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**CAUTION!**



ALIENS-1-8-82-POX.R


**\*BALL BEARING\*** is the zine of the Worldcon Yugoslavia Bidding Committee. Its aim is to make you all out there aware not only of the existence of the Yugoslav bid for the **\*Forty-sixth World Science Fiction Convention\*** in 1988, but of its essential rightness and the nobility of its purpose as well.

(We'll be simply GREIGHT in eighty-eight!)

The idea is to make this zine a quarterly, or, failing that, a thirdly. It will very probably vary in both its volume and quality, and may even change its name as the time passes. The editor is the person signed under the editorial. It will cost you \$ .5 per issue, or \$ 10.- for ALL issues up to and including the one after the con is over, if the Concom survives it. Ad rates supplied on request by the agents of Worldcon Yugoslavia listed below, or write direct to BALL BEARING, c/o Sfera, Ivaničegradska 41a, 41000 Zagreb, Yugoslavia. This publication is also available for "the usual", and for an especially nice show of interest\*\*\*\*

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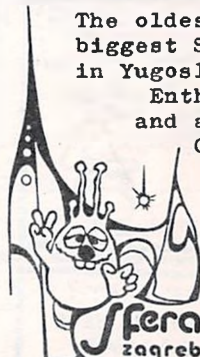
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NEVER THOUGHT OF IT, HUH, MR NIVEN?

by Ka M. Alien

There is a Bandersnatch shamefully lazy  
Who likes to lie hidden behind of a daisy.  
If you saw him never,  
It's because he's clever:  
He's an expert bo-peep, he's absolutely crazy!



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# did columbus waver? OR all defeatism is bunk

An editorial by Bruno Ogorelec

"... the clear, safe course ... leads ever downward into stagnation."

Paul Muad'Dib

This is the first BALL BEARING ever and, of course, you don't know what it is all about. Oh, but you will! Issue by issue we'll barrage anyone in our range with the news about us and our great bid for - wait for it - the forty-sixth Worldcon in 1988!

We'll be GREIGHT in eighty-eight!

Your predictable reaction to "Yugoslavia" is "Yugo-what?" or perhaps, "Yugo-where?". As to where, why, it is right here, on the top of Balkan Peninsula - good old Europe. It is smack right in the geographical and political middle between the "East" and "West". We are non-aligned and a law unto ourselves; there ain't no other country like Yugoslavia in the whole wide world.

Consulting the reference books will help very little, and even that is hardly straight gospel, as most of the stuff is either outdated or just plain wrong. As the dean of Yugo fandom, Krsto Mažuranić, says, most

SEEMS I'M AT  
THE WRONG PLACE,  
NoBODY LOOKS AT  
ME!



of the people know at least something about Yugoslavia, but miss the important points.

But we'll change that. You will get to know about us soon. We've started early enough, we are gathering momentum all the time, our aim is arrow-straight and true, and, boy, when the couple of eights click together on the calendar, watch out! Excet will pale in comparison.

Of course, the road to it is strewn with troubles, but so what? Did Columbus waver, eyeball to eyeball with trouble? No, sir, he didn't! Well, that's what the history books say, at any rate. And when the late Eighties come up for review by the history writers let there be written that the Yugoslavs Did Not Budge Either!

We are here, we know what we are up against, we have the means, we have the will, and - by the Holy Herbert G. - we are going to do it!

