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The Official Newsletter of the
International Association for
Astronomical Arts

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Your art here? See page 3
A MAN ON THE MOON
by Andrew Chaikin
Book Review by Michael Carroll

A Man on the Moon (Viking, 1994) is written with the heart of the poet, and the vision of the artist. Andy Chaikin is a founding member of the IAAA. Perhaps his artistic background makes possible this book, which surpasses any other on the subject, including tomes written by someone who have actually walked the dusty plains of the Moon. Chaikin begins with a sobering account of the Apollo 1 fire, underscoring the dangers involved in humanity’s first voyages to the Earth’s nearest cosmic neighbor. The narrative moves quickly to later Apollos, with stunning descriptions and novel insights into the people who made Project Apollo a success.

Chaikin’s text gives the emotional as well as the technical side of the lunar exploration experience. First-hand accounts with all of the surviving astronauts make this book one of the best, if not the best, on the subject to date.

Congratulations, Andy!

Space News

For all of you space artists who are interested in upcoming robotic missions, planetary exploration, etc., here are a few ideas worth considering: over the next ten years, the world’s space-faring nations plan to mount more than twenty missions to Mars, including orbiters, landers, rovers, penetrators and balloons.

For a good overview, check out the Planetary Report for September/October 1994. First among the explorers will be the Mariner Pathfinder, with a microrover and an airbag landing system.

Mars Global Surveyor follows close behind, departing in 1996 with most of the same instruments lost aboard Mars Observer last year. INFO: MESSR/Pathfinder in a NASA/JPL project (JPL Public Information: 818-354-5011). The Mars Global Surveyor is headed up by Martin Marietta (PIO: 303-977-5364).

Another area worth watching is Pluto.

Things are heating up within the ranks of NASA to launch a Pluto Fast Flyby mission to the remote planet before its orbit takes it farther from the Sun and its atmosphere "chills out". (Contact Steve Brewster, JPL: 303-354-4321).

Galileo arrives at Jupiter this December, after snapping images of the asteroid Ida and discovering its moon, Dactyl. Japan, Russia, ESA and NASA have ambitious plans for the near future. Watch the news! For an overview of NASA’s cheaper-faster-better plans, see Aviation Week and Space Technology with a wonderful set of Pat Rawlings paintings (5 December 1994).

Artists new to the genre should note that it is best not to use other artists’ paintings as your sole reference. Try to get photos or engineering diagrams from various Public Information Offices (PIOs) to help you understand the object being drawn in full three dimensions. The more you understand what you’re painting, whether it’s a mountain or a satellite, the better your work will come out in the end.

New Aerospace Museum Opens

Michael Carroll’s one-person exhibition of space paintings was unveiled at the opening of the new Wings Over the Rockies aerospace museum in Denver, Colorado.

Mike is negotiating for a possible IAAA exhibition or auction for sometime late next year. Stay tuned!

We want your images!

I want to showcase as much work by our members as possible in Pulser. You may send it in any form except transparencies: colour or B&W prints, on a disk in TIF or EPS format etc., or by e-mail. Already printed material can be used, but may not reproduce so well because ofmoire screen problems.

But not only images; I’d like you to send in information about your artwork - when you painted it and why, what special research you did, locations you visited, what difficulties you had, where it was published, and so on. Are there any special memories or other associations attached to it?

To kick off (because obviously I don’t have many outside contributions yet) I’m including one of my own and, at left a line drawing by Arthur Gilbert. On the cover is ‘Terraforming Mars’, which shows Mars with clouds and water - Valles Marineris is a real martian canal - seen from a base on Phobos, on which can be seen the mass-driver which projected dark, carbonaceous material onto the polar areas so that they absorbed more infra red radiation.

This has been a rather special painting for me. I painted it for my book Atlas of the Solar System (Heinemann, 1981/revised 1986), and had 100 proofs run off at the time of printing. Kim Poor included this in his Novographics catalog, and it sold out within a couple of weeks. I painted a second version a couple of years ago, this time with an ocean in the lowland areas, also for the Novographics catalog, entitled ‘Terra Nova’.

