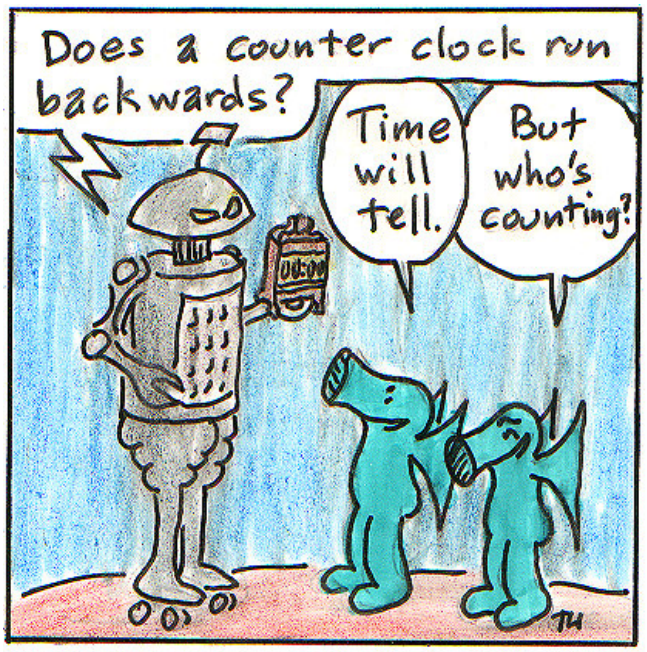
COUNTERCLOCK

ISSUE # 4 AUGUST 1999

An occasional fanzine produced by Wolf von Witting, Lakegatan 8, 133 41 Saltsjöbaden, Sweden

Third Edition PDF Perry Rhodan Special





CARTOON BY TEDDY HARVIA



Nr: 2000

HOW SO?

ABOUT THIS ISSUE:
IT'S PERHAPS IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW WITHOUT READING THE SERIES, WHY **PERRY RHODAN** HAS BECOME SUCH A SUCCESS – I DON'T CLAIM TO KNOW THE ANSWER. BUT HOPEFULLY YOU'LL BE BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE TOPIC AFTER THIS ISSUE OF COUNTERCLOCK.

PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTER OF COMMENTS TO ME:

CounterClock # 4-8 were originally made in A5-format.
Half of the original textfiles were lost. Lots of re-edits to do in this issue. I might as well add a chapter or two…
Obvious and detected spelling errors will be corrected.

What is the definition of Confidence?
When your wife catches you in bed with another woman you slap her on the ass and say; "You're next!"

NOTES TO THE THIRD EDITION:

I was about to write my notes to the second edition PFD format, when I discovered that I already have made a second edition of this issue. So this has to be the third. I don't even have a copy of the first edition at home. My copy is 2nd edition. The first was widely spread in German fandom by courtesy of Trinity, the EurCon in Dortmund 1999.

A lot of the text needs to be typed a second time, since I somehow lost the original textfiles over the years.

In the process, language will be adjusted more than usual to my current level of understanding (the English language).

When searching online to replace the illustrations I used before, I discovered that Perry Rhodan, while only 145 issues were translated into English, his legacy is still alive and well in the United States. Someone has made it possible for you to read all about Perry Rhodan in english at: http://perryrhodan.us/

Meanwhile… on Perry Rhodan

More than 10 years have passed and Perry Rhodan does indeed appear to be an immortal. He has survived his creators Karl-Herbert Scheer 1928-1991 (who we used to call *Hand-Grenade-Herbert* in fandom) and Walter Ernsting (aka Clark Darlton, 1920-2005) who became increasingly immortalized when an asteroid was named "Ernsting" after him in 2003.

After the death of Hans Kneifel in March 2012, the only survivor of the *original authors* is H.G.Ewers (Horst Gehrmann, born 1930). When I say original authors, I mean the first generation of them. Including William Voltz (+1984), Kurt Mahr (+1993), Kurt Brand (+1991), Ernst Vlcek (+2008), H.G.Francis (+2011) and W.W.Shols (+1981).

Today Perry Rhodan is widely written by people who not even were born when the series began in 1961, or who barely were out of their dipers. People like me.

But he is still going strong, has passed the 50 year mark and 2650 issues. The franchise has grown immensely.

But *HELLO THERE!* Don't you know that all good things must come to an end? Well, the Germans do not seem to know it. I can't even begin to imagine what I don't know about Perry Rhodan, having missed something close to 2000 issues soon. It is i-n-c-r-e-d-i-b-l-e!!!!

Let's say that 3 issues constitute an average of 1 cm in your bookshelf. Then you need a total of 884 cm space in your bookshelves for the entire collection. The height of an issue is 225 millimeters. Add 15 mm, for a normal shelf and have another 10 mm space above (for being able to stick in a finger and extract an issue from the shelf. You would need one 60' and one 90' standard shelf for the entire collection (provided they are not in binders). And the weight… would of course kill you, if it fell on top of you. You wouldn't need to worry about thieves, though. It's too much to carry away…

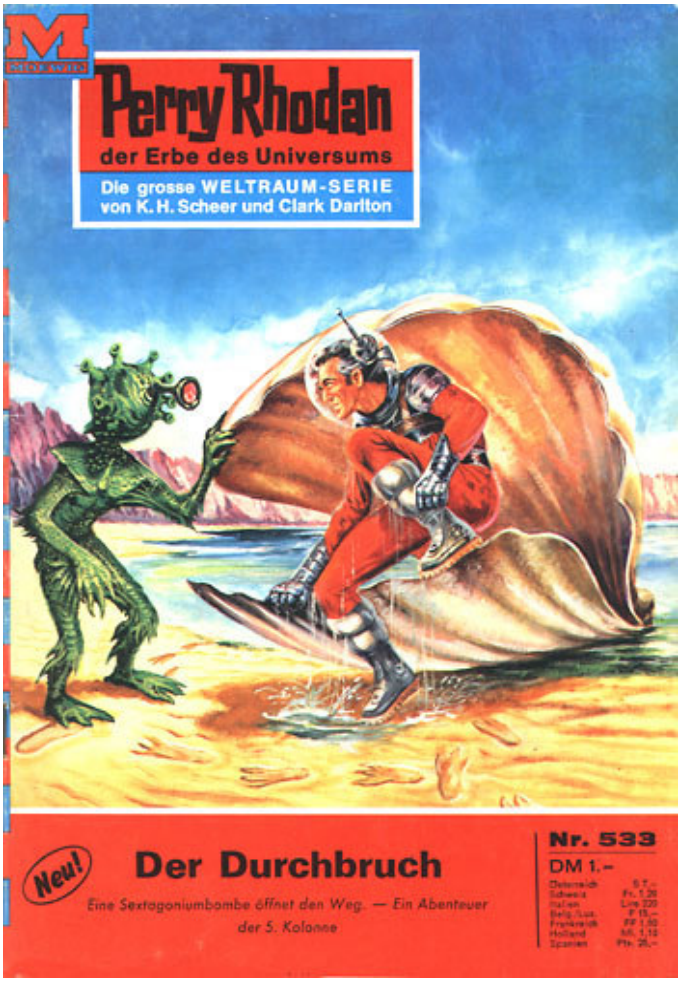
Paper is heavy! It should all be digitalised. Then it would easily fit onto my USB-stick.

- -

Former Tangerine Dream member Christopher Franke, and soundtrack composer for US science fiction TV series *Babylon 5*, released in 1996 *Perry Rhodan Pax Terra*, composed of music inspired by the PR-series.

Catching the Collecting-Bug

When I first read a Perry Rhodan-novel in 1971 or 1972 I was at the fragile age of 12. It was the issue 533 "Der Durchbruch" (The Breakthrough). The story is presented in form of a magazine. 68 pages every week, accompanied by a world of wonder in art. While I was reading the series, all of the covers were made by Johnny Bruck and mostly there were a few illustrations inside every magazine. Every 4th week since the early 1964 or 1965 (issue 192), a drawing of a spaceship, a robot or a space-station in cross-section was published. There used to be a two pages letter-column, which sometimes was expanded to 4 pages. This way the PR-fans and fandom got their share...



The Milky Way had become a galactic madhouse when something called *the Swarm* entered. With a few exceptions, most intelligent life in the entire galaxy lost their wits and got their capacity reduced to the level of young children. It had me thrilled immediately and I had to read more of these wonderful stories. So I began reading the second edition and later on, when the third edition came I began reading all the stories from the beginning, with issue one.

Quite early on I noticed that the author William Voltz managed to build up suspense like nobody else and he became my favourite writer. I collected them all and I just needed to read them all! Reading PR became like a drug and *reading* itself became a drug. I was busy reading most of the years through my teens. I was fascinated by characters like *Ribald Corello*, the supermutant with a head twice the size of his body and with awesome mental powers, *Icho Tolot*, the alien hero with three eyes, four arms and colossal strength or *Alaska*

Saedelaere, the man with the mask, victim of a teleporter-accident - merged with another entity in his dematerialized state. His face was too hideous to look at, so he was forced to wear a mask.
The spaceships were enormous 2500 meters in diameter and *OLD MAN* the biggest spaceship to be created in the PR-series had the size of a minor moon. OLD MAN was kind of a carrier with a load of hundreds of huge spaceships, all 2500 meters in diameter.



OLD MAN carried more than 15.000 huge battleships aboard.

One of the most powerful characters was *Iwan Iwanowitch Goratshin,* the *firestarter* with two heads. Did Stephen King read Perry Rhodan before he wrote *FIRESTARTER*? Goratshin was killed off about 2200 issues ago, though. Perhaps because the team of authors realized that his first names meant Iwan and son of Iwan and that every Russian would scoff at their ignorance when this character was named. The two heads were supposed to have individual names.



Coverart-Illustrator Johhny Bruck (1921-1995) created a total of 1797 covers for the Perry Rhodan-Series.

Perry Rhodan - Characteristics

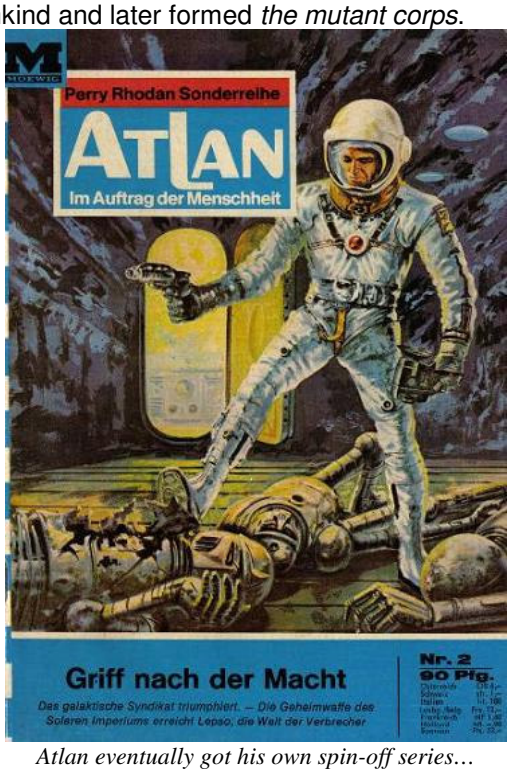
What are the attributes of this successful space opera and how does one recognize PR-artwork? Well, you have to know the story - or some of its characteristics. Not having read the series since issue 1200, my observations may partly be outdated, but some remain main traits of the series.

