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A recently discovered unused 1970s Mattel card game illustration. Inks by Mike Royer, new color by Tom Ziuko.

(S) (G)

THOR #158



"YES, I REMEMBER IT ALL!
 ALL THE BLUDGEONING
 BATTLES... THE NOBLE
 FRIENDS... AND THE
 DEADLY FOES!"

LAST PAGE WILL DEAL WITH SIF AND THE MYSTERY OF
 IDENTITY WHICH CHALLENGES DOC BLAKE -- AND TO WHICH
 HE MUST SEEK ANSWER.

YOU'LL
 HAVE
 SEND
 EXTRA
 PANELS

Glen Gold is still tracking down more original art pages from Thor #158-169, to examine discrepancies and learn what led to so many rejected pages in Jack's Galactus origin arc. Here's one of the framing pages from Thor #158 (1968), the fill-in issue which reprinted Thor's origin. Jack's margin note: "You'll have to send panels..." seems to support the idea that Jack penciled this issue at the last minute, based on phone conversations with Stan.

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Page one inks: **MIKE ROYER**
Page one color: **TOM ZIUOK**

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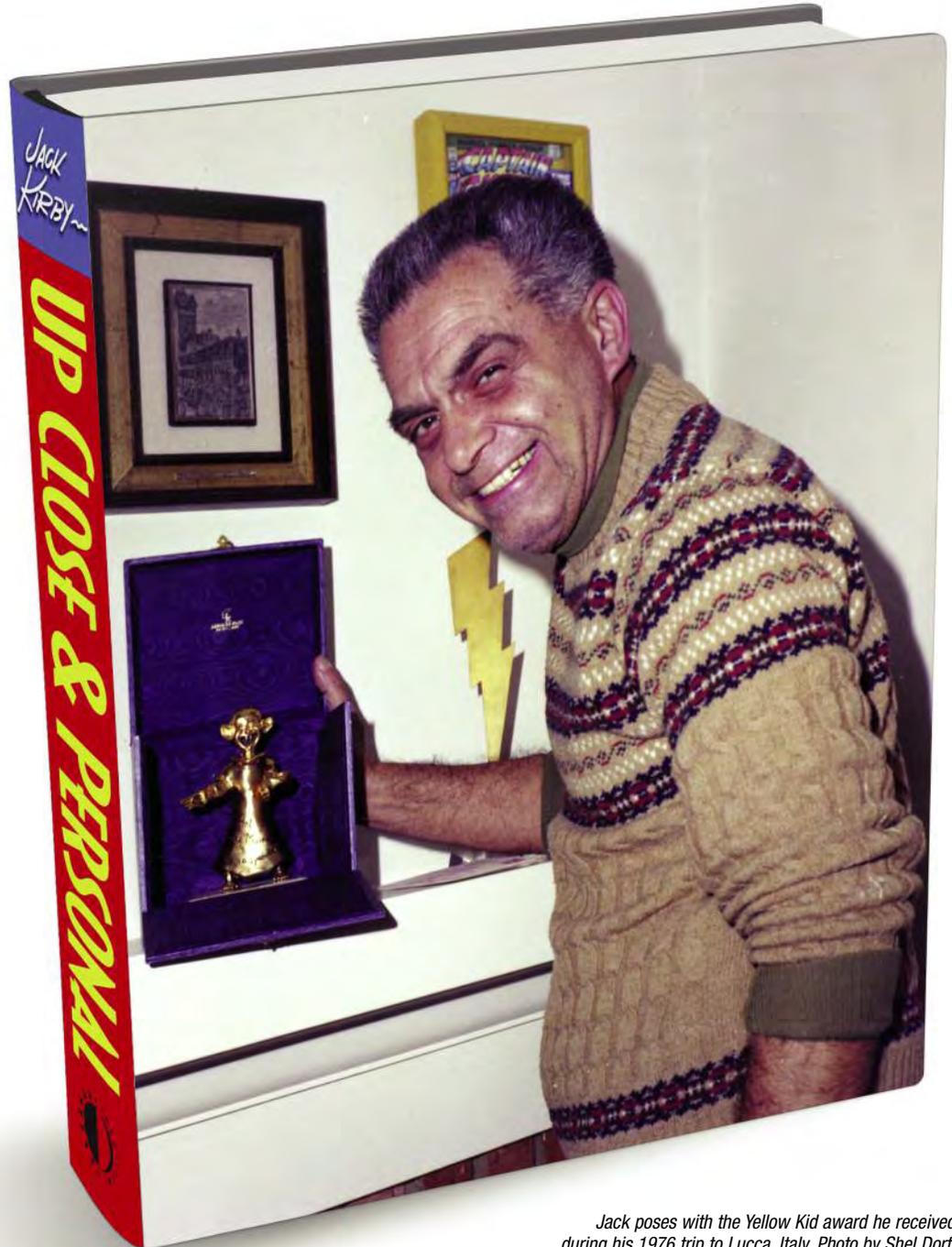
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THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR



