

20p

# ZIMRI-5

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and others



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# ECOLIST

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Cover designed by:

Within: ATOM on page 58;

HARRY BELL on pages 53 & 37\*

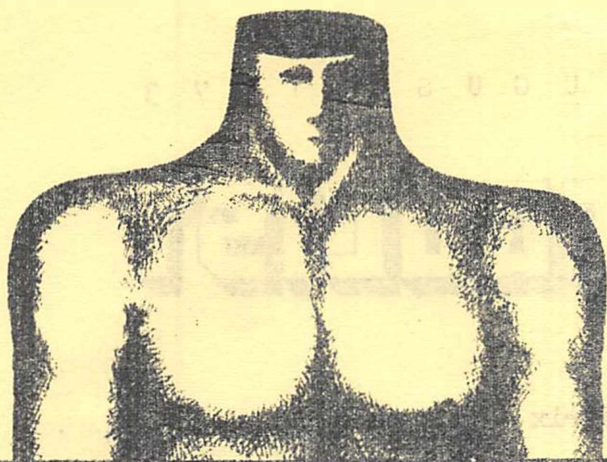
THOM PENMAN sent in illoe on  
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All else are either trouvages or illoes designed by your editrix & letraset.





# dialog

You've opened the fanzine and now you are looking at this page, and you're wondering aren't you? You're wondering just what I'm playing at this time; if you are a Roje Gilbert or some other professor or Hoax, you'll know instantly that title-wise I'm not addressing you in the English language. No, I haven't gone all foreign on you again, and no, Jo Withisone is not my Pru Freda again either. I'm going to talk about Modern Poetry and what I'm trying to do when I attempt to write it. Aa, all is suddenly made crystal clear and half the readers have turned over the page. And you, my imaginary soul-mate-fan-poet, you are wondering why I'm attempting such an impossible task... You're right, of course, it is impossible but you're willing to listen and I'm willing to try, so I'll tell it to you just how it was and why.

"Why don't you like Modern Poetry?" I asked a certain fan at the Bristol convention. "You mean the stuff you print in Zimri?" "Yes," I nodded enthusiastically - someone actually reads the stuff! "To be honest," he confessed unwillingly, "I'm not sure I understand it, and I'm not sure you do either." My eyes widened in surprise, "Well," he went on valiantly, "what the hell do you mean by the term Modern Poetry anyway?" I mumbled a few generalities, knowing full well that he wasn't really listening. However, what he said made me think. Perhaps the reason why some fen automatically bolt at the sight of anything labelled Modern/Contemporary/Whatever Poetry is because they lack confidence in the poet and the term itself.

The odd thing is that in the last issue of Zimri - 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  - there was the usual section labelled 'Poetry' to which I got the usual response, ie pathetic, and there was Ian Williams' Reflections of a Depression which could well have gone under the heading Poetry or Prose Poetry; this got quite a healthy response. People identified with Ian's state of mind or not, but they responded and were moved to write about it. I suspect (and I hope I'm not doing Ian an injustice here) that had I given this piece the label Poetry the response would not have been as good merely because this very label seems to grate on fannish sensibilities. I myself hate labels, feeling that they create fences, and possibly rules, and yet we do need them, if only for the sake of easy and economical identification.



Question: What then do we mean by the term Modern Poetry? Answer: Any poetry which has been written in our lifetime can be called Modern - regardless of its structural pattern - simply because chronologically the term is correct. I don't presume to lecture or educate anyone here, however, in order to explain what I'M trying to do today I have to go back to 'yesterday', so let us remind ourselves of a few basic facts.

Up to the XX-century there was almost no change whatever in the way poets expressed themselves. The 'word' in poetry was used in the same way it was used in everyday communication: a description of objects/whatever and no more. Thus it eliminated any possibility of double-meaning. The logical structure remained the same for thousands of years; there is hardly any difference between the way Homer used words, for instance, and Coleridge. And it was up to the late XX-century poet to give a swift blow right into the very heart of logical structure, the meaning of meaning of words and the way they were used in poetry.

The leaders of the 'cultural-revolution' were of course the futurists, dadaists and surrealists. Words tore themselves from the rigours of traditional composition, crowded themselves in without ties and found freedom. The hardest blow was delivered to traditional composition and composition in general - in relation to grammatical dependance. But that's not all, the subconscious was discovered, and it demanded different, peculiar to itself, modes of expression. For whereas logical composition is able to talk about the epidermis of consciousness: the depths of the unconscious can only be expressed by automatic recording of impressions. The poem then becomes an uncontrolled record of thoughts and visions, basically running free with unrestrained associations. The logical ties were broken with the conviction that the poetic-word can be something different. This was the beginning, the straightjacket was off.

The poet is free to use words his way; sometimes with conscious precision and economy, leading the reader into a lyrical experience rather than describe it for him. He uses metaphors not as decoration but as real and essential structural elements.

Words take on new shapes, the poet isn't merely concerned with different shades of meaning and emotion but a complete transformation of the word; from its sound to its semantic significance. Poetic dialog (or if you must, dialogue) becomes lavish and independent of prose. Its no longer enough to have rhyme or rhythm, a moving subject or the old poetic structures; every word has to change, become different in its very being.

This "difference" depends largely on the fact that it is not the word but the between-word which is important; on the currents between word and word; on the setting off of sparks by creative placing of words and phrases. The betweenword liberates visions determining the lyrical situation; the between-word liberates emotion.

We find ourselves in a world of metaphorical meaning which does not lend itself to verification on everyday level. The metaphor seems to be suspended in mid air, without terminal comparisons.

New compositions run in many different directions: a) breaking up of words into independent metaphorical particles and reorganising them into new growths or leaving them broken up; b) eliminating and using sounds with lyrical values regardless of metaphorical meaning; c) the linking up of alternative sentences or parts of sentences; d) application of irregular formation in a "sentence"; e) assembling words without any grammatical dependence; f) building structures without logical or apparent meaning and g) deviding such structures into sequences which are loaded with emotion.

These are but few of the more characteristic factors in Modern Poetry; a scaffolding upon which a poet builds. There are many, many more, amongst



them the avant-garde metaphorical structure, in other words: freely related conceptions, creating associations which have no basis in the real world. Since I'm trying to 'explain' what I am trying to do in some of my attempts I'll use myself to experiment with, . out of context:

Words swim higher than the boat of our thoughts.  
Oars pushed away the afternoon from our eyes.  
The swimming chapel of brass,  
from which apples dripping like prayers...

Here you have a stream of visions in which it is impossible to pick out words used in the real sense from the metaphoric. The plane of reality doesn't in fact appear at all, being wholly operated on the level of imagery.

The poem works (or is designed to work) through a stream of visions, not broken up into fragments but as one unit (swim, oars pushed away, the swimming chapel, apples dripping). This is by no means a 'classic' example of the 'great metaphor', merely my own attempt by which I illustrate the use of metaphor which has no literal sense, at the same time it is firmly anchored to a clear point: ("the boat of our thoughts"). Examine if you would the following poem:

in the rocky valley  
kneeling is a black crowd of nuns  
a huge owl in front  
emitting thick red smoke

eyes of the owl from inside  
with my soft  
mousy hair  
I rub

on my head  
two half-moons are dancing

mine is this valley  
ignoring

now into the owl's ear  
I'll drive a needle

ha ha hi hi

he hu

it'll scream

all at once

so that the nuns unprepared  
will explode unknowing

up

elevated

long black and shaggy  
like stone pines

and then I'll say stop

the main work  
by artificial afforestation  
will be finished  
in my kingdom

I have chosen this poem - one which at first glance might seem meaningless - because here I'm trying to use three of the most poetic elements: image, the element of sound in the words and their construction, as well as far reaching metaphors in individual images and the entire subject of the poem. The phrases are elliptical.

This arrangement is the direct result of composition. Each element or phrase creates a certain rhythmic whole. The first phrase graduating in minus; the

second symmetrical; third graduating in plus. On this falling and rising 'melody' I have tried to hang some elements of half-tone (rub-up); repetition (my - my) and onomatopoeic statement (ha ha hi hi he hu). All this determines the 'melody' of the poem.

As for images, they are placed in the fourth dimension: (by artificial afforesting of my kingdom) by way of intellectual speculation it should be possible (the kingdom of a poet - poetry) to draw out the 'proper' meaning: artistic problem, which is the subject of this poem.

The built-in metaphor becomes independent, and the image becomes real in itself (valley, nuns, owl), extended by way of metaphor into further dimensions (identifying subjective lyricism with the owl: I rub the eyes of the owl from inside is immediately followed by division: into the owl's ear I'll drive a needle) etc, etc.

Since I'm analysing my own (one clearly composed with this analysis in mind) the process is easy, working out someone else's might have been braver but the result would have been far from certain. Besides the whole point of this article is to try and give you some idea of what I often try to do with my poetry. There are many other things to be taken into account in present day poetry, not least of which is the fact that it lives and evolves in many, many directions; its aware of graphic space as its structural agent. The construction of a poem attracts, it is human, friendly, makes words move on the page...

Whether the road of poetical dialog will lead us to a complete separation from the language used in prose, and poetry become more figurative and subtle, thus more difficult to understand we don't as yet know. One thing is certain having liberated itself from former restrictions, the poet is free to let his imagination soar, experiment with words on many levels and reach heights of expression hitherto denied him.

I take my poetry very, very seriously (you may have noticed..), this 'explanation' here may or may not show you how some poems could be built, but it is up to the poem itself to tell you why - and more.

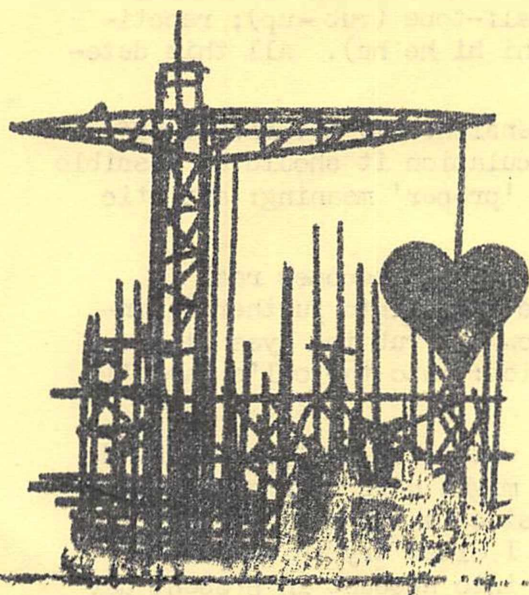
Contrary to fannish tradition I have NOT typed my words straight onto the stencil, oh dear me no. Long have I laboured writing and rewriting my words begging them to sound less pompous, more clear... Even so I leave you in despair, promising myself (and you) that it will be some time before I attempt the impossible again - if ever.

\* "Though contrived, this little story  
might well exemplify the mischief  
that involves us all who take on  
the job of turning real life into words.

Always the essential thing gets lost. That's  
one rule holds true of every inspiration."

\* - Jorge Luis Borges (The Moon)  
from A Personal Anthology - Pan Books, 45p.





# poetry

The first few poems are taken from HOMAGE TO THE EARLY POUND: fifteen poems, by Brian Aldiss. "Their history" writes Brian, "is this. I wrote them in true grief when Ezra Pound died earlier this year. Though I never took to the Cantos, his early poems once made a deal of difference to me..."

I was tempted to include all fifteen here, but managed to restrain my enthusiasm somehow. "The rest will be included in the Poetry Booklet I'm compiling for TYNECON '74 (they will also be read by Brian at the Poetry Soiree in Newcastle) as well as in the subsequent issues of Zimri."

## INNOVATION IN THE ARTS

Ezra, you, Pablo, and Igor!  
What fun you had, what vigor,  
What a romp through the house of Art!  
Yet, I can discern it, you're  
The guys who broke the furniture  
And pushed the goddamned walls apart  
To make bystanders snigger -  
You, Pablo, and Igor!

#### AT THE JULIUS CAESAR HOTEL

The dew is on the leaf  
And they are playing Ravel's Bolero

"How can you admire nights without music?"  
She asks - but we are both being precious.  
"Oh, darling," - sighs in the ineffectual  
Moonlight - "how hungry I am!"  
More caresses or a chicken danzak?  
Like many a heart-mad lover, I  
Settle for the lesser thing.  
After all, the lady's always willing,  
While the Indian restaurants close  
At midnight, moon or no moon.

The dew is on the leaf  
They are playing Ravel's Bolero

Sweet is the music of a breaking papadum

#### A MOMENT OF SUSPENSE

In the ginger field  
Two young stallions  
One black one white  
Frisk like an animated Stubbs

In our sedate pines  
Last of what were extensive woods  
The wind howls  
On its way to Bristol

In this moment  
With all its terraces  
And immense cycles  
Everything lasts forever



## WHILE FEEDING PARROTS, NOVEMBER 9

"No, of course there's no one else..."

Does she believe me? Her brow clears,  
She smiles, she does believe. And I?

I believe my words but not my fears.

Oh, if she only knew how much and by how far  
She was the only one! She would not ask  
Ever again, or even love me more,  
Feeling unequal to the task!

## BEATITUDES

Although I knew she was afraid of me  
And much preferred snowdrops to marigolds,  
I kissed her on the third floor, going down.  
By the ground floor, we were speaking again;  
I don't know what she was saying,  
But she was mispronouncing 'controversy'.

## EXIT AQUASCUTUM

By the time I decided to wake,  
She had left for her teaching job.  
Her clothes were strewn across the floor  
Like children's paintings. Well, we weren't

Exactly made for one another.  
"You're so unfashionable!" she'd said.  
I had a fixation about the permanent;  
She was mad about the transistory.

Outside, the air was inhospitable  
And I had arrived without my coat.

#### CREATION

Here I am again, back at my white desk,  
Labouring to create something worth while.  
To make words tell of vast empires  
Or recapture a woman's smile.  
This morning I'm speaking of suffering  
And trying to touch on darker things.

No wonder I'm so glad to seize  
The coffee my wife brings.

#### REJECTION SLIPS BY DOWSON

We have forgotten much, Faber & Faber,  
Written novels, laughing, with the throng.

As sure as Mammon is my neighbour,  
The weeping and the laughter are not long.

Brian W. Aldiss - '73

\* \* \* \*

#### HER MIDDLE NAME IS TRUTH

Tell me what you need and I will give it  
Tell me how you feel and I'll make it real  
Only have faith even if I don't  
And all the plagues and irritations I'll seal  
Out of your universe and you won't  
Ever have to cry again

John Nielsen Hall - '73

\* \* \* \*



EYES OF A WOMAN --- FROM A PORTRAIT BY PICASSO (In Homage to Pablo (Ruiz)  
Picasso. 1881 - 1973)

I miscalculated looking into her eyes.  
They were of alien dimensions. Three open pupils  
on the firmament of one face. As  
if I were counting stars somewhere in contiguous skies  
double images through reflecting smooth rivers,  
in a mirror where as well as nimble fish  
and golden sands, billowed the hair of the drowned.

With soundless motion?

Yes. And the sand was right at the bottom of  
the galloping river. Over it the Seine  
flows combed by a flat little bark. A small  
steamer and a swift yacht  
with white wings of a dove instead of sails.

It was here

where the eyes really were. Triple brilliant  
written on a face which I no longer remember.  
Yet there was a face. Cut with lines  
stiff but very human, plucked out of time  
which was yet to come. Hence the excess of pupils  
fixed biting like eyes of a snake  
reflecting themselves.

--- I don't know, I don't remember!

But I see those eyes, see them today, here  
in the window of my house. Coming through the glass  
through hair which time  
unglues from my skull  
through the body crevices  
through the pith of spine.  
Eyes of a woman from a portrait by Picasso ---  
my eyes.

