



The Drink Tank Issue 82

*Cover by Robert Hole, With
Writing by Frank Wu, Judith
Morel, The Swans, Chris Garcia
and Others!*

I am the Leprechaun!

That's Robert Hole's interpretation of what would happen if I somehow managed to capture the pot of gold. This issue has some Guidolon stuff, some love & marriage stuff and some Bay-Con Stuff, along with photos from LJ SuperStar JohnO!

Enjoy



The Other Kind of Hustle by Judith Morel

Somewhere along the way, I learned the true nature of buying and selling. It's nowhere near the same thing as supply and demand. There's

more to it than simply holding things back to drive up prices and letting things go to lower them, especially when you're trying to sell to television or movie studios.

You see, there's no such thing as a lack of potential purchases for studios. Here's a sad fact, and if you ever want to try and make a living doing the film thing you might want to turn your head: there are between 3 and 4 THOUSAND feature films completed in the US every year by independents. There are about a hundred and fifty or two hundred studio films, including indy films with distribution agreements before they are completed. Of those 4K movies, maybe three hundred will get a distribution deal somewhere in the world, and another hundred might get one DVD-only deals or net-dist. That's about ten percent of the total. Now, if you include film festivals, about fifteen hundred films are shown, meaning that more than half never get screened outside of engagements set up by the producers for one-nights or parties.

A full 1/2 of all producers do a Feature Film and never get anything out of it. The numbers are worse for shorts, though slightly better for feature docs and about the same for short docs, but those have special TV options that most features don't.

Television is slightly better, but believe it or not, the costs are worst. About 1 in 10 serious pilots are picked

up and maybe sixty percent of those go to air. There are whole seasons of shows that were actually sold that never aired. Some of them find ways to get out (Manchester Prep was recycled into Cruel Intentions 2 on DVD) and most just float away.

It's hard to sell, but that's not to say it can't be done.

If anything, Robot Chicken and Harvery Birdman prove that anything can sell. Frank Wu, that beautiful dreamer, has his work cut out for him, but it's not impossible that he'll see the light of day. But, even if he does manage to get it picked up, I think he might be in for a rude awakening.

The first guy I ever met who managed to sell a series to any network (MTV in this case) was very smart...and then very unhappy. They gave him a choice of deals which were accompanied with varying degrees of money. The first was 50K and he turns the project over to the good people of the network and they produce it. Number two was he produces the show and they pay him a fee for each episode shown. The last was he produce the entire season and sell it as a whole all at once. He took option two and ended up losing about thirty thousand dollars because they only bought eight episodes of the twenty-four he produced.

That's one series of options that will probably be presented Frank's way, and choosing between options like

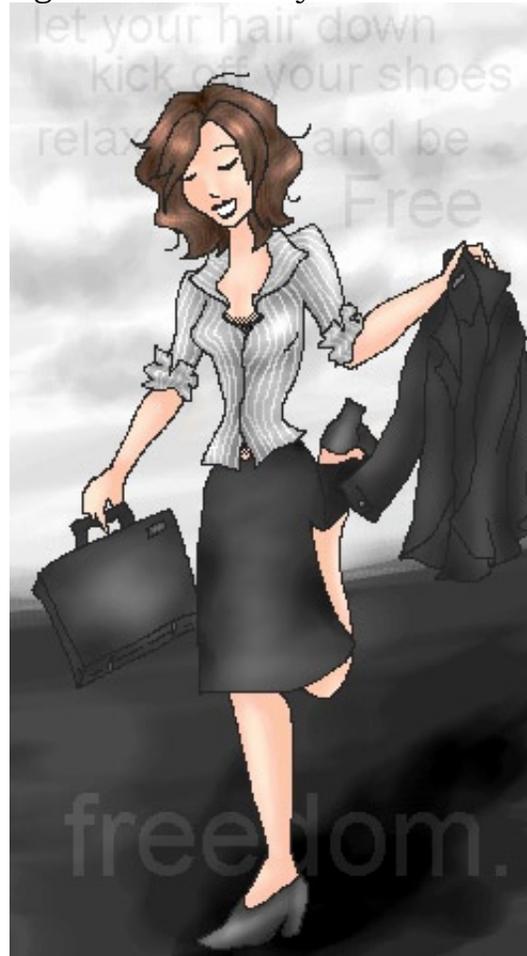
that is pretty tough. Lately, the networks have been buying concepts and making them their own. You'll produce a pilot and they'll say 'Great, we'll buy it, give you some licensing money and take it from there'. Almost always the production crew that you used won't get picked up unless they are really extraordinary and the spot animation will be shifted to Korea. Clerks was done much that way. This is an option where money isn't great, but it also allows for less outlay, so the profits tend to be bigger.

