CounterClock

ISSUE # 20
DEC 2014

The CounterClock Convention is postponed to Issue # 21



Why SF-Fandom matters - Fandom in Italy
Report: NOVACON 44 in Nottingham, UK
TAFF History - The 2015 race
The European Event Calender
José Sanchez Artwork, LoCol
and more...

TRANS ATLANTIC FAN FUND

INTRODUCTION

First off, I have been *overheating* my head lately with CounterClock # 19 and Clockwise # 2015, and need to take on a project of lesser mental stress than what I had in mind with the CounterClock Convention. So, I have postponed the fictional con until next issue.



Illustration: José Sanchez

Life takes surprising turns. All my right *and* wrong in the past lead up to a present, which I would not even want to change. The present changes by default and what lies ahead is interesting no matter the outcome of what is involved in my path.
"Everything happens for a reason." I firmly believe in this. Not that the reason always needs to have anything to do with me. Of course, it pleases me, when the impact of something I did has been good for other people, friends or relatives. Best example, my kids. Both of them successful. By their own hands. I can take no credit. But isn't it a nice coincidence? At least my impact did not *prevent* them from being successful. Try not to control, what you can't control. And you can't direct anyone else's life but your own.
Now I learn things from my kids. Because while I do talk a lot, I still listen. And I like to listen.

At Fulham Broadway I got onto bus 391 for Imperial Wharf and happened to talk to an old Cockney dock worker. He was laid off before they started building Excel. All his life he had lived in London. But his hometown was nothing like it had been when he was young. Now he was a tad bitter and full of loathing for all the foreigners around town.
- Yes, why is it called tourist season, if we can't shoot them? I said. He laughed.
Oh, I do see the irony of it, when I am myself one of the effing tourists which bother me. But I do wish I could have experienced *his* London. And even though I am not the least xenophobic, I could see his point. I do not wish to go back and see what progress has done to my childhood memories. There's a parking lot over our playground in Gothenburg, the Autobahn across the peaceful rural landscape in the Rhine-Sieg district and nothing ever really remains the same anywhere, does it?

Anyway, the conversation on the bus, gave me the idea to start with *investigative journalism*. In the sense, that I can go out and ask people about their understanding and their experiences of matters I already made up my mind about.
If the results differs from what I expected, and reveals interesting facts, then I like to write about it.
And while having time in London to spare, I got the idea to write about "Security and Surveillance". in this issue (page 22). Mind you, these are merely a few easy steps down the road towards writing on more serious issues.

For a long time, I have relied on memories and experiences of the past to fill these pages. But I am afraid the occasional convention-reports and developments in fandom will not be enough to keep up a captivating quarterly publishing pace. I do not intend to slow down and I hope not to repeat myself too much. Naturally, I have to look around for other relevant topics. And without much ado, I seem to have found a goldmine to dig in. The present.

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Strange, but true. After 55 years of life, today I first tasted rice boiled together with potatoes. Make it 50/50 and add a diced onion. Surprising what rice and potatoes do to each other when boiled together. I liked it. Spice with dill and a whiff of fish or any meat you still happen to have around. It doesn't take a lot. Use your imagination. It's an easy one.

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Prompted by two friends in the one APA I am a member of I saw *"The Crucible"* (1996) yesterday. It is based on the play by Arthur Miller and it was the kind of film which make me weep bitter tears for humankind. We are supposed to make progress, but even though we have advanced in so many ways technologically, we are not particularly much ahead of society 400 years ago. Right after it, we revisited ST-TNG: *The Drumhead*, which confirms and made me laugh about it. There are so many willing witch-hunters among us and so few Picards.

Italy, my new *home*. After seven years here, it would be sad if I didn't comprehend written Italian. It may take longer to fully understand Italians though. Perhaps because they are like Germans, not a single people, but a compound of different tribes. Going to the south of Italy, is like going to another country. I wouldn't even understand half of what people say there. They use *passato remoto* and we use *imperfekt* in the north. But an hour of debate with Anna Feruglio Dal Dan at Novacon 44 convinced me, that what I had written about Italian fandom so far, and what I could deduct from the interview with Luca Volpino, was basically correct. She was less positive than I to the impact STIC has had, but while hierarchy and authority is a surviving remnant of an archaic society structure, the fact that a **fan** must be welcome in a **fanclub,** gives hope for the future. Doesn't it?

So, let's get on with CounterClock # 20:

WHY SF-FANDOM MATTERS

First impressions last.

I treasure my early convention-experiences, because they were in the spirit of old sf-fandom. I recall the veneration I felt, when I first met an author of Perry Rhodan or a BNF [big name fan]. I was a teenager. But they all made it clear, they were not to be put on pedestals. Appreciated for their achievements, yes. Everyone likes that. But being placed on a pedestal? No. They all recall their own first moments of awe, or sense of wonder. They too, were once fans. And even though they became what we in sf-fandom generally refer to as filthy ol' pro's, they kept the spirit of fandom inside.

SF-fans were outsiders in society. The genre we loved, was not considered proper entertainment for grown-ups. Again I have to quote Gregory Benford, the sf-author and plasma-scientist, when he was in his teens and said to his father: - - Dad, I want to grow up and become an sf-writer.
- Son, his father said, You can't do both!

That was the attitude all of our parents, aunts and uncles had. We went to sf-conventions to encounter like-minded people. We found them in every range of age, in every shape and color. And we were all alike and happy to be with other sf-fans. We learned, that our heroes, the professional sf-writers were people, just like us. Pro-mags in Germany and Sweden had a column in which they *kept an eye* on the things which were going on in fandom, which events were organized and which fanzines were being published. And fans could take pried in being fans and nothing more. They were not in it for the money.



Artwork: Chris Loneberg. Some fans were aiming at becoming professionals, but some fans were only aiming at making a good fanzine. As in the Enchanted Duplicator.

There are grapes and there is wine. The grapes are called grapes and the wine is called wine. There are sf-fans and there are pro. And while a pro may have been a fan and even though he still is passionate for the genre, he is not a fan. He is a pro. We can not replace sf-fandom with a bunch of pro's (former sf-fans). Fandom would cease to exist.

There's an exaggeration about sf-fandom mentioned in John Clute's *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, that we on the other hand can remove the genre, but sf-fandom would continue to exist. It is not very far from the truth.

Only the bleating herd of consumers, which now pollute almost every sf-convention, would go away. I was never comfortable with the term media-fans. It was used in a derogative way, implying that media-fans didn't read any books. It is prejudice. What is annoying, are people who do not think for themselves. I call them the bleating herd of consumers. And now, that the genre has become popular, they gather en masse.

Fortunately, the sf-genre itself stimulates to independent thinking. Independent and original thinking is often found in childhood. Many great ideas come before we are being taught what we can and what we can't do. Originality is often being educated away. But not so in sf-fandom.
Fandom has always been welcoming diversity.

Conventions were made by sf-fans, for sf-fans with the participation of sf-fans. It wasn't the organizers of an event which guaranteed the success of it, it was the participants.

And we all began with a whole lot of imperfections. But we were allowed to publish our crappy stories in our cruddy fanzines. And they were mentioned in the fandom columns anyway. Yes, we were absolutely mad. And it was wonderful to be allowed to be so insane. Soon enough the sane and mundane world would get us into its claws. We too would come to the point, where we perceive money as the essential component to existence. Money for postage and packing, money for printing, ink and corflu, money for a new type-writer. We climbed the mountains of inertia and ventured through the canyon of criticism until we finally reached the golden tower. You can translate the word into other languages. But if you only translate the word, you do still not understand its meaning. We have long since determined that the word *fan* is no better description for sf-fans than the word *ventilator.* But we really have not bothered to find another, better word for it. Fans are slans, and everyone knew it. Until now.

The word fan, doesn't make much sense when translated. It doesn't nearly cover the scope of what sf-fandom does. SF-fandom, which has existed for 85 years is so much more than a group of followers. The first meeting of the *Scienceers* on 11th December 1929 in Harlem, New York, is often hailed as the birth of fandom. But unlike sport or musical idol fans, sf-fandom was never satisfied with merely reading the literature. Cinema and TV have always been limping behind in the evolution of SF, but if you look at what fan-influence did to ST-TNG and Doctor Who, for example. Then perhaps you understand the point I am trying to get across. Nothing turns out as well, as when the best ideas out of fandom ar savored.

Prodom is not doing well without fandom. Prodom are the peddlers and fandom are the customers. A healthy fandom helps prodom to advance and grow, and to stay on their toes. Fandom is a breeding ground for original ideas. And every sf-author knows, the fan isn't merely a bleating consumer. He can also bark.

If you're Italian, then you may not like what I have to say, but then you never knew what a fan really is. You need a healthy fandom, so you should promote it.

Wolf von Witting



Italian fandom

In Italy, Luigi Cozzi (the director of Starcrash) is hailed as the first editor of a fanzine in the 60's, and the publication of these "riviste amatoriali" (fanzines) is said to have exploded in the years 1962-1965. But perhaps not quite on the level as it did in Sweden, because after 1965, Italian fandom went gafia until they got the equivalent of a kick in the butt with the first Eurocon in Trieste 1972.

Trieste'72 also became the first ItalCon, the national Italian convention, which now has been held 40 times. But Italy is fandom-unfriendly. It had SF-books and magazines, but never contact pages, fandom- or letter columns. No Italian sf-convention ever had a Fan Guest of Honor. It appears, Italians do not understand the purpose of having fandom.

I have talked with **Luca A.Volpino** (47), who in spite of the dismal conditions for fanac, has become an sf-fan and who is perfectly content with just being it.

Wolf: What was your first contact with fandom?

Luca: Well... my first contact with fandom was quite early. My uncle, who used to live with us when I was 6, was an amateur author of SF. He managed to get a short story published in "Urania", which at the time, had a section for amateur authors.

Wolf: It was your early contact with science fiction then.

Luca: Not much later I made friends with Giancarlo Castello, an italian author, friend with Vittorio Catani In my mother's town, near Sanremo And through him, I got to read a ton of fanzines and got in contact with Vittorio and other people from various fan clubs.

Wolf: When was this?

Luca: About 30 years ago. [..Sigh..] When I was 16... actually I was 14.

Wolf: Before the dawn of the internet.
Luca: Make it 33 years

Wolf: 1980 - more or less...

Luca: More or less, yes

Wolf: Did you ever make a fanzine yourself?

Luca: I did With a couple of friends. We never got beyond the first issue. Later I made a gaming 'zine, that one got to #2

Wolf: Back in those days you had... apart from Urania also Rivista di Isaac Asimov, but it had no contact pages and no letter columns. How did Italian fans get in touch with each other?

Luca: As far as I remember, it was mainly through bookstores. You went to buy SF books or you saw someone on the train, or bus, reading a SF novel. You started chatting with them... That was "social network" before the net.

Wolf: When did you first attend a convention?

Luca: Uhm, quite late actually. I enrolled into STIC (Star Trek Italian Club) in the early 90s and for the 2 years I was into it, we held a local "mini convention" of local members, a dozen people or so... usually in the environs of Rapallo, Santa Margherita. Places with a good tourist reception, who in winter had no clients. So they rented the space for less.



Luigi Cozzi published the first Italian fanzine.

Wolf: How was the public attitude towards SF, when you were young? Were you considered a freak, or did you feel.... "normal"?

Luca: Well, I felt normal because most of my friends had the same literary passion I had. But I was considered a nerd for sure. I mean, role-playing

games, Sci-Fi, reading two books per week. Actually *using* my library card. That's for nerds!

Wolf: Did you stay in touch with your old friends by writing letters when you moved around?

Luca: I think I wrote more letters than Lovecraft at the time. I wrote regularly with Vittorio and Giancarlo and sporadically to other people.

Wolf: It was my impression in Fiuggi, that most people who attended were somehow professionally engaged into SF. Not many REAL fans there, who did it for the fun of it only. Was that your impression as well?

Luca: Uhm - not sure. Depends on the level you consider "professional" keep in mind that, in Italy, the line between "pro" and "fan" is very, very hazy.

Wolf: I met and talked to one Italian fan, who said he was a bit disappointed, that you "had to be somebody" so that people talk to you.

Luca: Well, I am nobody and people talk to me all the time.

Wolf: That's what I said. So it's more of a personal experience then. Italians are not very authoritarian?

Luca: It depends. Let's say they are utilitarians towards authorites. They respect those that can be useful for them, and diss the others.

Wolf: That is my impression also, but... some seem very quick to diss. You never know what potential a person has.

Luca: Yes. There's a sort of envy for people that's better placed... If you are a published author, there's a good chance everybody will praise your first book, hoping to enter into your grace and will demolish your second one. Because you "sold to the system".

Wolf: But, that is an illusion. Many authors earn didley squat or little from their writing.

Luca: Oh, it is not a money question. It is just "being published"

Wolf: Demolish the second, if it is not a best-seller in the US, you mean.

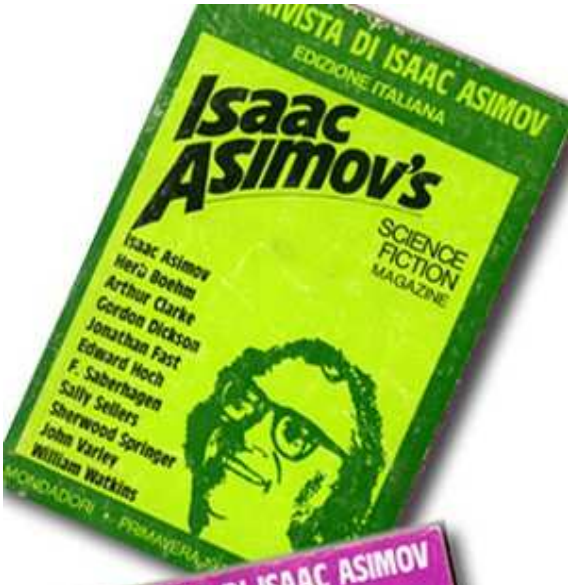
Luca: No, I was speaking about Italian authors specifically.

