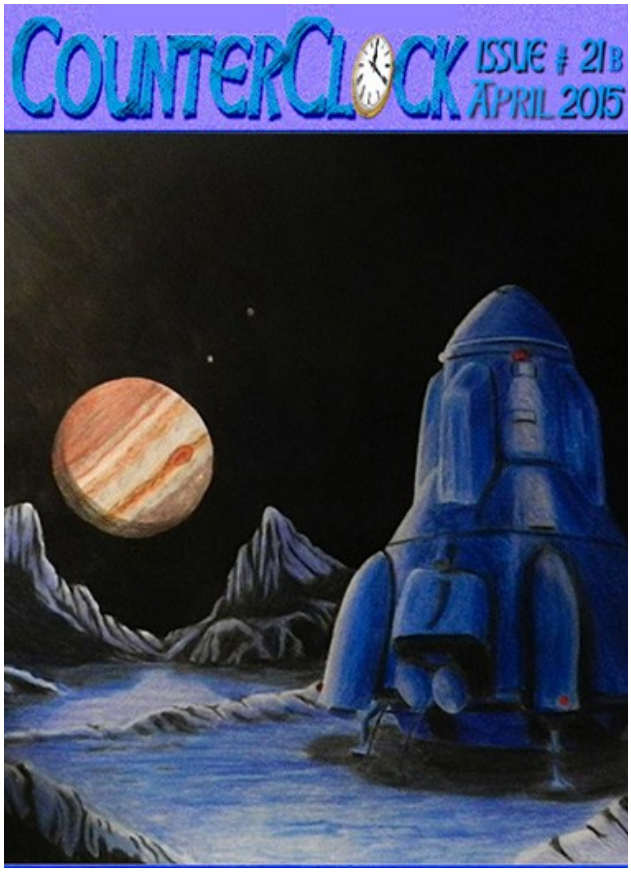


COUNTERCLOCK # 21b - April 2015

by Wolf von Witting, - Italy

I was already considering an addendum to the previous issue. One of the reasons was I forgot to include this brilliant cartoon by Teddy Harvia (how could I forget? My brain must have been seriously malfunctioning). And secondly, I forgot to mention, that while in Stockholm, I happened to run into oldtimer fan Mats D Linder in the science fiction-bookshop. He mentioned that he was making a print of CounterClock and was having it... not sure what the word is here... hardbacked? Myself, I have a spiral-back binder (also color print), Volume 1 containing issues 1-16. Aiming at making volume 2, issues 17-24 equally thick. Cost for print (for me) was around 50 Euro. It made me very happy to hear that someone else also felt it worth doing. Anyone else out there with a hard-copy? Or if anyone feels like spending 50 Euro, I'd be happy to have it done for you. Email me.
No trouble, really.

A TERRIBLE, TERRIBLE TYPO

The final element causing this half issue into existence was a typo. *John Herzt* kindly made me aware of it.
Unfortunately I omitted a "not" in a sentence, reversing the meaning of what Patrick Nielsen Hayden said.
I completely agree with John. This is a terrible typo. So I have swiftly submitted a corrected CoClock # 21 version to Bill Burns and point out my mistake here.
*"Patrick Nielsen Hayden, who has been active as both a fan and a pro for some while now, says fans are **not** junior pros."*
I am very sorry for this. It was, as John already guessed, a typo. It ranks right up there, with the misspelling of people's names and other journalistic cardinal errors.
By now, the issue has already been out there for three weeks, but better late corrected, than never.

Time is still the great mystery to us. It is no more than a concept; we don't know if it even exists. (Clifford D. Simak)

FANEDs AND SMOFs

Surely Kevin Standlee was jesting when he mentioned a sort of rivalry or discord between fan-editors and con-runners. Not the least because Cheryl Morgan who is an accomplished faned, was standing right next to him and didn't seem to mind. And what could possibly be the cause for such rivalry?

The faned has an easy life. Even more so when he does not torture himself with deadlines. The smof on the other hand has all the trouble which cause grey hair at best and total loss of it, when going into the reds. I know. I have done both. Running a good convention is no easier than making a good fanzine.

A convention needs an interesting program. Much like a fanzine needs interesting articles. The huge advantage of a fanzine (at least now that the pdf-form is becoming an accepted form), is that it doesn't need to ruin the faneds economy. Well, experienced con-runners don't ruin their economy, but it happens now and then, that smofs make mistakes. Just like faneds make typoes.
The consequences of such errors can be disastrous.

Small fandoms, can't afford to split into categories. Most Scandinavian smofs have also been faneds. So, the smof thinks himself a **s**ecret **m**asters **o**f **f**andom? Nah, it's a joke, we all know it. And a smof is just as much a slan as a faned. It's just becoming harder to be a good faned now.

Turbulent times have caused me to postpone the Counter-Clock Convention. An issue, which is *like a convention*.
I don't know where to fit it in now, with possibly more upcoming turbulence. That depends on what happens in TAFF. Should I win, I'll definitely won't be able to do that convention issue until the end of the year, at best.

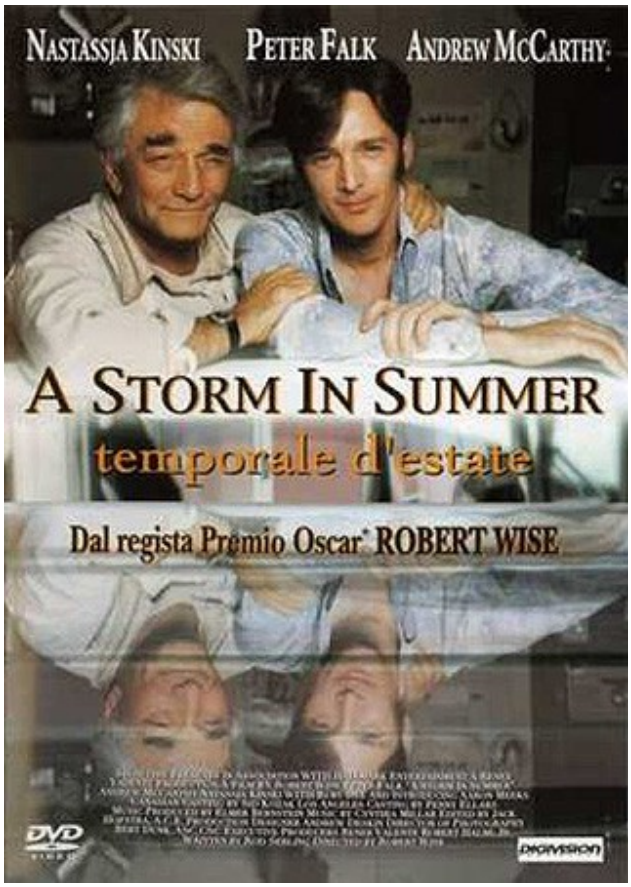


Artwork: Teddy Harvia

TAFF - Can't say my *campaign w*as running with full force. But I would like to thank Murray Moore in particular, for volunteering to do some campaigning on my behalf at TYNECON III/Corflu 32 in Newcastle. Thank you, Murray!

I haven't sold to the movies. In other words, I haven't gotten any enormous checks yet.
(Jack Vance)

My recommendations this month:
Buy an Italian dvd and see what you get. On the cover it said the dvd had Italian and English audio. For subtitles I only had Italian, which is a pity. Like old men sometimes do, when they talk to themselves, Peter Falk doesn't bother to articulate properly. This causes some difficulty trying to catch his lines. Even more so when crunching on crinkle cut cheese onion chips. I like to sometimes have the English subtitles (for hard of hearing) running instead of pumping up the volume on the speakers. But this dvd didn't have a menu for language options.
This is a typical reason for why I avoid Italian dvd's. But I couldn't find this film anywhere else in region 2.



A Storm in Summer (2000) Dir: Robert Wise - written by Rod Serling (1970) is a remake. But while the first version with Peter Ustinov in the lead role went widely unnoticed, but appreciated, this second time around Rod Serling won a Writer Guild Award for his script despite having been dead for about a quarter of a century. We all remember him as the creator of the TWILIGHT ZONE. In my humble opinion, this is one of his absolutely best scripts.
But it is not science fiction.

