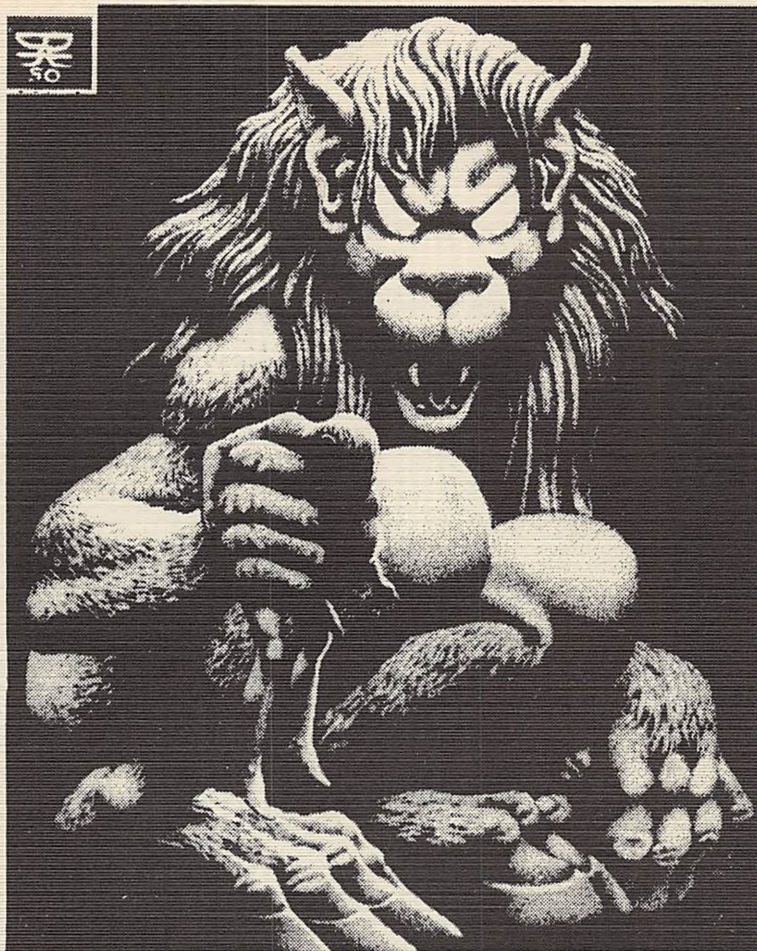


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The Baltimore Science  
Fiction Society Presents

# BALTICON 18

Guest Of Honor  
**PARKE GODWIN**

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**ROBIN WOOD**

Fan Guest Of Honor  
**MARK OWINGS**

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**Marta Randall**  
**Marvin Kaye**  
**C.L. Moore**

**April 20-22, 1984**

**The Hyatt Regency Hotel**

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Many other members and friends of B.S.F.S. have helped and contributed in many ways to the success of this convention. It was thought that rather than list some names and (perhaps inadvertently) omit others who had contributed nearly as much, it was preferable to extend our thanks and appreciation to all the people who have contributed their aid and support to the convention.

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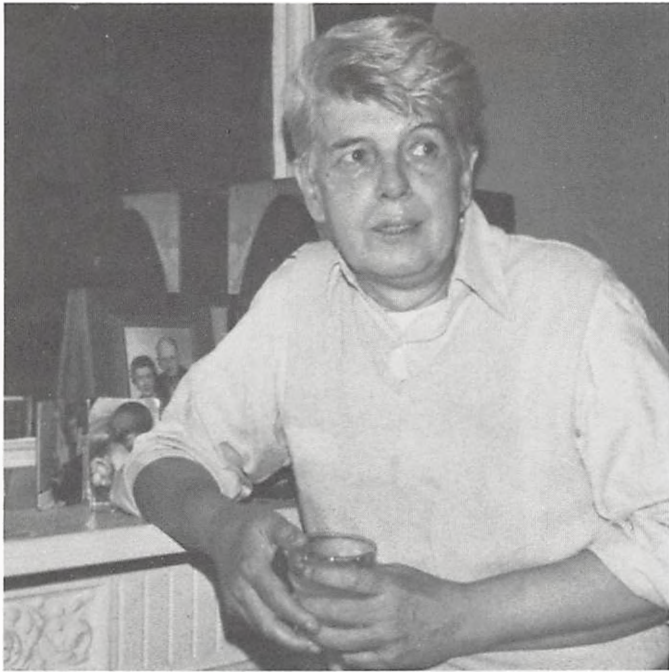
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12 ..... "Little Friends" By Suzanna Griffin  
16 ..... Untitled, By Diane Duane  
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24 ..... Untitled, By Teanna Lee Byerts  
31 ..... Untitled, By Teanna Lee Byerts  
32 ..... "Portrait of Robin Wood as Harpist" By Teanna  
Lee Byerts  
34 ..... "Choices at the Portal" By Suzanna Griffin  
37 ..... "Early Stars" By Suzanna Griffin  
40 ..... "Robot Dancer" By Susan Linville  
(Suggested by the 1944 story "No Woman Born"  
By Special Guest C. L. Moore)  
43 ..... "The Right Place to Scratch"  
By Jan Sherrell Gephardt





### An Introduction to Parke Godwin by Marvin Kaye

Parke Godwin and I are in love.

We adore old films and competent literature and fine food and drink, and we're positively passionate about music. True, these days Parke stays busy at the typewriter, but there was a time when his fingers were just as comfortable striking the keys of a piano. I love to sing, and both of us are frustrated composers. Indeed, when we collaborated on *The Masters of Solitude*, *Wintermind*, and *A Cold Blue Light*, we were more apt to discuss our effects in musical terms than literary. ("Marv, here's where we want a single oboe, not the full Tchaikovskian strings.")

But any attempt to analyze the special bond that shapes our friendship and our joint writings must ultimately explore the emotional attachment Parke and I have for the world of the theatre . . . and spell that, please, with an "re" and let all modish proofreaders be damned!

"How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa?"

Those were the first words Parke ever spoke to me, and they were written by Shakespeare. Since then, Parke and I have shared good talk in Manhattan and on trips to the Georgetown of his youth and my own native Pennsylvania. The blarney started on a winter evening in the late 1960's at a West Side Manhattan YMCA where a showcase production of *The Merchant of Venice* was rehearsing. Parke played Shylock, I was everyone else. Practically, I had to change costumes and makeup three times because I had three roles: Old Gobbo, Tubal and the Duke of Venice. The first time I officially met Parke was when he opened his mouth and addressed me as Shylock's countryman, Tubal, in cene 31, which is theatrical shorthand for Act III, Scene one.

I suspect Parke shared my opinion of most of the cast: good people, but few of them besides us trained in Shakespearean acting technique. At any rate, I felt enormous admiration for this white-haired, pot-bellied old gaffer Godwin, who looked to me about as old as Methuselah's wet-nurse. By dress rehearsal week (in an ice-cold dressing

room on the lower East Side) Parke and I gabbed incessantly as we smeared on the cold cream and greasepaint. We discovered our mutual interest in theatre, film, music, brandy, beer . . . and science-fantasy.

Several months later, I directed a pair of plays by Ray Bradbury at Lincoln Center. Because I needed a good character actor for the role of the Old Man in the second script, *A Clear View of an Irish Mist*, I phoned that "old fellow" who played Shylock.

Parke agreed to be in the cast. A few nights later, he strode into the rehearsal studio: trim (he'd lost about fifteen pounds), lean, vital, a fortyish man with prematurely-white hair. I felt beamish, decrepit and decidedly rotund.

That's the way he's affected me ever since.

Up till the early 1970's, Parke and I mostly met on stage. He was out of the city doing touring productions, and for reasons that any union actor understands, started calling himself Pete. Nowadays, he'll tell you that his friends still call him Pete, but I don't—somebody's got to keep the bum humble.

Then something happened to Parke and me to wean us away from the theatre.

We discovered we're really writers.

I sold my first novel in the early 1970's, a murder mystery with a scene backstage at the same theatre where Parke and I first met. Other contracts followed.

One afternoon, Parke stopped by with a partial manuscript of a book he said he was trying to write. He asked if I'd mind reading it, but his attitude suggested he already regarded his labors as folly. It gave me a sinking sensation. I was sure I was about to wade through a quantity of bovine effluent, and I was also certain that Parke cared a hell of a lot more than his casual manner seemed to suggest.

I didn't know that Parke was once a promising writer, long before he switched to acting. But I had only to read the first few pages of his manuscript to realize that this was no abortive first try by a tyro, but rather the work of a consummate storyteller.

That night, I devoured sixty pages—all that was then ready—of *Darker Places*, one of the most harrowing horror stories I've ever read. I called Parke up the next day and demanded more.

More pages came, and more, and soon the book was finished and with enviable ease, Parke sold it to the colorful Pat O'Connor, then at Curtis. Several years afterward, Parke did a partial rewrite and resold *Darker Places* to Play boy Press, whose paperback edition may still be tracked down by aficionados of the macabre.

*A Memory of Lions*, recently rereleased by Berkley, followed. It is a brilliant historical novel with strong overtones of mystery and terror. It also persuaded me to approach Parke and suggest that we collaborate on a vast philosophic epic that I'd been wrestling with conceptually for years. Parke said he might be interested if he could add certain dimensions to the plot, and when we got into the nuts-and-bolts of it, we realized that in some ways we'd both been trying to write the same book for years. Eventually our labors were rewarded with the steadily growing appreciation of *The Masters of Solitude*, which may be the best-circulated "cultclassic" in the genre.

Somehow, in between working on the sequel to *Masters*



and our 1982 haunted house novel, *A Cold Blue Light*, Parke also managed to write his important Arthurian novel, *Firelord*, and its soon-to-be-released Guineverian sequel, *Beloved Exile*.

We've never collaborated to the extent that we write in the same room ... we'd probably throttle one another if we tried. But we have marvellous plot conferences, steeped in Martell or Glen Morangie (or during leaner seasons, Colt 45). We divide up the work so that each of us does the first draft of those sections with which we individually feel most comfortable. Thus, Parke did the primary writing of the coven and battle scenes in *Masters*, while I handled the Singer and City sections. Once our books reach the final stage, Parke and I haggle over minute points and word choices like Talmudic students engaged in *pilpul*. We defend our choices staunchly enough, but never quarrel. Indeed, the only time I ever got mad at Parke was when he changed the word "canvas" to "sail" in one stanza of the Ballad of the Wintermind without telling me ... and typically, I was only aggrieved because I'd composed a melody for the ballad and I couldn't really be comfortable with a quarter note when "canvas" required eighth notes.

Our genuine admiration and friendship for each other is perhaps remarkable, considering the contrast in our natures. If we were like our own characters, Parke would come closest to Arin or Garick, while I'd be Singer. Parke's tallish, I'm undersized; he's open and direct, I'm introspective and convoluted (Parke calls it "kinky"); he's mad for earthy brunettes, I'm partial to ethereal blondes; he likes Martell, I prefer Hennessy; he adores *Watership Down* and Ursula Le Guin and has no patience for Tolkien, I'm exactly the opposite; he prefers working longhand, I compose directly at the keyboard. Most drastic of all, he smokes and I'm allergic to it, and Parke wakes cheerfully at dawn whereas I'm apt to bite anyone who breathes too loud a block away from my bed.

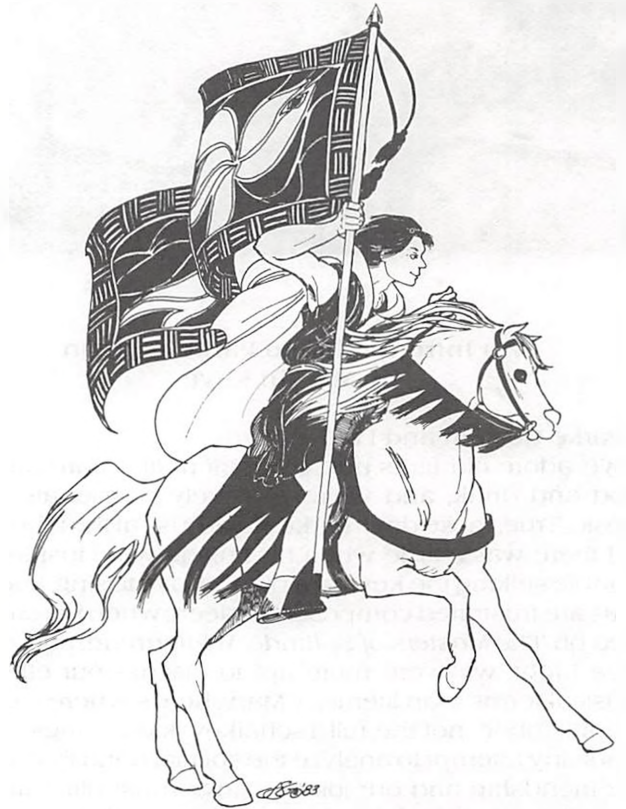
And yet Parke and I share an inordinate fondness for Indian food, late Sibelius and beer, so I guess there actually is a basis for the marriage.

