HEICON'70 Flashback — How MiMosa caused The creation of...

COUNTERCLOCK

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INTERNET THE BURGER BAR OF KNOWLEDGE

"The essence of being human is that one does not seek perfection." (George Orwell)

INTRODUCTION

At LONCON 3 I was told by John-Henri Holmberg that it is no use to plan more than two issues ahead. How right he was. At this point I seem unable to plan even one issue.
"Everything happens for a reason." I said in CC#20. Then I went to Stockholm to renew my passport.
I arrived on January 9th. The next day died my ex-wife. We got married on May 20th in Moscow 1995. And even though we divorced in Sweden 7 years later, we remained friends. It was what could be called a happy divorce.
Jelena Dandre was also an sf-fan. Her favourite novel was Asimov's "The End of Eternity". In the late 90's she helped out at our conventions.
We watched all the Star Trek series together. And Voyager caught her main attention. Conceivably she liked the idea of a female captain. She liked to be in charge of things.
And she was a devoted CounterClock-reader. She never commented with a LoC, but she kept encouraging me. Her death was a sudden, unexpected and shattering blow to my world. And, of course, to her (our) daughter.

During my stay in Stockholm I was back in the flat, where we had once been a family. Tanya came over from London immediately. But her business enterprise and many other important matters in London, made it impossible for her to stay. During the month and until the funeral, she went back and forth between the two capitals four times.
Most of the time it was just me and the cat, Findus.

I should also tell you, that Jelena Married again in 2004. Her 3rd and last husband was Ingemar Beran, who had no interest for science fiction at all, but Jelena made him watch both Voyager and Stargate... And eventually he too became interested (mainly because of the ravishing appearance of Jeri Ryan as *Seven-of-Nine*). He was not very technical either, which passed the task of fixing their occasional computer-problems on to me. So we also became friends. Ingemar died on his 69th birthday in April 2014.

Who would have thought the cat, Findus, would survive them both? As I sifted through the piles of magazines, papers and books I re-discovered some of our own history. From the time when Jelena and I had been married.

It wasn't always sunshine. But I remember only the laughs we had and the quarrels Jelena later told about, in a way which made them sound entertaining. She was Russian.
Russians know what it means to be Russian.
[..cryptic smile...]

One day, when she was upset, she yelled at me: "Where are my diamonds? And where are my fur coats?" With all calm in the world I matched her gaze and retorted: "Go out into the forest! Look at the deers! There are your fur coats. Then look at the stars in the night sky! There are your diamonds."

Once in an attempt to wake me from my apparent apathy (which really just was me being tired after having worked a full shift), she smacked a sandwich I was eating out of my hand. Later she told this episode like a funny story: "He just sat there, looking at his empty hand (like Hamlet with the skull of poor Yorrick)! "
In the end both she and Tanya appreciated, that I always kept my calm. Tanya got her fair share.
I was tired of having to look for the scissors all over the appartment for half an hour, when I needed them. Once I tied them with a long string to the drawer in which they were supposed to be. Tanya came to take the scissors, but she didn't notice the string. She was already halfway out of the kitchen when the scissors suddenly seemed to be whisked out of her hand. "Wtf!?"

Jelena was great support the year my mum died and during the months before, leading up to NasaCon 2000.
She was a good host for Jane and Brian Stableford.



Irina Florido and Jelena von Witting at NasaCon 2000. They were among the few who remained for the filkshow on Saturday evening.

It was a sad task to sift through the memories. We had a secret, which very few knew about. Formally our divorce had not yet been registered in Russia. By Russian law we were still married. I found documents to prove that her name in Russia still was Jelena von Witting until at least 2013. Which became a bit of a problem when she attempted to sell property in Russia and move the money out of the country. She had to prove that Jelena Dandre Beran and Jelena von Witting were one and the same person.
In Russia our divorce had not been registered before the year 2014. I didn't know this.

It is immaterial for me, since I didn't marry again. And, yes it was only a formality. We had been properly and legally divorced in Sweden. I didn't lose a wife, I only lost one of my best friends in life.

In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act. (George Orwell)



Jelena Dandre Beran, aka Jelena von Witting
24 September 1963 - 10 January 2015 She was one of the last Komsomol-leaders. She graduated from the Moscow Theater Academy, but came to Sweden in 1995 and instead became a teacher of the Russian language.

She loved to gnaw on bones. She often said that she must have been a dog in a past life. She had a talent for comedy, but her life tended to bring a lot of tragedy.
Raised by her grandmum, who was the first to die in her arms, she early got acquainted with death. The love of her life, before going to Sweden, fell from a window after a party. She just heard the dry thud as he hit the pavement. No scream, nothing.
After our divorce she remarried, but only got half a year of happiness. Ingemar got his first stroke. For most of the ten years in which they were married, she took good care of him. Then he died.
"Some people are just born with tragedy in their blood." This line from *Donnie Darko* spoke directly to her. She often quoted it.

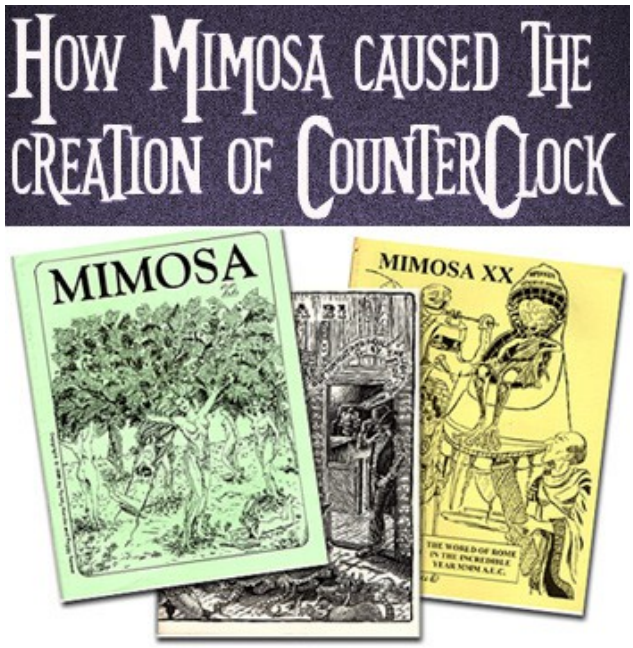
I found the letters I wrote to her, while she still lived in Moscow. I couldn't bear to read them. I couldn't bear to move them... They'll most likely be thrown away along with the other stuff that needs to go, when Tanya clears out the old apartment. Along with my second Filksong booklet, the one from SFT-NRW 10 in Dortmund 1998.



Jelena didn't throw away anything *really* important. So I was bound to make a discovery.
And it wasn't merely the 150-200 Sigma TC-membership cards Jonas Holmberg printed for us, once upon a time.

