

Fandom on Infinite Earths



The Drink Tank Issue 185

Yes, that's a cover from Espana, and yes, it's a lot of fun and yes...I'm pretty sure that Ape is modeled on me. Always good to have an Espana cover.

There's fun afoot as John Purcell and Taral have provided pieces for this issue. Plus art from Mo Starkey, Dann Lopez, Bill Rotler, Genevieve (aka Tunaboos on Deviantart.com) and more!

The following piece is from John Purcell and is a great piece of faan fiction. It makes me laugh like a mad man. And So, let us get to it!



Yet another vision of "Fandom on Infinite Earths"

by

John Purcell

"Hurry up and finish getting dressed! We'll be late for the awards ceremony." Adjusting my necktie, I added, "And remember: this is probably going on streaming video through the Virtual Fandom Lounge, so you'll need to watch your language."

My wife poked her head out of the bathroom, sticking her tongue out at me. "Oh, so now you don't want me to be myself. I see how this works." Shutting the door again, I heard the latch lock. *Hmm*, I *hmm*ed. *Now I'll have to hold it for at least another five minutes.*

I had to admit, this was the most nervous I had ever been when attending a Corflu. Granted, it was only my third one, but even so, getting nominated for a FAAn Award was a pretty big deal. I had to explain to my wife why this was so since she figured the Hugo meant more. Not to me; being named to the short list for the FAAn for Best Fanzine was a heck of an honor, and I wanted to be on top of my game for the big show. So I fiddled with my necktie, making sure it was absolutely perfect so that Curt Phillips and Guy Lillian, who would both be probably watching via the VFL, would be totally envious of the whole shebang.

After what seemed like eternity but was really only three and half minutes, my wife exited the hotel bathroom. Once again, she looked

absolutely stunning. Her long, red hair cascaded over her bare shoulders, and the purple-and-orange floor-length gown perfectly complemented her figure. "Val, you look absolutely stunning," I whispered in awe. *Lucky me. Take that, Graham Charnock! You'll never touch her again, not after what you did Friday night in the consuite. Filthy old phart...*

No, I wasn't gonna rub anybody's face in this at all. But I did really want to enjoy this day to its fullest. Having the hottest babe in fandom for my wife helped the cause.

"Yippee, skippee," I said, and ducked into the bathroom. "Be out in a jiff."

"You do that, Prostate Man."

Val was always quick with the rejoinders.

Moments later, we promenaded to the elevators in the Hotel Deca. Once inside, I pressed the button for the second floor, where the Grand Ballroom awaited our grand entrance. When the elevator doors irised open, we stepped out into Something Else.

Gone was the Hotel Deca.

Its elegant art deco ambiance, the openness, the beautiful, plush chairs, the wonderful color scheme, the pleasant hotel staff... everything was gone. In its place was some rinky-dink dive of a hotel that reeked of stale cigarette smoke, and the never-been-vacuumed short pile carpeting was permanently stained by spilled bottles of Wild Turkey. Val and I stood there, taking this all in, while one of those just mentioned wild turkeys ran past, followed closely by one of the greasiest chefs I have ever seen.



“Wotthell...” was all I could manage to say.

Val shrugged, and said, “A bit quieter than I thought it would be.”

“What?” I couldn’t believe what she had said. “Nothing looks amiss here to you? This is supposed to be the ‘luxurious Hotel Deca’ that, I might add, is setting us back a pretty penny just to be here. Where are the plush, green lobby chairs? The trappings of 20th century art deco that you oohed and aahed over all weekend long? The splendid high-columned entrance? The delicious mahogany woodwork? And where’s your red hair? When the hell did you dye it brown?” She was still in that gorgeous purple-and-orange evening gown clinging to her figure, which helped bring me back to some semblance of reality.

“What are you talking about?” Val shot back, glaring at me as if I was stupid. “Come on. We’ve got to get to the awards ceremony or we’ll be late.”

“True enough. So which way’s the Grand Ballroom? I can’t wait to see the chandelier hanging from an 18-foot ceiling. It’s made from hand-blown glass and wrought iron, according to the hotel’s website.”

Again, my wife stared at me in disbelief. “What in the world are you talking about? Which hotel did you think we were staying at? The Ritz-Sheraton? We couldn’t afford anything like that! Heck, nobody can.”

She led me across the skanky lobby to a hand-written flipchart that listed the day and evening’s events.

“WELCOME TO ARKADELPHICON!” was colored in big letters across the top of the sheet. In slightly smaller and neater letters was “THE 79TH WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION.” Her hand traced the entries half-way down the page, ending with “Hugo Awards: Meeting Room C.” “Eh?” I muttered, rooted to the spot in consternation, then had to run to catch up to Val, who was already outside the door to Meeting Room C. I flashed my name badge to the gopher guarding the door, who let me pass with a nod. We made our way to the first five rows, acknowledging the waves and salutations of friends as we sat down.

My eyes wandered around the room, taking it all in with complete and utter confusion. “This doesn’t make any sense,” I whispered to Val.

“Nothing is as it seems, or as it should be. This is totally Not Right.”

She turned to me, smiled, and said, “Look, you need to calm down. I know you’re nervous about maybe winning the Best Fanzine Hugo, but you’re acting really weird. Take a chill pill, hubby.”

I took a deep breath and sighed. “You’re right. I am really nervous. But that has nothing to do with this, this sudden...*change*. I mean, what ever happened to the Hotel Deca? When we were getting ready for this that’s where we were!”

Valerie patted my arm affectionately, but also did so with a very matronly attitude. “Boy, you really *are* out of sorts, aren’t you?”

It was all so strange to me. I had to talk to somebody else besides my wife. Twisting around in my folding chair like a demented contortionist, I tried to locate Randy Byers. He’d know what was going on, I figured. But he was nowhere to be found. “Where the heck’s Randy Byers?” I muttered aloud.

The long-haired lady in front of me turned around. It was Jay Lake. “Nobody knows where he disappeared to,” Jay told me.

“Huh?” That was the best I could say under the circumstances.

“Oh, come on, you remember what happened. A lot of people blame Randy for bankrupting fandom by hosting Corflu Zed at that impossibly expensive hotel in Seattle. What with all the other expenses and making it BYOS (Bring Your Own Shiner), it left a lot of people with virtually no money, but who still wanted to attend cons. Of course, it didn’t help that in 2010

Corflu was in England and the WorldCon was down in Melbourne that same year, so the exorbitant airfares hurt fans, too. And then that damn Garcia issued the *coup de grace* by not only hosting Corflu in San Jose (of all places), but charging ridiculously high fees to give personal guided tours of his computer museum. Damn bastard killed us all." Jay spat the last sentence out in disgust.

I was aghast. "That's insane! But...but....I...." I wheeled around, still looking for Byers, my eyes resting on my wife. "That doesn't explain what happened to Randy."

A light touch on my shoulder made me jump and look behind me. It was Claire Brialey, looking as sweet as ever, but noticeably disheveled from an apparently difficult train trip across country. Mark Plummer dozed in the chair next to her, his hands grasping the latest issue of *No Sin But Ignorance* in his lap.

"The last thing anybody heard about Randy was a few years back," Claire told me in a hushed voice, as if she was imparting some secret information. "Rumour was he was



living on a South Pacific atoll under an assumed name. Something like Claude D. Monet. It was never confirmed, but it made for a great fanzine article." She smiled triumphantly, then sat back.

