

ISSUE 4

GATEHOUSE GAZETTE

JAN '09



4

THE ROMANCE OF SCIENCE

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Editorial

We are unexpectedly on time with the delivery of this fourth issue of the *Gatehouse Gazette* in which we talk all about the romance of science and the romance of winter also, for as Miss Hilde Heyvaert amply demonstrates in one of her 'Steampunk Wardrobe' columns (she wrote two for this issue!), it is the perfect season for steampunk and dieselpunk fashions indeed.

Of course the cold means that it is also the season for some fine spirits and therefore we welcome Mr Craig Daniel who from this issue onward will write all about liquors appropriate to us decadent adventurers and Neo-Victorians in his column, 'The Liquor Cabinet'.

Further changes are afoot, with a slightly updated layout, yet two more new contributors (Mr Trubetskoy who wrote a review of the novel *Jack Faust* and Mr Sigurjón Njálsson, our new *film noir* connoisseur), and a 'Featured Photo' gracing the back page. Miss Heyvaert came up with the idea of inviting photographers to submit a snapshot of their own for a

little contest and we were delighted to receive so many high-quality photographs! We hope to receive just as many for next issue, thus all who know how to handle a camera well are called upon hereby to participate!

While the weather outside may still be frightful, we already take a look at what is to come, for February 8 is Jules Verne Day and later that same month comes Valentine's again. We plan to feature more Verne in Issue #5, but you already find an article about this 'Grandfather of steampunk' in the edition you are holding. For Valentine's Day, Miss Heyvaert has prepared a nifty wrist cuff tutorial so that you may fabricate a steamy gift for your beloved!

My space here is limited so I sadly cannot mention all the other fine articles in further detail. We have more reviews (*Scarlet Traces*, *Chinatown*), two exclusive previews (*Acadian Snips* and *the Steamwork Consortium*, *Remnants of Skystone*), a beautiful interview and more exquisite columns—suffice to say, there is plenty of reading pleasure once again. Enjoy! ■



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Jules Verne

Article | Grandfather of steampunk

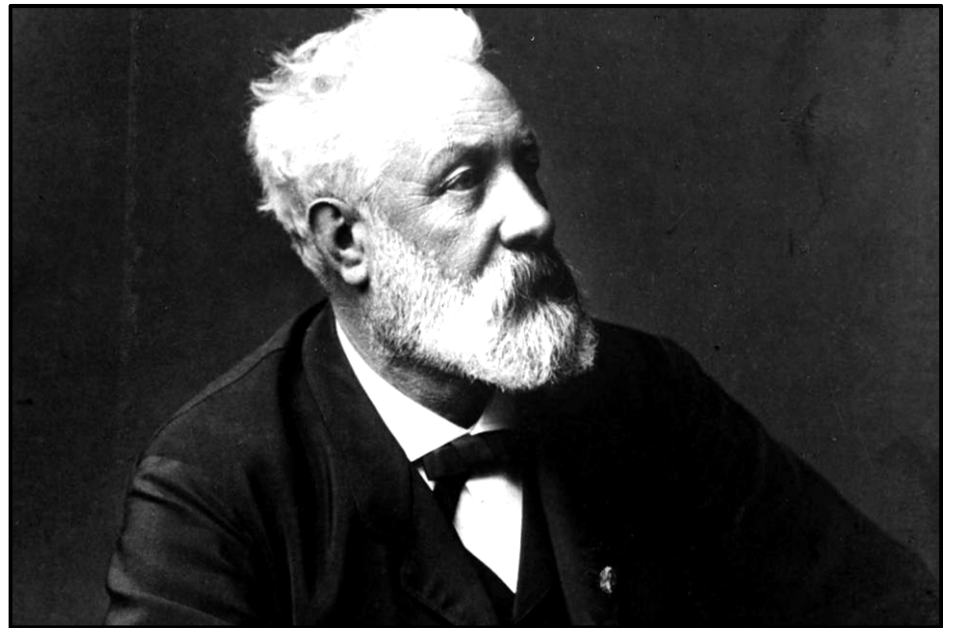


Hilde Heyvaert

No one will argue that Jules Verne, just like that other founding father of science fiction, H.G. Wells, is not just important to steampunk but somewhat of a hero to many steampunk enthusiasts. He was one of the first to write what would ultimately become steampunk and his works have survived up to this very day not only as novels, but as adaptations for theater, radio and film also; they inspired countless of authors and artists and even amusement park rides!

The French are indeed so proud of him (and rightly so!) that Verne is most definitely and very visibly one of their national icons. Both the city in which he was born, Nantes, as well as the one in which he died, Amiens, boast Jules Verne museums and exhibitions.

Nantes is home to the permanent exhibit, *Les Machines de L'Île*, a collection of mechanical wonders, many of which could have come straight out of one of Verne's novels. Amiens has several monuments in honor of the great author, including a *Rue Jules Verne* where his final resting place is situated. Yet these are not the sole places of Vernian worship. Back in the 1990s when Disney was building its European theme park nearby Paris they chose to dedicate a large part of its Discoveryland to Verne. His vision of the future is visible in the architecture of Discoveryland as well as its



principal attractions: Space Mountain, the Orbitron and a recreation of the Nautilus from the 1954 film adaption of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

Verne's significance to steampunk is undeniable today. We even celebrate Jules Verne Day the 8th of February in honor of his birthday! But how much do we know about the man himself?

Jules Gabriel Verne was born in the city of Nantes, France on February 8, 1828. He grew up during the first years of the Victorian era, watching the boats sail in and out of the harbor of his hometown while the world experienced unprecedented technological progress. As a child he developed a liking for the adventure and travel that later

became part of his stories. Supposedly, as a boy he once tried to board a ship and travel the world to find a present for a childhood sweetheart. The attempt was foiled by Verne's father.

After completing his education at the *Lycée St Donatien*, Verne went to Paris to study law. He spend more of him time writing librettos for opera however and stories for the *Musée des Familles*. Once his father got wind of his son's pursuits he blocked young Jules' financial support. Verne subsequently became a stockbroker to support himself.

In these days he befriended fellow-author Alexandre Dumas and met Victor Hugo, both icons of French literature who are said to have offered their advice to Verne.

Whether they did or not, Verne kept writing and ended up being published by the same publisher as Hugo, Pierre-Jules Hetzel, one of the foremost French publishers of the time.

Hetzel too is said to have had a considerable influence on Verne's work. Under his guidance, Verne's first novel, *Cinq Semaines en Ballon* was published in 1863. From that point on even until after the author's death, Hetzel's publishing house released about two Verne novels every year.

Verne wrote a total of fifty-four *Voyages Extraordinaires* along with ten other novels, one non-fiction work and a considerable amount of short stories. Some of

these were published after his death on the March 24, 1905 in the city of Amiens.

The most famous of his works is undoubtedly *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* featuring the enigmatic Captain Nemo and his *Nautilus* submarine ship. *Around the World in Eighty Days* is another quintessential Verne novel about the Englishman Phileas Fogg who along with his butler Passepartout seeks to circumnavigate the globe in no more than eighty days. Both these stories were adapted into films and plays numerous times.

The *Nautilus* in particular as a nineteenth century machine of brass and steam and electricity, is a symbol of Verne's vision and very

much a symbol of steampunk for as a product of Nemo's defiance it embodies the "punk" of the genre perfectly. The submarine has inspired artists and builders in their own creations and continues to speak to the imagination of nearly all who read about it and lay eyes upon it.

Apart from the tales of Captain Nemo and Phileas Fogg, Jules Verne wrote many more works all worthwhile of a thorough read whether you are into steampunk or not. Without doubt it can be said that these and in fact all of his extraordinary stories will continue to inspire generations to come as they have from the moment that they were published. ■

To the Stars!

Review | *Scarlet Traces: The Great Game*



Guy Dampier

The sequel to *Scarlet Traces* takes place in the Britain of the 1930s with the invasion of Mars by the British Empire going badly. We follow the Lady Charlotte, a photographer and reporter for *The Interceptor*, the last remaining liberal newspaper. With an insurgency in Scotland getting worse and branching into suicide attacks, Oswald Mosely as Home Secretary and the Commonwealth trying to withdraw its troops from Mars, Lotte manages to sneak onto the frontlines only to discover that she is stuck with the rearguard—and there is no rescue coming for them.

Much like the first series this continues on the same themes with a worryingly despotic British Empire, conspiracy, and technology going out of control. Unlike the first this series is much more upbeat about the Empire. While plenty of problems remain—which the heroes fall foul of frequently—Britain is at least trying to do the right thing here. The updating of the Martian-derived technology is great

stuff for dieselpunks and particularly dieselpunks who care for Dan Dare-esque space opera with more than a dash of politics.

Much like the first this is a four-issue series and a real nail-biter. The writing and artwork are by Ian Edginton and D'Israeli again who provide snappy dialogue, a good story and clean art. Once more an interesting tale buzzes along at a snappy rate and everything is explained perfectly. (Just why did the British government shoot those returning British soldiers? You'll have to read it now won't you!) If anything there are even more cultural references in this than the first series, from Dan Dare to Quatermass to *EastEnders*. It is a much bigger story this time, what with the Solar System hanging in the balance, but the comic stays true to its roots, even bringing back a surprise pair of characters from the first series in a very welcome return. All in all a jolly good series by two masters of their craft. ■

Porkshanks

Interview | Molly Friedrich



Hilde Heyvaert

Ms Molly 'Porkshanks' Friedrich is a talented steampunk artist from the United States who makes all kinds of extraordinary creations, ranging from costumes to artwork to goggles, jewellery and fantastic mechanical constructions. This month, she kindly allowed the *Gatehouse Gazette* an interview in which she talks about her motivation and philosophy and about her perspective on the steampunk movement.

Did you have any kind of schooling in the arts? And what inspires you to all of this great diversity?

I have had specialized schooling, I went to college for about three years; two-and-a-half years at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, and half a year at Minneapolis College of Art and Design. I do feel that it was a positive experience, going to classes with other people who were passionate about aesthetics and design, but the best teacher for me has been just getting out into the world and opening myself to it. I was interested in creating with my hands from a young age, but I enjoyed playing outside with my friends and watching the neighbourhood boys play football and riding my bike a lot, as well.

After my mom got married and we all moved out to this little town, there was pretty much



Ms Molly Friedrich. Photograph by Libby Bulloff.

nothing to do for a city kid like me.

I lived most of my childhood in a small village of 900 people called North Prairie located forty-five minutes drive outside Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My parents smoked a lot and my stepfather had a drinking problem, and they were both bad with money to begin with ... so I barely had clothes to wear, much less any of the toys I wanted! I had to learn how to build my own toys. I drew a lot and built constructions out of cardstock paper and Lego brand building elements to keep myself entertained. I also watched two hours of *Doctor Who* every Sunday, which was my mental escape from

captivity, god bless PBS for that!

I was raised to be very fearful of the world. My mom is Lutheran and she had had a very hard life, so she imprinted on me that people were generally horrible. For me, a big part of becoming happy in this world is growing to accept that people really aren't that bad. Yes, terrible things happen, but I think almost everyone wants to do the right thing, deep down in their core. The problem comes in when we are bombarded with conflicting messages for all of our lives and some of us become vain or selfish or afraid.

Learning to realize myself as an artist in the purest sense of the word meant overcoming my fear and preconception and seeing the world as clearly as I could. The next step was to imagine all the different sorts of worlds I would like to live in or visit, and then connecting myself to those places intimately in my mind so that I could begin to bring bits of those places into our world. This is my work process. I try not to think about art too much or it tends to get stiff looking and overwrought. The best of my designs tend to flow from my subconscious in the moment I build them.

As for diversity specifically, I have always been a bit of a polymath. I get bored if I do the same thing too much, so I have developed a habit of working on several different projects at once.

That way, if I get stumped on something, I always have other things to focus my attention on while my subconscious goes to work on breaking down the stump.

