

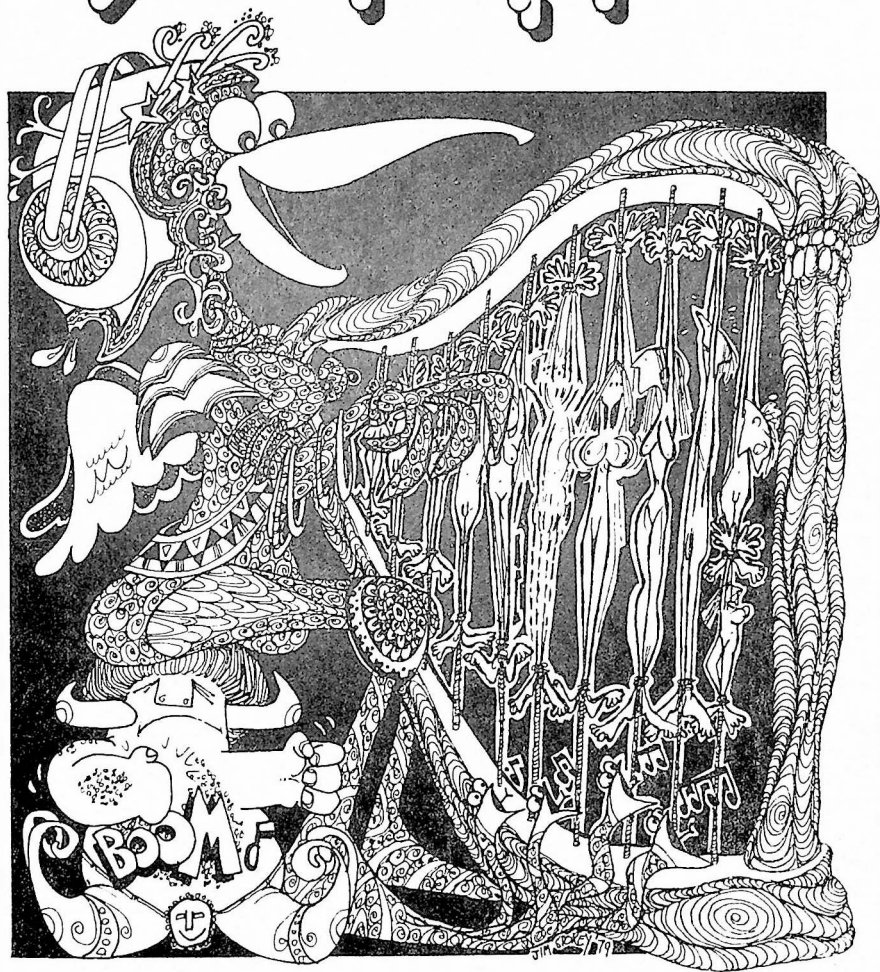
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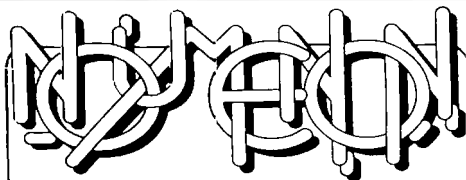
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Mike Pownall (NZ) — page 4.
Colin Wilson (NZ) — pp 5, 14, 15, 24, 32.
Jim Storey (NZ) — pp 6, 22.
Vanya (NZ) — pp 8, 28.
Jim McQuade (USA) — pp 13, 25.
Ken Gorrie (NZ) — pp 19, 20, 21.
Terry Jeeves (UK) — p 26.

EDITORIAL

I was almost tempted to call this the "explanatorial" as I think I should give you some idea of why *Noumenon* is late, again, and other such things.

First up, the week of December 2nd arrived and everything was prepared for *Noumenon* production. So the IBM typesetter broke down. Don't panic, I thought, should only take a couple of days to fix at the most (an opinion with which the experts at IBM agreed). But it didn't arrive fixed on Thursday like they said, nor the following Tuesday (which was essential for Gulf News production, let alone *Noumenon*), nor the following... So what happened was the machine arrived back the second time on December 19, after appeals and threats to "top personnel" to forchissake get it back to us and fixed!

So three issues of Gulf News were typeset in an emergency fashion by friends in the city and because I kept being given dates a few days hence for the return of our IBM I thought it okay to hold off with *Noumenon*.

Thus Christmas was upon us and no start had been made on the actual production of this issue except preparatory editorial work. Okay, I thought, I can find some time over Xmas/New Year to put the issue together.

Then our Gulf News editor/journalist quit at very short notice and I was left with bumper holiday-season issues to not only produce but to write and edit as well!

I was not well-disposed towards the world for the first three weeks of 1979.

Neither was Deb, because she and I have been having a few hassles in our island paradise home, and so after mammoth upheavals (and a bit of sickness) the typesetting for *Noumenon* 27 was begun in mid-

Continued on page 38...

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

1st NZ SF CON

Mervyn Barrett has knocked all sorts of ideas and plans into some sort of shape, even going so far as to book a hotel/convention centre. So, NZ's first National SF Convention of modern times will be taking place this year, 1979, over Labour Weekend in Wellington. Mervyn has some serious reservations about name:

"First off, the name. I utterly loathe the name KiwiCon. The word Kiwi as applied to identify a person from New Zealand has associations with all those New Zealand characteristics I find most repellant and undesirable. I would like to feel too that we are not so lacking in identity as a people that we need to establish our connection with some avian oddity (which hardly anyone outside New Zealand will have more than the vaguest awareness of anyhow) so that people can place us geographically. The other thing is that this will be a New Zealand Con for New Zealanders living in New Zealand — not in Earth's Court where some such label might be justified. If KiwiCon is ever used — and I certainly hope it never will be — it should be for an international event — a WorldCon.

My choice is the traditional form of name incorporating a city association and the word Con — as ChiCon, NYCon, TorCon, LonCon, etc. My two choices at the moment are WellCon or WelCon. (I'm not sure of the spelling, which do you think looks better?) or CapCon for Capital Con. Will you accept one of these? If so, which do you prefer? Any other suggestions?"

Well, Mervyn, apart from SteepCon or WindyCon (sorry, we must keep national jokes out of these pages!), I think WellCon looks better and may be more suitable for a log.

Mervyn and his colleagues and I are polishing up final details, to be notified here real soon now, so KEEP LABOUR WEEKEND FREE. ★

SF COURSE

Mervyn Barrett also hits the news with his 6-part "lecture/discussion programme" called "Voyages Into Science Fiction". Part of the Wellington WEA Adult Education Programme, the course commences on Wednesday 14 March, 5.30 - 7.00pm, and will cost about \$6.00 for the series. Enrollment forms will be available from libraries in February or from WEA, 154 The Terrace, Wellington (phone 726-668). ★

EASTERCON 7

Further to our report in Noumenon 24 (page 3), the EasterCon committee have put out a second progress report. There is no new information, other than the January 1st rise in membership rates, which are now \$10.00 attending and \$5.00 supporting.

DATE: April 13-16, 1979

PLACE: Melbourne Sheraton Hotel.

GoHs: Bert Chandler (Pro); Brian Thurogood (Fan).

ADDRESS: PO Box 175, South Melbourne,

Victoria, 3105, Australia (Ph 699-3347).

Check the item in N24 or send off your money and get all the latest info direct. ★

SF BOOK PROMOTION

Hodder & Stoughton are running a special SF paperback promotion in February, with special display stands of Sphere titles. The stands and accompanying posters should be in most bookshops



who usually stock SF, and perhaps a few others besides. (If your local bookshop doesn't have the stand, ask about it.)

The twelve titles in the promotion are:
TIME STORM — Gordon Dickson
SIGN OF THE UNICORN — Zelazny
A CIRCUS OF HELLS — Poul Anderson
THE POSSESSORS — John Christopher
THE SYNDIC — C.M. Kornbluth
FOOL'S HILL — Richard Lupoff
PATTERNMASTER — Octavia Butler
PLAGUE FROM SPACE — Harry Harrison
CAPTIVE UNIVERSE — Harrison (reprint, new cover)

DANGEROUS VISIONS (3 volumes) — Edited by Harlan Ellison (reprints, new covers). ★

THE MAGAZINE RACK

The big news, of course, concerns Omni, the first two issues of which have recently been released in New Zealand by Gordon & Gotch. For those readers who have missed our previous reports, Omni is the new "magazine of science, science fiction and the future... the first magazine of the 21st Century" (advertising blurb) and it is edited, designed and published by Bob Guccione of Penthouse.

Omni is Penthouse size, is extremely attractively produced, and worth every cent of its \$2.65 price tag in NZ.

Issue 1 has: fiction by Asimov, Sturgeon, Goulart. James Hall: an interview with Freeman Dyson; articles about longevity, space probes, the Nobel prize. Zen & technology & the split brain, and future drugs. pictorial features by Roman Vishniac, Harry Harrison and Ken Kay; and many superb columns. ►

4 QUIDNUNCs...

Issue 2 has fiction by Lloyd Biggle Jr, Leigh Kennedy, William G. Shepherd, Rick Conley; an interview with Alvin Toffler; articles about bionics, computer lib, short-lived phenomena, test-tube babies, Ellerbroek on language, emotion & disease, Lilly on dolphin/human communication, and Watson on life tides; pictorial features on "natural" packages, unseen worlds, and photosynthesis; and those columns.

We have asked Garry Tee to prepare a special review of the first issues for *Noumenon*, so I'll say no more here.

To help launch and introduce *Omni*, the October issue of *Penthouse* is a special Science and the Future issue, with all the articles, interviews and fiction tied in, plus the columns and even some of the "girlie" features.

There's fiction by Anthony Burgess and Malcolm Brenner; articles on science fiction, robot lib, and cosmic censorship; an interview with Robert Jastrow of NASA; and an essay "Space is a Welfare Program for the Technocrats". (Might see if I can get Garry to review this too.)

Future and *Starlog* are continuing to lead the field of media sf magazines by a long long way. The last three issues of *Future* (5, 6 and 7), especially, have been very good.

The fourth issue of *Science Fantasy Film Classics* (October) features *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA*, plus other items on George Pal, Gerry & Sylvia Anderson's "Doppelganger", *JOURNEY TO THE FAR*

SIDE OF THE SUN, and *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE*. Plus a pull-out centrefold of plans & Poster.

Fantastic Films (December) also features *B G A L*, the first part of a survey of sf on tv, an illustrated article on tv sf animation, an overview of *OUTER LIMITS*, and pieces on Gerry Anderson and John Dykstra.

The 25th Anniversary edition of *Playboy* includes part one of Arthur C. Clarke's new (and last?) novel *THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE*, plus an essay by Ray Bradbury "Beyond 1984".

Overall, a very good crop. ★

WHITE LEAVES AMAZING

Ted White has terminated his editorship of *Amazing* and *Fantastic* and the January *Fantastic* and the February *Amazing* are the last under his hand. White has edited the magazines since October 1968 and has weathered a number of storms and problems. He cited financial arrangements as his major reason for leaving.

It is likely that the magazines will have mainly reprint material, both stories and art, but may look for new material — many details are still to be finalized, including a new editor. ★

"It is the policy of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to carry out its authority to establish and administer a personnel security program in the interests of the common defense and security for the purpose of safeguarding special nuclear material and preventing sabotage which would endanger the public by exposure to radiation in a manner consistent with traditional American concepts of justice."
—Federal Register.

VERY CLOSE ENCOUNTER OF THE THIRD KIND





Alan Dean Foster, Box BC1-11, Big Bear Lake, CA 92315, U.S.A. (13/10/78)

Many thanks for another informative and well put together issue (No. 25). Nomenon is one of the few zines that looks as good as it reads.

Kerry Doole's comments on *DARK STAR*, a film much respected and enjoyed by fans hereabouts (and one which I was fortunate enough to be able to turn into book form) lead me to bring you up to date on what the prime movers of the film are currently up to. John Carpenter, the film's producer, director, writer and composer, recently wrote *THE EYES OF LAURA MARS* (I hope he did, or else I'm due a kick in the memory). Dan O'Bannon, who co-wrote the film, worked on many of the special effects, and played one of the principal characters (Pinback), is responsible along with a chap named Ronald Shusett for the script of a major new sf film now in production in England entitled *ALIEN*. I've just completed the novellization of the latter for Warner Books. It's a horror film with an sf setting, very nature, not machine-oriented at all. It's scheduled for release in the US around the middle of 1979 and, if left intact, will probably draw an "R" rating and end up scaring the beejeezus out of viewers... if the director and cinematographer do their jobs right.

Keep an eye out for the work of a new artist named H.R. Giger, who did some phenomenal pre-production paintings for *ALIEN*. Sort of a cross between Harry Clarke and Rich Sternbach. And have any of your rock-oriented correspondents heard of a marvelous electronic group named SYNERGY? Delightful stuff!

Donning Publishers (*THE ART OF SCIENCE FICTION: FRANK KELLY FREAS*) are currently doing a book on Michael Whelan.

On Stephen Ballantyne's review of *FORBIDDEN PLANET*, I can't imagine why the climactic battle with the monster from the ID was excised from the print he saw, but it wasn't because it was re-cut for American tv. I've seen FP on local tv at least a dozen times, including within the last year, and that sequence is included untouched. I'd guess some enterprising hands removed the sequence for

repositioning in a private collection. On the unique electronic score for the film, a recording of it is available in the US. And John Carpenter wasn't the only one influenced by the film. It's still my personal favourite sf film (maybe I'm getting old enough to become nostalgic).

By the way, Joshua Meador, the fine Disney special effects animator who was loaned to do the ID monster and other effects in the film, was a good landscape artist.

Re CRF's reviews of my *THE TAR-AIYM KRANG* and *ORPHAN STAR*, viz the 2000 km. cliff... the proofreader who worked on *ORPHAN STAR* was fired immediately. Um, need I comment? Oh well, I will... it should've been 2000 metres.

Donald Wandrei is alive and well and living in Minnesota. Why he hasn't written much of anything in the last 40 years is a story unto itself.

***Letter writers like Alan - professionals who keep abreast of most developments in the sf field and who still find time to read and write to fanzines - give a considerable boost to the enjoyment factor of editing/producing a fanzine. Thanks for taking the time to write and keep "the colonies" up to date Alan. ***

Paul Collins, PO Box 66, St. Kilda, Victoria 3182, Australia (28/9/78)

Thanks for the copy of *Nomenon* (# 24). It seems that you're getting better all the time. From memory you never had much space for LoCs, and it's good to see familiar names appearing within the pages. Also loved the cover design - top notch.

However, there was one comment which I didn't agree with. In a mini review, or should I say mention of *ENVISAGED WORLDS*, you say: " - reviews have been less than ecstatic...". I beg to differ! Or at least point out that it all depends on which reviews you've read! Perhaps you could have said, "The reviews I've read so far..." Out of some fifteen reviews E.W. has received, only three were unfavourable. Also, the Australian Library Bulletin phoned the other day to say E.W. had received a feature review which highly praised it: also, Nev Angove and Peter Knox have written to say that the book is to receive good reviews. Van Ikin also in Science Fiction... the list goes on.

So you see, I do think you have misled your readers by your comment. Of course, when you read E.W. you might feel that you agree with the bad reviews, but let's not jump the gun, huh?

There is something else that has been gnawing away at me for some time. Just let me say that it's all very well compiling a collection of stories by Asimov, Clarke, Heinlein and the rest of them who are competent writers, but quite another job to compile a collection of stories written by people who have never been given a chance to develop their writing, and who have never been published before. Any old fool can write to well known writers and publish their stories and claim "I've edited this", but surely the word 'edited' should be substituted for the word 'compiled'? So someone might well say if

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I can't get those fledglings up to the standard of masters, then I shouldn't be publishing them. But Peter Knox, Nev Angove and myself are trying, at least, which is more than I can say for the majority of Australian and New Zealand's publishers. And in closing, I might add that we, too, are fledglings!

Oh yes, **OTHER WORLDS** has been published, issues 9, 10 & 11 of Void. I guess Ron Graham will send you a review copy.

****Paul enclosed some copies of reviews from newspapers and general-interest magazines with his letter, which do show the book has been favourably received in general. However, even Paul will admit, I'm sure, that the praise is not totally unreserved.****

Bruce Ferguson, 13 Burnside St., Lower Hutt, New Zealand. (23/9/78)

It is nice to see Noumenon continuing so well. I too like Bogor and it was great to see the inclusions in N. There are certainly a variety of covers to the last few issues, and I particularly enjoyed Marlon's cover — hope we see some more of his work.

In N24, Eric Lindsay's second letter indicates he is a good case for getting a few back issues for himself. In no way was I trying to cover all of Piers' work. Tony Lovatt did an excellent but incomplete look at the majority of his books, and "Omnibus" was intended to supplement Tony's contribution by covering the books he had missed.

I can't say I enjoyed the Vidal excerpts in Playboy. I do agree about Professional Courtesy however — excellent.

We are looking at the possibility of going to EasterCon next year. After your criticisms of the last one, it would have to be better than previous ones, especially with you as guest speaker. Anyway, with a bit of planning and luck, we might see you there.

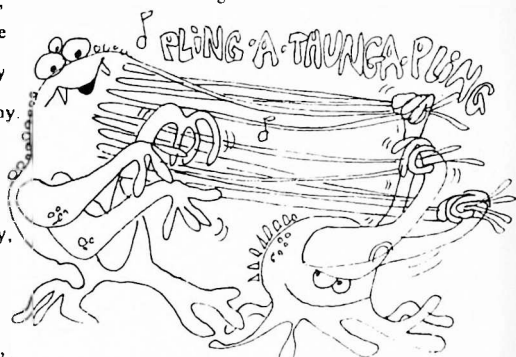
NASF in Wellington has been interesting lately. At the last meeting we saw a premier of one of the members' own films (called "Gross Encounters of the Worst Kind"). Highly derivative of Spielberg's movie, but good fun. It is admittedly amateur, but (in my opinion) good. Russell Hobbs made it and he used some of my lps for the music (PINK FLOYD and SEVENTH WAVE mainly). His next sf venture will be based on a script I suggested. Russell's special effects are well done, so I have given him a story to work from. The other movies we saw at the meeting were better forgotten — someone had got hold of some terrible Taiwanese sf features and Mervyn Barrett summed it up perfectly with the comment: "Well, what could follow that?"

Zak Reddan is incorrect in labelling me as "sf columnist for Salient". I have written a few articles for Salient as a series but lack of time and encouragement meant that it finished after a couple of weeks. It was slightly along the lines of your regular column in Hot Licks a long time ago. However, I don't think Salient is ready for a regular

sf column yet — it is too much the vehicle for repetitive political ravings.

When people are unfamiliar with a medium, they tend to ignore any presentations in it. I think this is the main reason for Leigh and Mervyn denying the existence of sf music. Most sf music is difficult to access and the few 'pop' songs that are blatantly sf appear flippant, e.g. Space Oddity or Nilsson's Spaceman. So can we ever persuade them that they are missing something? I doubt it, unless they want to.

People are receptive to media in different ways: this accounts for the variety of tastes that people have (and possibly the popularity of Mike Moorcock books). Rock music fans who are also sf fans can grasp the relationships more readily because they are familiar with the medium and the concepts. People unfamiliar with the medium and only familiar with the concepts of sf will find it difficult to grasp the connection, because they don't know the medium. Music is a far more emotive medium than literature because it uses sound rather than language. Those who dislike certain sounds (e.g. rock music) are unable to get the message of that medium because they don't accept that medium. Marshall McLuhan was right in saying that the medium is the message.



GOTTA MAKE YEROWN FUN IN THIS UNIVERSE, BUDDY.

