

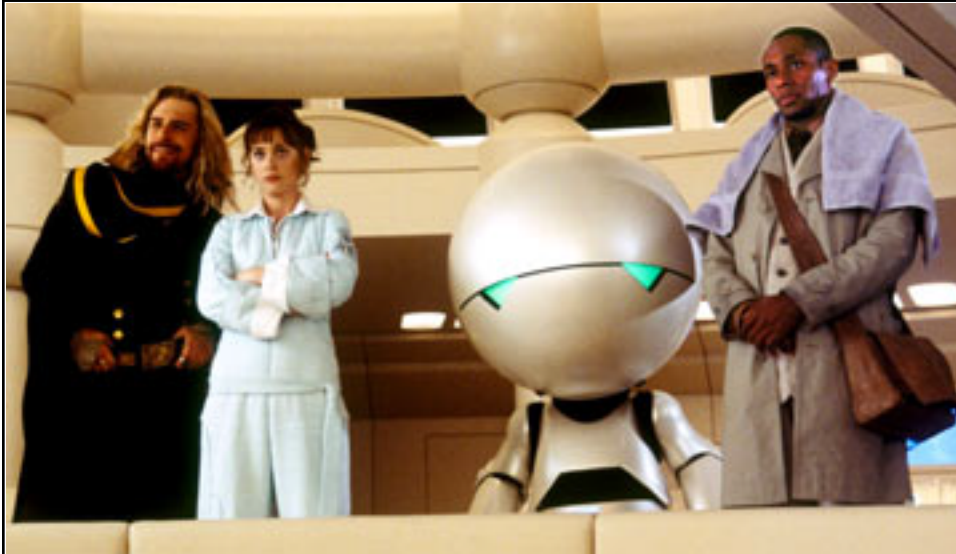


# The Drink Tank



IT'S ISSUE SEVENTEEN (SEVENTEEN)

MORE THOUGHTS AND STRANGENESSES  
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY  
CHRISTOPHER J. GARCIA



**Sam Rockwell, Zoey Dechanel, Marvin and Mos Def**

## HITCHHYPER'S GUIDE

OK, I'll be the first to admit it: I've never read Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. I've tried, believe me, I've tried, but I just couldn't do it. I've never been able to figure out why. Maybe it's just too British. I've seen a number of reviews of the up-coming movie, a couple by folks whose opinions I usually agree with. These reviews are divided into

two categories: SF fen and fanboys.

The difference between science fiction fen and fanboys is noticeable in the areas where they are snobs. Fanboys are usually comics and movie fans who tend to express their displeasure or gush overwhelmingly on the net. Science fiction fandom uses a variety of locations for their opinion sharing: the net, cons, fanzines, etc, etc. The reviews I've seen from folks in and around science fiction fandom is that it's awful, it leaves much of the fun of the book out and just produces a weak film, especially when compared to the radio drama, stage play or BBC series (which I've been watching). The Fanboys say that it's a thrill ride with great effects, fun acting by the likes of Sam Rockwell and that dude from Love, Actually, and just a plain old good time.

Hmmmmmm.....

I'm not sure what to think. I enjoyed the radio drama back when I was in high school, as I thought it told the story well and made me laugh. The TV show is funny, though at times a bit too silly for my tastes. The big thing to me is that I want the movie to be entertaining to a wide-audience, and I don't see a version of Hitchhiker's that is along the humor lines of the TV show working for an American audience, and let's face it, it's being made for American audiences since that's where the money is. I mean, OK, there's money Internationally, but the biggest single source of money is the US and the rest of the world is more forgiving than the US when it comes to films, or so the success of movies like Shakes the Clown overseas would seem to state.

