



EXHIBITION HALL ONE

EXHIBITION HALL ISSUE ONE

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Well, it's finally here. The first official issue of Exhibition Hall. I've been looking and I ain't found a single other Steampunk Fanzine. Maybe we're behind the times, as odd as that would seem being in the Retro-Futurism business, because everyone else has gone off and is putting together Podcasts and websites and interest groups and esty slots and so on. If this were a completely paper fanzine, we'd be ever so retro...

Which brings me to what this issue contains. I was lucky enough to catch the team that gives us The Clockwork Cabaret, a fine Steampunk-themed radio show and podcast out of North Carolina. Mike Perschon, the star of the 2008 Sunnyvale Steampunk Convention Steam-Powered, dropped us a fantastic article. Our fashion editor Arianne Wolfe has her first fashion article, I sink my teeth into Jay Lake's Mainspring, and James Bacon has some fine work as our London Bureau Chief. We're off to a rolling start!

WorldCon in Montreal saw me release a teaser issue. As always, poorly proof-read and hastily edited together, but hey, it means there's nowhere to go but up, and with Rina Weismann agreeing to take a look at the mess that is my writing, it can only get better! I did a panel on the Teen Programming track about Steampunk with Ann Vander Meer and a couple of others. Ann won the Hugo for Best Semi-Prozine for Weird Tales, which is a big get because

that means she beat out Locus, which wins 9 years out of 10. I enjoyed the panel, but it showed something strange: that the young folks seem to think that Steampunk is solely a movement of art and fashion.

Now, this it not a really bad thing, and when I mentioned the books of the LA Dream Team of Powers, Blaylock and Jeter I got looks of unrecognition, but it does suggest that something like Exhibition Hall is needed. We talked about Steampunk music, and there were quite a few glazed eyes. On the other hand, the kids all knew Jake Von Slatt and Datamancer, so go figure. TO me, art and fashion is very important to include, and I'm so happy to have Arianne writing her fashion section, and the artists that I've found have all been great, but one thing that really important to me is to talk about the writing. Looking to future issues, I'm glad to say that we'll be looking at the literature of Steampunk, which is why every issue will have at least one issue, and at least one interview, with the first few revolving around musicians like Mr. B Gentleman Rhymer, the Men Who Will Not Be Blamed for Nothing and more. We're dedicated to the whole gamut of Steampunk stuff! That's our goal. I'm excited.

This issue is dedicated to one of my true heroes: Charles Babbage. That's a piece of the Babbage Engine they built at the Science Museum in London. The team that built it was led by my former curator Doron Swade. The Computer History Museum has a Difference Engine until December, so if you're around Mountain View, CA, stop on by before it's too late!

Yeah, Babbage failed to actually build a computer, but at least he spent a lot of government money!

So, let's get going! Exhibition Hall issue 1 is go!

Artists who appear in this issue- Cover- LenZ (<http://pagan-live-style.deviantart.com/>), Page One and Page Eight from the Science Museum, London's Making the Modern World exhibit, Mainspring cover by Stephen Martinerre, Page 3 by Laura Crites (angelfeather@hotmail.co.uk, crashingwave.deviantart.com/gallery/), Page 4 & 5 courtesy The Clockwork Cabaret, Page 6 by Pzule, Page 9 by Asok Yeessrim, Page 10 by Meg Lyman (meglyman.deviantart.com/gallery/), Page 11 by Duane R. Stevens, Page 12 by Mike Pecci, Page 18 photos from Lloyd Penney,

MAINSRING BY JAY LAKE

Review Reprinted from Matt Appleton's Some Fantastic Issue 12- Summer 2007

The Plot: it's a wonderful thing, and I've learned to love it in all it's glory. When cavemen sat around fires, they spoke of adventures in the simplest terms, re-enacting the brave deeds through plots told over and over again.

The Character: how I hate you, brazen hussy of the literary world; invented by later cavemen who wanted play the role and be exalted for glory. Feh! I spit on you! The

Setting: beautiful, sweet, kind-hearted, and often pushed to the back in favor of both of its scene-stealing cousins. Provider of context, shaper of vision, it is the foundation on which the house of Plot and the ramshackle shed of Character are built upon.

Jay Lake's *Mainspring* is the story of a young clockmaker's apprentice, Hethor, who is sent on a journey by the archangel Gabriel. That is the plot boiled down to syrup. Along the way, Hethor deals with brilliant librarians, questionable magicians, winged savages, little furry people, the British Navy, and various others. These characters are given various amounts of time to develop into varying degrees of completeness, with Hethor, in true Joseph Campbell (pew! I spit on that name!) fashion, acting out the hero on his quest. But then there's the Universe. The setting of *Mainspring* is the star whose role is far beyond what any character or plot could possibly play. The universe is an orrery in true-life scale. Each planet and each piece of the solar system is on a brass rail

around the sun. The Earth is both the planet we know today and a giant clock, the most accurate ever built. The setting provides the story; that most accurate of all clocks is now winding down and must be rewound. Hethor has been set to the task and a chance meeting with quite possibly the most seductively brilliant librarian of all-time sets him in with something of a secret society that aids him on his journey.

The first half of the book is almost all plot and setting, and it is marvelous. Hethor journeys and we

are introduced to a history of the world that is both familiar and disquietingly different. The year is 1900, but America is still under Colonial rule. There are electric cars and lights, but much of the world is still gear, cog and wheel-based. Everything that happens to Hethor gives us a slightly better view of the world that was built, the history that has passed on this mechanical Earth, and the religion that has grown there. The first half of the book gives us secret society,

magic, an appearance at Court, airships, strange creatures, fighting and more, all driven by plot and setting.

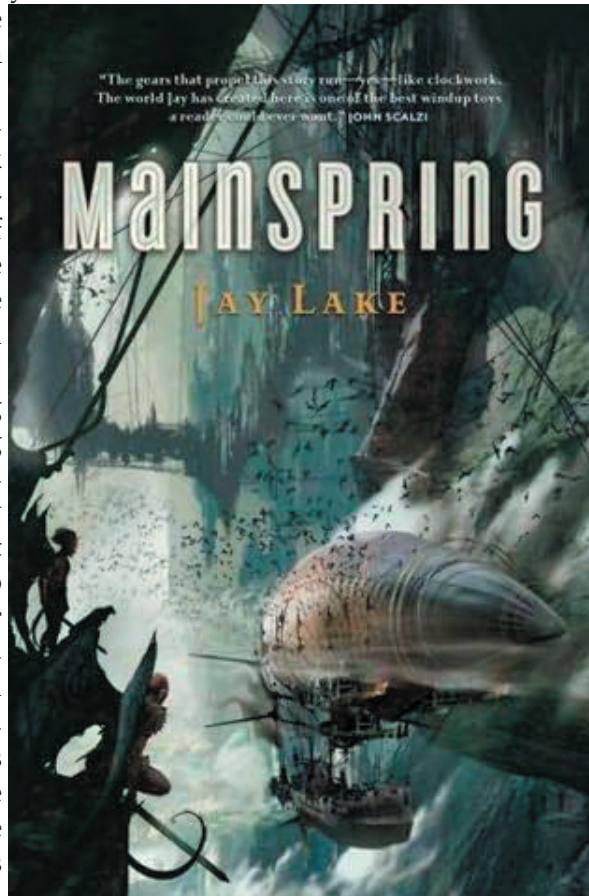
Then the book hits a wall. Literally.

The second half starts with Hethor and the Royal Navy arriving at the Equatorial Wall, a wall hundreds of miles high. Here, we follow Hethor's journey up and over the Wall to a new world that few if anyone from the Northern side has ever experienced. It is a much different world, one people by very different tribes, where the British hold no sway and there is danger around every corner. Here, we see Hethor take on many new roles and discover his own power, his faith, and love.

In other words, it's where all the character happens.

While I loved Hethor's exploits, I was never a fan of him. Yes, I wanted him to escape his latest momentary peril, but I also hated his way of thinking. Every chance he had to make a choice that could make it easier or harder for him, he would choose the harder. The interactions between Hethor and the people of the Southern Earth were good, but the moments of plot-filled goodness were fewer.

In many ways, *Mainspring* is Voltaire's *Candide* if Tim Powers had written it. I made that joke to myself around page 80 and just kept finding little pieces that supported it. Lake put Hethor in grave situations and even when he makes it out of it safe and sound, he loses something in the big picture. Much like Powers with his characters, Lake seems to take great pleasure in torturing poor Hethor. He gives pieces and takes away giant chunks throughout the book. It's fun reading, no question, but at times I just wanted Hethor to have a



BY CHRISTOPHER J GARCIA

free victory. I knew that whatever complication would arise would mean that Hethor would escape with his life but little else.

Mainspring is a book of great imagination and it builds a world that is as rich as the worlds in Discworld or the Dune series. There is powerful writing throughout; Jay's mastery of the language is apparent from line one, but it seldom calls attention to itself.

