The "SMS" Automoton

This curious device has haunted the catacombs beneath the

Lyceaum for as long as anyone can remember. It's appearance seems to

alter over time, as it slowly changes inexorably in hue, material, and

detail. In all cases, it seems to be humaniod, but certainly not of

any particular sort. Also, it's appearance remains visibly

inorganic, despite it's continously changing appearance, providing a constant

source of puzzlement to those who visit it. It seems to be willing to

carry on brief conversations with those who might address it, thus the

first chronicles of it's meanderings were put to record. It's unusual

name is often attributed to mis-pronunciation, but no one can be sure.

The automoton seems to come and go at will, with barely any

sort of predictability, and has effortlessly defied any attempts to

constrain it's wanderings. It's near-constant movement has hampered

even the most determined efforts to study this most amazing machine

for any considerable length of time. Worse, the machine seems

completely unimpeded by walls, floors, or any sort of barrier at all.

Sometimes the SMS cannot be found for weeks, even months at a time...

While all of this is rather interesting, it is startling to

note that the automaton has composed various musical pieces, each

focusing on various aspects of a few of Talislanta's varied cultures.

Persons whom have heard it's works related to their culture swear

they've heard them before, but are unable to pinpoint the source -

even with powerful magical assistance. Many of the works concern

cultures which the machine has had no known contact with whatsoever,

yet each seems to "fit" the culture perfectly, so much so that a

native would swear they know the music as though they'd heard it many

times..!

More puzzling still, is the SMS's penchent for prophetic

speeches, of which an astounding number have been proven reliable! The

very concept of a "psychic" automaton still causes heated debates

among the most astute minds in Talislanta. While a few of it's

announcements have taken considerable time and effort to verify, many

often "come true" in the public domain for all to see. The Lyceaum

faculty have yet to determine why the machine insists on announcing

new arrivals to all present, but as many mysteries surround this

creation, few are surprised.

To date, the Seven Kingdoms has declared the SMS automaton a

"National Wonder and Treasure", and kept as close a watch as possible

on it as possible. Thieves and vandals beware...