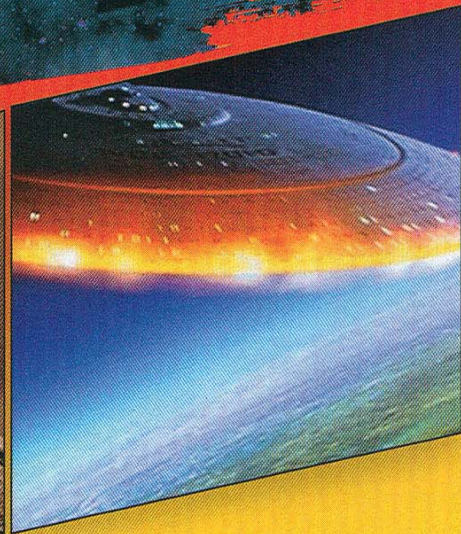
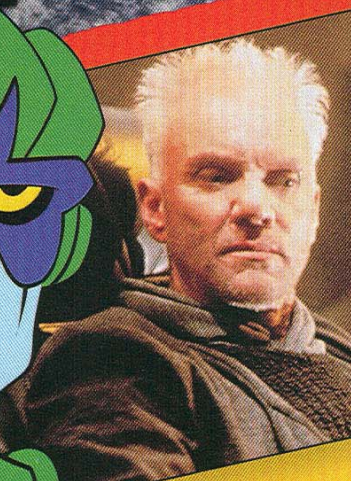


EYE OF THE



Starting with his script for "The Pirates of Orion" for the animated series, Howard Weinstein has contributed to the *Star Trek* canon in many different ways. Along the way, his fame has had some interesting side-effects...

Twelve: it's a quietly momentous age. By 12, our secure tethers to hearth and home begin to loosen. Spurred by curiosity, we're expanding our independent observations of the world, venturing from the nest to explore, making conscious choices that define the kind of people we want to be.

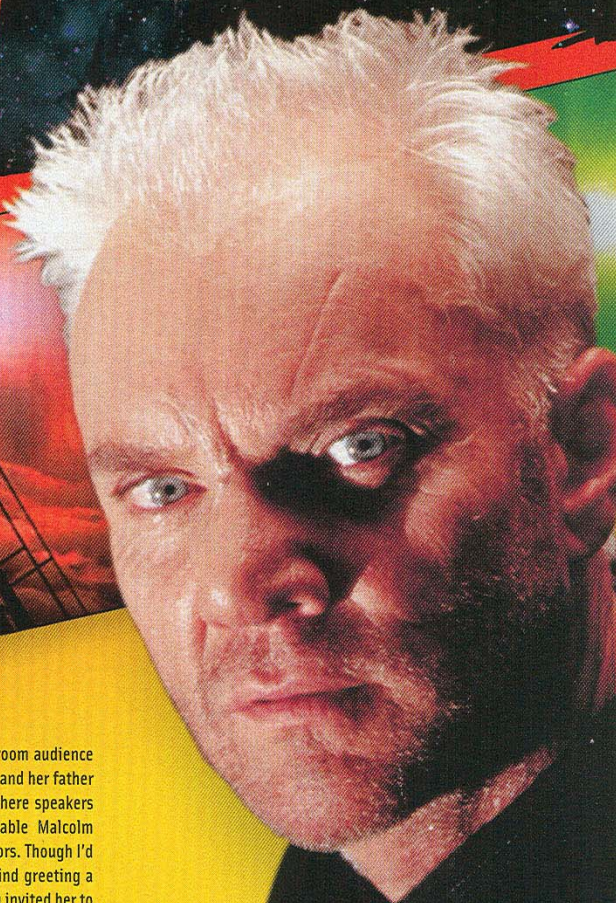
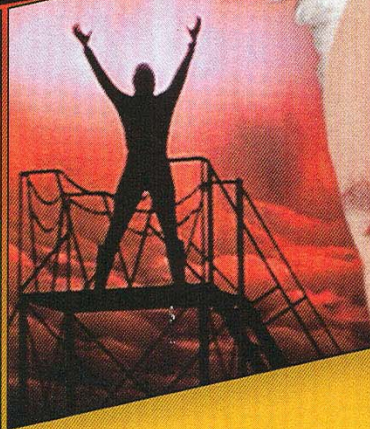
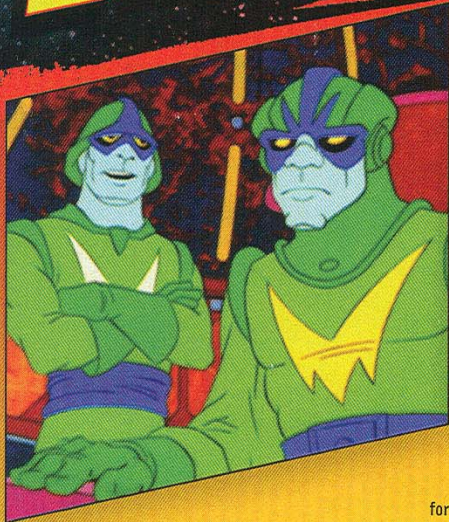
We're impressionable, at 12. With luck, some breeze may catch us just right and sweep us off on our journey, shaping and shading who we are and what we'll do. For me, at 12 in 1966, *Star Trek* was one of those breezes.

