

Firesign Back Home In Burbank

Already in 1974 we've had the pleasure to share in two Firesign Theatre recordings, *GIANT RAT* and *ROLLER MAIDENS*. And now in several months, October to be exact, we can all sink our minds into Firesign's newest album, *EVERYTHING YOU KNOW IS WRONG*. It seems that Harry Cox has something to do with this one, and why not? Coming from Hellmouth, California he's somewhat in the midst of all the unexplained scientific experiences often encountered as well by Firesign. This is the third production by Harry, following the well known recording of "I Came From Outer Space." Firesign terms this the *NudeAge* and will utilize such media as educational films (starring Ben Franklin), Indian

wire recordings, television (of course!), and astral projections. Sounds as if it'll be a pure scientific trip with such topics as "Dogs flew spaceships" and "Our forefathers took Drugs!"

EVERYTHING is now being recorded at the Burbank studios of Warner Bros. Firesign has expressed nothing but delight in regard to the studio facilities, especially being able to use sound effects from the Warner Bros. library. So indeed they are making "movies of the mind" in the middle of a real movie studio!

The back cover photo will convey the album's idea of "Aliens — Register Here" with TFT themselves posed around a booth at "The Intergalactic Alien Friendship Convention."

QUID MALMBORG IN PLANO: A Bottoms-Out Review

"*Quid Malmberg in plano*" is an expression on nearly everyone's lips these days, ever since it was heard in that gripping radio drama, *I Think We're all Bozos on this Bus*,¹ where it appears to be a sort of oath, expletive, or interjection, and later, a title, viz.:

- a) SIR SIDNEY FUDD: "But, *quid Malmberg in plano*, consternation turned to lucidation. Could this be the solution to our problems, both personal and scientific?"
- b) BARNEY THE CLONE: "Look at this: "*Malmberg in Plano*," a below-the-belt, bottoms-out revue!"
- c) COMPUTER PROGRAM: "Start emergency *Malmberg in Plano* revue."

Inundated with queries, etc., as to the origin and meaning of the phrase, we took pen in hand, and venture now at long last to supply the public with an answer which will, we assure ourselves, put all doubt to rest.

"*Quid Malmberg in plano*" is actually a question, couched in an idiomatic Latin construction where the verb 'to be' is unnecessary. It may be rendered, "Why [is] Malmberg in the field?" The Malmberg referred to can be none other than Petrus Nicolai MALMBORG or Malmberg (1653-1710), Swedish Lutheran priest. In 1704 Charles XII appointed him chief court chaplain and field-superintendent. Thereafter MALMBORG followed the king in his many battle campaigns. He was named Bishop of Vasteras in 1709.²

We recall CHARLES XII as that great military strategist who seemed to spend most of his time dashing around Europe fighting the *Great Northern War*. After meeting his Waterloo at *Poltava* in the Ukraine in 1709, CHARLES fled with a remnant of his army to the fortress of *Bender* in Turkey, hotly pursued by the *Zaporogians* under *Mazeppa*. Bishop MALMBORG died at *Bender* in 1710.

CHARLES was much given to blurting out phrases in Latin, e.g., "*We'll fight*," adds he with a smile, "*pro aris et focis*."³ He also liked to converse in that language. VOLTAIRE tells us, in his *History of Charles XII*, that "when he afterwards saw ... the French Ambassador ... a person of distinguished merit, but acquainted only with his mother-tongue, he answered him in *Latin*; and upon DESALEURS protesting that he did not know four words in that language, the King

rather than talk *French* called for an interpreter."⁴ The atmosphere of his court was extremely classical. Verner von HEIDENSTAM, in his book *The Charles Men*⁵ portrays the king and his officers at *Poltava*: "...to break the force of gloomy thoughts... they began a philosophic discourse with the king. He sat in a circle of ponderers and taught like a mayor in his school, and LEW-ENHAUPT, the honest old Latinist colonel, recited Roman verses."

With MALMBORG serving both as chief court chaplain and field-superintendent, there were conflicting demands upon his time; for "How can you be in two places at once," etc. CHARLES, naturally somewhat depressed after the catastrophe of *Poltava* and in need of spiritual guidance, must on occasion have called for his court chaplain, only to be told that the latter was out superintending the field. At such a moment it is not hard to picture CHARLES raising his sword into the air and uttering the words "*Quid Malmberg in plano?*" ... "Why is MALMBORG in the field?" August STRINDBERG wrote some 23 plays on the history of Sweden; and if he did not use that phrase, he certainly was missing a dramatic moment.

