



The National Fantasy Fan

Cras ad Stellas— Tomorrow to the Stars

Volume 79 Number 3

March 2020

Jose Sanchez Wins Kaymar Award!

AS N3F President, it is my privilege and honor to report that very-long-time member Jose Sanchez has won the N3F Kaymar award for 2020.

Kaymar Award Teller Jon Swartz writes “As election teller, I pronounce Jose Sanchez as this year's winner. The final tally was 15 votes yes, and 1 vote no.”

Jose’s artistic contributions have added brilliance to the covers of the N3F’s magazines, including N’APA, Tightbeam, and Eldritch Science. Three cheers for Jose’s contributions! And may they long continue!

2020 Neffies

For many years, the N3F has given awards for speculative fiction materials in all media. We now approach the Awards for 2020, covering award categories. By popular request, we have added fan activity categories. Categories are

Best novel (over 100,000 words)
Best shorter work (under 100,000 words)
Best book editor
Best TV show
Best SF movie/video
Best anime

Best manga/comic
Best cover artist
Best non-N3F fanzine (electronic publication is allowed)
Best N3F fanzine
Best fan artist
Best fan writer
Best fan editor
Other

Please send your nominations to George Phillies
phillies@4liberty.net by April 10, 2020.

Bureaus

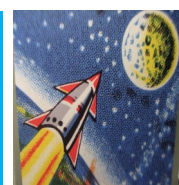
Pro Bureau

We received an inquiry: “I have a relative who has written a science fiction short story. I have read it. He wants to get it published and asked if I knew where he can send it. I told him of places that accept short stories, (anthologies, magazines, online magazines) but since I have never had a short story published I don't know of any specific places to send him. I was wondering if you could give me that information?” The Pro Bureau recommended Ralan.com for an extended listing of places.

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We Need a New Treasurer!
David Speakman Does Not Have the Time
Contact phillies@4liberty.net with ideas



Your Volunteer Team

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Continued Next Column

Recruitment Bureau

All quiet on the Western Front. We continue to look for recruitment possibilities.-John Thiel

Correspondence Bureau

Are you seeking Intellectual Adventure into the Unknown? Would you like to find an Intellectual Companion? The Correspondence Bureau can help you with your quest. Currently we have 2 members interested in corresponding.

You have two choices for seeking a pairing:

Choice #1 -You want to be paired with someone of like interest When someone with similar interest requests a pairing both of you will be notified.

Choice #2 - You want to be paired with the next person whose wants to correspond.

Your Volunteer Team

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 Writers Exchange Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Many New Volunteers are needed: Cosplay, Electronic Publication Support, Convention Hospitality, Outreach. Support the N3F. Volunteer Now!

Join or Renew

We offer four different memberships. Memberships with TNFF via paper mail are \$18; memberships with TNFF via email are \$6. All other zines are email only. Additional memberships at the address of a current member are \$4. Public memberships are free. Send payments to N3F, POB 1925, Mountain View CA 94042. Pay online at N3F.org. Our PayPal contact is treasurer@n3f.org Send phillies@4liberty.net your email address for a public membership.

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Send an email to the bureau head asking for a correspondent. Include your name and email address. The Correspondence Bureau is open to all members of the club who have an email address.

To join the Correspondence Bureau or if you have questions, please contact:
Judy Carroll - BlueShadows@gmail.com

Round Robin Bureau

Patricia Williams-King reports that she has been reviving Round Robins and will have an extended report next month. To join a Round Robin, writer her at Patricia Williams-King, 335 Forrest Park Road, Apt # 75 Madison, TN 37115

Heath Row sends us a representative Round Robin letter:

The following letter of comment was originally written for the N3F's Star Trek Classic Round Robin on Aug. 31, 2019. It appears here in slightly edited form.

