

spring-like news stories. Every year we hear of various beaches--from various communities in Florida preparing for the annual onslaught of college so-called students migrating like seagulls south to Florida for spring break. Back in pagan times the coming of spring was celebrated as that time of year when you could stop

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shoveling pagan-time driveways and skidding oxcarts on roads. In all piety young adult pagans would dress in their skimpiest fur loin cloths, drink gallons of mead, and putting down their scrolls for copies of P_l_a_y_p_a_g_a_n and P_e_n_t_h_o_v_e_l, head out for the beaches, where they would shake their bodyparts for each other and for primitive pagan television cameras. Actually, it was surprising they could find beaches given the state of knowledge of the ancient pagans who were just learning things like how to read and write and that there was a world outside their village. At that time, reading, writing, and geography were advanced knowledge.

Today's college students--who are also just learning to read and write and who cannot name you the three major countries in North America--rest up from all the heavy learning they do by going south to tie up roads and drink beer and to shake barely covered bodyparts for each other and for television cameras, as if the growing of those parts was an engineering feat equivalent to building the Eiffel Tower.

What sparked all this was a news story that many traditional haunts that spring break "students" infest are now trying to discourage them from coming. Now that should give you some sort of hint as to how these visits are valued. As one of the students pointed out, "48 weeks a year Florida runs ads saying 'Come down to Florida,' and the other six weeks they say 'Stay home.'"

One of the locals, however, said he welcomed the onslaught of students. "These are the leaders of tomorrow," he said, climbing back into his beer truck. Now I might question that statement. Everybody looks at young people and calls them the "leaders of tomorrow." I wonder how many of today's leaders participated in spring break mating migrations. You'll never know because how many will admit it even if they did? I could almost believe it of Congresspeople. But when I look at these spring-breakers on the

news, in my heart of hearts I don't tell myself that these are people who will be running the nation; I tell myself that these are people who will be running a cash register at Food Town. The cashiers of the future have got to come from somewhere and these look like prime candidates. At least once automatic pricing machines are installed.

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Nothing that is contrary to, and inconsistent with, the clear and self-evident dictates of reason, has a right to be urged or assented to as a matter of faith, wherein reason has nothing to do.

-- John Locke

1990 Hugo Nominees
Courtesy Laurie Mann @ Stratus.

BEST NOVEL OF 1989:

THE BOAT OF A MILLION YEARS, Poul Anderson (Tor)
PRENTICE ALVIN, Orson Scott Card (Tor)
A FIRE IN THE SUN, George Alec Effinger (Doubleday/Foundation)
HYPERION, Dan Simmons (Doubleday/Foundation)
GRASS, Sheri S. Tepper (Doubleday/Foundation)

BEST NOVELLA OF 1989:

"The Mountains of Mourning," Lois McMaster Bujold (ANALOG, May 89; BORDERS OF INFINITY, Baen)
"A Touch of Lavender," Megan Lindholm (IASFM, Nov 89)
"Tiny Tango," Judith Moffett (IASFM, Feb 89)
"The Father of Stones," Lucius Shepard (IASFM, Sep 89; THE FATHER OF STONES, WSFA Press)
"Time-Out," Connie Willis (IASFM, Jul 89)

BEST NOVELETTE OF 1989:

"Dogwalker," Orson Scott Card (IASFM, Nov 89)

"Everything but Honor," George Alec Effinger (IASFM, Feb 89;
WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN, Vol. 1, Bantam Spectra)
"The Price of Oranges," Nancy Kress (IASFM, Apr 89)
"For I Have Touched the Sky," Mike Resnick (F& SF, Dec 89)
"Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another," Robert Silverberg
(IASFM, Jun 89; TIME GATE, Baen)
"At the Rialto," Connie Willis (OMNI, Oct 89;
THE MICROVERSE, Bantam Spectra)

BEST SHORT STORY OF 1989:

"Lost Boys," Orson Scott Card (F&SF, Oct 89)
"Boobs," Suzy McKee Charnas (IASFM, Jul 89)
"Computer Friendly," Eileen Gunn (IASFM, Jun 89)
"The Return of William Proxmire," Larry Niven (WHAT MIGHT
HAVE BEEN, Vol. 1, Bantam Spectra)
"Dori Bangs," Bruce Sterling (IASFM, Sep 89)
"The Edge of the World," Michael Swanwick (FULL SPECTRUM II,
Doubleday/Foundation)

BEST NON-FICTION BOOK OF 1989:

ASTOUNDING DAYS, Arthur C. Clarke (Gollancz, Bantam Spectra)
HARLAN ELLISON'S WATCHING, Harlan Ellison (Underwood-Miller)
GRUMBLES FROM THE GRAVE, Virginia Heinlein, ed. (Del Rey)
DANCING AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD, Ursula K. Le Guin (Grove)
THE WORLD BEYOND THE HILL, Alexei & Cory Panshin (Tarcher)
THE NOREASCON THREE SOUVENIR BOOK, Greg Thokar, ed. (MCFI Press)

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BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION OF 1989:

THE ABYSS
THE ADVENTURES OF BARON VON MUNCHAUSEN
BATMAN
FIELD OF DREAMS
INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR OF 1989:

Ellen Datlow (OMNI)
Gardner Dozois (IASFM)

Edward L. Ferman (F&SF)
David G. Hartwell (Morrow/Arbor House, Tor)
Beth Meacham (Tor)
Charles C. Ryan (ABORIGINAL)
Stanley Schmidt (ANALOG)

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST OF 1989:

Jim Burns
Thomas Canty
David A. Cherry
James Gurney
Tom Kidd
Don Maitz
Michael Whelan

BEST SEMIPROZINE OF 1989:

LOCUS
NEW YORK REVIEW OF SCIENCE FICTION
THRUST
SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE
INTERZONE

BEST FANZINE OF 1989:

FILE 770
FOSFAX
LAN'S LANTERN
PIRATE JENNY
MAD 3 PARTY

BEST FAN WRITER of 1989:

Mike Glycer
Arthur Hlavaty
Dave Langford
Evelyn Leeper
Leslie Turek

BEST FAN ARTIST OF 1989:

Steve Fox
Teddy Harvia
Merle Insinga
Joe Mayhew

Stu Shiffman

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER OF 1988-1989 (not a Hugo):

John Cramer¹

(TWISTOR)

Nancy Collins¹

(SUNGLASSES AFTER DARK)

Katherine Neville¹

(THE EIGHT)

Kristine Kathryn Rusch²

("Fast Cars" [10/89 IASFM], "Phantoms" [06/89 F&SF],
and "Fugue" [11/89 AMAZING])

Allen Steele²

(ORBITAL DECAY, "John Harper Wilson" [06/89 IASFM],
"Red Planet Blues" [09/89 IASFM], and "Free Beer
and the William Casey Society" [02/89 IASFM])

¹ First year of eligibility

² Second year of eligibility

BEST ORIGINAL ARTWORK of 1989 (Not a Hugo):

QUOZL cover by James Gurney (Ace)

THE STRESS OF HER REGARD cover by James Gurney (Ace)

RIMRUNNERS cover by Don Maitz (Warner/Questar)

HYPERION cover by Gary Ruddell (Doubleday/Foundation,
Bantam Spectra)

PARADISE cover by Michael Whelan (Tor)

RENEGADES OF PERN cover by Michael Whelan (Del Rey)

Note: No Award is an option for each category.

Since not enough voters nominated non-English works, this category will not appear on the final ballot.

ConFiction received 281 ballots and there were two three-way ties for fifth place.

Hugo ballots will be in the mail to all members of ConFiction this spring. Completed ballots must be postmarked by 7/13/90.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
A film review by Mark R. Leeper
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Capsule review: NBC had the money and the time to tell Gaston Leroux's story correctly and accurately to the book. Instead they gave it to people with no respect for the novel (by their own admission) and got a slow and uninteresting version with most of the power of the original story missing. Rating: low 0.

The day that Tony Richardson's made-for-television version of T_h_e P_h_a_n_t_o_m_o_f_t_h_e_O_p_e_r_a was due to be shown, my local newspaper did a feature on it quoting the writer Arthur Kopit as saying, "[After having read the novel] what struck me was that this story ... wasn't very good. Still it captured the imagination of people. Why? What bothered me about [the previous dramatic] versions, what I thought they essentially missed, was that you never knew why the Phantom was in love with Christine."

I had very high hopes for this version. There were four announced film adaptations in the wake of the success of the Broadway play. One starred Richard Englund, whose most famous role was the razor-gloved Freddy Krueger; one was simply a film version of the musical; one was set in Nazi Germany. Of the four versions, the only one that sounded like a genuine new adaptation of the novel was the announced four-hour television version. Then I read Kopit's quote.

What Kopit is saying is that he has no respect for the material itself, only for its ready-made market. He also thinks that the dramatic versions missed the point of why the story is popular. I could easily believe his comment if it really was the novel that people remember but, in fact, the book has not been what people have liked. For most of the years the story has been liked, Gaston Leroux's novel has been hard to find. Andrew Lloyd Webber tells an anecdote about how difficult it was to find a copy of the novel when he wanted to read it. The dramatic adaptations that Kopit thinks missed the point of why the story is remembered are really what made the story popular. And here

they cannot have missed the point. Actually I would contend that they have all missed what I like in the novel, but not what has made the story popular.

