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WINCON II

King Alfred's College, Winchester 16-18th August 1991

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Photograph of Bruce Sterling on page 8 courtesy of Roger Robinson.

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Introducing WINCON

- Mike Cheater

Hello and welcome to WINCON II, the second SF convention to be held at King Alfred's College, Winchester, which follows WINCON (UNICON 9) in 1988. We hope you enjoy this convention as much as many people claim to have enjoyed the first of the series.

We've set out with the clear goal of putting on a convention that breaks away from some of the 'run-of-the-mill' conventions that can be found lately. To this end we've made WINCON II international, with a strong European flavour; we aim to be open and friendly, particularly targeting the first-time convention attendee (as reflected in the 'Mixer Quiz' on Friday night where everyone old and new is expected to take part). But this is not to suggest that the experienced attendees will be left out - there will be plenty for them as well.

Two main themes are evidenced by many of our programme items. These are 'Images of the Future', which looks at how the media has treated the subject, using video clips and discussions, and 'The Art Of Storytelling'. 'Images of the Future' is introduced in more detail later in this booklet.

Also taking place during the convention are the celebrations for the 10th anniversary of the South Hants Science Fiction Group (SHSFG) - of which all the committee are, by sheer coincidence, members.

Before we get into the Souvenir Book proper, there are a number of "thank you's" which need to be expressed. These are to people who have helped in one way or another and without whom things would have been a lot more difficult:

- Cyril Simsa: for help with things Czechoslovakian
- Gwyneth Jones: for running the Writers Workshop for us
- Andy Morris: for help with the convention's film programme
- Dan Lish: a student at Portsmouth College of Art - for the cover

- Jeff Suter: who might as well have been a member of the committee.

Other individuals to thank:

- John Brunner
- Keith Freeman
- Anne-Marie and Peter Wright

Publishers who provided books and such-like:

- Simon & Schuster
- Pan
- Transworld
- Grafton
- Penguin.

And of course our Honoured Guests:

- Bruce Sterling
- Brian Stableford
- Josef Nesvadba.

A special thanks should also go to our sponsors Southern Arts, who enabled us to bring Josef Nesvadba over from Czechoslovakia and also to put on the Writers Workshop. In particular we would like to thank their Literature Officer, Jane Spiers, for her time and assistance.

Last, but by no means least, we would like to thank the contributors to this Souvenir Book, programme participants and gophers too numerous to name individually.

Always assuming that the committee are still speaking after this weekend, I suppose you should watch this space for WINCON III

Introducing The Committee

Pan-Trantor PD 87th Precinct - a.m. bulletin

In overnight raid on underworld rendezvous 'Mike's Pad', precinct officers apprehended notorious 7-strong 'Wincon Committee' gang plus 1 known close collaborator.

Female suspect thought to be gang associate known as 'The Teacher', escaped during confusion.

Questioning under way charges expected shortly. Details of 8 perpetrators follow overleaf:



To Be Named Lastly:

BARK

To Be Named Firstly:

JOHN

To Be Named Also:

WHO?

Things Done:

WINCON (UNICON 9)
Chairman of SHSFG
Treasurer, Edinburgh SF Soc.
Prize-Winning Short Stories.

Things Left Undone:

Accumulation of enormous
wealth through best selling
5 volume trilogy.

To Be Affiliated With:

SHSFG
GLOMERULE (Reading
Berks)

To Be Generally Known:

John tackled Site & Guest
Liaison, Publicity and
Publications. Creator of
Cyber-Alfred/Cyber-Gopher.

To Be Particularly Known:

Omnicompetent



To Be Named Lastly:

CHEATER

To Be Named Firstly:

MIKE

To Be Named Also:

JOHN RICHARDS

Things Done:

WINCON
30 CON
SHSFG Everything

Things Left Undone:

Retiring to America
with WINCON surplus

To Be Affiliated With:

SHSFG

To Be Generally Known:

Mike has been Chairperson
Membership Secretary and
Treasurer.

To Be Particularly Known:

Mike Cheater is not John
Richards. He has a
woman but no beard.



To Be Named Lastly:

COSSLETT

To Be Named Firstly:

KEITH

To Be Named Also:

KIPPER (Look, don't
ask, just DON'T ask!)

Things Done:

Editor of "Cyberspace", the
newsletter of the SHSFG
from issue 10.

Things Left Undone:

Has not, as yet, become an
internationally famous rock
star.

To Be Affiliated With:

SHSFG

To Be Generally Known:

Keith has been irrespon-
sible for publications &
some publicity, and was
Southern Arts Liaison.

To Be Particularly Known:

Keith has taken great
delight in introducing the
music (!) of the "Macc
Lads" to the SHSFG.



To Be Named Lastly:

CROFT

To Be Named Firstly:

ANDY

To Be Named Also:

'CLINT' CROFT

Things Done:

Tech for: WINCON
CONFICTION
SPECULATION

Things Left Undone:

Written Star Wars Part 1

To Be Affiliated With:

SHSFG, BDA,
NODA, PAC

To Be Generally Known:

Andy is the Stage
Technical Slave.

To Be Particularly Known:

Is likely to shock anyone
messing about with Tech.



To Be Named Lastly:—

HUNT

To Be Named Firstly:—

TERRY

To Be Named Also:—

(PAUL)

Things Done:—

President of St Andrews SF
Soc, edited clubzine "Zarbi!"
Gophered at several cons,
worked on OPs at Confiction.

Things Left Undone:—

Simultaneous possession of house
and job; collection of all
British SF paperbacks ever
published; achievement of
simultaneous orgasm (too slow).

To Be Affiliated With:—

SHSFG
BSFA
ASTRA

BBCS
SDS

To Be Generally Known:—

Terry was committee member
without (amongst other
things) portfolio, and has
helped with Publications.

To Be Particularly Known:—

Rumoured to listen to
filk. Lacks enthusiasm for
Real Ale. Disciple of
Charles Fort.



To Be Named Lastly:—

PLUMBLY

To Be Named Firstly:—

PHIL

To Be Named Also:—

DIMBLEBY (Ask my old
French Teacher!)

Things Done:—

Finder of Shoelaces and Time
Warp in Room 13 at WINCON I...
Deputy Ops Manager at Con-
fiction; and head chair mover
at Speculation.

Things Left Undone:—

WINCON III
POMPEYCON

To Be Affiliated With:—

SHSFG
WINCON I committee
WINCON II "

To Be Generally Known:—

Committee Scapegoat of
WINCON I. Committee Inky
(Secretary) at WINCON II.

To Be Particularly Known:—

SHSFG speaker to Czechos-
lovakia. WINCON II seeker
of Weird Beers & Bottles.



To Be Named Lastly:—

RICHARDS

To Be Named Firstly:—

JOHN F. W.

To Be Named Also:—

MIKE CHEATER

Things Done:—

30 CON
WINCON
Contentious Articles for
HDF (Helicon)

Things Left Undone:—

RUNNING A WORLD CON
JOINING THE BSFA

To Be Affiliated With:—

SHSFG
LCFI
Rainbows End Fan Club

To Be Generally Known:—

John is the only member
of the committee egotis-
tical enough to run
programming.

To Be Particularly Known:—

John Richards is not Mike
Cheater. He has a beard
but no woman.



To Be Named Lastly:—

SUTER

To Be Named Firstly:—

GEOFFREY *\$@!&%

To Be Named Also:—

JEFF, Hey you,
'Fatso'

Things Done:—

Co-Founder of The SHSFG
BSFA London Meetings Organiser
Panzine Editor.

Things Left Undone:—

Becoming a best selling author.
Learned how to sing in tune.

To Be Affiliated With:—

SHSFG

To Be Generally Known:—

Geoff wishes it to be
known that he is warm and
cuddly during winter.

To Be Particularly Known:—

NOT GUILTY!