Wolf: There must be exceptions. some Italian author who is VERY popular?

Luca: Well, Dario Tonani, probably.

Wolf: Are there not fans who are perfectly happy with just being fans and don't care a bit about becoming pro? Except you...?

Luca: Probably two or three, yes. An author friend I won't name because he's not here, once said that Italy is the country where everybody writes, nobody reads and I totally agree with that.







Wolf: Delos, was first mentioned to me in 1998 by Roberto (Quaglia). With the dawn of internet, it seems italian "fandom" is centered around it. Is this correct?

Luca: It is. Fantascienza.com and fantasymagazine.com are the main hubs of fandom.

Wolf: I took a look there. While the debates go hot in most sub-topics, such as Star Trek, Babylon 5, Dr Who, etc, even in general topics such as Fantascienza generale and cinema, but in the topic fandom is silence. LONCON was mentioned under Fantascienza generale, but not under fandom.

Luca: That's because nobody wants to be a "fan"

Wolf: But YOU are okay with it.

Luca: I am

Wolf: Do you go to conventions abroad?

Luca: Well - I go when I can. Unluckily, cost is a serious matter.

Wolf: Do sf-fans in Italy have regular pub-meetings?

Luca: Uhm, not that I know of. Delos tried to start a kaffeeklatsch tradition, but it didn't last long.

Wolf ...in Milano?

Luca: Yes. In their offices.

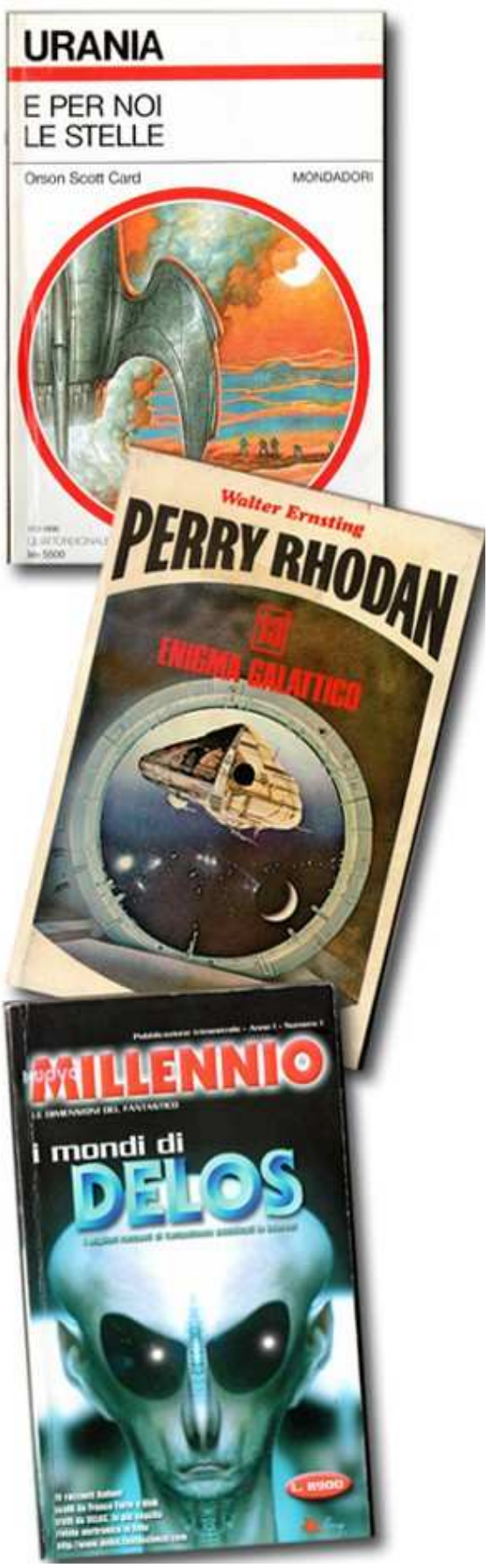
Wolf: Final question. Is there someone in Italy, who you see or is generally regarded as the Mr.Science Fiction of Italy? Or a no:1 fan? You know, like Forry Ackerman was.

Luca: Uhm. Not a *single* person. There's two or three fans, namely Umberto Rossi (who's a professor), Sandro Pergameno (a professional translator) and Silvio Sosio (Delos' boss).

Wolf: Thank you, for the insight into and understanding of Italian fandom your answers have provided. Looking forward to see you again at a convention, some day. The next beer is on me!

I googled the words "associazione" and "fantascienza", the latter being the Italian word for science fiction and got plenty of hits. One being the pompously named World SF Italia. At least it links to basically everything in SF within the country. It links to two fanzines, which look nothing like fanzines and links only to one Club, the Star Trek Italian Club. There are more sf-clubs in the country, but they are like STIC, media-related, with an apparently narrow spectrum of interest. The words *fannish* is possibly a concept more alien to italians than Eddorians.

Critical mistakes were made in the early days of Italian fandom. They may have understood the basic meaning of the word sf-fan, but they perhaps never grasped its wider sense. Hence, no efforts were made to stimulate growth of a regular fandom. There is no fandom to speak of, only a number of more or less isolated fans. There is an active Prodom, which also calls themselves sf-fans, but not doing a particularly good job of it. I have to believe this is unintentional. Because Italian publishers of science fiction never understood the value of a healthy and creative sf-fandom.





Fondazione has won the category fanzine of Premio Italia for the years 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. This, so called fanzine, was started in the year 2001 by Enrico Di Stefano and Claudio Chillemi (the latter being a published author). The main content are stories.

Another fanzine ALPHA QUADRANT (a Star Trek zine, is my buest guess, won 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2009.

Star Trek Italia Club

STIC was founded in 1982. In April 2001 it had more than 6500 members between 2 and 70 years old. Why this number is so outdated in spite of my Italian source article being from January 2014, is probably because the number of members is in decline. But the STIC Facebook group had the day I joined them 3824 members, which still is a very impressive number. Undoubtedly this is a well organized and well functional fanclub. But it may have to deal with the same problem as most of the major associations, that less than 1% of its members are active.



STICCON is well attended. Here the main auditorium.

STIC had their first convention in Montepulciano 1986, it was also ItalCon XII. Since then, STIC has added 27 more editions and invite you to attend STICCON XXIX on April 29th to May 3rd in Bellaria.
STICCON has been the national Italian convention 8 times if I counted them correctly. Of these, the last three years 2012-2014 had otherwise nothing been going on) in Italian fandom. But STIC constantly come up as a first contact for the sf-fans I know in Italy.



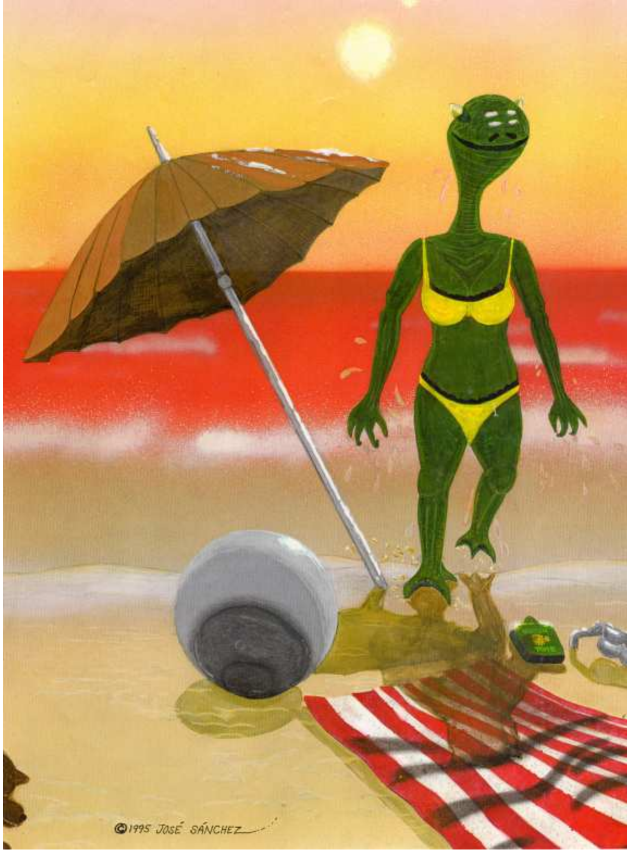
STICCON III, the EuroCon in San Marino was also the first sf-convention for Roberto Quaglia.

Sticcon has moved around a bit. It was in Venice (1991), in Rome (1996) but seems to have found a good home in Bellaria (near Rimini) since 1998.

Slightly surprisingly, the internationally best known Italian fan, is *barely* a BNF at home. Roberto Quaglia, the vice-chair of the European SF Society for 11 years and a regular face at Eurocons for two decades, FGoH at the Eurocon in Bulgaria 2004, GoH in Ekaterinburg 2013 and the only ever Italian winner of a BSFA -Award (in 2009).

The longest time sf-fan, living in Italy is German, Klaus Eylmann. But he was never part of Italian, only of German speaking fandom. He counted himself among the fannish fans who counterbalanced Walter Ernsting's focusing of power into the SFCD in the mid 50's. I may get back to Klaus Eylmann in the future. Although he is living in Italy, he is going to conventions in Germany, namely the Oldie-Cons in Wetzlar and Unterwössen.

Perhaps it is too late for Italian sf-fandom to repair the *damage* to its fandom. Technology has moved on and very few Italians recall what it's like to operate a mimeograph or a dittograph. I don't know if "The Enchanted Duplicator" would mean *anything* at all to an Italian. Perhaps a translation of it, would give clarity. If any Italian reading this, wants to take on the project, I am willing to provide updated illustrations to it (I illustrated the German translation in 1984). That is... if any one of you has ever been touched by the Wand of Fanac. - Wolf -



Artwork: José Sanchez, 1995

YOU'VE GOT TO LOVE SNAKE

Which Game of Thrones character are you? Which Marvel Super Hero? Which Disney character?

No matter how you twist and turn it, you've got to be goofy, to answer any of these questions. I had to think long and hard before I came up with a character anywhere, which I truly can identify with. So, if you force me to answer the question, I would not be taken from Stargate, Trek or Wars, not Indiana Jones or Buffy. I'd *Escape from New York* with Snake Plissken. Why?

Hauk: *There was an accident. About an hour ago, a small jet went down inside New York City. The President was on board.*
Plissken: *The president of what?*

He is not going in because he is a hero. He is given no choice. It's not like he is willing to go Hauk's errands. He chooses to run, when he can, rather than to fight. Having been blackmailed into risking his life, Snake doesn't hesitate a second to get back at his tormentor. He saves the president, as requested, but he doesn't deliver the crucial tape the president carried. No better than a djinn who is granting wishes. Nobody's mercenary and nobody's servant. That's why I love the character of Snake Plissken.

Girl: *You're a cop!*
Plissken: *I'm an asshole...*

He doesn't hold a high opinion about himself. Letting himself get caught up in a seemingly hopeless situation.
And in the end, he knows, it was only blind luck that he manages to wriggle his way out of the entire mess.
Plissken: *Call me Snake.*

FANTASTIC ART

The featured artist in this issue, José Sanchez is from the other side of the pond. I guess it would happen, sooner or later, that something would drop into the mailbox from the US. I gave it some thought and concluded that it is not a bad idea, not only to introduce European fandom to the Americans, but to do so the other way around as well.
CounterClock is being read all over the globe, not only in Europe and North America, but also by one or the odd reader in Australia, so... yeah... sure! It doesn't really matter where you are. The Earth has been shrinking and fanac has been slow everywhere. I welcome your views, no matter where you are from.

What I like about José's work, is that his original images inspire me. If there is a picture, but no story, I sometimes feel compelled to add the story. His work awakens this urge in me and we may still see what comes of it. From this issue on and forward you can expect to see more of his work. - Wolf -

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Cover artwork to this issue: DOWNTOWN by J. Sanchez

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José Sanchez

was born and raised in Miami, Florida on March 10th, 1968, where he still lives today with his wife Aliana. At the age of six, he was introduced to fingerpainting. By first grade, he had picked up his first pencil, but it was not until the summer of 1977 when Star Wars hit the movie screens across America, that his imaginative spark was truly ignited! Like so many other people that were influenced by the cult phenomenon, he was too. So much so, that this led him to seriously explore and develop his talent for creating art further. As time has gone by and he has honed his skills, he has been notably influenced by the works of Science Fiction and Fantasy artists such as: Stephen Youll, Donato Giancola, Chris Moore, Tim White, Jim Burns, David B. Mattingly and Michael Whelan, to name but a few.

He attended Lindsey-Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida where he received a certificate in Commercial Art Technology-majoring in illustration and minoring in Graphic Design. Jose would ideally like to see himself one day working professionally in the motion picture industry as a Concept Artist. He had previously worked on a low-budget SF/Super Hero Animation flick titled: "Shadow Runner", designing the individual character's spaceships. "They tend to depend more on technology than they do on their own superpowers". He is also interested in the publication and gaming markets. To one of his many credits, which have included several fanzine covers and one semi-prozine cover and interior artwork.

Also appearing in the official LucasFilm Star Wars Insider magazines: "City Patrol", was chosen for publication in the March-April 2006 / issue #86. “Oil Bath”, “Artoo”, “Pair of Jawas” and “Land of the Rising Suns” in April 2014/issue #148 now being published by Titan Publications and online at starwars.com on the Jan.15, 2014 Blog article: Bantha Tracks: Best of the Year, Online edition: “AT-AT Driver” and in the Blog article: Bantha Tracks: Art Galaxy, March 2014 “Djas Puhr-Settling The Score!”

Much of his art can be currently seen at efanzines.com.

