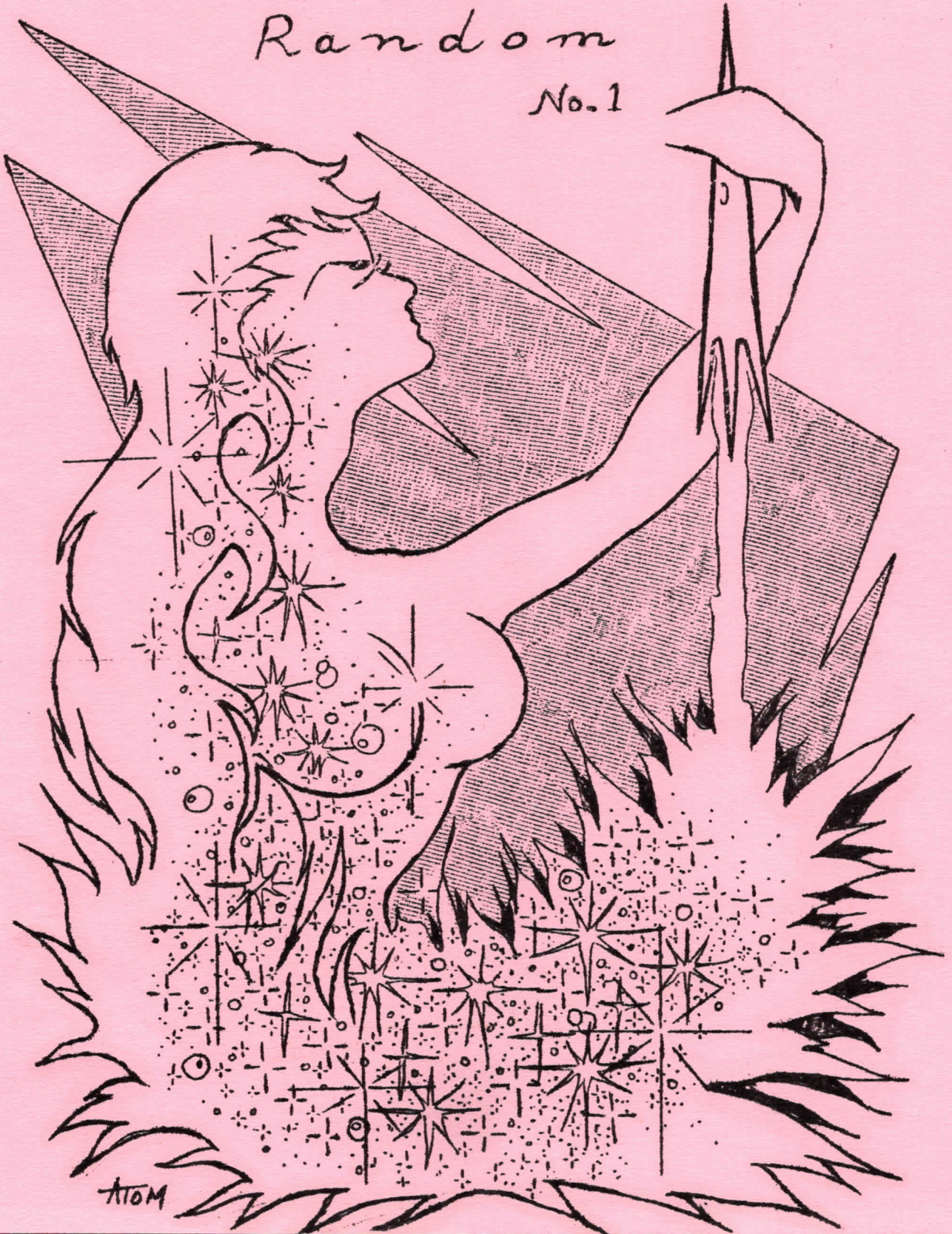


Random

No. 1



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RANDOM is the new title for my OMPAZINE. I have put ESPRIT into circulation as a general zine and it will no longer go through OMPA.

