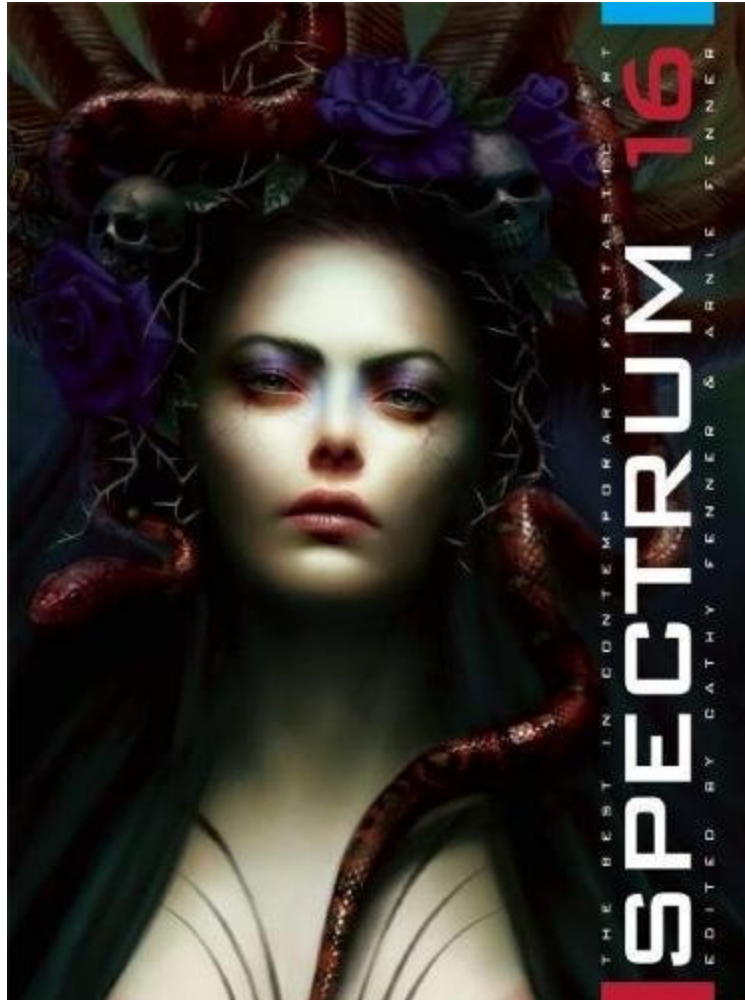


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## Spectrum 16: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art

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**From Underwood Books : Spectrum 16: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Spectrum 16: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art:

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful. GORGEOUS! Another Feast of SF Art In Assorted Media with lots of sea creatures and odd rabbits this year...By MirSpectrum 16 continues the habit of offering a feast for those who enjoy speculative art--whether graphic novel style, SF book cover art, advertising, etc. Plenty of fantasy of the traditional sort (sorcerers, maidens, fairies, witchy women, enchantments, magical landscapes) and a good amount of sci-fi stuff (steampunkiness, robots, futuristic). Here are 264 pages, from beginning to index: in-between, a banquet of gorgeous, fantastical visions. I liked last year's cover better, but those into dangerous females will relish the glowingly pale, serpentine-haired Medusa type on this edition's front. It's by Melanie Delon, called "Doom", and is found fully repro'd on page 256. Sexy and creepy. The femme fatale, flaunting her assets and dangerous allure, never goes out of

