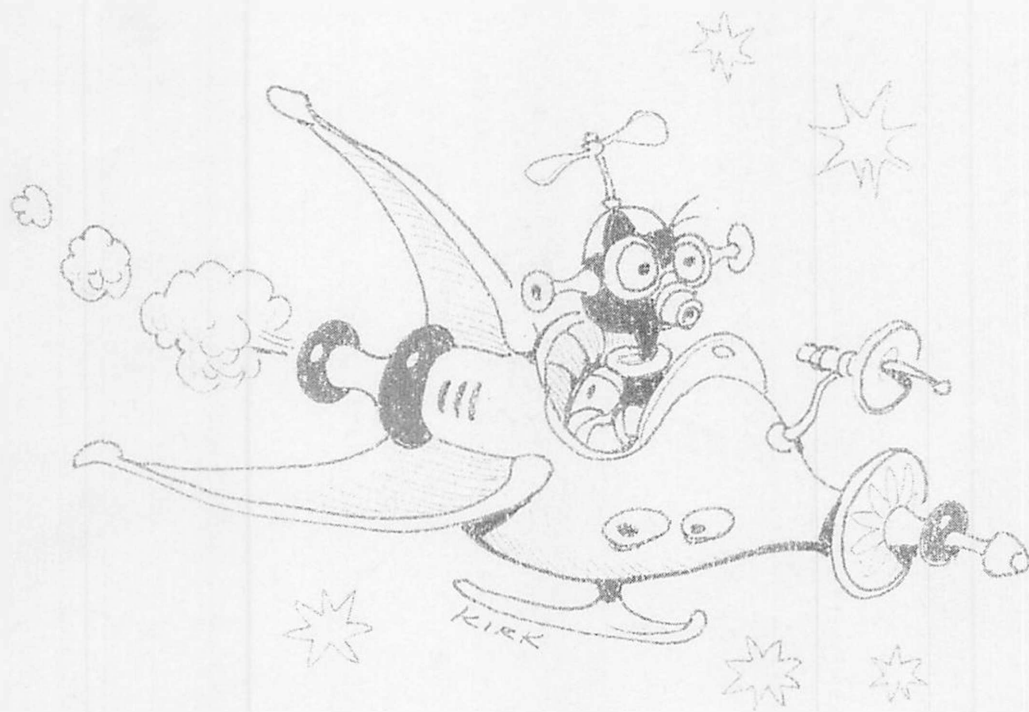


Neither Complete nor Conclusive



fanwriting by John Hertz

collected in honor of Boskone 50
the 50th Boston science fiction convention

published February 2013

2013

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Just buildings enough
That in February dusk
One catches the sun.

with cover art by Tim Kirk, and drawings from *Vanamonde*

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The Kirk cover first appears here. The Kelly Freas is used with permission. The others first appeared in my fanzine *Vanamonde*; the Foster was its 2010 header, he does a new one each year, bless him.

John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St., Los Angeles, CA 90057, U.S.A. "Loscon" and "Westercon" are service marks of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc., a California non-profit corporation; "World Science Fiction Convention" & "Worldcon", "WSFS" & "World Science Fiction Society", "Hugo Award", "NASFiC", of the World Science Fiction Society, an unincorporated literary association; "Boskone", "NESFA", trademarks of the New England Science Fiction Association, Inc., a Massachusetts non-profit corporation. Published February 2013 by NESFA.

My World and Welcome To It

There are many interesting things to do in the science fiction community. I feel lucky to take part in a few.

At s-f conventions people say I'm a good moderator of panel discussions; I'm often a judge, or Master of Ceremonies, in the costume competition we call a Masquerade; I lead Art Show tours; I've been leading Classics of S-F book talks. I'm a judge of the annual Rotsler Award. But let me commend fanwriting.

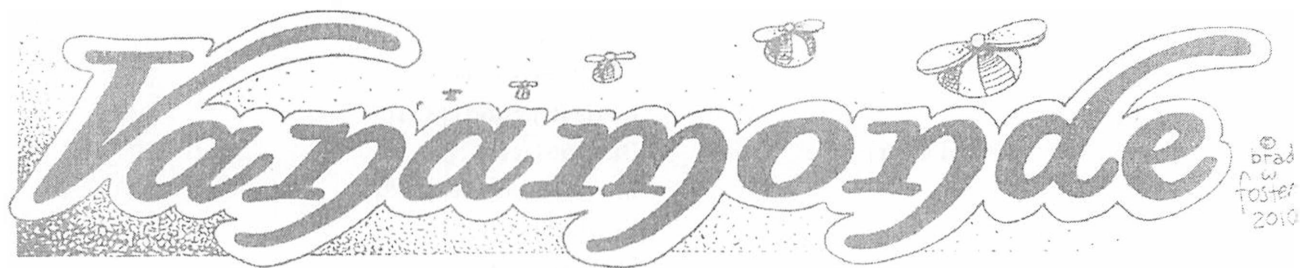
In our community *fanzine*, a word coined by Russell Chauvenet in the 1940s, means an amateur magazine by fans and for fans; and among us a fan is more likely to read Avram Davidson than to collect his typewriter ribbons. We like the light touch, and the taste of imagination. It is a pleasure and a kind of happy exercise to try to tell tales well, to see what might be worth talking about, and to contribute to the conversation.

This is the fourth collection of my fanwriting, following *West of the Moon* (2002, after I was Fan Guest of Honor at Lunacon XLIV, New York; produced by local club the Lunarians), *Dancing and Joking* (2005, after I was Fan GoH at Westercon LVII, West Coast Science Fantasy Conference, Arizona '04, called "ConKopelli" i.e. *con* + *Kokopelli*), and *On My Sleeve* (2009, after friends formed HANA, the Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance, sending me to and returning me from the 2007 Worldcon at Yokohama). Also mentioned here is the North America S-F Convention ("NASFiC"), held when the Worldcon is overseas.

"Neither complete nor conclusive" alludes to E.E. Smith's *Galactic Patrol* (1937), first of his Lensman series (prequels and sequels followed); wicked Helmuth keeps snarling it at underlings, whom our hero Kimball Kinnison keeps eluding. In 1992 it was the title of my reminiscence in the Rick Sneary memorial fanzine *Button-Tack* (L. & J. Moffatt and J. Hertz eds.; get the rev. 1993, which we proofread better). My own fanzine *Vanamonde* is named for a creature in Clarke's enduring classic *The City and the Stars* (1956).

The propeller beanie as a sign of fannishness came originally from Ray Nelson.

Sometimes I wonder how much to explain. You may know the pro writers, but not the fans; already I haven't introduced you to Russell Chauvenet, or Rick Sneary, or Len & June Moffatt, or Ray Nelson. Or you may wonder why I trouble over people, events, and jokes you've known for years. Obviousness is relative. Confucius said 2,500 years ago "When you know a thing, to recognize that you know it, and when you do not know a thing, to recognize that you do not know it, that is knowledge" (*Analects*, Book II, chapter 17).



Everybody attending a Worldcon sees a different one; this was mine. Followers of my *File 770* convention reports know that quotations of what I've been reading at the time tend to creep in.

The Worldcon I Saw

File 770 162

Renovation, the 69th World Science Fiction Convention, 17-21 Aug 2011
Atlantis, Peppermill, Marriott Courtyard Hotels; Convention Center; Reno, Nevada

Author Guest of Honor, Tim Powers; Graphic Artist, Boris Vallejo. Named with them, long-time S-F Book Club editor Ellen Asher, *Locus* editor Charles N. Brown (posthumous); named as special guests, the band Tricky Pixie and comics star Bill Willingham. Attendance 4,100; Art Show sales \$94,000 by 100 artists. Chair, Patty Wells.

Miracles do happen. I'd begged the con committee to send me my schedule, or at least the first thing on it; finally I phoned one of the Programming heads, who said "Nothing before your first Classics of S-F talk Thursday 1 p.m."; I booked a flight arriving on Wednesday at 3. Then a spy learned from the con Website that I had a panel discussion on Wednesday at 4. My baggage at once: short trip by taxi; I waved good-bye to Ellen & Murray Moore, made my driver stop at the Peppermill while I handed bags to a bellman, and walked into "How to Watch a Masquerade" a minute before it started.



Our moderator Byron Connell was *en route* by rail from Albany. Julie Zetterberg pinch-hit. With us, Susan de Guardiola, John O'Halloran, Pierre Pettinger. Many in the audience had never seen a Masquerade. I explained the Original and Re-Creation divisions, the Novice – Journeyman – Master classes. O'Halloran said the Masquerade was like a variety show. Pettinger, like *haiku* theater. Zetterberg and de Guardiola, don't hesitate to volunteer. Or perhaps enter. Great fans have. From the audience, how does judging work? Pettinger said, we tailor awards to what we see. Zetterberg explained workmanship judging. I said, there's usually "half time" entertainment while judges are out deliberating. The Masquerade is an artform the s-f community made, originally a dress-up party as its name suggests, by the 1960s an on-stage costume competition, inventive, illustrative, beautiful, impossible with our resources but we do it somehow.

On the right in the Exhibit Hall was the Fanzine Lounge, a bar and a snack stand next to it. The snack stand had in advance filled jugs with simple syrup, which keeps well; they used a lever-style machine and brought lemons: squeezed on demand. Lounge host Chris Garcia had been told to attach nothing to the walls. A dark curtain hung before them. The con signshop was a logjam. His computer printed F A N Z I N

E S, one letter to a page, which he attached to the curtain. The Art Show and Dealers' Room were at the Pieces of imagination, pictures of life, and disquisitions of literature.

Johnson

far end of the hall, the Dealers' Room with a gratifying proportion of books.

Tom Veal and Becky Thomson had mounted the Christine Valada Portrait Project, three hundred monochrome photographs mostly of s-f pros over twenty-five years, we depending on space exhibiting some; I edit the labels; the earlier pictures may be all the more valuable because, with time passed in the subject's life, one can see how acute the portrait was. Next to this was the Fan Gallery, curated by Chaz Baden and run along a different perspective, an attempt to represent important people using photographers as they came to hand rather than a single artist's work which did not undertake the question of importance.

Two other more or less standing exhibits, in the sense that at a Worldcon someone usually mounts them, were the Hugo Award trophies to date – the rocket ship is standard, each Worldcon designs its own base – and tokens of past Worldcons and the adventures of bidding for the privilege of producing one.

Glass cases held historic paperbacks from the collection of Donald Gray. One was *The Pocket Book of Science Fiction*, first ever. Among Ace Doubles, *The Big Time*, Leiber's first Hugo-winning novel. Book-movie pairs put a book next to its movie's publicity image. On the other side of these, the Japan table. Help with relief from the March earthquake and *tsunami* was on all our minds. Throughout the hall big Vallejo banners hung overhead. So did the proud World S-F Society banner.

I'd bought a fresh copy of *On Stranger Tides*, but Jim Mann's book talk was also on Wednesday at 4. Later he said double the crowd he'd expected showed up, then when he explained Powers wouldn't be there, half left. I was glad so many people wanted to meet Powers. In the Fanzine Lounge bar were Randy Byers, Carl Juarez, Mark Plummer. David Cake the Down Under Fan Fund delegate arrived. Juarez talked of playing "mash-ups" for people who didn't know the underlying music; respect for the beginner mind. We

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all talked of fanart and raising new crops. I try to do a Rotsler Award exhibit at Worldcons, and the Website <www.scifiinc.org/rotsler> with Baden, partly for people who don't already know.

In the Peppermill lobby around midnight Anton Lien said he could follow *Vanamonde*. He had no news of a Scandinavia party. Game machines were everywhere. Their flashing lights and electronic sounds recalled the Penny Palace in Van Vogt's *Weapon Shops of Isher*. Greg Benford said, in *The World of Null-A*

Studied everything, as a skillful comedian does.

Dumas

the Machine is a test of intellect, these are the opposite. Are they nevertheless a triumph of s-f? In the Terrace Bar a man asked about my hat. "An s-f con here! Really!" I found the con Website with his electronic thingummy when he couldn't, and answered his questions when it didn't. Laurie Mann said "I died on stage." It was Music Night.

Godson had been reprised from Boskone, a musical (based on the '94 short story) whose manuscript Chris Kovacs found while compiling the NESFA Press *Collected Zelazny*. David Grubbs was Death. I heard more from David Bratman at the San Antonio for 2013 Worldcon party in the Atlantis. IBC, Kemper, and Virgil's root beer were gone, A&W was left, I drank that. Tom Becker and James Shields discussed baseball. As with the Masquerade, Becker and I agreed, when the tech to show close-ups was added it created a new medium; the close-ups' attraction, though they were valuable, tended to distract from a sense of the whole.

Marjii Ellers used to say hall costumes, the imaginative garb some build to stroll the halls at a con, are daily wear for alternative worlds. They're designed to be met; no good on stage. Prowling judges pin rosettes on. I was the chief at Renovation. The con gave me name-badge ribbons. No good: the award has to go on the costume, or it loses its *Exemplary!* effect. After daylight on Thursday I got some help and brought back likely-looking supplies from a Michael's art & craft shop. No good: the veeblefetzers wouldn't fit the potrzebie. Jill Eastlake arrived with leftover Denvention III yellow silk roses. These inspired Becker. The photo in *File 770 160* shows me working to his successful design. I set up an assembly team and went to lead my book talk.

The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet has strangeness and charm. I pointed out its note on indexing, the Wise Men's records which could only be used by reading through a whole scroll. From the audience: it catches the feeling of building a space ship from Christmas lights. Another: I first read it as a boy, now I've been a space engineer thirty-four years. Another saw our room was half women. Another: what

about "You must never doubt"? We looked at where and how that came in. Another: the prose, and the science stuff, are shining, effortless. See, if you like, my own comments at *Collecting Science Fiction*

Isn't the writing of good prose an emotional excitement?

Helen de Vine

Books <www.collectingsf.com> under "A Fan's View".

Todd Dashoff the Exhibits head had told me to bring ten pegboard panels' worth of Rotsler Award. Something went wrong; he still hadn't resolved it; would I take one panel, double-size? The Moores helped me shrink to the occasion. I somehow worked in one sample for each winner since we began with Steve Stiles in '98. Into the Fanzine Lounge came Vivian Perry, gowned to the nines. I introduced her to awed men, whom she told Camaro stories. She'd bought her latest on E-bay. Shiny spots on the flywheel showed the previous owner hadn't clutched well. Her joy at high-tech driving and car innards was sparkle to her Champagne. Across the hall a bare-bellied woman in bat wings posed for Bob Eggleton, Winona Nelson, Anthony Palumbo, Martina Pilcerova, and Fairlane

Force, deftness, and I
Arguing form and substance
As the ink lays down.

[*Vanamonde* 858]

Vincente to make five different paintings. Eggleton's palette was a paper plate. It was Art Night.

I led my Art Show tour. I didn't have to include the spectacular exhibit from Ken Moore's collection because Naomi Fisher was giving tours of that. Peggy Rae Sapienza and Art Show chief Elayne Pelz somehow worked in panels of Japanese art for earthquake relief. The Japanese knew European images better than we know *The Tale of Genji* or *The Forty-Seven Rōnin*. Frank Lurz among his astronomicals showed a machine like George Pal's *War of the Worlds* hovering in Earth sky; we see no force beams, only explosion bursts; a larger and thus nearer craft above. An Arlin Robins bronze flying horse touched its rock with one wing. In Pilcerova's acrylic & oil "Secrets" a guitarist lounged on an airboat whose bat-sail, and jet engine ready below, drew a taut chain just above water past two steel ships and a slice of light.

Mark Olson reprised "Who's That Artist?" from L.A.con IV. As he and I saw when I hosted in '06 the moderator, showing an image, at the most fruitful coaxes from experts not only their guess of who the artist was, but why they thought so. With *The Wanderer* on my mind, I was struck by Ron Walotsky's cover for the '86 Tor reprint, the saucer a strong diagonal, the Wanderer its gold and blue background. In the Atlantis, a combined party by the seated Seattle ('12) and Olive Country ('13) Westercons, and the Utah for

'14 bid. The London for '14 Worldcon bid served orange barley-water. At the San Antonio party Kurt Baty said "We've defeated fandom. It's 1:30 and we The bright beings who store their honey in the cells of our hearts.

Yeats

have food left." Paula Lieberman said "Last time you bid, you ran out."

Friday 11 a.m., Jane Frank's Art Show tour. Carved Balinese-style dragons by Laura & Paul Bernier had signs stating the material used, hibiscus, rosewood; I later learned they made their own tools and in '08 had won Best in Show at – yes – Dragon*Con. Vincent Villafranca casts his own bronze. We talked of displaying art at home. Frank knew a lot about that, also about Vallejo and his collaboration with Julie Bell. Teresa Nielsen Hayden and Ctein's tour, 2 p.m. Ctein was impressed by Richard Man's photos, from this source high praise. We talked of composition; he showed what difference it made how a picture was cropped. We saw how Stiles, with his cartoonist's eye, got the expression of a face in five lines.

Regency Dancing was scheduled against the Masquerade. People groaned to me, but this year I had nothing to do with arranging or teaching it. Since I was no judge or Master of Ceremonies in the Masquerade either, if the show was short I might catch some of each. With no holiday weekend, and the Masquerade on Friday night, it might be. Directors Kevin Roche & Andrew Trembley had printed a program. Wells in a glorious Sue Renhard gown introduced the show. She said she had the power to chase men who had the heads of donkeys (like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), not hard to find at a Worldcon. Kaja & Phil Foglio were M.C.s; Toni Lay, Mary Miller, John O'Halloran, judges; Karen Dick, Lindsay Tallman, workmanship judges. Man was Official Photographer.

I liked the scrappy – sorry, bad pun – Tin Woman in "Wizard of Oz" (Original; Best Workmanship, Journeyman): Kathryn and Zachary Brant; Theresa Costanzo; Ann, Ellie, Mark Ezell; Thor Halbert; Barbara Hoffert; Sandi King. What a difference a D makes. The wings of "Phoenix" (Original; Persistence of Vision Award, Novice; Best Workmanship in Class), Elizabeth Mittman, sparkled in main light, in dark glowed gold. Vicki Glover made "Nothing to Wear" (Original; Best Journeyman) on site, crowned, a dragon robe lined with stars. Karen McWilliams' "Undine" (Original; Most Elegant, Master; Best Dyework in Class) danced splendidly, bronze flashing in blue, rods doubling her body length overhead,

The spirit of poetry which breathes through all their extravagance.

Jeffrey

she rising from and returning to the flat stage. Lance Ikegawa's "Blue Meanie Blues" (Re-Creation; Most

Nostalgic, Master; Best Transformation of Materials) won the audience, his mask and claws fine. In "Music of the Spheres" (Original; Best Workmanship, Master), Sandy & Pierre Pettinger, Randy Smith, two gowned helmed faceless figures brought Things to a black and white man; roundels on the two breastplates lit; the man opened flowers into a globe. It had a sense of event. It read at the back of the hall.

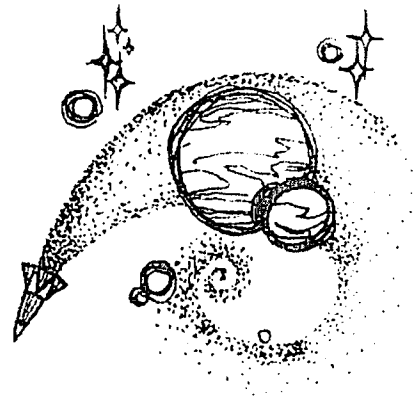
I ducked "half time" and saw the awards in the newsletter next day. Backstage, Roche with everything on his hands was expecting me. When Alan Winston at Westercon LXIV had added a second night of Regency Dancing, I didn't want to steal his thunder so borrowing a Roche costume dressed as Vanamonde van Mekhan from *Girl Genius*. When Renovation gave Winston the whole thunder, I decided to reprise. I kept the beanie; Phil Foglio looked askance; I said I loved espresso, and beat it. The Peppermill was a labyrinth, but I was used

Fans are people who can take a perfectly nice conversation and turn it into a discussion of theology or lasers.

Debbie Notkin

to it by then, and indeed it wasn't so bad for any of us who knew the Klein Bottle Hotel from Lunacons. I took Larry Niven with me. We arrived about a third before the end. Ulrika O'Brien and Janice Gelb were in Regency gowns. Gelb had been too busy at Aussiecon IV; I danced with her.

