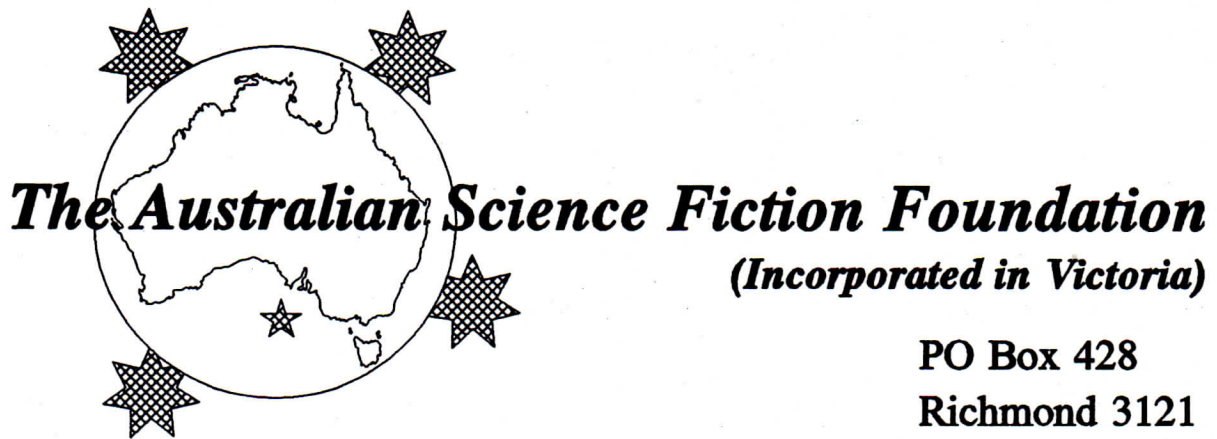




SUMCON 92

SOUVENIR BOOK



The Australian Science Fiction Foundation

(Incorporated in Victoria)

**PO Box 428
Richmond 3121
Australia**

WHAT FOUNDATION?

THIS FOUNDATION!

Since the Australian Science Fiction Foundation was formally established under the Co-operation Act in 1976, partially to carry on the work of Aussiecon, it has been involved in the Australian Science Fiction Community through the sponsorship and administration of writing workshops, short story competitions, regional and national conventions and the publication of its newsletter, *The Instrumentality*. From the beginning, the Foundation has been a resource centre for everyone involved in Science Fiction in Australia.

The Foundation was the nucleus for the successful Aussiecon II bid and its members worked, along with many others, to run the 1985 Worldcon in Melbourne. In March 1988, the Foundation became an incorporated association - a legal vehicle that was more appropriate for its activities and which had not been available in 1976. Since 1988 the Foundation has been involved in all of its more traditional activities, such as sponsoring Short Story competitions at national literary and media conventions and through providing seed loans to a number of conventions. The last year, however, has seen the role of the Foundation grow and develop.

THE CHANDLER AWARD

At the 1991 Annual General Meeting the Foundation set about establishing a new award for "*Outstanding Achievement in Australian SF*". Unlike the *Ditmars*, this award would be decided upon by a jury and, although nominally an annual award presented in conjunction with the NatCon, would not necessarily be presented every year. In recognition of the contribution that A. Bertram Chandler made to Australian SF, his popularity here and his patronage of the Foundation, the new award (after gaining the approval of Bert's widow Susan) is called the *Chandler*. The Foundation is pleased to announce that the inaugural *Chandler Award* will be presented at the 1992 Australian Science Fiction Convention - *SynCon '92*.

THE FOUNDATION PARTY

Another inaugural event for the Foundation at *SynCon '92* will be the hosting of the first Foundation Party by Vice-President Alan Stewart - a golden opportunity to find out exactly what the Committee of Management really does with all that money... Look for details of time and place around *SynCon '92*.

INTERESTED IN JOINING?

Write to the address above asking for information about membership.

G'DAY

Welcome to **Syncon 92**, the 31st Australian National Science Fiction Convention. This year's Syncon is memorable for a number of reasons. It is the fortieth Anniversary of the first Australian Natcon, which was also held in Sydney. It is the 10th time that the Natcon has been hosted in Sydney (the 6th time as a Syncon). And it is the first time that a Natcon (to the best of my knowledge) has had, as its Professional Guest of Honour, somebody whose greatest claim to fame is not that of wordsmith.

The theme of the convention is *The Art of Science Fiction*, and some people may feel that this means the convention is going to be all about artwork and artists. However I think that our convention theme deals with the concept in a holistic manner: that is, the writers, artists, readers, fans, critics, all of the parts which make up the genre of SF and what it means to us, as an art form in itself. **Syncon 92** reflects these thoughts. Certainly, you will find a large Art Show. Certainly, our guests are artists. Certainly, the program has more art related programming than one may expect. But does any of that matter? The writer of the words is as much an artist as the person who draws the pictures. At this convention you will see writers talking about art and artists (and vice versa), cartoonists talking about movies, and so on. There is no difference, all that matters is to get out there and enjoy.

The organisation of this convention has not been without its problems. A major recession, and the

collapse of an airline, all these things, and more, have had their affect. However, despite all the problems the convention committee has had to face we are confident that all will turn out well and that **Syncon 92** will be a creditable and enjoyable convention. This confidence is due to all the people who have helped out in some way and although the convenor is supposed to take all the brickbats and bouquets, there is no way I could do it alone. I would like to thank the committee for their tireless work and our interstate agents and spreaders of information, Danny Heap, Roger Weddall, Gigi Boudville and Justin Ackroyd. To those of you who will be helping out on the registration desk, the art show and all the hundreds of other little things that make a convention run smoothly, my thanks. Finally my thanks go out to our guests and program item members especially Karl Kruszelnicki, Ron Ward, Jane Larsen, Rex Thompson, Eva Hauser, Phil Kidd and most especially Sean McMullen, Nick Stathopoulos and Michael Whelan. Finally I would like to thank you, our members, without whom none of this would have been possible.

In closing I am reminded of what Jack Herman said in his convenor's Polemic in the Conviction Program Book, and think that it is quite appropriate (with a slight change) for me to close with:

Have a good con and see you ALL at SWANCON in 1993

Acknowledgments

The Committee

Rod Kearins

Gerald Smith

Karen Warnock

Blair Ramage

Margaret Hilliard

Barb de la Hunty

Kevin Maclean

Michelle Hallett

Australian Science Fiction Foundation

For Supporting the Convention, especially the Short story competition.

Peregrine imports

For Supporting the Art Competition

Danny Heap, Gigi Boudville, Roger Weddall, Justin Ackroyd, and all others who helped to spread the Word

Jack Herman for controlling the Business Meeting

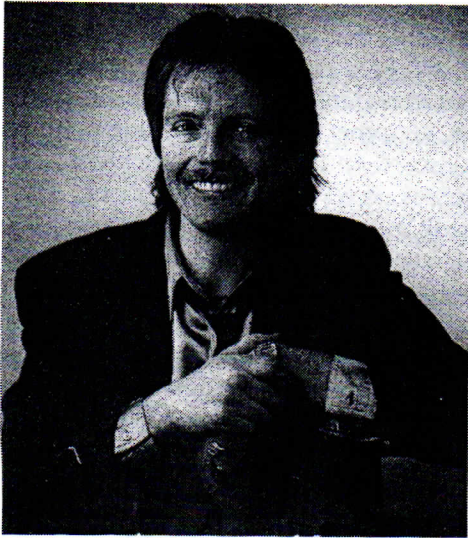
Handbook printed by **KanPrint Printers**

Bromides supplied by **Rimi Typesetters**

Art Credits

Craig Hilton 19

Phil Wlodarczyk 23,26



Michael Whelan GALLERY OF WONDER

If you go into Galaxy Bookshop, you will no doubt be overwhelmed by that intimidating wall of paperbacks stretching the shop's entire length - all vying for your attention. So many to choose from! Yet I was seduced by one such cover.

It may have been the quality of light reflecting on the desert worn hero that first caught my eye. Maybe it was the soft, subtle use of colour amongst all those garish splashes, or perhaps it was the exotic female alien: alien but not too alien. She was dark, alluring, and almost as mysterious as the strange vessel behind them, the prow of which loomed over both figures. Decorated with a fine network of what looked like macrame, and interlaced with jewels and beads, it peaked my curiosity. And oh, the rendering!

I bought the book for that beautiful painting. So beautiful in fact that I could never read beyond the first few pages. Somehow the text never seemed to fully realise the promise, the expectation, elicited by the artwork. To this day, the book remains unread. But the cover is fresh and alive in my imagination.

The cover artist was Michael Whelan.

It is no mere hyperbole when Anne McCaffrey claimed, "Fortunate indeed is the author who has Michael Whelan for illustrator." She appreciates the wealth of talent and experience Michael brings to her covers. Apart from the marketing value, she understands the incalculable emotional impact his work has on the reader.

Yet, to create an image as accurate and indelible as Michael routinely creates, an artist must get closer to the material than any reader can, sometimes even more so than the author.

Whereas we mere fans can only read about flying on one of McCaffrey's anatomical anomalies, Michael flies them. His paintbrush caresses women the likes of Killashandra or Friday. He has shared ice-creams with exotic aliens. When he holidays he takes his wife Audrey to Zarathustra. He has to! How else do you realise the fantastic?

Alan Dean Foster calls him a "Concretizer of the impossible.", while it seems to Isaac Asimov that it must "Be rather marvellous to be able to illustrate not a concrete scene but an abstract imponderable."

That's all well and good. But to an artist like myself - or indeed anybody who is captivated by the art of the fantastic - Michael Whelan has managed to make our greatest fantasy very real. Publishers seek him out for their choicest books. He has more Hugos than Harlan Ellison! Married to Audrey Price (who runs Glass Onion Graphics, which produces prints of Michael's work) and father of Alexa (11) and has taken on a slightly more sophisticated manner, courtesy of Ballantine/ Del Rey or some other publisher who now pays him to go there. Hmm, I wonder which Mars was the more exciting, that of a four - year - old, or that of an adult? But I digress. That childhood sense of fantasy still runs deep, and if his recent work is any indication, shows no sign of abating.

