CALIBANONLINE STORE ARRIVES

For the first time since 1995, new, uncirculated copies of all fifteen issues of the original print Caliban will be available to the general public. The Shaman Drum broadside featuring the Caliban manifesto, either in a limited edition hand-signed by issue #1 contributors or unsigned, and PDFs of all the issues of Calibanonline will also be available for purchase.

Putting together the new online store for the Calibanonline site jogged a lot of memories connected to the print magazine. Many times Doug Hagley, the assistant editor, and I spent two or three days with little or no sleep. After the long process of editing the issue was finished, Doug set pages on the ComputGraphic and pasted them up. Reading those pages until my eyes refused to focus, I tweaked until the boards were finally ready to deliver to the printer. It wasn’t as hard as setting cold type, but it was a real hands-on operation. And we were proud of the final product.

Looking over the Caliban issues also reminded me of the generosity of George Hitchcock, who turned over kayak’s contributor and subscriber cards to help get Caliban off the ground. His interview for issue #1 was quoted at the end of that amazing New York Times obituary in August of 2010, recognizing his importance in the literary world. Then there were Raymond Carver’s energetic efforts to publicize the magazine’s debut, passing out flyers as he went around the country. In fact, the active support of so many who were to appear in the first or subsequent numbers took me by surprise. I was entirely aware of the very bad odds for success in literary magazine publication. When Andre Codrescu praised the first two issues on NPR’s “All Things Considered” and the Co-ordinating Council of Literary Magazines gave Caliban an award for outstanding new magazine, I was stunned. I had always hoped the magazine would shake things up, stimulate the literary scene, but it happened so fast.

We always had fun with our projects. The “Forum on the Prosody of Thelonious Monk” in issue #4 featured contributions from Wanda Coleman, Charles Bernstein, Yusef Komunyakaa, Clark Coolidge, Lawson Inada, Harry Smallenburg, and Steven Somers. Why shouldn’t the musical innovations of my jazz hero show us new ways to approach poetry? The Columbia University Jazz Program recently reproduced the entire forum on their website. Then there was the “Practical Utopia in Detroit” in issue #6. So many artists and writers were eager to participate in a re-envisioning of America’s decaying cities. Edward F. Fry, the curator of Kassel Documenta 8, wrote an essay on the New Modernity for the issue, with a postscript on the practical utopia.

There were also exciting discoveries along the way. Sherman Alexie was among a number of young writers whose work first appeared in Caliban. Since the magazine was revived as Calibanonline, a significant number of well-established writers have written and told me their work first appeared in Caliban. I was delighted but never had any idea that was the case. Fiction was also a real strength in the magazine. We published the first excerpts from Maxine Hong Kingston’s Tripmaster Monkey and William Burroughs sent me the manuscripts of his last two books, offering first choice to Caliban.

The correspondence section of the magazine was always lively, some might say notorious. There was one feud that went so far, Jim Harrison wrote in and demanded a truce. There’s a lot of American literary history in these fifteen issues. Whether you want to complete your collection by purchasing the issues you missed or you are starting from scratch, I hope you will find their innovative energy as seductive as I still do. Enjoy.

Caliban thanks those angel-headed hipsters, Ellen Wilt and Charles Holdefer, for their generous donations.
RECOMMENDED SUMMER READING

1. D. Stolcius Von Stolcenberg, *Viridarium Chymicum*, 1624
2. M. Maier, *Atalanta fugiens*, 1618
3. Johannes Romer, *Congestorium artificiosae memorie*, 1533
4. Isidore of Seville, *De natura rerum*, 800
5. Robert Fludd, *Utrisque Cosmi*, 1621
7. A. Cellarius, *Harmonia Macrocosmica*, 1660
8. Johannes de Sacrobosco, *Sphaera Mundi*, 1573

Roam if you want to...

At the Beach:
Find the Hidden Words