Case in point: one website that points out things that were left out decries the fact that they left out that the Vogon ship "hung in the air exactly the way that bricks don't" and changed the line "Counterpoint the surrealism of the underlying metaphor" to "Counterpoint the underlying



Arthur and Ford from the BBC TV Version



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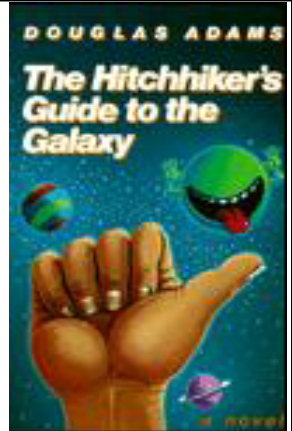
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metaphor". This is troublesome because it's an important line to some folks, but American audiences just won't take to that line. Sad fact, American, money-dropping audiences aren't terribly interested in witty lines like that, they are more interested in big effects, fast cuts and gags which require no thought. If you think I'm just talking about teenaged audiences, you're wrong. The average age for this film will probably be about 35. Interesting fact: the average age of viewer for an Adam Sandler movie (specifically Happy Gilmore and Billy Madison) was nearly 40. If you are interested in making money, you have to appeal to the broadience, and I think they're doing just that.

There's a lot that I like from what I've seen in previews and stills. I love the design of Marvin. I have heard a lot of H2G2 fans who say they hate it, but I think it's a fun little design. That and having Alan Rickman doing the voice is just about perfect. I love Mos Def, and though he gets hammered for not being British, he's a very talented guy. The guy from The Office who plays Arthur is good in just about everything I've seen him in, like the short Blake's Junction 7. I have a massive crush on Zoey, and Sam Rockwell and Bill Nihy are both among my favourite actors.

Having been both adaptor and adaptee, I can say that it's never easy. It is so hard to remain loyal and still put out a product that is viable, but I think if they give the effects enough money and let the actors do their things, they'll put out a film that I will enjoy. It might even get me to read the book!



## ***I know, I'm lame***

At work, we have a project called CRAMP (the Collection Reconciliation and Management Programme) that we work on with volunteers. This week, I was working with another volunteer who reads a lot of science fiction. We were chatting and she mentioned Ender's Game. I said I hadn't read it.

She gaped for nearly a minute.

"You call yourself a science fiction fan?" she said.

Well, there is no excuse. I've never read it for various reasons, though I've owned one or two copies in my lifetime and I think I have the original Novella that showed up in Analog. I've just never been motivated to read it. There are a lot of great science fiction books that I own that I've never read.

Here is a list of other books that I've skipped or have been thinking about reading that I really should have made time for long ago

- 1) Slaughterhouse-5 (I reference it frequently, but it's the one Vonnegut book that I fear will be a disappointment)
- 2) The Moon is a Harsh Mistress (I've tried, but I've never managed)
- 3) Flatland (I reference it frequently, but I've never read it)
- 4) The Stainless Steel Rat books (Harrison grates on me at times)
- 5) Dune (Made it through the first half, then I just couldn't keep reading)
- 6) Neuromancer (I just can't get into Gibson. The Difference Engine was a serious chore for me and it was SteamPunk, which is my favourite sub-genre)
- 7) Cryptonomicon (Not that I didn't try, just that I couldn't wade through it)
- 8) Anything by Terry Pratchett, Neil Gaiman, or Douglas Adams (Never even managed any of their short works)



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## Burstzine #1

Thanks to Jan Stinson, I have been reading various fanzines from all over the place. She sent me so many of the great fanzines from the last couple of decades and one of the better editions had to be Michael and Nomi Burstein's Burstzine.

The first issue of any zine can be a tricky thing, just look at the first issue of The Drink Tank. Burstzine is top notch, even from the first go'round. It's one of those zines that's not too much to look at, with a very simple cover and art throughout by Teddy Harvia. Teddy's art is simple, as always, but there's a long stretch where it's nowhere to be seen. This actually helps a bit, because it allows for the full appreciation of the long article by Mike Resnick on his favourite musicals.

