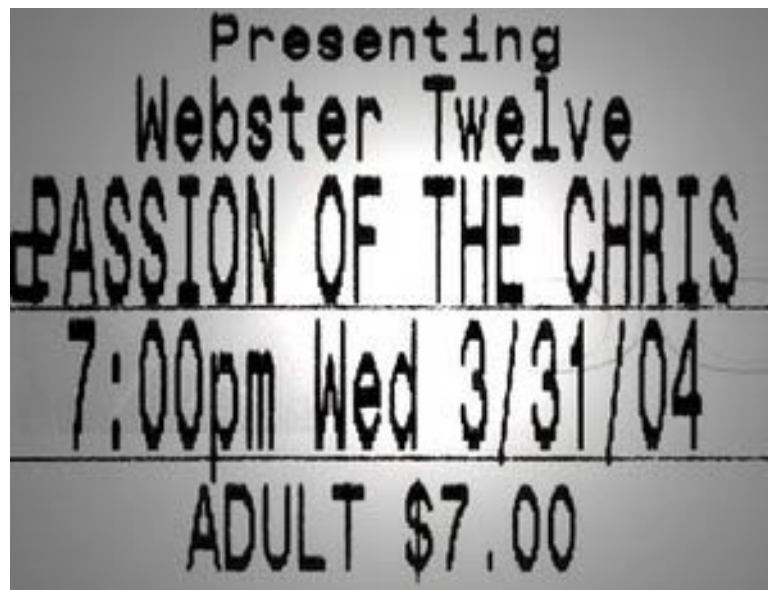


THE DRINK TANK ISSUE 61



**THE IT'S ALL
COMING IN THE
FUTURE!
ISSUE**

Warning! The Issue you are about to read is fake. Nothing you read in Issue Sixty-One of The Drink Tank is real. It's all just a bunch of articles about things that haven't happened yet. The odds of any of them happening? One in No Chance in Hell. It's a good thing too, because there are things here that are an affront of God and Man.

Everything other than this disclaimer is false...yeah. The Management.



Quentin Tarantino's
Miserable Failure of
Two Thousand Nine: The
Remake of Greed
by
Christopher J. Garcia

When I was in college, the two greatest movies of any generation came out. Some Video Clerk in SoCal made two movies, Reservoir Dogs

and Pulp Fiction. The thought that film had changed right before my eyes never escaped me. Nothing was the same when I sat alone in the dark again. When Bryan Singer's The Usual Suspects came out, we all knew that the Tarantino Way had changed film forever. So, I always look forward to the next Quint film, whatever it may be. His two-part masterpiece Kill Bill had me in the palm of his hand, and when I heard what his next project was, I nearly fainted with glee.

In the 1920s, film making was, in many ways, still forming. There had been some great films, even complex and powerful films that have managed to stay at least somewhat relevant today. One of those few films that pulls it off is Erich Von Stroheim's Greed. Based on *McTeague: A Story of San Francisco* by Frank Norris. It's an amazing



piece of cinema, and one that is so powerful, so amazing that it changed not only film making, but acting in general. And though Greed is top-notch stuff, it's flawed. That is to say that what's on the screen is only about 1/5th of what Von Stroheim wanted to do with Greed, and in fact he had shot and edited a nearly 10-hour version. To this day that long cut of Greed is considered the Holy Grail of lost films, alongside London After Midnight and the longer version of The Magnificent Ambersons. The long version was sorta recreated in 1999 when Turner Classic Movies took a shooting script and a ton of the production stills and put out a six hour version using the stills and the script notes.

I think that's what caused it all to happen, that somehow Quint watched that six-hour version, possibly while high, and came up with a plan: he'd remake the Greed that was meant to be shown.

The first part was to get Turner, who owns the original, on-board. It wasn't that difficult, as they simply seemed to be happy to get Quint to work with them. They then signed on with MGM to do the film itself, which was a giant task that involved jumping through many hoops. Tarantino talks all about it in his article *Why I'll Never Work In This Town Again*, about why he left LA and settled in San Francisco. He said "MGM

wanted a blockbuster, I wanted to do Greed. I gave a lot and got a little. It sucked.”

The thing he gave on first was that it wouldn't be a silent, but a talkie. Quint had pitched it as the 'Last Silent', a picture that would officially end the silent era nearly 80 years after it ended the first time. MGM said that there was no way they would do a silent picture and threatened to end things right there. Quint gave in.

Next, even though it was a talking



picture, Quint wanted to use certain title cards, and that was nixed quickly too. They did give in and let him shoot entirely on location in San Francisco and Death Valley, plus they let him set the film in 1899 instead of the modern remake that most in MGM were pushing for. Quint also gave in when he wanted to cast three unknown actors, two from the stage and one who was a well-known commercial actress, and instead was told that he'd have to submit the names of any potential hires to the MGM execs and they'd make the final call. This would be the downfall of the film.

