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"Imperialist" American here, sans Continental spelling mis-takes. Subscription rates remain US\$5, £1.50, or £1.50 for six issues (local cash equivalents accepted, slurp!), either in cash or to postgiro account (NL-44113560). Payments by check cheque \$2 extra. Art is by Brad Foster, main title by Iain Byers, calligraphy by Iain and telephonic assistance by Roger Weddall of Australia. Back to your regularly scheduled European. . . .

Shards of Babel



Holland bids for 1990 Worldcon

Dutch fans announced their bid for the 1990 Worldcon under the slogan "Holland in 1990" at Aussiecon II in Melbourne. The bid was officially announced by token Dutch fan and SF writer Gerben Hellinga and Australian agent Justin Ackroyd, in a less official way, the Saturday night party crawlers could get acquainted with the Dutch bid at the victory party of the British 1987 bid, which was combined with a bidding party for Holland in 90.

The Dutch bid will make the 1990 race special for a number of reasons. To begin with, this would be the second time only that a Worldcon was held on soil of Continental Europe -- the previous one was held in 1970, at Heidelberg, West Germany. Secondly, Los Angeles has made it no secret that it intends to bid again for the 1990 Worldcon after having organized the 1984 Worldcon, so for 1990, an American and non-American bid will be competing against each other.

Both Lynne Ann and I are closely connected with the bid, so it may be clear where our preferences lie. We believe that more Worldcons out of the USA are good for fandom all over the world -- good for better and more contacts between fans worldwide, and good for some variety in Worldcons. We also think that a Worldcon in the Netherlands has the

potential to be a particularly good and memorable one.

The "Holland in 1990" bid got off the ground nine months ago, when a few New York fans voiced that it might be nice to have a Worldcon in the Netherlands. A group of Dutch fans picked up this idea, and for the last half a year have been seriously investigating the shape a Dutch Worldcon could get.

The "Holland in 1990" steering committee consists of Kees (chair) and Angelique (secretary) van Toorn, Lynne Ann Morse (publications) and Roelof Goudriaan (vice-chair and treasurer), backed by the heart of Dutch fandom and a rapidly growing network of international agents. Convention site of the proposed Dutch Worldcon is the Hague, the Netherlands Congressgebouw (Netherlands Congress Building), the site of among others the North Sea Jazz festival, annually held in July with more than 10,000 visitors.

Holland in 1990 takes pre-supporting memberships for US\$5, £4, 15 guilders or local equivalents. Send correspondence (and money...) to: "Holland in 1990", PO Box 95370, 2509 CJ The Hague, Netherlands. More news soon! --RG.



(REAL PARTY ANIMAL)

Iron Dream again put on Index

Norman Spinrad's novel THE IRON DREAM can once again be only sold from under the counter in Germany. After its appearance in 1981 in Germany, the federal inspection board for youth-threatening writings put it on the Index in 1982. A work put on the Index, while technically not banned, may not be sold to minors anymore in Germany, nor showed in places where minors might pick it up or see it. Advertising for the work is no longer allowed, etc.

After an appeal to a court in Münster by German publisher Heyne, the court decided to repeal the Indexing, and from 1983 onwards, THE IRON DREAM was obtainable again in Germany. Now, however, the federal inspection board has appealed to a higher federal court in Berlin: until this court makes a decision, the Indexing will be in force like before. And this could take quite a while.

THE IRON DREAM was published in the USA in 1972 by Avon Books. With this novel, Spinrad wanted to expose the alarmingly fascist traits of the sf and especially fantasy works of his colleagues. THE IRON DREAM contains a novel written in an alternate history where Hitler emigrates to the United States after WW I to become an sf writer. In LORD OF THE SWASTIKA we recognize both many of Hitler's wishful dreams turned into actual nightmare in WWII, and all too many standard ingredients in present-day fantasy.