I'm a big fan of musicals, I grew up watching them on video and going to the theatre whenever my fam could keep me still long enough. I even acted in a couple, always in the largest non-singing role (I was HUGE in Guys & Dolls). Mike's list is good, very good if you don't happen to be a fan of rock and/or roll. I'm big on Jesus Christ Superstar and Rent, but Mike has some excellent choices. Personally, I'd take 1776 over anything on the list, with City of Angels a close second. The look at musicals is awesome and I'd love to sit down with Mike at some point in the future (I met him once, long ago) and just talk about musicals.

This is far from the only good article in the thing, as there are two others that I very much enjoyed. One, by Daniel Kimmel, is called Caught Between Two Worlds. It opened by being very harsh on the first Lord of the Rings movie, which I thought was a good film, but not as great as much of the world seemed to think it was. On the other hand, he somewhat defends The Postman and The Bicentennial Man, both of which caused me to lose my faith in film and dream of leading a rebellion against the studios.

Having worked as a semi-pro movie reviewer off and on over the last few years, I don't claim that I'm an expert, but I do know a fair amount about film. I disagree with some of Daniel's statements, but I do like the fact that he points out the disagreements that happen among critics. The biggest problem I have with most film critics is that they dismiss genre films. There's a local critic that annoys me no end for just that reason.

I've said it before, but Mimosa is my all-time fave when it comes to fanzines, and Rich Lynch did a great little article in Burstzine about Mimosa and all sorts of other little tips. I've always enjoyed Rich's work and this was a slightly-better than usual piece.

All in all, I like Burstzine and I wish there were more issues for me to gander over.

## A Very Short Story

When I arrived, the scene had already been picked over. The body was still covered with cloth that looked like a napkin thrown over a half-finished meal. I made my way over, lifted the cover and followed the track taken by the knife.

"Can you tell anything from the wound?" asked Myers, the first on the scene.

"Only that he's dead and I'm in the mood for a good steak." I said.

I put the cloth back down and used the toe of my wing-tip to slide the cut antennae back under the cloth that covered M'TlkSa.

## The Week In Chris Garcia's Life

So, I've finished and am just waiting for the cover of Claims Department #2. It's 10 pages of writing about me hanging around in Sonoma. The Third issue is almost written and I just got the photos developed for the fourth issue that takes place mostly at Disneyland.

LISP, my other gimmick zine, will be out for BayCon and I've just joined up with eAPA, so I'll be producing Alternate Wildly for that. Good stuff for me!





# The Drink Tank



ISSUE NUMBER FIFTEEN (AND I LIKE IT TOO)

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

SENT TO GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG

BY MY GENTLE READERS

The King of the LoCian Fields: Lloyd Penney: A Product of Canada

Dear Chris:

Finally, a little free time! I have spent much of the past three weeks working on a transportation expo, our local annual SF convention, and evenings doing website data entry for the Globe and Mail, so I have had no time to do anything else, except for this weekend! I hate doing a single loc on multiple issues, but I don't have much choice. So, here's a loc on The Drink Tank, issues 11 through 16.

**Hey, I'm not picky. I'll take your words anyway I can get 'em.**

11...I'd never heard of Able Edwards of the movie of the same name, but then, there's plenty of movies that never make it this far north of the border.

**Sadly, Able Edwards hasn't debuted outside fests yet. But keep an eye out for it!**

True, the layout of Chunga is very readable. Such an art seems to be on the way out, with blogs and online bulletin boards. Give me a paperzine with not only good reading inside (which Chunga usually does), but also one that looks nice inside and out, and shows some hint of design.

