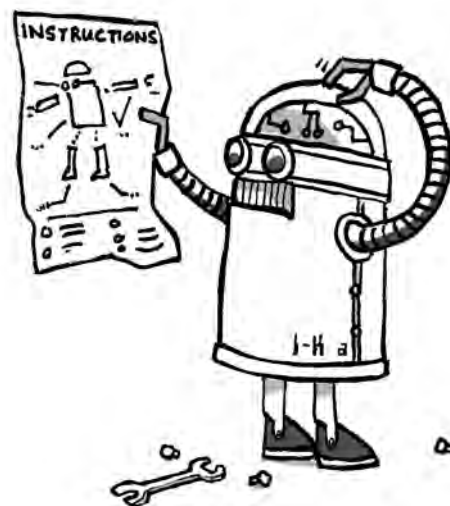


THE (FOURTHRIGHT) FORTNIGHTLY FIX



"I think the worst thing about being a fan is finding out what utterly reprehensible pieces of filth most writers and editors are, then waking up one morning and realizing you are one. Or both. And still no one pays you." [Andy Hooper, 2001]

Moving Pictures

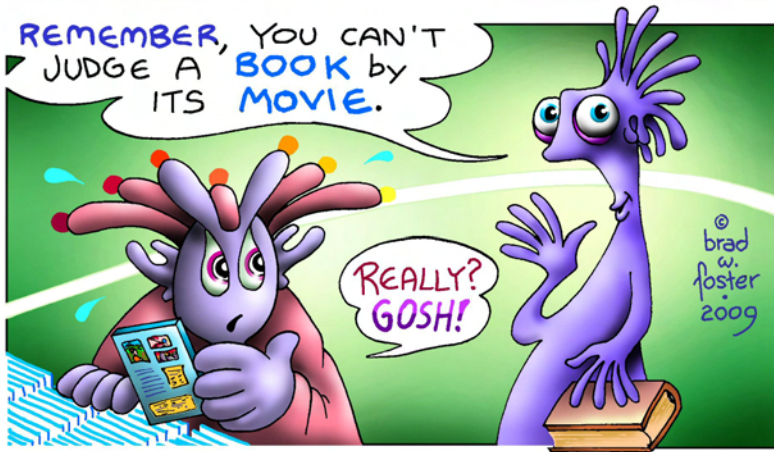
One of the first positive moves I made after losing Ann was signing up for the Cineworld chain's Unlimited card, whereby I pay a monthly fee (initially £11.99, now £13.50) and gain admittance to as many movies as I want. I knew my inner skinflint would ensure I made full use of the contract, and thereby force myself into the outside world at least once each week. It also gave me an excuse (as if one was needed) for meeting up with my friend Ray Holloway, who'd himself signed up back in 2000.

We cranked it up a little this year, when I set myself the goal of seeing fifty movies on the big screen. I assumed it might be a bit of a challenge, only to have hit that target a full two weeks before I set off on my TAFF trip at the end of July. When I returned, a month later, I moved the goalpost to seventy-five movies, a milestone I reached just before distributing the previous issue of *The FFix*. And that doesn't include the three films I saw more than once.

One of the useful side-effects of all this moviegoing is that you find yourself making an effort to attend films which usually wouldn't register, or which you might wait to catch on the dvd release. Sometimes, it's a pleasant surprise (*The Reader* or *(500) Days of Summer*, for example); on other occasions, you're left with a desire to go out to the food kiosk, buy a greasy tortilla wrap and then throw it at the screen (*Surveillance* was bad enough, but *Antichrist* managed the rare achievement of being both brain-numbingly tedious *and* infuriating).

Not all the movies were contemporary, either. Cineworld hosts regular one-day screenings of remastered classics, which this year have included *Spartacus* (1960), *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), *From Russia With Love* (1963) and *The Thing* (1982). In the case of the two horror/sf movies, it's fascinating to note how well physical special effects hold up against the computer-generated sequences produced a quarter-century later.

