



The Drink Tank

ISSUE 63

JUST ANOTHER MULTIPLE OF NINE



Why Does This Man Have a Bucket on his Head?

If you ask me who the greatest guitarist of all-time is, I'll give you a straight answer: some dead guy. If you ask me who the shreddingest guitarist of all-time is, and I'll have no problem giving you a name: Buckethead!

You see, there are several different type of guitarists: the ones who suck (like Eric Clapton) and the ones who can play faster and meaner than anyone human has any right to (like Dick Dale) and there are those who can make you weep (like the great Mexican guitarististas) but no one does the specific art of shredding so well as Mr. Head.

Ah, yeah, I should mention that Buckethead is a weird dude. A really weird dude. He is always on stage behind a white mask, very similar to the one that The Carver wore on Nip/Tuck. He also tends to wear a Kentucky Friend Chicken bucket on his head. That's right, KFC. He's weird, and usually with a gimmick like that

you don't get quality play, but not so with Buckethead. He is really an amazing guitarist and seldom have you heard someone who uses so many of the possibility of a guit-box to so many different levels.

Buckethead first came to my attention with a band called The Deli Creeps. They played the old Cactus Club (the club I'm making the movie about) and were incredible. He then got an added boost from being the guitarist asked to join Bill Laswell's group Praxis, which included keyboard/clavinet virtuoso Bernie Worrell, genius drummer Brain, and the funniest bassist of all time, Bootsy Collins. Praxis was a band of incredible talent making amazingly funky music together. Buckethead and Brain were the drive of the band, and Bernie and Bootsy were the funk. It was a great band at first, with the genius Bill Laswell doing the producing, I really got into them, but sadly that line-up only lasted one album and they really became more of a SoundScape band after that.

Buckethead still plays, often solo or with various bands. He was chosen as the replacement for Slash of Guns & Roses when they came back in the late 1990s. He's a much better guitarist than Slash and has much cooler headgear.

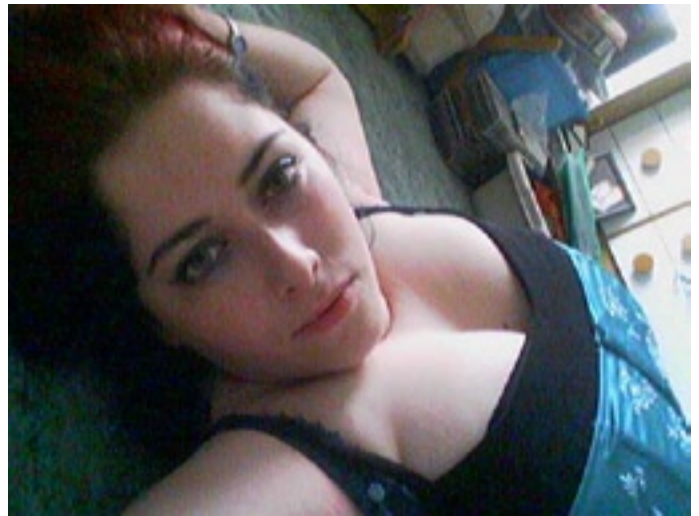
The Drink Tank Issue 63: Just Another Multiple of Nine, was written, produced and directed by Christopher J. Garcia and posted to eFanzines.com by Bill Burns: King of All Fan-nish Media. If you've got a comment or just want to see how many emails you can send me before I go nuts, you can send them to garcia@computerhistory.org or, if you're Old Skool, drop a letter to 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd, Mountain View CA 94043. Or, if you're so inclined, drop by and buy me lunch. I won't complain!

A Simple Adventure Story

One of, if not THE, greatest movie ever made is Sam Peckinpah's brilliant *The Wild Bunch*. There's no question that it's the greatest Western ever made and that there are performances that would blow anything else out of the water. The combination of violence and beauty and grit and intensity is everything that Quint Tarantino would be credited for introducing to film just a few decades later.

As is almost always true, great fictional material leads to great documentary material, and that is the case with *A Simple Adventure Story*, a short documentary about *The Wild Bunch*. Director Nick Redman brought a group of long-time Peckinpah and *Wild Bunch* devotees to the area of Mexico where Sam made his classic. They show old clips from the film as well as clips of the original footage they took when they were scouting locations. They talked with locals who were extras in the film, including one who had a couple of lines. There are strong connections to the film still evident in the city, and throughout that Northern area of Mexico.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about *A Simple Adventure Story* is the connection of the folks that get interviewed, the movie and Sam Peckinpah himself. A couple of them worked with him, and almost all of them knew him to some degree. The film obviously changed these guys, they're all most filmmakers, but it speaks to the power of personality that can sometimes bleed through, even if the real star isn't on the screen.



