

Day 2... This was the big day. Not only the longest, but also the day I was on the program. First a panel on stories we have never seen, moderated by Ralan (check out his webpage www.ralan.com with lots of advice for writers, lists of open and paying markets, etc). This was his first time as a moderator, and he did a fine albeit a bit too thorough job. Together we each contributed with potential aspects of the theme for discussion, and Ralan summarized this into 15 intelligent questions. Two days before the con, he sent them to us to reflect on, and in the session he posed those same questions to us. This gives, and gave, a much more intelligent debate. Naturally we only got through four questions and a couple from the audience, and actually never got around to the actual question in the panel's title – but at least I now have an informed opinion on that☺. What we DID discuss was what makes a story good, with interesting distinctions between mood, voice, character, and plot. The lineup of professional editor Ellen Datlow, Danish author H.H.Løyche, fan publisher Henrik Harsen, and me, were varied enough to keep the discussion going smoothly.

Prior to this panel, I attended an important exchange on NoFF – the NOrdic Fan Fund. The intention is to send a Danish fan to one of the other Scandinavian cons every year, ideally paying for every expense from the fund money. This money are collected by the previous winner in the year between his/her trip and the election of the next NOFF. Same concept as the GUFF, DUFF, TAFF, etc. NoFF works in the other Nordic countries, but somehow we seem to have problems making it work. So we wanted to discuss solutions that work with our Nordic co-fans present at the con. Attending were the finish fan, who is here in Copenhagen as a Finnish NOFF delegate (did YOU know that?), Johan Anglemark from Swedish Fandom, Flemming Rasch and me. We got a lot of input for a restructuring of the Danish Noff, and Flemming and I (plus hopefully one more) will implement this in the coming year.

Then the most important part of a con: Hanging out with more fans. Here I must mention Joen Juel Jensen, the only other Dane besides me reading German science fiction on a regular basis. Among other good names, we discussed the books of Oliver Henckel who comes as the GoH to this year's Science Fiction Club Deutschland-con URLAUBSCON UND MEER in Kiel. Also old friend Nicolas Barbano, Danish film fan No 1, attended the con, and we discussed that the chairman of the Danish Edgar Allan Poe

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Society really should have the Datlow anthology on Poe-inspired stories as a gift. So he did, even inscribed by Datlow too☺.

Suddenly, it was time for the first GoH interview. This is where we learn why this guest is so important, and what fandom merits they have. Ellen Datlow proved – as in the panel with me – to be a very interesting guest, fast-speaking, smiling, and full of stories about the REAL workings of professional publishing. As a reader for several publishers, editor of the in every way great OMNI Magazine, the online fanzine Strange Horizons, and the professional online site SciFiction – she has really influenced the genre for decades, deciding on what we fans should read, and keeping the writers on their toes by challenging them, and making them rewrite their good stories into great ones. Alongside all this editing, she also managed to bring all those great anthologies onto our shelves. On a question from the audience, she went deeper into the whole process, the different stages of editing, and how to edit properly. She also lashed out at all those so-called editors that never actually edit, but just publish what they get. Rewrite – rewrite – rewrite, people!

In the dealer's room, more people had arrived, BRI – the Danish Tolkien fans were there, and the V-people too. All dressed up. Apparently this permanent costume play is more important for them than the books/films. Also a bunch of Star Troopers and other characters from the Star Wars universe walked the halls this Saturday. I am not sure what I mean about this. As primarily a reader of the genre, I have difficulty understanding this. On the other hand I quite acknowledge the enthusiasm and dedication, and secretly wish reader-fans had the same commitment to things. Then a Danish con would not have 100 guests, but rather 1000...

Also – as per tradition – there were reps from the coming Swedish con, KONTRAST, 5th – 7th of October 2012 in Uppsala. Line up is Joe Abercromie, Peter Watts, Kelly Link, and as Fan Guest of Honor, Niels Dalgaard. Check out www.kontrast2012.se for those lucky people who can attend ☺. The Swedes really know how to make a con, and also how to get people to attend by constant promoting – like here at Fantasticon. They, Johan Anglemark and Carolina Gómes Lagerlöf, even promoted the bid for the 2014 Worldcon in London, the one place where I expect all Scandinavian fans with any interest in going to a con WILL meet up. Join up, people, it is going to GREAT. www.londonin2014.org

Then, at four o'clock, it was time to give my own speech on the Belgian, French-language, writer J.H. Rosny (contemporary of H.G. Wells). To my great surprise, the room filled up with people, eager to learn more about the unknown father of science fiction, actually to be specific, the father of Hard SF. As my viewpoint will be fully exposed in a coming issue of Fandom Forever, my English-language fanzine – and I have promised an article on Rosny in Danish in a coming issue of PROXIMA, there is no need to dwell on the matter here. But I seemed to have an attentive audience and a somewhat lively debate at the end.

I stayed on in the room for the next segment, Living in Space, where GoH Alastair Reynolds, futurologist Klaus Æ Mogensen, and Robert Jørgensen from Roskilde University discussed how we are going to get to space as a species, and what the challenges are. Flemming Rasch moderated and introduced. Apparently, even though our test habitat didn't pan out here on earth, there doesn't seem to be that great a technological problem in this. It was the psychology of isolation that destroyed the habitat

experiment this time. But there are solutions to that too. Robert Jørgensen showed pictures from the boats going to the poles in the 19th and 20th century, that were equipped for long isolation. Not just a food and sleep place, but also a cultural space. We NEED our cultural rituals to stay sane. So, the conclusion was: We can make it work, challenges lie on the political side, getting it funded and sustained way above the usual political program lengths (usually until next election). And then as one in the audience asked: How DO we persuade 10.000 people to go live on the Moon or Mars? And not coming back, ever. Would you go?

My final item on the agenda for Day 2, were the new Danish science fiction award, The Niels Klim Award. Named after the protagonist in Danish satirist and writer Ludvig Holberg 18th Century book, Niels Klim enters our hollow Earth through a hole in the ground up in Bergen, Norway (Then a part of Denmark), and finds all kinds of creatures there, all living in different political and philosophical state systems. Manfred Christiansen has designed an award in glas, where a person stands inside the globe of the Earth. A beautiful award. Lise Andreasen has set up the selection process, following the Nebula rules for categories. All published short fiction in Danish for a given calendar year can be nominated, and once nominated, can be voted upon by any fan of Danish science fiction. To oversee that everything is in order, Joen Juel Jensen and I have been attached to the award process. All of the nominees and the winners can be seen at Lise's web www.ommadawn.dk. And *read* the nominees and *read* the winners. Prizes were given to Alastair Reynolds, Lars Ahn Pedersen, Michael Kamp, and A.Silvestri.

To be concluded tomorrow...

Fandom Forever

The new English-language science fiction fanzine from Denmark.

Issue 1/2012 is out now: 80 pages of short stories, poems, and articles.

Available as a free pdf sent to your email.

More info on www.fandomforever.dk