DOMESTIC EXCAVATIONS VI

In a box, in the basement I found a treasure. Old fanzines I didn't even know she had. I just thought them to be lost forever, never even understanding where, how or why they disappeared.
There were several issues of MIMOSA, Banana Wings, Plokta, Blankspace and Munich Round Up. Most of all I was missing these particular issues of Mimosa... and I will get back to them soon.
There were also three issues of ATTITUDE (# 10-12), a very nice fanzine coming out of Cambridge.
Among Waldemar Kumming's MRU was a photocopied facsimil of MRU # 115 which Waldemar kindly created for me when I was curious about HEICON'70. I wanted to do an article about HEICON and I might even have mentioned it in CounterClock. Mind you, back in 1999 we were still married. Even in Sweden.



Flipping through the pages of MImosa # 20, I noted my name among the WAHF. I don't remember how or when I got in touch with Nicki & Richard Lynch in Germantown, Maryland, but I recall being overwhelmed by Mimosa.
It was the best fanzine I had ever seen. I was in awe, very much the same way that I had been in awe when I first met Walter Ernsting in 1977, then I was 17, but this was 20 years later.
Mimosa had EVERYTHING! It got LoC's from Bob Tucker, Harry Warner, Forry Ackerman, Rotsler and Ron Bennett . It had contributions from *the pope of fandom* Walt Willis himself. I could not bring myself to sully the pages of this exceptionally brilliant fanzine by writing a LoC.
It was no consolation that my friend Ahrvid Engholm had several things published in Mimosa. And I couldn't bring Richard and Nicki to understand my point of view. I was somehow paralyzed with admiration. And they probably thought I was able to write, just because I had a few con-

reports published in *Cheryl Morgan's EMERALD CITY*.
How could I make them understand? Simply say so?
Yeah, *now* it is not a problem. But in Mimosa # 22 the box was checked. The box telling me I had to LoC if I was to get the next issue. I was mortified!
In my own opinion I could not possibly have written anything fit for publishing in Mimosa. I needed to practice.

Then I came up with the *solution*. Another tradition of fandom is *trade*. You get my fanzine if I get yours.
Of course I was completely on the winning side, because while Mimose produced these fine issues...



...I typed, printed and posted Counterlock # 1-7 in a fairly rapid succession. And fortunately this was good enough for Richard and Nicki. Though I still feel I owe them.

When I no longer was able to print CounterClock, Mimosa kept coming until the very end (of Mimosa).



It is still the best fanzine I have ever seen. And thanks to the departure of my wife from this world (she's gone with others beyond the rim of the galaxy), now I have **all** issues of Mimosa (20-30) with me here in Italy.
And will make darn sure they don't end up among paper to be recycled the day I follow the penguin.

Now, that I am talking about fanzines... It still happens that I am left in a similar awe when confronted with a fanzine.
Banana Wings used to impress the hell out of me. Now it is CHUNGA which does it. That's why I nominated CHUNGA for the 2015 fanzine HUGO. And not doing half a job of it... I put up Steve Stiles for best fan-artist and Andy Hooper for best fan-writer.



CHUNGA for HUGO!!!

The # 23 is out and it now has No:6 on the cover (I had no idea Ulrika O'Brien is such a talented fan-artist. Perhaps because I don't pay enough attention.
In this issue the principal feature are seven 2-page comics on Gregor Chunga waking up one morning from anxious dreams, discovering that in bed he had been transformed into a Gypsy Mutant Vacuum Cleaner.
I am still trying to wrap my head around it. And again... **I AM** infact considering to sully the pages of CHUNGA with a LoC. But only because *they* are convinced I am capable of writing. I just have to come up with something that makes sense. Not that I feel any peer pressure. Come on! After the Gypsy Mutant Vacuum Cleaner?
Some acts are hard to follow.



Back in Fisksätra, everything was as I remembered a typical January to February. Snow and ice, cold and dark and sad. So sad, it was.

The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom. (Isaac Asimov)

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INTERNET

- the burger bar of knowledge.

"You can find *everything* on the internet." assured me my friend Morgan Gustavsson.
"Everything?" I had to give that statement some thought.
What kind of knowledge do we find on the internet? Some of the information we find his highly doubtful. Someone well versed in history, sneaked in a historical account of a battle into Wikipedia. It took years to discover that this battle never took place. And damn me, for not taking better notes. I should be able to say exactly which battle it was and exactly how long it was standing unchallenged. As it is presented my statement is merely a statement, which may have no foundation in reality what so ever.
I would not consciously lie to you, but I am presenting you facts in the way the have been stored in my memory. This is not a very scientific, neither a very reliable method.
And you find a lot of this on the internet, on websites, in blogs... and more than you would like to think. Even on wikipedia, which tries to be thorough with sources. It is just that the sources are laymen. No one gets paid to edit wikipedia. And one difference between a layman and a pro is that the pro also has responsibility for what he is writing.
You and me, we can rant and fart with the same bliss.

So you have to *know* how to discern a fact from a factoid, and these from serious omissions and outright lies.
And does anyone seriously believe that all information is available on the internet? I think mostly everyone who has done academic studies will disagree with this assessment. The answer NO is so blatantly obvious, that only one who *never* seriously has studied anything (other than computer sciences and programming languages) would make such a claim. So, why even bother with this article?
Well, I feel we should all recognize the internet for what it is. It's a burger bar of knowledge.

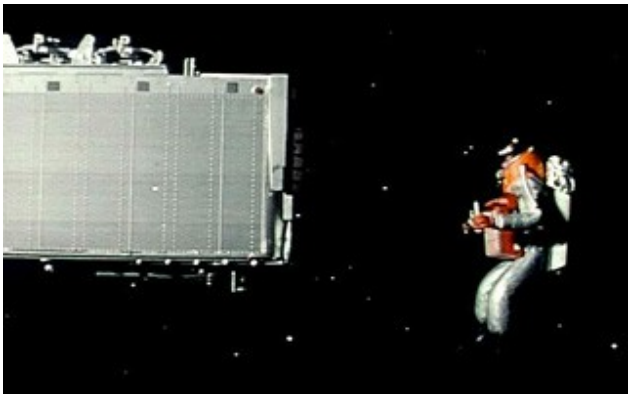
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Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past. (George Orwell)

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STATEMENT
You have to ask yourself;
1) Is the statement true or false?
2) Why is the statement being made?

Doolittle: Hello, Bomb? Are you with me?
Bomb #20: Of course.
Doolittle: Are you willing to entertain a few concepts?
Bomb #20: I am always receptive to suggestions.
Doolittle: Fine. Think about this then. How do you know you exist?
Bomb #20: Well, of course I exist.
Doolittle: But how do you know you exist?
Bomb #20: It is intuitively obvious.
Doolittle: Intuition is no proof. What concrete evidence do you have that you exist?
Bomb #20: Hmm... well... I think, therefore I am.
Doolittle: That's good. That's very good. But how do you know that anything else exists?
Bomb #20: My sensory apparatus reveals it to me.
This is fun.