The novel is about a man with a great intellect and a horribly deformed face. All his life he was treated as a freak and just occasionally exploited for his genius. Eventually he finds the opportunity to build for himself an empire in the darkness beneath the Paris Opera House. There he can enjoy the music and can be seen only when he wants. This is Gaston Leroux's Erik but he has never been done satisfactorily in a film or play. I had hoped that in the three and a

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half hours or so of story there would be time to show Erik's history. In fact, this version did show Erik's history but it bore little relation to anything in the novel.

Kopit missed the point entirely by making his Phantom a petulant young man (played by Charles Dance of T_h_e_J_e_w_e_l_i_n_t_h_e_C_r_o_w_n), who is being shielded by a former manager of the opera house (over-played by Burt Lancaster).

Kopit's screenplay intends this Erik to be likable and steers clear of the question in the novel of whether Erik might be psychotic. This Erik does not kill, at least in the course of the film. Oh, his face may startle and early on this causes a death, but that does not appear to be Erik's fault. This Erik has lost the feel of the sinister and instead controls the fate of the opera house with practical jokes. Even the cutting down of the chandelier is not a murder attempt but an act of angry vandalism intended to vent rage and for which the audience was intentionally given time to get out of the way. Of course, this Erik had less reason for rage than the one in the book. The script claims that Erik's mother at least found his face "flawlessly beautiful." In the book Erik's mother gave him his first mask because she could not stand to look at his face.

There are a few nice touches to the script. One of them is the handling of the issue of how to handle the unmasking. Sort of independently of the quality of the rest of the production there is the question of how to shock audiences when they do see the Phantom's face. The approach here was unusual and not badly done, though it was perhaps

dictated by the screenplay's efforts to keep Erik as a romantic Phantom. Less endearing is Erik's unexpected forest beneath the ground. It isn't like the metal forest of the novel but a real forest with live trees and unexplained sunlight. It appears that Erik must have built himself a holodeck.

Charles Dance is a little whiny for my tastes, as well as not being sufficiently sinister. Lancaster as the former manager is overripe and Teri Polo as Christine Daae (in the book Daae) is unmemorable. She and her lover Adam Storke as Phillippe, Comte de Chagney, are pretty people but boring actors. (Again, they got the name wrong on the Comte. The character's name was Raoul. Phillippe is the name of Raoul's brother, older by twenty years.)

The whole mediocre revision of the story is directed by Tony Richardson, who directed T_o_m_J_o_n_e_s. I am not a fan of that film but it certainly was better directed than this slow-moving version. If I had never heard of the story before I would have rated this a little higher, but as it is I would give Richardson's version a low 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.

[Postscript: Of the dramatic versions of T_h_e_P_h_a_n_t_o_m_o_f_t_h_e_O_p_e_r_a I have seen, I would list them best to worst as: the Webber play (which is

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surprisingly faithful to the book), the Lon Chaney film (1925), the Claude Rains film (1943), the animated cable version (1987) (lackluster but very faithful to the book), the made-for-television Maximillian Schell version (1983), the Herbert Lom film (1962), the made-for-television Charles Dance film (1990), and then there is a very long gap down to Richard Englund's putrescent version (1989). I do not count films only inspired by the story, such as P_h_a_n_t_o_m_o_f_t_h_e_P_a_r_a_d_i_s_e, T_h_e_P_h_a_n_t_o_m_o_f_H_o_l_l_y_w_o_o_d, and P_h_a_n_t_o_m_o_f_t_h_e_O_p_e_r_e_t_t_a.]

[Post-postscript: For someone with a better command of French than my own: the name of the novel as "The Phantom of the Opera" but in the novel he refers to himself less dramatically as "The Opera Ghost." Isn't that distinction purely on the part of the translator? Don't both

translate to the same words in French?]

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EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE DUCK by Gahan Wilson
Mysterious Press, 1989 (1989c), ISBN 0-445-40841-3, \$4.95.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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What we have here is Yet Another Sherlock Holmes Pastiche.

In addition to Sherlock Holmes (here called Enoch Bones), we also have "the Professor," "the Mandarin," and "Spectrobert," not to mention tunnels filled with booby-traps worthy of an Indiana Jones movie, Lovecraftian monsters, and inter-dimensional shenanigans. The duck of the title, Quacky Duck, is not the detective, but rather a famous cartoon figure, with his own following and song and a theme park designed around him. You don't need to be Sherlock Holmes to figure out who _ h _ e' _ s supposed to be.

