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ISSUE**

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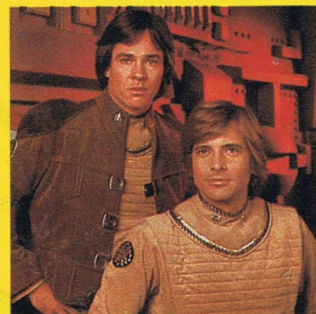
**NUMBER 39**  
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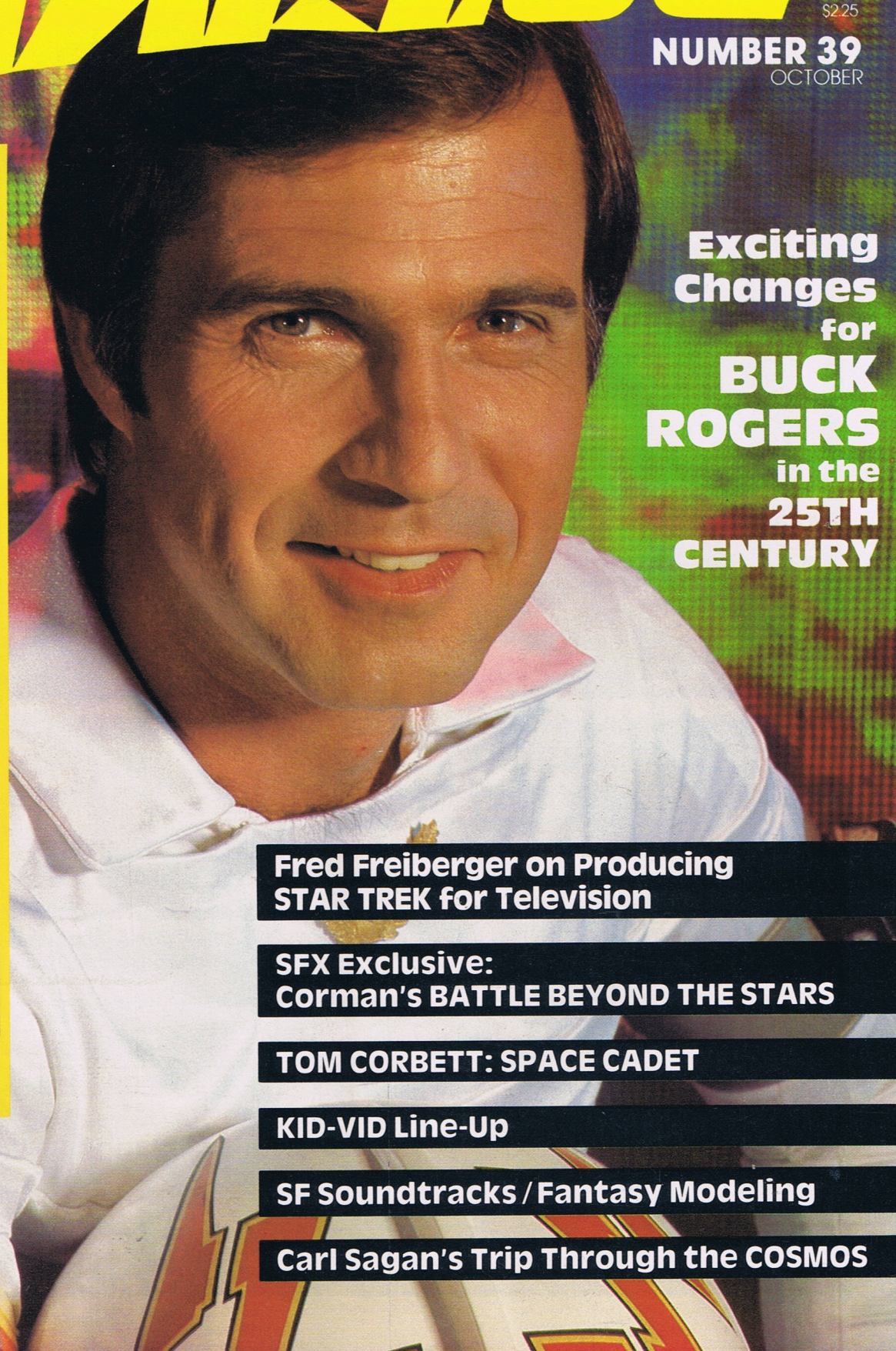
**The Return of  
MORK & MINDY**



