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**Please** look at the address label on the front, and note when your membership expires. If you are overdue, or coming up due soon, mail it in! **ALSO: Don't forget to mail in an address change if you move!!!**

All letters to Pulsar, and memberships should be sent to Laurie Ortiz at 339 W. University Ave. #A, San Diego, CA, 92103. Any other business please send to the president at the above address.
A Letter From Your Editor!

This issue of Pulsar is highly unusual in several ways. First of all it is longer than it should be because there was so much material. In the future folks will have to limit themselves to 500 words, period. I can always edit it for you but you might not like my version. Second, in the future I just can't publish every single thing that comes in. If our membership were larger and therefore could afford to publish more pages per issue it would be a different story. Pulsar can be supported by the current membership when it is 12 pages long. As most of you know, U.S. postage just went up. It not only went up by four cents but they lowered the ounce limit, so that the two ounces that used to cost 25¢ to send, now costs 52¢.

As many of you have been watching us go through growing pains it is evident that we haven't heard from you!! Beth Avary and Bill Hartmann are currently working on the manifesto of what exactly we represent. The board meeting is coming up at the end of this summer and I would encourage you (I wish I could demand it 😕 😎), to write down just what your in this organization for. What it should represent to you. I will xerox each reply and send a copy to each board member and officer.

I hope that all you active members have gotten your slides to Beth for the upcoming show.

I would like to give a huge apology to Arthur Gilbert! As well as Arthur Woods. In the January/February issue of Pulsar the Crimea Workshop Summary was written by Arthur Gilbert and not Arthur Woods. I'm ever so sorry.

Throughout this issue you will find some "word puzzles." The answers are in the back in the Calendar section. They were created by Peter Walters, a graphic artist at the Space Theater here in San Diego.

Behind-the-scenes
"In the Stream of Stars"
A report to the IAAA
by co-editor William K. Hartman

One of the fruits of the
the USSR Union of Art-
the first week of 1991
Stream of Stars" began

We are thrilled with
quality, and I think the
of this effort, which con-
paintings by IAAA
ists, some historical paint-
painters, but primarily draws from our first IAAA-USSR exhibition in Moscow.

It touches me that many of the Soviet artists have probably never seen their work so well reproduced as in our book. No credit to the Americans, though; the book was printed in Hong Kong! Workman Publishing Company sent a set of books to Moscow for the Soviet participants; I hope they have been received.

We hope the book will be a benefit to the IAAA as a group, and to all the members, as a portfolio and showcase of the work we do. Take it with you when you are talking to gallery people, curators, art directors; it may generate more opportunities for us all in the future.

Already the book has put $1500 into the treasury of the IAAA, along with another $1500 to the Planetary Society. The book was published, as the title page says, with the cooperation of three groups, IAAA, USSR Union of Artists, and the Planetary Society, who supported early meetings and approached us to do the book. The payments mentioned were portions of the advance money from Workman Publishing, which also included the payments for the work of the four editors, Ron Miller (USA), Andrie Sokolov (USSR), Vitalie Myagkov (USSR), and myself. We four met in New York in early 1990 to make initial picture selections: The Soviets brought their own transparencies: Ron and I helped put captions together; I solicited manuscripts from Ron, Alan Bean, Robert Schuman of the NASA Fine Arts Program, and others; Michael Carroll and Laurie Ortiz helped shoot transparencies from the first joint show, which was at Fleet Plan-
etarium at the time (Editors paid for those); most non-USSR work came from IAAA artists who answered our call for submissions. It could have turned into an unholy and unhappy misalliance between publisher, editors under contract, and various interest groups... but I hope that in the end, the project helped improve contacts among several groups with a common interest including IAAA, Plan-
etary Society, and the NASA fine Arts Program — to our mutual benefit. Carter Emmert pointed out that we had neglected to have a statement from IAAA President Kara Szathmary in the book, and fortunately we were able to have an afterword by Kara added on the last page — a terrific closing statement about IAAA and its aims.

We’re especially glad to have seen Dave Hardy’s book before we finalized ours. It gave us a chance to try to be complimentary instead of just a competitive duplication. I see Dave’s book as a great cross section of international space art and artists with some emphasis on Europe, and arranged by touring out into the universe. So we tried to stress the artists’ experience and motivation, the contrast between the work in the USSR and the West, and to recap our IAAA experiences in this international contact, illuminating how the work has been influenced by social patterns on the different sides.

The publisher solicited the foreword by Ray Bradbury, which is wonderfully inspirational and has a title that could stand for the whole IAAA: “We are the Carpenters of an Invisible Cathedral.”

As with any project, there are some disappointments. We preferred not to have the subtitle “The Soviet/American Space Art Book,” preferring something more reflecting the international aspects of IAAA. The Publisher overruled us on this, citing marketing interest in the US/USSR angle as prevailed by US buyers and bookstore distributors. (I must say, based on initial interviews promoting the book, this is proving correct.) We were sorry not to have work by some outstanding members, such as Rick Sternback. Some desperate last-minute maneuvering managed to fill in some gaps (e.g., I was able to supply one of Don Dixon’s pieces from my collection, with Don’s permission).

It was also difficult to make selections; we had to make some rejections as a team, based on how we felt work would reproduce and on compatibility with the nature, theme, and quality of other art. The general sizing and placement was done by Workman’s art department. They made some brilliant decisions. My own favorite is p 36-37, with a Jules Verne era woodcut on one side showing the capsule (in From the Earth to the Moon) retrieved at sea, and the same scene (down to the placement of the capsule and recovery craft) unknowingly duplicated from life by a NASA Fine Arts Program artist during an Apollo recovery. A less aware art department might have placed these on different pages! I also like their choice of Paul Hudson’s piece for the cover, and their work on page 1, a very simple layout with a picture by Soviet Cosmonaut Dzhanibekov, “Crew,” showing three cosmonauts walking away from us toward a vehicle... very appropriate to a beginning...

Unfortunately, among other glitches, Geoffrey Chandler took an unfair number of hits. A caption misstates the position of his work on p. 152, and of his two paintings, one is reversed and the other upside down. They are starfields, so only the artist may know, but Geoffrey was still disappointed and I apologize that this slipped by, especially since Geoffrey marked his transparencies more carefully than anyone as to top, bottom, etc. Pam Lee wished that her portrait of Bill Fisher had been the piece we used, but we vetoed it because it already had a full 2-page spread in Hardy’s book; we were trying (not always successfully) to minimize duplication between the books. Any way, I think her solar panel picture that we did use is fantastic, and will be fresh to most readers. One of Alan Bean’s pictures was cropped a bit too tight, but he was very understanding about it. Anyway, apologies to all for whatever glitches.