This Image Thing

- John Richards

Some years ago I saw a trailer for a BBC programme called Doomwatch. The scene shown was set in an aeroplane that was slowly dissolving. I didn't actually see the episode concerned - nor, in fact, any of the rest of the series - but that image has stayed with me ever since. This is what the 'Images of the Future' programme stream is about.

There are thousands of things that contain behind them a whole wealth of ideas that represent the public (and private) view of what Science Fiction is about. 2001 is encapsulated in the opening bars of Thus Spake Zarathustra; Star Wars can be stored entirely in the form of an asthmatic with a coal scuttle on his head; a city in a glass dome covers just about every story ever written for John W. Campbell.

For the most part these images are visual or musical. This is mostly because of the relative audience sizes for films and books, but also because authors have more time than film makers to develop specific ideas and so tend to deal less with archetypes. However, archetypes remain an important influence on how SF sees itself and how others see it at all levels. Whether a convention is adopted without question, avoided at all costs or re-examined and re-worked into something new and strange, it still has influence and will shape the final product.

In examining Images we may be inevitably chaining ourselves to the past,

since by the time an idea reaches the general public it is almost invariably 'old hat' and no longer of any particular interest to the cognoscenti. Although this is a genuine problem in some cases, it can also lead to the notion that any idea that has reached the general public is not worth the time of the serious fan. All I can say is that such an attitude cuts you off from an extraordinarily rich and vibrant stream of work, all in the name of elitism. (I must confess I have always been a believer in Clive James' dictum that there is more value in good trash than bad art.)

At WINCON II we will be examining four sets of images:

Transport
Aliens
Weapons
Society

We will be looking at where we went wrong and where we went right. We will be examining recurrent ideas and finding out why they keep coming back. We will be discussing how what the public sees compares with what is really happening, and asking how well the image makers have served the genre.

Last month I bought a BBC video of Doomwatch and finally got to see the plane melting again, this time in context. Also on the tape was "that one with the rats" which seemed to have excited a number of folk who were attending that month's BSFA meeting. I've since watched the thing three times. The action doesn't vary and the episode ends exactly the same way each time. Despite this I am still thrilled each time I see Robert Powell's plastic cup dissolve. That is the power of images. That is why they remain important.



The "Pathologically Imaginative" Mr Sterling

- William Gibson



I've known your GoH, Mr Sterling, for just under a decade, if you count our first actual face-to-face meeting. That was at Denvention, the '81 Worldcon, though we had been aware of one another for some time previous.

I'd purchased his first novel in 1977, at the University of British Columbia's campus bookstore. It cost a dollar-fifty brand new and boasted a peculiar cover-art involving lots of waves and droplets, singularly inappropriate for the tale of a world where there is no water whatever. I took it home, sat on the back step, beer in hand (it made, somehow, for thirsty reading) and read it. I liked it. I still do, although Bruce dismisses it as juvenilia. Which it is, I suppose, although it's patently the product of that ever-scarce species, the natural-born raving SF writer. I took it home, empathized with its author over the editor's fulsome intro (No. 14 in the Harlan Ellison Discovery Series), and was only mildly irritated that it had been written by someone considerably younger than myself. I had ideas about this SF thing myself, you see, and secretly suspected that one day I might try my hand at same.

Some vaguely longish time and a couple of short stories later, I found myself in New York's Lower East Side, wading with my friend John Shirley through the ankle-deep refuse of a short-lived art-revo along Avenue D. We were on our way to a subterranean restaurant that served chocolate mousse artfully sculpted to resemble human turd, and he was exulting about a book he'd just read, a novel called the *The Artificial Kid*. Back at his apartment (I'd declined dessert) he showed it to me. Hard covers, this time, because, damn, it's that kid again. And getting better, if John's enthusiasm was any indication. Shirley proudly announced that he was actually, well, corresponding with this guy. This made me, I seem to recall, obscurely jealous.

I decided to get in touch with this fellow myself. A matter of 'be there or be square', it seemed. And so it did prove over time to be, as remarkably little of real interest (my interest, that is) would take place in the SF world without Sterling either being personally involved with, or else furiously up on, whatever the new marvel might be.

In fact, Bruce Sterling turned out to be everything I ever wanted an American science fiction writer to be: pathologically imaginative, intellectually omnivorous, an out-of-the-closet polymath, a Texan (a people whom I hold in rather the same regard as Cordwainer Smith held Austrians), a discerning global consumer of other people's pop culture, a Sisters of Mercy fan, a snappy dresser, and, yes, a writer of undeniable talent and downright worrisome originality. Not to mention the extraordinarily fortunate fact that he is married to, yes, his wife - the only woman I can imagine dealing gracefully with such a situation, the altogether amazing Nancy Sterling.

Don't you hate these turns in programme books, Big Name Whatshisface No. 1 introducing Big Name Whatshisface No. 2? I know I do.

But nevertheless, folks, you are fortunate indeed. In an era of foil-embossed hackery and share-cropped identikit 'classics', your con committee has had the rare good taste to provide you with the genuine article, a writer as singular in his way as H.P. Lovecraft or your own Mr Ballard - a walking, talking paradigm of whatever the f*** it is that makes the, er, genre, pardon me, worth occasionally attending to.

So don't be shy, no. He may be loud but he doesn't bite, not usually anyway, and he bears (as indeed I do myself) a curious affection for your island nation and its eldritch customs. Indeed, the only foreign place in which he feels more at home is very probably Japan. About which you might ask him. Or you might ask him about Operation Sun Devil, or the Legion of Doom, or the relationship between acid house and hacking, or about Zelda (the pop group, not Ms Murakami), or why we fell to giggling like mad things when the lady from the Science Museum showed us the white cotton gloves.

Wish I were there.

WILLIAM GIBSON is the Hugo and Nebula award-winning author of Neuromancer. He lives in Vancouver, Canada and is listed in "The Bloomsbury Book of 20th Century Icons".

"Weird Australians" And Subtitles

- John Richards

The film programme for WINCON II was put together in the usual way. We sat down and thought hard about what 'themes' we were going to have running through the convention. We examined what was available, argued at length about the relative merits and then I chose some films I happened to like.

Well almost. To be honest we started with a map of WINCON I and decided to follow that. For those of you who weren't there the films at the original WINCON were: The Tin Drum, The Phantom Toll-booth, The Witches of Eastwick and The Last Wave. These rapidly became known as the "The Serious (subtitled) Film", "The Cheap Film", "The Big Film" and "The Weird Australian Film". And that's how they stayed for the first few drafts of the programme.

The first to crystallize into an actual film was "The Serious (subtitled) Film". Once Josef Nesvadba had agreed to be our guest I began to get flooded by requests that we show Tomorrow I Shall Scald Myself With Tea. On the whole this seemed to be a good plan but it presented

Sterling Bibliography

A. Novels

Involution Ocean (Jove/HBJ Books 1977)
The Artificial Kid (Ace, 1980)
Schismatrix (Arbor House, 1985)
Islands In The Net (Arbor House, 1988)
The Difference Engine (with William Gibson)
(Gollancz, 1990)

B. Short Story Collections

Crystal Express (Arkham House, 1989)

C. As Editor

Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology (Ace, 1986)

one difficulty. As far as we knew there was no copy available in this country. The film had been shown on BBC 2 some years earlier but that had involved the BBC getting a copy from Czechoslovakia, adding electronic subtitles for the broadcast, and then sending the thing straight back. There was no mention of the film in Andy Morris's catalogues and although several people had seen its showing no-one had actually thought to video it. No-one that is except for 'S--C--'. SC is an early member of the SHSFG who gradually gave up Science Fiction and took up American Football fandom. These days he seems to spend more time in the US than Tim Illingworth. He also seems to have recorded every single TV programme he's ever seen in his entire life. If anyone was going to have a copy of Tomorrow . . . it was SC. We waited for two months for him to come back from his latest American peregrinations nervously biting our finger nails and sending out increasingly hopeless enquiries to the normal video sources. Finally SC came back. Geoff Suter was immediately sent round to find if he had what we were looking for. He had. Tomorrow I Shall Scald Myself With Tea was on the bill.