The grounds of the repeal of the Indexing by the Münster court were mainly formal ones: the federal inspection board had not put THE IRON DREAM on the Index, but instead LORD OF THE SWASTIKA... [RG, with help from Dieter Schmidt]

Hugo Results

This year's Hugo Awards, announced at Aussiecon II: NOVEL: NEUROMANCER by William Gibson * NOVELLA: "Press Enter" by John Varley * NOVELLETTE: "Blood-

21 - 26 May 1985
Fanano, Italy.

Lynne Ann Morse reports:

World SF combined its meeting with the Italian national sf convention, Italcon. Attending Italcon was really the only reason I had to show up 2 days early in Fanano, Italy, for the World SF meeting -- I was travelling with Roelof, whose only reason for being at Italcon was that it immediately followed World SF... does something smell fishy here? Although we were there for the second of two days, we did get a flavor of the meeting. It was a bit intimidating, especially in its more business-like aspect. The panel discussion of American editors discussing what Non-Americans should do to get published was a good example. People like Frederic Pohl, Elizabeth Hull, and Harry Harrison sat in front of the crowd, virtually exuding "knowing-ness", not to mention that there was frequent commentary provided by people in the audience like John Brunner. This audience was not afraid to answer back, and occasionally challenge what most of fandom would accept as wisdom gained through experience. I felt very small.

Some of the advice, by the way, was rather surprising for me. A lot of attention was devoted to things that could be lumped under "Appearance: Don't freak the editor out. Don't make the editor's life difficult." They didn't quite accuse editors of being xenophobic, being editors themselves sometimes. But they pointed out that International Reply Coupons had a high "freak factor" (I'm roughly paraphrasing here) while stamps with "Healthy American eagles and flags", as Harry Harrison put it, weren't quite as likely to frighten an editor. Nor nearly as time-consuming -- American stamps on the return envelope made it much easier for an editor to return your story.

But authors (and their spouses, too) proved to be real people -- with a fan/author ratio of one to... oh, call it twenty, just for grins, an author wants to talk to whoever's in the chair beside him or her. Any time I said, "I'm just a fan," the answer to that would be, "Oh, come on now. What do you do?" With just a touch of exasperation. At times I caused some amusement, inadvertently -- when I called the panel mentioned earlier, "Interesting." I got an indulgent smile from Joan Harrison, and the reply "Oh, really? Well, you're young yet."

The World SF meeting wrapped up with a long, lazy afternoon in the bar, and a banquet served at the main hotel later in the evening.

The authors were invited to stay for Italcon, and quite a few of them did, to the enrichment of the convention. (And to the relief of Roelof, who found it difficult to strike up a conversation in English with any of the Italian fans -- English language education being less intense in Italy, I think, than in other European countries...)

The beginning of Italcon was quiet -- a group of fans and artists gathered around a table where someone had put two blank books and a pile of colored pens. This was a more fanish side to the Italians. One Yugoslav fan told me that to him, the Italians were almost not fanish at all because the major criteria for being a fan were what you wrote, and how seriously you wrote it. Then again, there was the crowd playing with pens and paper, trying to delight the eye and brain with sheer silliness, ... and later on, Italian fandom at its best and most playful, with the trivia quiz. Even someone not fluent in English could speculate enjoyably as the fans concentrated on a tough question, or alternately cheered and booed the answers.

The major panels did have a translator on hand, plus a few minor ones that took like yours truly volunteered for. My "job", translations into Italian for Forest Ackerman, was saved from total disaster by Angelo De Ceglie, an Italian author. Annarita Guorneri Tazzari did a heroic job of translating at a panel discussion of the state of sf in various countries. Many had something to say about the high reprint rate for English-language sf, but there was a cautious optimism, maybe, that local authors could not only break into their own country's market, but bring the flavor of their own culture to their stories instead of copying Anglo-American forms. John Brunner had his own tale to tell, a less upbeat one, of how his last novel had been rejected because it lacked just those things that identify sf to the general public (what I suppose a regular reader of sf would identify with "old fashioned sf"), and the editor was afraid it wouldn't sell because of that lack of easy recognition.

