

The Stf Amateur 15



***The Stf Amateur* 15**
December 2024

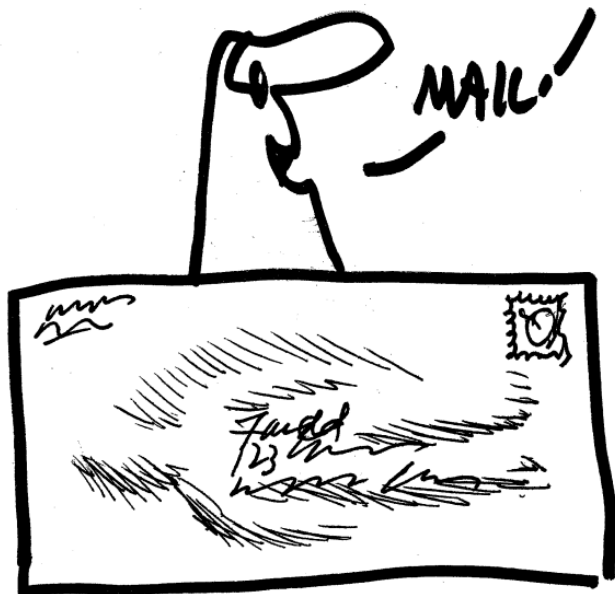
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You can learn more about cover artist Joe Pearson at <http://www.epochinkanimation.com>.

The Stf Amateur is a bundlezine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for members of the United Fanzine Organization and select others, available via *eFanzines* (<https://efanzines.com>) and the Fanac Fan History Project (<https://fanac.org>), as well as for the Usual. Letters of comment, cover art, and spot illustrations are welcome and desired—as are other contributions. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

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—William Rotsler

Garth Spencer

Quite the diverse gang at the pub, in your [*The Stf Amateur* #13] cover illustration.

[Isn't Larry Johnson's work wonderful?—HR]

Continuing the discussion of hobby science kits, construction toys, and “maker” fandom (Cy Chauvin's and my comments)—not really being in touch with maker fandom, if there is any in my town, I don't really know what's required. I am in some despair when it comes to learning how to build a minicomputer for myself or how to deal with operating system and program concepts. Maybe I should stick to daydreaming about flying submarines, underwater railroads, or space-going tunnelling machines.

[There was a Maker's Room at Loscon 50 at the end of November (<https://loscon.org/makers-room>), and its organizer Gene Turnbow told me after the con that they were busy the entire time. Next year's will be even better, he stated. Maker fandom might be on the upswing generally, if you can find other local fen who are into such things.

Regardless, those sound like some stellar daydreams!—HR]

Thank you for the explanation of Ignorable Themes! I have recommended them above to Kat Templeton.

Re: *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* 130-1: Maybe you and I

and Jean-Paul GB, among others, can start listing SFnal podcasts?

[Pardon my dimwittedness, but who's Jean-Paul GB? I'm not really that interested in doing a podcast—though I do encourage others to do so. (I'd rather see more sf radio programs broadcast on the air, but I'm not sure that's my task to undertake, either.) Regardless, I think I should bring a digital recorder to the next con so I can interview people more easily. I also think conrunners should arrange for the digital audio recording of programming; there used to be audio cassettes available afterward!—HR]

I have taken the liberty of copying your starter list from this apazine, as a foundation for such a list. As noted in *The Obdurate Eye* #45, I am working up lists like this for a new fannish reference Web site.

[Reprint away, good sir. Citations and source references are always welcome.—HR]

Cy Chauvin

Well, blast you, Heath Row—

(After that greeting, it seems I ought to have a bone to pick or at least a mild quibble to contest with you, but I don't!)

[Why, we could even stage—and feign—a proper, good old fan feud! “What beef has that Heath guy got with Chauvin?” “Sheesh, Cy sure seems to disdain that Row. I predict fisticuffs at Bubonicon.”—HR]

I was surprised by your revelation that you lived in Boston and Brooklyn, since I always thought you were a California sunshine guy, especially with your descriptions of visiting and working in Portugal and talk of retiring there. I'm envious of your trip to Providence—I really enjoyed Boston the few times I visited, with antiquities and graveyards on downtown streets, and imagine Providence to be far more so. The place did seem to fascinate [H.P.] Lovecraft so. And it's not so far away (for me).

[Hold on to your hat, good sir: I spent much of my life in... Wisconsin. Of the years I've been alive, I spent 18 in southern Wisconsin, five in the Chicago area, eight in the Boston area, five in Brooklyn, and now 15 in the Los Angeles area. A few years more, and my time in California will equal that in Wisconsin. I've lived at the same address now for 13 years, the longest I've lived anywhere other than my childhood home.—HR]

I reread “The Cats of Ulthar” and enjoyed it—I didn’t like it the first time. Perhaps I’ll reread more on William [Breiding]’s recommended Lovecraft list.

[One should definitely read Lovecraft, so I support your endeavors with enthusiasm and encouragement.—HR]

My local library generally automatically renews books multiple times, without late fees (with a few exceptions), so I’m quite spoilt.

Regarding a comment you made about *Interzone* and the New Wave: *Interzone* was started post-New Wave. Indeed, at one point during David Pringle’s editorship, I believe they were championing something they called “new hard science fiction.” That doesn’t mean they didn’t publish experimental sf.

[That is quite true! Launched in 1982, *Interzone* certainly came later. The Michael Moorcock-edited *New Worlds* is likely a much better reference point. Born after the New Wave—and only able to look back at it—I’ve perhaps always conflated *Interzone* with the New Wave. I came late to that periodical, as well. When I first encountered it as a wee lad, I deemed it too much. *Science Fiction Eye*, however, le swoon!—HR]

I’m rather shocked and surprised by the news of Gordon Eklund having a story that was slated to be in *The Last Dangerous Visions* returned after 30 years. Some of his stories impressed me long ago, like “Dear Aunt Annie” [*Fantastic*, April 1970] and especially “The Ascending Aye.” [*Amazing Science Fiction*, January 1973] I don’t know if I would want to reread those after all these years in fear my fond memories might be spoiled, although I did read his collaboration with Gregory Benford recently, “If the Stars Are Gods” (novelette version) [*Universe 4*], and it was excellent.

[I think Eklund is a writer deserving much more attention. I’ve enjoyed everything of his I’ve ever read. I’ll seek out the stories you mentioned!—HR]

I enjoyed your story of your recent trip to New York City and wandering through your old habitats, rediscovering old sites and new, rather than “sightseeing.” The closest I’d gotten to NYC in any recent time was Newark, New Jersey, through a series of cascading plane cancellations. I thought of contacting Moshe Feder then, too.

[We should all reach out to Mr. Feder. In early December, he went to the hospital but seems to be on

the mend already. May he heal fully and quickly.—HR]

The photo of the western story omnibus at the Dutch airport does seem so pulpish and out of place. Like a magazine out of a time warp!

Re: Your theme of not enough time, or making time for fanac: I’m sorry when I don’t make time. The conversations with the other people I know aren’t enough; they’re too limited. I wish I had a little more discipline so I would write more regularly than I do.

[I’m feeling the pinch this month, for sure. This issue of *The Stf Amateur* is about half the size of the previous ish, and it’s largely because of distractions while traveling. I can’t only chalk it up to the recent holiday and Loscon 50—which was a blast. (Conrep forthcoming!)]

Last month while in Portugal, I missed two apae deadlines (N’APA and eAPA—my apologies, Garth!), and my page count suffered slightly otherwise. Since returning, I’ve been considering whether apae are the best way for me to approach my fun—I can hardly call it work—as a faned, but without those weekly deadlines I don’t know what I’d do.

Part of that consideration is also driven by the forthcoming *Losconzine* #50, which is going to be quite the bumper number. We received more fiction submissions this year than ever before, and I enjoyed discussing article ideas with writers tabling in the huckster room. I also enjoyed discussing the relative merits of fanwriting, writing fiction, and editing with a couple of writer and faned friends, and wonder whether I should take more of a stab at writing fiction—or editing... fanzines and anthology projects.

The world is weird and wonderful. Who knows what the future will bring?—HR]

I’ll be especially interested in what reaction you might get to my review of *Genre Fiction: The Roaring Years* by Peter Nicholls [*The Stf Amateur* #14], of course, but especially to this excerpt I quoted from the book:

“Some of you may not be familiar with that famous work entitled *A Reference Book of Planetary and Galactic Civilizations for the Use of Science Fiction Writers*. It was a compendium John W. Campbell Jr. worked up from Spengler, Toynbee, and *The Child’s Wonder Book of World History*. Campbell had only one copy, and he used to lend it to his writers. Asimov and Heinlein used to swap it back and forth all the time; Alfred Bester could only get hold of it twice. There’s a nasty story that A.E. van Vogt had it Xeroxed, but his secretary made a mistake and Xeroxed a

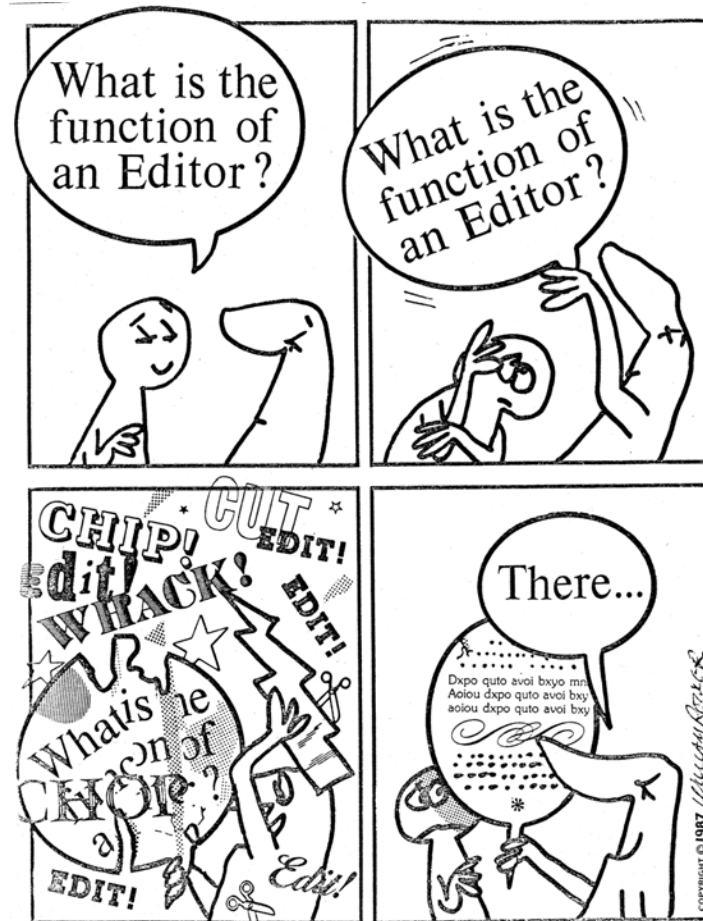
Superman comic in place of Chapter 6. Anyway, it came out all right, because he never noticed. Poor old Jim Blish couldn't get a hold of it when he needed it, so he had to read Spengler in the original, to the ultimate confusion of his fans."

You see, two of the people to whom I gave the review were completely taken in by Nicholls's tongue-in-cheek remarks and wondered that they'd not heard of Campbell's book before! I don't know whether Peter would laugh or weep over the thought.

[I honestly figured that such a text might actually exist. What a kick that it was a joke. If anyone remarks on that piece, you'll be among the first to know.

I bet Nicholls would laugh. His jape might be mistaken for history!—HR]

Call for Submissions



—William Rotsler

Do you write or draw? As *The Stf Amateur* continues to evolve from an interconnected assortment of standalone apazines to its current bundlezine format, it's only natural that it eventually becomes a proper genzine. Effective immediately, *The Stf Amateur* is open to submissions of all kinds.

The Stf Amateur is hereby requesting the following:

- sf, fantasy, and horror news
- fanart, illos, and fillos
- cover art
- poetry
- filk songs and lyrics
- short fiction
- articles and essays
- fanzine, book, movie, television, and other reviews
- con reports
- jokes
- letters of comment
- ... and other material

If selected for publication, material will initially be included in one of my apazines, as well as a monthly issue of *The Stf Amateur*. Cover art will be considered solely for *The Stf Amateur*. Contributors will receive the issue in which their material appears.

Send your contributions to Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; or via fax to 323-916-0367.

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #138

Nov. 8, 2024

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Last Week's Senryu

Portugal greetings

8 a.m. is 3 p.m.

In the future: Me

And that was *before* daylight saving time took effect in Los Angeles on Nov. 3! Now your 8 a.m. is my 4 p.m., and as I write this at 5:36 p.m. Thursday, it's 9:36 a.m. in your neck of the woods. I've already experienced much of a day while you're just beginning yours. That's okeh. You'll do more as I sleep. In fact, the 2 p.m. deadline today is my 10 p.m., so I'll likely work on this tomorrow, Friday, as you sleep. The world shall keep on turning.

Trip Report: Portugal (cont.)

To be honest, the last week—including the election—has been a bit of a blur. To assess how I've spent my time, I referred to the notes I've been keeping in my *2024 Agenda Condor* (<https://tinyurl.com/AgendaCondor>), my annual planner of choice while in Portugal—I can buy one for 2025 during this trip!—as well as my Google Maps timeline to see where I've been physically.

There are some things we do every day. We walk the loop past one Doce Convivio to the "everything store" next to Farmácia Nossa Senhora do Porto before continuing to the park and stairs down to the courtyard by the Capelinhas de N. Senhora de Porto de Ave and more stairs down to the Santuário de Nossa Senhora de Porto de Ave. The views from the park across from the second Doce Convivio past the everything store, as well as from the courtyard above the sanctuary are beautiful, and we love this walk.

