



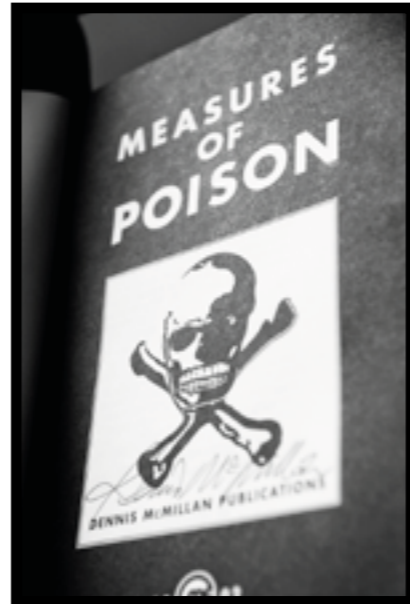
„Without his measure of poison,  
any man will flatly refuse his  
invitation to dance.“  
— Charles Willeford

## Dennis Ray McMillan: FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

„For the past twenty-six years I have been seeking out and publishing writers who are bothered—indeed, tormented—by certain aspects of existence. These writers react to that torment with certain attitudes present in their art, which happens to be that of the manipulator of language. These attitudes are termed ‚hardboiled‘ or ‚noir‘ in the parlance of the marketplace.“  
—Dennis McMillan

„This is what books should be: bulletproof (metaphorically and otherwise) works of art... D-Ray produces stunning cultural artifacts. . . .“  
—Rick DeMarinis

„. . . strikingly designed well-made books filled to bursting with uncompromising literature. The usual limited first edition consists generally of boards covered with hand-made Spanish-marbled paper created by the foremost authority on the process, Iris Nevins of Johnsonburg, New Jersey, with tasty foil-stamped endsheets, flap doodles and interior decorations, all of which is additionally bound in quarter-morocco pigskin, and housed in a ‚fake‘ full-morocco slipcase. They are books to have and to hold.“  
—Jim Nisbet



Im Frühjahr 2004, desillusioniert von zwei Kinospielefilmen, die ich gerade fertiggestellt hatte, machte ich mich nach fast zwei Jahren der Lese-Abstinenz auf die Suche nach inspirierender Lektüre. Hartem Stoff. Dabei stieß ich auf *Deliver Me from Dallas* von Charles Willeford. Zwei Wochen später hatte ich das Buch in den Händen: eine Hardcover-Ausgabe mit exzellentem Cover und Buch-Design, und einer Qualität, die man sonst nur von exklusiven Kunstbänden kennt. Der Verlag: *Dennis McMillan Publications*.

In meiner Buchsammlung befanden sich bereits drei seiner Paperback Titel: *Before She Kills* (Fredric Brown, 1985), *Kiss Your Ass Goodbye* (Charles Willeford, 1988) und *Whores* (James Crumley, 1989). Auch diese hatten interessante Covers. Doch erst das Hardcover brachte mich dazu, mich mit dem Werk des Verlegers auseinander zu setzen. Eine Erleuchtung, wie ich noch feststellen durfte.

Noch außergewöhnlicher als die Aufmachung seiner Bücher sind deren Inhalte und ihre Autoren. Michael Connelly ist der einzige Bestseller-Autor im Dennis McMillan-Verlag. Von George Pelecanos und Scott Phillips (Frank Nowatzki/ Pulp Master benennt *Alles in einer Nacht* als jenes Buch, das er selbst gerne verlegt hätte) gibt es Taschenbuch-Auflagen. Die meisten seiner anderen Autoren finden kein größeres Verlagshaus für eine kommerzielle Verwertung ihrer Werke, trotz erfolgreicher Rezensionen bleiben sie nur einem kleinen Publikum zugänglich. Kent Anderson (*Night Dogs*—the best Cop Novel since Joseph Wambaugh's Choirboys) und Bob Truluck (*The Art of Redemption*) sind bisher nicht ins Deutsche übersetzt worden. Pulp Master ist es zu verdanken, dass Jim Nisbet und Rick DeMarinis auch dem deutschen Publikum näher gebracht wurde.

Dennis McMillan's Output in 26 Jahren: 88 Hardcover und 17 Paperback Titel.

