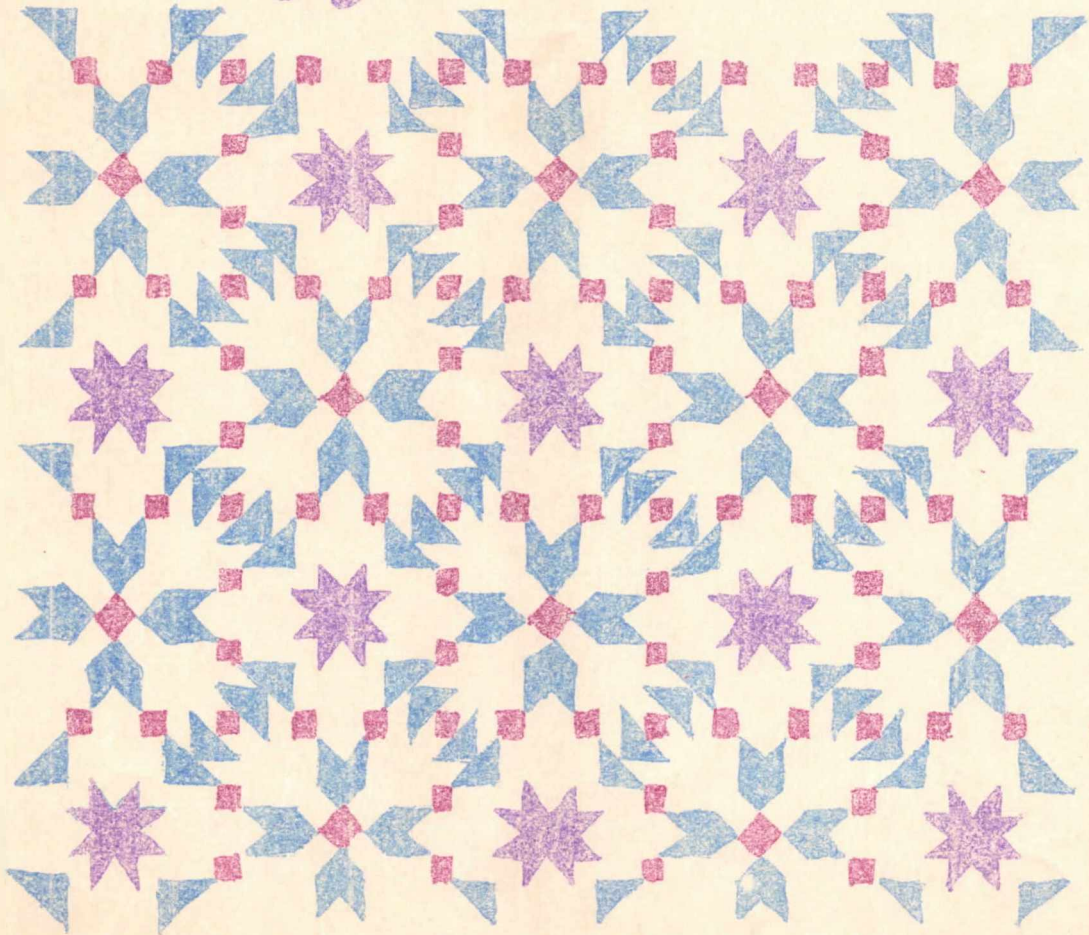
