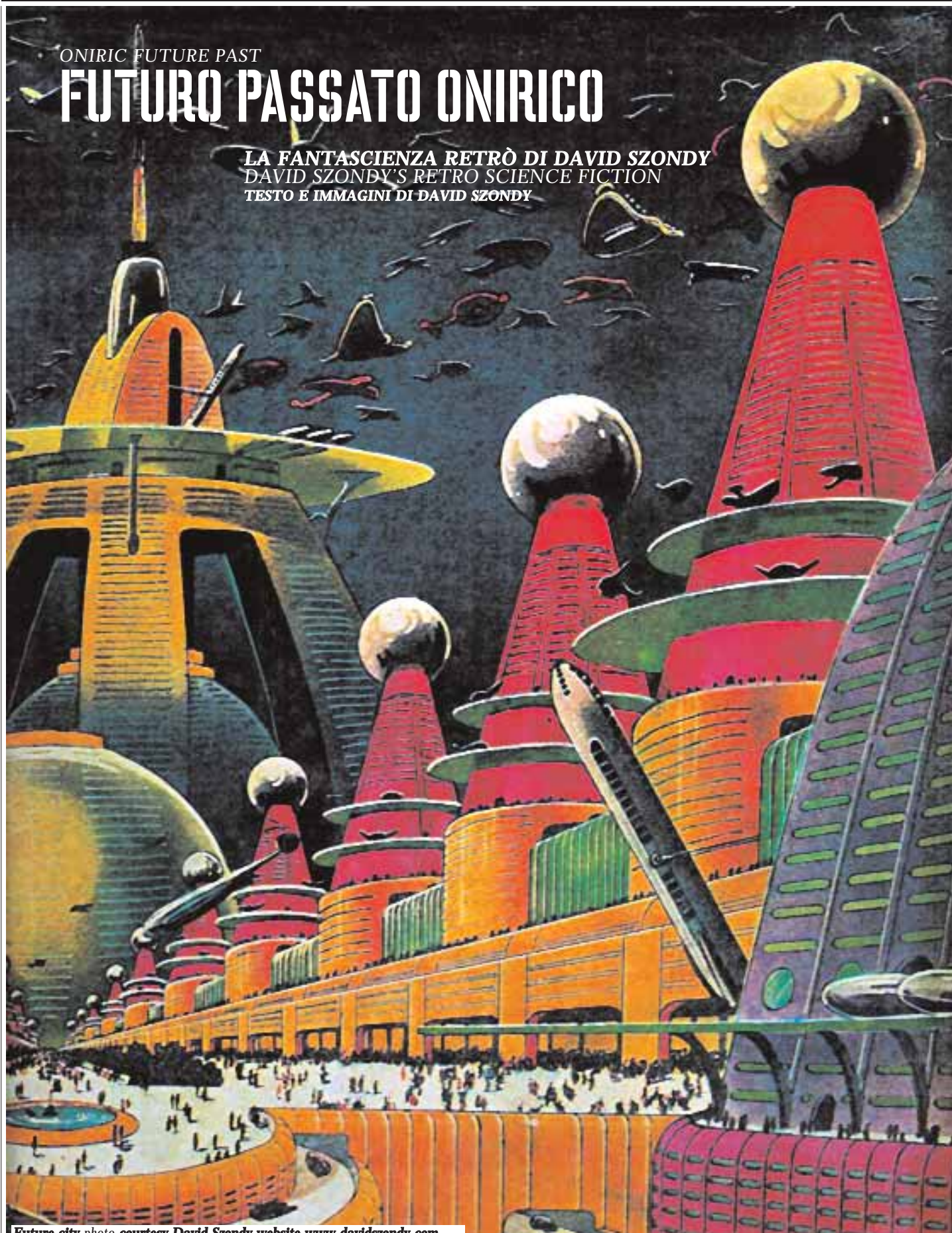


ONIRIC FUTURE PAST

FUTURO PASSATO ONIRICO

LA FANTASCIENZA RETRÒ DI DAVID SZONDY
DAVID SZONDY'S RETRO SCIENCE FICTION
TESTO E IMMAGINI DI DAVID SZONDY



Future city photo courtesy David Szondy website www.davidszondy.com

Ho iniziato a scrivere il sito Tales of Future Past (<http://davidszondy.com/future/futurepast.htm>) nel 2003 perchè mi sono sempre interessato al futuro come entità che non esisteva, ma sarebbe dovuta esistere. Le cose sono cambiate dalla metà del ventesimo secolo. Allora, ce l'avevamo un futuro. Okay, anche oggi ne abbiamo uno - a meno che qualcunomi stia tenendo qualcosa nascosto; ma il nostro futuro è molto diverso da quello immaginato, diciamo, nel 1950. A quel tempo il futuro non era il domani, era un nuovo, glorioso mondo scientifico con un'architettura distinta, in cui la gente vestiva in modo diverso, parlava in modo diverso, mangiava in modo diverso, e addirittura pensava in modo diverso. Un luogo in cui gli scienziati erano maghi, le macchine magicamente efficaci ed efficienti, i tiranni come minimo romanticamente maligni anziché banali, e il paradiso un regno fatato in cui i sogni potevano davvero realizzarsi.

Qualche anno fa si parlava di costruire un ponte per raggiungere il ventunesimo secolo. Adesso che ci siamo dentro, quell'espressione suona strana quanto costruire una passerella per arrivare alle cinque del pomeriggio. Quando la mezzanotte ha inaugurato l'anno 2000 (o il 2001 se preferite), qualcosa di strano ha cominciato a diventare chiaro. Per quelli della mia generazione, cresciuti nelle ossidate promesse dell'Era Atomica, Spaziale, dei Computer, e del Chi Più Ne Ha Più Ne Metta, il 2001 rappresentava un'enorme porta. Abbiamo aspettato venti, trenta, quaranta anni e più per varcare quella porta e accedere ad un mondo in cui navicelle spaziali grandi come navi transoceaniche facevano da spola tra pianeti colonizzati, in cui le città erano collezioni colorate di torri nuove di zecca senza neanche l'ombra di un edificio antico o un filo d'erba, in cui la gente indossava tute di volo come fossero toghe di una Roma tecnocratica, in cui i robot erano i nostri funzionali e obbedienti servitori, e gli zaini propulsori comuni quanto le galosce.

