



Miller

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presents...

Con†Stellation VII Centaurus

21 - 23 October 1988

Huntsville Hilton

Huntsville, Alabama

Guest of Honor

John Varley

Master of Ceremonies

Algis Budrys

Artist Guest of Honor

**Todd Cameron
Hamilton**

Fan Guest of Honor

Ricia Mainhardt

Acknowledgements

The committee would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance with Con†Stellation VII: Lee Stanford for his help with the dances; Book Villa, Prometheus Books and Comics, and Future Combat Simulations for supplying prizes for the gaming tournaments; Oh Henry's Video Station (2006 Oakwood) and Berry's Video Movies (2315-C Jordan Lane) for supplying movies for the Video Room; S.O.R.D. and H.A.G.A.R. for supplying game masters for the gaming tournaments; and Sound Distributors (3204 University Drive) for supplying the equipment for the Video Room.

John Varley

by P. J. Beese

Did you miss the sixties? Too young? Too out of it? In another country? Well, one of our guests did not. He was in them. All the way in them.

John Varley was then, and is now, a very busy man. Member of a bizarre octopus cult back then, he has recently taken time off from that and writing award winning books and short stories to do a screenplay... based, of course, on his book *Millennium*.

That means he was up in Toronto, taking in the sights, most notably Cheryl Ladd, and keeping an eye on things around the set in general, making certain the dead didn't shuffle away when they were supposed to be, well, dead.

Refusing to consider a word processor (see his story "Unpro-

cessed Word") he really does all of his writing on an archaic typewriter, his only concession to the computer age being the use of continuous feed paper.*

A good ole Texas boy, you can still catch a little of the drawl in his slow speech, even though he's lived in Oregon for a number of years now. I guess there's some truth to the rumor that they grow everything bigger in Texas. John is a whopping 6'6", a real gentle giant.

And, in spite of his imposing size, he's one of the nicest people you'll ever encounter. Don't be afraid to talk to him. Just step right up and ask to see his tattoo. He'll take it from there.

* Sorry, John. These words have been processed.

John Varley: Recommended Reading

by Richard Gilliam

Literature is subjective. No one can, with any credibility, proclaim a specific work to be the best ever written. Most people are wise enough to avoid pointless absolutes. As life changes a person, so change the tastes of a person. At best, the only credible personal statement that can be made is that as of today this story is a person's favorite, but that doesn't mean that the opinion will hold on other days.

People share their opinions with others in an attempt to validate their own tastes. For readers of science fiction, this often means convincing some skeptic that our favorite form of reading isn't all space-ships and bug-eyed monsters. As such, we have works we recommend to others. This seems to me to be the true test of what constitutes a favorite story. It is the one story which you are proudest to recommend, the one story you would most like others to read. The story by which you shout "Hey! Look at this! Screw the narrow-minded literary establishment! This is where literature is happening!" Only you don't have to shout, because the story you recommend will do that for you.

It is by this test I recommend to you the writing of John Varley in general, and his story "The Persistence of Vision" in particular as the one story, over the years, I have most often recommended to others.

And what is the most frequent reaction non-sf readers have to the story? Almost without exception everyone comments what a great story it is (and most of them actually mean it), and then they add one other comment — "But, of course, it isn't science fiction." While science fiction readers have, for years, struggled to define the term, to their discredit mundanes have a much easier time with their definition. If it's worthwhile, it isn't science fiction.

That problem, at least insofar as "Persistence" is concerned, should have been solved when it was included by Donald Wollheim in his "Annual World's Best SF" series, except that in the introduction to the story Wollheim proclaimed that he didn't consider the story to be sf.

Even stranger results can occur when you recommend books to other fans. I once loaned the short story collection *The Persistence of Vision* to a pulp magazine collector who loved every story in the collection except the title story. He didn't think it was sf either.

