

EXHIBITION HALL ISSUE 11



EXHIBITION HALL - JULY 2010

CHRISTOPHER J GARCIA - EDITOR, JAMES BACON - LONDON BUREAU CHIEF, ARIANE WOLFE - FASHION EDITOR, JOHN HERSCHEL - MUCH COOLER THAN CHARLES BABBAGE

Steampunk moves along. I'm glad to be able to say that because there are those who think that Steampunk is a single venting away from oblivion. We're living in an interesting time when there's a whole lot going on with cons and meet-ups and the zines and various other folks doing Steampunk specials.

And that's what I'm talking about this time.

Yipe! is an amazing fanzine out of the minds of Kevin Roche and Jason Schachat. They're both buddies of mine and they're both very good people. Its subtitle, the Costume Fanzine of Record, is pretty good since it is one of the few costuming fanzines out there today. The Steampunk issue, which you can find at <http://www.yipezine.com/issues/Yipe%20Issue%202.4%20small.pdf>, is full of Steampunk costuming notes, a bit of snark, a few serious questions raised, and most importantly, it's got lots of photos. One thing that I love about Yipe is that they have some great photographers, especially Andy Trembly, who does a great job in this issue.

One thing that Yipe! shows is that Steampunk costuming is becoming very typical in many areas as a standard for costuming. You'll see at least a half-dozen Steamy costumes at most SF cons with Masquerades and tons more hall costumes. When I was at CostumeCon in 2008, there were dozens of fantastic S t e a m p u n k

costumes, including some that rival anything I've seen at the various Steampunk conventions. Just some magnificent costuming.

And that's something I'd love to see in 2012, when CostumeCon goes to Phoenix (hopefully after the Supreme Court rules that Arizona's legal idiocy is unconstitutional). I would love to see Steampunk costumers who have been doing great stuff to show up at the con and hit it hard! The theme is Steampunk/Alt. History/Other and that would seem to be the perfect place for Steampunk costumers to explode onto the scene.

Because, in many ways, some of the best costumers I've seen around the Steampunk conventions are very much isolated into the community and haven't experienced much aside from the Steamy cons of the last couple of years. There's a need for something of a coming-out party for some of our Steampunkish Cousins into the Mainstream of Costuming fandom. I think it

would be great to see a sea of Steampunks in the halls of CostumeCon 2012, and then a whole raft of y'all in the Masquerades. It'd be awesome. I'd even risk deportation if I knew that we were going to see that happen.

I recently went back and took a look at the first Steampunk zine I ever did was a single issue of The Drink Tank Presents from 2005. It was a decent early effort from me. It has its



problems, I've gotten much better, and it sorta shows the direction I wanted to go with Exhibition Hall a full half-decade before I actually decided to give it a try!

I think it was a good start, it wasn't long after that I saw the first issue of Steampunk Magazine and I guess that was the start of the current wave.

Steampunk has changed, and I'm glad for it, not because in the pre-Steampunk Movement days were things bad, but because without change, we're stuck.

Speaking of change, a couple of new Steampunk Conventions in the Western US have popped up. The first I heard about is the Gaslight Gathering in San Diego, May 6-8, 2011. It's being put on by some really good folks at the Town & Country in San Diego. I'm excited and I'll be there for sure. Nick Baumann, Leatherman extraordinaire, will be the Maker Guest of Honor.

The second, which I heard about completely by accident, is WildWild-WestCon in Tuscon, Arizona. It's got a pretty darn good list of folks appearing, including Abney Park, Veronique Chevalier, The Unextraordinary Gentlemen, The Strand and more.

Of course, with my last name, poking my head into Arizona right now would be at least somewhat dangerous. They're also not having the con itself at a hotel. They're having it at Old Tuscon Studios, which is very cool as so many movies of the Old West have been shot there, but there's likely to be a shuttle between the hotel and the studios, though it's likely to cost. Not a perfect arrangement, but the site is really interesting. It's the first weekend in March, so I won't be going since it's up against the Cinequest Film Festival.

This issue, we're pleased to have Diana Vick with a look at two of the events from May, the Month of Steampunk, and we've got Paige Connely as our artist

spotlight. You'll notice Brad Foster sent a piece of art for us (on the last page). He's one of my favorite fan artists, and a regular Hugo nominee, and a 6-time winner over the past twenty years. Always good to have stuff from him!

James Bacon has a look at a couple of great non-fiction comics, Ariane continues her series and I write about stuff!

What could be better than all that!

ART THIS ISSUE - BRAD FOSTER (PAGE 1), PAIGE CONNELLY (COVER, BACOVER, PAGES 5 - 10), GLORIA CUBANO (PAGE 2), RICK GEARY'S COVERS (PAGES 3-4), R. "MARTIN" ARMSTRONG (PAGES 13-16)



COMMENTS? JOURNEYPLANET@GMAIL.COM

REVIEWED: THE TREASURY OF VICTORIAN MURDER

Jack The Ripper by Rick Geary

Rick Geary is one of those creators in the comics industry who garners immediate respect from all in the business. This series of black and white, digest sized comics, is without doubt his most prominent work, and with good reason.

Geary brings us the murders of Victorian times. He uses a number of clever literary devices to tell his stories, and Jack the Ripper uses the journal of an interested gentleman, with close links to the Metropolitan police, that he is subsequently illustrating. This is a clever way to tell the story, as one must be objective with anything of the ripper lore. Without being too judgemental, and of course with the matter of the Ripper, one has to deduce what was germane to the history of the case.