Dear Trekkers:

I was delighted to learn today that Full Moon Streaming, the streaming service on Hulu and other places, features a series of movies bookended and punctuated -- hosted, shall we say -- by William Shatner. It's called William Shatner's Full Moon Fright Night and seems to date back to 2002 with movies including Castle Freak, Horrorvision, and others. I watched just a little of one opening segment, and I shall return. He'll be a nice addition to Joe Bob Briggs, Elvira, and Svengoolie. It also reminded me of the old William Shatner DVD Club, which operated for less than a year in 2006. I subscribed briefly and received movies such as Black Cadillac, Dragon Storm, Epoch, Ginger Snaps, and The Lathe of Heaven. Has anyone watched any of the Fright Night episodes?

I quite like that Channel 31 where Patsy lives airs Star Trek regularly. When I was in college near Chicago in the early 1990s, there was a fellow who published a monthly calendar of what Star Trek series aired where in the Chicago area. He'd figured out the syndication schedules and could even identify which episodes would be aired. All

photocopied on an 11-by-17 or 8 ½-by-14 piece of paper with photos clipped from magazines -- pre-mainstream Internet and a true labor of love. I wish I knew where he was now. I'll check to see where Star Trek is airing in the LA area. Mostly, I watch Trek on DVD so I can be a linear completist and am able to refer to specific episodes whenever I want.

Not too long ago I found an inexpensive set of the 1981 reprint of the 1967 Leaf Star Trek card set. There are 72 cards in the series that feature black and white images from various episodes as well as stills taken during filming. The writing on the back doesn't always appear to relate to any specific episode, but in most cases, seems to. Let's just go with the first card in the series: No Time for Escape. The photo side features Spock and Bones examining some kind of snowy globe. The back reads, "The U.S.S. Enterprise is ordered to rescue a scientific earth team from the dying planet Psi 2000. Captain Kirk orders the spacecraft to change course and race for Psi 2000. The rescue is too late. Mr. Spock and Dr. McCoy beam down to the dying planet. They find the entire scientific team dead -- frozen to death. They return to the spacecraft and the Enterprise goes into orbit, observing the disintegration of Psi 2000." That would describe "The Naked Time," the seventh episode, which originally aired in 1966. I've seen lists of all the card titles, but not a detailed episode list based on the cards... perhaps a project to undertake!

I'd also like to call attention to a magazine of potential interest: The Parade Special Edition The Best of Star Trek, Athlon Entertainment #37, published in 2018. It's one of those bookazines that are so popular now -- ads-free magazines with a cover price of \$12.99 or so. But they sure are wonderful. I haven't read this one completely yet, but it touches on the origin of the series, Shatner and Nimoy, the various series, the role played by fandom, memorabilia, the movies, and current projects. Highlights include the wide range of photos -- including stills from the pilot! -- including the animated series, the nod to fandom, and the bit on the rumored Quentin Tarantino Trek movie. The magazine only gives two pages to Star Trek: Discovery. Just two pages... so there's plenty of material on older stuff, with a bias toward the original series, cast, and movies. Check it out --

or others like it -- if you like such a thing.

Tonight's episode was "That Which Survives," an episode from the third season, the 69th in the series, with an air date of Jan. 24, 1969. It's a slightly quiet but good one... with an abandoned alien outpost, immeasurable power, a beautiful menace, a race against time, and some great -- for the time -- special effects. Two instances are notable. One, when the Kalandan Losira leaves the scene... and two, the magnetic field when Scotty's in the crawl space. There are a couple of fun lines, too, but I don't remember them exactly. But good luck to the crew of the Enterprise when Spock is in charge! Totally different bedside manner than Kirk.

With that, I leave you. Live long and prosper,
Heath Row

Welcommittee

The purpose of the Welcommittee is to welcome new members to the club. A letter is sent, by email or postal mail, to new members informing them of club activities they may be interested in joining. Those members with email addresses are also sent attachments to the current TNFF and our other publications. Anyone willing to help welcome new members to this wonderful club will be greatly appreciated.

We would like to welcome Kathryn Jankowski as the newest member of the N3F. Kathryn, we hope you have a long and enjoyable stay. We also have a new Public Member, Michael Lowrey. He's this year's Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund recipient. He first joined in the early 1970s, He was very active with us in the early 1980s.

