

Science Fiction/San Francisco

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News and Notes

By Christopher J. Garcia

Editor

Not much goin' on around these parts. January is usually slow and this January seems even slower.

We've got Further Confusion coming up the last weekend in January and it's looking like it'll be a fun time. I'm on the staff and I have to say that it's been a fun lead-up to the con. I'm expecting the same fun time as I witnessed last year, and I'll be there for most of it.

eFanzines had a slight slowdown for the holidays too, though it never really stops. There were two issues of *The Drink Tank* that raised eyebrows, with a piece from Cheryl Morgan that got me into a little trouble with a few people. If you wanna see why, read issues 156 and 157. It's funny stuff, but it's also a little bit brutal. Issue 158 has a piece in response that's also very funny.

John Purcell published the 6th edition of *Askance* and that has a lot to do with the whole Core Fandom debate that seems to have taken a segment of fandom by the throat lately. Andy Trembley and Claire Brialey weigh in on the subject, largely in response to Arnie Katz's article in the last issue. John puts out a good zine and this one got folks talking, even beyond the folks who I know normally read it.

The Knarley Knews put out another issue. I like *Knarley* a lot and this issue was

solid. I thought that the last issue was the second best one I'd read (after Issue 120), and this wasn't quite that good, but it's still totally worth reading.

Here's to Spring Schoenhuth and Dave Gallaher for throwing such a lovely party the weekend between Christmas and New Years. A lot of great folks were there, and not just the usual BArea fannish suspects. Nolly showed up from San Diego, which was a shocker as I'd have never guessed she'd be around. There was also cheese that proved to be a big hit. Gotta love a good Irish cheese.

Hey, go to eFanzines and read *Chunga* 13. Good issue with some really fun articles.

I'm still planning my TAFF trip, but it seems that I'll be staying with the Fishlifters (of *Banana Wings* fame) and a portion of the *PLOKTA* Cabal (of *PLOKTA* fame) for the first part of my trip. I'm excited since I've never been to the UK and there are a lot of folks I just gotta sit down and chat with!

Rich Coad's latest issue of *Sense of Wonder Stories* is really good stuff with articles from Randy Byers, Bill Burns, Robert Lichtman and others. It's a lot of fun and the article on Edison's Conquest of Mars is great.

File 770 came out and it's one of those zines that fandom should really get behind. There's a great review of Westercon from John Hertz and much much more. I haven't read it all

yet, but I'm workin' on it!

I was around Twelfth Night at the DoubleTree, which was weird because it was an SCA event with Furies having their Further Confusion meeting in Club Max. Yes, two strange tastes that taste strange together.

Wondercon has started to put out from press for its return this year. I'll be there, probably only for a day, but I'm going. I love the small press comics area and usually drop some good money there. This year, no money will be dropped, but I will take a look at what's out there. I hear that they're expecting some sort of major *Star Trek* thingee for the film that's coming out in 2009.

Anyone know where I can get a copy of *I, Libertine*? The famous book that was a fraud by Theo Sturgeon with the Frank Kelly Freas cover? I've read it, I know I have, but I can't find it anywhere.

Speaking of Sturgeon, I've got a plan to do a special zine dedicated to the writings of Theodore Sturgeon in the coming year. It'll be a big one dealing with all of his major works and more than a few of his minor ones. If you're a Sturgeon fan, lemme know and I'll recruit you to help me out.

Letters Of Comment

John Purcell writes:

Well, I might as well write one last loc to *SF/SF* here in 2007, and end the year on a high note. I might even write another loc or two tomorrow morning to wrap up my loc-writing for the year. We shall see.

Jean Martin replies: Happy new year to you and all our readers!

This past week has seen a lot of action on efanzines. Besides the last two (maybe) Garcia-produced zines of 2007, there has been the latest *Visions of Paradise*, *Scratch Pad* #68, and *Argentus* #7. I also just received *Bye Bye Johnny* #2 in the mail from Graham Charnock, so the year has finished with a flurry of zines. I won't complain. These are all fine zines and I am enjoying reading them.

It sounds like 2007 was a good year for zines. It certainly feels like we did a great job here at SF/SF last year too. Here's hoping that 2008 will be just as fun and productive for us and other zines.

As you can tell, I survived finals week. Surprisingly enough, only two students have e-mailed me asking why their grade was lower than what they expected. Answer: low final exam score. It always happens, and there ain't much I can do about it. Numbers don't lie — unless you fudge around with them to make them do so. Also in regard to my loc, that Texas Renfest article will be next on the docket after I finish off *Askance* #6 and a piece for the *Drink Tank's* third anniversary. Busy, busy, busy!

Jean Martin's editorial is all about the changes we go through, and I do hope that that numerologist's reading is correct. I don't believe in stuff like this — never have, in fact — and anybody can say something vague like “2007... is a year for completions and 2008... is a year for new beginnings.” I don't want to sound mean about this, but quite frankly, this can be said about any year and you will hear crap like this from every end-of-year prognosticator. Change is the one constant in life, and how a person reacts to change is completely under that person's control. From what I've read about Jean over the last year, she's one intelligent, well-centered person who can handle a lot; she'll be fine no matter what. So saying, my best wishes for Jean are to have a peace and love-filled life. You can't beat that combination.

Thanks for your best wishes and for still thinking I'm intelligent and well-centered even though I have new agey beliefs. Some people would think otherwise. But I guess that's what's great about fandom. We are all tolerant of others' different beliefs because we're all different from the mainstream as it is. So it's great that we respect each other's sometimes wildly divergent proclivities. To add to my previous discussion, I'm also Piscean and we do tend to be dreamy, mystical, intuitive and spiritual. I suppose that also lends itself to my interest in fantasy, sci fi and the otherworldly. I think there's much more to life and the universe than what we can quantify through science and our rational minds.

I also believe that things do come in cycles... on the individual and macro levels.

Arthur Thomson's artwork (ATom, that is) has always been so wonderful over the years. *ATom Abroad* would be a wonderful addition to any fan's fanzine collection. Great stuff, and I encourage any and all to go to click on that link on page 6 and enjoy.

