



The Drink Tank



AN ISSUE OF FOURTH

MORE THOUGHTS AND STRANGENESSES

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

CHRISTOPHER J. GARCIA

Max Schmeling: 1905-2005

I'm bothered by the fact that the death of one of the truly great boxers of the last 100 years hasn't been covered by more outlets. Max Schmeling was one of the great, though his record may not be as impressive as others. I had a prof at Emerson who called him "The Schindler of Sport" because he hid two young Jewish boys during Krystallnacht and later helped several others escape Germany. He was one of Hitler's favourites, but he also used his influence to get the black athletes at the Berlin Games safe treatment. Hitler soured on Max and sent him into the war as a paratrooper, hoping he would be killed and could be used as a dead hero to rally his troops. Max did not abide.

Later in life, he owned a portion of the German Coke franchise and became rich. He became close friends with former rival Joe Louis. He often made it to the important events in the history of boxing and wrote a truly engrossing autobiography.



Am I the Spectre of Death?

In recent years, there have been too many deaths of the all-time greats of science fiction and of SF fandom. Harry Warner, Kelly Freas, Julie Schwartz, all of them important cogs in my Fannish life. There have been a number of close calls, like Forry's illness a couple of years back. There is a sad truth though: I may, in fact, be responsible for killing three of the greats.

I had the honour of being on the final panel that Marion Zimmer Bradley would ever do. It was a lovely piece of work, afterwards I gave her greeting from my Dad who had known her a bit back in the day. She passed on a good amount later, but Pops still joked that I had been the cause of death.

2000's Baycon saw me doing a couple of panels, including one with Poul Anderson. We had a nice chat about antique cameras after. About six months later, Poul passed. This got me thinking, but both MZB and Poul weren't in the best of shape when I met them, so it must have just been a coincidence.

Douglas Adams visited my museum to give a talk. I got to show him around and the two of us held court around one of the machines in the collection, talking about science fiction and what everyone missed when they tried to write the future. Two weeks later, Adams had his heart attack.

Now, luckily, not every writer feels the effects of my curse, or we'd also have lost Niven, Pournelle, Gerrold, Vinge, Brin, Ellison, Ray Nelson and Steve Barnes. Oddly, I was supposed to do a panel with Forry, but he missed the panel due to poor health. Maybe my reputation had preceded me at half-strength.

The Drink Tank is written by Christopher J. Garcia and posted to the best website in fandom, efanazines.com, by Bill Burns. Created using the full suite of Adobe products. All stuff written by Mr. Garcia himself is free to reuse without permission in any medium per Garcia's Free Use statement (see YANKspot Mag, June 1997). Send any correspondence to garcia@computerhistory.org. The next issue should appear by Feb. 19.



The Drink Tank

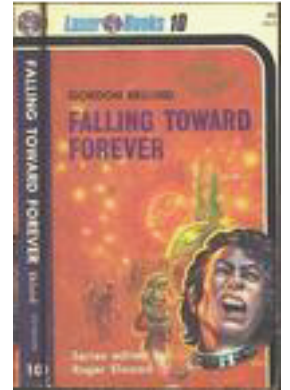
AN ISSUE OF FOURTH



M. Lloyd and I have an on-going argument: who is the better writer, Gordon Eklund or Stephen Goldin. The battle is fierce, as I have held my ground saying that Eklund's work after his Laser books was not nearly as much fun. M volleys a claim that Scavenger Hunt, in Laser form, feels truncated but is far more fun than the full version. Of course, both of us hold the exact opposite opinion when it comes to those two particular stances.

The battle started when I started collecting Laser books. I've always loved Kelly Freas' art and the series was numbered, so it made it easy to know how many more you needed to buy before you had them all. M borrowed some of them and we both got hooked on the stuff.

Serving in Time by Eklund is a decent book, though it would not hold up with many current readers. Caravan and Herds by Goldin are also fun and more than a little pulpy. I'd say that it's close, but Goldin's post-Laser stuff is better than Eklund's non-fannish PLS.



A Very Short Story The Ladies of La Marche

Every woman in the lobby of La Marche stood gorgeous against the teak-paneled walls. Every one of their eyes dazzled in invitation. No failed turn of the sculptor's chisel showed on any of them, their dresses draping and clinging in spots of perfection. The only flaw they all shared was the tail they would theatrically expose when they'd turn their backs on their johns and drop the dress. The poor men who did not find this exciting would run out of the room, leaving their pants and wallets behind, forfeiting them to the management, as the sign on the door had warned them.

More Madames should take to studying BioEngineering

My definition of terror is being the low man on the totem pole in front of a crowd. On the first Baycon panel I did, I was the only one without a Hugo or a PhD. My reading at the Make-out Room in San Francisco on Saturday will be another of those times. I'm reading with a respected Fantasy writer, a great poet and a non-fictionalist whose latest book is 100% Bad Ass. I'm doomed, as my piece is about wrestling and I'm not the best talker.