While this seems by far the most likely explanation, we feel it incumbent upon us, in the interest of scrupulous accuracy, to submit an alternative reading. The Swedish word *malmberg* is also a noun meaning ore-bearing hill, ore-field, mining area. Indeed there is a whole mining region in Sweden called *Malmberg* (near *Norrbottnen*, just above the *Arctic Circle*.)

So with this sense in mind we have "why is an ore bearing hill on a plain?" or, to take it further, it is the question "why is a hill on a plain?" as it might fall within the province of a classically-educated Swede interested in mining and metallurgy.

Although this might seem puzzling at first, "why is a hill on a plain?" is merely a Domitian question (*domitiana quaestio*) an old tradition at European universities: a simple or humorous question posed to a doctoral candidate in law to signal the end of the oral *examen rigidum*.⁶ What makes this theory attractive is the fact that Sir Sidney FUDD did indeed write his doctoral dissertation at Uppsala University on a topic in *Mine Law* ... a branch of the law of real property relating to mineral and mining rights ... only to go on to become one of the greatest scientific geniuses the world has ever known. Thus "*Quid malmberg in plano?*" would have been a perfect Domitian question for him, and one which could never fade from his mind. The answer, by the way, is obvious: were a hill *not* a plain, it could not in and of itself be a hill. Compare LOCKE'S example of a trivial maxim: "a hill is higher than a valley."⁷ Also recall Dr. JOHNSON saying: "I will not be baited with

Everything you know is wrong!



Nino the Mind Boggler



"Happy" Harry Cox



Gary & The Seekers



Art Holeflaffer

Schizophrenia

[The following is excerpted by permission from *An Analysis of The Schizophrenic Thought and Language of The Firesign Theatre by Don Lindley of San Rafael, Ca. The paper was presented in partial fulfillment of Psychopathology at Lone Mountain College, San Francisco. This will be continued in the next issue.*]

DISTORTIONS OF THOUGHT CONTENT NEOLOGISMS

I have found a veritable plethora of neologisms throughout the [Firesign Theatre] recordings. It is interesting to note that the diagnostic category most frequently mentioned in relation to neologisms is hebephrenic reactions.¹ Schneider classifies them into five types,² four of which appear in the Firesign material:

Verwelchung — the Frenchifying or Italianizing of a word
Abwandlung — changing a verb into a noun; a trend toward cosmic experience or magic
Umformung — simple transformation of a word
Wort-zusammensetzung — word compound
Neuschöpfung — new creations, compound phrases; technical words or phrases used in the patient's own context

Abwandlung: Divisibility.....Anybody got any lynch?.....In Beat The Reaper, naming one's disease cures oneself

Umformung: Our generated, veneered leader!.....Lesson in Turkish: Bath, Towel, Border.....Magic Bowl Movement from Symphony in C Minus by Johann Amadeus Matetsky.....Equalism.....Amazonia..... Namland.....Vid(Don't vid us, we'll vid you).....Rebendable..... Newscity, Nevada

Wort-zusammensetzung: Mr. and Mrs. Too-Busy-To-Be-A-Homecoming Queen.....Ecoplanning.....Landfill, California.....Roxanne PavementMagneticlight.....Closeupgram.....Tridimensionality.....Freefloater.....Walt'sdeadnow Enterprises

Neuschöpfung: Wirewheelspokefenders.....Two-way sneeze-through windvent.....Sponge-coated edible steering column.....Chrome fender dents.....All-weather climate-control in red, blue or green..... Das ist immer alles Aulung und ist rauch mit and potzen Volkswagen und niemand stint und "Swell Pizza!".....Powerhouse Church of the Presumptuous Assumption of the Blinding Light.....United Snakes..... Negritude.....Angerdream Pills.....Pic-smission.....Napalmolive..... Astralsurplus.....Patented Miracle.....Eastern Zipzone Time.....Carbon Recycling.....Zepcarnival.....Tweeny.....Chocolate Malted Falcons