If you have questions about the club or are interested in helping, please contact Judy Carroll at BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Writers Exchange

Welcome to the Writers Exchange!. Since we are rapidly approaching the end of the first quarter of the 'new year' I thought this might be a good time to give ourselves some positive quotes that can be applied to our writing as well as our lives

"If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it, even if I may not have it at the beginning." - Mahatma Gandhi

"Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle." - Christian D. Larsen

"What the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve." - Napoleon Hill

"If you limit your choices only to what seems possible or reasonable, you disconnect yourself from what you truly want, and all that is left is compromise." - Robert Fritz

"The harder you work for something the greater you'll feel when you achieve it." - Unknown

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress." - Frederick Douglass

"Just keep going. Everybody gets better if they keep at it." - Ted Williams

"Stay positive. Work hard. make it happen." - Unknown

If you are a new writer, a professional writer, or someone who dreams of being a writer - this is the place for you. If you love reading unpublished work and find it exciting to do so, this place is also for you

The Writers Exchange is for anyone interested in writing. If you have a story you would like read and commented on, or if you just want the excitement of reading unpublished work, then the Writers Exchange is here for you. Published or unpublished - all are welcome. You may join as a writer, a reader or both. If interested, please contact: Judy Carroll. BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Birthday Club Bureau

Birthday cards sent: 11; renewal notices sent: 6 (3 by e-mail) R-Laurraine Tutihasi
laurraine@mac.com

Be nice to Earth. It's the only planet that lets us live on it!

—Lauren Birch

Convention Bureau

The attention of readers is called to ConCellation, now open at facebook.com/groups/concellation/. It includes reports of cancelled cons. There is an effort to launch an all-electronic con in a few months, but planning is on a closed Facebook group.

Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau

I should mention those interviews coordinate us with the writers as well as being worthwhile reading. It makes the writers aware of us and us aware of the writers. Amazing Stories has shown an increased awareness of us. We have an interview with James Gunn coming up in the April issue. Fan Michael Lowery's TAFF win is also discussed by Lowery in the issue. Don't ignore IO if you want to know about the bureau's doings. A lot of our doings are done with Ionisphere. And when things are happening, we report them.-John Thiel

History and Research Bureau

Jon Swartz is keeping active at history, as you can see by receiving the latest Fandbook on the N3F's founders. Those certainly are august individuals. Our chief work right now is on improvement of Origin, and with it the bureau, and we try to set a good example thereby and perhaps have some influence on others. The bureau is certainly far from dormant. We're trying to aid Judy Carroll's correspondence bureau in the latest issue.-John Thiel

Directorate Acts

Heath Row has been elected as Directorate Chair for the year.

Letters of Comment

Hi, George,
Many thanks to you and Jon for Fandbook 8 -- a most useful reference!
Best wishes,
Robert Lichtman

Dear Neffers:
Another couple of issues, another letter of comment. The issues are Volume 79, Issues 1 and 2 of The National Fantasy Fan, and the letter? Well, it's starts right below this opening paragraph.

Vol. 79, No. 1... It is unfortunate when real life makes demands on the time you like to devote to hobbies and other fun, but c'est la vie. Someone with at least some accounting experience would be good, and I am sure that David Speakman may have a notebook on how to do the job, and what to remember and look out for, plus annual legal responsibilities.

Justin Busch, I have my own copies of Mark Shainblum and Gabriel Morrisette's Anglo-Man and Anglo-Man 2, which makes for the most laughs if you remember Canadian politics from the 80s and 90s. I think there are more strips online, but I'd have to pester Marc to find out where they are, and if they are readily found online.

Yvonne and I were FanGoHs at Loscon some years ago, so I have at least found out what the convention is like, and it is great fun, with a wide variety of panel ideas, and other activities to keep you busy and learning. I recommend going, and volunteering, too.

Greetings to Heath Row! I have been extraordinarily lucky in that the new editor-in-chief for the paper version of Amazing Stories is a local friend, so I volunteered my services, and Ira Nayman took me up on it. I have been working as a Copy Editor/Proofreader on the magazine since Volume 76, No. 2, the second issue of the current run, and I recently completed my copy edit/proof of Volume 77, No. 2, the sixth issue of the current run. I also edited a novel connected with the Amazing subscription, plus an anthology of horror, and a YA fantasy. I hope there is the opportunity to do a lot more.

