COUNTERCLOCK

ISSUE 10 FEBRUARY 2009

A random fanzine by Wolf von Witting, Via Dei Banduzzi 6/4, 33050 Bagnaria Arsa (Ud), Italy. Email: **halluciraptor at gmail.com**
Assistant Editor: Floria Anca Marin, Bagnaria Arsa, Italy.



Artwork: Christian Holl

INTRODUCTION

I am a time traveller from the 70's. From the 1970's. My life is not linear. I have spent more than ten years in the aforementioned decade. By choice! It is my opinion that civilization peaked then. Culturally, intellectually and socially. But since then humankind has degenerated.
For some time I was contemplating upon, if the madness of the world perhaps was a constant, and merely my ability to recognize it was increasing. There was always a possibility that the following generation would accumulate wisdom and knowledge in the same pace it was lost by the frailty and demise of the previous one. Now I am certain this is not the case at all. The accumulation of knowledge is considered and activity for *nerds* and *geeks*. It is more fashionable to be ignorant. A lot of people carry cell phones smarter than themselves. Some people spend more time on futile attempts to improve their appearance, while their minds get naught, or little enriched. Therefore humankind is degenerating. I am not however, entirely sure if this is intentional.

My mission is to compare the visions of science fiction to reality. How did George Orwell's *1984* turn out? How was 1999 compared to the tv-series *Space 1999*, and what became of Arthur C Clarke's *2001* and *2010*? The further away, the more difficult it was to speculate. We had so many theories, ideas and fears for the future. I, for one, expected a great megapolis across the south of Sweden and Denmark, where Copenhagen and Malmö is situated.

For sure we would have a lunar base as in 1999! For sure we would have landed on Mars! It was questionable how far the mining operations in the asteroid belt had come by the year 2000, but for sure it had been thought of. So I gathered. But no, really. I didn't expect any third world war to wipe most of us out. It didn't happen either. Yet. Also; the world is still far from overpopulated as in *Soylent Green,* where we are forced to eat our neighbours. The environment is being so gradually ruined from year to year, that we barely notice it. And the random occasions at which nature retaliates mostly hit remotely living people who we have little affinity to.

My mode of travelling is low tech, since our time travel technology hasn't advanced far enough yet in my home era. But I prefer to be thorough in my research and considered it prudent to get started early and learn more along my way. I was 20 years old when I left the 70's behind to investigate the future. Since then I have had little reason to fast forward in time, since life has been full of interesting events and surprises.

REPORTING BACK:

The 80's were wonderful years in many ways, with many memorable events. In 1984 people still cared about George Orwell's vision and objected to authority imposed by *big brothers* watching eye. It would take another twenty years before the population had become too numb or too dumb to protest against infringements on their personal freedom. On the other hand, many who lived in a communist country at the time, felt they already have experienced the reality of Orwell's 1984. And when they moved to the west, they first experienced an illusion of freedom. But slowly and surely humankind slipped into a state in which most citizens feel they are unable or just do not care about what their elected authority does.

In 1981, John Carpenter depicted the year 1997 as the future in his thriller *Escape From New York*. But no wall has yet been erected around Manhattan and no plane had until 1997 crashed into the city.
On september 13th in 1999 I watched the sky carefully. But there was no moon! How the hell did Gerry Anderson do that? The moon was just gone for several days. Not visible in the night sky over Stockholm anyway. But hold on a minute! We didn't have any moonbase. Not that we lacked the technology, or any technology we could see in *SPACE 1999*. Our computers were even vastly superior to the ones in the show. But building a base on the moon would not render any profit to its investors. Hence no moonbase Alpha. So how could the moon possibly have taken off without Martin Landau and Barbara Bain? It didn't. The moon is still up there.

We didn't launch any Jupiter mission in the year 2001. We haven't even landed on Mars yet. But in the pilot episode of *The Lone Gunmen* (a spin off from the *X-Files*) a commercial airliner was aimed for the World Trade Center (collision was fortunately averted). But half a year later it happened in real life. Talk about global traumatic experience. And that's when reality sort of began to drift into sf mode. The US of America slowly came to accord with the dystopian vision. Soon the year 2010 is here!

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CLOCKWOLF

Q: How come you suddenly decided to pick up CC after 10 years of silence?

W: Actually, not so suddenly at all. It was suggested by Lloyd Penney about half a year ago. I wasn't sure about doing so to begin with, but a quick survey on facebook convinced me otherwise. I was surprised to find that Lloyd was not the only one who'd might be looking forward to read another issue.

Q: Surprised? Why?

W: People must be tired of all the information and blogs that gets "thrown at them" these days. I fear my musings may drown in the general whirlpool of publications. It is my hope that my writing has improved in the past ten years and that the readers will recognize it.

Q: Have you considered a blog?

W: I wouldn't want to write a blog where I'd be forced to produce words more or less every day, on a regular basis. Chance is I'd run out of meaningful things to say. And who is interested in my opinion anyway? Everyone has an opinion already. In CC I have to choose my words more carefully. Certainly I expect a number of new readers. I will bear in mind that I might have to explain some of the sf fan speak we are used to.

Q: What stopped the publication of CC 10 years ago?