If the everything store is open, I buy the day's edition of *Jornal de Notícias* (<https://www.jn.pt>), and once a week, the new issue of *TV 7 Dias* (<https://www.tv7dias.pt>). Sometimes we stop at Pão Quente O Início Unipessoal for bread, or pastries and coffee. Sometimes we go to the post office. After walking home, I'll usually read the newspaper, utilizing Google Translate as needed, and flip through the TV

listings to see if there's anything I want to record on the DVR that week.

JN, the newspaper I've taken to reading, occasionally features items of fannish interest. On Nov. 2, F. Cleto e Pina reviewed a new Portuguese translation of Jiro Taniguchi's bande dessinée (manga, really) *Bairro distante*. (<https://tinyurl.com/JN-Bairro>) There's a BD review every Saturday, I believe. (I'll check again this weekend.) That day's edition also included an article profiling three new small publishers: Desmuro, Lingua Matria, and Quiui. (<https://tinyurl.com/JN-publishers>) Finally, *JN* published an obituary for anti-fascist activist Camilo Mortágua. (<https://tinyurl.com/Mortagua-obit>) The Oct. 29 edition included an article about an antiracist gathering.

Many days, *JN* publishes at least one editorial comic strip—and sometimes two. Cartoonists include R. Reimão e Anibal F., whose approach is relatively minimal and text dependent, and Jose Bandeira, whose work seems more similar to gag strips than editorial cartoons—but is still topical. There doesn't seem to be a cultural focus on newspaper comics otherwise, though I don't often read beyond *JN*. I'll have to do so. (Comic strips are culturally relevant, however. The recent book *Toda a Mafalda* celebrates 60 years of the Argentinian comic strip published from 1964-1973.)

ELIAS,
O SEM-ABRIGO

AS ELEIÇÕES NOS EUA
REVELARAM
UM PAÍS
PARTIDO AO MEIO...



E COM TENDÊNCIA
PARA ESFRANGALHAR
O MUNDO
INTEIRO...



R. Reimão e Anibal F.

BANDEIRA DE CANTO

ADEPTOS DO BENFICA
LANÇARAM PIROTECNIA
NO METRO DE MUNIQUE E
PARALISARAM UMA LINHA.



MEU DEUS! SERÁ QUE...
SEI O QUE VAIS
PERGUNTAR E A
RESPOSTA É
NEGATIVA.



NÃO, NÃO É
METRO DE
SUPERFÍCIE.



Jose Bandeira

Jornal de Notícias, Nov. 7, 2024

The newspaper also occasionally encourages community reading of great books, apparently. An Oct. 30 full-page advertisement highlighted three such "Grandes Romances," Lev Tolstoi's *Guerra e Paz*, Victor Hugo's *Os Miseráveis*, and Margaret Mitchell's

(misspelled in the ad!) *E Tudo o Vento Levou*. Each book, available in limited quantities at select newsagents, will be sold between Oct. 20 and Dec. 29 in two 400-page volumes. Every two weeks, on Sunday, you can buy a portion of a great novel—and a newspaper for €11.95. That’s kind of a neat idea, even if I haven’t seen them anywhere yet. (<https://www.jn.pt/4091462715/colecao-grandes-romances>)

The Oct. 25-31, 2024, issue of *TV 7 Dias* featured an inside front cover advertisement for the musical *A Bela eo Monstro*. (<https://tinyurl.com/BeM-musical>) The Lazer section promotes fannish movies most issues—*Venom: A Ultima Danca* last week—as well as occasionally relevant books, such as the new George Orwell adaptation from Minotauro, *1984: Novela Grafica*. Aimee de Jongh’s novela grafica *Dias de Areia* was also listed.

Halloween movies and cartoons—primarily aired on AXN Movies, Disney Junior, and Cartoon Network—were showcased in the magazine. Also featured was a SkyShowtime suspense series that focuses on a heavy metal band. The description of *Hysteria!* (from the network’s Web page) seems promising: “In 1989 Michigan, USA, when a local teenager disappears in an alleged Satanic ritual, a group of high school students pretend to be Satanists to give visibility to their metal band, triggering a witch hunt that leads to them.” The first season includes eight episodes, and one is titled “Can I Play with Madness?”—perhaps inspired by a wonderful song by Iron Maiden.

Fannish fare is also sometimes featured in the thumbnail photos for each day’s two-page spread. Oct. 31, the final episode of *Chucky* was highlighted, along with the movie *Nope*. It’s not common that two such options are featured on the same day.



Los Angeles Times, June 3, 1955

A Cornucopia of Comics

When we go into Braga—which we did to pick up a friend visiting from Spain, last Saturday—I usually check a couple of newsagents for Brazilian comic books. There are two kinds of comics occasionally available: Brazilian Portuguese reprints of Marvel comics published by Panini (<https://panini.com.br/>

[home-marvel](#)) and Mauricio de Sousa’s children-oriented Monica comics. (*T&T* #52 and #90)

While at the Central de Camionagem de Braga, the bus station, to pick up our friend, I was delighted to find that the newsstand included multiple Monica comics. Here’s what I was able to snag—and a sense of their fantastic contents, if any.

Almanaque de Cascao #19 (March 2024)

With a cover featuring the ghostly character Turma do Penadinho (Bug-a-Booo), this was a delight to see so close to Halloween, despite its publication date. (These take a while to reach Portugal!) Inside, stories feature a fortune teller, a talking sphinx, the caveman character Piteco, and Turma do Penadinho in the piece “Sob os Efeitos da Lua,” which also includes a werewolf!

Almanaque do Cebolinha #19 (March 2024)

Another excellent Halloween cover published in March, featuring a carnival ride’s ghost, bat, skull, and skeleton. Piteco’s caveman friend Beleleu is featured, as is Penadinho, accompanied and comforted by Frankenstein’s monster. The space-faring Astronauta e Franjinha piece “Uma Nova Nave” includes many a BEM, as well as a rocket ship.

Almanaque de Historias Sem Palavras Turma da Monica #8 (December 2023)

This collection of wordless comics won’t necessarily help me learn Portuguese! A couple of Piteco stories appear within.

Almanaque da Magali #18 (February 2024)

In one piece, Magali’s friend Dudu dreams about being on display in a futuristic zoo run by a robot. There’s a 5,000-story building, curving roadways, flying cars, and a robotic police force and judiciary. Astronauta stars in the one-page “Planeta Picole,” as well as a six-page strip. Penadinho considers the question “Quer Fazer o Gavor de Nao Suhar o Cemiterio” along with a mummy, werewolf, vampire, and Frankenstein’s monster.

Cebolinha #50 (February 2024)

The title character is pulled into “uma edicao super-especial” of a comic book—with blank pages. The resulting Indiana Jones-like adventure is quite fun. Dona Marte appears in the three-page “Bom de Papo.”

Chico Bento #50 (February 2024)

Pulled into another blank comic book, Chico Bento’s friend is abducted by rabbit-like aliens in a spacecraft. Piteco’s “Ponto de Vista” might be one of the best de Sousa stories I’ve ever read. After a couple of pages,

Piteco considers the future—which is depicted, culminating in a panel featuring Astronauta. A pretty cool idea.

Magali #50 (February 2024)

Continuing the 50th issue “por dentro do gibi”—“inside the comic”—theme, this takes *Magali* into an *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*-like story. In “Planeta Acukarix,” an out-of-his-spacesuit Astronauta (I’ve not seen *that* before!) visits a seemingly prehistoric planet populated by aliens. There’s also a Dona Morte story.

Monica #50 (February 2024)

There’s not really anything noteworthy in this issue.

Turma da Monica #50 (February 2024)

This edition features a detective investigating an anthropomorphic mystery. Penadinho appears in a cute little one-pager, as well as an eight-page piece that includes multiple characters—and a depiction of Freddy Krueger.

I enjoy *Monica* comics, but I think I now have enough—generally. From now on, if an issue doesn’t include a story featuring Astronauta, Penadinho and his friends, or Dona Morte, I don’t think I need to pick it up. Those characters, however, I enjoy thoroughly!

Comments on APA-L #3093

Given the luxury of being in the future compared to the rest of you ellers, I’m actually wrapping up this—and the distribution—Friday midday. It’s currently about noon, Greenwich Mean Time, and 4 a.m. PT back home. I’ve apparently been apahacking while late-night giddy in recent days because I accidentally assigned cover artist Alan White the incorrect distribution number for this week’s cover. APA-L #3984 is not due to come out this week, and not for quite some time. (That’s just one key over for the two middle digits—3094 vs. 3984—so I know how the error occurred, at least.) I’ll likely further delay this emailing until I can have Mr. White correct the issue number. The mistake was entirely my own!

In *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #81, **Matthew Mitchell** updated ellers on the temperature in his neck of the woods. The weather in Portugal remains lovely, though rain is expected later today. I quite enjoyed your Halloween-themed movie reviews. I’d forgotten that *The Howling*, *Wolfen*, and *An American Werewolf in London* came out in the same year: 1981. A 2021 Syfy article (<https://tinyurl.com/Werewolves-1981>) considers that lycanthropic cinematic serendipity—and also includes *Full Moon High* to make the count four. I wasn’t aware that

Wolfen was based on a novel; Whitley Strieber’s *The Wolfen* was published in 1978.

Uncanny #60 is available all sorts of places: <https://www.uncannymagazine.com> as mentioned in *T&T* #136, via Amazon for Kindle, even via <https://weightlessbooks.com>. (I’d send you my copy, but they’re worth supporting, so I hesitate.)



Los Angeles Times, June 10, 1955

Nola Frame-Gray’s *Kandor: Notes from a Bottle* languished unnoticed in my email inbox for almost four weeks—thank you, Nola, for bringing it to my attention! It’s good to see you in our pages, again. I appreciate your efforts to help mobilize voters. My wife and I participated in similar activities: sending postcards, writing letters, phone banking, and text banking. It’s frustrating to me that fewer people might have voted in this election than in other recent elections. Hopefully, the worst case scenarios with a second Trump presidency won’t come to be.

Michael Crichton’s novel *Disclosure* was published in 1994. That’s about when the World Wide Web was first attracting widespread mainstream attention. I remember reading one of Bill Gates’s early books and wondering how he could have missed the initial importance of a mainstream Internet. CD-ROMs did hold people’s attention for a while.

In *Vanamonde* #1616, **John Hertz** shared news about the *Europa Clipper* and the *Super-Heavy Starship*. Such stuff is certainly impressive, inspiring, and captures the imagination. That page and a half was most excellent fanzing, good sir. I will share your feedback with cover artist Jose Sanchez. Thank you for the additional context on his artwork!

The introduction to **Joe Zeff’s** *Toony Loons* #779 reminded me of “The Grand Old Duke of York.” There might be a nascent filksong in that idea: “My Internet at Home.” Perhaps somebody’s already thought of that—and written it! Your description of

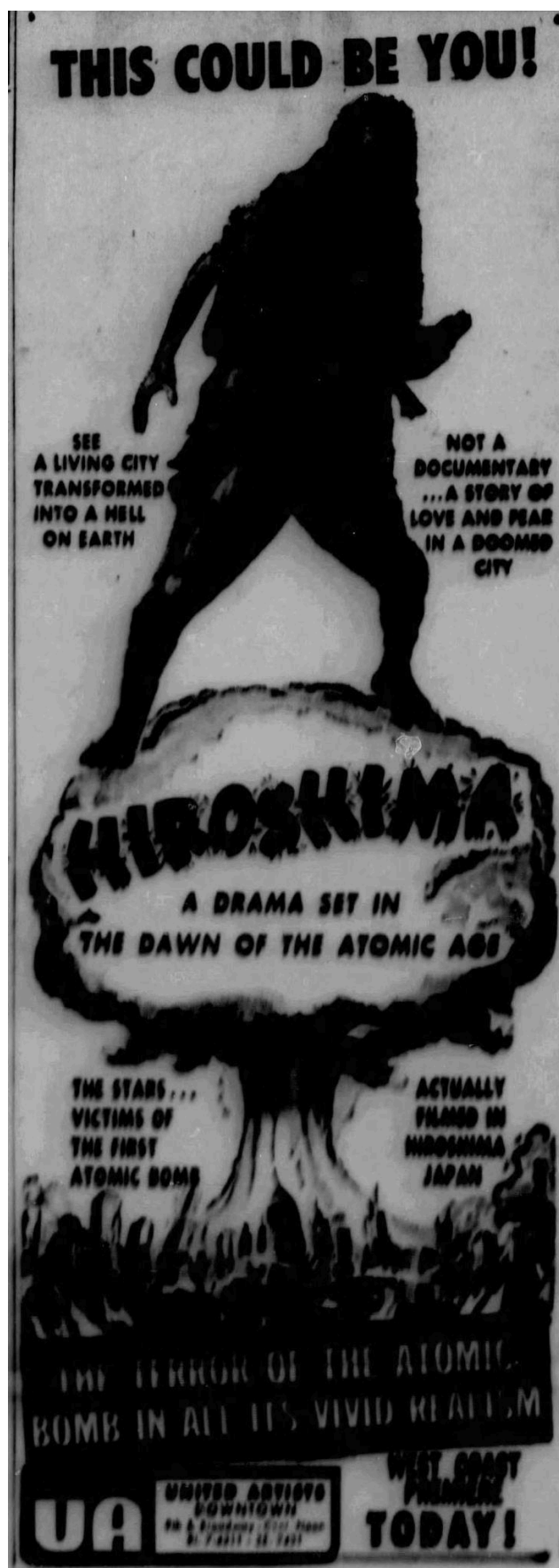
“Stokey the Bear” from *Dudley Do-Right of the Mounties* and *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle and Friends* piqued my interest. That segment is available for viewing at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn2KDisoo5w>.