All this notwithstanding, at the 1979 World Science Fiction Convention "The Persistence of Vision" was honored as the Best Novella. John repeated with Hugos in 1982 for Best Short Story, "The Pusher," and in 1985, again in the novella category, for "PRESS ENTER ■." Both of the latter

John Varley

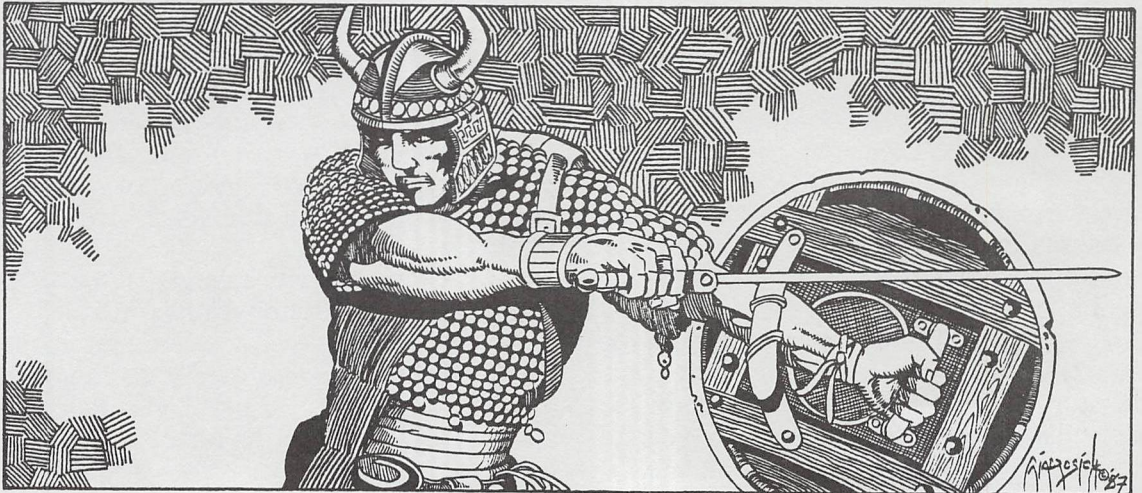
stories appeared in John's 1986 collection *Blue Champaign*, which contained some terrific illustrations by our Artist Guest of Honor Todd Cameron Hamilton and which is dedicated to our Fan Guest of Honor Ricia Mainhardt.

Recent years have seen John, who lives in Eugene, Oregon, working more and more in Hollywood. His "Overdrawn at the Memory Bank" was filmed and has been shown on PBS. It is available on videotape. His novel *Millennium*, for which John wrote the screenplay, was recently filmed and is in post-production awaiting release. The drawback to this success is that it has slowed the output of new Varley fiction available to be read.

A couple of interesting notes about *Millennium*. When *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* was launched, the publishers wanted the strongest possible story content for the first issue. They chose to include two stories by John Varley. Ironically, when the publishers opted to disguise one of the stories with a pseudonym, it was

that story, "Air Raid," that made the greatest impact of any story published in that issue. "Air Raid" was expanded into *Millennium*, which is generally regarded as one of the finest time travel novels ever written. Recognizing the heritage of time travel stories, the chapter titles for *Millennium* are the titles of classics in the field, stories such as "The Time Machine," "Behold the Man," and "A Sound of Thunder."

Huntsville fandom first met John Varley in 1986 when he visited on his way to Atlanta for a convention. As is befitting a science fiction writer, he stayed on the grounds of the Space and Rocket Center in a travel trailer he had driven from his native Texas. Elaine Hinman hosted a party on behalf of NASFA where John was a popular hit. The club came to a quick consensus that we should invite John to be ConfStellation VII's Guest of Honor. We are pleased John accepted. We think you will be pleased when you meet John Varley here at ConfStellation VII.



