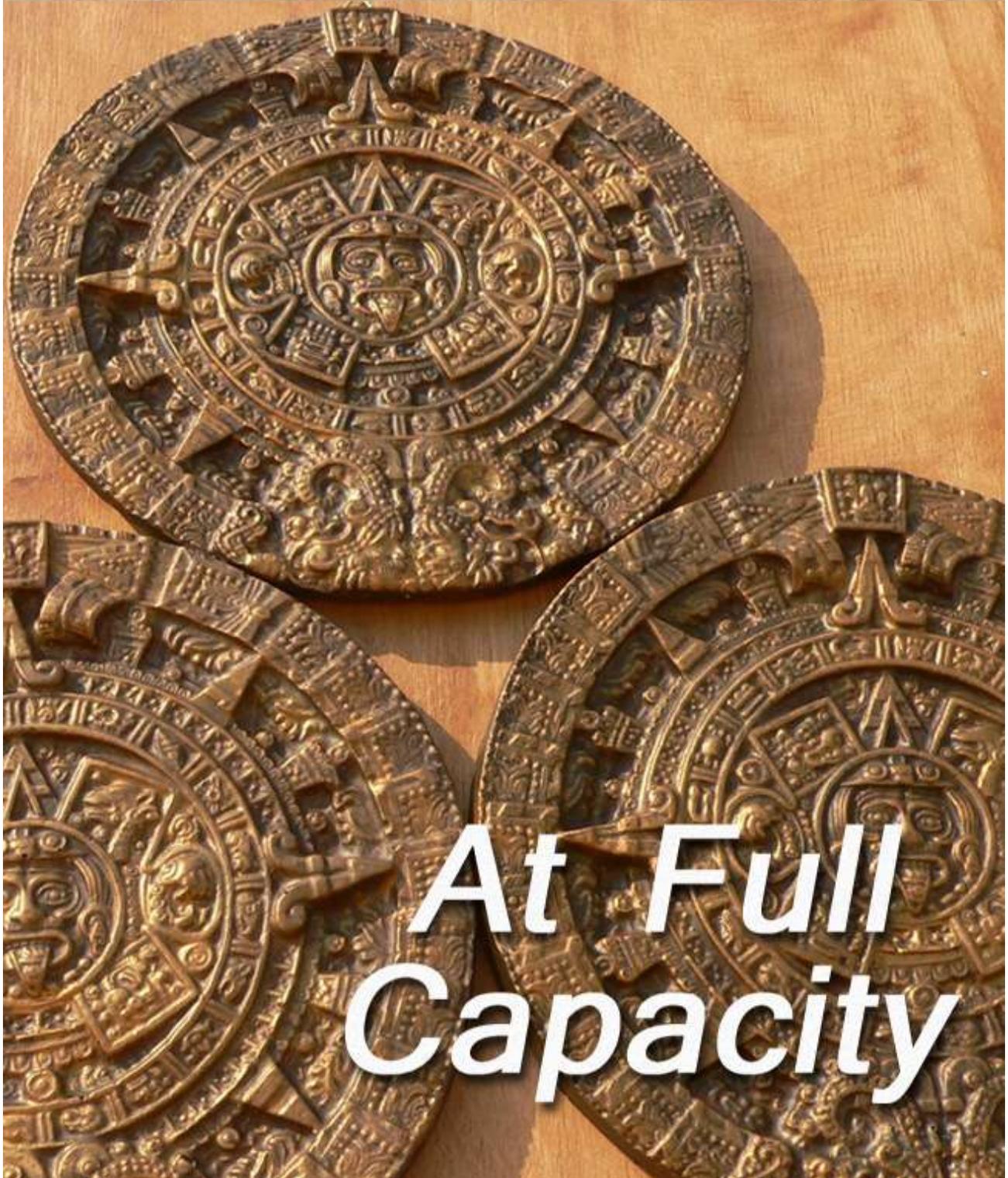


# COUNTERCLOCK

ISSUE # 35 - APRIL 2019



*At Full  
Capacity*

Artwork: Wolf von Witting. "The CounterClock Award – For Significant contributions to European SF Fandom"

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....page 02  
 Fannish Handcraft.....page 04  
 Sf-Fandom in Switzerland.....page 09  
 Tom Ölander, the Father of Finnish Fandom  
 by Wolf von Witting.....page 14  
 SCI FI SHORT PIECES.....page 20  
 History of Polish sf-fandom Part 1 (of 3)  
 by Aleksandra Wierzchowska.....page 35  
 Stieg Larsson -Science fiction reader  
 (and sometimes writer)  
 by John Henri Holmberg.....page 38  
 LoCol.....page 57  
 THE FINAL WORD.....page 62

(F)illustrations in this issue by Lars "Lon" Olsson, whose work has been appreciated in Swedish fanzines since they first appeared in the mid'70's.

**Continuous contributors & affiliates:**

*Special thanks to the following people for helping this fanzine to where it is today, by contributions in form of text, LoC's, images, significant encouragements, reviews, publicity and other assistance. These are our friends who each and every one in their own way made a difference:*

Nicklas Andersson (Sweden), Eemeli Aro (Suomi Finland), Anders Belis (Sweden, Greece), Imants Belogrivs (Latvia), Gregory Benford (USA), Olaf Brill (Gefany), Sue Burke (Spain, USA), Tomas Cronholm (Sweden), Robert Day (UK), Theresa Derwin (UK), Rainer Eisfeld (Gefany), Bojan Ekselenski (Slovenia) Klaus N Frick (Gefany), Carolina Gomez-Lagerlöf (Sweden), Ronald M Hahn (Gefany), Teddy Harvia (USA), Roelof Goudriaan (Netherlands), Rob Hansen (UK), John Hertz (USA), John-Henri Holmberg (Sweden), Darius Hupov (Romania), Lena Jonsson (Sweden), Marcin Klak (Poland), Gerard Kraus (Luxembourg), Radoslaw Kot (Poland), Nicolas Krizan (Sweden), Guy Lillian (USA), Katja Lindblom (Sweden), Bojana Nariel Lubina (Croatia), Richard Lynch (USA), Cristina Macia (Spain), Floria Anca Marin (Romania), Klaus Marion (Gefany), Denny Marshall (USA), Gerd Maximovic (Gefany) Jim Mowatt (UK), Einar Leif Nielsen (Iceland, Denmark), Karl-Johan Norén (Sweden), Tatjana Novitjenko (UK), Guntram Ohmacht (Gefany), Mats Öhrmann (Sweden), Lars LON Olsson (Sweden), Sergii Paltsun (Ukraine), Matthias Pätzold (Gefany), Lloyd Penney (Canada), John Purcell (Texas, USA), Roberto Quaglia (Italy, Romania), Stefano Re (Italy), Hermann Ritter (Gefany), Joerg Ritter (Gefany), Thomas Recktenwald (Gefany), José Sanchez (USA), Martin Stricker (Gefany), Rolf Strömgren (Sweden), Tais Teng (Netherlands), Kees van Toorn (Netherlands), Francesco Verso (Italy), Ian Watson (Spain), Taral Wayne (Canada) Alan White (USA) - **Thank You, All!**



Hello there, and

Welcome to an issue of CounterClock, where I hope to become creative at my own full Capacity. I have therefore spent slightly more time with my writing than I usually do for an issue.

I began early in February and hope to stay with it until early April, when I wrap it up.

This is because there was another chapter in the book about Stieg Larsson, which was cut beyond recognition. *Stieg Larsson, Science Fiction reader – and sometimes writer.* This chapter is slightly longer than the one about Stieg in fandom.

Even though I could add my regular quota, this whopper of a chapter urges me to take a step beyond my usual efforts. I don't mind John-Henri being responsible for the *better* part of this fanzine, as long as I stay in charge of the bigger.

Mid February I had a dream. I was thinking how nice a HUGO nomination would be. Remember BLACK PANTHER had been nominated for Oscar and it reminds me how twisted the world is and that pigs can fly now. And while the world keeps twisting to the right (as they see it), I most surely am twisting to what's left. Still. I step on the gas pedal, as you can see and I will keep doing the best I can. Seriously. I do not expect to win. But a nomination would be another grand goshwow-experience.

Two years ago, if I would have announced any such ambition, I would have expected to be laughed out of the room. Today nobody laughs, but probably thinks like I do: We will see...

More words by the editor throughout this issue.

Enjoy!

WolfEd

*"No work or love will flourish out of guilt, fear, or hollowness of heart, just as no valid plans for the future can be made by those who have no capacity for living now."*

Alan Watts

A Fandom Rover post on Eurosmof, 31th Jan 2019



## European Fan Fund

I was thinking about creating a small Fan Fund to allow people from different countries to attend Eurocon. My dream is to have fandom more internationally connected (well, this is one of the reasons I started blogging). I think that allowing people to travel to other countries is a good step forward.

I would gladly accept your advices and opinions on the rules below. Feel free to post them in comments or send them to EuropeanFanFund-at-gmail-dot-com. If you would like to help with the fund definitely let me know.

I would like to thank Claire Brialey and Fionna O'Sullivan for their help in drafting below proposal.

### Name: Eurocon Fan Fund (EFF)

Purpose: The purpose of the Fan Fund is to create and strengthen bonds between European fans and fandoms. Currently in almost every country there is a fandom that quite often has small or no connection to the broader European fandom. Most fans do concentrate on the "here and now" and are not looking for friends in other countries.

The idea: A delegate would be elected by fans across Europe to travel to Eurocon. The delegate must offer to have a talk about fandom in their country. The delegate should also offer their participation as a guest in the Eurocon Awards ceremony, Opening ceremony and Closing ceremony. Any other help from the delegate should be encouraged. It will be for the Eurocon organizers to accept that help to the extent that suits them.

### Rules:

#### 1) Any person can run for a Fund providing:

- They are a Science Fiction fan living in a European country.
- The Eurocon for which they run is held in a country other than the one they live in.
- They have been active in fandom within their country for at least two years.
- The previous two races were won by candidates from different countries than the one they live in (if there will be no other candidates this rule may be omitted).
- They will find three nominators in European countries (each of whom must have been active in fandom for at least two years).
- At least one nominator will be from the country of the candidate and at least one will be from a different country.

- They will provide a platform of no more than 200 words.
- They agree that providing they will win they will be administrators for the next two races.

#### 2) Voting

- Any fan who has been in fandom for at least one year can vote.
- Each voter needs to contribute to the Fan Fund by offering no less than 3 Euro.
- Voting can take place online and also via paper ballots.

#### 3) Administrators

- At the end of their trip, each delegate becomes the administrator of the fund for the next two races.
- Administrators jointly announce the nomination and voting periods.
- Administrators count the votes and announce the delegate.
- Administrators offer their help to the delegate to help them with the trip organization.
- Administrators get in contact with the Eurocon committee to arrange the details of the delegate's participation in the convention.
- Administrators are responsible for raising fund money.

#### 4) Races

- A race can be held each year providing the Fund has enough money (or will have by the time of the Eurocon).
- If the Fund does not have enough money a race need not be held that year.

#### 5) Trip

- The fund covers whatever is needed of:
  - the cost of the transportation to the Eurocon
  - accommodation during the convention (in coordination with the delegate, this may be a hotel, hostel, host willing to take care of the delegate, or other accommodation)
  - membership of the Eurocon (this, or any other support, may be donated by the Eurocon committee).
- The trip should last for at least the length of Eurocon.
- The delegate can decide to come early/leave late to meet fandom in the hosting country or to help with the con.

#### 6) Other responsibilities of the delegate

- The delegate should prepare at least one of the following:
  - Trip report (especially for longer trip)
  - Fanzine created together with fans met at the convention.
- The trip publication should be published within two years from the trip.
- The trip report/Fanzine may be sold in order to raise the money for the Fund.
- The Trip report/Fanzine is encouraged to be published as a standard publication (digital or printed) but it is allowed to be a series of blog posts. In that case, the rule is that those posts must be made available for the administrators to archive them and publish somewhere in case the blog is later deleted.
- The trip report/Fanzine must be produced in English, but translations or any additional publications in other languages are encouraged.
- The delegate should offer to the Eurocon:
  - a talk about the fandom in their country
  - willingness to participate in Eurocon Awards ceremony, Opening ceremony and Closing ceremony
  - other help they are willing to offer to the convention.

## Fannish Handcraft - 1979

This story begins as I was attending my fifth convention, the one arranged by Sam J Lundwall at Hotel Amaranten in Stockholm in October 1979.

I was in the last month of my 20th year of life and on the threshold to adulthood. In retrospect I can admit, that I was a deeply troubled young man. One of the few things my parents approved of, was that I rather was reading a good book, than being outside chasing girls. My fathers all too firm hand, combined with moms spiritual guidance had steered me towards a view of life none of them expected. I made little sence in what I said or did, neither to myself nor to others. On auto-analysis, I realize that I was in search for an understanding of life and reality which I today best can express as zen. I am a creative force. I *have to* create.

This urge to create manifested itself in a wide variety of fanzines. All too often I used to put form over content. But there was a form, in which this kind of publishing was suitable. A kind of fanzine which in a very small way distinguished itself from a personal letter. The carbon fanzine.

A carbon fanzine was achieved by the use of very thin paper crammed into the typewriter with sheets of carbon paper between them. This way, seven or eight readable copies could be obtained (and very theoretically nine). Nobody gave me the idea. I came up with it on my own. I just felt the urge to publish in any way possible and hand it out to my closest friends in Sverifandom at the convention, namely *Ahrvid Engholm, Bellis, Roger Sjölander, Kaj Harju and Anders Åkerlind.*

I was totally surprised to find that, not only did my friends approve of this mode of publishing, but they were doing it themselves and had an APA for it. A secret DNQ APA called GURKA (Cucumber). Ahrvid revealed to me that it was a time-honoured tradition in sf-fandom to publish carbon fanzines. It was a method frequently employed when other means of printing were scarce or forbidden.

These scarce and sometimes forbidden fanzines were then passed around by science fiction-fans in underground movements throughout a hostile environment. It was easy to imagine cloaked sinister shapes with dark glowing eyes, lurking in back-alleys handling thin collections of paper. These fanzines contained the mysteries that puzzled the adolescent mind and theories of how to counteract reality. How we one day would rise into a brave and free new world. Rise we would. We were fanzine-publishers and

we had discovered a secret not taught in schools. We discovered that wielding the word was power.

- Actions need to be preceded by thoughts.
- Thoughts are shaped with words.
- He who controls the words controls thoughts.

Elementary! We understood this. We... well, some of us. We saw ourselves as the true disciples of *Asimov, Bradbury and Orwell* (replace names with any authors as your *choice prophet*). Our prophets were many.

There is a phase in the development of every child, when it discovers the word "no!" and its meaning. I believe it is about the age of 4-5. It happens that the child says *no* to everything:

- Go to bed!
- No!
- Well, then stay up.
- No!
- Do you want an ice cream?
- No!

It matters for the intellectual development of a child how parents react to this. I am not sure what the proper response should be, but...

Children in their lower twenties are actually in a similar phase of their development, though often significantly more eloquent. They can sound as if they knew exactly what they are talking about. Sometimes they need to be conciliated in their endeavours by experienced elder adults. Then it doesn't help that children in their thirties are perceived as fully adult, and children in their forties and fifties not necessarily have acquired the wisdom that ought to come with age. He who hasn't acquired any wisdom in their fifties probably never will.



Artwork:Lars Lon Olsson

Sometimes, there is no one experienced around to guide us when we turn to Lords of Flies. And even though we didn't regress to the level of primitives, we didn't exactly build on experience.

*And why should we be remembered?*

Our efforts would be pointless, if our future was utopia. Since we were so extra-ordinarily gifted in intellect and spirit, our efforts were directed at combatting dystopian and belligerent tendency. Not that I ever phrased myself as such. But I have all my life been disapproving of authority and I have all my life been against the use of force. But intuitively knowing that the future wasn't in my hands, but in the hands of randomly appointed people (who couldn't find a seat when the music stopped) or men and women promoted above the level of their competence, it was obvious the future could come to no good.

I am unable to reconstruct exactly *how* I was thinking in those days, but I do remember being convinced of having the highest intelligence of all students at college. My friends *Kaj Harju*, *Staffan Mossige-Norheim* and *Johan Richter* also were among the most intelligent. In the latter case this was true, since he in fact became a neurosurgeon in Linköping.

And we were members of this *cultish league of fhaans*, led by the two most brilliant minds of us all, namely *Bellis* and *Engholm*, the only two mortals ahead of us in *twens noble art of wielding the word*. Flipping pages of *Vheckans Ävfentyr* remind me, that I was still living with my parents.

Saturday, March 10th - 1979 Bellis and Engholm conducted an interview with Sam J Lundwall, of which the first part was published in VÄ #12. Here Sam makes the claim that *Harry Martinsson* had an sf-club located in Stockholm as early as in the 1940's (Harry Martinsson, the author of the epic poem *Aniara* died in 1978). He went on to say that Harry Martinsson was a great admirer of *Ray Bradbury* and that the two had met since Bradbury's mother (Esther Moberg) came from Stockholm.

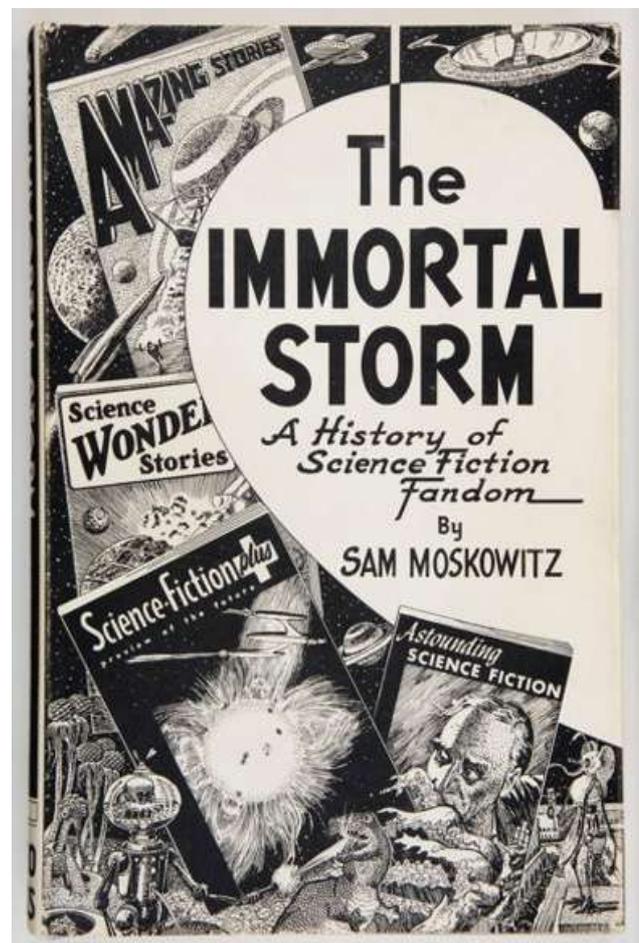
Early in 1979 we (G. Bobjörk and I) introduced *Sigma TC* to Swedish fandom. We were lucky to have the electronic musician *Ralph Lundsten* joining our ranks immediately. *Vheckans Ävfentyr* covered everything in Sverifandom. Its coverage was so thorough, that every premature thought, idea and intention was published as an upcoming initiative. *Anders Åkerlind* was going to revive *SF-Times*. Me, with my big mouth and ten ideas per week, could not keep my mouth shut. Of my 10 weekly ideas perhaps one became reality. The fact that some 50 out of 500 things actually got done, was drowned out. Instead I received the reputation of someone who had a lot of ideas and didn't get anything done. But I've got generous coverage in *Vheckans Ävfentyr* and the one out of

ten ratio in which I actually invested any energy, reads almost like a dictionary of things I didn't do.

My excuse was that I had to wield the German word as well as the Swedish. But not having the *Bellis-Engholm* in Gerfany, proved a good time for exporting ideas. German fandom was (as I saw it) hopelessly *sercon* and needed badly the infusion of fannishness. They needed to lighten up a lot and start looking at their hobby less seriously.

- *What's all that yelling about anyway!???*

It's one of the great paradoxes of its time, that I would have more success in far more competitive Gerfany than in Sverifandom. But the *gospel of fandom* had its own inherent magic.



A rare "magic" book of sf-fandom

I mentioned early on, that this story begins with Sam J Lundwall's convention at Amaranten.

One thing I observed at this event, was the close friendship between *Sam J Lundwall*, *Brian W Aldiss* and *Harry Harrison*. Then there was this other thing.

Bellis or Ahrvid said; "*Walt Willis is here!*" And I looked at him (which ever it was) with blank face.

- *Don't you know Walt Willis???*

Both of them knew exactly which intonation to use to make oneself feel really stupid.

I still don't know if he *really* was there, but I highly doubt it. What Bellis and Engholm did, was to ensure that the rest of us, ignorant Sverifans, would learn who *the greats* were; namely *Walt Willis, Bob Tucker, Harry Warner, Bob Shaw, John Berry, Forry Ackermann, Sam Moscowitz, Bill Rotsler, Arthur Thomson, Jack Wiedenbeck* and *Terry Carr*. Not necessarily in that order.

They also made sure that we sooner or later needed to learn what *Warhoon #28* was (better still, having and having read it) or at least having absorbed the grand wisdom of *The Enchanted Duplicator*. They also informed us about TAFF.

They read Harry Warner's; *All Our Yesterdays* and Sam Moscowitz; *The Immortal Storm* before anyone else of us in the Swedish 4<sup>th</sup> fandom.

To learn that we were not just some weird kids, but in fact a continuation of traditions which had existed for longer than our parents have lived, was an extra-ordinary discovery. We were simply unfortunate to have been born to the wrong parents. Or, perhaps not, because my mom had easily joined the ranks of sf-fandom, had she ever known such a thing existed. She would have become a fan-illustrator, for sure.

And it was for me a great pleasure to find that the first issue of my *Fannish Handcraft* turned out to be a seed which fell into the Good Earth.

-----  
 In *Vheckans Ävfentyr #13* - *Sam J Lundwall* mentions peripherally why he and *John-Henri Holmberg* didn't get along. "*He (JHH) has a strong will, and so do I. That is difficult in a small group. We are also politically wide apart. We do not trust each other. Not in any way.*" This is one of the rare occasions that either one has said anything about the distance between them. Both of them have appeared at Swedish cons throughout the 80's without talking to each other, but otherwise behaving like perfect gentlemen, not affecting the convention atmosphere.  
 -----

We were living and breathing sf-fandom. Next to a cup of tea or besides creating a oneshot on then blank papers for the tray at hamburgers joints, the daily sustenance was a fanzine or a letter of comment. N-o-t-h-i-n-g else mattered. We were living in a bubble of our own creation.

This was allowed to go on for two entire years without the slightest impediment. Gradually the sensation of sf-fandom being breathable settled in us. Backfires, like Nasacon in January 1980, were skillfully smoothed over. Ahrvid Engholm was a grand wizard of sf-fandom, and we all listened to him and Bellis. Because it was fun and because we were slightly insane.

### **The late 70's - The tender years...**

were my/our neo years. It was a time in which we younger fans regarded the SFCD in Gerfany as an "*old people's home*" and SFSF in Sweden was *the establishment* against which a revolution was led by Engholm, Bellis and *Vheckans Ävfentyr*.

We were sure of ourselves, ignorant and arrogant about aspects of life we didn't consider important. Having fun was a prime directive. Consequence and assuming responsibility for ones actions was not foremost in mind of a young person between 17 and 21. I remember the time.

I can't remember how or if I reasoned. I thought myself capable of so much more than what reality proved possible. One by one, the illusions of youth had to be shattered. Listening to experience was only an option now and then, if we admired the person who had the experience. And who ever admires their parents at the tender ages?

We were no better than other kids our age, even though we, being the intellectuals, were convinced of our superiority. Only as an adult I learned to appreciate kindness over intelligence, a good heart over stubbornness. As an adult I understood that listening was more important than speaking.

### **Uprising - A Fannish Weekend 1980**

We gathered at Vanadisway 13 in Stockholm, the home and castle of Anders Bellis. Background music for the day was Bob Marley's new album.

Between Redemption songs, Bellis and Engholm glued fresh sliced, soaking wet Cucumber to the cover of GURKA, its most recent mailing. It wasn't enough to have a secret DNQ amateur press association, it was introduced a more secret and absolutely DNQ version, for the extremely privy small circle, the Shadow-Gurka. Yeah, I was part of that inner circle too. For a while. Because I was brooding on my own plans. And it didn't include the mailing of decomposing vegetables. In February 1980 I launched the first mailing of the Carbon Amateur Press Association, CAPA, with monthly mailings. In German language. With my German friends. Which is why I didn't have time for the Swedish Gurka or the Shadow-Cucumber.

*Kaj Harju* was one of us. The Revolution against the establishment led by *Vheckans Ävfentyr* delivered the crown and scepter into our hands.

Kaj, Roger and I stood silently in the background when Ahrvid was standing on the chair (I don't recall Bellis on a chair). We were on their side. Not completely innocent. Then we certainly matured a little, King Kaj and all the others during the 7 years he was the chair. Bellis and Engholm

were not as close as it appeared, but Bellis was also disgruntled because he in 1979 had to share the Alvar with Stieg's friend Rune Forsgren.

Tomas Cronholm; recently commented: *"Yes, I myself got tired of fandom at the December meeting in 1979, but was already back on track in December 1981 when I was elected to the nomination committee, and at Swecon in 1982 I worked full time. What I remember is that Kaj actually led annual meetings that worked and was crucial for several conventions in the 80s. And unlike the fannish revolutionaries, he was genuinely interested in sf, as evidenced by his fanzines.*

*The annual meeting protocols, usually written by Lars-Olov Strandberg, are available on the SFSF website. As I said, I was delighted to see that Kaj's contribution was emphasized in John-Henris's article. It's easy to forget about our gaffiated fans."*



*Anders Bellis & Ahrvid Engholm 1980  
Foto: Lars-Olov Strandberg*

Of fond memory is the telefangathering we held on 16th July 1980, while Joachim Henke visited Stockholm. We hooked up the switchboard in Grand Hotel Saltsjöbaden to connect 10-12 fans simultaneously on the telephone. Then we called Sam J Lundwall as GoH. He was not at home, but we left a message on his answering machine. A message which may have sounded just like 12 Monkeys.

*Technology is destructive only in the hands of people who do not realize that they are one and the same process as the universe.*

Alan Watts



*Kjell Borgström, a quiet man, present at most fan-events and an inseparable friend to Lars-Olov Strandberg (foto).*

## Berlin 1980

If you ask me about 1980, the first thing coming to mind is BÄRCON 80 and *Walter Ernsting's* 60th birthday. After a moment of pale contemplation, it comes to mind the huge slice of humble pie I had to eat for running Nasacon, my first event.

Wrong time of year (January) and wrong size for the venue (*Skuru school – way too big*). Had it not been for Ahrvid, I would perhaps never have shown my face again in Sverifandom.

So, in the summer of 1980 I made my first trip of many to Berlin. BärCon was the biggest German event since Heicon and it was bigger than Heicon. It was the one opportunity I had in life to chat with *Mario Bosnyak* and I missed it. Missed it, because my interest in fan-history was not yet awake.

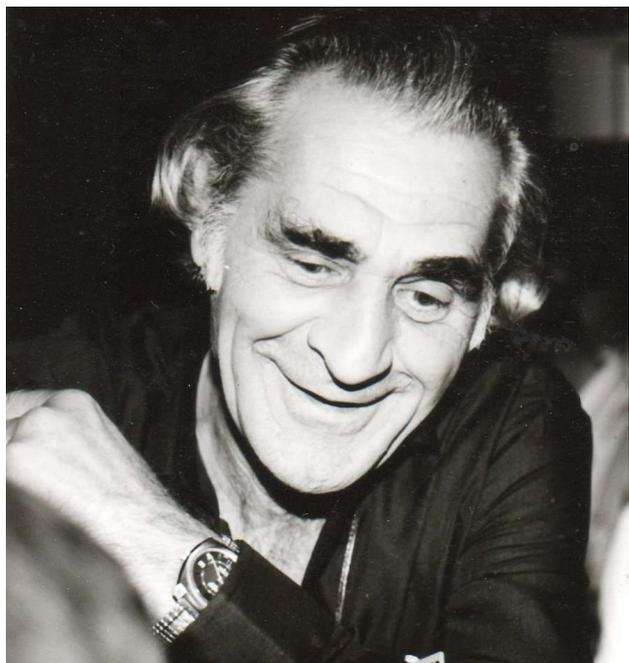
Gerfany had their usual semi-political quarrels. It was the leftist AGSF vs SFKR on the political right side at BÄRCON and since the latter under *Ernie Siepmann* were better represented at the convention, the former group under *Josh Schütte* began looking more and more like the underdogs. From my point of view, a storm in a glass of water. I was not the least interested in sf-fandom-politics. Then, it seemed very important, to some.

Far more interesting was the live concert of electronic musician *Rolf Trostel*, performing on Saturday evening to the delight of everyone. It was what we considered *awesome*. Popularized by the Düsseldorf Karl-Heinz Schmitz, the music

of Tangerine Dream was heard at every SFCD-con of this era.



*SFKR, Siepmann far right made a lot of noise at BärCon. Does Gerfanhistory even remember them?*



*GoH: Walter Ernsting, 60 in Berlin 1980*

Eckhard Marwitz was promoting DRIVE, the third German APA and I was in my final year at college. (I had already lost all respect for the Swedish educational system.) Marwitz was not invited to CAPA, which he at some point, years later, remarked on that we were annoying him with our DNQ-APA.

