

AMOR

twelve wishes you

A VERY
MERRY
HAPPY



Since this twelfth issue of the Amor De Cosmos Peoples' Memorial Quasi-revolutionary Susanzine should (Goddess willing) reach you sometime between Christmas and New Year's, I'd like to use it to wish everyone on my mailing list a happy and blossoming New Year. You too, Bruce Gillespie, yes. As usual, AMOR is a letter-substitute. I apologize to people to whom I owe letters-- I really do WANT to write to you-- but I'm a full-time teacher (who marked 300 term papers, 130 English 100 papers, and 45 sf class exams in the past 13 weeks, as well as teaching 3 classes, two of them new) a half-time administrator for the 16 Canlit survey classes, and, this fall, a hostess for various visiting fen. If you've heard from me, you're probably me Mum. If you're not on my mailing list, apologies, but it is finite, I'm afraid. "

ABOUT THE COVLR: A creation myth of the Tsimsian Indians of the Pacific coast says that, In The Beginning, the earth was covered with clouds; it was a dark swamp, where, in the rain, lived various creatures-- notably frogs. Raven, the Trickster, flew up to the vault of heaven, where the gods sat in the sunshine. With his beak, he pierced the cloud-cover, allowing sunlight to fall on earth for the first time. When the light touched the frogs, some of them were transformed into the image of the gods: they became human. The frog, and especially the flying frog, are important figures in Tsimsian art and ritual. I've used Cathryn Miller's flying frog to wish you all a happy holiday celebrating The Creation Myth of Your Choice: may you have lots of sunshine, too!

((In the interests of knowing something about what's around me, I decided to learn something about Northwest Indian life and culture. Being an academic, my obvious approach was to enrol in a class, specifically in an experimental course on Indian art and worldview held at the Museum of Anthropology this fall. I would have gotten far more out of the class, of course, if I'd had time to do the reading, but at least I did get a booklist, and some overview of all the different Coast Indian cultures, their mythologies, and the place of art in both their rituals and everyday life. In fact, only the Tsimsian, apparently, had a distinct word for, thus concept of, "art" as opposed to ornamentation, ritual objects, etc.-- that word was the word for "butterfly," something purely beautiful and decorative.

((For those of you coming up to Vancouver for next year's Westercon, I recommend a visit to the museum, about a quarter of a mile north along a cedar-lined road from the convention centre. Its chief recommendation is its lack of museum-ness; in the central hall at least, totem poles and carvings are arranged with lots of space around them, in the light from huge windows overlooking Burrard Inlet, the mountains of the north shore, and the snowy mountains north up Howe Sound. I saw it at sunset, with the water rippling pink, the cedars dark silhouettes, the lighthouse beam flashing... For some sense of how the coastal poles and houses look in their natural environment, find OUT OF THE SILENCE, a lovely book of photographs by Adelaide de Menil, with text by William Reid-- *everything* about Northwest Indian cultures seems to have been written or inspired by Bill Reid, a one-person cultural revival--published by Harper and Row.))

ABOUT THE QUEEBSHOT COVER: By the time you get this AMOR, nominations will be about to close, or will have closed, for the current DUFF campaign to send some deserving fan to the 1977 Australian National Convention (and bring him/her back, of course.) I couldn't think of a more deserving fan than Bill Rotsler, cartoonist extraordinaire and Nice Person. I wrote to him about running, and I spoke to several peripatetic Aussiefen, who all agreed that Rotsler would be a right bloke, or whatever. Besides, think of the illustrated DUFF report we'll get. Bob Tucker, Michael and I are Bill's North American supporters, John Bangsund and (I think-- things got confused with all the travellers travelling) Eric Lindsay his Aussie ones. We can't think of a person we'd prefer to have represent us (no slight to the other candidates running, of course; they're fine people); more important, the Aussies want to meet Bill. I should have a DUFF ballot out with next issue (realsoonthen). *Rotsler for DUFF!*

UPDATE: My time sense is strangely distorted; so much has happened this fall-- as indeed has been characteristic of my life for lo these several years-- that three months seems like three subjective years. That trip two weekends ago up through the mountains to Brandywine falls... that was months ago, across a gulf of marking English 100 composition exams, 130 of them to be marked by each of the 4 people on my marking committee, with a 25% failure rate and a numbed brain for days... except that worldcon was only last week, wasn't it? Well: let's see: Paul Williams arrived, making friends for APPLE BAY (Warner, 1975) and DAS ENERGEI (which is prominently displayed in the "recommended" rack at Duthies' main store, Paul. I've also been having fun recently re-arranging book racks, because Terry Carr's THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

seems to have been picked by the local paperback monopoly distributor as sf-book-of-the-month; it's not only in the bookstores-- along with Marta Randall's ISLANDS, both from Pyramid-- it's in drugstores and the like, and I've been having fun in trufannish fashion putting it in front of the UFO books on the racks; covered up a couple of John Rackhams with Randalls, too, Marta.))

