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Introduction | Vorwort

You keep an issue of ANDROMEDA SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZIN of SFCD in your hand. We compiled this very special edition for LonCon 3 and Shamrokon in Dublin trying to give you an understanding of German science fiction. Where are the roots and what is going on in 2014?

We hope you enjoy reading your copy!

Ralf Boldt & Michael Haitel

Du hältst ein Heft des ANDROMEDA SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZIN des SFCD in deinen Händen. Wir haben diese ganz spezielle Ausgabe für den LonCon 3 und den Shamrokon in Dublin zusammengestellt. Wir möchten dir die deutsche Science-Fiction nahebringen. Wo liegen die Wurzeln und was ist 2014 aktuell.

Wir wünschen viel Spaß beim Lesen!

Ralf Boldt & Michael Haitel



VILLA FANTASTICA WIEN
Bibliothek der fantastischen Literatur

www.LITERRA.info
Die Welt der Literatur

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www.sfgd.eu – www.sfgdforum.de – Facebook: www.facebook.de/sfgdev

Science Fiction in Germany

SFCD – We are the future

SFCD - Science Fiction Club Deutschland

The SFCD stands for science fiction of all kind and all stylistic movements. We do not commit ourselves to certain areas only. Regardless if Trekkie, Star Wars fan, cyberpunk or simply a friend of utopias, hard sf and phantastic adventures – all of them are in good hands here. Even fantasy is not simply factored out among us. Books of any size, movies in all manifestations, events from the genre ... We can tell you where to find like-minded people in your neighbourhood, what is going on in the pro, semipro, and amateur publishing scene, where the big and small cons are taking place. And we are always game for something new.

The Science Fiction Club Deutschland (Germany) e. V. (registered society), for short SFCD, has been founded in 1955 and therefore is the oldest and largest in membership science fiction club in the German-speaking area. Currently our oldest member was born in 1920, our youngest in 1990 – and we are constantly working to reduce our average age. :-)

The traditional main focus of the SFCD's work is put on our publications – ANDROMEDA NACHRICHTEN, ANDROMEDA SF MAGAZIN, the online magazine androXine, and book series (not included in the membership fee) AndroSF, in which the STORY CENTER is continued. But membership in the SFCD doesn't just

mean a simple subscription of one or several periodicals. Though no one is bound to work on our publications and other projects, but anyone wanting to do more than just consume science fiction and its varieties will not just find manifold opportunities within the club; above and beyond that helpful connections can be established.

Rather young are the activities of the SFCD in the internet. Mid-2007 the club opened a discussion board (reachable via www.sfcdforum.de) within the SF-Netzwerk (sf network, a German internet co-operation), where not just club members but many other interested persons discuss about the club and its activities. Surrounded by other multifold sf-centred offerings the SFCD forum is a good starting point also for those sf fans who are not appealed to the traditional activities of the club. The in 2010 redesigned internet homepage at www.sfcd.eu is supposed to not only give information about the club, but also to provide access for member to the club's resources. Among other internal matters regarding membership archives of the club's publications and the Phonotheek, i.e. audio recordings of cons and other items, are planned once the copyright legal issues are solved. SFCD members who would like to be kept updated in between about news from the club and the scene can achieve that by subscribing to the e-mail newsletter called SFCD-News.

A last important aspect of the club life are the SFCD-JahresCons. They take place once yearly at changing locations across Germany and offer the opportunity to meet other SFCD members and of course also other sf fans from all parts of Germany and abroad. The SFCD-JahresCons are traditionally also the location of the Mitgliederversammlung, the general meeting of the members that happens at least once yearly, where the assembled members set the course for the future of the club.

SFCD members are not just consuming. With their membership fee they support the activities of the SFCD in and for the sf scene in Germany and the German-speaking area. (Effects on the non-German-speaking countries cannot completely be excluded.) Besides supporting e. g. the Phantastische Bibliothek Wetzlar (one of the two largest phantastic libraries on earth, the SFCD is member of the Förderkreis Phantastik since 1989) and other relevant facilities around the globe and the assembly of the Deutsche Science Fiction & Fantasy Fanzine Archive DSF³A (German sf & f fanzine archive) there constantly are events at which the SFCD is participating either directly or indirectly. The club is always open ad ready to discuss new projects.

The SFCD issues a yearly literature award since 1985, now called Deutscher Science-Fiction-Preis (German Science Fiction Award, short DSFP, www.dsfp.de), which has the two categories best German-language novel and best German-

language short fiction. Thanks to generous donations this award is the only genre award in the German-speaking area which is coming with prize money of 1,000 Euro per category. The DSFP is issued by a committee, which is open to any interested person including non-members, and is awarded at the respective SFCD-JahresCon.



ANDROMEDA NACHRICHTEN

is published 4 times per year in A4 format with differing size between 120 and 160 pages. Historically the ANDROMEDA NACHRICHTEN were the club-internal news magazine, in the meantime they have not only evolved into the most important contact medium between SFCD members, but also into an important in-

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formation pool about the sf sector and bordering areas – e. g. fantasy, fantastic etc. ANDROMEDA NACHRICHTEN offer news and more profound examinations about science fiction, fantastic and also fantasy, about books, magazines and booklets, motion pictures and music, audio plays and audio books, and also information about the national and international fandom scene. It is often said that just receiving the ANDROMEDA NACHRICHTEN is already worth the membership in the SFCD. Submissions to ANDROMEDA NACHRICHTEN are open to all SFCD members.

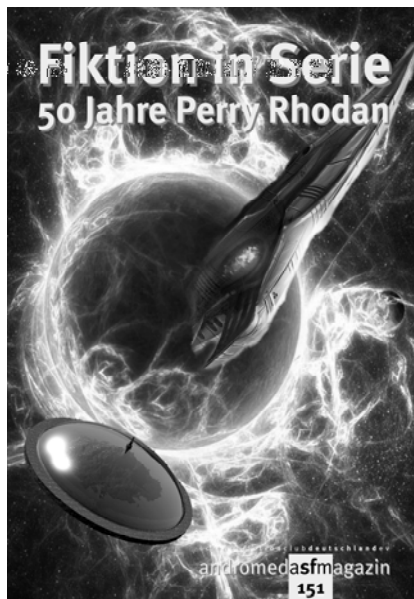
ANDROMEDA SF MAGAZIN

is published once a year in A4 format with 80 – 100 pages as a themed magazine. The theme is set by a central editor, suggestions and participation are always welcome! Andromeda 149 for 2010 investigates the work of US author George R. R. Martin, Andromeda 151 for 2011 draws conclusions from 50 years of Perry Rhodan (the largest sf series on earth). And you have a special edition in your hand!

androXine

(ANDROmeda eXtended magazine)

is an online magazine published for the SFCD, which is issued irregularly and can be downloaded free of charge even by non-members at www.sgcd.eu/publikationen/androxine. It comprises contributions that, due to the limited budget, could not be printed in ANDROMEDA



NACHRICHTEN, as well as articles written specifically for androXine. It offers a good impression about the quality of the SFCD publications.

AndroSF

is a book series created by a publishing house for the SFCD, which due to its size is not included in the membership fee, but can be bought individually through any bookstore. The series publishes both non-fiction and fiction titles. So far 41 volumes have been published, more are in preparation. Within the scope of AndroSF also STORY CENTER is carried forward, now as a yearly published thematic anthology. (Details about the books on www.pmachinery.de.)

German-language SF Awards

There are three major science fiction awards for the German-language area, listed in the order of creation:

- Kurd-Laßwitz-Preis (KLP)
- Deutscher Science-Fiction-Preis (DSFP)
- Deutscher Phantastik Preis (DPP)

I will give you some basic information about each of these three awards below. If you are interested in German-language science fiction, you can find lists of all relevant publications since 2000 here: www.sfdb.de/deutsche-sf/index.html. If you do not understand German but would like to read German-language science fiction, which has been translated into a language you understand, I have started a list here: www.sfdb.de/deutsche-sf/deutsche-sf-ausland.html. It currently (end of June 2014) includes translations into Danish, Greek, English, Spanish, Croatian, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Latvian, Dutch, Polish, Romanian and Russian. As information about translations are very difficult to get (in some cases not even the authors know) I would appreciate any additional information you have.

The 2008 DSFP winner story »Heimkehr« by Frank W. Haubold is included in this magazine in the English translation by Wilf James as »Homeward Journey«. The story was first published in »S.F.X«, Wur-

dack Verlag, the translation in Albedo One issue 36 (2009). Many thanks to Frank W. Haubold and Wilf James for the publication permission! To my knowledge this is the only DSFP winner story that has been translated into English so far. Two DSFP winner novels have been translated into English: »Der Schwarm« by Frank Schätzing, winner of both DSFP and KLP in 2005, was published as »The Swarm« by Hodder & Stoughton in Great Britain and Regan Books in the USA, the translation by Sally-Ann Spencer also won the Schlegel-Tieck-Preis, ISBN-13 of all editions 978-0-340-89523-8, 978-0-06-081326-0, 978-0-340-89524-5, 978-0-06-124661-6.

»Das Cusanus-Spiel« by Wolfgang Jeschke, DSFP and KLP winner in 2006, has been published in English as »The Cusanus Game« by TOR in 2013, ISBN-13 978-0-765-31908-1. Another award-winning novel translated into English was »Der letzte Tag der Schöpfung« by Wolfgang Jeschke, KLP winner in 1982, published as »The last Day of Creation« in 1984 by St. Martin's Press, ISBN-13 978-0-312-47061-6.

Kurd-Laßwitz-Preis (KLP)

The Kurd Laßwitz Award was modelled in 1980 after the US-American Nebula Award, the first awards were given in 1981. It was named after Kurd Laßwitz (1848–1910), who is considered the fa-

Deutschsprachige SF-Preise

Im deutschsprachigen Raum gibt es zurzeit drei wichtige SF-Preise, aufgelistet in der Reihenfolge ihrer Entstehung:

- Kurd-Laßwitz-Preis (KLP)
- Deutscher Science-Fiction-Preis (DSFP)
- Deutscher Phantastik Preis (DPP)

Im Folgenden werde ich einige grundlegende Informationen über jeden der drei Preise geben. Bei Interesse für deutschsprachige Science-Fiction können Sie hier Listen aller relevanten Publikationen mit Erstveröffentlichungen seit 2000 finden: www.sfdb.de/deutsche-sf/index.html. Für diejenigen, die deutschsprachige Science-Fiction lieber in einer anderen Sprache lesen möchten, habe ich eine Liste mit Übersetzungen deutschsprachiger Science-Fiction hier begonnen: www.sfdb.de/deutsche-sf/deutsche-sf-ausland.html. Zurzeit (Ende Juni 2014) sind Übersetzungen ins Dänische, Griechische, Englische, Spanische, Kroatische, Ungarische, Italienische, Japanische, Lettische, Niederländische, Polnische, Rumänische und Russische gelistet. Da Informationen über Übersetzungen nur sehr schwer zu beschaffen sind (mitunter sind selbst die Autoren nicht informiert), bin ich für alle zusätzlichen Informationen sehr dankbar.

Die Sieger-Geschichte des DSFP 2008, »Heimkehr« von Frank W. Haubold, ist in

diesem Magazin in der englischen Übersetzung von Wilf James abgedruckt, auf die deutsche Version musste aus Platzgründen verzichtet werden. Die Geschichte erschien ursprünglich in »S.F.X«, Wurdack Verlag, die Übersetzung in Albedo One Nr. 36 (2009). Vielen Dank an Frank W. Haubold und Wilf James für die Publikationserlaubnis!

Kurd-Laßwitz-Preis (KLP)

Der Kurd-Laßwitz-Preis wurde 1980 nach dem Vorbild des US-amerikanischen Nebula-Awards ins Leben gerufen, erstmals vergeben wurde er 1981. Benannt ist er nach Kurd Laßwitz (1848–1910), der als Vater der deutschsprachigen Science-Fiction angesehen wird. Ein Treuhänder organisiert die Preisvergabe, seit 1991 nimmt Udo Klotz diese Aufgabe wahr. Der Preis wird zurzeit in acht Kategorien vergeben, wobei die Möglichkeit besteht, den Preis in einer Kategorie nicht zu vergeben. Er ist nicht dotiert, stimmbererechtigt sind nur Personen, die professionell im Bereich der deutschsprachigen Science-Fiction tätig sind (Autoren, Lektoren, Herausgeber, Verleger, Übersetzer, Fachjournalisten, Graphiker und bisherige Preisträger), die Kategorien Bestes Hörspiel und Beste Übersetzung werden jeweils von einer Fachjury vergeben. Alle Nominierungen müssen eindeutig zur Science-Fiction gehören, im Nominierungsjahr professionell erstveröffent-

ther of German science fiction. A custodian organizes the award, since 1991 this is Udo Klotz. The award is given in currently 8 categories, is non-endowed and awarded by the German-language professionals in the area of science fiction (authors, correctors, editors, publishers, translators, journalists, artists, and former awardees), except for the categories best audio drama and best translation that are awarded by professional juries. All nominations must be definitely science fiction, for the first time professionally published in the nomination year (the award year is the following year), and the nominated person must be German-language or have created the work for the German-language market (except the category best foreign work). It is possible to not give the award in a category.

The awarding ceremony for the 2014 awards will be held on September 20, 2014 at the ElsterCon in Leipzig. The 2014 awardees are:

- Best novel: Wolfgang Jeschke: »Dschihad«, Heyne
- Best short story: Michael Marrak: »Coen Sloterdijckes diametral levitierendes Chronoversum«, Nova 21
- Best foreign work: Jo Walton: »In einer anderen Welt (Among Others)«, Golkonda
- Best translation: Margo Jane Warnken for the translation of »James Tiptree jr. – Das Doppelleben der Alice B. Sheldon (James Tiptree, jr. – The Double Life of Alice B. Sheldon)«, Septime
- Best graphic: Pierangelo Boog for the cover of »Exodus 30«
- Best audio play: no award
- Special award for long-standing accomplishments: Martin Kempf and the Fandom Observer team for 300 issues of the Fandom Observer
- Special award for one-time accomplishments: no award (due to the small number of nominations this category was merged with the category for long-standing achievement)

Homepage with all awardees: www.kurdlasswitz-preis.de (German language only)

Deutscher Science-Fiction-Preis (DSFP)

The German Science Fiction Award was named SFCD-Literaturpreis (SFCD Literature Award) until 1998 and first awarded in 1985. It is awarded by the Science Fiction Club Deutschland e. V. (SFCD), the oldest (founded in 1955) and largest general science fiction club in the German-language area, in two categories. The award is endowed with 1,000 Euro in each category, the endowment is donated by Thomas Recktenwald and the Villa Fantastica Wien foundation, a public library for all fantastic genres founded by Helmuth W. Mommers. In addition to the endowment awardees receive a medal based on an idea by Andreas Eschbach. Except for the first two years when the awardees were determined by a poll

licht sein (der Preis wird im darauffolgenden Jahr vergeben), und die nominierte Person muss deutschsprachig sein oder das Werk für den deutschsprachigen Markt erstellt haben (Ausnahme ist die Kategorie Bestes ausländisches Werk).

Die Preisverleihung 2014 findet am 20. September 2014 während des ElsterCons in Leipzig statt. Die Preisträger 2014 sind:

- Bester deutschsprachiger SF-Roman: Wolfgang Jeschke: »Dshiheads«, Heyne
- Beste deutschsprachige SF-Erzählung: Michael Marrak: »Coen Sloterdikes diametral levitierendes Chronoversum«, Nova 21
- Bestes ausländisches Werk zur SF: Jo Walton: »In einer anderen Welt (Among Others)«, Golkonda
- Beste Übersetzung zur SF ins Deutsche: Margo Jane Warnken für die Übersetzung von »James Tiptree jr. – Das Doppelleben der Alice B. Sheldon (James Tiptree, jr. – The Double Life of Alice B. Sheldon)«, Septime
- Beste Graphik zur SF einer deutschsprachigen Ausgabe: Pierangelo Boog für das Titelbild zu »Exodus 30«
- Bestes deutschsprachiges Hörspiel zur SF: kein Preis
- Sonderpreis für einmalige herausragende Leistungen im Bereich der deutschsprachigen SF: kein Preis (mangels ausreichender Anzahl von Nominierungen in den beiden Sonderpreis-Kategorien wurden diese für die

Abstimmung zu einer Kategorie zusammengefasst)

- Sonderpreis für langjährige herausragende Leistungen im Bereich der deutschsprachigen SF: Martin Kempf und sein Team vom Fandom Observer für 300 Ausgaben des Szenemagazins in 25 Jahren

Homepage mit allen Preisträgern: www.kurd-lasswitz-preis.de

Deutscher Science-Fiction-Preis (DSFP)

Der Deutsche Science-Fiction-Preis hieß bis 1998 SFCD-Literaturpreis und wurde erstmals 1985 vergeben. Er wird getragen vom Science Fiction Club Deutschland e.V. (SFCD), dem ältesten (1955 gegründet) und größten allgemeinen Science-Fiction-Club der deutschsprachigen Region. Der DSFP wird in zwei Kategorien vergeben, die mit jeweils 1.000 Euro dotiert sind, die Dotierung wird ermöglicht durch Spenden von Thomas Recktenwald und der Stiftung Villa Fantastica in Wien, einer öffentlich zugänglichen Bibliothek für alle phantastischen Genres, die von Helmuth W. Mommers gegründet wurde. Zusätzlich zum Preisgeld erhalten die Preisträger eine Medaille, die auf einen Vorschlag von Andreas Eschbach zurückgeht. Abgesehen von den ersten beiden Jahren, in denen die Gewinner durch eine Umfrage unter den SFCD-Mitgliedern bestimmt wurden, wird der Preis von einem Komitee aus Freiwilligen ver-

among the SFCD members, the award is given by a committee of volunteers who try to read all published German-language science fiction. Since 2010 the chairman of the committee is Martin Stricker. Eligible works must have been published professionally for the first time in the year prior to the award and must have been written originally in the German language.

