

ISSUE 2

GATEHOUSE GAZETTE

SEP '08



STEAMPUNK: HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Foreword

With great pleasure and a slight sensation of triumph, I present before you, dear reader, the second issue of the *Gatehouse Gazette*. In a way, this is again a first, for from this point on, each publication will feature a theme to which most articles are somehow related. However, we shall not enforce this too strictly upon our esteemed contributors, thus there should be plenty of interest even if you care not especially for this issue's motif, which, as you may have gathered from the ambitious subtitle, is history.

Once again, I owe great gratitude to the many people who have either again or for the first time contributed to our publication. You will find their names along the articles which they sent in, however I list them here more prominently for without them, there could be no *Gazette*. Also, I would like hereby to thank the many people who have advertised our previous issue online. Do continue to spread the word!

—Nick Ottens, *Editor*

List of Contributors:

'Col. Adrianna Hazard' - Robert Rodgers
Joost van Ekris - Hilde Heyvaert - J.D. Roger
Toby Frost - 'Octavius' - 'Piecrafft' - 'The Czar'

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Editorial



By NICK
OTTENS

How will history judge us steampunk enthusiasts? As a peculiar club of ladies and gentlemen, dressing up in nineteenth-century costume to reminisce about a past that never really was over tea? Or as a band of self-proclaimed rebels and revolutionaries, seeking to better the world through Victorian Revival?

A bit of both, probably, however, we do not represent the movement within steampunk that seeks to 'put back' the punk in a genre that had little to do with punk from the beginning. The word 'steampunk' was derived from cyberpunk (which *was* inspired by punk) jokingly, to refer to cyberpunk-esque fiction set in the Victorian era. Of course, when Mr Jeter coined the phrase, he could not have expected that two decades later, it would have spurred an entire subculture, spanning fiction, art, costume and design. Steampunk has changed throughout its existence and,

perhaps, with a new generation of steampunk enthusiasts gaining prominence, it will eventually embrace the noble though slightly naïve ideologies associated with punk. However, thus far, attempts to ascribe anarchist philosophy to a genre that is otherwise about nineteenth-century science and adventure, with typically little empathy for those who did not prosper from progress, have largely failed.

Because steampunk is what we make of it, and because history will judge us by what we make and write today, we have filled this second issue of the *Gatehouse Gazette* with articles nearly all related to the past somehow. However, steampunk is not only about the past; it is very much about the present, and about how to make it more beautiful through remembering the past. Perhaps, after all, we do seek to better the world, if only a little. ■

In our previous issue, a dismal oversight was made which I must correct. In the article, "Discovering Dieselpunk," Mr 'Piecrafter' and myself discussed the genre of dieselpunk extensively and its two flavors in particular; that is, the more optimistic 'Ottensian' dieselpunk, epitomized in the film, *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, as well as the darker 'Piecrafterian', to which films such as *Mad Max* and *Perfect Creature* would adhere.

In my enthusiasm, however, I neglected entirely to properly credit the person who originally coined these phrases, that is the author of the *Flying Fortress* weblog. In the post, "The dark side of dieselpunk," (published June 4, 2008) he thoroughly explores the different kinds of dieselpunk fiction, ascribing the

divide between the 'Ottensian' and 'Piecrafterian' to the pervasiveness of nuclear weapons.

I hereby wish to offer my sincere apologies to the author of *Flying Fortress* for this regrettable oversight, and assure him that, in the future, whenever we make mention of matters previously discussed at his blog, we shall provide proper reference! Also, we greatly recommend *Flying Fortress* to our readership, for though the blog is currently on hold, past posts have shown great insight into the genre. We thus hope that the author shall resume regular posting schedule soon and will also be able to enjoy what we write about dieselpunk here. ■

Visit the Flying Fortress at <http://flyingfortress.wordpress.com>.

An Essay

"Of World Wars and Ham Sandwiches."



By ROBERT
RODGERS

The foundations of history are held hostage by the whims of our predecessors—how Herodotus felt about the Spartans two thousand and five hundred years ago determines what we know about them today. A mathematical fact is an unflinching cinderblock of provable truth; an historical fact is no more than mutually consensual quicksand. How can we even begin to build objective structures in a field where everything we know can be overturned by a botanist discovering a scrap of North American tobacco in the stomach of a mummified Egyptian king?

Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian Serb and self-proclaimed Yugoslav Nationalist, was born on July 25, 1894. On June 28, 1914, he and five others set out to assassinate Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in an attempt to revitalize the Serbian struggle for independence. The events that preceded the attack played out much like a black comedy of errors; each assassin was given a weapon and a position on the Archduke's motorcade route, and each in turn failed at their task.