Tell me more about St. Putragus’ Day and Liza Doolittle Dai. All Saints Day (Dia de Todos-os-Santos) is recognized in Portugal, so there was no mail delivery Nov. 1, and some stores and such were closed. That reminds me: I’ve found a couple of Portuguese equivalents to *Poor Richard’s Almanack*, *The Old Farmer’s Almanac*, and the like.

For 2024, I procured *O Seringador T*, a “reportório crítico-jocoso e prognóstico diário” that’s been publishing for 159 years. It includes information about eclipses, visible planets, and fairs and markets, and offers monthly almanac entries indicating notable holidays, saints of the day, and so forth.

Borda d’Água, “o verdadeiro almanaque,” has been in print for 95 years. It, too, includes eclipses and monthly almanac listings, as well as phases of the moon, sunrise and sunset in Lisbon and Porto, notable historic dates, festivals and fairs, weather-prediction aphorisms, and “grandezas e distancias astronomicas.” I’m impressed by its focus Earthward, as well as outward. So far, I’ve picked up the 2025 *O Seringador T*—at the bus station newsstand!—and I look forward to obtaining the new *Borda d’Água*, as well.

Charles Lee Jackson II screened *Cult of the Cobra* for the FWEMS? I’d love to learn more about that. I would love to check out your novel and short stories. Feel free to email them to me.



Los Angeles Times, June 10, 1955

Faculae & Filigree #37

Nov. 9, 2024

Faculae & Filigree is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to LASFAPA, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Trip Report: Portugal (cont.)

The day after the election—after two relatively late nights (Monday up until midnight GMT waiting to receive an expected launch release note at work, and then up until almost 3 a.m. watching the election results roll in)—my wife and I decided we needed to reconnect with the outdoors and history.

We've been in Portugal since Oct. 28, taking a vacation day for the travel from Los Angeles through Amsterdam (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #137) and working from outside Póvoa de Lanhoso otherwise (*T&T* #138), largely keeping New York City hours. My wife's currently in between projects, so she's been a little more able to relax (relatively speaking, given the state of the world) so far, and we hosted a friend who was visiting Spain for about a week.

Wednesday, we went on what might be our favorite hike since beginning to spend time in Portugal. (*T&T* #111) Seeking distant views, familiar surroundings, and a sense of permanence in the midst of transience, uncertainty, and discomfort, we returned to the Trilho dos Moinhos do Pontido at the end of Parque do Pontido in Póvoa de Lanhoso.

That relatively short trail takes hikers along the Ribeira de Pontido, site of a sequence of 18th century castor mills. The remains of the mills' foundations are now tumble-down stone, walls still somewhat intact, overgrown with moss and lichen. Combined with the natural greenery of the area, it's a lovely, lush location.



Caitlin explores the first castor mill

For the first time, we came upon the reclining chair along the trail when other people weren't around or using it, so we had a chance to relax on it ourselves for a while before continuing along the creek.



As beautiful as the trail is, our destination and intended goal was really the end of the hike. Regardless, I'd forgotten that the park at the end of the trail, Carvalho de Calvos, was home to the Calvos Oak, a tree seeded in the early 1500s.



The Calvos Oak's support beams

We spent some time touching its bark and branches before lying underneath its spread to look at its leaves—and through, to the sky—before continuing to our actual destination, which I *had* remembered. Our goal was the Mamoa do Madorro, a Neolithic burial mound dating back to the fifth and fourth millennia BC.



Walking toward the burial mound

The outcome of the recent election is disappointing and concerning for many. The next four years—and subsequent time—will be challenging. But we need to continue. We need to overcome. While Wednesday was a challenging day, I am glad we sought out these signs of history. Mills built as early as 1758 remained in operation until the early 1970s. A tree planted in 1510 still stands. Portugal overcame its own fascist dictatorship. And the living continue to struggle and thrive in locations where, oh, so many have died over the centuries. There's still plenty of cool stuff to do for the good of all. The world and its people remain weird and wonderful. Sometimes, horribly so.

O Futuro da Música ou Música do Futuro

Thursday night, we went to the Centro Cultural Vila Flor in Guimarães for the opening concert of this year's Guimarães Jazz festival. (<https://www.guimaraesjazz.pt/en>) We'd enjoyed our first exposure to the festival last fall—a solo performance by Elliott Sharp—and were inspired to attend opening night, a concert featuring Ambrose Akinmusire's *Honey from a Winter Stone*.

I was only a little familiar with Akinmusire's work as a trumpeter, primarily *When the Heart Emerges Glistening* and the much more recent *Owl Song* with Bill Frisell. I thought Akinmusire was more straightforward than this performance suggested, and that got me thinking about the role of touring musicians, the cultural cross-pollination afforded by jazz and the ways ensembles form and disband, the

meaning of jazz, and the future of jazz—if not music itself.

It could be argued that last night's concert wasn't necessarily jazz. It could also be argued that it was. It was certainly—at times—improvised music. It was also occasionally composed, or at least structured. It rarely, if ever, swung. But the ensemble's combination of jazz, contemporary classical, ambient, electronic, hip hop, and other musical forms was compelling and a heck of a lot of fun.



Playing trumpet as well as synthesizers and perhaps other electronic effects, Akinmusire was joined by Sam Harris on piano, Justin Brown on drums, Chiquitamagic on vocals and keyboards, and Kokayi on vocals—and accompanied by the Mivos Quartet on strings. Harris and Brown would have been at home in any jazz trio or quartet setting. Chiquitamagic's keyboards and ethereal vocalizations brought an element of electronica and near-dance music, if not occasional droning, rhythmic noise. And Kokayi was a delight, freestyling and often trading lines with Akinmusire on trumpet.

In the biographical sketch of the performers, writer and translator Manuel Joao Neto describes Akinmusire's music as “freely orbiting between the centers and the peripheries of jazz music,” the musician having “ignited his first collaborations with fundamental musicians from the emerging jazz generation of the first decade of the 2000s...”

Ivo Martins's at times cryptic opening text to the program booklet, “Lines of Tension in Amorphous Fields,” considers several contradictions in contemporary jazz. “When we frame jazz within the scope and magnitude of internet reality, we have the feeling that music has shrunk in size,” he writes. “[A]t the same time we sense an increasing proclivity for the combination of sounds that led to the acquisition of

new dimensions.”

Considering whether jazz “may be falling into a kind of artistic torpor”—must it always be so?—Martins suggests that “[a] commercially invasive element persists within music...” Free and easy access to music online, combined with economically driven definitions of popularity, quality, and success, might lead to what the writer terms “dilution.” Musicians mimic other musicians, leading to a decrease in originality and innovation.

“[W]e do not know exactly where music, and particularly jazz, is going,” he continues. “How often is music the key that opens our minds to new doors of perception, that takes us to other horizons and new paths that we didn’t even know existed before?”

That a musician born in Oakland, Calif., can travel to Portugal in order to perform for a sizable audience, that his recordings can be released by Blue Note and Nonesuch, that he can perform at the Village Vanguard and record with older, more established musicians such as Bill Frisell all indicate that Akinmusire—and his music—refers to the past while looking to the future. Just like jazz has always done, even if a listener might occasionally be tempted to ask whether the music continues to remain jazz.

Must it?

The Comics of *Correio da Manhã*

Since arriving in Portugal, I’ve been enjoying the editorial comic strips by R. Reimao e Anibal F., and Jose Bandeira in *Jornal de Noticias*. I also picked up a handful of somewhat recent Monica comics. (*T&T* #138) Thursday morning, in addition to buying the day’s *JN*, I also procured a copy of *Correio da Manhã* (<https://www.cmjornal.pt>) to assess its comics offerings.

Esplendores CM

Por António Maia



Correio da Manhã, Nov. 8, 2024

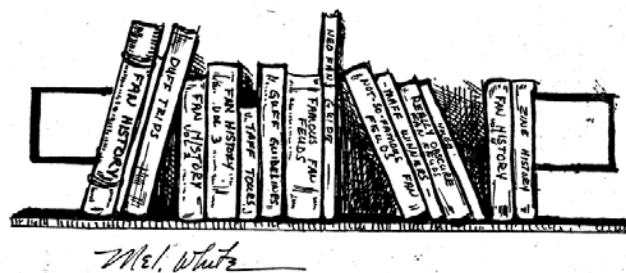
To my surprise, the Nov. 8 edition of *Correio* offered a third-page editorial cartoon—in color—by Antonio Maia on the third page of the newspaper. That’s the furthest forward I’ve seen comic art in a newspaper so far in the country. The cartoon is a single-panel editorial gag, and Maia’s artwork is strong. (The two fellows seem to be recurring characters.) Maia, a cartoonist and painter, has been cartooning since 1978.

More appealing, however, is that *Correio* also publishes *Mafalda* on the Passatempos page. The undated strip is copyright “sucesores de Joaquim S. Lavado (Quino)” and “published by arrangement with Caminito S.a.s. Literary Agency.” Even though the strip only ran between 1964-1973—and has been reprinted ever since—it’s an excellent strip. At its best, it reminds me of Charles M. Schulz’s *Peanuts*, Ernie Bushmiller’s *Nancy*, and Hank Ketcham’s *Dennis the Menace*.



Correio da Manhã, Nov. 8, 2024

Despite its quality, I can’t help but wonder whether another cartoonist—any other living cartoonist in Portugal—could perhaps utilize that space rather than *Mafalda*. It’s a beautiful strip, but after more than 50 years of reprints, surely there’s a contemporary comic strip worth publishing?



From the Reading Pile: Tables of Contents

Here’s the most recent tables of contents from a handful of recent semiprozines and prozines that I’ve received. If I’ve read any of the stories or articles, I’ll share brief commentary.

I highly recommend Weightless Books (<https://weightlessbooks.com>) as one possible source for these periodicals. Most are available as PDFs and in multiple ebook formats.



Los Angeles Times, June 17, 1955

Apex Magazine #147

<https://apex-magazine.com>

Editorial: "Musings from Maryland" by Lesley Conner

Original Fiction

"And She Had Been So Reasonable" by Rachel Bolton

"Birds of a Feather" by Rachael Severino

"What Happens When a Planet Falls from the Sky?"

by Danny Cherry Jr.

"Their Wings as Powdery as Bones" by Avra Margariti

"Ceasing to Be" by Garrett Ashley

Flash Fiction

"Your Return to the Five Ruins of the Bog" by Parker M. O'Neill

"Let Her Collect Stamps" by Juniper White

Classic Fiction

"The Boy with the Golden Arm" by Danian Darrell Jerry

"NPC (or Eight Haxploits to Maximize Your Endgame Farming: A Player's Guide)" by DaVaun Sanders

Nonfiction

"The Tyranny of High Concept" by Robert V.S.

Redick: In this brief essay, the author considers the varying attitudes toward literary and genre fiction, suggesting that practitioners of both can "[g]o further..." and "[s]tretch the limits others cling to." While he posits that literary fiction is more repressive than speculative fiction, he criticizes purists of either type. Then he challenges the merit and value of "high concept" fiction... I think. Perhaps it's just the elevator pitch for work you might be unfamiliar with. Perhaps it's easily describable, definable, and categorizable writing. Perhaps it's merely one-line descriptions. To be honest, I'm not sure what the problem is.

"Pariahs" by Zohair

Reviews

"Words for Thought: Short Fiction Review" by A.C. Wise

"Book Review: Kerstin Hall's *Asunder*" by Leah Ning

"Book Review: Layla Martinez's *Woodworm*" by Lesley Conner

Interviews

Interview with Author Avra Margariti by Marissa van Uden

Interview with Author Rachael Severino by Marissa van Uden

Interview with Artist Asya Yordanova by Bradley Powers

Excerpts

“Island of the Dead” by Brian Keene

Beneath Ceaseless Skies #420 (Nov. 14, 2024)

<https://www.beneath-ceaseless-skies.com>

“Another Tide” by Will Greatwich

“In Memory of the Daihani Revolution,” by Miranda Rain

Clarkesworld #218 (November 2024)

<https://clarkesworldmagazine.com>

Fiction

“LuvHome™” by Resa Nelson: This is a very fun and enjoyable story that asks the question, What if your smart home thought it knew better than you do? What if our personal devices could actively take care of us, even when we’re unaware we require such care? An excellent piece.

“Mirror Stages” by Claire Jia-Wen

“Luminous Glass, Vibrant Seeds” by D.A. Xiaolin Spires

“Negative Scholarship on the Fifth State of Being” by A. W. Prihandita

“Duty of Care” by E.N. Auslander

“The Slide” by Oliver Stifel

“Technicolor Bath” by Raahem Alvi

“Unquiet Graves” by Michael Swanwick: This story seems to be heading in one direction, then takes another—leading to even more interesting and satisfying possibilities. The narrative focuses on death, loss, mourning, and the technological opportunities to continue to give the once living voice after death. Worth reading, and perhaps indicative of future stories along these lines.

Nonfiction

“Martial Arts and Fight Scenes in Zero-G: Research, Training, and Depictions in Film and Reality TV” by D.A. Xiaolin Spires

“Teslapunk and Nerve Endings: A Conversation with Nalo Hopkinson” by Arley Sorg: Largely focusing on the new Hopkinson collection *Jamaica Ginger and Other Concoctions*, this conversation touches on the need for more non-white writers, themes underlying the author’s work, the possibilities afforded by co-authoring stories, and upcoming projects.

