. "Silver Fern" maybe, anything really.

I think Auckland, as the locale, has the edge with its population, although Wellington is centralised (in fact why don't you all come round to my place...)

If films can be obtained I think it would be a good idea to show those which have only had limited (if any) exposure here, eg *BED SITTING ROOM*, *BOY & HIS DOG*, *DARK STAR*, *FANTASTIC PLANET*, *FINAL PROGRAMME*, *FLESH GORDON*, *METROPOLIS*, *SILENT RUNNING*, *SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE*, *THX 1138*, an episode of *THE PRISONER* (*sigh*).

[Incidentally, an English 'Prisoner' fan club "Six of One" is offering inflatable Rovers for £2.]

Anyway, the Con -- milder sf rock/planet suite filtering through/oil wheels playing across the Bradyburesque stalls; info board of sf news, trivia, real life science news; speaker guest speaking (how does one entice these people over?), holograms slicing people in two... (see you there).

David Bimler
Student
Massey University
Palmerston North
NEW ZEALAND

Odd discoveries in the solar system continue. The latest is an asteroid-sized body, its orbit ranging from just inside Uranus' to just inside Saturn's. It is far too small -- 100 to 400 miles diameter -- to be classed with the planets, and too far out to be related to any of the known asteroids. So the astronomers are calling it Object Kowal, after its reputable and highly esteemed discoverer, or by his given name, Chiron.

There are enough observations of Chiron for accurate orbital calculations. The orbit's period is 46 Earth years, and is quite elliptical -- more eccentric than Pluto's. Chiron is not merely a temporary intruder: the orbit is stable over a time scale of 1000 years. It might be a comet stuck in an orbit too far from the sun and thus inactive, something left over from the formation of the Uranus rings, or even represent a new class of objects. If the

last is true, Saturn's moon Phoebe could be a captured member of the class. Any others discovered would also be named after centaurs — Nessus, Pholus, etc.

I agree with Perry Middlemiss' point about astroforming, that it is easy to get unpleasant effects from a star. I can think of a good many ways to send a star supernova (though most of them are not practical with today's technology). But a time may come when it's less risky to tamper with the Sun than to leave it. There's a lot of evidence coming in that the Sun is nowhere as regular as we've thought. In the period 1645 to 1715 sunspots were virtually absent, and other solar activity was low; a "little ice age" occurred; fewer cosmic rays were blocked by solar activity and more reached the Earth. There were similar fluctuations earlier.

We're observing far fewer neutrinos from the sun's fusion than we should. And there are several other anomalies, suggesting oddities in the Sun's core and in its outer layers. So... what will be done if the sun changes and the icecaps or deserts expand?

Peter Graham's suggestion for computer-printed star charts. I shall see if I can find any computer print-outs for Colin Wilson when I'm home next (though I might have given most of them away).

Do you have any extra attractions planned for KiwiCon? It will be very nice to go along and see if Noumenon's contributors are such lunatics in real life. But once you've got them assembled you might as well take the opportunity to inflict a few other events.

***Events can be expensive to put on. What's wrong with hours of mutual back-patting anyway? Besides, Mervyn Barrett is the programme committee, so we'd better nobble him. ***

Chris Fountain
96 Hackthorne Road
Cashmere Hills
Christchurch 2
NEW ZEALAND

(24 April 1978)

Further to my last letter, I recently attended a lecture at the university given by one Walter Hurd, a director of the Lockheed Aerospace Corporation. He was discussing the relevance of space resources to man's future survival. On the whole, the lecture was interesting, though a little disappointing. He did not say much more than what I've read on the subject in Jerry Pournelle's articles in *Galaxy*. But it was good to hear a man who has faith in the future of *Homo sap* (related to dumb sap in more than name); it makes a change to the doom and gloom boys.

Anyways, it seems that humankind is about to head off into space chasing a profit. You know, the stuff Harry Stine has been talking about for years: zero gee to as high a gravity as the structure of the space station will take; a vacuum much harder than is possible here on Earth; virtually unlimited power (I mean energy); and so on.

Hurd was quite keen on O'Neill colonies and devoted a good deal of his time to them, including

a disappointingly brief film on the subject. On the other hand, the slide show was a little long. There were too many slides of artists' impressions of space shuttle.

Cherry Wilder
16R Egelsbacher Str.,
6070 Langen/Hessen,
GERMANY.

(15 June, 1978)

I am a science fiction writer from Australia now living in West Germany and enjoying the change very much... one can go to English Cons. Every one is getting excited about SeaCon in '79. I can't really say that I am an Australian sf writer because the plain fact of the matter is that I was born (long ago) and educated in New Zealand. I spent my formative years wandering all over the North Island with my parents who were relieving teachers. The last time I saw Auckland was as a member of a drama team from Canterbury University College; we made a raid on the famous wedding-cake tower of the university and were repelled by a watchman.

I don't believe that any of my old friends are sf fans with the possible exception of Brian Cashin of Wellington who was doing some editing of a trade paper when last heard of. I used to write poetry in the olden days and was the younger contemporary of terrible people like Louis Johnson and James K. Baxter. My first published work for which I got paid was a story about Santa Claus in the Auckland Herald children's pages.... so I was bound to get back to fantasy etc.

The Commonwealth edition of my first novel **THE LUCK OF BRIN'S FIVE** is coming out soon from Angus & Robertson, Australia, and I am working on a sequel **THE NEAREST FIRE** to be published by Atheneum USA.

With best wishes to the sf community.

Regards,
Cherry Wilder
(formerly Cherry Lockett)

*** Many thanks for your letter and enquiry Cherry. Copies of Noumenon are on their way to you now, which I hope you find interesting. Thanks also for the info on your books and good luck with further writing. ***

We Also Heard From:

A large number of other people, and most of their letters will appear next issue. I'd also like to add that we've already had considerable response to the last issue, much of which I will collate together to form a special 'feedback' section in next issue's lettercol. So keep those letters and comments coming. Some of the people we've heard from: Greg Hills (three items from him I want to use), Peter Knox, Lynne Holdom, Leigh Edmonds, Perry Middlemiss (twice), Steven Green, Mike Newbery, Tony Pelvin, Frank Macskasy Jnr and a few others whose letters are not typeset yet. Thanks to everyone for the continuing kind words about Noumenon.

BRIAN ALDISS INTERVIEWED

The following interview was recorded in Melbourne during last Easter's UniCon. Our grateful thanks to Brian Aldiss

Noumenon: You mentioned in your guest of honour speech the potential ability of science fiction to stimulate and encourage people's imaginations. Could you expand on this and say whether you think much sf achieves this?

Brian Aldiss: Yes, I would love to give you a straight quote from Shelley's **DEFENSIVE POETRY** because he puts it so extremely well. And what he says is (I will have to paraphrase) that we have so much knowledge, we have so much wealth, but we are unable to use them wisely because we lack the power to imagine and this is the power that we gain through poetry -- and he means a complex thing by poetry -- but one of the things he would have meant today is fairly obviously science fiction. So I rather regard Shelley as the first sf poet rather than his misnomer is the first sf novelist. And it seems to me that imagination is something that transfigures everything. It transfigures knowledge, it transfigures facts and it is something that has a great deal more golden awe in it. For instance, we would be unable to kill each other on a large scale if we had that sort of imagination. I would think that a novel like **SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE** is exactly trying to get over this point. Vonnegut is trying to re-imagine the holocaust of Dresden for us all so that it wouldn't happen again.

As to what other science fiction does this, I don't know because I think it's up to the individual reader. You know very well that you meet people who rave about a book and you yourself don't care for it. Well, I think often their imagination has been touched. I also think that when you first encounter science fiction at whatever age, you're struck by its imaginative qualities. When you've been reading it for some time you get a bit fed up with it because you don't get the same kicks. And that's a common phenomenon I'd say. I have to say for myself that I don't get as many kicks as I used to, perhaps because the act of writing has taken over from the act of reading to some extent.

You still get as many kicks out of writing though?

Well, that's a different matter. I believe that my pleasure in writing deepens because I have what is at least an illusion that I write better than I used to, that my understanding has deepened and my imagination has strengthened. There's also the excitement of the chase ... I think this is perhaps not generally realised. You're impressed by something -- tally ho it's in sight -- sometimes you actually catch up with it!

Would you subscribe to the idea that the artist never really achieves his goal?

Well, it's a very easy thing to say but yes, I think it is true. Some sort of auto-destruct mechanisms come into play though. After all the goal itself is rather nebulous but I suppose one would have to say that it included total self-knowledge, maybe, among other things, and I don't think really you can obtain total self-knowledge and still speak. I think you may find that you fall into a Buddhist silence!



Do you think sf can continue to stimulate people's imaginations? What trends do you see in sf, either older ones coming into fruition, or hints and suggestions in current sf of future avenues?

I'll answer the first part of your question. I think science fiction's role in stimulating the imagination has changed slightly. I believe that a few years ago, let's say before the Apollo program, before the great step that Armstrong took on the moon, the science fiction writer could easily astonish his readers because something like the moon walk was only a possibility. And I can remember being absolutely breathless over reading a story about men getting to the moon. It seemed a tremendous goal. But once it's done, it's done and the situation is different.

As to the general population, they passed rapidly through three phases. The first one of course was believing that the moon walk was an impossibility, and anyone who thought it was otherwise was a non-sense. Two, a nine day's wonder when they marvelled and fell about in front of their television sets. And the third stage where they looked at each other and said, "well, I always knew it could be done!"

Do you think that the presentation of the moon program in the media was rather drab?

No, it didn't strike me as that. I was enthralled and I also confess that I felt the general public was getting something that up until now was a private thing among friends. But I think after that event the writer has much more difficulty in stimulating his readers. I don't think that's a bad thing. I think civilization has become more sophisticated in its thinking (if that isn't too big an assumption) so that the writer must also become more sophisticated because instead of working against the grain of their disbelief, he now has to go with the grain and therefore he has to go more deeply. That's how I see it, but I am sure that's a very arguable point because what we in fact see happening in science fiction now is a trend towards a whole lot of pop sf. There's no doubt that the audience has grown enormously and that audience has grown for all levels of science fiction. And I would think that the more rarefied levels have got a much bigger audience than ever before. But it may

be that proportionately, the new readership has come mainly on the sort of pop-Flash Gordon level.

This is what I expect is happening with the success of STAR TREK and so on. So all levels have profited and the sort of scum level - I am afraid I think of it as - has profited most, and maybe STAR WARS is going to encourage this trend. It's the things that don't explain, a movie doesn't explain. If you make a film from a good science fiction novel the chances are that the novel will explain and extend your knowledge and the film won't. It will only show you. Although we all rejoice to think the two films that everyone must see at the moment are both science fiction, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS and STAR WARS. I think there are a lot of dangers in this situation. It could all go back to being that Buck Rogers stuff in no time as far as I can see! And that has an effect on the serious science fiction writer in that he may get entirely pissed off with this situation and decide to go and write something else.

