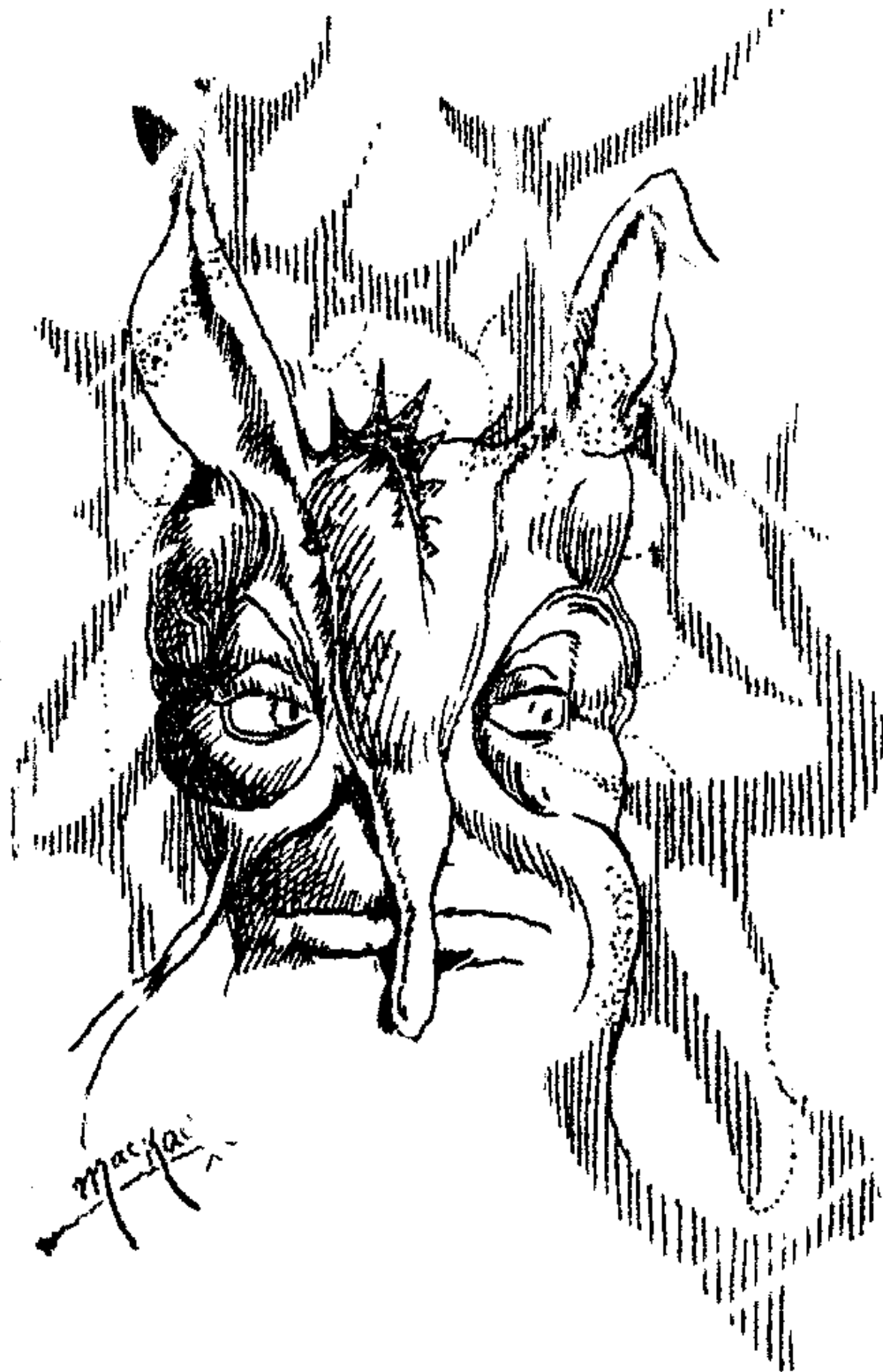


THE FANACTICAL FANACTIVIST

The Fannish E-Zine of the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards Society Dedicated to Promoting Canadian Fanzine Fandom

#3

September 2011



ASTOUNDING NEWS!

Well, astounding to me at any rate. You recall Eric Chu's wonderful design for the Faned which appeared on the cover of last issue?

Lawrence Prime, a well-known member of Monster Attack Team Canada and an award winning model maker has agreed to sculpt the Faned! Huzzah!

At a recent M.A.T.C. meeting he and I discussed the feasibility of the task. He said the sculpting would be quite easy, but he'd like to add a little more detail, as well as chose a more upright stance (for stability's sake) and dispense with the stand, converting the exhaust from the fountain pen rocket back pack into a billowing base. Sounds good to me!