‘Terraforming Mars’ was used, in B&W, in an article in the Journal of the British Interplanetary Society in 1993, and Arthur C. Clarke saw it there. He faxed me to ask if he could use it in his new book The Snows of Olympus (in which he uses computer graphics to ‘green’ Mars). It ended up as his cover art.

Meanwhile, Carl Sagan had also asked me to do some interior illustrations for his new book, A Small Blue Dot, about the future of mankind in space. ‘Terraforming Mars’ was amongst them - but I was somewhat alarmed when I learned that the publishers intended to use it as their cover! I told them at once of course that it was already A.C.C.’s cover. Carl ended up using ‘Terra Nova’ as his cover instead.

So - do you have any stories of that sort? Any sort? If so, let’s have them. If not, just send art anyway!
MIRA Art Show:
A Report by William K. Hartman

On 2-4 December 1994, an exhibit and auction of space art was opened at the Who's Who in Art gallery in Monterey, California. This gallery is owned by a member of the board of the Monterey Institute for Research in Astronomy (MIRA) and is also known as the gallery that shows the last works of Chesley Bonestell, along with traditional Californian, non-space art.

The show drew primarily from the IAAA and our Russian friends, and some of the work was material from our shows in Russia, and from In the Stream of Stars. Painters included Avary, Carroll, Davidson, Leonov, Miller, Paplovsy, Shabram and Sokolov. Prices ranged from a few hundred dollars for smaller Carroll and Hartmann pieces to the $6000-7000 range and above for larger (3-4ft) pieces by Sokolov and Leonov. Lower priced prints were also provided. Leonov also brought some of his small Russian landscapes. Keynote talks were given by Davis, Pavia, and Hartmann. Beth Avary, B.J. Johnson and Jow Shabram also attended.

Alexei Leonov was a big draw, and it was a thrill for me to see him happily painting at the gallery when I arrived. On the good side, I would say that the show reflected an increasing interest and price escalation for notable space art. The fact that we can break into 'mainstream' galleries is also a positive sign. The show looked terrific. A silent auction technique was used where people sign up to buy whatever paintings they want, and later bidders can sign up to offer a higher price. I think this is a good technique for space art and for fund raisers. Proceeds would be split between MIRA and the artists.

On the down side, the show was rather hastily organised (partly at my suggestion) and perhaps would have been successful as a fund raiser had there been more months of publicity and the venue had been a gallery in San Francisco, aimed at an upscale clientele. The auction, on the second day, netted only some sales of In the Stream of Stars, some prints, and some of my notecards. After the confusion of the opening and the auction, gallery owner Patti Compton was settling down to pursue sales by 'phone - the more traditional sales technique for upscale art.

The show will remain until January, when the Russian art will move on to several other venues, including Houston. These shows are being organised by Art Dula, who is dealing in the Russian art of Sokolov, Leonov and others. Our guess is that he may have more success with selling these paintings, because he can target upscale collectors, instead of astronomy buffs who want to support MIRA.

A good precedent has been set in utilizing IAAA art for fund-raisers, where the artists and the sponsoring organization can benefit. (At the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, in Tucson, I helped organise a similar show of desert paintings. 150 were submitted, 40 were juried, and the show sold in a gallery at the museum, and 19 had sold after about two weeks!) This type of show might be the wave of the future in the US, where (in the Year of the Newt, following our recent elections) public sponsorship of the arts and of science may go drastically downward, but private sponsorship may go up.

A Secondhand Report on the Status of IAAA Art in Las Vegas, Nevada

By William K. Hartman

During the show in Monterey (see previous page), I was able to get some information on the status of IAAA art that went to Las Vegas. During the last month or so, two leading UK SF writers, Critical Wave and Andromeda, have published a note about an alleged breach of copyright by Starlog magazine and World Class Marketing, Inc. Here's my own experience:

During the 1993 Novacon UK convention a book deal was made and I now have a set of trading cards - which I had never seen and knew nothing about! There were also cards by Chesley Bonestell, Robert McCall, Ron Miller, Don Dixon, Lilis, Pesek, Don Davis - some 15 in all.

