

APEX

A woman's face is the central focus, adorned with elaborate, colorful face paint in shades of orange, red, and yellow. She wears a futuristic headpiece made of a golden mesh with numerous thin, radiating spikes, each tipped with a small, glowing blue or green light. Her hair is a vibrant red. The background is a dark, abstract space with streaks of blue and purple light, suggesting a digital or cybernetic environment.

MICHAEL BUTTERWORTH
**QUEENS
OF DELIRIA**

A Novel

Based on an idea by MICHAEL MOORCOCK

MICHAEL BUTTERWORTH

QUEENS OF DELIRIA

A novel

Apex-Verlag

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The Book



Earth had already been devastated by the Death Generator...

Then the Red Queen meddled with the very laws of Time to advance her evil ambitions. She transmogrified the planet into a world stalked by decaying ghouls and policed by

satanic Bulls, their amplifiers meting out the punishing music of Elton John.

Only the Hawklords could save the remnants of Humanity...
only the Hawklords could restore the forces of Good.

Their sole ally Elric the Indecisive; their sole weapon their music; they fought to the death with their awesome enemies, the macabre Queens of Deliria...

Queens Of Deliria by Michael Butterworth (born 24 April 1947 in Manchester) - based on an idea by Michael Moorcock - was first published in 1977: an echo of New Wave SF, an incomparable psychedelic rock fantasy - and a definitive cult novel!

Queens Of Deliria is published in a new edition by Apex-Verlag, edited by the author (and supplemented by a new introduction written by Rick Evans).

Copyright

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By the same author

Novels

The Time of the Hawklords
Queens of Deliria (Hawklords 2)
My Servant the Wind

Collections

Butterworth

Non-fiction

The Blue Monday Diaries: In the Studio with New Order
AC/DC: Hell Ain't No Bad Place to Be (as by Richard
Bunton)

Poetry

Complete Poems: 1965-2000

Novelisations

Space: 1999 Series Two:
Planets of Peril
Mind-Breaks of Space (with J Jeff Jones)
The Space-Jackers
The Psychomorph
The Time Fighters
The Edge of the Infinite
Space: 1999 Year Two Omnibus

Co-authored and Co-originated Works

Lord Horror (novel, main author David Britton)
Brion Gysin: Here to Go: Planet R101 (non-fiction, main
author Terry Wilson)

Lord Horror: Reverbstorm (graphic novel, main authors David Britton & John Coulthart)

68 Cantos (prose-poems, main author William Weiss)

Ledge of Darkness (graphic novel, Hawklords 3, main author Bob Walker)

Return from the Wild (the story of Lassie the fox-dog, main author John Roberts Warren)

Anthologies

The Savoy Book (ed., with David Britton)

Savoy Dreams (ed., with David Britton)

Works Edited

All novels in the Lord Horror sequence:

Lord Horror

Motherfuckers: The Auschwitz of Oz

Baptised in the Blood of Millions

La Squab: The Black Rose of Auschwitz

Invictus Horror

Razor King

Old Death

To Mike, Elric and Jerry - with thanks

Note

While the characters in this story are based on actual people the descriptions of these characters are entirely fictitious and based on rôles used by members of Hawkwind on stage and recorded performances.

Legend

“And in the fullness of time, the prophecy must be fulfilled and the HAWKLORDS shall return to smite the land. And the Dark Forces shall be scourged, the cities razed and made into parks. Peace shall come to everyone. For is it not written that the Sword is the key to Hell and Heaven?”

HAWKCRAFT INVENTORY

At the time of the events presented in this book, the ever-changing crew of the Hawkwind Spacecraft featured are:

Baron Brock – (David Brock, lead guitar, 12-string guitar, synthesiser, organ and vocals)

The Thunder Rider – (Nik Turner, sax, oboe, flute and vocals)

Lord Rudolph the Black – (Paul Rudolph, bass and guitars)

The Hound Master – (Simon King, drums and percussion)

The Sonic Prince – (Simon House, keyboards, mellotron and violin)

Astral Al – (Alan Powell aka Powell the Power, drums and percussion)

Captain Calvert – (Bob Calvert, poetry and vocals)

The Light Lord – (Liquid Len aka Jonathan Smeeton, lights)

The Crystal Princess – ('Rickie', dance)

INTRODUCTION

No one captures the mythology of the Hawkwind universe better than Michael Butterworth whose books *Queens of Deliria* and its prequel, *Time of the Hawklords*, take you into their actual mythical universe. Their rerelease by Apex-Verlag means there is something in the air, appearing as they do on the heels of the nearest other contender, Joe Banks' *Hawkwind: Days of the Underground*, published in 2020 by Strange Attractor.