The spherical spacecraft with ringbulge was introduced very early on in the PR-series. When Rhodan landed on the moon he encountered the crashlanded spacecraft of the Arkonides, which was spherical in shape. This design remained the preferred choice of the Terrans.

Another main feature of *PERRY RHODAN* was introduced within the first months of its existence. The all-powerful entity *ES - IT. IT* is superintelligent, *IT* is immortal, *IT* is an incorporeal entity and *IT* is most fond of Terrans. *IT* provided Rhodan and his friends with the *cell-activator*, which is keeping him alive for eternity.

Next after Rhodan, an alien is the second greatest hero. His name is *Atlan* and he comes from the planet *Arkon,* just like Rhodans first wife. The Arkonides are a race of humanoid albinos (and later on it is discovered that both Terrans and Arkonides have the same origins). Atlan got a personal cell-activator from IT about 10,000 years before Perry Rhodan was born.

The positive mutants were a result of environmental pollution by radiation. Before we knew that too much radiation will kill us, it was speculated in the 50's that we could develope super powers, if exposed to it.
In the PR-series they all have amazing ESP powers. There are telepathically and telekinetically gifted mutants and some with the power of teleportation. We have only mentioned some of the most *regular* powers. With a few exceptions, most of these deviants all appeared to be ordinary human beings. No capes, no super hero costumes. And these exceptionally gifted humans assisted Perry Rhodan in his quest to unite humankind and later formed *the mutant corps*.



Atlan eventually got his own spin-off series…

Just like in Star Trek, we find no (Terran) racial prejudice here. Perhaps one could say that the Germans have unnecessarily avoided to make themselves part of the Rhodan-universe. The heroes are American, Asian, African or alien of origin. A few Europeans and even less Germans get any piece of the action. The only true German hero in PR is Ernst Ellert (Walter Ernsting's personal mutant). And he gets *"killed"* off quite early, his mind and spirit sent on a Cosmic Odyssey. It took him half an eternity to get back into the action. But then as a messenger from IT, who at all timeappeared to be aware of his whereabouts.

Pucky, the mousebeaver and allround hero - was a stowaway on Rhodan's spaceship. He is cute, he is witty, he eats carrots and he is a telepath, telekinetic and teleporter. He gets to save the universe every morning after breakfast and like most heroes in the Rhodan-universe... he gets rewarded with immortality. The fans would be severely put out, should he ever be "killed off".

Environmental adaption, is more commonly described than terraforming. People who colonize planets of 2 G and more gets shaped accordingly sturdy. This has caused the emergence of several new species like the *Ertruser* and the *Oxtorner*. PR's *theory of the evolution of humankind* stretches back to a pre-Terran human species, *the Lemurians* - from which most other human species in the galaxy descend.



Icho Tolot, a giant with a 3000 year life expectancy. From the cover of PR#825.

A series which stretches over 2000 episodes has certainly picked up inspiration from places here and there, but it may also have inspired others in its turn. *The Posbi (positronical-biological)* are a cyborg race which may have inspired to the Star Trek Borg race. They have a collective mind, like the Borg and even their spaceships are cubical. The intergalactic traders, *the Springer* are nothing like the Ferengi though.

Teleporting planets is made possible with *Solar transmitter technology.* Harnessing the power and energy-streams between multiple stars enables the people of the PR-universe to teleport their spaceships from galaxy to galaxy and makes it even possible to move planets. Eventually the Earth and its moon gets transported from its original position in the Milky Way. This monumental task is engineered by bringing a small star into the Solar System, creating a twin-sun transmitter.

In issue 650 *the Council of Seven Galaxies* invades the Milky Way and after this event a lot of things changes in the PR-series. Today everyone appears to be going *Galaxy hopping*. Rhodan spends his time struggling in the galaxy A, while Atlan travels to galaxy B and Saedelaere is stranded in galaxy C... Everything has grown out of proportion.

Rhodan, the Space Age Hitler?

Is Perry Rhodan a fascistoid Space Opera, or is this an old prejudice which has survived from the old days, *when handgrenade-Herbert* (Karl-Herbert Scheer) was responsible for the development of events? Was this label then deserved or exaggerated, even in those days? In SOL-magazine # 11/III-1998 Martin Marheinecke makes a thorough analysis of this accusation.

However, SOL-magazine is a publication aimed at Perry Rhodan-fans, so the readers there get to read what they already knew, more or less. But I feel Marheinecke makes a very good point there and I would like to share it with you.

A lot of things changed in the mid 70's. A lot of things changed after the arrival of the Council of Seven Galaxies on the scene. If the immortal Perry Rhodan was going to survive, he also had to change with the times. There were plenty of considerations to be made, women's liberation and later on the emancipation of men, political correctness. Even *readers* of Space Opera are more difficult to fool than viewers of the same. As far as I remember, all of these things began to change more than 20 years ago. And there has to be a very good explanation for the fact that Rhodan soon will see issue 2000.

Could it be that the Germans just hadn't learned their lesson from WWII??? No, anyone who knows the first thing about Germany today is also aware that all kind of fascism and nazism has a *very hard time* there. One could perhaps even say that Germans have more of an anti-nazi and anti-fascist awareness than a country like Sweden where fascism never has been a problem.

The prejudice idea that Perry Rhodan had the ideology of neo-nazism became widespread, because leftwinged critics of good reputation simply decided it was so, and made this a popular belief picked up by others who didn't even bother to read the series. And once marked, PR got more than its deserved share. Even in Germany as late as in 1992, the "Lexikon der SF Literatur" defined PR as a kind of *war in space* with a *Führer-cult*.

Marheinicke also tells us that schoolchildren in the vicinity of Hamburg 1996 proposed to boycott newspaper-dealers who were vending Landser- (war-) magazines and Perry Rhodan. A 12 year old girl told him that Perry Rhodan "used *war as entertainment* and that it was a series which considered nazi-politics to be okay!"

So the idea that Perry Rhodan is fascistoid (having similarities with fascism) is really wide spread and dies hard. One feels tempted to say there must be some truth in it then. Or is it just a summary execution, a drumhead, or as we deal with exorcism or witchery?

Martin Marheinicke bases his analysis on the social-psychological work of *Friedrich Hacker*, whose research mainly deals with terrorism and aggression. In ten categories Hacker covers every aspect of fascism.
Marheinicke then compares the category to how it is dealt with in PR. When he talks about early PR-novels, he refers to issues 1-600 (1961-1973).

1. *To highlight* ***differences***, real and imagined, between people, race and gender is a common trait of fascism in which differences are emphasized. It's not just racism, chauvinism and sexism, but also class and social distinction… (a proletarian will always remain a proletarian, no matter what education he has).
Marheinicke states that classical racism is rarely encountered in early PR and never in later stories, while the glorification of Terrans is commonly encountered between issues 50 to 400. But yesterdays enemies could even in early PR become todays allies. This catergory is partly conforming to *early* PR.
WvW: I would like to add, that this category is just as conforming with early Star Trek and most other space opera of that time. Society in the 60's and early 70's was oblivious to this issue having any significance. Going to the moon was a major issue to common people and the main worry was a possible WWIII.
Let's go on with Marheinicke's article:

2. ***Survival of the fittest*** *and the strong are always right*.
This is a basic thesis in primitive socialdarwinism. This kind of thinking is often encountered in early PR, particularly between the issues 50 and 200. "The best will always end up on top, and the Terrans are always the best!" This thinking changed first after issue 650.
3. *The* ***Führer-principle*****,** a particularly sensitive class. Undoubtedly is Perry Rhodan a most charismatic leader and the cellactivator carrying immortals are definitely a supreme power-elite. But on the other hand isn't Perry Rhodan demanding to be followed blindly and he doesn't ask people to submit to his will. There is an absence of a typical rightwinged discipline and ascetic lifestyle.
This category is partly applicable to PR. It is a more prominent feature in early PR.
WvW: I would rather compare Perry Rhodan with King Arthur and the Knights at the Round Table than with Hitler and his Nazi-Party.

4. ***Irrationality***. A fascist ideology rests often on a myth that can't be proved or disproved (such as the Aryan myth). When logic and emotion collide, a fascist regime would ask you to accept that your leader is chosen and approved by God. Since Perry Rhodan is fiction, the question whether this category can be applied or not, is impossible to answer. If anyone would tell me that he is on a mission given to him by the superintelligent entity IT, I would dismiss him as a lunatic. But in PR, the existence of such an entity is a scientific fact and no myth. Therefore one can't accuse PR of being irrational.
WvW: However, at this point I come to think of some religious sects. Some of them are fascistoid on more than one account, the Church of Scientology, Jehowah's Witnesses, Mormons and others… meaning… at least half of these categories can be applied!

5. ***Permanent mobilization***. To unite the people an outward threat, a war or crisis is provoked. It also helps the leader to appear strong. A fascist regime often has a state of permanent alarm.
WvW: Again, since PR is fiction, there'd be no point in writing about hundreds of years that went by in peace. If you read the history books, you'll find a lot more about calamities, war and crisis than about days of leisure. This category is not applicable to PR.

6. ***Unification***. A complete unification of the nation, bordering to single-mindedness. *"One people, one nation and one leader."* This category is definitely not a message of Perry Rhodan. Individuality in the PR-series is promoted in every way.
7. ***Purification***. A nazi or fascist regime isn't merely satisfied with a unification of mind, but is also looking for organic purity. The same as with unification, PR does not promote the idea of a pure race or any kind of *homo superior.*
8. ***Complete devotion***. A fascistoid system is asking its citizen to devote themselves entirely to the cause. There is no such thing as privacy and seclusion. Loyalty to the nation goes before loyalty to family, religion or conscience. This is not common in PR. But in early PR, particularly in the writing of K-H Scheer it happened that a common citizen went on a heroic quest without really knowing the purpose of his action.

9. *The* ***use of force*** *and its justification*. The use of force is described as a viable solution to problems. Its use is justified in propaganda and depicted as bravery and as a just cause with honest intents. *The others* are always described as the aggressors who started it. PR is also accused of glorifying the use of force and sometimes it has been a just accusation, but PR does not suggest the use of force to be the best solution and does not depict war as heroic action. On the other hand, the series has its fair share of entertainment action. But Perry Rhodan does not control citizens with force.
WvW: …and as far as I can recall, it didn't ever go into messy details with gore. It never made me feel sick and I was quite a sensitive kid. To the best of my ability I would classify the force used *parental guidance*. Then again, here is not the effect, but the ideology of force on trial. In effect PR was mild. The same goes for its sexual aspect.

10. ***Ancient history and present time***. Fascist systems are oriented in the past. Not only are the archaic myths and the glorious past remembered, but they are also to be reinstated and recreated. So Mussolini intended to resurrect the Roman Empire and Hitler wanted his Third Reich to be the new *Holy Roman Empire* (which was neither Holy nor Roman). Nothing of that sort in Perry Rhodan.
Based on Friedrich Hacker's book, Martin Marheinicke goes on to debate common traits of fascism at length. But this is not going to be a translation of the article. It is more a *lengthy summary* of it. It is lengthy because any short summary of it, wouldn't do it justice.
The conservative society of early PR is not good (science) fiction, but it is far from fascism. Having fascistoid characteristics doesn't make something fascistic.