DISTORTIONS OF PERCEPTION DISTORTIONS IN THE PERCEPTION OF TIME

"To psychotics, as to the dreamer, a span of years or miles may be condensed into two minutes of experience. Conversely, the dreamer may feel, after having dreamed only two minutes, that he has covered a span of many years or miles."³

"Schizophrenics are less oriented in time and space than normals."⁴

1. "This is Side Five" says the voice on the second side of the "Electrician" album.
2. At the end of "Electrician," time becomes cyclical, not linear.
3. Information man answers unasked question.⁵
4. Guard says "next" but P is preceded by no one.⁶
5. Even though Lord Kitchener is dead, P says, "Lord Kitchener did not--nay, will not--die in vain."⁷
6. Ralph:....Seven days a week, seven days a year, five days a week, 365 days a month⁸
7. FM Announcer:....and now back to our morning concert of afternoon favorites⁹

8. Hugh: And last year, Patti, you and the viewers will be interested in noting that the world ended¹⁰
9. Private: How long have Pico and Alvarado been out on patrol? Sgt. M: Since 1400.
Private: Gee! That's 2000 years!¹¹
10. Patented Miracle in "How Time Flies" distorts the whole notion of a miracle, that is, something that happens very rarely.
11. In "How Time Flies" distinctions between past, present, and future are blurred through the use of tape loops and bogus pre-experienced experience

DISTORTIONS OF LOGIC

PLASTIC REPRESENTATION, treating words as if they were objects

1. Because a black preacher's voice is heard coming out of a radio, the police call it a "Negro radio"¹²
2. Dr. Math:....at's 2 Postmen, times 3 Animal Control Officers, divided by 2 Gassed Meter Readers, makes how many Bendable Integrated Community Workers? Decode your answer now. ... Did you remember to carry the Bum?¹³
3. Lt. Tirebiter: Silverberg here won't go over Pork Chop Hill. Silverberg: Killin' pigs ain't Kosher, Sarge.¹⁴
4. Namecalling is a form of plastic representation, where a threatening person is given a name, thereby magically reducing that person to a non-threatening object:

Babe: Oh, this is ridiculous! You guys are nothing but a pack of cards!

All: Drink Me! Eat me! Smoke me!¹⁵

Compare this with what Alice says: "My name is Alice, so please your Majesty," said Alice very politely; but she added, to herself, "Why, they're only a pack of cards, after all. I needn't be afraid of them!"¹⁶

DISTORTIONS OF SELF REGRESSION

1. The symbolism in this regressive episode brings to mind some Oedipal themes:

Babe: That Pyramid is opening!

Old Man: Which one?

Dr. Dog: The one with the ever-widening hole in it!

(continued on page 4)



AND SOON — PAPOON

A very high source tells us that George Papoon will appear soon, however briefly, to discuss future political plans. Being "Not Responsible" has led George to declare his newest campaign slogan, "FREE PARKING!" George also reminds us that we are about to find ourselves with appointed leaders and this is of concern to Papoon. He wants to, therefore, move up the presidential elections to 1975.

This all brings to mind of course the "Martian Space Party" in which, way back in 1972, Firesign made the revelation that the President would speak to us in Russian! After being

SCHIZOPHRENIA (continued from page 3)

Babe: I'm saved! I'm going in!

Mom [from within the pyramid]: No! Don't do that, son!
It's dark and dirty in there!

Babe: Aw, but mom...

Mom: It's full of bees and spiders! You might poke your eye out! Wait 'till your Father comes home!

Babe: I'm going in, Mom! There's a vacancy! ¹⁷

2. In this example Lt. Bradshaw regresses from the role of detective to the role of scolding mother:

Nick Danger: Well, what brings your flat feet sniffing around here now, copper?

Lt. Bradshaw: Just a friendly word of advice, Danger.

Nick: Yeh? What?

Lt. Bradshaw: Don't go sticking your nose into police business.

Nick: Sure, lieutenant, is that all?

Lt. Bradshaw: No! Don't talk with your mouth full.

Nick: Okay, Bradshaw.

Lt. Bradshaw: And don't fidget while I talk to you! And stop tracking mud across my nice clean kitchen floor! ¹⁸

¹ Vetter, Harold J. LANGUAGE BEHAVIOR AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY. Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1969, p. 184.

² Vetter, 1969, p. 187.

