Contrary to the honeyed words of gentlemen, this Age of Empire is a pestilence upon every continent and soul, through colonization manifest or implied.

Rich men from stone buildings wade blindly through the penniless on their way to the opera, at leisure after a day spent plotting wars across the seas; and though these gentlemen are excellent at imposing a world order, they are equally adept at colonizing the women who maintain their homes.

All the while their attention is turned outwards, and all the while we plot from within. Discontent with the complex machinations of the imperialist state, we build a system of co-operation and autonomy. Fed up with the hunger about us, we glean and tax the rich. Tired of playing master or servant, we work only as friends and lovers.

And when approached by the newspapers, how they look at us queerly when we tell them with open hearts, “Death to the Empire! No longer will we cower; we are all nobility! Your colonization of our bodies and hearts is an act of war!”

— Erica A. Smith, On The Political Situation Experienced In Our Era
ISSUE ONE:
Putting the Punk back into SteamPunk

It is with great pleasantries and with much joy that I welcome you, dear reader, to the first issue of SteamPunk Magazine. You hold in your hands (or stare at on a screen, if you’re cheating) the product of a near-ridiculous amount of volunteer work by a variety of people. Our budget was literally nothing.

One of the goals of this magazine is to bring the SteamPunk culture offline, a step we consider crucial to its vitalization. We want SteamPunk to be more than a blog, more than a website. Hell, we want SteamPunk to be more than a magazine; we imagine it as a way of life. And while we respect that the internet—as a tool—can be useful, we also see that it—like many tools—has become a monster of its own.

The magazine is a dying medium, and only the massive consumer magazines, driven by glossy advertisements, are surviving without heavy attrition. And—not to hold magazines on too high of a pedestal, mind you—along with the death of physical media comes a lack of physical culture. No longer are we introduced to new concepts face-to-face, no longer do we debate in person.

But it is the physical nature of SteamPunk that attracted us to it in the first place, however we first heard of it. We love machines that we can see, feel, and fear. We are amazed by artifacts but are unimpressed by “high technology.” For the most part, we look at the modern world about us, bored to tears, and say, “no, thank you. I’d rather have trees, birds, and monstrous mechanical contraptions than an endless sprawl that is devoid of diversity.”

Included in this magazine are a few pieces of radical political thought. Most prominent among these is “The Courage to Kill a King,” an essay which explores the period in time when anarchists were quite prone to political assassination. We feel it is important to disclaim, then, that this piece does not necessarily represent the views of any other contributors or the editorial staff of the magazine.

It is the “punk” side of SteamPunk that is controversial, of course, and it is to the punk side of SteamPunk that the editorial staff owes its loyalty. But we hope to provide a range of material that will appeal to a reasonably wide audience. A bit of a contradiction, perhaps, but we believe it’s one that we’ve balanced here-in. We are always open to correspondence, and plan to include a letters section in the second issue. Further, we are a contributor-run magazine: we get all of our material from submissions.

I hope you enjoy the magazine. If you don’t, contribute something you would rather have seen!

— Margaret P. Ratt

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Steampunk is a re-envisioning of the past with the hypertechnological perceptions of the present. Unfortunately, most so-called "steampunk" is simply dressed-up, recreational nostalgia: the stilling tea-rooms of Victorian imperialists and faded maps of colonial hubris. This kind of sepia-toned yesteryear is more appropriate for Disney and suburban grandparents than it is for a vibrant and viable philosophy or culture.

First and foremost, steampunk is a non-luddite critique of technology. It rejects the ultra-hip dystopia of the cyberpunks—black rain and nihilistic posturing—while simultaneously forfeiting the "noble savage" fantasy of the pre-technological era. It revels in the concrete reality of technology instead of the overanalytical abstractness of cybernetics. Steam technology is the difference between the nerd and the mad scientist; steampunk machines are real, breathing, coughing, struggling and rumbling parts of the world. They are not the airy intellectual fairies of algorithmic mathematics but the hulking manifestations of muscle and mind, the progeny of sweat, blood, tears and delusions. The technology of steampunk is natural; it moves, lives, ages and even dies.

Steampunk, that mad scientist, refuses to be fenced in by the ever-growing cages of specialization. Leonardo DaVinci is the steampunker touchstone; a blurring of lines between engineering and art, rendering fashion and function mutually dependent. Authentic steampunk seeks to take the levers of technology from those technocrats who drain it of both its artistic and real qualities, who turn the living monsters of technology into the simpering servants of meaningless commodity.

Authentic Steampunk is not an artistic movement but an aesthetic technological movement. The machine must be liberated from efficiency and designed by desire and dreams. The sleekness of optimal engineering is to be replaced with the necessary ornamentation of true function. Imperfection, chaos, chance and obsolescence are not to be seen as faults, but as ways of allowing spontaneous liberation from the predictability of perfection.

Steampunk overthrows the factory of consciousness by means of beautiful entropy, creating a seamless paradox between the practical and the fanciful. This living dream of technology is neither slave nor master, but partner in the exploration of otherwise unknowable territories of both art and science.

Steampunk rejects the myopic, nostalgia-drenched politics so common among "alternative" cultures. Ours is not the culture of Neo-Victorianism and stupefying etiquette, not remotely an escape to gentleman’s clubs and classist rhetoric. It is the green fairy of delusion and passion unleashed from her bottle, stretched across the glimmering gears of rage.

We seek inspiration in the smog-choked alleys of Victoria’s duskless Empire. We find solidarity and inspiration in the mad bombers with ink stained cuffs, in whip-wielding women that yield to none, in coughing chimney sweeps who have escaped the rooftops and joined the circus, and in mutineers who have gone native and have handed the tools of the masters to those most ready to use them.

We are inflamed by the dockworkers of the Doglands as they set Prince Albert’s Hall ablaze and impassioned by the dark rituals of the Ordo Templi Orientis. We stand with the traitors of the past as we hatch impossible treasons against our present.

Too much of what passes as steampunk denies the punk, in all of its guises. Punk—the fuse used for lighting cannons. Punk—the downtrodden and dirty. Punk—the aggressive, do-it-yourself ethic. We stand on the shaky shoulders of opium-addicts, aesthete dandies, inventors of perpetual motion machines, mutineers, hucksters, gamblers, explorers, madmen and bluestockings. We laugh at experts and consult moth-eaten tomes of forgotten possibilities. We sneer at utopias while awaiting the new ruins to reveal themselves. We are a community of mechanical magicians enchanted by the real world and beholden to the mystery of possibility. We do not have the luxury of niceties or the possession of politeness; we are rebuilding yesterday to ensure our tomorrow. Our corsets are stitched with safety pins and our top hats hide vicious mohawks. We are fashion’s jackals running wild in the tailor shop.

It lives! Steampunk lives in the reincarnated collective past of shadows and ignored alleys. It is a historical wunderkabinet, which promises, like Dr. Caligari’s, to wake the somnambulist of the present to the dream-reality of the future. We are archeologists of the present, reanimating a hallucinatory history.
In 1869, a scientist and musician by the name of George Frederic Kastner stuck flames into glass tubes to see what would happen. Lo and behold, sound emerged from the other end. In the version that he perfected, the tone emerged when two flaming gas jets separated, and disappeared when they were brought back together. We have no idea how that worked1, but he hooked the gas jets up to a keyboard and called it a "pyrophone", or "flame organ".

But there is a simpler method of thermoacoustic music to be had, and we even dare call it a pyrophone. A single flame, when placed within a tube, causes a temperature difference. The temperature difference causes the air to oscillate, which we perceive as sound.

And what a sound! The attack is slow and the note builds over a second or two, with pronounced harmonics on the octave of the root. We can have a beautiful pad synth sound without such antiquated ideas as "electricity", and a pyrophone's size is limited only by imagination and source of heat.

The simplest way to hear a pyrophone is to acquire yourself a metal pipe of a 3-5cm diameter and a propane torch (check the plumbing section of a store). Light the torch and stick the nozzle a ways into the tube. Very quickly a sound will emerge. Very quickly, as well, security will emerge—if you're still in the store.

But for a polytonal pyrophone there are two problems to be surmounted: the method of applying fire to the pipes, and the tuning of the pipes.

The simplest method of fire application is the use of handheld propane torches. Limited by your two hands, you will have to make friends with someone to form three or four note chords, but all kinds of mechanical (or, yes, electrical) systems can be devised to control the jets of flame. A mechanical system could route input from a keyboard to valves and sparkers set under the pipes.

One musician noted that candles were not hot enough, and that the flame from bunsen burners was pulled away from their source of gas by the convection taking place in the tube. The recommended solution was a Fisher burner, a common lab instrument that has a grill across the top that acts as a mantle.

Tuning the pipes will also be difficult. For someone more interested in experimentation than western music, there is an easy solution to tuning: don't. Just get pipes of different lengths. Longer pipe = lower pitch, shorter pipe = higher pitch.

But if you want to harmonize with the rest of the world, you will have to tune your pipes. A pipe resonates at a certain frequency, depending on whether it is open at both ends or only one. We assume that we can consider our flame organ to be composed of open-ended pipes.

The resonant frequency of a pipe is a function of the length and diameter of the pipe and of the speed of sound. Unfortunately for us pyros, the speed of sound changes as the temperature does. We ran a few experiments to determine the pitch of different pipes at different lengths. It appears that the speed of sound is differing in our pipes, but not too greatly (approx. 407-413 m/s). This chart provides rough guidelines—fire is a chaotic force, and we have not done as much experimentation as we would like. Do not expect this to work! Overestimate the length a lot and then tune it by shortening the pipe. 2

\[ L = \text{length in meters} \]

\[ L' = \text{effective length in meters} \]

\[ d = \text{diameter in meters} \]

\[ t = \text{degrees in celsius} \]

\[ f = \text{frequency in hertz} \]

\[ v = \text{velocity in meters per second} \]

\[ v = 331.6 + .6t \]

\[ L' = L + .3d \]

\[ \text{Speed of Sound (v)} \]

\[ \text{Effective Length (L')} \]

\[ \text{Length (L)} \]

\[ f = \left( \frac{v}{2\pi} \right) \]

\[ L = \left( \frac{v^2}{2\pi} \right) \cdot 3d \]

\[ \text{Note} \]

\[ C \]

\[ C' \]

\[ D \]

\[ D' \]

\[ E \]

\[ F \]

\[ F' \]

\[ G \]

\[ G' \]

\[ A \]

\[ A' \]

\[ B \]

\[ C \]

\[ \text{L} \]

\[ \text{L'} \]

\[ \text{C} \]

\[ \text{C'} \]

\[ \text{D} \]

\[ \text{D'} \]

\[ \text{E} \]

\[ \text{F} \]

\[ \text{F'} \]

\[ \text{G} \]

\[ \text{G'} \]

\[ \text{A} \]

\[ \text{A'} \]

\[ \text{B} \]

\[ \text{C} \]

\[ \text{L} \]

\[ \text{L'} \]

1 - If you can figure it out, let us know!

2 - To determine the frequency of a note in the next lower octave, divide the note in half. To raise it by an octave, multiply it by two.

3 - Effective Length was calculated by using v=410, the average of our experiments.
Although not the first crystallophone, Benjamin Franklin has been credited for the invention of this beautiful instrument in 1761. It was possibly the first instrument invented by an American, and it predates the similarly named, but musically disparate, free-reed Harmonica by about sixty years. Franklin’s instrument was an improvement upon the Seraphim, a system of wineglasses that are tuned by being filled with water. You may know already that if one runs a wetted finger along the edge of a wineglass, you can produce a single, clear note. The most startling thing about the glass harmonica is—ironic to its name—the lack of harmonics produced. Although some players have learned to bring out harmonic notes, glass in general gives a remarkably pure tone. Franklin arranged 37 bowls horizontally on a spindle, separated by cork. A simple foot pedal powered the flywheel that spun them all, and multiple bowls could be sounded at once, allowing a musician to create chords with the voice of the angels. And yet, although the instrument gained widespread acceptance as a parlor instrument—and was written into orchestral pieces by Mozart, among others—it went out of vogue by 1810. You see, the Armonica was more than a musical instrument. Dr. Franz Mesmer, from whom we have the word mesmerize, used the singing bowls in his medical treatments. Everything went downhill for the Armonica when people got the bright idea that it was supernatural, and therefore evil. Insanity, convulsions, marital disputes, death and even the waking of the dead were blamed on its seraphic voice. Its popularity never returned. Building one will probably be difficult. The construction of the apparatus to spin the bowls would not be overly complex, but glass-blowing the bowls to specific notes would be. Yet hope is not lost; many of the original glass harmonicas were tuned by grinding bowls down. The shallower the bowl, the higher the pitch. It seems not inconceivable to take a variety of second-hand glass bowls and tune them in this manner. Unfortunately, the physics of how to best pre-determine pitch of a bowl are quite beyond the scope of this article or author, so we suggest simply playing a bowl into a tuner and working from there. The original Armonicas were made from a lead-based glass, but modern Armonicas are usually built with quartz glass. Some collectors insist that this changes the tone, but we of DIY spirit will work with what is available.

Benjamin Franklin refused to patent the instrument, and he made a powerful statement against the tyrannies of iron-fisted intellectual property we face today: “As we enjoy great Advantages from the Inventions of others we should be glad of an Opportunity to serve others by any Invention of ours, and this we should do freely and generously.”

“...if Chimes could whisper, if Melodies could pass away, and their souls wander the Earth... if Ghosts danced at Ghost Ridottoes, ’twould require such Musick, Sentiment ever held back, ever at the edge of breaking forth, in Fragments, as Glass breaks.”

— Thomas Pynchon
Boxing day was a day of family, and of celebration and gift-giving—for the rich, that is. For the denizens of New York City’s many slums, this was just another frozen day. The only gifts they would receive would be those that they took for themselves.

Professor Calamity was in his fiftieth hour without sleep, but his half-mad companion Mathilda knew what made him shake; it wasn’t sleepless nights. She had seen him work for more than four days at Bellevue without sleep, burning with the steady glow of laudanum during those tumultuous days of the draft riots. Now he could barely steady his hand to remove the charred flesh of the terrified Polish girls who lay on the dirty floor of their flophouse clinic.

Neal—their bulky ex-steelworker assistant—passed out numbers to the semi-conscious girls waiting as if they were queuing for a bakery. He tried to give the lowest numbers to the most severe cases, but to his untrained laborer’s eye, each looked equally as bad as the next.

As the sweating hulk passed out tickets, Pip, a second assistant, checked the unconscious seamstresses for change to purchase the Professor’s opium. Though he appreciated the ideals of a free clinic, Pip knew that Calamity would need some chemical steam to get him through the long night’s work.

The filthy tenement clinic was often filled with screams, stench and roiling chaos. Fires were always the worst, and they were becoming more and more common on the Lower East Side; greater demand for textiles during the war years had created a glut of sweatshops in and around lower New York. Now, with the horrors of war drifting into the quiet despair of the depression, the sweatshops were a powder keg that was touched off with an infernal regularity; owners, desperate to squeeze as much profit as possible into twenty-four hours, were forcing more and more machines into their crowded and poorly ventilated sweatshops. Ever suspicious of the dishonesty and slothful machinations of their immigrant employees, the owners had taken to locking doors during shop hours to ensure that the girls stayed at their machines and did not steal a single rag. There were no smoking breaks,
and so the girls—most in their early teens—were trapped within the walls of their workplace prison, smoking in their seats. Surrounded by swirling clouds of flammable textile dust, sweatshops became suffocating infernos all too often.

And after the volunteer firemen looted what they could while the building still blazed, the newspapers would screech that the seamstresses were to blame for their own deaths, that it was unfair that the city had to spend a buck forty-five to bury each dead child in Potter’s Field. In their cigar rooms around Washington Square, the owners would wait anxiously for their insurance checks.

Those lucky enough to survive could not afford private doctors and were forced to seek the free services of Professor Calamity—a nefarious alienist and drug addict—and his band of revolutionaries.