I happened to see most of the film by accident when flipping to the Hallmark channel in Sweden, many years ago. I saw the scene just as the young boy walked into the old jew's shop. From there on I loved the film and always hoped to see it again.

Now, on *the other side* of grief, I see the film in a different light, but it is still as brilliant as the first time around. It is not an action film. No car chase, no explosions.
Just ordinary people.
And while I'm at it, I might as well recommend another film which is not science fiction. In spite of the title.

MARTIAN CHILD (2007) Dir: Menno Meyjes, based on the novel by David Gerrold, who we best remember for the trouble with Tribbles in Star Trek.
John Cusack plays a science-fiction writer, who considers to adopt an imaginative 6-year-old socially rejected boy who claims to be from the planet Mars.
Not science fiction either, but very nice film.



"Sometimes we forget that children have just arrived on the earth. They are a little like aliens, coming into beings as bundles of energy and pure potential, here on some exploratory mission and they are just trying to learn what it means to be human."

THE WEST WING 1999-2006 update. I have just finished the first season and seen two epsiodes of the 2nd season. What have I learned about America and Americans so far, which I didn't know before? Not surprisingly... nothing. But I do enjoy the show. I merely noticed that every episode begins with a military drumroll, which conjures up the notion that the US is in a permanent state of war.
Somehow I can't help to think the Americans would have preferred Martin Sheen as president instead of Bush jr. Problems with Iraq and bin Ladin were actually mentioned in year 2000 episodes. So, Sheen is some kind of parallell Universe president? Looking forward to season 3, when the events in our reality become exceptionally dramatic.

COSMOPOLIS (2012) Dir: David Cronenberg, based on the novel by Don DeLillo. I had to buy the book as well.
Beware!!! This is heavy stuff! And it's a Cronenberg, so be prepared for a few graphic and violent images. But they are not dominating this film. We see one dialogue after the other, always Robert Pattinson (as the young billionaire) on one side of the dialogue. There are many comments made, on which one needs to ponder and perhaps this is easier with a book, when you can put it down and ponder at your leisure. In this 105 minutes feature, you do not have this luxury. Profound statements zoom past your ears faster than what most people can absorb them.
Ok, so I was challenged here.
Maybe you are sharp minded enough to *get it* all. I didn't. That's why I bought the book.
I don't know, but I can't say *Cosmopolis* is entertainment. It is a cerebral challenge, and it is not science fiction.
It's just very Cronenberg.

The phenomenon of reputation is a delicate thing. A person raises on a word and falls on a syllable. (Cosmopolis)

SAY WHAT??? CRAZY LYRICS

In 1973 Italian singer and composer Adriano Celentano was heard throughout Europe with his hit single:

Prisencolinensinainciusol"

The lyrics were total gibberish, but it sounded like English.



At least these lyrics were of no questionable nature. But Frank Zappa landed a hit in Sweden with Bobby Brown in 1979, peaking at No:1, perhaps because most people had no idea what the song was about. It was banned from the radio in the US.

But over the years, there have been a lot of songs which just slipped past unsuspecting ears of people who don't listen to lyrics. It sounded good, didn't it?

Smokie - Living Next Door to Alice (1972)

Everyone has heard it. But wait a minute!?

"Oh, I don't know why she's leaving, or where she's gonna go, I guess she's got her reasons, but I just don't want to know, 'Cos for twenty-four years I've been living next door to Alice. Twenty-four years just waiting for a chance, to tell her how I feel, and maybe get a second glance, Now I've got to get used to not living next door to Alice..."

24 years just waiting for a chance, to tell her how I feel and maybe get a second glance...?

Think about it! He has been in love with this young lady for a long, long time and hasn't brought up the guts to talk to her? In fact - he has not even seen her for 24 years, or else he would have had a second glance. And a third...

What kind of moron is this and how does it matter if Alice moves away? He didn't see her anyway.

What a silly, silly song.

Sailor - One Drink Too Many (1977)

Points for coherent lyrics here. But reason is lacking from the alcoholic. It's not **one** drink too many, it's a whole lot of drinking, which always ends badly.

I find these lyrics a bit annoying, because if you can't handle it when you drink, then don't drink at all. It's the first drink which leads to overconsumption. That first one an alcoholic should avoid. Not the one drink just before he becomes a total nuisance.

By then it is already one helluva lot of drinks too many.

Prince - Purple Rain (1984)

What is purple rain? Aha, urban dictionary says it's another word for sizurp or: One part strawberry soda (8oz), one part cough syrup, one teaspoon crushed codeine. Also: An expression of feeling or emotion brought on by the memory of a regretful action or loss, resulting in the personal knowledge that what has transpired cannot be corrected or undone (inspired by the popular 80s Prince song).

A restless feeling. A non-descript feeling of boredom, restlessness and confinement. A feeling one has when wanting to escape from responsibility ...

I take it, the latter meaning didn't exist before the song. My first thought was, what kind of air pollution does one have to generate, in order to cause a purple rain?

Well, it's clear... Prince only wanted to see her bathing in cough syrup then.

Brotherhood of Man - Save Your Kisses for Me

In 1976 nobody noticed the Eurovision song contest winner ended with... *"Won't you save them for me even though you're only three."* Such lyrics would probably not get far in these times. An outraged public opinion would roar: "Pedophiles, pedophiles!!!"

Somehow I prefer the intentionally *crazy* lyrics, such as Bloodhound Gang - Fire Water Burn (1997) *"I'm hung like planet Pluto, hard to see with the naked eye."*

Speaking of crazy lyrics. Before the rock band Rainbow, there was another band called *The Rainbows i*n Germany. In 1965-1966 they had a chart runner with the song "Baby, baby, Balla, Balla!"

In the German language "Balla-Balla" is a colloquial for "not right in your head". It's definitely an insult.

On the other hand. In Italian it simply means "Dance!"

...in the imperative form. I wonder what they were thinking, the Rainbows. Well, yeah... it was a fun song to them.

It's funny, what memories emerge when you ransack your memory.

There was a song I heard once, and I hoped never having to hear it again. It was about a Taxi driver in Calcutta. I got my wish. I never heard it since then.

One of the weirdest and most bizarre albums ever to hit the European market was CARAMBA (1981) with the hit single Hubba Hubba Zoot Zoot.

It was long speculated who was behind the record and eventually Michael B Tretow took *the blame* for it. It has also been revealed that Ted Gärdestad and many other prominent Swedish artists were involved (one can clearly distinguish the voices of ABBA in a song), but exactly who was doing what has remained a secret until this day.

Tretow was the audio engineer for ABBA, btw.

Their involvement can hardly be denied.

The *parodied* languages on the record include Hawaiian, Russian, Italian, German and Japanese. But, yeah, just like Prisencolinensinainciusol, it's all really just gibberish.

There ought to be more fun artists out there, like *Ray Stevens* and *Weird Al Yankovic*. There were some comets, such as Rick Dees - Disco Duck (1976) and The Goodies - Funky Gibbon (1975). Chuck Berry had mostly *serious* songs, but My Ding-A-Ling (1972) was an exception.

Royal Guardsmen (1967) Snoopy vs the Red Baron was funny, but does not exactly qualify as crazy, does it?

Anyway. It's obvious I love music, isn't it?

Of all the sf-fans I met throughout my time in fandom, the single most significant impact was made by one fan:

AHRVID ENGHOLM

born 6th January 1959 in Stockholm, Sweden and a resident of Stockholm ever since. Writing anything about him, is *playing with fire*. But I've gotten away with it before, so I take my chances. Again.

We met the first time on 8th January in 1979, two days after his 20th birthday at something George Bobjörk and I called a Sigma TC convention. But it wasn't exactly a con, more a minor fan-gathering for Sigma TC to make and establish first contact with Swedish fandom.
Ahrvid and Anders Bellis had just launched their weekly news-fanzine *Vheckans Ävfentyr* and so he came to report on our venue. A professional journalist was there as well, Malin Parméus, reporting for the local newspaper. Her following brief article in NST caused electronic musician Ralph Lundsten to join our ranks. Her article was published January 11th and before Ahrvid hat time to print # 3 of VÄ, Ralph was already aboard. A *big name*, for a small club. We suddenly got significant spin on our fanacs.