Vol. 79, No. 2... Whoops, gotta fill that Treasurer position. I hope someone will step forward, and manage the treasury.

That's an impressive list from Heath Row, and he does subscribe to my own local list of conventions within a day's drive away from Toronto. We're even going to a few of the cons listed, a couple as a vendor, and a couple as just attendees.

John Thiel mentions a good relationship between Amazing Stories Online and the N3F... I am certainly subjective in this, but I also hope that Neffers

will subscribe to the magazine, too. Both deserve your support.

I am getting close to the end of my page, so I will sign off, say my thanks, and get this to you asap. Thanks for all these issues, and please do keep them coming.
Yours,
Lloyd Penney.

Hello, George -
Thank you kindly for writing such a nice review of the First Fandom Annual, 2019. It is always a thrill to see our work profiled in your historic publication. (Jon D. Swartz and I cannot believe that somehow we overlooked (and forgot to list) Dave Kyle's important contribution as a founding member of the N3F. Sorry...)

Please let me know if I can be of assistance to you in any of your future projects. Sending my appreciation and best wishes your way,
John L. Coker III

Hi George,
Received TNFF a couple of days ago, and with a break in the hectic schedule around here I thot I would send along a few brief comments. Sorry to hear that David Speakman is resigning as club treasurer. He has certainly done yeoman service during his years in the job. I hope you can find someone to take his place. As you note, the treasurer's job is extremely important to the smooth functioning of any club.

That's one impressive list of conventions provided this issue; almost three pages worth, and to think, it only covers the second quarter of the year! I remember when SF/fantasy related conventions were few and far between, each one a major event in the fan community. Of course I also remember when gasoline was twenty-six cents a gallon and comics cost a dime each, which only proves that I'm Really Old. I'm glad there are so many more fans out there these days that there are plenty of people who can support and attend all these different conventions. It is a welcome change from ye olden days.

And speaking of ten cent comic books, I enjoyed Jon Swartz's reminiscences about the first comic book

he ever bought with his own money. I can't say that I remember the first comic I ever spent my own money on. Mostly I recall begging and pleading for my parents to buy me comics books. Every now and then a relative, an uncle or aunt, would buy a few comics to give to my brother and me. We were supposed to share. At least we didn't fight over them till after the relatives left.

I think Leading Comics featuring the Seven Soldiers of Victory failed because the stories were hastily written imitations of the team-up adventures better presented in All Star Comics. While it is true that the Seven Soldiers of Victory mostly consisted of second rate heroes (or third, or even fourth tier in some cases), good stories can make any comic characters interesting, but most of those adventures were fairly hum-drum. By 1945 the first big super-hero/costumed character fad in comics was fading, so the switch to funny animals was an easy decision.

By the way, Peter Porkchops didn't debut in Leading until issue #34. The first new funny animal headliner in Leading Comics was Nero Fox, a jazz jive emperor of ancient funny-animal Rome. I've never personally read any of those stories, but I suppose the concept sounds more interesting to an adult like myself than it might to a small child.

Incidentally, despite the hype and promotional effort by DC Comics to push the Columbia Studios Vigilante movie serial, that Action Comics mini-promo comic was never published. Ethan Roberts did an extensive article on The Vigilante character in my fanzine, Comic World #20 which I published back in the 1980s. He did extensive interviews with the people involved with the character, and while the mini-comic was planned, it never got printed, possibly because Columbia was too cheap to bank-roll the issue and/or because independent advertising from candy or cereal companies that would have paid the printing costs never materialized (maybe both). Anyway, even tho the cover pic is shown in a number of DC comic inside covers, that promo comic does not exist.

So far as the Neffies are concerned, I still believe my original suggestion of a committee to suggest titles would work best, I can appreciate that few individuals volunteered for that, so we are back to taking

nominations from individual members. I hope the turnout for both nominations and voting is better than last year.

During 2019 I read a lot of stuff, but not very many new SF/fantasy novels, certainly too few to even be considered a representative sampling of what is out there. I can make a few nominations in areas that I am more familiar with. The harsh reality is that there are too many new novels/shorter stories appearing in the genre these days for anybody to possibly keep up with.