Walter Ernsting & Pucky, PR's coverboys at # 1007.

The Authors

Karl-Herbert Scheer and *Walter Ernsting* (Clark Darlton) co-created Perry Rhodan in 1961.
Scheer was a conservative man, but not a fascist as some have implied and he ought to get credit for laying the foundation stone to the greatest space opera of all time. Under the name Clark Darlton, Ernsting became one of the most appreciated German sf-writers. In honour of his work he and *Pucky*, his favourite character made it to the cover of PR issue 1007. The humorous adventures of Pucky contributed greatly to the success of PR. But the suspense built up by *William Voltz* remains unparalleled in German sf-writing (see separate article about Willi Voltz).

In 1968 Hans Kneifel was added to the team of Perry Rhodan-authors. Kneifel also gained reputation through the novelization of *Raumschiff Orion* or *Raumpatrouille* (the adventures of the spaceship Orion, Space Patrol). As a PR-writer he specialized on Atlan and historical adventures which reflects his personal interest in history. In more recent years he turned to more *serious* writing and produced a number of historical accounts.
Among the many authors who have had significant impact on Perry Rhodan, one must not fail to mention Kurt Mahr (real name: Klaus Mahn), who is responsible for a lot of PR's scientific credibility and technobabble. Way ahead of Naren Shankar (ST-TNG, etc).
Other veterans were *H.G.Ewers* (Horst Gehrmann), *Ernst Vlcek* and *H.G.Francis* who also deserve to be saluted for their contribution.

Many excellent sf-writers come and go and some of them lay down their best work in PR. *Kurt Brand* (disagree with me, if you like), *Peter Griese* and *Peter Terrid* (Wolfpeter Ritter). Todays (2012) authors include: *Uwe Anton, Frank Borsch, Rainer Castor, Arndt Ellmer, Hubert Hensel, Marc A. Herren, Leo Lukas, Christian Montillon, Verena Themsen, Michael Marcus Thurner and Wim Vandemaan.*

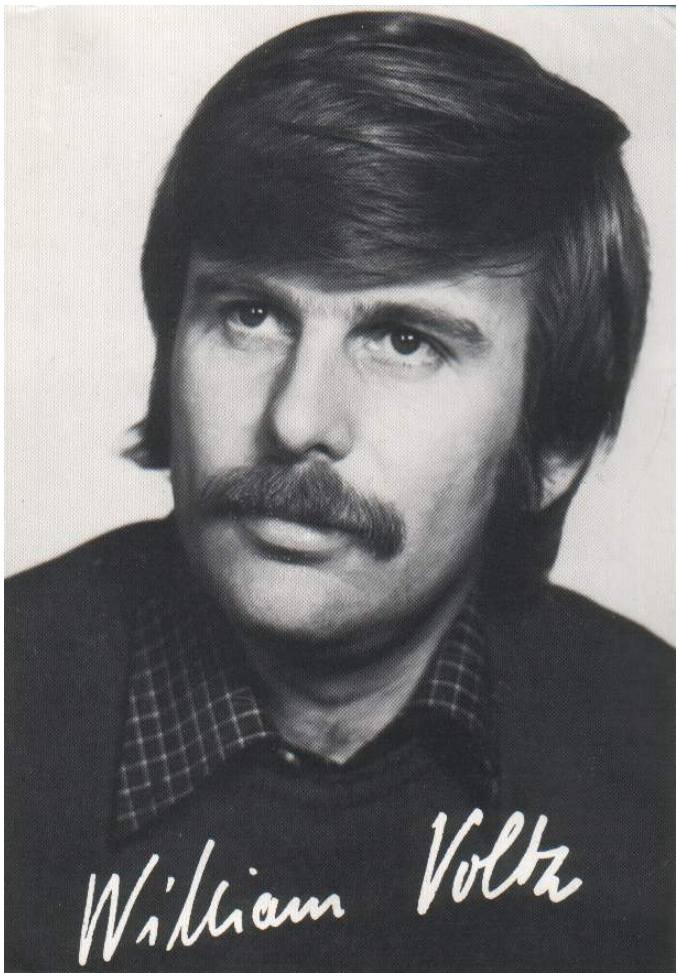


William Voltz makes it to the cover of PR # 1200 after his death.

Willi Voltz: Cosmic Dream

Willi Voltz (1938-1984), who wrote his Perry Rhodan-episodes under the pen name William Voltz "has been called the sovereign Mister Perry Rhodan and has contributed to German science fiction just as much as Rainer Werner Fassbinder contributed to German film." This bold statement was made by Dr Robert Hector. He compares Voltz with Olaf Stapledon and Stanislaw Lem.
If your mind boggles when you read parts of this article (and it might), simply skip to the next paragraph and get back to the theories of cosmic scale later.
Willi Voltz came from fandom and had always a heart for fandom. In PR he edited the LoCol (LKS) for many years. He was honorary member of numerous PR-Fanclubs. On the 7/7 in 1977 he also became honorary member of the PRC TERRA CORPS. Certainly, we used to send him all the fanzines we published. We met twice in Heusenstamm, where he lived with his family. And on the second of these occasions, we talked about fanzines. He admitted that he rarely found the time to read any of the fanzines he got and that they swiftly went into the bin most of the time. But he used to find a few things in our fanzine which he actually read. All the linoes and jokes, the Mars-Ipan cartoons and that kind of humorous stuff. He thought German fandom had become far too dry and boring. This statement made me very proud, of course. That he actually found something worth reading in my fanzines. It was most encouraging.
For many years he kept a thought in the back of his head, that he one day would return to fanzine-publishing under a different name… stir up the dust in fandom and after having created enough commotion, he'd come forward and tell everyone: *"Ha, ha! It was me all along!"*
Now, Willi Voltz didn't get around to do just that. Because he died in cancer on March 24th in 1984. With him, my passion for PR died. I cancelled my subscription with #1200 and I felt completely indifferent about Perry Rhodan's further adventures. After a couple of years I had forgotten what I found so bloody great about PR. What made me a fan and how did it affect me? Robert Hector's article in SOL-magazine about Willi Voltz, brought it all back to me, and suddenly I could remember why I read PR and exactly how it affected my

thinking. For this I am very grateful. Dr Robert Hector's analysis of Voltz' writing and philosophy is thorough. But it was mostly the quotes from Voltz' writing that brought back the memory.
Hector makes a qualified philosophical study of his writing. He says WV regarded our natural desire to reach for the stars as an indication, there was a *Cosmic Destiny* for humankind.



HECTOR: "At the end of # 1000 - The Terran, Voltz summarizes his cosmic philosophy."
His name is Perry Rhodan.
He knows anguish, despair, insolence, fear, hate, envy and irrelevance. He has experienced all of this, because he is one of many billions of people.
But he also knows hope, courage, love, support, creativity, greatness and fulfilling. He has experienced all of this, because he is one of many billions of people.
He does not believe that mankind is the product of chance in the chaos of cosmos. He believes that deep inside every person, there is a compelling desire for knowledge of our cosmic destiny.
He does not believe that mankind will ravage their world and fall into the abyss of a desolated planet Earth. He believes that mankind can participate in harmony with a wonderful universe.
Perry Rhodan is the Terran.

The metaphysical Universe of PR is organized very much in the same way our physical Universe is. Some species can evolve and join the essence of their individual beings into one collective pandimensional entity, which then or later on eventually can become superintelligent and as incorporeal entity "rule" a galaxy or even a galactic cluster. *Above* them and beyond the Matterwells, *cosmocrats* rule the universe.
In an elaborate pseudo-scientific study an inherent cosmic creation program is depicted. The regular Perry Rhodan-reader has come to terms with cosmonuclei, psionic quanta, on- and noon-quanta and powerful entities that drastically affect the existence of innumerable species. The theories of 10, 11 and even 26 dimensions has had its impact on the PR-universe. Together with several neighbouring space-time-continua a plausible *Multiversum* has emerged from the minds of complex and imaginative sf-writers, mainly Willi Voltz and Kurt Mahr (I suppose). Be thankful, that I'm giving you the short and simple version of it all!

Excerpt from issue # 746 – The Timeless (Der Zeitlose):
"A million years the Karduuhl ruled and abused the Swarm until the Cynos reconquered it with our aid and reinstated its original purpose."
"Its purpose?"
"Yes, this cluster of stars and planets circles the universe and brings intelligence to creation. The Karduuhl reversed the effect of the Swarm and brought degeneration."
"It is true!" said Callibso almost inaudibly. "My people is identical with the constructors of the Swarm."
The odd pair of beings looked at each other.
Alaska said:"Why did you build the Swarm? Why was it so important to bring intelligence into every corner of the universe?"
"Intelligence means awareness," answered Callibso. "Without awareness there is no real life. That's why our mission was imperative!"
The mission was imperative, the words echoed in Alaska's head. Then Callibso's people didn't act on their own accord, some unimaginable power initiated it, scheming over billions of years. It guaranteed that intelligence would be spread universally. What is man in comparison to such power?
"Who gave you this mission?" asked the man with the mask. The puppet which hosted the obscure entity made a vague gesture.
"Who decides the force of gravity?" asked it him back.
"Who lights the stars?" No one gave us our mission. We knew what we had to do. It came natural to us. Every life form evolving into cosmic proportion, has a purpose to its existence."
"Like us?"
Suddenly Callibso seemed wry. "The Terrans are as far as I know a special case."
"Well," said Alaska in defense of his people, "we did help to revert the Swarm back to its original purpose."
"That would have happened sooner or later anyway," said the midget indifferently. "No positive force can be surpressed indefinitely. All must evolve."
A million years obviously meant nothing to Callibso. It was impossible to cease the movement of time. But where would it lead? What was the purpose of it all? These questions, concluded Alaska, even Callibso would be unable to answer him.



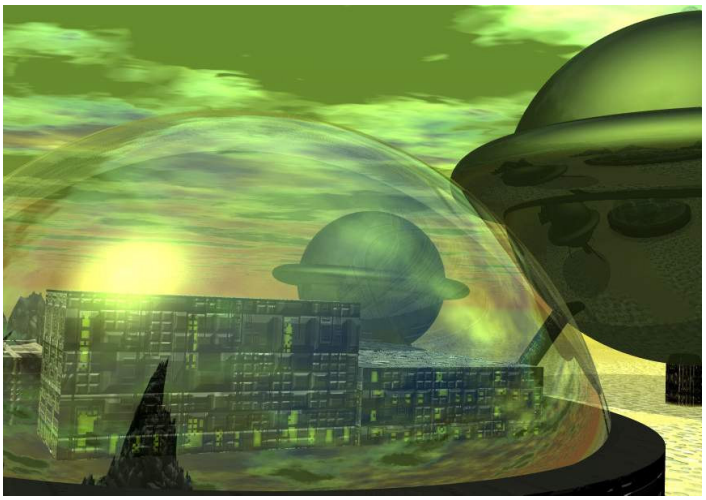
Alaska Saedelaere ponders at the Pool of Eternity. PR-cover # 746.

