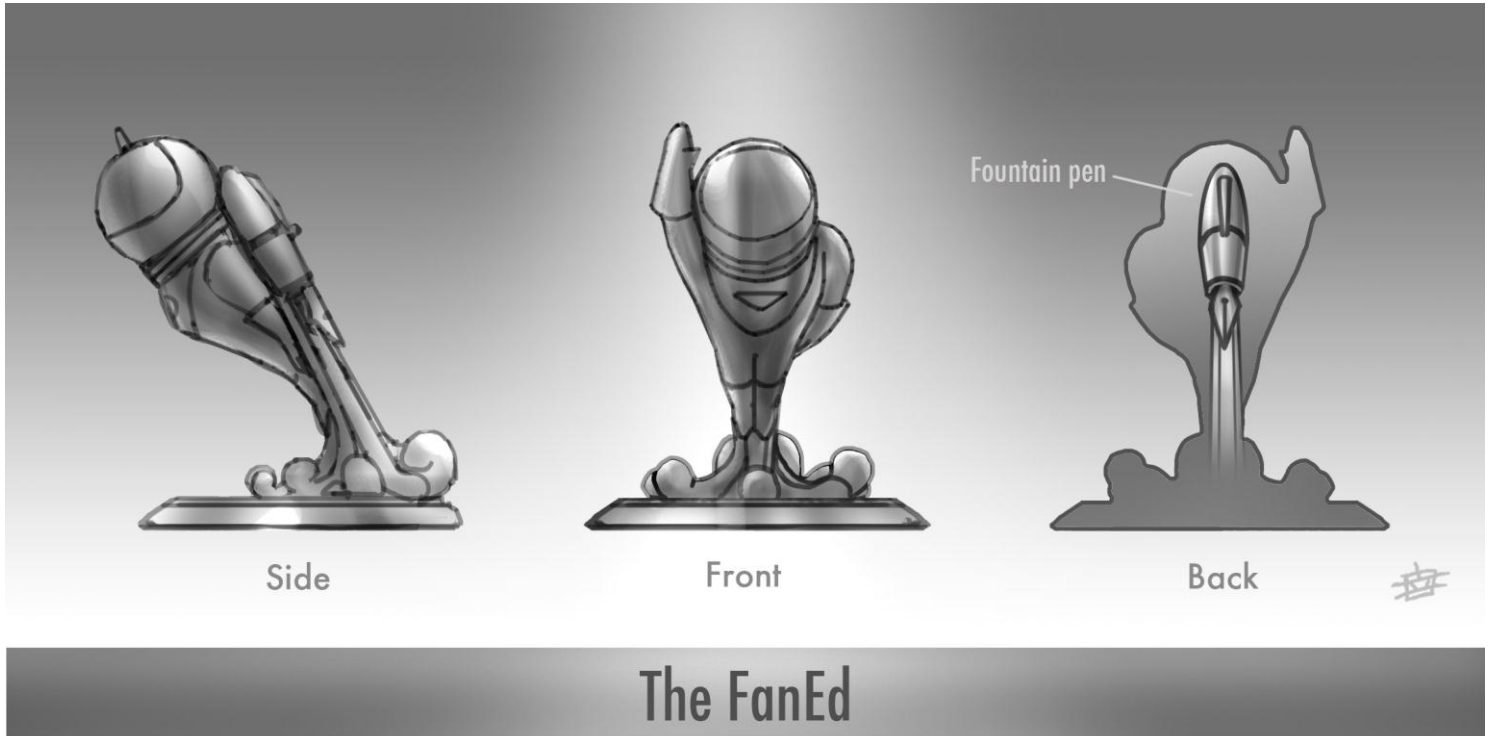


THE FANACTICAL FANACTIVIST

The Fannish E-Zine of the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards Society Dedicated to Promoting Canadian Fanzine Fandom

#2

September 2011



The FanEd

The above is a 'FanEd' design proposal submitted by Eric Chu, a member of M.A.T.C. (Monster Attack Team Canada) from Hong Kong where he is currently residing. In my original proposition I had described the backpack as a mimeograph machine shaped device, functioning as either a rocket or air supply system. On receiving his submission I wrote back:

"The fountain pen backpack rocket was definitely a surprise. Very retro and very appropriate to an old-fashioned faned. Were you thinking of all of it being sculpted? (The actual ink 'nib' or whatever it's called looks complicated to sculpt.) Or were you thinking of a piece of an actual pen to be inserted in each award?"