Three street arabs* had slipped through the chaos of the overcrowded clinic unnoticed—it was a skill they had perfected in the suffocating alleys of Hell’s Kitchen. They pulled back the ripped Chinese curtain that separated the ‘clinic’ from Professor Calamity’s cot.

Mathilda hissed at the intruding children, a skew yet sharp sound that froze their blood. She still wore the elegant mourning clothes that hinted at a past far removed from the teeming tenements of the Bowery; but her disheveled hair and frenzied eyes belied the effects of her burning insanity. She swept at the children with long chipped nails.

“Mathilda my angel,” Calamity mumbled, ignoring the intrusion and rubbing his inflated eyes, “I need my medicine.”

Mathilda’s mood instantly transformed from fiercely defensive to exquisitely tender as she turned to him and rolled up his blood-soaked sleeve. She found her mark with the needle and sunk the rewards of Pip’s hard work into her lover’s thinning vein.

“You are Runts;” the doctor said dreamily, glancing toward the children and stroking Mathilda’s bare thigh, “and mighty far from Hell’s Kitchen, I might add.”

One of the two boys pushed the girl, the tallest and the oldest of the three, to the front. She came only to the lanky man’s waist, but she stared into the doctor’s red eyes and steadied her nerve.

“It’s mama. She’s hurt bad,” she said, her voice so soft that it was nearly capsized by the screams coming from behind the curtain, “She needs a doctor. We have money.”

“Can’t you see he is sick?” Mathilda was shouting, and the doctor winced. “You think you little cretins can just barge in here?!”

“Mathilda,” Professor Calamity intervened, “it’s quite alright. Let the Runts speak.”

The girl gathered her courage once more and nudged one of the boys. “We have money,” she repeated.

The boy wore an over-sized derby that fell forward over his face as he unearthed a few dingy coins from deep inside one of his many padfoot pockets. He presented them to Mathilda as though they were gold.

“Girls are dying in there, and you are wasting our time with these…” Mathilda pushed Calamity’s wandering hand back down her leg, away from her waist, and straightened her black funeral dress.

“Children, I’m quite sorry to inform you that my angel nocturne is quite correct. There was a dreadful inferno at the Wedemeyer Corsettery and we are quite unable to provide you aid. But if you could entertain your good and loving mother to come from the west side to see me, say in a few days time, I can’t see any possible reason not to survey her. I shall have her right as rain, I promise you, my considerate gents and lady. Take your coins and make haste to the Chemist. Get some Dr. Parker’s Drops; they will no doubt ease the suffering of your dear mother until such a time as she may make my acquaintance. I look forward...” Calamity’s monologue was cut short as he nodded out, covering his eyes with his arm.

Mathilda stepped past the children and into the main room. “There will be a break,” she announced to the writhing seamstresses. “The doctor is consulting his books, and will see no one for at least another hour.”

She walked over to Neal and began to consult with him about the waiting patients, while the three children disappeared as quietly as they had entered. They stepped over girls dying from burns so grotesque that Goya would have shuddered, but their minds were filled only with worry for their mother. They had seen worse despite their tender age.

The children ran to the corner of the block, where Tinder was waiting for them. Tinder was the oldest of the Runts; no one knew how old he was, least of all himself, but a few whiskers were beginning to shadow his upper lip. These downy hairs were his greatest pride.

Tinder listened to the girl describe their encounter with the professor, running his soot-stained hand through his mohawk while she explained breathlessly.

* [note that “street arab” is not a racial term, but was used rather in american slang to mirror the more enduring british slang “street urchin” — ed.]
post-celebratory thoughts drifted to his youngest son's new fiancé as he tipped his club soda by the dying fire, to how shapely she had looked in her yellow violet eyes of Mama Giuseppe.

When Tinder returned to the children waiting in the cool basement, they had barely touched the potatoes they had lifted from Fulton Street market three hours earlier. They were all too anxious to eat; even Piggy Hovek hadn't swallowed a spud.

"She is so heavy to move. We cannot get her to the doctor," Tinder told the children, matter-of-factly.

Some of the smaller amongst them began to weep. "Is she going to die?" Piggy asked, choking on the words.

"No. There is someone who can help, but I need to talk to Spinner and Sal first." Tinder pointed to the older boys who stood in the back of chaotic common room.

Tinder and the two older boys entered the room where Mama lay, the room where Tinder planned to reveal the secret he had kept for years, the secret that he had half-forgotten in his love for Mama. It was a secret he had not asked to know, but Wild Kip had to tell someone before the ex-Runt had headed out west. Tinder lifted Mama's petticoat as she lay sleeping on her mattress and Runt had headed out west. Tinder lifted Mama's lifeless hand in the cool basement, they had barely touched the yellow velveteen dress earlier in the evening.

The sound of breaking glass woke him out of his reverie and he felt the cold Hudson wind invade his gloomy study. "What in blazes are you doing?" Harlowe demanded of the three boys who were rushing in through the shattered garden door.

"Aye, are you Harlowe?" Sal asked as he freed his shirttail from one of the jagged pieces of glass.

Harlowe could tell by the Sal's many piercings that the kid was not from Gramercy. "This is my home and you are...."

Tinder wasted no time in sapping the elderly man, who fell to his knees still holding his glass. Even in excruciating pain, he was careful not to spill his drink on the antique Ankara rug.

Spinner hit Harlowe with the chair leg that he always carried and the old man went down. The sharp, throbbing pain forced Chester Harlowe back into consciousness. He was only a mile or so from his study, but it was a world away.

His eyes could barely see in the sooty gloom of the Runts' cavernous cellar-home. He could hear their voices whisper in the darkness. They sounded to him like his own grandchildren talking late after midnight mass, speculating in hushed voices about the presents that would await them under the tree. He couldn't see them, but still he could not shake the feeling that his sweet, tender grandchildren were somehow down in this dungeon with him.

Tinder was the first to realize that the old businessman was awake. He poured some cool water into a dented can and handed it to Harlowe.

"I'm sorry we had to sap you mister. You see, our ma's real sick, and you can help." Tinder spoke in a voice more a boy's than a man's. "Don't you worry, we won't hit you again."

Harlowe could only just make out Tinder's face by the greenish glow of a soap candle; the child's pierced visage glowed a soft white in the faint illumination. He had seen these children before, perhaps not the Runts specifically, but their kind. He had seen their skinny tattooed arms reaching into his fireplace as they cleaned his three chimneys. He had seen their dyed hair glowing in the summer's daylight as they chased rats, with sticks, by the reservoir. He had been around these children almost every day of his life in the city, but had taken no notice. Like most of his fellow street arabs but had never really noticed them. But looking upon them in the dank dungeon that was their home, he saw not only pests but also his own grandchildren.

He was not afraid of these children. He knew they would not hurt him again.

"Will you look at our mama, mister? Will ya?" Spinner pleaded.

Chester nodded that he would, but he was nauseated by the smell of Spinner's newly dyed blue hair when the boy moved closer to him. As he bent over, trying to keep himself from gagging, he wondered why these children mortified their flesh with needles, colored lye, and tattoos. Tinder helped him to his feet.

"Watch the timbers, they're low in here," Tinder warned, taking the businessman's hand.

"Tell me, why do you do it?" Chester asked as the pair descended further into the cellar. "The silver ring in your eyebrow... and those tattoos on your arms."

"They can't nick it from you," Tinder answered absent-mindedly, "they'll take everything else, that's for sure."

Chester walked past dozens of children lying on filched pallets, huddled under patchwork blankets. They feigned sleep, every one, but peeked through half-open eyes at the well-dressed stranger in their midst.

Chester was certain that he could convince his brother-in-law, a physician, to help care for the mother of these unfortunates—if she wasn't beyond hope already. He found that he wanted to help these children, children he had passed a thousand times without giving them a single thought or penny. Perhaps it was the holidays; perhaps it was the throbbing pain in his skull. All he knew was that he would help them tonight. Let tomorrow forget that they had ever entered his life.

By the time the businessman and the pauper entered Mama's room, Spinner and Sal were already beside her. Sal held Mama's lifeless hand in his own while Spinner tried in vain to wipe clean the dark fluid that dripped from her neck. Chester was struck immediately by the vivid whiteness of the woman collapsed on the rat-eaten mattress; she looked as cold as a ghost, as pale as a woman who had never seen the sky. Her dress was ancient and ridiculously fringed with gaudy lace. She
looked more like a Luna Park fortune-teller than a mother to twenty children living in a burnt-out stable cellar.

Chester knelt in front of the woman and drank in the loveliness of her countenance; the ghostly light of the spattering candles added to the oddly Catholic aura about her, making her seem like a sort of Bowery Madonna, peaceful and divine.

Chester went to take Mama's hand from Sal, who released it only after a nod from Tinder. Her hand was as cold as it looked, but it was also exceedingly hard. He dropped it at first, frightened by its unearthly texture. He shly picked it back up and thin ivory curls of paint flaked off of her fingers; he tapped the back of her hand with his university ring, eliciting a dull clank.

"She is metal," Chester murmured to himself, though all the room heard.

"Show him, Spinner," Tinder said.

Spinner slowly unbuttoned the mother's whalebone corset to reveal a frame of dull iron.

"Yes. No. I mean that is from my company, but surely you do not think.... Listen boys. I am, I mean I was, a businessman, but I am quite retired. I owned the company that may have made some of these parts, but by the looks of it, there are all sorts of parts in here. This plate, this might have been from one of our steam wringer-washers, but the rest of this machine.... I can assure you I had nothing to do with this.... woman."

"But its got your name right here, right as rain it does," Sal interjected, holding up another candle to cast more light.

"Yes. It's a mistake. My machine shop may have made that piece, but it had nothing to do with her assembly. Whoever made this was a genius. An absolute genius. This belongs.... I don't know where, but certainly not here."

"What is that supposed to mean?" Spinner said, a sinister undertone creeping into his voice.

Tinder came between the two. "She's our mother, mister. She's the only mother any of us know. If you think you can take her.... She will stay here, that's for sure. Can you fix 'er?"

"No, I can not," Harlowe replied, rapty staring at the intricate brass lace of the mother's metallic organs.

Tinder whispered to Spinner, "Then we must find this Schneider"

Harlowe overhead them and answered: "Listen boys. You don't want to do that. He can no more help you than I can. You need... I don't know who you need. But Schneider cannot help you. It's very complicated... everything is counterweighted. Look, this spring has come off its hook."

Chester replaced the spring and immediately the lifeless hand in his lap opened and closed. Mama's left eyelid started to flutter and he could not help but let out a startled cry.

"It's really quite amazing, and it's all in pretty good order. This gear needs oil, that's plain to see. And here's probably the reason why: that tube, near her neck, it's leaking. No oil is getting through," he said, pointing to the vein-like intake tubes. "I'm not sure what this does, but it is connected to a whole string of other gears. Get me a little oil, and some wax to seal this hole."

Chester lost track of time as he tinkered with the automaton; he was shocked to find so little wrong with it. Within the first hour he had been able to get her to sit up and move her arms, back and forth, in a cradling motion. He found that by applying different amounts of pressure the limbs would react differently: sometimes they would cradle a baby ghost and other times they would gently reach out and pat an invisible child. He even got her to play patty cake once, but could not replicate the feat. And every time he fixed one thing he had to realign the counterweights and pendulum.

Sal and Spinner were exhausted, both their kidnapping adventure uprooted and their worry wearing them down. They slunk away to join the other children in the main room to sleep. Only Tinder remained behind to hold a candle for Harlowe.

Not even Wild Kip, the oldest Runt before Tinder had known the whole truth behind Mama. In fact, an Italian clockmaker had built the automaton many years ago. The poor clockmaker had no children of his own, and—lacking in proper work—had owned a pushcart that sold molasses candies. Eventually he had befriended a number of the street children that would buy his penny wares. The clockmaker had built a machine from scrap so that the orphans could know the love they had never been spared.

Harlowe was able to guess parts of this truth as he uncovered pieces of countless different machines investigating the orphans' mother. He found telegraph striking-posts used as balance levers and mason jar locks twisted into springs. He found bits of debris from all over the city cunningly arranged, and the businessman in Harlowe marveled at their economic ingenuity even as the hobbyist engineer despaired at the chaotic array that impeded his repairs.

Chester was a man who had never used his hands or mind to make anything but money, but that night found him actually working, repairing a physical object. The sweat trickled down his neck in the muggy basement, he could see the oil tanning his fingertips, and he could feel the satisfying snap of a perfectly placed piece.

"Surely, the children must know that this is a machine," Chester said to Tinder, wiping down one of the six Italian-language phono-disks that gave voice and song to the automaton.

"Some suspect it when they get older, but by that time they love her dearly. She's always there with a song or a hug. Mama is our first memory, for many of us."

P. A. Schneider & C. D. Harlowe
1856

SteamPunk Magazine Issue #1 - 17
Chester shuddered at the thought of children knowing of love from only a machine. He thought of his own childhood, of his affectionate mother and house-keeper. His own first memory was riding a wooden horse, his father beaming down at him from under his broad mustache.

Tinder, reading the pity etched in Harlowe's face, stood up proudly. "Listen, Mister. We got it pretty good, better than most. We got each other, and older Runts that are gone still know where they came from and they look out for us. Besides, we got it."

Something had changed in Tinder; it was the first time he had referred to Mama as an it. And with that, he knew he was no longer a Runt. Seeing the rich man working on the machine—the machine that had been his sole source of love for his entire life—he realized it was a soulless thing, a cruel parody of life. He didn't like thinking that way, but he knew now that he would never be able to return to his childhood beliefs.

"Just finish up and I'll take you home. The streets here are not safe for a gentleman," Tinder said coldly.

"I would like to see what else she can do, maybe hear one of these disks. Are they lullabies? Or something more?" Harlowe asked, carefully replacing the soft wax disks on a spindle in her throat.

"No."

The officer yanked Harlowe to his feet and half-dragged him through the ex-stables that glowed with small fires and were dense with smoke. Here and there a small figure lay still, some still clutching for an absent friend. Though most of the Runts appeared to have escaped, Harlowe wondered if he would be able to forget the night so easily after all.

Out on the street, new snow fell, lost among the smoke. The bells of the season drifted softly to his ear, faint against the agony and rage that foamed and screamed throughout Hell's Kitchen.

"What's the big idea of..." Pip said, rolling over.

"There's a riot. Neal was not-so-gently tapping his ax handle against the sleeping legs of Pip. Roused, Pip rubbed his eyes to see that Neal was wearing his war-leathers.

Neal was not-so-gently tapping his ax handle against the sleeping legs of Pip. Roused, Pip rubbed his eyes to see that Neal was wearing his war-leathers.

"What's the big idea of..." Pip said, rolling over.

"There's a riot." Neal shouted with childlike enthusiasm, waking the others, "those damned cops are raiding the Runts' nest. They been rounding up street kids all night beating them senseless. We should get down there. The Dead Rabbits are already on their way. It's going to be a good dance."

"The Runts?" Calamity asked as he rose from bed. His voice sounded like it came from the bottom of a well.

"Yeah. I guess they grabbed some mucky-muck at the square. In his own god-damn house. Those kids got more guts than sense. Pip you coming?"

Pip reluctantly stood and grabbed a nearby length of chain.

"It seems the cops are smashing heads over at the Runts. Neal and Pip are off to join the riot."

"So go if you want," she said without opening her eyes.

"No it's not that.... It's just... they are only tots. I don't know."

"Everyone was child once, nothing special about that," Mathilda said dreamily. "Come back to sleep."

This seasonal shows us the perennial truth: that truth, itself, is overrated. From the story of Harlowe and the Runts, we learn that disillusionment is a powerful factor in maturity, and that goodwill may manifest itself in the unlikeliest of places.
Many people have attributed the birth of steampunk to you, this seems fitting to me since you were an early influence on punk as well. Do you have any thoughts on the current state of a genre you helped to inspire, or thoughts as to what it could be?

As an ‘intervention’ into a particular kind of Edwardian fiction, I think the [Nomad of the Time Streams] Bastable stories did their best. I never expected it to become a subgenre.

