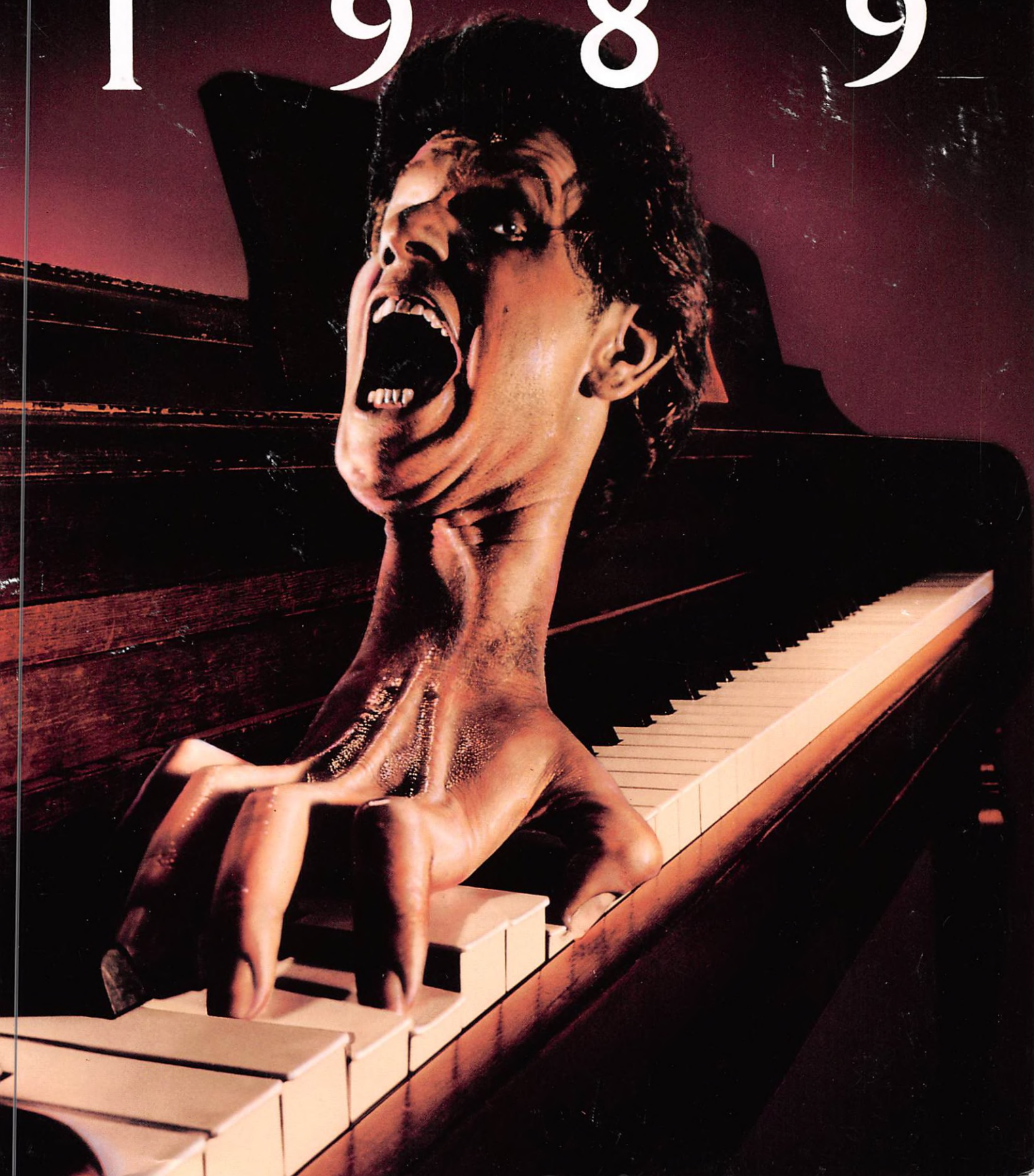


DISCLAVE

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SHEPARD

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ALEXIS & DOLL
GILLILAND

May 26-29, 1989

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- **NO WEAPONS.** If you think it might be a weapon, it probably is. Due to numerous complaints last year, boom boxes played excessively loud are now considered weapons.
- Please do your sleeping in your room—not in the corridors or the lobby.
- Please wear your badge while at the con. It means that you've paid your way and lets the hotel know that you are part of the con and not trespassing.

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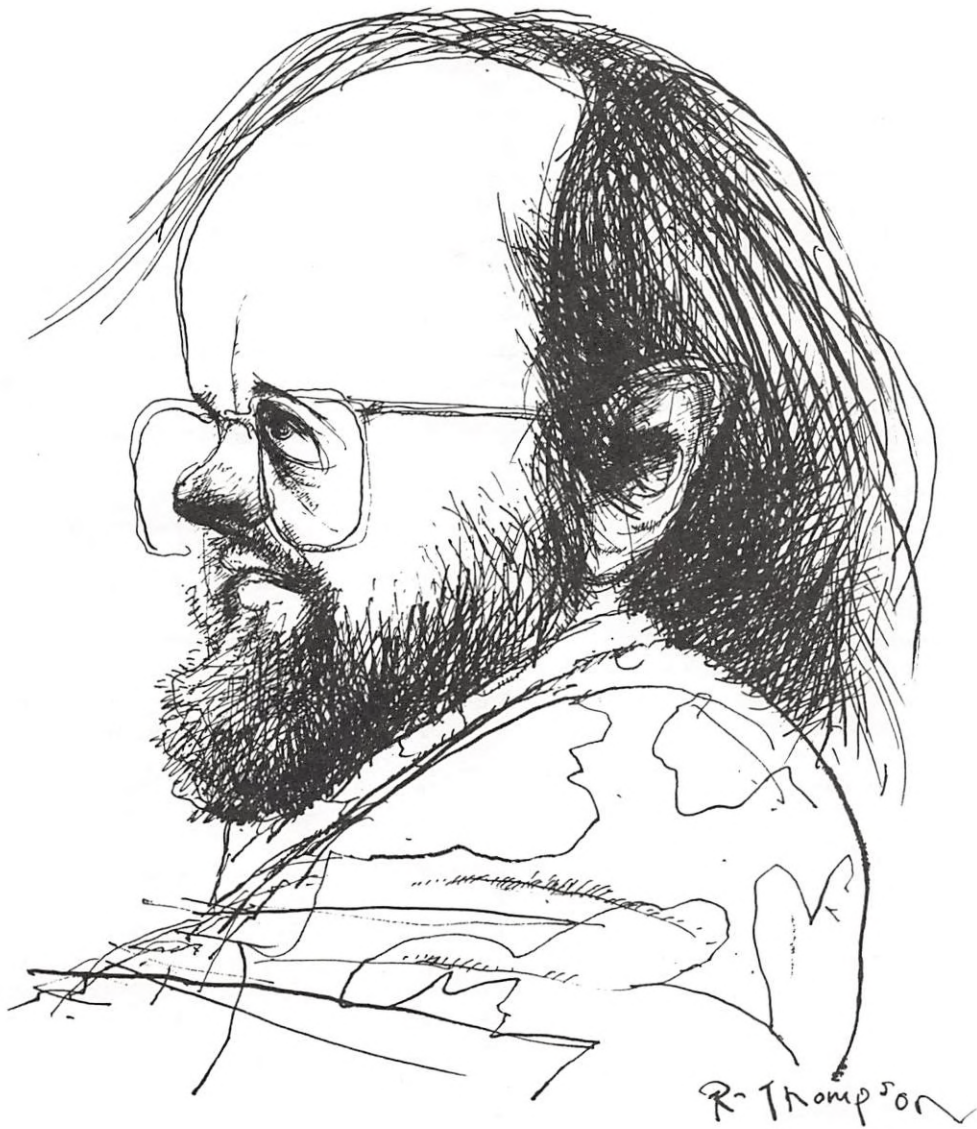
**PRO
GOH**

**A
SHEPARD
WALKABOUT**

By Kim Stanley Robinson

When I was asked to write an introduction to Lucius Shepard for Disclave's program book it occurred to me immediately that the best way to do this would be to have a disillusioning romantic entanglement and then move to the coast of some Central American country and hang out drinking, smoking, snorting and otherwise ingesting the local psychotropic substances until one night I would stagger out under the stars and it would All Come Clear To Me in a sudden rush that I would hopefully remember or get down on scraps of paper. Yes, this was obviously the way.

Unfortunately I do not desire to have a disillusioning romantic entanglement and I am not currently able to get to Central America, and as a replacement the waterfront scene in Bethesda Maryland would seem to be lacking in certain essential respects. Also my house's supply of drugs is down to Advil and espresso and one almost empty bottle of retsina, I know, not very inspiring it's true, but nevertheless as a writer I know What Has To Be Done, and obviously this pilgrimage Had To Be Made if I wanted to do justice to this introduction.



So I reconsidered and thought, well, what's so wrong with Bethesda Maryland, how is it so essentially different from the coast of Honduras? The weather is often similar, there are lots of ethically dubious characters walking the streets making their livings in ways they don't want God to hear about: yes, this is just another tropical swamp with some concrete thrown into it. I can do my Shepard Safari right here if I just use my imagination a little, the Globe Theater becoming the battlefields of France sort of thing, all the world's a stage exactly. So I resolved to take my trusty notebook in hand and go bar-hopping in Bethesda, stopping for a drink or two in each and taking these notes as I went along. Inhaling bus fumes and bar smoke would mimic the effects of the bad dope, and I'd be on my way.

The first bar was called O'Brien's, and it was dark and crowded with Bethesda businessmen having lunch, but I sat on a stool and ordered and quickly drank a bloody mary jammed with lemon pulp and barely broken grains of pepper, and opened my notebook and got to it.

What do I like about Lucius Shepard's stories? Well, where do I start? I like the landscapes. I know, I know, I'm missing the point, it's a habit of mine and believe me I'm aware that there are larger matters here, for instance the powerful political aspect of Lucius's work, yes, I too used to wish with all my heart that I could kidnap Elliot Abrams and Oliver North and old Ronnie and all the rest and force every one of them to read "Salvador" and "R & R" and *Life During Wartime* page by excruciating page. I'm convinced that if they had read these stories and understood them, our foreign policy in those years would have changed. Because these are strongly political stories, and beautifully so in that they do not preach a message but instead witness: *this is the way it would be*, these stories tell us, and reading them I feel certain that Lucius has captured that future war—a war that might never happen, partly because of the vision of it that he got onto the page, which from there seeped through the culture, one image of our fear. "These are the days of lasers in the jungle, lasers in the jungle somewhere," yes.

So that aspect is important, yes, and as I drain my second bloody mary and look around at the businessmen in their suits that are all shades of gray except for one bold black, it seems even more important, and I leave the bar and walk down Wisconsin Avenue to the next one, called Flanagan's Irish Pub. This one is a dark narrow room filled with businessmen eating lunch and talking over drinks, and I sit and order a margarita, which

comes in a wide shallow glass rimmed with salt. It's a thick 7-11 sour lime Slurpy with an indeterminate amount of tequila in it, and I who love tequila down it and get back to my point, which is the beauty of Lucius's landscapes. These are for me the most wonderful part of his work. How to describe their effect? Perhaps another margarita will help. Can't tell if they're weak or strong. Open up a recent story by Lucius, almost anywhere, and there it is: "I did not choose a direction, but soon I found myself on the beach, heading toward one of the shanty bars. The night was perfect for my mood. Winded: a constant crunch of surf and palm fronds tearing; combers rolling in, their plumed spray as white as flame. A brilliant moon flashed between the fronds, creating shadows from even the smallest of projections, and set back from the shore, half-hidden in deep shadow among palms and sea grape and cashew trees, were huts with glinting windows and tin roofs. The beach was a ragged, narrow strip of tawny sand strewn with coconut litter and overturned cayucos. As I stepped over a cayuco, something croaked and leaped off into the rank weeds bordering the beach. My heart stuttered, and I fell back against the cayuco. It had only been a frog, but its appearance made me aware of my vulnerability."

Yes. "The night was perfect for my mood." "Its appearance made me aware of my vulnerability." Shepard's landscapes are always psychic landscapes, and this, it seems to me, is just as it should be. All landscapes are states of consciousness, and to use them as such in fiction is a powerful magic, one of the most powerful. Looking around Flanagan's Irish pub the contrast is strong: I can no longer stand the plastic landscape it represents and so I take off into the streets of Bethesda again. As I leave I hear a fiftyish executive saying complacently to his secretary, "Yes, I'm going to have a daughter in a couple of months." Our mysteries are disappearing. Outside it's dark for midday, it seems it will rain soon. Getting tropical, how perfect for this walk-about.

In this area of Bethesda they are tearing out the old buildings and replacing them with postmodern skyscrapers. There are giant holes in the earth, holes that could contain huge buildings all by themselves but are in fact only the foundations for buildings even more massive than that. The final effect will be just as intimidating and inhuman as the old Modernist architecture ever was: immense concrete towers, lightly decorated with a scree of postmodern decoration. No wonder we love stories set in the untameable jungles of the world!