### Captain's Call

Joachim Henke, Hans-Jürgen Mader, Willmar Plewka, Nils Stickan and Wolfgang Bolz, were some of the first members. The first mailings went to members of the German incarnation of Sigma TC, the Perry Rhodan Club Terra Corps. But not

finding enough willing carbon fanzine-publishers there, expanded to all Gerfany. *Carla Mötteli* in Luzern, Switzerland joined. She was a BNF since the 60's, but claimed to be the daughter of the former, named Carla Lucille Mötteli, daughter of Carla Andrea Mötteli. It is possible that this was true, but we will return to this issue. With Carla Mötteli promoting another old BNF of Gerfany, *Christian Worch* was voted into our ranks. Him I knew by name from my very first fanzines, which I received 3-4 years earlier.

2 more females joined our ranks. *Karin Plewka*, Willmar's younger sister and *Klaudia Vidmar* from Villach, Austria (today living in Helsinki, Finland). The APA was well represented on the female side. CAPA was held on its monthly schedule, but its future was determined by 2 upcoming factors. I would do military service in 1981 and I would not have much income during this time. I suggested a rotating responsibility. After the 10th mailing, in alphabetical order everyone would get to be official editor (or Captain, as we called it) starting with Joachim Henke for the 11th mailing. This turned out to be a good call.

*Mötteli, Worch, Plewka and Mader* were the main providers of substance to CAPA, while *Henke, Bolz, Vidmar* and I leaned towards the fannish, silly and entertaining side. *Karin Plewka* was a little of both, if memory serves.

*Wolfgang Bolz* eventually dropped out and most of the time the APA consisted of 8 members.

*Carla Mötteli* went quiet in fandom after the 80's. I once went to Luzern to deliver a CAPA-mailing. She was unavailable for a face-to-face encounter. We talked on the phone. She adamantly claimed not being at home. "Just put it in the mailbox!" Which I did. As I left the house and turned, I looked up at the facade of the building to the floor where she lived. There was an old lady by the window. Did she really think we would care any less, had we known she was older?

Her disappearance from sf-fandom fits with *Carla Andrea Mötteli*, the one who was active in fandom since the late 50's. I wonder and hope to find out if *Lucille*, her younger persona ever existed. She was a frequent LoC-er and contributed to many fanzines with her poems. In the 80's she got more or less completely absorbed by CAPA. It is safe to assume that she always was the one and only *Carla Mötteli*, even though she said otherwise.

-----  
*So what is discord at one level of your being is harmony at another level.*

Alan Watts



## SF-Fandom in Switzerland

Little has been known about sf-fandom in Switzerland, until recently. The first name which comes to mind, is Pierre Versin.



Pierre Versin - © Maison d'Ailleurs

It turns out that Pierre left quite a legacy behind. This legacy is Maison d'Ailleurs and is located in Yverdon-Les-Bains near Lausanne, Switzerland. In a brief biography about Pierre, the museum states on their website: "*Pierre Versins was born in Avignon in 1923. Following his deportation to an extermination camp during World War II, he emigrates in Switzerland in 1952. Convalescent, he falls in love with a new and successful literary genre: science fiction. In 1957, he founds a Club*

*called "Futopia" and starts to publish the magazine Ailleurs, which can be translated as "Elsewhere". Patiently, he collects an incredible amount of books and objects on the topic. [..snip..]*

*In 1976, Pierre Versins celebrates the opening of the Maison d'Ailleurs (House of Elsewhere) that includes the 50'000 books and items he collected for 25 years."*

-----  
<http://www.ailleurs.ch/en/historique-musee/>  
 -----

The facts differ slightly from the wikipedia-article on Pierre Versins, but OTOH delivers wikipedia a link to a documentary about the life of Versins in French with English subtitles. In this documentary speaks among other *Pascal Ducommun*, who has been frequenting Eurocons for as far back as I can remember.

-----  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre\\_Versins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Versins)  
 -----

About the museum, near Lausanne:

Apart from Pierre Versins collection, several other have been added to the attraction.

In 2006 the Malcolm Willits pulp collection

In 2008 the Jean-Michel Margot collection specialized on Jules Verne

In 2010 the Andrew Watts pictorial collection and finally, also in 2010 the Anglo-Saxon collection of Brian Stableford.

The latter news had me raising both eyebrows. I remember this collection. I was sleeping in the room with his pulp-collection. It had the distinct bouquet of old printed paper, like my own piles of Perry Rhodan-magazines had. I joined Brian on some expeditions exploring what new old-stuff the antiquaries of Reading had on their shelves. Not that Brian needed any more books. He already had every room, every bookshelf, every corner filled with piles and boxes of books.

Rarely have I ever seen a man so in love with books. Afterwards we seated ourselves in front of the TV for Brian's favourite show (at the time). It was to my great surprise *XENA the Warrior princess!* At first I found it hard to believe what I was hearing. But Brian explained it.

He got caught up when the makers of Xena made an episode about the Trojan War with only six actors involved. It was hilarious. I eventually got caught up in Xena myself and have now the entire series in my collection.

Perhaps I should take further note of *Maison d'Ailleurs* and consider them as a third candidate for my own collection (see issue #34, page 30).

Back to Switzerland and its sf-fandom. On page six of D'Ailleurs Info #29 from January 2016 we found a presentation of Swiss sf-fandom, written in German language by Hans-Dieter Furrer and translated into French by AMDA.

-----  
[http://amda.ch/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/DI\\_29\\_janvier2016\\_web.pdf](http://amda.ch/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/DI_29_janvier2016_web.pdf)  
 -----

AMDA (the Friends of the Maison d'Ailleurs) came across an old fanzine, named Swiss SF. Edited by Pierre Strinati and distributed at the 1970 worldcon HEICON in Heidelberg / Gerfany. A second issue was produced in 1972, for the first EuroCon in Trieste. In this a text, in German was found, presenting the story of Swiss-German sf fandom. AMDA contacted the author, Hans-Dieter Furrer, now a member of AMDA, in order to publish a translation of this text. Furrer not only agreed to publish it but also proposed to complete it.

-----  
*But I'll tell you what hermits realize. If you go off into a far, far forest and get very quiet, you'll come to understand that you're connected with everything.*

Alan Watts

-----  
**SF fandom in German-speaking Switzerland**  
*recalls in many ways also the development for French-speaking Switzerland.*

When, in 1955, Walter Ernsting founded the SFCD it resounded in Switzerland. The readers contact-pages in Utopia magazine were helpful in forming sf clubs and city groups (of the SFCD) in Zürich, Basel, Bern and Biel around 1958. A fanzine *Altair*, printed on green paper, gathered the members of associations in all Switzerland.

The highlight and dazzling peak in the existence of this Swiss club was the very first European Convention of the SFCE [SFC Europa], then the "largest association of SF in the world", held at the Hotel Weisser Wind in Zürich in 1959.

(see Clock#13, page 10 – *The first Eurocon was not the first European convention*) Among the guests was also Pierre Versins from the "Futopia Club" in Lausanne. At the time a European fandom was dawning.

The Swiss sf club regularly organized gatherings until the spring of 1961. The Swiss fanzine, now known as Magnet-Altair, took advantage of the exceptional art of *Bâlois Kurt Küng*. But, from completely green paper to a dark shade of gray, Magnet-Altair would soon expire. The engine of early Swiss fandom, Walter Wegmann, withdrew

from fanac and the SFC Schweiz plunged into hibernation. Everyone continued to read sf, buy the books and watch the movies. But everyone did so in their own corner of the country. There was no club.

### Telstar, the Lucerne fanzine

By coincidence or providence, in the autumn of 1962, two fans met who wanted to revive the club. A year later a center of activity was established in Lucerne, with the already legendary but very real *Carla Mötteli*. In May 1964 they published the first issue of Telstar, while in Zurich there also had come a city group back to life. The last delivery of Telstar, was in the summer of 1965. It boasted with 150 pages and was the thickest fanzine that anyone in Switzerland has produced so far. Two Swiss fans attended LonCon II in 1965, but at the end of 65, Swiss fans once more withdrew into their shells.

Swiss Noitcif constituted a new attempt to revive an sf-fandom in Switzerland on Sunday, 9th April 1967 with a meeting in Zurich of six members of the SFCD. They were all of the opinion that something should be organized again. They met each month in Zurich, Bern or Lucerne. The culmination of this third activity was the joint visit of Harald Szeemann's science-fiction exhibition in Bern. Swiss Noitcif was born of this enthusiasm and had at least three editions. In August 1968, they were four fans to go to Heidelberg for the German convention.

### Heicon 1970, Eurocon 1972

Even though there were no clubs or fanzines in German-speaking Switzerland, there remained a number of fans who kept gathering.

They read SF from German publishers, just as fans from French-speaking Switzerland were reading new releases from France. And the literary spectrum was widening: Not only Asimov and Van Vogt. They also devoured Lovecraft, Poe and Blackwood.

The Worldcon in Gerfany 1970, was an important moment for science fiction fans across Europe.

Poul Anderson, Robert Silverberg and John Brunner were present. And the Swiss fans had the chance to take part in a boat trip on the Neckar, sitting at a table with John Brunner and Forry Ackerman.

-----  
*Omnipotence is not knowing how everything is done; it's just doing it.*

Alan Watts

COUNTERCLOCK SF # 35



*Pic personal details on next page.*

*HEICON-pictures from Kees van Toorn's archive*

Previous page, top left: Fred Patten of the LASFS (11 Dec 1940 – 12 Nov 2018), unknown shades, n. covered, middle: Gerd Hallenberger, two N.N and left: Rolf Heuter of the SFCD.

Bottom from the right; John and Marjorie Brunner, walking in front of Kees van Toorn (age 16) and Klaus Dieter Kunze, the old lady in the back is the Italian author Carla Parsi-Bastogi (1904-1986)

*The reason we have poverty is that we have no imagination. There are a great many people accumulating what they think is vast wealth, but it's only money... they don't know how to enjoy it, because they have no imagination.*

Alan Watts

Another highlight was in 1972 the "1st Congresso Europeo di SF" in Trieste (Italy), which took place in conjunction with the 10th International Sci-Fi Film Festival. Subsequently, in the 1970s, fans turned more and more to fantastic movies. In the 70's German speaking Swiss sf-fans were entangled with German sf-fandom. So appeared Carla Mötteli's poems and Pierangelo Boog's illustration in various German fanzines. The Schweiz wasn't considered a separate fandom.

Pascal Ducommun was bidding for Eurocon at La Chaux de Fonds (50km north of Lausanne), won the voting, but lacked domestic support for the event, was subsequently forced to cancel in 1982. Instead the SFCD-con in MönchenGladbach was elevated to status of Eurocon.

In this Millennium remain 11 original members of the SFCD in Switzerland. They're not linked by an association, but have attended cons several times in the 90s and approximately until the year 2000. For example, in 1990 for the Convention in The Hague (48th WorldCon). And of course, the fans took the train 1991 to Yverdon-les-Bains, to attend the spring opening of the Maison D'Ailleurs.

Hans-Dieter Furrer concludes his report with: *"Today, German-speaking Swiss fans meet more or less regularly. To exchange ideas, going to the movies or for a pizza. And of course, they visit all the exhibitions at Maison d'Ailleurs! Just as they will satisfy their cinematic hunger at NIFFF. Two or three of the fans, who were already members of the Science-Fiction Club in the 1950s, meet each year with German fans for "oldie-cons" [meetings of former members of the SFCD, held in Wetzlar or Unterwössen in Germany, to discuss and exchange memories on SF. Science fiction is thus, without a doubt, the only literary genre that, through its fandom, is bound by decades of friendship."*

Association des Amis de La Maison D'Ailleurs  
Created in 1988, the AMDA is a cultural non-profit association whose aim is to promote the museum and make it better known. In addition to raising funds and collecting new items, it also offers and organizes activities intended to illustrate the actuality and variety of utopia, extraordinary voyages and science fiction.

### Back to the Capacitizen...

I have the year 1981 marked as a low in fanac. I ran/attended only one con that year, Nasacon II jr with much help from Ahrvid Engholm.

I wrote my contributions for CAPA's 11th mailing in December, the one when Joachim Henke was the first Captain to assume the responsibility. In January 1981 I was handed the green uniform of the Swedish army / coastal artillery.

The Swedish fan *Anders Hedenlund* can confirm that this didn't completely prevent me from *pubbing my ish*. I brought typewriter and paper with me to the barracks. I was fortunate to have a fellow sf-fan in my platoon.

I can't say that I was thrilled to run around with a machine gun playing war games. I told them; *"I am unable to see a Russian or East-German as my enemy. I don't want to shoot them."*

- *Do you wish to be excused altogether from doing military service? Asked the recruitment official (psychologist).*

- *No. I am aware that I may have a disadvantage in civilian life from not having done it, and I don't want to have this disadvantage. I will play your games. But that's the only thing you can count me in for. In case of a war, don't rely on me.*

I was "sentenced" to 8 months in the service, which at the time was the shortest possible.

Thank Ghu! Had I shown any spunk whatsoever, they would probably have made me an officer with at least one and a half year to go. Thanks, but no thanks!

My zine-notebook registers only 22 fanzines published this year, with an average of 10 and a half pages. The bulk of it in German language for CAPA. A few pages in Swedish for Sigma TC. The 12th mailing came from Orscholz at the river Saar and Captain *Hans-Jürgen Mader* and the 13th mailing came from Switzerland. It was collected, edited and delivered by our Swiss Captain *Carla Mötteli*. It was a well-fed 60 page issue with an additional 10 pages of supplements.

These supplements consisted of fanzines we made outside of CAPA, *Willmar Plewka* and *Joachim Henke* had launched *Fandhome Wheekly* and I distributed a few issues of my newszine *Science Fiction-Faction*. In the first draft to this reminiscence of CAPA, I omitted to mention CAPA#15, Captain *Nils Stickan*, he was perhaps

as far left on the political spectrum, that any one of us would ever get. Not that we ever wrote or talked politics. I've thrown him back into the blend because he counterbalanced Worch's influence. And so did *Wolfgang Bolz*, when Stikkan dropped out and Wolfgang returned for a second round.

-----  
*Christian Worch was one of my most dangerous friends. In 1980 convicted to three years in prison (in Hamburg). Last time I saw his face was on CNN in the late 90's and today he is the leader of the right-wing political party DIE RECHTE. We were always politically incompatible, but even though the wise course of action perhaps would be to renounce this friendship, I can't say that doing so would be an honest action. Surprisingly few have addressed me on this issue. And only one has taken an open adversary stance, I assume because of this. What I ought to do, is to sort out exactly what has been and has not been said. Also what of the public opinion on Worch is based on truth. Because I do not recognize him at all, from what other people say about him. I get back to Worch later.*  
 -----

The turn to Captain a mailing came to *Willmar Plewka* in April 1981 and by the time it became Maders second turn as Captain (#19th mailing) in September 81, the amount of supplements had already increased to a point when no stapler could punch through the entire mailing. It was the first *split volume* with separate supplements. CAPA #20, Carla Mötteli's second turn as Captain was a match for Telstar 1965. 108 pages regular contributions + 42 pages in supplements. But let's flash back to the middle of the year.

-----  
*It was the same year in September 1981, when Engholm, Bellis and I recorded on Betamax the lost documentary about fandom; "They call us Fhaans!!!"*  
 -----

### The death throes of Vheckans Ävfentyr

...a number of things happened in Sverifandom. We experienced in spring the sad divorce of the dynamic duo Bellis-Engholm. They turned out to be far less dynamic as every outside observer would have presumed.

In Vheckans Ävfentyr #88 Engholm unilaterally announced that Bellis was fired from VÄ. Bellis replied with a by Engholm disputed issue VÄ#89. Sverifandom replied to Engholms fury by publishing additionally 9 issues of VÄ#89 by nine different editors, bringing the total versions of VÄ#89 to ten. Engholm changed the name of his zine to *Fanytt* (Fanews), beginning with ish #90. He refused to acknowledge Bellis' subsequent issues of Vheckans Ävfentyr (90-101). As Bellis quit, *Chris Schander* continued to annoy Engholm by publishing *Vheckans Ävfentyr-Vhest 102-109* and *John Sören Pettersson* fired off a final issue (110) VÄ in September 1981.

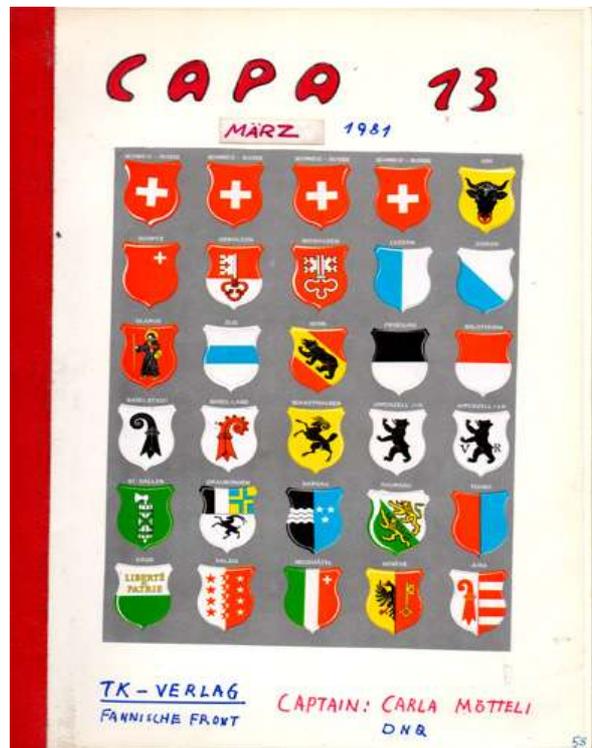
Bystanders were still amused. In all of this, regardless, I sided with Engholm. Together we steered Nasacon towards a fun event in the mid 80's. The way back was paved with Nasacon II jr early in July 1981. The con was no bigger than the first one had been in January 1980, but since we had moved it to *Villa Caprifol* in Fisksätra, the site for the venue became decidedly more attractive. I learned to take small steps.

A 2nd important (for me) event, was that I took a trip to Berlin and found myself a seven years older girlfriend. Johan Richter had resumed his studies in Berlin. It was a good time for visiting him. I made 6 more trips to Berlin after laying off the military uniform. All of these trips in matters of the heart and none in matters of fandom.

-----  
*I recall Staffan Mossige-Norheim accompanying me to the Central Station in Stockholm before one of these trips to Berlin a year later, near the end of my relationship with the attractive Berlin lady.*

*I hadn't packed any clothing, because it was all in the laundry, so it was planned to equip myself with completely new outfits. My bag was half-empty.*

*We sat at the central station café talking, waiting for my train, when Staffan casually asked me: "What time did you say was the departure of your train?" As it turned out, I had only one minute left before the train would roll out from the station. We came out on the platform as the train already was set in motion. There was only one door open through which the conductor was entering and I barely made it, squeezing myself in behind him, hearing Staffans rough laughter from the platform.*



Capai could afford to create elaborate covers.

In *Quiexschnauz #7* (name from the German translation of *Orwell's Animal Farm*), my 20-page contribution to CAPA's 18th mailing, I can read & recall summer events.

I had forgotten, that *Ronald Hoppe* (on the Trinity committee in 1999, *Clock#5*, page 4 left column) lived in Berlin at the time and that he, *Thomas Barnow* and me had a small fangathering. Later in the evening we joined forces with five mundane youngsters and went to the Irish Pub, Eisenacher Strasser (Barnow's favourite pub).

-----  
*Radio Sigma TC broadcasted its second radio-show this summer. Most of these radio program's were recorded on Engholms initiative and with a jingle courtesy of Ralph Lundsten, opus 227.*

This isn't writing – this is typewriting. Capa#18, Aug'81

### Engholm – von Witting go to Helsinki'81

*The departure from Stockholm was scheduled at 18:00 on Thursday July 30 and would take us by ferry to Helsinki in 14 hours. Before departure Ahrvid and I assembled the latest issue of Fanytt (#97). We were still living and breathing fandom. Every hour of the day, every day of the year. Yes, we were quite insane.*

The object of this journey was to visit

### Tom Ölander (17 Aug 1945 - 26 Aug 2002)

I knew Tom by name only. I don't know if Ahrvid, Bellis and Ölander met at ScanCon 1976, but they were all there. I know this, not because I found him in the list of pre-registered members, but because he grabbed a few rare German language fanzines from the box Sture Hällström-Sedolin had left for the fanzine-vultures at the convention. In a letter from 18th September 1981 he promised me I could have them if he ever wanted to hand them over to anyone else. I am not making any claim to those fanzines today. Mainly because Tom's entire fanzine-collection went to the first SF-Society founded in Finland (in January 1976), the Åbo (Turkku) SF Society. There they are in perfectly good hands. Tom was widely known for his supporting stance in Scandinavian sf-fandom.

He contacted me as soon as he heard about the existence of Sigma TC (*founded the same year as the Åbo SF Society*). In a letter from 31th December 1979 he laments that there is no sf-fandom in Finland. Only One club and one fanzine (Spin).

But Tom helped out where he could. In 1977 he printed the Norwegian fanzine *Aardvark #10* and the Swedish *Future Fan # 15*, which if I haven't got it completely wrong, was the last public fanzine *Bo Stenfors* produced. I say public, because I do not exclude the possibility that Bo also made a carbon-fanzine or two in his days.

Tom Ölander was waiting for us at the quay in Helsinki as Ahrvid and I arrived. It was some two weeks before Tom would have his 36th birthday.

For us, it was very important to be taken seriously - by an adult. An adult who wasn't making his living on selling sf. We had *Lars-Olov Strandberg* and *Kjell Borgström* in Sweden, but it is easy to take friends for granted when you have them around all of the time. Most of the time, it was quite impossible to be taken seriously by an adult if we talked about science fiction.

We arrived at the Ölander home after a few minutes walk and immediately started drinking his sf-fanzines and talk about his vast collection of beer.

The Freudian slip I experienced was most likely induced by spending so many hours with Ahrvid.

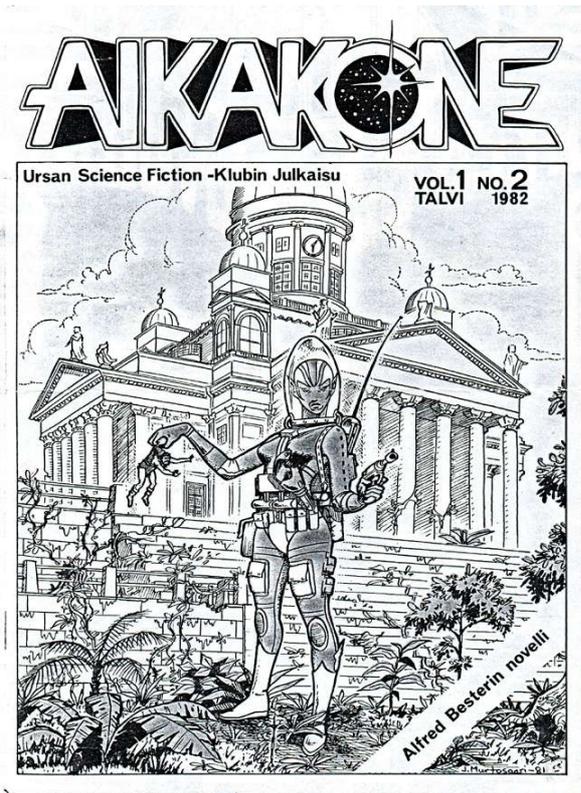
He did these kind of wordplay all the time. On the ferry he was so tired *he could sleep an entire horse*. And his eyes were looking at each other...

I was soon drooling over Tom's German early 60's fanzines, SOL, HECKMECK (Kage&Kwiat), Space Times, etc and I quoted in Capa from Heinrich R Arenz: *Was Soll's No:2* which vaguely translates as *What of it? Nr 2*. "By Ghu, I ought to gafiate!" (which he did, until EDM lured him to HanseCon 1999 (see *Clock#22*, page 9-11). I found it interesting that Wollheim's Ghuism had a foothold in Gerfany since the early 60's. Later, Carla Mötteli proclaimed herself *high priestess of Ghu*.

In the night between 31/7 and the 1/8 of 1981, we visited the printing shop of *Hufvudstadsbladet*, which was Helsinki's main newspaper in Swedish. Ahrvid and I got a first-hand close-up look at how a newspaper was made in 1981. Being faneds, both of us, it is difficult to come up with a more captivating excursion for us. We both, Ahrvid and I, kept a golden souvenir misprint-plate from the newspaper on our walls for decades after. I believe mine was lost on 2007, as I moved to Italy. There's a slim chance that my son still has it.

The next day we met *Jari Koponen*, chief editor of the second Finnish fanzine, AIKAKONE (The Time Machine). The first issue of which to appear in September 1981 and we were told that the only visitor Finnish fandom had before us had been Anders Palm.

But I have to give Ahrvid the honour of being the Buzz Aldrin to Finnish fandom since I myself was born in the country, some 40 km east of Helsinki.



AIKAKONE had a highly professional layout and probably didn't allow for content of any less quality. This was, I believe the main reason why it did appear so scarcely. What you need, for practice is a *rag*. A gazette where anything goes. For the purpose of practicing serious writing. Another method recommended to me, was the writing of erotic tales.

Markku Hapio, the editor of the first Finnish fanzine SPIN from 1978 until 1980, was also an SFCD-member. He was succeeded as SPIN-editor by Jouni Hyttinen in 1981.

The fanzine was printed in 250 copies. Sadly, for me who doesn't speak the language, it was written in Finnish.



Artwork: Lars Lon Olsson

*Trying to define yourself is like trying to bite your own teeth.*

Alan Watts

### 1982 - an intense year

First coming to my mind, if you say 1982 is EuroCon Mönchengladbach and then Nasacon III. My notes bring also up Orcon and Swecon 82. Indeed 1982 was intense. In matters of fanzine-production I calmed down slightly and put out 11 zines to a total of 141 pages.

*Just like Shadow-Gurka in Sweden, we needed to have a Shadow-CAPA. SCAPA was a short-lived sidekick excluding Carla and Christian for the rest of us to gossip a little about my journey to Switzerland and revelling in the great mystery that Carla Mötteli represented to the rest of us. Scapa also happened to be a Scotch whisky distillery.*

CAPA's 1st mailing of 82 was its 23rd appearance and Captain *Joachim Henke* was supposed to be at the helm. Strangely, he got inexplicable sand into his machinery and forgot to *mail it!* For several weeks. He was "*punished*" with a two-year retraction of his Captain's Card, which in essence meant that he was not allowed to handle the official editorship during 1982 and 83.

*Christian Worch* once wrote, that if democracy in society would work as well as within Capa, then he would renounce his political stance. And while he credited me with creating this democracy and gave me plenty of opportunity to involve him in a serious discussion, I was too stressed out during these years, to have such a discussion with him. In matters of CAPA, this is my main regret, that I didn't find the time to engage in a serious debate with the members of substance. Easier to forgive about Carla, since we had many serious debates before CAPA in private letters. Willmar Plewka and Hansi Mader were easy-going and laid back types. A kind of laid back I admired.

But *Chris Worch*, I blew the chance I had, to really understand him. Years after when re-reading CAPA, I understand many of the things Chris was trying to tell me, but he eventually gave up, since I didn't listen (read then).

### CAPA mailings 24-34 - 1982

CAPA#24, Feb-82, Cpt Wolf von Witting (special)	
CAPA#25, Mar-82, Cpt Christian Worch	130+26p
CAPA#26, Apr-82, Cpt Hansi Mader	164+18p
CAPA#27, May-82, Cpt Wolfgang Bolz	147+155p
CAPA#28, Jun-82, Cpt Carla Mötteli	144+42p
CAPA#29, Jul-82, Cpt Karin Plewka	85+x
CAPA#30, Aug-82, Cpt Djinnie a Sahbre	76+2p

(aka under her real name – Klaudia Vidmar)  
 CAPA#31, Sep-82, Cpt Willmar Plewka 91+x  
 CAPA#32, Oct-82, Cpt Wolf von Witting 82+10p  
 CAPA#33, Nov-82, Cpt Christian Worch and  
 CAPA#34, Dec-82, Cpt Joachim Henke (pardoned)  
 CAPA#24 was an emergency mailing, because of  
 Joachim Henkes lapse. It had more supplements  
 than contributions. Its purpose was to bring the  
 APA back on the monthly schedule after its first  
 and only (to me) known derailing.  
 The APA peaked in April-May of 1982. HJM's  
 whopping 164 page mailing (#26) remains a never  
 beaten record.  
 Wolfgang Bolz on the other hand, had more  
 supplement pages than member contributions, in  
 spite of CAPA's 8 members submitting a total of  
 147 pages that month. It was a record of another  
 kind and thicker than HJM's mailing.  
 Most of us went... Urrrh!!!  
 No wonder, the ladies Karin and Klaudia got less  
 to deal with during the con-season June and July.

-----  
 Among the supplements of CAPA#24 I found a  
 ditto-fanzine which's existence I had forgotten,

### OrCon - 28th March 1982

*Coverartists: Wolf von Witting & Willmar Plewka*  
 I don't remember how many OrCons were held,  
 but an Orcon meant 60-80 sf-fans crammed into  
 the home of Hans-Jürgen and Maria Mader, who  
 were good hosts. It wasn't as crammed as  
 ChaotiCon II 1979 in Bad Kreuznach, when we  
 attempted to fit the entire attendance of the  
 convention with at least a body-part into a phone-  
 booth. But crammed enough. As fannish cons go,  
 Gurfany rarely experienced a fannish event with  
 better atmosphere. Gurfans talked for years about  
 the spontaneous events held in the early 80's in  
 the village Orscholz (near Mettlach) at the lovely  
 river Saar.