If a second printing comes, we might be able to correct some glitches. Write a polite letter to Sally Kovalchick at Workman if there is a typo or small change you’d like to see in a second printing. Do some publicity interviews for the reviewer for the St. Louis Post Dispatch, so I know there is some interest out there in our work!

I had a nice note from Bonestell, saying the book of (or should I say in controversy in Pulsar over definitely tried not to “approved” type of art, citing cross section of artists are inspired by exceeded there, I like the different styles — we perhaps one of the best things make us think toward the future of about the book is that it will our art.

After working on this book, I can imagine that perhaps there is still another IAAA space art book lurking five years down the road: Not just a USSR/IAAA book, but a genuine Planet Earth Space Art Book, with art from all over the world — an update on what has become of IAAA by that time. Or should it be an A.D. 2000 book? Anyway, now that IAAA has helped rapprochement between USSR and USA, I suppose we need to get to work in Isreal, Iraq, and the Palestinian community. We’re talking sense of vision, interplanetary vision. I mean, how else can IAAA repeat its USSR/USA success and solve the mess in the Middle East? (Or did you think the politicians are going to do it?)  
Freedom and the NEA: Another Perspective
by Don Dixon

While I applaud the spirit of Dennis Davidson's eloquent defense of freedom of expression (Pulsar, Jan-Feb, 1991), the NEA seems a questionable banner around which to rally the troops.

First of all, denying an artist a grant hardly constitutes censorship. The artist is still free to pursue his/her projects - but with private financing. The First Amendment implies no right to have one's hobby subsidized by the taxpayers.

More to the point, blame for today's oppressive climate should be laid at the feet of the appropriate villains: not demagogues like Jesse Helms or Pat Robertson - but the artistic community itself, whose elitism and arrogance have never been more evident in the recent controversy. I have yet to hear an apologist for the NEA make a statement to this effect: "Most of the stuff we fund is worthwhile, but occasionally some crap slips by the review committee." Such an admission would do much to defang Helms and Company. Instead we are told that art is sacrosanct, and that anyone who objects to subsidizing a performance artist who wallows in Hershey syrup and bean sprouts is a knuckle-walking troglodyte. Civil libertarians may sometimes champion an unpopular cause in order to protect an important principle, but exactly what principle is being defended here - the right to not only mooch off the taxpayer but spit in his face?

The law speaks of "prevailing community standards" when prosecuting pornographers, but what are the standards of the arts community? Once, in a more spiritual age, art was supposed to uplift and enoble, but about a century ago the concept of artist-as-revolutionary emerged, and the criteria changed. To have one's passport to the Land of With-it stamped by the arts establishment today, one's work must be NEW! DIFFERENT! SHOCKING! If it is also incomprehensible, pretentious, ugly, and opposed to everything held sacred by Western civilization, so much the better. This is the context in which the decision to display a photograph of a bullwhip up a backside becomes a cause celeb, rather than a simple question of taste.

NEA apologists assert that tolerance for dissent is an absolute virtue, but although the Wine and Cheese Set will go to the wall to defend flag-trampers, who do you think would be first to grumble if the NEA funded a photo exhibit titled "Farming the Amazon: Progress in the Third World," or a retrospective on the furrier's craft? Left and Right tend to meet at the fringes. The Left supports all points of view, save those that are sexist, unprogressive, or judgemental. Freedom-loving right-wingers draw the line at blasphemy, obscenity, and sedition. Everyone is for freedom of speech, as long as it is the proper kind of speech.

Part of the problem derives from a rather pretentious worship of art by it's devotees. "ART" needs to be demoted to "art." It is something that people do, along with plumbing and carpentry. Sometimes it can be done so well that it touches the soul, but that is very rare. The arts community, a favored refuge for the arrogantly inept, has embraced the egalitarian doctrine that if traditional standards of excellence exclude the majority of aspirants to greatness (read: "fame and riches"), the standards must be changed. More, the classical standard must be derided as archaic, chauvinistic, and oppressive. This is the real danger in empowering governmental arbiters elegantarii. The NEA panelists become the Art Police. Does anyone honestly think that DiVinci or Beethoven could get an NEA grant? Are the arbiters likely to look compassionately upon supplicants whose talents are greater than their own? Or are people - particularly those with a political bent - sometimes motivated by envy? (I'm sorry, Ludwig, but your music is too formalistic. Now that young man in the waiting room, the fellow with the chickens and the Cuisinart, is creating tonal sculptures that are entirely NEW! DIFFERENT! and SHOCKING!)

In the marketplace, the work of one artist may be chosen over that of another - but not at the latter's expense! In state-funded art, we are not only forced to subsidize would-be competitors, but to help perpetuate an artistic climate that may be actively hostile to our own work. How can anyone think this is a good idea?

There is a place for public funding of art. The ornamentation of public buildings may require murals and sculpture. California has a law which requires one percent of public construction costs to be dedicated to such art, which seems reasonable. In February the law was extended to mandate this expenditure in private construction also. It's likely that most private construction already includes a budget for ornamentation, but such a law should give pause to anyone who values freedom. Mandatory artwork? Who decides what qualifies? The lobbying for this seems just another manifestation of arrogance of the artistic community (You must give us work - or face criminal penalties!).
Letters to the Editor

All that I can gather from Hartal’s most recent letter is that he is certainly prepared to be one of those who “knows how to deconstruct, revise and transcend the burden of the past.” He demonstrates a willingness to do this that is almost dazzling. Before I go on, however, I would very much like to know exactly where I “twisted” his text. Although he misquoted me at almost every opportunity in his last letter (September-October Pulsar—which I took some pains to correct in my follow-up), I believe that I was meticulous in quoting him verbatim in my November-December Pulsar response. If I did misquote him, I hope that he will please let me know exactly where I did so and I will apologize. I may not have interpreted what he said in a way that pleased him, but that is another matter; in any case, as he says at the letter’s close, he doesn’t want to impose his views on anyone (although his statement seems at best contradictory and at worst hypocritical).