Is this something like what's happened to Silverberg, for example?

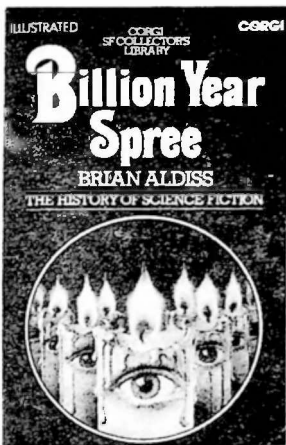
Well, maybe, although I think that Bob has other difficulties - like having written too much for too long and now nemesis is overtaking him.

What is your opinion of sf on film? Have there been enough successes to talk of sf films as a distinct group, or are we still in the infancy of that field, pointing to a few successes and shuddering to think of the rest?

We certainly do less shuddering than we used to! There was a time when the whole thing was a disaster area. I'd say things have improved so much. Whether you can talk about the sf cinema per se, I don't know, although after all, there are magazines that do it with some accomplishment. Cine Fantastique and this sort of thing. By throwing in things like SINBAD AND HIS WOODEN EYE or whatever, you have a certain range of fantasy films. But I should have thought that in cinema, much more than in the novel, you got the creative spirit moving in. There are a lot of cinematic equivalents to BRAVE NEW WORLD I think.

There is always a prejudice in the sf writing field against sources that come in from outside and make a success. They are popularly supposed to be exploiting the field, which to my mind is a lot of dreadful nonsense. But in the cinema there are very good instances of quite well-known directors who can see all the possibilities of science fiction. ALPHAVILLE, for example, directed by Godard - that kind of film seems to be readily accessible to a director with a wide vocabulary. There is an interesting English director, Lindsay Anderson, who's never actually made a science fiction film but he's made things like OH LUCKY MAN and IF with very strong elements of fantasy. And even someone like the Spanish director Buñuel, with THE DISCREET CHARM OF THE BOURGEOISE seemed to me to be doing a sort of inner-space science fiction. Godard also made WEEKEND, which is a marvellous, very good movie - that really is science fiction.

However, if you toted up all the items on the bill I still don't think you'd make a fortune, simply because it really is difficult to do. It is genuinely difficult. You can't repeat the success of 2001 or CLOCKWORK ORANGE every year. There's a thesis by Wyndham Lewis about progress in the arts, he claims this is an illusion, that the arts don't progress. Or if progress can be seen, it's only towards the status of art. I'm afraid this doesn't say much for the science fiction field. But I would think if you see any progress in the movie field, you'll see a lot more sf movies in the future. But probably not very good. You could be surprised, though, what's going to come out.



My impression of the major recent films, the ones that have had such popular success, would put: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS as a film equivalent of a mid-20's story, STAR WARS as an early-30's story, and 2001 as an early-50's story. So I don't know of a film that has managed to capture the 60's or the 70's.

Oh well, I thought WESTWORLD did rather well for the 60's. It was a very 60's idea that if you could have perfect androids they should only be used for your pleasure. I thought that was a rather fine film, actually, it had an interesting moral question posed behind it, which was extremely well and effectively done. Funny too, by god, in parts! Intentionally funny as opposed to accidentally funny.

Sf art and illustration is a field of great interest to me. Is it possible that field has more successes, a far higher percentage of very imaginative and original work, than sf in other media?

Well, I certainly felt like that when I was doing the sf art book, that the more I went into it, the more excited I got. I do think really that there was some marvellously dedicated work done by guys who were being paid peanuts who delivered far more than they were ever asked for. And reading the stories that

12 INTERVIEW...

went along with them, I really thought that the reverse was true. There are hundreds of unreadable stories in those old magazines that we're supposed to revere — absolute rubbish! And it must have been rubbish at the time, and yet some of the illustrations seem as fresh, delightful and mysterious as ever. All sorts of people who have worked in the magazines are very much neglected really. I think it's a very delightful creative field.

How did you put your art book together?

It was actually a project that I'd long wanted to do and had tried on several publishers and had absolute null response. And then I got a letter out of the blue from a publisher I didn't know, recently in business; that was Trewin Coplestone. I went up to see what their intentions were and found to my delight that they did actually want to do the sort of book I wanted to do. So there was no quarrel there. And it was interesting that they had great success



with a book on war movies, and then one on the spectacular movies, so they were looking for something to follow it up. And they didn't care a bean about sf illustrations. It was just something they could merchandise. They were very good, coming down to my home to see what I'd got, and they got more and more excited. It was interesting that I had that touchstone of people who didn't know it. They kept saying, "My God! What a treasure trove!" And of course I was allowed to do what I think is the best thing in the book, present the work under the names of the artists, at least in the first part, so that one could see that there were a lot of very distinctive

styles working in the field. If you classify accordingly to subjects or chronology or whatever, you don't get a clear impression of how individual some of those men were.

At the time I was working on **THE MALACIA TAPESTRY**. I'd work on that hard during the day, and at night I'd use my xerox machine and run all these pictures through and lay them all out and decide what belonged where. It was really a joy to do.

So you had a large hand in the actual designing?

Yes, although they had a very good designer there called Terry and he was the chief sceptic to start with and the greatest enthusiast to end with. It all went very well actually. There was a slight follow-up to that book because they said at the end, "That was great, Brian. We wish we'd done a bigger book." So I said we could always do another book. "Oh, really, what?" And I said we could do almost the same thing again and call it **Fantasy Art**. There are a lot of books on the market calling themselves **Fantasy Art** and they're all concerned with fairies. We can do a nice hard fantasy. And they thought about that and said they'd a better idea. "We want you to edit a visual encyclopedia of science fiction."

I was against the idea from the start because I knew it meant a great deal of work, and owing to the nature of that firm, they would want it all done within six months. And these two were in conflict. And so, although I liked them and their enthusiasm, I said, I can't do it chums. Get someone else. Which of course they did — which is Brian Ash's book.

Which actually seems to work very well. I've only just glanced at it but it seems to cover the field. It's a very attractive package, but thinking about it is actually rather depressing in that it does compartment all the clichés of science fiction and perpetuate them one more time. I suppose for most people that's fine and that's what they want and that's the level on which they read, but they must realize that I am a bandit in the hills and I'm forever raiding these sordid little commercial townships down on the plain. I want science fiction to be **BETTER!** To be stronger, to be a greater intellectual force. So that ultimately I'm hostile to the view of science fiction propagated in the **VISUAL ENCYCLOPEDIA**. And if I'd taken up the job I would have been in exactly the same position myself. But that's the way you do these things. So perhaps mine is an idle complaint.

There is also the related field of sf comics — or rather comics with an sf theme. Have you seen much of the recent large expansion of work in the field, from Metal Hurlant/Heavy Metal and associated artists, to the hundreds of sf comic fanzins currently available?

Well, it doesn't interest me very much. Again, I like the whacky theories and explanations in science fiction which I find are slightly missing in the visual stuff. But, yes, I do see the French **Metal Hurlant**, which is just marvellous and transcendental — my god! the things that they do there. Quite extraordinary. Nothing like it. I think that it is something on its

own and that the work of people like Drullit is so outstanding, quite staggering. I like that very much because it just gets to you, doesn't it?

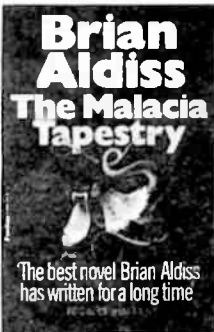
Do you have any idea of the origins of Metal Hurlant?

Well, I don't think it would have begun life any where but France because they're very strong on sf at present. Science fiction has always meant something apart to the French. It always seems to be more into fantasy, with a sort of sado-masochistic undertone. This is the sort of reasoning the French like. And **Metal Hurlant** embodies all this.

Music with sf themes and, in some cases, similar intent to written sf, is another field of great interest to me. Have you heard anything you consider imaginative and interesting, which can give a similar buzz to that obtained from outstanding work in the other fields?

I honestly don't know the answer to that. I know a lot of music that gives me a buzz, but whether it gives me the same sort of buzz, I don't know. Except in one case, and that was what George Melly calls a "Revolt into Style" of pop music in the 60's and it seemed to me it was very close to sf

BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD
CRICH W ALDIS



And, as you may recall, **BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD** is dedicated to the shade of Ouspensky and Procol Harum's *Whiter Shade of Pale*. And it seems to me that music like that was right on the night wave band. A lot of the Beatles' stuff, when they were introducing new instruments and all the rest, was very innovative stuff. Recently, I can't think of much really. On the whole that sort of music is not greatly to my taste.

Are there any of your works that you would like to see taken into other media, like films or illustrated editions?

Well, would you believe, the whole lot! At the moment there are some madmen in Los Angeles who are striving to make a film of **HOTHOUSE**, true to the original. Whether it will ever happen, I don't know.

You mentioned in your guest of honour speech that you hope Earth has the only life in the universe. Could you expand on this please?

Well, to a certain extent that was just Aldiss being

difficult. It is part of my handit war against the cliché. I've long been making myself unpopular among my fellow authors by scoffing at FTL and telepathy -- in my view they're just clichés and used without examination. And I begin to feel that the alien's almost in the same boat. But if you use a concept like this you should not accept it too easily or it loses its challenge. Like we were saying earlier about space travel to the moon, no one believed it, then they wondered, now they accept it. It wasn't long ago since everyone said we were nuts if we said there were people living on other planets -- now everyone appears to believe it. You go to the bookstore and next to sf there's a whole nut culture.

Which brings me to my last section. Do you have a particular philosophy, through which you view the world, which contributes to your writing, and which you are prepared to state and/or discuss?

The brief answer, really, is no. It's no good my pinning these things down onto the dissecting board -- they're the things I live by! If I pin them all down, there would be very little more to write about. At heart I'm a sceptic. I don't have any formulated religious belief but at the same time I'm haunted by religious feelings about the world. Rather like Thomas Hardy in a way. Let's just leave it at that. *

A FEW BACKGROUND DETAILS

Brian Aldiss was born on 18 August 1925 in Norfolk, England. He gives quite a vivid account of his early life in the collection of personal histories he edited with Harry Harrison, **HELL'S CARTOGRAPHERS**. Like many sf writers (it seems), he was a somewhat lonely and clever child, becoming an omnivorous reader and a voluminous diary writer. He served in the British Army in Burma and Sumatra during World War II, joined the bookselling trade on his return to England, later becoming literary editor for the *Oxford Mail*. Following success with some early stories, Aldiss gave up the idea of being a poet.