A. J. Budrys: An Appreciation

by T. K. F. Weisskopf

A. J. Budrys is the coolest person I've ever known. He is at home in every situation, and I've seen him and set him some pretty strange ones. He is suave in an age when suave has degenerated to the merely slick. He is extremely well read, broad of interest and mind, and probably knows more about the art form that is science fiction than anybody else alive today. (It is my own form of rebellion that I refuse to use the all-encompassing term "speculative fiction" as he does.) A. J. also has the common touch. By this I mean that he does not talk down to you, he always strives to make one feel comfortable and worthy of attention. This is the man who, after all, gave Chicago the Miss Pickle

contest, who drove race cars for a while, and marketed trucks after that; the man who worked his way through college writing papers for others less gifted than himself. This is a man who has spent a lot of time in a lot of bars, time listening to people and studying how they tick. Very little phases him, yet he retains the capacity for delight. And that's who you'll meet if you go down to the bar, or up to the Writer's of the Future suite: a canny, intriguing person.

Then there's the A. J. you can encounter on the written page. Here his intelligent elegance shines forth. His command of the language is awe-inspiring, whether he is writing fiction or criticism. Although he is



A. J. Budrys

gentler in person, he makes very few concessions to a lazy audience in his writings. He will take you through leaps of intuition that can be startlingly hard to wrap your mind around, but which at the end of the exercise, you discover were very much worth the effort expended. And when all is revealed, the construction he has wrought — be it of logic or that unnameable something that makes a story work — is beautiful to behold. So, indeed, if you haven't read *Who?* or *Rogue Moon* or *Michaelmas* or even a book that has a special place in my heart, though I'm not sure quite why, *The Amsirs and the Iron Thorn*, then find them and do. Even better read the short works collected in *Budrys Inferno*. Then you'll know.

For his criticism you can find an interesting sample collected in *Benchmarks* published by the Southern Illinois University Press; or of course check out *F&SF* every month. And you will see why any work that attempts to deal with sf must refer to Budrys (they might not agree, but they all make certain to at least prove that they've read his opinion!). I discovered this fact when I went to design my own course in sf two years

ago: every reference book I consulted had him in the index! So I brought A. J. in to guest lecture — let the master speak to the masses himself, I figured. So have many others. A. J. is sought as a teacher of writers; he's been an instructor for many years at Clarion, most recently spent a semester at Harvard, and in the last several years he has been masterminding the Writer's of the Future workshops.

Now, for the past five years or so A. J. has been visiting us at convention after convention letting us know about the Writers of the Future program. It began as a contest to encourage new writers and has grown into a world-wide phenomenon. It's spawned four bestselling anthologies edited by A. J. and containing, aside from an impressive display of new talented authors, words of wisdom from A. J. and others that can not be missed by an aspiring writer. The good this contest has done is incalculable, but the best thing it did was bring A. J. back to the forefront of the sf community, where he belongs.

So take advantage of him while he's at this con, bask in his presence. And get him to sing — he's got a lovely voice.

Schedule of Events

FRIDAY

- 12:00N Open Registration (Lobby), Game Rooms (Von Braun Room and Grand Salon C), and Con Suite (Mill Town and Hunt Rooms, and Room 137). Art Show (Heritage Ballroom I) open to artists. Dealers Room (Heritage Ballroom II & III) open to dealers.
- 3:00P Video Room Opens Twickenham Room
- 4:00P Art Show Opens.....Heritage I
Dealers Room OpensHeritage II
- 6:30P Opening CeremoniesGrand Salon B
- 7:00P Panel: A Retrospective on NOLACON. (Ricia Mainhardt, Mike Kennedy, and others discuss this year's Worldcon.)...Grand Salon B
- 8:00P Special Presentation: Skepticism — Dr. Mark Durm takes on Psychic Phenomena, etc.....Grand Salon B
- 9:00P Special Presentation: Dr. H. John Caulfield on "Hell and the Hologram"Grand Salon B
Close Art Show and Dealers Room
- 11:00P Close Registration
- 11:30P Dance.....Grand Salon A & B
- 2:00A Close Video Room

SATURDAY

- 9:00A Registration Opens..... Lobby
Video Room Opens Twickenham Room
Art Show open to artists, Dealers Room open to dealers
- 10:00A Readings: The local Science Fiction Writers group tries out their best on you.....Grand Salon B
Miniatures Painting Workshop. (The Infamous Tish).....Grand Salon A
Art Show Opens.....Heritage I
Dealers Room OpensHeritage II
- 11:30A An hour with Todd Cameron Hamilton.....Grand Salon B

