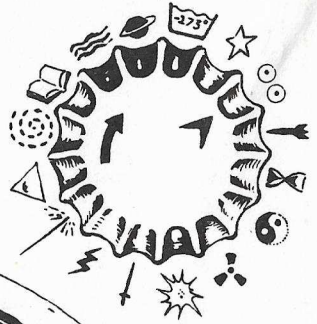
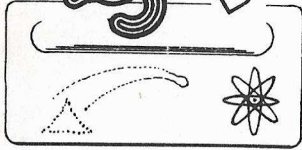


17-20 APRIL 1981

Yorcon 2

Dragonara Hotel Leeds



32nd British Easter S F Convention

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British Guest of Honour: Ian Watson
American Guest of Honour: Thomas M. Disch
Fan Guest of Honour: Dave Langford
Toastmaster: Mike Dickinson

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OKAY, COME IN!

So said Nigel Molesworth in one of the immortal "Skool books" by Geoffrey Willans and Ronald Searle. Not that we intend painting the glories of the Dragonara in similar style, but this is an introduction, after all. It's a long time since we started planning YORCON II - two years in fact. Not content with feeling totally exhausted and dead after the ordeals of running YORCON I in 1979, certain members of that committee eagerly expressed the intention of trying again "to get it right this time". Two renegades from a writer's course were press-ganged into helping out. You can tell they didn't choose their jobs because Graham ended up secretary and Simon, Registrations Officer - the two most time-consuming posts available! Seriously, though, those two chaps have made a grand job - as is demonstrated by the smooth running of affairs.

The committee in general has gone through the usual quota of departures, arrivals and non-committals. D. West, now thriving on a University Grant felt it expedient not to be involved this time ("Can't stand up all day, you know"); Mike Dickinson started as Chairman, resigned when he wanted time abroad, came back having satiated his wandering lust for the while and is now toastmaster, taking on the role of Chris Priest from 1979. Tom Shippey, elected as successor to Mike, threw himself wholeheartedly into the organisation at an early stage, and was always an imposing fixture at Hotel committee meetings. Tom's good fortune at being awarded a Post at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. has been our poor fortune since his position had to be taken up just recently. Still, being a Professor of English does take precedence! Kate Jeary, a survivor from '79, came back onto the scene following our successful Albacon bid; Joseph Nicholas (advertising), Geoff Ryman (films), Anne Page (Fancy Dress) and Paul & Jan Matthews (Art Show) formed our sub-committee, all very hard-working and worth their weight in spare copies of 1979's Programme Book, whilst youthful John Collick was drafted in to take over from Ian Williams in the Fan Room. Dave Pringle came back once more to run the programme (and a very effective job he's made of it too) whilst I, attempting to run the BSFA with one hand and the world with the other, have been "responsible" for those 16 page Progress Reports and the general co-ordination of this Programme Book. I'm the one to blame if your name's spelt wrong!

There are some new things to look out for at this convention compared with our dry-run of '79 (and for those who remember our last minute bar problems, that is an entirely appropriate phrase). The Fan Room occupies perhaps the most sumptuous position in the hotel. No longer outcast to some room on the 12th floor (Albacon) or some basement (Skycon) or an Aircraft Hanger (Seacon), we've taken over the Rosewood Restaurant. Own bar! Great atmosphere! Nice easy chairs! Coffee Tables; Flop Space, Display Space...and on the same floor as the main bar, the con hall and reception. The bookroom has been expanded to the dealer's delight (we hope...,there's always something to complain about...perhaps the carpet will be the wrong psychological colour for people to feel like spending money), we've an alternate programme (ably run by Leeds University's Mike Ford), special guests from Poland (Wiktor Bukato) and the USA (TAFF winner Stu Shiffman), a series of video shows (In the fan room), reduced Beer prices (2p a pint off... and judging by the 60p plus you pay in pubs down in the south, the Dragonara's prices are quite reasonable), a welcomittee to help new fans along and two main Guests of Honour (about whom, more later).

So, I don't think we can be accused of not having tried. Of course, things can still go wrong - we'd be fools to believe that we've set everythin g up perfectly. Much of the way things work out depend upon you, the punter. You've paid your £6, you've put your trust in us...and I hope that you don't think we've been wasting our time over these last two years. We hope you've had a good last two years too, but let's make this weekend the best, okay?

Have a Great Convention!

Alan Dorey

Programme Book Editor.



THOMAS M. DISCH

An appreciation - JOHN SLADEK

When I first met Tom Disch, the world was flat, or at least going through a flat spell. The Kennedy Era had hardly begun, Russia was putting dogs into orbit, Coca-Cola was suing Pepsi-Cola for putting a waistline on its bottles, people were still talking suburbia a lot and reading John Updike. What a flat, unvarnished time it now seems, without any of today's assumed highlights: No Vietnam or Watergate, DNA or microchips, "brain death" or "oil weapon". Some cities even had to put up with safe streets.

The midwest where we met was even flatter and more boring than elsewhere. Tom had earlier forsaken it for the gothic spires of New York, where all the art happened (this was before New York became a Gulf & Western company) but had returned to visit some Minnesota friends. He had written a few stories and carried around copies in a briefcase. I can remember sitting at someone's kitchen table one summer afternoon while Tom fished up these stories one at a time and read them aloud. I remember that he read them very well, and that the stories impressed me. But I'm damned if I can remember what the stories were.

Only one sticks in my mind, "Thesis on Social Forms and Social Controls in the U.S.A.", a story whose modest proposal is temporary slavery for all, turn and turn about. It's a modest story, too, but in retrospect what is interesting about it is that its subject crops up in several later works as a theme. The problem(s) of freedom can be seen in many of his novels, either occupying the center of the stage or directing from the wings. A minor novel, The Puppies of Terra, sets up a kind of slavery which is paradoxically attractive; another, Echo Round His Bones, asks questions about freedom from (and ownership of) the body. Camp Concentration links imprisonment and death with artistic freedom and immortality; it is his deepest delving into the problem until On Wings of Song, which is the most brilliant, sustained dramatization of the problem of freedom, with all its complexities and corollaries, that I've ever read.

When I next saw Tom, Kennedy was dead and I was passing through New York on my way to Europe. When I returned, broke, wearing Belgian cardboard shoes, Tom was kind enough to put me up. It was one of many kindnesses; later Tom turned over his flat to me while he went off to Mexico to write The Genocides. By this time there was a lot more of his fiction about, much of it in print. There was "Nov is Forever", one of my favorites among his minor early stories, in which people achieve a kind of immortality through a kind of daily suicide; "The Roaches", a light horror story; and "Descending".

"Descending" began a new line of Disch stories, more ambitious and experimental than his earlier work. Often in these new stories the central conflict was between an individual and omnipotent Fate. Fate often has infinity on its side---but other crushing infinities prevail in "The Squirrel Cage" and "Let Us Hasten Quickly to the Gate of Ivory". In nearly all cases, the crushing force is impersonal, hardly aware of the human crushed. But at the same time there is the feeling that the individual has somehow sinned, broken some taboo or unwritten rule without knowing it: infinity is just what he deserves.

The alien invaders of The Genocides behave like this kind of Fate. They never appear, yet their terrible, impersonal power is everywhere in a garden world where humans are pests. The same steamrolling indifference to human values is manifested by the alien Masters of The Puppies of Terra (in which humans are pets). The impersonal force in Camp Concentration is two-fold: a militaristic society without and an irreversible disease within. And in 334 the steamrolling force is provided by a remote, uncaring bureaucracy, again, never seen.

In Disch novels the characters seldom accept passively the decrees of Fate; they struggle like hell and go down fighting. People in The Genocides seem to use every weapon in the arsenal of human nature, from intelligence and science to compassion and love, to villainy and even cannibalism. Some become heroic figures (like Laocoon) and comport themselves in a vigorous, Joseph Campbell manner.

Camp Concentration by contrast provides a central character who is passive---whether passively resisting or passively accepting his destiny, he is the eye for the novel's hurricane. Camp Concentration is frankly modelled on Thomas Mann's Dr Faustus, and it takes up the same problem, that of the artist within society. Does the artist have a duty to his society? A moral responsibility to repudiate a bad society? Or is his business purely art for the artist's sake? Camp Concentration wades into the largest ethical issues without flinching. Besides being a subtle and powerful novel, it is an indictment of all in human nature that is small-minded, anti-intellectual, corrupt and militaristic.

I was around, in Austria, when Tom wrote it. I wish I could say that being there gave me special insights into Camp Concentration, but it didn't. I can only testify that Tom worked damned hard on it and that we both knew it was something special. I was also around when the British publisher, as though suppressing a yawn, grudgingly printed and lackadaisically distributed a few copies. Tom had terrible luck at this time with his British publisher, who brought out three of his books without advertising or promoting or even sending out review copies.

Tom and I were in London during the glossiest part of the sixties: Swinging England, Vietnam protest, Pop Art, acid, Moon missions, and all those hundreds of movies in which Judy Geeson wraps a feather boa around her neck and goes

to a party on a houseboat---but there was also brave New Worlds. Michael Moorcock published not only Camp Concentration and much of Tom's experimental fiction (e.g., "The Colors") but also his poetry and criticism. That Tom established a reputation in Britain is due almost solely to his exposure in New Worlds.

New York has always been Tom's spiritual home, and he returned there about ten years ago (after a trip to Turkey which produced "The Asian Shore", a relentless tale of lost identity). In the succeeding years his writing has gone from strength to strength, with the collection Getting into Death, with 334, and with On Wings of Song. Those fans who liked earlier work and who hope that Tom Disch may repeat himself may be disappointed, for each of his books breaks new ground, each dares more. 334, for instance, is a full explanation of New York life---as it is now, has always been, and probably always will be.

Not that Tom has forgotten the Midwest, that great, flat Deadly Desert where he managed to grow up. In an article in Harpers in the mid-Seventies, he proposed building "Pyramids for Minnesota". The argument was that pyramids would give people something to do, something to believe in, and something to look at. Until such pyramids are built, the best cure I can recommend for flatness of the landscape is reading anything by Thomas M. Disch.

On Tom Disch - JOHN CLUTE

Behind the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street in Manhattan there is a small park which (I thought then and still think) papers over an underground storage complex for the library itself, row upon row of books tunnelling downwards into the hard rock, labyrinths of arcana downwards to the Minotaur, to the salt lick. As you walked across the small humid formal park in the wet dusk under tree silhouettes and skyscrapers, the gravel beneath your feet seemed to thrum with premonitions you had no key to yet, as though you were tickling the open palm of the secret heart of Manhattan. It was here I met Tom Disch for the first time. Later it seemed right.

But even then, in the autumn of 1961, he seemed instinct to Manhattan; from the first I felt the envious complicity of trespass, not being native at all. I was too vain to wear glasses, so he came sliding into my field of vision like the moon rising through wet elms, head lifted back, hand raised in greeting or admonition, a very proscenium person even then, admirably conscious of the boundaries and the tempo of the scene, and prepared to make ad libs. We spoke together. He said we were in the same class at NYU, J Max Patrick's course in utopias. I remembered him

then, his high smooth melismatic voice hot off the press, as though what he was about to reveal to the class comprised unbound galleys for your eyes only; a scoop. And often it was. Already he worked hard; already word underlaid it all. He seemed to think constantly, though sometimes to keep the presses running. He was the most intelligent man I had ever met. He had the feverish articulate nerve for the cognitive jugular beneath the skin, for thought reified in serried exempla, of an eighteenth century figure like Candide sea-changed for the dark, because his taste (I thought) was for the horrors of the thing itself, for the pits beneath this Manhattan he had moved to like a fish into water at last. And when he found himself on the bleak peneplain of the day (as I thought), he had to create: scenes, friends, entanglements, hints of the jugular within, sometimes out of whole cloth: and of course, even then, fiction.

This may not all have been clear at first glance.