IN TIME

lisa conesa

In time meadows full of flowers  
In time the moon cold and foaming  
In time green trees  
In time winds In time  
Night is day  
To night

In time  
Birds for birds In time  
And even we deserve some time

E quar fin amor men some  
For time  
Everything In time  
That meeting in greenery Who  
Waited for me For whom  
The yellow thrush was singing

In time

You leave and return In time  
Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day  
In time

The thrushes weeping  
In time regret In time  
Marjolanna worthy lady  
In time everything

## THE GREY ALEGY

Look, stranger on this Island once more.  
Silhouette cities of mad shadows.  
Phallic towers to rent the turgid skies  
that fear no gods  
that squat upon the mound of  
epileptic history  
of a thousand dead empires  
that grew from their graveyards  
of many slain heroes of many proud races  
of rotting cobbles from streets of insanity.  
Thrusting horns of Asgard,  
thrusting wings of Beowulf,  
beyond Om silence.  
Beneath ontological black star fuming,  
twisted warriors lie exhausted  
by centuries of myth-murder,  
upon sun-less rocks,  
by tracts of dead Sargasso ocean  
of purgatory worlds  
raped by lunatic cripples while  
gutter beggars dance and whore  
to break the spell of their weaving.  
Cosmic ventriloquy that goads with promises  
the mindless sperms to create  
grass from between the lips of a corpse.  
Life forced unwillingly upon  
sedimentary refuse of eons.  
Look, stranger, on this Island once more,  
while still there are eyes that can see.

- Andy Darlington

## A SECOND SKIN

like second skin  
that can't be sloughed  
at will, no matter how  
sluffed you are,  
until the time is ripe  
the snake cannot appear  
nor bone begin to wink

yes till the time  
eviction from  
your body is begun,  
the world remains as tight  
on miser you or drunkard me  
as the 9 layers of wallpaper  
that alone hold up a wall  
whose plaster otherwise  
would all be sure to fall

& let the empty damp creep out

steve sneyd - '72



TED TUBB

Dear Lisa,  
Have just  
cleaned my typewriter  
which was a wild and  
stupid thing to do...

...and one I do very rarely because I don't really know how. However, after blowing off an accumulation of cigarette ash and rubbings I drenched it in petrol and then, working on the assumption that every moving part needs oil, then drenched it with oil. The inevitable result is that the damned thing's gone all sticky and the keys move as if through quicksand. So I've just drenched it with petrol again and am writing this to get the machine back into some kind of working order. Why the explanation? It covers the undoubted mess of typos I'm going to make, the misspellings etc. And it proves once again the sense in the old adage - leave well alone.

A thing, when you come to think about it, that politicians never do. As soon as they get into power it seems they look around to find what they can interfere with. Is there something the public enjoys? Ban it. A scrap of personal freedom which, so far has been overlooked? Regulate it. The one thing about power, in fact the sole attribute which makes people want it, is the ability to enforce their will on the rest. Every damned government has added to the restrictions - and not one that I know of has ever lifted a ban, a limitation or in any way has added to personal liberty. A blind eye may be turned to things like pornography - but the laws are still there and, at the moment, are being enforced. And don't try to walk naked down the street. There is no law against it - but they'll grab you for conduct likely to cause breach of the peace. In this freedom-loving (freedom for whom) so called democracy of ours you can't win.

Oh well.  
Start again;  
Dear Lisa...

...they keys are a little easier now and the alternative to writing this is to work and the aim of all Mankind and the sole purpose of living - from one point of view at least - is not to work but to have fun. To which should be added the qualification that work, by definition, is something you would rather not do - if you want to do it it isn't work but fun. So, in heaven, you would pick the jobs that need to be done and which you like doing. In hell you are forced to work at what you don't like doing at jobs that don't need to be done.

End of philosophy.

Talking about book reviews I have yet to come across a reviewer the equal of Algis Budrys who used to appear in *Galaxy*. His reviews always twanged a sympathetic string in my heart and the times when he didn't actually review books but, in a sense, reviewed authors, not in particular but en masse, showed that he has a keen insight into the problems attending creative endeavour. One of the things he pointed out, and with truth, was that writing holds occupational hazards one of which is the inevitable loss of reading enjoyment. And this is because a writer cannot remain wholly detached from what he is reading - always the critical faculty is at work.

So you pick up a best seller and read it and love it to stare bleakly into space while within the skull the mind buzzes with baffled fury. This is good? This has sold? This is what is wanted? My Ghod! Why, oh why, have I been wasting my time when crap like this gets the praise?

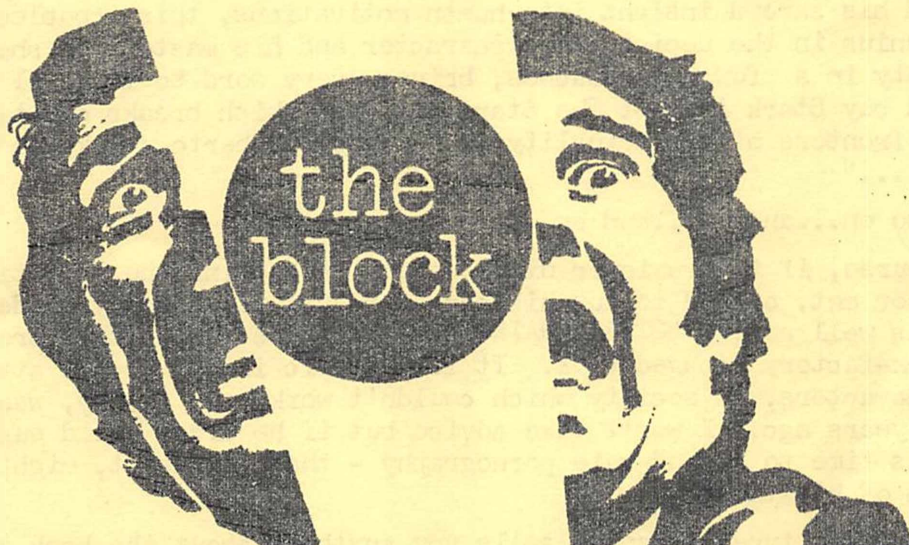
Or:

This is good! This should sell. This must be what is wanted! Why have I been wasting my time attempting the impossible!

So dump the paper and sell the typer and get a nice, quiet, comfortable job clipping tickets or sweeping up leaves and stop trying to attain the giddy heights of professional success.

Of course we rarely do.

There are other hazards, naturally, dare I mention the financial instability? The loneliness - writing is a very solitary occupation - no matter how extroverted the author might appear when in company, what over-compensation he might make, or the facade of a rich, full enjoyable life he might present basically, when he is working, he works alone.





And I mean alone. No one can help him, it's all up to him and either he makes it or he doesn't. And no matter how big the room or how luxurious, when working his world diminishes to the span of a sheet of paper - and then, of course, there is the BLOCK.

Every artist knows of it, everyone engaged in creative endeavour. Everyone has experienced it, for some it lasts a short while, for others a long, but it is always the same. The head turns into a steel ball hanging between the ears. The imagination withers. The very desire to work fades and dies and is replaced by a terrible antipathy to the entire thing. You don't want to write. You can't think of what to write. The fingers rebel, the head aches, the eyes twitch. The soul shrinks and depression comes in a wave. You are mentally impotent. Hell is very near.

There are ways to beat it and everyone has their own. Some will roll in a sheet of paper and write regardless of what they are writing, just putting down words and using the fingers knowing that, if they do it long enough, the BLOCK will vanish. Others take a long, long walk. Some get drunk. Others take temporary jobs. Most just have to wait, never certain that the BLOCK will go, yet knowing that it has happened before and passed, and yet... And yet...

"For sale. One used typewriter, dictionary ditto, paper, carbons and erasers. Ex-author emigrating. Cheap for quick deal."

It happens.

And then, of course, there are the critics.

I suppose that book reviews should not really be included in a list of occupational hazards, but they are real and they are there. And it will never be known just how many young writers have been permanently damaged by a too-effusive review any more than it will ever be known just how many have been blasted by a bad one to cringe and crawl quietly away never to touch a word again.

And the thing about it, the one thing which makes normal writers scream and froth and beat their women, is that the average reviewer doesn't know what the hell he is talking about.

What I mean is they aren't reviewing the book at all - they are simply airing their own opinions and personal preferences.

Illustration.

How often have you read a book and then read a review of that book and wondered if both you and the reviewer have read the same work at all? Or done it the other way around? The normal review seems to consist of a pundit pontificating:- "In his latest book X has shown once again his mastery of the language and his shrewd insight into human motivations, this, coupled with his undoubted genius in the depiction of character and his mastery of showing a future society in a few deft touches, brings every word to life. I urge to rush out and buy Stark Against The Stars, a novel which breaks old taboos and extends the frontiers of neo-sexuality in a manner hitherto unknown in the genre....."

And so on...and on...and on...

Of course, if the reviewer didn't get a free drink the last time he and the author met, or had to buy his copy, or just felt bloody-minded, we could just as well get:- "STARK AGAINST THE STARS is yet another production from the hack-factory managed by X. It is pathetic in its feeble attempts to depict characters, a society which couldn't work and, anyway, was done better by Y years ago. X won't take advice but if he did I would suggest that he devote his time to second-rate pornography - that, at least, might be within the realm of his talent."

And neither type of review tells you anything about the book at all.





The way to review a book, the only honest way, is to first determine just what the author intended to do then decide whether or not he did it well. For example: if I write a space opera it has to be judged as that, not compared to a of philosophical discussion on the impact of aliens with men. And, equally so, a novel based on the impending explosion of the sun can't be judged on the same plane as one in which three men and one woman are cooped up in a space ship with only enough air to last two of them to planetfall. Or one in which giant ants pour from a Martian ant hill to chomp the colonists. Some things, naturally are universal. Good writing in the sense that it does not offend and conveys keen entertainment - which is what writing fiction is all about. Logical development of plot and response of given characters to present situations. But don't blast an action story because it is just that and you don't happen to like action stories. And don't laud a book because it contains a heavy sex element and you happen to be a randy cowson. Judge each work on its own merits. If it's bad say so and say why. If it's good ditto. If you can't do that then you shouldn't be reviewing at all.

And so we come to another of the author's occupational hazards - and for the purpose of this screed the last. It is the Visitor.

The visitor is male, young, very keen and dedicated, knowing just what the author is doing wrong and willing to say so. He hasn't phoned in advance because that way he can be put off and, anyway, to phone would be polite. Instead he rings the bell and stands on the doorstep and you have the choice of either slamming the door and getting the reputation of being a hard-hearted, selfish, callous son-of-a-bitch, or letting him in for a cup of tea. As you are a tender-hearted, polite and were young once yourself you let him in. The first time, anyway - we all have to learn.

Let's fictionalise the rest.

The room was just a room with a table and a couple of chairs, only two because visitors were rare and the ones he liked to call weren't really interested in sitting down not when there was a bed in the other room. A dream, he thought, such people never called, but his trade was in the creation of dreams and surely the Great Scribe above would not begrudge him this little fantasy? And now instead of a lisson shape and a yearning dedication which would bring her to her knees at his feet eager to listen to the pearls of wisdom he knew, so well, could flow like a limpid stream, he had this young man. Looking at him the Tired Old Author - hereinafter known as Toa - sighed. Well, he thought, each of us has his cross to bear. But this cross promises to be heavy. First he arrived late and Toa knew just what that implied. Second he had that Look. Third - Toa narrowed his scrutiny seeing what he had expected to see.



The uniform of jeans, anorak, long hair and beads. And, of course, the beard. They always wore a beard. And he would be intense and probing and a little rude. Once he could have matched it but now he was old and tired and life was grey.

Bleakly he reached for a bottle.

"You drink a lot," said the Bearded young Man - herinafter known as Bym - "Do you find it helps your creative faculty?"

A grunt as Toa poured and drank and poured again, his hand and arm were moving with ingrained reflex action as if containing a life and will of its own. Many years, he thought grimly, too many years. When did I take the first drink? How long has it been since I poisoned my metabolism with noxious liquors? Too long, he decided. One day I must break the habit. To be clean again, unsullied, free from the dependance on the vile juice. And yet... And yet...

"I tried mescal once," said Bym. "And a little pot and a couple of times some lsd. I must say that it expanded my consciousness and showed me the realms beyond the obvious. I think an authors duty is to explore those regions, don't you? I mean, in your last book - "

"Latest," grunted Toa, he was touchy about such things. "You said, last," he explained. "I'm not dead yet."

"Well, that's right, but -." Bym looked at the bottle. "May I?"

To drink alone was a mortal sin. Toa filled a second glass, wary as he poured. Maybe the sprout would get drunk or pretend to get drunk and then honour would force him to provide a bed for the night. Booze, bed and breakfast, he thought grimly. That's what the guy was really after. A free flop for the night and what did he have to offer in return?"

"I called you because of something of yours I read a short while ago." Bym sipped the glass. "I can't remember the title but, man! it was wonderful! Such a tender grasp of human motivations, such a fine development of character, I'm not lying when I tell you that it was the finest thing ever to come my way."

Toa said, "What was it?"

"I can't remember the title, but it was really great."

A ploy, thought Toa mildly amused. To probe would be useless. To mention a title would be worse. A handle was all the bum needed and then would expand into a rhapsody of enthusiasm, taking care, of course, not to pin himself down. A sure way of flattering any writer but he had bumped into it before. He frowned, remembering the old pain, the bleak confrontation when he had finally realised that the gushing young thing hadn't read a damn word he had written but was



using the ploy to gain an introduction to someone else. Someone she had read. That was the part which had hurt.

"The thing is," continued Bym intensely, "I have this great idea for a novel. I can't write it myself, for one thing I lack your talent, for another I haven't the time, but it's something you could do really well."

"What is it?"

"Well -" The old, familiar veil dropped over the eyes. "Well, you know. A great idea like mine - I can hardly give it away now, can I?"

"So?"

"Well, I thought we would collaborate. I give you the idea and you knock it into shape and then we split the proceeds down the middle. That's why I really came. After I read that thing of yours - I wish I could remember the title - anyway, after I read it, I thought, that's the one man who could use my idea. It'll make us both rich," He added. "Hard cover first then paper-back, foreign rights and then the film. Maybe it'll go into a television serial."

Toa said, "Have you written anything yourself?"

"Some poems. I haven't written a novel yet, I haven't the time. I mean, I'm busy travelling around."

"Why?"

"Why do I travel? Well, I guess I've got to find myself, you know."

"I can help you there," said Toa. "You are, at this moment -"

Bym stared at him, unbelievably. "I don't mean my actual location," he blurted. "I mean, I've got to find a purpose in life. Why am I here? Why was I born? You catch?"

Too well. Toa reached for the bottle. Another nut, he thought. And a male one at that. With a woman he could have - The arm did its job.

"Well, what do you say?"

Toa could have said to hell with it and kicked him out but it was late and the booze was beginning to take effect and the alternative was to go back to work and he didn't want to do that. He had three characters trapped in a cave by a giant slug and spiders, poisonous, were dropping from the roof, their guns were exhausted and the girl was hurt and he had stopped because he couldn't see how the hell they were going to get out. Tomorrow, maybe, he would know, but tomorrow was hours away.

The glass, he discovered, was empty. I drink too much, he thought, and smoke too much and think too often about women. I'm rotting my lungs and liver and the other thing is playing hell with my equilibrium. And now this creep wants to sell me an idea.

He said, "Just what is this notion you have?"

"My idea?" Again the veil. Like all non-writers Bym had an inflated idea of the value of a story-concept. He had yet to learn that ideas didn't make a story. There were other things.

ASIDE: Note to Aspiring Authors 1 - hereinafter known as Ntaa.

It has been said, and with truth, that there are no new ideas - only new treatments of same. An idea is the barest of skeletons on which to build the flesh of the story and, particularly in the case of a novel, it isn't enough. We are talking about novels. The idea must be expanded into a plot, one or more sub-plots added, characters formed, scenes determined, situations developed, and a correct blend of narrative, dialogue and description merged into a whole. An overabundance of one can only be achieved by the sacrifice of another. Like a cook making a cake, the proportions are determined by the



author to the success or failure of the final product.

Continue.

"Look," said Toa. "You think your idea is of value, right? Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. You trade me one for one. For example, as a starter how about this for an idea? The gardner is mixing up a new fertilizer to increase the size of his marrows. It does that and more, it increases the size of the insects around and before we know it we have huge ants & wasps & beetles running around chomping up people and smashing down houses and threatening the very lives of the human race. Got it?"