This year is a banner one for Godwin. In addition to seeing *Wintermind* and *Beloved Exile* in paper covers from Bantam Books, 1984 will yield the first collection of Parke's shorter fiction, *The Fire When It Comes*, forthcoming from Doubleday. The title story is one that won the 1982 World Fantasy Award for Best Novella. "Fire" originally appeared as a lead story in *F&SF*, and it is one of the most original "ghost" stories I have ever encountered. It is quintessentially Godwin: a tale primarily concerned with what it feels like to be *alive*.

Indeed, all of Parke's heroes, heroines, and heavies passionately love life. They may bleed and bellyache, rage or cry or laugh—very often, they pass from one another with a fluidity that can only be comprehended by those who have lived as long and as wisely as Parke himself has. Wisdom is not the product of a mistake-free life; it is the bitter wine pressed from experience, aged in the casks of memory and decanted when there is an artist who knows how it must be poured.

Parke Godwin is that kind of artist. His writings are pure vintage champagne.

[Editors note: This article was rewritten by Marvin; from the Introduction to *The Fire When It Comes* by Parke Godwin, Doubleday. Copyright©1984 by Marvin Kaye. All rights reserved.]



"The Standard Bearer"



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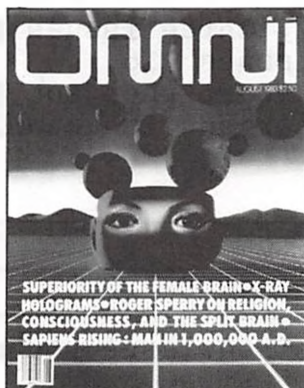
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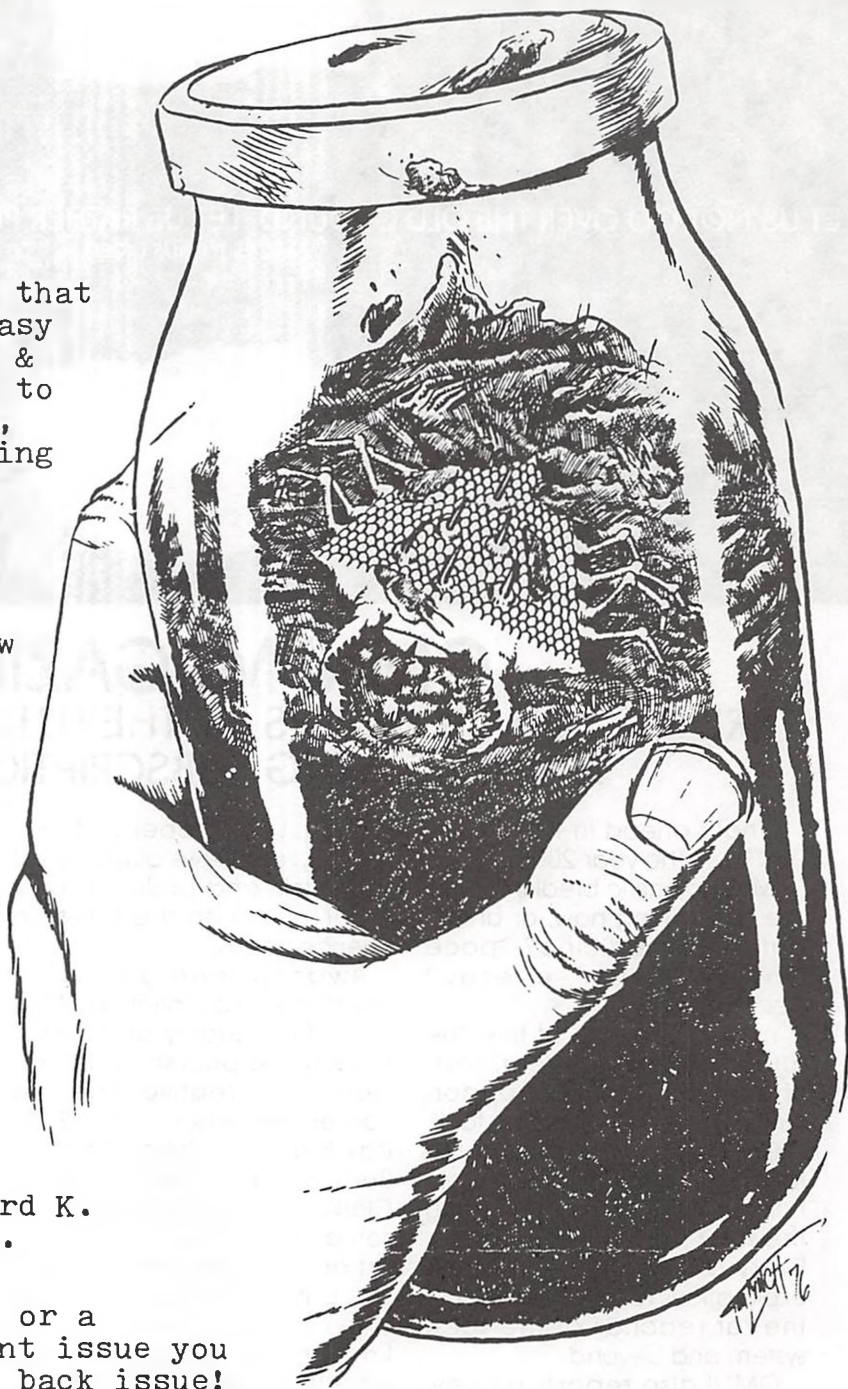
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then the percentage rises to 92.3. I find my height to be a definite advantage when I take on large, multinational corporations — all those big guys look alike to me, and they never expect an attack from below. However, I am not a heightist — I recently married a wonderful gentleman named Christopher Conley, who is six feet tall. I have forgiven Chris this vertical extravagance and trust that he will forgive me my vertical modesty, once he looks down far enough to figure out what it is.

Aside from running SFWA (in the same manner that one "runs", for example, a team of bolting horses — one hangs on and prays), I have put together a workshop combining playwrights and science fiction writers, in conjunction with Playwrights Unlimited in San Francisco. Called "Science Fiction on Stage", the workshop will culminate with performances in mid-March at the Exploratorium in San Francisco.

I like beer, except the "lite" stuff. Also football. And "Hill Street Blues". And cats (I am owned by two) and dogs (also two). And good cigars. And people who don't step on me by mistake.

[Photograph of Marta Randall, copyright 1981 by Karen Preuss; used by special permission.]

[Editor's note: We asked Marta Randall to write something about herself. Lest the reader be misled by the casual and whimsical air of her article, we thought we should point out that Marta Randall:

- \*is the author of six novels (including *Those Who Favor Fire* due out this year from Pocket Books) and a whole lot of exciting short fiction;

- \*holds down a full time job as manager of a legal office;

- \*has taught science fiction in university workshops in Michigan and Oregon;

- \*has received two Nebula nominations (which are harder to come by than Hugo nominations);

- \*co-edited (with Robert Silverberg) the prestigious anthologies *New Dimensions* 11, 12, and (coming soon) 13;

- \*was the toastmistress of the 1982 World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago. At the press reception we threw for the media after the Hugo Awards ceremony, Marta was the one person *everyone* wanted to interview; and she stayed and answered questions cheerfully for hours. This may explain why at the closing ceremonies the following day (Monday), Marta arrived at the podium, peered at the audience, and began, "Hi! Welcome to Chicon . . ."

- \*and has been Vice President and, for the past two years, President of the Science Fiction Writers of America.

We thought you ought to know.)

**Marta Randall  
by Marta Randall**

My father's people came to California in 1852, so despite the fact that I was born in Mexico City (1948), I still consider myself a 4th-generation Californian. This entitles me to slouch about the state muttering about newcomers, smog, freeways, and the Good Old Days, and to say rude things about Easterners who believe that all California is palm trees, bikinis, and Hollywood types who "take a meeting" at the drop of a hat.

I have one son, Richard Bergstresser, who is seventeen and taller than I am. Roughly 85% of the American population is taller than I am, except when I take my shoes off and







### Biographical Data by and about Dr. Alan Nourse

Alan E. Nourse, M.D.: World traveler, raconteur, bon vivant, and "the most underestimated science fiction writer of our time." (That's a quote but I forget who said it.)

Born in Des Moines, Iowa, August 11th, 1928. Studied at Rutgers (B.S. in biological sciences) and at University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine (M.D. in 1955). Interned at Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle, an experience immortalized in *Intern* by Dr. X. Family medical practice from 1958 to 1963 in North Bend, Washington. Full time writer of SF and mundane work since 1963. Married Ann Jane Morton of Linden, New Jersey in 1952, three sons and one daughter.

Began writing science fiction in 1950; first professional sale with "High Threshold", published in *Astounding* in March 1951. Most notable short science fiction: "Nightmare Brother", "Brightside Crossing", "Family Resemblance", "The Canvas Bag". Most notable science fiction novels: *Rocket To Limbo*, *Raiders From The Rings*, *Star Surgeon*, *The Mercy Men*, *The Bladerunner*. Most recent science fiction novel: *The Fourth Horseman* (Harper and Row), a novel of latter-day plague.

Notable mundane work: *Intern*; *Nine Planets (Astronomy For The Space Age)*; *Universe, Earth And Atom: The Story Of Physics*; *The Practice* (a novel), *Inside The Mayo Clinic*. For the past 6 years has contributed the monthly "Family Doctor" column to *Good Housekeeping* magazine. Winner of the Arthritis Foundation's prestigious Russell Cecil Award in 1979 for excellence in medical journalism, exemplified by his *Good Housekeeping* article, "The Arthritis Book". Work in progress: a book about addiction in collaboration with Dr. Janice Phelps of Seattle, under contract with Little, Brown; and *The Elk Hunt*, an account of Nourse's recent heart attack and a discussion of the State of the Art in treating coronary diseases today.

Three years ago, with children dispersed, Ann and Alan moved full time to their country retreat in eastern Washington, near Thorp. Ann, an experienced and skillful physical therapist, serves as physical therapist for the Home Health organization in Kittitas County. Alan writes.



"Tourists"



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"Not With A Bang . . ."  
A Physician Looks At Alan Nourse's  
*The Fourth Horseman*  
by Dr. Harold Bob

A group of self appointed scientists move the mythical clock of doom one minute closer to the apocalypse. Acts of inhumane terror are carried out in all parts of the world. The strategic arms limitation talks are broken off. In an age of distant impersonal lethality, it is no surprise that our imaginations search within our species' soul for a different age of heroism. Stories of futuristic high-tech civilizations have given way to racks of novels and stories set in a "regressed future": post destruction futures where technology is absent, or being rediscovered, and where death comes from the edge of a sword borne by a recognizable enemy.

How will the end come? Will it be a mushroom cloud, or a poisoned atmosphere? Will there be a comet of doom, or an unforeseen solar accident? Perhaps; but *Rats, Lice and History* by Hans Zinsser (1934) reminds us, "Swords and lances, arrows, machine guns, and even high explosives have had far less power over the fates of nations than the typhus louse, the plague flea, and the yellow-fever mosquito."

In *The Fourth Horseman*, Dr. Alan E. Nourse writes of a mutated form of pneumonic plague that sweeps across America. In a style that is readable for the non-physician, Dr. Nourse presents an accurate and plausible scenario: Public health officials are dedicated and do their best, initially controlling the problem, later unable to stem the tide.

There is a tendency in *The Fourth Horseman* to see large cities in a 1960's context. Much has changed in large eastern cities and I see many more signs of pulling together in urban communities. Addicted to the cultural textures that are supported by larger population centers, I have a different bias. Who is to say whether my optimism or Dr. Nourse's pessimism for the cities is more correct?

In stories of the apocalypse (or near misses) there are two tales: that of the event itself, and that of the individuals caught up in it. In *The Fourth Horseman* the battle against the disease holds the clear forefront. The plague itself develops almost a character's soul, "pale and naked, bony legs clasp[ing] the flanks of his nightmare steed, pale as its rider, its shoulders pouring sweat, great nostrils flaring, fearsome eyes blazing with death, the great spiral horn spearing up from its heavy forehead . . ."

Dr. Nourse's novel holds our excitement as the fate of civilization and mankind is decided. He brings us back from the hubris of our nuclear era to understand that the tones of midnight may not be struck by our own hands.

As Albert Camus concludes at the end of his novel *The Plague*, "He knew that the tale he had to tell could not be one of final victory. It could only be the record of what had to be done, and what assuredly would have to be done again in the never ending fight against terror and its relentless onslaughts, despite their personal afflictions, by all who, while unable to be saints but refusing to bow down to pestilences, strive their utmost to be healers."

So while the plague bacillus hides in its sylvan reservoirs or in cellars or warehouses of cities, Nourse knows "another time would come in its season. And time, he knew, was on his side."