España's experiences working the writer's strike picket line was interesting. I see that Letterman's writers have worked out a deal with him, and Leno and O'Brien are returning to the airwaves without their writers. This strike shouldn't last much longer, I would think. At least España has had the experience of walking a picket line. In my younger years (read: 1970-72), I was involved in some anti-war protests that were remarkably uneventful. Even so, it felt like we were doing something important that really said how we felt about the Viet Nam War and how our country was being run. Ah, me; those were the days.

Yeah, that's so cool that España got to do that. And as usual, the Bay Area Browncoats have mobilized themselves toward a worthy goal. Personally, I'm not much of a social activist. It's hard for me to choose sides on any issue as I usually see the merits and problems of both parties. But I can appreciate the feeling of being part of something and doing something about it. That I find exciting. Also, as a writer, and creative person in general, I do lean toward the cause of being compensated fairly for one's

creative work.

Cool pictures of the Hiller Aviation Museum. That would be a neat place to visit. What would really be impressive would be an actual size replica of the Hindenburg. That might require building an extension to the museum, I suppose, but it would certainly give visitors an idea of the immensity of that famed dirigible. No need to recreate its last moments, either, but a film of that could be running alongside the display.

Yeah, a Hindenburg replica would be fantastic. The Hiller only displays items related to the San Francisco Bay Area, though, so I don't think they'll do that. I wonder if there are any replicas in existence somewhere.

Now I'm babbling. No matter. Another fine zine, folks, and I wish you all a Happy New Year and the best of luck in the future. Have fun on your trip to jolly old England, Chris, and Jean, have a great life. You deserve it!

Thanks! You have a great year too and I'm sure Chris is excited about his trip. We all can't wait to hear about it.

Lloyd Penney writes:

It's the same old story...two issues behind, yadda, yadda, yadda...time to catch up, blah, blah. You folks must get tired of this. Anyway, I will make comments on issues 56 and 57 of *SF/SF*.

We're happy to hear from you at all so don't worry about being late. We don't have deadlines for LOCs.

56... Where I live, there is no regional convention for any of us to bid upon. Keep that Westercon going, folks, after all, like Joni Mitchell sings, you don't know what you've

got 'til it's gone. We're just going to be happy there's another Worldcon up here. After that, I suspect it'll be a long time until there's another Worldcon... until someone I know figures that Calgary might be a good place...

I agree with you, Chris, and John Purcell, too... *Consonant Enigma* is a great fanzine, discussing one of my favorite topics, fannish psychology. Man, what a local that is, and what it could be if more people get into the discussion. Jean, I don't drink either, and more and more, fans don't drink, or at least don't drink much. My favorite parties are those where I can sit and chat, drink a little water or soda, and relax. I am at the convention for the people there. And, another hug just for you.

Thanks for the hug!

My loc... Well, the CNIB did not keep me, pleading poor finances, and things "just not working out," whatever that means. If I did something wrong, let me know! However, life continues, and I am working a three-month assignment at Panasonic Canada, and the resumes keep going out. Working evenings is hard, but working both days and evenings is ridiculous. Good thing I don't have to work on weekends; otherwise, I wouldn't be at home writing this letter. Having to leave the CNIB was a poor Christmas present, but the real presents under the tree were marvelous, and we're still enjoying them, plus little bits of chocolate left over... mmm...

I'm sorry to hear about your stint at CNIB not working out. Good luck with finding a better and more permanent job that doesn't have you working round the clock. But I'm glad you enjoyed your Christmas and Christmas presents

in spite of it all.

Hey, Chris, you got our votes for TAFF! And now, we got to nominate for DUFF. Yvonne and I are two of Murray Moore's nominators for his DUFF efforts. I am certain there'll be plenty of DUFF ballots stuffed into various fanzines. Let me know if you need one, and I'll try to find the URL... There will be an adapter for your CPAP machine, no problem. Find out if there is a British consulate in the BArea or in L.A., and get in touch with them. They can probably give you a complete list of things to do to get yourself ready for your trip luggage-wise, money-wise and official papers-wise.

Yes, do send us a DUFF ballot. Oh, and there isn't a British consulate in the Bay Area. At least there wasn't one in 1994 when I was going to the U.K. and I still wasn't a U.S. citizen. That was quite scary mailing my passport to L.A. to get an entry visa stamped on my Philippine passport. I suppose the U.S. Post Office is as reliable as they come, but things do get lost in the mail. I did get my passport back safe and sound. I'm so happy now that I'm a U.S. citizen and I can go to the U.K. (and practically anywhere) without needing a visa. So I don't think Chris will need much in the way of paperwork. There are some great travel web sites that I've used as far as getting ready for a trip. I travel quite a bit as you all know. I personally love PBS regular Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) but he only concentrates on Europe. I just bought his 70 episode DVD set for myself for Christmas. He's so entertaining and he goes to all these lovely places in Europe. He was in the Bay Area doing lectures recently but I couldn't get around to seeing him. There's also Frommers (www.frommers.com), which

covers the entire world. As far as luggage requirements, the airlines' web sites are the best source of info. The U.S. Department of State's International Traveling Tips web site (http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html) is also very useful for paperwork requirements, but even more so for safety and emergency tips. The link for Travel Warnings has advisories on countries where there may be potential trouble. I wouldn't worry too much about the U.K. but other places would be good to check beforehand. I hope this information helps Chris and anyone else planning on traveling soon.

There is an annual British Isles show in Toronto... Just Googled it up, it's coming up in March! We have been wanting to go to it for years, and I think we can this year. This show usually brings in someone from the Coronation Street cast, but for me, it'll be the chance to snap up some British goods, and perhaps a t-shirt or several. Should be a lot of fun. It would be great if someone from the BBC could be there...

Sounds like fun. I wish we had something like that here in the Bay Area as I'm such an Anglophile.

Chris, are you wearing a Flintstones shirt on page 15? Now that's just plain typecasting. Hey, as I type, I think the Leafs are playing the Sharks! And, I'll bet the Sharks are winning...

57...Did everyone survive Christmas? I am sure some credit cards didn't. We got everything we wanted, and some things we weren't expecting. Overall, a great time we didn't want to end.