Though I dare say that Ahrvid Engholms presence at this occasion, was infinitely more important. Until that point SIGMA TC had existed parallel to Swedish fandom, not as part of it. And Ahrvid was always a volcano of ideas, by which my own creativity pales in comparison.



Anders Bellis & Ahrvid Engholm, VÄ fan-editors 1979-80

Some defining moments. For example on 6th January one year later, on the Saturday of NasaCon I, Ahrvid begged forgiveness for being late to the convention. It was his 21st birthday. I was honestly surprised he came at all. Up to that point I always considered mundane birthdays to be more important than any fandom event. Not so Ahrvid. He lived and breathed fandom. No mundane event could ever be as important as a fannish gathering, no matter how small it was.

Another defining moment was after the fiasco of Nasacon, when he encouraged me to go for a 2nd attempt, but moving it to summer and to a smaller location. I would never have attempted running another convention, had he not picked up the shards of my shattered pride.



Ahrvid and me reading Tales by Candle Light in 1980

After all, the ideas were not all bad. We just picked the wrong time of year and the completely wrong location. He was really good at sharing his enthusiasm for fandom. And make everything related to fandom seem *important*.
It had an effect on me.
He had a magic way with words. He made the mundane world seem... yes, exactly... mundane... there is no other, better word for it. Mundane = boring. All that was fun and entertaining pertained to sf-fandom. In our minds.
There was nothing in the mundane world, which we could not translate into sf-fandom. Make it fannish. Boring poetry became suddenly interesting, if it was fandom-related.
Music, if it was sf or fannish (That was before I had heard Ornette Coleman's 1971 free jazz album *Science Fiction*, I still find it hideously disagreeable. I hate free jazz).



Vogonpoetry at NasaCon *[Photo: Olle Sahlin]*

Ahrvid was funny. I recall his article about the three types of guests a convention could have, the "Å, Ä and Ö", being the three last letters of the Swedish alphabet.
Å - sounds like "Oh!" and he described the overwhelmed and pleased super-important guest who immediately gives his approval, the Ä - sounds like a scoffing "Ah.." and is the kind of guest who only will show if you have 500 or more attending members... and finally the Ö - sounding a bit hesitant, like "Uhm..." not sure of anything.

Ahrvid was instrumental in making NasaCon a success. Most of the fannish *silly games* were his ideas (he wrote about them in MIMOSA # 17, October 1995),



Ahrvid trying to flip a peanut on a boomerang across the required distance - and back again. (In my Kojak-phase, before I picked up smoking instead). [Photo: Olle Sahlin]

The Great Peanut Race was introduced in 1984, at Nasa-Con V. The Winner (me) got an invitation to a pre-screening of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* for the Swedish press.



Me and Ahrvid, at the first Great Peanut Race in 1984.

I secured the 1st prize with one of my less ingenious contraptions to transport a peanut, using a duplcator and an ink-soaked stencil (in which the peanut was immersed). Personally, I preferred my steam engine, pulling a small armoured peanut-vehicle, with space for a pair of unpeeled peanuts.

Regretfully, there were a few years in which we didn't communicate at all. Though we made peace again after many years, we had both gone further on separate paths, not the least being for me to settle in Italy.

We made three journeys together. The first trip occurred while I still did military service, end of July in 1981. We went to Helsinki, Finland to visit Tom Ölander while the Finn's fandom still was in baby shoes. The 2nd was in August 1982, after the EUROCON in Mönchengladbach. If memory serves, we went to Bad Kreuznach and to a small village near the border of France and Luxembourg, where fandom had a hot spot in H-J Mader's home.
The third trip was 20 years later, in 2002 and brought us to Riga in Latvia, where we attended LATCON III. From the last trip I recall an evening at Imants Belogrïvs home when we were reminiscing *old* great music. Imants and I had been ranting about how great we thought Steve Harley and the Cockney Rebels had been in the early 70's (and they really were. You ought to listen to their albums 1973 - *The Human Menagerie*, 1974 - *Psychomodo* and 1975 - *The Best Years of Our Lives*).
...when Ahrvid found a Rolling Stones record from the same time period (1973) and totally rocked off to *Angie*.
Ah, yes... Imants went into trance as well... and I just observed them both dancing with themselves It was a slightly surreal moment. And I can't recall Ahrvid having been so happy in a long time, without even having had particularly much to drink.



Filking in Riga at LATCON III - 2002 (Photo Jörgen Städje)

I didn't get any of his genius. Things like that don't rub off among friends. But I got some of his passion for all things fandom. It was he (and Bellis) who imprinted onto me the significance of Walt Willis, The Enchanted Duplicator, Bob Tucker, Harry Warner jr, Rotsler, ATom, TAFF, etc
Now he is a published writer, a journalist and many other things, but most of all - he is still a fan and will always be.

I feel I owe him thanks for hitting me so hard over the back of my thick scull with the wand of Fanac. I needed that.
We met, last time in August 2014 at LONCON 3. I still didn't know how to say it... How does one say "*thank you*, for the good you did!"

TAFF OR TATE

Just as I was about to panic arrived Graham Charnock's VIBRATOR 2.0.10 and I read the very sobering words in a header: *"Awards, who needs them?"* I have never won a popularity race in my life. Why start now? But then again, perhaps neither has Nina Horvath. Yet one of us stands on Tuesday as the winner of the 2015 TAFF-race.
But what I do need. I need to make a living.

Ruby Tuesday. Well, I don't need to win. Yes, I hope to, but I also hope Nina Horvath will win. And if she doesn't win this time, I hope she will race again and win the next time.
I need money. Not a lot. Just enough to make a living. And I do seriously believe we are still in the midst of a global economic collapse. It has been going on since 2008. The problems have not been solved anywhere, we have merely kicked the can further down the road.
Meanwhile the situation of some people have become far more desperate than my own. I have only been out of a steady job for seven years. But I do still have my head on my shoulders and that is all I need.
Plan A - to make money, is already in operation. It still makes more honey than money and not exactly an overwhelming amount of honey. It depends on the weather.
But this year is the chance still alive that I will have my first cans of Dandelion honey. This endeavour still cost a lot more than what it pays off.
Plan B - let me tell you about it. (There are also plan C and plan D, but I haven't progressed with them, yet).
Diving into the world of modern and contemporary art.

After NOVACON I roamed the streets of Nottingham and happened to stroll into a gallery. I was wondering how it works, in the world of art. Just like writers and musicians, the painters must have the same difficulties at selling, as everyone else. And mind you, from sf-fandom to art, the step is smaller than from sf-fandom to railway (and the latter I have dealt with rather successfully, if I may say so).
Is it easier or more difficult to sell ONE expensive painting than 1,000 copies of a book? How about the level one very expensive painting compared to selling 10,000 copies of a book? One outrageously priced painting compared to a best-seller?

The Nottingham experience (talking about the gallery now) reminded me of one important thing. It's all up to a person with guile, perseverance and people skills.
Me, me and me... (in my own limited mind). I can do that.
I didn't say it was going to be easy.

The place to go, to learn, is London. The parts of London which appear to be unaware of any crisis going on in the world, such as Chelsea, Kensington and Westminster.
There, it still appears to be business as usual.

And an not entirely unexpected response in most places was; "We do not accept unsolicited..." or "Wow, very nice, but not our style."

More interesting was the rather long speech held by an Italian artist living in London for several years trying to play *by the rules*. There are 750 studios and more than 1,200 artists in east London. Yeah, giving me the odds?
I never cared much about the odds. This world rewards elbows and assholes, that's all I need to know.
I'm trying very hard not to be an asshole, so it's the *elbows* I will be forced to use. Oh, and yes, of course, there's the power of language (which we are oh, so well aware of). The quest continued.

I had brought with me Italian artist Marina Battistella, who really puts the work back into the art. Just by looking at any of her works, one can tell it is not tossed up during a coffee break. Her artwork ranges from weeks to months in completion. She is not exactly famous (yet). But she has been working very hard in running exhibitions throughout Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Belgium and United Arab Emirates. In May she'll have an exhibition in Berlin.



A Mimosa tree (top left), Marina Battistella and me at a corner of King's Road in Chelsea, London March 2015.