Eric replied: *"Yes, I changed the jet pack to a pen because I felt that a mimeograph was a something that would not be easily recognizable to most people. I understand your reasons for requesting it, but in the end, I felt that a pen would get the same message across and also look better as a retro jet pack."*

"It would be difficult to find a fountain pen that would fit the size needed for the sculpt. If the award is only 4 inches high, that would make the pen less than 2 inches long. So, probably easier to sculpt it."

"As I said before, I am away from home, and getting the tools and materials to produce the sculpt would be difficult right now, or I would do it myself."

It remains to be seen whether any further designs will be submitted (Calling all fan artists! Any nationality! I seek your design!) or whether I can find anyone to actually sculpt the winning design, create a mold, and cast at least a few years' worth of 'Faneds' for a reasonable price. Chu's design is a magnificent first step!

LETTERS OF COMMENT

The Graeme's comments are in dark Blue.

From: Mike Glycer, August 6, 2011
Faned of File 770.

Thanks Graeme! Good Luck with your new venture.

And thank you Mike! Especially for the article you posted at your File 770 Website which reads as follows:

I, Canada

R. Graeme Cameron, the Dean (or at least Boys Vice-Principal) of Canadian fanzine fandom has unilaterally created "The Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards" (nicknamed the "Faneds").

There will be awards in five categories: (1) Best Fanzine, (2) Best Fan Artist, (3) Best Fan Writer (editorials, columns, articles, etc.), (4) Best LocHack (letters of comment writer), and (5) Hall of Fame (lifetime achievement).

He plans to present them annually at VCON beginning this year.

The Graeme explains in *Auroran Lights* #5:

"Let's get something straight here. This is not a big deal. As far as general fandom is concerned, it is of marginal interest. It's basically a promotional stunt, a publicity ploy, a gimmick to stimulate interest in the fanzine niche fandom."

"But also, I admit, an effort to awaken awareness of the "Best Fan Publication" category of the Aurora Awards."

Cameron would know how badly that is needed, for he is a [director of the association that runs the Prix Aurora Awards](#). The award, though, is his own personal project.

There's precedent for this sort of thing. In the Seventies, Sheryl Birkhead made her own set of awards – dog biscuits in Lucite – and sent them to faneds whose zines she appreciated. I was lucky enough to get one.

However, Cameron has something more traditional in mind for his "Faneds." He's already enlisted Taral to design a certificate and hopes to find someone to design a figure that can be cast from a mold for a physical award.

The first time around – for this year's VCON – Cameron will select the winners himself from "a few

obvious choices." In 2012 they'll be picked with the help of "peer consultation and suggestion" and by 2013 he hopes to institute a formal vote by Canadian fans.

From: Neil Jamieson-Williams, August 7, 2011
Faned of Swill @ 30.
Dundas, Ontario

Hi Graeme,

At least there is some method in the madness...

I think that the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards are an excellent idea, in particular to promote the niche fandom that is fanzine fandom; as is the new fanzine/newsletter for the brand new society. While I do applaud this effort (and I am, I think, the sixth person to become a member of the Yahoo group) I do have some critique to offer (hey, I'm the editor of Swill; what did you expect? I have a reputation to uphold and all that...). My critique comes down to the question, what is the long term goal for the CFFAS (and I realise that this is a question that cannot really be answered yet, as you do not know whether or not this whole thing is going to liftoff or just explode on the pad)? Personally, should CFFAS succeed, I see it going one of two ways; which I shall discuss later after this digression...