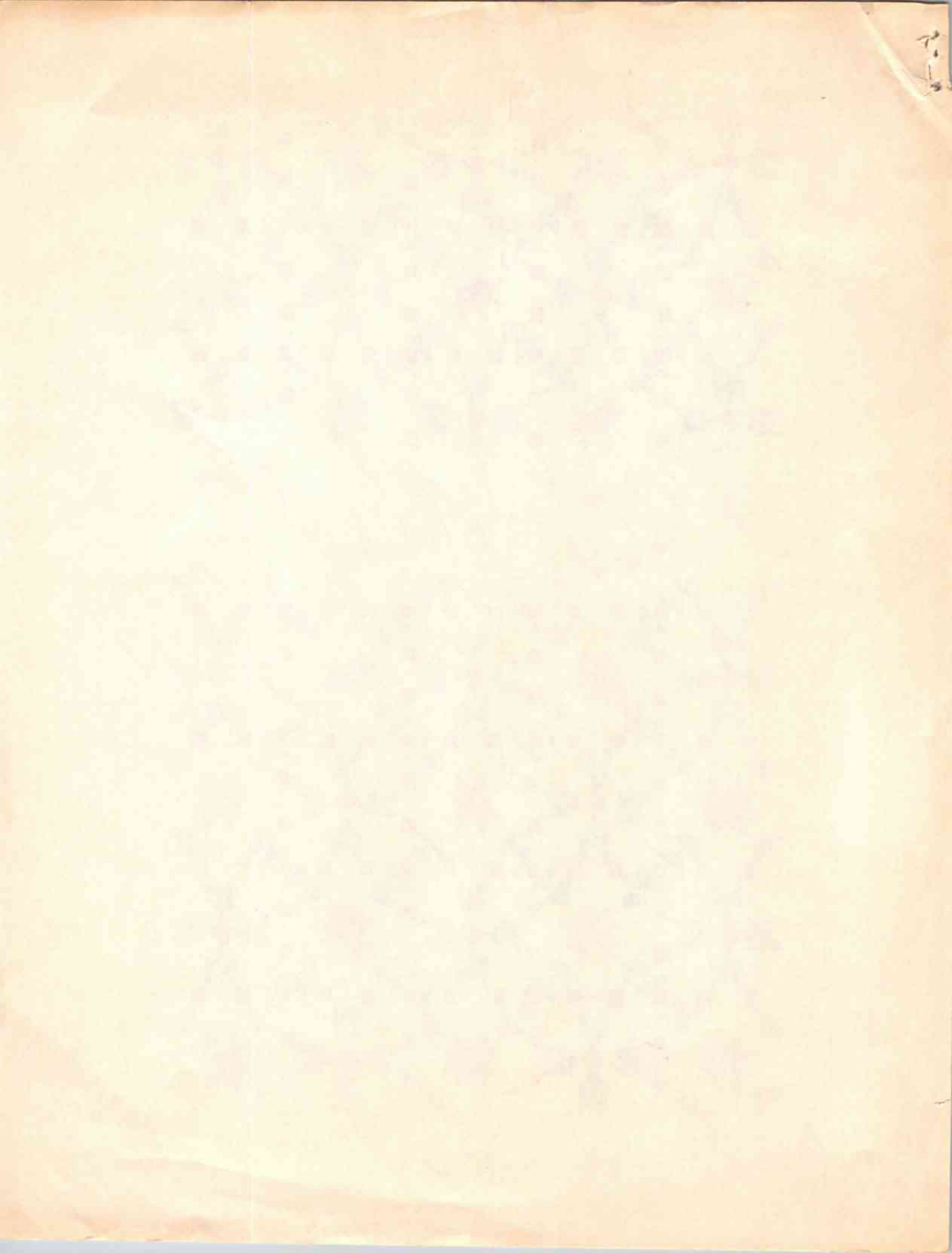