My mom taught me sewing when I was 5 or 6, and I loved it. It was an exciting idea to me that people could actually build their own clothes and pillows and the like. I dabbled in sewing after that, and mostly just watched what other people were doing and waited until inspiration hit me. I love music and so I played accordion until my shoulder got damaged. I have dabbled with a theremin for about ten years, and keyboard/synth for about twenty years and am currently devoting a couple hours a day to learning to hand drum. My grandfather owned a metalwork and welding shop, and I spent a lot of my summers working there or hanging out with my grandma or my cousins.

It's funny, I never imagined I would be learning how to cast metal or doing anything like metal work, but it feels fulfilling to me because I sort of think of myself as carrying on the family business in my own demented way. I wish I would have learned to weld from my grandfather, he was amazing at it!

I try to get involved in so many things because I guess I am just very excited about helping to create a better world. This is why the social movement side of steampunk interests me more than almost anything else about it. People are finally starting to accept that the way we have been living for the last hundred years or so is unfulfilling and dangerous on many levels. Not to say I want to see a return to the past, because

things were messed up in many ways back then too. We have been moving away from slavery of all types and towards freedom in many places, but we still have a long way to go as a planet. I think we are starting to understand the world better than any generation that has ever lived, and I hope that we may soon figure out how to have many of the conveniences of today without blindly stomping out so much of the natural beauty of the sky, earth, and sea and all the other creatures that need those places to remain unmolested to survive. I am optimistic that when my own and the younger generations gather the courage to finally grab the steering wheel, it will be an interesting ride!



Mini-goggles created and photographed by Ms Molly Friedrich.

Would you say that the social movement side of steampunk is benefitting of the recent increase of popularity of the scene? And do you think it is benefitting steampunk as a whole?

I can only really speak about the West Coast scene of steampunk in

general, and the local Seattle scene in specific. I think what started as an Internet-only sort of thing, seems to be spreading more into the real world of other scenes more and more.

What really seems intriguing to me is that I see what used to be a lot of different and separate scenes all slowly sliding together into one thing eventually. I don't know if we will ever get there completely, but it looks like it [has] already begun in some small ways.

In steampunk we have; goths, hippies, makers, geeks, cosplayers, sci-fi lovers, Victoriana fans, Burning Man types, circus punks, belly dancers, and people who have never been part of anything else like this before... and because steampunk is so inclusive, it just keeps growing. I don't consider myself a steampunk right now, but that is mainly because I don't like to label myself. I love making steampunk art, and I love hanging out with other people who like steampunk.

It seems like the scene is sort of at a plateau right now. I'm not sure it can really sustain this kind of growth. The main issue seems to be that the U.S. economy is really damaged (and the rest of the world isn't doing too hot either) and most people view steampunk as a frivolous costumery scene and little else. I think that if people want to attract others to the steampunk scene, we will have to start talking more about the social/political side of it all. That is, after all, what attracted me to it in the first place. This year when the cosplayer/fashion side of things took over a bit too heavily, it actually started turning me off of steampunk completely. Things

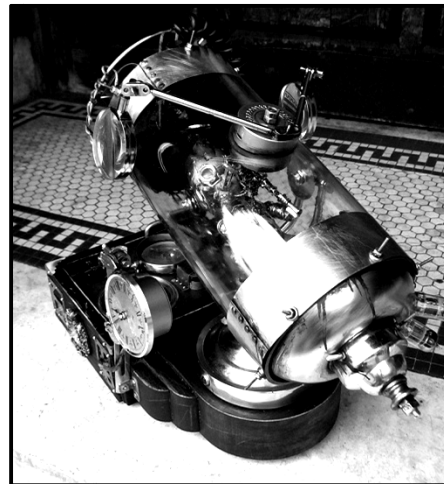
seem to be returning back to balance lately, so I have hope this will happen.

My dream, and a dream that many have had for our scene is that it might eventually lead to a new way of life for people. This sounds insane, I know. I say lots of insane things, it's sort of my hobby. But seriously, what if people looked underneath all the fun and frivolity and found out that there were people who were living off the skills and knowledge they learned due to their interest in steampunk. It's not that steampunk itself is so special, it just tends to draw a special kind of person. The worlds that the steampunk fantasies enthrall tend to be romantic optimists who feel this world we live in now is headed toward a crisis moment.

Forget steampunk totally for a second. When I talk to people; friends, strangers on the train, at parties, out on the streets, people who find me on the Internet ... most of them agree on some level that our way of life is inherently broken. Most of them also agree that we need to change something or we will regret it later. More and more of them feel we are going to see some kind of crisis moment within our lifetime. Crisis point or not, a lot of scientists think the point of no return for life on our world is within the next ten or twenty years, and I haven't seen anything that disagrees with them yet. Honestly, we are long overdue to embrace a new way of life. I don't think we should call this new way of life steampunk, but so far, the people who I have met who most embody the values I value are steampunks. This is where the social movement came into play

for me. It's not about dressing up, but that is fun. It's not about role-playing, although I love role-playing. It's about taking your life into your own hands and looking at the world and courageously asking yourself, "Is the way I live my life ready for the future or not?"

The more people that we get off of the mass production mentality that has been so polluting our minds and our landscape for the last century, the better. For each of us that is trying to prepare for a new world to rise



Mechanical womb including infant automaton, created and photographed by Ms Molly Friedrich.

from the old, there is one less possible scared rioter during the crisis moment. This is the only reason I am so passionate about spreading the social movement side of steampunk. It suits the *zeitgeist*; it may not be the best idea ever for a way to live, but self-reliance, preparation, seeking knowledge, and optimism are rarely harmful things to embrace.

I personally hate the word 'apocalypse'. I think calling ourselves 'post-civilization' or 'pre-apocalyptic' is dangerous and it's

not going to attract many people to the movement. What we need is a new name for this lifestyle, and I don't know what to call it. But I think we need to start thinking of this as a new beginning, and not as the end of things. Yes, the old ways are going, but for those of us who embrace it, this is going to be our time to shine! This is going to be our world if we remain steadfast and work together to survive and build something the world has never seen before.

I don't have all the answers, I am as lost as anyone is right now, but when I follow my instincts I never regret it. Follow your instincts and do what you feel is right; don't listen to me ... listen to yourself.

How does your view on steampunk and your involvement in the social side of the movement influence your work?

Well, I am probably introduced to different people and different artists' work because of the people I spend time around. I don't know, actually ... I do try to put some of my beliefs into the stories that go with my work, but I usually try to make it a subtle influence. I'm sure beating people over the head with your opinions is a great way to make sure they immediately tune you out. So I try to find a balance between pure message and pure entertainment.

At the same time, I don't hold out much actual hope that our culture is going to actually change in any real way. People have been fed the same lies and promises for so many generations that they can't see past their own self-created limits. I will keep trying to encourage growth because that is

all my conscious will let me do, but if you take a look at the facts of the situation and then look at how little our society has actually done to change even though we've known about all of this stuff for decades ... it's very disheartening most of the time. I try not to think about it too much.

Although I have recently begun to set goals and limit my interactions with people who are personally, ecologically and socially irresponsible by choice. I think it's time for us to demand more from ourselves and more from those who wish to be around us. We can do far better than we have been doing, and surviving into the new world is going to be hard. I need to get in better shape, for example. I used to be able to hike and run good distances, but in the last year I've mostly stayed home crafting and I've lost my fitness. I am going to be getting a

bike and that will be my transportation to most places, instead of a car or public transportation all the time.

Lastly, could you tell us where does the name 'Porkshanks' comes from?

It comes from a sadly boring story I hate to say it.

I crashed my 1979 Vespa P200 in 2003 after driving it for about ten years. This crash shattered my right clavicle and gave me a frozen shoulder issue for two years. Anyways, when I was recovering, I was still trying to fix my Vespa so it would run again, and I was dating a guy who wanted a Ruckus and spending time with a friend who had a 1981 Vespa P200. We were joking one night about how it would be fun to start a scooter club exclusively for people who've been in accidents. We decided on the name *The Moving Carcass Scooter*

Battalion, and I ended up making a patch design for the club, again never intending to really use it. We also realized we would need scooter gang names, and that they should be meat themed to go with the club name. So I became 'Porkshanks AuJus', my boyfriend became 'Roasty McBeef', and my friend Kerri became 'Vienna Brisket'.

I don't know, the nickname 'Porkshanks' just stuck with me, people thought it was hilarious so I started using it for my Internet log-ins since it was always available! Sorry there's no secret meaning or anything behind it ... I have heard people come up with some awesome silly theories over the years though. ■

Ms Friedrich maintains profiles at both deviantART and flickr under the username of 'porkshanks'.

'Clockwork Lovers'

By COLONEL ADRIANNA HAZARD

Ruffles and laces
Cold metal faces
A gentleman's thrill
She'll never feel ill

Frock coats and top hats
Dandies with brass spats
Hysteria cure
For women still pure

Sisters and brothers
Hold clockwork lovers
Their hearts receded
Connection unneeded



Steam *en masse*

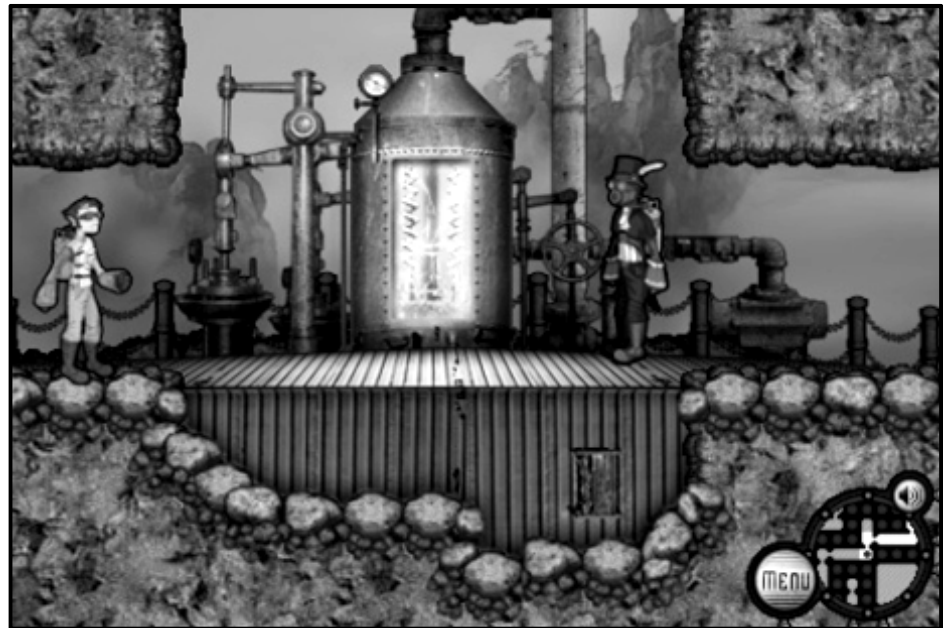
Preview | *Remnants of Skystone*



Colonel Hazard

Steampunk games are becoming more and more prevalent as the genre and movement attract more followers. Currently in the alpha phase of testing, *Remnants of Skystone* is a massively multiplayer online role playing game (MMORPG) that takes full advantage of the present obsession with dirigibles and the ether. It is produced by Flipline Studios and hosted by Kongregate, a website that supports game developers and allows community members to play all sorts of games online for free. *Remnants of Skystone* combines traditional combat game elements with a *Sims*-like focus on character interaction to produce a thoroughly enjoyable entertainment experience.

Set in the fictional land of Skystone which is overrun by dangerous creatures known as Mimics, you must join the fight to protect humanity. There are three character class options available: Aeronauts, Ferrics, and Craggs. The Aeronauts utilize steam technology to the fullest, with jet packs and weapons that are steam powered. Ferrics are climbers who fight at close range, utilizing the beaks of Ferron birds as a combination of armor and weapon. Craggs are mountaineers who make use of a rope launcher to move about and fight. All classes are limited in how much they may use their associated skills. A power bar



measuring skill use is depleted during fighting or flying or climbing and recharges when the player remains on the ground.

