

**PROGRESS
REPORT** **No. 1**

**1962
HOMECOMING!
PICK-CONGRESS HOTEL
ChicaGO**

AUGUST 31
SEPTEMBER 1, 2, 3



20th WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

POST OFFICE BOX 4864 CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

Like Officialdom

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**MAKE ALL CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO
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Damon Knight says of our

Guest of Honor —

THEODORE STURGEON

is a phenomenon out of Philadelphia, a yellow-eyed thing with a goatee, a mortician's voice, and Pan's original smile. He clashed with high school. He ran away to sea, took up nudism, ran a bulldozer, got married and unmarried, wrote music, advertising copy and fantasy, smoked cigarettes in a long holder, got married again, tinkered with gadgets. His biographical note in More Than Human, as wild as anything he's written, ends with this sentence:

He lives with his wife and son, twelve-string guitar, and hot-rod panel truck in Rockland County, where he is at present working on an opera.

Now there you are; that's Sturgeon. Damn the man!

In More Than Human he writes like violins and stained glass and velvet and little needles in your throat. Even after the first reading, you can dip into this book anywhere and have to haul yourself out by the scruff. It goes from here to there like a catenary arc, and hits one chord like the Last Trump when it gets there, and stops. There's nothing more to be said about it, except that it's the best and only book of its kind.

But Sturgeon's failures, some of them, are as triumphant as his successes; they made the successes. Sturgeon is the most accomplished technician this field has produced, bar nobody, not even Bradbury; and part of the reason is that he never stops working at it. He tried writing about each character in a story in a different meter once -- iambs for one, trochees for another -- a trick, not viable, but it taught him something about rhythm in prose. He has cold-bloodedly studied the things that make people angry, afraid, pitying, embarrassed, worshipful and mortared them into his stories.

And for the last few years he has been earnestly taking love apart to see what makes it tick. Not what the word means on the cover of a pulp magazine, but love, all the different kinds there are or could be, working from the outside in. Some of the resulting stories have been as flat and unconvincing as others are triumphantly alive; but Sturgeon is learning, has learned more about the strongest theme in life or literature than anybody this side of Joyce Cary.

He writes about people first and other marvels second. More and more, the plots of his short stories are mere contrivances to let his characters expound themselves. The people stand out from their background like Rubens figures that have strayed onto a Mondrian canvas: graphic evidence that Sturgeon, like Bradbury, long ago went as far as he could within the limitations of this field without breaking them.*

*Freely adapted from "The Vorpall Pen" in IN SEARCH OF WONDER copyright, 1956, by Damon Knight.

SOME PROGRAM NOTES -

ARE FANS REALLY SLANS ??

This ageless rallying cry of fandom will be put to an official test in Chicago; in an effort to determine once and for all if we really do possess, as a group, knowledge superior to the mundane. Under the very capable direction of Mr. Jules Karlin, Chairman of the Sociology Department of Wilson Junior College, standard I.Q. tests will be administered to all interested parties.

Just to be on the safe side, though, in case fans turn out to be something less than Slans, the test will be conducted in a blind fashion; numbers will be assigned to all takers. The results, by number, will be posted so that only you and the elder gods of Cthulhu will ever know what your I.Q. really is. The over-all picture, of course, will help greatly towards a better understanding of the social aspects that govern our cohesion as a group. It is hoped that those rating highest on the scoring will identify themselves by producing their numbers, so just honors can be acknowledged where they are due.

Another old cliché of science fiction will have to stand a very critical test on Saturday afternoon; whether or not science fiction has really arrived. A panel on the topic of SF, IS IT REALLY LITERATURE will be moderated by Edward Wood, well-known bibliophile of the field. Already claiming their places for this discussion group are Basil Davenport, author, world famous authority on the genre, anthologist of many books within the field and editor for The Book-of-the-Month-Club; Damon Knight, lecturer, author of several books, including In Search of Wonder, Hugo award winning critic and acknowledged most biting critic of the field; and P. Schuyler Miller, author, and proprietor of "The Reference Library" for Analog Science Fact & Fiction. Several other prominent critics have been invited to join the panel and are expected to claim their seats momentarily.

To round out Saturday's activities with a bang we have the annual masquerade ball and orgy. For this special occasion we've revived the traditional old name of The Hell-Fire Club, and are already planning some explosive surprises for the evening. The initial surprise being that Margaret Brundage has offered to lead the judging panel if she can get out of some previous commitments. Just remember one thing about the masquerade ball; being in costume is more than half the fun. So start yours now. There will be some very special incentives for coming in costume, as well as valuable prizes for the winners of the judging.

Ed Emsh has offered to show some of his new 16 mm experimental films and to discuss what all went into their creation. Mr. Emsh, as you must know, created the award winning Danse Chromatic, several years ago. He now has ready for distribution a full-length commercial film called THE

TIME OF THE HEATHEN which you might be on the watch for on the regular theatrical circuits.