He also felt that enlarging the Faned to 5 or 6 inches in height would be more impressive and make it easier to sculpt.

He will craft the sculpture, but it will be up to me to figure out how to reproduce it. Hmm, that's the next step for me. As it turns out, I will have plenty of time to research this because he will not be able to create the Faned for the first CFF Awards presentation at the upcoming VCON 36. But it will be ready by next year's presentation.

That means that this year's lucky winners will receive a tiny Faned handcrafted by me! Sad, isn't it? At least they will be collector's items, I guess. At any rate, as soon as the 'proper' Faneds are ready I will ship one to each of this year's recipients. That way they'll have one impressive Faned to display prominently in their home, and another rather hideous Faned to hide in the closet. Who could ask for anything better?

The award is going to look very good indeed. Prime created a superb model from scratch of the Martian Fighting Machine in the famous Classics Illustrated Comic Book version of Wells' 'War of The Worlds' that I still drool over in my sleep. And the intricate, detailed miniature he constructed of George Pal's version of 'The Time Machine' was even more extraordinary! I have every confidence his master sculpture of the Faned will be much sought after by potential recipients. In fact, reviving Canadian zinedom is going to be a lot easier with such a prize at stake! I is very happy about this.

Another cool thing about the M.A.T.C. meeting was the presence of Eric Chu freshly returned from his trip to Hong Kong. I got to thank him personally for his wonderful design. He will receive the first cast of Prime's 'The Faned' as a permanent 'thank you'.

LETTERS OF COMMENT

The Graeme's comments are in dark Blue.

From: Robert Runté, August 23, 2011
Former Faned of 'New Canadian Fandom'

Design is good... Almost enough to make me edit again.... Robert.

You refer to Eric Chu's design for the proposed 'Faned' which appeared on last issue's cover. The first year's Award I will have to do myself and, considering I possess no artistic ability whatsoever, I will not be able to follow Chu's design and must produce whatever my fingers create. The resulting Faned will probably bear a significant resemblance to a lump of clay covered in finger prints. Consequently your momentary temptation to resume fan pubbing will probably dissipate quickly. But next year, when Lawrence Prime's magnificent version of Eric Chu's design is unveiled, I predict you will be sorely tempted indeed. Better start planning your layout & contributors now if I were you.... ☺

From: Garth Spencer, August 24, 2011
Faned of 'One Swell Foop'.

Dear Graeme,

Getting down to brass tacks:

Whatever happened to adamantite tacks?

What are the fanzines being produced in Canada now? (Occasionally I try to compile a list, but the Steampunk Canada zine was entirely new to me.)

Well, issue #1 provided a partial list. It will be an ongoing task to add more as they crop up. Hoped it is that the CFF Awards will inspire new zines to start up.

What are the issues current in contemporary fanzines now? (I have really fallen behind on my fanzine reading, so I need to do a reading blitz.) It might be helpful to cover some such material; otherwise we will tend to self-referential navel-gazing.

Other than fannish apathy, I don't know if there are any current issues being debated. If such exist, they pertain to the local readership of a given zine. Certainly there's nothing on a Canada-wide scale going on. But I don't see that as a problem. Examining 'current issues' is not the primary purpose of a fanzine, in my opinion, but rather celebrating and advocating whatever the

zine relates to, be it club activity or an interest in Steam Punk Costuming. A zine devoted to 'current issues' would be rather academic in nature, methinks; a sure-fire descent into self-referential navel-gazing'.

Of course, it can be argued THIS zine is devoted to debating current issues, or at least the issue of how to revive zine fandom. But then, most of the 'debate' is in the form of a loc column. THAT is where you will find most discussion of 'issues' in any current zine. Other than editorials, I personally feel that is where all debate belongs, if only to keep the loc columns a'bouncing.

What do fans see when they see fanzines, or fanzine fans? Apparently fanzines have been under the radar as far as contemporary fans are concerned; and when they did see fanzine fans, contempos (my coinage) imagined they were being snubbed.

Fanzines? Archaic garbage. Old phart stuff. Fanzine fans? Old pharts. SF zinedom? Old stuff. Dead stuff. Beloved by snobs & dinosaurs who hate & resent on-the-ball pushing-the-envelope modern pioneering fans because they just don't get it. Worst of all? BORING OLD BASTARDS who deaden the air around them by their stifling presence. BOB's you can't get away from fast enough. BOB's to be avoided at all costs. BOBs!!!! Watch out for the BOBs!