I understand that you ran a magazine, New Worlds, with some people in the late 60s that, in one version of the story I heard, was condemned as leftist propaganda, for obscenity in the other version, but risked losing its funding from the Arts Council in both versions. Can you clarify this for me?

There are various ways—drinking with audiences is a good one, certainly. There is no gap between you and the audience as long as you don’t let one grow up. It’s all to do with your mind set. If you want to be a ‘rock star’ then by god you’ll do with your mind set. If you want to be interested in writers and visual artists wanting to express themselves as thoroughly as possible.

In a one interview you said “As punk sank, like hippies, into more fashion, I lost interest.” I fell into the basement show anarchopunk scene in something like 2002, and I have to say that, although it may have missed a beat, punk at the moment can be a lot more than fashion... What were the aspects of punk that attracted you to it in the first place?

Punk had the same idealism as whatever bohemian movements came before it. I welcomed punk because I welcomed the idealism. Punks liked Hawkwind because they thought we were sticking to our ideals rather than holding out for record deals and big money and so on. We really did see ourselves as a ‘peoples’ band doing things like riding freight trains and fighting against environmental degradation. How do you feel about the new life that this symbol has found?

Given that I drew the sign on our kitchen table when I was trying to think of a good sign to indicate ‘Entropy’, I had no idea it was going to be taken up by so many. Though I suppose it’s not surprising, since the [Role-Playing] games are based firmly on the main heroic fantasies series. So much is lifted, especially from me and Tolkien. I rather like the asymmetrical version first drawn by Walter Simonson and now being increasingly adopted!

I was wondering if you had any opinions about the current intellectual property debate? Concepts like Creative Commons are gaining ground among many contemporary writers, artists while increasingly restricting Intellectual Property laws are being passed in many countries.

I’ve watched most of my ideas go into public domain and hung on to one or two of the salient ones. It’s flattering and it’s disappointing. You create particular images for particular needs, both philosophical and creative and when those images are co-opted for dumb reasons it does tend to take your breath away. But there you go.

Not many of our readers are aware that you designed the chaos symbol that is so prevalent in punk and traveler culture today. A lot of people associate its history with TSR and D&D, but it started with you. Are you aware of the perhaps thousands of people with it tattooed who are doing things like riding freight trains and fighting against environmental degradation? How do you feel about the new life that this symbol has found?

We were sticking to our ideals rather than holding out for big money.
A scorching blast of heat came from the iron-bellied boiler as Yena opened the hatch to triple-check the engine. She could feel the flames through the glass of her facemask and she slammed the door shut almost immediately.

“Don’t worry,” her sister clucked over her shoulder. “We’ve done this a dozen times at least.”

“Yeah,” Yena muttered, “but never with an audience.”

Yena was the house-reed player and primary mechanic for Bellows Again, a three-piece punk band local to The Vare that had yet to play a show. She walked back to sit before the keyboard of her instrument, the tools hanging from her coveralls jangling reassuringly as she went.

Given enough time, she knew she could fix anything. The trouble was, she wouldn’t have the time while she was playing.

She raised her facemask up and leaned towards the brass mouthpiece suspended from a tube in front of her. “Testing,” she spoke, and the words echoed throughout the empty club, amplified by soundhorn.

She stepped hard on a pedal and the machinery to her left came to life.

A massive bellows began to breathe enormous, as tall as a person when fully extended. Double-action, it pumped air on both extension and compression, the constant cycle of inhale-exhale that had endeared Yena to the instrument in the first place.

The staff of The Cally Bird filtered into the room at the first rumble of mechanical breath. Yena saw Annwyn—a thin, severe sculptor who often lived upstairs—and caught her eye. They smiled, briefly, and Yena turned back to her keyboard, pressing a key and routing the bellows’ breath over a large brass reed. The club shook with the note’s slow power, and Yena smiled again. She was surrounded by her friends, she was safe. When she let go of the key, the air was diverted back into bypass mode, and only the slow breathing remained.

Fera, their diminutive and adorable drummer boy, tested his vocal soundhorn and engaged the wheel of the drum machine. The geared wheel would spin without effect until he triggered the drum-rod via...
danced chaotically, and Yena's stress began to

Yena flipped down her mask and began to

Again!

“Welcome to The Cally Bird, “ the trio said in

The space filled all too quickly and soon the

tunnels, orderly, and meet back the night after

Annwyn, the sculptor in residence, sauntered

A rhythmic pounding, like that at The Cally

The sisters had lowered it into place by way of a

foot pedal. At that point, the next tooth of the gear

would send a piston against a drum the size of a

wasteland shack. Fera had drumsticks and a drum

kit of abandoned contraptions spayed out in front of

him for every drum noise higher than “booom.”

Yena's twin sister Set played the cylindraphone,

a high, wailing counterpart to the house-reed's

bass hum. "A bit like the difference between us,”

Set had mentioned to her when they had formed the

band, “only in real life, I'm a lot louder than

you.”

The cylindraphone was a lever-operated bank

of spinning lead cylinders, each inscribed with a

sine wave. The pitch rose as the rotation gained speed.

Dozens of needles led the sound to a series of soundhorns placed throughout the high-

ceilinged club, but they merely created a ghostly presence when played alongside the house-reed.

After their brief equipment test, the band

quieted. People from all over The Vare were coming into the concert hall now, mostly squatters

and youth that Yena recognized. An awkward,

coming into the concert hall now, mostly squatters

and probably only a few years younger than them,

looked the boy over. He was handsome, to be sure,

but a lingering look at his tallbookshelves filled to overflowing. The floor

was currently blocked by a stone as tall as Yena.

The only entrance to the street was a steel door that

was thwarted by a fifteen-minute walk. "Icar, “ Yena said.

The door was shook with violent force.

"I saw someone looking in. “

"Yeah, I think they saw us. “ Yena still lay on the

floor, her voice clear of emotion.

"Icar, “ her sister interjected, “His name is Icar.

We met him last night. “

"Icar, “ her sister interjected, “His name is Icar. “

Yena nodded. "What do you think they want?”

"Same thing they always want, “ Fera answered.

sweat dripping down his shirtless barrel chest.

“They want us to start paying taxes or something,

or rent on a building none of them built. To join in

their ridiculous charade. But Suyenne, I’ll stay too.

I figure there ought to be two of us here, on the

off-chance they get in.”

Annwyn, the sculptor in residence, sauntered

over, leading an awkward young man with the

healthy tan and clueless face of a runaway from the

Waste. Besides the six of them, the room was

empty.

A finger-thick red line was tattooed down

Annwyn's swarthy face and neck, starting below

her left eye and disappearing into the unbuttoned

neck of her filthy work shirt. Her face was a smear

of grease, which meant she had just come from

working upstairs; Annwyn would rarely let herself

be caught undressed.

"Can you all take our local little lizzard here with you when you go? “ Annwyn indicated the young

man, who did indeed look overwhelmed. “I've got to

see to some things.”

"Sure! “ Set agreed immediately and Yena

confirmed with Set briefly and Set spoke into the

confered with Set briefly and Set spoke into the

rumor that she was worried.

"So just stay calm. The Townies seem to be at the

front door, and of course they are hopping mad.

Annwyn suggested they remain, the sisters and the stranger descended.

A fifteen-minute walk found them sprawled

on the floor of a large one-room shack. It was

adorned by a large canopy bed and three-meter-
tall bookshelves filled to overflowing. The floor

was packed earth, the windows were barred, and

the only entrance to the street was a steel door that

was currently blocked by a stone as tall as Yena.

The door was shook with violent force.

"Yeah, I think they saw us. “ Yena still lay on the

floor; her voice clear of emotion.

A rhythmic pounding, like that at The Cally

Bird, began against the door.

“What're we going to do? “ Icar asked nervously,

palming a knife from a pouch on his belt.

“Do? Nothing. “ Yena reached into the chest

pocket of her cover-alls and pulled out a thin
cloth-wrapped package. “They can’t get in, we can’t fight them, and there’s nothing we can do until Annwyn gets back and tells us what the hell is going on. We’re going to sit down, maybe play some Garakka, and try to get some sleep.”

Reluctantly, her sister and the new-comer left the window and joined in the game. Icar had to learn the rules, so Set instructed, and slowly the game picked up its pace until they were tossing the thin metal cards back and forth with abandon; the Townies outside were successfully ignored.

After a few hours the pounding relented. Yena put her cards away and pulled off her leather boots. She sat down on the edge of the wool mattress, unclipped her utility belt, emptied her various pockets into her shoes, removed her cap and lay down to sleep. On the other side of the bed, Set was doing the same. Icar curled up on the floor under his greatcoat, and the squatters slept.

“Come on now, wake up!”

“No way in hell.” Yena refused to open her eyes or even identify the speaker by voice.

“Blast it! You’re coming with us today. I need your help. You’re the best mechanic I can find by morning light.”

Yena ratcheted the stone back to its place above the door and the four of them stepped outside onto a broad, empty city street, deep in the industrial district. The sun was newly emerged and Yena estimated that they had slept three hours.

“If you sow here, you reap only death,” Icar continued. “I mean, why isn’t anyone living here, defending this water, these plants?”

The group disembarked and Annwyn produced a basket woven from copper wire filled with food and a blanket. “Weren’t joking about that picnic,” Set observed.

“Why is this oasis here?” Icar asked. Annwyn sighed. “What kind of question is that?”

“Same idea as the drum-machine?” Icar asked. “Yes, same idea. What’s worse, we invented it. The Townies adapted it for battle, though.”

Yena wished the squatters had thought of it first, though the invention predated both her immigration to The Vare and her hatred for Townies. “Who are the Townies exactly, anyway?” Icar asked.

“Oh,” Set replied, “everyone else.”

“Whoa! That’s interesting,” Icar said. “I can’t believe we invented it. The spirit of a joyful picnic. ”

Yena ratcheted the stone back to its place above the door and the four of them stepped outside onto a broad, empty city street, deep in the industrial district. The sun was newly emerged and Yena estimated that they had slept three hours.

“We’re going to see the woods. ”

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The bus rocked back and forth on its wheels once they had pedaled it out of the city and onto the open plains, and Yena was grinning behind her captain’s goggles. A trip by sailbus always put Annwyn in a better mood, and though she resented the Townies adapted it for battle, though.

“The water is poisonous, Icar. All ground water east of the mountains is poisonous,” Yena answered him, annoyed as one might be with a curious child. “Icar was silent. Yena realized she was being too pretty around Annwyn.

Annwyn read her mind. “You’ll have time to get cleaned up on the way, I’m sure. I know how to sail!” Annwyn had changed from the night before, wearing a leather greatcoat cut to maximize airflow and minimize her exposure to dust and sun. Only a thin, tan V of her chest was exposed by the open collar.

“Is the street clear?” Yena asked her sister.

“Street’s clear.”

Yena ratcheted the stone back to its place above the door and the four of them stepped outside onto a broad, empty city street, deep in the industrial district. The sun was newly emerged and Yena estimated that they had slept three hours.

“See that,” she overheard her sister tell Icar, “those marks in the dust are where the steam ram was set up. And if you look closely, you can see the trail that the tread left on its way coming and going.”

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“Oh,” Set replied, “everyone else.”
They ate in a calm silence, and soon Yena and Annwyn were on their way, leaving the others to watch the bus.

The air grew colder as they ascended and Yena pulled up her hood. The path was rocky but relatively stable, and the pair had no trouble finding their way. Yena had only been up to see the old woman of the mountain once before, when Annwyn had brought her to be introduced.

It was several hours before they reached the small patch of woods. It was protected on all sides by steep cliffs, exposed only as one edge touched against a poisonous creek. They hopped the creek at a narrow bend and were soon lost in trees.

Trees were the stuff of legends. The Vare was situated on the High Waste, east of the mountains. Far, far to the west, at the end of the railroad, lay Angelina on a misty coast. But even there, the only forests were those of bamboo and other grasses. In the Northwest lay the true forests, where none ventured for fear of the beasts Fell and direthath traipsed within.

Yet these woods, tucked away among the mountains of the High Waste, were unknown but to a select handful of mechanics who had studied with the Woman of the Mountains. Yena was nervous as she walked through the thick underbrush at the edge and into the forest proper. Flocks of birds adorned the branches like leaves of black and white. Nothing hunted the woods, she knew, but the large raptors seemed to pull at wheels and levers without a thought. “I don’t think that the Townies even know the old woman of the mountain once before, when Yena was aware of. Certainly they had never come for one of them individually that Yena was aware of. Certainly they had never come for the object of Yena’s unrequited love.

“So what are we going to do?” Annwyn began to walk again and left the question unanswered for the leaves and birds.

“Where’s Annwyn?” Icar came up the last hundred meters to meet Yena and help carry the awkward leather sack she bore across her shoulders.

“She’s going to be gone for awhile, it seems.”

“Oh.” Icar looked dejected.

Yena happily shared the weight of sack and the two walked carefully back over the stony ground to the oasis and the bus.

“We’ve got to go, now. We’ve got a hell of a lot of work to do before dawn.”

They boarded the bus and raised sail back east to The Vare. Both Set and Icar climbed out onto the driver’s platform and Yena knew that she ought to say why. We expect them to raid her house, her say the Townies want something out of us, they just raid our building. Unless we resist, we don’t even get a chance to talk. Every time they imagine some new gripe, we have to defend ourselves.”

“What’s the deal with that… who are you all?” Icar had to yell to be heard, sailing as they were into a headwind.

“When those Of the Mountain came down, they found The Vare built and waiting, empty. They settled in and founded a government, a centralized oligarchy. Those who joined, of course, considered it benevolent. But we, the we of a thousand years ago, didn’t.

“They expected us to work for the good of everyone, and they created a lower class where none had existed. We never agreed, we never consented to be governed. No one really did anything about until, I don’t know, 1060….” She stopped to think and looked at Icar for a moment. “The tribes you’re from, they use the same system of years?”

“Yup. It’s year 1082 Modern Era, is it not? Over a thousand years since you coast people came up from underground?”

Yena nodded and continued. “In the 60s sometime they revolted, shook The Vare near apart. Did it some good, from what I’ve heard. But then again, I hang out with the squatters. Anyhow, government has been a remarkably casual thing in The Vare ever since. We siphon gas from the earth for their lamps and stoves, and they leave us alone, more or less. But everyone else is centralizing again, and they expect us to.

Icar nodded. “So tomorrow they raid Annwyn’s squat, and we put up a fight?”

Set touched his sinewy forearm with a soft finger. “It’s not like you might think. It’s all a game, really. No one dies. They’ll surround the place and we either occupy it or booby-trap it.”

“What are we doing?” Icar asked.

Yena smiled for the first time in hours. “What do you think?”

The night found the members of Bellows Again re-united, but they applied their skills to more practical tasks. They had returned to The Cally Bird, a building of four stories with an I-beam skeleton protruding with an extra four. Fera had been perched on a platform near the top, spyglass pasted to his eye, and they waved him down.

“Anyhow, we won’t be able to negotiate until we put up a fight.” She turned her attention to Icar, because she knew he was new. And for some reason all of her antagonism towards him had left when Annwyn did. “See, when the Townies want something out of us, they just raid our building. Unless we resist, we don’t even get a chance to talk. Every time they imagine some new gripe, we have to defend ourselves.”

“Cally Bird last night. “ says they’re after me. That’s why they came to The Townie who fed the squatters information. “He I went to talk to Gregor. “ Gregor was a spy, a Townie who fed the squatters information. “He

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Yena happily shared the weight of sack and the two walked carefully back over the stony ground to the oasis and the bus.

“We’ve got to go, now. We’ve got a hell of a lot of work to do before dawn.”

They boarded the bus and raised sail back east to The Vare. Both Set and Icar climbed out onto the driver’s platform and Yena knew that she ought to say why. We expect them to raid her house, her say the Townies want something out of us, they just raid our building. Unless we resist, we don’t even get a chance to talk. Every time they imagine some new gripe, we have to defend ourselves.”