The first 27 winning stories are collected in »Die Stille nach dem Ton und die anderen preisgekrönten SF-Kurzgeschichten des SFCD-Literaturpreises 1985–1998 und des Deutschen Science-Fiction-Preises 1999–2012«, edited by Ralf Boldt and Wolfgang Jeschke, p.machinery, ISBN-13 978-3-942533-37-9. This book is still available and was awarded both the KLP and the DPP in 2013. In the same format all winning novels will be published as well, the first volume, the winner from 1994, »GO! – Die Ökodiktatur. Erst die Erde, dann der Mensch« by Dirk C. Fleck, is already available. For more information: www.pmachinery.de/unsere-bucher/androsf-die-reihe-zum-dsfp (German language only).

The awarding ceremony is always held at the yearly convention of the SFCD, the 2014 ceremony was held on July 12, 2014 at SchlossCon 2 in Schwerin, the 2015 ceremony will be held most probably (time planning is not yet finalized) on July 5, 2015 at WetzKon 2 in the Phantastische Bibliothek Wetzlar (Fantastic Library Wetzlar), the second-largest fantastic library on this planet.

WetzKon 2 will also celebrate the 60th birthday of the SFCD.

- Best German-language story: »Seitwärts in die Zeit« by Axel Kruse, p.machinery
- Best German-language novel: »Dschiheads« by Wolfgang Jeschke, Heyne

Homepage with all awardees: www.dsfp.de (limited information available in English)

Unofficial lists with all relevant publications since 2000: www.sfdb.de/deutsche-sf/index.html (German language only)

Homepage of the Science Fiction Club Deutschland e. V.: www.sfcd.eu (German language only)

Homepage of the Villa Fantastica in Wien (Vienna): www.villafantastica.com (German language only)

Deutscher Phantastik Preis (DPP)

The German Fantastic Award is given by the online magazine Phantastik-News.de and was first awarded in 1999, only in that year under the name award-at-phantastik.de. The award is not endowed, the awardees in the currently 9 categories are determined in a public poll in which anyone with internet access and an e-mail address can participate. Works eligible for nomination must belong to any fantastic genre (there is no genre separation), originally written in the German language (except category best international novel), and originally

liehen, die sich bemühen, alle deutschsprachige Science-Fiction zu lesen. Seit 2010 ist Martin Stricker Vorsitzender des Komitees. Preisrelevante Werke müssen im Jahr vor der Preisverleihung erstmals professionell erschienen und im Original in deutscher Sprache verfasst worden sein.

Die ersten 27 preisgekrönten Erzählungen wurden in »Die Stille nach dem Ton und die anderen preisgekrönten SF-Kurzgeschichten des SFCD-Literaturpreises 1985–1998 und des Deutschen Science-Fiction-Preises 1999–2012« gesammelt, herausgegeben von Komiteemitglied Ralf Boldt und mehrfachem Preisträger Wolfgang Jeschke im Verlag p.machinery, ISBN-13 978-3-942533-37-9. Diese Anthologie ist nach wie vor beim Verlag erhältlich und wurde sowohl mit dem KLP als auch dem DPP 2012 ausgezeichnet. In gleicher Ausstattung werden auch alle preisgekrönten Romane erscheinen, der erste Band, der Sieger von 1994, »G0! – Die Ökodiktatur. Erst die Erde, dann der Mensch« von Dirk C. Fleck, ist bereits erschienen. Für weitere Informationen: www.pmachinery.de/unsere-bucher/androsf-die-reihe-zum-dsfp.

Der Preis wird immer während des JahresCons des SFCD verliehen, die Verleihung 2014 war am 12. Juli 2014 auf dem SchlossCon 2 in Schwerin, die Verleihung 2015 wird vermutlich (die Terminplanung ist noch nicht abgeschlossen) am 5. Juli 2015 auf dem WetzKon 2 in der

Phantastischen Bibliothek Wetzlar stattfinden, der weltweit zweitgrößten Bibliothek für phantastische Literatur auf diesem Planeten. Zusätzlich wird auf dem WetzKon 2 der 60. Geburtstag des SFCD gefeiert.

Die DSFP-Preisträger 2014:

- Beste deutschsprachige Kurzgeschichte: »Seitwärts in die Zeit« von Axel Kruse, p.machinery
- Bester deutschsprachiger Roman: »Dschiheds« von Wolfgang Jeschke, Heyne

Homepage mit allen Preisträgern: www.dsfp.de

Inoffizielle Listen mit allen relevanten Publikationen seit 2000: www.sfdb.de/deutsche-sf/index.html

Homepage des Science Fiction Club Deutschland e. V.: www.sfcd.eu

Homepage der Villa Fantastica in Wien: www.villafantastica.com

Deutscher Phantastik Preis (DPP)

Der Deutsche Phantastik Preis wird vom Online-Magazin Phantastik-News.de seit 1999 vergeben, nur im ersten Jahr unter dem Namen award-at-phantastik.de. Der Preis ist nicht dotiert, die Preisträger in den zurzeit 9 Kategorien werden in einer öffentlichen Abstimmung ermittelt, an der jede(r) teilnehmen kann, der über Internetzugang und eine E-Mail-Adresse verfügt. Nominierbare Werke müssen zu irgendeinem phantastischen Genre ge-

published (firstly published in German translation for the category best international novel) in the year prior to the award. The five entries with the most nominations in each category are placed on the ballot for the award.

The awarding ceremony is always held at the BuchmesseCon in Dreieich near Frankfurt am Main at the Saturday of the Frankfurter Buchmesse (Frankfurt Book Fair). The 2014 ceremony will be held on October 11, 2014. As the awardees will not be published prior to the ceremony, below you will find the DPP winners from 2013.

- Best German-language novel: Judith & Christian Vogt: »Die zerbrochene Puppe«, Feder & Schwert
- Best German-language debut novel: T. S. Orgel: »Orks vs. Zwerge«, Heyne
- Best international novel: George R. R. Martin: »Der Sohn des Greifen/Ein Tanz mit Drachen [Das Lied von Eis und Feuer 9/10]«, Penhaligon
- Best German-language story: Bernd Perplies: »Der Automat« from »Erinnerungen an Morgen«, Fabydon
- Best original anthology/collection: Peter Hellinger [editor]: »Wenn das die Grimms wüssten«, art & words
- Best series: »Das Schwarze Auge«, Ulisses Spiele
- Best artist: Arndt Drechsler
- Best secondary work: Alex Jahnke & Marcus Rauchfuß: »Steampunk – kurz & geek«, O'Reilly
- Best internet site: www.phantastik-couch.de

- Honorary award (awarded by the editors for the first time after 1999): Ralf Boldt and Wolfgang Jeschke for editing the anthology »Die Stille nach dem Ton ...« with all 27 winners of the DSFP in the story category

Homepage with all awardees: www.deutscher-phantastik-preis.de (German language only)

Each of these three awards is different and has its unique point of view on the genre. The DPP is a public poll and therefore gives a good impression on how the fantastic-reading public sees all of the fantastic genres. Well-known authors and well-known publishers are more likely to win because they have been read by more of the persons who vote. The DPP therefore is rather similar to the Hugo Award, where all members of the World-Con can vote. The KLP also is a poll, but limited to science fiction and its professionals, deliberately shaped after the Nebula Award. The KLP gives a good inside view of the professional German-language science fiction scene. As the professionals are networked, they often already know new authors and new publishers before the general public does, and therefore can nominate or award them already. This has sometimes created the rumour that the professionals vote among themselves, which is nonsense – they just have a different perspective than the general public. The DSFP is different from the two other awards be-

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hören (es gibt keine Genre-Trennung), im Original in deutscher Sprache verfasst worden sein (außer in der Kategorie Bester internationaler Roman) und erstmals (erstmal in deutscher Übersetzung für die Kategorie Bester internationaler Roman) im Jahr vor der Preisverleihung veröffentlicht worden sein. Die fünf Vorschläge mit den meisten Nominierungen in jeder Kategorie werden für die Hauptrunde zur Wahl gestellt.

Der Preis wird immer auf der Buchmesse-Con in Dreieich bei Frankfurt am Main am Samstag der Frankfurter Buchmesse verliehen. Die Verleihung 2014 findet am 11. Oktober 2014 im Bürgerhaus Dreieich-Sprendlingen statt. Da die Gewinner nicht vor der Verleihungszeremonie bekanntgegeben werden, finden Sie im Folgenden die Preisträger von 2013.

- Bester deutschsprachiger Roman: Judith & Christian Vogt: »Die zerbrochene Puppe«, Feder & Schwert
- Bestes deutschsprachiges Romandebüt: T. S. Orgel: »Orks vs. Zwerge«, Heyne
- Bester internationaler Roman: George R. R. Martin: : »Der Sohn des Greifen/ Ein Tanz mit Drachen [Das Lied von Eis und Feuer 9/10]«, Penhaligon
- Beste deutschsprachige Kurzgeschichte: Bernd Perplies: »Der Automat« aus »Erinnerungen an Morgen«, Fabelion
- Beste Original-Anthologie/Kurzgeschichten-Sammlung: Peter Hellinger

[Hrsg.]: »Wenn das die Grimms wüssten«, art & words

- Beste Serie: »Das Schwarze Auge«, Ulisses Spiele
- Bester Grafiker: Arndt Drechsler
- Bestes Sekundärwerk: Alex Jahnke & Marcus Rauchfuß: »Steampunk – kurz & geek«, O'Reilly
- Beste Internet-Seite: www.phantastik-couch.de
- Ehrenpreis (erstmal seit 1999 wieder persönlich von der Redaktion verliehen): Ralf Boldt und Wolfgang Jeschke für die Herausgabe der Anthologie »Die Stille nach dem Ton ...« mit allen 27 DSFP-Preisträgern der Kategorie Kurzgeschichte

Homepage mit allen Preisträgern: www.deutscher-phantastik-preis.de

Jeder dieser Preise ist unterschiedlich und hat seinen eigenen einzigartigen Blickwinkel auf das Genre. Der DPP ist eine öffentliche Abstimmung und gibt damit einen guten Einblick, wie das phantastische Lesepublikum alle phantastischen Genres sieht. Bekannte Autoren und bekannte Verlage gewinnen mit einer höheren Wahrscheinlichkeit, da sie von mehr abstimmungsberechtigten Personen gelesen wurden. Der DPP ist daher dem Hugo-Award recht ähnlich, bei dem alle Mitglieder der WorldCon wahlberechtigt sind. Der KLP ist ebenfalls eine allgemeine Abstimmung, aber beschränkt auf Science-Fiction und die dort professionell Tätigen, absichtlich nach dem Nebu-

cause it is not determined through a poll but inside a committee of dedicated individuals. This gives unknown authors and publishers a much higher probability to be recognized for outstanding quality. Consequently, the DSFP has been awarded to the first works of several authors like Andreas Eschbach and Oliver Henkel who were nominated for or won the other awards only with their later texts. Critique has come for example

when the KLP winner was not even nominated for the DSFP – the perspectives and weighting of the different aspects of literary quality are different between the awards.

While to the outside it may look like the three awards are competing with each other, there is cooperation between them. My lists with German-language science fiction are deliberately published publicly since 2003 to support all three awards and the general public (I consider them unofficial because it's impossible to capture all publications – this year I found out about a publication from 2000 that we missed for the DSFP 2001). Information about potentially relevant titles is exchanged between all three awards and then published in my lists.

The three science fiction awards in the German-language area are different from each other, but share the same goal to inform the public about works they consider outstanding from their different perspectives. These different perspectives help to find hidden gems. If you want to be informed about interesting science fiction literature from the German-speaking community, you should look at all three awards as they complement each other.

Copyright 2014 by *Martin Stricker*. All rights reserved. Martin Stricker is an avid science fiction reader since childhood. He is a member of the DSFP committee since 2000, its chairman since 2010, and served one term on the board of the SFCD.



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la-Award modelliert. Der KLP gibt einen guten Einblick in die Perspektive der professionellen deutschsprachigen Science-Fiction-Szene. Da die Profis untereinander vernetzt sind, kennen sie häufig bereits neue Autoren und Verlage, bevor diese der Allgemeinheit bekanntgeworden sind, und können diese daher bereits früher nominieren oder zum Sieger wählen. Dies hat mitunter zum Gerücht geführt, die Profis würden sich den Preis gegenseitig zuschieben, was natürlich Unsinn ist – sie haben lediglich einen anderen Blickwinkel als die Leser. Der DSFP unterscheidet sich von den beiden anderen Preisen, da er nicht durch eine allgemeine Abstimmung bestimmt wird, sondern innerhalb eines Komitees von engagierten Personen. Dies gibt unbekannten Autoren und Verlegern eine viel höhere Wahrscheinlichkeit, für herausragende Qualität gewürdigt zu werden. Folgerichtig wurde der DSFP bereits an Erstlingswerke mehrerer Autoren wie Andreas Eschbach und Oliver Henkel verliehen, die für die anderen Preise erst mit nachfolgenden Texten nominiert oder ausgezeichnet wurden. Kritik wurde beispielsweise geübt, wenn der Sieger des KLP beim DSFP nicht einmal nominiert war – die Perspektiven und Gewichtungen der verschiedenen Aspekte literarischer Qualität unterscheiden sich zwischen den Preisen.

Während es Außenstehenden erscheinen mag, als stünden die drei Preise in Konkurrenz zueinander, gibt es Zusam-

menarbeit zwischen ihnen. Meine Listen mit deutschsprachiger Science-Fiction werden mit Vorbedacht seit 2003 veröffentlicht, um sowohl die anderen Preise als auch die Öffentlichkeit zu unterstützen (ich sehe sie als inoffiziell an, da es unmöglich ist, alle Publikationen zu erfassen – dieses Jahr habe ich von einer Publikation aus 2000 erfahren, die wir beim DSFP 2001 übersehen hatten). Informationen über möglicherweise relevante Titel werden zwischen allen drei Preisen ausgetauscht und dann in meinen Listen veröffentlicht.

Die drei Science-Fiction-Preise im deutschsprachigen Bereich unterscheiden sich voneinander, verfolgen aber das gleiche Ziel, die Öffentlichkeit auf Werke aufmerksam zu machen, die aus ihrer jeweiligen Perspektive herausragend sind. Diese verschiedenen Blickwinkel helfen beim Aufspüren verborgener Juwelen. Wenn Sie sich über interessante Science-Fiction-Literatur aus der deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft informieren wollen, sollten Sie alle drei Preise beachten, da sie sich gegenseitig ergänzen.

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Martin Stricker ist begeisterter Science-Fiction-Leser seit seiner Kindheit. Er ist Mitglied des DSFP-Komitees seit 2000, dessen Vorsitzender er seit 2010 ist, und war für eine Amtszeit im Vorstand des SFCD.

Dime novels in Germany

Marianne Sydow = Marianne Ehrig publishes together with her son Ralph Ehrig a reprint of the series »The air pirate and his controllable air ship«.

Marianne died in 2013. She was the first female author of PERRY RHODAN.

»Mankind will not live eternally on earth. Initially, they will timidly enter the frontiers of atmosphere in the fight about light and space and then conquer the interplanetary space ...«

(Konstantin Eduardowitsch Ziolkowski, 1911)

Once, a Japanese lady told me she does not understand the Germans. PERRY RHODAN is the best science fiction series of the world ever – if it would come out in Japan, made up and written by a Japanese, the whole country would be proud of it and the authors would be famous and respected and would not have to live in such a lousy house like me (of course, she said it more politely). Also, the Americans would surely have made more of it in the meantime. If PERRY RHODAN would be a French product, the series would of course, be art and a national memorial. In Germany it was, is and will be rubbish. Exactly like »The air pirate and his controllable air ship« – this was the first real science fiction series worldwide and it was published in the 20th century in Germany, too (not really a mini-series with 165 issues!). Isn't that great?

We have the first science fiction series in the world – really a fantastic tradition! We could be more proud of it, couldn't we? What is there to be beefing about?

Because these are only dime novels? Well: the dime novels where a reasonable alternative compared to the much more expensive books, which were simply beyond many people's means. Readers, I mean real readers, needed more than just two books to wish for Christmas or their birthday. A real reader needs reading stuff, plentiful, masses of books, to get lost in another world for hours. This was called »reading fever« and it was done everything to stop it because it was not useful for work moral at the production line and willingness of military drill and it created longings after longings for a different more interesting life – not either good for work in forge or in the mines.

