

## **Imaginary Places**

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IPlaces0.pdf	Introduction
IPlaces1.pdf	Buleria Madrugada
IPlaces2.pdf	Belau Belau
IPlaces3.pdf	Fortress of the Dead
IPlaces4.pdf	Abbe at Urban
IPlaces5.pdf	Plaza of the Patriots
IPlaces6.pdf	Bedou
IPlaces7.pdf	Spawning Ground
IPlaces8.pdf	Space Station M
IPlaces9.pdf	Maoam

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## **Acknowledgements**

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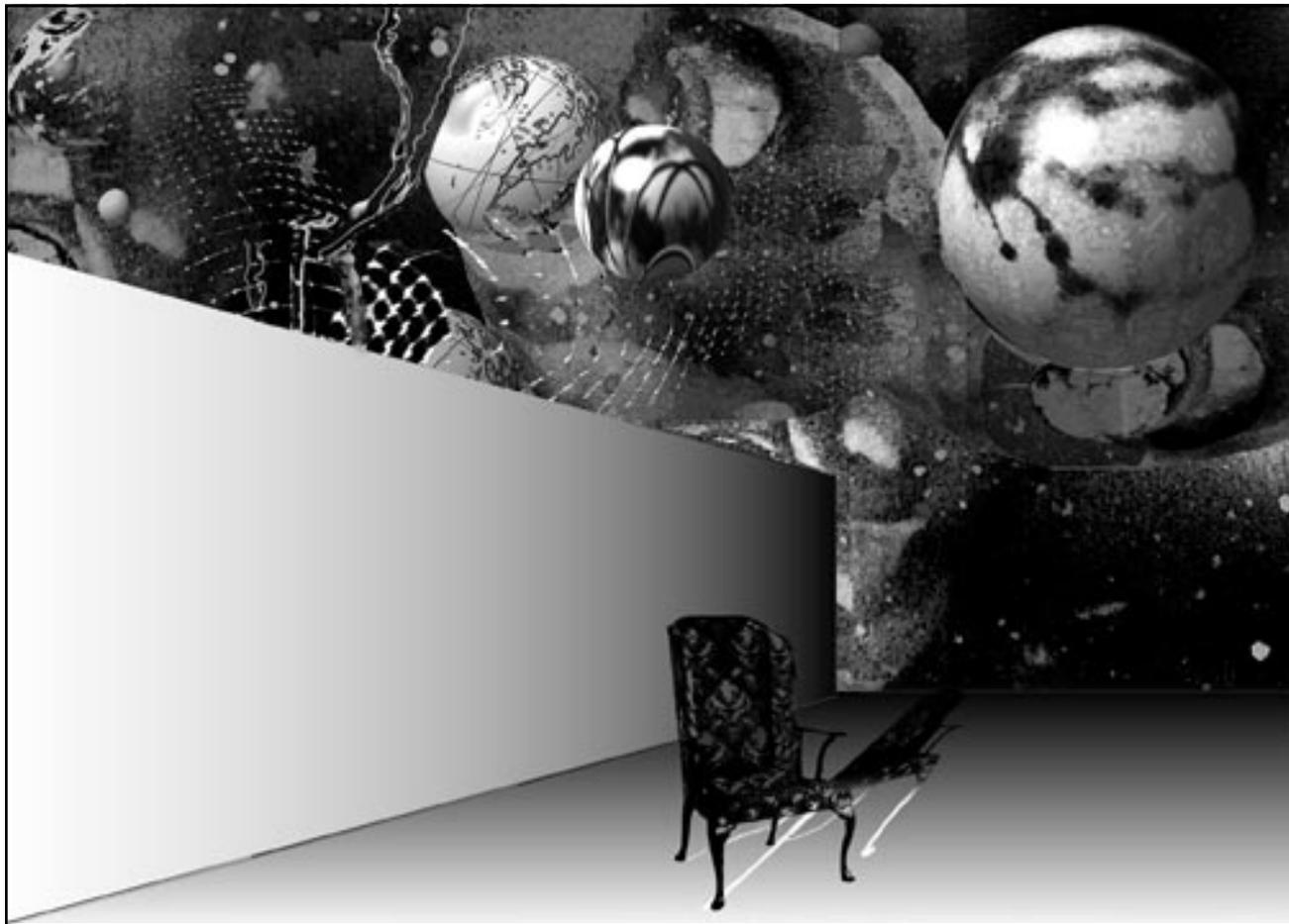
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IMAGINARY PLACES VIII

# **Space Station M**

E. R. BEARDSLEY



## Space Station M

Station M is the first space platform to take advantage of the minute differentials that occur when mental energy is expended in a vacuum. It has no outer walls. No atmospheric system. No central communications.

