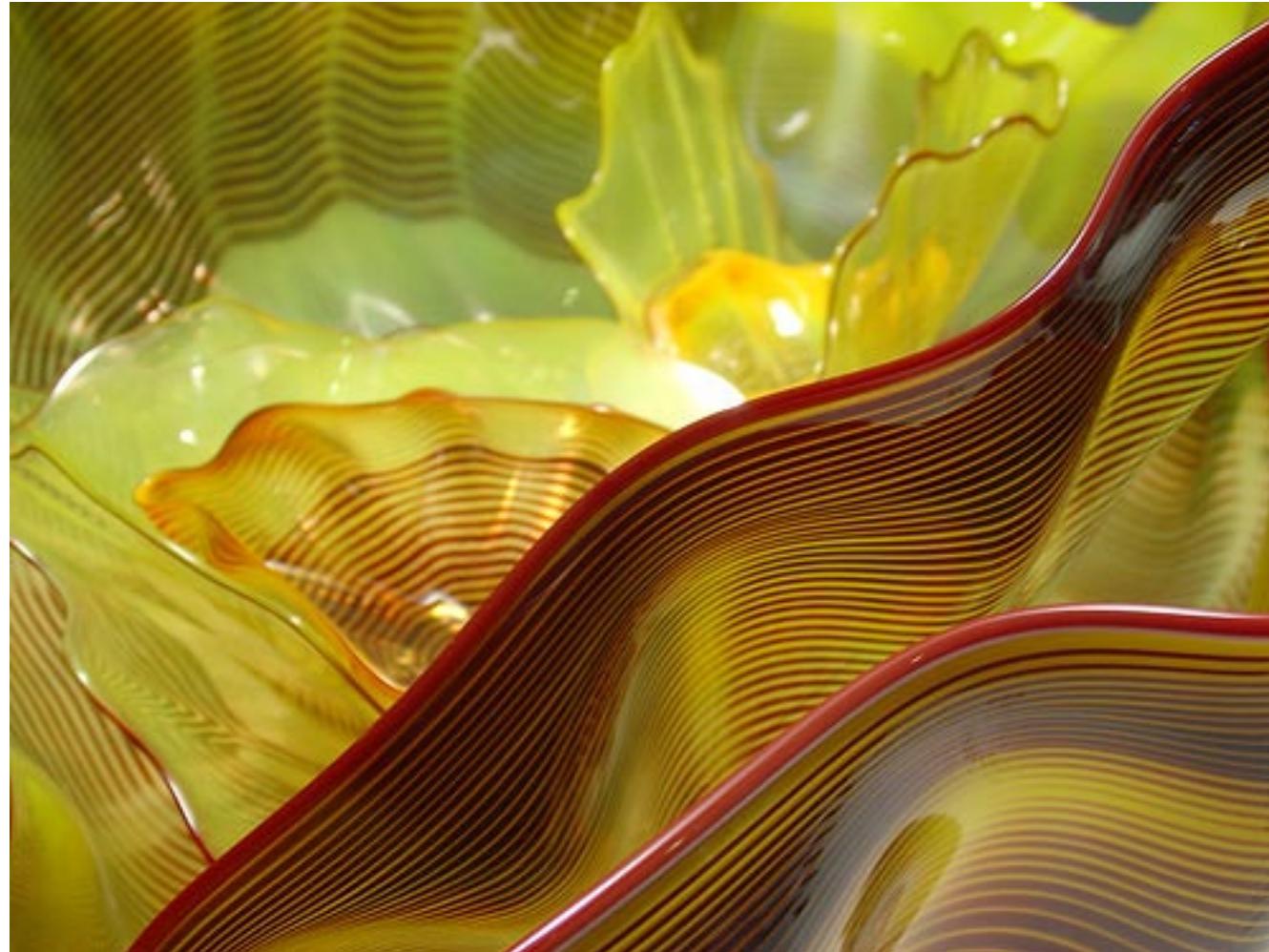


The Drink Tank Issue 221



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The cover and the photos with my article on Montreal are all from The Lovely & Talented Linda Wenzelburger. There's some art in here from Taral too! I love that. The cover is a photo of a piece from Chihuly...or however you say it. It's an amazingly gorgeous piece of glass work. The photo on this page is also of the same piece. It's amazing the way the piece changes when you're standing in a room with it. I've seen a lot of his pieces, there are several at the SFMoMA, where Linda and I spent the day off I took on the Friday before we left for Montreal. I'd never been and while the Richard Avedon exhibit was what brought me in, the Chuhily pieces really hit me strong.

Also, they had a Tom of Finland piece. He and Aarno Sarninen are the two best known FInnish art-types...unless you count hockey. Then you have to add Teppo Numinen.

I'm not going to say much about the Hugos, though a lot of folks might expect me to comment on Best fanzine. I won't comment, except for one thing: the Hugo Voters suck.

Yes, I am among them, and saying such things may well assure that I never win, or even get nominated for a Hugo again, but there's a single award that made the bile rise. That's Best Fan Artist. I love Frank Wu. I really do. I love Frank's art, I've been lucky enough to run many of his pieces over the years and he was the first fan artist to really let me run his work. I think I ran the most of his pieces over the last year. I've voted for him in the past, but this year...