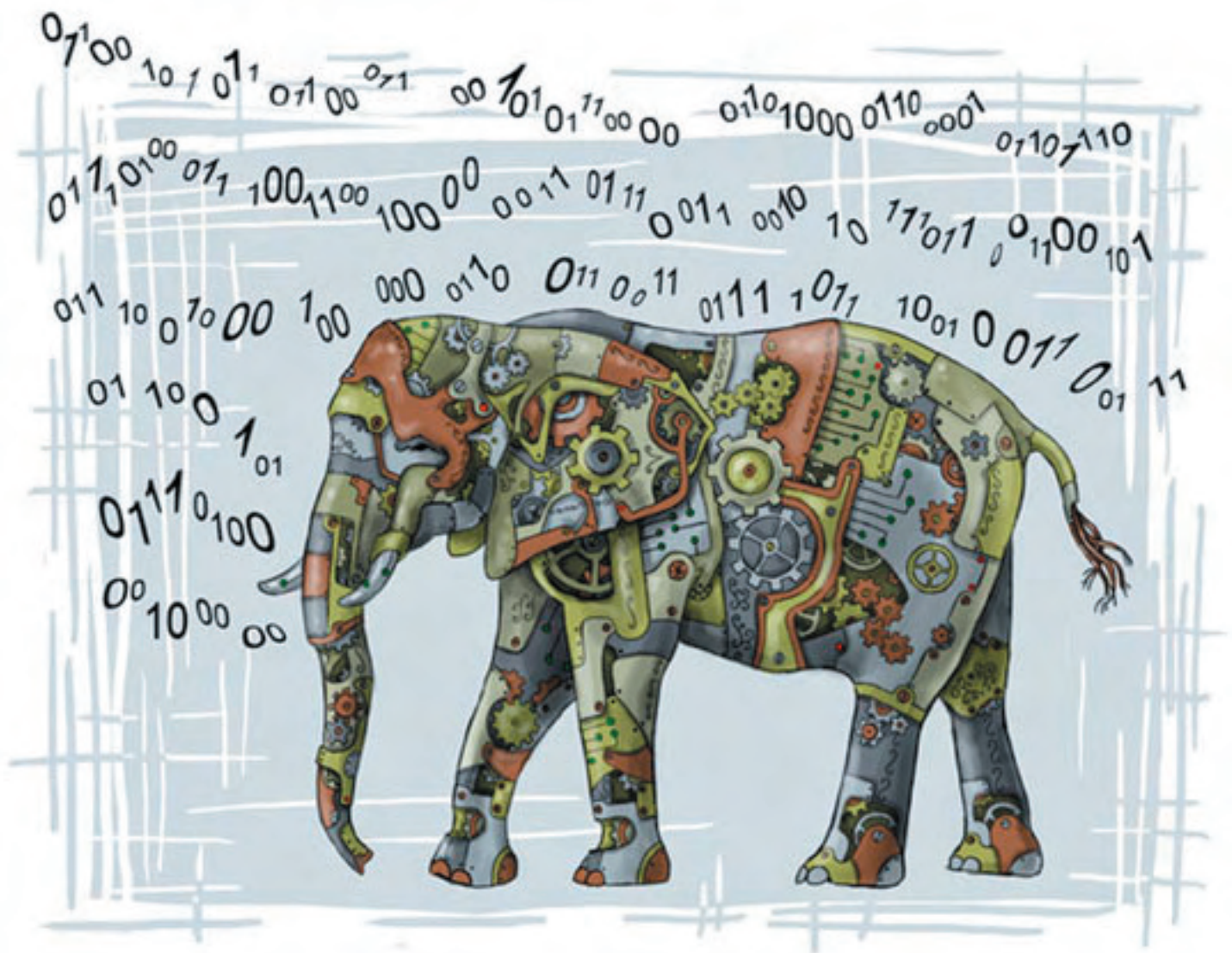
THE MAINSPRING UNIVERSE IS CONTINUED IN THE BOOKS ESCAPEMENT (2008) AND PINION (2010), BOTH FROM TOR BOOKS, AS WELL AS THE NOVELLAS CHAIN OF FOOLS AND CHAIN OF STARS.

The characters are strong, but to me that is far less important than the plot, which is strongest early, takes a bit of a dip, then regains strength turns towards the conclusion. There is a touch of unevenness to the way

it plays out, but there is a remarkable clarity to the writing that kept me reading, even when I wanted to set it down to avoid seeing poor Hethor get beat-down again.

If you like a good hero's journey, this is your book. If you like rollicking fun, this is still a very good book that you'll enjoy. If you like reading about a character getting his ass handed to him over and over again, I don't think you'll find a better novel.

Christopher J Garcia is an editor of Exhibition Hall, Journey Planet and The Drink Tank. He has lost Hugos for Best Fan Writer and Best Fanzine three times each. In addition to doing fanzines, he also produces short films, works for several West Coast Film Festivals and writes about professional wrestling. Chris makes a living as a Curator at the Computer History Museum and lives in Sunnyvale, Ca.



AN INTERVIEW WITH EMMETT AND KLAUDE DAVENPORT OF THE CLOCKWORK CABARET

I love Podcasts. I have always loved College Radio. It is lucky, then, that I came across The Clockwork Cabaret, a college radio show with a Podcast version that allows those of us out in the world to enjoy their eclectic music, their comical bits and the kind of banter that takes me back to the days when I'd sit up pretending to study while listening to WEGB in my dorm room at Emerson.

The Davenport Sisters, Emmett and Klaude, host the Clockwork Cabaret every Monday from 11pm to 1am, though you can get it anytime on the interwebs at clockworkcabaret.com.

Editor Christopher J Garcia- So, tell us what inspired your dip into the world of Steampunk radio?

Emmett- Steampunk was this amazing cauldron of creativity that was just starting to simmer and sister and I knew we wanted to contribute to the art movement somehow. The best way for us to do that was build on our experience as dj's. I'd worked at a radio station in college for 2 years in addition to some club dj'ing, and sister was an accomplished alternative dj, so putting together a radio show that had steampunk appeal seemed like a good way to build on our talents and fit a niche that hadn't been filled yet. Steampunk bands were cropping up here and there, and Sepiachord.com was doing an amazing job of aggregating bands with an antique aesthetic, but we wanted to do a proper old style radio show with characters, little plots and intrigues as a way to showcase this amazingly vast world of music that can be used to soundtrack the steampunk art movement.

Once we had the concept it was an amazingly easy sell. The programming committee at WCOM FM found the concept really appealing and granted us a two hour show. Prior to our show starting we'd been offered an hour long spot once a month on a friend's pre-existing radio program. Reverend Jynxx Midnight hosts the Phantom Frequency on Monday nights from 1-3 am EST, and we did his show for about 5 months while also doing our own weekly program which at the time was on Tuesday nights. It wore us out pretty quickly and we had to bow out of the Rev's show. It was a great chance to open our show up to new listeners. Fantastically after about a year of doing our show Tuesday nights the spot immediately preceeding Phantom Frequency opened up, so now we're doing

our shows back to back as god intended. The lineup on Monday nights is fantastic. From 9-11 is the Taproot Radio a dirty americana show for roots rock, alt country and deep blues. Then from 11-1 am is the Clockwork Cabaret and from 1-3 am the Phantom Frequency for dark alternative. We share a lot of crossover with both Taproot Radio and Phantom Frequency, so it's a fantastic blend from one show to the next.

CJG- Now, there's a lot of talk from folks who wonder exactly what constitutes Steampunk music. How do ya figure out what's acceptable and what's just plain not?

Emmett- There are no hard and fast rules to the defining of steampunk music, but there are two good descriptors that seem to apply to much of the music we play. The first is that the music is played on traditional instruments but either their use or the subject matter of the songs is subversive. Good examples of this are the Two Man Gentleman Band who play traditional instruments but their subject matter is just slightly skewed, for example their fantastically suggestive songs "Let's Make A Sandwich" or "Stuff Your Ballot Box".



Another example is the band Rasputina who play cellos, but run those cellos through effects pedals to create an amazing unholy ruckus. The second descriptor is that we find we often play music that is composed using modern instruments, or even electronically, but that has a vintage element to the lyrics or the composition itself is traditional. Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds are a great example of this. You get modern instruments like electric guitars and Hammond organs playing traditional American murder ballads. Lemming Malloy does a great job of this as well, so does Vernian Process. They're all working with modern tools to make something that harkens back to an older time.

Of course those are just two ways to look at

steampunk music. There's also the music we play because it simply sounds like the industrial revolution, like Einsturzende Neubauten, Fad Gadget and Tom Waits' song 'Clang Boom Steam' for example. Or the entire category of "What the hell?", which I seem to bring an awful lot of to the table. Like Man Man and Mr B, the Gentleman Rhymers. That's my favorite



kind of music because it's a real polarizer. I had a woman once respond to the Man Man album I was playing with "This music makes me want to go home and kill myself. This is terrible." How can you top that for a reaction? That's beautiful! Good art should be so polarizing, and for better or worse I find myself being drawn to the sort of bands that either turn people immediately off or make them freak out and start dancing. And this segues nicely into your next question...

CJG- Tell us about the experiments? What have been the biggest backfires?

Klaude: I went to dj out on the west coast early this year and wound up in a sticky situation. Folks were dancing and generally having a good time and the dancefloor was never empty, but there were a few people who were really upset with the kind of music that I found to be steampunk. I found out later a lady had been twittering from within the club saying I was an awful dj and that there was something wrong with

me because I was playing more polka than a Hungarian nightclub. That's weird in itself, because Emmett is the polka fan, I don't think I own any outside of the odd track on a DeVotchKa album. That experience had me down for a few days, feeling really blue and wondering why the heck a few people reacted so poorly. Then I realized Emmett, myself and the entire North Carolina steampunk scene should take it as a huge compliment that while I was being lectured on how people need to be "eased into" steampunk music and how it's not an easy genre to get people to dance to, we've been throwing hugely successful dance parties where we never compromise on the music. It wound up being an overwhelmingly positive experience that

made me appreciate the steampunks around me even more.