ISSUE #67, SPRING 2016



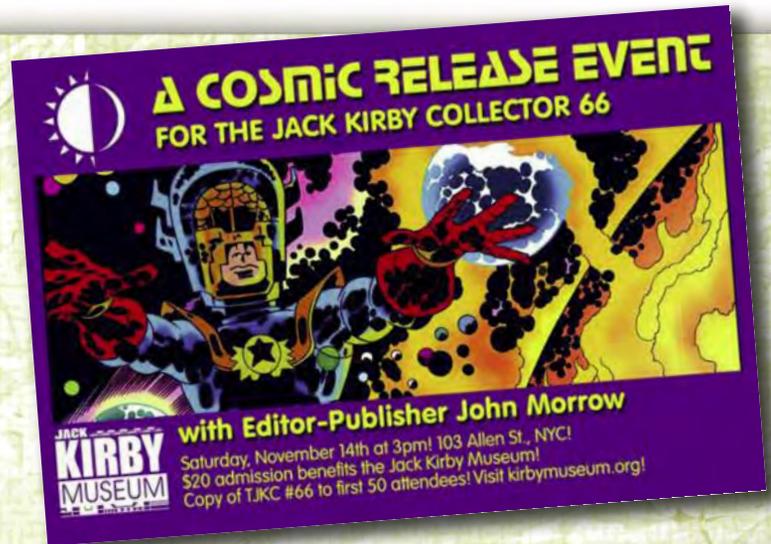
Jack poses with the Yellow Kid award he received during his 1976 trip to Lucca, Italy. Photo by Shel Dorf.

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JACK KIRBY: YESTERDAY,

To kick off the Jack Kirby Museum's Pop-Up exhibit (November 11-19, 2015) in Jack's old neighborhood on the Lower East Side of New York, I put together a video "scrapbook" of my recollections of the man, his work, and his influence on my life and career. I presented it during the Pop-Up's opening weekend release party for *TJKC* #66, and the whole whirlwind weekend experience was a blast for me.

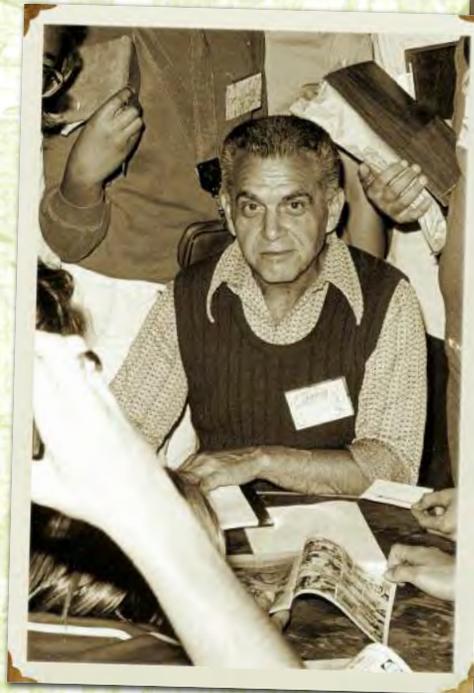


From the event itself, to walking around Jack's childhood stomping grounds with Rand Hoppe and Tom Kraft (including finding the building Jack was born in), you could feel Kirby everywhere. And the feedback I received on my presentation was so positive, that rather than let all the hard work and research languish, for this "up close and personal" issue, I proudly present an expanded print version here. I hope you enjoy this trip down my personal Kirby memory lane.



