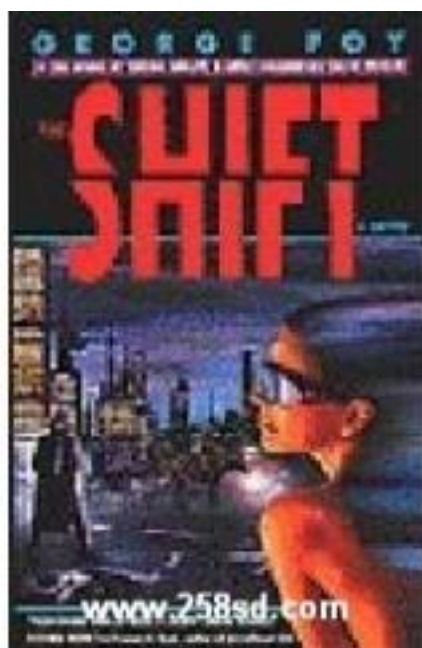


# SHIFT, THE



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From Publishers Weekly Set in the not-so-distant future, this latest by the author of Challenge and Asia Rip is a compelling noir mix of science-fiction thrills, virtual-reality wonders and 19th-century horror. When Alex Munn accepts the job as head writer for a new virtual-reality television show, Real Life, he is frustrated that his own virtual creation, Munn's World, has been passed over. The executives at Television City had no interest in a show about an 1850s New York City serial killer known as the Fishman because he disembowels his victims. But before Real Life can air its first episode, Alex's own world is turned upside down when his estranged wife, Larissa Love, is found brutally murdered, leading Alex to believe that the Fishman has somehow escaped from Munn's World and followed him into the present. What ensues is an absolutely terrifying adventure filled with plenty of plot twists that most readers

won't anticipate. Alex faces jail and the loss of everyone and everything he loves unless he can pinpoint his tormentor. Foy has created an intricate thriller that science fiction and historical fans alike will relish, one that combines elements of *The Alienist* and *Lawnmower Man*. (July) ~ FYI: Among many other jobs (designing CD-ROM games, traveling through Afghanistan with arms smugglers), Foy has worked as a commercial fisherman, hence "Fishman". Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Just when it seemed cyberspace was wearing out its welcome, along comes this fresh and powerfully imagined new take on the coming video revolution. In the ratings-hungry entertainment world of near-future New York City, Alex Munn is a rising young "xtv" producer whose forthcoming virtual reality^based series, *Real Life*, promises soap opera junkies full interactivity in three dimensions. Already bored by the show's cliched characters and predictable plots, Munn spends increasingly more time on his unsponsored pet project, *Munn's World*, a crime drama that tracks a serial killer through the seamy underworld of 1850s Manhattan. Neither Munn nor his video-engineer assistant, who adds the random factor to the show's programming, is prepared for what happens when the serial killer begins making his grisly presence felt in the everyday world beyond xtv's electronic margins. Munn's deliciously glib narrative voice and an irresistibly compelling story line are key elements in making Foy's stunningly vivid, all-too-plausible vision of the next wave in entertainment media one of the best cyberspace vehicles since Gibson's *Neuromancer* and a deserving candidate for every major sf award. Carl Hays See all Editorial Reviews

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目录:

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