If, as was widely reported, audiences had difficulty in following the plot of Back To The Future II then they don't stand a chance with this one. The basic plot concerns the designer of a tourist time-travel vehicle who takes his

brother's place when that individual accidentally chokes to death, and becomes involved in the plot to provide Hitler with an atomic bomb. By the end of the film, however, our initial hero somehow becomes two people and is marrying both a stewardess and the daughter of a family of trampolinists whom he accidentally killed during a previous attempt to stop the Nazis. It's great fun, really, but it does pay to keep your eyes open.

The next film in place was The Cheap Movie. This was prompted by Terry Hunt's discovery that Saturday August 17th was the anniversary of Bella Lugosi's death. Phil Plumbly immediately decided that nothing else would do than that we show Plan 9 From Outer Space, the film that contains Bella's last performance.

In point of fact Bella Lugosi never knew anything about Plan 9 . . . and was actually working on a film called Mark Of The Monster when he died. However, Ed Wood Jnr, the director, was never one to waste film and, since he really did not have enough footage to make the film he had planned, used the material for Plan 9 The effect of this, when mixed with the fact that Bella's stand-in was almost a foot taller and holds his cloak in such a way as to surely preclude visibility, is almost as macabre as the last scene of Poltergeist 3 when our heroes are trying to rescue from the underworld the stand-in for the late Heather O'Rourke.

Phil being determined on Plan 9 From Outer Space, I decided that damage limitation was required and so also went for the 1930 version of Dracula. Maybe by the end of his career Bella Lugosi had become a joke but when he was good he set the pattern for everyone who followed.

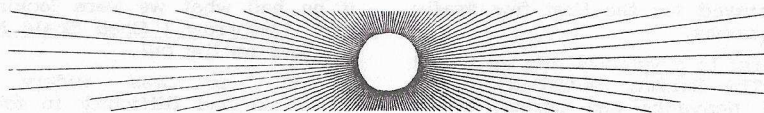
The last two slots were settled by availability really. For some time I had Field of Dreams and Encounter at Ravensgate pencilled in but when we got

our hands on the catalogue they simply weren't there. I must confess to some degree of disappointment since I dearly love Field of Dreams and think that Encounter . . . definitely deserves a wider audience, but there were plenty of other goodies there.

When I came across The Abyss I couldn't for the life of me think why I had not put it on the short list earlier. Aside from the rather weak ending this is one of the best 'hard SF films' of the last two decades. It has a strong plot, excellent acting and some exceptional photography. Wait until the first shot of the city and then go and get a drink. You'll miss a few effects and the happy ending but so what? You will have already seen over two hours of excellent film from the couple who brought you Aliens.

"The Weird Australian Film" has become "The Weird American Film" with the selection of The Power. (Actually I had considered going for Kurosawa's Dreams - but I thought two subtitled films was excessive.) This is a George Pal film starring George Hamilton and Michael Rennie and not the rather pathetic 80's horror film now available at your local video library. The story concerns a scientist who discovers that one of his colleagues has terrifying mental powers and is trying to kill the others. The plot is not too light but the imagery, particularly the office with the disappearing door and the fight in the kitchen, is terrific.

Well that's where we are at the time of writing and with any luck that's what we'll have by the time of the convention. Films that didn't make it due to lack of availability include Tremors and Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure. Films that they wouldn't let me get away with include Dreams, The Exorcist and Society. Films that weren't considered for a fraction of a second include The Ice Pirates, Highlander II and Life Force.



Writing A Bicycle

- Geoff Ryman

The terrible thing about writing is that it isn't about words. At least, not at first.

Writing fiction is about learning how to imagine - interesting characters, strange vistas, exciting action - but in a formed and shaped way. It's about training yourself to imagine, regularly, in a useable form. Writing is a state of mind, first of all. It's also a habit, to be developed.

I ran a writers workshop at the first WINCON. The aim was to start brand new writers off on what I thought was the right road.

Since writing is a habit, I tried to get people to produce notebooks, regularly, over a period of time before coming to WINCON. The aim was to get them used to pushing out words at regular intervals.

Since writing, like riding a bicycle, is all about having the confidence to keep going fast enough, the workshop also aimed to encourage rather than criticise. With each writer, individually, I went through the notebooks to discuss what I liked about them, and possible directions for the future.

For that reason, also, the usual format of writing workshops was avoided. We did not sit in a circle criticising each other's work. New writers sometimes try to air their critical skills. This can be discouraging to the people whose work is being dissected.

I also tried to talk about writing habits. This is more than the need to keep writing often. I talked about ways to circumvent the conscious mind, and encouraging the unconscious imagination.

There are some pretty cheap tricks for doing this. You can gently engage the conscious mind with some simple task - going for a walk, scrubbing the floor. With the conscious mind occupied, the imagination can sometimes step forward. If the imagination is being lazy, you can deny it other satisfactions. You can prevent it reading anything, or listening to music. In the silence, out of sheer boredom, it may start to work again.

So, writing is also an exercise in self-management. I DON'T mean sitting down and forcing yourself to write. In fact, I mean precisely the opposite. NEVER sit down to write if you don't feel like it. NEVER spend time staring at a typewriter (that will become a habit too).

By self management, I mean observing your writing self, all the time. What time of day, or day of the week best suits it? Under what circumstances does your imagination fire on all cylinders. Does playing music inspire or distract.

I said to the workshop to think of their imaginations as lovely, wayward children that need to be loved, protected, coaxed and sometimes disciplined by the responsible, mature, but uncreative conscious mind.

They probably thought it was bullshit. But I'm still in contact with some of them. Indeed, I'm working with one of them on a show.

Once your imagination is working, once you are producing fiction regularly, then you will be ready for a workshop where your stories will be criticised. At that point writing does become a matter of words on a page.

GEOFF RYMAN is a winner of the World Fantasy Award for 'The Unconquered Country' and the Arthur C. Clarke award for his novel The Child Garden. He lives in London and was a Guest of Honour at WINCON (Unicon 9) in 1988.

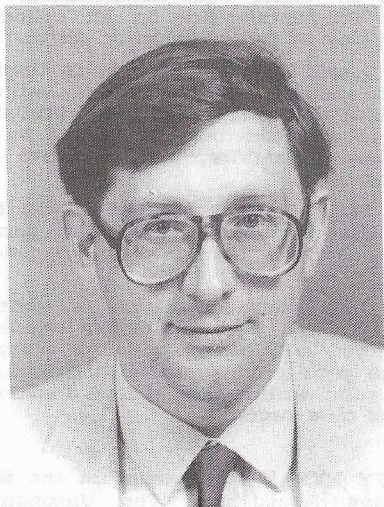
* * *

RUNNING THE Writers Workshop at WINCON II is writer and critic, Gwyneth Jones. Gwyneth has written a number of books as 'Anne Halam' including King Death's Garden; and the Daymaker series of juvenile fantasies, (Orchard Books). Under her own name she has written one SF book for teenagers, The Hidden Ones, (The Women's Press), and three SF novels for adults: Divine Endurance, Escape Plans and Kairos, (Unwin Hyman). White Queen, a novel about "first contact, sex games and smart cockroaches", is set for release by Gollancz later this year. Gwyneth has written reviews, critical essays and short stories for Foundation, Interzone, The New York Review of Science Fiction, and Strange Press.

Gwyneth was born in Manchester in 1952, has a degree in something obscure from Sussex University and lives with her husband and child in Brighton.

Six And A Half Things You Didn't Know About Brian Stableford

- Dave Langford



This is the trouble about living down the road from a practically famous author: crazed convention organizers expect you to know and reveal all his most embarrassing inner secrets. I'm not actually sure whether Brian Stableford has embarrassing secrets, since unlike eighty or ninety SF hacks you and I could both mention, he seems completely lacking in pretensions about the awesome literary inwardness of his works.

