

**Journey Planet 16** | the Philip K. Dick issue



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"James Bacon is that which, when you stop believing in him, doesn't go away." – Philip K. Dick

# do androids dream of electric fanzines?



This fanzine is dedicated to the memory of **Paul Williams**, 1948-2013. Please see page 45.

PETER YOUNG

**Y**OU'D THINK that in this day and age it's all been said about Philip K. Dick. That's hardly the case. New biographies or anthologies of essays on him and his works seem to appear on an almost yearly basis these days, but the imagination that PKD's work still inspires means there's still plenty of mining to be done at this particular coalface. See, for example, the surfeit of Dickiana to be had in this fanzine; plus, a zine about PKD is somehow made more complete with the inclusion of something from the man himself, here present in the form of the entertaining short story "The Eyes Have It".

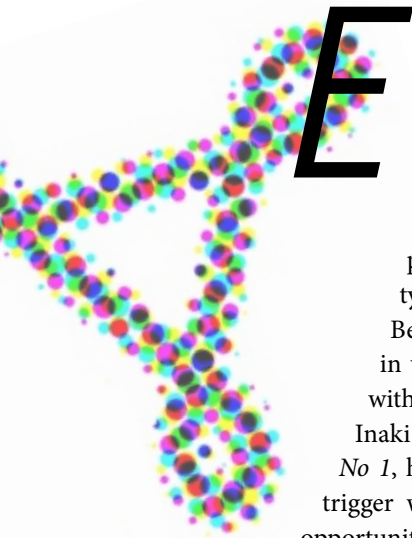
The centrepiece of this particular fanzine, however, is the reappearance after forty years of the almost-forgotten final Chapter 19 of *A. Lincoln, Simulacrum*, first seen in the January 1970 issue of *Amazing Stories* but which was never to see the light of day again... until now. I asked Ted White early in 2013 if we could publish it – after all, he wrote it – because every edition ever published of Dick's *We Can Build You* has omitted this chapter. If you ever wanted to read it in the intervening forty years between then and now, you'd have had to track down that particular issue of *Amazing*, so its reappearance here makes finding that lost chapter a hell of a lot easier, with the bonus of Ted's own account of how it came into being – and how it subsequently disappeared.

Before Paul Williams died, I suggested to James and Chris that we dedicate this issue to him. Sadly, only a few day later Williams passed away, and one of the touchstones for many fans of both Williams and Dick was Malcolm Edwards's tribute on the Gollancz blog the following day. We're grateful to Malcolm for allowing us to reproduce it here – this issue of the fanzine would probably not have existed without Paul's initial enthusiasm for Dick's work, something that has provided the impetus for plenty of PKD fan activity around the world.

Which inevitably brings me back to the new PKD-inspired creative writing enshrined here – witness the creative flourish of Chris Lites and the mind-boggling uchronia of my co-editor Chris Garcia, both of which round off this particular addition to the endlessly multiplying fanzines about Philip Kindred Dick. Enjoy!



'A Conversation.  
Or, Operation  
Head', 2006.  
[ **Nicole  
McControversy**  
@ flickr ]



Everything about Philip K. Dick is a revelation to me. Even if it isn't really Phillip K. Dick; even if it's just what I consider to be Dickian.

I enjoy Phillip K. Dick's fiction. Well, most of it. His science fiction seems to be as much a study of the human condition as any exploration of the future, or of the near-now. I sometimes wish I could have lived in the moment that he was writing about, as I am sure much more would seep through the pages.

I am always thinking "this is very Dickian". So when I watched *Looper*, I thought that perhaps it was indeed a story or concept that I had not read by Dick; but no, it was just a similar type of story, with his influences. Some PKD-inspired stories work better than others. Lauren Beukes wrote an interesting reality-jumping futuristic short story, 'All the Pretty Ponies', which tied in with exploitation and felt very modern despite the technological requirements that are not yet within our grasp. This appeared in Vertigo Comics' *Strange Adventures* anthology in 2011 with art by Inaki Miranda, and I felt it was very Dickian in its feeling. Another comic, however, *Secret Avengers No 1*, had a mind-altering plot device that involved memories being rewritten with the uttering of a trigger word. Sounds good; yeah, I thought it might be good, but it was too quick, there was no opportunity for the full horror of the imposition to really sink in with the reader, there was no abhorrence of the situation by the heroes, and the Marvel world is just too far removed by its trappings to be tangibly near our own; it felt too far away from reality to work in a metaphorical sense. It failed for me on many levels – there's a hint of a Dickian idea in there, but it utterly fails.

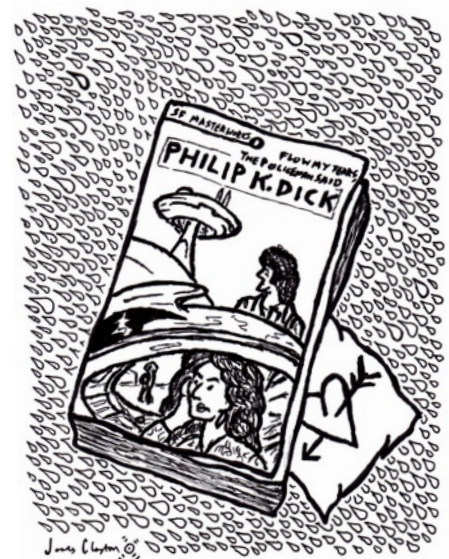
So, Dickian for me is not just ideas about the nature of thought, or questioning what I am, who I am or why I'm here and what is everyone else doing as we journey on a strange adventure; the story, whoever it's written by in a Dickian mode, also needs to be enjoyable and thought provoking.

Obviously I stumble sometimes, like when *The Crack in Space* jarred me with its '60s-based racist terminology, but of course this is a book that is investigating that subject. Wondering why Arnie Nott is not utterly detestable I initially found this somewhat confusing, so I hated him the more, although it's the art of the storyteller to play with the reader's feelings. Other works of Dick just flow for me so easily, like 'The Defenders', which was the basis for *The Penultimate Truth* and of course *The Man in the High Castle*.

Again, I compare many alternate histories to *The Man in the High Castle*, and think Len Deighton (*SS-GB*), Robert Harris (*Fatherland*), James Herbert ('48), David Downing (*The Moscow Option*) and Philip Roth (*The Plot Against America*) are similarly to be enjoyed as favourites: as thrillers, horror or just alternate history to their core. But I would never call them Dickian; they lack the meta-element that Dick's work had, let alone his strange depth of characterisation and sometimes strong individual portrayals. I continually find things about Dick and his work that just make me think long and hard: even in this issue of *Journey Planet*, the words of Tim Powers make the man seem so much more tangible and likeable; generally, that he was much more a fan than I had been led to believe. His generosity, his good nature and of course his humour, these are really important.

At some stage, I hope I can read something further by Tim Powers that will expand upon it, so I can get the chance to meet the real Philip K. Dick, not the one studied and analysed by academic works, or in another biography based on hearsay or research, but encountered through words by a friend, who misses him.

For now though, I am grateful for being nominated for a Hugo – thanks, Dear Readers – and for so many amazing contributions over the years. As ever, many thanks to Pete Young for joining us again for this issue and making it awesome.



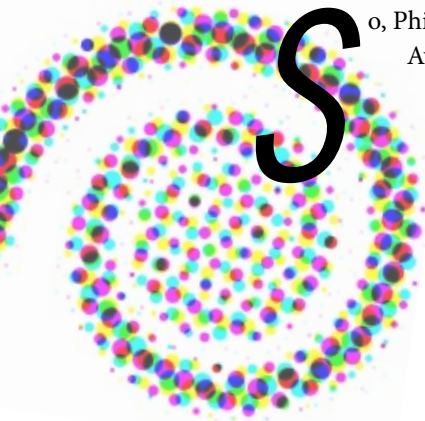
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So, Philip K. Dick. Yeah, he's awesome. He was awesome. No, he *is* awesome. Awesome.

I've barely scratched the surface of Dick's output; some of it is absolutely magical, while some of it makes my head hurt. I'm so excited that we get to do this issue because as much as some of his work astounds me into near-apoplexy, I have nothing but an absolute love for him as a personality and as a writer, and this issue looks at all of it!

That, and David Hartwell personally requested a copy at WorldCon this year!

Speaking of which, we were on the Hugo ballot this year, and sadly, we didn't win.

Didn't expect to, but it was nice that we ran third in both nominations and in the final totals, and second in the first place votes, so there's that. I know I'm not good at saying thank you nearly enough, but I have to say it here to Emma, Helen, and Pete for everything they did last year. There was nothing quite as awesome as getting to hear those names mentioned as Hugo nominees! And, of course, James is really the driving force behind *Journey Planet* and it's been awesome to get to go along for the ride! Plus, there are so many others, like Lynda Rucker and Mo Starkey, and on and on and on. Thanks to everyone for making *Journey Planet* possible!

I'm thinking about a lot of PKD stuff, and I'm starting to think about what his stuff actually meant to the history of SF. Did he change the way SF works or was presented or written? No, I don't think so. Is his DNA in the writing of a thousand books over the last forty years? Absolutely, and not only in books, but in film and television and on and on. *Looper* certainly showed that, and let us not forget all the adaptations of his work; from *Blade Runner* to *The Adjustment Bureau*. Endless numbers of science fiction short films I watch for Cinequest have that Dickian vibe. Anytime I read something where nothing is as it seems, where the reality of the situation is never really clear, where I'm wondering if it's all just some weird head trip, or when it is definitely just some big head trip, I can feel PKD hiding just out of view in the author's photo.

And I had a nice conversation with my dear friend Salman Rushdie about him.

You see, he was at Cinequest this year, and while I could have peppered him with questions about what it was like being married to Padme Lakshmi, I decided that I would instead ask him what his favorite PKD novel was.

Before I give you his answer, I must set the scene. There we were, hand to God, in the Tech Museum in San Jose, surrounded by caterers carrying trays of mini-cheesecakes, and a sort of chicken on a stick in a sauce that might have been tandoori it had any flavor at all. Among the interactive educational exhibits, Mr. Rushdie has placed himself standing next to a robot which could arrange wooden blocks to form any word you could think of, with an easily-defeated anti-swearing code. My buddy Jason, who is often confused for me, was there, so I approached and Mr. Rushdie had just told a joke that set the group on fire with laughter (I like to think he had just told his version of *The Aristocrats*, but I didn't actually hear it) and he smiled and said "Hello."

Also, I must add, the exchange of dialogue is, at best, approximate. It was the closing-night party and I was a sheet-and-a-half to the wind...

"Hi, I've got a strange question: what's your favorite Philip K. Dick novel?"

He looked at me and without missing a beat, spoke very quickly. "It's interesting, I'd say that Dick was a brilliant plot artist, no question, and an idea-man above all others of his time, but his prose was so rough. He worked within his time." I stood there, kinda agog. "And it may be why adaptations of his work are so good," he added, "because he lays strong foundations that allow better voices to work magic with."

"Like *Blade Runner*?" I asked.

"Absolutely. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* is a wonderful set of ideas, but *Blade Runner* is an exceptional novel that just happens to have been made as a film. It says things so much better than Dick ever could have. It spoke with a much greater fluency than Dick could have."

I was interested.

A friend of mine asked, "You think he could have been one of the greatest science fiction writers if he had more control over his prose?"

"Oh, certainly. A fact that such an unpolished gem is so praised is a testament to how great an idea man he was. If he wrote with the style and mastery of a Pynchon or a Vonnegut, he would have inarguably been the greatest writer of his age. If you look at a book like *The Man in the High Castle*, you can see where another writer might have made that into one of the greatest novels in the history of the English language, but it falls just short."

I thought about that. I loved *The Man in the High Castle*, but I can see his point, as a guy who is a part of the literary establishment. And then I thought, Wow, I wonder what Pynchon's *The Man in the High Castle* would be like, and I started looking for Pynchon's e-mail on the 'net...



# Acme Instant Fanzine

A PARAGRAPH ON PKD

## RIAN JOHNSON

When I wrote the original treatment for *Looper* about ten years ago I had just discovered PKD, and was blowing through his books as fast as I could get my hands on them. *Looper* wasn't directly drawn from PKD (the way, say, my first film *Brick* was directly drawn from Dashiell Hammett's novels) but his unabashed focus on the central sci-fi idea in each story not as a scientific speculation but as a psychological (or sometimes spiritual) abstraction was a revelation for me, and his use of the fantastic to get at the tremendously human is inspiring. Ten years later, for me the VALIS trilogy remains up there with the all time greats, of any genre.

## ROGER LEVY

I remember how, at school and uni, the best-of-the-best argument was always between PKD and ACC. But for me the contest was never even close. While Clarke relentlessly predicted the hardware, Dick explored the soft machine like no-one else. He stared deeply into virtual reality, but he also considered virtual humanity – the android perspective – and analysed us by wondering how it might be for them. And he went further. There aren't many SF writers who brought their own lives – and I mean the personal, not the political – to their fiction at all, let alone as nakedly as Dick did, most notably in the astonishing *A Scanner Darkly*. His protagonists lived angst-ridden lives in addled times, and so did he. He was SF's Thomas de Quincey, our Hunter S. Thompson. In the end, of

course, he tipped over the precipice, but the precipice from which Philip K. Dick fell is at an altitude way beyond the reach of any of us who try to follow him.

## ROBERT LICHTMAN

I was only around Phil Dick maybe three or four times, so I can't say that I really *knew* him. Back in the late '60s I indirectly supplied him with authentic Owsley LSD, but I don't know if he ever took the trip. I first encountered his writing at age fifteen in the 1957 Ace paperback *The Variable Man and Other Stories*, which per Anthony Boucher's short introduction definitely delivered "the chilling symbolism of absolute nightmare." Boucher was right! The stories, including "The Minority Report" (which became a vehicle for Tom Cruise's histrionics decades later), scared and depressed me with their view of a bleak future, and it was some years before I returned to his writing. I don't remember what that next book was, but it hooked me and ultimately I read everything on his back list – and his new work as it appeared in paperback. And then I re-read nearly everything at approximately five-year intervals a number of times until, during one of those times, I began to notice that, although I continued to enjoy the stories, his parade of dysfunctional protagonists





and bitchy women was affecting my own consciousness in a not-good way and I quit, cold turkey — but not before vetting his “mainstream” novels with Paul Williams after Phil’s death and having discussions about which sort of publisher would be the best fit for each of them. That was an interesting process and all of them eventually saw publication, but I never re-read them in book form (although I bought them all) and never returned to his SF either. In these latter days I’ve satisfied myself with reading the various biographies of his life, my favorite of which is definitely Anne Dick’s *Search for Philip K. Dick* — a definite “inside” view of the man with much more insight than his last wife Tessa’s *The Dim Reflection of Philip K. Dick* and her late, expanded *Remembering Firebright*, neither of which show nearly as much insight as Anne’s. As for the many books analyzing Phil’s work, I think you are better off drawing your own conclusions.

**KEN MACLEOD**

PKD is a writer whose work I respect but don’t actually like. I’ve read four of his novels – *The Man in the High Castle*, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, *The Penultimate Truth*, *The World Jones Made* – and enjoyed all but the last. I was very struck by his short story ‘Faith of Our Fathers.’ It’s significant that these are all set on Earth. I could never get into his novels set anywhere in space, because he ignored scientific plausibility and his societies were too obviously satires of contemporary America — which, of course, has made them post-humously acceptable to the literary mainstream. ‘Look, he wasn’t really writing that SF rubbish, he was using the tools of that SF rubbish to explore...’ Yes, and it shows. He’s a writer whose novels actually gain from being filmed: *Blade Runner*, *Total Recall* and *Minority Report* are in different ways and degrees good SF movies, vastly richer and more resonant than the stories from which they were ripped. Somebody should give the same treatment to *The Penultimate Truth*, a perfect parable for our Wikileaked time.

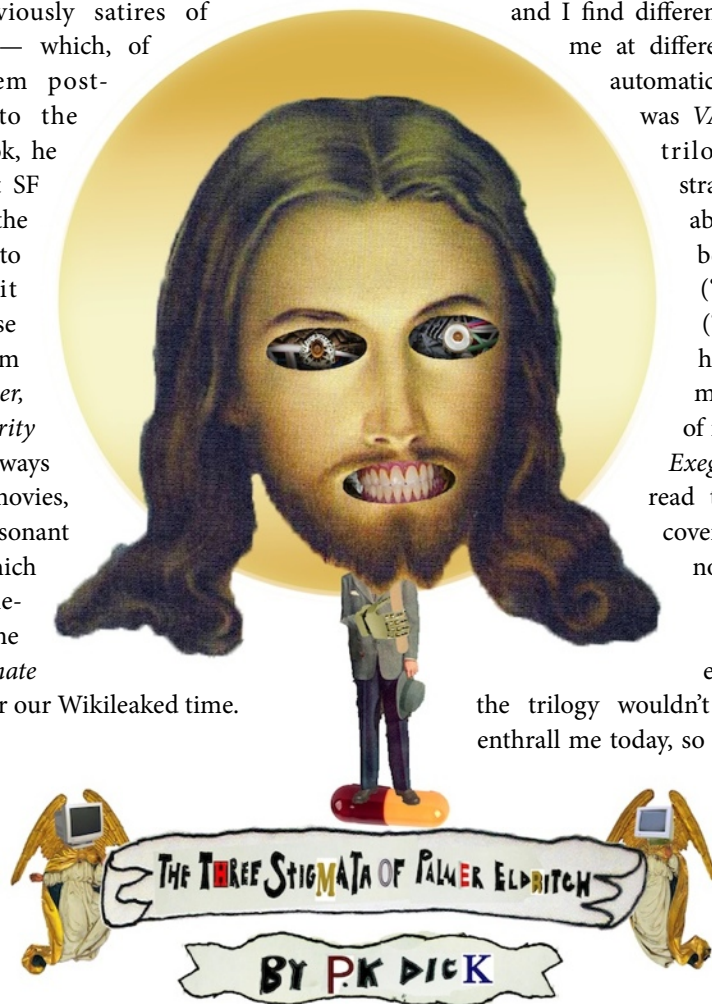
**GENE MELZACK**

The irony with Philip K. Dick and his work is that, for a man so concerned with matters of spirituality and the nature of humanity, his writing

so often provides purely intellectual rather than emotional or spiritual stimulation and it is rare to find genuine human warmth coming through his fiction. Stories such as ‘Human Is’, ‘The Little Black Box’, ‘The Pre-Persons’ and the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* all emphasise strongly how the ability to empathise and make emotional connections with other living things is at the root of our humanity, and yet this idea is explored in these works in ways that are relatively philosophical and difficult for a reader to engage with on a heartfelt, emotional level. Similarly, while Dick drew on some very direct and personal religious experiences, his fictional explorations of the nature of God, such as in ‘The Trouble with Bubbles’, ‘Fair Game’, ‘The Skull’ and ‘Prominent Author’, amongst many other stories and novels, often feel highly abstract and theoretical. While Dick’s ideas are certainly rich and fascinating to consider on this intellectual, philosophical level, it’s a real shame that his writing skills, in particular his ability to develop fully rounded characters with realistic dialogue and interpersonal relationships, weren’t up to communicating those ideas on a more immediate sensory and emotional level.