Anyway: I made oatmeal cookies for Paul, and the GEORGIA STRAIGHT reporter who hasn't yet returned my copy of DAS ENERGEI-- nor has the story appeared, alas, Paul; Paul, in turn, stapled AMOR for me. Paul went off up the highway to revisit Apple Bay on Remembrance Day. David Suzuki spoke to the sf class, for 2½ fascinating hours during which I wished I were an sf writer. Fascinating stuff! Did you know that cellular chimeras, fusions of the genetic matter of wildly different cells, are now quite common?--fusions of rat and chicken cells (a "Richard Nixon"), rat and fish, rat and mosquito, even (according to a recent NATURE) rat and tobacco plant, multiplying away? Then Suzuki got serious, talking about the problems of recombinant DNA, the problems of scientists' refusal to accept responsibility for what they were, potentially, creating (more and deadlier bacteria which could flourish in human waste, for instance) and about the factory university and its failure to provide ideals, or any place for the exploration of knowledge for its own sake... he sounded very bitter, very frustrated. A strange evening... made all the stranger by the heavy fog which had covered the campus for days creating odd tensions-- several false fire alarms in Buchanan Tower, a bomb scare in the library, a general feeling of fuzzymindedness: I was exhausted as I reluctantly and ungraciously excused myself, thanked Dr. Suzuki (leaving him talking about Harlan Ellison with Allyn Cadogan, as I recall), and dashed off with Rick and Lynne to meet Eli Cohen at the airport, only about 6 hours late because of the fog.

Eli went off to be job interviewed. Paul arrived back in the middle of the night (with built-in maternal instincts, I woke up as soon as I heard the key) and Eric Lindsay arrived. Somewhere in there, I marked 45 Canadian Literature essays, showed the guests a mountain or so, and took Eric (and Eli) to a Canajan Cultural Event. I managed to work in a Dumptruck concert, a very bad play set in Saskatoon, and an Earle Birney poetry reading for Carey, a concert for Christine-- for Eric, it was a sculpture exhibit by David Gilhooly, the frog man. "My Beavers and I" it was called, apparently ungrammatically-- but really, as in "My Beavers and I Carving a Sports Trophy" (ceramic beavers and a totem pole of a football, softball, baseball, etc.). Or how about "Frog Victoria," "Mao Tse Toad," "Space Frog Noah," "My Beavers Carve Me As a Hermes Post With Cubist Pigeon," or "In California It's Against the Law To Fish From a Car," featuring a frog, with a gun, in a blue VW with a frog hood ornament, balanced on a ball carved with fish? Isn't Canadian culture marvellous?

Eli decided to move to Vancouver, somewhere between comparing temperatures with Regina, and gorging on shrimp and crab at the Ship of the Seven Seas' seafood buffet. He then left. Paul already had left (--zoom!), the faint notes of "Ambulance Blues" dying along the highway (sorry, Paul, but "On the Beach" has to be one of the most self-pitying records I've ever heard. Even if he is in T.O. keepin' jive alive.) Eric stayed another week, during which I kept regretting that I was so tired and hassled and busy with marking that I couldn't sit and talk to him more; Eric had one of the most amazingly-stocked minds I've ever encountered. (He did surprise me a little, though. Sometimes I'd make what seemed to me a perfectly obvious comment about The Universe and my-- or women's--place in it, and he'd say "I didn't think you were so *radical*, Susan." And then he was surprised that I could cook.)

DIGRESSION: CORRECTION: Speaking of cooking, a bad case of careless corfluing wiped out some of the directions on lastish's soup recipe, for some of you at least. That's ¼ c. chopped onions, combine the ingredients, simmer 5 minutes. I bought some fresh correction fluid and resolved not to type at night, when I'm tired.