Ghod, of course, will put in an appearance; in the disguise of Robert Bloch, proverbial sage of fandom and frightener of the naive. You are, of course, familiar with his Psycho; so be on the watch for The Couch, from Warner Brothers, and later an all new script for that old favorite, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari. Mr. Bloch will present a novelty called MONSTERS I HAVE KNOWN, being an illustrated lecture on monster, horror and science fiction (is there any difference?) films.

We are extremely fortunate in being able to secure the services of Wilson Tucker as Master of Ceremonies for the annual awards banquet. Mr. Tucker is already delving deeply into his collection of Joe Miller and has promised to astound Mr. Sturgeon, Mr. Bloch, et al, with his natural wit. Besides being an excellent MC, Mr. Tucker also writes extremely well, too. We need only mention The Long Loud Silence to send the average fan into hours of praise. His most recent book was To The Tomboy Station.

To moderate the now traditional Fan Panel we have prevailed upon the Dean of midwest fandom, Dean Grennell. This could very well develop into another of those all-night panel sessions under Dean's guidance so be thinking of what definitive questions you want to hear discussed.

And just to make sure that you are never thirsty we have arranged to have a bar follow the program wherever it roams around the Pick-Congress, dispensing all the necessities of fandom. Unfortunately the law requires that these necessities be unavailable on Sunday morning until noon, so those who wish can attend the church of their choice.



Gosh, you're right-

EVERYBODY is for

D.C. IN
'63

your 1962 convention hotel is

THE ALL-NEW

PICK-CONGRESS

We have had plenty of time to make our choice of hotels. Remembering how well the Pick-Fort Shelby hosted the Detroit convention in 1959 it was only natural for us to consult the Pick-Congress in Chicago as our possible host. And what surprises they had in store for us. It began with a complete interior remodeling job and 100% air-conditioning and has just ended with a complete exterior face-lifting that even included a new glistening sidewalk along the boulevard. There is still some corridor work to be done on the interior, but we are sure you will be as pleased with our selection as we are.

Possibly the greatest pleasure comes, of course, in the special convention rates we secured for you. Remember that the Pick-Congress is a major first-class hotel, offering all the luxuries one expects to find in a major city, but it's been a long time since you've seen rates like these: Starting at \$7.00 for a single, \$13.00 for a double and with suites from \$25.00 (and take our word for it, these are some suites. They are so deluxe in fact that we've instructed the hotel NOT to assign anyone the presidential suite, complete with its concert grand, priceless antiques and fragile brick-a-brack. Can you just imagine this after the party finally breaks up?). In order to be absolutely sure you get the room of your choice, at the price of your choice, it is highly advisable to mail in the little yellow pre-paid postcard now.

The Pick-Congress itself is located at the end of the expressway. All eastern toll-roads and express highways lead directly to the door of the hotel. It is located in the downtown section within easy walk (or a short taxi ride) from all downtown points of entry; airport limousines arrive or depart every eight minutes from Midway or O'Hare fields.

There is a large indoor garage immediately west of the hotel and for those who prefer economy parking the Soldiers Field parking lot is just a few blocks away. Rates here are a disgusting 35¢ for 24 hours and a 15¢ shuttle bus makes constant trips from the lot directly to the Pick-Congress.

Remember too that Gnome and Advent have combined to give you an Early Bird incentive to get your room reservations in early. For the first 200 reservations made at the hotel you will receive, with your confirmation directly from the hotel, a certificate good in trade on some of the very books you were going to buy when you get to the convention anyway. Give yourself that extra bonus value and send in your reservation card now to assure that you are an Early Bird and get one of those cash discount certificates. Remember that fast action on your part can mean as much as 50¢ off on your next purchase, good any time from now through the close of the convention.

Extra roll-away beds can be furnished for any room at an additional charge of \$3.00. Children under 12 are free when accompanied with their parents. And yes, you heard correctly, the Pick-Congress is 100% air conditioned.

GNOME PRESS

and

Advent: Publishers

are

looking

for



EARLY BIRDS!!

AS A MATTER OF FACT WE HAVE A PRESENT TO GIVE THEM.

FOR THE FIRST 200 MEMBERSHIPS TO THE 1962 CHICAGO CONVENTION

and

FOR THE FIRST 200 CON RESERVATIONS AT THE PICK-CONGRESS HOTEL

we are giving, absolutely free, a cash discount certificate good on any of our books purchased from now through the 1962 convention in Chicago. Each certificate is good for a 25¢ cash discount towards any single title or for 50¢ off 1st price of any Fantasy Classic Library title.

REMEMBER

THIS OFFER IS POSITIVELY LIMITED TO THE FIRST 200 MEMBERSHIPS

AND TO THE FIRST 200 CONVENTION RESERVATIONS!

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