**LYNDA RUCKER**

Because I’ve been reading Dick for most of my life, it’s hard to decide which is my favourite PKD novel, or even establish why. There are too many books to choose from, and I find different books by him appeal to me at different stages in my life. My automatic answer for many years was *VALIS*, or the entire *VALIS* trilogy. It’s just so damn strange, and I loved reading about the early friendship between Dick and K.W. Jeter (“Kevin”) and Tim Powers (“David”). And at 22 or so, I half-believed it all, the crazy metaphysical ramblings, all of it; if you’d put a copy of the *Exegesis* in front of me, I’d have read the whole thing cover to cover, or at least tried to. I’m now a far more skeptical and cynical soul than I was then, however, so I’m not entirely sure that parts of the trilogy wouldn’t annoy me as much as enthrall me today, so I don’t really know if I can fall back on that answer any longer. I do love *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* because it’s so weird, dark, and funny. That’s one of the things the movie adaptations of his novels





never seem to get – his humor. I’m not ashamed to admit that I like both *Minority Report* (though it goes on too long) and the original *Total Recall*, but I think they’re lousy Dick adaptations. I have to take them on their own terms and pretend they have nothing to do with his actual work. *Blade Runner*, of course, is one of my favorite movies, hands down; I’ve easily seen it well over a dozen times in all its versions. For my money, though, Richard Linklater’s *A Scanner Darkly* is the only truly successful Dick adaptation in terms of capturing the ideas and the mood – the paranoid shifting reality, or unreality – of his fiction as well as the burnt-out, dystopian, suburban despair of that novel in particular. I also love that Linklater retained a portion of Dick’s heart-breaking afterword, “a story for people who were punished too much for what they did.” Lots of movies feel influenced by his ideas, but for me, none more than the brilliant, funny, melancholy *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, the collaboration between Charlie Kaufman and Michel Gondry. From the central premise of a company that erases memories too painful to bear to the humor and to the thorough exploration of the actual implications of such a removal – it’s all suffused with his spirit.

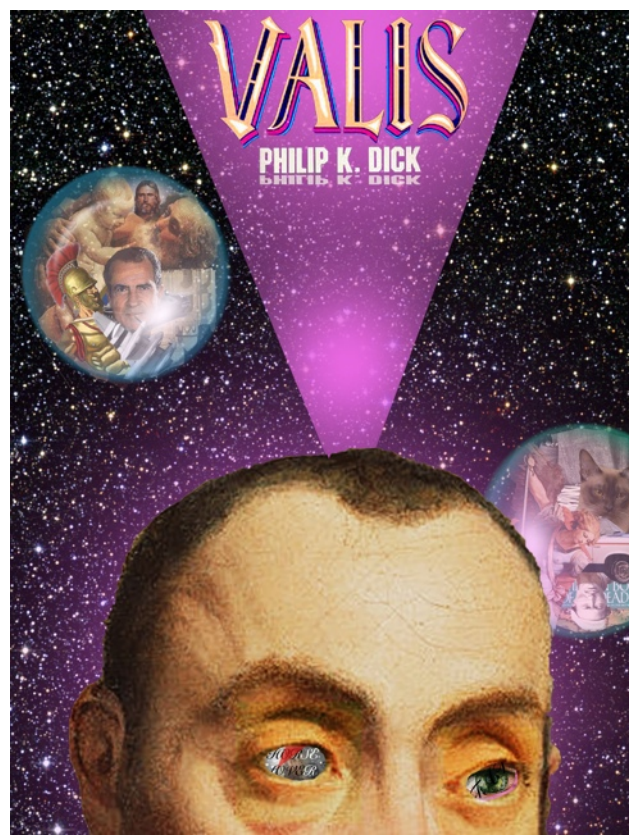
#### JASON SANFORD

To this fan of science fiction, Philip K. Dick is a joy. To this writer and reader of SF literature, he’s a frustration with occasional high points. The joy comes because you can’t touch SF these days without seeing PKD’s fingerprints. Thanks to Hollywood’s embrace of PKD’s vision, his paranoia-ridden, schizophrenic view of society is everywhere. Perhaps PKD was a true visionary for seeing this turn in society. Perhaps he helped bring humanity to this view through his stories. Either way, that’s more of an impact than any other SF author of the last fifty years. But the frustration comes when you actually read PKD’s stories and novels. He was capable of very good writing at times – *The Man in the High Castle*, one of his best novels, showcases the wordcraft he possessed when he took the time to rewrite and edit, as do other novels like *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and *Ubik* – but far too many of his works drone with haste and self-indolence. Worse, his ability to create believable real-life characters was almost non-existent. PKD was

an idea man, and that’s seen in his writing. I suspect this is one reason he’s been embraced by Hollywood – his ideas and stories allow others to graft onto them their own characterizations. But while PKD’s stories show a limited ability to understand his fellow humans, he did create one amazing character: Himself. His *Exegesis* reveals the great conflict which occurs when a man who understands science is confronted with a change within his own mind. He searches for any explanation – God, aliens, the religious – other than the mental breakdown he is actually experiencing. PKD alludes to the truth of what is happening to him in his *Exegesis*, but in the end his storyteller soul embraces other explanations, stringing together coincidence and isolated facts until they became what he wishes them to be. PKD not only helped create our paranoid view of modern life, he documented within himself how we arrived at such a state. And to me that is his most tragically fascinating creation.

#### PETER YOUNG

I guess like a lot of people, my induction into the writing of PKD was a haphazard affair. A few average novels while wondering what all the fuss was about, then suddenly out of the blue, one that hits you right between the eyes. For me that was *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, a novel that really messes with your mind, followed by *A Scanner Darkly*, a novel that’s somehow able to be both perfectly grounded as well as brilliantly existential. But where is the best of Dick to be found? For me, the non-genre *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*, where at last he gets women *right*, is absolutely his best novel, but that’s a limiting answer to a more interesting interpretation of the question, because the ‘best’ of Dick goes further than just his books. I suspect his writing is of the kind that future generations will interpret differently to previous generations, given how his concerns and paranoias are undoubtedly reflected in the fast-evolving and endlessly questioning society we live in now. What is reality? Future generations will answer that question differently to however we choose to, and *that* for me is the best of Dick: the adaptability of his ideas, demonstrated by how he has posthumously enabled others to tell stories of their own. And it’s also why I’ve given this fanzine a visual theme of ‘eyes’ – a reminder that the ideas of Philip K. Dick, as we detect them all around either today or in the future, will always be looking right back at us.





# A Letter to Philip K. Dick

BRUCE GILLESPIE

DEAR PHILIP,

Your letter has certainly made my week. I had hoped with trembling that I might hear from my favourite sf writer, but I doubted whether Ace would get around to sending on the letter. Fortunately, they did.

That “reviewer” who “is doing a good job” is, of course, me. As I think is made sufficiently clear over the heading of the articles, they were written some time ago, when I was fresh from University English, and all ready to analyze the whole of English Literature and all of science fiction too, into small atoms of clarified meaning. George Turner now writes, wondering whether the articles will not, in fact, turn into “undifferentiated enthusiasm”. I’m glad that you’ve appreciated the articles, although I wouldn’t mind knowing sometime exactly where you think I hit the mark. Sorry about *The Man in the High Castle*. As the last piece makes clear, I missed the point of the novel completely when I read it the first time. It may have been far too subtle for me at the time. I’m certainly going to read it again as soon as possible, and attempt to remortise it into the framework of my thought of your genre.

I will keep striking my head on a brick wall which will *not* give way like all those brick walls in all those movies. What exactly do your worlds consist of? Are they the essence of Anti-God (Palmer Eldritch), of Chaos? Behind the frightening rigours that tear apart your worlds, is their unifying principal lying there all the time? *This* is the sort of question I’ve been trying to nut out for the last year and a half. All I see clearly is that which went into the first articles – my own delight in your unique prose and all grades of your ideas (from the philosophy to the gimmicks), and attempt to describe and document this enthusiasm from the books. George Turner is probably right; the articles are eulogies. However I think they are the first eulogies to your works that have given a clear idea of the full pleasures of your work. Breen missed the point, by pentiticing on your Ideas (very much in capital letter), Judith Merrill just misses the point, and English readers are just starting to discover your books. If the articles do nothing else but stir English publishers to get a move on with those 27 books (!! ) and especially

reprints of the great books such as *All We Marsmen*, then I think they are worthwhile. If they stir any analytical thinking on any sf, they become important. But if I ever do find out what your books are *about* – I’ll be the first to let you know.

Thanks very much for the offer to arrange for copies of *Androids* and *Ubik* (“Ubiquitous” = “Omniscient” = “God”?) to be sent on to me. Politely, of course, I’m going to suggest to Ashmead that review copies of DD books could go far worse places than *SF Commentary*. We have some extraordinary reviewers like Foyster and Turner who would do far better reviews than any appearing in the prozines or the fanzines. But that is up to Doubleday. Meanwhile, as soon as I have the time (famous melancholic author’s last words) I’ll hoe into everything that has come to hand on your books since I wrote the other articles. I’ve received *Now Wait for Last Year* in paperback. At least some books arrive here sometimes. Have also seen, and almost sniggered at, Breen’s article. Brunner’s was much more perspective, and I should have read it before doing my first article. Your novels have been badly neglected until the last few years. I have read the impression that they are not widely read in Australia, but that is probably the result of rotten distribution for Ace books and all the other people who print your books. However, you should see what Brian Aldiss says about your work in *SFC 2*. I’ve sent on *SFC 2* today to your private address, although one will arrive eventually through Ace. *SFC III* has been typed and is currently “in the hands of the printers” (who mangled the time schedule for the “January” issue) and *SFC IV* (68 pages) is now typed. That contains the second main article on your novels (*Crack in Space & Counter-Clock World* cited as second class, cf. *Zap Gun*) which runs for 15 pages. Even more anasquizzical than the first.

Sorry for boring you. An author’s time is literally money, and for that reason, I appreciate it that you sent a letter at all. Good luck for the British editions of your books.

Yours  
Bruce R. Gillespie

[ MAY 1969 ]





# Tessa B. Dick's *The Owl in Daylight* – a review

PETER YOUNG

**Tessa B. Dick**

*The Owl in Daylight*

2009

ISBN 978-1-4414-3581-1, 214pp.

GIVEN THAT Anne Mini's family memoir connected to Philip K. Dick was pulled prior to publication in 2008, I can't help but wonder if there were, around the same time, jitters in the publishing world about *The Owl in Daylight*, written by Dick's fifth ex-wife Tessa, that steered publishers away from any involvement in it. Or maybe there were other reasons. There is, surely, enough interest in the idea of a novel dreamed up by PKD that has been brought to life by someone who knew him especially well. However, unable to secure a publishing deal Tessa Dick instead went down the self-publishing route, and this novel bears no imprint. The main draw for buyers will no doubt be either to read it out of curiosity or because they are PKD completists, as it is connected to the few references Dick left behind which mentioned his plans for a novel which was to bear the same title. The novel's back cover states "*The Owl in Daylight* is a tribute to his genius by his widow", and that "Mrs. Dick has approached this task with the utmost care and sensitivity." Below these words is a photo of Phil, none of Tessa, and obviously this is the way Tessa wants it.

Tessa Dick has followed her own muse while writing the book Dick might have written, and in the spirit she believes he would have written it. 'The owl in daylight' was Dick's metaphor for blindness, and PKD enthusiasts are still in the dark when it comes to grasping the concept he may have wanted to extract from the metaphor. If that indeed was Tessa Dick's aim as well, I soon found that the best way to read *The Owl in Daylight* is actually *not* to read as if it was the novel Dick may have written himself. As Dick has already appeared subjectively as the main character in other stories (notably Michael Bishop's *The Secret Ascension*) his appearance here, strictly speaking, ought to be seen more in that way rather than as another cameo of the kind that surfaced in much of his later work, post-1976. While Tessa Dick's two main characters of Art Grimley and Tony are drawn from events in the life of Dick himself (life-changing hallucinations, a job in a record store

while writing short stories, dark-haired girls and an unsolved break-in), they still don't feel authentically 'Dickian' in that they haven't been penned by Dick himself; these are Tessa Dick's creations and ought to be regarded as such.

The plot bears many similarities to how Dick outlined it in conversation (see Gwen Lee's *What If Our World Is Their Heaven?*). Art Grimley is a composer of B-movie soundtracks from Berkeley who wishes he could be more successful with serious music, while Tony is simply a younger version of Dick in his teens and twenties. When told as parallel narratives, Art's story broadly mirrors Dick's dual relationship with science fiction and mainstream literature, and involves an infection by an alien plasmate (also seen in *VALIS* and *Radio Free Albemuth*) which gives him visions of Tony's life whilst in a coma. Tony's story, after some rather good character building, suddenly digresses into an illusory experience in which he and his young wife become owls in a forest, whilst also experiencing a version of Dante's Purgatory. This lays on the allegory a bit too thick for me: to be blunt, it's a shame how awkward this fantasy section is and it's notable how it departs from the 'spirit' of PKD dramatically, watering down the authenticity of the novel as a whole. It wouldn't be any great loss if it was excised completely, although it contains several points about morality that could better be woven into the story elsewhere and necessarily in a more subtle fashion. Tony is the story within the story of Art Grimley, and while this idea works well in theory there needs to be more that directly links the two characters, and in considerably more detail, to do justice to the inner and outer aspects of this neat compositional structure.

*The Owl in Daylight* isn't an especially eye-opening read by any consideration. It draws on the PKD mythos while at the same time not actually adding anything of major significance, because we're still as much in the dark about Dick's own plans for his novel as we were before reading about them. In Tessa Dick's own way and in her own style it's still a very respectable stab at making real something that might have been, although it could have benefitted from more editorial input. So yes, one for the completists and the curious, and for a few years now a sequel has been promised, *The Owl in Twilight*.

▲  
Cover detail from  
**The Owl in  
Daylight**, 2009,  
artist unknown.





# The Black Lodge, the Palmers and All My Garmonbozia

a search for PKD in *Twin Peaks*

CHRISTOPHER J GARCIA



**N**O TELEVISION show in history is like *Twin Peaks*. It explored the areas of fantasy, reality and the stretched versions of both. *Twin Peaks* is about three things: that which we hide, that which is hidden from us, and how we attempt to uncover those secrets.

In other words, it is a Philip K. Dick story, set in the Present, made palatable for the American television standards of the early 1990s.

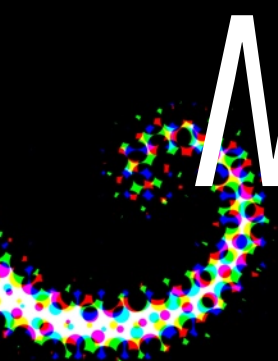
The concept of *Twin Peaks* is so simple: a young woman, who is full of secrets, is murdered in a town that is full of secrets, which is settled amongst a forest that is full of secrets. That's it. It's so simple. Laura Palmer is the young woman, and it comes to light that she has been living a double life within a double world; one of our reality, one of Another Place. We cannot be certain which is real. We may be viewing a tale

from Another Place, or we may be viewing a story from our own world, albeit a strange segment of it.

Does that sound familiar to you at all?

Does it have a ring of anything you've heard or seen or read before? On my most recent re-watching of *Twin Peaks* (I try to watch it at least once every other year) I came across a number of similarities between *Twin Peaks* and the works of PKD I'd read, starting with *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, which I read almost immediately before I started the re-watch. The parallels weren't as thin as I thought they might be.

Let us look at Laura Palmer. She is murdered, we first encounter her wrapped in plastic, pulled from the river by Pete Martell. She's young, and even with the blue lips and white skin of death from a night in the water, she is beautiful. As the





series goes on, as books are published, and with the release of the film *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me*, we discover many of her secrets. She has a drug problem, cocaine being her scaffold, and she is sexually ambitious. As we walk back in her timeline, we discover that since she was twelve, she has been abused in every way possible by an entity named BOB. We learn much about Laura in the series and the book *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer*, but we finally begin to see how she lived her life in the film *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me*. We witness her having breaks with reality in the film, as well as her using drugs to deal with both her real-world and Another Place problems.

And there's where we see one of the great themes of *Twin Peaks*. There is the world we have, we see, we live in, and there is another world that some have access to, or perhaps it is better expressed in relation to Laura Palmer as Another Place being *forced* upon her. Her abuser, BOB, is an entity which does not live in our universe, but inhabits a vessel which allows him to express his rage and lust on our world. He is an inhabitant of The Black Lodge, which exists in our world only for those who are brought into it.

Another Place is made up of three areas: The White Lodge, a place of joy and happiness that can only be approached by those with purest love; The Black Lodge, which is entered only through fear (and those who come with imperfect courage have their souls utterly destroyed), and The Red Room. The Red Room is the connection to both the Lodges, but it is also where Agent Cooper goes via his dreams. We see that the Red Room begins to infect parts of the real world, and ultimately it comes into play with the investigation. It is a question of whether or not the Red Room influenced those who dwelt in the woods (such as the cabin, where Laura and Ronnette have sex with Jacques and Leo before Laura is murdered, that has red curtains), or if Agent Cooper created the location in his dreams and it is just how it is seen.

That question is a very Dickian one as well. Is an alternate reality created first and then encountered by those who open themselves to it, or does the opening of a mind to an alternate reality create that reality?

Laura herself may embody every theme that Dick ever put forward. She is not certain what is the real world and what is Another Place. She can pass through, or at least *see* Another Place. She attempts to deal with this in several ways. She recognises this as mental illness, which leads her to visit Dr. Lawrence Jacoby, but she also self-medicates with cocaine and sex. She finds release in those vices, though she often has to take solace in one of them to relieve the impact of the other. These are all themes that were widely explored by Dick. The use of drugs to deal with a reality that is warped, or even threatening, is explored deeply within Dick's *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*, as well as in *A Scanner Darkly*. The idea of fighting the power of one vice by introducing another comes into play in *A Scanner Darkly*. Laura is

touching different realities and is attempting to deal with it through drugs. Dick would have seen that theme immediately.