My mind whirled. Numb from the confusion, I decided the only thing that I could do was to sit there and hope that everything would turn out just fine and make sense in a few minutes. It wasn't easy, but it made me feel a little bit better.

Six minutes and thirty-three seconds went by. Yes, I was counting; I always do that when I'm trying to zen out. The con's Toastmaster, Kim Stanley Robinson (who still looked a lot like me), approached the podium. He cleared his

throat and began speaking. "Welcome everybody to the 79th World Science Fiction Convention held in beautiful Arkadelphia, Arkansas!" A smattering of applause greeted that comment. "Tonight we will be presenting the Hugo Awards for achievements in Science Fiction, beginning with the Fan Awards. The first one is for the Best Fan Writer who published work during the calendar year 2020."

Val touched my arm, held

my sweaty and trembling hand. I had been nominated for this award, too, but I didn't stand a snowball's chance in College Station against the competition. "Let's cut right to the chase here, shall we? The first award, for Best Fan Writer, is...(ripping of cheap envelope)...well, what do you know? For the tenth year in a row, it's a tie: Dave Langford and John Scalzi!"

The two winners trotted up on stage from opposite directions, doing the appropriate muggings for the cameras, playfully doing a tug-of-war on the shabbiest looking silver rocket I had ever seen. The base fell off, clattered on the make-shift stage, then rolled off the edge. Ted White kicked at it, missed. Langford and Scalzi exited, holding what was left of the award between them.

Stan Robinson said, "Don't they make a cute couple?" A half-hearted laugh went up, as if they'd been hearing the same line for the last nine years. Not missing a beat, Robinson continued. "The next Fan Hugo Award is for the best fanzine produced during calendar year 2020. And the winner of the 2021 Best Fanzine Hugo Award goes to....(rip).... *Pablo Lennis!*"

A great cry went up, cheers and jeers combined. I couldn't believe my ears. That pronouncement definitely did not help at all. The next thing Robinson said made matters worse: "Accepting the award for John Thiel is Arnie Katz!" More cheers and jeers. More, people were turning and staring at me, angrily shaking their heads or smiling; some even looked as if they just didn't care.

I cried out in pain. "Why is

everybody looking at me? I'm not Arnie Katz! I'm John Purcell! Editor of *Askance*! I was nominated for this award, damn it all to hell! This year was supposed to be **my** turn to win! What the hell's going on here?"

That made Val grab my right arm so hard it made me wince. "Knock it off! You're making a spectacle of yourself. Get up there and accept the award."

"ME??!???"

"Yes, you!" she hissed. "You promised John Thiel that if his zine won this award you would accept it for him. Now get up there and say something nice about him, for once!"

Visibly shaking, I stood up. People were applauding, and those in our row scrunched up and slid themselves out of the way as I made my way to the stage. Ted White glared at me as I began my approach to Kim Stanley Robinson, who smiled and held out the rocket-ship-shaped aluminum foil award to me. I reached out, and just as my hand was about to close over it, I woke up in a cold sweat. Still shaking, my hands were clenched tight around the bedsheets.

"What a terrible, terrible dream!" I said, relieved. "I dreamt that I was about to win the Best Fanzine Hugo award for *Askance*, and instead it went to *Pablo Lennis*! And I had to accept it and say 'nice things' about John Thiel! Egad!"

Grumbling, my wife Joyce rolled over in bed, and said, "That's it. You need to see a doctor, Arnie. That's the fourth time this week you've dreamt of being John Purcell."



Milestones *Tara*

Two milestones for furry fandom recently...

The first is a new low in how the fandom is depicted to the general public.

I expect few of you would likely watch a Canadian made sitcom called *Robson Arms*, showing on CBC. It's about the numerous residents of an old apartment house in Vancouver. I never watched the program myself. In fact, I had never heard of it until some spots for the upcoming episode caught my eye. With a sinking feeling I knew I had to watch it.

One of the girls living in the *Robson Arms* wasn't sure she wanted

to stay in BC, and was thinking of relocating in Toronto. For someone in BC, that's like admitting you want to leave the Shire and settle in Mordor. In an effort to talk her out of it, a friend takes her to an offbeat party where people have an odd way of looking inward to find their true selves.

Even if you're not a furry, you've already guessed it. The two girls found themselves surrounded by pathetic, dancing "furries" in costume. One of them removes his head and explains all about the inner animal, and how to get in touch with it. Meanwhile the two girls make expressions like they'd found a dead mouse in their fresh garden salad. One of the furries is even trying to shag their leg. The costumes were so bad they'd be laughed at if they had made an appearance at any halfway seasoned con. Just baggy generic pajamas with a cartoon heads.

What I wonder is why furries seem to have been taken such a hold on the media that they get their butts kicked like this so often. It isn't the first time -- there have been magazine articles, scenes on CSI, and entries in books on curious sexual fetishes. There isn't one chance in a thousand of anyone in the general public ever meeting a furry, and knowing it. Nor for anyone in the media who doesn't go looking for them.

Unfortunately, they do...

Perhaps that's why. Furries are one in a thousand, even ten thousand. You can't make fun of Pollacks,

Queers, and Micks anymore. They'll kick *your* butt. If not by precipitously connecting the toe of their shoe with the fundament of your pants, then in a chewing out you won't soon forget. The whole incident might well make the next day's news.

Science fiction fans used to have the same problem with stereotyping -- people thought all fans were wild eyed believers in Little Green Men who wore capes like Raymond Massey in *Things to Come*. "Zap, zap! Ray guns are passé!" ran a Toronto newspaper headline at Torcon II as late as 1973. We've outgrown it, but it took forty years or more. More recently Trekkies have struggled to outgrow the image of pimply girls in love with Mr. Spock, and overweight guys with bumpy Klingon foreheads. (Actually, that stereotype is pretty much true.) But SF has become respectable enough for college courses. And you don't make fun of a genre on which Hollywood deems it worthwhile to spend tens of millions of dollars for next summer's blockbuster.

By comparison with furies, Trekkies and SF fans are *visible* minorities you can't so easily ridicule. But it is perfectly safe to make fun of a group so small they are almost non-existent, who are so without influence among intellectual circles, or importance in any boardroom, that nobody will take their grievance seriously. The only group that could possibly be safer than furies to make fun of would be pixies.

Not all PR is bad though. In recent talks with the good folk running the Montreal worldcon next year, we've established that I'll be designing Anticipation's t-shirt. Everyone at the worldcon will be wearing it, and no doubt taking it to other cons for years to come. Worldcon t-shirts are status symbols in fandom. A badge of honour to show your inclusion in the tribe. Rather than force a corporate style con logo on me, or demand I include some half-assed mascot or other, Anticipation has given me what amounts to carte blanche. (As long as its PG, the art doesn't even have to be bilingual. It does have to be *labeled* in both official languages though.)

Guess what? It'll be furry. It took me very little time to make up my mind about that, as an image almost immediately popped into my head. What symbolizes Canada better than moose or beavers? Hockey of course. And what symbolizes Montreal better than the Montreal Canadiens? ¹ When I told Steve Stiles I'd do the shirt, he virtually demanded I make it a skunk. (You can't find a better judge of what's fannish than that, can you?) Relieved of any doubt at that point, it all came together in my head.