A rt from the Worlds of Science Fiction and Fantasy

Michael Whelan's fascinating artwork for "The Summer Queen" by Joan D. Vinge. Fine art print to be released soon.



For this and many more of Michael Whelan's works of wonder, see us in the hucksters' room or contact us at the address below.

... for Michael Whelan artwork contact

PEREGRINE IMPORTS

PO Box 312, Fyshwick, ACT, 2609.

Phone Barb or Geoff on 06 258 3839

THE 10th AUSTRALASIAN NATIONAL MEDIA

SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY CONVENTION

6-8th JUNE 1992

HOTEL ADELAIDE

HONGCON

NEIL GAIMAN

Multi-Award-Winning author of 'The Sandman', 'The Books of Magic', 'Don't Panic' and co-author of 'Good Omens' with Terry Pratchett.

PAUL CORNELL author of the Dr. Who 'Timewyrm' series novel 'Revelation'.

Guest Panellists- Michal Durkiewicz, David de Vries & Glenn Lumsden.

EVENTS:

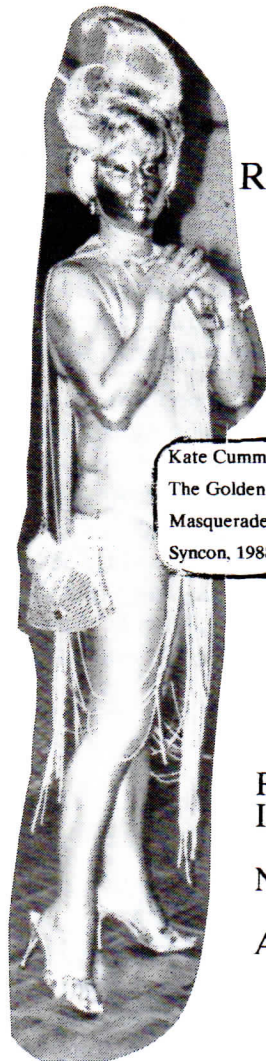
- * banquet * panels * videos
- * masquerade * auctions * workshops
- * theatresports * hucksters * gaming
- * art & literature competitions
- * fantastic trivial pursuit
- * nude jelly wrestling * T.V. & movie memorabilia *
- * costuming
- * etc!

COST: \$75-00 membership until 1-5-92 then \$95-00. Supporting m'ship \$30-00.

Accommodation available at the venue.
CHARITY: All proceeds will go to The Anti-Cancer Foundation of the Universities of South Australia

For more information send a SASE to:
Hongcon '92 Inc.
P.O. Box 160
Rundle Mall 5000





Kate Cummings as
The Golden Android,
Masquerade Co-Winner
Syncon, 1988

REMEMBER ANOIF DOOW

at Worldcon 1975?

REMEMBER THE GOLDEN ANDROID

at Syncon 1985?

Read the Story Behind the Story

"...a lifetime of self-discovery and self-destruction
told with acerbic wit and crisp observation..."

KATHERINE'S DIARY

the story of a transsexual

by Katherine Cummings

(to be published by Heinemann Australia in July, 1992)

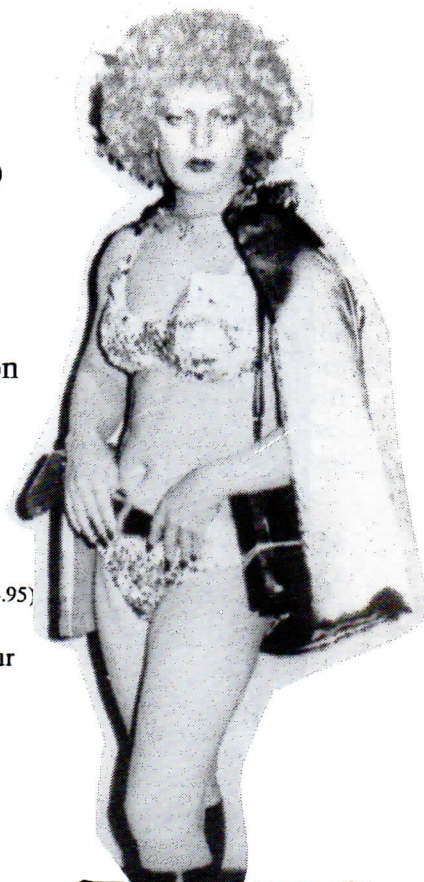
Pre-publication orders \$16.00 posted anywhere in Australia (RRP \$14.95)

See Kate Cummings during the Con or send your
remittance to PO Box 451, Rozelle, 2039

Please send mecopies of Katherine's Diary.
I enclose \$16.00 per copy

Name:

Address:



Kate Cummings as Anoif Doow,
Masquerade Winner Aussiecon, 1975
(Photo Gary Hoff)

This convention provides a rare opportunity to enjoy Whelan's work first hand, not reduced to paper-back size and smeared with text. When you visit the Art Show, don't just look at his work. Take time. Analyse. Study his composition, examine his fine rendering and eye for detail. You'll see for yourself what Kelly Freas meant when he said that Michael, "Possesses a strong element of the showman, and the communicator; and he puts both abilities to work in every picture." Indeed, Michael himself claims that, "A good artist is a good communicator." But a good artist is also a good diplomat. "The artist must walk a fine line between commercial necessities and aesthetic responsibilities."

Try to understand what compromises may have been made to satisfy the whims of a publisher or art director. Art directors may desecrate his work with such names as Asimov, McCaffrey, or Clarke (I should be so lucky!), but his work still maintains integrity as art. The paintings work by themselves.

Painting one superb fully rendered cover is tough enough. Sometimes every brushstroke can be a struggle. Yet Michael has painted hundreds; each

fresh, each different, each original. How does he do it?

The answer is simple. He enjoys it! You can tell. Look closely at any painting. Michael revels in the minutiae of his subjects. And he's obsessed! These are no mere illustrations. Look deeper. They're more like psychological breakdowns of characters and story - full of symbolism and sub text. He likes to play games too. Like hiding his signature in a piece of jewellery, or a mission patch, or in alien hieroglyphs. Hidden always in sympathy with the work, unlike vainer artists who emblazon their signatures as if they were soliciting for their next job.

So what motivates him? What keeps him creating? Allow me to venture my own psychoanalysis. I think I know the real reason why he's drawn back to his easel day after day.

No, not to please authors. Not for the awards. Nor to satisfy publishers, or even to placate his bank manager. You see, Michael Whelan is still running away to Mars.....and whenever we buy a book with one of his covers, we're happily running away with him.

Nick Stathopoulos.



Nick Stathopoulos

ENIGMA AND GENIUS

Terry Dowling has previously written of "The Alchemist Of Blacktown" (*Swancon 17 Program Book*) so, when I was asked to say a few words about Nick Stathopoulos it seemed only appropriate that I take a different approach.

I've known Nick for as long as I have been in fandom. He has been one of the major influences in defining both myself and my work, and I consider him my best friend. Yet, as I marshal my thoughts, I realise that part of the man I thought I knew so well remains an enigma....

To try and explain I must return to that first meeting almost a decade and a half ago. I was in my late adolescence, a pretty good model maker, freshly inspired by "Star Wars" and attempting to teach myself how to make rubber masks. I answered an advertisement in Galaxy Bookshop wanting FX technicians for an amateur SF film, fully confident that I could supply them with anything they could envision. I soon learnt that they wanted me but they also had this other guy who "did rubber" and was really good. I was hit by a brief flash of jealousy and insecurity that was instantly replaced by curiosity - who was this guy?

I soon found out - a distorted doppelganger, a like mind, a person sharing the same hopes and dreams. And, yes they were right. He was good - better than me in fact. In a pulp melodrama we would be instant bitter enemies. Instead we became the best of friends.

Our backgrounds and methods have always been different. He did not have to worry about the shadow of a famous and strong willed father, but, by the same token, had only himself for teaching and guidance. The result, at its best, was genius: at its worst, dogmatism.

There are only two people whose judgment and opinion I trust implicitly. He is one and he introduced me to the other - an artist by the name of Marilyn Pride (but that's another story).

Nick introduced me to fandom, and our enthusiasm and developing skills were fuelled by a friendly rivalry to outdo the other. Convention masquerades became the battleground for our conflicting sensibilities - analytical versus intuitive, technical versus elemental, Lewis versus Nick.

Beyond our fantasies lay the "real world". We were torn between practicality and our desire to be true to ourselves. We were racing towards the narrow niches that exist for artists like us when Nick stumbled, or, closer to the truth, was tripped.

For six years, as I built a career, Nick studied to be a lawyer. If he agreed with his friend's misgivings it did not deter him from what he perceived to be his obligations (a noble attitude that continues to bring him angst).

Nick finished his studies and got the letters after his name that his parents desired. Thereafter he swore

he would live and succeed "in the real world" as a fantasy artist.

The rest, as they say, is history. I won't detail the awards won, or the tragedies and heartache that has gone hand in hand with the greatness. Suffice to say he is recognised both as one of fandom's most celebrated figures and, more importantly, as an artist in his own right.

In the thirteen years I have known him I've envied and admired, been uplifted and exasperated. I look at the superb body of work and the enigma stares back. Almost every piece painstakingly produced and jealously guarded - for somebody or something else. It is almost as if he is sacrificing his personal dreams just as he sacrificed those agonising six years. I cannot recall one piece done for his own pleasure. And yet, maybe this is just the training,

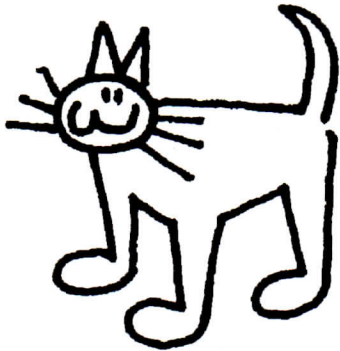
designed to hone his skills for a dream that demands nothing less than perfection.