Does that answer your question?

Referring to modern fans as 'contempos' is a very nifty coinage, but... in and of itself feels like a variant form of 'contempt' and strikes me as divisive and dismissive at the same time, rejecting modern fans as something beyond the pale, the very attitude of trufandom that turns modern fans off the most.

Unless it be the tendency to accuse modern fans of 'betraying' trufandom by not living up to our glorious past. That really pisses them off. This could be the single most irritating habit of BOBs.

Us BOBs have got to stop lecturing modern fans as if we are revered elders descending from Mount Olympus in order to teach them the 'proper way' to be a 'real' fan. "Go fuck yourself" is the usual response to that approach.

We need a paradigm shift here. We are NOT the masters of yesteryear. We are NOT an elite. We are NOT a clique. We ARE the niche fandom enthusiasts of TODAY joyfully participating in a charming and highly creative, highly personal RETRO fanac that delivers immense personal satisfaction greater than and well beyond the momentary gratification to be gained by doing what everyone else is doing. We practice a rare and unique art form. We are a bunch of

enthusiasts LIVING IN THE PRESENT. In fact, WE ARE CONTEMPORARY. Zine pubbing is fun to do NOW. That's what we is. Ghu damn it.

In short, we've got to stop talking about how different modern fans are from us. We've got to stop thinking, talking, and behaving like BOBs. We've got to STOP BEING BOBS.

What we must do is reveal ourselves to be what we actually are, modern fans engaged in an obscure but fun contemporary hobby. Portraying ourselves as living fossils is the kiss of death.

These days I liken fanpubbing to ham radio: both are hobbies that seemed to be on their way out, due to the Internet. But maybe they're both transmogrifying, due to the Internet. Discuss.

Everything changes all the time. Fact of life. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is stable. I personally am not interested in how the internet is changing this or that, so am not interested in discussing any changes at all, merely briefly noticing them as they pass me by.

What does intrigue me is the concept of mastering an old craft tradition (some people manufacture their own paper out of milk cartons, some people fashion costume jewellery out of broken glass; I like to create fanzines) and presenting it to fellow contemporary fans as a fun and very satisfying hobby. Sure, ham radio is no longer a widely popular fad, nor slot cars, HO scale trains or plastic model building, but there are still plenty of enthusiasts around, and every now and again someone new joins their ranks.

If train enthusiasts grouse about the glory days being over, what with hobby shop after hobby shop shutting down (I think there's only one devoted to trains left in the Lower Mainland) then they'll never succeed in encouraging anyone to join them. But if they emphasise how easy it is to order tracks & trains on-line, how easy it is to get in touch with other train enthusiasts via the internet and stay active in the world-wide train enthusiast community; then, yes, I think their particular hobby remains viable, remains capable of attracting newcomers.

So too, I believe, Fanzine fandom remains viable. Not only that, but capable of a vigorous revival.

Consider role-playing. Remember the Tarzan clubs? In the 1920s their members outnumbered the Boy Scouts! But eventually, in part due to librarians' refusal to carry the Tarzan books because of their racial prejudice against Germans, the super keen interest in Tarzan role-playing died out. Who today remembers this phenomenon?

And who back then, once the Tarzan clubs were dead, could have predicted the enormous resurgence of role-playing with the sudden blossoming of innumerable Star Trek clubs a half century later? Bloody amazing if you ask me. Point is, just because a social phenomenon is dead or dying doesn't mean it's gone forever. A new form may appear unexpectedly anytime anywhere.

Besides, given the numerous predictions of imminent abandonment of Facebook, YouTube, etc., and declarations that even tweeting may be on the wane, not to mention predictions of the death of the internet itself, it may very well be (especially if the world economy collapses and governments universally transform themselves into Draconian regimes) that paper fanzines will make a small (possibly underground) come back.

See how easy it is to be optimistic and positive about the future? Never say die.

[This has been a prolonged editorial rant by the Graeme who, quite obviously, is still struggling to divest himself of his BOB tendencies.]

From: Lloyd Penney, August 26, 2011
Famed Aurora-winning Loc Hack.
1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON
M9C 2B2

Dear Graeme:

Just a few days ago, Yvonne and I got back from this year's Worldcon in Reno, NV. A great time was had by all, and we sure did, too. This means that I have fallen behind with now two issues of The Fanactical Fanactivist, so I will get to these two issues so you'll have something for the third issue, already in progress.

Someday I'd like to attend a worldcon...

