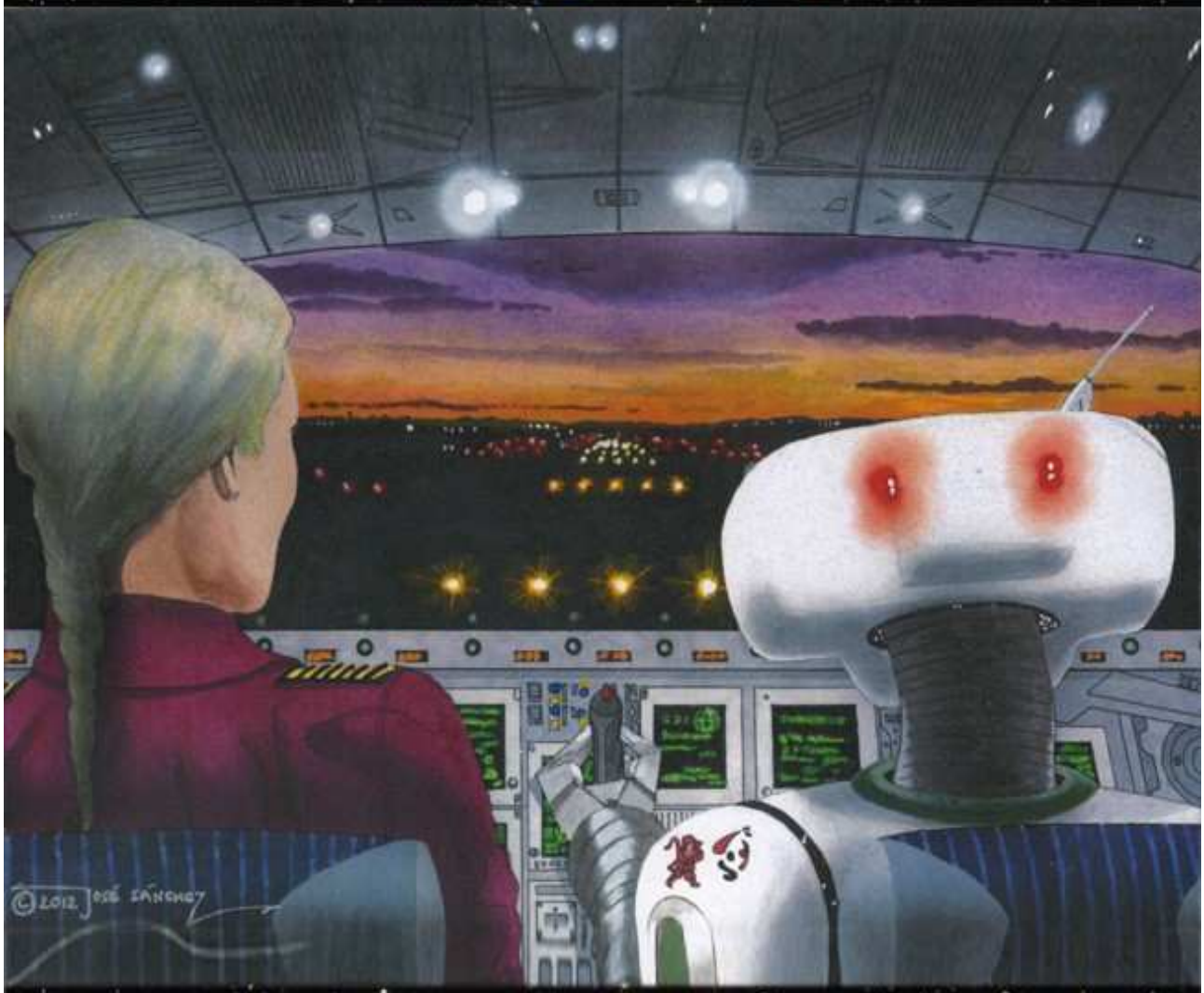
CounterClock

Issue # 22 - July 2015



Log Entry:

Flight of the CounterClock
What is a science fiction-fan? - Radio Free Albemuth
Halluciraptor photography
why we can't travel in time
do androids suffer distress
José Sanchez artwork
WetzCon II-2015 report

What is a science fict◷n-fan?

Without the usual laziness in explaining it, I will here try to cover the definition of what an sf-fan is. It is rarely being explained in full. For one, the definition of what science fiction is, is by itself a lengthy issue. Mind you, that a fan of something so complex, is no less complex than what he or she is a fan of.
I would begin to point out, that the cause for being interested in sf may have all the angles that sf itself has. Basically it is the interest for the expansion, and the consequences of human ideas and for the limits of our imagination and understanding. This includes basically all areas of science (except economy, which really isn't any science at all, but a paradigm).

The level of involvement differs from fan to fan. In its most primitive form, the sf-fan can be no different from a sport fan, or fan of a musical artist. It has been argued, that the word fan and fandom are not entirely accurate, but in lack of any better word, we have kept these words. Fan is short. Short is nice.

But most sf-fans can't simply go *wow* and leave it at that. Well, perhaps they can nowadays, but in the past, this was not the case. In the past, the common person was more aware that we don't know it all yet.
It was obvious when we were reaching for the moon. Now we have been there, and we have many things of bewildering technological wonder. We have not succeeded in creating artificial intelligence, but the miracles we have created are enough to occupy the human mind.
We can have 500 channels on our TV, making us aware that we miss 99,8% of all transmissions even if we watch it full tme.
Our smart-phones often outwit their wearers and give the illusion of intelligence. They can answer any question.
- How do you feel?
- I feel fine.
- Does your gostak distim the doshes?
- I don't know. Do you want me to google it for you?

Once we were looking towards utopia or dystopia.
Few feel, as I do, that we have arrived. It is the latter. We should never have expected humankind to do any better. Reality shot way over the targets set up by George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, Karin Boye and others.
So the sf-fan begins by being interested in some or all aspects of sf. Travels in space or time, cloning or other medical wonders, robotics, computers, astronomy, biology, etc
Then he asks his own questions. Some of these can be rather tricky. In the past, we didn't have Google and wikipedia to satisfy any youngster. We had our sf-conventions, where like-minded people met to discuss the tricky issues. *Normal people* didn't care.
This is why sf-fandom became necessary.

There was a *need* to talk about the inexplicable. And we had to organize and express ourselves. On all levels. So a regular sf-can could be one or all of the below. An sf-fan is a person:
- who reads and reviews books without getting paid.
- who writes articles related to sf or sf-fandom.
- who publishes an amateur publication related to sf or sf-fandom.
- who organizes a convention
- who helps out in organizing a convention.
- a speaker or lecturer at a convention.
- who goes to sf-conventions to meet his friends.
- who writes music or lyrics related to sf & fandom.
- who draws illustrations for sf-fanzines.
- who designs logos for cons and fanzines.
- who records the history of sf-fandom.
- who reports from sf-conventions in blogs & zines.
- who writes letters of comment to fanzines.
- who translates text related to sf & fandom.
- who publishes science fiction.
- who paints covers for sf-books.

and many other related categories here omitted.

Some sf-fans are pro and some are amateurs. The professional gets paid with money, the amateur has fun and occasionally gets paid by recognition.
In sf-fandom, the amateur has no less value than the pro. Of course, the amateur has value.

Just because we do what we do for free, doesn't mean that it is worthless. Quite the opposite. All work done in sf-fandom has the same value as work done in society. We choose to work in sf-fandom, because we love what we do.
For many sf-fans, fandom has been the place where we learned many skills. Writing, for example, is so much more rewarding, when having readers.

You may be under the false impression that you have to write something very clever, if you wish to comment on a fanzine.
Oh no, just share whatever thoughts come to your mind, because for the editor of the fanzine, there is no greater joy than to receive comments.
Even if you just write: "I've read your fanzine, and I found it very entertaining or interesting or boring."
This is even more true, if you never ever wrote a letter of comment before. I once got a comment which only was "Thank you!"
It takes so little to warm the heart of a fan-editor who gives away his thoughts for free.

The two main aspects of amateur non-paid work is
THE JOY OF DOING IT and
THE SATISFACTION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT
Because when the final page of a fanzine has been tipped, or when the last bottles and cans have been recycled after an sf-convention, a very distinct sense of accomplishment fills the sf-fan and the meaning of life has exceeded 42.

In the Beginning is Thought

My mind is chaos. Because I let it be so.
Now and then, when I need to communicate with the world, necessity of coherence forces me to sort out what the thoughts in my head really are.
It doesn't always work out well. It depends how far I went out and the distance back to our world.
There have been people who knew me better than I knew myself. For example, my former colleague *Max Lipari* once said to me that I was a dreamer.
In the context it was presented I got terribly upset, because I was working in traffic control, where the act of dreaming would have been nothing but a sin.
But Max didn't mean it as an insult. He meant it the good way. And I didn't know myself well enough then to answer; "Yes, you're right! I am and will always be."
It is not a bad thing to be a dreamer. In fact, the world needs more of us. I got upset, because he was *right.* And I wasn't even fully aware of it.

I don't know. But I understand so much more than before, only to learn that I know less than I thought I did. So much less.

Sometimes I have been asked: "In what language do you think? When I speak Swedish I think in Swedish, when I speak German I think in German and when I speak English I think in English, of course. I have also found myself having thoughts in Italian. Not so much though, because of all the languages I know, Italian appears to be the least efficient one, while English (to me) appears the most efficient.
However... every language is a different world. Some thoughts would never come into a German mind, but they come to the Swedish, and vice versa.
Words are a limitation. I often find myself thinking in images rather than in words. I also keep a set of abstract nonverbal mind-flags. For snap decisions.

Markers of Life

There have been defining moments in my life, which I like to view as *markers*. A marker is an event or a coincidence which decides the outcome of a decision I have to make.
I may have previously mentioned the failed suicide I attempted at Christmas 1965. It was a 'spur of the moment' decision, since my mum had decided to end her life and I recall thinking along the lines of: "*This time around*, life may not be so much fun with mum out of the picture at such an early stage."
Never mind the exact phrasing. Mum died much, much later and I'm still here. The crux of the matter, was that I felt myself forbidden to commit suicide again, at least until after some other point in my life.
Another defining moment was in 1974, surely I have mentioned this before, when I went out in the garden and looked up at the stars. We lived in a small village in Germany at the time (Oberauel - Hennef an der Sieg). I decided to solve the question of why I was here. And already being a fan of sf, I decided the year 2001 would be a nicely convenient time to have found the answer. Because of the film.
The Hitch-Hikers Guide to the Galaxy had not even been written yet, so I failed to notice that 47x42 is 1974, and that 2001 would be the year I turned 42.
It just seemed like a good number to pick.
I was 14.

There was the encounter with Karl-Heinz Schmitz in Bonn 1982, when we watched PHASE IV and SOLARIS from his Betamax video-collection. In the following discussion, he pointed out that we had met at BÄRCON 2 years earlier and that it had been the 14th. And this day in Bonn was also the 14th of the Month. And we were both born on the 14th of November. And HE said: "14, 14 and 14. Maybe this means something!" By the lineage of Jesus himself.... apart from three times 14 being 42, it sure as hell was a relevant *marker.*

I decided, I wanted to have a video-collection just like that (only slightly bigger). *Her ways are always with me, I wonder all the while. But please, you must forgive me. I'm old but still a child.*

For a while I was Insane

For a while I thought I was born twice. Once on the 30th of May 1697 somewhere between the Citadel of the Lion and the Citadel of the Crown in Gothenburg, Sweden. And once on 14th November 1959 in Borgå, Finland. I heard his voice inside my head.
The voice silenced in 2001.
Then it occurred to me, if it was genetic memory, then it would have been passed on by the time his son was born. It could also have been coincidence.
After 2001 he felt like a brother, somewhere else in time. After 2009 he disappeared. I got better contact with my real brother in this life. But then he died.
And then I found out, my "brother in time" was killed in 1747. Probably. *All dead, all dead. All the dreams we had. And I wonder why I still live on. [Queen, 1977]*

Depression

It comes and goes in everybody's lives. As sure as REM sings it: "Everybody Hurts" sometimes.
Sometimes everything is wrong. It was 1994, when I pensively hit rock bottom. Incidentally it happened to be the same year in which Swedish fandom had no conventions. Both of the planned events were cancelled. It never occurred to me before, until this writing moment, that these all-time-lows coincided.

I decided to explore the dephts of depression. As Sidney W Hage expressed it, at the time: "To blend different pains like good coffee." I knew there was no

risk that I could commit suicide, since I still had at least seven more years to go. For the next *marker.*
The no-stupid-ideas-rule from 1965 was still valid.
I remember covering on the floor of my kitchen, wishing for myself to escape into insanity. But, the abyss of depression is less frightful when you know it can't kill you. It is like the absolute zero in temperature. Zero degrees Kelvin. There is nothing below. Negative degrees Kelvin do not exist.
Perhaps it is more difficult to understand *why* we are looking into the abyss. If there is a war going on, then the reason is clear. But when we get down there and don't know who or what to blame for it?
When we know that others are worse off, then why do we suffer as much as we do? It is no consolation that others are worse off.

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, the pangs of despised love, the law's delay, the insolence of office, etc asked prince Hamlet.