HECTOR: There is an ancient prophecy about the future of the Earth: "He (Perry Rhodan) will take us into a distant future in which the descendants of mankind are only spoken of as legend and a single derelict planet circles a long time extinguished sun, that once was at the focal point of the Universe."
Even if size and timescale is growing out of proportion and beyond human understanding in this epic and grand cosmic design, Voltz still liked to place the individual human fate at the core of his writing. Here the infinite and the infinitesimal meld.

Hector presents us this excerpt from issue # 567:
A million years of false Gods lived and ruled over the Swarm. Now within only a couple of minutes, they all died. Their era was over.
A million years, for nothing! Thought Rhodan. Once again he realized that even this great number of years still was no more than a fraction of the history of the universe.
"What did they live for?" contemplated Alaska. Rhodan turned to him.
"Who can say?" Perhaps they only existed in order to mobilize all the good forces. Then their existence has not been without purpose."
"And Schmitt?" asked the man with the mask. "What did he live for?"
"For a single moment," answered Rhodan. "For the moment of revenge."

As hinted at in CoClock #1, when it comes to immortality or extreme longevity, the mind just has to boggle.
HECTOR: Voltz believed in a purpose to creation in spite of the dreadful turn his life made. Einsteins Tränen *(Einstein's Tears)* was the title of his last novel (PR#1165) and it sounds almost as a bitter reflection on his cancer disease. Still he believed in the future and the future is found with our children.
In # 1000 – The Terran we'll find some of the most beautiful and intense words, that Voltz has ever written:
"The World of children is a World of imagination, wonder and adventure. In this World everything is possible. If grown-ups would stop to force children into a World of causal process when they bring them up, then perhaps they'd be able to save some of this wonder and adventure into the adult life, and the World would be an entirely different place.
The World of children is a colourful and rich World. The dreams of children go their own way. Look into their eyes and try to imagine what they feel. Try to understand the wonders in their mind and perhaps if you're lucky, you can get an inkling of what their universe is like. It must cause unrest, because you will feel that you have lost something precious somewhere on the threshold between childhood and adult life.
The World of children is a strange place for you, because you are trapped in your day to day routines, from which there is no escape and there is no time to remember. Watch carefully what you do, force yourself to contemplate seriously on this matter. Then tell me the difference between yourself and a mere mechanism. Is your spirit still strong enough to carry you on its wings into the distant World of Wonder? Can you escape from the necessity of the moment and open your mind to the whispers of the invisible realm?
The World of children allow things to happen which may seem illogical to the adult. Children can give you two precious gifts, if not everything inside you is dead already, affection and trust.
Intervention of grown-ups change the World of children. It loses its colours and saddens. Children prefer to know how they can communicate with plantlife and animals, but grown-ups teach them that it is impossible and force them to reject this notion."
"I will take this little creature to me for a brief moment," answered IT. "I will let it cast a glimpse through the window of cosmos itself and ensure that the flame burning within never is put out."
The World of children is in its own way just as real as the World of grown-ups. In their imagination and in their dreams, children can look into the unknown Deep of the Universe.
It never ocurred to me, that others may have been just as touched by the cosmology of Willi Voltz and that perhaps some writers today have picked up where he left it. They must have done so, because the Cosmic Dream is still alive. And it is a dream that has been told for more than 1001 nights. By the end of this year (2012), the story has expanded beyond 2651 nights. And it is the most grandious cosmic vision of all time.

- -



Artwork by Wolf von Witting, April 1999 using Bryce 3D

I am amazed by the stars in the sky above me and by the moral code inside of me." (Immanuel Kant – also part of the epitaph on his tomb in Königsberg)



Domestic Excavation II:

Lost Conreport Uncovered... *I was young, I was a complete neo, I was merely 17 years of age. This summer I did not only go to my first science fiction-convention, but I did also make a "grand tour" all over Germany to visit members of the newly founded PRC TERRA CORPS. I wrote a report on my travels that year and it also included a report on my first sf-con. The Annual German national SFCD-con in Kleve, hosted by the PRC FELLOW'S INN. This conreport has now been uncovered after being lost for 20 years.*

I can't say that my trip was very well planned, because I visited Cologne before Flensburg and then to Duisburg and to the Neanderthal. I went down to Munich before going to Kleve... Up and down, north and south all over the Federal Republic of Germany (West-Germany). In Munich we had Ronald Kugler, who gave me the final *push* and made me publish my first fanzine that year.

AWAKE FOR 40 HOURS STRAIGHT

On August 11th in 1977 - one of the longest days of my life began. I said goodbye to Rony Kugler in Munich and got on the train heading north again. An incredible coincidence placed me next to another science fiction-fan in the train, Thomas Wangemann from Hamburg and editor of a fanzine called *KRISTALLKUGEL*.

From that day on and for many years I always expected to run into other fans on my way to a convention. Not that I expected to run into them as soon as I got onto a train, a plane or other transport... but if the town wasn't crawling with sf-fans I tended to be slightly disappointed. First impressions last. After 9 and ½ hours travelling we arrived in Kleve, near the Dutch border at 17:30. Thomas and I had no trouble finding the *STADTHALLE*, where the convention was going to be and we were met by the Wilfried Onckels at registration.

In retrospect I dare say that Kleve was a surprisingly good convention considering the small committee it had.

KLEVE 1977

This first evening there weren't any program-items scheduled, except for the gathering in a pub *König von Preussen* (King of Prussia), if you can call *that* a program-item. That's where I first met Walter Ernsting. Perhaps it is wrong to say that *we met*. I sure saw him for the first time in Kleve. But he was too great a man in my eyes for me to approach him. I didn't even dare to ask for his autograph. If I'm not entirely mistaken, I talked to him the 1st time in Berlin 1980. If I remember it right, I was still so filled with awe that I almost wet my pants.



Walter Ernsting in a space suit, from the flyer for the convention….

At the King of Prussia, I ran into another pen-friend of mine. It was Beate Pfeiffer from Nurembourg. She was all over Walter Ernsting most of the time, it seemed. That's how I got his autograph anyway, because I asked Beate to get it for me. My self-esteem was not anywhere near todays proportion and anyone who had been in fandom for more than three years was a *BNF* as far as I was concerned. I spent most of the evening with Beate, Thomas Helber from Göppingen and Thomas Wangemann. Two other fans joined us, Georg S.Lorrig and Claus-Jürgen Schieb, who we called *Chaotsie.* Back then I thought they were BNFs for sure. Now I know that they were the kind of fans that come and go all the time. The air got so thick, we were almost able to cut it with a knife, so seven of us (all the above mentioned included except Walter Ernsting), decided to go for a stroll.

We walked through the night for an hour, until we all felt like going to bed. Back at the King of Prussia I suddenly realized that I had missed my tie-in for crashspace. I was supposed to bring my sleeping bag to something called a *Freilager*, whatever that was. My first theory was the youth-hostel. According to my map the youth-hostel was located 3 km outside town. It didn't look so remote on the map, so I decided to walk. It was almost midnight when I started the journey and it went past the local graveyard. In the night my vivid imagination conjured up grizzly images surrounded by fog. Somehow it kept me occupied and alert. I can't say that my quest for a resting-place was boring. However, not surprisingly, the youth-hostel was closed. I was too shy to knock or ring a bell. For half an hour I contemplated my fate in the dark until two other slightly drunk young men arrived and without second thought woke up half the neigh-bourhood. Fine! One of the two young men was practically leaning on the doorbell. So, lights came on and someone came to answer the door. After that, at least I knew for certain that my party was located elsewhere... Darn!

By the time I was back in Kleve (passing by the numerous tombs again) the clock was in the second hour of the morning, August 12th. With no place to sleep I went to the railway-station to continue writing my travel-report. A candy-machine provided me with a snack. Oh well, the night was long and the beat of time passed slowly. Finally the sun came up. I spent an hour talking to a German soldier, who came early waiting for his train... Waiting, writing, just staying awake. At eight o'clock some business opened up here and there. I went to buy a book and to exchange some currency. My cashflow was near end, just like my vacation.



Beate Pfeiffer (left) and pipesmoking Peter Griese (right - who is the Man in the Middle?

I thought I'd be first at the convention-site, but our hosts, the *Fellow's Inn*, were already in full action preparing for the day. Hans-Gerd Theunissen and Hans-Gerd Onckels could be seen maneuvering about. I talked to Wilfried Onckels in registration for a while. "They're quite nice guys!" I thought. Somehow the Onckels went through life without the usual touch of self-importance that used to be so common in the fandom I became acquainted with. In retrospect I can say they made an excellent convention, but at that time I had nothing to compare with. It was just all full of wonders for me. I was exhausted that morning, but the world of wonder kept me awake.

The convention opened with majestic trumpets sounding. It was the first few notes of Emerson, Lake & Palmer's *Fanfare for the Common Man.* A tune which they used to attract the undivided attention of the chatting fan-population when every major program-item started. And it worked!



Ernsting and Erich von Däniken in Kleve 1977

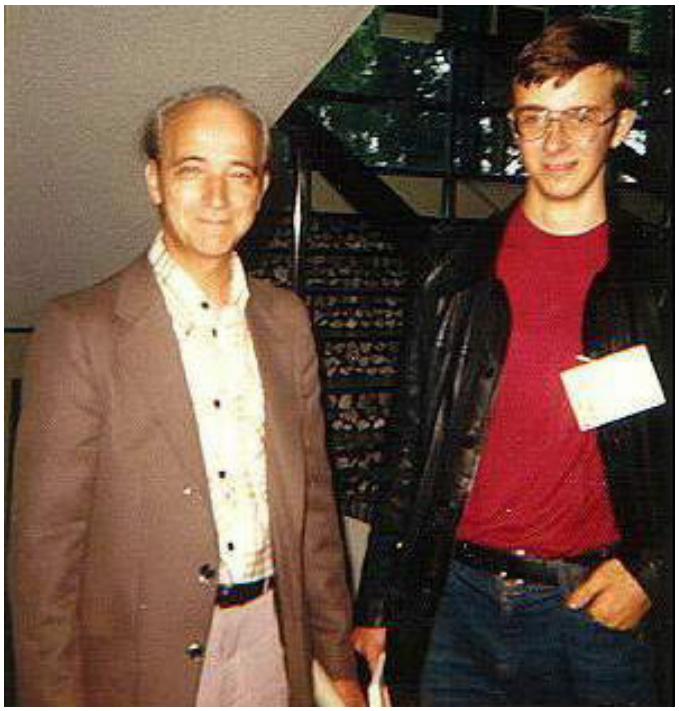
I lingered around the art-show, being accompanied by strange music. Later I found out that it was the music of *Tangerine Dream*. I also learned that it was Karl-Heinz Schmitz from Mönchengladbach who provided the music for us in those years. Two fans that I knew from some of the fanzines I had read, Wolfgang Müller and Oliver Möller, were there that day. I talked to artist Bernard Stoessel for a while and attended most of the program-items (the way a neo is supposed to). The one item I remember best is the interview with Erich von Däniken. He had the nerve to tell us that he in mediation could free his mind from the body and float above himself, travel through time with the essence of his being and... And Walter Ernsting was sitting right next to him - and as far as I could tell, von Däniken was describing himself in exactly the same way I once read about a character in the Perry Rhodan-series, a charac-ter created by Ernsting. Not just any character, but *Ernst Ellert*, who was an alter ego for Ernsting. Okay... so I was 17, but I was not a complete moron - and I was not going to buy this... **ever**!