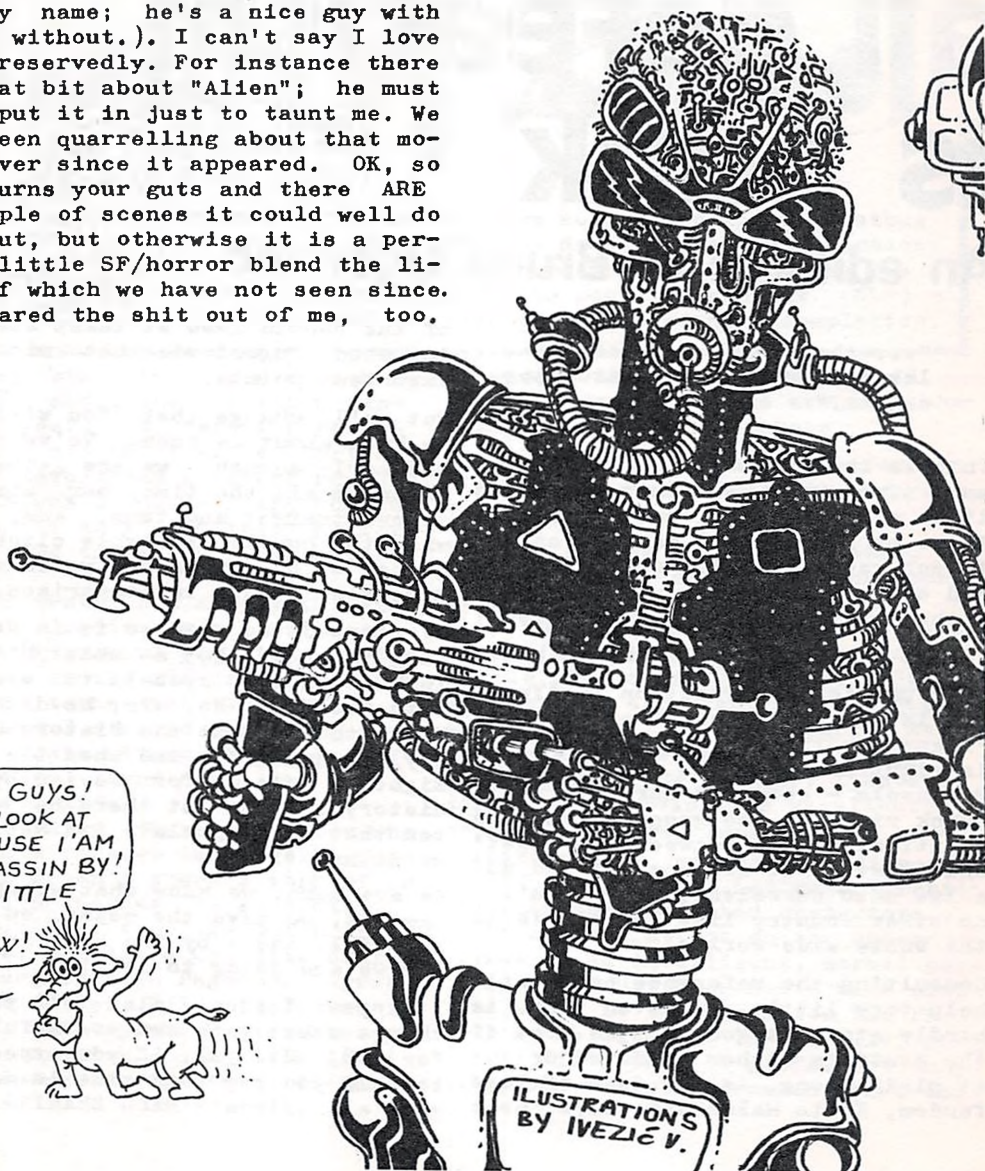
I suppose I should also tell you of things other than our wonderful bid for '88. However, if you expect me to tell you why this zine is called - of all things - BALL BEARING, you

've got another think coming. For that revelation you'll have to wait a little longer. This time we just let you know we are here - there is hardly any space left, anyway.

The central part of this issue is the interview with Krsto A. Mažuranić. ("Krsto" is pronounced in the following manner: try imitating the sound a gearbox will make if a gear is changed without the clutch: khrrr... khrrr... - and to this add "stop" without the last "p". It comes out like KHHRR-STOH. What could be easier? I won't even attempt his family name; he's a nice guy with it or without.). I can't say I love it unreservedly. For instance there is that bit about "Alien"; he must have put it in just to taunt me. We've been quarrelling about that movie ever since it appeared. OK, so it churns your guts and there ARE a couple of scenes it could well do without, but otherwise it is a perfect little SF/horror blend the likes of which we have not seen since. It scared the shit out of me, too.

As for Krsto' contention that "Soylent Green" is one of his favorites - yetch!

What gets me most, however, is that he preaches that fandom here didn't appear till the mid-seventies. Why, my mother was a true blue fan back in the forties! This guy is trying to negate my noble lineage stretching all the way back to the turn of the century and the first publication here of Flammarion's La fin du monde. (My Grandma liked it enormo-



usly but seemed to regard it as the words of a prophet, an accurate description of the days to come, which complicated the things somewhat in the later years). Yes, it is technically correct that the organized fandom started in 1976. But why take things so bureaucratically? He'd better avoid telling that kind of story when Ma is around. (She is sweet but rather short-tempered).

And for the final fling, I can hardly resist the ignoble joy of revealing that he has been on the verge of becoming "...the editor of the...fanzine..." for the last four years or so. I mean, there he is, jawboning poor editors of clubzines about the necessity of appearing regularly and as often as possible, and at the same time he dithers, unable to make up his mind to finally goddamn START that fanzine of his that he has been so meticulously preparing. Print them on discarded brown paper bags, but publish them often! - he says, but does not do his own 'cause he can't put together enough money to produce a G\*L\*O\*S\*S\*Y lavish goshwow zine he has in mind.