Anyhow, by the end of November the list read: *(500) Days of Summer*; *12 Rounds*; *An American Werewolf in London*; *An Education*; *Antichrist*; *Blood: The Last Vampire*; *The Blues Brothers*; *Bride Wars*; *Bruno*; *Che, Part One*; *Confessions of a Shopaholic*; *Coraline*¹; *Crank 2: High Voltage*; *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*; *District 9*; *Dorian Gray*; *Drag Me To Hell*²; *Duplicity*; *The Fantastic Mr Fox*; *Friday the 13th*; *From Russia With Love*; *Frost/Nixon*³; *Gamer*; *Gran Torino*; *The Hangover*; *Harry Brown*; *Harry Potter and Half-Blood Prince*; *The Haunting in Connecticut*; *He's Just Not That Into You*; *The Hurt Locker*; *Hush*; *I Love You, Man*; *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus*; *In the Loop*; *The Informant!*; *Inglourious Basterds*; *The International*; *The Invention of Lying*; *Jennifer's Body*; *Knowing*; *Last Chance Harvey*; *The Last House On the Left*; *Lat det ratte komma in* (aka *Let the Right One In*); *Lesbian Vampire Killers*; *Looking For Eric*; *The Men Who Stare at Goats*; *Monsters vs Aliens*¹; *Moon*³; *My Bloody Valentine*¹; *Night At the Museum 2*; *Outlander*; *Pandorum*; *Public Enemies*; *The Reader*; *Religulous*; *Revolutionary Road*; *Role Models*; *Slumdog Millionaire*; *Sorority Row*;



Spartacus; *The Spirit*; *Star Trek*²; *State of Play*³; *Sunshine Cleaning*; *Surrogates*; *Surveillance*; *Terminator Salvation*; *The Thing*; *Three Miles North of Molokom...*³; *Tormented*; *Triangle*; *The Unborn*; *Up*¹; *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*; *Watchmen*²; *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*; *Zombieland*.

[¹Caught those films in 3D, though the keratoconus in my left eye means it's more like 2½D. ²Seen twice so far. ³These were 'enhanced' screenings (Ray Holloway and I saw *Moon* at

the National Film Theatre on London's South Bank, when it was followed by a fascinating Q&A session with director Duncan Jones and producer Stuart Fenegan; the *Frost/Nixon* preview included a live telecast interview with screenwriter Peter Morgan and actor Michael Sheen, whilst the *State of Play* preview offered screenwriter Tony Gilroy; *Three Miles North of Molokom...* was preceded by a live telecast stand-up routine from Russell Howard.]

Another Farewell

I wouldn't claim to have been a *close* friend of Rob Holdstock, but we had known each other for at least five years before I approached him in 1983 to be guest of honour at Novacon 14. To my relief and delight, Rob not only agreed but became an active participant in the convention's evolution, even driving up to attend the first committee meeting and joining us for a meal at a local Indian restaurant. Rob's engagement with the convention itself was similarly enthusiastic and full-on, and I was so pleased it coincided with the release of *Mythago Wood*, his breakthrough fantasy novel.

Rob's death, aged just 61, is a tragedy, and learning he'd been struggling with diabetes in recent years gave it a personal dimension I need not elaborate upon here.

In an exchange on LiveJournal last week, Pat Cadigan suggested I understood loss. I replied that no, I *comprehended* the nature of loss, but *understood* the importance of friends and family, and the legacy you leave. From the outpouring of honest sorrow since the news broke, I'd say the depth of Rob's legacy is beyond doubt.



Down the Loccol

My accelerated schedule seems to have wrongfooted a few correspondents, who are only just getting around to responding to *The FFix* #2. Cue my old pal Chris Holmes:

"I had never realized that we joined the BSFG in the same year, 1977. I had been an Andromeda regular for three or more years, but never entered Fandom. Novacon 7 was my first SF convention, the Holiday Inn, if memory serves. Aah, sweet memories!"