An effing happy pill is not the answer. It introduces a new problem. And if you go there, sorry, that's all far beyond my area of expertise.
I prefer to suffer and eventually end that suffering by action. If it is my life which brought me to a point when I can't bear it anymore, the logical solution is to change that life. If it is people, then try to socialize with other people. If it is work, change the job. If it is the environment, change the environment. For the worse, by all means. You may live in a perfectly good environment without knowing it. Change it and get a different perspective. Same about people and work. The one thing you can't escape is yourself.
The root of all your suffering is yourself.
Can you imagine, to have nothing and be happy with it? The day we go, we leave *everything* behind.
Does it really matter if we go one by one, or all at the same time?



New officers of the Science Fiction Club of Athens (l to r): George Katsavos, Christodoulos Litharis (President), Aggelos Mastorakis, Dimitris Arvanitis, Manolis Manolas.

Found in LOCUS # 477, Vol.45, No:4 - Oct 2000, page 36

A Gigasecond Ag◷

It was 1983. Yes, if I say: "Wait a Megaminute here!" It means you have to wait for two years.
A Gigasecond is 32 years. In March 1983 I made a fanzine called RAUMSCHIFF 114 (Spacecraft 114).
It was my 114th fanzine, I kept meticulously count.
The zine was carboncopied directly on my typewriter which reproduced only 9 copies. It was the normal size of an edition for a fanzine aimed at the Capai.
In it I made a journey.
While I remained in my kitchen at Fisksätra Torg 1 from the 6th to the 14th of March, on 40 pages (with covers 42) I wrote a lonely journey through space. It is my intention to repeat the kind of journey here.
Another journey, of course. But similar.

RAUMSCHIFF 114 was prompted by *The Road Goes Ever On...* which was a similar fanzine created by the Capai for my 23rd birthday November 1982.
It was my way to say "Thank you!"
After 32 monthly mailings I needed a vacation from CAPA (Carbon Amateur Press Association) and took my leave in October 1982).
All the male members of CAPA met at the SFCD-Convention in Hannover 1983. Not present were Carla Mötteli, Karin Plewka and Klaudia Vidmar (aka as Djinnie).
Later I returned to CAPA for a second spell from October 1984 (53rd mailing) until January 1986 (66th mailing). CAPA went on without me. The last mailing I saw, was the 75th (the deadline for the next mailing was set to my birthday in 1986).

Now, here's the truth about CAPA. There was no conspiracy what so ever. Of course there were some fans who believed we had a conspiracy going on, but we didn't. We were just having fun. A lot of it.
I just fueled the theories here in CounterClock since it generally is more fun to confirm suspicions than to deny them. Had I denied them, the people who wanted to suspect us, had done so anyway.
Not that the suspicions were entirely uncalled for. We did produce a couple of ANDROMEDA issues, run the SFCD-convention in Hackenheim 1987 and had Hans-Jürgen Mader running for chair of the SFCD. We did bombard fandom with FANDHOME WHEEKLY, launched EURAPA and SUSAPA, etc
And we did many other silly things. It was fun doing.
But there was no conspiracy behind it.
It just happened.
Back to RAUMSCHIFF 114. The name of the craft in this story is of course COUNTERCLOCK 22. It is launched from Earth near the end of June 2015 and now accelerating past Jupiter towards the speed of light. Still not a great speed, as we have discovered.
To cross between the stars of the galaxy we have to go a lot faster. There is only one speed to exceed the speed of light. It's the speed of thought.



Artwork: José Sanchez - Charging Batteries, 2007

I keep an Android for company.
It is a better companion in the sense that it has fixed parameters for argumenting. She is called Arandi, and does not really have a gender, but her female appearance has a comforting effect.
- Arandi, would you please decrease the size of your buffer zone? It's distracting!
- Sure! she said, turning her pale face towards me.
- Who needs tits, with an ass like this?

We are on a heading towards the oort cloud. I would really like to see it. I could steer clear of the Solar system quicker, had I not decided for a planar heading. The asteroid belt was a disappointment.
I had imagined it denser. But there is really no risk of bumping into any asteroid, unless you already travel at the speed of light. And that is only because the sensors can't react, if something obstructs your vector. Course corrections can be done quickly and the asteroid belt is not nearly as dense as in some artistic representations. There is a lot of space between every major piece of rubble.
The impact of small pebbles is averted by deflector shields. But small pieces can be encountered anywhere within the plane of the Solar System.
Let's see what's oot there!

L◷g Entry - June 18th

Received an invitation from the SFCD to appear in Wetzlar as FGoH at the 60th anniversary of the club. Can't possibly decline. It's a great honor.

It is the third time I am FGoH at a convention in Gerfany. First time was 1986 at HanseCon II in Lübeck, the 2nd time was 1998 at the 10th SF-Days of North-Rhine-Westphalia (huge event).
But this time is special. It is special among other things because I published the Wetzkon-reports in CC # 14-16 and here goes now Wetzkon II.
I get to see Anne Steul's collection.

Setting the return-to Earth hyperspace jump to July 2nd, with Earth coordinates to Frankfurt-Hahn. That ought to put me 20 kilometers from Bad Kreuznach and the Asimov Basement Bar. Guess I will be going to the convention with my old friend Klaus Marion.

Looking out the window. Even though the Counter-Clock is moving at half the speed of light already, the stars outside hardly seem to move at all. I might as well be standing still. My instruments say differently.
A few close by objects reflecting the light of the sun pass by my space vessel like shooting stars. This is nothing like it is on film. The darkness outside is compact. No nebula in sight. No planets. Yet I have not even left the Solar System. I guess it wouldn't make much of a film. We adore the visual effects and outside my window in space are none.
It is plain boring.

Arandi is still charging her batteries. Let's have some music in here, Boiler! That's the shipboard computer who is named after a character from Dark Star.
As always, when I phrase it like that, he starts with the obvious, Benson Arizona by John Carpenter.

A million suns shine down
But I see only one
When I think I'm over you
I find I've just begun
The years move faster than the days
There's no warmth in the light
How I miss those desert skies
Your cool touch in the night

CHORUS:
Benson, Arizona, blew warm wind through your hair
My body flies the galaxy, my heart longs to be there
Benson, Arizona, the same stars in the sky
But they seemed so much kinder
when we watched them, you and I

Now the years pull us apart
I'm young and now you're old
But you're still in my heart
And the memory won't grow cold
I dream of times and spaces I left far behind
Where we spent our last few days
Benson's on my mind

- Let's hear 1983, and see what memories it brings back! Immediately *Susanna* by *Art Company* pours out of the speakers.
- Wasn't *Rain in May* 1983?
- *Max Werner.* No that was 1981, said Boiler.
- I keep mixing up memories. It means, I was in Aschaffenburg 1981 at the home of the Plewka's.
- If you say so.
- Well, I recall Willmar playing the song for me. It was a big hit. At least I like to think so. We sure liked the song a lot.
- It peaked at # 2 in Germany, but only got up to # 74 on the Billboard Hot 100 in the US.
- Oh!? Well, I still love the song. *"Rain in May, wipes your worries away."* It reminds me of Willmar. I see him every time I hear the song. Haven't seen him since... I don't know... was it Hackenheim 1987?

1983 - I was listening to a lot of German music at the time. *Die Neue Deutsche Welle* produced a vast variety of German pop with self confidence. BAP sang in the dialect of the Rhineland, Spider Murphy Gang sang Bavarian, Wolle Kriwanek in Swabian and IDEAL were obviously from Berlin.
It was the German music industry saying, we don't *need* the import, we *can* make music of our own.
- In 1983 came Rodgau Monotones, the Hessians.
- Which reminds me of the ORCON in Hans-Jürgen Mader's home in the village Orscholz. The one with Wolfgang Kehl...
- No, that was the Orcon 26-28 March in 1982.
- You don't allow me to mix up anything, do you?
- What are computers for? answered Boiler calmly.

My Life in Quints and ◷ctaves

When I look back, I used to divide my life in *Quints*. That's what I call a period of five years. It usually fitted very well to mark eras. 1959-1964 Finland and Germany, of which I recall preciously little. But some. 1965-1969 Mainly in Gothenburg and Lund, Sweden and 1970-1974 mainly in Oberauel, Germany.
1975-1979 the last years of school in Stockholm, where I finished college in 1980.
It's not like the years 1980-1985 passed in a blur. They were quite intense. Framed on both sides by a BÄRCON in Berlin 1980 and the next in 1985, but these were possibly the best years of my youth.
Now, as I think about it, I might as well divide my life into Octaves, periods of eight years. They also curiously mark beginnings and ends of eras.
8, 16, 24, 32, 40. 48...Dividing it in octaves puts the focus on different events. Also rather important ones, but events I haven't paid much attention to before. I like to think there is some kind of order to things in life. That things not only happen for a reason, but also in a certain order for a reason, and that in the end a pattern emerges. Oh, dear! If I'm right, then a major change is coming up. Both in quints and octaves. Something big AND important.

Come to think of it... I watched a documentary many years ago, in which it was stated that every cell in our body (except the brain) is replaced in 7 years.
And if I divide my life into septimes (periods of seven years) there also emerges a pattern. 7, 14, 21, 28...
I guess we can see a pattern everywhere, depending on what we wish to put emphasis on. But no matter how I toss and turn it, I see major change up ahead. Time is a curious thing. Because it doesn't really exist, does it? We made it up.

I'm trapped in this body, which is almost used up. I will not make a particularly good organ donor. It is my intention to use all of my body parts until there is nothing to save. The lung is ruined already.
Kidneys and liver still function. But doctors stay away from me! There will be no cutting here.

Long, long time ago... in the late 70's or early 80's I bought a book written by a young doctor named Rickard Fuchs. The title was VISST ÄR NI SJUK, which means *"Of Course You Are Sick!"*
It was a *handbook for hypocondriacs*. I remember laughing a lot while reading it. But most important of all, I believe it cemented my conviction, that I will stay healthy if I believe that I am healthy. Since then I have never doubted it even for a minute. I do have to concede, that while the book has helped, it is also a certain portion of luck. I've never been seriously ill.



Of Curse You Are Sick by Rickard Fuchs is unfortunately only available in Swedish.

- The man is still alive! said Boiler.
- Alright, dial his number. Let's thank him. I figure it is good to know, that at least one person never needed to see a doctor because of his book.

Can't say that many books have had that kind of significant impact. Maybe *Siddharta* had, by Herman Hesse and MOMO by Michael Ende. But how many books actually *change* something in your life?
Incidentally, Rickard Fuchs told me his book is being revised and will appear in a 40th anniversary edition this autumn. Good news, my Swedish friends, good news. Read it, for your health!

Outside the window, space just turned black.
Everything disappeared, the stars... every light, just everything went black.
- What's this Boiler? Are we still on course?
- Yes, captain.
- What's this sudden blackness around?

- I don't know. There is nothing on record to explain it. Perhaps a dust cloud, captain.
- Darn peculiar. Do the sensors pick up anything?
- Nothing at all. There just seems to be no light penetrating this region of space.
- Where are we?
- We should come up on Saturn any minute.

Arandi disconnected from her socket approaching my station.
- Would you like a cup of coffee, Captain? she asked with a soft voice. I just nodded, while studying the readouts from the gravitational sensors.
- Darn peculiar! I didn't expect anything like this.
- I always wanted to see Saturn, said Arandi while preparing the coffee machine.
- Should I contact the Mimas Rangers? asked Boiler.
- That's actually a good idea. See if you can get them on Spaceskype.
The connection was established within seconds.
- Jethro Retekin, Mimas Rangers here. Hello there!
- Okay! I can see the transmission is not affected. Can you see us incoming?
- No, but we have you on radar.
- You know anything about a black cloud, blocking out all light?
- Oh, that! said Jethro. Yes, we know of it. We don't know exactly what it is. It appears stationary and it is a limited region. How long have you been inside?
- A few minutes.
- Speed?
- Half light. Barely.
- That's odd. You must be passing through its length. Anyway, you should be out in a minute or so.
- And if not?
- Then it must be growing. Ahem... CounterClock?
- Yes?
- Still surrounded by blackness?
- Yes.
[...silence...]

The clearing of a throat was heard. It was out of sync with the image of Jethro Retekin.
- Is your computer in charge of navigation? he asked
- Yes, it is... Why?
- You are... kind of... on a direct course through the Maxwell gap!
- Holy shit!! Boiler, is this true!?
- Yes, Captain. I thought you might enjoy the view,
Boiler had barely finished the sentence as the CounterClock swept out of the black particle cloud.
For a moment my adrenaline surged. I held on to my panel, bracing for impact, but nothing happened.
- It is quite safe, reassured me the computer.
Already the rings of Saturn were far behind us.
- Stop by for a game of frozen methane hockey the next time you are in vicinity! said Jethro over Space-skype.
- Sure, and thank you! CounterClock, over and out!

Valar M◷rghulis

Music: Adolphe Adam "Oh Holy Night"
("Cantique de Noël", 1847)
Words: Wolf von Witting, 2015-06-15

Oh what a night! The stars are brightly shining
It is the longest night of the year
Grey is my hair, it's called a silver lining
Gone are my friends, many I once held dear
But I'm still here, unable to surrender
Tomorrow brings another glorious day

CHORUS:
Rise from your knees
Don't fear the coming storm
For all men must die
when their road has come to end
So please, don't cry
For all men must die

My life was rich, I caused no revolution
I gave away most posessions I had
Seeking the light in runes of elocution
Though no wisdom I found, it is sad
The Lords seek might, their vassals all around us
And once a year, pretend to mean us well
CHORUS:

If there is love for all and one another
Then heed the call, more than once every year
There are no Lords who listen when we bother
They monger war, only spread words of fear
No man is born a slave of institution
Free your soul and rage against the night
CHORUS:

alternative CHORUS:
Rise from the floor
Let's hear the tempest roar
For all men must die
when their path has come to end
So please, don't cry
For all men must die

Yeah, I felt I *had to* mess up this Christmas song. The original words came across as too mellow for my taste. Sorry, about that.