I am privileged to have known Nick and to have had my life changed by him. I am also privileged to have seen the birth of his greatest and most personal dream.

In the stillness and blackness at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean lies a rusting ship. Its brief existence was one of pride and complacency followed by swift and irrevocable tragedy. Technology has rediscovered that tangle of bones and metal, but as a symbol it endures.

I truly believe that one day that symbol will be reinterpreted through the genius of Nick Stathopoulos. On that day *The Titanic* will sail again, to take its rightful place amidst the clouds.

Lewis Morley



CONSTANTINOPLE

"Uniting the Empire"

Easter, April 1-4, 1994

Hello to all Syncon '92 supporters and Members! This is to let you know about CONSTANTINOPLE, a convention to be held in Melbourne over Easter 1994.

We've invited a Professional Guest of Honour, and two Fan Guests of Honor, as we're bidding to host the 33rd Australian National SF Convention in 1994.

Our Bid Committee consists of James Allen, Donna Heenan, Jan MacNally, Katrine Papworth, Karen Pender-Gunn, Alan Stewart, Glen Tilley, Jane Tisell and Apollo Zammit. Carol Patterson will be running the fan room; Marc Ortlieb and Roger Weddall will be involved; other's who've offered to help include Ian Gunn, Mark Loney, Tom Marwede, Sharon Tapner and Beky Tully; and we're just getting going.

Our Convention Hotel will be the Southern Cross, in Central Melbourne and the Convention Charity is the Cat Protection Society of Victoria. Pre-supporting memberships are now available for \$5 and we're looking for ideas and helpers.

We'd love to hear from you and can be contacted at
PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005 AUSTRALIA,
or have a chat to us at Syncon '92.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Sean McMullen

Sean McMullen's first professional contact with SF was when he sang in a production of Poulenc's SF opera, *The Breasts of Therese*, while with the Victorian State Opera in 1973. Seven years later his first SF story, "Killer", was published in the student magazine *Yggdrasil*, but it was not until early 1985 that he decided to take writing SF really seriously. Later that year he won the writing competition at *Aussiecon 2* (the 43rd world SF Convention) with "The Deciad", and in 1988 *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* published "The Colours Of The Masters", which later reached the Nebula Awards Preliminary Ballot.

Since then Sean has sold to *Interzone*, *Analog*, *Universe 2*, *Eidolon* and *Aurealis*, and his collection, *Call To The Edge*, was published in March by Aphelion Publications. His stories have appeared on the *Locus* Recommended Reading list, won a Ditmar Award, and come equal top of the *Omega* reader's poll. His fiction has a very firm foundation of science, yet it is often populated with frail, eccentric but believable characters. Sean is a systems analyst with the Bureau of Meteorology, and has a Masters degree from the University of Melbourne. He is married with one daughter.

OTHER SPEAKERS

Apart from our Guests of Honour and Keynote Speaker there are some others who you will see at **Syncon 92** appearing in the program that we thought you might like to know some more about.

Dr. Karl Kruszelnicki was born in Sweden and spent his first year in Australia in a refugee camp. He has worked as a labourer, physicist, tutor, researcher, roadie for rock and roll bands, cab driver, film maker, car mechanic, scientific officer, bio-medical engineer and radio journalist. As a populariser of science he has appeared on television programs such as *Quantum* and *The Midday Show* and is currently seen on *Good Morning Australia*. He has also been on radio and written for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. His books include *Science Bizarre I and II*, *Great Moments In Science* and *More Great Moments In Science*. Karl is a qualified physician and also has degrees in Mathematics, Physics and Bio-medical Engineering.

Ron Ward is a lecturer in the School Of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Technology Sydney. He teaches a course on Management for Technical Personnel using science fiction case studies based on A Bertram Chandler's *Rim World* books. Ron holds a Trades Certificate and has degrees in engineering and business administration. He has worked as an apprentice in the aircraft industry progressing to toolmaker and draftsmen before going on to the chemical industry as draftsman, project engineer, maintenance engineer, plant manager and engineering manager and part time lecturing at Sydney Technical College. As well as his lecturing at UTS Ron acts as consultant to companies in the process industries. He has written a wide range of academic papers, two textbooks and a number of case studies on engineering management.

Rex Thompson is this year's winner of FFANZ (the Fan Fund of Australia and New Zealand). If I may quote from his platform, "I am Dunedin's longest serving NASF member (I'm always last to leave the bar, so I get served longest) and my associations with fandom span three decades (why else would I be named after something prehistoric). At conventions I am well known for "boogeying down" at masquerades and "playing up" at room parties. There is also my endless fascination for the "pretty coloured liquids" found at hotel bars.

Eva Hauser comes to Syncon courtesy of GUFF (the Get Down Under Fan Fund). To quote from her platform for the GUFF race, "I am a Czechoslovak fan, editor and writer. I write BIOPUNK stories which are (according to some people) disgusting. I like to write funny articles for fanzines. Unfortunately I can't write anything funny in English. I am also very fond of discussion - about society, the future, feminism, the environment, literature etc.

Jane Larsen, from Tacoma Washington, USA, is a life-long science fiction fan and has owned *Lady Jayne's Comics & Books* since 1980. Lady Jayne's is a speciality store featuring new and used science fiction and fantasy books, new and collector comics, role-playing games and related genre. Jane has been a panellist at several SF cons and served on con committees as vendors room co-ordinator. She is currently vice president of the *Northwest Science Fiction Dealers Association* — a "Guild" for SF con vendors from the western Canadian provinces and Pacific Northwest states of the USA. She is attending **Syncon 92** with her husband, Conrad — a mundane Dane.

THE ART OF SCIENCE FICTION — AT A DISTANCE

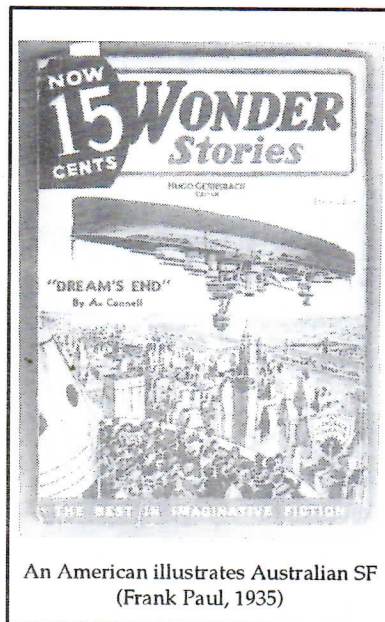
I would like to start by posing a few questions relating to SF art in Australia. Who is your favourite Australian SF artist of the Forties? Can you name one? How about the Fifties, Sixties, or even Seventies? The more knowledgeable among you might be able to name Stanley Pitt but unless you read my recent article on Australian SF Art in *Eidolon*, you will probably be struggling. Change the question to overseas artists, and there will probably be no problem. Orban, Cartier, Finlay, Freas, Bode, Jones, Fabian, the names are a little less familiar than those of authors for the same decades, but they are familiar nevertheless. One further question. How many of those overseas artists just mentioned have illustrated novels or short stories by Australian authors?

Most of the time SF art is a collaboration between author and artist, and the author is not always the dominant partner. How many times have you bought a novel on the strength of a wonderful cover illustration, only to find a thorough turkey of a story inside? It is in the publisher's interests to maximise the sales, and a good cover is a very effective way to do that. On the other hand, how many times have you ignored a story on the strength of the dreadful illustration that went with it, then encountered it in some Best-SF-of-the-Year anthology? Artists can exercise a lot of power in the promotion of SF and fantasy, regardless of the fiction's merits. Let us try an easy question. Can you name half a dozen professional Australian SF artists of the 1980's? Nick Stathopoulos, Marilyn Pride, Lewis Morley, Rowena Corey, Michael Dutkiewicz, Step Campbell — okay, that's six, and there are still plenty more. Their names are familiar, but not just because we are talking about a more recent decade. Australian SF art really has flourished in the past ten years or so, and it is no coincidence that the same period has been the most active decade ever for local SF publishing.

Syncon 92 is an Australian SF convention on the theme of *The Art of Science Fiction*: our Guest of Honour is one of the foremost SF and fantasy artists in the world, and our Australian Guest of Honour is one of the finest genre artists that have come out of this country so far. What should we be thinking about in this sort of company? Authors would be advised to learn who are the best artists if they want their works

to prosper either here or overseas. Any author lucky enough to be given a say in who illustrates the cover had better be able to make an informed choice or the sales may suffer. Artists, on the other hand, might be advised to take a very careful look at both the local market and their own technique. The local market is small, and the overseas market is practically impossible to sell to while living in Australia — yet the best work of overseas artists is on the covers of imported SF books on display in every newsagent and bookshop in the country. Australia's SF publishing industry may be small, but Australian SF art has to at least as good as the best from overseas ... because that is what it is up against.

I have compiled a bibliography of Australian SF covering the period from around 1890 to the present day. It currently runs to over one hundred single-spaced A4 pages. Less than a quarter of this SF was published overseas, so who did the illustrations for all those stories and novels? Who are the people who created most of this country's SF art. The unfortunate truth is that most of the artists were from the mainstream with little or no background in genre styles, themes, ikons, or technology. In some instances they rose to the occasion, such as when Lionel Lindsay illustrated Earl Cox's first SF story, "The Social Code", for *The Lone Hand* in 1909. Most of the time however, they were just house hacks with a job to do in an area where they had little experience. All through the interwar years *The Bulletin* interspersed its regular short stories with SF and fantasy works, and most of the accompanying illustrations were crudely rendered and played for laughs. What magazine published more original Australian SF than any other? The soft-core porn publication *Man* between the mid-Thirties and the mid-Seventies, and every one of its stories was illustrated. While some of *Man's* artwork was excellent, none of it was particularly distinguished as SF art because the artists were not SF specialists.