Published in February 1957, and in his own words, Walter Alexander Willis 1919-1999, gives an account on how TAFF began.

The Harp stateside, part I

Daydreams and Nightmares

by Walt A. Willis

It seemed to me at the time that it had all started with an innocent remark I'd made at the end of a report on the '51 London Convention in the Quannish... "Sometime it might happen, though I don't know how, that I might attend an American Convention and see how it should be done..." Anyhow, the next thing I knew, Shelby Vick had started a whirlwind campaign to import me for the Nolacon the same year. After it had been whirling for a couple of weeks he remembered to write and tell me about it. This was only a month before the Nolacon and I figured it was just a fine piece of fannish foolishness, best nipped in the bud before it gave anyone any trouble. I airmailed Shelby that I couldn't get away: though of course I could have. In fact, knowing Shelby as I do now, I sometimes wonder if I mightn't have got to the Nolacon after all.

After that blew over I assumed the thing was finished. You know what fan projects are... or were. Though it was pleasant to think that even a couple of people had had such a nice idea, and I began to toy with the thought that maybe if I fanned hard and saved lots of money I might get to South Gate in '58. But of course it was only a vague dream, like the way each young faned secretly cherishes the thought that one day he will get a letter from Street or Smith saying they've been impressed by his editing and has he ever thought of taking it up professionally...

I was still underestimating not only Shelby Vick, but fandom. Manly Banister donated an electric mimeograph for a raffle, the Chicon Committee offered to put me up during the Convention, and leading fans like Lee Hoffman, Gregg Calkins, Forry Ackerman, Dick Ryan, Robert Bloch, Henry Burwell, Ian Macauley, Dave English, G.M.Carr and Dave Ish were behind Shelby. Furthermore, people were actually sending in money. Incredibly, it began to look as if Shelby might bring it off.

I put Slant into suspended animation and began try to do my bit by writing as much as I could for other fanzines. At one time I was writing a bi-weekly column, a monthly column, regular features in four other fanzines, occasional articles for another dozen or so, and letters of comment on every fanzine that came into the house. In my spare time I had started a mimoed mag (Hyphen) to keep Slant subscribers quiet and was trying to keep up with my correspondence. It was quite a job for someone who isn't naturally prolific and it got more difficult as time went on and I began to feel as if I was performing in a shop window. Shelby would ask me for a short column and I would sweat out some laboured fragment... I always find it very difficult to write short articles... and later I would find to my horror it was being run as a sort of advertisement in some publicity issue, with introductory remarks on the lines of "Look what genius the man has! Wouldn't it be worth paying money to meet him?" It was all very embarrassing and I tried desperately to put over the suggestion that it wasn't me personally that was important so much as the Idea itself. In Shelby's celebration issue of Confusion I ended a message of thanks with "...I happen to have been the accidental focus of the first concerted and successful effort of science fiction fandom. It shows that fandom today is nore capable and greater in every way than it has ever been. If it can do so much for one ordinary member of it, what couldn't it do for something really worth while?"

It still seems that way to me. Shelby's Fund was the first successful attempt to bring a fan across the Atlantic (there had been previous attempts but the amount raised had been negligible) and it led directly on to the Transatlantic Fan Fund.

One of my attempts to discount the propaganda for me personally and to prepare fandom for what I regarded as the inevitable anticlimax was the following piece I wrote for one of Shelby's publicity issues. I thought I might quote it here because although it was supposed to be funny it will give you a pretty good idea of the way I was feeling...



Illustratiion: José Sanchez, 2003

WILLIS VISITS CHICAGO (A Nightmare)

The Deputy Chairman rises to call for order. He announces that he is pleased to introduce the famous... er... (he consults a scrap of paper) Walt Willis, editor of... er... (another look at the scrap of paper) Slant. There are confused murmurs. ("Who's he? What's Slant? Must be one of those *fanzines*.") You can hear the inverted commas. A tall figure trips down to the stage, falling over Bloch, Korshak, Evans, Eshback and Tucker, in that order. They curse him for knocking the cards out of their hands. The tall figure climbs onto the stage. Shelby Vick presents him with the scroll of contributors and leads him over to the microphone stand. He gives a dazed look at the audience, unscrews Shelby's bow tie and tries to pull his head up. Shelby hastily points him at the microphone and retreats. He grasps at the real microphone like a drowning man at a straw and succeeds in knocking it over. Three members of the audience are given treatment for perforated eardrums and the public address system is never quite the same again. He drops the scroll and picks up the microphone, steadying it very carefully. Then he bends down to pick up the scroll. Out of his breast pocket there tumbles a pen, two pencils, a sheaf of notes, a comb and a screwdriver. They rattle about the stage. He stoops forward to pick them up and knocks the microphone over

again. The entire platform party hurry forward to help him. Finally he is propped up against the microphone and the scroll tucked under his left arm. He clears his throat. Some of those who have already heard him talking think he has started his speech and clap encouragingly. He feels in his breast pocket and realizes to his horror that he has stuffed his notes into some other pocket. Confusedly he starts to look. The scroll pokes him in the eye. He puts it carefully on the floor with a silly apologetic grin at Shelby Vick and goes through his pockets. The audience crane forward expectantly. "Conjuring tricks, eh? This is new." After transferring articles frantically from one pocket to another for some time he realizes that this is getting him nowhere. He begins systematically to empty his pockets. The audience watch, fascinated. An interesting little heap grows on the stage. A complete file of Slant, on which he places his cigarettes and matches so that it won't blow away, a handkerchief, a copy of Galaxy, keys, a knife, a revolver, a life insurance policy (you can't tell him anything about Chicago), maps, aspirins, money, a magnifying glass, a packet of sandwiches, fourteen fanzines, half a cubic foot of lettuce (he hates lettuce, but he doesn't like to hurt people's feelings), a half eaten bar of chocolate, a list of addresses, a notebook, the Convention Program and a pair of socks. But no notes. No white rabbit either, in spite of the lettuce: the audience is bitterly disappointed. They have got nothing on Willis. He stuffs everything back into one pocket and, carefully avoiding the microphone, picks up the scroll again. He unrolls it, looking for inspiration. The first thing he notices is the names of three fans whom he has dreadfully insulted in his last column. There are now three layers of bottom end of the scroll it whirs up madly like a roller blind and strikes him smartly on the chin. This seems to give the audience ideas. In desperation he starts to say something - - anything. The audience calms for a moment, and then begins to look around for headphones such as delegates to UN meetings are provided with. Shelby makes apologetic gestures. The speaker stumbles on, his unconscious fingers methodically tearing the beautiful scroll into tiny pieces. Shelby looks round for the nearest exit. The audience looks ugly. The platform party looks ugly. Bea Mahaffey makes a hopeless attempt. Sinister murmurings are heard, and fans dash along the aisles to cut off Shelby's retreat. Willis wishes the ground would open up and swallow him.



Joy Clarke, Walt Willis, Rainer Eisfeld, Steve Schultheis, James White and Vince Clarke.
From Rob Hansen's THEN archive. http://fiawol.org.uk

Willis is never seen again, but some sixty years later a frail old man tucks some money in an envelope with shaking fingers and strikes off the last name on a long list. The pen drops from his palisied fingers and he crumples back in the bed with a peaceful expression on his face. His debt is paid at last. Mrs Vick mournfully draws the sheets over his face.

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As an author of fannish prose, Willis belongs on the by Bob Silverberg proposed Mount Rushmore of fandom. But not as a prophet. Shelby Vick is still in fandom.

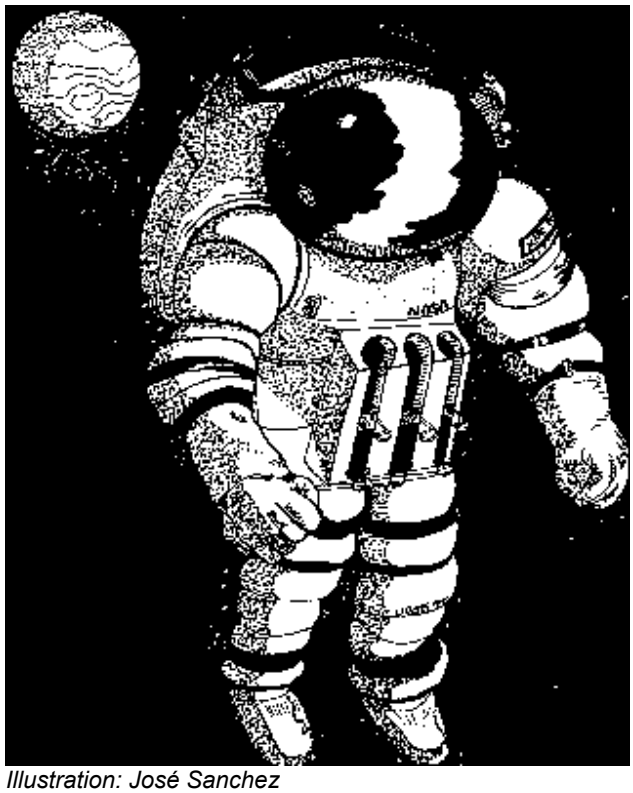


Illustration: José Sanchez

A History of TAFF & its Winners:

Robert A Madle wrote this in Nebula # 39, Feb 1959 about the Trans Atlantic Fan Fund:

"Like many other things in the s-f world, it all started with Forrest J. Ackerman. Forry, who is known in America as "Mr. Science Fiction," has been reading s-f since 1926 and has been a science fiction fan since the inception of the term. He was projected into fandom through being a demon letter writer, and he started at a very early age. I can still recall his first letter-to-the editor. It appeared in the Fall, 1929 issue of Science Wonder Quarterly and started off thusly "Although I am only twelve years old. . . ." Through this, and subsequent letters, Forry obtained many, many correspondents, a large number of whom were residents in Great Britain .

During World War II, when it appeared that the British fan world was doomed to extinction, Forry kept it alive by contributions of books, magazines, paper, money — even mimeo stencils. As legend will have it, his British s-f friends wanted to repay Forry by paying his way to the U.K. Forry, philanthropist that he is, wanted it the other way. He wanted American fans to bring a British fan to

America for a World Convention. As a matter of fact, Forry wanted to bring two British s-f fans to America simultaneously, if possible.

Thus was created "The Big Pond Fund," which was one of the projects of the 1947 World Science Fiction Convention, held in Philadelphia . The basic idea behind the Big Pond Fund was that fandom, through voluntary contributions, would pay the passage of the first fan ambassador. Unfortunately, fandom was comparatively young (and small) and it wasn't until 1949 that Forry's dream materialised when Ted Carnell made it to the "Cinvention ", held in Cincinnati , Ohio . And even at that Ted paid a good portion of his expenses out of his own pocket. But the die was cast.

Some time in 1949 a young fan appeared on the scene with an unpretentious publication called Slant. This fan resided in Ireland and, as he was unaware of other fans in Ireland , communicated with American fans by sending them his magazine. The result of this was a large number of correspondents and an excellent staff of writers. This, coupled with meticulous typesetting and excellent format, catapulted Slant to the top group of fanzines. And up the ladder with Slant went its meticulous editor, Walter A. Willis.

In 1951, Shelby Vick started a campaign to bring Willis, the fan world's brightest new star, to the "Nolacon" (New Orleans). However, the campaign didn't bear fruit until 1952 when Walt made it to the "Chicon" (Chicago , Illinois). When Walt returned to Ireland he wrote up a lengthy report of his trip, "The Harp Stateside". [..snip..] (And with the publication of "The Harp Stateside" another fannish tradition was born, for it is expected that the recipient of the TAFF trip will write up his adventures so general fandom (or those who contributed for the trip) will be able to read it.

1952 **Walt Willis** 1919 - 1999, Slant / Hyphen

1954 **Vince Clarke** 1922 - 1998
Vince Clarke could not make the trip. Decades later, in the 1990s, TAFF found itself reasonably flush and suggested that he might now like to take his TAFF trip ... but he declined.