Let’s reiterate a little: Going back to the March-April Pulsar, I see that on page 3 he wrote this: “Jules Verne’s classic, Journey to the Moon (1860).” All my other comments aside, I pointed out that the book was not published in 1860, but in 1865. His response was limited to this one comment: “Writing precedes publication!” Pulsar September - October 1990). I could only assume that he meant that Verne wrote his novel in 1860. Once again I had to point out that there was no justification for this, that it certainly flaunted accepted citation standards (how was anyone to know from his original citation that he meant date of writing rather than publication?). His response to this, in this most recent letter, informs me that the date 1860 referred to the year in which Verne was inspired to write From the Earth to the Moon! He is, now he tells me, merely proposing a “hypothesis.” Give us all a break!

When I merely try to pin him down concerning a date - an intolerably objective reality, I suppose - he accuses me of being prejudiced and dogmatic! Meanwhile he blithely goes on “deconstructing, revising and transcending” history to suit himself.

He is quite right at the beginning of his letter in saying that “knowledge is never complete.” But this should not be taken to mean that all “facts” are equally subject to either uncertainty or revision. It may be difficult to ascertain exactly when Verne was inspired to write his Moon novel (and I would certainly like to see the sources for his hypothesis”), but the year in which it was first published is certainly a pretty hard fact. I think that he fails to realize that there exist degrees of certainty.

I appreciate the credentials of Goswami and Harrison, but I do not see where it makes them especially qualified to comment accurately on either Verne or the history of astronautics. If he did indeed get the date 1860 from the former, then the bald fact of it is that Goswami was wrong.
It seems to me that it is Hartal who is confusing the issue concerning Poe. I believe that it was clear that the point he is making in the March-April Pulsar was that Poe’s writings influenced modern astronomy. If that is what he intended, then I believe that no case can be made for that hypothesis. If he instead meant that Poe only offered these ideas, but that they made no impact, then I stand corrected (in fact, we would seem to agree)...but why then did he bring up the subject of Poe in the first place?

Some of his comments concerning de Bergerac are simply ridiculous. “Miller [he wrote] seems to forget that gravity is not the exhaustive property of Newton’s laws... In this respect one should bear in mind that when Cyrano’s flying machine was lifted off by rockets, it was a practical anticipation of Newton’s third law of motion.” When the Chinese invented the rocket in the 12th or 13th century they were certainly using the Third Law of Motion, but I don’t think that much of a case can be made for them being actually aware of it, no more than a squid is when using its jet. If mere use of action-reaction allows Hartal to credit someone with anticipating Newton’s laws, then he would have been better to have mentioned the Chinese in his original letter, rather than de Bergerac. Or perhaps better yet, Hero of Alexandria (62 AD) or Archytas (ca 360 BC).

Kepler and Wilkins also made comments concerning gravity during a space voyage that would seem to anticipate Newton, But were, I believe, in all actuality merely applications of “common sense.”

The text of de Bergerac’s that I quoted is from the 1687 translation by A. Lovell, which at least one authority considers “the most faithful to the French original.” The relevant passage is quoted here in its entirety: “When I had, according to the computation I had made since, advanced a good deal more than three quarters of the space that divided the Earth from the Moon; all of a sudden I fell with my Heel up and Head down, though I had made no Trip; and indeed, I had not falling again towards our World; for though I found myself to be between two Moons, and easily observed, that the nearer I drew to the one, the farther I drew from the other; yet I was certain, that ours was the bigger Globe of the two; Because after one or two days’ Journey, the remote Refractions of the Sun, confounding the diversity of Bodies and Climates, it appeared to me only as a large Plate of Gold: That made me imagine, that I bypassed towards the Moon; and I was Confirmed in that Opinion, when I began to call to mind, that I did not fail till I was past three quarters of the way. For, said I to myself, that Mass being less than ours, the Sphere of its Activity must be of less Extent also; and by consequence, it was later before I felt the force of its Center.”

As I originally commented, all that this seems to indicate is that de Bergerac thought that the moon would be less attractive than the earth because it was smaller. Nothing more nor less. Also, the remark de Bergerac makes about falling “Heel up and Head down” certainly seems to indicate a somersault to me. The nature of the passage Hartal quotes in his letter makes me think that it is more of a paraphrase of the original text. Where did he get it from? Why didn’t he look for something closer to the original?

I don’t think that I was ignoring anything. I was responding to unambiguous remarks that Hartal made that were clearly unfounded and I demonstrated that they were unfounded. Dragging in issues such as the “central unity” of de Bergerac’s works, his motives in writing, and so forth, or Verne’s supposed dates of “inspiration”, are all irrelevant to the issues that I raised, and are clear examples of the kind of “slipperiness” to which I was referring. I can only take it that he really believes that he can make things up as he goes along because for him, at least, there is, in reality, no objective reality.

Ron Miller

Ron Miller is unrealistic in expecting me to provide in this limited space detailed explanations and bibliography to his biased remarks. Since the medium is the message, even the best translation is still just a secondary source. Consequently when Miller judges the quality of Verne’s English translations he is acting as a tertiary agent.

Yet in some of his statements Miller seems to pose as the primary source itself. But why should we believe him more than we believe others? Why does he assume that he is a more scholarly authority and a less obscure source than my references are? After all Amit Goswami, for example, is Professor of Physics at the University of Oregon whose work was published by McGraw Hill: and Edward Harrison is Distinguished Professor of Astronomy at the University of Massachusetts. The latter’s publisher is Harvard University Press. Miller certainly did not do his homework. He includes Poe’s own writings, in a Penguin edition collected by Harold Beaver, in the list of alleged obscure references. Poe’s pioneering and correct solution to the enigma of the dark universe, as well as his cosmic contraction-expansion thesis are to be found in this volume ("Eureka").

Concerning Poe, Miller’s complaints are utterly unfounded and misconstrued. On the one hand he acknowledges the poet’s remarkable astronomical insights but on the other hand he also denies them.

Regarding Verne, Miller overlooks the nature of the creative process. The novelist was inspired by Poe’s moon-travel burlesque befor the American Civil War. It was Lincoln’s election as President and the secession of South Carolina (1860) which stimulated Verne’s imagination and triggered the eventual writing of the novel. Thus, my hypothesis that 1860 can be viewed as the takeoff, leading to the writing of Verne’s lunar voyage story, does not contradict the historical facts, the setting or the plot of the novel. I never denied that it was published in 1865.