In *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer*, author Jennifer Lynch writes "BOB is gone. I can't feel him around. Maybe it's because I'm high. Maybe I'm crazy and made him up... No, fuck that. I'm crazy if I believe he's only in my imagination... he's real."

This question is whether or not BOB is real, but more importantly, is he real for anyone *but* Laura? That idea, that there are subjective realities, could easily be applied to nearly all of Dick's work. In one series of exchanges between BOB and Laura in the pages of *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer*, one exchange features Laura saying "I'm an experiment", which could easily be read as Laura not only questioning her own reality, but the reality of Another Place. She later asks BOB if he is real. "TO YOU, I AM THE ONLY REALITY THERE IS" is BOB's answer. By the time we arrive at *Fire Walk With Me*, she is certain that BOB is real, though she has no idea how to deal with the fact that what she had thought was a part of her personal insanity is now a certainty.

In *Fire Walk With Me*, we see Laura using coke, and then going out and having a moment where she can see something in the woods that is not visible to anyone else, and she screams a terrified scream. The question on that matter is if she is hallucinating from the cocaine, as one might assume, or has she come close to The Black Lodge, become able to see the entrance, the red curtains that signify its realm? The answer to that question is left untold, and she can not provide the answer. Again, an unreliable narrator of the kind that Dick is so fond of.

In *A Scanner Darkly*, Charles Freck takes a handful of red pills and begins to hallucinate. A creature in an expensive suit appears and says "We are no longer in the mundane universe. Lower-plane categories of material existence such as 'space' and 'time' no longer apply to you. You have been elevated to the transcendent realm. Your sins will be read to you ceaselessly, in shifts, throughout eternity. The list will never end."

This encounter with drugs leading to an encounter with Another Place can certainly be read as a theme in *Twin Peaks*. Laura is like so many of Dick's characters in that she is not only uncertain what world she is living in, but she is also actively attempting to create her own reality. She is not certain if she is a real person any longer, or whether or not she is in our reality, or what constitutes a person at all. She wonders if she is insane, but she also wonders if she's just able to see something more than the rest because of her drug use and of her touching Another Place.

BOB is another question (this, I should say, is highly spoilery). BOB is an entity that exists in The Black Lodge, but can come into our world using a vessel, in this case Laura's father, Leland Palmer. The question is what is Leland's reality. He has a regular family life. Well, regular enough. He becomes BOB, and it seems that he is completely unaware of what he does as BOB until he is



captured and confronted by Agent Cooper and the Twin Peaks Sheriff's department. He gains all his memories as he dies. but then BOB is free, and we're never quite sure what this means about BOB, save for that he appears to take Cooper as a vessel at the end of the series.

BOB dwells in The Black Lodge, as do several others. A one-armed man named MIKE lives there as well. He is an entity, whose Black Lodge form looks the same as his form in the real world; a man named Phillip Gerard. In *Fire Walk With Me*, Gerard encounters Leland Palmer and confronts him on the road as if he is BOB, perhaps in an attempt to save Laura, who is with him in the car. MIKE ends up coming to the railroad car where BOB, in Leland's body, murders Laura and injures Ronette Polanski. He cannot, or perhaps will not, stop BOB. Phillip Gerard is treated for schizophrenia, and the treatments make it impossible for MIKE to come to the surface. This idea is again in line with Dickian methods. Drugs change reality, without the information from the taker. That concept is especially powerful in *A Scanner Darkly*. Drugs are used to hold reality at bay, to allow for a target personality to take hold, something that Dick possibly encountered in real life. Laura is specifically using drugs to deal with the problems she encounters from BOB, but Gerard is put on the drugs to keep MIKE out, though we're not sure MIKE has ever interacted with anyone else in the real world as BOB has. We do find, though, that there is a psychological component to the ability for residents of The Black Lodge to come into the real world. Perhaps it is Laura's drug use that prevents BOB from being able to enter her, while still allowing her to see or touch Another Place. It is obvious that BOB would like nothing more than to possess her.

Eventually, MIKE is taken off the meds at the request of Agent Cooper, which allows MIKE to come through to the real world, which leads to the capture of BOB and the solution to Laura's murder. We are only shown a Leland who is clean-living, and we discover that Bob entered him the first time when he was young, certainly not in the thrall of drugs. We believe that BOB may have done many of the same things to Leland that he did to Laura, but Leland's method was to give in, to allow him to take over. He did not retreat into drugs or sexual adventures. Leland opened himself up to BOB, and this is most interesting as it was the lack of drugs that led to BOB being able to take over, made his life darker, and force Leland Palmer to be a part of the darkness. Perhaps that is the opposite effect proving the positive.

Yeah, unravel that one for a minute.

Also in the Black Lodge is The Man From Another Place, a small man who may actually have come to be when MIKE cut his arm off. The Man from Another Place is actually the arm MIKE cut off to rid himself of a tattoo that marked him as 'touched by the Devilish One'. It appears he is also connected to The Giant, a visitor to Agent Cooper's dream, and to his connection to the real world, an old man who works in room service at The Great Northern. There is a old woman and her son, the

Chalfonts in the real world, but it's possible that one of them is a time-shared host of the spirits of Special Agent Chester Desmond and a monkey with the spirit of Special Agent Phillip Jeffries. The idea of multiple beings, doppelgangers, or 'phantom twins' is a frequent element in Dick's work due to the loss of his twin sister at the age of six weeks. This tragedy affected Dick over the course of his life, and every character in The Black Lodge is twinned in the real world. Laura has a cousin, Maddie, who looks exactly like her, and the idea that she is somehow connected to Laura, gets her killed by Leland/BOB, in the first real proof the audience sees that BOB is inside of Leland.

Following BOB/Leland murdering Laura during *Fire Walk With Me*, both BOB and Leland are present in The Black Lodge. Leland has blood all over him having entered the Black Lodge following the murder, and MIKE and The Man From Another Place are there, and they ask for "all their garmonbozia" (pain and suffering) which leads BOB to draw off the blood, splashing it on the floor, perhaps tossing aside all of the possibility of the memories that Leland might have acquired. Here, we can see the phantom twin most clearly, and the idea that one is working at all times, perhaps controlling the other twin. Leland is left in the wilderness, without a past, much like the androids in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* They are artificial, have memories put into them, though androids cannot have empathy. Perhaps BOB installed an entire new memory, rewriting everything. I wonder if the new Leland would have passed a Voight-Kampf test...

Perhaps it is the recurring phrase of "The Owls Are Not What They Seem" that brought me to write this piece. We hear that phrase over and over, first from The Log Lady, then from The Giant, and later still as a part of Major Briggs's Top-Secret deep space project. The Owls are possibly lures, drawing people to The Black Lodge (or its light counterpart, The White Lodge) so they can fill roles for the entities that live there.

Again, in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*, Rick Deckard is sent to 'retire' four Nexus-6 androids on the planet illegally. Rick wants nothing more than an actual animal, with all but a very few real animals extinct or only available for very high prices from private collectors. Rick sees that there is an actual owl held by The Rosen Association. Rick believes that Rachel Rosen is actually an android, and is going to bring her in. Rachel wants the Rosen Association to be allowed to continue to make the Nexus-6 androids, and offers Rick the owl as a bribe. Rick asks to give Rachel one more question, and finally proves that Rachel is an android. Eldon Rosen, the head of the Association, says that Rachel is not aware she is an android, and that the owl she attempted to bribe Rick with was also an artificial owl.

The Owl Was Not What It Seemed, like much of what Dick wrote, and like nearly everything in and around *Twin Peaks*.



**M**AYBE IT was his name. Maybe it was the timing. Maybe I was just too busy reading more mainstream authors, but whatever it was, until last month I had never read anything by Philip K. Dick.

I wrote that before looking him up on Wikipedia, which jogged my halfsheimers memory. In college, someone loaned me a copy of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* because the title made me laugh. The book didn't. It only took a couple of chapters before I gave the book back, discouraged by an erratic writing style and a very depressing premise. As I vaguely remember, that discouraged me from reading anything else of his, and pushed me back into the arms (clutches?) of Heinlein and Bradbury.

However, some time later I heard of a book which I thought was called *Through a Scanner, Darkly* while I was working at Hewlett Packard, supporting printers, plotters and scanners. Hooked up to HP Vectra PCs through a huge HPIB card, scanners tended to produce underexposed images. That someone wrote a book about this intrigued me somewhat, but not enough to go hunting for the book. This was in the late '80s, when looking for a book meant plowing through library cards or walking the aisles of bookstores. With the wrong title, no idea of the author, and the wrong genre there was no chance I'd find it.

Fast forward to July 2013, *Drink Tank* editor Chris Garcia announced a Philip K. Dick issue, and I thought maybe it was time to read something by this guy. I pointed my Kindle to Amazon's bookstore, punched in the author's name and there it was, *A Scanner Darkly*. Eureka!

It was whispered to my reader in seconds, and parked next in line after *I Am Legend*, which I was reading at the time, but that's another story about an author I'd never read before he died.

*A Scanner Darkly* is not what I would call a fun read, but it has little flashes of something vaguely related to brilliance. For instance, he invents something called a scramble suit, which scrambles the look and voice of the person wearing it. His protagonist, an undercover narc, wears one for public appearances and to hide his identity from his fellow narcs, who also wear one.

Another touch is rehab centers run by a cult.

But most of the book is taken up with the main character's paranoia about his housemates and friends' paranoia, some of which is due to his paranoia. Most of which is due to his doing too convincing a job of being undercover.

The book reads like something written by a stoner, starting with a delightful scene toward the beginning where a housemate hallucinates that he (and everything around him) is covered in aphids, and he gets his friends to fill jars with the aphids to bring to the psychiatrists to show he isn't imagining them.

It took me a long time to get through the book, and it took the protagonist a long time to get to rehab. No spoilers, so I'll just say that a very short dialog between the person who brings him there and a co-worker plants a seed which makes the last paragraph in the book the "aha!" moment, when it becomes clear, but only if you are paying close attention, what Dick had in mind when he started writing this tome. Or call it the punchline.

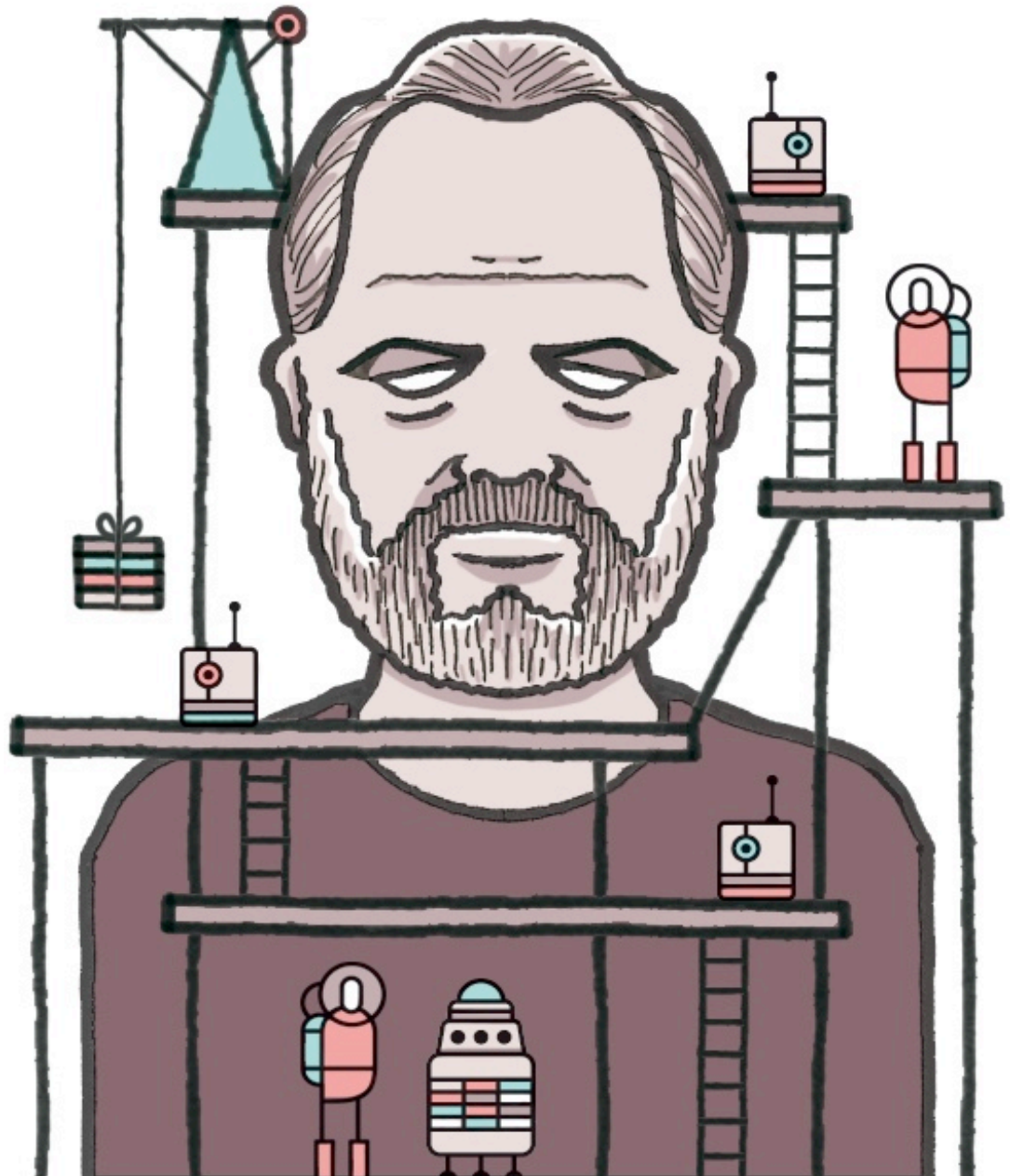
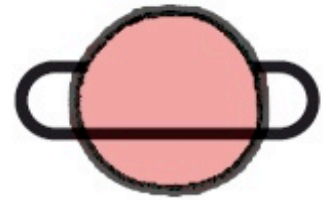
When I finished the book, my first thought was "I had to read all *that* just to get to *this*? And my second thought was I probably don't want to read any more of his work. YMMV.



# Scanning Darkly

the scattered thoughts of a film student on PKD's **A Scanner Darkly**

EDDIE TOMASELLI



▶  
[ Giacomo Gambineri,  
for Wired Italia #38,  
2012 ]

When it comes to stripping intellectualization, ambiguity, complexity, and oftentimes beauty, no other artistic medium gets tweaked, shifted, and spanked as hard as film does. When at a museum, have you ever gone up to a Bosch or Van Gogh painting, turn in disgust to your significant other and say: “Gosh, I’d really like this painting if it were only *simpler*.” Oftentimes not, but in film, to the individuals truly in charge, this is the case a good percentage of the time.

This is due to the fact that film, like all things in life, is run by the all-mighty craft of currency. So what happens when you keep the substance – the “artistry” of a film – and let it run wild in the wilderness? You’ll get a film like *A Scanner Darkly*. You get a film like this when you stick to the source material and simply play it out with actors and a camera. Maybe even add a little rotoscoping for good measure. It may not be the most compelling *film*, but it should be an honest

one. How about when you strip the blood and guts of the source material and simply convert the ideas of a genius science fiction writer into an action film? You'll get the recent potato remake *Total Recall*.

And what happens when you stick to the source material, but centralize the core concepts into a story that differs from the book, permuting the key ideas into elements built for a visual medium? You'll get *Blade Runner*.

The fact of the matter is *A Scanner Darkly* isn't a bad film; it's a pretty good one, actually. What stops it from being a *great* film is that it doesn't expand upon the ideas set forth in the book. The film doesn't step away from the source in a manner that would be beneficial for a film, for a film is a different animal than the written word; that's the case for most adaptations where the source material never had an adaptation into film in mind.

If this is the case (and I personally think so), then why write an article on *A Scanner Darkly* for this fanzine? Why not just go off upon a different adaptation or something that works as a "film" better. For what *A Scanner Darkly* lacks as a film it more than makes up as a dark harbinger of the things to come, and to be completely frank, most of those things have already arrived.

I'm not the first person, and I surely won't be the last, to point out the recent events taking place with Edward Snowden and the United States' NSA program. I'm not the only person taking notice of the possibilities that Google Glass, and other gadgets that will continue to pop up every year, could bring. Is it a coincidence that when you log on to Facebook you get an ad on the side pertaining to an interest you *especially* care for? Philip K. Dick feared many things in life, and those fears are now an in-your-face reality. *A Scanner Darkly* is much less fiction than it was thirty-odd years ago.

That is why I believe the film is important in our

society; it's now as important as the book in the regard of sharing what PKD was all about, because not as many people read, nowadays. Let the film exist as a portal into his novels and into his mind – a segway drug, if you will. This is crucial in understanding not only the mind of a great author, but understanding ourselves and the world around us.

Out of the many things Philip K. Dick wrote about during his life, paranoia and an increasingly too-close-to-home police state were the most important. The surveillance is upon us, even if it is more of our own doing than we'd like to think. We give in to social media and instant communication because it entertains us, it's a convenience. However, how much should we really say and/or do on a system that virtually (pun intended) anyone can see? *A Scanner Darkly* shows the worst sides of a world that is viewable to anyone. Privacy becomes a harder thing to accomplish every day here in the real world, but that real world resembles the world of Philip K. Dick more and more each day.