But she has limited sense of business. You need to include website, catalogue and advertisement flyers into the overhead costs. And where's your capex? Your prices need to go up! Not the least, because I also want a share.

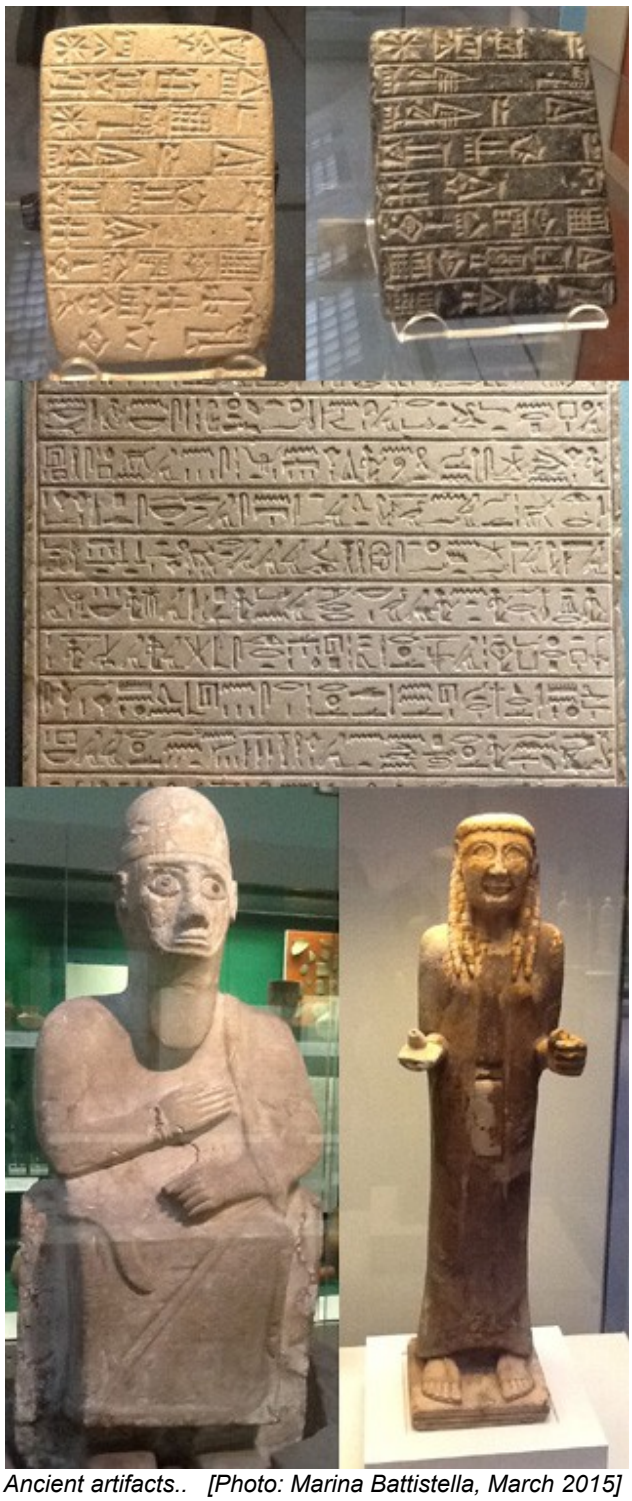
Marina was all business this week. Which is a bit of a pity when we are in London and there are so many nice things to see. It's like going to a restaurant with someone who isn't hungry at all.



The World's End can also be found on Kings Road...

After four days of little success, I decided we needed to do something healthy for the mind. I dragged Marina to the British Museum. I figured that, since her art evoked senti-

ments referring to archaeological excavations, maybe she would feel some enthusiasm faced with the real items. Indeed. She did.



Ancient artifacts.. [Photo: Marina Battistella, March 2015]

It was the first time she smiled that week. Or so, at least, it felt. But not only that she seemed to come alive among ancient works of art. She even allowed a "Wow!" coming across her lips. Not only once, but three times the same day.... a second at the Sumerian-Mesopotamian section and a third "Wow!" at the African Art exhibits.

I have to admit, I feel the same about ancient art.



Now THERE's something we need a picture of...



And there's evidence of a smile. What is it?



The spotted iron big enough to take on Gulliver's shirts...

I never expected it to be easy. We did King's Road in Chelsea and Old Brompton Road in Kensington. No, we didn't stop at the Ferrari-shop. It's a noisy car, better buy a Porsche, if you need to have a fast car.

The next destination was TATE MODERN ART. Judging by the number of tourists heading the same way, I guessed we could expect something really spectacular.

There was construction going on outside the gallery. Apparently Tate was making good business. Okay, so let's see what they have inside!?



One of the rooms had a ventilator shaft on the floor. Oh, dear! There appeared to be construction going on inside the gallery as well! Then I noticed the ventilation shaft was being corded off and there was a plaque on the wall.

Spontaneously I burst into laughter. It was supposed to be art. Hang on there. Is this really a ventilation shaft, coming straight from the factory, or is this a piece of art made to look like a ventilation shaft? How much time did the artist spend with it? And if the item had not been corded off, could it not accidentally had been tossed away?

There were other exhibits which even more easily could have been mistaken for litter, had they not been corded off or framed and exhibited on the wall, such as the finger-paints of an infant on an old newspaper page. Surely, the world of art and their senior scholars have a perfectly sane sounding explanation for this.

But imagine a day in the distant future, when someone forgets to put up the rope. A piece of art, immensely valuable just gets thrown away. I seriously hope it won't come to that. I seriously hope that some day before that, someone is going to notice that the emperor is naked.

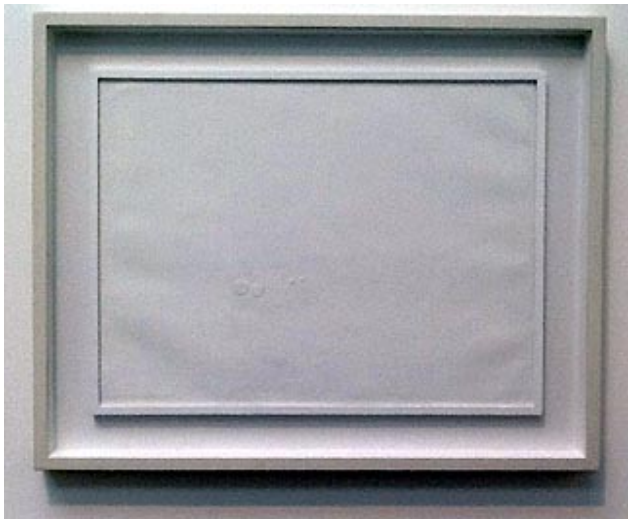


In the year 2015, this is still considered art.

There may still be plenty of cretins out there, who would pay a gazillion dollars for Marilyn Monroe's used knickers, or for a piece of waste paper on which Andy Warhol has drawn a few lines with a pencil (while intoxicated).

- -

The *Catholic Encyclopedia* remarked that given that the question has long been debated whether Christ was crucified with three or with four nails: *Very little reliance can be placed upon the authenticity of the thirty or more holy nails which are still venerated, or which have been venerated until recent times...*



Three minute white blotches in a white field. It's called art!

Seriously. Some of us are being fucked with. And it has been done ever so successfully throughout the 20th century. Every conceivable vulgarity has been done to death. Take your garbage bin and empty it out on the floor. Cord it off, and call it art? Forget it! It's been done already. Only the first to think of something (no matter how silly), gets any credit.
ike the japanese On Kawara, who only painted the date of the day, every day. Art!
Or Lucio Fontana: *"He punctured the surface of his canvases, breaking the membrane of two-dimen-sionality in order to highlight the space behind the picture."* Meaning he cut a hole in the canvas.

"From 1958 he purified his paintings by creating matte, monochrome surfaces, thus focusing the viewer's attention on the slices that rend the skin of the canvas."
Meaning, he didn't bother to use any brush or paint at all, he just cut the canvas. Oh, sancta simplicitas!
Just cut the bullshit, let the man have his credit for coming up with it. But it has been done now.
Next!

How about art, which impresses by its quality? By the quality of not only having a tremendous amount of thought, but also of skill and work put into it?
Such as H.R.Giger, Patrick Woodroffe and Roger Dean to name a few, which I am convinced will be more appreciated by future generations.



