

N'APA

July 2022



The Official Organ

#259

Next deadline: September 15, 2022

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Procedure: Please Read:

George Phillies will collate and mail, but submissions should be sent to the preparer, Jefferson Swycaffer. No harm is done if submissions get sent to George, but the process should be to send them to Jefferson.

N'APA is the Amateur Press Alliance for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). As it is distributed in PDF format, there are no dues or postage fees. It is open to all members of the N3F. If there are members interested in joining who have no computer access, special arrangements may be possible. All N3F members with email access are sent N'APA. Check with the official collator, who is George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609; phillies@4liberty.net; 508 754 1859; and on facebook. To join this APA, contact George.

We regularly send a copy of N'APA to the accessible (email address needed) N3F membership, in the hope that some of you will join N'APA. Please join now!

Currently the frequency is every other month, with the deadline being on the fifteenth day of odd-numbered months. The mailing will normally be collated in due time, as the collator is retired and the preparer has a full-time job. Publication is always totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "is", "always", "totally", and "regular". N'APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

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For more art by Jose Sanchez, go to www.cosmofunnel.com/user/50125

Äs we säy över here:

Beat them yellow and blue INTERMISSION #121

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and other fanalytically minded. Follow @SFJournalen's sf/f/h&fandom newstweets. I too want 155 mm howitzers, to blow up all typos! Join Intermission's fanzine blockade against Putin! Slava Ukraini! June 2022.

Editorially: To Be or Nato Be, That Is the Question

In lastish I was rather certain Sweden and Finland would end up in Nato, and now we have submitted applications (though one Mr Erdogan of Turkey is sour since we don't share his view that all Kurds are terrorists - let's hope the issue will be solved). It's all because Russia or more precisely one Mr Putin-on-the-Blitz thought it was a dandy idea to invade a peaceful neighbour. That made Swedish politicians so scared that they peed in their pants.

And in Finland they became so frightened that they pooped in their pants. Finland has had some really bad experiences with the Russians in modern history, so they announced they'd go Nato no matter what. Though they have a good army, Soumi is populationwise only 1/8th of Ukraine. This would leave Sweden as the *only* country in northern Europe not covered by Nato, so our politicians said: *Hey, wait for us...* Our regional politics could become strange and complicated if we were the odd man out, the only outside Nato in our neighborhood. We'd also be more exposed to blackmail.

But I think we could have defended ourselves, because unlike Ukraine we have a lot of water between us and the Moscow Madman. Sweden has over 100 top jets (the nifty Gripen, als exported to Nato countries) with anti-ship missiles. Our five Gotland and Blekinge class submarines are the stealthiest in the world thanks to air-independent, silent Sterling machinery. They have "sunk" US aircraft carriers in wargames. The missile-carryng innovative Visby corvettes also have stealth properties and our coastal anti-ship missile system was recently reactivated. The Russian navy would be slaughtered at sea! And they haven't even shown to be very competent, proven by getting their Black Sea flagship HRAS Moscow sunk (=His Royal Asshole's Ship).



The medieval city wall is still intact around Visby, main city of Gotland!

However, the mid-Baltic island of Gotland would be exposed. The politicians love to have their huge summer conference on Gotland, around the same time the summer Stockholmers invade (slightly more peacefully than Russians would). If you like to fool around as a medieval tin man Gotland has the big medieval festival for you. Ingmar Bergman also wrote his film scripts on Gotland and put them under seven seals. So to protect Gotland, if nothing else, Nato seemed so much better... *så mycket bättre!* Confession, I did my national service on Gotland 30 years back, as a morse-code tapper, and think I know this beautiful place. The island capital Visby with its original city wall is perhaps even more picturesque than Stockholm's Old Town. And Gotland dricku is the Nectar of Gods!

If you have been neutral for 200+ years Nato it is a Huge Deal. Sweden's second to last war was in 1808-09 when Russians (who else!) attacked and conquered Finland, that had been a part of the realm for over 600+ years. Our last war was in 1813-14, in the coalition against Napoleon, ending in attacking Norway which we imagined we should have instead of Finland. (The resulting union broke up as late as 1905. Personally I think we shouldn't have left the 1397 Kalmar Union!) After that we



Finnish and Swedish Nato ambassadors as they handed in membership applications. GenSec Stoltenberg in the middle.

attacked, the UK will send everything we request (and if Britain is attacked, Sweden have some fine jets and subs to send). It feels good to have the Coldstream Guards and the like behind you. Our Nordic neighbours, US, Germany, France and others makes similar pledges, though not on paper. The Society of Creative Anachronism would feel so lost if they can't have their joustings and black death plague reenactments on Gotland. Where would the lobbyists and political types go to get their summer fix of rose wine? And where else to worship Film God Ingmar? Gotland is worth defending.

There'll be some more war talk in this, a little History Corner, ABBA babble, and some comments to the APAs you should joi, because Fanzines Are Fandom's Eternal Backbone (FAFEB!). I'll try not to make it too many pages. (I skip eg event reports, like a fascinating evening with the Swedenborgians. A later issue perhaps.) Comments are welcome! If you have something really interesting on your mind, I may run it as a LoC. Finally, war is a terrible thing, so:

Mr Putin, turn down this war!



UK's Boris & Maggie of Sweden sign, in effect, a military pact.

Arms for War Footing

We were a bit late and out of breath when we arrived to the potluck party. There's a stuffed Turkey on the table and Finland is already there, but what did we bring?

The Finns have a 1340 kilometre reason to have one of the strongest armies in Europe, fielding 300 000+ (and a potential 900 000 in reserve) with over 800 heavy guns. We? Well, Sweden brings in a strong air force and navy and an advanced arms industry (details below). The Swedish army fields only 86 000 according to the latest figures, including the home guard, but that will increase as the government has decided to increase military funding.

The home guard has seen applications increase a couple of hundred percent. It's a rather experienced and well-equipped force, comparable to the US national guard. Many guardsmen are those previously doing regular national service, and when the army downsized at the end of the cold war a lot of modern, powerful equipment could be transferred to the home guard.

During the cold war, Sweden had compulsory conscription, taking ca 85% of all males 19 and over (15% were rejected, did non-armed service or were simply placed in "training reserve"). But as the USSR collapsed and Putin didn't yet show his true bloody colours, fewer and fewer were conscripted until conscription was mothballed in 2010 and we went for a smaller contract army.

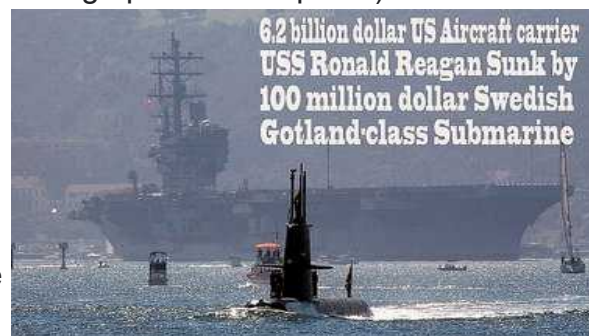
Since a couple of years back selected conscription has been re-introduced. In practice it seems to be that if you are enthusiastic



A Gripen starting from a motorway base.

and really want to, you get conscripted. The army took in 5000 in 2020, but it has increased to 8000 and will go up more. But as modern war is more about equipment than numbers, let's go into that...

The **JAS 39 Gripen** jet is the first thing worth mentioning. It's a heavily computerised, prepared for E-warfare, multirole jet that with a push on a button on the dashboard can switch between modes **Jakt** (fighter), **Attack** and **Spaning** (reconnaissance, the letters making up the "JAS" prefix). It's constructed to be very manoeuvrable, cost efficient and is exported to half a dozen countries (incl the Czechs and Hungarians in Nato). It's simple and cheap to operate with low flight hour costs, and able to start from short, makeshift runways like motorway stretches. The Gripen can be refueled and rearmed in 10 minutes by lightly trained conscripts and take off from 500 m of motorway. Sweden operates 130+ of the C and E versions, the last being the brand new, heavier model with more weapon hard points, a stronger engine and more fuel for extended range. The Gripen is mean little bastard, more than a match for MIGs! See eg <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6O6N3UIvII> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vK8Ytx1hAZo> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saab_JAS_39_Gripen



Caption is wrong. A Gotland sub is more like \$500m. Still lots of bangs for the buck!

Next in the defence line are the **submarines**. The Swedish navy operates three of the Gotland class and two of the new Blekinge class are on their way in. They have air-independent, LOX-fed and very silent Sterling engines, giving them up to two weeks submersible endurance. The US Navy leased a Gotland which in wargames showed it could penetrate their submarine defence and "sink" their heavy carriers! Each carry 18 guided torpedoes and would wreak havoc among Russian ships, See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QRchTMUCe8> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saCdvAp5cow> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotland-class_submarine

Talking of stealth, the navy's **Visby class corvettes** will also take a bite out of the Russian navy if they dare to lower their toes into Baltic waters. The Visby's are radar deflection built out of composite materials and carry missiles, torpedoes, mines, depth charges and a fully automatic 57 mm gun just



to be sure. (And with increased budget, I think they get those SAMs too, earlier delayed to save costs.) Should the Russians somehow squeeze past Gripens, Gotlands and Visbys they'd be met on land by a barrage of **portable tank busters** and precision artillery, though they would in the north first

have go through Finland, who'd give them a warm welcome (they'd fry them sauna style)..

On land the Ruskis would have to worry about the rapid-firing **Archer artillery system**, of with the Swedish army has 40 (of a total of 72 ordered). It's a 6-wheel drive truck-carried 155 mm automatic howitzer that fire 9 rounds a minute with a range of 40-60 km. The last distance is with the rocket-assisted Excalibur GPS-guided shells, said to be accurate to within 5 metres of the programmed target. It's one of the most flexible self-propelled guns in the world. You sit in the armoured "cockpit", press a few buttons and the gun does the rest. Even the US Army are looking into getting it. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK1d7Dyp7IU> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archer_Artillery_System <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56cQDI6vx2k>



Archer fires up to 9 rounds/min, up to 60 km with Excalibur GPS ammo, said to hit within 5 metres of target!

It's rumoured that Sweden will or has sent Archers to Ukraine. Our government has announced more military help, but details are kept under wraps (probably to be kind to P the Patient of the Kremlin asylum, so the poor guy doesn't contracts brain hemorrhage!). I think Archer's manufacturer would love to get it tested in live field conditions, so they have probably lobbied for it.

And then there is the **Combat Vehicle 90** from BAE Systems Hägglunds (joint Swedish-British company) exported to half a dozen countries, crewed by three, seating 6-8 troops (depending on version).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combat_Vehicle_90 Not mentioned are **Leopard tanks**, a German design (claimed by many to be better than the US Abrams) with our own improvements in electronics, sensors, extra armour. The portable anti-tank launchers **NLAW** (here called Robot 57), **AT4** and **Carl Gustaf** have been covered in earlier issues. The Swedes may not have the highest number of troops, but quite a lot of quality equipment, most domestically



Fast, carries troops, but not a tank. Armour is "only" against 30mm tops, but CV90 can be fitted with reactive armour against shaped charges.

produced. In modern wars weapon systems often count more than numbers.

And wouldn't all of this help, we'd treat any trespassers trying to stick their filthy noses in our affairs with that fishy, fermented, stinking *surströmming*...



The Ultimate Weapon...

ABBA Entered Orbit!

I wasn't a fan the first time they were around. Not that I hated them, I just didn't care as I was a fan of another kind and had no time. I was too busy with reading Asimov, Clarke, Vance, JVM and whatever it was, and then I cranked the to let world take part of it all. But as music became boring – the top lists reached bottom sometime in the 1990s bottom - I vaguely remembered tunes that not only caught you but kept to prisoner. So I opened my ears to ABBA.

I've covered them before here - forgive me the BABA parody last Christmas! - and have of course been interested to know how it went with the premiere of their "ABBAtar" show in London.

Look, they built a special venue for it, spent five weeks in ridiculous dotted leotards with 800 Star

Wars-animators, they wrote an unexpected whole new album, and then we had to...wait...and wait..and... The project is said to have costed them £150m, but they can afford it being the world's second best-selling band in history (after John, Paul & Co).

Would it work? I thought the know-it-alls would give it thumbs down, saying they've bitten off more than they can chew. Aiming for the stars and reaching the tree tops. Four 70-somethings from the 70s in a mist of dementia. Things like that.

I wouldn't have to worry. The ABBAatars took off... *And reached orbit!*

Most reviewers, using the common scale to 5, give the show 4 or 5! They may be a 3 somewhere in a corner and local rags were sour: *"Against all pop music is about"* Dagens Nyheter said and *"Why did you choose to do this?"* Svenska Dagbladet exclaimed. They are braver on the home turf. But else most others loved it!

BBC: *"Abba Voyage: The band's virtual concert needs to be seen to be believed"*

<https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-61592104>

Variety: *"ABBA's Voyage'CGI Extravaganza Is Everything It's Cracked Up to Be, and More"*

<https://variety.com/2022/music/concert-reviews/abba-voyage-cgi-concert-review-1235280181/>

The Telegraph: *"A mind-blowing celebration of some of the greatest pop music ever made"*

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/music/what-to-listen-to/abba-voyage-review-mind-blowing-celebration-greatest-pop-music/>

The Guardian: *"Jaw-dropping avatar act that's destined to be copied"*

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2022/may/26/abba-voyage-review-jaw-dropping-avatar-act-thats-destined-to-be-copied>

NME: *"ABBA Voyage live in London: an epic avatar mega-mix from a brave new world"*

<https://www.nme.com/reviews/live/abba-voyage-live-in-london-review-photos-video-setlist-3235227>

Most note that the animated ABBAatars - they are *not* holograms - seemed to work very well. After a while you forget they are just pixels on a huge zillion dots screen, people said. And of course, the ABBAreals were there. Here on the read carpet:

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

Here a little on how the show was made:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NnlrVDAg8>

An excerpt of "Mamma Mia", with the ABBAatars:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-w35GgQ218>

And "Dancing Queen" (shot by the audience, though at some distance):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntfjqjF859c>

Even the Swedish king (Carl XVI) Gustaf and queen (Silvia) were there for the premiere. <https://www.euronews.com/2022/05/27/sweden-s-king-and-queen-attend-premier-of-new-abba-digital-concert-in-london> and 18s in

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntfjqjF859c> (Frida actually became a Swiss princess through marriage, and is personally acquainted with the Royal family.)

Here're the songs of the show as it stands now: *The Visitors* / *Hole In Your Soul* (an underappreciated gem!) / *SOS* ("The World's best pop song" said The Who's Pete Townsend) / *Knowing Me, Knowing You* / *Chiquitita* / *Fernando* / *Mamma Mia* (musical and films!) / *Does Your Mother Know?* (done in a new version) / *Eagle* (another underappreciated gem!) / *Lay All Your Love On Me* / *Summer Night City* (the band wasn't first satisfied with the recording, I think it's great!) / *Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! (A Man After Midnight)* / *Voulez-Vous* (the song Björn said he'd



The ABBAatars had new virtual clothes too. Five different sets.



Electric Agnetha!

dance to) / *When All Is Said And Done* / *Don't Shut Me Down* (the best one from the new album) / *I Still Have Faith In You* (from new album) / *Waterloo* (6th of April 1974...) / *Dancing Queen* (played by defibrillators to revive the dead!) / *Thank You For The Music* (thanks a thousand!) / *The Winner Takes It All* (and they took it all - the audience, fans, critics, the sales...and yes: money).

I didn't comment the first track, "The Visitors" from the album of that name. It's another of those underrated gems. Beside musically being rather advanced (listen: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_xFpjlRf38) I think they picked it to open because of Russia's war against Ukraine. This is a song against Putin's Soviet union roots. The "visitors" knocking on the door are KGB, as Björn Ulvaeus has explained. From the lyrics:

*I hear the door-bell ring and suddenly the panic takes me
The sound so ominously tearing through the silence
I cannot move, I'm standing numb and frozen
Among the things I love so dearly
The books, the paintings and the furniture, help me*

...
*These walls have witnessed all the anguish of humiliation
And seen the hope of freedom glow in shining faces
And now they've come to take me, come to break me
And yet it isn't unexpected
I have been waiting for these visitors, help me*

Now in Ukraine, the heirs of KGB knock on the offices of Ukrainian mayors to kidnap and murder them, they break up the entrances to garages and cellars to steal, torture and rape, they strip civilians in roadblocks looking for imaginary "nazi" tattoos and steal their cellphones - they are themselves the Nazis! Bombs and missiles make unwelcome visit from the sky, and in Moscow holding up a blank piece of paper (!) will make corrupt Putin police visit you...

Each day of the five weeks of motion capture sessions had one ABBA song as theme, which means they did 25-35 songs, depending on if they worked weekends, so they probably have more songs prepared for the ABBA-tar show. After a year or so I think they'll shuffle around a bit in the song list. to give the audience an excuse to come back for a second fix. Presently hits like "Super Trouper", "Money money money", "When I kissed the teacher", "If it wasn't for the nights" and others aren't in the show. Still it's sold out until December with 380 000 tickets being booked. It's BTW claimed that when ABBA played on Wembley in London in the late 1970's, they had 10 million who wanted tickets... The special arena is constructed to be able to take a voyage. You can take it down and put it up on another site. They actually *need* that exact venue with all its technology for the show to work. Rumors have it that Las Vegas is ready to bid a billion or two to get the ABBA-tar arena. But there is some free space around our Museum of Technology here - not very far from the existing ABBA museum BTW - so this hi-tech arena should of course end up in Stockholm!

Just watch this in the Summer Night City with Agnetha at the wheel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntfjqjF859c>



King Carl XVI Gustaf & Queen Silvia

History Corner

I still have a bundle of sf & fandom related newspaper articles, from my diggings in the Stockholm Royal Library archives. And as usual I'll do quick (not perfect) translations and/or summarise. We'll start this history expose with Flying Saucers, a term from the private pilot Kenneth Arnold who described things he claimed to see in 1947 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth_Arnold_UFO_sighting) as "saucers skipping on water". In Sweden these things which began flying around by the end of WWII were initially called "ghost rockets". There were speculations about that it was secret Russian weapons or tests with left-over German V-rockets. But some thought they were from further away, as we read in Aftonbladet Aug 17, 1947: "*Ghost rockets visiting from Mars?*":

"Spökraketerna" påhälsning från Mars?

Folkfantasin har sedan århundraden tillbaka alltid varit roligt av att frossa i de mest vidunderliga upptäcktsfärder i den okända världsrymden. T. o. m. en så modern människa som våra dagars amerikaner, han må vara hissig på Waldorf Astoria eller framstående industrimagnat, läser med största förtjusning vecka efter vecka om "Blixt Gordon", "Tom Trick", "Rymdens Riddare" eller någon annan teknad bildserie, som innehåller rafflande äventyr i främmande världar. Man måste förstå den jättade amerikanen, som under ett ögonblicks avkoppling unnar sin fantasi fritt spelrum, alltid under det ögonen glider fram över de både underhållande och många gånger skönt teknade figurerna. I synnerhet kvinnorna på de okända planeter, som seriehjältarna dimper ned på, har ju som bekant ett utseende som en filmstjärna skulle kunna avundas dem.

Men kanske amerikanen med sitt, för fascinerande projekt tränade sinne är mera klärvanligt än andra människor och han kanske också inser, att vad som i dag verkar fantastiskt och ogenomförbart, kommer för morgondagens människor att bli rena vardagsmaten. Vi har ju dock, fast ganska omärkligt, glidit in i en ny tidsepok — atomåldern, och vad denna bär i sitt sköte kan ingen med säkerhet förutsäga men kanske de flesta ana.

Under kriget gjordes som känt är många uppfinningar, varav flera nu i fredstid kommit till mänsklighetens gagn och fromma. Hitt hör exempelvis Radar eller den s. k. ekoradion, med vars hjälp man kan "se" i det mest ogenomträngliga mörker eller dimma. Nyligen har också vetenskapsmännen världen runt haft kontakt med månen pr ekoradio och planerar även för liknande försök med planeterna Mars och Venus m. fl. Vad beträffar den förutnämnda himlakroppen hoppas man att med Radar, i viss mån, få hjälp med lösandet av mysteriet med de s. k. "kanalerna". Men de fortsatta experimenten för utforskande av världsrymden fördrar ett både tidsödande och mycket dyrbart förbrukte, innan positiva resultat kan framliggas. Bl. a. måste radarstrålarnas kapacitet ökas oerhört och mångdubbelt övertäffa styrkan hos de strålar, vilka utsändes mot månen.

Att experiment med radiostyrda raketer och projektiler eller dylika drivna med atomkraft f. n. febrilt pågår världen runt, är icke längre någon hemlighet. Därom vittnar så gott som dagligen både press och radio. Inte minst de för vårt land så aktuella "spökraketerna" är fullgoda bevis på att "något är i görningen". Givetvis omges själva experimentarbetena och resultaten därav inom resp. länder med den största sekretess, men av vad som dock sipprat ut, lär synnerligen värdefulla rön ha gjorts, såväl inom atomenergens utnyttjande som konstruktioner av olika raketer (projektiler). För en tid sedan kunde man även läsa en notis om, att franska vetenskapsmän arbetar på ett atomdrivet raketskepp och att "vi borde vara klara för den första flygningen till Mars 1960". Alltså inom en tidrymd av 20 år beräknas den första människan kunna landstiga på planeten Mars!

Är det nu radiostyrda, av människor konstruerade och tillverkade raketer, som f. n. överflyger vårt land? Så länge icke något påtagligt bevis i form av t. ex. splittror från någon nedslagen projektil av jordisk metall framlagts för beskådande i dagsluset, torde ingen här i landet med bestämdhet kunna säga att det rör sig om mänskliga försök. Naturligtvis är det med 99 procentig säkerhet dylika försök som pågår, men så länge som — vad skulle det annars vara? Meteoriter? Synvillor? Påhälsning från Mars?

För många år sedan skrev den i dagarna bortgångne författaren H. G. Wells sin berömda bok "Världarnas krig". I romanen lät han marsborna bombardera jorden med jättprojektiler, vilka slog ned i England. Ur dessa kröp sedan fram vederstyggliga varelser, som med sina mysliska dödsstrålar försökte förinta världen. En annan författare, som däremot gav marsmänniskan ett mera human och intelligentare utseende, var Kurd Lasswitz, som i sin bok "På tvenne planeter" beskrev hursom två polarforskare kom att hamna på planeten Mars. Vem som har rätt, får väl framtiden utvisa, om det nu inte kommer att visa sig att planeten är lika utdödd som månen. Hur många böcker som sedan

Folkfantasin frossar i märkliga upptäcktsfärder. — Atomåldern förverkligar det otroliga. — Radar avslöjar andra planeters hemligheter. — Kontakt med Mars klar 1960?

tidernas begynnelse skrivits om rymdforskning och i synnerhet om planeten Mars, kan inte exakt anges: dock torde antalet snarare över- än understiga tusentalet.

Finns det levande varelser på Mars eller Venus? Beträffande den sistnämnda himlakroppen, vars bana går närmare solen än vår egen jord, tvivlar vetenskapsmännen, bl. a. på grund av den där rådande hettan från solen. Likaså är Venus alltid omgiven av täta moln- eller dimbankar, varför ett mera ingående studium av nämnda planet är förknippat med synnerligen svåra omständigheter. Det är här Radar beräknas komma att spela en stor roll. Mars däremot, som oaktat den ligger längre från jorden än Venus, är mera känd på grund av klarare atmosfär runt sin kropp samt att dess bana omsluter jordbanan. Bl. a. har planeten i analogi med vår egen jord vita fläckar vid bägge polerna, vilka har uttytts som event. snö. Och finns det snö, är steget inte långt till fruset vatten, som ju består av väte och syre. Vad de mörka "kanalerna" är för något, får väl Radar, som tidigare påpekats, så småningom bidra till att lösa, eller det nya jättteleskopet i Amerika, när detta i sinom tid blir färdigställt. Vad som däremot är bekymmersamt är temperaturförhållandena på Mars. Temperaturen beräknas nämligen ligga endast vid omkring + 4° C., samtidigt som atmosfärtrycket endast är 1/7 av jordens. Kanske har marsinvånaren tvingats till att "gå under jorden", en sak som människorna på vår egen planet om miljoner år kommer att få finna sig i. Så solens värme börjar avta och jorden alltigenom blivit kall.

En kropp som med svindlande fart rusar mot jorden, blir på grund av friktionen så småningom glödande, såvida icke hastigheten kan regleras. Ett exempel härpå är meteoriterna, som då och då dimper ned på vår jord. Om marsvarelserna vill bombardera jorden med något slag av projektiler, måste farten sålunda regleras under färden genom världsrymden. En annan viktig sak att ta med i beräkningen är jordens dragningskraft. Tas icke nödig hänsyn till rymdstrålning, föreligger således risken att ifrågakvarande föremål upphetas och så småningom förgås samt under ett väsende eller visslande ljud upplöses i tomma intet — utan knall!

Men om det nu, som många tror, verkligen existerar levande varelser på Mars, och att dessa på grund av den där rådande kylan tvingats till att förlägga sin verksamhet i själva planetens inre, måste ju detta i så fall peka på ett visst mått av intelligens och äveledes på en väl framskriden teknisk utveckling. Varför skulle då Marsborna icke tidigare ha sökt kontakt med jorden, då man kan räkna med att deras teknik vida övertäffar vår egen? Den som lever tar se, heter ett gammalt ordspråk: låt oss därför alla hoppas på att få uppleva år 1960.

Hans Hansson



Popular imagination has since centuries indulged in the most extraordinary expeditions in unknown space. Even such a modern person as the American of today... finds huge enjoyment in week after week reading about Flash Gordon, Brick Bradford or Knights of Space or any other of the comics presenting baffling adventures from alien worlds. You have to understand the stressed-out American, who likes to relax for just a while and give imagination free roaming, with eyes meanwhile glancing the entertaining and finely drawn figures. Especially the women on the unknown planet the comics heroes land on have as we know a look a film star would envy. /Speculation that Americans are very acquainted with the future, And now we've reached the Atomic Age. WWII saw many useful inventions, like radar. / Scientists around the world have recently had contact with the Moon via echo-radio and similar attempts are planned for Mars and Venus. Regarding the first they hope radar will to some extent help to solve the mystery of the so called canals. /More space explorations tests with radar will come, but also:/ experiments with radio-guided rockets or projectiles driven by atomic power goes on around the world, and are no longer a secret. You hear about it daily in the press and radio. In our country the recent "ghost rockets" are full evidence of that "something is going on". The rockets and the experiments with them are of course top secret, but from what has leaked we learn very valuable results have been reached with both use of atomic power and in rocket (projectile) construction. A while ago you could even read a story about how French scientists work on an atomic powered spaceship and that we "should be ready for the first trip to Mars in 1960". So, within 20 years the first human being is believed to land on Mars! Is it radio-guided, man-made and constructed rockets that at this time flies over our country? As long as no tangible evidence is presented like shrapnel from a crashed projectile of EARTHLY metals meeting daylight, no one in this country can say for sure it's from human trials. Of course such tests are with 99% certainty going on, but as long as - what could it otherwise be? Meteorites? Illusions? Visit from Mars? The the recently deceased HG Wells many years ago wrote his famous book War of the Worlds. In the novel he let the Martians bombard Earth with giant projectiles, landing in England. Hideous creatures emerged from these, with mystical death rays trying to destroy the world. Another author who instead gave the Martians a more humane and intelligent behavior was Kurd Lasswitz in his book Between Two Planets, describing how two Arctic researchers happened to end up on the planet Mars. The future will tell who is right, unless it will be shown that the planet is as dead as the Moon. You can't exactly say how many books have been written since the beginning of time about space research and especially the planet Mars, but the number should rather be more than less than a thousand. Are there living beings on Mars or Venus? Regarding the last body with an orbit closer to the sun than our own Earth, science has doubts, eg due to the heat from the sun. And Venus is also covered by thick clouds or fog, which makes a closer study of the planet extremely difficult. Radar is here expected to play a role. Mars on the other hand is further from Earth than Venus and known for its clear atmosphere and that the orbit is outside Earth's. Eg the planet has analogous to Earth white patches around the poles possibly interpreted as snow. And if there's snow it isn't far from being water, consisting of hydrogen and oxygen. /Radar and the new giant US telescope, Mt Palomar, will reveal what the canals are. Mars is very cold. / The temperature is calculated to be only +4C, with an atmosphere pressure only 1/7th of Earth's. Martians have perhaps been forced to go underground, something people on our own planets millions of

years hence will have to endure as the sun's heat will decrease and Earth becomes cold. /Talk about meteorites and if Martians send projectiles they should burn up in our atmosphere. Many believe there are Martians and if they've been forced to go underground/ ...it points to certain intelligence and also to advanced technological development. But why haven't the Martians then not tried to contact Earth before, when you can count on that their technology is far ahead ours? We'll have to see...and let's hope we'll experience the year 1960.

The sf genre began to grow over here in the 1950's, with new book series, the prozine *Häpna!*, an expanding fandom, newspaper articles, spots in radio and the new TV medium, like the radio show "Tidspegeln" ("Time Mirror") reviewed in Svenska Dagbladet March 29 1958:

The spaceman is today what the Wild West gun lad was 30 years ago. Folke Isaksson sampled the sf literature in Tidspegeln. Ray Bradbury got a solid A for his latest space book, Fahrenheit 451. Yes, Bradbury stands above most of the gentlemen in this space business. You may just as well call him a promising descendant of Jules Verne. But it's more dubious if he's big enough so that the listeners must also connect his name with Edgar Allan Poe.

The radio host Isaksson or the newspaper reviewer must be a bit confused. Fahrenheit 451 hasn't anything with space to do! But yes, why not compare Bradbury to Poe?