One of the main obstacles that must be overcome is something called the Haze. This purple fog given off by Mimics is deadly to humans and has permeated much of the ground. The only way to control it is via powerful Ether Tubes created by the famous inventor, Otto von Tesla. These devices harness the ether gas created when an electrical current is passed through the Etherillum filament to counteract the Haze. Once installed, areas may be explored safely.

People have been driven to live above ground due to the Haze, which provides the game with one

of its signature elements—Floats. The main town, Nidaria is completely suspended in the air. It is a last refuge for humanity after the world below was infected by the Haze. Airships ferry players from one location to the next, providing a convenient and attractive loading screen. Each player also has their own personal Float, a house suspended by balloons that can be furnished and decorated to suit personal tastes. Paint, flooring and furniture are available to create a refined, Edwardian looking pad or a tough, industrial flat with scrap metal floors. All the Floats are organized into clusters, creating neighborhoods and community structure. This is one of the aspects of the game that seems most promising

for elevating it above a run-of-the-mill MMORPG.

Other elements of the game are pretty standard for the action-adventure genre. The combat style is not particularly innovative, being limited by the keyboard-based controls. Maps are loaded on a room-by-room basis which has the usual pitfall of being able to explore only one room at a time in any given map. This is normal though, for games played within a browser and the unobtrusive, short loading times make it altogether not that bothersome. Combat skills may be enhanced using personal Etherillium Tubes (essentially power ups) with a limited lifespan. Co-op missions are also available and leader boards track the top team players. These games are an opportunity to play with friends made in town and to colonize new areas of the world by eliminating Mimics and Haze producing fungus. Rewards include experience and etherite geodes, which can be used to produce

more Etherillium Tubes in Von Tesla's laboratory. On the whole the simplistic combat mechanics are overshadowed by the sheer entertainment value of the gameplay.

In order to learn more about Skystone and unravel the back stories of its characters, places and other features, players will have the ability to collect Sprockets. These items come in multiple series and give bits of information that will help to connect the dots and reveal more about the game world. They can be obtained through side quests, building a relationship with certain NPCs and found randomly on the ground. Like a collectible encyclopedia, this feature adds another layer of depth to the game.

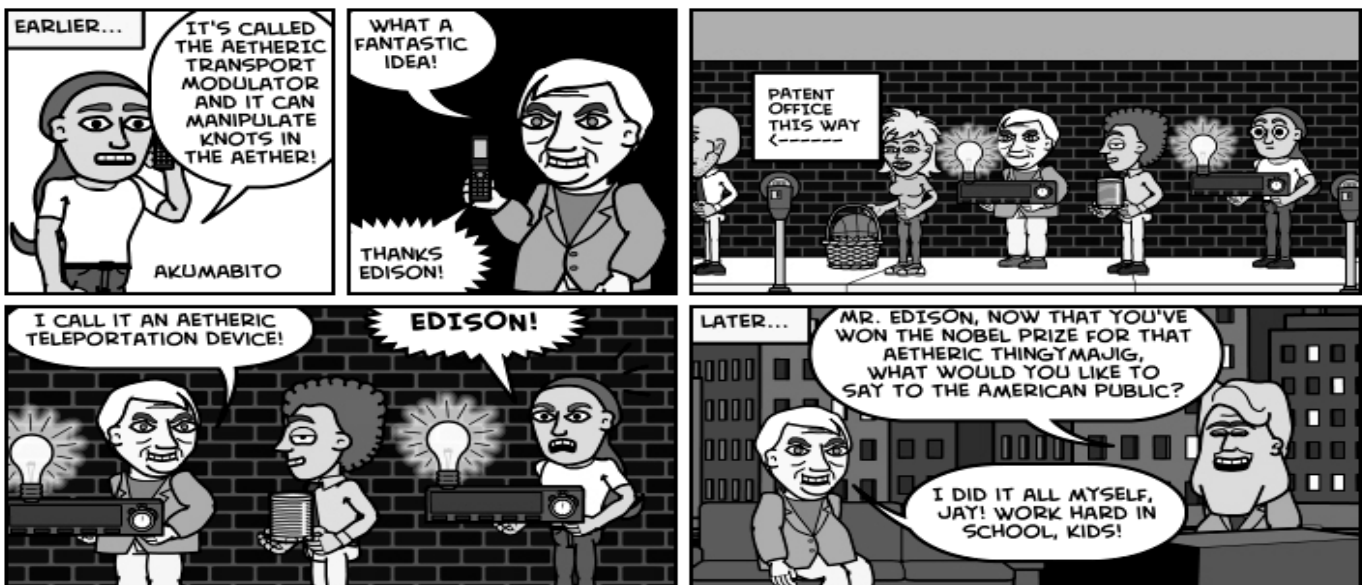
Over all, the alpha version of *Remnants of Skystone* is quite entertaining and guaranteed to become even more so once additional planned features have been implemented. The many small improvements over generic

MMORPGs make this one of the most promising games of its kind. Along with the gorgeous design that permeates every element of the game, one of the main draws has to be the level of character and Float customization possible. With so many initial design choices, it is easy to create a unique and appealing character. Once the marketplace shops are opened, the possible combinations will be endless. This sort of whimsy and focus on creative, customizable design gives the game a distinctive flavor not previously encountered in steampunk-inspired games. So if you are looking for an immersive world filled with colorful people that epitomize the lighter side of steampunk, *Remnants of Skystone* may just be for you. ■

Interested in helping Flipline Studios iron out the bugs in the game? Register at Kongregate and post in this topic: <http://www.kongregate.com/forums/1/topics/23601>.

PATENT PROBLEMS

BY COL. HAZARD



WWW.BITSTRIPS.COM

Winter Fashion

Column | The Steampunk Wardrobe



Hilde Heyvaert

Now that the cold weather of the freezing season is upon us, steampunks and dieselpunks can rejoice because now everyone is finally able to layer without overheating. And of course also wear fabulous coats and winter accessories to top it all off. Both styles are incredibly varied, and if you have already chosen your favorite type of steam- or dieselpunk then it is just a matter of finding the perfect coat and accessories.

Steampunk aristocrats and other denizens of the Victorian and *Belle Epoch* eras can either get a coat made from period patterns or find a lovely period inspired or classic coat in high street shops. The more contemporary steampunk enthusiast will no doubt be able to find his or her perfect coat in either the same establishments on the shopping streets or in a thrift shop.

The airship pirate can either go hunting for a coat in the urban sprawl or go for a (modernized version of the) traditional pirate coat of yore while the more militaristic steampunk will no doubt find what they are looking for in the better army surplus store.

Dieselpunks are particularly lucky this season as several designers have send creations fitting of the style down the runway as part of their autumn and winter collections. This means



From the Christ—German Leather Fashion collection.

that high street fashion shops, especially chains, have now a wide range of garments perfect for dieselpunk outfits on their racks so it is only a piece of the proverbial cake to find the perfect winter coat during a day of shopping, and also the ideal time to expand your wardrobe.

Accessories are easy to come by. Hats are generally good for all seasons. If you have none yet then this is the time to come by one as nearly all the larger shops carry some models. It might take you a day of shopping but it should not be too hard to find a hat to your liking. Dieselpunks especially should find this season a blessing

for hats from their preferred period or ones reminiscent thereof, are now in vogue.

Gloves and scarves are not only an excellent addition to your outfit; they are also essential to fight off the often bitter cold. Leather gloves are perfect for the upper class steam- and dieselpunk of every gender. More rugged 'punks might prefer knitted hand warmers, possibly combined with gloves.

Scarves also come in all kinds. If you wish to portray a member of the establishment then make sure to go for a fine knit, because it looks a lot more distinguished. Gentlemen will find that a traditional plain scarf works best, while ladies will likely prefer the lace like knits.



'Punks adhering to other styles will probably prefer rougher knits. You could even get a knitted plaid (blanket) and cut that up into a lovely fraying accessory perfect for your own personal style or simply drape it, taking advantage of its hugeness to provide extra warmth and that special touch to your outfit.

Of course there are many other accessories typical for winter such as legwarmers, woolen shrugs and vests, which can all be added to your outfit as you deem appropriate.

So as you see, winter really does offer plenty of opportunities for an absolutely splendid outfit for steampunks and dieselpunk enthusiasts alike—no matter your style and budget. ■



Abigail's story

Preview | *Arcadian Snips*



Robert Rodgers

We are immensely grateful to Mr Robert Rodgers for delighting us here with an exclusive preview of his upcoming novel *Arcadian Snips and the Steamwork Consortium*, a clattering steampunk story which we hope to see published soon! Enjoy this excerpt from one of the first chapters of the novel.

"Dear Madame," the document read. "Although we appreciate your attempt to add a woman's touch to the world of aeronautics, the Royal

Society of Aviation regrets to inform you that your invention shall fly only once swine have taken to the skies."

Abigail had the letter framed and mounted on her workshop wall.

The project was difficult; although she had never considered herself merely a woman of leisure, mechanics were not her realm of expertise. Abigail preferred smudging her fingers with the dust and ink of an old mathematics book to the grease of a hammer or saw. But each time the work brought her frustration, she would

cast her eyes up to that letter and read the last line aloud:

"Your invention shall fly only once swine have taken to the skies."

"Very well," she would invariably say, and then she would return to her labor.

She knew that those around her thought she had gone quite mad. They questioned her about the strange noises that emerged from her workshop at night and the oil stains on her fine dresses; they wondered out loud why an attractive young woman with a considerable fortune at her beck

and call preferred the company of machines to handsome suitors.

Had Abigail's mother or father been alive, they would have explained the situation to them thusly: Abigail did not take rejection well. Especially when she knew she was right.

A month after she had been rebuffed by her would-be peers, Abigail sat upon a wool-lined throne in the cradle of her own invention. She strapped on her father's aviator cap, pulled up her goggles, seized the controls, and turned the machine on.

"Soar," she whispered.

The frame shuddered. Valves hissed. Wood creaked. Sheepskin bags groaned.

She held her breath as the contraption's skids scraped across the workshop's floor. Slowly, the machine bobbed up and down; at long last, the vessel drifted up to the workshop's sun-roof and floated out into the brisk morning air.

She waited until her workshop and house had sank well beneath her feet. Then, pinning her bottom lip beneath a row of teeth, she twisted the levers in her grip and dragged the ship's nose down.

The machine groaned as it lunged into a dive over the fields of her estate.

Abigail eased the levers back, allowing the ship time to regain some of its altitude. Then, grinning, she reached over her head to untie the strings that kept the canopy over the cigar-shaped balloons in place; when the cover slid off, it exposed her personal touch to its design.

The balloon's front had been painted into the likeness of a

swine, with gaily colored wings worn upon both its sides.

Abigail laughed and then aimed the first successful unpowered dirigible airship toward the Royal Society of Aviation's headquarters.



Exhausted and exhilarated after a day spent making her peers look like fools, Abigail returned home to find two men of dubious character waiting for her in the smoking lounge.

Both were lanky and well dressed, but after that, all comparisons between the two failed. One was dark and calm, sitting in a comfortable arm-chair as he enjoyed a freshly lit pipe; the other was blond and fidgety, wearing down her expensive carpet with the soles of his shoes.

Abigail herself looked quite strange—she had worn her dark blue morning dress, her auburn hair bound up beneath her father's cap. She had left her goggles dangling just below her throat, and her eyes flashed with fury at these two men and their unannounced intrusion.

"I do not know who you two are," she told them, retrieving the fire poker from her hearth. "But as I remember telling the servants to allow no one in, I can only assume you have arrived through some means of mischief—"

"Mischief," the dark haired one said, laughing. "Yes, you could certainly make that claim, Madame."

At once, the other turned to her, glaring at the poker in her

grip. "I still think this is a mistake, Nigel."