Oh, well, apart from the above digs the interview is OK. It will tell you a lot about us. It still, however, does not address the most important point, and that is, why on Earth are we doing it at all! Well, sometimes we are wondering about it ourselves. In the last analysis it would probably boil down to a simple fact that we are fen. Sometimes there's just no substitute for that.

And on this happy note let me conclude this editorial - if the above exercise in positive thinking could be called by that lofty name.

Do write us ! We are eager to find out what kind of LOCs the start of our peerless campaign produces. Articles and such are of course most heartily welcome. Deadline for No.2 is October 30 or thereabouts.


May the Ball be with you!






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# A TWO-DIMENSIONAL MARTIAN

Nauseously hideous Martian hung there on the wall perfectly still, never moving a muscle. (If he had, I'd have yelped with fright and scurried away anyway).

He caught my eye the moment I entered the auction hall. Now, you must understand that I only go for alien real estate rather than alien life forms, but this one fascinated me. I ignored the rest and approached him until I was so near I could have touched him if I wanted to. (Heavens, no, I didn't want to: he was repulsive and, besides, what would be the point?) Did it a bit hesitatingly, I must admit. It was not that I was afraid he'd touch me back, of course (a ridiculous idea, that!), but some undefinable smirk on his... er... face? made me falter. As if he knew he was for sale. (Perhaps that's why I normally don't buy aliens. We all have our petty idiosyncrasies and mine is to feel somehow as if I'd be buying slaves, you know. Also, I shrink from the imagined stench.)

Anyhow, it was as if he were aware of the touch of unreality about him, as if he knew he was unnaturally flat, obviously and unmistakably two-dimensional.

Otherwise, everything was there: his hide the color of vomit after eating far too much spinach and eggs and beet-roots; his... er... face? thick-skinned and scarred like ancient bark against the cold and abrasive sand storms, the fine mesh horn grille over his respiratory intake apertures to filter the omnipresent dust particles out from



## Short fiction by K.P. Božičković



the air, the irised nictating plates over the bulging domed visual organs on top of his turret-like head; his thin, tubular, gnarled torso sprouting three knobby grabbing branches (yes, only three: he must have lost the others in some vicious battle, guessing by the disfiguring, badly healed scars); the jumping leg-root taut, poised to launch the body into a huge leap forward upon an unsuspecting victim, the ballancing leg-root tucked under out of the way, yet ready to come into play at the instant of landing.

Yes, he looked very much like a tree spawned by a sick imagination of an insane imitator of Disney's and a rather badly painted one at that, where the artist failed to give it the impression of three-dimensionality.

Well! A gruesome treelike Martian looking so obviously two-dimensional surely won't rub my petty idiosyncrasy. Might be a good idea to hang the painting on the wall over the safe: might get handy for scaring squeamish burglars out of their wits and pants - and, preferably, out of my house.

Yes, I'm going to buy it. WorldCon art auctions do have their good points sometimes.

((It is a so-so story, but I wanted to rub Krsto the wrong way - he's the one who dislikes gruesome scenes. By the way, I was sure it was "nictitating", and not "nictating". Now I'm nictating with embarrassment. God, was I ever so certain! -Ed.))

# SF AND FANDOM IN YUGOSLAVIA

Krsto Mažuranić interviewed  
By Christine Kulyk



This interview appeared in No. 13 (October 81) of THE MONTHLY MONTHLY (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada). It is slightly shortened and updated for this occasion. Thanks, Christine !

((Krsto A. Mažuranić is a very active Yugoslav fan. He was born in '42 is married and has two children. In the "mundane" world his profession is that of translator and interpreter--which isn't surprising, in view of his excellent command of the English language, among others. In the fannish world, he is one of the founders of SFera, the oldest Yugoslav SF club, of which he is currently chairperson. He has also been on the concom for Yucon One, the first Yugoslav convention, and all the others that followed. He may soon become the editor of the first true Yugoslav genzine. This interview was conducted by mail.))

CK: Very few fans in North America know anything about the nature (or even the existence) of fandom in Yugoslavia. In fact, most of us probably know very little about your country in general. How do you feel about this?