"By 1957, I was earning as much money from writing in my spare time as from working from 9 till 5.30 in a bookshop. So I left the bookshop. From that day to this, I have never done an honest day's work, and have lived happily ever after!" [**HELL'S CARTOGRAPHERS**, W&N, page 188]

Creative writing and criticism always went hand in hand as far as Aldiss was concerned and he wrote reviews and critical articles for a wide range of publications. He became one of the foremost experimenters in literary styles, with many fine novels to his credit. And as well as his definitive **BILLION YEAR SPREE** and **SCIENCE FICTION ART**, he wrote the rather fine speculative essays collected in **THE SHAPE OF FURTHER THINGS**.

Aldiss is also an anthology editor of some repute.

He edited the fine Penguin anthologies in the early sixties, going on to co-edit the annual **Year's Best SF** series with Harry Harrison in the late '60s/early '70s. Lately, he has assembled quite a few 'nostalgia-style' anthologies concerning space opera and galactic empires. He is a true "man of letters". *



VIEWED FROM ANOTHER SHORE

Rollo Treadway discusses SF Art and Illustration

This morning's flood of mail (well, a letter and two packages) contained the latest issue of *Starlog* (No. 14, June '78). Singlehandedly, and very much on the quiet I feel, this monthly magazine has been doing some good work promoting science fiction artists. And in this particular magazine, not just the artists producing the artwork adorning the covers of all the new sf titles appearing at your local friendly bookseller, but sf artists of a more general nature. The field does not begin and end with paperback, magazine and prozine art (ie illustrations to supplement the written, fictional word), at least it doesn't for me. Scientific visualisers (for lack of a better term), animators, and especially special-effects artists (matt painters, etc.) all certainly qualify as science fiction artists by my personal definition. *Starlog* has done more than any other magazine I know to bring these people and their work to the sf reader's notice.

Without a doubt *Starlog's* continuing *Movie and TV Special Effects* series is one of the best I have yet read: in issue 14 the matt painter P.S. Ellenshaw is interviewed. The article presents a fascinating inside look at the little seen matt painters' world, concentrating mainly on the very technical aspect of the art, but also mentioning the careful interaction of production visualisations to set designs and cinematography, to matt painting and other visual effects. P.S. Ellenshaw is the best in his field, as his work on *STAR WARS* obviously illustrates (or perhaps not so obviously, as Ellenshaw himself says that viewers should never even notice the matt-work when the work is done successfully).

In an early section of the interview Ellenshaw mentions his feelings on first viewing Ralph McQuarrie's visuals for the same film, which brings to mind yet another field of sf art overlooked by many — the pre-production visualisations and storyboards. Storyboarding is the system many directors use to break down the existing written movie script into various camera angles and shots, a form of visual shorthand really, which includes notations of mood, pace, and editing which very much dictate the movie's finished

form. Often these can be significant sf artworks in themselves, as was the case of Ralph McQuarrie's pre-productions for *STAR WARS*, and Jean Giraud's (Moebius to you) storyboards for *Kodrowsky's* short lived, but infamous, *DUNE* movie. *Starlog* has done much to credit this type of behind-the-scenes work, and to bring it to the sf readers notice.

Also in the same issue of *Starlog* is an article on one of the all time great sf illustrators, Virgil Finlay. In itself it is a rather good article but to this reader already familiar with the visuals and information within, the article only goes to show the overall lack of talent apparent in the field today. There must be a few notable professional artists working the black and white sf illustration field these days but is there anyone to rank with Virgil Finlay? I don't think so. I'm afraid in these days harsh economics have very much taken over, as they have in much of the film world and almost all of television, and all too often, quality is sacrificed for speed (and greed?). It takes an artist like Finlay to show us how badly serviced we are by many of today's sf artists and illustrators.

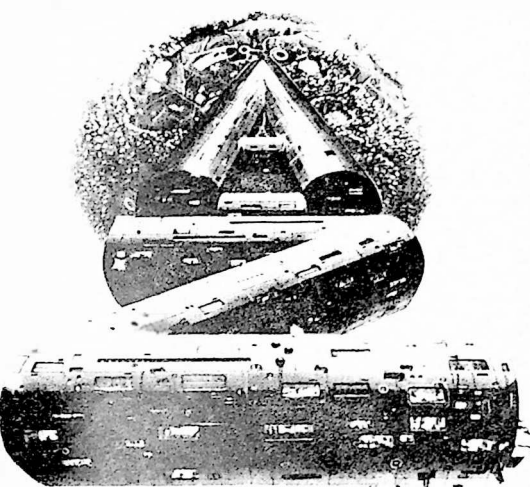


If you doubt me, take a glance through the nearest prozine.

Speaking of Finlay and his phenomenal technique, brings to mind the work of one Caza, a French comic artist whose work appears in the occasional *Heavy Metal* (see HM, Nov '77). Where have all the good sf artists gone to? To comics, perhaps.

Enough of this

THE VISUAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION, edited by Brian Ash (Pan), may not be all its title suggests, but it certainly proves interesting to the eye. Included within are countless bookcover paintings and interior illustrations and unlike many other similar projects, the editor has not limited his selection only to those visuals which



have aged well. Although sf art is covered in a ridiculously condensed five pages, Ash has certainly not spared the illustrations elsewhere throughout the volume, and in most cases artist credits are also given, a practice sadly lacking in other sf-related fields. Perhaps not the "Visual" Encyclopedia of the title, but certainly a visually interesting and well designed edition. Now, if someone could do a similar job more specifically on the sf art field I'm sure he would be onto a winner. Any bidders?

— Rollo Treadway



Formed to unite fantasy fans everywhere, in all areas of interest (Weird, Heroic, Horror, Supernatural) and forms (Literature, Films, Art, Music). When you join you receive information on BFS publications & services, relevant addresses, and back-issue material. **Dark Horizons** - the lavish thrice-yearly magazine with articles, interviews, letters, etc. **The Bulletin** - the bi-monthly "newspaper" with news, reviews, letters and lots of art. **Fantasypool** - the amateur writers group. **Booklets** - occasional specialist items.

Further information and application forms available from the Membership Secretary, Brian Mooney:
447A Porters Avenue, Dagenham,
Essex RM9 4ND, ENGLAND.

Frank Kelly Freas, 4216 Blackwater Rd.
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23457, U.S.A.

It seems that as a result of exposure to my book **THE ART OF SCIENCE FICTION** (plug), a number of people got hooked on science fiction — including my publishers.

After that, it was only natural they should want to do an sf line, and equally natural that they should want Polly and me for editors. After all who else could they find so literate, so talented so handsome — and so close to the office? As for us — well, I ask you — what fan of sf could possibly resist the opportunity to choose the books he wanted, illustrate them the way he wanted, and see them published in the *form* he wanted?

The price will be \$4.95 per book, but we have a special offer — one time only. If you order the first four books from our publishers (they are *Some Will Not Die* by Algis Budrys, *What Happened to Emily Goode After the Great Exhibition* by Raylyn Moore, *Confederation Matador* by J.F. Bone and *Another Fine Myth* by Robert Asprin), the price is \$16.00 for all four *and* you become a charter member of the **STARBLAZE** series and from then on you receive 10% discount on any books you buy (Checks are payable to Starblaze Editions.) You'll receive our regular mailings on new books, but there will never be any obligation to buy (or refuse!) anything. Just information. (Starblaze Editions, 253 W. Bute Street, Norfolk, VA 23510, U.S.A.)

Because of the high cost of distribution, and because of the large number of sf books now being published, it is quite often very difficult to find the books you want at your book store. We will be selling through the book stores, but if we can sell a sufficient number of each book by direct mail, we will be able to retain the highest quality, which is, of course, what we want to do.

So, we are trying to get the largest mailing list possible of interested fans. Would you be kind enough to publicize the above message in your fan magazine so that anyone who wants to can order and/or get on our mailing list? And, of course, if you would care to send us your mailing list of fans to add to ours, we would be more than delighted to pay for your xerox and postage costs.

I will greatly appreciate anything you can do and, in exchange, will gladly give you an autograph or six at the next convention we both attend. ★

"The Book Review is now set in cold type by computers, and locally written columns such as this one are typed out on the keyboards of Video Display Terminals, the words produced not by metal, ink and paper but by electronic impulses on a screen. The process makes us all wonderously faster and more efficient. Still, the misspelling of T. S. Matthews's name two weeks ago was a human error. Human beings, you see, remain in charge here."

The Times Book Review ★



MINSTRELS

Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 103, Brunswick, Victoria 3056, Australia. (24 April 1978)

Thanks for Noumenon, thanks for the cutting, thanks for making it to the Con -- it was great to see you both.

The letter from Mervyn Barrett got me interested enough in the subject of sf music to go back and read the item in question. Of course I more or less agree with Mervyn in what he has to say, although he is incorrect in his statements on the socialness of music. The audience for music and the people who write and perform it are socially conditioned and hence music is as political as everything else.

Anyhow, away from that the problem is that you and I and Wingrove are listening to different sorts of music and begin treading on toes when we begin talking about things we do not understand. This said I should go off and listen to some nice modern string music which I regard as being interesting and worthwhile but you may not. However I shall jump in and stand on toes, to hell with it -- if we can't have some exchange of ill-considered opinions what good is life. I should also say before I get going that I do not ignore the kind of music you write about out of malice, but out of lack of time and money to get involved.

Right. It is my opinion that, as yet, a decent piece of sf music has not been written or performed. The Rock music I have been exposed to has been sometimes interesting but always, in the end, dull stuff. The term "sf rock music" carries in itself several contradictions but the main one that strikes me is that sf by its nature should be something which is not tethered to contemporary culture and of course rock music is to a very large extent the foundation of contemporary culture. Rock music is unable to exist without always returning to a steady and heavy four-four. Yet genetic research is not conducted to that beat, a Saturn 5 never sounded like that, L-5 colonies are not planned with that, and so on and so on. When rock music returns to its roots it divorces itself from that which

is sf. (Of course, we here run up against the business of definitions -- your fellow has not provided them and neither do I.)

A concession! I suppose that it's obvious that there are all these people out there producing rock music about something other than sex and pimples so I'll admit that there is such a thing as rock music about sf. But no more than that. This could become a very complex discussion but I'm not going to spend more than this sheet on it. It is annoying to find that serious music (classical music or whatever -- you think up a good term) is left out of your writers' consideration, perhaps because a lot of it is even more obscure and difficult to get than the music he quotes. However, all the technology he is talking about (with the possible exception of the electric guitar) is taken from contemporary serious music. Synthesizers were not devised in music studios by serious composers who wanted to open out the sonic landscape. These people are still the masters of the electronic art -- the second time through most rock records using such equipment you realise what a fearful waste of technological potential is going on.