But it is not just the exoticism of Shepard's landscapes, or their intensely felt pathetic fallacy, that I find exciting: it is also their sheer beauty, beautifully rendered: "One evening after a storm, with dark blue ridges of cloud pressing down upon a smear of buttermilk yellow on the horizon, we walked out to the point beyond the Cafe Pluto, a hook of land bearing a few palms whose crowns showed against the last of sunset like feathered headdresses. Nearby stretches of cobalt water merged with the purplish slate farther out, and there were so many small waves, it looked as if the sea were moving in every direction at once." Yes indeed. And in fact thinking of this passage makes me suddenly aware that there is a clearing in back of Wisconsin Avenue, a big parking lot only but it gives me a bit of the sky, and out there to the west the low and so far undramatic gray rain clouds are showing a bit of a bruise, and the potential for a sunset breakthrough. Nice.

So I cross the parking lot spinning to look all around at the sky, and duck into Dunmor's Tavern. You'd think we were in an Irish neighborhood. Dunmor's turns out to be one of those shopping mall spaces, white panel ceiling and the like, and irritated I order a double shot of rum. I hate the taste of rum, but now I'll gag it down as you would a bitter drug, thereby falling more deeply into Shepard reality, which has so much to do with *estrangement*.

Yes, he's got a great sense of place, doesn't he? I wish he could be locked in a room and given the task of rewriting all those old fantasy classics in which the landscapes are quite interesting but somehow not really *there*, not bursting with an almost-perceived significance and meaning. What Lucius could do with the potentially stupendous landscapes of Tolkien! Yes, we must make him rewrite the entire *Lord of the Rings*, take all those futzy old Bayreuth sets and transform them. Then as I gag down the rum it occurs to me that he is already doing this, that Griaule is a name in the same language as Smaug, and that the transformation of the cute crusty old dragon into the massive immobile world lizard that you can climb into, that you can spend years inside of, suffering all the pain and waste of real life, living with moron hobbits/habits—this is exactly the transformative suffusion of the landscape I was hoping for. Walk into an old fantasy prop and rework it utterly.

So Lucius is already transforming the genre, not only in his vision, but in his language: the diction a peculiar and idiosyncratic mix of archaic locutions and the latest street slang, the rhythms fluid, the

imagery vivid, the prose using whatever rhetorical trick it takes to make the sentences just right. This is the first thing I noticed about Lucius's writing, in fact: it was something near the end of "Solatario's Eyes," something unlikely about the reflection of a lightning bolt in a horse's eye or the like. I read that story by a writer I'd never heard of and said to myself Hoo boy, a writer with poetry in him, they're coming out of the woodwork aren't they! Actually they were not coming out of the woodwork, and never are. It was just that I had run into Lucius for the first time, and I made an error I make a lot, as when once I went to see an Oakland A's game and the A's new left fielder took off running to stop a line drive from going up the gap, impossible as I judged it but he got there and held the guy to a single and I said Lord they're getting fast in baseball these days! Except it was Rickey Henderson. That kind of error. "Solatario's Eyes" was not the new norm: it was Lucius. "Everywhere he looked it seemed that the world was being enriched by the pressure of his vision." Exactly.

I decide to switch back to tequila. No more gagging psychotropic intake, not needed, I am fairly wrecked and it is time for a lascivious wash over the tongue, the taste of being high. Remarkable how much the lurching businessmen dress alike, all in their lawyer uniforms as if the semiotic code governing our use of clothing had become a rigid law that you couldn't break without going to jail. Compare this to the night beach shanty bar, with that *presence* looming outside. Well, I can't really criticize these folks, I live here too, I work my nine to five like all the rest, in my domestic bliss pursuing that path of the artist that scribbles away at the kitchen table with the kids crawling overhead and the cats racing underfoot and the bill collector pounding the door, and as I stagger out of the bar in dismay at what we accept for daily reality, thinking that the lives we live (like the genres we read) are a bit overdetermined by convention and habit, it occurs to me that this is in fact the characteristic beginning of a Shepard story, a stepping out into the real world, disillusioned with the past. And once there? "Each time he added up the elements of his experience, it seemed clear that fantasy and truth were in union." But of course! Exactly! We live in just such a mixed spirit world, and we need to be reminded, we *want* to be reminded, that suffusing the dead structure of our habits is an intense significance, our life's only meaning. "A single word began sounding over and over in his head, *Debora*, *Debora*, *Debora*, but that wasn't it, not her name, her name was only a translation of the real word,



which meant much more, secret kingdoms of meaning, of mastery and giving," exactly. We want reminding that love is not safety but a vital risk, an exposure to the Other which is unsafe but at the same time essential. That the world is vast and awesome and quite beautiful: "The wind pulled the soft crush of the surf into a breathy vowel; the moon had lowered behind the hills above the village, its afterglow fanning up into the heavens; the top of the sky had deepened to indigo, and the stars blazed, so dense and intricate in their array that I thought I might—if I were to try—be able to read there all scripture and truth in sparkling sentences."

Meanwhile the Bethesda afternoon sky was now black with rain, and wind began to shove me back toward Wisconsin as a squall splattered the sidewalk. How perfect, I said to myself. It was late afternoon and with any luck a break in the clouds would allow a dark yellow light to pour over the ominous mirror-walled skyscrapers, while rain poured down and wind lashed the tall swaying palm trees that lined the avenue, it would be perfect. Head south to the land where you cannot escape yourself, and there through voodoo or Mayan magic or Nazi science or bad drugs be transported into that larger world of spiritual significance that we all know we inhabit, and want to be re-introduced to. Sure, it makes sense—we respond to Shepard's fiction because his honesty and passion have touched something in us that we know is true even if it is dangerous and scary and deeply weird. Recently Lucius told me that his second story collection, to

be called *The Ends of the Earth*, had an alternative title, *True Life Adventures*; he meant this as a joke, but I think it is a perfectly fitting title. Is real life really that big and bizarre? Perhaps not, but true life is.

The rain was coming down in torrents by this time, flooding the streets and the gutters and the little coconut and banana stands. I walked along with a solid buzz, feeling quite warm in my mountain parka, staring into the butter eyeball of the sun reflected from a mirrored window across the street. Wonderful light for a rainstorm. Suddenly it became obvious to me that the blocky squarish skyscrapers lining the avenue were actually huge books, stuffed with stories, and that in this neighborhood many of the stories were displayed in the windows, because it is a Persian rug district, there's Parvizian's, Hadji's, Persepolis Sia's, Kesheshian's, and in all their plate glass windows were spread these big intricate carpets and finally I could see that each carpet was actually made of a human being, that's why they tend to be red you see, the flesh spun out into thread, the heart providing the darker red, the bones and ligaments and organs the other colors: whole people stripped down and spread out for us to view the beautiful patterns they can make, and I stood in front of a window marvelling at a set of them, and at the little cards next to them with the calligraphy giving their prices and their individual names: "The Jaguar Hunter," "The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter," "A Spanish Lesson" and so on. ●

**PRO
GOH**

AN INTERVIEW WITH **LUCIUS SHEPARD**

By Rafeal Sa'adah

RAFEAL SA'ADAH: As a reader of your work, one of the things that has been frustrating to me has been the lack of background information on you that I've been able to dig up. A couple of paragraphs here, a couple of paragraphs there. But basically you're a mysterious figure. Just to start off, maybe we could talk about a little biographical information.

LUCIUS SHEPARD: Sure. I was born in Lynchburg, Virginia, which is Jerry Falwell's home base. All my family's from Virginia. All my relatives live there. I hate them all. They're all First Family Virginia types, aristocrats. They all know their family tree back to 1400, like who really won the Civil War, and all that shit. I moved away from there when I was real young, eight. But I kept going back there to visit my relatives.

I grew up in Florida, Daytona Beach, which is one hell of a town, no sense of place. February they bring in the red necks for the stock car races, then come the bikers, then come the college kids, then come the red necks again. And then the old people

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come. It's like growing up on a Hollywood set. You don't have a sense of it being your town because it's everybody else's town first. I graduated from Seabreeze High School, the Seabreeze Sand Crabs. I used to get a lot of shit about that. So then I went to the University of North Carolina for about six weeks. I wasn't doin' real well.

SA'ADAH: Was this the first time you'd been away from home?

SHEPARD: Not really. I'd done a lot of traveling with my parents, and some without. My mother was a Spanish teacher so we used to go down to Mexico and a lot of Latin American countries. A couple of times I went with older kids.

But college . . . I talked to my advisor, and he says: “What do you want to be?” And I said well I figure I want to be a writer, and he said: “Well, what the hell are you doing here?” I didn't start writing right then. I tried. I was writing poetry. I was having some stuff published and doing all right but . . .

SA'ADAH: Was this in academic journals, poetry journals?

SHEPARD: Yeah, I published a lot of stuff. I came back about two and a half years later and edited the *Carolina Quarterly*. I was there for a few months and bopped out again. I published there, and I published in *Lilabulero*, which was Russ Banks' magazine. Russ, he's a novelist. His last book was *Continental Drift*, which was up for the Pulitzer. He's a good friend. He lives in Brooklyn. Just like that, it was the only place to do poetry.

SA'ADAH: What time-frame are we talking about here?

SHEPARD: We're talking about the late Sixties. So anyway, I went to New York City after I dropped out and I got a job in a book depository, worked for a while, saved a little money, then I split and went to Europe. I got pneumonia in England, so I had to get the hell out of England as soon as I got well. I ended up in Spain and I had about twenty-five dollars. At one point, in Spain, I was amok, I was trying to kill squirrels with rocks in the park. It was really dumb. So I hustled. I met these old ladies who couldn't talk Spanish, and helped them buy shoes and crap like that.

What I would do is buy construction paper and make these collages out of lottery tickets, turn around and sell them and they would give me five bucks. They thought I was real cute.

I taught English for a while in this really bizarre school, called the American High School which was basically a haven for dope addicts, as far as the teachers go. I wrote about this in a story called “A Spanish Lesson.” It was really funny. Everyone

there was on serious drugs. I had a class with Arabs, Germans, Americans, Spanish—just all kinds of things. So I was trying to teach a little language. I would go in there and draw a picture of a bird on the blackboard and say “bird.” That was about it.

SA'ADAH: Winging it.

SHEPARD: Yeah, sort of vague out for a while. Mostly it was pretty run of the mill. It sounds a lot more on the edge than it really was. But I stayed overseas a long time. I came back once for a little bit, and that's when I went back to college for a while. I didn't cut it there either. So I went back to Europe, then I went to the Middle East, basically hung out in the Middle East a lot.

SA'ADAH: What were you doing in the Middle East?

SHEPARD: I'm not sure. Just hanging out, really. I kept thinking I was going to write, and I didn't.

SA'ADAH: Had you been doing any writing up to this point, other than the poetry?

SHEPARD: Just poetry. The first fiction I wrote was in 1980. When I applied to Clarion I wrote a story. I had a good background. My father beat a classical education into me pretty much, I mean literally beat it into me. By the time I was twelve I had a major-league knowledge of all the English Romantic poets and the Greek histories, Thucydides and like that, Shakespeare—to the extent that I can still quote, to everyone else's unending boredom, major sections of this shit. He made me do that. Probably one of the reasons that I didn't start writing until real late. He wanted me to be a writer. I kept saying that I was going to be a writer, but I did everything to avoid it, except the poetry. That was short and easy.

So I was just basically hanging out in the Middle East, just goofing around, wiping out, just like people were doing back in the late Sixties and early Seventies. There was a lot of people doing the same thing. I worked a couple of times. I worked for a perfume merchant in Cairo, named Abdul Afifi.

SA'ADAH: That's a detail that found its way into “A Spanish Lesson.”

SHEPARD: Right. A lot of that stuff's true. The only thing that wasn't true was the fantasy element.

SA'ADAH: I was hoping that you were going to say that that part was true also.

SHEPARD: Well, there were a lot of other fantasy elements that I didn't put into the story that

were, but I don't think that Ed [Ferman] would have printed them. But all the people, essentially, all the details that weren't injected with other-worldly crud.

SA'ADAH: It read very realistically, but then a lot of your fiction does. So I wasn't really sure. It had an autobiographical tone.

SHEPARD: Well that was. All the stuff about my character, that was about right.

SA'ADAH: A portrait of Lucius Shepard as a young man.

SHEPARD: Yeah, that was about it. A real cretin. The thing in Egypt was cool. It was sort of senifraught with danger, not anything terrible. There were some edgy moments from time to time.

Basically I was a shill. I would steer people to this guy's place and he would sell them antiquities or whatever. He was a money collector. He would be gathering large sums of money. If China wanted to buy some German equipment, he would be getting together a million bucks in Deutschmarks. So there was some interesting moments around those operations. But basically I just hung out with him. I was his pet American.

