

IN YOUR MIND'S EAR

RON SINGER

“Hmm. A metaphor that melds body parts. ‘In the mind’s eye’?”

“Right. It’s one of those expressions that fix themselves in the mind’s ear.”

“Was that one of those jokes that fix themselves in the mind’s nose?”

“No. Yes. Seriously, though, do you think ...”

“Of course. Sense memories. We just don’t have metaphors for the other four.”

“ ‘The mind’s eye,’ ‘the mind’s ear,’ ‘the mind’s nose,’ and ‘the mind’s ... fingers,’ I guess. But what’s the fifth one, I can’t think of ...”

“Taste, ‘the mind’s tongue.’ I was waiting for ...”

“I wonder why I couldn’t think of that.”

“I wonder, too. In what part of the memory do we store and lose lists, like the five senses? Or did taste get lost on the way to the metaphor center?”

“ ‘The occipital peripotato,’ or something. But ... where did I get that from?”

“ The ‘occipital peri-’ part is real, I believe, one of the language centers, although not the one that stores lists. And the ‘potato,’ of course, is a joke. In the absurdity center, you found a vegetable which is humorously and variously related to the brain, and you grafted it onto a real part of the brain’s anatomy.”

“What do you want for dinner?”

“Were you thinking of dinner before ‘taste’ and ‘potato’?”

“Not consciously. Post-facto. It was probably associational.”

“ ‘Post-potato.’ And ‘ab ovum.’

“Potato out of the egg. A sort of fritata.”

“Let’s go out.”

“Where?”

“Out of the apartment. You know, down the elevator and out onto the street.”

“Where?”

“Italian?”

“You mean, ‘Italy.’ “

“That was complicated.”

“It was. Are you very hungry?”

“It will wait. Go on.”

“Okay, let me see... ‘hear’? ...’taste’?... good, let me taste ... I think ...”

“Of course, you do. Nothing but.”

“We use ‘Italian’ as shorthand for, ‘to an Italian restaurant.’ ”

“Or if the interlocutors have a favorite Italian restaurant, ‘Italian’ implies that one. In this case, when you said ‘Italian,’ you were asking if I wanted to go to Rocky’s tonight. And you didn’t mean ‘pizza,’ because you would have said that specifically.”

“And if I had said, ‘pizza,’ I would have meant our favorite pizza place, which is impossible because ...”

“... we have two: ‘Ray’s Almost Famous’ for gourmand, and ‘Orazio’s’ for --met.”

“Using ‘gourmand’ and ‘gourmet’ for pizza is a subliminal ... what do you call ...?”

“An inter-language mixture. I forget the term, too. Hmm, ‘subliminal.’ ‘Light.’ Another visual metaphor. To stay within the boundaries of the lexicon under discussion --food-- why not say, ‘sub-lingual’ ?”

“Wrong. ‘Limin,’ as in ‘limit’ or ‘threshold,’ not ‘lumin,’ as in ... “

“Whoops! Keep that under your hat, please.”

“ ‘Below the threshold of consciousness.’ But it’s still true: we don’t say, ‘in the mind’s ear.’ ”

“Thank you. Or ‘tongue.’ ”

“ ‘A hit. A palpable hit.’ “

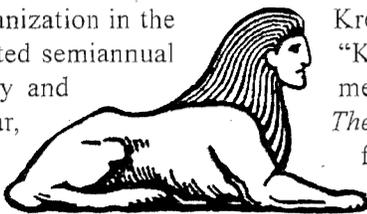
“Touché.”

From *WORLD OF ANAGRAMS* by Zorn Radisavljevic zoradis@eunet.rs

NATIONAL PUZZLER’S LEAGUE

You probably noticed that some authors of anagrams use pseudonyms. Most of them are members of the National Puzzlers League (NPL), an American non-profit organization focused on puzzling, primarily in the realm of word play and word games. Founded in 1883, NPL is the oldest puzzlers’ organization in the world. It originally hosted semiannual conventions in February and September of each year, but conventions are now held annually, in July.

Each NPL member generally chooses a “nom” upon joining, an often cryptic pen name which serves as a nickname when communicating with fellow members. The use of pseu-



donyms, also commonly practiced by the compilers of cryptic crosswords, originally helped “to break down barriers of occupation or social class”. It is also an opportunity for wordplay and self-description. NPL members are known collectively as “the Krewe” and individually as “Krewepersons”, “Krewemembers”, or “NPLers”.

The Enigma, the NPL’s official publication, is distributed monthly to its members. It provides a medium for members to share their original word puzzles for fellow members to enjoy. *The Enigma* also contains articles and announcements of interest to its members.