

Virtual Tucker Hotel



“Me? Fannish?”

Issue Sixteen

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/the-virtual-fan-lounge>

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VTH is primarily an electronic fanzine, available on <http://www.efanzines.com>. Paper copies of this fanzine do exist, however, and will be available for the fannish usual. In any case, e-mails and letters of comment are, of course, welcome.

Thanks to: Bill Mills (“FanLounge”), without whom The Virtual Fan Lounge wouldn't exist. And to everybody who helped out with the link to the Denver Fanzine Lounge, especially Kat Templeton.

Member fwa. Startling Press Production number 286. Today is Friday 22nd August, 2008.

Looking Back

As planned, we kept The Virtual Fan Lounge “open” on the Saturday of Worldcon for the same hours as the Fanzine Lounge operating in Denver. We gathered together a number of articles that were e-mailed through for the one-shot being produced. We also made live contact with the Denver Fan Lounge using highly “cutting-edge” pieces of technology – OK, so we rang somebody with a cellphone after we failed to get Skype to work...

For the rest of the session, as well as playing and replaying various videos and audios, there was also much chatting in the chat-room. This was followed by some more chat the next day, Sunday. All of this, and more, will be written up for future issues of [Virtual Tucker Hotel](#).

The plans for a further episode of The Wasted Hour last weekend had to be cancelled at short notice due to illness, for which apologies.

Looking Forward

This coming weekend, the Southern Fandom Classic chat session will be happening as normal on the Saturday, but with a twist. We'll be playing Fannish Botticelli. Botticelli is a guessing game, similar to Twenty Questions, but with more interesting rules for more interaction. The rules of Botticelli are further on in this issue; Fannish Botticelli is the same as normal Botticelli, except that all persons named must have some link to Science Fiction, Fantasy or Fandom.

The weekend after is the 5th Saturday of the month, so there will be neither an edition of The Wasted Hour nor a Southern Fandom Classic chat session. However, we will be planning some other event for the Saturday

instead. See next week's issue for more details.

Joining the Lounge

To use the chat-room, just go to <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/the-virtual-fan-lounge>. On the left hand side of the page is the live video feed – replaced by a slide show when there isn't anything happening. On the right is the actual chat-room. You can see what everyone else is typing in the top window, and add your own contribution in the smaller box at the bottom.

You will be assigned an initial user name in the format “ustreamer-12345.” If you'd rather change this – to your real name, livejournal name, or whatever – you can do this by clicking the “Sign Up” link at the top to register for free. Some people have been slightly put off by the amount of information that the registration form asks for, which I can empathise with. But registration is entirely optional – you can simply stay as “ustreamer-12345” if you prefer.

Video Library

As well as the live events, The Virtual Fan Lounge is beginning to build up a library of recorded material available for viewing. The clips are listed under the main viewscreen – just click to select.

The one new video this week is actually an audio – a recording of our phone-in to the Denver Fanzine Lounge, where we managed to conduct a short interview with both Chris Garcia and Kat Templeton.

If you have problems with the streaming video, most of the videos are also available at our alternative/back-up site, The Fan Video Network, which is available at the web address <http://TFVN.renebooks.com/video/fanvid-1.html>

Schedule for the next few weeks

Southern Fandom Classic chat-room session – Fannish Botticelli Special

Dean Sweatman and other members of the Southern Fandom Classic group will be holding their regular chat session in the Virtual Fan Lounge, and invite other interested fans from around the world to join them. This week will be a Fannish Botticelli special.

- Saturday 23rd August, 1.00 pm PDT (Pacific Daylight Time)
- Saturday 23rd August, 4.00 pm EDT (Eastern Daylight Time)
- Saturday 23rd August, 8.00 pm UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time)
- Saturday 23rd August, 9.00 pm BST (British Summer Time)
- Sunday 24th August, 4.00 am WAST (Western Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 24th August, 6.00 am EAST (Eastern Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 24th August, 8.00 am NZST (New Zealand Standard Time)

And More?

Other ad-hoc events may be added around this 'core' schedule – see future issues of Virtual Tucker Hotel for more details. And, of course, the chat-room itself is open 24/7.