Miller insists that Cyrano de Bergerac did not anticipate Newton’s laws. He
quotes him in this respect but the words prove just the opposite. Apart from this, Miller seems to forget that gravity is not the exhaustive property of Newton's laws. In this respect one should bear in mind that when Cyrano's flying machine was lifted off by rockets, it was a practical anticipation of Newton's third law of motion. Modern rockets still work by the same action-reaction principle. Miller's reading of Cyrano's text is entirely careless. He writes, for instance, that "three-quarters of the way to our satellite" Cyrano "does a somersault and falls onto the lunar surface." In fact, however, this is what Cyrano wrote: "I had travelled much more than three quarters of the way from the earth to the moon, I suddenly found myself falling head first, although I had not somersaulted in any fashion. I would not, indeed, have noticed this, if I had not felt my head taking the weight of my body." See: C. de Bergerac, Other Worlds (London: Oxford University Press, 1965). In the poet's words there are the seeds of Newton's second law of motion: Cyrano's body accelerates or decelerates in the direction of the action forces. Miller, of course, conveniently ignores this. To be sure, Cyrano was not a scientist. He was a poet-philosopher who intuitively sensed the technological possibility of space flight aided by rockets.

Miller is right though, that we must not be afraid to say what space art is and what it is not. If he wants to establish definitions and criteria for space art, he is of course entitled to do so. My objection is to his lack of tolerance.

Paul Hartal

A' is for... David A. Hardy

Arthur (Clarke) always gets his 'C'. William always gets his 'K'. But nobody seems to want to give David his 'A', and I think I'm in danger of getting paranoid about it!

I've lost count of the number of times I've written articles or letters for magazines, or had books reviewed or other mentions, and the 'A' has been left out, even though I always include it in my signature, byline and letterhead. Can anyone tell me why? I understand that it is much more common for the middle initial to be included in the USA, yet American publications seem to be just as reluctant as anyone else!

Why does it matter? you may ask. Occasionally, people ask me what the 'A' stands for. I've just today had a letter from Bill Hartmann in which he does just that. Now there's a case in point: he's known to his friends as 'Bill', but officially he is 'Dr William K. Hartmann'. In exactly the same way, I'm 'Dave' to my friends. No-one ever guesses the middle name, yet not because it is really unusual. No...

It's just that it is actually a surname. It's 'Andrews', which is my mother's maiden name, and David Andrews was a favourite uncle of hers, who died in World War I. So I could use the hyphenated name 'David Andrews-Hardy', and perhaps I should, but it sounds a bit highfalutin (pretentious and frightfully British, don'tcha know, in case you don't know that word), doesn't it - and takes too long to sign...

So there you are; I've let you into my secret, and got that off my mind. In any case, to all of you it's just -

PS. Some of you may be aware of the long-standing dialogue between Bill and myself on 'who's oldest?'. I was amused therefore to see that in the profile in *In the Stream of Stars* he had deducted three years off my age by making my birth date 1939. Thanks, Bill!

13. **MAN**

The moon

14. **TRAM**
1: Space Art in East Germany

Everyone has the basic ability and the liberty to state his or her artistic feelings, but in the past in East Germany only some professional artists had the chance to show their paintings in exhibitions and books to a wider audience. And these artists were not space artists!

Therefore let me describe my experiences with space art in former East Germany. I am 27 years old and became interested in astronomy and the history of our planet when I was 13. At the same time, or shortly before, I began my artistic work; at first showing landscapes, flora and fauna as they may have looked in different decades of Earth’s history. I became enthusiastic for Zdenek Burian paintings. They look so realistic. Imagination brings to light forms of life which human beings have never seen. Nevertheless this is the best picture we can have. Space art is a continuation of this art style in times before our Earth was born. I am self taught, and this has brought me many problems:

1) It was absolutely impossible to participate in space art illustration in popular astronomy books because a special Art Office stated: ‘only for professional artists’. As a technician I got no chance to study art in the ‘economic plan’ of a communist state.

2) In the same way, exhibitions were open only for professional artists. Only by my short talks at the Planetarium in Magdeburg could I make space art more popular. At the time I did not know any other space art, with the exception of some paintings by Alexei Leonov and Andrei Sokolov (We exchanged letters in December 1989). As a budding science reporter and a member of our Astronautical Society – which was responsible for the latest IAF congress – I try to make astronomy and space exploration better known. We have astronomy lessons at school, and when I look into the bright eyes of young pupils showing our universe only by mathematical formulae, theories, chemical symbols or technical signs, I know how important space art is.

2: View Point

At this point I am taking the opportunity to express my thoughts on space art:

Space science as well as space art could have a much greater influence on the development of ideas on the course of human space exploration. But in reality only a few artists have a greater interest on what is going on in science. People here do not expect artists to show realistic visions from space, but visions from the soul – impressions which are interesting only for one kind of science – psychology. In my opinion, it is not enough to paint a pink or green ball and call it ‘A Star is Rising’. This is not space art. But we can find this labelled space art in galleries, and even in planetaria in Germany. What a shame! The fine space art by Pesek is an exception to the rule. Naturally opinions differ, but in the case of space art I would agree with Roger Malina’s major address which was given at the 41st IAF congress in Dresden (Pulsar, November 1990). The IAAA manifesto should include this menu of styles. I am not so optimistic as Kara in relation to the unification of all art styles as well as science. This is a wonderful dream and we must do something together to make this dream come true, but it will not be the majority. There is no majority. Unity involves the drive of human mind towards understanding, and the desire of the human spirit for love. Today so much of our world seems to be fragmented by needless conflicts and ecological disasters. Much of life is passed in isolation or in hostility. There is a real need for intelligent co-operation. We are just beginning.

I ask myself whether, if the first chapters of Genesis were assimilated into the ideas of the world’s famous artists, might contemporary cosmology have something to offer the leading artists of our generation? Only a dynamic relationship between space art and space sciences can reveal the limits which support the integrity of either discipline. Our work must be based on further research and discussion. Exactly what form that will take must be left to the future.

3: Is There a Need for Space Art in Europe too?

My first communication from Dave Hardy in the UK was in March 1990. I had previously sent him three letters but I believe that none of them left this country. Writing to official addresses was forbidden, and I only had the address of the British Interplanetary Society to contact him. The BIS journal Spaceflight, with an article by David, was only available in the private library of our Institute of Cosmic Research, and it was not easy to gain access. It was a lucky accident when I contacted David, and through him the IAAA.