"Oh, quiet down. She's exactly what we're looking for."

"Explain yourselves at once, or I will send someone to fetch the constable," Abigail said, pointing the poker at the blond.

"We apologize for our crude manner," Nigel replied, moving to stand and bow. "We gained entry by convincing your servants that this is a matter of the utmost importance. Do not think poorly of them, Madame; we are quite persuasive when we wish to be. I am Nigel Arcanum, and this is my compatriot, Jeremiah Daffodil."

The iron poker wavered in her grip, its tip beginning to sink toward the carpet. "Arcanum? Daffodil?"

"Yes," Jeremiah said, scowling. "We're very important people, you know."

"Yes, yes. I recognize your names," Abigail said. "Professor Arcanum, the famous naturalist and doctor. And you," she added, glaring at Jeremiah, "the equally infamous mad scientist and administrator of the Steamwork. I read that last paper of yours."

"Oh?" Jeremiah asked, the scowl melting into something cheerful and bright. "Did you?"

"Yes," she said. "Absolute rubbish. You had no clue what you were babbling about."

Jeremiah blanched; Nigel laughed. "Oh yes," he said. "You are most certainly what we are seeking."

"I've read your work as well," she told Nigel. "You, at least, seem to have some fundamental grasp over your field." She now held the iron poker out in front of her as if it were a sword, still watching the

men warily. "Nevertheless, I fail to understand what matter requires you to intrude in my home at such a late hour without so much as sending a letter of introduction first."

"Secrecy, Madame." Nigel said. "We require your assistance." He tapped the bell of his pipe, spilling the remains of his tobacco into an ashtray. "Jeremiah and I are working on something big."

"A project?" Abigail's eyes narrowed. "Oh yes, let me guess. You are working on some sort of ground-breaking research; some immensely important and grand experiment. But just one problem—you don't have all the funding you require."

"Well," Nigel said, "Funding is always a problem, yes—"

"And so you've read a little bit about me, found out that I'm a very rich and unmarried woman who is very keen about matters of mathematics and engineering?"

"Well, yes, something like that—"

"And so you think, 'Oh, of course she'll sponsor our wonderful experiment!'" Abigail finished. Then she swept the poker up and pointed to the exit. "Out."

"You've got it all wrong," Jeremiah began, but Nigel cut him off.

"Of course. We shall leave at once," he told her. "We apologize for bothering you with this trifling matter. Would you care to perhaps show us to the door?"

Abigail glared. "The faster you are out of my home, the better." She gestured for the gentlemen to follow; it was then that she noticed both were carrying umbrellas with peculiar stylized hilts. "Are you

daft? There's not been a cloud in the sky to-day."

"Hasn't there?" Nigel asked, then shrugged.

Something about his tone gave Abigail pause, but she dismissed the feeling. She led them both to the exit, opening it and moving aside to let them leave.

Nigel and Jeremiah stepped outside. But before she could slam the door shut, both had turned to face her.

"Mr. Daffodil?" Nigel said. "Time, please."

Jeremiah removed a gold pocket watch from his coat, inspecting it. "Twenty seconds."

"Madame, if I may just mention, before we go—one of the reasons we came to you was because of a paper you wrote. 'On Matters of Weather Prediction', I believe."

Abigail's hand rested against the door's frame. "Yes? What of it?"

"Even my compatriot acknowledged it as a brilliant summary of what makes accurate weather prediction impossible," Nigel said. "You describe the difficulties of understanding incredibly complex systems elegantly; we were particularly smitten by your example of how even the flapping of a butterfly's wings can, given enough time, lead to a rainstorm half way across the world."

"Yes, yes," Abigail said irritably, although she flushed beneath the presence of the compliment. "Well, then, I'll bid you both a good night."

"Time, Mr. Daffodil?"

"Five seconds."

"You were correct, of course. Predicting weather with our standard model of mathematics is

impossible," Nigel said. "The best we can do is attempt an educated guess."

"I'm aware," she snapped. "I wrote the paper. Now, as I was saying, good night—"

"Mark," said Jeremiah.

Both gentlemen lifted their umbrellas skyward and opened them with a pop. And at that exact instant, thunder rolled out and roared over their heads. A shower of rain crashed down over Abigail's estate, dropping like a curtain on the stage.

Abigail stared up into the stormy sky, mouth agape.

"Well, then," Nigel said, turning back to the road. "I suppose we'll bid you a good night as well, Madame. Again, we apologize for bothering you with this insignificant matter." He and Jeremiah began to walk away, umbrellas held high.

It took Abigail a moment to find her voice. When she at last did, it was burdened with a hoarse croak: "W—wait."

Jeremiah and Nigel stopped, looking over their shoulders. Abigail stumbled out into the rain, eyes wide, teeth chattering at the cold.

"I, uh, that is," she began, trying to assemble her words into some pattern of thought. "Perhaps I was a bit too hasty in my initial assessment. If you gentlemen might need someone to, uh, that is, look over your notes—"

"We are uninterested in a secretary," Nigel said.

"And we are certainly not looking for a sponsor," Jeremiah said.

"But," Nigel added with a swiftly growing smile, "we are in the market for a partner." ■

Nostalgia

Review | *The Adventures of Tintin*



James Roberts

It must have been a nostalgic mood that gripped me when I decided to buy the box-set of *The Adventures of Tintin*. I was yearning back to rainy Saturday afternoons when the TV or a good book offered the only chance for some innocent high-adventure. So I acted on this whim and made the purchase, remembering the brightly colored characters and escapist adventures of Tintin.

Although not strictly what we might call dieselpunk, being based quite directly on period comic strips, these *Tintin* films could still be considered as good examples of the pulp genre and so are worthy of our study.

For those not in the know, the films are based on the *Tintin* books by Belgian artist Georges Prosper Remi, otherwise and more famously known as Hergé. Hergé was one of the first comic-strip artists in Europe and created numerous favourites of Belgian childhood; Jo, Zette and Jocko, Quick and Flupke and of course, the iconic Tintin.

Along with Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, Tintin is perhaps the most famous fictional Belgian, and the proliferation of his adventures has spread all over the world and into many languages. *The Adventures of Tintin* have brought joy and adventure to over three generations since Hergé began his first Tintin adventure in 1929; the quite topical *Tintin in the*



The Crab with the Golden Claws (1941)

Land of The Soviets. (An adventure unfortunately not featured in the film collection.) But Hergé would send Tintin on adventures much further afield. The most successful and memorable of these are presented in the animated films. Never short of a little playful satire of the times, these adventures include frequent trips to lost South American temples at the heart of countries in the middle of revolution, coups and counter-coups, often featuring Tintin's friend, Revolutionary General and part-time variety act General Tapioca. From the 1930s to the 1950s, Tintin has been involved in Oil conspiracies in post-war Arabian states, diamond thefts, treasure hunts, Opium plots in China and even a very retro-futuristic trip to the moon in a space rocket. Indeed, Tintin's adventures are a perfect introduction for children, young

and old, to the high adventure of the 1920s to 1950s pulp stories. As the times changed, so did Tintin. The humor was to begin with, slapstick, mostly provided by the clumsy detectives Thompson and Thomson, but later as Hergé witnessed more of the world, this humor evolved into sophisticated satire and cultural observation.

This similarity to the film adventures of the likes of *The Maltese Falcon*, or the American dime novels was arguably an influence on the young Hergé when he brought Tintin to life. The films do not disappoint in this regard. They may be lacking the *femmes fatales* and the heavy-drinking hero, but Tintin is still possessive of the core of these period adventure yarns. This is after all, kids' stuff, harmless, innocent fun. Something we can all relate to, a common childhood memory so well represented in the style of Hergé's artwork and the simplicity of the adventures.

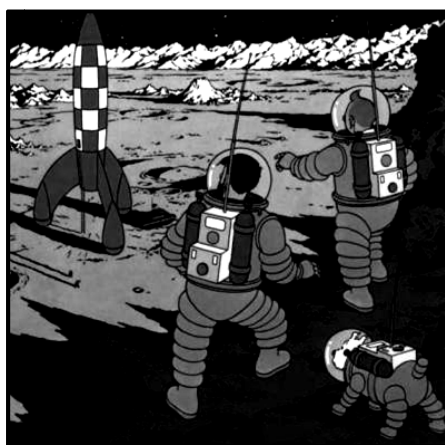
The cast of characters which surrounds him adds weight to the momentum; Snowy (or Milou, for the purists and the Belgians), is the faithful hound, somewhat more colorful than Tintin as everyman, Snowy drinks Scotch whiskey when possible and often gets up to mischief. In the books he offered a dry sense of humor and criticism to the plot. Unfortunately this element of Snowy is missing in the films. Presumably the animators

wanted to keep things a bit more visual and simple.

The other memorable characters of the series include Captain Haddock, the seafaring captain whose sarcasm makes up for the lack of Snowy's dialogue. In this role, Haddock offsets Tintin's optimistic heroism. Then there is the detectives, Thompson and Thomson who bungle through the adventures, oftentimes at odds with Tintin, sometimes relying on the young reporter to save them. Like Professor Calculous the hard-of-hearing and absent-minded physicist, I found them a bit tedious at times, but then again, the humor of these three characters is much more suited to a younger audience, as opposed to the rest which I found enjoyable even at my stage of adolescent vulgarity.

As with the books though, I found these films hard to criticize. They are perfect adventure tales and really quite lovable. The franchise of Tintin however has

often been criticized as colonialist and even racist, and as much as these things are wrong, it is equally wrong to criticize these for that for they are period pieces (more so the books than the films) and so the social climate of the time of creation should be taken into account before such statements are made. By no means then, should these be dismissed as racist or anything of the kind. The films were made in the early 1990s and so they are discretely edited for



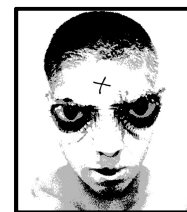
Explorers on the Moon (1954)

anything offensive. Hergé himself looked back at the controversial *Tintin in the Congo* as a low point for his work and accurately points out that, at the time, there was nothing wrong with its stereotypical portrayal of the indigenous black populace, although this portrayal is shocking by modern standards.

To conclude then, I strongly recommend these films if you remember watching them, as I did, as a kid, or enjoyed the books and fancy a stroll down memory lane, or even better, let Tintin capture the imagination of the next generation and get them for your own children, if you are fortunate enough to have any. Tintin's adventures to the bottom of the sea or in search of lost tombs and treasures are as enjoyable for today's youth as they were seventy years ago and a perfect reminder to those of us interested in dieselpunk and pulp that there is also a light-hearted side to our interests. ■

Diesel Classics

Article | The History of Dieselpunk, Part 2



Piecraft

With Hollywood reverting back into its archives for added inspiration for narrative ideas, we find a recent trend of nostalgic hindsight to the age of the Roaring Twenties and the 1930s. This seems to have infiltrated gradually the science fiction genre that is emerging in contemporary cinema. Films like

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow (2004) and *The Mutant Chronicles* (2008) have perhaps inspired the intrigue in the early first half of the last century. Other recent films like *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008) and *The Spirit* (2008) have sparked new interest in the previous century, overcast with

economic turmoil, lawlessness on the streets and in politics and the ever-present dystopian sentiment towards a near-hopeful future with the potential of war hanging in the balance.

We must also not forget the alternative-historical elements of the times, when people perceived a future that could at one time or

another have been dominated by the totalitarian powers, specifically the Nazi regime—evoking concepts of the supernatural and *über*-technology that was revolutionized by the whacky radicalism of engineers and scientists of the time. Such themes promoted in the independent feature *Iron Sky*—which alludes to what would have happened if the Nazis had escaped to the Moon—present the growing fascination with the emerging genre of dieselpunk.

Referring back to the understanding of dieselpunk, it could be said that what once was a mere neologism to define a type of alternative history science fiction that was all too obsessed with the on-goings of the 1940s, has slowly integrated into the public consciousness. Increased with the added support of films that harken back to this time period, a gradual and easier environment for dieselpunk has become accepted by the masses of steampunk and cyberpunk *aficionados* as a reputable and notable term and genre.