Thomas J. Murn, 434 W. Main St., Belleville, WI 53508, U.S.A. (26/9/78)

I've been meaning to write for some time to comment on that series Noumenon has been running on modern sf music. I have, however, been involved in changing my address, from the stuffy confines of urban Madison to the charming and soon-to-be-snow-filled valleys and hills of rural Wisconsin. In the process, my fanzine collection lost itself in the dark recesses of a storage box... nevertheless, I will comment on what I can remember:

The music article mentioned the checkered career of AMON DUUL II. Actually, AMON DUUL did little to contribute to the furthering of sophistication in sf music. Their LP, DANCE OF THE

LEMMINGS is a good example. I think it is side three that starts with a very nice and hard-driving guitar solo and then the group proceeds to shatter the set mood by attempting to sing. Maybe they are considered golden of voice when they sing in their native German, but in English they resemble sandpaper on sheet metal. A later LP, CARNIVAL IN BABYLON went nowhere except for the song All The Years Round, which was still slightly spoiled by the shattering vocals.

Anyway, most of the "spacey" piddling around done by groups such as AMON DUUL aint worth nothin when compared to the total approach of, say, BLUE OYSTER CULT. Face it, the CULT is one of the best hard-driving bands, thematically as well as musically, and when they choose to go the sf route, in songs such as Stairway to the Stars and Wings Wetted Down, they appear to be spiritually sluggish and musically dormant. I hope that the CULT gets some mention in the upcoming segments of your sf music article. Noumenon is improving steadily and it's always a joy to find it in the mailbox — although those metric size brown envelopes must look suspicious to the mailman. Maybe you should put "SF" or "SCIENCE FICTION" in big letters on the outside of the envelope?

Anyway, best of luck, and please pass my COA along to your subscription department, and Bert Chandler if you ever happen to see him...

There you go Bert, a change of address. And there you go sf music lovers — a strong recommendation from the rural charms.

Perry Middlemiss, PO Box 98, Rundle St., Adelaide 5000, Australia. (29/10/78)

N24: David Binler and I seem to agree on rather a lot if I can go by his letter. I can see that there may come a time when the human race, if it wants to stay in the solar system, will have to nudge the sun a little to get it back to the proper state of equilibrium. However, I'd like to see or think that quite a number of experiments had been done elsewhere before the idea was brought that close to home.

N25: sorry if I've put anybody onto a bad bunch by giving the T-K Graphics address, and I'd like to thank Lynne Holdom for putting me straight there. The mail order house I mentioned in that letter was Witter who seems to handle a large selection of T-K Graphics' material. I'd suggest that anyone deals through him.

It seems appropriate that you should be talking about the NZ government banning films; the Queensland government has just banned the Louis Malle film PRETTY BABY which has been rated 'M' by the Commonwealth censors. The Queenslanders have banned films before (after they have been passed by the Commonwealth) but they have all been 'R' rated. I gather Playboy is banned there as well which means that any Queensland fans are going to miss out on Arthur Clarke's next novel which will be serialised there — starting in January I believe.

Thanks for the issues — I find Noumenon very easy to read and, if it arrives at the right time, sure makes my Computing lectures far more interesting.

Did you see the Australian F111 go down near you recently?

No, I didn't see it go down but saw all the hubba-hubba in the papers and the warships and etc. Almost made life exciting!

John Knight, No. 4 RD, Rakaia, Canterbury, New Zealand. (8/12/78)

My congratulations for your substantial efforts with the magazine. May I endorse the remarks a recent correspondent made about the F&SF Book Co. of Staten Island, NY. I've been dealing with them for 12 or more years. I have never had cause for complaint. They seemingly stock everything in Sf/fantasy: their minimal postage charges and their discounts are remarkable and they always airmail advice as to what exactly has been sent.

Best wishes for your continued success with Noumenon.

Jay K. Klein, RD 1, Box 166, Bridgeport, New York, USA. (5/10/78)

Just before the recent IggyCon (worldcon in Phoenix) I received something in the mail from Godzone and couldn't imagine what it could possibly be, unless perchance Piggy was writing to ask my advice on the sheep and kiwi problems threatening the stability of the South Island.

Anyway, it wasn't Muldoon after all, but you folks located Down-Under-And-To-One-Side. I've your pictures in color behind your stall at the UniCon and recall you both very well.

Couldn't answer earlier because first I had to get to the worldcon, get through it, and recover. I'm still recovering.

Oh, you'll be pleased to know, if a bit doubtful, that I no longer limp. Strictly temporary thing put on only to arouse sympathy at UniCon.

Read your con report in Cosmic Kiwi 8. Too short — you didn't even have room to mention me! I just finished writing my second Iggycon report, the first was 1200 words long, as requested, and the second 6000 words (so they asked for 3500, who counts?).

I did one worldcon report running to 15,000 words, and they ran it all — frightening several pregnant women into premature labor and killing half a dozen seabirds circling overhead at the time.

Hey — if you think the UniCon concom were unhelpful, you should have been at the IggyCon! On the other hand, it was a sort of scratch, put together at the last minute bunch, with the original chaps having quit, been fired, or driven bonkers. All in all, we were lucky to have a concom at all, and a con to go with them.

Except for the lameness, I enjoyed myself thoroughly at UniCon. The chairman came by one

8 LETTERS...

time and seeing I couldn't walk, brought me three sandwiches from the park, which I wolfed down, even if one of them was Vegemite. (Fans in the US don't know what Vegemite is, and don't want to know — they prefer axle-grease should be used on axles.) So, Item 6 of your Bill of Particulars should in my case, at least, be modified to "Let them eat Vegemite".

Ah, the hotel did lack something, I agree. It lacked heat, a working lift, an operating restaurant, functioning room service, and such niceties as laundry service. Doesn't the Easter Bunny do anything in Melbourne?

Commenting on Noumenon 22/23, I must say I find the article on the Jojoba Bean fascinating — keep up the good work!

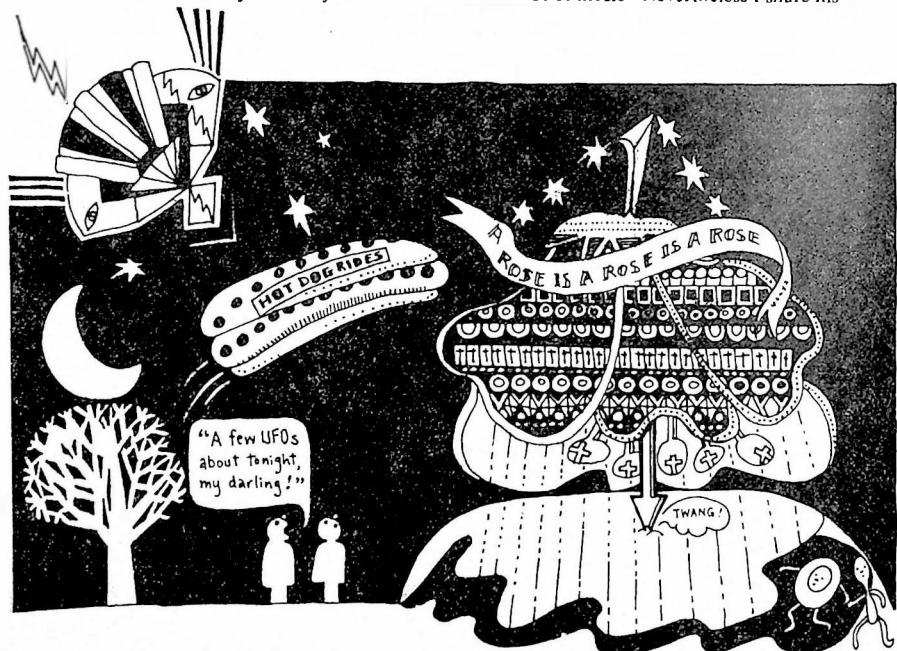
Re Chris Priest's letter and comment anent Sci-Fi, I had lunch at IggyCon with Forry Ackerman, and asked him how it ever had come to him to invent the term. He said it just flashed into his mind — and the rest is history. Even worse, he said he thought of Spy-fi (mystery), Sigh-fi (love stories), and several others even more horrible. And just perchance NZ fans haven't heard, in the US we pronounce sci-fi as "skiffy" to show our justifiable scorn.

Isaac Asimov tells the story that he was called by a magazine editor who said she wanted to contact a sci-fi writer. Isaac said, "Hi. I'm a sci-fi wri. why?" He managed to thoroughly confuse her, especially as he managed to carry on an entire conversation in that style and rhyme.

Michael Newbery, 111 Houghton Bay Road, Wellington 3, New Zealand. (29/10/78)

Well, returning from some O.E. in London I am greeted with the welcome sight of N25, wherein you indulge in the infuriating practice of not merely splitting an article but of putting the second bit immediately before the first. The excellent Mr Wingrove (who may not however be excused the appalling appellation "pomp rock") deserves better.

And so to the latest installment of "A Song . . ." the ambiguously titled '39 from **A NIGHT AT THE OPERA**, with the line "*For the earth is old and grey, to a new home we'll away*" is another example of QUEEN's use of sf imagery. David Wingrove omitted to mention the linkup between Sinfield and ELP: Sinfield contributed to the lyrics on **KARN EVIL 9**. Generally a good overview of this class of music, particularly the observations on the effects of the hardware on the music — but what is with this "trinity of love songs, patriotic protest songs and comic ditties"? The continuing tradition of songs about events probably antedates all others; and there are many more emotions expressed in song than love, patriotism, righteous anger or humour. As for his statement that the "fantastic" song "is only a recent thing. There was nothing comparable before this last decade"; generations of folk singers would disagree with him. Certainly there has been a sudden increase recently of popular (so-called) music with fantastic themes, but either David Wingrove's definitions differ from mine or he is unacquainted with an awful lot of music. Nevertheless I share his



sentiments about the power (often misused, alas) of modern instrumentation. I just don't find its application to 'fantastic' music at all strange.

While in London I saw a demonstration of Teletext — very impressive. Very much a step towards the electronic newspaper (to the disquiet of the common or garden variety) and a truly worthwhile alternative to adverts (which of course doesn't worry the BBC, but may explain a certain lack of enthusiasm from some quarters). Teletext is currently being tested here — try fiddling with the height control on your TV and you can see little bursts of pattern above the picture — that's it folks. When/if we get it is being decided somewhere now.

In reply to Eric Lindsay's letter in N24, the trouble with codes is that one must decide to a large extent everything that may be said using the code at its creation; ciphers are generally less restrictive in message content. Actually the differences between language/code/cipher get a little blurred. With a cipher one establishes an encrypting/decrypting algorithm — which may be represented by machinery and mass-produced — and allows the users to construct their own keys. Such brasts, using the trapdoor functions mentioned, are now being offered. The 'locks' are complicated enough to keep anyone — except the US Security Service — from eavesdropping on your conversation. Why the exception? Seems that 'someone' chose a prime number length which just barely allows the cipher to be broken by 'someone' with huge computing resources. A slightly longer key would have completely removed this possibility and the decision has caused some comment. Remember, you are only paranoid if they are not out to get you!

***I don't know who's out to get who, but Garry Tee sent me a copy of a talk he delivered at the recent ANZAAS Congress wherein he describes the "perfect cryptographic method": "The cipher is commonly referred to as "the Rivest scheme" after the "inventors" Rivest & Shamir & Adleman. Perhaps if you write to Garry he will send you a copy of the paper.*

*Garry also mentioned that ANZAAS 49 was the largest known conference to have been held in NZ, with over 4000 delegates. This science stuff is getting almost as popular as sf! ***

Lyle Craig, 2815 Amarillo, Baton Rouge, LA 70805 USA.

I feel that the cover on N24 is of much better quality than that of N25. First of all while both are of entirely different themes and thus requiring different treatment, the line quality on N25 could have been the equal, at least, of 24 but falls far short.

The cover of 25 is much too busy and confusing. The areas of light and dark are not so well planned either. The only good thing I can say about 25 is that the human figures' positions and anatomy are well done even though their execution is also

too shaky. All in all, a nice attempt but it could have been so much better.

24's cover right away draws my attention and lets me know the artist really took his time in executing this piece. I get a nicer feeling from this one. The drawing is well planned and is quite exciting with all the diagonals going through it. Some workmanship went into this one. Quite interesting. The interior art in both issues is relatively little but relatively nice.

Brian Strong, PO Box 3476, Postal Centre, Wellington, New Zealand. (18/11/78)

When you get time I wonder if you could help me a little further. I don't seem to be able to track down any English sf magazines currently available in Wellington in spite of having done the rounds of the bookshops for several months. I know of the bigger publishers, but can't find any UK equivalents to Analog, F&SF, Amazing Stories, Galaxy, IASF, etc. If there are any available could you just let me know title and distributor and I'll do the rest.

I currently have a few stories in the pipeline and would like to spread them around a bit. They've all (almost all anyway) got a NZ setting so it'll be interesting to see the reaction. This writing is a long painful process: I'm on my sixth re-write of one of them. As nearly all my writing over the years has been for spoken material (radio, radio news, film commentaries, etc.), I've always been used to using only the bare bones and it's been quite a mental wrench using all that beautiful detail I usually have to leave out.

I know your feeling when you say that you sometimes feel there's only one of you. My personal bitch is that there aren't enough hours in the day and sleep uses up so bloody many of them! Also, how dare you mention Summer. To one who has now spent four years of Wellington anti-climate such thoughts are not good to dwell on. Sometimes I wonder if J.G. Ballard ever lived in Wellington to get the idea for **THE WINDS FROM NOWHERE**, or perhaps on Waiheke for **THE DROUGHT**.

A few comments on your editorial remarks about changes in NZ society.

I too have had the same feelings nibbling at the edges of my mind for some time. I haven't resolved quite what they are or exactly what sort of development they'll take. Call it a feeling maybe, but something that shouldn't be shrugged off as inconsequential. I've noticed that this election there's a far greater political awareness over a much broader age group. My daughter's only 15, but for the first time her group have shown an awareness of what's going on and have a pretty fair grip of the whole thing. "Oh, politicians, where is a shroud for your transparencies". There's a changing attitude among people. You find it in shops, party conversation, at coffee breaks and in news trends. The thing that frustrates me is ►

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that I can't yet put my finger on it. Maybe I'm missing some obvious clue, maybe I'm just dumb, but sure as hell I'd like to be able to anticipate it instead of ending up as an "I told you so". Some clues are obvious, like the current birth pangs of the credit card society, but it's the others that elude me.

Sorry, but I don't think there is an English equivalent of Analog, Galaxy, etc. The few attempts over recent years have been more media oriented and most have failed even with such (presumably) wide appeal. So the possibilities of an English fiction sf magazine are slight.

Thomas J. Murn, 434 W. Main St, Belleville, WI 53508. USA. (9/12/78)

The letter from Leigh Edmonds in Noumenon 24 was extremely interesting. What is the diff between true "sf music" and music forwarded to the artist by corrupt A&R people and recorded, with an "SF theme"? 4/4 time features in prominently here. This particular rock beat encapsulates the essence of our wheeled, solenoided, mindlessly-moving society. 4/4 matches nicely with, say, the roar of a Saturn rocket leaving the pad. Electronic diddly jazzings-around will not leave the same sf-related impression on the listener. Perhaps the crucial point of Leigh's letter is when the question is asked: is "tinkering with noise" more relevant, passionate and deep than "experimenting with instruments and musical forms." Much recorded electronic noise, sans appropriate theme and force, is tearfully boring, and as mentioned above, does not have The Beat. The audio excesses of a band like HAWKWIND, T. DREAM or even YES nullify the proper emotions; while, in comparison, even a stupid band like da SABS can inspire the most hardened and demanding critic with a song like *Supernaut* (which contains the great line "I've seen the future and I've left it behind").

Also, one must keep in mind that music is to express music, not words. This is why most sf operas fall flat on their faces. Conclusion: the modern artist must integrate musical messages which carry appropriate feelings with musical poetry that enhances the vision already inherent in today's music listener, who is already sophisticated enough to paint in most of the background of the woven story already. A good musician/writer, just like Tolkien, must learn to depend on the reader or listener for all the sundry imaginative work. Put more simply, one must integrate. This is why, for anyone who doesn't know, Brian Eno is the greatest artist of our age, whether he is working with sf thematics or not. Check out *No One Receiving* from *BEFORE AND AFTER SCIENCE* for one of the all-time most perfect impositions of sf thematics on post rock'n'roll. *No One Receiving* proves that one can use electronics to very good effect in modern music, as long as one does not ignore The Beat.

To finish, regarding the letter from Kerry Doole, in No. 25, given the current general consumer's lack of taste in modern music, I'd rather if the CULT, et al. would stay FAR AWAY from the top-10 vinyl-waster ellpees.

And a thank-you to all at Noumenon who continue the propagation of articles and things on sf music. Would that other zines go your way.

Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave, Prospect Park, PA 19076, USA. (12/12/78)

Just thought I'd drop a note to let you know I got Noumenon 25 today and as usual enjoyed it very much. It is a fine zine. I especially like the letters, book reviews, and FORBIDDEN PLANET review. Of course the news was a bit dated for me, but I imagine you provide a good service for New Zealand and Australian fans.

Now that Karass has folded (you probably haven't gotten the last issue yet — it went out in early November), I'm trying to write more locs to keep getting fanzines. I may eventually put out a personalzine of some sort — I'd like to.

I've been trying to do more professional writing, but I'm very slow. I'm working on two projects now, but they're not coming very fast.

Some good news though. Dell is buying my second book, *THE SPELLSTONE OF SHALITUS*. I don't know all the details, but they may want to change the title. Also, it may come out in hb as well as pb. If so that would be very good. Meanwhile, I've seen the cover painting to the first, *MASTER OF HAWKS*, and it is fairly good. It is by Cintron, whoever that is. *HAWKS* comes out in July. I feel as though I've been waiting for it forever. I don't even remember all the characters' names any more! I'm really anxious for *SPELLSTONE* to come out, as I think it is a much better book than *HAWKS* (that's not to say *HAWKS* isn't good — it is just that I learned a lot in writing it and *SPELLSTONE* is better). Both are science fantasy — right in the Andre Norton, Marion Z. Bradley vein. *SPELLSTONE* is the prequel to *HAWKS* — its heroine is the grandmother of the heroine in *HAWKS*.

I'm afraid I don't have much in the way of news to tell you. Enclosed is a TAFF ballot which you may want to reproduce. The major fannish talk lately has been about SeaCon and the high cost of rooms. I know of at least one person who write asking for a single and was told all the singles in the three main hotel rooms were full, so he was given a double at double rates! With the high prices, many fans are registering in the bed and breakfast hotels, which overall should be a better deal. We sent in our reservation for a b&b and got our first choice right away. It should cost about \$20 for a double/night, instead of the \$50+ it would cost at the Metropole.

Do you think many Aussie and New Zealand fans will go? I don't know what airfares are, but I hope that with the cheaper air fares SeaCon will be one of the most truly international cons in years.

Well take care, and keep up the good work with Noumenon. I really think it is one of the best zines around.

****I don't know of any NZ fen going to SeaCon, but understand charter (or somesuch) trips are being arranged for Aussie devotees.**

Good to hear of your writing successes, and thanks for the kind words re Noumenon. **

David Bimler, 706 Massey Street, Hastings, New Zealand.

Greg Hills Syndrome claims another victim. A few moons ago I wrote to Noumenon explaining just why I would not buy a micro-computer. Then I went out and bought a micro-computer (she is called Teresa - for reasons that shall remain obscure). An apology to Ron Primula.

You have sampled the Niven Pournelle entry into the disaster fiction field? I took the trouble of borrowing **LUCIFER'S HAMMER** from Greg Hills; but I gave him it back - 'twas less impressive than their earlier efforts.