Parke Godwin — Bibliography

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- A Memory of Lions* (historical) Popular Library 1976/Berkley Books 1983 (revised)
- The Masters of Solitude* (with Marvin Kaye) (science fiction) Doubleday hardcover 1978/Avon paperback 1979/a Science Fiction Book Club selection/English, Dutch and German editions
- Firelord* (Arthurian) Doubleday hardcover 1980/Bantam paperback 1982, second edition 1983
- Wintermind* (with Marvin Kaye) (science fiction) Doubleday hardcover 1982/Bantam paperback 1984/a Science Fiction Book Club selection 1983
- A Cold Blue Light* (with Marvin Kaye) (occult) Charter Books 1983
- The Fire When It Comes* (collected short stories, science fiction and fantasy) Doubleday hardcover April 1984
- Beloved Exile* (Arthurian) Bantam trade paperback June 1984
- The Last Rainbow* (historical/fantasy) Bantam Books 1985

Short Fiction:

- "The Fire When It Comes"
- "Influencing the Hell out of Time and Teresa Golowitz"
- "The Last Rainbow"
- "The Second Day of Genius"
- "A Matter of Taste"
- "Up Yours, Federico"
- "Stroke of Mercy"

Most of the above stories are collected in *The Fire When It Comes* (see above). "A Matter of Taste" will appear in *Shadows 7*, edited by Charles L. Grant, Fall 1984

Articles:

- "Confessions of a Slush Pile Reader" — *Empire SF* #30, winter 1982
- "Deathwish Revisited" — *Empire SF* #29, fall 1982
- "There Goes Deuteronomy" — *A Journey Through the Fantastic*, essays, edited by Sharon Jarvis, Ungar Publishing 1984

Frankenstein Monster Rewrites Shakespeare!

At last year's Balticon, people sat on chairs, tables, the floor, the windowsill and each other to attend the dramatic reading by Marvin Kaye and Parke Godwin of a two-character play. This year promises something equally unusual: Shakespeare—as the Bard never visualized it. Marvin Kaye will present a one-act farce of *Hamlet* as conceived by Frankenstein's monster and written by Marvin, with Cassius (of *Julius Caesar*) replacing King Claudius. There are 13 parts, all played by Marvin. Like last year's play, this is likely to be a highlight of the convention. Please consult your pocket program for exact time and location.

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**The Fan Guest of Honor  
by Patrick Kelly**

I believe that it is important for the reader of this commentary to know what a Fan Guest Of Honor (GOH) is and why we honor one at Balticon. To understand this I provide my definitions:

Fan = An active member of the Science Fiction Community who is not a professional in the field (i.e. not a paid author).

Fandom = The Science Fiction Community.

Pro = Professional. Someone who earns their living from the field (i.e. an author, publisher, actor, producer, editor, artist, etc.)

Science Fiction Community = That group of people who associate with each other because of their common interest in the literature. The community has two sub-groups, the Fanzine Fans who express themselves mostly in the publication of amateur publications, and the Club Fans who join their peers in formal or informal organizations such as the Baltimore Science Fiction Society Inc. (BSFS).

The Fan Guest Of Honor Title was developed to honor those people whose efforts within the Science Fiction Community merit recognition. This honor is our way of saying, "Thank you for a job well done."

Mark Owings is Balticon 18's Fan GOH in recognition of his long service to the Science Fiction Community.

Mark, born on January 3, 1945, is a native of Baltimore and has been involved in Fandom since 1961. Mark is one of the founding members of BSFS and has served as club parliamentarian since its founding. Mark's services to Fandom include but are not limited to;

- \* Serving on many Convention Committees including Balticons, Disclaves, Hexacons, and ConStellation, the 41st World Convention, held in Baltimore in 1983.

- \* Due to his extensive knowledge of the field he has prepared many bibliographies for convention program books like this one.

- \* He has spent long hours performing the "dirty work" needed to make this convention and many preceding Balticons run smoothly.

- \* His dedication to the Wednesday Night Movie Conspiracy has helped make that event a success.

He has been an active member of both the Washington and Baltimore clubs, and while temporarily residing in New York, he was active in Fandom there.

Mark has been married to a fellow fan, the active Jul Ochs Owings for two years. (Jul was elected president of BSFS after Mark was chosen Fan GOH.)

Mark Owings is an honorable man whose actions continually demonstrate a consideration for others that is too often missing in our world today. Mark Owings is my friend and I value that friendship.





**Marvin Observed**  
by Parke Godwin

Fifteen years ago, I was backstage in Greenwich Village, making up for a forgettable stage production, when I noticed an apple-cheeked young man peering over my shoulder, friendly and shy behind his glasses.

"Not bad," he assessed my make up job. "You know the story about Henry Irving and the apprentice who was making up, and . . ." From half-hour to curtain, this voluble young actor sped glibly from Irving to Tree, Lovecraft, Bradbury, Bloch, Shakespeare, and Edwin Booth. He talked easily with a tremendous relish for the words, a bespectacled cherub who framed his speech with a rueful smile that hinted, "You don't really have to listen to all this."

The guy was dangerously intelligent for an actor.

I quickly learned that Marvin Kaye was, besides a natural raconteur, a professional magician, an insatiable collector of books, and the author of a delightful (and now very collectable) chapbook, *The Histrionic Holmes*, on the many impersonations of the Baker Street violinist. Not to mention a profound knowledge of Nietzsche, Russell, Gilbert & Sullivan, John Dowland, the recordings of Alfred Deller and the comedy art of Laurel and Hardy. Over delightful beers and whiskey, I tapped his encyclopedic knowledge of popular and arcane fantasy. With Marv, there's always a pie or a banana peel lurking around the corner.

A few years later, Marvin had an agent and a contract for his first mystery novel. I was impressed. I was also unemployed, but there were the tentative beginnings of a novel. I left it with Marvin, praying he'd be helpful but mostly kind. He read it.

"Finish this," he barked into the phone. "If you don't, I'll never speak to you again."

"He's so glad it's a good book," his wife Saralee confided to me later. "He was so afraid of hurting you."

That's Marvin Kaye. On the phone with a less-than-competent copy editor or other nemesis, he can be a staccato demon. With a friend — he wouldn't hurt.

Time passed; Marvin rolled on, a literary Mississippi. I had sold only two books, neither of which made the *Times* Book Review Section or even a laundry list. But Marvin had a fantasy idea bouncing over editorial transoms for some time . . .

"It's your kind of thing," he said in his cautious, half-mournful way. "Kick it around. Maybe we can work together on this."

I'd never collaborated, couldn't even stay married, but the idea grew between us, obsessed us in reams of notes and letters until the horrible day when I put the first draft pages in Marvin's hand and prayed: *God, is it right? Is it good enough?*

Marvin read it, then began to speak of other things. Letting me down gently, I thought. I braced myself for it.

"This stuff is good," he said finally. "A steamroller. Keep going."

Jesus, redemption. A book had never mattered to me so much before. The guy gave me faith in myself at a time when I could easily have quit and never written again. I wanted to cry for gratitude.

People have asked, "How do you two collaborate?" I don't know. Strictly speaking, we never have. After five years, Marvin and I have yet to write together in the same room. If our philosophies cleave, our habits strain apart. He composes at a typewriter while I plod in longhand. He's organized, where I pace, mumble, and spill coffee on what I've just written. Cigarettes bother his sinuses; I trail a perpetual cloud of smoke. I find it easy to wake up, grab a cup of coffee, and a cigarette, and hit the script right away. Marvin has no love for morning and especially for *me* in the morning, as we discovered on our first research trip.

"You're so goddam cheerful," he moaned.

*The Masters of Solitude* is a trilogy. Its middle volume, *Wintermind*, required a long ballad, vital to the plot. I thought I could better sketch the verses myself and sent off the results to Marvin. The reaction from West End Avenue was funereal as a cancer diagnosis.

"I had to fiddle with the ballad," Marvin wrote me. "It needed something."

The subsequent story conference at my place was one of those rare, delightful evenings when we work a little, eat and drink a lot and generally unbuckle. Only when we were half shot did Marvin open the ballad, reading and singing in a soft hesitant voice. I listened in silent humility. It not only furthered the plot, it *sounded* like a ballad, far superior to what I'd conceived, and I told him so.

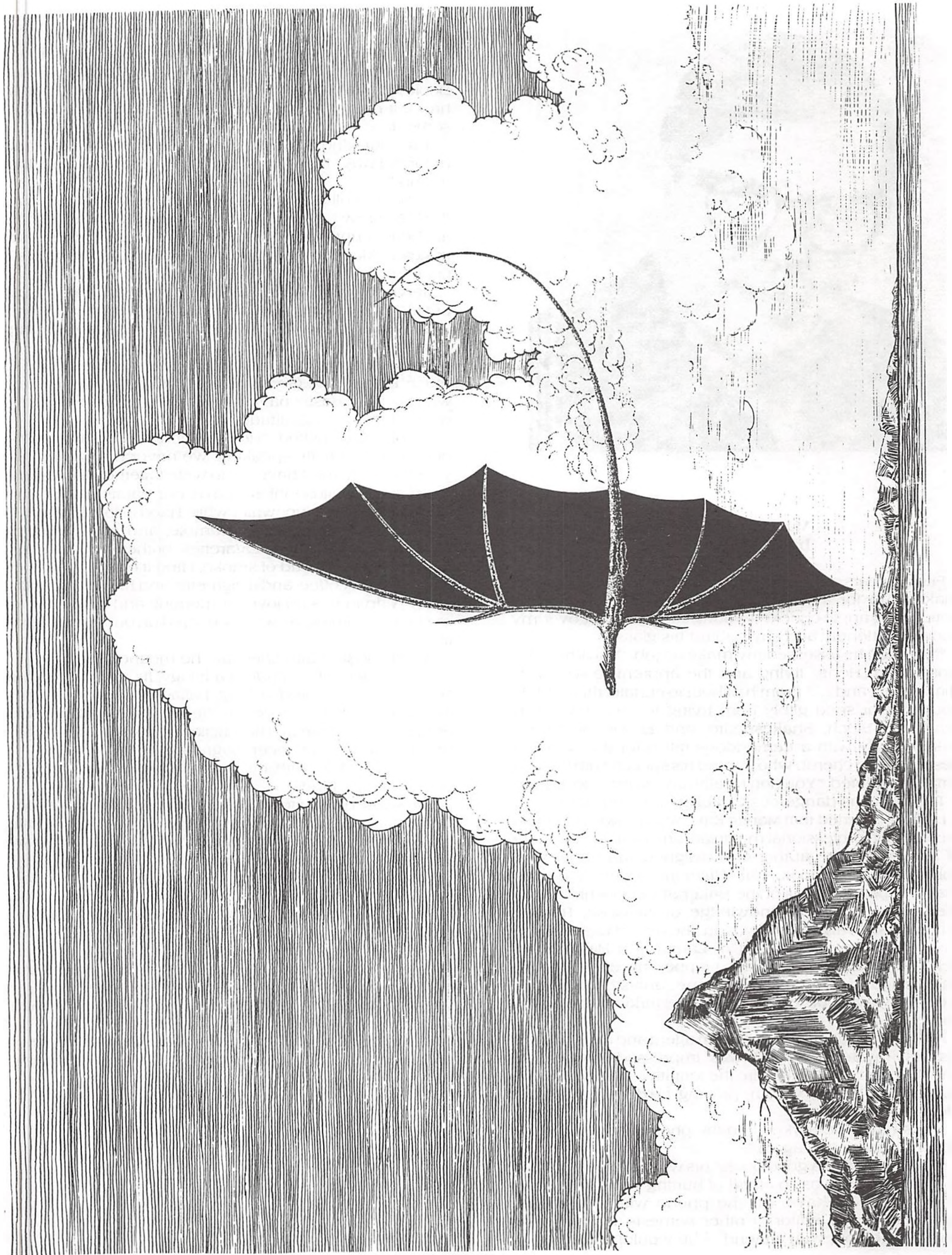
"You were right, Babe. That's it."

Marvin looked at me, then ducked his head. "Jesus!"

He was crying as I should have five years earlier. "I worked on that damn thing for *weeks*. I was scared it wasn't good enough."

Maybe that's how two writers collaborate: a lot of work, a good deal of respect. But you gotta love a guy like that.







## Meetings On The Stair by Diane Duane

I saw a time machine in my backyard the other night.

As I look at that sentence — despite that fact that it's absolutely true — I think I'd better come at the subject of this article from another angle. I've worked in too many psychiatric hospitals to want to spend time in one as a guest.

I stopped in at Dell Books a few weeks ago, to visit the beautiful and talented Olga Litowinsky, my children's-book editor there. We spent our usual hour or so shmoozing, then went off to visit the chief publicist for Dell, a sharp-eyed and charming lady named Janet Seigel, and shmoozed with *her* for another hour — mostly about writing. Close to the end of that hour, Janet leaned back in her chair with a sort of "devil's-advocate" gleam in her eye, and said, "Tell me something. Do people ever ask you if you don't feel guilty about writing so much escapist literature for children, who're so impressionable? And do you ever feel guilty?"

The answers, immediately, were "yes" and "no!", for reasons that — as I tried to articulate them — multiplied until the conversation started sounding like something out of the Spanish Inquisition. *Why should I? Where do grownups get this idea that kids are terminally impressionable — that someone under voting age is likely to believe everything they hear? Don't adults understand the difference between imagination and belief? Don't they remember that there is a difference? — And our spiffy red uniforms!...*

My editor shut me up as best she could (she'd fortunately remembered to bring the cattle prod from her office) and told me to go home and write an essay for the *School Librarians' Journal*. So I did. That's another story.