The following is an analysis of particular 'quintessential' works of fiction that correlate what make up the understanding of dieselpunk—or at the very least examples that reflect the genre in contemporary media today. There has been considerable debate relating to the subject matter of how a piece of fiction would be considered as dieselpunk. The examples given have been linked to the genre in regards to the themes and the setting by which they take place in. Each example possesses particular elements that confirm their position as a genre work of fiction within the universe of dieselpunk.

What follows is an analysis of 'Ottensian' and 'Piecrafrican dieselpunk', followed by a few examples each from various contemporary films that illustrate how the genre is recognizable in terms of its thematic context from the choices selected.

To begin, we shall venture into the realm of 'Ottensian dieselpunk', bringing with it elements of the hopeful perspective correlated to the technology and times of the prolonged 1930s era. Most films that possess the 'Ottensian' setting, place the importance on a world which has developed from the destitute ashes of a previous conflict or dire event (i.e. the First World War of the Great Depression) leading to a much more positive outlook.

Just Imagine (1930), directed by David Butler, put forward the tagline "YOUTH AND LOVE 50 YEARS FROM NOW!" on its original printed ad. This reminds us of F.T. Marinetti's blossoming Futurist Art Movement of 1919, promoting ideals of modernity, embracing technology by a passionate, younger generation to dispel the boring and mythic qualities of the older deprecated and dated systems and culture in substitution for one that looked ahead to a new-found future, full of aspiring potential and dynamism.

Butler depicts a New York City in the 1980s where airplanes have replaced the automobile, people's names have been replaced by number codes, and pills have replaced every day food—heralding a retro-futuristic nod to

the later animated series *The Jetsons* of Hannah-Barbera.

Just Imagine deals with the detachment of humanistic love by emphasizing the control the corporate state has over pre-arranged marriages which has replaced the romantic ideal of true love, and test-tube babies replacing the intimate act of reproduction. The story revolves around a man who is struck by lightning and revived by scientists. His name is relabeled as Single-O. Single-O then goes on to befriend and fall in love with a girl known as J-21, only he cannot marry her because he is not "distinguished" enough. The film follows Single-O's escape to elope with J-21 on an expedition to Mars by a renegade scientist.

As fantastical as Butler's film is, it illustrates the hopeful sentiment of the time through the technology that the visuals elaborate on—even with the naïve and outlandish portrayal of the Martian landscapes. Therein we find the suitable role of the anti-heroic protagonist in Single-O who due to the worldly circumstances of the times cannot attain his happiness, and therefore must go on the run from the control of the government and seek refuge. Even though the film is set in the 1980s there is a clear indication that the narrative focuses on the reverberations of a world that has endured a cataclysmic global war, thus requiring some novel ideology in order to sustain the new order.

Therefore many of the older values and morals are still being employed. An example of such values is reiterated with the way the film places importance on class, bringing about Single-O's preoccupation of not being

* These terms were first coined at <http://flyingfortress.wordpress.com>.

"distinguished" in society. Or perhaps the end process of the war would lead the viewer to believe that the victors were in effect the totalitarian and authoritarian powers and the world of *Just Imagine* is merely a glimpse of a near-bleak but technologically superficial future.

Just Imagine brings into awareness the same ideas portrayed in other 'Dystopian Piecraftian' examples, such as those found in the precursor to cyberpunk: George Orwell's excellent literary statement on a world gone horribly wrong when taken over by the malignant powers of corporate rule in *Nineteen-Eighty-Four* as well as Terry Gilliam's satirical film homage to Orwell's piece, *Brazil* (1985). And last but not least the 'Dark Ottensian' example, Kazuaki Kiriya's visual interpretation of Dai Sato's romanticized mega-mecha world of *Casshern* (1973-'74). All four films feature the conceptual design elements of a world that has its mind deeply involved in the nostalgia of the past—specifically

the 1930s and onwards throughout the Interbellum war period of World War II.

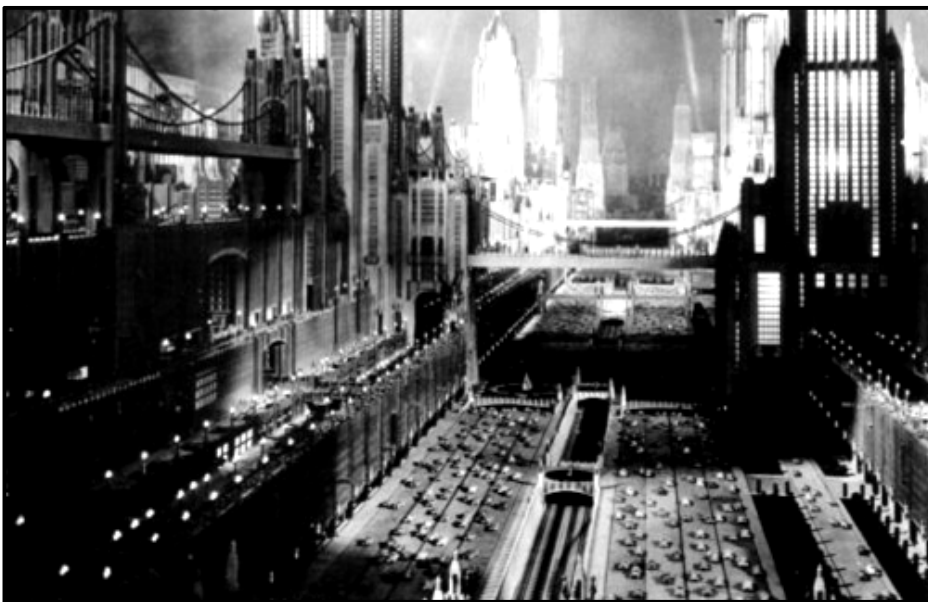
These films equally address the qualities of a retro-futuristic landscape influenced by political ideology (regardless whether it is an overly industrial-based capitalist system or wholly totalitarian regime) throughout most of the early-twentieth century. This is a vision of an atomically-charged future where technology has become the opiate to the masses, especially in regards to engineering and design. We find airplanes or airships as the foremost modes of transportation; the sky in seemingly perpetual darkness from the smog of combustible vehicles; dirty diesel-guzzling locomotives and the petroleum-producing factories dotted across the metropolis-complex. All these elements make up the definitive dieselpunk world.

We find elements of the 'Hopeful Ottensian' mostly dominating the consensus of dieselpunk fiction—predominantly focusing on the mood leading up

from the Great Depression that either is on the verge of sustaining itself or having never occurred. This example promotes a world-view that is still at its peak from the Jazz Age that brought about radical developments in technology on every level of urban life, a cultural upheaval that added to the greater adventurous outlook of the new generation as well as expanding the horizons in which to enrich the narrative of a newfound empowered world.

Examples of these hopeful and changing times are mostly evident in the popular depictions of pulp-orientated narratives found in *The Rocketeer* (1991), *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* as well as *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008). In all three examples we find a protagonist that represents the qualities of the heroic spirit of the times: a strong sense of morality with a cynical mind-set to the world around him attributable to some past personal conflict. Such values are defined by the strive to seek a resolution to the perpetuating crises that have developed in the world. Most notably the Nazis are seen to be the root of all worldly woes, as exemplified in the *Indiana Jones* series, *The Rocketeer*, *Hellboy* (1991), the video game *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* (2001) and even *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*.

The 'Ottensian dieselpunk' narrative is dominated with this characterization of a strong, male heroic protagonist—an adventurer at heart, fearless, yet very human still. The rugged and tough exterior is the stock for most pulp-orientated heroes of the time. However there is a deeper quality



Just Imagine, New York City in the 1920s.

to the dieselpunk hero as the protagonist reflects the world which he has lived in.

We see in all examples a world dominated by the petroleum-fuelled anxiety of governments, the emphasis of modernity pushing the envelope further.

In *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) there is the memorable scene of the zeppelin providing a modern form of transportation in a modern time. Whereas in *Sky Captain* we are introduced to Dr. Totenkopf's modern-day colossuses (giant mechanical flying robots) and once again to the zeppelin, only this time docking at the Empire State Building.

This is also present in *The Rocketeer*, where the giveaway is in the remarkable rocket pack that provides the protagonist Cliff with his ability to fly. All these differing mechanical wonders and advances in mega-tech are a throwback to the curious and grandiose ideals of technology and machinery presented during the 1930s and reinforced throughout all three films with the retro-futuristic Space Age style and design in architecture and fashion.

These aspects of the world presenting modern change and radical advances in different areas of society such as tourism and transportation are what attribute to a blossoming future for the 'Hopeful Ottensian' world. Even with the overbearing presence of the Axis in the *Indiana Jones* series or *The Rocketeer* there is the plausible utopian scenario as presented in *Sky Captain* where the Nazis settled the war with the Allied Powers through a peace treaty instead. Of course the

necessity for the Nazis to either be portrayed as good or evil is irrelevant to a 'Hopeful Ottensian' world as is clearly seen with *Sky Captain's* Dr. Totenkopf. What remains is the feeling that even in an uncertain world of on-going war there is the excitement of things changing; a sentiment that was celebrated by the likes of the Futurists in the early-twentieth century who promoted dynamism, speed, and violent regime change.

The possibility of victory is the essential ingredient to films as *Indiana Jones*, *The Rocketeer*, *Sky Captain* and *The Iron Giant* (1999) where the world weary hero overcomes the malignant, at times dated supernatural forces originating from the Old World—such as the archaic and mythic roots to the totalitarian regimes of the time. If such forces were to succeed, they would enforce an evolved technocratic yet compartmentalized regime; the future platform for the 'Dystopian Piecraftian' setting.

In the 'Dystopian Piecraftian' we find the ambition and excitement no longer existing in the world. Instead, an expression of despondency and despair lingers upon society which has long forgotten the novelty or dynamism of the old glory days of the Jazz Age. Creativity and innovation is exchanged for productivity and submission, and we find this all too true with the substitution of the heroic protagonist into antiheroic. Whereas the 'Ottensian' hero reflected the traits of a steampunk identity of adventure and ingenuity, the 'Piecraftian' character projects a more cyberpunk antihero sentimentality,

one of hopeless-ness, deep cynicism, sarcasm and personal turmoil in accepting his circumstances, due to a random event that has marked a considerable change in his monotonous lifestyle.

This is seen with the likes of Sam Lowry from Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* (1985) who can only dream of being the liberated romantic hero within his imagination that cries out to break through the bureaucratic, Orwellian state surrounding him. We also find that this lack of motivation leads to a sense of duty being of the utmost importance to the 'Piecraftian' antihero. Lowry is at first extremely dedicated to his routine, albeit with reservation but eventually out of his own internal curiosity realizes the truth about the system he works and lives under. Lowry then becomes an enemy of the state inadvertently out of his own sense of individuality, breaking free from the herd.

The same could be said of SS-Sturmbannführer Xavier March from Robert Harris' *Fatherland* (1992), who out of his duty as a homicide police officer of the New European Reich (the Germans having won the war) begins to investigate the mysterious death of a Nazi Party official. A cover-up of the Holocaust is subsequently uncovered. With the assistance of an American journalist, March probes deeper and discovers the full truth about what happened to the Jews; a truth that could destroy the delicate peace process between the New Reich and the United States. In his attempt to evade capture from the Gestapo we find March like Sam Lowry, questioning



Sky Captain Joe Sullivan; the archetypical 'Ottensian dieselpunk' hero?

his position within society and his allegiance to the system he functions within all the while fighting against it.

The characters of *Sky Captain* and *The Rocketeer* are the new hope with a can-do attitude for a generation in a time of turmoil. They are not deliberately demonized by the ruling power, rather they are idolized, as is customary with the heroes of pulp literature and Golden Age comics. A 'Piecraftian' hero is more likely to succumb to a world darkened by the technology and attitudes determined by the outcome of the Second or a Third World War.

