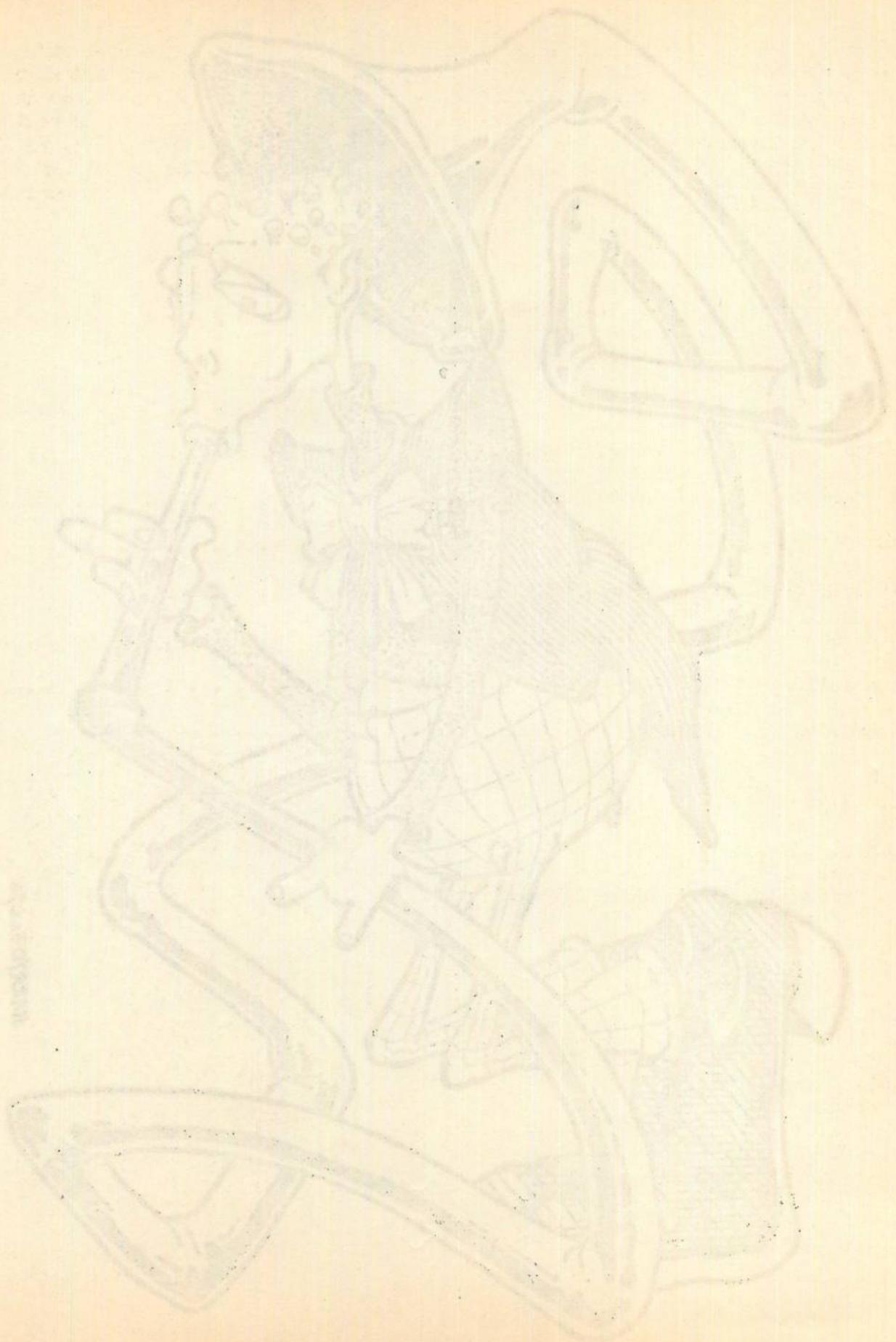


HARRY BELL 76



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NOTEBOOKLINGS

+ Hank Luttrell +

Our ambition was to have published two issues of Starling this summer, but here we are on the eve of MidAmericon with only one issue to show you. Well, we already have a number of tasty items on hand (and promised so work hard you contributors), so hopefully the next issue won't be any later than usual.

It is probably time to bring everyone up to date about the overseas fanzine publishers for whom we are acting as agents. For some time we've been agents for Leigh Edmonds, and he has been our Australian agent for Starling. Leigh publishes the excellent Fanew Sletter. If you have any interest in staying up with Australian fan and science fiction news, subscriptions to Fanew Sletter are 35¢ per issue. Leigh also publishes an occasional Rataplan, but they have been so occasional lately that I don't even know what the US price would be were one to appear. Christine McGowan asked us to act as agents for her fanzine, but then she won the DUFF race, and I'm sure she has been too busy getting ready for her visit to these shores to publish any additional issues. Bruce Gillespie's plans for SF Commentary continue to accelerate, and after years of doing without a US agent, he has asked us to fill that position. We don't have any details about the US price yet, but I'm sure the next SF Commentary will contain that data. If success were always proportional to quality, SF Commentary would be the leading serious science fiction fanzine. I also have a number of copies of Norstrillia Press' Best of SF Commentary #1: Philip K. Dick: Electric Shepherd, which I will be selling at our Travelling Convention Book Shop and Medicine Show for \$6.

* * * * *

This summer my editor at the Milwaukee Bugle American asked me to write a short feature about Wisconsin science fiction and fantasy writers, for a special "Tall Tales Issue" of the Bugle. This turned out to be a lot of fun. One of the fantasy writers most associated with Wisconsin was, of course, August Derleth. Robert Bloch also comes to mind, and Bloch was particularly important in the context of the issue because another of the features was to be about Wisconsin's ghoul, Ed Gein. Bloch's Psycho is loosely based on the Gein case. Other Wisconsin writers who I mentioned included Ray Palmer, Stanley Weinbaum, and contemporary writers Arthur Tofte and Gene DeWeese.

And Ralph Milne Farley. I think I must have first discovered that Farley lived in Milwaukee while reading Sam Moskowitz's article on Stanley Weinbaum in the book Explorers of the Infinite. Farley was an occasional collaborator with Weinbaum. They were both members of a group of writers called the Milwaukee Fictioneers, that also included Bloch, Tofte, and that continues to this day. In Explorers, Moskowitz mentions that Farley's real name was Roger Sherman Hoar, and that he was a "former United States Senator from Wisconsin." Now that was something pretty interesting for my feature, I thought, so I set about trying to find out more about Farley/Hoar. I first consulted some bibliographic dictionaries about Wisconsin politicians, and quickly learned that Hoar had not been a Wisconsin US senator, nor even a member of the Wisconsin State legislature.

Fred Patten unfortunately further perpetuated this myth about Farley/Hoar in his history of World SF Conventions in the MidAmericon Progress Report #4 (p.46) where he tells how Farley showed up at the Philcon in 1947. Patten says that Farley was

a former US senator, and that he was authoring a bill in Congress to "help fight the Red Menace by cancelling the civil liberties of 'subversive individuals.'" Hoar may have been helping to write bills, but at no time had he ever been a US senator.

Actually, the Hoar family was influential in Massachusetts' politics for many generations. Roger Sherman's father Sherman was a State Representative, US attorney for Massachusetts and Attorney General under President Grant. Roger Sherman himself was a senator in the Massachusetts legislature around 1910, while still in his twenties and going to law school. In 1914 he was Assistant Attorney General in Massachusetts. While serving in the armed forces, he turned inventor and designed some components used in artillery. In 1925, Hoar moved to Milwaukee where he worked for Bucyrus-Erie, a manufacturer of excavating machinery. The only mention I can find of political activities while he was in Wisconsin was his early advocacy of unemployment insurance on a Wisconsin committee studying the program -- Wisconsin was the first state to form an unemployment insurance program.

So there you are, more than you've ever wanted to know about Ralph Milne Farley. I'll also note that Ace has once more reprinted Farley's The Radio Man. In my feature I noted that Farley wrote the Radio Man stories back when the word "radio" sounded modernistic. I just don't understand why publishers can't leave creaky old antiques like this in the domain of collectors (like myself) instead of trying to sell them to modern readers.

A Wealth of Fable, Harry Warner's fan history of the 50's, will be published by Joe Siclari's new Fanhistorica Press. It is probably too late by now to order at the pre-publication price, since the book was supposed to be ready by MidAmericon. Joe was busy typing stencils for this mimeographed edition when I saw him in July at a Fanoclast meeting in New York. Profits from this edition will go to finance the hardcover edition. Look for Joe at the MidAmericon or other conventions; or send \$8 plus 75¢ postage & handling to Joe Siclari, POB 1343, Radio City Station, NY 10019

What was I doing in New York? Well, Lesleigh and I decided to do something out of the ordinary for us in the nature of a vacation -- we took a trip which wasn't to a convention. We went to New York to visit Chris Couch and Claudia Parish. We'd been talking about this trip for a long time, but I was frankly nervous about taking a car into the city (as a result of a traumatic taxi ride from the airport to a hotel the last time I was in NY). Then we decided to park the car in the Catskills and enjoy the kind hospitality of Joe & Hilary Staton, and take a train into the city. This should have been perfect -- we even got to carry some Hulk artwork into Marvel for Joe -- but we had a bad experience with Amtrak. Nothing as exciting as Tucker's Train Crash; we were broke down in Yonkers for 2 hours with a car load of boy scouts and Moonies.

Everyone has their own priorities, but aside from seeing our friends, what we wanted to do while in New York was to see Museums, book stores and interesting buildings, all of which New York has plenty of. I can't hope to give a catalog of everything I liked in NY, let alone the things I didn't like, but I do want to recommend the Museum of the American Indian and the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Cloisters. The Cloisters is an old Monastery which is located in the middle of a serene park with a fine view of the Hudson and the Palisades (for you geology freaks). The quietness of the Cloisters can provide a needed retreat from the rest of the city. Special thanks fo to Lou Stathis for spending a day of museum hopping with us.

The Marlborough Galleries had an exhibit -- a stronger word is needed there -- called Ruckus Manhattan. It was like a giant, 3-dimensional, 4-color underground comix full

of the vitality and diversity and humanity and vulgarity which make NY interesting.

Our NY Book Crawl was great. Lou and Chris and Claudia told us stories about the 4th Avenue Book Sellers, which is actually both a neighborhood of used book shops and a bookseller's organization. We started at Strand, which had huge numbers of new hardcovers, remainders and review copies, all at half price. At the many other shops in the area we found tons of used hardcovers, at prices which started at \$1 and stayed in that area for most of the stuff we were interested in.

As an experiment to see if it was true that you could find any book you wanted from the 4th Ave. Booksellers, I was looking for They All Played Ragtime by Rudi Blesh and Harriet Janis. I couldn't find it, but I did pass up at \$10 a copy of Shining Trumpets by Blesh at Strand (\$20 new) and purchased a used copy of an earlier edition for \$4 at Fourth Ave. Books.

Now, we mostly buy paperbacks usually, because they are cheaper and also because they take up less room in our over crowded apartment. NY isn't a place to buy used paperbacks, it seems, unless they are to be found in large quantities in shops we didn't visit. While it wasn't a 4th Ave. shop, Murder Inc certainly deserves a recommendation as a first rate specialty book shop, with a large selection of new and used mystery and detection fiction. The owner had just returned from an overseas tour, so Lesleigh was treated to an interesting discussion of the writers met on the trip.

* * * * *

As I write this editorial, I listened to several programs on WORT-FM, which is a new community supported station in Madison, and one of them was the Madison Review of Books. Today's program included a tape that was made live in Nick's Bar & Grill on State Street, by a number of members of the Madison Science Fiction Group. Reviewed on that tape was Aurora: Beyond Equality edited by Vonda McIntyre and Susan Janice Anderson. Earlier this summer I turned the editorial of Starling #32 into a radio review of the Avon SF Rediscovery series, and Lesleigh has reviewed the new Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection by Chris Steinbrunner and Otto Penzler.

Some of this activity might easily be attributed to the fact that we've acquired a new cassette tape recorder. Tom Murn has been talking about putting together a special on science fiction music, which he has been writing about in Janus. A few of you might remember the series of articles I wrote on that subject in the early 70's. So it is a subject which I feel a great deal of interest in. Final production work is taking longer than expected, but Mad-Stf has already put a major radio drama in the can, and I'm looking forward to its eventual broadcast.

THE AMAZING STARLING TRADE IN OFFER:
I still need copies of Starling 5 and 7, for which I will pay \$3 each; and issue 13, for which I will pay \$2; and issue 33 (already) for which I'll pay \$1.



That's not
folk!



+ Frank Denton +

I guess I'm just a frustrated folk singer at heart. There was a time when I was a for-real folk singer, but I'm afraid that those days are gone forever. Ah, yes, I can remember the old coffee house days when some nights a performer might just as well not have been on the stage, for all the audience cared. Those are the nights I'd rather forget. And there were the occasional nights when everything went so well that you thought you had the world by the tail and were the next best thing to Pete Seeger.