We went and had coffee. His manners were atrocious. He was clumsy, gauche, edgy, glaucous; he would enter a restaurant like an extremely brave lawyer approaching a hostile life-or-death case. Tall, ungainly, self-obsessed, not always only marginally paranoiac about the urban world he already seemed to understand so well in theory, he had an awful tendency to victimize the victims: waiters, conductors, anyone who represented authority and sanctions as long as they were themselves as powerless as he must (in 1961, fresh from inland America and dire experiences in the Army) have felt himself to be, unless he won the case. But it didn't much matter. From the very first there was the flow of talk; and from the very first, it felt like he meant it. If he had an idea, he would use it, shape it, turn the wheels of the world with it. The first of my journal entries to refer to him dated 3 November 1961, is typical enough:

From Tom Disch, not to be exploited. John D
Rockefeller meets the roaring abysmal beast.
The above phrase a code. Viz as correlative,
the shanghaied man of horrors.

God knows what it meant. I wrote it down and forgot all about it. But I was shit lazy. Tom was not. There were other differences too, but even then we had a sense, Pamela Zoline and I, that he would continue, Tom would, that he had a purchase on the brain-fevers we all felt privy to then, being extremely young.

We became friends. He lived south of Houston Street, near the Holland Tunnel. There were cockroaches in his dark rooms. We collaborated on an article for the NYU newspaper. I sloped into graduation; he quit. In the summer he and Pamela and I saw Franju's Eyes Without a Face. It was called The Horror Chamber of Dr Faustus then. We sat through it twice. God. In the autumn of 1962 we arranged to share an apartment on Riverside Drive, overlooking the Hudson River. This lasted for a year. Pamela was living with me. Tom

had a relationship in its dying fall with a ballet dancer named (I think) Babara or Judy. He had already sold his first science fiction story to Cele Goldsmith, and was beginning to see the shape of the future, though he still had some kind of job, in Brooklyn I think. There was a lot of moaning. My journal is claustrophobic; the elements of comedy in it are clearly unintentional. "26 December 1962. Tom stayed home for no reason and will probably be fired, and I've no idea how I'll support the rent and the repayments at the same time." "30 December 1962. Tom conducting his ghoulish party tomorrow: dressed in provant purple, imperator of the incubi." "2 January 1963. Tom hasn't gone to work today, for he is depressed; and he will be fired." "19 January 1963. Took Tom's IQ test today; got 3 more wrong than he did--7 wrong out of 190, very good, Tom told me." The work continued:

19 April 1963. Tom is home today too, about as sick as I am, reads my New Yorker now in the other room with his staccato hilarity. He is one-third through his novel, the idea of which is solid: in 1988 or 9 the world, having gone through a Terror of almost-war for a year, has gone askew in the following way: each year in the USA a Referendum is held, originally called by an earlier government as an object lesson; the question it puts up to vote is whether or not this year the bombs shall be unleashed on us. The object lesson backfires, as in the first vote 37% voted yes; the thrill of playing with fire; the malaise actual.

Industry having grown up about death, the hero of the novel is an executive in The Big Trick, an organization of large influence that organizes mass suicides.

The year the novel starts the vote is down to no, 50.4%

After a year we all moved. A decade and a half ago, I thought Tom's short story, "Slaves", was a bit insensitive. I don't now. It is something made. Therefore it paces you. Like the albino alligators beneath the skin, it paces you. Pamela had left on a liner for England. I flew south to board a freighter and work on it. "23 September 1963. Tom came to Idlewild in the Imperial with Mother and Father; each person I looked upon, each thing, was for the last time. I have been robotic, glaring backward at the happened events like a Caliban out of Faulkner." Tom remained in the Manhattan he was shaping to his instinct, which is in 334 and On Wings of Song. With regard to the truths of the creative writer, or the salt lick: some of us stay on the surface haunted by silhouettes of unnamed trees, dying synapses; some go through long hegriras before finding the key to their premonitions; some are the Minotaur.

IAN WATSON

An appreciation -

BRIAN STABLEFORD

Ian Watson is outstanding among modern science fiction writers for the startling fertility of his imagination. His seven major novels published by Gollancz present a fabulous display of ideative innovations. These books - The Embedding (1973); The Jonah Kit (1975); The Martian Inca (1977); Alien Embassy (1977); Miracle Visitors (1978); God's World (1979); and The Gardens of Delight (1980) - constitute one of the most impressive canons produced within the genre during the last decade. Two further novels have been produced in collaboration with others: Orgasmachine (1976 - in French translation only) with his wife Judy, and Under Heaven's Bridge (1981) with American writer Michael Bishop. A collection of his short stories, The Very Slow Time Machine, appeared in 1979. Although it is possible to identify underlying themes and concerns which unite this body of work into a whole, what is most immediately striking about it is its variety and imaginative vitality.

There is no other writer in the field who provides such a bold challenge to the imagination as Watson. He combines exotic fictional landscapes and glimpses of alien consciousness with a strict intellectual conscience that leads him to use his ingenuity to the full in constructing explanations even for the most bizarre combinations of circumstance. He believes that modern science fiction is a phenomenon of some social and intellectual significance, and he does his best to prove the case by example.

The Embedding, whose French translation won the Prix Apollo in 1975, arrived on the sf scene like a breath of cool air, refreshing a period when the genre seemed in danger of slipping into the creative doldrums. It took its premises from sciences not usually considered fertile ground for exploitation by genre writers: linguistics and anthropology. Watson's interest in these fields was concerned with the manner in which they suggest new possibilities in connection with the way minds can and might work, and the novel sets a bizarre experiment in psychological engineering in the dual context of a visitation by aliens and a strange ritual performed by south American Indians, eventually to develop a complex pattern of imaginative resonance. The notion that our evolutionary potential may be concerned with the development of different modes of consciousness and being-in-the-world, and the corollary hypothesis that men might be - or perhaps ought to be - on the threshold of some kind of spiritual metamorphosis,

provide the baseline for virtually all his work. Indeed, he has argued that science fiction, by reminding us that mental evolution is a possibility, may be contributing to the eventual realization of that possibility.

The extension of this theme in his other works is easy enough to see. In The Jonah Kit he grapples with the problem of representing the complex perceptions of intelligent cetaceans, which follow a way of life very different from ours in a very different environment. In The Martian Inca an alien "invasion" recalls to the minds of men their godly ambitions - and also the hazards of assuming godliness in a world of mortals. In Alien Embassy he became involved with the ideas of Eastern mysticism, whose mythologies contain certain parallels with his notions of biological and psychological transcendence. Other mythologies were exploited for their analogical and metaphorical potential in his subsequent books: UFO mythology in Miracle Visitors; Christian neo-Platonism in God's World; alchemy in The Gardens of Delight. In the view of some readers, this dabbling with the occult and arcane has drawn his work away from the field of pure science fiction, but this is really a mistaken view - the elaborate use of metaphor is largely a reflection of the inadequacy of literal representation; his vital concern retains its anchorage in the realms of the conceivable. Despite his fascination with the apparatus of metaphysical systems, Watson is never fanciful for the sake of it, and it is rarely possible to see mere idle whims at play in his work.

Watson has occasionally been accused of being a rather graceless writer, cursory in his characterization and sometimes awkward in his style - particularly in his handling of dialogue. There may be some truth in these accusations, but the quality of his prose - especially in his more recent works - is well-adapted to the nature of his projects. Some of the criticism of his mannerisms has come from readers who are out of sympathy with his essential endeavour, and who therefore find him difficult to read. In certain respects he is a difficult writer - the wealth of his allusions and the boldness of some of his hypotheses (as, for instance, the cosmological thesis outlined in The Jonah Kit) make it hard for many readers to tune into his aesthetic wavelength - but it is well worth making the effort to get to grips with his ideas.

Science fiction is, for the most part, a post-Einsteinian genre, and there is a sad irony in the fact that most of its practitioners remain confined within a Newtonian clockwork universe and a neo-Victorian set of political sensibilities. The advent of Darwinism and the mythology of social progress were the principal imaginative stimuli which generated and shaped early sf, yet genre sf writers have largely set aside the attempt to come to terms with the process and possibilities of natural and social evolution. So much genre sf is content to assure us that though change (alas?) is inevitable, it can be channelled and controlled in such a way that we need never fear that the spirit of John Wayne and J. R. Ewing might be extinguished from human affairs, and that everyone but the meek might yet inherit a universe

fit for heroes to live in. British writers, thankfully, have been more cynical about this prospect than their American counterparts, but they have not always been resistant to its glamour, and have too often failed to advance any positive imagistic account or stand against it. Ian Watson, however, does not subscribe to the dreary pessimism which offers us a future full of petty victories won by beings depressingly akin to our contemporary culture-heroes over token alien adversity; instead, he is optimistic that the real horizons of possibility lie far beyond the confines within which so many writers find it convenient to imprison their imagination.

On Ian Watson - DAVID PRINGLE

Ian Watson was born in the north-east of England in 1943. That makes him younger than Harlan Ellison and very considerably younger than Patrick Moore. Yet he has something in common with each of those gentlemen. He has Ellison's build and Moore's rapid tongue. He has a touch of Ellison's cynicism and awareness of political realities, yet he has also more than a little of Moore's schoolboy enthusiasm and naivete. It is a potent combination, and makes Watson a fount of ideas and energy. He is also a dedicated and accomplished science fiction writer.

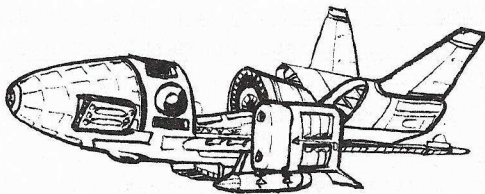
British SF in the 1970s belonged to Ian Watson - though some would add that Bob Shaw also owned a substantial interest in the somewhat ramshackle property. The older owner-occupiers had recently left - Arthur C. Clarke and Brian Aldiss to become members of the jet-set, J. G. Ballard and Michael Moorcock to take up squats in literary edifices. Among those authors who thought of themselves primarily as SF writers (and who were proud of the label), Ian Watson and Bob Shaw were undoubtedly the leaders in terms of a combination of critical acclaim, popularity, influence, prolificity and sheer purity of purpose. And of these Big Two, Ian Watson scored the highest points for originality and messianic fervour.

Although he had published a couple of short stories in New Worlds in 1969-70, Watson was unknown to the SF world until he arrived with a bang in 1973. The noisy event was the publication of his first novel, The Embedding. A fast, slightly confusing and immensely invigorating novel, it heralded a renewed concern in SF with ideas, politics and current intellectual fashions. It seemed to deal with everything - despoliation of the environment, space-travel, alien contact, anthropology, linguistics, Levi-Strauss and structuralism, Latin American politics, the CIA, you name it. Watson wrote with vigour and panache, whipping a large cast of interesting characters around an all-too-real world of the near future. The Embedding gained some excellent reviews, including a commendation from J. G. Ballard. In France, where they apparently suffered from the 1970s less than we did, it was awarded the Prix Apollo.

Since The Embedding, Ian Watson has published six more novels and a collection. He has also had an erotic novel published in France - written in collaboration with his wife Judy. This is called Orgasmachine (1976), although the original English title was The Woman Factory. In all, these fictions add up to an amazing stew of speculation: they bubble and steam with original notions, sometimes throwing out solid gobbets of scientific extrapolation, occasionally belching metaphysical gas. Watson's writing is sometimes hasty, but his novels always entertain and provoke. As I said above, Watson is a messianic writer, as all the best SF authors should be. He is aware that we are entering exciting, if supremely dangerous times, and his fiction reveals the lineaments of those times.