Yes, my furry children! If I have any say, and I do, the official t-shirt for the 2009 worldcon will be a hockey playing skunk in a Hab uniform!

Put that in your hash pipe, *Robson Arms*, and smoke it!

(Endnotes)

¹ For all you Anglos, that's pronounced "Keh-neh-dyehns" with no emphasis on any syllable. Make sure you get that "y" as in "yeah". Really nasalize it. Pretend you're Pepe Le Pew. Hell, you might even pass as a furry!



This edition of CorFlu: 28 Zines Later, is the first that actually features the CorFlu itself. All the photos are from me and Linda from WorldCon and are photos of people with the scraf that Leigh Ann knitted.

OK, here we go!

Friday: Hold Me

I looked up and saw that Linda was walking around, all awake and rubbing it into my face, being all smug about it. I was still in that phase where I could kill anyone who makes me get up and move around. I sat up and looked the Lovely & Talented Linda. She seemed to have a sense of purpose.

“What’s up, darling?”

“You need to get up, baby. It’s almost noon!”

I heard the word noon and a panic set in. I had a ton of stuff to do before we started checking people in at 6. I was shocked that I’d slept so long. I’m usually good for a four-hour turnaround on the first day of a convention. This was weird.

I jumped out of bed and made my way to the bath, starting to fill the tub and then doing a fast turn around. I got back to the bedroom and started through on my clothes. It was then that I noticed that Linda was watching Channel 37 and they were showing an interview with Mike Glyer talking about File 770 from when he was the GoH at some con. I then noticed that the scroll was talking about the hours of operation for many of the ConSuites and

what food options were where. It also noted that the time was 10:15.

“Sweetheart, where did you get that it was Noon?”

“I said ten.” Linda said. “You should really listen closer.”

I really should, but then again, I was obviously in the state where I had not think the worst was about to happen since, in fact, the worst was probably about to happen. I got dressed and made sure I was wearing a decent t-shirt: in this case, a WorldCon shirt that I won at a BASFA auction that was completely clean. I watched a little of the CFTV stuff, which was really nice, and headed down to get some breakfast. I was ready for the awesome to begin.

Once I was downstairs, I started what would be a day of running into people. I first ran into Laurraine Tutahasi and then Ed Green and Liz Mortensen.

“Chris, you old so-and-so.” Ed said, coming over to shake hands.

“Ed, you made it!” I said, glad to see him. He’s one of those people who doesn’t regularly attend a CorFlu, but he came because he was interested from all the strange advertising I’d been doing with the Website and the YouTube videos. It didn’t hurt that James and Stef had been gathering people on their side of the Atlantic and there were a few folks from Australia coming too. It was an international CorFlu, that was for sure, and then I saw proof when Dave Langford walked over.



"Well, Chris, it is good to see you again!" Dave said.

I hadn't talked to him since some-time during the Eastercon I went to when I came out for work and just happened to be the same time. It was good to see him and I'd made sure he would be able to come by pushing a bring LangFlu fund to bring him out.

"Good to have you out here, Dave!" I said, offering him my hand.

"So, I understand that you're planning on doing something out of the ordinary with this particular gathering, Chris."

"Well, would you expect anything else, Dave?"

"From you Chris, I've no idea what ever to expect!" He said.

I headed to check on the various areas that were to be up and running. The Pool deck side ConSuite for smokers was already housing three smokers out on the deck. I could tell that this was to be a popular location. Ed Stoeke was out there, and we chatted. He's usually the Party Maven for a ton of cons out this way. He was chatting folks up and it was obvious that they were all enjoying themselves in a non-tabacco way. I was sure that he'd get along with a number of the guys who had come out for the con.

I headed across to the Silicon Valley Room, which really looked great. It was hilarious the number of people who were in there staring at the scrolling bulletin board. I'd OCR'd a few important zines and loaded the text so that it would continuous-

ly scroll on the board. Since they built the board to bend at three points, we'd mounted it across the two turns of the walls and you could see that folks just stuck with a single location and let the words flow by them. There was John Hertz, Leigh Ann Hildebrand, Jason Schachat and Andy Trembley were reading the third chapter of



The Enchanted Duplicator. I would be back to read Ah, Sweet Idocy without have to hand the physical copy.

"Ah Chris, good morning, good morning!" Mr. Hertz said as I walked in. "Everything seems to be going well."

"And it's only going to get...well, that's as much as I can give you for certain." I said.

There was a delicious layout in the Suite. We'd ordered cookies and a veggie plate, plus we'd provided a lovely cheese and cracker platter and since we technically had corkage waived everywhere in the hotel since we'd ordered a ton of food from the hotel, I had folks bring a big thing of chips and salsa and there were two crock-pots full of soup: today Clam Chowder and Miso. It smelled really nice.

I took a seat and took a look at the zines that Christian and folks unpacked from the suitcases. This room had zines from the 1980s and 90s. I'd managed to acquire enough of them to fill the huge space, but there were far more seating areas. I noticed that a couple of folks I'd never seen before sitting around and reading various zines. I'd been hoping that Murray Moore would be around, but I didn't see him.

I headed down and saw Linda checking her eMail on one of the tables outside Sprigs.

"You wanna get some breakfast?" I asked.

"Promise you won't abandon me?" She asked.

"Absolutely."

We walked in and took a seat on the edge so that I could see folks as they walked by and make small talk across the planters. Folks kept walking by who I really wished that I could get a few words with. The first guy was Mr. Mike Glycer, who was on a positively Langfordian streak winning the Best Fanzine Hugo. Mike stopped for a moment and we chatted. He was enjoying the ConSuite, he said, but the smell of the soup had driven him crazy. I hadn't thought of that. After a couple of minutes, he walked on and then Jo Rhett, our man, walked by. He stopped and slung himself across to join us. I always love having Jo visit, and just a few moments later, John The Rock Coxon emerged and joined us. We were having a crowded breakfast, but we all decided that the All-You-Can-Eat Buffet method was probably the best idea. John and I, as always, put a serious hurt on the sausage and potatoes.

As I was on my second plate (and John his third) a new face emerged and made me very happy indeed. Frank Wu in ages. Probably close to two years. He'd made his movie, *Guidolon*, managed to sell it, made almost no money on playing the Festival Circuit and then a limited release, and then managed to get himself a much bigger deal for a much different cartoon series that led to him becoming a big deal animation mogul. Ganadin Pictures was a serious studio. It had certainly come a long way from me doing the voice of *Guidolon*.

"Chris! How the heck are you?" he

said.

"Ah, Mr. Wu. Where've you been? The last I heard of you, you were making millions on Steam-Powered Monster Demolishers for ABC Kids."

"It got cancelled. It didn't appeal to kids. Really, I think I was its target audience."

"I know how that goes. I didn't know you were planning on being here." I said.

"I did. Surprise!" Linda said.

"Have you been up to the Far ConSuite?" I asked.

"Not yet, I just got here." Frank answered.

"You should go and make a little love to the walls."

Frank looked at me with a very strange look. We chattered a little more, but Cheryl Morgan came by and started chatting with Frank and I went back for more breakfast meats.