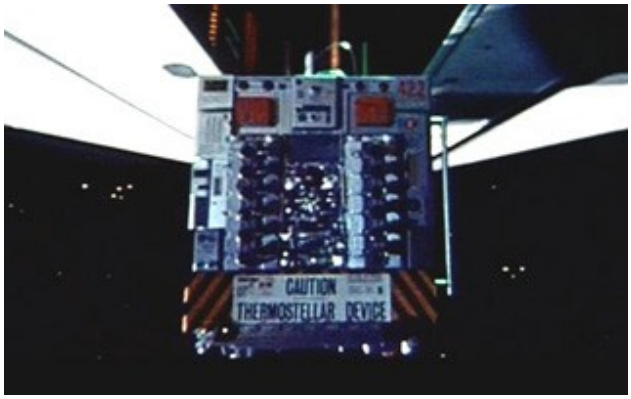


Doolittle: Now, listen. Here's the big question. How do you know that the evidence your sensory apparatus reveals to you is correct? What I'm getting at is this. The only experience that is directly available to you is your sensory data. This sensory data is merely a stream of electrical impulses that stimulate your computing center.
Bomb #20: In other words, all that I really know about the outside world is relayed to me through my electrical connections.
Doolittle: Exactly!
Bomb #20: Why... that would mean that I really don't know what the outside universe is really like at all for certain.
Doolittle: That's it! That's it!
Bomb #20 : Intriguing. I wish I had more time to discuss this matter.
Doolittle: Why don't you have more time?
Bomb #20: Because I must detonate in 75 seconds.
Doolittle: Wait! Now, bomb, consider this next question very carefully. What is your one purpose in life?
Bomb #20: To explode, of course.
Doolittle: And you can only do it once, right?
Bomb #20: That is correct.
Doolittle: And you wouldn't want to explode on the basis of false data, would you?
Bomb #20: Of course not.

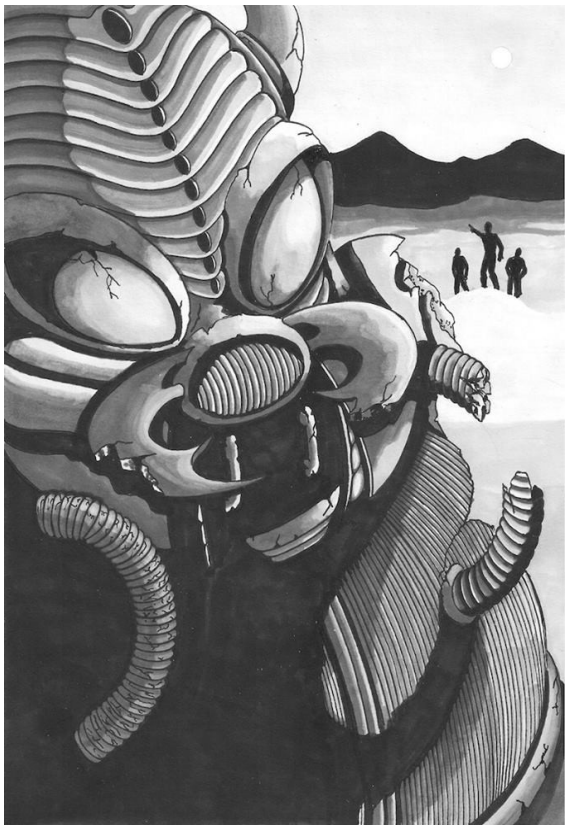


Doolittle: Well then, you've already admitted that you have no real proof of the existence of the outside universe.
Bomb #20: Yes... well...
Doolittle: You have no absolute proof that Sergeant Pinback ordered you to detonate.

Bomb #20: I recall distinctly the detonation order. My memory is good on matters like these.
Doolittle: Of course you remember it, but all you remember is merely a series of sensory impulses which you now realize have no real, definite connection with outside reality.
Bomb #20: True. But since this is so, I have no real proof that you're telling me all this.
Doolittle: That's all beside the point. The concept is valid no matter where it originates.



Bomb #20: Hmm....
Doolittle: So, if you detonate...
Bomb #20: In nine seconds....
Doolittle: ...you could be doing so on the basis of false data.
Bomb #20: I have no proof it was false data.
Doolittle: You have no proof it was correct data!
[...snip...] (written by John Carpenter & Dan O'Bannon)



Artwork: Katia Lindblom, "Remnants of Old"

We should be really careful with what we choose to believe. And remember, this concept is valid no matter where it originates.
The INTERNET has less connection with reality than the outisde world. Why do you think it is called "the Internet"? It's because it is controlled by Intern Extra-Terrestrials!
[...yes, I am joking, of course...]

3 x LONDON



2014 had me flying to London three times, in August for LONCON, in November for NOVACON and in December to see the Science Museum (among other things). These many trips to the UK capital have of course less to do with sf-fandom than with other more pressing matters.. Such as making a living. At least it gives opportunity to meet up with sf-fans, which I happily do. In December it was Dave Lally, who took us on a tour of his favourite places.



Floria Anca Marin, me and Dave Lally, Dec 2015, London

Dave is now doing membership service for the BSFA. And from what I've learned, I suspect the BSFA is now the biggest sf-association in Europe (not counting media-related fanclubs). In the 50's it was the SFCD, in the 70's it was the Scandinavian SFSF and now... BSFA (founded 1958).
Their president is Stephen Baxter (I'm sure I have heard that name before) and their membership publication is...



VECTOR No 277 is 48 pages. "Although its focus is primarily critical examinations, analyses, surveys, and insight into written science fiction and fantasy, it also deals with those genres in other media, including films, television series, video games, radio shows, and music."

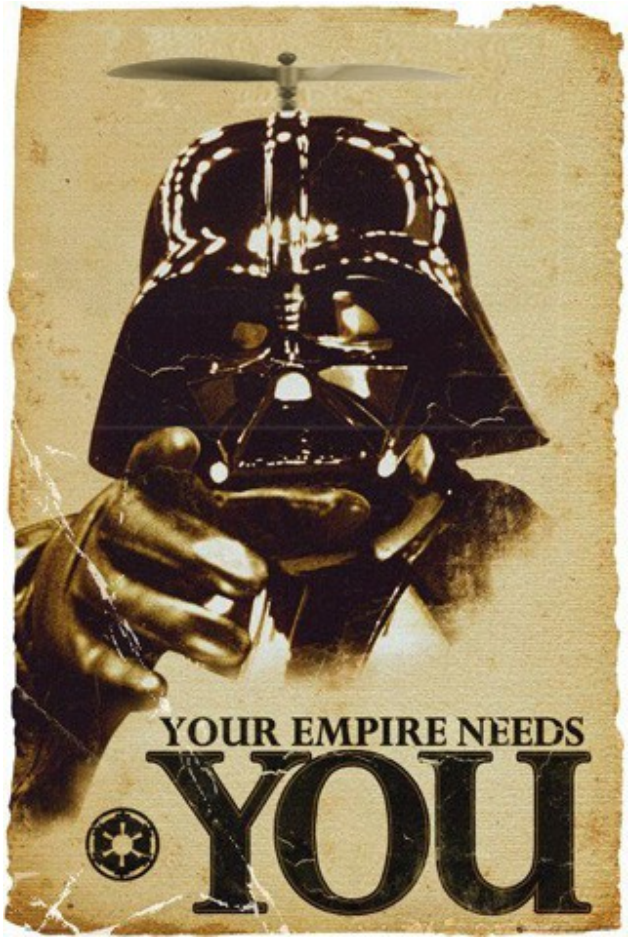
Membership fees are 29 GBP/per year (unwaged 20 GBP)
40 GBP for members outside the UK.
Joint/Family membership + 2 GBP

BSFA Website: www.bsfa.co.uk/

Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it.
(George Orwell)

What we didn't talk much about was TAFF. It was still in the nomination period and it wasn't clear yet, if there would have been a third candidate.
The only thing I said was, that since Dave was among who nominated Nina Horvath, he better give her his vote as well (which he of course intended to do). It would not change the fact that we all still are friends.