The physics of a comet-strike on Earth seem reasonable (there is little new - it's been covered now for a decade), though I doubt a dispersed strike would trigger geological uproar so thorough. Some might say the impact effects are minimised: alternative theories of comet structure would give a full-size planet-buster, like the Mare Imbrium event (you cowards, quit looking at the sky and go back indoors). New Zealand seems to come out lightly. Like Taupo is a caldera, which has missed a few periods and is overdue for an outburst. It would be an ignimbrite eruption - think of the Mount Pelee eruption. Now scale up that burp to cover most of the North Island (quick! one ticket to the Mainland, and don't bother about the return half!).

But the science in **LUCIFER'S HAMMER** takes second place to a mickle of polemic - from Jerry Pournelle? - for nuclear power and the vital place of high technology in the American lifestyle. This view is heralded throughout the book, and not one character gets to say anything different. I imagine such subversives as the editor and his readers might strongly dissent.

Get by Interloam, if you can, **PROJECT ICARUS** - the MIT report on deflecting asteroids from orbits colliding with Earth. They concluded it could be done with H-bombs and Saturn 5s, then went on to the logistics. Good warning is prerequisite; a matter of years.

Enough of that. Astronomical info from Jon Noble (whatever address he has at the moment) caught my eye. If Pluto indeed passes Neptune orbit on 22 January, I will have a party to welcome it - along the lines of equator-crossing festivities. Charon is quite definite now, and more is known for those turned on by such things.

Charon is relatively large - 800 - 900 km, compared with the new estimated diameter of 2400 km for Pluto. Charon is about 20,000 km out from its primary, and I am converting all this to metrick, letting you convert it all back. Pluto's

rotation and its moon's revolution coincide.

A letter or two earlier in Noumenon 26 were thoughts from RN McLean on Peter Goodfellow's cover art. I don't know about the portrayal of humans, but the landscapes and backgrounds therein seem much in the style of Bosch (the "Garden of Earthly Delights" especially).

Was exposed to **WAR OF THE WORLDS** being played on someone else's stereo (a third person lent the record. Electricity came, via an outrageous one-flex extension cord, from a room a corridor away. Such is university life.). There was general agreement with the Noumenon 25 review. Worth hearing maybe once or twice, but too repetitious repetitious to be worth buying all 4 sides. We were much irked by the art spreads that for Parson Nathaniel was an unashamed rip-off from Dali.

And, now I've wandered myself to the matter of records, let it be proclaimed: "A Song in the Depth of the Galaxy" is a great source of enlightenment. "Flying teapots forever", "Angels' eggs for breakfast", "Robert Frapp is God!": finally I understand these mystic messages on the lecture room desks.

Garry J. Tee, Flat 3, 7 Domain St, Devonport Auckland 9, New Zealand. (21/12/78)

A friend of mine is working on a history of radio astronomy. In 1930, Jansky made the very remarkable discovery that radio noise was coming from outside the solar system - indeed, that it was coming from the direction of the galactic centre. Amazingly enough, that discovery was ignored almost totally by scientists. Indeed, when Jansky died in 1944, exactly one other person had published any observations of extra-terrestrial radio noise. (By now, of course, the situation has changed somewhat).

Although scientists ignored Jansky's discovery during his lifetime the writers of sf did not, and the subject of extra-terrestrial radio noise was commonplace to the fen of the 1930's. For example, some time in the late 1930's, **Thrilling Wonder Stories** (?) published a story **The Cosmic Hiss** by (I think) Robert Moore Williams. (A reference to Donald Tuck's **ENCYCLOPEDIA** should settle that point.) I'd be pleased to learn from your readers of any other mentions of extra-terrestrial radio noise in stories published before 1945. This information would be useful to the author of the forthcoming history of radio astronomy to illustrate the social impact of the development of that completely new branch of science.

****Yes, checking in Tuck would be an easy reference. However, my ordered copy of Volume Two has yet to arrive - 6 months late!*****

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

Quite a few other people and many of those contributions will appear next issue.

Special thanks to John Millard in Canada for another superb and most welcome selection of magazines, including the first two issues of **Omni**. ★

FRANK HERBERT

Continued from Noumenon 26 . . .

David Wingrove: You've admitted you're a Jungian. How do the theories of Freud affect you?

Frank Herbert: Oh, I think Freud had his fixations. Well, so did Jung. And I think these come out in what he believed. I would say that his rejection of Adler², for example, was ill-timed and a mistake on his part.

In what way?

Power seeking power is a very strong motive in our society. Most of the politicians I know are driven by this. It's a flaw in all political systems — that the people who usually get into power want power for power's sake.

As a thing in itself.

Yes. And this is the essential flaw of totalitarian governments.

Their ultimate downfall?

Yes, and the saving grace of a democracy or a republic is that occasionally we can throw the bastards out. And get a new set of bastards (laughs).

Do you think much changes about human nature?

Oh, I think the word "human nature" is a sort of catch-all that doesn't mean too much anymore. The sophistication of the people who observe their own participation in history and the way others perform is increasing. And that certainly must have its influence on whatever we believe is "human nature".

So it's really the recording process that is becoming more sophisticated, not Man himself?

Oh yes. And computers are going to make a quantitative difference in this because they are storage and retrieval systems above all else.

I notice that there's not a great deal of scope for robots in your stories. In Phil Dick's stories, for example, the simulacrum is a standard thing of the future.

I believe we've tried slavery and have found that it is more dangerous to the slave owner than it is to the slave.

And you think that lesson is deep-rooted?

I think it's very deep-rooted, yes. I think there is a hardcore of very sane distrust in most of civilisation towards the free lunch.

Do you think this is a modern thing? Since Roman times, if you like?

I'd say since the Middle Ages. But perhaps it's 12th to 14th Century. Since that time. When you see

factory workers revolting against the automated factory, I think you're sensing this — not that this is going to stop the automated factory, because most factory workers, caught in the clutches of union hyperbole, are going down a primrose path, I believe. That is not going to pay them in the end. They are reducing the quality of what they produce. And this is where the automated factory can beat them. You see what I'm saying? If they let it beat them. *I don't know how it is in America, but in Britain you have this trend now — and it's a small trend, I admit — to go back to hand-made goods.*

It's getting very strong in the US.

As almost a reaction to this.

Of course.

A reaction to the machine age.

To the machine that makes a very nice product that will last quickly

No longer but . . . (both laugh).

And instead you can make one by hand that your great-grandchildren will be passing on to their descendants. We support that sort of thing, personally, my wife and I. We have had our furniture hand-made, for example, by cabinet makers.

You don't like utility living?

I don't feel that I really own anything. I'm a steward of certain things and my stewardship certainly will be judged in the centuries to come not only on the basis of some artistic interpretations of what we've done, but also of how the things endure.

Are you conscious of endurance, as far as being a writer is concerned?

Yes. Also of the extent of time. Take, for example, a science fiction writer who writes a story about 25000 years in the future. In a very real sense, while you're writing that story, you live out there. Then you come back to this time. Well, these are primitive times.

And you react differently? Do you find that?

2500 years ago, if you look back — that was primitive times, wasn't it? All present time is primitive in terms of this kind of time development.

Do you get a personal sense of that in your own writing?

Oh yes, very much so.

When you look out of the window and see petrol driven cars.

Oh, indeed. Quite primitive. At least, the conditions around me are quite primitive.

It's an amusing concept.

And not only amusing. I think it's quite accurate. If you could be transported back, let's say, five thousand years, what would you find around you? See, you've lived here now — how old are you?

Twenty-three.

Right. You've lived here for twenty three years. You go back five-thousand years. What would you find around you?

It's very hard to visualise.

² Alfred Adler was an Austrian psychiatrist (1870–1937) who was at first closely associated with Freud but later split to form his own school of psycho-analytic thought, rejecting Freud's views on infantile sexuality and proposing his own views on infant inadequacy and the drive to overcome such. In his view this drive formed personality and life-style and was the basis of neurosis. Adler is also a progenitor of the theories of Penis Envy.

Primitive times! Very much so. You wouldn't have any indoor plumbing. No medical facilities as you understand them. Your food would be catch-as-catch-can probably.
In fact, I don't know whether you've heard of it, but they had an experiment down in Devon . . .
 Oh, I know about this. The primitive-living experiment?
That's it, the Bronze-Age one. And they've all fled back to their comforts after a while.
 Of course. I know of such an experiment in the United States where the people cheated. They took canned goods (both laugh).



Perhaps that's something we haven't discovered about the bronze age yet.
 I don't think bronze cans would work very well.
How in fact do you see the future in personal terms, not just in fictional terms – or perhaps it's the same thing for you? Is what is in your books the way you visualise the future?

I keep looking for surprises. And I know I'll find them.

You haven't actually sat down to set out the model in your head of what's going to happen?

Oh no, because I think that's another dead end. There is no such thing as the future. That's a Protestant delusion because it says that predestination is it, you see. It's the future and all we're doing is waiting for it to happen.

You're very much an advocate of free-will then?

Well, in a sense, yes. But more, I would say, an advocate of the accidents of the universe. I really do believe that we live in an Einsteinian and Heisenbergian universe, where relativity is the name of the game. Not fixed courses – we are *not* on a railroad track.

And do you think the rules will ever change?

Oh, indeed, I think rules will change. You see, it is asking for absolutes when you say "rules".

Hmm. It's very much against what the universe is about.

Yes, of course.

A thought, here, in fact, which was spawned by something I read in THE DOSADI EXPERIMENT, about getting down to what things actually are and people defining things. When they actually define "that's how an atom moves", "that's the pattern of something", do you ask the question then "why does it do that?"

Of course, you must. I think that absolutes always occur in very isolated circumstances. The single rule to explain everything means you're very localised. You haven't moved out into a broader universe. And the same thing is true of what we usually call 'scientific progress'. When we discover something – the way an atom moves or the way the DNA molecule spirals round – what we've done essentially is open up a new door on things we don't know.

And people crowd into the room and explore it?

Yes.

Do you think that will be the continuing pattern of scientific development?

I don't see how it can help but be. That's the way the universe plays its game.

Every sixty years people will channel their thoughts into certain dead-ends and then someone will break out into another room?

Well, I don't know that I'd put a sixty year beat on it, because I think the beat is different. But the universe continually surprises us, in the sense that things are not what we thought they were a generation ago.

Have you ever thought of writing a novel on that idea?

I use this – I think it's an insight – regularly, but I haven't thought of doing just that, because I think that again is an idea that you would have to people with interesting people and flesh out in dramatic ways, and that changes the character of it, you see.

But the idea is in the back of your head?

Well, ideas are a dime a dozen. Ideas don't make ▶

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stories. People make stories.

Do you find, then that you – you've said already that you have files on characters – sit down and look at several files and say "these are the people I've got..."

When I said that I meant I will have the concept of a story, the broad concept, the structure, and then I people it.

But you never find you have odd characters?

Left over? Oh, no.

You never get a character developing in mind without a story to go with it?

No. Because I build the characters for the story and the story for the characters. It's an interesting situation.

Going back to what we were saying earlier. How do you react to Toffler?

The voice crying in the wilderness. **FUTURE SHOCK** is, I'm sure, what you're meaning. Well, Toffler, I think, has put his finger on a human characteristic which, at its core, we usually call 'conservatism'. Now conservatism is bred in the bone – and I think for very good survival reasons. It didn't do to go out and pick any fruit you saw in the forest and eat it because the damn thing might be poisonous. But somehow we learned this was poisonous, that not, this cures gastritis and this gives you visions of God... (laughs).

Or visions of what God isn't...

Or makes you drunk. We've done this with a sort of toe-in-the-water conservatism all through human history.

And hence get these sharp reactions against it.

Yes.

Like the youth movements of the sixties.

That, I think, is the essence of what Toffler is talking about when he talks about 'future shock'. So, what he is talking about, basically, is something that's always been there?

Yes, that's right. There's always been 'future shock'. Yet it moves. (laughs)

Jumping a bit. You say you like poetry, you like reading (though not particularly fiction books). Do you get involved very much in other art forms?

Music?

Yes...

Do you paint?

No, no. I was a professional photographer and still know quite a bit about it, although I'm probably ten years out of date with some of the developments, because I haven't kept it up. I'm interested in visual arts – other people's painting and so on. I like nothing better than to get in a good coffee house with a good poetry reading.

Have you found any while you've been over in London?

Not yet. I haven't, no. But I haven't really had too much spare time. It's usually work all day on the script.

Do you take lengthy holidays at times?

Oh, I've been known to take a month off or so...

And what do you like doing in your spare time?

Fishing. Sailing. I love to race a sailboat. A great sport. I also like to fly an airplane – that sort of thing. And I think one of the things I'm going to pick up on in the next few years is sail-planing. I've already had some instruction in it. I'll get my ticket and do it. I feel every ten years you should pick up something new.

And get deeply involved in it?

It's what you should do. Kind of renew your ability to adjust to the marvellous things that are around us in this civilisation.

Have many things over the last ten years or so genuinely surprised you in that way? Anything that's come along, out of the blue?

No. I'm afraid not. But I keep hoping.

Have you ever found that after a while your wonder at the world begins to diminish? Or does it, in fact, increase?

Oh, no, no. Because I am continually surprised by people and their wonderful inter-actions and by the permutations of society – that sort of thing. I did an extensive journalistic trip through the commune movement in the US and marvelled at it.

Did part of that go into the novel HELLSTROM'S HIVE?

Well, it's hard to say that it did and hard to say that it didn't. I don't consciously recall ever mining that, no. But we're all products of what we learn, you know.

Do you ever find yourself recognising things – first of all, perhaps, do you ever re-read your stuff very much...?

Not very much, no. Not unless I'm going to do a sequel and need to get into the beat of it – which I did with **DOSADI** of course. I read **WHIPPING STAR**. In fact, I went right back through the Jorj McKie file for that. But that's to build the kind of verisimilitude that the surround has. It's necessary for a story. It has to happen sometimes.

And do you recognise parts of your previous self when you do that? Can you see certain of your earlier characteristics?

Oh yes, partly. I don't know of a writer who wouldn't like to go back to some of his work and re-write it. In fact, I've recently had the pleasure of doing that. You see, what's happening here is that I'm writing a sequel to a book and it deals with a previous book – so I don't like to talk about it too much. Collect the energy that's going into the book, you see. If I talk about it I use that up on the tape.

And do you find the books that you read influence what you're writing at the time?

Oh, I'm sure they do. Why wouldn't they? If you gain something from what you read...

You assimilate it all into the mix.

Of course. We stand on each other's shoulders, and on the shoulders of history, I'm sure that's true. And always have done. Have you any final questions?

I don't think there are any final questions. At least, I've not prepared any.

That's true. ★



VIEWED FROM ANOTHER SHORE

Rollo Treadway discusses
SF Art and Illustration

December/January is traditionally the time when book publishers release their largest range of "coffee-table" titles and this year has been no exception. At present, fans of sf/fantasy art possibly have the finest and largest selection of titles so far available in this field and, for once, the choice is rather difficult.

I've been awaiting **MECHANISMO** by Harry Harrison (Pierrot/Big O) for a while now and I must admit to being a fraction disappointed with the final volume. It's the **GREAT BALLS OF FIRE** format again; Harry Harrison supplies the commentary for what is essentially an sf art book. This time the theme, as the title suggests, is sf hardware.

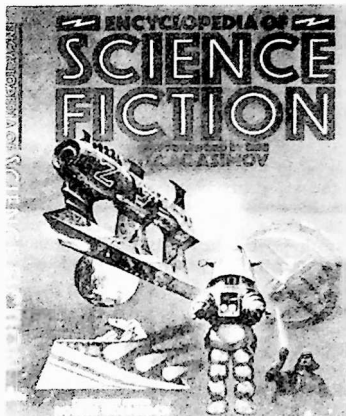
The book presents some lovely artwork, no doubt about that, it's just that there is not much great work here. For a book that begins with a fascinating theme, **MECHANISMO** concentrates rather dangerously on two artists' work, Jim Burns and Angus McKie, at the expense of other more obvious talents. A small carp perhaps, but a fault which, if overcome, would have produced a much improved addition to my sf art library.



HARRY HARRISON

MECHANISMO

Fantasy artwork is currently where most of the action is happening these days. But before that I must mention **THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION** by Robert Holdstock (Octopus). Essentially what the title suggests, this book also just happens to publish some of the best sf/fantasy artwork available these days from both sides of the Atlantic. In fact, as far as art goes, I feel this is the best cross-section of work I have so far seen. Each chapter has been prepared by different specialists and the art section, by David Hardy, is again one of the best I have so far seen. Check this volume out — it's the first in the field to transcend its limitations.



And now the fantasy. Frank Frazetta can usually be relied upon to produce a fairly interesting volume, but **FRANK FRAZZETTA Volume Three** (Peacock Press/Bantam) is a great disappointment. The format is the same as earlier volumes, a short introduction by Betty Ballantine (this time entirely superfluous) and then it's over to the paintings. Only this time there just aren't that many paintings. Discounting those already available on the 1978 calendar, what's new here can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Instead, we have pages and pages of black and white illustrations and doodlings which, in the words of the already-mentioned Betty Ballantine, 'one can see the genius of those characteristics that are a hallmark of his work'. Unfortunately, 'characteristics' do not make a successful book on sf/fantasy art. Peacock Press/Bantam Books could do better publishing artwork from other perhaps less 'famous' artists who are far more deserving of recognition than FF's 1953 doodlebook!

I've mentioned Jim Fitzpatrick and his **CELTIA** in an earlier column. His new work, **THE BOOK OF CONQUESTS** (Paper Tiger) is, well, more of the same. Fitzpatrick I feel is very much an acquired taste, so you will either like this volume or it will pass you right by. I rather like it. Fairly evenly divided between text and art, **TBOC** is a

16 ANOTHER SHORE...

delight to browse through, and while I haven't had much of a chance to devour all the text yet (some of us have to work too, you know!) the art is very impressive. Fitzpatrick delights in rich, heavily detailed border surrounds which often dominate pages entirely. But here, on every page of the book, these ornate borders produce an unusual continuity and flow unlike anything I've yet seen elsewhere, even in his earlier *CELTIA*. This, in addition to the full colour throughout, produces an excellent first impression which will, I'm sure, be maintained with further immersion.

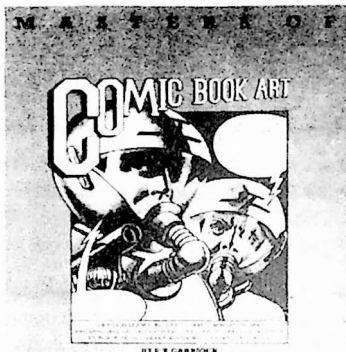
Chris Achilleos is a name that pops up regularly in this column, and *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* (Paper Tiger) is his first collection of fantasy art. While not a major innovator in the field, Achilleos has produced some rather fine paperback covers, and all of those are included. But it's the lovely ladies which catch the eye here. In a twenty-odd page section at the centre of the book are a selection of grossly sexist paintings which I certainly haven't seen on the covers of any paperbacks, and it is here that the artist displays a clarity in both design and execution lacking elsewhere within this volume. Nice stuff these, and they would make some very popular posters too!

The comic field has not missed out on the pre-Christmas publishing boom either. Two books by the Frenchman Philippe Druillet have finally seen the light of day in English, and these will be a delight to those who follow his work in the American magazine *Heavy Metal*. Both *LONE SLOANE/DELIRIUS* and *YRAGUEL/URM* (both *Dragons Dream*) have seen the light of day before in HM or its French counterparts *Metal Hurlant* and *Pilote*, and both are worthy additions to any comic fan's library. While Druillet's stories are not perhaps the greatest comic works, his artwork is the greatest strength and is, as always, a delight to look at.

Druillet works not in the usual frame-to-frame comic narrative form, but in a splashy page-to-page style all his own in which colour and an immense amount of detailing are predominant factors. He

might not be the world's greatest comic artist but he can certainly hold the attention of the viewer. One hopes, however, that he is not to get more of the overexposure already apparent at the expense of other worthy comic artists.