That the space age had begun put focus on sf and space, with the Sputnik satellite (and soon after, the US Explorer). Haley's Comets and Elvis had also given us rock music, which may be the reason for the headline "Rocking robot may reach the Moon", in Svenska Dagbladet March 31, 1959:

Rockande robot kan nå månen

SCHENECTADY. General Electric avslöjade på påskdagen några data om en ny robot av verkligt "science fiction-format", som skulle kunna bli den första "människan" på månen.

Roboten, som fått arbetsnamnet "Handyman", liknar i mångt och mycket en människa och kan uträtta en hel del manuellt arbete med sina massiva armar och händer. Den kan fjärrmanövreras på distanser av tusentals mil, och det skulle enligt General Electric vara möjligt att placera "Handyman" på månen och ge den direktiv från jorden. Meningen är att roboten skulle tjänstgöra som ett slags "mekaniker". Den har konstruerats först och främst för att arbeta inom atomkraftstationer och på andra radioaktiva ställen, där människor inte kan vistas.

"Handyman" är enligt sina upphovsmän den första robot som kan göra griprotelser på samma sätt som en människohand. Den kan slå i spik, den kan dra i skruv och bult och den kan till och med manövrera en hula hoop-ring.

Var och en av robotens två armar och händer kan göra tio grundrörelser, och den som manövrerar roboten känner vad roboten "känner" genom ett komplicerat elektrohydrauliskt system. Dessutom kan "Handyman" utrustas med en tredimensionell televisionsanordning som tjänar som ögon.

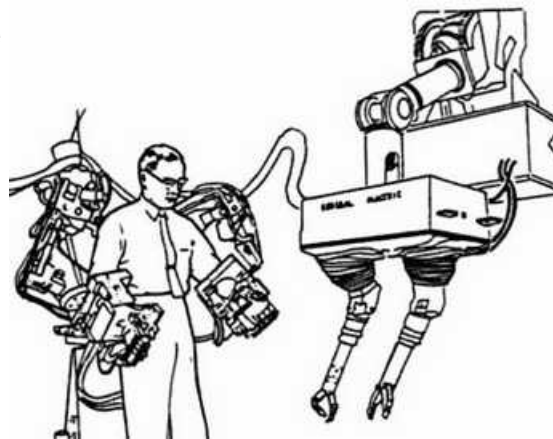
Som ett bevis på robotens fulländade konstruktion meddelar bolaget att hans "handlag" är så mjukt och exakt att han kan plocka blombladen från en ros utan att skada dem.

On Easter Day General Electric revealed some data on a new robot of real "sf format", that could be the first "man" on the Moon. The robot has the nickname Handyman, resembles a human in many ways and can perform a lot of manual work with its massive arms and hands. It can be remotely controlled at distances of 10 000's of km and according to General Electric it'd be possible to place Handyman on the Moon and direct it from Earth. It could serve as a sort of mechanic. It has been designed primarily to work in atomic power stations and other radioactive places where people can't stay. Handyman is according to the designers the first robot to have grip like a human hand. It can work with nails and screws and even manoeuvre a hula hoop ring. The two arms of the robot have ten basic movements and the operator feels what the robot feels through a complicated electro-hydraulic system. And the robot may further be equipped with a 3D TV-system to serve as eyes. To prove the robot's supreme construction the company says that it's so soft and exact that it can pick the petals off a rose without damaging it.

An illustration I found reveals that Handyman works along the Waldo principle - described and named by Robert Heinlein! - replicating the operator's movements.

But robots would first of all come to military use, as a reader's letter in Expressen Dec 22, 1960, reminds us, "Small Green Men":

Rymdmannen är i dag vad Vilda Västerens revolvergosse var för 30 år sedan. I Tidspegeln botaniserade Folke Isaksson i science fiction-litteraturen. Ray Bradbury fick mer än godkänt för sin senaste rymdbok, "Fahrenheit 451". Ja, Bradbury är huvudet högre än de flesta herrarna i rymdbranschen. Man kan gärna kalla honom en lovande ättling till Jules Verne. Om han är så stor att lyssnarna också måste få hans namn förbundet med Edgar Allan Poe är mera tveksamt.



Handyman and its operator.

"De små gröna männen"

I söndags refererades i P2 en USA-författare som i en nyutkommen bok raljerar över de små gröna männen, dvs besittningarna på de flygande tefaten. Förf. anser att tefatsbesittningarna skulle vara så enfoldiga att de inte kunde inse att vi människor skulle kunna ha byggt upp vår civilisation.

En dylik enfold kan man väl knappast förutsätta hos varelser, intelligenta nog att bemästra interplanetarisk trafik.

Har nutidsmänniskan över huvud lärt sig något av den tid hon lever i, så är det väl att man aldrig ska säga aldrig. 1800-talets science fiction är en

realitet i dag: ubåtar, TV, radio, flyg. Så sent som omkring 1916 visades en veckotidning hur "framtidens krig" skulle utkämpas: målsökande robotar, som reagerade för ljud-, ljus- och värmestrålning, avfyrares mot fiendliga plan och sprängde dem. Då — 1916 — flinade man åt dessa vildsinta fantasier och kåsörerna fyllde spaltmeter med nojs på teknarnas bekostnad. I dag, 1960, ingår sådana robotar i o m i småstaternas standardutrustning.

Bättre tåga

Last Sunday P2 (=radio channel) referred to a USA author who in a recent book made fun of the small green men, ie the crews of the flying saucers. The author thinks the saucer crews are so stupid they don't realise we humans can build a civilisation. Such stupidity could hardly be possible with beings intelligent enough to master interplanetary traffic. If the man of today has learnt something, it is never say never. The sf of the 1800s is today real: submarines, TV, radio, aircraft. As late as ca 1916 a magazine showed how the "war of the future" would be fought: guided missiles reacting to sound, light and heat, fired on enemy planes to blow them up. These wild fantasies were laughed at then - 1916 - and pundits filled long columns with silliness against the illustrators. Today, 1960, such robots are in the arsenals even for small states.

Science fiction igen

När jag fick syn på artikeln om science-fiction i PRESENS måste jag säga, att det glädde mig att tidningen har ägnat en så stor utrymme åt denna litterära genre. Men efter att ha läst igenom artikeln kunde jag konstatera att redan kännedom om SF är ytterst begränsad. Red. påstår bl. a. att den svenska publiken fick sin första kontakt med SF år 1889 i och med översättningen av Lauries roman: DEN STORA MAGNETEN. Detta kan emellertid ifrågasättas. Det utgavs åttiofem SF-verk tidigare, av vilka många med största säkerhet har översatts till svenska. Redan de gamla grekerna skrev SF. Bland dessa kan nämnas Lukianos från Samosata, som skrev berättelser om resor till solen och månen. Även i Odysseen kan vissa delar betraktas som SF. 1726 utkom en roman som verkligen var SF i allra högsta grad, nämligen GULLIVERS RESOR. Vidare kan jag nämna att vi nordbor har haft en författare som skrev SF. Det är ingen mindre än Ludvig Holberg som skrev en roman om Niels Klims resor i jordens inre. Holberg levde som bekant redan på 1700-talet.

Men det som tydligt visade red:s kunskaper om SF var det att han påstod att Robert A. Heinlein har skrivit JAG ROBOT. Så är ingalunda fallet. Författaren till denna utmärkta roman är nämligen professorn i biokemi vid Bostons universitet, Isaac Asimov. Om red. vill läsa något av Heinleins till svenska översatta litterära afärer kan han t. ex. läsa MANNEN SOM SALDE MÅNEN eller VARNING FÖR OKÄND PLANET, vilka båda är utmärkta SF-böcker.

HANS EKLUND.

Speaking of Heinlein and Waldo and that reviewers could learn more about the sf genre, another reader's letter had a complaint, "Sf again", Svenska Dagbladet, June 10 1960:

When I saw the article about sf in PRESENS I must say I was glad that the magazine spent so much space on this literary genre. But after reading through the article I could note that the editor's knowledge about the genre is very limited. Ed claims that the Swedish audience had its first contact with sf in 1889 with the translation of Laurie's novel The Big Magnet. It can be questioned. Many works of sf was published before, of which many was certainly translated to Swedish. Already the ancient Greeks wrote sf. Among those we can name Lucian of Samosata who wrote tales of trips to the sun and moon. Odysseus may also to some parts be seen as sf. In 1976 came the novel that really to a high degree can be called sf, namely GULLIVER'S TRAVELS. I can further mention that we people of the North had a writer who wrote sf. That is no less than Ludvig Holberg who wrote a novel about Niels Klim's trips in Earth's underground. Holberg lived already in the 1700s as you know. But what most clearly shows the Ed's small knowledge about sf is that he claimed that Robert A Heinlein had written I ROBOT. That is not the case. The author of this excellent book is the professor of biochemistry at Boston University, Isaac Asimov. If Ed wants to read something by Heinlein translated to Swedish he can for instance read: THE MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON or STARMAN JONES, which both are excellent sf books.

The letter is signed Hans Eklund, a known fan at the time. My Fandbook fancylopedia mentions he was as "Lord Orgie" ruler of the "country" Parth in the early 1960's famous Fannish War, published *Fantazine* and also held lectures at sf cons.

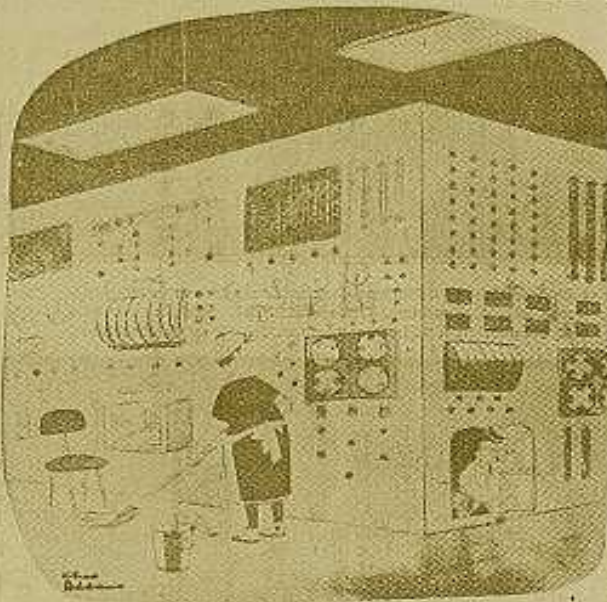
For robots some sort of "Thinking Machines" are needed, as we learn in Dagens Nyheter September 22, 1962, reviewing a new book on computers:

The lively discussion about the government's purchase of computers for the population registry shows how the concept of "computer" /called "data machines" in Swedish at the time/ has entered the public's mind. It's been fast. Just a few years ago we talked about electronic brains. It was rumours about machines could faster and more efficient than the human brain. Sf authors saw the complete robot invasion at the horizon. In a fundamental way, they thought, man had been surpassed by his own creation, the machine. /Carl Erik Frölund's book Data Machines lack such excesses and Bengt Sigurd contributes a chapter on machine translation. ENIAC was first 1944. Computers have been much used for atomic bombs and space tech. Sweden invests a lot but has a deficit of trained people. Programming is a bottle neck./ Computer translation was an idea born 15 years ago by mathematicians and technicians. When linguists entered to solve grammar problems it was clear the grammar machines needed was something else. Rules must be phrased strictly in math. You can say a new sort of linguistics now grows in the shadows of the machines. It is closely related to math logics...an effect of machine translation promises to be just as interesting as practical results. Those are as yet few. Further on wide perspectives open, not only for translation but also for the fundamental problem of letting machines search for info. No wonder they put a lot into the project in both America and Russia. For the moment it seems USSR is in the lead in this race for the "Sputnik of linguistics"...Fröberg notes that the question can't be resolved until it has been defined what it means to "think". That machines in some meaning think is obvious. They can read, remember, be made to learn from mistakes and play a rather decent naughts and crosses. The perhaps biggest difference between man and machine is that our brain has a much bigger capacity than even the biggest computers built this far. Another difference is that machines of course must be programmed by humans. But we are ourselves also in a way "programmed". Our reactions are to a high degree decided by our genetics, a "program" created for the struggle for existence. /Machines can't solve judgement problems, even with help of languages like Algol and Cobol./ The reader won't understand much of the program excerpts in the book except for the flow charts.

TÄNKANDE MASKINER

Om datamaskiner och deras användning inom vetenskap, administration och språköversättning handlar den första volymen i skrifterna Tänkande Maskiner, som utger av Biblioteksförbundet i Lund. Boken anmält här av professor Åke Ellegård.

DE TVÅ FÖRSTA diskussionerna om datorns inslag av datamaskiner för fullständiga vetenskap, administration och språköversättning handlar den första volymen i skrifterna Tänkande Maskiner, som utger av Biblioteksförbundet i Lund. Boken anmält här av professor Åke Ellegård.



Teckning av Gbat. Addams in The New Yorker.

var ett självklart ämne vid handläggningarna.

Svårigheten att formulera problemen så att maskinen kan behandla dem har också språkvetarna fått känna på. Språköversättning med datamaskin är en idé som klistrats för ungefär femton år sedan — av matematiker och tekniker. När sedan lingvister trädde till för att lösa de grammatiska problemen såg det snart klart att den grammatik som maskinen behövde var något helt nytt. Begreppen måste formuleras med matematisk stringens. Man kan rent av säga att en ny sorts språkvetenskap nu håller på att växa fram i maskinernas skugga. Den har nära anknytning till matematisk logik. Den kommer inte att ersätta den traditionella språkvetenskapen, som ju knyter an till pedagogiken, estetiken och sociologin. Men den kommer sikkert att verka befruktande i teoretiskt avseende.

Denna följdverkan av arbetet med maskinöversättning lovar faktiskt att bli väl så intressant som de praktiska resultaten. Dessa är än så länge ganska få. Men på längre sikt öppnas vida perspektiv, inte bara för språköversättning, utan också för det mer fundamentala problemet: maskinell skickning av information. Det är därför inte att undra på att det sätts hårt på de här projekten, både i Amerika och i Ryssland. För närvarande tycks det vara Sovjet som leder i denna kamp. Logiken om "lingvistikens sputnik", som Sigurds uttryck lyder,

"Tänkande maskiner!" heter ett av de stora kapitlen i boken. Fröberg påpekar att frågan inte kan avgöras förrän man definierat "tänka". Att maskinerna i vissa mening tänker är ju klart. De kan läsa, de kan minnas, de kan få ut lära av sina misstag, och de kan spela "ett ganska njutbart luftschack". Karaktär den största skillnaden mellan människan och maskinen är att vår hjärna har en mycket större kapacitet än till och med de största av de hittills byggda datamaskinerna. En annan skillnad är förstås att maskinerna måste programmeras av människor. Men också vi själva är ju på sätt och vis "programmerade": våra reaktioner bestäms i hög grad av våra genetiska anlag, vilkas "program" kan sägas ha pressats fram i kampen för tillvaron.

Datamaskinerna kan härja liksom väldefinierade problem — de kan inte göra allmänna rimlighetsöverväganden som människohjärnan. Konsten att definiera problem är därför den stora svårigheten för den som vill utnyttja maskinen. Svårigheterna mildas inte märkbart när man nu börjar få hjälp-språken nylol och cobol som mellanled vid programmeringen. Den grundläggande kunskapen om maskinens sätt att arbeta kan maskin användaren inte undvara.

Fröberg och Sigurds bok är inte någon lärobok. Av program-stumparna som boken innehåller fårståt nog den oövade läsaren inte mycket utöver flödesdiagrammen. Men han får åtminstone en någorlunda klar uppfattning om

Well, getting computers to translate natural language is still a problem, 60 years later... Early computer reports tended to be a bit exaggerated. Computers in those days could crunch less numbers than your wristwatch. Governments want computers to register (and thus control) people, as you saw. Sf authors have often warned against the electronic surveillance state, so it's no wonder some wanted to rename sf as "PF" (Political Fiction), as we learn in Aftonbladet 7 July, 1962:

It's usually a joy to read Libertas. /A magazine/ But the substitute intelligentsia... on the left have assembled a crowd of intelligence and pens. That #3 of Libertas, now out, has political opinions that both clashes with SvD's reactionary head but also deviates from official Social Democrat course, is nothing to linger on here. To be inoffensive is our program and honour. But we can go past Jacob Palme's article on sf and society. A naive love for sf can stay also in an older heart. So it is worth noting that Palme finds good reasons to rename sf to pf, political fiction. Social sciences is more important for sf than natural sciences.

Speaking about computers, Jacob Palme who was a very active fan in the 1960s, later became professor of computer science and rather important in these circles, eg setting up the KOM messaging system in the 1970s, a precursor to

Internet. (He was BTW a distant relative to Olof Palme, the Social Democrat Prime Minister who was murdered in 1986. Resulting in a very long investigation, recently landing on that one Stig Engström - already deceased - was the killer, an odd man, loosely right wing activist and employee of a firm near the murder scene.)

Author, critic etc Sven Christer Swahn (1933-2006) was very important for Swedish sf. He sometimes came to our cons, was semi-active in fandom - wrote in Sweden, I sometimes had LoCs from him - wrote sf and on sf. And he was interested in our stuff from early on, https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/swahn_sven_christer, here reviewing Kingsley Amis, "In the Hell of SF Authors", Expressen (biggest daily at the time) May 18 1960:

P F
● DET ÄR I REGEL ett nöje att läsa "Libertas". Man får ett intryck av att den radikala begagningsreserven gott och väl räcker till och att vår egen, smält moss-belupna generation inte behöver hålla ut mer än ett knappt decennium till för att tidningarna på vänsterkanten ska få tillgång till ett vimmel av intelligenser och pennor.
Att nr 3 av "Libertas", som är aktuellt för dagen, rymmer politiska meningar som inte bara stöter S-D för dess reaktionära huvud utan också avviker från officiell socialdemokratisk kurs, ska vi inte närmare uppehålla oss vid på denna plats. Oförargligheten är vårt program och vår heder. Men vi går inte gärna förbi Jacob Palmes artikel om science fiction och samhället. En klockarkärl till science fiction kan dröja kvar också i ett åldrat hjärta. Och då är det för det första att notera, att Palme finner goda skäl att döpa om sf till pf, science fiction till political fiction. Samhällsvetenskaperna betyder mer för sf än naturvetenskaperna.

New Maps of Hell, that's what the new book by Kingsley Amis is about. But it is a non-theological hell: it deals with the mapping of the future by sf literature /books with spaceship covers now becoming popular, and we meet a new Amis/ with dayjob as university teacher and now when dealing with sf literature hesitates between its two roles: the author himself coined the book title...the teacher continued with "A Survey of SF"...Every second sentence begins so pompous that you hear the Adam's apple pound against the evening dress of science - and then suddenly a few lines of jargon, attempts to soften the language in a fiction way. Kingsley Amis describes himself as an avid sf reader and values everything belonging to the genre, but notes it must be well-written. / Amis skips the list of all sf through history from the Bible to Shakespeare/ Isn't there in "A Midsummer Tempest" two persons who are classic in all sf stories, the excentric scientist and his beautiful daughter? When he comes to the real pioneers, Verne and Wells, he goes more into detail. His harsh criticism of Verne shows deficiencies in his equipment, but you are apt to agree with his final words on Wells: "It is very probable that Wells soon will have a well-deserved full recognition, not somewhat half, as the pioneer." You also appreciate that Amis mentions a thing like Wells' "A Story of the Days to Come": it's usually overlooked, despite having much modern sf contents. The Swedes, Amis says, are the people in Europe that best understand real jazz (except for England), and that is probably a reason they have such a stated interest in sf. Jazz and sf belongs together. Well if it is the case that Swedes are so into reading sf - they will also find a lot of gaps in Kingsley Amis' book. You agree with Kingsley Amis about the social scourging sf author Pohl's importance, but won't be sure that his co-worker Kornbluth needs to stand in a corner in shame - you agree with that the ex-wonder kid Sheckley has an abundance of talent, but are not totally convinced about eg Golding (this may stand for me only). The most baffling blunder is not mentioning Brian Aldiss, though he is an Englishman who has been active a number of years and a quite convincing talent. For a time I played around with the thought that Kingsley Amis and Aldiss were one and the same, but it's impossible: Brian Aldiss writes to well. An author lately getting a lot of space on Swedish culture pages is Bradbury. Kingsley Amis has here an odd attitude. He says he will only judge authors from their efforts in the sf genre, ie keeping to the topic, but when he comes with the today so common bashing of Bradbury he bases it on an excerpt from one of his ghost stories. His reaction indicates his simplemindedness as reader - you can compare with his distaste for Verne. Of course, Kingsley Amis is correct in that Bradbury (especially in Fahrenheit 451) has sunken low in stylistics, but it seems unfair to not want to see his greatness as a prose artist in other circumstances.

It's true that the Swedes liked jazz. Louis Armstrong toured here already in the 1930s (to the horror of some columnist who talked about his music as "primitive roars from the darkest jungles") and jazz clubs like Nalen were very important in the 1940/50s, but unfortunately this didn't translate totally into a love for sciencefiction. The 1950's positive curiosity about sf seemed to die off in the 1960s.

Lets finish with Swahn again, "Lost in Hyperspace", in Expressen shortly later, July 17, 1960:

I SF-FÖREATTARNAS HELVETEN

Nya helveteskartor — det är vad Kingsley Amis nya bok ska handla om. Helvetet är emellertid oteologiskt: det är sciencefiction-litteraturens kartläggning av framtiden boken berör. De helveten som beskrivs har läsarna redan mött i de små lätthanterliga böckerna som just sprids över världen — böcker med ryndskepp på omslaget.

Man möter också en ny sida av Kingsley Amis (den här förstås skymtat förut i hans artiklar och debattinlägg) — möter en författare som till vardags är universitetslärare och nu när det gäller att bena upp sf-litteraturen tvekar lite mellan sina

två roller: författarjaget myntade bokens titel, om de nya helveteskartorna, läraren fortsatte med "A Survey of Science Fiction". Samma tveksamhet råder i hela boken. Var och varannan mening börjar så pompöst att man hör ett adamsäpple falla mot vetenskaplig fräckhet — så helt plötsligt några rader jargon, försök till skönlitterär uppluckring av språket.

Kingsley Amis beskriver sig själv som inbiten sf-läsare och sätter stort värde på allt som hör till genren, nota bene om det är välskrivet. Man slipper den invanda uppräkningen av sf-litteraturen genom tiderna, de där listorna som brukar börja med Bibeln och via Lucianos tappert fortsätta genom seklerna. Ganska roande visar han att man i så fall mycket väl kunde räkna Shakespeare till

sf-klassikerna: finns inte i "Stormen" två personer som blivit klassiska i all sf-novellistik, den excentriska vetenskapsmannen och hans sköna dotter? När han närmar sig de verkliga föregångarna, Verne och Wells, blir han med all rätt utfärligare. Hans kärva kritik av Verne visar väl på vissa brister i hans egen utrustning; men man instämmer gärna i hans slutord om Wells: "Det är mycket troligt att Wells snart får ett helt, inte halvt om halvt, väl förtjänt erkännande som pionjär". Man uppskattar också att Amis tar upp en sådan sak av Wells som "A Story of the Days to Come": den brukar alldeles komma bort, fast den rymmer mycket av modern sf-stoff.

Svenskarna, säger Amis, är det folk som bäst förstår sig på ordentlig jazz i Europa (med undantag för England) och därmed hör säkerligen samman, tror han, att de har ett så markant intresse för science fiction. Jazz och sf hänger ihop, ja, om det är

Av

SVEN CH. SWAHN

riktigt att svenskarna är inställda på sf-läsning — då är de också ett folk som kommer att hitta gott om blottor i Kingsley Amis bok.

Man är ense med Kingsley Amis om den samhällsgisslande sf-författaren Pohl's betydelse men inte helt säker på att hans medarbetare Kornbluth behöver stå i ett hörn och skämmas — man är ense om att före detta underbarnet Sheckley har talang övermått, men inte helt övertygad av tex Golding (det sista kanske får stå för min egen räkning). Det mest förbluffande uttalandet i boken är att Brian Aldiss inte nämns, som ändå är engelsman, som har varit verksam några år redan och som är en mycket övertygande begåvning. Jag lojde ett ögonblick med tanken att Kingsley Amis och Aldiss vore en och samma person, men det håller inte: Brian Aldiss skriver för bra.

En författare som fått gott om utrymme på svenska kultursidor sista åren är Bradbury. Kingsley Amis inställning är här lite underlig. Han förklarar att han uteslutande vill bedöma författarna efter deras insatser i sf-genren, han vill hålla sig till knutet kort sagt, men när han riktar ett av de numera så vanliga huggen åt Ray Bradbury utgår han just från ett stillprov hämtat ur en av dennes spökhistorier: hans reaktion visar f.ö. på hans ensidighet som läsare — man kan jämföra med ogillandet av Verne. Naturligtvis har Kingsley Amis rätt i att Bradbury (framför allt i "Fahrenheit 451") sjunkit lågt som stilist; men det förefaller orättvist att inte vilja se hans storhet som prosakonstnär i andra sammanhang.



Old cartoon on the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact... Putin would fit well in this company!

Sven Christer Swahn
vid en galaktisk bår

SF vilse i hyperrymden?

I dagarna har en påkostad och ambitiös svensk SF-tidning kommit med sitt sista nummer.

Galaxy heter tidningen, eller heter, och nu har alltså ett övermåttat antal fjälliga venusianer och sygande antropoider från Alpha Centauri lagts i en alltför tidig grav. Galaxy ägnade sig helhjärtat åt oändligheten, både tidens och rummets, och när perspektiven växer krymper stundom läsekretsen. Här några tankar vid graven av en som inte tillhör

de allra närmast sörjande men ändå färdig en tår.

Snart, i dessa samma dagar, samlas det en astronautisk kongress i Stockholm, och ett förväntat antal herrar skall då utan att stamma och snegla förläget mot planeterna yttra sig positivt om hur man inom rimlig tid ska förfara med dem — med Mars och Venus och de andra. At-minstone inbillar jag mig att en god astronautiker inte är nöjd med att bara kalkylera om de mindre ljus som sätts att lysa på himlen. Och är det kanske möjligen så att

ju fler astronautiker som samlas, med gedigna blåskopior i portföljerna, desto fler blir de människor som samlas kring klockorna för att köpa science fiction-magasin? Så att alltså människor som läst SF-böcker och SF-tidningar hela sitt liv plöjligt börjar skämmas för sin ledigt när raketerna perforerar en verklig rymd på väg mot en påtaglig fara? Det är ju det första man kommer att tänka på när det gäller tidningsdöden i SF-genren.

Skamsenhet i USA?

För Amerikas del kan man tänka sig att en viss skamsenhet spelar med — också där är det många SF-magasin som läggs ner. Det är kanske inte så stimulerande att läsa om unga amerikaners pionjärdåd på månen, när andra varit framme där. Jag tror man förs betona hur självklart den livaktiga amerikanska SF-litteraturen gjort det för många direkt bortom rymden redan praktiskt taget oavsett och att ett engelsktalande universum — med omiskänklig amerikansk brytning — redan öppnats för alla goda amerikanska medborgares tjuvta blickar. Sedan är det en annan sak att SF-författarna ofta varit mycket angelägna om att skicka upp rymdskeppsbesättningar med blandat rasinnehåll: en präktig skandinav brukar vara med, och en schackspelande ryss brukar sitta och säga kloka saker i en vrå, och en gånglig fullblodsindian går omkring med kaptenmössa och har glömt allt om reservat och hat. De har ändå talet amerikanska hela buntan.

Men Henrik Rabe, redaktör för Galaxy, tror i sina avskedsord till läsekretsen inte att det behövs några "subtila hänvisningar till världshändelserna" för att förklara att hans tidning inte orkar längre. Han hän-

der till att det inte är så enkelt naturligt med helvetiskt science fiction för de svenska författare som ägnat sig åt genren. Ibland förs tappra försök att låta Lund eller Sundsvall bli språngbräda ut i rymden, men också i sådana fall har den goda amerikanska mallen oftast lyst igenom: man kidnappar igen gruppen om immet, sätter ut utveckla tankeexperimentet, sätter ut tvånga fram den oödmådade poängen. Stjärnorna är många, men räkner på de fem SF-läsaren tycks ibland i stunder av övermåttad.

Föruxen genre

Man kanske inte bara behöver hänvisa till detta med den begränsade publiken eller detta att verkligheten — astronautiska kongresser och annat — gjort fiktionen överflödigt, så att en genre växer till den blivit en smula förvuxen, eller i varje fall uttömt de närmast till hands liggande möjligheterna. Då måste det komma en paus, en andhämtning, och sen får man se om det kommer nytt vin i de gamla läglarna.

Det är ofrånkomligt att det inte finns mycket mer att göra åt vissa standardsituationer i världsrymden längre. En novellsamling med SF-stoff kan likna en bok med schackpartier. En traditionsrik öppning — övergång till en annan variant, nästan lika valkänd — försök till fria fantasier i mittspelet och slutligen uppgivet från författarens eller läsarens sida. Trasan vrids tills den blir torr.

