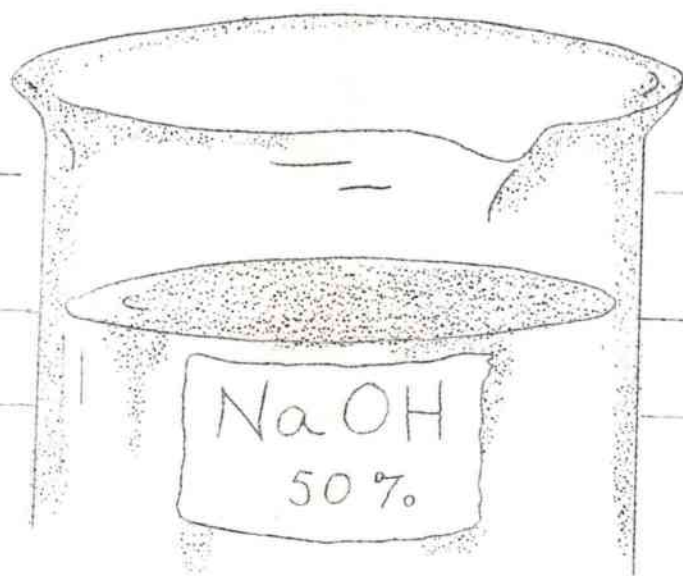
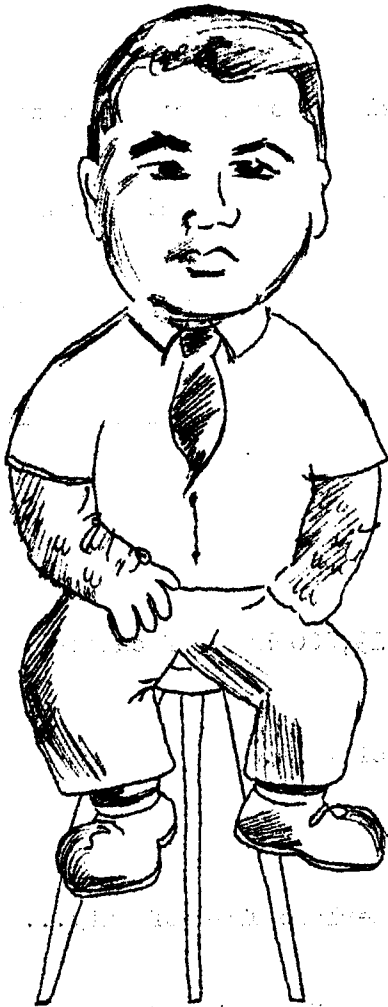




WHY NOT
6



WHY NOT? Number Six. Published for the 108th mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, August 1964 by Al Lewis, 1825 Greenfield Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90025.



"A cut stencil is sacred," said Charles Burbee on one occasion. How much more sacred, then, is a run stencil!

A couple of years back I published five issues of WHY NOT? for N'APA. I was part way into a sixth when deadline came and went, and the zine did not seem to be worth the trouble of finishing. Last-minutezines seldom are. At the time I was up to my neck in N3F politics, having, by one of those fickle flicks of fate's finger, been in a position to inherit the club, so to speak, on Ralph Holland's death, while trying to juggle a convention, four separate but interconnected feuds, and more personal bitterness than I had heretofore believed existed in fandom. Someday, when I get old and gray and all my contemporaries have passed on and I am feeling all mean and nasty inside I may write the Secret Fan History of 1962.

At any rate, I had this cover all run and a couple of illos on stencil (which may wait until the next issue) and time had come to publish a FAPazine and--WHY NOT?

The illustration over to the left is by Mike White, who is 13 years old, and last semester was a pupil in my A-8 United States History class. Mike, on occasion, is a rather inspired caricaturist.

For those of you who do not know me (and I have met some 45/65 of you), let me introduce myself. I am Al Lewis, having entered fandom under that name back in 1950, with every intention of sticking to it despite the attempts of some latecomer to usurp it. More fully, I am Albert Johnson Lewis, who is not to be confused with Alan John Lewis, especially not to the extent of sending him checks which are intended for me, though sending me checks which are intended for him is perfectly OK.

I am 31, male, single, and a teacher of history and English at Gaspar de Portolá Junior High School in Tarzana, a community with at least one resident famous in these circles. (Portolá was the military commander as Father Serra was the ecclesiastical chief of the expedition which planted the California missions.) Tarzana is a part of the city of Los Angeles, and Portolá a part of the LA City School system. I teach grades seven, eight, and nine--age levels roughly eleven to fifteen. Our school is in a high-income district; most of the homes are less than ten years old, and most of them are in the thirty-to-one-hundred thousand dollar class. Most of the parents are in business or the professions, and the IQ (whatever that may be) of their children is definitely higher than the average--our student body came out at 108 on the mass IQ tests, which is probably valid as an average, though if you'll flip over the page you may have a few doubts.

FROM THE PENS OF BABES

One of the rewards of teaching school is the occasional unexpected bit of humor that crops up. Here are a few that I remembered to write down.

Germanys Products are: Harring and various other fish: coal lignite, salt and sogtash.

* * * *

For travel north or south, many bridges, tunnels and sharp curves are needed.

* * * *

WHO IS THIS FOR?

THIS NOTEBOOK THAT I HAVE MADE, I WOULD GIVE TO ONE OF MY TEACHERS IN MY PAST YEARS WHO HAS TAUGHT & GUIDED ME WHAT I AM, IF ANYTHING.