Moving into the wilds certainly has a stimulating effect on Fanac - in the last three months I have done two OMPAZINES (the June one and this one), a oneshot (in this mailing), HOBO No.1, ESPRIT Vol 2 No.1., and the current issue of OFF TRAILS, which happens to be the biggest issue of O.T. ever, I think I am right in saying.

This issue consists of comments on Mailing 24. And that's all the editorial you get this time! And as this is being done at the last minute, you won't find it listed in O.T. either.

M A I L I N G 24

A L'ABANDON I agree that it is bad to have to use tricks to make people give to charities. Unfortunately, most of us are not in the habit of looking out for charities to support and it is necessary, one must suppose, for such incentives to be used. In previous times the masses had no money to spare for charities and the rich were brought up to make a habit of giving to them, so campaigns weren't needed to such an extent. Nowadays the majority have money for luxuries but haven't been brought up to the tradition of giving (with one or two exceptions such as poppy day) so...thus the campaigns. // Talking about youngest members, what is your age anyway? // Your remarks about education and its relation to experience - under WALDO - are very well put indeed. Hear, Hear, to your remark that communication is the most interesting part of fandom. To me it's the primary purpose. // What are TV dinners?

Now to Donaho's bit: The difference, to me, between Lehrer's two records is that one has the intimate atmosphere of songs sung at a private party, while the other has all the trappings of commercialism. I find it impossible to judge the merits of the second lot of songs because I am prejudiced against them by the audience interruptions, gaps for appreciation, etc. Makes it sound less sincere than the first. I always wondered what was funny about "Mozart. Or one of that crowd" but have come to the conclusion that it must be the implication that

Mozart, a genius, could be one of a crowd. Is it really true that college audiences have disdain for classical music? It is not so in this country. // Agree with you about the family who use the same bath water - I suspect all Anglofandom is wondering who it could be! Ron says: But what about a crowded swimming bath? Do you object to entering those? And what's this about the American diplomat who "naturally" could not find a house in England with central heating? It's available if you've got the money. And I know several quite ordinary people who have what might be called semi-central-heating; i.e., a couple of radiators, towel rails, etc., supplied from the normal hot water system or by electricity. Would this count with you? There is a big campaign going on at the moment (a competitive one between the coal and oil suppliers) to get people to have central heating installed on an easy payment system lasting about five years. And this campaign is aimed at the lower-middle or upper-working class. So we're not all that barbaric! // Re one person keeping a feud going, I am reminded of a quote I once saw, "It takes only one to make a quarrel but two to make it up." True. Why is it so many of the old proverbs turn out to be true also when reversed? You will have noticed that this is usually the principle on which 'witty' epigrams are based. Which reminds me of another one, this time attributed to Shaw: "I can't think why he hates me. I haven't done anything for him." // Yes, I think English schools are centrally administered though not sure quite to what extent. I think curriculums must work out pretty similar because all the country is preparing for the same exams in any one sphere i.e. University, technical, commercial, professional etc. It can be said that if you know the type of school a person has been to then you know, roughly, what level his education is up to. // Agree with your remarks about drinking - fans do tend to write up parties as though everyone were in a terrible state. I have been to a great number of these parties (and held a few myself!) and very rarely have I seen anyone in any way objectionable. These writings up exaggerating the wildness of parties, although amusing to those who have been there, are liable to mislead those who haven't. I deplore this kind of writing up as it gives all fandom a bad name to those who haven't been to any of the parties. Parties should be enjoyed for their own sake and anyone who writes one up as an orgy can only be doing so for exhibitionist reasons. He is saying, in effect, "Look what a bad boy I've been!" // L'ABANDON is one of my favourite OMPazines.

AMBLE Loved that phrase, "agreed to be illegal, immoral and possibly slimming". I don't think you can ask what the difference between a vice and a drug is. You might as well ask the difference between walking and a piece of chalk. One is an act and the other a substance. Don't you agree? // The rest was enjoyed but I don't seem to have any comments to make on it.