Comedy comes natural within most narratives of the 'Hopeful Ottensian' setting due to its less complicated and *laissez-faire* attitude to the burgeoning mechanized world that is constantly moving forward. This brings about a good-natured and excitable outlook of the world, with witty and sarcastic remarks being the usual fare from the 'Ottensian'

hero or with the addition of a sidekick for comedic value as is seen with the examples of Shortround in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984).

In the 'Dystopian Piecraftian' setting we find rather than comedy or slapstick being the norm, satire takes precedence instead. This is evident with films as *Brazil* where social commentary becomes the focal point of the *tour de force* behind the development of the narrative. We similarly find the same satirical demonstration in Andrei Tarkovsky's seminal movie, *Stalker* (1979). The premise referencing the consequences of a nuclear apocalypse; The Zone, a no man's land near an anonymous unnamed city; an alien place guarded by barbed wire and soldiers. Over his wife's numerous objections, a man rises in the dead of night: he is a stalker, one of a handful who have the mental gifts (and who risk imprisonment) to lead people into The Zone to the Room, a place where one's secret

hopes come true. That night, he takes two people into The Zone: a burnt-out author, cynical, and questioning his own literary genius, and a mild-mannered scientist more concerned about his knapsack than the journey. In the deserted Zone, the approach to the Room must be indirect. As they draw near, the rules seem to change and the Stalker faces a crisis. There is an exaggeration of the world caricaturizing it somewhat, however still retaining the serious tone of the dystopian atmosphere that pervades throughout.

Finally, the darker spectrum of the 'Piecraftian' and 'Ottensian' presents a world which leaves the emphasis of the political or symbolic nature of the world to a much more irrational or futurist outlook. In the 'Dark Ottensian' there is a melancholic atmosphere projected within the world, where the dark pillars of petroleum fumes and engine noises and vehicles no longer bring about sentiments of joyous anxiety and wonder but one of conformity and pollution. *Casshern*, *The Mutant Chronicles* (2008) and *Delicatessen* (1991) each portray a world that harbors the mood of the previous decade. The angst and depravity still remains from the previous economic crisis and the futility of the last war still resonates upon the characters in this new world of wondrous mechanical and industrial prowess.

Even with the splendor of the giant mechanical creations as gargantuan robots and skyscrapers and mega-structures, in *Casshern* there is that horrific reminder of the previous war that is demonstrated with the village

scene where we find people living in poverty and dying from starvation—left over from the previous war to rot. Or in the case of *The Mutant Chronicles* the forgotten ancient, albeit alien machine that is unknowingly unleashed upon the world due to the on-going wars between the global corporate powers—another reminder of the destructive effect of the machine-industrial complex.

We find the haunting themes of technology and an unresolved past that bring about a much more jaded world that seems to be caught under the shadow of progression rather than brimming with hope and prosperity as seen in the 'Hopeful Ottensian' setting. However, even so, *Casshern* and *The Mutant Chronicles* as well as *Delicatessen* provide their dieselpunk world with a hero who attempts to remedy the problems through their own means, even if it relies on their self-destruction—as is usually the case in all three films.

The emphasis on famine and poverty emanating from the social collapse of the Depression and on war-torn urban slums or cities built up entirely of factories and industry are key to the look and feel of the landscape capitalized in all three films and are another important facet to the dieselpunk formula. In the 'Piecraftian' world there is no hangover from the previous decade, such as the socio-political problems that have carried on into the consciousness of the new generation.

Max Max (1979) and *Six String Samurai* (1998) do not present a particular mood to their world other than one of nihilism where the future is uncertain and the past is only manifested through the

physical ruins left behind from the previous civilization. Nostalgia plays no importance upon the characters in the 'Post-apocalyptic Piecraftian' dieselpunk setting. This is because they no longer retain any memory of the 'Hopeful Ottensian' or 'Dystopian Piecraftian' world prior to the 'rapture', only a visual reflection of what it was once like from the objects and landscape that survived. The anti-hero is reinforced from the 'Dystopian Piecraftian', only in this case we see again the lone stranger attitude revel in the characterization of the protagonist, and fast forwarded to a much more alienated and misunderstood stereotype.

The 'Post-apocalyptic Piecraftian' antihero has no sense of responsibility or duty; therefore is care-free and is truly a nihilist. He exists and survives for the present, the antihero is a survivor and can be seen as both heartless

and cruel at times or good natured and loyal depending on the circumstances of a situation presented in the narrative. This is exemplified with Buddy's uncaring and uninterested attitude at first to the abandoned Kid he encounters on his path in *Six String Samurai*. And this is also true with Max's personality by the manner in which he treats anyone he encounters in *Mad Max*. This can be explained because both Buddy and Max have experienced an event in their world which has caused them to distrust their fellow man—a clear differentiation from the always-at-hand and helpful Samaritan of the 'Ottensian' hero. Since the 'Post-apocalyptic Piecraftian' world is portrayed in anarchic disarray this inadvertently causes the negative-realism of an ultra-industrialized world to affect the characters that exist therein.

The ordered and bleak world



Mad Max: the 'Post-apocalyptic Piecraftian' antihero.

that breaks the will of the human spirit, in the setting of the 'Dystopian Piecraftian' is exchanged for one where the world is now completely destroyed and the people are an outward expression of a neo-primitivistic future, enhanced by the scrapped and wreckage leftovers from their diesel-charged and mechanical machinery that survived the cataclysm.

The present 'deprecated' technology and resource of fuel and mechanical sustenance is a drawback to the times before the great technological boom perpetuated by the megalomaniacal obsession and propulsion of the diesel-empowered world of the mid-twentieth century. This is their only link to the era of the 1930s, that and perhaps the scraps and shreds of clothing that remain, mostly connected to the automobile and motorcycle styles; Greasers, Rockers, mechanic, engineer and industrial work wear as well as army fatigues seem to be the typical clothing of the post-apocalyptic individual. Later we find these technologies re-invigorated in a primitivistic and patchwork style (much like their own clothing and state of mind), fused with the rusted remains of a time when such machinery was literally the oil that greased the cogs for the momentum of a futuristic technocratic society—one which would befall the events that take place in the *Mad Max* series, *Diesel* (1985), and *Spirits of the Air*, *Gremlins of the Clouds* (1989). The destruction of the urban-sprawl formed by such technologies and social highs that eventually bring about their own

demise promoted in such films as *Metropolis* (1927) and *Tetsuo* (1989) which present the future illustrated within a 'Post-apocalyptic Piecraftian' landscape.

Dark City (1998), directed by Alex Proyas, is perhaps the epitome of the darker nature of dieselpunk. The film possesses both attributes characterized in the 'Piecraftian' perspective of the genre. We find the dark despondency and dystopian world prevalent in 'Dystopian Piecraftian', exemplified by the bureaucratic and ordered society by which the people exist within the constraints of their city, always living in the darkness. A city deeply reminiscent of the 1930s in an attempt to emulate the ethos and essence of the 'Hopeful Ottensian' setting. However, we find out later that this city is nothing more than a constructed environment controlled by strange, psychic alien beings known as The Strangers who have saved the remaining survivors of a post-nuclear Earth and now regulate them on a mechanized world formed of gears and combustible engines that work to fabricate the illusion of the world prior to the cataclysm.

The central character once again is the misaligned antihero, John Murdoch, who awakens alone in a hotel to find that he has lost his memory and is wanted for a series of brutal and bizarre murders. While trying to piece together his past, he stumbles upon a fiendish underworld controlled by The Strangers who possess the ability to put people to sleep and alter the city and its inhabitants. Murdoch seeks a way to stop these beings and expose the truth before they capture him and before they can

once again assimilate him back into the ordered society.

The city is nothing more than an advanced computer perpetuated by the energy of the people imprisoned within it. The Strangers seek out Murdoch because of the extraordinary powers he manifests while he slowly recollects the memories of his original past. John decides to find out what is happening in the city; he questions the everlasting night and the apparent inability to leave the city. These are all elements of an exaggerated *noir*-esque environment. The dark, brooding atmosphere, smoky skies and oil-slicked streets are obvious dieselpunk characteristics and like *film noir* and other pulp material that has inspired the genre, we find that all the action takes place in one setting which is cleverly manifested as the *Dark City* itself. The individual protagonist never seems to escape the sprawl of the urban metropolis or the world in which the events that pave the way for the changing future.

Perhaps this is the pessimistic perspective by which any punk genre defines itself within the subject material. The characters are locked in a continuous time period, marked by the advances in technology that inspire all aspects of civilization, from architecture to fashion to music, yet they can never release themselves from that ever-changing fate of the future. A future that is persistent with the nature of the setting of the world, thus why Indiana Jones and Sky Captain will always remain the same, unchanged whilst Max and Murdoch must sustain the persistent downfall of their own bleak future. ■

Polanski's *noir*

Review | *Chinatown*

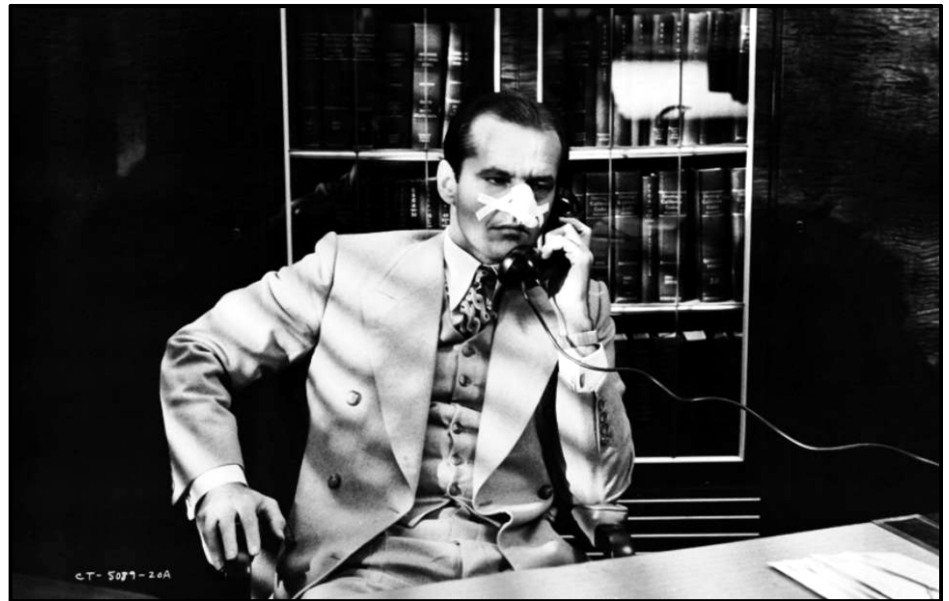


Sigurjón Njálsson

No film genre has been as beloved by dieselpunks as *film noir*, and for many, the first glimpse of this classic American genre was through the subsequent attempt to revive it. This genre, generally referred to as neo-noir, is probably best known for its fusion with cyberpunk in *Blade Runner* (1982). However, one the oldest and purest examples of the neo-noir genre came in the form of the period film *Chinatown* (1974) directed by the infamous Roman Polanski.

Set in 1930s L.A., the film revolves around a detective by the name of Jake Gittes (Jack Nicholson) who becomes embroiled in a government scandal involving a corrupt water department. In the process, he makes an acquaintance with Evelyn Mulwray (Faye Dunaway), and is eventually hired by her to investigate her husband's death. This investigation pushes him deeper into the corruption, ultimately meeting the head of the scandal, Noah Cross (John Huston). In these three characters and the plot that surrounds them, we can see the classic *noir* narrative unfold.