„Dennis has ‚definitive‘ tastes for the fiction he calls ‚rude‘. You know, a flat stretch of highway. The lonely diner rank with the smell of rancid vinyl. Tongue scorched by bad coffee. A .38 cool against the skin under your belt. Nowhere to go. Not a thing to lose. We all get that feeling, right? No publisher on earth is better than Dennis at scratching that itch.“  
—Don Herron

Bo-lo-hum-da-lan-dar-ro—Dennnissimo Stonosenhosis, the Elder (Jr.) is speaking:

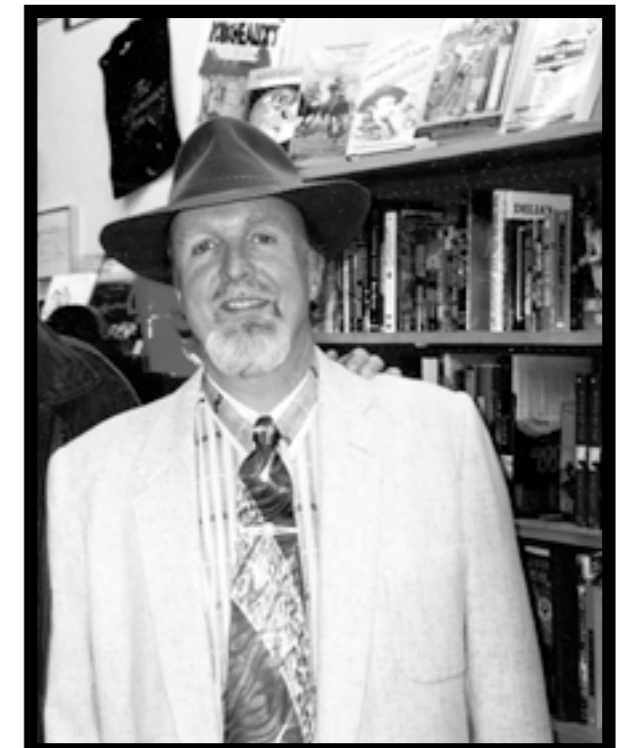
I got back from Wichita, Kansas last night (a truly grueling six-day trip, by myself, with only a radio for company, which I will NEVER do again, I guarantee you; the 6-CD changer in my H-2 was broken by a friend of mine who I hadn't seen in 20 years about six months ago, and now I'll be SURE to get a rebuilt one installed before my Montana Festival of Books trip, on which I'll leave about Oct. 20. Being in Austria, you're probably not aware that there now IS no National Public Radio station in Amarillo, Texas—only EIGHT [yes, 8!!] extreme-right-wing religious stations, on the FM dial, PLUS, three AM stations running the Sean Hannity show simultaneously [another right-wing moron], and two other extreme right-wing idiots with talk shows that I'd never heard of before; in fact, this is the case all the way from Albuquerque, New Mexico to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: nothing but „nattering nabobs of right wing nothingness“ to paraphrase Spiro Agnew from back in the day.

„Dennis' legend, all solidly based in fact, rolls out before him like a dust storm off the desert. Do you remember back when he was publishing his first set of books—McMillan: Opus One? About every eight months he moved from one side of the country to another. No one has ever understood that. You collect this impressive series of books, including reprints of extremely rare Arthur W. Upfield and limited first editions of Charles Willeford and the crown jewels of the run, twenty volumes in the Fredric Brown in the Pulps set. Are they all issued from New York? No. Are they all issued from the same place? No. You've got San Francisco and Miami Beach. Missoula, Montana. Volcano, Hawaii. Maybe one or two places no one has ever heard of. . . .“

—Don Herron

As with all American enterprises of novelty and note, Dennis McMillan Publications effervesced from the three great moral wellsprings of Modern Times: Fortuity, Desperation, and Ennui. The Fortuitous finding of the very scarce vanity-published American edition of the Australian mystery writer Arthur Upfield's first book, *The House of Cain* (Dorrance, 1929), allowed me to assuage both the first twinges of Desperation and an ever-present Ennui brought on by my departure from the tempest-in-a-teapot existence of academia. In short, once I realized that the satisfaction I thought I would derive from doing pharmacological research was as illusory and had about as much chance of being realized as winning the lottery, I was at loose ends, casting about for something I might actually „enjoy“ doing while still surviving the larger tempest that quenches our fires, buffets us and beats us down.

I had been a „serious“ book collector since 1975, when I discovered that certain Philip Jose Farmer titles that I'd not been able to locate were worth more than their cover price(s), and that there were people who actually collected



the things—not just for reading purposes, but as sorts of objets d'art! A staggering revelation.

In 1976 at the World Science Fiction Convention in Kansas City I had met Tim Underwood (of Underwood/Miller Publishing). He and Chuck Miller had just published their first book, a hardcover reprint of Jack Vance's scarce pb original, *The Dying Earth*, and I remember being impressed that they could do such a thing so well for very little capital.

