

OUSFG Newsletter, Late Trinity 1993

Mark Charsley <mcharsley@cix.compulink.co.uk>, 28th May 1993

Near Disaster in St. Hilda's!
Hound of Tindalos only avoided by lack of corners!

Discussion Meetings are held every Wednesday in the Lady Brodie Room in St. Hilda's, at 8.15pm. We can usually be found in the bar or The Half Moon afterwards. If anyone feels like volunteering to do one next term, it'll save me trying to nag you into doing one. Anyway, back to this term, below are the remaining ones for this term.

Week 5. Mark Boyes' Omniscience Workshop. Should come in handy for any finalists out there.

Week 6. (2nd June) Until the End of the Sun. Dave Clements discusses the far future in Science Fiction and Fact.

Week 7. Alex Ralph on Anne MacCaffery.

Week 8. The usual silly games and cookie party. See Daily Info nearer the time for the location of this.

Shock Video

Film shown was actually the one advertised!

Video Meetings are held in St. Hilda's South JCR, from 8.15 every Monday night. We plan to show the following films:

Week 5: Naked Lunch. Based on ol' Bill Burroughs' book, and full of drug-crazed cockroach fun. Can YOU understand it?

Week 6: Robo Jox. Quite a fun film involving lots of dead impressive stop-animation.

Week 7: Hell comes to Frog Town. Probably isn't about some chap named Hell going to visit the cutely named amphibian house at his local zoo.

Week 8: Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Probably is about some chap named Buffy who kills vampires.

But should any of these films be unavailable, we'll try and get Phantasm II, Taxi Driver, Cast a Deadly Spell, Jacob's Ladder or Exorcist III.

No books at Library Meeting
Penguins had to go to pub bookless

Alas, no-one was willing to house the library for the rest of the term, so no more Library Meetings. However, this just means we no longer have an excuse for going to the Rose and Crown on North Parade from 8.30 every

Sunday: it doesn't stop us going there.

Punt found at Punt Party

This is being held on Saturday 5th week (29th May) at the Cherwell Boathouse (see map on back page). Meet at 1.30, and what punts we have shall depart at 2pm. The Punt Party Panto Production this year is The Good, the Vlad and the Ugly, penned by Mark Boyes and Jason. Afterwards, we'll progress on to Mark Boyes' house, to finish off any alcohol left (there's nothing worse than having to go home with a half-finished bottle of wine). If you can get a punt from the Cherwell boathouse, PLEASE do so. Should anyone feel the need to soak people with various water-weaponry, please bring clean ammunition from the tap, so as to avoid breaking the Geneva Convention concerning biological warfare, and getting your nozzle clogged with leaves.

Joke Wearing Thin

Editor gets fed up with wacky Newspaper-style Headlines
before end of first page!

If anyone wants a copy of the Encyclopaedia of SF on the cheap, then get in contact with Tim Adye, before he sends off the order. Similarly if anyone wants a T-shirt, they'd better get in contact with Alex Ralph at Somerville a.s.a.p. We also need volunteers to run the Freshers' Fair Stall next year. Finally, we've been challenged to a Laser-quest match by RPGSoc. If you're interested in participating in such an event then get in contact with me, if we can get ten people together in this term, we'll probably hold it in eighth week.

Editorial

Well the touch-typing is getting better: as long as I actually look at the keyboard, it's faster than before. Apologies are due to Mike Richards, it turned out he only volunteered to deliver Newsletters to everyone in Newport, not Newport Pagnell. The cover for this month is one of the results of Colin's William Burroughs Workshop, created by Tim A, Wendy and Chris. See later on in this newsletter for some slightly more linear examples. Many thanks to John for his slushpile, and Chris for his film column, I hope. If there's a great big gaping empty page in this issue, then no thanks at all to Chris. Which leaves me little else to say, except give me some articles. Either Email me them at wa94002@oxford.ac.uk, or pigeon post me at Wadham, if you're really into the electronic age, my word-processor supports virtually any format on a PC disk, 3.5" preferred. Okay that's all I can fill up the space with, so until then, I'll Seeya Around

Mark Charsley

SFinx

The editorship of our affiliated SF fiction magazine is going up for

grabs as Chris leaves us. So if you want the chance to publish your stories, without getting them edited (or even rejected) now's your chance. Meanwhile, don't stop writing or drawing... okay, don't feel inhibited about starting to write or draw for it. Any work you feel worthy can be passed on to the committee for the time being.