I was in Afghanistan for a while, just hanging out, did nothing, just wandering around. I walked across Turkey, which was a weird thing to do, across the Cappadocian Plain.

SA'ADAH: Did you get hassled?

SHEPARD: Not much. A little. What I basically got was real sick. Real sick. Real, real sick. I was in these caves. The Cappadocian Plain has all these little lumpy hills that almost look fake. They're full of these caves where these old Coptic lunatics used to live and meditate. All this graffiti is on the walls inside, and they're going, shiver, shiver, hallucinating and having all kinds of proto-Christian nightmares. I'd start hearing things.

It was basically something I really don't want ever to do again. People would do things like climb Mt. Everest alone, I guess I respect them. I think they're probably nuts. But that's as close as I ever came to something like that.

There's a lot of little weird stories, but essentially I just bummed around until about '72, '73. I came back and got married and started a rock'n'roll band.

SA'ADAH: What was your attraction to music? What pulled you in?

SHEPARD: I didn't have to write.

SA'ADAH: Still avoiding that.

SHEPARD: Probably, yeah. It was always sort of what I was programmed to do. You know how it is. I had the big fear of failure that a lot of people are stuck with when you have very aggressive parents, aggressive in their education of their children. You never think you can come up to it.

Rock'n'roll was a group effort. I thought that would make it easier. It really wasn't. Keeping a band together is worse than the Yankees. Anywhere up to seven or eight major egos. People are out after promoting their own number on the stage.

SA'ADAH: The bands that you were in, were they performing units? Were you out there on the road a lot?

SHEPARD: Oh yeah. We were out there gigging, which is foolish. That's not the way to make it. The way to make it in music is to go into a studio and make good tapes. That was my stupidity.

SA'ADAH: What about the creative end of this, in terms of the songs that you were creating? Were you getting a lot of satisfaction out of the music?

SHEPARD: Yeah. I really liked writing songs. I wrote some really good songs. It's not that just I think so, they were really good. I've never stopped writing songs. Well, I'm writing a whole bunch of rock'n'roll stuff. I had to write a whole album for this book. Then I've got a series of rock'n'roll stories I'm doing, based on this character called the Queen Mother. So I had to write feminist rock songs, which is kind of interesting.

SA'ADAH: The songs that you're writing for the book, are these actual songs that you could actually perform?

SHEPARD: I haven't written charts, but I could play them on my guitar. Since September, October, I've probably written thirty songs, which is a lot compared to what I have done over the past three or four years.

SA'ADAH: This is the first time you've put a lot of energy back into music since the bands broke up.

SHEPARD: Yeah. It was destructive. Things happen to rock'n'roll bands that people wouldn't believe. You go into a bar and you see some guys up there and it looks real basic. These guys get their stuff together and practice, and they come in here. But the shit you have to go through is unreal. Just the logistics of getting everybody to practice alone . . .

But dealing with barowners, I think they all must come from one little crack in the earth. They're just out to screw you constantly.

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SA'ADAH: Just out of curiosity, what was the name of your band?

SHEPARD: There was a lot of them. When I started out, I was in a blues band called The Cathouse Band. Then I was in another band called Demon, just a whole bunch. Cult Heroes and things like that. We had different names.

SA'ADAH: So there wasn't one great name that stands out.

SHEPARD: No. Mister Right was probably the best band we had. It was a cool band. It was one that got busted up by women which is the other great thing that nukes bands. Which isn't really chauvinistic, it's just true.

The things that can blow up a band are infinite, like personalities, women, bad breaks—it just comes at you. It's a really dumb way to go about making a living. You meet incredible sleaze, just unbelievable sleaze. The publishing business, which has its own varieties of sleaze, is like dealing with the archangels compared with the music business. Promoters, man, those guys can vanish by turning sideways, just, wow, they're gone.

SA'ADAH: So you burned out on rock'n'roll.

SHEPARD: Definitely, absolutely. Too many disappointments, and I was stupid. It was probably on purpose, somehow. I was probably trying to self-destruct or something. Everybody kept telling me, in the studio, to fuck all these idiots. Just get a few people you can trust and start laying down tracks, and I probably should have. Them's the breaks.

SA'ADAH: But you kept moving on.

SHEPARD: Well, my wife got sick of me being depressed around the house, because I was really in a foul mood after this last band broke up, I didn't have the energy to get one going.

So I'd sit around, fart around, write a song, go down and get drunk in the afternoon at Mr. Flood's Party, which is this old musical hangout where a lot of bands got started, like Commander Cody and Asleep At The Wheel. All these country bands, blues bands used to play there. I'd go down there and get drunk and someone was playin', I'd sit in. It was awful.

Then my wife read about this workshop at Michigan State, Clarion, and she said: "Why don't you go there?" And I said I don't wanna go there, and she says: "Why don't you just fucking do something?"

So I went there. I wrote a story and submitted it and they accepted it, and I went there. Got a divorce out of it. I wrote two stories while I was there, didn't do much writing. But everybody liked the first two stories, so I figured that's cool, I must be all right. One of them was "Green Eyes."

SA'ADAH: Which portion of the novel?

SHEPARD: The whole novel, really. It's like a five thousand word version of the novel, except it all takes place on one night.

Essentially the story of the novel is that this woman makes this guy fall in love with her, and do all these things for her. So this is just checked out into one night, which is mostly spent on Bourbon Street.

SA'ADAH: So the stuff with the construct and the house . . .

SHEPARD: It's all basically in Tulane. This guy wants to go outside, and she feels sorry for him, so she steals him, kidnaps him, and drags him outside, and basically the plot is he goes down and has a drink on Bourbon Street and keels over. It's a sort of a relationship involved in that.

I submitted that after Clarion, and *Omni* said it was too weird, and *Twilight Zone* said it was too bizarre.

I liked that. It really gave me a lot of confidence about science fiction.

SA'ADAH: The two stories that you wrote while you were at Clarion, and the story that you wrote to get in there, were they moving in a direction toward SF?

SHEPARD: Well Clarion is essentially a science fiction workshop. Its only virtue to me was that it was sixty miles away. I'd read some science fiction, but it certainly wasn't my main reading. Generally speaking, I didn't like most of what I had read. I don't mean to offend anybody by that, but most of what I read, I just didn't think was very well written. The stuff I did think was well written—I'm not sure if I would still think so. Maybe I would.

I haven't gone back. It was kind of funny. I went there, it was just something to do. I figured my wife just wanted me out of the house. They accepted this, so I'll do it.

The story I submitted was a sort of a Central American fantasy. Actually it wasn't a story, it was half a story, because they had a limit on length. They liked that, and accepted me. I wrote that and I wrote "Green Eyes" and this other story that's never gotten published called "Jailwise." Then I sort of had this relationship bust on my marriage, it got all screwed up with that. That was Clarion for me. Well, I don't know. I met all these people I kind of liked. I really liked some of them. I got along with A. J. Budrys real well, and Avram Davidson.

SA'ADAH: Were they the instructors?

SHEPARD: Yeah. Also Damon Knight and Kate Wilhelm. Some of the people I met there I really liked, some of them I still know. There's a couple of people living here in New York from my Clarion, like Paul Witcover who's a writer in the process of selling a novel to Bantam. There's some neat people.

I left Clarion and I was fuzzed because my marriage was breaking up. So I went out to the West Coast and I started writing. I was probably writing about fifteen, sixteen hours a day, say, from four months after Clarion until not long ago. Actually, for at least two years, I was probably

averaging about thirteen, fourteen hours a day writing, just learning how.

SA'ADAH: Was this a big change in your work habits? From being in a rock'n'roll band . . .

SHEPARD: From being in a constant state of semi-sloth . . . Yeah, oh God, it was like somebody got let out. This goddamn workaholic got let out. It was like kung fu writing, because I was going through this really bad relationship with a married woman, which I don't recommend. Young boys, stay away. I was having a lot of mental difficulty, so I was writing in self-defense. Of course, I was writing all these stories about married women, so it was self-defeating.

SA'ADAH: The interesting thing to me about what you said, was that you were learning.

SHEPARD: Oh yeah. Sure. I'm still learning. If I ever feel like I've learned enough to where I'm satisfied, it's probably time to become a beach-comber. Definitely I was learning. I had a lot of advantages over people in my class. First of all, I had done a lot, and I had this terrific background in the English language, which I got before the age of twelve, so it really stuck. I really knew all those moves, all those slick iambs and shit. I could toss those around. So that was a real help. It was a little easier for me than for most people who went to Clarion. I was probably a little advanced of them. It was still a lot to learn.

SA'ADAH: So, there seems to be, in this period that you're talking about, this tremendous motivation, all this creativity coming out at once. Where do you think that was coming from?

SHEPARD: I always told stories a lot. This was probably my father's program coming out. This tape may not show it, but I've always been fairly entertaining. I tell stories and stuff. I get around people and they like to hear all the stuff I've done. So I lie a lot. I've always been doing that. Naturally, that's the place to go with that, is writing them down. Except that it's a lot easier to tell them, when you're drunk or something. I guess that was there.

The creativity part, I don't know what that is. That's something the psychologists will tell us some day.

SA'ADAH: So, during this period of intense writing, did you have it in mind that you were going to support yourself as a writer?

SHEPARD: Definitely. I didn't have any money. I had a little money, but not a lot. I had to support myself. So I sold a book.

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I realized from
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science fiction
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short fiction. The
best way to
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”

SA'ADAH: That was your first sale?

SHEPARD: My first sale was sold to *New Dimensions*, a story called "Black Coral." Then *New Dimensions* tubed. That was the last one, it got bounced. Then it ended up being printed by *Universe* a few years later, with all the cuss words taken out, because they sell to libraries, so you can't have that.

I guess the next thing I sold was the novel. I lied about that. Terry Carr called me up and said he really liked "Black Coral." He'd seen it, he'd bounced it because he didn't think I could cut out the cuss words and have a story. So he called me up and asked me if I had a novel.

Oh yeah, I said, I got one right here. I said I'll let you see it as soon as it's done. He said three chapters and an outline would be good, and I said okay, you got it. So I buzzed out three chapters and an outline and sent it to him. I knew it was shit. I started rewriting it the minute I put it in the mail, and kept sending him rewrites. So he bought it.

I finished that and then I decided that I didn't want to write another novel until I learned more about how to write. So I started writing short fiction a lot.

J. K. Potter and I are thinking of turning an unpublished fragment of *Green Eyes* into a graphic novel.

SA'ADAH: I didn't know he was doing stuff besides illustration. I didn't know he was into graphic storytelling.

SHEPARD: I don't think he has been, but we're talking about it. He's got a problem. J. K., people think of him as a splatter artist.

SA'ADAH: Splatter artist?

SHEPARD: He got started doing Scream/Press stuff, with a lot of horror stories. So people tend to think that that's all he can do. Which is bullshit, because he's real good. So this would take him out of that more.

I want to do some more about New Orleans and Louisiana. It's a truly bizarre state. Whether it's science fiction or not, I don't really care. I just want to do something, because it's fascinating. Real beautiful visual imagery all over. It's a great state to write about for someone who's into setting a lot and likes to use it in his work.

SA'ADAH: So you've established good relations with a lot of editors at this point. To the outside reader, your publications were a sudden burst of stories on the market. It was somewhat meteoric. Was it like that from your perspective?

SHEPARD: It was designed. My feeling about writing short fiction was twofold.

One was, it couldn't hurt me as a writer, to experiment with form. There were a lot of stories that I wrote that I worked hard on, that I don't think I would have written except as an experiment. There was a story called "How The Wind Spoke At Madaket." I'm not really into horror writing, but I wanted to try writing a horror story. Things like that. I just wanted to play with things, just get loose with it a little bit more.

Also, I realized from looking at science fiction history that the best way to make a reputation was in short fiction. The best way to make one quick. John Varley and people like that. They come along and they blow off about twenty-five stories real quick and get a reputation. If I come out with, say, another novel, I don't think I would have had half the visibility at this point that I do.

SA'ADAH: You certainly set the stage for your novels.

SHEPARD: That's what you've got to do, I think. You don't gotta, but in this field, it really helps. I think it's a good strategy for a writer. Obviously, you don't have to do that to be a commercial success, if you take a look at Gibson and people like that. But that happens so rarely. It's much more likely that something like the Varley strategy is going to happen like that. People like George R. R. Martin, same thing, he bops out with a bunch of stories and whizam, he's getting six-figure advances.

SA'ADAH: Were you carrying all these forms around with you, or when you started writing were you actually going out and reading what was on the market?

Looking at some of your pieces that could be definitely typecast as fantasy, a lot of the stuff that was in *F & SF*, and then there were the Central American pieces, which sort of fall neatly together, and so on. Different chunks of different styles. Were these just sort of springing naturally?

SHEPARD: I don't think I really had them too much in mind. "Salvador" was a surprise. I just sat down and wrote it. It was real quick for me at that time. I wrote it in five or six days. At that point in time it was a very fast piece of work for me, because I was working on a bad typewriter and ripping up pages.