CLONE OF DIGRESSION: I told David Suzuki all the clone jokes I could remember, which wasn't many. Help, people. (Denny? Dena? Jon?)

Eric, bless him, folded and stapled the last issue of AMOR ready for mailing, for me. You owe its actual addressing-and-stamping, however, to my dentist. You see, I noticed, about the time of the Paul-Eli-Eric visit (which coincided with lots of marking, seeing students for counselling, and administration-stuff) that I had a funny swelling around the site of my root-canal job. It didn't hurt, so I ignored it... about 2 weeks later I finally saw my dentist, who yelled loudly at me, put me on penicillen, and then did emergency surgery-- seems I had an infection which was draining merrily into my body (and here I thought that run-over-by-a-bus feeling was quite *normal* for term time.) The evening after the surgery (six stitches and a gouge to the bank balance) I decided it would hardly be fair to mark essays, so I addressed AMOR. This may explain why Victoria Vayne got two copies, and why the stamps are pasted sloppily... Lessee, I recovered enough to cook American Thanksgiving dinner, and hostess Father Frank Denton, Jeff Frane and John Berry from Seattle. The next week, Terry Carr dropped by to talk to my sf class. The week after that, John came up again to see David Bromberg (who is Very Weird. I had never seen him live, and was tremendously Impressed. I was less thanwhelmed, however, by Jimmy Buffett, a good acoustic singer who's gone for Southern Fried Rock, loud and crude. Speaking of music, I think the Murray McLaughlin concert was the standout of this season, as of last. He's made the transition from acoustic-guitar-lone-folkie into the punk-rocker-he-always-was-at-heart perfectly-- last year Arlo Guthrie showed how NOT to do it-- reworking his standard songs like "Honky Red" so that after seven years or so they sound completley new. His backup band, The Silver Tractors (yes), are superb (Ben Mink, late of Stringband, is still with them on mandolin and rock fiddle), and the live show is tight. I think there was a parenthesis up there.)

WHILE WE ARE SPEAKING OF CANAJAN MUSIC: The background vocals for this effort come from Joni Mitchell, whose "Hejira" is slowly winding tendrils round my mind, Toller Cranston and all; and from.... (banjo equivalent of a fanfare).... *the cast album, "Songs From Cruel Tears"!*... available for \$5.00, and I'd suggest including a dollar for postage, from: Humphrey and the Dumptrucks, Box 3028, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (Sunflower Records.)

Warning: The CRUEL TEARS stuff is more c&w than Dumptrucks' usual fare; and it's unbelievably sexist, some of it, because part of the point, indeed most of the point, of the opera is the attitudes the truckers have towards women ("Women are the cause of it all.") Johnny and Kathy's love duet is even soppiet out of context. But you get



to hear David Miller (photographed in his Roy-the-nerd role) doing "Roy's Aria", the "Homemakers' Duet," which is a delight, and Dumptruck doing fine stuff, especially "Catalogue Blues." (The only song left off was Flora's "Why Do You Treat Me This Way?" which is a fine country song-- why left off, gang?) The latest prairie rumour has it that CRUEL TEARS will be doing a national tour, but with the Moose Jaw Kid busy with another novel, I hear, I don't know what's happening.

The record was an early Christmas present from Eli, I think to make up for an earlier gift: Canadian culture reaching its nationalistic nadir in "Prairie Grass, Prairie Sky," a collection of local ballads leading down to "Moose Jaw Woman" (Don Mills Lady?)-- which is actually being played on the CBC, Father Frank. So much for Canadian content regulations.

Finally, Stringband are in the studio with "Thanks to the Following," due in January: \$5.00 from Stringband, 44 Sussex Ave., Toronto. Tell people that Susan sent you. (Gary Farber reports that Anna Vargo-- and he-- were freaked when Humphrey answered a letter in person. No, glitter stars they aren't. Also they can't afford secretaries. Buy records, feed a folksinger today.) Clone of finally, I hear there's another Pied Pumkin album in the works. We now return you to our programme, Susan Hartmann Susan.....