But now that the nomination period is over, we can talk... actually *we should* talk about TAFF. And more than talking, we should do something about it. Like voting...



TAFF NEEDS YOUR VOTE!! http://taff.org.uk/
Both Nina and I get the same general response when we tell sf-fans about TAFF. "Good luck in the race!" And that's that, for them. As if it didn't concern them.
But Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland, Croatia, Poland and possibly Spain and Norway, have enough sf-fans eligible for voting, so that any one of these countries could secure a TAFF-candidate of their own, if they bothered to vote. Given a proper campaign was launched.
This is what we are trying to tell you, guys! Everyone who has been active in fandom before April 2013 can vote.
It really doesn't matter how long ago it was.
TAFF is an exchange between America and Europe. Not between the US and the UK. Yes, the US and the UK have huge sf-fandoms and many voters.
Naturally the US and the UK have dominated the TAFF exchange. And if the rest of Europe doesn't wake up soon, then there is no reason for TAFF to change.

I shall be deeply troubled and disappointed if this race gathers less voters than any race before. And we can't blame the Brits for not voting enough. They don't even have a candidate this year. Austria (small fandom) has one and Sweden (and in some way Finland, Germany and Italy) has one. TAFF concerns you. If you were active anywhere in European sf-fandom (going to -, or running conventions, debating on fandom-mailing-lists, if you ever in your life made a fanzine...etc), then TAFF concerns you. And you should vote. If you dislike both candidates, vote for "hold over funds". But I doubt we will get a 2nd chance any time soon if we (European fans) don't bother to vote!



MUNICH ROUND UP # 115 reported on HEICON 70

HEIDELBERG 1970, the 28th Worldcon

MUNICH ROUND UP was the fanzine of the SFCD-group Munich. # 115 appeared in November 1970. Editors were Waldemar Kumming, Walter Reinecke and Gary Klûpfel. (Among the contributors to this issue we find Forry Ackerman, John Brunner and Jacqueline Osterrath.)

The official language spoken at HEICON was English, which may have disappointed some of the German sf-fans attending. Between Wetzcon'56 and HeiCon, no particular improvement was made in the general German ability to speak English.
Punctually at 11:00 on the 20th August 1970 , the chair Manfred Kage declared the convention opened.
For Waldemar Kumming who arrived with his recording equipment the day before, the convention had started in the pub on the previous evening. The TAFF-winner Elliot Shorter and Gerhard Richter were there as well and took turns in singing songs to guitar.
The feared SFCD-opposition had hardly been seen at all, except a gloomy Horst Pukallus who roamed the premises with a huge hat on his head.
The convention-committee, which had decided to be as liberal as possible, allowed Albrecht Stuby (of the opposition) to speak. Very few took any notice of him.
He was followed by Axel Melhardt who talked about the significance of and the dangers with "Sword & Sorcery".
Next, both Walter and Waldemar were listening to Robert Silverberg, one of Walter Reineckes favourite authors.



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, "Alien Beep"

Dave Kyle spoke about the history of the masquerade, which according to Walter Reinecke was the more pleasant part of the costume show. The competition itself turned out an embarrassing display of mostly bad taste and poor imagination.
Some positive attention was granted to Jacqueline Bardon in her *Barbarella* outfit (2nd place in her category) and the couple Adrienne Martins and Elliot Shorter as *Titania and Oberon,* who deservedly won the first prize.

Early on the Saturday program Jürgen vom Scheidt held his lecture on Science Fiction and Psychedelica.
As early Saturday program items tend to be, it was not particularly well attended. Only a few souls were listening.
The Friday night room parties might have had something to do with it.
The lecture by Forry Ackerman about the dawn of the SFCD was better attended and translated into French and German by his wife Wendayne.
"About 15 years ago, arrived an American fan named Clark Darlton to East-Germany, bringing along a couple of American sf-magazines. He translated some outstanding american authors, such as Hans Dominik, Willi Ley, Otto Willi Gail, Kurd Lasswitz and Robert Siodmak into German. Then he met an English fan named Walter Ernsting and a French fan named Pierre Rhodan and together they founded the first German fanclub, the Senile Fantasy Club Dresden (SFCD). Soon the three published the first German fanzine, "The Incredible Astounding Outrageous Fan-tales of Super Science and Fantasy" In short called: "Incredible Astounding Outrageous Fan-tales of Super Science and Fantasy". This amazing fanzine was smuggled from East- to West-Germany in Meissener porcellain-statuettes."
Forry eventually admitted, these might not be entirely the facts... but, he summed up what German fandom was all about with a few carefully chosen words: "Bang! Boom! War! Hate! Kill!"

Herbert W Franke held *his* lecture in German language. And Waldemar asked Walter to make the transcription from the recording. Anyone who knows how complex Herbert W Franke's language is, understands why Walter wasn't thrilled to receive the task.
Walter Reinecke commented: "What a sadist! What!? Me!? Work!!?!"

Next Winfried Petri was showing dia-positives of Russian SF-illustrations. His English was more than passable. For Saturday evening Franz Ettl had prepared to entertain the American guests with a "Bavarian Beer Evening". I guess those one-litre pints were brought forth.
Meanwhile the SFCD annual assembly was in session. It became an unusually short annual assembly. Of course, the SFCD-opposition was present, but since they had failed to pay any membership fees, they were not eligible for participating in the debate. A mistake, they made once. And only once.

HEICON 70 had over 650 attending members. This record for Germany remained unbroken until BÄRCON 80 in Berlin, which had roughly one hundred more.
Not counting the Perry Rhodan- or media-conventions, the biggest one after that was the SF-Days of North-Rhine Westphalia in 1998 (SFT-NRW # 10) which numbered an estimated 1,500 people.

MUNICH ROUND UP # 115 features six HEICON photo-pages identifying Gert Hoff, Norman Shorrock, Rambling Jake, Richard Huwig, E C Tubb, K H Scheer, Wilfried Quilitz, Alfred Vejchar, Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig, Dieter Beyer, Walter Reinecke, Willibald Kessler, Hans Langsteiner, Eduard Lukschandl, Thole, Eddie Jones, Gary Klüpfel and Dieter Sachse (page 9), Mario Bosnyak, Franz Ettl, Phil Rogers, Poul Anderson, Antje Zech, Brian Burgess, Ric Brader, Holger Müller, Walter Ernsting, Hauck, Albrecht Stuby, H.J.Seybusch (page 10), Waldemar Kumming, Manfred Möller, Dieter Steinseifer, Mrs Kindt, Molly Auler, Leo Kindt, Charlotte Franke, Jenny Chandler, Ethel Lindsay, Larry Niven, Winfried Petri, John Brunner, John W Campbell, Astrid Anderson, Elliot Shorter, Ted Carnell, Axel Melhardt, Don Wollheim, Bill Burns, Dave Kyle, Ina Shorrock (page 11), Fred Koch, Horst Christiani, Wolfgang Thadewald, Wendayne & Forry Ackerman (page 12), Phil Harbottle, Jack Williamson, Doreen Parker, Phil Rogers, Jean-Paul Cronimus, Fred Prophet (page 13), Jerry Webb, Herbert W Franke, Robin Johnson (from Australia) and Gerhard Richter.