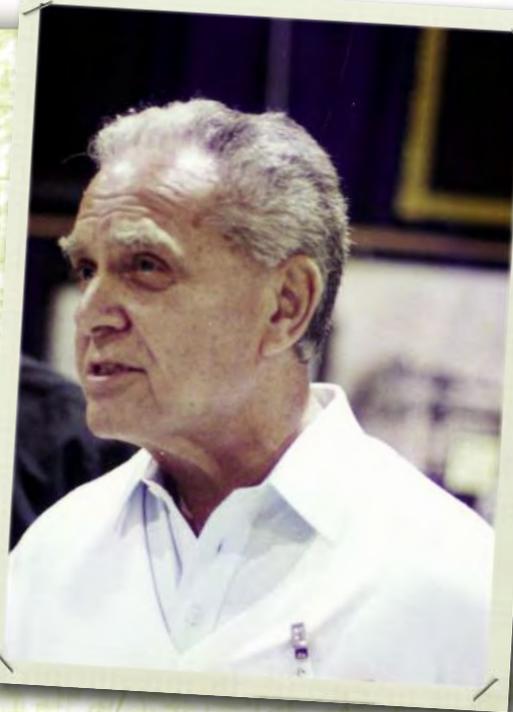
WAS BORN IN 1962, SO MY EXPOSURE TO KIRBY CAME LATER THAN MANY OF YOU. BUT MY ONE ENCOUNTER WITH HIM, LITERALLY CHANGED THE COURSE OF MY LIFE.

BY PRODUCING THE **JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR** FOR OVER 20 YEARS, I'VE ACCUMULATED A WIDE ARRAY OF PHOTOS AND ART. HERE IS JACK BEING MOBBED AT AN EARLY 1970s SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON, MINGLING WITH FANS, AND TALKING WITH GOLDEN AGE GREAT **DON RICO**.



TODAY, & TWOMORROWS

by editor
John Morrow



A FEW OF MY OTHER FAVORITES ARE HERE. WHAT LUCKY PERSON OWNS THAT GIANT CAPTAIN VICTORY ILLO TODAY?

FRANK MILLER WAS A BIG SUPPORTER OF JACK DURING HIS ORIGINAL ART BATTLE WITH MARVEL. HERE THEY ARE AT JACK'S 70TH BIRTHDAY PARTY.

DON'T YOU WISH YOU WERE THERE WHEN JACK MET **FRANK ZAPPA**?

AND I WAS DELIGHTED TO GET TO KNOW JACK'S WIFE **ROZ KIRBY**. NO ONE TOOK BETTER CARE OF HIM.



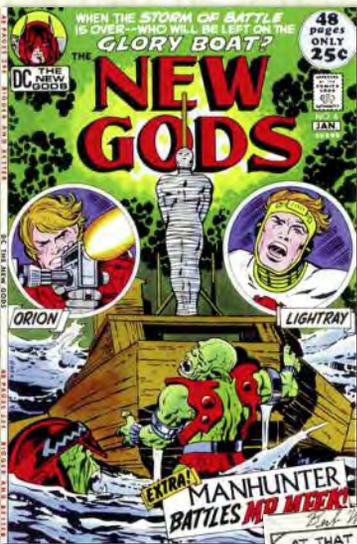
LOOKING BACK NOW, IT SEEMS INEVITABLE I'D END UP PRODUCING A PUBLICATION ABOUT HIM. I'M AMAZED HOW MY LIFE LED UP TO IT. AND TO THINK IT ALL STARTED WITH...

...A GRASSHOPPER?!



OKAY, A GIANT GRASSHOPPER, NAMED **KLIKLAK**. IN 1973, I WAS IN MY HOMETOWN OF MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, TRADING COMICS WITH MY BEST FRIEND MATT. SOMEHOW A COPY OF **KAMANDI** #12 ENDED UP IN MY STACK.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHO THE ARTIST WAS, AND I IMMEDIATELY HATED THE UGLY SQUARE KNEES AND FINGERS, AND LACK OF SUPER-HEROES. BUT BY THE LAST PAGE, WHILE I WASN'T YET A **KAMANDI** FAN, I WAS IMPRESSED WITH THIS KIRBY GUY, WHO'D MADE ME ENJOY A COMIC I WAS SURE I WOULD HATE. (NOW, IF HE WOULD ONLY DRAW SOME SUPER-HEROES...)

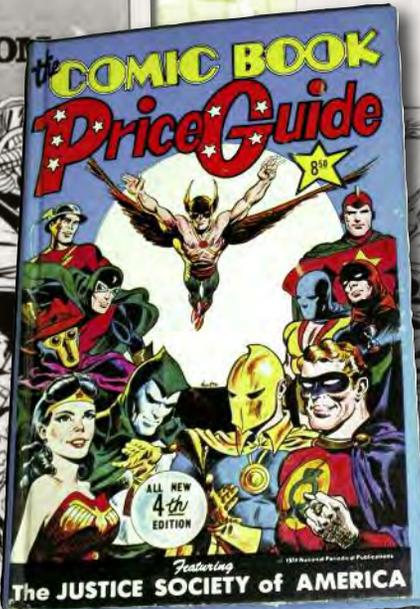


I CUT OUT THE KIRBY FIGURES AND MADE MY OWN STORY SCENES. AND I BECAME OBSESSED WITH FINDING OUT WHAT THIS "FOURTH WORLD" THING WAS. (MY FIRST PAGE OF ORIGINAL ART WAS FROM **NEW GODS** #9, WITH ONE OF MY FAVORITE KIRBY POSES ON IT.)