1955 **Ken Bulmer** 1921 - 2005
1956 **Lee Hoffmann** - 2007 *Lee Hoffman declined the TAFF trip and travelled privately instead.*

1957 **Robert A Madle**
http://www.fanac.org/fan_funds/fake/fcover.html

1958 **Ron Bennett** 1933 - 2006, *published the newsletter Skyrack 1959-1971 (96 issues). He chaired the Eastercon Ronvention at Harrogate in 1962.*
http://www.gostak.co.uk/skyrack/

1959 **Don Ford** 1921 - 1965
http://fanac.org/fan_funds/baedeker/baed01.html
1960 **Eric Bentcliffe** - 1992

1961 **Ron Ellik** - 1968
http://fanac.org/fan_funds/62/e-cover.htm
1962 **Ethel Lindsay** - 1996
1963 **Wally Weber**
1964 **Arthur Thomson** (ATom) 1927 - 1990

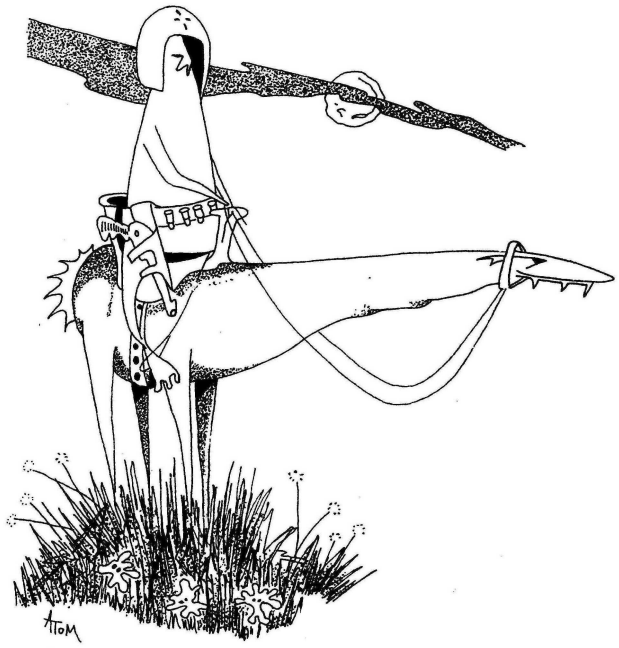
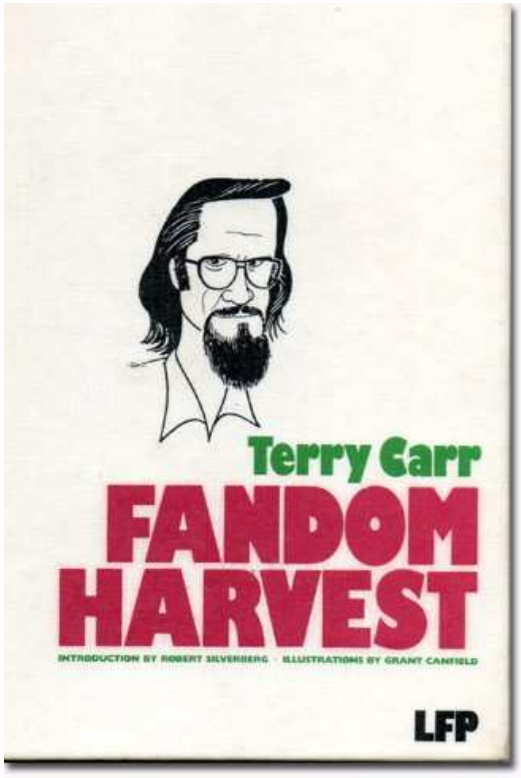


Illustration by Arthur Thomson (ATom)

1965 **Terry Carr** 1937 - 1987
*In May 1984 Bob Silverberg introduces Terry Carr to the readers of **FANDOM HARVEST** (published by John-Henri Holmberg, 1986) as follows:*
He has been a fannish legend an implausibly long time; but then, he got an early start. Back around 1949 or 1950 the letter columns of the prozines of the day were frequently occupied by knowledgeable, incisive comments from a San Fransiscan named Terry Carr. And out of San Francisco came actual fanzines from that person, and cartoons and essays for other people's fanzines, and to me everything he did seemed terribly suave, elegant, poised and mature. Of course, I was only about fifteen years old at the time. He, apparently, was reading the stuff that I was doing for fanzines back then, and evidently it seemed just as suave, elegant, poised, and mature to him. Each of us regarded the other as a Big Name Fan and himself as a mere neo. I had no way of knowing that the suave, elegant, poised, and mature Terry Carr was actually a year or two younger than I was. Nor was Terry aware that I, though his elder by a little bit, was still just a wet-behind-the-ears boy barely past puberty. We didn't know these things about each other because we had never met, and we had never met because we lived three thousand miles apart - I was a New Yorker then and neither of us could afford to go to conventions. We were both just high school kids, after all.
Eventually we did meet, years and years later, at the 1958 Worldcon in Los Angeles. By that time we were well along into our early twenties. I had grown a beard, sold lots of stories, won a Hugo, gotten married, been to Europe, and was generally living a suave, elegant, poised, and mature life, or so it seemed to me most of the time. Terry - here the slight age difference between us was at its most manifest - was still in college and had not yet begun growing beards, selling stories, winning Hugos, getting married, or going to Europe, though in the course of time he would get around to doing all these things. But still he struck me as notably suave, elegant, poised, and mature, except for

one thing. He was still writing for and publishing fanzines. So was I, more or less. (I still am today, more or less) But I wasn't doing much of it - fandom already seemed to me a part of my adolescence, a pleasant place in the past that I liked to revisit for sentimental reasons - and Terry was in the thick of it, a Publishing Jiant, a superfan, engaged in hypergolic fan activity of the sort that used to be called *crifanac,* and for all I know still is. I couldn't help thinking that anyone as suave, elegant, poised, and mature as Terry Carr ought to get his nose out of the mimeograph now and then and set about launching the major professional career he was obviously destined for.

Well, now, that was more than a quarter of a century ago. Terry eventually got around to a major professional career. Not as a writer, really: he is far from inconsiderable short story writer, with work like "The Dance of the Changer" and The Three Hop-Friend", "They Live on Levels" and "The Winds at Starmont" to his credit, and he has written one ver fine novel, *Cirque,* and may some day get around to writing another; but though the quality of his work has always been very high, his stories have been so few and so far between that it is hard to regard his writing career as a major one. His editing career is a different matter.



Fandom Harvest was published in time to celebrate the editors 50th birthday. Who could have guessed Terry would not see his 51st? Terry Carr died in April 1987.

After a couple of years working at a New York literary agency he moved over to Ace Books as Don Wollheim's assistant, and by 1967 or so was responsible for a paperback line of his own, the Ace Science Fiction Specials, among them *The Left Hand of Darkness*. Terry's Specials series was state-of-the-art publishing in the science fiction world. [..snip..] I think a case should be made for Terry Carr as the most significant sf editor for the past fifteen years. [..snip..]

So much for Terry Carr the pro. You don't really give a damn about that side of him, anyway, or you wouldn't have bought this book, which in its very expensive way preserves a whole lot of ephemeral stuff out of the nutty fannish microcosm, and has practically nothing to do with science fiction in any direct way. But I think it's impossible to understand his fannish career without knowing why he has been so successful as an editor. After all, it would not be difficult to suggest that a man who is still futzing around with fannish things after more than three decades is merely a victim of arrest development, worthy more of pity than praise. But the fact is that Terry perceives fan activity as part of his wide spectrum of endeavour; it is not a way of life for him as much as an aspect of life, and, holding it in perspective as he does, he has been able to maintain an active fan career over the decades without ever giving the impression that it is an unnatural act to be doing so. So too in his professional career: he keeps everything in balance, the lunatic fringe of the New Wave over here and the idiot fringe of the sword-and-sorcery crowd over there, and steers an even course between them. He is a very sane man, is what I am trying to tell you.

And fandom is fun for him, today as it was thirty years ago, which is why he can move serenely from a panel on contemporary trends in the science fiction novel to one on contemporary trends in mimeograph technology and be perfectly at home - charming, informative, amusing - at either one. The present fat volume of his contribution to fannish literature demonstrates that. You can open the book anywhere and find a vital, engaging record of a lively mind's activities. Whether reading of the old Berkeley fan crowd - a fannish *Doonesbury* populated by quasi-real characters, 'Ron' and 'Boob' and 'Miri' and 'Carl' and the rest - or hearing tales of his surrealistic conversations with the implausible but quite real Sidney Coleman, or stumbling with astonishement into the audacious piece that offers Sergeant Saturn speaking in the voice of T.O'Conor Sloane, you will not find a paragraph that is less than delightful. There is a fine but useful distinction, now sadly neglected, between the amateur and the amateurish. It is an amazing performance. In its fifty-odd years of existence fandom has produced a good many masters of fannish prose, but only a handful of titans, and Terry Carr is one of them. When the fannish Mount Rushmore is carved, up there on that big cliff overlooking the Tucker Hotel, we will surely se Terry's suave and elegant features on it, alongside those of Walt Willis, Bob Tucker, and Charles Burbee. Is there a fifth writer who belongs in that august assemblage? I doubt it. [..snip...] High praise indeed! From a science fiction-writer from the same era who chose to deviate into proac instead, *Robert Silverberg.*

1966 **Thomas Schlück** 1943 -
1968 **Steve Stiles** 1943 -

Tom Schlück and Steve Stiles are both still alive and well. At least as I am writing this. Tom Schlück started a literature agency after winning TAFF and has been at it ever since. I probably missed my window of opportunity when I didn't talk to him at the Eurocon 1982 in Mönchengladbach. My excuse is, that I wasn't yet interested in fanhistory. I was too busy attempting to make history myself.

Steve Stiles has been HUGO-nominated as best fanillustrator six or seven times, but we have yet to see fandom to acknowledge his talent with a HUGO.

But TAFF!? Yeah, he won that 46 years ago. And he is still going strong. We see him as a regular contributor on the FB - Faaned Group page.

1969 **Eddie Jones** 1935-1999
Fan and pro illustrator. Nominated for HUGO best pro artist in 1970 and 1971.
1970 **Elliot K Shorter** +2013
1971 **Mario Bosnyak**
Mario Bosnyak, the German-Italian and one of the many HEICON'70 WorldCon chairs before it ended up in the hands of Manfred Kage, was also in Berlin 1980, but has basically remained a big unknown in German fandom aside from winning TAFF in 1971. He managed to raise an impressive number of votes from a completely inactive Italian fandom (46). Bosnyak is an example of a fan with a rocket career. Swish and gone! Famous for winning TAFF only.

1973 **Len & June Moffatt**
1974 **Peter Weston**
Fortunately Pete got a new chance, and won! Editor of the excellent fanzine *Prolapse* and *Relapse*.

1976 **Roy Tackett** +2003, **Bill Bowers** +2005 (tie)
1977 **Peter Roberts**
1979 **Terry Hughes** +2001
1980 **Dave Langford**
Let's say a few words about Dave Langford, in the unlikely event you don't know anything about him. The editor of *ANSIBLE*. For this he has won so many HUGO's, he lost count. He does not have enough fingers and toes.
He needs an extra room in his home for storage of all the awards and honors he's been showered with.
How come you've never heard of him? Are you retarded, or something?

1981 **Stu Shiffmann** 1954 + 26 November 2014
Shiffmann also received the Best Fan Artist Hugo Award and the Rotsler Award in 2010. On June 18th 2014 he got married to Andi Shecter, who he had been together with for 25 years.
Read more in Mike Glyer's FILE 770:
http://file770.com/?tag=stu-shiffman

1982 **Kevin Smith**
1983 **Avedon Carol**
1984 **Rob Hansen** best known as fan-historian
1985 **Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden**
1986 **Greg Pickersgill**

Everything after 1986 happened recently IMHO.
You find a complete list here: http://taff.org.uk/taffhist.html

Among those who didn't win TAFF:

1956 Forrest J Ackerman	1963 Marion Z Bradley
1970 Bill Rotsler	1980 Jim Barker
1981 Gary Farber	1983 Taral Wayne

Wayne had the obvious disadvantage of being Canadian, because there appears to be a certain bias for Yankees on the US-side of America. Nothing wrong with it.
Not even with having five TAFF-winners in the Seattle-area alone. And there are plenty more TAFF-races ahead, so I would like to see at least one Canadian candidate in 2016 race!

NOVACON 44 at the Park Inn Hotel in Nottingham
14-16 November 2014, GoH: Kari Spelling
and with Science Guest: John Gribbin
- -
Never got a convention as a birthday-present before. Don't get me wrong, NOVACON had nothing to do with me, but the possibility to attend was cared for by my daughter. And since the convention already was stretching over 3 days, I decided to stretch my entire celebration over the duration of my stay in the UK. Upon arrival in Nottingham I thought it prudent to seek out my own accomodation first. I had a room booked at the Best Western Westminster Hotel and when I looked for the adress for the convention hotel, I found that it took place right next door, on comfortable crawling distance. *Someone* had paid far better attention than I expected. No trouble finding the event.
Here's a hint for con-runners and smofs: If you want to make sure I am at your convention, ask me to be on a program-item. I have to plan very carefully and can't really afford more than two conventions per year at best. Not yet, anyway. I did intend to visit HanseCon 30 in Lübeck, but my bees had not quite been as productive this year as I had hoped. The honey production in the entire region was down 70% compared to 2013.



Bellis, "the Sheriff" and Luke Smith

Not entire surprisingly, Bellis, was one of the first I ran into. We are the same kind of sf-fans who attend program items when we are on the program. Mostly. The rest of the time we hang out in the bar or in the smoking-area and talk with other fans. I lost count of exactly how many conventions I have attended before the turn of the millennium.
I always meet new and old friends. This is why I like going to conventions. Program is sercon. And I am as fannish as they come. Every sf-fan I haven't met yet, is a potential friend. While mundane friends tend to grow apart, sf-fans grow together over the years. Since 1997 my involvement in UK fandom has brought me to an Eastercon, Worldcon a filk-convention, and several Tun-meetings in London. By now I recognize many if not by their face, then by name.

Among our new friends are Luke Smith from Blackburn, Lancashire. He introduced himself to Bellis at NOVACON 43 and asked to buy him a beer. When Bellis asked; "But, why me?" He answered; "Because, you were the loudest!"

Obviously we have to do with a keen mind inside a young head here. And even though Luke has been wrongfully nicknamed *Skywalker* at occasions, it would be more accurate to call him "*Doc*" Smith jr, knowing that it wasn't Star Wars, but rather the medically trained evangelist who inspired to his given name. And I am quite sure he dislikes Eddorians, just like the next guy.

It was a great pleasure to finally run into the PLOKTA-editors Steve Davies and Mike Scott and also to meet the BANANA WINGS-team Christopher Plummer and Claire Brialey again.

The CLAUDIA BLACK Look-alike

Didn't see Margaret Austin since the Eurocon in Dortmund 1999, but I spotted Martin Easterbrook at LONCON. I had to thank Margaret again for providing me with the Millennium ATOM, which I have made good use of in CoClock. Together with Colette Reap, Alan Bellingham and Karoliina Leikomaa, who promoted the Helsinki Worldcon Bid, the six of us went for a friday-evening Indian dinner.

At the restaurant in Nottingham worked a waitress, who strikingly resembled Claudia Black of Farscape and Stargate SG1, etc. It doesn't happen very often, but it happened to me this time to go: "Goshwow!!!" Her natural charisma took my breath away. I only vaguely recall what we talked about at the table. My mind must have been completely somewhere else. Sorry!