Taral had everything going for him.

He was the Fan Guest of Honor, he had hundreds of pieces showing up all over the place over the last year, he wrote articles for pretty much every zine out there and he was amazing.

He ended up placing fourth.

Frank won.

What does it take to win a Hugo? There was no one who did as much great art last year as Taral. He did pretty much all the art for Anticipation and he didn't manage to do any better than 4th? That's not at all right. He was the best

fan artist over the last year, I can't think of a year where anyone had such an impact, and yet he ended up in fourth. Sucks. Hopefully, all the exposure he got this year will allow him to win next year, much the same way Brad Foster won Best Fan Artist a year after he exploded with his fantastic colored pieces after he took up Photo-shopping his pieces. I hope so. Nothing bothered me more than Taral not winning.

This issue has a Taral article and some more pieces from him. He's a mensch.



My trip to Montreal

If you want to hear about the con, you'll have to go to Science Fiction San Francisco and read News and Notes. Here I'm going to talk about the city of Montreal and my trip there, without talking too much about the con. I usually just fly in the day of, check-in to the hotel and then head right off to registration to pick up my program book and programming schedule that's never there. That's how it usually works, but this time, The Lovely & Talented Linda and I arrived a couple of days early and took in the city. We got into Montreal after changing planes in Toronto, made our way through



the airport and caught a taxi into town. They've got a standard price for all trips into Montreal's Downtown: just less than 40 bucks. I'm glad to say that the trip into town was fast, though as my luck would have it, the cab driver spoke no English. This was odd, but I guess I understood him just about as well as any cab driver I've ever had in the US.

We got to the Travelodge about 8pm. Perfect timing because you should never have deal with traffic in a new town. We checked in, every greeting us with French. I let Linda do all the talking. I know the simple words that you need to know, but I couldn't understand a word from any of the Quebecois. The accent also made their English difficult for me to trace. I have those problems. It was hard for me in England even to deal with the accents. This is a problem I will probably always face.

We took our keys and headed up to room 501. We got off the elevator and it was the closest room. This was good. I opened the door and we walked in.

You are in a small room- There is one obvious exit.

To give you a complete idea, the room was exactly 13 feet by 10 feet...including the bathroom. That's right: 130sqft. As a gentleman of 5'10 inches and 260 lbs. I can say that it felt like a dog-legged straightjacket. It was tiny; easily the smallest hotel room I've ever had. It wasn't that bad for me and Linda, but Jason was set to come up on Wednesday. It was going to be interesting. We set our stuff out, and to keep from feeling too much like a bear in the old Bronx Zoo, we headed out into the night.

WorldCon 2009 was smart enough to



put their con on at the same time as the Francofolies, a French music festival. There were several stages set-up along Rue de Sainte Catherine. They seemed to rotate with one stage running at a time. There was a pretty good band up on one of the stages and we walked by, enjoying their sort of funky-thrashy metal. It was good stuff. We just walked around and saw the way they laid out the festival. Here I was in the belly of the beast: the depths of the French-speaking Montreal where I heard literally not one word of English spoken save by Linda and I. It was hard to be surrounded by people who



don't talk my talk.

There were dozens of restaurants on the street, but the ones within the festival area were swamped. It was getting close to 9, so a lot of places were closing. We went to a place called Amir's, a chain as I understand it. They were a gyros place and I looked over their menu and saw the thing I'd most been wanting: poutine! I had one with chicken on it. It was great. The fries were good, but the gravy was fantastic. The cheese curds were awesome, and the chicken added a great and very flavorful note. It was the worst poutine I had on the entire trip, but it was still very, very tasty. Linda had the shwarma. It smelled good.

We walked back to the room and I got the wifi code so I could search for what we were going to do. There are a lot of great museums in Montreal, so we had to make a plan. We chose the Decorative Arts Museum of Montreal. It's a lovely pair of building right across the street from each other. We started with the older of the two building. It was a bit of a trek from our hotel, but it wasn't that bad. We got in and it was a big museum, free to go into the permanent collection and costs for special exhibitions. The collection we first went into was very good, a section of furniture starting with a lovely sleigh from the 1780s. It was in good shape and that made it even more impressive. There were a ton of pieces that I really enjoyed. Antique chairs, more modern things, pieces from Tiffani's. Frank Gehry's corrugated cardboard chair, an Apple Mac and televisions and radios. The designs were modern and beautiful and it made me very happy to see them all.

Upstairs, they had a lovely series of

rooms for paintings. There were some very modern pieces, including I think one Pollack and a few Pop Art pieces that were exceptional, but there was also a lot of Canadian pieces from artists I'd never heard of who were doing Abstract Expressionist and post-Impressionist kinds of things. There was a group of artists called the Group of Six who did some amazing modern stuff that related to Canadian landscapes. I loved their stuff. I usually like things that are much more in the 20th Century, but these pieces, which felt rooted in the late 19th,

were all fantastic.