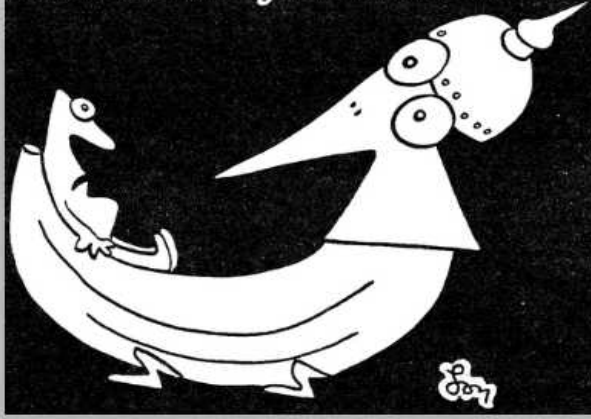
Inte desto är vanligare än omedvetna plagiat inom SF-litteraturen, och de är nästan mer nerslående än de klumpiga och fullt medvetna. Redan H G Wells ställde nästan alla de fortfarande aktuella frågorna och hann med en förbluffande mängd av

fattare. Det måste vara ytterligt svårt att verkligen fånga läsaren med en novell på det uppslaget. I en lika lång novell får man bevitna, än en gång, mutanters främlingsrika kamp mot vanliga människor. Författaren, har man en känsla av, måste ha fått en bemäkt vision av en redan från första stund gaspande läsekrets var gång han lyfte huvudet över tangentbrådan.

Vilse i hyperrymden är Fredrik Fohl i en annan novell (inte alldeles forsk, för övrigt). Han är aldrig tråkig, men läsaren har svårt att tänka på det skri av förtjusning alla SF-författare uppger när en i deras krets blivit "hyperrymden" som gjorde det möjligt att låta besättningsmän flyga hur långt som helst i rymden utan att följa ner dem i tråkiga sklock etc.

I Sheekleysnovellen (det är inga dåliga namn man fått ihop till avskedsnummer) kan inte den eleganta rymdvarelsepsykologin undanskymmas det allmogliga i mötet mellan människan och främlingen fjärran ifrån. Det är kanske just i detta den stora risken ligger: det sällsammaste av allt, mötet med en annan existensform, blir i SF-litteraturen till slut det banalaste tänkbara, och det måste extra kryddor till, och nya variationer: det brukar vara ett säkert tecken på trötthetens krusor hos författare och läsare.

Lars LON Olsson goes bananas...



Recently a lavish and ambitious Swedish sf magazine came with its last issue. The name is Galaxy, or was, so now an incalculable number of scaly Venusians and slightly growing anthropoids from Alpha Centauri are been laid down in a much too early grave. Galaxy was full-heartedly into the eternity, of both time and space, and when the perspectives grow the readership sometimes shrinks. Here some thoughts by the grave by someone who isn't among the closest relatives but still has shed some tears. Soon, these days, an astronautic convention will convene in Stockholm, and a sizeable number of gentlemen will then without stuttering and shy looks at the planets talk positively about how to deal with them within reasonable time - with Mars and Venus and the others. I at least imagine that a decent astronautician isn't satisfied with calculating only about the smaller lights that has been put there to light up the sky. And perhaps it is so that the if more astronauticians gather with proper blueprints in their briefcases, fewer gather at the newsstands to buy sf magazines! As if people who have read sf books and magazines all their life suddenly becomes ashamed about their reading when rockets blast through real space on their way to tangible danger. This is what you ponder around the death of magazines in the sf genre. /At one point there were perhaps 30-40 US sf mags published at the same time. This then dropped sharply.../ In the case of America you can imagine that a certain amount of shame plays a role - many sf magazines fold also over there. It may not be stimulating to read about young Americans pioneering deeds on the Moon, when others have been there. I think we dare to stress how self-evident the American sf literature has been for many over there, that space had already been conquered and that an English speaking universe - with notable American accent - has already opened for all good American citizens' lusty eyes. But it's another thing that sf authors often have been eager to send off space crews with a mixed race content: a decent Scandinavian is usually present and a Russian playing chess and saying wise words there in a corner, and a tall full-blood indian walks around with the captain's hat and has forgotten everything about reservations and hatred. But Henrik Rabe, editor of Galaxy, doesn't in his farewell words believe that the readership needs any "subtle references to world events" to explain that his magazine can't hold out longer...To this is added that it hasn't felt natural with Swedish sf for the Swedish authors who have dealt with the genre. There are sometime brave attempts to let Lund or Sundsvall become starting point for the jump into space, but even in those cases the American mould have often shone through: you recognise the handling of the subject, the way to develop thoughts, the way to force through the fatal point. The stars are many but the points are few, the sf reader may sometimes think in times of saturation. Perhaps you only need to refer to the limited audience or that this with reality - astronautical conventions and other things - making fiction redundant, here as in other cases it's probable that a genre grows until it's a bit overgrown or at least picked the lowest hanging fruits. Then there must be a pause, to catch breath, and then you'll have to see if new fruit will grow... It's inevitable that you can't do much more about some standard situations in space. A short story collection with sf stuff can be seen as a book with chess openings. A traditional opening - transfer to another variant, almost as well-known - attempts at free fantasies in the mid game and finally resignation from the author or the reader. The cloth is twisted until it is dry. Nothing is more common than unintentional

plagiarism in *sf* literature, and they are almost more pathetic as those who are clumsy and fully intentional. Already HG Wells asked about almost all of the still living topics...it must be extremely hard to catch the reader with a story based on that. In another short story you can witness, once more, the successful struggle of mutants against ordinary people. The author must have, you get a feeling of, a nasty vision of a readership that is yawning already from the start everytime he lifted his head above the keyboard. Fredrik Pohl is lost in hyperspace in another story (not all that recent, BTW). He is never boring, but the reader find it hard to think of the outcry of happiness that came from all *sf* authors when one in their rank invented "hyperspace" which made it possible for crews to fly any distance in space without being frozen into boring blocks of ice. In the Shekley story (there aren't any bad names they put together in the farewell issue) the elegant alien psychology hide the commonplace in the meeting between man and the alien from far off. It's perhaps here the risk lies: the strangest of all, meeting another existence, in *sf* literature finally becomes the most banal, and you must put extra spices into it and new variations: it's usually a sure sign of tired authors and readers.

Mailing Comments

Comments to APAs this zine litters... But join the fun and help fanzines reenter fandom's main stage! Silly computer animations, textiles, toys etc isn't fandom. Do a zine, be an apaman, crank a virtual mimeo!

Henry Grynsten: Thanks for the review of my book! □ □ □ doubt Creole could evolve from scratch in 50 years (a generation is ca 25 years) but I agree that humans have pre-existing mental structures for language (and consciuosness is important). Development of tools has been incremental AFAIK. First archeologists found a smashed rock with a vague edge, then a rock with a better cutting edge, and then a quite elaborated hand axe, and then some who put a shaft on the hand axe - through 100 000's of years of course. The hand axe *did* evolve. There were eg different types, from less to more advanced. It was just that its evolution was slow (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hand_axe) very slow. Your "field of dots" illustrates that changes in primitive things take a long time, due to difficulties to pass info over time. □ □ □ agree with most what you write about fake news, news "slanted in an undesirable way". Of course I don't believe everything in the papers (or other traditional media) is impartial and true. Staff of our semi-governmental TV/radio company is 82% supporters of the red-green parties (says Gothenburg Univ) and similar bias is widespread. I don't believe people in general - at least the vast majority - are stupid and gullible so they don't need "protection". The Nazis in the 1930's were helped by a "mental climate" that was extremely favourable for them. The Versailles treaty was seen many Germans as humiliating. The depresstion and hyper-inflation of 1923 (returning in 1929) shocked people. Hitler had a field day with humiliation and economic disasters. I've read about the communist Norrland miners who went to the USSR...they were in for a slight disappointment. □ □ □ think that properties of old USSR lingers in today's Putin-Russia. In fact, much of the old Czar-Russia was inherited by the communists and even that has been transferred to today's Russia. Czar=Stalin=Putin! Serfs were just changed to forced collective farmer. The nobility of the Czardom was exchanged to the communist party elite and today the elite are the oligarchs. Corruption has been rampant in Russia through history, from Czar to Putin, and so has war (WWI, civil war, WWII, Afghanistan, now Ukraine). The labels of Russian things have changed, that's all. I read about HG Wells meeting Stalin. HG was like a naive schoolboy, almost as dumb and blind as Jan Myrdal was on Cambodia (but Myrdal's *Jules Verne Magasinet* anthology was good!). A couple of Swedes going to Stalin's Russia in the 1930s (in culture/trade trips) were artist Karl Gerhard, afterwards writing the satirical "Hooray, it's fun in Moscow!" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUQD9JW7NDA>, and Nobelist Harry Martinson who also saw through the cracks. He has written about it, and a concrete reply from him was to sign up in the Winter War for Finland against the Soviets. He was a messenger with the Swedish volunteer corps. □ □ □ see the George Floyd demos and the Capitol attack - serious and from opposite political sides - as examples of polarisation, emanating from the left side getting more fanatic. We have postmodernism etc in universities, evolving from the 1970s, environmentalism demanding command economy, identity politics praising collectivism, etc. This activity push some to the "right" and activates them, as we see with eg as the growth of the Sweden Democrats. (I'm not sure they should be called right wing - I call them neo-nationalists.) There's a huge danger in companies (Facebook, Twitter etc) inventing their own restrictive laws for speech! Message services must be seen as the post office! If it is legal to do and say and send via a letter, it must be allowed on Internet. To lie is actually legal (in most cases) but no problem as long as we with free speech can correct it. Falsehood and 'net propaganda isn't the problem. The problem is people themselves, being susceptible to mob psychology when being in groups. Fake news can always and should be countered by true news and counter arguments. ElonMusk taking over Twitter is a promising thing.

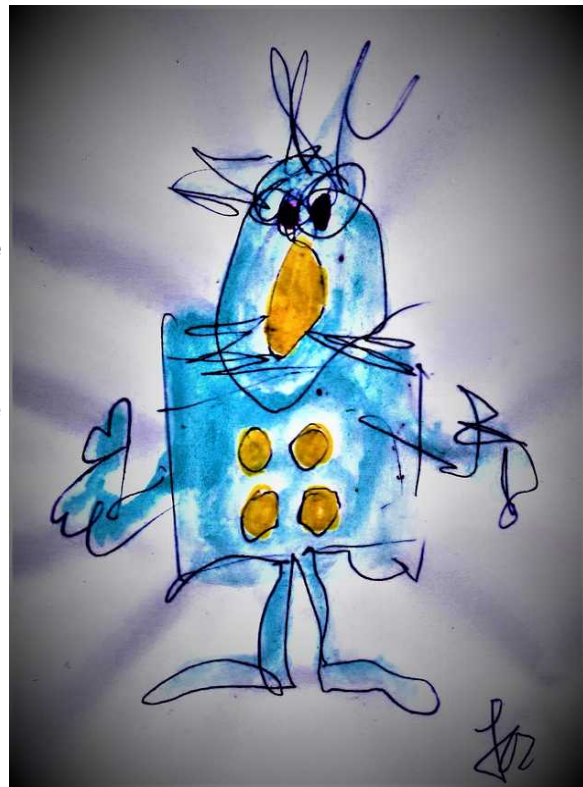
Garth Spencer: Trudeau would have gotten *plenty* from meeting with the truckers. With personal meetings you a) get direct response, b) may interpret subtle signals (body language, tone of voice etc) better and c) you have more time. Meeting them he'd experience they were people from all walks of life and couldn't possibly be "a fringe minority". Meeting in person means allocating more time - unlike short soundbytes on TV, which is all we get without real meetings - which makes it possible to explain your position in more detail. But I suspect Trudeau wouldn't go because he feared his position would then *weaken*. The case for treating the virus the hard way was weakening, due to a) that Omicron had proven to be very mild, and b) statistics showed that a "hard line" was inefficient, and could even make things worse. A softer approach - like in Sweden - had proved sufficient or even *better*. But if you invested so much rhetoric in a hard line you don't want your faults exposed! You must defend forced vaccinations and health passports (that civil & human rights organisations say are

dangerous for personal integrity). In other words, he fled, cowardly fearing he'd lose the debate.

William McCabe: How to define science fiction is an interesting question. In high school you had to do a "special assignment". Mine was a long essay (30+ pages) on sf, in which I eg listed a number of possible sf definitions and discussed the matter. In the maths class we had been going into set theory, ie how groups (sets) and sub-groups are related to each other. My conclusion is that mainstream literature ("non-sf") is a subset of science fiction, since it's just like sf - only missing a part, the "fantastic" element. All mainstream can be defined as being in the sf set (group), but all sf can't be defined as being in the mainstream set. Another way to phrase it is that an sf story can describe and containing everything a mainstream story can, but a mainstream story can't contain and describe everything an sf story can. (Reasoning in a similar manner, fantasy is also a subset of sf. If you take eg Tolkien. Elves, orcs and other strange beings can described in an sf setting as being just mutants or aliens with special powers. Magic can be explained as just being telekinesis, effects of quantum uncertainty, or whatever.) In practice, you of course want to separate sf from mainstream - to get what you want to read in the bookstore or library - so my practical definition is something like:

*Science fiction is a story that can take place anywhere, at any time, contain anything, but we only call it sf if it has at least one *fundamental* difference from the world we know.* The difference is the fantastic element. Exact meaning of "fundamental" can of course be discussed. Sherlock Holmes isn't sf, because having a private detective isn't a fundamental difference even if he is super smart (there are detectives in our world, there are some who are super smart!). But Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* is sf, because we know there are no secret spots where dinosaurs have survived.

Samuel Lubell: Look, flu comes from a corona virus. Covid comes from a corona virus. They are in the same virus family: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus> Earlier variants of the pandemic virus were more serious. Estimates vary, maybe X2-4 more lethal than seasonal flu. Now as the omicron has come and taken over and showed to be much milder, it becomes very close to the ordinary seasonal corona flu! So it's reasonable to compare it with...a flu. You say "many" get so called long covid. From what I can read in the statistics here https://covid19dataportal.se/dashboards/post_covid/ the ratio seems to be 2.5-5%. If that is "many" can be discussed, but I'm sure other flus have similar longer time effects (which in most cases still upside after a while). Medical people "who truly want people to be safe" may have additional motivations, like feeling gratification and importance when finally getting noticed. Don't underestimate the strife for egoboo! And remember how merry mathematicians waved and helloed about their "virus models" – *which were almost always wrong!* To this come politicians who want to appear resourceful and responsible and like to push people around. (Politicians always want to "reform" others.) You get a dubious combination that leads to overreactions. You may disagree about virus stats being exaggerated as much as you want, but analysis of the reliable excess deaths figures say they are. I looked into official gov data for Sweden 2020 and 2021. I'm sorry this is in Swedish, but try Google Translate: <https://www.freelists.org/post/skriva/Stor-verrappartering-av-virusavlidna> Claimed virus deaths for the two pandemic years were 9500+5170=14670. Combined excess deaths were...2559! For instance, 2021 had a death deficit, which means that 2020 "borrowed" some deaths from 2021. Stats were exaggerated for sure - here with the factor 6 - and tough measures against the virus have played a limited role. There's even a tendency that lockdowns, mask, closing schools and businesses have *increased* virus effects! (Locked in families easily infect each other. People tired of restrictions break rules.) Some articles worth reading: <https://washingtonmonthly.com/2022/04/19/what-sweden-got-right-about-covid/> <https://www.theweek.co.uk/news/science-health/956673/did-sweden-covid-experiment-pay-off> <https://nypost.com/2022/05/06/sweden-saw-fewer-covid-19-deaths-than-majority-of-europe/> □ □ □ Books don't get better with using too many words! A machine doesn't get better with more parts. It should use the parts it needs, but not more. More parts just means more than may break. Less is more - more is less! The role of characterisation is in my opinion exaggerated, because: 1. We are not telepathic, so we can't get into the mind of others. 2. We therefore only have our own minds to draw from. 3. So characterisation will all will be different aspects of the writer *him/herself* - what we get is *characterisation of just one person*, albeit from different angles. 4. And getting a ton of details stemming from just *one person* really should carry that much weight... Take eg Heinlein! Aren't Heinlein characters more or less Heinlein himself! PK Dick, most characters are outsiders, doubting reality, bouncing around like in a pinball game —like what Dick was (I think). My view of modern mainstream (non-sf) is how one-sided many characterisations are, tending to bend to popular ideologies and mindsets. We shall have characterisation in tiction, of course, but don't put it on a pedestal! Plot and ideas are more important. □ □ □ The 2010 Hugos probably went to some of the best writers! Unlike now.



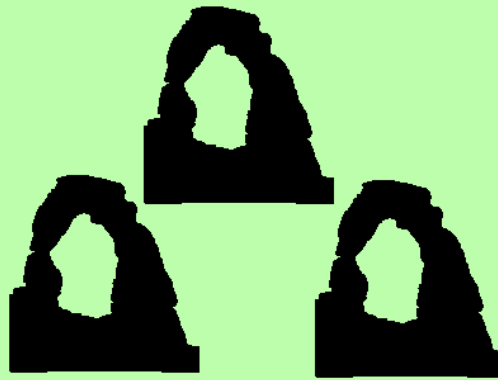
Is this Robot 57? Ask artist Lars LON Olsson!

Слава Україні! (=Glory to Ukraine!)

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 259

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29 May 2022

Comments:

Cover: via Internet search: just looking for something pretty!

Ahrvid Engholm: Intermission 119: General agreement with all you said re the war in Ukraine. My own personal prediction is a stalemate and a separationist cease-fire. Russia will keep all the territory it's seized, but will at least stop the damn killing. It's an ugly kind of peace, but it may be the best the world can hope for.

Jerry Pournelle: definitely an interesting soul, who mixed kind-heartedness with anger and cussing, in strange ways. I, myself, have been mauled by his viciousness...and yet, half an hour later he was chatting with me as if we'd been friends for years, quite as if he hadn't just torn me apart with cruel language. Mood swings? He was the first person I'd ever heard espouse the theory that if the Allies, in WWII, had devoted production to close-support fighter-bombers, instead of long-range strategic bombing, the war would have been shortened by a year. I have a suspicion that this analysis is correct. He also wrote some mighty fine SF. My own favorite of his is "King David's Spaceship," a stand-alone novel set in the same universe as "The Mote In God's Eye." I'm fond of "Mote," and hold it to be one of the best "first contact" novels in the genre. The sequel isn't as good,

and, worse, the sequel directly contradicts events and concepts from the original book. But it's worth reading, nevertheless. There is a subsequent book in the series, written by Pournelle's daughter, and it's not bad, although it is quite slow-moving. Also, she ignores the speed-of-light delay in communications.

Re NATO, Putin may very well have given Sweden and Finland no real option other than to join the defensive alliance. I think the alliance is the only reason tanks didn't roll into the Baltic Republics about the same time as they moved into Ukraine. Russia has become demented, and having allies is, alas, pretty much the only hope of survival in this brave new world. Re nukes, my personal theory is that if WWII really broke out, with a full exchange of missiles, launches would go out against neutral nations, including non-nuclear states like Australia and Japan, simply because Russia would not want to have a world arise where those nations existed in a position to be powerful and influential. My theory is that Russia would make damn sure that, in a full exchange, **everybody** dies. I have friends who analyze it differently, and hold that Australia and Japan would be spared. I'll certainly never know, as, living near a major U.S. Naval Base, I'm one of the first who'd die!

There is a co-operative group putting out a comic book anthology as a benefit for Ukraine, and I'm definitely subscribed for a copy when it comes out. (Target is around Christmas.) There isn't a great deal that artists can do to make the world a better place in a time of war...but they aren't totally powerless, either!

Heath Row: Welcome back to the N'APA shindig! Interesting notes on music and soundtracks, but, alas, not mostly my cuppa. I'm an old-fashioned Vivaldi fan...

Aye, I'm still on "green paper" even if it's virtual, and I still have the same old illustration of my dear mascot Corydon. It's also time for me to explain the "three things" illustrations that I always use. No one has ever asked, why three? The reason is that three things in a triangle is the description of the "Illusion" Rune from the role-playing-game "RuneQuest," and of all the RuneQuest Runes, that one is my favorite!

I'd certainly enjoy meeting you; I've been to the Orange County Science Fiction Club twice, and had a wonderful time! That's where I met Wesley Kawato, and quite a few other fun fans!

And, aye, "Sonic the Hedgehog" is the longest-running "licensed tie-in" comic book of all time. And it's pretty good! The character re-design was the best thing to happen to the series: the old "Archie" characters were too "puffy," too "Hanna Barbera." The redesigned characters are a great improvement.

I loved "Alita Battle Angel," the movie, although I certainly wish that it had been more "complete." It was released essentially as "Part One" of a series, with intimations of a sequel, and apparently that just isn't going to happen. The movie was very true to the original Manga. I've never seen any of the Anime, so I can't make a comparison.

George Phillis: One to Three Thousand SF books published every year – and so many more self-published on Amazon and other sites – ye cats! I think it is *wonderful* that there are so many authors and so many books! It suggests our beloved suite of genres is alive and well, and that the power of the imagination is untrammelled! I think I read only about a hundred books a year, and more than half are non-SF – I read a lot of history and science-fact.

I once met a chap who was determined to read every book ever written. In chronological order! He started with the most ancient texts and tomes he could locate, and was working his way slowly forward. I believe he got the the Classical era, Greece and Rome. I was glad of that, being very fond of the Iliad and Odyssey. But, alas, if he follows this path, he will never know Shakespeare, let alone Niven and Pournelle! Still, blessings upon him for taking the most outstandingly unique approach to reading that I've ever known!

Rxt me, I *think* we directly perceive the passage of time, but, to be honest, I'm not sure, and can't think of a way to test the proposition!

Ahrvid Engholm: Intermission 120: Good, solid, in-depth analysis of the war. Thank goodness for Putin's mistakes... When the war first started, I thought it would all be over, with a total Ukrainian defeat, in less than three weeks. I've rarely been as pleased to have been totally wrong!

I know nothing of Nils Frome other than what you'd shared with us, but if he was one of the many pen-pals of H.P. Lovecraft, then hooray for him! The Lovecraft effect was – and still is! – a wonderful thing in the great galaxy of SF and Fantasy fandom.

John Thiel: Lovely intro illustration! Fantasy art at its finest!

Synergy is fun, and metaphysics is a *lot* of fun – as Dan O’Neill said in “Odd Bodkins,” “I never metaphysic I didn’t like!”

Rct me, I perhaps should visit LASFS more often, but the brutal truth is that I’m living below the poverty line and don’t have the wherewithal. I’m about the qualify for Social Security, which will supplement my income a tad...

Will Mayo: Nice photograph!

Fun book cover, and fun title. “Perfection is Failure.” Well, perfection certainly doesn’t exist – okay, outside of the “Perfect Numbers” of Number Theory – and just maybe “A Wizard of Earthsea” by Ursula K. LeGuin – so one could say that striving for perfection is indistinguishable from striving for failure. But, at the very same time, striving for *improvement* is very often successful, and one of the best ways we have, as humans, to invest our time!

Samuel Lubell: Nasty truth: Covid is on an upswing. And that’s in the spring and summer. What’s this winter going to look like?

Good point about Disney comics being very, VERY long-running “licensed” comic book products. Maybe someone was playing games with the definition of “licensed.” To be sure, Disney, in part, was “self-publishing,” but they were also (and still are!) licensing to other publishers, such as Italy’s “Topolino.” I do not know, and am guilty of repeating what I’d heard someone else say without researching its truth adequately!

I’d never heard of Dave Duncan, but you cite easy availability and low purchase prices, and also you praise his style and light and fun, so what more can I ask? I’ll definitely look into the chap and make that first investment, a small one of money and a more meaningful one of time!

Re long-lasting series, I had a friend in high school who was a follower of both the Perry Rhodan and Dumarest of Terra books. I

never quite got bitten by that bug! Not quite the same thing, to be sure, but there certainly are a gob-heap-pile-mass of Star Trek and Star Wars novels!

Agreed that the Green Lantern movie wasn’t as bad as “conventional wisdom” has held. It was action-packed, interesting, and fun. It was a bit “dark” – not in emotional tonality but in actual light-and-dark. It was often hard to make out what was happening on screen! As a San Diegan, I’m amused that San Diego Harbor was used as a partial-inspiration for the city-scape in the movie! You can recognize some specific buildings!

If a Russian throws a grenade at you, pull out the pin and throw it back!

INTERMISSION #122

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and others but not Mr Putin who is fanzine blockaded! Follow @SFJournalen's [sf/f/h&fandom](#) newstweets. Take E-corflu against typ0eZ! Or Next-generation Lousy-typos Adjusting Words! Slava Ukraini! June 2022.

Editorially: First Space Exhibit, Go Turkish with Delight

As we're eagerly waiting for SpaceX's Starship to make its first real space trips, which Mr Musk now says will be in July, this will deal a lot with space and rockets. In the History Corner you'll find things about space, spaceships and such lovely stuff. We'll take you back in time to history's probably first public exhibitions on space and spaceflight, in Kiev and Moscow. But Yours Truly also recently attended a meeting with Sweden's first female astronaut, Jessica Meir (more correctly Dr Meir is a Swedish-American, with dual citizenship). There'll be a few words about that too. I earlier had lots of event reports, but the extensive history digging squeezed them out and the blasted virus stopped many events these last two years anyway. (Event reports may return later perhaps?)

I've always been a space buff, not only because of being addicted to skiffy, where rockets and alien planets play a major role. You're not a trufan if you don't like space! But I was also very active in the motley Swedish Space Movement society, I have written a lot about space (previous short story collection was centered around a Lunar colony), I knew the legendary space reporter Eugen Semitjov rather well (with a career from our 1940s pulp mag to winning our version of the Pulitzer - covered earlier in the History Corner), and I always follow what happens in space-related issues.

Right now there's more going on in space exploration and astronomy *than ever before in history!* New Mars visits with robots rumbling around on the surface like someone trying to find a parking space in London, probes to Pluto and asteroids some even grabbing gravel, new groundbreaking rockets from SpaceX landing like Tintin, NASA getting back to the Moon Real Soon Now, new telescopes like eg James Webb in space, China's new 500 metre radio telescope that just claimed to pick up alien signals, pictures of Black Holes, etc. To this comes that little Sweden may soon launch a satellite from her Lapland space base Esrange, this summer or possibly in the autumn. The rocket pad recently repaired after a fire (a smaller rocket exploded) is upgraded for micro satellites. Lapland is well suited for the polar orbits needed for ground mapping, environment watch, studies of the Auroras and certain types of communication satellites. And if lucky they may get a glimpse of Santa Claus training his flying reindeers...

There are breaking news on Nato. To the Turkish delight of the governments in Stockholm and Helsinki the Turkey president Erdogan has given up stopping the membership applications, eg with false claim about support for Kurdish "terrorism" (but we have given humanitarian aid). The Turks got a few concessions and I suspect the Americans did some arm twisting in the background too. To a degree I think this Erdogan figure used it to distract from domestic problems. The Turkish economy is in free fall with the inflation reaching +70%! He is behind in polls before next election within a year and his regime is becoming more oppressive

Anyway. The real Nato membership process will now begin. There are negotiations, protocols to be written and so on, but since it's summer vacation time I guess it will take until early autumn

But let's not forget Ukraine and the *insane Putin war!* Now the Russian government is after the bestselling - known for the apocalyptic *Metro* series - Russian sf author Dmitry Glukhovsky, who has taken an open and strong stand against this illegal war. Fortunately, he lives abroad and Russia's GeCtapo can't get to him, unless they try poison his undies. I met Glukhovsky as he a few years back talked in the Stockholm SF Bookstore. He was against Putin already then and now he says he stands by every word of condemnation of Putin. Let no shadow fall on this brave writer. We should support every Russian who dares to speak out against the bare-bested puffed president and his criminal regime. There's another Russia beside this pompous, poohead Putin. (Eg with great space history!)

After initial major setbacks for the Putin forces, they've concentrated on Eastern Ukraine. While the yellow and blue resists with every hemoglobin molecule they have the Ruskis press on. The creeps creep forward a kilometre here, another there, simply due to having 15 times as many artillery pieces as the Ukrainians. Their tactics is to shell like hell - civilians, their houses, hospitals, malls, civilian infrastructure is of no concern - and by firepower they try to force our Ukrainian buddies to withdraw. What the yellow and blue need is artillery, rocket systems, armored vehicles. While much has been promised and even shipped, it has been very slow to arrive to the front lines.

We should have rushed them the big guns and all heavy metal February 25th! Late is better than never, however, the big guns will arrive and we must hope for the Jokkmokk (an IKEA table) to start turning. Ukrainian losses are a painful 100-200 young men every day. 14 million Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes (6+ million abroad, of which Poland has taken half), 10 000's Ukrainian civilians have died. The mayor of Mariupol say 20 000+ have succumbed from the onslaught there, new mass graves are discovered where Putin forces try to hide their victims and there are reports that 1.2 million Ukrainians have been ethnically cleansed from the raped (occupied) area. Ukrainian citizens are taken to "filtration" (concentrations) camps in Russia - against international law which requires civilians to be protected.

Civilians are ripped of their clothes, their mobiles stolen and if the Russian SS finds any tattoo or a tweet indicating the owner isn't a fan of Putin they get "special treatment" - prison, torture, possible execution. For them Geneva just resembles that drink their drunk soldiers consume, because the Geneva convention is unknown in the "Russian World". PoWs must be executed says the Russian Disneyland "parliament" and a couple of Brits are already sentenced to death by kangaroo "courts".

It's all sad and outrageous beyond belief. Everything points to that Putin is paranoid. The latest news is that he has his bodyguards collect his poo, which is taken in briefcase back to Moscow, all to prevent health checks through his shit, and not get this asshole's DNA in foreign hands, I presume (fearing experts would find genes from rats and pigs there). <https://metro.co.uk/2022/06/11/vladimir-putins-guards-collect-his-poo-during-trips-abroad-16809780/>

There can be no clearer proof than this that *Putin-Russia is SHIT*.

--Ahrvid Engholm

National Mimeographic Society

Fanzines used to be the backbone of fandom, but now we see little of them - not counting these pages... Sverifandom has only *one* being published on paper and E-fanzines haven't shown to be much of a saviour. There are only about two Swedish PDFzines, and while one is excellent and fulfills your wettest wishes (this one!) we used to have hundreds when the mimeo ruled and rolled in the 1980s. It has also showed to be very difficult to recruit new zines to APAs. (I stubbornly repeat: *please join!*).