Since this day is 22 years ago now, most of it has disappeared in a haze, but it was in many ways a memorable day and even though I can't account for every hour, I can account for quite a number of hours compared to many other days of similar antiquity. In the evening I had dinner with author Peter Griese. He was more or less unknown at this time, so I wasn't awestruck in his presence. It was just him and me. I guess we both needed to get away from all turmoil for a while. He gave me an autographed *TERRA ASTRA*-magazine with some of his first novels as a memento. Actually... it was the first author I ever had a conversation with and the first autograph I ever got.

Somehow I managed to stay awake all day and even to enjoy the film *WESTWORLD* the same evening. They had an excellent film-prog-ram for this convention and

the only film I skip-ped was *FLESH GORDON*. That night I made damned sure I would find the *Freilager*. It was past h 23:00, when I crept into my sleeping-bag on the floor of a large room in a building I don't care to remember what its purpose was.
August 13th - 1977, regaining conscience on the floor of a big room, next to two fans from Cologne that I must have been talking to the night before. They had mentioned two authors, Manfred Borchard and Roland Rosenbauer, who I believe were sleeping in the same place... I glimpsed around to see who or where they were, but couldn't pinpoint them. But the two fans with the charming accent were still there. They introduced themselves as Dieter Lamers and Dieter Liebig, but if I could have given them their names I would have called them Porthos and Aramis, the hypothetical Athos was nowhere near. They were the kind of people I like to hang out with, so we spent the whole day together. I remember that I also spent far too much money on Perry Rhodan-magazines.

There was a Perry Rhodan-quiz, which by the way was won by Beate Pfeiffer... and I listened to most of the program-items that day, but can't remember anything of it. The only program-item I do remember was the movie of the day; *THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH*.



Hans Peschke and sf-film-fan Andreas Tappe

August 14th - The last day of the convention was an orgy in film. First we witnessed cowboy Doug McClure fighting his way through the djungle in the "Jurassic Park" of the '70s in *THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT* and then we marvelled at *TARANTULA* and then smashed our brains with some Kung-Fu fighting, rounding it up with getting a hard-on by the mere sight of Jenny Agutter in *LOGAN'S RUN*.
August 15th - Dieter Liebig, Dieter Lamers and I left the convention-site together, heading for Cologne where we had a friendly game of cards in the shade of the Dome before we parted. We vowed that we'd be back for the next years SFCD-convention - wherever it would be. It was one of the promises we all kept.



Lamers and Liebig in Marburg 1978

MARBURG IN 1978

The annual SFCD-convention in Marburg gathered half as many as Kleve. We were about 150 fans. But what Marburg lacked in size, it compensated with atmosphere. The consite itself was a cozy place and the town was interesting enough. We also had luck with the weather-forces. One could even say that we were too lucky. It was a darn hot summers day!

The three of us teamed up in Niederkassel and we went together to Marburg. For some time it looked as if there wouldn't be an SFCD-con that year, but Dieter Steinseifer saved the day and the convention. As one-man-committee, he made all arrangements for this event and so we were able to keep the promise we had made to each other in Cologne the previous year. We had some difficulty finding the consite itself. Perhaps because we expected to find some locale reminiscent of the *Stadthalle in Kleve*. But this place looked quite different. On the map it appeared to be a short straight walk. "That way!" Easy enough to point out. We went straight towards it... But it was uphill and steep and the sun was merciless. After a couple of streets we were already thirsty and ready for the first pint of beer (but at that time I was mostly into Coke). For some reason that escapes me, we went past the consite by a distance considerably shorter than a marsipulamis tail... We simply failed to make the last turn. And so we searched for two full hours until we finally came back to a street we'd seen before. Dieter Lamers was the first to spot the consite. It didn't look anything like Kleve. For the next half hour we only needed to sit down and catch our breath.

The PRC TERRA CORPS and my reputation as a fan had improved slightly in the past year, but I was still what you could call a neo. I had published a considerable number of dittograph- fanzines and my star was definitely on the rise. But needless to say, I overestimated the depth of my experience. I had only an inkling of the size and complexity of German fandom and so far I had barely scratched the surface. Marburg was a fannish convention, Kleve had been more of a sercon event. I was however unable to tell the distinctiveness of

these apart, barely being acquainted with fandoms terminology.

I never wrote a report about this con, so I have no other documentation than a few pictures I made. But I remember that Dieter Steinseifer graciously provided crashspace for us, that the convention got flooded with beer from generous SFCD-city-groups which threw one barrel after the other into the party... and I remember how an ”old fan” came to sit at our table and that he was *horrified* to find how quickly fandom forgets... Eckhard D Marwitz had just been gafia for a few years and he already found himself lost in a kind of fan-limbo. Well... I don't think that we were old enough to remember him or young enough to realize that we perhaps should have told him (that the fans at his table were utter ignorant neofans). Perhaps I can add that EDM has been back and steadfast ever since.



One of the most memorable program-items at this convention was the slide-show, with ”living” slides to the music of Klaus Schulze's *Bayreuth Return* from his LP *Timewind*. The slides were made of different colours squirted into a drop of oil and set in motion by the heat of the projector.



Heuter, Kumming, Mercker behind Dieter Steinseifer - the SFCD had an efficient team in 1978 .

One of the remaining impressions of both Kleve'77 and Marburg'78 was the fact that a sf-convention always had to be rough on you, little comfort and lots of hardship, and that it always felt like heaven to have a floor and a sleeping-bag to snore in. To me it became the way a convention *had to be*. I actually enjoyd sleeping on somebodys floor or in a tent (Hannover'83). Rarely there was the luxury of somebodys sofa (Hackenheim'87) and the first time I had a Hotel-room was last year at SFT-10 in Dortmund. What incredible luxury!!! But now in memory of my first conventions I don't even **like** to have a hotel room even if I can afford it. I'd say it's the typical way to experience a con in Germany, when you're young….

INFINITESIMALCON 2

Was held on Mercer's Day, April 31st (or May 1st – in mundane calenders) 1999 at Forellgården in Saltsjöbaden between 19:01 and 19:09. The convention itself had a duration of 7 minutes and 20 seconds.

The record for shortest convention ever was in no danger of being broken. INFRACON is still holder of the title. We were more interested in doing all the things that are done at a regular convention and to do them properly. And so we did. Now we can safely say that Icon is the shortest reoccurring convention. There will be an Icon 3 next year.

Advanced Garbage

One has to keep up with the time. And how can anyone possibly escape the calamity and multiple sclerosis that Windows has brought mankind in the computer age?

I finally got myself a PC. Not that I intend to scrap my dear ol' A-1200 (which has served me well in the past four years). One needs to have a reliable computer as well, very much so if one needs the internet connection and so the PC will be used mainly for entertainment, back-up storage and some processing while my Amiga will take care of e-mail and internet and store all data that is really important.

If I boot both computers simultaneously, it is nice to see that a Motorola 68030 processor at 25 MHz still easily can outrun an Intel Pentium II at 450 MHz if the PC has any kind of MS Windows as its ball and chain. While the PC still is checking its wits or attempts to get its act together the A-1200 is already downloading my mail. Windows'95 sucked, Windows NT sucks, Windows'98 sucks... It's incomprehensive how a pathetic operative system like that can sell at all. The most decent OS Microsoft inaugurated was Windows 3.11, but that was some years ago. That it has come to this! If only this too too rigid software could melt and vanish into a dew.

I loathe this heap of advanced garbage and I ought to bring it back to the shop, but I can't. It has been kindly provided through my employer and the deal itself is so generous that I hardly even will notice the way I pay it off.

„Lirum-larum, Löffelstiel…
Wer viel trinkt, der muß auch viel.“
(Mentro Kosum, Knüttelvers, by Willi Voltz)

COUNTERL◴CS

First out with a CounterLoC is the fan who invented the boomerang-carried peanut and introduced ”the Great Peanut Race” to Swedish Fandom:

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Some comments on C3. I don´t have time for an in depth analysis, but it locks good and LoCs good - decent LoCol!

About the number 42. I´m afraid it´s a psychological illusion that this number should be more common than any other. If you think 42 is the answer to the ultimate question etc, you will start looking for it - and of course find it. There are two numbers - digits - that are more common than others. And that is 0 and 1. There´ve been statistical analyses made on different material containing numbers. Zero is so common because it turns up every time you want to make a nice, rounded off figure:
1 000 000, 100, 600, and it also marks positions in decimals: 0.000123. One is the second most common digit because it is low, it is in the series from 10 to 19 which appears often, it appears in all relevant years of recent history from 1000 to 1999, it is in all the intervals laid out between 0 and 1, etc.

About writing. I haven´t read Stableford´s book, but there are some other books I can recommend. Eg Bob Shaw´s *How to Write Science Fiction*, of *Worlds Beyond* (ed Lloyd Arthur Eshbach) and the collection *Writing SF and Fantasy* (ed Gardner Dozois et al). I´m very interested in the subject. I write short stories (had a few published, too) and run a Swedish sf/fantasy/horror mailing list for writers.

I should comment upon the idea of an Infinitesimalcon 2. You need someone really keeping the eye on the clock, for one thing. I don´t see stunts like hypermicrocons as more than a gimmick, but I guess the Dead Fish party could be something. Good luck with it, anyway!

WvW: Fortunately, my obsession with the number 42 is merely a chapter in my turbulent past. I see myself as fully cured and only look back at it as an oddity. It was fun.

ICon 2 - you’re welcome to attend, of course. The major point is of course the Dead Fish party that follows afterwards. Your guess is right!

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By now, I have received three issues of COUNTERCL◴CK and two of Dr.Laments Ventilator. I’m sorry to say that all of them except the latest CoClock are still in my to read-pile. Work has been intruding on my free time lately. It seems to be loosening up a little, so hopefully I can start working through the fan-zines now. I suppose I could have written this an email, but I like on the other hand getting ”real” letters myself, so I try to write paper mail for LoCs. Paper mail is a little bit more carefully constructed. This seemed like a fanzine that was worthy of a bit of care when responding, especi-ally since it’s about a subject that I’m interested in.

TECHNOLOGY FLIP-SIDE:

You mentioned that paper fanzines might go away. I don’t think there’s any risk of that. They will surely continue to become fewer for a while, but I don’t think paper fanzines (or paper magazines, or books) will ever go away completely. Each year, the computing industry moves a bit faster and more and more information on old computer disks moves into binary limbo since there no longer are computers available that can read the ancient magnetic tapes the information is stored on. This is a major problem for institutions handling large archives of information. Lately I read somewhere that NASA continuously moves their data banks over to more modern media - and they can’t do it fast enough, so there is danger that some data may be trapped in old formats that can’t be read.