For best professional magazine I nominate The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction. Consistently the best of the few surviving magazines out there.

For best comic or graphic novel: Monstress. Simply the best comic/graphic novel series currently being published. I also nominate Lady Mechanika, another excellent series set in a British steam-punk universe, easily accessible at any point to new readers.

For fanzine, I nominate Opuntia by Dale Speirs (a fanzine that appears on a bi-weekly basis), My Back Pages by Rich Lynch (a fanzine that appears perhaps three or four times a year) and Chunga by Andy Hooper and others (a fanzine that appears maybe once a year, if everything goes right).

Those are the only categories I feel qualified to name nominations in. I hope other people will offer more insights.

---Bob Jennings

Editor:

In the course of his remembrance of Leading Comics #12, Jon Swartz mentions the story credit as belonging to Joe Samachson, who wrote SF under the name William Morrison, now surely unknown to most SF fans. It so happens that I'd read in quite enjoyed a Morrison story only a few days before: "The Model of a Judge" (Galaxy, October 1953, and never reprinted, so far as I can tell).

The titular judge, yclept Ronar, is a psychologically reformed member of a carnivorous humanoid species, "now half vegetarian, half synthetarian,"

who retains an astonishingly sensitive palate and equally sensitive hearing. He has been recruited to judge a cake-baking contest. Morrison cleverly blends Ronar's fragmentary memories of his earlier life with the appallingly trivial nattering of the humans, subtly building to what seems almost certain to be about bloodbath as Ronar reverts to type.

Not so. As Ronar contemplates the three final cakes, he hears the husband of a nervous first-time entrant who's afraid he'll stop loving her if she loses tell her that she herself is "good enough to eat". Glancing at the couple, Ronar agrees, and takes his revenge on the other entrants, each of whom he has reason to loathe. "The young bride never knew why she won first prize."

Jon Swartz admits that "there is nothing outstanding about issue #12." Nor is there anything outstanding about "the model of the judge". Yet sometimes small things done well retain the charm of their own that deserves recognition.

Justin E. A. Busch

Editor:

This letter of comment is on the January 2020 issue of The Fan. I received a letter from Wesley Kawato in response to a previous letter of comment; thanks for writing! I'll respond to you under separate cover, and perhaps your correspondence will spill back into these pages.

I wasn't aware of the Non—Political SF Writers Facebook group. We'll have to check it out tomorrow, but I am curious about its name. Is the page nonpolitical? Are the writers nonpolitical? Is their writing nonpolitical? I am half kidding. (Having now requested access to join, they asked two questions of potential members. Paraphrasing: have you written anything? And will you be able to avoid discussing politics?)

Welcome to the N3F, Justin Busch. Glad to have you here! Leave it to Lloyd to comment on Captain Canuck — just teasing. I absolutely love that your wife was a member of the fan club, read the comic, and even has a T-shirt... That's a great example of fandom coming to life in the very pages of The Fan. Jon's consideration of Hop Harrigan reminded me of Bill Barnes, which I recently read some of in a

Doc Savage pulp reprint. In Sanctum Book's Doc Savage #85 (October 2015), which includes two Lester Dent writing as Kenneth Robeson stories — "The Pharaoh's Ghost" and "The Man Who Was Scared" — there is also Charles S. Verral's "Scourge of the skies", the final Bill Barnes novelette by Verral. Similar to Hop Harrigan, Bill Barnes Air Adventurer was relatively popular, but not as long-running or cross media. First appearing in 1934, the early stories were credited to George L. Eaton but were written by Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson, founder and original owner of DC Comics. The magazine was renamed Bill Barnes Air Trails in 1935 and Air Trails in 1937; Bill Barnes stories continued in the by then mostly nonfiction magazine — also appearing in the digest-sized Doc Savage between 1939-1943.