Autobiographical comments from that direction tend to run more along the lines of "Oh, that book only took a week or two to write, I was a bit young then and did it in the school holidays." Or: "My editor told me to jot down the plots of the 'Odyssey' and 'Iliad' with lots of SF names and spaceships, and it would sell as a trilogy . . . it did too, people thumping each other with swords all over the galaxy." Or: "Of course my novels aren't all cynical and sarcastic. In one of them, if I remember correctly, the hero very nearly got the girl."

Brian, indeed, says wittier and more cutting things about himself than I ever

could, and to earnest seekers after truth I recommend his long autobiographical piece in the 50th issue of Foundation (Autumn 1990), explaining in depth how he founded a science-fictional career on myopia, sarcasm and flour beetles.

Inside knowledge? Brian as collaborator is slightly unnerving: I've worked with him on non-fiction masterpieces (The Science in Science Fiction, The Third Millennium) and find he tends to dash off 30,000 words of polished final copy while I'm still staring at the terrible blank expanse under the heading 'Chapter One'. Brian as critic can be utterly devastating ("This stropmy little man," expostulated a certain Mr Aldiss), but after wielding his awesome knowledge of unreadable 19th-century SF and carving a swathe through today's fantasy grot, he often comes up praising some rare and unexpected gem. One of his non-sarky reviews helped boost Robert Irwin's fine The Arabian Nightmare from small-press obscurity to a major hardback release.

Older pictures of Brian show him sinisterly bearded; he gave all that up some years ago, which must have added to his charms, as in May 1987 he married the lovely Jane. Then, while she fondly stayed in Reading, Brian dashed off for a non-honeymoon at a futurological conference in Tokyo. Such is the hectic life of a writer/critic/biologist/futurologist/sociologist Drafting a piece about him in March for a 1991 Swedish con where he was to be guest, I wanted to check some of the more hideously offensive and libellous remarks with their subject - no good, though, he was globe-trotting again and was last sighted at the International Conference on the Fantastic in Florida.

Brian the Public Speaker has also evolved before my stupefied gaze. Many years ago he nervously and mumblingly addressed the local SF group with what appeared to be bits of his old Encyclopedia of SF articles, but it was hard to decipher enough to be sure. By the mid-eighties he'd obviously been practising on helpless guinea-pig audiences at Reading University lectures: at a Cymrucon he held the audience spell-bound with an hilarious forty-minute talk, impromptu, on SF as exemplified by the life and philosophy of Wittgenstein. I would say nice things about his later speech at one Becon, but that was the time I got up too early for my single day's conventioning, drove for countless exhausted miles, collapsed into the front row, and went to sleep. They told

me later that Brian's comments on this snoring figure comprised a tour de force of protracted abuse without hesitation, deviation or repetition. Wish I'd, as it were, been there.

Brian the Radio Personality is one persona with which I've shared the odd microphone, trying to plug books like The Third Millennium. It usually went something like this. . . .

INTERVIEWER: I really enjoyed this marvellous book the, um, Third Million. And one of the things I particularly wanted to ask you about was, er, [opens book at random] this picture, this very imaginative picture of, er, [squints at caption] a 27th-century electronic sexual stimulation device?

BRIAN: I want to start by saying we had nothing to do with the pictures. Disregard the pictures. Other hands inserted them without our knowledge.

ME: And the captions too. Ask about anything but the pictures and captions. And tables. And maps.

BRIAN: And do remember that this is a book of speculation, not prediction. It's an imaginative history of the future.

ME: With a bit of wishful thinking about the gloomy bits.

BRIAN: Because you can't have World War III in 1995 or whenever if you want lots more interesting future history all the way from 2000 to 3000 [You can tell this was pre-Gulf War.]

INTERVIEWER: Oh yes. So, on what grounds do you make this very daring prediction of [inserts hastily selected random sentence from book here], and do you really expect us to believe it will come true . . . ?

[The authors groan, in stereo.]

The best part of these radio ventures was chatting in the pub afterwards about the number of active brain cells possessed by the interviewer, the millions of terrible review copies we'd recently read (Brian: "I didn't actually read XXXX, I only had to synthesize it for this reference book, not review it"), and the unspeakable horror of the literary life.

Which brings us back to Brian the Skiffy Author, for whom I had a lot of fondness before ever meeting the man himself. Besides any books mentioned above (ahem), seek out Man in a Cage (his most ambitious and hardest to find), The Walking Shadow (that was the one

whose first British printing sold out in an incredible seven weeks - after which the publishers, piqued by the public's failure to buy at a more restrained rate, declined to reprint), the six 'Grainger' books (whose cynical, non-violent hero has a lot of the author in him), the enjoyable 'younger readers' fantasy The Last Days of the Edge of the World, and his major recent novels The Empire of Fear (the ultimate Scientific Romance about vampires) and The Werewolves of London. Oh, and he's just edited one of the oddest theme anthologies ever, Tales of the Wandering Jew, tracing the fictional adventures of that unfortunate chap from 18th- and 19th-century classics through to the latest SF/Fantasy treatments by, well, various hands including Stablf*rd and Langf*rd. His new story collection Sexual Chemistry consists largely of a cycle of Third Millennial SF related to that book's future history, and thanks to the title was shelved in our local Blackwell's under popular science.

He's also publishing fantasies under the pseudonym 'Brian Craig', for Games Workshop's series of books set in their shared world of the dreadful 'Warhammer' game. The stories are moderate fun and I don't understand why Brian seemed a trifle upset when I warned readers in a review that the cover illustration of Plague Daemon (second in that sequence) was so vile, pustular, loathsome and diseased that you could probably catch gangrene and leprosy merely by touching the book.

Along with John Clute and Peter Nicholls, Brian is also working on the mammoth second edition of the 'Encyclopedia of SF'. Like the other editors who toiled so long and hard on the first edition of 1979, he is waiting with keen interest to learn whether, yet again, Peter Nicholls' name will be the only one appearing on the jacket.

How can I conclude except by saying that Brian is the most cruelly misrepresented author in British SF? Half the fanzines and a goodly percentage of reference books perpetuate this terrible injustice, by spelling his name 'Stapleford'. Yes, historians of the future are easily confused and Olaf Stabledon has a lot to answer for.

DAVID LANGFORD is a physicist turned freelance writer, author of The Space Eater and The Leaky Establishment. He lives in Berkshire, and is an ardent collector of Hugo Awards.

Stableford Bibliography

A. Fiction

- Cradle of the Sun (Ace, 1969)
 The Blind Worm (Ace, 1970)
 Dies Irae trilogy:
 The Days of Glory (Ace, 1971)
 In the Kingdom of the Beasts (Ace, 1971)
 Day of Wrath (Ace, 1971)
 To Challenge Chaos (DAW, 1972)
 Hooded Swan series:
 Halcyon Drift (DAW, 1972)
 Rhapsody in Black (DAW, 1973)
 Promised Land (DAW, 1973)
 The Paradise Game (DAW, 1973)
 The Fenris Device (DAW, 1974)
 Swan Song (DAW, 1975)
 Realms of Tartarus (DAW, 1977); separate publication
 of individual parts:
 The Face of Heaven (Quartet, 1976)
 A Vision of Hell (Quartet, 1976)
 A Glimpse of Infinity (Quartet, 1976)
 Man in a Cage (John Day, 1976)
 The Mind-Riders (DAW, 1976)
 Daedalus series:
 The Florians (DAW, 1976)
 Critical Threshold (DAW, 1977)
 Wildeblood's Empire (DAW, 1977)
 The City of the Sun (DAW, 1978)
 Balance of Power (DAW, 1979)
 The Paradox of the Sets (DAW, 1979)
 The Last Days of the Edge of the World
 (Hutchinson, 1978)
 The Walking Shadow (Fontana, 1979)
 Optiman (1980: in UK as War Games (Pan 1981))
 The Castaways of Tanager (DAW, 1981)
 Asgard trilogy:
 Journey to the Centre
 (SF Book Club, 1982.DAW, 1982)