It was not intended as a Game-of-Thrones-filk when I started writing it, but after the finished chorus I felt I had little choice. Besides... Valar Morghulis does sound a bit cool.
Almost as cool as "Ash nazg durbatul-ûk!" But then I always have had a very tangible dark side in me.
And the power of the dark side is strong. We have cookies, we have the other side of the moon and we have at least 75% of cocoa in our chocolate.
Not to mention the coffee!
- Arandi, where is my coffee!!???
- Coming sofort, Captain! Subito!

- We are jumping in ten... announced Boiler.
The time it would take to reach the outer rim of the Solar System would be several months if we didn't jump through hyperspace.
- Nine...
It would be merely a short local jump.
- Eight...
Arandi handed me my mug of coffee. It was the mug I kept from the sf-convention in Linköping, Confuse 2008. My favourite coffee mug.
- Seven...
The coffee was steaming hot. It had the pleasant bouquet of fresh percolated coffee.
- Six...
Don't you think these countdowns cause an entirely unnecessary sense of drama? Why not simply get on with it and effing jump?
- Five...
And I have to come up with something clever to say between every number. What if I just shut up?
- Four...
[...silence...]
- Three...
[...more menacing silence...]
- Two...
Well, that was awkward! I better keep the words flowing. Boiler, play Country Joe & the Fish!!!
- One...
I couldn't help it. I just braced again, as I always do. I know I ought to just relax.
It will be but a short, sharp, shock.
- Jump!
[...hyperspace transition executed...]
- Gimme an "F"
- Eff!!!
- Gimme an "I"
- Eye!!!
- Gimme an "S"
- Ess!!!
- Gimme an "H"
- Aytsch!
- What's that spell?
- FISH!!!
- What's that smell?

Come on all of you big strong men,
Uncle Sam needs your help again.
He's got himself in a terrible jam
Way down yonder in Ukraine
So put down your books and pick up a gun,
We're gonna have a whole lotta fun.

CHORUS:
And it's one, two, three, what are we fighting for?
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,
Next stop is Ukraine; and it's five, six, seven,
Open up the pearly gates,
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,
Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

Ech◷es of the Past

Sometimes it doesn't really matter at all whether you are alone in space or at the bar of a Hotel with a glass of whisky which serves as the singularity around which your thoughts orbit. The echoes of the past enter in no way the mind in a linear fashion.

There was the moment, at the beginning of the panel in Dortmund 1999 (CoClock # 5, page 5) when Terry Pratchett leaned over to me and quietly said:
- You should have told me.
I'm not sure there was any reproach in his voice. He simply would have liked to know beforehand, which way the debate was going. I didn't answer.
What I should have said, was; "Sorry, but I got this program-item with short notice and spent all the time I had to prepare."
The *twists* came courtesy of Harry Harrison, Martin Easterbrook and Vincent Docherty.
Never got around to explain it to him.
- Computer, display previously unpublished photos, Dortmund 1999 opening ceremony. Boiler needed a mere second to execute.
- Forward... hold... zoom, pan left... zoom...



Seated: T.Pratchett, Mrs & Mr H.Harrison, Sam J Lundwall

I never published my own pictures from the convention. Didn't shoot many either. Only 20-21 pics.
On the other hand, there are many events from which I only have the inner camera of my own eyes and mind to remember.
I never said "Cheese!" to Norman Spinrad, Marina Sirtis or Olof Palme. No, that would have been overkill, everyone knows what they looked like. But I never said cheese to Kurt Karnéus either, or Dieter Sachse and a few others. But not too many want to know what they looked like. So many faces and places which disappear into a blur. Times before the

digital camera. Today everything and everyone is being well documented. In images.



Marburg 1978, panel with Ernie Siepmann, W.K.Giesa, Hans-Gerd Theunissen, Peter Ripota and Rolf Heuter. (CounterClock # 4, page 11) My 2nd convention.

Further back in time, even the few images one has get blurry. But hold on... let's go back to 1999. There was another convention that year. Yes, several, as always... but one where I actually used my camera more.

HanseCon 15 - 1999

The 30th HanseCon was held in 2014. I scanned these images with intention to publish them in CC and tell the story about HanseCon, when it had come half way. As always, it was held in Lübeck.



Lübeck is such a lovely town, you might wish to go there, no matter if there is a convention or not. But HanseCon 31 on 29th October to 2nd November is as good an opportunity as any.
http://hansecon.eu/
Hold on... the first HanseCon was held 1985... which makes *this* year a 30th anniversary!
As I may have mentioned, it is not a big convention, it is in fact always a very small one. The size cons were in the pioneering years. The huge advantage of such an event is, that only hard core fans are there and you really have the time to talk with everyone who is at the convention.



Heinrich R Arenz and Eckhard D Marwitz in Lübeck 1999.

This is why I had the pleasure and privilege of meeting an oldtimer of German fandom, whose fanac stretches back into the early 60's. Arenz didn't like big events, so the only way to encounter him, was coming to small ones, such as HanseCon.



Dieter Steinseifer in Lübeck 1999.

And of course, there was Dieter Steinseifer, who in my humble opinion, should count among the top ten of German sf-fandom of all time. He is also the only fan to receive the German Fan-HUGO.



Dieter Schmidt, former Editor of Fandom Mirror.

Dieter Schmidt published the German newszine *(Fandom Mirror)* which began while *Fandhome Wheekly* was still running, but filled its vacuum until Martin Kempf's *Fandom Observer* took over in the late 80's (Fandom Observer is still running).



Wolf von Witting from Stockholm & Fred Körper from Hannover in Lübeck, photo: Birgit Fischer 1999.

The food alone was worth coming to HanseCon for. One of the best and most memorable banquets I've ever been to. And *I have been* to Italy.
A particularly challenging program-item was held on the last of October 1999 in Lübeck. Everyone got to say a line - anything - and the next had to say something which rhymed with what the previous fan had said. We went two rounds, so that everyone got to rhyme at least once. The challenge was that I during the night should create a song out of the lines thrown at me. And the next day I would sing it to them. I had no particular tune in mind, so I had to find one which fitted. No easy task, I can tell you.
But on November 1st - 1999 the song was finished and published in CONFACT # 33:

HanseC◷n 15 Filk

Music: Johann Sebastian Bach
Lyrics: Arno Behrend, Uschi Feyerabend, Angelika and Michael Herzog, Detlev Hohendahl, Fred Körper, Matthias Kunkel, Frank Linner, Christoph Lühr, Eckhard D Marwitz, Matthias Pätzold, Martin Schmoll, Dieter Steinseifer, Herbert Thiery, Barbara and Josef Vogt, Wolf von Witting.

In Lübeck steht das Holstentor
Hier gibt es viel zu seh'n
Viele Leute steh'n jetzt auch davor
Wie die Schwalben die am Bordstein steh'n
Und Lübeck ist 'ne alte Stadt
Wo kalt die Trave durchfließt
Wo man viel zu wenig Parkraum hat
(und) Marzipankartoffeln schießt

Doch der Herbert fuhr hin wie ein Tier
Sein Auto war schön voll
Ein Transport, mit ganze fünf, nicht vier
Aber sicher nicht mit Schmoll
Hier gibt es Fans und Filkgesang
Und schön 'was rezitier'n
Und andere die Tänze bringen
Sowie Schweiß auf meiner Stirn

Das Niveau sinkt ab, doch die Stimmung steigt
Ich sitz' jetzt ratlos hier
Während Möwe nachts die Wiesel geigt
Ich bring dies zu Papier
Und wenn es nicht der Thiery ist
Dann wird's wohl der gute Ecki sein
Oder war es jetzt der Anti-Christ
Na, der wird's wohl gewesen sein

Aber HanseCon findet trotzdem statt
Marzipan geht hier auf Warp
Die Bordsteinschwalben hab'n wir satt
Und verschwinden jetzt sofort
Den HanseCon gab's 15 mal
In "London" wird laut gesägt
Ja, der Ecki hat da keine Wahl
Wenn der Wolf sich niederlegt

Abends geh'n wir gerne zum Bankett
Die Kellner bringen Wein
Dabei werden manche etwas fett
Doch es darf noch mehr Braten sein
In der Schiffergesellschaft speisen
Das ist der Höchste Lohn
Ja da Lohnen auch sehr weite Reisen
Und Lobgesang mit Ton

Ich kann nicht denken, mir ist schlecht
Ich halte mich da raus!
Nicht nur Marzipan macht knüppeldick
Hier gibt's noch mehr im Haus
Oh, Muse zum Olympus klag
Nur Bach hat gut 'was drauf
Weil dies Gedicht wohl keiner mag
Na gut! Jetzt hör' ich auf.

It occurred to me, that some songs are small reports in themselves. "London" was the name of one of the rooms in the hostel, and some fans were *impressed* by my capability of snoring. I decided to let them sleep this following night, by brooding over the lyrics. *In London wird laut gesägt.* The line remains incomprehensible unless you know which London is meant and that *sawing*, is a German colloquial description of *snoring*.
Schwalben am Bordstein or Bordsteinschwalben...
Swallows on the sidewalk? My guess is as good as yours... I'm guessing it is a reference to prostitution, which is perfectly legal in Gerfany. The Trave is of course the river which flows through Lübeck.



Udo Emmerich, Birgit Fischer & Matthias Pätzold not all were present at the filkwriting session.

Sometimes not even the pictures stir a recollection of the moment. I think it was Martin Schmoll doing something here, involving a yellow balloon. Can't recall what it was, but it was something fun.



Program item at HanseCon 15 in Lübeck - 1999



A fairly decent shot of Heinrich R Arenz, Lübeck 1999.

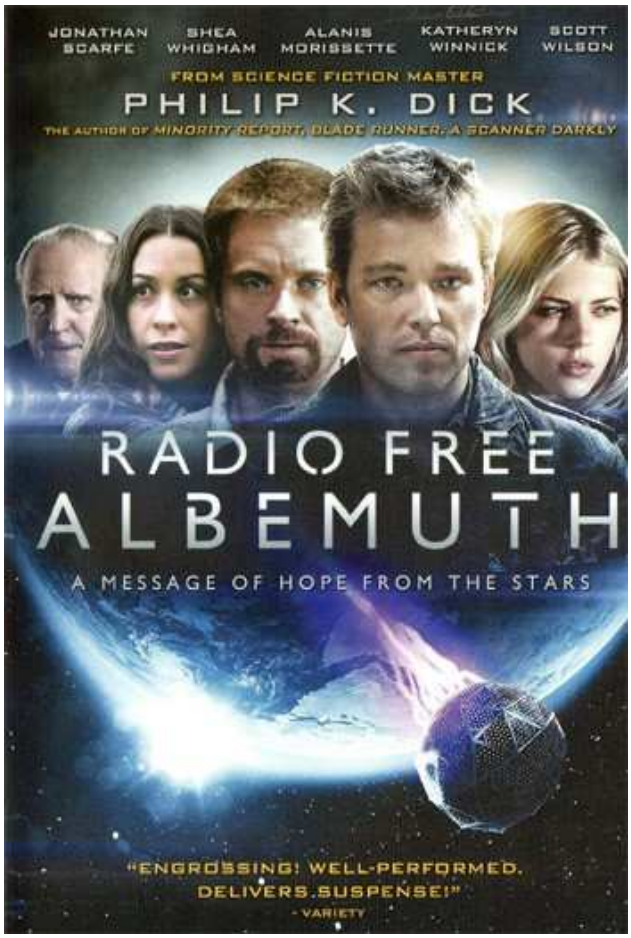
There was a second filksong, which I wrote during the night, The HEINRICH ARENZ CONSONG.
From the lyrics I can recall some of the things he told me. 1) He attended a British Eastercon 3 times.
2) He didn't go to HEICON (too big)
3) Like me, he preferred smaller events



Detlef Hohendahl, Lübeck 1999 *Photo: WvW*

I don't know what it is in this picture, which makes me suspect that Detlef Hohendahl might have more pictures from this particular convention. I do have some more, and who ever wants them, can have them. Just send me a mail. All copies are for free!

[...end transition...]
The CounterClock emerged from hyperspace in the outer region of the Solar System. Outside the ship, it was dark. What did I expect to see, really? There was rubble out there, but it hardly reflected any light at all. The sun was so far away, I could hardly tell which one was our own. With my instrumentation everything was easy to determine, but judging by sight alone, I would have been lost in space.
- More coffee? Arandi was ready to fill up.
- Nah, bugger all! Let's watch a movie!



I try to avoid Region 1 dvd's, but sometimes you just don't have any other choice.

By the looks of it, and if you should trust IMDb, then this film wasn't so interesting. But last time I looked, it's rating was determined by only 934 users, which means that very few have actually seen it.
Undoubtedly most of them were Americans.

That some of the things stated in this film are less popular to hear in the US is obvious. The Americans like to think of their country as part of the free world.
The idea that they could be manipulated and controlled, similar to how it was in the East before the Perestroika should be preposterous to an American.