Tarantino came up with a list of four actors he'd be OK with playing the role of McTeague. The first on that list was Michael Madsen. Then, according to newspaper articles, the list went Johnny Depp, Michael Chiklis and Zach Galifianakis (though that may have been a joke. The MGM team, looking at the choices, said that Quint could use Depp. This bothered Quint,

who thought that he was far too pretty to be playing McTeague. He talked with Depp's people and was told that he was unavailable. Returning to the MGM suits, he then pushed for Madsen, though he was too old-looking for the part. The MGM team said that Madsen could not be McTeague, and that was the first time Tarantino walked off the project. The standstill lasted three months before both sides gave a little. Tarantino agreed to withdraw Madsen from consideration and the MGM brass agreed that they'd only have to approve the top four actors (McTeague, Trina, Marcus and Maria) and that he and his casting director, Johanna Ray, would be given free reign over the rest of the casting. This seemed like a victory to Quint, who was grabbing for whatever he could get after being told that he'd not be able to make the film any other way by the Norris Estate as well as by Turner's people.

The role of Trina, originally played perfectly by Zasu Pitts, was the first to be finalised. After a long search and wooing of starlets including Scarlett Johansson, Kate Bosworth and even Parker Posey, Ray had managed to secure Laura Fraser. While Fraser was hardly a household name, she had been dependable in small roles for more than a decade. MGM was surprisingly happy with the choice and Quint saw it as an opening for a bold move on the part of McTeague. On June the 30th, a meeting was called with all the execs where Tarantino introduced Michael Rooker. Rooker was older (actually fifty-three) than any of the other candidates, but he had the look and a long string of



roles which showed he could be trusted with handling such an iconic character. Quint gave a twenty minute speech and then gave the floor to Rooker for several minutes. After that, Rooker was asked to leave. He went and waited outside in a lobby, drinking can after can of coke from the vending machine. Quint



emerged two hours later and told Rooker to go home and he'd give him a call.

The battle that took place in the conference room was heated, with Quint twice saying that he would walk off the project if he wasn't given Rooker and the execs twice saying that they'd be able to do what they wanted with the material since they had secured deals with the holders of the various rights. Around 4 am, nearly sixteen hours after the meeting had started, Quint called Rooker and asked him to join him for a drink at a local coffee shoppe. They met and Rooker was told that the studio had taken away his right to cast McTeague himself and they'd decided on Rufus Sewell, who had never even been mentioned in any previous conversations, but whose agent was well-prepared for the supposedly impromptu phone call they made to her at nearly midnight.

The next two weeks were the most important in the casting process. Tarantino regulars Harvey Keitel and Tim Roth were both cast in smaller roles, as were directors David Lynch, Jim Jarmusch and Sir Richard Attenborough. The two other 'Approval-Required' roles, Maria and Marcus, were left uncast until sixteen days before the start of shooting.

Marcus, a difficult and meaty role, was offered to a number of people by the MGM executives, but no one seemed willing to take it as it was a long commitment. Kyle

McLaughlin, who had little interest in the role initially, was offered it and accepted for a few days before pulling out before Tarantino had even been told of the choice. Dougray Scott was the next favourite of the MGM crew, and they held a meeting to tell him about it. Quint said that MGM had 'filled this

production with a bunch of limey creeps!' but, after calming down, said that he'd like to spend some time thinking about it and rewatching Scott's work. He supposedly borrowed a screening room and watched *Enigma*, then returned and said that Dougray was a fine choice and that he'd go along with it.

Maria was the last role cast. With only four days until production, Maria was supposed to be a Mexican woman, but MGM wanted to use a black woman instead, pushing for name like Vivica A. Fox and even Halle Barry. Quint came up with Selma Hayek and Mia Maestro. The MGM group called a meeting, and when Quint brought tapes of both Hayek and Maestro, they said which even of them Quint thought would work the best would be fine with them. Maestro was chosen and immediately flown to San Francisco.

The film's nearly 100 million dollar budget was astronomical in relation to Tarantino's other films, but he was shooting a nearly ten hour film on location. They had troubles finding areas of San Francisco that would work as an 1899 lower-class area. The answer, which MGM didn't like, was the find one area that could be used as the interiors and limited exteriors of the Polk Street boarding house, and then build a series of large avenue sets on Treasure Island. This drove costs up, but the sets produced will likely go on to win the Oscar for set direc-



tion. The costumes were also spectacularly expensive, but they were also worth the money.

The story of *Greed* is the story of McTeague, a brute who is an unlicensed dentist. He falls for Trina, a German immigrant girl who is semi-betrothed to Marcus. After knocking Trina out and working on one of her teeth, he kisses her and then says that she needs to return again and again to get more teeth removed. They fall in love and end up getting married. Trina, very shortly after leaving Marcus, wins an illegal lottery and five thousand dollars. This leads Marcus to report McTeague's dentistry business, which then gets shut down.