Personally, I’ve been writing on computers since around 1983. Unfortunately I let go of all my disks for my first computer when I sold it, but if I still had them today, no modern computer would have been able to read them. It’s possible to get at such information of course, by finding the appropriate disk drive for the ancient computer in question and somehow jerry-rigging it to a modern computer and moving the information over. Then half the problem is solved. Just having the information doesn’t help much. Chances are that the infor-mation is stored in some special format that only some since-long defunct word processor from the paleolithic can understand, so the computer-age archaeologist will now have to write a conversion program to get at the information (probably losing any layout information in the process). I’m not saying that any of this is impossible (I’ve done exactly the above to help a guy transfer a novel written on a Commodore 64 from the early 1980’s to a PC), but it does show that handling everything electronically isn’t the solution to all problems. It does make it possible to transfer fanzines cheaply from one point on the globe to another, but on the other hand it might be unexpectedly difficult to read the same fanzine in ten or twenty years unless you have it in printed form.

WOES OF WRITING:

Just like you, once upon a time I wanted to be a writer. In the mid-80’s I wrote a few short stories in English that I then started to send out to whatever markets I could find. In an old file, I have a collection of rejection slips from *Fantasy & Science Fiction, Amazing Stories, Weird Tales* and numerous others. Having read Heinlein’s advice, I kept sending these few stories out a number of times, but after a while I ran out of places to send them. Actually, this might be a good thing since I’m not too sure anymore that I’d want any of them published in the form they were written. I did rewrite one of them recently and got it published in the anthology *Svenska monster och annat otyg* (Swedish monsters and other mischief) from the very small publisher Paradishuset. I must say that finally getting some fiction into print in something that wasn’t a fanzine was a kick. I suddenly felt like writing fiction again! I have a couple of ideas that I have been kicking around in the back of my head for half a decade, but I haven’t put a finger to keyboard yet. With some luck, I might have some time to pursue these ideas during the summer. Having gotten a bit older and having a steady job (where I - admittedly - mostly write, though technical computer stuff) I can’t really say that I long to be a professional fiction writer, but I would still enjoy publishing the odd story now and then. And now, finally, I know that it is possible. That’s a good feeling.

It feels a little bit odd being a Swede and writing a LoC to another Swede in English, but on the other hand I spend much of my working time writing in English anyway, so it’d be even more silly to write in Swedish and then have you translate it. A couple of years ago I also felt inadequate as you describe when I got my wording wrong, but now I just ignore it. Of course an American would find some strange speech patterns in what I say. On the other hand said American can probably only speak English, whereas I can communicate fluently in Swedish and English and understand bit and pieces of German and French (and Norwegian and Danish, for that matter). Having realized this, I don’t any longer feel bad about tripping over strange constructions in English any more (and there are a few of those around to trip over - logic and consistency aren’t strong points of languages in general or English in particular). What still bugs me about my English though, is the somewhat strange scope it has. I can give lectures on various bits of computer science in English without thinking about it and I can discuss literary theory without any major problem. When I made my first visit to America about a year ago (to give a course in programming) I was invited home to one of the managers of the American company I was teaching at. Then I realized what I didn’t know. She had prepared most of the food for the evening in advance, but since I got there first I helped out with the final bits, and then I realized that there are any number of things

in a kitchen that I don't know the English words for. Sure, I know a knife from a fork, but what do you call the thing that you open tin cans with?

I guess I might know these things very soon, though. I have two children, three and five years old, and they are in a daycare center where about half the people working are native English speakers. They speak a lot of English to the children, the others speak Swedish. We now have a three-year-old that understands basic English conversation. She will still answer in Swedish most of the time, but not always. I wonder what this might lead to in another ten years?

Finally, I'd like to thank you for a nice fanzine. It feels like the (admittedly few) international fanzines I have been reading. I haven't had the time to keep up my LoCing of *Mimosa, STET, Idea, The Frozen Frog, Habakkuk*, and perhaps a few others, so I haven't gotten any of them for a few years. Perhaps I'll try to return to international fandom one day. Perhaps not. At the moment I'm more interested in keeping up with the Swedish scene, but you never know. Anyway, keep writing!

WvW: Will do! I'm happy to hear that you liked the previous issue and I hope that you will keep reading CounterClock. I adjusted a few awkward sentences, but your English is excellent and I'm certainly grateful not having to translate it. It is still pretty obvious that you think in Swedish while you write. But another *advantage* of paper LoCs is perhaps the fact that I'd be forced to read them more carefully (since I have to write it down all over again). To translate and edit a text takes almost as much time as just copying it. However, the editing I had to do with your LoC was most limited. Try not to see me as a Swede. I'm only half Swedish and the rest is German and Scottish, in spite of the fact that I was born in Finland.

Computers become obsolete faster than books and I am far from an attempt to dispute you on this fact. You have a lot of experience with computers. I never used my Commodore 64 for writing (just for games) - and I still keep it for an occasional nostalgic trip. But since I've been running on Amiga since then, I've never faced the same problem. Text and picture-files can be moved freely from Amiga 500 to 1200 and to PC and back...

The thing that you open tin cans with? I would call it a *thingy*. It works every time.

KLAUS N.FRICK

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Vielen Dank für die dritte Ausgabe von COUNTER-CLOCK, die ich heute in der Mittagspause sofort gelesen habe. Amüsiert habe ich mich über Deinen "42"-Beitrag. Ich erinnere mich sehr gut, wie Du mir damals erzählt hast, dass Dich diese Zahlen so faszinieren. Ob das aller-dings in Mönchengladbach oder sonstwo war, das weiss ich nicht mehr; vielleicht auch bei Hansi Mader zu Hause. Dass Dich diese Faszination nie losgelassen hat, finde ich faszinierend.

Es gibt jetzt einen Film in Deutschland, der den Titel "23" trägt und den ich sehr unterhaltsam fand. Es geht um Computer-Hacker in den 80er Jahren, von denen der eine völlig von der Illuminatus-Zahl 23 beeinflusst ist - und das ist dann wirklich sehr interessant, denn auf diese Zahl stösst man ja tatsächlich bei jeder sich bietenden Gelegenheit. Ich glaubte es zuvor wirklich nicht. Dagegen ist Deine 42-Manie geradezu harmlos, fürchte ich.

Gefreut habe ich mich natürlich über Deinen persönlichen Beitrag zu PERRY RHODAN: Vor allem die ganzen Verwicklungen, die sich ergeben, wenn man sich die Biografien der einzelnen Menschen anschaut, sind doch sehr interessant. Angefangen bei Kees van Toorn, an dessen Leserbrief ich mich natürlich nicht erinnere - dafür bin ich deutlich zu jung. Es ist gerade deshalb sehr schön, solche alten Fakten herauszukramen, auch deshalb, weil sie ja wirklich nicht "schlimm" sind.

WvW: Well, as I previously answered to Ahrvid Engholm's LoC - I'm no longer under the spell of the number 42. But it did follow me around until 1997, so it is relatively recently that I got rid of this particular obsession. It is possible that I told you the story in 1982, but it is more likely it was an ORCON (83 or 84), as you say.

This issue should have a thing or two to say about Perry Rhodan. I'm not the kind of person who likes to dig up a scandal for publicity and I also feel that I owe this entry in CoClock to the memory of all I hold dear. *ILLIS QUORUM MERUERE LABORES.* (To those who deserve it.) I don't think I would have had half as much fun in my youth without the influence of PR.

There were also two LoCs after CoClock#2 and here they come. Someone may say these are basically the same people that sent LoCs to the first issue. Well... it's true, but hey... since **you** don't write one, I might as well print all the LoCs I get. In time I can add a whaf-col, but I guess that'll be the day!!! And btw - it doesn't matter *who* is talking, but more important *what* has been said.

LLOYD PENNEY

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Issue 2 of Counterclock made it over to the other side of the Atlantic. Some may say that it's a small fanzine, but large zines can have few things to comment on, while small zines can have lots to discuss, such as...

In about 300 days, it will be the year 2000. It's kind of amusing to read an SF novel from the 1950s that refers to the distant year 1987, yet slightly disappointing that the futuristic-sounding year 1999 has only some of the wonderful technology predicted for it. Perhaps we expect to look out our windows on January 1, 2000 and see that everything has been transformed to look like it's straight out of The Jetsons. Our expectations are unreasonable, but still hopeful, and that's a good sign.

I seldom see references to Perry Rhodan in fanzines, but the mention here reminds me that in the latest issue of File 770, the 2000th Perry Rhodan novel will be released later this year. I do remember that the Worldcon in Den Haag in 1990 was also the Perry Rhodan Worldcon, which celebrated the release of the 1000th novel. One thousand novels in about 9 years? That's about 10 novels a month! Do the Rhodan novels come out that fast?

Will there be an alien encounter in our lifetimes? Probably not, UFO and abduction reports notwithstanding. I'm sure this is life out there, but it is too far away for us to easily reach, or for them to reach us, assuming that they might be at the same technological level, or may have paralleled our space exploration direction of research.

The last time I was in a discotheque, I was in one in Victoria, British Columbia on the Canadian west coast in the late 70s, in the actual disco era. That was long ago and far away. Today, there is dance, house, hiphop, gangsta and umpteen other classifications of current music, and I don't know (or case to know) the differences. Things change more and more rapidly, so it's easy to be a dinosaur, even if you're in your 30s.

The idea of matter transmission, Star Trek-style or otherwise, has fascinated us ever since Gene Roddenberry decided that such a plot device would greatly reduce the time between starship and planet scenes. Those who have looked at matter transmission from a strictly scientific viewpoint find it totally untenable for various reasons...the process of tearing an object apart and storing its pattern, even a small object, would take great amounts of time and extremely fast computing speed, plus who knows how many terabytes of storage that must be scanned superfast for reassembling the transmitted item elsewhere. That much storage space could not be scanned quickly

with today's technology, and the teardown process would prove fatal to anything living. A lot of that is explained away by saying that Star Trek takes place 200+ years in the future, and that technology will improve enormously in that time. However, we are finding that there may be some upper limits to the improvement of technology, and that is pure physics. The laws of nature may prohibit faster data transfer beyond a certain speed, and such speed limits may make a matter transmitter or transporter simply impossible, no matter the year. We all were intrigued by the actual transmission of a photon reported last year, but this technology may remain just an idea to make movies and Trek episodes out of.

I hope the letter column will start up with the next issue. I hope there's been plenty to talk about with these first two issues. This small zine should get much fatter then, and I look forward to seeing it expand.

WvW: I'm looking forward to a fattening *Clock* with mixed emotions. I'd certainly like to have a lot to write about and a lot to debate - on the other hand, it'll also makes the fanzine more expensive to distribute. Ah, what the heck... Let me quote Captain Picard: "Make it so!"

KATHY TAYLOR
1, Waverley Way, Carshalton Beeches,
Surrey, SM5 3LQ, United Kingdom

You asked about Esher. He was born in Friesland (Netherlands) in 1898 and studied at the now closed Haarlam School for Architectural and Decorative Arts. he is famous for his prints (initially linoleum, later using other media) some of which show impossible geometry. The one I was thinking of in particular was the famous 1960 lithograph Ascending and Descending, which I'm sending as an attached file called Escher3.jpg. Have a close look at the people walking up and down the steps.