To be fair some of these old horror stories were really heavy. There still was no control of morally damaging to juveniles contents anyhow and so in the stories there was massacred, killed and slaughtered with a vengeance – there was not even a slight idea of belles-lettres not even about »good entertainment«. But, not all series and rows were like this and not everything that was produced as a dime novel was entertainment. Among others quite all revolutionarily papers and calls were firstly published as flyers and dime novels because

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Groschenromane in Deutschland

Marianne Sydow = Marianne Ehrig gibt gemeinsam mit ihrem Sohn Ralph Ehrig einen Nachdruck der Serie »Der Luftpirat und sein lenkbares Luftschiff« heraus. Marianne verstarb 2013. Sie war die erste Autorin bei PERRY RHODAN.

»Die Menschheit wird nicht ewig auf der Erde leben. Sie wird im Kampf um Licht und Raum zunächst zaghaft über die Grenzen der Atmosphäre dringen und dann später den interplanetaren Raum erobern ...«

(Konstantin Eduardowitsch Ziolkowski, 1911)

Eine Japanerin sagte mir einmal, sie verstehe die Deutschen nicht. Perry Rhodan ist die größte Science Fiction-Serie der Welt – würde die in Japan erscheinen, von Japanern ausgedacht und geschrieben, wäre das ganze Land stolz darauf, und die Autoren wären bekannt und geachtet und hätten es nicht nötig, ein so popeliges Leben in einem so popeligen Haus zu führen, wie sie das bei mir besichtigen konnte (sie drückte sich natürlich etwas höflicher aus). Auch die Amerikaner hätten inzwischen sicher mehr daraus gemacht. Wäre Rhodan ein französisches Erzeugnis, wäre die Serie selbstverständlich Kunst und ein nationales Denkmal. In Deutschland war, ist und bleibt sie Schund. Genau wie »Der Luftpirat und sein lenkbares Luftschiff« – das war die *erste* echte SF-Serie der Welt, und die ist im ersten Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts *auch* in Deutschland erschienen (und mit 165

Heften auch keine Mini-Serie!). Ist das nicht toll? Wir haben die *erste* SF-Serie der Welt, und wir haben die *größte* SF-Serie der Welt – eine wirklich tolle Tradition! Könnten wir doch gut ein bisschen stolz drauf sein, oder? Was gibt's da noch zu meckern?

Dass es Heftromane sind? Nun: die Hefte waren eine preiswerte Alternative zu den viel teureren Büchern, die für viele Leute einfach nicht erschwinglich waren. Leser, richtige Leser, brauchen mehr als die zwei Bücher, die sie sich zu Weihnachten oder zum Geburtstag wünschen durften. Ein richtiger Leser will Lesefutter haben, reichlich, massenhaft, für stundenlanges Abtauchen in eine andere Welt. »Lesefieber« nannte man das und tat alles, um es zu unterbinden, denn es war dem Arbeitseifer am Fließband und der Bereitschaft zum soldatischen Exerzieren nicht eben förderlich, und es weckte Sehnsüchte nach einem anderen, interessanteren Leben – auch nicht gut für die Arbeit im Hammerwerk oder unter Tage.

Zugegeben – manche dieser alten Schauerschwarten waren wirklich schlimm. Eine Kontrolle auf jugendgefährdende Inhalte fand ohnehin noch nicht statt, und so wurde gemetzelt, gemordet und geschlachtet, dass es nur so krachte – von schöngestiger Literatur kann man da oft wirklich nicht reden, auch nicht von »guter Unterhaltung«. Aber nicht alle Serien und Reihen waren so, und nicht alles, was in Heftform produziert wurde, war Unterhaltung. Unter anderem erschienen so ziemlich alle revolutionären Schriften und Aufrufe erst einmal

this was cheap and easy to distribute. And thus, did not enter the chart list of lecture welcome on the part of the government. Additionally, there were a lot of religious tracts from the strangest sectarian corners: esotericism had its period of glory. Strangely enough, at that time first intersections to science fiction were built. Popular stories were those in which wise old men from Mars (or even from Venus or other planets) told worldly wisdom to the people and political idols. Mostly, this was more or less peculiar utopia and the authors were right to fear that these stories could leave a nasty taste at the authorities. What was nearer to claim that the Martians dictated this to them (like proven example, see Atlantis). It is hard to discuss about the authority of cosmic wise men.

Because at the end of 19th and beginning of 20th century it was so arduous to sort everything out they simply threw all dime novels in a ton with the inscription »deficient literature« and set it on fire: away with the dreams of another, better, easier, more interesting, fair life – away with everything the authorities didn't like. They collected all that nasty stuff in, where ever they could find it and extirpated it.

This was, of course, the best service they could render to the »trash literature publishers«. The culture upper class has always been trying to spoil everything being funny to the hard working under class. So if the upper class was so wild about the dime novels there must have

been something appealing on these little things. That's why these poor, small, prosecuted trashy little things became at home on all sites where a little bit of change and encouragement was so needed: in infirmaries, housemaid's quarters, in the barracks and of course, schools.

The three German opinion constants referring to dime novel literature resulted from the above: 1st: dime novels are bad. 2nd: dime novels are dirty and therefore interesting. 3rd: for property of dime novels one should preventatively be ashamed, hide them and explain immediately to the nerved looking seat neighbour in the subway that usually one doesn't read such stuff – »I just found it and thought, well, I could have a look what is written in there. One has to be informed ...« At that time, especially about 100 years before, some newspaper shops had special paper baskets for enabling the better off gentlemen to dispose the coloured »Nick Carter«-jacket before entering the tram with a now looking neutral writing pad.

Somehow, there got something collectively stuck to us Germans. Again and again there are people who seriously and disputatiously argue that they never never never in their life read a dime novel or even touched it, much less even read one line of it. I know a lot of mean (my deceased husband was one of them) who seriously assured that pornos did absolutely mean anything to them – how could one read and look such nasty stuff, no, no and again no. (As Tolkien said: In

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in der billigen, leicht zu verteilenden Form von Flugblättern und Heften. Und landeten damit natürlich auch nicht auf der Hitliste der staatlicherseits erwünschten Lektüre. Hinzu kamen allerlei religiöse Traktätchen aus den seltsamsten sektiererischen Ecken: die Esoterik hatte damals eine wahre Blütezeit. Komischerweise bildeten sich hier auch bereits die ersten Kreuzungspunkte zur SF. Beliebt waren nämlich Geschichten, in denen weise alte Herrschaften vom Mars (oder auch von der Venus oder anderen Planeten) den Menschen allerlei (Lebens-) Weisheiten und politische Ideale kundtaten. Oft waren das mehr oder weniger seltsame Utopien, von denen der Verfasser zu Recht fürchtete, daß sie der Obrigkeit sauer aufstoßen könnten. Was lag da näher, als (nach bewährtem Vorbild, siehe Atlantis) zu behaupten, ein Marsianer hätte sie diktiert? Über die Autorität der kosmischen Weisen ließ sich schlecht diskutieren.

Weil es so mühsam war, das alles auseinander zu sortieren, schüttete man schon um die Wende vom 19. zum 20. Jahrhundert alle Hefte in eine gemeinsame Tonne mit der Aufschrift »Untergeistige Literatur« und hielt ein Streichholz dran: weg mit den Träumen von einem anderen, schöneren, leichteren, interessanteren, gerechteren Leben – weg mit allem, was der Obrigkeit nicht gefiel. Man sammelte dieses widerwärtige Zeug ein, wo immer man es finden konnte, und vernichtete es mit Stumpf und Stiel.

Das war natürlich der beste Dienst, den man den »Schundverlagen« erweisen konnte. Die kulturelle Oberschicht hat seit jeher versucht, der schwer schuftenden Unter-

schicht alles zu vermiesen, was Spaß machte. Wenn also die Oberschicht so wild hinter den Heften her war, musste ja wohl was dran sein an den Dingen. Und so wurden die armen, kleinen, verfolgten Schunddingelchen an all jenen Orten heimisch, wo man ein klein wenig Abwechslung und Aufmunterung bitter nötig hatte: in den Krankenstuben, in den Unterkünften der Dienstmädchen, in den Kasernen und natürlich in den Schulen.

Daraus entwickelten sich die drei deutschen Meinungskonstanten in Sachen Heftliteratur: 1. Hefte sind schlecht. 2. Hefte sind unanständig und daher interessant. 3. Für den Besitz von Heften sollte man sich besser vorbeugend schon mal schämen, sie verstecken und in der U-Bahn dem pikiert dreinblickenden Sitznachbarn sofort erklären, dass man so etwas sonst nicht liest – »Ich hab das nur grad so gefunden, und da dachte ich mir, ich schau doch mal rein, was da überhaupt so drinsteht. Man muss sich ja mal informieren ...« – Damals, vor um die 100 Jahren, stand in manchen Zeitungsläden extra ein Papierkorb, damit die besseren Herren den bunten »Nick Carter«-Umschlag darin entsorgen konnten, ehe sie mit dem nunmehr neutral wirkenden Schriftblock wohlgemut ihre Straßenbahn enterten.

Irgendwie ist da kollektiv bei uns Deutschen was hängengeblieben. Es gibt immer wieder Leute, die ganz ernsthaft und streitbar behaupten, sie hätten wirklich nie-niemals in ihrem Leben einen Heftroman auch nur angefasst, geschweige denn auch nur eine Zeile darin gelesen. Ich kenne auch eine ganze Menge Männer (mein verstorbene-

a hole in the Ground, there lived a Hobbit ...)

How it all began

Appropriately the whole disaster common teachers were faced to was put down to implementation of compulsory schooling. First of all it was forced in Prussia and Saxony not only on the paper but also in practice (Significantly the three biggest dime novel publishers were located in Berlin and Dresden) and so firstly here a pretty high percentage of people grew up with a certain reading tradition and who did not implicate reading not only in the sense of schoolmasters came but, with entertaining stories.

Parallel to this new printing technologies were developed: literature could be printed faster in higher (up to very big) numbers.

And then the famous trashy literature came out. This word originates in the French language which was especially in Prussia extremely fancy at that time: »porter à col« meant something like »To carry it on the shoulder«: »trashy literature« were printed in layers and delivered to the door by the news boys. From these layers the buyers could bind real books (as far as they wanted it).

Trashy literature still was bound for the »upper society«. Although it was received by the domestic staff (and often also read by them) but, finally they ended in the parlour because in the length of time they were quite expensive for the

buyers. A trash literature novel could contain thousands of pages. The author just went on writing continuation after continuation until customers stroke and enforcedly he had to dissolve the numerous and racy complexity of his heroes (sometimes not even that happened). To survive a real trashy literature novel patience, time and money was needed. These three things were missing in the working class.

To understand the dilemma of these people you have to put yourself into this time: no radio, no TV, only every 6 months a fair, on Sunday to church. In the cities there was theatre – oftener than today. But, you had to pay entrance and to be well-dressed. At the end of 19th century public libraries raised but those were under strict surveillance. In literature lists it was listed what was allowed, e.g. by the society for propagation of national education, the society for ethnic culture and numerous associations of teachers and educationalists. These organisations determined what the nation had to read for uplifting of their finishing time. On the other side the publishers were confronted with a gigantic temptation: there were masses of potential customers who absolutely hungered for being entertained and they all were willing to spend money for that. The demand was there – the clientele craved for the right choice.

Approximately at that time the last ingredient was provided: the staple already existed but, now the stapler came

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ner Gatte gehörte dazu), die mit ebenso großem Ernst versichern, dass sie absolut überhaupt nichts mit Pornos anfangen können – wie kann man so etwas lesen und ansehen, nein, nein und nochmal nein. (Wie Tolkien es so schön sagte: Und in einem Loch neben der Straße sitzt ein kleiner Hobbit ...)

Wie es begann

Sinnigerweise war die ganze Misere, der sich die Volkspädagogen damals gegenübersahen, einzig und allein auf die Einführung der allgemeinen Schulpflicht zurückzuführen. Die wurde zuallererst in Preußen und Sachsen nicht nur auf dem Papier, sondern auch in der Praxis durchgedrückt (bezeichnenderweise befanden sich die drei größten Heftverlage denn auch in Berlin und in Dresden), und so fand sich hier zuallererst ein schon ganz guter Prozentsatz an Menschen, die bereits in einer gewissen Lesetradition aufwuchsen und das Lesen als solches nicht mehr nur mit Schulmeisters Rohrstock in Verbindung brachten, sondern mit unterhaltsamen Geschichten.

Parallel dazu entwickelten sich neue Drucktechniken: Literatur ließ sich immer schneller auch in großen (bis sehr großen) Auflagen herstellen.

Und dann kamen die berühmten Kolportageromane. Dieses Wort kommt aus dem dazumal speziell in Preußen als überaus schick geltenden Französisch: »porter à col« heißt so viel wie »Auf den Schultern tragen«; »Kolportageromane« wurden lagenweise gedruckt und von den »Kolporteur-

ren« ins Haus geliefert. Die Käufer konnten sich die Lagen dann zu richtigen Büchern binden lassen (so sie das wollten).

Kolportageromane waren noch immer eher für die »oberen Stände« gedacht. Sie wurden zwar von den Diensthofen in Empfang genommen (und oft auch vom Personal gelesen), landeten aber letztendlich im Salon, denn sie kamen den Käufer auf die Dauer ganz schön teuer. Ein Kolportageroman konnte Tausende von Seiten umfassen. Er wurde einfach so lange Lieferung für Lieferung weitergeschrieben, bis die Kundschaft streikte und der Autor notgedrungen die zahlreichen pikanten Verflechtungen seiner Helden auflösen musste (manchmal geschah nicht mal das). Um einen richtigen Kolportageroman durchzustehen, brauchte man Geduld, Zeit und Geld. An diesen drei Gütern fehlte es in der arbeitenden Klasse.

Um das Dilemma der Leute zu verstehen, muss man sich mal in jene Zeit hineinversetzen: kein Radio, kein Fernsehen, alle halbe Jahre eine Kirmes, sonntags in die Kirche. In den Städten gab es Theater – viel mehr als heute. Aber da musste man dann Eintritt bezahlen und anständig gekleidet sein. Gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts entstanden überall öffentliche Bibliotheken, aber die standen unter strenger Aufsicht. Ihre Literaturlisten wurden ihnen vorgegeben, z. B. durch die Gesellschaft für Verbreitung von Volksbildung, die Gesellschaft für ethische Kultur und zahlreiche Lehrer- und Pädagogen-Vereinigungen. Diese Organisationen bestimmten, was das Volk zu seiner Erbauung am Feierabend lesen sollte. Auf der anderen Seite standen die Verlage vor

into being and promptly some genius got the idea of cutting every trashy literature novel into slices, envelope every slice with a beautiful, colourful jacket and jab two staples through it – and voilà the dime novel was born!

And immediately made career.

Trashy literature novels were voluminous, long, not easy to transport under your arm or in your jacket pocket. They carried the image of old-fashioned like mature and staid. The dime novel was *young*. It was colourful. It was adventure. And an important factor: the teachers *hated* it.

With horror the people who were keen on culture watched how the obsessive use of reprehensible trash reading followed the yearned public education like a shadow. People hardly could read and promptly they read the wrong texts.

Being mocking one could remark that right at this stage the ways of utopia and fantasy crossed the ways of enraged fighters against trash literature – at a special, life related way. A constant theme of utopian-fantastic literature is the question how people should ideally live and how it could be done to impose them this ideal way of life. The fight of anti-trash literature movement is a utopia lived with high dedication and but like all utopias at the end it failed – because all ideals do not work in practice. Even not the educational policy.

No matter how strong they tried: people could not stop reading trash literature.

The continuation character of series was regarded as dangerous for work moral among others since it supported the feared »reading mania«. »The addiction to leisured wallow in a foreign phantasy world finally becomes impregnable. If one always follows this pleasure his body gets weak, the senses loose their acuity, memory and mind slowly become weak, the phantasy is overstrung, the will to attend like for every serious activity gets broken.« The reading addiction »calls a strong aversion for every imposed work (...) and makes people totally work-shy.«

The development in the USA and Great-Britain was different. They also had these magazines but, they took them easier – no reason to man the barricades. In America they called the »Penny Dreadfuls«. At the last in the forties they were changed mainly by cheaper paperbacks. In Germany, they maintained until today – why?

And once again the answer is found in our history: the cheap magazines often where the only possibility during war time and directly after it to print something entertaining. During all that time there was a big lack of everything – also on paper. Also, the publishers could not print frankly of what they expected profits from. During the Third Reich it was the Reich literature chamber, who judged and condemned the content, after the war it was the Allied Forces' turn. Before a publisher could print something, he had not only to ask for permission at the responsible occupying power but al-

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einer gigantischen Versuchung: Da waren Massen von potentiellen Kunden, die geradezu danach hungerten, unterhalten zu werden, und die waren auch alle durchaus bereit, Geld auszugeben. Die Nachfrage war da – die Kundschaft lechzte geradezu nach dem passenden Angebot.

Ungefähr zu dieser Zeit stand die letzte Zutat bei Fuß: die Heftklammer gab es zwar schon, aber jetzt erblickte die dazugehörige Klammermaschine das Licht der Welt, und prompt kam irgendein Genie auf die Idee, die Kolportageromane gleichsam in Scheibchen zu schneiden, jedes Scheibchen mit einem schönen bunten Umschlag zu versehen und dem ganzen zwei Klammern durch den Leib zu jagen: Voilà – der Heftroman ward geboren!

Und machte sofort Karriere.

Kolportageromane waren umfangreich, lang, nicht gut unterm Arm oder in der Jackentasche zu transportieren. Es haftete ihnen etwas Altes an, im Sinne von erwachsen und gesetzt. Der Heftroman war *jung*. Er war bunt. Er war abenteuerlich. Und ein ganz wichtiger Faktor: Die Lehrer *hassten* ihn.