KM: It seems to me that an astonishing number of people know at least something about YU--and miss the important points. It's weird to hear YU lumped together with countries of the "Red" Bloc, or to see an uneasy doubt in the eyes of, say a Frenchman when I tell him I don't speak a word of Russian. YU is non-aligned, you see, which means exactly that. We have friends, but no Big Brothers. Besides, YU is one of

the most open countries in the world today. Look, Life Atlantic -- -- shortly before it folded -- gave an uncannily accurate political map of Europe. NATO countries were painted green there; USSR, etc. were painted--close your eyes and try to guess--red; neutral countries were yellow; Yugoslavia alone was painted--now for the stunner--a nice bright hue of pink.



See the idea?

CK: What languages are spoken in Yugoslavia?

KM: We Yugoslavs take a morbid pri-



de in living in an impossibly complicated country and readily amuse ourselves by perplexing foreigners with it. To begin with, Yugoslavia is ONE country. TWO alphabets are used here: Latin and Cyrillic. THREE equally strong and respected major religions thrive: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Moslem (together with dozens of less well known and practiced). We speak FOUR main languages: Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, and Macedonian (well, I rigged the game a little here to arrive at Four - Serbian and Croatian are actually considered one language with two variants. That's why you'll hear of a "Serbo-Croatian" language. However, the two variants differ enough to be considered by some as languages by themselves. On the other hand, Croatian itself boasts three dialects virtually unintelligible mutually... you can see the difficulty one faces when trying to define anything here .).

To continue, there are FIVE nationalities here: Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Montenegrins. YU is a federation of SIX republics (plus two autonomous provinces inside Serbia). SEVEN countries share borders with YU. EIGHT national minorities have education, press, radio/TV, theatre, etc. in their own languages... There can easily be found a nine, a ten, etc. but let me desist. OK?

Ah, yes: most people other than Serbs and Croats understand (as opposed to "speak") S-C language. Few people understand other languages spoken in YU very easily unless it is their mother tongue.

CK: Whew! Sounds as though you could give us some advice concerning Canada's problems with French and English speakers. So it is possible to get along! But how does this multilingualism affect something like the book publishing industry in your country?

KM: Well, there's roughly 21 million people living in YU. Take a novel published in the English language which sold one million copies -- a smash hit bestseller, right? I guess at least 300 million people live in the English-speaking countries. It comes out that 0.3% actual-



ly bought the book.

Now suppose everybody in YU understands S-C well enough to be able to read and enjoy a novel in it. If we extrapolate from the above we have at our hands a bestseller that sold not quite 70,000 copies. Now, who's to envy YU publishers? The usual print run for S-C books is ten thousand. In some of the languages spoken here it's only a few hundred. This also makes locally published books rather expensive--more expensive than foreign books, as a matter of fact.

There's more: imagine a Canadian author wrote a novel and had it published in the local language in, say, Edmonton. Now imagine people in Calgary, Winnipeg, Québec, and Halifax can't read it at all unless it were translated into their respective languages!

CK: Yes, I think I can see the problem... But what about your contact with SF books from other countries? How available is English language and other non-Yugoslav SF in your country? How many fans in your country read foreign-language SF?

KM: SF was never a ghetto literature here. Wells, Verne and onwards were published as mainstream fiction and this practice continued to apply when more modern SF appeared. Asimov has, for instance, only recently acquired the SF label.

Also, there were too few "trash" or "pulp trash" titles to give SF a bad name. SF has always been popular here. Wells' The Time Machine was translated and published in the nineteenth century. There has been a steady trickle of SF from abroad ever since. (I can think of only about twenty novels by YU authors in this genre in S-C language. Of course, there are books in other languages--Slovenian, Hungarian, Ma-

ton, and exclaiming "Tko ovdje govori hrvatski?"...

So there was a large and growing number of us people who regularly read imported books in English (which started being available some-when early in the sixties) and now we can buy practically whatever we wish to, either direct from abroad, or in a bookstore here that sells foreign books: I have about 20 metres (70 ft.) of paperbacks and know

# Shards of Babel

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cedonian, etc.--but I wouldn't know very much about them. Foreign languages, see?). So there's a couple of novels now and then, a short story in a mainstream magazine now and then. It was hardly a happy hunting grounds for an SF fan then! So for a long time there was no organized fandom.

I remember how avidly I listened to the radio-serialization of Manfred Langrenus' The State in the Moon back in the fifties. I was hardly in my teens then. The SF bug got me and I started searching for similar texts. It was The Caves of Steel that I found next. The bug got me for life.

Naturally, there are those who can read a foreign language. A Yugoslav who doesn't speak a word of some foreign language is an oddity. We simply have to, like Dutch, for instance. Imagine a Canadian coming to Hamburg or Pago Pago--or Zagreb, for that matter. S/he simply has to exclaim, "Who speaks English here?" Someone invariably does. Now imagine me coming to Pago Pago, or Edmon-

of people who have passed a full hundred. Foreign books are also cheaper, as I mentioned above.