So much of what we know about the past hangs on nothing more than a scribbled word or phrase. So much of it is invented—sometimes out of necessity, sometimes merely out of preference—that we may wonder if any of it is true at all. For what purpose, then, do we study it? If there is no objective truth at the end of the rainbow, why bother seeking it out?

The first and second assassins failed to act; the third threw a bomb. It was deflected by Franz Ferdinand and detonated on the car behind him, wounding several people. In desperation, the assassin swallowed a cyanide pill and sprang into a nearby

river, hoping to kill himself before he could be captured—only to discover the pill was old and ineffective and the river was six inches deep. He was pulled out of the water and severely beaten.

History is about telling stories of the past. Just like any story, it must respect the truth—but even the best stories are never *really* true. The past occurs only once. Any attempt to revisit it is an exercise in creative story-telling. And just like any story, it tells us more about the author than the event itself.

After learning of the failures of his cohorts, Gavrilo Princip reluctantly surrendered his high ambitions of regicide and set his goal slightly lower: Finding a good restaurant. This brought him to a delicatessen known as *Schiller's*, known throughout Sarajevo for its excellent ham sandwiches. He stepped inside and ordered that day's special.

Steampunk is about revisiting the past with the knowledge of the present and reshaping it in a way that makes it pertinent and interesting to the now. It's not historical revision, because it never claims to be 'true' history in the first place; it's history *without* history. More than an aesthetic, it allows us to discuss the now in the language of the then, expressing ideas that would otherwise be inexpressible.

Gavrilo finished his sandwich and stepped out of *Schwiller's*, only to find that the archduke's motorcade was passing by at this very moment, traveling towards the hospital to visit those who had been injured in the first bombing attempt. Gathering his courage, Gavrilo ran forward and fired the opening shots of World War I. The economic disparities brought about by the Treaty of Versailles

would lead inevitably to the Second World War. The oblivious architect of an era defined by conflict and genocide would be sentenced to twenty years imprisonment and die of tuberculosis in Theresienstadt, a place that would later serve as a Nazi concentration camp—and all because of a ham sandwich.

In the field of history, we cannot accuse a ham sandwich of defining the *zeitgeist* of an era; stodgy history professors shall descend upon us in a flurry of

tut-tuts to rip our flimsy justifications to shreds. But in steampunk, it's perfectly feasible—perhaps even likely. Because steampunk is fictitious by nature; it allows us to destroy history and rearrange its parts into a more fascinating and useful whole. Simply put, it lets us come closer to what history should be—interesting stories that tell us about who we are and from where we came.

So, World War I started over a ham sandwich. Who's with me? ■

Local Steampunk

Steampunk in Disneyland Resort Paris.

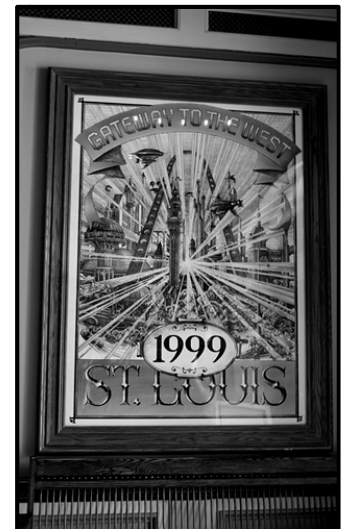
A Disney theme park might be one of the last places you would expect to find steampunk. Yet it is a veritable treasure trove for the style.



For starters there is the beautiful Victorian manor known as the *Disneyland Hotel*, which one must go through, via a specially designed hall, to enter the Disneyland Park. Once inside, one finds oneself in *Main Street U.S.A.*, an American turn-of-the-century high street inspired entirely by the late Victorian age and *Belle Epoque*. Not only the architecture is

entirely adjusted to the times, but all transport and employee uniforms are too!

The transportation consists of various types of old timers and horse drawn street cars. In the *Discovery Arcade* one finds anachronistic posters of all major American cities depicted in complete steampunk style as well as exhibition boxes filled with inventions of the time, like the telephone and the zeppelin.



By HILDE
HEYVAERT



Another section of the park filled with steampunk wonders is *Discoveryland*. The statue at the entrance of the 'land' is a mechanical wonder of slowly rotating orbs that could come straight out of a Jules Verne novel. What did in fact come straight out of one of France's most acclaimed writers are the Space Mountain's *Columbia cannon*, Café Hypérion's zeppelin, *The Hyperion*, and most prominently, the *Nautilus*. As if being shot into a rollercoaster pretending to be space or walking around in Captain Nemo's submarine (watch out for the Kraken!) wasn't enough, there is the beautiful architecture: *Autopia*, where one drives the car of future past and *Orbitron* with its flying machines readily waiting to be piloted by visitors.