**THE HULK  
Battles On**



**GALACTICA  
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**Exciting  
Changes  
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**Fred Freiberger on Producing  
STAR TREK for Television**

**SFX Exclusive:  
Corman's BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS**

**TOM CORBETT: SPACE CADET**

**KID-VID Line-Up**

**SF Soundtracks / Fantasy Modeling**

**Carl Sagan's Trip Through the COSMOS**



## AUCTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

**T**he good old days keep getting better... invest in the past." With that slogan in mind, over 400 active bidders turned out to feast their eyes and sacrifice their wallets at the first Great Sci-Fi, Fantasy and Horror Movie Memorabilia Auction.

Held this past June in Hollywood, the auction was the brainchild of producer Charles (Laserblast, *The Day Time Ended*) Band. During the two-day span, collectors examined and purchased such delectables as: Devil's Tower miniature from *CE3K*, several original uniforms from TV's *Star Trek*, Batho-sub from *Diamonds are Forever*, miniatures from many series, including *Lost in Space*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* and *King Kong*.

But the highlights of the auction shone on a functioning replica of Robby the Robot, and the original shirt and cape from TV's *Superman*.

After several hours of public inspection and an opening speech by Forrest J. Ackerman, the bidding began.

At times, the action was spirited, as when the price of a poster from *Superman and the Mole Men* was driven up to and finally sold for \$325. But bidding for posters, comics and artwork was generally less than the expectations listed in the auction's 160-page catalog. (Walt Disney's *Comics and Stories #1*, with a \$900 quote went for \$325.)

Of particular interest to fans of Irwin Allen were the *Jupiter II* from *Lost in Space* and the flying sub from *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*.

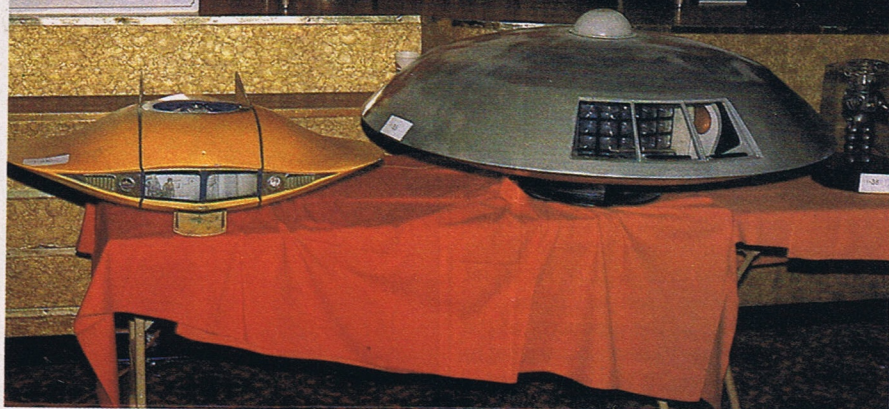
The former, with a minimum bid of \$500,

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Flying sub and Jupiter II. Below left: Superman cape and shirt, slightly moth-eaten.

went unsold, but the flying sub held the interest of several bidders and went for \$1,375. (It was later learned that several flying subs had been rescued from destruction and may be available at a later sale.) Unsold were Captain Kirk's original uniform and a longboat from Disney's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. The batho sub from the Bond flick *Diamonds Are Forever* brought in a \$4,000 bid and later went unclaimed.

Despite rumors of mail-in bids as high as \$60,000, the Robby replica (built by *Forbidden Planet* enthusiasts Fred and Mike Barton and Louis Duskin) was sold for a mere

\$23,500 to an anonymous Forest Hills, N.Y., buyer.

The *Superman* shirt and cape, slightly moth-eaten, went to a Los Angeles insurance salesman who picked them up for "investment purposes" for \$18,000.

To see what you missed, a complete list of the items sold and their prices is available from Wizard Promotions, Suite 1640, 2049 Century Park East, Los Angeles, CA 90067.