Shortly after the peaceful revolution in East Germany in October 1989, I started attempting to contact artists in West Germany. Serious space art has no relevance in official ‘avant-garde’ art. Space art means only illustration or slush, they say. Like the mafia they dictate how we should think about art.

From 11 July 1990 to 1 October 1990, my first space art exhibition consisting of 3 dozen paintings took place at the Wilhelm Foerster Planetarium in West Berlin. I have talked about space art and the work of the IAAA in the press and on the radio. During these talks I have spoken about my style of combining fine art with astronomical teaching, but I believe that most people do not dwell on the
astronomical and philosophical background.

My painting ‘Sb-type Galaxy’ was welcomed because it looked like a colourful whirl. Viewers were receptive to this kind of art, but they have not bought real space art like Carroll or Sternbach produce, and which I prefer. Nevertheless I believe that in Europe also there is a great need for fine space art.

**More News from Europe**

My membership drive is still bringing in results. As you know, Ludek Pesek applied for IAAA membership; he has now been made an honorary member in recognition of his service to space art. We have recently been joined by another artist from France – Lionel Bret, who lives in Paris and also produces other forms of scientific illustration, such as medical and architectural. His recent space paintings include the Magellan Radar Mapper, the ULYSSES probe, and the Earth-Moon solar sail race. He often works for *Ciel et espace*, the French equivalent to *Sky and Telescope*.

Another new British member is C.M. (Mark) Hempsell, who works for British Aerospace, and specializes in space stations, lunar bases and suchlike. I also have promises from Steinar Lund, Peter G. Goodwin and Terry Holmes – all of whom may well have joined by the time you read this. A European Workshop in the near future is a definite possibility. However, I’m sure none of us wants the IAAA to break into factions: let’s keep it truly international, with as much intermixing of cultures and participation as possible.

Finally, can I ask all European members to keep me informed of interesting projects, upcoming exhibitions, etc.? Thanks!

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**Exhibitions Update**

Beth Avery

The deadline for submissions to Art of the Cosmos is now officially closed. If there is anyone who would like to get in under the wire please call and let me know what you are planning, and when I could expect a slide of it. Besides California, Hawaii, Canada and Florida, we now have serious interest in the show from the university in Boulder, Colorado, and the Discovery Museum in Connecticut.

70 Sioux Way, Portola Valley, CA 94028
Tel 415-851-3125, Fax 415-851-3283.

I have received two letters so far regarding the IAAA Manifesto:

I appreciate the work that you and Bill Hartmann invested in writing the draft of the IAAA Manifesto. Please accept my compliments on the result; it is exactly what it should be. You presented a definition of the direction of the IAAA art goals without becoming involved in detailed definitions of what constitutes the three areas of art. The current debate over what constitutes astronomical art is heated and somewhat divisive, and you will probably receive some criticisms because the draft manifesto isn’t sufficiently specific; I view your generality as an attempt to reconcile all of us, and I feel more comfortable with the future direction of the IAAA because of it.

C. F. Yankovich

I greatly appreciated and enjoyed reading your proposed IAAA manifesto in PULSAR recently which you and Bill co-produced. I’m sure the Board will approve its spirit and directness. I support these views and find them philosophically sophisticated, sound and correct.

Kara Szathmary

*Any other comments? 🎈🎈🎈 Speak now or forever hold your peace!*

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10. **XYTH**

11. **TIME**

12. **A SOMEWHERE**

13. **LAG**
Music From the Other Side of Mercury

Active member Mark Mercury has decided to release an album of his music, and is looking for cover art that will be a real attention-grabber.

The music will be in a contemporary classical style but orchestrated mainly with electronic sounds. The album will feature six to seven superb poems expressing the thoughts, emotions and moods of a lone space traveller on a long voyage. Following are some indications from Mark as to what type of art he is looking for:

"The poems are introspective, emotional, and generally very inspirational. The cover art should reflect this and should in some way include a human element. Just a spacescape by itself, no matter how stunning, would not communicate the spirit of this album."

I asked Mark why he doesn’t just do the painting himself. "The kind of image I’m looking for isn’t of the style that I do best. Besides, sometimes it’s more fun not to do it all yourself, and it would be gratifying to provide some exposure for one of the many excellent artists in the IAAA."

For payment Mark is offering a royalty on albums sold. He expects the project to be ready for release in early 1992, and to be the type of album that sells slowly but steadily over a long period. If you are interested in submitting your slides, send them to Mark Mercury, 1307 N. Lincoln Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91103. Be sure to include a SASE if you want your materials returned.

One final word: "I’m still looking for a few more high-quality space poems, and I’d be grateful if anyone could help me find them."

The Arts, Obscenity and Who?

Peter Shaw

There are some important questions to be considered about an artist’s relationship to his work, the public, and the government. Dennis Davidson’s article, "The Arts, Obscenity and You" (Pulsar, January/February 1991) almost addressed those questions, but instead turned into a polemic over censorship and neo-McCarthyism, and the thesis that the National Endowment for the Arts is about to be snatched away from us, leading to the end of Civilization As We Know It. All of these, however, are non-issues generally, and especially as far as the IAAA is concerned.

As Mr. Davidson himself said, "Pornography. Blasphemy. Child molestation. ...What do these words have to do with art? Or astronomical art? They don’t." Quite so. I suggest that the issues may be organized as follows:

1. the relationship of a piece’s literal content to its artistic evaluation;
2. the relationship between the artist and the public;
3. the relationship between the artist and the patron; and
4. the relationship between the artist and the government.

Let’s consider them as one follows from another. (Please note: in the following, the artist is referred to for convenience as "him", which is meant to include both genders. No sexist implication is intended.)

(1) Unless a piece of art is completely non-representational, it has a literal content that (if the artist is successful) touches the viewer on an emotional and visceral level, and leads the viewer to see what the artist saw and feel what the artist felt. It can be extremely powerful in that regard — which is the basis of both commercial advertising and political propaganda. For that matter, it’s the basis for the IAAA’s apparent emphasis on using astronomical art to lead the world into a new era of global and cosmic consciousness. (Whether the IAAA should presume to do any such thing is another question altogether.)