Botticelli – The Rules

as listed on Wikipedia at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botticelli_\(game\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botticelli_(game))

One player (the chooser) is selected to think of a famous person (the identity). This person should be someone the chooser is comfortable answering biographical questions about, and someone the chooser is very confident that the other players will all have heard of; obscure identities make for frustrating game play, especially with young players. The rule of thumb is that the person should be at least as famous or well-known as Sandro Botticelli, hence the name of the game. Fictional characters are acceptable, but can present certain difficulties. In some contexts, a non-famous person with whom all the players are familiar may be acceptable.

The chooser then announces the initial letter of the name by which the person is usually known; for non-fictional characters, this is usually the last name. For example, if the chooser chose Sandro Botticelli, then the initial letter would be B. For the purposes of phrasing questions and answers, the chooser adopts the chosen identity.

The game has two modes — direct mode and indirect mode — and starts in indirect mode.

Indirect Mode

In indirect mode, the guessers take turns (either in sequence or informally) to think of someone with the designated initial letter. These guesser choices do not have to conform to any other information so far acquired about the chooser's identity (e.g. male, non-fiction, still alive).

Each guesser asks the chooser a yes/no question using some detail of the guesser's choice. For example, if the letter is B then the guesser might choose Yul Brynner and ask, "Are you bald?" At this point, the chooser has three possible responses:

"No, I am not Frank Black." — The chooser has either guessed the guesser's chosen person, or has thought of another person who fits the same criteria. (Even if the guesser was thinking of the chooser's chosen person, a correct "No I am not" that names a different person is allowed, if it fits the questioned criteria.) The game remains in indirect mode, and moves to the next guesser.

"No, and I don't know who you're thinking of." — The chooser can't think of someone meeting the criteria. The guesser reveals their answer, and the game changes to direct mode. (If guesser was thinking of the chooser's

person, then the guesser wins.)

"Yes, I am Yul Brynner." — The chooser's identity meets the criterion of the guesser's question, and the chooser cannot think of anyone else who satisfies it. The guesser wins.

Guessers can use indirect mode to guess the chooser's identity directly (e.g. "Are you Yul Brynner?")

The bar for guesser choices is lower than that for the chooser's identity; it is not essential for the chooser to have heard of the person, or to know the relevant biographical detail, but guessers should not deliberately exploit this provision. The ideal guesser question is one where the chooser says "Doh! I should have gotten that." when the answer is revealed.

Direct Mode

In direct mode, the guesser whose choice enabled the mode switch gets to ask a series of yes/no questions about the chooser's identity, as in standard Twenty Questions.

Direct mode continues until the chooser answers "no" to a question.

Example questions and answers for direct mode:

"Are you male?" → "Yes, I am male."

"Are you unconnected with art?" → "Yes, I am unconnected with art."

"Are you bald?" → "No, I am not bald."

If the chooser doesn't know the answer to a direct mode question, or the question does not permit a clear-cut yes/no answer, then the chooser answers as accurately as possible, and the game remains in direct mode. There are some conventions for answering contextually

inappropriate direct mode questions; for example, fictional characters are usually deemed to be dead if their death has been recorded.

Some variants allow only a single direct mode question before returning to indirect mode, regardless of the answer, as the reward for the guesser. Coupled with the confirmation requirement (see below), this allows for long, intellectual games.

Winning

The game ends when a guesser successfully determines the chooser's identity. That guesser then becomes the chooser, a new identity and letter are chosen and the game starts again in indirect mode. If the successful guess was suggested by a non-designated guesser in direct mode, then it is normal courtesy for the designated guesser to defer to the other player.

If all guessers give up before winning, then the chooser reveals the identity. The guessers then determine (by majority) whether the choice was a good one (that is, they should all have known of the character and the chooser's answers in direct mode were reasonably accurate). The role of chooser then remains with the same player, or passes to another player (e.g. clockwise) as appropriate. It is considered bad form for one guesser to hold out after everyone else has given up.

Fannish Botticelli

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