A second auction is slated for December. Write to Wizard for details and while you're waiting for a reply, start saving those dimes and \$100 bills. ☆

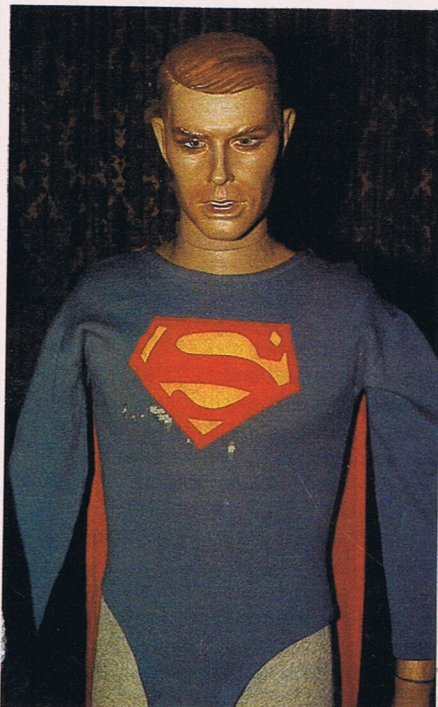


PHOTO: MIKE CLARK

## SOMEWHERE IN TIME

**A**fter finishing *Superman* and before beginning its sequel, actor Christopher Reeve chose *Somewhere in Time* to, as he puts it, "escape the cape."

Described by director Jeannot (Jaws 2) Szwarc as "an emotional film... about idealistic love," the film features Reeve as young playwright Richard Collier who falls hopelessly (it seems) in love with the photograph of Elise McKenna (Jane Seymour), a mesmerizingly beautiful actress.

Separating Collier from McKenna are not miles, but decades. Collier is planted in the present while McKenna's stardom dates back to 1912. This is no deterrent to Collier, who finds a way to travel back in time to find her. Christopher Plummer portrays William Fawcett Robinson, McKenna's possessive theatrical manager.

Richard Matheson wrote the screenplay which is based on his novel *Bid Time Return*. Matheson's previous credits include *The Incredible Shrinking Man*, *The Night*



Christopher Reeve and Jane Seymour enjoy each other's company *Somewhere in Time*.

*Stalker* and the recently televised miniseries *The Martian Chronicles*, adapted from Ray Bradbury's classic novel.

Stephen Deutsch produced and Isidore (The Muppets Movie) Mankofsky is the director of photography.

The movie is to be released this month. ☆

PHOTO: MIKE CLARK

PHOTO: © 1979 UNIVERSAL

# An Interview with Fred Freiberger

—By MIKE CLARK & BILL COTTER—

**W**e caught up with Fred Freiberger at his home in Beverly Hills. Having resigned from the short-lived *Beyond Westworld* series, he is currently mapping out a new Saturday morning show for CBS called *Space Station Starburst*. A pleasant looking man in his mid-50s, Freiberger was most gracious and spent the day with Starloggers Mike Clark and Bill Cotter, and presented his view on *Star Trek* and *Space: 1999*. (Freiberger's comments on *Space* will appear in Part II, next issue.)

**STARLOG:** Before we get into your career as a science-fiction producer, could you give us a few details on your background and early career?

**FRED FREIBERGER:** Well, I grew up in New York, in the Bronx. I worked in advertising until World War II, and joined the Army Air Corps as a navigator. When I was shot down, I spent two years in a prison camp—the one that they based *The Great Escape* on. After the war, I came out to Hollywood with two friends, hoping to get into the publicity business. Unfortunately, the studios were shut down due to a strike, so while I was hanging around I wrote and sold a story to Mary Pickford's company.

**SL:** Which story was this?

**FF:** It was called *Susie Steps Out*, a musical comedy show. After that I had several assignments until the picture business went down the tubes.

**SL:** Was this due to television entering the scene?

**FF:** Not just television—the whole business was just in terrible shape. I went into radio, and did suspense shows and *Richard Diamond*. Then television came in, although rather slowly. From the mid 50s on I was a writer on shows like *Zane Grey Theater*, *Climax*, *Wanted: Dead or Alive*, and *Rawhide*. The first time I got on the other side of the desk was as story editor for *Ben Casey*, and then I produced that show.

**SL:** How did you find the change from writing?

**FF:** Very difficult. The studios suddenly decided they wanted writers as producers so we could be on scripts and most of us didn't know about production. You made sure you had a good production manager. I suppose I learned more about production on *Space: 1999* because they wanted me involved in all phases of production.

**SL:** Before we talk about your involvement on *Space: 1999*, could you tell us about your initial encounter with *Star Trek*?