My Christmas wasn't so good. I came down with the flu after going to the Dickens Fair. I missed a week of work and was sick for

another week after that. I can't even remember the last time I got the flu! I started getting better, then I got it back plus a sinus and ear infection while I was in L.A. for the holidays with my family. Other than having a nice dinner with my folks, sister and nephew on Christmas Eve, and visiting some of my mom's relatives on Christmas Day, I didn't get to do anything. I didn't even get to go to Disneyland with them, which was my main reason for going. The closest I got was getting tickets at the gate the night before. We were told that the lines were very long since it was the holidays, and they were closing the gates at 11:00 a.m. as soon as they reached capacity. I'd never heard of anything like this before! So we were advised to get tickets in advance and then be there by 8:00 a.m. when the gates opened. Well, I couldn't even get up from bed the next day I was so feverish. I did get to see the fireworks from my bedroom window. And thank goodness for room service! I basically stayed in my hotel room for a week and just watched my nephew's Disney DVDs and re-runs of Knight's Tale and Shrek on TV. I surprisingly didn't like Knight's Tale the second time around, but liked Shrek this time.

Hello again, Jean...it's good that you're staying positive about the new year. Always be open for new opportunities, and new friends. It is easy to be protective when you've been hurt, but that can be a lesson to better see who is out there to hurt you, and be a closer part of your life.

I'm so happy it's 2008. I feel like 2007 is behind me and I can move forward with a clean slate. I'm feeling better about having a blank canvas to work on and am excited to find out what's in store for me this year. I'm so done with

being unhappy and sick.

Aviation museums are lots of fun! We have two very close to us...there's the Toronto Aviation Museum in the north central part of Toronto, and down the highway, there the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton. There is a third one some distance away in Trenton, the Canadian Forces Museum. Yvonne has let her 99s membership lapse, but is becoming a busy member of Canadian Women in Aviation.

Yes, they are. It's amazing to see the history of aviation since we sometimes take for granted how accessible commercial flight is nowadays. It's humbling to remember that flying really hasn't been around that long. And wasn't around for most of human history, even though mankind has dreamt of it since Icarus and Leonardo Da Vinci, and probably even before that.

It's getting late Eastern Time, so I'll shut things down after I send this to you. Y'all take care and stay close, and I'm sure you're already working on the next issue. Looking forward to it.

Mike Deckinger writes:

Just a brief note. I enjoyed the latest issue, as always.

Thanks! I'm glad to hear that people enjoy our zine.

However, I'm sure I won't be the only one to advise that Atom's last name is spelled "Thomson" and not "Thompson." No matter the spelling, he's still "Atom" and all his artwork is a joy.

Correction duly noted. Thank you.

Editorial

By Christopher J. Garcia

Editor

There's a lot of talk about the whole Core Fandom thing right now and what it means. I'm not going to go into it much except to say this: "Core" is a great word.

You see, computers used to have core memory as their principal operational memory. PDP-8s and 11s used Core, as did IBM 360s, 1620s, 1130s, 1401s and just about any other computer you can think of from the 1950s, 60s and most of the 70s. Core is little ferromagnetic donuts that can be charged either clockwise or counter-clockwise to signify a 0 or a 1. It's an essential part of the evolution of computers. Core was invented by Jay Forrester for the Whirlwind computer at MIT in the 1950s, which was then saved from the trash pile by Ken Olsen and Bob Evans in the 1970s and that led to the creation of the Digital Computer Museum, which became the Computer Museum, which spun off the Computer Museum History Centre which became the Computer History Museum which puts out the magazine *Core*. So you see, Core and I have a deep connection.

Core is also what you call the center of a pineapple. I like pineapple.

The Core is also a terrible movie from the early part of this decade that starred Delroy Lindo, Aaron Eckhart and others (Hilary Swank, maybe?). Its one redeeming value is that it has

the Space Shuttle land in the LA River, which is just a great thing.

So you see, I like Core as a word, though I do have some troubles with the idea of Core fandom as separate from Fandom.

But enough about that, let's talk about something else: 2008. This is SF/SF 4th year of service and it should be a good one. We're always looking for new and fun stuff to write up here, and we're gonna start doing just that with this issue. The biggest deal about 2008 (other than my TAFF trip, maybe you've heard of it) is that everything seems to be changing.

BayCon is moving to Santa Clara (my hometown, though I had to move to Sunnyvale recently) and Tim Powers is the writer GoH and he's one of my faves. The *SF/SF* crew (and adjunct faculty) will be putting something together to honor such a great guy and there's probably going to be more representation there than anywhere else. Is there going to be an *SF/SF* party? Not sure, but after such a great time at SiliCon, you can bet we're thinkin' about it.

Further Confusion is coming and it's turned into one of the bigger events in the BArea. I'm excited and on staff. Working a con that's in a section of fandom that I don't regularly play in has been interesting. I have to admit that I'm enjoying parts of it, and the con itself should be good stuff. I love the theming and can't wait to see what the Coffee Garden does to Chinese

food.

What? I hear you cry. Chinese Food from the Coffee Garden? What gives?

The FurCon folks have "The Fur East as their theme, and have made arrangements for the Coffee Garden to do Chinese food as a part of their menu. That's a big change, and one that may have dire consequences on one's digestive track if it's anything like the pepper steak they served me a few years back.

And there are more changes. I'm going to be introducing a new zine about film and movies called *Line_Out* in a few weeks. It's going to be nothing like anything I've done before but it will feature some good old fashioned film criticism. I hear that *Consonant Enigma*, perhaps the finest fannish sercon zine (strange concept, eh?) ever to live, will be taken on the road and will no longer be coming from the BArea, but from Portland. Our loss, but you gotta love a zine that looks at fandom in such a lovely way.

And there are more. I'm sure SiliCon will be different than it was this year. Yaoicon and Bascon will probably stay nearly the same but with tweaks, and there's no telling what's gonna happen.