- Invaders from the Centre (NEL, 1990)
 The Centre Cannot Hold (NEL, 1990)
 The Gates of Eden (DAW, 1983)
 The Empire of Fear (Simon & Schuster, 1988)
 The Werewolves of London (Simon & Schuster, 1990)
 Sexual Chemistry: Sardonic Tales of the Genetic
 Revolution (Simon & Schuster, 1991)
 The Angel of Pain (Simon & Schuster, due Aug. 1991)

As Brian Craig:

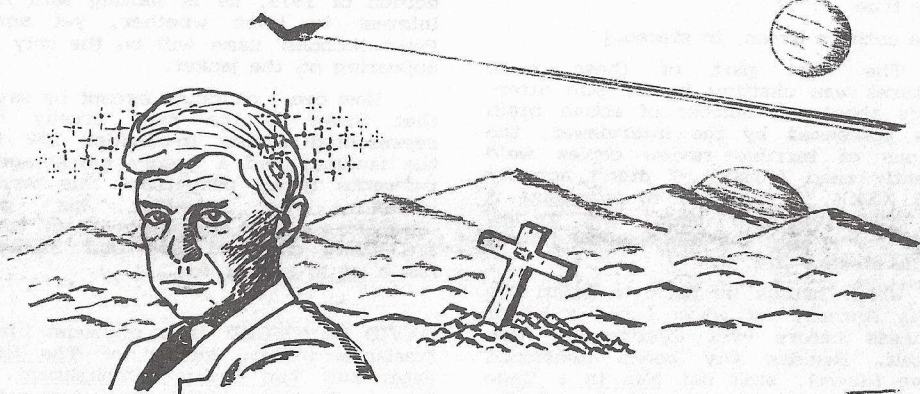
- Zaragoz (G.W. Books, 1989)
 Plague Daemon (G.W. Books, 1990)
 Storm Warriors (G.W. Books, 1991)
 Ghost Dancers (G.W. Books, 1991)

B. Non-Fiction

- The Mysteries of Modern Science
 (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977)
 A Clash of Symbols: The Triumph of James Blish
 (Borgo, 1979)
 Essays on Six Science Fiction Writers (Masters
 of Science Fiction I) (Borgo, 1981)
 The Science in Science Fiction (with Peter Nicholls
 and Dave Langford (Michael Joseph, 1982)
 Future Man (Granada, 1984)
 The Third Millennium (with Dave Langford)
 (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1985)
 Scientific Romance in Britain (Fourth Estate, 1985)
 The Sociology of Science Fiction (Borgo, 1987)
 The Way to Write Science Fiction (Elm Tree, 1989)
 Algebraic Fantasies and Realistic Romances
 (Borgo, forthcoming)
 Opening Minds (Borgo, forthcoming)

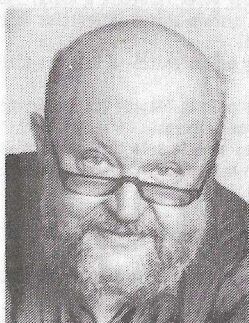
C. As Editor

- Moral Ruins: The Dedalus Book of Decadence
 (Dedalus 1990)
 Tales of the Wandering Jew (Dedalus, 1991)



A Friend From The "Golden Age"

- Michael Moorcock



My friendship with Josef Nesvadba goes back to the dawn of the Golden Age, before the Russians took their tanks into Prague. We only ever did see the dawn, but it was something. We have been friends since then, frequently missing one another in our various travels, always carrying on exactly where we left off when we did manage to meet. Sometimes our correspondence was in code, especially when the Czech authorities had made him persona non grata and he was effectively silenced by being excluded from the Writers Union - his picture being taken in Vienna during the protests against the Russians was exhibited in Prague as an example of a 'traitor' - and he bore his troubles with the same superb sense of ironic realism that informs his fiction, for Nesvadba is a master ironist in the great Slavic tradition and his work is full of clever digs at the sacred cows of Communist Czechoslovakia. Neither has he missed the further irony of, having cultivated a lifelong craft of popular parable forever at odds with the very fundamentals of the authoritarian state (see his English translations, especially In the Footsteps Of The Abominable Snowman), being suddenly faced with his colleague Havel's democracy, of which he might find himself a parodist - for Nesvadba is a natural and enduring opponent of any kind of bombast or injustice, no matter what its political complexion.

This is one of the strangest, least-understandable periods in Czechoslovakia's extraordinary history and I'm sure that Josef Nesvadba, in common with many other fine Eastern European

writers, is having to assimilate and almost simultaneously write about a world which, for him, is in its greatest state of uncertainty since the Second World War. I always feel privileged to hear his views, his anecdotes, his opinions - they are as full of common sense as they are of imagination and I envy the people at WINCON II their opportunity of meeting him. There is little justice in publishing and even less in the world of cinema, so it is a great disappointment that English-speaking readers aren't able to enjoy his best work - but at least they have the chance, now, to enjoy the man.

There couldn't be a better Guest of Honour to represent and talk about the rich world of Czech imaginative fiction.

MICHAEL MOORCOCK, one time editor of 'New Worlds' magazine, received the Guardian Fiction prize for The Condition of Muzak. His numerous other works include the "Elric" novels, Gloriana, and Mother London

A Letter From Prague!

- John Brunner

In the early 1960s short stories with what one might call an unusual accent began to appear occasionally in The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction. The author's name was Josef Nesvadba and he hailed from Prague. It was good to find Czechoslovakia contributing to international Science Fiction again (most English-speaking fans at that time imagined that there had been nothing since R.U.R.) and when I was commissioned to write an article about SF for a long defunct periodical called Aspect I remember citing these stories to support my argument that there was material being produced outside the Anglophone countries that deserved translation and a wider audience.

In 1964 I was attending my first American Worldcon, in California. A sturdily built man with a large head that seemed to have outgrown its available hair approached me and said, "Mr Brunner? I have a letter for you from your wife."

It was Josef. At a time when it was extremely difficult for people from Eastern Europe to visit the West, he had managed a trip to both Britain and the States. While in London he had called on me, but I had already left for America. On hearing that he was bound for the same

SF convention as myself my late wife Marjorie handed him a letter she'd just written and asked him to deliver it, which he duly did. And that was how we met.

We've been friends ever since. I remember him on another visit to Britain, hugely enjoying one of our parties in Hampstead; on our way to Poland for a convention in 1980 Marjorie and I had the pleasure of staying with him and his family in Prague - he's married to a tall and charming lady called Libuse and has a daughter whom I'm sure I would no longer recognise because by now she's grown up - and apart from showing us around the city he also arranged for me to visit a world-famous observatory where a sort of acquaintance of mine had worked before moving to the States. He made it a most enjoyable stay, brief though it was.

When the committee of Seacon '84, the first Eurocon to be held in Britain, was looking for a Guest of Honour from Eastern Europe, Josef was the obvious choice, as someone speaking fluent English (not to mention German and Russian) whose work was known to English-speaking readers. He proved a great hit, as those who were at the con no doubt recall.

By profession he's a psychiatrist and marriage-guidance counsellor, but authorship is his true avocation, and as well as narrative fiction (e.g. in his collections *Vampires Ltd.* and *In the Footsteps of the Abominable Snowman*) he has also written film scripts. If you can, do see *Tomorrow I Shall Scald Myself with Tea*. It's about a plot to change the past that goes hilariously awry.