“What’s the deal with that… who are you all?” Icar had to yell to be heard, sailing as they were into a headwind.

“When those Of the Mountain came down, they found The Vare built and waiting, empty. They settled in and founded a government, a centralized oligarchy. Those who joined, of course, considered it benevolent. But we, the we of a thousand years ago, didn’t.

“They expected us to work for the good of everyone, and they created a lower class where none had existed. We never agreed, we never consented to be governed. No one really did anything about until, I don’t know, 1060….” She stopped to think and looked at Icar for a moment. “The tribes you’re from, they use the same system of years?”

“Yup. It’s year 1082 Modern Era, is it not? Over a thousand years since you coast people came up from underground?”

Yena nodded and continued. “In the 60s sometime they revolted, shook The Vare near apart. Did it some good, from what I’ve heard. But then again, I hang out with the squatters. Anyhow, government has been a remarkably casual thing in The Vare ever since. We siphon gas from the earth for their lamps and stoves, and they leave us alone, more or less. But everyone else is centralizing again, and they expect us to.

Icar nodded. “So tomorrow they raid Annwyn’s squat, and we put up a fight?”

Set touched his sinewy forearm with a soft finger. “It’s not like you might think. It’s all a game, really. No one dies. They’ll surround the place and we either occupy it or booby-trap it.”

“What are we doing?” Icar asked.

Yena smiled for the first time in hours. “What do you think?”

The night found the members of Bellows Again re-united, but they applied their skills to more practical tasks. They had returned to The Cally Bird, a building of four stories with an I-beam skeleton protruding with an extra four. Fera had been perched on a platform near the top, spyglass pasted to his eye, and they waved him down.
The Townies had never gotten in, he told them with a grin. The door was too strong.

He joined them on the twenty-minute walk to Annwyn’s second workshop. It was outside the near-empty industrial district, on enemy territory, sandwiched between houses four times its single-story height. What was more, there was no tunnel access. There was a front door, a back door, and two barred windows facing the street; if they had chosen to occupy it, there would have been no escape.

But if they left it unoccupied, there was nothing to stop the Townies from going in and destroying half of Annwyn’s work. What was more, the squatters would have no bargaining power when it came time to negotiate. The Townies knew better than to kill—or seriously injure—any of the squatters, because the gas production would stop. So they were setting the house up to look occupied.

Once inside, Yena went to the stone clockwork set into the sidewall and cranked a steel reinforcing plate over the front door. Fera hit a switch and sparks lit the gas lanterns mounted in brackets on the wall. The one-room shack was built similarly to the room they had slept in the night before, but the shelves were covered in miniature metal people, each hand-made by Annwyn.

Yena didn’t understand why the Townies wanted the complicated dolls. They were interesting, to be sure, but they were about as dangerous as a pet rock.

Icar untied the leather sack from the mountains and gently emptied its contents out onto the stone floor. It was mostly clock parts, but there was also a thick book of paper-thin metal plates. Each was engraved with machinations and diagrams.

It took most of the night to finish their work, with Yena directing, and they escaped exhausted out the back door shortly before twilight.

“So what’s going to happen again, exactly?” Icar and Yena lay on the roof of a nearby building, passing the brass spyglass back and forth.

“They’re going to knock on the door. The vibrations will set one clock into motion, the lights will turn on, and copper silhouette plates will block the windows at nearly random intervals, but the door won’t open.

“So they’ll set up the steam-ram, and bash into the door. The more powerful vibrations will trigger the trap door set in the back of the roof and pebbles and flash-bombs will catapult forward. No one should get hurt too bad, but they’ll think we’re inside. Eventually they’ll let up for a moment. Set and Fera will attempt to negotiate with them. If they get attacked, we rescue them.”

“And how many of them will there be?”

“Oh, about forty.”

“Aright.”

Yena was glad that he showed no fear. Yena was scared, to be certain, but there was nothing that could stop her from coming to the aid of her sister, if need be. When she was trying to comfort Icar, she was trying to comfort herself.

“Remember, this is all a complex game we play. They don’t hurt us, we don’t hurt them.”

“Done this before?”

“Once.”

“It work?”

“Yup.”

“Aright.”

They came with the first hint of color in the sky. It was just like before—three-dozen hotheads, aged twenty to fifty, all men. Why was it always men? The squatters had woman among them, some of them just as stupid and looking for a fight at every opportunity. Like Annwyn. Or herself.

They pedaled the steamram down the street, a minor siege machine mounted with a full steam engine and boiler. It took ten people to pedal along. The mob reached the house and a dozen of them moved through the alley to block the back door.

One older man knocked on the door. The lights inside flickered into life, and soon the windows looked alive.

The men ran hooked a length of chain from the steam-engine to the grill of one of the tiny windows.

“What are they doing?” Icar asked. “Nobody could crawl through there.”

Yena ignored him and looked on in horror. The Townies started the machine and ripped the grill cleanly off. The older man raised a pole and smashed out the glass. A younger one threw something inside the building.

A moment later an explosion rocked the street and the roof of Annwyn’s shack collapsed.

“It’s just a game!” Icar gasped in shock.

Yena stood up. “Not anymore.”

To discover the outcome of this fateful morning—and to learn more of this nearly-fantastical world of mechanics and music, tribes and cities—be sure to obtain the second issue of SteamPunk Magazine.
Abney Park is a Seattle-based ensemble performing danceable goat-dishes laced with old-world ideals and postmodern tech. Diverse instrumentation married to evocative lyrics conduct a shocking love affair with their infectious stage presence. I have taken the liberty of interviewing the gentlemen of Abney Park, who at the time, unfortunately, were the worse for drink. Please disregard the debauchery if you will—the aforementioned contains what little I was able to decipher from their sinful drunken slurs.

**Interview by Libby Bulloff**

**Robert:** Truth is, if you haven’t heard it, it’s not much like anything you’ve heard. We’ve got elements that you’re familiar with: dance beats, Middle Eastern rhythms, solo violins and symphonic orchestration, male and female voice in harmony, blah, blah, but, for some reason when we put them together, they sound different then when other people put them together.

**Nathaniel:** At the moment, I play violin and guitar—a model vary from show to show. I’m always trying out different instruments, much to Robert’s irritation. I usually play them both at the same time with the help of my steam-irritation. I usually play them both at the different instruments, much to Robert’s violin and guitar—make and model vary.

**Robert:** From my understanding, “steampunk” is some new-fangled slang word referring to an anachronistic mix of things, old and new, in a way that wouldn’t normally be mixed. If you look at us, listen to us, and read our lyrics, you’ll notice things are riveted together in a way that doesn’t exactly fit a standard timeline.

**Nathaniel:** To be honest, I couldn’t tell you what steampunk really means. I mean, we just play the stuff we like and let people tell us what it is. I’m glad you like it, by the way!

**Jean-Paul:** Probably the 8th. We’ve been known to seduce a few audiences here and there.

**Robert:** From my understanding, “steampunk” isn’t just expected to be knowledgeable about the latest anachrotech, he or she is expected to wear it as well. Have you any advice for the aspiring lady or gent when it comes to fashionable garb?

**Nathaniel:** Probably the 8th. We’ve been known to seduce a few audiences here and there. As time progresses, the modern steampunk isn’t just expected to be knowledgeable about the latest anachrotech, he or she is expected to wear it as well. Have you any advice for the aspiring lady or gent when it comes to fashionable garb?

**Jean-Paul:** I just stitch old junk together, and I’m sure I look like crap. But the ladies on this crew would beat my ass if I suggested that they make clothes for me, and I’ll be damned if I’m gonna buy any of the clothes you people have in shops these days…Back in my day you could buy a horse or two for what you charge for those ridiculous blue canvas pants everyone is wearing. I’ve got some shirts I took from a tramp steamer heading to the new Indias in 1887—that was only a couple months ago, so they are still in good shape. And my boots, well, I’ve been wearing them for years but they make ‘em sturdy in 2137, so I expect them to last a while still.

**Nathaniel:** It’s true. He really does stitch old junk together. Personally, I like the feel of a well-tailored suit. I think mine might be a few years out of date, but it’s still sound and allows me sufficient range of motion to play violin and guitar. In general, my rule of thumb is to show [Abney Park singer] Madgalene what I plan to wear. If she gives me the thumbs up, I’m golden. If she says she looks like an idiot, then I know to rethink my plan.

**Robert:** Eye protection would appear to be a big concern with this crew. It seems silly now, but ever since that old bass player got his eyes poked out by some dancing girl’s “falls”, we’ve all wanted to make sure we had some sort of safety lens handy.

**Nathaniel:** My violin. Guitars are a dime a dozen, but do you have any idea how much of a pain it is to find a good violin? A good pair of flight goggles and a parachute has always proven useful as well. As romantic as the thought of going down with the ship can be, I prefer to live to fly another day.

**Jean-Paul:** Rope ladders, grappling hooks and various other quick-exit paraphernalia. Do tell us a tale of the finest show you believe you’ve played.

**Robert:** Oh god, they are all such a nightmare. It’s a constant stream of one technical glitch after another, and we feel blessed when we aren’t running out of town. Look, the only reason we keep doing those damn things is because people pay us…and leave their cars unattended while watching the shows. It’s easy pickings, and that’s all I’m saying.

**Nathaniel:** For me, that show would be our set at Dragoncon 2006. By the time we took the stage at midnight on Sunday, everyone in the room (fans and band alike) had been close to full steam for the past 48 hours. There were easily over a thousand people in the audience and the energy I got off of them was wonderful. After the set, we spent at least 4-5 hours just hanging out, talking with the fans, signing autographs, and generally having a great after-show party. We made a lot of new friends that night.

**Jean-Paul:** Probably our 1st show at Bar Sinister in Hollywood, Ca. For all intents and purposes we were the only band that night and we totally sold out! Standing room only. The crowd was singing along to every song and energy was

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**Jean-Paul:** For those readers who may not yet be familiar, characterize the Abney Park sound with a few choice adjectives. Postulate about your instruments and their custom modifications, if you please.

**Robert:** It’s still sound and allows me sufficient range of motion to play violin and guitar. In general, my rule of thumb is to show [Abney Park singer] Madgalene what I plan to wear. If she gives me the thumbs up, I’m golden. If she says she looks like an idiot, then I know to rethink my plan.

**Hats. Yes or no? If so, what sort?**

**Robert:** Yes or no? If so, what sort?

**Nathaniel:** A well-fitted hat is always appropriate. Top hats, aviator caps, pith helmets, anything! Unless you’ve got mad-scientist hair, in which case you should totally flaunt it!

**Is there any sort of object or necessity Abney Park refuses to leave home without?**

**Robert:** One technical glitch after another, and we feel blessed when we aren’t running out of town. Look, the only reason we keep doing those damn things is because people pay us…and leave their cars unattended while watching the shows. It’s easy pickings, and that’s all I’m saying.

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**Jean-Paul:** Probably our 1st show at Bar Sinister in Hollywood, Ca. For all intents and purposes we were the only band that night and we totally sold out! Standing room only. The crowd was singing along to every song and energy was
incredible! Plus the venue is beautiful! It's what so many other places try to do, but fall short. We sold out of everything that night and had people fighting over the scraps. Very satisfying indeed!

Do tell us a tale of the most horrid show you believe you've played.

Robert: Where do I start? Tell you what, I'll let everybody else tell you about the time all the gear overheated on stage in Seattle.

Nathaniel: We played a summer show in Seattle on the hottest day of the year. It was 105 degrees outside and we were in a venue that didn't have air-conditioning. It must have been close to 110 degrees on stage under all those lights and we were up there for nearly an hour. I don't know about the others, but I went through a couple of quarts of water just to keep myself hydrated. After each song, I'd open a new bottle of water, drain it, and toss it aside just in time to start the next song.

I think it was during the third song of our set that our equipment started to fail. We use the cutting edge of modern computing technology in our stage set and, sadly, that edge gets rather blunted in 110 degree heat. Halfway through the song "The Change Cage" (right before the solo!) the laptop's sound card decided to commit suicide in a loud and raucous orgy of sound. It scared the hell out of me. I thought it was the coming of the Apocalypse! The fans loved it, though. They thought it was all part of the show!

With the help of a few stage fans and a brief reboot, we were back on track. Sadly, the heat only got worse and we ended up repeating this procedure a few more times before the computer well and truly died.

The people in the audience were amazing, though. In spite of the heat, they were dancing and really getting into the music. They even cheered when the songs would cut off in that orgy of apocalyptic noise. It gave me a tremendous boost to see them out there on the dance floor. I couldn't have done it without them.

Eye protection would appear to be a big concern with this crew.

Practice makes perfect, as it were. Kindly advise those aspiring musicians among us regarding the style of your rehearsal sessions, and any pointers you might have on the subject of music recital.

Nathaniel: If you plan to use something on stage, you'd damn well better be using in rehearsal. You need to know your equipment so well that it's entirely second nature. You can't be letting yourself get bogged down in minutiae when you're standing in front of an audience expecting to see a show. Get used to setting up and breaking down your stage gear quickly and efficiently. As far as actually rehearsing goes, treat every take as if you're on stage. Be dynamic. Emote. Be a ham. Putting on a show is more than just playing the songs; you have to move and be an engaging performer also. And that takes practice. If you get used to playing a half-assed set in rehearsal, then that's what you're going to deliver when you're on stage.

It's also useful to have a heavy blunt object handy for use during the occasional difference of opinion.

Jean-Paul: You have to be able to tell the person next to you that what he/she is doing sucks.

Robert: Yeah, sorry about that Paul.

Jean-Paul: ...And you have to be able to hear it said of yourself as well. If the band can't do that, then too much mediocre crap will get through and you'll have a mediocre band. At best. But you have to be able to feel relaxed and unpressured so that you can play your best. It's a balancing act. And don't forget, it's just as important, maybe more important, to praise your bandmates when they do something brilliant. Fortunately for me, I get to do the latter far more than the former.

What place do you visualize Abney Park nesting in the current music world?

Nathaniel: We're just a group of subversives bringing enlightenment to the huddled masses. Our plans of world domination proceed apace. Just you wait!

Jean-Paul: As the rulers of our world. Now, if we could just get everyone to tunnel under the fence into our world....

Robert: Current Music World? Eh, they kicked us out long ago, and we let 'em, the bastards! SCREW 'EM ALL, I SAY! We don't need them..."sigh"

For more sober information about Abney Park, view their website at http://www.abneypark.com

Eye protection would appear to be a big concern with this crew.
ElEctrolytic Etching

For a long time now (significantly longer than any of us have been alive), people have been etching metal plates. Once etched, a plate can be used to print onto paper in a process called “intaglio,” or it can be inked and treated as a beautiful piece of art in its own right. Partly owing to our great love of metal objects—and partly because we have yet to experiment with the intaglio process—we present here only the latter.

But most everyone does this etching through a toxic, foul, acidic chemical process, appropriately referred to as “chemical etching.” Plates of copper or zinc are immersed in highly toxic solutions, at great hazard to both the earth and the artist. Not very punk.

Fortunately for the world, some artists have turned to another method of etchery, which we shall call “electrolytic etching.” The chemical solution involved in electrolytic etching is remarkably less hazardous—though none would be wise to refer to it as “safe”—and it can be used near indefinitely. As a bonus, the same process can be used to plate copper onto one object while it etches it from another.

We will be using brass plates for our example, because brass is sexy and because it can be purchased relatively cheaply at the hardware store. The same process can apply for copper without changing anything. Zinc or even steel can be electrolytically etched as well, but different chemicals must be used.

There are essentially two important steps in electrolytic etching. First, masking. Second, etching.

Masking is the process of marking off what is to be etched (or plated) and what is to be left alone. Since we will be working with an electric process, masking is accomplished by applying a non-conductive (insulating) material to the surface of the plate, in inverse to the image you want etched (or plated): you are masking off everything that you don’t want etched (or plated).