And that's a good thing because things that don't change go sour. *SF/SF* will be there and making sure that we capture what we can

Editorial, Page 16

This Old Fanzine

Spaceship Issue 20
by Robert Silverberg

By Christopher J. Garcia
Editor

Let us remember something that we might otherwise forget: Fandom begets writers.

That's not always the case, but as long as there've been fans, there've been fans who wanted to go on to become writers. And some have been very successful. Harlan was a Big Name Fan before he was a Big Name Writer. Arthur C. Clarke, Tim Powers, Marion Zimmer Bradley — all names in fandom before they made it writing fiction. Perhaps the best example of those wicked individuals who went pro after the going was weird is the BArea's own Robert Silverberg.

Starting in the late 1940s, SilverBob was writing zines and sending articles and stories to folks all over fandom. He was a member of FAPA (and still is to this day, which is slightly intimidating when you realize that the crap you typed up in an hour is being read by such a fine writer), and had his own zine, *Spaceship*. I remember reading issues of it from my Dad's collection and later when I had access to the zine library of Johnny Reglario. I only read a few

issues, but they were generally good.

Because of the efforts of the wonderful people at FANAC.org, a couple of issues of *Spaceship* are available on-line for reading. As I've been spending a lot of time there lately, I figured it'd be a good idea to look at a zine I kinda remembered from when I was a kid. I chose Issue 20 of *Spaceship* completely at random and found myself amazed at how things have changed and how they've stayed the same in the 54 years since it was published.

The cover is a robot/monster and a creeping hand. What says SF Fanzine more than that? It was by an artist I'd never heard of, Rita Adams, and was one of those fun covers that really only work in the mimeoed medium. The interior illustrations were from Richard Z. Ward (whom I think I've heard of) and Bob Silverberg. There's a certain feeling of youth to the zine, something you rarely see in zines today. I'm not saying it's not snazzy or seems infantile, but it feels like you're reading a zine made by a teenager who knows what he's doing.

Silverberg opens the issue with a nice look at the prozines of 1952. This felt just like the News & Notes section of *SF/SF* or any zine that looks at SF from a sercon bent. He looked at the numbers of zines published, talked about some of the new faces, and even took a good look at the art of magazine covers. What's interesting is that he declared 1952 as the end of

the Bug Eyed Monster era, which seems really early from this point in time. He awards Chesley Bonestell the Best Cover Award for his *F+SF* cover of December 1952, which is a classic.

SilverBob's look at fandom in 1952 is interesting as well. It's always a bit odd to see the reactions to portions in time that we know something about in reflection, and see how they were taken in real time by those who were writing in the day. I've always thought that the 1950s were a time of slow moving fandom with a couple of cons and a bunch of zines flying all over the place. The former seems to be a false impression, as Robert mentions the Chicago WorldCon and about a dozen others. That I didn't expect. Silverberg also mentions that *Hyphen*, one of the all-time great zines, was one of the up-and-comers of 1952. I think he hit that one on the head.

I never would have thought of 1952 as a Big Year, but Silverberg says this: "This, gentlemen, is the Boom. Thirty prozines, a hundred hardcovers a year, a dozen or so movies, ten million fanzines. A thousand people at the World Convention...prozines with circulations of 200,000...folks like Mickey Spillane entering our field...*LIFE* devoting pages to flying saucers...this is big, BIG."

Today some of those numbers seem huge (200,000 as a circ for an SF mag?) and some seem so small (1,000 at a WorldCon?). This is exactly

like reading old wrestling newsletters and seeing attendances at weekly shows that would rival major modern pay-per-views (10,000 weekly at the Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis) and then reading that even top stars made almost nothing (Jerry Lawler made 20k in 1976!). While I'm more familiar with the two other booms (the later 1960s-early 70s when WorldCon exploded into life on the back of increased media presence and *Star Trek*, and the 1980s explosion with *Star Wars*), it is also interesting to note that 1952 is the year that really started TAFF with the Walt Willis fund to bring him to Chicon.

Speaking of Willis, there was a great piece from Robert Bloch that claimed the whole Willis thing was a hoax and money-making scheme designed by Shelby Vick, and that they passed off some guy as Willis to make it look legit. It was a damn funny piece, the kind of thing that we seldom see today. There was a report from Australia which amazes me because without the net and eMail, communications from Oz took a good while. A column by Bert Hirshhorn is an interesting look at the relationship between fandom and the field of Science Fiction. He says that there is one, and others would argue. Go figure.

There's a piece of fiction from Charles Wells. It's short and it's a funny use of a classic cliché. I got a little laugh out of it. There's another long piece advertising the 1952 Fan Yearbook, which I now must try and get my hands on.