The bad news is not over yet. Although John Andrews developed a fine SF style for the Currawong Press SF covers during world War 2, the covers done by his contemporaries were generally crude and garish, doing nothing to promote the novels. Generally speaking those novels were enough to peel the

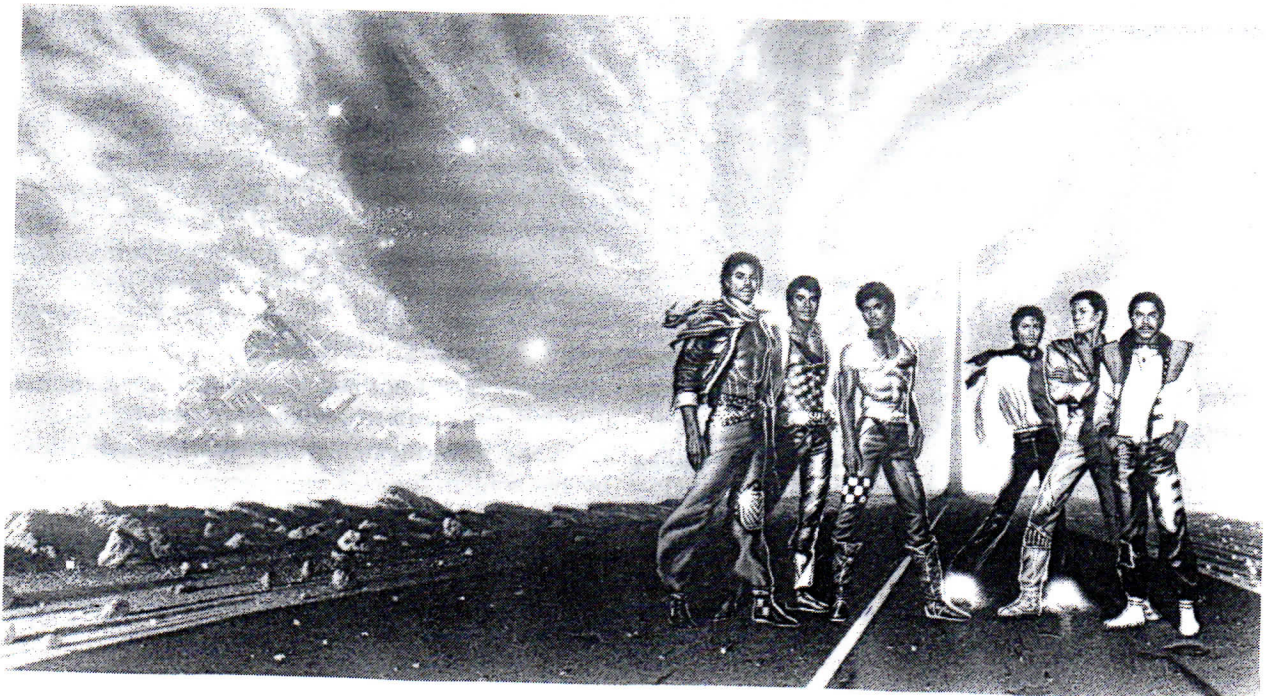
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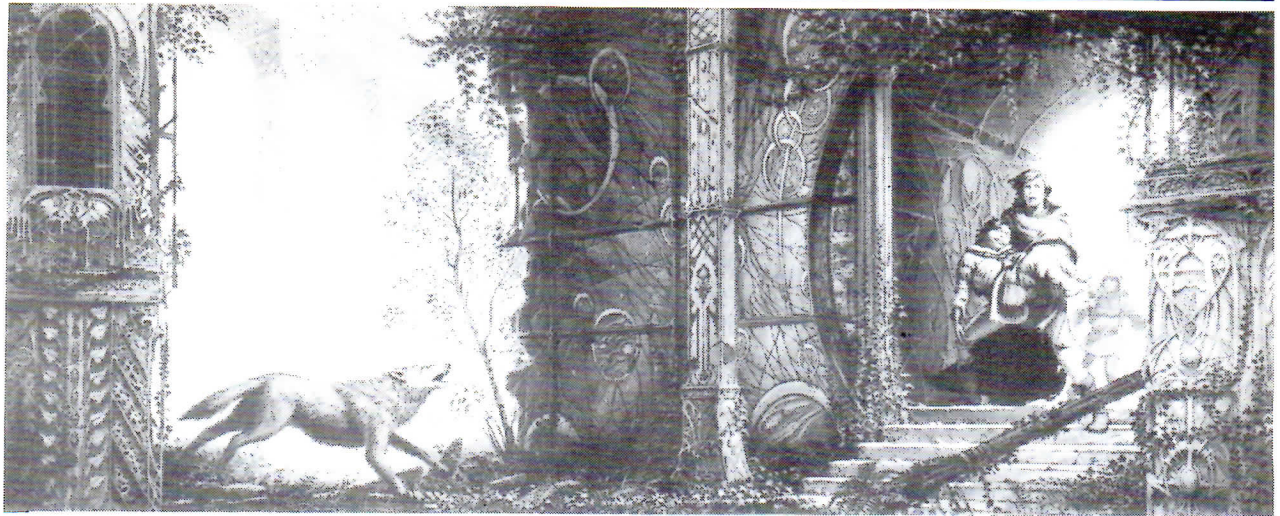
Catspaw

Michael Whelan
A Gallery of Wonder



Victory
C 1984 The Jacksons





In DA, AI CHIKIZA
Cover for The Dragonbone Chair



The Night Gaunts



Robots of Dawn



Chanur's Homecoming



MIA

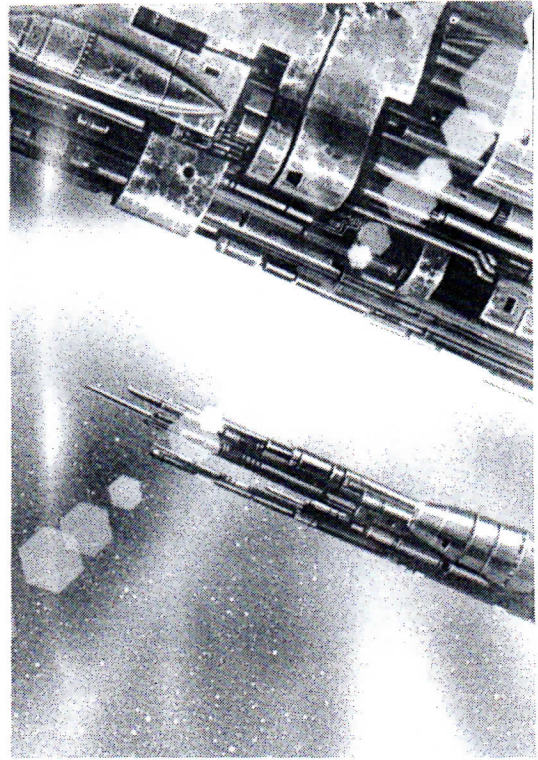


Pencil Study - Between a Rock and a Hard Place



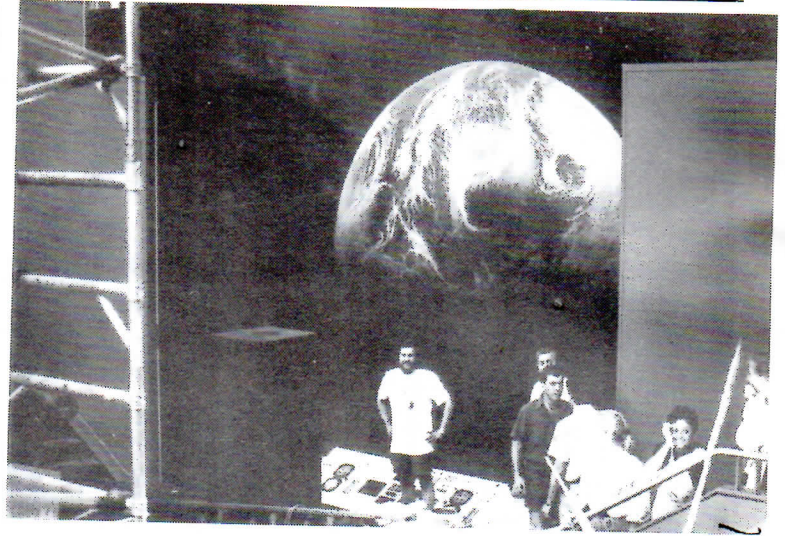
Friday

Nick Stathopoulos
ENIGMA and GENIUS



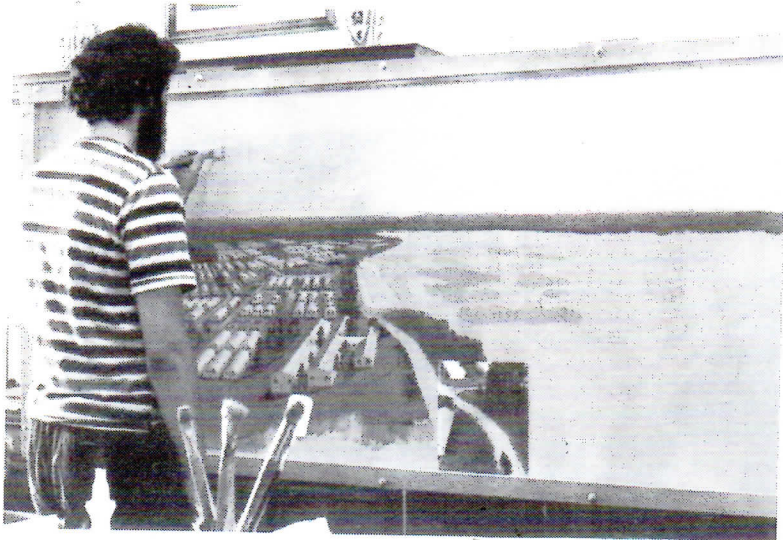
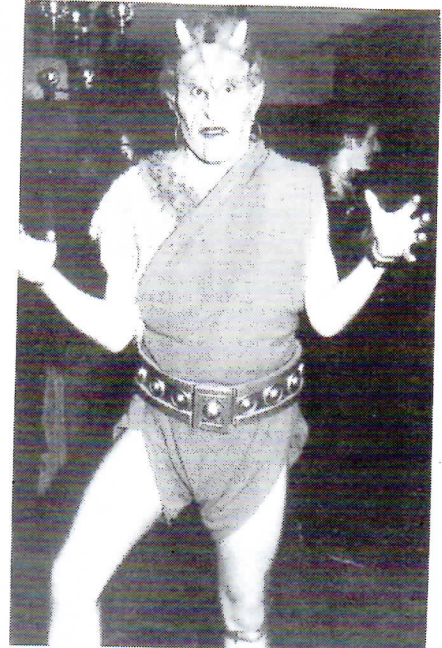


Sculpting Aussiecon II Masquerade mask



"Earthrise" mural - PowerHouse Museum

"Calibos" Masquerade costume circa 1984



Above A matte painting on glass (painted in his parent's loungeroom!)
Below CD cover "Love v Gravity"

Album cover "Redeemer"



Continued from page 11

enamel off your teeth, however, no harm was done. Even when the first specialist SF magazines were launched in the late Forties and early Fifties, the artwork continued to look as if mainstream magazine house artists were providing a caricature of overseas SF art from two decades earlier.