There was a great room dedicated to First Nations art, especially those traditionally around Hudson Bay and northern Quebec. There was a bear, a Polar Bear kind of statue, that seemed to be dancing. I asked Linda to take a bunch of photos of it. It was the kind of thing that just buzzed with a sort of joy. It looked like it was skankin'! Honestly, I am always looking for things that seem to represent joy. This was certainly one of them.

We enjoyed the museum and walked





out in the air of the city. It had been drizzling and raining a bit, but when we got out, it was clean and clear and everything was perfect. We walked across the street and there was the other building that formed the museum. This one had an exhibit dedicated to Napolean. There was one of his hats, a bunch of paintings and artifacts that were from his household or at least the kind that he would have used, and there was an awesome couple of chairs. This whole exhibit showed 1) that Napolean was an incredibly important part of the history of France and 2) the French can't seem to leave him alone. It was a nice exhibit, the kind you'd find at a history museum, which I didn't expect from an art museum. Sadly, I only saw one political cartoon

in the exhibit. There were probably thousands of political cartoons done in both France and the UK during Napolean's reign and it would have been nice to have some of those, but as it is, it was still a very strong exhibit.

We walked down to the bottom level which was nice. There was a lot of modern art, which is my wheelhouse. There was a weird video thing that I thought was pretty cool. There were five screens, all shaped like stretched bear skins. On them were projected the images of four dancing First Nations warrior types and a fifth that looked to be a woman in a red beaded thing. They all danced to a techno-y tune. It was really interesting, I found myself watching it more closely than I usually watch video installations. There was a lot to it. The central image did resemble Cher a bit, which was odd. I liked it. Kent Monkman was the artist, and I'm going to be looking for more from him.

The funniest thing was leaving the building. We walked around and there was this big remodeling project going on under the ground. They had a walk-way through it which had some lovely images of well-known paintings with hard hats and such. They were really fun. When we got to the end of it, there was a sign to the Sortie (which either means exit or a fleet of bomber pilots) and when we left, we were back at the first building! It was weird. I was seriously tripped out by the entire situation! These things only seem to happen to me.

We walked on towards St. Catherine. It's a wonderful shopping and eating street. It reminded me of Boston and Newbury or Boylston. I'd been there before, I love that part of town, and we walked around until we found

lunch. Reuben's. This was a place I'd been ages before, one of my trips with Emerson I think, and it's a wonderful deli-like restaurant. It'd almost count as a coffee shop and y'all know how I feel about Coffee Shops. We got a seat and Linda and I ordered. She had a sam-mich, I had the Smoked Meat Poutine.

Now, Montreal is known for its smoked meat. I'd say it's the half-way point between corned beef and pastrami. It's delicious, it really is, and there are several places that are famous for it. I understand that Reuben's gets theirs from Schwartz's, which is the Gold Standard. We ordered and when it came, it was giant. That photo only gives part of the story. The smell, she was amazing. You got the meat and you got



this scent of gravy that floated like perfume in a cartoon: lacy and peppery, making my toes twinkle as I floated through the air. The first bite was amazing. I only managed to get smoked meat in it and that was enough. There was pepper, there was salt, there was a touch of gravy. It all came together in ways I slowly came to understand.

I took the mound of product as a challenge. I ate up, dug in, fought by the forkful. It was amazing. The fries were only OK, the gravy was magical and the cheese, oh the cheese! Perfect, stringy not liquid, and the meat was there in every bit, slabs and slivers adding that flavor. If I had died while I was eating it, I'm pretty sure the coroner would have ruled it death by gastronomic misadventure. It was wonderful, easily the best thing I'd eaten in Montreal. Linda's sammich was big, she had to

take _ of it back with us. She's a slower eater than I (in much the same way that a Basking Shark is a slower eater than a piranha) so I had some rice pudding, which was cinnamon-laced, but overall only OK. It was a wonderful meal and one that held me over for a long time.

We headed out and back to the hotel. Linda's knee was bothering her, so we needed to rest for an hour or two, which we did while watching Montreal TV. It's weird. The channels are in French, but all the shows seemed to be American. We watched How It's Made and then a cooking show. The Cooking show, which was some sort of team challenge, was in English. It made me less angry.

After a good rest, we decided to go and look at the rest of the old part of the city. We walked out to get a good look at the piers. We trekked up and went towards the water. We had

to go by the Palais de Congres, which was a massive monster of a building. I mean, I knew it was going to be a trek every day, but I didn't know that the convention center itself would be such a hulking monster! We kept walking up and who should we run into but Sue Mason! I had only talked to Sue briefly at Eastercon, so it was nice to stop for a moment while waiting on a stoplight. We chatted about the lovely food that was in the area and it was very nice. It was pretty toasty, so Giulia de Caesere was hiding in the shade of a kiosk. I still think she's my favorite regular writer for PLOKTA. We kept walking up the hill and ended up at the Basilica de Sainte Patrick, but in front of it was a place where a statue usually lives, but it had been taken down for repairs. As a guy who sees an empty plinth as a challenge, I tried to figure out how I might get in there, through the chainlink



fence, and get a photo of me being a statue. Alas, there were too many people, including some park attendants, so it didn't happen. I managed it at the British Museum, but not here. I was sad...