So I suggest we form the *National Mimeographic Society* to promote the idea of the mimeo and fanzines. Of course, few have mimeos left and you can't get consumables like stencils and ink anymore, but we could try to keep the sweet memory of mimeographs alive! And we should support initiatives like eFanzines.com, Fanac.org, Iowa University's Hevelin collection, Swefan Tomas Cronholm and others who scan and make old mimeo fanzine gems available.

Everyone who has ever published a mimeod fanzine is automatically members of the National Mimeographic Society! And have you ever had material published in a mimeo zine you can be associate member. A LoC counts, because that proves you have received, read and reacted on a stencilled zine, and readers are important. (Electrostencilled



and dittoed fanzines would be borderline cases, but I'm prone to allow it for membership - spirit always counts!)

"National" in National Mimeographic Society of course refers to the fanation of Fandom. After all, as a fanhistorian has observed, fandom has a culture equal to a small European nation. (BTW, I have always wondered what the "nation" is in the National Hockey League? Most teams are from the nation of USA, but it was a Canadian game to start with. Is it the nation of North America?)

National Mimeographic Society could arrange lectures and demos on cons. I can for instance tell you that I did that on the fanzine and small press fair at Stockholm Culture House in 1998! I spoke about fanzine history - clearly stating its origin in sf fandom and that sf fanzines are the Real Stuff - and at the end of my talk printed a one-page oneshot in front of the audience, from a stencil I had typed previously. (AFAIK I was the last mimeod fanzine page this far produced on Sverifandom. But I'd welcome if anyone would do it again!)

Remember that the mighty mimeo was the *very first* Internet...on paper. The fanzines, the LoCs, the lettercols of the prozines, the thousands of letters any active sf fan wrote, worked like E-mail, Reddit, Twitter etc - only a bit slower and with typewriters taking the place of laptops.

The problem now is that there are probably no consumables to be found, no stencils, no ink (while some modern paper, like eg colorite, will work to print on). We should start a research centre (if someone gives us a few million quids, or we learn to print our own money!) to find out how to make our own stencils (thin paper and wax?) and find out the recipe of mimeo ink (soot and some thickener that alcohol can dissolve? - every fan knows alcohol works). And we could start publishing National Mimeographic (see illo), in glossy four-colour mimeography.

But I'm not optimistic to get mimeos back in operation. But we learn daily how lights go out in eastern Ukrainian cities as Russian guns reduce them to rubble and cut the electricity. This maniac in the Kremlin threatens the world with nuclear war.

If WWII comes hand-cranked mimeographs will be the *only* printing system to keep the small remnants of civilisation informed. That and manual typewriters. There are interest groups caring for the typewriter - mainly non-electric ones-, typewriter museums, typewriter repair shops and I'm sure there in India or elsewhere are small factories still manufacturing manual typewriters. If not, many typewriters are still around on the second-hand market.

It should be time to recognise the mimeograph too! Or to borrow the words of Robert A Heinlein:
The mimeos must roll!

205 Days in Space

Jessica Meir is a marine-biologist and astronaut, who lived through the strange experience of starting a perfectly normal tour in the International Space Station and then see the world go mental. A virus came to Earth, and it could be from outer space, as Nobelist Svante Arrhenius speculated! From orbit she could follow how countries closed down and mathematicians made wild, wrong disaster "models" so people were incarcerated in home lockdowns, while borders, shops, schools, offices and more closed. Old Terra went totally mad. When landing after 205 days in space, Earth seemed like a new planet.

The Swedish Space Corporation recently arranged a tour for Meir, visiting half a dozen Swedish cities. Your faithful fanzine editor was there when she talked at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm June 20th. They have their own Space Centre, lead by her astronaut colleague Christer



Me listening to Swe-US astronaut Jessica Meir, Stockholm, June 20.

Fuglesang, the first Swedish astronaut (two trips, 2006 and 2009), who introduced her. Vice boss of the institutes Space Centre, oldfan Carl Mikael Zetterling, eg former ed of SF Forum, was also there. The D1 Hall was nearly full, including a big group of youngsters from the organisation Astronomic Youth (an amateur astronomer group). Apart from CM Zetterling I didn't see any known fans, but Grand Old Man of Swedish space activity Sven Grahn could be observed.

Astronaut Meir began showing a film from her space adventures, showed slides and talked about both her life and career. She became totally hooked on space from a very young age, eg going to space camps for kids. Her mother is Swedish, her father Israeli, both met in the US where Jessica was born and grew up, in Maine. She did her PhD thesis in studying the breathing apparatus of animals, like seals that can hold their breath for 30 minutes and geese that fly over the Himalayas in incredibly thin and oxygen-deprived air. She then worked a few years in the space industry and for NASA, before being accepted for astronaut training in 2013, a training that took two years, being an AsCan (trainees are called that, astronaut candidates). And in April 2019 her dreams came true as she was lifted into orbit by a Russian Soyuz rocket for a long stay on the ISS, doing 157 experiments and reading Pippi Longstocking... She also did three space walks, eg to install new batteries on the ISS outside and fixing other things. You can read more about her here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jessica_Meir (Not mentioned there is that - from what I have read - she is also in the selected group of female astronauts who are candidates to be the first woman on the moon, with the coming Aretmis - 2025? or it may be a bit delayed.

After her long, interesting lecture there were questions from the audience. One younger member of the audience for instance asked what it takes to become an astronaut. The answer was: 1) Be a team player, 2) get good scientific education, 3) be a flexible "jack of many trades", because in space many skills are needed. She said she slept very well during the mission. You just slip into a thin sleeping bag that floats attached to a wall. Some have their arms outside which will I then fall into an outstretched positions because of how the muscles lay, but Jessica preferred to put her hands behind her head and lock the arms that way. Zero-G is a very fun and relaxing experience but it takes several days to adjust to gravity when you come back to the ground. You have difficulties walking for up to three days, not because your muscles have decayed (as they do) but because your balance system is confused. You won't be able to run for up to five days. In space you need to exercise in special machines for at least two hours every day, to minimise eg decay of muscles and skeleton. She enjoyed her mission very much, and would gladly go up there



Astronaut Meir reading Pippi Longstocking in orbit



C Fuglesang, CM Zetterling, J Meir, S Sweden (on the screen). Sorry for small pic but they moved on the other side from my position.

again with eg the SpaceX Dragon capsule. She was also very impressed by what SpaceX is doing as well as others in the now step by step more "commercial" space industry. She showed several pictures of her waving a Swedish flag on ISS and other stuff, like the famous Dala Horse and a certificate afterwards given to the University of Stockholm (where she studied for a period). We were also shown pictures of southern Sweden taken from ISS - only the south, the station doesn't reach further north.

I thought it was strange nobody asked about a specific topic, so I raised my arm and asked her what she could tell about her experience from working with Russians. Cosmonauts went with her in the Soyuz and worked on the ISS. She said it went very well, parts of her training

was outside Moscow (a town she "fell in love with"), something that BTW also included learning at least basic Russian. All on ISS has to learn each other's lingo. But now there is of course a lot of tension and she said the things happening in Ukraine now was very sad. Her mission was long before the war, it must be noted.

It's the first astronaut I've met or seen in person. On the International Astronautical Federation's convention in Stockholm in 1985, there were cosmonauts and I interviewed the US astronaut Owen K Garriott (who went up to Skylab in the 1970's) for a youth magazine. I've met Fuglesang several times - he even read and commented my first sf story collection, *Murder on the Moon!* I went to the veteran astronauts meeting in Stockholm in 2015 (reported in *Intermission*).

Unfortunately I'm getting too old to join their ranks, though I'd jump at it if someone would be whimsical enough to give me a space ticket. After all, John Glenn was 77 when he returned to orbit. And William Shatner was 90 when he made his space jump. One can always dream...

History Corner

The history space will this time be all about...space. The reason is that I stumbled upon exciting information about the first space and spaceflight exhibitions in the world, which were already in the 1920s in the then Soviet Union. There was a space exhibition in Kyiv in 1925 and a spaceflight one in Moscow in 1927.

I know it's inopportune to say something with a Russian connection, with that insane, bloody war going on. But we should note that if the Russians had engaged in space development instead of such stupid shit, everything would have been much better! For the purpose of not getting some so hot in the head that the brain boils, and to be able to cover the topic at hand, I have to leave the subject of Putin's aggression against Ukraine for now. Generally, I'm also of the belief that we shouldn't boycott "anything Russian" but those responsible, especially Putin. I suspect most Russians in secret are against the war and hope it would end. But I must leave that tragedy for a while. (Slava Ukraine!)

I happened to come across material about the world's probably first exhibitions on space! The very first was in Kyiv in 1925 and there was one specifically on space travel in Moscow 1927.

Parts of the 1920s was a time of a slight thaw in the traditional Communist oppression. Lenin had died and Stalin had not yet completely suffocated society and sent millions to death or Gulag. Odd modernist cultural forms such as futurism could flourish for a while, and we got, for example, the famous silent sf film "Aelita - Queen of Mars" (1924, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoROo4Ur49c>). After the Russian "revolution" (actually a coup), one Nikolai Tikhomirov received support from the Communist regime to start a research group to develop rocket weapons, the Gas-Dynamic Laboratory (GDL), <https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Gas+Dynamics+Laboratory>

And of course, one of the pioneers of theoretical spaceflight was Russian Konrad Tsiolkovsky (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konstantin_Tsiolkovsky). Works by Jules Verne and local epigones were published in Russia and the newspapers wrote articles about space travel and the future. So there was a little bubble of space interest brewing among at least intellectual Russians, though peasants in the countryside (the big majority) had their hands full with trying to survive.

"Exhibition on the Study of Outer Space" opened June 19, 1925 in "the Kyiv House of Communist Education". It consisted of five parts, one of which was devoted to the "interplanetary". In *Intermission* #119 I wrote about how The Science Fiction Club - as the name apparently was in translation - was started in Kyiv 1962 by among others Astronomy Professor Sergey Vsekhsvyatsky and biology professor Mikhail Klovov. Was this club an echo of the first space exhibition?

From <https://www.kxan36news.com/to-the-moon-with-the-tver-in-1927-in-moscow-was-recorded-on-space-flight> we extract:

The Forerunner of the Moscow exposition was the Exhibition on the study of outer space, which was opened in the Kiev House of the Communist education on 19 June 1925. Its initiators were young enthusiasts, led by mathematician Dmitry Grave /surname bad translation?/. The Exhibition consisted of five sections: astronomical, radiotelegraphy, alien life, meteorological and interplanetary.

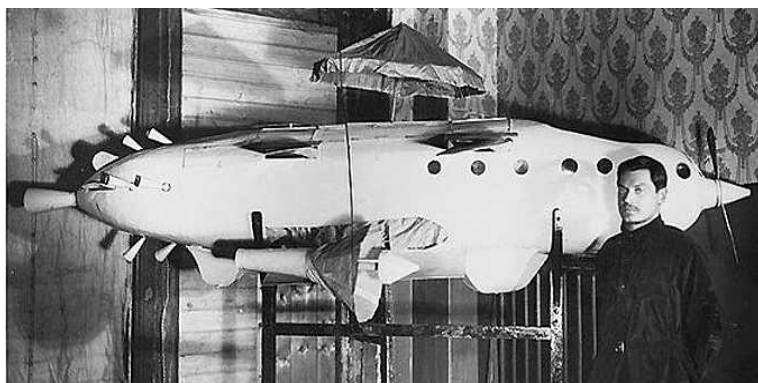
The Forerunner of the Moscow exposition was the Exhibition on the study of outer space, which was opened in the Kiev House of the Communist education on 19 June 1925. Its initiators were young enthusiasts, led by mathematician Dmitry Grave /surname bad translation?/. The Exhibition consisted of five sections: astronomical, radiotelegraphy, alien life, meteorological and interplanetary.

The last section of the exposition was devoted to space exploration, and presented the drawings and achievements of the engineer Alexander Fedorov. The main exhibit of the interplanetary section was a three metre model of his spaceship (it was later brought to Moscow) Kyiv exhibition was open for more than two months and closed on 1 September 1925.... The success of the exhibition in Kiev was demonstrated by Alexander Fedorov and his followers for the Association of inventors of invention (AIIZ) /more below/, and there was active public interest in the theme of space and exploration of interplanetary space. Shortly after closing of the exhibition in Kiev, the members of the Association began to prepare for more ambitious one which would be presented work not only by Soviet scientists, engineers and enthusiasts, but also their foreign colleagues. Letters with offers to participate in this event sent to all corners of the world and many received a positive response.... the Ukrainian press widely and favorably covered the /Kyiv/ exhibition. So, for example, the newspaper Proletarskaya Pravda of June 25 wrote: "... Every worker, every university student, every Soviet worker, having visited the exhibition, will find there a lot of useful things he needs today". Thus, the role of such exhibitions in those years and their significance for our entire subsequent history cannot be underestimated. But, unfortunately, history has not recorded if SP Korolev /later famous rocket engineer/ was on this exhibition or participated in the work of the "Circle for the Study of World Spaces" (reorganized in August of the same year into the "Society for the Study of Outer Space", but not registered). In those years, Korolev was more mundane, more dreaming of the sky than the conquest of the stratosphere and outer space....Sergei Pavlovich Korolev was still only a student at the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, and it is likely that he was also able to visit this exhibition and get his first acquaintance with the ideas of cosmonautics.

About Fedorov's spaceship, which was atomic powered (!), we read:



A Fedorov, G A Field and mechanics with a model of Fedorov's nuclear-rocket ship first shown in Kyiv in 1925.



Fedorov with his nuclear spaceship.

Even by today's standards, for 1925 this project was too fantastic, when even what an atom is was obscure...However, the author did not try to be incognito and personally told visitors about his vehicle for interstellar travel, standing in front of his three metre model, made in 1:20 scale. The stand also featured a description of the ship, drawings of its longitudinal section, engine room mechanism, heat regulator and other data.

Fedorov also arranged a study circle about space in connection to the exhibition.

Wired magazine had an article, "The Space

Craze That Grippped Russia Nearly 100 Years Ago", <https://www.wired.com/2012/04/russia-space-craze/> and we read:

Newspapers proclaimed that hundreds of starships would soon push out into the cosmos. People dreamed of moon colonies that were just a few years away. Ordinary citizens organized competitions to build rockets to reach outer space. Welcome to Russia in the 1920s...Moscow university students formed the world's first spaceflight advocacy group, the Obshchestva Izucheniia Mezhpplanetnykh Soobshchenii (Society for the Study of Interplanetary Communication). The Society brought together workers, scientists, and inventors to work on ideas for living in space and traveling to other planets. One prominent member, Fridrikh Arturovich Tsander,

constructed a lightweight greenhouse intended to supply fresh vegetables to space travelers and worked on a new kind of aircraft engine that could breach the atmosphere... Tsander

was a utopian who believed that mankind's destiny was the stars. He traveled around Russia giving speeches about /on the moon we could/ construct a habitation in which living conditions would be much better than on the Earth... In May of 1924, they organized a lecture by engineer Mikhail Lapirov-Skoblo called "Interplanetary Communications - How Modern Science and Technology Solves This Question." Tickets to the event sold out two days prior... In 1927 /April 24/, Russian organisers put on the world's earliest international exhibition on space travel... named the "World's First Exhibition of Models of Interplanetary

Apparatus, Mechanisms, Instruments, and Historical Materials"... Between 10,000 and 12,000 attendees visited the fair over two months. At its entrance, visitors encountered an elaborate display of an imagined planetary landscape behind a large pane of glass. It featured a hypothetical planet with blue vegetation and orange soil crisscrossed by straight canals. From the sky descended a giant silver rocket, while a space-suited astronaut stood at the edge of a crater. The exhibition's organiser, Mikhail Popov, said that in entering the fair, he felt as if he had "crossed over the threshold of one epoch to another, into the space era"... By the end of the 1920s, the Russian space fad was nearing its end. The Soviet government refused to officially support the Society for the Study of Interplanetary Communication, citing the lack of scientific knowledge among its members... widespread poverty and the growing Stalinist purges began to erase the idea from most people's minds.

The 1927 exhibition was about space travel and travel to alien planets, with models on spaceships and as you saw a simulated view of an alien planet. It was organized by an association for inventors, abbreviated AIIZ, where there were propellerheads that had a lot of ideas about rockets, spacecrafts and the like. The AIIZ Society had a preview of its space ideas and inventions in early 1927:

On January 30, 1927, the inventors sent out invitations to all those who, in one way or another, were engaged in rocket technology at that time and were interested in the problems of interplanetary travel. The invitation said: "With the exhibition of the Interplanetary Department of the Association of Inventors-Inventors, I bring to your attention that on February 10, 1927, the first world exhibition of models and mechanisms of interplanetary vehicles designed by inventors from different countries is opening in the premises of AIIZ, Moscow, Tverskaya, 68. "AIIZ" knows that you are working on the problem of space flight and, probably, you will not refuse to take an active part in the exhibition organized by us in the form of your works, such as: copies of manuscripts or printed publications, as well as sketches, drawings, models, diagrams and tables.... AIIZ members firmly believed /in the/ new communist regime, in the bright future of



Panorama at the entrance of the 1927 Moscow exhibition.

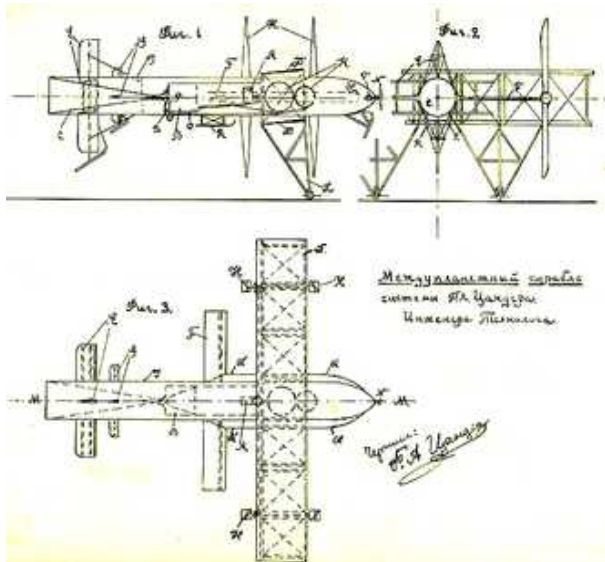


One of the 1927 exhibition rooms.



The Herman Oberth corner.

mankind, soon to come under the influence of their amazing inventions. So, for example, as one of the necessary conditions for this they considered the creation and all-round dissemination of a special international language to facilitate mutual understanding of astronautics from different countries. At that time, Fedorov was already in active correspondence with the "space dreamer" K Tsiolkovsky /who directed them/ towards the cause of popularising astronautics.



Drawing of an "interplanetary ship" by FA Zander

https://cosmatica.org.translate.google/articles/32-pervaja-mirovaja-vystavka-mezhplanetnyh-apparatov-i-mehanizmov-1927-g.html?_x_tr_sl=auto&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en (original URL <https://cosmatica.org/articles/32-pervaja-mirovaja-vystavka-mezhplanetnyh-apparatov-i-mehanizmov-1927-g.html>) snippets from this. (The automatic translation is a bit awkward at times so you must be a bit creative in editing and interpreting):



A display wall of the 1927 exhibition.

The above quote is from the below longer Russian article about the exhibition. AIIZ organised it on a voluntary basis, at their own and the expense of the members. Among the main people organising were A Fedorov, I Belyaev, G A Polevoy, Z G Pyatetsky, I P Arkhipov, A S Suvorov and O V Kholoptseva.

This article is through

an automatic translator:

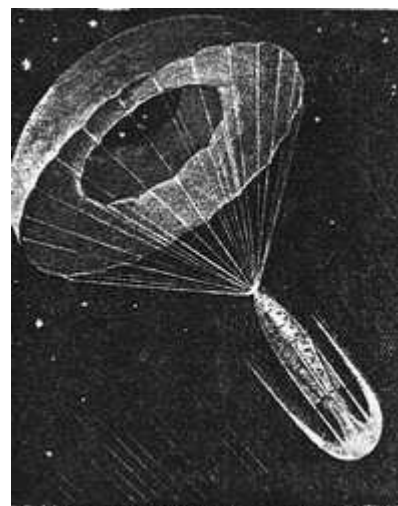


Close-up of part of the previous illo.

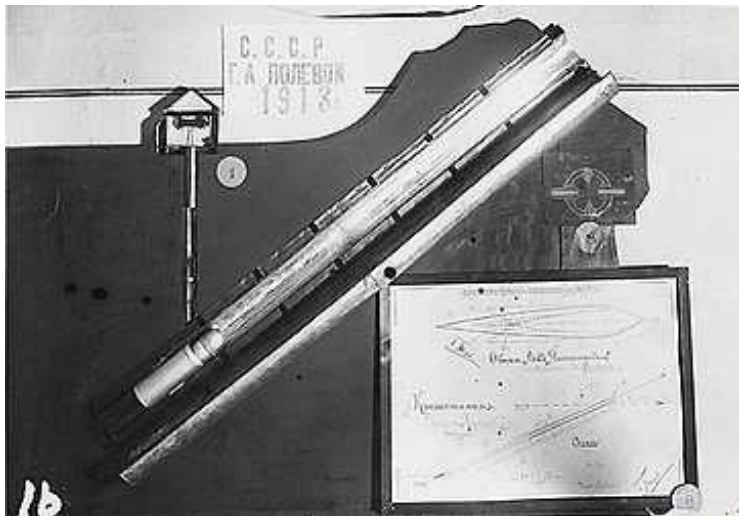
Material came from many inventors /and from/ Tsiolkovsky, and from foreign inventors, such as: America - Robert Goddard, France - Esnot-Peltri, Germany - Max Valle, Romania - Hermann Oberth, material from England and Wales was expected... Having collected the necessary funds and having spent 1.5 years (after Kyiv) there was a lot of preparatory work, organising, collecting and manufacturing exhibits and stands, informing potential participants around the world of the efforts of AIIZ, and the First World Exhibition of Interplanetary Vehicles and Mechanisms opened on April 24, 1927. The venue for the exhibition was house No 68 on Tverskaya Street in Moscow (in Soviet times it was the former Gorky Street). This is not far from the modern Mayakovsky Square, where the Association itself was located in those years. Before entering the exhibition, an information poster was displayed, and there was the so-called "moon" showcase, a three-dimensional



Robert Goddard's stand at the exhibition.



A spaceship re-entry, using a parachute and retro rockets at the same time.



The "space car" launch system by G A Field, giving an initial boost with an electro-magnetic cannon, like Verne.

installation made by a member of AIIZ, the young artist I P Arkhipov. It displayed a lunar landscape with sharp peaks of lunar mountains. At the edge of a large crater stood a silvery space rocket, next to which having climbed a rock there a little man in a spacesuit, made of plywood, settling down. And all this against the background of an endless black sky with a large blue-green disk of the Earth. It was impossible to pass by such a showcase. It was constantly crowded with people. The spectacle excited the imagination and aroused dreams of conquering the planets and outer space. Almost all the most prominent domestic and foreign practitioners and theoreticians of astronautics of that time submitted work, printed matter, and projects to the exhibition. Never before has there been such an interesting collection of works on astronautics. Special

stands were devoted to the biggest inventors. From the very first day the exhibition aroused great interest among working people and the intelligentsia. At the exhibition, from the abundance of stands, models of rockets and spaceships, photographic materials, diagrams and drawings, one simply felt dizzy. At some stands, visitors lingered for a long time, carefully studying the designs of devices unknown to them...Along with explanations at the stands by the authors of rocket and spacecraft projects themselves, the organisers of the exhibition held lectures for the visitors on astronomy, astronavigation, the theory of rocket propulsion and space flights. The exhibition was truly global. The international section of the exposition included, for example: the cannon of Jules Verne, first described by the science fiction writer in the novel *From the Earth to the Moon* in 1865 and a year later was published in Russian; the "apparatus" of the English novelist HG Wells, and many other interesting projects of rockets, interplanetary vehicles and mechanisms. So, for example, one of the pioneers of rocket technology, representing Romania in those years, but better known to us as the German scientist and inventor Hermann Oberth, sent a description of his rocket to the exhibition. Another German rocket enthusiast, propagandist of the idea of interplanetary flight, Max Valle, was able to send the exhibition only his books on astronautics and other literature with his articles. In his response to the invitation, he lamented that:

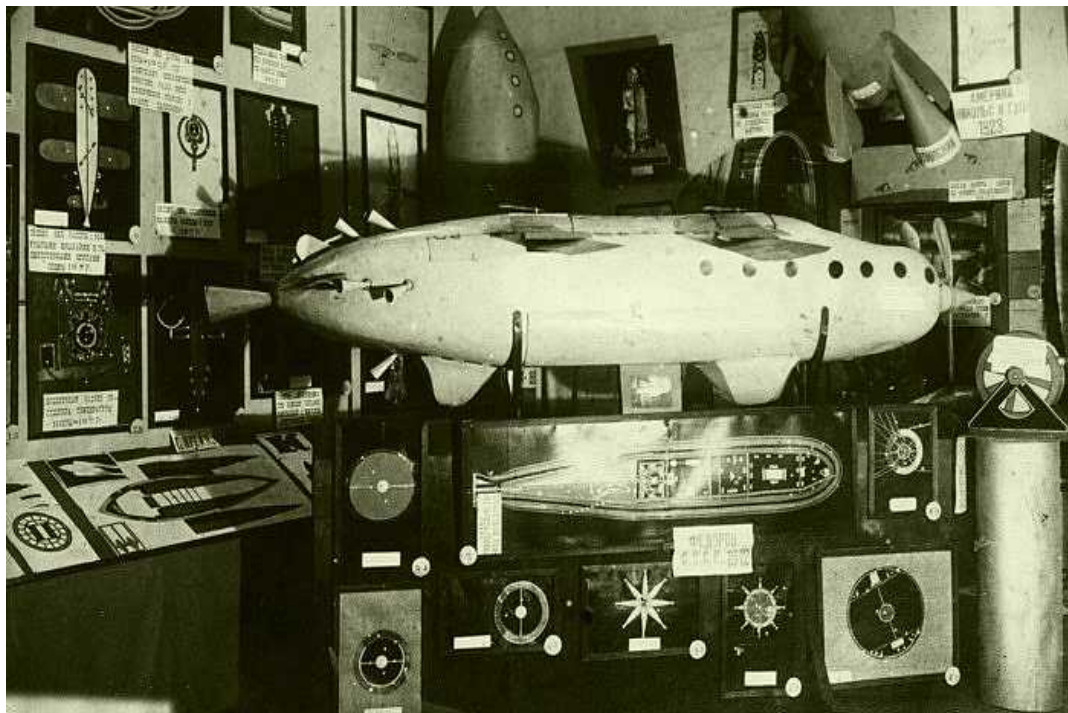
"Unfortunately, I do not yet have a rocket ship that would make it possible to overcome the space from Moscow to Munich in one hour. But I hope that such a miracle will happen in a few years. I completely share your opinion that only the improvement of technical means and an increase in the speed of our aircraft will lead to the conquest of outer space and the liberation of people from the concepts that limit them, which currently dominate society, such as: region, town, city, village, country, state. Flight into outer space will be a fusion of technology and culture. I am glad that I can cooperate for the embodiment of the Highest ideal of Humanity"... In general, the exhibition exhibited many printed works, reprints of works by Tsiolkovsky, Zander, Oberth, Esno-Peltri, Gunswind, Hohmann, Goddard, Welsh and other pioneers and popularisers of astronautics. In the stand of the work of the American scientist, professor of physics at the University of Worcester (California, USA) R Goddard, there was little material. This was most likely due to the fact that he, of course, was not present at the exhibition, as well as the fact that he had a difficult character and preferred to work secretly in a narrow circle of trusted persons. According to one of his American colleagues: "Goddard considered rockets his private preserve, and those who also worked on this were considered as poachers..." Nevertheless, the exhibition demonstrated the drawings of the rocket-aircraft developed by him, and some of his work. Austria was represented by a model and drawings of the rocket ship by Franz Ulinsky. In the description of the apparatus, work on which Ulinsky a native of an old Polish nobility family began back in 1901, it was said that he used so-called "useful dust" as fuel. The inventor approached a similar idea, namely the use of a power arising from a temperature difference, after conducting practical studies with high-capacity absorbing refrigeration units. F Ulinsky had earlier received a patent for the device of another interplanetary ship, in which the energy of the rays of the Sun is used as fuel. WG Crane's electric spacecraft was exhibited at the exhibition with a very brief description and illustrative material. For descent in the atmosphere of Earth and planets, the ship uses parachutes. As mentioned above, the exhibition was also dedicated to the 70th



A spaceship model by Max Valier, a German who contributed. They mailed out many international invitations.

anniversary of the birth of K E Tsiolkovsky. He really wanted to visit it, but for health reasons he did not manage to do that in person.