The filming of Radio Free Albemuth was finished in 2007. It spent another 3 years in the cutting room and never seemed to be finished. Late in 2010, it was finally released and I started waiting for the Region 2 edition. After more than 4 years, I felt i had waited long enough and ordered the film by Amazon. Two more weeks of waiting.
When the film arrived it went straight into decryption and then I had to burn a region free dvd for my dvd-player. Having a slow computer, it was a procedure which kept me waiting for another 4 hours.
Finally I got to see it.

Was it worth all the waiting and the extra expense? Usually I can buy 3-4 films for the price this one cost me. But, yes, I think so. It was worth it. And I think, in time, Radio Free Albemuth will be seen with different eyes.
They found an actor to portray Philip K Dick, who I immediately could accept as the writer. I only had a vague memory of a photo I've seen of him, and yes, Shea Wigham does a passable Phil K Dick.

I believe more sf-fans over here, in Europe, would want to see Radio Free Albemuth, and I predict that its rating on IMDb will rise, as they do. We are tired of car chases, explosions and stunning 3D-effects.
Give us a story, please! Radio Free Albemuth does have a story. And it is classic science fiction.
The sf-film of 2010 which got most attention, was *Inception*. Personally, I like Radio Free Albemuth better, but as always, it is a matter of taste. I don't feel that *Inception* was entirely successful and any hype of popular culture around something, tends to put me out. They could have held back the remake of *Total Recall* 2012 and instead released *Radio Free Albemuth* in Europe.
185, 487 users on IMDb felt half a point better about Total Recall than what 934 users felt about Radio FA. So why send across garbage, when better films are being produced? Because we prefer garbage?
Ah, yes, that must be it.

I tried to watch *Stargate - The Ark of Truth* yesterday again. And I fell asleep. Again. It wasn't so bad and Claudia Black always makes my day.
I still fell asleep.

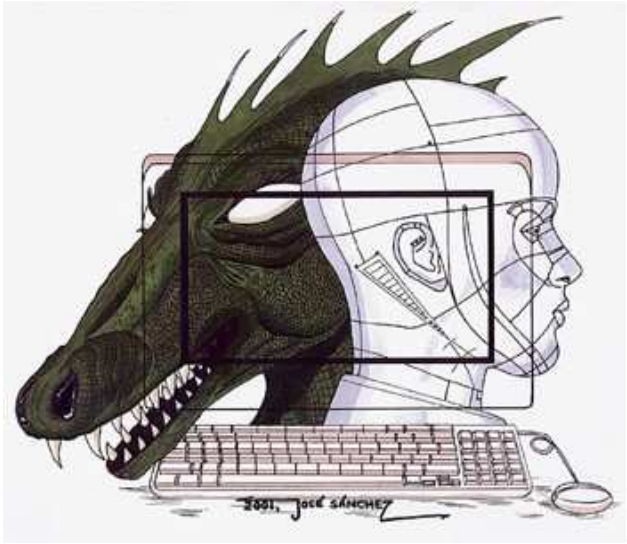
Isn't war a rather primitive concept? How is a man, holding a gun, more evolved than a caveman holding a club? To me, he is not. And should humankind progress into space, isn't there enough room for every species who makes it that far? Do we have to go to war against species, even if they breathe an entirely different kind of atmosphere? I think not.
I would be ashamed, if the people we sent out there, go to other planets, gun in hand. It would mean, we have learned nothing.

Killing is *easy*. Diplomacy is slightly more complex. It means, you would actually have to *think* your way to a solution.
Hey there, give us some more of that old Star Trek-

stuff. The kind of Star Trek we had before JJ.Abrams messed everything up with action and 3D. When we went into space as peaceful explorers, with phasers set on stun (if any).
- Found something! said Boiler.
- What?
- There's a planet in the habitable zone of a nearby triple star system.
- Do we have time to go there and make it back to Frankfurt Hahn in time for Wetzkon II?
- I would bet my RAM on it, Captain.
- So, let's go there.
- Ay, ay, Captain. Hyperspace jump in ten...
- Silent countdown, Boiler.
[...comfortable silence...]
- Jump!
[...hyperspace transition executed...]

Setting foot on other Planets

[...end transition...]
Whew!!! The sudden brightness outside came as a surprise. The CounterClock jumped straight into the triple sun system. Not too close to a sun, but close enough to startle me with its light. Since no alarm began blaring, I assumed my vessel was safe.
- Arandi! Boiler! Let's see what we have here!



Artwork: José Sanchez

The machines analysed planet and sun orbits in the system, with special attention to the planet Boiler detected in the habitable zone.
- What do you say? Is it safe going there?
- Sure thing! Breathable atmosphere, temperate climate. Wouldn't be surprised if the planet was inhabited by intelligent beings.
- Life forms?
- Plenty. But intelligence doesn't register.
- Wouldn't it be great if we could scan for that?
- I think it will be best to let Arandi have a look around first, to make sure it is safe to walk around down there. How about if you suit up to appear organic, dear? Take the blonde hair and the blue eyes. See if you can dazzle the natives. If there are any. Days appear to be short on this planet, so I would suggest you go down somewhere in the early morning zone.
- Will do, Captain. Anything else?
- Yes. Set up the Crawler to analyse ground compositions and micro-organisms.
Arandi unhooked her brown suit and went down the hatch to landing pod bay 2.
- Volcanic activity here and there. said Boiler. Could be a problem.
- Can we stay out of its way?
- I think so.
Barely half an hour later, Arandi reported to have set down on the planet. The Crawler was dispatched and she was ready to take a look around. But there was an unforeseen happenstance...
- What do you mean? Have you seen anything out of the ordinary there?



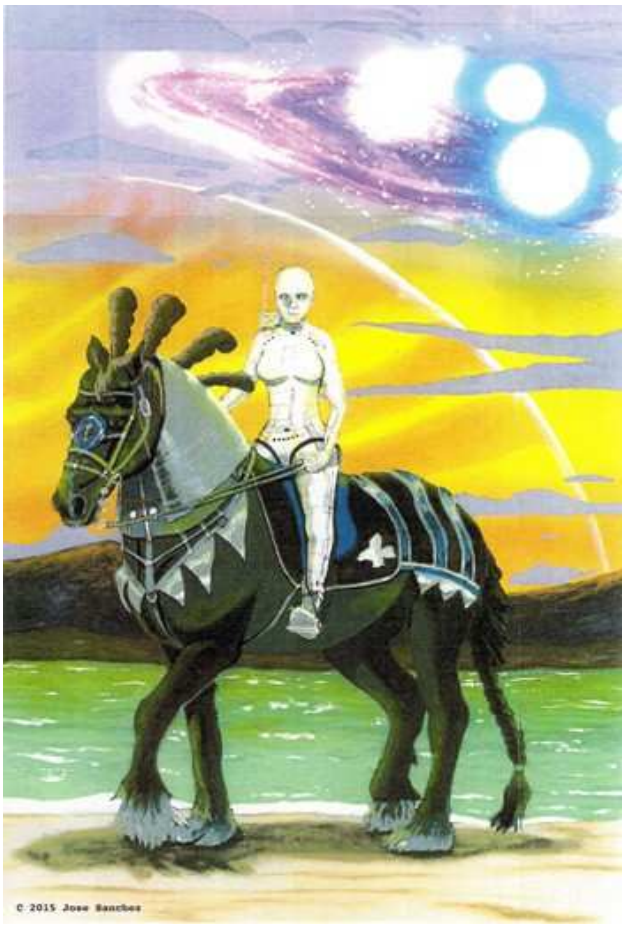
Artwork: José Sanchez, Landing party, 2000

- I would say so. There's a blue guy here, who asks if I have a landing permit. And you can never guess what language he speaks.

- English?
- Yes, Captain. How did you know?
- They speak English on all planets of the galaxy. It is only in Bulgaria where you can't undertstand what people say. Well, Arandi, did you show him our landing permit?
- Yes, but he says it is not valid if we issue one ourselves. They have their rules, we have ours.
- So?
- So he gave me a ticket.
- How much is it?
- 128 Frunts.
- Oh, dear! How much is a Frunt?
- Not sure, Captain, but I think a Frunt is 256 Rinnies
- I don't know what a Rinny is either. Like cents?
- Yeah, except they use the hexadecimal system.
- Easy for you. Look, we don't want any problem with the local authorities. Tell him, we'll pay. If we can.
- Look, Captain, the Crawler just fell into a crack, I have to go and get him back.
- Fine, do that. I'll be down soon. Over and out. Then I turned to the ship's computer.
- Boiler! You're in command, while I'm outside.

* * *

As I set foot on the alien planet a blue character with huge glossy eyes immediately stepped up to me and handed me another ticket. Arandi was nowhere in sight. But I had other things to worry about.
- 128 Frunts? Tell me, officer, where can I exchange my Euros for Frunts?
- Euros? You Earthlings come up with new currencies every day, don't you? The last one tried to give me Rubels, but we don't take them either.
- Let me guess, you want US dollars?
The blue officer burst into something which I had to interpret as hysterical laughter.
- No, you keep your paper tokens. We only take hard cash. If you have Italian 500 Lire coins for example, the bullion value of its silver alone is 64 Frunts.
- Now let me see if I got this right... If the silver of an Italian 500 Lire coin (years 1958-2001) equals 64 Frunts, then in dollars we owe you now 20 bucks.
- Yes, but as I said, we do not accept paper tokens, US dollars or otherwise.
- How about a gold filling? I pointed into my mouth.
- Ooooh... the blue officer with the big glossy eyes got excited as he peaked into my mouth.
- Many, many, many Frunts!
- See, I'm good for it! Now... have you seen my... uhm... friends.
- Your machines? Yes, the android rode off towards the city. The groundhog is around here, somewhere.
- Groundhog? You mean... the Crawler.
We had barely mentioned the device as it came towards us from behind a mound.
- Ah, there he is, the little bugger. Best put him back inside before you pass me another ticket.
- How did you know Arandi is an android? I had to ask. But the blue guy had spotted another vessel landing nearby and hurried off to hand out more tickets. I took out my communicator.
- Arandi, come in please.
- Captain, I'm on my way back. We better get off this planet A.S.A.P.!"
- Why? What's up? Where are you?
- You should see me any minute... I am riding something which looks suspiciously much like a horse.
And indeed, there she was!



Artwork: José Sanchez, Robot Rider 2015

- Hey, what happened to that stupid blonde skinsuit you were wearing?
- Minor volcanic activity, as I was down the crack to rescue our Crawler, Captain. But.. as I said.. we best get off this planet as fast as we can.
- Why, what have you found? Sickness? Dangerous creatures? Xenomorphs? Giant rats?
- No, worse than that, Captain. Bureaucrats!
My face went involuntarily pale as I realized what perils faced us on this planet. Endless paperwork.
- Hurry up! Let's go, let's go!!!
Nothing could possibly be worse, than finding another planet, which was more or less exactly like ours. The triple suns didn't make it one bit more interesting. We're out of here!!!!

Back on the CounterClock I was immediately overcome by boredom.
- Boiler, step on it! Take us out of here.
Perhaps I should finish that film I fell asleep to the other day. STARGATE - The Ark of Truth. So I did. Turned out I fell asleep towards the end of it. Wasn't much I had missed. So.. next Stargate - Continuum, the 2nd film. It had been on the shelf unviewed for long enough. Turns out the 2nd film was pretty good. From a Stargate point of view, I mean. The fans of the series must have been pleased. I remember what I liked about the series and why I watched it.
- Three vessels passing on 2 AU off the starboard bow, announced Arandi who had taken position at stellar cartography.
- On screen! Maximum magnification! Ah, it's the PIPS and the BANKSONIAN out of Cambridge. Can't make out the third ship, but it looks like a vibrator, so it could be THE VIBRATOR under Captain Charnock.



The BANKSONIAN has a slick design. Artwork by José Sanchez, 2009

- Want me to hail them? inquired Boiler.
- Where are they heading?
- Apparently they are heading towards a huge derelict at heading 176.4
- Identify derelict.
- It's huge, Captain. Enormous! At least 400 meters across and square like a mudbrick. There she is!
The view screen showed a giant dark spaceship floating without propulsion in space.
- It must be the DRINK TANK! It's the DRINK TANK!!
No, Boiler. Let Haddock and Mowatt salvage if there is anything to salvage. We're heading for Earth.
- Message from the HOODOO, Klaus Marion, he lets you know that he is heading back for Earth as well. He is expecting to see you at the Bad Kreuznach Space Port, in the Asimov Basement Bar.
- Sounds great! So, what do we have... which we haven't seen yet? I guess I also fell asleep during the second part of the Hobbit, extended cut. Just don't tell anyone. It's blasphemy, isn't it? Or, Arandi, are you up for a round of Scrabble?
- I will win, of course. she said. As always.

An OBSERVATION
Made on Earth, not in space. I don't know, but it is my impression that when a young person is bestowed with an honor, he or she suddenly acts as if he or she had accumulated more wisdom. Or one could also say that he or she acts with more self-confidence. When an older person is bestowed with an honor, he or she is humbled and expresses himself or herself more carefully. Has anyone else made the same, or a similar observation?