Saturday 1 p.m., *From the Earth to the Moon*. As promised I brought for a visual aid the 1978 Walter J. Miller annotated translation (haven't seen the 1995 edition). In the context of Verne's day the science is remarkably good. His people's engagement with it op-



erates his story. His style treats by implication what some authors bring onstage. From the audience: what pacing. Another: the dry humor, not only the Gun Club, but the end of the duel. Another: how well set up is Ardan's entrance. To me his "I will not return" is one of the great lines. His conversion of Nicholls is like Pericles' (in *The Peloponnesian War*) "I could tell you a long story about what is to be gained, but I prefer that you fall in love."

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The DUFF and TAFF (Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) Reception was in the Fanzine Lounge. Anne & Brian Gray the North America TAFF Administrators made paper crowns, "TAFF" for James Coxon, "DUFF" for Cake; I donated fixings from the hall-costume awards, whose making and replenishing indeed went on all weekend. Judging with me were Connell, Lay, Suford Lewis, experts; Kelly Buehler; Tom Whitmore, who has done everything, bless him; Sandra Childress and Flick, new to it and saying it was a blast. Meanwhile Byers had been collating WOOF (World Organization Of Faneditors, the yearly amateur publishing ass'n invented by Bruce Pelz, done at Worldcons). I had duly brought Roger Hill's zine. Byers attracted a swell gang of contributors and even got a Stu Shiffman cover. We trooped over to the stage for the TAFF-DUFF auction, Liz Zitzow auctioneer. A Tuckerization (like e.g. Bobby Bloch in *The Lincoln Hunters*; more recently authors have helped fund-raising by letting one be auctioned) in the forthcoming Niven-Benford collaboration – their first – went to Chris Marble, the con Dockmaster, beating Joe Siclari. The Grays keeping the tally told me we raised \$2,700.

White tie for Hugo Night. In the Japan video was Takayuki Karahashi, one of the best '07 Worldcon interpreters, who was at the Unit One reactor when the *tsunami* struck. Dave Kyle in his red blazer gave the Big Heart to Gay Haldeman; ovation. Seanan McGuire in green satin gave the Campbell to Lev Grossman, who knelt for his tiara. Shiffman gave the Best Fan-artist Hugo to Brad Foster, Scott Bobo accepting. Coxon giving Best Fanwriter to Claire Brialey said "I told you." Cake gave Best Fanzine to *The Drink Tank*; Garcia and co-editor James Bacon managed to reach the stage; Garcia melted. He threw off his coat uncovering the Fred Flintstone T-shirt, sat, helplessly let Bacon talk, finally spoke. Robert Silverberg giving Best Novella said "I am not a cruel man... the very first time I was a nominee.... and I vowed I would never put anyone through that. Connie, on the other hand.... Cordelia is a Shakespearean name.... *King Lear* ... he had three daughters.... I was never very much interested in having children...." after which Powers gave Best Novel to *Blackout / All Clear* and Willis thanked Iago Silverberg. It was 2 a.m. when Brialey got to the Fanzine Lounge by Night, in the Atlantis. We burst into cheers.

San Antonio won unopposed, to be Lonestarcon III. Stiles at 11 a.m. gave a Rotsler Award slide show Supreme and on the whole only moderately irritable.

Andrew Gurr

(in fact probably PowerPoint or something). He kindly acknowledged me in the audience – my co-judges Mike Glycer and Brialey being at the con but variously unable to attend – and used several of the images I'd picked for the Website. In a sense the Award belongs to its winners and its sponsor; in a sense to Rotsler, though

he never imagined it and one can only guess what he may think if he perceives it now; fanart, to its authors and readers (not limiting such terms to art in words): in a wider sense, both to our community; and perhaps, like other art, to anyone. There is art too in finding among the particulars of s-f, and of fandom, a universal.

The Wanderer. From the audience: is it dated? timeless? It's certainly full of ironies and questionable narrators. Another: how "hard s-f" it is. Another: from a man we hold a fantasy author. All the more striking in this book which is so romantic – and anti-romantic – and emotional – and critical (not mere fault-finding) of emotions – and whose emotions? Another: how advanced can Tigerishka be if she thinks an Earth cat is sapient? Nor did only she among the Wanderer's catfolk; and the Wanderer proves to be a multitude of sapient species. Paul Cook in the audience said he listened to an audio version on his Stairmaster. Another: how often have we been shown a wandering planet? Another: compare *Lucifer's Hammer*. Or the poetry to Bradbury's. As with *Lolita* it is helpful that the scathing of men's sex fantasy is written by a man. Another: could the police be the good guys?

I found myself talking with Greg Manchess, who's painted for *National Geographic* and U.S. postage stamps and Louis L'Amour covers and Tor. With Irene Gallo standing by I thanked her again for her part in the Hugo Award logograph. I tried to compare the Ken Moore exhibit with our Art Show. Manchess said "Once, we were classically trained." This brought to mind A.J. Budrys' *There are now no editors, only tal-*

I who was given in a dream the brush of many colors
Wish to write on petals a message to the clouds
of morning.

Li Shang-yin

ent scouts with "Editor" on the door and my own Why wait to be taught? Jane & Scott Dennis agreed it had something to do with clarity and focus. Perhaps we flee these thinking them cookie cutters.

Strictly speaking none of this had been the Worldcon. Wells at Opening Ceremonies had omitted to open it. She finally did so at Closing Ceremonies five minutes before closing. Perhaps the dates before August 21 mentioned above should be deleted. The Hugos. The site selection. I may never have to give a legal opinion.

The Hospitality Suite was an Atlantis ballroom. Both edges of this sword bit. A Dead Dog Party in such a room may have to end early. Closed parties I mostly don't mention in my reports, but I hereby invoke the favor of the fannish god Roscoe upon Lise Eisenberg & Moshe Feder; Keith Kato; the Cincinnati Fantasy Group, renowned for good fellowship whether winds blow hot or cold. Eisenberg said her first directions at Reno had been given by a Klingon and interpreted by a human. In the Fanzine Lounge by Night,

Bill Taylor, Mark Richards, and I, joined by hosting Colin Hinz when he could, argued whether art was extra or of the essence.

Fisher met me for Monday brunch. I'd hoped to learn more about the Moore collection. To others Moore showed the clown – he gave people the Bird – but Fisher saw the man who crawled into a culvert to rescue a kitten, who won the respect of Kelly Freas, Ed

Emshwiller, Richard Powers. She had given a tour each day of the exhibit, two on Art Night. That the exhibit appeared at all had been one of those s-f con miracles, with disaster, resilience, solitude and help taking turns. Roche & Trembley arrived. The con had been generous to them too. Most of a con may be a miracle.

Grab That Torch

Len Moffatt (1923-2010)

Vanamonde 913

I gave him a gilt bottle of mimeograph correction fluid for his 50th birthday. I dressed as Auguste Dupin for him in a presentation at the detective-fiction convention Bouchercon the year he co-chaired. I drank Chivas Regal with him. Len Moffatt was of First Fandom, that happy band active among us at least as early as the first World Science Fiction Convention in 1939. Born in Arizona, by his teens he was a founder of the Western Pennsylvania Science

Fictioneers, doing fanzines – a word not yet invented – and corresponding with

fans around the United States and United Kingdom. In World War II he joined the Navy like his

ancestors and served as a hospital corpsman with the Marines; he was in Nagasaki after the atomic bomb. In

1946 he joined the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. He always pronounced

LASFS to rhyme with *mass sass*. He did a lot of rhyming, sometimes as

the clown Pike Pickens, sometimes clowning himself.

Some fans sell s-f, some become quite active as pros. In 1949 the LASFS began a yearly Fanquet honoring the member who sold the most words in the previous year. Moffatt tied for that honor in 1951. In 2004 the LASFS gave him its Forry Award, named after Forry Ackerman, for lifetime achievement in s-f, putting him in the company of Ray Bradbury, Kelly Freas, and C.L. Moore. In 2008 his poem "What a Friend We Have in Sherlock" appeared in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. Detective fiction has long been our next-door neighbor. Bouchercon, of which Len and his second wife June were co-founders, was named for Tony Boucher, a top and if I may say so tony editor and author there and here. It

gave them its Anthony Award for lifetime achievement in 1999.

Len was probably Rick Sneary's best friend. Both were active in the Outlanders, one of the many s-f clubs outside the LASFS – often overlapping the LASFS membership – that have flourished from time to time. Sneary lived in South Gate. In 1948 he began, first as a joke, to use the slogan *South Gate in '58*. It caught on. The Worldcon moves around so as to be each year in someone's back yard. In 1957 the con was in London. It voted for South Gate. Be careful what you wish. Luckily the mayors of South Gate and Los Angeles by joint proclamation constituted the premises of the Hotel Alexandria as South Gate for the duration and purposes of the Worldcon. The con was called "Solacon" in honor of the combination. It also combined with that year's Westercon, the West Coast Science Fantasy Conference. Len was in the thick of it all. A decade and a half later he was Fan Guest of Honor at Westercon XXV.

Besides fanzines we have apas, amateur publishing associations, which distribute fanzines. We did not invent apas but we gave them our own life. Our first was the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, older than Worldcons. The distinction between science fiction and fantasy has long been known and blurred. The Moffatt FAPAZine was *Moonshine*. This was appropriate. Among Len's achievements was fan fiction – in our sense, i.e. fiction about fans – that Terry Carr thought was factual anecdote. Len and June were in APA-L, much younger than FAPA, over thirty years until Len's death. June still is.

Conviviality, hospitality were with Len's wit, amplified, if possible, by June. Together clubmen and party hosts – the suffix *-man* is not masculine – they also welcomed and sponsored newcomers with open arms, and discernment, for them no paradox.

But who shall sing it?
Art is long, life short, and we
Ready and daring,
Dream of a future we can
Send our accomplishments to. [825]

Neither Complete nor Conclusive

Fine fannish things happened at Moffatt House and when the Moffatts went abroad. They went well abroad in 1973 as the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund delegates, nominated by Terry Jeeves, Ethel Lindsay, Juanita Coulson, Fred Patten, and Roy Tackett, attending the British national s-f con, and publishing their TAFF report in good time. In 1981 they were Fan Guests of Honor at our local s-f con Loscon. In 1994 they were given the Evans-Freehafer Award for service to the LASFS. Shortly before I had the honor of co-editing with them the Rick Sneary memorial fanzine *Button-Tack*. It seems like yesterday.

He was a lion. I loved him. Good-bye.

Shibano Takumi (1926-2010)

Vanamonde 897

<i>dôshin no</i>	The awakening
<i>okori wa hana no</i>	Of faith began when the flower
<i>subomu toki</i>	Was still in the bud.

Kyorai

tr. D. Keene, *World Within Walls* p. 113
(rev. 1999)

Any seed might flower beautifully. Some do. An especially fine flower might rouse wonder at whether its beauty is more extraordinary or more ordinary. It might have just the shape, color, scent of its kind. The better we perceive it the more we admire how fully it is what it could be.

A son born to a Japanese army officer in Ishikawa eighty years ago might be found with an observant creative mind apt for science and upon finishing high school be drafted into the Physico-Chemical Research Association. He might attend the Tokyo Institute of Technology, marry, and become a high school mathematics teacher. He might be moved to write and able to sell a science fiction story, a year before graduation. He might persuade members of the Unidentified Flying Objects in Japan's Skies Research Group to branch with him into publishing an amateur s-f magazine. It might feature early appearances by Japanese who became major authors, translators, and critics. In five years he might find himself chairing the first national s-f convention. In fifty years he might find himself Fan Guest of Honor at the first World Science Fiction Convention in Japan.

That was Shibano Takumi. In 1950 he took the literary name Kozumi Rei (i.e. "cosmic ray") and in 1957 began the amateur magazine *Uchûjin*, in Japanese "cosmic dust" but resembling "space man". At his death a memorial zine, to which I had the honor of contributing, took for its title a Japanese proverb revised from *Dust becomes a mountain to Cosmic dust becomes a star*. The first issues of *Uchûjin* were handwritten on mimeograph stencils. By 1960 it was

typeset. Eventually five volumes of its best stories were professionally published. My trip to Japan for the 2007 Worldcon under the one-time fund HANA (Hertz Across to Nippon Alliance) was reported in *Uchûjin* 201.

The first Japanese natcon was in 1962. Shibano met Horrible Old Roy Tackett, a U.S. Marine stationed in Japan, and began writing for Tackett's fanzine *Dynatron*. In 1968 a one-time fund brought Shibano to the Worldcon at Berkeley. In 1969 he published two young-adult s-f novels, *Superhuman "Plus X"* and *Operation Moonjet*; in 1977 a third, *Revolt in North Pole City*. After 26 years he quit teaching and began a career as a translator. In 1978 he was principal author of *The World of Popular Literature*. He translated Anderson, Asimov, Clarke (notably "The Sentinel"), Clement, Niven (notably "Inconstant Moon" and *Ringworld*), Norton, sixty books. Greg Benford was one of the people he routinely verified scientific points with.

From 1979 he attended most Worldcons, often with his wife Sachiko. From 1981 the Shibanos, often joined by other leading Japanese fans and pros, at the beginning of Hugo ceremonies presented *Seiun* (the Japanese national awards) to those whose writings had won Best Translated Work at the natcon in Japan. The Shibano Takumi Award was founded in 1982 to honor those who perform great work for Japanese fandom. World SF, an international organization of s-f pros begun in 1976, gave him its President's Award for independence of thought in 1984, and its Karel Award for translation in 1991. In 1987 he received the Big Heart, our highest service award.

Red flashes, green flowers,
Each vivid for a moment,
At the turning sun,
Cheer us in these our short days,
Help us keep in mind far friends. [866]

In 1993 he received a Worldcon committee Special Award. To the 1996 Worldcon he could have said, as Benford did in 1999, "Certainly. Thank you. Are you asking me to be Fan Guest of Honor or Pro Guest of Honor?" Yano Tetsu, who also received the Big Heart in 1987, who wrote hundreds of books and received the Karel, and who wrote regularly for *Uchûjin*, said "We had a network that allowed us to meet, and I feel blessed that Shibano-san was here to create it. All of Japanese science fiction and fandom was born as a result." In 2007 he was Fan Guest of Honor a second time. Opening and Closing Ceremonies were standing room only, with standing ovations.

The long-hoped-for '07 bid was launched in 2000. The '00 Westercon (West Coast Science Fantasy Conference) was at Honolulu. I had occasion to put on Japanese formal wear. Across the street from

our hotel was an establishment that dressed the local Cherry Blossom Queen festival whose winner went to meet the Empress in Tokyo; one floor for women's clothes, one for men's. Takumi and Sachiko and their daughter Miho took me in hand. Seven years later, when Miho's parents had earned a rest after the Worldcon and she had to rehearse in a Mozart opera, she connected me with a *kimono* club, an s-f club, and many kinds of *saké*. The kindness of parents can flower further in their children.

Following his destiny? Doing what came naturally? Recognizing opportunity? By the One Strange rule s-f is *Ordinary things happening to extraordinary people, or extraordinary things happening to ordinary people*. Shibano Takumi did what he could. Some day that may not be extraordinary.

Edd Cartier (1914-2008)
Vanamonde 861; *Chunga* 17

Edd Cartier died on Christmas Day, as had Karel Capek seventy years earlier. Vincent Di Fate in his superb illustrated survey of science fiction art *Infinite Worlds* (1997) says (pp. 46-48, 137-39),

Sure, precise pen-and-ink style ... his color paintings were quite exceptional.... vignettes, pictures without clearly defined borders that fade gradually to the white of the paper ... require carefully thought-out silhouettes and a strong design sense.... few artists can capture the exaggerated gesture better.... the best ... to employ humor with any regularity were Frank Kelly Freas, Wallace A. Wood, and of course Edward Daniel Cartier.... facile, well-drawn ... illustrations began to appear in 1936 in Street & Smith's moody detective magazine, *The Shadow*.... distinguished [by] ... fluidity and action. Less somber, less shackled by the brooding *film noir* conventions ... an airy vigor ... dead-on characterization.... In 1939 ... *Unknown* was born and Cartier became its key artist ... cleverly conceived, comical aliens were something of a trademark.... an *Astounding* regular.... important work for both Gnome Press and Fantasy Press.... especially influential during the great SF movie boom of the 1950s.

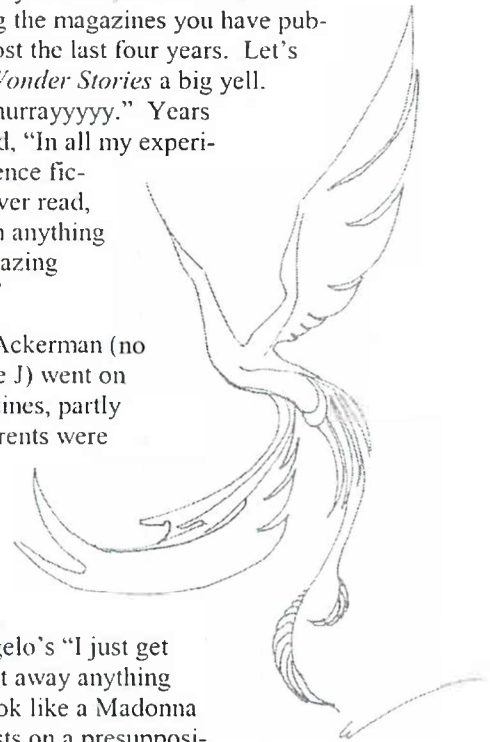
Cartier won the 1992 World Fantasy Convention's Life Achievement Award; in 1990 First Fandom, that happy band active by at least 1939, placed him in its Hall of Fame. *Edd Cartier, the Known and the Unknown* was published as a limited edition in 1977. During World War II he enlisted in the Army, drew maps in Britain, and fought in France and Germany as a machine gunner with a tank battalion; in the Battle of the Bulge he earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, then another Heart when his hospital train was blown up. He married in 1943; at the Pratt Institute he got a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1953. He illustrated Anderson, Asimov, de Camp, Dickson, Heinlein, Hubbard, Sturgeon. Irene Gallo said he was equally adept at seem-

ingly effortless figure drawing, creature design, and hardware. Robert Weinberg said he was perhaps the finest pen-and-ink illustrator ever to work for the pulp-paper magazines. His wit was bright even in the dark; he could be simple, could be strange; he was vital, as a comedian must be; he gave us of his best, and our best. *R.I.P.*

Forry Ackerman (1916-2008)
Vanamonde 853

He seems to have been first inspired by a Frank Paul cover illustrating Hyatt Verrill's "Beyond the Pole" on the October 1926 *Amazing*. He rang Bob Olsen's Beverly Hills doorbell and got an autograph, and cookies. In the fall of 1929 his first published letter was in *Science Wonder Quarterly*; from San Francisco, where he then lived, he wrote, "Although I am only twelve years old, I have taken a delight in reading the magazines you have published for almost the last four years. Let's give *Science Wonder Stories* a big yell. Hip, hip, hip, hurrayyyyy." Years later Olsen said, "In all my experiences with science fiction, I have never read, seen, or known anything that was so amazing as 4e himself."

Forrest J Ackerman (no period after the J) went on writing to prozines, partly because his parents were more willing to buy issues issues that had a letter from him, a method which, like Michelangelo's "I just get a chisel and cut away anything that doesn't look like a Madonna and Child," rests on a presupposition. Linus Hogenmiller of Missouri saw Ackerman's name in a prozine and struck up a correspondence, the first of thousands Ackerman maintained. By 1930 the two teenagers had started a Boys' Scientifiction Club, which involved Julius Schwartz and Mort Weisinger, and resulted in *The Time Traveller*. Soon came the Science Fiction League. Ackerman was a charter member. It tested members' knowledge with a questionnaire. Asked who were the nation's two most active fans, Ackerman replied "Remember our modesty." This was listed as a correct answer.



A straight-A student in high school, he quit the University of California after a year and got work as a

typist. He was a flame for Esperanto and, in English, for endless wordplay: he wrote under the pseudonyms Weaver Wright, Jack Erman, and Claire Voyant; his own name took many forms, like his spelling and paragraphing, in what became known as Ackermanese. He was part of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society when it began, and its fanzine *Imagination* and successor *Voice of the Imagi-Nation*. The LASFS adopted his colors, green and brown. His 1941 business Assorted Services, doing anything for anyone, is said to have been adapted by Heinlein for "We Also Walk Dogs" (1941). Came the war; inducted in 1942, he moaned he would be inept at Army life, but made sergeant – adding the pseudonym Sgt. Ack-Ack (anti-aircraft guns were "A.A.", under some phonetic alphabets "ack-ack") – and editor of his base's newspaper, which finished second in a contest of 2,000.