Vice Admiral G. C. Martin, Royal Navy, credits his design to the inventiveness and special knowledge of gypsies, who, he maintains, are persons of extraterrestrial origin, the proof of which is a book by Ivan T. Sanderson, *Uninvited Visitors*, published in 1967 by Cowles Education Corporation, New York, quoting as follows:

*[Gypsies]...are...discredited people...[living] a way of life, time-proven & happy...have nothing, own nothing except...music &*

*philosophy...and are not in the habit of admitting to their fellowship people of a different blood...[especially] vain mankind.*

Vice Admiral Martin tells us that the purpose of the platform is purely meditative, and it is available to any citizen who obtains the appropriate clearances and has the price of a shuttle ticket. The scenery, he assures us, is spectacular.

For more information concerning technical milestones associated with Space Station M, consult the following documents:

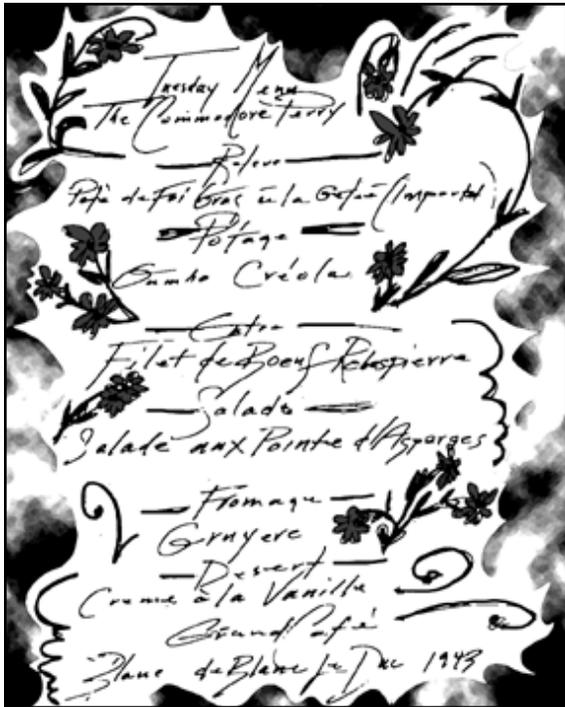
- **The Commodore Perry**
- **Tycho M50 Telescope**
- **Johnson's Gyroscope**



### **The Commodore Perry**

The *Commodore Perry*, an optical-drive rocket designed by Rheinfeld Peebles, delivered the first paying tourist to Space Station M. It remained in service for ten years before being retired to the ether of the asteroid zone out west. The dining facilities were four-star, offering a champagne breakfast with fresh fruit and a **dinner menu** the equal of any on the planet Earth.

Equipped with air-cushion shock absorbers, anti-lock brakes, and power steering, the *Commodore Perry* could stop on a dime and handle curves better than any sportster. No speed records were set, but for point-to-point travel in splendid comfort there has never been anything like it. Crowded seating and less than spectacular food are what one can expect in most commercial space travel since the *Perry's* retirement, a fact that has not gone unnoticed by numerous industry critics here and abroad.