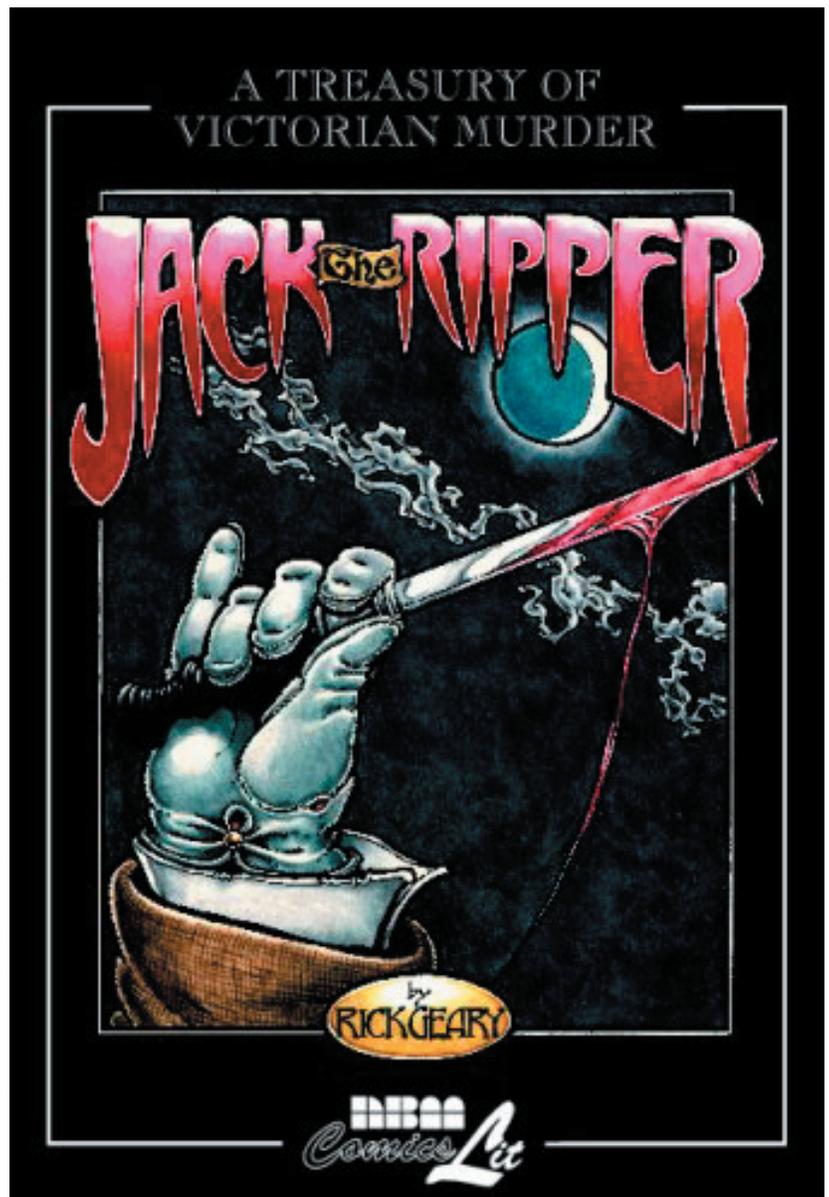
Geary manages to take the reader on a journey, showing the key people and places, without jumping to any conclusions and yet, explaining how the people of the East End of London, a terribly poor area, felt and feared. The various murders, which may have been the acts of the same person, the different leads, and important communique's. I was impressed how Prince 'Eddy' got very little space, this being a very dodgy avenue to pursue. I was also impressed how Geary manages to map out the East End so well.

I was lucky enough to be involved in arranging a tour of Jack the Rippers London, and the area has changed so much, since Victorian times, but even so, the close vicinity of the murders is inescapable. The darkness and claustrophobic feeling comes across in Geary's work, that now as one wanders spacious places, which bear little resemblance to what was once a much busier and seedier place.

The cartoon artwork style is unique and also very refined. Fashion

and Clothing seem to be key with Geary, who is able to identify the importance of appearance and dress in Victorian time, while his attention to detail of the architecture and implements of the time, is quite beautiful. I love the use of maps in this, and adore his artistic style.

The story of Jack the Ripper fascinate people, and Geary has ably added to this genre. In this gorgeously produced sixty four page comic, one ably comes to understand the gruesome history of The White Chapel Murders.



BY JAMES BACON: LONDON BUREAU CHIEF

The Beast of Chicago The Murderous career of H.H. Holmes by Rick Geary

Who is H.H. Holmes? I wondered as I opened this book. Rick Geary shines a light onto a truly murderous monster, who admitted to some 27 murders, but who may have been responsible, for literally hundreds.

A fraudster from an early age, Holmes used his charm and well spoken manners to fool and deceive people. A terrible man for women, he leaves a trail of wives, children and lovers in his wake, many of whom he disposes of.

I was taken again with Geary's skilful use of maps, and on this occasion, the excellent interiors he created to ably illustrate

the massive building known in the Chicago neighbourhood of Englewood, as the Castle, where many of Holmes crimes took place. The man was incredibly clever and devious, and also had an energy and ability to manage people in situations to his benefit.

He must have had a tremendous energy, as the man was able to carry on multiple relationships and business activities, while killing as his plans required. It's a gruesome story, one where people were obviously taken in by a man they felt they trusted, a doctor, manipulator and cold killer.