Another method is just buying the characters and stories outright. This leads to big money at first and then later you get nothing. The advantage of this is that they don't need to air it and you're still paid well. There are almost always riders that say if the thing doesn't make it to air, you only get a portion of the payment.

The last one is they bring the creator on and build a staff around them. That's actually the worst option, because a producer will often be beaten down to show that the network is the one really in control. A lot of TV sitcoms end up with that happening and they get bitter fast.

There are other dangers. I've had four close friends end up in bankruptcy over producing shows, only one of which was animated, and they all had the same excuse: they just didn't get us. Frank mentions that extra

deelyboppers and flapping wings won't cause they'll buy Guidolon based on the characters and the story. That's not true, though it's also very true. Companies are willing to over-look things like that if they'll be able to fix



it themselves. If they buy Guidolon as a main character and like the story and writing but dislike the animation, they'll pay and produce it themselves to get it the way they want it. Even if they like it, they'll probably want to cut

costs and go smaller with budgets. The other side is memory. If the execs see the piece and are turned off by the animation, there's no chance of it getting picked up. It's what they carry away with them that'll decide the future of Guidolon. If all they can remember is the flapping wings, then that's all, gone daddy gone are hopes and dreams, but if there's more there they'll remember that. It's being able to produce a lasting positive image that'll sell Guidolon. Even though everyone takes notes, if they have to refer to them you're sunk. You must make a positive impression that they'll carry away with them.

There are a hundred little things when you're selling. A friend once sold a show on nothing more than the theme song and a character sketch. True, he had a track record, but that's still a very bare skeleton. As it went along, Charles failed to win favour and ended up without much say as to the direction things went. His next project, Casual, went much better but only managed to get a small DVD release.

So Frank, I'm saying it'll be a tough time, but don't give up, it can happen if you're flexible. The fewer restraints you put on them, the more likely you're going to end up selling it. If you say 'here's my product, come and buy it from me!' they might just bite, though it becomes less likely when you say 'here's my team, here's my idea, help me make it.'



by
Christopher J. Garcia

BayCon: The Story of My Badge and Ribbons

There's a phenomenon that many fans who don't attend a lot of conventions might think is rather silly. Sometime in the Dark Past, they used to put various ribbons on the name badges to indicate what a person might be doing, such as if they were a Guest of Honour or on Staff or whatever. At some point, I'd say in the 1980s, someone figured out that you could make personal orders and use those to spice up badges. In the years since, ribbons have come a sort of fannish currency and are



hoarded and traded by attendees with joyful glee. Every year, BayCon has hundreds of ribbons, and often folks like Sabre collect almost all of them (and the archive gets one of each). Here is my explanation of the various ribbons and such that I collected throughout the weekend.

1) My Badge proudly declared that I was The Fanzine Lounge Coordinator. I have last year's badge, which indicated that I was Toastmaster, and I believe I'm the first person in fandom to go from GoH to Staff member for the first time in that order!

2) Staff. Yeah, I kinda covered that up there, didn't I? Folks started to recognise that these meant people were on staff and asked us questions when they noticed. The bright Yellow colour does draw the eye.

3) The Purple Gang '06- This one's the one that tells folks that you're an All-Weekend Attendee. It's also one that it given out every year by Kitty, the ChairPurple for the con this year. She's a wonderful woman and I think she did a masterful job. She also wears pretty much only purple, which should explain things.

4) Reality Deviant. I may in fact be that sort of Deviant, but it came from Tycho, the Hotel Liaison and was the first one I got when I arrived on Friday morning.

5) Fanzinista- This is the only ribbon I saw that had Spanish punctu-

ation. It was also the one that I ordered to give away in the Fanzine Lounge. It turned out to be pretty popular and a lot of folks got one. I plan on giving some more of these out to FanEds at WorldCon and perhaps elsewhere. I know I'll be using them for WesterCon next year (where I'm also running the Fanzine Lounge) and more than likely at BayCon again (if they decide they'll let me run another one).

6) There Ain't No Justice- This one's from the daily ribbons they gave out at the info desk and it references one of Larry Niven's stories. I got it very early in the day on Friday.

7) *VoIP Fan- OK, I'm not that big into Voice-Over IP, but I am a ribbon whore and I know what VoIP is, so Tony Cratz was kind enough to give me one.