He attended the first World Science Fiction Convention (New York, 1939), where he began our costuming tradition by dressing as a Man of the Future based on the 1936 film *Things to Come*. He was guest of honor at the first international s-f con in London (1951), and was given the first fan Hugo Award (1953). He coined the nicknames Chicon, Nycon, Pacificon, and the expression *sci-fi* – which he meant as a compliment, since at the time sound-reproduction technology had just improved to the point of being called *high fidelity*, or *hi-fi*. By 2002 his weekly open house, at his home the Ackerman-sion, had hosted 50,000 visitors. He was a formidable collector: 300,000 books, Bela Lugosi's *Dracula* ring, a meticulous replica of Walter Schultze-Mittendorf's robot for the 1927 film *Metropolis*, a hallway of Paul artwork he called the Paulway. In 2001 a 75th-anniversary edition of the *Metropolis* novelization had an introduction by him. He saw the film a hundred times.

His first pro writing was "Earth's Lucky Day" (1936) with Francis Flagg. In ten years as a literary agent his clients included Isaac Asimov, Charles Beaumont, Ray Bradbury, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Ron Hubbard, Curt Siodmak, and A.E. van Vogt. Fifty of his own stories were published, including the world's shortest (1973). His wife Wendayne's knowing German led to an adventure of translating and publishing a hundred forty *Perry Rhodan* novels.

You pulled espressos perfectly,
Your whiskey pours were good and strong,
But Sam, you made the pints too long!

Your rowboats were a winning shape,
Your sweet canoes well earned a gong,
But Sam, you made the punts too long!

Your lifts and carries were a dream,
Your leaps, applauded by the throng,
But Sam, you made the pointes too long! [909]

He had cameo appearances in two hundred movies. He more or less fell into *Famous Monsters of Film-land*, where for twenty years he was editor, writer, chief cook and bottle-washer, and blithe spirit, leading to more pseudonyms, Dr. Acula, the Ackermonger, and probably his widest fame.

Although he was an atheist, he was an angel. He got Bradbury to the first Worldcon, long before professional success, and backed his fanzine, among many others. He met Walt Willis in Ireland and drove him across America, a punsters' synergy we fortunately lack a full record of. He hosted Tetsu Yano for six months, visited Japan twice, and was one of only two foreigners to receive the Japanese Fandom Award; Takumi Shibano called him the greatest benefactor linking Japanese and U.S. fandom. He and Walt Daugherty founded the Big Heart Award, Ackerman administering it until the millennium; in 2006 we could finally give it to him. He was at the 3,507th LASFS meeting, as was I but he had been at the first; it was our 70th anniversary; he took the gavel and brought us to order, a hyperbole which may be allowed. For decades he was the first person any of us met at a science fiction convention. If he was wrong, that may now be true in Heaven. *Ave atque vale.*

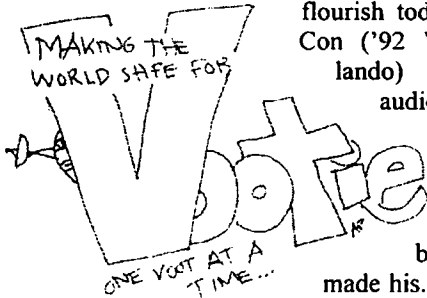
Jack Speer (1920-2008)
Vanamonde 829

Speer or *speir* in Scots is "ask". John Bristol Speer had an inquiring mind, a sharp wit, and a pioneering character. Before his seventh birthday he had read the September 1927 issue of *Amazing*. By 1937 he had built a hectograph. He was a co-founder of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, first apa of fandom – note the conjunction seventy-five years ago of fantasy and science fiction – and at his death the last surviving founder who was still a member. Jack Speer wrote the first *Fancylopedia* (1944), still unsurpassed, and our first history, *Up to Now* (1939). After FAPA came countless more s-f apas. Comments, in what one contributed to an apa, upon what others had in the previous apa mailing, thus *mailing comments*, became indispensable; fanzine letters of comment in apas or not became our blood; Speer pioneered the mailing comment. Permuting his name to John A. Bristol, with a different writing style, typewriter, address, and opinions, he created our first hoax. At Chicon I (World Science Fiction Convention, 1940) he pioneered the home-made music we later called filksinging (a typographical error – not his – which we adopted), and the *Masquerade* costume competition, in which he was one of two Masters of Ceremonies, himself entered as Buck Rogers, and later in costume on the street outside the hotel was nearly arrested by the police.

He invented quasi-quotation and interlineation. If in fanwriting one's quoting is inexact, whether deliberately or helplessly, one so indicates with quasi-quotation marks: "There is reason to believe he has forgotten nothing he has ever read." If one is so struck by some utterance that one must publish it out

On the other hand, it may have been triangular.

of context for the nourishment of readers – a "lino" – one interlineates it. These practices, like commenting, filking, costuming, flourish today. At Magi-Con ('92 Worldcon, Orlando) Speer in the audience of a fan-history panel I sat on wore a propeller beanie. He had made his. At Torcon III ('03 Worldcon) he and Art Widner were my roommates. At Noreascon IV ('04 Worldcon, Boston) he was one of two Fan Guests of Honor. From Elinor & Buz Busby, who knew him in Seattle days, I got four photos of him for an exhibit, sent to the con by overnight courier. He was himself a photographer. The Souvenir Book included his play *Last and First Fen*; he did not invent this jocular plural of *fan* nor allusion to Stapledon's *Last and First Men* (1930), but he had written famously about numbered fandoms, and his play was in Elizabethan blank verse. The New England S-F Association's NESFA Press published as his GoH Book a collection *Fancestral Voices*. Giving the Hugo Award for Best Fanzine he showed a mimeograph stencil; "We were robust then"; he said fanzines remained the most distinctive product of the s-f community. Here in *Vanamonde* when I mistyped Walt Willis' famous *poetsarcd*, see H. Warner, Jr., *A Wealth of Fable* p. 163 (1992), Speer corrected me "Nothing is sacr'd." Just before the end he attended Corflu XXV (fanziners' con, named for mimeograph correction fluid; in '08 at Las Vegas), where Widner sang Speer's "A Mighty Fortress is Our Apa", perhaps the first filk.



Born in Oklahoma, during his war service he spent a year in Algeria. Thereafter moving from Washington, D.C., to Washington State, he took a law degree, was an alternate to the 1956 Democratic National Convention, and in 1958 was elected for a term to the Washington House of Representatives. After moving to New Mexico he served two terms as a judge. He was married nearly sixty years until his death; his widow Ruth still energizes. Willis said he was "one of the few great fans able to synthesize in

himself the sercon [serious and constructive] and the fannish attitudes," H. Warner, Jr., *All Our Yesterdays* p. 177 (Siclari ed. 2004). *Ave atque vale*.

Art Rapp (1924-2005)
Vanamonde 656; *Chunga* 18

By 1950 he could say in his fanzine *Spacewarp* it had been fandom's top monthly since 1947. Sometime around then Art Rapp had the revelation of Roscoe, a fannish ghod (this spelling, so idiosyncratic with fandom, signifying emphasis or de-emphasis, reverence or irreverence, like *bheer*), known to mortals in the form of a beaver, in all which he was helped by Ed Cox and Rick Sneary. We had been taught of Ghu, deity of hectographs and spirit duplicators, by Don Wollheim and John Michel; of Foo, deity of mimeographs, by Jack Speer. Rapp suffered a turn for the verse. He explained, with the doubtful slogan *Fans are slans* [A.E. Van Vogt, *Slan* (1946)] and Joyce Kilmer's 1914 poem in mind,

Then mighty Roscoe's cult arose
(As every *Spacewarp* reader knows),
Interpreted by deacons three:
Rick Sneary, Edmund Cox and me.
The moral of this history, fan,
Is: cults ain't founded by one slan;
Attempts by two make fandom nod,
For only t'ree can make a ghod.

This kind of thing he called "not-poetry", becoming known for it. He served in the Army, where he rose to Sergeant. He married Nancy Share (1931-2002), herself a luminary, prompting the appreciation-zine *Share the Rapp* (1961).

The first s-f apa was FAPA the Fantasy Amateur Press Association; second, SAPS the Spectator Am. Press Society; both ongoing today; Art was in both – a true statement in many ways – and in SAPS, where he remained since the fifth mailing, reliable for lore: seniority, the brass knucks, the Pillar Poll. *Spacewarp* re-emerged as his SAPSazine. He was also in CAPA the Carboniferous Am. Press Alliance, a private monthly apa whose membership of five went unaltered thirty years until Sneary died. There were also *Timewarp*, *Mindwarp*, and *Postwarp* a letterzine of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. He contributed to *Button-Tack* the Rick Sneary memorialzine (1992, but get the rev. 1993, which we poorfread better) Sneary's first installment of "1958", a column which began in *Spacewarp* 38 (1950), where I recently saw it at the University of California – Riverside library. In *Spacewarp* 143 (Oct 86; by then in SAPS) he nominated as the best opening sentence in an s-f novel, from H. Kuttner's *Fairy Chessmen* (1951), "The doorknob opened a big blue eye and looked at him." Redd Boggs thought him responsible for the reversal of *gafia* ("Getting Away From It All"), originally *away from mundane life into*

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fan activity with no irony to “that flash of sanity known as gafia”.

The journalist Roscoe Drummond (1902-1983) got an honorary degree from Beaver College in 1966. Edward R. Murrow’s father Roscoe worked at Beaver Camp, Washington, in 1925. I can assure you that although Roscoe, New York, lies on Beaver Kill, that only means “stream”, like *Catskill*. Westercons are customarily on or near the U.S. July 4th holiday; for Westercon XLVI (Seattle, '93), Vonda McIntyre dressed a stuffed-animal Roscoe in velvet, satin, gold spray-paint, brass chains, and iridescent glow-in-the-dark fishing lures, as Eileen Gunn told Lunacon XXXVII (New York, '94), and I saw myself. World-

There exists a gay young beaver; Roscoe is this
beaver’s name,
And he seems like most young beavers, but he isn’t
quite the same,
For although the rest are brownish, or a muddy
grayish-blue,
When you take a look at Roscoe, why, the look goes
right on through!

He cannot be seen in water, he cannot be seen in air,
And if he didn’t bite you, you would vow he wasn’t
there.
But his teeth are keen as chisels, and if you commit a
sin,
Roscoe will find out about it, and he’ll bite you on the
shin.

Roscoe watches out for stfen wheresoever they may
be,
From the canyons to the desert, from the mountains
to the sea.
He’s a kind and helpful beaver, aiding fen in many
ways,
And he merits fannish worship on the Sacred Beaver
Days.

These days are two in number: one’s the fourth day of
July –
It’s the day when Roscoe flies a fiery spaceship in the
sky.
In his honor, on that date, a truce should fall on fan
dissension,
And every true disciple should assemble in
convention.

The second day is Labor Day, the date of Roscoe’s
birth,
When tribute should be paid him over all the fannish
earth,
When all fen shall meet their fellows to look back
upon the year
And shall drink a toast to Roscoe in that other great
ghod: Bheer.

cons are customarily on or near U.S. Labor Day; for L.A.con III ('96 Worldcon), Geri Sullivan hosting the Fanzine Lounge, Stu Shiffman supplied a color icon, complete with propeller beanie and mimeo stylus, which Sullivan duly brought to Reinconation (Minneapolis) the next month; that year Ahrvid Engholm told *Mimosa* 19 he’d honored Roscoe in Sweden since 1981 with Fourth of July parties, when fans gathered to drink bheer and see Roscoe’s spaceship in the sky. At Noreascon IV ('04 Worldcon, Boston), *Spacewarp* was on the Retrospective Hugo ballot for Best Fanzine of 1953, and the con committee wrapped round a pillar the third quatrain of this scripture from *Spacewarp* 27 (Jun 49). *R.I.P.*

Now, Roscoe helps his followers in many, many ways;
Just to list them would consume about a hundred
billion days:
He reduces typing errors; he makes fanclub laws
more stable;
He keeps laid-down pens and styli from a-rolling off
the table.

He makes mimeos print legibly, makes typer ribbons
last;
He keeps hacks from pulling boners when they’re
writing of the past;
He climbs into crowded newsstands, ferrets out the
stf-ish zines,
And attracts the fan’s attention via telepathic beams.

Roscoe crawls in cluttered corners where the book-
stores’ treasures stand,
And despite the dust and darkness guides the groping
fannish hand
So it misses the obscuring mass of mundane,
worthless books
And brings up the rare edition for which every stfan
looks.

And it’s Roscoe who puts blinkers on the greedy
dealers’ eyes
So they sell their stf like other pulps, at half the cover
price,
And it’s Roscoe who takes cognizance of what you’re
always wishin’
And arranges that you and the mag are in perfect
mint condition.

And many other boons befall those true and faithful
fen
Who agree that Roscoe merits being honoured
among men,
And to prove that they are striving to fulfill the Roscoe
Goal,
Submit their names for listing on the Roscoe Honor
Roll.

Spade in Hand

Banana Wings 49

Tocqueville said the danger to democracy was that people would have power and not use it.

You’d be surprised at me if I wrote much about politics. I shan’t disappoint you. I have something else to say.

What are you doing?

What are you waiting for?

Rabbi Zusya of Hanipol's students asked if anything worried him about what he would face on Judgment Day. He said "Yes. They will not ask me 'Why weren't you more like Moses?' But they will ask 'Why weren't you more like Zusya?'"

It's easier than ever to be a "Renaissance man". Finding other walks than our main path. Guides. Barriers low or down. Independence. Traders, currency exchanges.

One keeps hearing *I wasn't taught in school*. Why wait to be taught? What about that independence?

Bernard Shaw said artists must be at once their own master and everybody's pupil.

Fans marvel that Jon Singer plays *gamelan*, builds lasers, makes pots out of earth from Neil Gaiman's house. Singer started doing these things because they seemed a good idea at the time.

If you happen to like rock-'n'-roll music and everyone around is listening to it, I don't say you should stop. I don't say you should consider it the only music in the world. You might like *gamelan* or Gabrieli or *gagaku* better. You might not know.

We distinguish between fannish and mundane minds. In ordinary English *mundane* means *of the day-to-day-world*. To science-fiction fans that's no praise; *out of this world* is no insult. When we speak of people outside the s-f community as mundanes, we mean they seem to prefer not using their imagination.

Of course if we only bother to imagine things mundanes find shocking it's not so clear we're using ours. But let's move on.

The mundane mind, in our sense of the word, thinks *I've never heard of that so I'll run, not walk, away*. The fannish mind thinks *I've never heard of that so I'll see if it might be interesting*.

Since earliest days the marks of the fannish mind have been inquiry and participation. We were do-it-yourself before it became a three-letter word. An s-f club or convention is like a sandbox, you bring your own pail and spade. So are fanzines.

I've been much taken with Tennyson's *Better to promote the good than to rail against the ill*. Call it a version of the Eighty-Two Rule: Eighty per cent of the unpacking takes twenty per cent of the time; twenty per cent of the people do eighty per cent of the work. Eighty per cent of one's resources to further what seems right, twenty to counter what seems wrong.

Lest a word to the wise be insufficient, shall I note that when fanziners take part in cons the results can be excellent, e.g. Worldcon newsletters by Mike Glycer and by the *PLOKTA Cabal*? that two of the best Secretaries my local club ever had were Jack Harness and Glycer? that in the 2011 Hugos it took 23 nominations to put someone on the Best Fanartist ballot, 30 for Fanwriter, 43 for Fanzine?

Once upon a time a man with a spade in his hand stared at the ground crying "Why doesn't that hole get dug?" Maybe it should have been a woman, but that's the way I heard it. Let's call a spade a spade.

And in the end, the love you take is equal to the love that you make.

Loscon XXXVIII

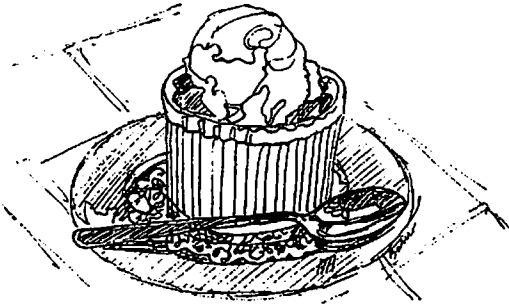
Vanamonde 965

Loscon XXXVIII was held 25-27 Nov at the L.A. Int'l Airport Marriott Hotel (local s-f con, annually on United States' Thanksgiving weekend; hosted by the LASFS [L.A. S-F Soc.], not the unrelated if overlapping SCIFI [S. Cal. Inst. for Fan Interests]). Author Guest of Honor, John DeChancie; Illustrator, Aldo Spadoni; Science, Col. Rick Searfoss, U.S. Air Force (ret.); Fan, me. Chair, Arlene Satin. Attendance 1,000; in the Art Show, sales \$5,700 by 35 artists.

Searfoss had flown *Columbia* and *Atlantis* and commanded a Spacelab mission. Spadoni won Best Amateur Astronomical in the Discon II ('74 World Science Fiction Convention) Art Show at age 17, got an M.I.T. degree, worked at Hughes and for the past

twenty-five years at Northrop, meanwhile consulting on *Apollo 13* (R. Howard dir. 1995) and *Iron Man* (J. Favreau dir. 2008, 2010) and painting Niven & Pournelle space ships, some exhibited in the Loscon Art Show. DeChancie besides his pro career has been an active fan, serving as LASFS Secretary, making friends with the Vegants in Las Vegas, contributing regularly to APA-L.

At Opening Ceremonies, Satin showing images of might-be flying cars had to ask if we really wanted any. Searfoss could only come Saturday. Spadoni modestly said he was an aerospace engineer. DeChancie said he'd never heard of fanzines until Cantor sent him *Holier Than Thou*. I, not crediting Tom Whitmore who



at Denvention III ('08 Worldcon) made Kipling's Rikki-Tikki-Tavi with "Run and find out" his new inner avatar, said again *Why wait to be taught?*

Starting a Classics of S-F talk on Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles* (1950) I asked what made it appealing today. From the audience: it reaches everyone, the masses, the literary. Another: it has simplicity, like Wilder's *Our Town* (1938). Another: it's polychromatic. Reading the first paragraph aloud, I said *Chronicles* attracts with beauty. Bradbury is an act no one has followed. Mike Glycer in the audience said, it rouses willing suspension of disbelief. I said, or creates belief.

The s-f broadcast *Hour 25* interviewed us honorees. DeChancie said he thought *Starrigger* (1983) was a straightforward adventure until a review called it howlingly funny and he realized he'd put in a good line every third page. Spadoni said engineering visualizers learned from Hollywood how handheld-camera footage looked, and built computer software accordingly. I said I liked to share my toys with my friends.

Greg Benford had asked me to help with a talk on his *Wonderful Future That Never Was* (2010). We sat on tables to be heard in a crowded room. People suppose combining two technologies will be twice as productive; more usually it's been half. The quantitative is where bright ideas go wrong, like jetpacks. NASA, he said, was a jobs program. The ghost of F.D. Roosevelt, I answered, says that to do things you have to get votes somehow.

Heard in the Art Show, "I couldn't find my combat boots." A parade, with costumes and a drum, "What do we want?" "Flying cars!" "When do we want them?" "Yesterday!" In truth the best time for them. Benford with Naomi Fisher peeked at Regency Dancing. Later I accosted him, "You fell for my s-f author's illusion." He said "What?" I said "You don't really have a faster-than-light space drive." He said "You mean those people haven't really been impossibly elegant all their lives."

Jan Bender, Jerome Scott, Becky Thomson, and a host of others helped me build the Rotsler Award exhibit. The judges (Claire Brialey, Glycer, and I; see if you like <www.scifiinc.org/rotsler>) had decided it should go to D West. I'd spent the usual hours poring over fanzines for samples. A kind of sticky-both-sides tape had been recommended; it kept failing; I, the Art Show staff, Glycer, and passers-by spent all weekend putting things back up. At home a West letter waited. He declined. We determined there would be no 2011 Award.

Spadoni's punctiliously detailed ships could have been contemporary. A Rick Sternbach giclée took *The Mote in God's Eye* (1974) differently, the Mote red, all else blue and white, a far viewpoint for simplicity. Selina Phanara's "Aloha" and "Tiki" showed her mastery of cut and colored paper. Mary Jane Jewell's quilts were strongest in "Tropical Sun", red and gold, its eyes askance. I was as ever glad to see the Illustrators of the Future contest exhibiting, not least because entries are often from outside the s-f community, and the contest by nature encourages monochrome, which current fads neglect. Of Richard Man's monochrome photographs I much liked "Echoes of China", his celestial eye seeing a classic landscape in the mist of Tomales Bay.