I'm always on the look-out for another project to start working on, whether it's a story, a short film or even a novel. I'm currently writing for Crass Dandy (Jay Crasdan's up-coming zine), dropping stuff to Jan Stinson's Peregrine Nations, Matt Appleton's Some Fantastic, and the Catchpenny Gazette. That's on top of Falls Count Anywhere for Fanboyplanet.com twice a week and doing this e-rag as often as I can. All in all, I've got a lot of time on my hands for another movie. I know my group of guys wants to do an action film, but honestly, that's an incredibly hard sell right now. Festivals have seen too many of them and even if there well done, they don't carry much weight. I'd love to do an adaptation of Ayelet Waldman's Minnow. It's a weepy SF story that I would just love to tackle. There's my script Good Hitler, about Adolf's Grandson trying to make up for what his Grandpa did. I've got a story about a female scientist in the early 1900s who builds a device to bring out ghost images. There are a bunch of short ideas that I have and mostly, folks aren't too interested in trying to do them.

My guess is I'll only get to four films this year, one below what I had hoped. If the money comes in for 5 Suicides, that'll replace all but one or two of them. Then again, that's about 200K away.



The Drink Tank

AN ISSUE OF FOURTH

Reviews by M. Lloyd and Christopher J. Garcia



Rasputina's Cabin Fever
Reviewed by M. Lloyd

If Charles Babbage's computers had worked, all modern rock would sound like Rasputina. Chris told me that once and I agree. Cello rock is somewhat rare, but Rasputina does it right. Too quaint to be Avant-Garde, too edgy to be nostalgia,

Cabin Fever is an album that flows with energy in many directions. There are Industrial-Gothic beat like Rats and, my personal favorite, Antique High Heel Red Doll Shoes.

There are a couple of pieces that suggest olden times. The Rememnants of Percy Bass is my choice as the best of these, reminding me of one of Chris' short film finds The Fine Art of Poisoning. There are several that seem to float between these two ends, sounding a bit like they came from The Magnetic Fields. The strangest thing is a supposed double date between Bjork and some guy and PJ Harvey and some guy. It is a rather brutal skewering to say the least.

The beauty of Rasputina is the pastiche that these ladies bring out. The vocals are emotional at times, but always playful. In a perfect world, songs like Rats would be dance music.



Jennifer Barker and Orlando Seale in Untitled 003: Embryo

Untitled 003: Embryo
Reviewed by Christopher J. Garcia

Special effects are both a curse and a Godsend. They can kill a movie by replacing elements like character and plot, or they can add much needed drama. Well used, CGI can make a good story great, and Belief's Untitled 003: Embryo is an example.

The story is of Jason, an agoraphobic after an accident with a piece of airmail. He receives a package containing a machine. The machine ends up sucking people's dreams. He brings his would be girlfriend Audrey over and the two of them investigate.

The short stars a pair of actor who aren't very recognisable, but also one of the people who get their dreams sucked is Ethan Phillips of Benson and Voyager fame. It's a delightful little twenty minute work that uses the effects beautifully. The captured dream sequences are comical and gorgeous...almost as gorgeous as Jennifer Barker!

Puppy Bowl on Animal Planet

Animal Planet ran Puppy Bowl all Super Bowl Sunday. It was Puppies frolicking in a pen shaped like a football stadium. There were dozens of cameras, including a Bowl Cam at the bottom of the water bowl. Next to Monkey Channel (Sunnyvale Educational Channel's Summer Placeholder which was 24 hours a day of a chalk-drawn Monkey) it was easily the most addictive thing I've ever seen on TV.

The Week in Efanazines.com

The first week of February saw 12 updates on efanazines.com, THE source for fanzines, and as usual, I was highly entertained. Three of them were issues of The Drink Tank and another three were Dick Geis' Taboo Opinions (Which I never agree with, but like the way he presents them). Arnie Katz gives us Vegas Fandom Weekly, which was very good. Aside from Rich Brown's tirade against the best-written fanzine out right now, Emerald City, I loved Earl Kemp's eI. I had a story in Peregrine Nations' latest fantastic issue, and I'll talk more about Back Numbers later.



The Drink Tank

AN ISSUE OF FOURTH



Standard Fandom Complaint

Reading Rich Brown's article in Earl Kemp's e1 reminded me that I've been reading a lot of fanzines out of the SF genre, that is they don't directly comment on science fiction or SF fandom. There are dozens of Anime fanzines, far less than there were in the early 1990s, but there are a great many out there. Reading them, I realised that I never saw the level of spite in them that I found in many SF fanzines. Now surely, they are still ruled by Garcia's Law (any shared interest grouping of ten or more people will always have at least 2 people who can't stand the site of each other), so why isn't there more bile vented in their pages?