**FF:** I was called down on an interview to produce the show by Gene



**Freiberger: One of SF-TV's most important—and controversial—producers.**

Roddenberry. I'm sure there were a few producers there to be interviewed for the job. I was shown the first pilot with Jeffery Hunter as the captain. I think the Shatner one had been done but hadn't been put together yet. Anyway, Roddenberry asked me if I would be interested in producing the show. I said I'd love it, but could not take the job because I was going to Europe with my family. I would be back in six weeks, and if the job was still there, I'd be delighted. So Gene says, well, he doesn't know if he can wait, and he got Gene Coon, a very capable guy and I went on to other jobs.

**SL:** Until *Star Trek*'s third season.  
**FF:** My office brought me up to Gene's office, and Gene said he would like me to produce the show. John Meredyth Lucas had produced it the second season and I assumed Roddenberry wanted to change personnel every year. Perhaps he got freshness of thought; I don't know.

Gene said, "Would you write a script so we can see what you can do?" I said, "Gene, I've got a lot of credits as a writer and I don't

audition scripts. I'm not up here to audition as a writer. I'm here as a producer." I think Gene appreciated that point of view and hired me to do the show.

**SL:** Some people believe that NBC hired you, instead of Gene.

**FF:** Anybody who knows Gene Roddenberry has got to be crazy to think that anybody could make him do anything he doesn't want. I watched him in operation with the network, the heads of the network, and he intimidated them! They didn't intimidate him. So that statement is a fabrication on somebody's part.

**SL:** Was Gene Roddenberry active on *Trek*'s third season?

**FF:** Roddenberry had very little to do with the third year. He was too busy; he had all sorts of personal things going for himself. If there was a problem, I'd call him and he'd come over very quickly. Roddenberry was an excellent businessman, involved in many areas, like fan mail, the merchandising... all that. Roddenberry is one of the few creative people who is also a good businessman. So if there was anything at fault, it would certainly be my responsibility.

**SL:** What were your priorities as the new producer?

**FF:** The ratings on the show were not sufficient to keep it on the air. The Trekkies and the fans, God bless 'em, created such a fuss that NBC put the show on again for a third year. The ratings were the same all the time. Sometimes a show would go a little higher, some of them would go a little lower.

**SL:** Even in the Friday night, 10:00 p.m. slot, the ratings were the

same?

**FF:** Yes. *Star Trek* became the legend it's become when it went into syndication, airing at 6:00 p.m. or so. Never in prime time. 7:00 p.m. maybe would have made it because that's really not prime time yet. The problem I was facing was how to broaden the viewer base...do a science-fiction show but get enough additional viewers to keep the show on the air. I decided to do what I would hope was a broad canvas of shows, but I tried to make them more dramatic and to do stories that had a more conventional storyline within the science-fiction frame. Now, if some science-fiction fans didn't like it because it went too dramatic... [I'm] guilty. That was deliberate.

**SL:** How was the third season budget compared to the budgets for seasons one and two?

**FF:** The third year, the licensing fee came down from the network, which means they're paying us less money. The studio then came down on whatever their budget was for *Star Trek*. In addition to this, the stars got a raise. This meant I had even less money to go with. So, naturally, the special effects got cut down... your sets too. It meant that about every fourth program had to be done exclusively on the *Enterprise*.

**SL:** We've supplied you with some excerpts from David Gerrold's book, *The World of Star Trek*, which, although you are never specifically named, criticize your efforts and the general quality of the third season. One of the criticisms is the lack of science-fiction writers during season three.

**FF:** When I went on *Star Trek*, Roddenberry, who had thought the show was dead after the second season, had given out 17 story assignments... for whatever reason. I honored those assignments, two of which were for Dorothy Fontana and a lot for writers who had already written for the show.



PHOTOS © 1988 NBC

*Plato's Stepchild*: "At the time it was anathema for a white man to kiss a black woman."

I may have cut off a couple of them because they didn't work out, so let's say there were 15 out of 22 that were not mine. Gene Roddenberry wrote two of the remaining seven. The third one David Gerrold wrote. The fourth one Jerry Bickel wrote. The fifth was done by the late Gene Coon, who was under contract at Universal at the time and could not have his name on his three scripts. His pseudonym was Lee Cronin.

**SL:** Why was Dorothy Fontana not used as

story editor on *Star Trek's* third season?