Or why not Marina Battistella? [0215]

Marina Battistella's art doesn't really come to its full effect as a photo. The above painting is 100x120 cm and has, as most of her recent work a 3 dimensional surface. It is a bit of a wall sculpture.

I believe I have something of value here. It looks good, it is not easy to replicate and it is both elegant and stylish. In my opinion it is only a matter of time before she breaks through the thickness and huge competition of contemporary art. With our elbows.

In order to accomplish this I have, again, plan A, B and C in place. Plan A is to find a gallery, in a place where people still can afford to buy original art. Most people today can't. Hey, regular folks rarely have enough to pay all their bills for living. Plan B is to manage selling 1-2 of her works and invest it in further expositions. There I had King's Road in Chelsea in mind.



It looks like stone, bone or metal...? [0144]

Plan C will take more time and involve more people, but is something which I consider anyway, along with A and B. I won't bore you with the details. All of the above include future investment in further exhibition. Her works need to be seen. *"We begin coveting what we see every day."* (H.Lecter, The Silence of the Lambs).

And how much do I need to get rolling? Oh, peanuts! 5,000 GBP ought to do it. From there on, I believe things will roll on by themselves. One obvious problem is of course, that 99% of the economy is in the hands of 1% of the population more or less everywhere in the world.
And we are the creators, not the cashiers.

The upcoming global economic crash of everything should bring a spark of hope though. Because we will still have the material. Wealth, as you may know, is not destroyed in a crash, it only changes hands.
And here we are at the starting line, just beginning a race. We're crash-proof. Money is not.
5,000 GBP or Dollar or Euro, which ever, can be worth

zero tomorrow, or the day after. Precious stones and metals retain their value, as do most musical instruments and some art. We are living in a time when people with cash are looking for ways to flee from it. Because most of the people who have it, know what is coming. The ECB, the Federal reserve and some other big banks are printing bills like crazy. It can only end one way.



Another 80x80 cm (small) Battistella [0222]

I don't know much about art. Yet. I am still learning. I hope to keep learning things for the rest of my life and not everything needs to become a career. I started playing the guitar at age 41, which some may consider late (and it was), but it is good to be able to play at least a few chords.

When it comes to art, I come from *a good home*. My mum was qualified for the academy of arts in Helsinki, but she chose family over a career. I finished college with highest marks in aesthetics and art.
Ahem, yes... is it not an oddity in itself, to proclaim oneself of being an expert in what pertains to aesthetics? *"I know what beauty is, because I got the grades for it! You're just a schmuck!"* No, I don't really believe that kind of argument will hold up.

Anyway...

BACK TO TAFF

By the time CounterClock # 21B comes up on efanzines it will already have been decided. But I don't know yet. If I win, I guess I will be busy for a long time trying to give back to TAFF what TAFF gives to me.
One more reason to find a steady source of income.
But as I said, I don't need to win. When I read the TAFF-flyer Murray Moore created for Corflu 32 (and the rest of them going to the Eastercon). On page two it reads...

Why will Wolf be an excellent TAFF delegate? Two of his nominators explain.

Lloyd Penney, North American

I willingly gave Wolf von Witting my nomination for TAFF. I agree with him in that I think more people should have the opportunity to run for this fan fund. I also believe in tradition, so Wolf, plus his participation in fanzine fandom, also meant for me that he was a good candidate.

The best reason for his candidacy? He openly supports Nina Horvath, his opponent in this TAFFish competition. Wolf's main concern is not that he wins, but that the fan fund is competed for, and that it continues. He is an excellent candidate, and he has my support.

John-Henri Holmberg, European:

At a time when fandom in all countries is changing, when movies and TV shows seem to replace books and magazines in captivating the interest and imagination of fans, when conventions are replacing clubs as primary meeting places for fans, when online activity is replacing fanzines as the primary means of expression and communication, and when the relative isolation of fandoms in various countries is being broken by increasing internationalization, I find it hard to even imagine anyone more perfectly able to bridge the gap between the old and the new kinds of fandom, or between the old and the new fannish worlds, than Wolf von Witting.

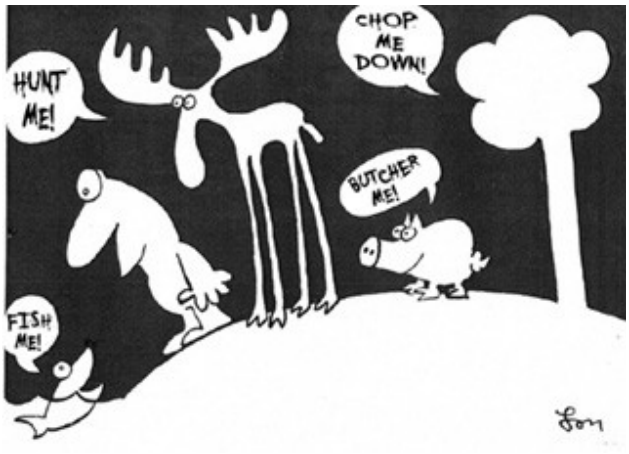
Wolf has been a fanzine publisher for more than thirty years, but today his fanzines are online and read throughout the world. He has been active in Swedish fandom for at least as long, but simultaneously in German fandom and increasingly also in many other national fandoms throughout Europe and elsewhere. He has read all the classics, but he has also seen all the shows and movies, and continuously been equally fascinated by verbal and visual speculations. He can tell Swedish fans about German fans, Italian fans about Swedish fans, and Europeans about American fans; I have no doubt that he would do an excellent job of telling American fans about the antics of the various brands of European ones.

Wolf is a true enthusiast, a mover and a shaker who actually almost always accomplishes what he sets out to do, no matter how unlikely it may seem. He has run clubs, conventions and fanzines, managed to stay on friendly terms with virtually everyone even during the worst feuds that have ravaged the fandoms in which he has been involved, and for all that is never afraid to speak his mind or to hold strong opinions. A likeable man, a good companion, a fan who will stand by his word and who has managed through thick and thin to hold on to his sense of wonder. Actually, I sort of envy those of you having the chance to meet Wolf for the first time at Sasquan. You'll like him. And as likely as not, he'll be buying you a bheer.
Did I mention that he's a fine cartoonist, a good photographer, an intrepid writer? And that he actually will write an impressive trip report?

[End of text on flyer Wolf for TAFF]

My comment:

With supporters like these, how can I lose? It's a win-win-scenario here. I could think of a good reason to vote for Nina, and that was a vote for her was a vote on the future.
I am an old geezer (relatively). I didn't think of having a foot in both the future and the past, but it's widely correct.
I am far from finished in fandom.
I had to laugh at *"And as likely as not, he'll be buying you a bheer."* As likely as not... I have to remember this as clever as delicate way of phrasing it. Beautiful. I sure as heck owe my five nominators (and the emergency holographic back-up nominator) at least one bheer each.
And another to Murray. I might as well purchase an entire brewery.
Thank you, all! It was nice racing. And what I didn't do in the campaign, I may make up for after...



Cartoonist: Lars Lon Olsson

THE LATE LOCCER

Rolf Strömgren, Stockholm, Sweden
rolf-str-at-privat.utfors.se

Your sense of humour is occasionally more subtle than mine. Under the picture where you come out of a phone booth you wrote: "2014 had me flying to London three times". I start wondering if Superman really is Clark Kent.

The current situation for fantastic literature in Sweden is a bit precarious. Here and there it surfaces, but you have to know where to look for it. On the bright side is the tenacity these publications show. Perhaps it's not as bad as one might believe.
The free library publication, BIF, *Biblioteket i Fokus*, write in every issue about fantastic literature.
(http://www.biblioteketifokus.se/)

In comics THE PHANTOM publishes new Swedish SF. "De utvalda" (The Chosen), by Gösta Lindwall and Nisse Lindberg, has appeared in several issues. The series takes place in an interstellar future with sentient machines and the possibility to transfer the human mind to robots.
In issue 6-7/2015 began also a new Swedish fantasy-series - Prasselsork, by Anders Végh Blidlöv. "Gnomes, Trolls and other fairy tale creatures live side by side with humanity. Outcast they live in national parks. It is Sweden today, the world of *Prasselsork*."