Mit Schrecken beobachteten kulturbeflissene Leute, wie der exzessive Gebrauch der verwerflichen Schundlektüre der ersehnten allgemeinen Bildung gleichsam wie ein dunkler Schatten folgte. Kaum konnten die Leute lesen, lasen sie prompt die falschen Texte.

Ein wenig spöttisch könnte man feststellen, dass sich genau an dieser Stelle die Wege der Utopie und Phantastik mit denen der wütenden Schundbekämpfer kreuzten – auf

ganz besondere, lebensbezogene Weise. Ein durchgehendes Thema der utopisch-fantastischen Literatur ist ja doch die Frage, wie die Menschen idealerweise leben sollen und wie man es anstellen kann, ihnen diese ideale Lebensweise aufzuoktroyieren. Der Kampf der Antischund-Bewegung ist eine mit großer Hingabe gelebte Utopie, und wie alle Utopien ist sie letztlich gescheitert – weil eben alles Ideale in der Praxis nicht funktioniert. Auch nicht in der Bildungspolitik.

Wie sehr man sich auch bemühte: Die Leute mochten von der schändlichen Schundliteratur nicht lassen.

Der Fortsetzungscharakter von Serien galt unter anderem deshalb als Gefahr für die Arbeitsmoral, weil er die gefürchtete »Lesewut« förderte. »Der Hang zu diesem müßigen Schwelgen in einer fremden Vorstellungswelt wird schließlich unüberwindlich. Wird ihm dauernd nachgegangen, so wird der Körper verweichlicht, die Sinne verlieren an Schärfe, das Gedächtnis und der Verstand werden allmählich geschwächt, die Phantasie wird überreizt, der Wille zum Aufmerken wie zu jeder ernsthaften Tätigkeit wird gebrochen.« Die Lese-sucht »ruft eine starke Unlust zu jeder ihnen aufgezwungenen Arbeit hervor (...) die sich zur echten Arbeitsscheu steigert.«

Die Entwicklung in den USA und Großbritannien verlief anders. Dort gab es sie nämlich auch, die Hefte, nur nahm man sie dort gelassener – kein Grund, auf die Barrikaden zu gehen. In Amerika nannte man sie »Dime Novels«, bei unseren britischen Nachbarn hießen sie »Penny Dreadfuls«.

so to apply for allocation of paper – and that was the more difficult part, a first class bureaucratic hurdling. Of course, the principle was valid: the modest the content the higher the hurdle. And on the other hand: the lower the need of paper, the easier something could be managed. The small dime novels had no competition.

And again there was the same situation: the people yearned for entertainment. They didn't want to be continually forced with advanced culture education with finger-wagging but they wanted to hide mentally in another, more friendly world where they could have fun and excitement, love, drive, riches, splendour and all the »trash«, that was necessary to forget for a few hours the unheated digs in the bombed-out post-war period, that meager bread, the hard fight for carbon and potatoes.

Over the years the situation became better. Paper was no longer scarce. The publishers could buy it without complicated applications (but there still was a certain control of texts by the Allied Forces). Theoretically, this could have been the end of the dime novels. But, the publishers calculated exactly that this format of publication had its undeniable advantages: easy and cheap to produce, easy to be distributed over the newspaper stands and – what also played a role – to be offered on good terms. The Germans were not so hard up strapped for money like directly after the war but, they also were not so rich to spend their

hard-earned money for well-shaped books which they maybe would read only once (and perhaps not even that). With a dime novel they did not risk a lot. They chose a series they liked and knew in advance what they would get. And if they sometimes got a dime novel that did not match their expectation, they did not make a big loss: they went to the weekly market and simply changed the junk, gave two novels away and got another out of the cardboard boxes that seemed to be interesting. The swap developed such a good business that the publishers printed prohibitory remarks on the merchandise.

An avalanche was unleashed, the triumph of the dime novels could not be stopped anymore. The libraries could have hold against it, but they reacted with the usual arrogance of the educated middle-class. To cap it all they indulged in a limited application area. Even literature of Hans Dominik who in no case was suspected of writing trash literature, were available in the municipal libraries: »science fiction novels« of all kind simply were Fie! They were existing. And there were people who wanted to read them. But they did not appear in the bookshelves.

The first publisher who got his act together was Goldmann: with his Z-row he provided a science fiction with hard cover which really were placed in the bookshelves – too late, because in the meantime already private lending libraries were opened. Since the thin-skinned

Science Fiction in Germany

Sie wurden beizeiten, spätestens in den vierziger Jahren, von anderen Formaten abgelöst, vorzugsweise von billigen Taschenbüchern. In Deutschland blieben sie uns bis auf den heutigen Tag erhalten – warum?

Und wieder einmal liegt die Antwort in unserer Geschichte begraben: die billigen Hefte waren vielfach die einzige Möglichkeit, während der Kriegszeit und unmittelbar danach überhaupt etwas Unterhaltsames zu drucken. In all dieser Zeit herrschte bei uns großer Mangel an allem – auch an Papier. Auch konnten die Verleger nicht frei von der Leber weg alles drucken, wovon sie sich einen Gewinn versprachen. Während des Dritten Reichs war es die Reichsschrifttumskammer, die die Inhalte be- und verurteilte, nach dem Krieg waren die Alliierten am Ball. Ehe ein Verleger etwas drucken konnte, musste er bei seiner jeweiligen Besatzungsmacht nicht nur die Erlaubnis für den Inhalt, sondern auch eine Papierzuteilung beantragen – und das war der schwierigere Teil, ein bürokratischer Hürdenlauf allerbesten Klasse. Natürlich galt auch hier das Prinzip: je anspruchsloser der Inhalt, desto höher die Hürde. Und andererseits: je geringer der Papierbedarf, desto eher ließ sich da was drehen. Die kleinen Hefte waren in dieser Beziehung konkurrenzlos.

Und wieder hatten wir die gleiche Situation: Die Leute hungerten nach Unterhaltung. Sie wollten nicht unablässig mit erhobenem Zeigefinger hochkulturell zwangsgebildet werden, sondern sie wollten sich geistig in eine andere, freundlichere Welt verkriechen, wollten Spaß und Spannung, Liebe, Triebe, Reichtum, Glanz und all den

anderen »Schund«, der eben nötig war, um die ungeheizte Bude im ausgebombten Nachkriegsdeutschland, das karge Brot, den mühsamen Kampf um Kohlen und Kartoffeln wenigstens für ein paar Stündchen vergessen zu können.

Mit den Jahren verbesserte sich die Situation. Das Papier war nicht mehr länger rar. Die Verlage konnten es kaufen, ohne vorher schwierige Anträge stellen zu müssen (eine gewisse Kontrolle über die Texte behielten sich die Alliierten dennoch vor). Theoretisch hätte das auch bei uns das Ende der Heftromane bedeuten sollen. Aber die Verleger rechneten sich mit spitzen Stiften aus, dass diese Publikationsform doch schließlich ihre unbestreitbaren Vorteile hatte: Schnell und billig herzustellen, über den Zeitungshandel leicht zu verbreiten und – was auch eine Rolle spielte – günstig anzubieten. Die Deutschen waren zwar nicht mehr ganz so klamm wie direkt nach dem Krieg, aber so dicke, dass sie ihre sauer verdienten Groschen für wohlgestaltete Bücher ausgaben, die sie vielleicht nur einmal (und möglicherweise nicht mal ganz) lesen würden, hatten sie's nun auch wieder nicht. Mit einem Heftroman gingen sie kein großes Risiko ein. Sie suchten sich eine ihnen passende Reihe oder Serie aus und wussten im Voraus, was sie bekommen würden. Und wenn mal ein Heft dabei war, das den Erwartungen des Kunden nicht gerecht wurde, so war das kein großer Verlust: man ging damit auf den Wochenmarkt und tauschte die Schwarte dort einfach um, gab zwei Hefte weg und suchte sich dafür in den zahlreichen Pappkartons eines aus, das ei-

dime novels did not survive the lending not even for four weeks, another typical German branch of entertaining literature inspired: the library book, printed on extra robust paper with a jacket of plastic film (Supronyl, therefore the tender name »supronyl-junks«) and in all other aspects equal to the dime novels: colourful, often a little dingy, decried as the epitomize of trash and rubbish and nevertheless dearly loved by a whole generation of readers, although they had to pay a reading charge at the private libraries for these colourful little things. In return, you could go there as often as you liked and loan as many books as you wanted (or as many as you could carry and pay), whereas at the municipal libraries there was a limit of three books a week. And the lending libraries had everything your heart desired at that time: space flight, Aliens, utopian worlds, colourful cover pictures – a splendid fan-

tasy world we could dive in as fascinated as our predecessors were right after the turn of the century when the opened air pirate novels and travelled to the Moon, to Venus, to Mars and to Saturn. Loan books and dime novels where our shuttles that brought us to the stars. And they were no hostile brothers but allies: many lending books were reprinted as dime novels.

I frankly admit that in contrary to a lot of my colleagues I did *not* start with Laßwitz & Co – *my* very personal focus infection *was* such a library book. It's title was: »Star A sends us an SOS« and was written by an author called K. H. Scheer. And one days, years later, I discovered in a box in the newspaper stand a dime novel written by the same author: Perry Rhodan Nr. 1, »Mission Stardust«.

*Marianne Sydow
aka Marianne Ehrig (1944–2013)*

nen interessanteren Eindruck machte. Die Tauschbuden wurden zu einem so guten Geschäft, dass die Verlage Verbotshinweise auf ihre Ware druckten.

Die Lawine war am Rollen, der Siegeszug der Hefte war nicht aufzuhalten. Die Bibliotheken hätten am ehesten dagegenhalten können, aber sie reagierten mit der gewohnten Arroganz des Bildungsbürgertums. Zu allem Überfluss huldigten sie einem beschränkten Themenkreis. Selbst der heute wahrhaftig nicht schundverdächtige Hans Dominik war bei uns in der »Städtischen« nicht zu bekommen: »Zukunftsromane« aller Art waren einfach pfui. Es gab sie. Und es gab Leute, die sie lesen wollten. Aber in den Regalen der Bibliotheken tauchten solche Bücher einfach nicht auf.

Der erste Verlag, der die Kurve kriegte, war Goldmann: Mit seiner Z-Reihe legte er SF in Form von Hardcovern vor, die tatsächlich in den städtischen Bibliotheken eingestellt wurden – zu spät, denn inzwischen gab es bereits die privaten Leihbüchereien. Weil die dünnhäutigen Hefte die Strapazen der ständigen Ausleihe keine vier Wochen überstanden hätten, erweckte man einen anderen typisch deutschen Zweig der Unterhaltungsliteratur zu neuem Leben: das Leihbuch, gedruckt auf extra dickem Papier, mit einem Jäckchen aus Plastikfolie versehen (Supronyl, daher die liebevolle Bezeichnung »Supronyl-Schwarten«) und ansonsten dem Heftroman in jeder Hinsicht ebenbürtig: bunt, oft nicht ganz stubenrein, als Inbegriff von Schund und Schmutz verschrien und dennoch von einer ganzen Generation

von Lesern heiß geliebt, obwohl man für die bunten Dinger bei der privaten Bibliothek eine Lesegebühr bezahlen musste. Dafür durfte man dort so oft antanzen und so viele Bücher ausleihen, wie man wollte (oder tragen und bezahlen konnte), während man bei den Städtischen im Allgemeinen auf ein Limit von drei Büchern pro Woche beschränkt wurde. Und in den Leihbüchern gab es all das, was wir damals begehrten: Raumfahrt, Außerirdische, utopische Welten, bunte Titelbilder – eine prächtige Phantasiewelt, in die wir genauso fasziniert eintauchten, wie es unsere Vorgänger kurz nach der Jahrhundertwende getan hatten, wenn sie ein Luftpiratenheft aufschlugen und zum Mond reisten, zur Venus, zum Mars oder zum Saturn. Leihbücher und Heftromane waren unsere Shuttles, die uns zu den Sternen trugen. Und sie waren keine feindlichen Brüder, sondern Verbündete: viele Leihbücher wurden als Hefte nachgedruckt.

Ich gestehe bereitwillig, dass ich im Gegensatz zu vielen meiner Kollegen *nicht* mit Laßwitz & Co begonnen habe – *meine* ganz persönliche Infektionsquelle *war* so ein Leihbuch. Es trug den Titel: »Stern A funkt Hilfe« und stammte von einem Autor namens K. H. Scheer. Und eines Tages, Jahre später, entdeckte ich im Karton in der Zeitungsbude ein Romanheft von eben diesem Autor: Perry Rhodan Nr. 1, »Unternehmen Stardust«.

*Marianne Sydow
aka Marianne Ehrig (1944–2013)*

Jules Verne, the cuttlefishes and the Steampunk

Is Jules Verne the »Father of Steampunk«?

This question is not easy to answer, it has a lot to commend it, and a lot against it.

His submarine masterpiece »20.000 Leagues Under the Sea« takes a central place in his lifework and can help to answer this question. »20.000 Leagues Under the Sea« was published in 1869 by »J. Hetzel et Cie.« in the extremely successful book series »Les Voyages Extraordinaires« (»The Extraordinary Voyages«).

Jules Verne wrote exciting stories: adventurous, imaginative, eager for sciences and exciting. Almost always he stuck to the facts known at that time because submersibles, electricity and scubas were already invented and success story of natural sciences had just begun. At the world exhibitions he caught up information about new technologies and he was in contact with scientists and many other forward-thinking persons. He also knew the Parisian professor of zoology Milne-Edwards who significantly influenced the character Prof. Aronnax. The literature character Prof. Aronnax himself gives the reference: »my famous teacher, M. Milne-Edwards«.

Verne wrote scientific thrillers – entertaining and educational likewise.

His books have a chapter of characteristics which are assigned nowadays to the sci fi subgenre Steampunk:

The strong and independent characters with love to adventure to conquer new living spaces perfectly match to this retro-futuristic genre. Spirit of research, complicated technical fiddles and a certain degree of »gentleman«-attitudes are celebrated also by the contemporary steampunks. Until now, little attention has been given to the cephalopods, which first appeared in the literature in »20.000 Leagues Under The Sea« as important protagonists and which are character animals of the steampunk today.

Tentacles and ink jet

Cephalopods are mollusks living in the sea with a different number of tentacles. As their name implies, the »arms« begin directly at their head. Their tentacles serve as well for grabbing as for moving. These animals are soft and do not have a skeleton, but some of them – like ammonites or nautilus – have an external shell. The modern cephalopods – octopusses and squids – have ink glands.

Jules Verne, die Tintenfische und der Steampunk

Ist Jules Verne der »Vater des Steampunk«?

Diese Frage ist nicht einfach zu beantworten, manches spricht dafür, anderes dagegen.

Sein submarines Meisterstück »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer« nimmt einen zentralen Platz in seinem Werk ein und kann bei der Beantwortung dieser Frage helfen. »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer« erschien 1869 im Verlag »J. Hetzel et Cie.« in der extrem erfolgreichen Buchreihe »Les Voyages Extraordinaires« (»Die außergewöhnlichen Reisen«).

Jules Verne hat spannende Geschichten geschrieben: abenteuerlich, ideenreich, wissenschaftsbegierig und spannend. Er blieb dabei fast immer auf dem Boden der damals bekannten Tatsachen, denn Tauchboote, Elektrizität und Tauchgeräte waren bereits erfunden und die Naturwissenschaften begannen gerade ihre große Erfolgsgeschichte. Auf den Weltausstellungen informierte er sich über neue Technologien und stand im Austausch mit Wissenschaftlern und vielen anderen modern denkenden Menschen. So kannte er auch den Pariser Zoologieprofessor Milne-Edwards, der die Figur des Prof. Aronnax maßgeblich beeinflusst hat. Die Romanfigur des Prof. Aronnax selbst gibt den Hinweis dazu: »mein berühmter Lehrer, M. Milne-Edwards«.

Verne schrieb Wissenschaftsthiller – unterhaltend und belehrend gleichzeitig.

Seine Bücher haben eine ganze Reihe von Merkmalen, die man heute dem SF-Subgenre Steampunk zuordnet:

Die starken und unabhängigen Charaktere mit ihrer Abenteuerlust zur Eroberung neuer Lebensräume passen perfekt in dieses retro-futuristische Genre. Forschergeist, technische Tüfteleien und ein gewisses Maß an »Gentleman«-Attitüden werden auch von den heutigen Steampunkern gern zelebriert. Ein bisher wenig beachteter Aspekt sind die Kopffüßer, die in »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer« erstmals in der Literatur als wichtige Protagonisten auftreten und heute Charaktertiere des Steampunk sind.

Tentakel und Tintenstrahl

Kopffüßer (Cephalopoden) sind im Meer lebende Weichtiere mit einer unterschiedlichen Anzahl von Tentakeln. Wie ihr Name sagt, beginnen die »Arme« direkt am Kopf. Ihre Tentakel dienen sowohl zum Greifen als auch zur Fortbewegung. Die Tiere sind weich und haben kein Skelett, manche allerdings – wie Ammoniten oder *Nautilus* – tragen eine Außenschale. Die modernen Kopffüßer – Kraken und Kalmare – haben Tintendrüsen, darum heißen sie auch Tintenfische.