Gittes is himself stereotypically *noir*—a male detective who must solve an intricate crime and in the process figure out his own sense of morality. In reading Jon Tuska's cultural analysis of *noir* men in his book *Dark Cinema*, this



Jack Nicholson as detective Jake Gittes in the neo-noir classic *Chinatown*.

connection becomes incredibly poignant. He states that "these actors in their roles were passive receivers of the actions of outside agencies and their responses, instead of being initiative, were strictly reactive."¹

Tuska furthermore states of the *noir* man that, "keeping women in their 'place' means for [them] that they, too, must keep to their place. ... It is their purpose in life to work, to provide, to protect, and to serve without ever questioning. ... *Noir* men who ... choose to live outside the traditional role assigned to them ... are subject to destruction no less than is the *femme fatale*."²

With this in mind, it is easy to see how a Polanskian character—trapped between being the

tormented and the tormentor—can easily fit within a *noir* narrative. Indeed, Gittes often plays the role of the tormented, as most evidenced by a wound to his nose he acquires while investigating the water department and the resulting bandage and scar. At the same time, he often acts as a tormentor, even if it is unintentionally. Throughout the narrative, he puts all the pieces in play for its tragic end, and then watches helplessly as they come to fruition. From the beginning, the film introduces us to his dual role—by spying on Mr Mulwray and thus ruining the man's reputation, Gittes acts as a tormentor, but as he was used by Cross and his associates to do so, he also appears as the tormented.

The character of Evelyn is also typically *noir*. This can become tricky, though, as our first view of her may remind us of the classic sort of *femme fatal*, but as the film progresses, our understanding of her character changes. It is important to note, however, that Polanski is not merely playing with the expectations of the *femme fatale* here. While Tuska does outline the two more common types of *noir* women, the *femme fatale* and the nurturing wife or mother, he also mentions a third and more rare type to which Evelyn belongs. He calls them the "beautiful neurotic" and compares them to the *femme fatale* saying, "she is still the *primum mobile* which brings both herself and the *noir* male protagonist to catastrophe."³ Indeed, while she lacks criminal intent, Evelyn is the key piece that brings about the narrative's tragic end.

Cross, and the nature of the criminality in general, is also characteristically *noir* in Polanski's film. Carlos Clarens states of *film noir* in his book *Crime Movies* that:

"They could be arranged along the lines of a detective story that, in its course, exposed a brutal and corrupt society that did not always coincide with the straight world's idea of itself. Even in the safer context of the detective film, the mere depiction of evil in places higher than the underworld conferred an awareness of the seamy side that other genres never provided."⁴

We see in Cross this high class kind of criminal, representative of a deeper sort of moral degradation. This is not a film about the crimes of the petty, and in its course, we find that murder is but one form of

depravity committed. The government itself is a part of the scandal, dumping water to make a few wealthy men richer. Evelyn verbalizes this corruption when she warns Gittes that Cross will not be brought to justice, saying, "He owns the police." The film culminates in a truly shocking perversity that I will not ruin here. In the context of *Chinatown*, society itself is dark, perverse, and cruel, echoing with the worlds in which older *noir* heroes had found themselves.

Of course, while all of this may suggest a classically *noir* narrative structure, that is but one of the things for which *film noir* was so revered. What of the distinct visual style? In this regard, Polanski deviates to some degree. We do see some of the characteristic low-key lighting, especially in the night shots and with the use shadows cast by the blinds in Gittes' office. However, this is not nearly as overwhelming as the rich blacks of old *film noir*.

That is not to say that Polanski does not obtain the intended effect of the stereotypical *film noir* aesthetic through his own visual structures. If the point of low-key lighting is to create moral ambiguity, Polanski is able to accomplish this instead through visual symbolism and motif. His use of the motif of a broken lens or damaged eye suggests an inability to understand. Polanski's camera-work, in which we are forced into Gittes' own subjective perception of the events, also creates this same sense of ambiguity and misunderstanding. I would therefore like to assert Tuska's claim that "what ultimately determines such films as examples of *film noir*,

or not, is the presence of the *film noir* narrative structure," and that, "in the best *films noirs*, the visual style and the narrative structure work hand-in-hand and constitute a consistent, unified ensemble."⁵ *Chinatown's* narrative is *noir*, and its visual structure supports this *noir* sense in its own way.

Therefore, in looking at *Chinatown*, it is easy to see it as a definitive work of neo-*noir*, and one that very closely mirrors its source. The narrative is characteristically *noir*, and even in moments where it may seem to break convention, it rarely does so more than *films noirs* had done in the past. At most, its visuals may seem to stray from the classic aesthetic. However, closer inspection reveals that it has simply been replaced by Polanski's powerful use of motif. Overall, *Chinatown* is closer to Polanski's attempt to create his own *film noir* than an attempt to completely reinvent it. It is neo-*noir* in its very essence, and in that regard, should be considered a must-see for any fan of the genre. ■

1. J. Tuska, *Dark Cinema: American Film Noir in Cultural Perspective* (1984), p.216

2. *Ibid*, pp.216-16

3. *Ibid*, p.203

4. C. Clarens, "Shades of Noir," in *Crime Movies* (1980), p.195

5. Tuska, *Dark Cinema*, p.151, 153

Photograph courtesy of Paramount Pictures.



Gin o'clock

Column | The Liquor Cabinet



Craig B. Daniel

Welcome to The Liquor Cabinet! In this new column we will take the reader on a tour of the world of beverages from a steampunk and dieselpunk perspective. In each column we take a look at a little bit of beverage history, supplemented with smattering recipes for those who wish to try them.

The clear starting point for a look at dieselpunk drinking is seventeenth century Holland. During the Dutch Golden Age, gin was invented there when 'malt wine' (a sort of strong beer) was distilled and infused with juniper berries. The product that most of us are familiar with today however is the English 'London dry gin'. Invented during the nineteenth century, this style is made by infusing a neutral spirit distilled from grain with an assortment of herbal ingredients, referred to as 'botanicals'. Juniper berries are still the main flavor, but distilleries pick other ingredients to produce a distinct flavor. After the infusion, the gin is then distilled again, diluted to the desired strength, and bottled.

Gin was among the most popular distilled spirits in England, especially among the lower classes, for most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the United States it was the base of many mixed drinks, which were a major feature of American drinking culture by the turn of the twentieth century. Since it was easier to smuggle hard liquor than beer, the 1920s alcohol prohibition in the U.S. led to a further boom in cocktails, and gin was among the most common spirits used. It remained popular in the States until it gradually gave way to vodka in the middle of the century.

The choice of botanicals significantly influences the flavor of the resulting gin—try a few and then use what you like! A few suggested brands to get you

started are Beefeater, Bombay Sapphire, Gordon's, Plymouth, and Tanqueray.

The most famous application of gin is the martini in which it is mixed with a little vermouth and an olive, but there are lots of other choices more directly tied to the pulp era. First, there is the gin sour, which dates back to the late nineteenth century and remained popular throughout prohibition. To make it, shake three ounces of gin, two of lemon or lime juice, and one of simple syrup with ice and strain it into a lowball glass full of ice. The Tom Collins, another classic, is just a gin sour served in an ice-filled highball glass, topped off with club soda. A whiskey sour is like a gin sour, with bourbon instead of gin.

"the 1920s alcohol prohibition in the United States led to a boom in cocktails..."

Getting into less familiar options, the Clover Club dates back to early twentieth century America, where it was the drink of choice of the Philadelphian elite. Prohibition largely ended its popularity, but it is clearly due for a revival. It is made by shaking together (with ice) a jigger of gin, half to three quarters of an ounce of lemon juice, and a quarter to a half of an ounce of raspberry syrup (for which you could substitute

grenadine), along with an egg white.

For after-dinner desert cocktails, consider the Alexander, which is basically the White Russian of the early twentieth century. It is made from equal parts gin, crème de cacao (dark or white), and cream, shaken or stirred with ice and served straight up (that is, without ice) in a cocktail glass with a little fresh nutmeg on top. Because gin is perhaps not the best spirit to pair with chocolate, flavor-wise, this drink largely gave way in the 1920s to the Brandy Alexander, in which the gin is replaced with Cognac brandy; this version has not entirely fallen out of vogue even today.

And now it's time to close the liquor cabinet until next issue, when we will explore exotic drinks for the pulp adventurer!

Faust is back

Review | *Jack Faust*

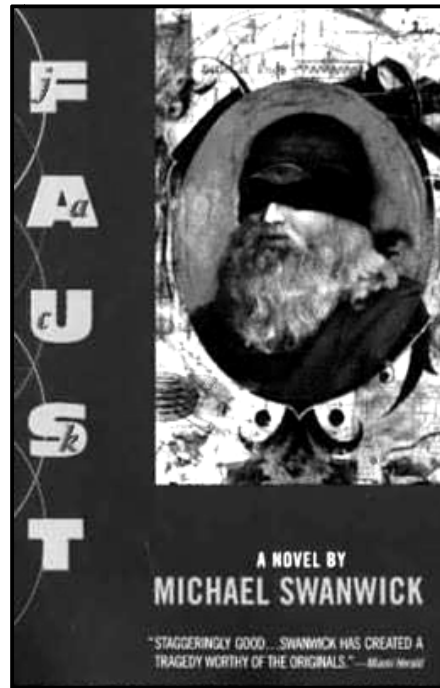


Trubetskoy

As a modernist retelling of the legend of Faustus, Michael Swanwick's *Jack Faust* is a dark meditation on the negative consequences of scientific progress, the ideal figure of 'the scientist', and the reaction of humanity to that progress.

The story opens in territory familiar to readers of Marlowe; in his home in sixteenth century Wittenburg, the great alchemist and scholar Johannes Faust, angered by the plethora of contradictory truths in the great books of his library, calls out to the great unknown to deliver him the secrets of the universe. Soon after, Mephistopheles, no longer a demon but an alien entity from another universe seeking the destruction of the human race, arrives to offer Faust all the knowledge of humanity past, present, and future. In exchange, Mephistopheles only asks that Faust understand the consequences of this knowledge. From there, the novel observes Faust's attempts to better humanity with his knowledge, and his unleashing of an Industrial Revolution upon Europe some three centuries early, with all the tragic side effects.

While stories about industrial development during the Renaissance are traditionally classified as clockpunk, the brave new world of *Jack Faust* is one that bears a far closer resemblance to



the early twentieth century. As Faust applies his genius, the familiar tropes of the Renaissance vanish entirely. Historical events are either erased or translated into surreal new forms, such as the Spanish Armada transforming into a battle between Spanish ironclads and English missile cruisers. Characters who appear as alchemists or priests earlier in the novel reappear near the climax as presidents of industrial firms and radio personalities. The religious disputes of the period are swamped entirely by Faust's introduction of capitalism, ethnic nationalism, and revolutionary philosophy to Europe's political landscape. By the end of the story,

events have accelerated to the point that the final few chapters seem to occur in a dreamlike state with fantasy, dream, and reality merging into one, marching towards the inevitable, harrowing conclusion.

Despite the vicious playful inventiveness Swanwick devotes to his industrial Europe, this is a novel of Faust's decline and fall. As a great scientist, Faust is headstrong, cunningly inventive, persuasive, and skeptical of tradition. He is also arrogant, disdainful of metaphysics, disgusted with humanity's inability to live up to his expectations, and driven by a boundless will for power. His arc is a tragic one, an evolution from impatient genius to hateful manipulator, constantly guided by Mephistopheles' darkly nihilistic explanation of the world and the power relationships that govern it.

Even his relationship with Margarete, the daughter of one of his early patrons and one of the few truly innocent characters in this world, is affected by this decay, with their relationship as lovers crumbling into a hierarchy of master and servant.

At just over three hundred pages, *Jack Faust* is a quick read, though one that will undoubtedly linger in the mind afterwards. Still, it is a bracing tale; a sober reminder of the consequences of wanting it all. ■

City of Porto

Column | Local Steampunk



Damon Molinari

Portugal is famous for many things—a national drink, an exploring and imperial heritage, a beautifully emotive singing tradition (*fado*)—but it is much more than this. To be in Portugal is to find yourself immersed in a swirling heady mixture of history and traditions, and the modernity of the twenty-first century. The second city of Porto (or Oporto), in the Douro valley in the north of Portugal, in particular is steeped in a heritage whereby steampunks would find themselves immersed in a world of medieval, Victorian, *nouveau* and deco, threaded together by the ribbon of the Douro along which the city clings to the almost cliff-like valley sides. To travel Porto's streets is to travel in time from the fifteenth century to the current day. With something for steampunks of any persuasion, few cities evoke the sense of historical sprawl of time as does Porto.