I say that this "sf rock" music may be about sf because I have yet to hear any piece of music that sounds sf. I have heard lots of lyrics which purport to be sf, I've heard music which some people have said sounds sf because it does not sound like ordinary music. Back in '73 or so, somebody was let loose at a con with speakers and a tape recorder and gave a talk on this supposed subject. The majority was quasi-sf lyrics set to very ordinary rock music, but more amazing were the examples in which the music was said to sound "spacey" and "sciencefictional". There was a ripper, something like a slow bit out of a slow movement of a Vaughn-Williams symphony run through a slowly moving low-pass filter. This was said to give us the impression of the vastness and emptiness of space -- all it conveyed to me was a general boredom, an annoyance that somebody would use such a cheap trick, and cynicism that they have the gall to put that sort of thing on record and I haven't. The main thing I have learned is that people who claim music sounds "sf" are in fact only admitting their own social conditioning. If somebody says that a piece of music is sf because it has an unusual sound texture or unusual arrangements of rhythms or anything which they cannot instantly peg as being made by such and such a set of instruments, then that person is not saying anything about "sf music", they are saying a lot about their lack of musical experience.

Finally, I find writing about music generally fruitless and talking about it slightly less so. I write and make the stuff not because I have any talent at the stuff but because it is best to speak by example. When 3M10, a cantata with David Grigg libretto, is finally on tape I'll send you a copy. It's my attempt at and my discussion of "sf music".

**Thanks very much for writing Leigh and, while I'm going to disagree with many points you've made, I hope this can develop into an ongoing and hopefully constructive discussion.

Who is "talking about things we do not understand"? I talk about Rock and Jazz and occasionally Classical/Serious/Modern music because I have an abiding interest in such music. I may not "understand" it all to the degree you (or I) might like, but it depends whether you are using understand to mean comprehend technically or to be familiar with. I think David has an extremely good understanding of the music he writes about and the only toes he's trodden on have been of non-Rock music appreciators.

David and I (and the few other music commentators) cite and review specific albums or songs, evaluating them in terms of that person's/group's other works, comparing them to work in similar vein, and discuss their relevance to sf and other styles of music. If you or Mervyn wish to cite specific albums I'm sure David and I will listen to them rather than dismiss "such" music with generalities.

Whether a "decent" piece of sf music has been written or performed depends on a person's preconceptions. Your preconceptions include: Rock



music is always, in the end, dull stuff. SF should not be tethered to contemporary culture; Rock music is unable to exist without returning to a steady and heavy four-four; Four-four (ie. Rock music) has no relevance to science, research, technology.

I find it amazing that all Rock music you've been exposed to is dull. This sort of absolute statement makes me suspicious. What in hell have you listened to?

What "should" sf: be tethered to, based upon, have relevance to, touch in a person, express of the author, treat in a metaphorical way? Etcetera.

Four-four is only a rhythm and does not (necessarily) limit instrumentation/expression. I'm sure I could find many Rock albums with little or no four-four. To say that four-four cannot be sfnal is similar to saying stories which are written in Greek cannot be sfnal, or that films filmed in deserts cannot be sfnal.

Music, as with all expression/communication (especially the arts), depends upon a certain degree of familiarity with the form/language to elicit response/appreciation. Familiarity with various forms of artistic expression can enrich understanding/

appreciation of each. The experiencing of an artistic form usually combines with a person's concepts and feelings to produce response/enjoyment/learning/emotion.

For me, sf has produced considerable enjoyment/empathy/enrichment. So has music. And some music has produced a very similar response picture to that elected by sf. Further, not only does some music deal with sf themes at least as well as written sf, but much of that music achieves the mood or feel of good written sf (see my introductory notes to *Starship Minstrels* in Noumenon 8/9).

You say "there is such a thing as rock music about sf" and beg off saying this is a very complex discussion. I can't agree. I don't know of any music "about" sf, any more than I know of music "about" detective fiction. My point is that there is music which deals with written sf themes and concerns, just as there are films, comics and TV programs which do the same. Whether such works succeed within their fields is open to discussion and review, and whether they match works in other fields is part of the discussion I encourage in Noumenon.

So, give some examples of serious/classical/modern music which David or I should consider. And who are these serious composers who are "expanding the sonic landscape"? I'm also interested in whether you think experimenting and tinkering with noise (or, to put it more kindly, composers/technicians investigating auditory experience) has more relevance, depth and passion than artists/musicians experimenting with instruments and musical forms to enhance the scope and depth of their (attempted) communication/discussion with listeners.

The main point of your put-down of some examples of purported sf music is to say you didn't like the treatments. This is similar to criticism of an author's treatment in written sf. Both criticisms are valid. But your absolute stance, based on a few unnamed examples, is the same as someone dismissing all written sf because they do not like Ballard-style writing, the only type they've been exposed to.

In short, Leigh (and Mervyn), I'd be interested in more specifics and less generalities. **



A Song In The Depth Of The Galaxies

(xi) *Roughage and Rocketry* . . .

Donovan offered a rare comment upon space exploration in 1973 when he released the single *The Intergalactic Laxative*. Dwelling upon the most basic elements of life in a rocket he comes up with some unforgettable lyrics:

*"The intergalactic laxative will get you from here to there
For cosmic constipation, there's none that can compare.
If shitting is your problem when you're out there in the stars
The intergalactic laxative will get you from here to Mars."*

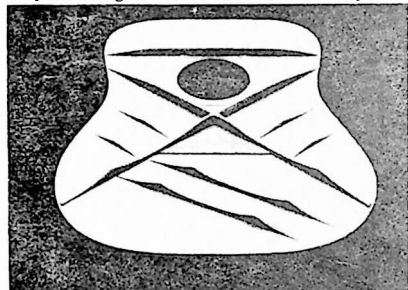
Contemporary music draws from the total output of all media for its inspiration and this is nowhere more apparent than in the narrow confines of sf-oriented music. Like its literary counterpart it seeks to re-define by extrapolation, abrogation and, if necessary, by revolution. It is no wonder then that, whilst it is a relatively small sub-genre, it embraces an extraordinary range of social commentary. In search of fresh territory, unclashed imagery and provocative concepts, the more talented and imaginative musicians are moving to a medium of expression that is akin to that of the sf writer -- and music is the medium of the masses, able to convey with a phrase and a handful of notes what a writer would labour chapters to produce. Part of its diversity and popular appeal I have already tried to illustrate. I would add the following examples:

I stated at the very beginning of this article that I felt jazz music failed to provide the correct atmosphere for the development of an sf music. Sun Ra is a perfect example of this. In various incarnations he has been producing "solar" and "galactic" sounds for many years, music inspired and structured by and in the manner of natural sounds. **THE HELIOCENTRIC WORLDS OF SUN RA II**, released in 1966, is typical of Sun Ra. Despite some very interesting percussion effects, the use of traditional instruments fails to lift this album. Instrumental chaos, unrelieved by coherent lyrics, it sounds dated and is.

Stockhausen and his many imitators in the rock field have well surpassed this traditional strain of experimentation. Sun Ra's inclusion in this piece is tenuous; his images are unconvincing. A deligh-

ful album that is successful is Burt Alcantara's **ZYGOAT**. This is beautiful, multi-layered music of the **TUBULAR BELLS** variety, performed completely on ARP and RSE synthesizers. Instrumental, the titles to the pieces conjure grand images that are not spoiled by ineffectual music. From the opening *Leaves Of Sand* through *Movement To The Earth*, *Zy-clone* and *The Ladder of Zengma* it progresses through a wide range of moods and tones. Again its complexity is rewarding, although to the well-versed classical admirer its structure will be familiar. I notice (though I have yet to hear) that there is a second album out from this studio (*Electrophen*), **WAVEMAKER**, with a piece entitled *Where Are We Captain?*

It is easiest to separate this type of instrumental music from the **TANGERINE DREAM** school by texture rather than intent. **ZYGOAT** comes from a shortlived family that began with Walter Carlos (famous in his own right here for his electronic interpretations of the classics which illustrated *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*) and are noted for their cramped configurations and intense delivery.



TANGERINE DREAM derived from **PINK FLOYD** with their relaxed inferences of space and the vacuum. Midway between the two, and a fusion of jazz and rock influences, is the work of Terry Riley.

Riley's **A RAINBOW IN CURVED AIR** is an utopian vision without reservations. The music is subtle, repetitious (and perhaps to the untrained ear, monotonous), and the overall effect cumulative rather than immediate. Linking with John Cale (of **VELVET UNDERGROUND** fame) he also produced **CHURCH OF ANTHRAX**, a similar attempt to inscribe a vision in purely musical terms. There have been no end of imitators, but none as effective as these two templates of how it should be done.

It seems, however, that for every one good exam-

by
David
Wingrove

Part Five. Reprinted from *Vector*, the Journal of the British SF Association, with permission.



ple there are two bad ones. I pause only to mention ATLANTIS and UFO as typical of the latter, promising to the casual browser of record shops and yet totally wasteful. Occasionally, however, the unintentional succeeds, such as Lambertland by TASAVALLAN PRESIDENTTI. An ambiguous song, it lays itself open to interpretation at several levels. The setting is nowhere on a known Earth. The time could be 1,000 years past, today or well into the future.

*"Same rash breaking out fresh ... itchy and sore
Sky locked sun she's glaring in a clench up and
tight
Field hand dropping the hoe, left it out there
Lost it somewhere, getting out of Lambertland
fast ..."*

There is no attempt to explain and the enigma gives the piece an additional dimension which even the excellent musicianship of this Finnish group could not provide.

GRATEFUL DEAD are another group that possess a reputation in excess of their production of sf music. DARK STAR is a masterpiece of its kind, but one swallow. Their preoccupation with country and western music is the complete antithesis of every other group or artist in this piece. Sf and pleasant country rock are somewhat incongruous. Their supposed link with sf appears more a publicity thing than an actual desire to use sf imagery. (A good example is the MARS HOTEL LP, which has no other reference to sf at all.)

A scattering of names here. I said at the start that I could cover only a small part of the actual production available to comment upon. With the following I plead my partial or total ignorance and the need to work for a living as an excuse for not giving more detailed comments, although I'll provide what I can.

SEVENTH WAVE (a later development of SECOND HAND) who produced an interesting album with DEATH MAY BE YOUR SANTA

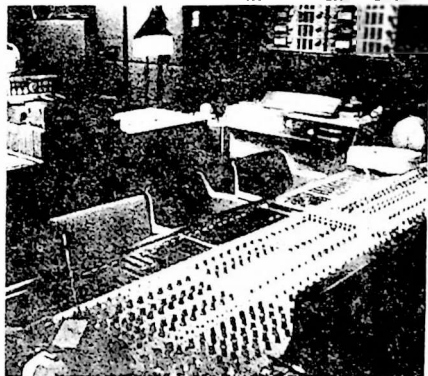
CLAUS) have so far released two sf albums with THINGS TO COME and PSI-FI. Heavily keyboard dominated, this is a brainchild of Ken Elliot and he seems to use the genre references very well indeed. Song titles include Metropolis, 1999, and Star Palace of the Sombre Warrior.