8) Roses are #FF0000- Yes, that's HTML code for Red. Another Tony Cratz ribbon, and he also had Violets are #0000FF, but I didn't get one this year. These always made me laugh.

9) Good SMoF- I think it was Kathryn Daugherty that was giving these out, but I got one. Now, I've always said I'd never become a Secret Master of Fandom, but there I was, running a fanzine lounge. There's also an Evil SMoF ribbon that gets given out.

I should note that my ribbon collection got wet on Saturday Night, so I have to staple all the original ribbons I



got so they wouldn't fall off.

10) Keepin' Me Down- Not sure where I got it, but if anyone at Bay-Con was NOT being kept down, it was me. Despite some periods where I was trapped in the Lounge since there was no one else around, I almost always had free range over the con, which felt kinda nice.

11) Casa de WorldCon- These were ribbons for the Hollister in 2008 Hoax Bid that were given out to those who presupported (and those who talked us up around the con). We did manage to collection 160 bucks in Pre-supports at the con.

12) Easy Target- another ribbon for the hoax, this one given to people who took us too seriously. I gave out some extras to folks who "are you seri-

ous?" and a few to kids who came into the lounge on Ribbon hunting expeditions. These got a lot of questions from people.

13) Tiki God- Last year, James Stanley Daugherty handed out Tiki ribbons, and I was lucky enough to get one. This year, since James was Toastmaster, the ConSuite was Tiki-themed and gave out Tiki God and Tiki Goddess ribbons.

14) I hide Bodies- Bobby Toland, who I went to High School with, was the one handing these out. We traded with each other: I gave him an Easy Target, he gave me a I hide Bodies

15) Toast- From J.S. Daugherty in celebration of his Toastmasterhood. There was a Toastmaster Panel that I didn't get put on for some reason, but only one person showed up.

16) Blackjack Junkie- Jason Schachat and I always play at the charity casino at the table that Vikki Savvo deals at. She loves us and we love her and even though Jason and I basically got cleaned out this year, we still had a wonderful time. Vikki gave us the ribbons as a celebration of five years of us playing with her.

17) Silly Pinkness- Also from Vikki. We love her bunches.

18) The Syndicate- This one actually got you into a party. Again it was Tycho, but I also didn't attend since I don't regularly do the room parties. I do love the metallic blue on black



scheme though.

19) SF/SF: Fandom News Zine www.efanzines.com/SFSF- This one's a great piece of shilling put together by Jean to publicise us. I saw a lot of folks with it on and I'm so glad she did it. It was an extra-big ribbon so folks looked at it. We did a brisk trade in them at the Fanzine Lounge.

20) Welcome to Westria- Another trade, this time with the folks who were leaving the Koffeeklatch with Diana Paxson.

21) Linux Mafia- Jason chided me for taking this since I am something of a Linux opponent (since it's not at all leading us to what I want:

a computer that anyone, even those without any training, could use) but I do know Linux, I have used it and I am, as I've said before, a ribbon whore.

22) Space Cadet- I'm registered and paid-up for WorldCon 2006 in Anaheim and Christian McGuire gave me the ribbon to prove it. I rock.

23) Will Work for Ribbons- Someone bought these as a gift to all staff. I will indeed work for ribbons.

24) BASFA- I didn't make the party, but I was given a BASFA ribbon after the fact by Ed. I'm glad to be-cause it would look pretty weird if the VP didn't have the ribbon.

Baseball & SF by Frank Wu

I love baseball and I love science fiction, but I wish sci-fi writers knew their baseball better. In the Star Trek: DS9 episode, "Take Me Out to the Holosuite," our heroes, the Niners, are playing against the Vulcan Logicians. One of the Vulcans flees the field to avoid being tagged, hiding among his compatriots in the dug-out. All Vulcans look the same to non-Vulcans, so a Niner tags all the Vulcans in turn, until he uncovers the escaped runner, who dashes back to the field. It's a funny scene.

However... In reality, according to Official Baseball Rule 7.08, the runner would have been automatically out, just for being outside the

basepath.

"Any runner is out when (a) (1) He runs more than three feet away from a direct line between bases to avoid being tagged..." Sorry to be such a stickler, but that's always bothered me. So now, when this episode comes up at the next con where there's a panel about "Baseball in Science Fiction," you can be annoying and anal-retentive, just like me.



A WRESTLING STORY
BY
KATH AND MIKE SWAN

Kath

My first husband loved wrestling. He would stay up late because they showed a show on Channel 19 that started at 1am. I used to watch with him sometimes, often futilely hoping that he'd decide my rubbing his thigh was something more than trying to keep his circulation going.