ROTUNDS 2





PROTHALLUS 2

June 1977

PROTHALLUS 2, for those of you who can't read my writing (join the club!) a budding fanzine from

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Available for the usual sorts of ~~editorial~~ editorial whim. If you're not reading this at Midwestcon, it's probably not available any more; but flattery will get you the next one, and a scrap of yellow ditto master gets you an Automatic Lifetime Subscription.

I once thought I was going to publish a tradezine in order to get lots of other fanzines, but it hasn't worked out that way; I have such a fat mailing list from all the apas I've been in that I haven't been out of my way looking for established names to importune (and I still haven't seen many fanzines at all, though I'm expecting a crash course or three this summer). Anyway the art folks I gave PROTHALLUS 1 to gave me the quickest feedback: they didn't necessarily understand it (but understanding is a n expensive luxury in art these days-- anything called art gets the benefit of the doubt) and they liked it. (Two of my favorite comments were "unpretentious" and "absurd".) Going to ditto this will help keep it in similar circles (time enough for a 400#printrun deeply empathic mimeozine later), but ghu knows what will come next (and ae's shuckling). Is there a rex rotary in my future? Or...something else?

I've largely given up on content here (or the pre-planned kind); I think I've beaten the mailing list into shape, but my filing of illos and rough drafts leaves a lot to be desired (I have no ambitions of ever running a genzine (what, never? well, hardly ever)); not to mention the loes! I was so well prepared to receive none at all, that I was unable to deal with the ones that did come. Few of you who wrote will get so much as a [AHP] mention (though I have illusions of excoavating those files this summer, even if I don't move back to the city as I've been threatening ever since I came), but rest assured that I read & enjoyed your letters.

For a while this spring I was granted my wish of a duplicator-- any duplicator-- in the person of a sympathetic little handcrank rocket standard spirit duplicator; for a while I played with it every night. It now resides at a slanshack down in the town (after all, it is club property). I want to publish a dittozine while I'm still in the habit & on such good terms with a machine. So if I may tickle those who have a taste for ~~ditto~~ bright colors...

TRAVELTHIRST

(TRAVELTHIRST)

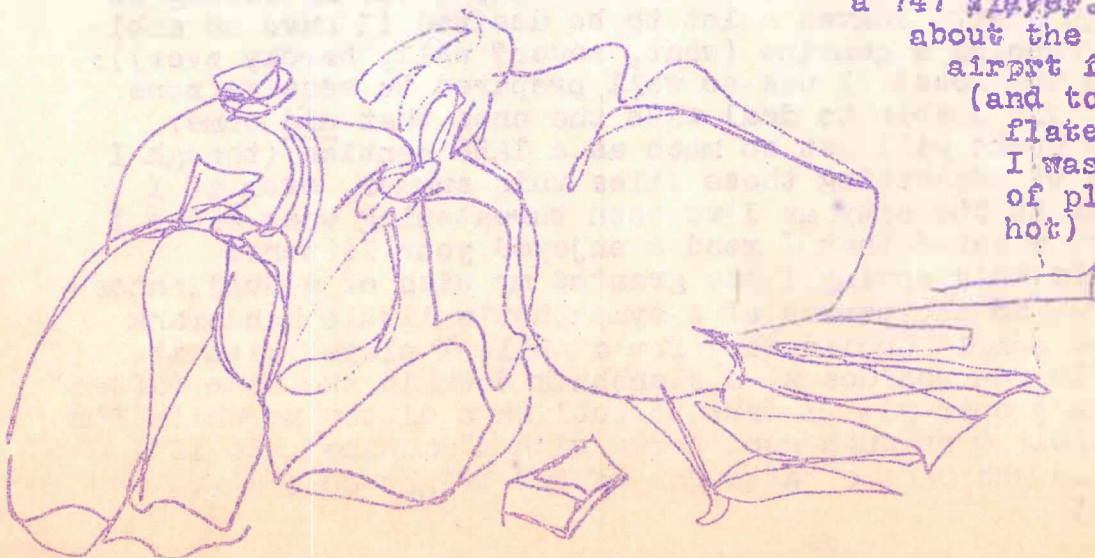
I feel a bit of obligation to write about some of the places I've been in the past few months; but those most interested will probably be disappointed anyway, since I don't want to talk about the personalities I met (with the possible exception of Fred Kuhn's guitar) or con programming (since I rarely go to any programming). But Travel, now, Travel is a subject in itself, often as important to me as Arrival. Travel produces new thoughts, whether by supplying new material or by mechanical agitation (Volkswagens are good for the latter stimulus; I compose many apazines on the wide gently-banked highways of south central Ohio...).

"I have always wanted to write about how one state differs from another. It is so strange that the lines are ruled lines on paper, I never stop having pleasure in the way ruled lines separate one state from another. Ohio from Indiana, Kansas from Nebraska, Tennessee from Alabama, it always gives me a shock of pleasure the American map and its straight lines and compare it to any other with the way they go all over nothing neat and clean like the maps of America. Well that is the way the earth looked to me as we flew to Chicago... Straight lines and quarter sections, and the mountain lines in Pennsylvania very straight lines, it made it right that I had always been with cubism and everything that followed after."