Do I hear you ask "what artists?" Well, take a look at *MASTERS OF COMIC BOOK ART* (Aurum Press/Big O) by P.R. Garriock, which is I feel the best introduction to the modern comic



form that I have seen yet. Garriock (who, you may ask is P.R. Garriock... I don't know. He is a lecturer in art who has written one other volume on comic art which I have never seen) has chosen ten talents in the field, all notable for some major contribution to the field, and written a short introduction to each to accompany a portfolio of their work.

Obviously, with this type of approach the choice of just who should be included is of paramount importance, and here I certainly cannot fault the author. Included are: Will Eisner (*Spirit*), Harvey Kurtzmann (*EC Comics* artist/editor, *Little Annie Fanny*), Frank Bellamy (a major *Eagle* artist, *Garth*), Richard Corben (*Rolf*, *Den*,



etc.), Barry Windsor-Smith (Conan), Jean Giraud (Lieutenant Blueberry, all Moebius work), Philippe Drulillet (see above), Wallace Wood (EC Comics artist who has done almost anything since the 1950's), Robert Crumb (the most famous of the US underground artist/writers in case you didn't know), and Victor Moscoso (the most unusual of the US underground artists). Any complaints? I certainly haven't got any, and I couldn't recommend this book more to anyone interested in comics. Rather surprisingly, Garriock's introductions are short, concise, intelligently written, and seemingly unbiased towards any one field of comic specialisation. And the above ten certainly are responsible for a remarkable diversification of comic work and styles. Each is certainly a great in his respective area and Garriock is to be commended for bringing them together under one cover.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to a new edition of a book mentioned earlier, Harry Harrison's **GREAT BALLS OF FIRE**. This is a straight reprint of the Pierrot edition with just a new logo and publishing info added. It is now locally available in a Penguin edition and I would like to quote from my original review in *Nooumenon* 19 (page 18) before closing this column.

"The written material is lightweight to an extreme, the illustration captions repetitive and rather nebulous, and so it is left to the illustrations to carry much of the reader's attention. But this they certainly do! Delightfully crossing the rather artificial barrier dividing sf illustration from comic strips, Harrison has chosen a remarkable array of material to highlight his text.

Illustrations are presented from such far-flung sources as sf magazines from all ages, American comics, and *Metal Hurlant/Heavy Metal*. The latter publication especially has provided several outstanding pieces of art by Drulillet and Moebius.



two brilliant sf comic writers and artists who I hope to mention in later columns. Overall,

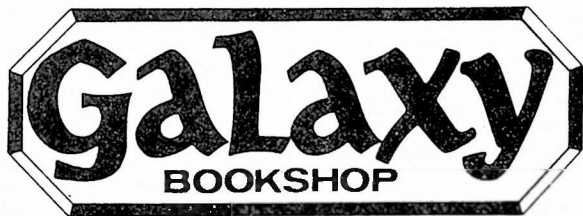
GREAT BALLS OF FIRE is a very good publication but, like most coffee-table books, eventually somewhat lightweight. With perhaps a little more work on the written text (and a bit more information supplied in the illustration captions) it could have been an excellent publication. It still remains a visual delight."

—Rollo Treadway

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BROAD MOONLIGHT

AN OCCASIONAL COLUMN by PETER GRAHAM (NZ)

Did I tell you that A.W. Reed, NZ publisher, was a fan? "My favourite author was Edgar Rice Burroughs, recently rediscovered by a new generation of science fiction fans. Although I enjoyed the Tarzan romances, it was the Martian stories which really seized my imagination. I read and re-read them -- **THE SANDS OF MARS** and **THUVIA MAID OF MARS** -- and all the rest, kindling a passion for science fiction which burns nearly as strongly today as it did then"

That, error and all in title of work is to be found on page 19 of his **BOOKS ARE MY BUSINESS**.

Incidentally, whatever happened to Richard H. Harding the West Australian fan whose name I saw in a 1957 zine? He had read sf since 1926, lived at 38 Central Avenue, Maylands, Western Australia, and must surely have left some fannish trace if he wrote to a prozine then.

A quote or two from **THE USES OF LITERACY**, Richard Hoggarth, for you -- he says sf appeals to "adolescents of below the average intelligence and for others who, for one reason or another, have not developed or do not feel themselves adequate." He offers parodies of other pop literature but not sf, so I deduce he didn't actually read it, since he says of it, "This is 'sex stuff' with zip-fasteners instead of the old-fashioned blouses and skirts; vicarious fornication (with no details) on a spaceship moving between Mars and Venus." How can you have sex stuff without any details at all has me somewhat puzzled? I suspect he deduced the sex from the cover pictures only. Such is criticism!

I occasionally find bits about sf in the unlikelyst sources: "The literature of science fiction, often written as a sideline by scientists themselves, preceded as well as followed the actual progress of space exploration. But it reached its full development only after actual achievements in this direction had been attained. Its real importance is not the occasional anticipation of scientific or technical discoveries, but the fulfillment of the desire of man to transcend the realm of earthbound experiences, at least in imagination. The so-called "Gothic" novel did this with the help of supernatural, divine and demonic interferences in the natural process of life, and the spiritualistic novel did it through the use of psychic phenomena which appeared as neither ambiguously natural nor unambiguously supernatural. Science fiction, especially if connected with space exploration, transcends the bondage to Earth by imagining encounters with natural but trans terrestrial beings. Mythological as well as psychic supernaturalism are replaced by a trans terrestrial naturalism. . . . The beings imagined are either glorified or vilified duplications of the human figure (angels and heavenly saints or demons and inmates of hell), or they are combinations of

elements by which the human figure is distigured, as in science fiction. . . . The imagined worlds are constructed with parts or elements of Earthly experiences, even if these experiences are religious or artistic."

Guess who wrote that?

Paul Tillich, in 1963, for **THE GREAT IDEAS TODAY**. A theologian's eye on sf. If I follow him properly he regards Gothics and what we'd call "occults", plus sf, as myth substitutes and an expression of the same urge to otherness as religion. In the case of sf the basic claim is that you can have otherness in a comprehensible universe -- a denial of the horror film cliché "there are some things man was not meant to know". That always annoys hell out of me -- knowledge is neutral, the use of it may be good or bad depending on intent. Lack of knowledge is dangerous and kills people e.g. not knowing that the diving reflex operated in humans we have not revived folk who could have recovered after long immersions -- this may remain true until the news creeps down to first aid level).

Anyway, it seems to me he has only part of the story about sf. The basis of science is that you treat ideas of how the universe operates as tools to allow prediction and control of events, and you deliberately hurry up the change to more useful world-views by experiment, looking for the cases where one is not useful any more. Before you can do this you need to be aware of the existence of alternatives, and of the temporary nature of all.

Science is also the process of selecting world views for predictive control of natural uses. A non scientific selection could be to change world views for purely aesthetic reasons or to find the one which gives you the most creativity, or the most control over yourself; traditionalists don't change theirs at all.

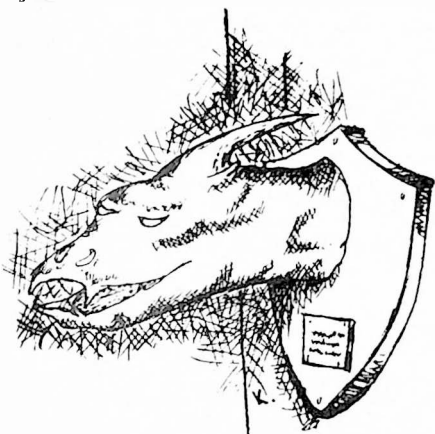
Sf is the literature that increases awareness of the existence of alternatives, deals with changes of world-view and reactions to this, and covers the changes produced by such enhanced prediction or control of nature. Naturally it is largely future-oriented literature.

And now for a crazy Graham hypothesis. As you know religious cults create statuettes of their gods. If we postulate a very old cult that, just as imitation Yeti scalps got made in Nepal, made up symbolic analogs of their aim, men as much at home in the sea as on land, then you can account for some strange items. Like the myriad of fake mermaid bodies -- and the simple ritual of dressing up in fish tail flotation sacks one floated in precarious balance above. (Cf. the Leopard men of Africa). Now look at the known evidence for merfolk (I claim it is just as good as that for UFOs until recently).

A classical quote from Pilny: "They have seene a Mere-man, in every respect resembling a man as

perfectly in all parts of the bodie as might bee." Echoed by Olaus Magnus with: "There be also Sea-men of an absolute proportion in their whole body: these are sometimes seene to clime up the ships in the night times." And by Andre Thevet in his **THE NEW FOUND WORLDE** as: "A sea monster having the shape of a man, that the floud had left on the shore, the which was heard to crie."

Thus, the case of one Francesco de la Vega, born 1657 at Lierjanes, who disappeared, was thought drowned and was much later netted by fishermen playing dolphin offshore. Returned home he finally returned to his ocean-living customs, being seen at a distance by fishermen who could not net him again.



And how is such oceanic life possible? Maybe some trick of respiration — seaweeds like the Scottish redware have been eaten raw, shellfish dived for, and fish caught — and perhaps once people contracting ichthyosis and getting scales on their skins might have interpreted it as kinship with the fishes. (Hell, King James once exposed a lady who claimed to have given birth to rabbits, as I recall, tho', not being checked, I can't guarantee that.) Big problems for truly oceanic living are sleep and drink.

Anyhow, I'd like to think it might come true if it isn't, and that one day people might go to sea living. I suspect what with silicone breasts being added by cosmetic surgery that the provision of, say, a couple of breast floats permanently affixed in the body could offset any sinking force. And plastic surgery is quite old in some fields.

Of course, what with the Yoga posture called The Fish being explicitly meant for floating meditation, and the Yoga emphasis on breath control, particularly the long suspension of breathing, there is always the chance, I suppose. Maybe Merfolk are the practising extremists of an old, old cult. I get a certain pleasure from the hypothesis.

And now a hitherto secret fact about dragons: while looking up the details of Hop Gar kung-fu I discovered that dragons are graded by the number of their digits — 5 clawed dragons are reserved as symbols of the Emperor, 4 clawed dragons for lesser royalty and 3 clawed for bureaucrats and like officials. Dragons are given the eastern quadrant of the sky in China — now the Dragon king of myth lives under the sea. Perhaps a species of *Draco volans* (the lizard with 5 to 6 ribs, extending wings of folded membrane to glide on — Greg's only living, but non-venomous, dragon relative) returned to the sea like the poisonous sea-snakes did. The rippling of rib wings might propel them through the sea like the snakes and give them take-off speed like flying fish for long glides. Thus, I feel Greg may be on the right track.

By the way, Alan Dean Foster has informed me that the minidrag, Pip, on the US cover of **ORPHAN STAR** was done on the basis of his own sketch and truly gets the pleated wings he intended right.

Did you see the Forum issue that had an extract from **ASTRA AND FLONDRIX** in it. All you want to know about the copulation of elves, and gee, would you believe some humans have double vaginae — try a horror called "Sexual Stimulation in Marriage" by Tuffin for an account of one such — and some have double penises? Maybe there is elvish blood in a few of us after all.

See Sagan thinks if a third moon of Mars should ever be found it ought to have a pacificist name like Pax. Hasn't anyone told him that Phobos and Deimos had a sister with just the kind of name he wants? Harmonia (meaning "concord") was a product of the same adulterous Ares/Aphrodite union. She married the hero Cadmus and still lives with him, happy ever after, according to Greek myths. Of course, Su-shu Huang — once wrote a paper on how to shift asteroids into orbit about Earth, and maybe some day we can expect an Anglo-French "concord" or larger scale to orbit Mars — perhaps only a super-sized Echo satellite, the largest balloon in the system, or a time capsule repository. Not a new idea in satellites that last. Lageos, a 60 cm diameter satellite now orbiting earth, has some odd world maps stored in it — one for now, and 2 hypothetical maps, one showing the Earth of 225,000,000 years ago and the other a geologist's guess of the world as it will be 8,400,000 years from now after due continental drift.

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****This is a free column to readers of Noumenon. Please feel free to use it.****

A Song In The Depth Of The Galaxies

(xv) Hartz Wlasik Kobaia . . .

A glance at the covers (if you are lucky enough to find all of them in any single store) will indicate something to the attentive; the six-spiked hemisphere, threatening, the devil's sign? Invert your conception of the hodge and there is the single shaft, like a rocket ship, its flames threatening to engulf the fragile needle. MAGMA is a conception so intricate that it would need an article this size again to even scrape the surface. Born in the mind of Christian Vander, the saga now spans five albums and looks likely to continue for some time longer. And what is MAGMA besides being a French rock band of solid core and constantly shifting peripheral membership? MAGMA is the performance on Earth of the THEUSZ HAMTAAHK, that already prophesied by Nebehr Gudahti; the judgment of Humanity for "all its cruelty, its dishonesty, its uselessness, its vulgarity and its lack of humility". A tall order indeed. It would need a new order of musicians to bring such a grand project to fruition. MAGMA is the vehicle by which that is achieved.

In concert there is a ritualistic feel from the start, an atmosphere of ceremonial cleansing. The powerful drumming of Vander pushes the massive wheels around and the juggernaut builds up speed. Showmen in the negative sense, MAGMA are electronic priests, telling us what has already happened. And who could deny the credibility of the vision. I'll tell you the story.

Mankind exceeds even John Brunner's worst predictions and man falls into utter degradation. But before the total collapse a few men object and build their own starship. They escape Earth Space Control and eventually discover the planet Kobaia, where they establish a utopia in perfect harmony with nature; a lengthy but successful

venture, incorporating technology and nature in mutually beneficial ways. Then, in the best tradition of sf, they forget (or neglect to remember) their origins and are only reminded when years pass and an Earth spacecraft gets into trouble over Kobaia. The Kobaiaans learn of the sad fate of Earth, a series of massive cyclical disasters, and a few of them decide to go back and convert them in the truest missionary sense. This much is covered by the first of MAGMA's albums, recorded in 1970, a double album of searing power and disturbing musical imagery.

Then, as told on MAGMA's second album, 1001 DEGREES CENTIGRADE, they arrive on Earth to seemingly friendly greetings but their zeal to create a better mankind is seen as a threat and they are imprisoned and their ship impounded. A message is sent to Kobaia however and a showdown results in the Earth authorities backing down against



DIE ANYONE REMEMBER

Kobaia's stronger military power. But the seed has been shown on Earth that will later come to full blossom when the Kobaiaans (who have left Earth in disgust) return many years later.

MEKANIK DESTRKTIW KOMMANDOH is the third album and undoubtedly the most powerful thematically and musically. It tells of the prophet Nebehr Gudahti who sees the only means of purifying the race as the path of self-sacrifice. This of course is not what people want to hear. They like simpler solutions like tax cuts and new hospitals. They revolt en masse against him, declaring that he is a ruthless tyrant. But the Universal Spirit, acting in its own inexplicable manner, leads them to a state of grace, turning their march of hate into a march of spiritual realisation as they enter eternity.

The solution sounds too glib, too mystical a solution, but in the context of what has gone before and what follows (the albums KOHNTARKOSZ and TRISTAN ET ISEULT and the live album) it has a very potent credibility. The vision is macroscopic, as was Olaf Stapledon's in STAR MAKER and FIRST AND LAST MEN. It succeeds because of the monomania of MAGMA and their obsessive

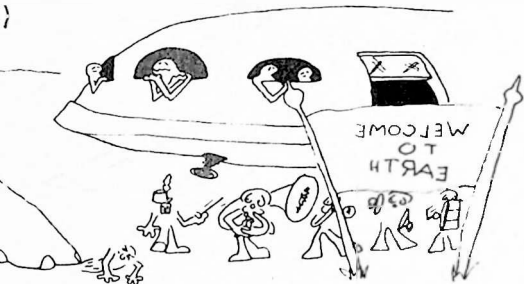
by
David
Wingrove

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

tapestry of sound.

Having commented upon the story that runs throughout THEUSZ HAMTAHAK I must comment on the actual music itself, for there is no one to compare to MAGMA musically. Their sound is derived from diverse and unconnected sources. From the very beginning it has been highly complex, utilising irregular time signatures that emphasise the stop-start nature of the narrative. Vander comes from the jazz school of influences and before MAGMA was a respected jazz session man, though he uses the rock idiom as if to the manner born. To speak of their sound in comparison to the MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA or Chick Corea is not overestimating the content, and says little for the skilful use of dynamics MAGMA make.

The use of a standard electronic/brass line-up (i.e. without moogs, synthesisers, etc.) would



TO BRING THE SAUCE?

seem very confining in the light of what I have previously said, but MAGMA overcome this with their use of dynamic rhythms and semi-operatic, repetitious and highly-stylised vocals. And the vocals are a crucial difference for they are all totally in Kobaian, a complex bastardisation of several European tongues into a single teutonic-sounding language that is easier on the ears than Esperanto. These harsh vocal sounds emitted in staccato fashion above a driving electronic pulse can conjure unpleasant comparisons (Nazi rallies, the rumblings of war machinery past government building...). But as every passage is illustrative of the plot the accusation that could be levelled at Bowie cannot be raised here. The message is that Mankind is ugly, but also that he can be saved.

The first album (the double) is a very open-ended work, the most relaxed of them all, describing as it does the Kobaian's attempts to harmonise with their new world; their successes and failures. Only occasionally does it develop into the densely-structured pattern of the later albums. There is no single dominant style as is marked on the

later movements and yet there is a steadily growing atmosphere throughout the four sides. The ten "songs" into which the album is divided are each tiny dramas, with several moods illustrated and created within a short space of time (as with the basically gentle Nau Ektila which describes nature's acceptance of Humanity on Kobaia). This vivid use of a musical chiaroscuro allows the full expression of very subtle mood changes and builds upon our suspension of reality.

1001 DEGREES CENT GRADE is a much more traditional album than any of the others with its strong brassy musical feel, but it utilises all the techniques first shown on MAGMA in a much ordered manner. It is a highly instrumental work which mixes highly pleasant themes with their opposites in short and sharp order. The result is a very good album with strong jazz tendencies. The long track on side 1, Riah Sahiltaahk, hints at what is to follow with stabbing, ever-changing rhythms that build up and die in rapid succession.

MEKANIK DESTUKTIW KOMMANDOH is MAGMA at its best. There are few as impressive opening pieces as Hertz Fur Dehn Stekeln West. Drums, bass and electric piano play out a three note sequence in powerful, machine-like manner whilst masculine voices half-sing, half-chant in Kobaian. The atmosphere deepens as brass chords thunder in over the top, joined by a choir of voices singing a repetitive line that grows and grows to a climax. It is the people of Earth marching in their hatred against Nebehr Guddahit, and as the music progresses and the urgency does not diminish by one iota it must be realised that Vander has successfully crossed rock with opera for the first time ever. The interplay of male and female voices, the repetitions of single lines (often up to eight or twelve times) and the infusion of standard MAGMA time sequences needs at least three or four listenings to appreciate the full depth. I have yet to read of a more futuristic music in any sf story:

"Wi wi ess wi wi uss uss wi wi ess ess wi sun wi sun (x12)

Wi wi ess ess wi we uss uss wi wi ess ess wiwidondai (twice).

Over the repetitious chords rise and fall, guitars and drums improvise, and all the while there is Christian Vander pushing the rhythm section along at a breathtaking pace. MEKANIK lives up to its name in its mechanical approach. But it is hardly sterile; emotion oozes from start to finish, unswelled by any overbrashness of delivery.