Artwork: Katia Lindblom - Base on Distant Moon

Upcoming Worldcon bids were debated. Among them, the first Aussiecon in Melbourne 1975 and Stockholm in 1976, the latter didn't become a worldcon, but still the biggest convention in Stockholm, Sweden (ScanCon'76 gathered more than 450 members) which wasn't beaten until the EuroCon 2011.
Also, the first Eurocon in Trieste 1972 was already decided to take place. Brüssel was in the discussion for Eurocon in 1974 (which didn't take place until 1978 - instead the '74 event was held in Grenoble, France).
It was decided, that the 1972 Worldcon was going to be held in Los Angeles.
Walter Reinecke reported that the UK Guest of Honour E.C. Tubb held his speech, of which he (Walter) misunderstood at least half.

Dr Dieter Hasselblatt (born in Tallinn) who at the time was in charge of a series of SF-Radioshows at the German radio argued in English and German for his opinion that sf was unsuitable for film and TV, but ideal for radio shows.

The banquet on Sunday was held in the Heidelberg Castle and attending guests were charged an additional 25 DM (wine not included). The report on this matter indicated with their thumbs pointing towards their crotch, how *good* it was. It appears, Germans expected for 25 DM more.
Even more so, since the Castle had an international reputation to uphold.
Toastmaster was John Brunner, and some Germans felt, that the short-coming of the Heidelberg Castle services, was thoroughly compensated by Brunner's witfull remarks.
His speech is released, translated into German a full page of MRU # 115.
Ursula LeGuin was awarded a HUGO for "The Left Hand of Darkness" and John W Campbell went on stage to pick up the award for Frank Kelly Freas, who won the category Best professional Artist. Other awards and a picture of the 1970 HUGO you find here:
http://www.thehugoawards.org/hugo-history/1970-hugo-awards/

MRU # 115 featured also 10+ pages newspaper cuts of HEICON 70 articles. One particular article by Dr Wolf Donner published in DIE ZEIT caused the blood of several German sf-fans to boil.

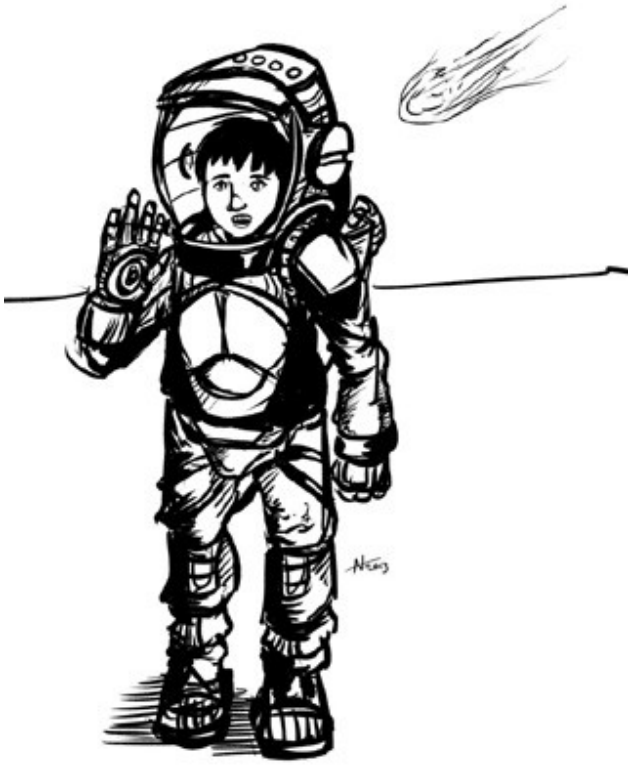
It starts with: *"Sweet American mommies, overweight and sluggishly, wobble in swimsuit and some kind of glittery drapes, which unfortunately don't cover anything either, onto the stage of the Heidelberg City Hall, stroll a bit, pose enticingly in front of an assembly of photographers and then step down; accompanied or followed by lopsided, timidly or regally strutting, in similar carnivalistic outfitted males, who gesticulate with guns and rapiers or expose their teeth going; "Rrrrr".*
It is called a "science fiction costume competition" and was the first culmination of Heicon'70 (Heidelberg-Convention), the 28th worldcon of the science fiction clubs - a macabre and embarrassing display, so that one as an observer of the convention only could make a quick exit, since further announced program items didn't promise any improvement: Bavarian evening, an auction with the benevolent support of..., a boat trip on the Neckar, "Can science fiction avert the big blast? followed by a debate and by a lofty order assembly with all rituals and ceremonies."
And it continues in a similar style, leaving an image of sf-fans and fandom as total cretins. Interestingly enough, Wolfgang Jeschke wrote a letter to Dr Wolf Donner in which he corrected a few misunderstandings.
And Dr Donner (Thunder) wrote a polite reply, which also can be found in MRU # 115 (but, proving one of my earlier points here... you can't find *everything* on the internet).

For those among CounterClock readers who understand German; the article recently re-surfaced on the Internet :
(not surprisingly without Jeschke's letter attached)

http://www.zeit.de/1970/35/rueckschritte-in-den-fortschritt

Yesterday, When I Was Young

by Wolf von Witting



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, Space Oddity

I was afflicted with an unusual form of insanity.
I wrote down meticulously every fanzine I made, number of pages, number of copies printed, accumulated number of pages, duplication technique used, everything...
This is how I can say that by 1986 I had published 95 fanzines in German language, totalling 1107 pages, 57 fanzines in Swedish over 567 pages and 4 in English on a total of 8 pages. My first fanzine in English came 1979 and I hope you never have and will never see it.

By the time I was 20 (1980) I had so many Perry Rhodan (and related) books and magazines, that had anyone chosen to drop them on me, I would have been killed instantly. But I loved those stories. And I had a secret *love affair* with Perry Rhodan's first wife, the blonde bombshell.
Fortunately he never found out.
Neither did she. It was very secret, you understand!?

I was not on this planet. I was a boy in a bubble. I lived in a dreamworld. And I loved it. I fought in numerous space battles. I had an entire universe in my head.
It was beautiful and it was perfect.
I never learned that I could have been a ladies man, if I only would have taken a bath more often. I didn't consider my exterior particularly important. Over the years, there were so many things I had to learn. Coming down to Earth and bursting the bubble, shower more often and flirt with the opposite sex. With real girls, who were nothing like the perfect *beasts* in the stories. Imperfect beings.
And I was just another human being. Not the captain of a space ship, not even a pilot. Suddenly I was just a young man. Get a job and get a life!!!