* * * *

Presidents flowed until Charles De Gaulle came.

* * * *

In a recent year livestock included more than 15,129,000 head of cattle including cows.

* * * *

The fishermen of Norway fish where there is a lot of fish.

* * * *

Q: What are the customs of the people?

A: The following articles may be brought into Switzerland free of duty...

* * * *

The peoples language is Norwegian. They get the name Norwegian from Norway. When they talk American they have a very cute accent. Really Danish.

* * * *

All religions are tolerated or else they are put into jail.

* * * *

The language of the Swiss is not all one language, but quit a few. They speak, Swiss, french, Italian, German, and who knows what else. Very few people speak English, in fact only about 10.

* * * *

She, Isabella II, was born in Madrid, Oct 10, 1830. She kicked the bucket in Paris April 9, 1904.

* * * *

Their festivals are very color. They last for about three days. Their is an awful lot of yelling & screaming at their festivals.

* * * *

Nothing in Belgium is wasted, the children go around picking up twigs and are burned into fuel.

* * * *

Boats are very popular for shipping.

* * * *

17

Walk softly and carry a big stick were said by Teddy Roosevelt and he meant that if you don't hurry your thought you will be at the head of an army like he was.

* * * *

[comment on a textbook] This book has too many details, not enough facts.

* * * *

Henry II -- He was a famous English King who was followed by other greats before him.

* * * *

[definition] History: Special events that have taken place in past years up to present time. History is really the story of man. Without man making mistakes in the past, the present wouldn't be what it is today.

* * * *

Christopher Columbus was a very great man as we all know also as we know he founded America. But the interesting part is that he wore high boots and his country in a shape like a boot.

* * * *

Napoleon I was a great king of France and was look up to by all the people (even though he was very short).

* * * *

Theodore Roosevelt was the vice-president when his brother (Franklin D. Roosevelt) was president. Then after Franklin was assassinated, Theodore Roosevelt took over being the president.

* * * *

People [of Italy]

What kind they are:

They are mostly Italians. About ¼ are different than Italians. They do a lot of work for the government.

Culture: culture is not often found in Italy. There is little culture in Italy.

Customs: Their customs are, they like to sing and also be happy, also they always sing when they are making a pizza pie, and they like to have a nice night ride in a gondola.

Religion, Italy's religion is strictly Catholic. From teaching posts in Rome, Paris, and Naples, in the previous century the Dominican friar Thomas Aquinas had reconciled Aristotelian logic and metaphysics with Christian dogma. In short, he had enthroned Reason alongside Faith as a guide to the knowledge of God. So you can see they are religious.

...New Years Eve is celebrated, as everywhere else with dances, church service, mass, and a little poker.

* * * *

Lincoln

Yesterday was Lincoln's birthday. We got school off because Lincoln was such a very important man and one of the greatest men of the World.

On Lincoln's birthday I didn't do too much. I bowled, played golf, played football, and Soker.

When I bowled I bowled 152. When I played golf I shot 35 for nine holes. When I played football I played right end. We lost 14-7.

Soker was the best because after a while Bill was tripped and it turned in to a big fight, it was team against team. There weren't too many people hurt. There was a bloody nose, and bruises and one boy was through in the poll.

6

LOS ALAMOS SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY
University of California
Los Alamos, New Mexico

TO: Distribution

DATE: March 29, 1961

FROM: Ralph S. Cooper

SUBJECT: ON SCIENTIFIC REVIEW COMMITTEES

SYMBOL: T-DO

While it is well known that Columbus made a vain appeal to the Senate of his native state of Genoa (as well as to the King of Portugal, to Henry VII of England, and to the Dukes of Medina Sedonia and Medina Celi), it was not until very recently that the full official Genoan Senate reply came to light. It was discovered, along with other of his early documents and letters, in a monastery library in Southeastern Spain and perhaps sheds some light upon why Spain rather than Italy was the dominant maritime and colonial power in the 16th Century. A translation of the letter follows:

To: Cristobal Columbo
From: The Senate of Genoa

We, the Senate of Genoa, thank you dear countryman, sea captain, geographer, and adventurer for your presentation before us of an ambitious plan to open a new sea route to Cathay. Being most impressed, but untutored in the technical arts, we assembled a committee of the finest academic minds in our own and neighboring states to examine and review your proposal and make recommendations upon our course of action. We are most pleased with their intellectual insight and broad understanding of the problem. While space deters us from presenting their full (964 page) report, we can give you the major ideas expressed by this learned body. They also applauded your plan but cautioned that certain preparatory steps must be taken before plunging into the unknown cosmos. Particular comments are listed under the names of their authors, all most distinguished men in their fields.

Sig. Alfonso Chioggia, Physical Metaphysician, Genoa State University (GSU)

"We must first study the oceans, their depths, temperatures, currents, tides, wind velocities, weather and most particularly the recently discovered inner and outer dragon belts, and, of course, the effect of the edge of the world upon all previous items."

Dr. Vittoria C. Vicenzo, Chairman, Department of Mechanical Arts, Venice Institute of Technology (VIT)

"Vehicle and propulsion systems should be examined and the optimum selected for the mission. A careful comparison must be made of manned oar vs. sail propulsion and thought given to the development of advanced concepts such as might be based upon Hero's water vapour engine or Archimedes' screw. As for the vehicle itself, in addition to the many structural and hydrodynamic calculations, one must weigh the use of a single ship against the three of standard size."