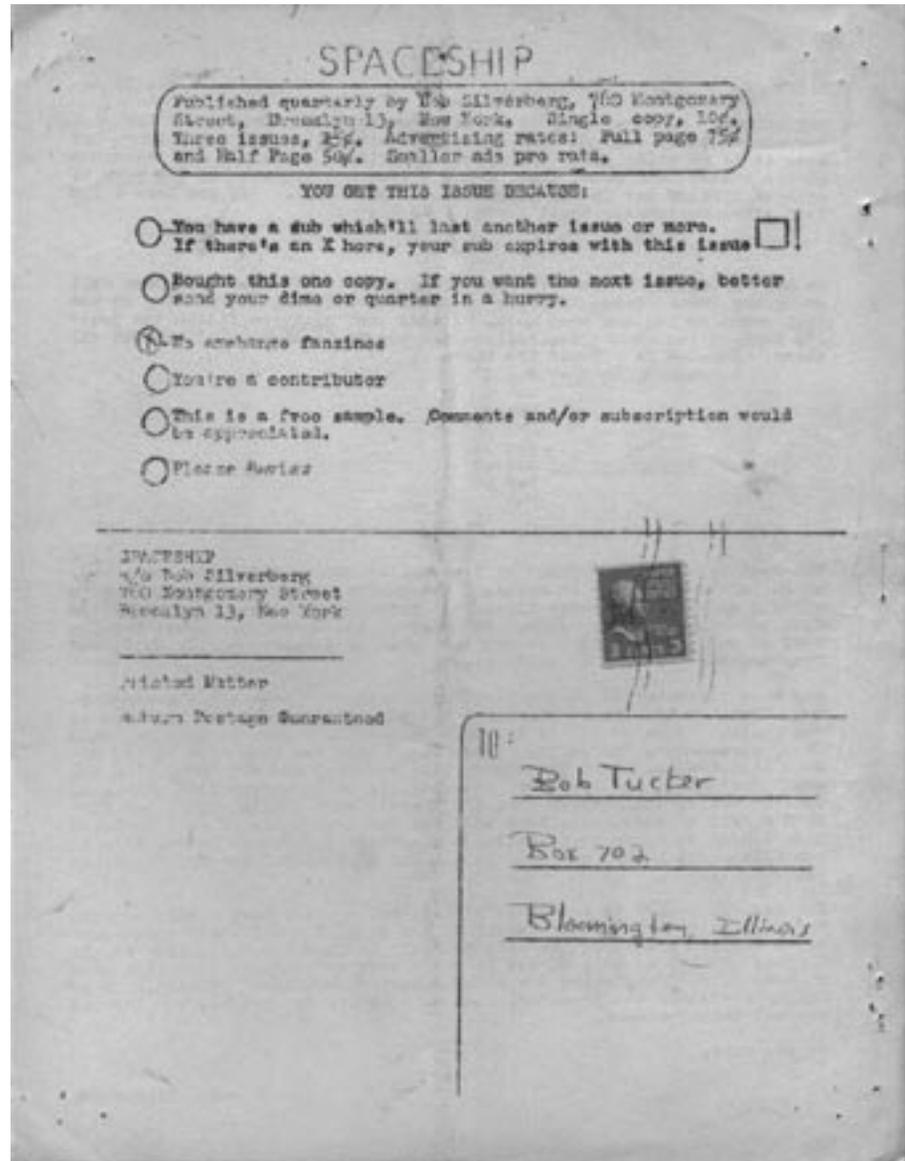
As I read it, there was one thing that struck me hard. There's the phrase "semi-pro-zine" used to describe the zine *Different*. That's a phrase that I thought came about in the 1970s

to describe things like *The Alien Critic* and *Algol* and later *Locus*. I don't think I've ever heard Silverberg named as the creator of that phrase, though.

And the final page reveals that this copy, mailed for 3 cents back in the day, was sent to

Bob Tucker. What's better than that?

A solid issue which you can find at <http://fanac.org/fanzines/Spaceship/Spaceship20-00.html>? All scanned and pretty. If you like the old stuff, give it a read!



Young Blood Animates Anime LA

By España Sheriff
Staff Writer

Although my knowledge of Anime is not exactly vast, technically it precedes my interest in science fiction.

My first experiences were two mid-seventies TV shows: *Heidi* (Arupusu no Shôjo Haiji), which I have no memory of watching at all except for one perfectly remembered scene which has to be one of my earliest memories, and a show called *Marco* (Haha wo Tazunete Sanzenri), which was a huge success in Spain with children and adults alike, and was rebroadcast in the early eighties. Although I barely remember the show itself, I do recall that everyone watched it and can still remember the songs — as can most Spaniards of my generation.

A few years later *Candy, Candy* was a hit with my age group. From what I remember it is exactly the sort of thing I can't stand now, sappy and girly and very very corny, but at the time it was fascinating. Very few shows that were aimed at kids had continuing story lines and early in the show the death of a main character was a big deal, terribly tragic to a ten-year-old girl. I also vividly remember being completely in love with the animation style, with its bright colors and clean lines. My friends and I collected trading cards for that show and glued them into binders sold for that purpose, although I could

never manage to complete the set. I remember watching a few other shows like *Mazinger Z* and *Robotech*, but anime as a distinct genre didn't really hit my radar until much later.



Xian Pu's Soul Calibur.

Photo by Richard Man

Aside from pop-culture phenomena such as *Sailor Moon* or *Pokemon*, as an adult my experiences with have mostly been with either feature length movies, generally large releases by the likes of Miyazaki, or with shows available on Cartoon Network like *Cowboy Bebop* and *Ghost in the Shell*.

So I attended Anime Los Angeles more on a lark than anything else, to relax and check it out, but with no real expectations. The GOHs were voice actor Vic Mignogna, who seemed to be a nice fellow and popular with the kids, and Bryan Wong, creator of the *Seasons of Constance* webcomic. Tadao Tomomatsu was Toastmaster.

The convention was started in 2005 by LASFS stalwart Chaz Boston Baden, and many of the staff are familiar LASFS faces including previous LosCon chairs Christian Maguire, Robbie Borguet and Elaine Pelz. So I noticed elements that I am used to which I'm told are more prevalent at general-interest fannish conventions than at anime cons — such as the consuite. The biggest difference I noticed was the membership demographic, which skewed quite a lot younger than that of any other convention I've been to, even Wondercon. I was probably older than half the members by a good decade, whereas usually the reverse is true. Mid to late teenage kids comprised the bulk of the folks running around the convention center, with the older folks mostly appearing to

be convention habitues and only a small handful of younger kids in evidence. And well over half of the teenage fans packing the joint were in costume, with cosplay seemingly a very big part of the convention experience. So the energy was very good, and just wandering about people watching was enough to made you smile.

The only real hitch from my perspective was the hotel, the Burbank Airport Marriott. Once a Hilton, it changed hands recently and is now a Marriott owned by Pyramid Hotel Group. There is some major remodeling in progress which has apparently been going on for the better part of a year now, but even taking that into account the shared spaces are a shambles. The ceilings have been lowered for some reason, temporarily it seems, but the effect is claustrophobic, akin to being in a parking garage. Hotel reception is tiny and currently sits in front of the elevators in a space only slightly wider than a hallway.

The labyrinthian passageways that lead from one tower to another make the short distance between spaces seem terribly confusing and twice put you out in the cold outdoors. Overall the effect is like being in one of those depressing underground malls that you sometimes see jammed into city centers, full of nail salons and desolate food courts. Thankfully next year's ALA will be held at the LAX Marriott, familiar to many of us as the current home of LosCon and Gallifrey One.