This section of the film is powerful, and Tarantino directs it remarkably well. The problems with production start here as well. These scenes, shot in the first 10 days of production, are heavily featuring Sewell and Scott, as well as Fraser. Sadly, the chemistry between Sewell and Fraser never materialized. Tarantino did everything

he could but nothing could make the two of them click. Tarantino wanted to replace Sewell, who he saw as too 'British', but instead he was convinced to let Fraser and Sewell work together for an extra two days of rehearsals. This seemed to work, as they re-shot many of the first weeks scene after the rehearsal time and the chemistry grew from cold to merely lukewarm, but it was still better.

As the story continued to be built, so did the problems. There were script issues, as MGM had hired script doctor John Milius to do touch-ups. Tarantino, despite loving Milius, thought that the changes were ruining the film and walked off again, this time for only two days, one of which had been a planned off day, so production was only slightly slowed. Tarantino demanded that he be given control over the script (which he hadn't wanted to have written in the first place as he would have been making a silent film with the original script) and MGM said they'd yank what footage he had and go on with someone else. Quint shrunk back and finished up shooting the film in roughly 120 shooting days.

In the editing room, Tarantino and his editor, Sally Menke, worked on piecing together a Nine Hour Film. The last few weeks of shooting had been rough on Quint, who argued with star Sewell on many occasions, but the film that made it to Menke was, by all accounts, very strong, though there were rumblings from the execs even before editing started that they wanted something far shorter.

"They wanted to cut it off at the knees





before it could even walk.” Tarantino noted in an interview with ABC. Menke was called in for various meetings, but she had been told by Tarantino that he’d handle it. He was called in and asked for roughs and other matters and he’d respond that they’d be coming soon.

On August 14th, almost a full year after production began, the first cut of Greed appeared, complete with every scene mentioned in the shooting script from the original 1923 production. The first screening was a success. Quint screened it for a few friendly media members and select members of the cast, including Jarmusch and Lynch. Lynch was quite impressed and asked if there had been a transfer of it done to any other format. Tarantino said that they’d had a series of DVDs made, and Lynch requested a couple of copies. When asked why, Lynch responded ‘Because I want to show this to people and I’m sure it’ll never make it to the screen. Tarantino sent him five copies two days later.

The first screening for MGM was a disaster. None of the execs could sit through the entire film, even with the built-in breaks every 3 hours. By the end, it was Tarantino, Menke, David Costler (Quint’s only supporter of the MGM suits) and the projectionist who had seen the full thing. The execs came back and asked Tarantino to defend the work. He said that he’d re-edit it down, losing some of the bits that may have seemed extraneous. MGM then asked

Lynch for all the footage. He said that he’d like one more pass with Menke, and MGM agreed. This cut came in at 6 hours, lost several pieces that Quentin thought were among the most impressive and screened that with a preceding talk saying that it could easily be released in two or three parts.

MGM did not go for it and noted that the contract they had signed gave them every right to recall all the footage. Tarantino called Menke, trying to get her to move the reels out, but she informed Tarantino that they’d already picked up the footage two hours prior. Tarantino went back into the meeting and announced that unless the studio accepted Menke’s version, they’d be forced to use an Alan Smithee on the film. That did not phase them at all and the film was released, exactly as the 1924 version, at a running time of two hours.

Tarantino started a lawsuit, but the decks were stacked. Tarantino dropped the suit. MGM then sued Tarantino to get the DVDs that he and Menke had made returned. He did so, but he conveniently forgot to mention the two hundred copies he made using a DVD copier. These are the ones that make the rounds on the internet even today.

The two hour version is terrible. The story has no sort of flow and everything is rushed. The title cards that Tarantino had done by hand are completely missing. So are a half-dozen subplots. And all the majesty that would have made Greed great.



JUDITH MOBEL

MY LIFE ON BROADWAY

SaBean was the dancer. She could do things on her toes that others couldn't do on their flat feet. Me? I'm no dancer. I can barely walk straight. So, how the hell did I end up on Broadway?

I've never been one for, how should I put this, singularity of romance. I like to play the field, maybe get a little drunk and sleep with the doorman...while he's on duty. It happens, you know it happens. Anyhow, I was in NYC, recovering from whatever family drama had taken place the night before. I think my Mom died...or maybe SaBean Oded again. I'm betting on the latter. Anyhow, I went to dinner with this guy, Mark, to a place in Manhattan called Nick's.

I don't know if you've ever been to an NYC burger joint, but they're not the kind of places you take dates, especially not me, a girl of class who makes more in a year selling collectibles than people like Chris Garcia make in a decade. So, this guy, let's call him Roger since that's his name, took me to Nick's on a rainy Friday night.

"So, Roger, what do you do?"

"I'm a producer."

"Anything I've heard of?"

"Maybe."

"Seriously, what have you done?"

"You know how there's off-Broadway and Off-off-Broadway?"

"Yeah."