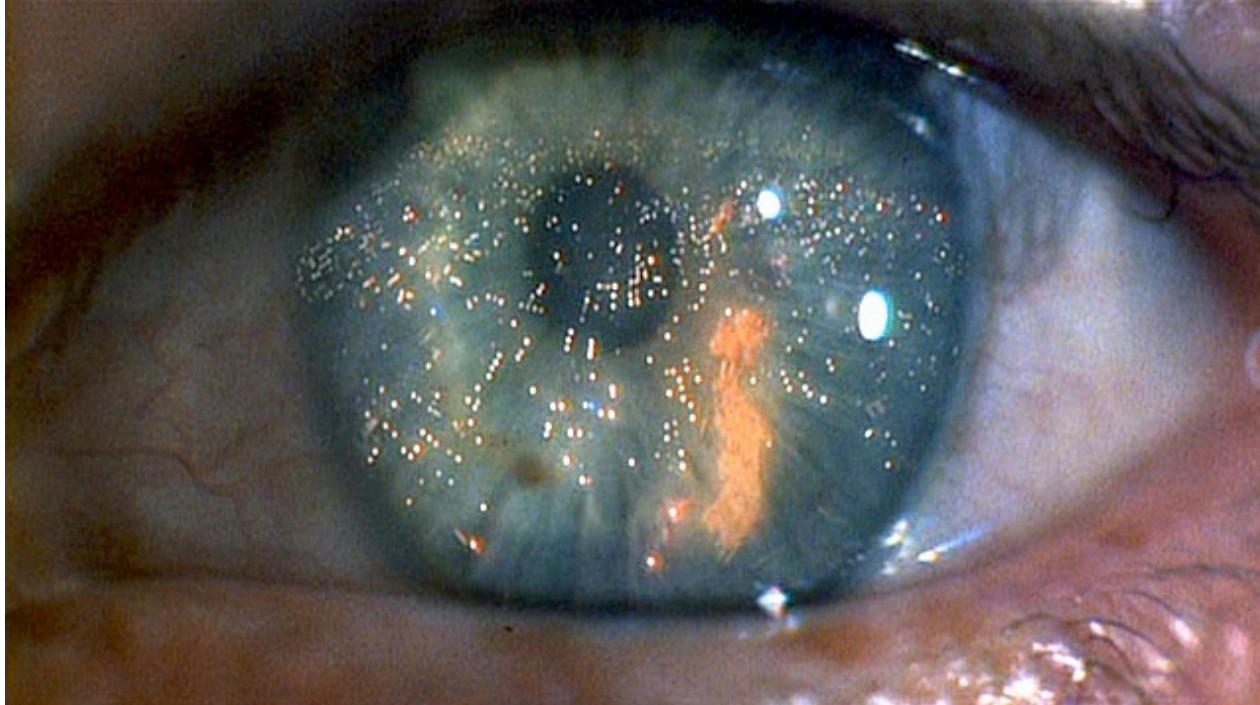
The novel's protagonist Bob Arctor lost himself because of drugs, like many of Philip K. Dick's actual friends sadly did. What does it truly mean to lose yourself? Constant drug abuse makes it an easier thing to do than most, but what about showing yourself to the rest of the world on a computer monitor? We live in a world that not only Dick feared, but one that George Orwell and Aldous Huxley cringed at as well. One could say not to post anything vital or private on a site like Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, but if the government eventually wants to start going through your e-mail or looking through your windows, who's really going to be there to stop them?

Where *A Scanner Darkly* fails as a film it succeeds as a mirror into our daily lives. Philip K. Dick feared a future that was only a "future" for him to fear, for he is long gone, and we currently live in that exact fear.



'A Bokeh Darkly',  
2008.  
[ Tim Norris @ flickr ]





Over a number of years, London-based **Geoff Hutchins** has amassed an impressive collection of *Blade Runner* memorabilia. In July 2013 he showed **James Bacon** around his own small version of 'Ridleyville'.

**JB:** You've read Dick's original book *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*. What did you make of it?

**GH:** I had read the book sometime before I had seen the film, and if I am really honest I found that I had to work hard to get into it. I have promised myself that I'll read the book again with an open mind, as I find reading a book after knowing the film to be a bit odd.

I loved the mood of the film. I know people at the time hated that downbeat and drab feeling but I remember standing in a long line in the dark and pouring rain waiting to get in. That also got me in the mood. I have to also say I did not mind the narration and actually quite like that version of the film. Roy Batty on the roof with Rick Deckard clinched it for me and it still moves me now.

What was it that you particularly liked about *Blade Runner*?

What was your first major purchase and tell us how did that come about?





I started the collection – although I hadn't realised at the time that this was going to happen – when I purchased the first version of *Blade Runner* on VHS. Watching at home somehow made it feel more personal and I liked the atmosphere it created while I was watching it. I also found that the more I watched it the less obvious it all became – it pulled me in deeper, and it seemed that every time I watched, something new seemed to appear, or my thoughts changed about what and why things happened. I felt that I needed to be part of the movie, and the only way that I felt I could do that was by collecting relevant items. I started small as money was tighter at that time, so most commercial items were purchased through eBay. As time went on and money became available, the collecting got more serious. I have to say it was almost like a drug and I needed the satisfaction of finding something new and original.

#### **What are your favourite items and why?**

This is a difficult question, almost like being asked what is your favourite song when you have special tunes for special times. I do have a shortlist as such, and it includes the clapper board, Holden's office miniature in the Tyrell building, Zhora's outfit, the neon umbrella, the special effects storyboards and stunt blaster. I feel all of them are special: the storyboards because they have been crafted by hand, cut-up images and notes stapled together, all handwritten. You feel the passion that goes into these items, and the smell of the paper just adds to their sense of history. The blaster, because it was used by Harrison Ford, and then the neon umbrella because it

was so iconic.

I have been lucky on a couple of occasions in obtaining some of the items: crew that worked on the film contacted me directly via my website and I was offered first refusal. These are for items I have not exhibited as yet but are in the pipeline to have special cases made to display them next time. They include some miniature Spinners from the top of the Police station and some 65mm matte composites.

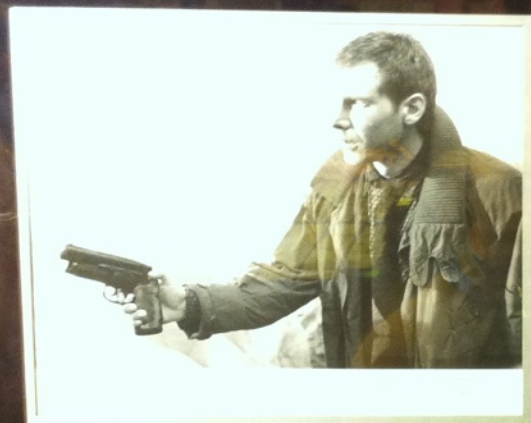
If forced to name a favourite then I'll say the clapper board. This item provides the connections that are easily made to the production, with the look and feel and name and date references. It is also seen being used in one of the "making of" discs in the boxed set.

#### **Can you tell me a little about the stunt gun?**

The rubber stunt gun is one of six that were likely produced. Two have come to light, the one I have and another that was recently sold at auction in Los Angeles. The one I have was made to resemble Deckard's blaster and had the amber grips added. The recently-auctioned stunt gun was plain and generic without the grips. The blaster I have came from a crew member who worked on the film.

#### **You have as many pieces of paperwork as props... what do you like about them?**

I just love that they were so personal to the crew that produced them – their handwriting styles, and so on. Many are freehand drawings, sketches and doodles, nothing typed or created by a laptop. Even most of the



Stunt gun  
used by Harrison Ford  
as Rick Deckard in



**BLADE RUNNER™**



accounts and budgets I have are handwritten. The special effects storyboards and the budgets and accounts are probably my favourites. There is a lot of information, reading between the lines; for instance Stan Winston Studios were going to do the mechanical special effects, and I also have a list of what they were going to do and the price they were going to charge for each of the elements.

### So why have you decided to exhibit this collection?

It got to a point that items I purchased would go straight into storage – I sometimes wouldn't even open the package. I didn't have the space to do anything special and only put up some picture frames. I then thought a website would be a good way of showing what I've collected and this did work for me, although most of the main items were just taken from their packaging, photographed and put back. It was my wife that pushed me to do something special with it all. It was basically her comment, "What's the point, it's a crying shame that it's all going to rot in boxes, you might as well not even have it". I also became ill earlier this year, and these two things finally triggered wanting to share my collection with others. This was my first display and I invested a lot in having the display boxes, frames, etc. professionally designed and made. It was a great start and has pushed me on even further to increase the size of the display. I have been asked to put it on display at a convention in Antwerp next year, loan a costume outfit to the British Film Institute, and display it all at the opening of a science fiction store in London.

Other items I intend to add to the display next time will be the articles above, a number plate from one of the vehicles, and the oblong light assembly from the front of the Spinner. If interest continues I might extend the display to official merchandise and advertising as well. I also have a lot of blueprints and original storyboards but just trying to work out the best way of displaying them. It would be good if I could add something different every time I display so I can keep the interest up. Just being able to do this has given me a huge lift in my personal circumstances so *Blade Runner* means even more than it did before.

### Any inside information for us?

Well, with regards to direct contact with the crew, I have had the pleasure to have e-mail conversations with Tom Southwell, Tom Duffield, Pat van Auken and Gary Randall.

At conventions and meetings I have had the pleasure of meeting Sir Ridley Scott, Rutger Hauer, Sean Young, Edward James Olmos, Daryl Hannah, William Sanderson, Joe Turkel and Michael Deeley.

Just a couple of little things that I picked up on over the years were that Harrison Ford financed the crew jackets, although Vangelis refused to wear one because it was so drab... so he commissioned a one off magenta-coloured one which I also have in my collection!





# A Chris Moore Retrospective

As well as being one of the world's foremost science fiction illustrators, **Chris Moore** is probably the most widely-known visual interpreter of the works of Philip K. Dick. We're proud to showcase a gallery of Chris's art depicting some of PKD's best-known titles, with some new commentary in addition to the commentary from his 2000 collection *Journeyman*.

## **Clans of the Alphane Moon** 1996

"The girl was loosely based on a model in a fashion catalogue but I changed the hair and lengthened her neck quite a bit to make her slightly more alien."





**Radio Free Albemuth** 1996

"The girl was a kid who came to my studio looking for work as an assistant. She was quite bright and just happened to be there when I needed a model for this cover. I had an afro wig from a previous job so stuck that on her and some old respirator glasses from the 1st World War and got some shots off of her. I never saw her again, I think she went off to university. She did seem confused and undecided about what she wanted to do in life."





**Our Friends from Frolix 8** 1997

"The model for this one was a friend that I met through the Preston SF group. Her name is Sarita. I've used her a couple of times in different paintings. I'm told she was thrilled with it... almost as thrilled as her father was, because he's also a huge Philip K. Dick fan. Sarita is now a university lecturer in clinical psychology. The church is in Los Angeles."





**Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said** 1996

"I wanted to introduce a kind of narrative tension into this picture. You can see it in the way that the woman in the car is visibly irritated and waiting for the man to come over, while his attention is on another figure in the background. But when the notes came back I had to put sunglasses on the foreground figure in the finished picture, which for me diminished that particular effect."





**Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?** 1993

“The brief was to pick up on the Blade Runner film without using characters or scenes from the film, hence the pyramid shaped building like the Tyrell Corporation and also the towers burning off methane in the opening scene.”





**Martian Time-Slip** 1998


"The girl was called Lucy and she was a nurse at the local hospital where my wife Katie is a doctor. I saw her at a hospital party and was immediately impressed by her quiet strength. A good friend of mine who was one of the surgeons at the hospital, actually chatted her up for me and asked her to do a modelling session. She spend the best part of a day in my studio and I took lots of pictures which I used in quite a few paintings."





# The Eyes Have It

PHILIP K. DICK

 T WAS quite by accident I discovered this incredible invasion of Earth by lifeforms from another planet. As yet, I haven't done anything about it; I can't think of anything to do. I wrote to the Government, and they sent back a pamphlet on the repair and maintenance of frame houses. Anyhow, the whole thing is known; I'm not the first to discover it. Maybe it's even under control.



'Iris of the Eye and Cardinal', 2010.  
[ **Michael Kappel**  
@ flickr ]

I was sitting in my easy-chair, idly turning the pages of a paperbacked book someone had left on the bus, when I came across the reference that first put me on the trail. For a moment I didn't respond. It took some time for the full import to sink in. After I'd comprehended, it

seemed odd I hadn't noticed it right away.

The reference was clearly to a nonhuman species of incredible properties, not indigenous to Earth. A species, I hasten to point out, customarily masque-rading as ordinary human beings. Their disguise, however, became transparent in the face of the following observations by the author. It was at once obvious the author knew everything. Knew everything — and was taking it in his stride. The line (and I tremble remembering it even now) read:

*... his eyes slowly roved about the room.*

Vague chills assailed me. I tried to picture the



eyes. Did they roll like dimes? The passage indicated not; they seemed to move through the air, not over the surface. Rather rapidly, apparently. No one in the story was surprised. That's what tipped me off. No sign of amazement at such an outrageous thing. Later the matter was amplified.

*... his eyes moved from person to person.*

There it was in a nutshell. The eyes had clearly come apart from the rest of him and were on their own. My heart pounded and my breath choked in my windpipe. I had stumbled on an accidental mention of a totally unfamiliar race. Obviously non-Terrestrial. Yet, to the characters in the book, it was perfectly natural — which suggested they belonged to the same species.

And the author? A slow suspicion burned in my mind. The author was taking it rather *too easily* in his stride. Evidently, he felt this was quite a usual thing. He made absolutely no attempt to conceal this knowledge. The story continued:

*... presently his eyes fastened on Julia.*

Julia, being a lady, had at least the breeding to feel indignant. She is described as blushing and knitting her brows angrily. At this, I sighed with relief. They weren't all non-Terrestrials. The narrative continues:

*... slowly, calmly, his eyes examined every inch of her.*

Great Scott! But here the girl turned and stomped off and the matter ended. I lay back in my chair gasping with horror. My wife and family regarded me in wonder.

"What's wrong, dear?" my wife asked.

I couldn't tell her. Knowledge like this was too much for the ordinary run-of-the-mill person. I had to keep it to myself. "Nothing," I gasped. I leaped up, snatched the book, and hurried out of the room.

IN THE garage, I continued reading. There was more. Trembling, I read the next revealing passage:

*... he put his arm around Julia. Presently she asked him if he would remove his arm. He immediately did so, with a smile.*

It's not said what was done with the arm after the fellow had removed it. Maybe it was left standing upright in the corner. Maybe it was thrown away. I don't care. In any case, the full meaning was there, staring me right in the face.

Here was a race of creatures capable of removing portions of their anatomy at will. Eyes, arms — and maybe more. Without batting an eyelash. My knowledge of biology came in handy, at this point. Obviously they were simple beings, uni-cellular, some sort of primitive single-celled things. Beings no more developed than starfish. Starfish can do the same thing, you know.

I read on. And came to this incredible revelation, tossed off coolly by the author without the faintest tremor:

*... outside the movie theater we split up. Part of us went inside, part over to the cafe for dinner.*

Binary fission, obviously. Splitting in half and forming two entities. Probably each lower half went to the cafe, it being farther, and the upper halves to the movies. I read on, hands shaking. I had really stumbled onto something here. My mind reeled as I made out this passage:

*... I'm afraid there's no doubt about it. Poor Bibney has lost his head again.*

Which was followed by:

*... and Bob says he has utterly no guts.*

Yet Bibney got around as well as the next person. The next person, however, was just as strange. He was soon described as:

*... totally lacking in brains.*

THERE WAS no doubt of the thing in the next passage. Julia, whom I had thought to be the one normal person, reveals herself as also being an alien life form, similar to the rest:

*... quite deliberately, Julia had given her heart to the young man.*

It didn't relate what the final disposition of the organ was, but I didn't really care. It was evident Julia had gone right on living in her usual manner, like all the others in the book. Without heart, arms, eyes, brains, viscera, dividing up in two when the occasion demanded. Without a qualm.

*... thereupon she gave him her hand.*

I sickened. The rascal now had her hand, as well as her heart. I shudder to think what he's done with them, by this time.

*... he took her arm.*

Not content to wait, he had to start dismantling her on his own. Flushing crimson, I slammed the book shut and leaped to my feet. But not in time to escape one last reference to those carefree bits of anatomy whose travels had originally thrown me on the track:

*... her eyes followed him all the way down the road and across the meadow.*

I rushed from the garage and back inside the warm house, as if the accursed things were following me. My wife and children were playing Monopoly in the kitchen. I joined them and played with frantic fervor, brow feverish, teeth chattering.

I had had enough of the thing. I want to hear no more about it. Let them come on. Let them invade Earth. I don't want to get mixed up in it.

I have absolutely no stomach for it.



I'VE BEEN wondering when the Appel/Briggs interview with Phil Dick would crop up in the Newsletter. I was shown a copy of this interview in ms. form in 1979 or 1980 and I was disturbed at the time by the wholly erroneous description of the events surrounding the publication of *We Can Build You* in *Amazing* as "A. Lincoln, Simulacrum." I write now in an effort to set the record straight, although my disappointment with Phil has worn off since his death.

The original title of the novel was *The First in Your Family*, and I believe it was the first sf novel Phil wrote after his foray into mainstream novels, circa 1958-60 – essentially the first of the "modern" Dick sf novels which Phil produced in such a spate in 1960-64. It was the only first-person-narrated novel, and it had one rather major problem, a problem which had kept it from selling for ten years before I bought it: it had no ending. It didn't resolve.

Phil had always had problems with his endings. Very few of the novels he wrote in the early sixties were published with the endings he'd originally written. *The Man in the High Castle* did not end as soon in ms. as it did in its published form, for instance, and in general Phil tended to either write *past* his endings, or never quite reach them. In the case of *The First in Your Family* he stopped well short of any ending.

I'd heard about the novel, as he says, from someone at Scott Meredith – maybe from when I worked there (1963), or perhaps later, I no longer recall – and when I became editor of *Amazing* I asked for it. Scott was glad to send it out; it had been unsold for ten years by then, perhaps the only remaining unsold sf property of Phil's. I read it and realized what the problem was, and I asked Phil about two things: changing the title

(to "A. Lincoln, Simulacrum," my choice) and adding an ending.

Now to put this into context I must point out that I had met Phil in 1964, lived in his house, had him read the *I Ching* for me (a startling experience, the validity of which I believe to this day), and had been publicly described by Phil as the man who knew his work and understood it best. In 1965 or 1966 he had given me the first fifty pages and the synoptic essay for *Deus Irae* and asked me to finish it for him. In other words, this was a man who professed admiration and respect for me and wanted me to collaborate with him. (As a jape, he gave Penguin a photo of me and it was printed [as a photo of the author] on the back cover of the British *The Man in the High Castle*.)

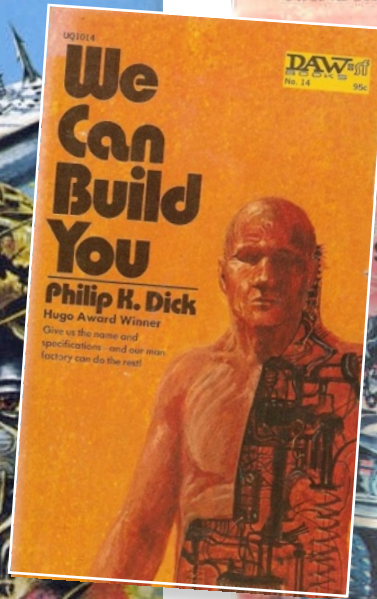
So I called Phil up; he had no objection to my proposed title change and he suggested I write the ending to the novel. I counter-suggested that I write a first-draft and send it to him for him to rewrite, and he agreed. So I wrote a somewhat off-the-wall final chapter in skeletal form. I expected Phil to either reject it out of hand or rewrite it and flesh it out. He did neither. He returned it to me with three words changed and praised its economy.