ONE NIGHT IN EARLY 1974, MY AUNT GAVE ME A STACK OF COMIC BOOKS HER BOYFRIEND NO LONGER WANTED. ON TOP WAS **NEW GODS** #6. THE TITLE SOUNDED SACRILEGIOUS, AND I WAS A LITTLE AFRAID TO OPEN IT. BUT "THE GLORY BOAT" BLEW... MY... MIND! I READ IT REPEATEDLY, BUT STILL WASN'T SATISFIED. I HAD TO HAVE MORE! ISSUE #9 WAS ALSO THERE, AND I DEVoured IT.





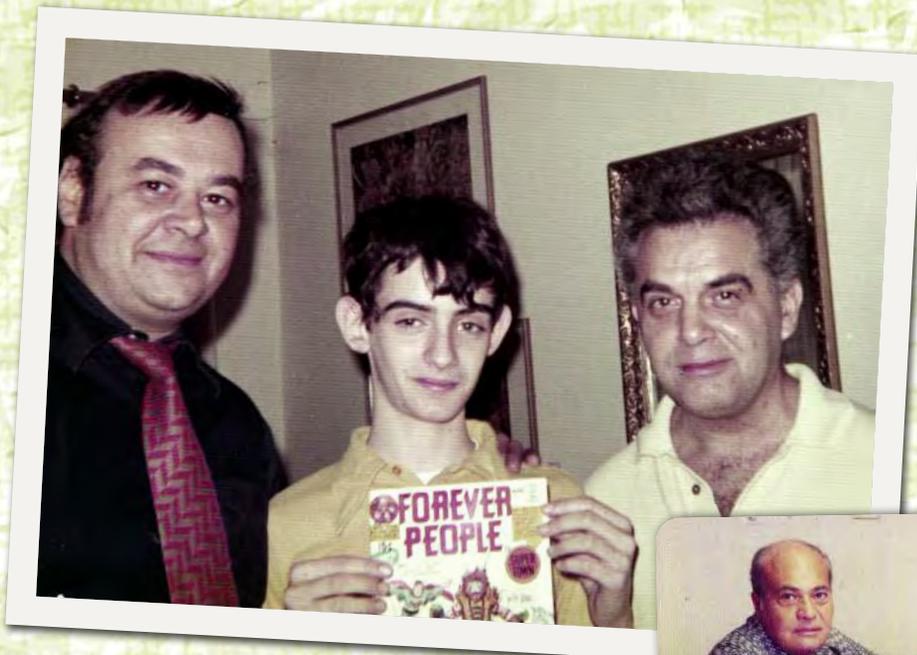
I STARTED SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION ON JACK, AND THE **OVERSTREET PRICE GUIDE** HELPED ME SEE HOW FAR-REACHING HIS CAREER WAS. I SUBSCRIBED TO **THE BUYER'S GUIDE**, AND SAW ADS FOR KIRBY COMICS FOR SALE. IT WAS ALSO A GREAT PLACE TO READ ABOUT PEOPLE WHO MET JACK AT THE **SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**. BUT I WAS NEVER ABLE TO CONVINCE MY PARENTS TO TAKE ME THERE SO I COULD MEET HIM MYSELF.

I LEARNED THAT JACK WAS REGULARLY HOSTING FANS IN HIS CALIFORNIA LIVING ROOM, IN MEET-UPS COORDINATED BY COMIC-CON CO-FOUNDER **SHEL DORF**.



HERE'S SHEL IN A 1973 PHOTO WITH JACK.

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT KID IN THE CHAIR ABOVE?



THAT'S **BARRY ALFONZO**, THE VISUAL INSPIRATION FOR WITCHBOY FROM *THE DEMON*.

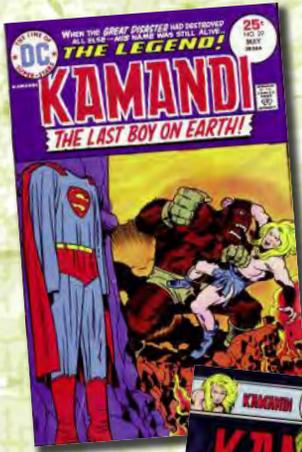
HERE HE IS IN 1973, WITH **CARMINE INFANTINO** AND **JACK**.