Two things happened to put an end to all of that. One was that younger people came along who could play rings around me, sometimes wrote their own songs and were closer in generation to the people who were listening. The second thing is that ghastly thing called fanac. Yep, science fiction took me away from all of that. Except for one thing. I'm the world's greatest record listener and there's rarely a time when I'm at the typewriter that there's not a record on. My tastes are pretty eclectic, but there's a portion of the collection that seems to keep growing consistently. That's the folk section.

At the meetings of The Nameless Ones, Seattle's sf club, and at conventions as I've talked with other fans of all ages, I've been struck by the number of fans who also like this type of music. At first I thought that it might have something to do with that tenuous connection between science fiction fandom and the Society for Creative Anachronism. But as I thought about it, I decided that was not true. One of the earliest music conversations with members of The Nameless which I can remember revolved around the records of the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem. Among the several of us who liked this Irish group we had all of the albums which were available.

Later at conventions and in personalzines and apas to which I belong the group known as Steeleye Span kept cropping up. We were truly into the age of electric folk and Steeleye was only a rather natural extension of the music which began with Pentangle and Fairport Convention. Pentangle is gone now, although their records can still be found. Fairport Convention is trending away from the traditional ballads and songs which they performed in their earlier career, and Steeleye Span has seemed to capture the hearts of those fans who are into this kind of music. I'm forever reading the raves which come from a fan who has just recently discovered Steeleye and is just beginning to collect their records.

Most of Steeleye's records are available on American labels, although there are several which are imports and which I will list at the end of this article for those who may be wanting them.

I'm not going to try to recap the aforementioned groups and their records. Nor all of the spinoffs and solo albums that have come from personnel of the groups. There are many and if you become interested in this style of music you'll soon find enough of them to drive you crazy and keep your pockets empty. Sandy Denny has done solo albums and for a brief time had a group called Fotheringay. I've only found one

recording by that group. Bert Jansch and John Redbourn have done many solo albums.

What I'd like to point out are some groups which are similar to those with which you may already be familiar and which I think you might find interesting. Many of these records are imports and I've found that you have to be quick to get some of them. There must be a lot of folks out there snapping them up. I was in one of the two shops which seem to be my main source of supply just last week and in talking to the owner I found out that a record for which I've been desperate has been through the shop at least five times. It's been snapped up each time on the same day that it has arrived. The only advice I can give to remedy this sort of situation is to get to know the owner or salesperson and have them save a copy for you. Ask them if they'll take your phone number and give you a call when something which you want arrives. The whole business of buying import records is frustrating at best and anything which you can do to alleviate that frustration is worth a try.

A group that I began to hear about sometime in the middle of last summer is The Boys of the Lough. There has been one change, I think, in the makeup of the band since its inception in 1971, although the idea for it goes back to 1969. Currently it is composed of two Irishmen, one man from the Shetlands, and one from Northumberland. They claim that the music from these areas and from Scotland has been bouncing around for a long time anyway and they see nothing so strange about being involved in the music of these varied geographical areas. Essentially the music is very traditional and is performed on traditional instruments. The settings are often learned from people of the areas and credited to them. The liner notes have been excellent. Here you'll find one of the best examples of bodhran playing, the traditional hand drum from Ireland. Each of the records has a good selection of jigs, reels, and strathspeys, as well as traditional ballads, all done in very traditional ways. If you're interested in getting away from the modern beat of groups such as Steeleye and hearing the music as it has been played in homes and at ceileidh, the Irish equivalent of a hoot, give The Boys a try. You won't find this music better performed anywhere.

There has been one television show, a half hour in length, made of this group talking about their music and performing. If you ever see it listed in your tv guide, try to take it in. It was a very interesting, unpretentious show that displayed their talents well. The yellow album (Philo 1026) has an excellent setting of The Hound and the Hare in which you can hear the hounds giving chase and voice through the instruments. It's a virtuoso piece that can be tackled by only the very best. I've heard it performed on the Irish pipes, but here the fiddle does the work, and probably as nicely as you'll hear. The instruments played by the four are cittern, concertina, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, flute, tin whistle and bodhran.

At last Westercon I finally got a chance to meet Don Keller, who has done and continues to do music columns for my own zine, Ash-Wing. Naturally we talked a great deal about music. At one time during a conversation he stopped short and said, "Say, you're going to England shortly, aren't you?" "Yes," I said, "Why?" "I've heard about a group called Planxty, but I've never heard their records. You might keep your eye out for them. I hear that they are very good."

Well, of course I did keep my eye out for them. As a matter of fact, I went looking for their records particularly. There is a huge record store in London. It covers three floors. I almost went crazy in there. I did manage to find the three records by Planxty which are extant. Again we have an Irish group playing traditional music and singing songs both in English and in Gaelic. The instruments here are guitar, harmonica, bodhran, Uilleann pipes (the Irish bagpipe, a lap instrument which has air

supplied by a bellows attached to the player's elbow, and which is a softer instrument than the Scottish pipes, which are often called war pipes. The player has the ability to play chords with the drones in the Uilleann pipes.), mandola and mandolin. On some selections the hurdy-gurdy is played and Donal Lunny sometimes plays bouzouki, a Greek instrument. Occasionally they will play a familiar tune or song such as The Raggle Taggle Gypsy, The Jolly Beggar, and Follow Me Up to Carlow. But more often than not it's the unfamiliar for which we are grateful. Good tunes, jigs and reels that have not often appeared on records found in this country: The Frost is All Over, The Hare in the Corn, The Humours of Ballyloughlin, and hornpipes such as Cronin's Hornpipe and Fisherman's Lilt.

My latest information is that Planxty is no more as a group, but that some of the members are a part of a new group called The Bothy Band. Again, the record has been in and sold already. I can only surmise that the new group is as good or better than Planxty and you might keep your eyes open for it.

While we were visiting the Lake District in England last summer I was excited to find that Hedgehog Pie would be appearing at a folk club in Ambleside, one of the lovely towns dotting the area. I was excited because I had one of their records, purchased on the advice of one of my record contacts. Now, if you are into Steeleye Span, this is another electric folk group for you, and one which has equally as much energy as Steeleye. We arrived early at the hall; managed to get there before the band had arrived, as a matter of fact. We had good seats right up front and watched them go through the oh, so familiar, setting up of instruments, the inevitable soldering of cords, living out of a truck and patching things together on the go. My son's band was headquartered at our house long enough for me to become familiar with it all. I wonder how they manage to make it for each performance sometimes.

I think we were rather conspicuous by our age and when the concert was finished around 11p.m. (closing is early in England), the red-haired Irishman, Mick Doonan came up to us and asked how we had enjoyed the music. We responded with enthusiasm. He said, "Well, did you know what you were getting into tonight?" "Oh, yes," I replied, "I have your record." "Oh, but you bought it here, didn't you?" "No, I bought it at home in the states." He was so ecstatic at hearing such that he had to call the rest of the group over to tell them that we had bought their record in America. The upshot of it was that we were invited to share a beer or three with them after the hall had cleared. We sat for an hour and a quarter talking about music and other groups. We all had a good laugh when they found out that we were teachers, since three of them had given up teaching to see if they could make anything with their music.

They make lots of happy music. Margi Luckley, the female "earth mother" (I swear every electric folk group has to have one) is not quite as good as Maddy Prior, but she'll do. Her voice is a bit thin at times, but she makes up for it by having a hell of a personality. I probably have been prejudiced in their favor by having had such a fine experience that night. Mick plays a hell of a flute (he learned it from his da) and Martin Jenkins plays a cello-mandolin that is strikingly beautiful and doubles



9
on amplified violin. He may not be the best in the business, but he plays just fine. I fractured him by telling him that I knew and had the records of Dando Shaft, a band with whom he had previously played.

Hedgehog Pie's first record has a couple of familiar songs on it, such as Jack Orion and New York Trader, a version of our more familiar New York Boys. The bulk of the selections are unfamiliar ones such as O'Rourke's Flogging Chair, Spalpeen's Lamert and The Reverend Johnson and the Big Kerry. Their second album was to have been cut in September of 1975 in Newcastle-on-Tyne, their home. I understand that it also has been released, but I've been unable to get my hands on a copy yet.

While we are talking about the Lake District, here is a good time to mention The Water-sons. Near the Scottish border, in Northumberland and Cumberland (now Cumbria once again since the redistricting which has recently gone on in England) there is a lot of unaccompanied singing. We heard such at the intermission of Hedgehog Pie's concert. Standup spots, they were called, where people from the audience would sing a song or two with no accompaniment. The Water-sons are from that area and the family, including older members, had recorded back in the sixties. But they've not recorded for some time. Now three of them are together and have been joined by Martin Carthy for a recent recording. There are no instruments, just wonderful harmony singing of traditional songs from the Lake District and other parts of the north. It's the kind of record that makes you want to learn the words so that you can join in lustily singing the part which you like best.

I'm afraid that I've rambled far too long and covered too few recordings. Perhaps if there is any response we can continue this in some future issue. I've not mentioned Scafell Pike, Eddie and Finbar Furey, Maddy Prior and Tom Hart, The Swarbrick Brothers, Mr. Fox and Bob Pegg's newer album, Ancient Maps. Nor Steve Ashley, nor Gay and Terry Woods. Nor Alan Stivell, that wondrous harp player from Brittany, whom paragraphs could be written about. Plus a whole heap of people just a half-step away from folk; groups like Tir Na Nog, Horslips, and Amazing Blondel. There's one thing to be said for all of this. There is more music available for whatever your interests are than at any other time in history. It all drives you slightly crazy, especially if you try to keep up with the recordings of groups whom you like. And if you like more than just one kind of music, as most of us do, the trauma is increased almost geometrically as new records appear every week.

Celtic rock is just beginning to be heard over here; I don't know what else to call it. Groups such as Thin Lizzy, Curved Air, Druid and the later recordings of Horslips. It's enough to keep your pockets empty of change. Well, for those of you who may have a spare farthing, here's a short discography of the records mentioned above. I hope you have good hunting.

THE BOYS OF THE LOUGH: The Boys of the Lough - Trailer LER 2086
Second Album - Rounder Records 3006, The Boys of the Lough -
Philo 1026, Lochaber No More - Philo 1031.

PLANXTY: Planxty - Polydor Super 2383 186, The Well Below the
Valley - Polydor Super 2383 232, Cold Blow and the Rainy Night
- Polydor Super 2383 301.

HEDGEHOG PIE: Hedgehog Pie - Rubber Records Rub 009.

THE WATERSONS: For Pence and Spicy Ale - Antilles An-7020.

STEELEYE SPAN (Imports): Hark the Village Wait - RCA SF 8113,
Please To See the King - Big Tree BTS 2004, Commoner's Crown -
Chrysalis CHR 1071, Ten Man Mop - Pegasus PEG-9.



electro music, part the second



+ Leigh Edmonds +

Why electronic music? Why even contemporary music?

Because it's about time you opened your ears as well as your eyes. Sitting at home comfortably with the stereo system pouring out the Beethoven or Bay City Rollers is an escape which makes reading stf seem like being out on the streets confronting the state or whatever. You can listen to escapist music if you like, I do it too, but let's not claim that the activity is something which makes us really alive.

We (most of us) were born with the facility to absorb information through minute differences in air pressure which acts on our ear drums. We hear everything that goes on around us - at least our ears register everything - that causes noise, and in most cases even the slightest noise. The human ear is a fantastic thing, it can register a noise so slight as the rustle of leaves in a breeze up to a couple of dozen Rolls Royce Spey's at full throttle and afterburner. It can judge the difference of only a few hertz in frequency and readily senses the subtlest nuance in timbre.

And yet we rarely use this sensitive instrument, the brain closes it off and doesn't react to a great many sounds. We become used to things and our brain doesn't consciously register what is going on around us because it considers we don't need to know. Which is all very nice and probably saves us from becoming jibbering idiots on occasions. But it also means that we have got out of the habit of listening, we let our automatic brain functions take all the life out of what we hear.

That idea of John Cage, Street Music, is getting near the point. Throwing open the doors of the concert hall and telling the audience to listen to what is going on outside. Of course, there is the problem of saying exactly what music is, but since people who know more about the subject than you or I cannot make up their minds there is little doubt that we won't be able to either. So let's let it ride for a while.

One of the most exciting sounds I've ever heard was a McDonnell F-4 Phantom at an air show. It flew over at about five hundred feet and must have been just a touch under Mach 1. The sound, it was magnificent. An overpowering red hot noise (in the technical sense) over the whole spectrum with just a hint of compressor and turbine whine. And above all, with the afterburner switched in, a gigantic crackling, ripping sound as though the air itself was being torn apart.

I've heard that only the BAC Lightning is more impressive but I wasn't there the year it was. And I imagine that one of the Apollo/Saturn launches would have been the ultimate. It is the sound of raw energy being released. If there were an atmosphere

between us and the sun it is a sound we would be familiar with from our first moments.

The first time the Concorde was in Melbourne I was lucky enough to see and hear it take off, from the closest taxiway which is just about as close as anybody is going to be likely to get. Once again there was the sound of energy, but unlike the Phantom it seemed more controlled, not actually muffled but with a restraint as though even the noise was being converted or used as propulsive energy. But aeroplanes are just one small sound source in a whole world of sound.

What have Bach, Beethoven and Brahms to do with you?