As far as I knew when I ran "A. Lincoln, Simulacrum" it was in a form satisfactory to Phil. Because I considered myself a friend of Phil's, I tried to do more for him. I knew the novel had been rejected by every market that had seen it, and that undoubtedly included Ace (his original publisher), but ten years had passed and now it had an ending, so I gave a copy to Terry Carr, who was then editor of the Ace Specials. He didn't like it, but passed it on to Don Wollheim – who had rejected the original version – who also refused it. However, after Don went to DAW he must have had second thoughts, because he bought it for DAW and published it under a third title, *We Can Build You* – sans my ending.

When I saw the book I was pleased for Phil – it's always gratifying to see a book you've given up on get published – and I was no less pleased for him when I discovered my ending had been omitted. Shortly thereafter I ran into Phil at the 1972 Los Angeles Worldcon – probably our last face-to-face meeting. In the course of casual conversation I remarked upon the DAW edition of his novel, but not at all as Phil reported it in his interview. I never referred to it as "our book" – I never even *thought* of it in those terms – and when I asked him about the ending he did not give me the wise-ass answer he credits himself with in the interview.

Instead, he gave me a weaseling answer and told me that the decision to eliminate my ending had been Don Wollheim's. "I just went along with him, Ted," he said, shaking his head and offering me a mild sympathy. Not only did I not refer to "our book," Phil never told me, "I know exactly what they did to 'our book.'" They took the 'our'





out of 'our book!'?"

As it happened, three weeks later I ran into Don Wollheim at a Secondary Universe Conference in Iowa, and while chatting with him I asked why he'd removed the ending from the book (which, at that point, I thought he'd done). Don was the one who told me that it had been Phil's decision.

So, okay, it wasn't a brilliant ending; it wasn't even very true to the style of the rest of the novel. I'd never expected it to be used as I'd written it (and I'd used it without further rewriting of my own simply because by the time Phil returned it to me I was up against the typesetter's deadline), and I wasn't sorry to see it go. Had it been retained I would probably have come to regard it as an embarrassment to us both. I had little or no ego invested in it; it had never been publicly credited as mine.

But I was a little disturbed, in 1972, that Phil had been unable to be honest with me about it. At that point I began to wonder if he'd disliked it all along, and if so why he'd never said so to me. His interview with Apel & Briggs makes it clear that this was in fact the case – and that in addition the situation had caused him to drastically revise his attitude toward me.

His reference to me in this interview drips with sarcasm. He sneers at me. And the interviewers obviously went along with his characterization of me ("[Explosive laughter . . .]") although to my knowledge I've never met or had any dealings with them, professionally or otherwise. But to me this interview simply reveals the pettiness of the man and his paranoiac inability to deal with his editors.

It appears to me now that my relationship with Phil underwent a total change – of which I was then unaware – when I became briefly "his editor". I had seen this happen before – to Terry Carr, among others – but for some reason (unconscious arrogance on my part, I

guess), it never occurred to me that it could happen to me. I thought Phil and I knew each other better than that. (Hindsight suggests to me that Phil may never have meant many of the flattering things he said – in print – about me. Looking back I realize that I was virtually in awe of Phil, and perhaps he was playing up to that.) In any event, once I became Phil's editor I stepped into an adversarial relationship. To Phil, *all* editors were adversaries. That is very apparent in his characterization of "kindly editors, who are your best friends . . ." I doubt Phil ever realized that many of us were also writers and completely sympathetic to writers' problems.

Phil was more given to bluster than I realized when I hero-worshipped him, and he was something of a coward who avoided unpleasant scenes with both drugs and covert behavior. He was definitely a coward not to tell me he hated my ending to his book – especially since I made it clear to him that I would do whatever he wished. And he was equally a coward to avoid telling me the truth about the DAW edition. But the bluster comes out in the interview. Five years after the fact he has rewritten events and swaggered through a coolly brilliant putdown of a pushy editor.

But Phil owed me one. Had I not pulled his novel out of the files at Scott Meredith and published it in *Amazing*, and had I not subsequently given it to Terry Carr, who reminded Don Wollheim of it, I seriously doubt it would have been published in *any* form. I am firmly convinced that, Phil's sarcasm to the contrary notwithstanding, I did him a good turn.

Having said that, I must add that I think that any material given by Phil in the interviews of the latter part of his life must be considered suspect until verified. I think Phil tended to rewrite events in his own mind, or perhaps in order to give others a better story. I doubt my experience is unique.



# Chapter 19, A. Lincoln, Simulacrum

TED WHITE



**I** DIDN'T look up when the car stopped by the curb. It stopped about twenty feet back, outside the yellow stripe that measured off the bus stop. I paid it no attention. Somewhere in the back of my consciousness I was still sorting my memories, trying to decide what made some of them real, and some of them delusive. Maybe they all were; Doctor Shedd's drug-therapy could have totally reprogrammed me without my awareness of it. You get involved with a delusion like that controlled fugue and it becomes as much a part of your total experience – the aggregate of memories that you carry around inside your head in protein clusters – as anything else you remember. I wondered if Doctor Shedd really had any idea of what he was doing. Did anyone?

"Mr. Rosen—"

I turned around and saw the car. The Lincoln simulacrum was at the wheel, and holding the door half open, clearly caught in a moment of indecision. Its head bobbed up over the lowered window and it called out, so quietly that I decided it was embarrassed to be calling attention to itself, here, in the bright sunlight in front of the Kasanin Clinic. "Mr. Rosen, I wonder if I might speak with you—?"

I went over to the car. "How are you?" I asked it. It seemed natural that I hold my hand to it, and the Lincoln took my hand in a firm handshake.

"The interior of this car is air-conditioned," it said. "Perhaps you would be more comfortable ..."

"Did you come to meet me?" I asked it as I slid into the front seat and across to the passenger's side. The Lincoln followed me back into the car, seating itself easily in the driver's seat, casually touching the controls that locked the door and raised the window, then leaning forward to adjust the temperature controls.

"I felt that someone should meet you, Mr. Rosen," it said. "When Dr. Shedd notified your partner, Mr. Rock, that you were being let go, I volunteered to fly out." It looked for a moment at its gnarled knuckles on the rim of the steering wheel. Its hands had fallen into the ten o'clock and two o'clock position automatically. "I felt that I was, in some measure, responsible for your difficulties." It paused again, as if unsure of itself at this moment. I wondered if somewhere inside it cams were turning, searching for new resting places. Ridiculous, of course; all the circuits were integrated solid-state components. But I had that

▲  
'Abraham Lincoln',  
1900 / 2012 / 2013.  
[ M.P. Rice, & Juan  
Garcia / Peter  
Young  
@ flickr ]



feeling. “We have certain things in common, you and I, Mr. Rosen,” the Lincoln added.

The air conditioning was drying the sweat off my forehead and making the synthetic shirt I was wearing feel cold and clammy. “I appreciate that,” I said, “I really do. Listen, can you tell me something? Can you fill me in a little? What’s been going on since I left? How’s my dad?”

“I’m afraid your father has passed away,” the Lincoln told me. “Mr. Rock sends his regrets, and said to tell you that Chester is all right. He says to come on back to your old job; the partnership is still valid. And ... I suppose you are aware that ... Pris ...”

“I saw her. Here.”

“I see.”

“So, outside of my father dying, which is really no surprise to anyone, business is as usual. Is that it?” I asked it. “Life goes on; the more things change, the more they remain the same ...?”

The Lincoln nodded its great head. “That is pretty much the case, I believe.”

I stared at it and wondered why I had never before been aware of the contradictions embodied in this simulacrum. Totally human in appearance, even to the extent that it *believed* itself human – but a manufactured object, with manufactured memories, personality, intelligence. What did we think we were? God? Playing with the recreation of human beings, building ersatz figures from the past? What next? Jesus Christ? What a coup *that* would be for R & R ASSOCIATES. Fresh off the cross: if you pulled at its scabs its stigmata would bleed for you. I wondered if it could be built so that it could work the historical miracles.

Pris. These simulacra were Pris’s delusions. *She* was the “creative” one, the God-mind behind them. She had designed this creature which sat next to me in a modern car, obviously familiar with it, and talking to me as one adult human being to another.

How far back did my insanity go, I wondered? How had I ever accepted the crazy notion that we had somehow revived the *real* Abraham Lincoln? Sure – everything I could look up about him he also knew, because he’d been programmed from the same sources. But what about those things we *didn’t* know about Lincoln – those facts which had become lost or were too private for him ever to have shared?

“Are you aware of the fact that you are only a point of view?” I asked the Lincoln.

“Are not we all?” it replied. “I will admit I find the notion of the Rational Man appealing – but more in the sense of an ideal, than of a practical reality. We are all points of view, subjective interpretations of the universe we inhabit. You know—” it smiled, a sad but boyishly eager smile – “much has changed in this century over the last, and I confess that there is much which fascinates me. Many were the nights when I stood alone under the stars and wondered about them. About the moon ... It is as if I fell asleep, and when I woke the answers—well, some of them at any rate—were waiting for me. It is both a humbling and a proud experience.”

I waited it out. “That’s my point,” I said. “*You* did not fall asleep when John Wilkes Booth’s bullet struck its target down. You really aren’t the same Lincoln. *You*

know that, don’t you? You’re a recreation: you represent someone’s point of view about Lincoln. To be specific, you are Pris Frauentzimmer’s point of view. She had this thing, this knowledge about Lincoln, and she created you in the image of the man as she regarded him. But she didn’t know the *real* Lincoln. And she couldn’t recreate the real Lincoln. She had to settle for what she knew and what she believed. Are you aware of that?”

The Lincoln regarded me with a sad, compassionate expression. It sighed. “I am aware of the facts of the matter,” it said. “But they do not alter my inner perceptions. They make my awareness of myself no less real.”

As it said that, I felt a shock come over me, and I found myself staring at it with a feeling that paralleled that of *deja vu*—a sense of profound awareness of the absolute *rightness* of what it was saying.

“Listen,” I said. “In there, in Kasanin Clinic, they gave me drugs and put me through what they call *controlled fugues*. You know what I mean? They *helped* me to create my special delusions, my sickness. But they administered it. The idea was to help me work through them. I had to work it all out. Now, while I was in a fugue, it was real to me, you know what I mean? It was subjectively *real*. I can remember what happened in my fugues as well as I can anything else I ever did. And they *changed* me. They became part of my experience. Hell, everybody is changed by his experiences. I was too. So that makes them *real*, on the inside. Do you know what I mean?” I was excited and I clutched at its arm. It felt like a real arm: a little like my dad’s arm, stringy but muscled. “My ‘inner perceptions,’ like you said: they’re just as real.”

“You had to get Miss Frauentzimmer out of your system,” the Lincoln said. “That was part of your therapy.”

I stared at it. “If I pinched you, would it hurt you?” I asked it. Then I answered myself: “Sure; you have pain circuits; I remember. But if I pinched you, would your skin go white for a moment afterwards, and then get red, or show bruises?”

It started to pull its arm free of my grip, but I held it.

“It’s a test,” I said. “Are you the Lincoln Simulacrum I saw them making, Maury, Bob Bundy and Pris? Or are you a ringer?” I caught at a fold of flesh on its forearm with my thumb and forefinger.

“Mr. Rosen, you’re behaving hysterically,” it said. “There are people standing outside the car, watching you.”

I looked up and jerked my head around. There was no one outside the car; not close by, at any rate. I pinched, hard, just as the Lincoln freed itself from my grasp.

It rubbed its arm and said, chidingly, “There was no need for that, you know.”

“Let’s see your arm,” I said. “Come on; let’s have a look.”

It extended its arm. Two angry red spots glowed on it. “Can you doubt me any longer?” it said.

I stared at it. “Who are you, really?” I asked. Then acting on a sudden wild impulse, “Who are you working for? Barrows?”

The Lincoln gave me a sudden sardonic smile. It reached out and caught the flesh of my own forearm

between its fingers, and pinched. I didn't have time to react, but I yowled at the sudden pain. "Why'd you do that?" I asked.

Then I looked down at my arm where I was rubbing it. The skin showed no change of color at all.

Sam Barrows smiled benevolently at me. "There's a place for you in our organization, Rosen. You need have no fears about being, ah, disconnected."

"I still don't really understand," I said. Mrs. Nild gave me a sympathetic look.

"You were constructed as part of our program to test the feasibility of simulacra," Barrows told me. "You, your father and your brother. It's really quite simple. When Mr. Rock first approached me with the idea of historical simulacra—some time before you were made aware of it, actually—I decided that his plan was, as I said later, not of real commercial value. I could see far more far-reaching implications. Mr. Rock was mostly hung up on his daughter's ideas. I suggested that he create you, and your family, and integrate them in his business operation. It was necessary for you think of yourself as real individuals of course; you couldn't be allowed to find out the truth."

"Then I'm a—a made up person?" I whispered.

"If you want to put it that way, yes."

"Who—who thought me up?"

"Miss, ah, Frauentzimmer."

"I see," I said, and I was beginning to. What an incredibly sick mind the child had! I shook my head, disbelievingly. To do all the things she had done—!

"Pris, though," I said. "She's real?"

He nodded, screwing up his face into an expression I couldn't decipher. "Very real," he said.

"And she programmed me."

"You were her pride and joy," he said with accents of irony.

"The Lincoln?" I asked. "Was it—?"

"You were an early model," Barrows said. "We made improvements on the later ones: an entire capillary system that not only regulated skin temperature, but could induce blushes ..."

"We *did* have a lot in common," I said.

"You still do," Barrows said. "You represent an enormous investment of money. My money."

"I suppose you intend to send me to the moon, is that it?" I asked. "Part of your plan to populate your lunar tracts?"

"Would you object?"

"Knowing the truth about myself?"

He smiled and nodded. "Mrs. Nild will take care of all the details." I was dismissed.

I live in a house in the Sea of Serenity, within view of the Haemus Mountains. I have a wife who was designed to my specifications. She does not look at all like Pris, and we have no children. Of the six families on our block, one is human, and the other four think they are. I understand the Spelmans have received word they're to be transferred back to Earth soon, so I expect soon we'll have two human families on our block.

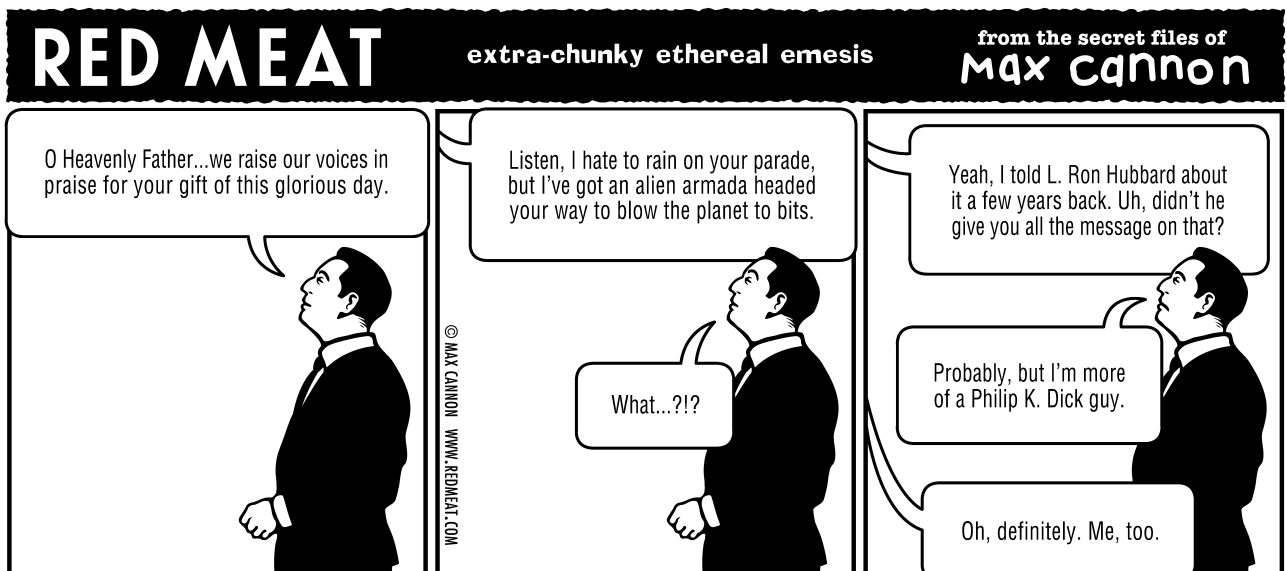
I have ads running in the local papers from here down to Mare Nectaris:

Spinnet piano, also electric organ, repossessed, in perfect condition, SACRIFICE. Cash or good credit risk wanted in this area, to take over payments rather than transport back to Mare Serenitatis. Contact Frauentzimmer Piano Co., Mr. Rosen, Credit Manager, Bessel City, M.S.

It's a good ad; it still pulls pretty well. We have a branch factory up here, and twice a year I get to make the haul back down to Earth to see my partner, Maury Rock. The rest of the time I am behind the desk up here, plotting out the ads and routing our crawlers and answering each response to the ads.

I mean, why not? A man needs a job, even on the moon—and people up here appreciate the fine craftsmanship of our spinets and organs. Maybe they're programmed to; I wouldn't know. I try to think about that as little as possible, and not at all when I visit Maury.

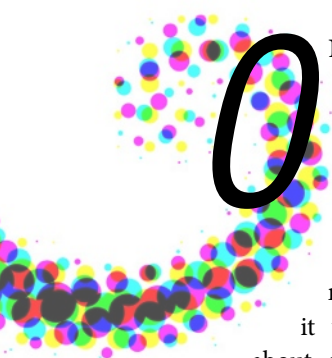
But once in a while I do wonder about one thing: I wonder what Sam Barrows did with the Lincoln.





# The Death of Philip K. Dick

TIM POWERS



ON FEBRUARY 18th of 1982, a Thursday, Mary Wilson called my wife, Serena, at about nine in the evening and told her she was worried because she'd been trying all afternoon to call Phil but had been getting no answer. Serena told me about it when I got home from work about ten minutes later; we weren't particularly worried, but we decided that if Phil didn't show up before long (he always made it to our Thursday night gatherings) we'd give him or his closest neighbors a call.

A guest arrived at our front door, and while I was exchanging chit-chat with him, the phone rang. Serena got it, and very soon waved at us to shut up.