So how do we remember the artwork of the Forties and Fifties? Some of the more notorious covers are reproduced in SF histories from time to time, either to show us how far we have come, or for light comic relief. On the other hand, a few individuals produced some very fine work in this period, and the best of their artwork constitutes an enchanting tributary to the mainstream of SF art. John Andrews, Ray Cavanagh and the great Stanley Pitt became Australia's first specialist SF artists, and left us a body of work that is both original and distinctive. We have every right to be proud of their creations.

The beginnings of our local SF industry sprang from a wartime embargo on the import of various non-essential goods from overseas. Darwin had received a heavier air raid than Pearl Harbour. Broome, Katherine and Cairns had also been bombed. Japanese submarines were attacking Sydney, and Spitfires and Zeroes were fighting it out above our northern coasts and towns. Imported SF was, of course, an unthinkable luxury under these circumstances, yet thanks to predictable government inertia the embargo was not lifted until thirteen years after the war ended, in 1958. The unrestricted return of overseas SF killed the local SF industry dead in its tracks. The first signs of recovery did not appear for another ten years, and it was not until the late Seventies that the achievements of the Fifties were consistently surpassed. This first flowering of a local SF publishing industry demonstrated one fact very clearly: good, original effective SF art does not come from mainstream artists dabbling in the field. These dabblers have produced the overwhelming bulk of our SF art, however, and even today they are very active.

Publishers need local artists, and artists need local publishers, so it is hardly surprising that the fortunes of Australian SF art are the fortunes of Australian SF publication. The lesson is clear for other countries: allow your SF publication industry to concentrate in one city, or even go offshore, and your country's SF art will go the same way. It is not quite so bad for written SF. Authors can send manuscripts overseas and at least have a fighting chance of acceptance. All through the lean years from the late Fifties to the late Seventies Australian authors were selling well overseas. For five year period the top British magazine *New Worlds* carried more stories by Australians than by Americans and some of these works topped the

An Australian illustrates American SF (Stanley Pitt, 1953)



"Are you sure she's allergic to seafood?", the beastie seems to be asking as an Australian illustrates Australian SF (Davidson, 1952)

readers' polls. SF artists do not have such a long reach. They must work close to the mechanics of production and publication. Hark back to that list of overseas artists that I mentioned earlier: Orban, Cartier, Finlay, Freas, Bode, Jones, and Fabian. All of them illustrated SF sold overseas by Australians. The father of modern SF art, Frank Paul, did a classic painting for the cover of *Wonder Stories* in 1935, featuring a battleship suspended upside down above New York. The story behind the painting, "Dreams" by the Sydney teenager Alan Connell. Going back to the 1920's, the first Australian to be published in *Amazing*, Joe Czynsky (pseudonymously), also had his stories illustrated by Paul. If an illustrated story is a collaboration, then Australian authors have collaborated with most of the top SF artists—Michael Whelan included. Does this artwork amount to part of Australia's SF heritage? It may be stretching the idea a bit, but I would say yes.

I suspect that artwork was the very first act of creation involving SF for most people reading this, if not for most SF enthusiasts around the world. After watching *Star Wars* on TV my three year old daughter presented me with a sketch of what she declared to be a robot, and I remember sketching scenes and characters from television shows current when I was a teenager. Art is a way of capturing something of futures and other worlds, art is a way of personalising something as remote and inviolate as a TV series. Glance through a few fanzines. They are often full of amateur art, and some of the art is far from amateurish. If you are a fan with particularly strong affections for, say, Spock, Ridley or Avon, then the portrait that you sketch, frame and hang on your wall is

about the closest and most personal contact that you can make with those characters.

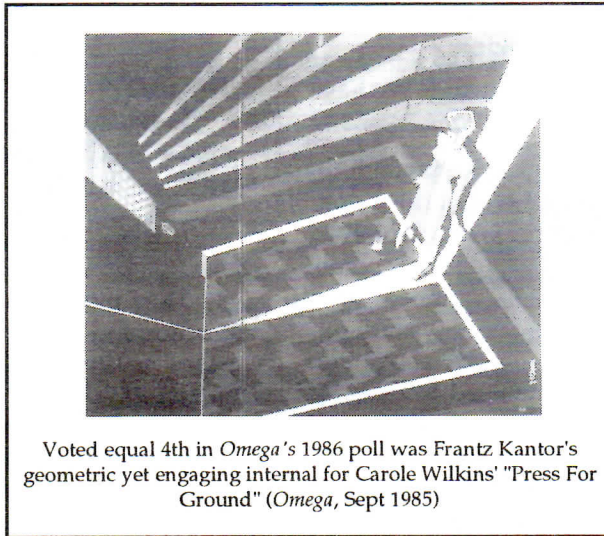
As I implied earlier, modern SF art in Australia dates to the late Seventies, when there was a revival of SF local publishing. This was partly as a result of Aussiecon 1, Australia's first worldcon, and partly due to increased government funding for and promotion of local authors and publishers. Paul Collins launched his Void magazine in August 1975, and in 1978 changed it into Void Press and began publishing SF anthologies and novels. Collins' venture still holds the record for SF books published by a small press (18), and many featured eye-catching, bright covers by Rowena Corey.

Steph Campbell's early work also dates from this period, and his best known pieces were for David Lake's The Man Who Loved Morlocks. This novel was rare for Australia in that it was packaged and presented with the artwork as a single unit. There were internal illustrations — practically unheard of in non-juvenile SF — and certainly the text could not be read in the same way if the illustrations were absent.

Marilyn Pride's cover for the Penguin edition of Damien Broderick's The Dreaming Dragons is yet another stunning example of the artwork that Australians are capable of if only there is an opportunity to display it for a stable market. In 1981 that opportunity came in the form of the magazine *Omega Science Digest*, which ran until 1987. *Omega* commissioned full page colour illustrations for each of the two SF stories that were featured in most issues. Professional illustrators were able to develop their own styles in SF and fantasy illustration because of the stability of this market. When a poll of readers was conducted in 1986 there was a remarkable tendency for the leading stories to be illustrated by the leading artists. Since the demise of *Omega* its successors have done their best, but good art is expensive. *Omega* paid as much as \$250 for some internal artwork in the mid-Eighties, which is enough to buy several stories in the early Nineties. Of course there will always be talented beginners who will accept chickenfeed for the sake of exposure — along with the talented professionals who contribute art for sheer love of the genre — but is there any local market that pays realistic rates for SF art?

Until the 1980s Australian SF art concentrated around the book and magazine illustration niche of the market, but lately there has been a considerable expansion in its scope. Painting, sculpture and animation for film, television and television commercials definitely qualifies as SF art if the artwork is for SF themes. Pop/rock video clips are a favourite of mine, and are one of the newest forms of SF art's expression and presentation, perhaps coming close to a 'total' experience of the artwork. Computer games and board games are being designed and marketed in Australia, and both the computer graphics and box cover art have a similar sales job to cover art for SF novels and magazines. If you want to live

by traditional SF artwork, you must go overseas. If you want to remain in Australia, you must broaden the scope of your art. Because of the rapid progress of science and technology into our everyday lives, we have some dependence on SF to help us keep up with changes and impending changes. In the 1990's SF authors will find themselves dealing increasingly with current issues, not threats in the distant future, while SF art will have to move fast to get

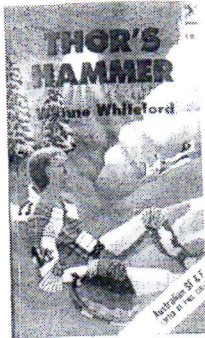


Voted equal 4th in *Omega*'s 1986 poll was Frantz Kantor's geometric yet engaging internal for Carole Wilkins' "Press For Ground" (*Omega*, Sept 1985)

the ikons right for a fairly sophisticated audience. This will require artists to work hard on their scientific expertise as well as artistic skills. Real astronauts have already published SF novels, and many astronauts have also have artistic training. That is a hard act for both authors and artists to follow, but we have to try — and the best place to start is the future. Most of you could probably draw a recognisable space shuttle, but how many could get the shape of a hypersonic ramjet right without some research? They will be flying by the end of the century, and most people reading these words will probably have the opportunity to fly on one.