We found our way down towards the docks where there was a museum. A museum that was really pricey, so we didn't go in, but they had a pirates exhibit. There was also a lot of food and such around. If I never make it to mainland Europe (and with all the trouble I had with the language around Montreal, I doubt I'd last in a place where English wasn't spoken by 90% of the inhabitants), this'll stand in for it in all my visions. It's a lovely part of town with wonderful restaurants and cobblestones. I love cobblestones. Yes, I am aware that Europe is not nearly as quaint as all that (I am also aware that Scotland is not England, but I will never stop calling it as such!), but one must let the myth live!

We walked back to the hotel, running into a couple of folks along the way. More TV, some of it good. We got hungry, so we walked out again, looking for a place that I knew was on Sainte Laurant, but I had everything mixed up and it was actually on the other side of town. We ended up going to a full-fledged diner: the McGill Plaza. I was thinking about getting poutine, but instead got a pork kabob thing that was over-cooked. The rice was good, though, so that was nice. We ate and walked over to the Delta, where we ran into Rene Walling. I like that guy. He was looking harried and he greeted us with 'Don't tell anyone, but I'm busy.' We chatted for five minutes or so, then made our way off to the hotel, to sleep. There was a talk show

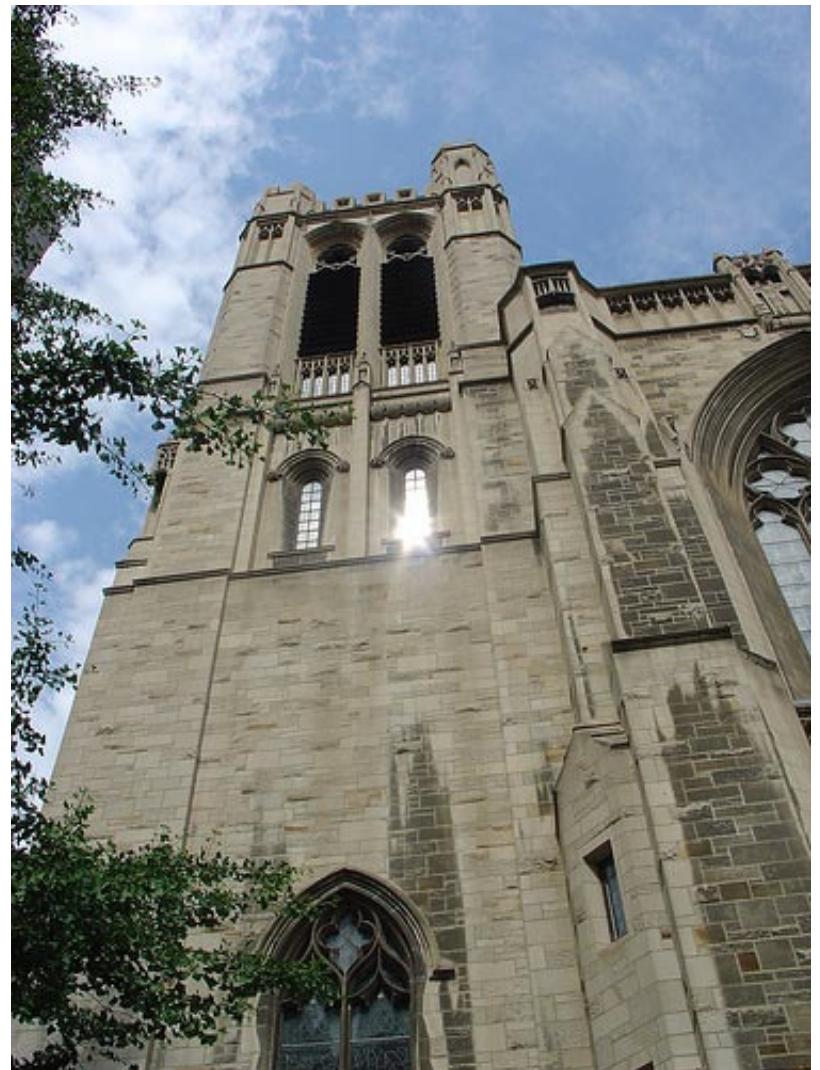
with the guy who wrote Fight Club being interviewed. The Interviewer was really good. I can not for the life of me remember who he was.

We woke up ready to go to town. Linda wanted to see the Contemporary Art Museum and the Redbush Museum at McGill University. We walked out and the day was actually muggy. Me= fat and furry, like a seal. You don't see many seals hanging out in Toronto during the summer, do you? I was sweating like a bastard. We did the walk and made it to the museum.

Man, this was a throwback.

I spent a lot of time at the California Academy of Sciences when I was a kid. This was an old Stuffed Animals in Diaramas kind of place. This was a lot like that, an old, slightly dusty, showing its age kind of museum, which isn't bad, it's just such a contrast to the museums I've been going to recently. The entryway told the story: a couple of hanging skeletons, a few small cases with minerals and shales, a few cases with bones. It was as if time had stopped in the 1960s. The skeleton that loomed over the front of the hall was of a Beluga, my favorite of the whales. Seriously, Raffi made it one of the most popular whale varieties, but I love it because it's the only whale that can move its neck. It's just that cool.