After we got divorced, I watched once in a while with my kid, Christy. She loved Hulk Hogan and George "The Animal" Steele. I didn't like her watching it all the time, but she had a lot of fun on Saturday mornings staring at the TV.

My second husband wouldn't let her watch it, but he wasn't around that long and I would say she could stay up on Saturday nights to watch the WWF show that used to play instead of Saturday Night Live.

I always like boxing, which my second husband didn't get either. When I was a kid, Mohammed Ali was starting to rise and eventually he took over the world. Not just boxing, but the entire world. He was amazing, and there were guys like Joe Frazier and George Foreman, and Rocky came out and that changed everything again.

When I was single again in the early 1990s, I used to watch boxing



on USA and HBO and ABC and then I might turn on wrestling. When I worked the late shift at the hotel, I'd get up @8pm, go to work @9, come home at 5, make Christy breakfast and take her to school, then I'd watch ESPN's Global Wrestling Federation until 1 when I'd usually fall asleep on the couch. Christy never woke me up when she came home from school, but she'd always make sure that I had a once-warm dinner waiting for me on the living room table.

Those were my fondest memories of wrestling until very recently. Now

there's something even better.

Mike

I never liked wrestling much, certainly not as much as the rest of my gang of friends. Chris has always been crazy for the stuff. M too. SaBean watched once in a while, including once while we were in the process of making a quiet afternoon less quiet. I enjoyed the girls who would wrestle, like Wendi Richter and Medusa. They were hot babes brawling, what's better than that? It wasn't until the late 1990s that I finally caught on.

It was The Rock and Stone Cold, Kurt Angle became my hero when he was all goody-goody and people still booed the hell out of him. It was a good time for me, and since then I've been attending various shows whenever I can afford to go. Once I moved in with Kathryn, I started to take her. She, in turn, started to drag me to boxing cards all over the place.

On Friday, May 12th, we went to an indy show in Texas. I had a week off and Kath's took some time, so we flew down. PCW is a good fed and watching it was a blast, but afterwards, I just realised that I was closer to Kath than to any other woman I've ever known, dated, or even found myself engaged to. We've been a couply-thing for a while now, and living together has been great. She even started referring to me as the Old Man, which was sweet. I'd



briefly, as I understand it) and he'd had his moments with other members of the circle. That can make things a little bit harder than if he'd just been another guy, but he's always been good to me and we always manage to joke and have a good time.

So, once we moved in, we started dating. Well, not right away. I had a TV in my bedroom and managed to figure out ways of getting free cable, which we couldn't get in the living room. He had a cable-less TV with a DVD player and VCR. When we'd want to watch something, we'd come into the other's room and lay on the bed together. That encourages cuddling up to one another, which leads to kissing which leads to those tingling moments when you've just had the Good Stuff and you're just playin' around in bed together. I guess he fell

pretty much fallen in love with her and never said anything.

About 1/2 way through the fifth match of the night (a really long brawl) I turned to her and said "so, you wanna get married?"

Kath

When I moved in with Mike, it was a little awkward. He'd dated Sa-Bean (and they'd even been engaged

in love with me the same time I fell hard for him.

But we never said anything.

One morning, while I was making breakfast around two o'clock, Mike came in from work.

Mike: Any plans tonight?

Kathryn: I was thinking we might stay home.

Mike: Good, that was my plan.

Kathryn: Yeah, we aren't allowed to get nearly as naked when we're out in the world.

I kissed him when he bent down to me and I held his face there for a second or two.

This is the man I wanna be with I thought. I'd only vaguely felt those things about my exes, both of which were rush jobs because of outside forces, but here I was with a guy I would choose to spend the rest of my life with.

I just didn't know how to tell him that I wanted to spend that time with him.

On the plane to Texas, we acted like any old couple going on a trip. We had a little tiff over packing and we were just being together while we flew. We got there, checked into the hotel for the night and then went to the show. We took a cab and it got us there just in time for the opening bell to the first match. Mike had his arm around me and we kissed a lot. If we hadn't chosen seats in the far back, I'm sure we would have grossed out everyone around us. Out of nowhere, Mike looks at me and he has this look in his eye that I've never seen before.

Mike; Do you wanna get married?

I didn't think. I didn't have to. Everything was simply 100% perfect at that moment. I didn't need to see a ring, I didn't need him to get on his

knee. All I needed was to hear those words coming out of his mouth.

Kathryn: Of course I do, baby.