LET'S LOOK BACK TO THE **1975 SAN DIEGO CON**, WHERE **JACK** WAS HOLDING A CHALK TALK. WATCH HOW HE PROGRESSES FROM THE BARE BONES OF A FIGURE WITH NO REAL GUIDELINES, TO A FINISHED PIECE, ALL IN MARKER.



THESE AREN'T FULLY RENDERED DRAWINGS, AS **JACK** DID HIS BEST WORK ALONE IN HIS STUDIO, WHERE HE COULD FOCUS ON WHATEVER MAGIC WENT ON IN HIS HEAD.





MEANWHILE, IN SUMMER 1975, I WAS STUCK AT MY GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE IN FLORIDA, BORED OUT OF MY MIND. RUMMAGING THROUGH A BASKET OF OLD MAGAZINES, I FOUND A COPY OF **KAMANDI** #29. TO THIS DAY, I HAVE NO IDEA HOW IT GOT THERE, BUT THIS ISSUE SOLD ME ON **KAMANDI**, AND I MADE IT A REGULAR PURCHASE. IRONICALLY, THE FIRST NEW ISSUE I FOUND WAS #34, WITH A JOE KUBERT COVER, NEAR THE END OF JACK'S RUN.



PLEASE PARDON THE FRONTAL NUDITY. IN 1976, I BOUGHT **THE STERANKO HISTORY OF COMICS** AND SAW THIS AMAZING KIRBY PENCIL PIECE IN IT. SO ON THAT VERY HOT LABOR DAY WEEKEND, I CONVINCED MY DAD TO LET ME PAINT A SWIPE OF CAPTAIN AMERICA ON MY BEDROOM DOOR WHILE I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT WATCHING **THE JERRY LEWIS TELETHON**.



CAROUND THAT TIME, I CAME DOWN WITH CHICKEN POX, AND WAS STUCK HOME ALONE. BUT I HAD RECENTLY ORDERED MOST OF KIRBY'S **FOURTH WORLD** BACK ISSUES, AND THEY ARRIVED THAT WEEK.

THOSE BOOKS WERE JUST THE THING TO MAKE ME FORGET MY ITCHING—AND TO FANTASIZE ABOUT GETTING A FAR WORSE ILLNESS, SO JACK WOULD HEAR ABOUT IT AND VISIT, TO DRAW A MURAL OF ALL HIS **FOURTH WORLD** CHARACTERS ON MY BEDROOM WALL. SADLY, IT NEVER HAPPENED.)

THEN, IN 1977, IT FINALLY HAPPENED! MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA HOSTED **MONTCON '77**, MY FIRST COMICS CONVENTION! AND WHO WAS THE SPECIAL GUEST? YOU GUESSED IT: THE ONE, THE ONLY...



...C.C. BECK!

OKAY, HE WASN'T JACK KIRBY, BUT AS CO-CREATOR OF **CAPTAIN MARVEL**, HE WAS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN COMICS HISTORY. C.C. EVEN DID A GREAT SKETCH OF THE BIG RED CHEESE FOR ME.



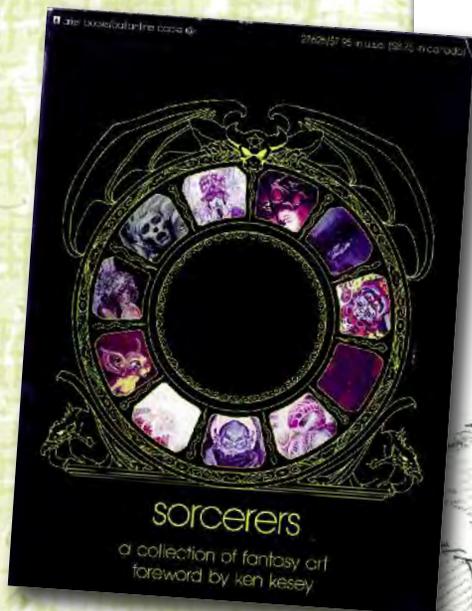
I WAS SELLING **SUPER-HERO SWIPE DRAWINGS**, SET UP NEXT TO C.C.'S TABLE. A LOCAL NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHER WAS THERE, AND C.C. SUGGESTED INCLUDING ME IN THE SHOT, AND USING MY BOOTH AS A BACKDROP. THIS PHOTO WAS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF OUR SUNDAY NEWSPAPER, WHICH CAPPED OFF A PRETTY GREAT FIRST CONVENTION.