I managed to make it through the entire meal in the same seat and across from Linda. We even talked! It was a miracle! That never happened at cons these days. John even pointed out that we were taking over all the conversation at the table. This might have been because Jo wasn't in the conversation much and John had to deal with eating, so that left it just to us.

Looking at my watch, it was time to check what James and Stef were doing. I'd been kind of dreading it, because I gave them near complete freedom with the concept of what they'd be doing with the

rooms.

I got up from the table, kissed Linda goodbye, knowing that I'd only see her when I went through the fetching of my badge. She'd volunteered to run registra-



tion, and had a dozen volunteers within a few days. It was pretty awesome that she could call in so many forces. That's why she's Lovely & Talented.

I headed down the stairs to the city rooms on the lower level. I could hear the work that was furiously going on. I almost worried about what I would see when I got in there, but first I saw a face I had not expected.



"Is that Mr. Peter Sullivan?" I said.
"Damn, there goes another surprise."

I walked over and stuck my hand out, taking a shake from the Great Big Man himself.

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

"Well, it seemed like a good time to come out and see what's going on. Besides, who could miss Chris Garcia's CorFlu?"

Those words freaked me out the most. Do you ever get the feeling that the story's too damn real and in the present tense? This was one of those moments.

"What are those two up to in there?" I used the classic What's James Bacon upto dodge.

I turned the corner and there were James, Max, Stef, Ken and Jerry and a few other BASFans. It was a wild scene. I'd been looking for a place to put the Mimeograph stuff, and when James heard that I had a room with a ton of stuff ready to be made into some sort of post-apocalyptic world, James jumped all over it and volunteered to set it all up.

And they did an incredible, nearly terrifying job. The mimeograph, the electrostencil and the other required materials were all in the center, and along the walls was all the cyclone fencing I'd got when the museum ended phase three construction and they'd posted all these posters for various historical fanzines. There was a ragged poster for Hyphen, a half-burned poster celebrating File 770, even a Drink Tank poster which proclaimed it 'The King of

the Crudzines!'. They'd managed to make it look like there'd been a riot and this was the left-over world. It was brilliant.

"You guys did an amazing job."

"Tank ya much, Mr. Garcia." James said.

Stef looked like he'd been through the ringer. It looked like he'd been in charge of making the blood-splatters happen, which was probably the best job for the mad man. Max must have been working a lot because she was positively worn out.

I was very glad we didn't go with the 1960s office theme I was working on at first. That would have been fun, but this was far more fun.

"A little piece of the Fallen Earth for your shining moment." Peter said, walking in behind me. "I'm actually affraid to walk through this place."

James looked quite pleased with himself. Colin Hinz entered.

"Is this the Mimeo room?" Colin asked.

"Ah, Colin! Good, the man who understands these futuristic beasts has arrived." I said, heading over to shake his hand.

"This place is creepy." Colin said.
"Very Repo Man."

I thought about that for a bit before I got down to talking to Colin about keeping the room working.

"We'll probably have a couple of people today and a few more tomorrow. I'm betting they'll all know how to work it

themselves." Colin noted.

I figured he was right, but I was in need of some rest, and I had stuff to go over before the big opening. I also had to figure out how to keep a few folks out of the know for just a few more minutes.

I walked out into the hall and there was a crew of folks from Further Confusion, who had decided to come down since I'd been working for the Creators Lounge there. I exchanged some greetings and took a pile of art pieces from Felicia. There were about 25 different pieces, which I was going to put to good use.

I walked across to the office and asked for Samantha. I had a few things to go over with her, specifically the evil plan for 7:35pm. She told me of all the little problems, but everything had happened and gone very well so far. She'd been very nice about all the weird requests, but it worked so well for us.

The entire morning I kept running into new people who I was so glad to see. There was a group of Boston fans who were there and I was happy to see them all. The funny thing is that I saw all sorts of folks who I would never have expected to see at a CorFlu.. When Linda was going over the list of attendees, she said that it was a little like a SMoFlu, which would



be a bizarre combination to have happen. I ran into Kevin Standlee and we chatted for a while. I managed to grab lunch with John Coxon and Christian and we all had a wonderful time.

And then it was time to go and prepare. The reg desk would open and then send everyone upstairs to the Ballroom where the second part of the fun would begin.

I had to prepare by showering and then getting properly dressed. It would be this time, when folks were starting to get their boxes and party favours that the secret would be completely out of the bag.

I'd have a lot to answer for then, but now I had bigger, and frankly more difficult fish to fry.

I had to figure out how to get my hair straight.

I was in the room and Linda was sitting on the bed watching the CorFlu 1999 photo montage. It was really impressive.

"Did you see what James did in the Mimeo room?" Linda asked. "It scared the hell out of me."

I kissed her and checked the room for all the stuff. I had my suit and every hair product known to man.

"You ready for the check-in?" I asked.

"Johanna, Leigh Ann, Radar, Jason, Dave Gallaher, Bobby and Sarah, Andy and Mette will be there. I think Mary Burns agreed to help too. It shouldn't be too hard."

I headed into the bathroom and got ready for my bath. I was totally in need of it. The way I do conventions as an attendee has been described as athletic, and running around trying to make sure everything is right along with doing my regular con stuff meant I was rank. It happens! I lounged in the water for an hour, letting almost all the water out and refilling it even hotter three times. Drought be damned! I washed my hair and when I was finished, I looked at my cell phone, conveniently left on the counter, and discovered that it was 6:30!

I got the towel on and put a ton of Depp in my hair. I ran my comb through it over and over again, getting the proper tracks from front to back, completely straight. I grabbed the scissors and trimmed the beard. It had to be short. Not so short that it wouldn't cover that second chin, but short none the less. I was completely ready and had the look down.

I walked back into the bedroom and got dressed. The suit was a smidge too big, but what do you expect? I had to get the look right. Linda had gone down to start the whole reg process. This was where it would hit the fan. I had to wait until exactly 7:30 when the montage that we'd planned would start and everyone would be downstairs.

I kept watching the channel, enjoying the recording of the 1947 WorldCon GoH speech that someone had found a wire recording of and had transferred. Joe Siclari, who I haven't seen yet I remembered, sent along a bunch of images to show over the audio. They were awesome. I was going over my script in my head. I had written it so long ago that I was really amazed that I hadn't needed to go over it until just minutes before I was supposed to go out. I just wandered if I could keep it right.

I hadn't heard the whole thing since it was found, but it was an amazing thing. I took off my jacket and sat on the edge of the bed, turnign my ear to the TV and wrenching my back a little. It wouldn't be the last minor, insignificant injury for the

weekend, but it was the one I remember right now.

It had an easy opening, it was relatively short and it was relatively funny. There was a knock at the door and standing there was Mr. Jason Schachat.

"It's time." he said.

I picked up my suit jacket and put it on. I looked in the mirror and I knew that I looked the part I was planning on playing, so I followed Jason.