During that same panel the authors made some observations directly about Italian sf. Angelo De Ceglie pointed out that Italian sf tended more towards fantasy, and while Italy had a wonderful literary history, a weak point of the authors as a group was that they didn't consider the earlier works, to see if they could learn something from them. John Brunner added that he thought less attention was paid to the craft of writing in Italian schools, and aspiring authors were often without the sort of guidance that an English-speaking author could find at a writers' workshop. Then John had a minute to plug his own latest good news -- that of being invited to teach sf at an Italian university (SGB published his announcement in the last issue).

A running motif through Italcon was "the witch hunt". These were trials set up -- to the point of people putting on lovely Renaissance costumes -- to interrogate (and find guilty -- most of the time!) first the authors of sf in Italy, then the fanzine editors, the fans (where I was called as a witness, and required to swear upon an IBM manual), the women (again called, this time to talk in some magical tongue called English). This wasn't damning enough for the women were acquitted), the artists, and finally the Inquisitors themselves. All the guilty were to be "burned" Saturday evening.

Saturday evening first had a celebration that the town of Fanano was also invited to. That could hardly be helped, since it was held outdoors, on the main piazza. That was the only place big enough to stage, "The Dance of Love". It was quite elaborate, with announcements made from windows overlooking the piazza, stage lights, music from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century, and dancers. And a horse galloping through at the climax of the production. I overheard one comment, of a convention member, "How stupid! This is not the image we want to give to the public." I suppose I was a bit dismayed at the simple plot. But it was a labor of love for those working on it, and fun to see. (Childhood memories of running through the neighborhood at twilight, or dancing, always with one ear cocked for Mother's call to come home. Not tonight, not tonight, in Fanano.) Were they really doing it for "the public, the non-Italcon group, or for their fanish family? For fun..."

After the play a bonfire was lit, and the condemned were wheeled up in a cart. Then the committee members (the greatest portion of the condemned) took turns running up to the fire with one of their number in hand and then dropping him (or her? Most of the women were in skirts, but perhaps one of them was dressed to play rough rather than sit pretty) right at the fire's edge.

The night eventually became too cold, and the convention headed off to a bar for a drink. One interesting sort was passed around in a sort of covered pot, warmed. You could drink from one of four spouts, and the pottery warmed cold hands.

Sunday was for the Italians. They gave prizes for two writing competitions, and the Italian section of World SF had an official meeting. Looking back at the program, I'm surprised how much the Italians had wanted to do at Italcon. At times they were running on a half hour schedule for events that were to take place in the same room. Not surprisingly, the program was often late.

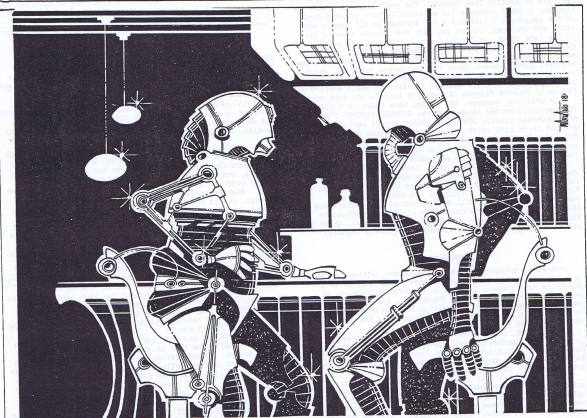
But that's easy to forgive, since that's almost a requirement at a convention. The Italians seemed pleased with it, since more than anything else it is a chance to get together and talk sf, or anything else, with other fans. --LAM.

Lynne Ann and I felt honest low-budget fans this Summer, so we had registered at the cheapest boarding-house in Fanano. When we arrived for our first meal, we were greeted in a friendly but slightly wondering fashion by a dining room full of East European fans and professionals. As it turned out, we were the only Western guests in the boarding-house. Or, as a Czech fan put it, "When I picked this boarding-house, I just knew I would meet this lot here!"