ATOZ No, your typing straight on to stencil does not read

'ragged' as you put it. It reads fine. Ethel's article on Don reminded me of something but I couldn't think what for a long time. Then it dawned on me. It reminds me of a childrens' story describing the visit of a favourite uncle. Every phrase fits. Very apt.// I enjoyed the Recommended Reading. More please.// The Illo I liked as a drawing but thought it had too many textures incorporated. Same applies to front cover. Nothing stands out as being further in the foreground than the rest - it's all in one plane. I think you are at your best with caricature and cartoon work, Arthur, and tending to forget that, unlike those, pictorial work needs dimensions. //I like the general look of ATOZ - it always makes me want to read it.

ERG Packs some quite interesting things into only two pages. Wish you would write more about your experiences in school or are you one of those people who like to keep your job out of fan writing as much as possible? I had thought that vinegary inspectors belonged to pre-war days and that the kids (and teachers) had it all hunkydory these welfare days. No?

PARAFANALIA The reason the ditchdigger and their ilk get more money than professional men is that they have powerful unions. Q.E.D. Though I'm surprised you included journalists in your list of underpaid people.

SATAN'S CHILD Your experience in the supermarket was unusual. I have gone into them dozens of times for just one thing and no one took any notice. It is not fair to make judgements on just one incident like this. You should have mentioned it to the manager who would, no doubt, have corrected the assistant. It makes a good humourous article but by writing it in a serious vein I think you may be misleading others who have not, perhaps, been into a supermarket yet. I think they are a good institution, myself.// The rest of your article were interesting but Imdo not feel like taking up your arguments because you never join in OMDA arguments yourself, nor do you ever comment on anything, so there seems no point.

SPACE DIVERSIONS One of those LARGE offerings which one cannot do justice to. I think I enjoyed Bennett's and Donaho's piece best, though all of it was very readable, except for Eric's bit on buses which bored me. I like the typeface used in the Frogman piece.//The cover made me think of a monster's arm leaving a trail of slime (which isn't meant to be an insult). I don't seem to be spurred on to any other comments. On the whole I don't really approve of subzines in OMPA - apazines should be personal zines.

THE ASCENT OF NTN Sheila's was the most entertaining report of the three; Vernon's was a little long-winded and rambling; yours (Mal) was informative but I still don't want to go near a mountain. The other day we went out and climbed a grassy hill near here that is all of 1100 feet high and

I was exhausted by the time we got to the top. That was enough mountaineering for me.

THE REJECTED CANON Makes me wish I'd bought a copy of the FANCYCLOPAEDIA. // Turnover Time was fascinating - history usually bores me but you make it entirely readable. Why don't text books read so easily as this? Maybe I've only tried the wrong ones? I do like the way you're always quoting from Mencken - keep on with it, won't you?

VERT I nearly didn't read THE HEH, being a play, but I'm glad I did. It was hilarious. // Yes, I've read that definition of jazz too, but I can't remember where. // I found your remarks about politics interesting but I don't think you can speak of "acting against the concept of politics" any more than you can speak of acting against geography or music or any other department of human knowledge. Even anarchy is 'politics' in that it is one way of organising a community which is all 'politics' means. What you are getting at, I take it, is whether it is worth fighting against an undesirable form of government with equally undesirable means? An old question and one, I think, which has never been solved!

ZOUNDS!!!!!!! The cover was clever // I'm not too sure that it can be said that we learn World History in this country either. British people will tell you that they do when what they mean is that they learn British Empire history - which does cover the globe, if only in blobs. There was Clive in India, Wolfe in Canada, Cook in Australia and so on and there were the many European wars that England got mixed up with. Whether you can call all this world history is a moot point. // Watchtower is sold here too. I had a woman knock at the door and tell me about it (and about themselves of course) and that it cost such and such. After waiting for it to sink in for a few moments, when I didn't make a move, she told me that if a person really couldn't afford it they gave it away. I think she was surprised that the accusation of not being able to avoid 4d didn't make me rush for my money but, when it didn't, she told me a few more things, pushed a copy into my hand and went off. I did read some of it at the time but there were no comment hooks so I threw it away. // Why are you so completist about mailings and not about other fnz? You say you threw away a poll sheet but when you found it was part of a mailing you had to go and get another copy. Either you wanted it or you didn't want it. // You obviously don't realise (and why should you?) that Bennett was in the habit of not counting the pages in a mailing in the credits in the same mailing's OT. He adjusted them in the next one. So the situation in June was not quite so bad as it looked since the June offerings had to be deducted from the number of pages shown as required in the next 30 days. // Touch typing isn't hard to learn - theoretically, no -