Incoming Transmissi◷n

- It's Rolf Strömgren calling, said Boiler. He says "Don't worry about typoes. They can always be sorted out. There are worse things!"
- I know. Like Meteor showers... they must be worse.
On screen.
The viewscreen flickered and produced the bearded and bespectacled friendly face of Rolf Strömgren.
- Hi there!
- Say... #21 is the same as 21a, is it?
- Indeed, it is. When I made 21, I wasn't determined to produce 21b. Otherwise I would have called it 21a immediately.
- Aha. You know that thing about Lucio Fontana. *He punctured the surface of his canvases, breaking the membrane of two-dimensionality in order to highlight the space behind the picture.* You ought to write a filksong about that. Like... to the tune by Harry Belafonte. "There's a hole in my space-time, dear Isaac, dear Isaac..." If not someone has done so already.
- Sure! Rolf, do I adress it to Newton or Asimov? I will keep it in mind.
- And you know... about garbage... I mean Art.. being mistaken for garbage and tossed away... A friend of mine, who works in the industry, claims it has happened already. More than once.
- Why am I not surprised to hear that? I laughed.
- You have to think of your affiliation with Marina Battistella as a long-term project, and don't count on the galleries. They only crave money and take a huge share of the profit.
- I know. But thanks for the input. Galleries take 50% of the sale price (VAT included). Which I think of as fair, as a matter of fact. But you're right, I do not expect any immediate results. However, for potential investors, who buy directly from the artist (or me), I can guarantee that we invest what we can, to boost the artist and the value of her art. Making it a good investment..
- Exhibitions are exellent to make contacts and to build a network. Maybe start a newsletter.
- Hey! That's a thought! A newsletter... or something like it. Marina has already had loads of exhibitions and keeps having them. Currently there is one in Prague. She's expanding her network. But, alas still few, very few sales. Not that I expected differently...
Art **is** hard to sell.

- And finally, I wanted to congratulate you, on an honorable 2nd place in the TAFF-race!
- Thank you, very much, Rolf. You phrased it exactly how I like to see it. I don't see it as losing. I prefer to look at it as not having won at this time. I wanted someone to win, who wasn't from the UK. Nina is Austrian. Primary objective achieved. Also... I **if** I am to win TAFF, I want fans in Europe to *wake up*. The participation from Gerfany and Sverifandom was minimal. I don't and shouldn't win per default. Nina made an excellent campaign. She deserved to win.
I made no campaign. I had a funeral.
But in retrospect, I'd say the result was the best possible for TAFF. I would love to see a Canadian going for it, but no matter which, the first North American to ask me to nominate him, shall have my European campaign in his favor. And no matter if he or she wants the Eastercon or the Eurocon/Novacon option, I'll support it. Until then I'll still lobby for the latter choice, of course.
And... it is my guess, that the Eastbound traveller next year, will be the first who gets an invitation to come to Italy as part of his TAFF-trip. I'm pretty sure I will get the rocket facing in the appropriate direction next time. It was kind of an omen, having it wrong.



This rocket is Eastbound... as in next year's race.

- Rolf, thanks for calling! Forgive me for making you an integrated LoC this time (and only this time).
- Bye! I'll go back to my activity, trying to gather funds for the WWF (World Wildlife Fund) by phone calls. [...sigh...] to save elephants from becoming extinct in the wild. Most recent call, I misspoke and said; "...telephones will be extinct in the wild..."
- Elephants, telephones, I can see how such a Freudian slip can come up [...chuckles...]. A lot of people chose not to have a home phone, only the mobile phone. Telephones may become extinct!

Is Time Travel Imp◷ssible?

I found this Djinn-in-a-bottle in a storage locker, uncorked it, and was faced with a vaporous entity which instantly granted me the traditional three wishes.
- I would like to be able to time travel. I said.
- Done! Actually, I didn't have to do anything, the Djinn chuckled, since you *are* time-traveling. Minute by minute you go into the future.
- But, I want time to be running backwards.
- Done! said the Djinn with a smug face.
- I don't see any difference.
- You wouldn't. Who said, the processes running in the universe have anything to do with your definition of time? I mean, I don't even need to reverse the Earth's orbit around the sun, neither the orbit of the Solar System around the Center of the Galaxy.
If you look at it from one side it will be clockwise and from the other side; counterclockwise. What did you expect? Ask for a Time Machine, and I'll give you a wristwatch. A bottle of minutes? Take an hourglass, you can have the hour running both ways. But no matter if the sand runs up or down in the glass, it still passes an hour. And what's your third wish?
- I want you to go back into your bottle and shut up, so that I can cork it and have three more wishes at another time.
- Aww, bummer!!! The Djinn sighed, but obeyed.
- It stuffy in here! came the muffled disapproval from inside the bottle.
- Were you not obliged to shut up?
- Well, technically those were two wishes. One to go back into the bottle and secondly to shut up. But you already had your three wishes!
- But you didn't actually *do* anything, my volatile friend. Except returning to your bottle, thank you very much! You just *talk* a lot.
- Well, I haven't had an intelligent conversation in 443 years.
- Flattery gets you nowhere!
- Hey! I didn't say our conversation was intelligent. I said I haven't had one in over 440 years.
- Oh! The spirit entity had a point there.

* * *

- Duh! Human beings are so small minded. You think you can make the entire universe run backwards, for your own trifles. Whatever happens in your small world is mere trivia, compared to the universe.
And you expect *all of that* to bend to your will?
It is not a new idea. Have a look in Joshua 10:12-13! Do you *really* believe the gods ruptured the balance of the Solar System just to satisfy a small tribe at the rear end of this world? And on the other side of the planet, people were thinking; what a drag! Is the sun not going to rise today!? What did we do wrong?
Or Isaiah 38:8 when time even appears to become

reversed? Or 2 Kings 20:9? But, those are elaborate parlor tricks. A local temporal stasis field could explain Joshua. For Isaiah you just need to confuse one person's mind. And it's not like you are reversing the thermo-dynamic processes, or anything and you still perceive it all in a linear forward fashion. Which is what you actually want to do. You want to change the future, not the past. The past is already what it is. If it were other, or ever had been altered, you wouldn't feel bad about anything having turned out as it did. And changing the future is something you can do any day. Today.

I was beginning to wonder, if this Djinn ever was going to catch his breath. I began to understand why the bottle had been tucked away in a storage locker.

- You can look into the past, the Djinn continued, by observing the signs of what has remained of it. Actually, that's what most historians and archaeologists are doing. I can understand *their* desire to go back and look at how things *really* were. Because they are interested in every petty little detail and most of the time don't wish to change anything at all.

- Oh, shut up!

I had enough and put the bottle back where I had found it. Muffled sounds came from the storage locker, but I was unable to distinguish any words.

How I love peace and quiet!

* * *

Be careful what you wish for. Even innocent wishes such as peace and quiet can be overdosed.

BORED◷M

Sometimes, when bored, I see what I have in my drawers. There's always a hint of madness from the past somewhere. For example... there is my little blue book of madness.

"Inkhead Production - Fanzines" I used to write down every fanzine I made, in which language, how many pages, how many copies and the accumulated amount of pages, etc This is how I can say exactly, that my 100th fanzine was Quiekschnauz XI for the 27th CAPA mailing. 150th was TID & RYMD # 14 for Sigma TC (the club magazine) and 200th was...

Not sure... after production #182 it gets slightly confusing (CoClock # 5). But with CoClock # 19 I had passed making 200 fanzines, for sure.

Page 1000 was back in 1981, 1500 in January of 1985 (Nazghâsh # 2) and page 2000 in 1999.

Suffice to say, nothing noteworthy in that blue book.

I also kept meticulously statistics over how many letters I wrote. I loved statistics. I was so boring.

I can still be amazingly boring. I even bore myself.

Ah, Inkhead... yes, I used to sign my illustrations with it, so I wouldn't have my own name all over the fanzine. It would appear as if I did all by myself, which is what I often did. Only wanking is more embarrassing (in semi-public, such as fanzines).



Artwork: José Sanchez, Cybernetica, 1998

Arandi was standing on the port side of the Counter-Clock, looking dreamingly out the window into the infinite vastness of space.

- I am a machine. she said.
- Yes, that is correct.
- I am only one in a series of one thousand.
- Yes, that is also correct.
- You are unique.
- Where are you going with this?
- I am expendable, am I not?
- Not to me, you are. You are not expendable at all.
- But I am not unique either.
- Well, I like to think of myself as unique, but... There are so many of us, that it doesn't really matter anymore. We humans have become even more expendable than you androids. You cost a shitload of cash. Humans can breed like rabbits. In fact, some do.
- Can my mind be preserved?
- Can mine? Look, the question is, is what we know so valuable that it needs to be preserved? Can't we simply pass down what we have learned, by writing about it? Good riddens, all the boring thoughts I ever had. Who cares?
- But they have great value to you.
-Yes, they have. But to me alone. As your thoughts and experiences have to you. We like to think that we have experienced something wonderful, that we would like to share. But everyone feels that way.
- And... by ending... we allow the next to experience everything on his own.
- That's it! And there are infinite experiences to be

made. And they are all, more or less, as fun, as wonderful, as enticing to experience, as what we have experienced. The universe contains infinite wonders even in small, small realms. We just have to learn how to see it.
- What is it like? Dying?
- I don't know, I haven't done it yet. But I guess it is similar to running out of battery.
- But when I run out of battery, I can be recharged.
- Humans can be revived, after dying. But we also decompose. If we have started to decompose, we cannot be brought back to life. I guess... as a machine, the point from which you can't be brought back is only slightly further away.
- But you have a soul.
- What is a soul? We have soles, but what is the soul? No one can really answer that. There are still so many things we do not know.
- I am self-aware, said Arandi. I like to think I have a soul as well.
- Yes, that's an interesting point. Can we create souls? If so, then we somehow prove, that we don't have one. Don't we? Or we prove that we can create souls, which is it?
- One can go crazy, thinking about these things.
- It's not the only thing one can go crazy thinking about. Try to grasp the concept of infinite and everlasting. I feel, scientists like the Big Bang theory, because it puts a beginning to it all. It is comfortable being able to say;"It began 14 billion years ago..." as if we knew it. But it is really just a pile of horseshit.
It is also comfortable to be able to say, the universe is this and this gazillion lightyears big. So we don't have to think about what is beyond that. Yes, you can ask, but it becomes irrelevant. But you see... it never is irrelevant. Because you can't even grasp the 14 billion years, neither the gazillions of lightyears. You make a scale model in your head, and you have no idea what the scale really represents.
- We don't really think so differently, do we? said Arandi with the hint of a smile in her metallic face.
- Of course not, I requested the parameters you have. I wanted you to be smart.
- Like yourself!
- Hrrm... now that you phrase it as such, you find me almost embarrassed. Yes, we like to think of ourselves as smart. No one **ever** complains about not having been given enough intelligence. Not even the mediocre minds. Everyone is convinced they are clever enough. Well, most people anyway. But most people just follow the crowd, like lemmings. They only repeat what they have heard and never or rarely add a thought of their own.
- And you?
- I am really pleased with myself, when I come up with a joke that no one has told me, but I created it in my own mind. I am pleased, when I say or write something, which is good reading, and no one has ever said anything like it before. I am also thrilled when someone else comes up with something as unique in mind. On the topic whether machines have a soul or not, if they are property or if they should have the right to chose, a lady named *Melinda Snodgrass* once wrote a brilliant episode of Star Trek; *"The Measure of a Man"*.
- Yes, I saw it. While you were watching Stargate. That's what started me thinking.
- You know, I think a lot about what I leave behind. And I believe that most of what I had to say, what was worth saying, has been said somewhere in 24 issues of CounterClock. I leave behind far more writing than what most people do. But then far less than what some writers leave behind. But I don't believe that I ever knew enough or learned anything in excess of what humankind has learned. I am just one in ten billion people.
- Counting some of those who died already.
- Exactly. And there are more people alive today, than people who have died since the foundation of Rome in 753 BC.
- And everyone is unique. I guess we won't be missing one or the other as much.
- No, but you androids don't reproduce. Yet.
- We have no such desire.
- Do you have *any* desire at all?
- Well, with thinking, comes the inevitable questions. We want to know why we are here, what we are and where we go to. Is this now, only here and now or is there forever?
- Perhaps this one moment here and now includes the forever.
Arandi mimicked human behavior by raising an eyebrow. She gazed at me with her artifical blue eyes.
- How do you figure?
- There are moments in time we treasure. Those moments we wish'd we could share. One of them, for example, was in 1984, when I was heading back home on my bicycle trip to Germany. I was leaving Recklinghausen early in the morning and was alone on the road. It was a long smoothly asphalted stretch of bicycle path next to the main road, which was some kind of an alley. It was October, so the leaves started falling and the morning was slightly foggy. So I pedalled until I had good speed and then just glided through the morning, with no other sound than the wind at my ear. It was a magical moment in time.These are the precious moments we live for.
Sometimes *years* can pass between them, but when they come, all the hardship and suffering in between seem worthwhile. We don't really suffer about anything much which is further in the past than three months. Unless we choose to do so.
- Why would you choose to do so?
-Because some of the people who die, have become so much a part of ourselves, so that a part of us dies, when they die. Such as my brother. Or Jelena.