Upstairs, there was a lovely display of minerals. Apparently, McGill is known for



mineralogy. I had no idea, but they had a fine display, including Smithsonite, my favorite mineral. Then there was a big hall of Biology. That was fun. This compacted everything from dinosaurs to modern backyard animals. The thing that's cool about these kinds of museums is that you can get up close. There were stuffed musk ox, wolves and a moose that were right there. You couldn't touch, but you could look

closely at them. There were a few set-ups of mock environments, including a lovely one of a beaver dam, and it all felt right. I did really like the section, even though it felt like an old, old museum.

The top floor required you to walk past a stuffed Ibex and Lion along with a bear. It was kinda weird. The top was the Anthropology. There was a lot of African stuff, but the highlight was the lovely section on Egypt, including a number of mummies, including one of a cat and a couple of crocodiles. It was really neat. The top part looked down on the Biology Hall, so it was a narrow walkway, which is the problem with old timey museums that do that. Yeah, it gives you a very cool view (one that started in



museums that also did lectures, which was most of them) but it eats up a lot of space.

Would I say this was my least favorite museum of the trip? Yeah, I would, but it's not bad. It's just not up with the times. Still, a fun place to take stuff in.

We had read that the Museum of Contemporary Art was free after 6pm, so we headed back to the room, taking a mild jog off to the Palais to pick up our badges. We were walking back when we passed the restaurant called The Noodle Factory. It looked interesting, like one of those Chinese places on Castro Street in Mountain View. We decided it would be a good place for food that night, so we went back to the room to rest up and watch some more TV. I was hot. Really hot. I needed to rest and put my shirt on top of the air conditioner so it would cool off. It's a trick you need to know if you're a big guy like myself.

We watched more TV, I took a shower,

Linda got her knee rested, and then it was off into the world of Rue Rachel. I had a need. I needed poutine and we'd found the directions to my favorite place from one of my earlier visits. It's called PatatiPatata. It's a lovely little place. It's tiny, about the same size of the hotel room. If it's small for a hotel room, it's minuscule for a restaurant. It's a diner writ small. The food is simple: burgers, fries, sammiches, the usual. I ordered the regular poutine and Linda had the BLT.

Smart moves on both

parts.

We got there exactly at the start of the rush, and since there were only two guys working, they had to keep everything going. They managed to keep the order of who came in when and served folks in the order they came. I was happy they did that, and they were two nice guys in their early twenties. They went and took the orders, we waited about a half-hour before they got to us, and then they made our order in about 2 minutes. I was impressed with their speed.

And even more so with the food.

The fries in the poutine were awesome. I mean, I don't think I've had fries that good ever. Even the Duck Fat Fries and Horse Fat Fries I've had haven't gone up to that level. They were amazing. The cheese was cold. That's both a good and bad thing. That meant they melted slow, but I eat fast and that meant that most of the curds I ate were not even slight-

ly warm. That's a bummer, but it's my own damn fault. The gravy, on the other hand, might have been made from the sweat of God himself. It was amazing, a touch of pepper, a slide of salt, an interesting combination of everything a gravy should be. I loved it. I couldn't stop talking about it.

Linda also had her own moment. She said that her BLT was the best she ever had. The guy who made it had given her some extra bacon because she waited so long. She also got fries. They were good. She dipped some of them in my gravy. I would highly recommend it to anyone spending some time in Montreal. It's on Sainte Laurant at Rachel. Well worth your time.

We walked back up Sainte Laurant, a street that reminded me of Newbury in Boston again, or perhaps Market in San Francisco. There were all sorts of little shops (including one that had a Theramin in the window!) and restaurants and a couple of sex shops. One of them specialized in couples viewings. I pointed this out to Linda and she said "yes, it would be the last thing we viewed as a couple."

She's so much more classy than I am.

After that, we were back to the hotel, and then off on another walk, this time to the Contemporary Art Museum. It was a simple place that had this great foyer and several galleries off of it. Upstairs there were several galleries. The first was this 35mm projector showing a film of Loie Fuller dancing in reverse. The artist was Christine Davis, who also had an installa-

tion of iPod Touchs showing a series of clips and stills. It was an awesome exhibit. There was another projector that showed images from a math textbook on an orchid plant. It was sweet. The next gallery was Robert Polidori's photos of Havana, Beirut, Chernobyl, and post-Katrina New Orleans. It was amazing. There was one of a control room at Chernobyl that I thought was especially effective. I'm not 100% sure why it got me so, but it did. There was this fine pink spray all over, and there were still monitors and the like, just making it all feel like the disaster

was fresh.

Beyond these was a strange installation from Spring Hurlbut. She's a very famous gallery installation-type, and this one was odd. It was 100+ cribs, cradles and doll's beds all installed in a neat set of rows. They were all in varying degrees of disrepair, and I'm not sure I fully got it. When I found Linda wandering through the group, I walked up to her and said 'What's it gonna take for me to get you to buy this one today?'