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Sig. Carlos Fiorento, Professor of Astrology and Occult Science,
University of Genoa at La Spezia (UGLS)

"One must develop techniques of astrogation, that is, selecting one's course by consultation with the stars and planets. Alternatively, one might consider using the newly developed lodestone, though this suffers from unreliability, inaccuracies, and is yet untested under the expected environmental conditions. Arrangements should be made for communication among the vehicles or with the base and thus work should proceed with flags, lanterns, mirrors, and notes in bottles."

Herr Dr. Franz Von Schulte, Professor at Large, Medicine and Life Science,
the University of Leipzig, visiting the Genoese Bureau of Research (Savona)

"Such a voyage requires considerable advance in our understanding and controlling the various humours which afflict the human body and spirit. One obvious case in the prevention or cure of scurvy. In general, one must determine sound dietary regimens and devise techniques to provide for the sanitary necessities over long periods at sea. These range from obtaining fresh water from salt to concocting a variety of interesting fish recipes. This latter brings us closer to problems of the spiritual humour, involving long periods of loneliness and/or mal de mer with the possibility of group dynamic interactions leading to mutiny, for example."

The committee included representatives of the church (Msgr. Donella), the government (Minister De Stortzo), and the Bureau of Finance (Sig. Barrata). These eminent gentlemen discoursed at great length upon the theological and political aspects of such a project, and Sig. Barrata most wisely pointed out that one must compare the development and operational costs of this uncertain method of reaching Cathay with cost of improving the well-established Polo overland route. Indeed, he observed that one could pave the entire route with Florentine tile for the price of one round-trip sea voyage. Nevertheless, these are prosperous times and the enthusiasm of the scientific members of the committee was undampened. Thus their recommendations were as follows:

1. Study programs be initiated to solve the aforementioned problems.
2. When these are solved, a series of unmanned, instrumental vehicles be sent to Cathay, the final ones carrying animals and instructions for setting them upon the return route.
3. Finally, establish an academy for instructing captains in creative leadership (because, though you have conceived the trip, you are unlikely to possess that exact mixture of attributes required for this demanding position) and for training crews in favorable dynamic group response.

We feel you will be quite pleased with the output of this progressive, forward looking committee of profound scholars. Incidentally, there was one additional member of the committee, a rather rash and impetuous young mechanical engineer, lately of Florence, who was sent in place of the ailing Dr. Taglatti of the University of Milan. Though he came highly recommended, he showed his immaturity and poor judgement by advocating the voyage itself be initiated immediately. investigation proved him to be quite eccentric (he talks of flying machines and fancies himself an artist), and he was therefore dismissed from the

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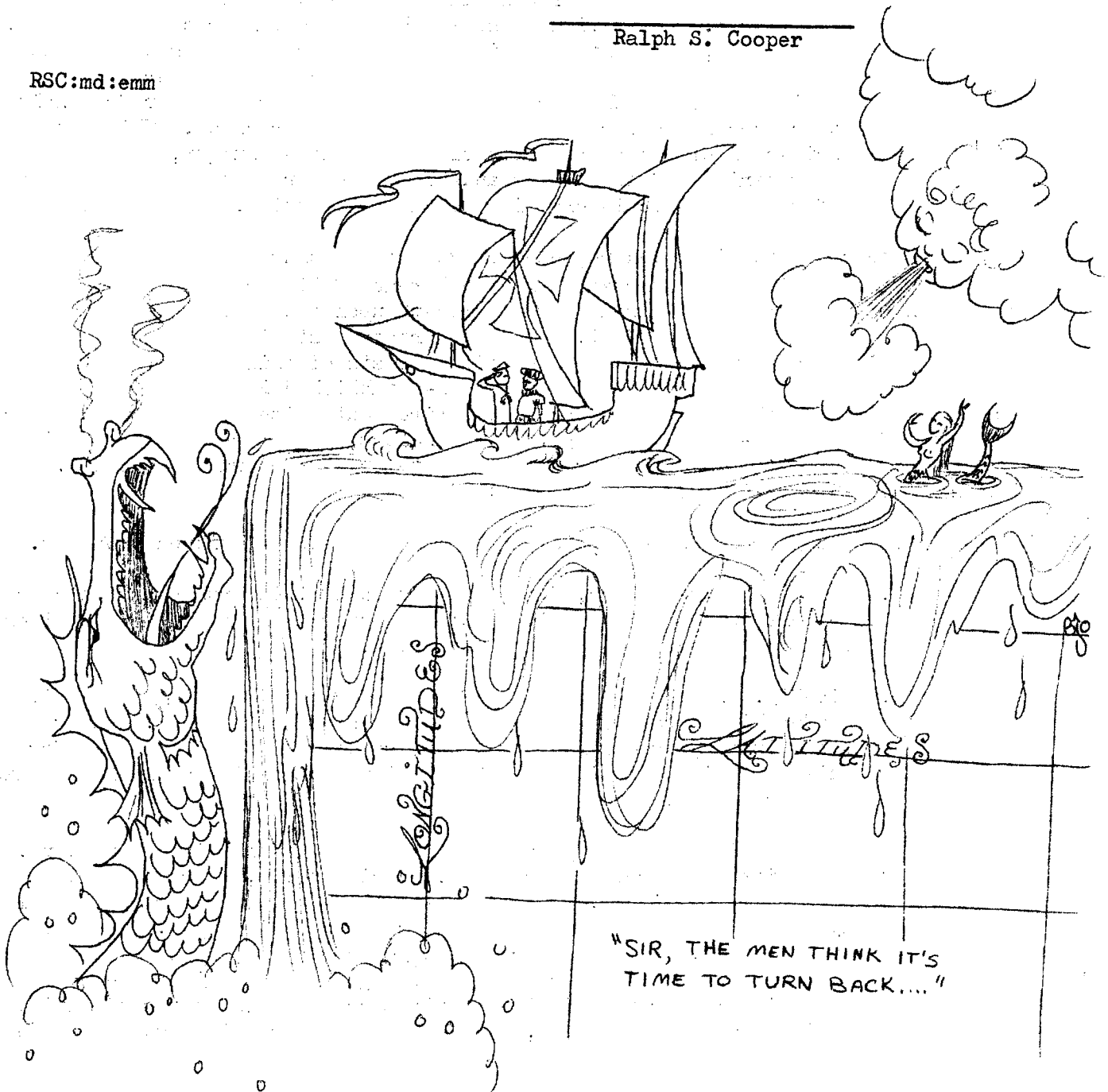
committee. He is the illegitimate son of a florentine notary and takes his name from the place of his birth, Vinci, Leonardo being his given name, should you desire to contact him.