"I think so - hasn't it been done?"

"A few times, maybe," admitted Toa. "But so what?" You can give it a face-lift. Have the gardner a girl research worker, set the scene on Mars, make the insects develop intelligence - hell, use your imagination!" The level of the bottle, he noted, was way, way down.

"Well -" Bym looked uncomfortable. "My idea isn't exactly like that."

"What is it?"

"It's different."

"How?"

"It has a deeper social significance."

"In what way?"

"It reaches into the basic formation of mankind and illuminates hidden mysteries."

"You're certain?"

"Yes."

"Absolutely positive?"

"Yes."

"I'll say it again," said Toa. "Your idea is different to mine. Right?"

"Right."

"That's what I thought you said. A different idea to mine."

"Yes."

"A better one?"

"Yes."

"I see."

NTAA 2: - Between the first word of a novel and the last there is an awful lot of space which has to be filled if the buyer of a book doesn't want a notepad. Padding is a bad word to authors, but at times a little can be an asset. The above is an example of obvious stretching. When it becomes obvious it becomes bad. The trick is to use it and not make it obvious. Of course, the Ideal Novel would not contain one unessential word. As yet the Ideal Novel has not been written.

Continue.

Bym swallowed his drink and held out his glass for more. "I'd like to trust you," he admitted. "But, you know, you hear staries. A lot of authors pinch their ideas - or so I've been told. Look, suppose I tell you about it and you write it down and sign it and then, if you use it later without telling me, I'll have something to prove it was mine in the first place."

For a guest he was being very tactful. Toa felt a rising tide of anger and quelled it with an effort. He said, "Forget it. Don't tell me. I don't

want to know."

"But it's a wonderful idea."

"So you keep telling me. Do you know how long it takes to write a book? A long time. How long will it take you to tell me your idea? Minutes, if that. A bit of yak with no sweat and you want half? Maybe you should leave?"

"Would you be willing to buy it?"

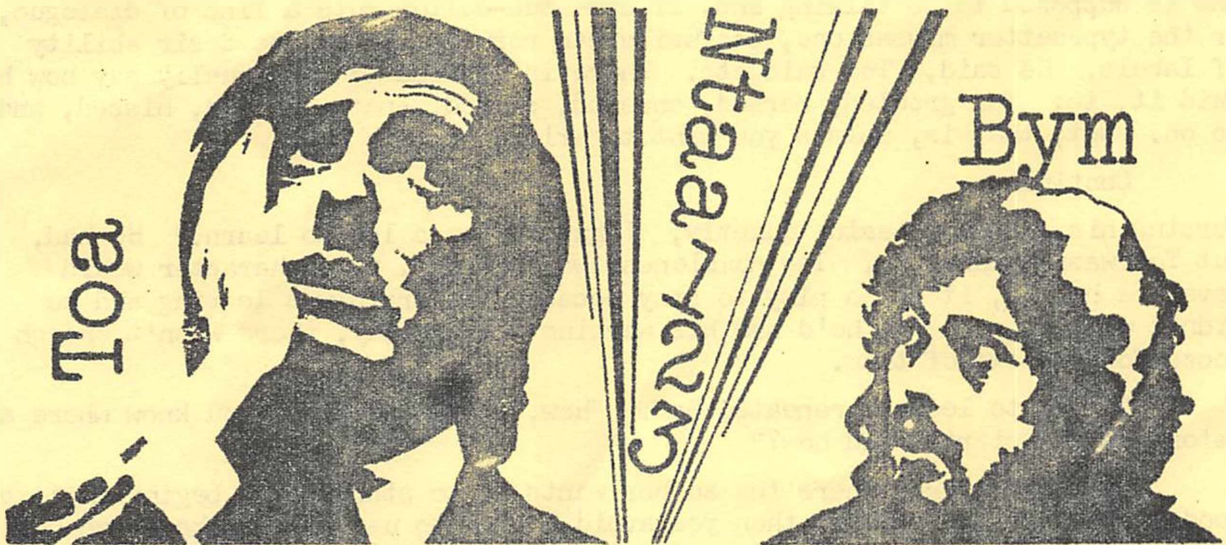
"An idea? No."

"A synopsis then?"

"Have you got one? No? That's what I thought. Well, it's been nice meeting you. Your last brain leaves in thirty minutes."

"Listen," Bym had decided. "The idea," he said. "If you use it then, maybe, you'll think of me. Right?"

Toa said with feeling. "I'll never forget you."



"Well now, it's like this. We have this old and ancient race and their world is on the edge of destruction so they build a ship and put into it a man and a woman. The man's name could be Adam and the woman's Eve. They leave and land somewhere and have all sorts of trouble and the ship has a computer which they musn't touch and the woman does and then - " He broke off, Toa wasn't listening. Instead he had risen to return with a black-leather book which he threw on the table. "What's that?"

"The original," said Toa. "They land, of course on Earth. Surprise, Surprise!"

"It's been done?"

"Moses wrote the first version."

"So it's no good?"

"Sure it's good." Mollified Toa helped himself to more liquor. "A strong plot, human frailty, a villain lurking in the woodwork, battle, murder and sudden death. One of the best books ever written. You should read it when you get the time."

"I see."

"They give them away, you know."

"They do?"

"In hotels."

"I don't stay much in hotels."



"You could pick up one cheap."

"From a bookshop?"

"Some bookshops."

"The big ones?"

"Yes."

"I'll remember that."

"You remember it."

"I will."

"You'll enjoy it."

"I think I might."

"A lot of people have."

"They must have."

"It's a best seller."

"Yes?"

"Yes."

NTAA 3:- Not another example just of padding, though it is that, but an illustration of the need to identify. After a while the reader tends to forget just who is supposed to be talking and, if some sub-editor cuts a line of dialogue, or the typesetter misses one, confusion can result. Hence the desirability of labels. He said, Toa said etc. There is no need to continually say how he said it, ie: Toa growled, barked, sneered, smiled, spat, snarled, hissed, and so on. Not, that is, unless you want to write a crummy book.

Continue.

Nursing his glass Bym said, quietly, "I guess I've a lot to learn." He had, but Toa wasn't taken in. The humbleness was a front, this character would never be humble, it was a ploy to stay because the train was leaving and he didn't want to go. But he'd had his warning and, anyway, there wasn't enough booze for the two of them.

"A lot to learn," repeated Bym. "How, for example, do you know where a story should start? And how?"

"A story starts where the author wants it to start. The beginning is as good a place as any because then you avoid having to use flashbacks. And how? Well, each to his own. The only general rule, I think, is that if the reader's interest isn't held then he won't bother to read on so all the rest is a waste."

"A hook?"

"Could be."

"Action?"

"If you're writing that sort of book." Toa glanced at his watch (See?).

"It depends. You haven't much time if you want to catch the last train."

"I -"

"Go, man!" Urged Toa. "Go!"

Alone he sat looking at the bottle, the ash in the ash tray, the empty space where his visitor had left something undefinable. A smell, he decided, odd how those who were so eager to find themselves never took the trouble to make sure they'd be welcome once they arrived. Or maybe it was just himself. These people upset him with their supreme conviction that they knew it all, that they were right and he and all his kind were wrong. Old, he thought, that is true enough, but why, oh why, don't they realise that they too, one day, will be old. And that in the weary journey through life some of us, at least, may have learned a little on the way.

He was getting maudlin and more than a little drunk. Not drunk, he corrected himself, simply unwound. The night was still young if you counted time from midnight. Time enough to set down an idea. Not Bym's, but the other.

The giant ants - action could be got from that. Intelligent ones with an infinite depth of understanding of the human condition.

Idly he considered titles. "Message found in a hollow bone thrown on the English shore by the midnight tide?"

Too long, he decided. It wouldn't fit the covers, lacked punch and who could remember to spout that mouthful when asking for the book. "Alien Fury" perhaps? Or, Terran Gods of the Anters Chiton of Charn? Death all around us?"

He shook his head, undecided, but a title would come eventually, that he knew. In the meantime there was unfinished business. A mag sent for his perusal and comment and one he had enjoyed as he had enjoyed the thought behind it. Concern, thought, a reaching and touching, if only by proxy - at least he hadn't been forgotten.

The machine was still gummy but it would work. As he sat a fragment of an old song drifted through his aching mind.

"As I sat at the typer, tired and ill at ease, and let my fingers wander, idly over the keys -"

How did it go now? Never mind. It was time for him to get down to it.

Dear Lisa, he typed and paused before continuing.

Dear Lisa,  
Have just  
cleaned my typewriter  
which was a wild and  
stupid thing to do...

E. C. Tubb - 1973



# book *DR* Reviews



THE HAUNTER OF THE DARK by H.P. Lovecraft. 256 pages Panther - 35p  
 DERNI RISING by Katherine Kurtz (ISBN 345 09771 8 ) 271pp  
 DERYNI CHECKMATE by Katherine Kurtz (ISBN 345 09772 6) 302pp  
 both Brom Pan-Ballantine @ 40p each

Reviewed by George Hay

Remember van Vogt's SLAN? Well, take a persecuted Slan minority, transfer them to a world parallel to ninth to eleventh century Wales, add some psi-type magic ---even the odd matter-transmitter---savour with the trappings of religion, and you're away. Sword and sorcery indeed..to the tune of two thick paperbacks totalling five hundred and seventy-odd pages of plot and thickening counter-plot.

The heavy odour of midnight oil and the sounds of tushery made these novels heavy going as far as I was concerned. "Resolutely, she crossed the chamber..a young minstrel strummed softly..Perhaps here..she could find the inner peace she so desperately needed for what lay ahead...A faint shudder crossed her frail shoulders." Oh dear. And there is worse. "As he scanned the chamber...As he compleated his visual circuit..Resolutely she yanked the bell-pull." Miss Kurtz, we are told, has taken her masters in Medieval English History (note the capitals)



and graduated from the University of Miami with honours in the humanities. But she also took a major in chemistry (lower-case, that), and has worked in television and law enforcement--among other things--and it is clear enough from her prose which of these was the stronger influence, and the worse.

These things apart, I found it odd that, for all the ecclesiastical courts, Archbishopsrics, Councils, Chambers, and the rest, there seemed to be no discussion at all of what religion is about. The whole story hinges on the opposition between magic and religion, but the distinction between these two is treated as given, the nature of the theology involved being given the total go-by. If Miss Kurtz didn't know better, Lin Carter should have; in his introduction to DERNYI RISING he says. "It is something of an innovation that so much of the plot and intrigue of this novel revolve around the religion extant in that world, for religion per se is quite strikingly absent from most imaginary world romances of this kind." True, and for that reason it is a shame that Miss Kurtz, having had the intelligence to use the theme, then muffed it.

I must add in fairness that the plotting is carefully done, that the action moves along well, and that the cover illustrations are first-rate. My complaint, I suppose, is that these could have been wonderful books if someone else had written them..As it is, we have a good theme, adequate as to plot, indifferent as to characterisation, plagued by cliches, and with all depth suppressed.

What a change to go over to dear old H.P. Lovecraft! He, too, committed solecisms, and yet, his are worlds to which one returns almost with a sense of solace. Here is genuine hokum, pokum without built-in internal contradictions. What relief to know we can always come back to "witch-cursed, legend-haunted Arkham, whose huddled, sagging gambrel roofs and crumbling Georgian balustrades brood out the centuries beside the darkly muttering Miskatonic." Ten of Lovecraft's best stories and an introduction by August Derleth, all for 35p--value indeed. "I do not think I shall visit the Arkham country hereafter", says the protagonist of one of these tales. But we shall, Sir, we shall!

Geroge Hay.

TALES FROM THE GALAXIES edited by Amabel Williams-Ellis and Michael Pearson.  
126pp Pan Books @ 25p

Reviewed by Jim England

I am an ignoramus about some things, and one thing that has often puzzled me is how collections of SF stories get to be edited. In particular, why do stories by famous authors have to be edited by people whose names appear prominently on the covers? My dictionary says that to "edit" may mean simply to "set in order for publication". This seems one hell of an easy job -- if no more is done --and since there is presumably some financial reward for it why don't more people get the chance to do it? Can anybody explain? I assure you I am not trying to be sarcastic, and genuinely would like to know.

Anyway, this is a collection of four short stories plus a comic strip, aimed at young readers, that starts off with The Red Stuff by John Wyndham. The red stuff is a kind of organic jelly that spacemen find on an asteroid. It seems to need nothing but light for sustenance and has a habit of spreading over everything it contacts. Fire is the only thing that will destroy it. A spaceship which gets covered with it is sterilized by revolving under the jets of another spaceship. But traces of it are brought back to, and start to multiply on the Moon. The ending is left to the reader's imagination. Fine -- if you can believe in a carbon-based life-form that thrives and multiplies in the vacuum of space on the hull of a spaceship.

Miss Inman and the Kloots by Amabel Williams-Ellis is unfortunately written in a rather tongue-in-cheek style and sounds like a childrens' bed-time story, but



it poses an interesting question. Is it safe to assume that alien creatures without a language must be unintelligent?

The Odour of Thought by Robert Shackley also poses an interesting question. How would it be possible to escape from blind creatures which hunt their prey by detecting thoughts?

Exploration Team by Murray Leinster, the longest story in the collection, is good old space-opera from Astounding SF which I read in '56. I remembered it from then -- the "sphexes" (animals so dangerous they make a planet uninhabitable by men), the long mountain journey with domesticated and friendly bears as companions, the moral that robots can never be trusted to handle the unexpected, the happy ending. It all came back to me. This long story has all the ingredients of good space-opera. It can be read and re-read with enjoyment. It rescues this collection from mediocrity and makes it, at only 25p, well worth having.

GOLD THE MAN by Joseph Green 224pp from Pan Books @ 30p

This is a novel with not just one audacious theme, but several. Imagine this state of affairs at some unspecified time in the future: The Earth, for the past 28 years, has been subjected to bacteriological attacks by "the Exterminators" for some unknown reason. The Exterminators are a race of 300-foot-high aliens; no live specimen of which has ever been captured for interrogation.

One of the Exterminators is finally captured, but he is suffering from brain damage. Someone gets the brilliant idea of building a very special control room inside the giant's brain; wherefrom his body can be operated by remote control. The alien will then be put in a situation from which he can be "resued" by his friends, and the occupants of the brain-control-room will get information about his home-planet.

If this is not audacious (or improbable) enough for you, read on.

There is just one snag to the control-room idea. To be able to operate all the necessary knobs and switches you would have to be a superman! The hero (Gold) is just that. A "genetically altered superman".

Everything goes according to plan and Gold arrives on the alien's Brobdingianian planet. He finds out why the Exterminators are so keen on extermination. Yet another audacious theme is involved here. Can you believe in a star being alive, with a "brain" 40,000 miles in diameter?

The Exterminators turn out to be quite nice people when you get to know them, and everything ends happily with Gold having a child and the Exterminators deciding that Mankind may soon reach the required standards "to join the interstellar community".

Put like this, the whole thing may sound rather silly. Some of the ideas are rather hackneyed, and the novel cannot claim to describe "a future which may be just around the corner" (as pretentious SF blurbs tend to say). But the main theme seems definitely original. I could agree with the publisher's blurb that "the style is lucid and intelligent". And the result is something very readable and capable of holding one's attention.

As if the above plot-ingredients were insufficiently exciting, the author adds a sexual theme in various places--there are flashbacks to Gold's early sexual adventures and the birth of a child is described in some detail. This I found rather unnecessary. On the whole, "a good read" -- but oh!, for some really believable SF for a change!

Jim England - '73

Tell me where is fancy bread, Or in the heart or in the head?  
How begot, how nourished? Reply, reply.



Once upon a time there was Science Fiction and there was Fantasy. And never the twain did meet. People read and enjoyed one or the other, but seldom both. And in Soho a certain book-seller could quite easily separate his stock into the two types, shelving them in different places.

But over the last few years there has emerged a cross-breed, an SF mongrel which incorporates both hard science fiction and fantasy. Not many of these exist, but they are growing in numbers. At least, it's my opinion that not many exist and that they are growing in numbers, for I am well aware that this business of dividing up and defining science fiction and fantasy is extremely controversial.