When Linda laughs, it's adorable.

We walked through more galleries, including a lovely one from artist Betty Goodwin. She did vests and assemblage pieces that just felt dense and strange. Not quite Louise Nevelsen, but still good stuff. There was an exhibit from Christine Davis again called Not I/Pas Moi which featured words from Samuel Becket and Simone Weil projected onto a wall of clothing buttons. It was quite something. I sometimes miss the point of these things, but this one I think I felt right, even if I didn't completely grok the intellectual side of it all.

The final thing was a series called Projections in the basement. They were running a series of music videos from groups like Arcade Fire, Feist, Radiohead and more. One of them was from a group called Grip. The song was called zZz is Playing: Grip. It was a video that had a bunch of folks jumping on trampolines holding signs that were references to various computer functions. You should go and look it up on youtube. It's there, I've seen it. The best is the guy who is actually painting the progress bar at



the bottom of the screen. I love that.

The museum might have been the best of all the museums we went to when it came to overall experience. The video installations were great, and even comparing it to the SFMOMA, where Linda and I had gone less than a week before, it is favorable. I'd love to go back sometime. It's got an especially nice collection and I've been looking through the website to find what's coming in the future.

As we were leaving, there was this great French band playing funky-thrash. Sadly, we never got their name, but they sounded awesome and I'm hoping that I'll be able to figure it out because I'd totally buy their CD.

We headed back into Chinatown, which was right next to our hotel, and found Noodle Factory. This place was great! They were the typical hole-in-the-wall joint, but they made their noodles by hand by a guy who was in a little glass box. It was awesome to watch him. There was a table with a little kid sitting at it, and since the noodle-maker slammed the noodles on to the table in front of him. The kid clapped his hands over his ears every time. It was funny.

The food was not funny: the food was excellent. The General Tsou's Chicken was perfect. It had spice, lovely vinegar tastes, a light sweetness and a crunchy shell that crumbled slowly. I had beef Chow Fun. The noodles were amazing, which was to be expected, but the beef was so tender that I barely needed to chew it. We also had the Green Onion Pancakes, which were dense and light and crispy and flavorful. I enjoyed it so much. If you put a piece of the Chicken

on the pancake, you were in Heaven.

I enjoyed the walk back to the hotel, especially since it was less than a block and a half. We had to swing by the Delta again and we ran into a number of friendly fans. I love fans! I even love Fen. We wandered about, looked into a liquor store and found the prices for Ice Cider to be rather steep. I love Ice Cider, especially when served cool. It's almost as tasty as Spruce Beer, which I only managed to get two cans of on my entire trip. It was a shame, as

they were both exceptionally good.

The next day the con started. It was a good con, but that's another story! The museums were really nice, the festival was a lot of fun (even if I didn't get to see Bela Fleck) and the food, oh the food. I'm hoping I can go again sometime, but honestly it would take another con in Montreal to get me there.

But oh, how I love Montreal!





That is Niall Harrison digging into a Bison rib. I love Bison. You could have used that thing as set of handlebars for a tricycle. He loved it.

OK, so Au Pied de Cochon was featured on Anthony Bourdain's show No Reservations. He went to the restaurant and the owner said "Start at the top and don't stop until he's dead." Everything was excellent and Bourdain said it was the best stuff he'd had on the show! That's nuts.

The place is wonderful, but not exactly refined. The tables are simple, not tableclothes or the like, the walls are wood except for the glass which showed off wine and random boxes. The place is kinda small, about three of my hotel rooms, but every table was taken up, every seat filled. The joint was loud. Not only were people talking loud, but the sound was bouncing off all the wood and glass! It was even hard for me to hear Niall who was sitting right next to me!

The food was not to be believed. Linda, Kevin and Andy each got a cube of Foie Gras that was breaded and deep-fried, giving it both crunch and awesomeness. There was Duck Carpaccio (which I had a bite of) and some other stuff for appetizers. The main courses were incredible. Linda and Nic both had a Hot Pot of various sausages over mashed potatoes. Niall had the rib, Andy had Duck in a Can. Jason had Foie Gras Poutine, which I sadly didn't get to taste. I don't remember what Sharee, Randy or Abigail Nussbaum ate. I had the Shepard's Pie. It was amazing. The meat was cubes of unctuous beauty, the gravy could heal light wounds. The potatoes, oh the potatoes! They were covered with a light shaving of cheese that added only a hint. I loved every second of it and I kept saying 'This is the best meal of my life!' and it certainly was.

We weren't the only WorldCon attendees there. Tom Becker and various other folks were there when we got in. There was a table from Locus. A group of French-Canadian Fans were on one side, and on the other were George R. R. Martin, Connie Willis, Gardner Dozois and a couple of others. It was a classy table.

All in all, expensive, but a wonderful meal shared with some very good friends who I hope to see again soon!