The character also appeared in comic books, including Street & Smith's Shadow Comics and comic of its own, Bill Barnes Comics. According to Steeger Book's Pulp Superhero Index online, there were about twenty novels in Air Adventurer, 16 in Bill Barnes Air Trails, and 25 in Air Trails. 22 stories appeared in Doc Savage, and one in Doc Savage comics. There were also associated Barnes feature pages in those magazines. Interesting that Hop Harrigan took off just as Bill Barnes was landing! Jon, I also like that you belonged to both Hop Harrigan fan clubs as a youth — and that you were able to reclaim your own original club certificate.

To end with, a couple of short stories. In the new issue of Interzone (#285, January-February 2020), David Bennett's short story "Frankie" is a brief but effective musing on the cost of war, the value of family, and the role of memory. Set in the mid-2030s, a soldier on leave from a land war, perhaps against aliens ("We can learn something from them, Captain, even though their skin is green."), comes home to visit his sister and revisit the final home of his brother — who documented his gradual death from an unnamed disease in an online journal. The story includes entries dated 2030-2035. His brother's online readers have traveled to his shack, too, like a shrine, and the story alternates between their narrative and excerpts of Frankie's online writings. We survive in the memories of others. We survive in the writing.

And in Clarkesworld #161 (February 2020), Melina Salazar Macia's "Eyes of the Crocodile", translated by Toshiya Kamei, is a fascinating piece about nanobots run amok, personal transformation, and what we owe the communities in which we live. "The disaster that led the planet to ruin broke out because alarms didn't go off until it was too late," Macia writes. Can we hear the alarms? The author's combination of African or Haitian voodoo culture and post-apocalyptic technology blends well. A writer to seek out! Based in Havana, Cuba, Macia's work has also been translated into English for The Future Fire, Mithila Review, and Selene Quarterly Magazine. Yours truly,
Heath Row

SerCon

The Phantom

by

Jon D. Swartz, Ph.D.

N3F Historian

The Phantom is an adventure comic strip created by writer Lee Falk, who also created Mandrake the Magician. A popular strip adapted into many media -- including television, film, and video games -- The Phantom is about a costumed crime fighter operating from the fictional African country of Bangalla. The pygmy natives of the area where The Phantom has his headquarters, the Bandar, help him in his peace-keeping efforts. The medicine man of the Bandar, Guran, is The Phantom's best friend.

According to the back story, The Phantom is the 21st in a line of crime fighters that originated in 1536, when the father of British sailor Christopher Walker was killed during a pirate attack. Swearing an oath to fight evil on the skull of his father's murderer, Walker started the legacy of The Phantom that would be passed from father to eldest son, leaving people to give the mysterious figure nicknames such as "The Ghost Who Walks" and "The Man Who Cannot Die" -- believing him to be immortal.

Unlike many other fictional costumed superheroes, The Phantom does not have super powers, but instead relies on his strength, intelligence, and his fearsome reputation of being an immortal ghost, in order

to defeat his enemies. The 21st Phantom is married to former Olympic champion Diana Palmer, whom he met while studying in the United States; they have two children, Kit and Heloise. Like all previous holders of the title, he usually lives in his ancient Skull Cave in the Deep Woods. The Phantom also has a tame wolf, Devil, and a trained white horse named Hero to help him keep the peace.

Newspaper Strips

The series began with a daily newspaper strip on February 17, 1936, followed by a color Sunday strip on May 28, 1939; reprints of both strips and new strips are running in several countries in the world. At the peak of its popularity, the strip was read by over 100 million people each day in over 40 countries, and translated into 15 different languages.

Big Little Books

The Phantom (1936). In this initial BLB, the first daily newspaper strips were reprinted. The Phantom met his future wife, Diana Palmer, who was sailing in the South Seas when her ship was captured by pirates.

The Phantom and the Sign of the Skull (1939). In this story, set deep in the African jungle, two diamond prospectors ran afoul of The Phantom. Smiley, one of the prospectors, killed his partner --and then became a guide for Diana Palmer.

The Phantom and Desert Justice (1941). While Diana was returning home on a freighter, a storm sank the ship. Diana and others were washed ashore, and Diana was captured by bandits. The Phantom began a search for Diana.

The Return of the Phantom (1942). This BLB was from the eighth daily newspaper strip, dated November 7, 1938, to January 28, 1939. Diana was bound for the Orient, when she was forcibly taken by the evil Roark. The Phantom had been trying to stop Roark from using natives to dive for pearls.