Most respectfully yours,
Salvatore Paello
Secretary of the Senate
The Sovereign State of Genoa

Thus Columbus continued in his search for a sponsor until he was at last successful, at least in starting his voyage. It has been pointed out that the problem of trade with China (especially for Spain) is yet to be solved. Should another Columbus appear, what would we say to him?

Ralph S. Cooper

RSC:md:emm



WHEREIN THE EDITOR RESUMES... 9

Museums are interesting places to visit. Last Sunday Sylvia Dees, Jack Harness, and I went to the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles where the Vernon Mona Lisa is on exhibit. Perhaps you have read about it; there was a write-up in the July 31 issue of Life. This is a version of the Mona Lisa which may very well be an authentic Leonardo--and did you know that the one in the Louvre may not?

When William Henry Vernon came home to the United States from France in 1787 he brought with him a collection of paintings, including a number by recognized old masters. Among them was one which was recorded as a Leonardo, and which Vernon said was a gift to him by Marie Antoinette from the royal collection. The painting has been in the family ever since, and the showing at the Otis Art Institute marks the first public exhibition. The problem revolves around the insistence of the family that the portrait be exhibited as a genuine Leonardo and the reluctance of art experts to certify it as being authentic.

Yet the evidence is impressive. Firstly, by the chemical nature of the pigments used, the weave of the canvas, and other interanal evidence, the picture has been conclusively dated to the first part of the fifteenth century--which means that if it isn't by Leonardo, it is by a contemporary. Secondly, two of the pigments are authentic ultramarine and authentic vermillion--made from ground lapis lazuli and carnotite respectively--and more valuable than an equal volume of gold dust. Only the greatest of the masters were allowed to use these particular pigments--the students made do with substitutes. Thirdly, all of the brush strokes were made by a left-handed painter. Leonardo was left-handed, and these brush strokes match very closely those used in Leonardos of undoubted authenticity. Fourthly, the woman in the Vernon Mona Lisa appears somewhat younger than that in the Louvre Mona Lisa--the bone structure in the face is less pronounced, the flesh fuller. We know from accounts left by Leonardo's pupil Vasari that Leonardo worked on the Mona Lisa over a period of at least four years --did he do one painting or two (we know that he did at least two versions of "The Virgin of the Rocks" for example)? Accounts in French archives twice during the seventeenth century list "Mona Lisa and a copy"--does this mean two Mona Lisas by Leonardo or one by Leonardo and one by somebody else? Descriptions that exist are not sufficiently detailed to be able to tell which Mona Lisa is referred to on any given occasion.

To certify the Vernon Mona Lisa as genuine would also run against a number of vested interests--and nobody is really willing to stick his neck out. It seems that back in the early eighteenth hundreds an Italian patriot decided that the Mona Lisa should go back to Italy. One night he stayed in the Louvre after closing time, cut the Mona Lisa out of its frame, waited until the next morning, rolled it, stuck it under his coat, and walked out in workmen's clothes. About two years later the Louvre announced that they had recovered the painting. All well and good, but this was just about the time that the possibility that there was a genuine Leonardo in America was aired for the first time. Last year the Mona Lisa came to America--and the copy that was sent here as being "the" copy is on wood! Which Mona Lisa was stolen, which came to America, and which now hangs in the Louvre? And how many "genuine" Mona Lisas are there?

One more tidbit: just before returning to America Vernon began a correspondence with a mistress he had met just two years before. He referred repeatedly to their "eight year-old" son. He embarked with a boy servant, but the servant was not with him when he landed in Philadelphia. It was just about this time that the Dauphine, a sickly, undernourished twelve year-old "looking like a child of not more than eight" disappeared from the Bastille, never to be seen again....

There were two other exhibits this year that are worthy of mention here. The first of these was an exhibit of Mexican Art which is the biggest single display the Los Angeles County Museum has ever presented--it occupied nearly half of the ground floor. The second exhibit was "Gold Before Columbus".