The passage of time has made the politically progressive 'Hawklords novels' more relevant than when they were written, as though their author had a third eye looking into the future—both the Hawkwind future and our actual future. The consequences of Brexit in Butterworth's own U.K., and Trumpism in the U.S., haven't fully become clear, but it's easy to see how possible scenarios might parallel those found in *Time of the Hawklords* and *Queens of Deliria*. After Butterworth finished caricaturing the 1960's in Britain, in *Queens of Deliria* he turned his fire to the U.S. and Watergate. Trump and the two agents of the Death Generator—Colonel Memphis Mephis and the Red Queen—are not identical figures, but they do have eerie similarities. The damage Mr. Trump did to my country is beyond repair. The damage to our democracy. The normalcy of his malignant fabrications. There have been so many deaths from COVID, which will continue because of the anti-vaccination people (99.5% of people dying in the U.S. at the

time of writing are non-vaccinated) fueled by Trump's lies. Trump is Mephis by another name!

The pandemic itself makes the books more relevant than they were forty-five years ago. As does Hawkwind's significance of long-overdue elder statesmen and oracle status. Below are some examples of the books' bearing on what became Hawkwind's future and the real world's future.

In making them I am not so much stretching for hidden connections or hidden meanings—the real allegorical themes for humanity to be found in these books—but pointing out how they capture a certain mythology that Hawkwind also captures. That's what Butterworth was trying to do in the late seventies, when he intentionally or unintentionally foretold things yet to come both in the Hawkwind universe and in our real universe.

To start with, *Queens of Deliria* takes place a hundred years or so after *Time of the Hawklords*. Now Hawkwind in the real world won't live that long, but amazingly Dave Brock is still leading Hawkwind over fifty years later, and not as some oldie's band, but one whose last few albums rival their best work. I can't think of any other band like this. Sure there's the Rolling Stones, but they haven't put a good album out in decades. It's as though Butterworth foretold that Hawkwind would have amazing longevity! Of course Brock is the only original member, but it's the personnel changes that have kept the band a vibrant entity. The mythological paradigm they framed—or to put it another way, the spaceship that Brock pilots—to move

forward, because the new crewmembers write and create within the broad Hawkwind-framed universe.

More of Butterworth's predictions include Michael Moorcock's Elric of Melniboné, who makes a significant appearance in *Queens of Deliria* years before Hawkwind's excellent 1985 album, *The Chronicle of the Black Sword*. Granted Hawkwind had a long-standing relationship with Moorcock, with him contributing tunes like 'Warriors' and 'Sonic Attack' prior to Butterworth's books, but those songs do not mention Elric.

In *Queens of Deliria* Butterworth created Time Zones. Hawkwind/Psychedelic Warriors' most experimental album is *White Zone* (1995), on which the cover art implies a similar disorienting microelectronic effect that a Hawklord experiences when entering a Time Zone.

The author repurposed the term 'the Horrors'—a sixties English colloquialism for a bad dope experience—for the effects the Death Generator's deadly Cyndaim Waves have on most humans. In 1992 Hawkwind put out a great song called 'Sadness Runs Deep.' The music is rather morose, Eastern-influenced (the deserts) and epic in size, along with lyrics about 'no place to hide' from these feelings. It is rooted in the break-up of a relationship, but it's not like any other break-up song I've heard, as the overall impact evokes the total gloom of the Horrors more than a single broken heart. Granted Hawkwind's music always had a feel of dystopia, and the general malady that comes with that, but the way in which Butterworth uses the Horrors is

wholly his creation, forecasting the horrors of today's real world.

The books are crowded with invention. In *Time of the Hawklords* his depiction of the 'computer of minds' seems to anticipate virtual reality. In less than one paragraph in *Queens of Deliria* he defines the 'sector of domes', where the Children live, as being essentially zero-carbon-emitting and sustainable: "By a policy of living design each house provided safe power, sufficient for its needs." Geodesic domes were popular in the seventies, but these were more about strength and structure than sustainability. The point being, as Butterworth also did in *Time of the Hawklords*, he predicts the sustainability movement decades before it's an actual thing. In turn, Hawkwind continued to gravitate to more earthbound green issues, notably in the last ten years with albums like *Blood of the Earth*, and the two companion albums *The Machine Stops/Into the Woods*.