I moderated Niven and Pournelle in a twentieth-anniversary discussion of *Fallen Angels* (1991). Pournelle said "We tried to draw characters generically. Any fandom has people like these." Maybe. From the audience, "I didn't recognize anyone, but I saw they knew things that affected their actions." Another: it's funny. Another: the big picture has changed surprisingly little.

Saturday night I circulated some after shopping for the Prime Time Party (1 a.m. Sunday to dawn each Loscon; you, dear reader, are invited) with co-hosts Thomson and Tom Veal. Chaz Boston Baden shaved his beard leaving a mustache, and put on a bowtie and hair pomade, to help with a Kansas City for 2016 Worldcon bidding party; fliers showed Harry Truman

I can't say what Dark Matter's made of.
It could be of Taoists' jafe; of
Snakes, snails, and puppy tails; frightening old
duppiies' nails;
What devils won in their raid of. [760]

with a newspaper headlined "Password is 'Goats'" (the friends of Tom Pendergast 1873-1945). We opened and closed as advertised – in fact we went till 9:30 a.m. – people coming and going in tides.

At the talk on Blish's *Jack of Eagles* (1952) Jim Young in the audience said, again Blish shows himself a stylist. Another: *Martian Chronicles* doesn't engage with any particular person; *Jack* does. Another, "I read

it for the first time this morning.” I recalling Sturgeon’s “Science fiction is knowledge fiction” said “Jack’s what-if being scientific proof of paranormal powers, look how intellectually clumsy, though powerful, are the characters who take them mystically.” At the talk on Frank’s *Alas, Babylon* (1959) someone said “I still remember scenes from reading it on publication.” Another: it focusses on a small group. Another: it’s hopeful. I read aloud the last nine words. About

Babylon’s treatment of race relations, and civilization, I said “Look at art – painting, singing or playing music – who’s doing it?”

At Closing Ceremonies, Spadoni in a superb gesture gave Satin one of his space ships. I couldn’t improve on that so said again *In fandom the difference is participation.*

John DeChancie later corrected me. He did know of fanzines; he was then given a stack by no less than Bob Leman; he wrote Cantor’s *Holier Than Thou* a letter of comment; by return mail came the first copy of a fanzine specifically addressed to him. I like this version better, not only because it’s truer, and shows a fine fannish pro hipper sooner, but also because it shows him looking around. Be bigger than your immediate adventure.

Three Classics of Science Fiction

Collecting Science Fiction Books <www.collectingsf.com>

Isaac Asimov, *The End of Eternity* (1955)

Here is Margaux wine gleaming red through the glass, with the flavor you can’t decide whether to call strong or delicate and the breath of violets. Here is Japanese *nigirimeshi*, seaweed around a triangle of rice



holding in its careful blandness a sharp center, perhaps a salted plum.

Asimov at Noreascon III, the 1989 World Science Fiction Convention in Boston, told us that while he had by then published 400 books, of which only 75 were s-f, he considered himself an s-f author. By his death in 1992 it was 500.

He is represented in each of the ten categories of a library’s Dewey Decimal System except philosophy. He used to say a good joke could do more to provoke thought than hours of philosophical discussion.

This book is dedicated to *Galaxy* editor Horace Gold, who rejecting it as a short story provoked its rewriting as a novel. It has been translated into Russian (1966), Hebrew (1979), Finnish (1987), and Spanish (2004).

Two thousand years ago the great Roman poet Horace said to start a story in the middle of things. Fifty-five thousand years from now *Eternity* begins, “Andrew Harlan stepped into the kettle.” He moves the starting lever. The kettle doesn’t move.

Notice the touch of resonance Asimov brings by giving the same word “move” to the kettle and the lever. Doing such things aptly is an element of the writer’s art. We’ll look at more.

Andrew didn’t expect the kettle to move. This is time travel. He was born in the 95th Century and is off to the 2456th, a sizable distance even for a hardened Eternal.

Eternity is outside ordinary time. Men invented it. The men who live there, Eternals, are brought from ordinary time and trained for the task of watching, protecting.

If ordinary time, Reality, appears to be going wrong, Eternals Change it. They seek the minimum necessary change for the maximum desired response.

Because an Eternal entered Time and tampered with a vehicle clutch, a young man does not reach a lecture on mechanics. He never takes up solar engineering. A simple invention is delayed ten years, and a war is moved out of Reality.

What if personalities were Changed? The new personalities were as human as the old and as deserving of life. A great work of literature was never written in the

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new Reality, but copies were preserved in the libraries of Eternity, and new creative works came into existence.

The man who got this result, and had these thoughts, is Andrew Harlan. He excels at finding the minimum necessary change.

The night after the vehicle clutch he could hardly sleep, worrying. But he had begun his career.

If there is a flaw in Eternity, Andrew muses later, it involved women. He knew the flaw – or thought he did – almost from his first entrance into Eternity, but he felt it personally only the day he first met Noÿs

Seven pages after we see this collection of symbols we learn it is the name of a woman.

We were expecting her.

Asimov assumes his readers know or will discover that the two dots over the vowel “y” are a diaeresis mark, signaling a separate sound.

In the interests of avoiding emotional entanglements, an Eternal must not marry. In the interests of avoiding emotional entanglements, an Eternal must not have children. Liaisons exist, as a compromise with human appetites.

Such liaisons are almost always of Eternal men and Timer women.

Women almost never qualify for Eternity. For some reason, taking them from Time into Eternity is ten to a hundred times more likely to distort Reality than is taking men.

When Eternity was published, men – and women – readers might have smugly taken this in stride. Today’s women – and men – readers might smugly take offense. Wrong, wrong, all wrong. See instead what the author has made.

Noÿs Lambent as a Timer from the 482nd Century comes to change Andrew’s life. She is youthful, physically attractive. Andrew is promptly consumed with desire and, when we meet him, is already deep in an affair of the heart.

His conscience is clouded. His world turns sweet and sour. He is a Technician whose task is to manipulate Reality; he now marches through mist after mist of manipulation. Eternals, trained to be selfless, he sees again and again as self-interested; where they should be pure, he sees they are petty.

Yet far more is in store for him as he first thinks – then learns – what underlies Reality, what he is, and what is the truth of Noÿs.

We meet the one era in Reality that develops electro-gravitic space travel. Sociologist Kantor Voy says, “It’s an aesthetically pleasing device. It’s a pity we must Change away from it.” These particular ships are called beautiful, a rare instance of that word in the entire book. And Eternity keeps Changing away from space travel.

The four instances of “beauty” are these ships, Andrew’s work, the music of an instrument Noÿs plays, and Noÿs herself.

There is intrigue in this book, unstated plans, detection. There is indeed a scheme, but it is neither the first nor the second which may present itself – I allude to Conan Doyle’s story “The Final Problem”, Asimov was a Sherlock Holmes fan.

There is the fruit of considerable thought about time travel, which makes this book interesting to students of s-f as a genre.

Similarities come to mind.

Hermann Hesse’s Nobel Prize s-f novel *The Glass Bead Game* (1943) imagines a secular culture of men, in about the year 2400, who for the sake of their profession as a kind of guardians exclude themselves from women. Hesse is alive to consequences of that, and as to thoughts of eternity he lets us glimpse the Roman Catholic Church offstage, whose monasticism, it seems, is of a fundamentally different order.

Asimov’s Eternity never mentions religion.

Larry Niven’s novel *Protector* (1973), the later books in his *Ringworld* series (*The Ringworld Engineers* [1980] and thereafter), and his time-travel comedy *Rainbow Mars* (2000) explore problems of protecting people which may arise even with superior intelligence, technology, or perspective.

There is no sign that Eternals have superior intelligence; indeed it is essential to the story that they are of ordinary human nature.

Discussing Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) at s-f conventions recently I’ve observed that, while we may prefer customs between men and women today over those when it was published, we have to recall the shocking effect then of some *Brave* passages.

In George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949) the idyll of Winston Smith and Julia – Orwell never tells us her last name – was still a shock.

We may react quite differently from a 1950s audience to the explicit – but not graphic – intimacy between Andrew Harlan and Noÿs Lambent.

The 482nd was not a comfortable Century for him, hedonistic, marriage a personal agreement without binding force. He wishes millions of pleasure-seeking

Only one slice left.
Poets, cicadas sing you
Cut away dark, Moon. [903]

women would transform into pure-hearted mothers. She says only "Wouldn't you like to?" and later "You just ask a girl. It's so easy to be friendly. The girl has to be willing, of course."

Fifty years ago this was titillating. Today it may seem offensively convenient. See instead what the author has made.

Brave New World is foaming, heady, a poem of intoxication. *Nineteen Eighty-four* is a stiff dose of bitters. The *Brave* women are as false as the men. In *Nineteen Eighty-four* too no one is redeemed.

The End of Eternity is a love story. Our questions about Andrew's love are right. In the end as the mists melt – indeed by reflecting on Noÿs – we recognize what he has been and done. His mistakes are worse, and his character better, than we thought. We are left with a man who learns.

Asimov's spare prose is here at its height. It lies in his language, his focus. Hills of detail are at a stroke given to the imagination. Minds and hearts – and this is a novel of the mind and heart – are painted partly by silence, by the author's silence, by what is set before us and what goes unsaid. The reader, the re-reader, who looks, who notes, is rewarded. Theodore Sturgeon used to say "Science fiction is knowledge fiction." That is true not only of physical knowledge.

Avram Davidson ed., *The Best of "Fantasy and Science Fiction", 13th Series* (1964)

"We are all of us one-of-a-kind writers, really, but Avram was more one-of-a-kind than most," said Robert Silverberg in *The Avram Davidson Treasury*. Like Winsor McCay's *Little Nemo*, like R.A. Lafferty, like Gerard Manly Hopkins outside our field, Davidson's voice was both fine and distinctive.

As an author he could be simple or complex. What could be simpler than his short story "The Golem"? He could be recondite – the word "recondite" may itself be recondite, alas – but he did not speak only to the love of learning; take "The Affair at Lahore Cantonment", which won the Edgar Award from the Mystery Writers of America, and in which the Kipling reference is brilliant for whoever sees it, while everyone else is still hospitably served.

Davidson was a kind of miracle, as shows in his short wonderful term editing *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. He kept up his own writing, he followed Alfred Bester as the *F&SF* book reviewer, and he brought out others' marvels.

Behold this anthology.

He received these stories, thirteen suitably; the history of literature is full of things that were sent but not received. Perhaps he improved them; the public record rightly does not say, and although some of the authors are alive, and I know some of them, I have not asked. He selected them. He saw and provided achievement other than his own.

Here is Jack Vance's "Green Magic", a candidate for his best though he has widely excelled before and since; it was fifteen years later the title story of a collection. Here is Ray Nelson's first story to be anthologized, "Eight O'Clock in the Morning", a strange look at freedom, from the man who fifteen years earlier invented the propeller beanie.

In fact many stories here are strange looks at freedom. Shall we say that was in the air then? Why not? It may be in the air now. How can art not be of its time? The best will also be of our time. That *how* I can't tell you. But we can try to appreciate it.

Here is Richard McKenna's "Hunter, Come Home". If his best in our field may be "Casey Agonistes", a rival is "Hunter", his most stfnal – our old adjective (pronounced "STEF-nal"), a relic of the word Hugo Gernsback wanted, *scientifiction*. The science is biology. "Hunter" was the cover story for the March 1963 *F&SF*, with the Mordinmen and the fate of Midori Blake well illustrated by Ed Emshwiller, who did more covers for *F&SF* than anyone else. Those who know the story will like my calling it a rival.

Here is Davidson's own "What Strange Stars and Skies", also later to entitle a collection. It is less simple and less fantastic than his "Where Do You Live, Queen Esther?" but it is as poetic and just. His wonderful women! He shows them smart and strong, vivid and victorious, quiet and quirky. Fifteen years after his death we see he does not neglect these things when they are right.

Zenna Henderson published seventeen stories about the People, gifted with psychic powers, looking so much like Earth folk that when their planet succumbed to a natural disaster, and their ships fled through interstellar space, and some landed on our world, they could fit in – or almost, see "Pottage". Not until the ninth, "Deluge" here, are we told of the escape. Henderson's gift is to sail at the edge of sweet-

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ness. One false tack and she would be saccharine. She isn't. When Priscilla & Mark Olson of the New England S-F Association's NESFA Press edited the 1995 collection *Ingathering*, Priscilla in her introduction called these "stories of us at our best, as we hope to be, and where (with work and with luck) we may be in some future."

Arrangement too is an art. Davidson begins with "The Golden Brick" by P.M. Hubbard, ends with "Deluge". Before "Hunter" is "Treaty in Tartessos" by Karen Anderson; after, "McNamara's Fish" by Ron Goulart. Nor do the comic and tragic simply alternate;



before "Strange" comes "They Don't Make Life Like They Used To" by Alfred Bester, which is, at least, both. There are resonances. The sea keeps coming in. It has a silent part in "Treaty". Ships go away at the end of "Brick" and "Deluge" – leaving us with what different kinds of happiness!

Let us take in some of the voices. Vance:

He explored much of the green realm, finding so much beauty that he feared his brain might burst.... Nourishment came in a thousand different forms: from pink eggs which burst into a hot sweet gas, suffusing his entire body; from passing through a rain of stinging metal crystals; from simple contemplation of the proper symbol. Homesickness for Earth waxed and waned.

McKenna:

"Miss Blake, young Craig has clearly been your dupe, as you insist he has," Barim said.... "Invent a motive, then. Say you hate Mordin. Say you hate me."

"I hate no one. I'm sorry for you."

"I'll give you a reason!" Miss Ames jumped to her feet.... "Your reckless, irresponsible use of translocation endangers us all! Accept defeat and go home!"

She helped Barim recover his composure. He smiled.... "We neither accept defeat nor fear death. We require no tears of anyone."

Anderson:

It was darker inside the tent than out, despite the luxury of three lamps burning at once. "I hope you've dined well? May I offer you anything?" Kynthides asked politely, with considerable misgivings. The centaur probably wouldn't know what to do with a barley loaf, and as for wine – well, there wasn't a drop within five miles of camp. Or there had better not be.

Each of these speakers is wrong, as it happens, but their authors do not make them cheap. The first, Howard Fain, is transported by learning, but not enough. We are left to realize he never thinks what good he might do others. Barim the Huntmaster is not smug. We dislike the ways of Planet Mordin, but the courage of the Mordinmen has truth. The centaur too may be more noble than his opponent. With Vance's strange poetry we have nourishment in a thousand forms. With McKenna's drama of strength and ignorance we have human pathos that makes the scientific method, mistakenly applied as it is, our protagonist. With Anderson's horse story we have corroborative detail to give artistic versimilitude.

Short fiction has been called the peak of s-f writing. Mike Resnick gave the novelette a moving tribute on Hugo Awards Night at Chicon VI, the 2000 World Science Fiction Convention. Four of these thirteen are novelettes (Bester, Davidson, Henderson, McKenna), the rest are short stories. Focus and concentration can

Hold up a flower.
Only one maybe will smile.
Need to say a word?
Even if the others sleep,
You exchange a living light. [821]

achieve much in little. Shakespeare plays run three hours, Dickens novels run eight hundred pages; but Shakespeare also wrote sonnets, before Dickens was Austen, and in Japanese the highest form of writing for a thousand years was the 31-syllable *waka*, which finally, not short enough, gave birth to the 17-syllable *haiku*. The Roman orator Cicero said "Please forgive me for writing such a long letter, I didn't have time to write a short one."

Michelangelo when asked how he sculpted said, "I get a block of marble and chip away anything that doesn't look like a Madonna and child." This jest has truth too. It presupposes not only his vision but his focus and concentration. In our field Algis Budrys said, "Always ask yourself *Why are they telling me this?*"

"Peggy and Peter Go to the Moon" by Don White is even shorter than "Eight O'Clock" and "Treaty". Everything about it is right, although everyone in it is wrong, really wrong. Nanny helps Peter on with his new red mittens. He is nineteen. Peggy is wearing her

mink-collared gold *lamé* party frock, the one she hadn't worn since Rosemary Jane's party celebrating the defection of her father to the Russians. Cook has come (not "the cook", this is England) with sandwiches, and a nice Thermos of hot Bonox and rum. Off they go from their father Professor Love's secret rocket range, the little Loves. Off go Professor and ex-nanny. His last words are cream.

R.A. Lafferty, *Past Master* (1968)

The expression is "passed master" – one who has presented his masterpiece, has been examined, and has been accepted. But here is a master from the past.

In the year 2535, on the planet Astrobe, Thomas More is brought from the year 1535 on Earth. Humankind has lived on Golden Astrobe five hundred years. Life is perfect: only it isn't. Maybe More will help.

Or maybe he won't; maybe he will do something else; and what does who mean by help? That is the plot of this book, that is the satire. The book, standing on those feet, rises higher.

Past Master was Lafferty's first novel, after three dozen short stories in *Galaxy* and *If* and *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*; he published about thirty, about two hundred short stories.

The three big men were met together in a private building of one of them. There was a clattering thunder in the street outside, but the sun was shining.... the mechanical killers.... shook the building.... The three men.... each believed that he controlled the other two.... "This is Mankind's third chance," said Kingmaker. "Ah, they're breaking the doors down again." [ch. 1]

By 1968 we had been fearing political dominators, predatory drones, for a while. One of these fearsome men is named Kingmaker – Cosmos Kingmaker. Who are the others? Brutus Truthwister? Simon Faithseller? No, they are Peter Proctor and Fabian Foreman. Lafferty can lay it on, but the hand is the hand of an artist.

"We must agree [says Kingmaker] on our candidate for World President." "We want a man [says Proctor] who can serve as a catchy symbol, a man who can be manipulated by us."

By 1968 this was recognizable stage-setting.

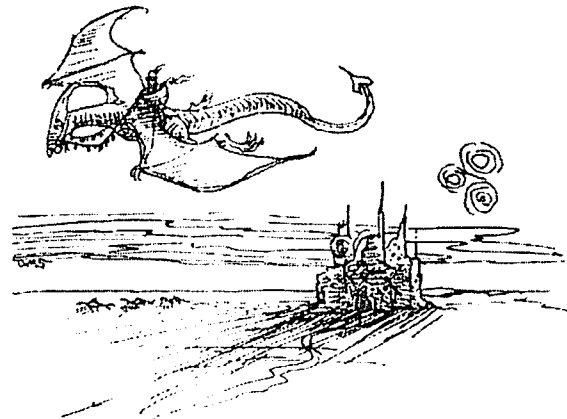
"We need not limit ourselves [says Kingmaker] to men now living. Chronometanastatis has been a working thing for a dozen years. Find a dead man who once led well. Let him lead again. It will catch the fancy of the people."

How short these words are, except the one Lafferty makes up; how simple, except it and the two signals of the speaker's sophistication, or his sneaking, *limit* and *fancy*.

Foreman wants More. The others agree. Foreman sends a pilot named Paul, through space and then through time. Astrobe, five light-years from Earth, is by Hopp-Equation Travel less than one Earth month. But the Law of Conservation of Psychic Totality will not be abridged. There are years of psychic awareness to be compressed into a month, and it forces its compression into dreams.

Every poignant thing that ever happened, every comic or horrifying or exalting episode ... is still drifting somewhere in space. One runs into fragments (and concentrations) of billions of minds there; it is never lost, it is only spread out thin. [ch. 2]

As it happens other time-travelers have visited More. To make sure we have his book *Utopia* in mind



Lafferty has him tell Paul, "I coined the word and the idea Utopia." More comes along. Through time and then space Paul pilots. They arrive in a tumult. Through and through the book are killers. The two men survive. When Paul comes to, both are in a barrio. Twenty years ago Astrobe was completely beautiful and civilized; then these places appeared.

"But, Thomas, everybody in Cathead and the Barrio is here by choice. They left civilized Astrobe of their own free will to set up these giant shambles. They can return to civilized Astrobe today, within the hour, and be cared for and endowed with property, and settled in ease. And they'd be rid of the mechanical murderers also."

"God over my head! *Why don't they do it, then?*" [ch. 3]

To colossal Cosmopolis, the capital. There is a Convocation. The Exaltation Trumpets blast. Thomas More wins an Ovation like a pouring ocean. "It is the Past Master," the people everywhere say.