1...No end to the madness? I hope there's no end to it. This isn't madness you suffer from, it's madness you enjoy. You're right, the zines produced in this country are, for the most part, isolated from the larger group of zines in the US. We don't usually trade. I know WARP in Montréal goes to a few American editors, like Guy Lillian III, but we don't do much more. I've been asked if there is a tradition of Canadian zines the same way there are in the US and Britain, and I've had to say no, not like it used to be.

I'm not sure what the "way it used to be" was like. From the few issues of 'Light' and 'CanFan' that I've seen, faneds like Leslie A. Croutch were in regular

touch with a few clubs across Canada, contact which consisted mostly of trades and locs, but often articles and illos submitted. Still, the number of active fans was small. Then Victoria, Edmonton and Toronto revved up and produced a larger number of zines more or less contemporary with a sudden flourishing of conventions, and everything seemed fresh and exciting, but that generation moved on, and was never very numerous to begin with, being a handful of faneds producing multiple zines (much as I do now).

Fact is, Canadian fanzine fandom has always been fewer than a dozen faneds at any given time, has always been a narrow niche fandom, and has always had more to do with US fandom than Canadian (at least in terms of readers). There was, briefly, albeit several times, a sense of community across Canada, but that was something of an illusion, being more in the way of shared experience than any kind of formal exchange or arrangement.

In short, harkening back to the good old days is merely an exercise in nostalgia. Mind you, as a fantiquarian I don't see anything wrong with that, we have a rich heritage. But as a means of promoting zinedom the nostalgia approach is a mistake. Almost literally no one has ever heard of the old zines, let alone read them. Nobody cares. So to try to use the past as a wedge to get people interested in the present just doesn't work.

We have to use the present to get people involved, THEN hit them with the past to deepen their interest and commitment.

Our emphasis should not be on restoring the past. That is impossible. We have to work with what we've got (about a dozen zines, a handful of writers, almost no artists), celebrate what we've got, and see if we can share how much fun it is to be involved in our niche fandom, see if we can encourage newbies to join in and BUILD a greater zinedom!

We'll never get anywhere if we restrict our activity to grousing and complaining over comparisons with the past. Then we truly do deserve our reputation as BOBs. We've got to stop being BOBs. Our only comparisons should be between the present and the FUTURE.

We've got to start small (and we certainly are) and build incrementally bit by bit till it's no longer a question of a 'revival' but of 'maintaining' an ongoing, active zinedom.

I look forward to seeing what kind of award comes out of your fevered imaginings... I know of one Montréal fan, Sylvain St-Pierre, who used to produce small figurines for

art show and masquerade awards. I don't know if he'd be willing to do this; if not, he might be able to give you guidance as to how to make the clay figurines you have in mind.

Lawrence Prime is the solution, in terms of producing the master for all Faneds to come. But I would be interested to contact Sylvain St-Pierre. For instance, was each award a one of a kind clay sculpture? Or did he somehow make molds and cast multiple copies? However, not really enough time for me to learn and experiment before the first award presentation.

Hmm, I might just award each recipient a block of clay and tell them to make their own award, or if that seems cruel, tell them the block is an I.O.U. for an actual Faned to be forwarded once Prime has created the master and I've figured out how to reproduce it. Hmm....

I like the idea that if you win one year, you are ineligible the next year. I can see Taral winning all awards for individuals (Best Fan Writer, Best Letterhack, Best Fan Artist), but in different years.

Nothing wrong with that. He deserves them all.

Mention of the Canadian Fancyclopedia makes me remember that Joe Siclari at Fanac.org has relaunched Fancyclopedia 3. Wonder if you should get in touch with him to see if what you've got could be integrated with their project? I need to get in touch with the above-mentioned Sylvain St-Pierre; he invented some French-language fannish terms I'd like to share with both you and Joe.

Our two fancyclopedias are very different in approach and purpose. Joe is welcome to use whatever he likes from my Canfancyclopedia. However, I'm not interested in acquiring a 'complete' compendium of fannish lore, but rather just enough to put the Canadian content in context.

I'd very much like to receive Sylavain's invented fannish terms and add them to my Canfancyclopedia.

I believe Jeff Boman does intend to produce another issue of The Original Universe. He is finishing up a work contract, plus has had to work out some health issues.

Looking forward to his next ish.

2...Interesting design for the Faned. I do like the pen. Yvonne has collected some pens over the years, including quills and fountain pens, so I have learned to write with a fountain pen.

I was trained to write with a fountain pen. Had to dip the nib in the bottle of ink set into the school desk every few letters. Very frustrating. I could never get my feeble letters to match the magnificent specimens on the green board above the blackboard. To this day my penmanship sucks. Do they even teach it anymore?