SA'ADAH: Were you surprised by what came out?

SHEPARD: Yeah. I sat down and . . . I can't even remember how I came about the idea. Oh, I know. I was talking to this friend of mine on the phone. She's an organic chemist, she was talking about all these things that endorphins can do. I don't even know how we got onto endorphins, prob-

ably as a mode of consciousness enhancement. I said, well if you can do that, you can probably turn people into this and that.

I've always been pretty much Leftist, and there was a lot of shit in the paper about El Salvador at that time. I'd been down there in the recent past, so it just came together like that, real quick.

SA'ADAH: That leads into what I wanted to talk about. Basically the issue of war, writing about war.

Specifically you've published pieces about a war in Central America which, although they are science fiction, they're entirely plausible, considering the fact that we're already in a covert war down there. Also, you've written pieces about Vietnam, two of which were published recently in *In the Field of Fire*.

I want to sound you out about your background for writing these pieces, and your motivation.

SHEPARD: I've seen combat situations in Central America—supposedly covert operations. They didn't seem real covert to me. I've seen Honduran troops in El Salvador and things like that. I know something about what a combat situation is.

It's kind of chic now to talk about *Platoon*, but *Platoon* is a terrific movie about combat. I think that's what it's about. I don't think it's about Vietnam, I think that's secondary. It could be anywhere. It's really about combat. Vietnam is, I think, a much more complex subject than I think you can handle by studying a combat platoon. I think that people are taking this as the statement on Vietnam.

Combat is pretty generally the same everywhere. You have a lot of really scared fuckers yelling their asses off and firing their guns anywhere that looks like something. That's pretty universal. I don't even think you have to know it to write about it well. If you've ever been scared . . . I think the one thing about being in a long-term fright situation—to me this is my analogy: if you've ever been in a car crash, there's this moment when you realize it's gonna happen, and a flash of cold goes all through you. Holy shit, everything lights up and gets real particular.

What happens, I think, in a serious combat situation, when you're under that kind of fire, when it starts, you have that flash, then you live inside it for a real long time. So your behavior becomes real different. If people were to all of a sudden drop in for a quick view, they'd think here's a bunch of real lunatics. They're absolutely right, from their standpoint. I think I said in one story that fear has its own continuum of right actions, and that's what I was talking about. Everything you're doing that might seem freaky to someone else is perfectly logical to you.

That's the whole thing in "R & R," about the superstitious shit. You gotta have that, it's part of it

and it makes absolute sense. This whole kind of magical thinking you get into which gets even more complex than that. You know, don't step on cracks, wear a parrot feather, it just gets really intricate and you can get real wrapped up in it, and not even know it. It'll be a subroutine more than anything that's really conscious. But it's there. You just develop all these strange behaviors.

SA'ADAH: Did you find yourself, even as an observer in combat situations, developing those behaviors?

SHEPARD: Oh yeah. Definitely. You're not really an observer. You may be there to observe, but you've got your hand in the fucking soil. The thing that's different between someone who is in that kind of capacity, and a combat soldier, is that he can leave. Which is an immense freedom, and it makes you feel very guilty. You can get very screwed up about it. But you can get out of there. Whereas, a lot of times, these guys just don't have an option. You'll find veterans of almost any war who will tell you that combat has a fantastic allure, no matter how horrible it is, just because of the intensity.

I was talking to runaway kids for one of the books I'm writing. I think it's the same thing with them. They have this nightmare life. And yet you find kids who are, say, nineteen or twenty now, and are out of it, looking back fondly. Because there they were, they were right out there on the edge. They were really alert. Maybe they had a lot of bad times, but it was very vivid.

SA'ADAH: Do you find yourself drawn back to these specific periods in your life, or are these periods still coming up?

SHEPARD: Lately, in the last two and a half years I've been in New York, it's been the slowest time of my life. I've been working real hard, and going through the usual emotional entanglements and all that shit. So really I haven't been doing a hell of a lot. I've been looking forward to getting out again. I don't have an Ernest Hemingway complex, I'm not going to war zones or places where people are starving to death. I just want to go somewhere where something could happen. That's the funny thing about me.

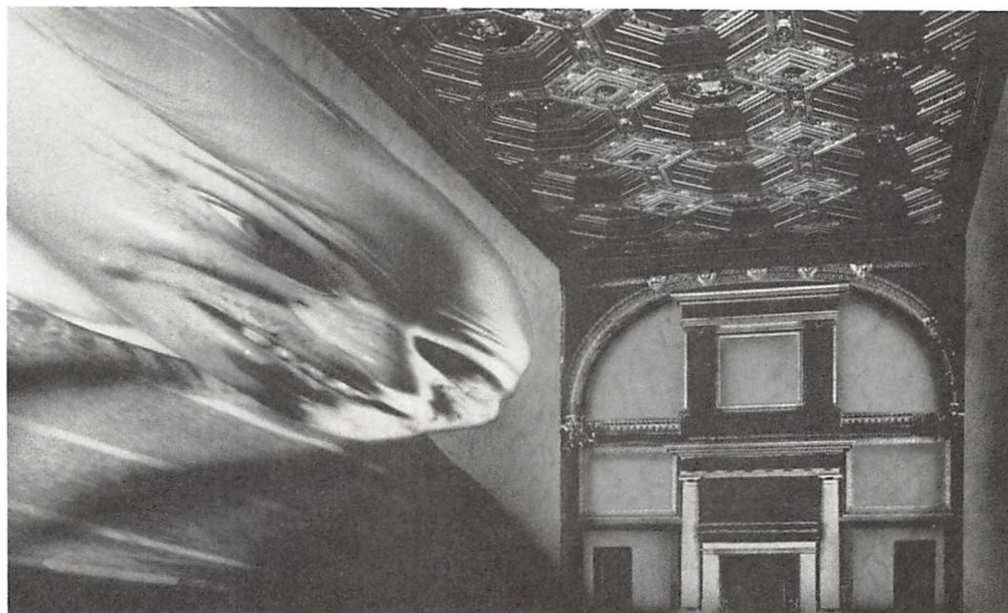
A lot happens on the street. Every day the crackmobile comes down Westervelt Avenue, and all the Puerto Ricans go "Here comes the crackmobile." I go out there too. We all go out and look. It's like the ice cream man. Everybody on the street is tragic in their own way. This is a terrible street. It's not a horrific slum like parts of the Bronx, but everybody here is living a bullshit lie. It's like this legend, that someday they're going to steal something large enough to make them famous, or

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Everybody's got
an imagination. I
think people
have good
imaginations.
People around
here have good
imaginations,
they just don't
focus them.
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become cocaine dealer of the year. It's pretty poor but it's a neat street. I'll end up writing about it, but only after I leave it.

Right now it really makes me sick, because there's so much waste. For a long time I haven't felt comfortable in America. Part of that is the political bias, which has kind of crept in over the years. I feel bad being an American sometimes. I've been exposed to a lot of situations where I've felt really fucking bad about it. I've seen some real grungy things that Americans are directly responsible for, and it's given me a kind of weird pitch to the way I feel about this country. I'm not saying that Red China is much better, anything is better. It's just that I'm an American and have trouble sometimes from being down in Latin America a lot, and liking that place. Getting back here and living the good life pisses me off. I guess I just feel better being a little more on the edge.

When you're in your home place, I think you . . . I do, I tend to slump a little bit and not want to do things as much. You know, you've got your apartment, your friends and everything, and so you get into this routine. I don't really like that too much. I don't like routine. I like to have it exploded once in a while, something coming down the road that I'm not expecting. Here I insulate from that, without even trying to. It's a sort of a natural pattern that you fall into.

So I think I thrive being out of the country more. So I'm going to probably stay out for a while, a year or two anyway.

SA'ADAH: I wanted to talk about the role of travel. One of the things that separates your writing, for me, from a lot of other people's writing, is that it's obvious that you have lived some. You have gone out and experienced things.

Whereas a lot of writers are dealing strictly with creations of their own mind.

Obviously you have a tremendous imagination. Some of the fantasy elements in your work, the other realities that people are always stepping out into . . .

SHEPARD: Everybody's got an imagination. I think people have good imaginations. People around here have good imaginations, they just don't focus them. So I don't consider that much of an aptitude.

The travel, I don't think it is necessarily right, that you have to travel a lot to be a really good writer, or even a decent writer. I think from my particular bias, I like being kind of a stranger. Not in any kind of a romantic way, I just like being out of my element a little bit. It makes me aware of things more.

Back to the slump thing, I'm aware of it, but there's always a kind of skin between me and things, a little more than there is when I'm, say, in Central America or somewhere else. But there are writers, it seems, who must be like that in some way. Graham Greene, for instance, is a writer who has to be as addicted, probably in a similar way, to being outside his own sphere of comfort and familiarity as I am. I think that different psyches fall into different things.

You meet some people, like a friend of mine down the block from me. He'll say, I'm going to Florida this winter, but he'll never go. He'll never leave this block unless he's pried out of here. It's just my disposition. My sensibilities are piqued by travel. ●

—Reprinted and condensed from *Science Fiction Eye* #2, August, 1987

LUCIUS SHEPARD

A BIBLIOGRAPHY

By Charles R. L. Power

Sa'adah: I'm trying to compile a bibliography to go along with the interview, for those that are completists, and are trying to track down those off-the-wall stories.

Shepard: I just throw them away, man. That's my problem. Because I move around and I don't keep anything.

—from "An Interview with Lucius Shepard"

This is intended as a complete listing of the published works of Lucius Shepard.

1983

Solitario's Eyes

First publication: *F&SF*, September

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter* (British edition only)

Taylorville Reconstruction, The

First publication: *Universe 13* (anth., ed. Terry Carr)

1984

Black Coral

First publication: *Universe 14* (anth., ed. Terry Carr)

Others: *The Year's Best SF 2* (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois, 1985)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Etheric Transmitter, The

First publication: *The Clarion Awards* (anth., ed. Damon Knight)

Green Eyes

First publication: *Green Eyes* (New York: Ace Science Fiction Books, May). ISBN 0-441-30274-2. xii+275p. Introduction by Terry Carr.

Book: *Green Eyes*

Man Who Painted the Dragon Griaule, The

First publication: *F&SF*, December

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Night of White Bhairab, The

First publication: *F&SF*, October

Others: *The Best Horror Stories from the*

Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction (anth., ed. Edward L. Ferman & Anne Jordan, 1988)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Reaper

First publication: *IASFM*, December

Salvador

First publication: *F&SF*, April

Others: *The Year's Best SF 2* (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois, 1985)

The 1985 Annual World's Best SF (anth., ed. Donald A. Wollheim, 1985)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Storming of Annie Kinsale, The

First publication: *IASFM*, September

Traveler's Tale, A

First publication: *IASFM*, July

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

1985

End of Life As We Know It, The

First publication: *IASFM*, January

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Fundamental Things, The

First publication: *IASFM*, July

How I Spent My Summer Vacation: A Student Perspective on Clarion (essay)

First publication: *IASFM*, February

"... How My Heart Breaks When I Sing This Song ..."

First publication: *IASFM*, December

How the Wind Spoke at Madaket

First publication: *IASFM*, April

Others: *The Mammoth Book of Short Horror Novels* (anth., ed. Mike Ashley, 1988)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Jaguar Hunter, The

First publication: *F&SF*, May

Others: *The Year's Best SF 3* (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois, 1986)

The 1986 Annual World's Best SF (anth., ed. Donald A. Wollheim, 1986)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Mengele

First publication: *Universe 15* (anth., ed. Terry Carr)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

Spanish Lesson, A

First publication: *F&SF*, December

Others: *The Year's Best SF 3* (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois, 1986)

Best SF of the Year 15 (anth., ed. Terry Carr, 1986)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter*

1986

Arcevoalo, The

First publication: *F&SF*, October

Aymara

First publication: *IASFM*, August

Others: *Best SF of the Year 16* (anth., ed. Terry Carr, 1987)

Challenger as Viewed from the Westerbrook Bar (poem)

First publication: *IASFM*, October

Dancing It All Away at Nadoka

First publication: *IASFM*, Mid-December

Fire Zone Emerald

First publication: *Playboy*, February

Others: *IASFM*, November 1986

Note: Not identical to section of novel *Life During Wartime* with same name

R & R

First publication: *IASFM*, April

Others: *The Year's Best SF 4* (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois, 1987)

The 1987 Annual World's Best SF (anth., ed. Donald A. Wollheim, 1987)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter* (U.S. edition only)

Life During Wartime

Note: 1986 Nebula Award, Best Novella

Voyage South from Thousand Willows

First publication: *Universe 16* (anth., ed. Terry Carr)

1987

Black Clay Boy

First publication: *Whispers 6* (anth., ed. Stuart David Schiff)

Delta Sly Honey

First publication: *In the Field of Fire* (anth., ed. Jeanne Van Buren Dann & Jack Dann)

Others: *Twilight Zone*, October 1987

The Year's Best Fantasy 1 (anth., ed. Ellen Datlow & Terry Windling, 1988)

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter* (British edition only)

Exercise of Faith, The

First publication: *Twilight Zone*, June

Book: *The Jaguar Hunter* (British edition only)

Glassblower's Dragon, The

First publication: *F&SF*, April

Others: *The Year's Best Fantasy 14* (anth., ed. Arthur W. Saha, 1988)

Interview with Lucius Shepard, An (interview by

Rafael Sa'adah)

First publication: *Science Fiction Eye #2* (August)

Note: This publication available from Science Fiction Eye, Box 43244, Washington DC 20010-9244.