Statt eines zahnbewehrten Kiefers sitzen in der Mundöffnung scharfkantige Schnäbel, mit denen sie Beutetieren und Feinden tiefe Wunden reißen können.

Instead of a teeth-equipped jaw there are sharp-edged beaks in the mouth opening with which they can cut deep wounds at their prey and enemies.

Squid are fast swimmers with ten arms and agile hunters in the ocean. Two prolonged arms have tentacle clubs with suckers for catching of its prey. The suckers are often armed with barbs which enable them to grab their victims inescapably. The biggest squid is the giant squid *Architeuthis*, who was often suspected to attack ships.

Octopuses have eight arms and live on the seafloor. Mostly, they move unhurriedly and can be kept well in an aquarium. But there is no escape for their prey out of their 10 tentacles with suckers. With eight arms and surprisingly muscular strength they can grip dauntless and they release their prey reluctantly.

***Nautilus*: Ink snail and submarine**

Vernes submarine, the »Nautilus« of the mysterious Captain Nemo, is one of the most famous vehicles in the fleet of Steampunk.

The submarine runs with electricity and not with steam and therefore does not fit to the steampunk in the stricter sense with its steam mobility cult. In the book, the electrified »Nautilus« is vastly superior to the steam frigate »Abraham Lincoln«. After the attack of the submarine there only remain a few wreckages of the proud steamship in the vastness of the ocean. So electricity, which Verne

described as god and demon at the same time, was victorious over the steam.

Verne introduced the ingenious submarine »Nautilus« in »20.000 Leagues Under The Sea« and described it in details, however, rather the technique and less the design. The illustrators of the publishing house draw it like that: factual, timeless, without a trace of embellishment. The Victorian embellishments only appeared in 1954 in the Walt Disney movie and since then they are associated with the »Nautilus« and Verne.

The ingenious designer Harper Goff became inspired by different sources and created something spectacularly new. That Goff met the broad public's taste, shows the fact that his picture of the »Nautilus« has been and is copied always and everywhere. Much more later, in 2003, in the movie »The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen« there is a submarine »Nautilus« that reminds to Verne's original in its factual design.

Captain Nemo's famous deep sea vehicle bears the same name like the ethnic cephalopod *Nautilus*, an ink snail. On purpose?

The submarine is fast, agile and defensive.

The ink snail is far from being fast and agile, but has been rolling gently through the oceans since millions of years, softly floating up and down. Since the age of the dinosaurs these animals only changed slightly.

Unfortunately, they are not defensive, so they are in danger of extinction be-

Kalmare sind schnelle Schwimmer mit zehn Armen und gewandte Jäger im freien Wasser. Zwei verlängerte Arme tragen saugnapfbesetzte Tentakelkeulen zum schnellen Ergreifen der Beute, die Saugnapfe tragen oft Widerhaken mit denen sie das Opfer unentrinnbar festhalten. Der größte Kalmar ist der Riesenkalmar *Architeuthis*, der oft verdächtigt wurde, Schiffe anzugreifen.

Kraken oder Oktopusse haben acht Arme und leben am Meeresboden. Sie bewegen sich meistens gemächlich und lassen sich gut in Aquarien halten. Aber auch aus ihren saugnapfbesetzten Greifarmen gibt es für die Beute kein Entkommen. Mit acht Armen und überraschender Muskelkraft können sie beherzt zupacken und lassen nur ungern wieder los.

Nautilus: Tintenschnecke und Tauchboot

Vernes Tauchboot, die »Nautilus« des geheimnisvollen Kapitän Nemo, ist eines der berühmtesten Vehikel im Fuhrpark des Steampunks.

Das Tauchboot läuft mit Elektrizität und nicht mit Dampf, damit passt es nicht in den Steampunk im engeren Sinne mit seinem Dampfmobilitätskult. Die elektrifizierte »Nautilus« ist im Buch der Dampffregatte »Abraham Lincoln« haushoch überlegen. Nach dem Angriff des Tauchboots bleiben von dem stolzen Dampfer nur noch ein paar Trümmer in den Weiten des Atlantiks übrig. Damit trägt die Elektrizität, die Verne gleichzeitig als Gott und Dämon beschrieb, den Sieg über den Dampf davon.

Verne hat das geniale Tauchboot »Nautilus« in »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer«

eingeführt und detailliert beschrieben, allerdings eher die Technik und weniger das Design. Die Illustratoren des Verlages haben dann die »Nautilus« entsprechend gezeichnet: sachlich, zeitlos, ohne die Spur eines Schnörkels. Die viktorianischen Schnörkel sind erst 1954 in der Walt Disney-Verfilmung aufgetaucht und werden seitdem mit der »Nautilus« und Verne assoziiert.

Der geniale Designer Harper Goff hatte sich aus verschiedenen Quellen inspirieren lassen und daraus etwas spektakulär Neues geschaffen. Dass Goff damit den breiten Geschmack der Menschen getroffen hat, zeigt sich auch darin, dass sein Bild der »Nautilus« fortan überall und immer wieder kopiert wurde und wird.

Erst viel später, 2003, gab es in dem Film »Die Liga der außergewöhnlichen Gentlemen«, wieder ein Tauchboot »Nautilus«, das in seinem sachlichen Design eng an Vernes Original erinnert.

Kapitän Nemos berühmtes Tiefseevehikel trägt den gleichen Namen wie der urtümliche Kopffüßer *Nautilus*, eine Tintenschnecke. Mit Absicht?

Das Tauchboot ist schnell, wendig und wehrhaft.

Der Kopffüßer ist alles andere als schnell und wendig, sondern dümpelt seit Jahrtausenden durch die Ozeane, sanft auf- und abschwebend. Die Tiere haben sich seit den Zeiten der Dinosaurier nur wenig verändert.

Leider sind sie auch nicht wehrhaft, sondern vielmehr durch die starke Befischung vom Aussterben bedroht. Der weiche Körper mit dem rätselhaften Blick und den 50 kleinen Tentakeln ist nämlich in einer aufsehen-

cause of overfishing. Their soft body with its mysterious eyes and the 50 small tentacles is »packed« into a sensational shell. A spiral of fabulous shimmering mother-of-pearl. The spiral form is geometrically perfect and flatters the human sense of harmony. Thus, the *Nautilus* became the symbol of renaissance and is, unfortunately, until today a popular collector's item.

But, Verne's steely underwater hull has no direct references to the primary cephalopod. In fact the author got inspired for naming by Robert Fulton who built and tested successfully a submarine called »Nautilus« already in the year 1800.

So, this tentacled animal surfaces more or less by chance than intended.

Octopus and squid: eight or ten arms?

On purpose Verne established other cephalopods in his submarine adventure: octopuses and squids.

The fight with the giant squid is one of the most memorable scenes in »20.000 Leagues Under The Sea« that additionally burns itself into reader's memory by its action-packed illustration. Also in the later Walt Disney movie this became a key scene: the bloodthirsty giant squid caught the »Nautilus«, the submarine crew attack the monster with axes. Its enormous eight arms are far stronger than the physical strength of the defenders, it even captures a two-

legged defender and swing him over the others' heads. Then the astute Captain Nemo succeeds with this technical superiority to fend off the squid by means of an electrical shock.

Another illustration shows the lasting effect of the silhouette of Prof. Arronax in front of the bull's-eye of the »Nautilus«, behind which a capital octopus curls its arms. The illustrator worked out in detail the eyes of the octopus. Man and octopus are faced eye to eye. This illustration is at the beginning of the octopus' attack and builds up the suspense of the coming event.

The striking illustrations in »20.000 Leagues Under the Sea« show octopuses as an exotic novelty in the central European fiction. However, their biology was only little explored. Therefore, in Verne's text and his illustrators' drawings octopuses and squids are confounded. Furthermore today we know of course that octopuses and squids do not attack ships. But, this does not dampen the tension of enthralling action scenes, finally the book is a historically important and fascinating novel and not a current octopus educational book.

Why – of all thing – cephalopods

Cephalopods are daunting and self-protective creatures with eight or ten arms in a strange habitat. Jules Verne was the first who made the almost unknown invertebrates with those expressive eyes to literary stars. With their tangle of tenta-

erregenden Außenschale »verpackt«: Einer Spirale aus märchenhaft schimmerndem Perlmutter. Die Spiralform ist geometrisch perfekt und schmeichelt dem menschlichen Harmonieempfinden. Dadurch ist *Nautilus* das Symboltier der Renaissance geworden und bis heute leider ein begehrtes Sammlerobjekt.

Vernes stählernes Unterwassergefährt hat aber keine direkten inhaltlichen Bezüge zu dem urtümlichen Kopffüßer. Vielmehr hat der Autor sich bei der Namensgebung von Robert Fulton inspirieren lassen, der schon 1800 ein Tauchboot namens »Nautilus« gebaut und erfolgreich erprobt hatte.

Dieses Tentakeltier taucht also weniger beabsichtigt, sondern eher zufällig auf.

Kraken und Kalmare: Acht oder zehn Arme?

Andere Kopffüßer hat Verne absichtlich in sein submarines Abenteuer eingeführt: Kraken und Kalmare.

Der Kampf mit dem Riesenkraken ist eine der einprägsamsten Szenen im »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer«, die sich zusätzlich durch die actiongeladene Illustration ins Lesehirn einbrennt. Auch im späteren Walt-Disney-Film wurde das eine Schlüsselszene: Der blutrünstige Riesenkrake ergreift die »Nautilus«, die U-Boot-Fahrer gehen mit Äxten auf das Monster los. Seine gewaltigen acht Arme sind der Körperkraft der Verteidiger weit überlegen, er ergreift sogar einen der zweibeinigen Verteidiger und schwenkt ihn über die Köpfe der anderen davon. Dann gelingt es dem listigen Kapitän Nemo mit

seiner technischen Überlegenheit, den Kraken mit einem elektrischen Schock abzuwehren.

Ein anderes Bild mit nachhaltiger Wirkung ist die Silhouette des Prof. Arronax vor dem Bullauge der »Nautilus«, hinter dem ein kapitaler Oktopus seine Arme kringelt. Der Illustrator hat die Augen des Kraken detailliert ausgearbeitet. Mann und Krake stehen sich Auge in Auge gegenüber. Diese Illustration steht am Anfang des Krakenangriffs und baut Spannung auf das kommende Geschehen auf.

Die plakativen Abbildungen in »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer« zeigen die Tintenfische als exotisches Novum in der mitteleuropäischen Belletristik. Ihre Biologie war allerdings noch wenig erforscht. Darum werden in Vernes Text und den Bildern seiner Illustratoren Kraken und Kalmare verwechselt. Zudem wissen wir heute natürlich, dass Kraken und Kalmare keine Schiffe angreifen. Das tut der Spannung der packenden Actionszenen aber keinen Abbruch, schließlich ist das Buch ein historisch bedeutsamer und spannender Roman und kein aktuelles Kraken-Lehrbuch.

Warum ausgerechnet Tintenfische?

Tintenfische sind Respekt einflößende und wehrhafte Wesen mit acht oder zehn Armen aus einem fremdartigen Lebensraum. Jules Verne hat aus den bis dahin nahezu unbekannten Wirbellosen mit den ausdrucksstarken Augen erstmals literarische Stars gemacht. Mit ihrem Gewirr an Tentakeln und der übermenschlichen Reaktionsschnellig-

cles and superhuman reaction time they are optimum opponents for the brave human heroes.

Squids and octopuses live in the ocean which at Verne's times was much more unexplored and terrifying than nowadays, finally discovery of this wet habitat had just begun. To the people in the 19th century the ocean was stranger than the universe to us today. The cephalopods in the past version are the today's aliens from outer space. At the beginning of the 20th century other authors like Sir A. C. Doyle with its air octopus in »The Horror in the Heights« (1913) and P. H. Lovecraft in this stories Cthulhu (»The Call of Cthulhu«, 1928«) and the »Flying Polyps« (»The Shadow out of Time«, 1936) successfully picked up again the cephalopods .

From monster to cult

The image of the cephalopods basically changed since Vernes times: today we know that octopuses and squids are highly intelligent and have a smart social behaviour. Aimless monsters turned to smart playfellows, passionate lovers and intelligent creatures. Experiments in the open sea and aquariums have meanwhile proven that octopuses are very inventive and adaptive: They heave up aquarium covers to escape and reach to open screw cap glass to get the food stored therein.

Some – like the octopus Paul – have a successful part-time job as a football oracle.

Because of their ability to communicate and solution strategies they meanwhile gained high affection. They are still different and mysterious but in a positive way. In spite of their ability to communicate octopuses live on their own outside pairing season. Only for pairing the males and females meet for an extensive amorous play – always an arm's length away. May be also the image of this broody loner with his distinctive skills makes the octopus an ideal steampunk idol?

In any case, the exotic sea dwellers conquered an everlasting place in the iconography of steampunk: They are models for jewelry designs and decorate illustrations for different purposes.

The numerous cephalopods in the steampunk could primary be traced back to Vernes' dramatical octopus scenes and only secondary to the Cthulhu-Z

cyclis and the air octopus. Thus, he mainly influenced this genre in any case.

It is out of question that some of Vernes novels did influence the steampunk and without any doubt »20.000 Leagues Under the Sea« belongs to it.

But, in my opinion it would lead too far and thought too narrow to call the French author as the »Father of Steampunk«. However, certainly his stories are the ideal medium and arena to be enriched with squiggled design and ideas.

Bettina Wurche

keit sind sie optimale Gegenspieler für wackere menschliche Helden.

Kopffüßer leben im Meer, das zu Vernes Zeiten noch viel unerforschter und Furcht einflößender war als heute, schließlich hatte die Erforschung des nassen Lebensraums gerade erst begonnen. Der Ozean war den Menschen des 19. Jahrhunderts fremder als es für uns heute das Weltall ist. Die Kopffüßer sind die damalige Version der heutigen Aliens aus dem All. Zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts haben andere Autoren wie Sir A. C. Doyle mit den Airkraken in »The Horror in the Heights« (1913) und H. P. Lovecraft in seinen Geschichten mit Cthulhu (»The Call of Cthulhu«, 1928) und den »Flying Polyyps« (»The Shadow out of Time«, 1936) die Kopffüßer erfolgreich wieder aufgegriffen.

Vom Monster zum Kult

Das Image der Tintenfische hat sich seit Vernes Zeit grundlegend geändert: Wir wissen heute, dass Kraken und Kalmare hochintelligent sind und ein ausgeklügeltes Sozialverhalten haben. Aus seelenlosen Schreckens-tieren sind gewitzte Spielkameraden, leidenschaftliche Liebhaber und intelligente Wesen geworden. Experimente im Meer und in Aquarien haben mittlerweile nachgewiesen, dass Kraken sehr einfallsreich und lernfähig sind: Sie stemmen Aquariendeckel hoch, um zu entfliehen und schaffen es, Schraubverschlussgläser zu öffnen, um an das darin liegende Futter zu kommen. Manche – wie der Krake Paul – arbeiten nebenberuflich sogar als Fußballorakel.

Durch ihre Kommunikationsfähigkeit und Problemlösungsstrategien haben sie mittlerweile hohe Sympathiewerte erreicht. Sie sind immer noch anders und geheimnisvoll, aber auf eine weitaus positivere Weise. Trotz ihrer Kommunikationsfähigkeit leben Kraken außerhalb der Paarungszeit allein. Nur zur Paarung treffen sich Männchen und Weibchen zu einem ausgedehnten Liebespiel – immer eine Armeslänge auf Abstand. Vielleicht macht auch das Image des grüblerischen Eigenbrötlers mit ausgeprägten manuellen Fertigkeiten den Kraken zum idealen Steampunk-Idoltier?

Die exotischen Meeresbewohner haben sich jedenfalls einen festen Platz in der Bildsprache des Steampunk erobert: Sie sind Vorlagen für Schmuckdesigns und schmücken Abbildungen für unterschiedlichste Zwecke.

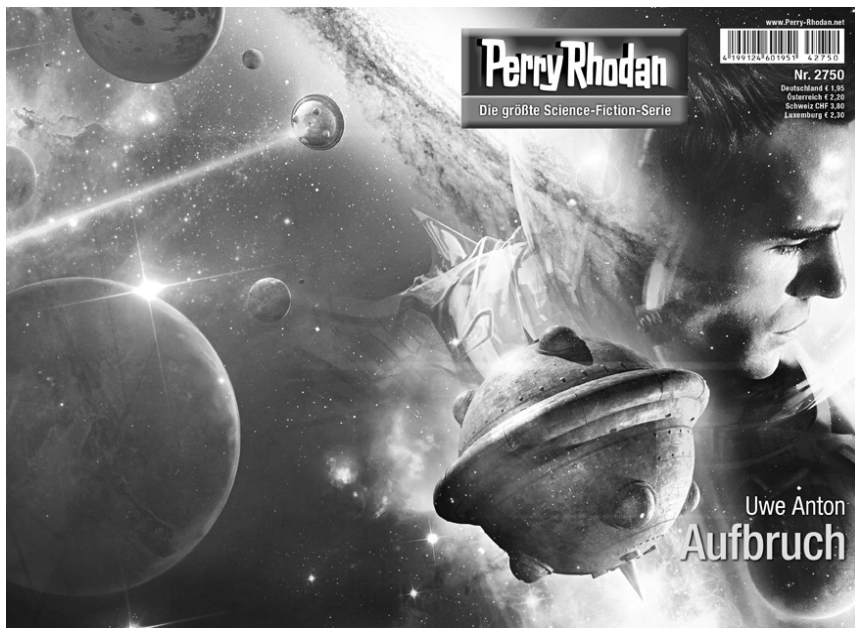
Die zahlreichen Kopffüßer im Steampunk dürften primär auf Vernes dramatische Krakenszene zurückzuführen sein und erst sekundär auf den Cthulhu-Zyklus und die Airkraken. Dadurch hat er dieses Genre auf jeden Fall maßgeblich beeinflusst.