The Phantom and the Sky Pirates (1945). In the story the Baroness Sala, the "Sky Pirate," was introduced. At the end of the story, Sala shot The Phantom, but he was able to parachute to safety.

The Phantom and the Girl of Mystery (1947). The last BLB was set in Alexandria. The Phantom saved a girl from a band of thieves, and the rest of the story was about discovering her identity.

Comic Books

The Phantom has appeared in comic books since 1937, when Ace Comics began reprinting the newspaper strips in its eleventh issue. This series continued until 1949 (Ace Comics #151). During the 1940s The Phantom also appeared in Future, Feature Book, and King Comics. During the 1950s-early 1960s King Comics, Harvey Comics, and Harvey Hits also featured The Phantom. During the 1960s-1970s, The Phantom was published by Gold Key, King, and Charlton. DC published a mini-series about The Phantom in 1988. and a regular series in 1989-1990. Wolf Publishing took over the character in 1992-1993.

In 1987, the Marvel Comics Group (under their Star Comics trademark label) published a "Defenders of the Earth" series -- based on the cartoon television show -- that starred The Phantom, along with Flash Gordon, Mandrake the Magician, Lothar, and their children. Stan Lee was credited as the writer. In the 2000s Moonstone Books published several graphic novels, annuals, and comic books about The Phantom. In June 2008, it was announced by Dynamite Entertainment that they had obtained the license to produce comics about The Phantom in the United States.

Over the years, The Phantom has also appeared in comic books published in several foreign countries, including Australia, where the character is very popular even today.

Movie Serial/Feature Films

The Phantom was the subject of a Columbia 15-chapter movie serial, with Tom Tyler in the title role, in 1943; and of a Technicolor feature film in 1996, starring Billy Zane (The Phantom/Kit Walker), Kristy Swanson (Diana Palmer), and Catherine Zeta-Jones (Sala of The Sky Band).

The 1943 serial also featured Jeanne Bates, as Diana Palmer; and Ace, the Wonder Dog, as The Phantom's tame wolf, Devil. B. Reeves "Breezy" Eason

was the director. The serial was released on a double-disc DVD by VCI Video in 2001.

Copies of the 1996 feature film on DVD and VHS sold well, but box office sales in the United States were not enough for the producers, who had planned two sequels -- as well as a feature film about Mandrake the Magician – to go ahead with their plans for both characters.

Both film versions of The Phantom were well received by young people, however, and critics found the special effects in the Technicolor movie especially well done. Critics also liked the design of The Phantom's costume (by Jim Henson Creations). At least three unauthorized films about The Phantom were made in Turkey. Two were made in 1968, both titled Kızıl Maske (the Turkish name for The Phantom, translated as “Red Mask”).

Television

Defenders of the Earth was an animated television series produced in 1986, and featured characters from three comic strips distributed by King Features Syndicate – The Phantom, Flash Gordon, and Mandrake the Magician – opposing Ming the Merciless in the year 2015.

Supporting characters included their children Rick Gordon (son of Flash Gordon), Jedda Walker (daughter of the Phantom), Kshin (adopted son of Mandrake), Mandrake's assistant Lothar, and Lothar's son, L. J. The show lasted for 65 episodes. The closing credited Rob Walsh and Tony Pastor for the main title music, and Stan Lee for the lyrics. The series was later shown in reruns on the Sci-Fi Channel, as part of the “Sci-Fi Cartoon Quest.” A descendant of The Phantom (the 24th Phantom) also appeared in 33 half-hour animated episodes of the syndicated television show Phantom 2040 that debuted in 1994. Featured voice actors included Scott Valentine, Margot Kidder, and Ron Perlman -- while Mark Hamill, Debbie Harry, and Paul Williams had recurring roles. This program was a favorite of young viewers, and episodes were re-shown in 1996.