After I dropped out of the University of Florida's Ph.D. program in Pharmacology and moved to San Francisco with the idea that I would get into a more interesting and worthwhile program in Molecular Genetics at the University of California Medical Center, in the summer of 1982 I found the copy of *The House of Cain*. It occurred to me that I might possibly follow in the footsteps of Underwood/Miller, who were by that time fairly successful small publishers of (mainly) science fiction. I would try to do the same type of „genre“ publishing for collectors, concentrating on obscure and sought-after mystery material, which by that time had replaced science fiction as my main reading and book collecting interest. I contacted Tim and he told me how to go about it.

By the time UCSF rejected my by-now-lackadaisically-pursued application, I had already published *The House of Cain* and *The Brazilian Guitar* (with my friend jazz guitarist Brian Hodel), and any return to academia had become a moot point. The rest, as they say, is history.

Reprinting small trade editions of scarce and desirable mysteries and publishing small print runs of true first editions of writers I admire has allowed me to live wherever I've wanted and has brought me into contact with an eru-

dite and good-hearted group of people trying to communicate with their fellows—to give their readers some ease, enjoyment, solace, or consolation through their creative artifice, wrought from a common pain.

After a four-and-a-half year hiatus (during which I made both a 1930's-style Hawaiian shirt and several types of hand-embroidered classic Western shirts and failed to reach my audience—if in fact one existed!) I moved to Tucson, AZ, and returned to publishing in mid-1995 with the limited first edition of Jon Jackson's *Dead Folk*.

In November 1995 the „second incarnation“ of my publishing venture got into full swing with the appearance of an unusual short story collection by my good friend Janwillem Van de Wetering: my first trade hardcover, *Mangrove Mama & Other Tropical Tales of Terror* (the „terror“ referred to being of the metaphysical rather than the corporeal variety). Soon after that, I published a couple of titles that well-justify the „outré“ literature designation on my masthead: *Silent* by famed science fiction writer A.A. Attanasio (a very lyrically written outlaw biker vs. the Mafia novel based on the life of one of his friends who had been a biker and heroin addict in Boston in the late 60s—ending up a bookseller in Hawaii!) and *Rude Awakening* by Purnell Christian (text) and Joe Servello (graphics), a collection of scathing social satire that can best be described as what an unholy marriage of Charles Bukowski and Robert Crumb would be like sans the typical sugar-coating of the latter two writers' bitter efforts.

Books came fast and furiously after my reentry into the field, and I was fortunate to be able to do both limited editions and modest trade print runs of some of my favorite writers (and people): James Crumley (*Bordersnakes*), Howard Browne (of his collected pulp detective fiction,

*Incredible Ink*, in honor of his 90th birthday in 1997), Kent Anderson (the brilliant and agonizingly truthful novel *Night Dogs and Liquor, Guns & Ammo*), Jon Jackson (*Go By Go*, the story of the murder in 1917 by Pinkerton agents of I.W.W. organizer Frank Little in Butte, Montana), Kent Harrington (*Día de los Muertos*, a book that was rejected by many publishers in NY as „too black & truthful“ to be commercial, one of the most outstanding *noir* novels ever written), Don Herron (*Willeford*, his memoir *cum* biography of my favorite author and person of all time—as James Lee Burke once said: „A truly chivalric man.“), Michael Connelly (*Blood Work*), George P. Pelecanos (*The Sweet Forever*), and Leigh Brackett (her collected pulp crime fiction, *No Good from a Corpse*).