A lot of the "backfires" we have are with the strange muddy area that seems to have developed between steampunk and goth. To me they are two completely distinct entities with only the most minimal of crossover, but often folks come out to a steampunk event expecting to hear goth music. Emmett and I

have worked very hard to make sure that in our area the steampunk soundtrack stands on it's own two feet and that we don't use the steampunk genre as a thin brown gear covered veil for just another goth night. Goth nights are wonderful, Emmett and I know because we have alter egos. Emmett's alter ego started the longest running monthly goth night in NC and mine dj's at that night. We love the goth scene and all that goes along with it, but we don't love it enough to think it has more in common than it should with steampunk.

CJG- Are y'all involved with a Steampunk scene outside of the show?

Klaude: We have some great friends in the area, because I'm a creepy recluse who prefers to spend most time at home we really only see one another when we're working on a project together or out at one of the Clockwork Balls. We work with some amazing photographers in the area who have really embraced the steampunk aesthetic. Perception Crisis

Photography has an amazing eye and is stunning with lighting. She's just a stunning girl in and of herself, but her photographs are thrilling to me. We also work with Bohemian Noir Visions who is an extremely talented photographer who does traditional slow capture images (we have to hold our breath for up to 10 seconds and try not to be shakey, it's hard!) but on digital equipment. His work has this fantastic dreamy, antique quality to it. There is a great livejournal community we're on for North Carolina steampunks, it's called [steampunk_nc](http://steampunk_nc.livejournal.com). It's a nice way to stay in touch with other NC steampunks. Emmett: We are constantly coming up with new things that we should organize for our area steampunks, but sadly, we both lack a lot of free time, as we are always working on multiple projects.

CJG- OK, tough question: you're trapped in a weather balloon that's come untethered. You've got one pill-based food item and a mix-cylinder of three songs. What flavor food pill and what three songs.

Klaude: Blueberry flavored food pill, and I think I'd have to be antagonistic and pick three songs about disaster and death, so The Two Man Gentleman Band - The Hindenburg Disaster The Vernian Process Remix of The Unextraordinary Gentlemen - Open Arms, Empty Air Why Are We Building Such A Big Ship - To The Vultures

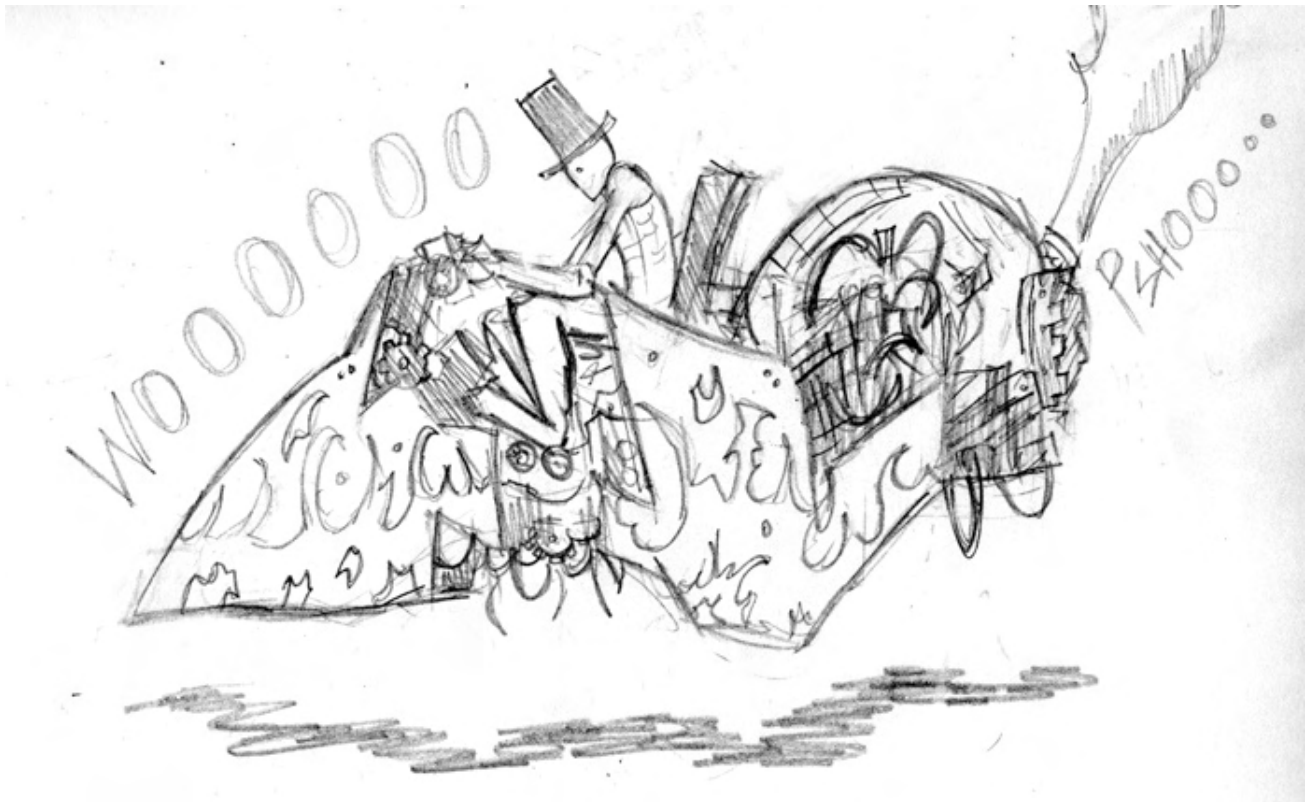
Emmett: I'd have to go with an Absinthe Lemonade food pill, I mean, if I'm going to be trapped in a weather balloon, I need something to keep me distracted from the height, as I'm not very good with it. As for music, I would have to go with They Might Be Giants - Istanbul (Not Constantinople), The Real Tuesday Welds - Cloud Cuckooland, and The Divine Comedy - Imaginary Friend

CJG- Six: Plug your show and anything else you think important

Klaude- clockworkcabaret.com! We broadcast live for two hours every Monday night from 11pm EST on WCOM 103.5FM available for listenings online at <http://wcomfm.org/> or listen to our archive of over one and a half years of shows at clockworkcabaret.podhoster.com

We throw steampunk parties once every couple of months, more information can be found at myspace.com/theclockworkball

Next Month's interview will be Chris Garcia chatting with Chap-hop Superstar and Mr. B, Gentleman Rhymer, one of the best discoveries from listening to The Clockwork Cabaret.



STEAMPUNK, RIBOFUNK, EVEN IF IT'S OLD JUNK IT'S STILL ROCK AND ROLL TO ME

I find the lyrics to Billy Joel's "It's Still Rock and Roll to Me" playing in my head whenever I turn to the task of working out a precise definition for the steampunk aesthetic. I keep coming back to one stanza in particular:

Oh, it doesn't matter what they say in the papers
'Cause it's always been the same old scene.
There's a new band in town
But you can't get the sound from a story in a magazine...
Aimed at your average teen

I played in a few indie bands before I got into academia, so I often find myself mashing pop lyrics up against scholarly ideas. In this case, Billy Joel gets to come into conversation with religion scholars Carl Olson and Willi Braun. I will attempt to provide a condensed overview of the issues and problems of defining religion as argued in chapter one of Carl Olson's Theory and Method in the Study of Religion, and Willi Braun's articles "Religion" and "The Study of Religion and the Mischief of Curiosity."

To illustrate how slippery defining the word "religion" has proven to be, both Olson and Braun share parallel anecdotes, recalling students enrolled in introductory religion courses offering a multiplicity of definitions for religion. Olson catalogues scholarly opinions alternating between seeing a definition of religion as "useful" and "ultimately unnecessary" (2). The reader is to understand this is not an easily reconcilable issue. As Braun quotes Jonathan Smith as saying, it isn't that religion lacks a definition, but that "it can be defined, with greater or lesser success, more than fifty ways" (2000: 4).

Olson continues to catalogue the variant viewpoints on this subject, referencing John Hick, whose denial of a shared common essence between religions lead him to conclude that "religion cannot be defined; it can only be described". Jonathan Z. Smith further complicates the search for a definition by stating that there is no hard data for religion; rather, as Olson puts it religion is a "construct of academic life" (3).

Looking back on this brief summary of Olson and Braun's initial arguments, one easily could

substitute the word "steampunk" for "religion." In the discussion thread "The steampunk or not topic" on Gothic Steam Phantastic, Moderator Yaghish posted his observation that "It's kind of weird that most discussions among steampunks are actually about the definition of the genre," citing examples of people who "come up with art and stuff...then ask 'was that steampunk (enough)?'" Yaghish then goes on to suggest that "it's better to make a solid definition of steampunk, and then see what fits in and what doesn't, instead of bending the definition with each cool and hip gadget found anywhere on the internet or elsewhere." The problem with this approach is that, like religion, steampunk doesn't really exist.