They had a large living-room and a big sofa with  
 enough space for 2-3 fans to sleep on. The rest of  
 the fans slept exhausted in the early morning  
 hours in sleeping-bags all over the floor through-  
 out the house. The magnum bottle of red wine  
 was empty. But HJM never seemed to run out of  
 energy. Most of us were knocked out, but he went  
 on as long as anyone else did, like a duracel-  
 bunny.

-----  
*Zen does not confuse spirituality with thinking  
 about God while one is peeling potatoes. Zen  
 spirituality is just to peel the potatoes.*

Alan Watts

### Nasacon III 1982, 3-4 July

(F)GoH: Mika H Tenhovaara, attendance: 60  
 The third Nasacon was the first hugely successful  
 convention in the series. One reason was the  
 popular relocation to Villa Caprifol in Fisksätra.  
 Another reason was the FgoH Mika Tenhovaara,  
 who was known to everyone by name, but no one  
 had ever seen him at a convention. Mika was not  
 an outgoing person and the only way to meet him,  
 was to invite him as GoH to a convention. He was  
 a long-haired Led Zeppelin-fan, but the name of  
 his fanzine was taken from a song by *Pink Floyd*:  
 "Arnold Layne Had a Strange Hobby."  
 Mika did not collect clothes from the washing-line  
 at moonlight, like Arnold Layne. His fanzine was  
 his hobby and I am not sure how many issues of  
 ALHASH appeared, but they were **many**.  
 My covention-report to Nasacon III was delivered  
 in CAPA#29. It mentions the committee of four,  
 being Engholm, Bobjörk, Anders Carlsson and  
 myself. It mentions several of the prominent  
 attending members and by prominent I mean the  
 people who made a name for themselves in sf-  
 fandom (professionals and amateurs). I was  
 always full of reverence for older fans. *Torkel  
 Franzén* confounded me, when he said; *nah I've  
 been gafia for such a long time, you know more  
 about this than I do*. I could never feel that way  
 about those who were **before** me.  
 My report mentions that Mika besides ALHASH  
 also published zines by the names OMIKRON  
 and FOUR DENEb and that he also had been a  
 member of the Swedish Carbon-APA Gurka  
 (Cucumber). He had already published more than  
 2000 pages of fanzines. How did I know this?  
 I must have asked.  
 George, our treasurer noted that the event had  
 created a 260 SEK surplus in our club-finances. A  
 small but significant income to support the club-  
 fanzine Tid & Rymd (Time & Space). On Saturday  
 evening I brought home 12 fans to sleep over. We  
 listened to *Ralph Lundsten's* new album, which so  
 far was the best he had made (in our opinion). A  
**big** surprises for me personally, was the entrance  
 of my military friend *Anders Hedenlund*, who  
 suddenly stood in the doorway on Sunday. It was  
 the first time we met in fandom-context. And as  
 civilians.  
 George Bobjörk and I hauled shopping carts of  
 empty beer-bottles after the convention until after  
 midnight. He gave me a fake peevish look from  
 the side, while pushing uphill in the twilight of the  
 warm summer evening. *Wanna do this again next  
 year?* He asked.

- Hell, yes!!!!

**"Words, words, words!" (Hamlet)**

A couple of thousand pages fanzine-production was not entirely unusual for Swedish fans of its 4th fandom (compare fanac in Sweden 1954-77 in Clock#19, page 5) Engholm, Bellis, Kaj Harju and probably *Roger Sjölander*, to name a few of this generation. The latter is the only one who until this day remains without an Alvar Award. After 1978 it became impossible to make an accurate estimate of how many fanzines were produced. I broke the first 1000-page barrier myself in December 1981. The second thousand not until CounterClock#6, 1999.

Of course, the output of Mika Tenhovaara was exceptional for some time. Two-three fans of earlier generations who I am certain of having broken these barriers were of course John-Henri Holmberg and Mats D Linder. Probably also Bertil Mårtensson and Bertil AG Schalén, who was a candidate for the first Alvar Award in 1978. But he declined the honour in favour of Ahrvid Engholm.

Producing words, in any language increases the writing skill of he who does so. To once again quote screenwriter Simon Moore: "You have to write a million words of crap before you get it right." Sweden never had a *golden age of publishing*, compared to US, UK and Germany, climbing with a total population from 8 to 9 million (1970-2001) and now approaching 10 million. One could at best make a living from it. Far more difficult, the smaller a language. The transition from fandom to prodrom was therefore rare.

The success with Nasacon III gave me renewed energy in Swedish fandom. It became difficult to juggle between Gerfany and Sverifandom and I decided to take a break from the German Carbon-APA in Dec 1982. In spite of its DNQ-status, I was kept abreast on the APA by my closest friends, Henke, Bolz and Klaudia Vidmar. No new member was added during my absence 1983.

In March 1983 I fired off a 42-page independent Carbonzine to my former CAPA-friends. It was named Raumschiff 114 (it was my 114th fanzine). It paved the way for a later return to the APA.

The SFCD-Con in Hannover gathered 7 Capai: Bolz, Henke, Mader, Willmar Plewka, Stickan, Worch and myself. All its male members. At the time only *Nils Stickan* and I were outside. Worch had only recently been released from prison.

(see picture in Clock#7, bottom page 9, the two politically furthest apart standing next to each other)

Face-to-face he made a very calm impression. He listened carefully and answered briefly and to the point. This was the only time we met in real life.

Hans-Jürgen Mader succeeded Lutz Reimers as chair of the SFCD and it was decided that Willmar Plewka and I each should make an issue of *Andromeda*, the club-magazine of the SFCD launched by Walter Ernsting in 1955.

We had joined *the old people's home* after all. But the going wisdom, at the time, was "if you can't beat them – join them!" So we did.

**NasaCon IV – 2-3 July 1983**

GoH: Mats D Linder, attendance 60

Nasacon find's a reference in Engholm's Fanytt #117, saying that the 4th edition of it had been even better than the third. The warming up on the evening before started at the Futurian Embassy, Ahrvid's home. 34 cheerful sf-fans were squeezed into his single-room apartment.

Sigma TC lost the traditional meteorball-game for the first time with 53-56 pts against "the rest of Sverifandom". Umpire at this game, which had a remarkable resemblance to softball, was always Lars-Olov Strandberg. The GoH, resident of Fisksätra (a suburb of Stockholm) was part of the local Sigma TC team. He published a fanzine by the name "Summa" (Swedish for *sum*) which in mathematics is expressed with the greek letter sigma. It was impossible to be closer affiliated to Sigma TC without actually being a member of the club. As we traded Tid & Rymd against Summa, we always got the better part of the deal.

-----  
CAPA#41, Aug'83, Captain Wolfgang Bolz, 44

CAPA#42, Sep'83, Captain Hans-Jürgen Mader

After 28 weeks of publishing *Fandhome Wheekly* all by himself, Willmar Plewka started taking turns with Joachim Henke until issue 44. Then Henke was replaced by Klaus Marion until #50.

Klaus Marion continued for 10 issues alone until Hans-Jürgen Mader stepped in and the four of them; Plewka, Mader, Henke, Marion alternated with the main load on Mader until issue 100 in June of 1984. As with *Vheckans Ävfentyr* in Sweden, mainly by Engholm and Bellis, with one issue #52 made by me, Wolf von Witting, the German *Fandhome Wheekly* had one issue made by Eckhard D Marwitz (#94). I'm not sure, but the last issue of FW which I have in my collection dates back to #113 of Sep 84.

In the late summer of 1984, we then assembled two issues of *Andromeda* 111-112, subsequently voted second best and best German fanzine of the year 1984. The first edited by Wolf von Witting (me) with Henke-Plewka-Mader-Marion. And the latter by Willmar Plewka, assisted by Henke-Mader, Christian Holl and Marion. 1986 saw an issue of *Andromeda* (#116) co-edited by Joachim Henke and Klaus Marion, illustrated by Christian Holl. My return to the Carbon-APA came with...

CAPA#53, Oct'84, Captain Willmar Plewka, 24

CAPA#54, Nov'84, Captain Klaudia Vidmar, 24

CAPA#55, Dec'84, Captain Wolf von Witting, 30

CAPA#56, Jan'85, Captain Christian Worch, 24

...and mailings of reasonable volume, between 24

and 32 pages until December 1985, when HJM suddenly had to edit 58 pages of contributions. In January 1986 I dropped out again and CAPA#66 voted on who to replace me with. A glimpse into CAPA#75, reveals that the void was filled by Michael Kempter and/or Gabriele Berndt, the other to replace Joachim Henke, who also threw in the towel. The deadline for the 76th mailing was set to my birthday in November 1986.

Legend has it, that the Capai sailed off into the fog towards Avalon, with Carla Mötteli at the helm. Knowing German fans, they would not have quit so close to 100 mailings. It would have seen the light of day end of 1988.

Klaudia Vidmar married and moved to Helsinki in 2003. Hans-Jürgen Mader jumped ship and joined a Viking tribe. He lives today in the far west of Germany, near Trier. He didn't stay chair of the SFCD for many years, because Birgit Fischer took over at some point and steered Germany for ten years, after which Thomas Recktenwald repeated the achievement and extended it by working on its board longer.

Joachim Henke and Klaus Marion were running the SFCD-Convention in *Hackenheim 1987*. By then we all felt safely established as BNF's of German fandom. One great ambition of youth had been satisfied. It was ten years after my very first convention in Kleve'77 (see Clock#4, page 9).

The winds of change blow fiercely in German fandom. BNF's come and go. Few stay until their journey beyond the rim of the galaxy, like Waldemar Kümmering, and it is totally unpredictable who does. We made a difference, but only for a while and what seed we sown got eaten by the birds. Instead, myths are spawning.

**I'm still standing, after all this time.**

In Sweden the story continued with 3 more cons at Villa Caprifol and two at the local school after Villa Caprifol was converted to a Montessori daycare center. Swedish fandom took a moral dip in the mid 90's, but I had already quasi-gafiated.

I realize that my status of gafia only was from my own point of view, a hiatus of inactivity in both publishing and conrunning. But I did keep in touch with many of my fandom-friends.

My return to fanac was most clearly emphasized with the SFCD-con in Ratzeburg 1997, the 20th anniversary of my first convention. But that is another story and will be told in another issue.

By Wolf von Witting



Artwork Klaudia Vidmar/Weber, 1980



Sverifandom saw in the latter half of the 80's most of my fanac. Between Hackenheim 1987 and my return to fanac, with Ratzeburg in 1997, the only other convention I visited abroad was the ColoniaCon 1989 in Köln.

Sigma TC experienced on the other hand its best times with Nasacon V-VIII until 1987.

Among the fun we had, was the Interplanetary Hockey League, which was a club-series in table top Icehockey.

*Hyperion Flyers* (in play, above image) won the first NasaCon Cup and came second in the series. Behind the success was Jan Johansson, one of the clubs (then) younger generation.

*Prometheus COM* (Champions of Mankind) won the series. They had a change of manager in the beginning, but both *Maths Claesson* and *Michael Pargman* were excellent players.

There was a dramatic final 3 rounds, which in a spectacular showdown between my own team, *Mimas Rangers* and *Ganymedes Heinleiners*, Engholms secured the third position for the team from the Jupiter moon. *Mimas Rangers* won the last Nasacon Cup which was held in 1988.

Apart from the elite division, which was 10 teams, we had two entire subdivisions of interplanetary

hockey teams, div 1 inner and div 1 outer Solar System. With fictional (dice generated) results.

The game fever also caught a hold of Sigma TC members because we first sat around the Vic'64 (Commodore'64) and later around the Amiga-500. With Kick Off we expanded interplanetary sports to a Football/Soccer league (nobody in Europe calls it *soccer*, mind you). Later, much later, we turned to online games and made Sigma TC "famous" in *Ogame*, *Livehockey* and *Hattrick*. Thousands of kids (now in their 30's and 40's) had to play against the Sigma TC Alliance in a game of space conquest. The only team still in play, from this game empire, is *Sigma TC Cyborg* in Livehockey. So that's also basically where my fanac disappeared into while I took a vacation (gafia) from sf-fandom. It was also a time of discovery in the *Forgotten Realms*, with everything from *Pool of Radiance* to *Neverwinter Nights*.

Hours upon hours of adventure in a fantasy world. But one can hardly claim these endeavours were pertaining to sf-fandom.

- WolfEd -

**The Rise and Fall of Cucumber:**

<http://www.jophan.org/mimosa/m15/engholm.htm>

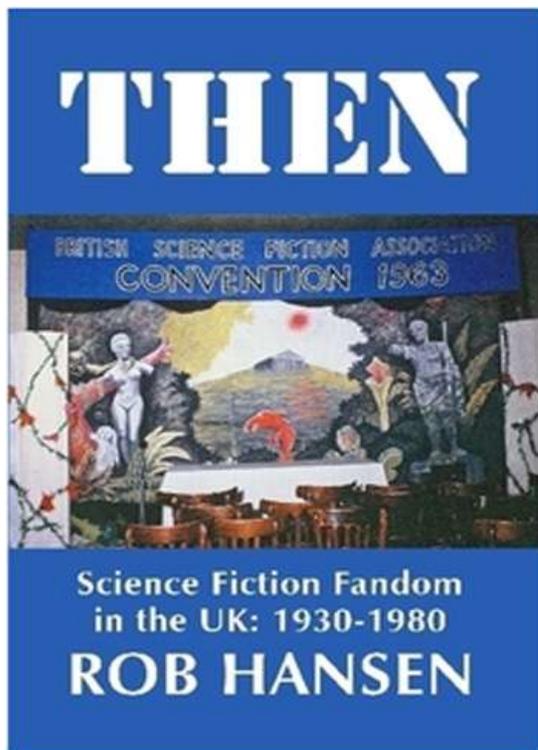
**Silly fan games:**

<http://www.jophan.org/mimosa/m17/engholm.htm>

Rob Hansen's THEN

Science Fiction Fandom in the UK: 1930-1980 is available for free at:

<https://ansible.uk/Then/>



Or you can buy the 454-page book. As I did...

Rob Hansen (born in 1954) is a British fanwriter, artist, and editor active since 1975. His first con was SEACON 75, the 1975 Eastercon, and he was a member of the Newport SF Group, and founder of Friends in Space, and the Fanhattonites. He married fellow fan Avedon Carol in 1985.

He is a major British fan historian, publishing Then, a fanzine and website devoted to fan history; a much expanded book edition appeared in 2016. He was brought to Fanhistoricon 6 (held in conjunction with Boskone 32) in 1997 by a special Fanhistoricon Fan Fund.

He was TAFF winner in 1984, FGoH (along with Avedon Carol) at Contrivance, 1989 Eastercon. He was a contributor of fannish entries for the 1993 edition of Clute & Nicholls The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction. He was on the committee of Mexicon I, Conspiracy '87 and Precursor.

**Awards, Honors and GoHships:**

- 1982 — Nova Award for Best Fanzine for Epsilon and the Nova Award for Best Fanartist
- 1984 — TAFF, European Science Fiction Award for Best Fanzine for Epsilon.
- 1989 — Contrivance
- 1997 — Fanhistoricon Fan Fund
- 2013 — Corflu Fifty

[...Fancylopedia 3...]



PERRY RHODAN 3000 FOLLOW-UP

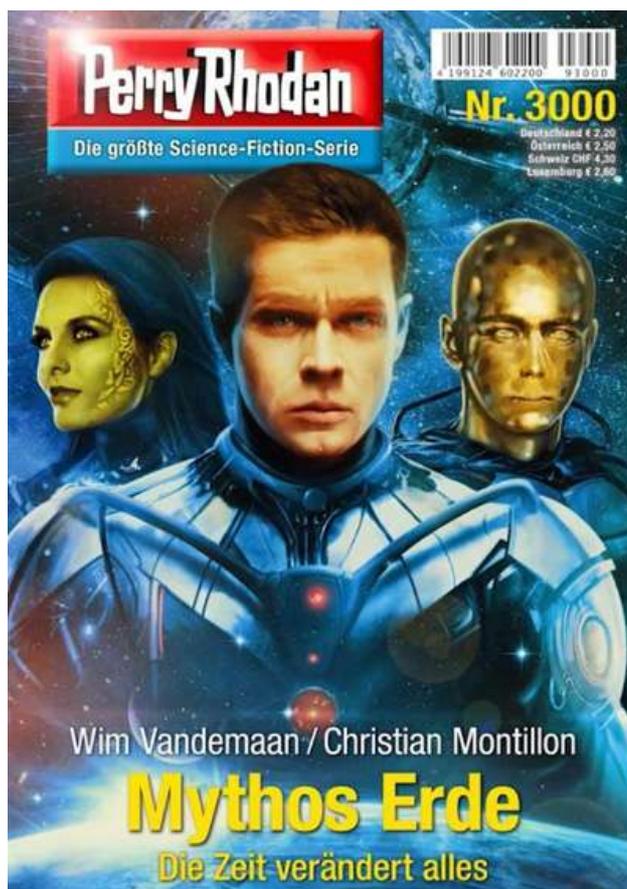
by Joerg Ritter & Wolf von Witting

The immortal time & space-hero experiences a jump in time between issue 2999 and 3000.

500 years have passed and Perry Rhodan needs to find himself in a reality which is familiar to some extent, but also different from what he recalls.

This is the teaser to the audience which had gathered to hear about the new adventures.

CounterClock's Joerg Ritter was in place with his camera and notepad. The auditorium was filled to the point when every seat was taken and the rest of the interested fans were lining up along the walls. The estimated ratio of one female on 8-10 males and most of the attendance appears to be from approaching their 50th birthday and up.



But that shouldn't come as a surprise. Younger readers may have been attracted by the new version of Perry Rhodan (Perry Rhodan-Neo). Chief editor Klaus N Frick took the stage in the



Literaturhaus München (The House of Literature in Munich). Some of the attention was also pointed at the recently published book by Germany's best-selling author Andreas Eschbach, "Perry Rhodan" – a book which, if I understood it correctly, not is sf at all, in spite of the title. Eschbach's Perry Rhodan tells the story of the man, growing up to become the astronaut who was launched into space.

Various artists have over the years given Perry Rhodan various faces.

In an interview, when asked how long Klaus N Frick has been chief editor of the series, KNF took the opportunity to wrap interesting fact in a humorous double-edged answer: "PR can be divided into three distinctly different periods. There was the *golden age* of Perry Rhodan 1961 to 77, while Klaus wasn't reading it, the *silver age* 1977 to 92, when he was reading it and its *iron age*, since 1992, when he has been the chief editor."

Who reads between the lines gets what KNF was referring to, other than when he started reading and editing. Who understands German, understands also that the team had to work *hard* to keep Perry Rhodan alive. There were many who doubted and said so, that Perry Rhodan *never* would make it to issue 2000. With KNF at the helm, they went further into the future than any other sf-series ever will.

Frick's predecessor Günther M Schelwokat (born 1929 in Tilsit, today Kaliningrad, died 1992 in Straubing) began as lector and chief editor of PR shortly after the publication of the first issue of the series in 1961.

He was renowned for his meticulousness and his phone calls were feared by the Perry Rhodan-authors. Ernst Vlcek once called him the "The Sadist of Straubing". (Due to illness, some of Schelwokat's responsibilities were covered by Florian F Marzin from 1987, who also assisted Klaus N Frick with the transition until 1995).

Frick never experienced the golden days of publishing and never had an easy task. But he was a fan, raised in



fandom, and even though he jestingly refers to his days in charge as "the iron age" he was no more harsh with his co-workers than Schelwokat had been. Probably less, how I would estimate him.



Fans on stage. Udo Klotz (middle) is the custodian of the Kurd Lasswitz Award, but also a fan. Next to him (in red) Hermann Urbanek who once wrote a series of articles on "Fanzines in Germany" which stretched from the beginning and into the 80's.

An official promotional video was shot (but only any good for he who understands the German language).  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzQRhW\\_PYCQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzQRhW_PYCQ)

Another 258 images to this event can be found in an album on Joerg Ritter's FB page.  
[https://www.facebook.com/joerg.ritter/media\\_set?set=a.10213836894291637&type=3](https://www.facebook.com/joerg.ritter/media_set?set=a.10213836894291637&type=3)

---

## Sturgeon's law

*"90% of science fiction is crap".*

According to Philip Klass (William Tenn), Sturgeon said this in 1951, at a talk at New York University. It was subsequently included in a talk at the 1953 Worldcon in Philadelphia. He said, "90% of science fiction is crap." This upset his audience, but then he added, "90% of everything is crap."

(Fancylopedia 3)

---

## Friday Afternoon Fun

A member of STIC (Star Trek Italian Club) posted this article on the STIC page:

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/big-bang-may-created-mirror-universe-time-runs-backwards/>

The article being in English, I felt it ok to comment in English, I wrote: "This is of course utter nonsense. A) because you need forward moving time to observe both backwards moving time and time standing still. B) Imagine looking at a Star

Trek-episode from end to beginning and stop liking it. Open a book and read. Your knowledge disappears. Throw up your breakfast and put it back into the fridge. In some way, what happens has to make sense. What happens in maths and what happens in reality are different. You can not have minus degrees Kelvin, because the absolute absence of motion is minus 273 Celsius. Absence of motion is not the same as time standing still. The concept of time and "times arrow" is a construction of language. There can be no backward entropy."

STIC-member 1 answered: Well, i did appreciate what you wrote Wolf, ...a little lack of poetry and romanticism indeed...Vulcan? Unfortunately i agree with you.

I am not Vulcan, neither volcanic, so I replied: "The universe I know is infinite and eternal. Can it be any more poetic and romantic? We go towards undiscovered country willingly or unwillingly. We can not stop time and change. But this is how we grow. It is not a Vulcan (unemotional) sentiment, even though it is logical. But logic, as Spock once said, is only the beginning of wisdom. Wishing for time-travel, changing the past, is living in the past. All the while we have the wonders of the universe all around us, at our feet. It is now and here, that we discover it. The poetry of the universe is a harmony between its components. Everything spins. From the sub-atomic to vast galaxy clusters. The rules of the small apply to the big." And STIC-member 1 was satisfied with this.

Instead STIC-member 2 argued: Negative time doesn't have to look like moving backwards, maybe it's just a negative dimension, just like axis in a cartesian space.

Wolf: "Ah, yes. Let's be clear what we talk about, when we say dimension and what it means for extra-dimensional space (& time). Do we expand the cube or the tetrahedron with an extra axis? The tesseract (hypercube) has 8 rooms, the hyper-tetrahedron only six. Both can be used to fill 3-dimensional space. Personally I prefer the hypertetrahedron because it would be a lot easier to represent it's expansion on a 2-dimensional chart. It also harmonizes with the known universe, since the hexagon occurs naturally, while cubes are mostly human innovation. It would explain where quantum-particles go in their absence and why the universe has characteristics of a simulation." After which I burst into laughter and tried to imagine how their heads were overheated. I expected it to stay quiet after this comment. And it did.

*"Wealth is the product of man's capacity to think."*  
Ayn Rand

---

### No More Fucks to Give

Written by Thomas Benjamin Wild Esq

I've tried, tried, tried  
And I've tried even more  
I've Cried, Cried, Cried  
And I can't recall what for  
I've pressed, I've pushed, I've yelled, I've begged  
In hope of some success  
But the inevitable fact is that  
It never will impress

I've no more fucks to give,  
My fucks have runneth dry,  
I've tried to go fuck shopping  
But there's no fucks left to buy  
I've no more fucks to give,  
Though more fucks I've tried to get,  
I'm over my fuck budget and  
I'm now in fucking debt

I strive, strive, strive  
To get everything done  
I've played by all the rules  
But I've very rarely won,  
I've smiled, I've charmed, I've wooed  
I've laughed,  
Alas to no avail  
I've run round like a moron,  
To unequivocally fail!

I've no more fucks to give,  
My fuck fuse has just blown,  
I've been hunting for my fucks all day,  
But they've upped and fucked off home,  
I've no more fucks to give,  
My fuck rations are depleted,  
I've rallied my fuck army but  
It's been fucking defeated!

The effort has just not been worth  
The time or the expense  
I've exhausted all my energy  
For minimal recompense  
The distinct lack of acknowledgment  
Has now begun to gall  
And I've come to realize that I  
Don't give a fuck at all!

I've no more fucks to give,  
My fucks have flown away,  
My fucks are now so fucked off  
They've refused to fucking stay!

I've no more fucks to give,  
My fucks have gone insane  
They've come back round and passed me  
While they're fucking off again!

I've no more fucks to give,  
My fucks have all dissolved,  
I've planned many projects  
But my fucks won't be involved!  
I've no more fucks to give,  
My fucks have all been spent,  
They've fucked off from the building  
And I don't know where they went!

I've no more fucks to give,  
I've no more fucks to give,  
I've no more fucks,  
I've no more fucks,  
I've no more fucks to give!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-calvsGLRfs>

---

### The Counterclock Journal

appeared on the internet in the summer of 2017,  
coincidentally right after CounterClock SF winning  
the ESFS Award.

<https://www.counterclockjournal.com/>

Neither do we support any Counterclock podcast  
<https://counterclockpodcast.podbean.com/>

We do not mind the Montreal-Canadian rockband  
by the same name. There is a huge difference  
between making music and making a magazine.  
But what puts me out is google which doesn't  
display the first and original CounterClock at all,  
unless something of its content is included in the  
search. I therefore have decided to adjust the  
name of this publication to CounterClock SF and  
let those who do not have any original ideas of  
their own just keep calm and carry on.

WolfEd



Artwork: Lars Lon Olsson

**Paranormal (adjective)**

1. (Psychology) beyond normal explanation
2. (Alternative Belief Systems) beyond normal explanation

This is a word which needs to be de-mystified for better understanding of unusual phenomena. Because the paranormal merely states that what we observe is beyond the normal explanation. For example the Moonbow, (see Clock #9) which now has been scientifically explained. It is still not a normal phenomenon. Very few have seen one.

Without involving extra-terrestrial, metaphysical or supernatural entities, one should be allowed to speak about observations made, which are out of our normality. Describe what you've experienced without trying to explain it.

Those who think they know, can try to explain it. Coincidence? Synchronicity? Some people have experienced extra-ordinary events which they can not explain. Others have never experienced any such thing. But those who have should not be afraid to talk about it.

I once emptied the washing machine. Among all the clean wet laundry I pulled out a dry and dirty sock! I was flabbergasted, because I had no explanation for how the sock got there. The only rational explanation I can give, is that it was on top of the machine when I opened it and fell as I opened the hatch and bounced into the machine. But I didn't see it happen! Not exactly the kind of thing one writes an article about. Nonetheless, a paranormal event.

It **can** be explained, but before we do it, we should compare it to other possible explanations and not automatically assume there is only one.

Only with this kind of serious approach to paranormal events, we might find the correct explanation (as it was found for the Moonbow).

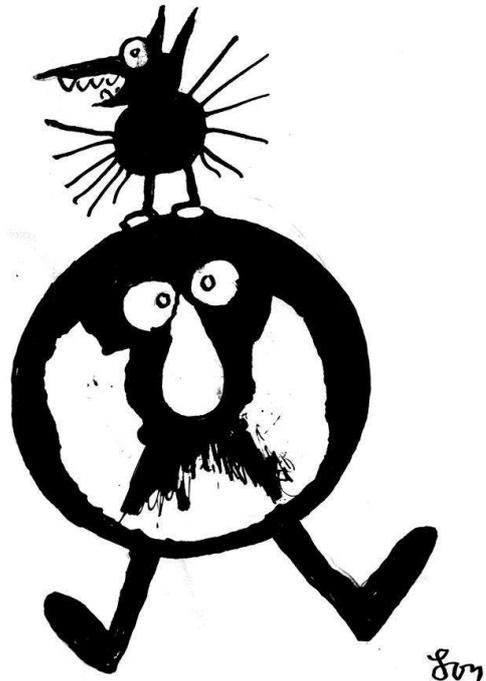
Have you ever experienced any such thing? **Any** thing that you can not explain?  
I am curious.

Feel free to share your story.

-WolfEd -

*I have realized that the past and future are real illusions, that they exist in the present, which is what there is and all there is.*

Alan Watts



Artwork: Lars Lon Olsson

**The Times They Are A Changin'**

Confusion ahead. The words related to our hobby have expanded in their meaning and become unclear and we can't do anything about it. It is always the majority who decide what the meaning of a word is, depending on how they use it. Like it or not.

CounterClock-readers and contributors generally understand the profound differences between an sf-fan and a fan of a sport, the supporter of an athletic team or the idolizer of an artist or actor. A young self-promoted Swedish fan-historian of popular culture once wrote about the first fanzines: "The first fanzines were made in the late 70's with the arrival of punk rock." In this case, *Ahrvid Engholm* was quick to intervene and defend the lore and tradition of sf-fandom.

The 1999 exhibition about fanzines at the House of Culture in central Stockholm (Kulturhuset) was enlightened about the true origins and history of fanzines. *SF-Journalen* and *CounterClock* were represented as sf-fanzines.