style. The Grand Master Award this time round goes to Richard Corben (Hellboy, cover of Meatloaf's BAT OUT OF HELL, The Hulk, co-creator of BLOODSTAR. Really enjoyed the detail art on the contents page (full repro found page 186) by Jenna Smith--a digital piece with a watercolor vibe and anime spirit, playful and fun and beautifully colored, of a girl blowing a pink gum bubble while her backpack issues forth a trail of assorted critters, large and small. It's worth taking a peek at the phallically-clogged sci-fi-ey AIDS awareness poster repro on page 12. The Advertising Gold Award was rather disturbing--a forward-frantic melee of human appendages and rabbits by Ryohei Hase (digital). Note that scary rabbit-like things are scattered throughout this edition of SPECTRUM. Urg. For instance, p 77. And the clay/acrylic sculptural hare on p 133. Eek. The Silver ad award went to Yuko Shimizu for a retro-look piece with men in old-style striped bathing suits and red/white lifesavers against a pea-soupy colored background. What are they doing? Riding a saddled multi-celled organism that looks like a close-up of amoebae cluster? Made me think of old hardcovers with faded artwork. (ink drawing with digital) Weird. Both winners have a sense of movement and energy, though the styles are quite different. Shimizu has another retro-deep-sea fantasy diver on page 150, and I actually like this piece better, personally. Andrew Jones' "Autumnal Dancer" deserved its sole position on page 31. A gorgeous swirl of orange garment made of fall foliage, another galactic-like swirl of pure white, a zombie-pale dancer, a watchful, haloed moon. Really cool (Painter X medium). His "Heaven's Bones" on page 62, with its gorgeous use of a red accent amidst the dark and the wondrous gear-machinery wings is worth an extended visit (digital). Two more pieces on 172-173 are must-sees, and Mr. Jones ends up being a stand-out for me in this issue. A thought-provoking, surrealistic, social-commentary piece by Jose Emroca Flores (Starbucks employees may wanna avoid) is oil on wood with some serious "Cashcow" udder-sucking. Stephan Martiniere's epic moodiness in his digital piece for Orion's ACE OF SKULLS is a delight to behold, partly for the perspective: You're high above a misty SF city with winding roads about hills and a great big metal hulker of a ship floating above, while we're anchored by a male figure on a parapet watching what is going on below. Lots of grays, misty pale colors, bits of blue, shadows, scaffolding, banners. Make me think of many older SF titles, and I mean that in a good way. This is page 39, but behold 38 where smaller reprints of two other Martiniere works show he's no slouch. One of my faves, J J Palencar, has a gorgeous piece on page 46 done in acrylic that momentarily took me back to THE SLEEPING GYPSY, only this boasts a white tiger staring down the viewer and keeping guard over a lovely tawny-skinned sleeping female in JJP's trademark subdued tones. V. Ery much a horizontal composition and me likey. More Jude on p. 63 with "The Mystery of Grace." Also acrylic. And page 82, "Nor Flesh, Nor Feathers." (I own that book, hah.) Another non-digital piece (for those of you who whine about the preponderance of digital) is a stunner by Donato Giancola (who had one of my fave artworks in last year's SPECTRUM): the cover for Tor's ARCHER OF THE ROSE. Wow, look at that wonderful diagonal composition of ornate shields (golds, greens, roses, silvers), the gleam of armor, the brightness. Contrasting to all that metal is the heroine with her bow and arrow and blonde, unarmored presence, who is anchoring at the center. Really, really love this. Page 57. Oil on panel. (Check the lovely pencil piece on the opposite page by Eric Orchard called "The Guardian of Autumn." Nice.) If you like pirates, visit Johnny Duddle's "Treasure Hunting!" on p. 66 (digital), which will make you smile at its teeny ship of fools and its large octopi on the grab. Digital. Note: I noticed a lot of sea dangers recurring, including a cool Jonah and the Whale piece on p. 86 and a giant squid on 107. Also about sea perils, see the really marvelous piece on page 224 (watercolor, acrylic) by Jeremy Encio. One of my faves--a blue, green, white, composition with sea serpents. The curling snakey bits around humans made me think of the classic Laocoon. A nice architectural focus spreads across 118-119-, with mysterious and threatening to playful structures. Ron Wilson's fun retro-futuristic landscape with robot piece--the "lighting" effect is tres cool--is on page 175, "The Electrician" (digital). A delightful, and not wholly fluffy knight/damsel/forest/fairies piece by Justin Gerard effectively uses rose tones and lighting and swirling fabric. Pretty. (watercolor/digital). One of my fave two-page spreads is on 182-183, with an acrylic/ink/watercolor by Scott Bakal having majorly "pink" fun with a spaceship in Central Park; a terrific digital, low-to-the-ground/zombies-in-the-playground piece by Jason Chan (normal kids fighting zombie kids, and how cool is this); and a mixed and ink media piece by Dan Santat that does something totally delightful with Godzilla. 216-217 has an amazing double offering by David Bowers, both oil works, one on panel and one on linen. Wow. Really rich, detailed work infused with subdued, but living sort of light. I'm impressed. Beautiful execution meets creepy story elements. If you're a bee-lover, visit the two-pager on 232-233 for four bee-yootiful works. Herman Smorenburg's haunting oil on wood, The Vision of a Mortal Life, is a haunting, sensual, creepy memento mori type painting, complete with darkened landscape, Celtic cross, death figure, skull-caressing maiden, and lantern-holding seeker. If like me, you've got a thing for albinos (I blame Elric of Melnibone), visit two really worth-seeing pieces: Tran Nguyen's "Fine Line", p 242, photoshop--with a lovely use of turquoise against the neutrals; and Jeremy Encio (again, he's standing out for me this year) "Milk", a digital work, of an albino madonna holding a totally red child. Spectrum 16 closes with Michael Whelan's soaring architectural piece in acrylic on canvas, "Lumen 5". It's a piece that has a rickety-looking, spiraling structure that looks medieval, but it rises and rises and curves in one of those huge spaces we've seen Whelan do before (and do well, of course). A serpent of wood and cloth seeking a way out from this hulking structure (is it an alien ship or a temple of sorts, with those boxed details like the Pantheon?) It's looking toward what's out there, and it's moving up and out. I suppose it's good to end with this piece, which is one

that is looking onward...to Spectrum 17. Enjoy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Buy It, Buy It Now By PAUL These books are always worth getting with truly great artwork in them from many areas of the Sci-Fi related arts. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best ever!!! By BLOWORKZ Once again, Spectrum 16 has outdone itself with the amount of amazing artwork/illustration featured in this book. I've been overwhelmed by the quality and the caliber of talent presented by the Spectrum Fantasy Art Annual year after year. If you're into fantasy art or just a lover of creativity, this book is a must. The only regret I have is not knowing about Spectrum until the 6th Annual was published. Ever since, I've been collecting them annually. Definitely one of the better art books I have in my collection.

Spectrum 16 features such diverse visionary artists as James Jean (Fables), Brom (The Plucker), Iain McCaig (Star Wars), Peter de Sève (Ice Age), Anita Kunz (Rolling Stone), and nearly 400 more. Drawing from books, graphic novels, video games, films, galleries, and advertisements, Spectrum 16 is both an exciting art book for fans and an invaluable resource for clients looking for new talent. A useful "Year in Review" section surveys the entire field of fantastic art, and a handy index provides contact information for each artist.

About the Author Cathy Fenner and Arnie Fenner are recipients of the Locus Award and World Fantasy Award for Spectrum as Best Art Book. In addition to Spectrum, the Fenners have edited a number of books celebrating contemporary art. They live in Kansas.