This provides a segue to Braun's opening statements in his chapter "Religion" in the Guide to the Study of Religion, where he compares the term religion to an elusive "specter [presenting] us with the dual problem of being flamboyantly real, meeting us in all forms of speech and in material representations, on the one hand, and frustratingly apt to turn coy or disintegrate altogether when put under inquisition, on the other" (3-4). Again, we could easily say the same about steampunk, with the proliferation of definitions and fragmenting taxonomies breaking the already elusive steampunk into Gaslight Romance, Gaslamp Fantasy, Neo-Victorian Retrofuturism, Dieselpunk or my least favorite, Clockpunk (as though earlier steampunk wasn't dealing with issues of clockwork and time). In addition to the spectral nature, of religion where "there are too many meanings and the meanings are too indeterminate", Braun identifies the problem of religion's history, "a more consistently successful career as a marker of difference and separation than as a container and carrier of an irreducible, stable, and inspectable knowledge" (2000: 8) addresses Braun's concern that we not construct markers of difference based upon ethnocentric classifiers where we pit "their superstition versus our religion" (2000:8). Once again, we could look at this from the perspective of steampunk.

There is a tendency to uncritically classify certain books by K.W. Jeter, Tim Powers and James Blaylock as steampunk, because they were the works Jeter was referring to when he offhandedly coined the term in the now infamous interview with Locus.

BY MIKE PERSCHON

The problem with this approach is that discussions on classifying later steampunk work in a more fragmentary approach, excluding certain texts due to the absence of steam technology or “punk” elements, as though these elements were some sort of empirical fact, rather than a culture product. Jeter didn’t *discover* steampunk. He didn’t even *invent* steampunk. He unwittingly coined a term which others utilized as an arbitrary marker for a certain style of text or media. The definition of this term is elusive for the same reason a definition of religion is elusive. To explain, let’s return to Braun.

Braun turns his attention to substantive approaches, which is to say that, there is either no “genie in the bottle” or said genie (or God/god/goddess) is unknowable, then let us abandon the search for the genie and instead “regard religion as a concept...and not as a substance that floats ‘out there,’ a something that might invade and enlighten us if we should only be so fortunate as to have the right kind of receiving apparatus” (2000:9). He takes this substantive critique a level higher when he quotes Jonathan Z. Smith as saying “there is no data for religion” (2000:10), effectively closing the book on any approach to defining religion as anything other than a human endeavor, a product of certain cultures.

Braun’s goal is to see the academic community agree upon a definition of religion that is nominative, rather than accepting any of the aforementioned definition types. He proposes a definition of religion as a classifier, wherein “religion does not exist” in the sense that there is “no religion in-it-self apart from people who do things that both those who do them and scholars of religion call ‘religious’” (2006). On first read, Braun’s statements that “the gods are not given a say in our sense-making of religious affairs” (2006) and that further, are not ontic beings but rather “discursive entities” seems to assume an a priori dismissal of the possibility of the existence of such gods, or any numinous activity one generally associates with religious study. This is not the case however. Since to our knowledge the academic is unable to study gods, angels, devils or dharma according to the disciplines of the academy, Braun seems to be saying, let us study what we can. We can study the people who worship the gods; we can study what they believe about angels, their taboos about devils and how their belief in dharma affects their everyday life. What we have are the rituals, texts, and culture of people who adhere to religion. This then, is the object of study for the scholar of religion.

Likewise, we cannot call steampunk to the table to make our inquiries. Instead, we have rituals



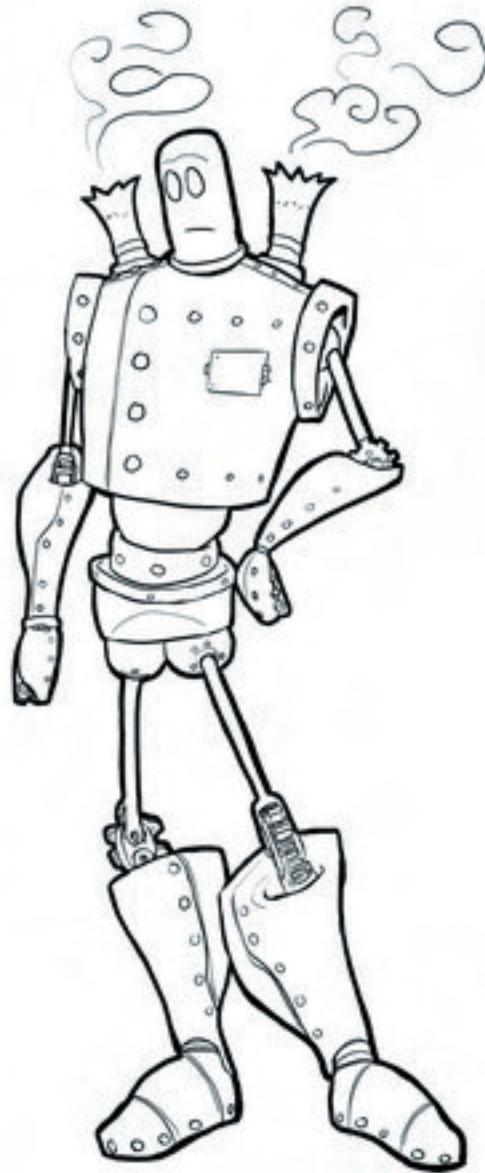
(pilgrimages to conventions and Dickensfairs, costumed performance), texts (art, books, films, music, etc.), and culture which people refer to as steampunk: steampunk is a culture *product*. We cannot “come up with” a definition of it and then determine whether media, practices, or certain people “fit” or not. This sort of exclusionary practice is akin to a Muslim student informing me that we can study the Torah or New Testament as mere texts, but that the Koran is holy, since it was given to Mohammed. We either study them all as mere texts, or we sit in our corners, assured of the “truth” of our particular path. Effectively, if steampunk is held up as some transcendent concept which we must discover rather than a culture product we can observe and study, then it is going to remain as ineffable and unknowable as the divine.

Now, to bring Billy Joel back into the conversation, reminding us that “you can’t get the sound from a story in a magazine,” another way of saying “there is no data for ‘rock and roll’.” Rock and roll does not exist outside of songs which we classify as rock and roll. Again, rock and roll is a culture product, like religion or steampunk. It is not a substance, it is a style. We cannot observe rock and roll. We can only hear rock and roll music. While Russ Ballard may be of the opinion that “God Gave Rock and Roll to You,” I’m pretty sure it was the convergence of blues, gospel, jazz, and American folk music that did so, which in their

turn are all products of early musical forms. Likewise, steampunk is not a gift of the gods, or of any one particular big-head, including myself.

Likewise, there is no data for steampunk. It doesn't exist outside the media and culture products which we label as steampunk. Accordingly, steampunk is defined by observing the culture which identifies itself as steampunk. I'm not recommending every item arbitrarily labeled steampunk by random username #2341 on a forum to be immediately accepted as steampunk. The steampunk culture will decide that by the acceptance or rejection of the item, in much the same way it has embraced the somewhat random term steampunk itself, largely rejecting the alternatives proffered, such as scientific romances, or gaslamp fantasy.

Further, we can cross-index the various lists of what aficionados consider steampunk to determine whether an artwork is likely to be considered a product of steampunk culture, thereby perhaps arriving at a working definition of what constitutes steampunk art. In compiling the reading list for my research, I did a number of searches for steampunk reading lists, including both the generalist approach of [wikipedia](#) and the more precise esoterica of [steampunkopedia](#). I tabulated the frequency the books appeared, and compiled a list of most recurrent. I ended up with around 50 books and graphic novels, and while reading each one, I record major themes, characters types, settings, tone, tropes, and plotlines. Early on in this process, I formed the opinion that steampunk was not really a genre, or even a sub-genre. You might have noticed that I began this article with the statement



that I think about these lyrics whenever I'm employed in the task of determining a definition for the steampunk *aesthetic*. I'm of the opinion that discussing steampunk as a genre or sub-genre is wrong-headed. Like rock and roll, steampunk is a style, not a substance: Jake Von Slatt "steampunked" a laptop; Tim Powers "steampunked" the time travel story in [The Anubis Gates](#); Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill did the same for superhero teams with [The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen](#); and to bring our discussion back to rock and roll, Abney Park can be said to "steampunk" rock music.

Even though fans of Abney Park might say the band has a "new sound," funny, it's still rock and roll to me. After all, as some detractors

of Abney Park have noted, Abney Park wasn't always a steampunk band—what changed (other than the entire lineup of the band) between *The Death of Tragedy* and *Lost Horizons*? The sound isn't drastically different – songs such as "The Wrong Side" or the cover of "Stigmata Martyr" share a musical kinship with tracks from *Lost Horizons*. What makes Abney Park a steampunk band isn't necessarily their musical style despite the ostensible retro-futurism inherent in Nathaniel Johnstone's ability to play industrial-style guitar best suited to any number of Rammstein tunes, then switch to playing violin with a slow, melodic feel Loreena McKennitt would welcome to her stage, all in the same song, to say nothing of Kristina Erickson's orchestral keyboards matched to techno-dance beats. Rather, Abney Park is steampunk because they've adopted an encompassing steampunk aesthetic. Compare the generic angst-ridden lyrics of "The

Wrong Side" with the steampunk ditty of "Airship Pirates" or the neo-Victorian intertextuality of "The Secret Life of Dr. Caligari." The lyrics of these later songs are narrative poems, in the tradition of most of Kate Bush's repertoire, well-suited to the retro '80s influence lurking behind Abney Park's sound. The narratives told are speculative neo-Victorian ditties: steampunk. The band's fictional identities, conveyed through their costumes, onstage pageantry, and brilliant band images rendered by Aimee Stewart all serve to create an immersive *mise-en-scène* to Abney Park. Abney Park is a steampunk band, not because their music can be classified as steampunk, but because they have adopted the steampunk aesthetic.