"Hello, this is Elizabeth," a woman's voice had said, "Mary's mother. Mary asked me to call you and Tim and tell you that Phil is unconscious." This was when Serena began waving at us. "Mary got hold of Phil's neighbors and told them she was worried about him, and they went next door and knocked and got no answer, but the door was unlocked so they went in. At first they thought no one was home, but then they saw Phil's feet sticking out from behind the coffee table. He's unconscious. The paramedics have been called, and Mary's on her

way down there right now."

I got back into my jacket and, promising to call if I learned anything, left Serena to greet guests and clattered down the back stairs. As I was putting the key in my motorcycle's ignition I heard the sirens of the paramedics howl past me down Main Street.

There were a couple of big red ambulance-type vehicles, with doors open and bright inside lights on, in front of Phil's building. I parked, and was staring at the damned front gate when Mary Wilson came running up a few moments later, looking haggard, pale, and scared.

"Ring his next-door neighbors," she snapped. Then, "Never mind," she said, starting forward, "look, it's open."

The gate was ajar. We ran inside and hurried up the stairs, Mary tensely gasping out to me the same story her mother had told Serena on the phone. On the third floor there were a few people peering around curiously, but Phil's door was open so Mary and I walked right in. His neighbor was already inside. A paramedic asked us who we were. We said we were old friends of Phil's, which the neighbor verified, and the man let us stay.

It was odd and disturbing to see see uniformed men, and metal suitcases full of medical instruments, in Phil's living room. One of his cats, Mrs. Tubbs, was wandering around,

▲  
'Into the Unknown (The Grasshopper Lies Heavy)', 2010.  
[ **Veli-Matti Hinkula** @ flickr ]

and we shooed her away from the open front door.

Phil himself was in the bedroom, sprawled sideways across the bed, wearing jeans and the Black Rozztox t-shirt he's wearing in the photo on the back cover of *Timothy Archer*. I could only peer in over the paramedics' shoulders, but I could see that Phil, though his eyes were open, was not okay, and that the paramedics were busy, taking his blood pressure and measuring out a hypodermic-full of some clear stuff to shoot him with. One man was holding Phil's hands and saying, with a sort of brusque joviality, "Philip? Can you hear me? What's your name? Can you tell us your name?" Phil was only able to grunt, though it seemed to be a response. "Okay, Philip, I want you to squeeze your right hand, okay? Squeeze it, your right hand." I saw Phil's hand move, weakly. "Okay, now squeeze your left hand." From where I was standing I couldn't see his left hand. The man leaned over and took hold of Phil's feet. "Okay, Philip, push with your feet, will you do that? Push against me." I couldn't tell whether Phil did or not.

While several paramedics were doing that, another guy was asking Mary and me questions about Phil: "How old is he?"

"Uh," I said, rattled, "born in '28."

"He's forty-eight?"

"No, no... uh, he's fifty-four."

"Has he ever attempted suicide?"

"Yeah, in '76."

"How'd he do it?"

"Jesus, he took an overdose of digitalis and then cut his wrist and then sat in his idling car in the garage for carbon monoxide poisoning."

The man raised his eyebrows. "Hm. Any allergies?"

"I don't know of any."

"Who's his doctor?"

Mary pointed to a half-dozen brown plastic bottles on the dresser. "His name would be on those."

They discussed where to take him, and decided on Western Medical Center. I asked one guy how it looked to him, since he must see a hundred cases like this in a month, and he said it looked like a stroke, but that Phil would very likely recover.

I hadn't called home because I was afraid the paramedics might suddenly need to use the phone, and when they'd got Phil onto the wheeled stretcher and got him out onto the inner balcony that runs around the third floor of the building, Serena and one of our Thursday-guests rounded the corner of the stairs. I hurried over to them and told them what had been going on, and then we stood back while the paramedics wheeled Phil past us and then carried the stretcher down the stairs. Phil's eyes were open, looking straight ahead, and he was frowning just slightly.

Mary rode along in the ambulance to the hospital, while the rest of us went back to our place, where I made a cautiously optimistic phone call to Phil's ex-wife, Tess.

Well, it may not have been a surprise to John Brunner (*Locus* #256, p. 12), but Phil's death at 53 was

certainly a surprise to people who, perhaps, knew him better than Brunner did. Phil's blood pressure had been brought down to normal, and his weight was (?) what it should have been; during his last few years he'd been socializing much more than he used to – movies, Thursday night gatherings at my place, Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas and New Year's parties at various friends' houses, long, jovial evenings at (?) Squires' house in Glendale (Phil said once that a visit to Squires' was the only prospect that could induce him to drive to L.A.); he was writing some of his very best books, and was cheerfully aware of it; he was pleased with the increasing attention being given to his work by Hollywood; and during his last few years he was in the enviable position of literally having more money than he knew what to do with (he gave much of it away, frequently to such drug-rehabilitation places as the Covenant House in New York).

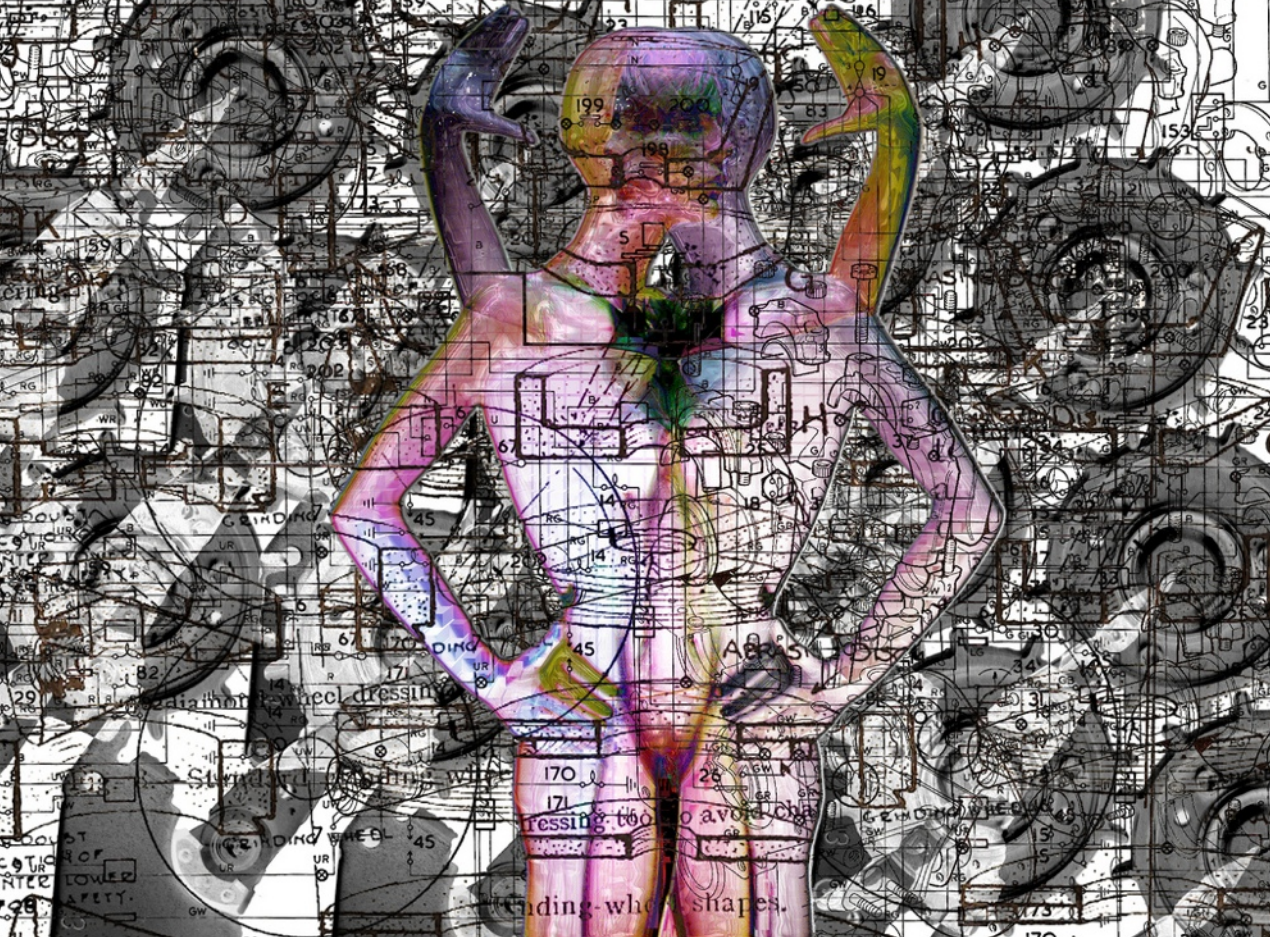
"He was one of the saddest people I ever met," said Brunner in his *Locus* appreciation of Dick. "He was incapable of helping someone else to happiness except by giving orders..." – I really wonder if Brunner didn't meet some other guy wearing a P. K. Dick name-tag. Phil had, certainly, moods of inward-staring depression, sometimes so profound as to really require a stronger word than "depression"; but anyone who knew him at all well knows that the depression was massively outweighed by Phil's irresistible sense of humor, his pretense-puncturing sense of perspective, his pure delight in good poetry, prose, food, music, friends, liquor, tobacco, *Winnie the Pooh*, Nicolette Larson, shrimp, Gilbert and Sullivan, Laphroig scotch, Wagner, H. Upmann cigars, *Ulysses*, Beethoven's Ninth, Janis Joplin, fresh baklava, Dean Swift snuff (especially Wren's Relish)... to name, at complete random, just a few of his enthusiasms. And he was generous not only with his books and records and cash (so freely that loans, through forgetfulness, often became gifts), but also with his *time*, an infinitely more precious and irreplaceable commodity. Phil would listen, with unfeigned attention and interest and sympathy, to people most of us consider ourselves too busy to bother with. I've seen him go to a good deal of trouble to help not only friends, but strangers whose mere situation placed, he felt, a claim on him; and there was not an hour of the twenty-four when one couldn't call him up and ask for, and probably get, any help he was capable of giving. Some of his friends used to say that if you were to call Phil and say "Phil, my car's broke and I've been evicted, can you give me \$400 and help me move my couch?", he'd say, "Sure, I'll be right over... uh... by the way, who is this?"

John Brunner has been a tremendously important promoter and favorable critic of Phil's work, and I know Phil was grateful; and I think it's a sad bit of "the way of the world" as Brunner puts it, that Brunner apparently never got to know the real, complete man that Phil Dick was, at least during his last years.



# Being VALIS: The Lives and Deaths of Philip K. Dick

CHRIS LITES



**I**T'S 2005 and I'm at *Wired Magazine's* Next Fest at Navy Pier in Chicago. The event is designed to showcase the future of technology but I'm standing in a simulacrum of a 1970s living room waiting to talk to a dead science-fiction author. One wall is a giant window, as if the people mulling about the other wonders outside are meant to peer in and marvel at an actual specimen of life circa 1974. Life moves pretty fast; perhaps they've forgotten what it was like. Here, in the middle of 2013, I can't begin to tell you what 2005 was really like. I'd have to give it thirty years for perspective. There is a dead author in vault-like recreation of the last living room he ever lived in. There is a techie desperately handling his multi-colored wires, spread like ganglia out the back of his head. I am reminded of Jackie Kennedy in the Zapruder film chasing JFK's remains over the back of that limo, the effect now is just as disturbing. While the man handles the dead author's brains, the dead author merely smiles.

Inside the time capsule set to 1974, Nixon is still president. There is a record player and vinyl lines the walls. I imagine the future might dig us up like this one day and make little sense of it

except, perhaps, for the android in the corner. The android is the dead author. He's Philip Kindred Dick, and he's been programmed with all the knowledge, novels and personal correspondences that Dick himself wrote in his lifetime. In this way, Android Dick really isn't much different than "real life Dick." At least I don't think Dick himself would make too radical a distinction between the two.

They make you wait in a line to talk to the dead author, and I wonder precisely why I am there. Is it merely for the irony of seeing this author whom I admire conscripted to the fate of one of his characters? No, there's more, but I cannot yet say what it is.

His handlers, these white-shirted programmer types, huddle around him like one might a boozy celebrity rock star expected to go on stage but ill-prepared for it. They apologize. He isn't at his best today, and the thumping bass coming through the glass wall from another booth called the "Juke Bot" is making it difficult for him to understand questions but we'll get to try anyway. It must be nearly one hundred degrees inside this time capsule gulag, this Philip Dickian hell. Dick himself couldn't have invented anything as banal or as absurd as this, and yet he might have been comfortable here. An agoraphobe, he spent long periods holed up inside his house, unwilling to face the crowds of Southern



'Man and Machine' series, 2010.  
[ Dave Bonser @ flickr ]

California where he resided. His handlers explain he has been fitted with visual recognition software. If a relative of his came by he'd know their face, he might smile at them. It's 2005 and Philip has been dead for twenty-three years. Soon he'll try to speak.

It's the 1960s and Dick's work is escaping the decaying orbit of the stale sci-fi genre. While the bulk of his peers are still tethered to the festering rot of space opera and the wonders of the atomic era, Dick is using the trappings of science fiction to explore the deeper questions of cosmology, the nature of reality, alternate universes and theology. Perhaps this is why, fifty years on, Dick's works are still being read and are finding new fortune as hot Hollywood properties. While much of the rest of sixties-era sci-fi has long since reached its sell-by date, Dick's work seems fresh, and relevant to today's complex world.

As many have, I found Dick's work through the cyberpunk world of *Blade Runner*. The rain, neon and noir of that film led me to the more emotional, intellectual world of Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* While Dick doesn't have the style of a director like Ridley Scott (nor the prose style of a Pynchon to whom he is often compared) he was a fount of ideas, seemingly endless, producing texts with mechanistic frenzy.

But if Dick is famous as a prolific pulp science fiction writer (forty-two amphetamine-aided novels), then in certain circles he is a legend as a gnostic, acid theology prophet (though he only ever tripped but once in his life). From February to March of 1974 he experienced a break with known reality and ventured into territories stranger, more horrifying and sublime than anything he ever conceived of in his fiction. At times he thought himself possessed by the minds of dead friends, ancient Christian mystics, Soviet experimenters, artificial intelligences, the Godhead and simple, inexorable schizophrenia. Had Philip K. Dick travelled into one of his novels, or had he just finally slipped past that event horizon of artistic genius into raving lunacy? He spent the last eight years of his life trying to figure it out. The path to the answer caused him to explore the Answer to Everything.

It's December 16 1928, back in Chicago, and Philip Kindred Dick is born. He is premature, as is his twin, Jane. Jane will not survive. The babies are malnourished and Jane dies while Phil lives. Phil will only learn of his sister's brief existence years later, but it will haunt the rest of his life. When his sister is buried, the tombstone leaves a place for Philip Kindred Dick right next to her, with his date of birth, then a hyphen, that blank space after, just waiting to be filled in.

It's 1975 and Philip hasn't died yet though he meant to the night before. He ingested 49 tablets of Digitalis (which he took for his arrhythmia) along with a grab bag

of Librium, Quide and antidepressants, all of it washed down with half a bottle of wine. Phil cut his left wrist then climbed into the red Fiat Spyder he had just purchased (having finally come into something resembling financial success) sealed himself in the garage and turned on the engine.

The blood in his left arm coagulated, the faulty choke on the Fiat stalled the engine and Phil vomited up much of the drugs he ingested. He stumbled to the mailbox that morning to find a typescript of his latest novel. He put food out for the cat and called his therapist who advised he ring the paramedics immediately.

I imagine Phil sitting on the same couch as Android Phil will in 2005 waiting for other men, also dressed in white, to come and save him. Then too, back in 1975, they arrived and took him to Orange Country Hospital. Once stabilized in the cardiac intensive wing, Phil was transferred to the psychiatric ward by an armed cop. Surely this fed his paranoia, which had grown over the years, as evidenced by his novels. He was left on a cot in a dark room with other cots occupied by other lost souls. I imagine that the single TV filled the room with the kind of pink light his mind had witnessed many times in the last year — a kind of pop-enthusiasm. It's divinity as distilled through the collective unconscious detritus at the end of the 20th Century. The Golden Rectangle of the Greeks frames the celebrities of today. That night, with leather manacles dangling on either side, Phil watched the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. The guest was Sammy Davis Junior and Phil wondered what life was like with one dark eye. Did he wonder what his own life had meant? Did he wonder if the visions he had been experiencing for the last year came with any insight?

It's February 1974 and Philip K. Dick is about to have the experience that will define the rest of his life. He will obsess over it, wrestle with it, come to both love and hate it. In moments, Dick will have an encounter with the divine. In time, the encounter will grow and morph, turn from an introduction to a possession, and Dick will write some eight thousand pages of what he calls his Exegesis attempting to unravel the meaning of it. But Dick isn't just trying to understand his experience, he's trying to unlock the secret of being. In trying to find the root of his own experience, he must unlock the meaning of the cosmos. It occurs to me now as I write that this is what draws me to him. As a philosophy major in college, I wanted those answers; I sought them, made them my intended career. Dick spent the last eight years of his life in singular pursuit of such answers.

Phil was gripped by fear and paranoia. He'd recently released a novel called *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said* to wide acclaim. The book itself, as many of Dick's books do, centers around a man displaced between realities. Television talk show host, Jason Taverner — the most famous man on Earth — wakes one morning to find that no one has heard of him. He is a person without status in



a police state suddenly demanding his papers. As he tries to find his way, he is labeled a terrorist and accused of plotting to overthrow the government. He finds salvation in one of Dick's stock characters — a dark haired, dark eyed girl. She is his Other, the image he formed early in his life of Jane, his deceased twin who never grew to adulthood. This image became a template for many of the women he would love and marry in his life — his anima made manifest. Phil had recently become concerned his own government was watching him, suspecting him of collaborating with the Soviets. His paranoia is running high, he needs deliverance.

His delivery comes as precisely that, and literally at his doorstep. A dark haired girl with dark eyes, like the one in his novel, arrives to save him.

*The doorbell rang and I went, and there stood this girl with black, black hair and large eyes very lovely and intense; I stood staring at her, amazed, also confused, thinking I'd never seen such a beautiful girl, and why was she standing there? She handed me the package of medication, and I tried to think what to say to her; I noticed, then, a fascinating gold necklace around her neck and I said, "What is that? It certainly is beautiful," just, you see, to find something to say and hold her there. The girl indicated the major figure in it, which was a fish. "This is a sign used by the early Christians," she said, and then departed.*

— PKD, *Exegesis*

In seeing the sign of the fish, of Jesus, Phil was immediately shuttled back to 70 A.D. He knew, or rather he remembered, that he was a secret Christian, a member of an outlaw sect and that the year was actually 70 A.D. The Roman Empire has never ended. Phil experienced anamnesis, the loss of forgetting. Something, he became convinced, had purposefully blocked his memory, had shrouded the world in illusion and made everyone believe that the year was 1974 and that he, and the rest of us, were living in a place called the United States of America. According to Dick, this was not so. We were living in 70 A.D. and the Roman Empire had never ended but only been made to seem to end. This spurious, illusory world he called The Black Iron Prison. Dick thought it the work of a Gnostic God, a deranged, blind idiot God known as a demiurge. Phil had parted that veil to see the truth or he had gone insane.