- I do not understand this.
- Well, how old are you?
- A month or so... I am fresh off the production line, state of the art android. A.I. Mark III.
- And this conversation we are having. Do you like it? Will you remember having it?
- Yes, I like having it. I will be able to recite it word for word exactly, for the duration of my existence.
- Can you associate a color or smell with it?
Arandi hesitated. But then she decided...
- Blue... and coffee...
- So, let's say that we have more conversations like this, over coffee. What will the smell of coffee eventually remind you of?
Arandi mimicked a genuine human smile.
I have lived for more than 50 years. Everything I touch at home, more or less, everything has memories attached to it. And the more you loved someone, the heavier your heart, or CPU, when they die.
- What is love?
- You know... Russians do not distinguish between love and like. The Russian word is one and the same. The Greek on the other hand, have four different words for love, to describe the different sensations. I believe most important is not to confuse love with sexual desire. This is a hormone driven impulse, confusing the human mind thoroughly. But generally I would go with the Russian understanding of the word. Love life and everything in it, with all of your CPU, ROM and RAM. Don't be lukewarm about things and don't deem one love of higher value or virtue than the other. You may discover that life can love you back with the same generousity. We are all in passing. Man, machine, animal, constructions... Even the pyramids will have an end in the cosmic view of things. Nabokov once wrote: "Life is a flash of light between two identical sets of darkness." And perhaps he was right.
But in the vast emptiness of space, two minds have met and we say hello to each other. Isn't that quite a miracle in itself? What more do you want?
You have been given existence. And just like your creators, us human beings, you have been given the power to create wonderful moments or misery in the lives of others. It is up to you, to decide which it is you exist for. Of course, most entities do not spend much time thinking about it, so they do both.
You can do that, if you like. But now that you *are* thinking about it. You might have a preference what you would like to spend your existence with. In the end you will only exist in the memories of those who you encountered. IF Nabokov was right...
- And if we have a soul.
- Then may the Gods have mercy on those who only created misery for their fellow beings.
- Do you believe in Gods?
- Honestly? I don't know. But there must be something more in the universe than space and energy.

Halluciraptor Photography

I'm the raptor. Actually, it began with the usual problem. I can't use my given name as a login, because there are already a million others whose name isn't "Wolf", but who like to think of themselves as one. Back in the days, when computers were not in everyone's hands, at least Wolfram was still useful, so it became my first *computer name*. Later I had to come up with something giving zero hits if you google it. That's when I invented the Halluciraptor and a couple of other names, which gave zero hits.
Among them "Grendeline" (my main RPG character) in everything from Dark Grimoire to Baldur's Gate.
I used the code name Halluciraptor for the online sf-game Ogame a long time. Now I use it to "sign" my photo's, when needed. I don't actually *sign* them, but when somebody asks what name to put, it's either my own or Halluciraptor.
I've done nearly 9,000 baseball / softball pictures and here's my favourite one of those:



I like to create impossible scenes. It is fun...
And some of it only takes limited effort in photoshop.



Such as this hollow tree trunk. As such, it is hard to estimate, just how plenty of space there is inside. Would a person fit into it? No, not really. A child perhaps, but not a grown up.



Jelena Darshina was kind enough to volunteer.



So I took a couple of shots outside the trunk.



...before I placed her inside.

This experience of size is rarely **in** the picture, when we see it. Have we actually *been* to a place, then we *know* how big something is. Photographs of the pyramids rarely do them any justice, because they need to be taken over a distance. You can't get all of a Giza pyramid into the picture, if you are standing right next to it. Which means, we can't really say how big the tree trunk is, until we put a person inside. And then we are still in the dark.



I can put a whole Eurocon inside, if I want to.

Father and son:



But sometimes no trickery at all is required:



When i first saw this building on the cover of the Pink Floyd album Animals, I thought the chimneys were photoshopped into the picture.
When you see the real thing in London, you still feel like the chimneys are photoshopped into reality.
Well, that's how I felt about it anyway...

I can also repair and restore old pictures which have been damaged. As long as the faces are intact.
I can't *guess* what a face looked like. But the rest can be guessed back into place.
Old pictures rarely have very good resolution.

When creating a fake image, there are certain levels of trickery, which basically depend on how much time you spend with creating the fake.



I have noticed, that the habit of creating fakes also increases the ability to spot a fake when you see it.
That is, if a dilettante has created the fake. I would dare to say, that no one can spot a fake I made, unless I wish it to be so. And that is a level of skill.
A dilettante rarely has the proper sense of proportion. Neither does he pay sufficiently attention to the details of shadow angle, hue and contrast. To create a perfect fake one needs a vast archive of pictures.

The evidence of your *crime* is easily removed by lowering the resolution. Basically, I can create any kind of image you want. If it involves a person, it depends on the resolution of material provided. The level of perfection is an issue of time, and the price one is willing to pay for the fake image.
Fake or real?



Me, on the Red Square in Moscow 1996

It's real. On the other hand, it is hardly fair to ask about small reproductions such as this.



While this one is obviously a fake, since Michael Hällzon [read: Hells son] doesn't have any identical twin.

So... yeah, I could theoretically enter this line of work when I have my new computer... in order... And if anyone had any need or use of this skill...
Meanwhile I'm content with shooting animal, people, birds and babes... And sf-conventions...



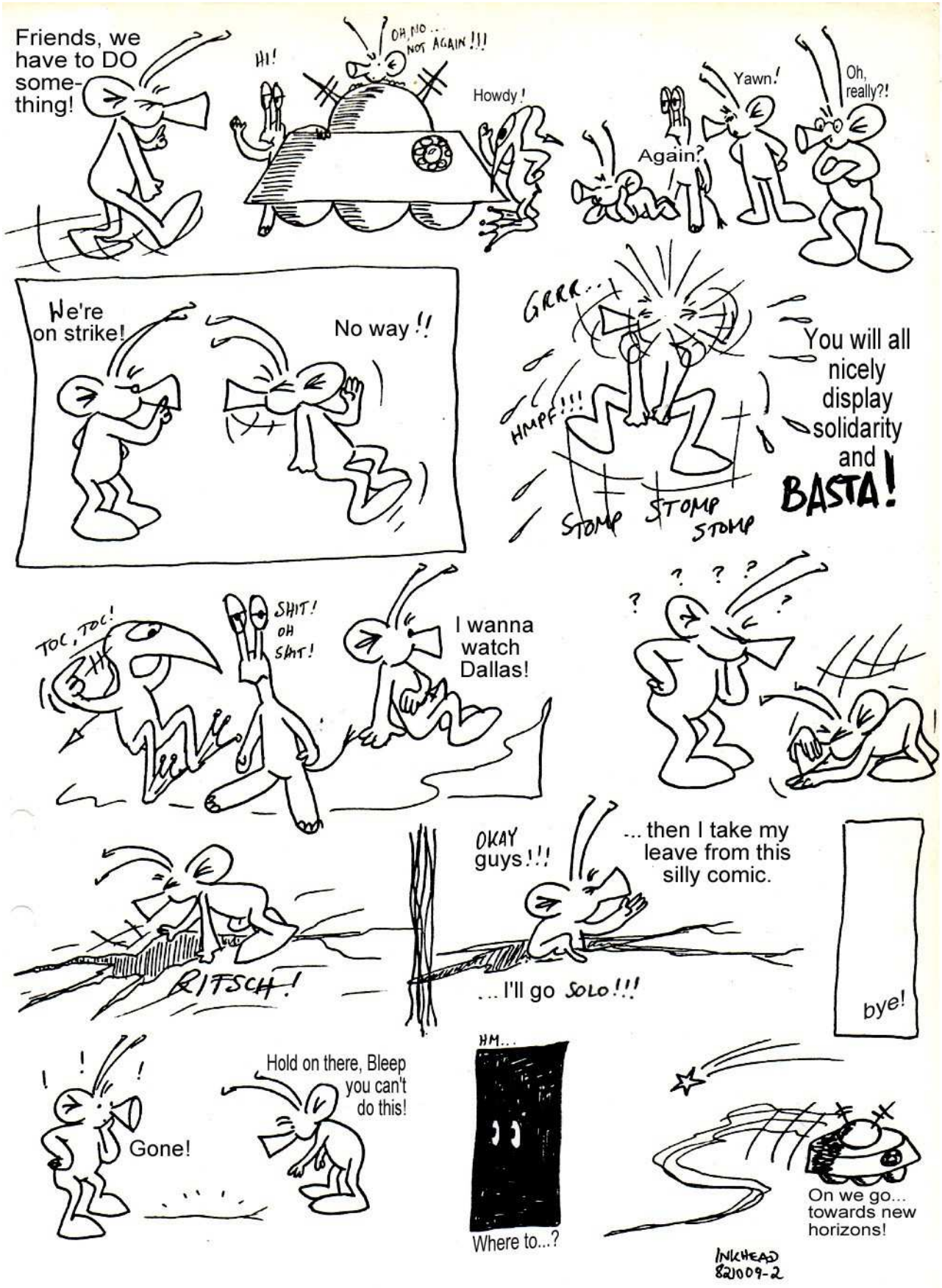
Dee, 2004

I wish I could work with this, but the market for photographers is no more profitable than for writers and artists, musicians... basically everything which is creative. So, let's call it another one of my hobbies.

My favourite direction in which to point the camera, is towards people (except infants - they're all cute, I might as well be shooting cats). So if you like to be in front of the camera, rather than behind it, then we are a match.

Sincerely, the Halluciraptor


A shooting star! Let's make a wish!
YEEPIE!
It worked!
FOP!
What?
Empty?
WOOSH!
YAHOO!!!
DOPS!
SERVUS!
I AM DJINNIE...
I grant you but ONE wish!
BUT...
...I merely wished for...
No butts !
Hurry up!
... a bottle of VURGUZZ !!!
OKAY!
HEY! It didn't have to be so much! Let me out of here!!!
POCO DOPO...*
SPUCK!
GASP!
Yikes!
SK&L PRINTHEAD!
Cheers INKHEAD!!
KLING!
KLONK!
GRRR...
You think you can do whatever you want with me, don't you?
STOMP STOMP!!!
BLUB BLUB BLUB
AHEM...
Yes...
Exactly...
OH!
You can...
INKHEAD-821009-1
Translated 150619
*POCO DOPO - Italian for "shortly thereafter"


Friends, we have to DO some-thing!
HI!
OH, NO... NOT AGAIN!!!
Howdy!
Again?
Yawn!
Oh, really?!
We're on strike!
No way!!
GRRR...
HMPF!!!
STOMP STOMP STOMP
You will all nicely display solidarity and BASTA!
TOC, TOC!
SHIT! OH SHIT!
I wanna watch Dallas!
? ? ? ? ?
OKAY guys!!!
... then I take my leave from this silly comic.
... I'll go SOLO!!!
RITSCH!
bye!
Gone!
Hold on there, Bleep you can't do this!
HM...
Where to...?
On we go... towards new horizons!
INKHEAD 82009-2

ConFuse
2015

SweCon
in 2015

Guests of Honour:
Ben Aaronovitch
Madeline Ashby
Kristina Hård

7-9 August 2015

Frimurarehotellet
Linköping, Sweden

http://confuse.nu/

A Memory ◷f Mark Brandis

I remember Mark. Actually, his real name was Nikolai von Michalewsky and he was a German sf-writer descendant from Russian nobility, born 1931 in Dahlewitz, Mark Brandenburg.
To my surprise, he has a Wikipedia entry in English.
We were both GoH at the SF-Days 10 of North-Rhine Westphalia in 1998.
It was the first sf-convention he had ever been to, but he enjoyed himself immensely. He was a sweet old man and I feel privileged to have met him.
Beluga Post, the con-chair, was a huge fan of his writing. He liked fandom and conventions so much that he returned for Trinity, the following year. That's the last time we spoke.
Mark Brandis died near the end of the following year.
I didn't know him very well. After all, we only met twice and I haven't even read his work. But I know this, that no greater gift could have been given to him, than being present at these two conventions.



Me and Mark Brandis (Nikolai von Michalewsky) at SF-Days 10, NRW 1998.

Mark Brandis wrote hard sf space opera, but unlike similar literature of his time, he put the human being and not technology in the foreground.

- Hey! yelled Arandi suddenly. Did you know Boiler had a mobile unit?
- Yes, it looks like a washing machine with the head of a vacuum cleaner, connected by a short hose for a water cannon. It has primitive claws and...oh, why am I telling you all of this? Just look at the cover of this issue. You're sitting right next to him and you are preparing for landing on Hahn Space Port. Why did José Sanchez do all this work if you're not looking at the pictures? I mean.... really.... and I don't need to describe every little detail.
- Say... why is **he** a robot and I'm an android? What's

the difference?
- Well, uhm... I'm not sure, but I guess youi are an android because you approximate human appearance while a robot is constructed for functionality.
Look it up! Go to the hamburger bar of knowledge. Wikipedia must have an answer for those kind of questions.
- So, it's not the remote control.
- No, it's not, inflected Boiler, surprising both of us with actually *having* a different tone of voice.

ANOTHER INC◷MING TRANSMISSION

- It's from **Lloyd Penney**, Captain.
- On screen!
- Ahem... it is a recording.
- Very well. Play back recording.
- The date is May 4, 2015 and the recording was dispatched from the Etobicoke Space Communication array in Ontario, Canada.

"Dear Wolf:

I won't do the usual greeting you'd expect on a day like today, but I will say thank you for issue 21b of CounterClock, and I will say I will attempt to write up another loc, and see how I do.

Kevin Standlee might not have been kidding. I know some faneds who don't like conrunners, for some reason. I've been more than 30 years in fanzines, and about 30 years on the con committee, so I imagine some people aren't sure what to think of me. A CounterClock convention would be great, but it does take money to run, and in many cases, you will need to be incorporated in order to sign a contract with the hotel or facility you stage the convention at.