W: I only got 150 copies of issue # 7. My friend who was supposed to print the rest mislaid the originals and by the time new originals were produced, that particular printing option was no longer available. I never found another who could print at a reasonable cost. But this way, making the fanzine available in pdf-format is a very good idea. Who ever wants to, can print their own copy.

I had a preview version of issue # 8 ready for Nasacon 2000, but there was some dispute with Anders Bellis about a translation (him being professional). I lost momentum, not only because of this but also because of the convention and the impending death of a parent. That year was a personal year of hell. I simply lost puissance.

Q: So what about issues # 8 and # 9?

W: I still have a lot of material lying around (somewhere) which were intended for 8 and 9. A contribution from Sam J Lundwall among other things. I am considering to make them on paper. Eventually.

Q: What can people expect to read in CoClock?

W: More or less the same as before. I know, fans on the other side of the Atlantic would like to know what goes on in European fandom. I also like to write fan historical articles, since it is my opinion, fandom needs it. Knowing the past is essential for continuity and traditions.

Q: Highlights of the past ten years? Greatest moments? Darkest moments?

W: The Alvar Award 2001 is the first thing coming to mind. It is the most prestigious award an sf fan can get in Sweden. Of course it was a great moment. Almost as great as when I realized the convention Nasacon 2000 didn't fail at all. I thought some things about it were a complete disaster, but the guests didn't notice it much and maybe that's what counts. I am sure Chris Malme wasn't so happy about the size of the audience for the filk item, for example. But they had a very good show. Too bad swedish fans prefer to hang out in the bar. And the general opinion was that the convention was a success.

Q: You spent some time in the UK?

W: That is correct. Another disaster, if I may say so. The plan was to start an IT-business in London (with 3 others). This was in the autumn of 2002. But the first bailed out before I even had arrived. I was the last one to give up. Maybe because I was determined to survive long enough to be able to attend QUINZE, 15th british filk convention in Ipswich, in February 2003. I was broke at the time.

I owed Chris Malme some money for CD's, which was my intention to repay him for at the convention. He declined generously. But he didn't know how desperate my situation really was at the time. At least I had money for food at the time, but not for the hotel.

Q: Was it worth the *ordeal*?

W: Oh, yes! Absolutely! It was a sheer pleasure to meet the GoH Teri Wachowiak from Augusta, Georgia (well-known amongst the filkers of Atlanta). It was also nice to finally meet Dave Weingart.

I have a particularly fond memory of Lawrence Dean performing a beautiful song about *the First Flight of Wilbur & Orville Wright*. At the time it was exactly 100 years ago (Of course, it has been argued the Wright brothers were not the first at all. Gustav Albin Weisskopf made the first flight two years earlier).

It was also quite a surprise to run into Mark Harwood from Springvale Studios in the bar at the convention. Nice guy! He was there in company of Louise Robey (the knockout redhead from the TV-series Friday the 13th) and introduced her to myself and Chris O'Shea. Chris and I were invited to the studio where we had tea, remembered old episodes of Friday 13th and got a little Hollywood-inside gossip, which I do not intend to share. We got a ride in a white Jaguar back to the convention and the next day we met Cradle of Filth drummer Adrian Erlandsson at the studio. After roughly an hour of drumming the man was literally oozing. He was probably the most athletic person I ever saw.

The genuinely cozy atmosphere at the convention, the thrilling encounter with Louise Robey and a walk down to Portman Road in Ipswich at night made me momentarily forget all about my worries for the future.



"THE WORST SF FILMS OF ALL TIME", *Wolf & Dave Lally in a fairly entertaining program item at SweCon 2004.*

Q: After the convention you went back to Sweden?
W: Yes, I had no choice. Maybe I would have had a choice… If I had told my friends in Reading about just how deep down shit creek I had come. But I didn't. I was too proud to ask for help. I had created the mess myself, so it was only fair that I also solve the problems myself. When I came back to Sweden I was *deep in the reds*. It took me three years to repay the debts I made then. This was also why I couldn't afford Glasgow in 2005. I had so been looking forward to go there. But I messed it up.
Q: Are you still filking? Writing songs?
W: I have to admit, not much. I would hate to end up in another drawer, as a filker only. But filking is fun. I finally received a better acoustic guitar, a Stinger. A birthday present from my soulmate Floria Anca Marin.
Q: Is she the reason why you moved to Italy?
W: Yes, indeed. But also the fact that my conscience found it increasingly difficult to remain in service with my employer in Sweden.
Q: You have claimed, for quite some time now, to be working on a book. How is it going?
W: Quite honestly, not so well. And I am not sure what the bug up my arse is. 1999 I produced more than enough words for a book. The following year, like I said before, I lost momentum. All of it. Maybe I will *need* CC to get it back. I find it easier to motivate myself when I write for an *audience*. I'm a bit disappointed with myself. However, I am not going to give up. I am going to finish the book, no matter how much time it takes. But you know, much can happen in a day. A lot more in a year.
Q: Thank you, for this interview!