As you know, I have edited perzines, genzines, and clubzines in the past. I am also not as much of a purist as you are -- based upon your comments in print. For example, I am not horrified that a podcast won the Best Fanzine Hugo. In fact, I think it is great. Think back, Graeme, into the distant past, do you recall the fad of audiofanzines in the mid to late 1980's? I produced a oneshot audiofanzine. I didn't do one again due to the limitations of the technology and distribution (I had my mini-studio of sort, so the production values were high, but the distribution cost of posting out the cassette tapes and having them arrive damaged, etc. just made it more hassle than it was worth) as well as the fact that the audience for audiofanzines was a very small niche market at the time. Today's technology removes all of those obstacles that existed way back when. I also don't have any problem with videofanzines, blog fanzines, and so on. Here is a type of fanzine that I would like to read/watch/engage in; a fusion of text, audiovisual, possibly with music and animations, that has an interactive synchronous chat as well as asynchronous forums/blog, and links to past articles/essays of the zine, and so on. It doesn't exist yet because to produce that is a lot of work, but as the technology and software becomes ever more user friendly, something like that will eventually appear. So, here is another question, how open is CFFAS going to be to new technologies being used for the purposes of fan publication?

Why, not at all. As other awards struggle to keep up with changing modes of communication, each more exciting and science-fictional (not to mention ephemeral) than the last, the Fanac Awards will plunge furiously into the past, clinging desperately to the papernet (& on-line copies) with reactionary tenacity unparalleled.

If the answer to that second question is, "no", then this is how I see CFFAS developing; it will be a small, comfortable niche fandom of those people who see the print medium fanzine (either hardcopy or as a pdf/epub) as the only definition of a fanzine. With hope, some new blood can be attracted, but it will be, in all probability, a greying membership. Nevertheless, it will provide a way for those outside of the niche to see what is going on at present in print medium fanzines and have more knowledge to go on when they make nominations for that category in the Auroras.

Yes, it will be a small, hopefully comfortable and somewhat useful niche fandom that may well survive as long as we do (which raises the prospect that its last gasp may be a collection of random nattering zines written by senile old fools, something I quite look forward to actually). As time goes by 'our' zinedom may come to appear so bizarre and peculiar that it will be hip and cool to retrogradedly regress down into our little hobby. Might not be as popular as vampires or zombies, but turning into a faned is not all that dissimilar a process, so who knows?

If the answer to the second question is, "yes", then the CFFAS could develop this way... Note: it doesn't have to develop this way all at once, either. With the intent stated by the Society that doors will be opened based upon the success of the organisation and the increase in the number of alternative medium fanzines, the CFFAS could evolve into a big deal at least in regards to the Auroras -- that Aurora nominations will take their cue from the CFFAS nominations/winners. What I am saying is keep the current five categories but publicly state that the organisation is willing to open the number of categories in the future (even if the CFFAS restricts itself to the print medium, if it is successful, it will probably have to expand categories anyway, eg. Best Clubzine, Best Perzine/Genzine).

In my wildest dreams. But certainly if we are overwhelmed with vast numbers of new publications we can expand exponentially (as if CFFA were run by a megalomaniacal dictator ... but of course there's scarcely any comparison at all...).

Quebec fandom is more open on this as demonstrated by their Prix Boréal – Fan Publications nominees; two are fanzines and three are blogs. Not only that, but the two fanzines have a very solid web presence, including a blog, they just also publish a print medium fanzine. FYI, «Brins

d'Éternité» and «Clair/Obscur» continue to be published and there is also another fanzine «Asile» in publication. These are all, I believe Quebec fanzines, and they all contain original fiction as well as non-fiction opinion pieces/articles/reviews. While these are amateur publications, they are being published with very high standards -- if the category existed in the Auroras/Prix Boréal, I would classify these publications as semi-professional.

As I understand it, the Prix Boréal are virtually the same as the prix Aurora, both have a category for all forms of written fanzine ('Best Fan Publication' & «Fanédition»), and both have a separate category open to electronic non-print presentations ('Best Fan Other' & «Création artistique audiovisuelle»). Thus it seems that every type of fannish communication (in all its evolving forms), both French and English, are equally well served by the more prestigious 'professional' awards. The Prix Aurora for English speakers, the Prix Boréal for French speakers.

That being said, you suggest the Quebec fanzines are more semi-pro than amateur. Almost makes me wonder if I should exclude them from consideration. Another factor is my total inability to read French with any degree of understanding. Yet it would be false to imply that the fan Prix Boréals takes up the slack. They are simply the equivalent of the fan Prix Auroras.