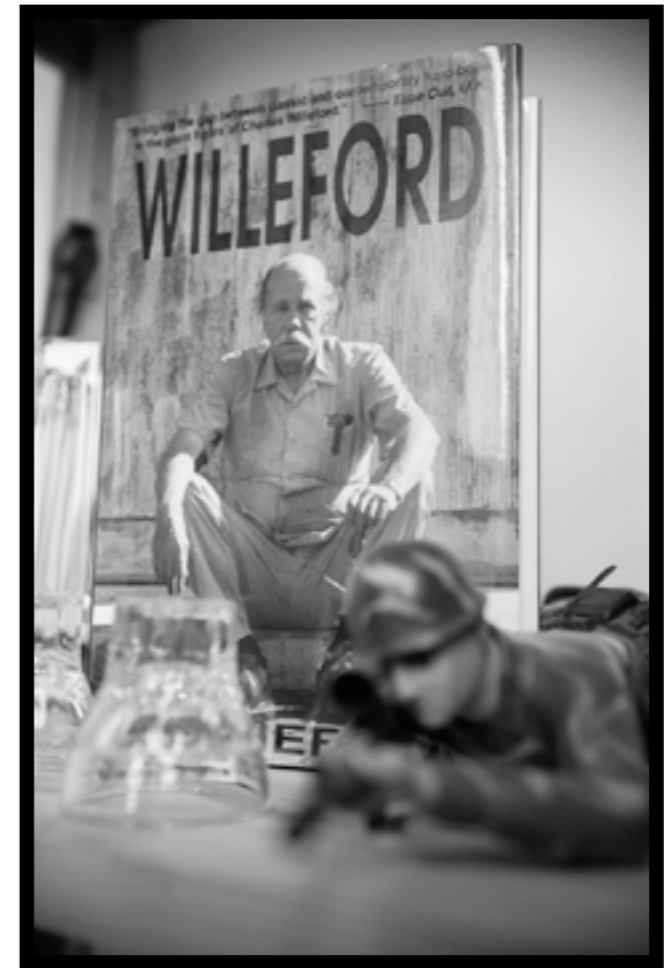
I feel like Lono Waiwaiole's *Dark Paradise* is the start of my „third incarnation“ as a small publisher, it's been almost a year since I published *The Good Physician* by Kent Harrington, and, much more importantly, I've lost two of my very best friends: Janwillem Van de Watering and James Crumley.

If you're not familiar with Lono Waiwaiole, you should track down his first three novels: *Wiley's Lament*, *Wiley's Shuffle*, and *Wiley's Refrain*, and read them (in the order in which they were published, as there's a story-line throughout) without fail, as they are three of the best „street crime“ novels published in the past 25 years. They are all set in Portland, OR, where Lono now lives, and where he (mainly) grew up, and they are all three „killer“ reads. They were all published by St. Martin's, starting in 2003, and ending in 2005, when St. Martin's let go the only editor left there who had any intelligence, apparently, which screwed not only Lono, but several other very good writers I've never even read, I've been told by a bookseller who knows the story. Ah, New York publishing: the last refuge of . . . ? I'll let you fill in the idea; it's not difficult.

*Dark Paradise* is a stand-alone, as they say, and, in comparison to the others, like an apple to oranges because, 1) *Dark Paradise* is told from probably 10 different first-person perspectives, and the Wiley novels are from only *his* perspective, and 2) *Dark Paradise* is the observation of a semi-outsider of Hawaiian society, that society being the result of what I call „internal colonialism,“ with which no person who hasn't lived there as part of it will be familiar, whereas almost *all* readers will be quite familiar with their own version of the „Portland, Oregon“ of the Wiley novels, even if they live in a fairly small Mainland town.

„As a publisher, Dennis McMillan is no stranger to risk, and does not care to be. Risk is a factor, of course, but it does not rule his taste. More generally, we might borrow a phrase from Jean Genet and put it at the head of the bibliography of D-Ray McMillan: *If I examine my work, I now perceive in it, patiently pursued, a will to rehabilitate persons, objects and feelings reputedly vile.*“  
—Jim Nisbet

The recent poor economy has pretty much reduced the number of people who can afford my \$250 limited-state morocco-bound eds. to about 40-50 individuals, which



number is too few for me to „make it“ any longer as a small publisher, because the physical quality of the books I produce costs at least five times what a NY publishing house pays, PER BOOK, and I HAVE to sell out a concomitant 104-copy morocco-state in order to pay about 85% of the total production costs for those 104 books plus, typically, a 1,000-copy „trade“ edition, at least half of which is usually purchased by libraries.

Starting with *Dead Horse* by Walter Satterthwait, a book that got good, but not starred reviews, and which, because every library in the United States has all of his other 15 or so novels, I expected to sell, oh, probably 2,000 copies of, TO LIBRARIES. But I sold only 425 copies, exactly, to libraries. Why? By that time, the Iraq War had drained so much money out of the public sector that the libraries (and I've been told this by several different librarians, in different parts of the country) no longer had monies to buy any but the best-seller authors that the public „expected“ them to buy, such as James Patterson or Clancy or Grisham. And from then on, my library sales have been anywhere from 40% to 80% „off“ of what I would have expected, given a certain author and his past sales record to libraries. So, in that narrow sense, the large, corporate NY publishers didn't suffer all that much—their „midlist“ writers were the ones who no longer even GOT published. I heard on NPR that the publishing industry was down 18% last year, and to me that means they were REALLY down, probably, about 30-35%, since they lie as much if not more, than other corporations about how they're doing, financially-speaking, and sales-wise.