Caspita, eravamo davvero fuori strada. Non è solo una questione di previsioni sbagliate. Nessuno con un briciolo di cervello si sarebbe aspettato una simile accuratezza. Alcune meraviglie predette non si sono av-

I started writing the Tales of Future past web site (<http://davidszondy.com/future/futurepast.htm>) in 2003 because I've always been interested in the future as it wasn't, but should have been. Things have changed since the middle of the 20th century. Then we had a future. Okay, we still have one today - unless someone isn't telling me something, but our future is very different from the one envisioned in, say 1950. Back then the future wasn't tomorrow, it was a brave, new scientific world with its own distinct architecture where people dressed differently, talked differently, ate differently, and even thought differently. It was a place where scientists were wizards, machines were magically effective and efficient, tyrants were at least romantically evil rather than banal, and the heavens were fairyland where dreams could literally come true.

A few years ago, people talked about building a bridge to the 21st century. Now that we're there, the phrase seems as odd as building a causeway to five o'clock. As midnight brought in the year 2000 (or 2001 if you prefer), something odd began to sink in. For people of my generation, who had lived through the tarnished promises of the Atomic Age, the Space Age, the Computer Age, and the This That and Another Age, the year 2001 was a gateway. We had waited twenty, thirty, forty years or more to pass through that gateway into a time when spaceships the size of ocean liners plied between colonised planets, where cities were colourful collections of brand new towers without a single old building or blade of grass, where people wore jumpsuits like they were the togas of a technocratic Rome, where robots were our powerful and obedient servants, and where jetpacks were as common as galoshes.