Contemporary music and electronic music in particular come from the same technology which has given us space flight, tv, computers and the paperback book. Many people, maybe too many, would reckon that space flight and computers are bad things but then they got most of their knowledge out of paperback books. At the same time they will be listening to their eco-rock bands and contemplating the latest on the tv. It's all so mixed up in most peoples' minds. Back with electronic music we also find gross misuse and misunderstanding.

A DEFINITION OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC.

It is any music which is produced or reproduced by electronic means. This includes record players (of the non-mechanical sort), tape recorders, electric guitars, hammond type organs and, of course, synthesizers. All of which makes up ninety percent of what we listen to today. Synthesized music, which I suppose is what you expect me to be writing about, is only a small part of it.

WHAT ROBERT MOOG DID FOR ELECTRONIC MUSIC.

He was about the first one to apply the idea of electronic circuits working on each other to the simple oscillator. With this application I can make a low wave signal cause a tone pitched within the audible range to slowly rise and fall. With it I can cause a filter to remove and then replace any components of any sound and so on and so on. The limitations on an electronic composer are placed only by the restrictions of the available circuitry, his ability to manipulate them and his imagination. And hers too. Imagination is limited by what the composer lets himself hear. What sort of mentality is it which would consider only the works of composers that had gone before him as fitting material and inspiration? We all laughed at the Imperial Ambassador in Asimov's "Foundation", the one who considered historical research to be a matter of reading history books. But all the same most of us are only too willing to do the same thing ourselves. Composers are not backward here either, unfortunately.

AT THE NEXT WORLDCON, in a room party, stop for a moment and open your ears, not to what people are saying but to the texture of the sound everybody is talking. Next time the PA system overloads or starts to feed-back, don't shut your ears and complain, listen to what it sounds like, how it's made up.

Just as Baroque Music expresses the Baroque ear and Romantic music tells us about that age, so contemporary music expresses our contemporary times. There is no point in longing after the past, we cannot live there because even if time machines existed we are too much the products of the twentieth century. "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." What is your relationship to Bach's sets of Preludes and Fuges ("The Well-Tempered Clavier")? Of sheer necessity it cannot

be as intense as the Shostakovich Preludes and Fuges (Op. 87). Twenty five years separate us from Op. 87, that is enough but nothing like the two hundred and fifty years for the Bach set.

I'm not claiming that "new is better", my neck isn't worth that much and besides, I like composers like Monteverdi, Mozart and Mahler. But Monteverdi never read a daily newspaper, Mozart never heard a machine gun (not even a recording of the sound) and Mahler never saw and heard the Rolling Stones, live or on the tv.

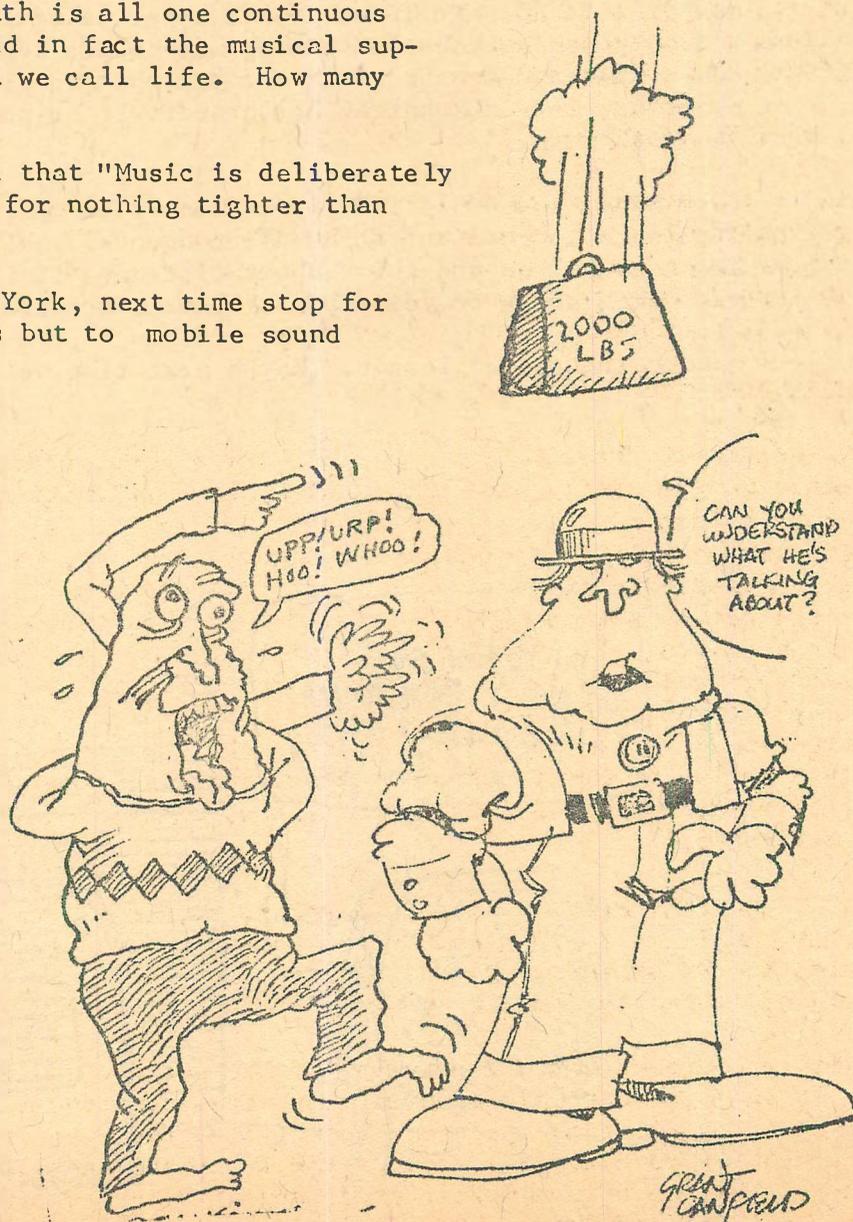
When confronted by the objection to his music that it isn't pleasant to listen to, Felix Werder replies that not all the sounds we hear in everyday life are pleasant.

Back to the business of defining music. The good old "what I point to when I say it" is tempting but maybe we should come up with something a little tighter. With that definition it would be quite easy to say that everything we hear from our birth to our death is all one continuous work, a work intensely personal and in fact the musical support to that extended music-drama we call life. How many of you would go along with that?

Otherwise there is the definition that "Music is deliberately organised sound." I will settle for nothing tighter than that.

When you're in the middle of New York, next time stop for a minute and listen. Not to cars but to mobile sound sources to provide an aural fluidity as they pass in and out of your hearing. Shoes on the footpath are not people walking but a complex pattern on some vast percussion instrument. Voices are not speaking words but are part of the continuing human chorus. You will be listening to a work that millions take part in. According to the second definition it is not music, just noise. But having realised that, actual composition is not a difficult step. If you don't enjoy listening to that work you will find many other, quieter, places to listen.

Electronic music studios are fascinating things. I think so anyhow. By a strange quirk of fate, from the early fifties when equipment was bulky and



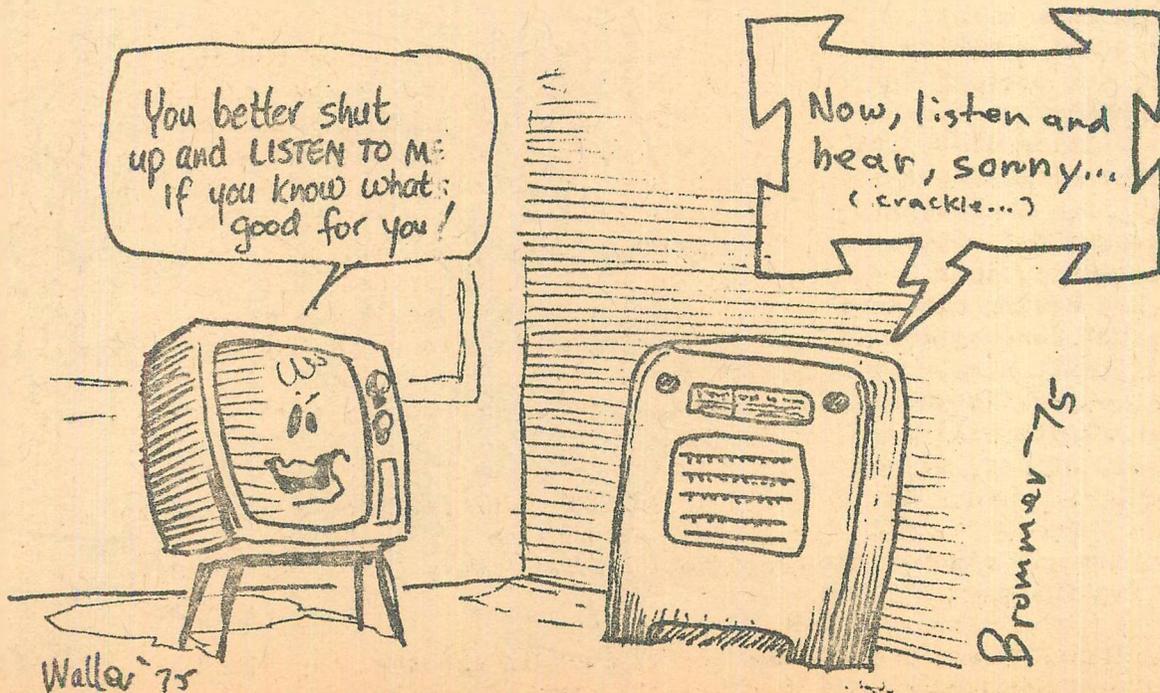
expensive and difficult to manipulate, my little synthesizer is technically considered to be a studio. But on a bigger scale I've been inside three, at Melbourne University, the CEA and one in San Francisco. The one in San Francisco was the most fascinating, partly since it was built up of US components such as we don't see over here and because it was arranged to use the old patching cord system, but mainly because I didn't have time to discover how it operated. Down at the CEA they've got a little room with all sorts of dull stuff, but that's because I know all the equipment there. Up at the University they've got themselves an EMS 100, a truly marvelous if inflexible machine with enough controls to demand a years study before it is understood. And they have other bits and pieces but mainly a couple of half-inch tape decks I'll lust after for the rest of my life, if I last that long.

As well as these I've seen photos and read descriptions of many other studios, and they all sound fascinating.

When an author sits down in front of his typer he calls on all his experience to help him, when a composer switches on the power to his studio he does the same. But the difference is that a composer works through what he has heard and the way he has thought about hearing and what he has heard. If he hasn't listened then he has no material to work with.

On the other hand, you would find it difficult to make sense of any book if you hadn't bothered to learn to read and to handle concepts. So if you haven't learned or bothered to learn to listen and think about listening it is not surprising if New Music doesn't make much sense to you. Don't blame composers and the music for your laziness.

(And so endeth the second lesson. Maybe next time we'll get onto hardware.)



ten dumb bozos I hate

+ Jim Turner +

Last winter, HI-FI STEREO REVIEW took a poll of its pet critics on "Ten Artists I Hate." Most of those who responded did so with glee and the resulting indignant mail doubtless delighted the offending parties. I have always been of a mind to encourage such animosity myself, believing as I do that a man is known by the enemies he keeps. Get your indignation together, kiddies, it's my turn.

I automatically rejected several people from this list as being beneath contempt. If you really want to know, some of them are Melanie, Chicago, Frank Sinatra, Paul Williams, Jerry Vale, Olivia Newton-John, Black Oak Arkansas. Now you really don't want me to go on, do you? Sammy Davis, Jr. was too bad even for this list. (At the rate he's going the J.D.L., the NAACP and Yassir Arafat may have to go thirds on a hit man.)



1) The Rolling Stones. I have never ceased to be puzzled by the appeal of this group. They embody everything that is cruel, base and perverse in the human psyche. It is one thing to be constantly aware of these things; you can't read a newspaper without knowing all about this. Alas, all their skills and--ahem--creativity seem totally geared toward the exaltation of every form of unpleasantness. Back in the days of the peace movement, before the hippies died their natural, organic death, I knew all sorts of people who campaigned fervently for peace, nonviolence, feminism and whatever. One of their main amusements was smoking dope, gazing rapturously at the wallpaper, and listening to songs about stupid girls under somebody's thumb, who are about as necessary as yesterday's papers and who probably would enjoy having somebody's knife stuck down their throats. I suspect that many of these people now have complete sets of the works of John Norman. Mick and the boys were born too late; they would have made a dyn-oh-mite warmup group for Hitler.

2) Elton John. Did I really like TUMBLEWEED CONNECTION for a while? Yes, I did, and I'm not proud. This man is as dull as they come, as phoney as a Nixon speech, and will wind up as a regular guest host on the Johnny Carson Show (alternating, no doubt, with Paul Simon.)