In the „old days,“ and I’m now talking about the period before 2000, and probably pretty much before 1997 even, if a book received a starred-review in either PUBLISHER’S WEEKLY and/or BOOKLIST (the official journal of the American Library Association), and was published by a „house“ as small as mine, then at least SOME corporate New York publishing houses would be interested in at least SEEING the book, and determining if they thought they could reprint it and sell enough copies to make it worth their while. This only happened with ONE SINGLE BOOK that I published, ever—*Night Dogs* by Kent Anderson, which was reprinted in hardcover (and, of course, later in paperback) by Bantam Books.

In summary, as to where Dennis McMillan Publications stands these days: on the precipice of non-existence. It’s a sad, sordid history of beating my head against the wall of corporate NY publishing indifference, no matter how many starred-reviews the authors I published piled up. 90% of the books I’ve published since my „second incarnation“ as a publisher have received starred reviews. So here we go. I mean, it’s not a conspiracy or it’s not a blacklist. It’s simply if they do not originate or discover the author they are not interested. It doesn’t matter who it is. They do not give a shit.

„Needless to say, I am very proud to be in the McMillan stable.“

—George Pelecanos

The biggest achievement for me, so far, is the reprinting of *The Given Day* by Robert Hans van Gulik. As Charles Willeford commented, after reading the book for the first time (since van Gulik privately printed it in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, back in 1963, it had no distribution, except amongst his friends and acquaintances, before my hardcover reprint edition back in 1983; then, I did 5,000 paperbacks of the novel in 1986): „It’s a lesson in how to write a masterpiece in only 133 pages.“ This book is all of life and just about every major „culture“ ever created on this planet by human beings rolled up into one day in the life of a former Dutch colonial civil servant, who’d been interred and tortured by the Japanese during WWII, and is now living back in Amsterdam, working as a bookkeeper at a department store, living an unobtrusive, quiet life, until. . . Well, you’ll just have to get ahold of a copy and read it!

I suppose I must put *Night Dogs* as „second“ on my list, although several of Kent Harrington’s novels, Jim Nisbet’s, Scott Phillips’, Rick DeMarinis’, Bob Truluck’s *The Art of Redemption*, Lono Waiwai’ole’s, James Crumley’s *The Final Country*, several of both George Pelecanos’ and Michael Connelly’s novels should also be on it (I WAS limiting myself to books where I was the sole publisher, and not just doing a limited first ed., but I really should include George and Mike and Scott Phillips (who reads like a combination between Charles Willeford and Dan J Marlowe), as they are some of only a few „corporate New York-published“ writers that I feel are in the same league with the above-mentioned novelists).

„Without Dennis Ray McMillan I would never have published a goddamn word of fiction.“

—Scott Phillips

„I was introduced to Dennis McMillan, and I designed my first jacket. [Kent Anderson’s *Night Dogs*.] It won a design award, of all things.“

—Michael Kellner

Michael Kellner is finally starting to get his due, or at least „some“ recognition in the larger world, other than from just those people who know him as the designer/artist who’s done all these great dustjackets for me. Way back I started out with my brother William, and after he died, I was looking around for somebody else. I haven’t used that many different artists: Joe Servello, S. Clay Wilson, Scott Musgrove, Carol Collier.

„Dennis has an encyclopedic love of noir and damn near exquisite taste mixed with a solid sense of what should be preserved. These books, his publications, are a truly unique and magnificent achievement. Nobody has ever done it better. In fact, nobody but Dennis McMillan has ever done it.“

—James Crumley

Some writers that AREN’T well known in the hard-boiled genre, or are less well known than Hammett, would be Benjamin Appel (*Brain Guy*; in fact, probably anybody published by Knopf, when it was still RUN by Alfred A. Knopf, you wouldn’t go wrong in checking out), and of course, Raymond Chandler. But, somebody like Leigh Brackett, whose *No Good from a Corpse* was a Chandler pastiche, was actually AS GOOD AS Chandler himself (on the basis of that 1943 novel—her first, although she later became more well known for her science fiction work, and the very last thing she ever wrote was the screenplay for *The Empire Strikes Back*, in 1977—Howard Hawkes said, „Get me this GUY Brackett—he’d be good to write the screenplay of *The Big Sleep* with Bill Faulkner,“ and, when it turned out that the „guy“ was a 26-year-old young woman, Hawkes went ahead and hired her anyway, and the rest is Hollywood history, as she went on to write Westerns, sci-fi, adventure movies, etc., that he directed, as well as a pretty large body of superb fiction in every „genre“ that exists. Howard Browne, of course, in the 1940s and 1950s. Many aficionados think that *The Taste of Ashes* is THE best hard-boiled novel written by anybody in the decade of the 1950s, in fact. I recently became aware of William Francis, who wrote *Rough on Rats*, published in hardcover by Morrow in 1942: a book dealer whose opinion I highly respect told me that that book was as good as anything Hammett ever wrote, and he was right. Francis also wrote a number of interracial love/crime novels as „Curtis Lucas,“ many of which were published as Lion original paperbacks. Going back to the 1940s again for a minute, Robert Reeves, to MY mind, would undoubtedly have become one of the heavyweights in the hard-boiled genre, and in fact, IS, with just three novels: *No Love Lost*, *Dead and Done For*, and *Cellini Smith, Detective*, but he was killed in early 1945, in WWII, so that’s what we’re left with, plus a handful of short stories that appeared in the *Black Mask* detective pulp during the 1940s. I can see that this would turn into an essay in itself, so I’ll stop here, but I WILL say that *Dia des los Muertos* is a landmark in the hard-boiled/noir genre—and „instant classic,“ really.