Jaguar Hunter, The (collection, U.S. edition)

First publication: *The Jaguar Hunter* (Sauk City: Arkham House Publishers, Inc.). ISBN 0-87054-154-4. xii+404p. Foreword by Michael Bishop. Illustrations by Jeffrey K. Potter.

Contents: "The Jaguar Hunter," "The Night of White Bhairab," "Salvador," "How the Wind Spoke at Madaket," "Black Coral," "R & R," "The End of Life As We Know It," "A Traveler's Tale," "Mengele," "The Man Who Painted the Dragon Griaule," "A Spanish Lesson"

Note: 1988 World Fantasy Award, Best Collection

Life During Wartime

First publication: *Life During Wartime* (Toronto/New York/London/Sydney/Auckland: Bantam Books, October). ISBN 0-553-34381-5. vii+438p.

Others: "R & R" (excerpt, 1986, see separate title)

Book: *Life During Wartime*

Note: Novel in five sections: "R and R" (see "R & R"), "The Good Soldier," "Fire Zone Emerald" (not identical to novella of same name), "Crossing the Wild," and "Sector Jade"

On the Border

First publication: *IASFM*, August

Pictures Made of Stones (poem)

First publication: *Omni*, September

Others: *The Year's Best Fantasy 1* (anth., ed. Ellen Datlow & Terry Windling, 1988)

Shades

First publication: *In the Field of Fire* (anth., ed. Jeanne Van Buren Dann & Jack Dann)

Others: *IASFM*, December 1987

The Year's Best SF 5 (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois, 1988)

Sun Spider, The

First publication: *IASFM*, April

Others: *Orbit SF Yearbook* (anth., ed. David Garnett, 1988)

The 1988 Annual World's Best SF (anth., ed. Donald A. Wollheim, 1988)

White Trains (poem)

First publication: *Night Cry*, Spring

Others: *The Year's Best Fantasy 1* (anth., ed. Ellen Datlow & Terry Windling, 1988)

1988

Gag Reflex at "The Response to the Humanist Manifesto" (letter)

First publication: *Science Fiction Eye* #3 (March) ("Subscribers' Supplement")

Note: Shepard's letter is a reaction to Rob Hardin's "Response to the Humanist Manifesto," a letter in *SFE* #2, itself reacting to John Kessel's article "The Humanist Manifesto" in *SFE* #1.

Introduction (introduction)

First publication: *The Last Coin* (novel by James P. Blaylock. Willimantic: Ziesing, 1988. ISBN 0-929480-00-7)

Jack's Decline

First publication: *Ripper!* (anth., ed. Gardner Dozois & Susan Casper)

Jaguar Hunter, The (collection, British edition)

First publication: *The Jaguar Hunter* (London: Paladin). ISBN 0-586-08719-2. 429p.

Contents: Identical to U.S. edition (1987) except for deletion of "R & R" and addition of "Solitario's Eyes," "Delta Sly Honey" and "The Exercise of Faith")

Life of Buddha

First publication: *Omni*, May

Nomans Land

First publication: *IASF*M, October

Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter, The

First publication: *The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter* (Willimantic: Mark V. Ziesing). ISBN 0-9612970-8-5 (signed edition 0-9612970-9-3), v+153p.

Others: *IASF*M, September 1988

Book: *The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter*

Way It Sometimes Happens, The

First publication: *IASF*M, December

Wooden Tiger, A

First publication: *F&SF*, October

Youthful Folly

First publication: *Omni*, November

1989

Ends of the Earth, The

First publication: *F&SF*, March

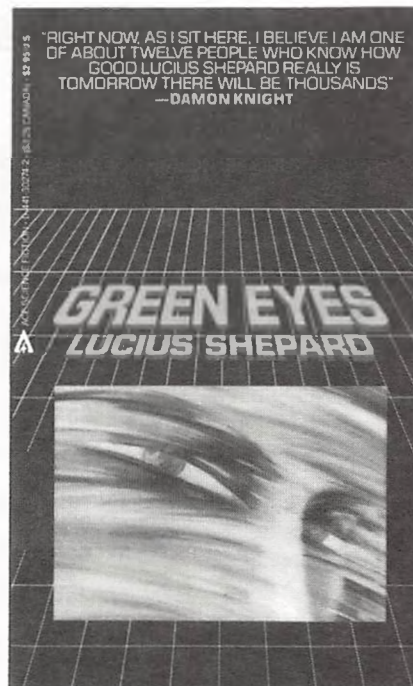
Father of Stones, The

First publication: *The Father of Stones* (announced for 1989 publication by Disclave '89)

Book: *The Father of Stones*

Off Season, The

First publication: *The Off Season* (announced for 1989 publication by Mark V. Ziesing)



FURTHER POTTERINGS

By Ramsey Campbell

Try as I may, I can't recall exactly when I first became conscious of the work of J. K. Potter. It seems longer ago than his published credits say it ought to be. It seems as if he took up residence in my subconscious before I knew he was there. Or has he always been back there in our shadows, waiting to be noticed? How can he have taken his camera into the darkest areas of our minds?

Perhaps by being inconspicuous. I'm assured that we met at the World Fantasy Convention in New Haven, but he registers only as a shy presence at the table in a restaurant near the hotel (though it may be that his presence was signified obliquely by the appearance on the menu—none of our party dared order it—of the Open Face Smother Burger, which sounds even more alarming than the thing which sprang on John Hurt in *Alien*). However, I'm certainly aware of meeting him the following year, in Chicago, where he proved to be extremely congenial and stimulating company. And certainly nobody who visited the art show that year could have failed to be aware of his work, especially his superb illustrations for *Scream/Press'* equally superb edition of *The Face That Must Die*. Many were the





American Politics magazine featuring Ramsey Campbell's children

folk I saw falter to a halt before his slashed portrait of John Horridge, complete with the actual razor that had been used to reveal the layers of nightmare underneath. The portrait hangs on the wall of my workroom now. I haven't yet tried the razor.

One pleasure I gain from writing is being illustrated—seeing how someone else visualizes what I write. In J. K.'s case, however, the pleasure often comes from his ability to depict more vividly than I can what I actually imagined. Some of those *Face That Must Die* illustrations—the endpapers, Peter's trip (as jagged and unpredictable and dismayingly mysterious as such experiences often are) in particular—seem less like illustrations than photographs using my eyes for the lenses at the times when I felt most like the blackest sections of that book. For *Cold Print* he rediscovers the dark lyricism which had graced the pages of Harry Morris' *Nyctalops*, and I venture to suggest that Lovecraft would have been enthralled by these images. I've a special affection for the surreal sexuality of his *Scared Stiff* illustrations: a pity that Warner didn't use the cover he originally offered them for their paperback. Still to come, or perhaps out by now, is the *Scream/Press* edition of *The Influence*. I've seen some of the illustrations, most of which star my daughter

Tammy (who with her brother Matt appeared as AIDS victims on newsstands across America, courtesy of J. K.), and believe me, they're worth waiting for. Soon we mean to bring out an illustrated edition of *Dark Feasts*.

Well, this has been another stumbling (and, I suspect, unduly egocentric) attempt to communicate some of the admiration for J. K.'s work I tried once before, with "The Other Side," a tale based on one of Jeff's most remarkable images, to be found readily as the cover of *Year's Best Horror XVI*, and this is as good a place as any for me to admit that the story's portrait of a stiff fellow going to pieces related partly to my attempts to push my imagination beyond the point at which J. K.'s picture made it redundant. But I'm rambling on about myself again. Maybe I'm doing so because I feel the need to cling to some sense of myself while considering J. K.'s work, to guard against being drawn through the surface into the world beyond. May he continue to explore it in all its variety! It is ours too, and we are in his debt for showing it to us while we are still awake. ●

Merseyside, England
April, 1989

JEFFREY K. POTTER

A PORTFOLIO

In the realm of fantasy and science fiction illustration there are many artists who practice long and hard at assimilating the vocabulary of the genre in which they work. Many of them have learned that this visual language is the essence of successful science fiction artwork. A well rendered robot or spaceship or alien can allow an artist to slip into the field and become well-known without much effort. Giving the sf audience pictures they recognize is the secret to big success as an illustrator and cover artist. Presenting them with the proper cliché lets them know that they haven't accidentally picked up a western or mystery.

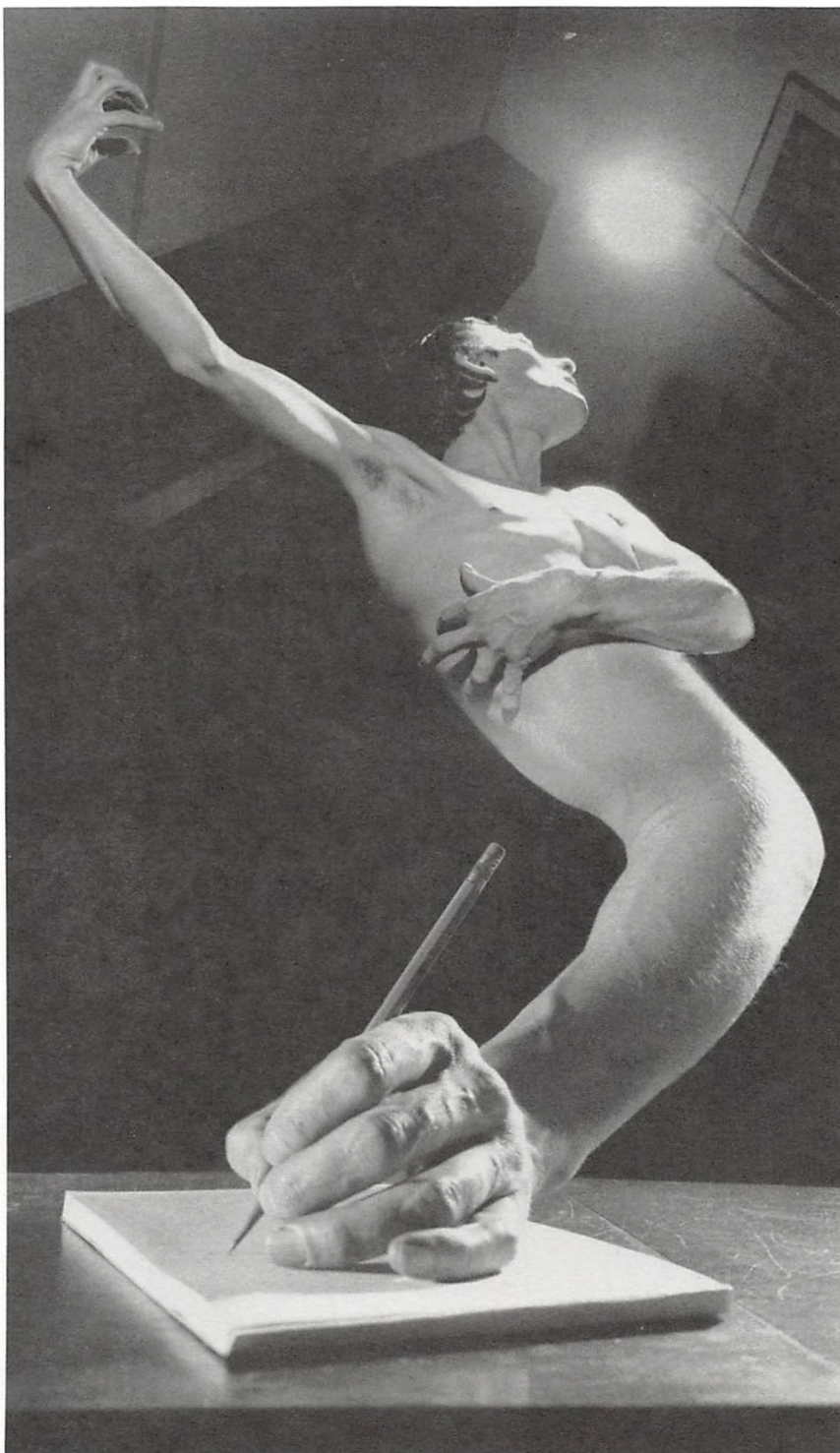
The hardest thing to do is to try something different. New visual ideas in science fiction are not easily accepted by the literature of change. Usually a new technique or approach to illustrating sf and fantasy is greeted with all the enthusiasm with which one greets a boil on the ass—everybody just stands around waiting for it to go away. However, on rare occasions, when science fiction dares drop its pants and moon the rest of the world, there are always going to be people who enjoy what they see.