3) The Eagles. These fellows are pretty much in the same bag with Jackson Browne and John David Souther, i.e., they are the sort of people who are beaten up in bars

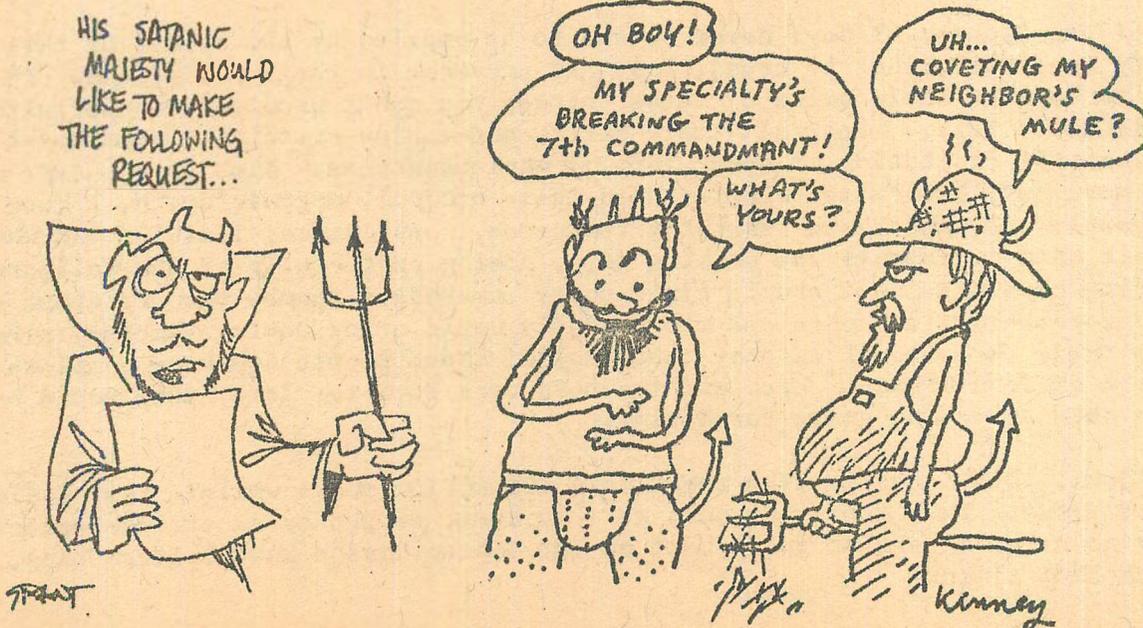
by Jerry Lee Lewis. With the exception of Souther, all have written some good songs and are more than passable pickers. Much of it sounds pretty good for a while but the end result is similar to that of a nine course meal composed of various forms of cotton candy. Somebody, probably some chick they were trying to make at the time, told them that music ought to sound P*R*E*T*T*Y. Their records flow smoothly, unobstructed by humor, and run freely. Take Kaopectate as directed for quick, symptomatic relief.

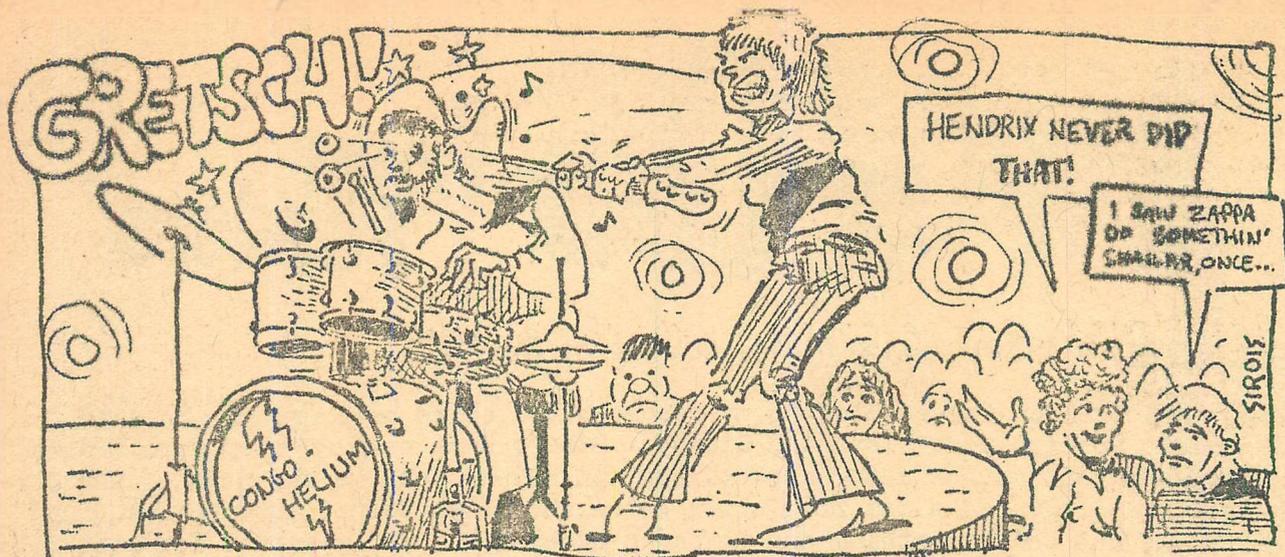
4) Neil Diamond. Yes, he has written some pretty good songs. Yes, there ought to be a law against him performing them. Listen to the HOT AUGUST NIGHT live album and hear him intone, "I am Neil Diamond. . .I feel. . .I hurt." I am the consumer. . . I blanch. . .I barf.

5) Emerson, Lake & Palmer. Yes. Rick Wakeman and the rest of that crowd. These guys all got good grades in their high school Lit. classes and never quite got over it. I'm sure they all have the first pressings of SWITCHED-ON BACH. Take one cup Richard Strauss, one cup Gustave Mahler, one cup Erich Korngold, one cup Walter Carlos, six cups bullshit skimmed off the top of every concept album since SGT. PEPPER, ten cups pure, distilled ego. Shake until turgid. Strain through ten mellotrons. Spread all over vinyl like catsup. Stock up on Ex-Lax. You, too, can be a rock and roll star.

6) John Denver, Mack Davis, Tony Orlando. These kids are all from slightly different pill presses. Elton John is the panacea of placebos. These three are for specific illnesses in the consuming public, mainly small localized infections due to Johnny-Mathis withdrawal.

7) Buffy St. Marie. Lo, the professional Indian! Soldier Blue may not be out to get you, baby, but I am. Many years ago, the University of Missouri campus newspaper, THE MANEATER, had a columnist named Skip Weiner. Skip, wherever you are, thank you for describing her voice as sounding like "cheap glass cracking under the boots of her universal soldier."





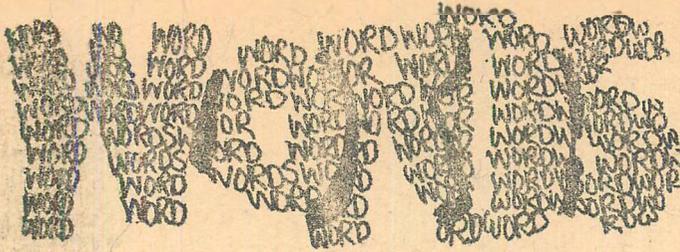
8) Grand Funk Railroad (and those who came after like Bachman-Turner Overdrive.) Who was it that asked that if Marijuana doesn't rot your brain, why do so many teenyboppers like this crud? Very heavy stuff, meaning unbearably loud and mindlessly repetitive. Music to have a migraine by.

9) Cat Stevens. This guy would be a wimp if he wasn't so obviously clever. Three years ago I committed myself to a mental hospital during a prolonged postoperative depression and wound up on a small ward with lots of adolescents who embraced Cat and his product with religious fervor. His message is carefully concocted to appeal to adolescents who have trouble adjusting to the adult world (and name one who doesn't). Don't worry, Cat tells them, just smile a lot and wear some pretty clothes so you can grow up into a pack of mindless proles. Nixon would have liked nothing better. I see no reason why I couldn't do as well as Cat. I have an idea for a song about a girl who makes it through life with a smile because she's retarded. Can't you hear the chorus now: "Oh baby, baby, baby, it's a dumb world. . .?"

10) Eric Clapton. Maybe this surprises you. As Robert Christgau said about Roy Buchanan, yes, he is a great guitarists and, yes, he doesn't know what to do about it. This man probably has every blues lick since Robert Johnson down pat and he has a magical ability to make them all sound exactly alike. Heinlein said something about sincerity being the most overrated virtue in the entire pantheon.

To the inevitable question, there are some people I like. It's easier to write about the ones I don't. I find that explaining why you like certain music is like explaining love. You may describe the parts perfectly without being able to fit them together to anybody's satisfaction but your own. The music I like affects me so powerfully that it defies my precise analysis. If you aren't familiar with Loudon Wainwright, Bob Dylan (there must be a few,) Bonnie Raitt, Muddy Waters, Duke Ellington, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Mary McCaslin, the Clancey Brothers, Loretta Lynn, Jesse Winchester, Roger McGuinn, Paul Butterfield, Jerry Lee Lewis, or Roalie Sorrels, give them a try. Then you can write a column about what a dolt I am. If you're offended by four or more items on my list, I may have to wait until you learn how. I'll wait, don't worry.

COMING NEXT TIME (MAYBE): PIMPLY, MASTURBATING ASSHOLES OF GOR!



From readers

Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA. 22205

I thank Paul Skelton for rushing to my rescue but I think he's wrong. He said Bullwinkle's moonmen were Floyd and Gidney. Others have told me they were Gidney and Cloyd and that sounds more correct. Now can anyone tell me the name of the cartoon show that featured a man from outer space who often turned into pure energy? I believe he was Col. something and he had a caveman and a boy puppet for sidekicks. I've been trying to recall that show for ages. As a reward I will do an impersonation of Rocky Jones' spaceship.

Michael Carlson says he prefers the third version of Chandler's Farewell, My Lovely. My differences come down to a matter of personal taste, so I can't say I'm any more right than he is. However, I still prefer Murder, My Sweet as a film. I think Dick Powell handles the Marlowe character very well and definitely better than the too old Robert Mitchum. Mitchum doesn't even deliver the lines properly -- he takes a breath and spews out the words in a dull monotone without inflection. The quips lack the zest and charm that Philip Marlowe would use. Michael and I must have differing concepts of Marlowe. Robert Mitchum would have been a good choice several years ago and if he had really put himself into the role. Michael also praises FML's Moose Malloy who I found less than adequate. MMS's Moose was more convincing. In FML he was about the same height as Mitchum but in the novel Moose is supposed to be a giant. In MMS Moose is much larger than Powell and most of the other people in the film. He was a seasoned actor as well rather than a first timer.

I also prefer the adaptation of Murder, My Sweet; I felt it still retained the essence of the novel. Farewell, My Lovely changed things too much for me and the changes didn't work. Of course I have also seen the first movie version of the book: The Falcon Takes Over. The Falcon, a high society detective played by George Sanders, is no Philip Marlowe but he futilely tries to take his place. The only characters from the book that survived the transition were Moose Malloy, Mrs. Florian, and Velma. The movie added a humorous sidekick for the Falcon, two dumb cops (whose comic relief consisted of variations on: "Follow that car!" "Why?" "Because I have a gold badge and you only have a silver one!"), and a bumbling but beautiful girl reporter. I would describe it in much the same way Monty Python describes Australian wine, "It's something to lie down and avoid."

I recently read that Chandler's agent sold RKO complete rights to the novel Farewell, My Lovely for only \$2000 or \$3000. This way they made The Falcon Takes Over for that amount and later did Murder, My Sweet without paying Chandler a dime.

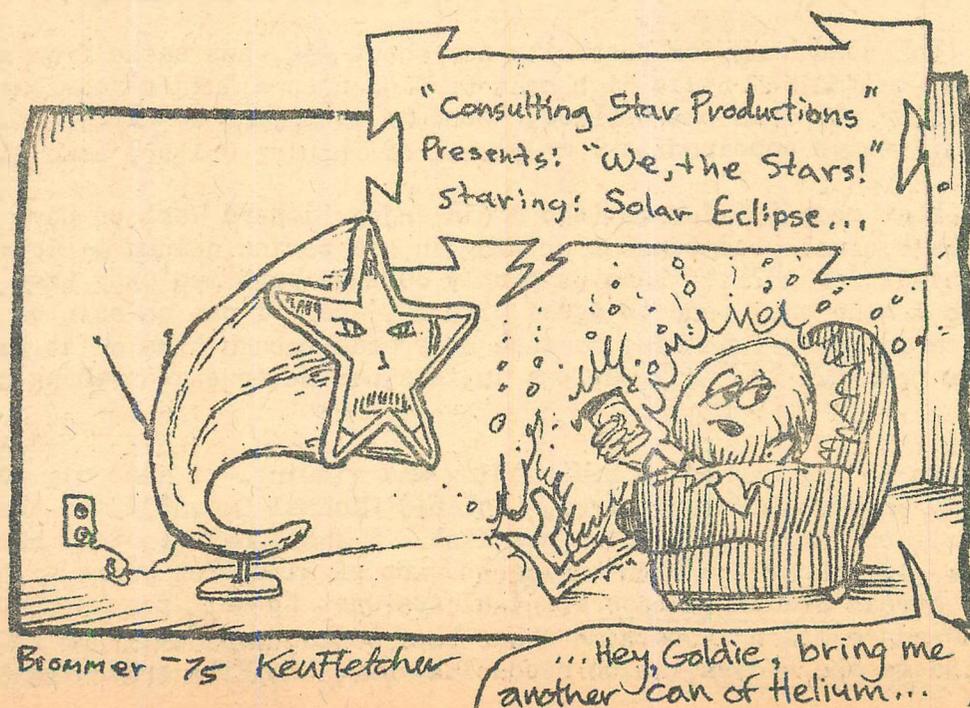
Jim Meadows, 31 Apple Court, Park Forest, IL 60466

Farewell, My Lovely was my first association with Chandler -- I mean the new film, I've read none of his books -- and I reacted favorably to it. I'm not sure if Mitchum was quite right as Marlowe. Something was stopping Mitchum from stepping deeply into the role, in the way John Wayne is more John Wayne than any of the parts he plays.