- 12:30P Panel: What every new writer should know. (A. J. Budrys, Ricia Mainhardt, Julius Schwartz, T. K. F. Weisskopf).....Grand Salon B
- 1:00P Panel: Are there too many Science Fiction conventions? (Patrick Molloy, Gary Robe, "Uncle Timmy" Bolgeo)Grand Salon A
- 1:30P Special Feature: The making of the movie *Millennium*. (John Varley).....Grand Salon B
- 2:00P Artist Workshop — bring your own materials to participate, or just come to watch and chat. (Todd Cameron Hamilton, etc.)...Grand Salon A
- 3:00P An hour with A. J. BudrysGrand Salon B
- 4:00P Panel: Those were the good old days. (Rusty Hevelin, Julius Schwartz, Gene Wolfe).....Grand Salon B
- 5:00P Guests of Honor Speeches.....Grand Salon B
- 6:00P Close Art Show and Registration
- 7:00P Art AuctionGrand Salon B
Close Dealers Room
- 8:00P Close Tournament Game Room for MasqueradeGrand Salon C
- 9:00P Masquerade.....Grand Salon A & B
- 11:00P Son of DanceGrand Salon A & B
Reopen Tournament Game Room.....Grand Salon C
- 2:00A Close Video Room

SUNDAY

- 9:00A Video Room Opens Twickenham Room
- 10:00A Art Show Opens.....Heritage I
Dealers Room OpensHeritage II
- 11:00A Panel: Does Fandom really differ from region to region? (Ricia Mainhardt, Ken Moore, Richard Gilliam, Sue Toker).....Grand Salon B
- 12:00N Panel: Why write for a Living? (John Varley, A. J. Budrys, Todd Cameron Hamilton, Gene Wolfe).....Grand Salon B
- 1:00P Close Art Show — Artists must be checked out by 3:00P
- 2:00P Close Dealers Room — Dealers must be out by 4:00P
- 3:00P Close Video Room

Todd Cameron Hamilton

by P. J. Beese

If there is a Renaissance man alive today, it has to be Todd Cameron Hamilton. Having built his excellent reputation at a young age as a national award-winning illustrator, he's recently moved into the field of authoring. His first book recently on the stands, his second will be available in approximately one year.

But his list of successes doesn't end there. He is also a sculptor with pieces in major corporate collections, a puppeteer of the highest order, and a metalsmith, his jewelry designs having won numerous awards.

Chicago born and raised, it is still the city of his choice, though he

enjoys travel when his busy schedule permits. Recently having spent time in Ireland with Anne McCaffrey, his drawings of her dragons meet with her approval, and will be appearing soon in print.

Todd is willing to do the kinds of research for his work that frightens off most people, and occasionally leads to bizarre experiments like stuffing pillows up the back of shirts to create a hump for a portrait of a hunchback. And when he says he wants to know everything, it is not a joke. So if Todd begins to study you closely, don't be put off. Humor him. There's something interesting about you.

Ricia Mainhardt

by P. J. Beese

Don't let that long, luscious golden hair fool you. Ricia is no dipsy blond. Inside that beautiful head rests the brain of a research scientist with multiple degrees in audiology. A long way from research scientist to successful literary agent, you say? Well, yes. And it's by way of just about every town in the United States.

Which means, if you have to call Ricia, expect to get an answering machine. She'll get back to you as soon as she climbs off the jet. You're as likely to hear from her from Frankfurt, Germany, San Fransisco, or Poland (yes! She's leaving this

fall!) as from New York. Those new phones they've just installed in the planes must have been designed with her in mind.

A connoisseur of fine chocolate, and maker of the most wonderful truffles this side of heaven, she makes friends very easily. Even the most reticent of folks tend to melt when they get a whiff of her liquor-spiced specialties.

Now, I don't know if she's got a package of truffles with her this weekend. Depends on whether or not she was home to make them. But even if she doesn't, stop and say "Hi." She'll charm you. Guaranteed.