„That house is so full of cool pieces of art... Anyway,

the *best thing* about going down there was just talking to Dennis about everything from Nazi war history to quantum physics, and learning what he taught me about music, all kinds of music.“

—Kent Anderson

As I’ve probably raved about before, it’s my considered opinion that, if a person, either male or female, doesn’t „get into“ or „learn“ to read for pleasure (and, admittedly, just as some people can’t learn, for example, calculus, there are, indeed, a number of people who simply can’t turn those words-on-the-page into images-in-their-heads in ANY WAY AT ALL, and hence, can NEVER „learn“ to read for pleasure; again, just as some people are totally tone-deaf, and can’t enjoy music, AT ALL; it’s just „noise“ to them: but, those people aside—and I have no idea exactly what PERCENTAGE of the human race this is, but perhaps, as a guess, as high as 20-25%, seriously) sometime between the ages of, say, 5 and 12 or 13, they NEVER will. Unless, as is the case with a VERY few men that I’ve met (and no women) they „get into“ reading for pleasure while incarcerated for a long term, or terms, depending on the extent of their recidivism(!). Nylander hath spake, and truer words were never uttered, I’m sorry to say. What this means, essentially, is that, starting back in the mid-1970s, when the average household in the U.S. was getting hooked up to cable TV, and kids started fanatically watching movies on said cable TV instead of, say, reading even a COMIC book for entertainment: SINCE that time, moving on along through all the other technological „advances“ (and I suppose I shouldn’t really put the sarcastic quotation marks around the term, because what ELSE are we going to call them?), such as the advent of the home computer and playing games on it, right on up through the present era where people spend all their free time „social

networking“—twittering, tweeting, face-booking, sex-ting, and whatever other ways they can jack-off either mentally or physically or BOTH, using all the new communication technologies that seem to come online every few months like clockwork. I cannot predict where it will lead, in terms of whether ANYBODY will still be reading books for pleasure (they’ll always be reading books, in some way, shape, or form—Kindle being only the latest incarnation—but mainly for information content alone, and not for the PLEASURE ITSELF of reading brilliantly crafted stories, novels, sentences, ideas, new ways in which to put old and/or newly coined words together, etc. I DO know that the core population of what I would call „serious book collectors“ has shrunk by more than half in the past couple years alone, partly due to simple economics, and partly due to people spending their free time in more of these new, „social networking“ ways. If I quit publishing, as I now am about 95% certain that I will, and liquidate my own book and pulp and art, etc., collections, I, too, will have a Kindle (or whichever of it or its competitors seem to give the most bang for my buck at the time I end up buying one) to read on, as I simply won’t be ABLE, if I’m living as an itinerant flamenco guitarist, playing in cafes, etc., for my daily bread, to haul around a book/pulp/art/etc. collection with me: these are sedentary pursuits, and I may not BE sedentary for several years in the foreseeable future. When you get almost to the age of 60, and HAVEN’T found the right mate, and are not even living in a country you can STAND anymore, well, you realize that the next 10 years are probably „it“ as far as really doing anything in the way of traveling around, seeing different cultures and places that you may have always thought about seeing and/or experiencing, and you’d better do it NOW, if possible, and quit kidding yourself that you’ll be ABLE to do it after the age of 70, even if, given your genetic composition



Holding a grudge is like letting somebody  
live rent-free in your head.



(judging from your relatives, etc.), you're probably good for another 30 years, at least. But now I've veered into the „too personal“-type of answer to your general question, so ignore the above last few sentences, eh?