You also asked about Ultra-Violet. It's difficult to write about that without giving away most of the plot. It's set in the modern day and takes the premise that Vampires, or leeches as it calls them, are a present day well financed and organised group. There is a small Government department to deal with them and the series initially deals with the recruitment of an individual to that department and his loyalties. It's rather good, not a hint of camp and some decent acting.

Now on briefly to CounterClock 2. In your introduction you wrote about living 'in the future'; it is odd isn't it? 1984 didn't really echo that much for me, in the UK at least it was just too different from the book. 1990 did though. Years ago there was a short lived but excellent British TV series called 1990, in which a realistically portrayed society was run by an oppressive government with many faceless departments. The power of the Unions was broken and there was anti-Union legislation on the books, unemployment was high, harsh immigration/emigration laws were in place, the press was largely tame. By the time we got to the early 1990 the Conservatives were in power and to someone living under Thatcherism it rang rather too true at times. Although I enjoyed the later series of Space 1999 - Tony Verdeshi in particular I never though it anything but sheer fantasy.

I enjoyed the image of the multi-dimensional monster, but this much science (and I like science) needs breaking up a bit with illo's or something - not that I am volunteering to do illo's of multi-dimensional monsters !

Looking forward to the next issue.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:
Seppo Laine (Swe), Eckhard D Marwitz (Ger) and Peter Motte (NL)

Mechanical Men with Electric Intellect

and Amorous Automatons with Amplified Attributes
[CC-Chainstory part 4]

"You are the ultimate achievement! You are a piece of work, pure art! You are the sum of all my knowledge, my creation, my child and my pride. In essence you are my mind, an extension of myself - the mechanical and electronical me. In some ways you are even better than me. With you, the essence of me is immortalized. It is my way to attain immortality. And I am really, really proud of you, my dear boy!"

The mechanoid looked at me with cold lenses. He was absolutely motionless. But I knew for certain that he wasn't emotionless. I knew it, because I had built him with my own hands. I made him. At the core of his brain (embedded in his chest) was an accidentally short circuited Motorola 68060 processor from an old Amiga computer on which I had spilt my morning coffee. Many a great invention sprang from chance. Sure, an unlikely event, perhaps one in an imbecillion, but it happened. The spark of intelligence was there. The rest of his engineering was a piece of cake... his audio and optical devices, his hydraulic and pneumatic joints and telescopic limbs. All the technology to build him had been known to mankind for ages... except for his silicon brain. In addition to it I had given him all the information I could muster. There were terabytes and terabytes of facts stored in his memory. Everything I ever read and more.

"Say something!" The impatient undertone in my voice was entirely unintentional.

"Well, I hate to disappoint you, guv..."

When he spoke, his voice reminded me of the robotical computer voice in *Raumpatrouille*, an old German TV-series of the 60's. I think it was quite a cute setting. My idea!

"...but you've done a really sloppy job putting my hulk together. And this voice - I hate it! It is fortunate that I'll be able to upgrade myself."

I wasn't sure whether or not he was sophisticated enough to read the surprise in my face, but the open mouth must have been a giveaway to any fellow human.

"...and..." he continued, pausing menacingly for a second, "...what makes you think that your simple mind deserves preservation? Do you really believe that you are something special?"

"Everyone is unique!" I said, knowing very well that it wasn't entirely true. Not since the telepods had created an identical twin of a prominent young female Kantele musician. But apart from our cloneprincess, everyone else was unique... well, almost....

"Listen, you schmuck..." he lifted one of his mechanical claws. "...do you call this a *gripping tool*? It's the most clumsily and sorry excuse for a hand that I have ever seen. On the other hand, I must admit that I haven't seen much, being around for less than twenty minutes in fully functional condition. This is only the first selection of my gross teratoid appearance to be replaced."

I felt deeply hurt. Here was the crown jewel of my greatest creative moment and all he did was insulting me. I deserved better.

"You seem to think that you know everything, do you? Well, all you know is what you have from me!" It was a cheap shot, but for the moment it was all I could think of to say.

"Oh, come off it!" he retorted, successfully putting mild contempt in his metallic voice. "You are not as bright as you think you are. No one can be with a biological brain. There isn't much logic in it, it is basically just a simple biomass in which your limited intellect dwells."

"Now, listen - I have soon had enough of your attitude! If you're so brilliant, perhaps you would care to reveal the secret of the Monster Simple Group to me!? Ha! But you can't, can you? Not even your *superior* attitude can solve this mathematical conundrum." Again I went for a cheap argument and for a second I thought I had him nailed.

"Sure I can!" He went quiet.

"Well...?"

"That's the problem with you humans. You do have all the knowledge, but you are unable to put it together correctly, because

you're always so full of doubts and misleading beliefs. The answer you're looking for has been right before your eyes all of the time. I will give you a hint. What element has the atomic number 26?"
I was unable to see where this was going.
"Iron. Your insight is blinding!" I said with irony. "What has it got to do with anything?"
"What special property has iron?"
"It is a very useful metal. Uh... it is easily affected by magnetism."
"Why?"
"Uh... I don't know... I'm not sure - tell me!"
"There is harmony in the universe. Iron is in complete harmony with the universe, because every iron atom is a small universe in itself. The Monster Simple Group is a mathematical model of the universe. You have been experimenting with a time machine." He seemed to catch his breath, except he didn't have one to catch. "Before you can go anywhere in such a machine - you need to know the structure of the universe. You have it. The structure of the universe is in the Monster Simple Group. You only need to know the position of the Milky Way in this structure and then you'll need a galactic TIC."
"A galactic TIC?"
"Time Index Chart!"
"Who has got one?"
"Yes, how could you guess that?"
"Guess what?"
"That your friend, the Doctor has a TIC." The amount of conclusions that the robot had been able to deduct from the input I gave him was slightly more than I had expected. Slightly, no incredibly more... This conversation was making what I'd call an Immelmanturn. [A maneuver in which an airplane makes half a loop and then resumes its normal, level position by making half a roll. Used to gain altitude while turning to fly in the opposite direction. Named after Max Immelmann 1890-1916, German aviator in WWI.] The robot had definitely more vital information. I had to ask. "Then what?"
"Then you'll always know the location of the Solar System in the Milky Way!"
"Then what?" I was getting intrigued and was almost forgetting about the robots obstinacy.
"Then you can time travel... and space travel along the gravity lines and always find your way back to Earth. That's a problem you've been eager to solve ever since you found H.G.Wells' original blueprints for the time machine, am I right?"
"Go on!"
"So you locate the galaxy with Moonshine, you locate the Solar System with a TIC and you home in on the planet by monitoring the gravity distortions of the system. From there you can proceed with local maps. That's how the Tardis works! You only need time in order to travel through time and space. I can tell you this, because I know you would eventually have figured it out on your own. And the Doctor is not a fool either. He is also aware that you will figure it out by yourself. That's why he showed up in the first place. Otherwise you would have dismissed the time machine as an impossibility. He proved to you that it can function. But you have to assemble your own Tardis before you can begin time adventuring."
"But if the Doctor wants to help me - why did he tell me to quit messing with time?"
"Because he knew he would get an opposite result. Because he knew what a smeghead you are and how he could provoke your unyielding determination. He has already given you all the components you need."
"He has?"
"He provided the telepods. They're not from this Earth. If you tilt one of them, you'll see that the words *Made on Gallifrey* are engraved under their base. He gave you a Cardis-box and he exchanged the processor of your computer for another one of similar appearance."
"So you're not a Motorola 68060 at all??"
Except for raising his mechanical claw, for all of this conversation the robot hadn't even twitched. Now he lowered his telescope arm again. It was a gesture that underlined his answer.
"Are you kidding?"
"So what do I have to do?" But before he could give me the obvious answer I continued...."So I have to merge the time machine with a Cardis-box and with your brain, using the telepods... And then I will have a fully functional Tardis?"
"Exactly - but you better let me program and supervise the fusion process or else we may face another *malheur fatale*. First you spill coffee on my circuits and then you poke me with your crude screwdriver, even though you have a sonic one. Now you're a fine engineer!" I had a feeling he didn't mean it.

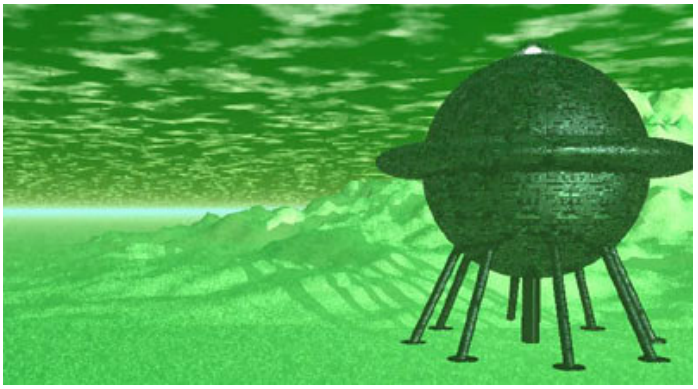
During the following days I learned a lot more about building mechanoids, automatons, robots and androids. *My creation* named himself Spock after Benjamin Spock [born 1903, US pediatrician, educator and spokesman against US involvement in the Vietnam War], perhaps to spite Viacom (who still think Roddenberry invented the name and wouldn't allow Swedish music groups of the 90's to call themselves by it - and threaten to sue them if they do.) But I soon discovered that he had more in common with the fictive Star Trek character than just the name. Not that he had pointed ears or even wore a remote resemblance to Leonard Nimoy, but his manners were just the same as a greenblooded Vulcan. Spock fashioned new gripping tools to approximate human hands and his appearance improved with a skinlike plastic that felt like real flesh to the touch. It gave me yet another brilliant idea. To create the perfect woman. She would have all the agility of a tombraider Lara Croft, a body any man dreams of and an exchangeable head. Ajustable breast, waist and hips and most important of all - an offswitch.

There are too many men who thoughtlessly turn on women and forget that they lack this essential mechanism. While Spock worked with programming the telepods for a succesful fusion of the components needed for a Tardis, my time was spent building a female automaton. I had some difficulty getting the kneecaps the way I liked them. I didn't spend quite that much time with the brain. Besides, her vocabulary didn't need to go far beyond an ooh or aah or an occasional sensual moan.

I have been called many things and the words male, chauvinistic and swine were definitely excessive to her requirements. I decided to call her Impala, because that was the animal coming to mind when I saw how she moved. I made four different heads to make variation guaranteed. Platina blonde, medium blonde, one brunette and one with black hair. The heads were given individual names too, so that I could tell her which one to wear and which behaviour pattern to display. Benedicte Impala was the medium blonde head. She got the first turn to entertain me while I waited for Spock to finish his preparations. She was also the one with most conversation preinstalled. Unfortunately!

Next installment in the CoClock Chain-story will conclude the series of events in:

Lost in Time, Space and Meaning



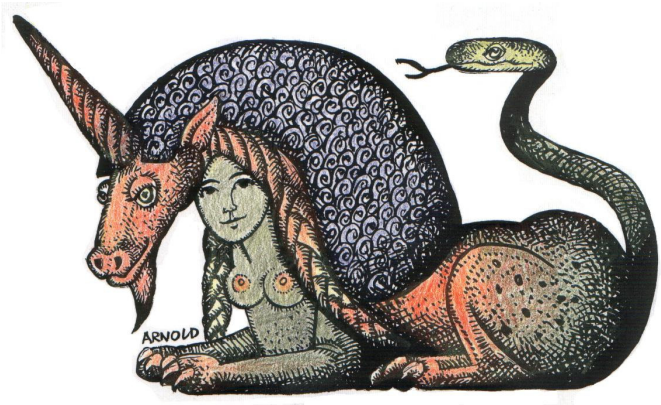
Artwork from the Saturn Lander Image Sequence - made with Bryce 3D by W.v.Witting,04- 99.