Above all, Ian Watson's fiction gives one the sense that the world is his oyster. Most of the action in his novels takes place in the "Third World" - but he is not reluctant to set scenes in the USA, the USSR, Japan and of course, Britain. He treats all geographical locations, and characters of all nationalities, with equal confidence. So far as I am aware, he is the first white male Anglo-Saxon author to write an entire SF novel about the first-person adventures of a black African girl (Alien Embassy). Unlike most SF writers, Watson is not afraid to deal with the aliens in our midst - and to show that they are not aliens after all (except in the sense that each of us is alien to someone, some of the time). In a decade during which far too much newly published SF turned out to be marginal fantasy, providing spurious escape routes into the past of the never-never worlds of other dimensions and the far future, Watson's novels were enormously cheering in that they showed someone had refused to abandon the Good Fight. Through Watson, SF still spoke about real issues and a real world, and did so in a manner that evoked wonder and joy, high jinks and occasional belly-laughs.

Watson is a serious writer and also a Grand Entertainer. The best authors have always been both. It is only mediocre criticism and the pallid responses of a jaded public which force the two functions apart. But the decade has turned, the historical climate is changing. In the 80s Ian Watson should gain full recognition for the valuable talent he bears. Meanwhile we are delighted to honour him as our special guest at YORCON II.



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The Gardens of Delight. Gollancz, 1980. Novel.
Under Heaven's Bridge. Gollancz, 1981. Novel. (With Michael Bishop.)
-

Prayer to Diligence

Mother of deadlines met and large achieve,
Assist me always but especially when,
As now, my work is such I can't believe
In it. Put thoughts into my head and weave
Of them a seamless web, a specimen
Of purposeful prose with a beginning, then
A middle, and finally an end. Amen.

Ancient Hero

Before I watch his wedding
To the bride his deeds have won,
May I ask to see the bedding
Over which the blood has run?
May I witness the beheading
Of his daughter and his son?

Before I run away and hide
From the arrows of his eyes,
Tell me-- does he still reside
In ballads and in lullabies?
Is it safe to mock his pride
Within the walls of my disguise?

**POEMS
BY
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JUST PUBLISHED

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UNDER HEAVEN'S BRIDGE

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A novel by Ian Watson and Michael Bishop

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ALSO AVAILABLE

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THE JONAH KIT • ALIEN EMBASSY

SF

THE VERY SLOW TIME MACHINE

SF

GOD'S WORLD • THE MARTIAN INCA

SF

THE GARDENS OF DELIGHT

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FUNDAMENTAL DISCH

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The very best of his short fiction

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ALSO AVAILABLE

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ON WINGS OF SONG

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Winner of the John W. Campbell Memorial Award

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Gollancz

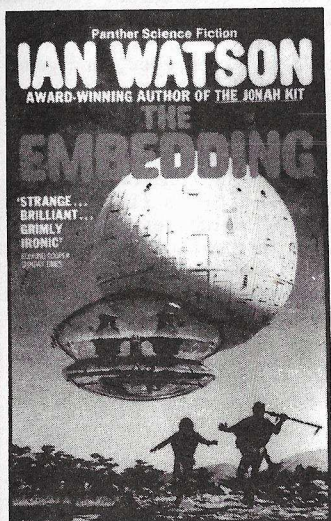
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IAN WATSON

IN PANTHER SCIENCE FICTION

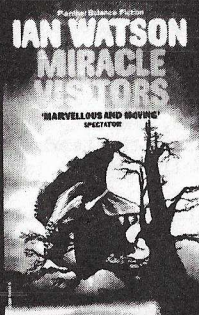
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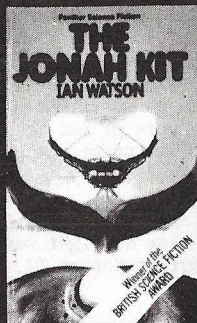
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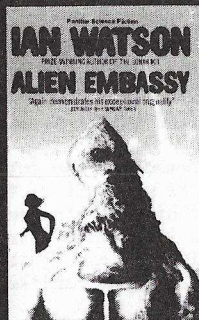


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new, near-poetic
dimension, the
most formidable
fiction (Ian Watson)
has yet written, and
also one of the most
compulsive'

The Times

GRANADA

'Good day, fellow.'

'Axe handle!'

TRUE FACTS ABOUT DAVE LANGFORD by Kevin Smith

The first, embryonic, sign of Dave Langford's impending fannishness manifested itself at school in Newport, Mon., where he produced an alternative school magazine entitled *Vole* which ran for just one issue. Not that Dave ran out of enthusiasm, you understand; indeed he went so far as to print the second issue and even to distribute three or four copies. And the kids loved it -- just ask Martin Hoare or Dai Price. No, the long arm of totalitarian law descended on him. "Give up or get out!" said the headmaster by way of compromise. *Vole* was a bit libellous, you see. Well, quite a lot libellous, actually.

It is fortunate for us that Dave saw the headmaster's point of view, and gave up, or else he might never have gone to Oxford and instead of being Fan Guest of Honour at Yorcon II, might just have been laid off at the Alcan works in Newport.

It was at Oxford that I met Dave, at a meeting of OUSFG (the renowned Oosf'g) in November 1971. He was the author of a short piece in OUSFG's fiction magazine *Sphinx* -- "Crankenstein: a serial in 37 horrifying parts" which began in issue 5 with episode 14 and ended a page and a half later. A fair bit of the humour was based on the use, in compromising situations, of words such as 'genuflect' and 'matriculation' and 'masticating', but there was nonetheless something of fannish interest in it. Dr Crankenstein, attempting (naturally enough) to create life, says:

"Now you will see -- the Perfect Man!" So saying, he twitched aside the covering sheet to reveal his creation; it sat up and, dangling a wrist limply, spoke in a falsetto voice.

"Think you slipped up somewhere, ducky!"

Thus, in 1971, did Dave Langford invent Joseph Nicholas.

After the first year, Dave seemed to fade out of the central OUSFG scene. On the occasions I spoke to him he was full of tales of cracking the Nuclear Physics computer; the main product of his efforts seemed to be a science fiction story writing program. The stories it produced were full of fast, random action, unlikely metaphors and totally plotless (just like A E Van Vogt), but very grammatical with jolly good spelling (just unlike...) Triffic stuff! You ordered it by the foot.

Unfortunately, the story program took up about all the computer space, and caused bubble chamber analysis programs to shut down just as they were getting to the interesting bits, which incidentally, as it were, precipitated great ire among the research professors. "Give up or get out!" they told him in conciliatory manner. He gave up.

This drove him back to OUSFG just in time to be elected President. Busily he and I set about re-inventing fandom, in miniature. Not that we knew of fandom then; we were working from first principles. To put it another way, we started going to the pub earlier and earlier in the weekly meetings. And then Dave met fandom proper, as exhibited at Novacon 3. This was it. Real fandom had been contacted and there was no stopping him. The imminence of Finals did little to

prevent his going to Tynecon in 1974, and that not enough. Tynecon, fortunately, didn't do anything to prevent Dave getting his degree in physics and landing a job with the Ministry of Defence Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston.

The police had other ideas, and arrested him for blowing things up -- specifically a rather small window in a rather inaccessible place, by means of a firework or two. "You've been blowing things up?" said the Ministry of Defence. "That's our boy!" So Dave moved to Aldermaston, where he and I began plotting *Drikkjls*, the fanzine for people who hated fanzines. After a gestation period of over 18 months this actually appeared, and turned out to be a fanzine for people who liked fanzines. It received the Greg Pickersgill Seal of Approval and our fannish careers were off.

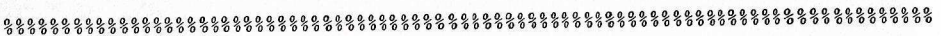
Very soon after Dave got it into his head to go solo, and produced the first issue of a 'grubby little personalzine', *Twll-Ddu*, which became famous on the grounds that nobody could pronounce it. That it was very funny, very well written and very frequent is entirely incidental. On the basis of its unpronounceability, Dave became a *Checkpoint* fan poll winner, Nova award winner, FAAn award winner and Hugo award nominee, culminating in 1980 with winning the TAFF race and, of course, being selected by a committee with remarkable good sense as Fan Guest of Honour at Yorcon II.

I say 'culminating', as if Dave's fannish career might now be over. After all, "Win TAFF, be a fan GoH, and die" has been the case far too often for comfort of late. Then, too, Dave has started writing for money, with the added advantage that he is being paid for it as well. The Ministry of Defence caught him at it not so long ago, when he should have been designing even better ways of killing more people with even less damage to property. "Give up or get out!" they said, appeasingly.

Dave got out. He is now a full time professional writer, with two non-fiction books published and numerous short stories in such diverse places as the *8th Armada Ghost Book* and *Penthouse*, as well as other books in the pipeline. In that sense, Yorcon II has three professional Guests of Honour. Personally, I think he only did it to give himself more time at home for fanwriting. Dave is one of those strange and rare beings, the fannish professional, and having said that, the name of Bob Shaw springs to mind. Like Bob, Dave is one of the Good Guys -- amiable, approachable and very entertaining to talk to, though don't expect Bob's dry delivery, rather a torrent of very long words. (As Dave gets drunker, the words get longer. There is a logical reason for this: it gives his increasingly befuddled brain a chance to catch up.) Perhaps it is too soon to toss comparisons with Bob Shaw around with such abandon, but it is something future generations of fans will do.

But it is for his contribution to fandom that Dave is being honoured now, probably the biggest single contribution of the last five years. For his 83 fanzine articles and 62 fanzines (65 by the time you read this), for serving on the committees of Novacon 7 and Skycon (not forgetting Faancon), for administering the Hugo awards at Seacon '79, for single-handedly maintaining the bar profits of countless convention hotels...

Help Dave out: buy the pints for him, and he'll never regret it.



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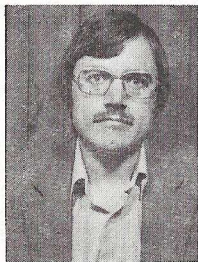
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The Yorcon Committee

DAVID PRINGLE
(Programme)



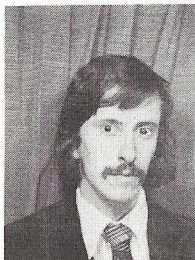
David Pringle is ideally suited to his committee function as Programme Organiser. Since the early days of Peter Weston's Speculation, he's been writing SF criticism and is now the editor of that respected SF journal, Foundation. Over the years he has become recognised as one of the leading British SF critics. His specialisation is the work of J.G. Ballard, which has resulted in his authorship of two critiques, one with James Goddard (J.G. Ballard: The First Twenty Years) and the other for the US Borgo Press. Trained as a librarian, he spent a year as a research fellow at the SF Foundation before taking up a post as Publicity Officer at Leeds Polytechnic. Married with a young son, James, Dave's ambition is to start a magazine of his own.

GRAHAM JAMES
(Secretary)



Graham first encountered fandom in the shape of Mike Dickinson, Alan Dorey and Paul Kincaid at a writer's course in June, 1978. Becoming infected by the bug, he started turning up at the weekly Leeds group meetings and was soon helping out at Yorcon I. Realising that his organisational skills at work (as an Industrial Relations Officer with the Yorkshire Electricity Council) could be deployed in the world of SF cons, he soon found himself assuming much of the responsibility for Yorcon II. Now the editor of the BSFA's Matrix, Graham also edits Ocelot (with Simon Ounsley) and Rubber Crab. When not throwing body and soul into running Yorcon, he's throwing mind and 10p pieces into Space Invaders machines.

ALAN DOREY
(Publications)



Still in possession of those infamous hollow legs, his capacity for consuming huge amounts of food and drink is undiminished. Chairman of the BSFA for the past two years, he still edits Gross Encounters, the 1978 Nova Award winning fanzine. He contributes pieces to Matrix and Vector and continues to be involved in a multitude of affairs, such as the proposed 1984 Eurocon, being Fan Guest of Honour at Uicon II (September 1981), appearing on several convention panels, writes his company news-letter, writes for and to various fanzines and is trying to work on an extended critique of H.G. Wells. Having got engaged to US lovely, Rochelle Reynolds, the happy day has been

announced as July 4th 1981. His ambition is to rule the world, or see the BSFA recognised as a national professional organisation - whichever comes soonest!