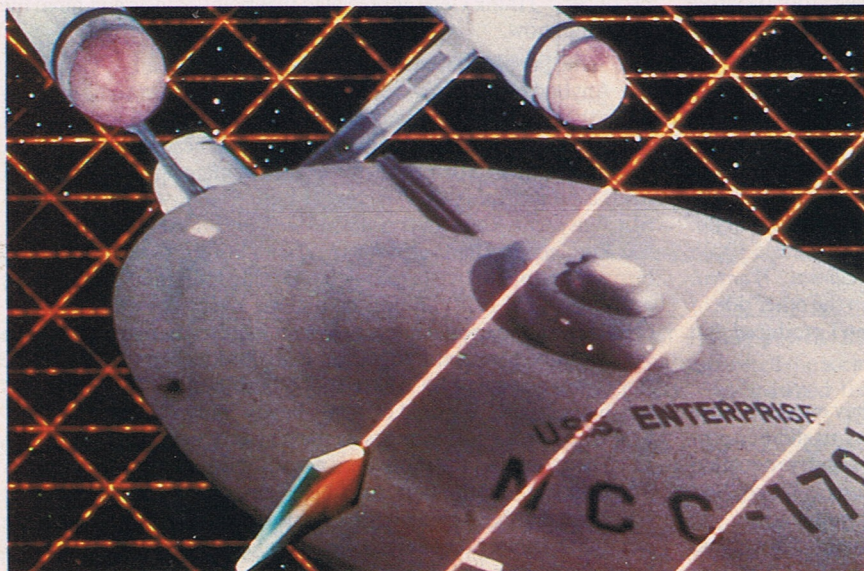
**FF:** When I came up to see Gene about producing the show, I was talking to him and a girl knocked at the door, came into the office and Gene introduced me to her; I didn't catch her name. She sat in a chair facing away from me. She would not look at me. Finally, she walked out. I said to Gene, "Who was that strange girl?" Gene said, "That was Dorothy Fontana. She was story editor last year." I said, "Oh." We went on to talk and Gene started talking about how we would staff the show. Gene said he'd been talking to a story editor named Albert Aley, who was a friend of mine—a very competent guy. Gene also said, "Of course, I'm not gonna foist anybody on you. You get whoever you want." I said, "Well, I've been thinking of Arthur Singer."

**SL:** Did you suggest Dorothy for the job at any time?

**FF:** No. That girl may have thought I was responsible for her not working; I don't know. I didn't ask Gene why he didn't suggest her for story editor because I knew John Meredyth Lucas was available. I assumed he probably just wanted to change staff every year.

**SL:** What about Dorothy's scripts?

**FF:** Two of the 17 assignments were for Dorothy. She came in with one story ("The *Enterprise Incident*"). The story, dramatically, I felt, didn't work. I wanted to get dramatic stories. There were some very good elements in it. She probably had a better grasp of Spock's character than I did. One of



*The Tholian Web*: One of the Freiberger episodes which he feels "can stand up against anything done in the first two seasons."

the things I really wanted to do with Spock's character was to explore the areas Gene had built into the character about a Vulcan father and an Earth mother, which I didn't see too much of. He was just playing that cool guy all the time from what I saw. I wanted to use the other aspects of the character. . . which were not germane to her [Fontana's] script. So we kept working on trying to get her to rewrite that script. She was very resistant. She was not at all cooperative. She wrote it and then we rewrote the script. . . extensively. Now she had a choice. If she didn't like what was there, she could use a different name, which is a procedure the Writer's Guild has set up for writers who feel this way. She didn't *have* to put her name on it. I'm not putting her down as a writer. She's a pretty good writer. I'm talking about professionalism. So we rewrote the script, and I think we got pretty good reactions on it.

**SL:** What about Dorothy's second assignment?

**FF:** Now, she *had* assignment number two. We were desperately trying to get it. We were picked up late for the third season, and she was told, "We need it, please, quickly." She disappeared. We couldn't find her. We checked with everybody. I called Gene Roddenberry. We finally got to her agent, and I told my story editor, "You tell her agent if we don't get her back here, this assignment's gonna be vacated!" Her agent told us she went to

Hawaii! We said to get her back. We finally had to vacate that assignment to another writer. I called Roddenberry and said, "We can't be the victims of this kind of non-professionalism." And he said, "Okay, let her go."