Over in the resort's second park, the *Walt Disney Studios*, there are plenty of features to attract both steampunk as well as dieselpunk enthusiast. One may suddenly find oneself to be part of *Streetmosphere*, a filmset in the streets with a crew that seems to have walked away from the Roaring Twenties, enlisting visitors to partake in their production.

The *Production Courtyard* is entirely made up out of various 1920s- through 1950s-style architectures and stars the *Tower of Terror*, an hotel from the 1930s, once struck by lightning and now haunted and dropping people in its elevators. Upon entering, one will find oneself in a building of the time, complete with staff in period attire.



All of these features make Disneyland Resort Paris an excellent place to be for steampunk enthusiasts of all ages. And an added bonus is that steamy parents can bring the kids and introduce them to the wonderful style while they're at it. ■

All photographs courtesy of Hilde Heyvaert.

Disneyland Resort Paris can be best reached by car or train. A railway station is located near the theme park with connection to Parisian Métro as well as high-speed rail networks.

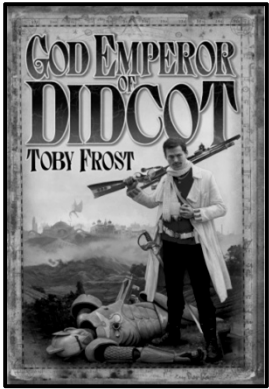


An Exclusive Preview

Of Toby Frost's 'God Emperor Didcot'.



By TOBY
FROST



Isambard Smith ran ten yards before the jungle burst open behind him and a mass of tentacles the size of a house threw a tree-trunk at his head. The tree flew past, throwing up earth like a bomb, and he swerved and headed east towards base camp. He glanced over his shoulder and

shouted: 'You didn't give me an answer!' A second Thorlian broke out of the greenery to his right, honking and bellowing, and Smith ran headlong for the bridge.

His boot caught on a protruding vine and he stumbled and lurched upright to hear the forest erupt in roars and the flapping of frightened birds as he raced on down the path.

His earpiece crackled. 'Smith! What the devil is going on down there?'

'Minor problem,' he panted. 'They seem to want to murder me.'

'Hmm, that's not good.' A tentacle swept into view, glistening like an anaconda. Smith ducked as it whipped overhead, and he plunged off the path and weaved between the trees.

On the other end of the line, Hereward Khan struck a match and lit his pipe. 'So I suppose they don't want to join the Empire,' Khan said.

'Well, they didn't actually say no,' Smith replied. Fronds snagged his coat: branches and trunks

splintered and fell behind him. 'But to be honest, they don't seem very keen.'

The ravine was in view: Smith broke from cover and sprinted to the rope bridge. The Thorlians howled. He bounded across, wood and hemp swaying under him, reached the other side and drew his sword. Smith cut once, twice, and the rope-bridge fell across the gorge to slap against the rock beneath the aliens.

As Smith dusted himself down Khan emerged from the undergrowth with a mug in either hand. 'Hello Smith. Tea?'

'Good idea, Sir.'

They drank, watching the Thorlians make threats across the gorge. 'Typical aliens,' said Khan. 'Always making a fuss.'

'It's as though they think Space belongs to them by rights,' said Smith. 'Shame, really. They'd have made useful allies against the Ghost Empire. I suppose someone will have to civilise them now.'

'I doubt the Navy can spare a destroyer. Besides,' Khan added, and he smiled, 'A message has come through from my contact in the Service. You're to fly to the Proxima Orbiter at once. Top Secret stuff, apparently. Very dangerous.'

'Excellent!' Smith finished his tea and wiped his moustache. ■

Mr Frost's novel, God Emperor of Didcot, is published by Myrmidon Books Ltd. in September 2008.

A History

Of the first motorized crossing of the Sahara.



By JOOST
VAN EKRIS

By the 1920s, the world was still a big place. While nearly every conceivable corner of the Earth had been explored and mapped by now, it was *getting there* in the fastest or most efficient way that was *getting more attention*. Airplanes had just began making their entry in the travel scene and indeed revolutionized the way far-flung destinations could be reached—at least for those who could afford the steep fares of air travel. Simultaneously, an ever-increasing number of passenger liners served an ever-increasing number of ports and bigger ships combined with fierce competition meant the prices for ocean crossing were kept reasonably low. However amazing all these developments were, one cannot escape the notion that they ultimately served but one purpose: to avoid having to travel over land at all costs.