As an author I have been lucky with my illustrators so far. The art done for my stories has varied between good and excellent as a rule, and even the worst art has been no worse than average. What I really fear is artwork that gives a grossly misleading impression of the story. When Jack Wodhams' story PET was featured in the cover illustration of Rigel it showed a woman running in a tread wheel in a cage, while a male soldier looked on from outside. In some ways the painting was a fine allegorical statement

Simple, elegant... and very popular with the readers (Nick Stathopoulos, 1990)



Paul Collins contemplates his wrecked spacecraft while posing for Rowena Corey (1983)

but — predictably — it outraged many feminists, who took their anger out on the author without reading his story — which had very little in common with the cover. As *Omega's* survey showed, good fiction can inspire good artwork, yet sloppy or inappropriate artwork can certainly drag good fiction down.

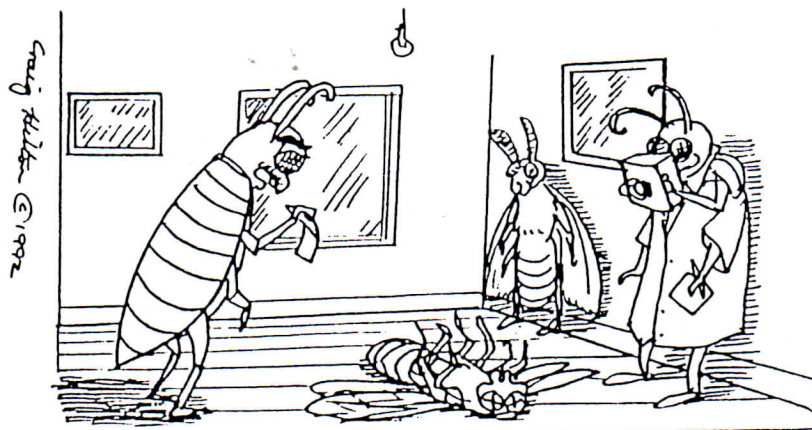
What are the problems and prospects of the immediate future for SF and fantasy art in Australia? One glaring and insidious problem is that of selling to the publishers of overseas magazines and books while resident in Australia. I do not know the answer to this one, and perhaps there really is no answer. An important issue is that of style and identity: is there any sort of uniquely Australian style that is emerging, and does Australian SF illustration reflect any local identity in the writing? Whatever the case, one must give the artists somewhere to work, and that

place is still primarily local print and visual media productions. Anyone who cares about Australian SF and fantasy art must support the genre in local books, magazines, television, film and computer games.

Lastly, what mechanisms are there for recognising the best of Australian SF art, especially the best professional work? The Ditmar awards cater for fan art, but in most years professional SF art is specifically excluded. Is this fair? It is almost impossible for Australian SF artists to illustrate for overseas publishers, yet it is only overseas where recognition is to be found. Our artists work in an unreliable environment for little money and scant recognition. Until my recently published list of artists currently active in the field in Australia, there was no comprehensive guide to local SF artists. You see plenty of reviews of fiction, but how many articles or reviews of artwork have you seen lately (apart from my articles in *Eidolon*)? Reviews of artwork seldom extend beyond "Liked the cover" or "Hated the cover", and this is not good enough.

SF art is an important part of the genre as a whole, and the SF publishing industry will not be fully mature until it supports artists at least as well as authors. You may not be able to judge a book by its cover, but a striking and innovative cover will certainly influence you to pick up the book in the first place. SF artists have a harder row to hoe than even SF authors in this country. They not only deserve our support, they provide part of the package that can make or break a work of science fiction. If we make the 1990s the decade of the SF artist, then everybody will profit.

Sean McMullen



DETECTIVE SERGEANT ROACH - INSECTICIDE.

SCIENCE FICTION AS AN EDUCATIONAL MEDIUM FOR

TECHNICAL PROFESSIONALS

The term 'technical professional' can be used to cover a multitude of occupations, but it's usually applied to those which are science and technology based. That is, engineers, chemists, physicists and the like are certainly in such a group. With a little squeezing we might also accept professional mathematicians who work as actuaries in insurance companies. Accountants, lawyers, doctors and so on are further away but might be included (with the first group expressing some reluctance).

However, all these professional people go through a rigorous system of tertiary education. What's curious about the process is that it's intended to be partly skills-training and partly intellect-training, as distinct from the college-level education which concentrates more heavily on the first, skills-training.

Referring now, particularly, to the tertiary education, of engineers and those in similar occupations I suspect there's a fault: they do acquire skills and their intellects are expanded, but the two are so closely joined that the expansion or development of the mind is uni-directional, in the same direction as the skills.

Engineers, in particular, learn to think in straight lines, in a problem-to-solution manner, very largely because the noses are kept constantly to the grindstone of the technology subjects. That's not to condemn that form of thinking and way those subjects are taught. The method of teaching suits the factual subject matter, and a large part of the student's later professional work requires, even often *demands*, a straight-line approach

There are other subjects, of course. Students have been required for some years to take a 'social science elective', which is intended to broaden the outlook and produce a more civilised person. This is all very well, but most engineering students find nothing in those subjects that really grabs them; they choose one because they have to do something in that area. Also it's my impression that the general run of these subjects don't relate to the engineer's work, so they put nothing into the engineering student connected with his final occupation.

This is where, in the development of these thoughts, I have difficulty in deciding which is the chicken and which was the egg; on the one hand I could see that need for another form of subject, then I've been an SF reader for a long time, on a third hand I've tried some writing, fourth, student interest in SF (often confessed diffidently) has been revealed in conversations, and on a fifth hand there's my research interest.

The last may have been the deciding factor. My research interest is in major disasters in the chemical industry, in which there is no such thing as a *minor* disaster. I have worked on committees analysing new designs for the potential for disaster, and one of the vital techniques in the meetings is for everyone to keep asking questions such as: 'What if.....?'

My reading of cases has shown that there have been many occasions when no-one asked such questions. And my observation in the committee suggested that the more 'technically-minded' members were least able to ask those questions.

But that question, and others like it, are standard in the writing and reading of SF. So the idea grew that a literature subject using SF would be an adequate social science elective as a form of literature to be studied seriously, and at the same time would encourage the engineering students to get away from linear thinking and ask the 'what if' type of questions.

The UTS School of Humanities and Social Sciences has provided such a subject three times now. It's titled 'Literature and Society, but the form of literature studied is pure SF. The 'society' aspect considered is how a science-based society had to develop before 'true SF' could appear, and how each period of writing tells today's reader something about the society of the author's period. We are also interested in the society presented or suggested by the writer of many stories we read.

The general outline of the subject covers the history of SF, several of the major themes which have always been in it, some themes which have been comparatively neglected, whether the main content is 'science' or 'technology', the techniques used by successful writers and how to write a critique. Of course, in many of those areas there's no one right answer.

The results have been very satisfying, as shown by work students have submitted. From the *literary* viewpoint some have analysed writers work; we've had a very good comparison of Asimov and Binder, both of whom wrote about robots at the same time. Another compared Chandler's 'False Fatherland' with Anderson's 'Virgin Planet', and another related Orwell's 'Nineteen Eighty Four' to Huxley's 'Brave New World'.

But These are only 'reports', similar to those engineering students learn to write as part of their professional work. While they have been well presented and have shown the students have understood what

Continued on Page 26

CONVENTIONS FOR BEGINNERS

(and other lost souls)

For some of you this will be your first science fiction convention. Still others of you will have been to cons before but are still lost in their mysteries. What follows then is a brief (but I hope helpful) guide to better equip you as you stumble around the maze of confusion politely referred to as a science fiction convention.

The first thing you have to realise is that SF conventions are cobbled together by a group of enthusiastic amateurs. Once you are armed with that small piece of information you are in a much better position to understand why the whole thing looks such a shambles. The answer is, of course, very simple. It is a shambles - sort of organised chaos if you like.

Following from that is the point that really must be underlined. All the other convention members are people, just like you (well, most of them anyway). And most of them are probably just as confused as you (unless they are committee members, in which case they are probably more confused than you), even if this is their forty second convention. Don't be afraid to talk to them. They're probably just as eager and curious to know you as you are to know them.

When you registered (and I assume you must have already registered, otherwise what are you doing reading this and how did you get it, hmmm!?) you will have received a bag of goodies which included this souvenir book and a smaller booklet called the Program Booklet. In that booklet is detailed some items referred to as "The Program". These items are designed for your benefit but you can only get the maximum benefit from them if you participate yourself. Ask questions, make comments, join in the fun. It may seem hard at first but you'll get the hang of it.

Not listed on the Program are things called Room Parties. I don't think I need to spell out what these are. Most are open to all convention members and are widely advertised - keep your eye on the notice board near Registration. Many believe these are the true *raison d'être* of SF conventions. You be the judge.

One thing almost guaranteed to confuse the convention novitiate is the language used. Known as fanspeak it has a vast vocabulary that I can't hope to list completely in the short space I have here. Instead I have included a small selection of some of the more common words used and their meaning.

apa: Amateur Publishing Association, a regular distribution of fanzines (q.v.) between members.

bnf: Big Name Fan, a science fiction fan whose name is known very well by many other science fiction fans.

con: Contraction of convention and often used as part of the name of a convention eg. Syncon, Constantinople.

Ditmars: The Australian SF Awards presented each year at the National Convention with winners decided by a popular vote of all members.

fan: Someone who becomes involved in fandom (q.v.) because of a love of science fiction, and stays in spite of it.

fandom: The loosely collected body of people who call themselves fans.

fannish: Anything to do with fans or fandom is fannish.

fanzine: A magazine produced by a fan and usually having little to say about science fiction and a lot to say about fannish things.

fiawol: Fandom Is A Way Of Life, a philosophical view of fandom.

fijagdh: Fandom is Just A Goddamn Hobby, a contrary philosophical view of fandom.

gafiate: Getting Away From It All ie. leaving fandom. Often practised by convention committees once the convention is over (and sometimes before).

genzine: GENERAL purpose fanZINE. Covers a multitude of sins.

Kipling: Participle of Kiple as in "Do you like Kipling?" "I don't know, I've never Kipled."

loc: Letter Of Comment to a fanzine (q.v.).