**I only have the one issue, but I've been going through the ones that are on eFanzines and just enjoying the hell out of them. I really must send those guys LoCs and copies of Claims Department to stay on their radar and perhaps keep getting copies!**

A protest was recently hijacked outside of Ontario Legislature. Just more than a month ago now, farmers from around the province organized themselves to protest against various provincial government policies, and got several convoys down major highways to go downtown to the legislature buildings. Everyone drove a tractor, so you can imagine there were a few traffic jams along the way. I was able to watch about 100 tractors drive down Highway 427, right outside my front window. The tractors surrounded the legislature buildings, and a demonstration ensued, with speakers and placards and everything...and then a distraught man in a panel van tried to drive into a restricted area, spoke to the police who tried to stop him, and then doused himself with gasoline and set himself alight in the van. The police broke into the van and put him out, and the media abandoned the farmers' demo for the action shot. The demo was quickly forgotten, and the media gave the man on fire more coverage.

**Wow. That's dedication. I don't think I am willing to go that far.**

Oooh, thanks for the plug in the locol! We'll definitely see you at the Toronto Corflu. I think Catherine and Colin are starting to look at hotels.

**Excellent! I'm really looking forward to it, especially since it's going to be my first trip to Toronto in many, many years.**

Eric Mayer's comments made me smile. I remember a zine from the 90s, can't remember the title offhand, but I do remember the staple controversy. The editor, indulging in patented smart-assery, put his zine on a single sheet of paper, and then stapled it twice down the edge. He got some howling letters asking why he hadn't used three staples...

**Now, that's a good bit. I wish I had thought of it. If there's one thing I enjoy doing, it's playing with those folks that are bugged by things like that.**

**Maybe that's why I don't get as many LoCs as other folks. It makes me stop and think.**

**Hmmmmmm...**



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12...You should ask Evelyn Leeper for an article on film festivals. She and husband Mark go to the annual Toronto International Film Festival every year. (The year Worldcon was here, Mark and Evelyn got to see a lot of this city, and saved a bundle on air fare.)

***I was supposed to go to WorldCon 2003 and stick around through TIFF, but my Dad's health was at that point dire (they gave him six weeks, which has been revised to 'where the hell did the cancer go?') and I thought I should stick around. I've had a lot of friends have little movies at Toronto, most notably a film called Birdlings Two that I consulted on.***

I remember Riverside Quarterly, although I started getting issues from Leland Sapiro in the late 80s, I believe. At one point, I think he was publishing them while a student at the University of Saskatchewan,

***I think you're right on him being a UoS student. I thought it was originally from UC Riverside, which has the Eaton collection. I've found another issue that is on its way to me now.***

13...So many of us grew up reading the wondrous adventures of Andre Norton, and it is sad to know that we might be the last generation to do so. I hope there are steps being taken to ensure that her works stay in print. Good for SFWA to make sure she's remembered for a good long time.

***Some of her works, most notably her westerns, are out of print already. Still, Witch World will be republished as long as there are kids to read them. I am sad to say that she may end up with Phil Farmer after his time comes as greats who are passed up once they pass away. With Farmer, people will remember Riverworld. With Andre, it'll be Witch World.***

We haven't had a zine from Marty Cantor in a while. We want No Award, Marty, and we want it now! (that's a polite demand, of course...)

***I can't argue that point. I've made it a mission to read No Award and I've been pleasantly rewarded. Marty's a good little writer and he always gets fantastic articles for his zines.***

Comic book superheroes that never existed...I just finished a novel by Alexander Jablonski called Nimbus. One of the minor characters in it creates his own background by inventing a full network of jazz greats and famed musicians, none of whom ever existed.

***Nice. There should be an anthology of Fake Non-Fiction. That would rule, it would.***

14...Fans in Montreal do a lot of fan films, and they clean up the awards every year at Toronto Trek, coming up this July. Plant Nine From Outer Space, Beavra, you get the gist. They are extremely silly, and the best part is that I know all the actors. I've known Rene Walling for a long time, and he's asked me to support the Montreal in 2009 Worldcon bid. I haven't, mostly because we've sworn off Worldcons, but who knows what will happen. I won't work the bid, though; I worked hard on Torcon, they dumped us both, and look what happened there...