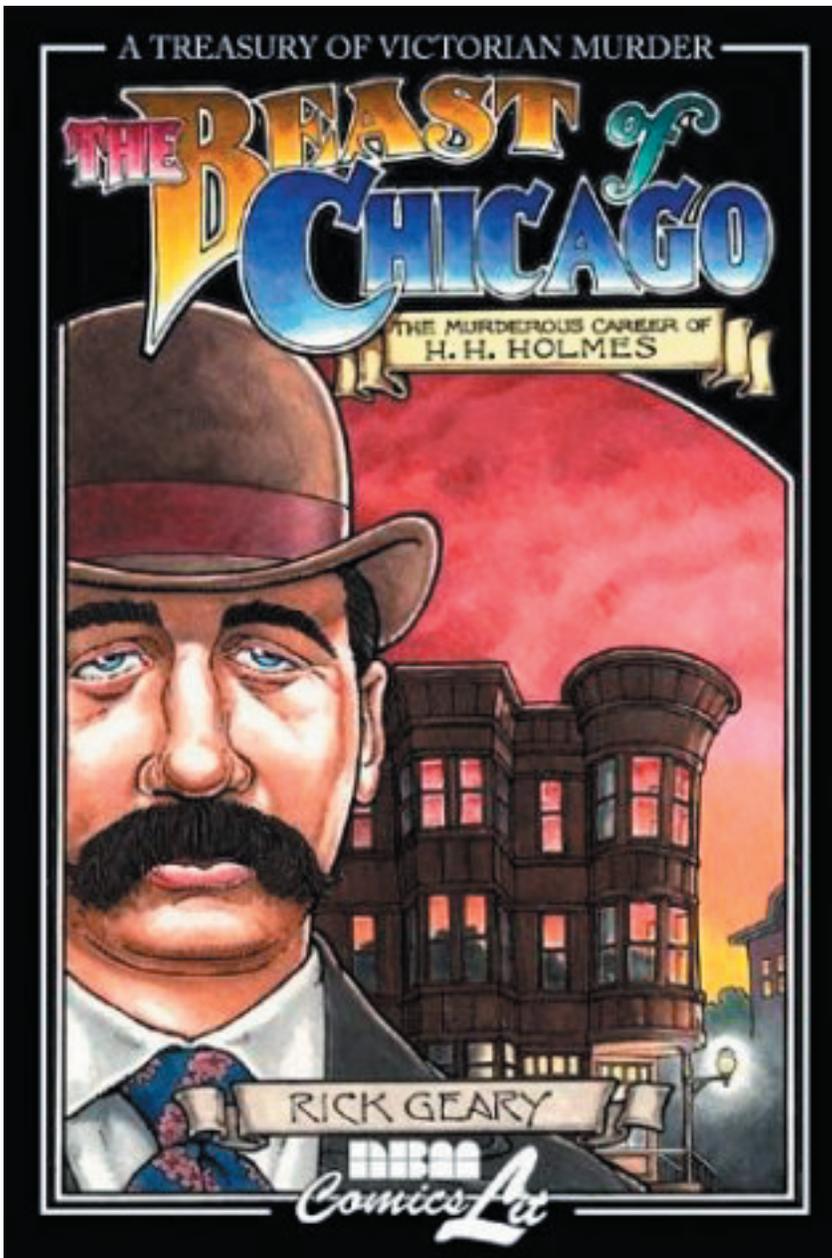
Geary really manages to tell this story. Again at all times the artwork ably illustrates the story, and I was very impressed with how each of Holmes' victims had distinct looks.

His attention to detail, his accuracy at attempting to tell a story as objectively as possible and the beautiful black and white artwork all add to make a great comic.

What's amazing is that these murders were occurring at about the same time as Jack The Ripper, the man had a gruesome basement of horrors, was incredibly inventive about how he killed, and yet somehow has slipped through a crack in history and failed to ignite the collective imagination, as the ripper story has.

I was especially pleased with this, finding a new story, is always enjoyable, that the subject is quite so horrible, and vividly portrayed in a gentle way.

Rick Geary's series of graphic novels about the famous murders of the Last Century, A Treasury of XXth Century Murder, has released two graphic novels so far- The Lindbergh Child and Famous Players: The Murder of William Desmond Taylor. There are also 10 other Victorian Murders. They are available from <http://www.nbmpub.com/mystery/gearyhome.html>



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT - PAIGE CONNELLY



Sometimes, in the search for the massive amount of art I run in this here zine, I come across a piece that rocks my world. In the case of Paige Connelly, it was her Steampunk Green Lantern image. I wandered around her gallery and discovered some really fun, really interesting pictures, some of which were Steampunk, and many of which weren't. Still, it was all great stuff, fun and exciting and beautifully composed. Her's was exactly the kind of art that I feel is missing in Steampunk art today: just plain fun!

I'm so glad that Paige agreed to be our Spotlight Artist for July and I'm happy to say that she agreed to answer a bunch of my odd little questions...

When did you start drawing? Do you ever go back and study the pieces you did when you were younger?

I remember drawing ever since I was a kid. I've been carrying a sketch book around with since about the 5th grade. So art has been a main staple in my life at a young age. Comic books greatly influenced the way I drew. I loved the X-men and collected those books like crazy, the Ultimate X-men was my favorite growing up. Drawing was the one thing I could do well as a kid, I wasn't able to read till the 4th grade and math was always a challenge, so drawing allowed me to become a confident person.

You've done some very cool pieces based on everything from Green Lantern to 2000ad. How do you approach your fan art? How difficult is character design when there's already an existing model?

For me, I really don't consider it fan art. For me it's a drawing of a character who doesn't belong to me. But when I do draw comic or cartoon characters, I just try to bring something new to the table with my style and design. For example, when I do a steampunk super hero I look at a full range of how their costumes have been in the past and pick certain details to bring into the new design. I don't want to copy some one else's work.



What books influenced you as an artist, and also as a storyteller? What would you say your favorite books are?