There were perfectly good reasons for wanting to do so, naturally. Roads were bad enough within the confines of the civilized world, and more oft than not became entirely non-existent the further one ventured away. Cars at the time were small, uncomfortable, prone to breaking down and the logistics of overland travel were nightmare inducing. For example: fuel

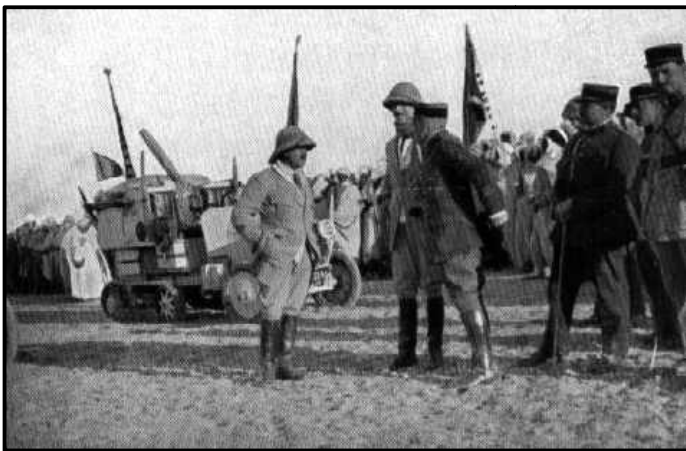
could only reliably be purchased in larger cities. In smaller towns it was available only sporadically, and outside the towns it could be virtually impossible to fill up. Add to that the fact that most cars were only able to get a mileage of around 10 MPG and it becomes easy to see why not many long trips were made by car back then. Perhaps even more daunting than that was the political climate in some regions, and the apparent *lack* of politics in some other. Some countries could be difficult to traverse because of endless bureaucracy or just plain hostile foreign relations, while other countries had so precious little actual control over what was happening within their borders that roving bands of bandits were commonplace.

Who in his right mind would willingly plunge himself into such madness then? Well, typically such people fall under two broad categories. There are the true adventurers, who would do it 'because it can be done', and there are the military types who would do it 'because it *must* be done'. This story has plenty of both.

So why did a French team decide to cross the Sahara by car in the first place? To answer this question, it is important to realize that by the early twentieth-century, colonialism was still very much the name of the game. All of Europe's more influential countries still maintained a large number of overseas territories. The French Colonial Empire of the day spread out over much of northern and western Africa. Nearly all of the Sahara desert was claimed by the French, with many important colonies laying just south of the desert. When recovering from the First World War, the idea of a quick and safe overland passage between France and the sub-Saharan colonies

suddenly became very attractive. France's industry desperately needed the resources. Likewise, settlers that were previously nearly cut-off from the homeland due to its pre-occupation with the war, were jubilant about the idea of new supplies. When the support of the military and scientific communities was won, the expedition could start.

The car that would make this journey possible was the Citroën Kégresse, one of the first successful half-track vehicles. The tracks, invented by Adolphe Kégresse in 1921, were continuous rubber tracks and allowed the vehicles a road-speed of 45 km/h (28 mph) and an off-road agility previously unseen in motor vehicles. Citroën quickly realized the importance of the expedition as a marketing tool—indeed they had been after securing military contracts for their vehicle and the expedition would be the perfect showcase for its qualities. Citroën then offered to sponsor the expedition with five vehicles, provided that the expedition be led under military supervision. This military supervision came in the form of Georges-Marie Haardt and Louis Audouin-Dubreuil, experienced officers in the French military. The rest of the team was made up of a photographer, a geographer, an army mechanic and five more officers for a total crew of ten. The five vehicles were given names by their crews. Translated, the cars were named; 'Golden Beetle', 'Silver Crescent', 'Flying Tortoise', 'Ox of Apis' and 'Crawling Caterpillar'.



The expedition left Algiers on December 18. The caravan traveled between forts and towns to replenish

food, water and fuel supplies along the way. Their route went from Algiers to El Golea, In Salah, Arak, Tamanrasset, Tin Zaovaten, Bourem, Gao, Niamey and finally Timbuktu. They covered a total distance of 3120 kilometers (1950 miles).



One of the most memorable moments of the expedition was the near-catastrophe close to the Sudanese border. The two vehicles bringing up the rear of the caravan had trouble keeping up. The lead vehicles stopped and launched a flare to signal their position. As the flare descended, it landed on a patch of dry grass, immediately igniting it. Despite their best efforts, nobody was able to put out the flames, which quickly grew out of control. As the fire spread, the drivers were forced to move on, lest they become trapped by the flames. Startled by the fire, a herd of animals now came stampeding towards the vehicles. Luckily, all expedition members and vehicles survived the ordeal unscathed.

Before departing, André Citroën, founder of Citroën, estimated that his cars could complete the journey in under three weeks. His estimate was proven right; the journey was successfully completed after twenty days when the mail the vehicles had been carrying was handed over to Colonel Mangeot, the French military commander of the Timbuktu region on January 7, 1923 thus completing the expedition and proving the Sahara desert was conquerable by motor vehicle at last.

Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil continued their pursuits for the French military in cooperation with the Citroën Kégresse vehicles. After the Sahara crossing expedition, they led the so-called 'Black Cruise' in 1924-'25, during which a convoy of eight half-tracks crossed the African continent en route to

Madagascar, covering a total distance of 28,000 kilometers (17,500 miles). But the explorations did not end there. After conquering Africa twice, the sights were set to the East to opening up the fabled Silk Road to motorized vehicles. From 1931 to 1932 Haardt headed the expedition to China; a distance of some 30,000 kilometers (18,750 miles) from Beirut to Beijing, where they arrived on February 12, 1932. Unfortunately, Haardt had fallen ill during this journey. Unable to return to France, he died in Hong Kong on the 15th of March, 1932.

As for the Citroën Kégresse vehicles, they proved their worth during the expeditions. As André Citroën had predicted, the publicity from the successful expeditions was enormous. His half tracks would

eventually be produced by the thousands and saw service in the French and Polish armies in a wide variety of functions. During the 1930s a large number of military forces evaluated the concept of 'endless' rubber tracks, most notably the US Army. Between 1940 and 1944 the U.S. Army used 41,000 M2 and M3 half-tracks in over seventy different versions—all of which directly descended from the Citroën Kégresse vehicles of the 1920s. ■

Sources for this article include:

1. "[Crossing the Sahara](#)" at [Citroën.com](#)
2. "[Photographic Record of the 1st Haardt & Audouin-Dubreuil Central African Mission, 1922](#)" at [The 153 Club](#)
3. "[Rétromobile 2004](#)" at [Classics.com](#)

An Essay

About Hugh Ferriss, "delineator of Gotham."



By NICK
OTTENS

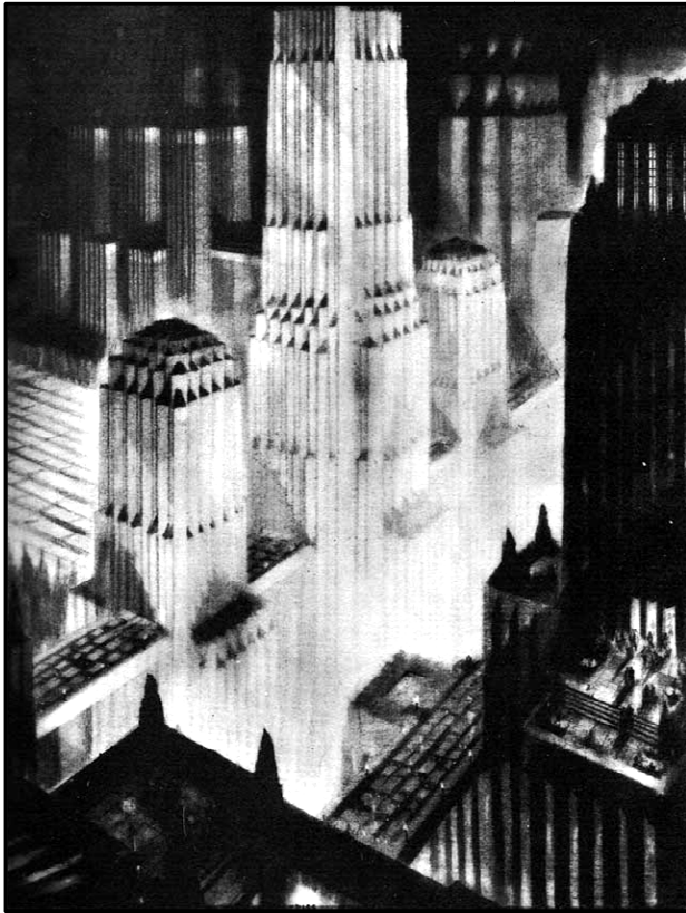
In both steampunk as well as dieselpunk, we tend to exaggerate history. Where by the turn-of-the-century, airships gradually began to enter service, in steampunk, by this time, the skies are congested with dirigibles. And where Nazi scientists performed the most dreadful human experiments, in dieselpunk, their work produces frightening creatures, half-man, half-machine, striking terror into the hearts of Allied soldiers.