--Gertrude Stein

I had a window seat out of Columbus, and picked out my own house from above: a shiny roof in a forest enclave among the developments. After that the air wasn't clear enough to see much, and in Chicago I transferred into the middle of a young lecturehall

full of acceleration couches,
a 747 ~~level~~. Dashing
about the Phoenix
airport fully-clothed
(and towing an inflated down parka)
I was rather out
of place (and
hot) by the time
I found



the right ~~judge~~ where the attendant smiling, always smiling, said "I can see where you're going!" and as he shuffled my papers and I caught my breath, I suddenly saw the Mark of the Iguana-- a tiny green embroidered cactus stuck on his ID badge...

That bony dry land stained with iron was fascinating from the air. Between two eroded valleys I saw a vast rulersharp ninety-degree angle drawn between two colors of ground, as if something had eaten or bleached the dirt one one side of a fence-- miles below me; and clusters of volcanic mountains bursting out of flat plains (volcanic! Growing up around meandering rivers in limestone beds, and secondarily in round glaciated New England, I've always been intrigued by volcanos.); driving back across that ground with Phoenicians hurrying to resume their lives, I wished I could stop to walk around on them...

It's amazing how trivial the Grand Canyon seems (cf. HOWARD THE DUCK #16). Perhaps it's the tinny muzak from the lodge; or the whole buildup it's had for so long; I had the same feeling some years before at the North Rim, more impressed by the gradual but mighty rise of the deserted Kaibab Plateau. The Canyon itself couldn't be real. As a Midwesterner I know air couldn't possibly be so clear that you could see something as far away as that's supposed to be. But the sky was undeniably bluer than I see very often, the bare ground was a rich red and the pines very green; I spent some hours out on the rim at various times of day, most notably at 2am under a half moon (think of that volume of thundering ether in a dark hole below you) and shortly after sunrise, watching the blue shadows drain out the bottom of the canyon. The down jacket was very useful then-- I heard it went down to 17°F-- but no one was equipped to go with me.

On the way down to Phoenix I found out that saguaros are real. Amazing. Then saw the Iguanacon hotels with an electric shiver of anticipated pleasure-- so plush! so convention-minded! so eager to have us! This must be an exaggeration, but it says in my notes that the con suite has three bathtubs (one for lime jello, one for chocolate pudding, and one for guacamole) not to mention a shower for the keg of beer (excuse me, beer) and a bar. I can't imagine having a bad time at that con.

On the way back I learned that the flat grainfields of Illinois (around Champaign/Urbana) are underlaid with drainage tile, a technique for wet ground known to the lowland-germanic settlers. Think what a job that was by hand.



I volunteered to work on Maroon in order to feel some solidarity with local fans (or, they would have been less than happy with me if I hadn't, since they have a small bodypool to draw from, and I have



been soaking (in the benefits of club memberships & connections). And to remind myself that I really don't want to be involved in politics; it's fun being a little pitcher with big ears to NASPIC bid snuffing (that's Louisville in '79, after voting Brighton in for the worldcon. If Brighton files in time...) but no more than that. I certainly don't want responsibility for anything; a few hours on the registration desk was almost too much for me. Better to be a captive artist, free at least to drag my chains about the halls. (I have some line drawings that ought to go with this piece of writing, but they'll have to wait til the right repre comes along.)