Ganz ohne Frage haben einige von Jules Vernes Romanen Einfluss auf den Steampunk und ganz ohne Frage gehört »20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer« dazu.

Meiner Ansicht nach würde es allerdings etwas zu weit führen und zu eng gedacht sein, den berühmten französischen Schriftsteller als den »Vater des Steampunk« zu bezeichnen. Ganz gewiss sind seine Geschichten aber der ideale Nährboden und Schauplatz, um mit verschnörkelten Designs und Ideen angereichert zu werden.

Bettina Wurche

Perry Rhodan, Peacelord of the Universe



I have heard that in Germany, science fiction is divided into »PERRY RHODAN« and »everything else.

But who is *Perry Rhodan*? He's the star of probably one of the longest space opera series ever — that sadly has had only a few works published in the United States. And in my opinion, the series is pure pulp.

Started in the 1960s, the PERRY RHODAN series was created by *K. H. Scheer* and *Walter Ernsting/Clark Darlton* (and

written by them and a cadre of authors) to be a series of some 30 works, but it continues to be published today, now over 2,700 novels, with spin-off series like »Atlan«, the »Planet Novels« and others, and most recently a new series, »Perry Rhodan Neo«, which reboots the series with the action starting in 2036.

The series centers on Perry Rhodan, an American astronaut who leads the first expedition to the moon in the future of 1971. There they find a spacecraft of

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the *Arkonide* race, a humanoid race that we much later learn is related to the human race (and that many other humanoid races of the universe are somehow interrelated).

The Arkonides are very advanced, but their empire is in decline, such that the empire is now ruled by a supercomputer, the *Robot Regent*. The main Arkonides, scientist *Krest* and the female commander *Thora* (who would later become Rhodan's first wife), seek Rhodan's help. Rhodan sees this as an opportunity to unite humanity.

He soon takes the technology of the Arkonides back to Earth, lands in the Gobi Desert, and declares the »Third Power« (called »New Power« in the U.S. edition) preventing World War III that was brewing. Soon teaming up with a cadre of mutants (they have mental abilities like telepathy, teleportation, precognition and the like), he works to unite the world into one power, not an easy task.

Mankind is soon colonizing the rest of the solar system, becoming a growing power, and more. Perry and select others are even made immortal, thanks to a »super intelligence« known only as *IT*. And this all (and I left a lot out) in the first 50 or so works that form the first »cycle« of stories.

The next cycle skips ahead several decades, and Earth is now the *Solar Imperium* under the leadership of Rhodan, and Perry soon meets the near-immortal *Atlan*, an Arkonide from the distant past who is the founder of the Arkonide col-



ony of *Atlantis*, and who had been in hibernation on Earth. He becomes a valued ally and soon the new ruler of the Arkonide Empire.

The overall series has arcs or cycles that can run 25 to 100 stories, with several such cycles making up »grand cycles.« In the U. S., the initial works got through three cycles. Since many of the main characters (Perry and many of his associates) are immortal, this allows the series to jump ahead several decades or more for the next cycle of stories, moving us hundreds or even thousands of years into the future.

The series would spawn comics, audio plays, even a movie in the 1960s called »Mission: Stardust.«

The well-known sf editor and collector *Forest Ackerman* soon worked to bring Perry Rhodan to the U.S. Stories were translated by his wife and others (some say they were better than the original German) and published by Ace Books. Additional material was added, and I've heard stories that it was the other materials that really sold the »maga-books« as they were called. But some felt the series too juvenile and Ace pulled the plug even though it was a great seller. Another 20 or so stories were published by subscription only, but even that was ended by the German publisher, four stories short of the current cycle.

Another fan tried a go in the 1990s, publishing four stories starting with #1800, and hoping to publish the final four stories of that unfinished cycle, before the German publisher again pulled the plug. FanPro was going to publish the six-part »Lemuria« miniseries, but only got the first volume out. I can't understand why in this day of print-on-de-

mand that the German publisher can't work out something to bring Perry Rhodan back to the U. S.

No, the series is not high literature, but I found the earlier series *fun*. And sometimes that's what you need in science fiction. Maybe someone will wise up and we will be able to enjoy the series again.

I like the work that Black Coat Press is doing in bringing some interesting French (and other European) sf/pulp works into America. But as long as the German publisher has an inflated view of the value of Perry Rhodan and is unwilling to work with a similar smaller press, nothing will happen it seems.

But if you look, you should be able to find the American editions.

Taken from www.thepulp.net/pulpsuperfan/, ref. www.thepulp.net/pulpsuperfan/2014/04/14/perry-rhodan-peace-lord-of-the-universe. With kind permission of *Michael Brown*. Thank you!

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Frank W. Haubold

Homeward Journey

It was dusk when Kravitz reached the Harsfeld autobahn exit and turned off in the direction of Niederlahr. He did not expect to encounter a police check, certainly not right before the Christmas holiday. Roadblocks were set up here during the first months after the appearance of the Barrier. Nevertheless, Kravitz was convinced that the main roads would continue to be watched, even if less conspicuously.

Abandoning a visible police presence was a part of the de-escalation strategy of the authorities, to show publicly that they had been successful. The stream of disaster tourists had long dried up – including those who had driven hundreds of kilometres and endured endless waiting just to get a glimpse of the Barrier. They were naturally disappointed because the Barrier was invisible and the countryside beyond it appeared to be no different to that around them.

When the Barrier appeared, roads were hurriedly closed. Hundreds of police and security staff took care that the sightseers were kept at a distance. Most of them were sent away after a short while. Several months after the appearance of the Barrier the small town in Nordalbland was still in the headlines. They referred to the spectacular attempts to get past the Barrier. Those who tried had to be careful

because nobody would accept responsibility for an explanation for the phenomenon. Stories about crashed helicopters and smashed bodies were now more effective than academic speculation about the nature of the Barrier. It had suddenly appeared at the grounds of the Niederlahr Research Institute on the morning of the 23rd December 2012.

Kravitz had found out about it before there was a flood of speculation in the media. He had flown to Boston to give a speech at the international planetology conference two days before the Barrier appeared. Although his tests were in progress at the time he could not decline the invitation. It was also one of the few chances he had to meet Professor Komarov, who was on the guest list. They had agreed to keep electronic communication to a minimum. One never knew who might be interested in their emails or might overhear one of their telephone conversations. Nobody knew what they had discovered and they wanted to keep it that way.

Kravitz's paper about the German contribution to the ANSMET project was received well. In the evening he and Komarov discussed their special interest in Komarov's room. Sergei's new experiments had been just as unsuccessful as

Kravitz's own efforts. They expressed their wish for better days as they enjoyed the bottle of Stolichnaya that Komarov had thoughtfully kept on ice.

The next day Kravitz woke with a splitting headache and only just managed to catch his flight. On the aeroplane he got an aspirin from a stewardess. However, his tiredness vanished in an instant when he caught a glimpse of a television screen showing the news. The headline in a red banner on the screen was as shocking as it was absurd:

»Accident at the German Research Centre – Niederlahr cut off from the rest of the world.«

The news item that appeared on the screen a few seconds later left him in no doubt. He knew the area well enough to recognise it, even though the view was from a fair distance.

But why would there be talk about a reactor accident? The institute where he worked didn't have one. What a pity he couldn't use his mobile phone while on board, otherwise he could have called Miriam to ask who might be responsible for such a prank.

Kravitz had often asked himself later if he really had been so mystified then. In retrospect, the question was unanswerable. All he could do was to regret the decisions he had made when he was younger. What would he have given to be in that situation again.

Kravitz turned the car's headlights on as he entered the darkness of the Hardt fo-

rest. The headlights drove the shadows back and transformed the frost covered trees into glistening fantasy objects. It had become cold, as always just before the holidays. Kravitz had been driving this way for eight years and couldn't remember if the forest and road had ever looked any different to the way it was today. It almost seemed that the countryside had adapted itself to the self-imposed ritual that took him to this location every year at this time. He had long given up wanting to know the basis for his motives. He had no rational explanation for his actions. Others put Christmas trees in their apartments and relived their childhoods. He just drove home. This would not have been so unusual, if not for the fact that his home was just as unreachable as his childhood.

The town lay before him in the valley as the glittering magic forest retreated behind him. He thought that nothing had changed, but he made the same error every time. The town at the lower reaches of the Aarnau was no longer the same as it had been. It had become slowly and steadily desolate.

This was not because of the absence of tourists. It was also not the sight of the vacant motels and pensions that had been built in the recent past. It was just that the inhabitants had left the town for a reason Kravitz believed he knew. It seemed their departure was caused by the effect of the Robinson Syndrome – the name given to the affliction in the specialist literature. People in the imme-

diate region of the Barrier were particularly affected. The reason was never discovered, despite extensive research. Most of those who knew about it kept silent, especially in front of strangers. Kravitz had now become a stranger in spite of the years he had spent here. For the old established residents he would always be an outsider – like all those who had come to live and work there previously.

The institute was founded in the seventies in the last century as a DESY branch financed by the federal state. It had recruited young scientists and had acquired a modest scientific reputation. Kravitz had been one of the young recruits then. When the synchrotron installation was established, a housing estate was built nearby – terraced houses on small plots which looked all alike. The town people had no regard for the residents of the estate.

The appearance of the Barrier had made them think: »These things just happen.« This was also one of the favourite sayings of Mr. Doldinger, the landlord of the Golden Lion Hotel. Another was: »It's lucky that they haven't blown up half the town, these crazy scientists.« The fact that Kravitz had once been one of the scientists didn't worry the landlord at all. The professor was a regular guest and was therefore beyond criticism.

At the outskirts of the town the decay was obvious. There were cafes with bro-

ken windows, closed motels and used car marts full of rusting cars with dust covered windscreens. Rubbish spilled out of dirty bins and the wind blew withered leaves and tattered papers along the abandoned streets. The building boom that the appearance of the Barrier had triggered did not last long. It had left the town more damaged than improved. Most of the decaying buildings were built around this time. Traces of the decline were far less visible closer to the centre; at least, there were no more broken windows and the street lights worked. There were only a few vehicles moving and Kravitz could count the passersby on the fingers of one hand. Only the old merchants' houses around the market square retained the air of permanence that the town had bestowed them in better times.

The Golden Lion Hotel was now, as previously, the main building on the square. The bronze lions on either side of the entrance shone as if freshly polished, and the row of lead glass windows at the front of the hotel glowed with warm golden light. Kravitz drove his car into a parking place reserved for residents and got out. An allterrain vehicle was parked nearby. Beyond it was a large white van marked with the blue logo of UNSCET.

Willems, thought Kravitz with concern. Why can't he finally leave me in peace?

Willems was the manager of an international observer group that had dwindled during the course of the years from company strength down to a half dozen

members. It was a puzzle to Kravitz why he had not left.

What was left to investigate here eight years later? And why did he not go home during the holiday like most of his colleagues? Perhaps he only wants to make himself seem important.

Kravitz attempted to calm himself while he took his suitcase out of the boot. It seemed heavier than it had been in the morning, even though he had packed it himself; it was a mistaken feeling that he dismissed every year. Besides, that was part of the ritual.

»Professor!« He was greeted by a sonorous voice that hardly matched the gaunt bald head of the man who polished glasses behind the bar. »Punctual as always. You are very welcome!«

The two others in the room were Dr. Willems and a younger man of asiatic appearance whom Kravitz didn't know.

Willems said »Cheers« and raised his half full beer glass towards him. The younger man, who had a glass of tea in front of him, scrutinised the newcomer.

»Number 32 as always?« asked the landlord obsequiously.

Kravitz nodded and accepted the key. It was not a code card but a real key, with a brass tag which had the room number engraved on it.

»Same procedure every year,« Willems remarked annoyingly in English, then emptied his glass with one gulp.

Kravitz resisted the temptation to return the affront.

With slow deliberation he picked up his suitcase and went to the lift without dignifying his adversary with a glance.

The corridor on the second floor smelt of disinfectant and stale smoke. It was a familiar smell that strengthened the déjà-vu that Kravitz felt every time he stayed here. The interior of the building had not changed in years. Doldinger was an expert at replacing worn out items with exact duplicates.

Room number 32. Kravitz felt his pulse quicken as he unlocked the door. The light came on automatically, the only new item that the owner had installed. Kravitz hardly glanced at the furnishings in the room. Everything was in its usual place. He had the impression that he had been here only a short while before. He made sure that nobody had followed him and carefully shut the door. The journey had tired him and he longed for a shower. Somehow he felt more unsettled. He must find out now, even if it might be distressing.

He carefully took his night sight box out of his suitcase, opened it and activated the electronics. He then turned off the light, pushed aside the curtains and went outside onto the small balcony. The rear face of the hotel was in darkness. The other rooms on this floor were frequently not in use and no lights were visible.

Kravitz could not rule out the possibility that he had been seen, but by whom? In any case, not Dr. Willems. He was fully occupied downstairs, drowning his frustration.

Eight years was an extremely long time, particularly for the UNSCET people who had such a fruitless task. Willems was there from the beginning, certainly from the time of the formation of the investigation committee. He continually indicated that he believed that Kravitz's reports about his actions were lies or at least incomplete. He could not prove his suspicions and he could only hope that the Barrier would disappear somehow, so he could do research in the region. The first part of that hope was the one that both men had in common.

Kravitz set up the tripod and attached the night sight to it. The Zeiss Night Vision IV was the best and most expensive of its type on the market with a range of more than two thousand metres. The Barrier was only a few hundred metres away from the old town – a jumble of terraces, lanes and alleys that led away from the market square. Most of the buildings were in darkness, only small flecks of yellow light glimmered here and there, street lamps perhaps, or the headlights of vehicles that had lost their way in the deserted suburb. Total darkness reigned on the other side of the Barrier.

According to the results of the research committee the Barrier appeared at exactly 10:23am central European winter time. At this time most artificial light sources were switched off. Almost all, thought Kravitz, while he set the focus on a darker collection of buildings that were still fingernail size, despite the

immense magnification. When he got the desired object in his sights with the laser focus, he activated the zoom. His heart pounded as he strained to get a clear view of the size and structure of the building. It was an inconspicuous terrace house that showed something different. Light could be seen in one window. It wasn't a single light source, rather a blurred bright area without any shape. Kravitz marked that part of the scene and activated the E-zoom. The bright area became larger, and when Kravitz strained to see, he could distinguish more than a dozen tiny points of light. Maybe he only imagined that he was able to separate them from each other, but that made no difference. He had absolutely no doubts about the nature of the lights. They were electric candles and they decorated a Christmas tree. Kravitz remembered that he had bought the tree himself, a blue spruce. Miriam had decorated it for a celebration that would not take place on a morning eight years ago. Kravitz stared with burning eyes through the night sight. Miriam must be somewhere there in the shadows. Perhaps she had gone to the cellar where the Christmas decorations were stored or she had taken a few steps back to consider her work.

What must she have felt at the moment when the Barrier field enclosed her like an insect in a drop of resin? Kravitz sought in vain to recollect any particular thing about what he had escaped from. However, there was nothing he could re-

call. He had really not expected otherwise. The UNSCET staff had studied every part of the area with special cameras without obtaining anything new from their recordings. He would not find Miriam even if he stayed out here all night.

When he put the night sight down red spots danced in front of his eyes. For a dizzy moment he was scared of losing consciousness. Nevertheless he pulled himself together, though his hands shook as he took the night sight off the tripod. Maybe it was just the cold from being outside.

Kravitz took the lift down to the restaurant less than an hour later. For a minute or two he had toyed with the thought of simply skipping dinner but then realised he was hungry. Besides, he had not eaten anything since breakfast. He dare not show any weakness. The shower had freshened him up and awakened his fighting spirit. Whatever Willems intended, he would not give him the pleasure of spoiling a pleasant meal.

The two men were standing by the bar as usual. Kravitz gave Willems a cold look as Willems raised his glass to him. He then went directly to his reserved table. He sat down at a place by the window with his back turned to his adversaries. For the first time he noticed that there were other guests in the hotel. Two tables away were an old couple. On the opposite side were a group of men who were drinking local wine in giant glasses.

»What can I get you, Professor?«

Doldinger had approached unnoticed and waited with his flimsy notepad for Kravitz's order. This also belonged to the ritual. Kravitz went along with it and did what he usually did, pretending to study the menu before he ordered what he usually had. Presumably Doldinger had already given the order before he arrived. The wine was served first, a rich red Burgundy that Kravitz sipped slowly while he waited for the starter. He heard the two men at the bar conversing in the background but only understood a few snatches of what they said. He asked himself what Willems was aiming at with his obvious presence. Did he really believe that he could break him out of his reserve? Hopefully he had enough decency not to disturb him as he ate.

The starter arrived, a mushroom soup with fresh herbs; it was excellent and so was the pickled venison that was served with it. Kravitz ate with pleasure, and for a while he almost succeeded in not thinking about either Willems or the reason for his stay. The end of the menu was a recommendation of the host – curd cheese with cherries in rum that Kravitz was hesitant to accept but nevertheless did not want to miss. As he heard steps behind him he realised that the agreeable part of the evening was over.