In terms of aesthetic, this exaggeration is more subtle, though equally significant. We augment Victorian style with design and technology the Victorians themselves perceived as futuristic in period *Scientific Romances* and *Voyages Extraordinaires*. Similarly, dieselpunk exploits the adventure and detective stories serialized in pulp magazines throughout its era, as well as the depictions of the future published in such magazines as *Popular Science* and *Modern*

Mechanix. Though the visions of many forward-looking authors and artists are now vividly recreated to conceive a dieselpunk aesthetic, when it comes to architecture, one name stands out. Invoking the art deco style of his time, this American delineator mastered the medium of shadow and light, molding form in a way that truly captured the spirit of place and being. Rather than designing buildings of his own, he specialized in creating architectural renderings which served either to sell a project or promote it to a wider audience. Thus his drawings were frequently destined for shows and advertisements and as a result, Hugh Ferriss (1889-1962) acquired a reputation and found himself to be highly sought after.

By the advent of the Roaring Twenties, Ferriss had begun to develop his own style, typically presenting the building being advanced at night, lit up by

spotlights, or in the fog, as if photographed with a soft focus. The shadows cast by and upon the building became almost as important as the revealed surfaces. He had somehow managed to develop a style that would elicit emotional responses from the viewer.



In 1922, skyscraper builder Hervey Wiley Corbett commissioned Ferriss to draw a series of four step-by-step perspectives demonstrating the architectural consequences of the 1916 Zoning Resolution. These drawings would later be published in his 1929 book, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, in which he introduces the reader to New York City at dawn, captured still in early morning fog, when, Ferriss writes, “one finds oneself [...] the spectator of an even more nebulous panorama. Literally, there is nothing to be seen but mist; not a tower has yet been revealed below, and except for the immediate parapet rail [...] there is not

a suggestion of either locality or solidity for the coming scene. To an imaginative spectator, it might seem that he is perched in some elevated stage box to witness some gigantic spectacle, some cyclopean drama of forms; and that the curtain has not yet risen.”

The human scale is what becomes particularly poignant in Ferriss’ renderings. Buildings are depicted at such an immense scale; their vastness is almost beyond comprehension. Yet we can relate to those individuals in his works, their personal perspective of the world around them becomes ours. The striking disparity of towering structures, the megaliths of our times, and the detail of personal space, is what provides this drama of place. We can relate to this drama, living vicariously in a world we may never experience, and understand it implicitly.

The intersection of a perhaps incomprehensible significance and a singular perspective of thoughts are what balance the realm of design in Ferriss’ drawings. Detail becomes acutely obvious because of the whole, not in spite of it. It is this precious sense of life in the presence of an overwhelming whole, the grand scale of place, that provides the stage for smaller realms of interaction to occur. Through his striking portrayal of yet unbuilt worlds, Ferriss lures the viewer into a drama as real as the world beyond the image. “There is a moment of curiosity, even for those who have seen the play before. Since in all probability they are about to view some newly arisen steel skeleton, some tower or even some street which was not in yesterday’s performance. And to one who had not been in the audience before—to some visitor from another land or another age—there could not fail to be at least a moment of wonder. What apocalypse is about to be revealed? What is its setting? And what will be the purport of this modern metropolitan drama?” ■

Quotations and image from Hugh Ferriss, The Metropolis of Tomorrow (New York 1929).

Steampunk Wardrobe

"The Steampunk Aristocrat."



By HILDE
HEYVAERT

The aristocratic aesthetic is quite probably one of the most representative of the fashion aspect of this movement. Neo-Victorian ladies and gentlemen are present at every steampunk gathering and event. To a lesser extent, however, it is known that not only the Victorian era lends itself well to steampunk, but that also the Edwardian, *Belle Époque* and even Regency periods are fantastic to gather inspiration and garments for your wardrobe.

The aristocrat takes care of his or her looks, and is refined to the smallest detail. They dress impeccable, in garments and matching accessories that reveal their higher standing.



Gentlemen wear high quality (dress) shirts, ties or ascots (preferable with cravat pin), waistcoats from the time of their preference, suit trousers and matching shoes, often accessorized with spats. Monocles and top or bowler hats as well as leather belts and walking canes are excellent accessories for the

gentlemen of standing. In cooler weather one can add a tail or frock coat, a long suit jacket or a long stylish coat. And let's not forget the elegant black umbrella for rainy days and the pocket watch to keep track of time.

Ladies wear shirts from the era of their preference, waistcoats or corsets, beautiful skirts of the preferred length and lovely matching boots, preferably of the

button up and/or Victorian variety, but boots covered up with spats work just as well. Some even wear ties or ascots with their shirts, but that is more of a personal choice.