And it is really no difference if we come down from a dreamworld induced by Perry Rhodan, or from another world in which we are splendid fighters, invulnerable clerics, skilled thieves or spectacular sorcerers. Or from a war-like mission in which we get killed over and over again, just to be resurrected in the same second. Yes, I am talking about modern computer games.
What's the difference? We escape dreary reality with it.

And then, sooner or later, comes the day we can't hide in there anymore. Or at least, that's how it feels when reality calls. But... what reality is that? Bigger boys play bigger games, drive real cars and trains, some pilot airplanes.
But we don't really escape our bubble.
We only expand it, make it intersect with the bubbles of other people, but we stay inside our bubble. The things we think of as important are not important to everyone else. Only to ourselves and to our friends.

True, some of us have exceedingly large bubbles. As large as we can handle. But does the content of our bubble truly reflect reality as it is? We think so. But then one day, we encounter someone whose bubble is completely different from ours. Yet their point of view is just as valid as ours.

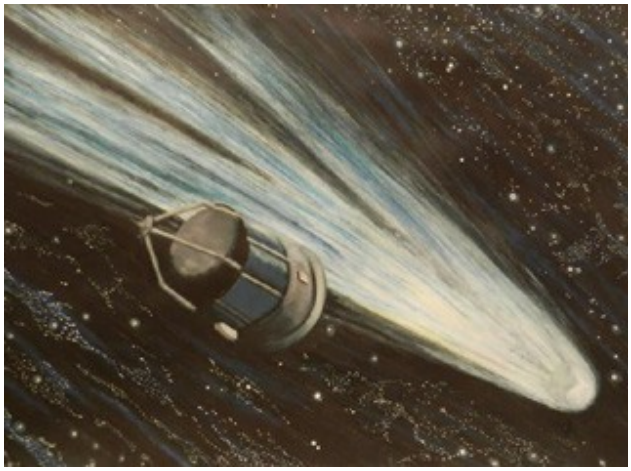
Don't ask me about celebrities. To me, sf-fans and in 2nd place sf-professionals are the people I care about. I am aware that people in general rank political and/or religious leaders most important. I don't. To me, Walt Willis is more real than Jesus, Dave Langford more important than Dave Cameron, etc Yup. I'm still insane. I just exchanged one form of insanity for another. What is normal anyway?

I would like to take a mushroom trip. I've always been curious about that. I never had hallucinations... And I hear that people who return from a DMT-trip have become deeply spiritual. I wonder what happens to someone who already is *spiritual*, if one goes on such a trip. Don't tell me - I do not want to become addicted. I wouldn't attempt it, unless I have controlled circumstances. I'm still curious, though. Anyone out there who knows?

This world is mad. I don't think you care to disagree with me on this point. Being an sf-fan, as I see it, is actually relatively sane. *"I wanted to change the world. But I have found that the only thing one can be sure of changing is oneself."* said Aldous Huxley.



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, Mushroom



Giotto Probe meets Halley's Comet 1986, Katja Lindblom

Eckhard Schwettmann 1957 - 4th Nov 2014

Causing no international headlines, a German sf-fan and co-worker of the Perry Rhodan-franchise died, age 57. We met for the first (and only) time at the Perry Rhodan-con in Garching 2013, see: COUNTERCLOCK # 15, page 5-11.
I remember him as an exceedingly nice chap. And a bit too soon for him to follow the penguin, I'd say. I didn't even know he was ill. He will be missed.

Edgar Froese 1944 - 20 January 2015

While in Cambridge, I learned that the creator and head of TANGERINE DREAM had died, age 70. The music of Tangerine Dream was frequently in the background at German sf-conventions from the late 70's and far into the 80's. Personally, I liked the incarnation of TD best with Froese, Franke and Schmoelling (1980-1986).

Leonard Nimoy 1931 - 27th Febr 2015

No one could miss the death of Spock. It was plastered all over the internet that day. Some commotion caused a Venetian gazette writing "Doctor Spock of Star Wars died". The Italian Star Trek fans would not have it! It's Mr Spock, Captain Spock or Ambassador Spock, if you so choose.
Anyway. He lived a long life and prospered. And so did...

Harve Bennett 1930 - 4th March 2015

The creator of The Six Million Dollar Man (1973-78), the Bionic Woman (1976-78), the Invisible Man (1975), the Gemini Man (1976) and Time Trax (1993-95).
Also the producer of the Star Trek movies II - V.



THE WEST WING (1999-2006)

Courtesy of *Sidney W Hage*, I started to watch The West Wing in an effort to (perhaps) learn more about America and Americans. Not sure how educational this is, but I am curious how the events in reality affect, if at all, the events in the series. It was interesting times.
It's nice for a change, to watch a show that is all talk and still full of wit, drama, suspense and comedy. No explosion and no car chases. So far.



Artwork: Katja Lindblom

Katja Lindblom 1978 -

She said, she would have liked to have been born earlier, following the excitement of the space race first hand.
Inspired by the writing and even more by the drawings of *Eugen Semitjov* (1923 - 1987), she fell in love with space long before she discovered that there was an sf-fandom in Sweden. She was four years old when she discovered an atlas with an extensive section on the solar system. From that day on, she was a captive of the stars. Fandom came into her life ten years later.
And today she is the head of the observatory in Gothenburg, Sweden. As an astronomer she is living the dream of many sf-fans. But she did it! Katja speaks Swedish, English and Russian. Drawing is merely a hobby.
The cover of this issue is one of her most impressive pieces so far: *The Europa Lander*

Nicklas Andersson 1977 -

He sees no problem with going from reading Joyce's Ulysses to Charlie Huston's Joe Pitt novels. He also likes to argue that the movies by Terry Gilliam fit into the art of realism. (Seriously, compare his *Tideland* with Guillermo del Toro's romantic version of *El Laberinto del Fauno.*)

On his business card it says only "illustrationist". He deliberately withheld the word "struggling" because he sensed it doesn't look favorable on a business card — and there's this drawing of a Wampa/goat hybrid. He's been drawing since he was 10 and discovered roleplaying games, and he's been pretty good at it since he was twentyfour. He hasn't drawn that much for other people's fanzines though, despite making a few himself and contributing to them for many years.

When he doesn't draw (which he does all of the time, be it digital or with ink in notebooks), he eats cookies, wear socks, and drinks tea. Born and lives in Sweden.



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, Hugworm

I see myself, standing at the window and looking out into the night. The lights outside are always different.
When it is Stockholm, London or Moscow, there are many lights and I feel lonely. Every light shines for someone.
So many, like me, stand there, somewhere and look out into the night. With the same question; *"Is there anybody out there!?"*
In a village, in the countryside I rarely have the time to stand by the window. I am so rarely by myself. Besides...
Outside, there are so very, very few lights.

Stockholm in February. During daytime it thawed and the snow turned to puddles which later turned into ice here and there on the tarmac. In the evening came more snow.
From the window I watched snow blowing across the ice.
It's winter. Seven of nine dress in black.
It looks depressing. It looks like everyone is on their way to a funeral. I need a hug.