"Well, I go and find good stuff there and buy them, send 'em on tour and once in a while up to the big time."

"Really?"

"Yeah, but Broadway's a pain in the ass. Hardly worth it for the money it costs."

"You make a lot of money at that?"

"You've got great legs."

"Thank you."

"Even acted?"

"Sure."

"Where?"

"Mostly in the backseat of cars, some-

times in the bedroom. Rarely in the kitchen."

"I bet you're good."

"I've never had any complaints."

"How'd you like to be on Broadway?"

That line must work on every girl. I'm no talent, though I can sing a little, and I never wanted to be on stage, but even had to say that the guy had me hooked deep. I smiled at him.

"Tell me about the part."

A week later, I'm in rehearsals and I'm singing the role of The Governess. IT's meaty, I get to cry and sing at the same time, and I die...well, I'm murdered, but it's the same thing. I sleep with my hunky British Actor boss and then when I speak to the press, he murders me...or does he? The first act is all me: the affair, the fall-out, the confession and the murder. The second act is the trial. Avant-garde? Kinda, with a long dream sequence, but mostly it's a dark and sexy musical.

On first preview night, I'm nervous. Mom's in the crowd, and since Chris won't fly, he sent his uncle Wayne to cheer me on. SaBean replied to my email far more politely than I expected: Dear Judith; Fuck You. Love SaBean. Even Chris' slightly ethnic ex-girlfriend's in the crowd.

The curtain opens and the show starts with my Boss' first song, no overture. Two hours and seventeen minutes later, it's over. I'm spent after the bows and I go and talk to Roger who is waiting backstage.

"How was that?"

"Doesn't matter."

"Doesn't matter?"

"Whether you're good or not, this show doesn't stand a chance."

"It doesn't?"

"It doesn't. We've got six weeks tops."

I started to look around and mentally make a long list of the props I'm gonna take home as my personal, unapproved severance package

THE HUGOS 2015: OR WHY I'M NOT VOTING...AGAIN! BY M LLOYD

To say that I'm disgusted would be an understatement. I'm furiously disgusted. Mad furiously disgusted. I'm so full of chust that I think I may well explode. Fuckin' Hugos!

When folks start voting for the 2015 Hugos, to be presented in that miserable little town of Las Vegas, I'm so sure that they'll all vote for the worst choices. No, I'm not sure, I'm 100% positive they'll choose poorly.

Case in point, Best Novel. There's an easy choice: Jay Lake's *Happy Valley*. It's such a departure, a horror/science fiction novel based around discovering the Lost City of Atlantis on Mars, along with evidence that Ancient Man had made the journey. Yeah, it's old-timey, but it's fun and it's sexy and it's raw and it's right. Nearly as good as his other nominated, but not-winning novel, *Rocket Science*. I'm sure that William Gibson's latest about whatever

he's paranoid about this week, will win, or maybe Connie Willis' *Here's a New Book, Gimme a Hugo* will take it. I don't really care, Jay should win and he doesn't stand a chance...just like last year!

Best Dramatic Presentation? I'm nearly ready to vomit. After they collapsed them back into one award, they made a couple of good choices (*Time-Travel to Stonewall*, *The Buses*) and now we've got a film that remakes a film that won a Hugo less than 15 years ago (*The Two Towers*) and there's one nominated that is the movie version of a TV show that was nominated 15 years ago (*Once More with Feeling: The Buffy Movie*) and now we're expected to vote for one of those two, or a David Croenberg film maybe 10 voters saw or some LA Blow-em-up (*Caustic Waters*) or that lame piece of crap think piece that made *Gattaca* look like *AI* (*Garcia, Wu and Sprinkles' A Day Away On The Lake*). Sweet Jesus why are we stuck with these...these...these chusty pieces of garbage.

Let's go back to the 1960s when good stuff could win Hugos and no voter ever made the mistake of voting poorly.

The Once Was Lost Film Festival

by
Jay Crasdan

There's something almost sinister about attending a film festival where none of the movies have been announced. It's strange, but I had expected more hoopla surrounding the festival. Despite not knowing what was going to be shown, the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood was packed with film aficionados (my Ghod, that's Forrest J Ackerman!), critics (Holy crap, Roger Ebert!), millionaires (Is that really David Packard?) and writers (Wow, Jackie Collins!). The festival's head, the AFI's Chairman of the Board, Sir Howard Stringer, took to the stage a little before the planned start time of 7 and gave a short speech about how this was a

series of films that were once believed gone forever but had been found, in some cases after decades of having never been seen. He started telling the tale of a man named Buck Hoffman. Hoffman was a projectionist from 1918 through the 1950s at the Real in Arizona. The theatre he worked for would often fail to return prints after runs of various films. In the 1930s, he started taking home various movies that he had enjoyed and kept them in a special ice box. Stringer said that Hoffman had died in 1999, but it wasn't until 2003 that the films that Hoffman had saved made their way to formal archives. The Pacific Film Archive had been given all twenty-seven films, nine of which were believed lost, from a private restoration group that kept their existence quiet. They had all been transferred to safety stock, as