Whilst KOHNTARKOSZ is lesser album than its predecessor MEKANIK, it is nevertheless an admirable achievement. The music shows a maturity and a new confidence but lacks rather the complexity and vitality. There are no marvelous operatic choruses and the scene of the action is back on Kobaia, hence the more relaxed, jazzier atmosphere. The musicianship is first class; in this respect MAGMA are the inferiors of no one. The two sections of the title track, which ▶

22 A SONG...

takes up all but ten minutes of the album, evidence a new approach; still vigorous and intense but far less dense in texture. It is a further demonstration of MAGMA's willingness to experiment with tonal sounds, especially with vocal textures. Of the two short tracks on this 1974 album only *Ork Alarm* truly deserves mention with its horrific vision of an invading force... perhaps the next MAGMA album will deal with this. (The people of Ork are marching on the people of Zeuhl Wortz, the former being made of matter which "to the machines is what the machines are to man".)

The double live album was, like *HAWKWIND's* "best of" album, unexpected, but even if it falls outside the steady development it is a fascinating documentary of MAGMA's diversity and musical ability.

TRISTAN ET ISEULT (based around the medieval love story) was the soundtrack for a film and was released under Vander's sole name, although the music is certainly from the *THEUSZ*.

You should leave the best until last, I've always been told. MAGMA are the best we have to offer at this time; they are unique. MAGMA have continued on an unswerving course for six years, forging their own musical direction (and it occurs to me that most of the "advanced" rock groups are a year or so behind what MAGMA were producing in 1970...) and making their obsession seem credible. Perhaps they are too clever to attain popular recognition; like sf they will remain obscure because most people want the mundane, the simplistic, the unimaginative.

I began this piece with the intention of indicating what there is in the way of sf music and must end with an attempt to justify my choices here, to define my interpretation of sf music. I have tried to tie in literary references where they occurred and where they were not too obscure, but a literary definition will not do because this is the newest of the genre's children and, as such, is still riddled with cliché and muddled fifties thinking (like the movies until very recently!).

Sf music calls upon the vocabulary of the genre and uses that vocabulary for the same purpose (i.e. "Fly Me To The Moon" is not an sf song!). Sf music uses the electronic tools of our advanced technology to create futuristic sound landscapes,

projected musical atmospheres (and not catchy pop tunes...). Sf music proposes alternative states suspended realities if you like - to the everyday mundane world. It does much more, of course. No one has defined sf properly and I think no one will. I'll not try to go beyond a brief outline of what I see it to be in musical terms.

It might be argued that some of the philosophical



bands, YES, MOODY BLUES and Beefheart had little right to be represented here. You could dismiss a reasonable percentage of modern sf writers for the self-same reasons. Sf has escaped the bondage of the machine world; we live and work in the machine world. Sf has to look elsewhere these days for that sense of wonder, and so too does music. I feel the best of sf music is yet to come as techniques improve and a second generation of musicians arrives on the scene. I personally would like to see this proliferation of distorted mirrors; an expansion of the grandiose musical images we have only recently been granted. ★

Noumenon extends its grateful thanks to David and the BSFA for permission to reprint his article. It has been quite well received in the main, has led to many letters, and has been very informative. ★

AUSTRALIAN

SF

NEWS

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FRED'S FILM NOTES

Noumenon 26 just appeared in the mailbox. I was amazed and honored to find that I've been promoted from a letterhacker to a columnist. I shall try to keep you supplied with film information.

Ralph Bakshi's **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** has now been out for about two weeks. The public doesn't seem to know what to make of it. I was privileged to see an advance premiere screening a couple of days before the general release. The reaction was rather striking. There was some perfunctory applause at the end, but people immediately began turning to each other and saying such things as: "Do you think people who haven't read the book will understand what's going on?" "The story is good but the animation is horrible!" "The action scenes were exciting but I couldn't tell which side was which or why they were fighting."

In other words, the general opinion seems to be hesitantly favorable, but everyone has serious reservations about one or more aspects of the film. It's clear that Bakshi knows and loves Tolkien's saga of Middle Earth, so any problems are not due to his not taking it seriously. The Tolkien fans, who are the main group who have rushed to see it immediately, seem disposed to accept the film as an honest effort made in good faith.

The most successful things about **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** are the excellent dialogue and characterization, the heroically realistic art style (much better than the comic-book imagery of **WIZARDS**), and the usually constant mood of dramatic tension, broken with occasional bits of intelligently-applied comic relief. The story is, of course, horribly compressed and abbreviated. Most scenes appear to gallop by in a few seconds. When the pacing does slow down to present a scene in what seems like normal timing (such as Frodo's confrontation with the Ringwraiths at the Ford), it feels very slow-moving in comparison.

The abridging and rushed production schedule have left some notable errors in continuity. In the scene in which Gandalf reveals the Ring's true nature to Frodo, and Frodo resolves to leave the Shire so as not to draw evil there, Sam Gamgee pops up to ask to accompany Frodo to see the elves he has mentioned. Frodo does mention elves in the novel, but that bit of dialogue has been omitted from the film, making Sam's line a non sequiter. It has previously been announced that Saruman's cloak of many colors would shift hues from moment to moment, like the "horse of another color" in **THE WIZARD OF OZ**, but it remains red throughout, apparently due to a lack of production time to keep changing colors. At one time it had been planned to change Saruman's name to Aruman, to make it more distinct from Sauron; but complaints from purists made them change it back again. But not all of the dialogue was corrected,

so the name changes from Saruman to Aruman and back again throughout the film.

The hasty production is most obvious in the steady deterioration of the animation. The film begins with rich, full animation, which becomes progressively more sketchy. By the end, in the battle at Helm's Deep where dozens of warriors are rushing about, facial features such as eyes and fangs (on the orcs) drift about their countenances most unattractively. Although I have not seen it confirmed, it is the unanimous assumption among fans that United Artists wanted the film released NOW and Bakshi did not have enough time to finish it properly as he had planned.

According to the publicity release, Bakshi's "technical production secret" was to rotoscope the entire film. It was first filmed in live action using actors in full costume. Then each frame of film was enlarged and painted over by the animators to produce a cartoon of a degree of realism never before achieved. Well, not exactly. What is obvious to the audience, starting about halfway through the film, is that the live-action film has not been entirely transformed into animation. In some crowd scenes (such as the inn at Bree) half or more of the background characters are real people tinted olive or olive. By the battle scenes at the end of the movie there is often no animation at all; only tinting and optical distortion. Some of the effects are rather like Karel Zeman's work; or like a 19th-century book engraving by Dore or Pyle brought to life. It is not unattractive, but it is not animation.

As a result, the local Tolkien fans tend to accept **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** for its faithfulness to Tolkien's story, despite some unhappiness over the abridgement and the many technical flaws. The cartoon-animation fans are outraged at the cheapness of the production in terms of "animation" and they are thoroughly damning Bakshi. The general public probably won't care by what technical process the movie was made as long as it looks reasonably good, and it does. Therefore I predict that **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** will be a mild critical success. However, the best word-of-mouth reaction I've heard so far is, "It's okay, but boy! does it have problems!" This is not likely to inspire the hesitant or indifferent to pay to see it, so I make no predictions as to whether it will be financially successful or not. And it will have to be financially successful if the second half of Tolkien's novel is to be filmed. This movie ends on a cliffhanger, with Pippin and Merry being carried away by Treebeard; Gandalf, Strider, Legolas, and Gimli exhausted but triumphant after the battle of Helm's Deep; and Frodo, Sam, and Gollum about to enter Mordor. "Here ends the First Part of **THE LORD OF THE RINGS**." Word-of-mouth of this inconclusive ending won't encourage attendance, either. —Fred Patten, USA.

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COMMENTS, NOTES & UPDATES ON OUR SPECIAL SECTION IN NOUMENON 22/23

Michael Newbery, 111 Houghton Bay Road,
Wellington 3, New Zealand (9/7/78)

So 22/23 arrives bearing the proud announcement Special Section in colour, which one discovers to mean printed in blue ink, and here your expectant reader was expecting a Chris Foss four-colour glossy fold-out at the very least. No matter, the special section was great. I especially liked Ron Primula's rave on information science and word processing. Prof. Hamming (inventor of the Hamming error-correcting-code, used on computer memories, among other things) was out here recently and described a desk size WP system which let him compose, edit and print a whole book, complete with mathematical symbols, assorted type faces and diagrams. He was considering buying one for his personal use (it cost about as much as a new car) and only decided against it on the grounds that if he waited a while the price would come down.

Hamming also made the point that it is no longer even theoretically possible to master all human knowledge, that the time required to completely index and cross-reference the sum of present-day knowledge is liable to exceed the probable life of the universe. Thus methods are generally (but not always) far more useful than recipes. It may take longer to find previously published information than to reduplicate the work leading to it. (A conclusion familiar to anyone who has ever pondered the rarity of 7 figure log tables.)

This of course leads me to the information rich society mentioned by Tony Lovatt. As an example of an individual who already seems fairly well adjusted to such a society I offer the following: our Hero was troubled by a noisy factory nearby which disturbed the neighbourhood at all times of the day and night, so he borrowed a decibel measuring device and hooked it up to his home micro-computer. It was set up to 'listen' to the factory and, if the noise level exceeded legal limits it switched on a tape recorder to record the offending noise, print out the noise level on a typewriter and print out the time. Armed with the tape and printout our Hero called in the local authorities who verified the accuracy of his equipment, then departed to make use of the evidence. (Our Hero writes for Popular Science magazine by the way.)

As an interesting example of private enterprise, ad hoc-ism and cost effectiveness in of all things, space research - OTRAG! (Orbital Transport und Raketen Aktiengesellschaft = Orbital Transport and Rocket Corporation). OTRAG is the brain child of Lutz T. Kayser, West German aeronautical and propulsion engineer. They provide a booster rocket for putting satellites into orbit at about \$15 million for a payload equivalent to that of a Titan III-C or the Space Shuttle. Compare \$40 million/shot for the European Space Agency's Ariane and

\$25 million/shot for the services of NASA, plus OTRAG naturally expect to make a profit, so the \$15 million is not what it costs them to orbit your satellite. To cap it all, the rocket was mass-produced from commercially available components such as car windshield-wiper motors!

The trick is that OTRAG is designed for freight only. Thus, vast amounts of safety-oriented redundancy can be eliminated. The watchwords are 'keep it simple'. The system actually looks like a whole lot of drinking straws glued together. Each 'straw' is one booster module. To increase your payload, you just add more modules (more or less). OTRAG aims to be operational by 1981.

I think this sort of thing is one of the most promising signs to appear in space technology for some time. The Space Shuttle, OTRAG and even the L-5 project show we have reached the stage where we are not so much blazing new frontiers as getting enough skilled people to the old ones easily, cheaply and comfortably enough to start using them.

Also, spectacular though OTRAG may be, I think that it is probably a dinosaur. A production rocket it may be -- even successful -- but it is still a one-shot system. I quite liked Arthur C. Clarke's idea of a geostationary satellite with a cable anchored to earth. To get into a geostationary orbit yourself you just climb up the cable, an energy expenditure of about 1000 kilowatt-hours.

Now that Hollywood (film capital of California) has discovered that money can be made from sci-fi, I should be able to get back to some serious reading (as I write this a 1 foot high stack of unread books stands accusingly beside me). Do let me know if anything worthwhile does exude a pseudopod above the general slime won't you? 'cause with LOGAN'S RUN coming up on the box -- as a series no less -- and the INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN running around outside I ain't gonna be doing too much viewing.

**** So, SUPERMAN and Disney's THE CAT FROM OUTER SPACE are not to your liking? Is this a recent sensitivity you've developed? It is? Well, why don't you just watch Heavy Metal instead. All you have to do is turn the pages. Love, etc. --James****

Bruce Ferguson, 13 Burnside St, Lower Hutt,
New Zealand. (23/9/78)

What a wealth of material went into the Futures/Alternatives section. I for one liked the blue print as it helped keep the section separate from the remainder of the mag. Some readers might be interested to know that the basic premise for LIMITS TO GROWTH was derived from a computer model of the world which was technically suspect. A variety of subsequent models have produced more optimistic results (even without resorting to sf dreams). Prof

Vigneaux here at Victoria University told us (at a post-grad course in simulation) about World modelling and the progress being made with them. The Limits To Growth model was instrumental in starting the whole thing off, but compared with the new ones is limited. For a start, it treated the whole world like the US. These new models seem to be to me manifestations of somebody's Law (the name escapes me for the moment, but I did know) which states that "if the facts do not conform to the theory they must be disposed of". In other words a typical academic approach!

Greg Hills, 22A Polson Street, Wanganui, New Zealand. (7/9/78)

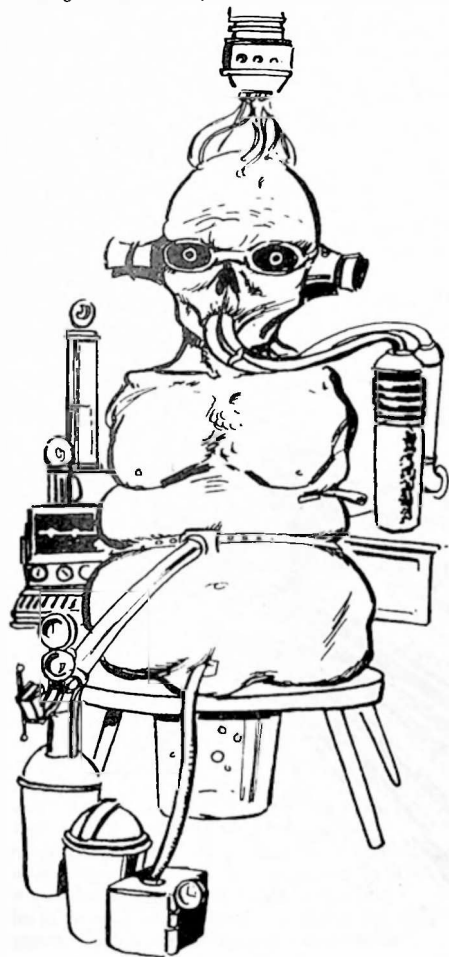
I note statements in various mags overseas (including the March TB) that the O'Neill colonies

are not viable on the grounds of the dubious stability of the Moon's points. I haven't the maths to calculate this; but it strikes me that there will be at least some stabilising effect: maybe enough so that L5 could stay put for hundreds or thousands of years before the perturbations ganged up on it. Even a stable lifetime of only a few years is okay: a few small ion drives (oh, yes, they perfected the things well enough long ago) pointing in various directions, and fired at need, could fix that. Same idea some guy suggested should be done with the synchronous satellites (which also are not stable over long periods, due to the perturbations induced by Moon, et al).

Of course, the L5 colonies will probably never come to pass. For the same effort we could chuck stuff to a low-orbit station, then out to the asteroids and beyond. Points in favour of L5 are even more in favour of asteroids, with only the travel-time as a downcheck. But O'Neill speaks of raising children in the L5 colonies, so why not the same for the asteroids instead? And the raw materials are easier to get at in the Asteroid belt, 'cos NO asteroid even approaches the gravity of the Moon: hence requires less energy to put stuff where you want it from the mining. And ion-driven drones can carry the stuff in from the asteroids just as cheaply as from L5. Use stuff from the asteroids to establish L5 is the best course, I think... and it's a step nearer the stars!

Psychological types for spacemen is an interesting (to me) point. Strikes me that (a) claustrophobes are no use in space craft; (b) agoraphobes are no use in space; (c) neither agoraphile nor claustrophile would really work out for various reasons: chiefly, they might like their respective environments *too* much! So we need someone who is claustrophile or agoraphile as occasion requires. So we induce a selective schizophrenia into them that will take effect as needed. Maybe a third personality as well, that can at any time suppress one or both other personalities, thus acting as a check. Hell, what better 'third personality' than a microminiaturised computer? Our spaceman is now a cyborg, with a split personality that is controlled by the objective little computer. All things considered, the computer may well be more intelligent than the spaceman. Two minds are better than one. Maybe the spaceman's own original thought-pattern is impressed on the computer, so that the cyb and the org both think of themselves as a single individual.

Or maybe the spacecraft itself will be obsolete: the spaceman, wearing his energy-spacesuit cum spacecraft, and carrying a miniature matter converter with a plentiful supply of raw material for it, just activates his portable antimatter unit and soars away to wherever he pleases, in the grip of his antigravity field. Maybe he has a larger antigrav field as well, and uses it to take a load of stuff with him. Maybe, to keep each other company, two guys go together. They make chess sets and books



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and TV sets out of their converters along the way, and store them by feeding them back into the matter banks of the converters. Hmmmmin!

Chas Jensen, 2/113 Osmond Tce, Norwood, Adelaide, 5067, Australia (20/7/78)

The section on the increasing use of computer graphics and word-processing was informative only in a small way (tended to be more of a personal ramble, and information got lost in the verbage), since I think that many fans are already aware of the speed-up in the growth of this sort of technology. I was surprised at its heading, since the words Information Science carry other implications for me, mostly on the side of storage and retrieval systems and programmes — the software is only incidental, its importance being measured by its effectiveness.

It amazes me even now that the vast majority of the so-termed aerospace industry spends all its time designing nothing more than large fiery toys for the children who run the Pentagon, and I find that one of the greatest wastes of current technology. Do people realise that Ellsberg claimed that, if the Pentagon had not been permitted the sway that it has had for twenty years, the USA would have been on the moon before JFK became prez; Simply because the prez would not have had to fight the allocations all the way through Congress every time NASA wanted money? Makes you wonder doesn't it?

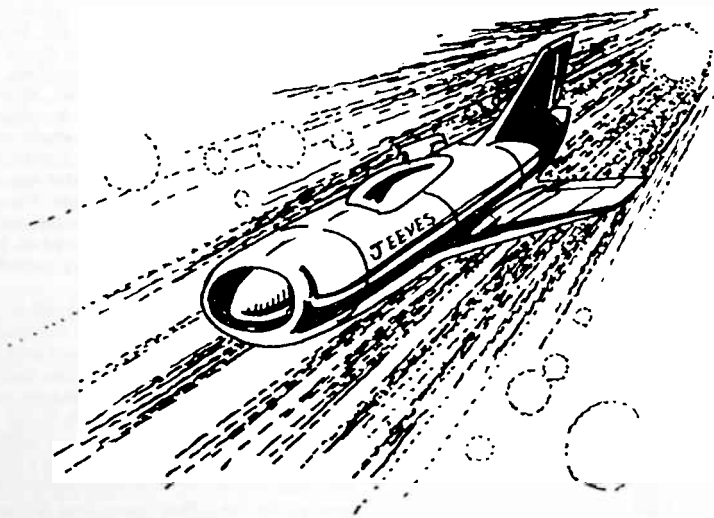
To see just how tied the aerospace industry is to the weapons Business (the industrial section of the Pentagon, since they are the ones who dictate policy in this area), examine the number of ads for flying weapons, platforms, etc, in the aviation magazines, then add up the number of

different companies involved. Then try and tell me that the industry isn't tied to the Pentagon's crib.

All of which makes the succinct quote from the Boston Globe that much more ironic (another word for the stupidity of the blinkered military mind).

And which made the sections on Political Models, Club of Rome, and the strange voice from the past declaiming the 'goodness' of capitalism a bit strange. I think your reply to Chris Fountain said most of what was necessary, but there is one thing I would like to add. The structure necessary to distribute the excess of product you mentioned, provides the structure for the society in which those products are distributed — in other words a system whereby the minority that has the excess in the first place accumulates an excess of the barter unit (be it in dollars or pigs, yen or chickens) and thus has the opportunity to further expand. This is the basic fallacy of capitalism — that expansion must occur all the time or the system "reverts" to collapse, in on itself. If I may quote: "Though you live near a forest, do not waste firewood." (Laymaa Pang, Chinese, 9th Century).

An equitable political system does not yet appear to have been founded. Even the Peoples' Republic of China has only recently had Chairman Hua declaring that "the people" should look to their leaders again for guidance. This seems to me to be a little strange after the days of Mao — who took the lead from what the people wanted and not the other way round. All very peculiar and it seems to imply that the party structure wishes to reassert itself and not wither away as planned. The Russians have state



capitalism and few people listen to them since they and the USA have come to sound so much like echoes of each other's imperialism. So it goes.