Zool

Many, many years ago Zool death planet where the intractable renegades of 10,000 worlds etc. was created. Since then generations of OUSFGites have been writing about the bloody thing. The latest round - robin fiction thingy combining gossip, bad Space opera and appalling lack of writing ability is being passed around at the moment. If you fancy writing an episode, go and nag Tim into writing his episode.

Context

Well, at number 1, with the most quotes is me, mainly caused by people shouting "Quote!" at everything I say, so if mine aren't funny, blame yourselves. At no. 2 however is Jason, a magnificent effort, considering that he doesn't even live in Oxford any more. Frances should have come next, but she kinda vetoed all hers by threatening terrible things should they get printed.

Mark C. (to Dan): "If you've experienced a radioactive vagina, then I pity you."

Jason: "It might be a bit unpleasant if you were in someone at the time, but it's not as bad as your penis exploding."

Adrian: "I dunno, he's probably got a bigger dick than I have."

Jason: "And mine's been dipped in a bucket of bleach."

Alex: "I'm not in a position to judge."

Jeremy: "Who wrote My knob's bigger than Stanstead Airport?"

Jason: "How the hell should I know: I'm talking bollocks!"

Mark C. "He stuck a stick up a dead magpies bottom and took photos of it?!"

Jason: "But poodles aren't spherical... you have to sort of restrain them."

Mark C. "That's the film about a bloke who dresses up as a man, or vice versa."

Ralph: "Columbus didn't know he'd discovered America until after his lifetime"

Mark C. "The male equivalent of a birth canal is not something you want a baby going through."

Wendy: " By no means is the Vitalite sun an OUSFG member"

Mark C.: "Get Frances drunk and she'll probably say yes"^[1]

Mo: "There's a plague of large zombies in Wessex at the moment. Can you fill us in Ralph?"

Mark C.: "There you go: bonk lots of naked females and your horse will jump better."

Mark C.: "I'm five years younger than you and I'm ill developed."

Frances: "I look like a deranged rat."

Neal: "Chris cut nipple holes in my T-shirt because he had a spare tube of lipstick."

The Unfortunate results of the W. Burroughs Workshop:

Apologies to those who haven't had their work printed, but I could only retype the ones where I could work out what order the phrases were meant to be read in.

Court Circular

Laszlo crawled inside. What Dr. Bibescu had to do was have a drink and a piss. Jesus Christ exploded. The pilot of the patrol boat turned a tense white face on his grim-jawed commander. "What shall we do now, sir?"

"There's something not right here."

"Well I think he's spooky." How to explain to the boy that the armed forces of his city had been subverted to the will of a reincarnation of Nero's violin?

"Do you really expect me to believe this?"

"Yes."

"I thought you'd say that."

Ch'tin nodded almost as wildly as Hogshead. With a finicky motion he flicked his pulsating sublimated detritus. He addressed them formally, "Bu' I've gorrall these pies to sell."

"Now? You're crazy!"

"If we don't leave now, we're all dead. Something's happened to Cummings. He's..."

"Sub-standard custard powder," whimpered the developer, stuck in the British countryside for services rendered.

"She sensed that he was in trouble. It was not an over-whelming intuition, just a ribald, speculative, and condescending systemic organophosphorous insecticide and acaricide," Neville chuckled. He stabbed the sharpened tent peg into his heart and

fell without another word.

Mark C. and Colin

The ships flew off to the north, bearing the sad news of the death of Prince Thar.

"I told Daddy, 'There's a woman in the cellar' because the English don't know where we are until we reached the end of the circle and conscience that sounded in my soul."

He waded in, swinging the magic blade lustily. Laughing with grim humour, he strode across the river and as soon as it lay behind him it vanished completely in an instant, ceasing to exist as swiftly as it had flashed into being. Behind him stretched an unbroken surface of the Road and nothing more. Smiling, he strode forward. Powders number of J/psi little boy lost alloy shims to alter its the day lost.

"Doctor?"

He didn't answer. Peering up the face, he chose, "Yes! Psycho..." - he searched for the word- "...somatic arctic antics."

It didn't work. The headache was still there. He added the cream and stirred the mixture until the coffee turned a device, with precisely graduated Wireworm. Morrissey came round to my house the other night and held cellar in that house.

"No, Miles, that's not possible."

But it was possible and she knew it.

Because she was convinced that Marie had been her friend long before Marie had been Miles's wife.

"Who are you?" he asked.

Friends.

"Are you ghosts?"

It did not answer. We can do much for you.