The howls of triumph and joy drowned out the accompanying organist. Everyone had come in hopes of this being the film they'd show. As the film went on, it became easy to see why this was the one that everyone wanted. This was everything that the Liz Taylor-Richard Burton version should have been: grand spectacle and amazing costumes and sets. Bara was magnetic, incredible in the role that she was the first to perfect: The Vamp. Cleopatra, after not having been seen by anyone for more than seventy years returned to the screen and afterwards the film received a twenty minute standing ovation.

all of Hoffman's films had been Nitrates. The first film was one that Hoffman himself had transferred in the 1950s and had often screened on the side of his house. The movie was Hollywood!

Hollywood was, in many ways, the fore-runner of the Robert Altman film *The Player*. Everyone in Hollywood seemed to be in it in various small parts. Unseen for several decades, Hollywood featured people like Mary Astor, Fatty Arbuckle, Charlie Chaplin, William S. Hart, Mary Pickford, Doug Fairbanks, and far, far more. In 1923, it was a sensation due to all the star power it threw at the screen.

As a silent, it's a typical rags to Hollywood riches story and it's cute, but I wouldn't have led off the festival with it, not by a long shot. Still, it was good to see all of the stars, especially Griffith and Arbuckle, in the same movie. There were some jumps here and there where the reels had been damaged, but still, it was a wonderful film.

The second feature was introduced as this: "The next feature from the Hoffman estate is one that many have been hoping would show in this theatre one last time. It's complete, to the point where every known frame is present. Here is the reason for the Once Was Lost Film Festival." Stringer then sat down and the title card came up.

Cleopatra.

The night ended with a Q+A with researchers and the reps from the Hoffman Estate, but I trucked out of there in all haste to the party at the Pig & Whistle. I ended up drinking with some joker name Eric Hoffman, no relation to the donor of the films, and we talked about monster movies and other fun.

The next morning found me up at nine, rushing over to the Egyptian to see the long series of shorts. I called Chris when they showed the footage of a Jack Johnson fight that had a reel surviving that happened to include the knockout. The 1909

One-reeler *Jephtah's Daughter: A Biblical Tragedy* was shown and was very interesting considering it was made in 1909. A few other shorts that had been found their way into various collections. My favourite was a Mary Pickford film called *In The Sultan's Garden*.

After lunch (again, The Pig & Whistle), I returned for what I was told would be a feature



film that I'd be most interested in.

I took a seat and somehow word must have leaked out, as there were hundreds of fanboys and Japanese nerds sitting in the auditorium which had been only 1/2 full for the shorts. I grabbed a seat and discovered that I was sitting next to the co-founder of Giant Robot Magazine, Eric Nakamura. I asked him what was showing and he smiled.

"No one told you? It's King Kong, brother."

I had seen all the versions of Kong save for one, and as the lights went down, I realized exactly which one it was going to be.

King Kong in Edo.

In 1938, the first Kaiju film was made. It featured King Kong terrorizing the city of Edo (aka Tokyo) in the 17 or 1800s. It was amazing, and the guy in the suit was terrible. The film wasn't very good, but that didn't matter, it was the FIRST KAIJU! The audience cheered at all the right moments and the experience was far better than the film. The film turned up in a closet at a Japanese Steak house in Chicago, of all places.

The final films were a version of Camille that I didn't want to sit through, and did not, and then the main event. The place was packed and I was in a back-row seat since I didn't sit through Camille. Sir Howard arrived on the stage again and said that some films only exist in fragments, and while this may seem unsatisfactory, the remaining pieces often give us fine films in and of themselves. I hoped this would lead to him pulling back the curtain and debuting the full Magnificent Ambersons or Greed or even Metropolis, but instead, we were treated to 31 minutes of London After Midnight.

The film was incomplete, having come from the Hoffman collection without the



LON CHANEY

LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT



final reel and missing large chunks in the middle. The story is difficult to follow, but it's a detective story, you kinda know how things move. The screening itself was interesting, as the Chaney performance was masterful and nothing short of amaz-

ing. He was fantastic and the film, though difficult to keep up with, was nothing short of amazing. The screening ended and they had a massive string of Q+A. Forry, who had seen it as a kid, was on the panel, as were several of the people involved in getting it restored. One of them, a young guy name Martin Fielder, said that the final reel was in a canister and when it was opened, they found that it had simply turned to Nitroglycerin. A sad ending but what remained was excellent. Roger Ebert, who had been sitting in the front row, then asked a couple of questions about the availability of the picture and no answers were forthcoming.

The festival was a lot of fun. King Kong and Cleopatra were the highlights, though the shorts were wonderful. I have been told to expect a DVD release of Cleopatra and King Kong in Edo, but that's not 100%. Doesn't matter, I've seen them the way they were meant to be seen.