There's also the comic Herman Hedning. Herman and his friends live in a kind of stone age, but is using all kind of advanced technology when it suits them. Very funny.
[...snip...]

On CounterClock #18:
Any Klingon would agree that no price is too high for a good revenge. With *Fire in the Hole* we learn that revenge also is a dish to be served hot.

About writing. You have been working on your novel for decades now. I think it is time to follow the advice of the giants of SF. Heinlein said: "**Submit** the book also." And John W Campbell said: “How dare you reject your story for my magazine?”.

After having worked on a text for such a long time, you lose the perspective on it. But an editor can. A good editor can point out how a weak story can be improved upon.

Stephen King was lucky to have a wife saving his scripts from an open fire. Can you treat yours worse?

H P Lovecraft was lucky to have friends who saw to it, that his stories were published. And unlucky they edited away some of the good stuff. Lovecraft didn't have poor scripts, only poor self confidence.
[...snip...]

On CounterClock #19:
Your memories from Stockholms commuter traffic describe the current state of things as well. Not a single day goes by without mishaps. [...little snip...]

John-Henri Holmberg wrote on relax-list about Gary McGaths filk-music-history. A book, to download for free:
http://www.mcgath.com/tst

Karl-Johan Norén has emerged as Swedish fandoms new and bright filk-star. His lyrics have been published on the fanac-list. Hopefully there will be a swedish Filk-Anthology in time. Could Karl-Johan be a platform to write an article about Swedish filk?
[..snip... Swedish filk related info - good for Swedish fans exclusively - but we might get back to it ...snip...]

On CounterClock #20:
Some things appear to be going badly in this world. We now have a vast amount of Romanian beggars in the streets. Their situation is so bad in Romania, that they have to come here to beg and the best we manage to do, is to get them out of sight (We put out park benches which are impossible to sleep on, build fences around places where they shouldn't build a nest and think about how we can completely forbid them to sit in the street).

I think we should ask for that money the Romanian government didn't take from the EU. and use the money in a respectful and just way to help them off our streets.

Finally, it is strange the image one draws to oneself. Walt Willis appears to have been tall and slim. I always imagined him short and sturdy.

Sense of wonder, according to a Lovecraft-fan: "Oh the Horror, the Blish!"



Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom, 1927-1990

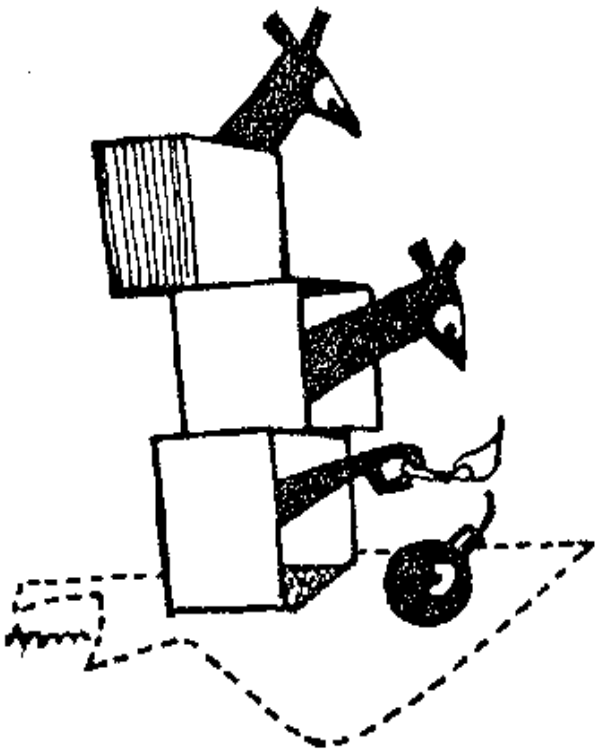
Ed: *First of all, Rolf, I missed your LoCs. I am glad you are back! And let me begin to tell you how sorry I am having to edit away half of it. Believe me,* ***all*** *of it was interesting to me, but some of it would have non-Swedish readers only shaking their heads. I wish to avoid being held responsible for their neck-trauma.*

About my novel. I began thinking about it, when I started CounterClock and the story itself was finished 2001, being 14 years ago. Most of the time since then, it has spent in a drawer. To say the truth, I don't think it is any good.
I may submit stories to magazines, but not in my own name. I can ruin my name only once. But look at the bright side. The number of CounterClock pages published in 1999, 2013 and 2014 each equals a book. And all together CounterClock constitutes a comprehensive overview on European sf-fandom, it's facets and history.

Perhaps, one day, a great grandchild of Richard Bergeron will publish Warhoon # 32 "The Complete Writings of Wolf von Witting" - So many books are being written already and one more or less is not going to make much of a difference. Though much can happen in a day, in a week and in a month. Even a book. I will let you know, when it has been accomplished.

I couldn't help but to notice the army of beggars in Stockholm, when I was there. It is not what I expected of the welfare-society of Sweden in the year 2015. Having a reputation for being rich, must be even worse when one is not. I don't know, but it is my impression we are better off in Italy.

About Walt Willis - You know, Rolf, I was also slim once.



Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom, 1927-1990

Jump, and you will find out how to unfold your wings as you fall. (Ray Bradbury)

Monday April 6th - by mistake I somehow thought it was the 7th and the last day of TAFF voting. Was out of balance all day. By the end of the day I realized it was in fact only the 6th. Oh, great! Looking forward to be *out of balance* one more day.



Artwork: Katja Lindblom

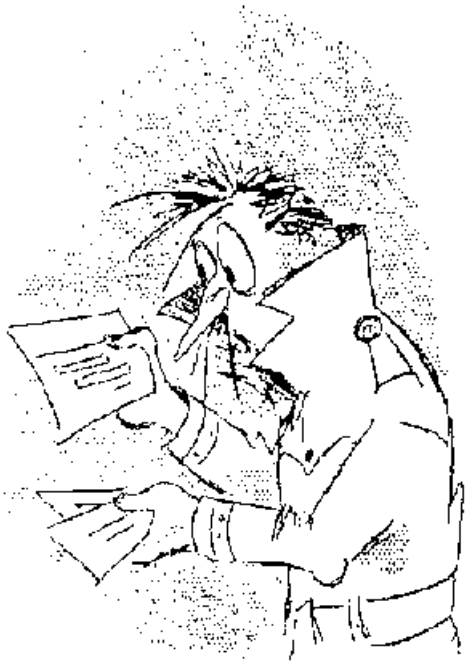
Everything is theoretically impossible, until it is done. (Robert A. Heinlein)

Wednesday April 8th - **Awaiting the TAFF result.**
Pacing up and down. Checking my email. Chewing on the keypad. Going out hanging up the laundry. Checking the email. Making coffee. Listening to the X22 report on youtube. Checking email. Lunch. Playing colored lines, freecell and minesweeper.
New highscore on minesweeper. Checking email.
Minesweeper now solved in 362 seconds on expert.
Pacing back and forth. Checking the email.
Message from Jim Mowatt. He wrote "*still waiting for the North American results so I don't have a result for you yet. As soon as Curt gets them to me then I shall add them to my totals and let you folks know as soon as possible. Many apologies for the delay.*" Terrific! Let's not become nervous, or impatient, or worse; start fidgeting.

Wrote reply. Made more coffee. Checking email. Watching two episodes of WEST WING, season 2. Checking email. Closing in on midnight. Decided to go to bed.

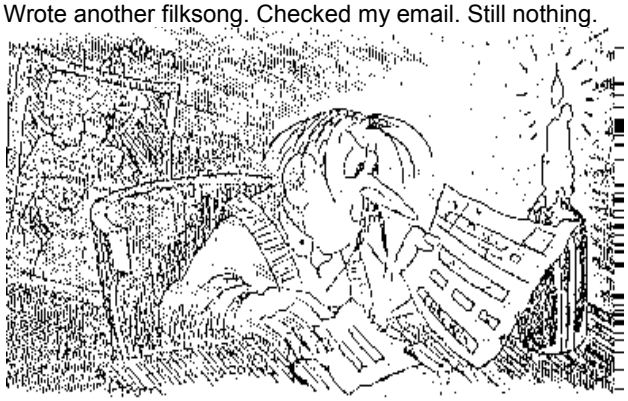
Thursday April 9th - **Still waiting for the TAFF result.**
Checking email. Morning coffee. Pacing back and forth, up and down. Checking email. Lunch. Looking out the window. It's sunshine in Italy. Checking the email. Nothing.
Chewing on the edge of my desk. Reading about how the HUGO Awards have been hijacked by Sad Puppies.
I thought they did that last year already... How come four out of five people nominated for best fan writer are published authors? Checking my email.
Bellis asks about the results. Nothing yet. Still nervous. He suggested a calming glass of whisky and a cigarett. Great idea!!! Pacing back and forth and into the bathroom for a smoke... With a glass of whisky. Checking my email again.
17:30 still no word... Bringin' in the laundry. Making coffee.