Natcon: The National Science Fiction Convention.

perzine: PERSONal fanZINE, sort of an open letter to all.

sercon: Serious science fiction, not practised very much any more except by a few diehards in Melbourne.

the usual: Fanzines are often available for trade, contribution or letter of comment, collectively referred to as "the usual".

Worldcon: The World Science Fiction Convention.

All this will, I hope, help in some small way to charter the way for you through the hazy world of a science fiction convention. It is really only the start of what could be said (and has been said in other places) on the subject.

It's now up to you to be bold and test the water - just try not to fall in.

Gerald Smith

FAN FUNDS

FFANZ

A brief commentary on a trans-Tasman affair.

FFANZ, or the Fan Fund of Australia and New Zealand, was established in 1983 to further links between SF fandoms in Australia and New Zealand. Apart from letters and fanzine exchange, the fund assists in meeting fans face to face. Each year there is FFANZ 'Race' where candidates stand to be elected representatives of their country. Upon winning the race, the new Administrator attends a Natcon in the Host country, and then supervises one end of the fund until their successor is chosen. This involves advertising the Fund, fundraising, conducting voting in the next two races and hopefully publishing a Trip Report which can be sold to raise funds.

The current administrators are Alan Stewart, a university student studying extractive metallurgy in Melbourne, and Rex Thompson who works for the New Zealand Government. What they have in common is a keen interest in Fandom, editorship of fanzines (Ethel the Aardvark and Paradox Lost respectively), and they are or have been, office bearers in national SF organisations such as the Australian SF Foundation (ASFF) and National Association of SF (NASF). They've both been on the organising committees of local and National conventions and have been known to contribute letters and articles to various publications. Rex is the artist and has been responsible for unique T-shirt designs, as well convention posters and many a zine illo. He has also entered masquerades in some strange and exotic costumes. Alan concentrates more on writing and has won both a Ditmar and ASFMA award. Rex scored GoHood first, as he will be Fan GoH at Shakycon, the New Zealand Natcon, later this year. Both Administrators will be wandering around at **Syncon 92**, so feel free to chat them up about FFANZ.



You could be interested in standing for the next FFANZ Race, Australia to New Zealand, which will be calling for nominations from 1 May to 30 June this year. Candidates must be prepared to attend Defcon, the 1993 New Zealand Natcon and 1993 Australasian Media Natcon, and require nomination from one Australian and One New Zealand fan. They also post a non-refundable \$10 bond and a 'platform' (not more than 100 words) encouraging people to vote for them.

FFANZ relies on the generosity of fans for its continued existence, and can be supported by voting in the Races, donations of material for auctions, or just assistance in the distribution of information about the fund. There will be a special Fan Fund Auction at **Syncon 92**, partly for the benefit of FFANZ, so come along to meet fellow fans and support the Funds.

If you happen to miss the Administrators at **Syncon 92**, they can be contacted at:

Alan Stewart
PO Box 222
World Trade Centre
Melbourne
Victoria 3005
Australia

Rex Thompson
PO Box 333
Dunedin
New Zealand

Alan Stewart

DUFF

DUFF is short for the *Down Under Fan Fund*. It was founded in 1972 in order to promote closer ties between fans in Australasia and fans in North America as part of the lead up to Australia's first ever Worldcon, *Aussiecon I*. In alternate years fans vote for an Australian fan to visit North America or a North American fan to visit Australasia. In return for having many of their expenses in such a trip paid for by fannish donations, the winner of the fund agrees to travel widely (including attending the major convention or conventions in the host coun-

try), produce a report on the trip and administer the fund until the next winner is chosen from their end of the world.

Fan funds are not a new idea. The idea can be traced back to 1952 when a special fund was created to enable Walt Willis to travel from Belfast to Chicago for the Worldcon and to 1953 when TAFF, the Trans Atlantic Fan Fund was established to exchange fans between North America and Europe.

DUFF exists solely on the voluntary support of fandom. Delegates are chosen by a popular vote of fans who make a small donation when voting. Additional money is raised through auctions, sales and the occasional donation from convention surpluses.

This year the race is to choose an Australian to travel to North America and attend Magicon - the Worldcon being held in Orlando, Florida. The candidates are

Roger Weddall and Greg Hills, both of whom should be at Syncon and more than ready to court your vote. Voting forms should also be available.

The current administrators of DUFF are:

Greg Turkich
8 Protea St.
Greenwood WA 6024
Australia

Art Widner
PO Box 677
Gualala CA 95445.
USA

GUFF LINKS

GUFF is short for the *Going Under Fan Fund* or the *Get Up and over Fan Fund*. It was established in 1979 by Leigh Edmonds and Dave Langford to encourage greater ties between Australasia and Europe. This it does by sending a popularly elected fan from one continent to attend a convention in the other.

As is the case with all fan funds, GUFF exists solely on the charity of fans through donations, auctions and sales. Syncon 92 will have a Fan Fund Auction at which some of the monies raised will be going to GUFF so we ask you to please give generously.

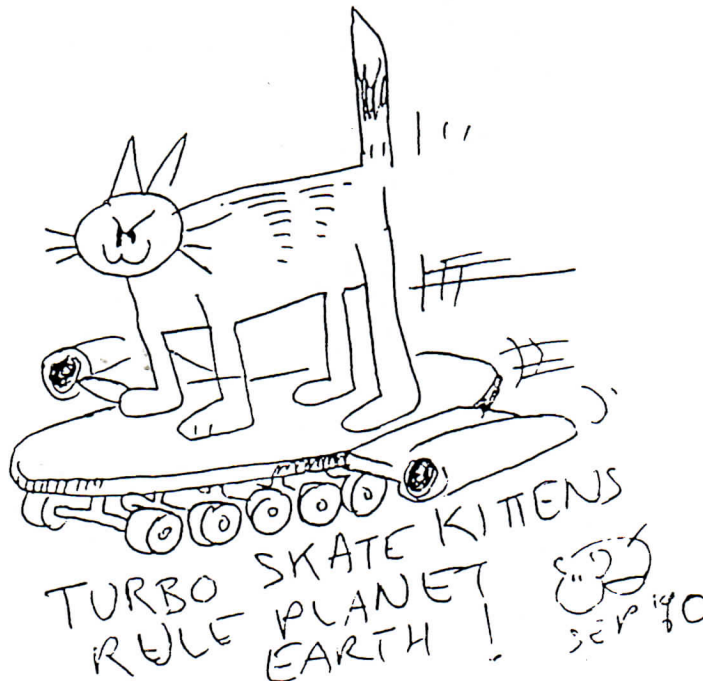
This year GUFF has been won by Eva Hauser from Czechoslovakia who will be attending Syncon and

also travelling around Sydney and Melbourne. She is the eighth winner since John Foyster was enabled to travel to Brighton in the UK for the 1979 Worldcon.

At some stage after Syncon nominations will open to send an Australasian fan to Europe in 1993. If you are thinking of standing, or know of someone you would like to nominate, you can talk to Eva about it or contact one of the administrators at the addresses below.

Roman Orszanski
PO Box 131
MARDEN SA 5070
Australia

Eva Hauser
Na cihadle 55
160 00 Praha 6
Czechoslovakia



THE SYNCON 92 ART SHOW

The last time the National Convention was held in Sydney (Conviction in 1988) the Art Show presented was highly acclaimed by all who saw it. Indeed, it is still fondly remembered as one of the best ever. That art show was organised by Margaret Hilliard. Margaret has also organised the show for Syncon 92 and it promises to be bigger and better than ever. This is what Margaret herself has to say about it -

"Amongst the items on display will be a number of Michael Whelan's original works, plus contributions from our Australian Guest of Honour, Nick Stathopoulos and other Australian artists such as Lewis Morley and Marilyn Pride.

In addition there will be a range of works from professionals and amateurs from around the country.

Special features of the art show will include:

- **The Opening Ceremony** which will take place at 10.30am on Saturday morning and which will include refreshments.

- **The Art Auction** to be held on Sunday morning at 11.00am for those interested and financially solvent enough to attend. All works entered for the auction will have bidding sheets near them for people to enter their bid.

- **Michael Whelan** will be conducting at least two guided tours of the art show for small groups; one on Saturday and one on Sunday. Details are available from the Registration Desk.

- **Competitions** are being conducted in conjunction with the Art Show. There is an *Art Competition*, a *Photographic Competition* and an *Animation Competition*. Entries will be on display at the Show. Judging will take place on Saturday evening and the winners will be announced at the Awards Presentation on Sunday night.

No effort has been spared for this art show. We hope you like it.

Margaret Hilliard
Art Show Co-Ordinator

Business Meeting Matters

The following is the constitution of the Australian Science Fiction Convention as it was after the 30th Australian Science Fiction Convention (Suncon).

CONSTITUTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

There will be an annual Australian Science Fiction Convention organised by a Convention Committee selected from amongst Bids submitted to the Business Meeting at the Australian Science Fiction Convention, two calendar years before the Convention to be selected.

The Convention Committee for each Australian SF Convention will, by a vote of the Convention members, after a nominating process involving Australian Fandom generally, award up to five Australian SF (Ditmar) Awards (of which, at least, one must be for fannish endeavours) and the William Atheling Jr Award for Criticism and Review.

The Convention Committee will ensure that any surplus by an Australian SF Convention will be applied to the benefit of Australian Fandom generally, and shall not be used to reward individuals or groups connected with the Convention Committee. The Constitution may be changed by this method only: notice of intention to amend, including the exact text, must be submitted to the convention committee in sufficient time to be published in the Convention Handbook (where this Constitution and any proposed amendments must be published) and then the amendment must be approved by a majority at the business Meeting. No amendment will be in order if it has the effect of increasing the number of words in the Constitution.