But as a result, for a week or two the question of responsible representation of reality — the business of telling the truth to one's readers in childrens' writing, and adults' as well — was much with me. I had once seen, and been very troubled by, a young man walking around a Star Trek convention in great distress. He had, he told someone, missed a timed rendezvous at a beam-up point, and he didn't have his communicator with him; there was therefore no way for the *Enterprise* to find him and beam him up home. He meant it. He wasn't role-playing. The image of him wandering those halls — "marooned," distraught, stranded on the wrong side of reality — came back again and again to haunt me.

"Fine," the more cowardly parts of me kept hollering from the background, "so when you write, stick to reality!" Useless advice. After seven thousand years, reality has yet to be adequately defined; given cowardice enough to obey such advice, there would be no way to know how. And anyway, truth sometimes has nothing to do with the physically "real" at all. For the first time in years, I found myself hung up in a genuine ethical crisis, and I didn't like it. The urge to ask "What is truth?" and then go wash my hands was considerable.

In the middle of writing that essay, I stepped out late at night for a walk. You have to understand that the house I share with three friends in a brick-and-fieldstone suburb of Philadelphia is situated in the best neighborhood I've ever known for long, lazy evening strolls... safe at night, quiet, very few streetlights and much open sky. The Moon

was out, full and ferociously silver. I walked a long time, relishing the silence, and came back up the driveway feeling quite relaxed, if not quite sure as yet about what to do in the essay. I turned the corner around the house to stretch that walk just another thirty seconds or so — and saw it.

It was lying on its side in the middle of the back yard. An oblong, boxlike shape made of some dark material, with panelled doors and small windows on the side that faced me, and with a little roundish projection jutting out at the "roof" end; a shape throwing a fat black shadow in the moonlight, and absolutely *there* with me and the yard and the real world and my breath going out in a cloud of amazement and cold. A London police call box, lying on its side in the back yard. They don't use police boxes in London any more — and anyway, what would one be doing in my back yard? On its side, yet?

Only one thing. Some of you know (and may more of you come to know!) about the TARDIS, a supra-dimensional vehicle for travel through Time and Relative Dimensions in Space. Specifically, some of you recognize that one TARDIS whose chameleon exterior is stuck in the shape of a police call box because it was in for repairs when it was first stolen by the "renegade" Time Lord called "the Doctor". (Doctor *who*? Right, he's the one.) That particular TARDIS is known, by devotees of the Dr. Who SF series, to have enough other things wrong with it to make side-on landings likely. And as for it winding up in my back yard — well, the Doctor's been to the ends of the universe in the TARDIS, even out of this one, and back again. How much longer could it have been before he ended up in Philadelphia? . . .

Now those weren't specifically the thoughts going through my mind at first sight of that police-box lying on its side. But a *lot* of thoughts *did*. I'd heard, as you have, of people who, in crisis situations, saw "their whole lives pass before them" in an instant. Startled into immobility, standing there and staring at that box, my experience was similar. But it wasn't so much my whole past life, as a whole life-to-come that was suddenly and impossibly possible. In rapid succession (and you understand, I'm translating images, or swift successions of images, into words) the thoughts went something like this:

*The show's based on reality, after all!*

*Oh Lord, he's here! (With, behind the mere statement, a composite background image of what many episodes of Doctor Who have shown this particular Time Lord to be like inside: witty, merry, compassionate, clever, resourceful, insatiably curious and adventurous, powerfully ethical, courageous, courteous, loving and wise — the best possible travelling companion.) And knowing him, he won't be here for long. Wonder who he's with? And whether they'd mind a hitchhiker? —*

*—got to tell the housemates! No, they're all out for the night —*

*— one phone call, then. Got to tell that one friend that I might be missing for a while, but that I'll be all right. Leave a check for a month's rent and expenses — better make it two —*

*Thank God the computer's portable! I can still write while I'm gone —*

*No motion, no sound yet — Are they all right in there? (For the TARDIS, like most other habitues of Faery/the Twilight Zone/the Outer Limits, is much bigger on the*



inside than it is on the outside; a many-roomed mansion that even the Doctor has never completely explored — all now suddenly lying crashed over on its side.) *In fact, the bad landing might have been caused "by someone's injury". Suppose there are bad guys in there with them! Cybermen! Daleks! Anyway, got to —*

— and the one step forward, as in many another fairy tale, broke the spell. Just the one step revealed to me that the (ostensible) TARDIS had only one side—there was no real "top" to it; that it had no back or sides, either, except those born of a trick of night and shadow; that the protuberance at the top, where the police box's light had seemingly been, was merely the corner of our old rotted backyard picnic table; that the whole TARDIS, in fact, was nothing more than a newly retired mattress leaned up against the table, waiting for the people from Lower Merion Township to come and take it away. The mattress's slats and fabric-pattern and the angle at which it lay had all conspired with the moonlight to evoke doors and windows, familiar forms, and someone who wasn't really there.

I stood there, coasting down the far side of one of the great adrenalin rushes of my life — recovering, slowly, both from a taste of my own medicine, and (more oddly) from a fierce attack of sheer joy. I spent the first few seconds being incredibly annoyed with my own gullibility. I felt pretty much the way I had one day when I spent about forty-five seconds staring at a stuffed squirrel on a prop tree that overhung the sidewalk at 20th Century Fox, thinking that the poor squirrel must be sick, it held so still. This was even worse; I'd helped my roomies carry this wretched mattress outside and prop it against the table in the first place!

But no. It wasn't nearly the same sort of experience. My feeling that day in LA had been almost entirely embarrassment at what I perceived as my own dimness. But what I was feeling now was far stronger stuff. It was sorrow, and loss. For the barest moment, an opportunity had seemed to have been held out to me, one for which I would cheerfully have left the familiar and the secure behind. I had reached out for it, delighted — and now it was gone. Or more accurately, it had never been there. After all, I knew quite well — had known before, and know now — that Dr. Who isn't *real* —

Oh, remarked a cool voice down in the logic department. *Do you really? And what were you saying about 'reality', not half an hour ago? Can't you tell the difference between imagination and belief? You imagined the TARDIS there. Doesn't mean you believe "in it" . . .*

That made sense, but just then sense was no comfort. I kept thinking of that old poem I had stumbled across and liked as a kid (and am probably about to misquote): *Last evening as I climbed the stair / I met a man who wasn't there. / He wasn't there again today: / I wish, I wish he'd go away!* . . .

But *did* I really? . . .

I went inside, shaken and unsatisfied, to think about it. "Shaken" because that wild inrush of joy I'd felt, and the sorrow at discovering the nonexistence of its cause, both suggested something most unsettling: that I didn't want *not* to imagine or believe in that man Who wasn't there. "Unsatisfied" because I knew I was missing a piece of the argument, and couldn't figure out what it was.

The problem was a knotty one for me. As a fantasy writer, I spend most of my time studying and describing places that have no physical existence — and I spend more time

yet in vivid, intimate observation of and interaction with people who inhabit those places, people who aren't *there*. I do this by seeing and hearing those nonexistent persons, places and things with my eyes open, while awake. As a psychiatric nurse, I have several fancy shrink-names for what I do: "guided imagery", "persona-fragment transference", "extrojection". Often enough, when I've tried to tell some friend the truth about my writing process, and the friend *gets that look* on his face, I've waved these words at him as a sort of substitute for holding up a sign that says "NOT INSANE, REALLY!". Unfortunately, whenever I do that, the back of my mind (nasty nagging thing) always insists on reminding me that the "hard word" for this phenomenon, when it slips out of control, is "hallucination".

So what about this last incident, then? Was I tipping over the edge? Losing control? And that rush of joy — what about that? Was I becoming pathologically dissatisfied with the reality I lived in? Was what I had felt actually the much-written-of "seductiveness" of insanity, coming after me at last?

And if it was, what possible right did I have to drag anyone down this road after me? What good could I be said to be doing anyone, child or adult, by postulating — hell, celebrating — things that don't, apparently can't exist?

I wasn't at all sure. But I felt deep down — and was ready to fight to prove it — that the things I was celebrating were *good*.

It only remained to see if that attitude was a sane one or not.

Well, what's a good sane reason to imagine weird things? Or, while we're at it, anything else? What's imagination *for*?

I started taking the word apart for clues and found one immediately, without even having to check its Latin roots or early usages. "Image-ination": making pictures in your head, of things you want to happen. And most specifically, making pictures of *things*. If you consider it thoroughly, you'll discover that every made thing, every physical artifact of what we call "civilization", started as a picture in someone's head — a dream or idea or image, working its way out of the nonphysical, through the human mind, to realization.

This being so, one could make a case for imagination as the single most important function of the human mind. It is the problem-solver, the arch-survival characteristic. Even time-binding is impossible without it. Imagination suggests to us how we can get that fruit down out of the tree, what to do about the saber-toothed tiger, how to use the sharpened stick on the mammoth. Data about the real world feed imagination, but only constant practice at it will train the ability itself. Imagination is a muscle that becomes stronger, more agile, more useful, with use.

In the old days, there was a simple way that the muscle got stronger, without needing volition. If you imagined a successful way to get away from the sabertooth, you survived to have children . . . and probably taught them, all unawares, to imagine too.

Things aren't so simple nowadays. The modern world no longer forces so much use of that muscle on the young. Schools are increasingly turning into places where one is fed raw data and expected to spit it back unchanged as proof of assimilation. Imagination happens, if anywhere, in play; and the adult world, the "real" world, looks



condescendingly down on it as something that (with luck) you'll outgrow. Notice particularly the prejudicial definitions and implications often attached to words like "dreamer", "daydreaming", "imaginary", "fantastic", and phrases like "making it up", "seeing things", and "imagination running wild".

The problem is that once the unnerved "adult" mind considering this subject has proved what it wants to by way of definition, it tends to drop the tool and run. You can't do that. Logic demands that you define completely: what makes one definition any more accurate than another? For example: "running wild" must also be able to mean, not just something gone dangerously out of control, but an object or faculty — in this case, imagination — in its original, natural, normal state, living free in the ecology of the mind, the way it was it was "supposed" to be.

And if imagination is a natural thing, a survival characteristic, the mere fact leads us straight to what imagination (including, by derivation, the imagination that goes on in fantasy and SF) is good for. It trains those mental muscles: positing, again and again, unlikely-seeming situations, and teaching the kind of thinking that's useful in dealing with them. In these days when the solutions of the past are hopelessly inadequate to the problems of the present and future, SF and fantasy — the most purely imaginative branches of literature — become a kind of Nautilus for the mind. The problem-solving patterns, the leaps of both intuition and logic, that we learn from fantastic literature, can be powerful forces in making our lives work better than they would otherwise. The expanded ability to imagine and cope with bizarre situations will later also be applicable to "adult" problems, helping one find novel solutions to them: ways to make that computer program work out, to solve that problem with a co-worker, a superior, a spouse, a child; ways to find your way through a maze, put that kit together, set up a budget, plan a life.

And there's a delightful fringe benefit to this strengthening of the imagining muscle by use of SF and fantasy. You meet the most interesting people in the process — characters (in both senses of the word) who can affect your life profoundly. I know that I wouldn't be the same person — and probably a worse one — without the influence of those people who aren't there. Who would I be without, say — picking an example at random — Spock of Vulcan? That dry, dark, faintly ironic, fiercely rational shape has haunted me since I was twelve . . . first ( I have to be truthful) as a safely un-haveable lech-object; then as a non-"real" person remotely (and erroneously) admired for his apparent non-involvement with the sticky business of emotion; finally, and best, as an old friend whose words and behavior I find have taught me more about the uses and joys of both logic and loyalty than either my symbolic logic instructor or my childhood companions ever managed to. Nowadays, while writing Trek, how many times have I looked up from the computer to find that dark, sharp regard seemingly fixed on me from across the desk, from out of "nowhere"? — a cool and slightly mocking look past steepled fingers, one eyebrow cocked in workless comment on some hasty, incorrect conclusion or off-angle assumption of mine about his universe. The experience is definitely non-physical; an un-"guided imagery", or maybe a "hallucination". But, if unreal, it's a harmless, amusing, useful unreality, and I embrace it. This would be a weary life without that wry, hypercompetent, steadfast presence to leaven it

now and then. It's been a privilege to work with him. And had Spock never existed at all, I would be much the poorer for it.

And what about all the other names and shapes that come crowding into my mind — old companions who've passed through my life and taught me love, danger, anger, humor, compassion? What kind of a life would it be without them? The good Doctor, of course, and many others: Eilonwy, Trente, Morgaine, Worsel, Archy, Reepicheep, Obi-wan, Brunnhilde, Prezmyra, Gro, Morgon, Severian, Sparrowhawk, Pyanfar, Fiorinda, Shevek, Ae'Lau, Ramoth, Vader . . . And hundreds more crowding in behind them, friends of childhood or adulthood. What an odd lot they are. Humans and tentacle things arm in arm; herds of Hokas, flights of dragons, computers with names like Mike and Harlie; creatures that have to live in portable iceboxes or travelling ovens; starships that sing or just go boldly. And that special group of people over there with whom my interaction has been even deeper than with the rest; people whom (it says here) I "created". A tall slender man with a peculiar sword; his special friends, a scruffly little king minus his throne, a brushfire looking for a place to happen, and a woman with a very strange shadow; a couple of kids in company with a talking white hole, a Lotus Turbo Esprit, various whales, and a hundred-foot great white shark; and many more . . . An odd lot. But my friends.