As I wrote my earliest *Star Trek* tales on blue-lined notebook paper for my school friends to read, I had no inkling that I'd soon be one of the first fans to grow up and become a *Star Trek* professional, selling a script to the animated *Star Trek* series at age 19... that I'd write *Star Trek* novels and comic books... contribute story-development tidbits to *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*... and meet many *Star Trek* actors and writers at dozens of convention appearances over 35 years.

Nor could I have known that, four decades later, I'd have the serendipitous pleasure of seeing *Star Trek* fresh again, through the eyes of another 12-year-old.

My friends Rob and Janet Lukas live north of New York City, where Janet is a librarian at Tomkins Cove Public Library. Two years ago, Rob told me about one of Janet's favorite library regulars, a brilliantly creative 12-year-old with the memorably musical moniker Kalliope Dalto. She was a dedicated fan of original *Star Trek*, a voracious reader of science fiction and *Star Trek* books and comics, and happened to like my stories. So I decided to autograph some books and

BEHOLDER



comics, and sent them off to Janet to relay to Kalliope. An e-mail correspondence and a friendship bloomed.

Describing this kid as "intelligent" is a little like saying "Scotty fixes stuff" – *big understatement!* Like many *Star Trek* fans, she is (to borrow cartoon character Yogi Bear's favorite phrase) "smarter than the average bear."

Buoyed by the "I can do that!" confidence that often waltzes with youth (the same blithe self-assurance that enabled me to submit my animated *Star Trek* script), Kalliope embarked on the practical process of becoming a writer by sending a clever short story titled "Brevity" to some magazines (proudly collecting her first rejection slip). She also sent it to the Creative Minds Fiction Contest run by Johns Hopkins University's prestigious Center for Talented Youth; competing against high school kids, her story won third prize and publication in *Imagine Magazine*.

When Kalliope mentioned she'd been to comic conventions, but never a *Star Trek* con, I told her about Shore Leave, a great convention at which I'd been a guest for most of its 30 years. Shore Leave takes place each July in Baltimore – where she happened to have relatives. That coincidence led to a family vacation in Maryland, including a day at the convention.

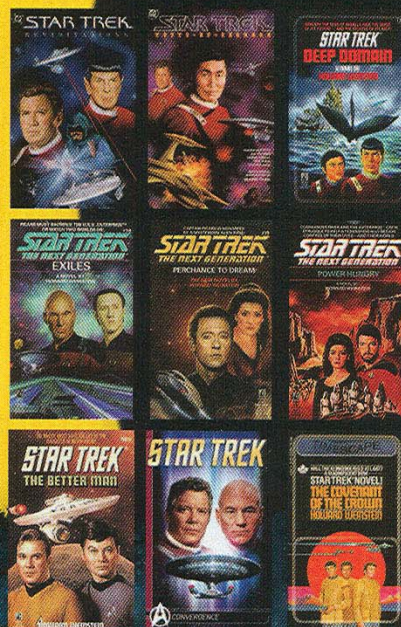
Confession time: I was at the very first *Star Trek* convention, in 1972, as one of 3,000 paying peons. I thought it might be a once-in-a-lifetime event. It wasn't – and every year since 1976, I've attended conventions as a guest speaker. Though I still enjoy hanging out with fans and fellow writers, the novelty has mostly worn off. But it was a real treat watching Kalliope experience all that convention jazz for the first time.

Rather than sitting in the vast ballroom audience for the talks she most wanted to see, she and her father Peter came backstage with me. There, where speakers wait to be introduced, sat the formidable Malcolm McDowell – one of Kalliope's favorite actors. Though I'd never met him before, I asked if he'd mind greeting a young fan. Without hesitation, he warmly invited her to sit and chat. When I mentioned Kalliope's prize-winning story, Malcolm congratulated and encouraged her, and confided that without writers, actors would really have nothing much to say (which is just what the charming DeForest Kelley told me 33 years ago).



I and many others have been asked innumerable times to explain *Star Trek's* enduring appeal, and I bet a zillion words have been written in response. Now, after 35 years as a lucky professional participant (and thanks to my young pal Kalliope), I can sum it up in just two words: *It's inspirational!*

Star Trek's characters, stories, ideas and idealism inspired me to be a writer – countless others to become artists, story-tellers, engineers, doctors, explorers of inner and outer space. I love that *Star Trek* is still inspiring kids to take their own creative ride on the roller coaster – to dream, try, fail, learn and achieve. I can't think of a better legacy... Can you? ▲



Inset pictures top: *Generations*; *The Pirates of Orion* top: *Star Trek* novels by Howard Weinstein