M Goes Shopping

One of the better things about M is that she knows how to shop. Despite being rich beyond my second wildest dreams, the girl manages to get stuff cheap and look good doing it. She once got a corset, the one she's wearing in the photo above, for less than fifty bucks. When I asked how she pulled it off, she said 'I've got boobs. That should answer your question.'

M wrote an email the other day about some shopping she did in Helsinki. She said that the town itself was pretty expensive, along the lines of Berlin. She said that you can get the best tech gadgets for a song, which I like to hear since my Birthday is coming up.

She said she had gone out for clothes and had come back about 1,500 bucks lighter. That's fine, with her money, she can spend like that once in a while. But when I asked what she got, she blew me away.

The first thing I found was a leather jacket, just like Trish Stratus wears. That would have cost 800, but I talked him down to 500 and I also picked up a bunch of short skirts and some stuff that reminded me of my old house parties for another 300, which should have cost me 700. I got a few other bits of leather and a few shoes, all of it for 1500 when it should have been around 4000. The guy must have liked me to shave so much off his mark-up.

Man, I wish I had the boobs to bring the cost of a new sweater vest down.

Wired Before We Were Wired

Frank Wu may or may not be an Angel. There's no proof that I could give, but there's certainly a possibility that he is one of those who has touched Ghod and returned to give us Peace, Love and Understanding.

You see Frank gave me, as a Christmas gift, a stack of 1925 editions of Science and Invention. They were wonderful, colourful and just plain rad, but why would Frank have a bunch of issues of S&I?

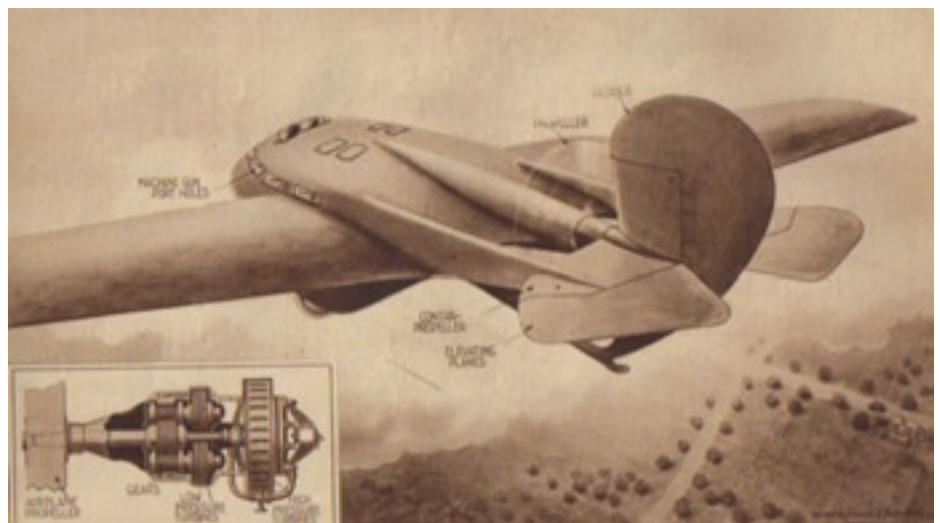
Well, Hugo Gernsback edited Science and Invention in those days, along with running WRNY radio station and doing experiments and editing science fiction. He was an all-around guy. He also liked to use several artists, including Frank R. Paul. Frank Wu maintains the Frank R. Paul site, so he bought the S&Is to look for Paul's work. When none were found, he gave them to me.

And what a gift that are.

There are several that just scream me, like the one here with the 900,000 dollar ship getting blown up (I believe it was for a film about the Spanish-American War) and there are several that feature my favourite form of transport: The Dirigible. There's an article about the future airplane which will be Steam-Powered. The drawing of it that just makes me smile (it's the one below), especially since it would never have been able to fly.

Science and Invention is often thought of as a hobbyist magazine, and it was certainly meant for those who loved early electronics and radio and the like, but really, it was the 1920s version of Wired. There were Science Fiction stories as well as non-technical articles. There were explanations of new inventions and descriptions of things that were 'ahead' (most of which never made it). There were articles on how to turn your radio into a short-wave receiver and how television (the mechanical variety) might end up working. They even outline what seems to be the airline hub concept, only using Dirigibles and the North Pole!

Needless to say, Frank Wu is a good, nay, GREAT man.