³ Fromm-Reichmann, Frieda. PRINCIPLES OF INTENSIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950, p. 167

⁴ De La Garza, C.O. and Worchel, P. Time and Space Orientation in Schizophrenics. JOURNAL OF ABNORMAL AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, 1956, 52, 191-195.

⁵ The Firesign Theatre. BIG BOOK OF PLAYS. Reno: Levison McNally, 1972, p. 25

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., p. 30

⁸ Ibid., p. 40

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 76

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 61

¹³ Ibid., p. 76

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 77

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 44

¹⁶ Gardner, Martin. THE ANNOTATED ALICE. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1960, p. 67

¹⁷ The Firesign Theatre, 1972, p. 46

¹⁸ "The Further Adventures of Nick Danger." Album CS9884, Columbia.



Worker Speaking

The term "peeper" as in "don't get wise with me, peeper!" from Nick Danger has previous use in Alfred Bester's sci fi detective novel *The Demolished Man*. The head police detective could read minds, as could many people in the book, and was referred to in a derogative manner as a "peeper."

More clues: Cunegonde was the name of the Baron's daughter in Voltaire's *Candide*. The last sentence from the prelude to *The Confessions of Aliester Crowley* is "And I have no motive for deception, because I don't give a damn for the whole human race -- 'you're nothing but a pack of cards'."

Also I'll tell you that the music from Mark Time on "Dear Friends" was lifted directly from the movie "The Dunwich Horror."

Simon Agree
Santa Rosa, Ca.

I was pleased to see your notice about my production of "Electrician" at University Massachusetts -- perhaps I can offer some advice for subsequent Firesign adaptations. In the first place, the transition from record to stage is a lot harder than you think it is! I found that out when it was almost too

late -- it was about one week before opening when several people informed me that they didn't know what was going on at all. Adding the visual means that many things must be slowed down to be clear, and that the director's concept of how to translate from record to stage and especially of transitions between scenes must be very sharply focussed. Our production of "Electrician" was not entirely successful, but it was stimulating; public reaction ranged from great praise to strong condemnation -- a mixture which I think is a good sign.

One unrelated clue for all computer freaks in the Howard-Cambridge-Muswego area -- compare the structure of the ELIZA psychoanalyst program to those of Dr. Memory -- especially its error messages! (Thanks to Ron Melrose for that clue.)

David Miller
Amherst, Ma.

I recently bought a book by P.G. Wodehouse, called *Uncle Fred in Springtime*. It was written in 1939 and reads like Sherlock Holmes in a Lewis Carroll story. Anyhow, having read half of it so far, I was surprised to find a lot of references to punters and Beans.

"Few members of the Drones are at their brightest and alertest in the morning. There was a puzzled murmur. A Bean said, 'What did he say?' and a Crumpet whispered, 'The what Stakes?' "(p.43)

"...The punters would bet on what sort of hat the first bloke coming in through the door would be wearing." (p. 42.)

Aside from these references (and others like them) the book is funny. That is, it's funny if you like drawing-room comedies in which the proponents seem like they're each using a different drug. It also helps if you picture David Niven in the title role.

Frank Johnson
Union, NJ.

Has anyone pointed out the affinity of "Dwarf" to Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of our Teeth*? Wilder has the News Events with the report of the sun rising and TFT's news announcer reports "big light slated to appear in East." Wilder's hero George Antrobus is visited at the end of the play by the hours of the night as famous philosophers of the past. Of course, Firesign's George Tirebiter is called by the great film comics during the night through his answering service. There are the nuclear families and probably much else.

Tom Lynn
St. Louis, Mo.

Can you tell me the meaning of "LOM" as in "re-con all LOM sectors"? There's a building here*on campus [Yale] called LOM (Leet-Oliver Memorial) and, in light of the fact that Proctor ('61) and Bergman ('62) must have attended math classes in that hallowed hall, I thought maybe....

Buddy Baker
New Haven, Ct.



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FIRESIGN MEMORABILIA DISCOVERED

Firesign enthusiast Scott Stewart recently unearthed this rare copy of the final issue of the "Nick Danger" magazine (see page 6), featuring the prototype story "Cut 'Em Off At The Past" which was adapted for the radio broadcast on that fateful December night. The novellette was written by mystery writer Hammett Yeggs (F. Scott Firestone having abandoned the series some years earlier) from a plot synopsis by George Leroy Tirebiter, writer of the radio program. The cover painting is believed to be by veteran pulp illustrator Timothy Curtain.