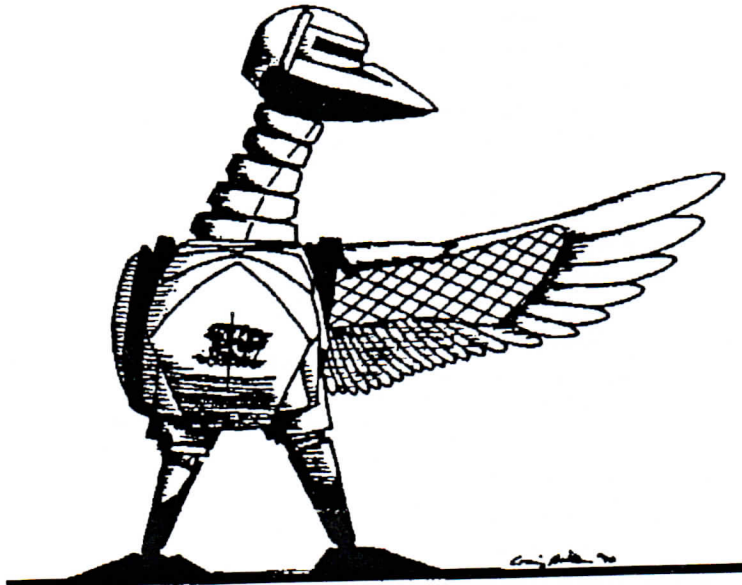
Bids to Stage the 33rd Australian Science Fiction Convention

As at the time of going to press, the following bids to stage the 1994 Australian Science Fiction Convention have been received.

Constantinople in 94

Convention proposed to be held on the Easter weekend 1994 in Melbourne

Principal Committee members are James Allen, Donna Heenan, Jan MacNally, Katrine Papworth, Karen Pender-Gunn, Alan Stewart, Glen Tilley, Jane Tisell, Appollo Zammit.



Australia's National Convention for 1993

Guest of Honour

Terry Pratchett

Fan Guest of Honour

Craig Hilton

Easter Long Weekend, Perth 1993

For more information about
Australia's National Science Fiction
Convention for 1993, please write to
PO Box 318 Nedlands W.A. 6009

SWANCON 18

SYNTEXT

Sydney Harbour reminds me of a book I read once, where a group of children find a tree in a backyard which is so tall it reaches to the clouds. After you climb a ladder to the top you find yourself in another country. Every few weeks things shift and a different country comes to rest at the top of the tree. With the harbour things change with the weather, or the angle of viewing.

I never tire of looking at the harbour. Every morning I scheme for a window seat on just that side of the train where, after Wynyard station and a length of tunnel, there'll be a view of the harbour with tugs steaming out from under the bridge. There might be a cargo boat with a deck full of containers, or one of those massive Japanese floating hulls. Up against a wharf there might be tourist boats, a paddle steamer or a Chinese restaurant boat.

The colours of the harbour are blue and grey, green and brown, and yellow and white. Yellow and white are for sunny days, with Blues Point Tower standing above the park and every other building. Directly opposite are little green islands whose names I don't know. Below are the brown terrace houses being restored. On cold days everything is sharp and the lines of the houses are clearly marked, the areas of colour sharply divided. On rainy days everything mists over and is grey and dark blue. I assess each day's chances and fortunes by how much I liked the view when crossing the harbour.

I take the ferry at night from some point on the North Shore and sit up front to see Circular Quay. It's like sitting in the middle of a black bowl. Above and to the left are the lights in the trees of the Botanic Gardens. To the right is The Rocks where Sydney was first settled and is now being restored. There's a clock tower outlined in lights and, almost directly below it, a mailing ship with strings of lights replacing its rigging. Directly above are the stars.

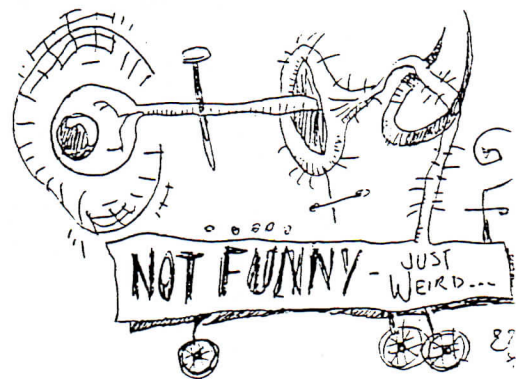
Ahead are the lights of the Central Business District. At Christmas, office lights are left on in the shape of a Christmas tree. There are neon lights halfway up to the sky. They look best when the sky is cloudy. Sometimes there are the bright cones of searchlights from some point on the foreshore. I always imagine they are looking for flying saucers. Maps of the harbour remind me of treasure maps. I like to buy postcards of Sydney Harbour to send to friends overseas and mark an X on the spot where I live.

My father and I set out one day to discover all the coves and inlets on his navigator's map. We found a naval base in one, with squat green military type barracks lined up above the cliff and stairs and lifts

to the base below. We found houses built into the cliff itself above another bay, only the windows gave them away and I formed a passion to live in one and call myself a troglodyte. We found an old power station with crumbling bricks and round white cylinder type buildings with BP on their harbour faces. Eventually we anchored at the entrance to the Lane Cove River and watched the tourist boats make a U-Turn while they told their passengers about rich people with houses in Hunters Hill. The sunshine was like a searchlight with our boat under its beam and I fell asleep.

Sydney Harbour is the heart of Sydney, though most of the city reaches for miles inland. It is the feature we most identify as worthy of showing to visitors.

Michelle Hallett



Continued From Page 20

should be sought in a literary work, the real measure of success comes from the number of students whom have attempted to write short stories. These have gone through the idea-generating step and the writing process all by themselves, all the way to being dissatisfied with the finished product, but have produced some quite imaginative and readable, and original, fiction.

The conclusions from teaching the subject three times are that engineering (and similar) university students can become interested in literature, that SF stimulates their imagination, and that this stimulation will probably help them to think of alternative ways means, and outcomes instead of the obvious ones given by the linear thinking mode induced by other subjects.

Ron Ward.

THE AUSTRALIAN SF ("DITMAR") AWARDS

1992 NOMINATIONS

Best Novel Or Collection

From Sea To Shining Star
Wormwood
Brother Night
Del Del
Brainchild
No Award

A. Bertram Chandler
Terry Dowling
Victor Kelleher
Victor Kelleher
George Turner

Best Short Fiction

"Vanities"
"Nobody's Fool"
"A Deadly Edge Their Red Beaks Pass Along"
"Olivetruffles"
"The Dominant Style"
"Alone In His Chariot"
No Award

Terry Dowling
Terry Dowling
Terry Dowling
Leanne Frahm
Sean McMullen
Sean McMullen

Best Fanzine

Eidolon
Ethel The Aardvark
Inconsequential Parallax
Thyme
Thyme
No Award

Jeremy Byrne
MSFC
Tim Rickards & Narelle Harris
LynC & Clive Newall
Greg Hills & Mark Loney

Best Fan Writer

James Allen
Terry Frost
Bruce Gillespie
Greg Hills
Alan Stewart
No Award

Best Artist

Ian Gunn
Craig Hilton
Nick Stathopoulos
Phil Wlodarczyk
No Award

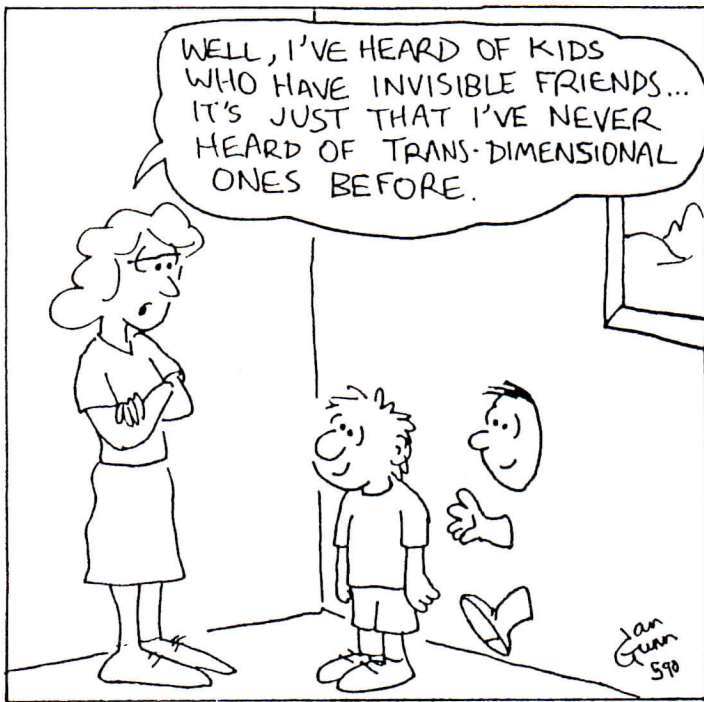
William Atheling Jr Award

"Jonathan Carroll, Story Teller"
"Going Commercial"
Review of The Fantastic Civil War
No Award

Bruce Gillespie
Sean McMullen
Blair Ramage

The awards themselves were designed and built by previous Ditmar winner Lewis Morley. They will be presented to the winners at the Awards Presentation on Sunday evening. All nominees will also receive a commemoration of their nomination.

Ditmar Nominated Artists



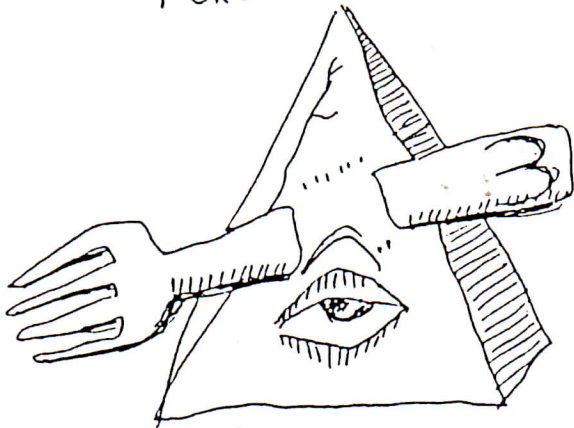
Ian Gunn



Bruce Roo and Norrie Numbat
Craig Hilton 1991

Craig Hilton

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Phil Wlodarczyk

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