(SEE IF YOU CAN SPOT MY KIRBY SWIPES OF **OMAC** AND **MISTER MIRACLE**. NO TRACING HERE; I DID EVERYTHING FREEHAND. AND NOTICE I ALSO HAD ON A T-SHIRT SPORTING KIRBY'S COVER IMAGE FROM **CAPTAIN AMERICA #193**.)



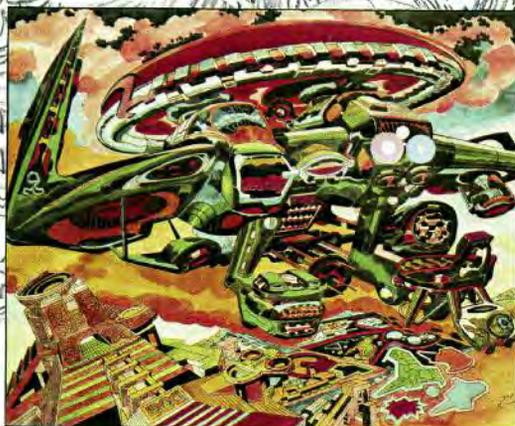
AT THE CON, I PICKED UP A COPY OF **KIRBY UNLEASHED**, AND THESE TWO **B&W KIRBY POSTERS** A DEALER WAS SELLING FOR 50¢ EACH.

THIS KIRBY ART IS FROM THE 1978 BOOK *SORCERERS*, WHICH TAUGHT ME MORE ABOUT JACK. AND AROUND THIS TIME, I DISCOVERED JACK HAD DONE A SERIES OF WAR STORIES IN *THE LOSERS*.



I CONTINUED TO PICK-UP ODDBALL KIRBY ITEMS WHEN I RAN ACROSS THEM, LIKE A *PEOPLE* TABLOID THAT PRINTED A FLOPPED VERSION OF THIS GREAT KIRBY CAP PIECE.

(I GUESS THEY FLOPPED IT TO KEEP FROM SHOWING A SWASTIKA PROMINENTLY IN THEIR MAG.)



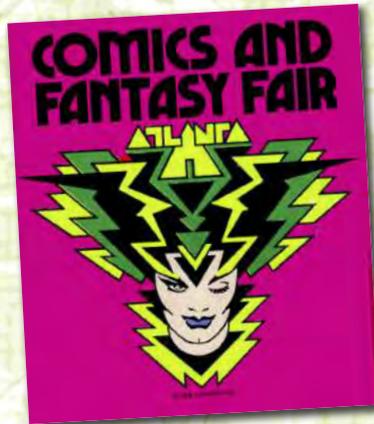
IN 1978, THE MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF ART WAS INEXPLICABLY INCLUDED IN A TRAVELING EXHIBIT OF COMIC BOOK AND STRIP ART, AND I GOT TO SEE MY FIRST KIRBY ORIGINAL ART PAGE ("FOREVER PEOPLE" FROM *KIRBY UNLEASHED*). IT LEFT ME SO INSPIRED, I WENT HOME AND DECIDED, IF JACK WASN'T GOING TO FINISH HIS FOURTH WORLD SAGA, I'D DO IT FOR HIM!

I GOT A COVER AND TWO PAGES INTO IT BEFORE I GAVE UP, GAINING A NEW APPRECIATION FOR WHAT A HARD WORKER KIRBY WAS.





IN SUMMER 1978, I ATTENDED MY FIRST MAJOR COMICS CONVENTION, THE ATLANTA FANTASY FAIR, AND PICKED UP THE KIRBY MASTERWORKS PORTFOLIO FROM JIM STERANKO'S SUPERGRAPHICS TABLE.



I MET STAN LEE, AND JACK'S NEW SILVER SURFER GRAPHIC NOVEL PAGES WERE ON DISPLAY. BUT I OVERHEARD SOME MARVEL STAFFERS MAKE DISPARAGING COMMENTS ABOUT HOW JACK HAD "LOST IT" AND COULDN'T PRODUCE DECENT WORK ANYMORE. I WAS STUNNED.