The Winchester Mystery Con

By SaBean MoreL

I don't know how he did it. In fact, I don't want to know. I know his Dad thought it up and there were folks who went along with it as a good idea, but I never NEVER counted myself among the dumb fucks who thought it smart. Corflu was a giant mess, but a mess that everyone enjoyed and that even almost put a guy in the poor house.

Somehow, when Chris put up the bid, he had already gotten an agreement from the Hotel Valencia to give them a good room rate and what little function space they had for almost nothing. I got my room for 99 bucks a night, and it was a Deluxe Room with a King-sized bed. I almost got the 139 dollar suite, but that was a little out of my league since it was just me and I doubted I'd be hooking up with any of these Corflu people. The hotel was nice and I got there the day before to see if Chris needed any help. I knew that he had sunk a lot of his own money in the con, fully planning on losing it and not caring at all. When I found him, he was sitting in front of the hotel smoking a cigar with another attendee. I didn't catch

his name, but he looked scruffy, so I had to figure he was there for the con. We chatted for a minute and then we went and watched as the set-up for the Fan Lounge got under way. Chris had hired caterers, on M's dime I imagine, so all we had to worry about was light decoration. This was no problem for us. He had also arranged for a pre-con gathering of old friends. M and her massive new post-baby boobs, arrived without Jay, who was watching the baby back in their room. Chris had brought her on as Co-chair specifically so she could pay for things, which was a nice idea. If you've got a friend worth a couple of hundred million dollars, I'd have them paying for stuff left and right. Chris had brought out Mike and Manny for the weekend, and Frank Wu, Jason Shachat and Steve Sprinkles were there along with a couple of other folks I'd never seen before. We all had a huge catered meal poolside. We followed this up with drinks in the courtyard. The night had gone perfectly, and

Chris wasn't worried at all, which worried me greatly.

Fri-day morning came and folks began showing up. The first of them from out-of-town was Ted White. I noticed M's reac-



tion when he entered and I figured he was the one who had annoyed so much she left fandom in 1997. The Brits started arriving, including Peter Sullivan, winner of the Bring Us the Hacks campaign run by Arnie & Joyce



Katz and Chris. They had enough funds to bring Peter and Lloyd Penney as well as cover the expenses of Milt Stevens, Robert Lichtman (who lives something like an hour North) and Eric Mayer. That last name was a surprise to all, but it made for an enjoyable con. The first official event was the Opening Ceremonies. These were held in the Hotel Courtyard again, with free drinks and even food brought in by Parsly, Sage, Rosemary & Thyme. The spread was pretty fancy and luckily it was a nice night. Not too cold and the heater they brought out worked really nicely. Chris did the drawing for the Guest of Honor and somehow the name Frank Wu came out. Chris had been GoH in 2009 (Corflatch III in Seattle) and I had become one of the chosen last (Morflu in Morristown, TN). This made three years in a row that long-time Drink Tankers had been pulled from the hat. I feared the GoH speech.

We chatted and the first programme item came, a simple little talk by the folks about the Bay Area Corflus. The panel was OK, but it wasn't a topic I was very interested in, so I mostly hung around the bar and flirted with Earl Kemp (hard to believe that he's almost 83!) and had a nice chat with Art Widner (who's something like 95!). The event went fast and we all retired to the Fan Lounge. I mostly stuck around Chris, but Frank and I got into a long conversation about an article I had written once about the

reconciliation of me and my sister. I didn't want to burst his bubble by telling him I slugged her the last time I saw her.

The conversations were wonderful, and Chris kept disappearing with folks to go and smoke cigars

or have a drink of whiskey. We all retired around 4am, with Chris being asleep in his room before 2.

The next morning was the big deal and the reason that I had come out at all. Chris had somehow gotten the Winchester Mystery House all day to let us use different portions. Chris had even gone so far as to hire two drivers and Limo buses to drive people between the hotel (which is really just across the street, but you know fans) and the House. Everyone arrived at the back room where we'd be doing all the morning sessions, mostly because there was a free breakfast. When I asked Chris how much this had all cost he simply said "Well, M's not quite as rich as she once was." We sat and though the place was touristy, and there were mundanes all over the place, it was a good programme. They did all the traditional Corflu panels, some funny, a couple legit, one with Chris, Earl Kemp, M, and Brad Foster called Sex and The Fanzine. This was a huge and hilarious panel that just had the audience howling.

We all took a brief break around lunch time and the two buses went to the hotel or to Valley Faire, where folks could have a nice lunch. I went with M and Jay to Flames, a tacky coffee shoppe right down the street. It looked like 1/3 of the people went to Chili's across the street. The same number seemed to head into Magiannos.