Special Thanks to Lloyd et Yvonne Penney for the Fanzine Lounge, Steven Silver, Dave Howell, James Bacon and Kevin Roche for Technobabble Quiz, Hugo voters for awarding Weird Tales and Exhaltation, Neal Stephenson for showing up, Guy Lillian for not exploding when they announced Electric Velocipede, Linda and Jason for putting up with me, Mike Glyer for the Shirt, John Hertz for carrying the shirt, Kevin and Andy for being Kevin and Andy, Sharee for finally being where I was, Cathrine Crockett for the Fanzine Lounge After Dark and Dave Kyle for living.

1982

Taral Wayne

Quite a lot of things happened in 1982. Oddly, I don't remember what any of them were offhand, and don't propose to talk about them. I have something else in mind. I've been scanning a year – 1982 as it happens. The year was picked for no esoteric reason involving numerology or prophecies carven on the Great Pyramid of Cheops, nor was it chosen randomly. The year is 1982 because I needed to copy a couple of old cartoons that went with an article



One of my "projects" is to type (and revise) all my old fanwriting from days gone by into digital format. I was working on an article from 1982 that John Purcell will be reprinting later this year. The article, a time-snatch from rich brown's Beardmutterings, was about the odd tendency I had in those days of finding small change just about everywhere I went. John asked if I would do illos for it, and I remembered that I had, in fact, drawn two cartoons for the original appearance. Once I had scanned the art John wanted, I noticed something.

It was easy work. In fact it was very easy work to scan those old black and white, inked drawings. For the last several years, most of my drawings have been done in pencil. It saves time, since they can be scanned into Photoshop and be made to look almost as though they were inked. Unfortunately, it takes lengthy tinkering to adjust contrast and brightness to an ideal balance, and it requires plenty of cleaning up with the brush tool. It was a pleasant surprise to find that the inked art needed almost no post-production work. I put it on the glass bed. I operated the scanner. And I saved the file. In some instances I had to make a tiny adjustment, or paint out a spot that didn't belong on the image, but it was the labour of a minute or two. By comparison, I could spend half an hour on almost any pencil piece that was fairly clean to start with. Far too often it took an hour or longer, particularly if I started air-brushing.

So an idea came into my head. How long would it take to scan all the art of that year? There was only one way to find out. I started scanning the rest of the art for that year.



It took about a day. All of 1982 in a day!

Now I have another "project." I want to scan all my old art. I'm not counting the thousands of pencil drawings that I've ground out in the last several years, but only the inked, finished, numbered, and sealed in plastic stuff that I used to do. Furry fandom had driven me to put quantity above quality. Even spending half an hour with Photoshop on a pencil drawing makes it look finished, and is far more economical of my time than inking. I rarely have time for that anymore. Another way to put that is that nobody seems able to pay me to spend that much time anymore. I can very easily price myself



out of the market, as there are roundabouts a thousand “marker monkeys” out there in furry fandom. Far too many will work in full colour for twenty bucks. Unlike me, they may not be trying to make a living, just earning enough at a con for lunch money. I try to play the quality card for all it’s worth, but not all those marker

I’m not kidding. Sometimes I found regrettable technical weaknesses, or a lack of verve that tells me I didn’t quite know what I was trying to do. But the range of styles and treatments, and the freshness of ideas impressed even me, and I did it! That’s how good much of the stuff was. I don’t get to innovate as much now as I did then,

monkeys are poor artists, by any means. Scanning all that stuff will have to wait for another day. Retirement, perhaps. Or reincarnation.

The question at this point is... should I work backward from 1982, or forward?

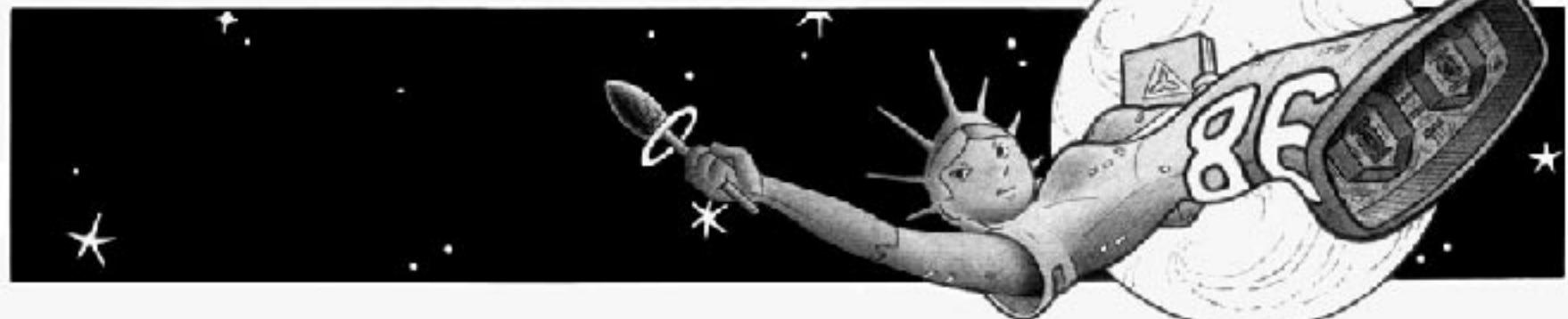
One of the great discoveries of scanning 1982 was that I was brilliant. Hell, no,

but let’s face it, pin-ups don’t demand much imagination. In fact, the more left to the imagination, the less it will reach its target audience.