TONTO'S EXPANDING HEAD BAND were a phenomenon of a few years back before TANGERINE DREAM swept the market. Their album ZERO TIME is entertaining stuff, particularly on tracks like Cybernaut and Jetsex. Ramases is busy producing concept albums such as GLASS TOP COFFIN. Again, I think this is the brainchild of a single man. PASSPORT are a new German group whose album INFINITY MACHINE shows promise. WEATHER REPORT are better known for their sweeping jazz rock pieces than for any connection with sf, and yet they have shown several times how successfully this fusion of the two influences works; as on the album I SING THE BODY ELECTRIC. Bo Hansson, who had quite a popular album with LORD OF THE RINGS (which was a certain target for criticism), has continued in the fantasy vein with MAGICIAN'S HAT.

And finally in this brief section, I must admit to my greatest omission, THE MOODY BLUES. The feeling of movement and spiritual seeking that is characteristic of a MOODY BLUES record has never enticed me before now to look any deeper than the surface icing. A few hours of intensive treatment rectified this as far as their CHILDREN'S CHILDREN'S CHILDREN album. It is much more than pleasant background music, and the theme of this album, that of unending wonder at life, is powerfully conveyed by the lyrics. The same can be said of A QUESTION OF BALANCE, IN SEARCH OF THE LOST CHORD and ON THE THRESHOLD OF A DREAM. All the concepts used are familiar to the arm chair philosophers of the sf field; the search for higher meaning beyond space and time.

*"I never thought I'd get to be a million
I never thought I'd get to be the thing that
all these other children see
God and me."*

• Continued next month •



Rags, Solecism and Riches

In this column we attempt to cover as many levels of writing about as is possible, hopefully giving both NZ fan and people in libraries a guide for subscriptions or enquiries. Because of the delays with surface mail (you send a zine by sea, which takes 3 months to arrive, I review it and return by sea, and you see a return for your effort at least 6 months later) Noumenon prefers airmail trades with other zines. Editors can suggest a monetary adjustment if they think an airmail, year-for-year trade is inequitable.

act = available for contributions or trade (most zine editors are always looking for news, letters, articles or art and will put you on the mailing list for frequent contributions. **act** is also referred to as "the usual" in many zines).

subscriptions — because many zines arrive by sea, I have just listed an indicative price for most of them. A letter with a dollar or two will get you up-to-date information from most editors.

A4 — A4 is the new metric paper size which replaces Qto and F/C (quarto and foolscap) and is 11 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches. American **A4** (previously Qto) is 11 x 8 1/2 inches approximately.

A5 is an A4 sheet folded in half, ie 8 1/2 x 6 (approx). **ph-ty** = photo-reduced typewriter text.

There is a saying to the effect that All Knowledge Can Be Found in Fanzines. This month's selection supports this.

HOAXES and "unreal" concepts are examined in John Rowley's editorial in our first dip into the pile this month. He suggests that sf readers are better equipped to handle such. Then you'll find a discussion of Zelazny's *Amber* novels, a very long lettercol, a humorous interlude, and a short reviewcol.

Argo Navis V3/N1 - March; 26pp; A4; dup. [L.U.S.F.A., c/- S.R.C., LaTrobe University, Bundoora, Vic 3083, AUSTRALIA]: quarterly; act; \$3.50/5.

BRIAN ALDISS was Guest of Honour at UniCon and the right venerable John Bangsund decided a "Twelfth Anniversary Issue" was an excellent excuse to put together a collection of old and new pieces by and about Aldiss. A reprinted transcript of Brian's taped address to the 1966 Melbourne convention opens, still a fresh piece. Bruce Gillespie's *GoH* speech to the 1976 UniCon follows, a lengthy and weighty piece in the style for which Bruce is famous. David Grigg then discusses why he gave up publishing fanzines and started heating his head against the wall (ie. started writing). Returning to Aldiss, an article of his from 1966 concerning the writing of *AN AGE* (also published under his preferred title, *CRYPTOZOIC*) is followed by reviews of *BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD*, *THE HAND-REARED BOY* and *A SOLDIER ERECT* (by John McPharlin, and excellent discussion) and *THE MALACIA TAPESTRY* (re-

viewed by Cherry Wilder, enthusiastically). And at either end you'll find short poems by Ursula Le Guin, and a couple of editorial notes. **Australian Science Fiction Review** - Special Twelfth Anniversary Issue - March, 38pp; A4; dup. [John Bangsund, Box 434, Norwood, SA 5067, AUST]: about 10/year; \$5/10; also act & trades.

OLD IDEAS about the future are still current, according to Perry Middlemiss. You see, back in 1971 a few prominent sf authors were asked to answer two questions (What form do you think sf will take in 2001 A.D.? Do you think it is desirable to urge everyone to read sf?). Brian Aldiss, Larry Niven, Philip Jose Farmer, Paul Anderson, L. Sprague de Camp, David Compton, Alexei Panshin and Ursula Le Guin provided answers — Aldiss at length, the others just a few paragraphs each. I agree it is, still, an interesting discussion. After that there's a load of fanish writing and a few reviews. *Auto Delirium* - 66pp; 8"x6"; offset. [Perry Middlemiss, Box 98, Rundle St., Adelaide 5000, AUST]: Irregular; act; 50c/1.

COMICS and sf have grown towards each other at a mass market level over the years, such that many sf-oriented (well, often pseudo-sf I'm afraid) comics now grace the magazine stands. There are also many comic fanzines and Martin Lock produces one of the best, covering general comics in depth and giving a slight emphasis towards sf. Regular columnists, a meaty lettercol, plenty of reviews, a fan column or two, and spot colour make *Bem* essential for comic fans. # 17 has a superb wraparound cover.

BEM Comic News 17 and 19 - 20pp ea; Qto; offset. [Martin Lock, 3 Marlow Court, Britannia Square, Worcester, WR1 3DP, UK]: \$2/4; 5 per year, 60c/1.

BEYOND BAROQUE FOUNDATION has gathered the Noumenon address from somewhere and sent me a rather curious (but, let me hasten to add, welcome) collection of magazines and booklets. BBF is a non-profit, tax-exempt educational/literary organization in Venice, California and sent 3 NewBooks in the NewBooks Project 2, plus a selection of earlier items. *A Vegetable Emergency* by Maxine Chernoff (40pp; A4; offset; typeset) is a collection of prose-poems, rich, imaginative, Gothic, occasionally funny, often mind-benders of the turned to 90° variety.

15 Predestination Weather Reports by Curtis Lyle (54pp; A4; typeset; offset) are poems on philosophical and spiritual themes, presented in rich and dense lines which touch on all sciences and pseudo-sciences known to man. A fine blend of humanistic and conceptual motifs.

Dan McCarroll's Space Diary (70pp; A4; typeset; offset) is a superb collection of notes, comments and jottings which display a very intelligent, creative and cynical mind at work. Word-pictures and picture-pictures abound with wit and sensitivity. Excellent. **New Magazine** - Dec. 1977; 56pp; A4; typeset; offset. This is a collection of art, poems, articles, news/views and jottings. Apparently the last under the name. [Beyond Baroque Foundation, 1639 W. Washington Blvd., PO Box 806, Venice, CA 90291, USA]

ALAN GARNER is an author I have a lot of time for and according to Matrix a TV "Play of the Week" production of his book *RED SHIFT* was excellent. You'll find lots of other news, letters and reviews too. **HERMAN HESSE** can also do little wrong by me and I was very pleased with the article in the latest *Vector* about Hesse, his books, and some speculations on his

life. The *Illuminatus!* trilogy gets an interesting review also, while Maxim Jakubowski presents a rather fine piece of writing, which is also an excellent review of **THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF IGNORANCE**. Also included are articles on Philip Dick, spaceships and definitions (the editorial), plus lots of weighty reviews and a lively lettercol.

The British Science Fiction Association.

Matrix 16 - February, 32pp; A4; duplicated.

Vector 85 - Jan-Feb; 52pp; A4; duplicated.

[BSFA Membership Secretary: Dave Cobbedrick, 245 Rosalind St, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 9AZ, UK]. \$10/year brings you all the BSFA goodies.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS among fans are frequent and a fanzine editor's curse. Checkpoint keeps you up-to-date on who's moved where, sometimes why, and often with whom. It also brings lots of British fannish news, frequent reviews, and some wit. **Checkpoint** 85 - 88 - Jan-Apr, 4-8pp; Qto, dup. [Peter Roberts, 38 Oakland Dr, Dawlish, Devon, UK]: act: £1/7 Aust & NZ airmail.

THE NEWS, Australian variety, is now being distributed by other than Fanew Sletter (which is in permanent limbo), although the format is similar and the editorship is from as high. Yes folks, it's the return of John Foyster:

Chunder - Apr. - May, 4pp ea., A4, duplicated [John Foyster, GPO Box 4039, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, AUST]: 3-weekly, act. \$1/5.

STAR TREK is still extremely popular and now that the film is *definitely* on we'll likely see an upsurge of ST goodies again. For news of ST, its people, its fans and everything else, Australian edition, look at **Data** 12, 13, 14 - Mar. - Apr. - May; 12-20pp; A4, dup. [Ron & Susan Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, AUST]: Clubzine; \$4.50/10 + membership

PETTY TREASON may no longer be a generally punishable offence but Arthur Hlavaty shows how pockets still exist, almost. You'll also find some defining going on, and a *huge* and rambling lettercol. **Diagonal Relationship** 3 - Oct.; 34pp, A4; offset. [Arthur Hlavaty, 250 Coligni Ave, New Rochelle, NY 10801, USA]: act. \$1/1; personalzine

FICTION in fanzines is often scorned and loathed. But Van argues in his editorial that the fledgling writer benefits - has done and will do in the foreseeable future. So you'll find 3 stories, 4 fannish articles, a poem, reviews, letters and misc features **Enigma** V9/N1 - March; 52pp, 10"x7", offset. [Van Ikon, Dept of English, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, AUST]: Clubzine; \$1.50/1; \$4/4.

RINGWORLDS don't fare too well as possibilities in Terry's "pensive" analysis, and in the next issue he has a go at near-light-speed-travel and its problems. Vortex editor Keith Seddon, James White and Sterling Lanier are all interviewed, and huge capsule-review columns and some letters round out fine issues. **Erg** 61 and 62 - Jan., April; 22pp ea.; Qto; duplicated. [Terry Jeeves, 230 Bannardale Rd, Sheffield S11 9FE, UK]: \$2/6; Quarterly; act.

PUBLISHING fiction, if you're an Australasian writer, is not easy. It's nigh on impossible if you're a young and unpublished writer. Two Australian magazines have attempted to change this, Boggle (see this month's lettercol) and Void.. both publishing new writers and minor stories by more well-known authors. Void's editor Paul Collins has gone one step further and published a triple issue (6/7/8) in book form,

calling it "Australia's First Original SF Anthology". It is a handsome package, which I've not got around to reading as yet - reviews have been less than ecstatic and the couple of stories I've read so far show the need of far more discussion between writer and editor, and some polishing.