Ah, the O'Neill cylinders . . . much has been written and said and speculated on these proposals. I agree that some of the project's advisors were startled at the response from interested environmentalists. There are flaws in the reasoning at the moment, though they are being worked through and will have measures taken against them by the time production is envisaged (nobody has been silly enough to claim that it can be built by the end of this century fortunately, or the whole credibility could have been called into question by administrators.) One of these flaws is using the Lagrangian Points as the site of the 'colonies' orbits. Since they do tend to be the points where things accumulate, there has been no discussion about protection of that enormous hull from collision with other junk (either natural or from the ongoing space programme) and possible puncture. Next flaw: the technology that is proposed for the transmission of excess solar energy will be made useless by the continued reluctance of today's governments to invest in solar energy and its technology. The assumption that solar energy will be saleable depends on Earth societies adopting solar energy as the main motive force behind its technology. Looking at the current government attitudes toward this possibility the prospect of selling solar power becomes smaller and smaller.

UP WITH HELIN — DOWN WITH L5!

Helin is an asteroid discovered by astronomer Eleanor Helin in 1976. It orbits the sun in circa 345 somewhat inside Earth's orbit. It passes Earth every 18 years. I think we should set up a Helinist society for the settlement of Helin at the next pass, sometime in the mid nineties. Exploration could begin 2-3 years before perigee. Settlement in the 20 years around perigee buried in the depths of the asteroid. Helin would serve as the first space colony and could sell reaction mass for other projects, etc. The colonists could learn from the early Zionists -- at least there would be no Arab problems on an asteroid.

Now why am I down on L5? I'm not just looking for a "leopard" to facilitate "male bonding" among baboons. Space industry can and should develop on solid grounds. We now have satellites for communication, exploration of earth resources, spying and research. We need many more for weather research and are likely to get them. We need an asteroid watch, as the next big one to hit earth, or the sun, could be fatal to life and weather. An asteroid hitting the sun would, of course, be vaporized but it'd be heavier than the mostly hydrogen sun and would go down like a superstorm under 29g to start with and more below. (The sun is not homogeneous in its density.) It'd drag a lot of virgin H into the burnt out zone at the center. Also maybe we ought to watch out for

space born disease if Hoyle's latest is right.

What we don't need is fake projects to stimulate misinvestments. So here are a few questions I have not been able to get answered by the L5ers: How do you know the Terra Luna system has stable L4 Grange points despite Solar perturbations? Of course the S-J system has them but, quod licit Jove!, that system has 99.9% of all the solar system mass outside the sun. I do not deny the possibility that the E-M system MAY have stable L points, but I hold that any reasonable person, before proposing action, would discuss solar perturbations and come up with professional ballistic astronomers' calculations. Instead of which the L5ers are now discussing resonant orbits which are, by definition, unstable. Jupiter has cleared whole swaths of the Asteroid belt which WOULD contain resonant orbits if they contained anything. One gets the impression the L5ers think L points and the like come with a moon like wind shield wipers come with a car.

Then there is the solar power proposal, based on J.W. Campbell's thin plastic bubble concept. How long will such a hubble stand soft x-rays, UV, solar particle wind etc? How will you keep it in place while it is acting as a solar sail impacted by all those rays and particles, and pulled about like an electrical conductor by any movement of the solar magnetic fields? If you want to propose rockets and decide to spend all the necessary reaction mass, how do you apply force to such a thin construct?

Why do L5ers expect this to be cheaper than the available sun in our plentiful deserts, housetops, etc, which are NOT being used so far because they are not supposed to be economical? An economic industrial project depends on its MOST EXPENSIVE factor. Tomatoes cannot be grown cheaply on Mt Everest merely because the real estate is free.

The power is supposed to be sent down via microwave. If this is feasible I would like to see a short range, practical power application. Not signals, not minipower where it doesn't matter if you waste 98% of ten watts to get 200 milliwatts to an inaccessible place. Something like a helicopter crane, a guided missile, an H rocket whose power is delivered in flight by microwave, so as to use the low molecular weight of pure H. As it is there is no proof that microwave beams are practical at all. One does not start a major project assuming that the known problems will be overcome while working on it — on the contrary, execution always brings up UNEXPECTED problems. Why not start a major project based on fusion power, TK, or anything else you might find in a Groff Conklin anthology?

The last thing space development, which is coming along nicely, needs is an L5 bubble. Space is out there this year, next year, etc. A society which overcomes its energy problems here below (with solar power, fusion, breeder reactors, organic refuse) will expand into space in its own time, for its own rational purposes. A "ghost dancer" society faked into spending billions on an L5 ►

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bubble while it collapses down here, will never make it afterwards. Until I get answers to my questions, I'll keep calling. "UP HELIN -- DOWN WITH L5!"

—Phil Kohn

Greg Hills, 22a Polson Street, Wanganui, New Zealand. (27/11/78)

Have you ever thought that a complete switch to 'appropriate' or 'alternative' technologies would spell the end of magazines such as *Noumenon*? The price of paper would soar, for starters. Then, all this fancy, costly, energy-eating machinery you use to reduce/typeset and eventually print, would have to go. Ink substitutes would have to be found. And have you ever thought of the amount of advanced technology that goes into making staples? Refineries, foundries, glue factories, dies, stamping presses, packaging... Then, too, there would be fewer books printed, and the paperback market would have to go; so "Viewed From Another Shore" would have no subject matter. The reviews section would fail. The pubbing info would fall off. Films would cost too much and so films would go; music, ... well, as an example of a high-energy and raw materials industry, the record industry is prime. Airmail postage would go, as ships are so much more economical. Fanzine reviews would go for the same reasons *Noumenon* would. And who wants to loc what would be left once all this had been deleted? So byebye letters.

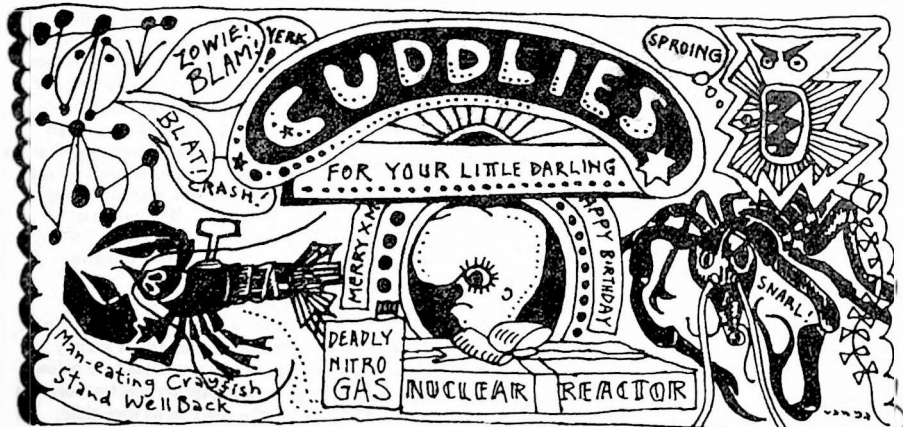
You couldn't even escape by other forms of printing. A lot of technology and energy goes into mimeo stencils, ink and the bond paper. Ditto? the same for the masters, and — well, meths has better uses than being poured into a quite non-productive fanzine. And the machines would have to be made; this takes technology. Energy technology, to satisfy the market.

Yessirree; you can betcha boots you won't see me joining the 'back to nature' crowd. And a crowd it would be if we did; first getcha population down to a level the land can support on subsistence farming. Get it down over the cries of SPUC and the like. Chop down the forests to make room for the extra farmland we'll need while we are dropping population and technology hand in hand — see the environmentalists run... why do they run?... they do not like the bad men who cut down their trees... see them run

The solution is nothing so coarse as 'more technology': it is 'better technology: technology that can support more people for less effort.' There is a difference. More technology is building more coal/oil-fired power stations. Better technology is satellites catching solar energy; nuclear fusion (so shut up about radiation Brian); heat conducting systems to ward off the effects of all this heat being produced by high-energy technology (don't ask me what sort of a system this would be; I am but a man of the 20th (almost 21st) century.) This is where RN McLean's letter grabbed me. One gigantic sewer main is 'more technology': a sewage treatment plant (preferably one that produces several useful products) is 'better technology', even if it ain't new technology.

Bimler letter on Page 19 must be an old one, as he nowadays has a Radio Sheak T 80 micro-computer. He is very proud of it and has been known to sit late into the night fondling and polishing it. In return, it demolishes the programs he attempts to feed into it.

You hit out (page 21) at the 'intellectual quantifying' that goes on nowadays. You seem to think we should not think of the costs; save that species. The point is, you have (whether you really thought thru what you said or not... I think you did not) just stated that we should think



'qualitatively' rather than 'quantitatively'. Yet we got into today's mess by thinking qualitatively. The action should not be on getting back to nature as soon as possible... or saving a species (actually many species, even just considering the whales). It should be on altering matters until a comfortable 'balance' (nature is NEVER in true balance — ask your neighbourhood dinosaur or dodo) is achieved: a balance where we are not changing our surroundings in ways that do us more harm than good. This does not imply that we must 'return to the soil', nor that we must save the whales. UNLESS those are the only ways we can save ourselves and achieve the balance; a course I do not think is so.

This balancing first requires that we know how to balance an ecosystem; that we comprehend how things work (not why; it is too urgent to spend time there). I do not believe myself to be treading dangerous ground when I say that (a) most 'ecologists' do not even understand the workings of evolution, nor the ramifications of that word, (b) that most of them who talk about a 'balanced habitat' have no conception of what a living ecosystem is, and (c) that most of them, if turned loose on a living ecosystem, would kill it in short order. And a dead ecosystem is nonexistent in short order. An ecosystem must change to meet changing circumstances: DOES change: is ALWAYS IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGING. Freeze this change, and the system will very shortly collapse. How sad... well, we'll do better with the next one; after all, we do want to preserve these species.

If the demise of the whale would in any way rebound on us in ways detrimental to our own survival, by all means save 'em. But if they benefit us vitally by our killing them... why stop? But we'd best be developing alternate resources for when they're all gone.

*"**In my view, humans have frequently made conscious decisions which, in the long run, are "anti-life" (A.S. Neill wrote a lot about pro-life and anti-life attitudes, goals, decisions, etc.). Such a judgement comes from balancing many factors, but overall I think a key question is: "To what degree are the futures of this planet's lifeforms enriched or limited?"*

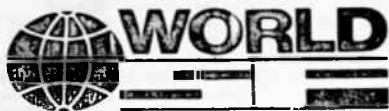
Contemporary man has been and still is systemically, consciously, deliberately and blindly doing a number of things which, when viewed together, suggest a very anti-life process is in operation: wiping out other species; destroying the majority of forests, wasting non-renewable resources; turning farmland into desert; affecting, perhaps irreparably, the life cycle in oceans; making short term decisions about farming which don't include the effects of weather variables, such that just another two poor crop years in America will seriously affect many countries' food supplies; pouring untold chemicals into the atmosphere which may have irreparable effects; advocating and enforcing bigotry and intolerance, especially with regard to personal human values; perpetuating heartless, wasteful education systems which are often nothing more than deceitful baby-sitting services for parents trapped in a socio-economic and political system they can neither understand nor explain; continuing and reinforcing mechanistic and heartless social and inter-personal values which help maintain societies of isolated, competitive family units which are perfect breeding grounds for neurosis and stupor.

Whew!

"Better technologies" may help, but we need monumental social upheavals to ever properly achieve them or gain their benefits fully.

*He says. And that's him below, pictured in rural bliss on his island paradise. ***





Brian Aldiss kindly sent us a copy of the first WORLD SF bulletin. I have reproduced most of it below and request writers, artists, librarians and publishers in New Zealand to please consider joining.

"If you put a pin in a globe of the world at Moscow, another at Tokyo and another at Rio de Janeiro, you form a sort of spherical triangle which designates Known Science Fiction Space for me. I've rarely ventured outside of that triangle, but I have visited perhaps twenty-five countries within it, usually to attend sf meetings, see sf people, or take part in some sort of sf event. And what has struck me over and over on these occasions is how much we all have in common, and how useful it would be for us to have a way of exchanging information and keeping in touch.

"WORLD SF is that way. It isn't just for writers. It is for anyone with a professional interest in science fiction of any kind. A composer of music in Budapest may never meet a painter of sf scenes in Nagoya, but it seems clear to me that each may want to know something about what the other does. A publisher in Athens who may want to translate a book from New York through an agent in London can find in WORLD SF a way of making the connection. A teacher in Toronto and a critic in Paris may have a common interest in a film-maker in Rome. All of them fit into WORLD SF.

"WORLD SF is not a political organization, and it isn't a trade union. It is a means for professionals to reach out to other professionals, for their common benefit. And it seems to me an idea whose time has come."
—Frederik Pohl

In the Beginning

The idea of World SF has been around since the First World Science Fiction Writer's Conference in Dublin, Ireland, held in September 1976. The delegates there decided that an organization of this type should be formed. A very low charter membership fee was set since, for the time being, all that would be done would be registration of members.

Now the next big step has been taken. In June of 1978 SF representatives from fifteen countries met once again in Dublin and this organization was formally founded. A constitution was drawn up and approved. Officers and a Board of Trustees were elected, and there was much discussion as to the aims of the organization.

Among the suggestions were:

An international register of all translators, editors and writers.

A magazine devoted to the affairs of World SF.

An annual international bibliography of science fiction literature.

It is obvious that *any* of these proposed plans will take more money than is available now. The original registration fee of \$2.00 or £1.00 will no longer be sufficient. (Not that it ever was — it will hardly cover membership postage and printing and posting of this bulletin.) Therefore the first order of business is the fixing of a reasonable membership fee. This will probably be done on a national basis, with each country fixing the fee in its own currency. Also, considering the vagaries of international finance, the collection of fees should also be on a national basis.

The next step is obvious. National groups of World SF should be organized soonest. Officers should be elected who can collect dues. An international congress is being planned where these suggestions can be put to delegates to be voted and acted upon.

That is the next step. We will do our best — and we ask for the aid of each one of you. Suggest, organize, work. World SF can be a unique organization in the history of world letters because of the difference and importance of science fiction. Or it can be a failure.

Over to you, members. You can take it from here. —Harry Harrison, Chairman

World SF

The Board of Governors, as elected at the meeting in Dublin on June 26, 1978, is comprised of the following persons, who are empowered to conduct the affairs of World SF until the next World General Meeting: Harry Harrison (Chairman), Ireland; Sam J. Lundwall (Secretary/Treasurer), Sweden; Brian Aldiss, Great Britain; Patrice Duvic, France; Charlotte Franke, West Germany; Gerald C. Izaguirre, Brazil; Peter Kuczka, Hungary; Eremey Parnov, USSR; Frederik Pohl, USA; Zoran Zivkovic, Yugoslavia. There are National Chairmen in Brazil, Denmark, France, West Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Sweden, USA, USSR and Yugoslavia. Needless to say, we hope to have National Chairmen in many other countries, too, before long, and we urge those interested to inform the Secretary of your desire to be of aid. The National Chairmen aid by trans-

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lating our releases into their own languages. Because the idea for this association was proposed at an English speaking conference we are using that language at this time. National Chairmen aid also by collecting dues in those countries where foreign currency transfers prove difficult.

All current members are urged to reproduce this bulletin and to circulate it widely. By all means translate it and see that not only science fiction writers receive it, but editors, translators, illustrators, teachers, agents, publishers - everyone connected professionally in any way with science fiction - receive it as well.

Questions and/or suggestions are most welcome; write to the Chairman in Ireland, or the Secretary

in Sweden. Remember, World SF is what you make of it. — Sam J. Lundwall, Secretary

World Headquarters
10 Fitzwilliam Square
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IRELAND

Secretariat
Storskogsvägen 19
S-161 39 Bromma
SWEDEN

*"Brian Thurogood here. I hope this organisation gets off the ground in a big way. To help further that goal I am prepared to act as a New Zealand co-ordinator or whatever to try and establish a New Zealand "branch". Please get in touch with me if you are interested in becoming a member and I will start the communication ball rolling with the Secretary. ***

Christmas

My biggest Christmas parcel contained **SCIENCE FICTION ART: The Fantasies of SF**. Compiled and introduced by Brian Aldiss, this is a great nostalgia jag. Look at the covers! Remember the stories! Like *The Last Blast*, *ASF* April '53 (p76). Roam thru cities of tomorrow (p89); that one is almost a ringer for p181 of *Adventureland: Every Boys Annual*, even if it is the front cover of *Amazing Stories* out of *METROPOLIS*. In the bulb Aldiss repeats his argument of *BILLION YEAR SPREE* that gothic and sf are inseparably intertwined.

But sf has another aspect: shamanism. Paint a picture of a bull on the walls of the cave of Lascaux. Then by a sympathetic magic you can catch the bull. Thus through pictures, Chesley Bonestell (p52) and sf in general have helped bring in the Space Age.

But mainly with **SF ART**, just look at the pictures... brass bra'd progenitors of *Octobriana* (*Octobriana* and the *Atomic Suns* of Comrade Mao - Samizdat Moscow. Reproduced in *Octobriana and the Russian Underground*. Tom Stacey Ltd.) on every other page. BFM's robots... just look at the pictures!

Another present was **THE FLIGHT OF THE HORSE**, a Niven fantasy. Hard-science fantasy? Niven writes that time travel is fantasy on any level, so when Svez is sent back to the dark ages to get a horse... (well, if it had been a bat he *might* have collected a harpy - that is a deliberate false lead.)

But to examine Niven's thesis more closely. We've read this kind of thing before, as Norder (Captain of the fast interplanetary freighter *Ares*) said of stories that go right outside the Solar System: "they might just as well be fairy tales." Well, any reader of Niven knows that he doesn't consider stories that go right outside the solar system as fairy tales - otherwise why concentrate on Bussard ramjets and laser/solar sail propulsion. Surely he is consciously trying to bring interstellar flight about (i.e. the shaman bit).

Now most physicists seem to agree that time travel is impossible, if only because it would violate causality. Recently there has been considerable

correspondence on the possibility of travelling backwards in time by means of Black Holes (*Spaceflight* V19 No 10 Oct '77, p376 review of *The Iron Sun: Crossing the Universe through Black Holes*, by A. Berry, Johnathan Cape, 1977, reviewed by S.G. Sykes, and reply by Berry quoting *Relativity and Cosmology* by Dr W.J. Kauffmann - astrophysics group, Cal-Tech - Harper & Row, pp66-68). Some people even go so far as to say that "By pointing his spacecraft in the appropriate direction, an astronaut can return to almost any point in space-time in our universe that he chooses." But causality must be preserved.

Time is an ever flowing stream; one can only step into the same river once... but why do all electrons have the same mass? To an external observer one particle weaves its world-line back and forth doing the work of many. To the eye of God all events are simultaneous, the time traveller reaps before he sows, mass/energy momentum are conserved in one frozen tableau *for ever*.

Thoughts on **TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE** by Robert A. Heinlein. Back in 1947 Mr Heinlein published the way to write a sf story (in **OF WORLDS BEYOND**, edited by L.A. Eshbach). If you dig up a back copy of *Analog* (I can't remember the date) you will see that he said the same thing to the cadets at Annapolis more recently. Mr Heinlein follows his own advice with this book - and very readable I found it. But I liked **STARSHIP TROOPERS**, a future history with one hero who goes on and on through the frontier worlds. The end is slightly kinky - remember the guy with the blind sister in the **ALEXANDRIA QUARTET**? Good adventure - but as future history I don't know.