***Rene and I were talking and it turned out that his daughter's name is Evelyn, just like my girlfriend's daughter! I'd say you should pre-support if nothign else, since it looks like a great bid.***

15...I'd wondered about your dad, and how he got you into fandom and fanzines, so thanks for the quick article about him. Good to see he's on eFanzines.com, and enjoying eI. A treat to see that after all those years, getting his zines back can make him a happy guy. They're a symbol of his happy days in fandom, I must assume.

***I've wanted to write a piece of faan fiction around Dad poking his head where it didn't belong, which seemed to be a theme for him back in the day. He would wander in on the private poker games and the secret parties. He has a story about being mistaken for the OE of some APA and milking it for all it was worth. I never said my Dad was teh most honest man on Earth, but he meant it all in good fun. His favoutire thing back then was to get cigarettes and use getting a light as an excuse to chat with writers.***



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Strange that anyone would say that they were supporting a certain bid for Worldcon because they were tired of all these out of country bids. Why do you think they call it Worldcon? Hey, when the Blue Jays first won the World Series in 1992, the outrage from the USA was amazing. How dare a Canadian team come in and win OUR World Series? Huh? I'm pleased that the Japanese, who run conventions regularly, decided to bid for a Worldcon, and they won handily. I wish I could go to Japan, and Glasgow, and Los Angeles, but I can't, but it is good to see the Worldcon going elsewhere in the world.

***I've heard worse reasons for supporting a WorldCon bid (the classic being 'It would require me to change planes since there are no direct flights from SFO') I supported Japan's bid, though I knew I wouldn't be going. And the Blue Jays winning OUR World Series was a crime. I mean, how many Canadian Players did they really have? Seriously, I'd love to see the Japanese, Cubans, Dominicans and Mexicans join in on an actual World Series, but I doubt it will happen.***

16...I received my issue of Claims Department a few days ago, and I will get a loc to you RSN, don't know when. Don't participate in the fan funds any more; money is perpetually tight, and I'm lucky that most people understand.

***My money tends to be restrictive too, though I've managed to exchanged getting birthday and Christmas gifts into trips to cons and the like. Take you time on the Claims Department LoC.***

Like I said, I hate doing a single loc for six issues of a zine, but the good part of it is that I am at least caught up with you, and at least a little caught up with everything else. I still have about 25 zines on the desktop, and I'd better get with it with them, too. Take it easy, and I hope there'll be some Corflu 2006 information soon. I trust the organizers will pass it along, but I'm sure I can help a little. Looking forward to more issues to loc.

***Can't wait to hear more about Corflu. I hope my good pal in the city let's me stay with her or else the purse strings might be a little too tight after I get back. Hope you get more time off. Remember: A life without it's down moments is all down moments!***

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

I was very saddened to hear of the death of Bill Bowers. News broke on Monday via Trufen.net and I was quite bummed all day after reading it. I had sent off an LoC to his latest issue of Xenolith just a few weeks ago and we exchanged a couple of emails. That was just about all the interaction me and Bill Bowers ever had.

Bill was the editor of three very good, top-notch fanzines over the years. Double:Bill was the first, and some would say best. The Bills, Bowers and Mallardi, got a 1965 Hugo nod for Best Fanzine. He pubbed many LoCs from folks who would go on to be very important fans, most notably Jerry Kaufman. He was well-known and respected for Outworlds, which got five Hugo nods in the Era dominated by Locus and Dick Geis' works. Xenolith had been his most recent work. He had been in poor health for a while.

The Drink Tank is written, produced and directed by Christopher J. Garcia. This is issue seventeen. Any writing by Mr. Garcia is free to reuse in any form or medium with or without consent. If you've got a good recipe, a strange list or any sort, anything you'd like see in The Drink Tank, or any comments, drop a line to [garcia@computerhistory.org](mailto:garcia@computerhistory.org) or 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd. Mountain View, CA 94043. Those are also the addresses if you want to get added to the mailing list for Claims Department or LISP. Also, if you know of any fans in Sweden, Finland, New Zealand or Australia who are interested in writing up the big conventions there, let me know.