I turn to something my dad once said: 'there are issues of jealousy, issues of payback, but mostly, fanzine writers are just grumpy.' It's almost as if people feel the need to issue receipts after every miniature slight. The Brown/Morgan issue I can see as Rich taking umbrage at Cheryl's methods, but honestly, to me, all that matters is the work presented and all the things he mentioned were just politics that I personally don't care about. You NEVER see this in anime zines, nor in old school wrestling fanzines. Once in a while, you'd come across something like that in a Punk zine, but that's a volatile crowd.

I don't know if fanzine fandom will ever come together and stop the bickering. Sadly, I doubt they will. The folks who don't participate in the squabbling in the pages of their zines are the ones I tend to read and enjoy. Say whatever you like on a bulletin board, that's what they're for, but why not try to keep the pages of your work free of that crap that just keeps folks from seeing that Fanzine Fandom has a lot to offer.

Warren Harris' Back Numbers Can Be Easily Procured¹⁴

I'm a huge fan of the pulp era. I collect issues of old magazines from the 30s, 40s and 50s. I was once told by a collector that I had destroyed a half-dozen highly-prized mags with my insistence on reading them. Warren Harris' Back Numbers salutes that era and does it as well, if not better, than any of the other mags that do the same. My favourite story of Issue 14 had to be the one on Rear Window, tracing it from the original story it was based on, Woolrich's It Had To Be Murder. The story examines both the film and the short story in detail, making a film buff and a mystery maven like me very happy.



The Logo for Office Supply Pictures.
Created by Steve Sprinkles.

My Big Scary Film Project

2005 is supposed to be the year that I make my first feature film: 5 Suicides. A distinct departure from all my other efforts, 5 Suicides is the story of a young reporter who is asked to go to a small mountain town to discover the truth behind the deaths of five unrelated deaths. It's dark, it's moody, and the chance of a lifetime for one actress to carry a Noir.

It also goes that I've not managed to raise a single dollar to make it.

Money makes films, so the saying goes, and though I've had meetings with some very powerful people, I've not managed to convince anyone to invest. Why? When they run the numbers, they realise that there's no way it can make them any money. So it goes. If anyone wants to read the script, let me know or better yet, send 20k and I'll give ya a copy!



The Drink Tank



AN ISSUE OF FOURTH

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS
SENT TO GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG
BY MY GENTLE READERS

Helen Spiral- UK
Hi Chris/topher,

I'm one of the anonymous downloaders via efanazines. I enjoyed your ultra short fic in DT2.

(In response to my story on Hispanic Science Fiction or the lack thereof)

Try Canadian author Charles De Lint's Newford urban fantasy books maybe? He has a normal mix of characters with a normal mix of backgrounds. By normal I mean varied and lifelike not bleached and washed whiter-than-life (except for the occasional vampire!). I don't know how accurate his Hispanic character's ethnicities are? You tell us,

Helen

Thanks for Anonymifying yourself. You know, I've never read any De Lint. I'm adding him to my list after I finish the next SteamPunk novel and then I'll pass it on to Bailey. Thanks for the kind words about the Very Short, though it means I will continue doing them from now on!

Manny Sanford- Santa Clara, CA

There's a lot of good stuff that you're writing. I've liked most of the Aztec/Mayan/Incan themed writing that I've read, Alexander Irvine's book being one of the best of them, and I'm hoping that there's a lot more from the guy besides the short work that has been a little disappointing.

Knowing that you're a steampunk fan, what do you think of Army of Darkness as the perfect example of Medieval steampunk? I've always thought that it was exactly what steampunk was supposed to be.

I thought that same thing about Raimi's film. It's a time travel story, it uses strange technologies in an old world, and they make a new hand out of existing techniques. Irvine and China Mieville strike me as very similar.

M Lloyd- Geelong, AU

Ok, you've got your review of Rasputina. Issue Three looks better, especially since there are a few photos. I must say that reading about Stacked Decks made me start an article I've been thinking about doing all these many years.

I must say also that one of the things that I love about The Drink Tank are the little pieces of fiction. They are most aptly described as cute.

Thank you, M. I've given up on salable fiction, but the Tiny stuff remains!!!

Miles Contreau- LA, CA

I'm interested in your short film reviews. You seem to like shorts, but I've never seen any of the ones you've reviewed. What can I do to see more of them?
Miles

There are a few ways. The efanazines of short films, ifilm.com, has a lot of great shorts in all genres. They have a great SciFi section that includes films like JFK1138, Glengary Glen Darth and about 50 things that end in -trix. It's great site. Film festivals pretty much all have shorts programmes, and you can see a lot more there. You may also want to try the series of DVDs called Short.

We also got mail from Jay Crasdan, Bill Burns, Al Morrow-Saint, Shelly T., K.A. Wells, and Chuckie Deivers (I'll publish his note someday in an issue dedicated to filth!)