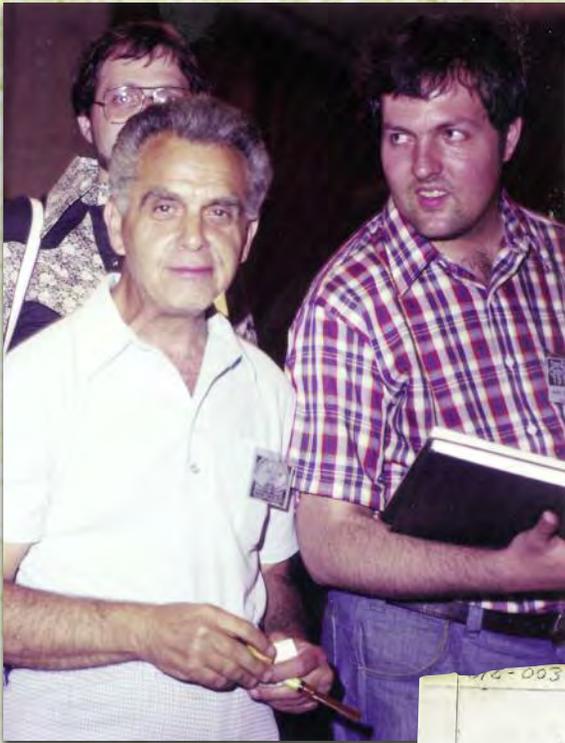
(I DIDN'T KNOW IT AT THE TIME, BUT MARVEL EVEN CHOSE TO OMIT JACK'S AMAZING COVER ILLU, IN FAVOR OF AN EARL NOREM PAINTING. I WOULD'VE GONE WITH THE KIRBY VERSION.)



IT WAS MY FIRST TASTE OF ANTI-KIRBY SENTIMENT.

(DOES THIS LOOK TO YOU LIKE JACK HAD "LOST IT"?)





JACK DIDN'T LET IT GET HIM DOWN. HE WAS STILL ATTENDING THE SAN DIEGO CON, SURROUNDED BY DEVOTED FRIENDS AND FANS. THIS MID-1970S PHOTO SHOWS JACK WITH **MARK EVANIER**, AND **MARY WOLFMAN** PEERING OVER HIS HEAD.



HE COULD STILL CHALK TALK WITH THE BEST OF THEM, BUT IT WAS BECOMING APPARENT THERE WASN'T A PLACE FOR HIM IN COMICS ANYMORE. SO HE FOUND WORK AS AN ANIMATION STORYBOARD ARTIST AND CONCEPT DESIGNER ON SHOWS LIKE **THUNDARR THE BARBARIAN** AND OTHER RUBY-SPEARS PROJECTS.

HE ALSO KEPT A TOE IN COMICS WITH **CAPTAIN VICTORY**, WHICH LAUNCHED THE DIRECT MARKET FOR COMICS DISTRIBUTION.



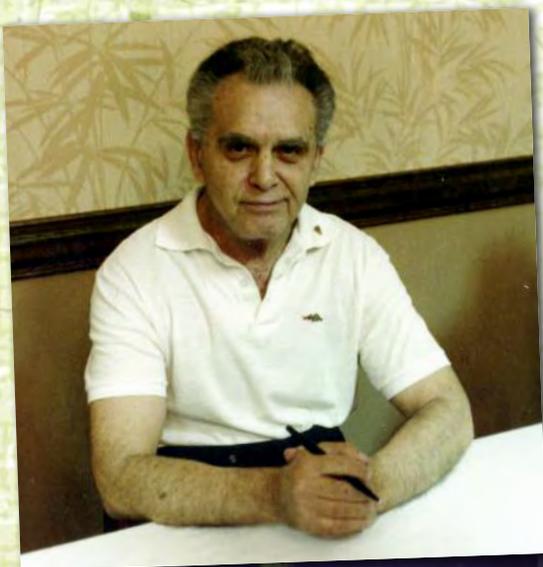
HERE'S CLOSE FRIEND AND CAPTAIN VICTORY INKER **MIKE THIBODEAUX** IN THE EARLY 1980s, WITH JACK AND ROZ IN JACK'S STUDIO.



AND HERE'S **STEVE ROBERTSON**, WHO HELPED MIKE WITH INKING BY FILLING IN SOLID BLACK AREAS AND CLEANING UP PAGES.



GOOD FRIENDS AND FANS WERE EVERYWHERE. JACK AND ROZ EVEN TRAVELED CROSS-COUNTRY TO ATTEND THE SMALL 1985 ACME COMICS CONVENTION IN GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, AT THE REQUEST OF FRIEND **JIM AMASH**.