Still the room I stayed in was nice enough, the Daily Grill better than I remembered, although pricier than even other hotel restaurants, and the hotel staff was friendly. The biggest culture shock was the total lack of parties, so the bulk of my convention experience was in the separate convention center building anyway,

which was laid out pretty much as I remembered it from LosCon. Registration was quick and efficient, although I heard the lines on Friday and Saturday morning were longish at times. The dealers' room was smaller than I expected and yes, packed with more Naruto merchandise than the human mind can comprehend. But there was a good selection of stuff, the bulk of the dealers carrying anime, manga and related products, a couple of weapons dealers selling swords and such. and a handful of others such as con circuit favorite The Hornsmythe.

The biggest culture shock was the total lack of parties.

Two very nice touches that fit the venue and the audience well were the bean bag chairs scattered through the convention center main hall for kids to sit, flop onto, nap on and (occasionally) whap each other with. Also scattered around through all the convention areas were a series of wooden benches custom painted by different artists. There was even one in the women's restroom — a very nice touch. The benches were a hit and will be coming back next year; artists are encouraged to request one to customize. Another specific-to-this-con detail was that in addition to the consuite there was also the by-reservation-only Blue Rose Maid Cafe, which included both maids and butlers.

I didn't participate in a whole lot of

programming other than wandering in and out of rooms, but from what I saw it included a lot of live music, with half a dozen rock, j-pop and such bands scheduled each day and DJ dances on Friday and Saturday, the latter packed to the gills with kids waving glowsticks. As with many conventions the Masquerade was the big Saturday event, but I didn't attend since Masquerades always fill up fast and this was no exception. From the pictures posted by official photographer Richard Man and videos posted on YouTube it seems to have been a very successful event despite some unfortunate technical glitches. Apparently there was quite a bit of AV trouble, but in his capacity as Toastmaster Tadao kept folks entertained and in their seats and the participants did their best to get through, in one case even singing their own music.

Next year promises to be even better since the venue is larger, more fan friendly and has been well tested out by the most of the folks running the con already.

<http://www.animelosangeles.org/ala/>
<http://www.imagecraft.com/photostudio/>

Join our crew:

We are looking for writers to cover local events, conventions, fan groups and the fannish scene in general.

Contact Jean Martin and Chris Garcia at SFinSF@gmail.com

FurCon: What Kind of Con, Now?

Story and Photos by Al “Rackstraw” Megas
Contributing Writer

Of all fandoms, furrydom is the easiest to understand, yet the hardest to explain. To understand what I mean, consider the following possible conversation as it might be heard at any given science fiction convention:

AVERAGE HOTEL GUEST: Excuse me. What’s the story with that guy’s costume?

CONVENTION ATTENDEE: Oh. He’s a Klingon. It’s a warrior race in the *Star Trek* universe, first appearing in 1967, later featured in all five spin-off series, and ultimately becoming uneasy allies with the United Federation of Planets.

AVERAGE HOTEL GUEST: Okay, uh...whatever. But why’s he dressed like that?

CONVENTION ATTENDEE: Oh, because he’s a huge fan of *Star Trek*!

But at this month’s Further Confusion (FurCon for short), the exchange might go a little differently:

AVERAGE HOTEL GUEST: Excuse me. What’s the story with that guy’s costume?

CONVENTION ATTENDEE: Oh. He’s a badger. It’s a species of mammal native to America, Asia, or Europe of the family mustelidae with short legs, tri-chromatic fur, a diet of...

AVERAGE HOTEL GUEST: I know



what a badger is! Why’s he dressed like that?

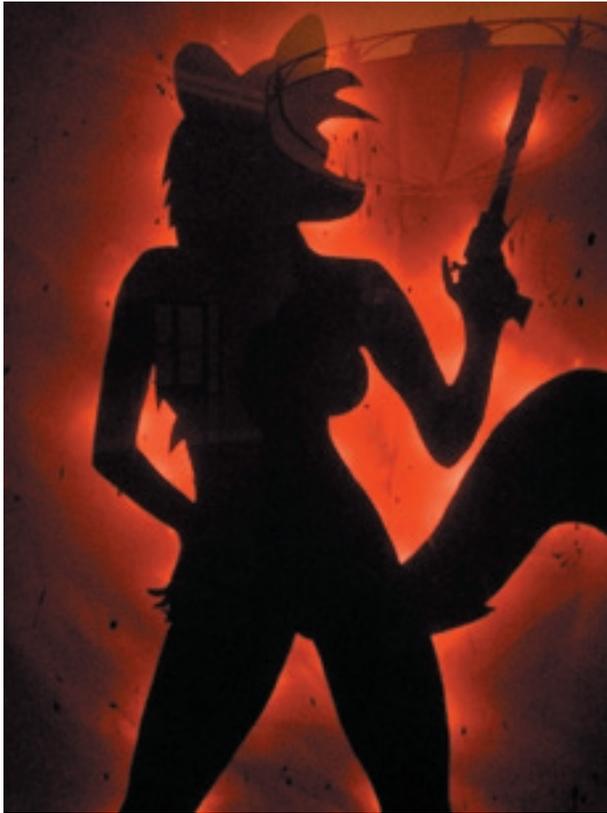
CONVENTION ATTENDEE: Ummm...

Indeed, for a lesson in confusion, ask three different furries what the heck their fandom is all about. If they can muster up straight answers, not all are likely to match. Many cannot seem to express what they are.

For a non-furry trying to explain it to

another, things can get even more difficult. Luckily, one clever character I ran across thought to do a search in Wiki. The explanation of these compelling people is simpler than some would expect.

Do furries believe they’re the creatures they dress up as? No. (Though at least one well-known YouTube loud-mouth went on record as



believing otherwise.) It's not about self-delusion, any more so than any type of costuming.

Is fur all about the fetish? Not so much. (The CSI episode involving furies is famous among the fandom, but they've found it skews the facts as much as any popular entertainment.) Adult action may enter the equation but it's not the focus of the furies.