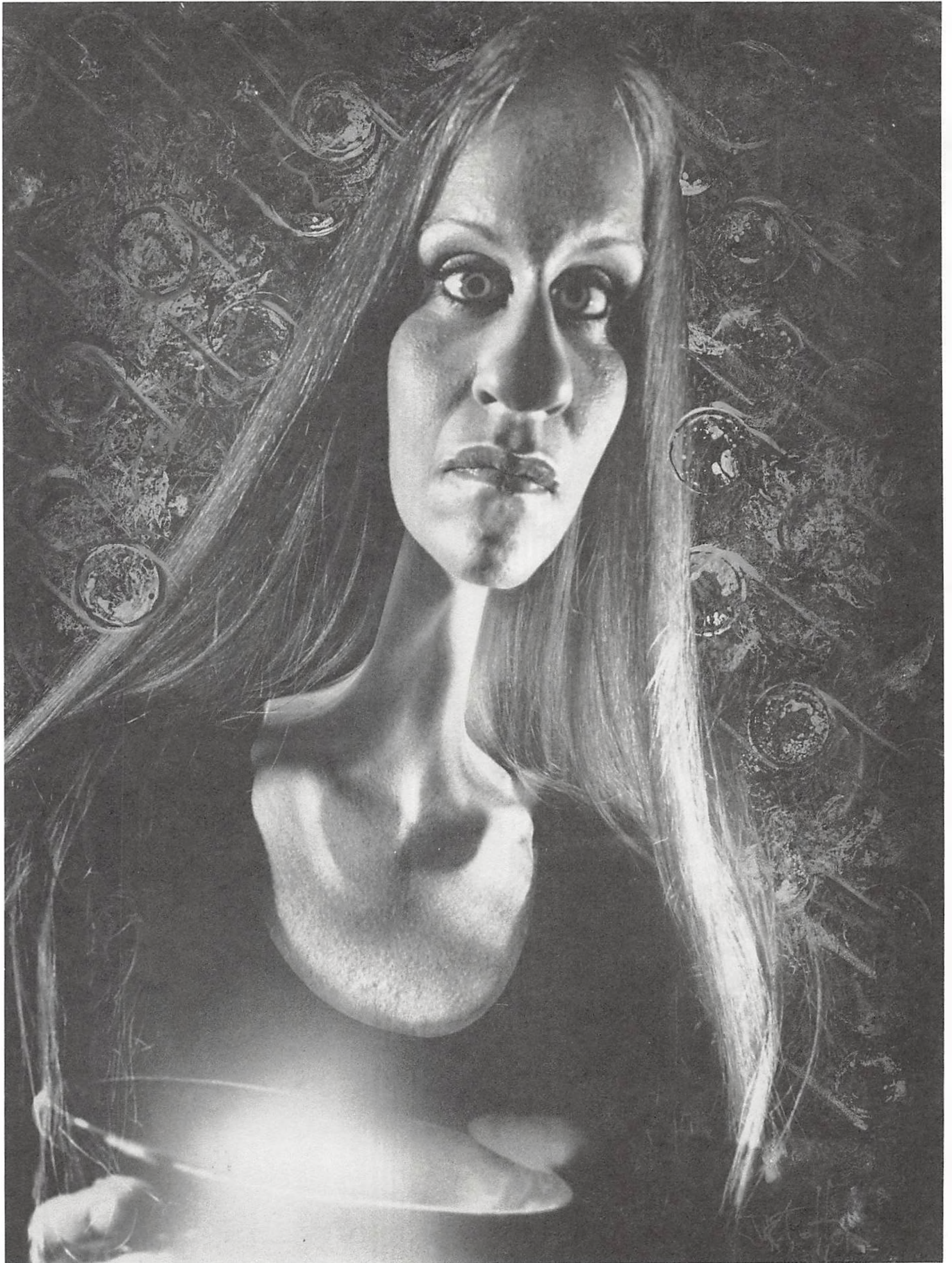
One artist who has managed to slip in the back door and crack our field wide open is our Art Guest of Honor, J. K. Potter.

In the past several years Potter has left a mark on fantasy and science fiction that is unrivalled. His ground breaking photo collages have given the sf community a new language to learn and a new vocabulary to use. His illustrations for Arkham House, *Isaac Asimov's*, *Scream Press*, *Science Fiction Eye*, *Signet Books* and many more have allowed him into the worlds of such authors as Stephen King, Clive Barker, Michael Bishop, Ramsey Campbell and even our Pro Guest of Honor, Lucius Shepard. The illustrations he has produced for these works are unique. They offer the readers a visual presentation that proves, at last, that fantasy and science fiction have begun to grow up.

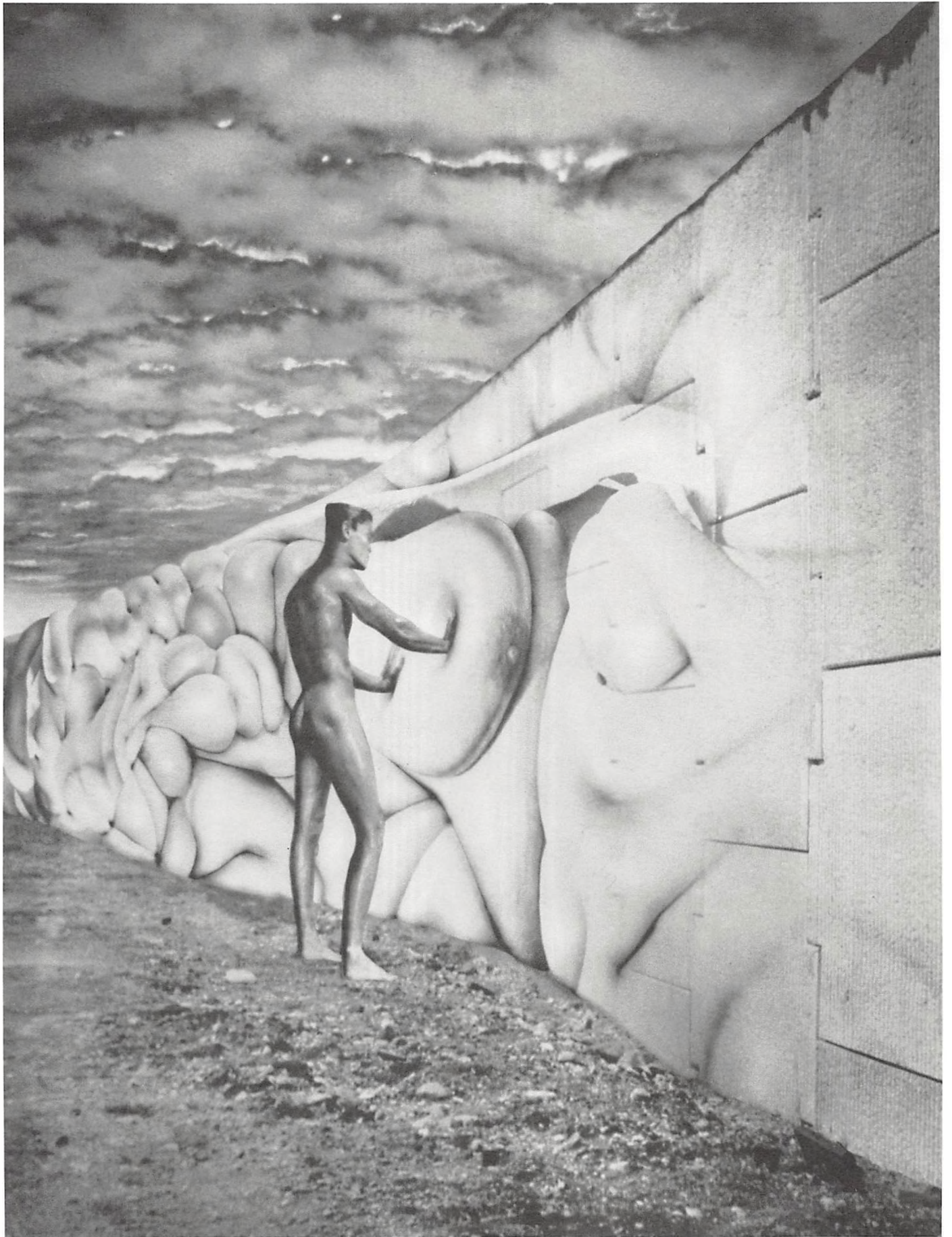
Potter has become our Man Ray, our Dali and our Mirrorshades, reflecting a new style and sophistication. J.K. Potter is a class act who is dragging fantasy and science fiction out of the pulp era once and for all. If you doubt this, then just feast your eyes on the portfolio that follows and you will never doubt again. ●

— Dan Steffan











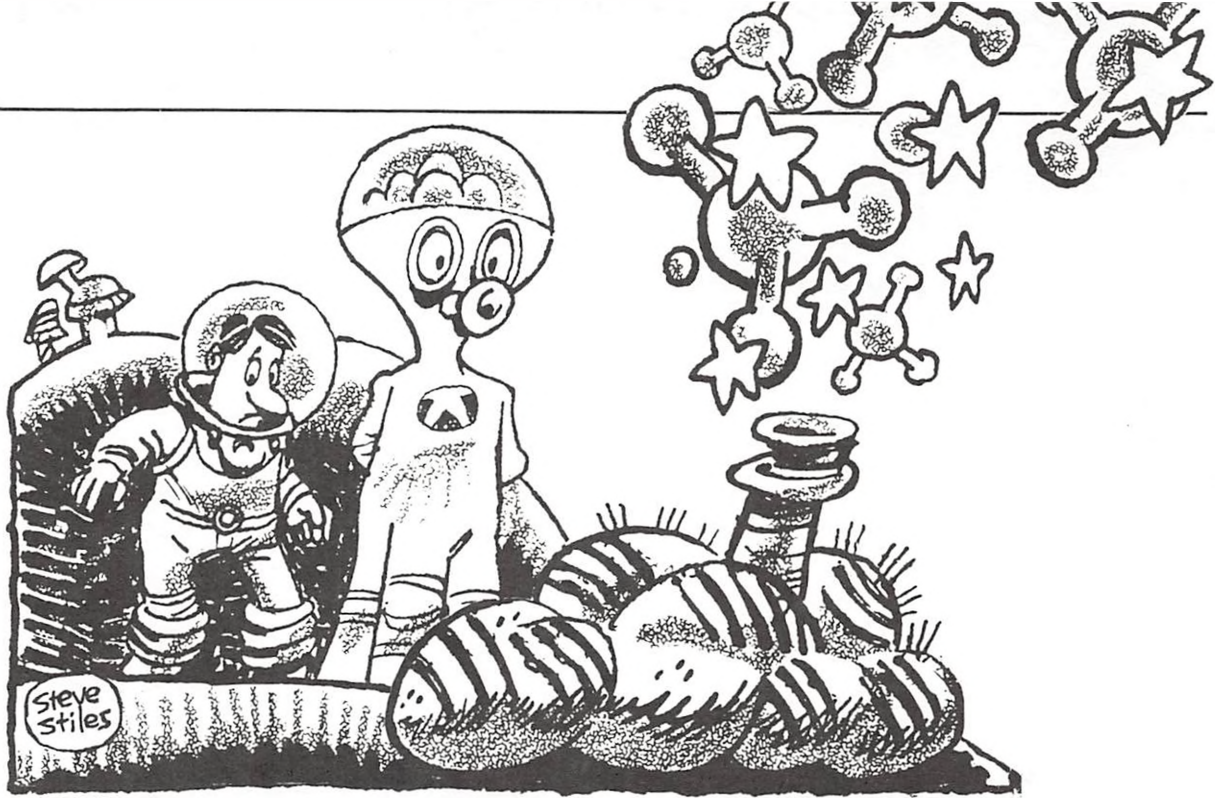
DOLL AND ALEXIS GILLILAND

By Steve Stiles

I first met Doll and Alexis Gilliland in the fall of '73, when they were hosting a large, congenial fan gathering in Washington, DC. As usual. As congenial as it was, I was never one to mesh readily with strangers. I needn't have worried; within minutes Doll was making me feel welcome and at home, radiating warmth and panache. That she was wearing an extremely large Mexican sombrero at the time only seemed, oddly enough, perfectly natural—but no one else I know could've brought it off with the appropriate elan.

I've now known the Gillilands for some (gulp!) sixteen years. It doesn't seem that long; for the most part, I was having fun. But maybe that's why I feel intimidated in writing this little biographical sketch; I've come to realize that Doll and Alexis are a veritable two-person fandom, spanning almost all the aspects of fannish activity. Having done *so* much, it's going to be hard to sum it all up in the space I've been assigned. I do know that if Doll were in my shoes (and only pausing momentarily to blink at the incongruity of that situation), she





would just go ahead and *do* it. Doll is a Doer and the possessor of an exuberance that snaps its fingers—ha!—at daunting projects. As for Alexis, to quasi-quote one of his cartoon taglines, his exuberance is a little more analytical. He's more than capable of handling any bit of writing with concision and a great deal of wry wit.