Surely this is a kind of hell I previously haven't been familiar with. ***Black Gate**, edited by John O'Neill. Its wikipedia entry says: "Black Gate is a glossy, quarterly fantasy magazine founded in 2000 and published by New Epoch Press. Using the slogan "Adventures in Fantasy Literature," Black Gate primarily features original short fiction up to novella length." No mention is being made of Black Gate being a fanzine.*
What do I care, if the HUGO's are being rigged? TAFF is not. At least, not yet. Or have they ever been?
Pacing up and down... and checking the email. Nothing.
At least, in these days, the communications run by email. I wonder how it was back in the days when everything was done by snail mail.
Imagine the long waits. The suffering in cases like this.



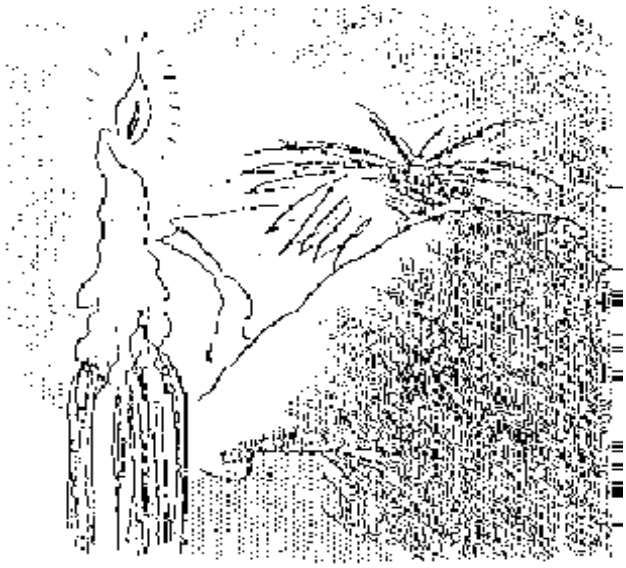
Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom 1927 - 1990

Waiting for the Postman. And when he finally came, YES!!! - he stopped at our house. Rushing to the mailbox. It's full of envelopes. Sod it!!! Only electricity, garbage and other bills. Guess we have to wait until tomorrow.
Pacing back and forth until bedtime. No email.
Listening to Tracey Chapman - *Talking About a Revolution* and finally the tables are starting to turn... Pacing back and forth like a wild wolf in a cage. Instincts reduced to eating, sleeping and checking my email.
Wrote another filksong. Checked my email. Still nothing.



Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom 1927 - 1990

Curt is probably still sifting through the ballots. Or is he? I hope nothing serious has happened to him. I'm sure there is a perfectly reasonable cause for the delay.
Almost 20:00 on thursday.
Pacing up and down. The carpet now shows clear signs of fatigue and is trying to hide under the sofa.
Please, kill me now and get it over with!!!
No, I didn't filk Tracey Chapman. I filked Reinhard Mey, a song about a modern cowboy.
Oh, frettled gruntbuggly!! How complicated can it be?
Either I won or I lost. There is really no other alternative.
Wish I would have had *Mihaela Perkovic* on my team. She was the 2013 GUFF winner and probably the greatest asset to Nina Horvath's campaign.
But I had Murray Moore and Anders Bellis... from a fannish point of view a winning team. But Nina sure did a good race. So good, that she might actually have won!
Checking my email. Nothing yet.
Maybe TAFF is really an abbreviation for The Anxiety Fan Fund, I mean secretly... Pacing up and down... and off the carpet, to give the poor rag a break.
Preparing supper. Rice, shrimps and vegetables. And of course, need I say it? No email yet.
It must come this evening, right? It must. It's getting late. Of course, it is one hour less in the UK and even earlier in the day in the US. I guess Curt lives in the resting-after-lunch-time-zone.



Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom 1927 - 1990

I, on the other hand, live in a country where the sun has gone down. And where a lot of pacing is going on. I'm really sorry, if I am boring you. Again.
20:30 Ding!
The TAFF result dropped into my inbox. I haven't opened it yet. Taking a deep breath... and...

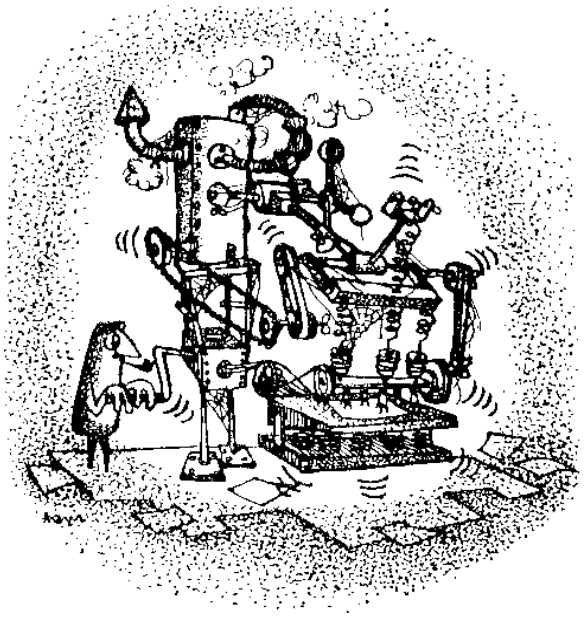
The winner is: NINA HORVATH from Austria!!!
All tension is rapidly evacuating, like the air going out of an inflatable mistress. It's over!
Wrote my congratulations to Nina. Going for a smoke...
Posted on FB. And... I will be attending my nephew's wedding instead. He just happened to nail exactly the same weekend as the world convention in Spokane. I guess in some mysterious way, all is going to work out for the best.

After all, I did hope that Nina would win. I hoped I would

win also, and we really can't win both of us.
But do I want to go through this nerve-wrecking again? I don't think so.
Anyway... Thank you, Graham Charnock, unknowingly, for preparing me for this. Now we have something else in common.
I stopped pacing...
I don't even bother to look at the emails any more.
Two more episodes of THE WEST WING and we're coming up on the season two final.

What have I learned about Americans? I don't know. But it's not just shooting, car chases and explosions. There's an entirely different, more thinking part of the population.
Just like everywhere else.
The carpet returns from out under the sofa to the middle of the floor. For a moment I was thinking that I may not have had as many friends in Sweden as I thought.
Or in Germany, for that matter.
For a moment I was thinking that I may not have many friends at all. Other than 666 acquaintances on FB.
Is that a bad number?
Then Mrs Landingham, the president's (Sheen) secretary gets killed in a drunk driver accident. And I am being reminded of Jelena's death earlier this year. Yes, there are certainly more important things in life, than damaged pride. I knew that. It just slipped my mind for a minute...
And Martin Sheen asks his chief of staff to seal off the cathedral so that he can have a chat with God.
What a wonderful scene.
"And if you don't intend to run again, just because it is difficult or that you might lose, then I don't even want to know you!" said Mrs Landingham.
How is that for synchronicity?

I don't know if I learned so much more about Americans... but yes, I understand that I have friends there. Everyone who voted for me.
And if you want to know, if I will race again, I can tell you this (haven't started on season 3 yet). Sure, I might. If my health and the global situation allows it.



Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom 1927 - 1990

I'm not sure Nina Horvath actually *expected* to win. Maybe not. But I **am** happy for her. She gets to go on a mind-blowing trip. Be nice to her!