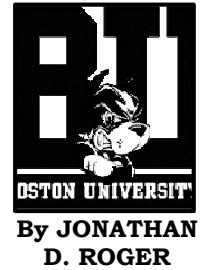


Other accessories to finish up this look are refined belts and ditto jewelry (a combination of gears, metals, charms/pendants and pearls is quite popular), a lovely umbrella (the Edwardian or pagoda umbrella is an excellent choice) or lace parasols, a pocket watch so you shan't be late at appointments and, if you choose to, a dignified hat of your choice. Those that choose not to wear hats more often then not wear elaborate hairstyles reminiscent of the *Gibson Girls* or a more contemporary *coiffe*. ■

Photographs courtesy of Hilde Heyvaert of House of Secrets Incorporated, <http://www.houseofsecretsincorporated.be>. We thank the proprietors of Louvanist to allow photographs to be made in their shop. Louvanist is situated at the Grote Markt, Kortestraat 2, in Leuven, Belgium.

An Essay

On Japanese Reasoning Behind Attacking America.



Why did Japan think that they could defeat the United States, or even contend with them militarily when they attacked Pearl Harbor? The answer to this is a complex one and involves a number of different elements of Japanese society and strategy, as well as a number of grudges held by the Japanese people against America. This essay will briefly examine the factors that led to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and what led to their belief that they had a chance to compete militarily with the United States.

Why the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor is a seemingly-simple question that requires an intricate answer. A variety of factors led to the Japanese attack on the morning of December 6, 1941. First among these was the Japanese desire for expansion. Since the twenties, Japan was in an expansionist mode and attempting to create an “Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” wherein they could control resources and become less dependent on foreign raw materials and resources. A population crisis in Japan, as well as overcrowding, and the only solution that appeared to the Japanese people was military expansion. Furthermore, they simply had the desire to “seize an adequate empire that was comparable to nations in the west”(1) who had already had their imperialist ages.

In connection to these expansionist tendencies was the simple fact that the way the Japanese government was structured, the military was almost completely separate from civilian authority. Though this went back to Clausewitzian ideals of separation of civil government and military, in the case of Japan it led to problems. The separation of the military and civil authorities was what led to the Japanese bombing of a train in Manchuria that killed the puppet warlord

Chang Tso-lin. When ordered by the emperor to discipline the military and those responsible, Prime Minister Tanaka was denied permission to do so by the military who claimed it would damage troop morale. Incidents like this, showing the military autonomy from civilian oversight, led to a number of problems climaxing when War Minister Hideki Tojo also became prime minister and directed the highly militaristic government of Japan through World War II.

Gripes with the United States also played a major part in the Japanese decision to attack Pearl Harbor. First among these was the non-recognition of Chaing Kai-shek and his puppet regime in Manchukuo. That the United States would not recognize Japanese conquests angered the nation and pushed them towards war. Japan also objected to Anglo-American cooperation and the aid that the U.S. gave to Great Britain against their allies, Italy and Germany. Embargoes that the United States had levied against Japan after Japanese expansionism became rampant also angered the Japanese as did the immigration exclusion policy that the United States used with Japan, keeping Japanese immigrants out of the U.S. Finally, the Japanese considered the American naval expansion to be directed directly at them, and found the massive fleet at Pearl Harbor to be menacing to their nation (2).

With a combination of all of these factors, Japan was more than fueled to go to war. However, was she able? According to Charles Bateson, Japan was “as prepared as she would be for a short war against opponents possessing enormous resources and great industrial potential”(3). Indeed, a *short* war was prepared for. Japan had stockpiles of oil and other

essential materials, but they would not last more than two years. Also, though her military had expanded greatly after four years of war with China, Japan's economy was still incapable of waging a long war. Japan's merchant marine was barely sufficient to maintain peacetime needs, and even then the nation lacked access to vital raw materials or industrial resources. But it also must be stressed that Japan's troops were battle-hardened in China, obedient, capable of great physical endurance, and fanatically loyal to their cause. Though the officer corps was not outstanding, Japan had a strong troop base. As well, their navy had been "lavishly modernized"⁽⁴⁾ before the war. Overall, Japan was indeed well prepared for a short war.

Japanese strategy seemed to run parallel to this idea of short war. Japan assumed that their attack on Pearl Harbor would render the United States' fleet useless and unable to operate for at least a year after the attack. They also assumed a year for a "full American economic mobilization"⁽⁵⁾. By that time, the Japanese would have fully prepared their perimeter in the West Pacific in their economic sphere, and thus would have had no problem repelling a newly-refurbished American fleet. Obviously, the actual turnout of the

war was far different. Though the Japanese were able to win great tactical victories for the first six months after Pearl Harbor, after their limited supplies had begun to wear down, the nation began to lose steam. A negotiated settlement was planned for after the Pacific islands were secured, but after America promised that they would drive Japan to unconditional surrender, this strategy also fell.