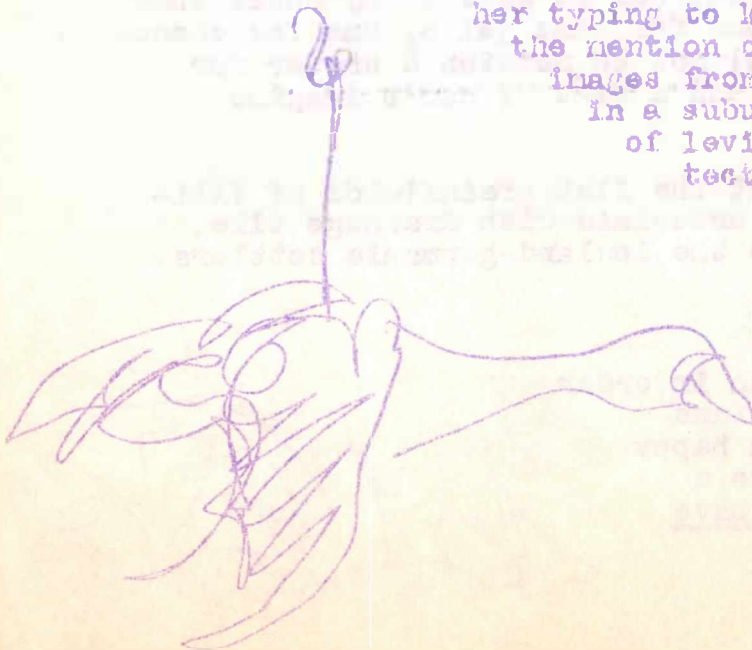
I also nearly joined Big Fandom (200 pounds) to fit in with the Maroon committee even better. Might have, if this manual typar didn't keep me exercising. Even so I knocked Kathi Schaefer down with the enthusiasm of my greeting. Here, have some counter-culture animal crackers.

At the dying end of the con I played airport taxi in order to trap some people into seeing that my house really exists. ("See Dublin and die." Paul Madarasz) And was impressed by how much better a light car handles on a gusty freeway when full of people and huckster's cartons of books. A little later, marooned at the airport, Ken Josenhans set stylus to master in an account excerpted here:

"Sarah, how big a log cabin do you live in?"

"It's not a log cabin," she replied; "it's covered with aluminum siding," she added, as if to impress me with the modernity of her living quarters. Immediately my conception of Sarah's residence began to change. I had pictured it as a snowbound log cabin in the middle of the Black Forest, under siege by invading rats, with snow drifting in through the broken windowpane; Sarah swathed in a mound of quilts before the fire, relying on the exercise from her typing to keep the blood circulating. But the mention of aluminum siding swept these images from my mind; Sarah, I decided, lived in a suburban rambler, a typical piece of levitt-designed/influenced shit architecture. Like my house.

"We drove past the Olde Sawville Townhouse Development and Light Industrial Park, a collection of carbon-copy, levitt-designed/influenced shit architecture. I spotted a house with aluminum siding. 'There,' I cried, 'there it is, Sarah!' But we didn't slow down as we passed the Olde Sawville, and I sank back into the back seat and chewed on my knees in disappointment.



"We drove on. The houses became fewer and fewer. We drove on. An Indian's arrow crashed into the front seat, and Karen Pauls stiffened noticeably. My knees began to bleed from the nervous chewing. Sarah drove on, looking resolute and fortitudinal.

"After a stop for one of the last wild buffalo herds in North America, Sarah turned off onto a gravel road. 'There,' I cried, 'there it is, Sarah!' 'Yes,' she replied, 'this is where I live.' At the end of the long, dusty drive sat a dreamhouse, a gingerbread home, with fieldstone steps and soft peach-colored walls, and dark wooden beams along the outside and lots and lots of windows--

"and the drive turned a corner, and hidden behind the hedge was the ugliest shack I'd ever seen in my life. It was a log cabin built out of aluminum siding."

We beg to differ with Mr Josenhans' aesthetic judgement, but he did very well at picking up the projected image; starving artist, indeed. Lazing about in the subtropical shade picking wild black raspberries, watching the

peas and tomatoes blooming while eating fresh wild greens... typing, I hear something mimic the typer, very close; quietly to the door, I see a downy woodpecker twenty feet away on a shagbark hickory.



Another strange place I saw in my travels was the Detroit Renaissance Center. It had a very circus atmosphere at lam on a weekend; imagine if all those people were fans at a world-con! It's a self-contained world, with bunkers around it; full of the greenery missing in the city...