Humans are rabid classifiers. We want to make taxonomies for everything, from religion to pop music to our genre fiction. This urge to contrast and compare by cutting up and organizing the world around us can be as profound as seeking to impose order on chaos, or as asinine as establishing some hip niche no one as cool as we are has yet discovered. I sense a lot of the latter in most arguments surrounding the definition of steampunk: it was cool when it was underground, but now that it's getting popular, some aficionados seek to create some limiting definition for what steampunk is so that it won't go mainstream. If steampunk is a genre, then I suppose that might be

possible. But since I'm convinced it's an aesthetic, then good luck in nailing it down. Good luck in keeping it from being applied to every genre of fiction, style of music, to décor, costume, computer hardware, software, and perhaps even religion. The fact that CGSociety's challenge to steampunk myth and legend was so prolifically successful should be indicative. The challenge produced steampunked Greek myths, Judeo-Christian scripture, fairy tale, and pop culture icons like King Kong.

When Billy Joel sings "Hot funk, cool punk, even if it's old junk / It's still rock and roll to me," we find an argument with as much relevance today as it had in 1980. You can call it clockpunk, but ultimately when you take that "old junk" and turn it into an item that would look at home on the bridge of the *Nautilus*, someone will likely post on comment on your Flickr page letting you know, it's still steampunk to them.

Mike Perschon: I'm a hypercreative scholar, musician, writer, and artist, husband to Jenica, my wonderful wife, father to Gunnar and Dacy, doctoral student at the University of Alberta, English instructor at The King's University College and MacEwan College, as well as Game Master for a Steampunk Middle Earth Roleplaying Campaign.



DRESSING THE PART

In a lot of ways, Steampunk has been an exploration for me; not just of the genre and the alternate history that it implies, but also in the realm of characterization and clothing.

I am a long-time historical re-enactor. For many years I worked at the Renaissance Faires in Northern and Southern California, learning how to develop a believable and probable persona, and then dressing, walking, speaking and, for the hours of the faire, *being* that person; it was full immersion acting, or what some might call the first “LARP”. Then I attended my first Dickens Christmas Fair, and I knew that I had found a place – and a time – where I felt that I belonged. This wasn’t strictly a re-creation of the Victorian London that history remembers, but rather a presentation of that time as seen through the eyes of author Charles Dickens and then interpreted by the actors who portray characters from his books and

others who might have lived during his time.

Working the Dickens Fair (which I still do), means that if for only four or five weekends out of the year, I literally step into someone else’s shoes (as well as her shirts, skirts, hats and corset) and get to relate to the world as that person.

Around the same time as I was discovering the Fair(e)s, I was also being introduced to the world of Science Fiction and Fantasy literature. I was fortunate enough to attend a school with a forward-thinking curriculum, and Sci-Fi Lit was a course offered to first and second-year students. It set the pattern for a life-long reading habit that I have enjoyed and indulged in for the past 20 years.

Enter my introduction to Steampunk. It didn’t take much to realize that this was a conjoining of my favorite literary genres and my passion for historical recreation and re-enactment. More than that, the Steampunk aesthetic, and the DIY spirit of the movement, called to me. Beyond the excitement of steam-power and airships, I am drawn by the clockwork and mechanicals, by beautiful, intricate, shiny devices that move with such symmetry and precision – or that may have, had the world developed a bit differently and on a divergent track of time. And of course, I am completely captivated by the many facets of Steampunk attire and the opportunity to play with characterization within its framework. I don’t profess to be an expert on the subject – far from it! I am a fan of the genre and the movement, and I get involved where I can.

The character I have developed – and am still developing – in the Steampunk world, is *Miss Skittles*. She is loosely based on an historical persona, Catherine Walters, a high-level courtesan and “Pretty Horse-breaker” who was known as “Skittles” to her friends and patrons. The heyday of her notoriety and her debut to London society was 1861-1863, having worked her way up from the streets. She was a consummate horse-woman who loved a good hunt and was said to ride as if she were part of the horse. She was also a Cockney, who disdained putting on airs... while she educated herself in as many areas as possible and could hold conversations that many women of her time couldn’t, she also tended to revert to her low-born speech patterns when excited or tired and never apologized for her lack of pedigree; Skittles was unabashedly who and what she was. From London she went to Paris, then returned and began holding Salons; men of high society would come to her apartments to drink brandy, smoke their



Duane R. Stevens

BY ARIANE WOLFE: FASHION EDITOR

pipes and discuss political machinations and current events. This is where my timeline diverges. I decided to place Miss Skittles in San Francisco, where she runs the *Clockwork Salon*, a gathering place for dining, tea, entertainments and perhaps... well maybe a little side business involving lovely, spirited women who might be more than happy to spend some time with you for a nice bit of coin... to talk of home and maybe share a dance or two.

All quite proper, of course.

For each issue of the *Exhibition Hall* zine, I will share with you my favorite corner of the Steampunk world – *Dressing the Part*. I will attempt to bring you a rich and diverse cross-section to peruse and sift through, with photos, descriptions, clothing modification suggestions and links to various resources. There are so many amazing and beautiful interpretations of character and fashion, that we may barely scratch the surface of what's out there... it will be upon you to look further and wider, to explore in directions I have not yet and if you so desire, to seek a place in it for yourself.

A final thought on the subject for now: "Steampunk" does not imply only one aesthetic or one "right" way to dress, accessorize or present a character; it does not (though some may disagree) boil down to whether one will or won't include goggles or a ray-gun

in their accoutrements. The fashion of this genre, like the literature itself, is a conglomerate of possibilities that is only limited by each person's interpretation and imagination. I invite you to join me in exploring the possibilities! So read on and we'll meet up here again in the next issue.



Ariane Wolfe is the Executive Director of Clockwork Salon Society, Ltd., a nonprofit corporation dedicated to teaching and disseminating information about Steampunk and related genres. She is the Event Director for the Nova Albion Steampunk Exhibition (formerly the California Steampunk Convention) and lives in a small flat in Berkeley with her teenage daughter and two delightful tabby cats.

Links: www.clockworksalon.com, www.steampunkexhibition.com

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ANNOUNCING: GRANDVILLE BY BRYAN TALBOT

I first saw images for *Grandville* at Easter in 2008, and I was immediately intrigued. Comic Artist and writer Bryan Talbot had just come down from the huge wave of appreciation for his previous work, *Alice in Sunderland*, and yet here was showing eager fans his next project.

A anthropomorphic steampunk story. I saw a badger in detectives clothing toting huge revolvers and in an obvious altered metropolitan setting of Paris and was excited.

Here is the official word from the publisher Dark Horse.

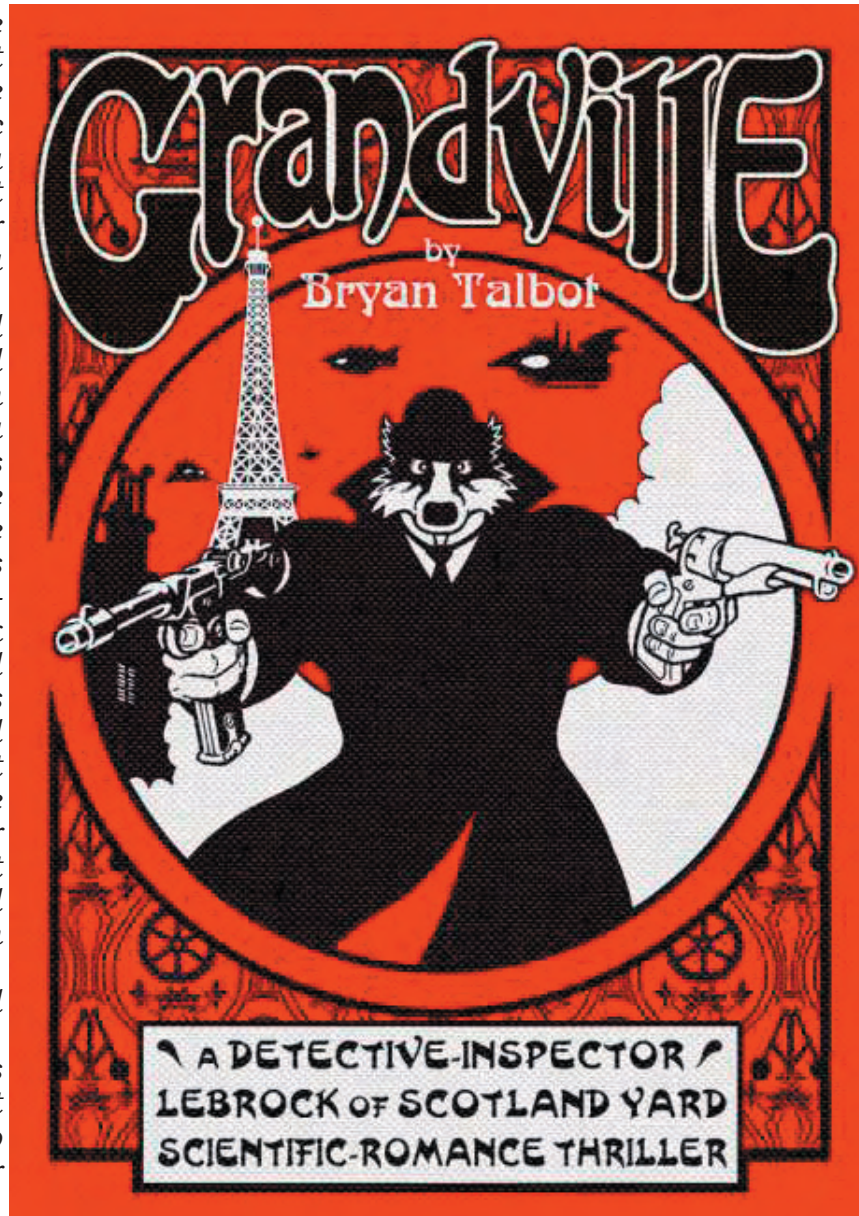
'Two hundred years ago, Britain lost the Napoleonic War and fell under the thumb of French domination. Gaining independence after decades of civil disobedience and anarchist bombings, the Socialist Republic of Britain is now a small, unimportant backwater connected by a railway bridge, steam-powered dirigible, and mutual suspicion to France. When a British diplomat's murder is made to look like suicide, ferocious Detective-Inspector LeBrock of Scotland Yard stalks a ruthless murder squad through the heart of a Belle Epoque Paris, the center of the greatest empire in a world of steam-driven hansom cabs, automatons, and flying machines. LeBrock's relentless quest can lead only to death, truth . . . or war.'