The Narnia series as well as the Harry Potter series got me interested in reading, I was a slow reader as a kid and got a little better when I was in high school. It still takes me a while to read a novel with all the words. When I was a kid, I loved comics because it had lots of pictures and not as much words. So it was much easier for me to read as well as be influenced by the art. I love the writings of Mike Mignola's hellboy universe as well as Neil Gaiman's comics and novels. Mike Mignola got me interested in writing and creating my own comics in high school because he proved that one can have a different style from a normal comic artist and be successful.

You say that you discovered Steampunk through an anthology. Which one? Can you describe the moment of discovery for us?

I got a gift card to a book store for

christmas one year. Me being a geek, I was in the sci-fi section and was looking at titles of books. A book entitled Steampunk jumped out at me, I was familiar with the term but never saw a book about it. So I sat down to read and finally said, "this is it". This is the world I want to draw about and occasionally write about.

I'm always interested in how artists influence artists who study with them. You studied with comic artist Guy Dorian for a while. What would you say was the effect of his class on you? Is there a difference between before and after?

When I was working with Guy I was a young kid, only ten. So I was very unsure that I could eventually make a living from art. Guy taught me all the basics of human anatomy, storyboarding, and character design. Since I was so young he created the basis that all

my art now lays on. I definitely improved from being in the class no doubt. I'm lucky because now I get to work with other great artists at college and friends to improve my art. My good friend Piers Hazzel is always helping me develop ideas. It's great to work with as many artists as possible to learn as much as possible.

Tell us about your involvement in Kendo and sword arts? Has that influenced your art in any way?

It definitely improved my knowledge of how the body moves and balance. Kendo was first a way to lose weight but I fell in love with sword fighting, that I eventually taught the class that I took. Sword fighting opened me up to Japanese block prints which I use to draw in the style of. It taught me line work which is very important to me when I draw. I also enjoyed learning about samurais and Japanese





history which I put into my art with dragons and battles.

I absolutely love your piece Steam Tuba. Just so very cool! I don't have a question for that one. I just wanted to say that.

Thanks, that was a little doodle piece from me sitting in class. A lot of those strange ideas come to me when i am sitting in class.

Many great comic artists have taken a pass at the Monkey King stories, including Gene Yang in the amazing graphic novel American Born Chinese and, of course, Dragon Ball. You've been working on a Monkey King/Monkey Kid comic. How do you go about working with such a known character?

It can be a challenge sometimes. But I'm not trying to tell the stories that have already been told. It's more of my idea of how the monkey king would be as a child interacting with not just Chinese mythological characters, but other mythological characters from other cultures. It's a mix of all different types of mythology that I like to study. It's based in true mythology but with new stories involved.

You play the french horn and I find that a lot of artists who are also musicians find ways to put them both together somehow. DO you do that in your art?

When drawing I do listen to classical or instrumental music to help me create pieces. Often I find classical pieces that I attach to my characters so when I am doing a character or scenic design I draw from the music to help me create the illustration that I am after. I do enjoy playing music because it's very different from drawing because drawing is very solitary while playing in a band I am with 80 plus other people creating one piece. It's just a different feeling then working alone.

I love that on your Deviantart.com gallery, you often put the pencils, inked and final coloured versions of your pieces, giving us a glimpse of your process. Which stage do you enjoy the most? Which would you consider concentrating in?

I show the process because I think it's important to not just show the final piece because when I look at other's art I always wonder how they get to the end process. Plus it's nice to have a record of each stage because I tend to not like the way I color my art. The strong contrast of black and white has been something I played with greatly in the past. But the more I practice with color, I get better. So recording the pencils, inks, and colors helps me look and see how i went through to tackle each. I very much interested in sketching and inking, not so much coloring, some days I wish I had a colorist like real comic book artists do. One day I would like the pencil and ink a graphic novel and have some one else color it. Not that I don't have a good sense of color, I'm just not doing it as well as I could be.

You can see more of Paige's work at <http://pcsamurai.deviantart.com/>



Mokey Kid



REVIEWED: THE AFFINITY BRIDGE BY GEORGE MANN

This review would be much different if a) I wasn't a huge mystery fan and b) if this was 1995.

Let us tackle the first of these problems. The Affinity Bridge is a Newbury & Hobbes Investigation, a pair of detectives who are on the case of...well, two things. They're investigating a series of murders by a glowing policeman and the crash of an airship. Of course, they start to realize the neither is what they seem.

Oh, and there are zombies.

This is London and the slums are invested with Revenants, zombies of a particular sort. It's an interesting premise, and the kind of zombies that they are make it even more interesting, but more on that in a bit.

The real problem is it's just not a very strong mystery. There's no possible other outcome. We can tell from the minute we're introduced to both the major cases that they're going to end up combining into one case, and even more so, who the villains are. It's not a stretch at all. It's obvious from the

get-go. That's not good mystery writing, but perhaps that's the point. I think of Mieville's *The City & The City*, another SF-Fantasy novel that attempts to be a detective story and suffers for it slightly. But unlike *The City & The City*, the SF-Fantasy is nowhere near amazing. In fact, it's a pretty typical Steampunk London. For a city that's beset

with zombies, it's still pretty normal. One of the reasons why *Boneshaker* worked (though imperfectly), is that the setting is so such a different world. This was Steampunk London... and it wasn't nearly as interesting as the Steampunk London that we got from Gail Carriger, *The Anubis Gates* or the Blaylock novels. In fact, if you took out the zombies, I could see Gail's Miss Hisselpenny and Alexia Tarabotti enjoying a lovely walk through it.