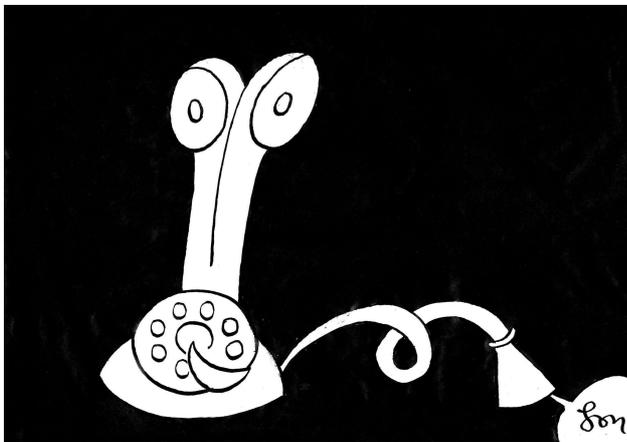
The mundane world doesn't understand the word fanzine as we do, I prefer to refer to Clock as a *non-commercial publication*. When someone calls it a *fanzine* among mundane people, I tend to cringe. I feel a flood of explanations necessary,

and I do very much prefer to just shut up.  
 The term *fan fiction* used to be a fictional or real story based on characters from sf-fandom. Now it means something completely different. Nowhere near its original meaning. Likewise the word sf-fandom is sliding off into unclear territory. This may among other reasons be, because as a genre sf doesn't sell enough in small European countries. Many writers and artists work for no or little compensation. It is also becoming a common practice to produce flashy magazines, which are costly to produce and can't be distributed for free, unless those who make them try to get back at least some of the cost of printing.

These semi-professional commercial, but with negative profit produced magazines blur the lines between fandom and prodom. One could attribute their production to either the passion or the vanity of those who make them. It is also, not forbidden for a pro to also be a fan. With exception for the Star Trek Italian Club, the majority of sf-fans in Italy appear to be equal to their prodom.

It is, how John-Henri Holmberg phrased it in the previous chapter about Stieg Larsson: *"Science fiction fans felt that their hobby was well on its way to conquer the world. They were in a sense right, but the problem was that once science fiction had conquered the world, fandom became obsolete. The worst that can happen to a sub-culture rising out of its object being misunderstood, despised and ridiculed is for it to become accepted, respected and part of general culture."* Some prodom don't seem to know themselves for sure which side they're on.

Again, revisit CounterClock #27, page 6 and refresh your memory with Walt Willis speech at TwerpCon back in 1954 and recall Ltn Doolittle's argument with Bomb #20 in Dark Star; "The concept is valid, no matter where it originates from!" (Real or fictional event).



Artwork: Lars Lon Olsson

## The CounterClock Award for significant contributions to European Science Fiction Fandom



The CounterClock Award will only be given a total of 12 times + 12 retroawards. There is no prize money included in the award. It consists of a plaster cast of the Mayan calendar and a diploma.

Previous recipients were **Arno Behrend + 4** members of the DortCon Eurocon committee 2017, who also worked on the Eurocon 1999.

The retro-award went to **Bridget Wilkinson**, for long and faithful service to the ESFS and for her Fans Across the World Newsletter 1990-2007.  
<http://efanzines.com/FAWorld/>

Nominations are open for the 2nd awards. You can nominate any European sf-fans or fan-group, for current and recent work + alive or deceased European fan whose past achievements were significant for European fandom and collaboration across political borders.

Your nomination also counts as your vote for that sf-fan as recipient for the award. If you believe that the person you nominate may not be known to us, please include a motivation/presentation with your nomination. The deadline for nomination is the last of June (30th) 2019.

Send it by email to Wolf von Witting:  
 wolfram1764-at-yahoo-dot-se  
 Subject *CounterClock Award Nomination*

The Frankenstein Chronicles (2015)  
 Created by: Barry Langford & Benjamin Ross



The six episodes of the first season take place in London nine years after Mary Shelley's book *Frankenstein* was published. The Chronicles is a journey 200 years back in time. We are visiting the great poet, painter and printmaker William Blake on his deathbed in August 1827.

The scenery is over all both as wondrous and beautiful, as it is monstrous and disturbing. Few anachronisms can be spotted, even for the historical nitpickers. It is **not**, as can be expected by the title, a story of Victor Frankenstein's attempts to create life, and followed up by similar pursuits by his descendants. It is a far further reaching story, involving the grotesque trials with human body parts, which were performed in the name of science. Reality was a little worse than shown in this TV-show. Here only a hand is moved, but it was also done with heads. As for the ugliness of reality, I'd call the *FC*; mild.

The first two episodes are the individually lowest rated ones at 7.6 and 7.7 – Of the remaining ten episodes, none is rated lower than 8.0

Curiously IMDb sums this up to an average: 7.4

9 Clock's: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒 - See it!



Limitless, yes, the 2015 TV-Series is based on the 2011 film by the same name. There is only one season with 22 episodes. Fairly entertaining. Carried humorously by the main actor.  
 7 Clock's: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒 - was okay.



Salvation (2017), 26 episodes, created by: Elizabeth Kruger, Craig Shapiro, Matt JL Wheeler

Here we go again. Saving the entire planet from certain doom. Flawed from the beginning by us knowing the outcome. We are still here.

And seriously, would we even panic and go crazy if we knew there's an imminent asteroid impact? Perhaps some of us would, I don't know.

But if you have little else to do, you might as well follow these pretty people with perfect bodies in their frenzy to save the human race. The actors are not to blame. What on Earth compelled me to continue watching? Perhaps it was the absence of continuous exchanges of punches, explosions and car chases. Not that there are none. There is a little bit of everything. Including the occasional exchanges of punches, explosions and killing. But that's what is supposed to be entertainment these days. And eventually we get saved.

I much prefer Don McKellar's version from 1998, *Last Night*, in which the asteroid really hits us. Because it makes you think!

[https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0156729/?ref=fn\\_tt\\_tt\\_3](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0156729/?ref=fn_tt_tt_3)

6 Clock's: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒 - I've seen worse.

*Some believe all that parents, tutors, and kindred believe. They take their principles by inheritance, and defend them as they would their estates, because they are born heirs to them.*

Alan Watts



**Black Mirror (2011-2019) 23 episodes**

Created by: Charlie Brooker

IMDb rating: 8.9

9 Clock's: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒 - See it!

This anthology-series is perhaps the best show of its kind since the original Twilight Zone. I look forward to the new episodes of 2019, even though I have to assume that Charlie Brooker at some point has to run out of brilliant ideas.

So far, he has not. On the other hand, we don't expect more than 4 new episodes. Sometimes less is indeed more.

**Ascension (2014) Miniseries: 3h 51min**

Created by: Adrian Cruz, Philip Levens

IMDb rating: 7.2

7 Clock's: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒 - was okay to watch.

Ascension is an ambitious original drama following a covert U.S. space mission launched in the 1960's that sent hundreds of men, women and children on a century-long voyage aboard the starship Ascension to populate a new world. Half way into their journey, as they approach the point of no return, the mysterious murder of a young woman causes the ship's population to question the true nature of their mission. The series features the confident and capable First Officer Aaron Gault, the eponymous ship's Captain William Denninger, and Viondra Denninger, the captain's beautiful, manipulative and dangerous wife (also serving as the ship's Chief Steward). Hardcore fans of Battlestar Galactica recognize *Tricia Helfer* (and her limited range of acting) in this role. (IMDb)

- WolfEd -



**Stranger Things (2016)**

Created by Matt & Ross Duffer

IMDb rating: 8.9

7½ Clock's: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒

Not bad! The kids of the show carry their part of the action convincingly. This interdimensional story is not meant to be taken seriously. It is a fun ride with scary things from another parallel existence. Part of *selling* season 2 of "Stranger Things" is telling us that it is *packed with references to movies and TV series from the 1980s*. Okay... No matter how much fun those references may be, I'd rather have it you focus on the story at hand. ...which, by all means, they do.

Among the stars we find: Winona Ryder, Matthew Modine, Paul Reiser (*Aliens*) and Sean Astin.

Interesting to see these actors in other roles so many years later. While I only recognized some of them with difficulty, Winona Ryder hardly seems touched by time at all.

*What the devil is the point of surviving, going on living, when it's a drag? But you see, that's what people do.*

Alan Watts

*But to me nothing - the negative, the empty - is exceedingly powerful.*

Alan Watts

-----  
**The Orville (2017)**

Created by: Seth McFarlane

IMDb rating: 7.9 (and rising)

8½ Clock's: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

How did it start? Was it meant to be a Star Trek parody, or worse a rip-off? Who cares? The Krill look suspiciously close to the Jem Hadar, Bortus is something of a Klingon bridge-substitute... but apart from the obvious TNG-similarities, Orville stands well on its own. It is space adventure in the best old Star Trek spirit. A fresher breeze than ST-Voyager was. And Voyager was still good.

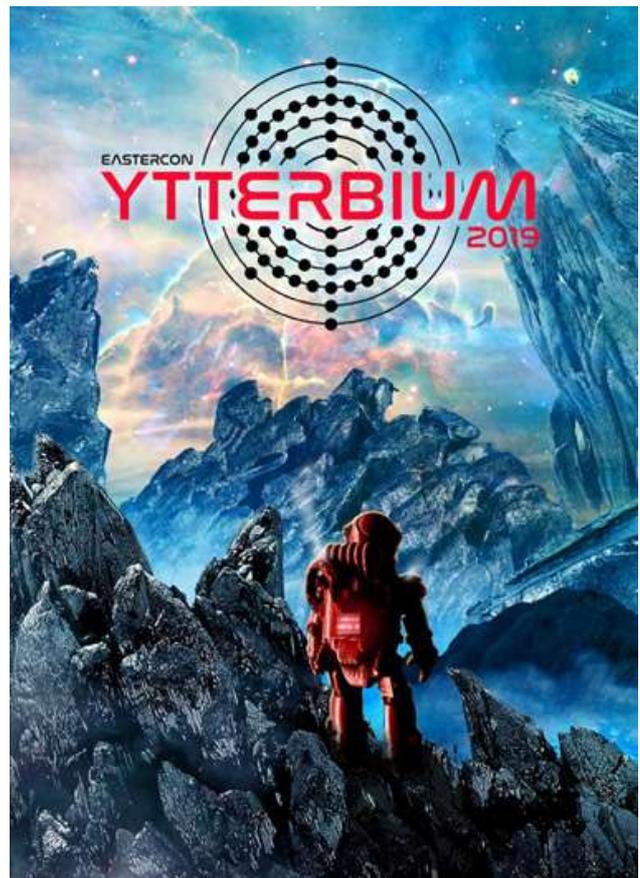
Let those who crave a darker trek revel in ST-Discovery, which in its second season recovers a little bit of the appeal a new ST-series could have had for free. It was thrown overboard in favor of creating something as ST unrecognizable.

Orville on the other hand, satisfies many of those who wish'd for more treks, without being it. Perhaps a cure for some against single-minded following of a franchise? Do we *learn* anything from this, other than *greed* being a bad motivator for good story-telling? Star Trek, Star Wars and Dr Who are not the only things worth paying attention to. All good things must end (even Perry Rhodan).



The 70th British Eastercon 2019 Ytterbium deserves at the very least a favorable mentioning. CounterClock has not kept a close eye on the Eastercons, because these cons have been exclusively for sf-fans with a thick wallet or for those who are willing to spend their last cent on a British convention.

For this reason I have, up until now, preferred to recommend a visit to NOVACON in Nottingham. Ytterbium is different. While the normal membership fee was 80 GBP until the last of March and now 90 GBP, it also has a low income-ticket for us who have *low or no* income at 30 GBP.



The convention will be held 19th-22nd April 2019, at the Park Inn Heathrow, London. The Guests of Honour are *Frances Hardinge, Sydney Padua, John Scalzi* and *DC*.

If this CounterClock Editor is not present at the event, then my absence has nothing to do with the cost of it. As soon as I discovered this low income option I began investigating if could wear my Eastercon-partici-pants.

<https://www.ytterbium.org.uk/>

Pre-registered members: 721 UK, 21 USA, Norway 15, Sweden 14, Ireland 14, Finland 9, Germany 9, Netherlands 7, Belgium 3, Spain 3, France 2, Denmark 2, Switzerland 2 +8 countries each 1 member.



LuxCon 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

<http://luxcon.lu/>



Replicon in Västerås, 14-16 June

<http://www.vasterasfandom.se/replicon2019/in-english/>



<https://2019.finncon.org/?lang=en>

FantastiCon, Copenhagen, Denmark

20-22nd September 2019

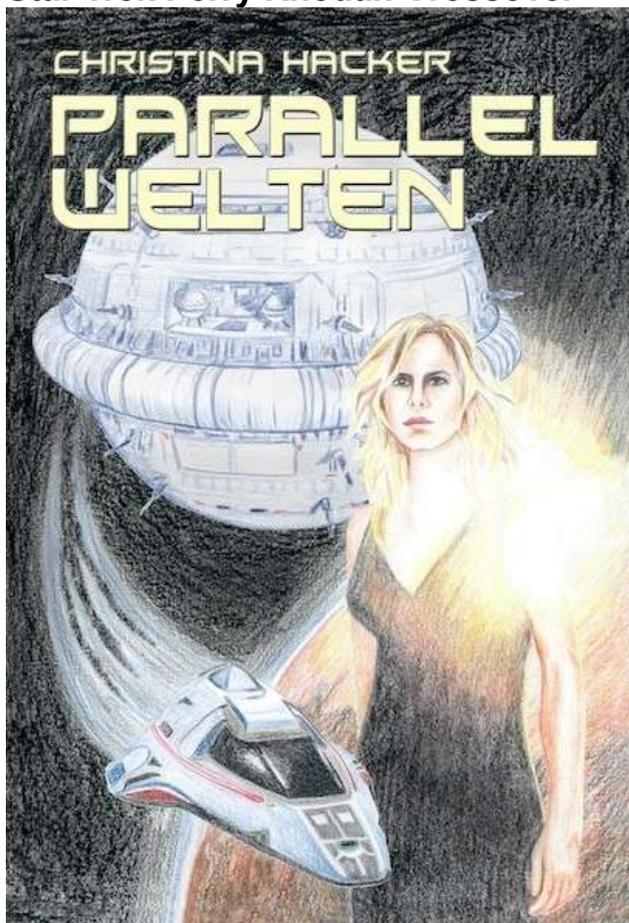
<https://fantasticon.dk/>



Sweden's oldest sf-club, Club Cosmos in Göteborg was founded in 1954. This makes it, not only the first club in Sweden, but the oldest sf-club in Europe still active. 2019 they celebrate their 65th anniversary. Still going strong. Website: <http://clubcosmos.net/>



## Star Trek Perry Rhodan Crossover



The German Star Trek AND Perry Rhodan-fan Christina Hacker has written a Trek-Rhodan crossover. Is she being sued from here to eternity by the Perry Rhodan-publishers? No, on the contrary. They are promoting the e-book on their website. Klaus N Frick also comments that the book contains sex-scenes, which most Rhodan-readers prefer not to have in their literature. Are Perry Rhodan-readers anti-sex? No, not at all. One of them commented on the news: "Sex scenes? Now I'm interested!" However, I wouldn't put high expectations on these sex scenes. Horny guys better surf on to the nearest porn site, or join the new Doctor Who-fandom. (Yaz is rumored to initiate a lesbian relationship with the Doctor). Another Perry Rhodan-fan said; "Anti-sex? No, I am anti-stupidity. What does sex have to do with the Perry Rhodan-series?" And there you have it! Perry Rhodan is not likely to sell, where sex is held in higher regard than content. Alas, info on this is only available in German language.

[https://perry-rhodan.net/aktuelles/news/ein-crossover-aus-perry-rhodan-und-%C2%BBstar-trek%C2%AB?fbclid=IwAR02XEqfi025KT0LHwvX17AXX-ikDA\\_1fnheody5vDKx6Jyr06KaX99O8ZE](https://perry-rhodan.net/aktuelles/news/ein-crossover-aus-perry-rhodan-und-%C2%BBstar-trek%C2%AB?fbclid=IwAR02XEqfi025KT0LHwvX17AXX-ikDA_1fnheody5vDKx6Jyr06KaX99O8ZE)

- WolfEd -



-Oradea, a vibrant Romanian city close to the border with Hungary, will host the second International Science Fiction Conference "The City and The Stars". It is organized by Wagner György Sebestyén and Kasza Magdolna, and will take place in the Citadel of Oradea, Saturday, May 18th 2019, between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM

The event will have two sections: a public conference held both in Hungarian and Romanian, and an expert panel where Science Fiction writers, publishers, graphic artists and promoters from both countries will have a work meeting to plan future projects. Representatives from various SF clubs, associations and magazines from Hungary and Romania: Avana, Galaktika, Deus Vult, Antares, Helion Online, will be present there.

Here is the timetable for the public conferences:

The City and The Stars 2019 (second edition) - Science Fiction Presentations in Romanian (RO) and Hungarian (HU)

- 10:00 - 11:00: Metal Shaking Paper - About Metal Hurlant - (HU) Süle Zoltán, expert collector
- 11:00 - 12:00: The underwater environment and the contact between civilizations in Science Fiction - (RO) Darius Hupov, Deputy Chief Editor of Helion Online
- 12:00 - 13:00: All you want to know about Star Trek - (HU) Kasza Magdolna, expert in the Star Trek universe, graphic designer
- 13:00 - 15:00: Lunch break
- 15:00 - 16:00: Dragons in literature and cinematography - (RO) Anamaria Borlan - Honorary President of Antares Club Braşov, writer
- 16:00 - 17:00: Me and The Other: The role of men and women in the world of Stargate - (HU) Vancsó Éva, student at the ELTE Doctoral School of Literature, translator
- 17:00 - 18:00: Exploring space: a scientific, military or commercial challenge? - Nic Dobre, President of Antares Club Braşov, writer.

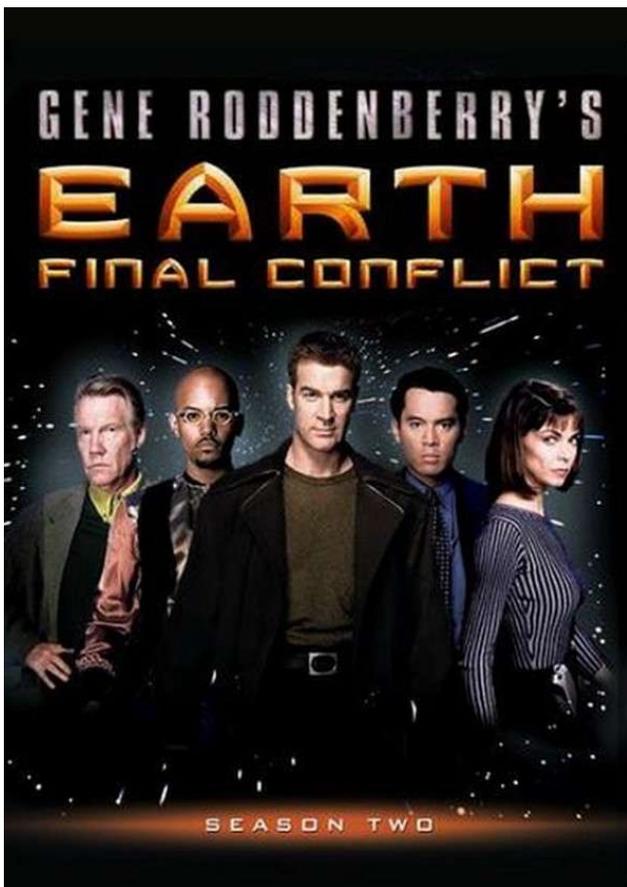
- DarEd -

Science Fiction ☹N:



What happened with *youtube*? It used to be a site where everyone could upload their home-made shit. Not anymore, that is, you can still upload your home made shit, but youtube is now so much more than that. It's becoming a tv-channel. I've already reported on SF SHORT Films on youtube. But there's so much more. For example, you can see the entire series *Fantastic Journey* (1977). It went on the sci-fi channel over here, but most of Europe hasn't seen it (yet). There's also complete *Starlost* (1973) and most recently I found Gene Roddenberry's *Earth: Final Conflict* (1997-2002), all the 110 episodes. For free!

But of course, being for free and available at any time and being old stuff, means you're not ever going to watch it!



*Earth: Final Conflict*, 6.3 on IMDb was not a big hit in the US and never made it across the pond to European TV, except perhaps to SF Channels.

Science Fiction SHORT Film

*It appears, that since I began reviewing SF short-films in CounterClock, not only has the range of selection improved on youtube, but their content as well. At least it was much easier to find a bunch of short films worthwhile watching. Here are some of them:*

Ancestors (UK, 2018) 3 min 56 sec

Written and directed by: Scott Tanner

IMDb: - 7 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚+



Considering this is a one-man project, these four minutes of film are damn impressive. Being as talented in front of, as behind the camera, one can perhaps forgive the script not being as pungent as it could have been. I can see many ways in which one man alone could have done a worse job, but not much better.

- WolfEd -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6my5xiKVPKs>

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8391412/>

Unearthed (2018) 22 min

Written and directed by:

Lindsay Harris & Stuart Leach

IMDb: - 7 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚+



Okay, so I did guess the end, before the final twist was revealed, but I wasn't disappointed. Prior hints gave it away, ever so subtle, but allowed only one conclusion. Obviously the makers of this short film, same as I, are fans of James Cameron. There are snips of dialogue and several shots which remind you of *Alien* (79) and *Aliens* (86).

And then they find these... items...

Which are not at all what they first appear to be.

- WolfEd -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVY1sAKSlzk>

Einstein-Rosen (Spain, 2016) 8:28 min  
 Written and directed by: Olga Osorio  
 IMDb: 6.8 (109), 8 Clocks: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒+



Brilliant, surreal and hilarious! Spanish sci-fi at its best. And then Pepe returns... This is a *must see!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMZbig5t8Ug>  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5928686/>

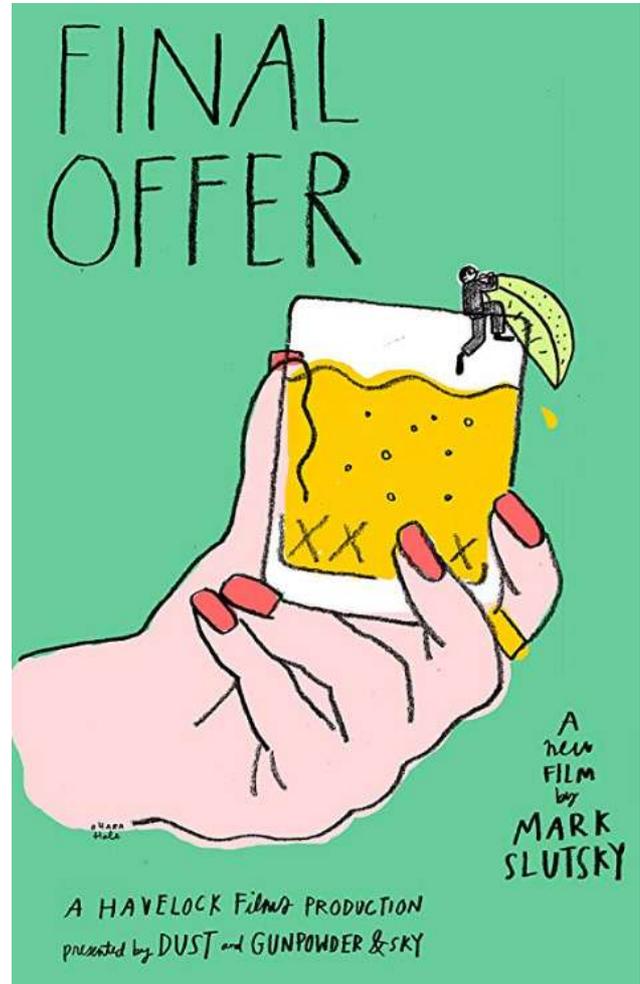
Future Boyfriend (USA, 2016) 11 min  
 Directed by: Ben Rock, Written by: A. Vincent Ularich  
 IMDb: 7.5 (99), 8 Clocks: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒+



Now here's a charming story, full of twists and surprises. A rare gem. But, a surprising amount of actors were used in this barely 11 minutes short. Basically about a couple in a restaurant and a waiter attending the table. Yet, IMDb reveals 17 actors involved. Huh!? I'm confused here. You need two actors for the lady, one for the device, the man and the waiter each. That makes five. Where do the other 12 actors come in? I guess I have to watch the film a fifth time. - WolfEd -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A\\_1YHHry0w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_1YHHry0w)  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3955652/>

Final Offer (2018) 11:23 min  
 Written and directed by: Marc Slutsky  
 IMDb: 7.8 (109), 8 Clocks: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒+



This film reminds me of a short story by William Tenn, *Bernie the Faust*, where another human is selected to negotiate on behalf of the human race. (That story by William Tenn is included in the second volume of his short stories, *Here Comes Civilization*). If Slutsky was inspired by Tenn I can't say, but here things unfold in much less time, and time is of the essence in this version.

The human lawyer (portraided by *Aaron Abrams*) is given only five minutes to think over his answer. The sly Alien, incarnated by *Anna Hopkins* brings well across the impression of a self-restrained predator ready to devour her prey in a single bite. However, it wouldn't have been fun to watch, if her lunch didn't have to wait. Interesting is the solution our *down-on-his-luck* representative came up with. - WolfEd -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rv8kOzRZK8g>  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8722088/>

## COUNTERCLOCK SF # 35

Automata (USA, 2017-2018) ca 5x10 min  
Written and directed by: Van Alan  
IMDb: 7.5 (46) 7 Clocks: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒



This is a pentalogy of five shorts 8:30 to 11 mins.

- 1) The Neon Rose
- 2) Mice Plans
- 3) Confirmation Day
- 4) Anointed
- 5) Just Murder

If you like *the future meets the past* and a mix of robots and Chicago in the 1930's and 40's, then you may enjoy this mini-series.

Link to the first episode:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGpr3Y6Q-1M>  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6089872/>

-----  
Also **Netflix** offers now an anthology series of short-films, all animated and presented under the umbrella title of **LOVE, DEATH & ROBOTS**, which in short sums up what it is all about. I will abstain from recommending it, since it only reminds me of the raw brutality introduced by the adult comics in **METAL HURLANT** (*Heavy Metal*, 1974). Been there. Seen quite enough of it. - WolfEd -

Lazy Boy (Australia, 2015) 12 min  
Written and directed by: Dave Redman  
IMDb: 7.4 (9) 7 Clocks: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒

# LAZY BOY



**RECLINE... REWIND.**

This Australian contribution to my collection of sf-short films had for once an ending I didn't foresee. It's a story about a man and his comfort chair.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHp7ngBVnQs>  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5021630/>

-----  
Orbit Ever After (2013) 19 min  
Written and directed by: Jamie Magnus Stone  
IMDb: 7.3 (252) 7 Clocks: 🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒🕒+



A boy on his way to the stars. Thomas Brodie-Sangster (born 1990) always looks a lot younger than he is. We may recognize him from *Game of Thrones*, the *Maze Runner* Trilogy or *Star Wars, episode VII*. But before he did any of that, he was the lead in this romantic cyberpunk (?) short story in orbit around the Earth. While the ending may remind you of Carpenter's *Dark Star*, what leads up to it, is still worth watching. - WolfEd -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpFXMlxgPo>  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3178550/>

## COUNTERCLOCK SF # 35

**Black Hole (2008) 3 min**

Written and directed by:

Phillip Sansom & Olly Williams

IMDb: 7.4 (2649) 7 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚+

An oldie, but a goodie. See it. Only 3 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijEfmJLV5PE>

⌚ **ther sci-fi shorts** viewed, but not reviewed, by order of IMDb and Clock ranking.

**Incoming Call (2016) 11 min**

Written and directed by: Eoin Cleland

IMDb: 7.8 (5), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nn8ZhBskStY>

**Multiverse Dating For Beginners (2017)**

Written and directed by: Kelly Tatham

IMDb: 7.7 (7), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0GaJ1WXCMY>

**Daisy Belle (2018) 8 min**

Written and directed by: William Wall

IMDb: 7.5 (6), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvwbP3f10vg>

**Alientologists (2017) 16 min**

Written and directed by: Tyler Rabinowitz

IMDb: 7.4 (40), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmCCJHnYOUU>

**Tree House Time Machine (2017) 14 min**

Written and directed by: Alan Ritchson

IMDb: 7.4 (33), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yu9t8QBpCg4>

**Plurality (2012) 14 min**

Directed by: Dennis A.Liu

IMDb: 6.9 (344), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pocEN5Hprsm>

**Nano (2017) 15 min**

Directed by: Mike Manning

IMDb: 6.7 (65), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAHGZSeGVww>

**Aether (2017) 20 min**

Written and directed by: Jerry Brown jr

IMDb: pending 5 votes (-), 6 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yT2UKwwUxiY>

**Interview With Time Traveller (2014)**

Directed by Ashley Cooper, 10 min

IMDb: 6.4 (59), 5 Clocks: ⌚⌚⌚⌚⌚

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLqmdV2Htew>

*And all this time invested amounts to half a page, listing those sci-fi shorts I didn't even find worthy commenting on. In case you are curious. - WolfEd -*

Filk News: Prolific Swedish filk-songwriter **Karl-Johan Norén**

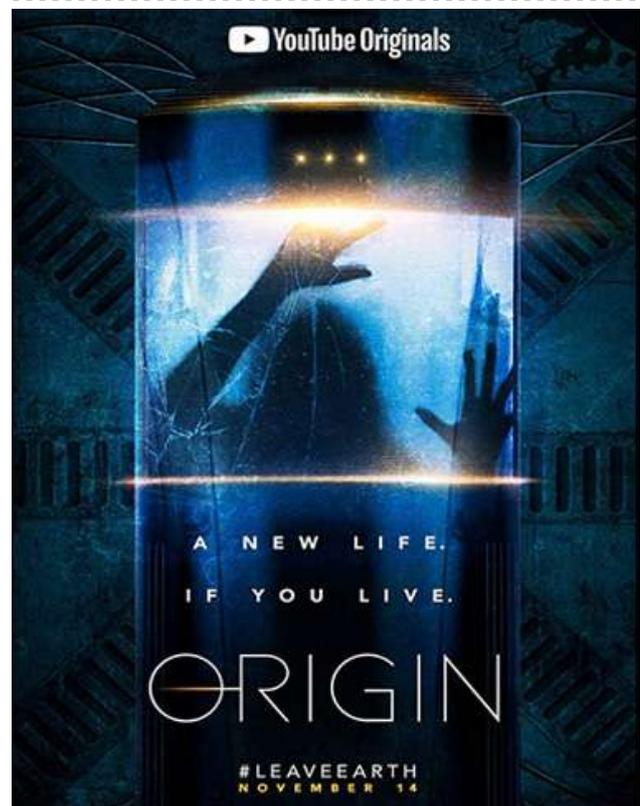
has been announced guest at Consonance in San Francisco, USA – March 2020.