Far from doing me harm, these people are innocent of anything but enriching my life. There have been times when I've found it easier to be kind to some person who drives me crazy, because of the impression made on me by the way Frodo let Gollum off easy on Mount Doom; times when taking a slightly dangerous stand, at a time when it might have been more political to keep quiet, was just a shade easier because of the memory of Luke Skywalker throwing his lightsaber across that dark chamber in the new Deathstar and telling the Emperor, in that slightly shaking voice, "I am a Jedi — as my father was before me!" How many chances at the great heroisms do any of us have, after all? . . . and what harm is there in committing the little ones of everyday life in the names of one's friends? Later in life — next week, next year — you may see your way through the names to the issue, the virtue, of heroism for its own sake. Or you may never see it. But in the meantime, enacting those small heroisms with the old friends in mind is better than not doing them at all.

If this is insanity, so be it. I doubt it is. But in any case, I refuse to renounce those people. *I want* their company. *I want* to meet them on the stairs.

More than that: I want to walk where those people walk, live where they live. Don't mistake my meaning! Frost said it best: let no willful power mistake me and snatch me away from Earth forever — I can't think where love is likely to go better. But Earth isn't everything. I want —

I want to walk down a London street and run into four children, one with a suspicious bulge under his greatcoat — a bulge that sticks its golden Phoenix-head out, peers at me with golden eyes, and says in kindly (if supercilious) tones, "Excuse me, my good woman, but would you be so kind as to direct us to my temple?" I want to sit at the crude wooden table in Caer Dallben, eating Dallben's bread and drinking his mild, while Princess Eilonwy talks my head off. I want to lean over the railing of a ship striking eastward over a twilit summer sea, close to the bold Mouse who's



perched on the bowsprit and softly singing the song that the Dryad made for him at his birth. I want to climb Roke Knoll on a starry night and spend long nights listening to the whisper of the waters of Earthsea, the endless murmuring of a Name I will never fully know. I want to spend an evening in front of a roaring fire with Prospero and his old friend Roger Bacon — the three of us working on Cheshire and mugs of old ale, while Roger tells about that brass wall he tried to make for the British, and upstairs the magic mirror screams out bad lightbulb jokes and shows videotapes of *Star Trek IV*.

Peace and quiet aren't everything. I want to go to lunch at Jocko's place on Nevvia — preferably on a day when the Empress of the Twenty Universes and her consort are there. I want to be somewhere nearby when King Clode and his three sons hunt the White Deer to the bottom of the magic mountain, and the sky rings with the sound of something aimed at the King missing him and hitting the Moon instead. I want to ride behind Dernhelm of Rohan, through a day nearly twilit at noon, knowing the two secrets hidden under his cloak, and not giving either away. I want to add a little willpower to the massed Lensman-mind bearing down on the Eddorians in the last battle for Civilization and the Universe. I want to clutch for dear life at the back of Han's seat, only slightly reassured by the feel of Obi-wan behind me and the lightsaber bumping against my thigh, as we dive away from the Imperial cruisers and get ready for the jump to lightspeed.

I want to be there when the door dilates and someone comes through. *Anyone*. I want to run for my post in a round, railed room while the Red Alert sirens whoop all around, and a slim dark-haired figure in the command chair says quietly, "All hands, battle stations: Captain Kirk to the Bridge!" And I wouldn't mind it a bit if I should hear a peculiar wheezing, grinding sound out in the back yard, and upon investigation find a London police call-box standing there — one from which a man with a beat-up hat, an extravagant length of scarf, and an astonishing smile, pokes out his head and says, "Excuse me, madam: is this Heathrow? . . ."

Many of you want these same things — or other scenes and company derived from other SF or fantasy. You know quite well how much fun it is to duck out to Kedrinh or Orsinia, and how much good it does you. There's no replacement for the delight of strange places, the fascination of odd ideas carried to their logical conclusions — or for the joy of discovering that nobility and power and hope aren't dead . . . in some writer's heart, if nowhere else. After sharing such experiences, you can't avoid being a little bigger inside than you were before.

Those grounds alone are sufficient for SF's and fantasy's acquittal. So as regards Spock and the good Doctor, and all the rest of them, the defense rests.

But there's still some unfinished business before the court. (before we put the topic of imagination aside.) Imagination is, as mentioned above, a survival characteristic. Survival characteristics can themselves become *threats* to survival once surviving isn't so much of an issue for a given organism. Aggression is a good example of this. And imagination is in just as much danger of being warped this way. Here the image of that lost young Trek fan, wandering the halls, looms large. It we don't make some conscious, positive use of what we have, that's the way we could be headed.

One constructive use for this sort of imagination comes to mind in a hurry. If you and I find that some piece of SF or fantasy suggests a workable solution to a problem in our lives, we might consider *actually using* it — trying it out in the real world and seeing how it stands up.

Of course, to do that you have to live in the real world.

"Oh God," some of you are thinking, "as it we have a choice." You have more of a choice than you think; therein lies the danger of the situation. I know many people (and I bet you do too) who consider themselves hardcore "realists"; people practiced at paying their utility bills and working out budgets — who nevertheless pay no attention to world affairs, to the news, because it "doesn't interest them", or "doesn't affect them". Three quarters of the world — more than that, if you include the water — is as tacitly unreal to them as the Narnia or Demonland that they openly scorn. *More* unreal, because these people don't themselves realize that they consider it so. I know other people who are fairly well versed in what's going on on the Earth, but think that the Universe beyond it is unimportant, and don't consider it worth spending money to find out what's going on out there. This deliberate disdain for the ongoing business of Terra's great back yard sometimes (during fits of pique) makes me wish briefly for a nice little solar flare, or a supernova barely outside the lethal limit, just to bring home how "unimportant" to this planet are the things that go on in Space.

But do you see the problem? It's all too easy to go on from day to day in this world, despite interacting with the TV and the telephone and the newspaper, *and not really be living in the world* — not be affected or moved by it nearly as much as by, say, Middle-earth or Pern.

The danger's easily understandable. Some of it is simple avoidance of the overwhelmingly unpleasant. One of the best damn writers on this planet can be heard to ask again and again, in his work "Do you know how much pain there is in the world?" He's quite right to point that out; and in the face of what he's pointing at, what sane mind would *not* sometimes feel the urge to ignore it all and go read a good book (or write one)? I'm no less guilty than anyone else on this count. When the famines and the plane crashes and the unemployment and the shattered bodies of young Marines and the twenty children dying every minute of hunger all get to be too much, sometimes it's a relief to slip off to the black beaches of Darthen, or the bridge of the *Enterprise*, or the alternate New York where wizards work — places where one can at least *do* something about the problems; punt a reluctant King in the general direction of his throne, stitch up a nasty gash in the Universe, make Manhattan safe for magic.

But one must always come back. LeGuin says somewhere, "An explorer who does not come back, or send back, to tell of his discoveries, is no explorer but merely an adventurer; and his children are born in exile." On pain of being exiles in our own world, we must come back every time we leave — or transgress against our responsibility to this world, as well as (eventually) against our own sanity. And the terror of it all is that many of us not only don't come back, but aren't even here when we *are* here. Some of us (not just SF freaks, either) act as if nothing really mattered much, as if this were all a dress rehearsal; as if the world will take care of itself without us, as if everything will turn out all right somewhere else, some other time. But while in the body, there *is* no other time. *This is it.*



I can guarantee you don't want to hear that. God knows, there are days when *I* don't.

But it isn't as horrible as it sounds. Really! The other side of Harlan Ellison's cry of anguish is the question, "Do you know how much love there is in the world — and how much joy?" Even accidentally, without people consciously working for it, there's a great deal. There's room for more. We can *make* more. And this world, besides pain and joy, has something priceless that (beautiful though they are) the Outerworlds don't have. Our world is *here*. It has hard corners and sharp cutting edges and the wonderful, frightening weight of physical reality — and it's filled with the terrible beauty of finite lives moving through time and space, and interacting with them. We can *do* something with this world, those lives. They're ours to transform; and the lessons of heroism we pick up in the Otherworlds will work just as well here as they did elsewhere — though Palantiri and burning swords and wizards' reference books may be lacking. Those are all just tools, anyway — no good unless *people* use them. And people we've got. Four billion of them. One of them is reading this right now.

One of them is *writing* this, too — and this is where my moral dilemma abruptly came undone, as I started to suspect part of my own answer to the pain. If what I do best is imagine — it looks that way to me right now — and if imagination is truly the arch-survival characteristic — then what better to offer the people around me? If I do it right, through what I write I can teach the delight of dreaming for its own sake, the joy of creativity. And though I'd prefer not to be sneaky about it, I can even sucker people into dreaming if necessary . . . attaching joy so securely to imagination and exploration that my readers will never quite dissolve the connection — to their continuing good, and the world's. For where imagination wakes up, impossibility begins to come undone: in a backyard, a job, a relationship, a life.

Any use *you* make of the tool is likely to be as powerful. So what do you do? Don't ask me. That's your business. You figure it out.

Just don't be afraid of your answer, once you do. For in this context, it turns out to be perfectly all right for us all to really *want* nonexistent places and things. The strength of the desire becomes an indication of the strength of a much larger one: the hunger for what's more beautiful, more joyous, more workable than our own world . . . and the desire to bring such beauty and joy and workability to the place where we *do* live. That hunger is a basic function (and possibly *the* most basic function) of our humanity; the "best destiny", as my favorite Vulcan would put it, of that ancient survival instinct that caused our remote relatives/ancestors, once upon a time, to first pick up a bone and hit something with it, or first look up at a star and wish on it. If I were in one of my philosophical moods, I'd say that that hunger might well be a reflection of the first great act of creation, still reverberating in our bones and our brains — a smaller version of the arch-Desire that made a World of an empty void, and found Creation "good". Read it in whatever way you like. Our survival and our dreams are inextricably tangled up with one another.

So work on your dreaming. Dream as well, as responsibly, as powerfully as you can. And afterward, act accordingly.

And while you're doing that, I'll be spending most of my time upstairs. Don't expect to see too much of me. I'll drop you a hundred thousand words every now and then to let you know how things are going with the people who aren't there.

And, just in case, I'll keep my computers portable.

After all, you never can tell . . .

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# LOCUS

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Balticon 84







## Art Show And Auctions

Art show hours will be posted in the pocket program. Each piece to be displayed must be registered. Art work may be registered by the artist or by an agent designated *in writing* by the artist. Art work may be put up or taken down only by artists, agents, and the staff of the art show. Generally speaking, the policy in the art show is: look all you like, but don't touch; some of the art is fragile. Convention members may be asked to leave large bags, purses, packages, quarterstaves and so forth at the door (safely guarded); your acceptance of this reasonable and usual security precaution is appreciated.

Bid and auction policy: Bids should be written legibly on the bid sheet preferably in ink. Show your name, badge number, and bid in *whole dollar amounts*. A bid once made should not be withdrawn. Any item receiving two or more bids on Friday or Saturday will go to Auction I on Saturday evening. (Consult your pocket program for exact time and location.) Those items having the most bids will go up first. If we run out of time Saturday night, left over items will be carried over to Auction II on Sunday afternoon. Any item receiving two or more bids on Sunday will go to Auction II. Any item receiving its first and only bid on Sunday will be considered sold to that bidder and will *not* go to auction.

Common sense tells you that if you find a piece of art you positively can't live without, bid on it and go to the auction. If you have a time limitation, we're reasonable. Write down the name of the piece and artist, give it to the art show staff and ask that this piece be brought up early in the auction. To the extent possible, we will try to comply with requests of this kind, especially if you are working for Balticon in some other area.

Balticon auctions are by *voice bid only*; speak up if you want to bid. Waving an arm is considered a signal to a runner that you want to see a piece of art closer, but will not be regarded as a bid. You do not have to wait until the end of the full auction to pick up art work you have purchased. After the conclusion of bidding on each item, a few minutes will be required for us to keep our paperwork organized. Personal checks will be accepted with adequate identification ("adequate" as defined by the convention.) Master Card and Visa will be accepted for art show sales. Cash is always welcome. Help with art show set-up (Thursday evening/Friday morning) and teardown (Sunday afternoon) will be gratefully accepted. Runners are needed for both auctions; experience is not essential. Please ask at the art show, information desk or convention office if you want to help.

PLEASE: NO SMOKING, FOOD OR DRINKS IN THE ART SHOW! Thank you.

## ConStellation Fund Raising

We assume that many if not most of the members of Balticon also attended ConStellation, the 41st World Science Fiction Convention held here in Baltimore last Labor Day weekend. This was the largest SF convention ever held, and everybody seemed to think it came off pretty well. We're glad you had a good time at our Worldcon. ("Our" because as you might expect, most of BSFS worked on ConStellation.) What you may not know is that due to some miscalculations and some factors beyond our control, ConStellation had something of a financial embarrassment. We came up short of cash to cover expenses by about \$40,000.00

*We intend to pay this off.* No Worldcon has ever gone bankrupt and we don't plan to be first. BSFS got the ball rolling with a \$1,000.00 donation last winter, and individual members of the club have more than matched that. Funds and promises of support have come in from fans and pros, and already a substantial fraction of the debts have been paid off. However, more help is still needed. Your contribution is *tax deductible*; and the convention is giving away goodies to all contributors. Let's bail out ConStellation! To make a donation, or for further information, contact Peggy Rae Pavlat at: ConStellation, P.O. Box 1046, Baltimore MD 21203. Thanks.