SIMON OUNSLEY
(Registrations)



Yet another victim from that Writer's course in 1978. Simon works for Yorkshire County Council (Counting bollards and planning the routes of roads through Bingley). Co-editor of Ocelot, he is also the BSFA's Club liason Officer, responsible for producing a very authoritative guide to the nation's local SF groups. Contributing articles and reviews to various fanzines, he's had the arduous task of processing and collating all the incoming memberships. Acknowledged as an expert on certain West Yorkshire beers, his spare time is consumed with writing the definitive SF novel.

KATE JEARY
(Registrations Desk)



Since first contact with fandom in the mid-seventies whilst at Leeds University, Kate has always taken a keen interest in its activities and proceedings. A student of archaeology, she'd contributed to Black Hole and Matrix and is the doyen of many a convention registration desk. With hands held firmly round the cash-box, Yorcon II's in no danger of financial collapse.

JOHN COLLICK
(Fan Room)



The youngest, but by no means the least experienced, member of Yorcon II. John started his first fanzine, Procyon, at the tender age of 12, and has gone from strength to strength ever since. His last fanzine, For a Few Fanzines More was highly acclaimed, although his industry has slackened just recently due to his current studies at the University of Sussex.

The Sub-Committee

JOSEPH NICHOLAS
(Advertising)

Renowned Man of Letters (but precious few full-stops), Joseph edits the BSFA's Paperback Inferno and his own Napalm in the Morning. Having helped out at several Novacons, he's been a very efficient procurer of advertising material.

GEOFF RYMAN
(Films)

Another 'recruit' from the 1978 writer's course, Geoff is a tall North American. A skilled, published writer, he has done a marvellous job at tracking down and obtaining all the films the committee originally chose - even unearthing John Pilger's Cambodia film, Year Zero.

ANNE PAGE
(Fancy Dress)

Anne's had much previous Fancy Dress experience at many a convention. Working for the BBC at Pebble Mill in Birmingham, she'll be bringing that touch of glamour to the Yorcon organisers.

MIKE FORD
(Alternate Programme)

Another stalwart pressganged from the Leeds University SF group, Mike is currently the editor of Black Hole. A post graduate computer expert, he has the good sense (among SF fans in general) to follow soccer in the shape of Tottenham.

PAUL & JAN MATTHEWS
(Art Show)

After an early involvement with the erstwhile Cheltenham group, Paul and Jan Matthews gravitated northwards where they quickly discovered the Leeds mob. With an interest in the visual side of SF, Paul has contributed artwork to a number of fanzines and is largely responsible for the 'new-look' Art Show we're having at Yorcon II. His wife Jan will be lending valuable assistance to the show, which promises to be even better than last time.



*

The Welcommittee

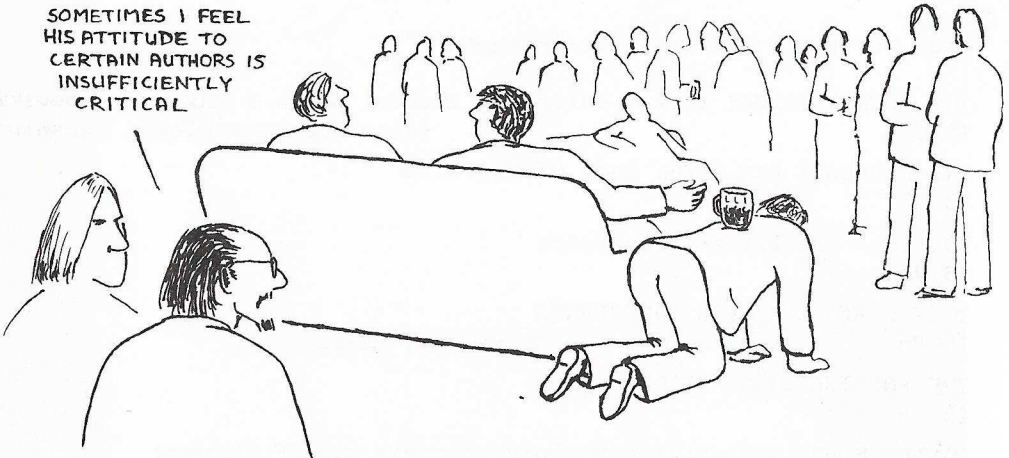
This special committee has been set up to introduce new con-goers to the whys and wherefors of convention life. As was said in Progress Report #4, they'll be available at all times during the day at YORCON to offer advice, assistance or just to lend an ear - and they'll be easily recognised by their distinctive green badges. We've three people on this committee, as follows:

Roy Macinski: - Found his way into fandom quite recently via the BSFA. Now a regular BSFA mailing session hack, Roy takes a very active interest in things fannish.

Steve Green: - Has been going to conventions for a few years now, and works as a journalist. It was his interesting comments at Unicon I last year that led us to set up this group.

Rochelle Reynolds: - Formerly a resident of the USA, she came over for Seacon '79, loved the place so much that she just had to come back. Now resident here, she has recently started her own fanzine, Driftwood.

SOMETIMES I FEEL
HIS ATTITUDE TO
CERTAIN AUTHORS IS
INSUFFICIENTLY
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YORCON FILMS

Reviewed by Geoff Ryman:-

The Abominable Dr. Phibes

Directed by Robert Fuest, 1971, 1 Hour 34 Minutes.

An achingly good film, as most of you already know. Fuest got his start as a designer, and it shows; Phibes is a bizarre visual treat. Done in a sort of manic art deco style that, ten years ago, was deliciously original, the film is full of daffy, kitsch invention. A wooden doll robot orchestra plays while Phibes tangos with his assistant. A golden unicorn's head is hurled from a catapult, skewering someone to a door; because the unicorn's horn is a spiral, the police have to unscrew it and the victim from the panelling. Phibes's coffin has a telephone in it. Plot? Vincent Price as deformed madman commits a series of ritual murders while Joseph Cotton guesses the horrible truth.

Solaris

Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky, 1972, 2 Hours 45 Minutes

My personal candidate for the best science fiction film yet made - not because of its arty ponderousness, but because I love the story. Solaris is a planet that produces in flesh (or illusion?) images from the pasts of the people who are examining it. The hero confronts the image of a beautiful girl who he loved and perhaps destroyed - certainly she is now dead. The heart of the film is the illusion's very real love for him, her confused desire to be real, and her terror that if he leaves her, she will cease to exist. Is the planet saying examine yourselves before you examine me? Is it saying anything at all? With infuriating elusiveness, the film manages to be about nearly everything - love, guilt, memory, illusion versus reality, identity, sex-roles, machine-made sterility. It is undeniably very boring in parts. The hero has a long country idyll with his family before leaving and the sequence in which he drives along a Russian motorway (it's supposed, I am told, to give you the feeling of plummeting through space) seems to go on for a lifetime. At the end the hero returns to his idyllic home, now nightmarishly altered. That too is an illusion given him by the planet. Is it a gift or a trap? When Star Trek The Movie boldly ripped it off - down to the scene in which the female emanation tears her way through a metal door to be with her lover - the living, organic planet was turned into a glittering machine. Symptomatic?

Films 2

The Parallax View

Directed by Alan J Pakula, 1974, 1 Hour 42 Minutes

I know absolutely nothing about this film except that it stars Warren Beatty, that it's directed by the man who made Klute and other worthy films with worthy themes, that the reviewers gave it a lot of space but were not overly enthusiastic, and that Graham James likes it. So did my partner in trade reviewing, back when I was doing it, who thought it was an excellent, loopy, post-Watergate paranoid thriller. You are advised to view it in an altered state of consciousness as, apart from anything else, the sound and visuals are supposed to be very good.

Time After Time

Directed by Nicholas Meyer, 1979, 1 Hour 52 Minutes

H.G. Wells pursues Jack the Ripper in his time machine to contemporary San Francisco - where the sexual psychopath is more at home. The acting - Malcolm McDowell as H.G., David Warner as the murderer - is rumoured to be excellent, and there are many deft touches, I'm told. H.G. finds himself in an exhibition of his own life and work. He goes up to his old desk, now on display, and takes out his spectacles from the drawer where he had left them a lifetime before. This is Alan Dorey's choice, and a good one as a lot of people - me included - missed it the first time around.

Golem

Directed by Piotr Szulkin, 1979, 1 Hour 32 Minutes

A film you won't be able to see anywhere else - and maybe not even here. Wiktor Bukato will try to bring it to us from Poland and will translate the dialogue as the film runs. It has only been reviewed in English once - in Variety, of all places. The film is not another version of the Jewish legend in which a clay man comes to life. According to Variety "it's a kind of 'Golem in 1984'." In an oppressive future, doctors are carrying out a programme for the improvement of the human race. 'Thus, instead of doctors creating a monster, the monsters are already there as the normal species of the future - but one of them is suspected by the doctors of being a human being, that is a Golem in reverse.' Variety also assures us that it is 'a treat for avant garde fans, but without offshore chances.' Whatever that means.

Thief of Bagdad

Directed by Raoul Walsh, 1924, 2 Hours 20 Minutes

A delirious fantasy film made in the days when sets were cheap and extras even cheaper. Douglas Fairbanks is irresistible as the thief - dripping in jewellery and pearl earrings, his English beakiness an acceptable substitute for

Films 3

genuinely Arabic features, he looks like something from an Aubrey Beardsley print. The film as a whole looks like a cross between art nouveau orientalism a la Theda Bara, and German expressionism. Huge, simple, lopsided sets with frills around the edges. The story is stronger than in the other three versions (the Korda version split the hero into two, to give Sabu a part) and features a very bad dragon (a crocodile with fins) and a winged horse. Fairbanks ends up riding the horse to the moon, a tiny little rock in the sky with a pagoda on top where he finds the object of his quest. This is the shortened version. Originally the film ran for more than three hours. The best performance comes from Anna Mae Wong as the princess's maid. Poor girl, there weren't many good parts for Chinese actresses in 1924 Hollywood.

The War Game

Directed by Peter Watkins, 1966, 44 Minutes

A film that made me physically ill when I first saw it one sunny afternoon in 1971. An over-optimistic view of what might happen to this island in the event of nuclear war, it is entirely successful.

Dr.Strangelove (Or How I learned to stop worrying and Love the Bomb)

Directed by Stanley Kubrick, 1963, 1 Hour 34 Minutes

A not very funny sick joke with an almost clinical eye for human absurdity, There is the bikini'd secretary running through all the standard excuses to prevent her boss getting a phone call - the phone call that will tell him World War III may have just started. There is the cowboy who rides a bomb down to Earth, yee-hawing and waving his hat. There is Keenan Wynn as the soldier who at first refuses to break open a Coke machine so that Peter Sellers can ring the President. 'All right,' Wynn growls. 'But if you're wrong you'll have to answer to...the Coca Cola company.' Sellers is excellent as the decent RAF Englishman, all toothy embarrassment at having to deal with Sterling Hayden's genuinely fearsome Jack D. Ripper. Sellers is also very good as the bland, Dean Rusk-style President, but his Dr.Strangelove is, I think, a silly and noxiously stereotyped ex-Nazi. Sellers was an actor who could alter his entire persona, but he hardly ever made me laugh. The same is true of this elegant, unsettling film.

Year Zero

Directed by John Pilger, approximately 40 Minutes

An ATV television documentary, filmed in Cambodia after the Vietnamese had taken Phnom Penn, presenting a harrowing picture of starvation and disease after war and the Pol Pot regime. It also features some of the few film clips surviving from the Pol Pot era - including a terrifying shot of a human ant heap at work on an irrigation canal. Pilger more or less follows the Vietnamese line and leaves some questions unanswered, but his film finally and irrevocably brought to the attention of the British what had happened in Cambodia.