CounterClock congratulates!

Cheer up! **Distopicon** will be held in **Timisoara**



A cheerful bid for Eurocon 2021 from Romania and a future worth looking forward to.



## Polish sf-fandom #1(of 3) 1976-1982

by Aleksandra Wierzchowska

Although science fiction books have been published in Poland since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Jerzy Żuławski's "Lunar Trilogy" was the milestone), no fan organization were established in the interwar period. The next years came with the war, occupation and death of millions – but a smart student from Lviv (Lwów) survived this horror and in 1946 published his first science fiction novel. His name was Stanisław Lem.



Early works by Lem, written under the circumstances of Stalinism, had to fit the ideological frames of that period. The 1956 thaw brought more freedom and in his golden age (1956-1968) Lem published seventeen books, becoming widely recognized writer. Although some literature critics found science-fiction not worth any mention, the interest in SF was growing in Poland. More novels and anthologies, including some translations of international authors, appeared in the bookshops, though not everything could be issued that time due to communist censorship and insufficiency of state-managed agencies. Science fiction novels were published in popular science and technology magazines, especially "Młody Technik" ("Young Technician") whose editor-in-chief Zbigniew Przyrowski supported young authors, giving them a chance for a debut and artistic development.

In the mid 70's a new generation of readers grew up and many of them wanted to exchange books, opinions and experiences. On the spur of the moment small fan clubs were set up in Brzeg, Kraków, Szczecin and (two clubs) in Warsaw. In the beginning of 1976 Warsaw and Szczecin clubs united into Ogólnopolski Klub Miłośników Fantastyki i Science Fiction (OKMFiSF; All-Poland Club of Fiction and Science Fiction Lovers), the first countrywide fan club. Officially it was not an

autonomous organization, but a branch of the state-controlled student association, which was the easiest way (or maybe the only one) to deal with the communist bureaucracy.

OKMFiSF activity launched on February 26, 1976, with an author event of Lech Jęczynek, a meritorious translator and acquiring editor. Few months later, August 19-22, the third Eurocon took place in Poznań thanks to Czesław Chruszczewski, a science fiction writer who was the president of Polish Writers' Union regional chapter. Eurocon in Poznań was dedicated to professional writers, but some members of OKMFiSF also attended the event. Soon the regional club of the organization was established in Poznań, as well as in other cities. Author events and book exchange fairs attracted many science fiction lovers, so OKMFiSF was growing.

The first anniversary, celebrated in a student club in Warsaw, appears to be of great importance for the Polish literature. Four popular authors, special guests of the event, were asked to write a short story based on a funny idea: UFO landing on the house of Adam Wiśniewski-Snerg, a young (but already famous) writer. Janusz Zajdel won the competition and the story he had created soon became a basis of his best novel *Limes Inferior*. But Wiśniewski-Snerg himself was also victorious: at the first All-Poland Science Fiction Clubs and Fans Convention that took place on December 7-11, 1977, he was awarded for the best book published in postwar Poland (*Robot*, hard science fiction novel issued in 1973). The other awards went to Andrzej Milczarek (debut of the year), Zbigniew Przyrowski (for the exceptional contribution in promoting young authors) and Lech Jęczynek (best translator and editor).

Lech Jęczynek formed Polish readers' literary taste in some way. Apart from three anthologies (*Rakietowe szlaki* 1958, *W stronę czwartego wymiaru* 1958 and *Kryształowy sześcian Wenus* 1966) edited by Julian Stawiński, there was no presentation of Anglophone science fiction. Jęczynek, who was working in Iskry publishing office, edited the first volume of *Kroki w nieznanne* (*Steps into unknown*) in 1970. The issue consisted of short stories (including Fritz Leiber, Harry Harrison, Clifford D. Simak, Strugatsky brothers, Lem and others) as well as popular science essays. Following its success, next volumes of the anthology were published year by year, presenting crème de la crème of the World and Easter European science fiction. Due to political reasons Jęczynek the series was

interrupted in 1976 and Jęczmyk had to leave. Since 1978 he worked in *Czytelnik* and conceived a new paperback series, presenting novels by Dick, Bułyczow, Strugatsky brothers, Kuttner and best Polish authors (Zajdel, Oramus, Wnuk-Lipiński and others). Besides, science fiction and horror books were published by several publishing agencies, but the editions were not sufficient, because of shortage economy.

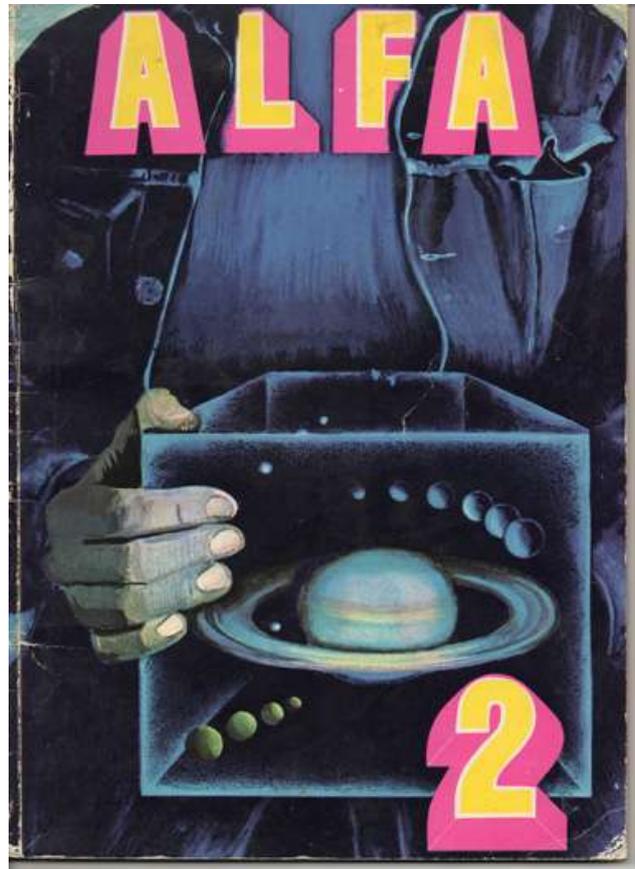
Meanwhile, writers wannabe were given a chance of debut in paperback book series *Fantasy – Adventure – Entertainment* launched in 1978 by Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza (KAW). It is not surprising, regarding the fact that Andrzej Wójcik, OKMFISF co-founder and vice president, was then working in KAW. According to some fans memories, so-called “worm series” (because of worm-shaped logo) consisted of the worst science fiction novels ever published in Poland. This opinion is a bit unfair since a couple books (including anthologies of short stories by Krzysztof Boruń, Janusz Zajdel or Julia Nidecka) were good or at least average quality, but the series has never had a great regard.

Another OKMFISF project, *Orbity Przyjaźni* (The Orbits of Friendship), was a meeting of science fiction fans from communist countries. But not only fans: Kirił Bułyczow from CCCP, Elizabeth Vonaburg from Canada and Sam Lundwall from Sweden also participated in the event. *Orbity Przyjaźni* took place in November 1978, accompanying the second all-Poland Convention. Bułyczow visited Poland again a year later, as a guest of the third convention (second *Orbity*) and some OKMFISF activists attended Worldcon '79 in Brighton.

How many fans joined OKMFISF? Nobody knows. Wiktor Bukato, a translator and editor who was a member of the organization, wrote in his memories, that he had been told of 10 thousands members. In the report written by Wójcik we can read about 20 thousands. But it is more than likely that the reality was less impressive – few thousands at best, probably even less. And many of them were only names on the lists, not acitivists engaged into events and initiatives. The activity of OKMFISF died away until the end of 1980 and on July 5, 1981 the organization was officially dissolved. The same time a new association – PSMF – was set up... but this is another story that will be told in the next episode.

From the very beginning Polish fans were making attempts to have their own “Amazing Stories”. A comic magazine “Alfa” (1976-1981), had some

science fiction texts and comics, but due to its rare and irregular publishing, it never gained a wide recognition. In the end of 70's a couple of clubs issued their monthly fanzines, but it was not enough. Even making the fanzine was a challenge: according to then law, all the periodicals should be controlled by the censorship office, unless the edition was less than 100 copies. And one could not that simply go to the shop and buy a printer or a duplicating machine – firstly, it would attract the political police, secondly – there were no such things in Polish shops anyway. Finding a way of printing the issue demanded a lot of creativity, persistence, good social skills and some luck as well.



Cover of ALFA#2 (printed in Warszawa 1976)

Fandom activists used both legal and unofficial ways to get all the permissions needed and edit a professional magazine. The chance appeared in quite an unusual way. 16 months after the “Solidarity” revolution of August 1980, the authorities struck back and on 13th December 81, introduced the martial law. The organizations, newspapers and magazines were suspended or closed down. Surprisingly, in 1982, the long awaited permit for science fiction magazine was given. The first issue of “Fantastyka” appeared in

October 1982 and all the copies were bought in a flash. Short stories and novels by Polish and international writers (including G.R.R. Martin), articles, adventure science fiction comic – fan dreams came into being. “Fantastyka” editor-in-chief was Adam Hollanek, a writer and journalist, accompanied by a couple of young journalists and former OKMISF leaders.

Some editors say that “Fantastyka” was to be a sort of a “security valve” – for the authorities young people talking about science fiction seemed to be less dangerous than the same people discussing politics and democracy. But the turn of decades has already seen the birth of Polish social science fiction, a subgenre that focuses on speculation about society, authority-community relations and human interactions. In a communist state such books were also recognized as the critics of the system, though the general idea was more ambitious: to examine various models of societies, to ask fundamental questions of human nature. Since 1979, when Edmund Wnuk-Lipiński published his *Wir pamięci* (“A Whirl of Memory”) a number of such books appeared, including outstanding novels by Janusz Zajdel. By the end of 1980’s the phenomenon faded away, but the books are still esteemed by critics.

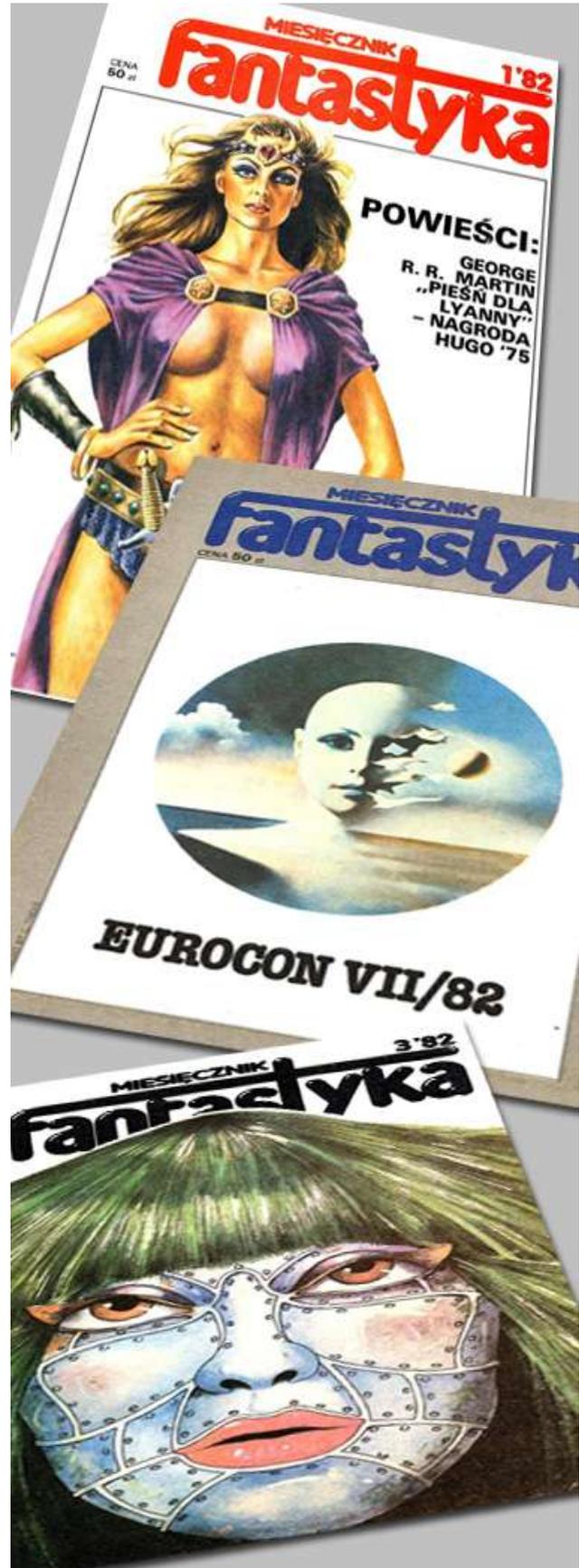
- AW -



Artwork: Klaudia Weber/Vidmar, 1988

*There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'All right, then, have it your way.'*

C. S. Lewis



Issues # 1-3 of the polish magazine Fantastyka 1982

On 14th Feb 2019 DAGENS NYHETER (Stockholm's Daily News) announced that the life of Stieg Larsson will be dramatised in a TV-series.



Stieg Larsson - Science fiction reader  
(and sometimes writer)

by John-Henri Holmberg

Science fiction developed as a speculative branch of realist literature during the 19th century. The book most often considered the first fully realized sf novel was Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, published in 1818. Already in her preface, the author stressed her efforts at clearly distinguishing her book from imaginative works not founded in scientific thought. "The event on which this fiction is founded has been supposed, by Dr. Darwin, and some of the physiological writers of Germany, as not of impossible occurrence. [...] In assuming it as the basis of a work of fancy, I have not considered myself as merely weaving a series of supernatural terrors. The event on which the interest of the story depends is exempt from the disadvantages of a mere tale of spectres or enchantment. It was recommended by the novelty of the situations which it develops; and [...] affords a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of human passions more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield."\*

This passage, written almost 200 years ago by a 19-year old first novelist, is an impressive both argument for the importance of science fiction, and definition of its specific nature. However,

*Frankenstein* did not inaugurate any avalanche of science fiction stories. Since childhood, Mary Shelley had been surrounded by staunch defenders of the Enlightenment, in many cases also counted among the leading and most radical thinkers, debaters and authors of the period. To her, the ideas expressed in her novel were self-evidently true. But it took a long time before most others also had accepted them.

*Frankenstein*, as indeed science fiction as a literary field, is based in the Enlightenment, which can be said to be the era in Western philosophy when reason was held as the primary source for knowledge, legitimacy and authority. In extreme brevity, you can say that the Enlightenment taught that humans have no other source of knowledge than through the use of our senses, and no other source of understanding than through the use of reason. This may not today sound like a revolutionary idea, but in an era when all true knowledge was claimed to emanate from God, and when kings ruled absolutely by divine right, the notions that we in fact gain no knowledge from gods, nor have any reason to obey hereditary rulers, were explosive indeed.

From the fundamental Enlightenment values of reason and rationality stemmed such moral and political ideals as individual liberty, tolerance, democracy, equality regardless of race and sex, and freedom of belief, thought, and expression. Politically, both the American War of Liberation and the French Revolution were direct and dramatic effects of the Enlightenment and of the liberalism it fueled.

What science fiction – and, later, the detective story – did was to transform the fundamental enlightenment values into fictional form. A science fiction story is a speculation on an idea that *within our current frame of knowledge about the natural world* may be unlikely, but which must not be impossible. If you write a fantasy story, you can make up anything – magic, unicorns, astrology that works, flying carpets, divine interventions in human affairs. But in a science fiction story, whatever innovations you use have to be rationally explained and developed. And it took time before any large number of readers was ready to appreciate that kind of story. In fact, you can say that it took around fifty years.

---

\* Mary Shelley, Preface, in *Frankenstein, or The modern Prometheus*. London 1818 and innumerable later editions.

Certainly there were other writers trying their hand quite at stories of scientifically based speculations (notably Edgar Allan Poe) in between, but the breakthrough came with Jules Verne. In 1863 he published his first novel, *Five Weeks in a Balloon*, and already by 1870 he had also written *From the Earth to the Moon*, *A Journey to the Center of the Earth*, and *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. His speculative but technologically and scientifically founded adventure stories proved immensely popular, and became the true genesis of modern science fiction. Verne had imitators and followers both in Europe and in the United States, and via his work, and theirs, what was for a while called the “scientific romance” was established. When British author H. G. Wells in 1895 published his first novel, *The Time Machine*, within less than a decade following it with *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *The Invisible Man*, *The War of the Worlds*, *When the Sleeper Wakes*, *The First Men on the Moon*, and *The Food of the Gods*, science fiction had gained not only its first major author but also to a large extent both the form and many of the dominant themes that have characterised it ever since.

It is reasonable to say that science fiction at the beginning of the 20th century was fuelled by the firm belief in progress and technology characteristic of the late Victorian era. Throughout the Western world, the huge technological, economic, scientific and social advances of the 19th century had led to the emergence of an already large and quickly growing middle class. Education had been reformed and schooling was universal; the future, almost everyone believed, would bring further unimagined blessings. Then World War I erupted, and faith in inevitable progress suddenly was no longer self-evident. After the War, science fiction was still written in Europe. But other literary forms became more prominent, and the serious sf works published now tended to express dystopian warnings of possible future disasters; important European authors were Karel Capek, Aldous Huxley, Yevgeny Zamyatin and perhaps foremost of all the British philosopher Olaf Stapledon, whose great novels depicted mankind as a short-lived, fluttering flame in a vast and uncaring universe full of unimaginable life and strivings.

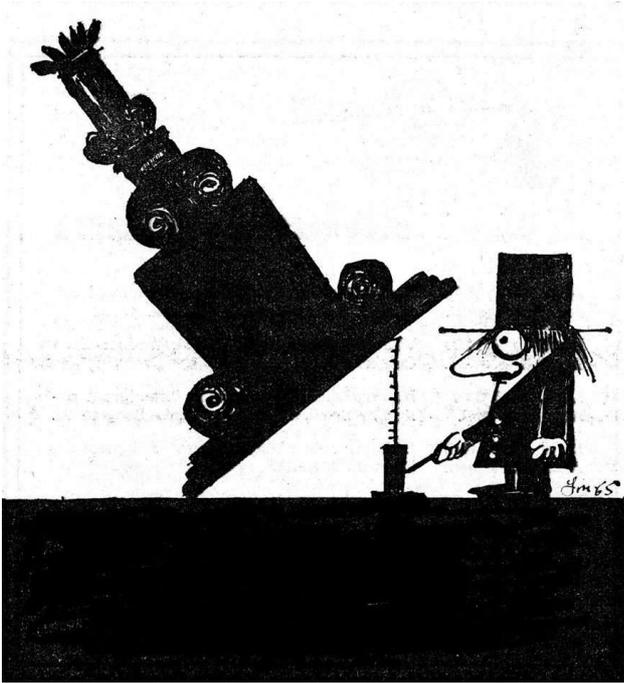
Instead, the adventurous, optimistic kind of science fiction, along with millions of Europeans wanting to escape oppression, intolerance and poverty, moved to America. In sharp contrast to Europe, the United States during the 1910s and

1920s was not ravaged by war or haunted by the economic and social disasters of war, but a nation in the middle of one of its most dramatic periods of economic growth, characterised by self-confidence, optimism, increasing tolerance and rapid social change. Much of that was wiped out by the Wall Street crash in 1929 and the depression that followed, but by then science fiction had already become established as a profitably popular form of entertainment literature. In April 1926, inventor and writer Hugo Gernsback published the first issue of *Amazing Stories*, the world’s first science fiction magazine. Gernsback had immigrated to the US from Luxembourg in 1905 and become a very successful entrepreneur and publisher of magazines like *Modern Electrics* and *The Electrical Experimenter*. But Gernsback had been a science fiction reader since childhood, and occasionally published sf stories in his popular science magazines. With *Amazing Stories* he wanted to try an all-fiction magazine, and the experiment was initially quite successful. In the magazine, he also gave a name to the “new” literary form he wanted to publish, initially calling it “scientifiction”, but a couple of years later changing it to “science fiction”. In his wake, science fiction developed and thrived in pulp magazines for a quarter of a century, until book publishers gradually began to compete with the magazines and science fiction, after another decade or two, began to be primarily written as novels rather than short stories.

Of course a number of science fiction novels were published in Sweden already during the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. During the years 1940–1947, there was even a weekly magazine, *Jules Verne-magasinet*, mainly publishing very badly translated short sf stories from some of the American pulp magazines. During the war years, the magazine was popular among teenagers, some of whom were smitten badly enough to remain science fiction readers for life.\* But *Jules Verne-magasinet* never used the term “science fiction” about its stories, nor did the magazine encourage readers to get in touch with each other.

---

\* Among them, fascinatingly, internationally known authors like Jan Myrdal (born 1927, author of *Report from a Chinese Village*, 1963) who in 1993 even edited an anthology from *Jules Verne-magasinet*; poet, novelist and philosopher Lars Gustafsson (1936–2016); poet and member of the Swedish Academy Lars Forssell (1928–2007), poet and novelist Sven Christer Swahn (1933–2005).



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

In the early 1950s, however, several publishers tried to establish science fiction as part of the Swedish literary marketplace, and now the name was also imported.

In 1953, a publishing company called Eklunds launched a series of sf novels, publishing seven books until 1955. Also in 1953, Bonniers launched a series of juveniles, publishing five titles until 1956. Half a dozen sf novels were also incorporated into the juvenile line Saga from Svensk läraretidnings förlag. Olle Lindqvist, with his Lindqvist imprint, started a line of hardcover adult science fiction, publishing a dozen novels from 1954 to 1956, and incorporated sf in his juvenile line. But sales were not encouraging, and by 1956 all of these early tries had been terminated. Instead, two original paperback publishers now had a try at finding a Swedish audience for science fiction. Wennerbergs launched a series of translated novels in 1957, but discontinued it after 20 books in 1960. More or less simultaneously, Pingvinförlaget published 22 books from 1957 until 1959. Again, readers were too few to sustain these efforts, and by 1960 all attempts to publish lines of science fiction in Swedish had ceased. They would be resumed ten years later, but during a decade Swedish sf fans were forced to read almost entirely in foreign languages.

But a backlog of books, often available in libraries or second-hand bookshops, had been created. And most important of all, two sf magazines had also been published. The first of them, *Häpna!*,

was launched already in early 1954 and managed 119 issues until its last in early 1966. A second magazine, *Galaxy*, printing translations from the American magazine

of the same name, lasted only for 19 issues from 1958 to 1960, but was an entirely commercial venture; *Häpna!*, on the other hand, was published by two sf enthusiast brothers who did not depend for their living on income from the magazine, and in fact kept publishing it until illness made the brother responsible for the editorial work unable to continue.

The interesting question, of course, is why many young readers who stumble on science fiction become lifelong readers or even active fans. Literary appreciation isn't the answer. There certainly exists modern science fiction that I believe deserve to be counted among the great works of literary art – I could name Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*, Vladimir Nabokov's *Ada*, Joanna Russ' *The Female Man*, as well as work by authors including J.G. Ballard, Octavia Butler, Samuel R. Delany, Harlan Ellison, Carol Emshwiller, R.A. Lafferty, Gene Wolfe and more than a few others – but the appeal of science fiction is generally greatest when you encounter the form at an early age, long before aesthetics is your guideline in evaluating fiction. But science fiction isn't "just" literature. It is literature written from a specific and unique perspective. All other fiction either mirrors humanity realistically in the past or in the present, or depicts events which we know to be impossible, but science fiction tries to portray humans in a real world which might have existed or may come to exist. In other words, science fiction realistically speculates in alternatives and in change. For this reason it is a form that by its nature poses important questions: about the nature and rules of reality, about the importance of human choices and convictions, about the effects of our actions, about our thinking and reactions when faced with the unexpected or unknown.

At the risk of sounding pretentious, I would claim that science fiction in this respect is the only literary form that manages on a large scale to explore not only our own humanity, but also our place in a changing reality. Viewed in this way, science fiction is ultimately a philosophical field of literature, even if nothing could be simpler than to name hundreds or thousands of sf novels lacking any substance beneath their surface of adventurous actions.

If this sounds boringly serious and intellectual, there is also another and perhaps more important aspect to consider. On the immediate, emotional and deeply individual level, science fiction offers its readers to experience what is often called a “sense of wonder”. And whoever has experienced this feeling is hooked. To that reader, science fiction can offer something that is almost nowhere else to be found. It is far from easy to pinpoint this “sense of wonder”, but I would suggest that it is created in the interaction between reader and text, and is an effect of the sudden perception of dizzying perspectives through time and space, perspectives in which human beings occupy a unique and for a time meaningful place. In a specific sense, science fiction is a deeply romantic literary form. Perhaps as a result of its fundamentally materialistic and scientific view of the world, science fiction generally perceives the universe as a random creation of matter, without purpose or meaning. But within this vast space there is also life and consciousness. Only living things can strive, long, feel and hope; life can never be meaningless, since living beings create their own meaning. For this reason, life matters; life is what gives the universe value and purpose. And perhaps the “sense of wonder” experienced by readers is a reflection of this: the perception of ourselves as infinitely small and insignificant in a vastness of time and stars, and at the same time as part of what gives purpose and meaning to the universe. Humanity is one of the flickering sparks of consciousness and life that are all that matter in all of existence.

And this “sense of wonder”, this perception of the vastness of time and space, but also of endless possibilities, opportunities, changes and transformations, can definitely be experienced at eight or ten. In order to repeat it and savour it, you become a science fiction reader. And in order to be able to talk about it, and about the ideas generated by it, you search for other sf readers and become a fan.

This may sound as if sf fans in general are unusually bright, intellectually precocious and verbal. In general, I would agree. They are. But that fact should hardly surprise anyone. What unites them is a common interest in reading. That in itself excludes all non-readers. The reading matter uniting them is quite often conceptually complex, demanding a good vocabulary, a willingness to learn, understand and accept new ideas, be open to alternate ways of looking at things. This narrows the field further. I make no

claim for fans in general to be geniuses. But I would be very surprised if there were many fans less intellectually gifted than the average college student. That many of them have become writers, editors, computer experts, scientists, and in a few cases even astronauts should be no great surprise. Fans are in general people fascinated by what critic Damon Knight called “the inexhaustibility of real things”: by knowledge, possibilities, intellectual speculation and reason. And through their reading, many of them also become interested in science and technology, some of them, indeed, to help implement science fiction’s age-old dream of discovering new frontiers in space.

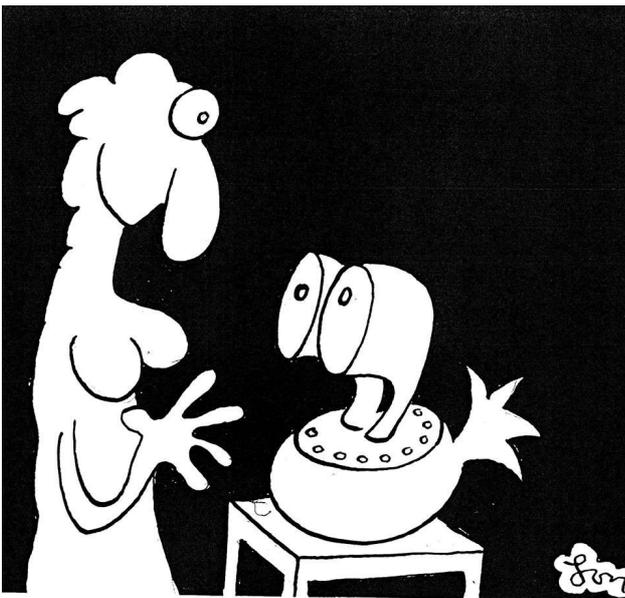
I became an sf reader towards the end of the 1950s. Once I had discovered the form, I spared no effort to track down more books and stories to read. By around twelve, I had read virtually all the sf published in Sweden up until then, and began reading my favourite authors in English. This was the early 1960s, and my guess would be that it was just around this time that Stieg Larsson, far north of where I lived, began to discover the same books I so recently had read.

What, exactly, did he read? We know a few facts. He started school at seven in 1961; he learned about the existence of fandom ten years later; it should be safe to assume that he read mainly in Swedish until at least thirteen or fourteen, in 1967 or 1968.