- -

Adso of Melk: *"And yet, now that I am an old, old man, I must confess that of all the faces that appear to me out of the past, the one I see most clearly is that of the girl of whom I've never ceased to dream these many long years. She was the only earthly love in my life, yet... [pause] I never knew, nor ever learned, her name."*

- -

BACK AT THE BAR...

There was a smörgåsbord of TAFF-winners. Okay, perhaps I had previously experience one or two, but never this many at once. I counted six with Steve Green, Greg Pickersgill, Christina Lake, Tobe Valois, Jim Mowatt and Sue Mason. No, I didn't collect any autographs... ;)

Neither from Bellis, who assured me I didn't want his autograph. It happens to him, now and then, in Stockholm, that people come up to him and ask for it.

- You don't want my autograph! He keeps saying.

But they insist and finally he surrenders and writes *Bellis* on a sheet of paper. They always tuck it in their pockets without even looking at it.

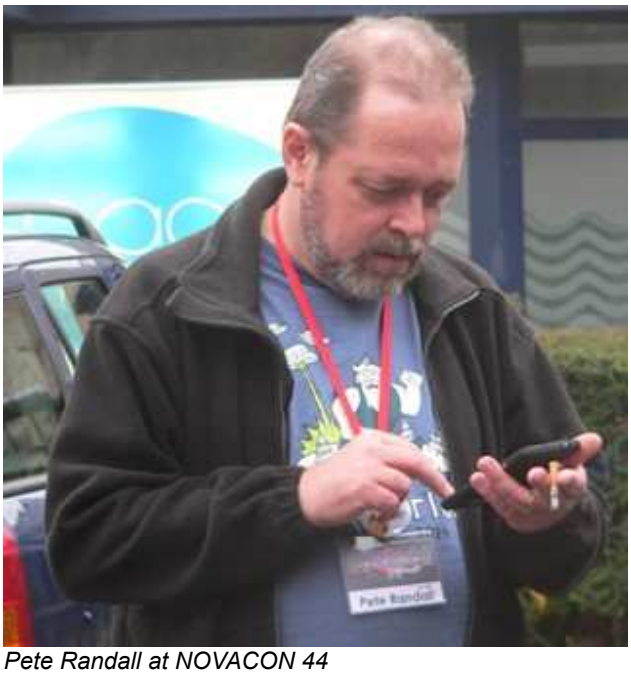
- Thanks, Mr Stormare!!!

Of course, having known Bellis since 1979 - **I** would never mistake him for the actor *Peter Stormare*. Though when he mentions it, I do see the resemblance.

While walking around in big cities I often see one or two Terry Pratchett's, the occasional Harry Harrison (I know he is dead) or other famous author look-alikes.

I once bumped into Christopher Lambert, but I believe it was actually him, because he insisted: "There can be only one!" I didn't ask for an autograph either.

The italian speaking Dustin Hoffmann was eerily similar to his actor counterpart, but when it comes to uncanny similarity, the winner of all time must be Pete Randall.



Pete Randall at NOVACON 44

Pete was a regular to the smoking area at the convention. And I knew we hadn't met before, but he did seem awfully familiar. BLACK BOOKS!!! Not Bernard Black, who is the owner of the book shop, but the other guy, Manny!

- That's Bill Bailey, yes I get that a lot.

He picks up his micro supercomputer / mobile phone and brings forth a picture of the actor Bill Bailey, just as Bellis arrives for another smoke.

- Ah, you've cut your hair! Bellis commented on the pic.
- It's not me! It's Bill Bailey.

Eerie likeness. Really! But you never know what an actor is like, until you met them in person. About Pete Randall I can say he is nice, just like "Manny" in Black Books, except I know for sure, Pete isn't acting. He **is** like that.

ROCKET SCIENCE

The Right Stuff was, among others, represented by John Gribbin, Oleg Sokolov, Gerry and Alan Webb. The latter invited me to the room-party in 241. Haven't been to many, so I was delighted to accept.



Gerry Webb and Alan Webb at NOVACON 44.

I have to admit. Listening to Sokolov speaking, was a rare privilege. He was an engineer on the Russian space program, smoking fat cigars with real tobacco and he loved to share his memories. He recalled the disaster when the Russian rocket heading for the moon, exploded on the launch ramp in Baikonur.
The Russians were rushing things, he said. They so much wanted to win the race for the moon. And they were ahead until this disaster happened.

The room party itself was nice, but the room was a bit small and for smoking one had to go outside and for returning to the room one needed to have a room-key for the elevator. Complicated. There was plenty of free booze, but I am long past the age in which I drink to get drunk.
I rather kill myself smoking. Either way, I smell bad when I eventually succeed.

FURTHER REPORTS FROM THE SMOKING-AREA
Among the regulars here, aside from Bellis, Pete Randall and myself, we often spotted ½r. Yep, that's what he is called - ½r. Pete convinced me that there is a backward region of London where one can't hear the difference if someone says "Half R" or "Arthur".
Hence, his real name is probably *Arthur,* but nobody calls him that. He is ½r to everyone in British fandom.
½r Cruttenden even raced for TAFF once... (in 2006). And now he introduced us to several exotic kinds of rum.
I do drink a lot of rum, with tea and honey in it. Or rather tea with rum and honey in it. But the rum ½r had me sipping sent my eyeballs wobbling out of their sockets.
It reminded me of the time I actually sipped at the Austrian STROH rum, which has 80% alcohol, even though ½r's silver contained 20% less. I can't believe I have turned into such a wimp, when it comes to alcohol tolerance. Late in the evening I even switched from beer to cola. Good grief, do I need to see a Doctor?

I saw him. Sort of...
Edward James, who at LONCON discretely appeared in clothes, which could lead to mistaking him for the seventh incarnation of the Doctor, wished me in passing by a happy birthday. At NOVACON and IRL. I was so baffled he knew, that I forgot the obvious. We are friends on FB. But FB is a shadow-world and now I am reporting from *the real world*. In which I kept this little detail quiet, that all of this happened to be my b-day as well.

SATURDAY NOVACON EVENTS
Woke up after breakfast. Since I usually have just a cup of coffee and a cigarette, the catching up is easily done. But it is far from me, living the life of a wolf and so I do indeed always consider carefully who I eat with.
My belly said: *"Time for lunch!"* And I have taken to heart, the words of the greek philosopher Epicurus.

- -

"Before you eat or drink anything, consider carefully who you eat or drink with rather than what you are to eat or drink: for feeding without a friend is the life of a lion or a wolf." Epicurus 341-270 B.C.

- -

I chose to have lunch with *Kirsti van Wessel*, mainly to have something pleasant to rest my eyes upon, but also because it was an opportunity to hear more about what is going on in Dutch fandom. The Netherlands have the third oldest fandom on the continent, if we count Scandinavia to the continent. Since Roelof Goudriaan more or less gafiated, we have heard little from there. To my sincere astonishment, I was informed that DAPPER (see CoClock # 3, page 2 and CoClock # 10, page 6), the 2nd European APA is still alive. In a time when fanzines are rare, this is a minor sensation which I have to look closer into. Perhaps I can rally dutch fandom into writing something about their fandom, next year. Kirsti van Wessel is already thinking about it. I made sure of that.

EUROPEAN FANDOM ON STAGE
From Poland, young Darek Gruszka, from Bielsko-Biala attended NOVACON. He lives now in Burton upon Trent.
He just recently turned 26, so I guess he was the youngest attending sf-fan. Was he? And Bellis secured Kirsti to join us on the European Fandom Panel.



Steve Green (right) introduced the Eurofandom Panel

I will approach the panel here from a different point of view. One which I am not sure we got across. But Bellis was happy with the outcome, so I am happy. It means it was good entertainment. Bellis has a sense for what good entertainment means.
I said it, but I am not sure it got across; fandom as WE know it, grew in Scandinavia, Germany and Netherlands after the war (I speak about non-English-speaking countries here). Fandom dawned in Sweden 1949 and in Germany 1955. Norwegian and Danish fandom split off from the Scandinavian one, as their fan-population grew.
Finland has a fandom history which goes back to 1976 and Poland we can trace back to at least 1978, when Wiktor Bukato started organizing polish fans.
French and Italian fandoms were showing early signs of...fanac in the late 50's and mid 60's, but due to a failure to understand the purpose of having a fandom, they never really developed any.



Behind the camera at this program-item was Luke Smith



Now we learned that Greek fandom has been around for roughly 25 years. That brings us back to 1990, more or less. And let's admit that Finland, Croatia and Greece have been very successful with the progress of fandom in their countries.

In Spain, the first Hispacon was held in Barcelona 1969. It was followed by one in 1970 and the third in 1975. Madrid hosted four of them (also 76, 78, 79), but then there comes a 10-year gap between the Hispacon in Granada 1980 and then the today uninterrupted annual series of Spanish national conventions, which began in 1991.

With the 90's came the upwind for the internet and the dwindling of fanzine-production. I would propose, that the successful fandoms of today, are something completely different from what we knew and have accepted as fandom. It is absolutely not wrong to peek at how Finns, Croatians and Greek are doing things, because it is *the new way.* And the Greek appear to have found a useful way to seriously work with the genre.

Gerfany is in a transition between the old and the new. The once proud centerpiece of German fandom, the SFCD is reduced to running minicons. The oldies don't even desire to mix with the neos. So the 60-year anniversary of SFCD's existence is to be held in the SF-Library of Wetzlar next year. It will be the usual 50 hard-core SF-Fans + the oldies. But it is not anymore what Germans generally consider to be fandom.
The main population consists today all around Europe of media-fans, gamers and cos-players. The reading and Ghu knows, the fanzine-publishing part of fandom are endangered sub-families of the species. One more reason to pay close attention to what goes on in Greece.
Stamatis got his word out, but I wonder if the audience is aware how important the case is.
For Bellis, it seemed more about building bridges. But we are doing that, and we have been doing this for quite some time already. With the European SF Portal, with Eurosmof and with the work of individual fans.

Fans everywhere are willing to build bridges. And the old barrier of language keeps crumbling.
In Sweden gamers have their separate "fandom", Sverok. Also most fantasy-fans are separate in Tolkien-societies.
While sf and fantasy isn't as much regarded separately in Gerfany, they too have separate Fantasy clubs.
One *problem* with fandom, is that we always have been very welcoming towards new fans. There is no test one has to pass, no ritual to perform, to become initiated.

But the number of faneds are dwindling and I would never have expected to be the last man standing in two fandoms - namely the Swedish and the German one.

FANEDS AND FANZINES AT NOVACON

I received 3 fanzines at Novacon. All three of them beautiful examples of the craft. All three of them, which I feel obliged to LoC and all three also to be viewed and read on efanzines.com First there is HEAD #12 by Christina Lake and Doug Bell, PIPS # 11 by Jim Mowatt and INCA # 11 by Rob Jackson.
Together with Ron Gemmel's EAT THAT DUCK # 5, which I already received at LONCON, it makes more than 120 fanzine-pages in the 2nd half of 2014. Obviously the production of fanzines is far from dead in the UK.
I would advise Sverifans and Gerfans to go english.



Apart from Karoliina Leikomaa being in place, promoting the Helsinki Worldcon bid, I spotted several fans wearing the Finnish mr blue sky T-shirt. I hereby report that the Finns were notably visible at this convention.



http://www.fanac.org/Fan_Histories/Netherlands/

From Sweden was, except Bellis and myself, also Anders Hedenlund, with his charming daughter Alice present.
Long before Alice was born, in January of 1981 I did my military service and had brought a mechanical typewriter with me to make a carbon copied fanzine in the barracks, someone looked over my shoulder and asked what I was doing.
- I'm typing something called a fanzine. I answered.
- You must know those guys Bellis and Engholm. He said.
That's how I met Anders Hedenlund. He merely cemented in me the illusion I had, that fandom was everywhere.
It is not so. But Hedenlund seems to show up everywhere I go. Be it Swecon, Eurocon, Worldcon or Novacon.



Sanem Ozdural is from Turkey. Here sitting peacefully with Stamatis Stamatopoulos from Greece.
In the bar at Novacon was a wonderful atmosphere.



Italy doesn't have a fandom... as we know it. What they really have, is a Prodom surpressing fandom with attitude. No Italian convention ever had a Fan Guest of Honour.



Anne and Stan Nicholls, Anne is aka as Anne Gay.

Stan Nicholls is a very popular author in Italy. Well... perhaps not only in Italy, since his *Orcs: First Blood*-series also appears to have been translated into German, French and Russian.
As a best-selling author, Stan had so far totally gone under my radar. Now I have to put him on my reading-list. Am I the only one, or are there others who only read authors they actually have met?
For me it is so since 1997 and meeting Brian Stableford. Since then I have had plenty of reading and barely time to keep up with those I limit myself to. Come to think of it, I have to read Jo Walton as well. I wasn't aware that she was the GoH of the convention, when I talked to her in Stockholm. Neither that she was an author. But everyone else, get in line behind Jo and Stan.
What impressed me most about Stan though, what I didn't know at the time, but I know it now. He was the first manager of *FORBIDDEN PLANET* in London.

WRAPPING UP THE NOVACON EXPERIENCE
Finally, on Saturday evening, Bellis got to be the Sheriff of Nottingham. At least as far as Novacon was concerned.



He tried to keep the glass of beer out of the picture, but I feel the image would not be complete without it.

Besides, I have never in all these years seen him unable to hold his liquor. Wearing the golden waistcoat, he is somewhat responsible to solve any problem that might occur at the convention. Then he can't be the problem himself.
I recall talking to Steve Green, Doug Bell, Theresa Derwin, Steve and Alice Lawson, Harpal Singh, Ron Gemmell, Bridget Wilkinson, Roger Robinson, Giulia De Cesare, Jim Walker (good ol' Jim, who I otherwise know only from **every** Eurocon I go to), Tim Stannard (who, as I understand, has been to all 44 Novacons so far), Vernon Brown (who was the chair of the first Novacon), Gary Wilkinson, Martin Hoare, Dave Lally and Rhodri James and John Harvey... apart from all those who I previously mentioned in my report.
On Saturday evening I also went to listen to... the Crimson Clocks, who were a sort of steampunk-folk-rock-band...
And I found the music rather... captivating.