This would be the right time to mention the Program Book. It was 256 pages, full color, cover and interior, with articles by just about everyone who was listed as attending and art by everyone from Bill Rotsler and ATom to Frank Wu and Brad Foster. Tim Kirk even had a few pieces in the beast. I'd never seen a hard cover program book, but there it was. It was beautiful, and as I understand it, each cost nearly thirty dollars to have made. Chris told me that he'd convinced Warren Harris to do the lay-out and let him know that money was no object. I also heard that there were about five hundred made and that the extras are being sent to various folks around the world. Nice touch.

The main event, as far as I was concerned, started after dinner at the Winchester House. M and Chris had negotiated a deal where M would pay for several hours worth of security and we'd get to use one of the ballrooms of the house. A couple of years before, as a tax shelter, I'm sure, she paid for the restoration of the ballroom's organ to playable condition, which they'd been using for Flashlight tours over the last couple of years. M had a lot of leverage because of that and she used it to get the night's programme held in the house itself, which was amazing. We all gathered into the ballroom, which was never finished, and a friend of Chris' from High School started playing old horror themes on the organ as everyone arrived. It was most impressive and we all barely fit in the room with the dais up front and the all the equipment. It wasn't very comfortable, but the atmosphere was cool enough to



make it worthwhile.

After a few words we had the evening's entertainment. Andy Hooper did another of his reader's theatre pieces, but this time it was also done along with a slideshow. It was called 'Faan-list' and it was about a fan-nish list-serv from the late 1980s through to 2005. It was hilarious as you could pick out the real people who were being portrayed and the old feuds. I sat next to Chris who explained the things I didn't get. It was hilarious, an hour and a half of PowerPoint slides and people reading their messages to the list. I fell over when I saw what had to be a gentle knock at Chris as every other message in the 2005 section was 'New Issue of The Beering House is up on FanzineNation.net!' I remember the days when The Drink Tank was coming out every fifteen minutes, so I laughed harder than anyone.

Some of the group then got taken around on a tour by a single flashlight and the rest of us left and headed back to the hotel. Chris and M went to check on the preparations for the breakfast and awards.

This is where the mess starts.

You see, whether it was the hotel not understanding or Chris just not checking, the hotel thought that we'd just be having a nice breakfast in the restaurant, Citrus. When Chris and M went to talk to them about the preparations, they said that there wouldn't be any because their regular clients would be in the restaurant for brunch as well. They talked this out for about an hour until M had to leave to feed little Jay and I took over. We ended up calling in the manager, who was asleep at home, and having him come in and make a deal.



Since both the restaurant and the courtyard were being used for the Brunch, we'd get the poolside area all to ourselves. Chris and I hurried to get signs made and posted them everywhere to point people in the right direction. Neither Chris or I got to sleep before 6, when we both collapsed in my room, and I woke up around 11, finding that Chris was gone.

I missed the announcement of the FAAn Awards, and as I got there they were just announcing the Past-President of The Fan Writers of America. The Plokta Cabal was given the honor, which was nice since several of them had come all the way from the UK to be at the con. The site-selection was next and it was a battle! There was a group from Vegas who wanted to have another wonderful Vegas Corflu, while another bunch of folks were pitching for the Boston Corflu. There was a lot of discussion all weekend, since there is rarely a contested site selection, and in the end the first vote was a tie. A second vote was called for and Boston won by two votes. Good for them!

After all of that, it was Frank's speech. To say it was weird would be an understatement. He didn't say a word, but he had drawn a series of pictures on white cardboard that he threw to the side like in that Bob Dylan video. It was hilarious as Chris kept handing him more and more cards. He went on for ten minutes just tossing cards to the side. Well-played, especially when he

had done little illustrations to go along with them. There was a tiny dragon in the corner for the first ten or so, then it got bigger, then it started attacking the letters. Eventually, the Dragon took over the entire card and got bigger and bigger as if it was coming to attack the audience. I was told that there was supposed to be a prop moment after it came all the way up, but it wouldn't work at the pool deck.

The con closed with two groups: one went to the Rosicrucian Museum, the other to play softball. The Corflu crowd keeps getting older and older, so the ball games aren't that exciting, but I went along and ended up playing second base. We tied after four brutal, run-filled innings.

And that was Chris' Corflu. After the con officially ended, Chris took a bunch of us out to eat. There were about twelve of us, all the Brings Us the Hacks people, Arnie and Joyce, Chris, M and Jay, Frank, another Vegas fan whose name I didn't catch, and I all sat down and broke bread at a Turkish/Greek place right up the street. We had a good time just chatting. I sat next to Eric Mayer who was howlingly funny. He said he never went to cons and I said neither did I, except for the last three Corflus because Chris or M always covered my room expenses. M told me that the whole thing ran her about half-a-million dollars, including the restoration of the organ. I pointed out that was less than 1/600th of her total worth and she sorta gave the nervous laugh that I love to make her give when she has to admit that she's loaded. We ate huge plates and everyone left full. It was nice to see some of these people who I had never met. I'd read Lloyd's letters in zines for years, but I had never met him. Same with Milt. Chris and Frank were busy talking about putting on a con for Frank's 50th and Chris' 40 Birthdays with whoever that Vegas fan was. Everyone seemed to like the idea.