The overland passage was the easiest way to get to the Ballroom, where all the attendees were herded to figure out what the hell the box they had was. I'd made arrangements to have the boxes held together with a locking mechanism that cost about twenty cents each. They required these awesome keys that nobody would have had. And since the boxes were kinda heavy, people would have wanted to get to the Ballrooms where we had told them they'd get their keys during the Opening Ceremonies. Folks were still streaming in to the Ballroom, but I had folks runnign interference for me and I heard Leigh Ann calling for everyone's attention. Everyone turned and I scurried behind them to the backstage hallway. I don't think anyone noticed me! That was incredible as I am not the kind of guy who can usually sneak anywhere. I guess Leigh's louder than I am recognisable. I got to the backstage and I could hear the presentation starting. The lights went down and the slide show went on. That was my cue to go down below the risers and get into



full position. I had to crawl and I could see where the sliding trapdoor was. I stood right next to it and looked across, where I could see the rope that JohnO was holding. He'd pull it the second the lights went out and I'd pop through and show up on stage. It was going to be classic.

Sadly, I had to sneeze. I could feel it rising and I sneezed, forcing my head down hard because I clamped down to keep from blowing it that I was underneath the stage. I ended up banging my head into the floor. I was seeing stars, and I brought my head up too fast and ended up knocking it against the ceiling of the risers. That was more painful. Luckily, we were well into the section where the dulcet tones of Dick Dale and His Fabulous Del-Tones that I know no one heard. I was dizzy, but I knew that the time was coming and I forced myself to try and see something more than the stars that took over my field of vision. I kept on focusing on JohnO, who was quietly laughing himself to death.

The lights went down and I heard the door slide open. I climbed up, in the dark, and a moment later, I was standing on the stage. Applause started from about 500 people. There were 300 people who were looking far less happy to see me. Ted and Earl and Rich Coad and Robert Lichtman were in the front row, looking very cross with me. There were 800 or so people



seated in the room.

Yeah, I'd managed to get 800 people to show up to a CorFlu. I had been talking it up for so long, that when we finally opened up registration, we managed to get 534 members in the first week. I was blown-away, but I was also scared. No CorFlu fan would be happy with that number of fans, some of them not at all fanzine fans. That was troubling in a way, but I had to make it work. The Hotel gave us amazing deals, especially after we sold out our room-block three times to the point where we had all but 7 rooms in the entire hotel. That allowed us to do a lot of fun things.

"How's everyone doing tonight?" I asked. The audience replied in a very kind fashion. Well, most of them. "I want to welcome you to CorFlu: 28 Zines Later. I want to thank everyone for being so patient. We did everything we could to make the registration process as painless as possible. I'm hoping that y'all are glad to be here and are still looking at your box trying to figure out what the hell it's all about. We'll get to that in a minute. Now, you know that I'm not about to do a paper programme book. No, you wouldn't expect that from me at all, would you?"

There was a laugh for that, including some of the grumpy folks.

"Now, I'd like to ask my loyal fans, the Chris-o-holics, to go through the crowd and distribute the keys to the

boxes.”

And with that, the folks I’d tapped to pass out the keys went tramping down the aisles, passing out the little key thin-gees. I knew that on the screen behind me were the instructions for the proper way to use the key to open the box. It was funny, since I waited for about a minute while people opened them. You could hear some surprise and a bit of weirdness from some parts of the room. There was even a cheer or two.

“That’s right, courtesy of We-Fix-Macs’ Bankruptcy sale, I managed to get 900 iBooks to give out to all the CorFlu attendees!”

There was a weird bit of applause, but mostly, you could hear a couple of hundred ‘bung’s of Macs starting up. It was a funny sound.

“You will notice that one, they’re fully loaded with old versions of the Adobe Creative Suite courtesy of our good friends at Adobe, and with a full Microsoft Office edition from about 2003, courtesy of the good people at Microsoft. Both of them.”

That got another laugh, but again, more bungs and a lot of people paying way more attention to their new toys.

“Those computers are your’s to keep, and I hope you’ll do great things with the,. If you don’t want them, just leave them in your room or hand them back at the Reg Desk and we’ll figure out what to do with them.”

You could head some folks had gotten to the point where they could see that

the Virtual CorFlu Programme Book had launched and they could read it. There was another weird set of laughter.

“OK, we’ve done that point. I hope you’ll all go about creating art and zines this weekend. In the Elevator Waiting Areas of every floor, you can find a printer, a couple of scanners, and even a photocopier, all of which donated by our good friends at Xerox. And there’s something else. You could print out on copy and then go down to the Mimeograph room down on the first floor and use the electrostenciler and Mimeograph machine to create a Mimeozine! Also, I’m sure we’ve got some Jello and could probably do hecto, but I wouldn’t recommend it.”

A fun little laugh out of that one.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, if this CorFlu will teach us anything, it’s that one has to be ready for anything. As the traditional picking of the name of the Guest of Honor is a little more difficult with 800 names instead of 100, I’ve had to arrange for a slightly more interesting way of choosing the GoH.”

The lovely Leigh Ann Hildebrand walked on stage with a giant knit nightcap she’d knitted for us for just this purpose. It was full of the names of every attendee, minus the previous GoHs and the 187 who paid their way out of having the possibility of having to give the speech. It was a very lucrative concept. I’m glad folks came up with that idea. I reached down into the very depths of the giant cap, knowing that the cameras were focusing on the picking

and that on the side screens were the words Picking the Guest of Honor.

“Alright, I’ve gotta name.” I said, pausing in a way that would build suspense. I learned that from Reality TV Winner Announcements. “The CorFlu 28 Guest of Honor is…”

I dragged that out. I’d never been the GoH, though many of the people who had been were in the audience, watching. “Mr. Mike Glycer!” I announced.

There was a loud round of applause and Mike stood up and walked to the risers. I grabbed the pom-pom of the hat and turned it upside down, dumping the rest of



the names into the trapdoor so they ended up down under the stage. Mike came up and was escorted up by Jean Martin, dressed impeccably as always. I placed the hat upon Mike's head and the place was still very applausy. That was a good thing, as Mike took a bow and seemed to enjoy his new cap.

After a couple of minutes, Mike settled down.

"Alright, on our shared CorFlu journey...which, you know, reminds me of the Hugo-nominated fanzine Journey Planet which is looking for articles right now, if you're interested," Good laugh there, "we're going to be takign this journey through the best possible means: alcohol! At that, my second waves of minions came through and passed down miniature bottles of Jim Beam for every attendee to every row.

"I think there's a tradition that should never be forgotten."

I waited a bit and pulled the flask of St. George's Single Malt out from my coat pocket. Dave Moyce, Tadao, Andy Trembley, Kevin Roche, Jason Schachat and Dave Clarke joined me up on stage and Tadao and I passed them flasks from our other pockets. Everyone took their drink and raised their hand. The audience took their sweet time, shuffling their iBooks around to get things in order. I waited until just about everyone had their hand up and then I did the traditional-

"Oh that is Smoooooooooooth."
That was followed by the hand

motion and that was followed by a loud round of applause. I looked over and felt that it was exactly the right thing. We'd paid homage to one of the true great fans of all-time, Bob Tucker, and we'd also all gotten to enjoy some whiskey, courtesy of



Beverages & More, who were also very nice to our smoking lounge with more than a hundred cigars! I'd managed to get a lot of folks to donate who'd never donate to a convention by saying that it was a zines publishers convention, that it traveled around the world and that some very cool attendees were going to be there. Plus, the in-house TV thingee got a lot of folks more interested.