Faise note of the convention was the videotape made of the artwork of Dutch artist Karel Thole for Italcon, without his consent or knowledge. Just a few days before the con, Karel got a phonecall asking whether they could use the videotape for the Italcon programme... A touch of amateurism can be the charm of a convention, but not when rights of people are infringed. "sigh"

The deafening enthusiasm in the Vortex Quiz; the gesticulating melodrama of Angelo De Ceglie, playing his beaming audience; the good feminist fanzine by Patrizia Thiella and 'City Club'; Italian fandom is a good group of people. I'll have to learn Italian, one of these days... --RG.

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HOLLAND IN 1990

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1,800 to 2,000 people attended Aussiecon II, which had no prizes, and was organized by the 1987 Worldcon, Britain defeated the Phoenix, AZ bid with 400 to 100 votes. The Brits will name their Worldcon "Conspiracy"; announced Guests of Honour include Doris Lessing (pro), Ken and Joyce Slater (fan) and Dave Langford (special guest). The pound Sterling is doing well; as might the guilder, as the Dutch bid for 1990 was well-received. West-Australian fans announced a serious "Perth in 1994" bid. With the Hugo's, it was disappointing to see that only ten percent of the Australian members voted... After winning the Famine Hugo, Mike Glycer withdrew File 770 from competition in years to come. [based on info supplied by Roger Weddall]

Tamcon

19-21 July 1985
Tampere, Finland.

The first Finnish convention ever held was King-con, which took place in May 1982. However, King-con was partly organized by Sweden and for a part held on a ferry between Stockholm and Helsinki, so can't really count as the first all-Finnish convention. That honour goes to Tamcon I, held in Finland's second biggest city, situated on the inland.

Out of the circa 75 attendees I was -- as far as I know -- the only foreign visitor. As a Finnish newspaper put it, I was "the delegation from Sweden". The programme was mostly in Finnish, a small drawback for me since I don't speak a word of the language. I listened a few minutes to all panels and talks and then went out to the book and fanzine room to talk to the fans there. As far as I could make out, the most successful talk was delivered by Johanna Sinisalo, who talked about women in sf. The Guest of Honour of the convention, Tom Olander, gave a speech about the phenomenon "fandom", which was also received with enthusiasm. The most successful panel dealt with ways to write science fiction, in which members of the newly founded Finnish SF Author's Association took part.

For practical reasons, all films were shown in a bloc in an especially rented cinema. We saw ZARDOZ, ALTERED STATES and the German classic DER GÖLLEN. Other events worth mentioning are the ferry ride which the entire convention went on Friday evening, the destination being a recreation island where beer & sauna were at hand, and a special show at the Tampere Planetarium, for convention attendees only.

Media coverage was fairly good. Local by had a report from Tamcon in the news, and several newspaper articles about the convention appeared. My own impression is that this first all-Finnish convention was a success; and there are already rumours that the Finns will have an annual convention from this one on. Next year's convention might be organized by Finland's oldest sf club, the Turku SF Association, which will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. [Ahrrvid Engholm]

Sweden

John-Henri Holmberg and Per W Insulander, editors of Nova, have announced that they will organize a big Scancon 86 in Stockholm next Summer. It will be the 10th anniversary of Scancon 76 (which they also organized), the largest and in the eyes of many the best convention held in Scandinavia up to this moment. Scancon 76 had 500 attendees; Holmberg says that "this time we aim for a thousand".

At Sveccon 85, SEFF-winner Jim Barker was also present. Original SEFF-candidates were Steve Green and Hans-Jürgen Mader, but a last-minute campaign for Jim Barker started by Kaj Harju had such major results that of the 129 votes cast, more than fifty percent favoured Jim Barker...

Main press news is that the Nova SF Pocket line will split in two this September. Nova SF Pocket is published by Laissez Faire Produktion in Stockholm with a monthly schedule; the two lines will each be published monthly as well. One of the lines, "Nova SF Pocket", will be concentrating on more "nature" sf, while the other line, "Galax", will feature space opera for younger readers.