And that started everything. He kissed me and we watched the rest of the show. We got another cab and on the ride we planned it all.

Mike: You wanna do it in Vegas?

Kathryn: Where else? Plus, Judith can be there, and Chris'll probably drive down.

I got on the cell phone and called Judith.

Kathryn: Jude, Mike and I are coming to Vegas and getting married.

Judith: No way! You're kidding? When are you coming?

She jabbered on for a while and then it ended up with her hanging up and making a dozen calls and flying SaBean and Christy out (Chris, who Mike wanted to be the Best Man, wasn't available because of his Dad's death) We were all in Vegas by Monday morning. We found a chapel in the Excalibur and got the gaudiest wedding you could imagine. It was perfect.

Now, I'm in my forties, Mike's in his thirties, and we're not having kids, but I know that we'll have a family that's made up of people with radically different last names living in different parts of the world. It's weird how much people like Jay and M, Chris and Manny are as much a part of my family as my daughter and sisters. I guess it's the ones you choose that are the clos-



est to you.

Mike

So now I've married a member of a family that I've been dating into (on and off) for the last couple of decades. I wasn't sure that everything would be OK until SaBean something very important

"You're better for her than you would have ever been for me."

The BayCon Match Game with Photos by John O'Hallaran and Kent Brewster

I've always loved The Match Game. It was my favourite game (after Tic-Tac-Dough) for most of my childhood. I was too young to get the best years (1973 through 1976) but I did see it in syndication and reruns for years. I was the biggest fan in the world of CNR: Mr. Charles Nelson Reilly. I can't think of a time when I didn't learn much from his witty retorts and brutal slap-downs. He was a GHOD!

So, when I heard Kevin Standlee was putting together a fannish Match Game, I begged him to let me be on the panel. Luckily, he decided that I was actually pitiful enough so that he'd give me the chance to play.

The rest of the panel was top-notch. In the Opener position (on the show Rosie Greer or George Linsey might be in that position) was Chris-





tian McGuire, Next to him, in the Brit Somers seat, was Lynn Gold. Doug Berry was in the CNR chair, and Tom Galloway in the other rotating chair. I was supposed to be Richard Dawson, but with my pipe and hat I was really doing Charles, and next to me, playing the bimbo role, was Leigh Ann Hildebrandt. It was a good set-up.

There were kids in the audience, which meant we had to keep it a little cleaner than we would have normally. I did get a 'Set Phasers on Impregnate' answer in and Doug, that genius, he said that Lois Lane killed the evening with a Kryptonite Diaphragm. I laughed heartily at that.

And all along, we were an entertaining bunch. Leigh Ann kept whipping me with her hair, and I kept making the old gags about the girl on my left.

I have to say that Kevin was a great host. He rolled with everything and the questions he came up with were great. Even when we went an entire round without matching a player (Throwing a No-Hitter I called it) he helped keep the contestants entertained. He even had us do our plugs, which worked nicely.

Speaking of plugs, I was there plugging Hollister in 2008 and it turned out to be a good running gag. I talked it up and it became a solid joke. We gave away the prize packages I picked up from Casa de Fruta and folks seemed to enjoy them.

So, in all, I really wanna do it again sometime. I'm not sure when, but whenever Good Kevin agrees to do one, I'll move Heaven and Earth to make it onto the panel. It would be great to do one at WorldCon if only for the fact that a couple of fun pros, like Connie Willis, would spice things up



Top: The Panel and Kevin. I believe that this was when he was warming up the audience. You can see one of the kids in the Front Row

Bottom: I'm losing it and Leigh Ann is offended. I think this is where I answered the old 'What's on the ConSuite menu?' with 'Leigh Ann' and arrows pointing to her.





Clockwise from Top-Left: Super-Mom and Super-Baby who were contestants; Christian, Lynn and Doug with Tom looking thoughtful; Doug Berry right before he dropped the 'Diaphragm' answer (with a 10 year old as the contestant) and I love JohnO's caption for the photo at the bottom-right: Leigh Ann seeming to notice her breasts for the first time"





*Goes Well
With Chicken:
TerryCon 1
Words and
Photos By
Robert Hole,
Jr.*

I've just had the great pleasure of being a part of organizing the longest running and largest area'd

SF Con I've ever heard of. We called it TerryCon, and it ran from 21 May to 29 May 2006. Guests of note included Writer GOH Terry Hickman, Media GOH Frank Wu, Celestial Glory of Honor Lori Ann White, Fan GOH Christopher J. Garcia, and Especially Unpresent Guest of Honor Jay Lake.