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A precis machine gives More general information. He talks back.

"I remember now who it was who limned this all out before," said Thomas. "It was myself. What other man makes a joke about a tree, and the tree bears fruit?... It was a joke, I tell you, a bitter joke. It was how *not* to build a world." [ch. 5]

Against the advice of his mentors, More travels. He has a loose retinue. Amid strange places and creatures, improbably persons and animals, he becomes a strong advocate of the Astrobe Dream. Yet he wants to look more deeply. He finds the feral lands and climbs Electric Mountain. He spends days in Cathead and meets the Bishop of Astrobe – the Metropolitan – the Pope – a very old thin black man.

"Kingmaker, cannot something be done about the Programmed Killers? They nearly had me again last night.... I am not a threat to the Dream! I love it.... I also in all honesty could blazon on my breast *I have not been false to the Vision*. There is something wrong with the programming of these things." [ch. 9]

He takes office as World President. The job is amazingly easy. Bills are drawn up, agreed on and submitted by the Lawmakers. How can you go wrong when the answer is always yes? There is an additional reason to assent. A president of Astrobe who three times vetoes any proposal adopted by the Lawmakers is sentenced to death. This is Chapter 11, "Nine Day King".

From Earth, where on July 6, 1535, he would have been put to death for refusing to get with the program, he has come to Astrobe, where on July 6, 2535, he is put to death for refusing to get with the program.

Science fiction in 1968 was athrob with protest. There is no sign Lafferty marched to that drummer then nor does this book seem to now. In the resonance of *Past Master* his warnings are neither because of nor despite what other people cry. He speaks in a voice singularly his own.

"I don't know how to strike a medal for it," the man said.

"If you find someone who does, tell him to strike a medal for it," the Emperor said [we are with Charles DCXII in the feral lands]. "Put my own fine hand on it, and the motto *They Come to Me Like Eagles*. Why, here is a dead saint from Old Earth, the Devil-Kid of Astrobe, a necromancer of unlikely powers, a transcendent ansel [named Rimrock, improbably a person and animal], a priest of Saint Klingensmith, an avatar who burns

up bodies, and pilot Paul who is a broken-faced old warlock. Not for thirty reigns have there been so many grand people at court at one time...."

"How long a time has the thirty reigns been?" Thomas asked him.

"It has been what we call a rapid year," the Emperor said. [ch. 7]

How could More be taken in? Even today his own book is sometimes made out to be some kind of sweet. He tells Paul, "There is something very slack about a future that will take a biting satire for a vapid dream [ch. 2]." But the prospect of relief from suffering softens the heart. In the barrio he groans, "Is there no compassion in the civilized sections of Astrobe? Can they do nothing to alleviate the misery here [ch. 3]?" Also domination can be subtle.

"You were talking nonsense, you know," Paul told him after that particular speech....

"Paul, I said words and I said words, but there were other words that I did not say.... Somebody else spoke those words out of my mouth."

"Oh, that! I suspect they've been doing it to you for a long time, and you just haven't been paying attention. You've been saying many things, publicly and privately, that don't sound like you. It's one of the oldest and easiest tricks of the Programmed. They crawl into your mind at odd moments and take control." [ch. 9]

Is this tale a tragedy? Is it More's? In history he is first impressed with the Government program and furthers it, then has second thoughts and stands by them. He has years rising in the offices of his country and the favor of its great until he realizes he can no longer do as he is asked. In Lafferty's book he starts there. He suspects and distrusts the ways of Astrobe. Yet he comes to support them. In the end he revokes his recantation. But too much has happened, and he is crushed by the motion he helped perpetuate.

Or is the tragedy humankind's? In biblical theology the Egyptians were punished, not just the Pharaoh,

Full moon, 3 a.m.

No curtain for my window.

Hours full of silver. [888]

because they went along. When he said "Hurt the Israelites" no one said "No," or "Who are you?" In *Past Master* we see a little of the great, a lot of the dissatisfied. Their turning from official joy troubles the top. Yet the bottom stays down. Surprising numbers of it vote with their feet, walking into real pain away from unreal pleasure, indeed working far harder in Cathead than is offered in Cosmopolis: but whose hands does

this leave on the levers? At the end a *coup* too late to save More is still advancing.

Well, does it happen? Does the reaction become the birthing? What does it look like?

Will we see it now, in face and rump, the newborn world?

Be quiet. We hope. [ch. 13]

Grinding away all but the satire, and even the structure, would leave a very flat book. Lafferty's imagination, his poetry, and his artist's hand fill it with fire. He was one of the most original authors we have known.

The Noreascon IV Masquerade

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The Masquerade at a science fiction convention was a costume party once, decades ago; today, a competition on stage, with a panel of judges and a full house. Entires in the Original Division are things we haven't yet seen, from s-f, or legend, or the entrants'

Thirty cypresses
Waving by fives and sixes;
The Green King beckons. [904]

imagination. The Re-Creation Division is faithful to existing sources, in film, television, graphic novels. Novice, Journeyman, and Master (plus often Junior) Classes are based on experience. Review by a Workmanship Judge backstage is optional.

It's a grand event. I know nothing quite like it. Drew Sanders (Masquerade Director for the '88 Worldcon, Nolacon II) calls it a cross between *kabuki* and Little Theater.

At Noreascon IV this year, as a friendly gesture, standing outside Registration was "Irving", the 50-foot dragon that closed the show at the Millennium Philcon Masquerade ('01 Worldcon). But this year's Masquerade was held the night *after* the Hugo Awards, as if they were its warm-up act, perplexing the costumers.

Masquerade Director was Richard Hill; Master of Ceremonies, Susan De Guardiola; judges, Rae Bradbury-Enslin, Laurel Cunningham-Hill, Terry Pratchett, Julie Zetterberg; workmanship judges, Heidi Hooper, Kevin Roche, Carol Salemi, Andrew Trembley; 35 adult entires, 12 juniors. Pratchett's publisher gave \$500 as a prize for the best entry from Pratchett's work; Pratchett kindly added \$100 of his own to make three prizes of \$100, \$200, and \$300; all this was generous but distortive.

The auditorium had been built by the con committee. Large video screens at either side of the stage helped. Audio was troublesome all weekend. Hill delayed starting half an hour after his published time, then actually began half an hour after that. Video was fed to some hotel rooms, and to the Mended Drum tavern in the Concourse (central hall of the convention). This year John Maizels and his crew were able to show two freeze-frames of each entry after it left the stage.

De Guardiola, the fine M.C. of the LoneStarCon II Masquerade ('97 Worldcon, *Chronicle* 195), was largely free from her personal plague of sheep, perhaps because she kept a stuffed Vampire Sheep mascot conspicuously on the lectern. There was baa-ing in the audience, which she eventually invited; at Closing Ceremonies, when next year's concom as a stunt re-played the weekend, a caption read *Maaah-squerade*. Her voice is like burnt honey.

Sara Weinstein in "Do Your Magic" (Best Presentation, Junior; Workmanship Award for tailoring) showed timing and focus placing a basket and raising a ball she made glow. Talis Thorndike Love showed poise as "Star Sprite" (Judges' Choice). Stephanie Kastan was the night's first Pratchett joke, "Death of Rats Goes to Worldcon" (Best in Class; Workmanship Award for papier maché), promptly topped by Eric Weingart, "The Grim Sweeper" (Most Humorous; Workmanship Award for props).

"A Pale Rider" (Chris Kramer, Matt Ragsdale) won Best Master, Best Workmanship of Show, and the 2nd Place Pratchett prize. The rider was Death, a hooded skeleton from *Discworld* – on a motorcycle, followed by the Luggage, a trunk with two dozen human feet. The Luggage, under remote control, had been all over the con, so was technically ineligible, but rules get exceptions.

Sionna Klassen for "Dragon Priestess" wore floor-length white chiffon sleeves (Most Beautiful, Journeyman; Workmanship Award for precise re-creation). David Ramsay for "Eight Seconds" (Master) rode a bucking cockroach, with Kimberley Ramsay as a rodeo clown. Gadgetry of the night was "Adventures in Time" (Best Journeyman; Workmanship Judges' Choice; Clinton Alvord, Brian Culver, Amy Johnson, Bonnie Kenderdine, Cheri & Karl Walker, Carol Zelman), a tall time machine that flashed and revolved, as

The mundane mind for talking squid
Reserves its fiercest diction.
It keeps itself from idleness
With WIDOWER'S SCIENCE FICTION. [834]

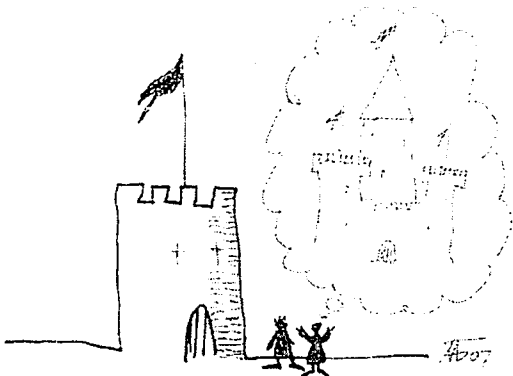
Widower's Wonderful Products seem to have
been first noticed by Eric Needham.

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Louisa May Alcott, Amelia Earhart, Annie Oakley, Mary Shelley, Mark Twain, H.G. Wells, and the police all got into the act.

For a pageant it's the Pettingers. Their "Future-Ikons", following four Hannah Shapero paintings – displayed in the Art Show – brought a new Raphael, in yellow, angel of Biotechnology; Uriel, in green, Ecology; Michael, in red, High-Energy Physics; Gabriel, in blue, Telecommunications (Best Re-Creation, Master; Best Workmanship in Class; John Blaker, Jeannette Holloman, Sandy & Pierre Pettinger).

What could be next? Mountains could; in the cold, a ritual dance, a brandished sword, a woman in spring gold, and the summoned Sun. This was "Arctic Circle"



(Best Workmanship, Journeyman; Carol Botteron, Jill & Don Eastlake, John Hatch, Rob Hupp, Janet Johnston, Allan Kent, Pat Vandenberg, Kate Waterous), winning Best of Show. And Don Eastlake chaired the Business Meeting. It's fannish to swim in many waters.

Best Novice was David Agro, "Blight, Unseelie Fey" (Workmanship Award for hair, make-up, prosthetics), dark with strange hands and rags, bending, reaching, grinning, crouching, fluent and eerie. A Masquerade entry needs a sense of event, usually contrast, or change; it can, with exceptional posture and movement, be character. "Blight" was wonderful. I hear Agro acts him at a local fantasy fair. Yvette Ciancio's "Chimera" (Master), in a feathered headdress, scales over her body, was pensive: what does the Chimera think?

A boy with a book knelt outdoors. As he read "the Old Ones" or "Cthulhu", a monster behind him came more and more to life. Something horrible might have happened, but just then "Howie! Time for church!" This was "Lovecraft's Inspiration" (Most Spellbinding, Novice; Workmanship Honorable Mention; Joanne Bruno-Miller, Donna Drapeau, Tam & Deale Miller, Will Pett, Adam Tuchman). A similar lot had won the 3rd Place Pratchett prize, "Inside the Mind" (Novice; Workmanship Award for three-dimensional costume craft; Matthew McNally, Jennifer Michalick, Nicole Smith) of Pratchett, who sat in thought while a turtle with four elephants and a disc crawled by.

Finally, in an ecstasy of Pratchettizing, "Not the Usual Unusual", with Cohen the Barbarian and a dread cargo which, opened despite warnings, proved to be Tom Jones (Most Humorous, Master; Workmanship Award for construction and distressing techniques; Jennie Faries, Bobby & Marty Gear, Jeff Poretzky, Ron Robinson, Mark Van Name, Vicki & Ken Warren). This cracked up many, won the 1st Place Pratchett prize, and was the end.

On Bradbury: Lest We Forget

<File770.com> 17 Jun 12

Tributes to Ray Bradbury continue. The ones I've seen have been wonderful and the others must be too. He was.

He started humble, he rose like a rocket, and as his stars burst in shimmering brilliant colors and his clarions rang he stayed humble. When he was striving he was helped, he kept that in mind, and when his work ignited he helped others.

We remember him as a lyricist of the human spirit, of youth and age and memory, of the rightness of attention and the wrongness of inattention. His praise and protest each set off the other.

He reached people. How widely.

In ceramics, where a noble bowl is breathtaking, its holding wine or water is only an aid to beauty.

In pyrotechnics where we love to see a flag or a dragon what rouses us is that they are afire.

Bradbury was a fine writer.

Seven Moments from *Vanamonde*

When I saw an empty Moxie bottle at the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society's first meeting in our new Clubhouse, I should have guessed someone had

Who could have built them,
Flown here in two flat white ships
Hovering like clouds. [818]

been to Galco's, a shop so much more famous for carrying five hundred kinds of soft drink than for its Blockbuster sandwiches that it's less known as Galco's Old World Grocery than as the Soda Pop Stop. Galco's has as many beers, six dozen kinds of bottled water, a hundred candies including Clark Bars, Nik-L-Nips, and Sen-Sen, but soft drinks are its fame, almost any so long as bottled in glass. After guessing someone had been there, I should have guessed it was Marc Schirmeister. Both guesses would have been correct. But neither of those afterthoughts was a double-take – unlike understanding the empty bottle.

Among the points upon which I concur with Marv Wolfman is the assessment of this drink. Galco's owner John Nese once told a visiting couple who'd driven sixty miles "Try a Moxie, then try a Coke. The taste is so pronounced, it just pops out." That's very true. Lloyd Penney says Klingons used to arrive from Montréal with cases of it. *Moxie* = *courage* may come from what's needed to drink it; or may be like Old Infuriator, the Algerian wine which the British Navy supposedly served because it was so bad it would make men fight anyone, see e.g. I. Fleming, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* p. 145 (1963).

Someone must have actually consumed a bottle of Moxie. Well, astounding things happen at the LASFS.

This Clubhouse is roomy. It has space for our 20,000-book library. No patio; we left our home-grown lemon tree behind. Also the *Star Wars* wallpaper Marjii Ellers hung neatly in one of our bathrooms. The new painted-concrete walls are "live", i.e. in the acoustic sense. Quiet is not a fannish virtue; we're talkative; I'd not have it another way; maybe we'll hang arras. Given our new neighbor across the street, we can tell people "Come to the LASFS and be close to power."

Among the attenders was Dr. Melissa Conway, head of Special Collections at the Library of the Riverside campus of the University of California; among her six, with the Tuskegee Airmen and fifteen printing presses, is the Eaton Collection, world's largest publicly accessible collection of SF, including the Terry Carr and Bruce Pelz and Rick Sneary fanzines. I intro-

duced her to Karl Lembke, Chairman of the LASFS Board of Directors. During the meeting I sat next to Selina Phanara, who thanked me. "Why?" I asked. "Because I did something about your door?" In 1999 this talented artist painted the APA-L collating-room door (Amateur Press Ass'n – LASFS) with a space ship and suns. When I learned the Club was relocating I asked Dr. Conway if Eaton wanted the door. She said "Yes, please." Lembke with a little help from his friends dismounted it and put in a plain one; he now arranged to get the Phanara door to Riverside.

In the festivities I brought greetings from Paul Turner and Tim Kirk. Kirk often drew APA-L covers in the years he won five Hugos as Best Fanartist. Turner had asked me to be sure and credit Pelz, who fanned Turner's building-fund spark into flame. Jerry Pournelle said "Don't forget to credit Chuck Crayne." We all cheered Pelz' widow Elayne, the LASFS Treasurer, who'd done more than anyone else to negotiate, close, and consummate the transactions that disposed of our second Clubhouse and brought us into this our third. [952]

Other members later pointed out a patio
I hadn't seen. A door opened onto the 14th
Chorp Dimension and there I was.

– o o o –

Sunday being *Nowruz*, the Persian New Year celebrated reasonably on the first day of spring, my friend K gave me a jar of *samanu*, a seasonal treat of sprouted wheat cooked to a paste, sweet, which you should make at home, taking hours, or weeks if you count sprouting, in traditional homes women's work, who in Afghanistan finish making it the night before, singing "*Samanak* [local pronunciation] *simmers* and we stir it, the men sleep and we play the *daf* [frame drum with bangles]"; if that's too much you can get it at a Persiangoods shop as K did, which at \$9/lb isn't shabby, this brand with whole almonds for good measure. The flavor is exquisite.

For Jews it was also the Feast of Lots; some Jews are Persian; since its events took place in Persia, this minor holiday is great there; in Hamadan a Mausoleum of Esther and Mordecai about seven centuries old is believed to have been built on the historical spot. *Purim* (Hebrew, plural of *pur* = a lot) is a time of merriment, jesting and masquing; in Israel, I hear, you board a bus and see the driver dressed as King Ahashuerus, when it stops at an intersection the traffic-officer is dressed as Mordecai. With companions I celebrated in the usual

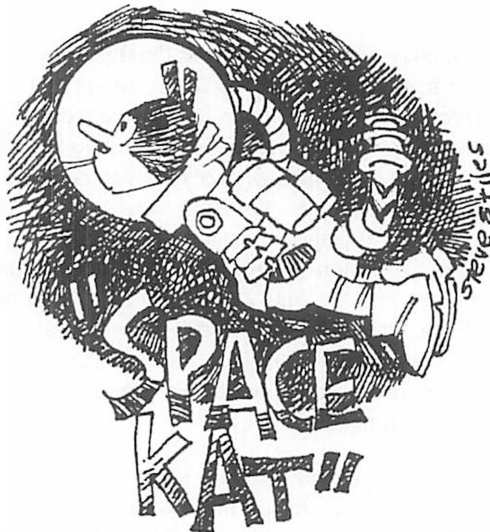
Neither Complete nor Conclusive

way, eating, drinking, praying, studying, reading *The Book of Esther*, and making jokes. For the reading the company is armed with noise-makers; when the name of the bad guy Haman occurs it's gleefully drowned out. During the day – Jewish, and Persian, holidays start at sunset – was the Los Angeles Marathon. I envisioned the runners and the crowd all in costumes, but they weren't. My Aunt R in Detroit, amused at this vision, observed by telephone that we not only ran in the rain but set records. [928]

– o o o –

On June 13th the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency's asteroid probe *Hayabusa* ("peregrine falcon") returned to Earth after seven years, where aimed and when predicted, a triumph of persistence and engineering over mishaps. Reaction control gone, it ejected its research capsule and burned in the atmosphere. The capsule, saved by heat shields and a parachute, landed at Woomera (South Australia), was recovered by a Japan – United States – Australia team, and on the 18th arrived in Japan for decontamination. It may have brought samples from Itokawa, a Mars-crossing asteroid 180 million miles (290 million km) from Earth.

Hayabusa was the first spacecraft to land on and lift from a celestial body other than the Moon and come home. Outbound its solar panels were hurt by a solar flare, one of its four xenon ion engines shut down, two of its three gyroscope-like attitude wheels failed. It reached the asteroid late in 2005 and maneuvered all



round, sending back photographs and determinations of Itokawa's composition, density, and gravity. This earned a special issue of *Science* (vol. 312 iss. 5778, 2 Jun 06), a first for Japanese scientists (and see "Spunky *Hayabusa* Heads Home with Possible Payload", vol. 328 iss. 5978, 30 Apr 10). *Hayabusa* landed twice. Its sampling mechanism may not have operated. But touchdown dust may have settled in a collection horn

anyway. If so, it will be the first asteroid matter yet retrieved.

Two months later, controllers on Earth lost contact. After another month JAXA picked up a signal. Weeks passed piecing together the picture. Batteries had shorted out. Hydrazine for the secondary propulsion system had bled into space, possibly from a fuel line damaged in the second touchdown. Regaining control of the craft was difficult. In 2007 it was set on a course to Earth. A second ion engine failed; a third became unable to generate neutralizing electrons. The engine

If we each have a gift, mine is the highest
Of any living creature on the earth.
You cannot do as I; you may be jealous,
Although we are of very different birth.
Sometimes I find that you can bring me down;
The same the other way may also be;
Sometimes I tower above you while you're hopeful
Of what I master, you'll have mastery.
You know me small or large, helpless or strong;
You paint the angels like me, that's not wrong.

[884; a bird]

N.B. birds bring us down, e.g. for pillows

that had earlier gone idle was made to provide them. Altogether, however, the ion engines operated over 1,000 hours, a first for humankind; testing them was the main object of the mission.