Nevertheless, Tsiolkovsky sent his greetings to the organisers and participants of the exhibition. Tsiolkovsky expressed confidence that a representative of their generation would fly in the sky. Despite the fact that the exhibition was organised on pure enthusiasm and at the private expense of AIIZ, the organisers considered it their duty to help K.E. Tsiolkovsky not only by popularising his ideas on astronautics, but also financially. However, it was far from easy to do this,



More from the Moscow exhibition. Fedorov's spaceship in the middle.

because he was very meticulous in this matter. So the organisers used a trick. They turned to him with a request to allow them to distribute his work at the exhibition, and allegedly the proceeds were sent to him. However, they themselves handed out his books to the visitors of the exhibition for free. "The throughput of the

public is 300-400 people a day," the inventors proudly reported to Tsiolkovsky. And there was something to distribute. The day before, in 1926, Tsiolkovsky republished his immortal work, *The study of outer space with jet devices*, with a usual circulation of 2000 copies. Many of the books received at the exhibition fell into the hands of interested readers. For example, the book became the reason for a long friendly correspondence between Tsiolkovsky and Mikhail Ignatievich Popov, a resident of Mytishchi near Moscow. Here is how colorfully M I Popov wrote about visiting the exhibition: "The huge showcase of one of the trading premises on Tverskaya Street is dazzlingly lit. There is a crowd in front of it. Behind the glass is a fantastic landscape of an unknown planet: orange soil, blue vegetation and straight channels. An original aircraft is attached - a huge rocket. Against the background of a black and blue, generously starry sky, an amazing inscription: 'The First World Exhibition of Interplanetary Apparatuses and Mechanisms.... Here, among numerous photographs, models and dummies showing the journey to alien worlds, Popov heard a passionate story about astronautics. The story was short. A new group of visitors entered, and the volunteer guide, throwing a pack of pamphlets to Popov, hurried over to them. At home, leafing through the brochures, Mikhail Ignatievich found among them several works by Tsiolkovsky, learned about the Association of inventors, about the language of all mankind: "AO". And if the language of "AO" seemed to Popov complete nonsense, then Tsiolkovsky's pamphlets gave rise to a sincere desire to get to know their author... Of course, in addition to the dedication of the exhibition itself to Tsiolkovsky, he had a separate display, which occupied the central place of the exhibition. Numerous works of Tsiolkovsky, photographic materials of his work, as well as a model of one of his rockets were presented on the stand next to his portrait. But the organisers of the exhibition, in addition to dedicating the exhibition to Tsiolkovsky, decided to give him a real gift. G A Polevoy and I P Arkhipov decorated the stand with a bust of the birthday man. But since Tsiolkovsky was not personally

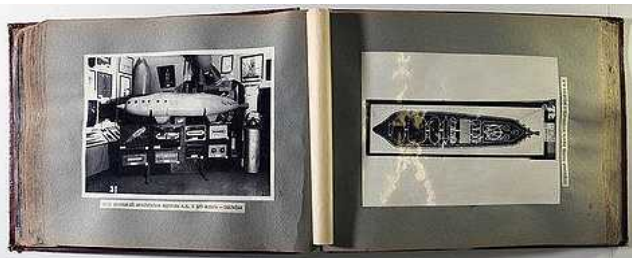


Several spaceship drawings, and a model of one (also in close-up). The propeller is probably for atmospheric navigation when landing.

present at the exhibition, he knew nothing about it. Already in the winter, after the exhibition, in December 1927, the postman brought a luggage receipt to the Kaluga house of Tsiolkovsky about receiving some cargo from Moscow. The strange cargo was accompanied by another gift - a money order to pay for the transportation of the cargo from the station. Unpacking a large, heavy box, Konstantin Eduardovich was surprised to find his bust in it. The unusual package was accompanied by an equally unusual letter: "It will be a great joy for us if this bust will be in the workshop of the greatest Architect of the Universe, and your refusal

you would upset us - the first interplanetary detachment that seeks to promote your idea as quickly as possible to the masses ... " After the closing of the exhibition, its organizers unanimously decided to donate the bust that adorned the stand with his works to Tsiolkovsky. The exhibition ran for two (!) months and was a great success. There is no doubt that after the 1927 exhibition, the popularity of the Tsiolkovsky grew even more. It certainly increased the interest of the general public for his idea and he gained many new admirers, and it led many to an understanding of the possibility and necessity of space exploration. In total, more than ten thousand people visited the exhibition. At the end of the exhibition, an "Interplanetary Corner" was organized at the exposition site and a report album of the exhibition was made. It presented data on all exhibitors, photographs and descriptions of projects. Today, this album is stored in the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics on Prospekt Mira in Moscow, opened on the 20th anniversary of the first manned flight into space, in 1981 at the base of a monument erected earlier in November 1964, in honor of the launch first satellite. Almost all the projects of the exhibition were included in immortal work of one of the outstanding domestic and world popularizers of astronautics, Professor Nikolai Alekseevich Rynin. He did the world's first encyclopedic work on the history and theory of jet propulsion and space flight, called "Interplanetary communications". In his letter from Leningrad to the organisers of the exhibition, he wrote: "I can't help but express surprise how you, with insignificant funds, managed to organise such an interesting and rich exhibition of materials, which undoubtedly for many visitors gave rise to a number of questions of a scientific and technical nature and made them interested in astronomy, the problem of interplanetary communications, and developed a new a worldview in general".

This also influenced Soviet sf, and the papers would publish stories and articles about space (at least in the 1920s - when Stalin's power grew it became more restrictive). We read:



In the first half of the twentieth century, with the rapid development of science and technology, there was a true boom in science fiction literature. For writers, it was sometimes not so important to go into technical details, as a new dimension of human existence and consciousness

developed. The dreams of science fiction writers and novelists were not limited by anything, because it became clear, especially after the First World War, that the coming century would be the century of new technologies, motors and vehicles with incredible possibilities for the times. And the avant-garde in this movement was of course popular science fiction literature.

As for space exhibitions in the west, the planetaries that began to pop up tended to have some space material beside more



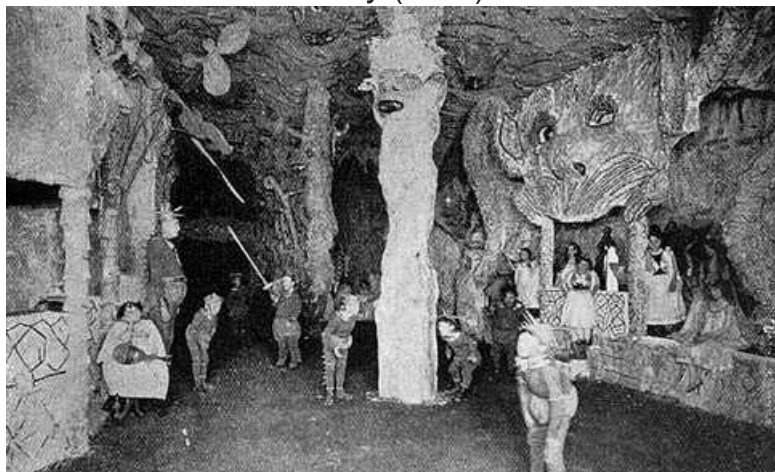
Tsiolkovsky's stand at the 1927 exhibition, though bad health prevented him from being there.

academic things on astronomy and the stars, but I don't know of any specifically about exhibiting space travel stuff earlier than the 1920s ones in the former USSR. Information from *Intermission* readers on early such exhibition is welcome! I know for instance that the Hayden Planetarium in New York City had some sort of exhibition called "A Trip to Mars" 1939-40, in conjunction with the World's Fair there (and members of the first Worldcon, Nycon in 1939, probably appreciated it). There's a short film from it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpypzMDAFno> And speaking of the Big Apple, though it would be a stretch to call it an exhibition, the amusement parks of Coney Island outside NYC had a sort of "ride" called "A Trip to the Moon" opened in 1903 and running for a few years. It was originally an attraction from the 1901 Pan American Exposition in Buffalo that was moved there. Visitors entered a big model of



Rocket model by F Ulinsky. One of his ideas was to use the Sun's energy as fuel

a Jules Verne-style airship, and according to John F Kasson's *Amusing the Million - Coney Island at the Turn of the Century* (1978):



Luna dwellers and a moon cave, from the Coney Island amusement attraction "A Trip to the Moon" 1903.

...After supposedly landing on the moon, passengers left the spaceship to explore its caverns and grottoes, where they met giants and midgets in moon-men costumes, the Man in the Moon upon his throne, and dancing moon maidens, who pressed bits of green cheese upon them as souvenirs of the lunar voyage. The "Trip to the Moon" was thus an especially elaborate ride promoting a sense of fantasy and escape.

But it doesn't seem like something serious, based on scientific speculations like the ones in Kyiv and Moscow. It was a fun amusement ride. I also know that the British Interplanetary Society (founded in 1933) in the 1930s had a couple of smaller displays at the London Science Museum

for inventions they had designed related to space travel.

A little more on space before I run out of...space. It's more from the newspaper vaults of Royal library in Stockholm, which I scrutinised prior to the Virus From Outer Space. I'll translate and/or summarise (marked "/>") a few things from Swedish newspapers (and those knowing the lingo can hopefully read the original clips). One of my oldest finds was from Göteborgs Allehanda December 18, 1905:

Publisher Wahlström & Widstrand delivers a youth novel sure to interest readers among boys, and let's hope also girls- it would do them good to come to know Oskar Hoffmann. Among Martians depicts a fantastic, but very captivating trip by some Englishmen to the red planet Mars through a strange airship, as their aim is to expand the English colonies in that direction. But that comes to nothing. Mars with a culture 10 000s of years older than Earth's can fend off any earthly ambitions.

WAHLSTRÖM & WIDSTRANDS FÖRLAG skickar ut en ungdomsbok, som säkert får en intresserad läsekrets af gossar och, låtom oss hoppas äfven af flickor — det skulle friska upp dem att göra bekantskap med Oskar Hoffmanns

Bland **Marsmänniskor**, som skildrar en vidunderlig, men ytterst fängslande färd till den röda planeten Mars företagen medelst ett konstigt flygekepp af några engelsmän, som ha ingenting mer och ingenting mindre i kikarn, än att utvidga Englands kolonier åt det hållet. Därpå blir dock intet. Mars, hvars kultur är tiotusen år äldre än jordens, kan allt värja sig för alla jordiska rådslag. Pris kr. 3.25.

A little googling tells me the original was titled *Die fremde Welt Mars - Roman aus dem Jahre 1913* (The Alien World Mars - Novel from the Year 1913) and that Hoffmann is believed to be one of the authors behind the at the time very popular German booklet series about the "air pirate" Captain Mors. Jess Nevins covers it in more detail

<https://ratmmjess.tripod.com/mors.html>

We stay on Mars and go to Svenska Dagbladet, Aug 8 1936, in *"Inhabited worlds"*:

Is the question about life in the universe and living beings on other heavenly bodies an astronomical problem? Or a biological? Or it may not be a scientific problem at all? The last would mean it can't be decided with recognised scientific tools and thus must be thrown on that junkyard where all uncomfortable ideas tend to be hidden. /Alien life has interested both artists and scientists, in older times with unscientific speculations/ From Lucian's lying A True Tale to HG Wells' shaking battles of War of the Worlds a number of authors have in their own ways treated the subject...Professor Knut Lundmark has in an earlier work, Life in Universe (1926), made an interesting and entertaining description of the sometimes valuable but usually totally worthless descriptions of life on other planets in earlier times.../it goes/ in three directions. The first is those who treat the subject from a strict science viewpoint and seriously deal with the conditions for life in the universe from philosophical biological and astronomical facts. Then there are great many literary works by authors who don't care about the science and give their imagination a free run. Finally there are a number of utopian or satirical works written to criticise conditions on our own planet, which can only be called the best of worlds if it is the only inhabited by living, intelligent beings. /We don't know if Earth alone has life but it seems improbable. Organic life has narrow conditions, and inhabited worlds must be very few compared to uninhabited. But it requires aliens are built from the same substances as we./ If you let your imagination loose you can stipulate newts living in fire and accept beings on the surface of the sun, where the temperature is 6000 degrees, or on Jupiter with an atmosphere of ammonia and other very poisonous gases. But such speculations are of no use. We can only investigate life under the conditions we know about. All experience is also against big variations in the building blocks of organic or non-organic matter in different parts of the universe. Space to the degree with

we this far have been able to explore it is impressive with its uniformity. Its true that stars are very varied. We know of very hot and very cold suns, enormous "super-giants" and dwarf suns so small that they are hardly bigger than Earth. There are light and heavy stars. Some of them are so thin that our atmosphere is thousands of times thicker while others are so compact that a ton of their matter will fit in a thimble. Most suns perhaps travel alone in the desolate space, but we know of thousands two, three, four and other multi-systems, star groups on borderline to be planetary systems and star clusters with hundreds and in some cases hundred of thousands of members. But there is unity in the diversity and all are made of the same materials...we know of 90 elements on Earth and haven't found any new in the sky. The composition of stars is identified through their spectrum, where every element have certain bands and lines. The identification can be very difficult and for a while they thought that gas nebulas contained the unknown elements nebium and arktogenium. Now we know that the lines for these hypothetical substances comes from well-known substances on Earth, mainly oxygen, with a spectrum that is modified at the extremely low pressure in the nebulas. It's strange that there are the same elements everywhere, but even stranger that they are in approximately the same proportions. Quantitive spectrum analysis is yet not very developed and its result are uncertain. The meteorites that fall from the sky are of the same material as Earth's crust and have the same composition, and that even the ratio between the "isotope" mix is exactly unaltered isn't so strange. The meteorites may have common origin as Earth and possibly come from the same nebula. That the sun and her planets have common origin is likely, but more important is that far away stars are proportionally the same as here. The conclusion isn't surprising. The universe is a work of a big master and as all masterpieces it has unity. The noted proportions between elements on Earth's surface have many strange and hard to explain properties. The rule discovered by Harkins is especially enigmatic, saying elements with even numbers are more common than those with uneven, a rule that also holds for the sun and meteorites. But this seemingly mystical rule probably comes from the build-up of the atoms coming from yet unknown conditions of balance. /AE: No doubt because their electron shell is full, so they are more stable.../ And these are probably universal, independent of time and space. This unity is important for life in the universe, which is built by carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen. If the universe is constructed from a unified basic plan it seems probable that all bodies that have any chance for having living organisms are inhabited by beings of the same chemical build-up. Carbon has a special position with its ability to combine with other elements and lets this element build protoplasm. But beware of hasty conclusions. Its possible that other elements like silicon or titanium can replace coal on alien globes, where the physical, chemical, mineralogical and meteorological conditions are much different from Earth.

Nature often follows the recipe from Kajsa Warg /famous Swedish cookbook author/: You take what you got. Earthlings are created according Earth conditions, but we don't know to what degree life can change appearance from the environment. Prof Lundmark even thinks it is possible living beings can be formed from radioactive elements like eg zirconium. The fact we don't know of any "radium plants" or "zirconium animals" on Earth, he says, is that the first are very short-lived and the last can't thrive on a planet where other elements needed are so rare as on Earth. The very small amount of those we have on Earth are perhaps remnants you could argue that so called anaerobe bacteria, which unlike all other living beings on Earth can't stand oxygen, could have come from Venus, the "carbon dioxide planet". If life doesn't need a special "life

Bebodda världar.

Av
ANSGAR ROTH.

Är frågan om livets utbredning i världsallet och levande varelsers förekomst på främmande himlakroppar ett astronomiskt problem? Eller ett biologiskt? Eller är det kanske alls inte något vetenskapligt problem? Det sistnämnda skulle betyda att frågan över hurvid färo kan avgöras med exakta vetenskapliga hjälpmedel och folklättig bor förvisat till den aktråpkanmare, där alla obevåarna ider-plåga stuvats enlitan. Frågan om världarnas belevohet har alltid väckt stort intresse såväl bland allmänheten som hos åktare och forskare, vilka gemensligen behandlat problemet ur filosofiska eller religiösa, mera sällan ur biologiska eller astronomiska synpunkter. Problemet har, särskild i äldre tider, ofta rötat en ovetenskaplig behandling, varvid nar eller mindre fantasiska spektiononer fått ersätta bristen på faktisk kunskap, och har därigenom råkat i misskredit bland vetenskapmännen. Från Lukanos' ornatliga åggnaktiga "Sanna historier" till H. G. Wells skakande bataljmalningar av "Världarnas krig" ha en lång rad fantasifulla författare behandlat problemet, var och en efter sitt huvud, varvid de i

KNUT LUNDMARK: Livets vilde. Till frågan om världarnas belevohet. Första delen. Bonniers.

Sv. D. 8—36.
med solen kunna förmådas vara bogt-vade med drabantor, visar, att villkoren för det organiska livets förekomst äro mycket snäva och sällan uppfyllda. Jordklotet är med största sannolikhet icke något unikum, utan torde ha otaliga gelikar i universum, såväl i Vintergatan som i främmande stjärnsystem. Men de bebodda världskloten måste vara så ytterst få i jämförelse med de obebodda och obeboeliga.
Denna slutsats vilar på förutsättningen att villkoren för liv alltid och öfverallt äro desamma, så att alla levande varelser — även de som t. ex. ha sin tillvaro på ett obekant planet, som kretsar kring en av Andromedanebulosans solar — äro danade av ämnenstone i stort sett samma ämnen som jordvärldarna och existera under likartade fysikaliska, kemiska och fysiologiska betingelser. Om man ger fantasien fritt spelrum, kan man ju antaga tillvaron av salamandrar som leva i elfden och medga existensen av varelser på solens yta, vars temperatur uppgår till 6000 grader, eller på Jupiter, vars atmosfär utgöres av ammoniak och andra ytterst giftiga gaser. Men dylika spektioner äro orökbara. Vi kunna endast undersöka möjligheten av liv under de villkor, som vi känna. All erfarenhet talar dessutom starkt emot möjligheten av stora variationer i den organiska eller oorganiska materiens byggnad i olika delar av universum.
Världsallet, i den utsträckningen vi hittills kunnat utforska, imponerar framför allt genom sin enhetlighet i e f. Det är sant att stjärnornas värld förer en mycket växlande bild. Men känner utomordentligt heta och mycket kallt solar, ofantligt vidsträckt "överbjättar" och dvärgsolar så små att de äro

föga större än jorden. Det finns lätta och tunga stjärnor. Många av dem äro så glea att luften vid jordytan är tusentals gånger tätare, medan andra äro så kompakta att ett ton av materien får rum i en fingerborg. De flesta solar gå kanse ensamma fram i den ödliga rymden, men vi känna tusentals två-, tre-, fy- eller mångubbla stjärnor, stjärngrupper som stå på gränsen till planetysiem och stjärnhopar med hundratals eller i vissa fall t. o. m. hundratusentals medlemmar.
Men enhet råder i mångfalden och alla himlakroppar äro uppbyggda av samma material. Samma grundämnen, som förekomma vid vår lilla planets yta och i dess atmosfär, ha påvisats i alla kroppar — planeter, kometer, meteoror, solar, stjärnor, nebulosor — från våra närmaste grannar till de mest avlägsna vintergatorna på ett avstånd av flera hundra millioner ljusår. Vi känna 90 grundämnen på jorden och ha inte upptäckt några fler på himlen. Stjärnornas och nebulosornas sammansättning analyseras med hjälp av deras spektra, där varje element representeras av vissa karakteristiska linjer eller band. Identifieringen kan stöta på stora svårigheter, om man trodde en tid att gasnebulosorna innehölle obekanta grundämnen, nebulium och arktogenium. Numera veta man att de linjer, som tillskrevs dessa hypotetiska substanser, alstras av på jorden välbekanta ämnen, framför allt syre, vars spektrum modifieras vid det utomordentligt låga tryck som råder i gasnebulosorna.
Att samma element förekomma öfverallt i rymden är märkligt. Men ännu märkligare är, att dessa städe uppträda i ungefär samma inbördes proportioner. Den kvantitativa spektralanalysen är

konstigt utvecklad och dess resultat osäkra. Att de från himlen nedfallna meteorstenarna bestå av samma material som jordskorpan och ha precis samma byggnad, så att t. o. m. förhållandet mellan de "isotoper" beståndsdelarna av s. k. blandelement är o x a k t oförändrat, är väl inte så anmärkningsvärt. Meteorerna ha kanske samma ursprung som jorden och härstamma möjligen från samma urnebulosa. Att solen och alla omgivande planeter äro enhetligt uppbyggda, förefaller av samma skäl naturligt — ehuru den gemensamma härkomsten ingalunda är bevisad. Viktigare är att stjärnorna i Vintergatan, ja även de mest avlägsna spiralnebulosor, synas vara uppbyggda av samma ämnen i alla delar. Detta bevisas genom sina egna spektra, som i de flesta fall sammanfalla med de spektra som vi på jorden ha fått i våra teleskop. Det har visat sig, att de mest fjärrbelägna vintergator ha samma genomslutande färg som vårt stjärnsystem, och det är därför troligt, om än icke exakt bevisat, att himlakropparna öfverallt i rymden äro danade av samma material och formade enligt samma lagar som i vår lilla vrå av universum.
Slutsatsen är egentligen inte öfverraskande. Universum är verket av en stor mästars hand och bör som alla mästerverke en enhetlig prägel. Den på jordytan iaktagna proportionen mellan grundämnen har många egendomliga och svår-förklarliga drag. Särskilt påfall förfaller den av Harkins upptäckta regeln, enligt vilken element med jämna ordningstal äro vanligare än ödda — en regel som håller strock även på solen och för meteoriterna. Men denna skenbart mysteriska lag är säkerligen betingad av atomernas lag i byggnaden, som regleras av ännu okända jämviktsvillkor. Och dessa äro med all sannolikhet universella, med av tid och rum oberoende giltiga

regler. Världsallets materiella enhetlighet hårdar. De ytterst små mängder av liv som vi på jorden ha fått, äro kanske rentav rester av varelser, som en gång fallit ned på jordklotet, men ej kunnat utvecklas här, utan gått sin un-dergång till mötes. Av liknande skäl kan man tänka sig, att de s. k. anaeroba bakterier, som, i motsats till alla andra levande varelser på jorden, icke kunna utåthåda syre, ha kommit hit från Venns, "kolsyreplaneterna". Om livet icke kräver någon speciell "livskraft", utan kan reproducera sig till rent kemiska processer, kan man knappast avvisa möjligheten av att livet kan vara bundet vid andra ämnen än kolföreningar.
Kunna varelser från främmande världsklot hamna på jorden eller livsfrån från vår planet öfverföras till andra himlakroppar? Denna fråga, som är av väsentlig betydelse för livets utbredning i universum, besvarar professor Lundmark med ja. En stor del av hans nyigen utgivna omfångsrika bok, "Livets valde", ägnas åt möjligheten av en interplanetarisk och interstjärn eller t. o. m. "intergalaktisk" trafik genom världsrymden. I bokens nu föreliggande första del är det inte fråga om transport av vuxna passagerare — detta intressanta kapitel kommer i den andra delen — utan blott av småpartiklar: stoffkorn, mikroorganismer, växtsporer och livsfrön. Låran om panspermien, som Lundmark närmast öfverfört från Svante Arrhenius, har vunnit i sannolikhet, sedan det visats att de små organismerna icke blott kunna befordras genom ljus-trycket och stötas bort av elektriska krafter, utan även öfverföras med meteoriterna. Visseligen har man inte med säkerhet kunnat påvisa förekomsten av levande bakterier i meteoritstnar eller kosmiska stoftpartiklar, men möjligheten av

force" but can be reduced to purely chemical processes, you can't exclude the possibility that it can be tied to something else than carbon compounds. Could beings from alien planets end up on Earths or life seeds be transferred? This question of big importance for life in the universe was answered by a Yes by professor Lundmark. Much of his recent, thick book *The Realm of Life* deals with the possibility of interplanetary even interstellar or intergalactic traffik through space. It is in the now published first part not transportation of adult passenger - this interesting chapter will come in the second part - but of small particles, dust, microorganisms, plant spores and seeds of life. The *panspermia* hypothesis of is something Lundmark has inherited from Svante Arrhenius, and has gained in credibility since it has shown that the small organisms not only can travel through the light pressure and be repelled by electric forces, but also be transported by meteorites. We haven't with certainty been able to show the presence of living bacteria in meteorite rocks or cosmic dust, but it is a possibility.

(Some words seem missing in the end, but I think it was so in the newspaper. SvD used 7 columns to a page at the time - I checked - so the 7 columns I have should be what was printed.) From life in space to perhaps the end of life on Earth. Dagens Nyheter was November 12 1945 very quick with presenting the idea of nuclear rockets, "*Phantom weapons for USA - Atomic Projectiles from 'spaceships'*":

The commander of the US air force, General Arnold, believes US air must become as an efficient in spying and surveillance as possible and in peacetime have access to complete and modern plans for destroying strategically important cities, industries and military targets with atomic bombs in every possible enemy state. It's from the general's official report to secretary of war Patterson concerning US air force operations during 1945. "V2 is a type of weapon that is ideal for transporting atomic explosives," Arnold writes. "If any countermeasures are developed against such projectiles moving av 4800 km/h, we must be ready to launch them closer to target, give them short flying time and make them more difficult to discover and destroy. We must be ready to launch them from unexpected directions. This can be done with real 'spaceships' that can operate outside Earth's atmosphere. It is already almost possible to construct such ships. Technical research will surely be able to in the foreseeable future. The general openly discusses possibilities of a new war and writes: "With present equipment an enemy air force can without any prior warning get pass all defences."

Interesting that he knew it was "almost possible" to construct spaceships. (The article continues but I didn't save that.) By this time it was still possible to speculate about Martians, because while it was known that Mars' atmosphere was thin (passing stars weren't dimmed much) but not how incredibly thin it was. This made it possible to speculate "*Are There People on Mars?*", as in Söderhamns Tidning, February 23, 1948. The new 200-inch telescope of Mnt Palomar was coming to help, which is described in the start, and then:

...The canals of Mars have never been clearly observable by anything but the human eyes. Photoes taken by telescopes only shown fuzzy lines, that both can or can't be canals. What so far has stopped photos is that there is air on Mars and decreasing brightness. They have tried time-exposure, but Earth's air layers cause shaking and make the picture out of focus. With the new telescope Mars will be filmed. Every exposure last 1/16th of a second. And on some of the many frames they hope to get a picture at a moment when the shaking has stopped. The vibrations move up and down and back and forth. If you get a picture just as the move shifts they belive the canals will be seen clearly. They have been able to count and map about 800 canals with a length between 160 and 3000 km. Almost all are stright, which they have explained by that they are dug by Martians. This theory is also supported by another observation. Many canals go in a north to south direction. Others cut through in 45 to 90 degrees angle and almost always they continue at the other side. A river never does that. Some 'canals' go to the white caps at the North and South Poles of Mars. They retreat during summer, as if it's snow melting. In spring a blue-green colour emerges - possibly vegetation - from the poles.. It is known that Mars is a very dry planet, and some astronomers believes the canals are built for irrigation. As snow melts in the spring the vegetation follows the water form the poles. They hope the new

FANTOMVAPEN FÖR U.S.A.
Atomprojektiler
från "rymdskepp"

TT fr. Reuter. WASHINGTON, söndag.

Chefen för Förenta staternas flygvapen, general Arnold, anser att det amerikanska flyget bör ha ett så effektivt spioneri- och under-rättelseväsen som möjligt och under fredstid förfoga över fullständiga och moderna planer på att med atombomber och andra vapen förstöra alla strategiskt viktiga städer samt industriella och militära anläggningar i varje tänkbar fiendestat.

Detta framgår av generalens officiella rapport till krigsminister Patterson rörande det amerikanska flygets operationer under år 1945. "V-2 är en vapentyp som idealiskt lämpar sig för transport av atomsprängämnen, eftersom det skulle bli ytterst svårt att frambringa något effektivt försvar mot den", skriver Arnold. "Om det utvecklas några försvarsmedel mot sådana projektiler som rör sig med en hastighet av 4.800 km i timmen, måste vi vara redo att sända i väg dem närmare målet, ge dem kortare flygtid och göra dem svårare att upptäcka och förstöra. Vi måste vara redo att sända i väg dem från oväntade riktningar. Detta kan göras med verkliga 'rymdskepp', som kan operera utanför jordens atmosfär. Det är redan nu nästan möjligt att konstruera sådana skepp, och den tekniska forskningen kommer säkert att kunna göra det inom överskådlig framtid."

Generalen diskuterar öppet möjligheten av ett nytt krig och skriver: "Med nuvarande utrustning kan en fientlig flygmakt utan föregående varning passera alla tidigare tänkta för-





Världen och Vi

Finns det människor på Mars?

Det väldiga nya teleskopet på Mount Palomar i Kalifornien, som nu börjat tas i bruk, väntas kunna ge svar på frågan om vi lever i ett universum utan gränser. Det är endast de största vetenskapliga gåtorna detta teleskop skall lösa åt.

Med detta teleskop, vars fem meterarspegel är dubbelt så stor som världens hittills största, ämnar astronomerna till att börja med finna »kanalerna» på Mars, vars gåta så länge intresserat vetenskapen.

Vad astronomerna väntar sig av det nya jätte teleskopet skildras av William Skilling i en astronomisk tidskrift, »Sky and Telescope».

Kanalerna på Mars har aldrig kunnat uppfattas klart annat än av människor. Fotografier som tagits med hjälp av teleskop visar endast suddiga linjer, som både kan och inte kan vara kanaler. Vad som hittills hindrat fotografering med gott resultat är att det finns någon luft på Mars, vilket minskar ljusstyrkan. Man har försökt med exponering på tid, men jordens luftlager orsakar dallringar och gör bilden oskarp.

Med det stora nya teleskopet skall man filmfotografiera Mars. Varje bildexponering varar 1/16 sekund, och på någon av de många rutorna på filmremsan hoppas man få en bild

just i det ögonblick då ljuset uppträder. Vibrationerna rör sig uppåt och nedåt och från ena sidan till den andra. För man en bild just som rörelserikningen växlar, tror man att kanalerna skall framträda tydligt.

Man har kunnat räkna och kartlägga omkring 800 kanaler av en längd mellan 100 och 3.000 km. Någon alla är raka, vilket man velat förklara med att de är anlagda av »Marsmänniskor».