Taking the environmental concept more broadly, Butterworth doesn't actually explain the cause of the holocaust that pre-dates *Time of the Hawklords*, leaving us to think it's probably a culmination of things, including environmental collapse. Even though the Death Generator is driving the enveloping worldwide catastrophe, today the books read more like they are portraying the imminent fallout from global warming. That he wrote it forty-five years ago is striking, and I wouldn't mind hazarding a guess that they resonate more to a general reader today than they did to a reader in the seventies. These are

themes that stand the test of time, with or without Hawkwind.

The beaten homeless man that lives in squalor in the Waltzer at the San Francisco fairground in *Queens of Deliria*, and the general homeless encampments featured in both books, remind me of the encampments found all over Los Angeles and San Francisco today. His desolate San Francisco Playland is now our 2021 Venice Beach. San Francisco itself is a major tourist destination in decay; now packed with the poor desperate souls in tents relocated from Earth City. Homelessness in the U.S. has been a long-growing problem, but just in the last few years, it has mushroomed into something... out of a dystopian 1970's novel!

The author uses the concept of 'horizons' repeatedly, to evoke the sort of melancholy associated with 'wondering what is' (or isn't) happening on the horizon, where we're not physically present, or the image of distant horizons we can't see. Hawkwind have the 1997 album and song, *Distant Horizons*.

I get a kick out the Squares vs. the Children depicted in *Queens of Deliria* and *Time of the Hawklords*, and all that goes with that: Greed vs. good. Consumption vs. conservation. Materialism vs. enlightenment.

The image of the zombie workers in *Queens of Deliria* is both tragic and a little comical: "Reminds me of Work... Remember when we had to do that?" They're controlled by the banalities of consumerism manifested through bad consumer music (product).

I can say that it's not as easy as simply foregoing a job. Politically I'm progressive. Musically I'm enlightened. Still, my company buys and sells real estate. We run the University's commercial units, license university property for Hollywood film shoots, and operate the restaurants on campus. I do this however, in service to one of the largest Hispanic-serving institutions in the U.S. My company is a non-profit, and surplus revenue goes back to this public university. Music, politics and my work, help me straddle the fence between no-compromise and sell-out. I believe most Hawkwind, and Butterworth, fans try to embrace meaningful and positive lives. *Queens of Deliria* allows us to personally reflect on these values.

One silver lining from this insane pandemic—straight out of a sci-fi book—is being able to transition most of my administrative employees to a remote work environment. I really want to be on the progressive edge of that. They've been working from home for a year and a half, and they'd like to continue that. The technology is available for us to do this. It feels like we're part of a Michael Butterworth novel!

Hawkwind still continue to put out great music within the sci-fi scope, ever expanding on their mythology, and Butterworth's books still comfortably synch up with the ongoing story. His books are a lot of fun, even if a little tongue in cheek at times, but with some very deep meanings that some cynics and critics miss.

I'm really excited that *Queens of Deliria* is being rereleased. Back in the day I enjoyed reading it every bit as

much, or more than, *Time of the Hawklords*, perhaps because the basic 'world' had already been established in the first book, and so *Queens* takes off running. I also like the way *Queens* contains some very new ideas, and doesn't rest on the successful ones of *Time of the Hawklords*. I'd love to see Hawkwind do a *Queens of Deliria* album. There are so many themes they could pull for songs.

Michael Moorcock said something like, "By means of our myths and legends we maintain a sense of what we are", and that he prefers to view the world through a science fiction mythological lens rather than through boring reality. So often, mythology is from a long time ago, yet some sci-fi mythology is more relevant to our lives now, and I can't think of any rock band that fills that space better than Hawkwind. In turn, Butterworth further expands and brings to life the Hawkwind mythos.

Underlying the whole raison d'être of Hawkwind and the 'Hawklords' novels is the idea of the 'freeing' nature of good music. As I read *Queens of Deliria*, I played Hawkwind's music in the background, thoroughly immersed in the mythology that is expanded upon in the texts. I have never seen (nor read) other novels that serve as 'companion readers' to music. Butterworth creates a truly unique multi-media experience.