[Ahrrvid Engholm]

Bulgaria

The 4th "World of the Future" SF Festival, annually held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, will be made more international, as SOB correspondent Nikolaj Bliznakov writes. Many SF writers from different countries (including USA, Japan and Europe) will be invited, and the convention will be presented as parallel programme of the Expo-85 World Exhibition of Young Inventors, held in Plovdiv from 4 to 30 October, 1985. During the convention, the SF Museum "Centre of Imagination and Crazy Ideas" will be opened. For information about the convention, which will be held from 18 to 22 October, write to Nikolaj Bliznakov, Ul V Markov 4, 4000 Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

Obituary

Janusz Zajdel, Polish SF writer and every good one, died on 23 July. He has written about twenty novels and short story collections -- at first mostly of juvenile character. His breakthrough was LIMES INFERIOR, and extremely good piece of political SF, followed by PARADYZJA. Both books have been chosen as best Polish SF novel in polls organized in 1982 and 1984, respectively.

Janusz Zajdel was a trustee of World SF; he attended the recent meeting in Fanano. He died of cancer at the age of 47. [Wiktor Bukato]

Soviet Union

[Our latest correspondence out of the Soviet Union gives details of an issue of The Literary Gazette, which is "the organ," as Boris Zaslavsky puts it, "of the Board of the Writers' Union of the USSR." The news of interest to SF fans consists of high-level looking awards given on the 50th anniversary of the Writers' Union for "... services rendered in the development of Soviet literature. ... as an article on SF films in the USSR. Since I cannot read Russian, I'll let Boris take over here! --LA]

It was a pleasure to see among those decorated the names of writers who have written SF. Daniil Granin, whose story "The Place for the Monument" has won the admiration of his readers, was decorated with the Order of Lenin.

The Order of the Labour Red Banner has been given to the poet Nina Kazarova, who wrote several interesting SF stories, and to Vladislav Krapivin, the Sverdlovsk writer who is the laureate of the Leninist Komsovet Award, the laureate of the "Meltin-83" SF award, and who received the USSR Fan Prize "The Great Ring" for his story "The Children of the Blue Flamingo".

The Order of the Friendship of Peoples has been given to Chingiz Aitmatov, the author of the SF novel The Day After Tomorrow and a Century (Windswept Jerk-water Station) and to Leningrad poet Vladimir Shnefer, whose last novel The Debtor's Novel was recognized as the best one in 1982 by Fans.

The Order of the Token of Honour has been handed down to E. Volkskiyusky, who has written many SF books with I. Lukodiyanoz. (E. Volkskiyusky has been one of those responsible for the Moscow seminar of young SF authors for the last years.) Unfortunately E. Volkskiyusky has decided to give up SF and his last novel Kroustadt is devoted to a military naval theme that is well known to the author, a former seaman. Brenna Parnov, a remarkable SF writer known as a constant representative of the Soviet Union at Eurocons and Worldcons, has also been awarded the Order of the Token of Honour. His last SF story, "Wake up in Fanagusta", opens another page in the list of works devoted to the mysterious country of Shambhala...

(The Literary Gazette) also features a large, interesting article by V. Kichin, entitled, "Science Fiction: Forecast", and deals with problems facing the Soviet SF cinema. It points out that the SF cinema in the USSR remains a genre that is presently in the course of its development and not entirely out of its teething troubles. Much is to be done before it can reach real heights and utilize the potentialities peculiar to it. The article notes some of the mistakes in the latest SF movies such as "The Moon Rainbow", and "The Unique Man". "The Testament of Professor Dowel", and "The Secret of Her Youthfulness". It expresses concern that the books by the Strugatsky (brothers) cannot break into the screen life, while the Gorky Studio has completed the shooting of "The Seven Elements", based on the novel by V. Scherbakov, which is the weakest and the most incomprehensible work of the last years. The article concludes with suggestions of a way out of the present situation, namely organizing an international SF film festival, establishing of a centralized agency and creating technical facilities for the production of SF movies, among others.

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