So just what IS up with furies? Well, the fandom began with their interest in art and stories. Anthropomorphic characters have been around at least since Aesop. Some like to draw them, some like to personify non-human beings. In a strong sense, the furry fandom is the most identifiable of all. AnimAls! You've heard of

them, right? Examples of works that feature furry inspiration include TMNT, Usagi Yojimbo, Gary the Rat, StarFox, and many others. Even Chewbacca could arguably be dubbed a poster child for furies.

To those who steer clear of furry conventions because it's not their branch of the geek tree, consider an alternative viewpoint. Chances are you've found the anime room at a science fiction convention, or played an RPG at Comic-Con. All these genres have representation at FurCon as well. You can roam the floor and watch the fun without buying a badge (those

are only necessary for party and vendor room access), and you may even see an unexpectedly familiar face! We're all part of the same family, believe it or not!

I suppose it's possible none of this is convincing to anyone. I'm not a furry. Heck, I'm still not sure I understand furies! But remember, tolerance begins with effort.

You don't have to don the geeky getups. All we are saying is give fleece a chance.

Editor's note: Further Confusion 2008: "The Fur East" will be held this weekend at the San Jose Doubletree. www.furtherconfusion.org



BASFA Minutes: Meetings 907-911

Meeting 907

December 17, 2007

Trey Haddad, President
Chris Garcia, Vice-President
Dave Gallaher, Treasurer
Galen Tripp, Sergeant at Arms
Barbara Johnson-Haddad, Secretary

Began 8:00 - with Trey in Texas

25 people attended

We established a TAFF jar

Secretary's report: the minutes of meeting 906 were accepted as 'on Wisconsin'

The Treasurer reported that last week we took in \$12.25 in the regular jar and \$4.50 in the party jar

VP reported that there's a new 'Drink tank' out, he's looking for a new place to live & 'go TAFF'!

The President was in Texas

There was discussion and for the next 2 meetings it is unlikely there will be club officers at BASFA - and Coco's closes at 9pm Xmas eve. While people are welcome to go there, there may not be a well-attended [official?] meeting until

January 7

Announcements

[evil] Kevin announced that St George Spirits in Alameda finally has permission to release their Absinthe Verte label, going on sale at their distillery Dec 21 & Costume Con's membership rates go up to \$95.00 on Jan 1

Harold announced that Comp USA is going out of business and having sales

Ken announced that another house with a major light display on Vallejo near San Tomas Aquino & the Legion of Rassilon will have the usual meeting on the last Friday of the month & the meeting will show 'Voyage of the Damned' & the entire 'Man from U.N.C.L.E.' will be for sale from Time Life

Reviews:

Joe reviewed 'Enchanted' as brilliant & worth full price, He reviewed Highway 121 near Sonoma as there's a crazy huge snowman army out there

Glenn reviewed 'SMOFcon' as he got a shirt, went to a panel, the con went really well & he had good conversations; reviewed 'Golden Compass' as he had objections to the movie because he had read the books and thought it the 'Cliff notes' version of the book, while Harold follow-on'd and did like the movie, possibly

because he had -not- read the books; Fred follow-on'd that he had read the books and still enjoyed the movie

Harold reviewed his new laptop as he -begged- for XP but they only had Vista & he's still working on it; Dave G follow-on'd 'Vista sucks' & Joe commented that if Vista sucked then it would be more useful than it is

Dave C reviewed 'Mister Majorium's Wonder Emporium' - about a magic toy store as 'stuff happens' & that the movie producers may have missed the point of their own movie & reviewed 'Black Dossier' by Alan Moore as not nearly as plot-driven as 'League of Extraordinary Gentlemen' & there's a bad case of 'what's the point' - worth maybe trade paperback

[evil] Kevin reviewed 'Atomic Twister' as perfectly workmanlike and he's seen worse [*cough* 'Flash Gordon'] & worth being a couch potato for, but he turned off 'Power Play'

Lisa reviewed 'August Rush' as lots of fun, interesting - she enjoyed it - and worth matinee

Chris reviewed being sick as he didn't go to work, went to Rasputin Records and found the soundtrack for 'Walk Hard', he was happy; then on Saturday he went somewhere & saw 'Bladerunner' - it was worth matinee & reviewed the January issue of 'F&SF' as possibly the best

magazine out this year

Ken reviewed 'I am Legend' as enjoyable and worth full price

Then we auctioned off a bag of Darth Tater and other stuff for \$2.75; a script for \$0.50; books for \$0.50, \$1.00, \$2.00; \$7.50 & birthday auctioned off Miko for \$20.00 to Chris and birthday auctioned off Dave C for \$8.00 to Dave C

We adjourned at = 9:49

And the rumor of the week was that = 'Donner on Blitzen'

Meeting 910

January 7, 2008

Trey Haddad, President
Chris Garcia, Vice-President
Dave Gallaher, Treasurer
Galen Tripp, Sergeant at Arms
Barbara Johnson-Haddad, Secretary

Began 8:04 - with comments made about 'Max Romney' - and we said 'hi' to Galen!

28 people attended

We established a party jar [after a close vote]

Secretary's report: accepting the minutes of meeting 909 was delayed for a week

The Treasurer reported that last week we took in \$1.00

No VP right then - he fled early to do packing

The President had even MORE nothing fannish to report

A motion to commend the president for being a lazy bum was successfully objected to being considered

We THEN did auctions, depriving Dave G of a chance to eat until they were done. We auctioned off a Max Headroom mask for \$1.00; books for \$0.25, \$1.25; \$1.00; \$1.00; \$0.50; \$1.25; \$1.00; \$2.50; \$0.25; \$1.25; \$1.00; \$2.25; \$0.50; \$17.00; \$0.75; \$2.00; \$5.00; \$0.50; \$25.00; and Adrienne-made cookies for \$1.00; \$2.00; \$0.25; \$2.00; \$0.75 [immediate review of the raisin cookies was 'Wow! These are great!']; \$1.50; and a bracelet made by Miko for \$5.00

Announcements

Cheryl announced that she has to go back to England Wednesday and will be back next in March - and that she gave 2 more episodes of 'Barmy Cats' to Chris

Andy announced that Further Confusion is in 2 weeks and there will be an Evil Genius party there on Friday night - and they will be judging Masquerade on Saturday