[Void Publications, PO Box 66, St Kilda, Victoria 3182, AUST]: No price indicated.

ENVISAGED WORLDS - Book format; 235 pages.

TOLKIEN Lives! may be more apt than Frodo Lives at the moment. Whatever the case, the new editor of the Journal of the Sydney Uni Tolkien Society has decided to prune the journal back to "things Tolkien rather than fantasy in general". So you'll find a history of the society, a reprint from Tolkien, art, society notes, an article on Sauron and a review of **THE SILMARILLION**.

The Eye 4 - No date, frequency or price given [S.U.T.S., Box 272, Wentworth, NSW 2006, AU ST].

DEVOTION to the different areas of fannish subculture through the writings and illustrations of friends and fans whose creations he enjoys is what Wally publishes. This issue has letters, small news columns (st on tv, Guatemalan food, UK fannish personal musings), a piece on the CBS Radio Mystery Theatre, and a questionnaire.

Fan's Zine 14 - January; 18pp; A4; duplicated. [Wally Stoelting, 852 Old Brook Rd, Charlottesville, Virginia 22901, USA]: Irregular; act.

FANZINES are a very curious phenomena to the newcomer, coming in all shapes, sizes, qualities and biases. They also contain some superb writing and art. So what better introduction than a sort of "Best Of" collection, masterfully edited, printed and published by Victoria Vayne. The selection comes from 1976 fanzines and is a wonderful volume of writings and art.

Harry Warner surveys the fannish year. Bob Shaw's superb "The Return of the Backyard Spaceship" is reprinted from Maya, with all those glorious Jim Barker illustrations.

Other humorous pieces include Victoria's "Hot Rubber Whips" (watch out Sartre!); what happens when Legionnaires Disease breaks out at an sf con (by Linda Bushyager); Leeh Youngfan's strangeness turning to horror in "A Traveling Giant Calls"; two fine pieces by Leroy Kettle (movies, and cats & vodka); and David Emerson's "Crudnet" episode.

Personal reminiscence takes the lead in Harry Warner's "All My Railroading Yesterdays". Mae Strelkov looks at religious aliens; Bob Tucker's "The Last Survey" is the definitive work on con food. Don D'Amassa's "On Courage" is a linking of three almost-vignette pieces to answer the question: Grant Canfield, artist/writer/fan, shows all his abilities, and provides a cautionary tale, in "Report From Point 30"; while Bob Wilson's "A Poor Man's Guide To Getting High" praises kites.

More serious considerations appear in Mark Keller's "History & Biology in Poul Anderson's Fire Time". Lou Stathis provides an excellent article on German film-maker Leni Riefenstahl; D. H. Carter looks at the "Physics of Square Orbits", and Tom Perry mixes all together in his clever "Fandom Ink".

An extra touch is the listing of the various Awards for the years 1976 and 1977.

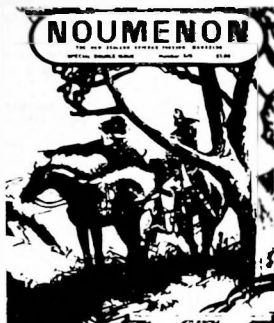
Excellent content; excellent production.

Fanthology 76 - 1977; 100pp; A4; superb dup

[Victoria Vayne, PO Box 156, Stn D, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M6P 3J8]: \$3.50. ●●●●●●●●●●

OUR BACK PAGES

Now that we've finally got the chalet/studio/workshop operational we can unpack many boxes of magazines, books, and back issues of *Noumenon*. So we proudly present, with a few recommendations from the fanzine review journal, our back pages:



Noumenon 5/6: "Sercon but never boring. Lotsa short reviews -- books, films, fanzines, etc. ... Aimed primarily at an audience wider than mere fandom, *Noumenon* is the right vehicle one feels for converting heathen non-fan sf readers to fandom." —Fanzine Fanatique.



Noumenon 8/9: "This continues to be one of my favourite zines of the moment. Most of the articles on sf Rock have been fairly superficial but Brian, in an extensive article, covers one hell of a lot of ground. There are one or two omissions inevitably ... but the article is a valuable intro to what's available. Even comic fans are catered for with an appreciation of the late Vaughn Bodé." —Fanzine Fanatique.

Noumenon 10 and 11: "Excellent sercon sf newszine which deserves a wider circulation. ... Garry Tee writes on Soviet sf and Rolto Treadway continues one of the best sf art columns. ... Both issues have lots of reviews of books, films, fanzines, records, etc. Well-chosen illus break up the text. I liked the shadow graphs of Bill Taylor." —F. Fanatique.

Noumenon 12 and 13/14: "A treasure trove of data on sf and fantasy. Rolto contributes the best column on sf art to be found anywhere, and extends his perceptive, uncompromising comments to the current sf film output. There's also an index to previous issues to let you know what you've missed. 13/14 contains a section on sf Rock, a cartoon strip, and some useful fanzine reviews, etc. I always find it stimulating reading." —Fanzine Fanatique.

Noumenon 15 and 16/17: "... It is a mine of information, features fine reviews, articles and artwork of interest to sf fans everywhere. 15 looks at the fantasy of Ursula Le Guin and 16/17 at Kurt Vonnegut (16/17 also contains the obligatory STAR WARS review). The text is enhanced by some fine artwork. Recommended." —Fanzine Fanatique.

BACK NUMBERS AVAILABLE:

All except issues 1 and 2. Issues 3 and 4 are in short supply. Single issues are 60c and double issues are \$1.20. Postage and handling are 40c per order up to five issues and 10c for each issue if more than five ordered. Issues 12 and 21 have the respective indexes to volumes one and two.

Noumenon 21: "I am still surprised to find book-dealers myopic enough to pass up the chance of distributing this excellent sf zine for sf readers and fans. SF and Fantasy Rock music also find a prominent place in *Noumenon*. SF films (CEK and the quickie cash-ins) are reviewed, also books and fanzines. GET IT." —Fanzine Fanatique.

Fanzine Fanatique — Published bimonthly by Keith & Rosemary Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quernmore Rd., Lancaster, Lancs., UK. \$1.00/3 seamaile.

Fanzine Fanatique reviews everything it receives, has been going for years, and really lets you know how your fanzine compares at a world-wide level.

Note: Keith & Rosemary recently offered to become our European agent. Details to follow.

DEMON SEED

Directed by Donald Cammell.
Produced by Herb Jaffee for Cinama International Corporation.

Julie Christie as Dr Susan Harris.
Fritz Weaver as Dr Alex Harris.

DEMON SEED is based on the novel by Dean R. Koontz (Bantam Books) in which Proteus IV, the most advanced computer of 1995 A.D. imprisons Susan Harris in her own home with the intention of raping her. Proteus plans for the subsequent baby to be born with totally blank brain cells upon which he will imprint all the knowledge in his memory banks. Then he will gain the freedom of mobility with the added advantage of being able to make love to Susan in the flesh (the procreation is achieved by means of mechanical aids).

Necessary changes have been made in the transition from book to film. The part of Proteus' creator has been enlarged in the film by having him married to Susan. There is also an additional character in the form of a retarded child who is being counselled by Susan. But these minor changes add to, rather than detract from, the film. The story still retains the bursts of terror as every avenue of escape is closed off to Susan and she is forced to submit to the computer's desires.

There is an obvious similarity between Proteus of DEMON SEED and HAL of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Both computers disobey their human masters (DEMON SEED: "Open the door, please."; 2001: "Open the pod-bay doors, please HAL") and commit murder to pursue their ideals. Both eventually have their functions terminated.

DEMON SEED continues the use of computerized special effects first used in WEST WORLD by computer-graphics artist John Whitney Jr., and later in FUTUREWORLD (excellent computer graphics). LOGAN'S RUN featured a poor example of holograms which could have been made far better by using more conventional optical effects.

DEMON SEED's impressive list of credits includes: special effects by Tom Fisher; synthavision animation by Bo Gehring; tetralinks by Level Seven; Delta Wing computer animation by the University of Utah's computer science department; electronic visuals by Ron Hays; electronic animation by Richard L. Froman; genigraphics animation by Grant Bassett; and the special Proteus monitor footage by Jordan Belson. A special effects tour-de-force indeed!

A highly unusual mechanical effect also features prominently in the film. It is the sole mobile member of Proteus -- an electronically controlled prosthetic arm mounted on a motorized wheel chair. The Yugoslavian-developed hand is one of only three of its type in the USA. The finger can not only open and close but also move in sequence, and can actually grip a pen and write!

"It was indeed an eerie experience to be grasped around the neck by that lethal-looking arm," confessed Julie Christie.

George Rosales, a technician with General Tele-operators (makers of systems for paraplegics) controlled the hand -- nicknamed Joshua -- off-camera by wearing a "slave unit" on his own arm. Rosales also played a brilliant practical joke with Joshua.

"The chair can be operated by radio control from as far off as 100 feet," he explains, "so I sent Joshua away ahead of me down the main MGM street. And you should have seen people wheeling around to stare at this strange contraption speeding along under its own power and looking ominously purposeful."

My main complaint about deviations in the film's plot from the original story line concerns the ending. The book ended with a desperate struggle against a half-insane, super-powerful monstrosity. In the film, the monstrous offspring is as weak as a kitten. The monster proves to be a mere cocoon containing a normal child inside. Normal except for the deep-throated voice of Proteus, the super-computer. Presumably Susan has forgiven Proteus for the rape committed on her person and that leaves us with a 'happy' ending.

Women's Liberation advocates will probably be entirely against the film as it tells the story of



one woman's degradation at the hands of an unfeeling, cold and calculating machine. At first Susan is only spied upon by the voyeuristic Proteus. Next she is confined to the house. She is physically and mentally assaulted by Proteus' medical tests, threats, and an obedience lesson. The ultimate degradation is the actual rape, which is never seen but is heavily implied with views of arms and legs being tied and a dress being cut open, followed by the appearance of a mechanical device whose shape leaves no doubts as to its purpose.

In the interests of good taste, the film then cuts to a 2001-type light-trip effect. Like the computer animation and other computer effects, this is very interesting visually but tends towards boredom due to repetition.

The best parts in the film are those involving the tetralink -- a metallic, shape-changing watchdog made up of pyramidal sections. This device produces a most effective sequence in the film as it bursts upward through the floor of the house in one scene. Also worth watching out for is a battle between computer-directed laser and man. Worth seeing if you get a chance. —Peter Hassall



Bruce Ferguson
Deborah Knapp
Tony Lovatt
Philippa Grove Stephensen
Philip Stephensen-Payne
Brian Thurogood

THE MALACIA TAPESTRY — Brian Aldiss
(Panther, 1978, 295pp, \$2.95)
Cover art & design uncredited.