One author we know for a fact is the one Stieg himself always mentioned as his first great literary love: Robert A. Heinlein. Heinlein was already in the 1950s one of the few sf authors fairly extensively translated into Swedish, and kept being translated. Those of his books available to the teenage Stieg Larsson were *Sixth Column* (published in 1949; translated in 1953), *The Man Who Sold the Moon* (1950; 1954), *Starman Jones* (1953; 1954), *Space Cadet* (1948; 1955), *Farmer in the Sky* (1953; 1957), *Have Space Suit – Will Travel* (1958; 1959), *Citizen of the Galaxy* (1957; 1961) and *Double Star* (1956; 1961). Robert A. Heinlein (1907–1988) was central to the development of modern science fiction. He sold his first short story in 1939 and within two years was both the most popular and probably best author appearing regularly in the sf magazines. He led the movement towards greater technical and social realism in science fiction, preferring to write about the near future and with humanity’s first steps into space a favourite subject. *The Man Who Sold the Moon* collects typical early stories –

of the invention of cheap, unlimited solar energy; of the social effects when automobiles are replaced by moving roads; of a space-longing entrepreneur financing the first manned trip to the moon. *Starman Jones, Space Cadet, Farmer in the Sky, Have Space Suit - Will Travel* and *Citizen of the Galaxy* are all technically juvenile novels, with teenage protagonists, though otherwise written in the same style as Heinlein's adult work from the same period. All are set in space or on other planets; all express the author's absolute conviction that mankind must reach for the stars. *Double Star* carries the same theme, although this adult novel, its plot inspired by Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda*, is primarily a character study of an actor forced by circumstances to devote his life to impersonating a great politician. As noted, Heinlein, as so many of the other early science fiction authors, infused his stories with his fascination for space. What did Stieg learn from the science fiction he read as a child? Almost certainly he read the novels and stories quoted below, as did I and most others who followed the sf published during the 1950s:

"As the ship swung slowly around, Earth would pass from view, and the stars would march across the port – the same stars he had always known, but steady, brighter, and unwinking against a screen of perfect, live black. Then the Moon would swim into view again to claim his thoughts. He was serenely happy in a fashion not given to most men, even in a long lifetime. He felt as if he were every man who has ever lived, looked up at the stars, and longed..."\*1



Artwork: Lars "Lon Olsson

"One minute it was Ohio winder, with doors closed, windows locked, the panes blind with frost, icicles fringing every roof [...] And then a long wave of warmth crossed the small town. A flooding sea of hot air; it seemed as if someone had left a bakery door open. The heat pulsed among the cottages and bushes and children. [...] *Rocket summer*. The words passed among the people in the open, airing houses. *Rocket summer*. The warm desert air changing the frost patterns on the windows [...]

*Rocket summer*. People leaned from their dripping porches and watched the reddening sky. The rocket lay on the launching field, blowing out pink clouds of fire and oven heat. The rocket stood in the cold winter morning, making summer with every breath of its mighty exhausts. The rocket made climates, and summer lay for a brief moment upon the land..."\*2

"He sat looking out at the stupendous glory of heaven [...] The history of man had,

in one sense, represented an unending struggle between instinct and intelligence, the involuntary rhythm of organism and the self-created patterns of consciousness. Here, the, was the final triumph of mind. [...] The change in human nature and human society which this would bring about was beyond even his imagination. A man would still have motivations, he would still want to do things, but he could select his own desires, consciously. [...]

Eventually – no more death?

No, probably not that. Man was still a very finite thing. Even now, he had natural limitations, whatever they might be. A truly immortal man would eventually be smothered under the weight of his own experience. [...]

Nevertheless, a life span of many centuries ought to be attainable; and the specter of age, the slow disintegration which was senility, could be abolished.

Protean man – intellectual man – infinity!" \*3

\*1 Robert A. Heinlein: "Requiem", originally published in 1940, reprinted in *The Man Who Sold the Moon*, Shasta: Chicago 1950, published in Swedish 1954.

\*2 Ray Bradbury: "Rocket Summer", in *The Martian Chronicles*, Doubleday: New York 1950, published in Swedish 1953.

\*3 Poul Anderson: *Brain Wave*, Ballantine: New York 1954, published in Swedish 1959.

“We are your guardians – no more. Often you must have wondered what position my race held in the hierarchy of the universe. As we are above you, so there is something above us, using us for its own purposes. We have never discovered what it is, though we have been its tool for ages and dare not disobey it. Again and again we have received our orders, have gone to some world in the early flower of its civilisation, and have guided it along the road that we can never follow – the road that you are traveling now.’ [...]

At the end of the [...] path? There lay the Overmind, [...] bearing the same relation to man as man bore to amoeba. Potentially infinite, beyond mortality, how long had it been absorbing race after race as it spread across the stars? Did it too have desires, did it have goals it sensed dimly yet might never attain? Now it had drawn into its being all that the human race had ever achieved. This was not tragedy, but fulfilment.”\*1

“Dusk and the bright floodlights down there, down where it was going to start to happen, down there where a man with a light in his eyes like the light in Billy’s eyes was getting ready to leave Earth, to escape from this poor two-dimensional surface upon which we three-dimensional beings crawl. Escape, God how we all need escape from this tiny here. The need for it has motivated just about everything man has ever done in any direction other than that of the satisfaction of his physical appetites; it has led him along weird and wonderful pathways; it has led him into art and religion, ascetism and astrology, dancing and drinking, poetry and insanity. All of these have been escapes because he has known only recently the true direction of escape – *outward*, into infinity and eternity, away from this little flat rounded surface we’re born on and die on. This mote in the solar system, this atom in the galaxy. I thought of the distant future and the things we’d have, and discounted my wildest guesses as inadequate. Immortality? Achieved in the nineteenth millennium X. R. and discarded in the twenty-third because it was no longer necessary. Reverse entropy to rewind the universe? Obsolete with the discovery of nolanism och the concurrent cognate in the quadrate decal? Sounds wild? How would the word quantum or the concept of matter-energy transformation sound to a Neanderthaler? We’re Neanderthalers, to our descendants of a hundred thousand years from now. You’ll sell them short to make the wildest guess as to what they’ll do and what they’ll be.

The stars? Hell, yes. They’ll have the stars. [...]

The floodlights go off. There is a breathless hush. Thousands of people and a breathless hush. Oh God, Ellen, if you could be here with me, to watch our rocket take off. *Our* rocket. But more yours than mine. You died for it.

Here waiting in the breathless dark I feel humble before it and before you, before man and his future, before God if there is a God before mankind becomes one.” \*2

Unless you happen to be well read in science fiction, you will have to take my word for it, but these quotes are in no sense unique or even particularly carefully selected; they represent a central theme in the sf written from the later part of the 1940s and well into the 1970s, after which it grew weaker for some time but has now started to re-emerge. And the quoted passages in most cases represent recurring concepts. In the work of Arthur C. Clarke, the intellectual transcendence of humanity to a higher plane of consciousness and rationality is central; an example is his most famous work, the manuscript for Stanley Kubricks 1968 movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* and the novelisation by the same title also written by Clarke. That movie, incidentally, premiered in Sweden in late August 1968, when Stieg Larsson was 14 years old. For a long time, he named it his favourite movie. In the work of Poul Anderson, the romance of space exploration is totally dominant. In the work of Robert A. Heinlein, colonising space is both mankind’s greatest adventure and an absolute necessity for longtime survival.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

\*1 Arthur C. Clarke: *Childhood's End*, Ballantine: New York 1954, published in Swedish 1955.

\*2 Fredric Brown: *The Lights in the Sky Are Stars*, E. P. Dutton: New York 1952, published in Swedish 1959.

As I have elsewhere in this book written about Stieg Larsson's political views, specifically about his embracing of Trotskyism, at least I find it not uninteresting to refer once again, in the context of the above quotes from major science fiction works of the 1950s, to the final paragraphs of Leon Trotsky's *Literature and Revolution*:

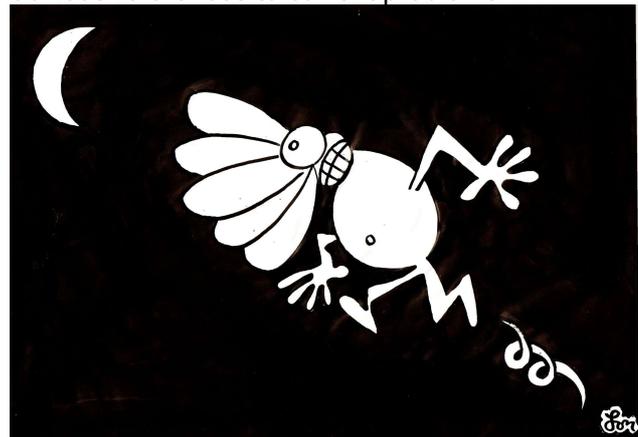
"It is difficult to predict the extent of self-government which the man of the future may reach or the heights to which he may carry his technique. Social construction and psychophysical self-education will become two aspects of one and the same process. All the arts – literature, drama, painting, music and architecture will lend this process beautiful form. More correctly, the shell in which the cultural construction and self-education of Communist man will be enclosed, will develop all the vital elements of contemporary art to the highest point. Man will become immeasurably stronger, wiser and subtler; his body will become more harmonized, his movements more rhythmic, his voice more musical. The forms of life will become dynamically dramatic. The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx. And above this ridge new peaks will rise."<sup>\*1</sup>

At least to me – Stieg might well have argued otherwise, but I also suspect that he would have been amused at the thought – there is an undeniable similarity between the utopianism of Trotsky and that of the science fiction authors imagining the bright future of a more highly evolved humanity.

But space travel was far from the only central motif of science fiction. Space travel presupposed a future in which science and technology had advanced far beyond the then present stage, and in the majority of stories and novels this had led to an affluence far beyond that of the 20th century. Disease, poverty and starvation, pollution and scarcity, drudgery and ignorance were viewed as problems solvable through science, technology and reason; in science fiction, they were solved in order for humans to be able to devote themselves to more important things, such as the exploration of the universe, the colonising of other worlds and the constant increase of knowledge and understanding. Even satirical stories, such as Frederik Pohl's famous "The Midas Plague", take off from this supposition; the story is set in a world of cheap energy, where robots are overproducing virtually everything, leading to a situation where "poor" people have to consume endlessly to keep up with the productivity of the robots, while "rich"

people can live simple lives of leisure.<sup>\*2</sup> More normally, the advances of technology and therefore of the average standard of living are simply taken for granted; in the world of tomorrow, robots would perform most menial tasks, women would be freed from household drudgery and abundance would be available for all. A further, almost as important and basic idea in science fiction was tolerance.

Initially, when imagining alien beings, science fiction writers often conceived of them as aggressive; a meeting between humans and aliens was bound to turn into an armed conflict. This notion is already evident in H. G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds*, 1897, and can probably be said to have dominated in the pulp magazine stories until the later part of the 1930s. Gradually, however, a diametrically opposed view came to dominate. In order to conquer space, a species has to have evolved to a level of scientific, technological and social sophistication, which to most science fiction writers also implied that ethnocentricity, prejudice, narrow nationalism and aggressions ought to have been left behind on the scrapheap of history. In many cases, authors quite obviously wrote about racial prejudice in the present, although placing their stories in the future, as in Ray Bradbury's "Up Through the Air", in *The Martian Chronicles*, where the black inhabitants of the American South pull up stakes and emigrate to Mars, leaving their white lynchers and persecutors behind. But other authors conveyed the identical message without as obvious references to current problems.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

<sup>\*1</sup> Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, translated by Rose Strunsky in 1925. Quoted from the Internet version, transcribed from the Russell & Russell (New York) 1957 edition and available at [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org).

<sup>\*2</sup> Frederik Pohl: "The Midas Plague", *Galaxy Science Fiction*, April 1954.

Possibly the author who most consistently wrote about tolerance was Clifford D. Simak. One of his best novels, *Time and Again*, is in fact basically *about* intolerance, and the necessity for tolerance; in the novel, mankind is colonising the galaxy, but humans are too few and so self-aware, intelligent robots and artificial humans, androids, have been created, sterile but in every other sense indistinguishable from other humans. Even so, both the robots and the androids are treated as property, and androids carry a mark on their foreheads to show that they are not “true” humans. The novel’s protagonist, Asher Sutton, after twenty years has just returned from an expedition to 61 Cygni, a “closed” solar system; with him, Sutton carries an alien symbiotic being and a message to robots, androids and humans alike from the highly evolved beings of 61 Cygni: “We are not alone. No one ever is alone. Not since the first faint stirring of the first flicker of life on the first planet in the galaxy that knew the quickening of life has there ever been a single entity that walked or crawled or slithered down the path of life alone.”\*1 Simak, indeed, was a major sf author whose virtually entire output was dedicated to the idea of the supreme, and unique, value of life and intelligence in an otherwise meaningless universe. But other authors echoed very similar sentiments. In Robert A. Heinlein’s novels, the solar system is inhabited and sentient species include the amphibians of Venus, the three-legged Martians and even the crystalline aliens living on Jupiter’s moon Ganymede; all of them are worthy of respect, compassion, and of being treated as equal, sentient beings. In *Have Space Suit – Will Travel*, the young protagonists are brought in front of the tribunal of the Three Galaxies (the Milky Way and the Greater and Lesser Magellanic Clouds), where they must defend humanity to a court made up of beings from alien races further evolved than mankind:

“They were all sorts and I’m not sure that any two were alike. There was one twenty feet from me who was as horrible as Wormface and amazingly like him – except that this creature’s grisly appearance did not inspire disgust. There were others almost human in appearance, although they were greatly in the minority. There was one really likely-looking chick as human as I am – except for iridescent skin and odd and skimpy notions of dress. She was so pretty that I would have sworn that the iridescence was just make-up – but I probably would have been wrong. I wondered in what language the diatribe was reaching her? Certainly not English. [...]

There was every graduation from pseudo-wormface to the iridescent girl – not only the range between, but also way out in the left field; some had their own private aquaria. I could not tell how the invective affected them. The girl creature was taking it quietly, but what can you say about a walrus thing with octopus arms? If he twitches, is he angry? Or laughing? Or itches where the twitch is?”\*2

These other species turn out to be benevolent and protective; humanity is to be watched over by the shape-shifting Vegans until we have matured enough to be allowed to enter the federation of civilised, space-faring races.

Almost overbearingly explicitly, humanity’s failure to live up to the tolerance necessary to a species allowed membership in the interstellar union of sentient beings is set forth at the end of British author Peter Phillips’ story “University”, where representatives of an interstellar community have examined us and found us wanting:

“The question, gentlemen [...], is not whether the universe is fit for Man, but whether Man is fit for the universe. You have answered it. He is not – yet. [...]

You have been undergoing [examination] since you arrived. You have just failed your Finals. So – back to school again, kids.’

*Ahh, get away from me, you dirty black. You stink. Jim, Jim, there’s a spider in the bath. Uggh, beastly thing, kill it! (delicate legs, sensitive, quivering palps, a thousand diamonds for eyes, a sweetly odd oblate spheroid for main body, a sheen of iridescent purple and green. A smear of dark blood on white porcelain.)*

*You louse no-account half-breed.*

*I regret that our generous offer of an arrangement to restore a balance of trade has met with what can only be described as contempt. If such outrageous provocations should continue – See, you pull its wings off, an’ it’s gotta crawl, it’s gotta crawl over this pencil, see? Hands off, punk, or I’ll kick your teeth in. There’s a mouse! Quick, quick, it’s getting away! Kinda saw red, you know. Didn’t mean to kill him, honest.*

*Goddam furriners.”\*3*

\*1 Clifford D. Simak: *Time and Again*, Simon and Schuster: New York 1951, published in Swedish 1959.

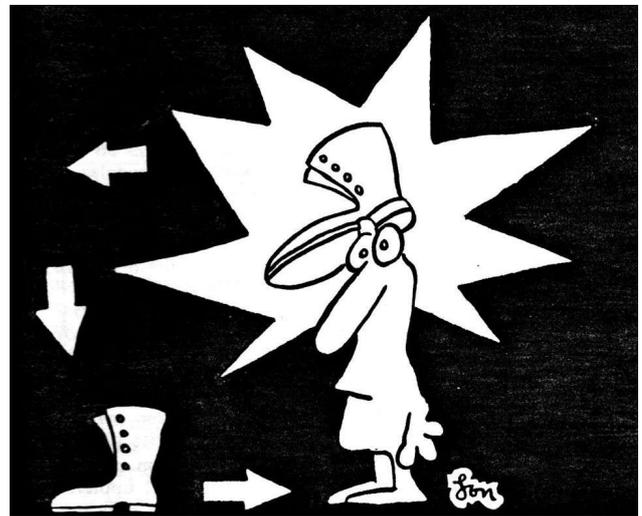
\*2 Robert A. Heinlein, *Have Space Suit – Will Travel*, Scribner’s: New York 1958, published in Swedish 1959.

\*3 Peter Phillips, “University”, *Galaxy Science Fiction*, April 1953, published in Swedish in *Galaxy*, no 19, July 1960.

In a non-sf story, readers might have found the comparison of racism to arachnophobia (fear of spiders) offensive. Within a science fiction context, however, few readers would react in that way; the conviction that xenophobia in every form is a primitive, unacceptable superstition of which humanity must rid itself to become a mature species was so pervasive that the comparison would be viewed only as a statement of the obvious. How could a species who denigrates its own members on the basis of minute differences in skin color or language, or who fear, torture and kill living entities only because of their different physical setup, ever be conceived of as capable to enter into a civilised relationship with more advanced but incomparably more alien beings? The majority of science fiction writers found it inconceivable, and so used their stories to tell their readers that with the dawn of the space age, it was time to grow up and embrace the idea of a new definition of humanity: a human is not a biped on Earth, but a living, self-aware and intelligent being anywhere in the universe, regardless of shape or chemical setup.

There is no doubt that the science fiction of the 1945–1960 period, which was what both Stieg and I grew up on, was in many ways written in accordance with traditional, even reactionary social and moral values. The protagonist of virtually every story published prior to the 1960s was male, white and heterosexual – although in fact sex in any form was virtually non-existing in science fiction during the same period. Theodore Sturgeon's short story "The World Well Lost", the first sf story to give a positive portrait of homosexuals, was rejected by every sf magazine in America and remained unpublished for a year until finally printed in the first issue of a new magazine, *Universe*, which needed major author names for its cover. According to a 1976 study by George Fergus, before 1965 a total of only ten sf novels by male authors had featured female protagonists, while female authors by 1965 had contributed only another half dozen. But in fact, many readers were often not even aware of reading science fiction written by women. Several leading female sf authors before 1960 wrote under pen names or used only their initials (Alice Mary Norton wrote as André Norton; Catherine Lucille Moore wrote as C. L. Moore; Leigh Brackett was usually assumed to be a man). As an adult, Stieg Larsson was very much aware of this. In an essay called "But She Writes Just Like a Real Man", published in 1980\*, he

expressed his view that few, or more probably no, other popular forms of literature had as consistently expressed male chauvinism, disdain for women and reactionary values as had sf. He called sf a fascinating mirror of its present, but noted that this is both interesting and tragic, in that "while a field filled with curiosity and ideas, sf will always be associated with the contradictory cowardice typical of its childhood." And he continued to point out the absence of other than white people in sf, noted that not only crime fiction but even westerns much earlier than sf began depicting homosexuals, and quoted American author H.L. Gold, who has said that at the beginning of his career in the 1930s, he had to use a pen name for science fiction, since editors viewed his Jewish name negatively.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

However, it is also easy to overstate criticism. Stieg was certainly correct in calling the early sf field contradictory. While H.L. Gold may have used pen names in the 1930s, another author, Stanley G. Weinbaum (1902–1934), became a reader favourite for his humor and depictions of alien beings as truly alien, all under his own name; Isaac Asimov, who published his first story in 1939, never used a pen name. And while Alice Mary Norton throughout the 1950s wrote her many sf novels under a male pseudonym, Judith Merrill without disguising her name simultaneously became an appreciated author, a major anthologist and one of sf's most respected critics.

\* Stieg Larsson: "Hon skriver ju som en hel karl", in *Feminac* [the fanzine of the feminist Feminac fan group in Stockholm] no 5, February 1980.

And, incidentally, though the main protagonists until around 1960 were all male, Robert A. Heinlein almost always doubled them with smart, practical, capable women, in virtually every sense their equals; another male writer, James H. Schmitz, preferred writing about women, and British sf author John Wyndham, wrote strongly feminist stories. Non-whites were seldom portrayed in sf, but Samuel R. Delany has pointed out that one of the things that made him want to be a science fiction writer was his stunned reaction when reading Robert A. Heinlein's Hugo-winning novel *Starship Troopers* (published in 1959). At the very end of the novel, in an insignificant aside, readers learn that the hero, Juan Rico, is in fact coloured; to the young Delany, this meant that science fiction could effectively depict a world where the color of your skin really doesn't matter, is so insignificant that it simply isn't worth mentioning. And when Delany himself began writing, as the first major black sf author, his work received impressed attention and quickly began to win the major sf awards. Even so, there is no doubt that the science fiction field deserves to be criticised for the omissions mentioned. Nor is there any doubt that the majority of sf authors have failed to examine many of the normative social and moral beliefs of their own day even when writing about cultures vastly different or far distant in time or space. But I submit that at least to a large extent, the pervasive attitudes in science fiction often had a greater impact on young readers than did the blind spots. To the reader, what science fiction told you was that nothing remains constant, that everything is subject to change, including our most cherished "eternal values"; that tolerance, inclusiveness and acceptance are fundamental virtues; that reason and science are our only working tools to gain understanding and insight and to improve the world; that expansion into space is the noblest possible long-range goal of our species.

And I doubt very strongly that most young readers would make any mental reservations about blacks or gays, women or Jews while subconsciously soaking in these lessons.

That Stieg learnt the lessons of his early science fiction reading well seems to me beyond doubt. To him, tolerance and the willingness to embrace change were fundamental values, just as the respect for science and reason. When in the mid 1980s he began to write feature essays for the TT news agency, debunking "new age spiritualism"

and other forms of pseudo-scientific creeds and notions was one of his favourite subjects. And in an essay called "The New Futurian Optimism", he began by noting that "This year, we celebrate a jubilee without compare. On July 20, it was ten years since the first manned Moon landing and the first step into the space age."<sup>\*1</sup>

This essay is interesting also because of how fairly obviously the author is of two minds about his subject. Stieg wrote about a trend within science fiction that became obvious during the last few years of the 1970s: it was inspired by the research of Gerard O'Neill at Princeton (and presented to the public in O'Neill's *The High Frontier: Human Colonies in Space*<sup>\*2</sup>) and more or less fictionalised in Ben Bova's novel *Colony*, 1978, after which the notion spread quickly among an influential group of science fiction writers and editors who made them the basis for a growing body of work. O'Neills basic idea was that immediate, large-scale space exploitation would provide the best possible means of improving living conditions for humanity. Colonies in space could supply our planet with unlimited and clean solar power; the Moon, the asteroid belt and the other planets of the solar system could provide unlimited raw material and other resources. Factories could be placed in orbit to safeguard the Earth's environment and ecology. This vision was soon given a name: it was called "the third industrial revolution".

In his essay on the literary expressions of this idea, Stieg Larsson on the one hand is obviously fascinated by the basic notion, and notes with some approval that the bad guys in the technological stories are no longer the mad scientists or communist aliens of yore, but rather institutions or ideologies; often politicians or bureaucrats within the prevailing system, and in most cases nor even particularly evil, just misled, incompetent and unaware reactionaries who for some reason oppose space colonisation. On the other hand, Stieg is also very much aware of the fact that the stories glorifying the "third industrial revolution" on the whole reject all traditional political ideas, viewing technology as able in itself to solve all social problems provided only that physical scientists are given unlimited power. And this, very obviously, is a thought abhorrent to him.

<sup>\*1</sup> Stieg Larsson: "Den nya framtidsoptimismen". Published in *Science fiction forum* [a fanzine], number 80, Fall 1979.

<sup>\*2</sup> William Morrow: New York 1977.

What kind of science fiction did Stieg Larsson himself write?

We do have a handful of examples – six short stories, all of them published in mimeographed fanzines during the two years from January 1972 through January 1974, and consequently written at least no later than when Stieg was from 17 to 19 years old. This last is important to remember; these stories are not mature work by an experienced writer, but amateur writings of an enthusiast so far never professionally published. The first of the published stories is “Vaxkabinettet” (“The Wax Cabinet”, around 2,000 words), in the first issue of *Sfären*, the fanzine co-edited by Rune Forsgren and Stieg Larsson and published in January 1972. This story is strictly speaking not science fiction, but rather a horror fantasy. The protagonist, Judy, is one of the decorators working at Madame Tussaud’s in London. She is working late, since the Queen Victoria display has had to be moved, and falls asleep in Victoria’s bed. While she sleeps the guard turns off the lights and leaves, and when Judy wakes up she hears many distant voices while an angry Queen Victoria asks her how she dares sleep in her bed. Judy is saved from the angry Queen by Napoleon, who introduces her to Lord Nelson, a couple of the Beatles and numerous other celebrities immortalised in wax. She relaxes and begins to enjoy herself, but makes a fatal mistake when she asks the wax figures how they are able to move, think and talk. The figures close in on Judy, intending to make her into a wax doll so that she won’t tell others about them. But she fights to free herself, grabs someone’s sword and cuts Napoleon’s head off. Then she is caught. In the morning, a caretaker discovers that someone has entered Madame Tussaud’s. He phones the police and they start searching the rooms. In the Chamber of Horrors, they discover a body, kneeling by the guillotine. Since Judy had killed Napoleon, the other wax figures had decided on a French execution.

Reader reactions to this story were not particularly encouraging. One letter writer, Sten Dahlskog, felt that the story had a much too long introduction, that nothing much was made of the comic possibilities once the wax figures had started living, and that the ending for that reason was not particularly effective. Perhaps Dahlskog, an extremely well read critic and in fact the first Swede to in print name Ursula K. Le Guin as a future major author after having read her first three short novels, was thinking about such other stories of living statues as Thorne Smith’s comic

novel *The Night Life of the Gods* (1931), where the night-living gods are statues in the Metropolitan Museum, or John Collier’s much darker story “Evening Primrose”, about the secret people living at night in department stores, during daytime hiding as mannequins. If so, certainly Stieg’s first published effort could not compete.

In the second issue of *Sfären*, in April 1972, Stieg contributed a longer story, “Superhjärnan” (“The Super Brain”, around 3,500 words). This time he wrote science fiction.

The setting is the future, in the year 2174, and the protagonist, telling the story in first person, is Michael November Collins, two years earlier an Olympian gold medal sprinter. The story opens when Collins receives a letter “through the mail tube, falling onto the breakfast table”, in which the government requests him to undergo a medical examination at the state research facility at Boston University.

Collins leaves his wife and two children, goes to Boston and meets Dr Mark Wester, who refuses to tell him the purpose of the examination. When Collins wants to refuse, he is told that Wester has an order signed by the President, demanding Collins unconditional cooperation, and that if he doesn’t comply he will be charged as an enemy of the state and may be facing a prison sentence to up to 25 years.

Collins undergoes the lengthy examination and is then told by Wester what it is all about. The greatest scientist of the day, Professor Hans Zägel, “born in Germany but fled to England when the Russians occupied Germany in 2136”, and now an American, is 86 years old. He is now on the verge of perfecting a brain transplant technique, which will require a further ten years of testing to be failsafe. But Zägel is dying, and so Collins, one of the world’s finest athletes, has been selected to provide the body into which Zägel’s brain is to be transplanted in order to make it possible for him to finish his work. Collins tries to escape but is caught. Wester promises him that his brain will be frozen and that a replacement body will if possible be found for it. He is told that the operation is set for the same night, and is allowed to see his wife but not his children. Judith enters his room, they make love and afterwards talk calmly until the guards return. Collins follows them to the operating theatre, Wester thanks him for his cooperation, and Collins feels the sting of an injection and loses consciousness, hating Wester.

“The Super Brain” is a much more ambitious story than “The Wax Cabinet”. Here, Stieg Larsson has managed several nice touches – trying to sketch in at least a few details of the future world in which the story is set, but unobtrusively, as reasonable asides, not through exposition. Much of the story is told in dialogue form, between Collins and his wife or between Collins and Dr Wester. It is obvious that this is an experiment, intended to help give a stronger characterisation, but the dialogue is not always believable; many of the lines feel unnatural or stilted. In a letter to the following issue of the fanzine, fellow fan and fledgling writer Ulf Westblom comments at length on this weakness, suggesting methods he himself had used to make dialogue sound more natural, as for instance reading the lines out loud and trying to “act out” the different characters. The theme of “The Super Brain” is also worth noting. The protagonist lives a comfortable life in a democratic and affluent society, but gradually finds that in order to further its own interests, the state is willing to suspend his legal rights, and indeed to demolish his family’s whole existence and ultimately to kill him. It is all done under a veneer of politeness and pretended consent, but when the rights of the individual clash with the wishes of government, all rights and all semblance of legality are dispensed with. At least in “The Super Brain”, the message of the story is that the state is the enemy. This is clearly an idea to which Stieg Larsson would return.\*

And, in fact, he did so already in his next published short story, again science fiction. “Jensens brott” (“Jensen’s Crime”, about 3,000 words) was published in *Sfären* number 3, August 1972.