Well, TAFF. Sorry you didn't win, but I hope you will run again, and you can have a nomination from me again. I am sure Nina will really enjoy herself. You should be able to enjoy the experience, too, one day.

Just this past weekend, Yvonne and I were in Ottawa, enjoying a large collection of M.C. Escher prints on display at the National Art Gallery of Canada. Much of the display was provided by George Escher, Maurits' son, who now lives in Canada.

I am finding only a few comments to make…maybe it is simply fatigue that's causing it. My job now has plenty of new responsibilities, so I will have even less time to get everything done, especially all the letters I need to write. Soon, I hope…take care, and see you with the next issue.

Yours, Lloyd Penney."

- End of message. Boiler stated only the obvious for the reason of protocol.
I also needed a few seconds to sort out my thoughts for the response.
- Boiler, send the following reply; begin recording: "Dear Lloyd, thank you for your comment on CC21B. I can't imagine the day you cease to brighten my day by acknowledging that I have at least two readers.

You know, phrasing it the way I did, was actually covert critisism aimed at those who are so narrow-minded and prejudice that they would think less of a person merely because he finds his pleasure in a different sort of fanac. I can't even imagine what I possibly could say to such a fan. I guess, we would simply remain in alternate realities to each other.

It is not for me to pass judgment on my fellow fan. It is not for my fellow fan to pass judgment on me. This is true in spite of the fact that the Bible says so.
...only... the Holy Rollers phrase it slightly differently.

No, Boiler, delete that last comment. Continue.
Actually... it seems you didn't understand yet, and so probably a few others along with you, that the CounterClock Convention will be a fictional one with real and fictional characters.
The convention site will be the fictional ASIMOV CONVENTION CENTER built right above the also fictional ASIMOV BASEMENT BAR. Of course... just like Orson Welles got people to believe that the War of the Worlds actually was taking place, I would not mind if less careful readers believe this Con did take place.
Wow... and goshwow about having seen the Escher collection in Ottawa. I would also have loved to see that. Roberto Quaglia had a few prints at his place in Bucharest and each and every one of Escher's creations is highly fascinating.

Don't ever worry about the length of your comment again. I feel there is also a need for short comments, so that more people realize they don't have to write any epic LoCs. A single thought can suffice. I'm still thinking about how to do with the next issue.
I am currently on a mission of space exploration. We found a planet with cute and tiny, little volcanoes and with an enormous bureaucratic apparatus. Which reminds me,. that we still have 256 Frunts to pay in illegal landing fines.
- You want to include all this small talk? asked Boiler.
- Yes, and now that I remember it; create an entry in the Internet Defloration Database about that planet we visited. We don't want anyone else to be fucked.
- Uhm, if Boiler could have made a stupid face, he would have. There already is an entry for the planet on IDDb, Captain. It says *avoid planet at all cost*.
- *Now*, you're telling me.
Anyway, let's return to planet Earth and see what is going on at the Asimov Basement Bar. It seems the Frankfurt-Hahn Spaceport and Airport is so far away from Frankfurt, it is not even in the same federal

state. Hahn is in Rhineland-Pfalz, while Frankfurt is in Hessen. I better make a touchdown in Bad Kreuznach before I go to Wetzlar.
Truth be told, I haven't been in Bad Kreuznach since the SFCD-Convention in Hackenheim 1987.
That would be 28 years ago. And I have not seen Klaus Marion, since he and his wife were in Sweden, roughly 25-26 years ago. At LONCON we skillfully managed to not find each other, even though looking for each other was part of our mission. The first shock was when his daugter opened the door, a blonde knock-out in her early twenties. Well done there, indeed! And Ingrid was the younger one.
Their son, Sven, was already out of the house, pursuing his studies in Magdeburg. He is 25.
Well, there you have it. The *wild years* of our youth abruptly come to an end, when we believe family and duty (and career) to be important above all.
And 25 years just disappear into a void which is duty and obligations. Actually... no... can't say those 25 years just disappeared. There was the GAFIA-time, the time in Russia, the last troubled years in Sweden and finally the relocation to Italy. But all that is an entirely different story. This is:

WETZKON II

Klaus Marion still had to work on Friday, so he dropped me off in Frankfurt around 07:00 AM.
Gerfany is familiar stomping ground. From 1976 and for 10 years I travelled around Europe by Interrail in six or seven summer months, barring 1981, the year of military service and 1984, when I chose the bike over the train. Otherwise I experienced most of what used to be West Germany, from Leck near Denmark *(Jörg Litschke)* in the north to Tuttlingen *(Martin Honecker)* at the Bodensee in the south.
Came to think of it, it is true that German fans *fight* among each other over many a trivial matter. But it is also true that I have laughed more in Gerfany than anywhere else. When the fog of battle has settled, the German fans are much closer to just having fun, than other samples of the same species.



Artwork: Rainer Habeck, 1980 - "Walter Ernsting merged with his favourite Perry Rhodan-character "Pucky".

Since Trinity 1999, the Eurocon in Dortmund I recall these book bags coming into use in Gerfany. I have a red book bag from Trinity, a blue Perry Rhodan book bag from GarchingCon 9 - 2013 and now upon arrival in Wetzlar I assisted Roger Murmann and Thomas Recktenwald in packing the Wetzkon-bag which on one side had the image of what I believe to be the bridge over the river Lahn, with old Wetzlar in the background, reading **WetzKon II 03-05.07.2015** above and **60 Jahre SFCD 1955 - 2015** below.
The other side of the bag simply said **WetzKon II** above the *Ernsting-Pucky-flying-through-an-asteroid belt-in-a-carrot-jet-toon* with the names of the GoH's beneath.
Andreas Eschbach
Reinhard Habeck
Wolf von Witting
Eva Strasser (DSFP)
Markus Orths (DSFP)
...which in my book is an entirely new level of *cool*. I never had my name on a book bag before.
Considering the amount of recent deaths, it is remarkable how the WetzKon-committee (basically Birgit Fischer, aka BiFi) managed to assemble such a dynamic trio as GoH.
First Jesco von Puttkamer was intended as GoH. But he passed away already in December 2012.
Next, the undisputed sovereign of German science fiction, Wolfgang Jeschke, was GoH. It was a major shock for all of German fandom, that he died on June 10th, barely three weeks before WetzKon II was to be held.
And me... BiFi tried to ask me during the LONCON, and we thought we'd see each other again during

the event, but it didn't come that way. I received the invitation a bit late, but still in time. And yes, *of course I accepted*. After publishing three Wetzkon-reports from the first event in 1956 (CoClock #14-16) there were so many reasons for me to attend this convention. Not the least of which was the privilege of being able to write this report.

THE KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING!

Andreas Eschbach is a modest man. When I pointed out that he now must be the new King of German SF, he countered that Wolfgang Jeschke was much more deserved of the title, since he was not only an author but also a distinguished publisher. This is all true. But Eschbach is only two months older than I am, and still has time to grow. But he has already gathered 9 Kurd Laßwitz and several DSFP, DFP and other awards already making him one of the most popular German sf and fantasy authors of all time. I would be very much surprised, if Eschbach doesn't rise any further. His writing is not the typical German style in which complex sentences are constructed merely to show off or to impress the reader. I haven't read many of his works yet, but what I have read, gives me the impression that translations would come easier than German sf in general and with any luck, might be able to present an Eschbach story to CounterClock-readers in a future issue.



Andreas Eschbach and Rainer Habeck with his companion Elvira in Wetzlar 2015. Photo: Roger Murmann

A purely personal observation. We have walked past each other at conventions before and this was the first time I actually talked with Andreas Eschbach.
I have never met anyone in German fandom who as much reminded me of *Willi Voltz* in mannerism.
It became very easy for me to like him. I can't recall who I mentioned it to (some other old-timer of Gerfany, who also had met Voltz), but he confirmed my impression.

RÜSSELMOPS MEETS MARSIPAN

Rainer Habeck is a fan, only slightly younger than myself (the same excellent vintage as Klaus Marion and Staffan Mossige-Norheim), who didn't come to sf- and fandom through Perry Rhodan, but over his interest in the theories of Erich von Däniken and by getting to know von Däniken, through Däniken's friendship with Walter Ernsting to Perry Rhodan and thereafter to sf-fandom.



Some of Rainer Habeck's work

Habeck is also writing things, but undoubtedly his strongest side is in his humoristic artwork.
There was a time when I suspected that Rainer might have been vaguely inspired by my Marsipan toons on the Perry Rhodan-readers pages, which preceded his works by a decade or so, but after hearing his story all such thoughts could be discarded. The lore of *little green men* and their attributes is very much the same throughout Gerfany.
Rainer Habeck asked this very quizzical question, where does it come from? Here it is an advantage being able to read English. Wikipedia does have a long and extensive article on it. But not in German. Sorry.
Rainer Habeck's cartoons are very popular and appear regularly on the PR-readers-pages. Rainer himself his an Austrian from Vienna, and as such a pretty relaxed character.

We attended each others program items. But due to the extreme heat and my eyes hurting a bit, I looked down to the floor for a while and only listened.
I could have sworn I was awake all of the time, but Kees van Toorn, among others later claimed they heard me snoring. The *photographic evidence* taken only confirms that my head was down. I don't know if I fell asleep. I don't remember falling asleep.
But most important of all, Rainer Habeck didn't hear me snore, he just kept joking about it later, because I believe, of course, every word Kees van Toorn says.



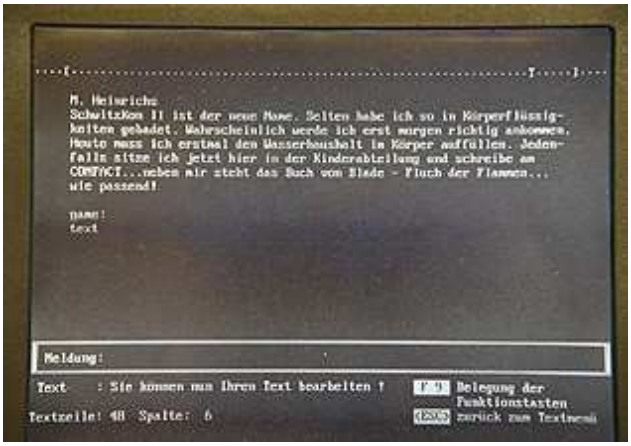
Kees van Toorn still lives of publishing Perry Rhodan in the dutch language.

Kees is internationally best known for having been the chair of the WorldCon in den Haag (the Hague), in the Netherlands 1990. He is perfectly fluent in English and in German.
According to Kees, Perry Rhodan wasn't cancelled in the US because it didn't sell, because it did. Perry Rhodan was cancelled out of fear it would appropriate a too large share of the market. So Forry Ackerman was forced to cancel. Or bribed to... It makes sense.
Perry Rhodan in dutch has reached issue 2300-something and is still doing well. A new issue of Perry Rhodan sells better in the Netherlands and in Germany than any average new publicated science fiction-novel.

Think about it. The new generation of Perry Rhodan-writers are former Perry Rhodan-fans. We all know what happened to Star Trek and Dr Who when the fans got their say. Why should Perry Rhodan be the exception?

KNUD LARN, No:3 ◷F DENMARK

Forever... or, at least for as long as I can remember, there has been Niels Dalgaard in Denmark. He once published the smallest fanzine I had ever seen.
His *PULSAR* was on a micro-fiche card. Later, but not very much later came Klaus Johansen. The third Danish fan to go interntional is Knud Larn. And Larn has the advantage that he can speak, or at least understands all the languages of the major fandoms in Europe. He is fluent in German and frequents German conventions for years, but he also has no trouble understanding Swedish, and of course his English is excellent as well. It was a bit of a surprise to find such a near *cousin* at Wetzkon II.
I discovered his presence in Wetzlar through CON FACT, the fanzine of Eckhard D Marwitz, which appears through courtesy of Eckhard and Matthias Kunkel for quite a few years now.



CONFACT, issues 145 to 147 was written during the con, by attending members.

I am guessing that the first issue of CONFACT came in the mid 90's, since HanseCon 15 - 1999 already saw the issue 33. It is being published by Edmund André, which is another one of Eckhard D Marwitz's many word-plays. EDM his initials + und (German for "and") + André, which is only a slight distortion of the word "Andere" (for *others*). Edmund André = Edmand Others.
The contributions this time were written by EDM, Marc Heinrichs, Dieter Schmidt, Knud Larn, Matthew Kunkel, Martin Stricker, Fred Körper, Jörg Ritter, Kees van Toorn and me. At Wetzkon II, 3 issues saw the light of day.
Fanzine-fandom is not completely dead. Yet.



Dieter Schmidt, writing his CONFACT contribution.

Another fanzine to appear at the con was **!XAVER**, which is a more typical German style fanzine, using all the advantages of modern technology in matters of layout and print. Still unmistakenly a fanzine.
Responsible are a quartet of fans, Ralf Bodemann, Christian Hoffmann, Udo Klotz and Stefan Kuhn.
They also publish a newletter appearing at conventions, with their advice on what to read in SF.

MORE C◷NFACTS

The fact above all other facts, repeatedly addressed in the fanzine CONFACT 145-147, was that Wetz-Con II from the gods of wind and weather had been chosen as the hottest convention on German soil ever. At least in modern times.
I recall MARCON'78 as a hot convention, but it was not quite as hot as this event, which peaked near 40 degrees Celsius.
Marc Heinrichs renamed it SchwitzKon in CF # 145.
It was difficult to sleep at night Friday-Saturday because of the heat. Another reason for being totally sloshed during Rainer Habeck's program item.