Therefore, either there should be a French language only equivalent to the CFF Awards (extremely unlikely this will come about) or the CFFA must include both French and English language zines. I think that's only fair.

So thank you for the information provided. I will look into these zines further.

This brings me to another point, what about fanzines that are primarily composed of fan fiction? Obviously (or maybe only obvious to me) if it is original fan fiction and not derivative (Star Trek, Dr. Who, Star Wars, etc.) it should be a valid form of Canadian fanzine. This should be specified in the definitions of what a SF fanzine is and what types of written SF are not eligible.

Are there any fan fiction zines? Garth has printed one or two in his fannish career I believe. WARP publishes fan fiction, albeit often Star Trek related. I don't think fan fiction is all that common. At any rate, even derivative fan fiction (Star Trek, Star Wars, etc.) would qualify if it is printed in fanzine form. After all, it a) has to do with SF, albeit media SF, and b) is a clear expression of fannish creativity and self-expression.

I will exclude non-sf&f zines, but I will include ANY SF&F zines, or zines that significantly touch on SF&F.

And, in addition, I am uncertain as to whether or not Steampunk Canada qualifies as an eligible SF club/association/society? If it does, you have omitted their organisation's fanzine THE DOMINION DISPATCH. The zine is into its second year and issue one of each volume is only available as hardcopy while issues 2 and 3 are only available online. Adam Smith is the editor and the dispatch is available here <http://www.steampunkcanada.ca/dominiondispatch.htm>

I will need to check it out (I'm quite busy right now working on the program book for VCON 36, which is why I'm rushing out this 2nd issue early since I know I'm going to be even busier real soon now) but Streampunk is a form of alternate history & therefore quite squarely SF as far as I'm concerned.

So, I do disagree that the CFFAS should for ever limit itself to "traditional fanzines" a la print medium, but I strongly agree with the creation of the society.

Thank you!

All the best, Neil

**From: Taral Wayne, August 7, 2011
Fan Artist & Faned of 'New Toy'
Toronto, Ontario**

First of all, can't we come up with something catchier than "the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards?" One common source of names is somebody from the early days who set the bar -- I humbly withdraw my name from consideration, as I'm not dead yet. Even Glicksohn seems a little bit like a latecomer.

Going back before even Mike and Susan, one name does stand out above others, and that's Boyd Raeburn. You might call them the "Boyd's" -- just think of the jokes! This award is for the Boyds! I suppose "the Raeburns" might be a little more dignified, but another approach might be to name the awards after Raeburn's zine -- the "A Bas's" That leads to new jokes, but you have to be cleverer to work them out. The "A Bas Award" would literally mean the "Down With Awards!"

Another option, you might name the award after the group Raeburn belonged to -- the Derelict Insurgents. People who remember the '70s "new" Derelicts might object, so how about "the Insurgents?" Maybe we should just go back to "Boyd's?" You can still subtitle them "Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards," for people who don't know what a Boyd is.

Very few fans know anything about fandom's history, never mind zinedom's history. In fact, some

fans are actively hostile for a variety of reasons. A 'mystery' name wouldn't attract anyone. 'The Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards' at least has the virtue of being relatively straight forward as to what it's all about.

However, since you do have the 'Faned' nickname for the physical award, then the subject can be talked about using that, rather than the 'Grand High Annual Peer Recognition Presentations for Excellence in the Field of Fan Publishing Activities by a Citizen of the Dominion of Canada Award.'

'Faned' is short, somewhat catchy, and only slightly mysterious. It will do. As for your long version, needs punching up with some additional words like "exalted", "imperial", "supreme", "glorious", etc.

A certificate, at least, can be offset easily. I'd be happy to try to work on it. Your basic idea is sound, though to fill it full of all the details mentioned may look cluttered. We'll see. If it's going to be inked it'll take me a lot more time than the sketches I'm doing now.

I can hardly wait to see it. I know it will be good.

You seem to have anticipated most of what had to be thought out. I approve of the every-other-year clause. But I suspect the whole project will go bollocks in some totally unexpected way. However, that will not happen in the first year and probably not the second.

Totally unexpected will probably be the motto of the CFFA Society. Part of what makes it exciting. I figure the awards will last three or four years at the very worst, hopefully much longer.