The MAN!

When the history of the video game industry is written, likely by Arnie Katz, it will feature a guy whose name might not be too widely known but whose start-up spirit change the business forever. His name is Nolan Bushnell, and he's a genius.

Nolan was an electrical engineering major at Utah and he got his hands on the DEC mainframes there. One of the most typical pursuits that computer users in those days would undertake is a game called SpaceWar, designed by Slug Russell and friends at MIT. Nolan got to playing it and it sunk in that folks outside of the computer labs might want to play SpaceWar. Nolan went to work for Nutting Associates and released ComputerSpace, the first commercial arcade game. Sadly, it flopped, but Bushnell got the idea to make a home video version of Ping-Pong (from visiting the Magnavox Odyssey booth at a Burlingame Electronics show where Ralph Baer's original version was being shown) and he had his friend Al Alcorn build him one. That was the start of the first Video Game Juggernaut: Atari.

Nolan was at Atari for only a few years. He bought out his partner and then he sold to Warner Communications. He made a mint on that sale and he was still with the company until 1978, just after the Atari 2600 changed home video gaming forever.

When Nolan gets free time, he starts companies. He had started a division of Atari called the Pizza Time Theatres. He bought the rights from Warner and then launched them with their mascot Chuck E. Cheese. This became a big hit, but it didn't last forever, as the crash in video games in the mid-1980s led to him leave Atari as it entered bankruptcy. Didn't really matter, Nolan had other ideas.

Nolan had started a second video game company called Sente in the early 1980s. This was a very advanced series of games which featured great graphics. With Chuck E. Cheese's in bankruptcy, there really wasn't a major outlet to give Sente games the nationwide exposure. Sente didn't do very well except for the hockey game called Hat Trick, but their games are popular today with collectors who do the Arcade Show circuit.

About the same time, he started a robotics company called Androbot. It was a home robot company that was way ahead of its time. This went down fast and ended up producing robots for only two years. He also founded a company that made a bear that would go on to influence Teddy Ruxpin and Furbies.

The Garcia family has long ties to Nolan starting with my Grandma. She used to work at the Hyatt House in San Jose as a Coffee Shoppe waitress with her Identical Twin. Nolan used to stop in every few days and she was his favourite waitress. My dad was the first security guard hired at Atari and often had good convo with Nolan. My Mom, Aunt and Uncle all worked for Atari in the 1972 through 1979 timeframe.

I met Nolan when I was a kid, but it wasn't until I was working at the Museum that I really got to talk to him. He and I played a version of SpaceWar and I beat him fair and square. A genuinely nice guy, Nolan's been here a few times and always enjoys himself.



What's with the Retro?

You may be asking why I just did an issue that was more like the early ones than anything I've done in six months or so. Did I forget how much they sucked? No, not at all. I just wanted to do a simple issue like this again before I forgot how. One of the reasons is because I'm about to dive into The Drink Tank issue 64 with all sorts of vigour, preparing my First AnnIsh for late next week or early the following. It'll be an interesting issue, that's for sure, with just about everybody who's ever written for me taking a stab at an article for me. I'm having a lot of fun laying it out and filling in with my own and those from The Cahootery.

So, what's after that? Will The Drink Tank be forever changed? Nope, not in the slightest. I'll probably take a week off (which means you'll get, at most, one issue of the Drink Tank that week) and then it's back to the weekly. I'll be taking a break during Cinequest (with a wrap-up issue after it's all over) and I'll probably be doing a lot of writing for Science Fiction / San Francisco on the various cons that seem to start up in the middle of February.

Other than that, it's all normal about the Garcia Compound. I'm starting to look for a place to move in the coming months (probably into Downtown San Jose or maybe Cupertino) and then it's all about getting myself ready for my serious con season (starting with BayCon and running until SiliCon in October)

I'm ready, even if I'm not that steady!

M Lloyd Presents A Chris Garcia Story from Years Gone By

I've been waiting to have a reason to run this, and here it is with Chris telling me he has a section that needs filling. I found this in one of the old cigar boxes I keep full of letters and poems and such. Read and rejoice in 18 year old Chris Garcia's prose!

She sat with her back to me, not smiling, but not frowning either. She was up to something, though I'm not sure what. The string in her hands seemed connected to some far-away object, not a kite, it was far too steady, but perhaps to a building. I learned far too late what the other end had been anchored to, and when I saw it arrive, I knew my choices had all been poor.

There was an eyelet on the moon that she had tied her string to. She reeled it in, pulling it ever-closer, increasing the tides and signing our Death Certificates.