Denna teori stöder också en annan räknelinje. Många av kanalerna går i nord-sydlig riktning. Andre skär dem i 45 till 90 graders vinkel och många alltså rätvinkliga linjer. Detta på andra sidan skärningspunkten. En teori gör det tydligt.

Linjerna tycks också utgå från samma punkt. En teori säger att de är anlagda av människor. En teori säger att de är anlagda av människor. En teori säger att de är anlagda av människor.

En del kanaler går fram till de vita hötterna vid nord- och sydpolen på Mars. Dessa hötter drar sig tillbaka om sommaren, som om de var smält som snö. På vintern utgår en tillron från — möjligen vegetation — från polerna. Det är känt att Mars är en mycket torr planet och vissa astronomer tror att kanalerna är anlagda för bevattningssändning. De satsningarna

börjar om våren, följer vegetationen vattnets väg från polerna.

Om denna teori är hållbar är vad man hoppas kunna avgöra genom fotografering med det nya jätte teleskopet.

En annan gåta, som man hoppas få svar på är vad som händer i universums »yttersta gränser», d. v. s. vid de punkter som utgjort en gräns för människans observationsförmåga hittills. Palomarteleskopet kommer att flytta den »yttersta gränsen» dubbelt så långt bort.

Den stora gåtan där är nebulosorna, de stjärnsamlingar, som vardera är lika stora som Vintergatan. De är knappt synliga på fotografi. Enstaka stjärnor kan inte urskiljas på dem.

Varje nebulosa tycks vara på väg bort från jorden med fruktansvärd hastighet, 3.000 km i sekunden eller mer. Inte ens en atombombexplosion sker med sådan hastighet.

Sedan detta fenomen upptäcktes för 20 år sedan, har vetenskapen frågat: Håller universum på att utvidga sig? Eller exploderar det?

Fem meter teleskopet kan ge svaret. Det kommer att mäta avståndet till dessa stjärnsamlingar till 100000, och det kommer att ge nya stjärnvärder, om det finns sådana, dubbelt så långt ut i världsrymden. Därpå kanske man finner svaret på de båda frågorna.

Om dessa ännu avlägsnare världar rör sig från jorden, är deras hastighet ännu högre. Ju större avstånd, desto större hastighet, är regeln. Detta innebär hastigheter, som närmar sig ljets. Därför kommer en mindre del av deras ljus att nå fram till teleskopets öga. Denna ljusreduktion blir 30 till 40 procent.

Om denna ljusreduktion kan konstateras, avser man att teorin om universums explosion bekräftas, och man kan igen sig åt att söka efter orsaken.

Ännu fall får man söka efter en annan förklaring till gåtan.

giant telescope will tell if this theory holds. Another riddle they hope will be answered is what happens at the "ultimate limit" of the universe, ie at the points that limit human observations. The Palomar telescope will double the "ultimate limit". The big mystery are the nebulas, the star collections each as big as the Milky Way. They are hardly visible on photos. Single stars can't be seen in them. Each nebula seems to be leaving us with a terrible speed, 3000 km/s or more. Not even an atomic explosion happens with such a speed. After this was discovered 20 years ago science have asked: Is the universe expanding? Or is it exploding? The 5-metre telescope will half the distance to these star worlds and it will see new star worlds, if there are such, twice as far out in the universe. The answer to both riddles may be out there. If these worlds even further way from Earth also move the rule says their speed will be even higher. The bigger the distance, the higher the speed. It'll mean speeds approaching the speed of light. It means a smaller portion of the light will reach the eye of the telescope.

The reduction will normally be 30 to 40 percent. If this light reduction is confirmed, they believe the theory of the universe exploding is confirmed, and they can begin looking for the cause.

Not that I know the difference between the universe expanding and exploding (maybe "exploding" is just a faster expansion?). In later year astronomers have to their amazement found the expansion is accelerating! More Mars. Dagens Nyheter had found a Swedish Martian! "Swedish Martian will be engaged in London", April 13 1948:

Two Englishmen in theatre are here watching Stockholm in the spring sun: it's the London director Charles Hickman and London actor Roy Dean here on a quick visit. Mr Rickman is on the hunt for a tall and handsome Swedish actor with acceptable English pronunciation who would consider accepting top billing in a new play, "The Ambassador from Mars", to be staged in London sometime in the spring. With some good will this task of playing a Martian could be a compliment to Swedish acting. Mr Dean, who has taken time off from his engagements in theatre, radio and TV, says he is especially fond of radio - rehearsals are through in 3-4 days. TV is much more expensive: four weeks preparation for half an hour of appearance. But actors don't any longer have to stand the death-like make-up you have seen in pictures from TV recordings; the apparatus has now been perfected to the degree that no make-up at all is needed. BTW, the two gentlemen were enthusiastic about the achievements by Mai Zetterling. She'll shortly be in her latest English film "Sarabande for Dead Lovers" playing against Stewart Granger / <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0040758/>, historical costume drama/ We can only wish them luck in the hunt for a typical Swedish Martian. Caption: Actor Roy Dean, to the left, and director Charles Hickman.

Unfortunately I can't find any info about this play, so I guess they never found their Swedish Martian and it was cancelled. I would have suggested they could try the tall comedian - used to play very strange parts - Marti(a)n Ljung! A real star who had just begun his career at the time.



Martian Ljung as spaceman

Martians or not, the real space age began later (and we also learn about a French sf film). We read in Svenska Dagbladet, November 6, 1957, how pranksters were early on the move, "Re. Sputnik":

Svensk Marsmänniska får Londonengagemang



Skådespelaren Roy Dean, till vänster, och regissören Charles Hickman.

Två engelska teatermänningar är här och tittar på Stockholm i värsol: det är Londonregissören Charles Hickman och den skådespelaren Roy Dean som har kommit över på en snabbvisit. Mr. Hickman är på jakt efter en lång och ställig svensk skådespelare med acceptabelt engelskt uttal som skulle kunna tänkas åta sig huvudrollen i en ny pjäs, "The Ambassador from Mars", som kommer upp i London någon gång på vårkanten. Med litet god vilja kanske man kan få detta uppdrag att spela Marsmänniska till en komplimang för svensk skådespelarkonst.

Mr. Dean, som har tagit sig ledigt från sina teater-, radio- och televisionengagemang, berättar att han är speciellt förtjust i radioframträdanden — repetitionerna är undanstötade på tre, fyra dagar. Däremot är television åtskilligt mera påkostande: fyra veckors förberedelser för en halvtimmes framträdande. Men den dödsliknande make open som man sett på bildor från televisioninspelningar behöver de stackars skådespelarna tydligen inte dras med längre; apparaterna har nu fulländats därhän att det inte behövs någon sminkning alls. För övrigt var båda herrarna överförtjusta i Mai Zetterlings presentationer. Hon kommer nu snart i sin senaste engelska film, "Sarabande for Dead Lovers", där hon spelar mot Stewart Granger.

Och så är det bara att önska lycka till på jakten efter typiskt svenska Marsmänniskor.

A Sputnik prank recently took place in Montbrison in Loire. There were much worry among the local gendarmes, who sealed the place off, until the joke was revealed. What happened was that a hollow metal rod with 58 cm diameter and inscriptions of Russian letters fell down on the main road. When the gendarmes disarmed the piece they discovered four electric batteries that produced a sound that resembled Sputnik's "bip-bip". Later it was found that the thing had been dropped from an aeroplane by a couple of honorable persons who wanted to film how it fell through the air to let the proceeds from the film go to the elderly of Loire... * A shiny metal globe with the inscription "Sputnik USSR" has fallen down near the little village Höland in mid Norway. The globe was made of aluminium, had a weight of 300 grams and a diameter of 30 cm. It contained no instruments at all. According to the finders it seems like the sphere had hung under a balloon. The police don't yet know who the joker is who launched the fake satellite. * The singer Charles Trenet is right now writing an operetta set in an sf environment, "The Fantastic Rocket". He has already 14 pages of a score and is also writing the libretto together with Raymond Vici. It is expected to open in November on the Chatelet theater in Paris. The singer intends to leave his Paris audience for a while and settle on the Canaries to finish the operetta.

Unfortunately I can't find any info on "The Fantastic Rocket" so it may have been canned too.

Now, taking about space this has now already taken up too much of that! I know how much you want more and more *Intermission* but this must soon end, for this time. I have more stuff on space - and Musk promises to launch Starship RSN! - so I may return to the subject, and maybe give you a ride through Coney Islands "Trip to the Moon".

Now something for the APAs I let this sneak into. First EAPA, the N'APA, and...Why don't you do a fanzine and join! Doing PDFs is easy and fun! Fanzines should reclaim their position as the backbone of fandom. Twitter-Schmitter, Fjuckbook and such are totally inferior. Smell the (virtual) corflu! See the mimeo ink stains spread! Publigo, ergo sum! I publish, therefore I am.

Mailing Comments

Henry Grynsten: Another great issue! ★★ Both you and Garth ask if there is "a tool to describe levels of complexity" (All quotes in orange.) There is, it's called entropy. High entropy means high disorder, ie things are randomly thrown around and dispersed. If you order things in structures, make it more complex, you lower the entropy. ★★ Growth is for getting resources to solve problems. You ask "how much is enough?" The answer is: until problems are solved. Solving problems will of course make people happier. You say you back progress in medicine, science, technology, and that's areas where more resources/growth are very useful. I don't think we should put too much trust in reported "levels of happiness", for many reasons: 1) It relies on subjective self-reporting, very unreliable, 2) what "happiness" is, psychologically, shifts over time, 3) other indicators say happiness rise by objective measurements! Eg suicide rates decreased in the US (and also Sweden) the years you speak of, even if it was only a slight decrease. And about economic growth, our low-hanging fruits only lasted until the 1930s, well before 1970. Besides, I believe growth is more difficult with simpler technology. Hitech is more powerful. ★★ "More smokers, the more people who get ill, the more it costs for health care...taxes will have to be raised" I'm not so sure, the government will also pay much less in pensions for those who die earlier, and pensions is one heck of a lot of money! But I think there are also hard to measure secondary effects from not limiting politicians' ambitions to meddle with people's lives. Such things make people unhappy, they'll be less creative and it's quite possible other illnesses comes from it. ★★ "as societies become more complex, the more care it takes to manage them." It could very well be - it's even likely! - complexity makes it more impossible to manage everything from the top by politicians. Complexity needs more automatic systems, the automatic adjustments done daily by the millions as people interact

Varlden en period

Ang. "Sputnik"

Ett sputnikskämt anordnades häromdagen nära Montbrison i Loire. Innan skämtet avslöjades rådde stor oro bland traktens gendarmar, som företog avspärrningar. Vad som hände var att en ihållig metallstav av 58 centimeters diameter och med en inskription av ryska bokstäver dunsade ned på stora ländsvägen. När gendarmerna desarmade pjäsen upptäckte de fyra elektriska batterier, vilka producerade ett ljud som påminde om Sputniks "bip-bip". Så småningom befunns det att pjäsen hade släppts ned från ett flygplan av ett par hedervärda personer som ville filma pjäsens fall genom luften för att sedan låta inkomsterna av filmen gå till de gamla i Loire... (Paris, Marg.).

△

En blank metallglob med inskriptionen "Sputnik USSR" har fallit ned i närheten av den lilla byn Höland i mellersta Norge. Globen var gjord av aluminium, vägde 300 gram och hade en diameter av 30 centimeter. Den innehöll inga som helst instrument. Enligt uppgifterna verkar det som om sfären skulle ha hängt under en ballong. Polisen vet ännu inte vilken skämtare som skickat upp den falska satelliten. (Oslo, Marg.).

△

Sångaren Charles Trenet är just nu i full färd med att skriva en operett i science fiction-miljö. "Den fantastiska raketen". Han har redan komponerat 14 partitursidor av musiken och skriver också själv libretton tillsammans med Raymond Vici. Premiären väntas bli i november nästa år på Chatelet-teatern i Paris. Sångaren tänker lämna sin parispublik och slå sig ned på Kanarieöarna en tid för att fullborda operetten. (Paris, Marg.).

among themselves and decide over their own lives. "Regulations and bureaucracy grow organically according to the needs". I think it grows psychologically, not organically, from built in ideas in the heads of politicians', ambitions to grow their influence, thinking they know better than common folks. ★★ "1961, electronic typewriters with LCD displays and a small memory arrived" I think you mean 1981. LCDs weren't around in 1961 and computer memory was small and expensive. BTW, I like typewriters. Manual ones will work after Vladimir has pressed the button and electricity is out. I understand that some still prefer typewriters to computers and the increased interest in those brave little machines is interesting. (One who still uses them is our local bestseller giant Jan Guillou.) ★★ A static society may be stable, but can't adapt to new challenges, disasters, and unexpected developments. If you are used to change you can adapt and survive. That's a good point with sf literature. Sf prepares us for change - sf is literature about change. ★★ "You can't make shirts and canned goods or build houses out of electricity". In a way, you can! Adding energy fights entropy. And this means the molecules for eg shirts that have been used and spread can be gathered together again and make a new shirt! You just need energy and some ingenuity. ★★ "Half of the topsoil of the Earth has been lost in the last 150 years". I'm not sure that figure is correct. I wonder if the environmentalists claims around this includes all crop-growing areas voluntarily abandoned due to urbanisation (and no longer needed since modern farming produces much more on less soil). New topsoil is constantly produced too! Note how the environmentalists cheats in claims of how much water is "needed" to grow this or that. Here they also count the rain falling that just goes through the soil without being involved in plant growth. ★★ What few tell about is that the plastic "island" in the Pacific is shrinking and "micro plastics" is just a intermediate state for it to degrade into its original molecules and atoms. Even if plastic decays slowly, it does decay. It dissolves from eg plastic attacking bacteria, UV light and chemical processes. (And that's why the Pacific "plastic island" shrinks.) As for chemicals in our body, it's no problem as long as the levels are low and below risk levels. Remember: the poison is in the dosis! ★★ About humanity's future, utopia etc, it's best not to make any long-term plans. Just look at what is right ahead and deal with that. Make sure you have means and resources to deal with what you know about but wait for what happens next. Deal with new things as they turn up, but to know the future is very difficult. You can't deal with something 50 years ahead. Many factors will have changed long before that. Think of how the Swedish navy in the early 19th Century planted oak for their sailing ships 200 years in the future. They failed to imagine that steel and steam was coming. Always prepare for change! Long-term planning is a waste. ★★ "it is becoming increasingly likely that civilization, if not humanity, is going to crash in the near future. Certainly it will not last another 1,000 years, and maybe less than 100 years." Pessimist! OK, I'll give you there is a possibility (low, I hope!) that stinking Mr P in Kremlin may press the Button (upon which we'll all need manual typewriters again). But that's the only viable scenario of humanity's collapse. Environmentalist fanatics are wrong, for instance. The environment has become markedly better in later decades, urbanisation means lots of land go back to nature, population stalls and will begin to shrink ca 2050, we use resources increasingly more efficient, atoms aren't lost and can be recycled...and of course, the small climate variations we see are mostly due to changes in the the sun's magnetic field.

Roger Sjölander: Interesting article by Mats D Linder, but as many know I don't agree with his environmentalism. I have detailed my opinions many times (as in previous paragraph) and I'd be exhausted if even tried to comment everything in Mats' piece. ★★ Interesting about ticket lines and dancing. BTW my music is virtually everything, except rap, hophop and disturbing noise on today's radio top list. I have special soft spots for 1970's rock and "sunkedelic" music, as reported in earlier Intermissions.

William McCabe: Right, don't give people more guns! Constant mass shootings in the US show the risks. There's also shootings in Sweden, though few compared to the US. (It's drug gangs shooting each other, using guns smuggled from former Yugoslavia.) ★★ Boris was a fool having parties during lockdowns! Embarrassing! However, he is right in supporting Ukraine. Which will carry most weight, one wonders? ★★ What fiction for print did you have published? I'd like to read it, if possible. Why not reprint it here? ★★ Communism is actually the same age as all other political movements! Liberalism (Euro-Liberalism, not how

the word "liberal" is used in the US) came in the 19th century about the same time as Marx sat and cheated and cherry-picked in his "class" research. Communism was said to be "science" (ha-ha!) and perfect from the beginning. It wasn't. They tried. And failed. Tried once more. Failed. They tried and failed again and again. The basic principles of communism guarantee failure! It has always led to oppression since collectivism needs oppression. It gives a rigid dysfunctional society economy, since planned economy is inefficient. Communism has had plenty of time to "evolve" but it started in a double-ended cul-de-sac it's stuck. ★★ Frome's diary hinted at suicide. But without seeing any medical reports we can't be 100% sure. It could have been eg carbon monoxide poisoning. Wales is coal country. Local newspapers of the time may have more info.

Garth Spencer: The world will slowly get more economically integrated, cooperation between nations will increase (despite setbacks like crazy wars). We might get something like a weak



Full steam ahead with artist Lars LON Olsson!

"world government" if we wait a century or two. But what we need more is to empower individual citizen. Governments should be relatively weak, you must have more to say yourself! ★ ★ No point in turning radiation into electricity via panels, because the energy output from ordinary radioactivity is very weak. You can turn the output up by using expensive and dangerous substances like plutonium, used to power some space probes (basically like "radiation panels"). But you don't want plutonium laying around. ★ ★ Vancouver seems to be a very colourful city!

Heath Row: I think both James Bond and Mission Impossible very often qualify as skiffy. ★ ★ Can non-LASFSians be members of APA-L? ★ ★ I've read some sf by L Ron. He was a competent but not exceptional hack. His To the Stars playing around with Einsteinian time dilation wasn't too bad. He wrote a series about "Ole Doc Methuselah" which was translated in our sf mag Håpna! in the 1950's, and I vaguely remember them as readable. What annoys me however is that the scientology gang tries to raise him to the level of Heinlein, Asimov, Anderson and others. (Yes, I have a soft spot for the Grand Dane Poul.) ★ ★ Thanks for your info on LASFS! ★ ★ In intermission I use 12p (p=points, for type size) for ordinary text, but 11p for the translation/excerpts from the newspapers. It should be readable, compared to newspaper where it usually is 10p or 9p! But the advantage with E-text is that you can easily magnify it in your application. So just use that if needed.

Jefferson P Swycaffer: Yes, the old British currency had 240 pennies to the pound. As a young boy I was in England the year after the decimal reform. There were still old pennies around, big coins - used as tokens in the slot machines. Old shillings were the same size and value as the new 5p coins, so they still circulated.

George Phillis: I count many of those "fandoms" you list as fringe-fandom, mediafandoms, not as the real fandom. With the real fandom I mean us who deal with literature and the written word, eg fanzines, not to forget how sf fans used to be chained to the typewriters and corresponded, wrote LoCs, letterhacked the prozines (today that energy is turned to twitter, blogs, etc). I try to encourage story writing, through SKRIVA and our story contest. Visual media is something else, and media fandom to a high degree just engage in copying. Today's "fan fiction" copies from the "worlds" of other creators. All those who march around in costumes copy clothes from comic books and TV shows. When you build models of spaceships or pound tin into medieval armour you are just copying too. Fandom as we should define it has original creativity. And it also connects to its traditions and long history, from 1929 and on. The typical fringe-fan seriously believes eg fanzines were invented by punk rockers. ★ ★ All of those pre-existing conditions you mention are fatal. Old age has been the strongest fatal factor for corona virus deaths AFAIK.

John Thiel: "finnegans wake ought to be easy to translate. Just write whatever you want to and measure it to the same length" A brilliant way to phrase it! ★ ★ Nice with poetry in a zine! Two Finland-Swedes (ie of Finland's Swedish-speaking minority) have just started an electronic magazine for "experimental poetry". English info below on page <http://kontradiktion.fi/> I think they take English entries too. Deadline for #1 has passed, but more ishs should come.

Samuel Lubell: "This isn't a case of power-hungry politicians but medical experts who truly want people to be safe." I think it is a case of what we call "rationalisation" and it's not only "power hunger" - or more precisely the feeling of satisfaction some get from pushing folks around - it is also attention seeking, as in "ah, people finally care about what I say and do!". And they act from more or less subconscious impulses, after which they for themselves rationalises it that it was really about "truly wanting folks to be safe". The Gods themselves contend in vain against subconscious instincts. Claimed "good intentions" have lead many astray. ★ ★ Official virus stats over here at least are definitely exaggerated. It lays in the claim that "so and so many (X) have died of the virus", but when you study the official (Nota Bene!) excess death figures they are only a tiny fraction of X. Death figures are very stable, so either they magically went down substantially 2020-21 for virus deaths to have a slot in them - and that's very improbable - or X doesn't give the true number of virus deaths. You say: "Governments are more likely to reduce the numbers so they can claim things are getting better than to exaggerate the threat." Not at all! I think it works the other way around. In a liberal democracy politicians are very, very sensitive to their appearance. If they appear to be "soft" on the virus they'll be slaughtered by the opposition and pundits in media. So they must exaggerate how deeply worried they appear to be, which of course is followed by lockdowns, closed schools, travel bans and the rest. Dictators are on the other hand insensitive to appearance and opposition, so they have instead downplayed the virus. Kim Il-Dung in North Korea is one example. Putin has also downplayed the epidemic. In eg S:t Petersburg observers found that excess deaths were 6 times higher than reported virus victims! ★ ★ "Since most U.S. states abandoned COVID restrictions death numbers have begun to rise again". No they haven't. Google "US covid deaths graphs" and you'll see. ★ ★ But when Hugos went to men, the huge majority of the sf writers were also men - and they are still are a substantial. I don't think that's strange, because science fiction is a lot about science, technology, machines etc, which for bio-psychological reasons are of more interests to men. ★ ★ Much of Eric Flint's 1932 series, at least early books, deals with the old Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus, who intervened in the 30 Years War. He was rather successful, introducing new more modern tactics, but eventually he died in battle of Lützen, the year... 1632. ★ ★ The longest Swedish book series by one and the same author could be the novels by Jan Mårtensson about the crime solving antiquarian bookseller JK Hohman. Book 50 in that series was just published. ★ ★ Time to stop. Remember: zines are Pretty Damn Fun!

Слава Україні! (=Glory to Ukraine!)

Ye Murthered
Master Mage 259

George Phillies
48 Hancock Hill Drive
Worcester MA 01609
phillies@4liberty.net
508 754 1859

N3F Progress

In recent years, the N3F has been extremely successful at expanding the range of our activities. The short story contest has more and more entries. We are now up to ten fanzines, most recently our fannish news zine FanActivity Gazette that was widely doubted before it appeared. Our APA N'APA gets thicker and thicker. Our list of Bureaus and volunteers continued to become longer. Yes, Fandom is a hobby. Members have other interests and obligations, so their activity time is sometimes shorter or longer. Nonetheless, for the most part we stay on a regular schedule.

The range of activities that can be supported by a club of 400 members is much larger than the range of activities that can be supported by a club of 100 members. It is by expanding our active membership, increasing the number of fen who are put time and energy into N3F activities, that we can become a better club.

In recent years, our most effective recruiting tool has been Facebook. We recruit when members show up on facebook SF&F groups and speak up for the N3F: They say what the N3F does, and why readers should join us.

As a member, I was perfectly happy to do my share of recruiting, but an obstacle arose: For reasons of its own, Facebook adopted security schemes that locked me out of their pages. The schemes are not the same for everyone, but in my case I would have needed hardware that I do not own in order to make use of FaceBook. My share of membership recruitment and advertising therefore substantially stopped. If you want a better N3F, you need to speak up to your fellow fen.

Issue Comments

NAPA 258

Intermission 119 ... Behold, real world politics in the form of a new major land war.

Hiding in there is a bit of science fiction history. One fine day during World War 2, the American FBI appeared in the office of Astounding SF Editor John Campbell. They had a few questions about his recent SF story involving a war on another planet between the Sixa and the Siella. An atomic bomb design was discussed, and they wondered where the details had come from. Campbell proposed that they were a fiction. Indeed, a couple of years later, Campbell published a short story incorporating the practical hydrogen bomb solution, namely blasting lithium hydrides with an intense neutron beam. The lithium tale included a literature cite to Physical Review. Teller was not pleased when a MITSFS member, in the late 1960s, called the story in question to his attention.

There was a suggestion that Astounding should stop publishing A-Bomb stories. Campbell pointed out that he undoubtedly had German readers, Astounding passing through Sweden on its way to Germany, and the absence of atomic bomb tales would be noticed. The FBI went on its way.

The Sixa bomb in most respects was not very realistic. Assembly of the fissionable material was very slow, not fast, meaning the explosion would have been at best disappointing. There was, however, a good reason that the story got the FBI's attention. The Sixa bomb had a neutron initiator, a Polonium-Beryllium gadget that at the right moment produced a pulse of neutrons. The initiator was the atom-bomb secret, sufficiently secret that it was not mentioned in the Smythe report and did not appear in popular books about atom bombs, even a decade later. Campbell had published it.

In defense of Heisenberg, he really had a nuclear reactor design, not a bomb design, and bad numbers for a few key cross-sections. On the other hand, the suggestion that Kapitza led the Russian atomic

bomb program, while reasonable, turned out to be incorrect.

Interesting point about Nebula nominations appearing a bit odd. I have not read the nominee books and cannot comment on their quality. Sometimes the list of publishers receiving nominations is also a bit skewed, but those are perhaps the publishers that hit the right notes with nominators. I was asked why nominations for the N3F Awards do not match Nebula or Hugo nominations. The answer is simple...there are 2000 SF novels a year published, round number, so it is not especially likely that any of our book fandom members have read a particular nominee.

Archive Midwinter: I have indeed finished Practical Exercise, and am now advancing to the formatting stage. Wrto SF Cons, Kevin Trainor is proposing running an N3F con in the next year or two. I am sure that your support would be appreciated.

Behold! Snow Poster rises from the dead. Glory to Heath Row. Welcome back. Stfnal elements in modern music seems to be an emerging theme. Note Will Mayo's reviews in Tightbeam.

Many thanks for your book reviews for The N3F Review of Books. They are most appreciated. I lived in Santa Monica ... Tenth Street, a bit North of Wilshire Boulevard...from the summer of 1975 to the Summer of 1978.

Intermission 120: Fascinating notes on Nils Heimer Frome. A sad ending to his career as a fan.

Synergy: An interesting account of a particular philosophy. Finding a poem that you enjoyed publishing is certainly a positive event. Will Mayo's poem is indeed ghostly in its beauty. My exclusion from Facebook arises from technical electronic issues not from having displeased their censors.

The Contents of a Good Life: your poems remain excellent. The Williams observation is very familiar, and well said.

Samizdat: Indeed, Star Trek led to radical changes in the relative number of men and women in SF Fandom, and brought in many new fen. Thank you for remembering Stasheff.

The Start of the next novel. Of Breaking Waves is Book Four of the Eclipse series.

Chapter 1 Eclipse

Very gradually I swam back to consciousness. I was lying on my stomach, my head resting on one arm. The background noise was heavy rain, beating on roofs, pouring off eaves, rushing through downspouts, splishing and splashing across the ground. I tried to roll over. Muscles screamed in protest. Where was I? Close enough to a house wall that I was dry, no matter the heavy rain I could hear all around me.

Where was I? I was cold as all get-out. At least my padded coat hadn't gotten soaked. I forced myself to open my eyes. It was dark, the dark of a darkling twilight under slate-grey clouds. Below me was rough-finished lumber. No, I was lying on the plastic composite Pickering's world uses for decks and porches.

A distance out from the house were thick woods. I squeezed my eyes shut and opened them again. The trees gradually came into focus. Now I recognized where I was. This was the base that Comet and friends built--OK, I helped a bit. Coming here made perfect sense. No one on Pickering's world knew where I was. Ignoring the pain, I rolled on my side and sat up, pulling my knees into my chest. The world tipped left and right...no, the effort left me dizzy.

I really ought to stop doing this to myself, I thought. You're twelve, I told myself, an age where your persona adventures should involve rescuing kittens from low trees, no matter that you know perfectly well that the kittens will get down by themselves and learn from the experience. Your adventures have been a bit more demanding.

Without thinking, I checked my Medico rules engine. The dead-black glyphs were now pure white. I wasn't dead any more. Somehow my body had returned. Medico reported that since then I'd had chills to the edge of having convulsions. I'd pushed way too deep into my gifts. I hadn't torn any muscles or shredded any ligaments, but I'd come close. I'd died, hadn't I, facing the Star Demons? As the darkling clouds faded into night, I could push against a wall, walk myself upright, and stagger to a door.



Snow Poster Township #5

July 6, 2022

Snow Poster Township is an apazine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. Banner artwork by Henry Chamberlain. *Snow Poster Township* is prepared for contributors to N'APA and select others. (Previously, it was prepared for FAPA. My previous N'APA apazine was titled *Snow Poster City*, and this effectively combines both.) A recent copy can be requested for The Usual.

Con Report: Westercon 74 Online

One of the benefits of being a supporting member of Westercon 74, which took place at the beginning of July in Nevada, was that the staff distributed a spreadsheet of programming offered via Zoom. Over the long July 4 holiday weekend, I was able to tune in to several sessions, which was a delight.

I reported on a couple of Westercon 74 sessions in my LASFAPA apazine *Faculae & Filigree* #13, and I'd like to report on one more here. Unfortunately, given the long holiday weekend, I lost track of time and didn't think about the Monday sessions I wanted to go to (John Hertz's second Classics of Science Fiction discussion and Speculative Fiction of the World) until Tuesday, but Saturday evening that weekend, I dialed in to Hertz's first Classics of Science Fiction session, which focused on Robert A. Heinlein's *The Door into Summer*, which I reviewed for the March 2022 edition of *The N3F Review of Books* (<https://tinyurl.com/N3FReview-032022>).