"Alright, we've got a lot of stuff going on tonight. The RetroTech ConSuite is on this floor and will have food and drinks and scrolling writing all night. I hope you'll stop by there. There's a smoker's lounge on the second floor, has food, drinks, and cigars if you're so inclined. There are three parties tonight that are going to be going on across the hall from the Smoking ConSuite and the deck outside the party rooms is another smoking area, including tabacco hookahs for all those who are interested. Now, feel free to go forth and get your party on!" I said.

"And remember to vote for the FAAn Awards. There are terminals all over the place or you can vote through the CorFlu 28 website since y'all have laptops with full wireless access! You can vote up until the moment the Banquet starts at 10am.

That was done. Folks gave some more applause and then everyone started to get their stuff together. I figured everyone would run off to their rooms and then they'd head off to the parties, but a bunch of clusters of folks seemed to be staying. I stayed on the stage with the guys chatting.

Ted had parked himself with a few others at the bottom of the stage. I stepped down.

"Now, Chris, I think we should talk about this a bit." Ted said. I could see that this would not go well. "This isn't what CorFlu's all about."

"I know, Ted, I totally know, but I just put it out there that we were doing this, and everyone wanted to be a part of things. It wasn't a conscious choice, but still, I'm thinking that we'll still have a good time."

Ted looked at me like I was crazy, which was a much different look than Peter gives me when he thinks I've said something crazy.

I walked off to the Foyer, where a bunch of folks had congregated. There was the Drink Tank clan, as some had referred to us. Leigh Ann, Dann, Jason, Espana, Tadao and Christian. They were all chatting and I arrived and Christian started a small round of applause.

"Oh don't!" Espana said, "You'll only encourage him."

"So, where's everyone headed?" I asked.

"We were thinking of getting some drinks over at the Black Hole." Espana said.

I hadn't thought about that for a while. I'd agreed to give a room to the Black Hole, the Klingon bar. I'd brought a Klingon group to CorFlu. I was rather confused. I'm not good at these things.

We all headed across the Overland passage, talking about the lovely, and now



dead, Ava Gardner. It was a good conversation, full of inappropriate moments and phrasing. It was also a terrible series of images painted by a group of very strange people.

We passed the front side smoking lounge, where folks were enjoying cigars and drinking stuff.

"Ah, Mr. Garcia has arrived!" called Marty Cantor. I hadn't seen him yet and I walked across and shook his hand. Marty's a good guy and I hadn't talked to him in ages.

"Big turn-out." Marty said.

"Quite. I'm thinking that it'll be remembered." I said.

I picked up a cigar from the box on the table and put it in my breast pocket, run along to follow the rest of them on

their way to the party. There were tons of folks milling about in the halls, and all three of the parties and the various Con-Suites were packed. I was enjoying the various conversation snippets, which is a great part of the walk down any hallway.

I came to the Black Hole and they'd done a great job as always. It looked really cool and there were the normal Bay Area fans who end up at the Black Hole, including Bob Hole. I hadn't seen him since LosCon back in November.

"Bob Hole!" I said, raising my arms in the traditional fashion.

"Ah, Mr. Garcia. How are you?" Bob said.

"Very very good." I said. "You having a good time?"

"Indeed I am." He said.

We talked a while, when I realised that I needed to head over to the SF/SF party since David and Jean would need help. I often forgot about things like that. I headed over and the place was jumping. Not only were the folks I expected, but a lot of people who were CorFLu regulars. Some of them were noticing all the fanzine covers we'd posted, and Lenny Balies was reading the article on the late great Jack Speer that ran along the top of the room. I hadn't seen Lenny, another CorFlu regular. This technique, printing out stuff from zines on eFanzines.com has been a quick and easy decoration scheme since we discovered it by accident at Silicon one year. Every year, we got a bit more artsy about how we managed to do it. This time,

we'd finally figured out how to make them into lampshades that just looked awesome. Jean and David were entertaining folks like Curt Phillips (and it was so good to see him since I hadn't run into him since the last NASFiC, and Joe Major was there too! I see him most years at either WorldCon or NASFiC, but this time we were in my turf! David had obviously been pouring Drink Tanks (Rye Whiskey, Ginger Beer and a



dash of bitters served in a Red Plastic Cup) and was very happy to see me.

"And here's the man who knows how to make these!" David exclaimed.

I went to the desk we were using as the pouring station and discovered that we were running out of stuff to The Little Thing, Leigh Ann's favourite drink. I was about to call out to see where Jason was, but then I figured it would be a good time to introduce a new drink.

"Ladies and gentlemen, who will be the first to try the latest of the Chris Garcia family of drinks?" I announced. "I call it... The Pickersgill!"

I poured a jigger of English Gin, a dash of Orange Bitters and a splash of Cabernet. It's a weird one, but the first sip I had after mixing it up didn't make me vomit or go blink, and so, the drink was born. The name came while I was staring at a cover from Stop Breaking Down and Greg's name just came to me.

Dave Clark raised his hand and I pushed it across the desk to him. He sipped it and made that 'Not So Bad' face that makes me smile. I mixed up another couple of them and passed them around. No one seemed to love it, but no one absolutely hated it. Johanna came around in her PVC Fanboy Appreciation outfit, and I had to give her one.

"What's this?" She asked.

"Trust me." I said, knowing I had only let her down with a drink once. I watched her as she sipped it and she smiled.

"Interesting." she said and drank a bit more. I was highly amused.

I poured drinks for another hour or so, but mostly, I just sipped at a single cup of bourbon I'd poured early on. It was tasty, not too expensive. A deadly combination, when I think about it.

I started listing slowly toward the downwards. I could tell that I was exhausted. I headed my way up to the room. It took me almost twenty minutes to get to the elevator when I ran into Henry Welch, Andy Trembley and various others who were chatting about a recent editorial in VFW. I was happy to hear good talk, and I popped in a few comments. Actually, apparently I was slightly more drunken than I thought because I'd managed to pop the same comments more than once. These things happen.

Saturday- Everywhere

8am and all was well. I'd slept good, not too long, as it stood that it was nearly 3am by the time I got into bed. Such a thing is tough. I woke up but felt great. Perhaps it was the fact that the alcohol had worked its way out of my system. Well, after I visited the restroom. I got myself dressed and noticed that Linda was still sleeping. I gave her a kiss on the forehead and went over to the desk to write a note.

Good mornin' Darlin'

I'm off to breakfast early, but I'll meet you at Reg

Love you

Chris

It was exactly the kind of note I meant to leave more often but only seemed to remember to leave it when I was pretty sure that I'd mess up somewhere in the near. Running a convention meant that I'd be messing again for her soon. It's just what happens. Someone told me that nearly 50% of all WorldCon chairs who were married at the time of running their convention got a divorce within two years. Weird, huh?

I went downstairs and I remembered my all-time favourite WorldCon note. When at a West Coast WorldCon, you could tell the East Coasters by those who were milling about the lobby when I woke up on the first day of a con. It was almost a flawless measure. I ran into four East Coasters when I made it to the lobby. Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, Warren Buff and Michael Pederson. I'd only met Mike a couple of times, and I was so glad he joined us out here. They were all waiting for breakfast and I said that we should all get a table on the edge together. They were actively happy about that suggestion.