**SL:** Could you tell us about David Gerrold's script, "The Cloud Minders?"

**FF:** Gerrold called one day and said he'd like to bring in a story. I didn't know him, but Bobby Justman said, "This is the guy who did 'Trouble with Tribbles.'" I said, "Gee, let's have him in." He came in with a story and I liked the concept very much. . . and we gave him the assignment. He wrote the story, and my story editor, Arthur Singer, said, "Cut him off. Terrible. Amateurish job." I said to Bobby, "How many credits has this guy had?" Bobby says he thinks the only other show he wrote that was produced was the 'Tribbles'. I said, "Well, he is kind of an amateur, but let's try to work with him." Again he came in. Gerrold talks about that brilliant thing he did. . . how Kirk stood by and let everybody solve their problems. That's basically a violation of everything dramatic in any of my training in terms of doing a series. Anyway, he brings in the script again, and if I can recall my story editor's words. . . it was "a dull, polemical tract and boring philosophical discourse. . ." He said, "Cut him off." I said, "No, let's work with him. He did that other show." So Gerrold did

another version, which, in our opinion, was still very bad. Both Bobby Justman *and* my story editor said, "Why waste any more time?" I said, "Let's go with him," and pulled in Ollie Crawford. I figured if I put a good dramatic writer together with a kid who had a good science-fiction concept, it could work.

Ollie worked with him. Finally, it didn't work out. We brought in Margaret Armen who did the final script. It never came out as well as. . . it's one of those concepts that I felt was just wonderful. . . just didn't work out all the way.

**SL:** Was that the last time you heard from Gerrold?

**FF:** No. A couple of years later, I got a call from a guy who said, "Hi, my name is David Gerrold." I said, "Who's David Gerrold?" He says, "Well, I wrote for *Star Trek*." I said, "Oh, hello. How are you? What're you doing?" The usual pleasantries. He said, "I'm writing a book about *Star Trek*." I said, "Congratulations." Gerrold said, "What I want to do is in a chapter. . ."—I can't give this to you verbatim, but in essence he said, "I want to write on how you destroyed my story." So the sheer affrontery of this, I must say, set me back for a second. I said, "Look, let me explain something to you. . ." and I went through the whole thing how I protected him, fought against my staff to keep him on. And he seemed to accept that. When I read



Freiberger liked "Tribbles" and accepted second script from Gerrold, "The Cloud Minders": "He's kind of an amateur, but let's work with him."

over what was in his book, and heard subsequently that he was doing this knocking of me, I was astonished.

**SL:** Gerrold also criticized the lack of a racially balanced crew on the *Enterprise*.

**FF:** Nonsense. The second or third show I did starred France Nuyen, who is an oriental ("Elaan of Troyius"). We did "Let that Be Your Last Battlefield," about racial prejudice. Sticking to this racial thing, if we were going to other planets, to see black people up there would be kinda nutty, right? We would see green or blue. It wouldn't be science fiction if they were black. If you're talking about a show where you have six or eight format characters, you're talking about putting some guy who is black in a *Star Trek* uniform in the background somewhere? A part that has some meaning, that's something else again. Fred Williamson was one guy who made his first TV appearance on *Star Trek* ("The Cloud Minders").

**SL:** Why was a black actor not used on "Let that Be Your Last Battlefield"?

**FF:** We wanted to use a black actor and we had continual discussions with the makeup department. Bad enough to get the minstrel effect on a white guy with the black makeup, but they said they'd go crazy and it would look terrible if we had a black guy and tried to put white makeup on him. I would really look like a clown situation.

*Star Trek* went off over 10 years ago, right? At the time, it was anathema for a white man to kiss a black woman. I did a show in which we had Michael Dunn ("Plato's Stepchildren"). These people on a planet were so decadent they had no way amusing themselves, so they were going to humiliate Kirk. We had Uhura, and somebody would be forced by these aliens to kiss her. We said, "Gee, it would be interesting to have Spock do that." But I said, "God, that's all we need is for everybody to say we didn't have the guts for a white man to do it!" On the other hand, we wondered about getting past NBC's standards and practices department. We said, "To hell with it . . . we'll have Kirk do it." And, of course, Shatner was delighted.

**FF:** And we did the scene. As Kirk, he said, "It's not that I don't want to do it," he was just resisting to beat those guys.