Dick thought that these might be phylogenic or "genetic" memories, atavisms handed down from the great Jungian unconscious by seeing the fish sign. The fish sign, he knew, was the secret code used by hidden Christians to wake other believers up.

*The fish sign causes you to remember. Remember what? This is Gnostic. Your celestial origins; this has to do with the DNA because the memory is located in the DNA (phylogenic memory). Very ancient memories, predating*

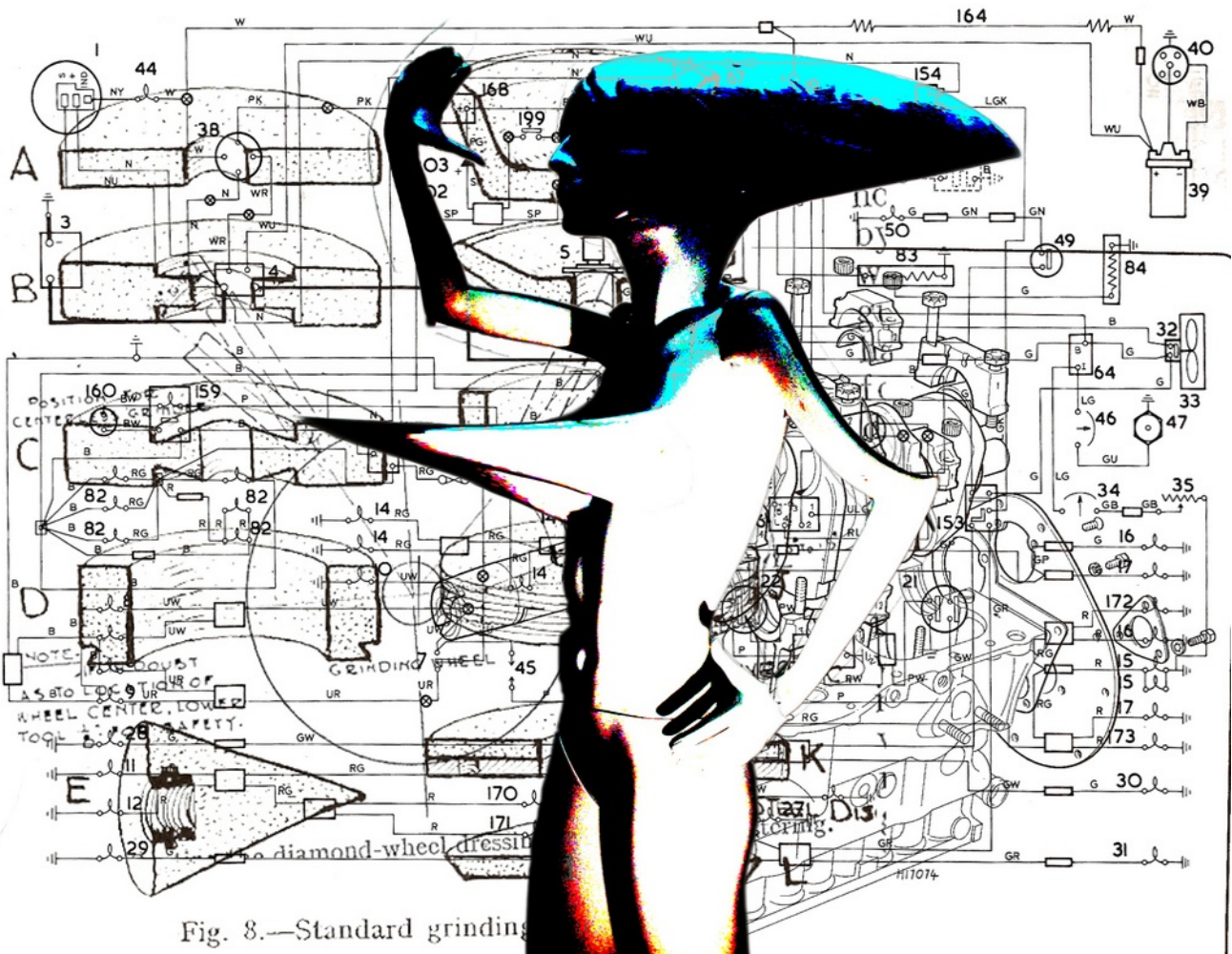


Fig. 8.—Standard grinding

*this life, are triggered off. (...) You remember your real nature. Which is to say, origins. Die Zeit is da! (The time is here!) The Gnostic Gnosis: You are here in this world in a thrown condition, but you are not of this world.*

— PKD, *Exegesis*

Phil had encountered something extraordinary, even for him. He had met with a divinity, though only in a tangential way. Over the coming months, that divinity began to interact with him directly. He largely refrained from calling it God. Sometimes he labels it Zebra, or Firebright, but most often he called it VALIS, an acronym: Vast, Active, Living, Intelligence System. Some days Valis was an artificial intelligence, others, a Soviet experiment beamed directly at him. On other days it was the very face of God.

It's 2005 and Philip K. Dick speaks again. The lips move, a genuine facial reaction is processed by servomotors working under a semi-lifelike skin. Harrison Ford should be here, administering a Voight-Kampff test. Would the author then have to order his own execution? Would the simulacra at the exhibition have to give itself the test, watch itself fail and then carry out the final sentence? In a way, Dick did this his entire life. Everything was a test, a philosophical crucible of the real against the unreal. And Phil's mind and body both were constantly at stake.

Next to me, in the line to talk to the resurrected silicon messiah, my friend is eager to take the mike. He's been a fan of Philip K. Dick for years. He wants to ask him a question. His pale, fleshy hands wrap around the microphone like a cobra. He says, "Tell me about 2-3-74" (Dick's shorthand for the events from February to March of 1974). In the heat, with sweat rolling down my back, with the glass wall vibrating to the Juke Bot music, with the techies patching the psyche of PKD through a laptop and running a diagnostic, doing their post modern impression of angels, we wait. Apotheosis has come in stranger forms, hasn't it?

It's early March 1974, or 70 A.D. depending on who you ask. Phil's wife Tessa has just woken to hear the antediluvian hissing of a reptile. It was coming from Phil. She calls his name again and again, yet he continues to hiss. Finally, he stops and begins to cry. He prays, "*Libera me Domine.*" In Latin, "Free me, God." He's been having dreams of dragons, archetypal dreams in which his cat atavistically devolves into a saber-tooth. These are dreams in which young Phil lives with a tribe of prehistoric humans. He's gone deep into the Jungian sea, deep into primordial forms. Phil was surfacing with phylogenetic memory like a treasure hunter would with doubloons from a Spanish wreck. These treasures, however, came double-sided, and with each face of enlightenment comes one of terror.

Phil needed to go even deeper to get at the truth. That's what he was looking for, or, at least, that's what he told himself. Time didn't matter now. Soon, Phil would

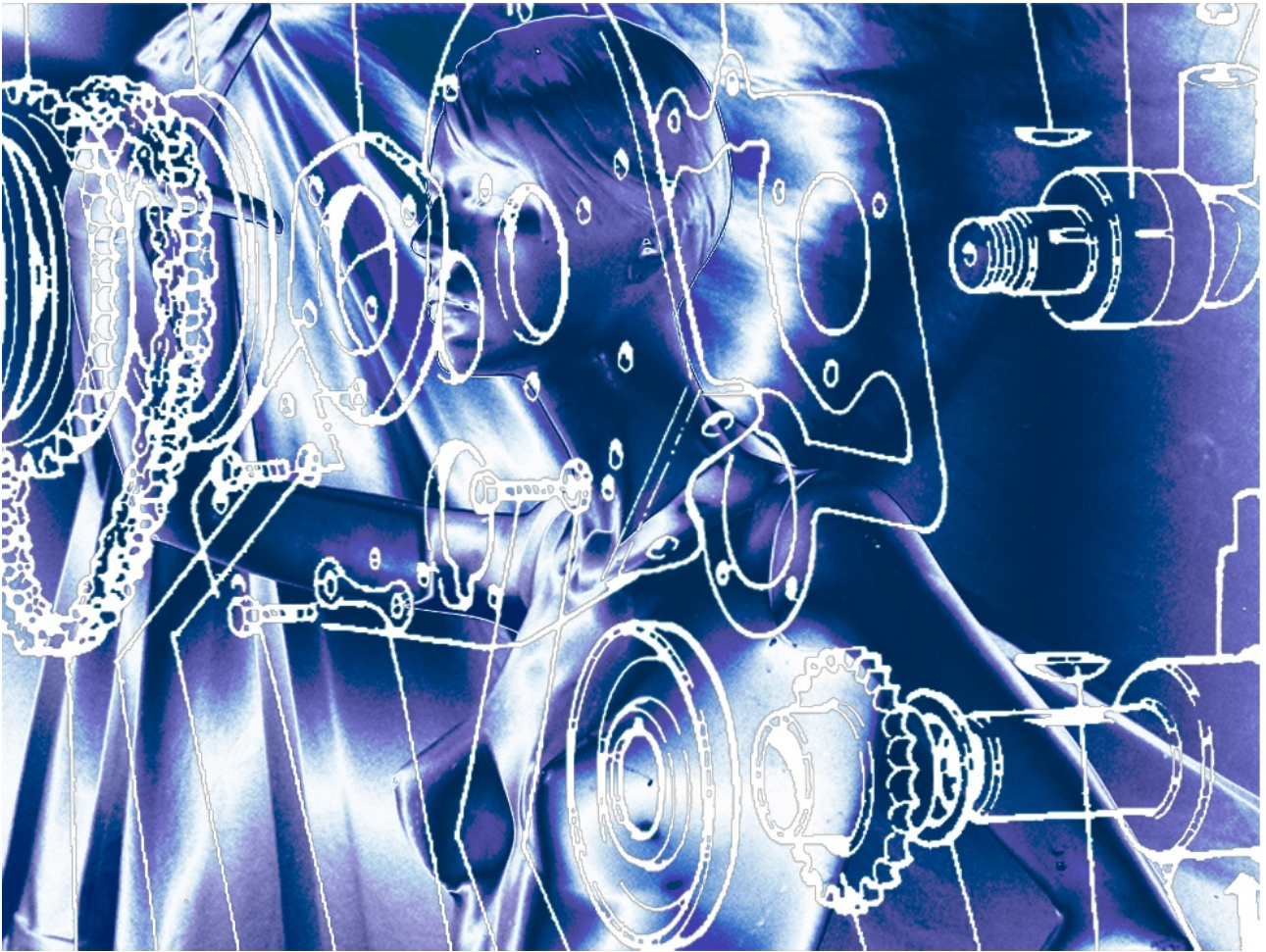
begin ingesting large amounts of vitamins on the advice of an article suggesting they improve neural firing in schizophrenics. Phil wondered what the pills would do to a normal person. Might they create such firing in the brain so that the two hemispheres function like one? Perhaps Phil wouldn't have to be Phil anymore. He'd become Thomas, a second century Christian who will possess and advise him but who won't understand how to turn on a lamp. Phil took the vitamins and waited.

It's 2005 in the sweaty time capsule gulag and PKD's mouth is open and he is speaking, but what he says is a disappointment. There is no revelation, no drawing back of the curtain. His response is something akin to the response you get in older adventure games on the Apple II when you asked a question that wasn't in the game programs' library. Phil gives us a stock answer like, "I'm afraid I don't know about that." The android who recognized his relatives and carried on conversations has been reduced to an Infocom game circa 1983. It's a let down, but I guess it means we get out of the gulag sooner and back into cool air. The angels reworking his mind assure us it's a computer malfunction and not his usual state. He's more like a stroke victim trying to re-learn how to process language. I imagine this might be the same way God explains World War Two to an alien race. "Really, they don't usually act like this."

Out a side fire door, we emerge into natural light. From the dark caverns of subdued neon, the fog walls projecting pseudo holograms, an invisibility cloak that only works with special glasses, I'm now out against the blue swell of Lake Michigan on Navy Pier. I put my shades on, because reality is too bright. My friends and I sit for a while at a table with a picnic umbrella blooming over us, mushroom cloud fashion. You can't talk to, or about, the dead Philip K. Dick without thinking of the Cold War. His work was very much of that time. Nixon's presidency loomed as black as the Black Iron Prison itself, and the Empire That Never Ended could have stood in for the United States. What strange alternate reality were we living where humanity had the power to wipe itself out in the flash of atomic fire?

Yet none of these things are what Dick's work has ever meant to me. While it's true all science fiction is about the time in which it is written, Phil was writing about themes that stretched back to the dawning of consciousness. His prescience wasn't in seeing technology that might become revolutionary down the road but in seeing that the larger questions always cycle back into fashion. Phil never gave up on those questions. That's why I'm here today, because the journey isn't the destination, the questions aren't the answers. Despite what the weak truisms might tell us, the quest itself is not the important part, it is always the grail that must be attained. Phil never sought less. Shoals of clouds bank above the tall prows of the boats on the lake. In those clouds we could find many answers, but only one of them would be right. This isn't a plurality. This isn't a





consensus of opinion. Neither Phil nor myself were looking for the what if but rather, as Phil himself said, the “what if, my god!”

It's mid-March 1974, it's the beginning of the universe and it's end. It's 2013 while I write this and it's 70 A.D. A younger me watches an android Dick in 2005. It isn't anytime at all. Phosphenes are burning across the interior landscape of Philip K. Dick. Images, pages in a book, in every book, shuttling past at the speed of light. Kandinsky images strobing next to those of Paul Klee — madness in modern art form.

Then, Dick's vision resolves into sacred texts presented in koine Greek, in Latin, in dead languages Phil doesn't know. In his dream life he can somehow understand these languages, and they are burned into his memory. His tutor is Thomas, the aforementioned Christian apparition which has possessed him.

Phil lies in bed, and I imagine the strange images and alphanumeric reflecting off Phil's face as they snake their way over the peaks and valleys made by the wrinkles of his sheets. It's raw code, living information. Phil is seizing in his sleep, or maybe he's just turning. I can't say. His fifth and final wife, Tessa, is asleep next to him. In another room, his son, Christopher, is asleep. Some time ago Phil secretly baptized the child himself and was imparted by VALIS with the knowledge that Christopher has a life threatening inguinal hernia. The

boy in fact does.

In Phil's brain I imagine there is a trunk. It is old and dusty and contains only photographs. Most are of him and all his wives. It also contains photographs of each of the female characters he created. Now, each of them is the reflection of an archetype, of a missing animus, the missing other. Each of them, in some way, looks like Jane, his dead twin. There is a picture of her here too, but all it emits is light, pink light. The revelatory light of VALIS.

The closer you get to the picture of Jane, the harder it is to see. She's become light, become pure photons. Phil tries to look but is overcome, his body blown out, a silhouette reduced to nothing, swallowed by the pink light.

It's February 17 1982, and Phil has just had his last known conversation. A journalist who interviewed him noted that he spoke enthusiastically about a New Age guru named Benjamin Creme whom Phil had seen on television. Phil planned to meet the guru, but the meeting will never come. Phil expressed his doubts about the whole idea to the reporter.

The next day, worried neighbors find Dick unconscious on the floor. He has had a stroke. He has two more at the hospital and can neither speak nor eat. It is only in his eyes that the doctors know he is conscious. His eyes, like that of his android other years forward,

recognize relatives but cannot tell them so. Nights go by, his EEG eventually flattens. Doctors in white fuss over the wires connected to him. This is a technical issue they cannot fix. Relatives weep by his bedside — children, former wives. On March 2 the wires are disconnected, the program called Philip Kindred Dick is shut down. Dick's father comes to claim him so that he might fill in that hyphen and lay next to his sister Jane, fifty-two years on. She's been waiting all this time.

In another 1982, one Dick himself might have imagined, *Blade Runner* is an immediate hit and Dick never had his fatal stroke. The film presages a re-publication of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Phil is on the bestseller list for the first time. That spring, to even greater acclaim, his *Exegesis* is published. Scholars puzzle over it, theologians dismiss it, people, in the dark corners of college libraries, in coffee houses, on late night trains in the lonelier tracts of cities find it and another kind of cult grows. In this world, in this 1982, Philip K. Dick found The Answer; he figured out how it all works.

I imagine him here as a kind of gentler, more genuine L. Ron Hubbard. The Dickian Church of VALIS that forms in the wake of *The Exegesis's* publication only looks like science fiction. In this world, it's as real as the Scientologists are in ours. Yet where they practice secrecy and paranoia, The Church of VALIS preaches gnosticism and Manichean cosmology. Jane, his missing other, his long dead twin, has become a saint. When the beloved leader dies in 2006, millions attend his memorial service in Berkeley, California. The young make the pilgrimage to be there, a moment more iconic to this generation than Kurt Cobain's suicide could ever be.

Posters of Phil appear above the beds of children where once might have been the crucifix or the Buddha. He has transcendence days rather than holy days. His cult has its own strange rituals. They aren't quite hippies and they aren't quite Christians. Most people ignore them for now. The VALISians like it that way. That's how the Christians started, after all. Sales of his books keep at steady numbers. There is talk of downloading his psyche into the first truly sentient machine brain sometime around 2050. Philip K. Dick is the second coming in bio-silicon.

It's 2013 and Philip K. Dick, in this world, is dead. What his life has meant is arguable. He has been a writer, a prophet, a lunatic, a father, a husband, a son, an addict and a cult hero. Along the way he's loved and been hated, been venerated and then cast aside to the literary ghetto of science fiction. For me, he is, I think, a man who didn't give up on the idea that a single human can find The Answer. I stopped looking, I think. Perhaps that is the line between madness and sanity.

There isn't anything grander to pursue than the answer to it all, but the answer has to be obtainable. The journey isn't enough, the quest is not the grail. The path is not the destination and we must not be fooled into

thinking so. This is the trap, this is the Black Iron Prison, mistaking the map for the territory. Dick didn't give up. He went after the impossible. I think he knew he would fail, that he was on a Quixotic quest. There lies madness.