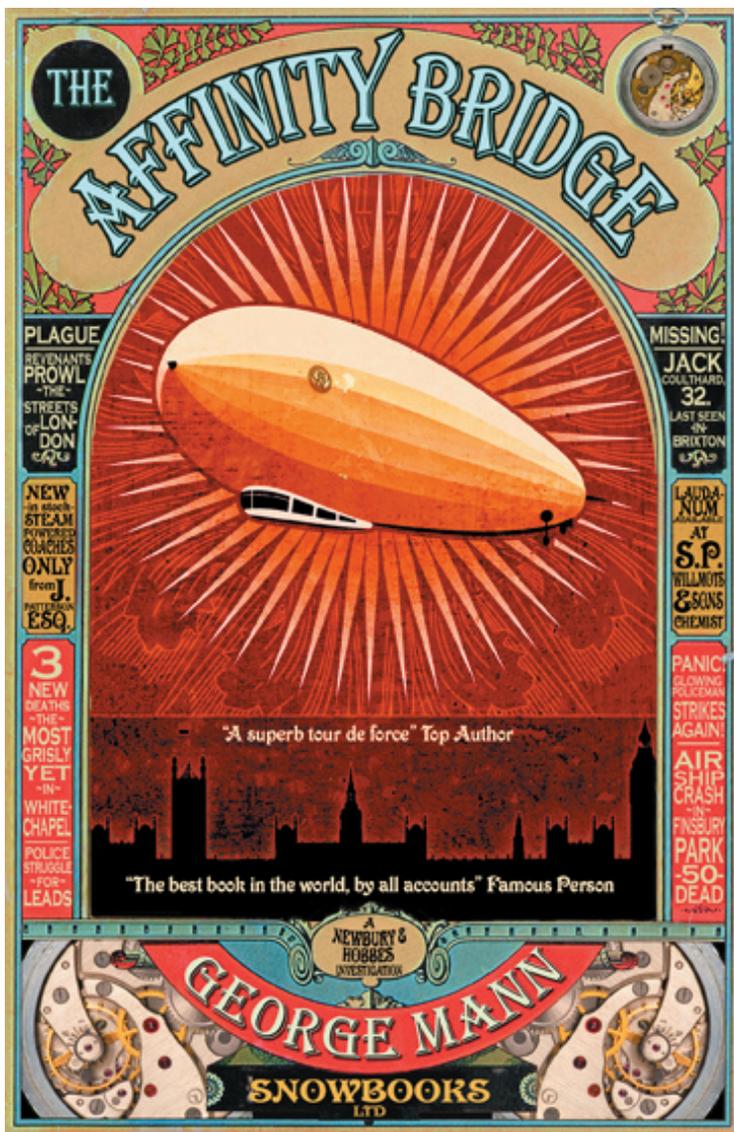
That's a problem.

The novel never really zigs or zags. It's pretty much a straight line. I was never guessing. Maybe I've just read too many *Hard Case Crimes* and can see through to the end, but an author really shouldn't do that. An author should at least make an attempt to throw you off-tract, or at least give you strong moves in other directions.

As detectives, both Newbury and Miss Veronica Hobbes are part-fantastic and part-dull. Newbury is a Holmesian character, with a couple of the very same flaws that Sherlock suffers with. He is a good guy, gentlemanly in

a way but all too often, he's goo-goo eyed over Miss Hobbes. He fights well, though not overly intelligently, and he's very much a Gentlemen's Club kind of guy without being an actual member. The fact that he's one of Victoria's Own is a nice touch, but it doesn't make him overly interesting.

Miss Hobbes is somewhat more
BY CHRISTOPHER J GARCIA



interesting, as she has a strong hold over Newbury and is a very smart character without possessing near-Deity observance. She's a smart character, also fond of goo-goo eying, but really, she's a Watson and that's not even played off at all. Watson-type characters exist for a reason, and they are best to be used as such, but she is not the sounding board, alas there's almost no sounding in the book at all, and she's not the one who inadvertently gives the entire thing away without realizing that she's solved the case without even trying. Excepting for scenes with her sister in an asylum, she doesn't provide too much to the story.

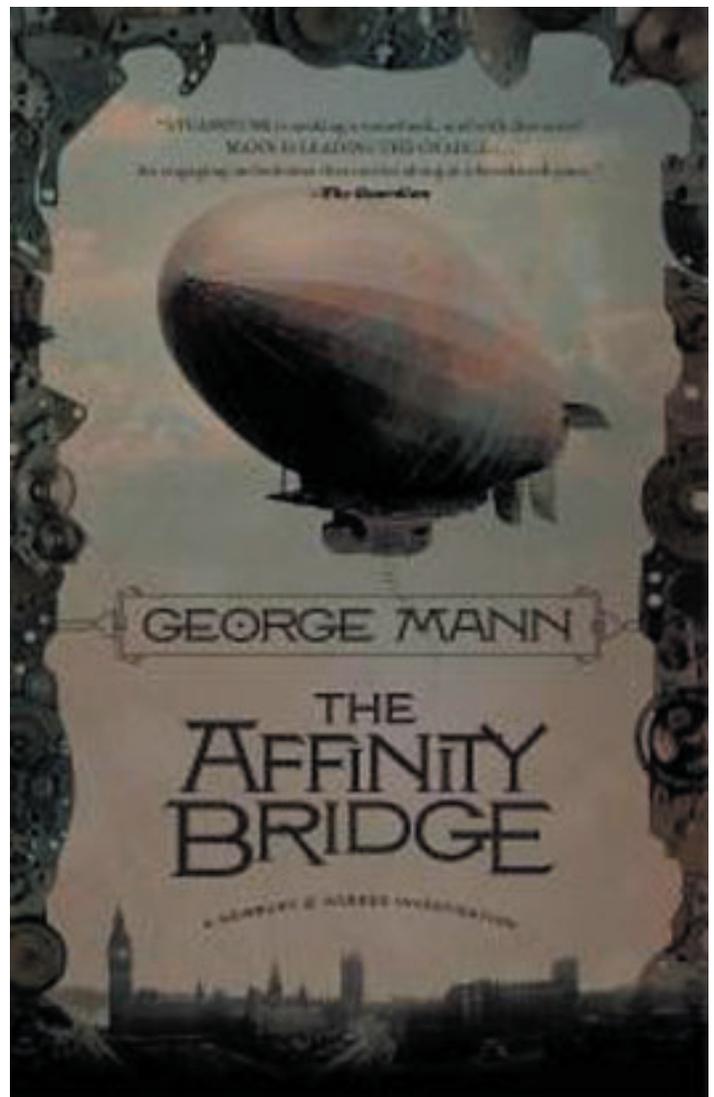
The other problem is that it's not 1995 anymore. Fifteen years ago, this would have been a marvel. *A Steampunk novel that combines automata and airships with zombies and a detective pair? Fantastic!* I'd have said. I'd have boasted how this was the next direction in Steampunk writing, the combination of aspects of horror and fantasy and science fiction would change the world.