SCIENCE FICTION In The Comix

By Paul Matthews

In the late '60s the 'underground press' (namely International Times, OZ & Friends) was giving considerable coverage of both SF and comics and I remember going to Dark They Were to buy Ellison's Dangerous Vision #1 and a Silver Surfer comic. This proved to be the start of an interest in both fields and over the last few years I have become aware that there is a significant cross fertilization between the two mediums. The links between SF illustration and the striking graphics of the comics are immediately apparent, less obvious is the links in terms of content with considerable use being made of SF as comic adaptations, but there is also a rich field of SF writing produced with the comic medium.

Comics as a mass medium really began at about the same time as the pulps and featured a host of pulp-like heroes of which the best known and longest lived, are Batman and Superman. These comics appealed to a very similar audience to the pulps and perhaps owe their continued commercial viability to a predominance of superhero escapist fantasy. SF characters such as Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon are perhaps more familiar now than ever before due to Hollywood's latest excess's.



The '60's saw the market dominated by two major U.S. comic companies each producing a large range of titles all of which were consistent with the companies own 'universe'. For

example, the 'Marvel Universe' had strong SF connotations with several alien races hostile to Earth (namely the Kree and the Skrulls!) and a 'Counter Earth' orbiting the sun directly opposite Earth! In this Universe almost all the characters had SF adventures, but perhaps the major SF titles were Captain Marvel, Warlock and the Silver Surfer - skyrider of the spaceways.



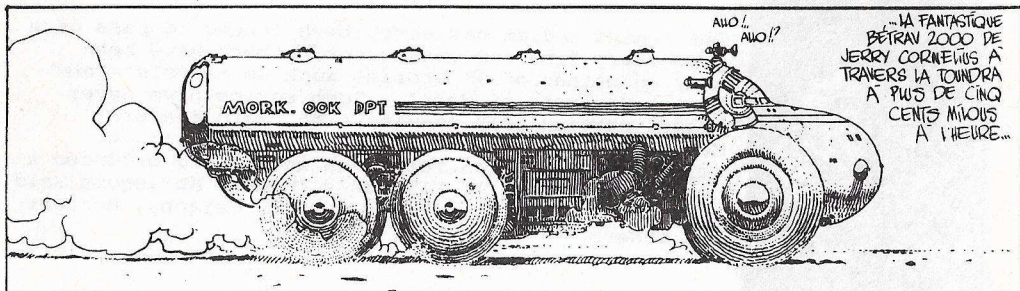
The comics medium has never been loathe to pass up a good story line and consequently there have been many adaptations of SF stories such as Marvel's 'John Carter Warlords of Mars'. Such series have never proved particularly popular with comic readers. However, a magazine entitled 'Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction' ran for seven issues and produced a 'classic' adaptation of Ellison's 'Repent Harlequin Said the Ticktockman' as well as work by Delaney, Herbert and others.

A new breed of comics emerged from the West Coast of America in the late 60's. These comics were totally free from any form of restriction and indeed were often an orgy of all the taboo subjects you could think of with a predominance of sex, drugs and violence. The underground comics, as they came to be known, produced some amazing work in which abounds with surreal imagery and very 'spacey' storylines. Vaughn Bode produced a comic called 'Sunspot' which has a space station orbiting the moon captained by Dr Electric, his 'mate' Belinda Bump and many varied minions, which is beautifully worked out,



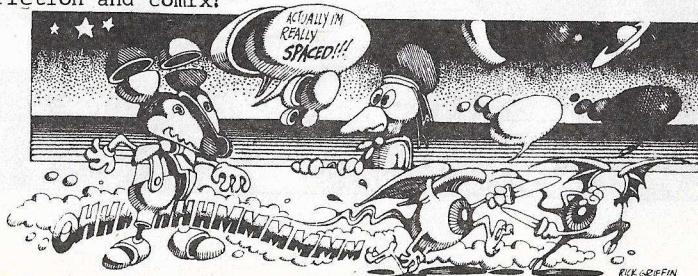
drawn and characterised. There are many others equally exciting and the variety is astounding.

The US undergrounds had a profound effect in France where there is a strong tradition of comics, Asterisc and Tintin for example. The result was an outburst of creativity with all the benefits of large markets such as good printing/production and wide distribution. The books produced are astounding, especially those by Moebius, Driullet and Bilal. A major magazine dedicated solely to comics and SF entitled 'Metal Hurlout' has been running since 1975 and is the inspiration and source for the USAs Heavy Metal adult comic magazine. Moebius is perhaps the major French figure, a mainstream comic artist, who uses the name Moebius to create his self confessed drug influenced comic work. His long running series 'Le Garage Hermetique De Jerry Cornelius' is a free use of Moorcock's character in a very strange world. The French artists are arguably producing the best SF comic work at the moment and the range is again wide from pastiches of 50's SF stories to wild surreal work that defies written description.



The foregoing serves only as the briefest overview of a subject that can only really be enjoyed by reading the comics themselves. Harry Harrison in his book 'Great Balls of Fire', made extensive use of comic material to illustrate his history of sex in science fiction illustration. Certainly it's there, even if only in Flash Gordon's overtly phallic rockets, and latterly in its full glory in the French and U.S. underground comics.

A small exhibition of comics with SF interest will be on display in the Artshow and more widely representative selection will be presented in slide form (with appropriate music!) as an item on the alternative programme. So, if you are interested I am sure you will not be disappointed and don't forget what Chester P. Hackenbush has to say: 'The second greatest pleasure in life is getting stoned whilst reading science fiction and comix!'



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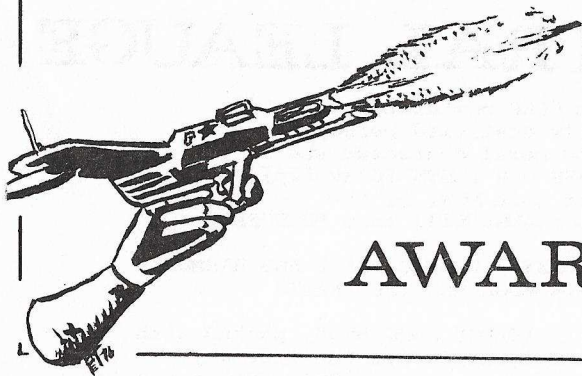
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AWARD RULES

The 1981 BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION AWARD

The final ballots for this 1981 Award are available at the convention, and all members of YORCON II are more than welcomed to pick their selections for the various categories. Members of the BSFA have already had their chance to cast their votes, but voting does stay open until seven pm on Saturday, April 18th. This innovation in throwing open the voting was taken at Albacon last year. This helps to widen the roster of those eligible to vote, consequently enhancing the Award's importance, for it is after all, the only Award of its kind in the UK.

Work eligible for the final ballots had to be published for the first time in the United Kingdom in 1980. Members of the BSFA then selected their choices, and from these, the final choices were collected and counted so that we could come up with the titles on the ballot. A paperback reprint of a hardback novel or collection published in an earlier year was ineligible; similarly, a work that had previously appeared in an SF magazine or anthology couldn't be nominated if it had since been reprinted in some other format. Magazine serials were eligible for nomination only if their last instalments appeared in 1980. Imported magazines and books were only eligible if the works were nationally distributed over here, thus books and other works only available through the specialist bookshops were ineligible.

The 4 main categories on the ballot sheet (which should be distributed with your Programme Book) are as follows:

NOVEL, SHORT FICTION, MEDIA PRESENTATION, COVER ARTIST

Obviously, with regard to the printing deadlines of the YORCON II Programme Book, we haven't been able to include the nominations here - but rest assured, that even at this early stage, I've seen one or two interesting surprises!

GOOD VOTING!

Alan Dorey, Chairman BSFA

THE KEN MCINTYRE MEMORIAL AWARD

Who was Ken McIntyre?

Ken McIntyre was an artist whose work appeared during the fifties in New Worlds, Nebula and Science Fantasy. Ken was a keen SF fan, a regular attendee of the Easter Science Fiction conventions and a Knight of St. Fantony. He was always willing to do work for amateur publications completely free and his work can be seen in many fanzines of the last twenty years. Ken died from a heart attack in 1968.

Why an award?

Three people suggested independantly that some form of memorial was needed and after discussion the KEN MCINTYRE AWARD was formulated. Although there are awards presented in the SF field, there is no award for artwork presented in Britain. It was felt that an award for art would help give encouragement to young artists in the field as well as giving some form of reward to established artists.

Rules for entry:

- 1) The Ken McIntyre Memorial Award will be presented annually. Each year it will be presented to the artist who, in the opinion of the judges, submits the most deserving piece of artwork.
- 2) The artists must be resident in the United Kingdom.
- 3) The piece of artwork must have appeared in an amateur publication during the twelve months preceding the Easter at which the award is made.
- 4) The piece of artwork must be accompanied by a copy of the publication in which it appeared.
- 5) The subject matter of the piece must, in the opinion of the judges, be fantasy or science fiction.

How to enter

The piece of artwork may be submitted by the artist himself or by the editor of the publication in which it appeared. The original together with a copy of the publication, must be handed to the registrations desk by 4:00pm on the Saturday of the convention, or taken by the same time to the Art Show. If, for any reason it cannot be handed in by this time, Keith Freeman should be notified in writing prior to the convention. The entries submitted will be displayed in the art show and the award presented at the Banquet on Sunday evening.

Keith Freeman, Award Administrator, 269 Wykeham Road,
Reading, Berks.

The 'Doc' Weir Award

Who was Doc Weir?

A fan: a schoolteacher who came into fandom late in life with a keen interest in both science fiction and fantasy, who enjoyed participating in many facets of SF fandom. He helped get the infant BSFA on its feet, corresponded with a considerable number of fans and wrote scholarly and entertaining articles for their fanzines. He was an active Cheltenham SF circle member and attended conventions where his talks were programme highlights.

What is the Award?

A goblet inscribed with the names of past winners, to be held for one year, and a signed certificate suitable for framing.

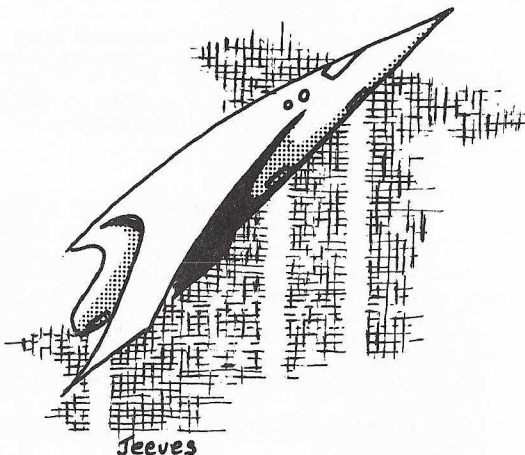
How is the winner chosen?

By YOU. The award is not given for any specific activity but for things in general. The award should go to the person you think most deserving. There is no restriction on whom it may be given to - it does not have to be a member of the BSFA or of the convention. By tradition, it is usually awarded to a fan whose activities have not been previously honoured. Voting is kept secret - only the winner's name is announced.

Who are the past winners?

WELL.....

in 1963 --- PETER MABEY
in 1964 ---ARCHIE MERCER
in 1965 ---TERRY JEEVES
in 1966 ---KEN SLATER
in 1967 ---DOREEN PARKER
in 1968 ---MARY REED
in 1969 ---BERYL MERCER
in 1970 ---MICHAEL ROSENBLUM
in 1971 ---PHIL ROGERS
in 1972 ---JILL ADAMS
in 1973 ---ETHEL LINDSAY
in 1974 ---MALCOLM EDWARDS
in 1975 ---PETER WESTON
in 1976 ---INA SHORROCK
in 1977 ---KEITH FREEMAN
in 1978 ---GREG PICKERSGILL
in 1979 ---ROG PEYTON
in 1980 ---BOB SHAW

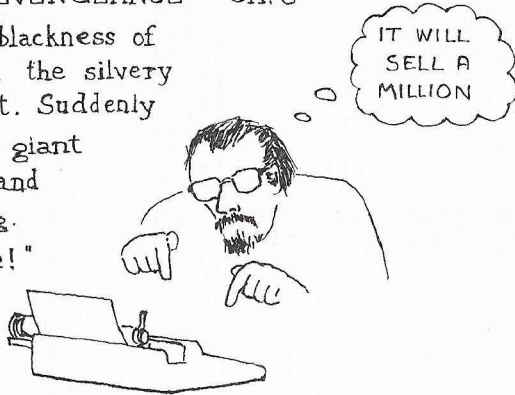


Peter Mabey, Award Administrator

DEATH STAR SHIP REVENGEANCE CH. 8

Across the inky blackness of the trans-galactic void the silvery spaceship went very fast. Suddenly there was a sound like giant elastic bands snapping and alarm bells began to ring.