EUROSMOF ON FACEBOOK

There has not been an overwhelming rush to join the Eurosmof group on facebook. Well, I didn't expect it. The Eurosmof idea originated 1997, or 1998 and was initiated by UK sf fan Fiona Anderson. The idea was to create a dialogue and collaboration across borders. Maybe the time was not right then. Maybe the time is not right now. But for sure, the facebook page does not need any maintenance. It costs nothing. With time the group may grow and when the time is right, things could begin to happen all by themselves. Some "officers" have been appointed. I wouldn't mind to appoint a 2nd administrator either. But every advancement needs to be voluntarily.
The point of doing something, anything should be one of two reasons: first - if you get paid for it and secondly - if it is fun doing it. Most of the time, we do not get paid. So it has to be fun.

FASCINATING TOYS

See the No:1 debt of the world ticking friskly away beyond the possibility ever to be repaid: U.S. NATIONAL DEBT CLOCK - The Outstanding Public Debt as of 05 Feb 2009 at 04:50:00 PM GMT was: 10,674,644,241,689 dollars and… 99 cent, no less. The National Debt has continued to increase an average of $3.36 billion per day since September 28, 2007.
Source: http://www.brillig.com/debt_clock/
which equals roughly 8,303 billion euro.
- - -
And if you can read some italian (or simply can guess what *popolazione totale mondiale* means) see how the world population grows (NOW: 6,774,540,100+).
http://www.neodemos.it/
I say, I say… The wonders of modern technology!!!

"Best piece of advice I have heard about how to become a successful writer comes from Robert A Heinlein, he said: Finish the book!" Edward James, at *Conversation* on the 11th to 13th of august 2006 in Stockholm.

The Dawn of SF Fandom in Europe

Being a fan of science fiction has not always been an easy life. Today the genre is widely accepted. There are plenty of sci-fi shows on TV. Not so many are actually reading it anymore, but not many would sneer at you in contempt, if you say you are a science fiction fan. But before the moon landing in 1969 this was pretty much still a pioneering business and even in the 70's one was still considered something of a nutter believing in "those things". People had no idea what it was about. "You're the guys who believes in UFO's, right?"
"Ah, no... I read books."

In my 1995 edition of John Clute's "Encyclopedia of Science Fiction", John describes fandom as being "the active readership of sf and fantasy, maintaining contacts through fanzines and conventions." He then lets us know that "fandom originated in the late 1920's, shortly after the appearance of the first sf magazines. Readers contacted each other, formed local groups, and soon began publication of APAs and other amateur magazines, which came to be known collectively as fanzines. The first organized convention was held in Leeds, UK, in 1937 and the first World SF Convention in New York in 1939."

Infact, the first world conventions were hardly worth being called that, since the first world convention outside the US was held in Toronto, 1948, the second in London 1957 (again in London 1965), and before New York in 1967 the worldcon never gathered anywhere near 1000 members. Calling it worldcons is a bit like appointing Miss Universe, while only females from the planet Earth are admitted to the competition (and from the human species). But like I said before, this was still a pioneering business. Viewing pictures from the 50's and 60's, you'd see sf fans wearing a suit and a tie. And the tie doesn't come off until the early 70's.

I recently got the question: What is a science fiction fan? How is he different from any other lover of science fiction? Well... it kept me awake the following night. I like to provide solid answers, and the matter was not so easy anymore. Today there are millions of sf lovers, but they are not fans or part of fandom. What makes a believer of god a christian? It's when he or she connects to christianity, isn't it? When he or she becomes a catholic or a protestant. Equally, when a sf lover connects to fandom and its traditions, he or she becomes what in fan speak is called *sercon* (serious constructive) or *fannish* (a fan who is more interested in sf fandom than in sf itself).
Of course, we don't have a book we speak of as the Holy Bible, but if we have anything near by comparison, it would be Richard Bergeron's Warhoon 28, which contains the complete works of an irish sf fan named Walt Willis and the "Enchanted Duplicator" by Willis and Bob Shaw, first published in February 1954. I would recommend you to read it. It is available over the internet.
A true sf fan published a fanzine, contributes to an APA (Amateur Press Association), writes letters of comments

(mostly to fanzines), runs or attends science fiction conventions and joins a club or fan gatherings.
Well, maybe a fan doesn't need to do ALL of the above mentioned, but some of it at least some of the time.
Publishing on paper, with postage and packing has become a luxury that we hardly can afford anymore, and by clever use of the internet, no longer need. Some fans, on the other hand, are happy to simply express themselves on todays existing mailing lists. Like before, sf fans doesn't just talk about science fiction when they meet, but about anything which comes to mind. Or they sing. And then it is called "filking". Filk music is the folk music of sf fandom and like the things sf fans talk about, the things they sing about can be about just anything.

But I am mainly going to focus on the non english speaking fandoms here. There is plenty of fanhistorical material available on the internet about American, British and Irish fandom. Of course the brits were first, earlier, bigger and better than everyone else in Europe (and remain so), when it comes to fanac (fannish activity), but we already know that. I am however going to focus on everyone else.

* * *

According to Jaap Boekestein, possible the first *fanzine* in the Netherlands was Fantasie en wetenschap [Fantasy and Science] by Ben Abbas and Lo Hartog van Banda. There were 4 issues between December 1948 and March 1949. It seems though, also according to Boekestein, this magazine was more directed to a general public than any existing fandom. We may acknowledge it as a kind of proto fandom, but nothing else which Boekestein finds worth mentioning happens in the Netherlands until 1965.