Rick Evans
CEO University Corporation
California State University Northridge
Los Angeles

August 2021

PRELUDE

Since the events described in *The Time of the Hawklords*, Parliament Hill was all that remained of the once proud and noble city called London. It was all that remained of any part of the cities and conurbations that had once existed on Earth; for nothing had been able to survive the Great Collapse of the late twentieth century. Little, that is, save for five hundred screaming, cheering individuals who were gathered at the summit of the Hill, the descendants of the survivors who had first gathered to listen to the final, great rock concert held in the ruins after Gaia had wreaked her worst.

The concert had lasted many months and out of it a new society had been formed, based around the ideas of the young, the aware and the Hawkwind sounds. Refugees from all over Earth had been attracted by the music, limping in as best they could on the remains of technology and the energy of sheer determination. But as they fashioned their new lives, disaster struck again.

The forces responsible for humanity's downfall manifested themselves in the form of human agents, and a long and trying battle between these and Hawkwind had commenced. At the outcome, the concert city had been demolished. Earth herself had almost been shattered into dust. A pocket of survivors, including Hawkwind, remained. Weak and few though they were, they had triumphed. The Dark Forces had been banished, and peace had reigned.

Now the night was alive with sound and colour again. The Children of the Sun had grown once more in numbers and had come up from their homes on the plain beneath the Hill to the sacred concert site where, each year, Hawkwind gigged in celebration of the former victory. They yelled with madness, and they had every right to be insane. For now, after a hundred and fifty years of peaceful development, the same Forces of Darkness were returning.

The Children were angry and frightened and already suffering from the crippling symptoms of the Death Rays. While the Hawkwind music played, they were safe, protected by the unique, healing power of the space music and the band of immortal super beings who produced it.

In the centre of the crowd's dark midst, illuminated by the orange lights of the fires, the coloured twinkling lanterns and the bright stage lights, the Spacecraft played, its engines thudding wildly.

The sounds whined and careened through the air, calling out to the last pockets of life on the besieged planet, beckoning them towards it.

The violet-coloured searchlights probed majestically, relentlessly over its massive engines, beaming out an SOS to whoever or whatever could see them.

All remaining life on Earth was needed to participate in the coming battle if the forces were to be overthrown once and for all.

BOOK ONE:
LAND OF THE SUPERSTARS

DARK ANGEL

The Hound Master, legendary Tamer of Beasts, heard the call and rode in on his great black winged *capriccio* from Hell.

He flew impetuously across the darkened landscapes of Earth towards the distant lights of the Hawkwind stage.

Already the night air was charged with the strident, negative energy of the Death Rays and his long golden hair streamed from his head as he raced harder against the wind. His imperious lips parted with a snarled excitement and he threw back his head and laughed at the death sparks that flashed around him. And as he flew, his mind burned with a thousand ponderings.

Until now, he had shunned the company of his fellow Hawks and mortals in a relentless search for the sacred Life Sword – the libidinal, regenerative font of power that legend told would be found amongst the débris of civilisation. It was a sword fashioned from matter so rare and ethereal that no mortal or even ordinary immortal could hope to wield it. Only when the favoured hero or heroine handled it would its billions of atoms solidify into the instrument required. In that champion's possession, a pathway to Earth's centre could be cut to where the Death Generator, source of humankind's hurt, lay entombed. Such a person would be able to cut the misfortune directly from Earth's heart and liberate humanity forever from suffering.

But the Hawklord had roamed in vain. He had searched for the Life Sword's whereabouts, and still the Death

Generator cast its malevolent influence across a world in pain.

Time had outwitted him. The Era of Peace – the First Era of the Dawn Age that had succeeded civilisation – was being vanquished.

“Hell Hound! Faster! The puny strength of the dark beings try their luck against us once more! I must get to my drums so I can show them who the real power is!”

He let go of the reins to give the creature its maximum lee.

Its straining muscles bucked beneath his command as its wings beat faster and more heavily against the tortured air. Below them, the agonised land, still scarred and as yet unreclaimed, fled fearfully from them as they drew closer to their destination.

THE PSYCHEDELIC WARLORDS

A lone, fuzz guitar howled in the night.

It was a prolonged, insistent growl of electrified steel that won the approval of the screaming crowd that had crushed itself against the stage.

The stage shook and shone, a great living eye of colour and light and sound in the primitive darkness, its surface like a huge target board agleam with curving rainbow bands of red, green, blue and gold. Buttress-like piers supported the two drum kits as well as the four squat assemblies of the searchlights that beamed up their violet-