Porto is an ancient city, established originally as a Celtic citadel, it was the first capital of the County of Portugal founded in 868 after the Christian reconquest of the Douro region from the Moors. Traces of its age may be found in any street in the center of the city. Those who view their steampunk through English-tinted goggles will appreciate Porto's age-old links with Britain. Both share a patron saint and Portugal is the oldest of England's allies, theirs



The city of Porto, Portugal. Photograph by the author.

being the world's oldest existing military alliance. This bond has impacted the cultures of both countries. The production and trade of Port, the local fortified wine, is the story of a sometimes antagonistic mercantile marriage of English and Portuguese interests, cemented in the Methuen Treaty of 1703, and stemming from the frequent wars of England and France which cut supplies of Bordeaux wine, as well the rise of a liking for the full-flavored robust wines of Portugal by the English. The production of the fortified Port wine of today is partly the result of a need for an improvement in the shelf-life of the wine due to the long journey to England. The ritual of Port drinking is steeped in the English naval tradition, possibly

even leading to the change from 'larboard' to 'port' as the designation of the left-hand side of a ship (Port being passed round the table from the left). The Port trade continues to be dominated by English-named companies to this very day.

The Port houses of Croft, Dow, Graham, Osborne, Sandeman, and Taylor, among others, dominate the area just to the south of the river. Taylor's (properly, Taylor, Fladgate and Yeatman), founded around 1692, was originally the concern of Job Bearsley, an English wool trader, whose woolmark still adorns the company's emblem, but it is by no means the oldest of the Port houses (that distinction being held by Kopke, a Portuguese house). The story of the port trade

demonstrates the interconnectedness of cultures, something that steampunks appreciate, despite the nominal dominance of Victorian England in the genre. A visit to the Port houses is a must for any visitor to Porto, if only to sample the rich variety of the wines cheaply, but also to immerse oneself in the ancient lifeblood of the city. Lunch at Taylor's also affords the best view of the bridge and city from the south side of the river while you eat.

Porto's historical center is a World Heritage site, and encapsulates the gothic in the Oporto Cathedral, the baroque in the Episcopal Palace of Porto, and neo-classicism and romanticism in the *Palacio de Bolsa*, the Liberdade Square, and the Sao Bento Train Station.

The waterfront provides a particular spectacle that captures all these traditions, dominated by the powerful Arrabida bridge that supports not just the railway and road, but also the moniker of Porto as *Cidade das Pontes* ('City of

Bridges'). To truly comprehend its wonders, the waterfront should be seen at night, where the strength and vitality of the architecture comes to life thanks to the magnificent lighting that illuminates the bridge and its surroundings. Rather than staggering down the steep streets, however, this is probably best appreciated by taking the ride down the valley side on the vernacular railway next to the bridge, which affords an unrivalled view of the bridge and the Port houses.

During the day, a visit into the many nineteenth century shopping arcades which rival those of Paris, or the cafes and bars, transport you back in time to the 1920s; the 1900s; even the 1880s. Steampunks should not miss the famous *Livrario Lello* bookshop, founded in 1881, which is a cathedral for Victorian bibliophiles, rich in ornate wood-carved paneling, leather chairs, stained-glass, dominated by a central staircase that would not be out of place

onboard Captain Nemo's *Nautilus*, and enveloping you in books from floor to ceiling.

For dieselpunks, the São João National Theater, rebuilt in 1918 and transformed into a cinema in 1932, is a must-see, as is the *Cinema Batalha* and *Coliseu do Porto*, the two great monuments to Art Deco. Porto has a firm place in cinematic history, with the first moving pictures being taken and shown by Aurélio da Paz dos Reis in 1896—within a year of the first public presentation by the Lumière brothers—and the country's first movie studios, *Invicta Filmes*, erected in 1917 in Porto in the Carvalhido. A stay in the *Residencial Pao De Acucar* is ideal for dieselpunk enthusiasts, with its magnificent Art Deco interior transporting you back to a time of quality service and style for a reasonable price—and it is within walking distance of many of the attractions of the city center, including the *Café Majestic*, established in 1921, an Art Deco explosion which hosts piano concerts, piano recitals, and *fado* singing (and is where J.K. Rowling wrote the first *Harry Potter* novels), though it is certainly not the only deco establishment to enjoy!

The steampunk movement is developing in Portugal, as evidenced by the growing Portuguese membership of online steampunk communities, and it has a rich vein to tap. Even the briefest of visits to Porto would provide the steampunk with a rich experience of a city with an intertwining of ancient and modern, a swirling of cultures, of technology and history—and is that not what steampunk is all about? ■



The magnificent Arrabida bridge at night. Photograph by the author.

Accessories

Column | The Steampunk Wardrobe



Hilde Heyvaert

Everyone knows that no outfit is quite right without those finishing touches known as accessories. The right bag, pair of shoes, scarf, belt or even piece of jewelry can make or break an outfit. It is no different with the steampunk aesthetic. This issue we bring you a run-down of some the most important and most used accessories of steampunk fashion.

First of all—everyone must have seen this one coming—the goggles. Goggles are an accessory that work with every type of steampunk outfit. Be you a mad scientist, a dainty lady, a dashing aristocrat, a bold adventurer or an artist, goggles can fit you. They work so well because they are so versatile. Not only in the way that they can be worn (on the forehead, as a headband keeping your hair out of your face, as protective eyewear, attached to a belt or bag...) but also in the way they look. If you cannot find a pair you love commercially available, then you will be able to either find a tutorial to make your own, or find someone willing to make that special pair you have been craving for you on commission. It is of course important to note that goggles are by no means a requirement. If they are not your cup of proverbial tea then that is absolutely fine too.

Then there are the hats, and as with goggles, there are many types. The more urban type of



steampunk will most likely find their choice with the baker boys and newsy caps reminiscent of the street urchins from bygone times. The more aristocratic among us will find bowler and top hats more to their liking, and the distinguished ladies can either wear the full size versions of those or the cute but no less proper miniatures, embellished or kept plain to their own heart's desire. For the true adventurers out there, there are the pith helmets and aviator caps, symbols of exploring new lands and discovering new things.

Steampunk pirates might like the aviator hat as well, or will perhaps choose the traditional headwear associated with piracy: the tricorne.

Other important accessories are the belt and the bag. A belt's sole purpose is not just to hold up your trousers or to accentuate a woman's waistline. No, a belt is also there as a means of displaying various items and props essential to your steampunk outfit or costume. A mad scientist might find it extremely handy to have a good belt with many o-rings to clip his many tools from. An explorer or pirate will find many uses for a hunter's cartridge belt or o-ring belt to attach his compass, spyglass and many other small yet essential pieces of equipment to. The urban and aristocrat punks will find their belts fashion statements, the perfect combination of utility and means of display of the pocket

watch and little belt bags holding items of great importance to them.

Bags are there, of course, to put things in that are too big to hang off your belt, or that you would rather keep out of plain sight. They come, just like every good accessory, in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. And really, everyone will have the bag perfect for them with minimal shopping effort. As long as the shape and

color suits your outfit and it fits the purpose, you should not be able to go wrong.

If you dislike carrying a large bag around, you can always get a nice smaller belt bag and combine both accessories together.

And last but most certainly not least there is the footwear. Nothing so dreadful as a perfect wardrobe and no shoes to go with it. Ladies wear either dainty boots

reminiscent of those from the Victorian age or *Belle Epoch*, preferably with a small heel and button up sides. Or heavy boots perfect for exploring or working in the laboratory and in some cases there is the juxtaposition of stumpy boots and dignified spats.

Gentlemen wear classic shoes, with or without spats (preferably with though) or riding boots and in the case of those exploring, stumpy boots fit to do the job. No matter what your steampunk persona is, the shoes are vital to finishing off your outfit! ■

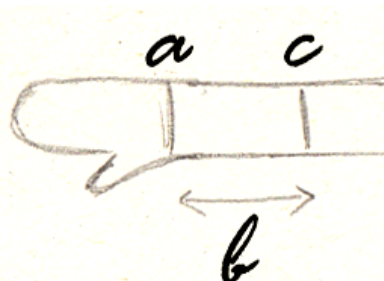


Note that none of this is set in stone. There are no rules to the steampunk aesthetic and this view is not necessarily representative for the entire steampunk movement. There is nothing stopping e.g. an aristocrat from wearing a cartridge belt or a mad scientist from wearing a top hat. Nor should there be anything stopping anyone from wearing an accessory not mentioned here.

A Steamy Gift

Tutorial | Steampunk wrist cuff

Valentine's Day is not so far away anymore and if you are still looking for that perfect give to bestow upon your beloved, may we recommend that you gear up and set about to create your very own steampunk accessory: a Victorianaesque wrist



cuff! This tutorial will teach you how to.

1. Measuring a) This is the first measurement to take. Measure all the way round your wrist! b) The length of the cuff, which you can determine yourself. c) The second



Hilde Heyvaert

wrist measurement. Again, be sure to measure all the way round your wrist.

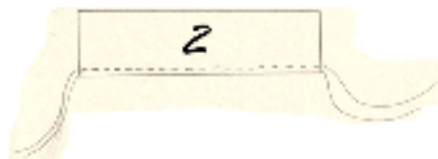
2. Fabric Take your fabric and measure a square the size of your largest wrist measurement (so either 'a' or 'c') and of your desired length ('b'). Make sure to add an extra half inch on the top and bottom sides and an extra inch and a half on the left and right sides. This is for seam allowance and to make sure that you have enough room to add button holes and buttons. If you use larger buttons you may need to allow for a little more space to the sides.

If you wish to add a ruffle to your cuff then cut out an extra square of at least twice the length of the first. Again, be sure to leave some extra space for seam allowance!



3. Making the cuff Seam the bottom and right and left sides of the cuff (of your main fabric; '1'). If you want to create a distressed look, you can leave them unseamed. If you do not want to add a ruffle to the cuff then seam all sides.

(The following only applies when adding a ruffle.) Take the fabric you wish to use for the ruffle ('2') and seam the top, right and left sides. Then set your machine to its largest stitch and sew a loose line (do not backstitch at the start and end) leaving out long threads on the bottom of the fabric. You need to leave long enough threads so that you can easily pull them together to gather the fabric and get that ruffle effect.



Gently pull the threads on one side 'till you reach the desired length (the same length as the wide of your main fabric; '1') and your fabric is sufficiently gathered. You can put a loose knot in the other threads to make sure the ruffle does not 'escape' so to speak. Tie the threads together on both sides (or on one side if you have already done so) so the gathering does not slip loose.



Turn both of your fabrics so the wrong sides are on top. Fold over the unseamed edges, like you would when seaming them normally and sew both of your fabrics together. You should get a cuff with a ruffle like the left illustration below.



Make button holes on one side and sew the buttons to the other. *Et voilà*, you have made your very own wrist cuff! ■



Colophon

The *Gatehouse Gazette* is an online magazine in publication since July 2008, dedicated to the speculative fiction genres of steampunk and dieselpunk.

The articles published in this magazine are written by a group of earnest volunteers. Listed below are the people involved in the production of this issue.

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Featured Photo

Every issue the *Gatehouse Gazette* selects one photograph submitted for feature. This edition's winner is a Mr Dave Charsley of *Declinegothica* with the photograph "Dawn of a New Age". Credit must also go to the models, Lady Nex Angelus and Captain J.B. Sadeian. Congratulations!



To nominate a photograph of your own, send it to the editor via n.ottens@gmail.com. The winner will see their picture featured here!

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