We got a table and we all ordered the buffet. I'd managed to get the Coffee Garden...I mean Sprigs, to give us a 10 dollar buffet. That was a big plus. We sat down, which wasn't a good thing as I was a little wobbly, and we all ordered the buffet. I piled on a huge massive pile of pancakes and a few sausages to do Make-My-Own Pigs in a Blanket. I love that. Everyone else got a very reasonable breakfast.

"So, this is a little bigger than your average CorFlu, isn't it?" Lloyd said.

"Yeah, I did a little too much publicity, I think." I wrapped up a link of sausage in a pancake and took a bite out of one end. Needed butter. "So, what'd y'all do last night after I disappeared?"

"We went from party to party. It was strange." Yvonne said.

"It was?"

"Yeah, CorFlu is not where I thought we'd find a Klingon party or a ConSuite on an outdoor deck with smokeless ashtrays and hookahs. It's not exactly what I'd expect at a CorFlu. It was a lot of fun, but there were some unhappy faces." Lloyd said.

"Yeah, but there were a few memorable moments," Warren said "like watching Guy Lillian and Graham Charnock chatting. That was one of those moments that I wish we could capture on tape."

We laughed and I kept eating. There were some great stories, like Ted White and Daniel Spector

discussing the politics of the music of the 1960s and Bruce Gillespie pumping up the conversation with his picks. I wish I could have heard that. There was also a group who were working on a zine in the Old Skool lounge, where Espana and folks had ended up with some Sir Mix-A-Lot blasting from a boom box.

"Well, that's hella Old Skool" I said.

The details of Warren's WorldCon bid for Washington. I still wasn't sure why he was bidding for there, but I'd already



agreed to help out by working on their Bid Fanzine: Capital Idea. I was excited since I hadn't been back to Washington in ages.

We had until 10 to get things ready. I put the entire bill on my room and headed off to the programming room. I'd had several tables moved in and lined with walls with various fanzines which would be for sale or for give-away. There were also huge numbers of TAFF materials for sale. There were a total of 15 TAFF winners (and only 8 DUFF winners, but also 4 GUFF winners, which was a nice surprise) and we all chatted. That might have been the most winners at one convention ever! I looked it all over, much of it coming from my personal extras pile, the rest having been put into the suitcases for Fanzine Lounges and the rest gone to the Eaton Collection as a part of the evil scheme Earl cooked up to bring the Eaton's collections up-to-date. It'd been fun for the last few years. I went through and found that a few folks had brought some extras that I hadn't seen. There was also the auction pile, and that was going to be the highlight of the day's events. I walked up to the stage and saw that everything was set up and that the camera positions had been chalked out already. I loved my crew. There were 750 seats, so if everyone came, I'd be screwed, but I didn't think that'd be a problem. I looked around and saw that a few people were already sitting around and chatting. Again, it was mostly East Coasters, including Evelyn Leeper and Murray Moore. I headed over and sat down, chatting without concern.

"So, didya all have fun last night?" I asked.

"It was an interesting night." Murray answered. "There were a lot of people roaming around."



"Yeah, I had no idea." I said.

We chatted some more and people started coming in. Within an hour, the place was about 1/2 full. The usual suspects had yet to show, which wasn't that much of a surprise. There were about 300 people milling around, some reading zines, some just using their laptops to surf the net and some obviously writing. It was nice to see Ulrika O'Brien drawing on a tablet. That was a nice touch. I was making sure everything was set-up properly when the first person I'd seen in a costume came up to me. It was Kevin Roche, dressed in a near exact replica of the Space Patrol outfit that Forry Ackerman had worn at the first WorldCon.

"Well, do you think it fits the theme?" Kevin asked, showing off a Heroic pose.

"Yeah, definitely. There's no question that if any costume was going to be worn at a CorFlu, that is the proper one." I answered. I think I caught a view of Ulrika looking not that happy to see Kevin dressed up, but I could be wrong. These things have been known to happen.

"What's the first program item?" Kevin asked.

"The Battle of the Greatest." I said. "We were gonna do it at the Montreal WorldCon, but we ended up not able to do it. We got five people to pick five different Fan Writers, Fan Artists, Fanzines and Conventions and they're gonna battle it out with a vote at the end."

"I bet Arnie won't like that. Doesn't

sound like his sort of fandom.” Andy said, arriving in his utilikilt and Portland in 2011: Seattle and Reno’s Revenge shirt.

“You may be right, but we got the folks to do it.”

I slightly shifted the chairs up on the dais a bit, allowing me to look like I was actually helping. Linda was already outside, giving people their bags and laptops. I happened to notice a 17 foot tall gentlemen with a noticable accent checking-in. I charged over that way.

“By Ghod, it’s Niall Harrison, is it not?” I said extending my hand.

“Chris, how are you?” Niall said, grasping the extended Garcia grip.

“Yet another all the way out from the UK to our doorstep.”

“Well, you certainly made it worthwhile. I can’t believe how many people you got out this way.” Niall said as Linda handed him the laptop.

“We were lucky. We had a ton of folks helping out and with the publicity, we managed to get good deals.”

I headed back and made myself busy until the panel started. Up on the dais was Warren, Lloyd, John Coxon, Milt Stevens and Peter Weston with the legendary Steve Silver serving in the moderator chair. I had gone out and bought out a closing Spirit Halloween store which had one of the replica thrones from Conan. That would be serving as the Moderator seat for the entire con. I think it was appropriate. The place was about 3/4 full, and finally the folks who were the CorFlu regulars had

walked in.

“As I sit in the chair of moderation, I hereby declare this first panel on The Greatest of All-Time to be open!” Steven announced. “I’ll let the panelist introduce themselves and say how they’re stumping for in the contest to determine who is the Best Fan Writer, Fan Artist and what the Best Fanzine of All-Time is.”

My cel phone rang. I pulled it out and it was Evelyn. She calls a lot, like a

good 13 year old.

“Hi Evelyn.” I said.

“Chris, guess what!”

“What?” I said, walking half-way out of the doors to the room.

“I went out with a boy yesterday!”

I could tell that this was going to be a long conversation, so I set myself up so I could hear the panel and Evelyn rambling about the boy who I had yet to approve of and so had to hear her entire side of the story. They apparently went to see the latest of Tadao’s 90 minute comedies. I’d kept trying to get him to do Hamlet, but Happy Madison had a

death grip on him. It was OK, always good to have steady work for a friend.

“...and I’m calling Harry Warner as the Best Fan Writer, without question, Steve Stiles as the greatest Fan Artist and Energumen as the Best Fanzine.”

“And he held open the doors for me! it was so cool! And we went to the restaurant right across from the Century 21, Flames, and I had the giant piece of cake and...”

“And I can’t believe no one else has said Walt Willis. He was obviously the greatest...”

“And we then walked over to the Winchester Mystery House and we played those old video games in the arcade. We played that Simpsons game and it was so fun because I played Lisa and we...”

“There’s no doubt that Richard Bergeron’s Warhoon...”

“And then Mom picked me up and we went home and she grilled me and I told her that nothing happened, but she kept on asking and asking...”



"You can argue that Tim Kirk's reign, during his time as the primary artist for The ALien Critic with work also appearing in zines like Amra and..."

"So, he asked if I wanted to go and see the new version of Yor, Hunter of the Future next week. Do you think I should go with him again?"