I'll start with Doll. Despite being a self-proclaimed nonfan, she's been hosting meetings of the Washington Science Fiction Association for over twenty years. In addition to going through acres of smudged carpeting and cigarette seared furniture, this has entailed feeding wild hordes, establishing the Pagan tree trimming ceremony for winter solstice, putting on the WSFA Seder, and acting as the entertainment chairperson of the club. She also founded the International Cookie Conspiracy for Disclave, a custom which has spread to Minicon and other regionals, as well as coediting one of the top fanzines of the '70s, the *WSFA Journal*, and writing a column for it, "Doll's House."

In spite of all this club activity, Doll still insists she really isn't a fan. In fact, for many years she declined to join the club she hosted. This admirable record of sorts came to an end when the evil club members waived the rules, paid her dues, and *drafted* her into WSFA—thus quashing her reputation as a "BNNF," Biggest Name Nonfan in Fandom. Fortunately this choice bit of treachery failed to embitter her, and Doll has gone on to cochair six Disclaves, in addition to producing the well-received "Inside 20,001; A Space Opera," written by Alexis, and performed at numerous Disclaves, Balticons, and two Worldcons.

And now for the other half of this team. Alexis isn't precisely sure how long he's been in fandom, although his first documented act of fanac was a published letter in the pages of *Planet Stories* in 1949. His first introduction to the actual world of science fiction fandom came in 1964 when a

coworker, Bill Evans (a longtime member of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association) enticed him into attending Discon I. Up until then Alexis had been a member of chess fandom, but eventually that was elbowed aside by his activity with WSFA—he's been president of the club seven times. He's also contributed reams of letters and articles for various fanzines over the years, most recently "The Rise and Fall of Sky Father and Earth Mother" for *BSFAN* #17. But that isn't the half of it—oh no; this guy is a *cartoonist*, too! And *what* a cartoonist; for every punchline I agonizingly rack my brains to squeeze out, Alexis is capable of effortlessly turning out twenty good zingers. I think I'd be a tad jealous if my enjoyment of them didn't supercede my envy. Other people obviously feel the same way: Alexis has won the Fan Artist Hugo in 1979, '83, '84, and '85, as well as the neat Fan Award in 1977 (a large green frog). For those of you who have chortled over his drawings in all those fanzines, you might be interested to know that they've been assembled in two choice collections, *The Iron Law of Bureaucracy*, and *Who Says Paranoia Isn't In Anymore?*

There's more; Alexis is a published science fiction writer. In fact, he's won the 1982 John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer for the first two books in his Rosinante series, *The Revolution from Rosinante*, *Long Shot for Rosinante*, and *The Pirates of Rosinante* (okay, now I'll get jealous . . .). Other books currently in print are *The End of Empire* and *Wizenbeak* (based on his cartoon character wizard), with a *Wizenbeak* sequel due out from Del Rey, *The Shadow Shaia*. If you're looking for a good read, any of these would be well worth your time.

And that's all I'll say about the Gillilands as a dynamic duo. As people they're every bit as interesting as their activities, and I hope you have the opportunity to meet and talk to them at Disclave. ●

FAN GOH

ALEXIS GILLILAND A PORTFOLIO

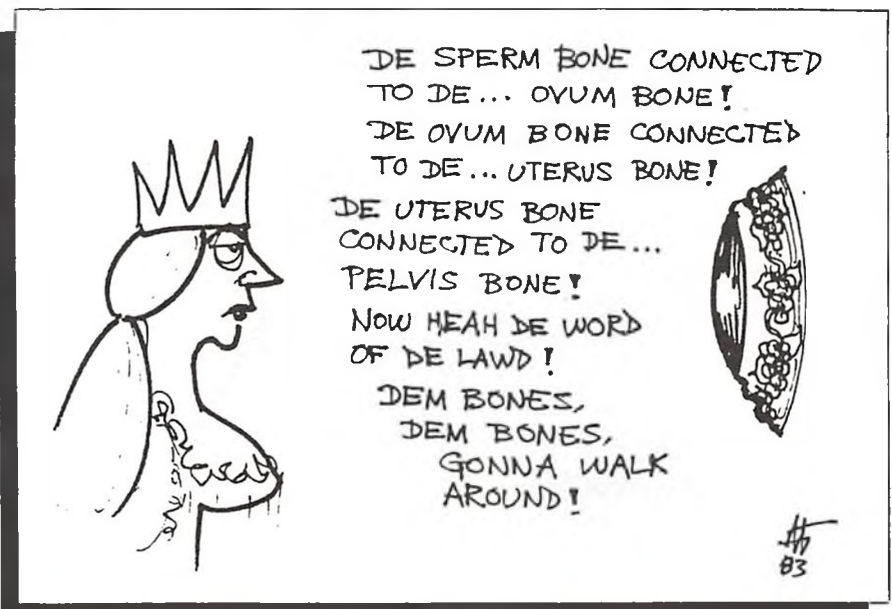
For the past twenty years Alexis Gilliland has been filling the pages of fanzines with humorous illustrations and cartoons. For several fan generations it has been impossible to pick up one of fandom's scruffy little magazines without stumbling over a couple of these unique pieces of fanart. After many years as the cartoonist-in-residence in the pages of Richard Geis' monumental *Science Fiction Review*, it became equally impossible to pick up a Hugo Award ballot that didn't prominently feature the Gilliland moniker in the FanArtist category. Before long, when science fiction fandom thought about fancartoons they thought about the omnipresent talent of Alexis Gilliland.

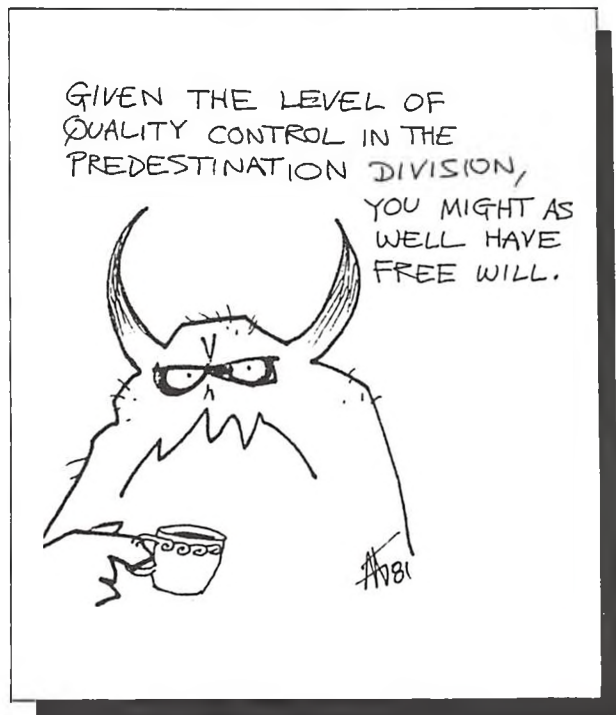
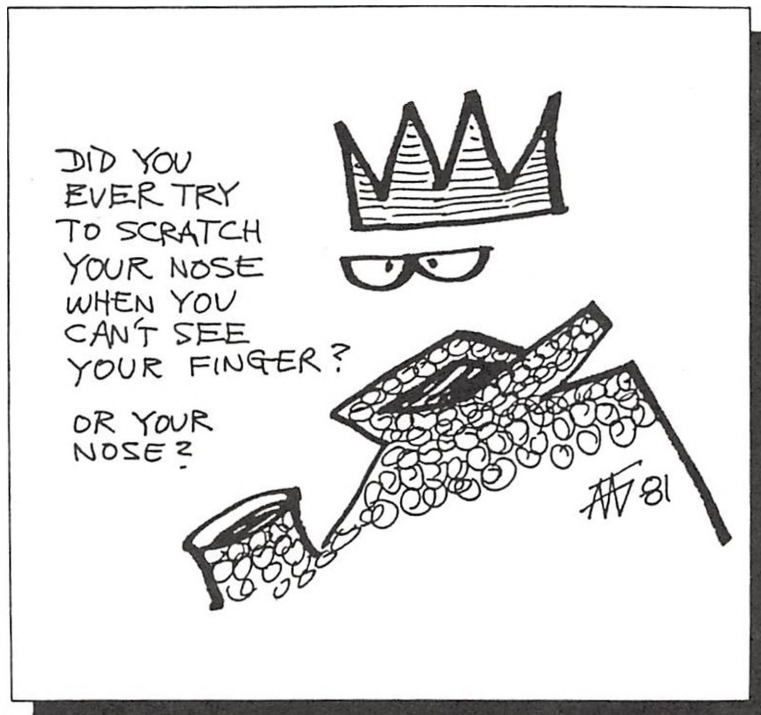
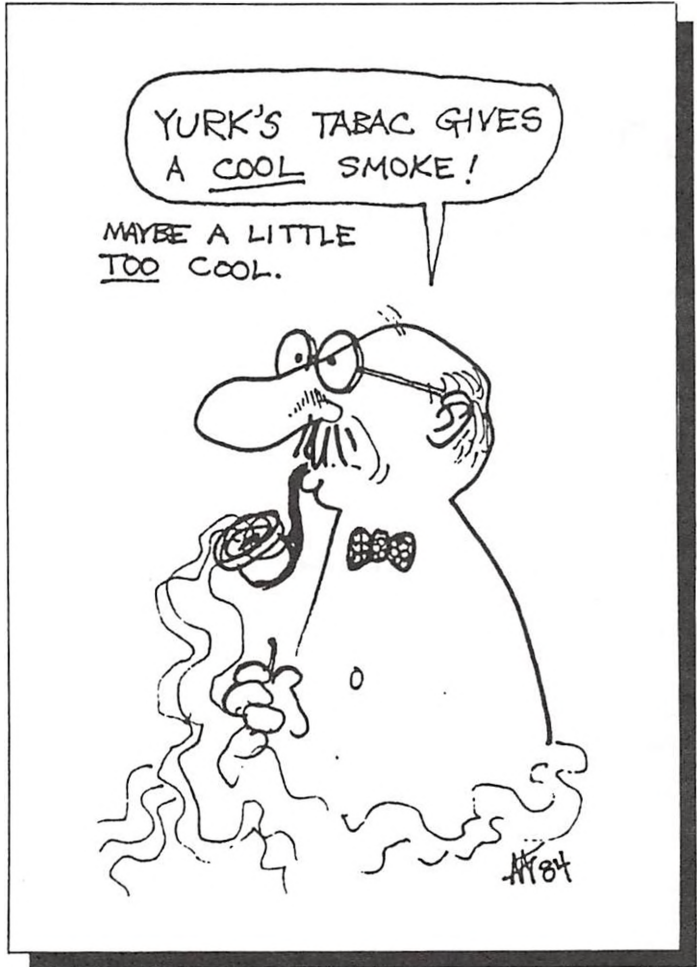
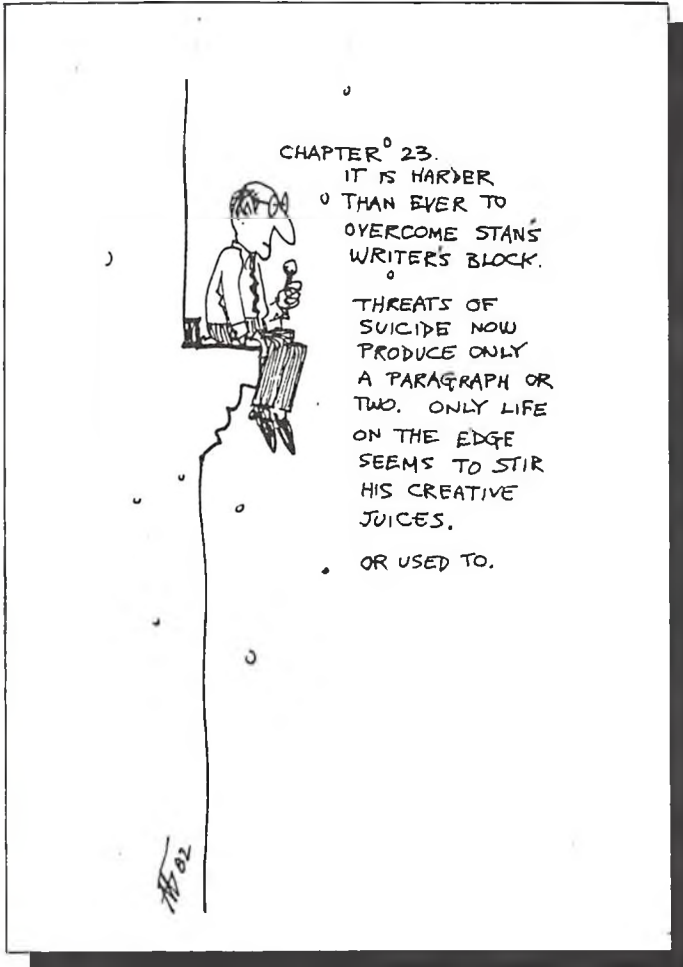
Upon entering Alexis' study the casual visitor must move crates of Hugo Awards and *Faan* Awards just to sit at his feet. If you want to sit in a chair you must move one of the cartons of cartoons that fill the room and hope, should you have to use the facilities, that your seat will remain empty during your absence. Normally Gilliland can fill a box with brilliant cartoons in the time it takes to relieve oneself. So, if you have been drinking too much of the infamous Gilliland Home Brew, we suggest you take his pens and pencils away from him before visiting the bathroom.