The Palace of Eternity is, clearly and without doubt, one of these cross-breeds. It is a mixture of hard SF and metaphysical fantasy. It is also Bob Shaw's best novel to date.

The first hundred pages of the book are hard and punchy, recapturing and even improving upon that grotesque and slightly melancholy mood which typified Nightwalk and Shadow of Heaven. Improvement is most evident in the descriptions. This is not such a fast-moving book as those two predecessors, and is all the better for it. It is written at a much higher level than its other predecessor The Two-Timers and, rather sadly, at a higher level than the two books which followed: One Million Tomorrows and Ground Zero Man. These three all deal, basically, with small, domestic issues. The Palace of Eternity, by contrast, deals with a planet, a full-scale war against aliens, and the fate of the entire human race.

The story follows the progress of Mark Tavernor, ex-colonel, weapons expert, mechanical genius, now a disillusioned man of fifty. We are shown his life in flashback. He has deliberately moved as far as possible from the war front and makes his living as a self employed mechanic on Mnemosyne, the artists' planet (where he is also bedding the nineteen-year-old daughter of the planetary administrator). Then the army moves in, making Mnemosyne into a military HQ and riding roughshod over all; much to the fury and disgust of Tavernor and of the planet's artist colony, which he despises.

This could be the setting for a good, realistic novel concerning clashes of personality and the limits of military authority, but Bob Shaw is not content to play it like that. To give any details of the remainder of the book would be to spoil your enjoyment. All I will say is that the scope is widened and the science fiction becomes extreme fantasy, though contacts are maintained with the "real" world of Mnemosyne. The degree of importance of the action is gradually increased right up to the grandstand finish, in which the relevance of the preceding action to the survival of the human race and its alien attackers, the Syccans, is explained.

If the book is carefully analysed it is found to be rife with faults. It really does fall apart into the SF and fantasy sections, with precious few connecting links. In fact, the first half of the book is superfluous to the ending except that it states the situation and builds up a picture of Tavernor. The plotting is based on old-fashioned melodrama and is, in places, not very convincing. As for the characters, we have a distinguished old planetary administrator (called Howard Grenoble), with a beautiful daughter (called Melissa); we have the handsome dashing nephew of the Supreme President of the Federation; we have an archetypal pansy artist, and we have a precocious three-year-old with special talents. Hack characters every one!

And yet despite all that, Palace of Eternity is excellent entertainment. It has a very strong central character and a host of original and exciting ideas, many of which are used as throw-aways, never being fully exploited. It's not a deep book, yet it's well worth reading. And, perhaps more important, it helps bridge that yawning gulch between SF and fantasy. (Oh yes, you'd better



shelve it in both parts of the shop, Bram.)

Chris's five-star rating: \*\*\*\*

THE SORCERER'S SHIP by Hannes Bok (345 09783 1) - Pan/Ballantine @ 40p  
BEYOND THE GOLDEN STAIR by Hannes Bok (345 09872 3) - Pan/Ballantine @ 40p

Both have an introduction by Lin Carter.

Reviewed by Harry Turner

I am leaving Lisa's pad when she thrusts a couple of paperbacks into my hand.

- How about reviewing them? she smiles.

I peer at the titles.

- You're not serious, I protest.

Alas, she is.

- T.S. Eliot once wrote that only poets should criticise poetry. Bok was an artist, you're an artist. So...

There's obviously an answer to that, but it eludes me.

- Look, she snorts, the stories appealed to me in the same way as Sinbad the Sailor did in my childhood. It's finding a world completely unrelated to one's own experience... alien. The reason why most people get hooked on SF I shouldn't wonder. But I'm asking you to review them because I want to see if an artist sees with greater depth into another artist's mind...

Her voice fades behind me as I stride into the night.

I've long been an admirer of Bok. Bok the artist, that is. I first saw his work in the 40s and while continued exposure revealed a certain repetitiveness and facileness, I still respect him as a original. The only work of his familiar to me is his speculative ending of Abraham Merritt's fragment, Fox Woman, published in 1946. I find the illustrations in this book more fascinating than the story, which prompts me to ask why Bok artwork is not used for the covers of these paperbacks?

Sorcerer's Ship is high adventure written in a prose style that lurches unevenly from naivety to excruciating preciousness, with improbable flat human characters and stilted dialogue. I must have read the story when it was first published in Unknown in '42, but not the faintest memory of it stirred as I waded through the paperback. And Beyond the Golden Stairs is in much the same vein, but owing more to Merritt and full of overly polished prose.

Really, Lisa said all: these books will make an impression on you if you are of an impressionable age. They make few demands upon the intellect and are ideal entertainment to while away a dull hour or so. Bok as a writer reminds me of the jazz virtuoso instrumentalist who succumbs to the presence of the mike and sings the occasional vocal - with excruciating results. But you indulge him in the lapse because of his real talent elsewhere.

And if that all sounds very patronising, it's because I've recently been reading three of Richard Brautigan's books\*(1) now available here in paperback. Here's a man whose writing involves me totally, who can make me forget my love/hate relationship with the spoken/written word. In Watermelon Sugar is a haunting allegory, written with a beguiling simplicity of style that enraptures me in a way that all Bok's high artifice can never do. And A Confederate General in Big Sur brings to vivid life that inimitable character Lee Mellon, clobberer of rich queers, neighbour of Henry Miller, descendant of the General Augustus Mellon,

and the people wandering in and around his life, with an insight totally lacking in Bok. Obviously Lisa asked me to review the wrong books, and it occurs to me that the snappy come-back to that TSEliot quip is Auden's comment that it's a good critic who criticises what he likes.

The thought clatters round the empty studio. Too late, as always...

harry turner

Since Harry brought me into this 'review', and having had the first, I must also have the last word on the two books by H. Bok. I feel that age has very little to do with enjoyment of this kind of pure fantasy - Edgar Rice Burroughs or Sinbad. They are not as profoundly fascinating as Lindsay's Arcturus, but neither are they as unreadable as Macdonald's Phantasties or Lilith.

Beyond the Golden Stair was, for me, the more enjoyable of the two, because it had less to do with real life - a fairy tale almost. The ending of The Sorcerer's Ship, on the other hand, I found oddly satisfying. The two lovers are to set forth into a new world, a new life - alone. I was virtually holding my breath hoping Mr Bok wouldn't, please, give us another Adam and Eve, and another world swarming with humanity thereafter. Relief, our two lovers go it alone; live for themselves and by themselves, "...free to roam the Universe on wings of thought. Free to make, or break - like Gods! ... Perhaps immortal ... side by side - forever!" A cliché? Right, but

Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends.

\*(<sup>1</sup>) Trout Fishing in America/ Confederate General in Big Sur / - Watermelon Sugar. Published by PAN-PICADOR @ 40p each.

#### BOOKS SENT IN FOR REVIEW:

One Million Tomorrows by Bob Shaw, published by Pan @ 25p (Chris Morgan reviewer)

Mindswap by Robert Shekely published by Pan @ 30p (Chris Morgan reviewer)

Day Million (Collection of s/s) by Frederik Pohl, published by Pan @ 35p

Nightland (Volume 1 & 2) by William Hope Hodgson. Introduction by Lin Carter published by Pan @ 40p each.

Profiles of the Future by Arthur C. Clarke, published by Pan @ 40p

Beyond Tomorrow (Collection of s/s) ed Diamond Knight, published by Pan @ 40p

And from Ye Gerbish Special Agent:

Deathworld (Volume 1, 2, & 3) by Harry Harrison, published by Sphere @ 30p each

The Invincible by Stanislaw Lem, published by Sidgwick & Jackson @ £1.95

.....  
In Zimri - 6 David E. Britton will be discussing the writings of Michael Moorcock - in depth and at length. This will include Alien Heat (one of my favorite books by Moorcock) and the latest Moorcock publications in this country.

Deadline for Zimri-6 is November 1st 1973, but if you are moved to write me a LoC please do so as early as possible, likewise the sooner I or Gray Boak get your fanzine the sooner it may be reviewed. Thankyou and goodnight.

lc



One moment in annihilation's waste  
One moment, of the Well of Life to taste  
The stars are setting and the caravan  
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing

Rub~~aiyat~~at of Omar Khayyam of Naishapur

jack marsh

# the dawn of nothing

the kick hurt

hurt bad

and i sprawled full-length across the cask before crashing into the fence,  
wriggling and flopping in the dust like a broken snake. the sand stung  
my eyes and my face throbbed where a splinter had gouged my cheek.

i could feel the blood

sharp

one arm was twisted and trapped under me, the dipper hard in my side. for  
a while i just lay there. there was more to come.

there was always more

the valley stretched away in front of my eyes. it wasn't much. bare,  
pitted earth. sterile. and heat. the air heavy with heat. and sweat.

and the Olduns

the Olduns with their God-fearing piety...and their beatings

always their beatings

escape?

escape to where?

it was the day of the Lords's vengeance the Olduns said. and had been for many, many, many days. the streams had turned into strontium and the dust into cobalt, and the land had become burning death

And it shall not be quenched, night nor day. the smoke thereof shall go up for ever, from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever

but here we were

starting over again

i heard him come close. heard his heavy, hand-pegged boots crunching through the sand

face down i drew my knees to my chest

and waited

afraid

and then the hurt exploded into my body, and the sudden bile-crawling vomit filled and filled my throat

i clamped shut my mouth

o, how much he wanted me to scream

clamped my mouth, but my nose and eyes overflowed and i retched, heaving and spewing while my body bequeathed its hate into my brain

i rolled over, still clutching the dipper with its chain broken and stared into the sun

his face appeared, obscuring the sun like a cloud. i saw clearly into his eyes. they were black. burned black

i guess he'd gotten so used to knocking me around it slipped his mind i'd grown some

my hate also

and before he could jerk away i slashed at him with the chain

slashed

again

AGAIN

and cut diagonally across his face. his nose was almost torn off. must have been cut to the bone. his right eye burst in a thick pinky-white spray, and his lips split apart and curled like tiny scarlet flowers that grow by the creek

and i was glad

he was my father...and i was glad

they took my eye for that

PAIN

PAIN

PAIN

PAIN

PAIN

PAIN

PAIN

PAIN

and smashed my nose



and slashed my mouth so that i would smile and be ghastly for the rest  
of my life  
and they turned me loose  
to die  
in the mountains-that-glowed  
but i did not die  
i became an animal  
i ate gilas and serpents and squishy-squashy crawling things and burrowed  
in the dirt for water  
or drank blood  
and lived  
an animal

then others came  
outcasts all

Burl, with his drooling mouth and dull mind, who had killed a child  
in play  
and Joby, whose only wrong was being born lacking an arm  
children once, but now fully grown and now cast out  
and others  
and we grew strong  
and bold  
waved our spears at the sun and screamed defiance at the moon  
bold  
and stole a woman from the valley and dragged her to our caves  
thrashing and struggling and shrieking

NO  
NO  
NO  
NO  
NO  
NO

i had her  
first  
as others held her body spread  
then Burl  
she screamed as Burl went into her. and struggled no more  
then the others  
then me. then Burl. then the others  
again

Again

AGain

AGAIIn

AGAIIn

AGAIN

A G A I N

until she died

except Joby  
who grovelled in a corner and cried  
so we drove him out  
to the desert  
to die  
and laughed and waved our spears and screamed out proud challenges  
for we were MEN  
but our days became endless merging one into the other  
and we stole women no more, for the valley was guarded by sentinels, and  
our nights became damnation  
then one day as we made sport with a snake, cutting it from tail to head  
in small pieces, slowly, to see how long it might live  
Joby returned  
with a woman he called wife  
and a youngun he called son  
and he told of other tribes and other valleys and that the sickness had  
ended  
and as he talked we listened  
and watched  
his woman  
for she was BLACK  
not the collied black of sickness-death  
but dark  
with flesh that was smooth and soft like the spring wind  
sleek and graceful  
the Olduns should know, Joby said, so the starting be easier  
and as he talked we watched his woman  
then i smiled at Burl  
and Burl smiled back  
and ~~spear~~ed him in the belly  
and there was dark blood from his mouth as he died and dropped into the  
dust and was forgotten  
the child we butchered and gutted and made fire to roast  
and threw Joby's woman in the cave as we chewed the meat  
she don't say nothing.  
just lies there staring at the wall  
quiet  
don't say nothing at all  
she will though, when me and the others get to work on her  
work on her good  
she will

jack marsh - 1973



# Not exactly a **CONREP** ... just some random thoughts from Bryn Fortey

Dave Chopping, Mike Collins and myself settled into a compartment on the South Wales bound train and watched silently as Temple Meads Station chugged slowly out of our lives. Mike swore he noticed a pater who scratched his head, picked his nose and smiled knowingly - but that is an in-joke known only to those who have followed the Dave Sutton edited New Writings In Horror & The Supernatural series. "What's this about you doing a convention report for ZIMRI?" asked Dave Chopping, probably to cover up for not knowing what Mike and I were talking about. Young Collins - the Jaggermouth of my Worcester journal of FOWLER infamy - took up the cry. "I thought you said you'd finished writing for fanzines, especially ZIMRI," he said brightly. "Why especially ZIMRI?" butted in Dave Chopping, sniffing at possible fan-gossip.

The original question was one I had been considering myself. Why had I agreed to do a conrep? A long period of gafiation had ended with the OMPAcon, but I had not really planned on a serious fannish comeback.

"Why ZIMRI?" repeated Dave Chopping.

"Because Lisa Conesa didn't throw herself at him," answered Mike Collins for me. What he had overheard was a part of a conversation during which Jack Marsh and I had commented upon the fact that Lisa didn't appear to use a Convention for chatting up possible future contributors, as did many fanzine editors. "Balls!" I retorted in true fannish fashion.

"All right, but why are you writing one at all? You did say you were finished with contributing to fanzines," insisted Mike.

"Because she asked me, face to face, and I was too much of a coward to refuse," I answered with complete and utter honesty.

"Are you going to use the funny names and things, like you did last time?" asked Mike, referring to my Fannish New Wave style.

"No, the two I did for FOWLER and the one for CYNIC were enough along those lines."

"Just be a straight forward con report then," said Dave.

"I suppose so," I agreed, then dropped the subject in favour of describing Tricky Mickey Fox being carried from the bar with vomit in his beard and moaning

"This is unforgivable," over and over again.

"When did that happen?" asked Dave.

"Friday I think, but I'm not sure. It might have been Saturday."

"A fine conrep you're going to write," laughed Mike. "It's only Monday now, and you can't remember on which day something took place. By the time you write your report you won't even remember the events!"

A fair enough observation, and one of the few things I do recall as I sit here at my typewriter. Going home day I still remember quite clearly, it seemed to be my pro-day. Saying good-bye to Ken Bulmer in the hotel foyer, and really appreciating the encouraging words he had to say about the stories of mine he'd seen. Having a drink with Chris Priest. Discussing American conventions with Bob Shaw - next years Guest of Honour. He was due to start a new job the following day and I hope it has turned out as interesting as it sounded. But apart from that, well, it's a jumble of related and unrelated incidents and happenings that could have been Sunday, Saturday or Friday.

Or am I exaggerating?

Either way, I have a ready-made excuse and a person to blame. Lisa Conesa, that's who! I mean to say, half past six on the Sunday is not the time to be asked if someone will write a con report for you. Things like that should be arranged well before the con itself. The reporter can then arrive fully prepared to note happenings of special importance and jot down all the quotes he can overhear - either first or second hand.

This being the case, and I did promise, what can I write about? Keep going as I am, I suppose. Well, I have knocked out around 650 words so far, and that's without making too many normal conrep statements. So I might survive the 2,000 Lisa asked for.

I doubt that I will make Newcastle next year. My personal conventioning has proved a bi-annual happening. Bristol in '67, Oxford in '69, Worcester in '71, and now back to Bristol for the '73 OMPAcon - this has been my attendance history. So I missed the London Novacon, which has been mentioned as a poorly organised affair. Somebody I heard of didn't miss it - I think it was Dave Fletcher, winner of the Ken McIntyre art award for a SHADOW cover. Novacon was his first and after it he swore it would be his last, but fannish temptations caused him to try again this year. He was overheard bemoaning the fact that he always seems to pick the duds and would definitely not try a third time. Maybe winning the award will change his mind.