The venues for TerryCon events were highly diverse and included Palo Alto (the whole city), Stanford University (special Towel Day events), Kepler's Books, a house in San Jose, San Francisco, Marin County, the San Jose Doubletree hotel, Emil Villa's Hick'Ry Pit restaurant in Campbell, Cathay Restaurant in San Jose, Hanger One at Moffett Field, the Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wisconsin, Ruby's Inn and Convention Center of Missoula, Montana, and

points in between and around those.

Attendance was, predictably for such a large and dispersed convention, variable. It ranged from one on up to about 4000 on various days. There were several hundred program items, including a Beach Banquet Babylon (held in the Stinson Beach Room), Road Trip (on) 101, and special tours of the underside of the Golden Gate Bridge and the interior of redwood trees.

Opening Ceremonies were held in San Jose and included great food and a world premiere sneak preview of Media GOH Frank Wu's "Guidolon". What can I say? It rocked, as did the game of Apples to Apples, which followed.

There were several other highlights during the convention, but one of the best for me was the Tide Pool Shoe Dunk, which coincidentally was won by GOH Terry Hickman.

An anonymous lady who injured her ankle just before the Tide Pool event provided the hitch in the proceedings, which is required at all truly great conventions. She was helped to her car by con-goers and sent off with her daughter to a medical facility.

Oh, and I got lost in almost every city in the south

bay area.

During TerryCon there were several major and extra special events that may have seemed independent of TerryCon but which were cleverly integrated into the fabric of the convention. These included BayCon, WisCon and MisCon, each of which was attended by at least one of our Guests of Honor. Most of the people reading this were probably a part of TerryCon, and I thank each and every one of you for your participation, whether done willingly or by Proximity.

For more information about TerryCon, including updates about future TerryCon events, please visit <http://www.radio-sf.com/Terrycon1.htm>.



Letter-Graded Mail
Emailed Words of Comment
sent to Garcia@computerhistory.org
by my Gentlest of Readers

Let us open things with John Purcell!

Welcome back, young feller! It's good to see an issue of *Drink Tank* again in all of its glorious splendor. Or whatever it is that the zine's full of.

I think we all know the answer to that question...

All things considered about Guidolon and the possibility of legal fall-out from the estate of Sir Laurence Olivier, I have to admit that he looks good in a multi-colored chicken costume. Not everybody can pull that off, you know. Even in death, a great thespian. "To cluck or not to cluck -- that is the queggstion..." (Dang! That's tough to pronounce.) Frank's run into the classic problem of dealing with the minutiae of a major project instead of being able to concentrate on the larger issue, which is what he'd rather do.

I'm one of those guys who believes that you should get mired down in the little things than in the big things, because you can knock out the little things one by one, but hte big problems...well, those are harder.

This sort of story is not unfamiliar; in fact, I've heard it from assorted folks like doctoral students

working on their dissertations to contractors building housing developments to artists recording albums. Even fanzine editors and writers face this problem from time to time. But it is taking care of the little things that truly make the final product look so frigging good and help to maintain that internal consistency so necessary for a dissertation, a house, an album, a fanzine, and especially a film. Sounds like Frank's getting close to being done, though.

I agree, internal consistency is utterly important, which is one of the reasons I continue to misspell the same words over and over!

Okay, you've got my interest piqued, Chris: I really must try to find that short film "The Mysterious Geographic Expeditions of Jasper Morello." It sounds fascinating and stylish. You are right in that the plot-line certainly sounds strong, but it's the way the film was put together that has me interested. I am assuming the illoes you're using herein are from the film, and they are what interest me the most. Definitely looks interesting. **Yup, 100% from the film. They were kind enough to let me use them.**

A comment you made on a portion of my loc deserves a quick comment of my own in semi-rebuttal. While I can understand what you mean by the educated disregarding the uneducated - or what the educated feel

is "normal" - I don't summarily dismiss them like David Cross. He's the kind of extremist who makes most Americans look bad. Maybe I should have used a qualifier in my statement, something like "it appears that a significant percentage of southerners who have not progressed very far in education tend to have a prejudiced, provincial view of the world." That makes more sense. What gets in my craw lately is how intelligent people willingly believe and follow things that our current President says and does. Loyalty does strange things to people. Witness the Hitler Phenomenon as an example. (Which reminds me of *eI* #25.)

There are people who legitimately believe that the President is doing the right things (I like his Tax strategies because I'm a greedy capitalist pig-dog) and there are those who even think the war is right. I wouldn't say that Bush and Hitler have much in common...if only because Bush hasn't annexed Iraq yet.