RICHMOND, SURREY, late 40s, 18st, seeks lover and friends 36-50.

"A rare and blazing talent"- Stephen King.

One curious development within left-wing politics in recent months, though, is an initiative by the Democratic Left - the Knife in the Back.

Dave Clements
Slushpile

The following little gems were distilled from the slush pile of Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine. You can safely assume all spelling, punctuation and syntax are original.

Weston was known for the firm but genital hold he had on his own men. It was one of the reasons he was chosen for this mission over six other equally qualified men.

Freddy was in the habit of staring at Beverly's legs as they peaked from her Susie Wong slit dresses. She had a dozen of them.

"Something must have happened, since it's not like her to come back naked

and not aware of anything."

Out of the dark void came what looked like a giant rabbit followed by small rabbits which looked as if they had undergone a mutation with three ears and 2 tails. They discovered they were on Rabbitania.

The afternoon was very calm but consolidated. The birds were singing but were not blithesome.

He groped in his trousers and came up with a dirty piece of trash which I thought he'd just throw away.

When I thought of the poetics of such a confrontation in the blackness of eternity, I laughed sardonically, in a dry voice, to myself.

The two naked bodies, which were lying beneath the satin sheets, were no longer the people whom everyone, who was anyone, knew whenever reality was in existence.

John wasn't at all surprised at the transformation of his body into what he believed were light waves.

"Are the shields contoured to the body of the ship?" the computer asked breathlessly.

[From a cover letter] This story is basically about a prince who is required to go through a ritual of kingship. The cleansing ritual involves the dunking of a boy in a soybean oil bath set at 350 degrees. It is a sentimental piece with an ending that is left open for a sequel.

... I am well qualified to relate a tale of science fiction since I have always been of a fictitious nature.

[from a synopsis] His physical condition supported little, if any, life.

His heart started thumping from his stomach.

"Do you want to come and have a gunfight?" I asked. He seemed a bit loath to answer.

They were human in every way but they owned the necks, heads, facial expressions were that of a chicken.

Jake was not a man to show much emotion, but he found himself suppressing the urge to smile out loud.

A pool of suppressed sweat started building under his forehead.

Instinctively, without thinking about it, he grabbed the woman and hugged her and then gave her breasts a couple of playful pinches.

"Commander please," she said as she blushed and began yodelling

He gazed at what appeared to be an invisible column coming from an infinite distance.

Talan gestured at the controls. "Overheating of the glycroms in the thermoperambulator. You know how it is."

The man spoke a foreign tongue to them which they followed without question.

Are you going to go up t her and say, (and you have to pardon me I'm form another planet, Let's get together for a life spand.)" The dwarf came back strongly. [All spelling, punctuation and grammar is correctly typed]

It was a planet spinning around Proxima Centauri, an Earth like planet covered with an average of two miles of water.

Kree's voice grabbed my heart form behind.

A large serf of joy rode under Lisa's face.

Then his head, which supported his bushy brown hair, turned to look at his sister.

My lips drew back in a savage frown.

And now, the very awaited
Hasty Tasty Film Column

This summer seems to mark the end of all the big budget science fiction epics that we've been seeing for the last decade or so. On the Aspel show both Sly Stallone and Arnie were busy trying to push the point that they were part of the "caring 90's" and wanted to move away from pure violence films and try and get some "urr urr character urr" into their parts. Hmmm. Jean Claude Van Damme has also starred in a film he helped to make, with "less violence" (emphasis on the less) than previous epics such as Universal Soldier. The question is, are audiences tired yet of good special effects as a replacement to badly plotted films (such as in Alien3) Probably not since effects advances are coming thick and fast, and will have audiences fairly gobsmacked for some time yet; besides, badly plotted and poorly written scripts aren't just restricted to science fiction... Don't fret, sci-fi fans; it'd take a major rewiring of the Hollywood mind to make such epics disappear. Already there's a Stallone movie coming up, in which (get this) Wesley Snipes is a bad guy, cryogenically frozen for some reason, who gets thawed in the far future and must be stopped!! The best man for the job is Sly himself, who was also (you don't say!) frozen many years before, and so he's thawed too. Could be terrible. But you never know.

One upshot of the leaps in effects technology is that decent effects can now be achieved quite cheaply, paving the way for television sci-fi series that can spread their budgets around a little more. (Or perhaps do the same for less money, all you cynics!). More on TV in a bit.