A Guide to Native Huntsville Bookstores

by Sunn Hayward

If that special book you've been looking for is not available from any of the dealers in the Dealers Room, and the chain bookstores don't have it, here are some local bookstores you might want to try. For non-natives, you may want to get directions before venturing off to find some of these stores!

Fleming Books, auxiliary branch, located in the Village at the corner of Whitesburg Drive and Airport Road. Hours 9:30A to 9P Monday thru Friday, 9:30A to 6P Saturday, and 1P to 5P Sunday. Very spacious, well organized general bookstore with pleasant atmosphere but no surprises.

Shaver's Bookstore, in a renovated house at 2362 Whitesburg Drive just south of Bob Wallace. Hours 9:30A to 5:30P Monday thru Saturday and 1P to 5P Sunday. Mostly hardbacks, well organized; carries a good selection of science, art and architecture, but I was particularly impressed by the excellent selection of children's books. Well worth a visit.

Friends of the Library Bookstore, located off the entryway of the main library (915 Monroe — just blocks from the hotel). Hours noon to 4P Monday thru Saturday and 1P to 4:30P Sunday provided a volunteer shows up. Easily the cheapest bookstore in town, where one can buy both hardcover and paperbacks in very good

condition for literally next to nothing. Unfortunately, also easily the least organized: be prepared to "read" every shelf during your search.

Ibis Books, in Penny Plaza at 1219-B Jordan Lane (across from Showbiz Pizza). Hours 10A to 7P Monday thru Saturday and 1:30P to 6P Sunday. A drink of water in the desert! Huntsville's only metaphysical bookstore, Ibis carries books, audio tapes, and new age music tapes. The staff is extremely helpful. Events and classes are held on premises: check out their bulletin board.

The Booklegger, in Steadman Corners at the corner of Holmes Avenue and Jordan Lane. Hours 10A to 6P Monday thru Saturday and 1P to 5P Sunday. Recently expanded, this used bookstore now features a room devoted exclusively to hardbacks. They pack a lot of books into not a lot of space: browsers welcome.

Books-A-Million, in The Mall, corner of North Memorial Parkway and University Drive. Hours 9:30A to 10P Monday thru Saturday and 10A to 9:30P Sunday. Appropriately named, with seemingly mile after mile of books (new and damaged) and Hallmark items. Most everything is below normal retail price. This is a large store, so be prepared to spend some time here.

Far Centaurus

by Jack Lundy

A Centaur is a storybook being
Part human and part horse whose lands
Spring from dreams of somehow freeing
Our ranging nature from our cage.
Saint of faintest hope and demands
Measuring, searching scientists
Long ago exploded those myths.
Yet, still there is a Centaurus
Whose nearest star, Alpha, thrills smiths
Of dreams and space crafts of our age.
Far Centaurus, cosmic atom
Centaurus, far from God's garden
Where for passion crimes of Adam
I feel half-known God's hope — but no pardon.
I ignore Fear's close evil screech
I pause, and I dream, and I can reach.

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Con-Etiquette...

WEAPONS POLICY

Generally, Con†Stellation VII has a strict **no weapons** policy. There are two exceptions. First, dealers may sell weapons, but these must be securely wrapped before leaving the Dealers Room and not opened in any public area. Second, weapons may be used as part of a costume in the Masquerade, if approved in advance by the Masquerade staff. Any violation of this policy may result in confiscation of the weapon or ejection from the convention, at the sole discretion of the committee.

DRINKING AGE

Beer will be served in the Con Suite during limited hours only, and **only** to those attendees 21 years of age and over. Twenty-one is the legal drinking age in Alabama. Proof of age must be presented upon request. The staff reserves the right to refuse alcohol to anyone judged to be already at their limit, whether you are driving or not.

Which bring us to: **DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE!** Please be considerate in these matters — remember, in order to be served alcohol, you must be an adult, so please behave like one.

Huntsville police are zealous in their enforcement of DUI and Public Intoxication laws, and we're only two blocks from the police station and city jail. The con committee will **not** make your bail. As always, peer pressure is the best method of preventing problems. All attendees are asked to please help the con committee in this area.