The question is, has Dave Fletcher been unfortunate in his choice of conventions, or is he not the type to enjoy them whichever he chose to attend? I can't comment on the latter since I don't know Dave, but I will say I consider Bristol in '73 to have been the most poorly organised of the four I have been to, and in general the programme was the most disappointing as well.

Though it was enlivened by the 'Bomb Scare'. I was even questioned by the police when returning to the hotel late Friday night after seeing off Jack Marsh who was staying with friends in Chipping Sodbury.

Am I being too hard to please? If you were there you can make up your own mind. All I know is that quite a few other people made similar complaints during the con itself. It wasn't that the committee didn't work. Fred Hemmings was a bundle of non-stop energy; Mike and Pat Meara seemed constantly on duty; the rest probably did their best. It just didn't seem to gell.

That said, and since it is dishonestly held opinion I felt obliged to say it, I must add that on a personal level I nevertheless enjoyed myself. This was because I spent the bulk of my time with good companions. Conventions can always be viewed in relation to two basic levels. OMPAcon '73 I considered an official disappointment but a social success.

But Lisa did ask for a conrep, so I had better insert something along those lines. You know - mention names, tell of funny happenings, that sort of thing.



After my previously mentioned period of gafia, my last minute decision to make the Easter trek to Bristol filled me with an enthusiasm which evaporated the moment I entered the Grand. Instead of dashing around in urgent search of the registration desk and people I knew, I sat in the foyer and began to wish I hadn't bothered. People with name badges hurried to and fro, but they were all strangers. Finally I decided to at least register, so followed the flow of unknown fans until it led to the desk.

"Fortey!"

At last - my first friendly face.

"Pickersgill!" I was glad I'd come.

After an enthusiastic greeting Greg led me to the bar. In no time at all, clutching a 20p pint of beer, I was greeting friends - old and new.

"See, see, the famous fan approach," yelled John Hall, who sadly had to leave on the Saturday - taking his Brunner-owned sleeping-bag with him.

"Hullo sailor," called Leroy Kettle.

Other sundry remarks came from the likes of John Brosnan, John Piggott and Peter Roberts. Rob Jackson introduced himself and suggested we should get together with Chris Morgan, Andrew Stephenson and Chairman Ken Bulmer to discuss the panel we were due to appear on later that very same day. It was a good idea, but we didn't all manage to materialise in one room until shortly before we had to file onto the platform. That was an experience I'll not forget in a hurry. All my carefully worked out words vanished in puffs of pure panic each time that damn microphone appeared before me. Luckily I managed to get away with only having to speak twice. No thanks to Pickersgill, Kettle and Hall who started to chant "Let's Hear from Fortey" towards the end. With friends like those.....!

To digress a moment, I remember Lisa reviewed my FOULER, Worcester conrep as a piece of fiction. I doubt if she will recognise the convention I am now writing about any more than she did in 1971, even though she was present at both. Our particular circles overlap but rarely, which is why she is still waiting for the drink I first promised in far off '71. Lisa drifted coolly through the outskirts of my con, a decorative addition constantly attended by Harry Turner.

"I will probably be reviving SoNF, even though you always regarded it as a grey fanzine," said Howard Rosenblum.

"Well use a darker duplicating ink," replied Peter Roberts.

Who else will record that inspiring conversation? Who else would want to! That's the thing with convention reports, it's highly likely that I won't recognise anyone else's and they won't recognise mine.

Rob Holdstock and Shiela Holdstock (the wedding was in June, folks) were part of my personal con-world. Together, Rob and I planned a major assault on the fiction world. Alone, I planned a major assault on Shiela. I only hope the former is more successful than the latter! If only my enemies would bring along wonderful women instead of my friends.

Rob and Shiela took me for a meal on the Friday and we were joined by an unknown fan who introduced himself as Kieth Walker - the guy who had given my 'New Writings In Horror & The Supernatural - Volume 1' story such a slating in his SHADOW review. In spite of this, he turned out a good feller and even said kinder things about my Volume 2 story. All's fair in love and book reviews!

Dave Sutton editor of the above mentioned volumes, was present with Sandra - his charming wife. I first approached him in the book room, employing the writer/editor attitude. Once that was over we were able to meet more as fellow fans for the rest of the con, which was much friendlier.

Jack Marsh arrived Friday evening and we had plenty good talking before saying farewell at the time when Breathworld was being shown in the Con Hotel. Rob and



Shiela took advantage of a lift back to London and went at the same time. Jack and Rob are about the only two I still correspond with on anything like a regular basis.

Biggest non-event of the whole con - and nothing to do with the committee I hasten to add - was the Gannet room party on the Sunday night. They had even advertised it in the Programme Booklet! The writing was on the wall when Ian Maule (of Julia Stone fame) went around asking for monetary donations from those likely to attend. After a few changes in room number, the party was apparently a viable entity so I trotted up to get my money's worth. A one pint bottle of brown ale was waiting for me. It was cheaper at the bar.

That apart, the 'party' consisted of a few gannets and rats who were prepared to converse amongst themselves to the total exclusion of anyone else who happened along to join in. I talked writing for a spell with Andrew Stephenson, then moved on when I'd emptied my bottle. One question though: who was the young, pregnant female on the bed who kept asking why her brother hadn't been invited?

What else? I spent a drunken half hour - goodness knows when - talking to Ian Williams about the novel in his life, and was left with a great deal of respect for his depth of feeling and capacity for sincerity.

Malcolm Edwards talked serious BSFA science fiction and might well have convinced me I should rejoin. If I do, it's his doing. He also won the quiz for the London team. Everyone tells me his Vector is worth having.

Dave Rowe was a fine fellow I met for the first time. Has anyone noticed what a fine fannish name David is? Neither Tom, Dick nor Harry can match the numerical strength within fandom of the Patron Saint of Wales. Dave Rowe reminded me very much of a young Bram Stokes, which leads into yet another story.

Did Bram Stokes deliberately take a dive in the first round? Both Ian Williams and Rob Jackson seemed to be suffering from microphone nerves when making their bid, but Newcastle was presented with '74 on a platter following the now infamous Stokes outburst. Then later came the childish message on the registration desk notice board. Maybe Bram was making sure that 1975 won't be given him either. A pity because I can see a lot of sense in George Hay's plea for a more serious convention every now and again.

Hitch-hiking Scot, Jim Campbell, impressed as a person mature beyond his years. His tales of merry Glasgow made for X certificate listening, all the more chilling since a ring of reality threaded his words. sobering interlude.

What could have developed into a nasty interlude occurred between Greg Pickersgill and Ritchie Smith. It seemed that Greg jogged Ritchie's drinking arm, splashing his booze. Greg afterwards insisted to me that it had been an accident, but Ritchie claimed it had been on purpose. Anyway, Ritchie retaliated by throwing the contents of a glass of wine at Greg, and for a moment things looked nasty. However, the ensuing combat was kept to the throwing of only oral missives and a possible crisis was passed.

What else? Who else? Tony and Simone Walsh told me of their move to Liverpool. The loss of their Bristol parties sadden me. I think their new home will prove too far for me to reach. It was nice to see Simone's non-fan sister, Mimi, popping in to say hullo. Mike Collins thought it was nice too, though the end result was maybe a little disappointing considering the time and effort put in.

Gray Boak, Majorie Edwards, Tom Penman and Brian Hampton all helped towards an enjoyable con. And how about the G of H? Apart from being a good speaker, what a fantastic guy! He tried to speak with as many people present as possible, really taking his Guest of Honourship seriously, and impressed as being a thoroughly likable person. And on top of it he can write! Samuel R. Delany was a resounding success, and I hope we will see him at many future British conventions.

Writing is an easy game to non-writers!



Dr Jack Cohen - I enjoyed his saturday lecture even though I had heard it before at Worcester - stood by the bar talking how he could plot novels in ten minutes flat. It appeared that his only problem was in not having sufficient time to write them up. A typical non-writers complaint, but maybe Dr Cohen will find the means to prove his words. Fellow biologist Rob Holdstock enthusiastically talked shop with him. Could a new writing team emerge?

I am almost certainly well past the 2,000 words I was requested to supply, so some sort of ending had better be reached. Thanks to everyone mentioned, and to those of you I've missed. In spite of previously mentioned reservations, I enjoyed the OMPAcon, and you are the people who made it possible for me to do so.

Greg Pickersgill was the first friendly face I saw, and to him I owe a special word of thanks as provider of floor space, pillow and eiderdown. How about it Greg? Cardiff in '76!!!!

Bryn Fortey - April '73

## a poetry soirée

is being organised by  
yours truly as part of  
the fun at the  
**Tynecon '74**



The SOIRÉE will be a late evening event, starting about 10pm on Friday (the 12th April, '74) and going on into the small hours.

There will be readings, discussions, music and a display of concrete poetry posters.

A swankey booklet will be published and sold at the convention. We anxiously solicit all poets to submit their work and be immortalized in splendour.

Brian Aldiss, Michael Moorcock, Robert Calvert (Hawkwind) have already submitted; John Brunner and other big name pros have made promises. But we encourage as many fans as possible to take part 'cos this is going to be a special con and a special event. Don't miss it you

may never get another opportunity such as this one!

For further information, including advertising, write to Lisa etc, address on page one herein.

And if you'd like to have your manuscripts returned, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Oyez, the afore mentioned posters will be auctioned off at the con (should the poet/artist so wish), if YOU care to hang adorning the hall, please contact me before or at the con.

For registration, general con-information and progress reports write to:

Ian Maule - 13, Weardale Avenue, Forest Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE12 OHX.  
T y n e c o n ' 7 4 .

PETER WESTON FOR TAFF

# Tynecon '74



HARRY BELLIS

Never been to a convention before? Well, this is what's happening at TYNECON '74.

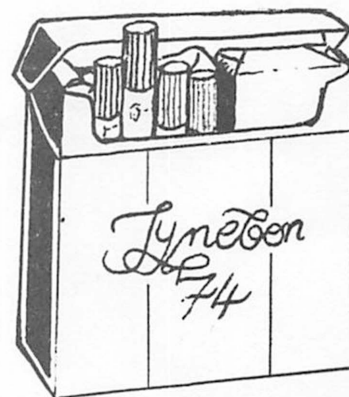
It's got an exciting varied programme featuring lots of your favourite authors involved in giving talks, appearing on panels....

....there are films, a warm friendly atmosphere and a private bar where fans and writers mix freely. Guests of Honour are Bob Shaw, acclaimed writer, and Peter Weston, famed publisher of SF criticism.

Excited? It's at the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle on Tyne, over the Easter week-end (12th.-15th. April) 1974. Supporting membership entitles you to progress reports with more details and the souvenir convention booklet, and £1.50 more entitles you to attend the convention itself....

REGISTER NOW!

Cut out the form below and send it with your money to: Ian Maule, Tynecon '74, 13 Weardale Ave., Forest Hall, Newcastle on Tyne, NE12 OHX.



CREATED FROM A BLEND OF OUR FINEST MINDS... SMOOTH MELLOW IDEAS...

EVERY COMMITTEE MEMBER CARRIES A GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING

I enclose 50p for supporting membership of Tynecon '74.  
£2 for full membership ++

Name

Address

++ Cross out whichever is inapplicable. Cheques, PO's etc. payable to Tynecon '74.



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# gray boak *reviews*

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GEGENSCHNEIN --- Eric Lindsay 6, Hillcrest Avenue Faulconbridge NSW 2776

There are those fans who refuse to consider fanzines from outside Britain as being worth reading; there are others who will tell you that only fanzines from abroad are worth reading. GEG is fun, but no great shakes. C9 was mainly concerned with Speed-reading and Spelling reform. I am perpetually astonished at how slow most people read, but some of the claims for Speed-reading seem crazy by my standards. H a r r y Lindgren describes rather than comments.

NO. 12 --- Ruth Berman 5620 Edgewater Boulevard Minneapolis Minnesota 55417

Personal fanzine. The main article appears to be a trip report of a visit to England (sorry, Britain). Full of unforgettable lines like "I had a nice time with J and K in Lincoln." Written as a series of letters home, this article may have been censored for publication, but as she seems to have met no fans over here, all I can say is "Poor A!" Maybe I'm missing something important.

○  
SFAREN --- Rune Forsgren N-fors 16587, 905 90 UMEÅ, S W E D E N

This is all in Swedish. -I don't speak Swedish, Lisa. Poetry, a long editorial, SF film reviews, locs.

THE ANYTHING THING --- Frank Balazs & Matthew Schneck 19 High Street,  
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

Locs, Book reviews, fanzine reviews, Calendar for 2001 ("President Violet Vogue is pregnant!"). Yes, Virginia, Americans have fanzines like that too.

GRANFALLOON 16 --- Linda Bushyager 1614 Evans Avenue Prospect Park, Pa.19076

Americans also have fanzines like this. G16 bears little relation to the kind of fanzine you are going to see from Manchester or Newcastle or Kingston or Croton-on-Hudson. Printed art folio, coloured artwork, immaculate duplication... G is deservedly a Hugo nominee, and it is being super-critical to point out that it is likely to be bottom of the poll. There's a long editorial, an excellent critique of CLOCKWORK ORANGE, and fancolumns from Mike Glicksohn and Ginjer Buchanan. Good stuff, all of it, but somehow... "Jeff Glencannon" talking about fanzines, has some interesting things to say. "(GRANFALLOON and ENERGUMEN) are obviously expensive fanzines. .... All of a sudden it isn't a matter of experience and talent any more." And later "...fandom is a party.... when a bunch of people show up in tuxedos, or \$300 suits, the party can change, and for the worse." Jeff isn't suggesting, but I am, that if Linda wasn't rich, G would be a different fanzine (obviously), and that it wouldn't be a Hugo contender.

I like G, it is one of the best fanzines available, but it does lack that indefinable touch of magic present in the best fanzines.

○  
ERG 43 --- Terry Jeeves 230, Bannerdale Road SHEFFIELD S11 9FE

Elsewhere, Terry has been a little upset because people are ignoring his fifteen years of valiant fan-publishing with ERG. Well, point taken, but OMPA reviews, three pages of elementary Cine-camera instructions, and short reviews of the paperbacks on everyone's local bookstands are, all in all, unlikely to set the world on fire. If you can stand Terry's intolerances, then ERG can be entertaining. Enough said.

BALTHUS --- Jon Harvey 18, Cefn Road CARDIFF CF4 3HS

Lithographically-produced fantasy/horror fiction and artwork, an article telling us about "the seed of the controlled powers of the homo superior" and yet another biography of Arthur Machen. (When I first entered fandom, I read an article about that great unknown writer Arthur Machen, deserving of vastly more praise than an unappreciative audience had provided. Such articles seem to have appeared yearly. The audience remains unmoved.) If you feel, as I do, that this kind of material is a little sick, or at least peculiar, then you'll realise why I can't recommend BALTHUS.

○  
JOY --- Joan Sharpe 145, Dunmow Court Offerton STOCKPORT Cheshire

No joy.



HELL --- Paul Skelton 185, Pendlebury Towers, Lancashire Hill, STOCKPORT SK5  
7RW and Brian Robinson 9, Linwood Grove, Manchester M12 4QH

If Brian and Paul had listened to the criticisms made about their earlier issues, they might never have continued to H9, their second anniversary issue. Then again, it might not have taken HELL so long to reach the standard of H9. Not that the standard is any too brilliant now, but it has crept above that of the average British fanzine. There is a fine healthy amount of editorial chatter, but they are still accepting disappointingly low quality material. A science-fiction corssword, gosh-wow! Or how about homosexual space-opera? Piggott and Maule raise the standard fleetingly. Reproduction is at best first class, but disappointingly variable.