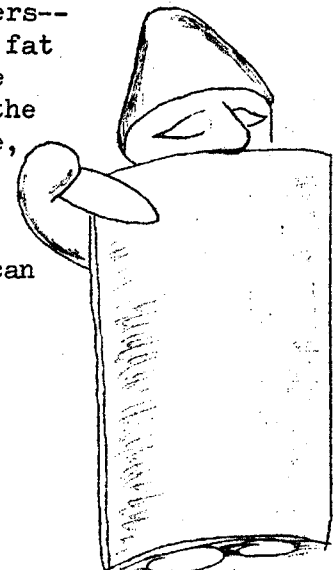
The Mexican Art exhibit was noteworthy not only for its size, but because it showed off both the very best and the very worst of Mexico--and gave in sum effect a totally erroneous picture of Mexican art history. Were one to believe this exhibit, Mexican art came to an early flowering with the Olmecs and has steadily degenerated in taste ever since, until one finds nothing but cheap souvenirs and trash in present-day Mexican culture. Any more-than-cursory perusal of the stores in downtown Tijuana will turn up large numbers of really lovely things, much lovelier than any of the items on display in the contemporary crafts section of this display.

Whatever brickbats one might justifiably hurl at the selection evidenced in the later portion of the exhibit, the display of pre-Columbian artifacts more than made up for it. As far as I know, this is the most extensive single display ever put together--the best items from many museums and private collections were assembled to fill half a dozen large rooms. The cumulative effect on the viewer is considerable. I went back three times.

Outside the museum was one of the large La Venta stone heads--and the day the exhibit opened museum officials were more than a little disturbed to arrive in the morning and find a bowl of blood and a carefully sacrificed chicken sitting in front of it.

Inside, nearly all of the objects represented were either stone or pottery--- and it is quite a delightful surprise to find that an astonishingly high percentage of these items are the classics that always show up in the textbook illustrations. There is the little ring of people standing around with their "surfboards" (at least that is what one ten-year old called them) standing in the sand; there was a Chac Mool from Chichen Itza, and a couple of fellows who looked like Sumo wrestlers, and a heavily padded ballplayer (and another one of the group which you don't see pictured in the texts who was a dead ringer for Tom Seidman, pointed beard, silly grin and all). And lots more.

But the most gratifying thing, and this was particularly in evidence in the works of the Olmecs, was a sense of humor. They seem to have a love of caricature. The soldiers, for instance, battling with daggers-- and whose noses just top their body-length shields. Or the fat little jar in the shape of a frog, and all of the fey little clay statuettes. As time went on, the anatomy got better, the sculpture becomes more and more realistic in its portraiture, and elaborated in its dress. The Gods assume terrifying expressions, wear elaborately ornamented clothes and head-dresses, and things seem to be a good deal more serious (if one can trust the selection of items shown better than one can trust the twentieth-century group). The largest and most involved of the stone items are from the Aztec period--some magnificent Quetzalcoatl's and Huitzilpochtli's for example.



A

It is with the Spanish period that one comes upon what I considered the two most interesting items in the display. (NOT the best art). One was a huge wooden altar and the other a stone crucifix. The altar looked for all the world like the facade of an Aztec temple--but there instead of Tezcatlipoca was Jesus Christ and a pair of saints! The cross was a beautiful conventionalization, with the face of Jesus surmounted by a crown of thorns, but with all the decorations in the style appropriate to Tlaloc. Syncretism was brought home.

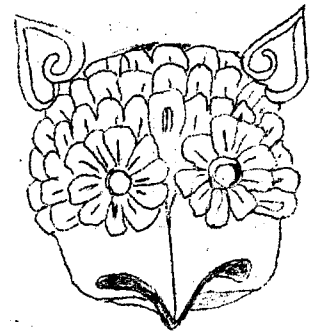
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There were only a handful of gold objects in the Mexican Art exhibit; the museum more than made up for it a few months later with the "Gold Before Columbus" display. One of the great tragedies of human creativity was the destruction of all of the outstanding metalwork of the pre-Columbian period by the Europeans, who cared more for bullion than they did for art. Pizarro, that most cruel and cold of all the Conquistadors, exclaimed over the beauty of his booty. Charles V, who needed money to fight Protestants, melted the whole lot down without ever looking at it. Benevento Cellini, who did get a chance to see some of it, and who gave what might be regarded as "expert testimony" went into raptures over it; so did Albrecht Durer. Notwithstanding, the religious wars saw the destruction of almost every single gold object d'art which the Spanish brought into Europe. They were not the only villains however. By piracy and other means the English acquired a fair display--in the middle of the nineteenth century the Bank of England melted it all down for coinage.

What is left of the great treasures of the Americas, then, is but a paltry representation--and all of it together would hardly equal what came from the tomb of Tutankhamen. This exhibit was representative--which means that there were a few objects of exquisite workmanship--and a great deal whose artistic value I consider zero.

I am afraid beaten gold--cups, breastplates, pectorals, or whatever, impresses me about as much as so much tinware. In fact, that is what it closely resembles. One is reminded very strongly of modern-day Mexican tinwork, and it is quite apparent that modern Mexican work is a continuation of a very old school of metal working. But castings or hand toolings--that is something else again!

I think that man makes nothing that is more beautiful than a carefully worked and satisfying hunk of metal, whether it be a small golden owl's head with every feather a separate piece--and the whole given the general design of flower petals (Bjo did the sketch over at the right, when we failed to discover a photograph in the guidebook. This is about twice life size), or whether it be a modern Navajo bracelet, with lines flowing and massive. Well-worked metal also has a sensuous quality that no other substance can touch, unless it be finely-grained wood, and that is a different quality of sensation.