But once upon a time, two distinctly to the traditions of sf connected fandoms emerged in Europe (outside the english speaking community). One was up in the north we call Scandinavia, and the other in central Europe, the German speaking community. Both of them forming roughly five to ten years after the end of WWII. Sweden, not having been ravaged by the war, was first out.

SCANDINAVIAN FANDOM

Sture Lönnerstrand (1919-1999), can be hailed as the pioneer in Sweden. Together with Roland Adlerberth he founded 1950 the first sf club in the country. But it wasn't until the mid 50's before one could speak of a fandom in Sweden as Dénis Lindbohm formed Club Meteor in Malmö and when Club Cosmos appeared in Gothenburg. Of these three, the latter one is the only one to survive until the 21st century. From Norway came a fanzine published by Roar Ringdahl and Cato Lindberg. The first Scandinavian conventions were held in Lund 1956 and Stockholm 1957.



* SFSF was founded in 1960 and is today with 180 members still the biggest sf club in Sweden. Most of its activity occurs in and around Stockholm.
* Sigma TC has existed since 1976. They arranged their convention Nasacon for 11 consecutive years 1980-1990 and SaltsjöCon since 1997.
* Linköpings SF Association was founded in 1988 and has had an impressive series of conventions running under the name ConFuse.
* SFF is the longest running swedish APA. It started in 1978 and had its 100's mailing in 1996. The APA is still running.

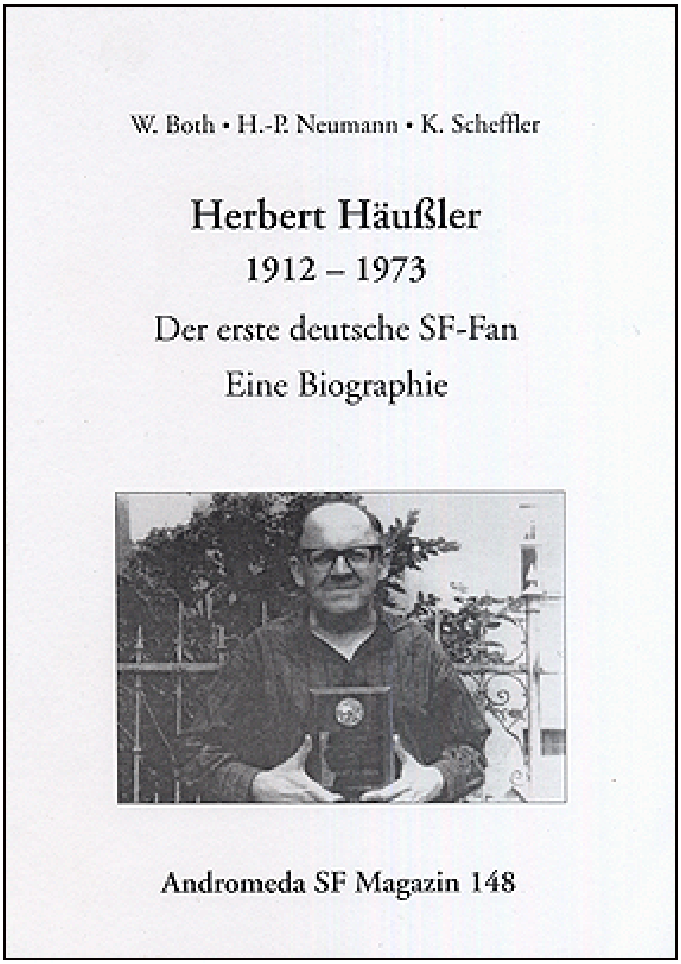
Swedish fandom has been fairly static, with the exception of a whole lot of feuds in the late 80's and early 90's which caused severe damage to it. Since then many older fans have returned to a somewhat more mature and sensible community.

Norwegian fandom has grown considerably over the years and maintained an excellent contact with Sweden. They have also been running a good number of conventions in Oslo and Bergen.

Danish fandom has for decades been more or less only two people; Klaus Johansen and Niels Dalgaard. This has changed, as they Eurocon 2007 in Copenhagen proved to us. But the first sf club in Denmark was founded in 1974 and the first convention held in 1975.

GERMAN SPEAKING FANDOM

But even if Scandinavia was first out with clubs and conventions, the honour of being the first not english speaking european to connect to sf fandom was a german named Herbert Häussler (1912-1973). Already before WWII he corresponded in esperanto with Forry Ackermann. Unfortunately he ended up on "the wrong side of the border", in East Germany. And it wasn't easy being an sf-fan there. The sf magazines that Forry sent to him were initially confiscated by Stasi.



The first fanzine in German language came already 1946 from Austria. It was the austrian fan Erwin Scudla who then kept publishing his fanzine SIRIUS until 1957.