“Cyberpunk Economics: A Conversation with Eliane Boey” by Arley Sorg: This interview with an author born and raised in Singapore considers the relationship between literary and genre fiction, her debut novel and its connection to other writing, the impact of the short

form, the role noir can play in sf, and other aspects of her creative process. I read this piece because of the word “cyberpunk” in the headline. Now I’d like to read Boey’s work, even if it’s not cyberpunk, per se. “Editor’s Desk: I Think We Can, I Think We Can” by Neil Clarke

The Dark #114 (November 2024)

<https://www.thedarkmagazine.com>

“Lightfingers” by Seán Padraic Birnie

“The Night Will Let It In” by Michael Kelly

“Robert, We Can Cry Now” by Françoise Harvey

“The Soul Garden” by Rhys Hughes

Forever Magazine #118 (November 2024)

<https://forever-magazine.com>

“Introduction” by Neil Clarke

“The Tinker and the Timestream” by Carolyn Ives Gilman

“Patience Lake” by Matthew Claxton

“The Abacus and the Infinite Vessel” by Vikram Ramakrishnan



Los Angeles Times, June 17, 1955

Lightspeed #174 (November 2024)

<https://www.lightspeedmagazine.com>

“Editorial: November 2024”

Science Fiction

“Antyesti for a Dead Ganesa, Part 1” by Ashok K. Banker

“The Oracular Manifestation of Human Consciousness Offers Three Provocative Verbs Separated by Commas” by Aimee Ogden

“Antyesti For a Dead Ganesa, Part 2” by Ashok K.

Banker

“Ancestor Code Error” by Ai Jiang

Fantasy

“Babywings” by Isabel Cañas

“We Will Bring Siege to the Bastion of Sin That Cries Out in Your Prayer” by Hammond Diehl

“The Last Word” by Oluwatomiwa Ajeigbe

“The Ones Who Come at Last” by P.H. Lee

Nonfiction

“Book Review: *Countess* by Suzan Palumbo” by Melissa A Watkins

“Book Review: *Faeries Never Lie*, edited by Zoraida Córdova and Natalie C. Parker” by Arley Sorg

“Book Review: *And the Sky Bled* by S. Hati” by Chris Kluwe

Author Spotlights

Ashok K. Banker

Isabel Cañas

Hammond Diehl

Ai Jiang



Los Angeles Times, June 17, 1955

Nightmare #146 (November 2024)

<https://www.nightmare-magazine.com>

“Editorial: November 2024”

Fiction

“She Sheds Her Skin” by Raven Jakubowski

“Moon Rabbit Song” by Caroline Hung

“A Guide for Your Journey to the Green Hills” by R.K. Duncan

Poetry

“Sumbisori” by Jess Cho

Nonfiction

“The H Word: The Horrors Persist but So Do We” by Sofia Ajram

“Interview: Nino Cipri” by Alex Puncekar

Author Spotlights

Raven Jakubowski

Caroline Hung

Uncanny #61 (November/December 2024)

<https://www.uncannymagazine.com>

Editorial: “The Uncanny Valley” by Lynne M.

Thomas and Michael Damian Thomas

Fiction

“Woodmask” by Adrian Tchaikovsky: I’ve not read anything by Tchaikovsky, author of the *Children of Time* series, before this story. In fact, I might have conflated him with Andrzej Sapkowski while reading this piece. (Embarrassing!) Regardless, I now want to read more of his writing—this story was very, very good. A gentle but threatening fantasy, the piece reminded me slightly of No-Face in *Spirited Away*. A young woman newly down on her luck encounters an Indweller of a mysterious wood—changing her life (and the life of another) forever. This story could definitely be part of a larger whole.

“The Golden Tooth: A Solo Show by Orion Cabrera” transcribed by William Alexander

“Twice Every Day Returning” by Sonya Taaffe

“The Geckomancer’s Lament” by Lauren Beukes

“On the Water Its Crystal Teeth” by Marissa Lingen

“Ancestor Heart” by Naomi Day

“A Book Is a Map, a Bed Is a Country” by Angel Leal

Nonfiction

“The Breathtaking Condescension Tango” by Vivian Shaw

“Longlegs, Long Held Memories” by Tania Chen

“Romantasy All Along!” by Tansy Rayner Roberts:

This piece offers the author’s perspective on romantasy, what it is, how it relates to chick lit and young adult fiction in terms of its marketing trajectory, different flavors of the subgenre, the role played by *Happily Ever After*, and historical precursors to the seemingly new development. Roberts suggests that authors such as Melanie Rawn, Anne McCaffrey, Mercedes Lackey, Jennifer Roberson, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Robin McKinley, and Tamora Pierce all wrote “Fantasy with a Romance structure.” The *Vintage Romantasy Reading List* at the end of the piece also includes authors such as Emma Bull, Robin McKinley, Tanya Huff, Patricia McKillip, Thea Harrison, Sherrilyn Kenyon, Kresley Cole, and Kelley Armstrong. Maybe romantasy has been here all along! “Can’t We All Just Get Along? *Them: The Scare* Uses Afro-Surrealism to Produce Effective Scares” by Alex Jennings

Poetry

“Anansi Braids Your Stepson’s Hair” by Brandon O’Brien

“Null Path Catalog” by Sneha Mohidekar

"We Tried Beating Time to Death" by Abu Bakr Sadiq
"Operetta" by Katherine James

Interviews

William Alexander interviewed by Caroline M. Yoachim

Marissa Lingen interviewed by Caroline M. Yoachim

I also read some of the March 1968 issue of *Analog*. This 178-page edition contains so much Kelly Freas artwork! The cover is by Freas. He illustrates Piers Anthony's "The Alien Rulers," Christopher Anvil's "Uplift the Savage," James Tiptree Jr.'s "Birth of a Salesman," the serialization of Harry Harrison's "The Horse Barbarians," and Verge Foray's "Practice!"

Oh, it's not like Freas is the only illustrator in this issue—though he might as well be: Harry Bennett provides one illo for Poul Anderson's "The Inevitable Weapon." I don't think I've ever seen a one-artist prozine issue before. It was remarkable.

John W. Campbell's Editor's Page offers "Long Delayed Recognition" for... dowsing. He lauds the practice, claiming that its adoption by the military lends credibility, and perhaps oversells dowsing's potential. "For the first time in human history," he writes, "there now exists a situation in which the disciplined thinking techniques, and precision-observing techniques of modern science will be applied in a positive sense to the problem of a subjective phenomenon." To invoke *Comics Buyer's Guide* lettercol, "Oh, so?"

I understand and appreciate Campbell's interest in science seriously considering more subjective phenomena (the Forbidden Unknown), but I wonder where—and how—this whole dowsing thing went. As far as I can tell, dowsing largely remains where it was almost 60 years ago. An interesting, if hyperbolic, read.

P. Schuyler Miller's book review column, The Reference Library, considers anthologies recognizing the winners of the 1967 Hugo and Nebula awards, as well as the role the prozines play. He also comments on then-recent books by Norman Spinrad, Robert Silverberg, Jack Vance, and Robert W. Prehoda's nonfiction *Designing the Future: The Role of Technological Forecasting*. That book, like the fiction reviewed, might also be worth reading even today!

In the lettercol, Brass Tacks, correspondents write about astrophysics, the dangers of inhaling Freon 12, the use of front projection in cinema (a missive from Arthur C. Clarke, no less!), military service and the right to vote, and psychedelic drugs.

Anvil's "Uplift the Savage" is my favorite of the two short stories I read. It considers various methods

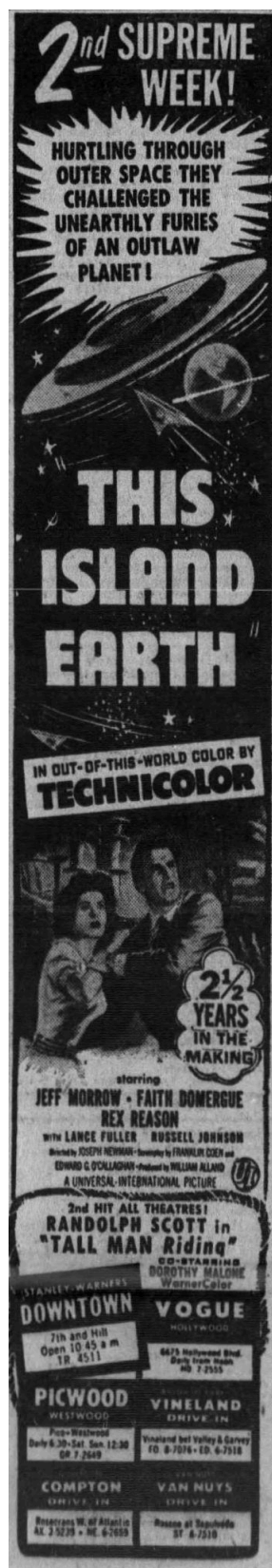
that could be used to encourage a less-technological society to adopt higher technology, the role of competition and games, and the need to occasionally unlearn things you think you know. Anvil also compares and contrasts "license to practice" and "ability to do the job." Actual conditions on the ground have everything to do with what you might choose to do, how, and why.



Los Angeles Times, June 24, 1955

Anderson's "The Inevitable Weapon" offers a nifty technological gimmick: a handgun of sorts that can focus the energy of the stars—sometimes. The story's approach to faster than light travel, unlimited energy, and the weapon's inconsistent results depending on whether it taps into a "feeble red dwarf" or the "finger of a nova" is an interesting element of what is otherwise a relatively straight-ahead mystery or crime

story. I wonder whether Anderson wrote more stories utilizing these characters or approach.



Los Angeles Times, June 24, 1955

Comments on LASFAPA #573

In *It's Still Rock and Roll to Me* #5, **Rich Lynch** mentioned the Iconography list. Before you rejoined our ranks, I wrote biographical sketches of those on that list so I could become more acquainted with them. If you'd like to see the mini-profiles for any of the people you never met—or knew, even—let me know.

Caitlin and I still occasionally mask, when flying to Portugal, for example, on the planes and in the airports. On the flight in, we transferred through Amsterdam—and weren't impressed by the airport. (*T&T* #137) While at a concert this past week (see above), a woman a few rows behind us was coughing quite chestily. We hadn't masked for the concert, but when the phlegmy coughing began, out the masks came. Better safe than sorry, sez me.

The audio drama I listened to—and enjoyed—was *Impact Winter*. (<https://www.audible.com/pd/Impact-Winter-Audiobook/B09PSLLWFG>) As I described it in *T&T* #130, it's "[a]n Audible Original that started in 2022 that focuses on an impact winter caused by a comet colliding with the Earth—and the emergence of vampires from where they used to hide." I quite enjoyed the first season and plan to eventually listen to the second season.

Since completing *Impact Winter*'s first season, however, I've also listened to Act I of *The Sandman*, another Audible Original. (<https://www.audible.com/pd/The-Sandman-Audiobook/B086WP794Z>) That audio drama adapts the first three Sandman collections, *Preludes & Nocturnes*, *The Doll's House*, and *Dream Country*, which takes you to #20 of the comic book series. So I've also been rereading the comic book, which has been wonderful. If you've already read the comic, I recommend listening to the audio drama as a new experience—and then returning to the comic books for a reread—rather than rereading the comics before listening. I did both at various times, and listening first was more rewarding. Neil Gaiman's comic book scripts made the series a natural to adapt for audio.

I've also listened to a Black Library audio drama, Nathan Long's *Slayer of the Storm God*, a Gotrek and Felix story. (Gotrek is a notable Warhammer Fantasy character.) The story is available as an MP3 (<https://www.blacklibrary.com/all-products/Slayer-of-the-Storm-God-mp3.html>), apparently, but I listened using the Black Library Audio mobile app. At only an hour in length, it's a pleasant diversion—but being Warhammer, it's a little more fighty than the other audio dramas I've been listening to. Still worth checking out if you like Games Workshop's brand of fantasy fiction. Thank you for the other podcast

recommendations!

I read and enjoyed your essay “My Short Career as a Chess Non-Prodigy.” I went to Northwestern University—graduated, even!—and am proud of my time there, as well as the shared association with George R.R. Martin, whose time there predated mine. “[H]e had sold his first story earlier that year...” what a phrase in the middle of that sentence! I’ll have to seek out “The Computer Was a Fish.”

Alva Svoboda’s *That Flagon Last Night* #260 mentioned *Slow Horses*. That is certainly a good television program. The novels by Mick Herron are also worth reading. Even more worth reading, however, are your poems! I had no idea you were involved in either concrete poetry or language poetry, and I enjoyed reading “Add Cooperates.” I would read more of your poetry. While I did not read the ChatGPT analysis of your work, I am glad you felt seen and read when reading its interpretation.

In *Fool’s Mate* #576, **David Schlosser** disavowed knowledge of what I’ve been using to apply optical character recognition to the LASFAPA back issues. Not that I’ve OCR’d any in recent weeks, but when I do, I use Adobe Acrobat. By the way, the Teddy Harvia cover for this distribution is absolutely wonderful.

I would welcome acquiring a few Sector General books to get my reading headed in the right direction. My mailing address is above, and perhaps on file! I’d have to revisit *Android Avenger* to be sure, but your recollection seems correct. As Schlosser knows—but other LASFAPAns don’t yet—I located LASFAPA #162 among the discarded LASFS copies and will mail it to our Little Sin Ghod and Lord High Counter of Legumes when I return from Portugal. He’s since informed me that he also can’t locate #350, so I’ll check what I salvaged from storage for that mailing, as well. Thank you for the book reviews! All were new and unknown to me.

