

## About our New Jacket Design

### SF ART

FOR MANY years I have thought that someone ought to do something about the one thing which puts more people off science fiction than any other single factor—viz., the wretchedly mistaken idea of illustrating it, in colour, on the covers of the magazines (and, all too often, in black and white inside them).

As a painter myself I am not averse to having a bash at most of the subjects that interest me, but I cannot seriously attempt to depict Martian cities, Venusian carrot men, Sirian octopocedal humanoids or spaceships bursting through a cloud of interstellar dust. Nor, as a purchaser of innumerable mags and paperbacks, do I want the vivid imaginings of Simak, Pohl and Van Vogt brought down to the level of pulp comics by artists who cannot match the authors in fertility of ideas and who, in any case, are usually hampered by publishers' demand that their product stand out on the bookstalls (where no doubt it keeps company with titles such as *I was a Sex Mad Teenager in Soho*, *Sadism at Scotland Yard* or *Vice Gang on the Prowl*). Hence almost every book jacket, if it does not show a flaming spaceship plunging into the sun, bears a half naked and bosomy alien in a translucent gown of shimmering and diaphanous alien fibre in the clutches of a hackneyed, bug-eyed monster from Pluto.

No, if our sf is going to be visualized, it must be by someone like John Griffiths, the designer of our new standard wrapper—in other words the treatment must be *abstract* and suggestive, not *literal* and suggestive.

Anyway we hope you like the new design, whether or not you agree with our general strictures against sf illustration. We think it makes an exciting change and fits the mood of the times and the mood of the subject.

O. C.

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books out on time when we were doing nine, so we're sure to snarl up twelve. Not so. The dispatch problem was in no way related to the increase in SFBC titles but to late deliveries (chiefly in RU) during the previous year. We expect to be able to provide a regular uninterrupted flow of monthly SFBC titles throughout 1962—Khrushchev, Kennedy and khomeiny permitting.

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# SCIENCE FICTION NEWS



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## EDITORIAL

### Time Contracts—Club Expands

This might very well prove to be as exciting a new law of nature as  $E=mc^2$ —and far less dangerous! At least if we can multiply pleasure by reducing time intervals we shall be doing a sight more for the species than those of our fellow men [*sic*] who fool about with critical masses and the like.

What all this is leading up to is this—to cope with the wave of good sf now pouring from the presses, to please our membership and to enable us to plan our activities coherently, SFBC will, as from now, issue a book each month until further notice.

The increase in output during 1961 has been so popular, to judge by letters and new enrolments, that we feel this new move will be even more warmly welcomed.

Many of our long-suffering members will be saying to themselves (no doubt) that this is all very well, but we failed to bring our

*[continued on back page]*

THIS MONTH'S CHOICE IS

**CITY by Clifford Simak**

*(Weidenfeld & Nicolson (out of print) 9s 6d; SFBC 5s 6d)*

NEXT MONTH'S CHOICE IS

**GALACTIC CLUSTER by James Blish**

*(Faber & Faber 15s; SFBC 5s 6d)*