The simplest—and for some most entertaining—method is to paint with a non-conductive substance directly onto the plate. We experimented with two different methods: acrylic and oil based paints. Acrylic paint has the advantage of drying more quickly, but the disadvantage of flaking off unappealingly. Oil paint (we used black lithographic ink, thinned with linseed oil and treated with japan dryer to speed up the process) gave us much better results, but we had to wait several days for the paint to dry, and oil paint is significantly more toxic (and smelly) than those plasticy acrylics. When either paint dried, we took a nail and scratched fun little drawings into them.

The other method is useful for those who want to reproduce an existing image exactly. At some point in recent history, people realized that if you ran inkjet glossy photo paper through laser printers, you could iron the resultant image onto metal plates. Photocopiers are laser printers, so you could theoretically take your image to a photocopy joint and use the manual feed option to put in your own paper. Or, if your image exists in the digital realm, print it out on a laser printer. Either way, you want your print to end up mirror-imaged and inversed (black for white, white for black).

Clean the hell out of your piece of brass, with a solvent like alcohol.

Once your image is printed, place it face down on your brass plate. Turn your iron on to its highest setting and iron the paper: you are trying to meld the toner off of the paper and onto the plate. You might want to try using a roller to keep it pressed down as well. After several minutes, the plate and paper can be soaked in hot water and the paper backing slowly... reader beware. These methods we describe are not 100% safe. Curiously, neither is life.

Warning: Copper sulfate is a poison. If you eat it or stick it up your nose or something, your life will take a sharp turn for the worse. Electricity is dangerous. Although most of the methods mentioned below use less electricity than is truly damaging to the human nervous system, we suggest not shocking yourself. And thirdly, if you let things heat up too much, they can sometimes catch fire. We really don’t see that happening, but well... reader beware. These methods we describe are not 100% safe. Curiously, neither is life.

adapted from the esteemed Mr. von Slatt

MATERIAL COMPONENTS:

OIL MASKING:
- lithographic paint (any color)
- linseed oil
- japan drier (optional)
- something pointy (nail, dentist’s tool, etc.)

IRON-ON MASKING:
- laser printer
- glossy inkjet photo paper
- clothes iron
- rubbing alcohol
- roller (optional)
- tray (optional)

ETCHING:
- 2 brass plates
- kitchen scrubby
- steel wool (optional)
- copper sulphate (rootkill)
- non-conductive tub, with lid (tupperware)
- stiff conductive wire (thick copper wire, brazing rod, etc.)
- DC power supply (car battery, DC power adaptor [3-4.5v], etc.)
- 2 alligator clips
- metal polish (optional)
- black spraypaint
- clear spraypaint (optional)
peeled off, using a stiff brush to get every last bit of white off. Honestly, we had very little luck with this method, but Jake von Slatt, our consultant, has repeatedly presented the world with gorgeous imagery by using it. We suspect that we should have tried a different brand of paper. See the bibliography (page 41) for more information on this process.

So now you have your masked plate, and the fun (read—mildly dangerous) part begins. You get to etch your brass plate.

First, an overview: if you run direct current electricity through a solution of copper sulfate diluted in water, between two parallel plates that have copper in their composition (which includes brass), the copper will be stripped from the plate on the negative terminal. Copper will be plated onto the negative terminal.

So you need a source of direct current electricity. Batteries provide direct current, but your wall outlet provides alternating current. One solution would be to use a car battery, although any sort of battery will end up drained and need to be recharged.

A car battery charger is also a conceivable source. It turns out, by the way, that if you use a car battery, you need to make certain you don't short the leads, as this could melt your wire and set things (like your house) aflame. Also, car batteries are full of acid. Lacking in such monstrous appliances, we opted to obtain a wall-watt DC adaptor from Goodwill. Car batteries provide 12 volts each, and a car battery charger will provide the same, but we were warned that with a wall-watt DC adaptor we ought to stick to something within the 3-4.5 volt range. We found a Nokia phone charger at 3.7 volts.

The more electric power you can send through the solution, the faster the etch, but electricity turns out to be quite a complicated interplay between these variables, we heeded the 3-4.5 volt advice.

We then cut the tip off the cable, separated the two wires, and stripped the last inch or so from each. But they looked the same; we didn't know which wire was positive and which was negative.

We stirred it up until the water was blue, placed our masked brass plate and an identical but un-masked brass plate into the holders, and clipped on the alligator clips: red, positive, for the side to be etched, and black, negative, for the side to be plated.

We plugged in the wall-watt and waited. After about five minutes, we tested the wall-watt to make sure it wasn't warm. It wasn't, so we stirred it in a bit more copper sulfate (after turning off the electricity!). We repeated this every five or ten minutes until the wall-watt was a little warm, and then stopped adding more. Then we waited again. For a really long time.

Our consultant has told us that this part is much more spectacular, and significantly faster, when more power is applied. It was just more complicated, but we've seen a wall-watt charger provide 12 volts each, and a car battery charger will provide the same, but we were warned that with a wall-watt DC adaptor we ought to stick to something within the 3-4.5 volt range.

Once we had our plate etched, we turned off the electricity, pulled out the etched plate, and washed it off thoroughly. The acidic was easy to wipe off, but oil-based paint took some dishsoap (ask any painter: dish soap breaks down oil) and scrubbing.

When the plate was clean, we inked it. We used the same black lithographic ink, but less diluted than before. We squeezed the ink across with a piece of cardboard, pressing down to make certain it was pressed into the etched lines. We then took a spare piece of cloth (surely you sew your own clothes, don't you?) and wiped in circular motions to clear off a majority of the excess ink. Finally, we took a scrap of paper and rubbed the last bits off.

The method that Jake uses sounds promising however, and relies on spraypaint, which is quite useful in its own right.

And there you have it: a strange little piece of brass.
PREPARING A WALL-WART DC ADAPTOR TO USE:

1. Check to make absolutely certain that the “output” of your wall-wart is “VDC” or “DC” rather than “VAC” or “AC.”

2. Cut the tip off of the wires, pull the two wires apart, and strip each about an inch or so.

3. Making certain that the bare wires are not touching anything, plug the adaptor in and touch the leads of your multimeter to the wires (while set to DC-15 or a similar setting: read the multimeter’s manual). If the meter reads a current, then your red lead is touching the positive wire. If it is not, touch the leads to the opposite wires and see if it reads a current.

4. Unplug your adaptor. Attach your red alligator clip to your positive wire, and your black alligator clip to your negative wire.

PREPARING THE ELECTROLYTE:

1. Bend your thick copper wire to a shape that will hold your brass plates against the walls of your tupperware tub.

2. Fill the tub with water, making certain to leave an inch or two from the top, to lessen the dangers of spills and the effects of displacement.

3. Place your plate-holders onto the edges of your tub.

4. Add a bit, perhaps a few tablespoons, of copper sulphate to the water, and stir. Don’t touch this stuff.

5. When the water is adequately blue, attach the red and black alligator clips from your power source to the copper plate-holders. Turn-on/plug-in your wall-wart.

6. Wait 5 minutes. Is your wall-wart warm to the touch? No? then you can add a bit more copper sulphate (we recommend turning off the electricity first). Yes, your wall-wart is warm to the touch? Then you have added enough copper sulphate. Yes, your wall-wart is really warm? Then you have added too much. Unplug the electricity, start over with clean water. But that’s wasteful, and generally not good. So avoid that.

ETCHING:

1. With the electricity off, put your brass plates onto the copper holders in the water. The plate that is to be etched is placed on the red (positive) holder, and the plate to be plated is placed on the black (negative) holder. If you are only etching, you still need to have a plate to be plated. Fortunately, the same plate can be plated over and over again.

2. Turn the electricity on.


4. To check on progress, turn the electricity off and pull the plates out.

INKING THE PLATE:

1. Clean your mask off the plate; with soap, scrubbing, steel wool, whatever.

2. Polish your plate with metal polish (optional, but a good idea).

3. Spray an even layer of black spraypaint.

4. While the paint is wet, squeegee off excess paint with a rubber squeegee or a piece of thin cardboard.

5. Wait for the ink to dry (20 minutes or so) and then use a scrubby, alcohol, whatever, to clean off the excess paint and the resultant haze.


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True and remarkable genius is a rare and felicitous thing, one which arrives often only once in a generation, and when it makes itself known one cannot help but stand amazed at the true ferocity of its intellectual prowess. I consider it my great honor to have known, indeed even to have worked alongside, one such Great Man. Although it is, perhaps, forward of me to say so, I do believe that my good friend Francis Edgar B—, now Earl of C—, must be counted among the finest minds in the history of the world. In a startling turn of events which even the Lord God Himself—please pardon me the blasphemy of my enthusiasm—could not have foreseen, dear Francis saved the British Empire from certain destruction at the hands of vile Continentals—who shall for now remain nameless—and thereby preserved the fate of the very world itself.

The events of which I speak took place in the summer of 19—, a time when the loss of our dearly beloved Queen Victoria—if only she had reigned forever!—was still fresh in the memory of Britania’s entire empire. I was fortunate enough to be spending that glorious summer with my dear friend at the family estate in the country. At that time, the then Earl and Countess C— were abroad, leaving the house in the capable hands of Francis, and the household butler, Mr. Waithredy. Comfortably ensconced in most of the eastern second floor of the house since mid-February, I had spent the past several months assisting my dear friend in his various incidents of experimentation, while engaging feebly in my own ignorant attempts when left unattended. With much of the family either married off or abroad, Francis and I had much the run of the house to engage in our childish pranks upon Nature’s laws and God’s order. In March we had raced Hildebrand motorized velocipedes through the upstairs gallery, foolishly scuffing up the helpless wooden floors and drawing curses from the servants tasked to polish them. Thank God we had the presence of mind to remove the grand rugs beforehand, or else I might well have been cast from the house by Waithredy as a poor influence on dear Francis. Come the first storms of the spring we attached copper wires to a

“...The foreign gentleman patted the heavy engine of the device affectionately. “You like, eh? Of course you do, no doubt about it. This, my dear, is my latest invention, the Mk. 2-A Self-Propelled Quadricycle. Powered by a fully self-contained boiler-driven pressure system, reinforced by heat-trap batteries, driven by genius....”

G. D. Falksen’s An Unfortunate Engagement: A Literary Serial in Several Parts
Part One: In Which the Heroes are Introduced, Engines are Examined, and an Explosion Occurs
lightning rod in the South Tower and wound them down to a nickel Edison battery, very nearly setting fire to the servant’s quarters in the process. Of course, it was all in good fun, the well-meaning antics of two hot-blooded youths determined to become the next generation of Nature’s masters. Come the warmth of summer, Waithfrey and Co. were quite relieved when we moved our locus of investigations to the old and disused stables some distance from the main house.

But perhaps I have moved on too quickly and left some mistaken impressions in your minds. You see, the mishaps that constantly plagued our work were never the fault of dear Francis, but rather the expected result of my incompetent bumbling getting into the way of his unimaginable genius. Even the infamous “Glider Incident” of which the servants have spoken even until this day, was entirely my own doing, for it was I who insisted that we attach the gear-driven propellers to a perfectly decent glider, which ultimately led down to the stables, we caught sight of Francis’ other guest, the delightful Dr. Bruno von H—, a fellow gentleman-scientist and the only Continental I have met and found as agreeable as Francis. The foreign gentleman patted the heavy engine of the device affectionately. “You like, eh? Of course you do, no doubt about it. This, my dear, is my latest invention, the Mk. 2-A Self-Propelled Quadricycle. Powered by a fully self-contained boiler-driven pressure system, reinforced by heat-trap batteries, driven by genius...”

Such statements were characteristic of dear Bruno, but intended only in the best of sentiments. Many were the dreamy evenings I had spent listening to those two chatting away over cigarettes and billboards, debating the future of scientific discovery. On several occasions I have taken part myself, although I fear that such incidents only display my own ignorance for I have often found myself agreeing more with Bruno’s logic and deductions than with dear Francis, a thoroughly inexcusable thing I admit.

Now then, returning to that glorious summer, one sunny morning found Francis and myself out for a pleasant ride across the estate, cantering pleasantly through the rolling hills and fields surrounding the house. Tall in the saddle, Francis was truly the image of an English gentleman: collar high, blood-red coat well brushed before wearing, and boots polished to their finest black. I had made all endeavors to mimic the perfection of his appearance, but I fear the end result was somewhat lacking. Even the dear fellow’s brown moustache was positively verite, while naturally I was without such. Timepieces tucked away inside our black vests, we were quite the dashing pair to behold, if I may be allowed the liberty of saying so.

Swinging around to the cobblestone walk that led down to the stables, we caught sight of Francis’ other guest, the delightful Dr. Bruno von H—, a fellow gentleman-scientist and the only Continental I have met and found as agreeable as any Englishman. Quite the charming eccentric, Bruno could normally be found in proper if somewhat outdated garb: it was his custom to be seen always in a perfectly tailored frock coat of black or gray, highlighted and blues and reds with a matching vest and silken tophat, and always with polished boots instead of shoes. To this day I have never seen the man with fewer than two pocket watches at any time, accompanied by a leather-banded wristwatch which he or dear Francis could wear while still preserving masculinity. Today, Bruno was dressed down for work, his finery replaced with sturdy work clothes normally reserved for the lesser class of person in this great Empire of ours, including a firm leather vest filled with all manner of pockets and clips for securing the necessary tools of the engineer’s trade. He had even gone so far as to replace his customary gold and pearl timepieces with simple watches of hard steel. We could tell he was preparing for travel as his beloved frock coats had been replaced by a long, double-breasted duster of sturdy leather, such as I hear the Americans used to wear in their western territories. Neatly trimmed hair blowing in the morning wind, Bruno raised a gloved hand and waved to us, signaling our approach. As we pulled into the court before the stables I could see that he was busy loading the carrying basket at the back of an abnormally long motorized velocipede. It was a curious machine with four distinct wheels and a veritable battery of exhaust pipes extending out and back from an overly large engine. Indeed, even the driver station was unusual, being much lower in position than a normal “bicycle” seat. Upholstered in red leather with a high back and even armrests, Francis felt this particular innovation deserved special praise. I did not have the heart to tell him that it was no doubt one of the reading chairs from the library that Bruno had surreptitiously obtained.

“Francis! Alex!” Bruno greeted us. “Back from a healthy romp in the meadow?”

My dear companion slapped his thigh cheerfully and laughed. “Not much of a ‘romp,’ Bruno old man! Much more of a leisurely canter. Good for the buttocks, you know.”

Bruno’s eyebrow arched decidedly at this, and he twirled the tip of his mustache between thumb and forefinger. “Well, yes, if you say so old man.”

“And what perilous mischief are you engaged in now, dear Bruno?” I ventured, peering with the utmost curiosity at the dear fellow’s curious machine. “And what on Earth is that?”

The foreign gentleman patted the heavy engine of the device affectionately. “You like, eh? Of course you do, no doubt about it. This, my dear, is my latest invention, the Mk. 2-A Self-Propelled Quadricycle. Powered by a fully self-contained boiler-driven pressure system, reinforced by heat-trap batteries, driven by genius...”
"Fantastic!" I found myself exclaiming, swinging down from the saddle in a rush and hurrying to examine Bruno’s work. I could identify numerous sealed capsules of riveted brass latched onto the side of the machine’s boiler engine, and connected to the device through heavy pipes with pressure gauges and multi-colored knobs. These no doubt captured released steam that was stored like charge in an electrical battery, although how Bruno expected to regulate the process was entirely beyond my limited understanding of pressure engineering. No doubt Francis, with his squinting, confused expression had already determined countless flaws in our companion’s design.

“So it’s um…” Francis mused distantly, “some sort of steam car?!”

“Well, yes.”

“What an utterly ghastly idea!”

“Why to the dirigible, obviously! I’m not about to let Ferdie von Z— beat me to the air!” And with that, he was away, his curious machine rumbling off down the path as the boiler and pipes shook furiously.