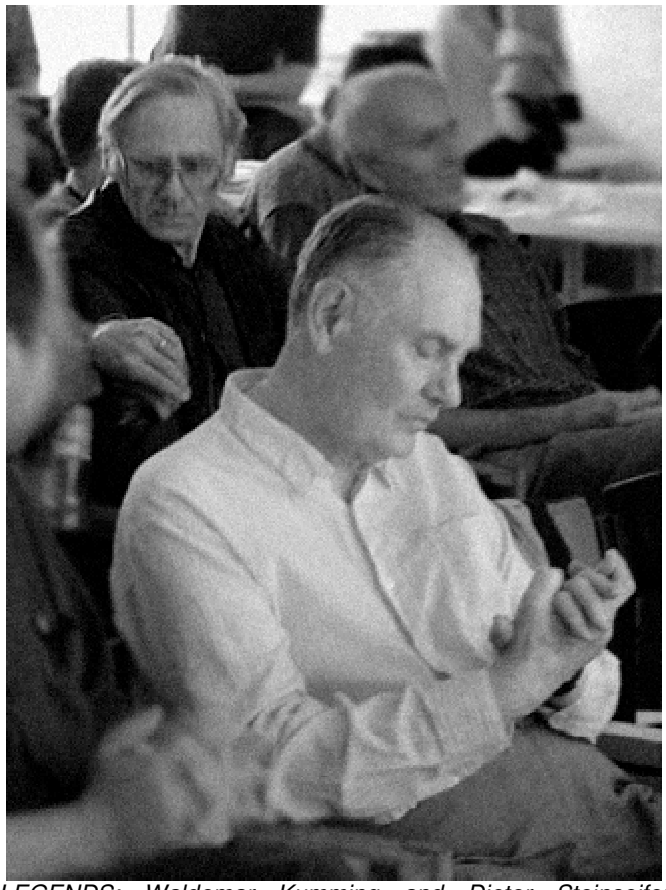


Walter Ernsting (1920-2005) is the man known as the father of german fandom. On August 4th in 1955 he founded the SFCD (Science Fiction Club Deutschland) with Forry Ackerman and Hugo Gernsback among the founding members. He also published his first novel the same year under the pen name Clark Darlton (because a sf novel written by a german was unlikely to be published in Germany) and even invented an "original" english title *Tomorrow the Future*, whereas he named himself as translator of the novel. He also started the fanzine Andromeda, which remained the official fanzine of the SFCD and still is being published today.



Walter Ernsting, the father of german sf fandom.

Waldemar Kumming, another fan of the 50's has now published *Munich Round Up* in six decades. He regularly visited international sf conventions and has been well known throughout world sf fandom. Last time I checked, he was still alive.



LEGENDS: Waldemar Kumming and Dieter Steinseifer (background, left) in Lübeck 2003. [Photo: Wolf von Witting]

- - -

German fandom grew out of proportion in the 70's with hundreds and hundreds of sf clubs and fanzines, mostly due to the space hero Perry Rhodan, which is a space opera in pulp magazine form which has been appearing with an issue weekly since 1961. The magazine has a readers column and this has been a platform for fans to meet for five decades. Ten years ago, I wrote about Perry Rhodan in CounterClock # 4, when PR passed the 2000 issues mark. Yep, issue # 2475 was released on January 23rd this year and he is still going strong.

The german speaking fandom includes today former East Germany, Austria and Switzerland, though one should always bear in mind that it is people we deal with, and not countries. And the people in fandom were very few before 1967. And still few in 1977, even though the number of attending fans at world conventions doubled from 1500 to 3000.

DUTCH FANDOM

The year 1965 saw the birth or maybe rebirth of fandom in the Low Lands. It all started with the 23th Worldcon: Loncon II. Because of this convention 'Mr. Sci-Fi' Forry Ackerman visited Europe.

Through mail-contacts with British and American fans several Dutch fans had found each other. This small and nameless group came together every now and than to talk, swap books and go to the few science fiction movies that made it to the Dutch cinemas. From this group came the invitation of Dutchman P. Hans Frank-

further to Forry J. Ackerman to visit the Netherlands after Loncon II. Forry accepted and when he arrived at Tuesday 10 August with the 22.28 train from Düsseldorf, he was welcomed at the station by P. Hans Frankfurther, a group of students in monster suits and some journalists. The next afternoon there was a meeting in the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam. [Forry's recollection of this visit can be found in the Souvenir book of Confiction, the 48th Worldcon in The Hague, Source: Dutch and Flemish fandom in the 50's & 60's by Jaap Boekestein]
In the 80's we recall Roelof Goudriaan who published the formidable fanzine *Shards of Babel*.

EURAPA & DAPPER

There has been at least one attempt at creating a european APA. Back in the 80's Hans-Jürgen Mader and Joachim Henke launched EURAPA. But it didn't last for very long. Dutch fan Jan van Ent kept his APA, DAPPER, alive much longer. And it was more of an European APA than EURAPA ever was. But then, roughly 10 years after EURAPA, the time was right. I left DAPPER when it had exceeded well over 50 mailings, early this millennium.

FRENCH & BELGIAN FANDOM

Jules Verne pioneered the science fiction genre and Georges Méliès provided us with the first sf film of all time: "La Voyage dans la Lune". Since then the french have added Alphaville (1965) and La Planéte Sauvage (1973). Francois Truffaut gave us his excellent film version of Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451. The french magazine Metal Hurlant created with its new style an entire culture, known as "heavy metal". Yet french conventions are from 75 to 90% dominated by professionals and only 10-25 % amateurs (fans), while it is the other way around at the conventions we are used to attend. Ok, so with the rare exception of people like Pascal Thomas, not many french or belgian sf fans bother to learn and speak english. And the only time when we get to hear anything from France, is when they come up with another revolutionizing idea. They've always been good at that and I just assume they will keep doing it.