Some classes of visual symbols are unusually effective in grabbing viewers’ attention and interest, not to mention their adrenaline level. Sexual imagery is the most familiar example, but religious and ideological imagery can be in the same league. This very effectiveness, in fact, makes their use the cliched hallmark of the third-rate hack who can’t get himself noticed in any other way than to shock and titillate. Even from the hand of a truly great artist (which is rare, because great artists know how to be effective without manipulative tricks), such a piece therefore carries an unavoidable suspicion of sensationalism and emotional exploitation.

Let’s be clear about this: it is flatly unrealistic to insist that a work of art be
evaluated in an aesthetic vacuum, in isolation from the literal content of its subject matter, if it is that very content that makes the work effective at all.

(2) If a work of art has shock value, it is because the artist is purposefully violating the viewing public's sensibilities. I imagine that this can be politically legitimate (whether it is artistically legitimate is arguable), but to sneer at those sensibilities as invalid, and at those who have them as the hoi polloi, is something else again. Unfortunately for such elitist arrogance, it is still true that the vast majority of the art-viewing public in this country is shocked and repulsed by depictions of sexual activity (straight, gay, perverted, or otherwise), and by disrespect shown to symbols of religious faiths — faiths for which people have lived and died. This is not simply a matter of the body politic being hijacked by evangelical Christians, as Mr. Davidson implies. (And frankly, that's a cheap shot. Such depictions are at least as offensive to Jews and Muslims as to Christians, as well as to many with no religious affiliation at all; why then are his barbs aimed only at Christian televangelists?) People's feelings are facts. The emotional distress felt by someone who is deeply and personally offended by the content of a piece of art is as real as the ground under your feet — and it is utterly beside the point if you yourself cannot understand or sympathize with that distress. If you cannot respect people's real feelings, you cannot respect them as people at all: you've dehumanized them and set yourself above them...and that, Mr. Davidson, is the first step on the road to fascism.

The creation of art is by nature a self-centered and self-absorbed process, but it does not excuse the artist as an individual from a decent respect for the feelings of others. If our pleasure as artists in self-expression prompts us to cause pain and offense to others, knowingly and deliberately, simply for the sake of our own egos — then we may be the greatest artists in the world, but we're miserable excuses for human beings.

(3) Here is another point about which we must be clear: the artist who accepts financial support for his work — as distinct from one who creates on his own resources and sells his work if someone happens to like it — is an indentured servant. As the old saying has it, "He who takes the King's shilling is the King's man." Whatever the artist does is on the sufferance of his patron: if the patron chooses to let him do what he pleases, well and good...but the choice is the patron's, not the artist's. A transaction has taken place, and a transaction is always a two-way street, with reciprocal obligations. An employer has the perfect legal and moral right to expect an employee to do what the employer sets him to do, in the way the employer wants it done, in exchange for his paycheck. The only constraints are the law and the employee's personal conscience — but all his conscience can lead him to do is quit his job. If he never again does that kind of work as a result, well, that is his free choice. (Do you protest that being an artist is "different" from other kinds of work and should be above such things? Sorry. The distinction exists only in your head.)

To complain that all of this is unfair and artistically restrictive is not only itself unfair, but childish nonsense. One might as well complain about the laws of thermodynamics: that's life in the real world, friend. Certainly, artists have always known and accepted this arrangement (with whatever ill grace!) — I'm sure we all know why Gainesborough made "The Blue Boy" blue. If you want the security of outside support, you give up your claims to total independence. Or, you create only to please yourself, and avoid starvation if you happen to find someone of like mind. There's no middle ground, and no third choice.

(4) The artist who accepts the patronage of the government — we come at last to the N.E.A. — has put himself in a double bind: he has not only subjugated himself to the tastes of a patron, but (in a democratic society) to the tastes of the public at large...because his patron, the one footing the bills, is the public at large. That means that the consensus of public taste can legitimately be the basis for accepting or rejecting a work of art, even if the public never sees it — and the same applies to setting ex ante guidelines such as an anti-obscenity oath.

It should be obvious that this has nothing whatever to do with censorship.

Censorship is the attempt to restrict a free person's right to free expression. But, as we have seen, an artist who has attached himself to a patron has given up that right: his artistic output is the patron's property, not his, and the patron is perfectly within his rights to enjoy it, suppress it, or bury it in a hole in the ground. Nor is the patron's withholding support a form of censorship — it is non-support, which is very different. It constrains artistic expression only if there is no other market for the artist's work, which is not the case here. As Mr. Davidson acknowledged, corporate and private patrons abound, as well as private buyers. If an artist's work is so ill-executed or offensive that he can't find someone, somewhere, willing to support it, and he has to sell himself to the government instead...and he then finds that he doesn't care for the government's tastes in art — well, tough.

A harsh assessment? Perhaps. It's hard to imagine the performing arts even existing without outside support from corporate sponsors and the government, because they are enormously resource-intensive, large-scale collaborative efforts by their very nature. But is this true of the individual visual artist, whose most basic needs come down to a blank canvas, a tube of paint, and a brush, or equally-modest equivalents? For individual artists, the appeal of government support such as the N.E.A. isn't so much that it allows them to exist as artists, as that it exempts their work from having to be good enough to be competitive in the free market.

Mr. Davidson's comparison of Senators Joe
McCarthy and Jesse Helms is without substance. McCarthy's accusations about communist affiliations were outrageous not only because they were sometimes untrue and always reckless, but because they resulted in people being blacklisted from work for reasons totally unrelated to their profession competence or merits. Senator Helms' objections, however, are completely to the point: are the artists supported by the N.E.A. competent and deserving of that support, in terms of satisfying their patron's tastes and desires? Remember, their "patron" is not the artistic establishment — artists, art critics, and art teachers — but, through the intermediary of the government, the average citizen who believes (to whatever degree) in God, country, and the traditional Ozzie-and-Harriet family; whose tastes in art run more toward Norman Rockwell than Robert Mapplethorpe; and whose pocket is being picked to support "works of art" that would make him vomit if he ever saw them. (When the art in question is public art, he is forced to see it whether he wants to or not.) Now who, exactly, is in more of a position to complain about being ill-used? And as for careers being ruined because of bad publicity, look what happened to the sales of Salmon Rushdie's The Satanic Verses after the Iranians ordered his assassination, or the sales of 2 Live Crew's albums after they were charged with obscenity. Notoriety has kept some careers going longer than talent ever could.