Since I am a fan of best annual listings of various types (eg. Bruce Gillespie's efforts in this area) I eagerly perused Michael Carlson's written record of his cultural year. I immediately noticed that he reads many more books of crime, mystery and suspense than myself. I'm glad to see he's been reading Philip K. Dick and Colin Wilson since those two authors are favorites of mine. Still, if Michael says he's closing in on him, unless he's read a lot more Wilson in previous years, he's got a way to go before he catches up. The man has, after all written over thirty books and dozens of essays. I was interested to see Grendel by John Gardner place so high on the list of best science fiction, I read that one a couple of years ago and thoroughly enjoyed it. It never occurred to me to compare it with more conventional sf however. I later tried to read The Sunlight Dialogues and got bogged down after a few dozen pages or so. That is also an extremely interesting list of movies. I saw Images when it was first released back in '73 after Paul Anderson raved about it, but I would not want to take it too literally as science fiction. Well, it certainly has that feel about it, but I wouldn't interpret it as science fiction, unless you define the mind breaking down as sf. The photography was stunning, as was the music, which used quite a bit of Stomu Yamashta's work incidently. (Stomu Yamashta also has some of his "Eastern" mood music featured in the new Roeg film The Man Who Fell to Earth -- a film which I whole-heartedly recommend although it's going to be controversial.)

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Michael Carlson is unsettling for the statistics he gives on his reading and movie-going last year. He really should explain why he ignores the movies he sees on the tube when he draws up these lists of favorites and anti-favorites. If he feels that a film can't be judged fairly when it's interrupted every ten minutes or so for commercials, then he may be justified in his segregation. But if he's doing it on the theory that it's less satisfying or pleasant to watch movies on television for other reasons, I differ. The much-repeated grumble about the small television screen isn't too valid. I sit about eight feet from my 25-inch screen, and the picture covers almost as wide an angle of my total visual field as a movie viewed from the rear half of a





Kent Fletcher '74

local theater. Whatever is lost in sharpness of picture and quality of sound is recovered for me by the greater concentration I'm able to give a movie in my home, free from the chatter of patrons of a theater in my ears and the brushing of spilled popcorn and thrown candy wrappers against my ankles or the worry about what kind of traffic I may encounter driving home.

+Theater advocates will point out that +wide screen films don't have the same +proportions as your TV screen, so you are +actually losing part of the image. And +of course TV features are too often +subjected to terrible "editing." But +still I agree with you -- I like watching +movies on television. --HL

I don't see anything terrible about Mabel Seeley's habit of getting criminals punished for the wrong crime. The first offender almost always gets off easy, with a suspended sentence or a minimal fine or some other recognition of the fact that it's the first time he has been caught doing something wrong. (Unless of course he has done something like massacred a family.) The judge will probably start to crack down on his second conviction for a crime, even if his law violation wasn't as serious as the first one or was just equally bad. So in a sense he

is punished to some extent for both the crime of which he has just been convicted and also for the previous conviction.

Doug Barbour, 10808 -75th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 1K2

i could try to say something for posterity now about #32, but aside from saying i enjoyed Juanita Coulson's article, i should mention Joanna Russ's fabulous & superbly intelligent & witty piece on the Gothics, "Someone is trying to murder me & I think it's my husband," which appeared in The Journal of Popular Culture some time ago.

the two pieces that made #33 for me (tho i did enjoy Richard West on Carl Barks, too) were Joe Sanders's usual good sense & writing in his review column & Michael Carlson's "Jelly Troll Awards for 1975." this is partly because both men show they have good taste (by which i mean they tend to agree with me, where i can be sure of things). so i enjoyed Joe on The Triune Man, because he spends enough time on it to clearly & fairly make his points. too many reviews in fanzines never say anything more than 'i liked it.'

now i just happen to dig Michael & his reading and viewing. i also dig anyone who's reading not only Charles Olson but (yea, CanLit!) Michael Ondaatje. & there are all those other good Canadian books on his list. i shall have to tell him about some more, heh, heh. of course ive been trying to warp sf minds for years by telling people they must read Beautiful Losers. i always want to tell people who liked Grendel that Gardner has written some other boss books, especially an attempt at an epic poem, Jason and Medeia, which reads like say, the Fitzgerald translation

of The Odyssey, & which is speculative in the best sense of the word.

20

i can see that Michael & i don't agree about movies all the time, but i can only applaud his placing of Images at the top of his list. it and Don't Look Now are the two best horror/terror films of the seventies, & they both represent attempts to transcend the Bmovie genre film approach that work and work beautifully to scare the shit out of the viewer even as they also make him/her think & feel for the characters as most horrorflics can never do. i think the problem with Farewell my Lovely is that Robert Mitchum should have played the role about 15 years ago, & the decor was too neat, too bright, too Hollywood tho it was an ok film. i would put Lacombe, Lucien a lot higher on that list, tho. Also Smiles of a Summer's Night, which is a great Mozartian comedy (i wish Bergman had kept making things like that & not gotten so damnd pretentious & arty & full of angst; which is why i welcomed his The Magic Flute, a beautiful film, & he made sense of the opera with his changes, to boot).

Dick Lupoff, 3208 Claremont Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705

Thank you for Starling #33 with the nice meaty review of my book The Triune Man. Joe Sanders is a perceptive reviewer and a good writer; for years I've been reading his stuff and wishing he'd tackle a book of mine.

You know how they used to teach you, back in high school, that a really good story doesn't end at the end of the book -- that characters go on, in the reader's mind? Well, Joe comments on that point, in The Triune Man, where the hero of the book (Buddy Satvan) quits the superhero comics business to create "a good realistic strip. One that deals with contemporary problems in a realistic manner."

After The Triune Man, Buddy does get that "realistic strip," and it's a total flop. It just isn't the kind of thing comic strip readers want to read, and they avoid it in droves. It dies within six months.

Sorry about that.

There's a good deal of metaphor in The Triune Man, and if you want to consider Buddy's comic strips metaphors for science fiction, that's a pretty good reading of the book, although of course hardly the only possible one.

Steve Johnson, 201 N. Pinckney
#3, Madison, WI 53703

Considering how much has already been written on Carl Barks, I was surprised that Dick West was able to make an enjoyable contribution on the topic, something I would attribute to the theme, which both unified the article and carried it through some choice territory. The main draw back in an article like this lies in the absence of reproductions,





an absence understandable in view of copyrights and mimeorepro. (Shull's illo on p. 32 was quite nice, I should note.)

Richard West, 1922 Madison St., Madison, Wi. 53711

I've noticed a number of errors and possible sources of confusion in my article on "Christmas With Carl Barks" in Starling #33, and I'd like to correct them.

One is on page 29. The code of Duckburg does not stipulate that a Christmas present must be kept until the next Christmas, but only till the following spring. Fortunately, this difference does not affect the discussion of the story.

I was also mistaken, on page 31, in saying that Donald Duck and the Christmas Carol identified Barks as the illustrator. The title page says only "Pictures by the Walt Disney Studio Adapted by Norman McGary." I was thinking of Uncle Scrooge the Lemonade King (Tip Top Tales, Whitman Publishing Company, 1960), which does credit (as the other book should have) "Pictures by Carl Barks and Norm McGary."

The gremlins were busy on p. 31, for here can also be found two problems in the vocabulary. When I speak of the ducks' oultretemps with bears aroused from hibernation", I wish I could call "entretemps" a deliberate neologism, but I am afraid it is just an out-and-out error. I can't find that the word exists either in English or in French, and I think I must have meant "contretemps." I should have stuck to a simpler word, such as "encounter." Some confusion was also caused by my reference, on the same page, to "each member of the duck family receiving his heart's desire in spades," for one friend objected that this suggested they were killed. Here I will stick to my last, for, though that slang expression can carry that dire significance, in my experience it usually means only that someone gets much more than he expected or wanted.

My introduction seems also to have occasioned some puzzlement. This was meant only to provide a sketchy framework on comic book stories geared to seasonal holidays before zeroing in on the narrower topic of that one essay; and none of these general comments should be pushed very far, let alone taken as anybody's last word on the subject. When I refer tangentially to "John Stanley's stories of Witch Hazel's Halloween shenanigans" (p. 28), I was only trying to recall that large body of work in as few words as possible; I did not mean to slight Little Itch, who replaces Hazel as antagonist in so many of those stories. When, a paragraph later, I briefly outline a couple of Walt Kelly's "main (though not exclusive) uses" of Christmas settings, I

was only trying to suggest some of the things he often did, not to comprehend the totality, or even the bulk, of his rich oeuvre. Why, the very title of my essay is meant to be a play on Kelly's Christmas With Mother Goose.

One very entertaining Barks story set at Christmas was, I blush to disclose, inadvertently omitted from the article. It was published in Walt Disney's Comics & Stories #136, Vol. 12, No. 4, January, 1952 and reprinted in WDC&S #388, Vol. 33, No. 4, January, 1973. In this tale it becomes Donald's obsession to beat Gladstone in a turkey raffle, but he fails in all attempts despite some ingenious cheating and flagrant raffle-rigging. It is easy to see how I overlooked this one; if I ever revise the essay, I'll include a discussion of this near the beginning, with the other stories which make almost no use of the Christmas setting. I'm grateful to John Bullis for pointing out this omission to me. Did anybody notice any others?

K. Allen Bjork, 3626 Coolidge St. NE, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55418

Lovelace's drawings through the lettercol I enjoyed greatly: it had a flavor much like that of turn-of-the-century poster art, or the animation used in Yellow Submarine during "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."

It seems that what I have stumbled on here is not the fanzine I had expected -- my idea of a fine-zine is what Bowers or Porter do -- offset, sercon, etc. When I started my fanzine, this was sort of what I had in mind, and now with Changeling it's precisely what I'm after. At the opposite end of the scale, however, lies Starling: still the repro is good (though mimeo), but the thoughts move in another direction. Perhaps as the faned of my kind of zine, I'll never be able to bridge the gap and try to truly appreciate Starling.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

Carl Barks: "The article about my Christmas stories was very flattering. I think I remember the name of Richard West among those sterling founders of the great Society of the First Dime." Marc A. Ortlieb: "I like your recycled paper. How do you get it done? It has a nice texture. The little black bits floating in it give it an interesting effect." ++Recycled mimeo paper is sold under many trade names in the states: twil-tone, mimeo-tone and others. --HL++ Richard Gordon: "Chopped a lot of wood and wrote Three-eyes in a freezing room with windows that wouldn't close and with floor which didn't meet with outward-sagging walls -- worked daily with three sweaters, gloves and overcoat." Lester Boutillier: "A lot of people do admire Flashman. A lot of people rebel at authority or responsibility, are amoral, and see Flashman as a "cool" guy." Carolyn "C.D." Doyle, Jerry Kaufman, James Shull, Don D'Amassa, Mike Glicksohn, Jim Turner, Ken Braka, Mark R. Sharpe, Shakrallah C. Jabre, Chris Couch, Ken Ozanne.



++This letter column was too short. Write.++

JAWBONE

THE LOST

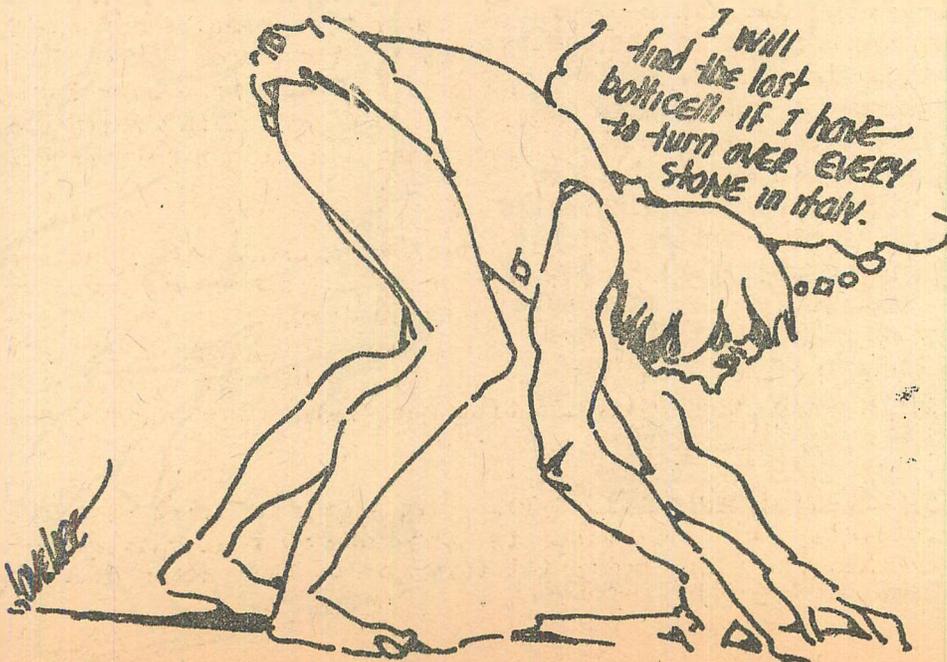
+ Michael Carlson +

Since this is a music issue of Starling, I want to talk a little about some of my favorite rock albums, some that are unjustly unknown by the wider audience, some that I've listened to with consistent pleasure over the years. I have an attraction for little-known and esoteric artists; I can recall feeling disappointed when, for example, Jefferson Airplane, having replaced Signe Anderson with Gracie Slick, all of a sudden made it big. Or after Blood, Sweat, & Tears, whose first album, CHILD IS FATHER TO THE MAN ranks with the Electric Flag's A LONG TIME COMIN as my all-time favorite played at Wesleyan, where I was a student, back in 1968. I'd prepared everyone for a great group, only to discover it was a completely different great group. Maybe it's because I heard "You Made Me So Very Happy" 10,000 times in the next month, but BS&T were never the same.