### The Masquerade by Marty Gear

The Balticon 18 Masquerade will be held beginning at 9:00 PM on Friday, April 21, in Constellation Ballrooms A & B. In addition to "Balticon's Favorite Vampire" as host/MC, the Masquerade, this year, will feature a runway and spotlights! Award certificates will be given out *at the con* the next day, and Award Plaques will be mailed to the top prize winners in each Division. The Divisions used for judging will be: Young Fan, Novice, Journeyman, Master and ReCreation. In addition to the prizes awarded by Balticon, additional awards will be presented by Lucasfilm and by 20th Century Fox.

In addition to the Masquerade itself, there will be two special program items devoted to costuming. On Saturday, April 22 at 11:00 AM there will be a panel and slide presentation on "How to Graduate from Hall Costumes to Presentation Costumes". (There is a difference.) Our panelists for this are all Worldcon award winning costumers. Also, on Sunday, April 23 at 11:00 AM we will feature a workshop on "Costuming without a Sewing Machine". Designed primarily for those new to costuming, this program item will present tips and techniques for the use of "different" materials.

Each year the Balticon Masquerade gets better, and is usually the best attended program item at the convention. Serious costumers come from far away to participate in our Masquerade. It has been recommended by *Locus* as one of the outstanding Masquerades in the East. This year should be no exception!



About That Item at 5:00 PM Saturday . . .  
By Mark Owings

The Compton Crook/Stephen Tall Memorial Award was founded by the Baltimore Science Fiction Society in 1982 to encourage fledgling novelists in a practical manner: with money. It is named after a local writer, Compton Crook, who wrote two books under the pen name of "Stephen Tall". [Editor's note: Dr. Crook, professor emeritus of natural sciences at Towson State University, was perhaps best known in science fiction circles for the "Stardust" stories, one of which was nominated for a Hugo in 1974.]

The award is a \$500 prize to the best first novel in the overall fantasy field (meaning science fiction, fantasy, horror, etc) in the English language. The primary selection is made by a committee of five people pledged to read (or at least attempt) all the first novels in the field. (There were 47 of them this year.) These poor souls narrow the collection down to a handful, which are then voted on by the general membership of the Baltimore Science Fiction Society to produce a final winner.

It was felt that, to begin with, first novels are often unjustly overlooked by persons more concerned with predictable known quantities; secondly that first novelists are more likely than more experienced writers to be underpaid; and thirdly that *good* first novelists should especially be encouraged. It may be noted here that one 1982 novel which was not seriously considered as a finalist won the National Book Award for best paperback original. However, I feel that's their problem.

The award was created as a deliberate parallel to the Mystery Writers of America's "Edgar" award for best first novel in their field, and should be distinguished from the John Campbell Award given each year at the World Science Fiction Convention for best new *writer*, which carries no money and seems not to have prevented its nominees (and even winners) from retreating into obscurity.

The nominees for the Compton Crook Award this year are:

*Paradise*, Don Henderson  
*A Rumour of Angels*, M. Bradley Kellogg  
*Tea With the Black Dragon*, R.A. MacAvoy  
*The Helix and the Sword*, John C. McLoughlin  
*The War For Eternity*, Christopher Rowley  
*The Blackcollar*, Timothy Zahn

A Fannish Puzzle

Five starships leave Earth headed for different destinations. Each is a different type, each is painted a different color, and each, of course, has a different captain. Can you sort out all the facts about each ship? The clues below contain all the information you need.

1. The *Nychthemeron* is not going to Barnard's Star; neither is it black.
2. Captain Adeke's ship is also not going to Barnard's Star, but is black.
3. The chemical rocket is going to Tau Ceti.
4. The captain of the *Charles Boyle* has the same last letter in his name as the name of his ship.
5. Captain Nestore's ship is of multi-generation type.
6. The *Ruy Diaz de Bivar* is going to Sirius.
7. The Bussard-ram type ship is neither blue nor orange.
8. Captain Hashim is the captain of *Hypoxis*, which is also neither blue nor orange, but is not a Bussard either.
9. The white ship is going to 61 Cygni, but Captain Conniff is not its captain.
10. Captain Garcia's ship is a photon sail type but is neither black nor green.
11. Captain Conniff is also not the captain of *Antisana*.
12. The warp-drive type ship is orange.
13. The multi-generation ship is not going to either Tau Ceti or Epsilon Eridani.
14. The *Nychthemeron* is white.
15. Captain Nestore is a woman and her ship is blue.
16. The ship going to Tau Ceti is commanded by Captain Hashim.
17. The ship going to Sirius is neither a photon-sail nor a Bussard ram.
18. Captain Adeke is going to Epsilon Eridani.
19. The ship going to Tau Ceti is green.
20. The *Charles Boyle* is a Bussard ram.

## ON THE MARK

THE NEWSLETTER FOR MARK HAMILL FANS

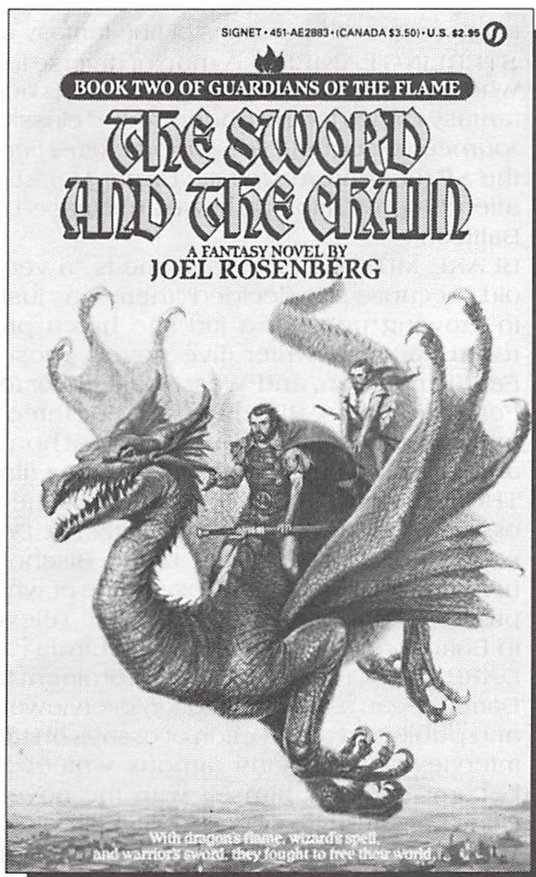


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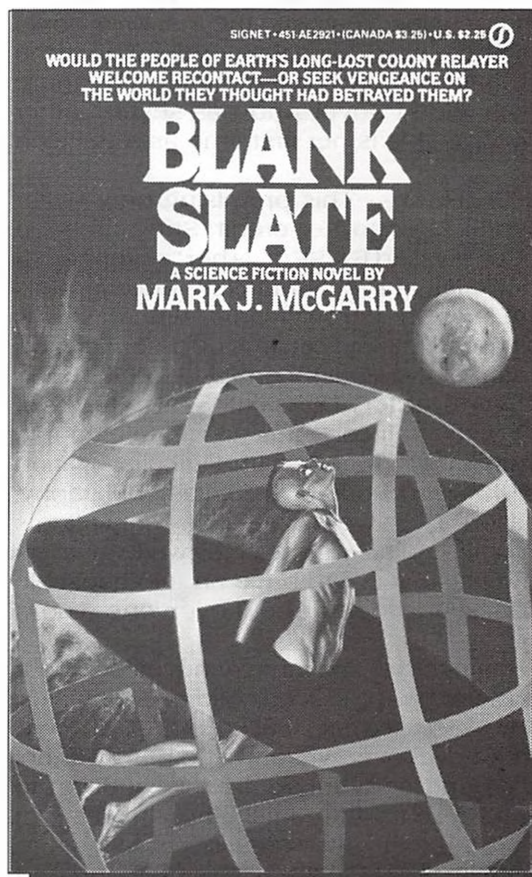


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## Other Program Participants

HAL CLEMENT — If this former Air Force pilot, Massachusetts science teacher and author of numerous classic SF novels (*Mission of Gravity, Needle*, etc.) isn't everyone's favorite fan, he ought to be, since he attends more conventions than practically anyone. He was Guest of Honor at Balticon 9 in 1975 . . .

A.C. (ANN) CRISPIN — A new figure in the pro ranks, Ms. Crispin broke into print last year with the Star Trek novel *Yesterday's Son*. She is now doing the novelization of the NBC-television movie "V", is collaborating with Andre Norton on a Witch World novel, and has several other projects in the works. This is her first time as a Balticon guest . . .

P.E. (PAT) CUNNINGHAM — This promising new writer already has several sales to her credit. She has been compared to McCaffrey, and F & SF calls her "a premier SF storyteller" for her tales of the planet New Eden and its inhabitants. She lives in Pennsylvania, where she is (conveniently) a typesetter, and came to our attention as a program participant at last year's ConStellation . . .

L. SPRAGUE & CATHERINE C. DE CAMP — The Guests of Honor at last year's Balticon, this illustrious couple have created (individually, together, and in collaboration with others) more than 800 works of SF, fantasy, biography, and other non-fiction. They were screenplay consultants on the "Conan" movie, and are also noted as work travellers and linguists. They also seem to have an inexhaustible supply of fascinating anecdotes about everyone who is anyone in SF . . .

DIANE DUANE — Since her first fantasy novel *The Door Into Fire* in 1978, Diane has produced children's fantasies, a Trek novel (*The Wounded Sky*, called by C.J. Cherryh "the best Star Trek novel ever written") and has a sequel to *Fire* due out around convention time. In addition to writing, Diane is a nurse and an artist. She is also bright & pretty & talented & a really nice person . . .

SALLY FINK & GEORGE PACZOLT — This husband and wife team of noted costumers has won numerous top awards at Worldcon masquerades and many other conventions. They have also helped run many masquerades including Balticon and ConStellation, and appear regularly in costuming programming, where they share their expertise (despite the fact that they are thus helping raise up people to compete against them) . . .

DOLL & ALEXIS GILLILAND — Are noted D.C. -area fans and Cookie Conspirators, and have great taste in Korean restaurants. Alexis wrote, and Doll directed, a play performed at Balticon 17 and at ConStellation. Alexis, artist-turned-writer, won a "Fan Artist" Hugo in 1974, and the John W. Campbell Award as "best new writer" in 1982. He is the author of the *Rosinante* trilogy and is now at work on a new series . . .

MIMI HILLER — A systems operator for the Literary Special Interests Group on Compuserve (a nationwide computer network), Ms. Hiller is coming to Balticon to organize a panel on the advanced medical applications of computers . . .

BARBI JOHNSON — An established figure in both pro and fan circles, Barbi has done covers for books by Marion Zimmer Bradley and Andre Norton, but is never too busy to contribute art work to her many fannish friends: for example, this year's Balticon name badge. She has been Art GOH at many conventions, and her upbeat drawings are popular with collectors of fine fantasy art everywhere . . .

STERLING LANIER — A man of diverse talents, Mr. Lanier, who has been an editor and sculptor, is best known in SF/fantasy circles for the underground classic fantasy *Hiero's Journey*; a sequel, *The Unforsaken Hiero*; and recently the SF/adventure *Menace Under Marswood*. He seldom attends conventions and we are pleased to have him visit Balticon . . .

BLAKE MITCHELL — Says she is "a very tall eight year old" because she decided "there was just no percentage in growing up". For a kid she has a pretty impressive record: actress, writer (five novels, most recently *Blood Feud*), musician, and West Coast editor for the magazine *Fantastic Films*. Blake has left her three dogs, five cats, and collection of ancient weapons at home in L.A. to fly in and preview a new 20th Century Fox film for us . . .

THOMAS F. MONTELEONE — Tom is the versatile author of several SF novels (most recently *The Day of the Dragonstar* in collaboration with David Bischoff); two modern horror novels, and several plays, one of which was recently produced and broadcast on Public Television. Tom lives in Baltimore with his lovely wife Linda . . .

DARRELL SCHWEITZER — A prominent figure in area SF, Darrell began as a writer/editor/interviewer for TK Graphics, and published a collection of essays on Lovecraft, and his interviews with many famous writers. Since then he's become a writer himself with the novel *The Shattered Goddess*, and a collection of his colorful short fiction, *We Are All Legends*. He continues to be active in writing, editing, and conventions . . .

DAWN WILSON — is to SF art as Grace Kelly was to movies: classic patrician elegance. A knowledgeable committee member recalls that seven or eight years ago Dawn, then unknown, displayed at Balticon a piece done in colored pencils that was "more beautiful than 80% of the paintings in the show". The promise of that young amateur has been fulfilled in an artist on the verge of becoming a major professional name. She has been commissioned by Tor to do the covers on Jack Chalker's new series *Soul Rider* . . .