Nick Smith’s *Labyrinthine Lines* dated October 2024 opened with a Ray Bradbury quote. The line “There was a feeling of autumn coming to last a million years” resonated strongly with me. Your commentary on *Five* and *The Substance* make me think both are worth seeking out, but I’ll probably take a pass on *Joker: Folie à Deux*. Interestingly, a mere four days ago, Nov. 5, the Theatro Club da Póvoa de Lanhoso screened its first movie in 40 years. The movie? That movie. (<https://bragatv.pt/povoa-de-lanhoso-vai-transmitir-o-filme-joker-uma-aventura-a-dois>) *Megalopolis*, however, still seems promising.

Thank you very much for your book reviews, as well as for identifying the Black Death books. “Try not to die on the toilet.” Helpful advice, indeed.

And in *October Surmise*, **Alan Winston** wrote quite a bit about dancing. I agree; the traveling together for calling gigs seems promising. In response to your observation about *The Altar on Asconel* and *Android Avenger*, I think Arthur Fonzarelli would have only one thing to say: “Ayyy!”



Los Angeles Times, June 24, 1955

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #139

Nov. 18, 2024

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Last Week's Senryu

The sun has set here.

My evening walk past pigs and goats,
before sending this.

My wife and I tend to take two walks most days. In the morning, we head toward the east up the hill for newspapers and down past the Santuário de Nossa Senhora de Porto de Ave. (Wednesday morning, I also bought a shovel to tidy up some horse manure.) In the evening, around sunset, we head toward the west just below the Igreja de Taíde and along the edge of pasture to see various animals.

When we were in Espinho last weekend, we ate lunch at a beachfront restaurant, Green Coast Beach Bar, that featured a chair suspended beneath lettering that read “Sunset,” to be used for selfies at such times. It was a gray, misty, and overcast day on the Praia Azul Espinho, and a dune had been constructed beside the restaurant to protect it from the surf. It was not yet sunset, and we did not sit in the chair.

According to *Borda d'Água*, in Porto, o Sol ocase as 17 h. 29 m. on dia 1 of Novembro, and as 17 h. 07 m. on dia 30. According to *Time and Date* (<https://www.timeanddate.com>), sunset will occur at 17:16 today, Wednesday. The 24-hour clock is relatively common in Europe, so we've taken to using it, too—when we remember to do so.

Trip Report: Portugal (cont.)

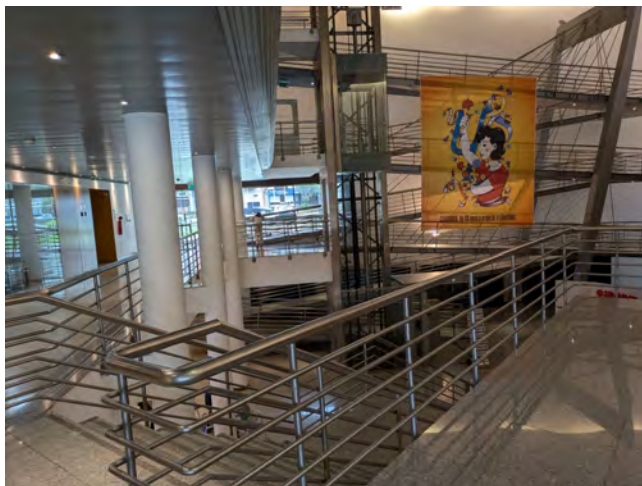
Last Saturday, we stayed close to home and hosted friends from Braga for dinner in the evening. Caitlin made ratatouille, as well as a garlicked bean dip, which we enjoyed with fresh bread from the local bakery and brie.

Sunday, we ventured to Espinho, about an hour and a half away, on the coast south of Porto, for Cinanima (<https://cinanima.pt>), of which we experienced little last year. (*T&T* #91) We were unable to see the exhibit, which hadn't opened yet this year, but we were able to see a couple of screenings, which we hadn't been able to do previously. It was a gray and

misty day, and we enjoyed walking along the beach before getting a beachside lunch (see above), then heading to the Centro Multimeios de Espinho. It is a very interesting structure—and houses a planetarium.



We procured tickets for Cinanima's 3:30 p.m. family session, a children's program of short films, as well as a later retrospective because the ticket price was so affordable. If we decided not to stick around for the later program—there was about an hour and a half in between the two—we wouldn't be out much money, and we'd be supporting the event.



A little early for the screening, we looked at the festival posters on display, as well as a display of works associated with *E se um Dia da Liberdade...*, an “exposicao de trabalhos realizados para o filme de animacao” featuring student work from several area secondary schools, as well as a music school. We also located the restrooms and cafe, as well as comfortable seating, determining that we could easily hang out between both programs.

The children's program offered 11 short films in

about an hour. Works included *A Pet* directed by Nastimir Tzatchev (Bulgaria), *Koyaa—Jumpy Eraser* by Kolja Saksida (Slovenia), *Pip* by Bruno Simões (Spain), *Patchwork: Flamingo* by Angela Steffen (Germany), *Fox Tale* by Alexandra Allen (Portugal), *Animanimals: Sloth* by Julia Ocker (Germany), *Ink* by Joost van den Bosch and Erik Verberk (Netherlands), *Ace* by Bruno Simões (Spain), *The Ice Cream Man* by Katerina Pantela (Cyprus), *Between Two Sisters* by Anne-Sophie Gousset and Clément Céard (France), and *Hi!* by Narjes Mohammadi and Hajar Mehrani (Netherlands).



The two pieces by Simões were promotional films for Dogs Inc. (<https://dogsinc.org>), which specializes in guide dogs. The Steffen film felt like a commercial cartoon with a collectible toy tie-in; it is, in fact, a televised cartoon with associated products. (<https://www.patchworkpals.de>) And a couple of items shared positive messages about people with disabilities and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

The best work in the showcase included that by Saksida, Allen, and Ocker. Though enjoyable overall, there was little that would qualify as art, however. Saksida's film perhaps came the closest.

In between screenings, we got sweets and coffees from the cafe and found a comfortable chair in which to sit and read until the next showtime. It featured two episodes of *25 Abril—O Rochedo e a Onda (The Rock and the Wave)* by José Bandeira e Humberto Santana, more mature work—a two-episode miniseries—concentrating on the aftermath and impact of the 1974 Carnation Revolution.

From the festival's Web site: "When Saraiva and his colleague Fuinha, from [PIDE], detain a suspect for questioning, they are far from imagining that a revolution is being prepared. In the early hours of April 25, faced with the news on the radio, Saraiva

decides to flee, but his wife, Eleutéria, refuses to accompany him with their son, André." Also: "André grows up carefree, unaware of his father's fate, whom he thinks is dead. With a stable professional career and married to Catarina, with whom he has two children, he is suddenly confronted with the past when he meets the son of his father's former colleague, Fuinha, in the middle of the pandemic."

The animators' style reminded me of Doug Allen's comic strip *Steven* and *Hey Arnold*, though the color palette and mood overall resonated with the work of Seth, oddly. It was an excellent program, and we were glad we stuck around for some more mature animation. I think the real action—and art—occurs in the Competition Films and International Grand Panorama programming. We'll have to return in the future to explore further!

Walking back to the car along the plaza between Av. and R. 8, we met a woman from Berkeley, Calif., named Indigo. We shared stories and concerns about the election, our experiences in Portugal, and various communities we'd visited before parting ways.

The Nov. 9, 2024, edition of *Jornal de Noticias* featured a review of the banda desenhada *Fabulas das terras perdidas—Integral* by Jean Dufaux e Grzegorz Rosinski, recently published in Portuguese by Arte de Autor. (<https://artedeautor.pt>) The Nov. 11 issue included an item on a Films Culture and Technology screening series at the Teatro Aveirense. According to *Aveiro Mag*, "Works by renowned filmmakers such as Jean-Luc Godard, Veit Helmer, Francis Ford Coppola and Wong Kar Wai are part of this series, together with the first feature film by the youngest director in the region, Tiago Roma Almeida, and the premiere of a new film by filmmaker and musician Joaquim Pavão."

The Nov. 9 issue of *Correio da Manhã* featured a half-page advertisement for a short story serialized in the next few issues of *Sabado* magazine. I do not know much about Afonso Reis Cabral's "Chimpanze," (<https://www.sabado.pt/ficcao-sabado/o-chimpanze>) but I quite like that print media is advertising serialized fiction. There was also a full-page ad for the story in that week's issue of *Vidas*, a *Correio da Manhã* magazine insert.

That edition of *Correio da Manhã* also included a short item on the humanoid robot-created portrait of Alan Turing that recently sold for more than \$1 million. (<https://tinyurl.com/Turing-AI-art>) Even if "Chimpanze" isn't genre fiction, there's science fiction in the newspapers all the same.

[illegible]

Shiver: Selected Stories by Junji Ito (Viz, 2024)

This collection of horror manga stories by Junji Ito was first published by Viz Media in 2017; this is its 13th printing. It was first issued in Japan in 2015. The collection includes 10 stories, one of them a shorter piece, “Fashion Model: Cursed Frame,” that relates to another in the volume, “Fashion Model.”

Compared to *Gyo* (*T&T* #111), I much preferred this volume—though I also enjoyed the longer work, as well. Ito's work resonates strongly in shorter form, and over the course of the collection, he's able to offer many more ideas and concepts to tickle the brain stem. ("Greased" is particularly effective.) I will seek out more of his short work with enthusiasm and interest.

The pieces in this book feature haunting music and mysterious records (“Used Record”), a jade carving that causes holes to appear in one’s skin (“Shiver”), a horrific magazine model (“Fashion Model”), death by strangulation (“Hanging Blimp”), domineering puppets (“Marionette Mansion”), a bewitching artist’s model (“Painter”), the sense of time travel while sleeping (“The Long Dream”), a strong desire to procreate (“Honored Ancestors”), and the effect of living in a oily home (“Greased”).

Each item is followed by editorial commentary by Ito, as well as a reproduction of his preliminary notes and sketches. He discusses his inspiration, life events at the time, where the piece originally appeared (such as *Halloween* magazine), and other topics. References include the Swingle Singers, spiracles, fashion magazines, dreams, the novelist Katsuhiko Takahashi, and the director's cut of *The Exorcist*.

While much of the work in this collection focuses on the horribly fantastic—horror, I suppose—the pieces I enjoyed most, including “Used Record,” “Shiver,” and “Greased,” are quieter and more gentle in their approach. At times, Ito’s work reminds me of the short fiction of Haruki Murakami: darkly fantastic, but almost dreamily or sleepily so.

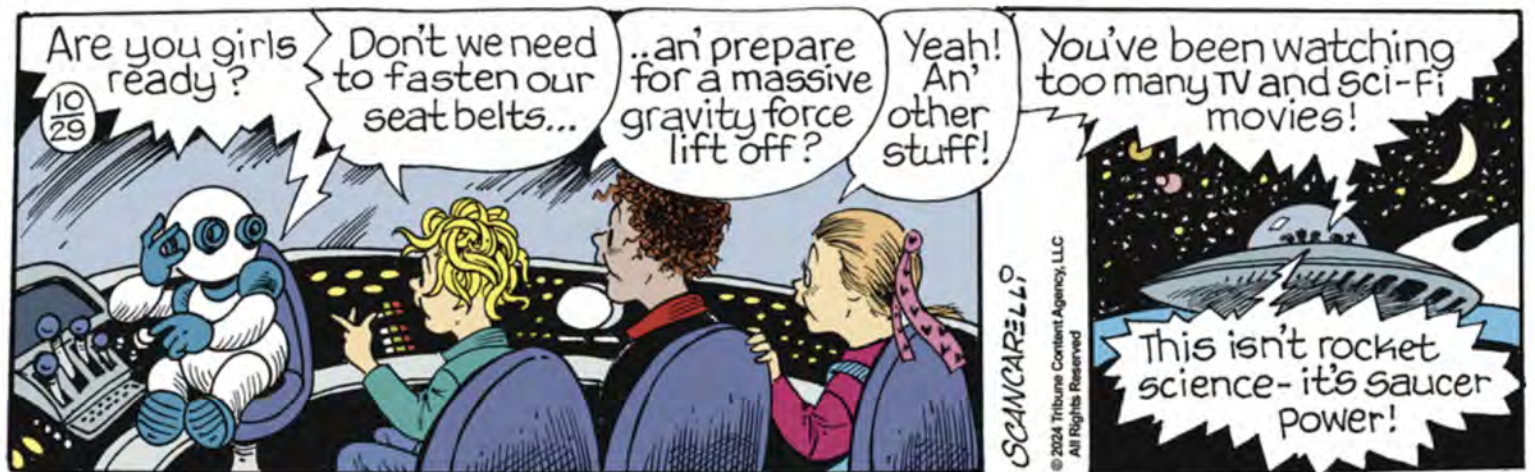
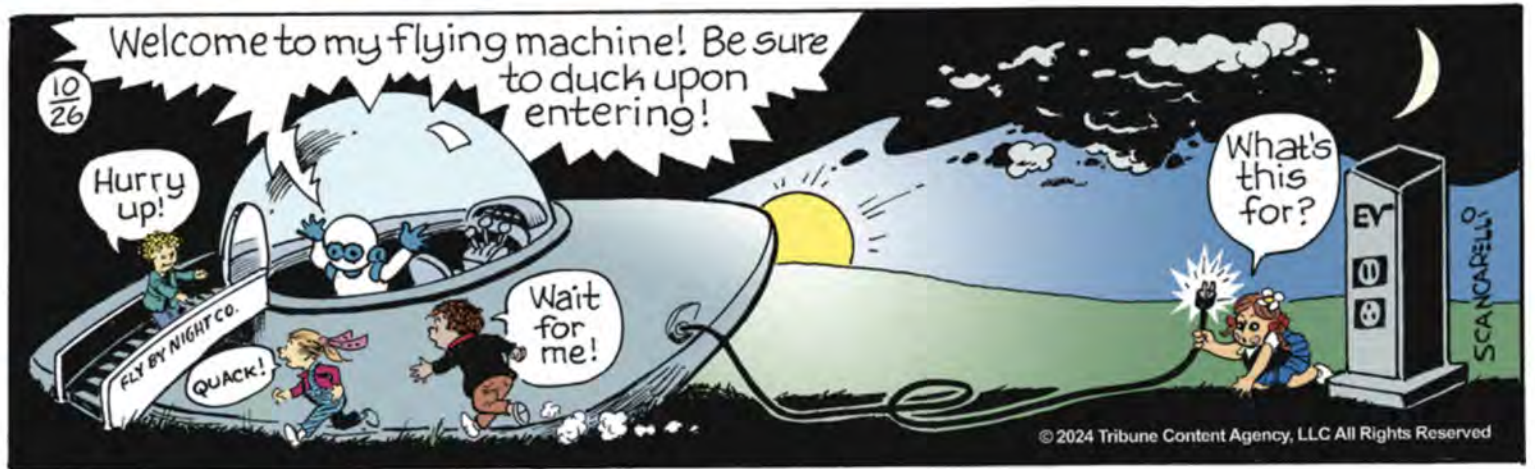
Viz offers other short story collections by Ito: *Frankenstein*, *Smashed*, *Lovesickness*, *Deserter*, *Alley*, *Tombs*, and *Soichi*. If they're all as good as this volume, there's plenty of excellent reading ahead.