From which you may deduce he has quite a sense of humour. Correct. He also enjoys good food and good drink - last time he called on me in Somerset I remember introducing him to a ham and chicory in cheese sauce (for which he took home the recipe), washed down with local farmhouse cider - and a good argument: in other words, exactly what fans enjoy, too. All in all I think the WINCON committee had a brilliant idea when they thought of inviting him, and I'm sure you'll be delighted that he was able to accept.

JOHN BRUNNER's prodigious body of work includes the Hugo award-winner *Stand on Zanzibar*. He lives in Somerset and is a frequent contributor to the letters columns of *The Guardian* and *New Scientist*.

Nesvadba Bibliography

A. Books In Czech

Short Story Collections:

- Tarzanova smrt (Tarzan's Death) 1958
- Einsteinův mozek (Einstein's Brain) 1960
- Výprava opačným směrem (Expedition in the Opposite Direction), 1962
- Ridičský průkaz rodičů (A Driver's Licence for Parents), 1979
- Minhava podruhé (Nápady starého psychiatra) (The Return of Minhava (Thoughts of an Old Psychiatrist) 1981
- Hledám za manžele muže (Druhé tisíciletí neskončí) (I am Seeking a Man to be My Husband (The Second Millennium Will Not Finish)) 1986

Novels:

- Případ zlatého Buddha (The Case Of The Golden Buddha) 1960
- Dialog s doktorem Dongem (Dialogue with Doctor Dong) 1964
- Jak předstírat smrt (How to Simulate Death) 1971
- Bludy Erika N.: labyrint (The Errors of Erik N.: a labyrinth) 1974
- Tajná zpráva z Prahy (Confidential Report from Prague) 1978
- Edvard, císař z Beneš (Edward, the Emperor from Beneš) forthcoming.

Reprint Collections:

- Vynález proti sobě (Inventor of His Own Undoing) 1964
- Tarzanova smrt (Tarzan's Death) 1966 - Not the same book as above.
- Poslední cesty kapitána Nema (The Last Voyages of Captain Nemo) 1966
- Tři dobrodružství (Three Adventures) 1972
- Výpravy opačným směrem (Expeditions in the Opposite Direction) 1976 - Not the same book as above.
- Einsteinův mozek (Einstein's Brain) 1987 - Not the same book as above.
- Případy starého psychiatra (Cases of an Old Psychiatrist) forthcoming

B. Books In English

- Vampires Ltd. (Prague: Artia 1964).
- In the Footsteps of the Abominable Snowman (London: Gollancz, 1970).
- The Lost Face (New York: Taplinger, 1971)(Same as 'In The Footsteps ...')

C. Original Screen Plays

- Zabil jsem Einsteina, pánové (Gentlemen, I've Killed Einstein) 1969
- Slečna Golem (Miss Golem) 1972
- Zítra vstanu a opáim se čajem (Tomorrow I'll Wake Up and Scald Myself With Tea) 1977

D. Stories adapted for the screen

- Bílec z Xeenemünde (The Half-Wit of Xeenemünde) 1963
- Tarzanova smrt (Tarzan's Death) 1963
- Vynález proti sobě (Inventor of His own Undoing) 1963
- Ztracená tvář (The Lost Face) 1965
- Tajemství zlatého Buddha (The Case of the Golden Buddha) 1973
- Upír z Feratu (Vampires Ltd) 1982

Prepared By Cyril Simsa

Czech Science Fiction:

An English-Language

Reading List - Cyril Simsa

Key to libraries: BL = British Library; SFF = Science Fiction Foundation; SSEES = School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London.

1. Starting Point

Ivan Adamovič: 'Czech Science Fiction in the last Forty Years', Science Fiction Studies 17(1), March 1990, 50-59.

Jaroslav Olša jr: 'Bibliography of Czech Science Fiction in English Translation: a Supplement', Foundation 44, Winter 1988-'89, 50-54.

Panorama of Czech Literature 8, 1986. Special issue on Czech SF. An anthology series published in English in Prague. This volume is a rather uneven and politically suspect selection, but is nevertheless the only anthology of contemporary Czech SF available in English. Also includes a valuable critical essay by Ondřej Neff. Available at SFF and SSEES.

Cyril Simsa: 'Bibliography of Czech Science Fiction in English Translation', Foundation 40, Summer 1987, 62-72.

2. Additional translations not listed in bibliographies above.

Only a partial listing. Stories detailed in either of the two published bibliographies are excluded, as are a few additional stories by minor writers from hopelessly obscure East European journals.

(i) Karel Čapek [1890-1938]:

'The White Plague', tr. Michael Henry Heim, Cross Currents 7, 1988, 431-504. New translation of Čapek's last SF play, previously translated into English as Power and Glory (1937). According to a note on pp. 429-430 of the same journal, the earlier English version was a travesty, and this is a first authentic English translation. (Cross Currents: a Yearbook of Central European Culture, available at BL, SSEES, and elsewhere.)

Towards the Radical Center: a Karel Čapek Reader, ed Peter Kussi, tr. various (Catbird Press: Highland Park, NJ, 1990: UK distr. Turnaround). Recent collection of Čapek's work in new or revised

translations: includes new versions of R.U.R., The Makropulos Secret, and two out of three stories in Čapek's 'Footprint' series. According to the introduction these works were also poorly served by earlier translators.

'The Island', tr. H.E. Kennedy, The Argosy (British Edition) 14(87), Aug. 1933, 1-5. A different translation to that listed in Simsa (1987). Presumably also in the American Argosy.

'A Resettlement Agency', tr. uncredited, Orphia 1, 1990, 44-47. Comparatively late story, first published in newspaper form in 1936, and not collected until after Čapek's death. Orphia is a new English-language magazine from Bulgaria; should be available from book dealers.

'The Man Who Could Fly', tr. uncredited, Orphia 1, 1990, 48-53. Another late story first published in 1938.

(ii) Pavel Kohout [b. 1928]:

White Book, tr. Alex Page (George Braziller: New York, 1977; UK distr. by Wildwood House). Satirical novel with SF elements in which a small-town professor discovers a form of anti-gravity and is taken to task by the communist authorities for disobeying the laws of nature. Written in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet invasion of 1968, it should finally see print in Czechoslovakia in 1991. Kohout was one of the most important dissidents of the '70s, and was eventually forced to emigrate in 1978. English edition translated via German.

(iii) Ondřej Neff [b. 1945]:

'The Murmur of Vernal Rain', tr. uncredited, Orphia 1, 1990, 147-149.

(iv) Josef Nesvadba [b. 1926]:

'Confidential Report from Prague', tr. uncredited, Panorama of Czech Literature 2, 1981, 13-19. Novel extract.

'Captain Nemo's Last Adventure', tr. Iris Urwin (prev. published in various anthologies 1973-75). Now also available in: The World Treasury of Science Fiction, ed. David G. Hartwell (Little, Brown: Boston, Toronto, London, 1989), 392-414. Important novella.

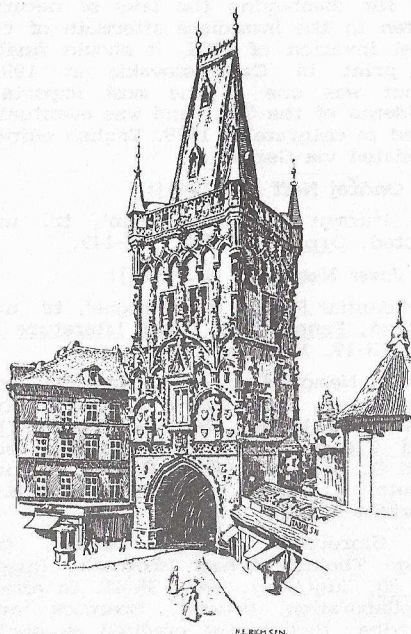
'The Storeroom of Lost Desire', tr. George Theiner/Michael Moorcock, Interzone 30, July/Aug. 1989, 36-41. In effect a collaboration between Moorcock and Nesvadba, though not credited as such, Moorcock having reworked a translation previously published as 'The Planet Circe' (see earlier bibliographies).