"This means trouble!" rasped Arth Pudor through gritted jaws. "Man the P-Ray Guns! Stand by the Quongo Transmitter!" Suddenly



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ALBACON ACCOUNTS

<p>GoH Expenses / Gratuities / Hospitality</p> <p>Hotel Bill Colin Kapp / Jim Barker (1) £ 630.15</p> <p>Travelling Expenses Colin Kapp 53.00</p> <p>Hotel Bill Jim White 80.75</p> <p>Travelling expenses Jim White 60.00</p> <p>Other Guest expenses 101.00</p> <p>Guest travelling expenses 19.50</p> <p>Hotel staff gratuities 20.00</p> <p>Bar staff gratuities 6.64</p> <p>Other gratuities 5.40</p> <p>Banquet drinks 86.79</p> <p>(inc wine for all participants)</p> <p>Banquet costs met by Albacoon</p> <p>eg Guest tickets (2)</p> <p>Assorted Banquet costs 9.88</p> <p>Operations Room Coffee 10.60</p> <p>Fan Room punch 27.97</p> <p>Fan Room speaker's drinks</p> <p>Main & Alternative Programmes</p> <p>speaker's drinks (3) 3.52</p> <p>Prizes (12 bot wine, 3 bot malt, whisky) 35.46</p> <p>Other drinks prizes 16.81</p> <p>Yorcon 1 Albacoon Room Party (4) 15.25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1257.62</p>	<p>£487.35</p> <p>439.98</p> <p>927.33</p> <p>£10.00</p> <p>45.00</p> <p>12.00</p> <p>67.00</p> <p>£65.00</p> <p>3.45</p> <p>22.00</p> <p>60.00</p> <p>25.00</p> <p>2.00</p> <p>32.00</p> <p>14.50</p> <p>22.00</p> <p>156.39</p> <p>35.65</p> <p>89.70</p> <p>70.74</p> <p>18.00</p> <p>(2) These were retained and held for future Conventions.</p> <p>5.03</p> <p>621.46</p>
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<p>Repair, purchase & hire of equipment/transport costs</p> <p>Closed circuit Video System £138.00</p> <p>Albany Electricians charges (1) 162.50</p> <p>Video recorder hire 40.00</p> <p>Cable, leads etc. 14.60</p> <p>Electrical sundries 2.32</p> <p>Projection equipment £150.00</p> <p>Typewriter repairs, golfballs etc. 43.75</p> <p>Insurance (2) 69.00</p> <p>Hire of vehicle & petrol 50.65</p> <p>Petrol 26.00</p> <p>Taxi & other transport costs (3) 7.60</p> <p style="text-align: right;">668.04</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p>(1) These were substantially reduced from approx £300.00 after negotiation with the Hotel.</p> <p>(2) Two Committee Members had extra equipment worth over £150.00 stored at Albacoon. These items were inspected and both Committee Members to await an insurance company pay out rather than charge the Convention for their losses. In both cases the equipment had been loaned to the Convention.</p> <p>(3) Most transport costs were absorbed in their entirety by Albacoon Committee Members; these represent additional 'on the day costs' only.</p>
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<p>Mailing/Stationery/Printing</p> <p>Progress Report postage etc. £353.56</p> <p>Post Albacoon mailing 65.00</p> <p>Envelopes 48.30</p> <p>Safety pins 7.40</p> <p>Pens, selfotape, card etc. 13.47</p> <p>Badge wallets, badges & cards 197.45</p> <p>Assorted Letraset & graphics sundries (1) 23.50</p> <p>Photocopying 49.42</p> <p>Albacoon posters/fliers etc. 63.00</p> <p>Progress Report printing 217.61</p> <p>Pre-bid printing 14.12</p> <p>Programme Book 800.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1852.83</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p>(1) A large proportion of Albacoon graphics materials were paid for by Faircon - e.g. Letraset etc.</p>
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<p>Hotel of Hotel</p> <p>Function Suites</p> <p>Art Show/Penthouse Suites</p> <p>Advertising costs</p> <p>FOKT fanzine</p> <p>Seacon Programme Book</p> <p>vacation</p> <p>Films & Programme events</p> <p>Slide copying (Captive slideshow)</p> <p>Other photographic costs</p> <p>Book review panel</p> <p>Dancers</p> <p>Disco</p> <p>Blackmail materials</p> <p>2001 Wargame (1)</p> <p>CND, Wargame</p> <p>Westburn Films</p> <p>Rank</p> <p>Columbia-Emi-Warner</p> <p>Harris Films Inc</p> <p>FDA</p> <p>Videotapes (2)</p> <p>Video Insurance</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p>(1) For convenience the Faircon Cheque Account was used throughout for Albacoon.</p> <p>(2) To be applied first to production of the Albacoon Report, thereafter any balance/income will be distributed as decided by the Albacoon Committee. Albacoon received NO income from any preceding Eastercon.</p> <p>£420.00 was received and thereafter disbursed to British Rail in respect of cheap rail fares organised by Albacoon.</p>
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<p>Summary of Albacoon expenses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GoH Expenses/Gratuities/Hospitality 2. Repair, purchase & hire of equipment /transport costs 3. Printing/Mailing/Stationery 4. Films & Programme events 5. Advertising 6. Hire of Hotel 	<p>Notes:</p> <p>668.04 At a post-Albacoon meeting the gathered Committee Members decided to personally absorb all costs not shown above e.g. telephone, transport, materials and other bills.</p> <p>5394.28</p>
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<p>Albacoon Accounts</p> <p>Income:</p> <p>Credited to Albacoon Deposit Account: £4422.76</p> <p>Credited to Faircon Cheque Account (1): 1163.52</p> <p>Albacoon cash in hand Nil</p> <p style="text-align: right;">5586.28</p> <p>Total expenditure 5394.28</p> <p>Excess cash at close of accounts (2): <u>192.00</u></p> <p>The above figure for income is the total of all Memberships, Advertising, Auction and other revenue-gathering exercises.</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p>(1) For convenience the Faircon Cheque Account was used throughout for Albacoon.</p> <p>(2) To be applied first to production of the Albacoon Report, thereafter any balance/income will be distributed as decided by the Albacoon Committee. Albacoon received NO income from any preceding Eastercon.</p> <p>£420.00 was received and thereafter disbursed to British Rail in respect of cheap rail fares organised by Albacoon.</p>
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THE
1981
TAFF
DELEGATE:
STU
SHIFFMAN



*

By Dave Langford

Like many conventions before it, YORCON II has the bonus of an extra, honoured guest. The strange fellow pictured here is Stu Shiffman, who's the 1981 Transatlantic Fan Fund delegate and has thus been brought all the way from America (to be precise, New York) to boggle---or to be boggled by---British fandom. I personally underwent Stu's hospitality whilst in the States and can testify that he not only looks hideously like his self-portrait but has in his apartment a stained glass panel depicting the great fannish beaver-god Roscoe, which ought to qualify him for honorary membership of the Astral League at the very least.

Stu has acquired vast fame and influence by drawing and writing for fanzines such as Mainstream, Rune, DNQ, Nabu, Janus, Ansible and his own coedited Raffles (with Larry Carmody): indeed he's responsible for the cover of the special edition of Twll-Ddu produced for YORCON II. He's also illustrated the librettos of several fan-musicals; picked up Hugo and FAAn award nominations; and chaired the Flushing in 1980 worldcon bid, which last year succeeded in providing a wholly independent, and nonexistent, alternative

Worldcon. His immense wealth, his vast political influence, and his devotion to Battlestar Galactica are all legendary and likewise non-existent. For a small consideration, such as being told the inside dirt on British fandom, he will gladly tell you the inside dirt on US fandom---or teach you the forgotten art of drawing onto stencils. In the real world he works in ladies' undies (would I lie to you?), the complicated exigencies of which will limit his time over here to a couple of weeks from 11 to 26 April; make the most of him while you can at YORCON! Stu's ambitions whilst in this country, besides his crazed desire to meet millions of UK fans (ah, little does he know) involve the inspection of famous architectural ruins, and I'm sure that YORCON attendees won't fail to show him round Brian Burgess and D. West. Evil fanroom organizer Collick has plans for Stu: watch for him in the fan room if you haven't already found him in the bar.

Stu did not vote for Ronald Reagan.

The Transatlantic Fan Fund has been organizing these 'cultural exchanges' since the early 1950s, in both directions---indeed the first person to make a TAFF trip was our very own Ken Bulmer. TAFF promotes contact between US and European fandom, and provides an accolade for favorite fans popular on either side of the Atlantic; who actually makes the trip is chosen by vote. The contestants in this last TAFF race were Gary Farber and Stu Shiffman; nominations for the next race, whose winner will travel from Europe to the Chicago Worldcon in 1982, are officially opened at YORCON II. To get onto this ballot you need three European and two North American nominators; you must 'post bond' by donating £5 to TAFF, and must promise to make the trip if elected (barring Acts of God). Then the ballots go out and fans around the world cast their votes, each accompanied by a donation: if you should win you'll also become TAFF Administrator with responsibility for fund-raising and administering the next two contests.

TAFF exists solely through fans' generosity. We need donations of saleable auction material or even of money; we hope you'll attend YORCON'S book auctions and (subliminal message follows) spend! spend! spend! Both the current administrators will of course be available at YORCON to accept donations, answer questions and sell you wondrous goodies; if you'd like to know more about TAFF and to be kept in touch with the progress of the coming race, the administrators' addresses are:

(N. America) Stu Shiffman, 19 Broadway Terrace (1D),
New York, NY 10040 USA
(Europe) Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Avenue,
Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW

The Transatlantic Fan Fund was sparked off by the success of a special one-off fund which took the world-famous Irish fan Walt Willis to the 1952 World SF Convention in Chicago. In 1953 Willis and other fannish notables of the day established TAFF; here are the elected TAFF delegates so far:

1954 Vin Clarke (didn't make trip)	1968 Steve Stiles
1955 Ken Bulmer	1969 Eddie Jones
1956 Lee Hoffman (declined)	1970 Elliot Shorter
1957 Bob Madle	1971 Mario Bosnyak
1958 Ron Bennett	1973 Len & June Moffatt
1959 Don Ford	1974 Peter Weston
1960 Eric Bentscliffe	1976 (tie) Roy Tackett, Bill
1961 Ron Elik	Bowers (Bowers didn't make trip)
1962 Ethel Lindsay	1977 Peter Robert
1963 Wally Weber	1979 Terry Hughes
1964 Arthur Thomson ('Atom')	1980 Dave Langford
1965 Terry Carr	1981 Stu Shiffman
1966 Thomas Schluck	1983 ???



Support GUFF

GUFF, fandom's newest fan fund, brings well-known British and Australian fans half-way round the world to the host country's national SF convention. Inaugurated at Seacon '79 when John Foyster came from Australia to Brighton, GUFF's first Australia-bound race has just come to a successful conclusion with Joseph Nicholas being voted Britain's representative at Advention '81, Australia's national convention in June.