THE MIDDLE EARTHWORM --- Archie Mercer, 21 Trenethick Parc, HELSTON, Cornwall  
TR13 8IH

A letterzine produced by Archie for members of the Tolkien Society and WORMfriends everywhere. I enjoy Tolkien's work, though I wouldn't rave over the Ring trilogy as some people do, and I definitely consider myself a WORMfriend. The WORM is full of general ramblings on Tolkien, fantasy writings, and the doings of the letter-writers themselves, most of them seemingly the younger TS members. A mixture of informed (though rarely pedantic) discussion and naive ramblings, the WORM is somehow a microcosmic representation of fandom as a whole, Tolkien-flavoured. To those with Olympian detachment, this is what we must look like. I like it very much.

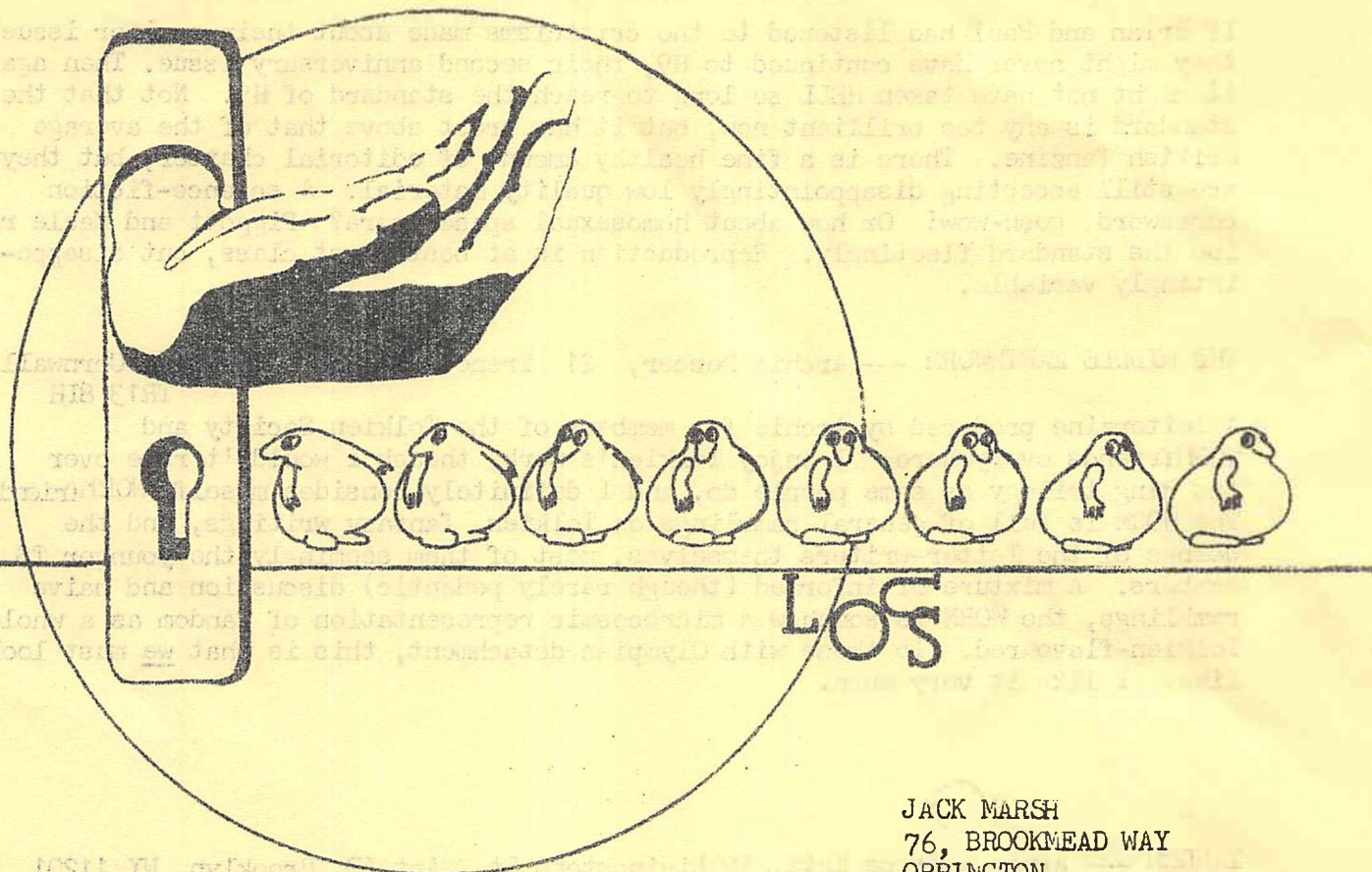
TANDEM --- Arnie & Joyce Katz, 59 Livingstone St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201

It had been an unsatisfactory week for letters, but on Friday there was a loud 'clunk' and I broke all records to the hall. I've been disappointed before, but not then. There on the mat was a large brown envelope shouting "Fanzine!" and postmarked New York. New York, of course is full of Fabulous Fannish Fanzines: RATS, FOCAL, POTLATCHs, FANGLEs..... Carefully I slit open the envelope - this one was big enough for a bumper edition of POTLATCH, I thought..... The cover, I thought, was familiar. VOID. QUANDRY. There was the Quertyuiop Kid, with a three page Ross Chamberlain cover. The first issue of the promised joint fanzine from the Katz family. The contents? Editorial from Joyce. Two editorials and a piece of faanfiction from Arnie. A Bob Shaw column. Fanhistory from Harry Warner Jr., and an F. Tower Laney reprint from Terry Carr (talking about Burbee). John Alderson on showing Lesleigh Sydney. Articles by Susan Glisksohn and Grant Canfield. Artwork from fifteen fan artists: Kirk, Rotsler, Atom, Lovenstein, Kunkel, Fletcher.... 66 pages of just what has to be the finest fanzine so far this year.

There are people reading ZIMRI who don't appreciate good comic art, humourous fan writings, references to the fannish past and the occasional comment that requires a certain ammount of familiarity with the fanzine scene. I feel sorry for such folk, and can only suggest a programme of self-improvement. TANDEM is a pretty good place to start. TANDEM is a pretty good place full stop. Highly recommended.

Graham Boak - VII -'73





JACK MARSH  
76, BROOKMEAD WAY  
ORPINGTON  
KENT BR5 2BD

John Brady's annoyance at Clockwork Orange is, in my view, quite unfounded. Clockwork Orange is not science fiction, indeed, I think it says much for our society that Kubrick used the Thamesmead housing development to depict scenes of Alex's background. Thamesmead is for REAL...not just a film set designed to show an environment adverse enough to produce characters like Alex and his droogs. Thamesmead IS - people live there - and that alone seems to preclude any claims that the film is SF. Perhaps the book was social prophecy when first published over ten years ago...now it is reality.

John Brady quotes Burgess: "Theoretically, evil is not quantifiable. Yet I posit the notion that one sort of evil may be greater than another, and that perhaps the ultimate act of evil is dehumanisation, the killing of the soul.." But, according to Professor Jose Delgado (The Pleasure Areas by Dr H.J. Campbell) "...at birth there are no detectable signs of mental activity and we must conclude that human beings are born without minds."

Minds have to be made.

"...it is clear that we have full control of the mind, and we must recognise that mind-control cannot be avoided; on the contrary, it has existed throughout the history of mankind. It happens in every church, school, kindergarten and home. It is inherent in the process of education. Without mind control there can be no mind, because mind control is the setting up of preferred pathways.

Most people grow up with the preferred pathways built into their brains by parents, teachers and priests. Such pathways established so early in life and so subtly that most individuals are no more aware that they learned them than that they learned to walk. It is difficult to believe that these pathways which constitute our minds, our personalities, are not really ours at all in any selfgenerated sense. We do not like to believe that we are brain-washed and functioning like machines.



Nevertheless, a person whose behavior is based upon indoctrinated preferred pathways is no less a machine than the computer that behaves according to a pre-set programme. There is overwhelming evidence that the world is mainly populated by robots."

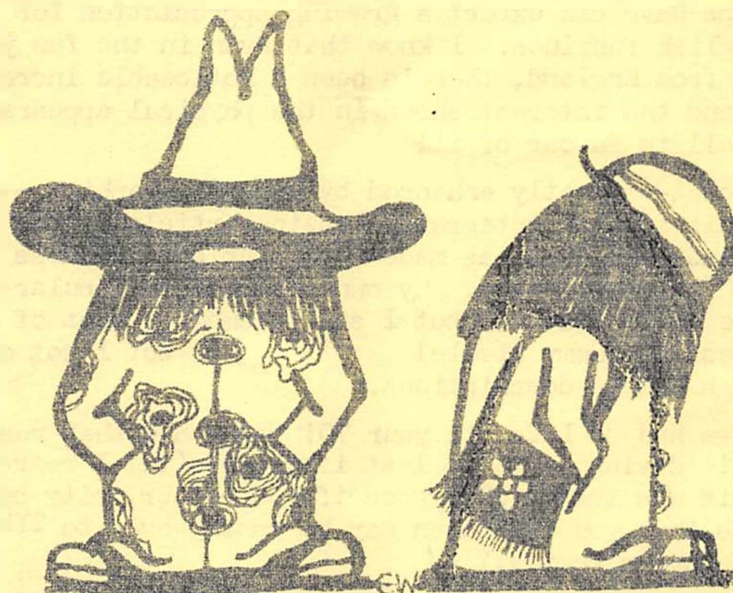
Surely then, the issue here is not dehumanisation (how do you 'dehumanise a robot?'), but whether the propaganda initially placed in the mind is good or evil.....

For man has a remarkable resistance to attitudes which conflict with his own; that his good will always triumph over evil.

And that is the paradox.

MIKE GLICKSOHN -- 32 MAYNARD AVENUE, TORONTO, ONTARIO, C A N A D A .

Kevin Hall pulled a dastardly trick (if he was serious) and shows an incredibly blinkered view of fanzines. Does he only enjoy a fanzine when he has a letter in it? How narrow! I've thoroughly enjoyed this Zimri despite the fact that it doesn't contain the loc I wrote on the last issue. The material itself is what makes a fanzine worth reading, and I'd never stoop so low as to point out that I've been a Hugo nominee for three years now and if you won't publish this letter then I'm going to gafiate and kill myself, although not necessarily in that order.



Excellent photocovers. I really appreciate those sort of montages, even though it's astonishing that you didn't know Marsha Jones and Don Wollheim, for a chance to find out just how totally incorrect my mental images of various fen may be. I didn't picture Peter Roberts as a freak, for example. (Er...that's "freak" in it's complementary, counter-culture usage, you understand?) The various rats, gannets and other furry types will undoubtedly be hard to distinguish in person, but at least I've now got a general impression to work on. Peter Weston will now be impossible to confuse with John Brosnan, for example.

/= Peter Weston with m@stashios is even less confusing - but why John Brosnan I wonder...? =/

I also enjoyed your musings on art, even though I'm more an enthusiast of illustration myself. Your pondering "If you've ever lingered in front of a Klee, Kandinsky or a Delaunay -- and who hasn't --" reminded me very strongly of a line in one of the early Monty Python skits, where someone being interviewed -- a psychiatrist, I believe -- says "And who among us hasn't burned down a famous public building -- I know I have..." There's little connection, of course, but my synapses are famous for their ability to make little connections so it was a moment or two before I recovered. And had to admit that I've never stood in front of a painting by any of the three gentlemen you name. Sigh. I suppose my tastes might be easiest explained by my enormous admiration for the work of M C Escher (and I've a feeling I might like Harry Turner's work from your descriptions), Not that this is the sum total of my appreciation -- I'm fascinated and repelled by the bizarre visions of Breughel, for example -- but it's an indication of sorts.

David Rowe comments on a matter that has been much discussed here of late: the lack of feedback for fan-artists. An average issue of ENERGUMEN drew about seventy letters, but rarely was there much beyond simple egoboo for the artists, and this despite our known concentration on artwork and appearances. The most common argument seems to be that fans are essentially verbally orientated and just don't feed qualified beyond the "I liked \_\_\_\_\_ but didn't like \_\_\_" stage. And the fan artists are too busy drawing to write the sort of meaningful criticism other artists would like to receive. I think that the advent of fanzines such as NERG, GRANDFALLOON, TOMORROW AND..., and OUTWORLDS has increased the amount of comment and feedback on artwork, but we still have a long way to go. If, as often seems to be the case, English fandom is slightly behind that in the US, perhaps Dave can expect a growing appreciation for and commentary on artwork in English fanzines. I know that even in the few years I've been getting fanzines from England, there's been a noticeable increase in the amount of artwork used and the interest shown in the physical appearance of the fanzines. And I'm all in favour of it!

John Hall's article -- greatly enhanced by Harry's graphics -- was a memorable contribution. This sort of integrated fanzine article is the sort of thing I've often promoted (and that has made Jerry Lapidus infamous in north American fanzines) and it works well here. My own interest in popular music really only dates back to the early Beatles (but I still remember most of the words to "Singin' the Blues" by Tommy Steele) but I got a good picture of the concert through John's descriptions.

/= To date I've had 36 LoCs to your 70! Wow, all that response and you go and retire! Having seen the last issue now (ta) I regret NERG's passing even more -- it was indeed THAT good if not better, pity but there it ~~is~~ was. I hear rumours that you and Susan may be coming over to TYNECON '74 - either of you guys a poet...? =/

The biting satire of Holdstock's fanslang (and to a lesser degree, of Gray's fanzine reviews) is typical of British fandom and one of its more fascinating qualities. I often wish I knew just how seriously to take it, but the deft use of the scalpel is a joy to watch.

Ken Bulmer has his finger on part of what makes fandom so much fun: the inter-relationship between fans and 'pros'. While there are certain 'big names' whom I dislike because I find their behaviour objectionable, most are "utterly charming" in a way. Ken's Ellison joke is beautiful, but I must defend Harlan. At the risk of name dropping, it happens that Harlan called me this morning. Seems he's here in Toronto for a while and wanted to get together: to paraphrase Ken, "in Harlan's case, the bigger they are the more courteous they (sometimes) are!"



E. C. TUBB -- 67 HOUSTON ROAD LONDON S. E. 23 2RL

Zimri-4½ received and for one wild moment I thought the millenium had arrived and that you had got out a con mag within the time people remember the con. Then I looked again and realised that it was a little late - which surely means that to comment on the mag is to talk of things long-forgotten.

However:- it's a nice mag. One filled with egoboo enhanced by your way of listing the letters - which must hold the danger that it will turn into a letter of comment on letters of comment on letters of comment etc., mag. A way to rapidly reach a point of diminishing interest because always, bones of contention must be thrown to the avid loc'ers so they can loc.

It's your mag and I don't think you claim it to be an SF mag, so the pop reports have a place - but not in my world so I'll skip them and continue casting an old and weary eye ever onwards. Not to nitpick on the typos - of which there seem to be none - or layout which is good, the illos too - but to come to a screeching halt at Johnny Hall's letter. Tut, tut, Johnny - is there no other adjective you could have used to express yourself?

And then on to stare in stunned disbelief at George White's question which I am happy to be able to answer. No, George, seeing God, having chats with him and receiving his blessing does not make you a sinner. It might make you a lot of other things - but not that.



JOHN PIGGOTT - 17, MONMOUTH ROAD, OXFORD, OX1 4TD

Unlike Paul Shackley, I never fear that I've written something too stupid for words when I open a fanzine since I feel that I have sufficient sense not to send such a piece in in the first place. This is where the ego comes in - were I as self-doubting as Paul Shackley evidently is, I'd never get anything done! Needless to say, I do do stupid things sometimes, but it takes other people to point them out to me. One of the good things about fandom is that stupid things are pointed out instead of being left to suppurate.

/= However, there is a difference between self-doubt and self-criticism--  
--I think..? \_=/

The ego may be the biggest impediment to civilisation: but it's just about the sole root cause of everything, good and bad, that mankind has ever done.

Obvious things like the Roman Empire, Third Reich &c., were hatched and nurtured by the egotistical ambitious of their leaders: and would electric light have been pushed so hard by Edison, or the automobile by Ford, were it not for their egos requiring everyone to take note of and use what they'd developed?