The asteroid was named for Hideo Itokawa (1912-1999), pioneer of Japanese rocketry, author of 49 books including best-sellers, student of basketball, golf, piano, *taishokin* (like a xylophone), baton twirling, English plays, and Mah Jongg. One day in 1954 at Tokyo University he told a graduate student to make a model rocket for wind-tunnel stability tests. "How much money do I spend?" asked the student. "None," said Professor Itokawa, probably meaning "Work it out yourself." The student made a rocket out of paper. It never went into a wind-tunnel, but the professor murmured "Good", photographed it, and used the photo, captioned "Domestic Rocket No. 1 manufactured experimentally at Tokyo University", for an article about rocketry in the *Mainichi Shimbun* ("daily news"). The graduate student was Ryojiro Akiba, later Director-General of the Institute of Space & Astronautical Science (now part of JAXA). One reader of the article was Susumu Okano, coördinator of space science at the Ministry of Education. He recruited Itokawa, and in 1955 came Itokawa's historic 2 x 23 cm (3/4 x 9 in) Pencil rocket, of which a replica is Item A19940219000 in the U.S. Smithsonian Institution ("so called because of its size, the weight of a fully-loaded average Pencil was less than half a pound. Yet these rockets were precision scientific tools fired on a horizontal ... range to test several important aerodynamic factors.... the Japanese progressed rapidly and in 1970 launched their first satellite ... using a four-stage ...

solid-fuel rocket"). Okano said afterward that article determined the direction of Japanese space development. [891]

- o O o -

A month after our local funicular railway Angels Flight reopened, the Gift Shop hadn't yet, so I could not replace my 1996 canvas shoulder-bag, now somewhat worse for wear. At the bottom, Hill Street between 3rd and 4th, is Grand Central Market, which is old. I drank an *espresso Cubano* (with a little burnt sugar), and later ate a box of *gyōza* (Japanese dumplings), although prepared food is not what one goes to Grand Central for. At the top, Olive Street, is the Watercourt, which is new. Five beds of marigolds bordered with purple pansies stood in a pool. Fountains played. According to a 50th-anniversary plaque the Flight had by 1951 carried more passengers per mile than any other railway; it remains the world's shortest, 300 ft (90 m) up and down Bunker Hill. As a Starbucks Black Apron cleaned her coffee machine I ate an oatmeal cookie, and saw Rahm Emanuel, the President, and Hillary Clinton walking to Blair House on the front page of the *New York Times*. They were in step. Clinton was on the left. On a record Sarah McLachlan, who is not Donovan, sang "Wear Your Love Like Heaven" (1967). For both rides I happened to have *Sinai*; the other car is *Olivet*. The fare each way is 25¢. [881]

- o O o -

I attended that memorial. It being pot luck, I brought some Clementine oranges and a pound of *hoshigaki*, dried persimmons. At the open-air market where I stopped on the way I found Aric Leavitt picking banjo and singing Bill Monroe's "Molly and Ten Broeck". Leavitt had once thought his given name, a parental compromise, was unique, but discovered it was only unusual. He looked at me. "Aren't you the Regency Dancing man?" I said yes. He introduced me to the crowd. Somewhere, he said, he had a 1991 record of his singing with Leslie Fish. [876]

- o O o -

The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, oldest s-f club on Earth, celebrated its 75th anniversary last month with a dinner at the Castaway restaurant in the Burbank hills. We had, although not planning it, the Starlight Room, with a grand view, at night a view of city lights. I was Master of Ceremonies. Lee Gold, who could not attend, told me to remind everyone of the *f*- i.e. that we should imagine between the *r* and the *l*. I did; perhaps I should have explained; I anyhow

Persimmon time! Persimmons!
How good these seasons be!
But you *can* have too many persimmons if

You have a persimmon tree. [811] thought this a fine contribution. I could have worn black tie, like John DeChancie, or white tie, but as it was I could put on my propeller beanie, which I had brought in my briefcase with a speech Paul Turner had given me to read. I called forth Roy Test, who had been at our first meeting in 1934 and then flew B-17 bombers; June & Len Moffatt, whose wit rhymed, Larry Niven, who said fandom civilized him; I read a letter from our cosmic Ray Bradbury; Lynn Maudlin belying her name sang, the Emperor revealed a singing voice among his powers; Laura Brodian gave a video presentation of Kelly Freas' work, Arlene Satin a video she made from archive photographs; before these and a host of others I quoted Thucydides, "Neither youth nor age can do anything one without the other"; after, I said "Not every great LASFSan who is with us tonight is here in person." There were many tales to tell, and we told some of them; many moments to remember, and we remembered some. In his day Johnson said, apropos of history and s-f, "Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings." [859]

When one is to master ceremonies one doesn't know whether they will need stretching or shrinking. It is good to be prepared. On the day of the 75th-anniversary dinner I happened upon a used-book sale at Nick Smith's place, the Pasadena Central Public Library, where I see him working sometimes, and there was a copy of Walter Karig's *Zotz!* (1947). Of course I bought it. I had it in my briefcase. Of *Zotz!* I could have told, a fantasy novel well-made and worth reading, its author a United States Navy captain (1898-1956) who wrote Nancy Drew books and a five-volume



from Tim Kirk

Battle Report of the World War II Navy assigned him in parallel with S.E. Morison's history; a novel whose neat satire escaped the posthumous 1962 movie (indeed

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I don't perceive how the tragedy of Ch. 32 could have gone onto the screen); a novel which, despite its modest but definite merit, became the butt of the annual LASFS Gift Exchange, as copies kept appearing, glutting, surfeiting, until *Zotz!* was a byword for an unwanted unvalued gift. But just as the fannish god (or ghod) Roscoe brought me and the book together that day, he (or if you don't believe, the course of human events) brought no moment to take the book forth that night. How would it have been received? Would it have been known at once? Could I have given it the honor, comic and other, it deserved? Perhaps those of us who love the small and not only the great, those who relish what might have been (indeed see "I Thought I Had a Pumpkin Bomb", *Trap Door* 23), may be pleased that our dinner was adorned, among its other ornaments, with a ready but never unleashed copy of *Zotz!* [860]

- o O o -

I'd done little in honor of *Diwali*, at root a religious observance of Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, which I have no part in, but a big time for a billion in India and Nepal, a Festival of Lights (*diwali* in Hindi is "row of lamps", for the victory of light and good in several events mythic and historical), fresh record-keeping, new clothes, gifts, and sweets. I had been neglecting Paru's Restaurant, near me at 5140 W. Sunset Bl., Los Angeles 90027, home since 1979 to good vegetarian food of South India - I'm no vegetarian either - so on Saturday night I went there, and at their suggestion ate almond *halwah*, softer and less dense than the ground-sesame style and served warm, and *gulab jamun*, caramelized milk-and-flour dumplings in rose-water syrup I could smell coming (*halwah* is from Arabic for "sweet"; many varieties; I've made a crushed-rice one; *gulab* is Farsi for rose water, *jamun* a fruit they resemble), in a room full of seasonal paper lanterns. I was given water in a beaten-metal cup shaped like a lotus flower, afterward *chai*,

spiced tea with milk. With a bow the waiter touched his palms fingers up (*añjali mudrā*, the salutation sign



= "I greet the divine in you which is also in me", also "thanks", which is not unrelated), a kind wish of Happy *Diwali*.

At home I learned President Obama had done more, in a White House ceremony at the start of the festival where he, without endorsing religion, as in his public capacity he must not nor detract from it, acknowledged the inspiration many profess it brings. Four weeks ago he greeted Muslims with *Eid Mubarak* ("blessed festival") for the *Eid* at the end of the fasting month Ramadan. In Turkey he visited the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. May the spirit animating these gestures be fruitful of peace. [856]

The Atomic Number of Iron

I've been promoting Classics of S-F book discussions at s-f cons. Sometimes I pick a few classics, sometimes I moderate panels or lead discussion alone. Sometimes I write descriptions for a progress report or program book or World-Wide Web site; you might like my attempts to describe important s-f stories in a few, possibly magnetic, words.

Wonders of 1958

This was a set of five for Denvention III (2008 Worldcon), six books published fifty years before.

James Blish, *A Case of Conscience*
and *The Triumph of Time*

Some call *Conscience* Blish's finest book. Is it science fiction? Is it a story? Is its best moment when the Pope asks "What did you do about it?" In the same year came the last of the four *Cities in Flight* novels. Is

it a success standing alone? How does *Time* compare to *Conscience*?

Algis Budrys, *Who?*

This penetrating study of identity, loyalty, uncertainty may be both more bleak and more hopeful than it

seems. If there is a sermon it is preached by silence. Budrys is known for his deftness and fine timing; here too are poetry, a fundamental grasp of tragedy, and the surprises of love.

Robert A. Heinlein, *Methuselah's Children*

By painting portraits Heinlein repeatedly asks the next question. What if your lifespan was two hundred years? What if you didn't care? If you are hunted, should you run? Where should you go? Here too is the first and perhaps best of Lazarus Long. Extra credit: compare the carefully rewritten 1941 version in the July-September *Astounding*.

Fritz Leiber, *The Big Time*

Spiders are the good guys, and our hero is a woman. The first Hero was a woman too, go look up

Here are some more and when we did them.

Edwin A. Abbott
Flatland (1884)

This little book is well loved even outside our field. Because it teaches geometry? Relativity? Because it uses up the last pure original idea? Because it's so old the satire no longer stings and people feel safe – no, what about the women? Because it's well made? Aha! (Westercon LXV, 2012)

Poul Anderson
Brain Wave (1954)

Humankind didn't invent it: we escaped from it. The Solar System suddenly moves out of a cosmic cloud after hundreds of millions of years. It was a suppressor field, so everything that has a brain is about five times smarter – people and animals. Now what? (Westercon LXIV, 2011)

Ray Bradbury
The Martian Chronicles (1950)

Bradbury has said this is fantasy, not science fiction. His poetry, his satire, his reproach – above all his poetry, without which stinging bees would starve – are in full bloom. Of course he satirizes the Martians too, who in all their beauty have folly. (Loscon XXXVIII, 2011)

John W. Campbell, Jr.
"Who Goes There?" (1938)

The most influential, possibly the greatest magazine editor we have known, Campbell could write, too. This is one of his best, put into a dozen anthologies, twice filmed. See how he manages the hints, the personalities, the masterly sequence of Kinner – Dutton – Connant – Blair. (Reconstruction, 2010 NASFiC)

Leander. Indeed this is a very classical book; it preserves the unities of time, place, and persons, which is mighty strange, considering. There's slashing drama, and if you've never been a party girl, it might not be what you think.

Jack Vance, *The Languages of Pao*

With four worlds in the spotlight, one populated by fifteen billion, this is a story of one boy and one man.

Knowledge may be power. Concentration and diversity may each be extreme. The characters say linguistics is the science here; perhaps it is really cross-cultural study, or patience; Vance's own language is the gold.

Eleanor Cameron

The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet (1954)

The New York Times said "scientific facts are emphasized in this well-built story." Applauded by Ellen Datlow and Walter Mosley, found on dozens of children's-book lists, it has strangeness and charm. Cameron, who knew her craft, used to point out that Dylan Thomas' father read him Shakespeare at the age of four. (Renovation, 2011 Worldcon)

Karel Capek
R.U.R. (1921)

"R.U.R." is "Rossum's Universal Robots", a word introduced by this play. The translator said it was a melodrama. The first New York performance was



called "Murderous social satire ... hair-raising." All true. Why is there only one woman (two, actually)? Does the lust to dominate follow from the conscious-

Neither Complete nor Conclusive

ness of pain? (Cascadiacon, 2005 NASFiC; Chicon VII)

Arthur C. Clarke
The City and the Stars (1956)

The City of Diaspar has lasted at least a billion years. By advanced technology everyone there has lived many times – except Alvin. He is beyond his teacher, beyond Khedron the Jester, perhaps beyond the Central Computer but it does not tell all. What if he keeps looking? (Lunacon LII, 2009)

Hal Clement
Mission of Gravity (1953)

Called a perfect hard-SF novel by many thoughtful readers, this is a remarkable character study – of its alien protagonists, for whom the human visitors we so sympathize with are the author's foils. He was active as both fan and pro. The title is typical of his puns. (Loscon XXXVII)

Avram Davidson
"Or All the Seas with Oysters" (1958)

He left us two hundred stories, none of them much like the rivers of others' fiction. Today people who seem never to have heard of him explain that safety pins change into wire hangers the way caterpillars change. Have you ever created an urban legend? This is not quite a love story, or maybe it is. (Westercon LXIII, 2009)

Pat Frank
Alas, Babylon (1959)

It may seem to focus less on technology than, say, Roshwald's *Level 7* (1959), or even Burdick & Wheeler's *Fail-Safe* (1962). Take a closer look. The author's sense of character and event develops much from simple themes. (Loscon XXXVIII)

Robert A. Heinlein
Farmer in the Sky (1950)

Heinlein's juveniles are jewels, of storytelling, the use of detail, the handling of science and fiction. *Farmer* has Boy Scouts and bureaucracy and a brother and bees, and if you'll allow a technical term it's a *Bildungsroman*. The Heinlein Double Surprise – something strange happens, then something *really* strange happens – is so near the end you think he might not do it. (Reconstruction)

Aldous Huxley
Brave New World (1932)

Written from outside our field, perhaps with many things to teach us. Protest and poetry hold it together. There's warning here; is there hope? Why? What makes the satire sting? (L.A.con IV]

Murray Leinster
"The Ethical Equations" (1945)

Here are hostile aliens we can't take advantage of, astounding technology ditto, bureaucrats who get their noses pulled, neatly and deftly shown. Leinster coined "first contact" for the first meeting of humans and aliens; the Sidewise Award for alternative history is named after a Leinster novella. He was one of s-f's best craftsmen. (Westercon LXIV)

Walter M. Miller, Jr.
A Canticle for Leibowitz (1960)

We're not long on stories that well paint any mainstream religion. This one shines and soars – I warned you about these puns – with the Catholic Church at center stage, the light relentless, but not ruthless, on Catholics and everyone else. Nor is that more vital to the tale than its characterization, selection, and timing – alas, another. (Westercon LXV)

C.L. Moore
"No Woman Born" (1944)

This masterly novelette, many times reprinted, explores beauty and attraction with almost inhuman resonance. It has the precision of poetry and the passion of science. It probably could not have been written by a man or in any other genre. (Cascadiacon, L.A.con IV]

Mary Shelley
Frankenstein (1831)

Here is one of those books everyone talks about but no one has read. It is poetic and pungent; its sermon is preached by silence. The man runs; the monster blames; what is missing from this picture? The author puts in a blind man to make sure we see. Cries for sympathy pour from the monster's lips. Where have we heard them before? (Reconstruction, Chicon VII)

Robert Louis Stevenson
"The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" (1886)

Strange? Stevenson *said* it was strange. The Victorian era, and timeless questions of human nature, together weave this tale. It is concerned with the results of technology. What if a medical researcher like Jekyll could do what he did? Who or what is Hyde? The best guide I know is Vladimir Nabokov in his wonderful *Lectures on Literature*. (Westercon LXIII)

Mark Twain
A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (1889)

Framed in a time-travel fantasy is a remarkable story of a benevolent alien bringing advanced technology. Is it distinguishable from magic? What is the tragic flaw of Hank Morgan? This book is much more widely popular than the others in our set of four. Why? (Lunacon LII)

Jules Verne

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea (1870)

Two motion pictures, a *Classics Illustrated* comic book, and the world's first atomic-powered submarine: not bad for inspiration. Who's the hero? Professor Aronax? Captain Nemo? Ned? Conseil? Why? (L.A.con IV)

H.G. Wells

The Time Machine (1895)

The title is one of those brilliant coinages which, once uttered, seem so obvious they pass into everyone's use. We in fact see only two times; the more gripping is narrated in a way which, upon reflection, is quite suspect. And the Time Traveller never returns for lunch. (Loscon XXXVII)

Within Us, Without Us

parochial and other notes, mostly from *Vanamonde*

Art lovers will want a look at Megan Prelinger's *Another Science Fiction* (2010), collecting a hundred twenty striking Space images from commercial publications of the years 1957-1962. Her book is two hundred forty pages, and some images get a full page, or two, quite rightly. All are highly imaginative; the things pictured had not been built, not that all the images are representational; it is science fiction through and through; it is wonderful art; it has everything to do

Where are the lotuses
In Echo Park lagoon?
Poor José Martí's bust is here.
It's Sunday and it's noon.
I can't believe a thing I read
About their careless doom.
I think of Tim Powers characters
Whose wind-up toys drum tunes.
Some joy remains at night;
Plain water shows the Moon. [854]

with us: and little connection. These artists were not working in our field, more's the pity, nor is there much sign they knew what ours were doing. So the title is true. Before the May release the *New York Times*, 9 Mar 10, p. D1, gave a dozen of the images and many column inches. Its text is expectable; so is the book's; imagine a lemon reviewing a quince. But never mind that. Most of the images came from *Aviation Week*, and *Missiles and Rockets* which is no longer published. Prelinger says (her p. 14), "I little expected that the advertising in their pages would seize my attention more than the articles." That's the truth too. She did us a service; let us rejoice in what she accomplished. As a picture book this is a treasure. [921]

- o O o -

In 2008 Jane Reichhold published *Bashō, the Complete Haiku*, I believe the most recent translation and first full collection of verses in this form by a Japanese man (1644-1694) long recognized as one of the greatest poets. *Bashō* (a kind of banana plant; in the present typeface I use a circumflex for the Japanese long vowel) is a pen name; *haiku* ("sportive verse"; once a kind of game; plural the same, like *sheep*) is the

term used since it was proposed by Shiki (1867-1902; another pen name = the Japanese cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus* which by legend sings until it coughs blood; he had tuberculosis) for a poem in three phrases of 5-7-5 sound-units similar to our syllables. That's short. *Haiku* reveal a moment; they reflect a season; in them you can see the subjective and the objective meet, which should happen at the end of the first or the second phrase; they don't preach; don't rhyme. Bashō left a thousand.

Half Reichhold's book is her valuable notes on each *haiku* giving its transliteration, Japanese characters, literal translation, year, season, allusions, which the publisher put at the end so you need two book-marks. Her introduction and chapter headings are good.

The simplicity and economy of the words demand that the reader ... explore the darkness of bird and night, autumn and bareness ... how a branch could move as the dark weight of a crow presses it down. The reader is writing the rest of the verse [p. 16].

She has just quoted one of Bashō's most famous:

kare'eda ni / karasu no tomaru keru / aki no kure [9 units in second phrase!]

literally

bare branch on / crow (subject) to perch (land, or sit) (*keru*) [a cutting-word, like our colon or dash] / autumn's evening

which she translates

on a bare branch
a crow settled down
autumn evening

noting

Bashō could have achieved the seven-unit count by leaving off the *keru* ... he must have considered it important ... to use *jiamari* [deliberately adding or subtracting sound-units]. In an earlier version, the second line ... had ten sound-units and ... the prescribed present tense.... the past tense ... broke another rule [p. 50].... The problem for the translator is to find a verb that applies to both the

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crow and the arrival of an autumn evening.... later ... Bashô said, "Poetry of other schools is like a colored painting. Poetry of my school should be written as if it were a black-ink painting" [p. 256].

Translating is hard, translating poetry harder, perhaps to translate poetry one must be a poet, as in the proverb quoted by Johnson (1709-1784) *If you would bring home the wealth of the Indies you must carry the wealth of the Indies with you*. Reichhold cites Donald Keene's 1996 translation of Bashô's *Narrow Road to Oku* (1689) but not Keene's masterly survey of this period *World Within Walls* (rev. 1999). Here are Keene and Reichhold together.

michi no be no / mukuge wa uma ni / kuware keru

literally

road of nearby of / hibiscus as-for horse by / grazed [cutting-word] [Reichhold, p. 269]

near the roadside
my horse grazing
on hibiscus

REICHHOLDE

Mallow flower
By the side of the road –
Devoured by my horse

KEENE

She says,

1684, summer. While humans enjoy flowers by gazing at them, horses enjoy flowers by grazing on them [a very Japanese pun].