Both Francis and myself knew well what he was speaking of. Since the idea had struck him several months ago, Bruno had been exhaustively engaged in constructing some sort of massive balloon-ship, having commandeered an old barn and decrepit farmstead at one end of the property for such a grandiose purpose. It was always a delight to visit above, the barn which had been haven and laboratory to our dear friend and guest, with singular ferocity and determination, summarily exploded.

With the crash of a thunderclap and a gout of flame rising to Heaven above, the barn which had been haven and laboratory to our dear friend and guest, with singular ferocity and determination, summarily exploded!

Here concludes Part One of my narrative. Dear reader, if tales of high adventure, English chivalry and Continental treachery are your fare, and if you are not afraid of wondrous Science or those who would master its—largely—immutable laws, please await the next portion of this truthfully fantastic tale.

Sincerely yours, A. Westminster, London 19—
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Take over a commune, introduce collective ownership there,... if attacked, fight back, defend oneself, and if one loses, what matter? The idea will have been launched, not on paper, not in a newspaper, not on a chart; no longer will it be sculpted in marble, carved in stone nor cast in bronze: having sprung to life, it will march in flesh and blood, at the head of the people.

– Paul Brousse: Propaganda by the Deed (1877)

Regicide became the crime of choice and legend, as propaganda by the deed expanded from minor insurrections to attempts on the lives of tyrants. The very next year, Stepniak—a Russian novelist who had also taken part in the Benevento uprising—took the life of the head of the Tsar's secret police; he knifed the man in the streets of St. Petersburg and got away clean. The Tsar himself was soon to follow, along with presidents, kings, emperors and governors.

The anarchists wanted to say to the world, "Hey! You need not play pawn in this life. The state is vulnerable, and the state needs to be held to account. Join us, for liberty!

Shortly we will return to our humble weaver.

1898

King Umberto I “The Good” was about as popular as consumption. Having turned his attention towards colonizing Africa, he paid no heed to the starvation that grew rampant in Italy. Social unrest reached a head in the first half of 1898, and by May the peasants demonstrated outside the palace in Milan. General Fiorenzo Bava-Beccaris turned cannon upon the crowd, killing between 100-350 and wounding about 1000.

The regal response? Umberto decorated the general.

Back to the great state of New Jersey, where our father, husband and anarchist toiled so vigilantly.

1900

Gaetano Bresci, an Italian immigrant, was a quiet, sober man by all accounts. A hard working weaver who made a new home for himself in Patterson, NJ as the 19th century drew to a close, he was highly regarded by his peers. He supported a wife and daughter. He helped found and fund La Question Sociale, an Italian language newspaper of Libertarian Socialism, and had no temper to speak of. He bore a fine, full mustache, the ends pulled to slight curls.

Why then did he abandon his family, purchase a pistol and passage to Italy, and gun King Umberto I down in the streets?

Anarchism was a prevalent political trend of the time—despite the dearth of attention paid to it in modern textbooks—and Gaetano was one numerous thousands who espoused a world of social equity without coercive force. What anarchists agreed upon was the end of a ruling class; what they disagreed on was how to see the ruling class ended.

Some advocated that peace would only come through peace:

The anarchists are right... in the negation of the existing order... They are mistaken only in thinking that Anarchy can be instituted by a revolution.”

– Tolstoy, On Anarchy

Others advocated insurrection and revolution. Many felt that only through a combination of education and resistance could liberty be obtained. But one popular trend in the anarchist milieu was that of propaganda by the deed.

What was propaganda by the deed, that it shook the world so greatly?

1877

A fellow by the name of Errico Malatesta—who grew a fine beard, but neglected to curl his mustache—was an advocate, and practitioner, of propaganda by the deed. First arrested at the age of 14 for writing a letter to the king in regards to local injustice, who can blame a person born under the yoke of another if they choose to rebel?

Errico and around 30 others marched on two small Italian towns in the Benevento province. They announced the people’s liberation from the monarchy and set tax and property records to the torch. A local priest, upon hearing their intentions, announced to his congregation that the anarchists were indeed sent unto them by God.

...that man who had the courage to kill a king... well, that Gaetano Bresci, who had even come from America, that fantastic country beyond the ocean, seemed, in my child’s imagination not a monster, but a great hero!”

— E. Arrigoni, Freedom: My Dream

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When Gaetano made up his mind to end the imperious reign of Umberto I, he spoke of it to no one. He needed no party’s permission to act, no conspiracy to bolster his strength. He just needed some money.

He went to his comrades on the newspaper and requested that they return his loan of $150, but would not tell them why. The paper was destitute, and it was only with much grumbling that they obliged him.

Bresci took leave of his family and returned to Italy. Two months later, on July 29th 1900, he waited for the King to emerge from a gymnasium where His Royal Highness was awarding medals upon athletes. Umberto began to drive away, and Bresci put three bullets into him before being apprehended. With a pistol and courage summoned only from his own convictions, Gaetano had meted out a justice that could have been provided by no state.

The double-edged sword of authority leaves a leader responsible for the actions of his subordinates. A king should be held accountable for the actions of his general, a general should be held accountable for the actions of his soldiers. A king should be held accountable for the actions of his soldiers. When this is forgotten, blame is dispersed so greatly that it allows the soldier held accountable for the actions of his general, a general should be held accountable for the actions of their subordinates. It should always be so; indeed, it is perhaps the only justification that can be found by no state.

The rest of Gaetano Bresci’s life was short and nearly formulaic. He was tried and sentenced to life imprisonment on a penal island. Within a year he was found hanged dead in his cell.

His friends back in Patterson who had so misjudged his character chose to adopt his daughter.

But propaganda by the deed wasn’t all beautiful rhetoric, murdered kings and martyred militants. The anarchists, by design, had no leaders and no centralized council. The same freedom that allowed Bresci to plot his deed—which the editors of this paper consider indeed praiseworthy—this same freedom meant that horrific actions could be carried out without restraint.

There were regicides, yes, but there was also terrorism: assassinations, poisonings, explosions. In 1897, Michele Angiolillo was about the most gentlemanly killer you could ever hope to meet. Having traveled to Spain from England, he tracked the Prime Minister Cánovas del Castillo—responsible for violent repression and many political deportations—to a resort spa and shot him to death. “Murderer! Murderer!” Michele heard, and the Prime Minister’s wife came to the scene of the crime.

Bowling to her, Michele spoke, “Pardon, Madame. I respect you as a lady, but I regret that you were the wife of that man.”

The assassination then allowed himself to be captured—so as to minimize the reprisal on his peers—and was executed by garrote in less than two weeks.

And yet propaganda by the deed wasn’t working; individual kings died, but monarchy did not. The people were not spurred, it seemed, to some glorious revolution, and the attention of the anarchist movement turned back to trade-unionism. Only a few remained convinced of the political righteousness of murder; of these, none were more dangerous than Luigi Galleani. The father of modern terrorism, Luigi advocated large-scale and nearly indiscriminate attacks on the bourgeoisie, but never practiced as he preached. Instead, the Galleanists did. Never trust someone whose followers describe themselves as someone-ists, and never trust someone who holds the opinions of someone else higher than their own.

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From 1914 to his deportation from the United States in 1919, Luigi—who, we must admit, also bore a fine mustache—oversaw or influenced dozens of bombings and poisonings. Yet most of the bombs were intercepted, went off unexpectedly, or otherwise misfired, and it was often housekeepers, bystanders, or the assassins themselves who paid the price.

The name of the anarchism was forever mired with terrorism, and forgotten were the bold folk who fought against systematic violence. It takes courage to stand alone against injustice, to stand before your betters, spit in their face, and refuse. It takes much less to leave bombs on the doorstep of their lackeys.

**Postscript**

Is steampunk anarchist? No, it is not. Ought it be? Probably not.

In our ranks there are enthusiasts from all about the political spectrum, to be sure. Yet the punk movement was intentionally one that stood against authority, bravely defiant. The anarchists were among the punks of their era—they stood by their ideals despite overwhelming odds. Although they are mostly lost or misrepresented in the annals of mainstream literature, they had what very few had: the courage to kill a king.

They also had, it can be noted, quite stylish dress and manners despite their lower class.
I know people ask you about your instruments all of the time, but I'm afraid we must. We're quite a bit interested in applied acoustic mechanisms, so as much technical information as you can spare would be appreciated by us all. Tell us about the hornicator: how is it built, what can it do? It uses physical objects to create distortion and reverberation.

I'm not really an electrician or engineer. I've always liked to build things. I've gleaned a lot of knowledge and experience from my days with puppets and moveable miniatures used in stop-motion animation. That probably also has something to do with the strong anthropomorphic element in my 'instruments.' I really do see them as little beings, bandmates, if you will. We do spend a lot of time together. I also did time working as a prop and set builder for theater and television; that certainly comes into it.

I've always liked to build things that were practical, that had a purpose, whether it was a gadget to help you do something or an instrument to make music. My goal is to make something that's both useful and musical. The Hornicator is a good example of that because it was originally created as an audio amplifier, and had a certain nice tonality of a certain flavor that hadn't been heard in ages by most people. So I attached a microphone element to it and started sticking things in and on it. It's now got fretted strings and springs on it, its structure lent itself to a horn-like set up.

Springs are fantastic; everyone loves 'em, everyone uses 'em. Stretch a spring across almost anything, put a mic or pickup on it and you'll get something as good as a violin or guitar. Spring doorstops were endlessly fascinating to me as a kid. I could lay on the floor for hours snapping those things with my ear pressed to the door necessarily absorbing the reverberation. Once someone came through the door while I was doing this and I've had an injured neck ever since. There's one of those on my instrument the 'Stringalug.' There's a very long spring attached to the small end of the Hornicator, which has a cup-like 'receiver' on the other end. This was something my brother sent me for a birthday present. A 'Space Phone.' When we were kids we'd make these by attaching two plastic cups with a long string between. When you stretched it and spoke into one end, the person on the other end would hear the sound. But I'm afraid we must. We're quite a bit interested in applied mechanical contraptions, so as much technical information as you can spare would be appreciated by us all. Tell us about the hornicator: how is it built, what can it do? It uses physical objects to create distortion and reverberation.

Anyway what I do is set out to find a way to make an idea happen; it's mostly trial and error, and the fun part is that often an instrument is more than just the sum of its parts. It might have its roots in a single idea, but the final product is a combination of many different angles. Often an instrument is altered or built by someone and heard by another and that's how it starts to take on a life of its own. It's a process of evolution, and sometimes it can be quite a messy one. But I've always enjoyed it, and I think that's why I keep doing it.

So for me it's not only about thinking up and making instruments for anyone to play in the usual sense, it's really a combination of many different angles. Often an instrument is added to and developed, or even built, to accommodate a specific new song. Sometimes a song is altered or built by someone and heard by another and that's how it starts to take on a life of its own. It's a process of evolution, and sometimes it can be quite a messy one. But I've always enjoyed it, and I think that's why I keep doing it.

Thomas Truax builds his own friends, and from that he has built his own career. His band is composed of mechan-electronic contraptions that he has designed himself, but he doesn't get by on schtick; he crosses his well-written, pop-sensible songs beautifully. He is, perhaps, the perfect steampunk singer-songwriter; he dashes about the globe with his bandmates in his suitcase, doing a ridiculous amount of work on his own. What's more, he was born and raised in Wowtown, a town in upstate New York that has physically seceded from the United States of America and relocated to the Atlantic Ocean. If that isn't steampunk, we don't know what is.

Our interviewer tried to fly to England to interview the man in person, but settled for interviewing Thomas via pneumatic tube.
this kind of dumpster-zen thing going on, where there’s a faith that the next thing you need will come into your life one way or another if you keep your eyes open.

But no one is good at everything. The trick is finding people that can do the stuff that you can’t, or that are better at things than you, and who want to be involved. Or that you can afford to pay. I’ve got an agent, which has been hugely helpful, but I wouldn’t appreciate her as much if I hadn’t booked my own shows and tours in the beginning and learned what a pain in the ass it can be, and how time-consuming it can be. And in fact I wouldn’t have an agent at all if I hadn’t built up a fanbase on my own first.

So you hail from a small island that recently seceded from the USA? Was the succession politically motivated? Or does the move into the ocean provide better opportunities for fishing?

Yes both to questions. Wowtown seceded in a sort of collective-unconscious psychic joining of the local community immediately following Bush’s re-election. The resulting energy field was so strong that it lifted the land—and Wowtown on its surface—like a giant cupcake and floated us out to sea. It wasn’t an island when we were attached to the US, but now floating in the Atlantic Ocean, yes the fishing is superior to what we had before, with just the lake.

It’s understandable that off-the-beaten-path musicians are wary of finding themselves labeled. It seems inevitable that once a person has been described, the industry and press want to box them in. We at SteamPunk Magazine are of course interested in steampunk, but as a description instead of a definition. What are your associations with the label?

A theremin/violinist that I sometimes work with, Meredith Yayanos, sent me an email and in the subject line it said: “HA! HA! You’re STEAMPUNK!” She’d been visiting the Dresden Dolls forum online and there was an argument, or a thread, on there, about what was and what was not Steampunk. Someone brought up my name as the perfect definition. To be honest I was unfamiliar with it at that point, but I liked it and found that other associations—complimentary and interesting, so I just threw it on the myspace site. But you’re right, I don’t much like labels, and am quite happy with what I typically hear people tell me after shows: ‘I’ve never seen anything like it.’ That sort of thing is much more complimentary to me than being associated with something or some scene already established.

You’ve stated before that you build your instruments out of junk, including from the bounty of dumpster diving. What are some of the best things you’ve found in the trash, aside from musical instruments? Have you had any crazy experiences while dumpster-diving?

In a strange way, a one-person band is perhaps the ultimate manifestation of DIY— you build the instruments, the songs, and your business yourself. What’s more, you stand as strong evidence that DIY work can be taken seriously. What do you think are the major advantages and disadvantages to doing this work yourself?

Well, the main disadvantage—that I’ve seen become more and more pronounced as time goes by—is that one person can only stretch themselves so many different ways until they’re spread too thin. You can miss opportunities and start losing your mind and run into problems in your personal life when things start expanding. I haven’t spent enough time ‘playing’—i.e. building instruments, writing songs, etc. these last few years because I’ve been on the road more and more. I definitely am DIY to a fault; I just don’t wanna let go of control, and I’m not very good at asking for help. I’ll be the guy that’ll put off dying an extra few hours because I want my grave dug just a certain way and won’t trust anyone to do it right but me.

The next thing you need will come into your life one way or another if you keep your eyes open.

I don’t know yet, but they’ll come. I’m going to try and de-intensify my schedule a little bit. But it can be. And in fact I wouldn’t have an agent at all if I hadn’t built up a fanbase on my own first.

Well, I got into a great deal of trouble with the New York Department of Sanitation when I was putting something back into a dumpster once. It was some dismantled studio pieces when I had to move from my last apartment. I won’t go into it because it’s mundane but I would warn anyone not to even throw a plastic cup in a dumpster that is not your own in NYC. They are very strict about this stuff, they’ve got their electric eyes everywhere, and I wound up having to pay a ridiculously huge fine.

It is amazing what people throw away though. I’ve found functional bicycles, stereo components, a nice bedside table. A coffee mug with Elvis on it, which, when you pour hot water in it, turns into later-period Vegas Elvis. Rock-climbing equipment (handy to find in a really deep dumpster). But it’s always the thing you think you’ll need or want and don’t take that you will need or want the very next day, while other things clutter up your corners for years untouched.

Finally, what sorts of instruments do you envision you would build if your space weren’t so limited and your schedule so intense?

I don’t know yet, but they’ll come. I’m going to try and de-intensify my schedule and show us both.
The Baron
A Short Fancy of Airships, Smog, and Questionable Friendship
written by J. T. Hand

The Baron was not an evil creature, whatever history might claim one day. He ruled a vast section of the infamous Empire, but he was no tyrant. He demanded obedience when he issued an order, but he mostly left people to themselves.

The Baron ruled from his airship high above the land. His skin was as white as pitch is black and his clothes were gray-white and ashen. The oil that fueled his galleon's propeller spat the loveliest pale smog.