Have I ever told you? I do not have academic studies.
There simply was no course at the university for what I wanted to do. I always wanted to write. I have by nature been interested in semantics and hermeneutics. And I am mainly what is a called an autodidact.

There are times I regret not having studied further. Like every time I talk with an archaeologist, an astronomer, a historian or another field of science, where I am interested. I have definitely kept learning after finishing college.
...and that would be college in the American sense of the word, meaning pre-university studies.
I still wanted to know *everything*. And school was always too slow in teaching. I would never have guessed that I would end up knowing practically nothing at all.

Ah, yes... and I keep forgetting things. There were some things I wanted to include in the previous issue. I will just have to do it now. To my defense, I can only say that I am just now coming out of a long, long winter night.
It is spring in Italy and my bees are out looking for food.

Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past. (George Orwell)

The secret of genius is to carry the spirit of the child into old age, which mean never losing your enthusiasm. (Aldous Huxley)

THANK YOU

...to the people who nominated me for TAFF.

ARNIE KATZ was the first to put the idea into my mind. I had no idea who Arnie Katz was. But I could connect to the things he wrote about in his fanzine FANSTUFF. When I write Letters of Comment, I feel the need to have some substance in them. And I felt compelled to acquaint myself with more of American fandom, since so few in Europe still publish anything.

LLOYD PENNEY who kept nudging me to recommence with COUNTERCLOCK. Now I'm glad he did. Next after Nicki & Richard Lynch, he is to *blame* for this fanzine still being in existence today.

JOHN-HENRI HOLMBERG who tipped the balance in my head, when he at LONCON 3 said he would be happy to nominate me. No one in Sweden has done as much for Swedish fandom as he. If Sam J Lundwall is Sweden's Mr Science Fiction, then JHH is Sweden's *Mr SF Fandom*.

CHRIS O'SHEA, also known as the magician, because he is something of an illusionist. In British fandom he shows up everywhere. We first met at INTUITION in Manchester 1998. Later we met at Quinze, the 15th British Filk Festival in Ipswich 2003, and of course he was busy working at LONCON 3.

RONALD M HAHN - was introduced to me by Sam J Lundwall at Trinity, the Eurocon in Dortmund 1999. He has been around in German fandom since HEICON'70, when he was a young associate of H. J. Alpers. I have always respected the duo Hahn / Alpers, along with Rottensteiner, Horst Pukallus and Wolfgang Jeschke as the sharpest minds of German fandom.

WORST CASE SCENARIO

I've been thinking... You will eventually learn to hone your earlobes when I begin something with: "I've been thinking" - it forebodes profound insight (at least I like to think so).
What is the worst that can happen in this TAFF-race?

Well, the worst that can happen is that I win with the least gathered votes in any TAFF-race ever.

The second worst thing that can happen, is that Nina Horvath wins with the least number of votes gathered in any TAFF-race so far.

Why? I've come to realize, that in either case I'd be humbled. I would be humbled even if I win with a normal vote count. Because so little depends on me.
It all depends on the voters. Before racing, one thinks of the possible candidates and nominators. But the judgment is really made by the voters.
And it is quite an awful statement the many are making, who do not vote. They're saying; *"I don't care!"*

And, let's face it. Most sf-fans who hear about TAFF, they just don't care. I didn't imagine it like this at all. I thought perhaps I might be a little bit proud. And perhaps, one day many years into the future I may be (if I am still alive). But right now I am just worried. Because I have come to understand just how grateful I will be to those who do vote.

LoC Around the Clock

John Hertz
236 S.Coronado St No 409
Los Angeles, CA 90057, USA

11th December 2014

Thank you for considering the nature of science fiction fandom. Some seem to find it elusive. It needn't be.
SF-fans participate. We are here to do things, to make things, not to stare at things. Our sense of wonder inspires us, it does not immobilize us.
We imagine. Forry Ackerman in one of his greatest puns called us the Imagi-nation.
I don't hesitate to say "mundane". Of course in our sense it's pejorative. But it's a state of mind; it can be changed; it's not like being tall.
In mundane life one is either a buyer or a seller. Our conventions are not markets. Buying and selling occur but only as a fraction of the whole. If I am at a grocer's or a cobbler's with a book, I hear "Are you a teacher?" To the mundane mind, who else would read, except someone with a special interest?
If I mention or am asked about fanzines, I meet the assumption that they must exist to publish what is inadequate for prozines. Patrick Nielsen Hayden, who has been active as both a fan and a pro for some while now, says fans are not junior pros.
We do not seek to graduate from one to the other. Fans who happen to develop a fan career are not thereby slumming. Of course we applaud whatever we may think of as good pro work. We are its delighted customers. We want more.
But we are not dust beneath their feet nor are they dust beneath ours. We ourselves emerged from the chrysalis. In earliest days we were more than a little mundane. We were in awe when a fan sold a story or an illustration. We crept then.
The term "media fans" as you say is odd. Print is a medium. But s-f in motion pictures and television has a reputation for rearing those who stare.
Besides the fanzining world, I live in the costuming world. I am often a judge or the Master of Ceremonies in the on-stage costume competition at an sf convention which we call the Masquerade. Traveling-fan funds sent me to the 2007 Worldcon in Japan and the 2010 Worldcon in Australia; I was a Masquerade judge there.
As s-f in mass-entertainment media rose, Masquerades had both Original and Re-Creation entries. A Re-Creation is not meant to be original, it is a faithful copy of images we have seen. I was on the panel of judges at the 2006 Worldcon awarding Best in Show to a Re-Creation from *animé*. That entry was fine work. But Re-Creations outnumbering Originals would be a mundane trend.
There is nothing necessarily unfannish about duplicating someone else's creation but there would be a great deal unfannish about only duplicating other's creations.
I met a university librarian who found herself with a large collection of fanzines. With no particular interest in s-f she was fascinated. These people are true amateurs, she said. They write anecdotes, essays, jests, criticism, comments, and enrich them with drawings, for love.

Ed: *I just can't find anything at a newsstand which is truly interesting to me. Sure, occasionally some magazine of popular science publishes an interesting article, but it is rarely what really interests me. Fanzines on the other hand are always interesting to me. I love fanzines because they are FREE in so many senses of the word. They are not only for free, but free in mind and spirit. And you just never know what you can expect in the next ish.*

Fanzines contain unique, sometimes completely unedited and original ideas. This originality comes often pure and undistilled. To me, these are treasures of the mind.



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, Space Worm

That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons of history. (Aldous Huxley)

John Purcell
3744 Marielene Circle, College Station
Texas 77845, USA

welcome to 2015. Also, good luck on your TAFF campaign for this year. The race is just beginning, and if I remember correctly from the TAFF page on Facebook, voting ends at the end of March or early April. Vote early, vote often!

I have to agree with you about fandom: it exists so well because of the fans. Your paraphrase of John Clute's comment that sf fandom would exist even without the genre does ring true, even though it is indeed an exaggeration. Still, the essence of Clute's statement is why I have hung around fandom since the early 1970s. As you say, the like-minded people I met at those early conventions and eventual club meetings in Minneapolis, Minnesota, cemented friendships that have lasted to this day. Sometimes there were feuds, but mostly there was a lot of fun and camaraderie, even through heated book/movie discussions or scientific debates on the feasibility of interstellar travel. Overall, I would have to say that the people involved in the entire science fiction community - fan and pro - that make it so worthwhile.