He says (*World*, p. 85),

The title [not all *haiku* have them] is found in two versions – "On horseback" and "Before my eyes". Both clarify the meaning.... without the presence of Bashô on the horse, his surprise at the horse's sudden movement, and his realization that the beauty of the flower has gone, the verse is nothing at all. [*Van* 896]

- o o o -

This month saw the 90th birthday of Ravi Shankar, the musician of India best known in the West. His career as a performing artist began eight decades ago in his much-older brother Uday's dance troupe, which won acclaim through Europe and America. After the



troupe for a while engaged Allaiddin Khan, Ravi in his late teens gave up dance and bound himself as a pupil to the great instrumentalist. He came to regard Allaiddin's son Ali Akbar like a brother, and married Allaiddin's daughter Annapurna. He took the *sitar* as his instrument, Ali Akbar Khan the *sarod*; they pioneered duets, where previously Indian classical music had been a soloist accompanied by a drone, such as the *tanpura*, and a drum. At 28 he was the Director of Music for the External Services Division of All India Radio, founding a national orchestra, composing for dance and film, notably Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* ("The Song of the Little Road", 1955). He toured the Soviet Union – where people called "Pushkin! Pushkin!", struck by his resemblance to the Russian poet – Czechoslovakia, and Poland; as it happened, Ali Akbar Khan preceded him as a solo instrumentalist in the United States, but Ravi Shankar soon returned here, after Britain and Germany.

Early on jazz-lovers were most of the foreign audience, but while improvisation is also elemental there, the similarities are superficial. Indian classical music employs no chords, harmony, counterpoint; its rhythm is a time-cycle which may have three or a hundred eight beats. To explore one *râga*, a series of ascending and another of descending notes, the melodic form at the heart of this music, may require two or three hours. In the days of 78-rpm records, master musicians contrived three-minute *râga* miniatures, which are still prized, but this was a *tour de force*. Shankar's fluency in English and French, his ability to entertain foreign ideas, made him an ambassador. He troubled to explain his artform, managed at least some illustration of it within the confines of Western-style concerts and the new Long-Playing album.

As a performer he was rooted in tradition; as a composer he ranged widely. His famous Western collaborators were Yehudi Menuhin and George Harrison who, connecting him with the Beatles, brought celebrity and his first memoir, *My Music, My Life* (1968); thirty years later, after the Concert for Bangla Desh, a memoir in Bengali not yet in English, the film *Gandhi* (1982), more film and theater, Japan, China, a second marriage, India's highest civilian honor the Bharat Ratna, honorary doctorates, the Praemium Imperiale, and residence in California, he published with Harrison as

Folded hills like words
North of San Onofre that
I'm too close to read. [815]

editor a second English memoir *Râga Mâlâ* ("Garland of *Râgas*", 1999). "Baba [his teacher Allaiddin Khan] always said that music is not for selling; music is not made for a commercial purpose. Music is like worshipping, and through music you worship God. Though

it is difficult for a professional musician to follow this doctrine, it is true," *Rāga Mālā* p. 312.

Ali Akbar Khan predeceased him (1922-2009). He too kept his roots in tradition; he too composed film music; he was the youngest music director of All India Radio; he too reached to the West and lived here. He taught at McGill University; he founded a school in California (another innovation, traditional learning is at the feet of one master), teaching there until two weeks before his death, bringing the *sarod* to ten thousand Americans; he opened a branch school in Switzerland. He was given a MacArthur Fellowship, the first India musician to have this "genius grant", and a National Heritage Fellowship. He received India's Padma Vibushan in 1989 (Allauddin Khan and Uday Shankar in 1971, Ravi Shankar in 1981). He recorded a hundred albums and was nominated for five Grammy Awards. He too was brought here by Menuhin, who called him the greatest musician in the world. May peace be upon him. [883]

- o O o -

After 37 years in the insurance business, retiring, a claims manager, at 55, Chester Cuthbert (1912-2009) lived to 96. He sold twice to Charles Hornig, editor at Hugo Gernsback's *Wonder Stories*: "The Sublime Vigil" (Feb 34; Frank Paul cover shows two battling tripod tentacular machines, each piloted by a man in a bubble dome), "The Last Shrine" (Jul 34; Paul cover shows tubeways converging on a ringed tower, years later adopted for Bob Madle's memoir "A Personal Sense of Wonder", *Mimosa* 27 (2001); the Jul 34 *Wonder* has Weinbaum's famous "Martian Odyssey"). He was of First Fandom, those active by at least the first World Science Fiction Convention in 1939, and knew Forry Ackerman and Sam Moskowitz, who came to his home when ConAdian, the 52nd Worldcon, was at Winnipeg; he never attended a con. He was a faithful *Van* correspondent, to whom I'm indebted *inter alia* for his recommending O. Onions' novel of time and life *The Tower of Oblivion* (1921, a year before Fitzgerald's "Curious Case of Benjamin Button"), *V* 613. After his wife Muriel died in 2007 he gave his collection to the University of Alberta, two thousand boxes of books, fifty tons. He kept on two more years, a gentle giant. *R.I.P.* [876]

- o O o -

Lamgley Searles (1920-2009), four decades a college professor of chemistry, his 1946 Ph.D. from New York University, was best known to us for *Fantasy Commentator*, which he began in 1943 and published until 2004, with a short pause 1953-1978. This fine fanzine first ran Moskowitz' history *The Immortal Storm* (1954) as a serial before the *Storm* broke out separately; it gave us bibliographies like "Science Fiction in *Blue Book*" and studies like E.L. Davin's "Wo-

men and the Birth of Science Fiction 1926-1965"; Steve Sneyd was the poetry editor; it was nominated for a Retrospective Hugo at L.A.con III, the 54th Worldcon (1996), the first time we presented these. Searles warmed my heart by writing "I have long felt ... that you manage to make individual comments of more than expected general interest to readers other than the producers of the zine commented on," *V* 577; in an exchange around then he wrote "Seuss is right: it is work that usually makes inspiration a success, and Rotsler is wrong to imply the contrary.... The finest poets put in hours.... remember Thos. A. Edison: 'Success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.'... most amateur verse is so bad [because] writers are too ... lazy or uncritical," which I answered "Willingness to work, certainly. Seeing when one needs improvement, a consummation devoutly to be wished. Rotsler's Last Rule *Quantity of labor has nothing to do with art* raises our sights from work to worth. That Mozart was effortless, Beethoven strove, places neither of them first," *V* 607. *Ave atque vale.* [876]

- o O o -

Free! - free!
A trip
To Mars
For 900
Empty jars.

Burma-Shave

Lloyd Penney recommended Frank Rowsome, Jr., *The Verse by the Side of the Road* (1965), of which the L.A. Public Library has both the original and a 1990 reprint. Rowsome, an advertising man, credits great success to these roadside signs, at peak 7,000 sets of them, six million Burma-Shave users in 1947, the work of a company with two dozen employees. This brushless shaving cream, an innovation in the 1920s, went through three hundred trial formulations before No. 143 proved satisfactory after it had aged two months. The signs, classically a set of six spaced along rented land, have been called the most famous outdoor advertising. From rough notices they soon became memorable jingles, and when the company began to run dry it sponsored nationwide contests that drew 50,000 entries. Passenger children vied for their turn at reading out "If you think / She likes your bristles / Walk bare-footed / Through some thistles" or "When you drive / If caution ceases / You are apt / To rest / In pieces" and eventually "If you don't know / Whose signs these are / You can't have driven / Very far".

Arliiss French, managing a Red Owl market of Appleton, Wisconsin, saw the Mars gag in 1958, accumulated 900 jars, and asked where he should send them. The company answered "If a trip / To Mars / You'd earn / Remember friend / There's no return." When Frenchy replied "Let's not quibble / Let's not fret / Gather your horses / I'm all set", the company sent

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back "Our rockets are ready / We ain't splitting hairs / Just send us the jars / And arrange your affairs." By then Frenchy was displaying a big model rocket and had little green men on top of the store throwing gliders to people in the parking lot.

Company president Allan Odell and a Brink's truck for the jars found Frenchy in a cape and helmet with his own signs "Have 900 / Empty jars / So long America / Hello Mars." Man and wife were sent on a paid vacation to Moers (often pronounced "Mars" by tourists), North Rhine - Westphalia, Germany, near Düsseldorf, by one of the first passenger jets, the first Americans there since Eisenhower crossed the Rhine. [871]

- o O o -

I obeyed the ordinary instinct of civilised and moral man, who, erring though he be, still generally prefers the right course in those cases where it is obviously against his inclinations, his interests, and his safety to elect the wrong one.

Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 1st Baron Lytton
The Coming Race ch. 21 (1871;
D. Seed ed. 2005 p. 99)

This satire, under the guise of finding underground a grand, mighty, ancient civilization, scarifies the love of power, the equation of truth and beauty, the sexes, progressivism and conservatism, science, sympathy, and maturity. It was kept in print by people who supposed it a gratifying presentation of metaphysics. The author, lulling countryman readers by clothing the narrator in an overseas caricature of the United States, and letting his lavish descriptions sound in more of the same, may have so masked his instrument that it was not felt, even with such sharp reminders as I quote; he in his time with thirty novels and twenty books of poetry and plays ranked high - who coined "forcing a square peg into a round hole", and "the pen is mightier than the sword" - today disparaged, here offers us a speculative story where we had better take neither the first nor yet the second thought which may present itself, where the only true love is spurned, and the Earth is not all that is hollow. [Van 856, *Chunga* 16]

- o O o -

The past is forever with me and I remember it all.

Nien Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai*
(1987) - opening words

"I believe that would be a right smart thing for us to do," Captain Wiley said. "I appreciate your wanting to help me, Lieutenant; and I am glad that you did not call me a liar."

James Gould Cozzens, *Guard of Honor* p.
339 (1948)

These two notable books which came my way I commend for their interest to us as science fiction fans.

Cheng's death at 94 in November, after twenty-five years in the United States, renewed the interest of her memoir of detention and abuse under the Cultural Revolution in Communist China. It was a best-seller and at this writing is ranked 9,686 in sales by the on-line book service Amazon (for comparison, Brin's *Uplift War* which won that year's Hugo is 58,690; Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* is 4,716). Cheng, widow of a Dutch Shell oil executive, was assistant manager of the Shanghai office; after it closed in 1966 the Red Guards seized her and for seven years held her without charges, treated her harshly, and insisted she confess, while she quoted Mao Tse-Tung to them retorting she had done no wrong. Finally released, with politics eased she was able at last to leave, never to return. *Guard* won the Pulitzer Prize, a novel of three days on an Air Force base at fictitious Ocanara, Florida during 1943, regarding with sympathy and satire men and women there under the extraordinary strain of war and the ordinary strain of organization



life. Old and young, childish and adult, white and black, they try to manage their duties, their perceptions, their passions.

When *Guard* appeared the U.S. of six decades ago was familiar; yet, even when millions were under arms, many never set foot on an armed-forces base, the realism of which Cozzens was at pains to paint. Cheng's task was harder, and more pressing; if she lost readers, or seemed herself unreal, she would lose the argument she wrote to make. We have a different view. We

need not share Cozzens' assessments of human nature, or for that matter Cheng's – though some of us will. Aside from those merits, which are not at all trivial, we can watch these authors solve the problems that s-f must. [866]

– o O o –

See Shelley plain? Who could? His foaming sea,
His eagle's feather falling on the moor
That made a hand's-breadth of it shine alone,
His birth in wrecks of a dissolving dream,
His wild spirit, moving everywhere,
The monsters of life's waste fleeing like deer –
To him the strips of sky were paved with moon,
The flowers were sisters, waves were kissed by beams.

In *Vanamonde* 841 this replied to Lee Gold, who'd quoted Stephen Vincent Benét's "The General Public" (1918) which begins by quoting Robert Browning's "Memorabilia" (1855) ("see Shelley plain"). For answer I quoted the Benét, the Browning, and five works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Hellas* (1822), "Ode to the West Wind" (1819), "Adonais" (1821), "The Cloud" (1820), and "Love's Philosophy" (1819). In *Chunga* 16 my 8-line stanza was reprinted under the title "*Honka-dori* in English"; I explained "In Japanese literature, *honka-dori* 'allusive variation' has for centuries been the admired practice of deliberately re-using lines from others' earlier poems. The new poet expects readers to recognize the older lines, now given a new context which recalls and re-illuminates while also standing on its own. As a *tour de force* a poet may make an entire poem, classically one 5-7-5-7-7-syllable stanza, using only earlier lines. I recommend Donald Keene's brilliant *Seeds in the Heart* (rev. 1999, J. lit. from earliest times to the late 16th Century). [*Van* 856; *Chunga* 16]

– o O o –

In 2004 the estate of John Howard Griffin (1920-1980) brought out a definitive edition of his searing narrative *Black Like Me* (1961) with a foreword by Studs Terkel (1912-2008, *R.I.P.*) and an afterword by Robert Bonazzi who had married Griffin's widow Elizabeth (1935-2000). Griffin in 1959 after hearing United States black folks say *You don't know what it's like until you've stepped into my skin* decided he would. Under the care of a dermatologist, with a pigment-enhancing medicine and hours of sun-lamp he went very dark. He shaved his head and hands so as not to be given away by his hair. He spent two months as a Negro in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. It was almost too much for him. His journal first appeared in *Sepia* magazine as *Journey into Shame* (Apr-Sep 60). He was threatened, and hanged in effigy, but of his first six thousand letters only nine were abusive. In 1964 Malcolm X, in the Holy Land

(*The Autobiography of Malcolm X* ch. 18 (1965), 1992 ed. p. 379), found *Black*

had made a tremendous impact.... "A frightening experience!" I heard exclaimed many times.... [answering] "Well, if it was a frightening experience for him as nothing but a make-believe Negro for sixty days – then you think about what real Negroes in America have gone through for four hundred years."

By 2004 *Black* had sold eleven million copies. It was neither the first nor the last remarkable adventure of this extraordinary man.

Howard Griffin as a Texas fifteen-year-old was accepted at the Lycée Descartes in Tours. He had no French, Latin, or Greek. That changed. He became an authority on Gregorian chant and, with Father Pierre Froger, a musicologist and organist at the Tours cathedral, co-authored *Interpretation of the Ornaments of the Music for Keyboard Instruments of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (1939). He joined the Underground and smuggled out Jews. The Gestapo put him on a death list. He escaped. When his own country came into the war he enlisted and was shipped to the Pacific. He was introduced to Vutha, Grand Chief of the Solomon Islands, having by then compiled a glossary of the Floridian dialect. In 1945 on another island the Japanese were about to attack he drew the short straw and stayed to destroy papers. The bombs came. He ran. He missed the bomb shelter by a hundred yards. Two days later he awoke in a hospital bed. Two years later his injuries had made him blind.

The war was over. Griffin went to France. He studied with the classical-music composition teacher Nadia Boulanger, met the poet Pierre Reverdy, renewed acquaintance with the husband and wife musicians Robert & Gaby Casadesus who remained his friends for life. In 1947, his eyesight gone, he returned

Passing the hedges,
Finding a way through the trees,
A balloon alone. [860]

to the U.S. for training in Braille and blindness. Living with his parents he raised champion livestock. His Poland China hogs took top prizes though no sighted person had handled them. He published two novels, *The Devil Rides Outside* (1952) and *Nuni* (1956). *Outside* won acclaim but ran afoul of obscenity laws. In *Butler vs. Michigan*, v. 352 of the *U.S. Reports* beginning at p. 380 (1957), Justice Felix Frankfurter delivered the vindicating opinion of the Supreme Court (pp. 382-83):

appellant was convicted because Michigan ... made it an offense for him to make available for the general reading public (and he in fact sold to a police officer) a book that the trial judge found to have a potentially deleterious influence upon youth. The State insists that, by thus quarantin-

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ing ... against books not too rugged for grown men and women ... it is exercising its power to promote the general welfare. Surely, this is to burn the house to roast the pig.

Griffin fell in love with a piano pupil, worried what he could give her, asked her father to keep them apart, and found her worrying what she could give him. They married and had two sons, two daughters. His sight came back in 1957. His journal of darkness and vision, *Scattered Shadows*, appeared in 2004.

In 1959 he published a history of the Staked Plain region of West Texas, *Land of the High Sky*. In the civil rights movement he worked with Martin Luther King and Whitney Young. Called as a consultant, he kept saying "Why ask me? Why not ask those Negroes there?" He resumed photography, which he taught Thomas Merton (1915-1968), the Trappist priest who became known to the world and who died by mishap at Bangkok attending a conference on monasticism. Griffin published *Twelve Photographic Portraits* in 1973; twenty-eight more are in B. Daniel ed., *The John Howard Griffin Reader* (1968). Griffin's study *A Hidden Wholeness, the visual world of Thomas Merton* (1970) has his text, his and Merton's photos. He was a cook who could make *crème au caramel* or *oeufs à la russe*. As Merton's authorized biographer he lived a week each month for three years in Merton's hermitage at Gethsemani abbey, with Mass daily. He published *Jacques Maritain, a homage in words and pictures* in 1974. At last his failing body made him give up the Merton biography. His *Hermitage Journals* appeared in 1981. He had the feeling tone. [833]

- o O o -

When a book I've meant to read bobs into view I try to get it, and there in an airport bookshop was Anita Loos' *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1925), bound with its sequel *But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes* (1927) and the original Ralph Barton illustrations. *The Memoirs of Harriette Wilson* (1825) show how right the coruscating *Blondes* is; it was a best-seller; never mind that it was called the great American novel by Edith Wharton, which is as silly as the dull-witted bellicose introduction (how often those two conjoin) in this 1998 Penguin Classics edition. Loos (1888-1981), almost forty as she started *Blondes* on the Santa Fe Chief between New York and Hollywood where she wrote scenarios for Douglas Fairbanks, put her narrator Lorelei at perhaps twenty, a marvel of characterization and dexterity. Satire is with love. [826]

- o O o -

Great art outlives its own time. The greatest art rouses interest in the time when it was made. Shakespeare (1564-1616) draws our attention to his England; his work is timeless enough to reach us, after which we to appreciate it better want to understand it in detail.

His plays have long been loved. What was his theater? A little study shows it like and unlike ours, actors portraying characters, their speech portraying events and life, without our amplified sound, almost without scenery. Unlike our picture-frame stage with its device of a curtain Shakespeare's theater could be an innyard. He used playhouses too; one called the Theater built in 1576 by James Burbage was taken down twenty years later and its lumber used for the famous Globe, where Shakespeare acted. Much later we began not only to think about the Globe in detail but to consider building and using a reconstruction.

After four centuries that was done. Its leader Sam Wanamaker (1919-1993) did not live to see its achievement. Its story is told in J. Mulryne & M. Sterling eds., *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt* (1997), with drawings, diagrams, photographs, some in color, discussion of the 1989 archeological Globe-site excavation, of polygonal joints, of the Thatching Advisory Service and the Loss Prevention Council, of painted pillars and painted cloths, of acting on a thrust stage in our time's clothes or Shakespeare's. Beside the interest anyone who can read English has in this artist, there is a special interest for s-f fans. There is valuable half-truth in "Science fiction is the poetry of technology"; *if they had that technology, we wonder, would they be like this?* The s-f narrative explores how engineering and event inform each other. That is also the tale of historical reconstruction, which if done well and told well is a pleasure. [824]

- o O o -

Douglas Fairbanks' film *The Thief of Bagdad* (R. Walsh dir. 1924) is a marvel, placed in an Arabia of Fantasy, with magic, a beautiful princess, and a dashing handsome man who begins as an unstoppable thief, is inspired to endure adventure, and by his accomplishments earns the lady's regard. I hear it cost \$2 million to produce (when eggs were 50¢ a dozen, milk 10¢ a quart), of which the great William Cameron Menzies sets are enough to convince me. But mere opulence will not make a story like this; it takes vision and indeed focus, here admirable, perhaps exemplary. [806]

- o O o -

In college an English and General Science major, in World War II an Army Air Force captain who won the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal, Don Herbert (1917-2007) went to television with *Watch Mr. Wizard* (1951-65, 1971-72) and *Mr. Wizard's World* (1983-90). He won a Peabody in 1953, a Millikan from the American Association of Physics Teachers in 1991, a Grady-Stack from the American Chemical Society in 1994. In his shirtsleeves, not so customary for 1951-65, in a television laboratory, with household objects and the visitor of the day, 11 or 12 years old, he did science. As he grew famous he was spoofed by

Mad magazine and by Bob & Ray (B. Elliott 1923- , R. Gould 1922-1990), which he loved. He did a bushel of other science projects, a book *Mr. Wizard's Supermarket Science* (1980), eight "The Story of a Search" films e.g. *Case History of a Volcano* and *The Invisible Planet*, 20-minute *Science 20* presentations from the viewpoint of the experimenter inviting participation, 15-minute *Teacher to Teacher* videos sponsored by the National Science Foundation, six hundred 90-second *How About* "newscasts" half of which were later packaged as *Science & Technology Reports*. He said, "What really did it for us was the inclusion of a child. When we cast a boy and a girl to come in, it took off." A physicist at the Institute for Advanced Study said, "What was really remarkable about Mr. Wizard was that he talked to the kids as if they were real people." *R.I.P.* [805]

- o O o -

Punctuation hasn't been trivial in English for centuries. Aren't you missing a capital letter and some hyphens? Seemingly *Bubalus* or *Bison* cattle from *Buffalo, New York*, having grown used to the characteristic local practice of bullying, impose it upon others of their kind must be "Buffalo-buffalo Buffalo buffalo Buffalo-buffalo Buffalo buffalo" – the fearful symmetry of which calls to mind "Yields a falsehood when appended to its own quotation" yields a falsehood when appended to its own quotation. Martin Gardner

Three Emerald Cities Chunga 19

As a boy I found the Emerald City of Oz. A neighbor introduced me to her father, a clergyman – of course the girl my age was the neighbor, I had a child's-eye view – who had most of Frank Baum's Oz

Steam curls rising up
From a cup of Chinese tea.
How cool is this May? [886]

books, some of Ruth Plumly Thompson's, and Jack Snow's *Shaggy Man*. The father and I made friends. I read his Oz, his Pogo. Two of my first and best friends in fandom, June and Len Moffatt, knew and loved both. At the Millennium Philcon, when Esther Friesner recited "There's a star in the wind" I could almost have said it with her. At ConJosé, I was Master of Ceremonies for the Masquerade; when people told me I looked like John R. Neill's illustrations of the Wizard, I said "If only I'd thought to bring nine tiny piglets!"