I wrote to Norman Jacobs at Starlog, who replied that he “produced the cards to try and help infuse some life into space art enthusiasm”. He “found it annoying to have to deal with artists who don’t appreciate it”. It turned out that Starlog had bought the original art of most of these cards, and he “thought he therefore had the right to reproduce it”. Of course, I was most upset - and so was Mr Jacobs, who had added: “If you want to sue, then sue. And believe me, I won’t receive bad press.”

I wrote to a few of the other artists concerned, and just about a year ago received a letter from an attorney whose name Ron Miller had contacted, who was willing to take up our case of infringement of copyright, for a small percentage of a successful outcome. I have so far received just $300 from Starlog (which I didn’t cash), and we now all await the imminent court case with great interest...
IAAA Workshops
by David A. Hardy

I must admit that I have been getting withdrawal symptoms since the Hawaii/Eclipse Workshop of 1991. You've never been to an IAAA workshop? Lots of members haven't; indeed, many of the same people have attended all the workshops I've been to, with just a few new faces (and a few missing) each time.

If I may digress for a moment, on a personal note: As I write (December 1994) it's actually 40 years this year since my space art was first published, in a 1954 book by 'new' author Pat Moore. I was 18 at the time, and produced my first work back in 1956, the same year as Alexei Leonov, the Russian cosmonaut-artist, and Kazuaki Iwasaki, Japan's leading astronomical artist who, like myself, was initially influenced by Chesley Bonestell.

For many years I worked as a 'loner', having no-one with whom I could discuss this very specialized form of art-science fusion. Then in 1988 I went to Iceland to meet US and (then) Soviet artists at the first international IAAA workshop. Pasadena for the Voyager/Neptune flyby and then Utah in 1989, and Hawaii in 1991. It is no exaggeration to say that these events changed my life. The joy of meeting like-minded artists, exchanging tips and criticisms, making new friends. Not to mention visiting the world's most alien places, photography and sketching geological formations which are analogs of those we would find on Mars and Io.

Shortly after the Iceland Workshop I suggested a future workshop in the Canary Islands, which are highly volcanic and about as far from the US east coast as Hawaii is from its west, so accessible by European members too. Added to this, there are UK observatories on Tenerife and La Palma, which we could visit. Although there was some interest, nothing came of this; until now.

A few months ago I received a letter from a British artist called Jess Artem who actually lives on Tenerife. He suggested an IAAA workshop combined with a major art exhibition at a new 'Museum of Science and the Cosmos' which has now opened there, next door to the Institute of Astronomy. Jess (who's about to re-join the IAAA) has kindly offered to organise the workshop at his end, while Mike Carroll will do so in the States and I will handle the European side.

Our President, Dennis Davidson, has already sent a brief note of this in his letter to all members recently, but a reminder won't come amiss! Could there be a more ideal venue? This is a chance for a real, 'old-style' workshop, for members from many countries to meet each other, and generally to revitalise the IAAA. Several European members have already expressed great interest.

Please do consider attending this - more details in Pulsar later - and start saving up now. You can't say you haven't been given enough notice, because we are thinking of 1996 for this great event! And if you are interested, do write to us at once, so that we can gauge the amount of interest. See you there!

Meanwhile, for 1995, there's:

Arches '95
by Michael Carroll

The Arches National Park workshop is being arranged as of this writing. We plan a five-day sortie into the desert wilderness of Utah, to paint, draw, critique and revel in nature's wonders and geology's weirdness (No, I am not referring to Joel Hagen). Plans to bring slides of work. We may have the opportunity to exhibit work, but this is still being negotiated. More information will follow in the next Pulsar.

A Brief Report on the Solar Eclipse in Chile

We really should have had an IAAA Workshop there! After spending a week in Peru, including a visit to the 'lost Inca city' of Machu Picchu, I crossed the border into Chile and saw the eclipse of 3 November from a site high on the Andes (over 14500 ft), surrounded by eight snow-clad volcanoes, some of which emitted puffs of steam during the eclipse. The sky was very dark, with some high cirrus; Venus was brilliant. It was one of the most alien experiences of my life, and quite different from Hawaii - though that was good in many other ways. D.A.H.