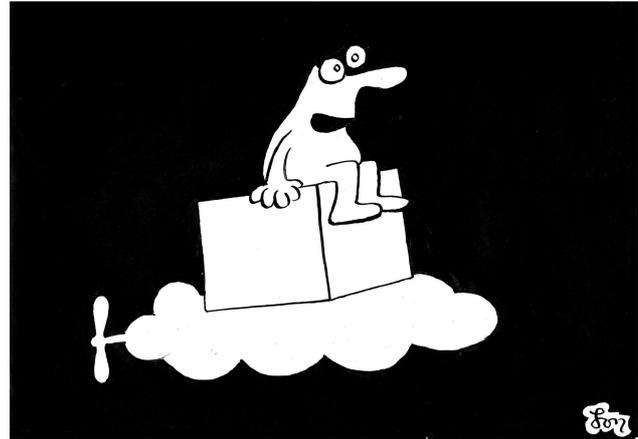
When the story opens an unknown man, called only Jensen, is trying to escape from a posse with dogs. At the end of the first scene, his hunters are very close and one of them throws a club, knocking Jensen unconscious.

He wakes up bloody and imprisoned, and guards armed with swords take him into a courtroom. We now learn that the protagonist’s full name is Michel Jason Jensen,

that the story is set in Amsterdam in the year 2036, and we realise that this is a future thrown back into medieval times. We soon also learn that Jensen is accused of having practiced “scientific methods” and similar witchcraft.

---

\* This story has been published in English, in my anthology *A Darker Shade of Sweden* (Mysterious Press/GroveAtlantic, New York 2014).



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

The story now gives the background. In 2030, a major war occurred, where the two super powers virtually annihilated each other. Jensen, who is a skilled surgeon from England, was on vacation with his wife and daughter in Holland when the war began and ended. During the atomic winter following the war, their daughter died but Jensen and his wife survived. And when spring finally came, the survivors turned on those they believed had caused the holocaust – but not on the politicians or military, but on scientists, who had built the weapons of mass destruction. And the mobs made no distinction between physicists and physicians; all science was banned, and those practicing science were condemned. Jensen adapted. But when his wife was to give birth to a second child, complications arose which would kill both her and the child. Jensen turned out those who had come to help his wife, brought out his hidden instruments and performed a caesarean. This was his crime; he fled, but was captured after two days.

The trial progresses. Jensen’s defence is that he acted in accordance with his convictions, and to save lives. But he lives in a world where science is viewed as evil, and the practice of it as witchcraft. And so he is burned at the stake. “Jensen’s Crime” is at heart a variation on a classical theme in science fiction: the fear of ignorance and superstition, and the idea that only rationality and science are able to secure progress. With the rejection of science, what remains of the world is hurled back into the dark ages; with the reign of superstition, any possibility of progress or salvation is literally murdered. These themes form the basis of many classical stories, the most famous of which is probably Walter M. Miller’s Hugo-winning novel *A Canticle for Leibowitz* (1960), which is also set in a world after an apocalyptic atomic war, where people

have turned on science and scientists as responsible, but where, in an ironic twist, Miller lets the monks of the Order of Leibowitz preserve scientific knowledge and writings until the world is again ready to appreciate it. It is notable that Stieg Larsson may well have taken the advice given him by Ulf Westblom concerning “The Super Brain”; the dialogue in “Jensen’s Crime” flows considerably more naturally than in the earlier story, but the story grinds to a halt while the background information about the war is inserted, and this makes the whole less than satisfactory.

In the third issue of *Sfären*, Stieg Larsson also published a second and very short story, “Den siste” (“The Last”, around 700 words). The story is told in third person, but with only a “he” as the subject; it details how “he” limps along, severely wounded, on a winding path, trying to hurry but with nowhere to go. While fleeing, “he” remembers the fear and horror of a morning a week ago, when alien monsters seemingly without caring had laid waste “his” village, killing hundreds. The survivors had all hidden in the remains of their village, trembling in fear of the monsters, until this day when the whole remaining town had been ground down to dust and everyone killed – except “he”, who managed to crawl away despite his wounds. But now the sun sets, and “he” can go no further.

After this comes an epilogue, only a few lines long, where two workers relax from their laborious work on constructing a new blacktop road through a forest. And in the last sentence, we are told that on a small stone in the forest now lay a dead ant. This is one of the “ant” stories Stieg admitted to having written a fairly large number of, and to my knowledge the only one of them ever printed. Two letters in the next issue of the fanzine comment on the story, both basically liking it, but one of the writers complaining that first of all, ants do not think as humans, and second, worker ants are normally sterile females and should therefore properly be called “she”. These comments, sad to say, are not untypical of how unimaginative some of those fascinated by imaginative literature actually are.

Even so, “The Last” actually is quite an effective try at a “twist ending” story, where the last few words, or even the single last word, suddenly twist the story around so that the reader has to view it from a totally different perspective than the one he was initially fooled into adopting. The acknowledged master of this kind of story, at least in science fiction, was Fredric Brown (1906–

1972), over 75 of whose stories were less than 1,000 words long, in some cases only two or three hundred.

As for Stieg’s early fascination with writing stories about ants, I’ve never seen any actual explanation for it. Although I suspect that if “The Last” is a representative example, part of the fun may have been in the challenge to think up situations where the reader would automatically assume that the protagonist of the story was human, while the last line or two would disclose him to be an ant.

Stieg Larsson’s fifth and last story in *Sfären* was published in issue 4, April 1973. It is again a science fiction story, since in the early 1970s so-called psionic (or extra-sensory) powers were still seriously researched and believed to possibly have a factual basis. “Det nionde livet” (“The Ninth Life”, around 1,500 words) is told retrospectively by Geoffery Holden, who characterises himself as a half alcoholic amateur author, making his living by interspersing his periods of drunkenness with translating the simplest and worst entertainment novels possible for whoever pays him to do it. The story he tells is about Annie, a slight, dark and pretty girl without friends or acquaintances, living alone in a small apartment and without working, thanks to the money inherited from her father. Annie is a telepath, able not only to read other people’s minds, but of controlling them. The narrator tells of her loneliness and isolation, of her withdrawal from the pressure of invading feelings and thoughts of enmity, stress and jealousy. He gives her a Siamese cat, which she names Socrates. And he tells of Annie’s conviction that a person’s personality, or psychic energy, can live on after physical death.

Then, not having seen Annie for weeks, he receives a letter from her, saying that she had been wrong, that psychic life does continue after death, but in physical form. And that she wants him to take care of Socrates.

The narrator rushes to Annie’s apartment. Annie has hung herself in a rope bound to the ceiling fixture. He takes Socrates home and opens a bottle of whiskey when the phone rings. Annie tells him not to worry about dying, and that she loves him. When he asks for the call to be traced, the telephone company states that he has received no call. The narrator is incarcerated in a mental institution and treated for schizophrenia. The story ends with his wondering what has happened to Socrates, and asking Annie to help him, wherever she is.

“The Ninth Life” is an intriguing story, suffering

mainly from being too short. The strongest part of it is the characterisation of Annie, and of her relationship to the narrator; here Stieg Larsson made an effort to portray two simultaneously dissimilar but related personalities, both finding in the other support in the void otherwise surrounding them. The story would have been stronger if this part had been extended, and if the ending had been made less ambiguous, and perhaps less dramatic; though the non-existing telephone call is easily explained by Annie's capacity to control other individuals' thoughts and perceptions, this should also have occurred to the narrator, and thus following the internal logic of the story a totally different end would have been both more plausible and made the story into a sustained character study rather than into one suddenly cut short by a drastic and needless twist ending.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

The fourth issue of *Sfären* was the last published, even though contributions to a fifth issue were collected and many of the stencils for it cut. But the publishers, particularly Rune Forsgren, lost interest in the kind of short story-centered fanzine it had become, and instead, in 1974, he and Stieg began publishing *Fijagh!*, a "fannish" fanzine centered on light, humorous or informal pieces, occasional essays, and letters from readers published along with comments by the editors. We will take a closer look at this fanzine in the chapter about Stieg as an active science fiction fan. Here, we will instead turn to the single short story he contributed to a fanzine published by others. In late 1973, the Gothenburg fanzine *Cosmos Bulletin* announced a short story competition, with science fiction paperbacks to be awarded the winning entries. Rune Forsgren showed Stieg the announcement and asked if he didn't have a story to enter into the competition; some time earlier, coming home a bit drunk after a party, Stieg had

sat down at his typewriter and written a story he claimed to be unable to understand. So he sent it in, and in *Cosmos Bulletin* number 21, January 1974, Stieg Larsson's "Rendezvous i dunkel" ("Rendezvous in Dusk", around 2,750 words) was presented as the winner of the short story competition, to which ten stories had been received. Stieg's story, the jury said, "treated a difficult subject in a professional manner". "Rendezvous in Dusk", also science fiction, is the story of Sanders, who leaves his wife Susan and five year old Billy to go on the first expedition to Proxima Centauri, a trip to last ten years. When he awakes from cold sleep, a disaster has occurred, the ship is wrecked and some of the crew members may be dead; at the same time, details don't fit, and an immense span of time seems to have passed, Sanders and the other survivors seem simultaneously to be in their drifting ship and on an immense prairie, or on an alien world where a giant being towers to the sky, greeting them and asking them to join him. But when Sanders does, he is suddenly back on Earth, and Susan welcomes him home. The story is told in juxtaposition, memories from before the expedition interspaced with the unexplained events after the ship disaster. There is no doubt that Stieg Larsson has developed his writing skills since the earliest of his printed stories. The dialogue now flows easily, the descriptive passages are more carefully phrased, and although the characters remain skeletal, they are given at least some individuality by their choice of words.

The basic problem with the story is probably just what Stieg said: he had no idea for any plot nor about what actually was supposed to happen in the story. This makes for difficult going when it comes to convincing the reader of having read a meaningful text. In the end, the story is unsatisfactory simply because it does succeed in hinting at being about something, but never revealing quite what. It would have been interesting to see Stieg doing a serious rewrite of it, after having decided on some actual idea of its meaning. Even as it stands, it does show a young writer interested in learning his craft.

One story remains to mention, although it is very different from all the preceding and can perhaps be better characterised as a combination of humorous tall tale and essay than as fiction. In the last fanzine Stieg published, *Långfredagsnatt* 1983, he printed a semi-factual story which was later revised and republished in my own fanzine

*Gafiac* number 47, September 1987. With the exception of a letter of comment in the following issue of *Gafiac*, this story was to my knowledge Stieg's last contribution to any fanzine. "Duellen" ("The Duel", around 2,000 words) is told by Stieg Larsson, here a story character. He is rereading Robert A. Heinlein's novel *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* at his table in a Stockholm coffee shop when a stranger enters, orders a coffee and joins Stieg at his table, even though only a single one out of the other thirty-three chairs is taken. The stranger sits down and also opens a book – L. Ron Hubbard's *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*.

The stranger bares his teeth in a superior grin, gestures at Stieg's book, and asks, "Science fiction?"

Stieg nods. After a silence, he makes a disdainful gesture at the stranger's book and also asks, "Science fiction?"

The stranger shakes his head, holds up the cover of his book, and declares, "Science!"

The war of nerves continues. Stieg cracks his finger joints by pressing his fingertips together and lights his pipe. But the stranger carefully cracks each finger in turn by pulling them. Stieg calls Hubbard's book "Nonsense", but the stranger comes back with "Reactionary" about the Heinlein novel. After a further exchange of word Stieg takes the offence by squeezing a box of matches and dropping it in the ashtray. The stranger retaliates by breaking a pencil in two. Stieg drains a new cup of coffee, burning his throat. His enemy does the same, but is shaken. Stieg gives him the coup-de-grace by carefully raising his Heinlein novel, opening it, tearing out the title page and letting it fall to the floor. His enemy stares at the mutilated book, then down at his own Hubbard volume. Without a word, he picks up his book and leaves.

This is when the coffee shop owner, Wild Mary, looks at the only other customer in the shop, the Major's wife. "Good defence", the Major's wife says. "Excellent reflexes", Wild Mary agrees. "Tomorrow we'll bring on the Mormon", the Major's wife decides.

This story is, in my opinion, the by far best of those Stieg published in fanzines. In it, you can easily and unmistakably hear his spoken words, even though it is carefully crafted for reading. At full length, it is both very funny and quite tense; the meticulous choice of words, the understatements as well as the exaggerated effects of the two opponents' subtle thrusts are very well handled. By the mid-1980s, Stieg

Larsson had most definitely learned how to create and sustain interest, mood and tension in his fiction writing, and to enlarge what was probably a brief, chance (and probably innocuous) encounter into an engaging and memorable story.

In "The Duel", Stieg Larsson is rereading Robert A. Heinlein's *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*, Heinlein's fourth Hugo-winning novel, initially published in 1966. As already mentioned, Heinlein was Stieg's first favourite author. He kept returning to Heinlein through the years, reading him not uncritically but with a keen appreciation of his powers as a storyteller and as one of science fiction's both great realists and great romantics. Had Stieg had either less integrity or less analytical acumen, he might well have rejected Heinlein, who after his novel *Starship Troopers* and the bestseller status he achieved was one of the most controversial authors within the science fiction field.

*Starship Troopers*, first published in 1959, was the novel for which many radicals dismissed Heinlein as at best a militarist, at worst a fascist. It is a coming of age story told in first person by the young Juan Rico who, when Earth is attacked without warning by a recently encountered alien species, joins the Space Infantry. The novel follows him through basic training, his first missions, then through officer's school and leaves him a captain.

Through Rico, Heinlein in the novel examines a number of moral and political views of suffrage, law and punishment, civic virtue and military might. There is little doubt that the positive portrayal of military training, companionship and discipline mirror Heinlein's own experiences as a naval officer trained at Annapolis and serving on active duty for five years until forced to leave the service in 1934 due to pulmonary tuberculosis. At the same time, it should be noted that Heinlein in this book, as always, was vehemently against conscription, which he considered legalised slavery; the army in *Starship Troopers* consists only of volunteers. The many other views expressed in the novel, however, are far from necessarily those held by Heinlein; throughout his fifty years of writing, he depicted a large number of very different social systems, often persuasively. He did what a superior science fiction writer is supposed to do: examine the plausible results of different changes, and argue for them as someone living in the societies portrayed would.

Even so, it is not unreasonable to assume that

Heinlein took great pleasure in making his arguments in *Starship Troopers* as persuasive as possible, not least because he must have been very much aware of how controversial they were. In Juan Rico's world, suffrage belongs only to those who have proved their willingness to put the good of society before their own by volunteering for a minimum of two years' Federal Service. However, a volunteer is allowed to vote in elections only after having been discharged from service; the idea is not to let government be run by those paid by or working inside government institutions. It should be noted that everyone who volunteers is guaranteed some form of meaningful service, regardless of handicaps, experience, aptitude or skills, and that consequently suffrage is limited only by the willingness to serve, not by any personal traits. Explicit comparisons are made between this system and the 20th century democracies, which in the future world of the novel have collapsed because "people had been led to believe that they could simply vote for whatever they wanted [...] and get it, without toil". To this should be added that the society depicted in *Starship Troopers* is ruled by a democratically elected government, that it is portrayed as a minimalistic government in accordance with Thoreau's dictum, "That government is best which governs least", and that its citizens enjoy unlimited freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of conscience. It is multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural, features not normally associated with fascism.

What Stieg liked in Heinlein, apart from his undeniable storytelling genius, was his delight in speculating about social change. Where a majority of science fiction authors were satisfied with taking a societal status quo for granted and limit their speculations to technology or science, Heinlein along with a very few others (Jack Vance is a major example) probably felt most at home in speculating about different social structures and about how new inventions or discoveries might affect society. His ostensibly juvenile novel *Citizen of the Galaxy* (1957) is in fact an examination of several distinctly different societies as well as a violent attack on the institution of slavery, which to Heinlein was the most barbaric of all human aberrations. Similarly, *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* is a novel of revolution, where the Moon, populated largely by the descendants of American and Russian deportees, much like Australia in the 19th century was populated by deported British criminals, declares its independence of Earth; the Lunar society is one of Heinlein's most radically

different, based on "line marriages", where people marry into group families consisting of many generations and where jealousy as well as feelings of ownership towards others are anathema; this, I suspect, also attracted Stieg who was strongly critical of the traditional institutions of marriage and nuclear families.

We have briefly discussed Heinlein. But which other science fiction writers did Stieg Larsson like?

During the period when he could read only in Swedish, as noted, he would certainly besides Heinlein have read most of the labeled sf novels published during the 1950s.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

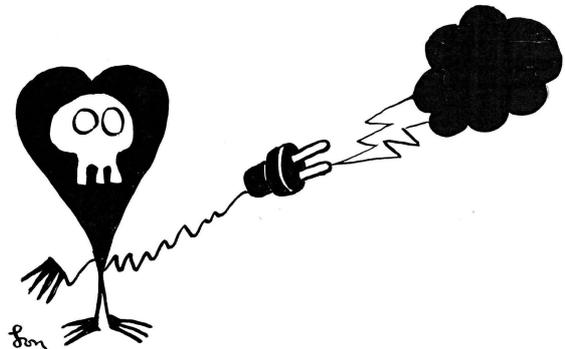
This means that he probably read John Wyndham, who had four novels translated – *Planet Plane* (also called *Stowaway to Mars*), 1936; *The Day of the Triffids*, 1951; *The Kraken Wakes*, 1953, and *The Chrysalids*, 1955. These are low-key, in a traditional sense very English novels, the middle two minor classics of what critic Brian Aldiss has termed "cozy catastrophe", where the world ends while people still have their afternoon tea and behave in a civilised manner. It also means that he read, as noted, Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End* and his later translated *The Deep Range*, 1957, and *A Fall of Moondust*, 1961, the last a for its time extremely realistic depiction of the first manned trip to the Moon. There were also three books by A. E. Van Vogt, *The Voyage of the Space Beagle*, 1950 but based on stories written a decade earlier, *The Weapon Shops of Isher*, 1951, an extremely convoluted time travel novel about the conflict between an autocratic empire and the "Free Weapon Shops" impervious to the empire due to their advanced technology and thus serving as a counterbalance

to its power, and the short story collection *Destination: Universe*, 1952. There were the previously mentioned novels by Poul Anderson and Fredric Brown, but also Browns parodic *What Mad Universe*, 1949, a humorous adventure story set in a parallel universe mirroring the imagination of an uncritical science fiction fan. There was Wilson Tucker's *Wild Talent*, 1954, a sensitive, excellent novel about a young telepath who is kidnapped by the US secret service which forces him to use his mind reading ability as a spy, while at the same time afraid of him to the extent that in the end a decision is taken to kill him. There was, of course, Ray Bradbury, all of whose books starting with *The Martian Chronicles*, 1950, were translated, but whose appeal was perhaps less on young readers more interested in ideas and "sense of wonder" than in lyrical prose and emotions. There were perhaps a total of around fifty less memorable books – and then there was Isaac Asimov.

Within the science fiction field, when you speak of the period from around 1940 and until the 1970s, the expression "The Big Three" refers to the authors Clarke, Heinlein, and Asimov. Isaac Asimov (1920–1992) was the son of poor Jewish immigrants from Byelorussia who settled in Brooklyn, where he young Asimov helped out in his father's candy store and taught himself to read at the age of five. He published his first sf story in early 1939; while studying biochemistry at Columbia he became one of the most highly regarded writers of scientifically based science fiction; in 1949 he became a professor of biochemistry at Boston University while simultaneously becoming one of the world's most prolific writers. By the time of his death, he had published close to 500 books, the vast majority of them non-fiction covering virtually every known field of science or knowledge, but including around 35 science fiction novels and short story collections.

During the 1950s, not many of Asimov's books were published in Sweden. But his first collection of robot stories, *I, Robot*, 1950, was, as were two of his pseudonymously published juveniles, *David Starr*, *Space Ranger*, 1952, and *Lucky Starr and the Big Sun of Mercury*, 1956. The Swedish magazine *Häpna!* serialised his initial three Foundation books and his later sf crime novel *The Caves of Steel*, 1954, but unless Stieg Larsson managed to find copies of the defunct magazine, he must have read these either in English or no earlier than in 1970–1971, when *Foundation*, 1951, *Foundation and Empire*, 1952, and *Second*

*Foundation*, 1953, as well as *The Caves of Steel*, finally were published in book form in Sweden. Although Asimov much later added several further novels to the series, the three original Foundation volumes are complete in themselves and superior to the later additions. The stories comprising them were initially written from 1942 to 1949 and were inspired by the young Asimov's reading of Edward Gibbon's monumental *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Asimov transposed the Roman empire on a galactic scale but added the brilliant "psychohistorian" Hari Seldon, who foresees the fall of the immense galactic empire and, in order to shorten the period of dark ages and barbarism before the rise of a new stable order, sets up a secret Foundation on a distant planet, with the purpose of intervening in history to counteract chaos. In one sense, it is an absurd story, but in another a very earnest and fascinating one; Seldon's "psychohistory" is conceived as an exact science, by which the behaviour and reactions of any number of humans can be correctly foreseen centuries in advance. This forces Asimov also to examine and discuss such concepts as free will, chance, systems of belief and conviction, and the role of individuals in history.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

Stieg Larsson was, at least briefly, entranced by Asimov's trilogy. So were most young sf readers encountering it for the first time; Asimov's gigantic canvas, encompassing all the Milky Way, was irresistible, as was his rigorous rationalism. Asimov, a life-long atheist and sworn enemy of superstition and pseudo-science, constructed his science fiction as logical puzzles, permitting no deviation from the absolute dictates of pure reason. But although you can continue to be fascinated by for instance the robot stories, Asimov as a writer of adult fiction has shortcomings that prevent you as an adult reader from enjoying his work fully. His characterisations are shallow, he is unable to create believable

female characters (and, indeed, has tried to create very few), and his prose is exact but lacks a personal style and variation. I know that Stieg later on read the first volume of Asimov's autobiography, *In Memory Yet Green*, 1979, and was flabbergasted, as were many. "The man has done absolutely nothing in his entire life except sit behind a typewriter and think up stories", he said, quoted from memory. "Yet he manages to make it entertaining to read about him writing. How is it possible?"

This, of course, was Asimov's genius: his ability to write entertainingly about anything. But in the end, he was not a fiction writer whose work was able to capture demanding and adult readers. Certainly not later than around 1970, Stieg had begun to read in English, and thereafter vastly preferred to read in the original rather than in Swedish translation. Or, actually, and weirdly: if possible, he even preferred reading Swedish authors in English, and at least claimed that he read the Per Sjöwall and Maj Wahlöö crime novels in American paperbacks, since he felt that crime fiction really felt convincing only in English. As for science fiction, reading in English was virtually a necessity to any genuine fan. Very few titles were translated, and even though the number of translations again increased considerably during the 1970s, few of the new and most interesting authors were published in Sweden, where the lines of sf titles tended to stick to the established, more traditional authors who might more easily find an audience among inexperienced readers.

In English, Stieg Larsson quickly discovered new favourites. He read Joe Haldeman, whose *The Forever War*, 1974, was a scathing criticism of Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*. He and his partner Eva Gabrielsson both read and were fascinated by Samuel R. Delany, the first major black sf author whose early novels, like *Babel-17*, 1965, *The Einstein Intersection*, 1967, and *Nova*, 1968, denoted fascinating departures from traditional sf storytelling. He read Ursula K. Le Guin and the other new feminist sf writers who infused science fiction with new ideas and a gender consciousness few authors previously had displayed: Joanna Russ, Vonda N. McIntyre, Suzy McKee Charnas, Elizabeth Lynn, Pamela Sargent, Marge Piercy, Lisa Tuttle. Still later he was impressed by Joan D. Vinge, whom he met and interviewed at the 1979 World Science Fiction convention at the Metropole Hotel in Brighton, England, where he also interviewed another author, Frederik Pohl, one of the foremost social satirists in science

fiction.

The authors Stieg primarily liked were the radicals – the feminists, like Joanna Russ, whose *The Female Man*, 1975, was a bitter, irresistibly funny and brilliantly experimental novel of the meeting and exchanging of views of four women, all the same but from parallel worlds where one had grown up in a reality much like ours, one in a United States where the Great Depression of the 1930s never ended, one in a world populated only by women and one in a world where males and females are engaged in open warfare. Or like Suzy McKee Charnas, whose *Walk to the End of the World*, 1974, is a novel from a future after a devastating war, where males have decided to blame the disaster on women, who are therefore kept as slaves in the male-dominated cities, while bands of free women dominate the wilderness outside the holdfasts and there hunt men like animals. Or the social radicals, like Delany, whose later novels included *Dhalgren*, 1975, and *Triton*, 1976, the former being a complex meditation on youth culture, the later a novel depicting the multiple, radically diverse social structures co-existing within the human colony on Triton, one of Neptune's moons.

Joan D. Vinge fascinated him because of her depiction of the alien, the outsider, a recurring theme in all of her early fiction, where the "alien" can be viewed as a metaphor for those who do not belong, whether because they are women, because they are mentally or physically different, belong to a different race, or are truly alien. In the reviews he published in fanzines, mainly in *Science fiction forum* during 1979 and early 1980, he lavished praise on Kate Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang*, a Hugo-winning novel from 1976, and characterised Wilhelm as an author who "always returns to the dangers to which absolute power exposes both individuals and collectives"; this, in Stieg's estimate, makes her an author you love to read, not just because of her brilliant use of language but also "for her insightful stories".

He was a great fan of Philip K. Dick, one of the most original and biting satirical authors within science fiction, whose basic theme was the shifting nature of reality and the impossibility of finding any absolute truth. And so was Eva Gabrielsson, who in 1979 had even translated Dick's most famous novel, the Hugo-winning *The Man in the High Castle*, into Swedish. Stieg wrote with great respect of Olaf Stapledon, and called his *Star Maker*, 1937, "science fiction at its very

best: a speculative and fascinating fiction of ideas, an exciting tool for discussion and a source of inspiration". And he expressed great sympathy for the humanism of Clifford D. Simak, the author whose most fundamental theme was the unity and unique value of life and intelligence, and who viewed the basis for all morality as the acceptance of the supreme value of all sentient living beings.

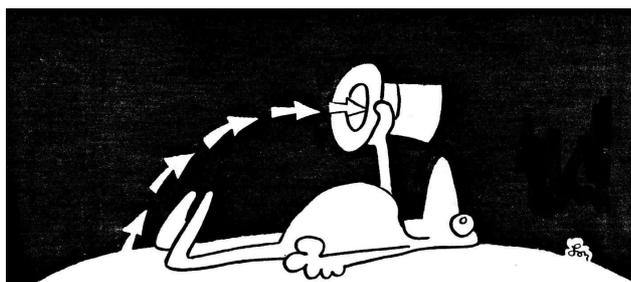
Stieg's last major contribution to any fanzine was his presentation of Frederik Pohl in *Science fiction forum* number 81, March 1980. He wrote a general biographic and literary overview of Pohl, interviewed him and reviewed three of his latest novels. It is obvious that Stieg held Pohl in high regard, and this is hardly surprising; in some ways, there is a clear affinity between them. Frederik Pohl was born in 1919 and wrote actively until his death in 2013. He grew up in Brooklyn, where his traveling salesman father finally settled in 1926, and began reading science fiction at the age of nine. At ten Pohl paid his membership to the Science Fiction League and began corresponding with other sf readers. At 14 he dropped out of Brooklyn Tech high school due to the depression; he never resumed his formal schooling, but in 2009 was at least awarded an honorary diploma from Brooklyn Tech. Instead he had to work to help support his family. In 1936, Pohl joined the Young Communist League and in 1937 he was one of the founders of the Futurian Society, a fan group in New York where he also became a lifelong friend of other young fans like Isaac Asimov, Cyril Kornbluth and Donald A. Wollheim (later publisher of Ace Books, then of his own DAW Books). He left the Young Communists in 1939, after the pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, since one of his reasons for joining had been his abhorrence of European fascism. Pohl's first professional publication was a poem, in 1937. But already in 1939 he became the editor of two newly launched pulp sf magazines and began producing stories at a prodigious pace, many in collaboration with other Futurians. He later worked as a literary agent, won three Hugo awards for Best Magazine during the ten years he edited *Galaxy* and *If*, edited an imprint sf novel imprint for Bantam Books in the 1970s, and then finally left editing to concentrate on his writing. Even so he had written continuously from the 1950s, when his incisive, satirical stories were published mainly in *Galaxy* and when his first novel, *The Space Merchants*, co-written with Cyril Kornbluth and published in 1953, became one of

the first science fiction bestsellers. It was translated into Swedish in 1960 and was among the books read by all Swedish sf enthusiasts; a savage satire on commercialism, it is a novel set in a future where advertising agencies almost run the world.