Can anyone explain to me why the Karadshiev Type II civilisation concept didn't get into sf until after the Dyson/Poul Anderson correspondence? As Dyson says, the idea goes back at least to Bernal (*The World, The Flesh and The Devil* - Clarke quoted it in *EXPLORATION OF SPACE*) but, apart from **THE BRICK MOON**, the only pre-1960 sf I know mentioning artificial planets is **GUNNER CADE** (by Cyril Judd-Judith Merril & Cyril Kornbluth) and there just as an aside. However, with all this shamanism from O'Neill, etc, I suppose that cities in space are as sure as submarines once were. — Tim Hassall, Auckland, New Zealand.



Philippa Grove-Stephensen
Tim Hassall
Greg Hills
Philip Stephensen-Payne
Brian Thurogood

THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION YEARBOOK

—Edited by Colin Lester
(Pierrot Publishing, 1978, 390pp, £2.95)
Cover art by Angus McKie.

Colin Lester has done a superb job with this first edition. The full scope of sf in all fields is surveyed and a monumental number of details and references are given. No other book comes anywhere near giving the amount of information about the current sf world as is included in the YEARBOOK.

Following the introductory "feature" articles, 25 sections/chapters tell you just about everything you could ever want to know — book publishers, magazines, fanzines, organisations, libraries, pseudonyms, artists, awards, films, etc. etc. Each section consists of: an introduction, or an article by a guest; notes by Colin on the topic and/or entries; and then (the bulk of most sections) the list of relevant entries.

The lists are arranged in alphabetical sequence and are given a code number. At times the numbers are awkward to use, but Colin explains in the Introduction: "Entry code-numbers are sometimes complex in this first issue of ISFY, as information had to be inserted at various stages of the compilation. A rationalization will take place in the future."

The YEARBOOK is slightly larger than the average paperback (it's 7½" x 5") and is fat, on good paper, and well bound. It should stand up to considerable use so the fact that it is only available in a paper edition should not worry too many people.

The design of the book is not always good. Lots of illustrations are used throughout, either specially commissioned ones or many reprints from leading fanzines, but many seem chosen for size and shape rather than to tie in with the

surrounding text. The quality of some illustrations is also poor, sometimes because they've been reduced too far, and sometimes because they weren't suitable for black and white reduction in the first place.

Nonetheless, most of the illustrations are good and, as collected here, provide a very good survey of (mostly) fan artists' work. Therefore, it is a great pity the credits were not presented in a much better fashion. (While on the topic of credits, some guest articles are not credited either — whether Colin's or the designer's fault I don't know.)



For the record, Noumenon and associated artists get good coverage in the YEARBOOK. The Noumenon entry in the fanzine section is bold and large, and your truly gets a few plugs in the section on music. Colin Wilson has three of his illustrations reprinted, and Jim McQuade has one.

This is undoubtedly the best book about sf on the market. It is essential for all libraries and New Zealanders will find it especially useful as an overseas contact resource. Highly recommended.
—BAT

ORSINIAN TALES -- Ursula LeGuin**(Panther, 1978, 170pp, \$2.25)****Cover art by Peter Goodfellow.**

These eleven stories are not sf, but like LeGuin's other fiction they talk powerfully of the human spirit. Only in two of the stories do the characters overlap, but several are set in an unspecified east European country, which you may choose to think of as Orsinia. Its capital, Krasnoy, seems to embody the dullness, the oppressive forces of want and drabness against which the human spirit constantly has to struggle to achieve freedom, or beauty. In some of these stories small people win small victories — moments of joy or the consolations of companionship.

Conversations at Night, for example, tells of how Sanzo Chekey, poor and blind, finds love with Lisha, and how both acquire enough courage to take a long chance on happiness — knowing the gamble may fail. The failures too are recorded here: in *An Die Musik* a poor man with immense musical talent makes one effort to gain the recognition which will allow him to fulfill himself but, unable to compromise over his talent, he sinks into poverty which destroys him. *The Lady of Moge*, on the other hand, is destroyed by safety and comfort, achieved at the cost of a forced compromise. LeGuin passes no judgements as she records the dark desperations which drive men to savagery (*The Barrow*) or the moments of beauty which preserve the freedom of the spirit, even when not only body but mind must bow to captivity.

These understated tales, with their carefully wrought detail and immense compassion, are a testament to LeGuin's imaginative power, craftsmanship and humanity. —PGS

COLONY -- Ben Bova**(Pocket Books, 1978, 470pp, \$2.90)****Cover art by Boris Vallejo.**

This is a "big book" on the scale of (yawn) *LUCIFER'S HAMMER* by Niven and Pournelle (*Futura*, 1978, \$3.95): i.e. it looks as if it is aiming not only at the sf market but also for people who buy blockbusters like *AIR SCREAM*. *COLONY* is set some years after *M'LENNIUM* (Ben Bova: *Futura*, 1978, \$2.75) in the same not very distant future. *COLONY* is also better written, according to my criterion, and I enjoyed it more. David Adams, whose birth and implants have some similarity to those of Poul Anderson's *UN MAN* (*Astounding SF Magazine* about 25 years ago), is a native of Island I, an O'Neill type space colony at ... L4! Island I is the property of the multinational corporations, as is David Adams. Planet Earth is in a Limits to Growth doomsday situation. David escapes to Earth via the lunar republic (pace Clarke & Heinlein) of Selene, and adventures follow thick and fast.

Small niggles: (1) I don't believe a 26 year old London girl would be as prudish as Evelyn Hall is made to appear in the year 2008 (chapter 1). At least they weren't when I was in London

in the 1960s! (2) Ben Bova has his space colony illuminated by hinged mirrors just as in O'Neill's original proposals. But I expect everyone knows by now that mirrors like these would not withstand the centrifugal loads. (There is a way round this problem, though, and when I have finished this, I am going to write it up for *Spaceflight*).

Overall, a good read in the "hard science" style. —TCH

ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED -- Joe Haldeman**(Orbit, 1978, 180pp, \$2.75)****Cover art by Pete Jones.**

Outstanding novelisation of Haldeman's three stories featuring Prime Operator Otto McGavin. Applying for a job with the Confederation, McGavin is drafted unwillingly into the TBII, who specialise in using advanced plastic surgery and hypnotic Personality Overlay to substitute their agents for key people in problem areas. In *To Fit The Crime* he goes to the high-gravity planet Bruch as the famous Dr Crowell to try to find out why the indigenous aliens are dying off rapidly. *The Only War We've Got* takes him to a lethal colony world which seems determined to wage interstellar war.

Finally in *All My Sins Remembered* he visits a planet of immortal aliens to find the truth behind their myths of planet moving. Haldeman builds up his character of McGavin most convincingly, particularly as he tries to square his actions with his Anglo-Buddhist conscience. Perhaps most outstanding though are the aliens in the first and last stories, marvellously visualised and portrayed. Haldeman is back to the standard of *THE FOREVER WAR* — let's hope he stays there. —PSP

BEASTS -- John Crowley**(Orbit, 1978, 180pp, \$2.75)****Cover art by Rodney Mathews.**

John Crowley's second novel, *BEASTS*, confirms his place at the top of the list of new sf authors. Set in a future and fragmented America, the book looks at the similarities and differences of men and beasts, and their relationships. In the wake of twentieth century genetic manipulation, cross-breeds of man and beast exist, the most common being the leos, proud, reclusive and hated by ordinary men. One of them, Painter, decides to exert his independence, refusing to be hemmed into Government reservations, and leads his tribe over the hill. With him goes Caddie, the human girl indentured to him as servant, and, later, they are joined by exthologist Loren Casaubon and his charge, Sten Gregorius, heir to one of the largest fortunes in America, not to mention Hawk and the crazy lost dog, Sweeps.

Weaving a complex path around them all is Reynard, half-man and half-fox, saviour, villain and genius. Crowley manages to balance theme and action with great skill to a startling yet satisfying conclusion. —PSP

34 REVIEWS...

THE WORM OUROBOROS — E. R. Eddison
(Pan/Ballantine Adult Fantasy series, 1975)

I've been meaning to read this book for some time and finally last week I finished the piece-by-piece-in-odd-moments progress through its many pages. In fact, Eddison has a vivid but rather turgid style which discourages large gulps of his work at a sitting. It is rather an archaic style: more so than is to be expected even in a book written way back in 1922! Rather than say "We must not let our minds be bent from our purpose in this accursed land", he has his characters say: "We must not in this accursed land suffer aught to seduce our minds, but follow our set purpose" (Juss, page 165). Nevertheless the book is rich in detail, and shows the hand of a skilled miner of prose.

THE WORM OUROBOROS is the (rather loosely related) first in the Zimiamvian Chronicles; albeit Zimiamvia itself appears merely as a glimpse of its mountains, seen from a distance. I have only skimmed the three main books of the line, and so will not comment on them. But **WORM** seems more adventure-oriented than the other books: where a character talks in the other books, in **WORM** he does. Briefly, the action is this: On the planet Mercury (1922, remember) there are several powerful races. One of these, the Witches, is ruled by a quasi-immortal ruler named Gorice. [Quasi-immortal because (a) individual bodies may die, but a new King will always appear, different from his predecessors yet having the same (soul?) and possibly memories — rather like a phoenix, and (b) the line can be ended.] Gorice makes war on another race, the Demons, who are ruled by the four Lords: Juss, Goldry Bluszco, Brancock

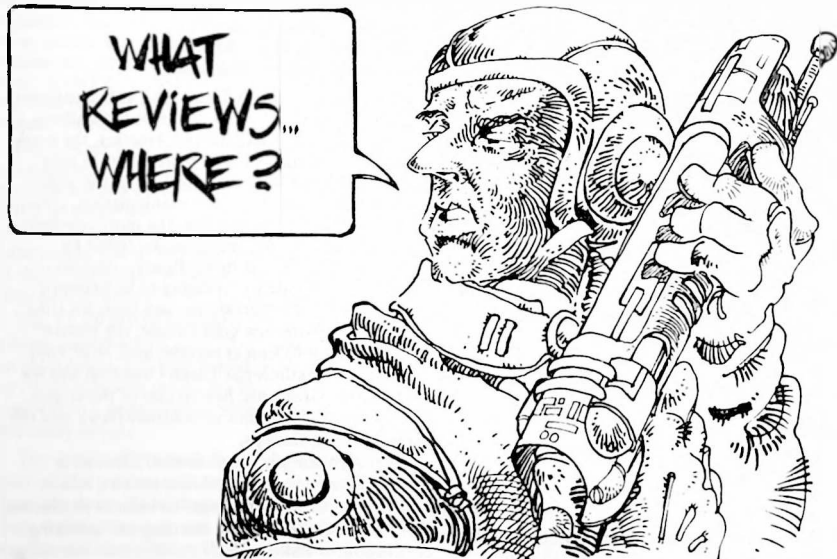
Daha and Spitfire. Gorice XI challenges Goldry Bluszco to single combat, but loses and is killed. His successor, Gorice XII, uses sorcery to steal away Bluszco to a far place. Most of the book is taken up by the involved moves of the remaining Demon Lords towards rescuing him from that place, hampered by various armies and hexes of the Witches. In the end the Demons are victorious, and the line of Gorice is rather rudely ended.

It is quite a tense book — one never quite knows where things stand at any moment, until the very climax. After which comes the justification for the title (the Ouroboros is a snake/dragon ('serpent') which swallows itself, tail first, endlessly), with the end of the book returning to the situation much as portrayed at the beginning ("Lord, it is an Ambassador from Witchland and his train. He craveth present audience"). And so it goes.

WORM is a rewarding book if you can get into it and read it slowly and carefully. It is thick on detail, slow in action. So if you want excitement, I advise the 'Doc' Smith on the shelf beside **WORM**. But if you want something slower and more pretentious, and have a facility with words and love of complex prose, try a bite of **WORM**. You will either like it or it will be too much or a chore to finish. But give it a fair trial before deciding, or you may cheat yourself —GH

MEDUSA'S CHILDREN — Bob Shaw
(Pan, 1978, 155pp, \$2.50)
Cover art uncredited.

An impressively unusual novel. In a strange underwater world where there appears to be no gravity and little air lives the Clan, a race of aquatic humanoids. Below them, at the centre of the world, lives their mysterious diety, Ka, to whom all things



return. When their universe is disrupted by a powerful new current a group swims down to investigate the cause, only to encounter Ka and he sent on a mission far stranger than they could imagine. Bob Shaw is consistently entertaining and sparkingly innovative, and this is one of his best novels so far. —PSP

IN THE HALL OF THE MARTIAN KINGS —

John Varley
(ISBJ, 1978, 320pp, \$12.65)

For an author who has been writing sf for only four years or so, John Varley has acquired a considerable reputation. From this collection of nine stories it is easy to see why, for each is as good as the best one would expect of the average collection, and together they are stunning. They combine the humanity that used to characterise Sturgeon with the inventiveness of Arthur Clarke in a mixture that remains, however, wholly Varley. It is impossible in the space to summarise all the stories, and inaccurate to label some as "better" than others, but a handful can perhaps stand for the collection.

The Phantom of Kansas tells of Fox, an Environmentalist — a Weather Sculptor — who creates symphonies with the weather. When she awakens in a cloned body one day she accepts naturally that she has died and been replaced from a memory recording. But her equanimity is shaken when she finds she has been murdered three times in the last two years. It can do her no permanent harm of course, but it is so time-consuming to keep being resurrected, so she sets out to trap her murderer.

Overdrawn at the Memory Bank is a simpler tale of Fingal who is projected into a computer simulation only to find he cannot get out again as the attendants have mislaid his body somewhere. On a far different, and more serious key *The Persistence of Vision* describes and develops the idea of a commune in the desert composed entirely of blind people — in a manner that wholly convinces.

If Varley can maintain this standard he will be one of the top authors of the 1980s. —PSP

THE DRAGONS OF EDEN — Carl Sagan (Hodder & Stoughton, 1977, 265pp, \$13.45) Jacket art by Don Davis.

Subtitled "Speculations on the Evolution of Human Intelligence" this is also a very compact and useful summary of state-of-the-art research and theory into the brain and "intelligence". Sagan looks at current theory and discusses what could lead to it, or looks at anthropological findings and postulates what happened to give our current situation, etc. You, the reader, can join the discussion at any time.

The first chapter, "The Cosmic Calendar", is one of those dreadful "fifteen-billion-year-lifetime of the universe compressed into and expressed in the span of a single year" type things. Fortunately, this is the only dud chapter in the whole book.

"Genes and Brains" is an excellent survey of intelligence, comparisons and the way different

animals have evolved. Further, it looks at brains gradually "dominating" the genes as a motivating factor in evolution.

"The Brain and the Chariot" is an comprehensive summary of current information about our "triune" brain — the parts, how they work and overlap, how they may have evolved, current "design" problems. Chapter Four then looks at our early ancestors in some detail, including a useful "recent ancestors" chart.

"The Abstractions of Beasts" is a very fine speculative essay based on the recent and exciting communication experiments with chimps, gorillas and dolphins. "Tales of Dim Eden" looks at other mammals, dinosaurs, "dragons" and reptiles, with Sagan speculating on human dreams given this background.

"Lovers and Madmen" looks at how we use our brains, and examines the rise of dominance of the Left Hemisphere and the effects of this, especially as current research shows the two hemispheres to be quite different in "operation and intent". "The Future Evolution of the Brain" is often Sagan saying what he'd like to see happen, including his "recipe" for societal change, the need for "polymaths" and the importance of adaptation to new ways of thinking and being. Computers and calculators are also surveyed.

The short final chapter is one of hope, especially about Sagan's pet, extra-terrestrial intelligence. But there's also a fine "reason" why the univers is so "understandable", so "knowable".

Again, another book to be highly recommended

—BAT

LOGLAN 1: A LOGICAL LANGUAGE —

James Cooke Brown

(3rd edition: The Loglan Institute Inc., Box 1785, Palm Springs, CA 92262, USA).

I was first made aware of loglan by a letter from Robert Levin (5511 South Braeswood, Houston, Texas 77096) in the June 1977 issue of *Analog* (pp 173-4), in which he asked those interested to "... please, by all means write me - in Loglan." Of course we all should have been aware of loglan before because, as Levin points out, it is mentioned by Heinlein in *THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS*.

Loglan is a language designed to test the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that habitual thought and behaviour are related to the language habits of our community — which predispose certain choices of interpretation of the relations between perceptions and concepts. Brown claims that loglan does this because it is **transformationally powerful, meta-physically parsimonious, syntactically unambiguous semantically non-restrictive**, and (because it is derived from eight of the most spoken languages including English and the Chinese National Language) **culturally neutral**.

I found the book an extremely interesting read.

36 REVIEWS...

It seems to me, however, that there are considerable practical difficulties in the way of its use as a test of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. If language is indeed a social convention no real test can come of loglan until there is a loglan-speaking society. The smallest such society I can conceive would have several dozen members, who would bring up a group of children as loglan speakers *de nato*. I must admit that I would be prepared to volunteer for such a group if suitably funded and situated somewhere sunny.

Brown suggests that loglan can be used as a linguistic toy. This may indeed become its chief use. For example, word building games can be fun.

—TRCH

Footnote: Tim did include an example of "word building" but such a mathematical exercise would be of interest to enthusiasts only. Write to Tim if you are such an enthusiast.

WHAT MAD UNIVERSE — Frederic Brown
(Bantam, New 1978 edition, 220pp, \$2.05)
Cover art uncredited.

Fred Brown's long unavailable novel at last back in print. Keith Winton, editor of *Surprising Stories* is knocked out in an explosion and wakes to find himself in an alternate reality where the sf stories he used to edit are now straight adventure: nine foot tall purple monsters roam the streets, 'Space Girls' wear tight-fitting bras, shorts and transparent space-suits, and Dopello is Hero of the Galaxy. Fred Brown takes a brilliantly satiric side-swipe at the 1940s magazine sf, its writers and readers. A real treasure. —PSP



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

EARTH'S OTHER SHADOW — Robert Silverberg
(Panther, 1978, 220pp, \$2.35)
Cover art by Colin Hay.

A collection of nine of Silverberg's best stories. Most notable in the book is the well-known *Flies* (reprinted from *DANGEROUS VISIONS*) — a brief and devastating tale of a man whose emotions are twisted by aliens, twice, with horrifying results. Somewhat lighter is *Something Wild is Loose* about a telepathic, invisible alien trapped on Earth and trying desperately to get transport home. *Ishmael in Love* takes a sad look at a dolphin who falls for his human trainer, and *To See the Invisible Man* portrays man's inhumanity to man, illustrating vividly that one can be loneliest in a crowd.

The Fangs of the Trees sees a man torn between his love for his plantation and his sense of duty, while *To The Dark Star* reveals man's darker side as humanity unites against the alien. Lastly there are *Hidden Talent*, *The Song The Zombie Sang*, and *How It Was When the Past Went Away* — a strong collection, and one of Silverberg's best. —PSP

THE BEST OF ROBERT SILVERBERG
(Orbit, 1978, 250pp, \$2.90)
Cover art by Pete Jones.

Ten of Silverberg's best stories collected and presented by the author. The stories are outstanding — *Flies*, *To See the Invisible Man*, *Sundance* and so on — but the introduction and linking pieces by Silverberg are overly egotistical, and Malzberg's foreword ludicrously overpraises the man by suggesting he is the best writer in English this century. The stories are all available elsewhere — buy and read them there. —PSP

THE COLLAPSING UNIVERSE — Isaac Asimov
(Corgi, 1978, 220pp, \$ 2.75)
Cover art uncredited.

It will be interesting to see whether Asimov is remembered longest for his science fiction or his science non-fiction, for while the former has certainly been popular and influential, it is in the latter that he really excels. In this book, for instance, he manages to start from a basic assumption of no prior knowledge on the part of the reader, and yet to expand painlessly and easily to a detailed discussion of black holes — a subject which even scientists feel uneasy about. At the same time, for those who do know something about the subject, he manages to insert a number of novel ideas on the way. One of his better science books, this is probably the best introduction to black holes on the market. —PSP

OFFICIAL STAR TREK COOKING MANUAL — Mary Ann Piccard
(Bantam, 1978, 210pp, \$2.70).