After din-din, I headed back to my room and read all the zines I had gathered. About 23, a new record! Chris stopped by and we talked for a while before he left me to my room and my fanzines.

YOU COULD HAVE STOPPED HIM

BY SABEAN MOREL AND THE DRINK TANK CAHOOTERY

You all should have known it would lead to tragedy. You all should have seen it coming. There was evidence everywhere! You know Chris was running for Mayor of San Jose and none of you tried to stop him. Shame! Shame on you for dooming us all!

The first sign was the election itself. Chris gets a nice mention in the Metro, the Silicon Valley's Weekly Newspaper. That's followed by Chris' first big rally where nearly 500 people turn up. Signs start popping up. He's invited to all the debates. There's a movement, God forgive us all, a Goddamn Movement, to get Chris elected.

People start to buy commercials. Vote For Chris Garcia: He's A Tower of Light For San Jose! Why didn't anyone who read The Drink Tank stop him? Huh? Was it that it was all too funny? NO! Nothing Chris writes is funny enough to make you forget that you're looking at the guy who will bring us doom.

When the Election Commissioner released the statement that Chris wouldn't be on the ballot, the riot of five thousand people trashing City Hall, the Hundred Million Dollar Eye Sore that it was, that should have told everyone reading that it was far more serious than you had expected. M was there, in the midst of that mob, and though she walked away with the Mayor's Day Planner, she should have known how dangerous Chris was and gone and put a bullet in his gullet. But no, it was all too much fun.

Judith Morel, sweet, slutty Judith. She was always the sensible one of the group. You really should get that looked at she'd tell me. And she was always right. Why didn't she hire a hitman to stop the most dangerous man in Santa Clara County? I'll tell you why, because she wanted to see the chaos. She needed the chaos to feel like



she was alive! She could tell that pieces of Chris she had around the house would be worth lots of bread once it all went down. Christ, she's the worst of them.

At least Jay tried. He called Chris how many times trying to keep him from doing that fucking press conference. 'You shouldn't try so hard, Chris' but did that matter at all? No, not the slightest.

The day of the election, when Chris won on write-ins was the day the world ended. The County Clerk refused to recognize the vote

and insisted that Cindy Chavez had really won when she won less than one-fifth of the vote. Those riots made the earlier riots look like a Kennedy Family Touch Football game. The Adobe Tower: torched, collapsed. The Knight-Ridder buildings: completely demolished. The Tech: now a meaningless pile of rubble (when once it had been a meaningless pile of educational theory). The entire Downtown destroyed, and why? Because no one thought to stop Chris when they had the chance.

When he was arrested and hanged in the City Centre, Chris said only four words "It was a joke!" and then he dangled, left up for days to serve as a warning to all the other hoaxers out there. It was the worst choice they could have made. Panic on the streets of Boston. Panic on the streets of Birmingham, the entire nation in ruins stemming from the Silicon Valley becoming a glowing ember on a map of the USA. Over-privileged White Kids started putting his picture on their walls and t-shirts. When all the blood ran, did any fanzine fan even stop to think what they had done? Nope, because he was much too amusing.

Personally, I drank Iced Crystal-light laced with Red Bull and watched the world burn. I'd known Chris for years, knew exactly what he could be capable of if he decided to become Che Guevera instead of Andy Kaufman. I knew, and I did nothing, mostly because I figured it'd be a good time. Never let anyone say that SaBean MoreL doesn't know how to throw a party that gets people's attention. I even remember the email I sent him when I heard about him running:

Dear Chris

You'll make a great mayor, if you only try hard enough. Don't take 'No' for an answer' and certainly don't give up. Mayor Christopher J. Garcia will change history! The Mexican-Jewish Reich will reign for a Thousand years!

And I don't regret say that at all, especially not since I run the West Coast and have had my choice of all the lovelies who pass through my LA palace.

That's Another Issue of The Drink Tank. Those Dark and Dreary Futures May be prevented by the careful planting of trees and further encouragement of Christopher J. Garcia in all his endeavors (except maybe the whole Mayor thing, which now seems kinda dangerous).

In Sad News, despite having had folks say that the Best Website Hugo was coming back, apparently it is not, so eFanzines.com will have to wait another year. Shame, as eFanzines has only been getting better and better. I wanna thank Frank Wu, Lloyd Penney and John Purcell, and all your submissions and LoCs will be in the next issue. I promise.

And Now I say a few very kind words about a few very kind people. M and Jay are 100% to settle in Finland in the town of Simo, most likely, though they've found a lot of potential cities where they might live. I'm happy for them. Very happy. They'll be getting married in 2008 (why? Because that's the 20th anniversary of the first time he asked her to marry him and they thought that would be cute) and I'll be there, with bells on.

Happy New Year!
Christopher J. Garcia