I was going to suggest you make the first year a complete slate of Past Achievements, something like this:

Best Fanzine -- Energumen
Best Fan Writer -- Susan Wood
Best Fan Artist -- Derek Carter
Best Letter Writer -- Mike Glicksohn
Hall of Fame -- Boyd Raeburn

These are all worthy recipients of the Lifetime Achievement award, and if the CFFA survive long enough, they will each get one. However, the other four awards this first year should go to contemporary, active zinefans. I want the awards to seem reasonably relevant to what's actually going on, as opposed to some purely antiquarian exercise (though truth to tell I have long considered myself more of a fantiquarian than a fhistorian). Not contemporary in terms of the latest trend, obviously, but indicative of 'something' current, something creeping along, sorta keeping pace.

From: John Purcell, August 9/2011
Faned of 'Askance'

Hi, Graeme!

I see you have been one busy little fan recently. Are you frigging crazy?!? Keep this pace up and you'll be a burned out fan in no time flat. Don't say nobody warned you. As the cultural saying goes, "Been there, done that." And I have, too. If you skim through some of my zines archived on efanazines.com, you can read some of the fannish bio-history documenting my ups and downs in fandom during the 70s and 80s. Ah, such sweet, warped memories...

Why yes, I am crazy.

At any rate, good luck on promoting the Canadian SF fanzine scene. It is hard to tell at this early stage how your quest shall go, but I recommend ducking frequently as you approach those windmills. Unexpected gusts of fannish angst can spin those blades damned quickly, so be careful.

Since some people believe true fannish zinedom died twenty or even thirty years ago, it is not surprising I am being viewed in some quarters as a grave digger ghoul enthusiast. But in reality there are about as many zines being published as there ever were, it's just that today, unlike past times, most of the effort (at least here in Canada) is born by the faneds themselves as there seem to be very few active in supporting roles (fan artists for instance). Still, potential for growth.

The only other comment I can make right now is that your listings of Canadian fanzines and fan writers are good. I am surprised at how many of these I have actually *read* recently, so that alone is a good sign, and here I am ensconced in the heat dome known as Texas. Bloody ridiculous hot right now, but surviving. Anyway. Since you announced in this debut ish your intention to award the winners by fiat, well... If your name wins, cries of "fix!" shall ring forth and the mad dogs will rush forth to kneel you in the groin. Or something like that. I wish you luck. Next time award the winners in a Porsche.

I couldn't live in the heat you are enduring. One place in Texas more than 100 degrees F 60 days in a row! I'm glad to be stuck in a moderate, temperate zone rain forest coastal climate. Anywhere else would kill me.

I did once contemplate buying a bunch of gigantic trophies and awarding myself all manner of 'Best of' fannish awards in an effort to shame and goad somnambulant fans into a frenzy of competitive effort. But then it occurred to me all I might achieve is the creation of a lynch mob and that wouldn't be very productive would it?

Well, let's see what is said in your second issue. In the meantime, I thank you for posting yet *another* fanzine on efanazines.com, and look forward to your follow-up issue.

All the best, John Purcell

From: Dale Speirs, August 15, 2011
Faned of 'Opuntia'
Calgary, Alberta

Thanks for TFF#1. I sent you a package of OPUNTIA back issues yesterday with your letter in it and my scribbled comments, but on sober second thought I will send you a proper loc.

You propose a new set of Canadian Fanzine awards for paper zines. Given how small the field is, I don't think the awards would be particularly meaningful. Even the Auroras are struggling, and I have now lost twice to 'No Award'. As far as drawing attention to paper zinedom and getting new recruits, they aren't even reading e-zines. They're too busy tweeting.

I don't know how to tweet. I admit it. But then, I never learned how to whistle either, so how can I be expected to tweet? I ain't no canary.

I wouldn't say the Auroras are struggling. In fact I think they are doing fine. Even undergoing a resurgence of interest and participation. All the recent hard work of the CSFFA board is paying off. Even the fan categories are doing extremely well.