"Yeah, sure...if you like him." I said, trying to figure out who was talking about Lee Hoffman

I stepped out into the hall and kept Evelyn talking to see if she really needed anything or she was just bursting with info and needed to get it out in the air. It turned out to be the latter, and since I didn't get to see her that often over the last year or so. Evelyn was all sorts of excited.

When I walked in, Peter Weston and Warren were having a lively discussion about the value of the classic fanzine Hyohen in today's fanning world. The audience was enjoying Peter and his very English Englishing on the matter. He got very excited and had well-played phrases that just hit the spot. Coxon, my plant on the panel, had chosen Pablo Lenis as his best zine. That seemed to annoy a lot of folks, but I thought it was hilarious. He was brilliant playing the fool on the panel, and I don't even think he had any booze in him!

As time went on, it became apparent that Harry Warner and Walt Willis were the consensus choices as

the best fan writer ever, but the Fan Artist was a three-headed beast between Rotsler, ATom and Stiles. I thought that Warren did a great job pushing Stiles, and I can't argue that D. West also got a bum deal, but he was up against a couple of greats.

The panel would down with Warhoon slightly edging out Hyphen as the greatest of all-time. There were a couple of folks in the room who still seemed to



be unhappy with the topic. I got up on the stage and took one of the mics.

"Now, as those of you who have read up on your laptops, you will know that this is officially be the Tea Interval. And so...here comes the tea!"

At that moment, two trolleys made their way into each of the aisles. We'd managed to find 16 different people to act as tea service folk. Leigh Ann was at the head

of the team and everyone seemed to enjoy it. Tea and coffee and little cakes were distributed over the fifteen minute period of the Tea Interval. I had a couple of cookies with lemon icing and some strong black tea. I love that stuff. The trolleys made their way through, everyone giving them a round of applause as they left. I'd managed to get the Dim Sum place on Castro in Mountain View to let me borrow the trolleys when I signed with them to do part of the banquet. It was a good deal.

During the break, Espana walked in to the room, obviously dragging from a long night partying, and handed me a zine.

"I wish you were there. It was a blast making it. Colin and Cheryl helped me out." She said, her eyes not quite in the right focus.

I looked at it and it was a 6 pager with a cover that was obviously done by my man Jason Schachat. There were a couple of articles, one of them from Arnie and another from Espana that was really funny about the time I got

drunk at BayCon and managed to walk into side of the escalator, almost knocking myself unconscious. It was very funny. The art was really nice too, especially the stuff that Espana had put together.

The next item was the one that I was most interested in. It was to be the panel on the Fan Funds featuring Janice Gelb, John Coxon, James Bacon, Guy Lillian, Steve Stiles and Damien Warmen. It was a good team. They did a slightly different panel, not only talking about how the Fan Funds work and why they're still relevant, but also they talked about the way things are changing and how the younger crowd has managed to latch on to it. I blame the fact that the two kids who were battling to replace as TAFF delegate were both born after the last time Westercon topped 1000 attendees. It was a fun race too. Neither of them showed up, which hurt my feeling a bit, but when you're either in college or working for a Weapons Lab, you tend to not get out as much as the rest of us would like. The talk turned to TAFF Reports, which have seen a great up-swing in the last few years. 7 Reports, two from the 80s, 2 from the 90s and three from the Oughts, had seen publication, with Greg Pickersgill's being the most recent with a little help from his friends. That's not to say that DUFF, which had a record three-way race in 2010 that saw almost 750 voters splitting the votes in a near dead-heat. It was an awesome sight to see and they counted the ballots three times before the final winner was announced. As soon as I heard the

results, I called-

"Hey Chris!" The panel called out to me. "How many days was it before you managed to get your report out?" James called.

"I was finished with it in the cab going home from the airport, took a day working on proofreading and then 4 or 5 days laying it all out."

"You proofread that?" Guy called.

"Yeah...I'm just not that good at it." I yelled back. That got a good laugh, better than anything else I'd tried.

The panel finished up and it was Lunch time. Groups got put together, some going over to the Coffee Gar...I mean to Sprigs, and others making excursions to the various restaurants whose websites, map and walking directions were included in the Safari that was installed in the laptops. James Bacon had instructed me to start to give out the latest issue of Journey Planet during lunch on Saturday. The copies of The Drink Tank issue 499. I'd printed up 500 copies of it just in case, and if they didn't all get taken, I was going to send the extras to various groups that might like them...or not if that was the case. I just wasn't gonna get stuck with a bunch of issues of the claptrap called The Drink Tank.

After about 10 minutes or so, as I'd been handing out issues of Journey Planet to everyone who

walked by, I even gave one to John Hertz, who I'm pretty sure had never got one. I walked out and ran into Espana, a sunglasses wearing David Moyce, Linda, John Coxon, James and Mike Glyer. Tadao wandered over too.

"Well, well, well, Mr. Tomomatsu." I said. "How the hell is the Asian reincarnation of Adam Sandler?"

"Good, good, though I think Bobby Lee might deserve that title with Yellow



Flag." Tadao said.

"Good point." I answered. "How long's the line for the Coffee Garden?"

"Sprigs." Linda and David said simultaneously.

"Well, how long?"

"We could probably not get a table and back in time for the auction." Mike said.

"Y'all wanna get room service sent up to the ElectroConSuite?" I said.

"Yeah, sure. Sounds like fun." Mike said.

We all headed up the stairs and found that there were a couple of folks already in there, dining on the little snacks and following the phrases from All Our Yesterdays that were traveling across the electronic billboards. It was awesome. We called down and got a bunch of wings, a couple of burgers and a pair of salads to supplement the sushi, soup and potstickers. I enjoyed some soup and one of the burgers. We were happily chattering about the new name for the zine that we'd be starting dedicated to the wonders that are the films of Tadao Tomomatsu. We decided on either Comedy-san, a title thrown out by Espana, or Wonderland Soufflé, the title of the second film in the 'Hey, that's the guy from Heroes' saga. I was leaning towards the latter and had started fiddling with various fonts for a cover that I had in my head. I saw that Ted White and Dan Stefan were handing out new issues of Pong, which made me happy. I haven't been around so much when Pong was hitting

the stands brand new. Mike hadn't handed me a File 770, but I knew one was going to end up in my hands because I'd seen Fred Mouton reading his copy earlier.

"So, what's the next thing?" John asked.

"Well, the auction is next, and after that, it's going to be something special just for the Fan Artists." I said, followed by

tipping the remains of the bowl of Miso soup into my mouth. It wasn't polished, but it was tasty.

We all sat around and chatted more. Tadao was going to be making another movie next month with Steven Segal and Miranda Richardson. There's nothing better than two Oscar winners in a film together.

Richard Mann came over with his camera and caught a few photos of all of us. Chaz Boston-Baden walked in and took a few photos, including a few of Richard getting shots of the rest us. Howieird then followed and got photos of Chaz getting photos of Richard. Jade Falcon then came in and got photos of the entire room, which meant that she was getting more photos of folks getting photos. It was like CostumeCon all over again. I was hoping we'd be able to document every moment, but I kinda hadn't thought that we'd have 10 total Official Photographers and who knows how

many unofficial ones. It's always something or another.

How does Saturday end? Where does this all go? What happens on Sunday? We'll find out when we reach the final conclusion in the next exciting issue of The Drink Tank: Fandom on Infinite Earths!