Supposedly from a book by Nurse Christine Chapel which briefly appeared in the twentieth century, this is a fairly wide-ranging cookery book, well spiced with Star Trek allusions. Each main char-

acter 'contributed' a selection of favourite dishes to produce a collection from many countries (Japanese (Sulu); Russian (Chiekov); traditional American (Kirk, of course!) etc. Vulcan food is (logically) vegetarian. The directions are quite clear, and though not really a beginner's book, this may provide amusement (and even new culinary experience) for the adventurous; and Star Trek, though much in evidence, doesn't spoil the food. —PGS

THE LIVES OF A CELL — Lewis Thomas
(Futura, 1978, 180pp, \$2.30)
Cover art uncredited.

Science fiction authors, readers and enthusiasts are given to speculating about the world and the lives we lead in it. The speculations include technological, sociological and psychological musings and projections. The ideas discussed or examined can be about one man through to entire races or civilizations, from "a day in the life" to spans of tens of thousands of years. Many speculations develop from, "if this is going on now/is how things are now, what would happen if/when...".

But what about current marvels? What about new information which allows us to totally revise our previous speculations about the future, the present, even the past? What about cross-disciplinary concepts which lead to new views which can't be worked into a story somehow? Lewis Thomas, in this collection of essays, tells the reader all sorts of unusual but exciting "facts", asks many stimulating questions, and offers some surprising and provocative speculations.

For instance:

- * There are very, very few "disease producing" bacteria, viruses, or etc.
- * Many animals seem like component parts of a large organism. Humans may be seen as a large information storing, processing and retrieval organism.
- * Information, knowledge, can be so interesting it could stop the destruction of Earth.
- * Music is the most important "message" to send into space to be picked up (hopefully) by other intelligent extraterrestrials.
- * Two organelles, mitochondria and chloroplasts, are the supreme organisms on Earth.
- * The gift of language is the single human trait that sets us apart from other life forms.
- * The once nomadic hunter tribe, the Iks, developed "pure" civilized neurosis in a few years.
- * Ancient and modern myths can be "explained" biologically.
- * And thanks to the atmosphere "breathing", we have evolved and we can live.

The point is, speculating is a very exciting pastime. It is also creative and Lewis Thomas can describe the information and the creativity in wonderfully succinct and poetic style. Here be mysteries, relationships, wonders and visions, presented in a rich way which turns some of the essays into masterpieces of style. Highly recommended. —BAT

STAR WARS (that tired old subject that still seems to be getting a lot of comment even so): I hadn't heard of **THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES** (sounds like Moorcock's Eternal Champion!)

However, it apparently bears out my view that similarities between, say, SW and LOTR (and ILLIAD) arise from the fact that they are set around an archetypal concept. I.e., they are all reflections of some fundamental aspects of humanity. I disagree with you, Brian, that SW is carried only by the special effects. They were only the spice that in earlier years would have been implied only, because they could not have been adequately done. I enjoyed SW as much for the hero/villain conflict as for the special effects. The same went for LOTR... and the ILLIAD... and the Elric novels... and the Lensman series... and the Foundation series... the other aspects merely spiced this and added interlocking cool juices. And I think that is why SW is so successful. Take another look at all that mindless pap — where does it aim for? Not who, but where? For me, it hit the emotions, and only the cutesy bits really hurt — i.e., R2D2's noises at the end. Anyway, it strikes at one's unconscious megalomania. How nice it would be to live in such times, where good and bad are clear and one can be a hero at short notice and win yourself a princess. This is not such a bad thing for sf on occasion, it leavens what would otherwise become a choking paste of thin intellectual secretion. Sf may be a 'visionary literature', a 'literature of ideas', etc. — but it began, and must remain if it is to stay viable, as a literature of entertainment. A solid diet of STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, DHALGREN, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5 and the like makes for tough chewing if that was all sf had to offer, I'd leave. Likewise, a solid diet of 'Doc' Smith, SW, etc would also turn me off. So I read mostly the part-and-part stuff. This sets me up so that I can dip into 'serious' stuff from time to time, and then relax with a little thud 'n' blunder. Sf needs all kinds. —Greg Hills

BSFA

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- An organization designed to promote and advertise science fiction activities.
- A body comprised of writers, publishers and readers of science fiction.
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245 Rosalind Street, Ashington,
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MINSTRELS

Fred Patten, 11863 West Jefferson Blvd., Culver City, California 90230. USA. (24/10/78)

I am in the process of getting a fair bit of information on Japanese sf records. Since Noumenon is just about the only sf publication of which I am aware that shows any interest in sf records, would you be interested in any of the following?

I am typing this on the back of a photocopy from one catalog, showing new releases from Nippon Columbia. Unfortunately, most of the reproductions are not coming out clearly. However, of the seven LP record jackets shown here: three are of symphonic suites of the music from sf films (clearly inspired by the symphonic-suite records from STAR WARS and CE3K); two appear to be condensed recordings of radio dramatizations of sf works; one is a musical collection of themes by a popular composer of Japanese sf cinematic and tv music; and the final one appears to be a collection of the opening theme music from a number of animated-cartoon tv fantasies.

No 57 shows the jacket for "Symphonic Suite Yamato", the music for the SPACE CRUISER YAMATO animated space-opera I reviewed for you some issues ago. No 60 shows a symphonic suite from "Message from Space", a new live-action Japanese rip-off of STAR WARS which I understand is getting horrible reviews. No 61 is a symphonic suite of the music from a tv cartoon serial, "Space Pirate Captain Harlock". That one I have a copy of and could review if you like. (It's pretty but is essentially musical junk food; 45 minutes of riffs and trills and other short motifs that segue blandly into each other without any resolutions.) No 58 and 59 are the dramatizations. No 62 is entitled "The World of Hiroshi Miyagawa", the composer of the "Yamato" music, and apparently features selections from that as well as others of themes for other fantasy films. No 63 is the one which appears to be an anthology of tv fantasy theme music.

This is just one page from one company's catalog. I have also just obtained, from Toho Records, a

"Godzilla" record which appears to be a pressing of all the musical tracks from the original GODZILLA feature film. This is not a symphonic suite, but it appears to be a recording of the complete themes from the film, many of which were broken off or had sound-effects recorded over them in the film. Yet another record is a symphonic suite from Toho's "The War in Space", the first Japanese blatant rip-off of STAR WARS.

Some of these records are rather good and others are rather bad. However, since they are music, which is "international" (for the most part there are no words to not understand - with the exception of the dramatizations, of course), I feel that they are of more potential interest to English-speaking sf fans than Japanese fiction would be. I am in the process of obtaining copies of most of these for myself. I could review some for you, if you'd like. I suppose I can also have illustrations made of the jackets if you'd like, through the same service I used to obtain the illustrations for Delap's F&SF REview when I was publishing it, although this would entail some expense - how much would depend upon how many jackets I might have photographed at one time. Let me know if you are interested in any of this.

Yes, Fred, I am interested in such information. In fact, next time I'm in the import shops in Melbourne (Easter) I'll check and see if any are available. Yes, reviews of significant titles would be appreciated. Illustrations of the jackets would be cream on the cake and, unless the artwork is very good or you feel very generous, I think we could get by without.

EDITORIAL

Continued from page 2.

January. Yesterday (February 3rd), while doing preparatory paste-up after having recovered from a much needed and pre-planned break at the Nambassa Festival (and having put together last week's Gulf News under sorely trying conditions), I decided there was nothing else for it but to go for the "double issue" and at least catch up some of the lost time. I don't really apologise for this, in that a labour of love such as Noumenon needs some sort of lee-way here and there and double issues *do* give readers what would have gone into two single issues - it's just re-arranged a little and (Greg Hills please note) admittedly a little late.

Enough! Because, you see, there is some good news. I have decided to sell all or most of Gulf News. When that transaction is completed I will have both time and money to spend on Noumenon, and that includes bringing to fruition a number of plans I've had in the back of my mind for some time. I hope you will be able to see some of the results of these plans in about three months time.

So thank you patient readers and subscribers, and contributors and letter writers, for not inundating me with questioning letters. Here we are again and I hope you enjoy the issue.

—Brian

Rags, Solecism and Riches

In this column we attempt to cover as many levels of writing about sf as 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.

This column is very important to me in that I hope it provides incentive for NZ fans, especially newer ones, to enter into the esoteric but very rewarding world of fandom and fanzines. Over the past four months, however, it has been impossible for me to read and adequately review the many fanzines which have arrived. But I think it unfair to not mention them at all. Therefore, and though I hate to do it, I will merely list the fanzines which have arrived over the past few months. MENTION IN THIS LIST DOES NOT PRECLUDE A FULL REVIEW IN LATER ISSUES. Many of these fanzines are too good to be relegated to a mere list. Sorry, editors, but circumstances dictate this is the only way at present.

Algol 31 (Spring), 32 (Summer); USA.
Anarkali 1, 2 (Sept); Australia.
APA H 67 (July); USA.
Argo Navis 3/2 (July); Australia.
August Derleth Soc Newsletter 1/4; USA.
Australasian SF News 1 (June), 2 (July), 3 (Aug), 4 (Sept), 5 (Nov), 6 (Dec); Australia.
Bellerophon's Rage 11 (Sept); USA.
Bem Comics News 20 (Aug), 21 (Nov), 22 (Jan); UK.
Beyond Baroque Foundation: 781 (Spring), 782 (July), 783 (Oct); USA.
British Fantasy Society: Bulletin 6/1 (March), 6/2 (May), 6/3 (July); Dark Horizons (journal) 18 (no date); UK.

British Science Fiction Association: Matrix (newsletter) 17 (April), 18 (June), 19 (Aug), 20 (Oct); Vector (journal) 86 (April), 87 (June), 88 (Aug), 89 (Oct); Tinfoil 2; Paperback Parlour (free to BSFA members); UK.
Checkpoint 91 (Sept), 92 (Dec); UK.
Chunder 2/11 (Dec); Australia.
Closer To The Edge 1 (Aug), 2 (Oct); Aust.
The Comics Journal 42 (Oct), 43 (Dec); USA.
Data 17 (Aug), 18 (Oct); Australia.
The Diagonal Relationship 1 (Oct), 4 (Jan), 5 (April), 6 (July); Australia.
Dream Vendor 3 (Fall); Canada.
Epsilon Eridani Express 3 (Nov); Australia.
Erg 64 (Oct); UK.
Fan's Zine 16 (Sept); USA.
Fanzine Directory 2 (Aug); USA.
Fledgeling (no info); Australia.
Forthcoming SF Books 43-46; USA.
Gannet Scrap Book 5 (June); UK.
Gegenschein 33, 34; Australia.
The Hag and the Hungry Goblin 2; Australia.
Jumeaux 3 (May); USA.
Kamikaze (no info or date); UK.
Karass 36, 37, 38 (Nov - last issue); USA.
Locus 216 (Nov), 217 (Dec); USA.
Mad Scientist Digest 3 (July); USA.
Maya 15 (July?); UK.
The National Fantasy Fan Federation: TNFF 38/4, 38/5; Tighthead 12, 13, 14; USA.
Paperback Parlour Aug, Oct, Dec; UK.
Phosphene 7 (May); USA.
Rataplan 19 (no date); Australia.
Requiem 21, 22, 23, 24; Canada.
Rune 50 (no date), 51 (no date); USA.
Science Fiction 2 (June); Australia.
Science Fiction Review 25, 26, 27, 28; USA.
SF & F 2/5 (Winter), 6 (Summer); USA.
Space Age Books Newsletter 32 (Aug), 33-34 (Dec); Australia.
Spang Blah 19 (Summer); USA.
Spectre 1 (Sept); Australia.
Still More Dangerous Cruzzines 4; USA.
Strips 8 (no date), 9 (no date); New Zealand.
Tangent 7/8 (Summer); USA.
Tanjent 4 (July); New Zealand.
Thrust SF in Review 11 (Fall); USA.
Up The Tube 1 (June), 2 (Aug); Canada.
Warp 4 (May), 5 (July), 6 (Sept), 7 (Nov); NZ.
The Whole Fanzine Catalog 1 (Aug); USA.
Xenium 11 (June); Canada.
Yandro 242 (Jan), 243 (April), 244 (June); USA.

PUBLISHING INFORMATION: Continued from page 40...

Hutchinson Publishing Group (NZ) Ltd:

SURVIVOR - Octavia Butler (S&J \$10.40): First British edition.
LORD TEDRIC - E. E. 'Doc' Smith (Wingate \$9.95): First edition (?): Cover art by Pete Jones.
IN THE HALL OF THE MARTIAN KINGS - John Varley (S&J \$12.65): Collection; First Br edition.
SCIENCE FICTION SPECIAL 29: One volume edition of THE BEST OF HARRY HARRISON and THE BEST OF FREDERIK POHL (S&J \$15.70): First edition; Jacket art (?) uncredited.

Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd:

THE ULTIMATE THRESHOLD - Edited by Mirra Ginsburg (Penguin \$2.50): "A collection of the finest in Soviet science fiction"; First British edition; Cover art by Peter Cross.
WOMEN OF WONDER: SF stories by Women about Women - Edited by Pamela Sargent (Penguin \$2.95): First British edition; Cover art by Candy Amsden.

Wholesale Book Distributors:

Perry Rhodan 36: MAN AND MONSTER - K. H. Scheer (Orbit \$2.15): First Br edition; Cover art by PAJ.
Perry Rhodan 37: EPIDEMIC CENTRE: ARALON - Clark Darlton (Orbit \$2.15): Ditto the above.
BLACK HOLES - Edited by Jerry Pournelle (Orbit \$2.90): Collection; First Br ed; Cover art uncredited.
THE BEST OF ROBERT SILVERBERG (Orbit \$2.90): First Br edition; Cover art by Pete Jones (PAJ).

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

SF (AND RELATED) BOOKS PUBLISHED IN NEW ZEALAND - NOV & DEC 1978

- Listed in order under their NZ publishers and distributors

Associated Book Publishers (NZ) Ltd:

UNIVERSE FIVE - Edited by Terry Carr (Dobson \$10.80): First British edition; Jacket by R. Weaver.
UNIVERSE SIX - Edited by Terry Carr (Dobson \$10.80): First British edition; Jacket art by R. Weaver.
THE BOOK OF SKULLS - Robert Silverberg (Gollancz \$11.95): First British edition; Jacket art uncredited.
THE GATE OF WORLDS - Robert Silverberg (Gollancz \$8.65): First Br edition(?), Jacket by T. Oakes.
ODD JOHN - Olaf Stapledon (Methuen \$7.25): New edition; Jacket art by Joe Petagno.

Beckett Sterling Ltd:

THE ORANGE R - John Clagett (Popular \$2.25): First edition; Cover art uncredited.

Book Reps (NZ) Ltd:

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MIDDLE EARTH - Robert Foster (Unwin \$4.05): First British edition of the 1978 revised American edition (original edition, 1971 and 1974); Includes THE SILMARILLION

Wm Collins (NZ) Ltd:

EARTHWIND - Robert Holdstock (Pan \$2.95): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
MEDUSA'S CHILDREN - Bob Shaw (Pan \$2.50): First paper edition; Cover art uncredited.

Gordon & Gotch (NZ) Ltd:

THE BICENTENNIAL MAN - Isaac Asimov (Panther \$2.65): First British paper edition; Cover uncredited
THE DROUGHT - J. G. Ballard (Panther \$2.45): New edition; Cover art by Chris Foss.
LOW-FLYING AIRCRAFT - J. G. Ballard (Panther \$2.50): Collection; New edition; Cover art by C. Foss.
GEORGE LUCAS'S THX 1138 - Novelization by Ben Bova (Panther \$2.50): First British edition.
NEW WRITINGS IN SF 30 - Edited by Kenneth Bulmer (Corgi \$2.95): First edition; Cover art uncredited.
THE THREE DAMOISELS - Vera Chapman (Magnum \$3.95): One volume edition of a trilogy ("Arthurian Fantasy") containing *The Green Knight*, *The King's Damsel* and *King Arthur's Daughter*; Cover/Goodfellow.
THE CABAL Volume Two - Saul Dunn (Corgi \$2.75): First British edition; Cover art by Chris Achilleos.
SHINY MOUNTAIN - David Dworkin (Magnum \$2.95): First British edition; Cover art by Bob Fowke.
ORSINIAN TALES - Ursula LeGuin (Panther \$2.25): First British paper edition; Cover art by P. Goodfellow.
DRUNKARD'S WALK - Frederik Pohl (Panther \$2.35): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
THE KILLER MICE - Kit Reed (Corgi \$2.95): First British paper edition; Cover art by Pete Jones.
EARTH'S OTHER SHADOW - Robert Silverberg (Panther \$2.35): First Br edition; Collection: Cover/Hay.
THE BLOODSTAR CONSPIRACY - E. E. 'Doc' Smith & Stephen Goldin (Panther \$1.95): 5th in the Family d'Alembert series; First edition; Cover art by Chris Foss.
LAST AND FIRST MEN - Olaf Stapledon (Magnum \$3.95): New edition; Cover art by Peter Goodfellow.
LAST MEN IN LONDON - Olaf Stapledon (Magnum \$3.95): New edition; Cover art by Peter Goodfellow.
MAN AND THE STARS: Contact & Communication with Other Intelligence - Duncan Lunan (Corgi \$3.95): Nonfiction; First British paper edition; Cover art uncredited.
THE HIGH FRONTIER: Human Colonies in Space - Gerard K. O'Neill (Corgi \$2.95): New edition.
Star Trek Fotonovel 8: A PIECE OF THE ACTION (Bantam \$3.15): First edition.
Star Trek Fotonovel 9: THE DEVIL IN THE DARK (Bantam \$3.15): First edition.
OFFICIAL STAR TREK COOKING MANUAL - "Compiled by Mary Ann Piccard from the Logbook of Nurse Christine Chapel" (Bantam \$2.70): First edition.

Hodder & Stoughton Ltd:

BENEATH THE SHATTERED MOONS - Michael Bishop (Sphere \$2.95): First edition; Cover by Gambino.
WELCOME TO MARS - James Blish (Sphere \$2.75): New edition; Cover art by "PE" (Peter Elson).
THE YEAR OF THE COMET - John Christopher (Sphere \$2.95): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
DEUS IRAE - Philip Dick & Roger Zelazny (Sphere \$2.95): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
ANCIENT, MY ENEMY - Gordon Dickson (Sphere \$2.95): First edition; Cover art uncredited.
BEHIND THE WALLS OF TERRA - Philip Jose Farmer (Sphere \$2.75): Reprint; Cover art by "Melvyn".
THE GATES OF CREATION - P. J. Farmer (Sphere \$2.75): Reprint; Cover art by Melvyn.
MAKER OF UNIVERSES - P. J. Farmer (Sphere \$2.75): Reprint; Cover art by Melvyn.
A PRIVATE COSMOS - P. J. Farmer (Sphere \$2.75): Reprint; Cover art by Melvyn.
INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS - Jack Finney (Sphere \$2.75): Revised & updated edition.
THE PASTEL CITY - M. John Harrison (Sphere \$2.75): New edition; Cover art uncredited.
GUNPOWDER GOD - H. Beam Piper (Sphere \$2.75): First British edition; Cover art uncredited.
STARSHINE - Theodore Sturgeon (Sphere \$2.75): Collection; New edition; Cover art by Peter Elson.
VENUS PLUS X - Theodore Sturgeon (Sphere \$2.75): New edition; Cover art by Peter Elson.
MARUNE: ALASTOR 993 - Jack Vance (Coronet \$2.40): First British edition; Cover art uncredited.
THE FANTASY BOOK - Franz Rottensteiner (T&H \$8.95): First edition; Large format paperback.

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