If you do want a prediction, all I can say is that, just because a kid reads Harry Potter doesn't mean that he or she will „get into“ reading from that experience: „reading“ Harry Potter is, as far as I can tell, usually done by the kid/child for the same reason that he or she would go to a football game, even though they might not have any real interest in football at ALL—simply because, at that age, the kid wants to „belong“ to his/her kid-community, and will do just about anything, up to and including reading a book(!—or PRETENDING to have read a book!) that is required, because „everybody's doing it,“ the same old saw as always. Then, later-on, the given little man/woman may completely reject and even thrive on the feeling of „anti-“ whatever the prevailing trends/popular culture throws in their faces every day. But, of course, if they didn't learn to enjoy reading for pleasure during that critical period of 5 to 12 or 13 (again, just my personal opinion, based on observations of some of the kids of people I've known for a long time), they will „rebel“ in some other way, and not by seeking out LITERATURE that concerns their feelings, whatever they may be. I don't know if this is all a garbled piece of shit, or makes sense to you: you'll have to tell ME that!!!

ENOUGH! I'm off to Nogales! Playing flamenco!!!

HASTA LUMBAGO,

Horst von Nylander, King of The Sea of Rage (that we're all floating upon—I just told Jim Nisbet what my brother's best friend, Russell Michaelsen, told me last year: „Dennis, after considering it for a very long time, it seems to me that Life is just a thin surface-tension of civil-

„He-he w-wanted....“ The girl reached through the window with both hands and clung to his neck. „Oh, Mr. BJ. He watches those porn-movies. He-he....“ She dissolved into snobs, her head on his shoulder.

Banerjee wasn't particularly taken aback at this small revelation, but he was pretty sure it wasn't any of his business. „Certainly if ...“ he began tentatively. „Have you been ...? I mean ... against your ...?“

„We were just about to get in the hot tub,“ she whimpered. „And he-he is like totally out of control.“

„Who, Toby? Out of control? Let me out of the car.“ But the girl wouldn't turn him loose. Her hair smelled of suntan oil and marijuana and cigarettes and other things he only involuntarily recognized.

The San Francisco *Chronicle* almost fired Eddie Muller [The Czar of Noir!] when they found out that he and Jim Nisbet were long-time-friends, after his review of *Dark Companion*, which, since it was one of the five Hammett Prize finalists for 2006, I think shows *anybody* that Eddie wasn't „fudging“ his review *because he knew Nisbet*, but the powers that be at the newspaper think that things like that are a no-no, and put him on notice that if he ever reviewed another *friend's* book, he *would* be fired: so you see, the world continues in its „tempest-in-a-teapot“ stupidity, even when it comes to *book reviewing* (!).

ity floating on a bottomless sea of rage,“ which is about the best one-sentence summation that I've ever heard, I think. Nisbet is going to use that quote for the epigraph for his forthcoming 717-page novel from The Overlook Press, *Windward Passage*, out next June.

„... one day this dark time in America will end. When that day comes, and we get our culture back from the corporations that stole it, there will be an accounting. There will be honors for those who didn't collaborate with evil. On a wall somewhere in the hall dedicated to American literature they will put up a picture of Dennis McMillan.“

—Kent Harrington

PS: I really would like to keep on publishing books until I die, and my mother will soon be 97, so I could be around for a while, you know? I'd really hate to have to learn auto-mechanic-ing or some other „useful“ occupation at this late date. . . . Of course, there's always „walking the Earth,“ and playing flamenco guitar on the street. . . .

Titles from the Dennis McMillan Publications are available at Squidink Books (Bob Maddox): [www.squidinkbooks.com](http://www.squidinkbooks.com)



## Pulp Master Band 28 DUNKLER GEFÄHRTE Jim Nisbet

Der indisch-stämmige Akademiker Banerjee Rolf, glücklich verheiratet, hat es in Kalifornien zu einem schmucken Eigenheim gebracht; in der Biotech-Branche scheinen ihm die Türen offen zu stehen. Doch die Idylle trägt: Eine feindliche Übernahme seiner Firma kostet nicht nur Job und Karriere, auch im privaten Umfeld gehen ihm gesellschaftliche Verfallserscheinungen in Person seines mit Drogen dealenden Nachbarn an die Nieren. Toby Price, ein paranoider Kiffer und Tunichtgut, ist merkwürdig kommunikativ, seit irgendjemand unpatriotische Videopamphlete in seinen Pay-TV-Pornokanal einspeist. Rolf, der in sich ruht und sich von den Verlockungen der Welt nur wenig reizen lässt, befreit sich aus diesem Trümmerhaufen und schreitet—in stoischer Ruhe—dem unvermeidlichen Ende entgegen...