TURKEY

Connected by a small land mass on the European side of the Bosporus, Turkey has literally one foot in Europe. Late 70's or early 80's I had contact, in german language, with a turkish sf fan, Aydemir Akgül. He sent me his fanzine *GÖKTASI*, which means Meteor. So, evidently there is or has been a sf fandom in Turkey. We just don't know a whole lot about them. Is there anyone who could remedy this deficiency?

SF IN SUOMI FINLAND

Finland had for a long time only one sf fan, Tom Ölander (1945-2002) in Helsinki, but in the mid 70's another sf club was founded in Turku, where the fanzine Spin was made. 1981 came the fanzine Aikakone (which means time machine). When Engholm and I visited Tom Ölander in Helsinki 1981, we had no idea how finnish fandom would surprise us all. Before his death in 2002, Tom witnessed an enormous expansion in finnish fandom. Mostly due to the fact that their conventions were government financed. The national convention Finncon virtually began to attract thousands of people. This sudden burst of interest in science fiction has been unparalleled in Europe.

ITALIAN FANDOM

The TAFF-Winner of 1971, Mario Bosnyak, was born in Italy but lived in Germany for 16 years when he won the race. And clearly Italy must have had a fandom at least before the first Eurocon in 1972. But in Italy it doesn't seem to be important WHO does what, but WHAT has been done. It is occasionally difficult to find the names behind a project. Who are running the Eurocon this year? The only italian sf fan today who appears to be *public*, is Roberto Quaglia, the vice chairman of the ESFS.
Much of Italian sf is centered around Delos, an online sf magazine. (http://www.fantascienza.com/)
In 1999 Delos published a paper back with sf short stories by 19 different italian amateur writers, of which at least 3 evidently were publishing some of their works in fanzines. So for example wrote Lanfranco Fabriani a story "Studio in grigio" in an italian fanzine The Time Machine in 1982. Giovanni Polesello and Livio Horrakh are two other fan writer / semi pro or pro writer who expressed themselves in fanzines. But all of the italian focus appears to be on pro writing and pro publishing and little attention is given to traditional sf fandom.
The italian edition of Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine which came in the spring of 1978 had only translations of the american originals and no letter column at all. After one and a half year in Italy, I still haven't figured out how italian sf fans are supposed to come in contact with each other. There are no sf magazines in the kiosks and shops. All sf you will find is the comic book hero *Nathan Never* who one possibly can compare to Perry Rhodan, except Nathan Never has no readers column. If Italy has a fandom as such, it appears to be dwelling *underground*. Probably in Milano, where every italian publication is being printed.

"A professional writer is an amateur who didn't quit." R.Bach

---

SPAIN & EASTERN EUROPE

Spain has been under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco until 1975. Like most of Eastern Europe, it has therefore been difficult for sf fans to gather or for them to make any fanzines. As the people began to win the upper hand in their struggle for freedom, Poland was among the first countries from which an sf fandom emerged. According to Pasi Karppanen (in Kosmoskynä - Cosmos Pen # 2/2003) their first sf club was founded already in 1975. This is likely to be correct. I remember having had contact with a fan, Wiktor Bukato, in 1979.
The Baltic countries Lithuania had fannish activity since 1979, Estonia joined in 1996 and when Latvia joined, can be in some dispute. Pasi says 2000, but surely some sf fans must have been in Riga when the Eurocon 1985 was conceived. And the latvian sf fan Imants Belogrivs was active before the year 2000. I met him first time at the Baltcon 1999 in Stockholm. Also the Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary eventually appeared on the map of sf fandom.

"Forcing myself to write showed me how easy it is to drift into a state of mind where you produce utter drivel. I found that there comes a point in the writing of every novel when you wonder whether it was worth starting." (Brian Stableford after forcing himself to produce at least 5,000 words per night, as retold in his book "The Way to Write Science Fiction") 5,000 words is roughly this issue of CC so far.

TAFF WINNERS

There are not many sf fans outside the english speaking community who ever won the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund. This fund, as the name indicates, sends fans across the Atlantic to attend world conventions. Only one german and one in Germany living italian have made it. So far.

1966 Thomas Schlück, Germany
1971 Mario Bosnyak, Italy
Also nominated for TAFF were:
1966 Bo Stenfors, Sweden
1971 Per Insulander, Sweden
2004 Anders Holmström, Sweden

This year **Steve Green** and **Tom Womack** have been nominated. The ballot is available at:
http://taff.org.uk/ballots/taff2009.html