Now I want to explain that these are merely a group of records I feel are deserving of more attention than they've received. Some may be totally unavailable, that's your tough luck. And no, Jeff Smith, I will not mention Yes.

JOHN SIMON'S ALBUM/John Simon (Warner Bros., 1970). John Simon is the fellow who produced the aforementioned first BS&T album; he also did production and played piano & tuba for The Band, our classiest rock group. This album features 11 Simon written songs, all very clever both musically & lyrically, and a supporting cast featuring Garth Hudson, Rick Danko, Richard Manuel, Paul Harris, John Hall, Harvey Brooks, Jim Gordon, Leon Russell, Barry Beckett, etc. "Rain Song" is a classic, and the album itself is one of the best designed ever.

THE JERRY HAHN BROTHERHOOD (Columbia, 1970). Jerry Hahn took Larry Coryell's place in the Gary Burton Quartet, so I knew of him when I came across this album. It's a blend of guitar/jazz with rock, and Hahn gets good support from organist Mike Finnigan, who



TOP TEN

has since recorded with Dave Mason and made the *Crazed Hipsters* album, and is now with Maria Muldaur. Most of the songs are by Lane Tietgen, things like "Martha's Madman", "Time's Caught Up with You", and "What I Gave Away", and they're good.

THE EARLY BIRD CAFE/The Serfs (Capitol). Mike Finnigan and Lane Tietgen (see above) were the center of this group, and this album features an advanced brassy sound, likely far ahead of its time, and covers of both "Like a Rolling Stone" and "I'm a Man" which shows audacity if nothing else. The styles range from the country title cut to a very r&b oriented "You Been Talkin About Me Baby".

SONG CYCLE/Van Dyke Parks (Warner Bros., 1968). Talk about esoteric. This was one of the first "concept albums", only Parks' concepts are so far out that this album might have moved a couple of hundred copies, and Van Dyke was busy with the Beach Boys ("Good Vibrations") and even that hype couldn't help sales. But this is a very sophisticated blend of experimental rock music with extended double entendre lyrics. "up through the babble on the fair banks complicity" is as good a description of Hollywood as I've seen. Say it three times fast.

SWEET MOMENTS/The Blue Velvet Band (Warner Bros., 1969). This one was a studio group and they never got together again. Jim Rooney (guitar and vocal) has been around the folk scene for a long time, last time I saw him he was single, the time before that with Amos Garrett and two others opening for Jerry Jeff Walker. Eric Weissberg (guitar, mandolin) became famous for dueling banjos. Bill Keith (banjo, pedal steel) is one of the unsung heroes of numerous groups and albums, including *Kweskin*. And Richard Greene (~~vib~~ fiddle) was between Gary Burton and Sea Train at this time. This is bluegrass, and every cut is beautiful.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR HEARTS AND FLOWERS/Hearts and Flowers (Capitol, 1967/8?). I know very little about this trio, except I think one of them was Larry Murray (whose album *SWEET COUNTRY SUITE* I saw once in Scotland and never have seen since) and Rick Cunha, who has since been with Mason Williams and others may have been a second, and the third might have been named Marty Cooper. Does anyone out there know for sure? I bought the only copy of this I've ever seen, in Middletown, Conn. for 97¢ in mono one warm spring day in 1969, and I've only regretted I couldn't get one now in stereo. It's a lovely, stylised album.

EARTH OPERA (Electra, 1968). My favorite of the Boston bands, they featured Peter Rowan (Sea Train, *Old and In the Way*, and brother of the other two Rowan brothers) and David Grisman, mandolinist to the Dead, Maria Muldaur, *Old and In the Way*, etc. Bill Stevenson, who was gone by the time their second album, *THE GREAT AMERICAN EAGLE TRAGEDY*, came out added keyboards and vibes, and it's a bit dated, but still a nice sound. "The Red Sox are Winning" commemorating the Vietnam war and the Sox 1967 pennant, is wonderful.

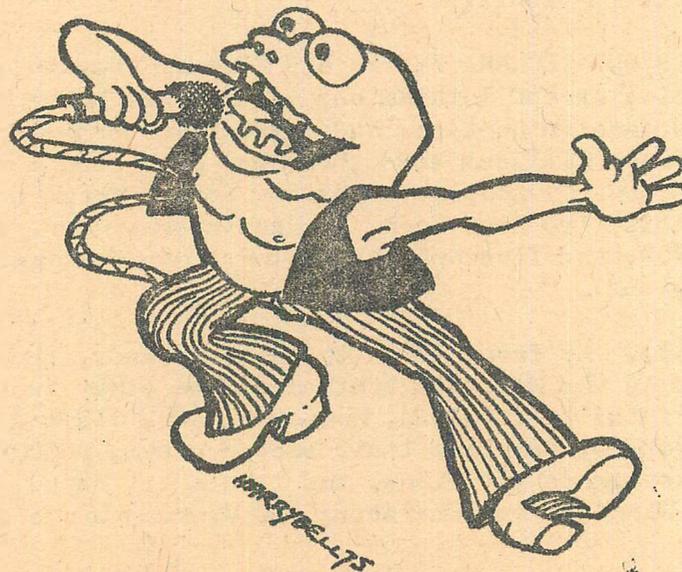
MY LABORS/Nick Gravenites (Columbia, 1970-1). Nick was a vocalist with both incarnations of the Electric Flag, and this album is some more of that easy grooving rock, a little less fiery than the Flag, but still very good. This album features Bloom-

field, Mark Naftalin, John Kahn, and a really neat "Gypsy Good Time", which justifies the faith which a Greek musician friend of mine had in this when it first came out.

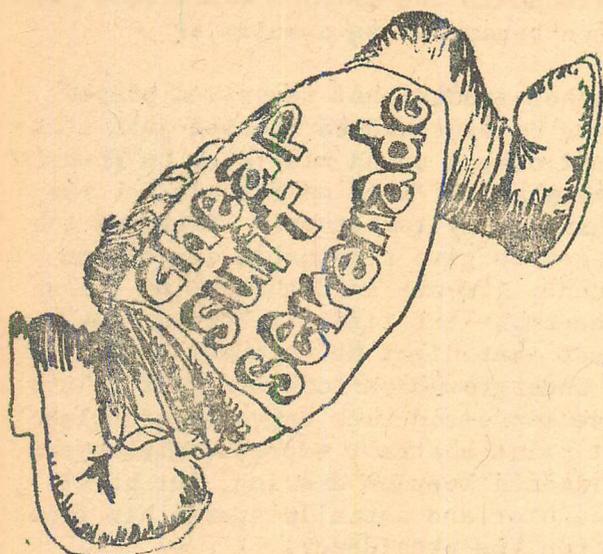
2 JEWS BLUES/Barry Goldberg (Buddah). Goldberg was also with the Flag, and came out of the mid-sixties Chicago blues scene. This album features: Eddy Hoh (drums), Charlie Musslewhite (harp), Mike Bloomfield, Harvey Mandel, Eddie Hinton, and Duane Allman (guitar) and it all sounds good. Bloomfield appeared under the alias "Great" which is an improvement over "Fastfingers Finkelstein".

THE CANDLESTICKMAKER/Ron Elliott (Warner Bros., 1969). Ron Elliott is/was the lead guitarist and writer/arranger for the Beau Brummels, and this album features the fifteen minute "Candlestickmaker Suite" which is one of the most pleasant things I've ever heard. Elliot has a lot of talent (check out his playing and arranging on the Everly Brothers album ROOTS, another forgotten classic, if you don't believe me) and he's helped here by people like Marc McClure and Dan Levitt (anyone remember their album?), Chris Ethridge, and Ry Cooder. It's a really nice record.

Most of these ten records can often be seen haunting the cut-out bins of your local chain stores. If there is anything all ten have in common, it is that they came out in a time where everything was moving in rock (1966-1970), and where rock was the most exciting of the musical genres. Now the excitement has returned to jazz, where it had been, and records like these would probably not even be produced today. But at the time, they were noble experiments, untimely failures. Today, for me, they are still good music, and they are happy memories, of a time when each new month produced more and more music that knocked me out of my tree.



+ Chris Couch +



R. Crumb and His Cheap Suit Serenaders in New York City

Like a lot of other people who grew up in the 1960's and early 70's, I feel as if I've known Robert Crumb, by sight and psyche, for years. So I was not surprised that I recognized him instantly, standing outside the auditorium at the School of Visual Arts on 23rd St., where Harvey Kurtzman was to interview him, and I almost said a familiar hello.

"Robert Crumb, America's foremost Underground Cartoonist" has assembled "a topnotch string band", the Cheap Suit Serenaders, according to publicity material from his record company, Blue Goose, and he was scheduled to play two shows at the Top of the Gate, in the Village. Harvey Kurtzman teaches a course at Visual Arts, which Crumb has reportedly visited in the past. Since this trip to New York was to be a public event in any case, it must have seemed natural that R. Crumb pay a public visit to Kurtzman at the school. Various people, especially a local collector named Mitchell Berger, did a lot of hustling and talked the people at SVA into providing facilities for the interview, and for a concert by the band as well.

The interview/concert was not advertised, though some tickets were sent out to local art schools; Shelby Kirch, a local Underground collector who has compiled a comix checklist, sent me a note about it. I won't pretend to have been blase about the event. I sat as close to the stage as possible, and prepared to listen intently to every minute. Sometimes that was difficult. That the facilities at SVA had been put together at the last minute was clear throughout the evening. The first scheduled event was the running of a 1969 Zap comics jam film. There was a long delay before the film started, and no sound during the first part of it. Crumb filled in the delay by starting to tell a joke about three turtles drawing straws to decide which of them would go out for beers on a hot day. He continued telling the joke throughout the evening's technical delays, but somehow never managed to get to the punchline. The audience laughed anyway. In the film, a boyish looking Crumb plays host to Gilbert Shelton, Spain, S. Clay Wilson, Victor Moscoso and Harvey Kurtzman as they jam on a page of "Science Fiction Comics." They're surrounded by videotape equipment, cameras and monitors, and occasionally their drawings become animated for a moment or two.

Kurtzman's interview was brief, he and Crumb joked easily back and forth on the stage. Kurtzman pointed out that many parts of female anatomy appeared in the Zap film, but no female faces, and asked Crumb if Underground cartoonists were sexist. The artist replied that perhaps they had been, but women had taught him how not to be sexist any longer. He asked only one serious question, whether Crumb would be interested in doing satire and if he might look for a larger audience for it. Crumb dropped his bantering

tone and answered that he didn't think it would reach people. Only streams of crazy images, violent and sexual images, like those published in the Lampoon would reach the public, he said, not true satire. Then the audience began asking questions.

No one asked him where he gets his ideas, though other traditional favorites popped up. "Mr. Crumb, what advice do you have for a young Underground cartoonist just starting out?" When someone asked him how he felt about others using his "Keep on Truckin" design, Crumb covered his eyes. "This guy is asking about 'Keep on Truckin.' I rue the day I drew that. They'll probably put that thing on my tombstone!" That was the only one that really threw him; otherwise, he managed to give reasonable answers no matter what the question. When asked about marijuana, R. Crumb said that he no longer smokes the stuff, he still gets stoned when he does smoke but finds it boring. He doesn't even drink, he said, but all through the set that night he consumed beers. He is a self-taught artist, but some of the other Underground cartoonists went to art school. One of S. Clay Wilson's instructors was so impressed with canvases of Wilson's characteristic pirates that he had another student paint abstract expressionist works over them. He promised the audience that he will indeed keep on drawing, but he'll be doing that for money and the music for fun. Laughter and catcalls spared him from having to answer whether he'd accept a nomination for the presidency.

At last a halt was called, and everyone streamed out of the auditorium through the dingy maze of halls that seem to comprise the School of Visual Arts and into the student lounge where the Cheap Suit Serenaders were to play.