CK: Do you get to see many foreign films? What SF movies are your favourites?

KM: SF movies are popular here, of course. I suppose no more nor less than elsewhere. We see more or less what is there to see with, say a year's lag behind N.A. We had our little 2001 craze, our little Star Wars craze, etc. Yes, Soylent Green was a big hit. So was Solaris. Maybe the all-time favourite is Dr. Strangelove. (By the way, I hated Alien. As a movie it's excellent--superb camera, superb sets, competent acting, masterfully directed. As SF, it's trash. Let me not mention shamefully clichéd characters... It's a sneak attack on the common sense of an intelligent, normal person. Steve Hotchner had a nice article about it in Denvention Two PR 1 --I agree with him to the hilt. Besides, it's full of goofs. Not only SF goofs but plain common sense and

logic ones, too. After all, has any one bothered to compare its script with Sturgeon's The Girl Had Guts ? Try looking it up and see what I mean. My personal favourites are: Fahrenheit 451, Dr. Strangelove, Dark Star, Forbidden Planet, Duel, Demon Seed, Soylent Green, Roller Ball, Metropolis... in that order, more or less.

CK: Who are your favourite SF authors, local and foreign?

KM: Favourites? It is simply that hardly any home author wrote enough stuff to really merit the label "prominent" except, of course, Zvonimir Furtinger, our home Fred Pohl in every respect-- popularity, quality, penchant for collaboration, all but the sheer volume of work. Foreign authors? People simply don't know that many authors if they can't read English. And translations appear at a rather slow (albeit steady) pace. So it would be meaningless to say Asimov, Lem, Herbert, Clarke, Sturgeon, the Strugatskis, etc. It is simply that some people were translated and the others weren't, or not as much. As for my personal favourites, I usually say Asimov, Budrys' Rogue Moon, and everything else that's good, especially the currently latest book by Pohl.

CK: How did fandom get started in YU and what is its current state?

KM: Everything started on a grand scale in 1976 here, curiously enough. The first SF club was formed --SFera, in Zagreb. The first true SF magazine started--Sirius, also in Zagreb. A publishing house started a regular line of paperbacks exclusively for SF, as opposed to the previous sporadic publications, or SF books in the otherwise mainstream series--the Kentaur series by BIGZ, in Beograd. (We are still talking of the doings in S-C language, although SFera and Sirius antedate all others in the country regardless of the language). All this in 1976.

Today there's an impossible chaotic array of clubs and semi-clubs and just amorphous gatherings and whatnots here. For full five years now everybody most fiercely agrees that a sort of national organizati-

on should be formed (it already has a name: YUSSO), and everyone equally fiercely does exactly nothing about it. No wonder: an organization needs--among other things--funds to make it run. Clubs live off their meagre, token membership fees. Pros live quite well, thank you, without the organization. No funds, no organization.

CK: If a fan in North America, or elsewhere, wanted to contact some Yugoslav fans, or to send them some fanzines, where could he/she write? (Would there be a language problem?) Can you mention something about fanzines which are published in your country?

KM: Anyone wishing to meet YU fan, please write in English or some other major world language--if not one of the YU languages. Fanzines are also MOST WELCOME. But I'm afraid we can't reciprocate, except with clubzines. We have several, but no fanzines that I know of. If you are not a purist, you are welcome to swap with us. Though, of what use could possibly be a text in S-C, or Slovenian, to a N.A. fan? Well, perhaps as a curio. However, I am very soon going to become the editor of the first true fanzine in YU. Its title will be ZBiF, a serconzine with English abstracts and sum-



maries, articles translated into English on request and sent upon receipt of a SASE.

((Here Krsto waxes eloquent about YU clubs. We intend however, to do a much more detailed treatment of this topic in one of our next issues, so that I'll omit this part of the interview and come straight to the end of it. - Ed.))

Sirius magazine sells between 25 and 30 thousand copies! It is certainly the most popular SF magazine in the world, calculated per capita. It never missed an issue yet in six years of publication, and gives a steady diet of 144 pages of short stories per monthly issue. No art except for the cover, approximately two thirds translated fiction and one third home-brewed original. Ken-taur, the paperback line, is inching towards its hundredth title. No original novels so far, just trans-

lations, but several Yugoslav titles are getting ready for publication this fall.

CK: Thank you very much, Krsto, and good luck with the club, the convention, and your new fanzine.

((And I say, thank you again, Christine, and sorry for tinkering with the original text. It is of much more use now, besides being more accurate. - Ed.))

G.M. WEBB  
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