In the end, Mr. Davidson was forced to concede, however indirectly, that none of this has anything to do with astronomical art — and, sadly, our doing our best at what we do best just doesn't seem to be good enough for him. He set out a lofty agenda for the astronomical artist as social critic-cum-gadfly-cum-revolutionary, and asked, "Is our art challenging citizens to look at the larger issues? Or is it merely chronicling one of the most profound explorations any species has ever undertaken?"

Merely? Merely? Clearly, astronomical art is too small a field for Mr. Davidson: he should abandon it altogether and run for Congress.

Comments on Guidelines for Criteria:

The "seven broad categories" of Space Art that Arthur Woods quoted from Roger Malina's paper, Space Art: The Role of the Artist in Space Exploration, only serve to exemplify the kind of meaningless diffusion that could all too easily trivialize Space Art, especially if we accept the "include everything" arguments of saying his seven points: taken at even face value, they tell us that quite literally anything could be considered Space Art! For example, Point #4 tells us that any artwork done on the Earth if seen from space becomes Space Art. This means that with good pair of binoculars the Great Wall of China suddenly becomes Space Art, as does the landscape architecture of Central Park of the Nazca lines in Peru. Point #5 is even sillier. According to it, any piece of art that an astronaut happens to be looking at becomes Space Art simply by virtue of its being in space. By merely taking a good, illustrated volume of art history with him or her, an astronaut could almost instantly transform every artwork done in the last thousand years into space art! If some artist sends an original portrait of his grandmother into space, does it become space art if an astronaut admires it? Point #7 informs us that if an artist simply creates a work that uses some NASA spin-off technology of material, then that piece of art is automatically Space Art! If it might be a still life of a bowl of fruit, it might be a soft-sculpture using Velcro, it might even be a crayon drawing by a two-year-old, but if it employed any materials developed from space technology, then that crayon drawing is space Art and that two-year-old is a space artist. If there might be any doubt about validity of the infant's work, than perhaps some accommodating astronaut could take it into orbit and lay a transforming gaze upon it.

I know that I am carrying some of these point to their most ridiculous extremes, but that is not my fault: it is in the nature of Malina's own agenda.

I do not think that we need to be discussing what belongs in at this stage of space art, we need to be discussing what space art does not encompass. We need to be exclusive, not inclusive. Kara's suggestion that the Space Age (such as it is) requires a "grand unification" of the arts is all well and good, but does it really mean anything? Aside from the problem of convincing every participating artist on the planet that they all actually belong to the same school no matter what they are doing, what Kara advocates sounds wonderful but is ultimately meaningless. There is already a "world art," in that it that is what is globally practiced, and has been practiced, constitutes a kind of human artistic gestalt. This is by necessity broken down into any number of schools, styles and techniques, from Baroque to Ashcan.

All that to "grand unification" would accomplish would be the attachment of a formal name to the sum total of human artistic production. We may choose to call this sum total Space Art, but that term would then be virtually meaningless when it came to discussing any particular work of art; there would still be the need for such pre-existing terms such as "surrealism," "modern" and "post modern,"
“cubism,” “expressionism,” etc. Similarly, and for example, all life on earth is categorized under the kingdoms of plant or animal, but in order to meaningfully discuss any particular creature we must subdivide the all inclusive Kingdom into Phyla, Classes, Orders, and so forth. No matter what grand name we attach to world art, we are still, nevertheless, left with the original taxa we started with.

So what then would be the point of Kara’s suggestion? Creating Space Art’s Manifesto is going to be a tough, unenviable job. However, I believe that the only meaningful way to go about is not to consider what is Space Art, but rather what is not. Space Art, to have any meaning at all, must be exclusive rather than all inclusive.

Ron Miller

Michael Carroll’s “Editorial: It’s Time to Focus” (Pulsar, November-December 1990) is an important encapsulation of the identity issue with which the International Association of Astronomical Artists is struggling.

As he points out the artists who founded the IAAA in 1984 wanted to create a unique new genre “based upon scientific fact”. They strove for bridging the gap between objective scientific discoveries “and the eager public, who is inspired by the natural beauty of the cosmos, and by the people and machines that explore it.”

This is a laudable goal. However, it also raises many vexing questions. One of them concerns the name of the organization. Why are astronomical artists, or the astronomical arts, limited to one particular type of expression? Are the astronomical arts identical with what I call astronoscapes: scientific illustrations of the universe and its explorers? If this is the case then the IAAA is a misnomer, and should change its name to the International Association of Astronomoscapists (IAA).

Another problem is related to the knowledge of other minds. How can the artist express the inspiration of the public? Is cosmic beauty an objective entity? And who exactly are these people? After all the public is not a homogeneous group, and even the most eager among them might have very different visions.

Furthermore, if the people and the machines involved in space exploration are the subject matter of the astronomical artist, in what sense, e.g., a portrait of a space engineer or a picture of a computer at Cape Canaveral differ from regular art?

Michael Carroll says that science fiction, creation mythos as well as astrology are excluded from the field of space art. But the history of science indicates that a great deal of science fiction finds its way into established science. Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) in the Astronomia Nova came quite close to the notion of universal gravity, and in Somnium - a dream of a voyage to the moon - he conjured up the image of the accelerating body of the traveller in space. He had also described the phenomenon of zero gravity: On a lunar journey the traveller must move by his own devices because the “forces of the earth and moon both attract the body and hold it suspended.” The American science fiction writer Larry Niven published his story Neutron Star in 1966, one year before pulsars were discovered. Beginning in the 1930’s theorists pondered the possibility that when a star exhausts its nuclear energy it collapses under its own gravitational attraction. In the collapsing star electrons are forced into protons and a super dense object is formed made of neutrons. The matter of the neutron star is so condensed that the equivalent mass of sun would be pressed into a body the size of Manhattan. Neutron stars are extremely heavy. Astronomers believe that pulsars are spinning neutron stars. They emit short and rapid bursts of radio waves at regular intervals. Some of them pulsate hundreds of times in a second. The Cambridge astronomers who detected the mysterious radio signals pulsating at the metronomic rate of 1.33 seconds first tended to explain them by means of the LGM Hypothesis. Thus, they postulated that the radio pulses were intelligent signals coming from “little green men”. Science as a cognitive process is neither final nor is it free from science fiction.