IMPORTANT EUROPEAN CONVENTIONS

1957 – Worldcon, Loncon I - London, UK (268)
1965 – Worldcon, Loncon II - London, UK (350)
1970 – Worldcon, Heicon - Heidelberg, W.Germany (700*)
1972 – Eurocon 1 - Trieste, Italy
1974 – Eurocon 2 - Grenoble, France
1976 – Eurocon 3 - Poznan, Polland
1976 – Scancon, Stockholm, Sweden (450+)
1977 – International SFCD-Con, Kleve, W.Germany (400+)
1978 – Eurocon 4 - Bruxelles, Belgium
1979 – Worldcon, SeaCon - Brighton, UK
1980 – Eurocon 5 - Stresa, Italy
1980 – SFCD-Con, Bärcon - Berlin, W.Germany
1981 – Eurocon 6, Moscow (cancelled)
1981 – SFCD-Con, StuCon - Stuttgart, W.Germany
1982 – Eurocon 7 - Moenchengladbach, W. Germany
1983 – Eurocon 8 - Ljubljana, Yugoslavia
1984 – Eurocon 9 - Brighton, United Kingdom
1985 – Eurocon 10 - Riga (cancelled)
1986 – Eurocon 11 - Zagreb, Yugoslavia
1987 – Eurocon 12 - Montpellier, France
1988 – Eurocon 13 - Budapest, Hungary
1989 – Eurocon 14 - San-Marino
1989 – Finncon, Helsinki (3000)
1990 – Worldcon, Confiction - The Hague, Netherlands
1990 – Eurocon - Fayence, France
1991 – Eurocon - Krakow, Poland
1991 – Finncon, Helsinki (4000)
1992 – Eurocon - Freudenstadt, Germany
1993 – Eurocon - Saint Helier, Jersey
1994 – Eurocon - Timisoara, Romania
1995 – Worldcon/Eurocon, Intersection - Glasgow, Scotland
1996 – Eurocon / Baltcon - Vilnius, Lithuania
1997 – Eurocon - Dublin, Ireland
1997 – Baltcon, SFCD-Con - Ratzeburg, Germany
1998 – SF-Tage NRW, Dortmund, Germany (1500+)
1998 – Eastercon, Intuition - Manchester, UK
1999 – Baltcon, Junicon - Stockholm, Sweden
1999 – Eurocon / Trinity - Dortmund, Germany (1000+)
1999 – Perry Rhodan Worldcon, Mainz, Germany (3000+)
2000 – Swecon/Baltcon, Nasacon, Stockholm, Sweden
2000 – Eurocon/Baltcon - Gdansk, Poland
2001 – Finncon/Baltcon - Jyvaskyla, Finland
2001 – Eurocon - Capidava, Romania
2002 – Eurocon - Chotebor, Czhech Republic
2003 – Eurocon/Baltcon - Turku, Finland
2004 – Eurocon - Plovdiv, Bulgaria
2005 – Worldcon/Eurocon, Interaction - Glasgow, Scotland
2006 – Eurocon - Kiev, Ukraine
2007 – Eurocon - Copenhagen, Denmark
2008 – Eurocon - Moscow, Russia
2009 – Eurocon - Fiuggi, Italy
2009 – Baltcon - St.Petersburg, Russia
2010 – Eurocon - Poland / Czech Rep.

Tero Ykspetäjä has provided Counterclock with a History of sf conventions in Suomi Finland (SF):

Before Finncons, there were two early conventions (both with a membership fee). KingCon in 1982 was in Helsinki, as a joint venture with the Swedish fandom (the con started on the ferry from Stockholm to Helsinki). GoHs Harry Harrison and Karel Thole. TamCon 1985 was a small convention in Tampere.

The Finncons:

The 1st Finncon 1986 in Helsinki, with Guest of Honor Brian W Aldiss had only a few hundred members, but the 2nd Finncon in 1989 (also in Helsinki). GoHs John Brunner and Tom Ölander had already about 3000 attendees.
Then followed the 3rd in 1991 (Helsinki), GoH Iain M. Banks, with about 4000 attendees and the 4th in 1993 (Helsinki). GoHs Terry Pratchett and Bryan Talbot, with about 4000 attendees. When the Finncon moved out in the country, to Jyväskylä in 1996 (GoHs Bruce Sterling, Vonda N. McIntyre and Storm Constantine), the number of attendees dropped, but still counted over 2000.
1997 Helsinki. GoHs Norman Spinrad and Ian McDonald had about 5000–6000 attendees.
1999 Turku. GoHs Connie Willis and Philip Pullman. FGoH Ahrvid Engholm. About 3000 attendees.
2000 Helsinki. GoHs Neil Gaiman, Stephen Baxter and Ken MacLeod. About 3500 attendees (organized together with the Helsinki Comics Festival, with combined attendance of about 10000).
2001 Jyväskylä (also a Baltcon). GoHs Jonathan Carroll, David Langford, Stelarc, Richard Stallman and Johanna Sinisalo. FGoH Ahrvid Engholm. Over 2000 attendees.
2003 Turku (also a Eurocon, a Baltcon). GoHs Michael Swanwick, Jonathan Clements, Steve Sansweet, Carolina Bjällerstedt Mickos and Boris Hurtta. Fan GoH Bjørn Tore Sund. About 4000 attendees.
2004 Jyväskylä. GoHs Robin Hobb, Gwyneth Jones, John Clute, Yoshitoshi ABe and Toni Jerrman. About 4000 attendees (2-day combined total).
2006 Helsinki. GoHs Jeff VanderMeer, Risto Isomäki, Justina Robson and Rickard Beghorn. About 9000 attendees (3-day combined total).
2007 Jyväskylä. GoHs Ellen Datlow, Joe Haldeman, Elizabeth Hand, Cheryl Morgan and Ben Roimola. About 7000 attendees.
2008 Tampere. GoHs Farrah Mendlesohn, Charles Vess, M. John Harrison, Ms. Mandu and Petri Hiltunen. About 7000–8000 attendees.