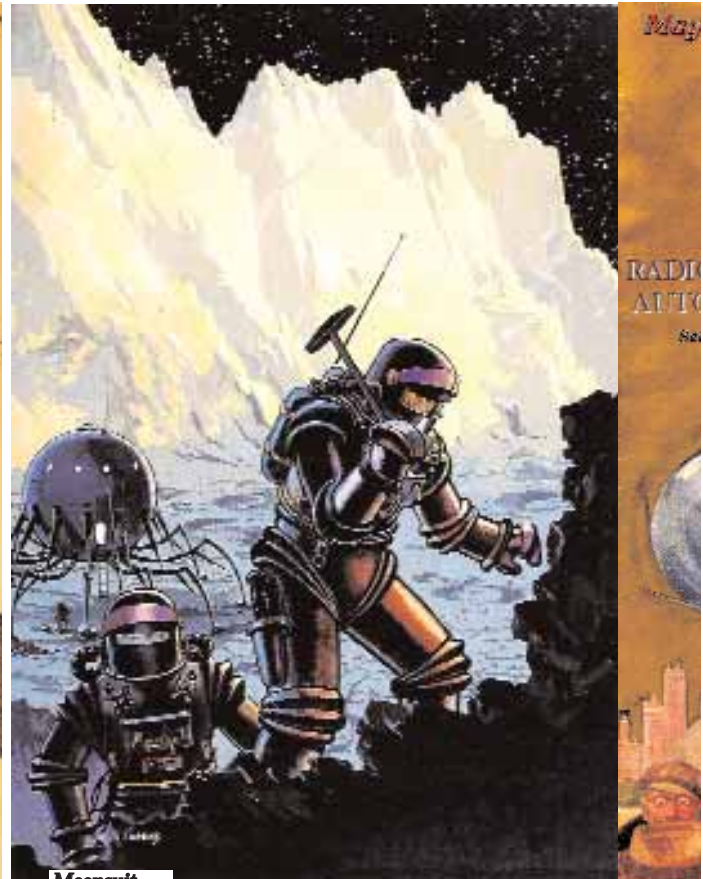
Boy, were we off base. It isn't simply that the predictions were wrong. No one with half a brain expected that sort of accuracy. Some marvels that were predicted did not come to pass, and others that weren't did. But what did not happen is what many expected, though never talked about much. Assuming that we dodged the 1984, Brave New World bullet, our future was supposed to be a sort of technocratic, atomic-powered, computer-controlled, antiseptic, space-traveling Jerusalem that would at last free us from the curse of Eden and original sin. We expected some how, some way that we would be on the road to being freed from the human condition. We expected a sort of bloodless, benign French Revolution with Hugo Gernsback as our Voltaire and Arthur C. Clarke as our Robespierre. And what did we get? The City of Man with Tivo. The



picture phone

verate, e altre non predette invece sì. Ma ciò che non si è verificato è quello che molti si aspettavano, sebbene non ne avessero parlato molto. Ponendo di essere scampati al 1984, il proiettile del Mondo Nuovo, il nostro futuro sarebbe dovuto essere una sorta di Gerusalemme tecnocratica, atomica, computerizzata, antisettica e spazio-errante che ci avrebbe per lo meno liberati dalla maledizione dell'Eden e dal peccato originale. Ci si aspettava in qualche modo, in una qualche misura, che saremmo stati sulla via della liberazione dalla condizione umana. Ci si aspettava una sorta di benevola, pacifica Rivoluzione Francese con Hugo Gernsback come novello Voltaire e Arthur C. Clarke come Robespierre. E cosa abbiamo avuto? La Città degli Uomini con Tivo. Il fatto è che la fantascienza e la scienza popolare hanno posto il traguardo così in alto che soltanto il Secondo Avvento armato di pistole a raggi sarebbe stato abbastanza.

Eppure, c'era una innocenza romantica nella visione del futuro del ventesimo secolo che ho voluto preservare e tramandare alle nuove generazioni. È facile ridere di auto a cuscinetti d'aria, poliziotti robot, autobus volanti, ipnopedia e occhiali-tv, ma siamo più sofisticati perché li deridiamo, o più poveri perché abbiamo dimenticato come si fa a sognare?



Moonsuit



Churchill future

fact is that science fiction and popular science had set the bar so high that only the Second Coming with ray guns would have satisfied us.

Still, there was a romantic innocence about the 20th century's view of the future that I wanted to preserve and pass on to a new generation. It's easy enough to laugh at things like hovercars, robot policemen, flying buses, sleep teachers, and teleyeglasses, but are we more sophisticated because we sneer at them, or poorer because we've forgotten how to dream?