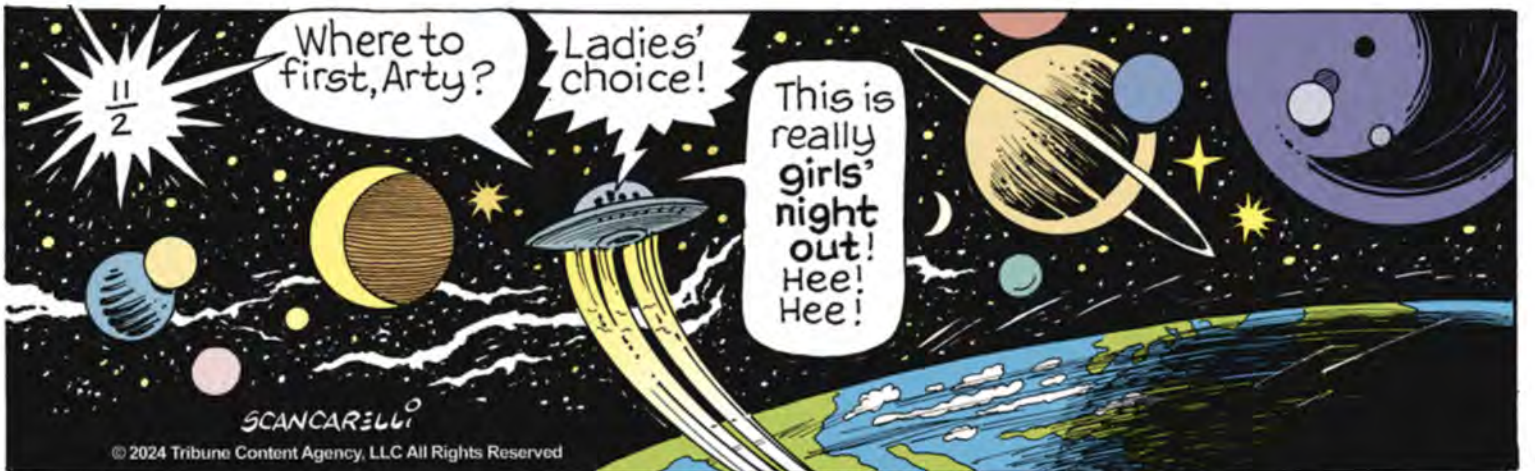
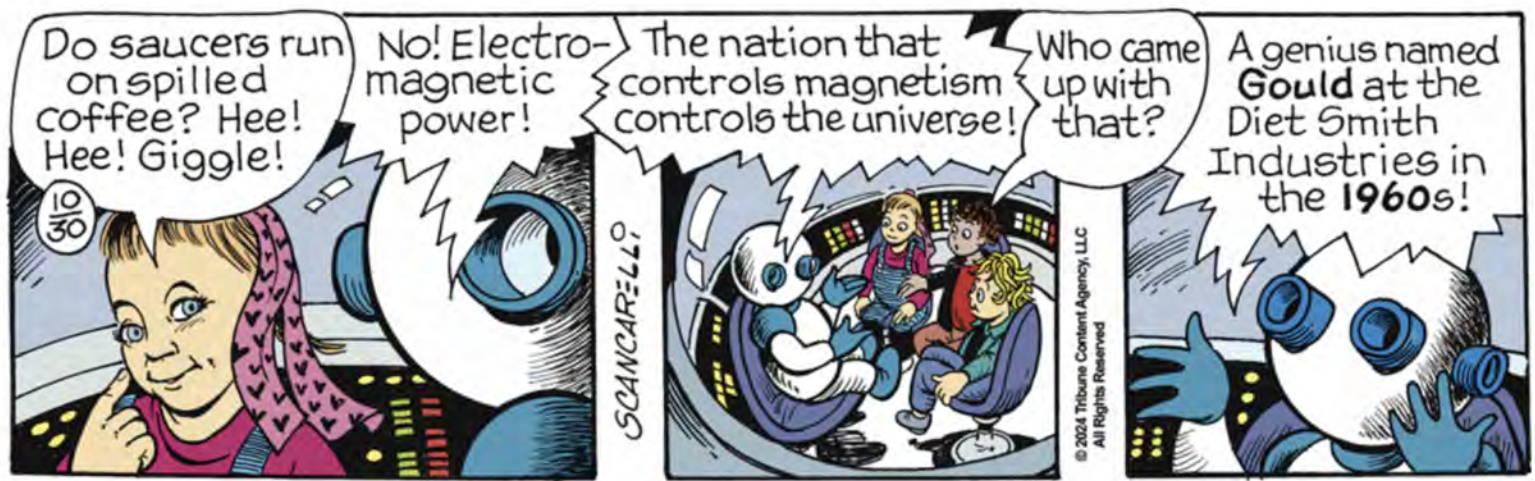
Administrivia: A Statement of Delay

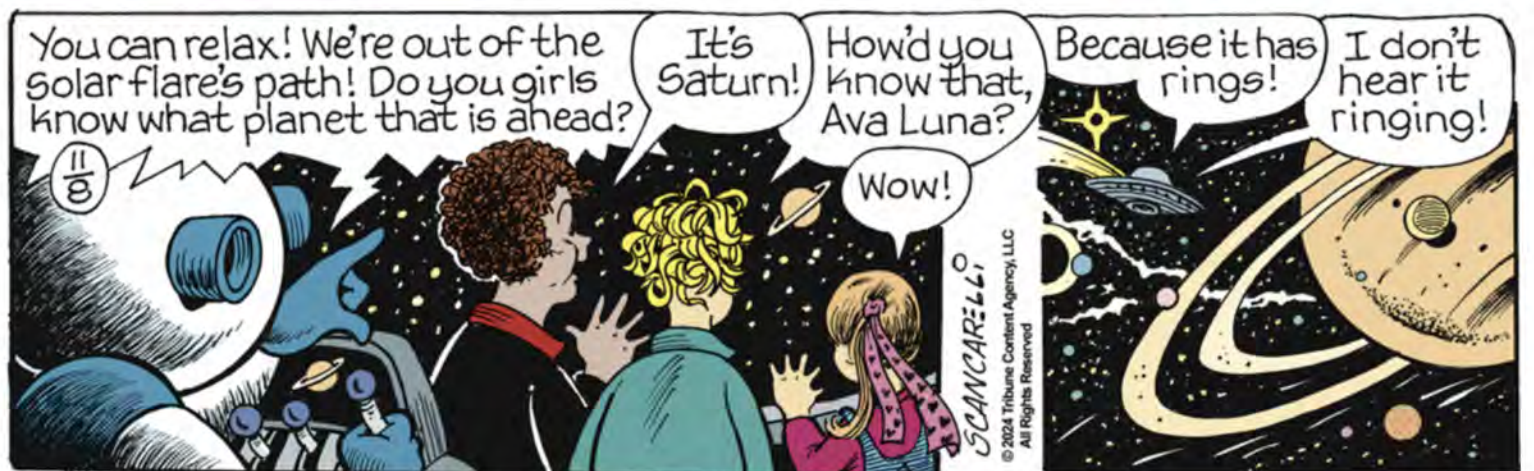
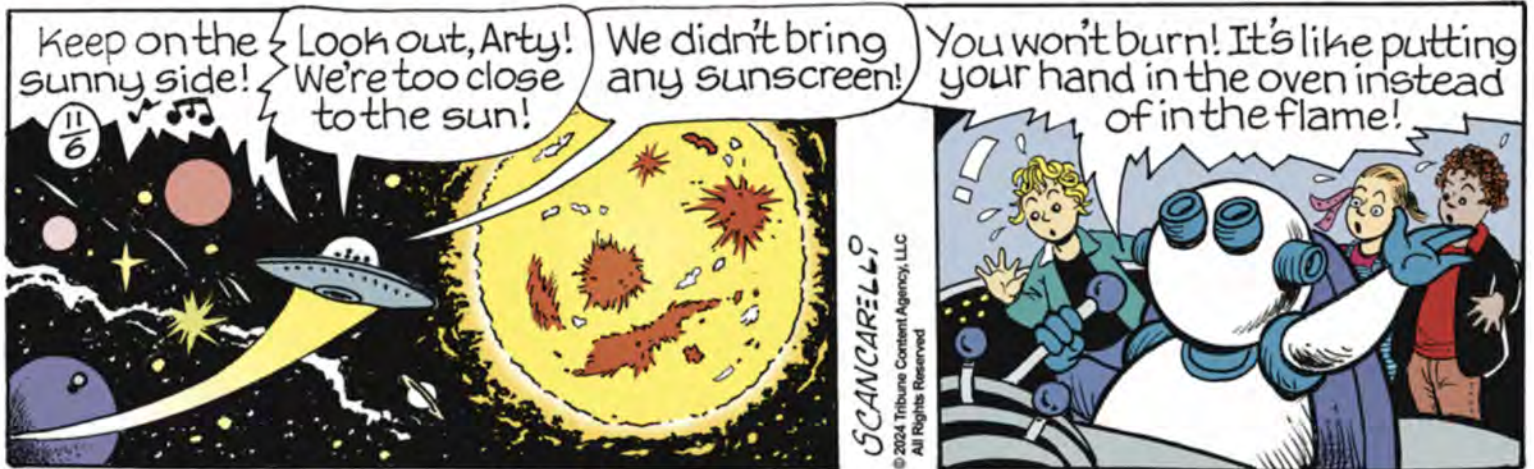
Apologies for the delayed distribution this week. We went to Lisbon for the weekend, departing Friday morning and returning Sunday evening. The next two distributions of APA-L will also be sent from Portugal, and we'll resume mailing from the United States in early December.

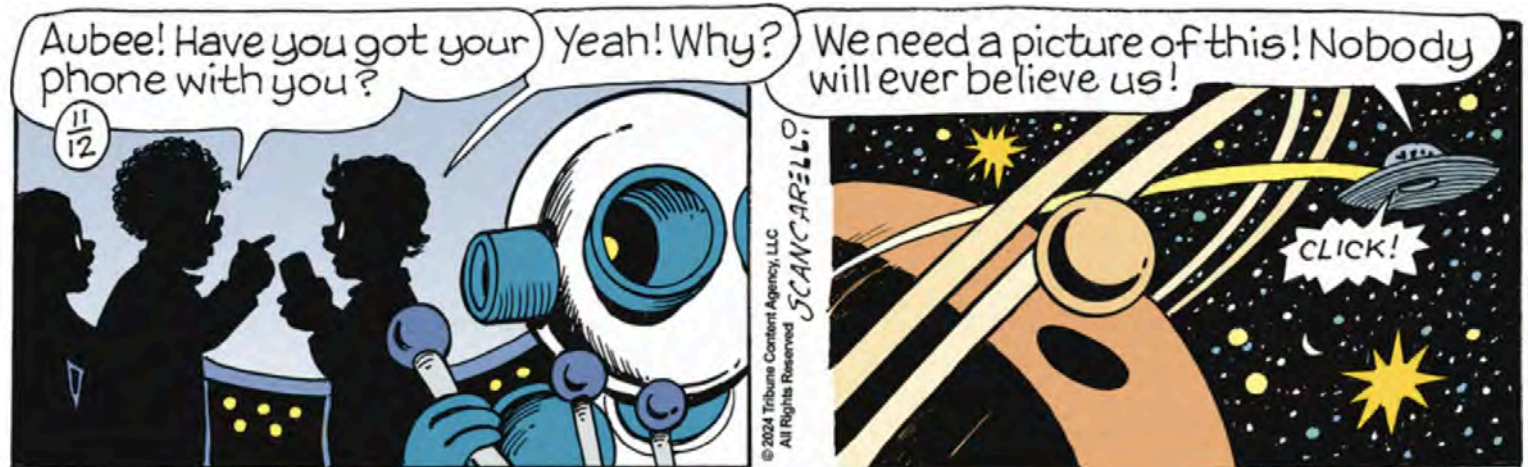
To fill the rest of the page, here are a couple photographs of street art taken in Coimbra, where we stopped for lunch and a walk on the way to Lisbon.