(v) **Alexei Pludek** [b. 1923]:

'The Enemy from Atlantis', tr. Ewald Osers, Panorama of Czech Literature 7, 1985, 165-181. Astonishingly bad science fantasy by one of the most prominent 'tankies' of official publishing before the revolution. Recommended as sociological specimen of official publishing at its worst, but emphatically not for any other reason. For a critique, see Klíma (1984), section 3 below. A shorter version appeared in Czechoslovak Life 1987(3), 32-33. Available at SSEES.

(vi) **Jaroslav Veis** [b. 1946]:

'Experiment for the Third Planet', tr. Norah Hronková, Czechoslovak Life 1977 (4), 26-27 [not seen; information courtesy of J. Olša]. Confusingly, an extract from the story 'On the Origin of Hoskovec's Dogs', and not from the story 'Experiment for the Third Planet' at all. (The error presumably arose because 'Experiment' is the title story of the collection in which both stories appear). On Veis, see Simsa in Locus (1990), section 3 below.



The
Pulverturm Prague

'That Invisible Human Spirit, or the Golden Ships', tr. Norah Hronková. Also published in Czechoslovak Life 1988(6), 32-33.

(vii) **Jan Weiss** [1890-1972]:

'The Apostle', tr. Cyril Simsa, Fantasy Macabre 13, 1990, 2-5. On Weiss, see Simsa (1987), section 1 above.

3. Selected list of further reading

Brian W. Aldiss: 'Nesvadba: In the Footsteps of the Admirable Čapek'. In This World and Nearer Ones: essays exploring the familiar (Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London, 1979), 64-68. Reprint of Aldiss's introduction to In the Footsteps of the Abominable Snowman.

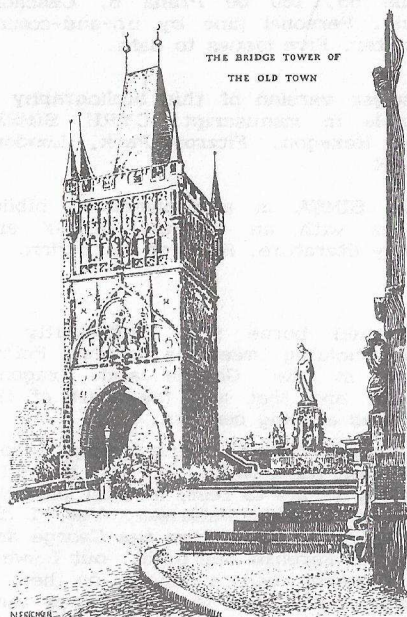
Anthony Boucher: 'Q.U.R.', Unknown Worlds, April 1942. Collected in: Boucher, The Compleat Werewolf (Ace Books: New York, 1969), 73-96 [magazine version not seen]. Fictional riposte to R.U.R.

B. R. Bradbrook: [Review of Večery u krbu by Vladimír & Ondřej Neff], World Literature Today 62(1), Winter 1988, 154. Review of a collaborative book of memoirs by Ondřej Neff and his father, a celebrated historical novelist.

Karel Čapek: 'Čapek Looks Ahead', tr. uncredited, The Living Age, vol 339, issue dated Nov 1930, 320-322. Fascinating historical curio (taken from a series of newspaper articles published the same year) in which Čapek tries to imagine the future of the U.S.A. Very funny, and surprisingly plausible. Other installments which describe the future of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Turkey and the U.S.S.R. were not translated. Sometimes known as 'Descriptions of what the United States will be like in years to come', following an erroneous citation in Readers Guide to Periodical Literature. The whole series was finally collected in book form in Czechoslovakia in 1990.

John Crowley: 'The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart', The New York Review of Science Fiction 15, Nov. 1989, 1, 8-11. General essay on utopias in SF, referring to the 17th-century Czech philosopher Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), but note that Crowley makes an error in Komenský's name.

Jan Čulík: 'Review Essay', Kosmas: Journal of Czechoslovakia and Central



European Studies 4(2), Winter 1985, 149-165. Discusses *Válka s mnohohvětem* [War with the Multibeast] by Vladimír Páral (pp. 149-155). Páral [b. 1932] was one of the few major writers of the '60s to survive the literary purge of 1970, and surprised many people when he later started to write SF. *War with the Multibeast* (1983), written as an homage to Čapek, describes how the accumulation of domestic and industrial waste gives rise to an amorphous self-replicating quasi-biological substance which starts to overrun the world; an extract was translated in the *Panorama* SF special (section 1 above). *Kosmas*, an émigré journal from the U.S.A., is available in BL.

William A. Drake: 'Karel Čapek'. In: Drake, *Contemporary European Writers* (George G. Harrap: London, Bombay, Sydney, c.1928), 310-316, plus bibliographic notes on pp. 378, 389, 398. one of the earliest critical essays in the English language. Previously published in the *Books* supplement of the New York *Herald Tribune*, and presumably also in book form in the U.S.A.

Colin Greenland: 'Josef Nesvadba: a doctor writes', *The Face* n.s. 20, May 1990, 104, 106. Nesvadba's first published interview in English: useful, but beware of typos.

Ivan Klíma: 'Stimulating Amendments to the Records of the Meetings of the Sages of Zion', tr. Robert Streit, *Formulations* 1(1), Spring 1984, 108-113. Critique of Pludek's *The Enemy from Atlantis*.

Josef Lustig: [Review of *Maso* by Martin Harníček], *World Literature Today* 57(1), Winter 1983, 132. See Trensky below.

Boris Médílek et al.: *Bibliographie Karla Čapek* (Academia: Praha 1990). Extensive, if flawed, Čapek bibliography, including book-length translations into foreign languages.

Josef Nesvadba: 'A Plot-Twist with Brian'. In: *A is for Brian: a 65th Birthday Present for Brian W. Aldiss*, ed. Frank Hatherby et al. (Avernus: London, 1990), 64-70. Memoir.

Jaroslav Olša jr: 'The Czechoslovakian Market', *Bulletin of the Science Fiction Writers of America*, 20(2), whole no. 92, Summer 1986, 31-32.

Cyril Simsa: 'Czech SF Writers Front', *Locus* 24(6), June 1990, 31-32.

Cyril Simsa: 'Czeching out the Fanzines - Czech Fanzines in the Eighties', *Matrix* 89, Aug/Sept 1990, 22-23.

Cyril Simsa: 'An Interview with Ondřej Neff', *Foundation* 52, Summer 1991, 59-67.

Josef Škvorecký: 'A Discovery in Čapek', *The Armchair Detective* 8(3), May 1975, 180-184. Reprinted in: Škvorecký, *Talkin' Moscow Blues* (Faber & Faber: London, Boston, 1989), 170-180. On Čapek's 'Foot-print' series.

Josef Škvorecký: 'Panorama of (Unionized) Czech Writers', *World Literature Today* 57(1), Winter 1983, 50-53. Critique of *Panorama of Czech Literature*. Interesting notes on both Pludek and Nesvadba.

Paul I. Trensky: 'Harníček's *Maso* as a Dystopia', *Czechoslovak and Central European Journal* 8(1-2), 'Summer/Winter 1989' [actually Fall 1990], 117-127. Invaluable summary of an important underground dystopia not available in English. Harníček was a Charter 77 signatory and wrote extensively for samizdat until forced to emigrate in 1983; this novel, first published in Toronto in 1982, did not appear in Czechoslovakia till 1991. For details of CCEJ (formerly *Kosmas*), see Čulík above.

For further references, see the two bibliographies in section 1.

4. English-language fanzines from Czechoslovakia

Kontakt, ed. Ladislav Peška, Na dolíkách 503, 274 01 Slaný, Czechoslovakia. Occasional newsletter from the editor of *Slan*. Three issues to date.

Poutník, ed. Egon Čiorny, Matěchova 14, 140 00 Praha 4, Czechoslovakia. English-language edition of one of the leading Prague fanzines. Two issues to date.