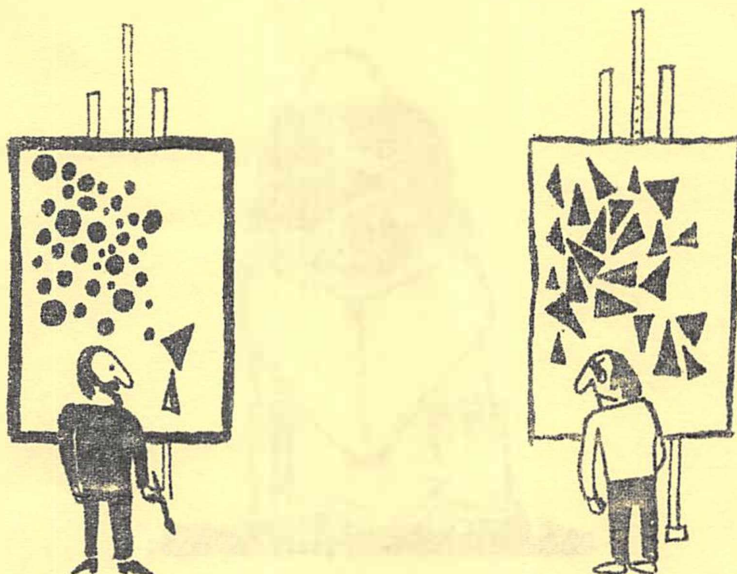
"IF YOU HAVE THE GUTS TO BE YOURSELF, OTHER PEOPLE WILL PAY YOUR PRICE."

John Updike - (Run, Rabbit)

ANDREW STEPHENSON -- 19 DU PRE WALK, WOODBURN GREEN, HIGH WYCOMBE BUCKS.

After thinking about Harry's phrase "fan graphics", I believe that I agree with him. After all, 'art' is too fine a word to be applied to some of the scribbles that appear in fanzines most of the times, and "graphics" does cover items like headings. Probably it comes down to what we call 'art'; for my part I'd say Harry's illoes for John Hall's fine article qualify. However, it'll be hard to persuade folks to change their habits. 'Fanart' is an accepted word now, with it's own meaning and subtleties; and probably we'll all relax back into using it rather than 'fangraphics' which is a bigger mouthful and not so grandiose a word.

Chris Morgan's style I like: it's quietly assured, a pleasant change from the usual 'Gosh, wow, sense of summary' bumblings most fmz give us instead of book reviews. The star ratings are a help, but please don't attempt a unified system sextending to other reviews. (For instance, the "\*\*\*\* $\frac{1}{2}$ " is dangerously close to being meaningless.)



HARRY TURNER -- 10, CARLTON AVENUE ROMILEY NR STOCKPORT CHESHIRE SK6 4EG

You asked me to comment on your comments on my paintings. Alas, words, words, words, when my paintings say it all...

No doubt all the things you list are there: logic reason, mathematical precision, controlled colour, seriousness. Something more too, I hope. It's not true to say that "Everything is worked out very precisely before it ever goes on to canvas". I can see that in trying to tell you something of my methods of working I have given you the image of an immaculate mental concept being mechanically transferred on to canvas!

Not so. I may make extensive calculations or draw up plans on graph paper of relationships and structural details before I start work on painting. This is my technique for getting started - an essential "warming-up" process exploring ideas sensed but still vague, a feeling towards a practical realisation.



But no matter how perfectly the concept is worked out from there, once I start the physical act of drawing and painting I find the unexpected intrudes. The pre-painting work creates a mental universe in which certain rules are introduced arbitrarily and the immediate consequences worked out. The act of painting exposes imperfections in the system, necessitates continual decision making, improvising within the logic of the system. It's largely an intuitively controlled process, an instinctive progression. And it's the visual discoveries I make in this "doing" that create the excitement, suggest variations on the theme, open up new directions. Make it all worth while in fact.

Surely, you as a writer, experience an analogous situation when you start putting words on paper?

/= I, as a writer, experience much more than that Harry, not least of which, is my experience of putting off my world shattering 'novel' until tomorrow!=/

I am not in search of any absolutes. Quite the reverse - in my world everything is relative; painting is an open-ended activity. No individual painting is an end-product, complete-in-itself, isolated; it is one permutation of many. An idea is not expressed as one-off work, to be explored no further - it is capable of countless variations, leading to other ideas. Self-perpetuating, unending...

Beauty, you say. Now there is a word to play with - but don't ask me to join in. Beauty may be order as you suggest, but I see beauty in imperfection. (And if you look a little more closely you'll see this in my work). I don't understand what you mean when you say "God is a mathematical equation" - what, to me, an unsemantic impressive-sounding blab, the sort of remark that promptly arouses my mistrust both of words and the user. Though I've no doubt you'll tell me that it is a metaphor (ah, you poets!). But to me it suggests that you have a hang-up over maths, which is implicit in your earlier phrase "mathematical precision" - do you really regard maths as being precise, dealing only with certainties? /= No I do not, but....=/ Mathematical "truths" are man-made: mathematics is essentially a matter of relationships, a search for pattern... which explains my interest.

Maybe these few paragraphs don't say anything about my work, especially to someone who has not had the opportunity to see it. That's the essential problem, of course. The message in my paintings is in them. I don't profess to be able to express it in words. I have the quaint notion that if you can explain anything in words then there was no point in doing it any other way in the first place. You may not agree, but then you are more concerned with expressing yourself with words than I am. I can't express a non-verbal idea verbally. You may be able to find an appropriate metaphor... but it is still a metaphor. Nothing more.

SAMUEL LONG -- BOX 4946 PATRICK SFB FLA 32925 US of A

To look upon and talk with you's  
A pleasure and a joy,  
Despite our certain differences.  
Said I to me, 'Oh boy!'  
When I read Zimri Four-and-half.  
My mind's now in a whirl  
And I must write a LoC  
And start it thus: 'Oh Girl...'

Oh Girl .... 'Grayb Oak' strikes again, rather well. We'd better watch it about hoaxes, else 'AGB' might form his own fandom with a credo 'Credo in Graham Boakam at in CYNIC solum fanzinam suum' or something of the sort, and declare us all hoaxes. As for me, I will be happy to prove to any femfan that I am flesh and blood ( by mathematics, no less, as Jurgen did) and no hoax

at all.

/= What about the fellers, how are you going to prove it to them Samuel, eh? EH?? =/



PAUL SHACKLEY -- BEVERLEY OAK MILL ROAD SEVEN OAKS KENT

One of the best parts of Zimri has always been the Book Reviews and 4½ was no exception, and I'd like to see someone who knows doing a longer assesment of that whole <sup>lensman</sup> and Skylark trip. Doc Smith may not be fun to read but he's certainly enjoyable to read about. Perhaps there is someone out there who could do a good defence on the Kinnison stories?

/= Well, is there, someone? =/

HARRY WARNER, JR. -- 432 SUMMIT AVENUE HAGGERSTOWN MARYLAND 21740 USA

Let me hasten to write a loc on the latest Zimri before you and others among the Zimri people follow the lead of Gray Boak and begin to grow faint and transparent. I wasn't too alarmed, feeling that the Boak episode might be a hoax, until the other day when a British fanzine reached me home with the correct address but the name of Harry Turner instead of mine above the address. It would be a terrible disappointment to discover that all these years in fandom have been a waste of time because after all I'm nothing but a Harry Turner hoax. And suddenly it occurs to me that this isn't really an issue of Zimri, if it's # 4½. Obviously, it must be an issue of Zin or Nri, depending on whether the other half-issue appears later on or some time in the past.

The photo covers were just as good as having a television set with a channel devoted to fandom. It would probably be channel 69 in the United States, where the UHF frequencies go up that high. I'm astonished at the way all those middle tones and highlights were retained in the engraving and printing process. Photographs taken at cons in this country usually have degenerated into high contrast black and white representations by the time an automated studio has converted the negatives to prints and it gets even worse if someone tries to engrave them. Everyone looks as if a marvelous time were being had and only one thing spoils my complete enjoyment of this cover feature. It's your admission that you don't recognise some of the people pictured. This is proof that British fandom is going the same way American fandom went, engulfed by growth. There was a time when even I from three thousand miles away could come pretty close to drawing up a list of who would attend a British con.

/= It's true our cons seem to be getting larger by the year - or so I'm told by those who have attended more than I; three for me to date - but I knew the faces, knew them to be BNFs but couldn't put the names to them with certainty thinking it wiser not to, rather than re-christen BFN-s! Would Mr Cohen ever forgive me...? =/



You may be on the track of something important in your remarks on that painting with the odd title. There's a theory that Charlie Chaplin attained his stupendous success with the masses because he broke one rule that nobody else in the movies had the nerve to challenge: he occasionally looked right smack into the lens of the camera. This, the theory goes, threw him into direct rapport with all those people in the dark theaters, causing them to understand that there was a real human being who had created the little tramp, one who could look at anyone who happened by, not some remote entity who was interested only in the other actors on the film. I also admire the quotation you dug up from Pope. I may borrow it for my FAPA publication, because FAPA has one member who is hard on the nerves of publishers for nitpicking over grammar and spelling, and by the best of good fortune, he's a judge in real life, in addition to sitting in judgement on FAPA publications as a hobby.

/= The credit for digging up Pope's quotation should really go to AMES not me =/

I don't know if it's safe to believe everything in Living in the Past. But it was wonderful fun to read, an enormous relief from the fanzine articles about rock music which firmly eject any inclination to let sense of humour sneak into their learned and serious prose. This article has the additional advantage of causing me to believe that there really is a wembley. I'd always wondered, because the joke about the three old ladies on the train is so popular over here and that was the only place I'd ever heard about Wembley until Zimri arrived.

/= I in my turn have heard of three old ladies in all sorts of places but on the train to Wembley, explain, explain! Please? =/

A lot of stuff in Ian Williams' piece would fit pretty well in an autobiography if I had the inclination to write one just now. It's a good thing these moods don't last indefinitely for me, and I hope Ian is equally inconsistent.

Spoken like a Fan! was hilarious. Most of these terms are probably too local for their full significance to cause them to be adopted by fandom in general. But I can imagine shitazine becoming part of the language almost immediately, and Raise Hell might also qualify.

Curious, how you happened to publish a review of Galactic Pot Healer just at the time when I'm worried about the non-existence of so many fans. Their non-identity crisis is quite similar to the way people keep fading in and out of existence about two thirds of the way through a typical Dick novel. On the Grey Lensman review: this is a natural reaction but something should be kept in mind. The true revolutionary works in literature or music or whatever suffer the fate of becoming hackneyed and uninventive to later generations, simply because they have such a strong influence on so much creativity. It's the creator who has no effect on an art form who is later hailed as revolutionary by mistake, simply because his innovations found no followers or imitators. That's why music lovers get excited the first time they run across the madrigals of Gesualdo, for instance, who sounds remarkably modern simply because he created an unsuccessful coup d'etat, while Wagner sounds like the most hackneyed background music for movies. Smith wasn't a great writer but he was a stupendously imaginative writer and an innovator whose ways of doing things influenced the whole field of science fiction for a third of a century. His works are old-fashioned and crude today, and a century from now they'll seem like typical science fiction of the 20th century, except to those who have studied thoroughly the history of the field. Smith's novels haven't lost their magic for me because I read the later ones when they were brand new and before they'd been imitated and reworked beyond all endurance.

Neither you nor Pete Weston has the facts straight about women. When a person has reached my age and retains bachelor status, he becomes aware of the truth. There's no such thing as a homely woman.

/= Spoken like a true fan... =/

STEVE SNEYD -- 4 NOWELL PLACE ALMONDBURY HUDDERSFIELD HD5 8PB YORKS

...the Ian Williams was a lovely mood piece...written at the 5 in the morning low ebb? I like yr. turtle poem a lot, too...nice resonance on the words hell...shell...

Chris Morgan I feel is unfair to Dick in both his reviews, particularly Galactic Pothealer, but he's done such a beautiful job of bet-hedging it'd be impossible to pin his lack of justice down without writing an anti-review about ten times longer than the review...Would only say that he (Morgan) betrays an unwillingness to try and really take in what Dick is saying; if I interpret him anything like right, life as a process is too big for us to control or understand but which we've got to keep working on. Morgan makes his unwillingness particularly obvious both in calling 'The Glimmung' a Big Brother type figure, and in calling 'The Preserving Machine' title story itself meaningless, when in fact it, like the throwaway last line in Pothealer clarifies his attitude to "art" in an immaculately vivid way. Still, anyone who tries to review Dick's work, like anyone who tries to review Vonnegut or Delany, is simply setting himself up to be potshot at (no doubt to counterpoint of sardonic chuckles from the writers concerned as they convert reviews into fossil fuel in their bunker-style penthouses), so I suppose the review has got to get X $\frac{1}{2}$  for daring-do if nowt else.



MARION LINWOOD -- 125 TWICKENHAM ROAD ISLEWORTH MIDDLESEX

I liked the interspersed comment in the letter-col, it adds interest and balance. Specially agree with your remarks about women being people first. After all what is pretty: False-lashes and a padded bra? Anyone can tart up in drag and look the epitome of glamour. Which is great on Danny la Rue, but why  $\frac{1}{2}$  the human-race should be expected to troll around in foam-rubber and bees-wax just to be considered pretty? I don't think Peter Weston is the sexiest bigot - but would he like his daughter to marry one?

/=I'm not sure about your " $\frac{1}{2}$  the human-race", I've worked in a Hair Care Clinic- a trychologist y'know - and what men don't do to their heads is not worth knowing about. And if you've ever visited a Photo Studio you'll have noticed that foam is also used by the male of the species!! =/

I find Harlan Ellison and Phil Dick's attitude to women interesting - Do they both have Jewish mother dominated backgrounds a la Portnoy? Ellison particularly seems to be so hostile to women that he must have had some very bad experiences of s-mothering to leave him petrified of any female having any sort of power over him. Almost as bad as Chas Manson's, who believed women are only

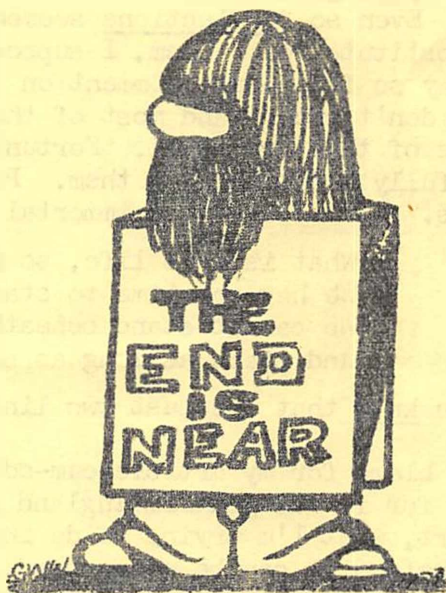


super aware slaves (sexual objects) that must be stepped on if they have any will of their own.

/=Funnily enough I'm in the middle of The Family (by Ed Sanders); its amazing how women - some very intelligent indeed - allowed themselves to be hypnotised by Manson's whatever...apparently enjoying the slave-status. And to think that it all started with Stranger! As for Harlan Ellison, methinks that he was rather badly hurt when he gave his all to a woman; see that beautiful intro in Dangerous Visions - 3 and the equally beautiful letter from Sturgeon to Ellison. No, Manson aka Christ aka.... and Harlan E have not a thing in common. =/

ERIC BENTCLIFFE -- 17 RIVERSIDE CRESCENT HOLMES CHAPEL CHESHIRE CW4 7NR

John Hall on the Rock Festival was interesting; I can't think of anywhere I'd less like to be than a rock festival, except possibly, a rolling-stones concert, but a good bit of reportage all the same. Rock, incidentally, in the style of Bill Haley was playing looooong before that gent came on the scene by Louis Jordan and his Tympany Five complete with honky saxes and the lot; he penned such immortal classics as 'There Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens' and 'Choo, Choo, Ch'boogie' sometime in the early forties, quite big hits in their day.



Ian Wiliam's (or whoever this was writing as Ian Williams') appears to be attempting a sort of fannish ray bradbury way of writing - all style and no content. He isn't as good/bad at it as Bradbury yet, tho'.