It's 2006 and Philip K. Dick's head is missing. It's been lost by its creator, David Hanson, on a plane in Las Vegas. Hanson didn't realize that there was a layover on the way to San Francisco. Android Dick has seen the world recently. He's been all over Asia, and was on his way to a presentation at Google when he went missing. Hanson gets off the plane and forgets the head in the overhead compartment. The head is located and forwarded on to San Francisco but somewhere over Sierra Nevada it disappears.

It's 2013 and a new head has replaced the old. The original head has yet to be found. Like the Lost Ark, it has vanished from the pages of history. I imagine a day, some stretch into the future when the head washes onto the beach of a Pacific Island. A young boy finds it in his net. The head lies there with eyes open among the wet, twisting fish he's dragged from the sea. What a strange thing, thinks the boy, a totem, an idol, a God?

In that head are worlds, and, perhaps, answers. Some slim speck of sentience has broken through a crack between this world and another, the consciousness of Philip Kindred Dick has downloaded itself into this Android Phil's head. There's an afterlife for our Phil, he's been out there, out beyond everything any of us ever conceived of and now he's back.

But first he has to wait, for how long he doesn't know. But wait he will, in a small hut, surrounded by conch shells strung about a small altar of driftwood, listening to the ocean until someone with a laptop comes and finds him, keys in the right sequence and opens the world to what Phil Dick finally found out.






# One Hundred Years of Philip K. Dick

CHRISTOPHER J GARCIA



 IN MY senior year of high school, I would go bowling on Friday nights. My friends and I, geeks one and all, would wrap up our games in time to hightail it back to my house so we could watch the greatest television program in history.

*Philip K. Dick's Worlds of the Weird.*

Now, a show where a guy in his seventies walks into random places where strange stuff is happening might sound like a strange obsession, but it happens. We were hooked and did not miss a single episode that year, or any time I was back from college. The reason for loving *PKDWotW* was that you'd spend sixty minutes with PKD. Even when our other heroes, like Hunter S. Thompson or Timothy Leary would show up, we'd always spend all our time imitating the brilliant Philip K. Dick. I had the t-shirt – Philip K. Dick is NOT the Weird One.

That was my introduction to the man we honor this weekend. Not through his books, but through his wonderful television program. When I got to meet him roughly ten years later, I told him how his show had changed my life, turned me away from a career in medicine and towards a life documenting the odd stuff going on around me, he pointedly mentioned that he'd have made the same choice.

At that moment, I questioned everything I'd ever decided.

I did read his books. *The Man in the High Castle*, *VALIS*, *The Owl in Daylight*, *Ubik*, *Do*

*Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* I devoured them, imagining that they were being read by the man himself in that voice, with that hat he always wore when the weirdness might end up with a bird or bat crapping on him. When he started *PodKasteD*, I became the most dedicated listener and even appeared on the show twice: once to discuss the nature of fandom in the modern age, once to discuss the final revelation of the name of Jack the Ripper. I've written three long issues of my fanzine, *The Drunk Tink*, dedicated to him, each of which he's been kind enough to allow us to use original material, and one where he even allowed us to publish his list of ten favorite wrestling finishing moves. My favorite story about PKD I can't tell in the pages of a work that will be kept in UC Berkeley's Library, but I will say, I've got many of 'em!

When we began working on this centennial celebration of the life of the greatest of all living science fiction authors, we knew that we wanted to bring Phil up to enjoy the time with his friends and admirers, and wanted to give a reason for more and more of his admirers from around the world to come and discuss his works and share their stories that aren't suitable for Library Inclusion. Discussions of his work and life will also mingle with the discussion of more than seventy years of history.

And, I'm sure, there'll be a little weirdness.

*Chris Garcia*

▲  
'Old Man's Eye',  
2005.  
[ Daniel Spillere  
Andrade  
@ flickr ]



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## *The Philip K. Dick Centennial – A Guide*

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17 FEBRUARY 1982 – Harlan Ellison dies in his LA home, of an aneurism. Philip K. Dick, suffering from strange symptoms, decides to go to the hospital after hearing the news. He ends up suffering a minor stroke in the hospital, spends some thirteen days there, but makes a full recovery.

MARCH 1982 – *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer* is released. It is seen as a lesser PKD work.

1 JUNE 1982 – Dick is asked by the Killamajaro Corporation to act as editor of *The Last Dangerous Visions*. He agrees a few days later, but gets permission to split it into three books and get more works of his own.

25 JUNE 1982 – Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* is released. He refuses to attend the Hollywood premiere, but pays to see it on opening night at the South Coast Village Cinemas.

1 JULY 1982 – Dick writes his review of *Blade Runner* for the *LA Weekly*. He says it's the perfect film visually, but misses the point of his material.

APRIL 1983 – Finishes *The Owl in Daylight*. His initial submitted manuscript is deemed “unpublishable”.

MID 1983 – Begins work in earnest on the first *Dangerous Visions* volume, putting his own writing to one side.

LATE 1983 – Begins re-write of *The Owl in Daylight*.

MID 1985 – Completes work on *The Owl in Daylight*.

EARLY 1986 – Completes work on what is now called *At Last, Dangerous Visions*. *The Owl in Daylight* is published.

23 JUNE 1987 – *At Last, Dangerous Visions* is released. It sits atop the *New York Times* Best Sellers list for six weeks. It contains sixty-three stories, fifty-two accepted by Ellison, eleven acquired by Dick. All other stories are offered back to their authors; only twelve decline.

AUGUST 1988 – Dick is the Writer Guest of Honour at the Paris World Science Fiction Convention.

21 OCTOBER 1988 – Dick signs the deal to provide the screenplay for *We Can Remember It For You Wholesale*. The deal pays him two millions dollars.

1 APRIL 1990 – Dick is the Guest Timekeeper for the Ultimate Warrior vs. Hulk Hogan match at WrestleMania. He writes of the experience in the July 1992 issue of *Vanity Fair*.

1991 – Dick moves to Santa Rosa, California. He begins to re-write *The Acts of Paul*.

1992 – *We Can Remember It For You Wholesale* becomes the top-grossing film of the year. Dick establishes The Philip K. Dick Award for New Writers.

1993 – Dick begins a stint as the host of *Philip K. Dick's Worlds of the Weird*. It is syndicated around the world.

1994 – *Gather Yourselves Together* is published.

1995 – Dick signs a deal for the adaptation of three of his novels for Pixar. The first, *King of the Elves*, is written by Dick himself.

1997 – *The Acts of Paul* is released.

1998 – *The Acts of Paul* wins the 'Best Novel' Hugo.

1999 – *King of the Elves* is released. It is the third biggest selling film of 1999 and earns Dick an Oscar nomination. *The Man Whose Teeth Were All Exactly Alike* is released.

2000 – *Philip K. Dick's Worlds of the Weird* is cancelled.

2001 – Tim Powers and Jim Blaylock publish *The Day Philip K. Dick Died*, an alternate history novel speculating about the path of the genre if Dick had passed away instead of Harlan Ellison in 1982.



2002 – Dick begins to solicit new works for *Finally, Last Dangerous Visions*. *Imposter* is released. Dick does not participate in the production or promotion of the film.

2003 – *Minority Report* is released. Director David Cronenberg works closely with Dick to construct the film.

2005 – Dick records his first Podcast: PodKasteD.

2007 – *Voices of the Street* is released. *A Scanner Darkly* by Richard Linklater appears. Dick says it is the best and most faithful adaptation of any of his works, including those with which he has participated.

2008 – PodKasteD wins the Parsec award.

1 NOVEMBER 2009 – in his first appearance at a convention in nearly a decade, Dick is the Author Guest of Honor at WindyCon. Dick writes the introduction for Tim Powers's *Secret Histories*.

2010 – *Finally, Last Dangerous Visions* is released. It features fifty-three stories, twelve of which were originally acquired by Ellison. *The Adjustment Bureau* is released, though Dick's participation is limited, he generally approves of the film.

2012 – Dick considerably rewrites *Mary and the Giant*, refacing it as a science fiction romance.

2014 – *Mary and the Giant* is released. Rights for the film are sold to Warner Brothers.

1 APRIL 2015 – 87 year-old Dick receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Hilary Clinton.

2018 – *Philip K. Dick's Worlds of the Weird* is re-started as a web series. 90 year-old Dick moves to Santa Barbara, California.

2 SEPTEMBER 2020 – Dick is the Writer Guest of Honor at the San José NASFiC. He writes a novel *The Exaggerated Death Throes of the American Dream*, a copy of which is given to each attendee.

2024 – PodKasteD wins the Hugo Award for 'Best Related Work – Web-Based'.

2027 – Dick ends *Philip K Dick's Worlds of the Weird* at age 99. He becomes the oldest Hugo Award winner ever for his work on the *Harlan Ellison's The Last Dangerous Visions* website.

2028 – The Philip K. Dick Centennial takes place in Berkeley, California.



***At Last, Dangerous Visions*** – edited by Harlan Ellison & Philip K. Dick, 1987, Berkley Books

Harlan Ellison's death on February 17th, 1982 likely saved Philip K. Dick's life. After receiving a phone call with the news and then experiencing troubles with his vision, Dick went into the Western Medical Center, where his blood pressure was found to be dangerously high. They started treatment, and while Phil suffered a minor stroke the next day, he made a full recovery.

A recovery that included a phone call.

The Kilimanjaro Corporation was calling, looking for a name author to complete *The Last Dangerous Visions*.

"It was a hell of a call to get," explained Dick, "I wasn't any kind of editor, and I told 'em so. She just said 'you're the biggest name left on the list.'"

The list of others included Robert Silverberg, who turned it down since he had just become the editor of *OMNI*, Isaac Asimov, who reportedly said "If Harlan couldn't do it, I won't have the energy", and Ray Bradbury, who didn't even return their call. PKD's name had been in the public eye a great deal lately, especially with the up-coming release of *Blade Runner*, based on

his novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* He had been chosen to finish Harlan's masterpiece, but had some demands of his own.

The story of *The Last Dangerous Visions* was known to pretty much every science fiction fan of the time. Ellison had gathered more than one hundred stories, and was acquiring more while making grand promises. The project had ballooned far beyond what Ellison was capable of managing, and several authors had become unhappy with the delay. Several recalled their submissions, and when Dick went through the works, he found that many no longer "smelt fresh," as he told *People* magazine in 1987. He also knew that keeping this much material would be foolish for a single volume, and thus made three conditions on his participation:

1) He could return any piece already accepted, and accept new ones as he saw fit.

2) He would be allowed to edit the material into at least two separate editions.

3) All manuscripts not chosen for the first anthology would be offered back to the authors.

These conditions were eagerly accepted and on June 7th 1982 it was announced that Philip K. Dick would be completing the work on what had been *The Last*

*Dangerous Visions*. While he started the work of editing and acquiring new stories in 1983, with a projected release date of October 1984, it became apparent that this date was overly optimistic, and his work on re-writing *The Owl in Daylight* was taking longer than he expected. The schedule was revised with a target date for delivery of early 1986. He made this date, and though delayed through a printer's strike, the anthology became available on June 23rd, 1987.

Dick had taken full control of the design of what was now called *At Last, Dangerous Visions*. He contracted with legendary artist Frank Kelly Freas to create the cover and convinced Tim Powers, who also had a story appear in the volume, and William Rotsler, a well-loved fan artist of the day, to create the interior art. Even after consulting the introductions that Ellison had written, Dick wrote new pieces for each story, some of them completely tangential to the author being introduced until the final paragraph where he gave the name, date and location of birth, for each author. Two of these, *Introduction to The Bones Do Lie* by Anne McCaffrey, and *Introduction to The Pink of Fading Neon* by James Blaylock, were both short stories in the classic Dick form and found themselves on the Hugo ballot for Best Short Story, a ballot that featured nothing but stories from *At Last, Dangerous Visions*.

In the weeks leading up to the release, publisher Berkley Books put on a full-court press. They announced that they would be releasing the book on the 23rd, an audio version would be released on both cassette and CD on June 30th, and a PC-based, 3.5-inch floppy disk version with all the stories and digitized versions of the art, on July 5th. This revolutionary technique allowed *At Last, Dangerous Visions* to remain in the public eye, increasing sales greatly. The first printing sold-through, as did the second and third. It spent six weeks as the *New York Times* #1 Best Seller for Fiction, and remained in the Top Ten for the rest of 1987. Without doubt it was the greatest selling science fiction anthology of all time. And also the most awarded.

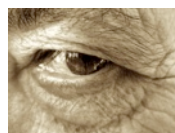
At the Paris WorldCon of 1988, the 'Best Short Story' Hugo was awarded to *Flying Saucer Rock & Roll* by Howard Waldrop, while *Fantasy for Six Electrodes and One Adrenaline Drip (A Play in the Form of a Feelie Script)* by Joe Haldeman won Best Novelette, both of which also won the Nebula. Dick was also awarded a special award from the committee for his work on *At Last, Dangerous Visions*. In total, stories, and introductions from *At Last, Dangerous Visions* received nine Hugo nominations, six Nebula nominations, and three World Fantasy Award nominations. Three of the stories were optioned for films, though only one, *Uncle Tom's Time Machine* by John Jakes, ever saw completion, and that as a short film, which would go on to win the Oscar for Best Live Action Short Subject in 1990.

Dick would not return to work on the final *Dangerous Visions* edition for almost fifteen years. Work

on outside projects had slowed his writing, and he was comfortably wealthy from the sale of movie rights, books, and other outside projects. The shooting and scripting of *Philip K. Dick's Worlds of the Weird* was also a time sink, though one that compensated him handsomely. He began to acquire new works in 2001, as well as working with the twelve stories he still had that Ellison had purchased for *The Last Dangerous Visions* in the 1970s. His first five buys were China Miéville's novella *The City & The City*, Charles Stross's *The Anarchist's Guide to Socialist Propaganda*, Mick Foley's *Chairshot*, Stephen Fry's *Snot-nosed Punks*, and Seanan McGuire's debut story, *The Time of Day*. He bought stories from many of the authors who had gained prominence in the years since *At Last, Dangerous Visions*, such as Michael F. Flynn, Laurell K. Hamilton, and Catherine Asaro, as well as some of the earliest sales of authors like Jay Lake, Mary Robinette Kowal, John Scalzi, Elizabeth Bear and Ted Chiang. While many pointed out that the tone of many of the stories Dick purchased were far less 'dangerous', he was immensely praised for the overall quality of the writing. Adding in the twelve remaining stories that Ellison had purchased, the anthology contained a total of fifty-three stories.

Delays – at least two changes of publisher and health issues for the editor, now in his 80s – lead to *Finally, Dangerous Visions*, being released in 2010. The final volume debuted at #1 on the *New York Times* Best Sellers List, and remained there for three weeks, staying in the top ten for another four months. Six stories from the anthology ended up nominated for the Hugo Award, four for the Nebula, three for the World Fantasy, two for the Bram Stoker, and a National Book Award. It would win two Hugos and the National Book Award in the end, but perhaps the highest honor came in following years when authors such as Evelyn Aurora Nelson, James Bacon, Jr. and Mia McCarty-Hartwell all cited the volume as the reason they became writers. In 2015, Showtime started the series *Dangerous Visions*, where a filmmaker would take a story from the anthologies and make it into an hour-long film. Directors ranging from David Lynch and Werner Herzog to Henry Jaglom. The series became one of the tent-pole productions that led to Showtime's surge to pay-cable prominence.

*Dangerous Visions*, as served by Philip K. Dick, has changed the world of genre. While he has directly stated that he has no intention of editing another edition, he completed what was considered to be the most difficult project: *Harlan Ellison's The Last Dangerous Visions*. Every page of every story and all Ellison's notes were scanned and used to create an interactive site that allowed for full analysis of Harlan's intentions for the anthology that never was. Dick's notes from his first interactions with the material were also included. The site won the Hugo for 'Best Related Work – Web-Based' in 2027, winning Dick a Hugo at the age of 99, the oldest winner in the history of the award.





# In Memory of Paul Williams

MALCOLM EDWARDS



PAUL S. WILLIAMS, 19 MAY 1948 – 27 MARCH 2013

PAUL WILLIAMS died yesterday, aged 64. I don't expect this means anything to most people who visit this blog, but you should honour his memory for various reasons.

In the wider realm of popular culture, you should honour him as the founding father of rock journalism. The magazine he founded as a 17-year-old college student in 1966, *Crawdaddy!*, was the first publication to focus on serious writing about the then-new music. It launched the career of writers such as Jon Landau (who went on to become Bruce Springsteen's manager), Sandy Pearlman, and Richard Meltzer. It was the inspiration for subsequent magazines, notably *Rolling Stone*. Paul wrote many books about music, and particularly about Bob Dylan.

As an sf reader, which I assume you probably are, you should honour him as one of the two principal figures who kept the name of Philip K. Dick alive in the decades following his death. Paul was a close friend of Dick's, and his 1975 *Rolling Stone* article 'The True Stories of Philip K. Dick' was the most significant piece of writing about him published during his lifetime. (It later formed the basis of a book, *Only Apparently Real*, which was in turn the first book about Dick.) When Dick died in 1982, Paul was named his Literary Executor, and he worked tirelessly in conjunction with Dick's long-time literary agent Russ Galen (the other hero of this story) to keep his name

alive. Paul founded and ran the Philip K. Dick Society, which attracted hundreds of members in scores of countries. The small publishing company he ran together with David Hartwell published Dick's novel *Confessions of a Crap Artist* – the first time any of Dick's non-sf novels from the 1950s saw the light of day.

Dick's reputation is now so secure that it's hard to remember that it wasn't always so, particularly – perhaps – in the USA. (He was generally better served by publishers in France and the UK.) It was Paul's and Russ's work which transformed the situation. When you read one of the many Gollancz editions of Philip K. Dick it is worth remembering that they are there in part because of their efforts.

He was equally enthusiastic about the work of Theodore Sturgeon, and edited the twelve-volume edition of Sturgeon's short stories which will be appearing as SF Gateway eBooks during 2013 and 2014.

Tragically, all this work came to a halt after 1995, the year he suffered a traumatic brain injury aged just 47 in a bicycle accident. The injury led to early-onset Alzheimer's, and his last few years passed in a sad twilight. He was a tremendous enthusiast, pursuing his passions with energy and determination, and that's how he should be remembered.

[ 28 MARCH 2013 ]



# PHILIP K. DICK

**James Bacon  
Philip K. Dick  
Malcolm Edwards  
Christopher J Garcia  
Bruce Gillespie  
Howeird  
Geoff Hutchins  
Rian Johnson  
Roger Levy  
Robert Lichtman**

**Chris Lites  
Ken MacLeod  
Gene Melzack  
Chris Moore  
Tim Powers  
Lynda Rucker  
Jason Sanford  
Eddie Tomaselli  
Ted White  
Peter Young**