There is a thing about museums that is profoundly exciting. Perhaps it is the air of authenticity, the sense of reality, the time-binding quality. But no quantity of pictures can give one the true feel of an object, or can generate the feeling of excitement that I had a few years back on observing a quantity of Egyptian beds and chairs in the Field museum in Chicago and realizing that all of the chair legs faced the same direction, and understanding, feeling, not just knowing, the power of animism in a culture. Or noticing the elaborate construction of an Egyptian necklace chain, the dead and uninspired quality of sixteenth century Spanish colonial painting, the continuity of history called forth by a near-familiar set of Roman surgical tools, or standing in the presence of a work done by perhaps the greatest of all human geniuses, feeling the disappointment of something quite unexciting, and then, for the first time, actually looking at and studying and seeing Leonardo's painting and the print of its more famous copy hanging nearby.

To me, the greatest enemy of a museum as an educational institution is the very abundance of material inside. There is so much to look at that one tends to look at all of it and see nothing. But when one takes the time to examine a few things closely, to think about them, to ask questions about them--a museum can be one of the most exciting places on earth.

--Al Lewis

SAMPLE VAGR

Some pages--four in draft, none know how many yet to be--appended to Al Lewis' first FAPazine by Ron Ellik, who can tell the story of the time Big Jim came to town in far more excruciating detail and at far greater length than can Poul Anderson, who tells it with a Danish accent. Same address as Lewis, whatever that is. August 1964. All that sort of thing.

-oOo-

WHAT I HAVE BEEN DOING

For one thing, tho it may disappoint you, I haven't been having any interesting dreams lately. I'm afraid 1963 was my year for dreams, for writing about dreams, and for talking about dreams; things have been pretty dull whilst asleep with only one dream (last night, in fact) in color in many months. It was not the sort of dream I'd like to put in a FAPazine--I want to keep my Number 475 Pacificon membership.

Last time I wrote something for FAPA I told you all how I had stopped helping build airplanes and turned to computer programming. This time there's no such exhilarating news--I'm still a programmer, employed by the same firm (Computer Sciences Corporation, which closed at 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ on the American exchange today and I bet you is going to declare a loss this quarter although business looks good). I own 44 shares of C.S.C., which I bought at 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ last September.

Rather than change jobs, I've consolidated my position: I now speak FORTRAN IV, FAP, SLEUTH, FORTRAN-63, and whatever they call the gibberish you use to program in a Stromberg-Carlson 4020 Plotter. They find jobs they don't want to do, and they give 'em to me--so I do anything. I've written a bunch of quick&dirty subroutines to calculate values of formulass, and I've written library card-catalogue sorting programs, and I once cost C.S.C. over \$8,000 on a job that was estimated at four man-hours and six computer-hours, for which we billed the customer about \$200. I bought a Volkswagen as soon as I discovered that my group manager, my department manager, and a vice-president all owned VWs--only to discover that all of Los Angeles fandom was buying them, too...at one meeting of LASFS, there was a row of seven fan-owned VWs. Bob Lichtman has since sold his, Trimble and Hulan have replaced their sedans with minibuses, and I guess there are only four in the area now. I learned to play Bridge the other week, because my boss plays--after our first game together, he congratulated me on my quick learning, and, as a parenthesis, loaned me a book on bidding.

So now, two years after hire, I have two years programming experience; if I came to apply for a job, they'd say I don't have the minimum qualifications to be interviewed, because C.S.C. requires a degree and three years experience. Sigh.

Through a conversation with Felice Rolfe, I learned that the California State College system has lower entrance requirements than the University of Calif. complex, so I ran right out and enrolled at the closest campus: San Fernando Valley State College, the school without frosh beanies because the initials won't fit on anything that small.

I'm now engaged in the Master's degree program (M.S.) in mathematics, with eighteen class hours behind me and twelve to go, estimated to completion in June of 1965. My 1962-3 nightschool work at UCLA helped some.

Just after the Discon, I discovered small-time gambling; everybody knows about Las Vegas, but far less is told about the poker-parlors of California, where you can play from 9 am to 5 am any day of the week except Sunday (noon to 5 am), and it's all as legal as taxes. Tony Boucher knows about these halls of iniquity, because Gardena (in southern California) has a sister-city of sin in the north, Emeryville; pretending to no secret knowledge, I can only add that, apart from Tony, myself and Steve Tolliver, I have never heard fans mention visiting these places. Which seems strange, because fans play a lot of poker--just locally, it's eclipsed for the nonce by Brag, but it's still a popular game at any convention.

Then, maybe it's not so strange; these poker clubs have no tables with bets below 25¢, and one must buy \$5 worth of chips to sit in. Fans are much happier with smaller stakes.

So anyway, last Nov. I was driving across south central Los Angeles, looking for bookstores, and a sign rose up from out the ground, bearing a welcome to Gardena; to the best of my recalling I had never before known myself to be in Gardena, which is just another of the small communities (such as Tarzana, mentioned on the first Lewis page of this magazine) dotting the LA scene--and the sign brought back what I had heard, years before--there was legit poker in Gardena. I resolved to take bookstores or poker, whichever fate brought first.

Gardena has no bookstores that I can find, but there are half a dozen big poker parlors, all with big signs. You can't miss them--there are two on Western Avenue, north of Redondo Beach Boulevard, and the rest are on Vermont Avenue, between Redondo Beach Blvd and Rosecrans.

Each is an imitation Las Vegas casino -- far from "back of a beer-hall" sawdust joints, they are carpeted and decorated, some with aquaria, television lounges, coffee-shops, hat-check stands, Special Police in uniform, liveried floor-men, change-girls in slacks, etc. All but one have the legal limit of thirty-five tables, each table seating eight players. Their gross is tremendous.