The Baron breathed smog as you or I breathe air. He took a deep breath every morning as he walked out of his cabin, savoring the thick, succulent poison that sank to the deck from the balloons that kept him aloft.

His subjects feared him as they would a dragon and no one spoke to him but when commanded. Even those down below who breathed smog as well, the smokelungs, avoided him, so tremendous was his ill-deserved reputation for villainous cruelty.

Thus the Baron lived in the loneliness known only to the rich, and no amount of reasoning or gift giving would unfetter him from infamy.

He spent his days writing, watching the land below, and composing music. In the heart of his metal ship was a calliope, a great steam music box. He would write compositions and then send for engineers to create the studded, mechanical wheels that dictated the pitch and rhythm of the calliope.

It was one day early in his reign that a flock of birds, madly fleeing an oncoming storm, tore apart all of the balloons which kept him aloft. Quickly, the Baron inflated the emergency balloon, but it only served to slow his fall.

He fell through lightning and rain to crash, unharmed, into a vast industrial forest of pipes, silos, fire and smoke. The smog was fresh and the Baron breathed easily, but his airship was dashed and dented beyond any hope of immediate repair.

The Baron was not young, and had been through his share of adversity; he was quite used to taking care of himself.

"I'll just walk until I reach civilization. I will commission a new ship," he reasoned, "and my duties, to be honest, are few, so my land will be alright until I return to the sky."

With only the clothes on his back and a canister of crude oil, the Baron left the bird-and-gravity shattered remains of his old life and
took off through the mechanical wilderness about him. His spirit was high—it had been years since he last visited the wild lands, the lungs which made the atmosphere habitable for smokelungs like him.

It wasn’t long before he stumbled upon a camp of travelers, hearing their music long before they became visible in the thick air. Ten or twelve men and women sat in a circle while in the middle a pair of young women played outlandish instruments. To his amazement, a few of those present, including one of the musicians, wore gas masks—the sign of an air breather.

“Stranger!” A man called out, “Come sit with us awhile. It isn’t easy to wander.” No one else spoke, and the musicians showed no sign of abating on account of him, so the Baron quietly walked over and sat on a half of an oil barrel before turning his attention to the two women.

The smoke lung played an accordian, he realized, and the airlung was playing a wooden violin. He was a worldly fellow, but he could barely contain his horror to see someone play on tree flesh. His father before him had outlawed such barbaric practices years ago. And yet the music was powerful, hypnotic even.

Wisely, the Baron said nothing of his station and kept his reverie for the barbarous airlungs from marring his expression.

The air became dark, as it is prone to do, though the sky was not visible through the haze. The Baron stayed on with the vagabonds. Almost all of them played instruments and those that didn’t would dance. He wasn’t certain they would ever stop. By the middle of the night, the Baron took off his boots and slept by an oilcan fire with his greatcoat as a blanket. He dreamed tremendous musical dreams.

The next morning most of the revelers were asleep, curled together like a litter of kittens; the only waking soul was an airlung keeping watch. For the first time in his life, he spoke to someone of the old world.

“Who are you people?” The Baron asked.

“Well, I am Ashen. My name, that is,” she answered, her voice strangely muffled through the mask, “but as for the rest of us… let me try to explain.

“Last night you heard us play music. Most of us sing, or dance, or play an instrument. Having learned one of these things, the others are easier. Do you practice the arts, Mister…”

“Mister B—,” the Baron introduced himself, “and I paint. Sometimes I compose, but I cannot sing or dance.”

“Ah, but you could, you could. The painter can dance, the singer can write. One informs the other. In truth, there is no other!” She paused before her next point. “The one is the other, the other is the one. Now, here is the secret: this is not some magical solution to anything. Understanding the oneness of the universe doesn’t just make everything okay.

“So this is who we are. In the same way all dance and song are the same, so are all living things.”

“This metaphor, then, you carry it across…” the Baron began but Ashen finished his thought.

“Everything,” she nodded, “but it isn’t a metaphor, it is literal. Music is the wild. You have your wild here, and I have my wild…” Through the mask her expression grew heavy. “We are a group of people who have sworn to uphold the balance of the wilds, organic and mechanical.”

“Throughout all of his life, and certainly throughout all of his reign, the Baron had almost mindlessly promoted the expansion of the industrial forests at the expense of the organic. Indeed, over the whole of the planet’s surface the two worlds battled to control the atmosphere.

Two more long, lazy summer days passed in this way of music, dance and conversation by the fires of the wild. At dusk a guard was posted against the hydraulic creatures of the night.

On the third morning they left their encampment and the Baron chose to join them. He was hooked, and when he discovered that they were going to the organic land he was intensely curious.

So great was his new love for these people that he resolved, during the second day, to swear service to their cause. If by life or death he could promote balance and harmony, then he would do so.

When he told his new friend Ashen of his resolve, she laughed and slapped him on the back.

“They arrived at the woods after a three-day trek. Initially he was quite frightened. At all times his smoke-mask was visible from the corner of his eyes, and nothing was sane anywhere about him. But to his word, he spent five years serving that strange alliance. Owing to the present imbalance, he helped the organics reclaim mechanical land. He learned a great many instruments, although he never could bring himself to play the wooden fiddle or guitar. He cunningly planned and schemed against his own lands, and he grew to love his comrades deeply.

Yet at the close of five years, the kudzu and blackberries had spread too far into his old kingdom, threatening the smog his people depended on.

“Ashen my friend,” he said, “we need to stop the spread of organic life to maintain the balance.”

Ashen stayed silent. The Baron spun on his heel to the smoke lungs of the group, eying them warily.

Only one spoke, the old man who had welcomed him to the fire those years ago. “The mechanical lands, the mechanical people… us… we have oppressed what is natural for too long already.”

“Maybe.” But the Baron quickly mastered his voice, calming down. “I have been betrayed, I have been so terribly betrayed.”

With that he left, and when Ashen tried to block his path and speak to him he struck her down with his fist.

He walked straight to the Empire City, to the emperor himself, and reclaimed his post. And thus he became the Baron whose infamy lives still this day. With a song in his heart and fire in his eyes he used violence and concrete to reclaim his lands for his people.

One day, while teaching his young daughter and heiress to waltz, she asked him why he never took his lands past the great river.

“My daughter, my love, all is one. The airlungs and the smoke.”

“And father, you kill them with abandon on your lands.”

“Youthful!” He left, and Ashen tried to follow him down with her fist.

The Baron is but one of eight short fantastical tales by J. T. Hand that will fill “The Seduction of the Wind”, an upcoming publication by Strangers In A Tangled Wilderness.
Despite appearances, kitsch is not an active commodity. Elusiveness is made ever more keen by its extreme iconicity. “[K]itsch is nothing if not a suspended memory whose...” According to Olalquiaga:

“Steampunk is, at a fundamental level, a kitsch experience. This view goes back right to the very beginnings of the genre and science fiction as a whole, as it points to that fundamental difference between the two masters and originators, Jules Verne and H.G. Wells.

In order to articulate this difference, we have to deepen our understanding of that variety of artistic enterprise known as “kitsch.” One of the most involved studies of kitsch comes to us from aesthetic philosopher Celeste Olalquiaga by way of her absolutely invaluable tome The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience, and it is her work which will form the foundation of this article.

To understand kitsch is to understand Steampunk, since Steampunk is, at a fundamental level, a kitsch experience. According to Olalquiaga:

“Kitsch is nothing if not a suspended memory whose elusiveness is made more keen by its extreme iconicity. Despite appearances, kitsch is not an active commodity naively infused with the desire of a wish image, but rather a failed commodity that continually speaks of all it has ceased to be—a virtual image, existing in the impossibility of fully being. Kitsch is a time capsule with a two-way ticket to the realm of myth—the collective or individual land of dreams. Here, for a second or perhaps even a few minutes, there reigns an illusion of completeness, a universe devoid of past and future, a moment whose sheer intensity is to a large degree predicated on its very inexistence.” (28-29)

The extreme iconicity of Steampunk, fixated in a nineteenth century that never was and opening up this past that wasn’t to imaginative dreams that can never truly come to fruition, is the very essence of kitsch. Though there are pushes to develop Steampunk into a complete subculture and lifestyle—with its own music, aesthetic values, decor, behaviour, philosophy, politics and the like—it can never truly come to pass because the foundational precept of Steampunk—the Victorian Era of Jules Verne—does not exist and never did. Steampunk is forever relegated to a sub-genre of fiction whose most particularly ardent fans may dress up in costumes to emulate. The closest that we may come to the imaginative epoch of Verne and Wells are those constructed environments of Disneyland Paris and Tokyo DisneySea, which shut out the modern world and create immersive but illusory Steampunk environments.

There is not, as Olalquiaga builds her thesis on, “just” kitsch. Kitsch comes in different varieties, and in these different varieties comes the qualitative difference between varieties of Steampunk. The heart of this difference lies in human remembrance and how that manifests itself in commodities, whether it forms the souvenir or the cultural fossil. Referring back to another aesthetic philosopher, Walter Benjamin, Olalquiaga states: “[T]here are two basic ways of perceiving events in modern time. Both are connected to memory and may be roughly distinguished as the conscious mode, which leads to remembrance, and the unconscious mode of remembrance proper.” (68, 70) Continuing, she says:

“In consciousness, events are perceived as a part of a continuum of time that is merely conventional. The shocking elements of an event are filtered out, enabling it to be lived as a memorable experience—the remembrance—that does not disturb the delicate balance of consciousness and can be stored as a memory to recall at will. Consolidated into a perfectly flawless moment—the collective or individual land of dreams. Here, for a second or perhaps even a few minutes, there reigns an illusion of completeness, a universe devoid of past and future, a moment whose sheer intensity is to a large degree predicated on its very inexistence.” (28-29)
that years after an experience whose lack is precisely glossed over by the desire for a utopian origin, producing a perfect memory of something that really never happened.” (293)

Where this leads us is to our first, and by far the most popular, variety of Steampunk: Nostalgic Steampunk. In Nostalgic Steampunk we find the creation of the Victorian Era as a Romantic myth infused with utopian desires and generally ignoring the more uncomfortable genuine history of the era. Nostalgic Steampunk—which can operate under the guise of so many other terms for Steampunk, such as Victorian Science Fiction, Scientific Romance, Industrial Age Science Fiction, and so on—makes technology the portal of elegant exploration rather than the industrial torture rack of the poor, as brave soldiers and scientists of the Crown go on expeditions which don’t enslave and destroy the cultures they come across.

The patron saint of Nostalgic Steampunk would easily be Jules Verne himself. The world of Verne was the world of the Voyages Extraordinaires... A place of limitless wonder and imagination which would be explored and innocently exploited for the good of humanity through human ingenuity. Verne was a fan of technology, and many of his Voyages feature on earth. technologies, such as the space cannon of From the Earth to the Moon and the Nautilus of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. While we have come to know the story of Captain Nemo today as that of a tortured soul waging war against a system of oppression and in the process becoming exactly that which he fights against (by imposing his own vision of order on the world through violence and technology, murdering and colonially exploiting the sea), the original novel was at first a travelogue of the deeps. A series of episodes connected only by the Nautilus’ journey, Nemo falls more into the role of oceanic guide than rogue science priest.

This is not to say that there isn’t a self-critical, self-conscious aspect to Nostalgic Steampunk. The observation that Verne wrote about technology while Wells wrote about people and politics isn’t entirely accurate. You can’t get past the first chapter of From the Earth to the Moon without a biting satire of war, and Verne’s first, long-unpublished work, Paris in the 20th Century was a dystopian tale to rival Orwell or Huxley. An ironic playfulness with the absurdity and spectacle of impossibly developed, or Queen Victoria’s Bomb, dealing with Victorian atomic weaponry. A good example, albeit from slightly different original form of Steampunk is found in the novels which founded Nostalgic Steampunk—much like Victoriana itself, in the imagination which would be explored and innocently exploited by the very things Nostalgic Steampunk represents with a frozen wreath from the decomposition of time; the other, temporal dislocation. “(298) In plain English, melancholic kitsch deals with the everyday, the unrealized experience of an event a time later, and experiences it rather than reinterpreting it. Melancholic kitsch remains rooted in the present day, looking back upon the past but through the lens of the present day and the loss of that past. As Melancholic Steampunk then, we see the very things Nostalgic Steampunk tries so hard to ignore brought out into the glaring sun. We see the corruption, the decadence, the imperialis, the poverty and the intrigue. And we see them not as much as an indictment of the Victorian era but as an indictment of our own, whether directly or by chopping away at our society’s Victorian roots. This Melancholic Steampunk is Steampunk proper, developed as it was out of the Cyberpunk movement which imposed the present melancholically upon the future, decreeing what we are presently losing by showing a world where it was lost. This original form of Steampunk is found in the novels which followed the genre, including Bruce Sterling’s and Gibson’s The Difference Engine. The original version of the Victorian era, which much like the Victorian era itself, no one person should want to live in, is opposed to Nostalgic Steampunk’s Victorian era of aesthetic beauty and grand exploration.

References:

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We see the Steampunk, the poverty and the intrigue. And we see them not as an indictment of the Victorian era but as an indictment of our own.
Darcy James Argue is the bandleader and composer for Secret Society, an 18-piece band in NYC. First formed in May 2002, they have played shows at several NYC venues including CBGB, Union Hall, the Bowery Poetry Club and Flux Factory. Darcy graduated from New England Conservatory in Boston in 2002 and commuted to New York weekly for a composer’s workshop before moving to Brooklyn in 2003. Once in the city, he started reading sessions to find musicians who were capable of—and excited to be—playing his original and challenging compositions. For two years they rehearsed in various incarnations before they played their first gig.

Argue describes the work as “steampunk big band” and after downloading his music from his website and blog [http://secretssociety.typepad.com] I immediately noticed why; when you listen to the music you are transported to a sinister yet beautiful world, a past that never was.

He agreed to meet me at a cafe in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn. His face was ageless; had he told me he was 20 or 34 I would simply have nodded and believed him. I drank tea while he spoke of his band-fellows, the political situation of music, steampunk and jazz.

Do you always have the same musicians when you play?

I have a core of musicians, but with 18 people on the gig, it’s not always possible to get the same players every time. Usually there’s enough carry-over from gig to gig that there is some sense of continuity, but obviously that’s one of the challenges of running such a large band—the personality is going to be slightly different every time.

You seem to have a lot of respect for the musicians, and you write about them as being an important factor in the work.

Bless these guys for doing this thing; it’s incredibly difficult music that involves a lot of rehearsal time, and they’re certainly not making very much money on these gigs. They’re doing it because they enjoy the challenge of the music that I write. As a composer there is nothing more gratifying than having musicians at this level, people like Ingrid Jensen or Matt Clohesy, really interested in playing your music. They have a lot of other more lucrative opportunities they could be pursuing.

What is your role as a leader of all of this, how authoritative do you have to be?

Well, I guess the best way of putting it is that it’s like the players are voluntary citizens in a benevolent dictatorship. The music is through-composed and pretty finely detailed in terms of the notation. There’s definitely room for improvisation from the soloists, but they don’t get to dictate the direction of the music. Their improvisation can’t just be what they were working on in the practice room the day before, or what they might play in a small group setting—the music has a story to tell and their improvisation has to serve that script. I think that the players in the group understand that; they still find a way to express themselves and be personal and creative but within more narrowly defined constraints.

Do you make your living through what you’re doing?

I’m fortunate enough to make a living in music, but I definitely do not make a living on Secret Society. At this point I have to finance my big band habit by other means; I’m a freelance music copystaffer and music copywriter, who prepares music for Broadway and film. The software that I use to notate my music is called Finale and I do Finale clinics in schools and for other professionals. I’m also an arranger and orchestra conductor.

Do you give away your scores online for free? Why did you choose to do that?

You currently give away all of the Secret Society music away online for free. Why did you choose to do that?

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You currently give away all of the Secret Society music away online for free. Why did you choose to do that?

