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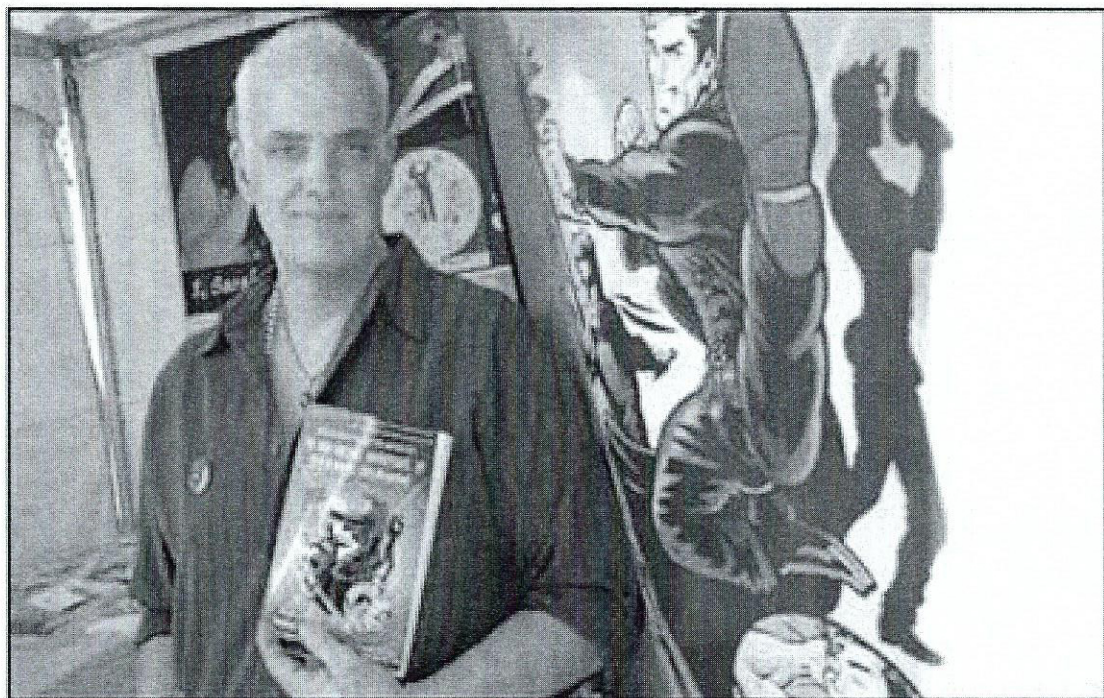
October 4 - October 10, 2007 • Vol. 74, No. 40

## A Secret Agent by Another Name

An author creates an action hero for our times.

By Cristina Peña

"The name's Blonde, Jayms Blonde-hairdresser by trade, and secret agent by choice," reads the opening line in the racy action-comedy novel "The Hair-Raising Adventures of Jayms Blonde: Project Popcorn." Making a book-signing appearance at A Different Light Bookstore last Wednesday and the West Hollywood Book Fair on Sunday, author Robert W. Cabell uses his flirtatious narrative to pack a se-



GARY MCCARTHY

"Humor is organic to me," says Robert W. Cabell. "You can take it as far as you want."

rious pro-environment message. "I wanted Jayms Blonde to be an icon for the world, a cheerleader for the environment, not [solely] a gay icon," Cabell said.

Blonde's mission: to save the world from bad hair and bad air.

Going for an "over-the-top gay narration with all the illusions to pop culture," Cabell introduces Blonde as a 6-foot-4-inch, ex-Navy SEAL, intelligent blond stud — a master at both disciplining hair-do's and environ-

mental criminals.

Armed with a band of sidekicks including pedicurist Precious Needmoore and boss Mama, the agency called STOP (Stop Terrorizing Our Planet)

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## Blonde

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saves the environment by fighting against corporate greed.

As the plot thickens, Blonde must stop the evil cartel ZERNON (Zealot Environment Nazis Ruthlessly Obliterating Nature) from releasing a virus that would destroy corn crops, forever preventing the use of green-friendly ethanol fuel.

Riddled with playful double-innuendoes, Cabell teases with snappy one-liners that makes a statement about Hollywood just as much it does about sex. "Humor is organic to me," the author said. "You can take it as far as you want. You can blush and turn the page or if you want you can fantasize about the characters for hours."

Along with the steamy flowery language, Cabell pairs comic-style illustrations. A collaboration of two artists along with Cabell's own mastery in drawing help to solidify the characters and create the "Blonde" world. "A lot of comic books can be very dark, highly over drawn," Cabell said. "I wanted all [these] characters to have very strong bold lines, very crisp visual look."

Cabell first was inspired to create the action-character following a three-way conversation with Rubert Everett, the British actor best known for his role in "My Best Friend's Wedding" and a friend over coffee. Everett expressed interest in a gay-version of the notorious Bond legend and it was then that Cabell decided to write a character for him.

"I didn't want it to be another cold war [story]," Cabell said.

"The cold war was over and I didn't want to be another corporate espionage or about terrorism."

A long-time environmentalist, the Oregon born writer decided that the environment would be the modern-day crusade. Singers Sting and Elton John fight for the rainforest and AIDS, Cabell said, now we need a gay hero to rally for mother earth.

The novel raises a very serious concern packaged in a very simple and fun way, Cabell added.

"I think that society is finally making [environmental awareness] trendy," Cabell said. "Trendy is good because it means it's timely. We are no longer the tree-huggers, the ones you walk away from at the table or not invite to the party. Now there is a regenerated interest in preserving the earth and taking care of the environment."

For Cabell, this novel was a

challenge to write. Revising the novel nearly a dozen times, the author said that the themes had to be carefully balanced. "There is not a subtle bone in my body, but the blending of sex and humor with environmental and political issues took a great deal of dexterity which I don't poses," Cabell said smirking. "The challenge was to create a style that embraced everything."

Now 125 pages into writing the pre-sequel entitled "The Deadly Orchid," Cabell has plans to produce a four-part series which continues to follow the adventures of the secret-agent.

In the end, Cabell describes Blonde as the "updated-Tarzen with the world as his jungle and John instead of Jane by his side."

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