Bellis declared:
- You have to tell Swedish fans to come here!
- But, you already tried that. Why would they listen to me?
- Because *you are Wolf von Witting!*
For a moment I was sure my ears were malfunctioning.
- But... *you are Bellis!!!* (Let me put this in perspective for you. Back in 1980 Bellis and Engholm were the superstars of Swedish fandom, while I was a struggling pedestrian with teutonic idiosynchrasies). I am grateful for the vote of confidence, even though I wasn't aware I had gone that far as to have my word weighing any more than the word of Bellis.
Perhaps my word **together** with his may convince you? I wasn't kidding when I said: "I've been to an Eastercon, Worldcon and a Filk-Con in the UK, but Novacon has so far been the nicest convention I've been to.
With slightly over 200 attending members it is not nearly as stressful as Worldcons and Eastercons. I value the time I spend, talking with and getting to know other fans.
I LIKE sf-fans and I care more about sf-fans than so called celebrities in popular media.
I'd rather talk to Pete Randall than Bill Bailey. Rather to Bellis than to Peter Stormare. Rather to... well... actually, there we have *a draw,* with Claudia Black. But that's just because the waitress was busy with her duties.
And I would love to go back to Nottingham next year.



St Mary's Church in Nottingham. Next time I need to plan seeing more of the town itself.

THE 2015 TAFF RACE

As I announced in CounterClock # 19, I intend to race for TAFF 2015 and I want to encourage you to vote. I want to encourage you to vote, not necessarily for me, but for the candidate of your choice. One of the reasons, that I stand for the race, is that I wanted to prove that TAFF is for everyfan, not only for US or UK citizens.
But since my competitor isn't British either, it really doesn't matter which one of us wins. The point is made and I do not even have to argue about it.
I mixed up East- and Westbound though, as Steve Green pointed out to me. The winner 2015 will be Westbound, going to the WorldCon in Spokane. 2016 the winner of the TAFF-race will be eastbound again, meaning... a North American coming to Europe.

I want to argue for this winner to be given the choice, if he wishes to go to the British Eastercon or to the Eurocon of 2016, which will be held in Barcelona. I will keep on to argue for this no matter if I win or lose. Btw. If Novacon is held the same time of year, next year, then the Eurocon and Novacon is only one weekend apart.

I will support the Helsinki vote for Worldcon in 2017 and I will vote for Finland in Spokane. This is not a fishing for votes from Finland. It's because Finland is the country where I was born, I have a half-brother living in the vicinity of Helsinki and I haven't seen him in a long time.

Actually, I do not expect much support from Italy, Sweden or Germany either. I have split myself too thin across the European continent. And after this issue of CounterClock, I may have *negative* popularity in Italy. Which is why I can encourage them to vote for my competitor.

NINA HORVATH
is an excellent candidate to race with. She is one of the most active fans in German speaking fandom. She has plenty of contacts all around. She is a good representative of what the best of modern fandom may become. By now she has also learned a few things about fandom in the past. And while I put the last hand on CoClock # 20, she is in Brno in the Czech Republic, attending Fenixcon 2014 on 5-7th of December. This Czech sf-convention has been held every year, at least since 2003. Alas, the information on the website is only available in Czech:
http://www.fenixcon.cz/
We look forward to Nina's report, which most likely will be found on the **European SF Portal.** Nina is a regular contributor. - http://www.scifiportal.eu/

- -



I found the next image, which has made the rounds on FB on Luca Volpino's page. My first reaction was a cognitive dissonance until I realized there would be a comma missing in the text.



Another question on my mind was, which one of them? Would Peter Capaldi now have a short career as the Doctor, or was this about any other of the recent doctors? Fortunately, it wasn't about any of them.



INTERSTELLAR (2014) Dir: Christopher Nolan, 2 h 49 min
"Do not go gentle into that good night; Old age should burn and rave at close of day. Rage, rage against the dying of the light."

A year ago, if you recall, I analyzed the 2013 sf-film production, their grades on IMDb and came to the conclusion that *HER (2013) A Spike Jonze film,* must have been *the best sci fi of 2013.* Now I've seen it. I stand by that assessment! This year, I do it the other way around.
I looked at a film, Interstellar, and declare it the best sf-film made in 2014. It's a safe bet, I dare say.
It will be debated, up there, among the great ones. It will be compared to milestones such as 2001, Blade Runner and Star Wars and it far more deserves it, than Inception ever did (same director, by the way).
Interstellar is very, very good, but not perfect. Which I see as a good thing. Christopher Nolan is after all only 44. He still has plenty of good time ahead to excel.
And if anyone can beat Ridley Scott, James Cameron and Stanley Kubrick and put his face among the greatest sci-fi-film directors of all time, Christopher Nolan is a candidate.
Some may argue that he already belongs there.
Perhaps indeed.
Interstellar gives an interesting idea of what a black hole REALLY would look like. Pity, that it should come out only a few weeks, or months, after Laura Mersini-Houghton proved that black holes can't exist.
Professor Mersini-Houghtons discovery rattles the entire understanding of our universe. Because it also means a good bye and farewell to the big bang theory.

Fortunately, Christopher Nolan has looked at the black hole from an entirely new perspective. His black hole is not a traditional black hole as we thought we knew them.
This is one of the things I can say in favour of Nolan's film. It is not entirely predictable.
There has always been a wonderful what-if-element in science fiction. And what if all of us are wrong?

There is nothing to say that both the Big Bang Theory and Mersini-Houghton can be both wrong. After all, we have only the five senses to work with. We can enhance those senses with our equipment, to make things visible to us, which otherwise would be invisible. But what if there is more? Science fiction has the possibility to go further.
Many discoveries of modern science were made through science fiction.
Geo-stationary satellites was an idea Arthur C Clarke had. And this is why we can see images from the other side of the planet in direct broadcast transmissions.

INTERSTELLAR is going to win a HUGO 2015, I'm sure of it. Christopher Nolan going to make more incredibly interesting sf-films in the future. I'm sure of that as well. I can't imagine him being 100% satisfied with his work yet. He is only in the beginning of his career.
Let's all be happy about that! - Wolf -



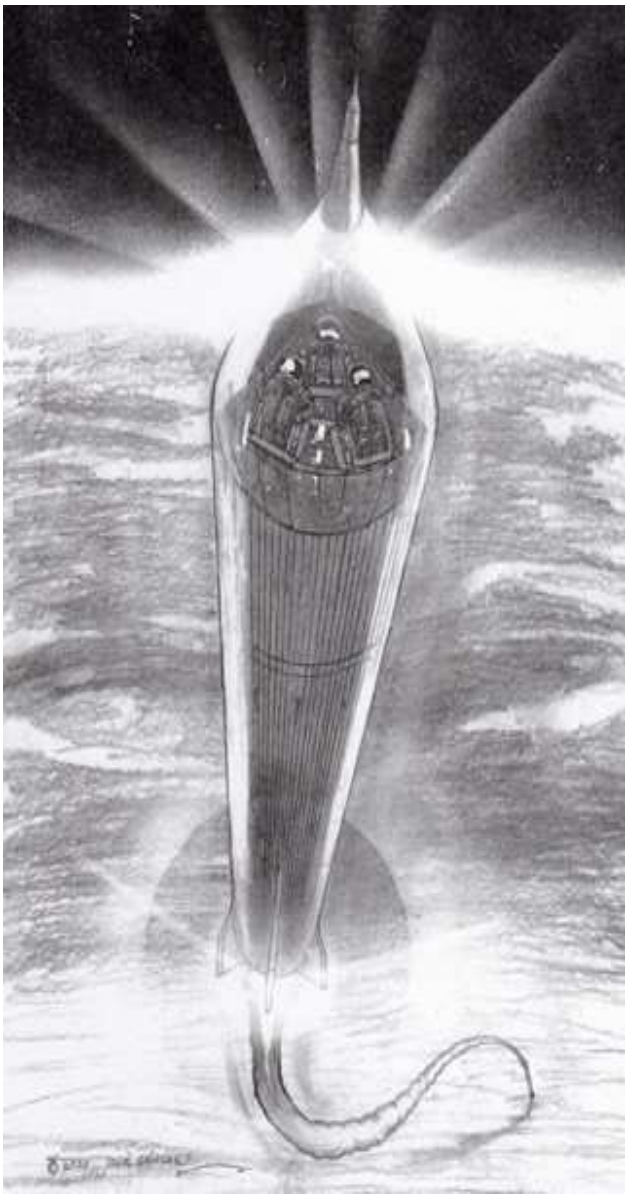
Artwork: José Sanchez, 1998, Cybernetica

As if I was living on another Planet

This piece of fannish writing by Matthias Pätzold *proved far more difficult to translate from German than what I had initially expected. But even though I may have snagged some of its potency in the process of translation, I still hope you can sense a whiff of Pätzold's wonderful original sense of humor.*

Another nightmarishly disturbing disorder called PCD is spreading. Affected are sf- and fantasy-fans.
A lot of people do not like Mondays very much. But for a certain category of people, these days are becoming increasingly unbearable.
- I wake up in the morning with a feeling of sliding into a dark void. It is as if I was living on another Planet.
Many feel like Alice L. after attending an event related to SF and fantasy, commonly known as conventions. And their numbers are increasing. Psychiatry calls it: Post-Convention-Depression" or PCD. A mild case of PCD may commonly display inability to focus at work. A gravely afflicted person is struck with apathy and often disconnects from reality for a while. In such a case, the afflicted becomes evasive and uncommunicative.
Physical symptons may occur. As was the case with Vincent D, one in the community of con-runners prominent organizer. With a slight scottish accent he whispers:
-Me voice is a wee hoarse nuw, after twa daes of smoffin'.
Most of the time, the onset appears really harmless. While traveling back home, the experienced Euphoria of the past two or three days slowly recedes. Primarily a sobering occurs when the afflicted returns to his regular disorder at home.
It has been found that a model spacecraft hanging from the ceiling, action figures on the shelves and two or three overloaded book shelves with science fiction and fantasy-literature has a soothing effect.
Next day it gets worse. The car refuses to enable the warp speed nacelles to bypass the traffic jam. Nobody at work appears to understand the simplest phrases of the Klingon language and one can't discuss Viper close combat strategy with anyone at work. As a result, the afflicted person remains unable to perform at peak efficiency.
The wider economic ramifications have come to the attention of authorities. The Secretary of State for Health, MP Fox said:
- We are concerned, as to the extent with which this problem is spreading. According to a careful estimate made by consulting experts 46% of all convention members are afflicted. Possibly a lot more.
Financial experts, who have chosen to remain anonymous, estimate the damage to the industry of the UK is already at £100 million. And the figures are rising.
In Germany PCD is an object of clinical research. Internationally reknowned psychologist Prof.Dr. Orbana Schol heads the Institue for extra-ordinary psychological phenomena (IAPP) at the Frankfurt University in Dreieich-Sprendlingen. Why the institute has located their research to this particular place between Frankfurt and Darmstadt, is because this is where the annual "BuchmesseCon" (BuCon) as well as a role-playing convention is being held every year. An excellent opportunity for field studies.
- The number of sf-fans is very high in the Rhine-Main area, why we have no trouble finding subjects for study.
Schol also tells us, that PCD merely is a mild version of a more serious disorder.
In particular the people who are intensely involved in preparing for a convention and clearing up after it, can get a more severe form of PCD. It can develop into Con-Induced Bipolar Disorder, CIBD.
CIBD arises through extended concentration on convention preparations, in which tensions and Euphoria gradually increase. Through this involvement, which some individuals perceive as positive stress, a peak is experienced during the convention. So much worse is the retraction of the afflicted after the event, the falling into a vacuum.
- What am I going to do now? What point is there to life?
These are commonly asked questions by con-runners.
Some deal with it by saying;
- After the convention, is before the convention. And simply commence with preparations for the convention next year. Others cringe under the full impact of CIBD, such as Alexander P (name changed by editor). He is now convinced to be a oceanic mammal and can often be observed at the beach at Wismar, searching for saucer shaped spacecrafts washed ashore on the waves of the Baltic Sea (*1). To avoid further complications and hope for positive results in future therapy sessions, his health counselor has strongly advised not to attend any further conventions.
A particularly dire case, is Alan W, who has successfully convinced high ranking ESA-officials in the UK, he is an alien from the planet Chulak, who has arrived on Earth by means of a circular portal which can create an artificial wormhole for space travel. His mission, he claims, is to aid them in their exploration of space.
Another severe case is Ian W, who has turned his beliefs into a pseudoreligious cult, the Chtulhu's Witnesses. He

can now be seen at conventions with a Holy Scepter of Chtulhu handing out writings and trying to convert believers to follow the faith of his prophet H.P.Lovecraft. If it is indeed a religious pursuit and not a ruse to gain access to the wallet of easy victims, is yet to be determined.
There still is no known cure for CIBD and PCD. The afflicted may suffer under the symptoms all their lives. Yet Pr Dr Schol is hopeful.
- It is possible to ease the suffering of PCD-patients. A primary task is to explain what PCD itself is and what the cause of PCD is. Furthermore the tolerance for the fantastic genre needs to be increased among normal people. This could be achieved by more televised SF and Fantasy programs and with an inclusion of the elements SF and Fantasy into the teaching of literature at school. Research shows that the oder generation, growing up with tv-series such as Twilight Zone and Star Trek, have a more advanced acceptance than younger generations who grew up with Teletubbies and Sesame Street.



Artwork: José Sanchez, 2005 - Blast Off!

Wolf von Witting, TAFF candidate 2015



In 1977 fandom became a way of life.