UPDATE SOME MORE: I marked English 100 essays. (*"Literature is useless to the science students. Science students do not need to write proses or poems in their lab works. They only require simply english to express their work."*) I went to department meetings. I fidgeted in my office while the appointments committee held its meeting. Kieran Kealy, one of my pleasanter colleagues (he collects editions of ALICE IN WONDERLAND, and teaches children's lit) dropped by to borrow my "Poison Maiden" article on women in Marvel comics "because I saw it listed on your cv at the appointments meeting." "What happened?" "Jerry Wasserman got tenure. I didn't know you were into comics. I'm writing..." "What did they say about ME?" "You? Oh, you weren't even considered." "???" "No, it was so obvious we had to keep you that we didn't even bother talking about it. Wanna borrow some copies of MS. MARVEL?"

I marked some good sf class essays and stories-- and some bad ones, ones that began "There was no need to broadcast it over the galaxy. The feeling of freedom spread faster than words." And: "The Third Intergalactic War had dragged on for twenty years by 3917, with no immediate end in sight." There seems to be an end in sight with the school work-- bare patches are appearing on both my desks-- though that wasn't the case when I decided that I was simply too tired and peopled-out to spend the Merry Holiday Season being More Gafia in the exotic East Bay. Alas. But just as well: superhostess Dena Brown has been forced away from her pre-med textbooks, and is, at the moment, recuperating from a serious operation. Get well, Dena.

Immediately after I decided that I wanted to spend Christmas at home, with a bottle of good sherry, a pile of blankets and pillows around me, and a stack of Ngaio Marsh mysteries... I agreed to write a 5,000 word intro for the Gregg Press re-issue of THE HERITAGE OF HASTUR. I think I likefeeling overworked. There are also various other writing projects underway... but today, I merrily waved my neighbours off to Hawaii (Rob's leading a field trip; I'm in the wrong field), assuring Sharon that I was QUITE happy to be staying home watering her plants... and then took myself off to hike down to the beach. It was one of those clear, freshly-scrubbed days when the mountains could have been cut from a tourist brochure and pasted sharply against the intense blue sky. The sun glittered on the water, on hundreds of sailboats. The air was warm: December 19, and I'm out hiking in a sweatshirt that's survived from Girl Guide camp days! The roses are, in B.C. legend fashion, blooming merrily (it's been 12°C or so, the past week and more); holly berries glisten. The carol singers have been serenading the neighbourhood for several weeks-- I came home from an airport run two weeks ago and found them singing "Silent Night" to and with the Mounties from the station at the end of the street-- but it doesn't feel like Christmas. Mum should send me a parcel of snow... I think I'll wrap this up, and put up my Christmas tree.

DIGRESSION: Prompted by reading in a back issue of GILGAMESH the sad tale of how A Certain SF Pro's Dean got upset when An Irate Reader sent him a copy of the pro's fanzine, I think I should mention that: AMOR is not produced on U.B.C. time, or with U.B.C. materials. Fanzines, or anything larger than a letter, should go to the university; anything else can come here, or go to school. Home seems a fairly safe address for a little longer (touch the proverbial Wood) (I got tired of people doing it to me, see) since The Nasty Developer just went bankrupt.

UPDATE UPDATED: I had an odd sort of Christmas surprise, I guess, the other evening. The phone rang, about 9:30 here or 12:30 Toronto time. "Hello" said Michael. "I thought you'd like to know that you're divorced." "Yippity shit!" I said, or words to that effect, before realizing that meant I owed \$200 in lawyers' fees. Since I started off the year by getting, er, engaged-as-a-joke to Jerry Jacks, and then falling ~~mad sane~~ madly in love (not with Jerry, sorry dear), it seems only fitting to end up with a 3-month waiting period until the divorce is final and I can apply to get my name back legally. Michael says he'll write it all up. It certainly has been a year.

Well: as I said somewhat earlier, have a merry. I saw the Christmas present I want in the December Ms-- a display of stuffed vegetable toys (eggplant, cauliflower, carrot) with the loveliest stuffed peapod-- it unzips to reveal five detachable peas. Oooo.

FINAL MESSAGES: *Flushing in 1980!* As Official Toastwhozit, or, as I prefer, Toaster, my message to you tonight is..... English muffins with apricot jam! And remember, *Rotsler for DUFF.*

AMOR # 12: artwork by Bill Rotsler (Queebshot), Cathryn Miller (p. 1), Terry Austin (p. 4) and Joe Pearson (p. 6). Lettering, p. 1, John Berry.

Electrostencils by Victoria Vayne.

Mimeo, BCSFA, with or without Allyn Codogan.

"I love fandom. It's even better than having an ant farm."--Bill Gibson, *English 314*



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