Wild Skarkaaah, ed. Eva Hauser, Na

čihadle 55, 160 00 Praha 6, Czechoslovakia. Personal zine by up-and-coming SF writer. Five issues to date.

A Longer version of this bibliography is available in manuscript. CYRIL SIMSA, 2 The Hexagon, Fitzroy Park, London, N6 6NR

CYRIL SIMSA is a professional bibliographer with an interest in SF and Fantasy literature. He lives in London.

Secret Origins Of The S.H.S.F.G.!

By Secret Masters Ric Cooper
& Jeff Suter

Like most organisations, the South Hants Science Fiction Group got off to a rather shaky start. I was at Novacon 9 (Nov '79) talking to my old Leeds University friend, Alan Dorey (for it was he) about the dearth of fanac in my life, now that I'd left university and gone back home to Gosport to help run the family business. So Alan (the Bastard!) said that, since I had no local fannish club, the only thing for me to do was to start one; and before I could shy away in terror from the prospect (*horribile dictu!*) of actually doing something, he dragged me over and introduced me to a gentleman of true fannish proportions.

"This is Jeff Suter," he said, heedless of my protestations that it was only an idle thought, no, I didn't really want to actually, like, do anything. "He's a keen fan, and wants to set up something in the Portsmouth area."

"Uh, right, hi, Jeff (gulp)."

Thus it was that the SHSFG was conceived. Needless to say, I went straight home and forgot all about it, but fortunately for posterity Jeff didn't, and I'd been foolish enough to give him my phone number. So we arranged to meet up.

We met up several times: there are two excellent pubs in Southwick and many a roar was to be heard from the Lions (Red and Golden). 1980 was like 1940, in that it was, as it were, the year of the phony SHSFG; but by 1981 our ads in local libraries, free listings in the local rags and letters to local members of the

BSFA had borne fruit sufficiently to justify holding meetings nearer Portsmouth, in the George and Dragon, Cosham: and that was the start of the SHSFG as a going concern.

Having got the thing going, I sort of gaffiated for a while. The last thing I'll do is try to lay to rest, at long last, the legend of Shirley Waterman. Yes, I did give her a lift home from the George and Dragon to Fareham one night: but I swear that I never laid a finger on her. I honestly don't know why she never came to another meeting: just because we look and act like a bunch of sexist paedophiles, doesn't mean we are. Honest.

- Ric Cooper

So, it was all Alan Dorey's fault. Without him as 'Fairy Godmother' to Ric and I, arranging the marriage made in Hell, there would be no SHSFG.

Our first 'real' meeting took place in the Red Lion, Cosham during the period of the phony SHSFG. There were about half a dozen of us (myself, Ric, Steve Coffin, a woman called Margaret and a couple of others), and it didn't go very well, because the Red Lion was not very conducive to our needs.

It was in 1981 that things got off to a real start (hence our celebrating our 10th birthday). I'd found a perfect pub, the George and Dragon in Cosham. It had a small alcove off the main bar and the Landlord and Landlady were very accommodating. I even got around to getting a real life, honest-to-goodness Science Fiction author, Michael Vyse, to come and give a talk. It was during these salad days that Mike Cheater, John Bark, Andy Croft and Phil Plumbly (to name just a few) became stalwarts and, more importantly, very good friends.

This was what we were trying to capture, the friendship, the joy of people

with similar tastes having a good time, that 'convention feeling'. During this period we often played Charades and on one occasion the Landlady guessed that Mike was miming something to do with "green goolies"! We also started Death Rays, our group fanzine. During 1982 several factors came to a head and I moved to London, having to leave the SHSFG behind.

When I returned the SHSFG was still going. Ric and I had given birth to a changeling child. It had matured and had a life of its own. Mike and company had taken the concept further than we ever could have on our own. They have gone on to running conventions but their base of operations is still the twice-monthly meetings of the SHSFG.

It is the people that make the

SHSFG, the friendships made over the years are very special to me. These people accept you as you are and help you cope with the mundane aspects of life.

But beware the curse of the SHSFG! The George and Dragon changed Landlords and the new management was very nasty to us, so the group moved. We are still going but the George and Dragon has been pulled down and turned into shops! From there we moved to the Portsbridge, they too were less than helpful so the Landlord was ousted and now it is a yuppy pub with video juke box and video quiz. We currently meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month in the lounge bar of the Electric Arms in Fratton Road. Here's to the next 10 years.

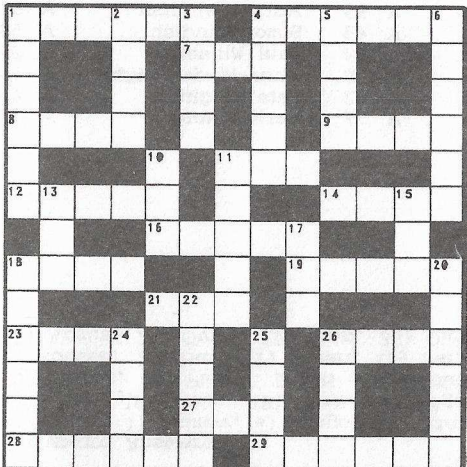
- Jeff Suter

SF Crossword - Raphael

Answers at bottom of page 22

Across

- 1) The Good Doctor was 'im over there! (6)
- 4) Spanish Gent has real silver monster (6)
- 7) Foreign Letter found in The Tales Of Hoffman (3)
- 8) River Goddess (4)
- 9) Palladium found in alternative city (4)
- 11) Conveyance used to travel towards Epsilon (3)



- 12) & 25 down. Vessel with lots of room (5,4)
- 14) Second of Harrison's three worlds (4)
- 16) Actor/Writer in the bad "Brighton Line"? (5)
- 18) & 18 down. Dimensional Experience by Rod Taylor (4,6)
- 19) Creator of John Carter and M. Valdemar (5)
- 21) One who went alone against the Empire (3)
- 23) Silver or jumble carried in this vessel (4)
- 26) Computer put in for accuracy (4)
- 27) Where it is said in ancient Rome (3)
- 28) Paper indicative of political colour? (6)
- 29) World-wide newspaper (6)

Down

- 1) Princess of Wales (as was) in a fool of a writer! (6)
- 2) God of Sweetness? Hardly! (4)
- 3) Five sound keen to go here (4)
- 4) Who fights against it? (5)
- 5) Maker of five oar flying machines (4)
- 6) Writer who will tend to be round nothing (6)
- 10) Writer of Colony Mountain (3)
- 11) Magnificent number (5)
- 13) Paranormal letter (3)
- 15) Little Maureen takes over a now extinct bird (3)
- 17) Recent directions (3)
- 18) see 18 across
- 20) Propeller without blades (6)
- 22) Very observant of spun sugar (5)
- 24) Greek letter back after zero five gamete (4)
- 25) see 12 across
- 26) She scored in the wrong goal (4)

Membership List

- As at 27 July '91

A = Attending Member
S = Supporting Member
C = Committee Member

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Iain Alexander A 78
Brian Ameringen A 76
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Simon Windish A 58
Paul Winship A 29
Anna-Marie Wright A 44
Pete Wright A 45
Mark Young A 73

Crossword Answers

ACROSS - 1) Astimov, 4) Dragon, 7) Eta, 8) Isis, 9) Opar, 11) Sht, 12) Space, 14) Home, 16) Niven, 18) Time, 19) Edgar, 21) Han, 23) Argo, 26) Orac, 27) Ubi, 28) Litmus, 29) Planet. DOWN - 1) Aldiss, 2) Mars, 3) Vega, 4) Dalek, 5) Avro, 6) Nourse, 10) Ben, 11) Seven, 13) Psi, 15) Moa, 17) New, 18) Travel, 20) Rocket, 22) Argus, 24) Ovum, 25) Ship, 26) Olga.

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