First off, I don’t want to present myself as some expert on steampunk literature or culture because I’m not. But I couldn’t resist appropriating the label because it seemed like an excellent shorthand description of what I was after with Secret Society. We are using an almost archaic instrumentation—when you say “big band” people think of ballrooms in the 30s, [songs like the Glenn Miller Orchestra’s] “In The Mood” and that kind of thing. Musically, that kind of thing bears almost no resemblance to what we’re doing, but there is something about that instrumentation that is very appealing to me.

In a way I’m trying to use this antiquated music technology, this group of largely acoustic instruments, to replicate the things in contemporary music that I really like. If I’m listening to a recording of a group of largely acoustic instruments, that has a lot more of a character than a recording of a group of largely acoustic instruments. And so I thought that this was a way of having that kind of thing bear some resemblance to what we’re doing.

Of course I’m not interested in the music that involves a lot of rehearsal time, and they’re certainly not making very much money on these gigs. They’re doing it because they enjoy the challenge of the music that I write. As a composer there is nothing more gratifying than having musicians at this level, people like Ingrid Jensen or Matt Clohesy, really interested in playing your music. They have a lot of other more lucrative opportunities they could be pursuing.

I also hope that other composers who are interested in my music take a look at those scores, see what I did, and ask me about it. I hope that as this blog grows we’ll have more of those discussions online, because I’m definitely interested in talking to other composers about how they solve the same kind of problems that I try to solve.

Well, those scores are there mostly for evaluation purposes—if someone has a big band of their own and would like to play the music, then I guess they could theoretically generate the parts for each individual musician from that score, but that would be an incredible pain, and it would be far easier for them to just buy the parts from me. But they are there in case bandleaders want to see what’s in the music and whether it’s playable by their group.

The challenge for a musician in the age of mp3s is to try to figure out how to structure a story, that requires problem-solving. I guess for me it feels more like storytelling, but of course when you set down and try to figure out how to structure a story, that requires problem-solving skills.

I think of the problem-solving you mentioned as relates to mechanics and music...

This is something I got from my mentor, Bob Brookmeyer, who I studied with at New England Conservatory. He viewed composition as exclusively problem-solving. I guess for me it feels more like storytelling, but of course when you sit down and...
For a while I was kind of obsessed with steampunk because you have a lot of people talking explicitly about the challenges of structuring stories, debating the merits of techniques like the three-act structure, the sequence model… That really resonated with what I'm trying to do musically, taking this old-fashioned instrumentation and making contemporary music with it.

Where did you first run across the aesthetic or concept of steampunk?

Like a lot of people, I'm sure, the first time I heard the label used was in relation to Alan Moore's The League of Extraordinary Gentleman, which I was very taken with, being a huge Alan Moore fan. But the word seemed to also describe things I'd read that I guess aren't normally considered part of the steampunk canon, like Thomas Pynchon's Mason & Dixon. That was the first time I had really encountered such an incredibly rich and creative use of anachronism. The entire novel is written in this faux-historical style—it uses the archaic capitalizations and abbreviations and whatnot that evoke the 1700's, but it's more about creating an effect than being a literal facsimile of 18th century literature. It grapples with some of the fundamental questions of modernity and colonialism, the idea of going westward, of literally inscribing the mark of progress on the map. It really highlights the ironies of how the scientific and imperial advances of the Enlightenment were bound up with the violence and brutality of slavery and colonialism, the idea that we were bringing civilization to "savage" lands through the use of incredible savagery.

The first time I wrote any music directly inspired by literature was after reading Both Mason & Dixon—I wrote a piece after one of the characters, a Chinese surveyor and Fung Shui practitioner named Captain Zhang. Both Mason & Dixon and The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen got me thinking about using an anachronistic framework in order to comment on the modern world. This is exactly what I'm trying to do musically, taking this old-fashioned instrumentation and making contemporary music with it.

What do you feel we have to learn from a time of empire and colonialism that relates to our present situation, both politically and musically?

Well, when the vice president can get up there and claim, on television, that the Iraqis will greet us as liberators, and not take control of their music. You see that all the time, whether it's through the music itself, and abbreviations and whatnot that evoke style—it uses the archaic capitalizations and abbreviations and whatnot that evoke the 1700's, but it's more about creating that constant vigilance?

For a jazz artist, independence is by necessity as much by design. But I also hope that the songs work independently of any extra-musical associations—that they work as pure music.

I didn't mean just through the music itself, but also about staying independent.

Well for a jazz artist, independence is by necessity as much by design. But I also feel that there are a lot of opportunities—opportunities and obligations—for artists to take control of their music. You see more and more people self-releasing records or putting them out through a cooperative venture like ArtistShare [www.artistshare.com] that allows them to own their work, instead of signing it over to a label.

I guess one of the challenges is that, if everyone is independent and self-releasing their records, then how do you engage in some sort of collective promotion? How do you make it seem like what you're doing is part of a movement? Because if it's all just individual people doing their own thing, it's hard for a scene to emerge out of that. It's hard for something like that to develop any momentum, which is why it's important for jazz musicians especially, who tend to be very insular, to try to reach out to other musicians in other genres who are pursuing common goals.

How did the blog come to be?

I was reading a lot of political blogs, and it was through political blogs that I discovered the music blogosphere. I was a little bit jealous of the scene around the indie rock blogs because it seemed like there was a real community there, people were excited. It wasn't that there were that many more people going to indie rock shows than were going to indie jazz shows at Barbes or Sonic, but there was much more of a sense of excitement because people would write about it on their blogs. People would come back from shows at the Mercury Lounge where there were maybe 25 people in the audience, but they would have taken pictures and maybe made a bootleg recording or just written animatedly about what went on. There was a real sense that, okay, so there were only 25 people in the audience, but it was important.

There's nothing really like that on the jazz side. When I started blogging, I was one of the very few jazz oriented blogs. My original goal was obviously to promote myself and my own music, but it was also to promote the music of my peers and colleagues, who were playing gigs that otherwise got no notice at all.

I hope to see more musicians, especially musicians in the jazz world, take up blogging. I think it's a way to try to start a conversation about this music, to get some debate going, some back and forth, some sense that this is vital music that matters to people's lives.

Find mp3s, scores and blogging online at http://secretsofsteampunk.com

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The ostrich’s digestive system is quite remarkable. Its stomach can hold a vast amount of material, including sand, gravel, and other indigestible objects. This is how the ostrich fills its stomach, as it is obliged to put in all it can get. And others say that the stones and brass and leather help him to digest his other food, in the same way that grit or gravel helps our poultry at home.

The next curious thing about the ostrich is the pair of wings that nature has given him. The wing is nature’s machine by which the bird can support itself in the air, and dart or sail through it as we may see every day. But in some birds the wing fails of this purpose, and is of no use at all to fly with. There are two reasons why the wings of the ostrich cannot bear him into the air. They are very small to begin with, and his great body is too heavy to be raised by such means. And besides, the feathers of the wings are different from those of other birds.

Look how firm and compact is the wing of the swallow or the rook. The feathers fit close together, and the little plumes on each feather hook into each other by those exquisite little catches that are among the marvels of nature. If you pass your finger over the wing it feels like one smooth surface. But in the wing of the ostrich the little plumes are loose, and float lightly about. The ostrich does not use his wings to fly with, though he spreads them out as he runs.

The Flying Camel.

He is in many respects so like an animal, that he forms almost a link between the animals and the birds. Indeed he is so like the camel that he is called the camel-bird. His foot resembles the hoof of the camel. It has only two toes, and both point forward; and the first is longer than the second, and ends in a thick hoof-like claw. And the habits of the ostrich resemble those of the camel; they both live in the sandy desert, and are able to go a very long time without drinking. The ostrich does not make any nest, but merely scoops out a hole in the sand. When the proper season comes, the mother ostrich begins to lay her eggs; she lays about a dozen, and they are very large, and of a dirty white color. In the day-time she leaves them under the burning rays of the sun; but when the night comes, and the air is cooler, she broods over them.

The natives of the country go out looking for the eggs of the ostrich. One monster egg has in it as much as thirty of our hen’s eggs, and is considered quite dainty. But they are very careful how they set about the task of robbing the nest. They choose the time when the mother ostrich is away, and then they take a long stick and push the eggs out of the hole. If they touched any of them with their fingers, the ostrich would find it out in a minute, and go into a great rage. She would break all the eggs that were left with her hoof-like feet, and never lay in that place again. Sometimes a number of mother ostriches will lay their eggs in the same nest.

In some parts of Africa there are tribes of men who eat ostriches, not from gluttony, but because they can get very little else. They keep them as we do cattle, and make them quite tame. The ostrich is by nature gentle, though it is so large, and soon makes himself contented near the dwelling of his master. Sometimes his master rides upon him, and takes a journey.

The beautiful feathers of the ostrich are so admired, that great pains and trouble are taken to procure them. The Arab comes with his swift horse in search of the ostriches. A flock of them are quietly feeding together on the plain. If it is mid-day, they shut about, flapping their wings as if for coolness. When they perceive the enemy they begin to run, at first gently, for he
keeps at a distance, and does not wish to alarm them more than he can help. The wings of the bird keep working like two sails, and he gets under way and runs down on foot. "I have myself observed of sight if he ran in a straight line. But he is so foolish as to keep running from one side to the other. The hunter, meanwhile, rides straight on, and when his horse is exhausted, another hunter takes his place, and they keep on in this manner, and so on, allowing the poor bird no rest. Sometimes, in a fit of despair, he hides his head in the sand.

Another method adopted by the ostrich hunter is to disguise himself in the skin of one of these birds, and, armed with his bow and poisoned arrows, stalk about the plain imitating the gait and motions of the ostrich. Moffat thus describes a hunt of this kind:

A kind of flat double cushion is stuffed with straw and formed something like a saddle. All except the under part of this is covered over with feathers, attached to small pegs, and made so as to resemble the bird. The head and neck of an ostrich are stuffed and a rod introduced, and the Bushman intending to attack quites the neck in his right hand, and his bow and poisoned arrows in his left. Such as the writer has seen were the most perfect mimics of the ostrich, and at a few hundreds yards' distance it is not possible for the eye to detect the fraud. This buzzard bird appears to be picking away at the verdure, turning the head as if keeping a sharp lookout; shakes his feathers, now walks and then trots, till he gets within bow-shot, and when the flock runs from one receiving an arrow he runs too. The male ostriches will, on some occasions, give chase to the strange bird, when he tries to elude them in a way to prevent them catching his scent; for when once they do the spell is broken. Should one happen to get too near in pursuit, he has only to run to windward, or throw off his saddle, to avoid a stroke from a wing that would lay him prostrate.

The Arabs of North Africa pursue the ostrich on horseback; not at a dash, however—one exciting run and victory decided—but in a deliberate and business-like way. A flock having been sighted, the Arabs put their steeds in motion, and hold them at sufficient speed to keep in sight the fluttering army in advance. When the evening comes, the Arab pickets his horse and rests for the night, and his tired game, finding it is no longer pursued, sinks to the earth and rests too. Next morning the chase is commenced, the clicking of hoofs rouses the still weary bird, and once more he braces his limbs and pursues his hopeless flight. So the game continues, till, tired to death, and with drooping and bedraggled wings, the poor ostrich comes to a dead halt, and the gallant Arab hunter safely approaches and cuts his throat.

The Blow that Ends the Chase.

Toward the approach of the rainy season, when the days are intolerably hot and sultry, the ostrich may easily be ridden down by a single horseman. At the above-mentioned period the protracted drought tells even on this invulnerable bird, and he may be seen standing in a stumped manner with his wings outspread and his beak wide open. Under such circumstances he offers but little resistance, and though for a few moments he may make hard running, his speed is not enduring; and presently he is again stock-still and stupidly agape, waiting for the hunter to knock him on the head with his "shambok," or knobby stick.

Our illustration depicts a chase of an ostrich described by Baldwin. Andersson relates that in certain parts of Southern Africa the animals7 lay down when they are followed by the Bushmen who accomplish this exploit on the shores of Lake Ngami. They usually surround a whole troop, and with shouts and yells chase the terrified birds into the water, where they are, of course, instantly killed. Harris, on one occasion, fell in with a party of caravans chasing an ostrich on foot, and, when they got close enough, "shying" after the fleeting bird, their clubs striking the bird's legs incessantly. "When the bird then is slain," says the last-mentioned authority, "the throat is opened and a ligature passed below the incision. Several hunters then raise the bird by the head and feet, and shake and drag him forward from the aperture nearly twenty pounds of a substance of mingled blood and fat, of the consistence of coagulated oil, which under the name of 'manettique' is employed in the preparation of dishes and the cure of various maladies.

Some African tribes take the ostrich in snares, similar to those used in the capture of the smaller species of antelope. A long cord having at the end a noose is tied to a sapling, which is bent down, and the noose pinned to the ground in such a manner that when a bird treads within it the sapling springs back by its own natural elasticity, suspending the bird in the air, only to be released from its sufferings by death. Others again are said to employ ostrich feather parasites, or rather massy plumes—the same as adorn our hearse—while hunting wild animals of every description. Thus in case of a wounded beast charging a man, the latter, just at the moment he is about to be seized, whips the big plume off his head, and thrusting the spike to which the feathers are bound into the ground, slips off. While the furious animal vents his rage on the nodding feathers, the wild hunter steals to its rear and transfixes it with his weapon.

Fair Play and no Favor.

In hunting the ostrich the more favored by sportsmen is to lie in wait at the margins of pools and springs where the birds come to drink. They swallow the water deliberately, and by a succession of gulps. While staying at Elephant Fountain, Andersson shot eight within a very short period. "Lying in wait," however, and taking advantage of your game from behind a wall or hurdle, is by no means as a rule a favorite system with the hunter. If an animal has "fight" in it, nothing gives the true sportsman greater pleasure than for it to demonstrate the same to the fullest extent—sharp steel against talons just as sharp and terrible, swift bullets against swift and sudden springs and bounds and death-dealing fangs. Should the animal chased be dependent on its fleetness for safety, again the true sportsman would meet him on his own weapons, and stake bit and spur on the issue of the chase.

Andersson relates the particulars of a chase after young ostriches by himself and a friend, and which is none the less interesting to us as it bears witness to the tender solicitude of the young ostrich for its progeny. "While on the road between the Bay and Scheppmansdorf we discovered a male and female ostrich, with a brood of young ones about the size of ordinary barn-door fowls. This was a sight we had long been looking for, as Galton had been requested by Professor Owen to procure a few craniums of the young of this bird. Accordingly we dismounted from our oxen and gave chase, which proved of no ordinary interest.

AN EXCITING CHASE.

Cunning Dodge to Save the Little Ones.

The moment the parent-birds became aware of our intention they flew off at full speed, the female leading the way, the young following in her wake, and the male, though at some little distance, bringing up the rear of the family party. It was very touching to observe the anxiety the old birds evinced for the safety of their young. Finding that we were quickly gaining upon them, the male at once slackened his pace and diverged somewhat from his course; but seeing that we were not to be diverted from our purpose, he again increased his speed, and with wings drooping so as almost to touch the ground he hovered round us, now in wide circles and then decreasing the circumference till he came almost within pistol shot, when he threw himself abruptly on about until he had killed off thelying in wait, for we was disabled, and made quickly toward him; but this was
Submit to no Master!  
but submit to us!

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collective@steampunkmagazine.com

www.steampunkmagazine.com

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Contributing Editors:
Juli(A) 
Kate Khatib
Margaret P. Killjoy

Contributing Artists:
Ben Anaman 
Libby Bulloff 
Ika 
Nick Kole 
Robin Savage 
Thomas Truax 
Magdalene Veen 
Tim Wilson

Contributing Writers:
The Catastrophone Orchestra and Arts Collective (NYC) 
SteamPunk Magazine Collective 
Libby Bulloff 
G. D. Falksen 
Cory Gross 
J. T. Hand 
Margaret P. Killjoy

Technical Consultant:
Jake von Slatt

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