SMOKING

A smoking area will be provided in the Con Suite; there will be no smoking in any of the other function rooms. The hotel does provide smoking areas in the restaurant, lounge, etc.

ART SHOW AND AUCTION

Please help us protect the artwork by not bringing food, drinks, or cameras into the Art Show. A check-in table will be provided for these items, as well as your purses and bags.

The art auction will be at 7:00P Saturday in the main programming room. At the auction, please use voice bids only. In adjusting your volume, assume the auctioneer is 75% deaf and the ambient noise level approximates that of a boiler room. That way you might be heard.

MASQUERADE

Rules and entry forms will be available at the registration desk. Please check there for the entry deadline and for where entry forms should be turned in.

GAMING

Gaming will be split between the Von Braun Room and Grand Salon C. The latter will be closed during the Masquerade, otherwise both will operate around the clock during the convention.

Tournaments are planned in AD&D (hosted by S.O.R.D. in Salon C) and Top Secret, Gurps, Toon, Axis & Allies, Call of Cthulhu, Runequest, Road Warrior, Talisman, and Hearts (hosted by

H.A.G.A.R.). See signs in the Game Rooms for times. There will also be plenty of space and time for open gaming.

AREA GUIDE

Restaurants, grocery stores, sites of interest, and other area businesses may be located using the area guide in your registration packet. If you need directions, or are completely confused, just ask any member of the con staff, or inquire at the hotel desk.

VIDEO

The Video Room (Twickenham

Room) will be closed between 2:00A and 9:00A both Saturday and Sunday mornings. Look for video schedules at the registration desk and/or posted near the Video Room.

CON SUITE

The Con Suite will be located in the Hunt Room, Mill Town Room, and Room 137 (across the hall from Hunt and Mill Town). The Con Suite will, of course, be open around the clock during the convention, though serving hours for beer will be limited. We plan to serve beer from 4P to 2A Friday and Saturday nights.

... and Information

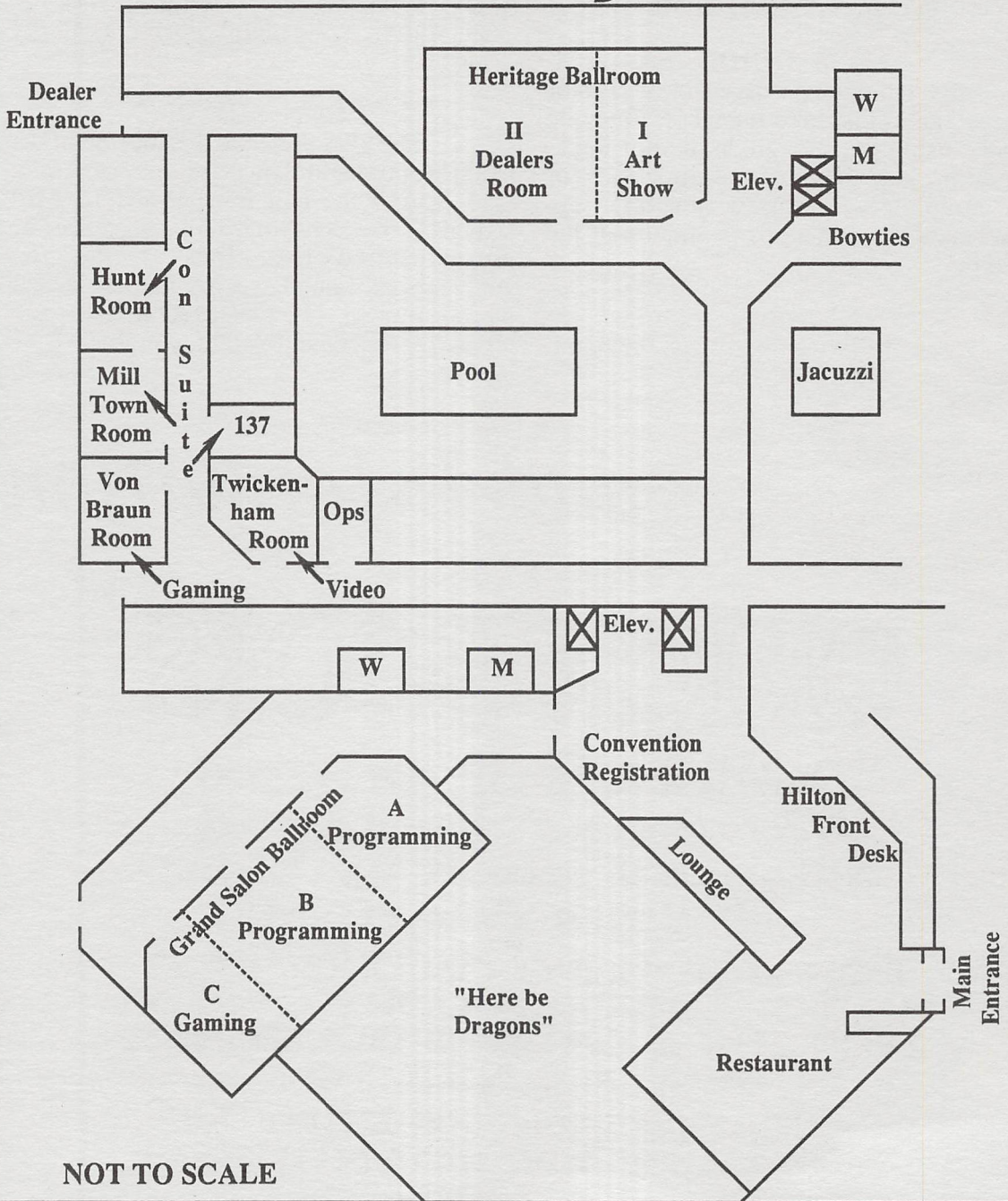
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HOTEL LAYOUT