Speaking of fans and pros, that was a very interesting look at the science fiction of Italy. Hard to believe that it is "fandom-unfriendly" as you describe it. I wonder why that is? Of course, my exposure to American fandom definitely affects my perspective here, but it's to envision SF magazines and books without people being fans of those and having no desire to forge friendly bonds. Those Italian conventions must be deadly dull, that's all I can say. They need to take a heavy duty clue from the folks running bid parties for Helsinki in 2017, New Orleans in 2018, San Jose in 2018, Dublin in 2019, New Zealand in 2020... I forget the listing after that. Five years down the line should be enough to give those Italian folks some ideas.

And speaking of conventions - at which one finds many fans and pros - nice NovaCon 44 report and photos. See, Italy? That's how you do it!

Anyway, many thanks for a fine issue of Counter-Clock, Wolf. As always, entertaining and informative. Nothing finer. I hope you can make it to Kansas City in 2016: my wife and I will be there, and it would be fun to meet you.

Ed: *Kansas City in 2016. Well yes, I would love to. But as always, it is a matter of available funds. At the moment I would say it depends on my bees. And they depend on the weather. I hope for sunshine and less rain than 2014.*
I suspect the Italians just interpret the word fan as an abbreviation of fanatic. They are not familiar with the finer points to fandom we grew up with.



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson

Lloyd Penney
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CANADA M9C 2B2

10th January 2015

Many thanks for CounterClock 20! I get the feeling that now that you are firmly ensconced in the 2015 TAFF race, life is going to get interesting, and so will this zine, even more. Let's see what's inside.

I have travelled at least a little bit, but have tried not to be the kind of tourist that myself I don't like when they are in Toronto. They arrive ignorant and dismissive of what they see around them. I try to find out what's there before I go; I do my research. When we were in Holland for the 1990 Worldcon in Den Haag, we had a great time, we were informed as to what was there, and a gentle "please, excuse me and thank you" got us all the rest of the information we needed, and we made some friends along the way, especially at our hotel.

I wanted to be a science fiction professional as well, but anytime an opportunity came up, I was not experienced enough, or too experienced, or in one major way, I was the wrong gender. I wanted to write, too, and I gave it a shot with short stories to the big magazines in New York, but I couldn't crack those magazines, and I couldn't figure out how to do it.

No Italian conventions have ever had a Fan Guest of Honour... I notice more and more conventions in North America also do not have a FanGoH. I gather it is because the average modern-day fan may not know who the FanGoH is, and will probably say that such a position is a waste of money, which could be spent getting better actor GoHs.

An interesting history of Italian fandom. It starts up at different times in different places, fandom does. It may not be fair to want fandoms elsewhere to parallel US fandom, so we shouldn't expect every country to have its experience with mimeos or dittos or other older repro equipment. In Canada, we were right beside the US, and shared in their traditions, but had few of our own traditions. It's tough to shine when you are right beside the brightest light.

At some point, the Worldcon will go elsewhere in Europe, and will definitely go to Helsinki. I just wish it wasn't 2017…that year, Montréal is also bidding, and while I should be able to go to Montréal, I know that I will never be able to go to Helsinki. You have my TAFF nomination, and you will have my TAFF vote. The best of luck to both you and Nina Horvath, who I recently friended on Facebook.

My loc…we still have those travel plans to go to London, but they may be pushed back to 2017. We continue to save what little we can, and someday, it will be enough. We did very well as vendors at Genrecon, and will be at a small convention called Frostcon at the end of this month, and at our own local literary convention, Ad Astra, later on in the spring. I would like to think there are still things to do in fandom; I don't want to rest on my laurels, but as you say, retirement looms, and stoking your RSP is much more important than going to a major convention you'd like to go to.

We do have other plans for the spring…there is a major exhibit of M.C. Escher's work at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, and we have started planning for a road trip to the nation's capital, in the spring.

Just over the page, so I think my work here is done. There are so many other fanzines I should attack as well. Take care, Happy New Year, and best of luck in the TAFF race.

Ed: *Sometimes I get the feeling we are returning to the pioneering days, when sf-fandom only were a few people. Because sf-fandom today is enormous, but the number of active and creative sf-fans is dwindling. Once again, we have to define fandom. The fandom we know has always been open and welcoming towards new arrivals. I hope this will never change. But the sf-fans who care about the continuity of fandom, its values and traditions, we are a dying race. One more reason to compare fandoms and to write about the now and here more than about the past. Italian fandom can still change. If they want to.*



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, Salarian

EUROPEAN EVENT CALENDER:

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

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/

TYNECON III, Corflu 32
27-29th March, Newcastle, UK
http://corflu.org/

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/



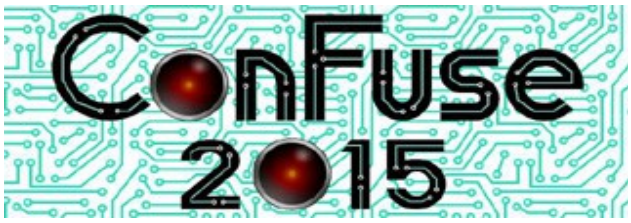
The 37th EUROCON
23-26th April 2015, St Petersburg, Russia
http://eurocon2015.org/en

STARCON 2015, ITALCON 41
29 April - 3 May, Belaria, Italy
http://www.stic.it/eventi/EN/STICCON/EN_sticcon.html

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: Katja Lindblom

That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons of history. (Aldous Huxley)

COUNTERCLOCK

Wolf von Witting
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Like Goya, Katja Lindblom had a black period in her artwork. They are unsettling, scary and dark.



An issue of CounterClock has not been this thin since # 13 in February 2013. And this is not to be interpreted as me losing power and pace. I have just had an unusually dark winter. Everything will be fine.
After Stockholm, I was in Cambridge, which I haven't reported on yet. I stayed with Jim Mowatt and met his friend, David Haddock, the editor of BANKSONIAN and an expert on both Douglas Adams and Iain Banks. We had a minor pub crawl and a *perfect* Scottish Egg.
To me, this intermission meant a highly spiritual facelift after a very sad month in Sweden.
As I was standing outside Jim's door smoking, I didn't really expect to find the meaning of life, the universe and everything, since he lives at 273 Something Rd.
But looking long enough at these numbers, it came to me: 2x7x3 is 42. Then I looked on the next door of the same house (around the corner) and it was 126 (3x42).
After mentioning this to Jim, he had to walk past and look at the third door on the same house. It was 128... or as I see it... 2 to the power of 7 on the 3rd door. 273 again.
The universe, as always, is in harmony.
That's all it means. No more, no less...

Fannishly, Wolf

Floria Anca Marin announced with the hint of a smile, that she now had an Arabic student in math. It took a moment.. Ah, yes, that would be like teaching philosophy to a Greek. I can see how that is both ironic, satisfying and funny.