VICKI WYMAN — Is one of the most popular East Coast artists. She utilizes several media, and her work is distinctive, energetic, and full of life and warmth. She spans the gamut from flutterkitties to cheerfully sexy pictures with equal dexterity. Last year Vicki did a sculpture on commission for the Balticon committee; recently, we are pleased to hear, she has been commissioned to do the cover for an upcoming Marion Zimmer Bradley novel . . .



**MISSING FACES** — Two good friends of Balticon, C.J. CHERRYH and SOMTOW SUCHARITKUL, decided it was only fair this year to give equal time to some of the other conventions held on Easter weekend. We have every expectation that Somtow and Carolyn will come back to Balticon some time in the future . . . JACK CHALKER decided not to attend this year . . . In order to meet a deadline, we had to go to print before it became clear whether DAVID HARTWELL would be able to come to Balticon. He wanted to, but was not certain if he could arrange to be here. Check your pocket program for updates . . . Yes, we still love CLAM CHOWDER, and we hope they will perform at a future Balticon. We just wanted to do something different this year . . .

### Participants in Gaming Programming

**DANA CARSON** — Was one of the poor unfortunates who helped put the gaming panels together. He has role played since September 1975, and contributed to "The Wild Hunt" and "Alarums and Excursions". He claims to be a computer programmer in mundane life, and lives in Baltimore with his wife Melinda. They have a daughter, Gwendolyn, born in January 1984 . . .

**REGINA COHEN** — Has been playing D & D since 1974, and has playtested "Lands of Adventure", "Other Suns", "Land of the Rising Sun", and "Dragonrider of Pern". She was a committee member and department head at ConStellation, the 1983 World Science Fiction Convention. In mundane life she is a computer programmer and systems designer . . .

**DICK ENEY** — Has been a fan since 1942, when he came across a copy of "Astounding" in a third grade paper drive. He has been into D & D since 1976. Dick has been named Fan Guest of Honor at L.A. Con II, the 1984 Worldcon . . .

**JOHN HOWARD** — Has been role playing for 12 years, and has had extensive experience at playtesting games and running tournaments . . .

**JOHN T. SAPIENZA JR.** — Is an attorney who is also an associate editor for "Different Worlds" magazine. He has been involved in the preparation of "Runequest", "A D & D", and other games, and writes regularly for both prozines and fanzines . . .

**PAUL WATERS** — Was one of the people who assembled the gaming panels, and has been playing assorted role playing games since September 1975. Paul has contributed to "Alarums and Excursions" off and on since issue 25 . . .

**LEW WOLKOFF** — has been playing D & D and related games since November 1975, and has been a contributor to "Alarums and Excursions" since issue 10. (The magazine is now into the early 100's.) Among other things, he has designed an "Illuminati" game variant, in which the players attempt to take over a Worldcon bid. This is indicative of the fact that Lew is involved in the Philadelphia 1986 Worldcon bid. He also plays the dread thief "Gongsho".

### On Coping With Professionals

Writers, editors, and artists are people too. (Well, mostly.) We're sure that all of our guests will be happy to talk with you — if you pick the write moment, and keep in mind that pros tend to be busier at conventions than most fans. With this in mind, we offer some suggestions on dealing with writers and other guests.

Be polite. Don't fawn, don't be sycophantic; but as they taught in the Army, courtesy works both ways. If you go up to someone and say, "Hey, I thought your last book was really [deleted]", that person has every right to treat you like the plague. It also reflects badly on the convention. It's not a bad idea to think up in advance something interesting to say or a question to ask. Asking for an autograph is one way to break the ice. (Have the book ready and bring your own pen.)

Some good times to approach a professional are: *After* a program item or reading (in which case the event automatically gives you something to talk about); if the pro is not visibly doing anything, e.g., looking around the dealers' room or art show like any other fan; in the con suite or at a private party.

Some bad moments to approach a professional might be: Immediately *before* a program event; while the pro is having dinner (or any other meal); when two or more professionals are talking with each other. (You'd be surprised at the amount of business that gets done at conventions — book contracts, editorial consultations, collaborations.)

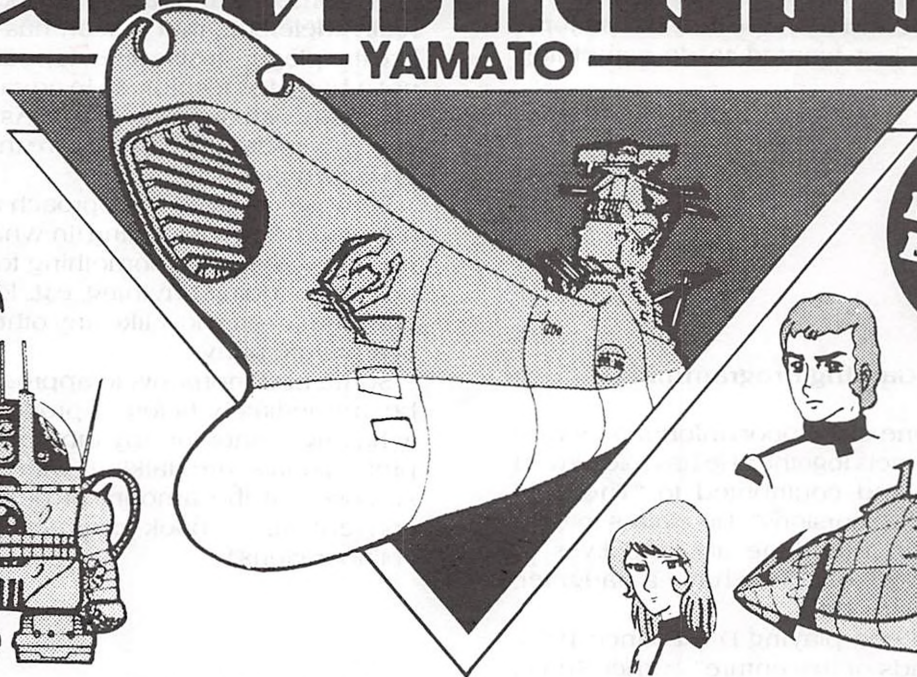
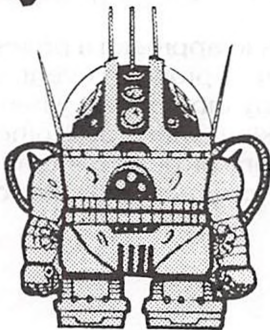
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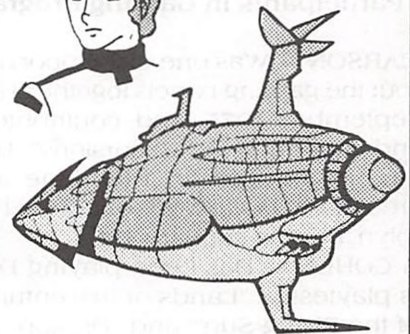


# ENTER THE WORLD OF STAR BLAZERS

— YAMATO —

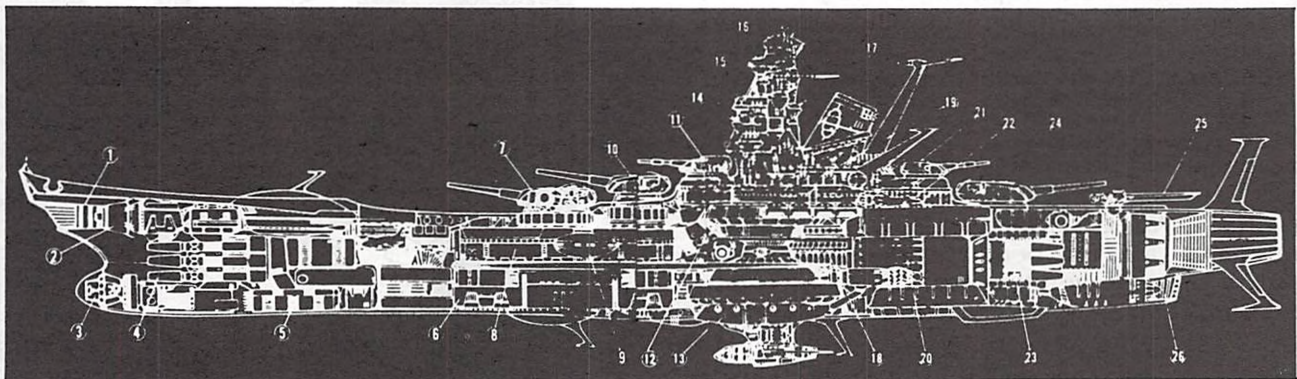


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### The Life And Times Of Robin Wood by Rhymer

Robin Wood was born last year at Boskone 1983. (She says this isn't true, but I keep this family's records, and I should know.) She fell out of the sky borne on the winds from a mystical land in the far east, and landed right in the heart of her family, which had been waiting for her all this time. We were getting a little impatient, but she was worth the wait.

Robin tells me that she was actually born into the Clinkenbeard family on November 24, 1953; that she is the middle child of three daughters; and that her mother named her Jane. I find all this a little difficult to believe. Anyone with an array of talents like Robin's would surely have arranged to be the eldest, or picked a birthday other than Thanksgiving out of the whole range of Sagittarius. Her childhood hobbies seem to have been art and contracting serious illnesses, and though she has had no formal training in either, she has pursued them with equal fervor through most of her life. At a slightly more advanced age (about 4) she added reading to that list, and the background for fandom was established.

After awhile Robin found herself at Michigan State University, where she discovered a new hobby — changing majors. In her grand attempt to learn everything there is to know, she encountered fandom in the form of the syndicated, cut-to-ribbons Star Trek reruns and the good people who forced her to watch them. I'm not sure exactly how they found her, but she must have been pretty hard to miss. For one thing, Robin is nearly 6 feet tall. Also, I'd be willing to bet she was the only person on campus who was in the habit of wearing glasses-and-cane for the blind while riding a half-ton bicycle with no steering down a two-inch bike path whilst screaming, "No brakes! No brakes!" at pedestrians. I would have noticed her... and I don't see how anyone could have resisted her. Anyway, she was noticed, and introduced to Star Trek, fandom, and the idea of producing free artwork for fanzines.

Robin's basically orthodox and mundane family didn't seem too pleased with this outpouring of art. It wasn't, after all, "Fine Art" — it was merely illustration. They also had things to say about the subject matter. Things like "Satanic" and "pornographic". In fact, they went so far as to suggest that she stop producing it at all. When it became clear that she would not, they told her the least she could do was to stop besmirching the good family name of Clinkenbeard. Since being born female had made her fantasy of growing a long beard and tying bells into it somewhat hard to realize, she decided to part with the name. One short conference later, she and her friends came up with the name of "Robin Wood" — a name that suits her so well I don't know how she managed so long without it...

Sometime later her family put its collective foot down and decided there would be no more changing majors. So Robin lost her chance to go into Forestry. She let school with a new name, a degree in special education for the blind, and more credits than you could possibly imagine, and went off to teach visually impaired children in Kentucky.

In Kentucky she discovered starvation, the SCA, the pagan movement, fantasy gaming, and a wereduck. The wereduck, of course, was Woody. Robin tells me that the first time she saw him he was at the end of a long table behind a gaming screen. He was gobbling munchies with one hand and killing off characters at a great rate. She took one look, and had to have him. (Personally, I think it was recognition. They are so obviously a perfect couple that they could use the collective "I" instead of the collective "we".) After a lengthy whirlwind courtship consisting of one date and hundreds of proposals, Woody married Robin and thereby saved her from a life of innocence. (Mrs. Morgan Woodward — gee, that is better than Clinkenbeard.)

The Army caused Robin and Woody to relocate in Maryland, where Robin quickly found that no one in the area wanted to hire a teacher who was likely to be sent overseas at a moment's notice. So she devoted herself to painting, Woody, teaching herself to play the harp, and not turning green. And her paintings were really starting to take off. So, just at the height of her popularity, Robin and Woody were sent into exile. (Well, the Army called it a transfer to Okinawa, but we know better.)

Robin does not speak of Okinawa with kindness. Sometimes not even with coherency. Most of her time was spent waiting for mail with an incredible time lag. But she did send back some wonderful paintings that were just slightly tinged with the effects of her exile — ask her about the invisible gekko or the ninja mice. She also discovered irrefutable proof of continental drift when she found that the natives were driving northern parts of the island south in trucks.

Just before Christmas last year they let them come home, and I can't tell you how glad we all are to have them back. Now you have chosen to honor her as guest artist here on her home turf. Don't waste this chance to get to know her — ask her about her paintings, get her to play the harp for you, or just get her to talk. Just don't expect to be able to get her to shut up... after all, for three years she had hardly anyone to speak English to!





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**The Baltimore Science Fiction Society**  
**by Mark Owings**

If you wondered where it came from, Balticon is put on every year by the Baltimore Science Fiction Society, and this is by no means all we do. We have a real year-round clubhouse at 2233 St. Paul Street in Baltimore, where we have business meetings at 8:30 PM on the second Saturday of each month. We also have riotous parties on the fourth Saturday. (Editor's note: "Riotous" is a matter of interpretation. Also, parties are not always at the clubhouse. It would be prudent to call ahead.)

On Tuesday nights we have game sessions at the clubhouse, and on Wednesdays we show movies starting at 8:00 PM. Thursday evenings are devoted to filksinging sessions.