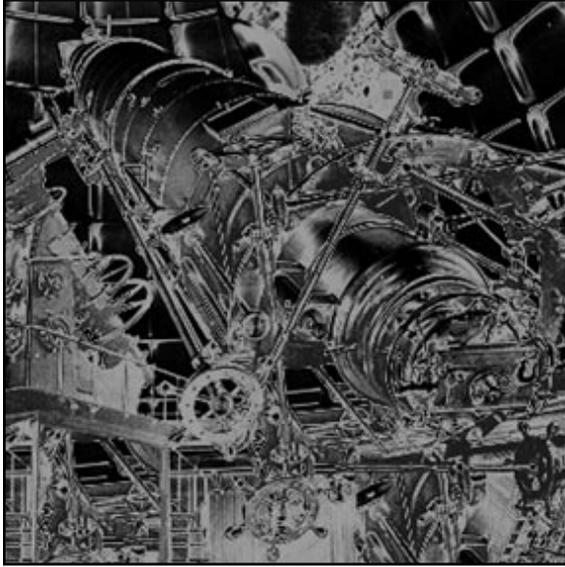
## Tuesday Menu

Tuesday's menu was a favorite of both passengers and crew of *The Commodore Perry*. Chef Billy St. John would render each menu by hand. Some have since earned great value as art and can be found in the private collections of many famous collectors here and abroad.

A recent exhibition of the St. John menus at the Tate Gallery included more than 300 originals, twelve facsimiles, and a video featuring St. John discussing life onboard the *Perry*, his encounters with famous travelers, as well as the theoretical basis of his artistic production. A reviewer in the *Sunday Times* said of the St. John exhibition, "It is noticeable how authoritarian the work is; you have no choice but to submit yourself to its tightly programmed sequence. What is more important for this reporter was that he came away from the experience better able to see reality, or at least to see it in a new way. Surely this is the ultimate test of greatness."

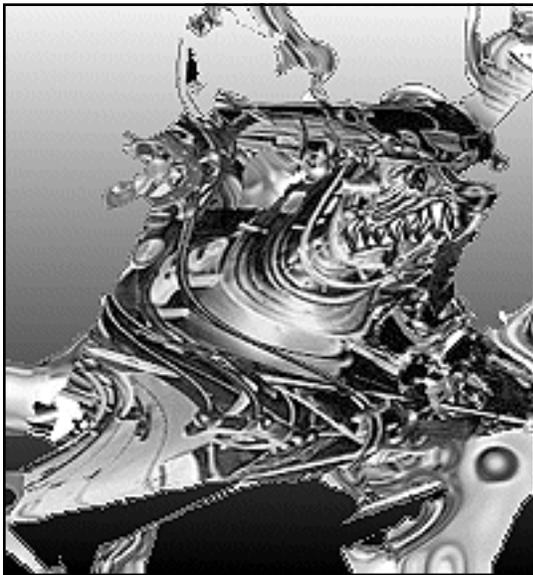
St. John himself characterized the work, saying "I've been trying to give some attention to how one thing just naturally leads to another." He goes on to explain that we can then move easily from that position to a deeper, more urgent position wherein we can see plainly that "many things can lead to many other things."

St. John's work will be featured in an exquisite limited-edition book produced by Halifax Printers. As St. John himself cannot himself sign the copies (he lost all fingers on his writing hand while chopping lettuce at his summer home in Bal Harbour), Halifax Printers has secured the services of St. John's only living relative, a Mr. Pratt Kilgore of Avant, Oklahoma, who will approximate the signature "with the utmost care and attention to detail."



## Tycho M50 Telescope

A later addition to Space Station M was the magnificent Tycho M50 Telescope. It is the only instrument of its kind to be put into space; its polished brass fittings and delicately ground Austrian lenses require constant **maintenance**. Paco Wang, an amateur astronomer, credits the M50 in connection with his discovery of the neutrino nursery in L2241. No professional astronomer has been able to verify this rarity, however, even by using more powerful and up-to-date equipment.



## Brilson Unit, Model 1

The Brilson Unit, Model 1, was designed and manufactured by Brilson Enterprises for the purpose of maintaining the Tycho M50 Telescope. It replaced the twelve employees who had performed this work in the first few months of operation. The cost savings realized as a result of this transaction were considerable.

The brain of the Brilson Unit, Model 1, is built around advanced protein chips working in tandem with memory cubes packed with something that resembles, perhaps too closely, a quantity of ripe cheese whiz.



## Johnson's Gyroscope

Johnson's Gyroscope is a curiosity. It performs no function essential to the station. It is a marvel of engineering, however, and many visitors to the station are content to spend hour upon hour watching as its interior parts spin silently and with nearly perfect synchronicity. Mr. Johnson, for whom the instrument is named, was a third cousin to Vice Admiral G. C. Martin. He served in various capacities on the station, including *grand sommelier* (the wine cellar on Station M has to be one of finest ever assembled).