The Wizard built the Emerald City. Baum's brilliance was bountiful, not only in that first book which, had he written no more, would be sufficient wonder, but then in the inventive reversal that led to another dozen, and peopled them with glass cats and gumps and

in a celebrated review of a book by Yuen Ren Chao (1892-1982) (!) asked, "Where else can you find a Chinese paragraph, consisting solely of 36 repetitions of the single syllable *hsi* (using four tones, to be sure), that he assures us a reader of classical Chinese can make out to be a somewhat improbable story about a Mr. Hsi who regularly took his pet rhinoceros to West Creek for an evening bath and romp?" *Scientific American* August 1968, p. 123 (unsigned); Y.R. Chao, *Language and Symbolic Systems* pp. 120-21 (1968):

systems of writing in which a unit represents a syllable or a morpheme, such as ... Chinese ... of the so-called literary, or classical style.... there are 116 characters under the syllable *hsi* ... in Chauncey Goodrich's (Chinese-English) *Pocket Dictionary* (T'ungchow, 1891). It would be possible, even easy, to write a story consisting of nothing but the syllable *hsi* in one of the four tones: (unmarked), ´, ˘, and ˙, as follows:

West Creek rhinoceros enjoys romping and playing.
Hsi (surname) Hsi (given name) every evening takes rhinoceros to play.
Hsi Hsi meticulously practices washing rhinoceros.
Rhinoceros sucks creek, playfully attacks Hsi.
Hsi Hsi laughing hopes to stop playing.
Too bad rhinoceros neighing enjoys attacking Hsi. [765]

wogglebugs and Woots. May we do as well in our way as he in his way.

My third Emerald City was Cheryl Morgan's electronic fanzine. Knowing how I felt about what Harry Warner so aptly called eekmail, she printed copies and relayed them to me. Regardless of various differences we were and are friends. I reviewed books for *Emerald City*. Its reviewer's note about me said "The participation and interaction in our community rouse his sense of wonder." Later when someone mistook a remark in *Vanamonde* Kathryn Cramer in rebuttal posted on her Website a photo of Cheryl and me at a Hugo Nominees reception, Cheryl in a thin-strap gown, me in white tie.

One book I took up was the *The Best of "Xero"*, published just in time to display when I ran the Fanzine Lounge at Noreascon IV. The selection was sensitive, and layout artist Ann Monn did marvels in monochrome with the near-legendary limning. Later the Lu-poffs seeing my note repeated under "A Fan's View" at *Collecting Science Fiction Books* sent kind words.

Neither Complete nor Conclusive

My second Emerald City was Seattle. I went to live there one summer with a woman and a rabbit. On the way several of us city folk decided to sleep under the stars. They were glorious. There must have been a million, of every shape and size. We soon perceived a comparable number of mosquitoes. In Wounded Knee, I met a Sioux (as he said) Roadmaster whom a vibraphonist friend knew. We talked for hours about his religion, over which he and his people suffered – I don't say at the hands of strangers, the Peyote Road can be physically painful – which was not mine, but which meant much to him. In Seattle, I saw the Joffrey Ballet, which began there and for its mixed-media *Astarte*, with a set that changed shape, onto which images were thrown, commissioned music from Crome Syrcus. I did not know Robert Joffrey's father was Pashtun and named him Abdulla Jaffa Anver Bey Khan. I read *The Lord of the Rings* and *Dune*. I bought a *ruana*. Later I learned Seattle had an active fandom.

Cascadiacon accepted my recommended four Classics of S-F for panels and sent fliers to bookshops,



APA-L is not formally a Club activity). Amateur journalism, a hobby unrelated to s-f, originated apas in the late 19th Century; we fans started the first s-f apa in the mid-1930s to exchange fanzines; since then, many, some lasting a little while, some for decades; our first, FAPA (Fantasy Amateur Press Ass'n), still goes on. FAPA is quarterly; APA-L appearing weekly was breathtaking when it began five decades ago, is extraordinary today. Over the years *Van* has also acquired a much wider circulation, which presents an interesting challenge. In an apa, comments on what other contributors publish are indispensable. An issue of *Van* has to reply to the previous distribution of APA-L, maintain the quick interchange of good apa writing, and at the same time be worthwhile for readers who don't see the other side of the conversation.

2011

Not only might "The King of France is bald" be true at one time, and false at another time, while France was a monarchy; now, while France is not a monarchy, the nature of the dispute over whether there is a King of France is qualitatively different from the dispute over whether there is a God. One would have to do more to come into the presence of Henri comte de Paris, or Louis-Alphonse duc d'Anjou. The witnessing would be of another kind. One might meet both these gentlemen (one of whom is balder than the other) and still be unable to establish that one had met the King of France. [945]

Since you a pro mention it, I'll say I think many of the sorrows of science fiction fandom today (we have joys too) stem from a worsening of s-f in the past few decades. It has also improved. I think the worst of s-f has risen, and the

colleges, libraries. *The Invisible Man* may have been best known, *R.U.R.* most influential, "No Woman Born" most admired for its writing, *Starman Jones* best loved. I moderated three and sat on the fourth under James Glass. Hiroaki Inoue was soon to host the first Worldcon in Asia. Alan Rosenthal, running the Fanzine Lounge, had a display of Steve Forty's mimeos. Kelly Freas' widow Laura and I had in June made a Memorial Slide Show, given by me at Westercon LVIII, then at Interaction by Jane Frank, Joe Siclari, and Frank Wu, then by me at the NASFiC. After filking I helped Anne Prather back to her room with her harp. In the elevator lobby, at 4:30 a.m., was Arizona fan Jean Godden, reading. Later Monday morning Dave Kyle said "Let's go to the Science Fiction Museum." Ruth fed us breakfast. She was afraid she'd never see either of us again. Dave and I got a cab, paid the driver to wait, and took turns pulling each other away from things.

Seattle is fertile. Its eponym said – maybe – "Yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion for centuries untold, and which to us appears changeless and eternal, may change. Today is fair. Tomorrow may be overcast with clouds. I will not dwell on our decay, nor reproach you, my brothers, with hastening it, as we too may have been somewhat to blame. But let us all hope the hostilities may never return. Be just and deal kindly, for the dead are not powerless. Dead, did I say? There is no death, only a change of worlds."

237 Talking Statues, Etc. remarks, from *Vanamonde*

Vanamonde is published in APA-L, which is short for Amateur Publishing Association – LASFS (Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, its host although

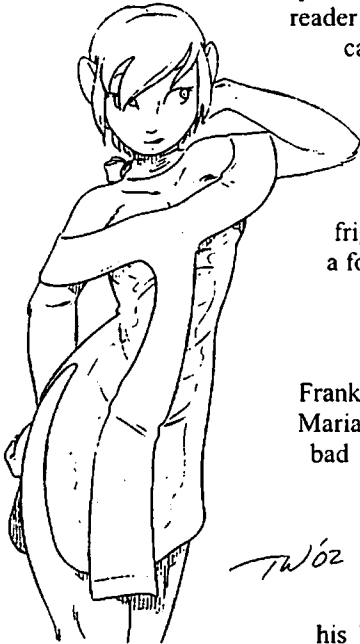
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worst of fandom. But the best has in a way sunk. We are there imagining more widely and writing worse. We have power, but lack precision and point. Partly we found, perhaps in the Sixties, that s-f was a cheap platform for preaching, a problem much older than we, grown to grip us; if Sturgeon said of Wells "He traded his birthright for a pot of message," *ipse dixit*; we protest more than promote; we so fix on pushing at borders we pass over what they hold. Partly we seem to forget, as the brand name of a car driving in front of me gave me a reminder the other day, to focus. Look how complicated is what appears in s-f convention Art Shows, and on book covers. Look at s-f con programming; at fanzines. I can't believe the price of being inclusive is being insipid, any more than sharpness means *You're no good*. [941]

Wanting to answer your comment about dictionaries with "Max Greech doesn't look like Satan, Satan looks like Max Greech", and hunting a copy of Wouk's *Marjorie Morningstar* (1955) to cite from (ch. 11; I paraphrase), I was startled to see this novel praised as a coming-of-age book for young women, the title character as every girl who ever dreamed. Aiee. It is a stinging satire – done lovingly (*Sarcasm is in anger, satire is with love*) – probably Wouk's masterwork, relentless too with Noel Airman, he more talented than Marjorie and more to blame, shredded and disposed of though not in the sad course of human nature finally with the famous moment "Shocks ... incredible humiliation" (ch. 36), which some of my feminist sisters who catch fault being found think derogates *her*. [936]

Many Golden Ages occurred before I was born. Jane Austen. Lady Murasaki. Confucius. To descend from the sublime to the ridiculers (though 2/3 of my examples are satirists) I've only seen Ernie Kovacs' and Milton Berle's television shows long after they were first aired. [936]

I don't think s-f is in the prediction business. But when a story is set in a stated year which is in the future at the time of writing and we read the story when that year is in the past, or when a story employs an apparent possibility and we read the story after that apparencey is deemed falsified, the story loses *frisson*, and requires a more mature imagination to appreciate: the same imagination an earlier reader ought to have brought to the story, but could escape. As Nabokov said, "To call a story a true story is an insult to both art and truth" (*Lectures on Literature* p. 5, 1980). [923]



If I squint maybe I can imagine that the U.S.S. *Bonhomme Richard* – whose original eponym is the pen name of Benjamin Franklin (i.e. in *Poor Richard's Almanac*), ambassador to France when John Paul Jones' frigate, the current ship's predecessor, was named for him in 1779 – is named for a foreign humorist. [922]

2010

Frank Butler singing "The Girl That I Marry" (*Annie Get Your Gun*, 1946), like Marian Paroo in "My White Knight" (*The Music Man*, 1957), he at the moment the bad man and she the good woman, prompted by the approach of a suitor whose nature is unexpected, even repellent, may exaggerate, as we do at a time of "Oh no, not that," but otherwise each is sincere – at least in the sense of *guileless*: but these are only their ideas, not their well-considered ideas, and in each case the author, who is something of a contrarian – indeed Willson was an Iowan ("welcome.... provided you are contrary," incidentally naming his birthplace, Mason City, "Iowa Stubborn", *Music Man*) – rescues the singer from a life in which the wished-for would come true, Butler who wanted someone unlike being confounded by happiness with someone like, Paroo who wanted someone like being confounded by happiness with someone unlike. [911]

In the year 2517, Ferdinand Feghoot arrived in the Feeshee Sector. As a potrzebie salesman he perceived that the locals did not readily respond to sonar messages. Electric, magnetic, and gravitic communications obtained their usual results. He translated and transferred resiliently, but he was never one to sink under a challenge. Fashion was influential here. Who and where was the fashion leader? At a verguzz party he learned that people followed those called Haridians; whom in turn were they following? It was curious how little talk was conducted sonically, and then only if amplified. Sociolinguistic instruments pointed more and more to the radiation of some one person. Feghoot was told that he should go to the planet Haring, but that he could not. He redoubled his achievements, electrifying the Sector with the meaning of potrzebie, magnetizing whole ranges of customers. If he could get no invitation he

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would attract a caller. Finally one day his wall flashed unusually. He knew this was his moment. As he signaled *Enter*, the door dilated. A man floated in. Feghoot, feeling light-headed, lost presence of mind and uttered a greeting in sound. "You'll have to speak up," gestured his resplendent visitor; "I'm Harid of Haring." [910]

I was disappointed to learn that the movie *Get Him to the Greek* (N. Stoller dir. 2010) was not about teaching a man to brew coffee or to dance [909].

I wonder if the demon *Punish them for what you consider disagreeable thought* derives its temptation from "I haven't been very effective at inspiring them to what I consider agreeable action." [895]

To notice what is worth recounting, and then to tell the tale well, are liberal arts – among the arts that suit one to the exercise of liberty. They underlie fiction (though other things are in fiction too), and can be studied there, in novels and shorter stories, poetry (is poetry fiction?), plays; besides fiction, history; essays, so neglected today. From this perspective a great advantage in looking across a cross-cultural distance, of time or space, is that one is less likely to be distracted by the whine of the author's axe grinding. The political jokes and other topical rib-nudging in Shakespeare, or Lady Murasaki, or Aristophanes, which may have been music in their day, are the least for us, and we can see what in fact made such artists great (and for extra credit, compare their contemporaries who with all local clamor then are revealed as lacking now). [895]

Fantasy is old. Science fiction seems not to have arisen until the 19th Century; the earliest I can think of is M. Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1831; I use this date as corresponding to her final version, though the earliest published was 1818). Science itself seems to be new; we apparently went on thousands of years without it. F and SF have what-if-ness in common; SF is what if *this thing which (though it hasn't been done yet) appears possible*; F is what if *this thing which appears impossible but is aesthetically interesting anyway*. Artforms get invented, or having arrived fade and later re-emerge: Ancient Greece had plays, then after the Roman era they receded for a millennium; in Japan, *nō* and *kabuki* only arose four centuries ago. [888]

One who would rejoice in the worthwhile must make way through the rest, disregarding dullmindedness and its cousin self-importance. [881]

A nice question whether art or science consists more in doing work or in appreciating work of others. [878]

2009

The merits of *The City and the Stars* (A. Clarke, 1956) I call your attention to are artistic, literary. Points incidental to the exploration which the author has chosen – where does all the energy come from? is that why Earth is a desert? – are machines capable of such service without sapience (and what is the role of the Council)? are these machines sapient (can machines be sapient?), even the Central Computer? are they thus mistreated, is this a world of slavery? who and what are the slaves? who enslaves them? – what is the nature of service? – what sustains Lys for a billion years? – although now we are getting closer to the main thread, with some glimmer given – he ably keeps offstage. Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on. [873]

He was Count Palatine of the Moon, another of Otto IV's boons? Those Brunswicks and Welfs feigning innocent of pelf should be glad they had no vembletroons. [861]

I used to think the vembletroon was invented by Bruce Pelz, but see below.

For all that our pioneering magazines were *Amazing*, *Astounding*, *Startling*, *Thrilling*, I wonder how elemental this is to science fiction. Valuable as is the piquant – I drink Talisker – the search for shock can cloy, or worse. [868]

Your noting *Thanks for Everything* (W. Seiter dir. 1938) from Cinecon XLV, with Jack Haley as Henry Smith the Average Man by whom Adolphe Menjou as J.B. Harcourt hopes to predict fashion trends, brings to mind "The Sources of the Nile" (1961; it's in the wonderful *Avram Davidson Treasury*, R. Silverberg & G. Davis eds. 1998); do you know it? Did Davidson know *Everything*? [855]

When I called the vembletroon to Steve Sneyd's attention, the very name unnerved him.

I horrified Sneyd with the name of a poem.
He rummaged through books and proceeded to throw 'em.

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The poor man was new to the Pelz vembletroon;
Just wait till he learns they're by – MRS. RAVOON. [834]

Of this unfortunate woman I can say little. The Internet, I hear, is now garbling even her name. Robert Lichtman, however, explained I had misattributed the vembletroon. He quoted *Nematode 2*, Bob Leman's zine in the January 1959 (46th) Spectator Amateur Press Society (SAPS) mailing:

the vembletroon ... is a poem of five lines, always an exercise in invective. The first line is of seventeen syllables, beginning with a term of abuse. Line two is in iambic pentameter, the only line which scans. The third line is a long one – thirty-eight syllables – and the first and last words must rhyme. Line four has eighteen syllables, with the first and second words rhyming. And the last line always consists of the single word, "Idiot."

This was a comment on the first issue of Pelz' *SpeleoBem*. In *Nematode 6*, Leman had a further mailing comment to Pelz:

I have a vembletroon for you, which refers to something way back in the 49th mailing, but ... these are my first MCs [mailing comments] since then:

Clotpoll, you spoiled an excellent ruse I was perpetrating in SAPS
By quoting from the learned Kilpatrick's book.
Just consider the fact that while I was trying to make everyone believe I am erudite, you had the colossal gall,
the amazing crust
To clue the membership in on the source of my strange and obscure verseforms.
Idiot!

Lichtman concluded:

I took the time to dig out Bruce's SAPSzine for the 49th mailing to see if I could find his reference to the Kilpatrick book. However, that issue is nearly 100 pages, I didn't find anything in his comments to Bob, and I rolled my eyes and put it away.

I likened *If it ain't broke don't fix it* to *Repent the day before you die* since, as *Repent* suggests looking beneath the surface meaning because applying the maxim literally requires perception of one's deathday, which can be elusive, so *Ain't broke* suggests looking beneath the surface meaning because applying the maxim literally requires perception of whether a thing is broken, which can be elusive. [832]

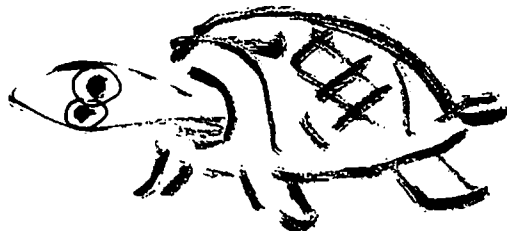
We should cultivate the art of finding what doesn't bother announcing itself to us, or doesn't know how to reach us, but would be happy if we arrived. We proclaim *Ask the next question* but less well practice it (or trivialize it into *I'll undermine you, now I'll undermine you too*). For many, the incorrectly included is easier to recognize than the incorrectly omitted; for many, both such badnesses easier than what would strengthen a goodness. Queen Elizabeth I of England once said "You right me much." [831]

It's vital to raise one's sights above how irritating a person is. [830]

Amerind, tamarind, Native Americans seek better names than poor Indians have; yet other folk born here chronosynclastically wonder if this is the sovereign salve. [826]

"Certitude is the enemy of wisdom" is orthodox dogma in this Romantic world. In fact people are very certain they'd better be uncertain. Complacency may be the real enemy. These days I rather hope I may correctly harbor certainty and uncertainty – "and the wisdom to know the difference". [819]

For me the art, science, or mystery of doing an Lzine is excruciating, exhilarating, nourishing. Thinking up what's worth saying, trying to contribute more than "Right!" or "Wrong!" to the conversation, reflecting, recounting, sometimes easy, sometimes a lot of trouble, these seem to me acts of civilization. I've always distrusted *I'll do it so long as it's fun* which *inter alia* fails to account for possibly spoiling the fun oneself. [818]





The Kelly Freas Memorial Slide Show

what an astounding artist

Kelly was called the Dean of Illustrators and science fiction's best-loved artist. In fifty years he won ten Hugos, a Retro-Hugo, three Chesleys, an Inkpot, an honorary doctorate from Pittsburgh, and our hearts. He drew insignia for Skylab, and *Mad Magazine's* Alfred E. Newman. CascadiaCon will celebrate his life and work on Monday, September 5, 2005.

**Monday 1 p.m.
Columbia B
with John Hertz**

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