We can be reached year-round at Box 686, Baltimore MD 21203, or by telephone at (301) 889-3290, where our answering machine is on 24-hour duty. Sometimes you can get real people, especially on the nights noted above. There are various other movies and speakers scattered around the year also.

We had 73 members of various sorts and conditions at the last census, but we are always looking for able workhorses, since most of us are not getting any younger. (Some, we're not sure about.) Regular membership involves showing up at two business meetings, then paying dues. (Amount varies since we run on a fiscal year basis.) For \$3.00 a year you can get all our newsletters, our fanzine, announcements of anything else we're up to, but nothing else; this is associate membership. We even have life membership, which means you never get away from us. (One fellow tried by moving to Chicago, but he came to Balticon last year anyway.)

**Planning Ahead**  
**by David M. Shea**

Is there some artist or author you think ought to be invited to a future Balticon? Is there some event or panel you would like to see that we haven't done? Let us know! Write or call us (see the above article); better yet, attend a few meetings. You don't have to live in the immediate Baltimore area to become a member of BSFS. Running a large regional convention is a year-round operation, and planning for Balticon 19 is already under way. There's a lot of work to be done, and the committee consists in large part of whomever will show up, put in the time, and accept the responsibility to see that things get done. We want and need new people to bring in new talents and new perspectives, to keep Balticon fresh and interesting. The next business meeting is in three weeks on Saturday, May 12th. If you think Balticon can be improved, show up and help us do it!

**Of Balticon and Fantasy Role Playing;  
Of Cabbages and Kings**  
**by Paul Waters**

Balticon has long been known to have excellent programming; Balticon has also been known to have a very good and varied gaming schedule. Until this year these two have always been at least one room apart. Until this year. Due to a unfortunate comment ("Why don't you have any gaming programming?" to which the reply was "OK, what can you come up with?") this year Balticon now has a gaming program. Roleplaying and Culture Generation were chosen because these are the two big factors that most differentiate the hack and slash from true role playing. In order to put together a competent and entertaining panel in each of these areas, no expense was spared to persuade, cajole, or outright blackmail some of the most prominent names in east coast roleplaying to take part. (I personally have the long-distance bills to prove the "no expense" part). All the people on the panels are outstanding roleplayers and game/world designers. Anyone who has any interest in Roleplaying is encouraged to drop by; all of us involved feel that there will be something there to help you turn your games into a more entertaining place to encounter and watch. As for cabbages and kings: who knows? Maybe next year?



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**Monotheism And The Earth Mother:  
Myth As Philosophy In Parke Godwin's *Firelord*  
by Dr. Harold Bob**

When Abraham broke the old idols it was symbolic of a new idea. The Jewish people cherished this idea of one god so great that his name could not be uttered. But while God is perfect, man is not. When humankind speaks of the Lord and names him within, it is within a cultural context. So the same God can take on many "masks" or names, and believers often see the name they use as the only "true" one. In time the God of Abraham travelled across Europe under the Christian banner, and across North Africa and into Spain under the name of Allah; and these two great cultures came to war for centuries over how to name and pray to God.

In Britain polytheism flourished longer than in the Middle East. Earth was still seen as a goddess and the old cultures and myths still flourished. When Christianity came to Britain it opposed not a similar idea adorned with a different "mask", but a remarkably different idea; and at that time a new tension and synthesis began philosophically, and a new era was born.

Joseph Campbell asserted that the tension between these concepts has accounted for a great deal of the vitality and creativeness in Western thought. (I refer those with time and interest to *The Masks of God*, especially "Creative Mythology".) It is no surprise that such a period is filled with myths of heroism and great deeds; and in ages of chaos where the air is filled with the sounds of impending doom and darkness we may look back to those other times when heroes walked on the Earth.

As movies filled with doom filter through the air waves (this writing comes one week after the showing of *The Day After*), it is no wonder that many authors are retelling the legend of Arthur. Parke Godwin's *Firelord* stands out above the other theme-and-variations.

Godwin's *Firelord* is heroic fantasy and so belongs in our genre; but it deserves a place as well with existential literature of a high order. From the opening passages of the book Godwin, much as Vidal in *Creation*, places Dignity in its proper place: "Be damned, it's a tedious bore." It is to be a world where minds and bodies enter the stage together; and legends are demystified to the point that we could learn from them, if only we had an evening to share over an ethanolic brew.

Like a character from a Camus novel, Arthur is placed in an absurd world, where the value in one's life is what one makes of it; yet something so created by man rather than divine hands will last so long as Sisyphus' rock stays atop the pile. "I rode with no helmet or armor, in ragged linen shirt and filthy trousers spotted with blood and blackened with smoke. That was how the people of Britain, for whom all the horrors were done, would accept me. Their king, their executioner, their chosen sacrifice."

If Godwin's tale is not exactly how it happened in this cycle of the universe, it certainly must have been so once, or perhaps will be so in the future... or perhaps both. Once again we may face a time of fear and chaos and conflicting ideas when we need a man who can raise a sword from the stone.





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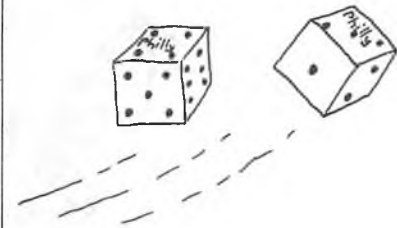
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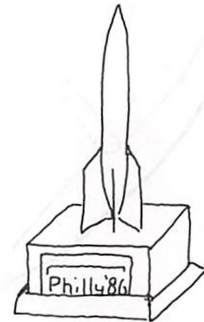
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**Twonk! You're A Pumpkin**  
by E.B. Frohvet

Jules Verne was science fiction's kindly old grandfather. H.G. Wells was the disgruntled uncle nobody spoke to. Edgar Allan Poe was the poor mad cousin who hid in the attic.

Hugo Gernsback was science fiction's obstetrician. And C.L. Moore was its fairy godmother.

She took her magic wand and went, "twonk!" and changed the course of science fiction forever. All by herself. With *one* story. It was called "Shambleau", and it was published in the November 1933 issue of *Weird Tales*.

In order to understand the impact of this one story, one must consider the state of SF in 1933. The genre was then commonly called "scientifiction"; the term "sci-fi" hadn't even been coined yet, let alone discredited. The medium wasn't called "pulp" for nothing. Yes, there was some good stuff being written; but consider: Heinlein, de Camp and Asimov were aspiring young writers; Clement and Bradbury and Pohl were teen-agers; most of today's writers were children, or hadn't even been born yet. Most of the science fiction being published was formula stuff: bad imitations of *The Island of Dr. Moreau*; someone's clunky late-Victorian guesses of what 1960's technology might be like; at best, ripsnorting space opera of the Flash Gordon/Buck Rogers variety. At worst, stories in which the entire piece was a vehicle to set up one outrageous pun.

All of these varieties are still to be found today, of course, and in their better moments are still capable of offering some light diversion (consider "Star Wars", essentially a 1930-ish story gussied up with 1980-ish special effects). For the most part, however, these types have been relegated to the lesser fanzines. The one thing 1933 SF stories had in common was a pervading greyness. Generally intentionally, they lacked emotional tone. The baddies were bad for no discernible reason save to contrast with the good guys; and the good guys (invariably

male, usually with snappy macho Anglo-Saxon names: "Flash" Gordon) always defeated the bad guys with little effort and less thought. Heroes never had doubts, or crises of faith, or ethical dilemmas (nor wet dreams, no matter how many months they spent alone in space). The vast majority of 1933 SF stories are, to the modern reader, sadly dated.

"Shambleau" changed everything. It is a tightly plotted and thoroughly plausible story, yes; but more important, it is painted in vivid if controlled strokes of color. It is deeply and humanly involving. "Shambleau" exudes an unmistakable sexual tension; and it shows a biting psychological insight: the true horror is not in the creature, but in the response and desire it evokes in Smith's deepest self, and in that agonizing moment of doubt at the end. It is a story as real and alive today as it was 51 years ago.

No contemporary story has matched the impact "Shambleau" had in 1933. (John Varley's "The Persistence of Vision" probably comes closest; and while I would not claim "Vision" to be a direct lineal descendant of "Shambleau", I could make an argument for their being at least distantly cognate.) Of course, no revolution is accomplished without some disruption. Many readers of *Weird Tales* were puzzled or offended by the story, and wrote the magazine in no uncertain terms to say so: "This isn't what I want to read" was a persistent theme. Some went so far as to cancel their subscriptions in protest. One is reminded of the Luddites, or perhaps those physicists of the generation before Einstein; those who are unable to comprehend or accept a major alteration of their universe will inevitably be consigned to the rubbish heap of history.

Had C.L. Moore never written another story than "Shambleau" her place in science fiction history would be secure. However, she went on to write a number of other works (either individually or in collaboration with Henry Kuttner), many of which were startlingly original and broke new ground in other areas. "Black God's Kiss" (1934), the first of the Jirel stories, was revolutionary in focussing on a female character who was not merely a vehicle for a male character to display his heroic plumage, but a ferociously independent arbiter of her own destiny. The story also has much to say about self-knowledge and the ongoing battle of the sexes. "No Woman Born" (1944) first explored the moral and personal consequences of the human/robot/computer interface, opening a vein which has been mined by generations of subsequent SF writers (Delany, Varley, McCaffrey to name a few of the more conspicuous). (Editor's note: The picture "Robot Dancer" on page 40 was also inspired by this story.) "Fruit of Knowledge" (1940) explored the roles of myth, allegory, and (yes, there it is again) sex in religion — an extremely daring concept for the time. Yet all of these and many more, were not mere tendentious lectures, but were (and remain) first and foremost, exciting and eminently readable stories. The fact that Miss Moore had something to say, and said it well, transcends "mere" science fiction and elevates her writing to the level of universality on which all superior fiction resides.

C.L. Moore was an original, one of a kind; and her mark on the history of our genre will never be erased. So if she should tap you on the shoulder with her wand and say, "Twonk! You're a pumpkin", I would advise you to exercise extreme caution, lest someone attempt to make you into a pie. You don't believe she's a magician? Just look what she did to science fiction . . .



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## THREE

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**EDITORIAL: A Little "Squelch" In The Right Places**  
by David M. Shea

There's a nice little short story by Zenna Henderson ("J-Line To Nowhere") during the course of which the heroine, in a moment of pique, deals with an obnoxious computer terminal by emptying into its slots and orifices an entire container of a somewhat slushy beverage aptly called "Squelch". Miss Henderson was, of course, making a point by gentle exaggeration; and the editor does not endorse random violence towards computers. Yet the point is worth making.

Let it not be said that the editor is opposed to or fearful of computers. In his time he has used a variety of small computers, and found them to be — within their limitations — highly useful devices. Neither has he horror stories to tell of multi-thousand-dollar telephone bills, or bizarre dunning letters about long-paid charges. However, the "operative words" in this article (as the editor's English professor was wont to say) are: "within their limitations", and "useful devices".

A computer is a *device*. It is a *thing*. No matter what terminally-cutesy (no pun originally intended) nickname the manufacturers' ad agency has stuck on it, no matter what cute little gestures some human has written into its program in the attempt to give the (usually poor) semblance of a personality, the computer has neither mind nor wit, nor capability beyond what it has been given. The limit of intelligence of the finest computer is that it knows the difference between "one" and "zero"; and that only because it has been told.

The computer remains, then, a tool: a sort of mental screwdriver, if you will. Like a screwdriver, it has a certain degree of flexibility which enables it to render service in a variety of situations. It is only fair to point out that if you can't assemble a cabinet with an Apple II, neither can you balance the checkbook with a Phillips head. Of course, one must apply the correct tool for the job (a matter of human judgement) and use it properly; yet it is the job that matters, not the tool. The important thing is that the checkbook be balanced, or the cabinet assembled as the case may be.

One of Balticon's panels this year will focus on the ways in which human ingenuity has devised new and remarkable computer aided techniques to assist paralyzed and blind persons. We join in applauding these worthy achievements. Yet the editor finds disquieting an increasing, even obsessive tendency in certain circles to regard the computer as a sort of godlike superbeing which can resolve all our difficulties; with the corollary that anyone who does not share this view is a hopelessly antiquated cave-dweller and unworthy of notice. Some problems are, in the last analysis, not quantifiable. Hamlet's dilemma would be no clearer if he had an IBM PC; nor will Texas Instruments give us the definitive answer on the morality of abortion, or lasting peace in the Middle East.

For those who wish to do so, let them continue to converse of "bits" and "bytes" and K's and other mysterious things, and find new ways of juggling data through their \$2000-plus systems; if the editor suspects they could achieve much the same results with a \$1.95 pocket note-

book and a Bic ballpoint, he will hereafter keep his opinion to himself. A preference for the old-fashioned kind of data-storage-and-accessing system (it's called a "book") is, after all, no more than a matter of taste; and of taste there is no disputing. Data processing is a fine and useful thing, so long as it is the date which remain important, and not the process. Just remember: we can always find some more Squelch.



*"The Right Place to Scratch"*



# AUTOGRAPHS



*[The text in this section is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a series of paragraphs or a list of entries, but the characters are too light to be transcribed accurately.]*



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