In the June issue of *F&SF*, Alexi & Cory Panshin suggest that there are two Brian Aldisses. One is the "young rebel" who discovered pulp sf and loved it for its breadth and vitality. The other is an "elitist mandarin" who shuns "juvenile junk" (ie pulp-style sf and what it has grown into and who embraces "high literature".

So **MALACIA TAPESTRY**, which is being praised in all sorts of places and ways, is very disappointing -- it is mature, high-brow junk. It groans and creeks under its attempt at authenticity, with medieval slums and imperious nobility and Dickensian poor and economic lessons. The people seldom come alive in a way to make you care about them or their concerns, especially because the book is littered with awkward speeches, poorly disguised as discussions. One or two instances do not offend but there are too many; near the end, for instance, Perian and Nicholas Fatember have a very unlikely 'discussion' which neither elucidates nor entertains -- it merely grates.

So much time has been spent on the artifact of Malacia that I wonder why the story of Perian seems the sole concern of the book. Surely it could have been much more than a soap-opera tale of social climbing and sexual jealousy. With the Supreme Council expressly forbidding change perhaps Aldiss is trapped by his creation -- the reader would love other than this reworking of a hoary old tale. Sf readers tend to have an iconoclastic streak and, by the end of the book, many of them will secretly long to put a bomb under the eternal city, and at the very least to give Aldiss a swift boot for his negligence in predictably mimicking Bengtsohn's "zahnoscope" play script (which is so boringly presented) with the manufactured Perian/Armida/Guy conflict.

There could have been interesting moments but, for example, most of the 'ancient' animals are described in such a stylishly dreary manner that they hover limp over the page. And a recurring annoyance is the attempt to present poetry or song lyrics. The examples are consistently contrived and thus clumsy and ungainly.

One small step backward for Aldiss, one large disappointment for Brian. —BAT

ENEMIES OF THE SYSTEM — Brian Aldiss
(F & SF, June 1978; Novella)

The start of this story is fairly promising, if somewhat stilted. The tensions between individuals and the state, and between each other, are convincingly drawn, while the suggestion of a holiday from almost straight-jacket conditioning promises hope. The mouthing of hollow slogans and the pert self-criticisms start to grate early on, however, especially as it is difficult to fit various stances to the same person at times. Aldiss presents intelligent people, but then expects us to believe they are capable of allegiance to mindless doctrine.

Polemic debates abound, too often suggesting that the plot is merely a contrivance to put various points of view. When these sort of mechanics of writing intrude this reader feels cheated. This is not fiction; it is an essay on political models and Skinner conditioning -- sadly, a dry piece of 'ideas' s(ham) f(iction). —BAT

GALACTIC EMPIRES (Two volumes)
Edited by Brian Aldiss
(Orbit, 1976, 338 & 296pp, \$2.45 each).

Brian Aldiss' skill as an anthologist surpasses his writing skills. In this excellent collection he shows us how various writers have handled the theme of galactic empires. The collection has been carefully compiled into a descriptive and instructive structure:

- (1) Rise and Shine, (2) Maturity or Bust, and (3) Decline and Freefall.

The authors chosen vary in age and type but all make equally important contributions. It is hard to single out any as being better or worse than the others. R. A. Lafferty's *Been a Long Long Time* gives exciting perspective on eternity and Arthur Clarke's *Possessed* has an interesting ending. There is a suitable excerpt from Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy and the obligatory story by Van Vogt (*Concealment*), plus Cordwainer Smith (*The Crime and Glory of Commander Suzdal*), Clifford Simak (*Immigrant*), James White (*Resident Physician*) and many others. There are funny stories, and sad stories -- all are enjoyable and make a contribution to the extensive scope and theme of the anthology. Recommended. —BWF

DYING OF THE LIGHT — George R.R. Martin
(Gollancz, 1978, 365pp, \$11.95)

This is George R.R. Martin's first novel and I am truly amazed at the depth, imagination, and caring detail with which Martin has developed the story. It is the most moving, compassionate and sad story I have read in a long while. The characters are very believable people, with more emotion shown than in most science fiction novels. There is dignity and honour in their social setting, but underneath there is a tremendous understanding and perception on Martin's part -- so much so that the reader is able to relate deeply to each character, even the bad-guys.

Many science fiction stories concern the growth and development of new worlds, exploration and discovery. This story is set in a time when a whole planet, Worlorn, is near the end of its civilized life. It is a wandering planet, continuously moving away into space, and losing a bit more of its history all the time. There are, however, a few remaining people and sentient creatures, but the many different civilizations which originally built Worlorn have long since left. And this is part of the underlying sadness of the story.

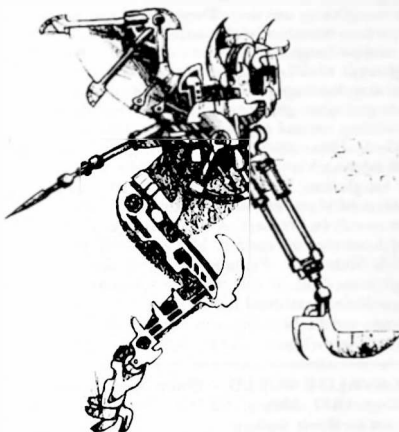
The time is far into the future, and the origins of the characters are planets far removed from Earth. It is the diverse and often conflicting social and ethical codes of the characters' backgrounds which provides much of the movement of the story. Gwen Delvano is an ecologist from the planet Avalon, but has been on Worlorn, married to the leader of a party from the world High Kavalaan, studying various life processes on the dying planet. Dirk t'Larien is a wanderer and ex-lover of Gwen. He came to Worlorn because she sent him the 'whispering jewel' — a very special token of love which they had given each other when they were lovers years ago on Avalon. The situation Dirk finds when he arrives is far from straightforward, and it is the complex and strong ethics of High Kavalaan which keep Gwen from him.

But there is far, far more to this story than the old love affair of Dirk and Gwen. There is intrigue, adventure, and tragedy. Above all, though, it is Martin's skill as a draftsman of human emotions and behaviour which stands out in this novel. His char-

acters are finely developed, and always the stark austere backdrop of Worlorn provides additional colour and scope to their interaction.

There is a large, very comprehensive Glossary at the back of the book, which I didn't discover until I had finished reading it.

I highly recommend this novel, and if the review of the actual plot is somewhat sketchy, I can only say that it is because I am left with more feelings about the story than I have experienced in a long while. To laboriously describe events would only detract from the overall beauty of the book —DMK



MIND OF MY MIND — Octavia Butler
(Siddgwick & Jackson, 1978, 185pp, \$10.95)
Jacket design uncredited.

The basic premise of this book may have made a good short story/novella. The writing as presented is over-long, at times clumsy, often mere padding. The use of different viewpoints suggests awkwardness rather than design. The pedestrian nature of the writing, with everything carefully explained, precludes any build-up of tension or drama: it is an essay rather than a compelling work of fiction.

There is a more fundamental fault to the book, however, which reflects on the author's "world view". I was attracted to the book by the cover blurb, only to be disappointed by Butler's lack of feeling for her characters. They are described, as are their feelings, in an offhand manner. As a result the reader never really gets in tune with any character. Finally, on a deeper level, I decided that the frequent, careless and 'mere statistic' approach to death and sorrow could only come from a person with little life experience or from someone with a very jaundiced perspective. That is, unless the book was just a trendy exercise which the editor should have refused to publish until it was substantially reworked. —BAT ▶

26 REVIEWS...

DEATHBIRD STORIES — Harlan Ellison
(Pan, 1978, 345pp, \$2.40)
Cover art uncredited.

At the front of this collection, Ellison recommends that the stories be read in several sittings for "the emotional content of these stories, taken without break, may be extremely upsetting" and, for once, he is not exaggerating. The stories are a cycle — a study of gods and men. First is the award-winning **Whimper of Whipped Dogs** of the cruel, blood-thirsty god of New York, demanding you watch his human sacrifice or are one. Then **Along the Scenic Route**, where worship of the automobile has been raised to new heights as drivers duel each other on the highways with lasers, Spandau and so on. On and on, step by step through the 19 stories, Ellison presents god after god, emotion following emotion, each building on and complementing the others. **Mars, God of War**, shows his terrifying visage in **Basilisk** when a Vietnam soldier gets the power to kill by his glance; **Dis, the Rock God**, awakening after years of slumber under a Manhattan skyscraper to call in his dues. And the lighter gods, the God of Love moving quietly like a unicorn **On The Downhill Slide**; or **Paingod** bringing mankind joy through pain. And, at the end, the summary of all, the incredible **Deathbird** itself. This is probably the best single-author sf collection ever compiled, and certainly Ellison's best, so far. —PSP

THE LAVALITE WORLD — Philip Jose Farmer
(Ace, Dec. 1977, 280pp., \$2.75); Import.
Cover art by Boris Vallejo.

The second, third and fourth books in the **World of The Tiers** series all ended with several unanswered questions, and the hint of future adventures. This book, the long awaited fifth in the series, continues the adventures of the trickster Kickaha in yet another of the created pocket universes.

The immortal lives of the Lords are made all the more exciting by the preponderance of lethal creations on their manufactured worlds. Urthona's shifting world, with all its impermanence, is a far more dangerous place than those previously visited. The characters of the last story were left on this world and **THE LAVALITE WORLD** tells of their further adventures. It is a place where mountains and valleys are constantly changing and every 400 days a large part of the world splits off to form a temporary satellite, which subsequently reunites with its parent in a cataclysm. The only refuge is inside Urthona's palace — floating above the landscape and moving at a constant one kilometer per hour.

Farmer's fondness for Edgar Rice Burroughs is apparent from previous books. A large part of this book is also along Burroughs lines, with the hero leading his associates through adventures and struggles against the primitive environment. Kickaha is the enigmatic leader, a combination of Tarzan, Doc Savage and all sorts of picturesque heroes. He

is able to escape from any trap, perform great feats of strength and endurance, and can fight or can his way out of any trouble. One chapter of the book is devoted to a capsule biography of his life, but it doesn't go far enough to answer all the questions raised in the last book.

This book is on a far more primitive level than the others in the series so far. The adventurers must cope with mobile carnivorous plants, antisocial natives, a constantly changing landscape, and a mobile target. It is not as profound as some previous titles, but it provides a further adventure in the lives of the Lords. It is very readable, and I can now look for the sixth title. —BWF

THE GODWHALE — T.J. Bass
(Methuen, 1977, \$2.30)

The American edition of this future-world story has been reviewed in *Noumenon* already, so I'll assume you've read Brian's review (No. 3, p. 16) and try to refute it. Brian objects to Bass' florid, biology-textbook descriptive prose. This is a matter of taste I like it and consider that it enhances the story, rather than detracts from it. Bass seems to have a love of words for their own sake, and enjoys parading his erudition and vocabulary — as I say, a matter of taste.