There are plans to bring another Australian here for the 1982 Eastercon, and we want to be ready to send a British (or European) fan to Australia in 1983, to the Worldcon if their bid is successful. So we need to raise money rapidly. GUFF has some very worthwhile items ready to be auctioned at Yorcon, including the MS of a major forthcoming nonfiction book. More material to auction will still be welcomed.

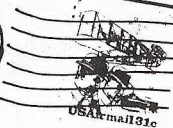
Attend GUFF's auction here at Yorcon — you'll not be sorry you did. And it's all in a fine cause, too. For more details contact Rob Jackson (administrator till June) or Joe Nicholas (who then takes over) at the con, or at home: Rob Jackson, 8 Lavender Rd., West Ewell, Epsom, Surrey KT19 9EB, or Joe Nicholas, Room 9, 94 St. George's Sq., Pimlico, London SW1Y 3QY. Have a good con, and support GUFF.



Dear Stu,
We hope everything
is going well with
your N. A. F. F. trip.
See you back here
soon.

Best wishes,
The New York in '86
Bid Committee

P. S.: Hope the party goes well!



Stu Shiffman
c/o Yoreon
The Ladbroke Dragonara
Hotel
Kerrville Street
Leeds, U. K.

Air Mail

Previous Conventions

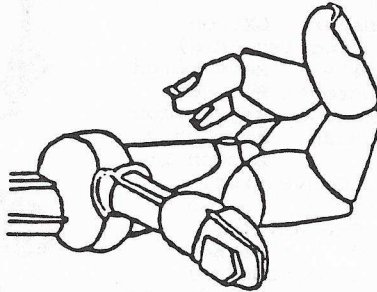
01	1937	Leeds	
02	1938	London	
03	1941	London	
04	1943	Leicester	
05	1944	Manchester	
1	1948	London	
2	1949	London	
3	1951	London	Festivention
4	1952	London	
5	1953	London	Coroncon
6	1954	Manchester	Supermancon
7	1955	Kettering	Cytricon
8	1956	Kettering	Cytricon II
	1957	London	Loncon
			World Convention
9	1958	Kettering	Cytricon III
10	1959	Birmingham	
11	1960	London	
12	1961	Gloucester	LXIcon
			(GoH: Kingsley Amis)
13	1962	Harrogate	Ronvention
14	1963	Peterborough	Bullcon
15	1964	Peterborough	Repetercon
16	1965	Birmingham	Brumcon 2
	1965	London	Loncon II
			(World Convention)
17	1966	Yarmouth	Yarcon
			(GoH: Ron Whiting)
18	1967	Bristol	Briscon
			(GoH: John Brunner)
19	1968	Buxton	Thirdmancon
			(GoH: Ken Bulmer)
20	1969	Oxford	Galactic Fair
			(GoH: Judith Merrill)
21	1970	London	Scicin '70
			(GoH: James Blish)
22	1971	Worcester	Eastercon 22
			(GoH: Anne McCaffrey FGoH: Ethel Lindsay)
23	1972	Chester	Chessmancon
			(GoH: Larry Niven)
24	1973	Bristol	OMPAcon
			(GoH: Samuel R, Delany)
25	1974	Newcastle	Tynecon
			(GoH: Bob Shaw FGoH: Peter Weston)
26	1975	Coventry	Seacon
			(GoH: John Bush)
27	1976	Manchester	Mancon 5
			(GoH: Robert Silverberg FGoH: Peter Roberts)



- | | | | |
|----|------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 28 | 1977 | Coventry | Eastercon '77 |
| | | (GoH: John Bush) | |
| 29 | 1978 | Heathrow | Skycon |
| | | (GoH: Robert Sheckley | FGoH: Roy Kettle) |
| 30 | 1979 | Leeds | Yorcon |
| | | (GoH: Richard Cowper | FGoH: Pat & Graham Charnock) |
| 31 | 1980 | Glasgow | Albacon |
| | | (GoH: Colin Kapp | FGoH: Jim Barker) |
| 32 | 1981 | Leeds | Yorcon II |
| | | (GoH: Ian Watson | FGoH: Dave Langford |
| | | American GoH: Tom Disch) | |

BECCON 81

JULY 31
to
AUGUST 2
1981



The BECCON Committee
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DAVE LANGFORD

A Room of One's Own

There is a series they run in the Observer colour supplement, wherein supposedly famous people (of whom I recognize about one-third) are photographed in their own little private dens, and rabbit on about their reasons for choosing such-and-such a decor. Most of these rooms seem appallingly posh and uninhabitable; many appear to have been expensively redecorated about five minutes before the arrival of the Observer cameraman; none has what I'd consider a reasonable population of books.

A little while ago we slapped some more paint over the bubonic plague (I'll come to that in a minute), Hazel cracked some joke about making my workroom nice for the Observer people and instantly I was away on a tide of fantasy wherein I was famous--- looking back on my career as civil servant and writer, I reckon my best chance is to become a famous terrorist ---and around came the photographer and interviewer...

Hello, Mr Langford. Can I ask you---

No, no! Please don't stand in the middle of the floor, it creaks when you do that and all the furniture tilts away from the walls.

Is this better?

So long as you don't kick the junction box there --- that causes a big blue flash and the electric fire stops working.

Suppose I---

Good grief, no! The top shelf of that lot's a bit shaky, one false move and you'll have Aldiss to Auden clouting you around the head--- mind those boxes of fanzines now---oh bloody hell. Look, I can't help it, I have to keep the duplicator somewhere. I expect it'll spong out, eventually.

Possibly. Well, Mr Langford, you do have a lot of books here--- have you read them all?

Every cretin who comes in here asks me that.

Pardon?

I said, most of them. Except the Badger Books; there are limits.

That's incredible---there must be hundreds. Why do you keep them if you've read them?

(Inarticulate noises).

On what principles did you choose the decor?

Well, um, I believe in two strong contrasting themes in interior decoration. The first theme is exemplified by the three desks, those four bookcases, the comfy chair, the wooden chair, the duplicator table, the other table, the unidentifiable thing which I believe is called a music stand and which is only good for storing rejection slips, the pointless cupboard under the table, the curtains, the carpet, the wastebasket, the little filing cabinet and the huge ugly box in the window-bay which Hazel's father palmed off onto us

and which is thus known as "her father's coffin", somewhat to her disgust. These things exemplify the first theme of my decor.

Which is?

None of them cost me anything. The second and as it were contrapuntal theme is one of things picked up on the cheap. ie. the typewriters, the typing chair, the duplicator, the deskclamps, the other five bookcases, the large filing cabinet and all that white paint hiding the bubonic plague on the walls.

Perhaps you could tell me about the bubonic plague.

Gladly. The previous owners of the house used to sleep in this room, and to help lull and soothe them they'd papered the walls in tasteful fluorescent orange, patterned with rather dainty little rosettes in luminous pink. It was like living inside a disco light-show; sometimes I'd peer through the window into sunlight and think it was a bit dim out there. So we covered it in the very best white paint we could buy at £1-50 a gallon, and when it dried the orange was gone but the pink peeped through---little rings of roses like the celebrated symptoms of the plague. You can still see them three coats of paint later, if you look hard---subliminal pink. There's only one really bad patch left now...

Where's that?

You see that Dali poster?

Why don't you tell our readers more about the fascinating little knickknacks you have about the room, like this most unusual light bulb---ow!

No, it isn't a light bulb---clever of you to spot that, boss. You see, there's that light bracket that's supposed to be over the bed only there isn't any bed in here, and I don't use it, and it looks so naked without a bulb, so naturally I keep Gregory there. You've seen one before, surely---puffer fish I think they're called, all inflated and spiny.

Yes. I'll get a tetanus injection on the way home, I think. Now what about this evil looking thing---it looks like a model of a mummified human head, ho ho...

Who said anything about a model? That's Cecil, former property of some Oxford medical student.

Do you think I could just lean out of the window a moment? .. That's better. Is it all right if I lean on this table for a while?

Um, well, let me tell you a little anecdote of my recent life. There's a school next door, and the other day I was burning some rubbish in the garden and left the fire going all morning, and next time I looked out I saw millions of schoolkids climbing up our tall garden fence, tearing bits of the fence and our nearby trees and throwing them into the fire. Being an SF fan, I conceived a cunning plot: while the kids were at their lessons, doubtless learning about the demolition industry and defoliation techniques, I crept out and anointed the top of the fence with a thin layer of Roneo duplicator ink. Very black, very sticky. You can imagine the resulting scenes.

Are you leading up to anything with this story?

Er, yes. That's the duplicator table you're leaning against, and the ink tends to lean out of the drum and sort of spread, and---

Aaaaaaagh! My trousers!

Never mind that. Let me tell you about the peculiarly brilliant book I've just completed, the greatest advance in literature since the invention of the semicolon, a work of art to make Jorge Luis Borge look like R.L.Fanthorpe (or possibly vice-versa---you never can tell), a mighty masterwork which---

You must be joking. I'm getting out of here---aaaaaaaargh!

How any grown man can contrive to trip over a mere few pieces of paper---

It was eighteen inches high. I think I've sprained my ankle.

Not a millimetre more than fifteen inches. I ought to know how high my own unanswered-letters pile is. Look, here's a copy of Hubbard's Dianetics, and Kingsmill's Anthology of Invective and Abuse. One of them should make you feel better.

I'm going. One thing though, that's been bothering me: why are there three jars of revolting brown gunge sitting on the filing cabinet? Don't tell me if you don't think I'm strong enough to know.

Just home-made apple-chutney, boss. We reckoned that if mighty auctioneer Rog Peyton could sell a Langford-grown apple for 85p, this highly-impurified end-product should command huge prices at the Yorcon auction. In aid of TAFF, of course.

Just tell me what TAFF is... please?

Bloody hell, I've already written pages about it for the programme book. I can't think of anything else witty and dynamic to say... nothing at all, not a syllable, not a pun, not a semicolon. I'm blocked! Help! I've got writers' block! Call the ambulance---

Perhaps, on the whole, it would be better to remain an obscure fan after all. Or if I should rocket to fame as a celebrated terrorist, then when the Observer reporters come round I'll pretend not to be in.

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Wilhelm In Boston

Brunner In Krakow

Watson In UFOS!

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is one of the most respected writers of the science fiction genre. At the 1980 World SF Convention, she was 'Joint Guest of Honour' with her husband, Damon Knight. Her major speech, The Uncertain Edge Of Reality, is published this issue.

JOHN BRUNNER

is, without doubt, still one of the most controversial figures of the British science fiction community. His novel, 'Stand on Zanzibar', is a landmark of sf. This issue we have an Interview with the man himself, and publish his speech, The Conjugation of the Verb Tomorrow, given at Krakow.

IAN WATSON'S

recent novel, 'The Gardens of Delight', is reviewed by BRIAN STABLEFORD. Ian Watson's views are always dynamic if not esoteric! Ian's article, UFO's, Science and the Inexplicable, opens the door slightly to his soul and explains his views on the current scientific thinking concerning UFO's.

REVIEWS

BRIAN STABLEFORD, BARRINGTON J. BAYLEY, DAVID REDD, DAVE LANGFORD, AND GEOFF RIPPINGTON review some of the recently published science fiction.

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by ALAN HUNTER, RENZO SCIUTTO, TAIS TENG, PETE LYON.

ARENA SCIENCE FICTION IS EDITED AND PRODUCED BY GEOFF RIPPINGTON.

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A Paranoid's Guide To Shrimp Fishing Clubs - Simon Ounsley

Now don't get me wrong. It's very nice of you to turn to this page and start reading, but I would like you to be more careful in future. I mean, somebody might be looking over your shoulder, or the walls might be bugged. You just never know. So do me a favour, just hang on a minute or two. Turn to another page - look at a D West cartoon or the list of members or some of the other delights that Alan Dorey's scraped together for you. Then wait till you're alone before you turn back to this - I mean completely alone, not just sitting in a programme item. The dead of night would really be best, preferably a foggy night. The hotel room will do, but remember to search the wall for strange devices, and look under the bed too. Someone might be left over from the last room party.