Robocop 1924

10,000 YEARS HENCE
A Prediction



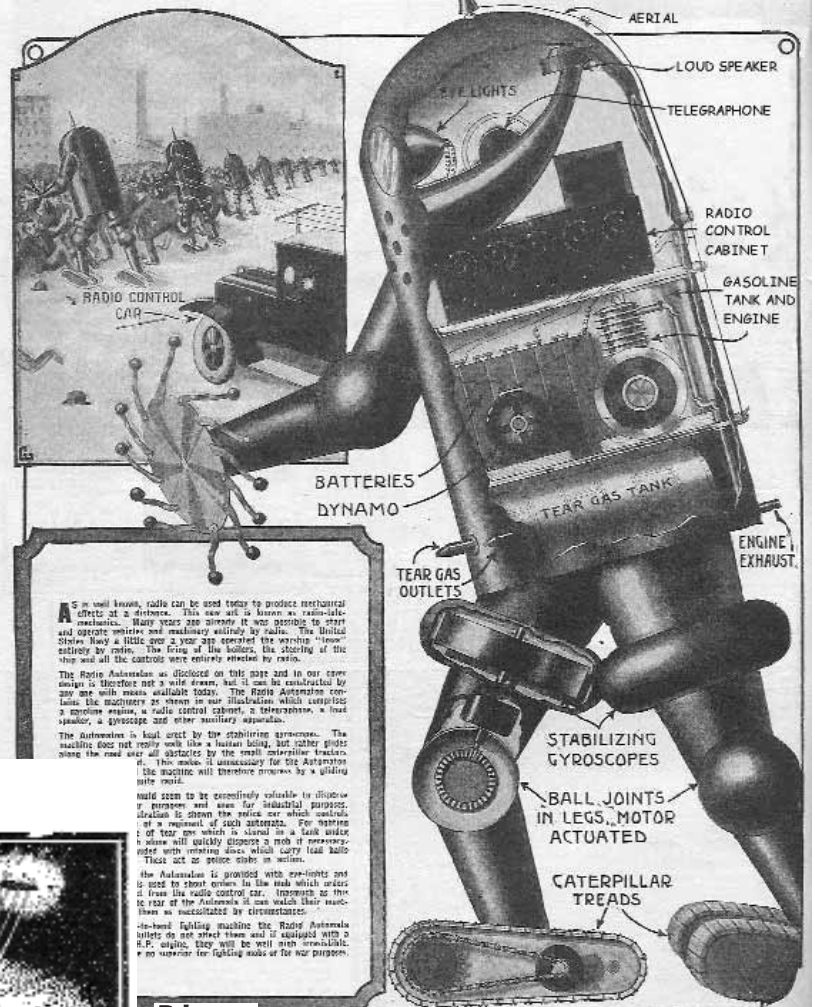
10,000 years

tutte le immagini all images courtesy David Szondy www.daviszondy.com

Radio Police Automaton

Distant Control by Radio Makes Mechanical Cop Possible

By H. GERNSBACK



As is well known, radio can be used today to produce mechanical effects at a distance. This new art is known as radio-life-mechanics. Many years ago already it was possible to start and operate wireless and machinery entirely by radio. The United States Navy a little over a year ago operated the wireless "boom" entirely by radio. The firing of the boilers, the starting of the ship and all the controls were entirely effected by radio.

The Radio Automaton as disclosed on this page and in our cover design is therefore not a wild dream, but it can be constructed by any one with means available today. The Radio Automaton contains the machinery as shown in our illustrations, which comprises a gasoline engine, a radio control cabinet, a telegraphone, a loud speaker, a gyroscope and other auxiliary apparatus.

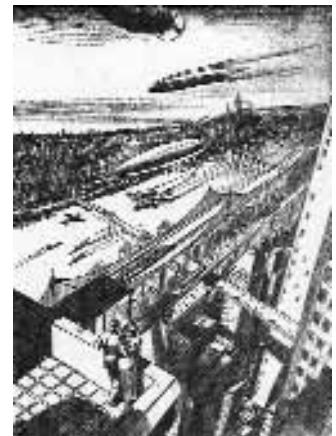
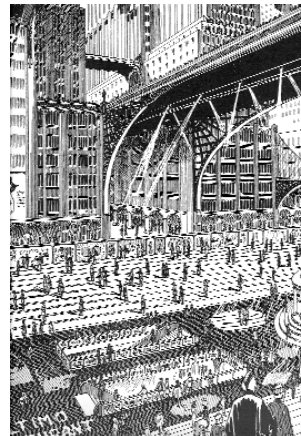
The Automaton is kept erect by the stabilizing gyroscopes. The machine does not really walk like a human being, but rather glides along the road over all obstacles by the small caterpillar traction wheels. This makes it unnecessary for the Automaton to be mounted on a vehicle. The machine will therefore proceed by a gliding safe road.

It would seem to be exceedingly valuable in following a patrol, and also for substantial purposes. It is shown in the picture car which controls it as a means of each automaton. For operation of tear gas which is stored in a tank under a valve will quickly disperse it when it encounters with rotating discs which carry lead balls. These act as pellets when in motion.

The Automaton is grouped with eye-lights and is used to shoot enemies in the dark which orders it from the radio control car. (Improvements to the 10 year of the Automaton, it can watch their movements as successfully by circumstances.)

An advanced fighting machine the Radio Automaton is built to not attack them and is equipped with a H.P. engine, they will be well over invulnerable, and no superior for fighting ends of the war progress.

Robocop



a sinistra left pavimenti mobili moving pavements a destra right amore romance