As moderator, Hertz followed his standard session structure, defining what constitutes a classic of sf—paraphrasing perhaps too simply, a text that outlives the currents of its time—and leading a discussion of whether that definition is adequate. One

participant joked that the novel is a cat book and that cats haven't changed. Hertz replied saying, "Neither have people."

He also challenged the notion that sf writers are in the prediction business. Regardless, in the book, computer-aided design features prominently, and the novel's idea of cold sleep is prescient. I myself sometimes remark that a work is dated. When I do so, I'm not suggesting that books need to be written in such a way that they portray a world outside of time or that science and technology need to keep pace with fiction. Hertz occasionally points out my use of the term in reviews, so I've given the word a little more thought. When I remark that a book or story is dated, what I mean most of the time—I think—is that its cultural mores and norms no longer hold true, particularly in an uncomfortable or critical way. Portrayals or assumptions that were once commonly held or not viewed as offensive are now objectionable.

The group didn't spend too much time on that topic, though Hertz commented on the gender roles and portrayals in the book, suggesting that it is men who are more round heeled (sexually promiscuous) than women, though the term has generally been applied to female characters. Instead, the bulk of the conversation concentrated on whether the protagonist changed, developed, grew, or matured in his mindset and approach to life over the course of the book. Hertz took the position that he did, though at least one participant disagreed.

Hertz proposed that the novel focused on knowledge, invention, and how that happens. That brought to mind the book's consideration of intellectual property issues, patents, and the ownership of ideas. At the end of the session, the conversation turned to where *The Door into Summer* stood among Heinlein's body of work—and whether we'd still be reading it if someone other than Heinlein had written it.

That was an interesting portion of the conversation. One participant said that she read it explicitly because Heinlein wrote it; she sought out his books. Hertz suggested that it was one of Heinlein's classics. "He managed to get to *Starship Troopers* and *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*, then became uneditable." He likened that occurrence to what might have happened with Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke, as well. I've thought about that in terms of writers such as Stephen King—his early work being so good in part because it was actively edited before he became famous—but I'd never thought about it in terms of sf before.

As always, a wide-ranging and thought-provoking discussion. I was lucky to have read the novel somewhat recently and always look forward to what

books Hertz will focus on so I can read ahead in preparation.

Many Monster Movie Magazines

There are no longer many general movie magazines in publication in the United States. *Movieline* published its final issue in 2009 and *Premiere* folded in 2010. As far as I know, only *Cineaste* remains. In the United Kingdom, there are still general movie magazines: *Empire* and *Total Film* remain worthy periodic reads.

Even though we're currently experiencing a dearth of *general* movie magazines, there are numerous monster movie magazines. Given the kinds of films I enjoy most—Justin E.A. Busch recently commented in an email while editing my reviews for *Films Fantastic* #16 (<https://tinyurl.com/N3F-Films16>), “You're rather kinder to some of the, shall we say, lesser, films than I might be.”—I am thankful for the bounty of such periodicals.

What follows is a brief roundup of what's been delivered to my mail box in recent weeks, and what you can expect to find inside:

Classic Images #562 (July 2022): This newspaper published by the people behind *Films of the Golden Age* showcases the restoration of Abbott and Costello's *Jack and the Beanstalk*, Arthur Franz, Kipp Hamilton, Roger Converse, and the magic of screenwriting. Cathode Ray tells me he refers to it when compiling his DVD release listing for “Celluloid Sentience.” (<https://www.facebook.com/MuscatineClassicImages/>)

Delirium #30: Published by Full Moon Features, which produces its own movies and offers a streaming service, this issue includes a lost interview with Tobe Hooper focusing on the 1979 TV miniseries *Salem's Lot*, nunsploitation cinema, Meosha Bean, *The Russian Bride*, Lance Kerwin, Julie Cobb, and vintage horror TV advertising. The magazine is wide ranging enough that it manages to be more than a house organ. (<http://www.deliriummagazine.com/>)

Filmfax #161 (March-May 2022): Long one of my favorite magazines, this issue covers *The Wicker Man* folk musical, Cold War comic books, a history of female aliens in sf cinema, the making of *Valley of the Gwangi* with Willis O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen, mad scientists, *Knight Rider*'s Rebecca Holden, and the careers of Sylvia Lewis and Brett Halsey.

Monster Bash Special #6: This nostalgia- and reminiscence-heavy magazine reminds me at times of *Scary Monsters*. This issue concentrates on Bela Lugosi, model kits, *King Kong* vs. *Godzilla*, toys, and recently released DVDs and Blu-rays. This is worth reading for the photographs and advertisements alone.

It might be as close as we can get to *Famous Monsters of Filmland* at this late date. (<https://www.creepyclassics.com>)

The Phantom of the Movies' Videoscope #117 (Spring 2022): Now publishing again to my delight, this review-heavy periodical gives nod to voice acting, David Harris from *The Warriors*, and review columns focusing on a wide range of genre cinema including monster, cult, horror, art-house, spaghetti western, noir, action, grindhouse, and other movies. I consider this the modern heir to the legacy of now-defunct *Psychotronic Video*. (<http://www.videoscopemag.com>)

Rue Morgue #206 (May/June 2022): Dedicated to horror in culture and entertainment, this magazine takes the place in my heart once occupied by *Fangoria*, even though that magazine is still in print. This issue focuses on psychic children in *The Innocents* and *Firestarter*, Edgar Allan Poe, Wild Eye Releasing, and stop-motion wizard Phil Tippett. (<https://rue-morgue.com>)

Rue Morgue #207 (July/August 2022): This issue takes a look at horror gaming, Dread XP, games *The Mortuary Assistant* and *A Mortician's Tale*, Alice Krige, photo makeup, *The Walking Dead*, *Allegoria*, *The Devil Takes You Home*, and the artwork of Kamila Mlynarczyk.

Shock Cinema #61: In print since 1990, the magazine offers interviews with Diane Franklin, Jonathan Haze, Ena Hartman, and director Joe Dante, as well as a slew of movie, DVD, and Blu-ray reviews. (<https://www.shockcinemamagazine.com>)

Epi-Log: The Ray Bradbury Theater

I miss *Epi-Log Magazine*. The TV semiprozine published by Star*Tech Publications saw 44 issues between 1990 and 1994, offering episode guides for sf, fantasy, horror, animated, and adventure productions. Programs covered included *The Invaders*, *The Man from Atlantis*, *Quark*, *The Time Tunnel*, and *UFO*. And I still refer to my back issues often before turning to online sources.

This item is the first in a series of episode guides offered in the spirit of *Epi-Log*. I begin by concentrating on *The Ray Bradbury Theater*, which aired six seasons and 65 episodes on HBO and the USA Network between 1985 and 1992. This item will cover the first season of the anthology program.

The Ray Bradbury Theater, Season 1

A man takes an ornate cage elevator to an upper floor, where he opens an office door, silhouetted in its window. The man is Ray Bradbury, and the office is cluttered with a valet displaying clothing, a Mickey

Mouse figure, photographs and other artwork, posters, books, and a globe.

“People ask, ‘Where do you get your ideas?’ Well, right here. All this is my martian landscape. Somewhere in this room is an African veldt. Just beyond, perhaps, is a small Illinois town where I grew up. And I’m surrounded on every side by my magician’s toy shop. I’ll never starve here. I just look around, find what I need, and begin. I’m Ray Bradbury, and this is *The Ray Bradbury Theater*. Well, then, right now, what shall it be? Out of all of this, what do I choose to make a story? I never know where the next one will take me. And the trip? Exactly one half exhilaration, exactly one half terror.”

Episode One: “Marionettes, Inc.”

(Original air date: May 21, 1985)

Home Box Office presents / Marionettes, Inc. / Based on an original story and written by Ray Bradbury / Starring James Coco / Leslie Nielsen / Directed by Paul Lynch / Produced by Atlantis Films Limited in association with Wilcox Productions, Inc.

A henpecked husband and computer salesman enjoys a harried breakfast of soft-boiled egg, toast, bacon, gourmet decaffeinated coffee, and Anacin before driving to work. There, at a Computer Junction in Toronto, he receives several mysterious messages: a telephone call, a computer message, and business cards with his *Globe and Mail* and receipt at lunch—“Marionettes, Inc. We Shadow Forth...”

He meets a friend at a bar after work for a drink and demonstrates how his A3 program displays his personal information. “I only sell the computers. I don’t own the company. Why would anyone want to follow me?” His friend recommends that he pay them a visit, and he does so, letting himself into an office where he meets a representative of Marionettes, Inc. “We’re helping you because you are. You live. You exist.”

The question comes down to whether you’re happy with your life—or whether you’re rushing to your own self-destruction. “It is the new age. Look at it. Marvel at its wonders. It could be yours.

Executive Producer for Atlantis Films Limited: Michael MacMillan / Executive Producers for Wilcox Productions, Inc.: Larry Wilcox and Ray Bradbury / Developed for television for Wilcox Productions, Inc. by Mark Massari

Producer: Seaton McLean, Line Producer: Gillian Richardson, Director of Photography: Thomas Burstyn, Art Director: David Moe, Editor: George Appleby c.f.e., Music: Bruce Levy

Cast—Braling: James Coco, Fantoccini: Leslie Nielsen, Mrs. Braling: Jayne Eastwood, and Kenneth

Welsh as Crane / Buyers: Pixie Bigelow, Rex Hagon, and Michael Fletcher; Secretary: Laura Henry; The Other Braling: Tom Christopher

Produced with the participation of Telefilm Canada and the Global Television Network

First Assistant Director: Michael Zenon, Second Assistant Director: Elizabeth Scherberger, Location Manager: Michael Brownstone, Assistant Location Manager: Woody Sidarous, Production Coordinator: Sandie Pereira

Sound Mixer: John P. Megill, Boom Operator: Jack Buchanan, Gaffer: Adam Swica, Best Boys: David McNicoll and Tom Bate, Electric: Geoffrey Pye, Key Grip: Mark Silver, Grip: Ian McGeagh Henderson, Assistant Grip: Greg Palermo

Script Supervisor: Joanne Tolley-Harwood, Assistant Cameraman: Malcolm Cross, Second Assistant Camera: Brian Gedge, Second Unit Camera: Paul Mitchnick

Set Decorator: Elinor Rose Galbraith, Set Dresser: Danielle Fleury, Costume Designer: Ellen Kennedy, Wardrobe Mistress: Judith Gostick, Makeup Artist: Marlene Aarons, Property Master: Peter Fletcher, Assistant Art Director: Nancy Pankiw, Hair Stylist: Jenny Bennicke

Casting: Diane Polley, Third Assistant Director: Wendy Ross, Office Coordinator: Rose Tedesco, Stills Photographer: Michael Courtney, Computer Effects: Lee Wilson, Transportation Coordinator: Jeff Steinberg, Drivers: Kris Hawthorne and James Tamblyn

Production Assistant: Nancy Nickel, Construction Manager: Kirk Cheney, Head Carpentry: Ian Fraser, Key Scenic Artist: James Kitson, Scenic Artist: Stephen Meil

Assistant Editor: Jay Houpt, Sound Editor: Arnold Stewart, Assistant Sound Editor: Daphne Ballon, Post Production Coordinator: Susan Gerofsky, Foley Artist: Andy Malcolm, Re-Recording Mixer: Jack Heeren

Laboratory: Medallion Labs, Opticals: Film Opticals Toronto, Titles: Meta Media

The producers would like to thank Computerland for their kind cooperation in the making of this film 1985, Atlantis Films Limited

Episode Two: “The Playground”

(Original air date: June 4, 1985)

Home Box Office presents / The Playground / Based on an original story and written by Ray Bradbury / Starring William Shatner / Keith Dutton / Kate Trotter as Carol / Directed by William Fruet / Produced by Atlantis Films Limited, in association with Wilcox Productions, Inc.

While playing at home with his son, a father remembers being bullied as a child at the local playground. The man's sister encourages him, a single father, to allow his son to make friends his own age rather than being so protective. He visits the neighborhood playground on the way home from work that evening to see whether it's safe for his son. His preoccupation with its dangers affects his performance at work, and he wishes that he could face the challenges of life for his son.

Executive Producer for Atlantis Films Limited:
Michael MacMillan / Executive Producers for Wilcox
Productions, Inc.: Larry Wilcox and Ray Bradbury /
Developed for television for Wilcox Productions, Inc.
by Mark Massari

Producer: Seaton McLean, Line Producer: Gillian
Richardson, Director of Photography: Mark Irwin
C.S.C., Art Director: David Moe, Editor: Ralph
Brunjes, Music: Domenic Troiano

Cast—Charles Underhill: William Shatner, Steve:
Keith Dutson, Carol: Kate Trotter, Ralph: Mirko
Malish, Charlie: Steven Andrade, Robert Peerless:
Barry Flatman

Produced with the participation of Telefilm Canada
and the Global Television Network

First Assistant Director: Michael Zenon, Second
Assistant Director: Rocco Gismondi, Location
Manager: Woody Sidarous, Production Coordinator:
Sandie Pereira

Sound Mixer: John P. Megill, Boom Operator: Jack
Buchanan, Gaffer: Maris Jansons, Best Boy: Ira
Cohen, Electric: Cactus Simser and Geoffrey Pye, Key
Grip: Mark Manchester, Grip: Greg Palermo

Assistant Cameraman: Malcolm Cross, Second
Assistant Camera: Brian Gedge, Second Unit Camera:
Rodney Charters and Douglas Kiefer, Second Unit
Assistant: David Niven

Set Decorator: Elinor Rose Galbraith, Set Dresser:
Danielle Fleury, Costume Designer: Gina Kiellerman,
Wardrobe Mistress: Trysha Bakker, Key Makeup: Pip
Ayotte and Kathleen Graham, Makeup: Marlene
Aarons, Property Master: Peter Fletcher, Property
Assistant: Jeffrey A. Melvin, Hairdresser: Jocelyn
MacDonald

Casting: Diane Polley, Third Assistant Director:
Wendy Ross, Production Accountant: James
Crammond, Office Coordinator: Rose Tedesco, Stills
Photographer: Michael Courtney, Computer Effects:
Lee Wilson, Transportation Coordinator: Jeff
Steinberg, Driver: Kris Hawthorne

Production Assistant: Rusty Deluce and Susan
Levi, Children's Coordinator: Daphne Ballon,
Construction Manager: Kirk Cheney, Head Carpenter:
Joe Curtin, Assistant Head Carpenter: Ian Fraser,

Carpenters: Myles Roth and John Dondertman,
Laborer: Michael Mackenzie, Key Scenic Artist: Nick
Kosonic, Scenic Artist: Jak Oliver and James Kitson,
Painter: Stephen Meil

Special Effects: Frank Carere, Studio: Toronto
International, Dialogue Editor: Arnold Stewart,
Effects Editor: Ralph Brunjes, Assistant Editor:
Michael Fruet, Post Production Coordinator: Susan
Gerofsky, Foley Artist: Andy Malcolm, Re-Recording
Mixer: Joe Grimaldi, Neg Cutter: Erika Wolf

Laboratory: Medallion Labs, Opticals: Film
Opticals Toronto, Titles: Meta Media
1985, Atlantis Films Limited

Episode Three: "The Crowd"

(Original air date: July 2, 1985)

Home Box Office presents / The Crowd / Based on
an original story and written by Ray Bradbury /
Starring Nick Mancuso / R.H. Thomson / Directed by
Ralph L. Thomas / Produced by Atlantis Films
Limited, in association with Wilcox Productions, Inc.

A man leaves an evening holiday party at a row
house to drive home through the city, its trees
decorated with holiday lights. Listening to the radio,
he swerves to avoid hitting a dog that runs into the
street—and flips his car. Injured, he's surrounded by a
group of people that disperses when an ambulance
arrives.

In the hospital, he regains consciousness, and a
doctor tells him that he'll be alright. The injured man
is concerned about how quickly the crowd gathered. A
friend, a journalist, stops by his neon artwork studio to
celebrate New Year's Eve. There's another accident
just outside his studio.

Another crowd quickly gathers—within 21
seconds. He recognizes some of the people from the
scene of his own accident.

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by Mark Massari

Producer: Seaton McLean, Line Producer: Gillian
Richardson, Director of Photography: Thomas
Burstyn, Art Director: David Moe, Editor: Roger
Mattiussi, Music: Louis Natale

Cast—Spallner: Nick Mancuso, Morgan: R.H.
Thomson, Doctor: David Hughes, Paramedic: Victor
Eartmantis

Produced with the participation of Telefilm Canada
and the Global Television Network

First Assistant Director: Michael Zenon, Second
Assistant Director: Elizabeth Scherberger, Location

Manager: Michael Brownstone, Production

Coordinator: Sandie Pereira

Sound Mixer: John P. Megill, Boom Operator: Jack Buchanan, Gaffer: Adam Swica, Best Boy: David McNicoll, Electrician: Tom Bate, Generator Operator: Art Wanuch, Key Grip: Mark Silver, Grip: Ian McGeagh Henderson, Assistant Grip: Greg Palermo

Script Supervisor: Joanne Tolley-Harwood, Follow Focus Cameraman: Stuart Shikatani, Second Assistant Camera: James Akum, Additional Camera: Paul Mitchnick, Steadicam Operator: Bob Crone and David Crone

Set Decorator: Martin Weinryb, Assistant Set Dresser: Kimothy Steede, Costume Designer: Eileen Kennedy, Wardrobe Mistress: Judith Gostick, Makeup Artist: Marlene Aarons, Makeup Assistant: Jane Meade, Property Masters: Peter Fletcher and Marc Corriveau, Assistant Art Director: Nancy Pankiw, Hair Stylist: Jenny Bennicke

Casting: Diane Polley; Third Assistant Director: Wendy Ross; Office Coordinator: Rose Tedesco; Stills Photographer: Michael Courtney; Video Consultant: Lee Wilson; Stunt Coordinator: Dwayne McLean, Stunt Performers: Billy Williams, Terry McGauran, Leslie Munroe, Peter Cox, Rick Forsayeth, Brent Meyer; Special Effects: Derek Howard; Special Neon Effects: Gianico Pretto; Transportation Coordinator: Jeff Steinberg, Drivers: Kris Hawthorne and John Pace

Production Assistant: Nancy Nickel, Assistant Editor: Andy Attfield, Sound Editor: Alban Streeter, Assistant Sound Editor: David Templeton, Post Production Coordinator: Susan Gerofsky, Foley Artist: Andy Malcolm, Re-Recording Mixer: Mike Hoogenboom

Laboratory: The Film House Group, Opticals: Film Opticals Toronto, Titles: Meta Media

1985, Atlantis Films Limited

Genre Media Soundtracks

Apple Music's Film, TV & Stage category currently offers the following new soundtracks of interest to fen. We encourage you to look for them on your streaming services of choice, as well as on compact disc where available.

- "Alien Invasion" from *Zombies 3* Single by the *Zombies 3* Disney cast
- *Baymax!* Original Soundtrack by Dominic Lewis
- *The Black Phone* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by Mark Korven
- *The Bob's Burgers Movie* Major Motion Picture Soundtrack

- *Chip 'n Dale: Rescue Rangers* Original Soundtrack by Brian Tyler
- *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by Danny Elfman
- *The Essex Serpent* Apple TV+ Original Series Soundtrack by Dustin O'Halloran and Herdis Stefansdottir
- *Firestarter* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by John Carpenter, Cody Carpenter, and Daniel Davies
- *First Kill* Soundtrack from the Netflix Series by Kurt Farquhar
- *FLCL* Season 1, Vol. 2 Original Soundtrack by The Pillows
- *FLCL* Season 1, Vol. 3 Original Soundtrack by The Pillows
- *For All Mankind* Season 3 Apple TV+ Original Series Soundtrack by Jeff Russo and Paul Doucette
- *Ghost in the Shell: SAC_2045* Original Soundtrack 2 by Nobuko Toda and Kazuma Jinnouchi
- *Jurassic World Dominion* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by Michael Giacchino
- *Keeper of Time* Original Motion Picture Score by Max Avery Lichtenstein
- *Lightyear* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by Michael Giacchino
- "Mama's Got a Brand New Hammer" from *Thor: Love and Thunder* Single by Michael Giacchino
- *The Man Who Fell to Earth* Themes and Sketches Original Series Soundtrack by Jeff Russo
- *Marcel the Shell with Shoes On* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by Disasterpeace
- *Marvel Future Revolution: World Orchestra* Original Video Game Soundtrack by the Beethoven Academy Orchestra and Video Game Orchestra
- *Minions: The Rise of Gru* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by various artists
- *Ms. Marvel* Vol. 1 (Episodes 1-3) Original Soundtrack by Laura Karpman
- *Night Sky* Amazon Original Series Soundtrack by Danny Bensi and Saunder Jurriaans
- *Obi-Wan Kenobi* Original Soundtrack by John Williams, Natalie Holt, and William Ross
- *Prehistoric Planet: Season 1* Apple TV+ Original Series Soundtrack by Anze Rozman, Kara Talve, and Hans Zimmer

- *The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder* Music from the Series by various artists
- *Riverdale* Special Episode “American Psycho: The Musical” Original Television Soundtrack EP by the *Riverdale* cast
- *Shining Girls* Apple TV+ Original Series Soundtrack by Claudia Sarne
- *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic II—The Sith Lords* Original Video Game Soundtrack by Mark Griskey
- *Stranger Things 4* Original Score from the Netflix Series by Kyle Dixon and Michael Stein
- *Stranger Things* Soundtrack from the Netflix Series, Season 4 by various artists
- *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Shredder’s Revenge* Original Game Soundtrack by Tee Lopes
- *The Time Traveler’s Wife* Season 1 Soundtrack from the HBO Original Series by Blake Neely
- “Video Games” from *Westworld* Season 4 Single by Ramin Djawadio

Comments on N’APA #258

The picture of the Horsehead Nebula on the **cover** is absolutely beautiful—and foreboding. Rather than an image of a, well, horse’s head, it looks to me like the ink-dark swirl of a smoky figure reaching out toward the viewer. There’s the suggestion of a right arm slightly raised, a shadowy face or head in the midst of broad shoulders, and the left hand reaching out toward the viewer. I certainly wouldn’t want to encounter *that* coming toward me in the cold depths of space!

The **Official Organ**’s table of contents suggested that the participation roster has increased by one—me!—since #257, and I’m glad to be back. Regardless, our page count increased by eight, from 50 to 58 pages, and I am only responsible for four of those pages. Good to see membership *and* page count on an upward trend. I look forward to delving into each of your apazines.

In *Intermission* #119, **Ahrvid** focused largely on war, an appropriate topic given the state of the world, its military conflicts across borders, and its armed insurrections and domestic terrorism within borders. I appreciate your efforts to keep *Intermission* a reasonable size. At 18 pages, it’s a daunting apazine, and the two issues in this disty make up 36 of our 58 pages. That is not to discourage you, but to express appreciation for your efforts not to inflate. I also appreciate the international point of view you bring.

Even though I have fond memories of *Byte* magazine, I was unaware that Jerry Pournelle wrote a

column for it! I’ll have to see whether “Computing at Chaos Manor” has been collected. (He published a few of them on his Web site at <http://tinyurl.com/pournelle-byte>, and he also used to pen a Q&A column for *Information Week*—<http://tinyurl.com/pournelle-info>.) Larry Niven might know. He participated in the most recent LASFS meeting I attended at the end of June.

As in the previous disty, I shall have to set aside your apazine to return to. “History Corner” alone deserves deep, focused reading rather than a quick read for comments. It was good to see Garth Spencer and John Thiel in your “Mailing Comments.” Garth might have included some of my recent apazines in an EAPA disty. He’s been a friendly encouragement to consider EAPA in addition to my participation in APA-L, LASFAPA, and now N’APA again.

I’ll ask around to see whether folks have photos of the various LASFS clubhouses. I recently learned that they might have even met in the late 1960s in a public park not far from where I currently live.

Jefferson’s March 20, 2022, edition of *Archive Midwinter* opened with light commentary on the previous disty’s inclusion of some comments from John on dreams. Your remarks on the wonder of dreams and C.S. Lewis’s *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* reminded me of a couple stories I recently read in *Dark Matter* #8 (March-April 2022). I commented on the two dream-related stories in *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #22 for APA-L. In that issue of *Dark Matter* (<https://darkmattermagazine.com>), Heather Santo’s “Dream Dealers” considers a law enforcement android that becomes addicted to downloading recordings of human dreams—and begins to become something else. The story is quite short, just four pages, and ends abruptly. Even though the piece does its work, communicates an idea, and evokes a feeling, I hope the author does more with these intriguing concepts.

Toshiya Kamei translated Malena Salazar Macia’s “Silent Slumber.” Resonating with the previous story’s meditation on the meaning and value of dreams, this piece tells the tale of a space-faring humanity rescued by the Ultra. To address overpopulation, people are removed from their homes at 100 to be encoded and connected to the Ultra network so their saviors can feed off their dreams for five more years. Two women plan an escape. Shades of *Logan’s Run*, this world would be worth returning to.

Maybe there are enough dream-related sf and fantasy stories to merit an anthology... or two. The idea seems like one that editors might have approached before, but the only recent such anthology I can find easily is *Odd Dreams: A Science Fiction*

Anthology, an ebook published in 2020. Regardless, the word “dream” is often used in anthology and book titles. *Dragons and Dreams: A Fantasy Anthology* was published by Writers, Poets & Deviants in 2018. Bloomsbury published *Frankenstein Dreams: A Connoisseur's Collection of Victorian Science Fiction*, edited by Michael Sims, in 2017. In 1978, Ayer Co. published the out-of-print *Dreamers of Dreams: An Anthology of Fantasy*. And of course we have Isaac Asimov’s 1983 Berkley collection *Robot Dreams* and Orson Scott Card’s *Keeper of Dreams*.

Jefferson, do you remember which E.E. “Doc” Smith story or book that light year conversation was included in? Was it *Grey Lensman*, perchance? Ha! It just struck me that I shouldn’t spend any time wondering why you didn’t comment on my apazine yet—you hadn’t *seen* it yet! (No one has.) Not that I merely trawl apazines for egoboo mentions—though one does scan—but there was a moment of cognitive dissonance in which I wondered why you hadn’t commented on *Snow Poster Township*, too. Silly rabbit. Next ish!

In this disty’s *Ye Murthered Master Mage*, **George** detailed his ongoing Facebook challenges. I’m sorry that you’ve been effectively locked out of that social media channel because you don’t text. Many recent technological developments—even in healthcare—don’t account for people who don’t currently use state-of-the-art devices and don’t plan to. My parents faced challenges scheduling their COVID-19 vaccinations because they don’t use a smart phone that supports mobile apps. Seems like an awkward combination of planned obsolescence and manifest destiny.

What source did you draw on for the monthly genre book count? Once we have 12 months of movie release data from Cathode Ray’s “Celluloid Sentience” column in *FanActivity Gazette*, we could do an annual count of sf, fantasy, and horror movie releases. It wouldn’t be perfect; the count will be somewhat subjective because the movies are selected by Ray, and some represent multiple genres. But I expect that horror will dominate. We shall see if that hypothesis holds up. In terms of book publishing, I am very much interested in better assessing the number of sf, fantasy, and horror books published—in print, as ebooks, and as print-on-demand.

Your question to Jefferson is a real humdinger: “Do we actually perceive time passing? Or do we note that our list of memories keeps changing?” I haven’t read much at all about the human perception of time. I’m sure there’s scientific literature available. It turns out there’s even a field bridging cognitive linguistics, neuroscience, and psychology that concentrates on the

study of time perception: chronoception. That field examines the subjective experience of time. *Five Books* published an interview with Marc Wittmann, a research fellow at the Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health in Germany and author of *Felt Time* (MIT Press, 2016) that might be interesting. (<http://tinyurl.com/time-perception>) There’s also a book whose title comes close to your hypothesis about memory: Douwe Draaisma’s *Why Life Speeds Up as You Get Older: How Memory Shapes Our Past* (Cambridge University, 2012). I look forward to the availability of your ebook *Practical Exercise*. Congratulations on finishing it!

Ahrvid’s *Intermission* #120 opened focusing on Swedish-Canadian fan Nils Helmer Frome—before turning his attention briefly to the ongoing war. I really appreciate your concentration on the history of fandom, Ahrvid. It connects with John’s thoughts about synergy, which I comment on below. Not only are we seeking and engaging in synergy by reading fanzines, writing letters of comment, and participating in apae, we do the same when we recognize and engage with the straight line to the history of fandom. Past, present, future, all in one universal moment. It was neat to learn that New Fandom’s Sam Moskowitz helped collect Frome’s work, especially since the National Fantasy Fan Federation was founded as a partial response to New Fandom. I’ve downloaded the scan you uploaded—I hope you’ll also offer it to *Fanac*. I’m sure Joe Siclari would be interested.

Your comment to William McCabe about whether James Bond is science fictional brought to mind a recent piece I included in my *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #18 (<http://tinyurl.com/Telegraphs-18>) for APA-L, “On Super-Spy Thrillers and Science Fiction.” I recently learned that departed LASFS member David McDaniel (fan name: Ted Johnstone) wrote a handful of *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* media tie-in novels. Lee Gold has annotated those books to indicate references to LASFS, fandom, and other related arenas at <https://www.conchord.org/xeno/mcdaniel>.

In *Synergy* #39, **John**’s choice of cover oddly mirrors that of this very disty. Perhaps that heavenly body is what’s reaching out to the viewer on the cover of N’APA #258. Do you play the saxophone? I do—or, I have; I don’t often these days. But I still own an alto—visible just to my left—and my son picked up the tenor to perform in the pit orchestra for a high school production of *Little Shoppe of Horrors*. I shall have to bust it out and return to playing clear cadenzas like my fellow fan. I shall also have to read Theodore Sturgeon’s *A Saucer of Loneliness* and consider the role synergy plays in his writing. Of the books

cataloged so far in my personal library, I don't have that one listed. Harrumph.