On March 23, 2009, the Sci-Fi Channel announced that they had formally ordered a 4-hour series in two parts, which would also serve as a back door

pilot. The series was shot in New York, Costa Rica, and Montreal. The cast included Ryan Cannes as Kit Walker/Chris Moore – the 22nd Phantom, Cameron Goodman as Renny Davidson (Kit's girlfriend), Jean Marchand as Abel Vandermark (Kit's mentor and one of the Walkers' oldest allies), Sandrine Holt as Guran (The Phantom's friend and advisor), and Isabella Rossellini as Dr. Bella Lithia.

The Phantom Rings/Other Merchandise

Copies of the rings of The Phantom have been offered to the public for years, usually in concert with The Phantom's appearances in movies and on television. The Phantom wore a good mark ring on his left hand and a skull ring on his right hand; he used these rings to mark his friends and enemies.

In addition to rings, other merchandise has included figures of The Phantom (and Devil and Hero), busts, video games, tattoos, full costumes, masks, belt buckles, shirts, knives and guns, drinking and shot glasses, calendars, prints, badges and buttons, posters, carbonated drinks, drinking mugs, playing and trading cards, movie sticker sheets, candy jars, a money box, and archery, safari, and pathfinder sets.

Other Books About The Phantom

The first book about the Phantom, other than the BLBs, was published in 1946 by Whitman Publishing Company, and called The Son of the Phantom. Written by children's author Dale Robertson, the book was based on Falk's story “Childhood of the Phantom,” although Falk had no other involvement with the book. This book was part of the Whitman Teenage Fiction Series. and had a dust jacket drawn by Wilson McCoy.

Avon Books began publishing a series of books about The Phantom, written by Falk, in 1972. Popular culture historian and science fiction author Ron Goulart contributed several novels to this series under his Frank S. Shaw pen name. Hermes Press later reprinted the daily newspaper strips in book form, and Movie Publisher Services has published the Sunday strips in a similar form. In 2006, the books The Story of the Phantom: The Ghost Who Walks and The Veiled Lady were released as audio books in Norway and Sweden, as part of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the character.

Lee Falk

Lee Falk, born Leon Harrison Gross (April 28, 1911 - March 13, 1999), was an American writer, theater director, and producer, best known today as creator of The Phantom and Mandrake the Magician. Falk also wrote short stories, and he contributed to a series of pulp novels about The Phantom.

Falk married three times: to Louise Kanaseriff, Constance Moorehead Lilienthal, and Elizabeth Moxley (marrying Elizabeth, a respected stage-director, not long before he decided to depict the marriage of The Phantom to the character's girlfriend Diana Palmer in the comic strip). Elizabeth also helped Falk with the scripts in his later years. She even finished his last stories about The Phantom after he died. Falk was the father of three children.

During his lifetime, Falk was described as having a magnetic, dynamic personality. Although he wrote the scripts for The Phantom and Mandrake the Magician, he was not an accomplished artist, and quickly found artists to do the strip. The principal artist on The Phantom was Ray Moore, followed by several others, including Wilson McCoy and Sy Barry.

Falk died of heart failure in 1999. He lived the last years of his life in New York, spending his summers in a house on Cape Cod. He literally wrote his comic strips from 1934 to the last days of his life; when in hospital, it was said that he whipped off his oxygen mask to dictate stories.

Some Conclusions

The Phantom is considered by most critics to be the first fictional hero to wear the skintight costume that became a hallmark of comic book superheroes; and to be the first such character shown wearing a mask with no visible pupils, another later superhero characteristic.

Some genre historians consider him to have been a major influence on many of the later “long-underwear” crime fighters. SF writer/artist Harry Harrison (1925 - 2012) was once quoted as saying: “The most popular comic in the world is probably The Phantom. It's the type that really makes it, a

guy with no eyeballs wearing a purple suit.”

Critics have described the Phantom as a “transitional” figure, since he had some of the characteristics of pulp magazine heroes such as The Shadow and earlier jungle heroes such as Tarzan, as well as anticipating the looks and abilities of later comic book heroes.

The newspaper comics of The Phantom are now written by Tony DePaul and drawn by Paul Ryan (daily strip) and Graham Nolan (Sunday strip). It has been nearly 85 years since Lee Falk conceived of The Phantom, a character that has proved to be popular throughout the world.

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