Skeezix in Space?

I don't always keep up with the comic strips as featured on *GoComics* and *Comics Kingdom* online, but I subscribe to both and receive daily emails of "favorites" I've identified at different points in time. Sometimes, those are narrative comic strips, sometimes they're science fictional or fantastic, and sometimes they're just comics I've always enjoyed.

Gasoline Alley fits into one of those categories (narrative), not another (It's not a longtime favorite.)—and in recent weeks, a category that surprised me. *Gasoline Alley* has launched into outer space! Created by Frank King, the strip first appeared Nov. 24, 1918, so there's an anniversary

approaching. It's the current longest-running strip in the United States. (But not the longest-running ever.)

I first learned about the strip from a reprint of *Mad* #15's "Gasoline Valley!"—perhaps in *Mad Magazine Super Special* #32's *The Nostalgic Mad* insert (March 1980). The strip's characters have aged along with its readers (see <https://www.tcj.com/growing-old-in-gasoline-alley-ninety-four-years-and-counting>), and in recent weeks, the strip features animatronic dolls, an artificial intelligence robot, and spacecraft. I find the near-realistic portrayal of the children off putting—but am astounded by the venturing from terra firma. The comic strip boldly goes!

Emulators & Engines #19

Nov. 21, 2024

Emulators & Engines is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to *Alarums & Excursions* and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Trip Report: Portugal (cont.)

Caitlin and I have been in Portugal since the end of October, and we return home within just a handful of days. I was unable to participate in Rolisboa (<https://rolisboa.pt>) on Nov. 2-3 because it was too soon after our arrival—and I don't yet speak Portuguese well enough to play roleplaying games with locals. (I don't want to be a burden or make everyone else speak English.) But I reached out to an RPG-adjacent acquaintance who planned to participate and hope to publish a con report at some point.

In addition to a couple of solo play sessions while in the country (reports forthcoming), I have only had a couple of RPG-related experiences during this trip. While playing, I felt the need for some non-standard dice—d24, d30, and such—so I turned to Amazon in Spain to procure some. I would have preferred buying them from a game store, but didn't know when we'd be able to visit one, or whether it'd stock such dice.

Online, SIQUK offered a Polyhedral Dice Set including the following: d3, d4, d5, d6, d7, d%, d8, d10, d12, d16, d20, d24, d30, d60, and d100. The accompanying bag is a little iffy, but I now have a full component of dice to use in Portugal.



While visiting Lisbon last weekend, we walked past a game store that was entirely new to me: Defuse (<https://www.defusecafe.com/pt>), which focuses on

board games and snacks—though that term is deceptive. When we walked by, the shop seemed relatively full, and as we checked out the fliers in the window, one of the employees stepped outside to say hello. Talking with him briefly, I learned that the store has been open for about a year—and that while no *Dungeons & Dragons* events were occurring that weekend, there might be some in the near future.



The store hosts open play events five nights a week, the menu is surprisingly savory and healthy—poke bowls! pierogi! tofu chickpea salad!—and I was impressed. Patrons can reserve tables online for up to 30 guests. We didn't step inside to see their stock, but the next time we visit Lisboa, it's worth a second stop. Next time, I'll even go inside.

I joined the advertised 35-member *D&D* group on Telegram, Journeys Through the Radiant Citadel, named after the 2022 *D&D* Adventure Book. The group offers several subgroups, which seem to focus on different campaigns and one-shots. I look forward to seeing how it compares to the Savage Worlds WhatsApp group I joined. I haven't plugged into that at all during this trip.

Unfortunately, I missed Kerzmielzorg games in Los Angeles on Oct. 27 and Nov. 10, and I'll miss the next session Nov. 23. Regardless, I and Beigwamil Oldazir look forward to returning to the table upon my return. I also look forward to returning home because my 2024 *Dungeon Master's Guide* was delivered Nov. 10—on the same day of a Kerzmielzorg session! Talk about serendipity. I've checked it out briefly online, but that's not the same as flipping through the book, for sure.

Apologies for the short ish this time around, but this way I can make the deadline. Solo game reports from Portugal shall appear in a future issue!

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #140

Nov. 22, 2024

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Last Week's Senryu

Weekend in Lisbon:

Bookstores, friends, and walking tours
delay APA-L

After almost a month in Portugal, we are beginning to prepare to leave, to return to California. Our flight is scheduled for this upcoming Tuesday. I've worked more this month than expected; I thought I'd be able to take a week off while here, but that was not meant to be. We've still managed to pursue a fulfilling mix of workaday mundane existence, local exploration, histori-cultural tourism, hosting friends from Spain and France, spending time with new local friends, and participating in area events.

I have not been able to keep up with my fanac as much as I'd intended, however. I've largely been able to make the deadlines for the apae in which I participate, but I skipped a distribution for the National Fantasy Fan Federation's NAPA and my Alarums & Excursions contribution was a single page. I've not had time to edit a November issue of *De Profundis* for the LASFS yet this month, either. I should be able to publish a December issue once I'm back home.

In any event, next week's APA-L distribution—while still a PDF—will be sent from California. I don't want to spend time printing, collating, and mailing when I could use that time to prepare for hosting the Fanzine Corner at Loscon. I'm looking forward to the con and hope to perhaps see some of you there.

Trip Report: Portugal (cont.)

Last week Thursday turned out to be quite an adventure. We went into Braga to hang out with the fellow who initially helped us explore northern Portugal in order to identify communities and homes we might like. We shared time and table for a delicious lunch at OubeLá (<https://www.facebook.com/oubelabistrobar>), enjoying conversation and catching up with Marco while partaking of a calzone

(me), a francesinha (Marco), and other fare. (I don't remember what Caitlin ordered.)

Near the end of our meal, I bit down on something surprisingly hard while chewing. "What is this?" thought I, soon realizing that a crown had detached. I don't remember how long I've had that crown, but figuring that it was a relatively straightforward procedure to reaffix it to the tooth from which it detached, we set out to find a nearby dentist who could do so that afternoon. We had evening and weekend plans, so we wanted to take care of the dental work before it was too late in the day.



Finding a dentist within walking distance who could sneak me in within the hour (with Marco's welcome assistance), we paid for our lunch and parted ways, soon walking to the dentist, which was located in a nearby residential neighborhood. Upon arrival, we were told that a procedure already underway with another patient would take a couple more hours, so we had to decide whether we cooled our heels there for two hours—or whether we cooled our heels elsewhere. We decided to leave and return.

We realized I'd parked in a no-parking area—despite a large number of parked cars nearby—so I moved the rental before we walked around the area in which we found ourselves. I'd previously located a stationery store nearby (Caitlin had been looking for letter-writing paper earlier this spring), so we walked to Centro Comercial Minho Center, figuring there'd be seating, restrooms if needed, and ways to divert ourselves without harming my crownless tooth until we could return to the dentist.

Note! Braga (<https://noteonline.pt>) was less a stationery store and more a vendor of your basic school and office supplies, as well as an assortment of books and magazines. The real find was Kiosk, an

international newsstand to which I shall definitely return.

Inspired by the Guimarães Jazz concert that evening, I initially looked for jazz magazines, locating two French periodicals—*Jazz Magazine* (<https://www.jazzmagazine.com>) and *Jazz News* (<https://www.facebook.com/jazznewsparis>)—as well as the British *Jazzwise*. (<https://www.jazzwise.com>)

My eyes were soon drawn, however, to some smaller format Portuguese romance novels. Harlequin Internacional's local paperbacks are similar in size to the Bouquet paperbacks I found at Schiphol in Holland. (*T&T* #137) Then I saw *Opus Humano: 1985-1995*, a relatively thick volume collecting material from Les Humanoïdes Associés, publisher of *Metal Hurlant*. An earlier volume has already been issued—1975-1985—and two subsequent volumes are planned for publication in 2025.

In fact, my previous comments on the new edition of *Metal Hurlant* (*T&T* #90) were misleading. While the first issue I procured—#8—featured reprinted material, the other issues have not. The periodical is utterly amazing, beautiful, and compelling. Since fall 2021, there have been 12 new issues of *Metal Hurlant*—primarily new material—and just recently, a Kickstarter began to translate that series into English for American reprint. (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/humanoidsinc/metal-hurlant>) My concerns of the new French edition not making it to our shores were premature. *Metal Hurlant* is on its way!

Oddly, there are also recent efforts to revive the domestic *Heavy Metal*, as reported by *Bleeding Cool* (<https://tinyurl.com/Heavy-Metal-relaunch>). That effort will launch a Kickstarter of its own next week. (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/heavymetal/heavy-metal-magazine-1>) While I've decided to back both, my expectation is that *Metal Hurlant* will be better than *Heavy Metal*, given recent approaches to the title in the United States. It's a bit of cognitive dissonance to have *Heavy Metal* and *Metal Hurlant* available in English at the same time. I'm curious whether the licensing will soon become complicated.

Also at Kiosk, I picked up *Les Legendes Marvel* #4, a very well printed Panini Comics collection of Marvel comics selected from 1979. Published roughly quarterly, the previous volumes concentrated on 1970, 1985, and 1966. The fourth volume includes French reprints of *Amazing Spider-Man* #194-195 (early appearances of the Black Cat), *Uncanny X-Men* #117, *Avengers* #188, *Iron Man* #128, *Daredevil* #158, *Fantastic Four* #202, and *Incredible Hulk Annual* #8. A series to look for should you find yourself in France requiring some Bronze Age Marvel.

That's when I really started to explore the

newsstand. On a lower shelf of one display toward the front of the store, I found a treasure trove of manga- and bande dessinée-related magazines. Among them: *Akiba* #9, a French magazine dedicated to “Japon and pop culture asiatique” (<https://www.facebook.com/akibamag>); *Les Cahiers de la BD* #28, which seems to be a *Comics Journal* for the BD crowd (<https://www.facebook.com/lescahiersdelaBD>); and *Fluide Glacial Hors-Série* #108, a special edition of the humor BD magazine. (<https://www.fluideglacial.com>) I also found a 2022 issue of *dbd* magazine, a still-extant BD periodical. (<http://www.dbdmag.fr>) The issue I picked up was #161 (Mars 2022); the magazine is now up to #188.

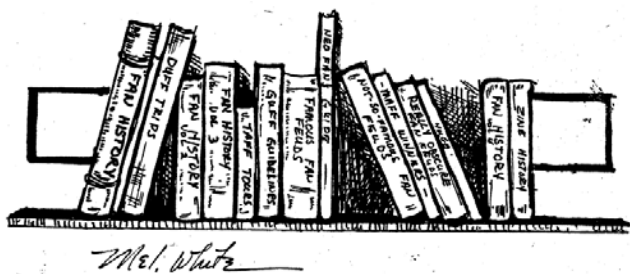
I encountered that another time during this trip. While at the bus station newsstand in Braga, I realized that much of the newsstand was taken up by older, sometimes dusty and sun-faded back issues, in addition to new issues. One of the magazines that caught my eye there was an older issue (2009 or 2019) of *White Dwarf*. I hope to return in order to see whether it had been translated into Portuguese or Spanish; I remember it not being in English. While the Minho Center Kiosk was primarily new magazines, I was intrigued that a back issue from two years ago was still floating around.

All that was just to kill time before we returned to the dentist to repair my crown. That didn't take long or cost much—the dentist, formerly a naval dentist in Brazil, was friendly and expert—and we were soon on our way home, several hours later than expected, and late for my meetings at work.



The day continued, however. That evening, we had plans to return to the Guimarães Jazz festival (<https://www.guimaraesjazz.pt/en>) for another concert. (*Faculae & Filigree* #37). We met up with friends from Braga for a performance by Wadada's Fire-Love Expanse. That ensemble was composed of Wadada Leo Smith on trumpet and piano (though briefly),

Regardless, it was a wonderful performance and a wonderful return to the festival. It's worth checking out annually.



From the Reading Pile: Short Stories

In *Faculae & Filigree* #37, I commented on some of the March 1968 issue of *Analog*. Since then, I've completed reading the issue, finishing the third short story and two novelettes while skipping the serial (the second of three parts).

James Tiptree Jr.'s "Birth of a Salesman" was a wonderfully comic story about the increasingly complicated—and important—logistics inherent in intergalactic trade. An aggressively harried customs professional is forced to make a career decision after a particularly complex series of decisions related to

product design, packaging, and shipping methods. A delightful story.

Piers Anthony offers the novelette “The Alien Rulers,” which focuses on a peaceful alien invasion and the resulting human revolution. After spending some time with the female of the invading alien species, a revolutionary reconsiders the relationship between the invaders and the invaded—and sees the opportunities presented to the human race in a new light. Anthony’s first short fiction was published in 1963, his first novel in 1967. This story predates his first Xanth novel by nine years.

And “Practice!” by Verge Foray details a surprise inspection of a school secretly designed to support the developmental needs of children with extrasensory abilities. It’s an interesting and amusing tale that reflects on the wisdom of children, adults’ occasional dismissal of younger people, and adult relationships. This is what Xavier’s School for Gifted Youngsters might be like were mutants’ powers less flamboyant or outwardly visible.

The local newspapers have also been interesting in recent days. While in Lisbon last weekend, I picked up a couple of different newspapers that were more Lisbon facing than Porto facing. The Nov. 16 edition of *Publico* included a *Baratoon* comic strip by Luis Afonso. Like other non-*Mafalda* comic strips I've seen in Portugal, it's a topical news commentary strip rather than a gag or narrative strip. That issue also included a full-page review of the newly translated into Portuguese banda desenhada Colecao Novela Grafica VIII Vol. 11, *O Caso Alan Turing* by Arnaud Delalande and Eric Liberge. Not only is this a BD review in the newspaper—it's a BD about Turing! Several full-color panels are reprinted.