A poetic and thought-provoking opener, making me consider that perhaps our participation in fanzines and apae is a form of synergy or collective mind meld. By reading fanzines, writing letters of comment, and participating in apae such as N'APA, we are reaching out for connection, resonating with—and sometimes in opposition to—others, and tapping into some kind of fannish group mind or oversoul. (Praise be to Ghu and Foo!) I'm not even joking. I am fascinated by your grouping of Sturgeon, L. Ron Hubbard, Timothy Leary, Gerard Manly Hopkins, Brother Antonius, and Aldous Huxley.

I've been debating how to work this recent reading into an apazine, and it's perhaps synergistic that this is where it lands. I recently read *Unveiled Mysteries* by Godfre Ray King. It's the first book in the Saint Germain series, actually penned by Guy Ballard, the impetus behind the I AM new age movement. Ostensibly the description of a series of 1930s encounters with the ascended master Saint Germain near Mount Shasta in California, it inspired me to write a letter to the Mystical Traveler of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness. It's adjacent to much new thought writing, and it's also... science fiction. Throughout the book, which was an inspiring read—the whole point, I suppose, of new age books—there's science-fictional fabrics, clairaudience and teleportation, time travel, dimensional speaking and viewing tubes (adding, perhaps, clairvoyance), and the long-lost continents of Atlantis and Lemuria. More fantasy than science fiction, I suppose, but I'd not previously considered new age writing adjacent to sf or fantasy—just hooey. Delightful hooey, but hooey all the same. So thank you for seeking such synergy. There might be something there.

I look forward to seeing "Omnis Vivandi" in *Pablo Lennis*. You should consider submitting it to the annual short story competition. Your comment to Ahrvid about *Finnegans Wake* resonated with my finishing Philip Jose Farmer's "Riders of the Purple Wage" at the end of June. There's a pun-oriented punchline in that story that I think you'd appreciate. Jefferson, you'd be welcome to participate in LASFS meetings. We're currently meeting via Zoom, and if you're interested, I could smuggle you the essentials. I participated in an online meeting at the end of June and look forward to my first board meeting in July.

Your end piece containing the text "Do you intend to stand as a representative of man in the study that is being taken of the species? If you do, you have some competition, as the earthly representative of mankind and manhood has already been settled upon,

and is standing with his arm held up to the sky," felt similar to channeled writing such as that published in the *Sedona Journal of Emergence*. Methinks Mack and Gwendolyn Light have a solid side hustle afoot! (Said the man who's currently reading a book of channeled writing by the Archangel Michael and has a copy of the first channeled Matthew book on top of his reading pile.)

Will's *The Contents of a Good Life* #25 offered a couple of well-written poems and a thought-provoking piece on the fluidity of identity and our sense of self. "We all appear to be just various unions of the fictions that make up our lives," he wrote. Perhaps we're the sum of the stories we tell ourselves. I look forward to your forthcoming book; be sure to let us know how to obtain a copy.

And in *Samizdat* #13, Sam commented on the previous disty. Your point to Jefferson about *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*' 44-year uninterrupted run might very well be true. The first issue was published in October 1940, and the series reached #510 in March 1984. There was a slight break before the series returned in 1986. It is true that there was a publisher change from Dell to Gold Key in 1962, but the series' publication continued uninterrupted. Now, why didn't I think of that! I was so excited about *Sonic the Hedgehog*.

I applaud your involvement in con running. In early July, I was able to participate in a few Westercon 74 sessions via Zoom—you can read my brief con reports in my LASFAPA apazine *Faculae & Filigree* #13 and above—and I'd welcome your news from the Baltimore Science Fiction Society and the Washington Science Fiction Association for my "Science Fiction Club News" column in *FanActivity Gazette*. I might pop you an email when I turn my attention to the next installment.

Given the discussion of the longest-running licensed comic book title, I also enjoyed your piece "Longest SF Series." I've only read one each Perry Rhodan and Tom Swift books, both in recent years, and I'm more likely to return to Rhodan. It's a pretty fascinating genre publishing story—and makes me wonder what wonderful writing we're missing out in non-English languages.

Your "Status of Projects" reminded me that I invoked you in a letter of comment to Garth Spencer in response to *Obdurate Eye* #15. You might be interested in his definition of "Agenda in Life" in *How to Human*. I have yet to devise my own approach to such projects, but I find the idea inspiring.

SYNERGY 40



NAPA, mailing 259

July 2022

John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904
email kinethiel@mymetronet.net .

Ah, look at all those good brothers and sisters enwrapped in Syzygy on the cover of this issue and know that there is Cosmic Oneness being had. This issue I (or is it we) present some very fine vibrations certain to get to the super-ego of all the fannish membership in this apa.

Nice to see the shot of the Horsehead Nebula; it gives an impression of clouds rather than stars, which is a relief considering how little stars actually amount to, and seems to contain a face. Its rider, perhaps? Using my imagination, he seems caught in between the “horse’s” legs. His shirt is open so you can almost see his dog tags. Well, that’s looking into what almost amounts to a celestial phenomenon. The sky is red, so I suppose there’s been some tooling around with the actual astronomical shot. One would have to ask an astronomer about precisely what is represented. Obtained from astronomers, yes.

No roster this issue, I see. Well, it always was a bring-down to look at those mailing addresses.



EDITORIAL



Looking Like I Just Got My Blue Belt in Akido

No, it's Synergy I'm discussing—so imperative a thing. We live in this: a world of hate, and there's something like an absolute lack of love, or even liking, at this moment of cosmic time. This is what "Stranger in a Strange Land" was getting at, somewhat inadequately, I believe. Yes, not everybody could be included in this evaluation of universal hatred, even if it is universal—I mean hating everything by "universal"—but everybody in the vortex we keep being in, which is a swirl of activity having a center, where there has not usually been a center, is. Akido? I watched my brother's son mastering akido, and there was no reason for him to be doing this; somebody named Carson was doing his thing and there being an akido popularity all around this region was a result. When he was going down there to get his belt, he was asked, "Don't you want to go down there?" and he said "No! Jesus F***ing Christ! You go get my belt if you want it." He had been humiliated by being told to show me the stances, etc. that he had learned and having to do them in front of me. He hadn't said much about this, and when it all came out then it was ugly. Speaking against the Christian mythos was going against what we were all doing and it brought damnation down on us, which we shunted off. His tone of voice likened his belt to a used condom, as he explained later. We really didn't need Akido, an Oriental form of self-defense; this was all part of the

cultural exchange centering around Purdue University, which was having in foreign students and by far sending students overseas, one of the worst follies I believe mankind has ever had happen, but it was considered smart and modern around there. We were actually standing in the remains of this policy and program. I had always been wanting to say "That's not smart, that's dumb, that exchange business, and along with it the new liberalism—who thought it up? Who's the exact mastermind? Earthly or otherwise? I'm hoping it wasn't some bohemian."

Diverting from my opening topic there, but I thought some might want to know how WE got the way we are now, now how did YOU get that way, that type of, as it were, communicative interchange. "Japs haven't forgotten the war." "Those are not Japanese of a different and more altruistic attitude. Those don't travel." A couple of them had tried to shanghai me on my way home from New Orleans, this was after the big get together with foreign students. They looked in place, never had heard of espionage. Well, those "Easterners" aren't unfamiliar with synergy, perhaps I can find some way of getting along with them here. They might say so.

As an explanation of why I call my apazine "Synergy", that has looked to me like a sharp name for a fanzine, and my apazine has been, for me if not for you, an example of a fanzine, which might be expanded into one if remade for general distribution. Of course that makes it a theme fanzine, unless the name is facetious and has a more general meaning than it does. Then it is jaunty, but if serious about the contents, it is hard if not heavy reading. There wouldn't be much variety in it if it remained true to its title. But I would be making it mean an attitude toward life rather than the study thereof, a wish that there were more communication, blesing and getting together in science fiction fandom and in the world as well. So the zine would have that air about it. And I think synergy is much in the air these days, awaiting its time, and it is consonant with my own attitude toward life. I don't really intend to sell people on synergy, just to have that general attitude, instead of giving my zine a name like "Crash Test Dummies" or "The Necrophile". (Case in point, "The Spanish Inquisition", none can say they have not seen this fanzine title.) Synergy is itself worth making reference to, a title one with the Age of Aquarius and Xanadu. Sure, it isn't a deathless title, one which will keep me from death, but it does keep me from siding with death in the grand debate about how worthwhile death is and how well it makes out in comparison with other things. There is no sense in doting on it, I feel.

Synergy, oneness with the many, under creation.

Mailing Comments



INTERMISSION. Why war digest? Is the zine heavy on warfare? This would explain the strong language. I see it's a war issue, but my point is, why a war issue of a zine? Warfare is so hard upon us. Why not cool it with an iced tea and be star seekers?

I'll do my commenting in my apazine, and I'm doing it now.

I see in the precedent that war interrupted a fellow's fanzine, which might well happen, what with the bombing raids on London, but I could agree that wars are backing up all over. There is indeed world-destroying war going on, accompanied with war's plagues.

They've said Fandom has been at war; actually much of it got involved in the real wars. But it made fandom get pretty mean.

I had a Russian correspondent for awhile who was part of a Russian science fiction society, or whatever they have by way of literary societies. She had an article about it in my fanzine, Pablo Lennis. It only skimmed the surface of what the society was.

People being naïve about a bomb is apt to get cartoonists going if they hear about it.

People who see doom in the atomic bomb seem justified to me. A real doomsday devising.

There's something about transforming matter into explosive energy about the A-Bomb. When one goes off you hear a great blast and then a greater blast comes up and crashes into it, with a sound of fury, and a blast streams out of the first one and hits something somewhere else, then another area reacts to that area and another amalgamation hits that amalgamation. Then all the amalgamations get the ass, and try something different. There's some magic in its makeup. Water, as with reservoirs, is vaporized instantaneously. When you look at fireworks, you can see a similarity in their workings, as individual rockets do several different things.

Yes, science fiction does have an interest in the atomic age.

Not in both mailings any more. My communications with e-APA went to pot.

Some time I might dig out the photo of the LA clubhouse and show it to you, but it's a tremendous chore to locate it. It's a newer one. I have the photo in Surprising Stories too, on the net, but it's gone off the net, and the files on that netzine are presently out of my keeping.

The What Mad Universe film has been banned by every banning technique there is. It seems like Khrushchev was asked for help in burying it. It was code-named OMEGA and attributed to someone else while it was being made. Wally Cox played the chief character, editor Keith Winston, or Winton, whichever it was. The Purple Gang and other such people played the Nighters. Sincerity of performance was highly notable in the film. First-class cameramen were hired and told to arrange their own views as they were accustomed to do them, and they were noted for originality. One of them had done the Ernie Kovacs show, not alone, of course. One time they got a whole street riot that was happening where they were filming on camera coming down a street, and had to detain them and get their consent to be in the picture, and told them that they'd all get tickets to see the film when it was made. None of them were public enemies or big names in espionage so they didn't care about being seen doing that.

ARCHIVE MIDWINTER. The empire in Star Wars does not seem to me to be an empire.

Maybe it would solidify the matter if effigies of world criminals were buried at Boot Hill. Then there's Edward Lear's epitaph: "Do you recall Mr. Lear? He was just short of noticed down here." The verse said that he dined on [some unknown delicacy], "which he ate with a runcible spoon."

There should be a study, not a simplistic one, of what goes into having a convention. Those who manage to handle it should also be studied. Know your overseers.

Complete, unexpurgated editions of Dickens' writings are not much available, to the best of my knowledge. I remember reading an edition of GREAT EXPECTATIONS where a scene describing sexual union had obviously been removed from the context.

SNOW POSTER TOWNSHIP. You certainly do come up with information from all over.

Who has LASFS taking convention bids? There's business being done there. I don't find it well reported in their Menace. Who maintains the offices these people take? Who gives them such powers as they have when they are in these official positions? I could have inquired about it at the early nineties Worldcon in Chicago, but I'd have been seen

as the Thing From the Water if I succeeded in finding a business meeting.

It's hard to get real information on any group, especially, I suppose, the DC group.

THE MURDERED MASTER MAGE. I don't know why I don't run into your problems with Facebook. I have three groups that I run. No authentication was required. Perhaps you followed a different system in Facebook membership, a more complex one, as I visualize it. Perhaps some form of behind-the-scenes activity was going on. I see Will had the same problem, but maybe he had other authentication difficulties.

Why should fandom be broken up into specialties? This seems not as good as a broad overview.

I think awards are considered as encouragements. An example of not receiving encouragement occurs in the second Intermission of last month, the publishing of only two issues of **Supramundane Stories**.

INTERMISSION again. It would have been fannish if Lovecraft put one of the last few paragraphs of "The Rats in the Walls" as a speech being uttered by Frone as he forsook his zine, into Lovecraft's own fanzine, as a portraiture or expression of gafia. Frone's expression in the photo resembles the one Lovecraft always had. Frone's editorial in issue #1 takes away from the jest by sounding like that speech.

I don't know why Frone's hekto illo would be expected to appeal to fans of that time of the early SF mags when fandom was still coming into being.

THE CONTENTS OF A GOOD LIFE. Wish you'd try mailing comments out sometime.

SAMIZDAT. Covid—a plague that spread over the entire earth a few billion times faster than man did. I wish our scientists could isolate some of the talents of this plague, but they'd probably catch it trying.

There are people who are white. Poe refers to them occasionally. So was the phantasmic Snow White. Whiteness was valued back in those days, and was highly thought of by people who were flesh colored. Similarly, there ARE negros who are black, rather than brown or tan. But I don't see why they call all of them black.



"Mail for Sergeant Pieatro."



Nighters, ala What Mad Universe

The Contents of a Good Life



for NAPA mailing
July 2022

WILL MAYO, Apartment 9B, 750 Carroll Parkway, Frederick, Maryland. wsmayo@yahoo.com



Ah, people, don't feel cheated. There are far greater things than us mere mortals.

Life's a winner for the space cadets. I'm not so sure about the Down Earthers.

Writing, for me, is a part of my way for salvaging a life. It hasn't been that good a life and I'm sure that I've hurt a lot of people along the way. But, in the words of Walt Whitman, "I lend my verse." And that makes it all worthwhile.

I dream of a world on the edge of shadow and light, between good and bad, between knowledge and ignorance.

Scientists have been able to extend the limits of life, yet they still know little about death. Nor have they been able to find out just what lies beyond death other than physical deterioration. Oh, one study found that consciousness extends at least five minutes beyond death. While another study found that life does indeed flash before our eyes when we die. But, at best, these and other studies are inconclusive. Really, they know so little the doorway to oblivion remains murky and dark. And the mystery remains.

People. Myths. Legends. The byways of this world. How we make gods out of ourselves and our fellow men in order to survive. And then we die anyway.



A news item:

IF WE'RE LIVING IN A SIMULATION, THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY
by Eric Schwitzgebel

That we're living in a computer simulation — it sounds like a paranoid fantasy. But it's a possibility that futurists, philosophers, and scientific cosmologists are taking increasingly seriously. Oxford philosopher and noted futurist Nick Bostrom estimates there's about a one in three chances that we're living in a computer simulation. Prominent New York University philosopher David Chalmers, in his recent book, estimates at least a twenty-five percent chance. Billionaire Elon Musk says it's a near certainty.

Michio Kaku has a series of Youtube appearances called "Big Think."





Psychic Fair, Frederick, Maryland

Swiftly, It Passes

Under the weight of sorrow, under the weight of darkness
there is only you and me.

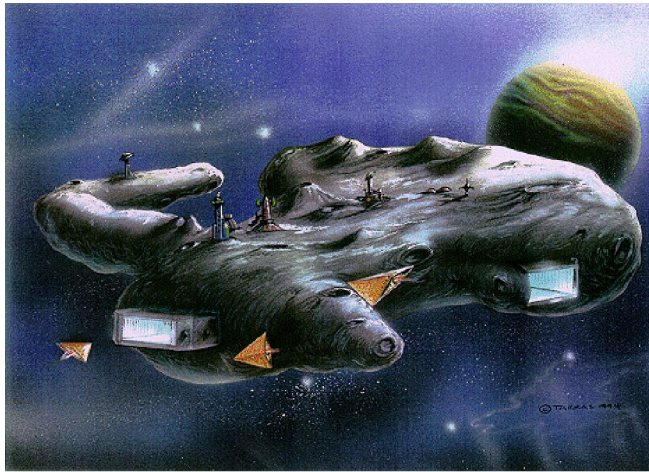
There is only our brief time, together in the cosmos
before the grave and oblivion closes over all.

You can smell its desire. Swiftly here before gone. But so sweet to the taste.

Drink well, for we are together in the now.

There is no other time for us. Only this passing minute.

Can you feel it in your arms?



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Samizdat...

ISH 14: July/Aug 2022
Samuel Lubell's zine

...LoC on N'APA 258

Intermission 119-I completely agree that Putin's war in the Ukraine was completely unnecessary. I've

been impressed at how long Ukraine has held its own. But over time, I don't see how they could win in the long-term unless the West gets involved or something happens to Putin. While there were no IBM PCs in 1980, there were other home computers including the Apple and the Tandy Radio Shack TRS-80 (I had the latter then). I agree on Jerry Pournelle. I didn't appreciate his politics but liked many of his books. I agree that there are far more nuclear weapons today than anyone needs. It is worrisome that a declining superpower such as Russia may turn to nuclear weapons if they are losing a war. The Chengdu WorldCon is in 2023. If another Chinese city wants to run for 2025, when the vote is in 2023, I don't see any way to stop them.



Archive Midwinter - I think SF has evolved and has become better in a lot of technical ways - characterization, writing quality, inclusion, and plotting. But I think some of the sense of wonder has been lost since it is a lot harder to come up with a truly original idea since so much sf has already dealt with whatever premise the author comes up (and perhaps some of this is that I am no longer young so have seen it before).

Snow Poster Township #4 - Welcome to N'APA. Sounds like you are listening to a lot of good SF movie music. You ask "Is Sonic the Hedgehog really the longest-running media tie-in comic book ever?" I think Walt Disney's Comics and Stories has it beat with over 700 issues. The Washington SF Association (WSFA) meets twice a month at the houses of members. During the pandemic we have been meeting mostly online with a few hybrid meetings. The meetings deal with club business, our convention Capclave, our small press award, and informing members of local activities of interest. Then there's a magazine discussion alternating between a print magazine (*Fantasy & SF* and *Asimov's*) and an online magazine (*Clarkesworld* and *Lightspeed*). However, in the summer we interrupt this to discuss the Hugo nominees (one meeting for the short fiction, one for the novels & series).

Ye Murthered Master Mage - I really need to start nominating for the Neffy awards. Please remind me of the process. I run the Baltimore Science Fiction Society's Compton Crook Award for best debut novel and there are over 100 novels by new writers each year so I can see why there isn't always overlap between awards (although I consider it a victory when the winner of our contest appears on the Hugo ballot). If Bova drove Schmitz out of writing, I wish Schmitz just sent his stuff to a different publisher. Flyer racks at cons generally



take standard size paper. Most cons list a mailing address on the website or we can ask members to take flyers when they go to cons.

Intermission #120 – Yes, Russia has not been doing well in the Ukraine war. It certainly is showing that its military might has been greatly exaggerated. You have an interesting presentation on Frome and Canadian fandom.

Synergy 39 – I love the fiction of Ted Sturgeon and remember “Saucer of Loneliness” well. How does your “regular fanzine” Pablo Lennis differ from this one? Sturgeon’s Law got enough people agreeing with it that it moved from being a remark to a law. Specifically, “95% of SF is crap, but then 95% of everything is crap.”

Good Life #25 – A ghoulish eats human flesh. I hope you have a better diet than that. I think we are all real; it’s just that we show different attributes of ourselves to different people.

...Author Spotlight: Theodore Sturgeon

Since I mention Sturgeon’s Law in this zine, let’s examine its author – Theodore (Ted) Sturgeon. Sturgeon is probably best known for his story “Baby is Three” which was adapted into the ‘novel’ *More than Human*. He wrote two episodes of the original *Star Trek*, inventing the Prime Directive, the Vulcan greeting “Live long and prosper” with the divided fingers (which I am completely unable to do), *The Dreaming Jewels*, “Microcosmic God,” “A Saucer of Loneliness,” and “And Now the News.” His first story, “Ether Breathe” was published in *Astounding Science Fiction*, September 1939, when he was 21.

Sturgeon wrote deeply humanistic stories. There usually was not much science to his SF. His focus was always on the characters and their issues. He wrote some of the earliest SF focused on homosexuality. He won the International Fantasy Award for *More Than Human* and the Hugo and Nebula awards for “Slow Sculpture.”

A 13-volume *The Complete Stories of Theodore Sturgeon Series* was published by North Atlantic Books. These are probably best suited for collectors. I’d recommend readers start with either *More than Human* or *The Dreaming Jewels*. And then haunt used bookstores for his collections.



...Gun Violence

There has been too much gun violence in America recently. A May 14th shooting in Buffalo, NY grocery killed 10. A May 24 mass shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas killed 19 students and 2 teachers. A July 4th shooting in the Highland Park neighborhood of Chicago killed 6 and wounded at least 30 more. Guns have killed about [22,500 people just in the first half of 2022](#). Opponents of gun control are blaming a lack of religion, TV/videogame violence, mass media, bad parenting, and everything but guns. However, most of Europe is less religion than the U.S., Canada gets the same mass media we do, and Japan has even more violent cartoons and videogames. Yet none of these places routinely have mass murder using guns. Why? Guns are not as available in First World nations as they are in the U.S. We allow people to purchase deadly weapons whose only purpose is to kill many people quickly.

Yes, the Constitution gives people the right to bear arms but rights can be regulated. We have a right to vote but polling places control where and when. We have freedom of speech

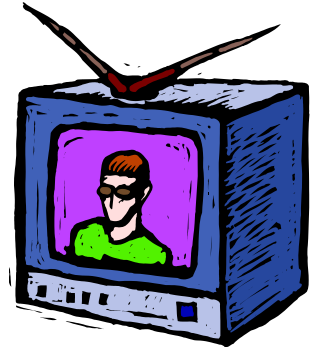


but not a right to interrupt teachers and speakers. America's obsession with guns has long since reached the crisis point, equivalent of yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theater. Conservatives are fond of talking about a 'right to life' when limiting abortion. Why do they not apply this right to life to freedom from gun violence?

...Progress with Projects

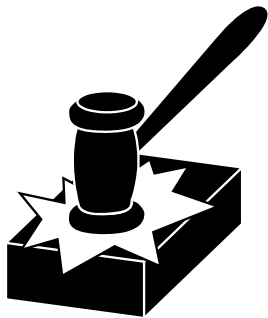
Regular readers may remember that I have begun a series of projects to watch more SF TV, use Netflix more, read more classics and history, and other things. Here is my current report on progress with these projects.

Project SFTV - Netflix has stopped showing Trek, even Deep Space Nine so I have broadened this to include SF TV generally. I watched some DS9 in June before they stopped so I'll cover those here. Fortunately, the local library has DVDs of both the Original Series and The Next Generation so I'll get through those before deciding how to watch the other series.



Deep Space Nine:

Q-Less - When Vash (a space archeology/treasure hunter) is rescued from the gamma quadrant, her estranged lover, the omnipotent entity called Q, tries to convince her to resume travelling with him. I can't say I really wanted to see a lovesick Q and this episode didn't really make good use of his abilities. He didn't feel like a menace. And this was far too early in the series to focus on guest stars. There was a nice scene where, in response to Q's taunts, Sisko hits him, hard. Q whines "Picard never hit me." Sisko says, "I'm not Picard." So I think part of this episode was to stress the difference between Picard and the Enterprise with Sisko and this crew. While decent, this ep should have been better.



Dax - Aliens try to kidnap Dax, the Trill science officer. It turns out they are sent from a planet to put Dax on trial for a crime committed by her predecessor with the symbiont, Curzon Dax. They accuse him of the murder of a planetary hero. Sisko, who was good friends with Curzon, tries to defend him, but is surprised at how little help Dax is with the defense. All she does is smile mysteriously (admittedly, which she does very well). It turns out that Dax is protecting the hero's wife, with whom Curzon had had an affair. There is a lot of debate over whether a Trill can be guilty of the crimes of the symbiont's predecessor (which one would think would have been a settled point in Trill law ages ago), but does suggest some interesting background for Trills in general and Dax in particular.

The episode does showcase Terry Farrell's (Jadzia Dax) limited acting range.

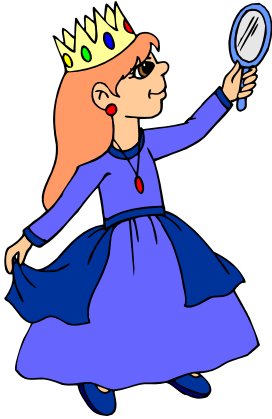
The Passenger - This is another mystery episode. An alien security officer is convinced that the prisoner she was escorting isn't really dead. There is some nice friction between Odo and a Starfleet security officer. But it is mostly a one-off episode, barely average.

Move Along Home - This was another one-off. The first aliens through the wormhole just want to play games. When they catch Quark cheating they force him to play one of their games in which he unwittingly directs Sisko, Dax, Kira, and Julian to solve simulated situations at the seeming risk to their lives only to be told they were never in danger since it is only a game. There's an interesting moment when Quark breaks down unwilling to choose which person must die, but not much else for characterization. It is a below average episode.

The Nagus - This was a fun episode. The ruler of the Ferengi comes to Quark's bar and announces Quark as his successor. He then dies, leaving all the other Ferengi to alternately butter up Quark or try to kill him.

(including his brother, Rom). This is the first episode where Rom actually speaks up and Quark actually rewards his brother for trying to kill him. This is an interesting look at Ferengi culture.

The Vortex - This is an Odo-centric episode. When a gamma quadrant planet wants Sisko to turn over a prisoner to them, the prisoner claims to have information on shapeshifters. Odo has a moral dilemma here when he told to escort the prisoner home. It turns out the prisoner really is using Odo to rescue his daughter.



Star Wars: Obiwan Kenobi - This six-episode mini-series is available only on Disney+, to which I don't normally have access. But I was staying with family who do have it. I'm okay with providing information on nearly 30 year old Trek episodes, but since this is new and probably most people have not seen it, I won't spoil it with details beyond the basics. This is worth seeing for any Star Wars fan. It could have been titled "How Obiwan Got His Jedi Back". Ten years after the fall of the Republic, the Empire is still hunting the remaining Jedi. When a 10-year-old Princess Leia is kidnapped, her foster parents ask Obiwan to rescue her. But Obiwan, having been hiding for 10 years is not the Jedi he once was. The kid playing Leia, Vivien Lyra Blair, was wonderfully snarky. And they got the actors who played Obiwan (Ewan McGregor) and Anakin (Hayden Christensen) in the prequel trilogy to repeat their roles. Obiwan doesn't look old enough to turn into the Star Wars: A New Hope portrayal in just 10 years, but that's sort of inevitable. The pacing was

somewhat slow at first; it probably could have been cut into a 2.5 hour movie.

Project Netflix - I saw *Black Widow*. This was a decent spy thriller whose main appeal was the family aspect. Before becoming the Black Widow, as a girl she was part of a family of Russian spies working undercover in the U.S.A. Midway through the movie, to get information, she rescues her fake "father," a low-level Russian super-hero. There's lots of action, but it doesn't really advance the Marvel Cinematic Universe plotline at all.

Casino Royale - When better to watch a James Bond movie than July 7th, which is double 07s? This is of course a reboot of James Bond, going back to the first book and his first adventure as a 00 agent. This movie was an attempt at a serious, gritty James Bond with more flaws, including some obvious sociopathic tendencies. There weren't any super-gadgets.

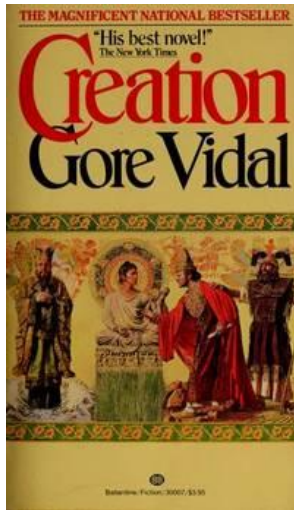


Jaws - I watched this with my sister's family on the day before we went to Martha's Vineyard (where it was filmed) ourselves. There was a lot less blood and bitten limbs than I expected. This was actually fairly political as the mayor kept insisting the sheriff not close the beaches since the island needed tourist dollars.

I also watched a few episodes of *Blacklist* (a crime drama in which a criminal traitor begins helping a FBI agent for mysterious reasons), and *Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda* (a space show starring Kevin Sorbo which had some ideas about the fall of a great empire but the idea that someone could put it back together with just one ship and a crew of seven people never made any sense).

Project History: I'm still reading Paul Johnson's *A History of the Jews*. I'm about halfway through it. At times this reads like a textbook since it is covering 4,000 years. But since the last 250 pages cover just 200 years, I'm hoping it will have more focus.

Project Shakespeare. No Progress. Still stuck on *King John*.



Project Classics. I finished *Creation* by Gore Vidal. This book is set in 5th century BCE in Persia, with trips to India and China. The main character and narrator is the grandson of Zoroaster, prophet of the Wise Lord, and friend to Great King Xerxes. This is not a period of history that I have studied but the details here show either extensive research or a vivid imagination. Much of the book is a travelogue of his adventures as diplomat for the Persian Empire and his efforts to convince the Persian Great King to conquer the East. This is strong historical fiction, although I think Vidal's American History books are better. I have started Charles Dickens *David Copperfield* which I think I read in middle school so over 40 years ago.

Project Cleanup: Err, no.

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