ARCHIE MERCER -- 21 TRENETHICK PARC HELSTON CORNWALL TR13 8LH

Ian Williams surprises me - he writes almost like Moondog. This is good. And I rather like the idea of a shitzine. If a zine has LoCs, does a shatzine have shittens though?

Anyway, it's a nice issue. I particularly liked it because it has the atmosphere of an extended zine-length lettercol. No long distracting articles or stories or anything - simply short items that flow into the other from the front cover to the back.

/= Happily this seemed to be a general opinion, and it was exactly what I intended it to be, but only as an experiment this time we are back to normal as it were - in every 'proper' issue of Zimri there will always be a story. =/

I thought that Klee was the bloke who drew triangles - or am I thinking of somebody else? /=Early Kandinsky perchance?=/ Delaunay I have heard of, though only just - I didn't even know he was an artist! Kandinsky is a new name to me. I'm just not with it, am I? /=Hmm..mm.. one could say 'no you ain't', but knowing you, you're probably with more than you'd like us to think...having us on as it were Eh? EH??=/  
Eh? EH??=/

I don't know - John N. Hall writes with such verve (or something) that he makes the rock festival almost sound like fun! Of course, I'm fully aware that had I found myself accidentally trapped in there I'd have been bored stiff at best, or screaming for the nearest exit at optimum. I once attended a couple of "festival" type trad-jazz concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, and they were bad enough! I'd sooner have my music rather more intimate than that.

/=There's something to be said for enjoying music en masse, there's nothing to beat the atmosphere at the Proms, especially on the last day. Likewise when the mood strikes the soothing tones of Chopin or Satie or even Charlie Parker are rather pleasing under more intimate circumstances...=/

JIM ENGLAND -- 'HOUNDEL' OUNSDALE ROAD WOMBOURNE WOLVERHAMPTON

Ian Williams's Reflections of a Depression achieved almost complete honesty (a rare thing in fanzines). I could not agree with him more, that one rarely learns "anything of worth" from fanzines and that the poetry is generally "inept". Even so, Reflections seemed rather precious and inconsequential. It was a substitute for a poem, I suppose, prompted by lack of inspiration. I wonder why so few people comment on the poems in Zimri? Perhaps because, like me, they don't understand most of them. I really would like someone to explain what some of them are about. Fortunately, it is possible to judge most of them without fully understanding them. Poetry is impossible to criticise objectively sometimes. How about those immortal lines:-

"What is this life, so full of care  
We have no time to stand and stare?  
We cannot stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep and cows."

How do we know that the last two lines are bloody awful?!!

/=The blame for my article-cum-editorial can safely be laid at your doorstep, for it was you Jim England who gave me the idea of trying to explain, in part, what I'm trying to do in my poetry. Of course a poem needs to be felt before it can be understood...tho by understanding we don't necessarily feel or respond to it. As for people commenting on Z's poems, they sometimes do, but these are the "I do" or "I don't like" type of comment which I judge to be of little interest to the general reader.=/

GRAHAM POOLE -- 23, RUSSET ROAD CHELTENHAM GLOSTERSHIRE GL51 7LN

Poetry. Surely it shouldn't be Historia de un Amor? Now, I know I'm thick so it's not surprising that I don't understand your poetry and therefore I don't like it. The only images I could see in Shell were sexual and even they were very obscure which might be because they weren't what you intended. I don't like any of the other poetry all that much either.

/=I didn't put any sexual images in Shell, now if you'd have seen the sexual images in Historia de un Amor I'd know that I'd gotten thru to you, cos that is where I put them. Modern poetry is like abstract painting, it is you the reader . o see. what you want to see in them, if you see obscure sexual images, OK, they are there for you... When I say in my poem "my eyes" I don't just mean my eyes; when you read that line its your eyes, everyone's eyes I'm refering to...See? By the way, if it shouldn't be Historia de un Amor, what then should it be? Le pido a Vd. que me ayude.=/



ALAN STEWART -- 6, FRANKFURT AM MAIN , ESCHENHEIMER ANLAGE 2, GERMANY.

I like the way you come in in the middle of someone's letter. Better than putting all the comments at the end. And as for the idea of no comments at all! Just doesn't bear thinking about.

/=I knew that IF I'd wait long enough I find someone who agreed with me, thankyou Alan. As is clear by now, keeping quiet is something I'm incapable of - just yet. =/

Thank you for trading your big and famous ZIMRI (f u n n y n a m e) for my small and unknown FAR. The next issue of FAR will be much bigger and I hope better. IE'll still be basically a fanzine/amateur publication orientated mag but with all sorts of other things as well. Should be out at the beginning of August and might be called FUTURE BLUES, but then again .....

John Hall's article is definitely the best thing I've read in a long time, and I'm not just referring to fanzines. ...Why is it that there are so few articles in fanzines (particularly British fanzines) that are actually about anything? There is plenty of writing but little content in it, apart from 'zines like CYPHER and SPECULATION.

ROGER JOHNSON -- 38, NORTH HOUSE BUSH FAIR HARLOW ESSEX

Despite your forebodings you seem to have little difficulty in producing issues of Z... Harry Turner, in particular, must be the find of the year, or rather the decade. The man writes pieces which are entertaining, amusing and informed. Your own prose is as endearing as always - partly this derives from its (unintentional?) chaotic state. Your verse is still damn' good and I envy you. I particularly liked Shell. The rest of the verse also, more or less. John Hall's When You Hear the Thunder was very interesting and conjured up some fascinating images. Ian Williams' piece of self analysis left me puzzled. I'd be hard put to categorise it as verse, prose or what have you? Not in itself a bad thing. It read like undated entries from a diary that was intended for publication.

Finally, a titbit from, of all people, the Duke of Edinburgh. Accepting an honorary degree as Doctor of Science at Reading University, he said:-

"Some people might well feel that your Vice-Chancellor has succeeded in presenting me for this honorary degree, not just in a good light, but in positively rosy glow of perfection. I hope that what he has left unsaid is not an indication of his true feelings, because the rest of his quotation from Dryden, which he carefully left out, goes like this:

"Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,  
was everything by starts and nothing long;  
but in the course of one revolving moon  
was chemist, fiddler, statesman and buffoon."

You will recognise the quotation, of course. /= Indeed yes --- it seems that Zimri has fans e v e r y w h e r e . =/

GRAY BOAK -- 6, HAWKS ROAD KINGSTON UPON THAMES SURREY 1KT 3EG

Peter Weston is completely correct. Fans do have a habit of referring to any active femme fan as being of astonishing physical beauty. This is completely separate from their views on her personality, writing talent or whatever! You seem to be saying that menfen (?) should treat all women as people. Damn true! I'm sure Pete agrees 100%. I think that mainly they do. Maybe this excessive praise is merely indicative of fannish gallantry ... maybe. It is still a fact of fannish life.

Was Pete patronising? Well, it could be. I haven't been around as long as Pete, but I have been around long enough to realise that there are neos

joining fandom now, making all the same mistakes I made in my day. Some make more, some make less, but just try telling them where they are going wrong... Instant fude. Especially when both sides get confused between fannish principles and personal taste, but just where is the line to be drawn?

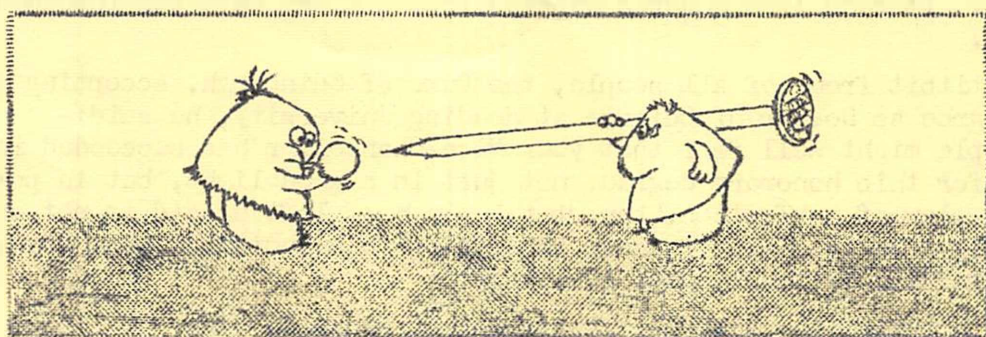
/= Not quite sure if you mean the drawing of lines re fudes or advice; I love fudes (you may have noticed...), not those that go into the realms of personalities of course, one doesn't really want to hurt anyone, but a good battle of wits can be very entertaining. Especially if you're the spectator. The line is naturally drawn by the one who wins, or the one who gets bored with the whole thing - right Gray? As for advice, well there is that story about the horse who wouldn't rink...but that's too old a story to tell, as are facts of life—fen are only people..said she profoundly. \_\*/

BERNARD A. PEEK -- 34 DONGOLA ROAD PLAISTOW LONDON E13 OAZ

Zimri-4 $\frac{1}{2}$  lacks the continuity necessary to make it a good 'zine. It lacks the editorial presence and seems impersonal. This is the same criticism I have levelled at Maya. The individual articles are good, Living in the Past especially so. Was Z-4 $\frac{1}{2}$  rushed? It has that general feel to it.

/= I never, never rush anything I enjoy, and I enjoy producing Zimri; 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  received MORE attention than it's predecessors because I was experimenting with ways of achieving increased editorial presence. Obviously I failed as far as you were concerned, happily tho not with the majority of those fen who'd written. So said I shall leave you in silent dignity..w

hoops!/\_



JIM ALLAN -- 10, KINGSGROVE BLVD. TORONTO, ONT., CANADA M8X 1N3

Zimri contains fiction reviews, mov reviews, fanzine reviews, fan fiction, poetry, articles on the media, articles on fandom, and a long rambling letter column. So do how many other zines? /= Er... me mind's gone blank \_=/ Why should I want to receive Zimri instead of them? "Ah," you might respond, "why not Zimri and them?" /= Well, this is not exactly ho I was going to respond, but I suppose it will do. \_=/ Well, I already get more fanzine-reading material than I really want. I have other interests and other calls on my time and a genzine which sort of covers everything but seldom gets into anything in depth for more than one article per issue, this I don't find worth the money to purchase it or the time and effort to LoC it.

This is only my particular taste about a certain type of fanzines. Zimri did have two articles which I enjoyed very much indeed: "Effluence" by Robert Holdstock and "Living in the Past" by John N. Hall. And there were



other individual high spots in each of the issues (Z-4 & 4½). Yet in the end, while I enjoyed both issues, I find I really don't care whether I ever see another or not, because almost any other reasonably good genzines are as astisfactory. On the other hand I wouldn't at all mind seeing another one.

/= Oh Struth and Saint Sebastian! Some men really know what they want, when they want and how.... OK Sir, I'll think about it. =/

KEN OZANNE -- 'THE COTTONWOODS' 42 MEEK'S CRESCENT, FAULCONBRIDGE, NSW1776 AUSTRALIA ('75 of course!)

Thank for the pictures on the covers - it's nice to know what the other fen look like. Who is Dudi? I like his/her artwork on the flyer.

/=Dudi is Andrzej Dudzinski, an artist from Poland. One or two of his 'dudi' carttons fell into me lap via a friend's friend... Unfortunately the drawings are done in red ink, hence my hand cut reproductions. =/

John Hall made me read every word of his article, which is a feat when you take into account the fact that my interest in Rock music is just about zero. He really made the event live for me and even managed to make me feel some of his own enjoyment of the entertainment. Tremendous.

Ian Williams seems to be capable of writing down virtually stream of consciousness stuff and having it come out interesting. Envy, envy.

None of the poetry grabbed me except the bit of Rubaiyat somewhere at the bottom of the page. (§3) Also the Pope quote.

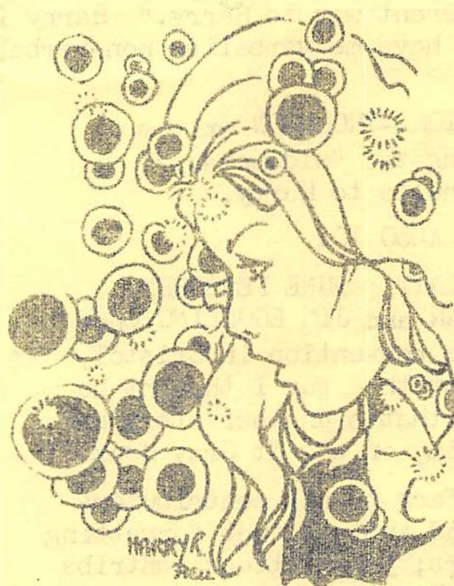
/= Well, they were the best in the issue. Ta.- '

MARYSIENKA LEGG --  
20 WOODSTOCK CLOSE, OXFORD.

Zimri ought to be billed as the fmz with a time machine! I refer, of course, to the photo covers, which arrived so soon after the con they almost made me suspect a time-warp! I was looking at some old fannish photos the other day, taken in my first few years in fandom; and how young and confident and ready to conquer the world I look!

/=Nothing's changed, surely! =/

Just wait another ten years, and look at these photographs again and see what you think - I'll wager you'll agree that "Bob Dylan's Dream" has a lot of truth in it! Nostalgia continues with the superb report of the Rock concert. Appropriately I pen these few lines to the tune of "Happy Birthday 21" by (you'll never believe it) 'e West..... / = Now who's using that time machine..? =/



"One should never trust a woman who tells one her real age. A woman who tells one that, would tell one a n y t h i n g." Oscar Wilde.

LAST MINUTE LOCS and WE ALSO HEARD FROM and THANK MUCHLY FOR WRITING :

ROBERT P. HOLDSTOCK who got married to his lovely Sheila - happiness and congratulations to both.

GERALD LAWRENCE who wrote asking more about a 'proper' Fannish Dictionary and wondered why nobody loves Pickersgill. I referred Gerald to Peter Roberts concerning the Fannish Dictionary, but didn't know whom to refer him to concerning Greg; or even if his assumption was correct. Doesn't anyone love Pickersgill?

JIM DIVINEY said he enjoyed Z but thought Andy Porter's remark would have been better left out. He didn't say which remark tho.

Then there was that funny 'letter' written on five luggage labels from RICHARD E. COTTON - obviously a fan on the move, have stapler will travel?

MATTHEW SCHNECK sez that my WAHF is too long, adding "...I could have a WAHF-list 12 lines long too, if I printed U.S. Army..." Unfortunately I don't get fan mail from the US Army, and if I did I doubt that I'd share my good fortune with you lot. I'd probably enlist instead.

JOHNNY HALL insists that "Ken Bulmer's lavatory mat is a story that absolutely must be told." And so say all of us, but does Mr Bulmer...?

BYRON TERRY JEEVES thanks us for a super issue but stops sending his own ERG; was it something I said, Terry?

BRIAN ROBINSON sent a long and interesting LoC but strictly forbade it to be published - makes a change, I suppose.

PETER COLLEY talked long of Harry's cover for Zimri-4, then asked for it to be explained: "After all Harry says he believes in non-verbal communication and I'm just wondering whether or not this cover was supposed to communicate anything? I ask because his mention of non-verbal communication seems to coincide with what I'm trying to do with my own art at the moment, although in a different way to Harry." Harry Turner replied thus: "Why this mad desire to have me verbalise non-verbal things? The ~~cover~~ needs no comment from me!"

ARTHUR--ATOM--THOMPSON writes remembering the "widowers..." and says hello to Harry.

MY THANKS ALSO TO:

CHARLES PLATT, RUNE FERSGREN, THOM PENMAN and JIM EGGEILING who was at the convention in Bristol, but was not the guy I thought he was...but that's another story and another Jim, or was it Gray Hoax..?

Thanx in fact to all contributors LoC-ers and artists, not forgetting subscribers; your letters, contribs and artwork are muchly appreciated.

I'm desperately short of artwork, fannish cartoons etc for the next issue, so when you put pen to paper please remember Zimri needs you!



A special THANKYOU to DAVID BRITTON and CHARLES PARTINGTON for helping me collate Zimri-4½ also for introducing me to Captain Beefheart. An experience not to be forgotten - both.