But in those days? Boy, I was good!

I’m still very good, of course. It seems that I’m good in a different way, though. I have a far more relaxed and fluid grasp of anatomy, pose, and body language than I did 27 years ago. And with Photoshop I can do things with colour that I could only dream of in 1982. My eyesight isn’t what it was, so the fineness of line I can manage is less than I’d like, but I can still pick and compose detail like nobody’s business. I can still parody other artists’ styles, and have complete mastery of my own. I’ve even picked up a little skill at likenesses. Most of all, my work looks like no-one else’s, which matters when you want to stand out in a crowd.

Yet I look back and almost wish I could do some of those 1982 works over again. Not to do them better, but to enjoy their freshness, and experience the expansion of personal horizons



again.

The question put before me now is what to do with 1982. It goes without saying, I think, that I'll scan the other, many years of inked and coloured art in my collection, but what should I do with them then?

Should I post them on the internet?

There's an attractive argument for this. Anything on the internet will last forever. Or will it? Maybe stuff on the internet only gets lost among the millions and billions of other things, unless they happen to be very popular. Eventually, even websites die, and their content with them. Also to consider, doesn't free access to intellectual property end any possibility of earning money with it? Why pay me to look at my art when you can google for it, and download it for nothing? One dodge is never to release your work in a high-quality form – freeloaders only get blurry, jaggy art. Or you can watermark it. But that hardly preserves the work for posterity. Would the world be better off if there were no copies of American Gothic that weren't pixelated, or had "Grant Wood" printed across it?

I posted a few of the drawings from 1982 on a site called FurAffinity. It's drawn some welcome comment. Most of the 1982 art, though, has relatively limited furry interest. And we are talking about something like forty files in just this year alone. Twenty-five or thirty more years of art would add up to a considerable number. In fact, since I numbered as well as titled my inked art, I know it adds up to over 1400 pieces. (If I had numbered coloured work it would be a good deal more than that, and if I start counting pencil drawings we arrive at figures I hesitate to name.) I already have over

800 files posted on FurAffinity. What are the odds of anyone actually looking at them all now, let alone adding many hundreds more?

Or perhaps I could find willing partners in crime, who would run a series of portfolios in their zines? Not the whole 1400 and more, of course. Just the two or three hundred highlights, to start with.

On April 20th, 1982, the greatest Rock 'n Roll journalist of all-time, Lester Bangs, ODed while he was listening to Human League's album Dare.

Another thought I have is to collect all my old art on CD. Maybe even two or three CD's. (I have doubts about the wisdom of making my whole life available for a bargain \$20, and then going destitute for the lack of anything more to sell for years to come.) The likelihood that I can scan 20 or more years of artwork before the Worldcon in Montreal, and then produce a good-looking CD, is pretty slim, howev-

er. If I had nothing else I needed to do, perhaps it could be done. But I have other "projects" that put demands on my time. Worse, the world unreasonably forces me to make money to meet rent, keep up with credit cards, pay utilities, and buy groceries. I've been known to spend money on discretionary purchases, too.

After all, I must have those boxed DVD's of Night Court and Columbo... And I've been looking for a decent Pertinax for ever so long. Now here it is on a dealer's website for a quite reasonable price, really. Can I really begrudge twenty-five bucks for a beautifully rendered die-cast of a 1959 Buick Electra? Of course not. I just won't tell anyone, that's all. They all think I should do without necessities. Isn't it enough I already had to give up cable TV, and the satellite dish no longer works because of "progress"?

If I'm so talented, why ain't I rich? Why? Why! I have better things to do with my time than make money, which any low-down,



corporate welfare bum can do, whereas I'm the only one of me.

The best thing about Tygers is, I'm the only one!

Oh well... excuse the outburst. But the question remains. And who do I leave all this to in my will?

Not just to someone who wants to look at it privately, and gloat. Or to a relative who won't even do that much, and probably throw it all out when they get tired of it taking up a drawer that might be better used to hold the dining room linen.

I'll just have to live forever. That's the only reasonable way out, though I'm sure I never thought it would come to this back in 1982.



That'll be it for this issue. I've got a couple of LoCs, some art from Frank Wu, Alan White, Macey Starkey and a few others that I need to use. Plus, I've got to complete the WorldCon zine that we had Marc Shirmister, Steve Stiles, Taral Wayne, Brianna SpaceKat-Wu and Frank Wu working on. They did some great pieces, plus the audience wrote some really fun little articles. I've got a piece or two for it as well, including some very fun interlinos that were actually said during the con.

Tonight is a night I've been waiting for for ages: Gina Carano vs. Cris Cyborg for the Strikeforce Woman's championship live from the HP Pavilion. It's going to be the biggest woman's MMA fight in history between a brutal tough woman who looks like you'd expect a fighter to look, and a model-gorgeous woman who is no slouch in the ring herself. Carano, the pretty one, has been the focus of Woman's fighting in the US and I can't wait to see it. It's still more than 8 hours away as I write this, but we've also got a Poker game to play before it! I love my life!