I managed to speak to Bryan at length for the Journal of The British Science Fiction Association, Vector, edited by Niall Harrison, and here I repeat an answer to a question I put to Bryan about the source of this idea.

Bryan Talbot : *'It was inspired by the drawings of the mid 19th century French illustrator Jean Gerard (aka Grandville), who did a lot of anthropomorphic animal characters in then contemporary dress and the work of the proto-sf artist Albert Robida, again French. I've never done an animal comic so it's been a challenge. It's set in the world of a Belle Epoch French empire that has automatons, steam-driven hansom cabs, flying machines and so forth and the protagonist is a large working class English badger – Detective*

Inspector LeBrock of Scotland Yard – in Paris on the trail of a murder squad. He has brilliant deductive abilities but, being a badger, he's also a bruiser and is quite happy to beat the crap out of a suspect to get information. I've been describing it as Sherlock Holmes meets Quentin Tarantino – with animals!'

The release date is in October, so do keep an eye peeled for this one, as anyone who states a story is 'Scientific Romance Thriller' on the cover, knows their mustard and I understand that there may be more Grandville stories planned in the future.



BY LONDON BUREAU CHIEF JAMES BACON

REVIEWED: NEMESIS, THE WARLOCK, VOLUME 1 BY PAT MILLS

Be Pure, Be Vigilant, Behave.

In 1980, Pat Mills, a man who had helped create British comics *2000AD*, *Battle* and publicly vilified *Action*, wrote a one-off story. Loosely based on a song by *The Jam*. It appeared in the weekly science fiction anthology comic *2000AD*, a comic allegedly aimed at children. Mills must have known, or was insightful enough to know that the capacity for children to comprehend complex situations and see thorough patronising bullshit meant that his stories had to be entertaining, not just entertaining for kids.

Nemesis the Warlock was born, as was Torquemada soon to be his sworn enemy.

This science fiction story with a healthy helping of magic and mysticism, sees the surface of Terra (now known as Termight), as uninhabitable, with humanity, if that's what one could call it, living in the interior, using networks of tubes like huge highways between cities, and in turn with the aid of Black Hole's super highways between systems.

Termight is now a puritan zealoted imperialist religious bigoted fascist authority, with control over vast amounts of space. Humans must fear the deviants. The deviants are of course the aliens from other worlds, which Termight has subjugated under the mighty metallic boot of The Terminators, the religious styled military, they have a large empire stretching out across the universe. Their leader is Thomas de Torquemada, quite insanely racist and determined to rid the known universe of all aliens, no matter how sweet and cuddly they might be. *'There is only one good alien, a dead one'*

The terminators wear peaked helmets depicting mask of anger and horror, a new strange take on the pillow cases of the KKK. It's not a pleasant world.

Pitted against this horrible vision of humanities disastrous development we find Nemesis the Warlock, a creature gifted with magic and wizardry, a sword that cuts through iron and rock, a fire breathing be-hoved creature, with a space ship that is itself an alien breed. He is the rebel leader, the creature that wants to free Alien and deviant human alike. He sees that humanity can actually develop into a caring and decent race, but he must fight for freedom.

This Volume collects the first four 'books' of Nemesis The Warlock in one complete 320 page collection. The important thing to remember as a reader is the stories are essentially in spurts of six pages, as originally produced for *2000AD*. This means there is a succinctness and real story telling skill as much detail and information must be imparted quite promptly, without skimming of depth or complexity. There is an equal amount of black humour as well as hidden visual messages in the book to equal the quick and impressive the dialogue.

This volume is complete so we see the first few stand alone stories, of Nemesis and then we continue onto the first book, establishing in detail the fight between Nemesis and the tyrannical Torquemada. We learn how Torquemada had a transporter accident becomes disembodied and is a spirit that must have host bodies, all because of Nemesis. We see a human Purity Brown helping Nemesis to release alien and human prisoners on Termight. The story flashes along as artist Kevin O'Neil (*Marshall Law*, *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*) with his very detailed fine angular style suiting the story perfectly brings Mills vision to life.

We learn more about Nemesis' background in the second book, his family and the alien resistance Credo, which unites all the races together against Termight power. We have artist Jesus Redondo take the artistic helm for a short while, and although his art is quite distinctive, and very European in style and composition he only works on part of book 2. Then we have more O'Neil.

Interestingly as the aliens try to consider whether the human race can be actually redeemed, Torquemada is dead set against such compassion and desires all out war and the destruction of all deviants. We also get an insight into the Nemesis clan and his interesting social set up on his home planet.

Book three is a beautifully imagined and realised and we encounter a great battle on the planet Demotika. The Terminators have laid siege to the massive Ydrasill castle, a huge tree miles high, that is the main refuge of the Basillisk race. The siege engines and vast depictions of battle, something

really only comics could accurately depict, are incredible. The complexity of the story, winding through the battle, with Nemesis engaging directly with the leader of the sieging terminators on Demotika and while Nemesis is at battle, a spurned lover, betrays him on his home planet and more importantly his betrays his family.

Book Four sees artist Bryan Talbot starting on his first ever regular comic, and with the story of The Gothic Empire, an alien race who listen to the early radio broadcasts of Earth, and developed their whole world and empire in the image of a Victorian British earth, giving us such planets as Lucknow and the Ion Dukes High Space fleet docked at the Scapa Flow space station.

It's a wonderfully realised steampunk vision, made all the more exciting with the development on a galactic empire scale. Talbot's visuals are perfect, with his vision of Torquemada in the dark alleys of Whitechapel complimenting his large scale space opera battles. This is an interesting version of steampunk, truly science fictional, but brilliantly extrapolated from true Victorianism.

Nemesis recruits the ABC Warriors – Atomic, Bacterial and Chemical resistant Robots, centuries old, yet very deadly and together they defeat the terminators onslaught against the Gothic empire, which is stemmed just at the home planet. It's a fitting end as we see our two protagonists battling it out.

I am dead impressed I must admit, I always fear that the rose tinted glasses are effecting the brain, BUT with Nemesis, its bloody brill stuff. I had read this as a teenager, and it was a favourite, but with a more relaxed eye, one can just see how much is being crammed so artistically into these pages.

The Terminators methods of keeping the Terran's in a state of fear of aliens, with their bestiary purposely created to portray the worst hark back to historical military propaganda,

and their religious enthusiasm is quite scary. Terran's in fear of aliens and the terminators are willing accept truly horrendous acts of genocide on planetary scales as a moral responsibility.

It's quite reflective of the political back ground at the time, with a very intolerant Margaret Thatcher at the helm in the UK, racism quite acute and a feeling that military solutions were best but also resonates with today's state of fear, and such extreme depictions can help make one consider more mundane and accepted norms.

'Thanks to my bigotry, my hatred, I united the Human Race against the rest of the Galaxy!' Torquemada.



BY LONDON BUREAU CHIEF JAMES BACON

MICHAEL MOORCOCK ON STEAMPUNK

Michael Moorcock must be considered one of the fathers of what was later to be called Steampunk by K.W. Jeter. His *The Warlord of the Air*, from 1971, is a brilliantly stylistically written alternate history story, where the first world war never occurred, where Imperialism and airship power are key and a very Victorian and Edwardian atmosphere predominate the world of 1973.

It is therefore interesting that he reviewed the recent novel, *The Manual of Detection* by Jedediah for the British Newspaper, The Guardian, where he took the opportunity to express some opinion.

Moorcock seems to be quite strong about his feelings on the genre. 'These days, you can barely pick up a speculative fantasy without finding a zeppelin or a steam-robot on the cover. Containing few punks and a good many posh ladies and gents, most of these stories are better described as steam operas.'

I too often wonder about the prevalence of the gentry in steam punk community, and intend at some future stage to go as a stoker to a steam punk event, along with fireman shovel and correct outer wear and authentic coal and coal dust. Yet this is a good point, do we eschew what would have been the majority in favour of the upper and aristocratic classes.

Is steampunk moving away from new and interesting ideas and viewpoints and just becoming a churn of similar and comfortable ideas?