MORE SUGAR!

"The Firesign Theatre's Fun Page" now a monthly part of Crawdaddy magazine. Enjoyable especially if you have the radio shows...
....Recent "Anytown USA" show by Firesign in Santa Monica prompted local TV news coverage by two networks.....Plans being made for shows later this year to be broadcast live from the facilities at The Troubadour *Syndicated versions of the radio shows "Let's Eat" and "Dear Friends" being offered as "A Radio Banquet."* Refer to ad in September issue of "College Radio Journal"Possibility of direct mail merchandising by Firesign for record product. This would be discs other than those put out by Columbia or as syndicated radio.....Proctor & Bergman's partially completed album WHAT THIS COUNTRY NEEDS with the other half of Firesign will be out in January.....Some cities in the PBS network have shown or will show Firesign's appearance on "The David Susskind Show." It was taped while TFT was in New York for the Westbury show.....BIG MYSTERY JOKE BOOK will be published in October by the people at Straight Arrow (Rolling Stone.) Includes scripts to such works as "Giant Rat" and "Nick Danger" plus a massive footnoted history of Fyre Sygne...
....Next LP from Firesign (out next year) tentatively titled "Sex and Violence".....Next issue of SWITCH by Christmastime!

MALMBORG (continued from page 1)

what and why; what is this? what is that? why is a cow's tail long? why is a fox's tail bushy?"⁸

In much the same way, UH-CLEM in Bozoes puts an end to his questioning of the computer president by asking the Domitian question, "Why does the porridge-bird lay his egg in the air?" The answer, as given in *Firesign Theatre's Big Book of Plays*, is: "In self-defense;" and indeed, with a computer president running the country, it clearly is a "question of self-defense." Thus we can see the evolution of the Domitian question from a mere formal device to an effective political weapon which "broke de president" --- owing to his inability to think outside the rules of binary logic or to recognize a simple or humorous question when he hears one. Of course on some level of actuality our president is still our president; but one notes

his aversion to press conferences...

This answer, we hope, will serve. Viewed strictly in context, however, it would be well to bear in mind that *quid Malmberg in plano?* probably means nothing whatever. We have the honor to be, Sirs, your humble servants, etc.

Maxim POLIPEPSKI and
Gregor SHNITNIKOFF
research associates
Brooklyn, NY
12-12-73

- ¹ Firesign Theatre, Columbia C30737
- ² Svenska Man och Kvinna, (Stockholm, 1949), V, 204
- ³ "For hearth and home." See Voltaire, Hist. Chas. XII, 6th ed. (Dublin: G. Risk, 1808), 223
- ⁴ Ibid., 164
- ⁵ (New York, 1920), I, 201-02
- ⁶ Grosses Vollständiges Universal-Lexicon (Halle, 1734.)
- ⁷ Essay on Human Understanding, Book IV, Ch. 7, Sect. 11
- ⁸ Boswell's Life of Johnson, ed. Hill & Powell, (Oxford, 1934), IV, 268

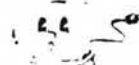


FIRESIGN WORLD/ANYTOWN USA

I know many of you had a chance to see Firesign in person reliving the characters from their albums in a show known as "Anytown USA." I made a trip to Chicago to see that performance and was indeed delighted, just as I expected to be! Reviews from across the country were very complimentary. So, herewith, thanks to Rick Bloom at CMA, are attendance figures:

April 4, Stanford — 1400 out of 1750
April 9, UCLA — 1500 out of 1900
April 14, Berkeley — 2200 (Sell out)
April 18, Phoenix — 2000 out of 2700
April 23, St. Louis — 2000 out of 3000
April 25, Kansas City — 2000 out of 3000
May 5, Albany NY — Sell out
May 11, Carnegie Hall NYC — Sell out
May 12, Washington DC — Sell out
May 13, Princeton NJ — Sell out
May 14, Devon PA — 2500 out of 3500
May 20, Westbury NY — 2500 out of 3500
May 23, Chicago — 1500 out of 2300
June 6, Santa Barbara — 1750 (Sell out)
Santa Monica — no figures available

good



night

address correction requested

LINCOLN, NEBR. 68505

P. O. BOX 5584

C/O TOM GEDWILLO

CHROMIUM SWITCH