Told mostly in the first person from John Weston's (Watson's) point of view, this novel shows that Gahan Wilson can write a good tongue-in-cheek detective story, even though the crime and its perpetrators are perfectly obvious. The occasional interludes told by an omniscient third party point of view do mean that Bone/Holmes is on stage perhaps less than we would like, or rather, less than we are used to. Still, the Flying Purple Cloud of Destruction does help make up for that.

It's a lot of fun.

THE CITY, NOT LONG AFTER by Pat Murphy

Bantam Spectra, 1990 (1989c), ISBN 0-553-28370-7, \$4.50.

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

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The time is the near future. The place (the city of the title) is San Francisco. And what it's not long after is a plague that has killed off most of humanity. If this sounds a lot like George R. Stewart's classic E_a_r_t_h_A_b_i_d_e_s, rest assured Murphy is not simply rehashing Stewart. In fact, T_h_e_C_i_t_y,_N_o_t_L_o_n_g_A_f_t_e_r is as much a rebuttal, or at

least a counter-proposal, to E_a_r_t_h_A_b_i_d_e_s as anything else. Stewart's novel champions the American way, with the main character as "The Last American" mourning its passing and only reluctantly accepting a new way of life (which is still very similar to life as we know it); Murphy's novel puts forth a society directly opposed to "the American way of life" as presented by General Miles (a.k.a. "Fourstar") in the novel. I can't claim that Murphy stacks the deck either; both novels emphasize the structure and discipline of an orderly government, as represented by the hammer in E_a_r_t_h_A_b_i_d_e_s and the Fourstar's troops here. I can only claim that Stewart characters also remember the personal liberty that America gave them, and this balance is missing from Murphy's portrait. (I am trying very hard here to avoid attributing to the authors philosophies that may belong only to their characters, not to them, but this makes for some awkward sentences, so if I slip up, bear this in mind.)

We are introduced to Jax (who remains unnamed until half-way through the novel, but for clarity's sake I will call her that throughout this review), the daughter of a woman who has fled the city. We find out that Jax's mother is somehow blamed for the catastrophe that has overtaken humanity, but we do not learn until much later in the novel what did happen. (And when we do, it seems to hearken back to Ursula LeGuin as much as Stewart.) Stewart and Murphy both gloss over the health implications of millions of rotting bodies. (I believe Stewart at least has his main character avoid the city for a while after the plague has run its course.) When Jax, directed by her dying mother, does return to the city, she finds it has become a city of artists. Jax warns the residents that Fourstar is coming to take over the city, but rather than fight a traditional battle (which would have been what Stewart's characters would have done), they decide to fight Fourstar's armies using art. This use of art is more like a highly refined use of psychological warfare, but to call it that would have undercut the "message" of the novel. (After all, on page 15 Murphy declares, "When Danny-boy was eight years old, he learned that art could change the world.") Call it what you will, though, it does have an effect. (My favorite line of the novel is "Lily and Zatch lay on the roof of a warehouse, their bellies flat against the gravel and tar paper. Down below them, the army was overreacting to a work of art.")

Now all this sounds implausible (or worse). And it pretty much is. For example, before Fourstar's arrival, one artist is making a giant harp by stringing wires across the Opera House Plaza so that when the wind blows it will make music. Another builds elaborate mechanical creatures that run (or fly) around the city. All this works, in large part, because there is so much food to be scavenged that people don't need to farm or hunt for a living. Shelter, clothing, all the necessities of life are provided by the city.

But as a novel it still works. And the reason it works is that, contrary to what it says on the spine of this book, this is not a science fiction novel. This is a fantasy novel. Or even closer, this is a "magical" novel. The characters in this novel live with ghosts, just as Murphy's characters in T_h_e_F_a_l_l_i_n_g_W_o_m_a_n did. The ghosts walk and talk and communicate with the characters. When someone decides to paint the Golden Gate Bridge blue, he is aided by the sudden arrival of a swarm of blue butterflies. Flowers fall from the sky. Angels give people advice. This is the city, not long after, and not quite real.

Jax spends most of the novel coming to terms with people who live through their art. She must struggle to understand that life for everyone does not consist in following the same path day after day, just because that is how it has always been done. By the end of the novel, she hasn't completely come around to the artists' way of thinking, but she has been affected and changed by it. By the end of the novel, the reader won't necessarily be ready to throw it all over and become an environmental artist either. But s/he will look at life, and art, and society, differently.

[Bantam/Spectra Special Editions may very well be taking the place of the Ace Science Fiction Specials as the leading edge of science fiction/fantasy. I was a bit put off by the number of them published--it sometimes seems that there are three new "Special Editions" every month--but I have been very impressed with the three I have read so far and plan to read more. My only caveat to the buyer is that some of them are reprints.]