Moorcock also says 'Steampunk no longer examines context and history but now looks ironically at its own roots, tropes and cliches.' He helpfully goes into more detail about this and he writes a good review, which is what one would expect. Whether one would then read the reviewed book is up to you, the readers.

With the rise of Steampunk as a life choice for some and for many a community where live action role play and cosplay are as important as anything else, is the genre losing out with mediocre cash in's ?

One would think that with the likes of Grandville, originality is still to be found, but Moorcocks' points do lead to some questions.

It is as ever advisable to read the full in context review, here online: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/aug/22/manual-of-detection-jedediah-berry>

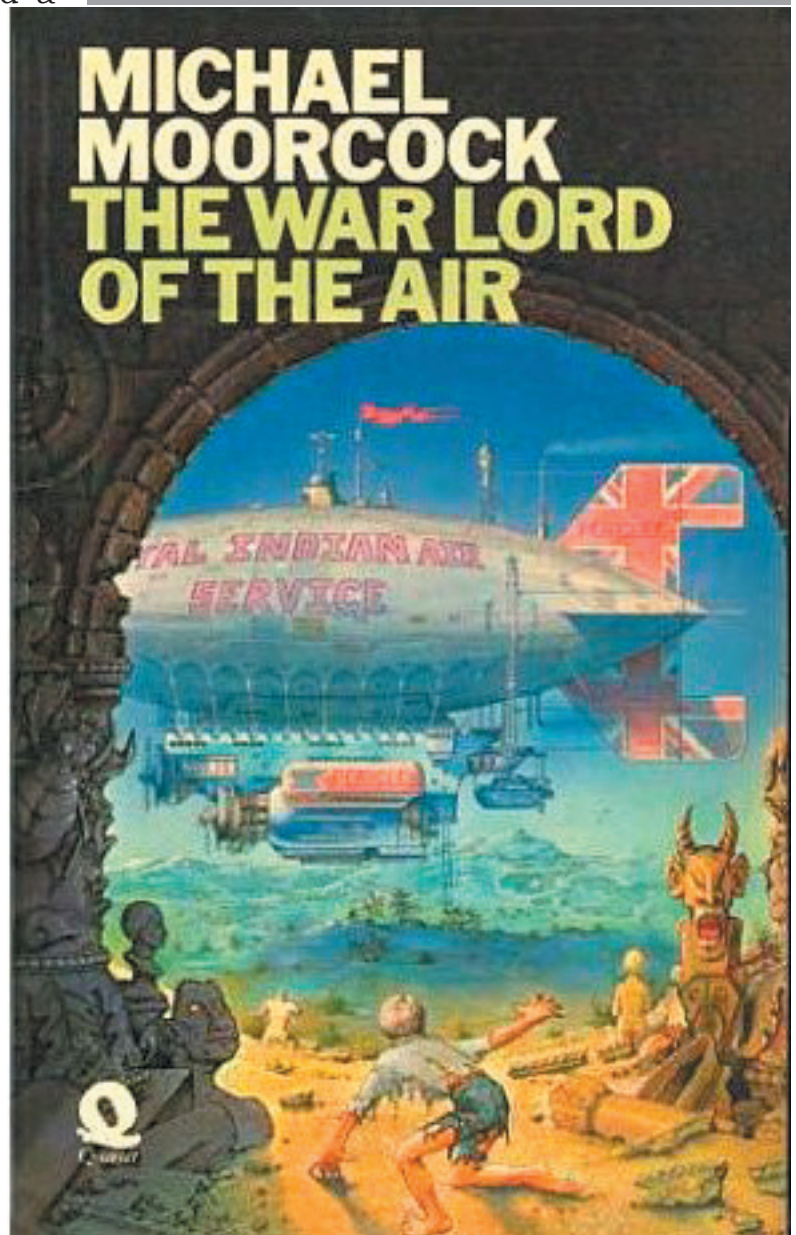
A NOMAD OF THE TIME STREAMS NOVELS OF
MICHAEL MOORCOCK

- THE WARLORD OF THE AIR, 1971

- THE LAND LAVIATHAN: A NEW
SCIENTIFIC ROMANCE, 1974

- THE STEEL TSAR, 1981

LATER, THESE WORKS WERE COLLECTED IN
A SINGLE VOLUME AS THE NOMAD OF TIME,
1982, BY THE SCIENCE FICTION BOOKCLUB
AND IN 1992 AS A NOMAN OF THE TIME
STREAMS BY MILLENIUM.



BY LONDON BUREAU CHIEF JAMES BACON

A LETTER OF ACCOUNTING

Dear Messrs Garcia, Bacon, et al,

I was most delighted upon the recent receipt of your fascinating broadsheet, *Exhibition Hall*. I am taken to understand that this is to be a continuing series, of which this first offering is but the merest sample. I wish you both the best of luck in this endeavor. Rather than a mere commentary upon your previous work, however, I would like to share a tale of a recent occurrence which I believe may be of interest to your readers.

Upon this last Saturday evening, I attended, at the invitation of my dear friends James and Belinda Coppersmith a conference towards the establishment of a Transatlantic Dirigible Corporation, held at the Boar and Bear Club. As this event was to be attended by many prominent persons active in finance and the sciences, I undertook to bring with me, for purposes of demonstration, a much enhanced camera of my own design, capable of capturing an image on film in mere fractions of a second. I have included prints of my photographs, in hopes that you might include them in your periodical along with my letter.

When we arrived at the conference, I discovered, to my great surprise, that His Grace the Duke of Westminster, the newly appointed Minister of Aeronautics, had opened the attendance to persons of all classes with an interest in the developing airship industry. As such, I was soon met by a gentleman who wished to bend my ear for quite some time that he might gain my sympathy for the labourers who are employed in the construction and operation of dirigibles. He was introduced to me as Walter Gordon, and in spite of his affiliations with organized labour,



appeared to eschew the more radical politics so typical of that movement. When he requested my signature for his petition, however, I had to decline. While



I do hope his cause succeeds in this, I must also consider my reputation, and the potential of such an association to make me appear a Communist or, Heaven forbid, an anarchist.

As I broke away from my conversation with Mr. Gordon, I was startled to meet Dame Priscilla Egerton, freshly returned from the deepest hinterlands of Africa. She was a most engaging conversationalist, recounting the beauties and dangers of the Dark Continent. I was shocked that a lady such as herself was able to brave such a wild and dangerous place, but she assured me



that it posed no more real danger than the streets of Whitechapel, though this did not strike me as an entirely comforting thought. Unfortunately, Dame Egerton was in high demand, and I was forced to part from her company in short order. (While I was unable to converse with her further that evening, she was involved in much of the excitement which I will explain in detail below.)

It was then that I first saw Mr. Howard Lee, a representative of the Standard Oil Company. Mr. Lee expressed his profound interest in ensuring that the final form of the Transatlantic Dirigible Company should be a joint venture of American and European interests (presumably including a prominent place for those of Mr. Lee and Standard Oil). He was a most optimistic fellow, and it lent him an unexpectedly charming air. I unfortunately did not have the pleasure of making his acquaintance, though he was most interesting to observe.



Another figure I was unable to meet personally, and perhaps the hardest to

BY WARREN BUFF

photograph, was a Professor Robert Norton, of Cambridge, a portly gentleman of refined tastes and good company who always seemed to hang back slightly from the crowd. Rumours swirled about the Professor like eddies in a stream, hinting at dark connections to



all manner of illicit activities. However, as I said, I was unable to personally converse with the Professor, and thus unable to pass any judgment of my own upon his character. His actions later in the night provided some indications, although I shall save those for their proper place in this narrative.



I was most curious to meet some of the actual aeronauts who pilot dirigibles, and in this, I was quite delighted to make the acquaintance of Mr. Reginald Daugherty and Ms. Elizabeth

Winters, freshly returned from an excursion to France. Their enthusiasm for air travel was immediately apparent, and Ms. Winters was even taken with the notion to strike a dramatic pose for my photograph. They told with relish of the greater and greater speeds which recent airships have reached, indicating that the potential now exists to make a transatlantic voyage in the matter of a few days. They explained that the goggles which have so recently come into fashion have done so first as a means of coping with the winds, which are known to whip about at great speeds high in the air. An aeronaut with his eyes unprotected might find he had become unable to open them! Mr. Daugherty and Ms. Winters were exceedingly engaging conversationalists, trading witty banter between them as they answered my many questions about aeronautics. I later came



to understand that the two have become affianced, a fact borne out by my photograph, in which the ring can be seen clearly upon Ms. Winters' left hand (a fact which escaped my attention during our conversation). As my time with them drew to a natural close, I espied another man whom I mistook for yet another aeronaut. He swiftly moved past me, however, ducking through the crowd towards the back rooms. As such, I was unable to learn his name or occupation, although the strange mask he wore, in addition to concealing his identity, gave him an air of mystery into which I dearly wished to pry.



I found myself distracted, though, by the arrival of a group of Bavarian nobility. They were a most fascinating sort, dressed in the newest styles of the Continent. Much to my surprise, and slight embarrassment, I realized upon development of their photograph that I had captured their image not only in the midst of their conversation, but just as a member of their company had broken off to procure the services of a woman of ill repute, no doubt attracted to the conference by the opportunities afforded when such an assortment of wealthy and powerful individuals gather.

I was much surprised to notice that His Grace was quite openly friendly with members of the working classes, and nearly



missed my chance to photograph such an event. It was only later that I learned that His Grace has been known – at least among those who are well informed – as a prince among men in his charitable work. His Grace, however, is most humble, and does

not see fit to conduct his charity in a boastful or self-aggrandizing manner. I would hope that it is this spirit which moved Her Majesty to elevate his family, for it is nobility in the truest and highest sense.

