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## All your yesterdays

All of yours yesterday is a free book, however, if you would like to donate for the time and effort it took to compile and write it, please set your own price and you will be redirected to download: Last year, John Conway, Kosemen and I published All Yesterdays (it also has skeletal reconstructions of the brilliant Scott Hartman), a book that focuses specifically on the more speculative aspects of palaeo : Click the links below for more information about this project. If you liked All Yesterdays, you'd love to hear that there's a sequel, now online and available for download here. It's called All Your Yesterdays, and it's essentially a crowdsourcing book: we've invited people to send in their own, All Yesterdays-style illustrations and the best and most interesting (in a purely subjective sense, of course) are the ones that have in the book. The memo put it all together and wrote the recordings; I wrote the introduction, but my contribution was otherwise minimal. And because I don't have time to generate anything new, here's a little edited version said Introduction... When C.M. Memo Kosemen told me and John about their plans to invite people to send their own All Yesterdays style illustrations for the All Yesterdays thematic theme contest, I thought it was an extremely bad idea. I expected a few poor mediocre pieces of art that were more likely to be silly and astonishingly speculative. How wrong and stupid I was. The actual results - included in the volume, now available here for download - are nothing short of impressive; I am blown away by the quantity and quality of work attracted by the invitation. Those interested in paleoart - wherever they find themselves in the world of science and art - will relish this book and the quality of its illustrations. Already I can't stop thinking about some of my favorite images, and I secretly fear that some of them will stay in my head when I look, or think about, creatures are concerned. The project that Memo decided to play All Your Yesterdays, in short, was an outstanding success. All your yesterday is a thing of great beauty. There are so many personal moments in the volume that it's hard to know which parts are honorable to mention in the resume. The invitation attracted professionals and semi-professionals, as well as interested amateurs; It's fascinating to see a few pieces of brilliant and increasingly famous Emily Willoughby, I Love Jaime Hedden Dixon-inspired Giraffapteryx, and Raven Amos' 'Bowertyrants' piece is wonderful. Other highlights that make the book more professional in appearance than I ever expected include contributions from All Yesterdays triumvirate member John Conway, as well as brilliantly innovative and creative works by Josúa Kruppe and Oscar Mendes. The invitation attracted contributions from several household names in the palaeoart ubernerd community: Mike Hanson, Mike Casey, Julio Lacerda and Simon Roy among them. Seriously: vau. Just... Wow! Remember also that the contributions included in All Your Yesterdays were essentially made for fun, sent by people purely because they wanted to, not because they were looking for financial gain. It's probably better here that we don't get into the whole question of how paleoartists (and, indeed, artists in general) can make a living with their work (for the record, the deal is no different for writers and some scholars, either). The point worth doing here is that the internet has changed everything: long gone are the days when an artist had to seek to get a job published in a largely published outlet (like a magazine or a book) before their work was seen or deemed worthy. Although - given the difficulties - we wouldn't necessarily recommend that someone try to get into a paleoart or even write as a possible career path, we sincerely hope that our promotion of the work included in All Your Yesterdays somehow helps its creators. Does the world need more speculation in paleoart? Is it tricky wise in encouraging people to speculate when it comes to paleoart? It's a complicated topic. Scientists tend to think that paleoart belongs in some way to science, and that people who produce reconstructions of extinct animals can only do so when they portray ancient animals and the environment in a rigorously accurate way, paying attention to the most active knowledge. Scientifically rigorous art of this kind is definitely has its place: we expect to see it, for example, accompanying a press release on a recently announced fossil animal, or adjacent to a fossil specimen in a museum: for a paleoart of this kind, we highly recommend William Stout's 2009 prehistoric murals of life (Stout 2009) and Steve White's 2012 Dinosaur Art: the world's largest paleoart (White 2012) However, the fact that paleoart combines an element of artistry and speculation – to be honest, even the harshest, most heartbreaking piece of paleoart still involves the amount of speculation – means that it is sometimes unclear where the facts end and speculation begins. Remember that animals are often shown to eat, stand or relax in certain poses, frequent specific environments, and are decorated in this livery. This is speculation, and even when they seem conservative, they are not necessarily correct or dignified. One of the criticisms levelled at All Yesterdays is that the whole project seemingly made it ok for people to speculate away and do whatever they liked, evidence, conservatism and critical thinking of being damned. Inviting people to speculate away and produce even more works of art of the same maybe we're sharpening things up, perhaps