A more serious objection, which was mentioned to me by (dare I admit it?) my mother, a fan of longer standing than I am a person, is that the plot itself suffers from the (according to Brian) deficiency of the prose style — it is too cluttered. There are robots and mutants and clones and cyborgs and computers and hemihumans; there are city-dwellers and hive-dwellers and tween-wallers and water-dwellers and island-dwellers; there is a profusion of plots and backgrounds and characters and technologies. As (blush) Mum said, "Why does he bring up the Tweenwallers, for instance? The story doesn't need them." But if you're going to be like that, you may as well ask, why write the story in the first place? (Brian will no doubt answer "Beats me").

There are ascetic stories, with a bare skeleton of plot, and everything else absolutely necessary to the development of that plot, but this isn't one of them. Nor is it a mere entertainment, with a clutter of detail for its own sake; novels like this can, I believe, point out the very real and pervasive clutter of real life. There is no reason for the Tweenwallers, any more than there is for the Mafia or the Society for the Protection of Community Standards — they just are, and I think we need the occasional novel like this to point out that things are never simple enough to be solved by Kimball Kinnison and his twin DeLameters; that before you can find the answer you have to find the question.

After such a breathless rave I refuse to detail the plot beyond saying that it switches viewpoints all the time. It is mostly about Larry Dever, the hemihuman, and to a lesser extent focuses on A.R.N.O.L.D., the synthetic warrior who is dependent on amino-acid-enriched bread (you'll love the derivation of that acronym). There are lots of

loose ends in the plot -- as might be expected from what I have said. For instance, the young ARNOLD glimpses and automatically memorizes the amino-acid sequence on which he is dependent -- but never recognizes it for what it is. This is frustrating for readers brought up in the dramatic tradition, where every casual disclosure or unrelated discovery is a premonition for a major plot development later on -- but why should it be? It might not be good drama, but life abounds with just such ironies.

This is not a great book, but I like it a lot. Judging by the differences between my view and Brian's, one is tempted to conclude that this is one of those books that one either loves or hates -- except that someone is sure to remark, "Oh, it was fairly good, I guess." Life is never simple. —ASL



THE WORLD-SHUFFLER — Keith Laumer
(Coronet, 1978, 155pp, \$2.40)
Cover art by Patrick Woodroffe.

Lafayette O'leary is transported from our world into one of his dreams where he overthrows an usurping king, kills a dragon, survives a duel with a jealous lover and marries his sweetheart. And all this in flashback in the first four pages. Then, just as he's getting bored with court life, someone or something shifts him to yet another reality. Here Lafayette has to start from scratch as nothing and nobody are quite what they seem. It's impossible to convey the side-splittingly funny quality of the book without going into incredibly tortuous detail; lovers of humorous fantasy will enjoy it greatly. It richly deserves its lovely (though uncredited) cover illustration. —PGS

BELOVED SON — George Turner
(Faber, 1978, 380pp, \$11.25)
Jacket design by Dave Griffiths

BELOVED SON is one of the "most remarkable" science fiction debuts of recent years". Which may be hardly surprising as it is by one of sf's most perceptive and argumentative critics.

Turner's writing is well paced, the opening sections capturing the reader until he *must* know how the various threads are resolved. Picture the members of Earth's first interstellar expedition arriving back to find a post-catastrophe, new order, barely recognisable, *youthful* society with strange new ethics -- and 'weapons'. Add the mysteries of international 'security', the birth of an underground movement, and a literally underground and secret biological research and development complex, and you have all the tension needed. While throughout the book Turner gives fascinating glimpses into the psychology of his characters, conjuring some marvelous exchanges between them at times.

So why did I have to struggle through the last chapter? Why did I feel cheated? I think, perhaps, that Turner bit off more than he could chew. He asked fundamental sociological and philosophical questions but didn't let the book carry to its own conclusions. He turned his characters into puppets, juggling them into contrived conclusions. I don't believe that last chapter ("But Tomorrow Will Be Better..."), anymore than I can swallow the pap paraded as a climax -- or that post-collapse, new-horizons, differently-educated youth would care beans about, or even understand, biblical mouthings. Turner says, "Wise, wise, Lindley granted, to use the old version with its immense majesty of words." Bah! Turner has tossed to one side the real characters and people of the novel and substituted 1953 concepts, 'ideals' and writing style.

BELOVED SON shows breadth of vision gradually limited by the encroachment of conventionality. What started as *Brave New Hope* became the Shape of Old-Fashioned Things. A disappointment. —BAT

THREADS OF TIME — Edited by Robert Silverberg
(Fontana, 1977, 200pp, \$2.25)
Cover art by Peter Goodfellow.

One of the better collections of three original novellas that became such a popular form a few years back. The weakest of the three is the title story by Gregory Benford, linking the Bigfoot of North America with a crashed alien spacecraft on the moon. Simak provides a very Simakian tale called *The Marathon Photography* about a curious set of recluses in the Michigan hills and the photograph one has that seems to have been taken at the Battle of Marathon. Best of all, though, is certainly Norman Spinrad's *Riding the Torch*, a panoramic vista of an emigrating armada from a dying Earth searching the Universe desperately for a new home, while rapidly ceasing to need one. —PSP

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

SF (AND RELATED) BOOKS PUBLISHED IN NEW ZEALAND - JUNE & JULY 1978
— Listed in order under their NZ publishers and Distributors

Associated Book Publishers (NZ) Ltd:

IF THE STARS ARE GODS — Gregory Benford & Gordon Eklund (Gollancz \$9.70): First British edition
THE BRASS DRAGON — Marion Zimmer Bradley (Methuen \$7.60): First Br. ed.; Cover by Bob Fowke.
DYING OF THE LIGHT — George R.R. Martin (Gollancz \$11.95): First British edition.
THE SCIENCE FICTION OF ISAAC ASIMOV — Joseph Patrouk (Dobson \$14.05): Non-fiction; First Br. ed.

Beckett Sterling Ltd:

THE CORRIDORS OF TIME — Paul Anderson (Berkley \$2.25): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
CLUSTER • CHAINING THE LADY — Piers Anthony (Avon; both \$2.60): The first two titles of the new Cluster trilogy; First editions; Cover art for both by Ron Walotsky.
THE WEB OF THE CHOSEN — Jack Chalker (Del Rey \$2.60): First edition; Cover art by Ralph McQuarrie.
THE GENESIS MACHINE — James Hogan (Del Rey \$2.60): First edition; Cover art uncredited.
CLOUDBY — Sydney Van Scyoc (Berkley \$2.25): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
COSMIC TRIGGER: The Final Secret of the Illuminati — Robert Anton Wilson (Pocket \$2.90): Speculation.

Wm Collins (NZ) Ltd:

HELLO SUMMER, GOODBYE — Michael Coney (Pan \$2.15): First British paper edition; Cover art uncred.
DEATHBIRD STORIES — Harlan Ellison (Pan \$2.40): First British paper edition; Cover art uncredited.
THE VISUAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION — Edited by Brian Ash (Pan \$13.00; 10"x8" paper edition; 360 pp, profusely illustrated in both colour & b&w): First edition; Cover art by Tim White.

Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd:

THE BRASS DRAGON — M. Z. Bradley (Methuen \$1.95): Paper companion to hardcover listed above.
TRAVELLER IN BLACK — John Brunner (Magnum \$2.35): First British edition (?); Cover by Bob Fowke.
STAR TREK: THE NEW VOYAGES # 2 — Edited by Culbreath & Marshak (Corgi \$2.65): First Br. edition.
THE PUPPIES OF TERRA — Thomas M. Disch (Panther \$2.35): First British edition (?); Cover uncredited.
RAVEN: SWORDSMISTRESS OF CHAOS — Richard Kirk (Corgi \$2.15): First British edition of the first of a new series; Cover art by Chris Achilleos.
LOGAN'S WORLD — William F. Nolan (Corgi \$2.15): First British edition; Cover art uncredited.
SHAKESPEARE'S PLANET — Clifford Simak (Magnum \$2.35): First Br. paper ed.; Cover by Chris Moore.
FANTASMS AND MAGICS — Jack Vance (Mayflower \$2.35): First Br. ed.; Cover by Peter Goodfellow.
PLANETS FOR SALE — A. E. van Vogt (Panther \$2.35): New edition; Cover art by Chris Foss.
METAMORPHOSIS — STAR TREK FOTONOVEL # 5 (Bantam \$2.70): First edition.
A HOUSE IN SPACE — Henry Cooper (Panther \$2.95): "The first true account of the Skylab experience"; First British paper edition; 16 pages of photos; Cover art by Mike Trim.

Hodder & Stoughton Ltd:

A FUNERAL FOR THE EYES OF FIRE — Michael Bishop (Sphere \$2.95): First Br. ed.; Cover by Melvyn.
THE WORLD SHUFFLER — Keith Laumer (Coronet \$2.40): New edition; Cover art by Patrick Woodroffe.
NIGHT WINGS — Robert Silverberg (Sphere \$2.75): Reprint; Cover art by "PE".
THE POWER OF BLACKNESS — Jack Williamson (Sphere \$2.95): First Br. edition; Cover art uncredited.
THE NEXT 200 YEARS — Herman Kahn & Brown/Martel (Abacus \$4.75): Non-fiction; New edition.
THE HYNK UFO REPORT — Dr J. Allen Hynek (Sphere \$2.95): First British edition; Illustrated.
UFOS: A SCIENTIFIC ENIGMA — D. A. J. Seargent (Sphere \$2.50): First British edition.
SITUATION RED: THE UFO SIEGE — Leonard Stringfield (Sphere \$2.95): First Br. ed.; Illustrated.

Hutchinson Publishing Group Ltd:

IN THE OCEAN OF NIGHT — Gregory Benford (S&J \$12.65): First British edition.

Oxford University Press:

BELOVED SON — George Turner (Faber \$11.25): First edition; Jacket design by Dave Griffiths.

Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd:

THE LAST STARSHIP FROM EARTH — John Boyd (Penguin \$2.25): New edition; New preface by Boyd; Cover art by Peter Cross.
THE POLLINATORS OF EDEN — John Boyd (Penguin \$2.25): New ed.; New preface; Cover by Cross.
SPACE COLONIES — Edited by Stewart Brand (Penguin \$5.00): Large format paperback; Non-fiction.

Wholesale Book Distributors:

BEFORE THE GOLDEN AGE # 1 • # 2 • # 3 — Edited by Isaac Asimov (Orbit; all \$2.90): Reprints.
Perry Rhodan 32: Challenge of the Unknown — Clark Darlton (Orbit \$2.15): First Br. ed.; Cover by Jones.
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