Another case in point is the rise of robotics as a science. Nowadays robots are widely used in laboratories, industry, construction and space exploration. But back in the 1920’s when Karel Capek’s play RUR (Rossum’s Universal Robots) was staged in European theatres these machines were still regarded as figments of the human imagination.

Even a realistically rendered picture showing, for example, a space settlement on Mars, is science fiction. Future events are not scientific facts. We have no evidence even that the sun will rise tomorrow.

From available data scientists extrapolate and postulate that the universe is expanding. This hypothesis implies that the universe is constantly changing in space and time. This, however, undermines the validity of premises by analyzing the past in terms of present conditions. When it comes, for instance, to calculating the age of the universe, how do we know whether physical processes in the past were the same as they are today? The cosmological theory that all the energy and matter in the universe originated in a colossal explosion at a determined moment in the remote past is the idea of a superdense agglomeration that burst into the Big Bang. If that explosion really occurred it destroyed the conditions that existed before. How do we know that the big bang happened as a singularity (i.e., a zero point of spacetime consisting of infinitely dense energy and matter) explosion? Well, the answer is that we do not know. For, despite Hubble’s finding that galaxies seem to fly away from Earth (1929), as well as the discovery made by Penzias and Wilson concerning the existence of microwave background radiation (1965), there cannot be conclusive evidence for a self-destructive event which transcends the realm of empirical investigation. Scientists hypothesized that space, time, matter and energy sprang 15 or 20 billion years ago from the big bang. This is, however, not science fact but a sophisticated contemporary creation myth!
Even with regard to astrology one ought to be careful. Astronomy after all developed out of astrology. For centuries the two were inextricably intertwined. Let us recognize the cogenet legacy of astrology, the establishment of constellations, for example. Do not throw the baby out with the bathwater!

The IAAA obviously has the right to define its character, direction and goals. However, the decision making process whereby a set of official criteria introduced determining what is space art and what is not deserves to be a democratic one. It is a pivotal decision affecting the entire organization, and therefore at least all active members should have the opportunity to ballot.

Definitions are often necessary. But they can turn into intellectual straight jackets too. Nevertheless, my outline of space art already appeared in Pulsar, March-April 1990. Let me reiterate its essence. In my opinion, the defining properties of space art transcend image and symbol making. “As a new genre, space art is concerned with

(1) the visual, scientific and philosophical investigation of the universe;
(2) the launching of objects into space, or
(3) the execution of projects on the Earth to be used or viewed from Space.”

Michael Carroll says that he does “mind belonging to an organization which has an identity crisis.” Yet we can look at the positive side of things, too. Not every identity crisis is a calamity. It might be a meaningful, soul-searching experience as well. It might lead to a gratifying catharsis.

According to him, the Impressionists would have rejected the German Expressionists in order to protect the essence of their movement. This might have indeed been the case. But again we can look at the problem from a very different angle. All modern art trends share a great deal of common denominators. These include the break up of traditional subject matter, of rules of composition, of treatment of form and color, of texture, line, light and perspective. Consequently, the Impressionists and Expressionists might have buried their hatchets and amalgamated under one umbrella organization; subdivided perhaps into two specialized factions.

A similar potential scenario offers a possible solution for the identity problem troubling the IAAA. The pioneering role of the original founders of this organization is a remarkable achievement which endows them with honor. It does not follow, however, that they are entitled to impose their oligarchic views and leadership on the association. Their glory does not waive their responsibility to share power with the members of the new non-profit IAAA. Life in this organization, just like at any other forum, should not be at odds with the ethical principles of democracy.

For my part the name of the IAAA tells it all: A combination of astronomical science and the arts. And the last A is a definite plural.  

Paul Harial

Footnotes:

Dennis Davidson

Joel Swaimler, the Museum of Natural History art historian, located a short film sponsored by the Hayden planetarium of the 1937 Peruvian eclipse. Although mostly a travelogue of Peru, the film includes footage of the eclipse itself and scenes of D. Owen Stevens painting the eclipse. Stevens, who died during the eclipse expedition, completed five exquisite paintings of the eclipse and associated atmospheric phenomena. He also completed a large painting of the southern Milky Way. Negotiations are under way to obtain a videotape for the Hawaii workshop.

Howard Russell Butler (1856-1934) Eclipse Painting

In his varied career, Howard Russell Butler worked with Thomas Edison, Andrew Carnegie, and as a lawyer, was retained by Alexander Graham Bell. In 1884 he gave up his career in law and studied with Fredrick Church in Mexico.

Although he painted portraits, marines and landscapes, he was best known for his astronomical paintings. Butler painted the eclipses of 1918, 1919, 1925, and 1932. He developed a short-hand technique which recorded color values while the eclipse progressed. By allotting a few seconds for observing each of the various phases of the phenomena. The Hayden planetarium has several Butler paintings in our astronomical art collection including Mars, Earth and eclipse paintings. A recent review of our collection has prompted Natural History magazine to publish an article in the June issue about the Planetarium’s eclipse expeditions.

... and one more thing...

CALENDAR

1991
- July 6 - 14: Hawaii Eclipse Workshop, Volcano Art Center Hawaii
  Contact: Laurie Ortiz
- Late Sept. - Art of the Cosmos Show

1992
- Spring Technical Workshops

Archives

Location categories (first two numbers):
- 06 Anza-Borrego Desert
- 04 California Coastal Rock Formations
- 02 Death Valley workshop
- 01 Hawaii workshops
- 05 Iceland workshop
- 03 Southwest workshop (Arches, Canyonlands, Goblin Valley)

Geological categories (second two numbers):
- 01 Alluvial Fans
- 02 Arches
- 03 Badlands
- 04 Buttes
- 05 Calderas
- 06 Canyons
- 07 Caves
- 22 Cliffs
- 08 Clouds
- 09 Craters
- 10 Dunes
- 11 Faults
- 12 Geysirs
- 13 Glaciers
- 14 Ice Fields
- 15 Lava Rock Formations
- 24 Misc.
- 23 Mountains
- 16 Moraines
- 17 Mud Formations
- 18 Mud Pots
- 19 Salt Pans/Fields
- 20 Volcanos
- 21 Waterfalls

To look at 8 slides at a time just send self-addressed stamped envelope with your request. The cost for mailing in the U.S. is $.45 cents, in Canada or other countries the cost is $.95 cents. I am always open to new categories and submissions of slides.