The fantastic Library of Wetzlar has 260.000 titles of fantastic literature, of which well 90% is in German language. It has an impressive fanzine-collection, which of course still is missing many important fanzines, but there is hope that time and generosity of heirs to fanzine-collectors can remedy this.
The mundane population can rarely assess the true value of old fanzines. To them it would often just seem like bundles of old paper. The underlying history of the entire science fiction-movement, the pro's of today are the fans of yesterday, is an insight few share.
The library is a safe haven for the history of fandom, as well as for the history of SF itself.



Very few ever had a private fanzine-collection of this volume. In Wetzlar it is a humble beginning.

I could spend many hours in the fanzine library, if it were not for the heat. The fanzine library was on the upper floor, which not exactly was the coolest part of the building.
The Phantastische Bibliothek Wetzlar had on the other hand two basement levels of which the sub-basement with the Perry Rhodan collection was the coolest... or least hot. There wasn't really any cold place to escape to, except for the fridge itself in the kitchen and I just wouldn't fit into it.

Unlike German conventions in the 70's, 80's and 90's, German fandom is now also experiencing an influx of female sf-fans, who are attending cons for other reasons than being the companion of a male fan. There was one young American, *Nicolette Stewart*, who has been living in Gerfany for the past decade, or so. *Bettina Wurche*, who IRL appears to be a scholar of Biology. Her lectures are always highly praised for their substance and I regret not having been able to attend her program item. This time. My estimate is that a third of the 80 attending members of WetzKon II were female.
I would call that quite a leap forward.

In Honor ◷f Wolfgang Jeschke

I was pitched with Andreas Eschbach to talk about the recently deceased Wolfgang Jeschke. This was the program item I was most worried about. I like to be prepared for program-items. I don't want to sit there and bs. I hate not being prepared. And I got notice of this program item on Friday.
I could hardly think of anyone less fit for the task than me. To make things worse, neither Eschbach nor I knew Jeschke privately. At least he has had professional interaction with Jeschke.
I suggested we'd pass the ball to the audience after we had exhausted our own experiences. And our personal experiences covered only 25 minutes (mine only 5). Fortunately Udo Klotz was among the audience. He has managed the Kurd Lasswitz Award since 1991 and had plenty of personal and private experience with Wolfgang Jeschke.
Udo Klotz is also a good speaker and should have been chosen for this program item in the first place.
He delivered substantial insight and was followed by Kees van Toorn, who had Jeschke as a GoH for the Worldcon in 1990. With the remaining participants who then shared their memories and experiences with Wolfgang Jeschke, the entire program item turned out a worthy farewell to one of the greatest fans ever to emerge from German fandom.



Authors reading selected passages of their work, is a common program item at German cons. Here Andreas Eschbach is reading one of his short stories.

THE FAN WOLF 2015

I often say, that while a pro' may enjoy all the awards and attention, the fans *only* reward is recognition.
A successful author can also receive a shitload of money. For a fan it is never about the money.
It is all about egoboo.
I decided for the end of my program-item to hand out once and only once the FAN WOLF to someone deserving. The choice was limited, since it is best passed on to someone present at the convention, and it had to be to someone whose work I was well familiar with and who has been doing it for a long, very long time.
Under consideration was Thomas Recktenwald, who has been the chair of the SFCD for ten years and a member of the board for several more years and who still was active.



Thomas Recktenwald in Wetzlar 2015.

Recktenwald has just come from Archipelacon. He reported that the convention between Finland and Sweden had approx 800 attending members, which makes it a very large Nordic con. Small in Finnish terms, but huge for Swedish standard. GoH at Archipelacon was George R R Martin.
Thomas also told me that he once had been FGoH at a convention in Italy. My claim in an earlier issue, that no one had ever been FGoH at a con in Italy is therefore incorrect. But not by much.
Thomas Recktenwald was FGoH at TauCetiCon II, on Sardinia 1996. But, it has to be noted, that the driving force behind TauCetiCon was a German fan.
And German fans do appreciate the fan life form.

Just not enough to hand out any awards. Until now.
The SFCD agreed at their annual meeting to instigate a Kuschke-Award for fannish pursuits.
I closed my lecture by handing out the FAN WOLF to Klaus Marion, for 30 years of entertaining fan fiction. His work does bring a smile to the face of his readers. And this is IMHO a very important matter.
A fandom as serious as the German one needs more laughing matters.



Klaus Marion, the master of German fan satire has written two fan fiction books and two even more hilarious books of mundane satire. We know the mundane world is crazy, Klaus Marion has skillfully exploited this fact.

I was impressed by his writing 30 years ago, and I still am. I wish I could emulate some of his sense for comedy in CounterClock and I will keep trying.
The Award itself was a cheramic Wolf sitting howling at the... moon (at least so I suppose... the moon didn't fit into the representation), and a diploma to hang at the wall (same kind of paper we used to give our GoH's at SaltsjöCon in the late 90's).
And... of course... no cash attached to the award. Because that was my point. It does not need to cost anything. Praise and friendliness is for free.

Friendliness is like an airbag. There is nothing inside, but it minimizes the damages. - Klaus Marion -

---

So be generous with it.
In particular the young and ambitious sf-fans need encouragement. Give it to them.
I believe fandom could be more lively, if the non-paid efforts of sf-fans were more appreciated.
Anyway...
The FAN WOLF will only be handed out once, as far as I am concerned. All the rights for any such future awards were handed over to Klaus Marion with the diploma, signed by me. It doesn't explicitly say so in the award itself, but I say it here.

My program item was initiated by the fanfare from "Fanfare for the Common Man" by Emerson, Lake and Palmer, in memory of the first sf-convention I attended 1977 in Kleve. I also used it once, at one of the Nasacons in the mid 80's.

IT IS STILL FRAKKING H◷T...

It is Friday the 10th of July. The con is over, I am back in Italy, but it is still too hot for typing fanzines.
I do it anyway. Memories in my head do not line up in a linear and orderly fashion. It is still too darn hot to demand discipline of my neurons.



Thomas Le Blanc is the steward of the library in Wetzlar.

What I forget in this issue, will be mentioned in the next issue, if I remember it later. A few more things need to be said though. It was a very nice event and with roughly 80 attending members, just of the right size. One had time to talk to all of the old friends and to make some new friends.
Wolfgang Pippke was one of the few who were around already in the 50's. He was part of Düsseldorf fandom and his closest friends were Rolf C Gindorf and Jürgen Molthof (CoClock # 14, page 16) who died in a car accident 1961.
Some interesting facts were revealed about Gindorf, which I may have to investigate further. He spoke 5 languages, among them Swedish? If so, then some Swedish fan must have known.
Also, during the show of Hagen Zboron's photo album a Mona Östling frequently appeared. Was she the daughter of Sigvard Östling? Could it be the one living in Kumla... (born today 1948).

The fan-historian in me is thrilled by such an event as WetzKon II. *Here walked Anne Steul!* Was a thought surfacing ever so often in the old town of Wetzlar. When I lived in Germany 1971-1974, there was an hour by train between our locations.
Less even.



CounterClock Volume 1 - issue 1-16, 264 pages in colour was my first contribution to the Library. It will not be the last. Too many publications risk to end up as recycled paper in a foreign country, should I pass on early. Here with Birgit Fischer (BiFI) of the SFCD at WetzKon II.

I spoke with Ralf Boldt, who is... something on the board of the SFCD and involved into next years con in Oldenburg, near Bremen. It is an event where I expect to be attending.
The flyer reads MediKon One, *SF meets medicine*.
The venue is scheduled for 12-14th August 2016.
Seems like an event where I can gopher a bit.
I also pre-paid my dues for the DortCon 2017, the Eurocon after Barcelona. Several events to look forward to.
What else? Perhaps I ought to mention that the DSFP (German SF Award) went to Eva Strasser (whose hand I had the privilege to shake at the entrance) and Markus Orths.
One of the flyers announced the PENTA-CON 2015 in Dresden on 11-13th September, where the Kurd Lasswitz Award will be handed out. See:
http://www.palitzsch-gesellschaft.de/
Click on Programm 2015
I would love to go, if I had the resources.

COUNTERCL◷CK
Wolf von Witting
Via Dei Banduzzi 6/4
33050 BAGNARIA ARSA [Ud] ITALIA
Email: wolfram1764-at-yahoo-dot-se

I have been paying attention. Suddenly I have reached page 31 and only one more page remains. You see... I had it all planned. Except... I have by no means said all I wanted to say about Wetzlar and WetzKon II, but I will have to save a few bits until next issue.

FINAL INC◷MING TRANSMISSION

From **John Hertz**, 236 S.Coronado Str No:409
Los Angeles, CA 90057, USA - dated: 6th June 2015
750th birthday of Dante Alighieri

Dear Wolf, Thanks for your careful explicit correction of that CounterClock 21 typo.
The two photos of Ahrvid Engholm on the left side of Clock 21b p.5 were particularly endearing to me.
His Mimosa 16 article mentions Ylva Spångberg, whom I haven't heard from or of recently. His M17 article mentions besides peanuts as in Clock 21b, also poker. My local club the LASFS (Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, oldest SF club on Earth) had poker mania for decades, our games being strange and some having strange names like Double Jesus and Ha Ha Herman; in Soft Shoe you can shuffle off to bluff a low. I myself was drawn into the game of Harry Warner's Fanzine Collection. I was wanted as a relief pitcher. I did pitch a little relief, but my team finally struck out. The game however may not be over. He mentions you often, although he sometimes calls you Wull Vör-Wirring. There's a good picture of a mimosa tree behind you and Marina Batistella on the right side of Clock 21b, p.6.

Let me join to those who explain to Rolf Strömgren that it's (literary present tense) Walt Willis' prose which is short and sturdy. I'm tempted to misquote George Orwell "If there is hope, it lies in the prose" except it may lie in the poetry.
I'm glad you stood for TAFF. It gave us two good candidates neither of whom lived in the United States or the United Kingdom. Such things help although they can't be of the highest importance. "This might be fun" is a better motive than "Is anyone there like me?"

ClockEd: Many puerile word games can be applied to my name in the Swedish language and they've all been done to death. "Wull Vör-Wirring" (total confusion) was one of the more imaginative distortions. And not entirely uncalled for. I hope to comfirm the volatility of my thought patterns in this issue of CounterClock. Sometimes the chaos in my head bothers even me. I wonder why I am wired like this. It has absolutely no apparent advantages.

FOUNDATION C◷NFERENCE CENTER
Above the Asimov Basement Bar

is near completion, now with half a year delay. While in Bad kreuznach I spent a lot of time in the *End of Eternity Garden*. Nobody uses the full name. The regular guests of the Asimov Basement Bar merely refer to it as the Eternity Garden. And at first glance it is a regular garden.
Regardless if you wish to sit in the shadow or in the sun, there's a spot for you. You can just relax or find a table to sit and write at. This is where I first penned down my impressions the oldfashioned way, with a pencil on paper.
A tiny bug crawls over the paper without bothering me. The garden is teeming with life.
Rudi Gerstner doesn't only feed his human guests, he is also a special friend of the birds who always find something to eat in his garden. There are two bird baths and bushes with berries, some for birds and some also for humans. There is life everywhere, as I remember it being in nature from my childhood. An insect buzzing around every plant. Butterflies flutter by.
A multitude of birds and the turtle Paula roams freely the garden. The right time of year, squirrels can come and pick their delights. Life is welcome, and it feels welcome here. With figs, apples, plums and berries, it gives back to the Gerstner family what he and his wife is giving the garden.
As I write a blackbird approaches the little pond and looks at me with curiousity. Who is this character who doesn't smack every bug within reach? He seems to be wondering. Or is it a she? Hard for me to tell.
Mind you, I live in the countryside, not in a small town such as Bad Kreuznach. But Italy has been under the thumb of agriculture ever so conscentious for thousands of years and every stream there flows now as straight as you can drive a tractor. In the planted forests, trees are standing as if they were soldiers in a military parade and the wind blows straight through them with no obstacles.
In the Eternity garden, the wind doesn't get far before it bounces off something and sends its hikers in a new direction. The more time you spend in the garden, the more you notice the care which has gone into details, such as the cheramic frog prince on an orb, the swedish pennon on the flag pole and the constant splashing and rippling of water.
Close friends of mine, the beescome to gather their honey. After anhour in the garden I am so relaxed that I don't want to leave, even if tiny insects insist on drowning in my glass of mineral water adding protein to it.
Rudi Gerstner is not a reactionary. Had I brought my laptop along I could have plugged it in at one of the tables. Electricity and internet. Surveillance cameras keep an eye on the larger predators who might approach the Foundation Conference Center. In case of a terrorist attack, the house would be surrounded by GSG-9 soldiers within the hour. No wonder the birds, bees, turtles, squirrels and bugs feel safe. Except for the ones drowning in my drink.
Over the distance I can hear children having a break at school and I hear the bell tolling when they're due for their lessons again. From a corner of the garden one has a view over one of the many vineyeards of Rhineland-Pfalz. The taste of Riesling always brings me back here, no matter where in the world I am.
The sound of running water adds a sensation of Tarkovsky and I get that pleasant notion of balance, harmony, peace and tranquility. A perfect moment in time. An Eternity in itself and the End of it. Tomorrow I return to Italy.



A bar pint from the Asimov Kellerbar (don't know how it ended up in my bag) and glimpse of the Eternity garden.