Upon seeing me taking my photograph of His Grace, I found that I had gained the attention of Dr. Benton Thistleby, a prominent engineer in the employ of the Ministry of Aeronautics. Dr. Thistleby's sharp scientific mind had instantly grasped the nature of my camera, and he wished to make a closer inspection of it. This led us to sequester ourselves at a table to the side, where I had ample room to lay open and display the contents of my camera. Dr. Thistleby was suitably impressed, and has promised his backing for any future economic development of my methods. Unfortunately, as I was busy reassembling my camera, I was unable to photograph Dr. Thistleby immediately, and had to catch a glimpse of him explaining to several interested parties **[photo 23]** his recent developments in the extraction and storage of hydrogen gas, which should prove critical in the development of the dirigible as an economically viable mode of transit.



I was less impressed by the actions of the Baron Wilhelm Thorsten von Danzig, who attended the conference to represent Prussian interests in air travel. Much to the embarrassment of his grown daughter, he was seen with a woman even younger than



her seated upon his lap. This can no doubt be of great distress to his wife, who is known to be in the final stages of consumption, and was unable to travel because of this. His Lordship was also seen to leave on perambulations with Mr. Lee and a Mr. Lloyd Prescott, a prominent London banker. Later, I was able to photograph Mr. Prescott in a state of discomfort, although I remain uncertain whether this was brought on by the intensity with which the party strolled or the content of their conversations. It proved little help, unfortunately, that Mr. Lee also appeared out of sorts, and secluded himself for a while at the bar.



I was also quite shocked when I saw Mrs. Jenny O'Toole, the young woman I'd earlier seen with His Grace, brandishing a pistol. She caught sight of me, however, flashed a scowl, and disappeared into the crowd. I was most disturbed by this occurrence, but found myself unable to find her again for quite some time, and when I did, she was no longer armed, nor had there been any word of wrongdoing. Still, she most certainly caught my attention as a dangerous sort. While attempting to ascertain her intentions, I noticed a Mr. Gerald Chesterton



receive, covertly, a note, which he glanced at and quickly pocketed. I was unable to capture this event with my camera, although I was able to photograph him as the messenger walked away. Mr. Chesterton, apparently not noticing me, proceeded to make his way through the crowd, and I saw him whisper something to some of the workingmen in attendance. Again, I was unfortunately unable to document this, owing to the time required to replace the film plates in my camera. I may have solved the difficulties of exposure time, but it is clear, after so many failures of alacrity, that I will need to find a way to expedite the replacement of film plates after an exposure is taken.

At this point, His Grace addressed the assembly, and I laboured so intently to replace my photographic plate in time to document this act that I missed the bulk of his speech. Just as I had this task completed,

though, I noticed a most curious member of the crowd – Mrs. O'Toole! Alarming, she was not looking in the direction of His Grace, but instead had her eyes fixed upon one of her companions, who was, as I could see, armed! I immediately photographed them, but they saw my flashbulb, and I feared they might make to attack me. Much to my horror, however, Mrs. O'Toole's accomplice chose not me, but His Grace as his target, firing upon and gravely wounding him in the shoulder. Mrs. O'Toole's other companion made to approach me, but was prevented from doing so by the rush of the crowd, shocked by the sudden gunshot. Two men, Kelly Fitzpatrick and Albert Pound, leapt upon the shooter, pinning him to the ground and restraining him until the arrival of the constabulary. I managed to have my camera ready in time to get a shot of the crowd closed around the unfortunate scene, though it can hardly convey the immediacy and shock of the moment. As you may well have heard, His Grace has retired to the country to convalesce.



While most of those assembled expected the attempt on His Grace's life to mark an end of the proceedings, we were informed by the Lady Johanna Inglestat that the Ministry of Aeronautics fully intended to proceed according to the original plan. In the ensuing confusion, I witnessed a great many conversations, beginning with one between a Mr. Alan Smith and a Mr. David Bartholomew. It was only after I had photographed these





two that I was able to see the third member of their party – Mr. Chesterton. Seeing my flashbulb, however, they dispersed. From that point onward, Mr. Chesterton seemed most nervous, even breaking out in a sweat. He most pointedly ignored me for the remainder of the evening. I was unable to track down his friend from earlier in the evening, although I did glimpse that particular gentleman in a rather friendly conversation with the Baron, although this was only visible to me for a moment.



I also witnessed an attempt by Mr. Pound to persuade Mr. Prescott to make mortgages more available to those employed in the aeronautics industry, be they the men of the airshipyards or the mechanics, engineers, and pilots required to operate them. Mr. Pound insisted that the aeronautics industry is on the cusp of becoming a booming trade and that such mortgages would not only be sound investments, but serve as an incentive for those labourers not to unionize. Mr.



Prescott would hear none of it, however, and walked away from Mr. Pound with great disdain.

And then, having thought the evening had already



seen its climax, I found that we were to be treated to a series of further excitements. I had only just refreshed the photographic plate in my camera when I heard Dame Egerton speaking loudly with Professor Norton. She revealed to him, and to the assembly at large, that she had uncovered his hand behind the earlier attack on His Grace, and produced evidence to this effect. The constabulary, still in attendance, descended quickly upon the Professor and his associates, and swiftly dragged him from the building. The Professor could be heard to shout wrathfully at Dame Egerton, swearing his vengeance upon her. The lady, however, took it with grace, content in having done a service to society. With the constabulary so distracted, Messrs Smith and Bartholomew made their move, closing in on Mr. Prescott

with flashing knives. When Mr. Prescott slipped and fell, the cutthroats seemed sure to fall upon him until the strange masked man from earlier leapt through the crowd, fighting



them off in a daring act of pugilism. His fists flew with such precision and flair that even the two armed brigands were no match for him. In the aftermath of the evening, he was revealed to be a Mr. Wang Jiongming, a recent émigré from Hong Kong. Messrs Pound and Fitzpatrick appeared to have already made his acquaintance, and I was able to convince the three to stand for a photograph together. This, thankfully, proved to be the end of the evening's excitement, and I was able to enjoy a

nightcap with Mr. & Mrs. Coppersmith before retiring to my hotel for the night. I left with high hopes for the future of the Transatlantic Dirigible Company, which appears prepared to develop regular service between London and New York before the decade is through! I do hope that you will keep His Grace in your prayers, and wish him an expedient recovery. Also, I wish the best of fortune to you all and the project of your periodical. I remain

Yours,
Mr. Warren M. Buff

Postscript: This entirely fictitious account was based upon photographs I took at The Clockwork Ball, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, on the night of Saturday, August 22, 2009.



DIALED IN: NEWS IN STEAM

Two science fiction conventions that are in the headlights have chosen Steampunk themes. The first is near-and-dear to this editor's heart, because he's the Fan Guest of Honor. Windycon will take place on the weekend of November 13th to the 15th in the Westin Lombard Yorktown Center in Lombard, Illinois. The regular room rate is \$104.00 and the Suites are \$159.00. The Guests, aside from Mr. Christopher J Garcia, are perfect for a Steam-themed event. James Blaylock is one of the LA Dream Team that rose up in the 1980s. His novels like Lord Kelvin's Machine and Humonculus are both required Steampunk reading. Phil and Kaija Foglio are the Hugo-winning pair responsible for Girl Genius, the Ultimate Gaslamp Fantasy. They're wonderful people and that makes 3 West Coast GoHs at the Con! Of course, Tom Smith, master filk-type, is the Music GoH. Should be an excellent convention. www.windycon.org is where you can get all sorts of information.

San Diego is known for ComicCon, but it's not the only game in town. Condor is another con that's been around for more than a decade, and it's got CJ Cherryh as the Writer GoH, but it's also got a Steampunk theme and has plans for some interesting programming. I know James Hay, fantastic costumer and steampunk devotee, has been to every one and has some great Steampunk costumery. He's good people. We'll have more as the time approaches. Condorcon.org.

The Clockwork Caliphate is coming! That's the fundraiser from the folks who are putting on the New Albion Steampunk Exhibition in March! The tickets are 50 bucks, but it includes a big Moroccan 5-course dinner, Belly Dancers and a Steampunk Artisans Raffle. Should be a great time for all. It takes

place at Tanjia Moroccan Restaurant, 4905 Telegraph in Oakland on Thursday, October 15th from 7-10pm. <http://www.steampunkexhibition.com/caliphate/> for more info.

Lloyd Penney, LoCer extraordinaire, sent the following- Coming up November 6-8 in Rochester, NY... Astronomicon 2009, with guests Mike Resnick, Mitchell Bentley and Paul (Crazy Igor) Meyer. Among the planned events is the First Grand Great Lakes Steampunk Cotillion, Symposium and Tea Social. For more information on all this, www.astronomicon.info.

If you like Steampunk literature, and let's face it, we all do!, and you happen to have an iPhone or iPod or whatever Apple's decided to throw at us now, then you'll love Steampunk Tales! It's got some great stories from some great writers, including the awesome Jay Lake, the exceptional Breda Cooper and a certain Phil Brucato. I highly recommend giving it a read.

If you've got news or notes, art or writing submissions or Letters of Comment on what you've read, send them to journeyplanet@gmail.com, preferably with EH in the Subject line.

'til next we meet!