Of these, the 1st Finncon in 1986 was a *traditional* convention with a membership fee, but all the rest have been free (so I'm using the term "attendees" instead of "members"). The method of counting attendees has varied. Normally the estimate is of how many visited the convention. 2004 and 2006 used a different method where the visitors were counted on individual days and the totals added together (so if a person visited on two days, they counted as two attendees).
In addition, there have been two minicons called Contact, in 1987 and 1997, where a bunch of Finnish fen have travelled to Stockholm. Contact took place in the

ferry and in Ahrvid Engholm's apartment (and on the way back to Helsinki).

In 1994, there was an attempt to start a tradition of smaller, more literature oriented conventions in Finland with AikaCon. GoHs Ian Watson and Risto Isomäki. About 100 members. AikaCon was not a success, so it took over ten years to try again. Then we had the more successful Åcon (small by intention)
2007 Åcon. GoH Hal Duncan. About 90 members.
2008 Åcon 2. GoH Ian McDonald. About 90 members.

COUNTERLOC's

Under this header some of the readers comments will be published. Please email me: halluciraptor at gmail.com



Louise Ann Robey & Chris O'Shea at Springvale Studios in Ipswich, February 2003. Photo: Wolf von Witting

TELEVISION

Adrian Hodges has modified the 1975-1977 series *SURVIVORS* a bit and created a modern version in this remake. I still think the 1975 version is superior, but apparently Hodges takes the series into another direction than the original. It also seems obvious this time, that Abby Grant will return for the second season and there is some extra spice to the story. I therefore look forward to view the second season and to find out what Hodges has in mind. *http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1258189/*

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS:

AXXIdental, the 21st British Filk Con, Grantham, UK
6 - 8 February 2009 (*ok, so we're already too late for this*)
http://www.contabile.org.uk/
EUROCON - Fiuggi, 26-29 March 2009
http://www.euroconsf2009.it/
EASTERCON - Bradford, UK, 10-13 April 2009
http://lx2009.com/
BALTCON, INTERPRESSCON, St.Petersburg, Russia
30 April - 3 May 2009, http://interpresscon.ru/
ALCOCON - Gothenburg, Sweden, 24-26 april 2009
http://www.clubcosmos.net/Alcocon3/
SFCD-Con, SCHLOSSCON - Schwerin, 5-7 Juni 2009
http://www.schlosscon.de/
FINNCON - Helsinki, Finland, 10-12 July 2009
http://2009.finncon.org/en/
ANTICIPATION, the 67th Worldcon, Montreal, Canada
6-10 August 2009
http://www.anticipationsf.ca/
FilkCONtinental - Freusburg, Germany, 9-11 October 2009
http://www.filkcontinental.de/2009/home/
IMAGICON 2/SWECON - Stockholm, 16-18 October 2009
http://www.imagicon.se/

FUTURE CONTRIBUTIONs

This is (in alphabetical order) what I would like to have:
AHRVID ENGHOLM & ANDERS BELLIS: In the next issue I will take a closer look at the impact on fandom of two very important swedish sf fans, without going into, or taking any side in any feud (disagreement) they might have been or still are involved in. Have one of these two had any impact on YOU (which you are aware of)?
AXXIDENTAL: A brief report from the filk convention?
CONVENTION REPORTS: From European conventions.
EASTERCON: A brief (or an extensive) report from this years Eastercon, if you write it immediately after the convention and, please, let me know beforehand that it is coming.
FAN HISTORICAL: If you have any updates, discovered omissions or if you would like to make corrections on my survey of early European sf fandom.
FANEKDOTES: Have any? If related to Bellis or Engholm, they'd be particularly interesting.
FANZINES: If I can read them (Yeah, I do have problems with arabic, chinese, hebrew, japanese, sanskrit and urdu).
ILLUSTRATIONS: Anything, if it is science fiction.
INTERVIEW: I would like to present an interview with the chair of a world convention. From a personal point of view.
LETTER OF COMMENTS: Also known as CounterLoCs. Did you like the previous issue? Did you hate every word of it? Have something to add? Whatever comes to mind!
PHOTOGRAPHY: Perhaps your forte lies not with words, but rather with images? No problem. Hit me, if you feel it is relevant somehow, and then we sort it out.
STORIES: I would like to have a short story in which one element is *time running backwards*. Not necessarily throughout the story, but at some point in it.

FOOTNOTE AND FINAL WORDS

This issue of CounterClock will also appear in a US letter edition for easy printing on the other side of the pond.
When installing the program for converting this issue to pdf-format, suddenly all the settings in this document changed. Another precious gift from Microdaft, which only confirms what we already knew about them. Their programming is for shite. Let's hope we never need to install Vista.

CounterClock will always be available for free. In the above listed suggestions for feedback, I told you what I hope to get in return. The next issue can be expected in April, after and with a report of this years Eurocon. I can't promise a report from the Eastercon, but I would really like to have one (wink).

As Engholm and Bellis once used to wish everyone [here I quote them]: "The reality of fanac, the hope of egoboo and the promise of bheer!!!"

Wolf von Witting