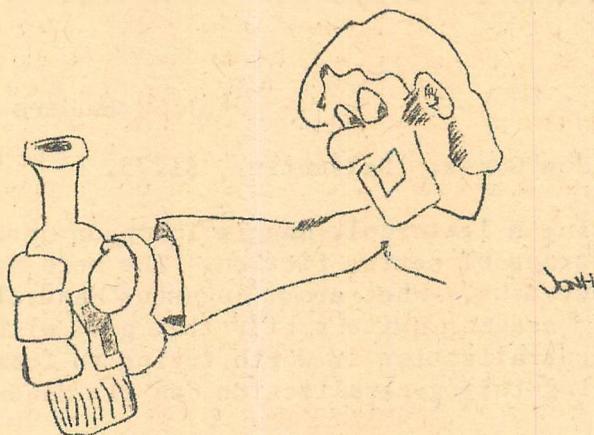
Crumb had a chance to tell more of his joke while the sound system was set up. One of the local Underground dealers had his stock of Arcades and also copies of the band's second LP for sale. The list price of the record is \$6.95, but it was being sold for \$5.00, apparently at Crumb's request.

As the third turtle was going out for the beers, the sound system was finally patched together and the music began. There are three members of the group besides Crumb, who plays banjo and sings. Allan Dodge plays fiddle, saw, duck call, and one of the most beautiful mandolins I've ever seen, an old one made by a well-known instrument maker who lived on Long Island. Robert Armstrong plays acoustic and steel guitar, and Terry Zwigeff plays cello.

Most of the band looked good-natured and relaxed while they played, but not Robert Crumb. He plays only banjo, and is spared the many changes of instrument that the other members make, but while playing he stares intently at the hand fingering the chords. He reminds me of old-time banjo pickers, far more concerned with what they are playing than with the fact that they are performing for an audience. He did many of the vocals, singing in a clear pleasant crooning voice, well-suited to the music, clearly learned from listening to 78's.

The Serenaders played for something more than two hours, with an intermission just long enough to run out for beer. They are indeed a top-notch string band. I presume they learned most of their tunes from records, but there was no lack of life in their playing. A friend of mine thought they lacked something in the way of showmanship, but I felt that they had just adopted an easy going, low-key style that suits their personalities. Their performance brought out the grace of the melodies, the humor of the songs.

Their repertoire includes plenty of humorous songs. Some are old novelty songs, like 'Duck's Yazz-Yazz', featuring a duck call as one of the instruments and 'Mysterious



Mose', background music from one of the Fleischer cartoons. Others were written by members of the band, like 'Fine Artiste Blues' and the 'RC Cola song', an ode to junk food. Most of their material is from the 20's and 30's, blues, rags, waltzes and popular, tin-pan alley material. They performed some familiar songs like 'Alabama Jubilee', 'The World is Waiting for the Sunrise', and 'Persian Rug', which features a saw dust.

They've also put together a Hawaiian medley. At their show at the Top of the Gate, they used this as the background for a wonderful sign-off that could have been lifted directly from the airwaves of the 1930's.

About 300 people attended the interview and concert at the School of Visual Arts; Crumb noted that they'd never before played for so large an audience. The audience included comic book aficionados and professionals, and people like Red Grooms, the artist and filmmaker who is currently showing a cartoony model of Manhattan in paper mache. There were also people primarily interested in the music, including most members of the Wretched Refuse, an excellent string band that has lately contrived a humorous act ('The RC Cola song' is one of their most popular numbers.)

Most of the band are collectors of 78's and instruments and tunes, and they hung around the city for a week after the shows, trading songs and records with local collectors. Apparently this was one of the major reasons they were willing to make the trip. At every concert, R. Crumb made it a point of announcing that this trip was the first, last and only time they would play in New York City.

* * * * *

Crumb's LPs are available from:

BLUE GOOSE RECORDS, Inc. 245 Waverly Place New York, NY 10014

WITH MALICE TOWARD ALL

+ Joe Sanders +

INTERFACE by Joe Gores. Ballantine, \$1.75.

In last Starling's lettercol, Maggie Thompson questions a recent "Malice's" ideas concerning the heroes of series fiction. The hero "must be somehow, however perversely, admirable"? she asks. What about Augustus Mandrell and Flashman? Well, yes. Maggie's right that I'm hedging quite a bit; that goes with formulating a generalization. But I think the generalization is worth trying to formulate, and I even think that without too much hedging this generalization can fit Mandrell and Flashman.

Mandrell is a hired killer; as Maggie says, there's nothing admirable about what he does. (She also admits to feeling the charm of the "masterful way he pursues his goal"--keep that in mind; I'll get back to it in a minute.) And that's why there's no Mandrell series. There were three books about Mandrell; that's all. I read the first two, then stopped, struck by the moral brutishness of the action. The second volume is titled RATHER A VICIOUS GENTLEMAN; it refers not to Mandrell himself but to anyone who would employ him--and thus, by extension, anyone who would enjoy reading about him. I decided I didn't want that self image. Evidently, despite what Maggie describes as an attempt in the third book to play up Mandrell's black humor, other readers made the same decision. Perhaps Frank McAuliffe, the writer, did too. My point, remember, was that unless readers can feel comfortable in a character's presence they won't pick up new books about him. And Mandrell is too appealing (witty and masterful) to be viewed purely from outside, yet too vicious to be accepted even vicariously. Uncomfortable.

Somehow, Flashman is acceptable. For one thing, he's not a professional murderer, just an unprincipled scoundrel. Also things happen to Flashman; he's not a competent enough manipulator to make them happen, as Mandrell does. Flashy keeps trying to manipulate people, but he keeps misjudging them. That's a crucial difference. It makes possible a different kind of humor, into which readers can enter pleasantly. Humor is, after all, the realization of the difference between the ideal and the actual, our expectations and reality, what ought to happen and what actually does. Mandrell's humor comes from his sure understanding of what characters are and how they will react; he springs that knowledge suddenly to upset the reader's picture of the way the action has been going. He knows his plan, and he tricks the readers as he tricks the people around him. Then he drolly reveals the truth. Flashman, on the other hand, has a sense of humor--he understands that the public postures of Victorian England are fraudulent--but he himself is surprised by the action's reversals because he doesn't quite understand what makes other people tick. Readers in the Flashman books are surprised at the difference between the things they expect to happen and what really does happen--but so is Flashy. And in one crucial thing Flashman himself is consistently misled. That's in his love-marriage, in which he obviously is a cuckold. Fraser has made his character part of the humor, a much more approachable position for a ruthless bastard that McAuliffe's character occupies.

Some other things combine to make Flashman acceptable. There's the matter of each character's personal style. As I noted in several "Malices" and restressed in the

second paragraph above, the series hero's attraction is not so much in what he does³⁰ but in the way he does it. That's the only way I can imagine getting through even one Mandrell book; delight in the cleverness with which he goes about killing people for money. He's cool, suave, self-assured and competent in a way that eludes most of us. Flashman is, certainly less competent. But he's an unabashed, thoroughgoing blackguard. At least he understands and is pretty much honest with himself. Finally, Fraser distances the reader from the ugliness of Flashman's actions by presenting the books as Flashman's posthumous papers. These tactics move the action just far enough from the reader--and Flashman's panache is just attractive enough--to make him an acceptable social companion even if one realizes he's not to be trusted.

So both Mandrell and Flashman are anti-heroic heroes. The difference is that Flashman's anti-heroism is distanced and qualified enough to let his virtues--clear observation, general lack of personal illusions, etc.--be appreciated. And the proof is that Fraser is still able to write about Flashman and readers are still anxious to read about him.

British writers may have a better grasp of the posture necessary to carry off an anti-heroic series hero. I can't imagine an American writer trying, or succeeding, at the same thing. (Cue for Maggie or someone else to tell me about such a series and set me off on another patchup job.)

As a further demonstration of what I'm talking about, on two counts, consider Ralph Dennis's Hardman series. As Michael Carlson pointed out in Starling #31, Hardman and Hump start out as part-time heroin runners/detectives, but the drug thing is nudged almost out of sight later in the series. Hardman is a good series hero; despite breaking laws, he's straight by his own principles and he doesn't believe in hurting people without reason. But as a series hero he can break laws only in vicariously acceptable ways--unregistered guns, deals with crooks, lies to cops, etc. No hard drugs. Not in a series; it makes readers uncomfortable. Overall, though, Hardman is a convincing, hardboiled character. And that's a dangerous thing for a series character to be. In WORKING FOR THE MAN, Dennis describes a girl as a shallow, vicious, utterly selfish bitch; at the end of the book, The Man, Hardman's client, has started to take an appalling revenge on her. Hardman wants to stop it. She probably deserves the punishment, she's not worth the effort to rescue, and she'll probably be killed if Hardman even comes close, but Hardman knows that he'll be betraying his own sense of human value if he doesn't try. I admire Dennis for realizing that human beings do have to make moral choices--and that such choices will change their lives. But a series hero can't (and has no need to) change. WORKING FOR THE MAN is the last novel in the Hardman series.

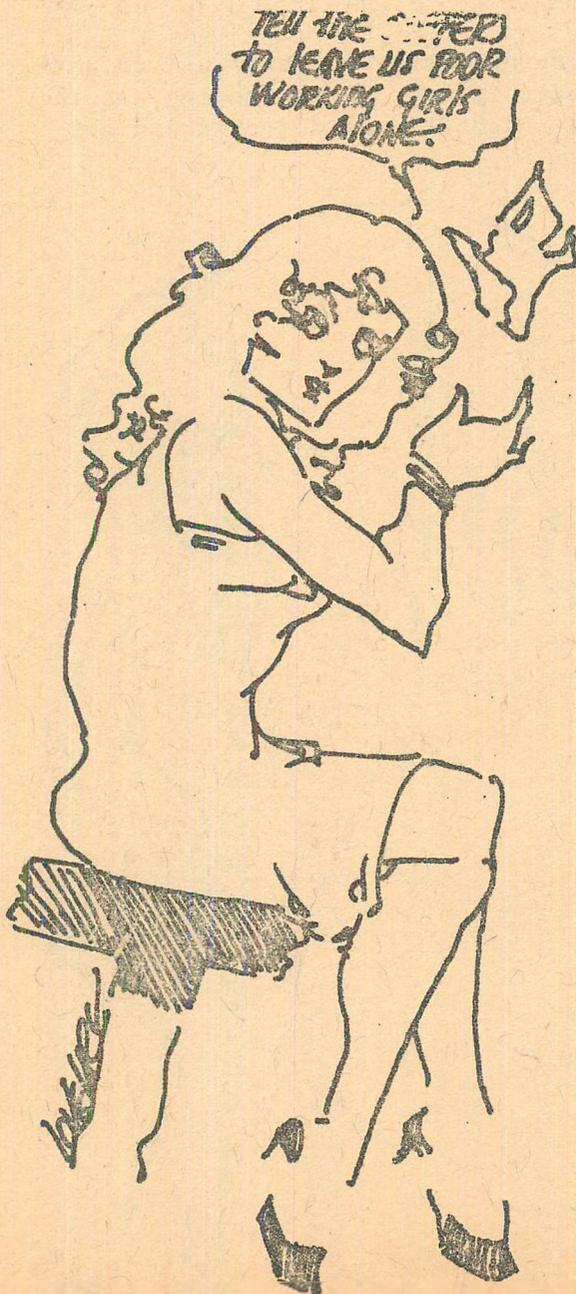


All of which brings us, somehow, to *INTERFACE*, a strange novel that reads like a collaboration between Dashiell Hammett and the writers of *MISSION:IMPOSSIBLE*. *INTERFACE* is interesting, and I guess I recommend it, but the action rests on a crucial gimmick. I can't talk about the book at all without hinting what's going on. So if you're at all inclined to read it, please do so before you continue on here.

Okay, The surface of the action in *INTERFACE* is hard, cleanly described action--the Hammett part. As in Hammett, readers are not permitted to see inside the characters. Events are not commented on, just described semi-objectively (the "semi-" because the writer is selecting details to misdirect readers; he's writing around his real point, and the reader must be alert to what the style leaves out). Here the subject seems to be description of what happens when an intermediary in a drug deal suddenly goes beserk, running amok through a city and leaving a trail of smashed people be-

hind him, all the time lugging an attache case full of valuable dope. However, under the action's flashy, apparently random toughness is a tight plot. The main character isn't demented; he has a plan. The plan is associated with the book's crucial gimmick, all depending on the character's ability to manipulate people. Using three props--dope, money, and pain--the main character sets everyone running in the pattern he wishes.