Alcohol may not be sold or consumed on the premises, and the house never plays--these are the chief distinctions between Gardena and Vegas. Income is from a seat rental, based on the table's betting limits; if you're at a table where the bet (minimum equals maximum bet, no variations) is 50¢ before and \$1 after the draw, you pay \$1 an hour for your seat; it goes up. The bet limit goes up to tables where you risk \$10 before and \$20 after the draw; and you can play Jacks or better draw poker, lobbaw draw poker, Aces-or-back hilo, or California (open on guts or fold). Stud poker is illegal.

Gambling is illegal in California, by statute--but that same statute defines draw poker (the forms named above) as a game of skill, ergo legal. If our legislators say I can play Jacks or better for cash, I won't argue--personally, I think it's a game of skill; but you go poll any dozen people on the subject.

Oh--there's a joker in the deck. In lobbaw, joker is any card, in high it's a bug--good as an Ace, or to fill out straights or flushes, not as any other card. And you can have anything (non-alcoholic) from coffee to a full dinner served to you at the table, no extra charge. Plenty of free parking. And watch your money.

In all probability -- hell, beyond any doubt -- there will be a poker table at the peak of activity all during the Pacificon next month. There I can play stud poker varieties, Monte, Benchley, and lots of other Bay Area dealer's-choice games. I'll probably lose my shirt, altho I break even at Gardena.

14
CULTURE AND ME

There are aspects of our civilization not driven home during a normal education, and I guess ballet is one of them. I never had use for ballet, undoubtedly because I'd never been exposed to it, and then all of a sudden it seemed to seek me out and surround me. A bill of short dance-movies at a local art theatre, mostly ballet; Fantasia for the second time, with its honest ballet even in the comic ostrich and hippopotamus sequences; Tales of Hoffman, movie & record; The Red Shoes one Saturday out at State; and, to put the tin top on the climax, the Schultheises Steve & Virginia took me to see Black Tights one night this summer, and what mortal can withstand this constant onslaught?

I very much enjoyed the brief glimpses of novelty ballets during Red Shoes-- the title ballet itself was beautiful, but had a sour note for me, because the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen have always seemed sort of inconclusive and arty... this is a feeling I've had since childhood, when I sat and wondered what in the ding dong I was supposed to make out of The Ugly Duckling. "Carmen" and "The Eater of Diamonds", two of the four ballets in Black Tights, caught my fancy immediately-- and it was the latter, and "Cyrano de Bergerac", that gave me to think on my subject for today--I call it "connection-with-fantasy".

I expected great things of "Cyrano", because I enjoyed play & Ferrer movie while in high school---but the ballet left me completely unmoved, feeling I had witnessed a group of pansies attempting to reproduce the movie. Probably the worst part of it was Maurice Chevalier's narration telling us how ugly Cyrano was, when he's a handsome devil in this ballet costume, see, with only a nose problem. It is a "Life may be said to be composed of those things which come off and those things which don't come off" sort of thing.

But anyway, I was thinking: it seems kind of funny that I like ballet with fairy-tales and fantasy in it, and I don't like the rest of the ballet. The written Tales of Hoffman are rather outre, but those selected in the opera-ballet-movie of Tales of Hoffman are entirely scientific. Of the performances by the New York Ballet Co. later this month here in L.A., I have tickets for two--including Midsummer Night's Dream. Fans are susceptible to culture when they are exposed to it through fantasy.

Like, my favorite Ibsen is Peer Gynt (altho I liked all the Ibsen plays I read for Scandinavian Lit class in 1959). Shaw, Pygmalion. Eliot, ... oh, I liked all of Eliot that I understood, but The Cocktail Party best of all, and undoubtedly that was because the English prof drew so explicitly its mythologic origin. I discovered The Beggar's Opera (a 1750 Gilbert & Wazzisname sort of scene) through an interest in Hogarth and in the period, which were engendered by reading Tom Jones, which I might never have attempted except for the references to it in Silverlock.

If you can get me to it through fantasy, I'll go there--though I occasionally read and enjoy things for other reasons. Honest.

But -- I first read Plato because of the references to his Atlantis thing in s-f books. I read Dante as a fantasy, not as a poem. In high school I was so carried away by The Knight's Tale that I swept directly through the rest of The Canterbury Tales as quickly as possible -- in modern, oh yes, in modern English -- on the enthusiasm of that chivalric story. In point of fact, there are precious few authors I've not first contacted through fantasy-- O. Henry is one, and I picked up an O. Henry story first because the book was accidentally placed on the s-f shelf in a public library, and I read all the way through one story before catching on.

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My recent reading is demonstrative of this connection-with-fantasy concept; I have a sort of half-read library into which I can conveniently dip at any moment--for a favorite book, or a complete unknown book. They have all come to belong there through fantasy or through accident.

I got around to the Poem of the Cid (W. S. Merwin's translation, Mentor, 1962) only to find I couldn't stomach the verse form. It's too faithful to the original (Castillian cantares) which are reproduced on facing pages; the form has an emphasized break in the middle of each line--like scaldic verse, such as "Old Man Zeus" in Silverlock--but Merwin added repetition to un-Anglic separation by referring to Ruy Diaz every second line as My Cid. That's a pretty irritating sort of thing, My Cid this and My Cid that--it's faithful to the original, though, except for the capital M. The original calls him "mio Cid", with a cedilla.

This, after enjoying the horribly non-poetic, almost pedestrian Southey work, The Chronicle of the Cid (from Routledge & Sons, London, 1883) in 1962. Old Bob Southey composed ecclectically--he read everybody, and wrote his own Cid story. He wasn't trying to translate a poem (the Chronicle is prose), and I'd recommend it for information about a very non-Charlton Heston character, or for bed-time stories age 5-10.