**SL:** Another Gerrold observation is that the third season burnt itself out . . . people weren't giving 100 percent.

**FF:** He condemned the people on the show as not being professional because he claims they knew the show was going to be canceled as production started for the third year. This is an outright misstatement of fact. If you didn't like what was up on the screen, it didn't have anything to do with cancellation. The show was not thought of as being cancelled. Everybody is facing cancellation all the time in this business, but to accuse them of not doing their best is a low blow.

**SL:** Some fans have complained that several third season episodes bent the characteriza-

tions of Dr. McCoy and Engineer Scott. For instance, "The Lights of Zetar," where Scotty falls for a beautiful technician.

**FF:** But why is Scotty out of character? Can't a guy be in love and still love his machines? Can't he be with a woman who's so attractive, he's gonna fall in love? We wanted to do a love story and we said, "Hey, let's give Scotty a break."

You know, everyone on the show wanted more stuff. Chekov would come up. He wanted more. Sulu wanted more. Uhura would want more. Of course, they're actors . . . why not? But it's difficult when you're doing a show. To keep McCoy and Kirk and Spock involved enough with the other people was tough enough. To keep the other actors happy, we would try to give them meaningful things to do. The characters were good, but you can't always do it. Sometimes you hurt the story flow.



Alien Melkotian from *Spectre of the Gun*.

**SL:** Speaking of "The Lights of Zetar," why was Shari Lewis, an actress, given the assignment?

**FF:** Shari came to us with "The Light of Zetar." Her husband worked with her. Now, that story in any other show would have been cut off like seven different times. We kept working with her more than anybody else, and finally got a script.

**SL:** But why give her the advantage over a more qualified writer?

**FF:** Because she came with a lovely concept; a life form that was lights. Why wouldn't I do that? Anyway, Shari wanted to be cast in the lead female role! I eventually cast Jan Shutan.

**SL:** How was "Let that Be Your Last Battlefield" developed?

**FF:** Gene Coon had a script that called for a devil with a tail to chase an angel with a halo . . . and I felt that we didn't want to do something so "on the head." I asked Coon if we could change it, and he said to go ahead. I wanted to keep the concept of good chasing evil, so I got Ollie Crawford, and came up

with this idea of half black and half white, and I think it worked out as a pretty good show. The program came in a little short and we had a chase that went on forever in the *Enterprise* to fill the hour.

**SL:** Could you describe your handling of "Spectre of the Gun"?

**FF:** Gene Coon's story, involving some aliens called "Melkotians," was a Western set in a regular, mundane Western town. We wanted to make it more science-fiction and I spoke to Roddenberry about it. Gene said, "Do whatever you want, Fred." So we came up with frameworks and suggestions of a Western town. I think it came out well.

**SL:** On the whole, how do you rate your *Star Trek* work?

**FF:** Some have told me they didn't like certain episodes. Some say they liked the first season better, some the third season. One of the things they [Gerrold and Fontana] have against me is that I made it too dramatic instead of straight science fiction. I made enemies inadvertently. Douglas Cramer, who was head of Paramount production at the time, said the only *Star Treks* he liked were the ones I did. The others, the fans said, were too dramatic. I thought I did some pretty good pure science fiction. There are certain shows I think can stand up against anything done in the first two seasons: "All Our Yesterdays," the show went back in time through a library; "Let that Be Your Last Battlefield;" "The Tholian Web;" and one that didn't even make it into prime time, the final episode, "Turnabout Intruder." As I say, I love science fiction and I like *Star Trek*, but it isn't my whole life and I had other shows to do. And these things would dribble back to me, that these two people [Gerrold and Fontana] were going around bum-rapping me. I tried to do different things in terms of the concept of the show; drama to broaden the viewer base, otherwise we would go down the tubes. So, if people have their complaints, that's justified from their viewpoints. . . if they have it. You know, you do 22 shows in a season. I think if you have three or four that are bad you've got a pretty good average. I'd like to see if Gerrold's opinions have changed since he's had the experience of actually being a story editor [on *Land of the Lost*]. The basic thing is that the ratings in all three seasons were the same. No matter what we did, just a solid core of viewers were there and that's all we had.

**SL:** What do you feel are your failures on *Star Trek*?

**FF:** "The Cloud Minders" was close, not David Gerrold's fault, though. We just could never work that script properly. The concept was nice. "The Way to Eden," "That Which Survives" and "Spock's Brain."

(Next issue, Fred Freiberger talks about his involvement on *Space: 1999* and the problems and advantages of producing a TV series in England.) ★