Similar to *JN*'s promotion of "Grandes Romances" (*T&T* #138), *Publico* also promotes community reading of select books. Between Nov. 25, 2024, and August 25, 2025, the newspaper will partner with A Bela eo Monstro Edicoes (<https://www.facebook.com/ABelaeoMonstroEdicoes>) to distribute "Os Livros da Revolucao," "os documentos que marcaram os dia de Revolucao de Abril de 1974." 10 titles will be featured over that time span.

Shortly after the Web Summit reported on in the Nov. 16 edition of *Dinheiro Vivo*, an insert in *Diário de Notícias*—coverage included reportage on ChatGPT and generative artificial intelligence, LLMs, and “robos humanoides”—*Público* also advertised the upcoming Innovators Forum. (<https://innovatorsforum.pt>)

On Nov. 16, *Diário de Notícias* included an article on Lenny Bruce, as well as a captionless gag panel by

Stuart de Carvalhais, offered on the Passatempos page labeled “Ilustrações do Arquivo do Diário de Notícias.” I’d encourage the editors to reprint such comics with their accompanying text. Unless the building signage “Colegio Moderno” is humorous enough and I just don’t get it. (Carvalhais’s artwork is absolutely wonderful.)

The Nov. 18 edition of *Jornal de Noticias* included a brief item on a screening at Cinanima. (T&T #139) In *Correio da Manhã* that day, Rita Monteiro reported on the Messaging Extraterrestrial Intelligence initiative’s “Mensagem de Arecibo” efforts to communicate with extraterrestrial life forms—and the resulting silence. (<https://tinyurl.com/METI-Mensagem>)

The Nov. 21 edition of *JN* reported on a virtual reality installation portraying Franz Kafka’s “Metamorfose” at Utopia, a literary festival in Braga. (<https://festival-utopia.pt>) The majority of the festival seems to concentrate on literary fiction, though a discussion panel Saturday morning suggests that art and literature are “achievable utopias” and an afternoon debate will explore Europe as a possible utopia.

On Nov. 22, *Evasoes*, a *JN* insert, featured a brief item on Noites Jurassicas, a 10-hectare display of lifesize dinosaurs and other animals at Dino Parque da Lourinha. (<https://www.dinoparque.pt>) Is there something like this available in the United States? It looks like a great experience. And in that day’s *Correio da Manhã*, Paulo Joao Santos reports on the discovery that “materia negra ocupa 70% do universo.” Given that newspaper’s occasionally mystifyingly conservative politics (that Portuguese journalists would be “anti-woke” perplexes me), it’s intriguing to see periodic science coverage.

The Nov. 15-21 edition of *TV 7 Dias* promotes the newly in Portuguese BD adaptation of *O Deus Das Moscas* by William Golding and Aimee de Jongh. That issue also included an article titled “A Televisao Tem Memoria” that featured still from a couple of interesting programs: 1996’s *Contra-Informacao* on RTP and 1998’s *Batatoon e Companhia* on TVI. I was surprised to learn about Max’s *Dune* movie series prequel *Dune Prophecy* from a local TV guide, however. The six-episode series is set 10,000 years before the rise of Paul Atreides. It started streaming in Portugal on Nov. 18. In the United States, the first episode streamed on Max on Nov. 17, and the second will stream on Sunday. Has anyone watched it yet?



—William Rotsler

Screened at the Globe: Movie Reviews

Gattaca

I watched this 1997 dystopian sf thriller DVR’d on Portuguese television with Portuguese subtitles. While I’ve been aware of the movie for some time—and while I’m pretty sure I’ve seen it previously—I’d forgotten much of it. The cast is quite impressive, including Ethan Hawke, Uma Thurman, Jude Law, Dean Norris, Gore Vidal, Tony Shalhoub, Alan Arkin, Ernest Borgnine, and others.

It surprised me that the movie wasn’t actually based on a book. Its plot and trapping resonate with the work of writers such as Philip K. Dick and similar writers, but the screenplay was original. (You can access the script at <https://tinyurl.com/Gattaca-script>.) Commentators online compare the film to Aldous Huxley’s *A Brave New World* and Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*.

In part, the movie is about efforts underway to hit a window necessary to send a spacecraft to, I believe,

Mars. That window is only open every 70 years, so time is of the essence. That leads to a film noir-like murder mystery in which the former director of the program is found dead, killed by an unknown assailant.

All of that takes place in a near-future society in which people are genetically engineered or screened, only the most “perfect” obtaining positions of importance or power, and those deemed less so serving as an economic underclass. A young man, played by Hawke, has obtained a new identity, working in complicity with Law’s character to join the launch crew.

Genetic testing and surveillance is widespread, and employees are often subject to blood and urine tests to confirm that they are acceptable or invalid. (It just struck me that there is a dual meaning to this term: not valid, and invalid in the sense of recovering from an injury—like Law’s character in his wheelchair.)

Gattaca is an excellent movie. Space travel serves as window dressing to what is otherwise a workplace drama and murder mystery. The tenor and tone are dark and foreboding, the noir mystery elements compelling, and the narrative commentary on societal structures, ableism, opportunities, employment options, surveillance, body autonomy, and other topics thought provoking. If you haven’t seen *Gattaca* in a while, it’s worth returning to. A Showtime series entered pre-production last year, so perhaps more along these lines will hit the small screen again soon.

Predestination

How have I not heard about or seen this 2014 Australian movie—titled *Predestinado* in Portuguese—before now? How did it take me recording it on Portuguese television, subtitled, to finally become aware of it—and see it? Similar to *Gattaca*, above, the movie stars Ethan Hawke and is surprisingly good.

Part of the reason might be that it’s based on a Robert A. Heinlein short story, “All You Zombies...,” which appeared in the March 1959 issue of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. I’ve yet to read the story, but I’m poised to once I distribute this week’s APA-L. (It’s currently 9:32 p.m. GMT, Friday, Nov. 22, so I should get this to you soon.)

Predestination is a story about a secretive agency tasked with solving problems. It’s a time travel story. It’s a convoluted what-the-heck-is-happening tale similar to *Dark* on TV, *Memento*, or *Fight Club*. It’s a sympathetic consideration of gender reassignment, as well as writing for confessional magazines. (The pulp elements of the movie are a lot of fun.)

And it’s a movie based on a Heinlein story! Hawke

and Sarah Snook are both excellent in what are effectively dual roles. Searching *eFanzines* online, I found very little contemporary fanzine discussion of the movie. Bruce Gillespie’s *SF Commentary* mentions it several times in 2015-2016, and he includes a related news item in a 2014 issue of *Treasure*. Wolf von Witting lists it in *Clockwise* #2016’s “Best SF-Films by Year,” which is a very useful item. Turning to Fanac.org, I find mentions in *The MT Void* (Vol. 36 #21 in 2017), the 2015 Sasquan’s Convention Guide and *Sasq-Watch* #5, and... *SF Commentary*.

If you haven’t seen *Predestination*, please do so. It’s a very good movie, even if the first 45 minutes are almost entirely back story exposition, and I’d suggest that it’s even an important movie. It should not be the sleeper hit it seems to be. Watch the movie, read the story—in whichever order you prefer—and tell a friend to do the same.



—Nola Frame-Gray

Comments on APA-L #3095

In *Vanamonde* #1618, John Hertz recognized APA-L’s 60th anniversary. I’ll have to look into the archives to see when Hertz and Joe Zeff first got involved. While Don Fitch might be our longest-standing recipient, Hertz is likely our longest-running active participant. (Again, I’ll have to check to confirm. Hertz and Zeff can perhaps clarify in the meantime.)

While I’ve not yet been able to read the paperback copy of Isaac Asimov’s *The Currents of Space* I brought with me, I still look forward to the Classics of SF discussions at the upcoming Loscon. I’ve also procured an epub edition of Eric Frank Russell’s *Wasp* and a PDF of Andre Norton’s *Star Man’s Son* (aka

Daybreak—2250 A.D.), so I might be able to read them on my way home, as well.

Matthew Mitchell's *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #83 shared a story about racial slurs in comments left in response to *YouTube* reaction videos. Are you sure that was a cart display? Perhaps it was just one household's idea of a party. I think *Psycho* and *Silence of the Lambs* qualify as horror movies. I quite like that you distinguish between monster movies and horror movies. Huzzah for the kaiju! Here in Portugal multiple Godzilla and King Kong films have been aired on television in recent weeks. I've recorded them but not yet watched them.

I will share your feedback with cover artist Alan White. Indeed, the Jack Kirby submersible you shared is a veritable cruise ship among submarines. Now there's an idea: a submersible cruise ship.

In *Toony Loons* #781, **Joe Zeff** updated ellers on the Saga of the Snow. Even though I'm sure the situation wasn't funny at the time—or now—I must admit to chuckling at the image of you and Marcia rolling around in the snow like turtles on your backs. Thankfully, it must not have been downhill where you both fell. (Ironically, I wrote that before reading that you “ended up rolling over onto your back and sliding backwards to the porch steps.” You *were* uphill!) That was certainly a snowy day.

I will share your feedback with cover artist Alan White. Tell me more about this Rif Raf Sam, the riffiest rif that ever rified a raf. Charles Lee Jackson II, if your eminent self is reading this, please tell me more about St. Putregus Day or Putregus Day. Inquiring minds want to know.

Ignorable Theme: Garage Sales

“Do you frequent garage, rummage, and yard sales? Have you ever gone to an estate sale? Have you ever bid on an abandoned storage unit?” While I used to enjoy going to garage and rummage sales, I am no longer in the practice of doing so. Regardless, if I see items on the street, say, on a stoop, front step, or sidewalk in front of a house, I often check to see what's there. Not long ago, for example, a resident living on an adjacent street had lined up puzzles in front of their home, for the taking. One memorable alley find was a video tape containing episodes of *The Simpsons* recorded off television.

While in college, I once worked on the staff of an estate sale to help out a friend's family—and for some pin money. I didn't bid on anything in particular, but my payment included a handmade comforter my wife and I still use to this day. It is lovely and quite comfortable. I have never bid on an abandoned storage unit.

In Póvoa de Lanhoso, there's a store called Superfeirão that's basically a collective rummage sale. Vendors rent stalls in the shop, which takes a cut of each sale. We stopped by for the first time last week on market day, and Caitlin procured a stylish overcoat. We'll return, I'm sure. I'll keep my eyes open for books and records, of which there were few.



Los Angeles Times, July 1, 1955

The UFO Checklist

The United Fanzine Organization (UFO) is a group of small press creators who come together to support and encourage each other, and to promote higher standards of quality in small press. Applicants may contact Chairman Steve Keeter, 10118 Mason Dixon Circle/ Orlando, FL 32821 (stevekeeter@gmail.com). Official UFO Website at <https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com> and the United Fanzine Organization Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tfrags>. Newsletter \$3.50 for non-members, \$20 for 6-issue subscription.



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The Official Newsletter of the United Fanzine Organization features articles, artwork, and more from co-op members.



THE IMPROBABLE GIRL AND THE WONDER KITTY #11

(available for only \$10 PayPal to jecarrales@yahoo.com, or send to email marisolinskikit-ty@gmail.com, or contact Joe Ely Carrales III via FB Messenger) Characters created by

Ryan Howatt and Ken Bailey join the adventures of Mari and Niko, as our heroes leap into a portal to another world and find themselves involved in a strange war! Humor, magic and more in one epic comic. The New Peoples Journal is an added treat. Also: check out that gorgeous cover by Trish Ellis!



The Stf Amateur 9

THE STF AMATEUR #9 (\$6.00 postpaid from Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230, or, PayPal to kalel@well.com or @Hrow . Outside US rates inquire via email. Free PDF Available @ <https://efanzines.com/HR/index.htm>).

Keith Row's absorbing apazine continues. A highlight of this issue is a series of back and forth correspondence between editor Heath and William Breiding. Much more is included, including talk about fanzines, sf movies and tv, and a gorgeous front cover by Larry Johnson.



The Stf Amateur 10

THE STF AMATEUR #10 (\$6.00 postpaid from Heath Row) Reviews of SHE FREAK, GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN, AVENGERS: INFINITY WAR, and other sf/fantasy/ adventure films are a prominent part of STF #10. Lots of engaging apa comments, and a visit to Antiquarian Los Angeles (with color photos) are highpoints.



THE STF AMATEUR #11 (\$6.00 postpaid from Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230) Of especial interest to sf/fantasy fans, Heath examines the BUCK ROGERS: 2429 newspaper strip, with numerous reproductions of artwork, ads, and the strips themselves. There are many comix and zine reviews, including TETRAGRAMMATON FRAGMENTS!, THE IMPROBABLE GIRL AND THE WONDER KITTY, and other United Fanzine Organization titles. STF #11 is a satisfying read and highly recommended.



TACITURN #4 (\$10 from Kurt Erichsen, 2539 Scottwood Ave., Toledo, OH 43610-1358. Also you can order this book on www.amazon.com/stores/Kurt-Erichsen/author/) Beginning with two amazing covers by Dan Burke and Brad Foster,

this anthology title features some of the finest talents in the alternative press, and includes classic comic stories along with new material. Featured are strips by Larry Johnson (a magical Lew Brown adventure), "Valerian the Barbarian" by editor Kurt himself, Neil Riehle's "The Incredible Time Saving Device" and much more!