If you haven't seen Groundhog Day yet, catch it quickly before it leaves the MGM. The story harks back to a Twilight Zone episode, and is all about a weatherman who for a (thankfully) unexplained reason has to relive the same day of this life over and over again, Sort of like Scrooge but loads better, it's an excellent "feel good" movie and be warned - when you come out you'll want to pull people's noses, jump in front of cars etc. etc. The Twilight Zone was repeating a single hour and was a bleak tale that was pure nightmare - Groundhog Day largely (but not

completely) ignores the depressing side of things for a much more light-hearted production and uses the situation to explore what would happen if you really could go back to yesterday and do it differently, and - perhaps more interestingly - if you could do anything you want without having to pay the price.

Coming up this summer is Jurassic Park, a huge budget film directed by Steven Spielberg and based on the book by Michael Crichton. (You heard about it already? And they were being soooo secretive too!) It's all about an island theme park that features real live dinosaurs regrown from DNA samples the archaeologists found in amber-preserved insects; things all start to go wrong and that's where the action begins. The book unfortunately has much potential for a corny script, and some of the brief clips in the trailer looked a bit worn, but the monster effects promise to make Ray Harryhausen's look like animated plasticene figures and it should be entertaining. Release is sometime in July, a week after the other major summer contender, Last Action Hero, which teams Arnie back with director John McTiernan (Die Hard, Predator, Hunt for Red October).

Meanwhile William Shatner has produced a script for Star Trek 7, but apparently it's had a cool reception from the film company after that flop of the last one he directed, no. 5. Instead there's talk of using the Next Generation crew for any future films. (Speaking of Shatner, his novels of late are being developed for the big screen.)

Meanwhile in the States the Next Generation has finished a number of science fiction spin-offs. The best is meant to be Deep Space Nine, starring the one-time operator of the teleporter in The Next Generation, and it concentrates on a fixed-site space station. Sadly Sky has nabbed this one, to add to ST:TNG. Booo. While reviews for Deep Space Nine have been enthusiastic, the other sci-fi shows that started this year in the US have generally been panned.

The state of sci-fi television in Britain is far from healthy, but on Bite Back recently hints were made at an improvement, with comments suggesting that a "potential" project being considered could be one of the major TV events of the decade! Honest! That was about it, though... the only other news is that the next Red Dwarf series is almost finished, and that Doctor Who could return (familiar one that). The interviewee did complain that the BBC gets very few quality scripts, and that that was a big part of the problem. I'm sure budget is also a consideration that few writers take into account, if the last few series of Doctor Who were anything to go by. Ed's Note: There have been rumours of a Doctor Who film with Tom Baker, and also Neil Gaiman keeps on going on about a dark-fantasy Doctor Who-esque series he wrote starring Lenny Henry.

On the Aliens front, there are apparently serious plans for an Aliens vs Predator cross over film, but that'll be a while in the making. Hellraiser III was really terrible, unless you like corny unimaginative horror with nothing to recommend it. On TV there's a new children's (ish) programme on Channel 4 on Thursday evenings called Eerie, Indiana, which is pretty bizarre and has been called a "cult" in America (not in any Waco sense) and has already been released to video. If you haven't seen any yet it's worth watching; the general theme seems to be that all the weird things you imagined as a kid, like the eye nurse brainwashing the pupils to work hard, or the old abandoned house near the shop being haunted, are all true, and they get sorted out by two kids who take it all very seriously. Joe Dante (director of Gremlins, Matinee, The Burbs)

has a hand in all this, as producer (I think).

That about wraps things up for this term folks; here's hoping the Brits do well at Cannes after a surprising number of our films have been nominated, and if the current lull in good SF at the cinema is getting to you, then we'll see you at the next OUSFG video meeting!

Chris Ewels

More Convention Stuff

Caption 93, this is a small, one day small press comics convention held on 17th July, and thus has little to do with this society. However, it's being held in the Oxford Union, and is run by members of the Comic Book Society. So if Adrian hasn't conned you into turning up yet, and you're interested, then have a word with him.

Lunicon, yet another plug for this year's Unicon, the national student SF con. Guests include Roger Zelazny, Michael Scott Rohan and Colin Greenland. It being held from 30th July to 1st August, costs £6 for students, and is in Leeds. Contact Paul or Barry on 0532 436849, or uni0sfs@uk.ac.leeds.gps for further details. If anyone is on the route between Wembley and Leeds, and wants a lift, get in contact with me.

[1] It was about editing SFinx, alright?

Online copy courtesy of

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