Adrienne announced that our local blood banks are desperately in need of donations [especially O negative blood]

[tall] Kevin announced that there is a shorter time than normal to make Hugo nominations since

Worldcon will be the 1st week of August this year and suggests starting the nominations next week; follow-ons included 'go join Denvention'

Reviews:

Lisa reviewed 'Atonement' as worth the 7 Golden Globe nominations and full price

Stellan reviewed the Tech Shop in Palo Alto as a clubhouse for folks who like to make things & wished they had all the equipment there in their own, infinitely large garage, check www.techshop.ws; it costs \$30.00 a day, \$100 a month and definitely worth full price and they do classes there

Glenn reviewed PG&E as not worth full price

Miko reviewed 'Sweeney Todd' as having bad CG for the first 10 minutes but that both principals sing rather well, the casting is great & it's definitely worth full price - even worth the mall Goths and 117 frustrated text messages. There were follow-ons - Dave C greatly enjoyed it and thought Depp did a very good, understated performance - thought the animation was okay and stated there was much more blood than the stage version; Harold followed that Depp's performance was brilliant, it was a wonderful film & worth full price; then Miko reviewed 'Juno' as hilarious and worth full price - and Lisa agreed

Harold reviewed Keith Olbermann's 'Truth or Consequences' as not worth full price and the diatribes within were angry ones; reviewed 'The Savages' as advertised as black comedy but he

missed the humor and as worth bargain matinee
Andy reviewed a product called 'Easy Screen Print' as useful, easy and simple - worth it - and reviewed 3 CDs of good Oompah music as worth what he paid for it & reviewed the West Kingdom's 12th Night - held at the Doubletree - as a very fun event, recommended and worth full price - that there were really neat things in the dealer's room and recommends the cheese mochi puffs[as an aside, where are these found?][evil] Kevin then follow-on'd saying that they met many charming people and the sword jocks were drinking more than usual since they couldn't hit each other with sticks

I reviewed 'Charlie Wilson's War' as enjoyable, a very good movie & Hanks does a great job - worth full price & reviewed 'National Treasure 2' as wonderful mind candy & it may give brain diabetes but it was a lot of fun to watch, worth high matinee; Dave C follow-on'd that the various break-ins of places like the White House and Buckingham Palace needed 'That was easy' stickers slapped on them & Trey thought it was entertaining

Cheryl showed us her cool ray gun and her periscope book cover thingy & reviewed Australia & India's cricket match as that after 5 days it came down to the very end - that Australia won & there was a diplomatic incident

Dave C stated that 'I read a book' ['1st time's always the hardest' came a quip] & he reviewed Robert Rankin's book 'The Da-Da-De-Da-Da Code' as worth wait for paperback

Trey reviewed 'Dexter in the Dark' as he was disappointed by the supernatural elements & reviewed Simon Green's 'Man with the Golden Torc' as gritty and wry but not his best stuff - worth used paperback

We adjourned at = 9:56

And the rumor of the week was that = 'Chris will be disappointed to learn that no one bought him anything in the auction'

Meeting 911

January 14, 2008

Trey Haddad, President
Chris Garcia, Vice-President
Dave Gallaher, Treasurer
Galen Tripp, Sergeant at Arms
Barbara Johnson-Haddad, Secretary

Began very 8:ish

30 people attended

We established a party jar & a TAFF jar

Secretary's report: we accepted the minutes of meeting 910 as 'brief'

the Treasurer reported that last week we took in \$24.60 in the regular jar & \$64.61 in the party jar

VP reported that he has moved and there's a new 'Drink Tank' out - and he's starting a new 'zine, 'Line Out'

The President had nothing fannish to report

Announcements

[tall] Kevin announced that there will be Hugo discussions after the club meeting tonight, next Monday and on the 1st week of February & he had print outs with him

Chris announced 'The Ten' is coming out on DVD, the funniest movie of 2007

Dave C announced that he brought freebies

Andy announced that this is the Smurfs 50th anniversary & there'll be a CGI movie out soon

[evil] Kevin announced that Further Confusion is in 2 weeks and there will be ranuki at the Evil Genius party there on Friday night

Ken announced that the actress who played Vampira died recently

Reviews:

Howeird reviewed Rustycon as there were lots of good costumes in the Masquerade, a very good filk circle; frank Wu follow-on'd that the hotel blew chunks but the con treated him like royalty

Dave C reviewed 'The Blonde' by Duane Swierczynski as strange and worth reading on an airplane; reviewed 'Alien vs Predator, Requiem' as likely to appear on TNT soon and if you've seen 'Night of the Living Dead' you've seen this movie, then Frank Wu did a follow-on that crashed the review

Lisa reviewed a book signing by James Owen as he's a very sweet man & will teach you to draw dragons

Joe reviewed racing as amazing and he'd never seen so many crashes in his life

Chris reviewed living in a new place as 'there I was, hand to God' and says '6 String Samurai' is a movie you have to see & that 8 year olds can really help you pack and moving was worth full price

We did speed auctions, selling books for \$0.50; \$0.25, \$0.50; \$2.50; \$0.25; \$5.00; & \$7.00

We adjourned at = 8:52

And the rumor of the week was that = 'Hot Card on Zimmer Bradley action'

Editorial *from Page 6*

and make big fun happen for everyone we can. I have to confess, I'd love for us to be the American version of the *PLOKTA* Cabal, but that's a tall order. I'm sure all the rest of the staff will agree that this is going to be a big year for BArea fandom and *SF/SF* in general.

But really, 2008 will be the year of the Fanzine Lounge...at least if I have anything to say about it!



Issue #1 is now on the web at:
www.imitationfruit.com

Our first edition is full of in season fresh stories, poems and artwork from a great bunch of artists and writers, including contributions from *SF/SF*'s own **Jean Martin** and **España Sheriff**.

We invite you to submit your story, poem, creative non-fiction or visual art for our next issue with a deadline for submissions on February 14, 2008. A fun prize contest is in motion for the next issue. Check out the website for more information.

Come give us a read!

Eva Kent
Editor/Imitation Fruit