I lost because I didn't have the time to launch a proper campaign. I generally suck at the entire campaigning-thing, so I would need to have people doing it for me.
It is midnight and Friday 10th of April is coming up. We have the results and I can go to bed and dream of the distant future still ahead. Good night, y'all!



Artwork: Nicklas Andersson, Sweden

Friday pril 10th - **The Day After**
The result is in, I slept on it, and I'm fine with it.
First thing in the morning I posted my address to Eurosmof *"Yesterday, at 20:30 CET came the result of the 2015 TAFF Race - and the winner is Nina Horvath. Doing a great campaign, she deserved to win. And her victory serves a higher purpose. It is good for Nina, good for Austrian fandom and good for European fandom. The runner-up (me) needs to remain hungry for the sake of TAFF. As a trial-run, without British contenders, this race was NOT a failure. Nina Horvath proved, that non-Brits can gather the sufficient amount of votes. But the many different language fandoms in Europe still need to familiarize themselves with the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund. Voting must be made easier and more fans need to understand that they are eligible for voting. Also, we (European fandom) have more to learn from and to offer American fandom, which receive our candidates so graciously. Who ever gets to go, receives a mind blowing trip. The eastbound American fans on the other hand, have so far "only" seen London and other parts of the UK. Perhaps they would in future also like to visit Sweden, Finland, Germany, Spain, Austria, Italy, Croatia, Slovenia or other countries once these options more openly come on the table."*
Already having been asked and taking Curt Phillips as a role model for attitude, I say… of course I will run again if health and the global situation allows it. But next step on my agenda, is to sweeten the selection for next year's eastbound traveller.

The less you act like a loser, the less you are one.

And since I don't get to announce this in Spokane, later this year. I do it now: "The first *von Witting*, born in the USA will be the child of Kendra Roberts and Sebastian von Witting (my nephew) and is expected to see the light of planet Earth, September 2015 in Nashville, Tennessee."

- -

...and I guess there is no point in holding back the new composition either:

Ballad of the Whistler

Based on Reinhard Mey's song:
"Die Ballade vom Pfeifer" (1970)
by Wolf von Witting, 10 April 2015

I am a modern cowboy
My horse is black and grey
He's goin' to McDonalds
As burger meat one day
For forty days and forty nights
I've been out on the road
My Colt is out of bullets
Coz I don't know how to load
They're calling me "the whistler"
Coz I whistle when I breathe
The damp air in a whorehouse
Then I never want to leave

I rode into Las Vegas
By the first light of day
Or was it San Diego,
I'm not sure, but anyway
In every tavern and saloon
On the door of the can
Was a picture with my name
And bold header "Wanted Man"
For I am a whistleblower
NSA and FBI
All want a piece of my butt
And I really don't know why

I swam in the Pacific
Big mistake, but now I know
Courtesy of Fukushima
Both my ears began to glow
The water tasted salty
A bit plastic and of oil
My blood reacts with mercury
And then began to boil
Internal pressure building up
10 pascals overload
Stay out of my proximity
I'm ready to explode



Artwork Arthur Thomson, ATom 1927 - 1990

THANK YOU for the Experience!

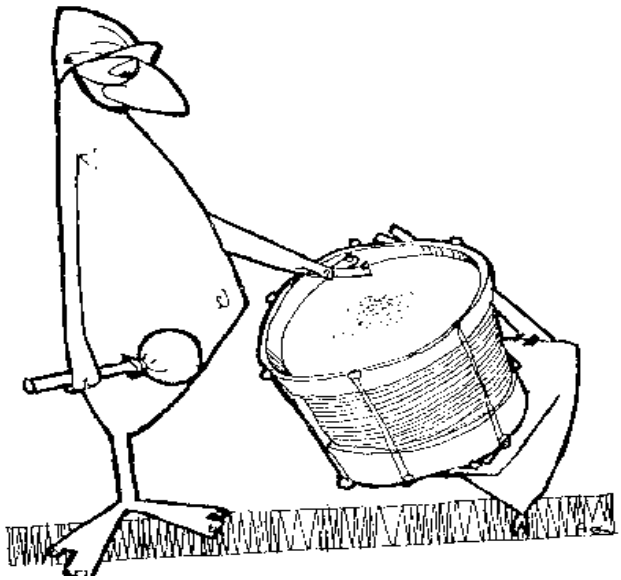
Administrators, nominators, campaign & supporters

Anders Bellis, Sweden / Greece
Arnie Katz, USA
Chris O'Shea, UK
Curt Phillips, USA
Jim Mowatt, UK
John-Henri Holmberg, Sweden
Lloyd Penney, Canada
Mike Glyer, USA
Murray Moore, Canada
Nina Horvath, Austria
Ronald M Hahn, Germany
and to **everyone** who voted.

After this issue, it will be quiet from my corner for at least two months. The upcoming CounterClock Convention requires a lot of work, so I don't think I'm up to it for now.
It will have to be # 23. But procrastination is a common thing in sf-fandom. Anyone surprised I feel drained?
I try to proof read the entire issue one more time, but I am just too tired now. My only thought is...

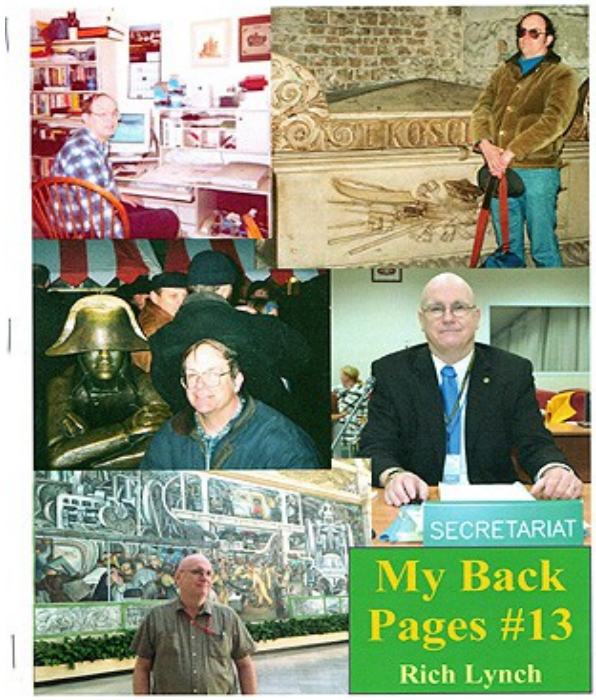


COUNTERCL◷CK # 21b
Wolf von Witting
Via Dei Banduzzi 6/4
33050 Bagnaria Arsa (Ud) - Italia
Email: wolfram1764 - at - yahoo - dot - se



Artwork: Arthur Thomson, ATom 1927 - 1990

A second letter, longer than the first, arrived from the late LoCCer **Rolf Strömgren**, elaborating on the sad state of affairs in Stockholm with beggars in the streets. How park benches are designed to make it impossible to sleep on, how potential outdoor homes are being fenced off, all in the spirit to keep beggars out of sight.
Out of sight, does not make it out of mind,
Once they were skilled horse breeders, excelling in copper and wicker crafts and more. But all the trades Romanian gypsies were skilled in have been outdated. Their services are no longer required. Like many other, they get tossed on the dump of time and progress.
I'm on the same dump, my friend. I just refuse to lie still or to sit in a street and beg. I do what I can to keep some cash flowing in until I run out of ideas. That day is still in unknown future.
Richard Lynch sent a huge fanzine package, containing several back issues of MIMOSA and His current fanzine MY BACK PAGES. He wrote;"*He* was blown away!" What about me, how I was blown away... AGAIN! And I already felt that I owe *you*. Okay, this is it!!! Let me make you an offer you can't refuse (in a private letter, I just have to wrap up this issue).



Richard Lynch, now resident in Gaithersburg Maryland still publishes a fanzine. Now it is My Back Pages, twice/year.

And another letter from **Nina Horvath**, who is worried I may be disappointed with the TAFF result. She didn't expect to win and was even encountered with some disbelief when it was made known in German fandom that she was challenging *me*. Better still, that she won!!

I believe everything happens for a reason. My nephew Daniel gets married while you are in Spokane, Nina. He is more important to me than winning the race.
Circumstances were in your favour - and you absolutely deserved winning. The wheels keep spinning and the times they are a-changin'.

Bee seeing you! - Wolf