Born 14 November 1959 in Borgå/Porvoo, Finland.
Became Swedish citizen on 7th December 1977, to avoid military service in a country whose language I was unable to speak. Lived in Recklinghausen (Germany) 1962-1965, in Gotheburg 1966-1969, and Lund (Sweden) 1969-1971, Hennef (near Bonn & Cologne, Germany) 1971-1974 and Stockholm (Sweden) 1975 - 2007, in Italy since Sep 2007.

Non SF-related history:
CHESS: Municipal champion U-16, 1975, Municipal Junior Champion 1976, Municipal School Champion 1977, shared 11th placed in Stockholm Junior DM 1978. Lost a game against IGM *Michail Tal* on 22 Feb 1976. - Inspired by the Akira Kurosawa movies. Kendoka 1978-79, Aikido 79- , studied Musashi's *Go Rin No Sho*. Acquired a view of zen pantheism.

Work: Hotel & conference service 1977-1982 at Grand Hotel Saltsjöbaden (during the OPEC Conference 1977 & Bilderberg conference 1982) Night porter 1983. Substitute teacher 1983-1984. Language teacher 1984.
Railway man November 1984 - 2007. Conductor, 1989 dispatcher 2002 drawbridge ward, also administrative work 1989, teaching conductors 1991-2001. Education included: leadership, employment law, budgeting, negotiation with union, management. Done odd jobs since 2007 within agriculture (irrigation), DJ (also in Stockholm 1999-2000), language teacher, gardening and IT service. Art agent, since 2012 and bee keeper, since 2013.

Computers: 1984-85 Sinclair Spectrum ZX 81, 1986 - VIC 64, Amiga-500 and Amiga-1200 until 2001. 1998 PC, Win 95, Win 98, Win 2K, Win XP, Win 7, Photoshop xprt. Linux: Mandriva, Ubuntu
Program: HTML, amiga-basic, ms-dos, A+

Who am I?
Now and then I have to stop and ask myself this question. I change, and these changes can go on for quite some time. Did you know that every cell in the body, including in every bone, is exchanged during a 7-year period?
This means, that none of the cells in my body today, lived in Sweden in the spring of 2007 (except my brain cells).

Am I the same? My daughter says *no*. She says I am far more content and at ease with myself today. And she is absolutely qualified to make that assessment. We had seven years together.
I got married in Moscow on 20th May 1994. My Russian wife had a daughter and I had a son (Fredric, born 1986). They were **our children**. And just because we divorced in 2001, doesn't make me feel any different about my step-daughter. I never placed one above the other.

The other thing in my life, which has had continuity, is my hobby; SF and fandom. I was stranded in Stockholm 1975 - far away from my former friends in Germany. I didn't have much choice but to keep in touch by letters. I wrote hundreds of letters annually.
Then I heard about fanzines and conventions and it was the fashionable thing to do, to engage in those activities. At least it was so, for the nerd I have been. Being a Perry Rhodan-fan (see CounterClock # 4), one could not help but to notice that there was a huge Perry Rhodan-fandom in Germany. For me, Perry Rhodan was a childhood *misdemeanor*.

I was brutally ripped out of it when my childhood hero, the author Willi Voltz died (1984). In retrospect I can say, it was good for me. I turned more towards general science fiction. Not that Rhodan had been bad for me. On the contrary, Perry Rhodan may not have been great SF, but it was great entertainment for young minds. The series must have improved since then, because I can't imagine so many still sticking to it, had it not evolved. But when I recently attempted to re-read Perry Rhodan, I realized I would have sacked K H Scheer from the team of authors, had I been in charge. I just can't enjoy it the way I did before.
In January of 1979 we made first contact with Swedish fandom. Running into Ahrvid Engholm and Anders Bellis, was like living in the eye of the hurricane. We had no idea how strong the winds of time were blowing around us.
We did crazy things.

One of the crazy things which come to mind, was when Ahrvid and Bellis attempted to glue slices of cucumber to the cover of an APA. I was there. I didn't object to it.
Why did they do such a thing? The name of the APA was GURKA (Swedish for Cucumber).

In the summer I worked at Grand Hotel and used their switch-board to set up a telefangathering. The first (and only) of it's kind. We called *Sam J Lundwall* and collectively shrieked a message onto his answering machine.

We had fangatherings at burger-bars and created one-shots on the back of the tray paper. Every opportunity which we felt needed commemoration was covered with a one-shot. So, when Ahrvid and I went to see Tom Ölander in Helsinki 1981, we created HUFVUDSTADSFANZINET. Which was a title leaned on the name of one of Helsinki's daily newspapers (Ölander worked there).
We were trufhaans, covered with convention badges like Latin-American meat-packing glitteratis.
We had no respect and we had no limits.

Not until after my son was born, I began to calm down, work and family life began to demand a more sensible person. My first era in fandom 1974-1991 was more or less entirely limited to German and Swedish fandom.

Now, if I compare to the level of Anders Hedenlund (who always seemed to have had a more sober view on sf-fandom), then I wasn't ever really gafiated. I never held myself on very far of a distance away. Only for my own demands upon myself, I saw myself as gafiated for a time.



Smoking cigar at Sigma TC's 25th year anniversary 2001.

MY SECOND ERA IN FANDOM 1996-2004
Living in Fisksätra, other sf-fans were never far away. My friends, who also were into computers, forced me out on the internet in 1996 (late as I was). And this initiated my second era in fandom. Fiona Anderson invited us to visit the *Tun* in London and Eckhard D Marwitz invited me to filk at his convention in Ratzeburg 1997. This set off a chain of events.
Barely based on any merit beyond still being around, Beluga Post decided I should be FGoH at the SF-Days of North-Rhine-Westphalia. It was with more than 1500 members the biggest ever sf-literature-convention on German soil. And it blew everything I ever had done way out of proportion in Gerfany. It was the virtual snowball.

Fiona Anderson had me working in OPS at Eastercon.
Most certainly I wanted to learn about running bigger conventions from the best in Europe (the Brits).

I began writing convention reports for Cheryl Morgan's EMERALD CITY. And I side-tracked into a brief filking career. Though I do dislike labels, and I don't want to get stuck in a drawer. When I felt vaguely comfortable about

my level of English, I began publishing CounterClock in January of 1999. I honestly believed I could keep up a monthly publication at the time. Which was an indication, that I still had not learned my limits.
The following year got tough because my mum passed away and because it more or less happened while I had to run the national Swedish convention. CounterClock also ran out of printing options after the 7th issue. In matters of fanac, the future was everything less than bright.
It was quite a consolation to finally receive the Alvar Award of 2001 (handed out at Confuse 2002, the Swecon in Linköping. I can't say that I had not been wanting it ever since Ahrvid first got it, in 1978. But I kept seeing *neos* like Hans Persson and Johan Anglemark sailing past me.
Suddenly they were no more neos at all. Suddenly they had been awarded with the most prestigious award to be had in Swedish fandom. And there was nothing quite like it in German fandom. Other fandoms yet have to learn the value of work done for free. I mean, just because it is done without any interest in money, doesn't mean that it is worthless, does it? So why do all the effing awards go to authors who already get paid? To bestseller authors who have the money coming out of their ears!?
Are *you* insane? Of course fanac should be awarded!!!

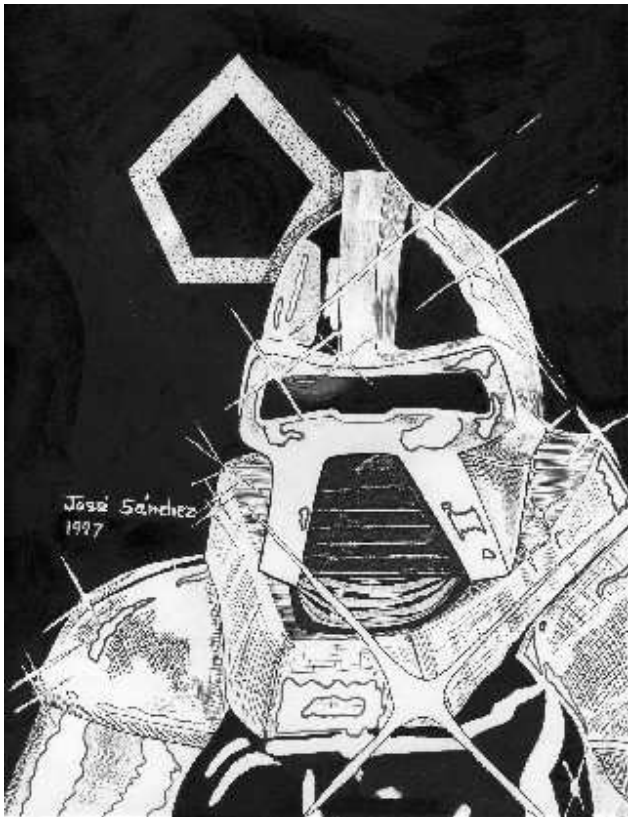
THIRD ERA IN FANDOM 2008 -
I would like to think of Confuse 2008 as the beginning of my third era in fandom. At the time, it didn't feel like it.
I had already settled in Italy.
Now and then Lloyd Penney kept nudging me to make CounterClock a pdf-zine. First I could simply not see a pdf-file as a fanzine. Old dogs and new tricks, you know.

***MY 10 LATEST** CONVENTIONS AS OF 2014*
CONVERSATION 2006, Stockholm, Sweden
SWECON -Confuse 2008 Linköping, Sweden
EUROCON - FIUGGI 2009, Italy
SFCD-Con SCHWERIN 2009, Germany
SWECON / EUROCON 2011, Sweden
EUROCON - ZAGREB 2012, Croatia
GARCHINGCON 9, 2013 Munich, Germany
SWECON Fantastika 2013 Stockholm, Sweden
LONCON III, Worldcon 2014 London, UK
NOVACON 44, 2014 Nottingham, UK

But creativity comes like waves of an ocean and the Eurocon in Stockholm 2011, followed by the one in Zagreb 2012, caused a tsunami of emotion which washed away all of my resistance. Yes, I dare say that it was the triumphant moment of Swedish fandom, in the light of young Croatian enthusiasm, which resulted in CoClock # 11 and consecutive issues.
I am the member of one (American) electronic APA, which I consider to be enough fanzine-engagements for the time being, since I also have sworn to write a LoC to every fanzine I get, which still is printed on paper.
A program item I wanted to do for a long time and consider a big challenge yet: Some 30 minutes stand-up comedy.

Fandom-related merits:
First club: 1974, first convention: 1977, first fanzine: 1978
Edited 2nd best German fanzine 1984, ANDROMEDA # 111
FGoH HanseCon II 1986 in Lübeck
Eurosmof 1997
FGoH at SFT-NRW 1998 in Dortmund
Chair of National Swedish Convention NasaCon 2000
Swedish Alvar-Award winner 2001

SECURITY & SURVEILLANCE
Being in London, and having time to spare it occurred to me, to find out how people and businessmen really felt about the amount of surveillance in town.
Big brother is watching? Is it good or bad?
The pub Hurlingham in Fulham has 16 interior cameras. How is it to be working there?
- Oh, it is absolutely a blessing!! so I was informed. And I can imagine, while in the SF literature, the victims of surveillance always are innocent citizens, in reality a lot of crime is, if not prevented, then at least easily solved.
This includes brawling, vandalism and shop lifting. In fact, none of the people I talked to, could come up with any adverse sides of surveillance at all.
There are literally thousands and thousands of cameras in operation around London. 98% of these are monitored at all time. One out of ten cameras also records sound.
And I can see how people generally can feel safe, with this vast amount of watchers around.
What happened in the suburb of Stockholm, where I was living, regular break-ins into storage facilities and a bored teenager going along a line of parked cars, scratching their sides. These misdeeds might be possible to prevent.
And the cameras don't follow you into the bedrooms and bathrooms.
No, you voluntarily take your surveillance device with you. And some make doubtful selfies in the bathroom mirrors, which then come to circulate among those with access to the content on your mobile phone. This is why I have a digital camera and not a mobile phone.
We already know that the NSA or CIA, or both, can listen in to anyone they please. You don't even need to keep your mobile phone switched on for that.
So you **can** actually avoid being watched in the bathroom. If you so choose.
But have all these cameras stopped crime?
No, in London are still more than 700,000 crimes comitted every year. That's a lot. I am impressed how calm and polite the British police appears to be acting, considering that *in average* every citizen commits a crime every 30 years. In London, mind you.
Who watches the watchers? Well, that is always a good question to ask.
The manager at Tesco near Imperial Wharf told me, that crime wasn't the real problem. Terrorism is.
- Well, have you ever witnessed any terrorism activity?
- No, he had not.
Statistics show, he is mistaken. Crime still is a problem.
But people generally believe what they want to believe and if you don't see much crime either and terrorism seem to be emphasised in the news, I can understand how ones perception can get skewed.
It is also a generally known fact, that if you should die an unnatural death, the most likely event to end your life is a car accident. Yet no one seems to be afraid of stepping into a car. People seem to be more afraid of the mad axe-murderer, who we haven't seen too many of (other than in the movies).
My conclusion is, that surveillance is not half as bad, as I thought it would be. Used in the right way, it has only benefits. Used in the wrong way, everything is dangerous.
I am watching *Person of Interest,* with Jim Caviezel, which I consider to be a pretty cool scifi-series. Sometimes it is hard to say what is sf in it, and what is possible. WOLF



Artwork: José Sanchez, 1997 - Cylon

FILMS WITH A PERSONAL IMPACT - Part 1 "The 80's"
I felt like strolling down memory lane and take a look at films which had a huge personal impact on me. And it was not always SF. Sure, Blade Runner (1982) is a great film and it did have an impact on me. More so, over the years.
But back in 1982 the film which created the most commotion in my head was Alan Parker's THE WALL: So, here are the films of the 80's which made me *think* more than other films of their time. In chronological order.
Battlestar Galactica 1980? No, I have it in my shelf, but I still haven't seen more than a single episode of it. But...

THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY (1980)
This South African film is full of wisdom. And somehow it doesn't get old. The truths then are as much truth now.
"Only 600 miles to the south, there's a vast city. And here you find civilized man. Civilized man refused to adapt himself to his environment; instead, he adapted his environment to suit him. So he built cities, roads, vehicles, machinery, and he put up power lines to run his labour-saving devices. But somehow he didn't know where to stop. The more he improved his surroundings to make life easier, the more complicated he made it. So now his children are sentenced to 10-15 years of school, just to learn how to survive in this complex and hazardous habitat they were born into."

HEAVY METAL (1981)
After finishing college I did feel slightly like the protagonist of Michael Moorcock's song "*Veteran of the Psychic Wars*" Military service that year enhanced the feeling.
How good is man? was title of a two page comic in a Heavy Metal magazine. In the last picture, the alien spitting him out with an expression of disgust in his face, definitely answered that question.
I loved the soundtrack to the film.

PINK FLOYD - THE WALL (1982)
The movie hit me somewhere in the guts.
Fame and fortune obviously had its down-sides. Inside we remain the kids we were, growing up. Or at least, from my limited perspective, it is what I understood.
"Day after day, love turns grey, like the skin of a dying man. Night after night, we pretend its all right But I have grown older and you have grown colder and nothing is very much fun any more."

MERRY CHRISTMAS MR LAWRENCE (1983)
There are so many kind of sufferings, and we really have not seen the worst of it, have we? We were living the best of times. No war, no famine, no dictator. And now with another christmas coming up... I still listen to Ryuichi Sakamoto now and then. *"You are the victim of men who think they are right... Just as one day you and captain Yunoi believed absolutely that you were right. And the truth is of course that nobody is right... "*

BIRDY (1984)
I was a huge fan of Genesis and followed the individual careers of their members as well. Peter Gabriel wrote the music to Birdy, which is why I had to see the film. First time I was a bit bored. But every time I see the film I like it more and more. Perhaps it grows on you, as you grow.

Does it matter when in time you see something? Instinct tells me it matters. How about NOW when everything is available at once? Isn't it tiresome, being bombarded with; "Oh, this is good, you *have to* see it!" when you yourself perhaps are in an entirely different stage of your mindset?
"The reason you couldn't fly, Al, is you don't believe you could fly."

RUNAWAY TRAIN (1985)
In the end and in the long run, the things which have the most impact on our mind, is something we perhaps don't even realize at the moment when we see it. The message may be obscured and we recall a scene, but we are not sure why we recall that particular scene.
Jon Voight as Manny: [after listening to Buck's dream] *"That's bullshit. You're not gonna do nothin' like that. I'll tell you what you gonna do. You gonna get a job. That's what you gonna do. You're gonna get a little job. Some job a convict can get, like scraping off trays in a cafeteria. Or cleaning out toilets. And you're gonna hold onto that job like gold. Because it is gold. Let me tell you, Jack, that is gold. You listenin' to me? And when that man walks in at the end of the day.*
And he comes to see how you done, you ain't gonna look in his eyes. You gonna look at the floor. Because you don't want to see that fear in his eyes when you jump up and grab his face, and slam him to the floor, and make him scream and cry for his life. So you look right at the floor, Jack. Pay attention to what I'm sayin', motherfucker! And then he's gonna look around the room, see how you done. And he's gonna say "Oh, you missed a little spot over there. Jeez, you didn't get this one here. What about this little bitty spot?" And you're gonna suck all that pain inside you, and you're gonna clean that spot. And you're gonna clean that spot. Until you get that shiny clean. And on Friday, you pick up your paycheck. And if you could do that, if you could do that, you could be president of Chase

Manhattan... corporations! If you could do that.

ALIENS (1986)
Sometimes, the best film I saw in a year, was actually a real science fiction-film. The most interesting aspect to me is the different kind of leadership you see in Aliens. You have the formal incompetent (Gorman), formal competent (Apone), informal creative (Ripley), informal competent (Hicks), the loudmouth (Hudson), the curageous (Vasquez and Drake), the corporate interest (Burke), the dark horse (Bishop), etc Interesting group dynamics. And of course, there's the little girl of gloom and doom.
Ripley: *These people are here to protect you. They're soldiers.*
Newt: *It won't make any difference.*

Of course, there's also this piece of lovely dialogue:
Newt: *My mommy always said there were no monsters - no real ones - but there are.*
Ripley: *Yes, there are, aren't there?*
Newt: *Why do they tell little kids that?*
Ripley: *Most of the time it's true.*

ALIENS remains my all-time favourite sf-film. Not because it is the best sf-film of all time, because it is not. But for me it came in a good place in time. My son made somersaults in the belly of his mother as Ferro steered their lander towards the surface of LV-426.

1986 was just a very, very good year as I remember it. It was the year I earned my blue badge as a railway man. And my son was born on 20th November.

DIRTY DANCING (1987)
Now, what on Earth made me choose a girly film like Dirty Dancing over Good Morning Vietnam or Lethal Weapon, for example? Answer: the music. And what's wrong with *girly*? This film is at the opposite end of the spectrum, of what I usually like. But it also proves I am versatile.
"When I'm wrong, I say I'm wrong."

PUNCHLINE *(1988)*
Tom Hanks is a flat broke stand-up comedian. This is where I started thinking about doing some stand-up comedy. At least once. I'm still thinking about it.
"We are all Gods animated cartoons."

DEAD POET'S SOCIETY (1989)
Can't say that 1987-88 moved me as much as 1989. Robin Williams makes you think. Or should I say Peter Weir, the director of the film or Tom Schulman, who wrote the brilliant script? Who do we credit? Perhaps it is best to credit them all, because they all together created this extra-ordinarily pensive movie.
"*No matter what anybody tells you, words and ideas can change the world."*
"Now we all have a great need for acceptance, but you must trust that your beliefs are unique, your own, even though others may think them odd or unpopular, even though the herd may go."
"There's a time for daring and there's a time for caution, and a wise man understands which is called for."

The 80's was the time I went from 20 to 30 years of age. I went from boy to man, from being a son to being a father. I gathered wisdom, not by listening to it, but by making my mistakes. And I traveled far... on a bicycle (3500 km).



Artwork by José Sanchez, 1997 - Love is in the Air

LOC AROUND THE CLOCK

Lloyd Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd. Etobicoke, ON
CANADA M9C 2B2
October 1, 2014

Thank you so much for CounterClock 19. Looks like a good sizable issue, with lots to comment on within. Let me finish this first paragraph...

...and go to the second, where I will say the cover looks great, but in one corner, it says it is by Tage Valentin, while in the opposite corner, it says EMSH, which is Ed Emshwiller, celebrated SF artist from a past age. I also see the initials TV in another corner. Who really did create the art for this cover?

I see a familiar name...Georges Gallet. During some of the earlier Worldcons Yvonne and I attended, we acted as Canadian agents for some of these Worldcons, and we got to meet M.Gallet, who seemed amused that someone like my wife Yvonne could come from Canada, and speak perfect French, and that I could not.

Being born in 1959, I found the Beatles a bit of a mystery, but I did catch the tail-end of bands who

were trying to copy their success. I knew of fandom in the late 60s and early 70s through mentions of Worldcons and SF clubs in SF anthologies, especially the F&SF anthologies, and through the Star Trek books I would buy. It wasn't until our family moved from Ontario to British Columbia in 1977 that I got to see that new movie called Star Wars, and find that a Star Trek club was forming. December of 1977 is when I date my entry into fandom, so for me, in a short time, it will be 37 years.

I worry about the future of SF bookshops too, and about bookshops in general. I used to know where all the new and used bookshops were in Toronto. I still do...but there's only about a quarter of the original number left. We are lucky in that we still have a science fiction bookshop in town, Bakka-Phoenix, but I have to wonder if it makes any money, or is financed through the labour of love.

Great histories of Swedish fandom, and I've received a few Swedish fanzines over the years. I talked with Mike Perschon, the Steampunk Scholar from Edmonton, on his trip to Gavle earlier this year. He had a great time, and was impressed at how people would bring him in from so far away to hear him speak.

We had so many hopes to be in London for the Worldcon this year...but, it was not to be. New jobs, new debts, and no vacation time. We're sorry we weren't there, but looking back, it was the right decision to make. We're feeling that we are local fans from now on, and that travel may simply be out of reach for us.

Our plans for London are now to go in 2016, and with luck, the places and events we'd like to go to will still be there, and we will still be healthy. We'd like to go to The Asylum in Lincoln, and Yvonne would like to go to the Harry Potter exhibit north of London.

My loc...I finally did get to see The Grand Budapest Hotel. A very strange movie, and quite enjoyable. We seem to have reinvented ourselves yet again, this time as steampunk jewelry makers and vendors. We are doing fairly well, and we are enjoying ourselves, and will be vendors at a relatively new convention, Genrecon, in a couple of weeks in Guelph, northwest of Toronto.

Many thanks for this issue. CounterClock must now be the fanzine of record for European fan historians. Well done, and I look forward to future issues.

ED: You know, Lloyd, I was wondering about exactly the same thing. Except I didn't know what EMSH stood for. Now it all comes clear. The original was made by Ed Emshwiller, but Tage Valentin had to copy it to stencil. In those days, copying wasn't done so easily. One had to draw it by hand exactly like the original. Making a good copy, took as much time as making the original. But it was still a copy, so he couldn't very well sign it with only EMSH, because it was not an original Emshwiller. So he put both signatures there.

Trying to copy the success of the Beatles, was a futile attempt. One could copy, or develop a certain aspect of their production, such as ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA which based their sound on a Beatles song, or the punk rockers who developed their style of music from the song *Helter Skelter.* Etc And the Beatles OTOH did a pretty nice *impersonation* of the Beach Boys, with Back in the U.S.S.R. (interesting article by Andy Hooper about this, in Doug Bell and Christina Lake's HEAD # 12).

Finally, I feel a bit like a *Lone Ranger* of European fanzine fandom (outside of the UK). I do wish there would be others who did something similar. And I do feel there is room for a second European fanzine. I can't afford to go to half of all the conventions I want to go to and I can't be in two places at once. Upcoming year dutch Imagicon collides with DortCon 2015. And I don't expect to be going on forever. We're both 59-ers. It means we are both facing retirement within 10 years. I'd really like to sit back at some point in time and feel that I did my bit. As you have.

EUROPEAN EVENT CALENDER:

Due to illness this Event Calender only covers known events until August 2015. If, interested, keep an eye on the updates in following issues.



The 27th UK Filk Convention
6th – 8th February, 2015
The Marks Tey Best Western Hotel
https://con27ilkin.wordpress.com/

IMAGICON
21 March 2015, LM Ede, Netherlands
https://www.facebook.com/events/267742136758893/?ref=22

DORT.CON 2015
21-22nd March, Dortmund, Germany
http://www.dortcon.de/

LUXCON 2015
28-29th March, Schungfabrik, Tétange
http://luxcon.lu/



The 66th British Eastercon
3-6th April 2015 at the Park Inn, Heathrow, UK
http://www.dysprosium.org.uk/

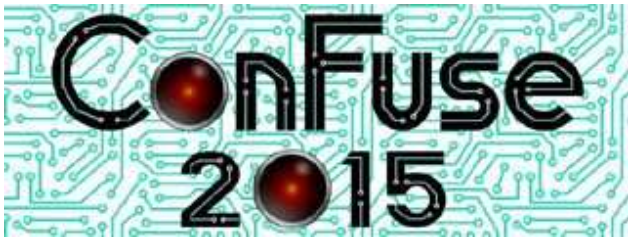


The 37th EUROCON
23-26th April 2015, St Petersburg, Russia
http://eurocon2015.org/en

CABBAGECON
27-28th June, Berg en Dal, Netherlands
Dutch Discworld Convention
Tulip Inn Hotel Val Monte Berg en Dal
info@dutchdwcon.nl

ARCHIPELACON
The Nordic SF & Fantasy Convention
25-28th June, Mariehamn, Åland, Finland
http://www.archipelacon.org/

WETZCON II
3-5 July, Phantastische Bibliothek Wetzlar, Germany
60th SFCD-Convention
http://www.sfcd-con.de/



ConFuse 2015 / SWECON
7-9th August, Nationernas Hus, Linköping, Sweden
http://www.confuse.nu/



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson



COUNTERCL◷CK
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And because it is the end of year
I finish with a simple rhyme right here
Be cheerfull and jolly, don't grieve for a loss
Have a Happy New Year and a Merry Cosmos!

This issue of CounterClock was finalized during the first two weeks of December and during a time of incessant coughing and sneezing, with severe pain to the muscles around the diaphragma, occasional headache and general disorientation. Through the tears of an upcoming sneeze (or was I peeling an onion?), I think I did okay, considering the circumstances. Because after all, my intention was to make a *light* issue. Apparently my understanding of l*ight* has evolved.

Fannishly, Wolf


LONCON 3
72nd World Science Fiction Convention, London, UK 14-18 August 2014
Wolf von Witting
KC
NOVACON 44
A 213
Wolf von Witting
FIRST WORLDCON
God, I'm bored.
Might as well be listening to Genesis.
- The People's Poet
GARCHINGCON 9
17.-19. Mai 2013
B
Besucher
www.garching-con.net
Wolf von Witting
KONTAKT
34.SFERAKON & EUROCON
FAKULTET ELEKTROTEHNIKE I RAČUNARSTVA
HOTEL INTERNATIONAL, ZAGREB 26.-29.4.2012.
EUROCON 2009
Deepcon 10
Icelcon 35
WOLF VON WITTING
27
FRI
28
SAT
EUROCON
2011
Stockholm, Sweden
June 17-19
fantastika
2013
Wolf
von
Wilting
Lördag