Disclave was unusual for me, in that I saw more of the city and less of the con than I would ever have imagined possible at a con. Rather than stand in line for Star Wars, I spent leisurely hours at the zoo with Duck Fandom (many things become more interesting suddenly when you're with people who enjoy talking about them), gleaning with ecstasy in front of the Chinese porcelains at the Freer Gallery, through the Hirshhorn, and sated with impressions at the Air & Space Museum. If I'd gone to any programming, Avedon Carol would have drafted me for a panel; might have been a good thing, a new way to meet people & all that, but terror prevailed over thirst for ego-boo, and I did not go. 800 people there? Where did 800 people come from for a relaxation, and where did they all go? As I'd been warned, there were maybe 200 people that I saw more than once or twice, more like 20 that I really interacted with; the rest melted away into the city (though I don't see what a daytripper would enjoy about cons, myself) or into that vast sponge of a hotel. Not that those 20 weren't sufficient...



I asked Kip Williams for artwork, with the grand intent of supporting work directly in the medium. Through a series (a plentiful series I should say if I didn't know any better) of misunderstandings I obtained the following page, which, he says, "mostly stars vultures."

On a favorite subject of mine, machine/human relations:

"I think it's the typer that writes everything I do; certainly it isn't always me. Could I write on another machine? I doubt it. I am superstitious, and this typer is my totem. Bless its solid old self. Don't you mistrust these modern plastic type-writers, these electric jobbies that jump in there and print letters before you even are aware that you've touched a key? Give me a machine which waits until it's sure it's been touched before the keys move." From Kathi Schaefer. She curses my typer & I can't do much with hers, but we have similar feelings. Mine is very responsive to variations in touch: the first pages of PROTHALLUS I were very blotchy, but as I calmed down about the business they looked better.

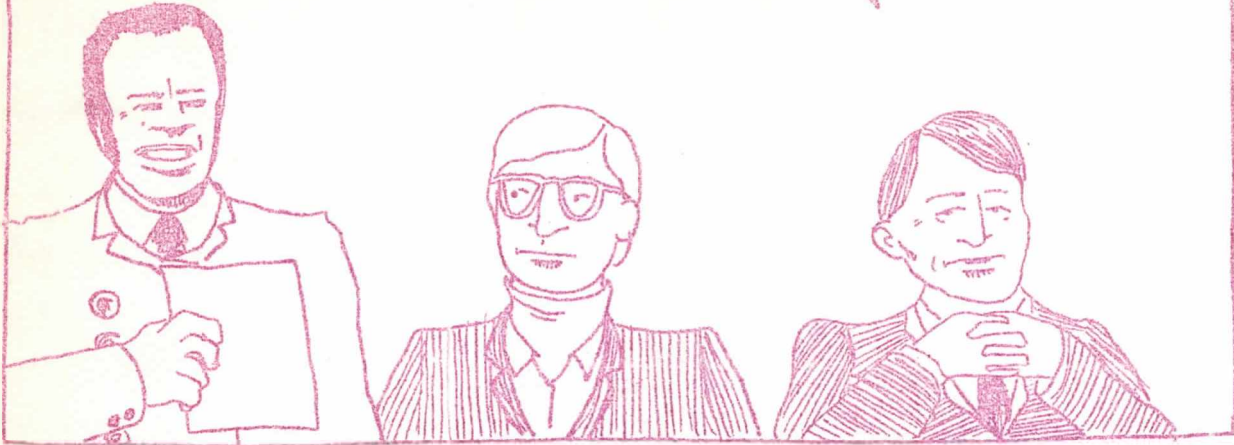
And Denys Howard, on the advantages of a familiar format:

"When I'm typing along like this, I'm always conscious of which side of a two-page spread I'm on, of how long it's been since I used an illc or otherwise broke up the type with white space, of how long the magazine is to be and therefore of how much I can write on this particular topic."



"IN 1895, MRS. EMMA GRIMLEIF HAD TO SLIP INTO THE ATTIC TO SMOKE A..."

THAT'S BEEN DONE.



"IN 1900, MORE MEN DIED OF LUNG CANCER THAN LADIES. YOU'VE COME A LONG..."



... WAY ...



HOW'D THEY LIKE MY IDEA?