I used to own a Rubik's cube, too; never quite figured it out, either. The best I ever did was three sides completed and got so frustrated with the damned thing that I rattled it off the wall like I was playing racquetball with it. Didn't damage the cube at all. Solid little construct.

There's a great Onion article in This Dumb Century that says that

MIT scientists have managed to solve three sides of the Rubik's cube. Then I was watching a Smart Kid Challenge and they had a kid stare at one for a few seconds, then put on a blindfold and solve the damn thing in like a minute.

Thanks again for the issue, and I look forward to more. And I just remembered about more zines that are now up on efanazines.com. A couple new people have posted zines: *Hexagon #1* and *Procrastinations #1* are up. One is from a Britfan and the other comes from a Minneapolis fan. This is a good thing. Now I must read and loc them. We need to urge these folks along. Of course, Jason Burnett is not a new fan, but this is a new zine from him, and I am glad he's back.

I haven't responded to either of them yet, but I've got them on my radar (I've read and enjoyed both, and I have things to say, I just gotta find time to say them to them!

All the best,
John Purcell

SPLAT!

by
Frank Wu

I showed the nearly finished film at Miscon (small convention in Missoula where I was artist guest of honor) this weekend, and it went over really well. There were spots without sound, sound

effects of music, and the audience did a "Rocky Horror," making up their own sound effects. That was hilarious. We're quickly running out of time, but we'll finish up next week. Hurrah!

OK, now that that preliminary, quickie update is out of the way, I can get to the fun part of this week's movie-making log entry.

Steve Martin once said, "Comedy isn't pretty."

But I have discovered that space-chicken comedy can be ... pretty disgusting.

Last night I wrapped up the last two bits that needed to go in. One was an establishing shot inside the spaceship of both Captain Takao and Lyta. THAT was pretty. The other was not.

(If you have a weak stomach, you might want to skip to the rest of this



fanzine.)

We have a wonderful scene toward the end where the giant monster played by Takashi is fighting the spaceship. It's a marvelous scene, animated masterfully by Jonah Gray, with the spaceship rocking in the rolling, splashing waves, and cool electrical bolts and Takashi changing colors as he's being shocked. But there was something missing when first the spaceship, then Takashi explode.

The electrocution shot is wonderful as it is, it totally flies - but it needed something.

One of the things that always bothered me about the destruction of the styrofoam sets in the old Godzilla movies was that you could tell the buildings were just hollow shells. And when a ship blows up on TV, I want to see engine bits and hardware and little guys flying all over the place.

Do you see where this is headed?

So I talked to the master musician/sound guy/sound effects guy, Dave Fleminger, and we thought it'd be pretty funny if we took some actual (you still there? There's some funny bits on the other pages) chicken guts - since it was a giant space chicken and threw them against a piece of glass and filmed it. (This idea was also inspired by the time Sr. Garcia and I got together and did screen captures of rollicking waves and at one point the water splashed against the camera lens

- it was beautiful.)

So last night I went out to find chicken guts.

I discovered that Safeway is not a good place for this. All the meat there is so cleanly trimmed and nicely packaged and rinsed and purged of the unpleasant proteinaceous fluids that keep us alive. They threw away all the disgusting bits - the stuff with veins and and white stringy bits and tendons and globs of fatty tissues. They threw away all the red and gelatinous stuff I wanted.

Then it dawned on me where I



needed to go.

The Chinese grocery store. Because, well, Chinese people will eat anything. (I say from experience as a Chinese person.) When we were growing up (ya know, there's some funny letters in this issue, too, if you want to read those instead), my mom and dad,

who were both born in China, would cook all sorts of weird stuff like pigs feet, and calf hearts (chewy but yum!) and tongue (which is good when sliced, and you get a bit of the opaque gelatinous goo with it), and gizzards (really chewy!) and all the other stuff euphemistically called "variety meats." Whenever we tried some new weird thing like thousand-year-old eggs (which are essentially normal eggs left buried in the ground for... what, months? Until they are well, well past the stage of total rotness and the yellow part has turned greyish green and the white has turned black and gelatinous - ick), my dad would call them a "delicacy." But, I guess, if you have a billion mouths to feed, ya do what you can.

I drew the line one night when he had cooked up this weird stew with these strange whitish cubes. They had the color of tofu, but the texture was wrong - one side had an almost bubble-like texture, with blood vessels between the bubbles. I knew right away it was brains. I said, "Hey, I'm not eating brains." And my dad said, "They're not brains, just try it." He was totally lying to me. I went into the garbage, and, yup, there on the package, it said "Calf brains." No, I didn't eat that.