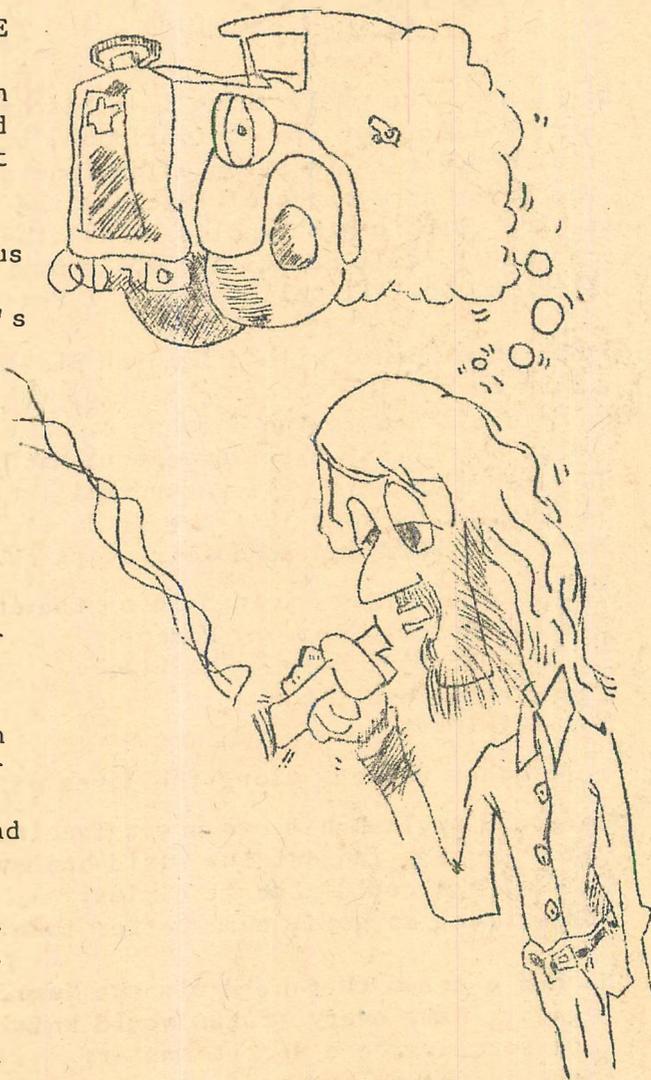
In that, the book resembles *MISSION:IMPOSSIBLE*. *INTERFACE* is fascinating in the same way, once you catch on to what's being done, and it's limited in the same way. I think it's awfully unlikely that one man could pull off such a complicated scheme, depending on the reactions of so many different people. Still, as with *M:I*, it's fun to watch the plot spinning out, even if characterization has to be oversimplified. Remember, *M:I* was an enjoyable show partly because it kept the personalities of its main characters so indistinct. That, I'd guess, is why leading actors could be substituted so easily in the show--they filled very simplified roles, ignoring any individual interests, hangups, clues to non-plot personality. The villains also were oversimplified, clay targets who existed only to be set up for the kill. The makers of *M:I* goofed only once, in a show featuring Wilfred Hyde-White as an unregenerate old Nazi, tricked by the IM team first into reliving the murder of his family and then into blaming it on the young neo-Nazi he'd been financing, so that the old man is programmed to shoot the young one. Some-



thing in ~~the situation~~ or Hyde-White's acting skill made me notice that the old man was not just a cardboard villain but a vulnerable, sad human being. I hated to see him destroyed just so the good guys could win. And somehow I never enjoyed MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE as much after that. In INTERFACE, Gores makes his villains thoroughly evil, his hero supremely competent. The novel is very satisfying on the surface. But it's slightly fakey and more than slightly unpleasant if you stop to think about it.

Perhaps recognizing this, Gores takes pains at the end of the book to show torrents of sentiment flowing under his hero's tough crust. It's part of the explanation of what's happening: the hero was motivated by love all along. The revelation is stunning--perhaps Gores thinks it must be to counterbalance the earlier brutality--but it's too abrupt a switch to be convincing.

To repeat what I said earlier, INTERFACE is an interesting book and I do think it's worth reading. Unfortunately, when I think about it now I also have in mind some of the things this column has dealt with. And in that context INTERFACE looks too cruel for a series book but ultimately too soft-hearted for a serious novel. As a serious novelist, I'd take one of Gores' models, Hammett. Hammett's characters move through a bleak, ruined society without real knowledge of themselves, though they bluff well. They have style. Primarily they act in a self-controlled, deliberate manner as they try to climb free of the decaying semantic sludge of comfortable, conventional deception. In uncertainty and pain, they make choices. Read as a whole, Hammett's novels show a quest for a workable, realistic, non-punitive way to view life. And that's one part of serious literature, whether it's written as detective novels, science fiction, or nurse romances. Most series books can be read repeatedly for relaxation--I find I can go through Howard's Conan stories every few years with the same pleasure because I've forgotten them in the meantime. INTERFACE can be read with satisfaction once. Hammett's novels can be read and reread as the reader grows to fit them and as they become part of that growth.



Neo-Fan Follies of '73

+ Lesleigh Luttrell +

Last April's Minicon was especially memorable to us for a number of reasons. For one thing it marked the convention debut of many of the members of the Madison Science Fiction Group (Madstf), as well as featuring as Fan Guests of Honor my parents, Leigh and Norb Couch. And the Minicon program included what may well be the definitive version of that best known fannish musical, "The Mimeo Man." That production brought back memories of the first time I ever saw a faan musical, and I began to wonder why no one else seems to remember that classic, performed at the Minneapolis worldcon, the "Neo-fan Follies of '73". Since no fan has published the book of that particular musical, and I can't seem to find my Minicon I (or was it Zeppelincon?) program

book right now, the whole thing is a bit hazy in my mind. Sometimes I almost think I first saw "Follies" at the '66 worldcon, but I'm sure that can't be right. I did spend that convention in a fog of neofannish enthusiasm, but I would surely have remembered the first appearance of 'Michael the Neofan' had he premiered in Cleveland. No, it must have been in Minneapolis in '73 that "Neo-fan Follies" first appeared. Despite the fact that I can't recall the whole musical, I think it deserves better than fannish oblivion, so I'll tell you what I remember of it.

I know the show opened with a faanish minstrel (in green-face) coming out in front of the curtain to set the scene by singing the introductory number, "Michael the Neofan" (to the tune of "Minnie the Moocher"). The song went something like this:

"Folks now here's the story 'bout Michael the neofan.
He wanted to be a well-known real fan.
He thought he knew just how to do it;
He'd join FAPA and send lots of pages through it."

(The Egoboo Singers joined in on the chorus:)

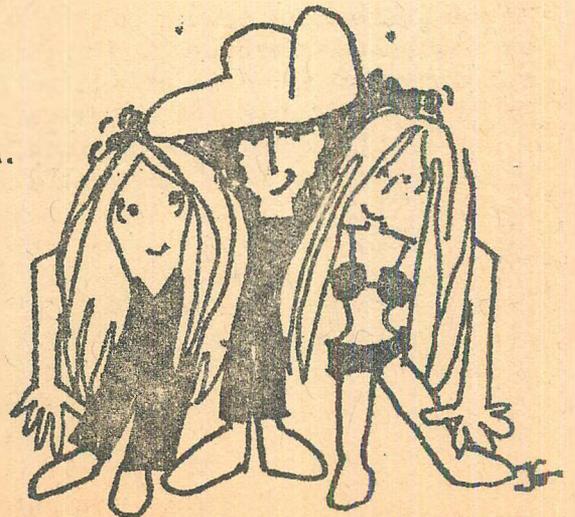
"Roscoe, Roscoe, Roscoe, Roscoe.
Herbie, Herbie, Herbie, Herbie.
Ego-, ego-, ego-, egoboo,
Y-i-i-i-ingvi."

There were other verses, along the lines of:

"He would publish his own great fanzine,
With the best fan art the world had ever seen.
No real fan could give it a miss;
The writing so good, even better than Willis.

"He had a dream that he'd win the Hugo,
Then his name every trufan would know.
He'd for sure be a secret master;
The Faan awards coming faster and faster.

"He'd go to cons, every neofan would stare.
There'd be no mistaking his curly black
hair.
He'd have groupies, have them by the score.
He'd be a BNF forevermore."



After this, the curtain opened to reveal a busy scene representing most aspects of a worldcon. Center stage are two neofen, one our hero Michael at his first Worldcon, the other a beany-wearing, obviously a bit more experienced neo. As the two view the scene, the more knowledgable fan shows Michael around while singing a little ditty to the tune of "Funny Reefer Man."

"Have you ever met that funny fanzine fan?
Have you ever met that funny fanzine fan?
If he says he'll pubanish,
Anytime that you wish,
Then you know you're talking to that fanzine fan."

"Have you ever met that funny, funny huckster fan?
Have you ever met that funny huckster fan.
Ask him about that pulp,
His price will make you gulp.
That's that dog, that's that huckster fan."

There were a lot more verses. I don't remember them all, but I know there were references to that funny Trekkie fan ("He'll pay ten bucks for a tribble/Even though the show is drivel"), first fandom fan ("If sight of him you catch/You'll know him by his blazer patch.") and Buck Coulson ("With black tee shirt and grin,/He'll do your fanzine in").

As the pair of neofen walk offstage, the rest of the cast join in singing the final verse, 'funny neofan'.

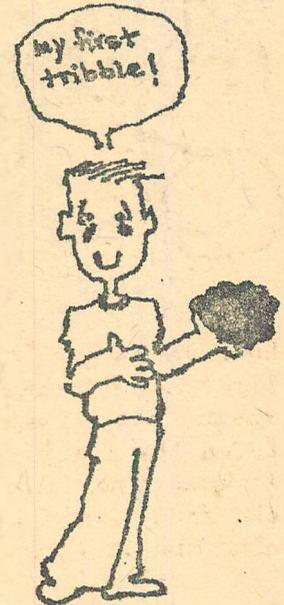
"Have you ever met that funny neofan?
Have you ever met that funny, funny neofan?
If you tell him you're a BNF,
He'll ask you for your autograph.
Goshwowoboyoboy, that's that neofan."

This was only one of numerous production numbers, featuring some of fandom's finest singing and dancing talents. Another number that was particularly impressive took place at 'Dr. Dodd Cleglar's Famous Fans School' where Michael has gone to learn how to win a Hugo. Using the tune of "The Boyfriend" other students at the school sing about their desire for that silver rocket ship ('We're blue without, can't do without, there's no egoboo without, that certain thing called The Hugo'). However, Michael soon leaves the school. Scorning Dr. Cleglar's advice on how to make it big in fandom ("You Gotta Be a Secret Master"), he decides to make it on his own (with just a little help from his friends). Things go badly at first and Michael is soon singing the "Neofan's Lament" (to the tune of "St. Louis Blues"):

"Oh fan reviewer with your reviews so mean,
Oh fan reviewer with your reviews so mean.
You don't like con reports or fiction,
And that's all I wrote for my zine."

"Oh loc writer, with your letter so mean,
Oh loc writer, with your letter so mean.
You said I had crummy repro
And I even slip-sheeted that ditto zine."

"Oh apa fan, with your comments so short,
Oh apa fan, with your comments so mean.
You surely cut me to the heart,
When you put 'noted' by my zine."





However, soon Michael is well on his way to becoming a BNF. While he is still singing the blues, this time it's the "No Mail Blues" (again to the tune of "St. Louis Blues"):

"I hate to see that three day weekend come around.
I hate to see that three day weekend come around.
It means no mail 'til Tuesday.
Ghu that really gets me down."

Michael quickly rises to be one of the biggest of the BNFs. His ascent is so fast that he is known throughout fandom as the 'seven months wonder'. All his fannish dreams come true; a Worldcon, the Hugo, trips to both Europe and Australia, femme fans are all his. But in the end that fate worse than death that overtakes all fans sooner or later catches up with our hero, Michael. He is left in the last scene singing the plaintive "Gafiates Lament" (still to the tune of "St. Louis Blues" --I wish I would remember who wrote the lyrics for "Follies". Could it have been a Columbus fan?):

"I hate to see that EAPA deadline come around,
Ghu, I hate to see that FAPA deadline come around.

I know I owe them 8 pages.

I guess I'll have to send the postcards round."

* * * * *

From Lesleigh's Notebook: To us, publishing Starling is primarily a hobby; we do it for fun, not profit, so we don't have rigid policies with regards to Starling. Obviously we don't always stick to a tight publication schedule. We don't have any hard and fast ideas about what we will or won't print here, and we don't rule our mailing list with an iron hand. Which is why you'll never see a 'why you got this issue' on the last page, or a lengthy editorial about how higher production and postage costs force us to give issues of Starling free for only published locs. However, on occasion we have been asked how we decide who gets Starling and for how long, and what the little symbols on some of our mailing labels mean. So a few words of explanation for those of you who worry about such things: most people get Starling because we trade fanzines. I abominate one-for-one trades; we always trade all-for-all. Some of you may find a 'T' on your mailing label -- that means I'm not sure we still are trading and I put that there as a reminder. We do trade with almost anyone who wants to trade, and in those rare cases where we decide not to trade, we always let the editors know. If we are trading, it's a safe assumption that the next issue of Starling will show up in your mailbox sooner or later. However, if the prospect of 3 or 4 Starlings a year, appearing at very irregular intervals, is not enough response for you, then you might not want to trade with us. We also have subscribers to Starling. If you are one, you will find on your mailing label the number of the last issue you will get. Quite often, people start out as subscribers and end up getting Starling for other reasons as well. In that case, you still get a number on your label but it doesn't really mean anything. People who are only subscribers will be getting notices when their subscription runs out. Finally, if you happen to notice a number on your mailing label corresponding to the number of that issue and you aren't a subscriber, it means we must hear from you by the next issue or you risk being taken off our mailing list. On occasion we do remove people from our mailing list who are still publishing or have some other reason for getting Starling. So, if you think you should have gotten that issue and didn't, let us know. Both the post office and your editors are fallible.