Only, that's what would have happened if things like China Mieville's *Perdido Street Station* hadn't already happened, and done it so much better. I would have said it if Cheri Priest hadn't managed somewhat better with a similar idea in *Boneshaker*. It would have done much better when Steampunk was an accidental movement instead of a fan-enabled sub-sub-genre. Still, the Steampunk trappings of that world, even in a post-Mieville, post-Priest, post-*Mortal Engines* are very entertaining and there's some very cool OldTech at work. The Automata are pretty awesome.

The action in the book is where some of the really good stuff lives, though it's brief. One in particular is a rip-roarer for Newbury towards the end of the book, but the best stuff is left to a quieter series of moments between Hobbes and a mostly immobile Newbury. It's the sort of writing that I enjoy the most, and it serves to set up a grand twist in the characters, though it is only somewhat course-changing. There is a part of me that wanted *The Affinity Bridge* to be a story of a romance between Newbury and Hobbes,

and at times, Mann certainly pointed us that way. There were times when I wanted all that non-sense to stop, and it never really got started, so that seems a bit irrational except for the part where I thought it might have been starting. It's obvious that the two share a deep admiration for each (hence the goo-goo eyes), but it is tempered and plays a part in what I thought was a rather satisfying epilogue.

The Affinity Bridge is far from the worst Steampunk novel I've read in the last year, but the problems it manages to force upon itself are pretty deep. There's another Newbury & Hobbes Investigation coming out soon, *The Osiris Ritual*, and I'm hoping that the brief turn at the finale ends up giving us better novel. The key will be making the detective part more detective-y and the Zombies a bigger factor.



MAY: THE MONTH OF STEAMPUNK

May was an exceptionally steampunk filled month for me. Along with running a Steamcon organizational meeting and giving my talk on “Introduction to Steampunk” at the second Steampunk University in Seattle, I attended two steampunk conventions, one in lovely Victoria B.C. and the other in historic Dearborn MI.

The first convention, in its inaugural year, was Victoria Steampunk Exposition, held at the venerable and elegant Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria BC, Canada. It was the perfect setting for a steampunk convention, posh and ornate; one which many con runners including myself can only wish to aspire to. Most hotels of its ilk don't have adequate convention facilities, but the Empress does. The convention itself took place in the Palm Court, an opulent room with mirrored ceilings and ornate gold sconces. Almost all the convention activity took place in this area, from talks to performances. With vendors and artists' tables arranged around the perimeter and a stage on the right hand wall with seating filling the center of the room, it felt a bit like a one room schoolhouse.

While having the talks take place in sight of the dealer's and artisans was good in some ways, it did curtail commerce to some degree. Luckily the speakers had microphones and could drown out the chatter. There was plenty of time in between speakers to do business and chat. In the evening, the tables were covered and more chairs were brought in to allow most of the convention to see the burlesque by Rosie Bits and the wonderful performance by Unwoman, Ericka Mulkey. I had a table to promote Steamcon, and got to talk with a lot of folks. While the attendance was small, they were an enthusiastic crowd. For most it was their first convention, much less their first steampunk convention, as seems to be the trend. Despite this almost all of them made some attempt to dress up. There were so many lovely outfits. My talk on Sunday about “Steampunk Archetypes” was well received and the audience's questions were intelligent and lively.

The hotel while wonderfully appropriate was expensive, so I feel it may have negatively impacted on attendance. I am glad I made the decision to stay in the hotel however because it really added to the feeling of stepping back in time. I was told that several of the speakers couldn't attend due to illness, which is unfortunate. All in all, it was a very enjoyable convention, with an intimate, inclusive feeling and a marvelous setting. Kudos to Jordan and Zandra, the organizers.



My next stop was Dearborn Michigan for World Steam Expo. In contrast to the weekend before, it was being held in a very large imposing modern hotel with an equally large convention facility located right next to a mall and near the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village. Being its first year as well, the organizers wisely

BY DIANA VICK

did not engage the entire convention space, but the possibility of expanding in the years to come is quite promising. Friday, my birthday coincidentally, nothing much was going on until the afternoon so we took the opportunity to explore the city a bit. When we returned, we got registered with only a little confusion, although being a participant; I had hoped it would be smoother. We headed for the dealer's room which opened late and did a bit of shopping. It was a very full room with a wide variety of merchandise, most of which was genre related. It's nice to get to see vendors from another part of the country than one's own. There were quite a few fabulous items, and I ended up with a few birthday presents from my sweet husband. Panels running in two different panel rooms on different floors began around 5:00 P.M. that night. The subjects looked to be a varied lot. I was feeling a bit travel weary, so we had dinner and went to bed early, so as to get an early start.