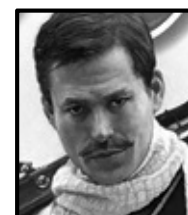
Overall, the Japanese were not prepared for the United States' lightning-fast economic mobilization and the setup of their military left them ill-suited to deal with the consequences of this miscalculation. Japan obviously paid for this mistake in the blood of their troops when they found that American carriers were far more effective than previously realized and that the economy of the United States could be mobilized quickly to a war economy. ■

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1. Edwin Reischauer, *Japan: the Story of a Nation* (1981), 189.
 2. Gordon W. Prange, *At Dawn We Slept* (1981), 5.
 3. Charles Bateson, *The War with Japan: a Concise History* (1968), 39.
 4. Idem, 41.
 5. Clayton James, "American and Japanese Strategies in the Pacific War." *Makers of Modern Strategy* (1986), 707.
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A Review

Of James P. Blaylock's 'Homunculus'.

Homunculus (1986) is about a scramble among a group of eccentric Victorians—some of them scientists, most of them mad—to capture a magical airship piloted by a tiny man who knows the secret of immortality; the Homunculus. It has a complex, multi-strand narrative and moves at a fearsome pace: most of the story is taken up by the intrigues between the different groups competing to loot the blimp as soon as it touches down on Hampstead Heath.



By TOBY
FROST

As the airship approaches London the heroic members of the 'Tresmegistus Club' become engaged in a battle against Kelso Drake, a depraved millionaire who staffs his textile mills with the living dead, and Doctor Narbondo, a lunatic fond of creating zombies in a process involving very large carp. Throw in a mad preacher and an amateur astronaut building a brass spaceship in a cattle-shed, and you get a rough idea of the crazy, overstuffed

richness of *Homunculus*. There's a lot to keep up with, and a detailed back-story as well.

Blaylock's prose is light and quick, and while he never turns the story into total slapstick, he clearly knows how daft it is—and revels in the daftness. Occasional Americanisms slip through, and some of the philosophers are rather lightly described, making it hard to get a handle on a couple of the characters. But the set-piece scenes are great. In particular the accidental launch of the (brilliantly imagined) spaceship and the resurrection of the preacher's mother are both amusing and grotesque.

Steampunk stories always run the risk of just being reshufflings of the same limited pack of cards. Blaylock avoids this by introducing all manner of

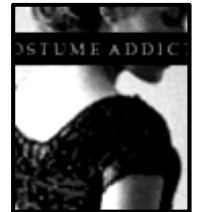
original weirdness, while staying firmly in Victorian London. Some may find the lack of actual steam technology disappointing: most of the mad science borders on magic, and there is none of the logic of *The Difference Engine* here.

Whether or not you like *Homunculus* probably depends on how madcap you like your thrills. By the end it's hard not to feel as though you've eaten a lot of very rich cake a little too fast. But doesn't everyone do that, once in a while?

There is a semi-prequel, *The Digging Leviathan* (1984), which, though quite good, is set in the present day and not steampunk, as well a related Victorian novel, *Lord Kelvin's Machine* (1992). ■

Gazette Cartoon

"Choose Your Own Adventure."



By ADRIANNA HAZARD



Steampunk Poetry

**Three original steampunk poems,
never published before!**

The Sky Pirate Rap

All those pirates that I see
No they can't touch me
'cause I take to the air
and stay out of the sea
You know I'm so carefree
I don't pay no fee
When I float gracefully
It aligns all my chi

Then I get all my crew out to loot and pillage
Say, what's that in our sights? Ooh, damn, it's your village
Well take all your children, your wives and chickens
Then we'll take all your gold, yea it's easy pickins

When I'm cruising down the street with my ball-musk-et
All these pirates wavi'n flags try to rep-re-sent
But with my steampowered arm I got all the charm
And with my built-in grappling hook I do bodily harm! What?

I mean egads, it's a riot how airships run away
When they see my jolly roger, yea I make them pay
And the British Air Corps, they ain't seen nothin yet
'cause when my cannons are set, on who you gonna bet?

By "The Czar"

Untitled

The bombs rain down from the sky like fire,
Robots and warplanes-the situation is dire.
People running crying
There seem to be bodies piling
Who can stand up to the threat?
Who will tell the machines they've not won yet?
Out from the smoke rides the dirigible-into the fray!
No need to fear, he'll save the day!
He may be old, his captain weary
But the outcome would be far more dreary
Fly now captain in dirible, go!
The age of steam has not ended yet, show
These new fangled machines what-for!
They will never know what you have in store
For those who thought their time was gone
It turns out they may be the one
Indeed they are and defeated the menace!
The captain flies over, his name is Hennis
Farewell captain and noble ship in flight
You have earned you rest for many a night.

By "Octavius"

Steampunk Haiku

Brass, goggles and gears
Neo-Victorian atmospheres
define most steampunks

By Hilde Heyvaert