Pohl went on to publish a further almost forty novels, his last being *All the Lives He Lead*, 2011. Stieg greatly admired Pohl's 1970s novels, and particularly *Gateway*, 1977, which he called "one of the best sf novels I have ever read". It is primarily a psychological novel, set in an overpopulated and bleak future, where humans unexpectedly find a long abandoned alien space port with perhaps a hundred spaceships left behind. No one manages to learn exactly how the ships operate, but through trial and error they find out how to start the ships. Once started, they will travel to pre-programmed but unknown destinations. For each trip, there is no guarantee that the crew will survive or the ship return – but even so, there is no lack of volunteers to try their luck, and the novel follows one of them, Bob Broadhead. Pohl interspaces the story of his three trips with transcripts of his later conversations with his psychoanalyst; it is a broad, multi-faceted novel, powerful in both its bleakness and the splendour of its imagination. Over the following years, Pohl followed it with five free-standing sequels, set in the same future. I have no doubt that Stieg went along on those trips as well. He kept reading science fiction. When I invited Harlan Ellison to be a guest at the Swedish Book Fair in 1992, Stieg was enthusiastic – Ellison, one of science fiction's most intransigent and emotionally powerful writers, had been a favourite for many years – and interviewed him extensively in a TT feature essay. When in the spring of 2004 I relaunched *Nova science fiction*, the magazine I had edited with my friend Per Insulander in the 1980s, Stieg lived long enough to receive copies of the first three issues and was glad to see stories by authors like Joanna Russ, Nicola Griffith, Justina Robson and Linda Nagata. As always, he was fascinated by and strongly receptive to female writers, although he would hardly fall into the trap of claiming that it is impossible to mistake a male writer for a female or vice versa. No science fiction fan active during the 1970s would: the then most highly praised of all new authors in the field, James Tiptree, Jr., the writer of whom Brian Aldiss wrote, "Thank God for Tiptree – if it weren't for him, all the best new sf writers would be women!", turned out to be a pen name for Alice Sheldon.

As I said, Stieg saw the first three issues of the restarted *Nova* magazine. When the fourth issue was delivered from the printer, he was dead. In the fifth issue I wrote about him. It was not how I had envisioned it – my hope had been to lure him back into writing science fiction and letting me publish him, if not before, then when he was done with his crime novels. At least he said that the idea attracted him.

This essay has only scratched the surface. Stieg Larsson was a dedicated, lifelong reader of science fiction. Influences from science fiction are easy to find in his three published novels, not least in the “Hacker Republic” to which Lisbeth Salander belongs and which is obviously inspired by Neal Stephenson’s novels. Science fiction was not only a part of his reading, but also helped inspire his fundamental beliefs, outlook, and morality. We are all largely the products of the things that have influenced us. In Stieg’s case, his interpretation of his experiences and reading made him into a man of strong moral convictions, of reason, tolerance, and intransigence. - JHH -



Artwork: Lars “Lon” Olsson

-----  
**Minimum recipe for happiness:**

1. Do not worry
2. Do not argue

Shit happens, When shit happens you deal with it. The shit that happens is rarely the shit you worry about, but something other, unexpected.

3. If you are unhappy even though you don't worry about anything, you have to change one or more of the following.

- A ) Your relationship
- B) Your job
- C) Your environment

You may feel a lack of courage to change one of the three, but remember that life hurts when you are healing. If you feel nothing (without anaesthesia), then you're not healing.

- Wolf -

*\* recipe works only if you also have your health*



**Lloyd Penney**  
 1706-24 Eva Rd, Etobicoke, ON  
 CANADA M9C, 2B2  
 7th February 2010

Thank you for yet another CounterClock, issue 34 this time. Always an anticipated issue, and always a challenge to respond to. I've got a couple of coffees in me, so I will give it a shot.

I admit that I have not read any of Stieg Larsson’s books, although they seem pretty popular. I think we have all found in our fannish careers that you never know where a connection to SF fandom might crop up, and such is the case with Stieg Larsson. I didn't know his fannish connections until a past issue of this very fanzine. I am pleased that my inquiry brought this article around; it should be the latest chapter in our history of fandom. My thanks to John-Henri Holmberg for allowing its printing, and commiserations that much of your contribution to the book was trimmed out. (An idea...we all need to respond to this portion of the zine. Wolf, you and John-Henri send all the remarks and comments to the publishers, for if there is a second edition, it can be an expanded edition, and John-Henri’s writings can be edited back in.)

A great introduction to fandom for the non-fans, and a good reminder of our origins for the rest of us. The origins of fandom and Swedish fandom are part of our history, and set the scene for Larsson’s appearance. Should this passage appear in the book at a later date, I might get rid of any first-person writing about your own entry into Swedish fandom. (I like the passage about being a part of a DX club. DXing is distant radio listening, and I have done that myself. I am a past member of the Ontario DX Association, which to the best of my knowledge, is long gone, another hobby killed by the Web.) It’s also interesting to see political leadings that came from correspondence in the fanzines, and some of the discussion on Richard Nixon looks like some of the current discussions on Donald Trump. I know how many people outgrow fandom to go onto other interests, but the revelation that Stockholm fandom, at the time, was full of jerks and idiots. Doesn't that sound all too familiar? At least

fandom may be seen as Larsson's social launch pad.

I admit that I watch and read very little SF these days. Perhaps embracing steampunk, and stepping a little bit away from SF, was part of my mid-life crisis, I don't really know. There is so much SF in books, in the movie theatres, and on television; we are spoiled for choice. Give it a few years, and television in North America will have a variety of Star Trek series to choose from. That will probably be when many walk away from it, as it won't feel special any more. I don't find Star Trek: Discovery to be bad; I am in fact enjoying it. We get to watch it in Canada because it is shot in a studio just east of downtown Toronto, which the US must subscribe to a special service to see it.

I remember at the Dutch Worldcon in 1990, there was in parallel with the Worldcon a Perry Rhodan convention, which at the time was celebrating the 1000th Rhodan novel. To see that it's hit 3000 novels is frankly amazing, given that Perry seems to have become a solely European hero. I remember seeing Rhodan novels in the remainder bin at a big local bookstore, but most bookstores are gone, and the big bookstore chain here in Ontario is slowly becoming less of a bookstore, and more of a gift shop.

I will have to see if I can vote in TAFF. Often, my vote or nomination is the kiss of death, and money is very tight with my continuing unemployment. I now know all the candidates, having just friended Sarah Gulde on Facebook.

That's quite the SF collection you've got, measured in terabytes. I am not sure I'd want all of that myself, but what little I have I have downloaded from YouTube. More and more, I have to trim down what little we do have, so not having a massive collection of SF is actually good for us. More trimming is coming in the future; it looks like as rental housing becomes less available and more unaffordable, we will have to make some very hard decisions.

A little personal report...I had been reading about the revival of Amazing Stories in magazine form, and it is out. While the owner of AS lives in the US, the editor-in-chief is Ira Nayman, a local pro/fan in Toronto. I offered my services as a proofreader/copyeditor, and I was readily accepted. It's a bit of a dream to be working on Amazing Stories, and now, I am. I was one of a team of proofreaders/copyeditors on issues 2 and 3, and I hope to be called upon to work on issue 4.

Here and elsewhere, I think you've been talking about not so much gafiating, but taking a break, recharging your creative batteries. Thumbs up to that. Going away entirely? I hope you won't. You and this zine have become one of the few, if not the only, gateways from European fandom to the greater fandom out there. I still think you're enjoying this, and I am sure there is more European fannish history to be written about.

Anyway, I do look forward to issue 35, and I suspect you're already working on it. Take care, and I hope that 2019 is a good year for both of us.

**WolfEd:** *You suspected correctly. This time I really digged into it, breaking the previous record of 48 pages (Issue #19). No, gafiating is not what I had in mind, but I do hope to make another transition from one form to another. It appears that CounterClock is a medium which allows me to do that. And it also appears that most people will like the pending changes. Read more about that in my Final Words to this issue.*

*I've been talking to a couple of people who I knew once were reading Perry Rhodan. My first question to them was if they still read it. The answers were 4 times yes. But one of them had fallen some 500 issues behind in reading, due to his marriage. But he intends to catch up.*

*My next question was, if the authors today are as good as the first generation was, or if they are better. Here we have a matter of taste. But the most interesting answer came from Thomas Kass out of Cologne who gave me a more detailed breakdown of who is what. For example, I didn't know that one author is from Switzerland and two from Austria. And generally the style of writing has changed. Adapting to modern times.*

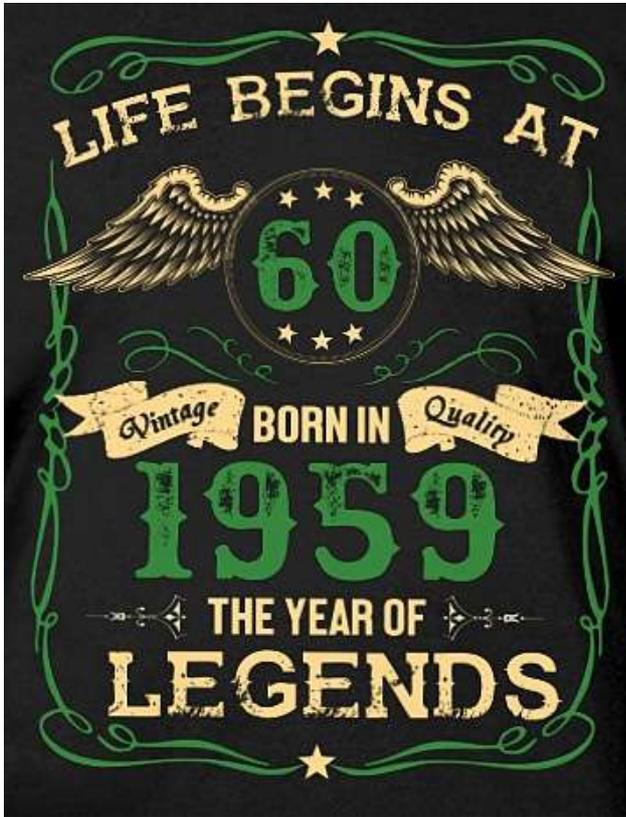
*Thomas also answered to my last question, what keeps them and he compared it to his beer. It means it falls within their comfort zone.*



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

*Has this world been so kind to you that you should leave with regret? There are better things ahead than any we leave behind.*

C. S. Lewis



*Now, there's a load of rubbish! Do act your age...  
But the colors are nice.*

Rolf Strömgren

rolf-dot-stromgren-at-bredband-dot-net  
Stockholm, Sweden  
10th February 2019

At last, a LoC. My favourite beer has long been Procrastinator. I even missed that the law has been changed so that a blank ballot with a hand-written party name is no longer a valid vote in the Swedish elections, unless the party name is duly registered with the authorities before the elections. Anyway, here goes...

TV series: Somebody wrote that TV series are now made with such psychological skill that it's more a question of psychological manipulation than making quality TV. (Compare with what producers of computer games do.) Do you agree? Is it still quality TV if they manipulate us? Where do they cross the border?

Perry Rhodan: 3000 books would mean eight

years of reading, reading one book per day. One hell of a binge-reading party. Aw heck, it is as good a way as any to learn German. McLane and his "ständigen husarenritten" is no competition. :-)

JHH: There is lots of substance in John-Henri's article, more than enough for a TV series. Hmm... Nazis, Ku Klux Klan, Stieg L, Swedish fandom feuds... Perhaps Netflix would be interested?

CoC33: Thanks for the nice photo of me, directly to the right of the light-bulb-bench. If I remember correctly I'm discreetly trying to yank my undies up before they fall down to my knees. Ahem.

The end of the world: I certainly hope for the best (while still being very grateful for not having sired any children.) Anyway I strongly suspect that when the day comes we will not react to it. Last week we suffered three utter catastrophies in Stockholm. What happened? We had a few inches of snow and the transportation system failed utterly. Some machinery failed somewhere - another transportation standstill. And yet another inch of snow. The last time people complained saying "this time everybody has to be fired!".

Thanks for all your CounterClocks. I am often late at commenting but I always read them. Good work!

By the way:

Right Said Fred's song "I'm too sexy" is science fiction. At least when William Shatner sings it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yhXyfvuWfc>

**WolfEd:** Thank you, for this Shatner-episode. A Perry Rhodan-magazine is in volume about the size of this CounterClock-issue. It took me 4-6 hours to read an issue, at my best. Some days I read two issues, 'cause I had catching up to do and because it was a thrill.. I'm glad you stay as a reader. It means Clock has something more in common with PR. Our readers get older and wiser, but they stay around.



Artwork: Lars "Lon" Olsson

## Robert Day

Flat 2, Heatherlea  
Station Road, Kirby Muixloe  
Leicestershire LE9 2EN, UK  
13th March 2019

The months fly by, and although CC:34 has been near the top of the "to do" pile for ages, only now have I got enough other stuff done to allow me the time to thank you for putting it out and let you have my reaction.

And that reaction was mainly: "WOW!" I never knew that Stieg Larsson was One Of Us. I have his *Millennium* novels on the TBR pile; they will get moved up a few places. Though I have to say that for years, the reputation of Swedish fandom in the UK was of a group with a penchant for deep and convoluted fan feuds, and John-Henri's article did nothing to dispel that view! Though I also found it a very revealing insight into Swedish radical politics. British fandom rarely took anything much too seriously (though it's interesting to note that a lot of fans who I knew back in my mis-spent youth and who I've got back in touch with through social media turn out to be mainly Leftist in viewpoint - though there are exceptions).

Meanwhile, on tv I have now caught up with *ST: Discovery*. I'm unsure that I entirely agree with you about its awfulness; I will say that it has a very different look and feel, based around it being intended for a different demographic of viewers. Of course, when legal matters intervene, the end effect is always going to be flawed and can sometimes give rise to some unintentionally funny moments. For example, there's a point in the first of Peter Jackson's *Hobbit* films where Gandalf forgets the names of two wizards of his Order. It turns out that when the Tolkien estate originally sold the film rights to *The Hobbit* and *LotR*, Christopher Tolkien hadn't at that stage compiled *The Silmarillion*, which was where the full list of names of the Orders of wizards were published for the first time. And no-one was going to pay CT his asking price for the film rights to *The Silmarillion* just so they could put a couple of names into dialogue...

At least *Discovery* has made it onto disc, unlike some of the other series that the streaming services have produced. I suspect that the market research suggested that Trek fans might revolt if the show didn't make it onto disc, though these days I don't frequent High Street media outlets as much as I used to. The UK's main such outlet,

HMV, recently went into administration, supposedly because of the competition from the Internet and the streaming services; though there are probably other factors in play here, such as the fact that we've been in a state of fiscal austerity since 2010 and it's just about now spread to most of the working age population, when it was originally just public sector workers who suffered the tightening down on their wages back in 2010. And also, the fact now is that fewer of us work in city centres any more; I've not worked in a city centre since 2010; when I did, my lunch-time exercise would inevitably take me into a bookshop or HMV. Not so much now; and I'm far from the only person who almost never goes into a city centre. Indeed, it's a bit of a treat when I do; a few weeks ago, my other half had a ballet class to attend in Manchester, and I was happy to ferry her there and back for the chance to have a good browse in a couple of bookshops.

Jodie Whitaker's excursion as the 11th Doctor has met with mixed reaction here in the UK. Most of the die-hard fans who dislike it do so because it has continued the faults of previous series - that the writing is no good. The objective in their series seems to have been to make the show into "Doctor Who and Her Gang", and making the troupe of companions into focal points for "B" plots isn't what the show is about. *Doctor Who* is not a vehicle for ensemble casts. The best episodes were the ones I thought were actually going to be the dullest and most worthy ones - the Rosa Parkes episode (where the Doctor had to sit on her hands and *not* interfere to ensure history worked out as it should) and the Indian Partition one. Otherwise, we had to wait until the New Year's Eve special for something worthwhile, with a different take on an old enemy. (UK viewers also did like the fact that the show's production had shifted the centre of the Known Universe from Cardiff to Sheffield, though once more, the writers failed to reference the wonderful line from Ecclestone's first outing as the Doctor, where his Northern British accent was countered with "Lots of planets have a North.")

The *Doctor Who* episode I would pay good money to watch would be Peter Capaldi's Doctor getting Jimi Hendrix and Georg Frederick Handel together for a jamming session - they were next-door neighbours in London, separated only by a party wall and 250 years. Capaldi's Doctor was no mean bass guitarist himself...

I was recently pointed to one of the short sf films

on YouTube produced by the channel Dust; and as I didn't have my computer powered on at the time, I suddenly thought "I wonder if my smart tv can get YouTube?" And it can! So I've been watching a few shorts myself recently. The material on the Dust channel has been mainly good, *FTL* being particularly good. There do seem to be a number of shorts on YouTube, though, that are fragments of bigger stories, or are exercises in effects or scene setting, without the film makers realising that in film, it rather helps if you tell a story in one way or another; but these are film makers developing their craft. I'll keep exploring. (And yes, I also saw *Lunatique*.)

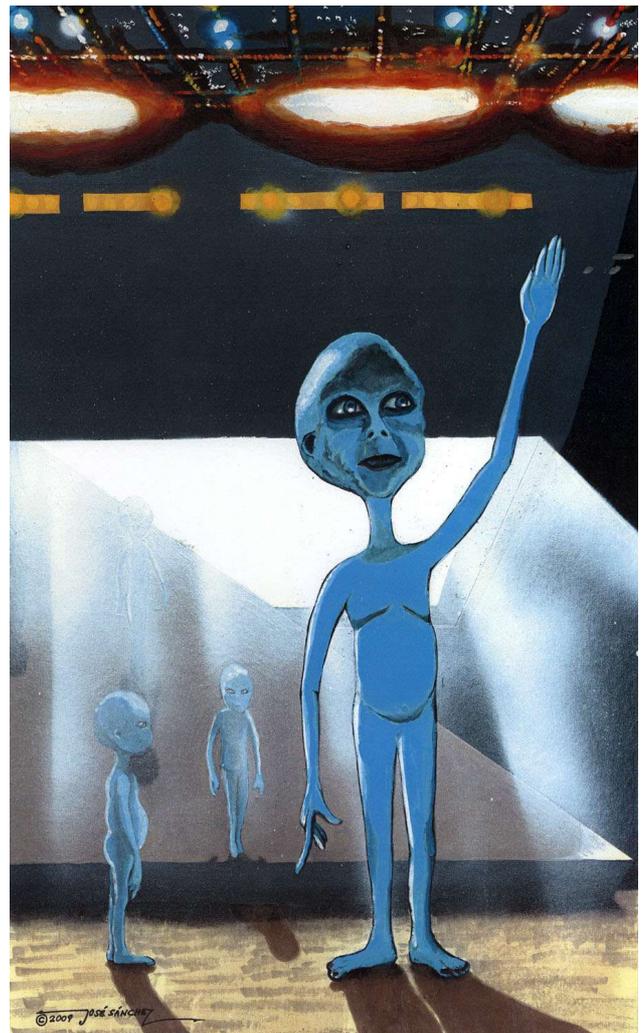
And it has *Skywhales* too! I remember that from the early days of the UK's Channel 4, who commissioned it as their remit was to be a bit experimental and different (something that they've mainly dropped now).

Your grand work of ripping all your DVDs is a major labour of love. You comment about copyright. Strictly speaking, ripping films and tv to a hard drive is in breach of the viewer licence that is in all the small print at the end of films in all those different languages (my other half calls this the 'Rosetta Stone'; a future alien civilisation finding the remains of our own should be able to start reconstructing a range of human languages from a good DVD with five or six different dialogue tracks and the same copyright notice in twenty languages!); but since you use it only for your own convenience, who's to know? (I doubt you've got many studio paralegals on the circulation list for CC...) I did wonder about doing something similar for my music collection, but it's a time-consuming job and at the time I started it, external hard drive storage wasn't massive and was (comparatively) expensive. And of course, nowadays we have streaming services, so physical carriers are just **so** twentieth-century, dahling... But no content provider seems happy to guarantee that stuff won't disappear in some future rights grab or dispute, and the range of stuff we want to see does rather require you to have more than one subscription, as well as to deal with some companies that you might rather not deal with, such as Amazon...

In my last LoC back in last October, I mentioned Ian Sales. He has just now got a new job in Sweden and has moved there, much to the envy of many of us. In other news, I am now in the process of registering by instalments for the Dublin Worldcon (though I doubt I shall make it to

TitanCon in Belfast the weekend after and so won't have the pleasure of voting for Timisoara); and I am now the proud possessor of not one but two Bionic Ears, courtesy of the British NHS. I consider these to grant me a new super-power (the ability to hear distant conversations), though I do find their lack of discrimination a bit trying at times. This is, I suppose, one of the disadvantages of not going private, as the vendors of hearing aids would have you believe that they do have improved discrimination for picking particular sounds out of the background noise. Well, I suppose if I ever get *really* rich and don't know what to do with my money, I could upgrade. But at least I get my batteries free of charge...

**WAHF** (*We Also Heard From*): Jonny Berg, Roger Sjölander, Tomas Cronholm, Hans Persson, Bertil AG Schalén (Sweden), Taral Wayne, Garth Spencer (Canada) Nic Farey (USA)



Artwork: "We Come in Peace" José Sanchez, 2009



ONCE UPON A MOUSE ...

Reunicon 2020 will be held at the Marriott Hotel (which was the Bel Air, our former headquarters and main hotel in 1990).

Memberships are available now!

ATTENDING € 50,-  
SUPPORTING € 25,- 

Payment via PayPal - account name [info@confiction1990.com](mailto:info@confiction1990.com)

E-mail us your name and address when you take a membership. Rooms for the event have been blocked and will be made available to members at reduced and special room rates. You can pre-book your room(s) now at [info@confiction1990.com](mailto:info@confiction1990.com)

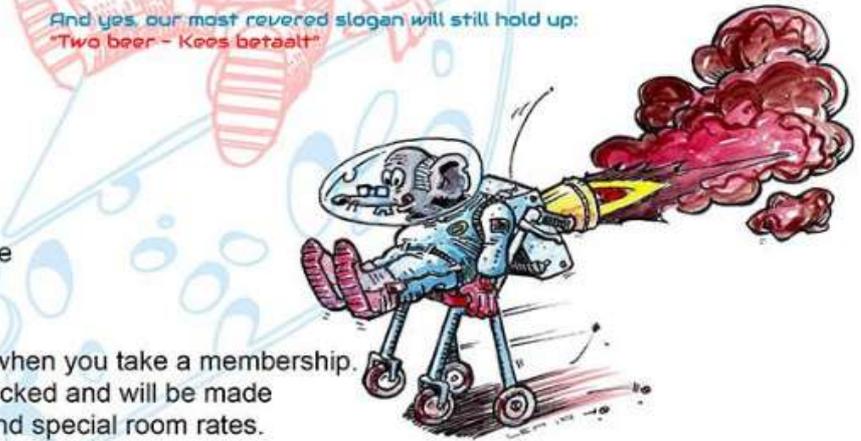
# REUNICON 2020

August 21-23, 2020

In August 2020 it will be 30 years ago when we held ConFiction, the 48th World Science Fiction Convention, in The Netherlands.

Come and join us - committee members of 1990 - for a weekend filled with great memories, fun and good vibes to commemorate 30 years after ConFiction 1990!

And yes, our most revered slogan will still hold up:  
"Two beer - Kees betaalt"



## THE FINAL WORD

Not without a certain feeling of pride, do I fill in the last entry of the index on page 2, the Final Word begins on page 62... Not since ANDROMEDA #111 in 1984 have I had an issue of a zine of mine amounting to 64 pages. And never before in my third language, which English is. This is, of course enormously satisfying. I will savour the egoboo for an entire fifteen minutes. Then I have to remind myself, that there still are a number of important things I need to get across. Ch-ch-ch-changes!

*Turn and face the strange...  
There's gonna have to be a different man  
Time may change me  
But I can't trace time  
And these children that you spit on  
As they try to change their worlds  
Are immune to your consultations  
They're quite aware of what they're goin' through  
Don't tell us to grow up and out of it  
Where's your shame?  
You've left us up to our necks in it  
Oh, look out you rock'n rollers.  
Ch-ch-ch-changes!*

[Bowie]

I'm sorry, if my style of writing remains slightly confusing to you. I am aware that my thoughts slide across time and space in a non-linear way.

Sometimes I have to hide what an angry old man I am. Angry with homo sapiens, which isn't a fraction as sapient as the name of the species indicates. We're really just a bunch of monkeys, if you look at us from space. Sapience means *having great wisdom and discernment*. But we are sooner a breed of *Homo Stultus*. You see it all around you. I have actually heard averagely gifted members of our species say: "LOL!"

They were not actually *Laughing Out Loud*. They just said: "LOL!" Is it a word now? Personally, I would have attributed such exclamation to the lower range of cerebral ability. But it appears to have entered the vocabulary of our succeeding generations. And how come, in a society of 98% literacy (*and more*), that books are only read by 2%? The other 98% are busy wanking (?).

I am always pleasantly surprised these days, when I encounter a person who *thinks*. Because it seems so rare. And we have the audacity to label ourselves as *homo sapiens*? LOL!

WHERE DID ALL THE FANZINES GO?

Music: Pete Seeger / Words: Seeger & Me

Where have all the fanzines gone,  
long time passing?  
Where have all the fanzines gone,  
long time ago?  
Where have all the fanzines gone?  
Mailing lists replaced them, every one  
Oh when will they ever learn,  
When will they ever learn?

Where are now the mailing lists,  
long time passing?  
Where are now the mailing lists,  
long time ago?  
Where are now the mailing lists,  
Social media killed them, every one  
Oh when will they ever learn,  
When will they ever learn?

Where is social media now,  
long time passing?  
Where is social media now,  
long time ago?  
Where is social media now,  
Killed our braincells, every one  
Oh when will we ever learn,  
When will we ever learn?

-----  
Gerfany

actually still has a good number of fanzines and semi-promags. At least a few dozen. *Andromeda* is still being published and *Andromeda Nachrichten*, both by the SFCD. There's *Exodus*, and a few others whose names escaped me. The problem with German fanzines is that they are all in German language. So, no good for the rest of the world, who doesn't speak or read German. Of course, it's a *lot* less than what it once used to be.

THE MAILING LISTS ARE SILENT

When the fanzines started to disappear, it was first *blamed* on the mailing lists. And I accepted that argument. There was indeed a lot of talking on the mailing lists, which sufficiently substituted the need for communication. But the mailing lists have fallen silent. Recently (perhaps a month ago) I returned to the mailing list of *Filk UK*. Not one message has come (yet) I have to test if it actually works (right after finishing this issue). The Swedish fandom mailing list brings news about conventions and who died. A few, but not a whole lot of other news. I get the feeling most people prefer to just wrap

themselves up into their personal shell. And everywhere I see people wrapped up in their smart-phone, which generally is smarter than their owner. I don't have one. I don't want to have one. I see no reason to own one. I have a digital camera, an mp3-player and a desktop computer. There's a phone plugged into the wall. Why would I need this gadget, which can replace them all and which turns their owners into *pod people in outer space*? Because they are certainly no longer present on this planet. I see them on the phone while driving their car (insane risk), I see them engulfed by their little screens everywhere. There can not be a silent moment. Something *has to happen all the time*. But it doesn't. It might. Any next second might a message pop in, right? A student of my domestic mathematician arrived recently 10-15 before she did. I opened the door. I said hello. He went straight into the kitchen and sat down at the table opening his books and started reading. He completely ignored me. I made myself a cup of coffee. He remained quiet. I got the feeling he was *afraid* that I might say something. This young man was in complete absence of any, even the minimum, of social skills (which I later pointed out – and as he returned the following time, he at least said *hello*). What is happening to people? Yes, yes, the times they are a-changin'. But are we raising social zombies now?

THE QUEST FOR AN ISSN

So, now there is a CounterClock Journal, a Podcast, a Rockband and Ghu knows what else. I was thinking it may be a good idea to get myself an ISSN. That's almost the same as an ISBN (for books), but for a magazine, such as this. Where do I apply for one? I thought I could maybe do that at the Royal Library in Stockholm, but they referred me to the Italian equivalent, because I live in Italy. Huh?

I find the thought of having to deal with any Italian bureaucracy abhorring. For all the dealings I have had with them so far, I find no reason to trust them with anything at all. They don't give a shit about what I need or want, they don't care if it gets done and they always hope someone else has to do it. The only thing they are interested in, is their own salary. I have yet to meet an exception. Of course, they must exist, the exceptions. But as soon as I receive my pension, I am likely to be *out of here*. So... asking an Italian for help? - Not in my lifetime. I could have asked *Patrik Centerwall* in Gothenburg to become a formal co-editor or moved back

## COUNTERCLOCK SF # 35

to Sweden temporarily, to register *CounterClock* there. That would have been easier than having to deal with Italians. But where's the fun in it? I better asked a Romanian, because things are likely to run smoother then. And it would be more fun with a Romanian collaborator. Because from now on, I'd be a *Swedish guy, born in Finland, with a German name, writing a Romanian non-commercial-magazine in English out of Italy.*

- Cool!!!!

Ah, yes, when talking to *mundanes*, it is better to refer to CounterClock as a non-commercial magazine than a fanzine, because in their minds a fanzine is something else. I am not a fan of anything other than science fiction, which in itself says next to nothing about what I *really* am a fan of. It is not Star Trek, Star Wars, Doctor Who or any other franchise. It is all moving images on the big and small screen related to the subject, the related music, related art and of course last but not least the related literature and **its** fandom.

Bee seeing you,

Wolf

## COLUMNIST's WANTED

CounterClock would like having regular columnists in the following areas: FANDOM SATIRE - FANZINE REVIEWS - FILK COLUMN - SF/FANTASY MUSIC - SHORT SCI-FI FILM because at the moment I am doing way too much of it all by myself. Makes it almost a personal zine again. Also b/w illustrations needed. Recycle from old zines if you must!

## COUNTERCLOCK # 35

Wolf von Witting, Via Dei Banduzzi 6/4

33050 Bagnaria Arsa (Ud) - Italia

Email: wolfram1764 - at - yahoo - dot - se

Darius Hupov, Timis, Str. Simfoniei nr. 64

Timisoara - Dumbravita / Romania

Email: hupovdarius - at - gmail - dot - com

Photographers: Joerg Ritter (Gefany)

and Sergii Paltsun (Ukraine)

Artwork: Star Wars Kids – Klaudia Weber, 2017