On Saturday, my first panel was "Steampunk Archetypes" in the smaller of the two panel rooms. The program book, due to a difficulty with loss of staff I am told, was rather hastily put together and the program grid was in miniscule print. My

bio, picture and indeed name were entirely left out. There was a description of the talk/panel, but no mention of who would be giving it. Also, the track schedules were offset by a half hour so you couldn't see two panels in a row if they were not in the same room. Another unintentional mistake, I have been told. So at noon, I set up in panel room two and gave my talk and took questions. It was an almost full room and the crowd was inquisitive and pleased as far as I could tell. Once again, many of the folks were quite new to steampunk and full of questions. It was invigorating. Unlike in Victoria, where most folk were already planning on attending Steamcon, most of these people wished they could but felt it was too far to travel. Ah well. They have a steampunk convention within driving distance, so who can blame them? We chatted with folks for a bit and then set off to listen to a couple of other folks in the other panel room. Due to the day starting with dance lessons in that room, the chairs never did get set up properly. In true steampunk fashion, it was DIY, or GYOC; get your own chair. The room was also cursed with panels going overtime, so by the time my panel came up at 4:30, the group ahead of me was 20 minutes late. They also had major difficulties



with the DVR and it barely managed to make it through their video. Luckily, I had no need of the technology, although I took advantage of a microphone to save my voice. In order to help some of the time discrepancy, I ended my talk "Thrifting Your Way to a Steampunk Wardrobe" on time. I'm not sure it helped, but I made an effort. The talk was well received, although it did make me realize how different things are in different parts

of the country. I kept having to ask if this store or that shop existed out here, but the end result is the same, I think.

As we were leaving the panel, we were beckoned over by our friends from the band, Abney Park. They were at the “Afternoon High Tea”. The convention apparently took the term very literally and there was simply tea in numerous varieties, and condiments. Having just attended a resplendent “High Tea” at the Empress the weekend before, the lack of anything but tea was a bit disappointing, but free is free and the company was wonderful. We chatted with the band and met several wonderful new people as well. We found out, contrary to the order given in the program book that Abney Park was actually playing first at the concert that evening, so we knew to attend earlier rather than later.

After changing clothes we came down expecting the concert to be in full swing, but the doors had yet to open. We waited in line an hour and a half, but eventually went in and were seated. The view was occluded by large pillars on the sides of the stage, but there was a live video feed to add to the show. Abney Park did their more acoustic set. It was quite fun. They played the fan favorite “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang” and almost played “The Rainbow Connection”. I am told if you search on You Tube, they did eventually play that one as a goof in a hallway.

There was a Masquerade Ball for charity that night. It was an extra ticket event, but the proceeds went to Detroit’s Cornerstone Schools. This kept the attendance to a manageable number. The music was good, for the most part. I did wish that they had put out a few more seats beyond the dance floor, but it was again GYOC. One trend of Midwest steampunks that causes me consternation is doing “the hustle” to “She Blinded Me With Science.” Talk about anachronism!

On Sunday we decided to take advantage of the proximity of the Henry Ford Museum. I was a bit worried that it would all be cars and I would be bored, but I was pleasantly surprised. There are many buggys and horse drawn carriages, many of which I truly covet. The trains were just wonderful,



as were the silver and pewter displays. It was a lovely morning. We ran into a nice young man in line for lunch and he asked “...how the steampunk convention was going?” As it turns out there is a civil war reenactment event at the Greenfield Village the same weekend. He was disappointed that he could not do both events. I don’t think that the two events could really be combined, but the timing is a bit unfortunate as people might attend both if they could.

We returned to the con and wandered the dealer’s room again, before hunting up dinner and changing. We got decent seats for Abney Park’s second performance of the weekend, which was wonderful as always. As the concert let out, there was a rather unfortunate encounter. Due to the layout of the hotel, the hallway to the concert is also the only way to get to the pool. A mundane family trying to get to the pool had to swim upstream, as it were to get through the exiting hoard of steamfolk.

Being a long holiday weekend, the con went on through Monday. A lot of the people I spoke to were planning on making their way home on Monday, making me uncertain of having an audience for my last two panels. I worked on promoting my talks as much as I could for the three days before and I was rewarded with full rooms. The first one, “Modding For Wimps”, was a talk about how to do lightweight props. It unfortunately conflicted with a Nerf modding panel, so I’m not sure how many folk chose to sit in on the other panel. Otherwise I think it went very well. Sadly, since FedEx has managed to lose one of my boxes on the return trip to Seattle,

it may be the last time I am able to show the Suffragette, the Bulbous Overthrunder and Big Baby's power pack. Travel is a curse.

The last panel was "Putting the Punk in Steampunk" during which I explained the origins of the term steampunk and how it has almost nothing to do with punk rock music or culture. I talked about the things one can do to bring an outfit from Victorian recreation to steampunk and how to walk the delicate line of too modern or too silly. The audience was once again quite curious and we had some good discussions which continued on in the bar afterwards with a few fascinating new friends.

By now the convention was definitely winding down. The con committee told us

that they think there were about a thousand attendees, so it was a decent turnout. Having been to several hundred conventions in my time, I can say that this one has potential.