opening the floodpungers to an endless stream of clueless arm swing. There are several answers to be made on this claim. As we tried to make clear in All Yesterdays (look at 10 in introduction), scientific reconstructions of fossil animals really should include any hard data we have about ancient animals and their environments (Conway, etc. 2012). We usually have detailed information about bone anatomy and therefore the proportions and underlying shape of this animal, for example; we can give out much about his musculature and integument based on what we know about his living relatives; and we should try to include any data we have about the environment, climate and local vegetation. The scientific paleoart that I and many of my colleagues will consider good ticks of all these boxes (though at the risk of sounding like a jammed record, I repeat the point I often have: that some paleontologists advising paleoartists are unaware of the necessary technical data, or honestly don't care about how ancient animals are depicted. However, when it comes to anatomy and soft tissue behaviour, many cherished ideas and themes of conventional paleoart are not always less speculative than those images we explored in All Yesterdays: they often represent historical tropes that arrived by chance, they represent assumptions and conventions, and they even apparently reflect cultural and societal expectations. Of course, there are some illustrations in All Yesterdays that may be a little unlikely (e.g.: a stegosaurus with a giant flexible penis, a plesiosaurus that camouflages itself lying on the seabed), but there are none that are obviously more unlikely than many other illustrations that have been approved elsewhere (e.g., stegosaurus with hypermoorous plates, pterosaurs, ceratops that form defensive circles, theropods that roar on their prey and so on). In short, speculation in paleoart should be seen as a sliding scale. At what point does speculation make itself too extreme? And is it even possible to reach the said extreme given the meaningless soft tissue structures and absurd behaviour present in today's world? It is, in fact, surprisingly difficult to come up with a speculative piece of paleoart that is unconscionably funny (at least as long as the basic rules of anatomy, biology and physics apply, as they are in science-based reconstructions). Critics and traitors are well remembered for this, criticising the speculative paleoart, especially when the art concerning is clearly marked - as it is - as an exercise in speculation. Remember if we've learned anything about living animals and about paleobiology, it's that things are more complex, alien and more remarkable than we normally assumed. It should also be pronounced that images of ancient animals do not belong entirely to science. Images of live animals are often included in abstract, fantastical and surrealist works of art: no one has ever ate that every image of an animal, ever, must be anatomically correct study that faithfully depicts a creature in its natural environment. Art depicting extinct animals can obviously play the same game. Speculative, hilarious and even deliberately incorrect images of extinct animals are therefore permitted in cases where the artist does not claim to create rigorous scientific reconstruction. Some of the art included in All Your Yesterdays can be seen in this vein. It is not necessarily offered as a scientific bit of paleoart, but as a stylized image that has a fossil animal. On this note, much of the paleoart of the past is now seen as grief wrong. Animals have irregular body shapes, wrong poses, they are shown engaging in unlikely or absurd behaviour, they are in the wrong environment, the wrong climate and so on. This does not stop them worthy, and even beautiful, works of art. Several people who admire and love the style created by Knight, Burian, Parker and many other great artists of the past portray a retro paleoart that does not claim to be scientifically accurate – rather, it is a homage to a particular style. Again, this is allowed as an artistic convention; this does not mean that the artist is necessarily trying to portray the imagination of reality. The human experience is rich. We must love what we do; we are passionate, we like to think and portray scenes from the world, from the past, out of our lives and out of our minds. Art may be driven by science, but it can be completely divorced from it. Speculative art, retro paleoart and precise, high-precision reconstructions have their place in how we choose to portray animals of the past. We hope you enjoy a great selection of images that we include in All Your Yesterdays. And well done and thank you to everyone who contributed. All your yesterday can be downloaded here at Irregular Books.For previous articles about the All Yesterdays project, and our next one is Cryptozoologicon - go here... Vertebrate Paleontology in Lyme Regis: about All yesterday's, Leathery Winged Revolution and Planet Dinosaur All yesterday's launch events All yesterday... Today! All yesterday: Unique and speculative views of dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals – book and launch event All Yesterdays: negotiations! Tales from cryptozoology: The stories of Yeti from cryptozoology: - Conway, J., Kosemen, .M. & Naish, D. 2012. All yesterday: Unique and speculative views of dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals. Irregular Books.Stout, W. 2009. Prehistoric murals of life. Flesque, Santa Cruz.White, S. 2012. Dinosaur art: the world's largest paleoart. Titan Books, London. London.

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