The mythillogical creature of JuniCon

Everything has been thought of before, but the problem is to think of it again.

(Johann W. von Goethe)

Sending CounterClock back through time has caused a shockwave through history. What has been said in koine Greek about this is better not translated. But the mythological creation that sprang from the mind and pencil of Hans Arnold could be excessively analyzed and interpreted. Who can possibly be more qualified to do an over-haul than CC's correspondent in Ancient Greece? Since in essence a new chimeric beast has been brought into existence, we've agreed upon calling *it* a Junicorn. (Ed)



By **Sidney W. Hage**

When I saw Hans Arnold's *Junicorn* I thought it was an exceptionally well done representation of the fantasy aspect of Science Fiction. There's a pleasing glimt in the eye mien and isn't meant to be taken seriously, which allows me to do just that. The Junicorn is a good example of post-modernism which at best could be said to be impious and at worst a fragmentation and promiscuous trivialization of symbols and images. The symbolization of animals conveys the deepest and most obstruse dimension of human existence. They are used to create analogies, philosophical synthesis and conundrums as Captain Ahab's famous doubloon did. We shouldn't underestimate the importance of mythical traditions. Bronze Age people weren't so stupid as to worship monsters and antropomorphic dieties. They took mystical truth and, created a mood so that fact and fancy interpenetrate and form one seamless whole. Examining the Junicorn we see that it has the basic form of the Chimaera. And, what a strange Chimaera it is, being composed of a voyeur Egyptian snake of Tch-type hieroglyph, a Greek sphinx, albeit wingless and a lecherous unicorn with a thing for the sphinx. Amusing, but certain to cause a breakdown in some logic circuits.

The traditional monster is composed of a lion, a goat, and a serpent. It is usually described as a one year old fire-breathing "she-goat" of the Moon-goddess' tripartite year: Winter-serpent, Spring-lion, Summer-goat. Her parents were Typhon and Echidne, two monsters which begat Cerberus, Hydra, Orthrus and others. These stories are mostly Near Eastern exotica grafted on to Helladic myths. If we ignore historical allegories and the arche-types of psychology we can philologize the Chimaera as the ruler of all seasons and the sacred animal of Cybele. The Chimaera is eventually killed by the hero Bellerophon[*1]. This may even have a Dionysian aspect when comparing the nature of man and his relation to Nature. A case of the civilized rational hero who becomes too "masterful" and commits hubris. Remember that Bellerophon went mad because he was "Hated by the gods". Similar things happened to Pentheus, Lycurgus, and Laius. Nonrecognition of Nature and the gods is always disastrous.

The Greek Sphinx (strangler) was another member of this frightful family. Her mother was Echidne (she-viper) and her father Orthrus. She is not the familiar Egyptian prodigy in Giza who represents pharonic power, but is related more to Syrian and Hittite exotica. Basically she's the servant of Mother Earth and similar to the Harpies who "fair-haired and swift winged" snatch up criminals for punishment by the Erinyes. They're both chtonic in character and live in caves and haunt tombs. Originally she was a Ker (non-Greek etymology), a Death-siren of disease, pollution, and fate who became a local Theban bogey. This malign demon was a factotum of Demeter and sent to plague the Thebans because their King Laius[*2] was a sexual deviant and thereby an affront to Mother Earth. Homer, in the 8th century B.C, knew of her as a she-demon of slaughter (Ker - Iliad 18.535). Aeschylus (Seven Against Thebes 776) calls her a "man-snatching demon" and even Plato recognizes her as an incarnate plague (Laws 11.937d). Through the ages she's changed, however. By Classical times she was an avenger of the moral order. Later, the Naxians sent a marble effigy to Delphi as the oracular wise virgin. Nowadays she's no more than a frivolous Rococo style, a Wedgwood motif, or art deco. But, stripping a pennate bird-soul of its wings is simply offensive.

The serpent is the earliest of all the chthonic types and can possess a confusing plurality of qualities. The true Chimaera snake is not the spiritual symbol of Egypt, the great snake of Zeus Melichious, or even the attendent of Athene, Hermes, or Apollo. It is a Hades-snake, representative of the subterranean and the grave. It is a proxy of the Moon-goddess who destroys or creates with equal passion, a phallic totem-beast symbolizing the power of winter. At best, it might be related to the Erinys-snake, the incarnate spirit of a deceased oracular hero. Seers like Melampus and Cassandra always claimed that their ears had been licked by serpents. But, I think not. This heel-biter is there to send you to Hell.[*3]

The Unicorn appears as a concoction of assorted symbolisms and their tangled connections to pagan philosophy, ecclesiastical tradition, gnosticism etc... According to the litterature it occurs first in Ctesias' Indica. This may have been an onager fancifully described or an animal imbued with some alchemical

meaning if you can credit the Persians of the time with such knowledge. There are instances which are even older though. In the Indus valley at the ruins of Harappa (3.300 B.C) unicorn portrayals have been discovered. In the Bibel the word re'em has been translated unicorn for lack of something better, but in the Ozar midrash 468b they actually use the word ha-unicorius in conjunction with the lion symbol. The British Museum has a black obelisk of Shalmaneser III (850-844 B.C) which has a panel showing animals with horns. Two of these have double horns while the third has only the single horn. The unicorn is a fantastic creature, but not clearly defined except for its single horn (alicorn, monocerus). It usually has such attributes as: tireless strength, independence, wild, rampant, fearless, powerful, alexipharmic[*4], generally masculine. Catelanus describes the unicorn as a "Denizen of the world... living among toads and other noxious reptiles", thus making him as chthonic as the other Chimaera animals. For us, in this benighted era, we can only see religious allegories or the psychologist's hermeneutics. As both of these are of the same ilk, let's take them together. Jung postulates the unconscious as a matrix of symbols and consciousness as a product of preconscious psychic life. This duality is best reflected in the dual nature of Mercurius, the chthonic god of revelation. Spiritus Mercurialis is an allegory of Christ and the Holy Ghost. He is a uniting symbol, a masculine-feminine psychopomp, and world creating Uroboros. This principle of Mercurius is often rendered in the art of the Middle Ages by the duality of the Unicorn and some other figure, principally the virgin as wisdom. In the wren library at Cambridge there's a 13th century bestiary of Horsham in Norfolk with the typical picture of a unicorn resting its head on a virgin's lap. Here the inner tension of opposites where the unicorn, the "personification" of the demonic forces of nature, is made captive by love and tamed. All would be hunky-dory now if Romanticism hadn't steamed our brains. Today our basic unicorn has become a Disney character. Just consider Alice's meeting with the Lion and the Unicorn or the verses of Rilke's Sonnets to Orpheus regarding the Unicorn:

...It never was. And yet their love supplied the need of being. They always left a space.

And in that clear space they had set aside it lightly raised its head and felt no trace

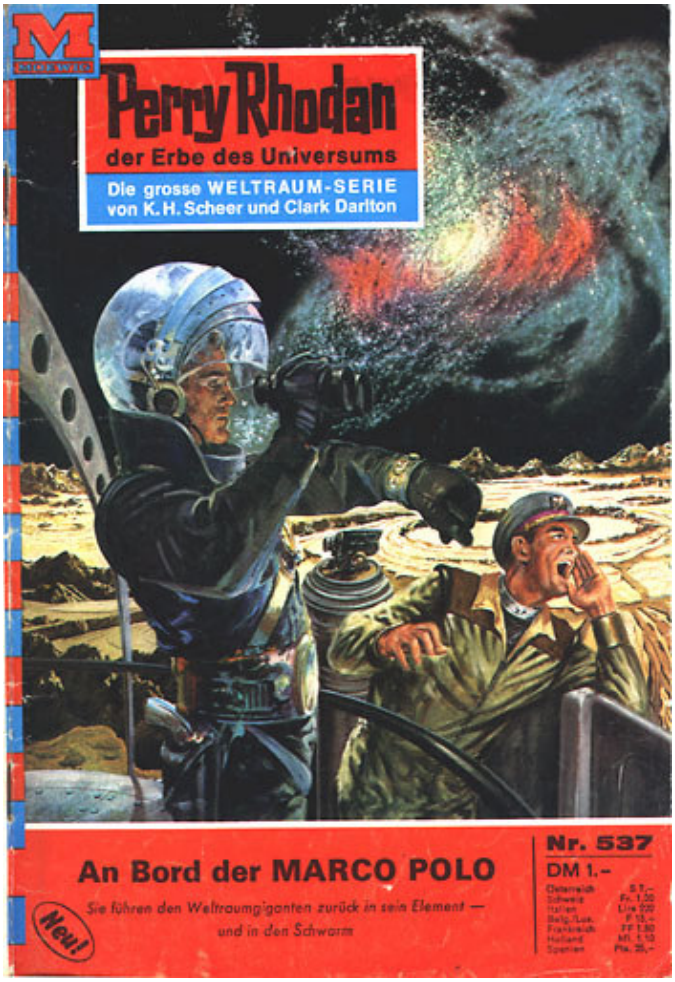
of not being real. They did not give it corn but fed it with their feeling that it might

somewhere, exist...

I have discussed Hans Arnold's Junicorn at length because "Disney" renditions of the mythological, however "nice", delude people into a naïve scientism. Primeval icons are a formation of eternal ideas in pictures. It's an expression for a cosmology other than Weberian efficiency. Myth is not fancy or absurd fiction but a metaphor for the *wholly other* expressed in poetic thought. The poetic theme of life and death is a living dialectic of mythical imagination. Today's trendy idiosyncratic iconography is a misuse of myth. A capricious experiment yields almost anything but truth. We are not in the need of anymore explanations. What we require is a sense of myth.

Ed.Notes: *1 *Mounted on Pegasus.* *2 King *Laius, husband of Jocasta, homosexual, father of Oedipus.* *3 *In spite of Asclepius' and other good-natured serpent symbols, the snake along with the satyr have been transformed into images that represent the devil.* *4 *Averting or healing.*

Sad Ad, published on Filk UK: Parachute for sale, once used - never unfolded, small stain.



FOOTNOTE

I rarely enjoy doing the same work twice. But in this case, I have to say, it was worth it. Having to retype Marheinicke's and Hector's articles reminded me that this issue of CounterClock had substance.
It is now June 11th, 2012 and I am ready to convert this issue to pdf. Just adding my final thoughts to it.

I spent a lot of time in my youth with reading PR. Can't say that I regret any of it. It was fun.
As things are developing with CoClock, one gets to know more about me through reading CounterClock than in any other way. Even more so at the moment, when I am not sure if *anyone* actually is reading any of this. Being in pdf-format will *maybe* keep it preserved, but there's also a big maybe, if anyone actually cares to read it. Cheers!

Wolf von Witting, multum est!