Except, as you say, the 'Best Fan Publication' category. Part of it is a lack of promotion perhaps. Undoubtedly lack of word of mouth, as not many fans are aware of any potential candidates in this category. Most of all, not even the fans who ARE aware, who read every issue of this or that zine, can be motivated to vote, which is very odd, very sad. Something needs to be done.

I have been trying in a small way, through AURORAN LIGHTS, to stimulate some action and interest. If I can generate more enthusiasm and fanac through the medium of the CFF Awards then hopefully both the Auroras and the CFFA will benefit. That is my intention at any rate.

This past weekend was a new literary convention in Calgary called WHEN WORDS COLLIDE, a success by the way. I'll have a full report in the next issue of OPUNTIA. I was struck by how many in this self-selected literary fandom spent spare moments tweeting their convention reports, or snapping photos with their smartphones and immediately uploading them to Flickr. How many old-fashioned full write-ups will be done of this

convention? Probably one or two on-line, plus my print-only version. *Litera scripta manet, iPhone volat.* (Pardon my Latin if I got the declension of iPhone wrong.)

I failed high school Latin. I'm guessing something along the line of "Literary writing dead, the iPhone lives!" or "No one reads writing, only the iPhone is listened to"? Something like that there. (Yes, I am as ignorant as I seem. Helps preserve my brain cells.)

Probably Kent Pollard will write a review, with any luck for WCSFAzine.

You ask: "Which do you prefer, video games or chess?" These days people are playing chess on a tablet computer, and while waiting for their opponent to tap the screen to make their next move, tweet to their friends "I just went Queen to Pawn Four and took his Knight, LOL." Twitter is for people who find YouTube videos too long to hold their interest.

I still think there exist fans willing to prolong the quiet, contemplative moment rather than rush pell-mell through the moment as if pursued by furies.

There are still a number of paper zines in non-SF fields, particularly controversial ones. The advantage of the papernet is that no one can find your paper zine by typing your name in a search engine, not your boss nor the police. There is something to be said for flying below treetop level and avoiding any incoming fire from Goggle. I trade mainly with non-SF zines now, most of which are far livelier than SF fandom.

To quote Pliny the Younger: "I believe in this generation, and am anxious for it not to prove barren and outworn."

In other words, I refuse to pronounce Canadian SF zinedom dead yet. True, to many old-time fans, zinedom is no longer what it once was, but then neither is anything else. The Romans were always going on about the decadence and uselessness of the current generation, and so do many modern fans, and both views are equally invalid. Mere expressions of old phartism. Things change. Things remain the same. The trick is to find your niche. And encourage others to join you.

In short, not only do I think 'my' style of zinedom will continue to live, but there are young fans out there capable of plunging into an old fashioned medium and making it fresh and vigorous once again, not by imitating the past, but by coming up with new twists and tricks us old pharts never thought of.

Have I succeeded in alienating everyone yet? Yup.

TO SUM UP

I think it more important than ever I pursue the classic old-school zine, because no one else is going to! Things are changing rapidly and radically. Only the CFFA Society is standing like an anchor, fluke firmly imbedded in the mud, idly watching the bubbles ascend to the surface.

As Mike Glycer reports, the 2011 Hugo committee has proposed changes to bring the fan awards more into line with contemporary fandom. Now a podcast cannot win, as such will no longer be eligible under 'Best Fanzine' but will instead be covered by:

"3.3.X: Best Fancast. Any generally available non-professional audio or video periodical devoted to science fiction, fantasy or related subjects that by the close of the previous calendar year has released four (4) or more episodes, at least one (1) of which appeared in the previous calendar year, and that does not qualify as a dramatic presentation."

You might say the Hugos have caught up to the Prix Auroras and the Prix Boréal.

Even more astounding, at least to me, is the news (provided by Arnie Katz in GLITTER #24) that the FAAn Awards, Trufandom's last bastion, presented annually at Corflu, will no longer be known as the "Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards," ... they will henceforth be called the "Fan Activity Achievement Awards."

"The change from "Fanzine" to "Fan" reflects the expansion of the FAAn Awards to include "Best Fan Website" and strong finishes in the "Best Fan Writer" category by fans whose work appears primarily on listservs, blogs, and websites."

The CFF Awards alone represent traditional zinedom.

Cheers! The Graeme

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COLOPHON

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