Some information for you and Neil Jamieson-Williams...according to what I found out at the Reno Worldcon, there may soon be a Hugo for what being called Best Fancast, which will include podcasts, websites and the like, and will leave Best Fanzine for paper publications. I think this was voted on, and will probably be ratified in Chicago next year. Ah, there it is on page 6. This compromise seemed to appease everyone at those meetings; now to see how fandom as a whole reacts.

Are you sure it restricts Best Fanzine to just paper publications? It seems to me the criteria for Best Fancast refers to an audio or video PERFORMANCE. Yes, it says "periodical", but refers to "four or more episodes." To me the implication is that Podcasts are no longer valid Best Fanzine candidates, but any written form of communication still is, including blogs, live journals, facebook, etc. The changes don't say they're eligible, but don't exclude them either.

I admit to being a little biased, but one of my nominations for Best Fanzine this year was Adam Smith's The Dominion Dispatch. I am a letter writer and contributor to this zine, and it has been some fun so far. Vol. 2 No. 1 is available as both a paper publication and as a .pdf, I believe. (I still don't really know what happened there. Is there a 10% rule that prevents candidates who receive less than 10% of the vote from getting on the ballot?)

No. You just need to get three votes to get on the ballot. (Though if more than five candidates get three or more votes, only the five with the most votes are placed on the ballot.) Apparently nobody got more than two votes for Best Fanzine. Sigh.

Continued success with this project. Some say it will work, and others have their doubts. We'll never know for sure unless you try it. Good luck!

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

**From: Murray Moore, August 29, 2011
Faned of 'Aztec Blue'
Mississauga, Ontario**

Hello! Graeme.

Here I lie, on our blue couch, a week after returning home, in the wake of reading your FANACTICAL FANACTIVIST 1 & 2.

Jack Layton is buried, Libyans are playing Where's Ghadafi?, and The Graeme is giving CPR to the endangered Canadian fanzine.

The Charge of the Light Brigade and General George Armstrong Custer, move over, make room for the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards.

Ah, but everyone REMEMBERS Custer! (Now you see my hidden agenda.)

When Mary Ellen and I spent time with you, the Saturday before When Words Collide weekend, you did not seem feverish. If only I had read TFF 1 when you gave it to me: I would have tried to help you.

Too late. I'm infected!

But seriously...

In my case you have alerted me to the existence of a fanzine named SWILL, a title of which I want to see a sample.

< <http://swill.uldunemedia.ca/> >

Just be aware you have to force yourself to wade through the ghastly pudmonkey font to grasp the excellent contents of the last two 'revived Swill' issues. Worth the effort, though painful.

Of the 12 current English language fanzines you list, eight are clubzines. The potential for skewed results when clubzines and non-clubzines are in competition for votes is that the clubzines have a bigger base of voters who might be encouraged to block vote for their club's publication.

Don't worry. Fannish apathy will prevent that. We'll be lucky to get any votes at all.

I also very much dislike nominees for an award being allowed to withdraw their name (see the Hugo Awards). My position is, I and the other voters give the award: if you don't want it, you can refuse it, but you don't get to skew the election by not being on the ballot if the voters want you on the ballot.

Ah, but this year there are NO voters! By megalomaniacal fiat, remember?

Thus I disagree with your position that winner of Best Whatever won't be on the ballot for that award the following year.

I understand that you want to spread the egoboo. But I nevertheless disagree.

Not just a question of spreading egoboo, but of preventing the awards from becoming predictable and boring. If the same zine wins 'Best Fanzine' year after year, eventually people won't give a damn who wins. I don't want that to happen.

The above apparent negativity aside, I wish I was going to be at VCon for the announcement of the first Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards. The proto-award is attractive, too.

But, I just realized, you are not official, Graeme: you do not have a Lloyd Penney LoC.

I'm official now!

--- In CFE_AWARDS@yahoo.com, "The Graeme" <rgraeme@...> wrote:

> ... and October issue #3 already 1/3rd complete. Huzzah! More locs please!

This evening I read TFF 1 and 2, wrote and e-mailed a LoC to you, Graeme, and joined this group. -whew- One LoC per issue is all you get from me.

I'll settle for that!

The photo of the piles of fanzines in our basement is out-dated. The piles are higher.

You refer to the pict in our yahoo group. Of course! Every collection grows. Law of nature.

TO SUM UP

I think I know what I am doing?

Cheers! The Graeme

You can contact me at < rgraeme@shaw.ca > or R. G. Cameron, 13315 104th Ave, Apt 72G, Surrey, BC, Canada, V3T 1V5

COLOPHON

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