OK? Now, if you're still reading, I'll assume you've taken all the proper precautions. Hey, what's that in your pocket? Oh good, it's a bottle of whisky. I thought for a moment it was a hidden camera. It looks like we're going to be reasonably safe then, so I'll let you in on a secret. I have this hobby, you see. Yes, just like stamp-collecting or do-it-yourself, but this is weird. I don't stick things in albums and I don't stick things up on walls. Sometimes, when I've been doing my hobby, there's nothing to see at all, other times there's just a few creases on the spine of a book or there's lots of sheets of closely typed paper screwed up in a waste-bin. That's the way I like it really, so that for all that anyone would know I might just have come from fixing the kitchen tap or digging up the garden, or things like that which normal people do.

I can't keep it check all the time though. Sometimes I just can't help myself. Once I went and did my hobby and before I knew it, there were all sorts of people crammed in a big hotel talking and shouting and laughing and singing, but mainly getting drunk. How conspicuous can you get?

Come to think of it, I probably dreamt that last bit. Usually you wouldn't know me from any normal sort of a bloke, who spends his time taking his car apart and putting it back together again. You'd never guess that I have a hobby that's so strange that people call it by its initials, because that's the only way that it's safe. SF, we say, we hobbyists, so that outsiders think we're talking about shelf fitting or shrimp fishing or something normal like that. It's just a case of being careful. For instance, on the few occasions when I have to go out into town to further my hobby, I always wear a pair of dark glasses and a dirty raincoat and walk several times nonchalantly past THE BOOKSHOP before I go in, just to check there's no one I know hanging around the other, more acceptable places, like the grocer's, the pawn shop or the bookies. Then I go in and walk swiftly past the SF shelves, removing several choice volumns

with eye-deceiving sleight of hand from the shelves as I pass, sometimes colliding with the raincoated figures of fellow enthusiasts as we rush past in our mutual haste. Then I go to the counter on the pretext of buying a copy of MAYFAIR or PEDIOPHILE'S WEEKLY, handing over the SF books surreptitiously, as though as an afterthought purchase for a favourite nephew.

Sometimes, I must admit, I wonder why I go to all this trouble, why I don't just come clean about it all, go out into the street and shout "I'm a science fiction fan!", tell the people at work, even tell my parents. Why don't I just say "I've seen more than STAR WARS, you know. Even more than STAR TREK and 2001. I watch obscure films like SOLARIS, and I sometimes talk about them afterwards. I publish fanzines and go to conventions, and once I even read a science fiction book - you know, one of those things with a spaceship on the cover (although I didn't like it very much). And sometimes...sometimes, I even write the stuff".

Yes, why don't I do that, get it off my chest and come clean for once? After all, it'll probably make me feel better, won't it? The trouble is, I do sometimes come clean, I do sometimes tell people about my hobby. I choose a sensitive, broad-minded sort of a person, I buy them a drink to buffet them against the shock, then I sit them down and talk nervously about the weather for a while, trying to build up my courage. And then I blurt it all out. I tell them everything. And then they say "Do you go out looking for UFOs?" or "I suppose you believe in telepathy then" or "How long have you been ill?". They start talking to me like I'm crazy.

And I don't know why it is. After all, in this day and age, perfectly normal people go and watch STAR WARS or BLACK HOLE, then come back home and start putting up shelves as though nothing had happened. But this is the way it seems to be.

Isn't it a good thing then (said he, coming to the point of the article at last), that you can go into the fan room here at YORCON 2 and see on the wall, or pinned to an art-screen or whatever (as long as things are running to plan) a chart of all the SF groups in the country, so that you can pick out the one nearest to you and go along to it if you want. An SF group, of course, is somewhere you can go and talk about SF and nobody bothers too much, as long as you talk about other fairly interesting things as well. It's a place where you can get away from conversations about putting up shelves and fixing the central heating systems and how many times the kids woke up in the night, what they were ill with, and how long it took to mop it up afterwards. It's a place where all the fans can come in dirty raincoats and get together and whisper in the corner and get very drunk if they want to. Sounds good, eh? To be honest, you don't really need a dirty raincoat, and some of the groups do extrovert things like show films and organise talks, sometimes even conventions. It all depends on the group and, of course, the people who go to it.

Against each group on the chart, there should be a contact address, but when you get in touch, make sure you approach the subject cautiously. We don't want any accidents. Don't come out straight away and say you're an SF fan. After all, you might have got the

wrong number. Get to it indirectly - say you saw Arthur C. Clarke on the TV by mistake, or found a plastic spaceman in a packet of RICE CRISPIES, something like that. I know I can rely on you to be subtle.

Of course, you might reading this article after the convention, in which case it probably won't be much good going to the fan room, because it's probably a long way to Leeds and the club chart won't be there anymore in any case. Even so, all is not lost. All you have to do in this case is join the very wonderful BSFA, which will no doubt be advertised elsewhere in this booklet, and then you'll be able to write to me in my capacity as BSFA Club Liaison Person and ask about your local group. Or if there isn't one in your town, I can probably help you start one. Pretty good, eh?

So that's it then. That's all I wanted to say. Sorry to keep you so long. Now you'd better tear out these few pages and destroy the whole book, why don't you? But do it carefully. Eat it or something. Just make sure you take out the staples first. Whatever you do, don't show this article to anyone else, unless you join a local group, of course, and then, as long as you check for infiltrators first, I might give you permission to show it to them. Always be on your guard though. Remember, there may be people, even at YORCON 2, who don't like Isaac Asimov, people who think Robert Heinlein is a boring old.... You just wouldn't believe it.

More Poems by Tom Disch

Ms. Found in a Bottle

Of course I continue to write
Here on the atoll. As well ask
Do I still think.

 About?

Oh, cocanuts sometimes.
The sunsets, the sea,
My inner life, my sense of being
Set apart.

 Art

Is all that matters here.
No, that isn't true.
My basic concern is survival.
But one can't worry about sharks
Twenty-four hours a day.

I exercise. I do some
Scrimshaw. I try to eat
A balanced diet.

Really, I doubt my life
Is atypical for a poet.

The weather was lovely today,
And I'm sure it will be
Again tomorrow.

Outer Space Haiku

Cape Canaveral
batting a home run out of
Yankee Stadium

The Casual Philosopher

Most things happen
necessarily.
Worlds and clocks and
circles turn
Around their centers. Fur-
ther, see
How rivers flow, how fires
burn,
How teachers teach and
students learn
That Socrates is mortal.
But not me.

AWARDS, 1980

HUGO AWARDS

Best Novel: The Fountains of Paradise. Arthur C. Clarke.
Best Novella: "Enemy Mine." Barry B. Longyear.
Best Novelette: "Sandkings." George R. R. Martin.
Best Short Story: "The Way of Cross and Dragon." George R. R. Martin.
Best Non-Fiction: The Science Fiction Encyclopedia. Nicholls & Clute.
Dramatic Presentation: Alien.
Professional Artist: Michael Whelan.
Professional Editor: George Scithers.
Fanzine: Locus.
Fan Writer: Bob Shaw.
Fan Artist: Alexis Gilliland.

NEBULA AWARDS

Best Novel: The Fountains of Paradise. Arthur C. Clarke.
Best Novella: "Enemy Mine." Barry B. Longyear.
Best Novelette: "Sandkings." George R. R. Martin.
Best Short Story: "giANTS." Edward Bryant.

AMERICAN BOOK AWARDS (SCIENCE FICTION)

Best Hardcover: Jem: The Making of a Utopia. Frederik Pohl.
Best Paperback: The Book of the Dun Cow. Walter Wangerin.

JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL AWARD

Novel: On Wings of Song. Thomas M. Disch.

BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Best Novel: The Unlimited Dream Comany. J.G. Ballard.
Best Short Fiction: "Palely Loitering." Christopher Priest.
Media Presentation: The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy.
Best Artist: Jim Burns.

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

Best New Writer: Barry B. Longyear.

GANDALF AWARD

Grand Master of Fantasy: Ray Bradbury.

FAN ACTIVITY ACHIEVEMENT (FAAN) AWARDS

Fan Editor: Jeanne Gomoll & Janice Bogstad.
Fan Writer: Dave Langford.
Serious Artist: Joan Hanke-Woods.
Humorous Artist: Alexis Gilliland.
Single Issue of Fanzine: Scientifricion 11 (Mike Glycer).
LoC Writer: Harry Warner, Jr.

NOVA AWARD

Best British Fanzine: One-Off. Dave Bridges.

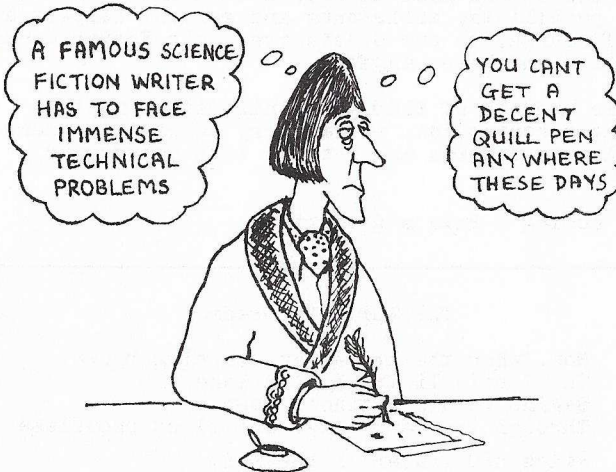
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Endless lists of acknowledgements have a habit of appearing with monotonous regularity in many latter-day publications, almost as if the author were afraid to admit responsibility for his work. However, they do have a very valuable part to play in certain circumstances, none more so than with the running of a convention. Putting together such an enterprise is a co-operative affair involving the assistance of many people. One reason for printing the membership list is simply to demonstrate the enormous debt of gratitude we owe to you the members, each one of you contributing something to the whole that is YORCON II.

More specifically, we'd like to extend our thanks to a number of people good and true who have supported us - Our advertisers (who, even in times of recession, have come through with the goods); the management and staff of the Dragonara Hotel for their sympathetic advice and help in the many practical problems of running a convention; Mary Burns for acting once again as our US agent; Eve Harvey for much typing help; John Harvey (and the BSFA litho machine) for his tireless activities in getting the Progress Reports printed; Ron Bennett for his help with the Book Room; Rochelle Reynolds for her typing assistance and proof-reading; Linda Strickler for typing; Michael Ashley, Chris Barlow, Steve Higgins, Stephen Hill, Pete Lyon and Kevin Pender for help in collating progress reports; Paul Marchant for providing us with a PA system and Arnold Akien for technical advice; Andrew Bennett for organising the computer room and Ackroyd Typewriters of Bradford and Currys Microsystems of Leeds for providing the computers; Vallances of Leeds for providing the video equipment; Ipsos Print of Leeds for printing this booklet; Tom Shippey for guiding those early committee meetings; Mike Dickinson for starting the whole thing off; John Sladek, John Clute, Brian Stableford, D. West, Kevin Smith and Pete Lyon for their contributions toward the Programme Book; Gerald Bishop for cinematographic help; the West Riding Hotel for drink; all the outlets that have helped promote YORCON II in their own various ways.

Finally, very special thanks must be extended in anticipation to all our speakers, panellists, assistants and general helpers at the convention, and of course, to our Guests over this Easter Weekend - Ian Watson, Tom Disch and Dave Langford.

With the incredible amounts of fiddly administrative matters involved in running a convention, we're sorry we can't be more specific - but all your efforts are not the less valued and appreciated.

Thank you all for coming - have a good time!

The Turtle's Dream

Now, when the leaves are turning brown,
The Turtle living by the lake
Begins to dig a tunnel down
Through the damp clay. The first snowflake
Finds him frozen in the mud,
Dreaming of summers past and springs
To come, when ice will thaw to blood
And he'll awake and stretch his wings.

-- Tom Disch

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