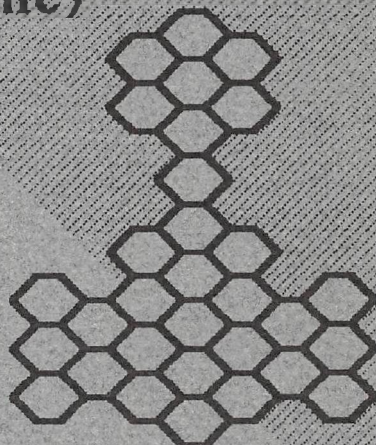
FUTURE COMBAT SIMULATIONS PRESENTS



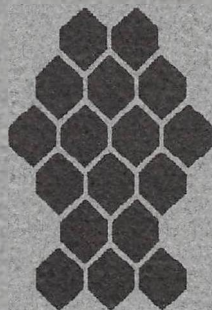
STARBATTLES (Mainline)

STARBATTLES (Mainline) is an intermediate level game of tactical space combat in the deep void of space.

Comes complete with rules booklet, mapsheet, 180 die cut cardboard counters, 17 CONTROL SHEET DIAGRAMS and combat reference diagram. Folio format. \$12.00.



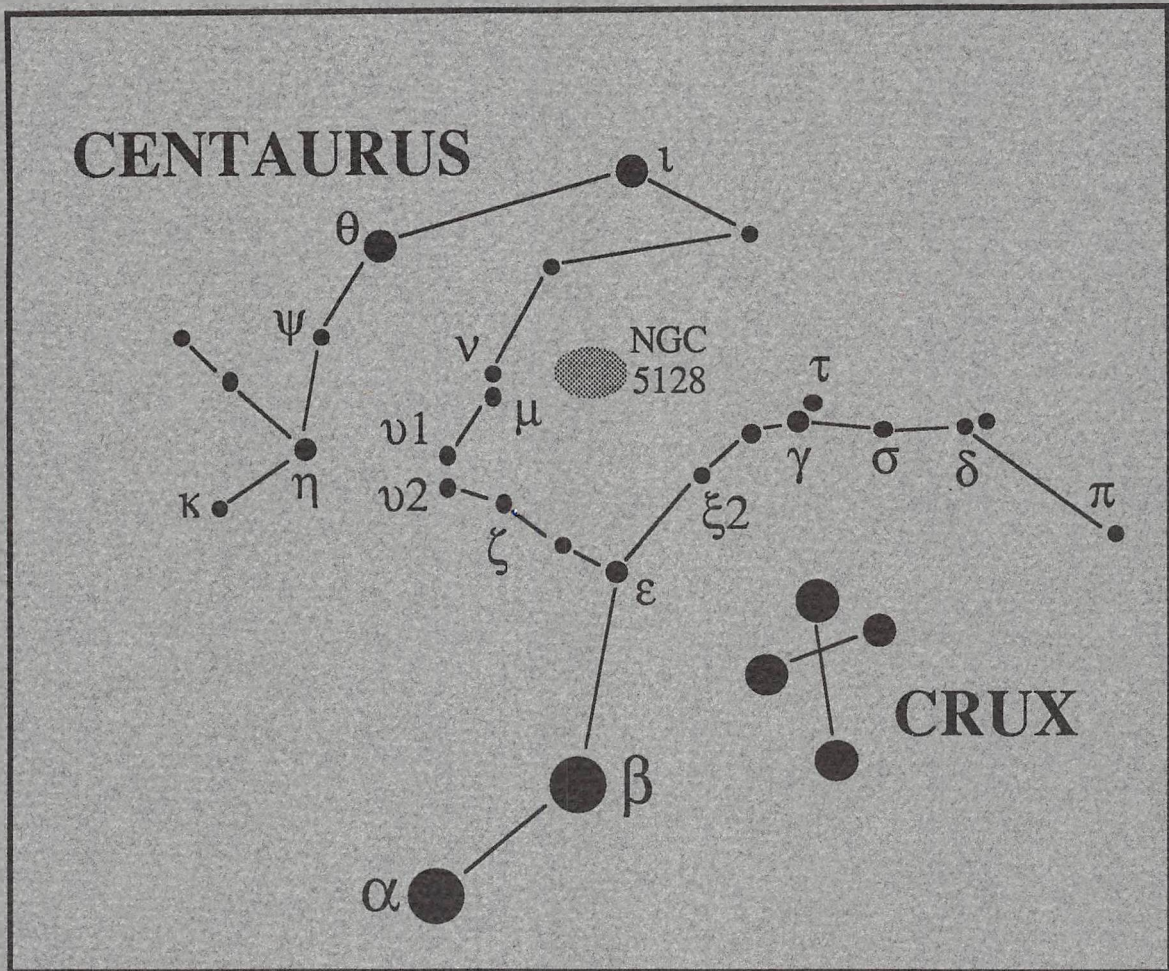
Cruiser



Destroyer

STARBATTLES (Mainline) is already a hit in the Southern California area, now its making its move to you Huntsville. And the Con*Stellation VII Convention will expose you to this unique game of tactical space combat with these hex-shaped space ships shown here. But these are just a few of the seventeen ships, bases and freighters found in STARBATTLES (Mainline). The game is here, the choice is yours.

FOR MORE INFO AND AN ORDER FORM WRITE TO:
FUTURE COMBAT SIMULATIONS
P.O. Box 9143
Anaheim, CA 92812-9143



The constellation, Centaurus, is located in the southern sky near Crux, the southern cross and Lupus, the wolf. Alpha (α) Centauri is a triple star and, at 4.3 light years, or 1.33 parsecs, is the closest system to our sun. Alpha Centauri C, also known as Proxima Centauri, is actually the closest component (1.31 parsecs). Centaurus contains Centaurus A (NGC 5128), a strong radio galaxy and X-ray source. The α and β stars are the front hooves of Centaurus. The hind legs are in the direction of π and the head in the vicinity of ι or θ .

Centaurus were believed to be the offspring of Ixion (Thessalian king) and a Hera-shaped cloud (Nephele) that Zeus sent to him. Centaurus is thought to be of that union or that of Apollo and Stilbe. Centaurus are the only of the fancied mythological monsters to which any good traits were assigned.