»Diesmal sind zweiundachtzig Millionen Schleifen im Jackpot.« Pride schnippte mit einem Fingernagel gegen die Scheine. »Da musst du einsteigen.«

In puncto Geldgewinn unterschied sich Banerjhees Haltung von der von Toby Prides. Banerjhees Meinung nach hatte man größere Chancen, wenn man zwei Millionen Dollar in eine Kiste legte und die, in der Hoffnung, die Scheine mögen sich paaren, in eine feuchte Ecke stellte, anstatt auf den Jackpot zu spekulieren, den Millionen von Menschen mit einer Kombination aus sechs Zahlen knacken wollten. Die Chance, die Zahlenkombination exakt zu treffen, liegt genau bei 1 zu 10<sup>12</sup> oder anders gesagt, eins zu einer Billion. Das ist eine sehr geringe Wahrscheinlichkeit. Egal, wie auch immer, wer hörte schon auf Banerjee Rolf? Gab es denn irgendeinen Zweifel, dass selbst Kaliforniens allerletzter Smiley-Magnet mindestens einen Lottoschein an einer Kühlschrantür fixierte?

Banerjee wusste, dass Pride in Sachen Spiel einer eigenen Maxime folgte, und die war simpel. Jede Woche erstand er zwei Lottoscheine. Stieg der Jackpot auf über zehn Millionen, kaufte Pride zwei Scheine mehr. Bei zwanzig Millionen erhöhte er um zwei weitere, bei dreißig war er dann bei sechs angelangt und so weiter.

Nach Banerjhees Dafürhalten bestand das Ironische darin, dass Toy Pride in gewisser Hinsicht bereits im Lotto gewonnen hatte. Der Junge arbeitete nicht, hatte rund um die Uhr Besuch und jede Menge Geld. Seiner hübschen Freundin gefiel es, sich nahezu unbekleidet hinter dem Haus zu sonnen...

In dem für den Hammett-Preis 2006 nominierten Noir-Thriller—eine philosophische Tragikomödie—dominieren unberechenbare Zufälle und Chaostheorie. In Nisbets Welt schützen weder intellektuelle Überlegenheit noch Gutmenschen vor Kollateralschäden.

JIM NISBET, Jahrgang 1947, stammt aus North Carolina, wo er die Universität in Chapel Hill besuchte. Er war Tankstellenpächter und führte ein Warenhaus, arbeitete als Geometer, als Nuklear- und Tontechniker. Er ist Autor von neun Romanen und mehreren Lyrik-Bänden. 1989 erschien *Tödliche Injektion* als deutsche Erstausgabe. Seine



Arbeiten wurden in acht Sprachen übersetzt. In den letzten 40 Jahren veröffentlichte er darüber hinaus diverse Artikel, Essays und Short Stories in Zeitungen, Zeitschriften und Anthologien sowie ein Sachbuch über Bau und Design retro-futuristischer Möbel. Er lebt mit seiner Frau in San Francisco.

**The Damned Dont Die** (aka The Gourmet, Black Lizard, 1981)

**Lethal Injection** (Black Lizard, 1987. Reprint: The Overlook Press, March 2010.

Deutsche Ausgabe: Tödliche Injektion, Pulp Master 00, 1989)

**Death Puppet** (Black Lizard, 1989)

**Across the Tasman Sea** (Small Pr Distribution, 1997)

**Prelude to a Scream** (Carroll & Graf Pub, 1997)

**The Price of the Ticket** (Dennis McMillan, 2003)

**The Syracuse Codex** (Dennis McMillan, 2005)

**Dark Companion** (Dennis McMillan, 2006)

**The Octopus On My Head** (Dennis McMillan, 2007)

**Windward Passage** (The Overlook Press, June 2010)

Jim Nisbet ist ein überaus wortgewaltiger literarischer Noir-Autor für eine ausgewählte Leserschaft. Ein ewiger Geheimtipp. In Reviews zu *Lethal Injection* wurden seinerzeit Parallelen zu Truman Capote und Norman Mailer gesehen. Bei dem hervorragenden Thriller *Syracuse Codex* hatte ich wegen des Umfangs—469 Seiten—noch gezuckt, bei *Dark Companion* musste ich wieder zugreifen. —Frank Nowatzki, Hrsg. PULP MASTER

Mehr über Frank Nowatzki und Pulp Master in der nächsten Ausgabe von *Rokko's Adventures*. OUT NOW: Pulp Master Band 29 NAZI PARADISE – Angelo Petrella ([www.pulpmaster.de](http://www.pulpmaster.de))

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