They will need to work on their rough edges, but it was a good first effort. Interesting talks/panels, a variety of good vendors, good music and lots of people to chat with and a lot of eye candy make for good conventions. Thanks to Morgan and his crew for their efforts. I look forward to seeing World Steam Expo expand into the space and truly excel in the years to come.



DRESSING THE PART

SUMMERTIME... AND THE COTTON IS HIGH

Wool tailcoats, toppers and riding habits are all well and good for a Winter Ball... but what shall we do when the weather turns warm?

As many of our Steampunk and Gaslight gatherings take place in the winter and cooler spring months, many of us have a tendency towards



layered and warmer attire. It is not unusual for a gentleman to sport wool trousers, boots, gaiters, shirtsleeves, waistcoat, jacket and overcoat or for a woman to drape herself in multiple skirts and petticoats, slips and stockings, corsets and vest, hat, gloves and coat or cloak. Now that Summer is here, and many of us live in a clime far warmer than our fabled London circa 1860 or so, the question arises: what to wear?

The steam-inspired fashion look does often depend upon layers of items; if you are one for whom an outfit is simply NOT proper unless it takes an hour to get both in and then out of, you may want to consider a change in fabric, rather than style.

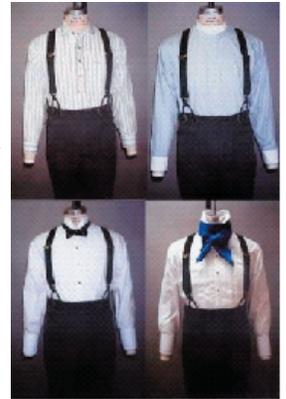
For The Gentlemen: a lower to middle-class look is easier achieved in the summer, but even High Fashion pieces can be created or found in cotton, linen and muslin. Men are fortunate in that a white cotton button-up shirt (no breast pockets please!), forms the backbone to much of their attire.

Sleeves can be rolled up or worn down as the occasion requires, and the fabric is both cool and a sun-shield. For a workman,

airshipman, scientist or mechanic, traveler or man-about-town, cotton pants in striped or solid colors can be worn in place of woolens, for a good base.

You can also sew buttons for braces (suspenders) onto any pair of pants, giving them a more Victorian look, and vests can be found in lighter fabrics as well. If you fancy a duster, cotton will work there as well; and while the layers will still be a bit warming, the fabric will breathe and keep sweat off of you.

Gentleman's Emporium (www.gentlemansemporium.com) can be a good online resource for men's clothing and ideas, as can River City. As well, you might consider a pith helmet or other exploration gear - quite authentic to the period, and geared, if you will, towards warmer climes. Tinted lenses on goggles can be quite effective at keeping the sun out of your eyes, as can the brim of your hat.



http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/images/B00150ITJ4/ref=dp_image_0?ie=UTF8&n=1064954&s=office-products



http://jastownsend.com/product_info.php?cPath=14&products_id=461



Photos by Gar Travis



http://www.riverjunction.com/Trousers--Striped-Cotton--Heirloom-Brand-p_84.html

A white or dyed light cotton petticoat with a long summer skirt over it can still be a bit too warm on a summer day... but clip, button or otherwise affix skirt lifters on either side in front, and voila! Victorian air conditioning. These can be found in so very many shapes, sizes and materials, too - so they can dress you up or down as needed! A silver or gold piece such as these that I found online would work for any high-society function, while something more simple in ribbon or lace would do for daywear or a walking skirt.

As you can see, these range from \$10 to \$300 and everywhere in-between. Use your imagination and see where it will lead you! If you are making or altering skirts and do not have or want lifters, 2" wide bias tape or grosgrain ribbon can be stitched to



(<http://www.etsy.com/listing/11730109/steampunk-pegasus-skirt-lifters>)

(<http://www.etsy.com/listing/38415773/my-stripey-valentine-skirt-lifter-set>)



(<http://www.etsy.com/listing/31556044/classy-antique-victorian-silver-skirt>)

(<http://www.goantiques.com/detail,victorian-14k-seashell,1847106.html>)



either the under- or topside of a skirt. If you stitch down the center, thread a ribbon or long shoelace up aether side, then tie or secure the top and bottom, you have a functional drawstring that is simple and can be used to raise or lower your skirts as needed. If you like to use a bustle, this method can be used to control how high or low it rides and extends. Clockwork Couture



has some lovely examples of this style...

For an over-piece, consider a loosely-crocheted shawl or sweater, and crocheted cotton gloves, that will allow air to reach your skin while still maintaining your modesty and virtue; propriety must be maintained, after all.



*Authentic Victorian Era Lady's Crocheted Shawl Pattern!
Originally Published in 1893!*

Shawl courtesy of <http://shop.vendio.com/schmetterlingtag/item/855131574/?s=1278057362>

And with all of this, of course, you may want to add buttons and pins, cufflinks and cravats, belts and pockets, goggles, spectacles and all manner of necessities.

In searching for a few parting words, I am reminded that even in summer, thus far Steampunk has not required of us a swimsuit issue... though perhaps, that shall be next...



http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_JXBSheiuHQ/Sndob522-EI/AAAAAAAAAMU/IGih5pigFmg/s320/PhelpsSuit.jpg

Leatherwork by www.bruteforceleather.com
Photos by Gar Travis www.garphoto.com



THE 2011 NOVA ALBION STEAMPUNK EXHIBITION WILL BE TAKING PLACE IN A LITTLE PLACE CALLED SANTA CLARA - THE CITY OF CHRIS GARCIA'S BIRTH! MARCH 25TH - 27TH AT THE BEAUTIFUL SANTA CLARA HYATT!