...uh, I just thought: my ideas of bed-time stories might be a bit thick in gore and treachery for some parents. Read it yourself before taking the word of a bachelor. It's perhaps a bit nastier than Malory.

John Myers Myers can probably make mistakes, to which I would be blind, but surely there are none in Out On Any Limb (Dutton, 1942). It's the same deal as his first novel, Harp and the Blade (Dutton, 1941)--young man at liberty in a rough world of individualists finds out how to get along. Finnian, the poet-swordsman in Harp, was wandering in Europe just after Charlemagne's heirs split up the old boy's domain and started making a mess of things; the slightly less ept, much more amusing Ingram Applegarth is a second son with no skills, in an England turned savage by the Essex plots in the years just preceding Elizabeth's death.

Ingram's troubles (and the fun) started when he got into a drunken night-time duel and his opponent skewered a prize bull; they both high-tailed it from their host's (and their families') territory for London, and on the way they got tangled with a character worthy of Heinlein's best writing: Chidiok Sangrel, Kt., who favors a hard-clay-bowl pipe, strong waters, cheese, and song. Out On Any Limb is as well-written as Silverlock (Dutton, 1949), with the bonus that Ingram is not as blase as Shandon Silverlock--he's a young whippersnapper, constantly getting foot in mouth or neck in stocks, but his problem is a narrow interest in the world; Silverlock's problem was a disinterest in everything, until about the time he met Friar John, anyway. Sir Chidiok woke Ingram most of the way--though it took sword-play, a day in the stocks, weeks in gaol, several near-misses in the court of love, and a final, heart-rending romance that kept me laughing...and reading intently...while Sir Chid rammed Life down the boy's throat, the boy not liking same.

You can only bounce off something so many times before you give up, and follow where it will lead--and Out On Any Limb convinced me there was more to Elizabethan England than (dirty word) history. It was the work of a moment to replace Myers on the shelf and pick up Neale--English history is Al's particular interest, and the biography of Elizabeth by J. E. Neale (Jonathan Cape, London, 1934; Doubleday, 1957) was immediately to hand in his shelves of history works filed chronologically.

I liked it.

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Overcoming a life-long disinterest (even aversion) for history, I sat captivated through the entire book, not once bored, emerging more personally familiar with the sixteenth century and its politics than I am with the twentieth. Neale was more interested in Elizabethan England than in Elizabeth--so naturally my next big venture in that direction is to be Elizabeth Jenkins' biography of Bess--but his accounts of the Queen's childhood...trying to be a loyal subject to her sibs, but not really succeeding because of friends who wanted her to be ruler...certainly made up for the slightly dry chapters on the years after quieting Mary Queen of Scots.

Then I read John Dickson Carr's Fire, Burn--but that's in Bobby Peel's London, so recent almost as to be contemporary. A good novel; easy reading, deceptively adventurous, and not at all like the single JDCarr I'd previously read. That was The Blind Barber, a locked-ship mystery obviously a detective story and not a novel. Fire, Burn went along at a grand pace, so like a well-written time-travel story--a good Leinster, say, from the late forties--that I felt a bit disappointed in the climax. Obviously I should have been trying to catch the murderer--and all I'd been doing was reading Cheviot's adventures in another century. I guess this proves that the connection-with-fantasy can't make me a detective-story fan.

The connection-with-fantasy is almost invisible in my recent splurge of James Bond-interest -- I went to see the movie From Russia With Love on a date with a fan's daughter. There's a chain of events for you. Anyway, I became less of a James Bond enthusiast after reading half-a-dozen of the books; the film is real good shoot-&-chase stuff, played almost exactly to the novel's plot (with a few non-essentials changed, such as the ultra-villians being SHMERSH in the book, SPECTRE in the movie), but Sean Connery in the movie does things, guesses what's going to happen next, kills people with elan, feels emotions, and definitely wins. The book hero follows orders, trips and accidentally saves his life, and eventually gets it mortally (but read the next installment, Dr. No); altogether a poor performance.

Certainly a case may be made for the stumble-theory in the first book of the series--one of the best of them--Casino Royale. There's a couple of fine chase sequences, an aborted bomb-throwing, a really exciting gambling scene, and (for the Ian Fleming fan) good writing. But what really happened? Our Hero wins at bacarat, a game in which the player is almost completely passive, accepting defeats or victories after almost no play; falls for a trap that even I smelled; gets the holy hell tortured out of him; fails to be murdered at an assassin's leisure only because said assassin's orders didn't include him; and gets laid. Is all.

Sure, he twice performs commendably: he tips his chair over at just the right moment, surprising a gunman; and he stands up amazingly to a painfully simple, downright nasty torture sequence. Hardly enough to explain Fleming's popularity.

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And so, until next time. I read chunks of the last mailing, but found myself moved to no comments.

"Simple vair", by the way, is the coat of arms borne by Beauchamp of Hatch. His shield was a conventional representation of small furs sewn together, argent on azure. It's an interesting design, seldom used as a predominant feature of a coat. The furs are squirrels' furs.

--rde.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

In bright sunlight, under 7/10 cloud cover, with zero wind and a standard atmosphere, 1682 pagan, medium height, female eskimo angels can do a brief kazatzka on the head of a No. 3 "blunt" oriented at 8° with respect to the local gravity vector.

--from the company bulletin board.