but it takes an unpleasant lot of practice. I've tried to go through with it twice in the past but never could stick to it. //In England, apartheid refers to the colour bar practice in S.Africa.// Agree it is nicer to read a person's zine if you know a bit about him but not that you can evaluate his work better. Surely it prejudices you?//Our stores, too, are forever having sales these days especially in drapery and clothes. They usually find some excuse such as an anniversary or bankrupt stock or special purchase or something (there's one that's been having a 'closing down' sale for about fifteen years now!) but the real reason is that there's so much competition that they have to keep prices down. Where food is concerned, one is always seeing labels saying 'bacon reduced' or 'eggs reduced' in big red letters stuck on the windows. Actually these are just normal fluctuations but one never sees a label when they go up again! And there are always lots of special offers and 'coupons'. Pkts of detergent have been having "4d off" for years now. They have it on the outside in large letters (some have it and some don't). They could just as easily put the price down and have done with it but by doing it this way, people think they're getting something for nothing. // "Fanzines should be to communicate and not to appeal to the aesthetic sense" Yes, yes, a thousand times. But we seem to be in a minority.//I like ZOUNDS!!!!!!

FIX You ask what good taste is. Far be it from me to give a precise definition of such an indefinable thing but, since you ask, a rough guide would be "anything that hurts anybody else's feelings"// Logic boring? And stultifying? You haven't lived, man, until you've come away in the early hours of the morning intoxicated by the cut and thrust of logical discussion. And I do mean intoxicated. I've come away like that when I've had nothing to drink but lemonade.// "The rest of we.. " should be "the rest of us.." no matter what follows// Science and religion are the same thing? Science is based on observable facts and religion is based on wishful thinking - how can they ever be the same? Explain please.//Of course 'literary-type s-f' is on a lower plane than literature. Because it's trying to imitate literature and therefore can only be second best. Heaven save us from these people who are trying to make s-f into literature. They're just trying to hide the fact that they haven't any sense of wonder.// "Indispensable for we.."; us again. I don't usually criticise peoples' grammar - only do with you because I know you're interested in such things.//If you don't think beliefs can be changed by force - read BATTLE OF THE MIND (Pan)// I'm sorry you stopped "before I get caught up in a passionate tirade against the evils of riches" - I like passionate tirades. And don't worry about being unable to say what you mean either; you can only acquire that ability by trying to say what you mean as often as possible. Most of us can't say what we mean most of the time anyway.// I wouldn't presume to criticise your

poetry - I simply react with the cry that so seems to infuriate you, poets, "But what does it mean?"

TRANEX I found this quite interesting for throwing a new light on various past matters but more for the personal things it said than club matters. What is this mysterious M.S. that you graduated with? And what was the previous graduation in? I do like to know what peoples' specialities are.

JD-ARGASSY I have been enjoying Bob's report and am sorry to see the end of it. The rest of JD-A was entertaining but I haven't any comments to make, except to say that I approve of your advising people to vote for whom they want rather than to follow your choice as most faneds do.

ICE AGE I enjoyed Harry's article even though I hadn't read the book concerned. The two by Algis Budrys were wasted on me, I'm afraid. I can't agree with Bob Block about con programmes. He's probably right in saying that cons would deteriorate without them but I can never work up much enthusiasm for them myself. It does seem that fans prefer subjective reports to an assessment of programme and do con organisers really need egoboo in fnz? Should have thought they had enough on the programme literature etc. Also, if fanzine fans are in such a minority how can they have much effect on the future of cons whether or not they write them up seriously?

CYRILLE I think you are right about the sense of wonder and that writers are not writing for fun anymore. At least, there must be some who are but the pro-eds don't want anything that is not what the public demands, of course; I like your bit about the definition of s-f but you didn't seem to get around to saying what you really meant - you seemed to be warming up to say something and then stopped. Frustrating. I don't seem to have any more marks in your margins but I enjoyed all you had to say just the same. Would rather see mimeo than ditto though.

MAILING COMMENTS Not received.

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