Actually, Novacon 7 was at the Royal Angus Hotel; it was Novacon 8 which moved across to the Holiday Inn, (in)famous for having a swimming pool right next to the main bar and employing staff who got sniffy when convention members (most notably Kate Solomon) decided to use both facilities on the same evening. Personally, I'd have been more concerned about the chains around the fire escape doors, which I noticed as I left for home on the Friday evening.

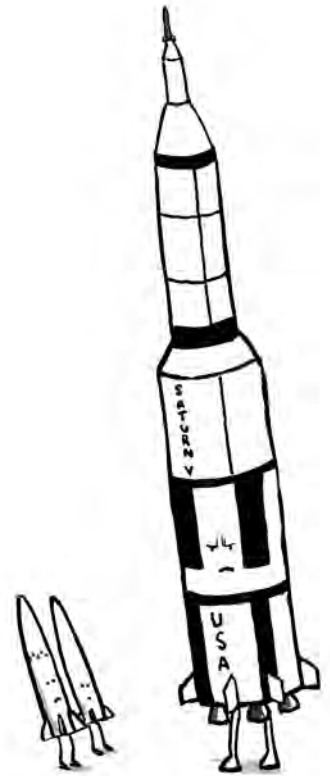
I wrote last issue of the personal impact of the global economic crunch, which unsurprisingly sparked a feedback thread:

Ron Salomon: “I can commiserate about the diminishing value syndrome, after going through similarly small amounts of money becoming smaller yet. When your tiny mutual fund account value ensmalls to the point where it won't cover lunch for two, well that's a depression for me.”

Joel Lane: “Another sad reflection of the mindless greed of financial institutions and the deregulated free-market culture that surrounds them. I don't see any of the major [British] parties challenging this poison.”

Eric Lindsay: “The more I see of corporate shenanigans, the more I think of the corporate structure as encouraging sociopath level activity by executives. Time for a circuit breaker, I feel. Perhaps a refusal to allow any trading in shares with a cycle time of less than a month, rather than responses in nanoseconds.”

Lloyd Penney: “Everyone's finances have taken a drubbing, so I am relieved that I finally have day time work. I am an editorial assistant at the Law Society of Upper Canada, one of the oldest law societies in the English-speaking world, established 1797. I like the work, they like me and my work, and the money is grand. I would like to stay, if they'll keep me. Right now, though, it's a six-month contract.”



I also heard from: Art Widner (“Thou fixen me up real good..”); Peter Sullivan (“Back in the days of paper fanzines, the cost of producing & posting them was always a recurring theme. But one zine editor I knew reckoned that the zine paid for itself simply by keeping him out of the pub for a couple of evenings a month.”); Brad Foster (“I like the idea of the short-n-quick zine, and each time I see one like *The FFix* show up, makes me think I really need to get my own act together one of these days and try my hand at doing it myself.”); Lucy Huntzinger (“Had someone today ask me about pubbing my ish. Am ashamed to say I can't even remember the name of my first fanzine, done at Ted White's house in 1983. But that was long ago and far away; I like journals and blogs and being online. I don't miss the days of paper zines at all. In this regard, I am all for modernization.”).

TAFF Update

The opening chapter of my TransAtlantic Fan Fund report has just appeared in the ninth issue of Steven Silver's *Argentus*, which can be downloaded from eFanzines.com. I'm currently working on the second, covering my initial stay in Montreal, which is scheduled to appear in the next edition of Guy H Lillian III's *Challenger* (previous issues are available at challzine.net).

You have just been reading *THE FORTNIGHTLY FIX #4*, dated 7 December 2009. A crime against literature perpetrated by Steve Green, who can be reached via stevegreen@livejournal.com. Title illustration by David O'Connell (do check out his website, scribblehound.com). Other artwork by David, Brad Foster and Atom. My usual thanks to Bill Burns at eFanzines.com.