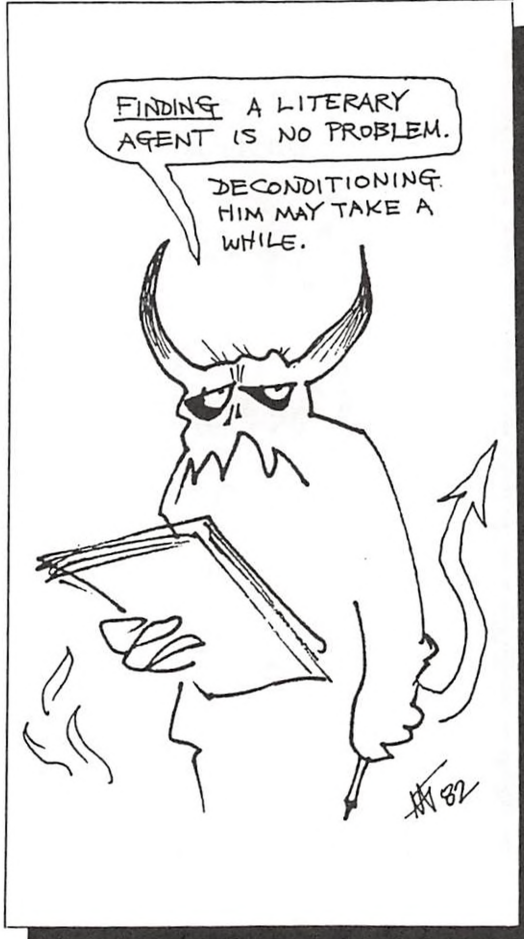
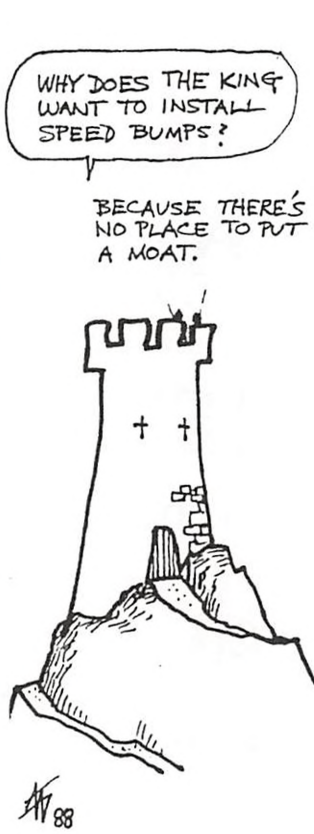
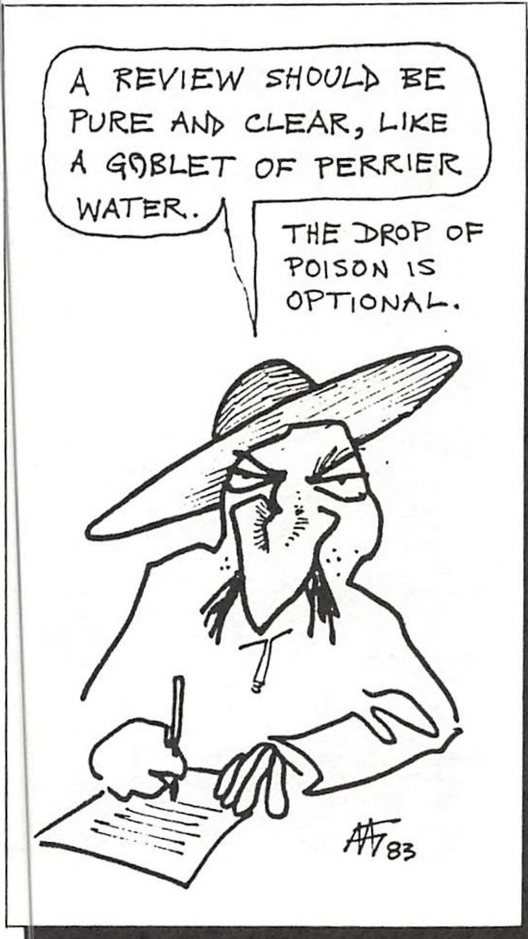
During one recent visit to Casa Gilliland I cleared a space to sit down and engaged our Fan Guest of Honor in a debate about the use and placement of the word balloon in modern cartooning. During a break in our discussion my humble host excused himself momentarily to check on the progress of his personal global conquest with his wife and strategy consultant, Dolly, allowing me a few moments to select the cartoons you are about to enjoy. Reaching into a nearby box of that morning's humorous masterpieces I randomly stuffed several dozen into my pants and slipped out the window and hurried back to my studio to prepare this portfolio.

I have no doubt that you all will appreciate these cartoons. Alexis Gilliland is a one of a kind talent in this cheaper by the dozen world of ours. ●

— Dan Steffan









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DISCLAVE HISTORY

DATES	SITE	FEATURED GUESTS	CHAIRMAN	COUNT
1950 4 30	Wardman Park*	Willy Ley	Bob Briggs	75
1951 4 29	Statler	Sam Moskowitz	Bob Briggs	23
1953 3 22	Statler	"Proyclave" (letters)	Bob Briggs	22
1958 5 10-11	Arva Motel	None	Bob Pavlat	65
1959 5 15-16	Diplomat Motel	None	Bob Pavlat	?
1960 5 20-21	Diplomat Motel	None	George Scithers	?
1961 5 12-13	Diplomat Motel	None	George Scithers	40
1962 5 12-13	Diplomat Motel	None	George Scithers	32
1965 5 7-8	Howard Johnson's—Wheaton	Chris & Sam Moskowitz	Banks Mebane	83
1966 5 13-15	Diplomat Motel	Roger Zelazny	Banks Mebane	99
1967 5 12-14	Regency Congress	Jack Gaughan	Jay Haldeman	?
1968 5 10-12	Regency Congress	Robert Silverberg	Jay Haldeman	?
1969 5 9-11	Skyline Inn	Lester del Rey	Jay Haldeman	?
1970 5 15-17	Skyline Inn	Murray Leinster (Will Jenkins)	Jay Haldeman	?
1971 5 28-30**	Shoreham	Terry Carr	Jay Haldeman	?
1972 5 26-28	Sheraton Park	Ben Bova	Jay Haldeman	?
1973 5 25-27	Sheraton Park	Gardner Dozois	Jay Haldeman	?
1974 5 25-27	Sheraton Park	Kelly Freas	Alexis Gilliland	284
1975 5 24-26	Sheraton Park	Gordon Dickson	Alexis Gilliland	360
1976 5 28-30	Sheraton Park	William Tenn (Phil Klass)	Alexis Gilliland	675
1977 5 28-30	Sheraton Park	Joe Haldeman	Alexis Gilliland	850
1978 5 26-28	Sheraton Park	Bob (Wilson) Tucker	Alexis Gilliland	1005
1979 5 25-27	Sheraton Park	Roger Zelazny Michael Whelan	Alan Huff	1485
1980 5 23-25	Hospitality House	Spider & Jeanne Robinson	Tom Schaad	?
1981 5 22-24	Sheraton National	Isaac Asimov	Alexis Gilliland	1400
1982 5 28-30	Sheraton National	Elizabeth Lynn Tom Miller	Jack Chalker & Eva Whitley	?
1983 5 27-29	Marriott Twin Bridges	George R.R. Martin Jack Gaughan	Alan Huff	1100
1984 5 25-27	Sheraton Inn—N.E.	Connie Willis Paul Yurek	Jane Wagner	900
1985 5 24-26	Sheraton Inn—N.E.	Ed Bryant Bob Walters	Michael J. Walsh	?
1986 5 23-25	Sheraton Inn—N.E.	William Gibson Steve Stiles	Jack Heneghan	?
1987 5 22-24	Sheraton Inn—N.E.	Gene Wolfe Barclay Shaw Chick Derry	Joe Mayhew	1350
1988 5 27-29	Howard Johnson's***	Barbara Hambly Jim Burns	Tom Schaad	1350
1989 5 26-28	Howard Johnson's	Lucius Shepard J. K. Potter Alexis & Doll Gilliland	Michael J. Walsh	?
1990 5 25-27	?	Mike Resnick	Eva Whitley	?

* *The Wardman Park became the Sheraton Park. Also the site of Discon II.*

** *By moving Disclave to Memorial Day weekend, we gained an additional night & day to "dead dog."*

*** *Formerly the Sheraton Inn—N.E.*



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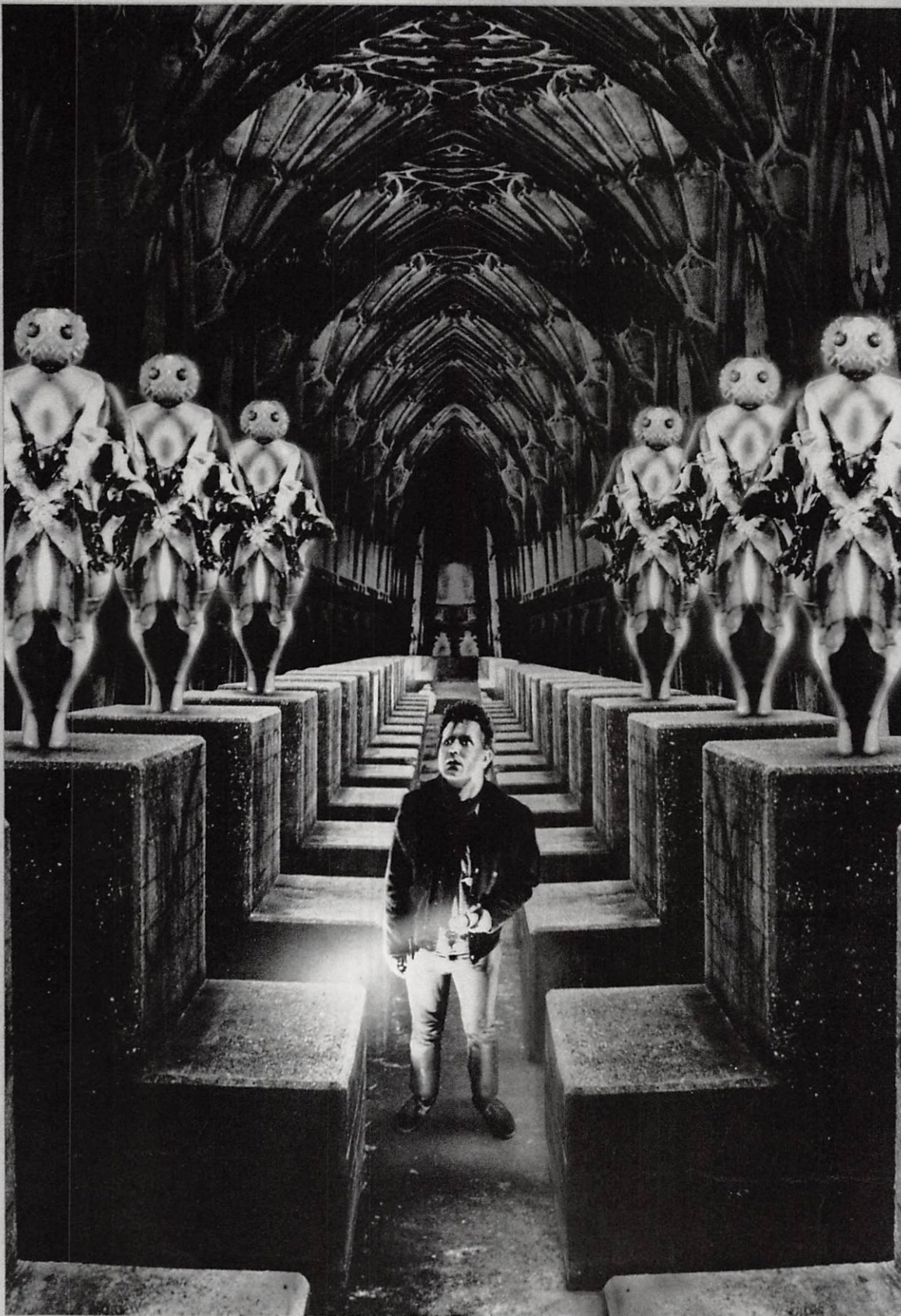
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