»May we join you?« Willems grinned and indicated the two places opposite Kravitz. The young man with him bowed politely. He was almost a head shorter than the Dutchman. He was dark haired and appeared to have far eastern ancestry.

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»May I introduce Mr. Kwang,« said Willems before sitting down. This made Kravitz more suspicious.

The shorter man smiled and bowed again before taking his place. Kravitz nodded to him and mumbled his name with resignation. What had this Kwang to do with his business?

Doldinger appeared and asked what the two men wanted. He gave Kravitz a questioning look, then left with a shrug of his shoulders. Willems wanted another beer and his companion ordered green tea for himself.

»I trust that you had a comfortable journey?« Willems began with emphasised politeness.

»Yes, thanks, but you are certainly not here to enquire after my health. What do you want to see me about?«

»News,« explained the stocky Dutchman as he grasped his beer glass.

»Is that all?«

»You could ask yourself why I invited Mr. Kwang to accompany me this evening?«

»Should I?«

»Mr. Kwang is an information gatherer and supports our team with his research. In the department people like him are called Webfishers.«

»Interesting. And what has Mr. Kwang fished out?«

The small man smiled again showing absolutely no reaction otherwise. Apparently the pair had agreed to leave all the talking to Willems.

»Does the name Komarov mean anything to you, Professor Sergei Komarov?«

Kravitz felt his pulse quicken, but forced himself to remain calm.

»Of course. We have done business together.«

»And you met him one day before the Barrier appeared.«

»That is quite possible. You know that I was in Boston at the time of course. One meets a lot of acquaintances at this type of event.«

»Wasn't it more than a passing acquaintance? Since you had a common interest...«

»We both took part in the ANSMET project. It is no secret that we have been together on some of the expeditions.«

»You were also active together in the field of meteorite research,« Willems continued. »What is more, you are both known to be keen collectors. On that point we know that you did not limit yourself to items you found, but you also bid for material now and again at internet auctions.«

»That's right,« Kravitz admitted and sipped from his wine glass. »Now I am curious how you want to connect these innocent activities with the appearance of the Barrier.«

»I will get to that,« replied Willems and he waved his empty beer glass in the direction of the bar.

»We know that professor Komarov undertook research that was unauthorised by the Academy at the time in question.«

He has nothing to go on, Kravitz thought relieved. »I'm afraid that I can't quite follow you,« he said aloud.

»That doesn't matter,« smiled Willems. »If you will agree, I want to tell you a little story that will tie the available facts together for us in an interesting way.«

»Presumably I can't stop you saying what you want to say,« Kravitz replied as he leaned back in a obviously relaxed manner.

»Let us accept for now that your acquaintance had discovered something, let's say it was very strange, at one of these half-legal auctions.«

»Possible, if not particularly likely,« Kravitz interjected.

»He came across something,« insisted his opponent. »There is supporting information.«

»Good, I accept that this could be the case. What sort of thing had you thought it might be?«

Kravitz was certain that he was involved in a dangerous game, but the temptation his adversary was presenting was simply too great.

»An extra-terrestrial artefact for example?«

»Most meteorites are of extraterrestrial origin,« Kravitz commented. »Otherwise there wouldn't be any.«

»You know now where I am heading – an artefact that was possibly not of natural origin.«

»You mean like a type of alien spaceship? Perhaps a rather small one?«

»Save your sarcasm until you have heard the story to the end,« replied Willems unimpressed. »We can only specu-

late about the size and shape of the artefact, not about the fact it exists; but as we see it, it is certain that it was not of natural origin.«

»As you say. Only get on with it!«

»Professor Komarov did not go public with his discovery; he carried out research on his own instead.«

»That sounds rather fantastic, but continue.«

»Komarov's research led to no usable results for reasons that we don't know, which is why he asked you confidentially for support.«

»And why should he have done that?«

»It was a question about what was technically possible. Professor Komarov was a mineralogist, not a physicist.«

»The boundaries are so vague, but I accept that it could have been so.«

»Komarov handed over a part of the material to you for investigation, and you did the work yourself, perhaps as a part of a test setup whose true background you withheld from your colleague.«

True, thought Kravitz regretfully. I dared not hand over supervision of the investigation.

»Even if all that was true,« he objected, »I can't see the connection. A physicist makes certain that he has no doubts about the capabilities of the institute's installations. Any connection with the appearance of the Barrier is excluded by the energy balance alone.«

»Not when during the course of the investigation something triggered a re-

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action that is beyond our knowledge of physics,» Willems contradicted.

»That is pure speculation.«

»It is certain that the centre of the affected area was in the region of the synchrotron installation – in the area of your responsibility at the time. Only a few days after the appearance of the Barrier your friend professor Komarov disappeared and there is not a trace of information about his current location. The same professor Komarov that you had met not only in Boston but four weeks previously near the Polish-Russian border – presumably for the transfer of the material.«

Kravitz felt warmth rising to his face. How could Willems know that? They must have made a mistake, although they had done everything to leave no traces. Kravitz had obtained the train tickets as well as overnight accommodation in the hotel using false names. He was absolutely certain that nobody had observed the transfer.

»It was not your fault,« Willems admitted. »The photos are from the FSB people,« he took a sheet of folded paper out of his case and handed it to Kravitz. »They were in front of the hotel because of another covert job – as chance would have it.«

The copy showed three photos: Kravitz checking in at reception, Sergei at the same place, and lastly, the two in deep discussion at the hotel bar. Apparently nothing that could be used as proof.

»And you want to have these found on the internet?« Kravitz asked skeptically.

»In the network, which is not quite the same,« his opponent corrected. Mr. Kwang smiled unconcerned.

»With respect,« Kravitz remarked finally and pushed the sheet back to Willems. »You have invested a lot of effort. It's just that I don't know what you actually want to prove.«

»You should listen until the end of the story. Perhaps we can clear up this point,« Willems replied emphatically.

»Agreed, but please make it short.«

»Professor Komarov gave you a part of the material. We assume that it was a product of extraterrestrial technology. We think it has inherent properties that make analysis difficult – a cosmic Black Box as it were – that doesn't want its contents to be revealed at all. These properties threatened to make all your plans come to nothing.«

Dammed right, Kravitz thought, while the shape of the dull grey capsule appeared before his inner eye. It resisted diamond tools and equally resisted concentrated acids, heat and x-rays. The tight beam synchrotron accelerator had been their last hope. They had chosen to bombard the capsule with highly accelerated electrons as a last resort.

»Your experimenting became foolhardy in the end, the energy input ever higher, until the material – by chance during your absence – reacted in the end, certainly in a way that nobody could have foreseen.«

»Interesting,« Kravitz smiled and surprised himself how little Willems' words worried him.

Willems had come rather close to the truth, but what did that mean anyway? He would not be able to prove anything. However, Kravitz now felt something like respect for his antagonist. Many others would have long given up, but Willems had sunk his teeth in like a terrier. He must have studied and analysed a vast mass of material. Otherwise he would not have conceived the idea that a lump of meteorite that took its owner to the far side of the world had anything to do with this matter.

The material was actually offered on the internet – meteorites from the Sichote-Alin region. They were considered to be relatively worthless by experts. Sergei became interested because the seller's description contained inconsistencies. The measurements did not match the weight. Sichote-Alin meteorites generally consist of iron with around six per cent nickel inclusions, therefore the lump offered was too heavy. Komarov had contacted the seller and settled the business as soon as he had confirmed the details. Then he had flown to Vladivostok and had called on the man, a rather dodgy young fellow, who alleged that he had inherited the stone from his grandfather. Presumably he had stolen it, but that did not interest Sergei. He paid the negotiated five hundred dollars after he had examined the meteorite. He then ad-

ded fifty more to persuade the man to forget his name.

After his return trip he went directly from the airport to his Moscow institute to carry out the preliminary investigation. He soon found confirmation of what he suspected. There were inclusions, four altogether, and – what really astounded him – all appeared to be the same size! It was no problem for a man of Komarov's experience to extract the inclusions from the material. It had taken several days before he was able to free the capsules – this was what the inclusions looked like – and remove all clinging debris. They were all exactly the same size, eight centimetres long and twelve millimetres in diameter. Each weighed exactly two hundred and eighteen grams, which corresponds to an average density of nearly twenty-five grams per cubic centimetre. Even Osmium, the heaviest metal known, is significantly lighter. The radiological investigation brought the first setback, the material showed itself to be absolutely impenetrable, even for the strongest x-rays. The attempt to get a spectrum analysis of the material was equally unsuccessful. The capsules were neither affected by ionisation nor reacted in the slightest to physical pressure. The greatest surprise Komarov got was caused by the attempt to heat one of the capsules. The material seemed to have the capability to absorb energy. Despite intensive heating, the temperature of its surface never rose above twenty five degrees Celsius. Sergei had to conclude eventually

that he could not make progress with conventional methods.

Kravitz later had come to the same conclusion and was equally astonished that the investigated capsule maintained its temperature even in a glowing plasma. The material resisted diamond tools and extreme compression without being deformed – not even by a millionth of a metre.

Willems interrupted Kravitz's thinking. »Is that all that you have to say about it?«

»Er, um – No,« replied Kravitz, still half in reverie, collecting his thoughts. »That is a fantastic tale. You should have become a storyteller.«

If he had hoped to get his opponent off the subject, he knew he had failed. Willems finished his beer silently without taking his eyes off Kravitz. He had drunk a lot but he seemed to remain as completely in control as earlier. What irritated Kravitz most was the grin of forbearance that played on his lips. Was he so certain of his facts?

»I know what you think,« Willems continued finally.

»Oh yes?«

»You think that this pompous Dutchman can say what he likes. In the end he can not prove anything. In any case not as long as the Barrier exists.«

»And what could be the problem?«

»Nothing, as long as you suspect that I mainly wanted to prove something to you.«

»That was naturally far from your thoughts,« Kravitz said with scorn.

He didn't want to be impolite, but the conversation had taken a threatening turn which disturbed him.

»I understand that you don't believe me,« Willems clarified with a regretful shrug of his shoulders. »Nevertheless you should know that I am personally very sorry about what happened. Nobody could have foreseen this.«

»Thanks, even if nothing has changed.«

»In any case, we are not here to create difficulties for you. But we must finally discover what caused this.« He pointed in the direction of the area near the Barrier.

»How do you want to deal with it? It has been active for eight years and does not seem to lose its strength.«

»You are certainly right about its unchanging nature. But there is another viewpoint: the question is why. I don't believe in chance events, especially not when we take the disappearance of your friend Komarov into consideration.«

»Do you know anything for certain about that?«

»The only certainty is that Professor Komarov could not vanish into nothingness. According to our information he entered the Institute on Monday 7th January 2013, at 7:50 exactly, Moscow time, and has not been seen since.«

»That does not seem possible.«

»That may be,« Willems grinned. »The fact is that Komarov's disappearance has stirred up a lot of dust. It has given rise

to more investigations involving the participation of all the appropriate services. They all state that Professor Komarov could not have left the institute's premises unobserved.«

»And what do you think?«

»I think that his disappearance had something to do with the artefact – perhaps it was a sort of defence mechanism that you, or whoever, triggered off here in Niederlahr.«

»Was it a purposeful action?« Kravitz forced a smile. »You mean that we have aliens here with us?«

»I don't mean anything,« Willems replied. »But I don't rule anything out. As long as science cannot provide an explanation for the appearance of the Barrier, we must conclude that a non-human intelligence is indirectly involved, at least.«

»By which we would be with the little green men again – I'm sorry Dr. Willems, but that appears to me to be too far fetched. Please excuse me if you will. It has been a long day.«

It was not an excuse. Kravitz felt exhausted and spent. Perhaps it had been the abundant wine, perhaps the long journey. In any case, at that moment he wanted, no he yearned for, the chance to be able to stretch out and shut his eyes.

»Apologies for detaining you,« Willems replied, not in the least bit put out. »I hope we have not bored you too much. Sleep well, Professor.«

»Good night, gentlemen,« muttered Kravitz. He returned the smaller man's

polite bow with a nod of the head. He waited a little until the two men had taken their places by the bar. Then he went through the empty lounge to the lift.

The door to his room was locked; but Kravitz still looked around cautiously on entering the room. There was no evidence that anyone had forced an entry in his absence, but he felt calmer after he had a look in his suitcase. The silver cigarette case was present, of course, and, judging by its weight, so was its contents. The case had belonged to his grandfather, Jonathan C. Kravitz. His name was engraved on the lid. It had lain in a drawer unobserved for decades, until Kravitz found it by chance. He was a non-smoker, but had nevertheless occasional use for the antique item, at least once a year. The capsule – a grey cylinder with rounded edges – was thicker than a normal cigarette and lay in a cushion that Kravitz had cut out of Styrofoam. With a little imagination one could take it for a type of cartridge, but basically it had no resemblance to any known thing. As Kravitz took it out of the case, he grimaced at the unsettling reaction of his muscles and nerves. He distrusted them somewhat, like he did the thing itself. Something that looked like metal and was heavier than lead should feel cool, but it didn't. The surface of the capsule was warm and shiny like polished wood. It was futile to speculate what caused this impression; a property of the material from which it was made, no doubt. An ex-

traterrestrial who happened to find a glass ashtray in his hand would be just as disturbed if there was no glass on his home planet. Only that ashtray would not be inclined to change the space-time continuum of its surroundings when it was exposed to a synchrotron beam.

But you can do it, Kravitz thought while he gazed at the grey piece of metal in his palm with a mixture of respect and unease, as if it was an exotic insect. You can stop time if someone annoys you, and make people disappear. Just like that. He snapped his fingers. »And who knows what else you are able to do.«

He then realised that he had muttered the last words aloud, but, although he was conscious of the odd situation, he continued.

»Okay, we were not particularly considerate, perhaps, but we could not know that you are not just a piece of metal that somebody here in the neighbourhood has forgotten.«

The attempt at justification was of course laughable, yet Kravitz had the urge to say more as if the grey thing in his hand could actually understand.

»I'm sorry if we have disturbed you, but we certainly did not want to hurt you. If we had had some sort of sign from you, some sort of reaction, we would have stopped immediately.«

Kravitz broke off and bit his lip. A memory forced itself into his consciousness – a memory he had long suppressed. Perhaps it had been only a nightmare that he had experienced at some time, but

were there dreams without images? It had become dark, pitch dark, but this darkness had nothing to do with the absence of light. In a strange way Kravitz became a part of it, without the least idea where his inner self ended and the other entity, out there, began. Alone. That was the only association that he could think of, an overpowering feeling of loss that shut out any possibility of doing anything to overcome it. He had never felt so helpless in his life.

Kravitz did not know how long he had spent in this situation. Perhaps an hour, perhaps only a few seconds. He did not know how long it had lasted as he started breathing again. He had been preoccupied with his thoughts and was now starting to become aware of his surroundings once more. The memory of the experience faded as quickly as it had surfaced. Kravitz then noticed that he had his right hand clamped hard around the capsule. He carefully opened his hand and replaced the grey cylinder in the case. Somewhat bewildered, he felt something like regret when he had done it.

It had happened here, in this hotel room, when he had made his unwilling acquaintance with the Robinson Syndrome two years ago. Following the research by UNSCET, the phenomenon had first been observed four years earlier. It had manifested itself since then at irregular intervals. One thing was certain, the intensity of the effect decreased with increasing distance from the Barrier. It

had caused most of the houses in the immediate neighbourhood of the Barrier to be vacated. After many guards had started to suffer from sleep disturbances and other psychological afflictions, their accommodation had been moved further away to the south suburb, and that had reduced the complaints. The problem was blamed on a sort of stasis field that existed near the Barrier. However, this was only a speculative hypothesis.

Could it be that some kind of »planned action« was in play, as he had suggested to Willems?

Another thought sneaked into Kravitz's consciousness, though vague and unstructured. It could be the first signs of an explanation that was almost attainable – if he could just reach it – and put the different parts together.

Capsules ... Stasis field ... Robinson Syndrome ... Sychote-Alin meteorite ... fragment ... loneliness.

There must be a simple connection. And perhaps it had to do with the origin of the meteorite. But he could not make headway without help. He needed more information.

Kravitz took his Comboard out of the side compartment of his suitcase and switched it on. When the connection was made, he activated the beamer and focused the projection. It showed a blue shimmering panel on which the logo of the Allnet portal soon appeared. He then selected his datafile and downloaded the SAM dossier. Somewhere here must be the information he sought. »Composi-

tion«, no, that wasn't it, »Distribution of finds«, likewise uninteresting, but perhaps »Orbit« would help him further.

The first calculations originated from a Russian called Fesekov who had reconstructed the path of the main body of the meteorite on the basis of eyewitness accounts. Later computer simulations by Shepard and Turner provided only minor corrections. They suggested an estimated period for the orbit of 1,132 days. They said that the meteorite would have come under the influence of Martian gravity approximately twenty-six years before its impact with the Earth. From that the two Britons concluded that either the data available to Fesekov was imprecise – or the meteorite originated in 1921 – probably through a collision between two objects in the asteroid belt.