Every once in a while my dad and I will go into a Chinese grocery store and I'll look for the grossest thing I can

find.

One time the winner was “Frozen Snake Head Chunks.”

The other time the winner was this package about the size of a small of Kool-Aid mix. But it didn’t have Kool-Aid in it, electric or otherwise. It had pictures of centipedes, but it was covered with Chinese writing I couldn’t read. I asked my dad what it was - I figured it was centipede poison, but he said it was actually dried centipedes, which you make a tea out of. And the package listed twenty different things it cured. Hmmm.

So last night I went to the Chinese grocery store on Castro Street in Mountain View in search of... chicken guts. I bought a whole fish (all the ones at Safeway had the interesting (read: nasty) bits already taken out and thrown away). These were whole (Chinese people love eating fish heads, especially the eyes). When I pointed to the one I wanted, the Chinese guy behind the counter asked if I wanted him to chop it up - no, no, no, I said, desperately, no - I need the whole thing.

So that was good, but not great.

Then I went to the meat counter.

And there I found wonderful packages of... pork. Packages in tiny yellow styrofoam trays neatly labeled and wrapped in non-sticky cellophane like hamburger or something you might actually want to cook and eat.

But, no, these had things like pork skin. White, slightly goose-pimpled, soft (you could poke it through the plastic) like a down comforter, with a thick layer of fat. You could tell right away it was a pig, cos they thoughtfully left the snout right there on top. And then there were the packages labeled just “Pork.” Like the guys with the meat cleavers didn’t even know what organ they were.

The ones I bought were labeled “Pork uterus.” They actually looked more like intestines, rosy, with clear cellophane-like fascia with blood vessels still attached. Springy when poked. Quivers slightly when I shake the package.

I had the winner.

The plan was to set the digital camera on the floor, with a piece of glass above it, and then drop the stuff ... onto it. I learned answers to questions I never thought I’d ask.

Like:

How much splatter does a pig uterus (soaked in teriyaki sauce) make when hitting glass from a height of ten feet? Not much, but the brown droplets around my apartment are very sticky.

What’s the perfect angle for glass to be splatted with pig uterus? About 15 degrees - so the glop would ooze down the glass, leaving a gooeey streak after impact. I got the glass at the right angle by putting some

books - including a Shakespeare collected works under it. I’ll bet never in his wildest dreams did the Bard think that his life’s work would be used to hold up glass that pig parts would be splatted against.

I still don’t know the sound of one hand clapping, but I do know the thunk of pig guts hitting glass.

It was actually hard to get the perfect shot - I needed tongs to drop the guts so I could get out of the shot in time, and the uterus, being all rosey like an intestine (which it may actually have been) tended to catch a little on the metal edge, and they also splayed out, uncoiling like a snake turned inside out. I needed the perfectly wet splat, with the right amount of brown spatter and gooeey brown streaking on the glass. In some of the shots the blood vessels were nicely backlit, revealing unsettling biological detail.

So, while grooving to Jimmy Cliff reggae music, I dropped pig guts onto the glass over and over and over again, but eventually I got it.

The things I do to make movies.

I sent off the footage to Jonah last night and I still wasn’t sure if this was my best idea yet - or worst.

My fear is that I will do something horribly insipid like Jar-Jar Binks. Perhaps I should fear that I’ll do something horribly disgusting and awful, so I’m always asking my

animators and artists to chime in to keep me from doing something that's truly a mistake.

I finally heard back from Jonah and ... he thought it was as if the whole movie was building up to the moment where the pig uterus glop splats against the screen.

So the guts are in.

We are so close to being done, which is great, because, truly, truly, I am going insane.

And That's it for another issue of The Drink Tank!

There won't be one next week, as I'll be prepping for The Family Issue, the biggest issue I'll attempt to date I believe. With long articles from Judith Morel and Myself, pieces by Bob Hole and others, it'll be an interesting issue that might make you think...which is something I don't know that the Drink Tank has ever done before.

There'll be another Pacheco Progress in the new few days too, hopefully. It's getting interesting to see where things are going with Hollister in 2008.

And there's always more. Thanks to Bob, Frank, Judith, John Purcell, the Newlyweds and of course Bill Burns for everything. Enjoy the next couple of weeks. Maybe write an LoC to Jason Burnett or John Purcell or just read everything that's up on eFanzines.com.