A collision, Kravitz thought, yet not so long ago. If that was actually what had happened, then it was possible that only small fragments were swung in the direction of the sun. The path of the more massive fragments would have hardly been altered because of the momentum of their orbit. Iron asteroids were not particularly common. Only larger planetoids could be formed with iron cores. The meteorite was possibly debris from a planet that Jupiter's gravity had ripped to pieces millions of years ago. What if the capsules came from that planet? Perhaps they had undergone this strange metamorphosis to ensure their survival? This was pure speculation but it

was the only one that made sense in Kravitz's eyes. If such a small fragment held more capsules now, how many would have existed at the place they came from? Thousands, a few hundred thousand, even yet more? Millions of survivors of a cosmic catastrophe, they had circled the sun in the rubble of their home planet for eons. The idea was just as fascinating as incredible. Perhaps they were even able to communicate with each other.

They could communicate – of course! The sudden certainty went through Kravitz's consciousness like an electric shock. The Robinson Syndrome! They want to go back!

A flood of conflicting feelings overcame Kravitz as he stared at the cigarette case that was still lying open on the writing table in front of him. How should he make clear to this thing that he had understood? If he tried to communicate, if he could, would it, would they understand him? Kravitz didn't know if he could but he knew that he must make an attempt if he wanted to see Miriam again. He had no basis for his plan but he was determined to try anyway. He would not stop now even if his hopes could be dashed. As if in a trance Kravitz gripped the grey cylinder again. He felt warm and comfortable in himself.

»We will send you back,« he whispered on oath while holding the capsule tightly in his hand like a talisman. But where?

As far as he could remember, there was only one large asteroid in the inner asteroid belt that contained a nickel-iron core – Vesta.

It could be a false trail but at that moment he did not have a better idea.

Kravitz returned to the comboard again and linked to the NAS portal. Using the search word »Vesta« he found some useful data about the asteroid and some relatively recent images. The space probe Dawn had passed very close to the planetoid in 2011 and had sent hundreds of

high resolution pictures to the Earth. The enormous craters that scarred the surface seemed anything but inviting, but they were of no significance. They did not relate to the present, they were a record of the object's past from many million years ago.

Kravitz activated the »virtual overflight« and saw the broken landscape of the tiny planet passing across the screen. If that was the place?

»Do you know this place?« he asked the capsule in his hand, but he did not intend it to be a serious question. He didn't believe that the artefact was in a position to accept visual input. Why should it understand Earthly languages?

»We will take you back,« he repeated all the same, »you and the others.« He was serious about it, although he had only a vague idea at the moment how he could keep his promise – even if his hopes were realised.

The capsule showed no reaction, and though Kravitz had not really expected

anything else, he was slightly disappointed.

He suddenly felt extremely tired. His limbs felt as heavy as lead. The few metres to his bed took all the rest of his strength.

Miriam, was his last thought before he slept. Miriam, I'm sor ...

The light in the room stayed on all night, but Kravitz slept like a log, while in his right hand he held the capsule as a child keeps hold of a favourite toy.

He was woken by the telephone. Sleepily he turned to the source of the noise and grabbed the handset with a deep sigh. If that is Doldinger then he should rot in ...

However, it was not the hotelier but Willems.

»Willems, damn you, have you gone completely crazy – what are you saying – the Barrier – are you serious? Thanks, see you later.«

In a moment Kravitz was out of bed. Still in his underclothes he grabbed his viewer, pulled the curtains aside and went out onto the balcony. At first glance there was nothing unusual to see. The old town in front of him seemed as sad and lost as it had been for ages. The metre high steel chain fence that surrounded the district was only recognisable as an outline. Kravitz switched his viewer on, but the grey foggy swathes that arose from the river meadows swallowed up the details of the scene in front of him. Somehow something had changed. The feeling was stronger than his memory of the place.

The transporter! It had disappeared, it was simply not there anymore. It had stood there for eight years, only a few dozen metres away from the Barrier. It was a delivery wagon of a cleaning service, and the images of the yellow transporter with the rear steering wheel had gone around the world. Now it was gone – vanished!

It is gone! With straining eyes Kravitz stared across at the banks of fog that hid the institute's buildings. It is actually gone.

Minutes later the first emergency vehicles approached the district with howling sirens, but Bernhard Kravitz was already on his way.

While he chased towards his goal at breakneck speed, he glanced again at the passenger seat to make sure that the objects he had put there were still there. They were a silver cigarette case and a packet in yellowing gift wrapping. He had not brought anything else.

»Merry Christmas, Miriam,« the grey haired man whispered with a beaming smile. »I'll be home soon.«

Home. a yearning alien consciousness echoed in the all encompassing darkness. Home – soon.

*Winner of the
2008 German Science Fiction Award
(Deutscher Science-Fiction-Preis)
Translated from the German
by Wilf James*

Science Fiction in Germany

Only the next little big thing

Steampunk in Germany anno 2014

1987 K. W. Jeter propagated in a letter to Locus magazine that Victorian fantasy would be the next big thing, if we can find a fitting term like Steampunk perhaps. About a quarter century later Steampunk has arrived in Germany, but only as the next little big thing. But why?

Germany does not look back to a great heroic past. Also there never was a long and affecting reign of a Sovereign like England had with Queen Victoria. Because of the typical German negative attitude the industrial revolution is seen very negative. Social Changes and impoverishment of the masses are the first associations made by Germans and not a start into a modern new age. So nobody should wonder whether genres like steampunk, connected addicted to Victorian age and industrial revolution has a bad start in Germany.

»Steampunk will never run in Germany« the major book companies oracle five years ago. And they should be right concerning high selling publications. The German book market is dominated by fantasy. SF suffers in a little niche und Steampunk runs below the horizon of perception. Cinema is dominated by the typical global blockbusters, mainly by comic adaptations and on free TV supernatural Creatures or heroes are the only fantastic series.

But below this threshold of perception even in Germany an active fandom exists.

Young writers labor on neovictorian plots, which have left the Mists of London and take place in Wiesbaden, Baden-Baden, Hamburg or Vienna. Anthologies are a no go at the major book labels. The small publishers see no problem filling a dozed of anthologies with steampunk short stories. At »Buchmessecon« a parallel event for small publishers during the Frankfurt book fair every year steampunk wins prices for the best newcomer, the best short story, best anthology or best secondary literature.

The visual aesthetics of Steampunks overwhelmed supporters of the Gothic scene, medieval fans and bored SF-dinos. Hackers and Modder form a political counter-culture against the uniformity of software and hardware. They want to change, expand or just beautify their equipment and software, without scrap this after three years of use to the next black box to get into the house. These makers have discovered the term steampunk itself.

LARPer started the first role-plays, even if both location as well as costumes and props are expensive and time-consuming to organize. And talented costume maker change from black to brown, from Medieval to Victorian age. In the province small meetings, round tables and circles of friends rise. Those soon leave the cafe behind and go in full costume on

Nur das nächste kleine große Ding

Steampunk in Deutschland anno 2014

1987 propagierte K. W. Jeter in einem Leserbrief an das Locus-Magazin, dass viktorianische Fantastik zum nächsten großen Ding avancieren würde, hätte man nur einen passenden Namen, wie vielleicht Steampunk. Über ein Vierteljahrhundert später ist Steampunk in Deutschland angekommen, allerdings nur als das nächste kleine große Ding. Warum nur?

Deutschland blickt kaum auf eine glorreiche Vergangenheit zurück. Auch gab es nie eine so lange und prägende Regierungszeit eines Herrschers, wie die von Königin Viktoria in England. Die industrielle Revolution wird dank der typisch deutschen pessimistischen Grundhaltung ebenfalls eher negativ belegt: Soziale Verwerfungen und Verelendung der Massen fallen als Stichwort und weniger der Aufbruch in ein modernes, neues Zeitalter. Somit darf es niemanden verwundern, dass ein Genre wie Steampunk, das in der viktorianischen Zeit und der industriellen Revolution verwurzelt ist, in Deutschland keinen leichten Stand hat.

»Steampunk wird in Deutschland nicht laufen«, prophezeiten viele Großverlage vor noch fünf Jahren. Und sie sollten hinsichtlich auflagenstarker Publikationen Recht behalten. Den deutschen Buchmarkt dominiert die Fantasy,

Science-Fiction existiert nur noch als Nische und Steampunk kreucht unter der Wahrnehmungsschwelle. Das Kino wird geprägt von den üblichen globalen Massenblockbustern, allen voran den Comicverfilmungen und die Free-TV-Serien kreisen um übernatürliche Wesen oder modernen Superhelden.

Doch unterhalb dieser Wahrnehmungsschwelle entstand auch in Deutschland eine rührige Szene, die durchaus aktiv ist.

Junge Nachwuchsschriftsteller laborieren an neoviktorianischen Geschichten, die nicht mehr im Nebel Londons, sondern in Wiesbaden, Baden-Baden oder auch in Hamburg oder Wien spielen. Kurzgeschichtensammlungen sind bei den Großverlagen verpönt, die Kleinverlage haben keine Probleme ein Dutzend von Steampunkanthologien mit Kurzgeschichten zu füllen. Beim Buchmessecon, einer Parallelveranstaltung zur Frankfurter Buchmesse für Kleinverlage der fantastischen Szene gewinnen seit Jahren immer wieder Steampunkwerke Preise in den Sparten Nachwuchsroman, Anthologie oder bestes Sekundärwerk.

Der optischen Ästhetik des Steampunks erliegen Anhänger der Gothic-Szene, Mittelalterfans und gelangweilte SF-Dinos. Bastler, die schon immer an schrägen Dingen werkten, verzieren ihre Arbeiten mit Messingbeschlägen und bekennen sich zum Steampunk. Hacker und Moder etablieren eine politische Ge-

the street. This is risky, especially outside of carnival. But the Steampunk costume is more socially accepted than the skintight Trekkie sweater over his wealth belly, or the tattered dud from the last Zombie Walk.

Internet activities concentrate round the Clockworker (www.clockworker.de) and a forum called rauchersalon (salon.clockworker.de), with most traffic in the maker sub forum. Bands change from medieval sound or folk to steampunk, like Off Limits, sometimes with a certain Victorian attitude like Coppelius or with strange instrumentation and lyrics specific to the genre like Drachenflug.

There are mere Steampunk Movies beside »Wild Wild West« or the dieselpunky »Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow«. But in a lot of movies we find retro elements, which force the Steampunk fan, to press this stamp on it, following the motto: Since I have a hammer, everything looks like a nail. So it seems to be an illusion, that Germany is able to produce a Steampunk movie. Professional filmmaker Dirk Müller ist Steampunk fan. And by crowd founding he produces a 10 minutes short movie »Airlords of Airia«. Now he's working on the script for a complete Movie.

In 2012 and so very late the first true Steampunk Festival took place, called Aethercircus (Ether Circus). The location

is Stade, a small town near river Elbe in the north of Hamburg. Michael Deutschmann, front man of the band Drachenflug had the idea, the perseverance and the support of a large family and friends. First the Circus was held in the Historic Town Hall. In 2013 and 2014 they met at authentic locations; an old guard fort at river Elbe named Grauerort. Live music, lectures, multimedia presentations are joining walking acts, camps and exhibitions of artists, makers and dealers. Many visitors appear in costumes. And the makers move with their wonderful gadgets to the other side of river Elbe, to Itzehoe. In the museum of this little town in 2013 the first German Steampunk exhibition took place with lots of events.

The Railway and Industrial Museum Fond de Gras is located in Luxembourg, which does not belong to Germany. But from there so much visitors access the steampunk festival »Anno 1900«, which it has to be mentioned. Fire artists, jugglers and puppet player enrich the event. There is live music and people in costumes travel in authentically trains from fin de siècle.

This was steampunk anno 2014 in Germany at a glance.

Yes – we have steam.

Jürgen R. Lautner

genkultur, gegen die Uniformität der Soft- und Hardware. Sie möchten die Geräte und Programme umbauen, erweitern oder einfach nur aufhübschen, ohne diese nach drei Jahren Nutzung zu verschrotten, um sich die nächste schwarze Kiste ins Haus zu stellen. Auch diese Maker haben den Begriff Steampunk für sich entdeckt.

LARPer versuchten sich an ersten Rollenspielen, auch wenn sowohl Location als auch Kostüme und Requisiten teuer und aufwändig zu organisieren sind. Und begabte Schneiderinnen wechseln von Schwarz auf Braun, von Mittelalter auf Viktorianik. In der Provinz entstehen kleine Treffen, Stammtische und Freundeskreise. Schnell lässt man das Café hinter sich und schreitet in voller Kostümierung hinaus auf die Straße. Das ist riskant, besonders außerhalb des Karnevals. Doch ist das Steampunkkostüm eher gesellschaftsfähig, als der hautenge Trekkie-Pulli überm Wohlstandsbauch oder die zerschlissene Klamotte vom letzten Zombie-Walk.

Internetaktivitäten konzentrieren sich auf den Clockworker und ein Forum namens Rauchersalon, wo die größten Zugriffszahlen im Unterforum »Erfinderwerkstatt« gezählt werden. Musikgruppen wechseln von Mittelalterklängen und Folk Richtung Steampunk, wie »Off Limits«, manchmal mit einer speziellen viktorianischen Attitüde wie »Coppelius« oder mit seltsamen Instrumenten und Texten, die sich am Genre orientieren, wie »Drachenflug«.

Es gibt kaum Steampunkfilme, abgesehen von »Wild Wild West« und – besser als Dieselpunk kategorisiert – »Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow«. Allerdings finden sich immer wieder Retroelemente in Filmen, was den Steampunkfan sofort veranlasst, diesem Film den passenden Stempel aufzudrücken. Gemäß der Devise: Seit ich einen Hammer habe, sieht alles aus wie ein Nagel. Dass also ausgerechnet aus Deutschland Steampunkfilme kommen, ist illusorisch. Doch ein professioneller Mitarbeiter vieler Filmproduktionen ist Steampunkfan: Dirk Müller. Über Crowdfunding finanzierte er einen ersten zehnminütigen Filmtrailer »Airlords of Airia«. Derzeit schreibt er an einem Drehbuch für eine abendfüllende Adaption.

Erst im Jahr 2012 fand das erste, reine Steampunkfestival statt: der Aethercircus in Stade, einer Kleinstadt nördlich von Hamburg. Michael Deutschmann, Kopf der Band »Drachenflug«, hatte die Idee, das Durchhaltevermögen und die Unterstützung seiner großen Familie und Freunde. Zunächst fand der Circus im Historischen Rathaus der Stadt statt, 2013 und 2014 traf man sich an authentischem Orte: einem alten Wachfort an der Elbe namens Grauerort. Livemusik, Lesungen, Multimedia-Vorträge gesellen sich zu Walking Acts, Zeltlagern oder Ausstellungen von Künstlern, Makern und Händlern. Viele Besucher erscheinen kostümiert. Und dann wechselten die Bastler mit ihren wunderbaren Exponaten auf die andere Seite der Elbe, nach

Itzehoe. Im Museum der Kleinstadt fand 2013 die erste deutsche Steampunkausstellung statt, begleitet von vielen Veranstaltungen.

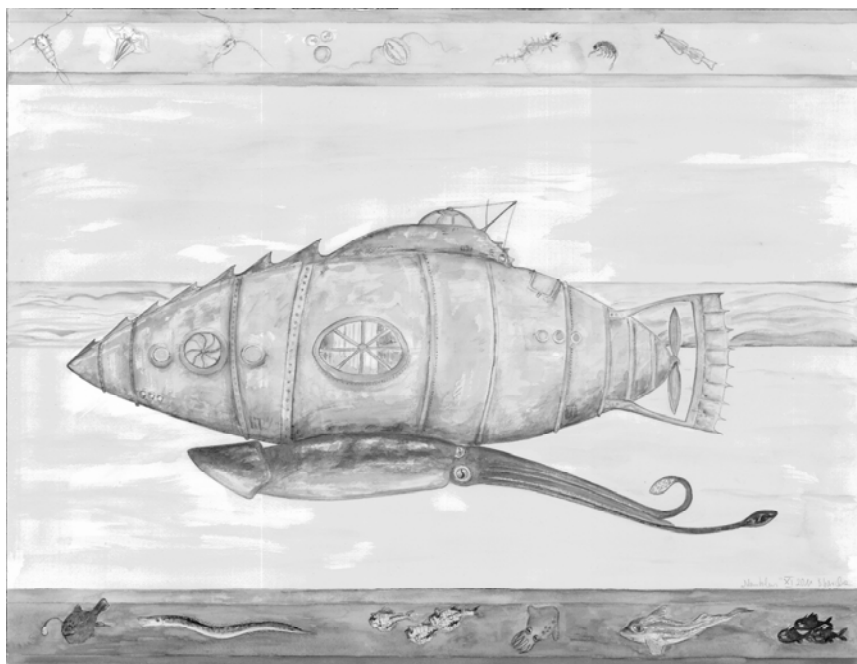
Das Eisenbahn- und Industriemuseum Fond de Gras liegt in Luxembourg, das nicht zu Deutschland gehört. Doch aus dem nahen Deutschland kommen so viele Besucher und Aktive, dass das Steampunkfestival »Anno 1900« erwähnt werden muss. Dort treten Feuerzauberer, Ar-

tisten, Gaukler und Marionettenspieler auf und bereichern die Veranstaltung. Bands spielen live und Kostümierte fahren in authentischen Zügen der Jahrhundertwende.

Das war Steampunk anno 2014 im Überblick.

Ja – wir haben Dampf!

Jürgen R. Lautner



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