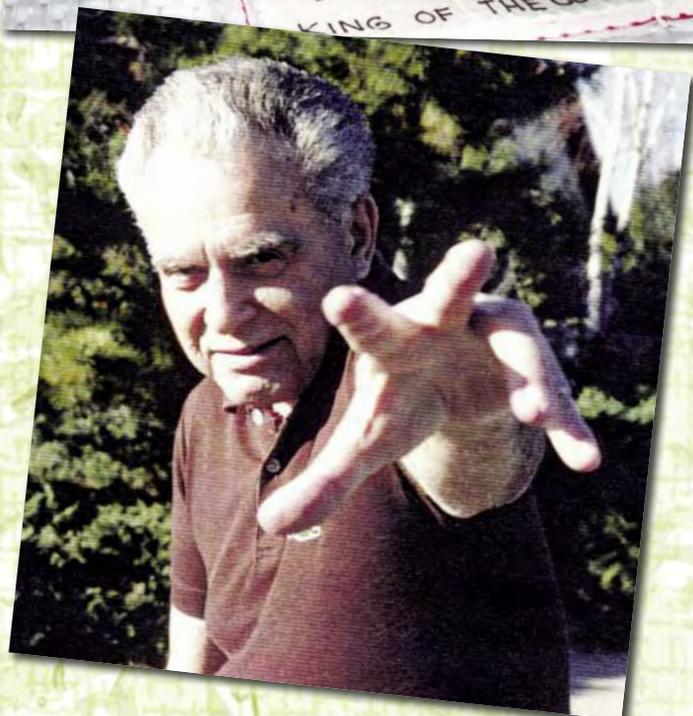
THEY'RE SHOWN ABOVE WITH **JIM** AND **JULIE SCHWARTZ**, WHO ALSO MADE THE TRIP OUT. (SADLY, I DIDN'T MOVE TO NC UNTIL THE FOLLOWING YEAR, SO JUST MISSED MEETING HIM.)



IN 1987, FRIENDS THREW JACK A SURPRISE 70TH BIRTHDAY PARTY DURING THAT YEAR'S SAN DIEGO CON.

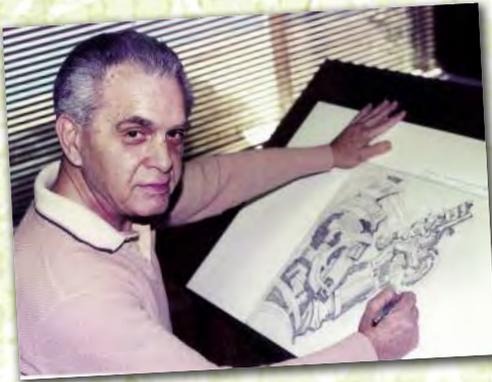


BACK HOME IN CALIFORNIA, **DR. MARK MILLER** WAS ONE OF MANY FRIENDS WELCOMED INTO THE KIRBY HOUSEHOLD THROUGHOUT THE 1980s.



JACK ALWAYS FOUND TIME TO CLOWN AROUND, LIKE WHEN HE LET LOOSE WITH FANS AT A 1990 CFA-APA PARTY.

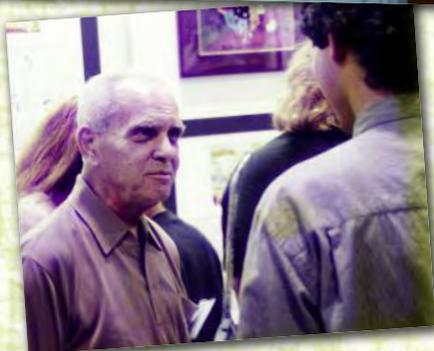
AFTER A TUMULTUOUS BATTLE WITH MARVEL COMICS, HE FINALLY GOT BACK A SMALL PORTION OF THE ORIGINAL ART HE DREW FOR THE COMPANY...



...AND SPENT HIS TWILIGHT YEARS DOING COMMISSIONED ART FOR FANS, AND ENJOYING A SLOWER PACE.



THINGS WERE ANYTHING BUT SLOW FOR ME BACK EAST. IN THE 1980s, I GRADUATED ALBURN UNIVERSITY WITH A FINE ARTS DEGREE AFTER DEVELOPING THE SKILLS I'D LEARNED BY SWIPING KIRBY IMAGES. MY WIFE PAM AND I MARRIED IN 1987, JUST AFTER GRADUATION & HAVING MOVED TO RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA TO WORK FOR DIFFERENT AD AGENCIES. WE FOUND ENOUGH FREELANCE WORK TO START OUR OWN COMPANY, **TWOMORROWS ADVERTISING**, IN 1991.



BY THEN, JACK WAS OUT OF THE COMICS FIELD, AND TAKING HIS VICTORY LAP PROMOTING HIS BIOGRAPHY **THE ART OF JACK KIRBY**, BUT THERE WASN'T MUCH LEFT IN COMICS TO HOLD MY INTEREST. SO I SOLD MOST OF MY COMICS TO HELP FUND THE DOWN-PAYMENT ON OUR FIRST HOME, ONLY KEEPING MY KIRBY FOURTH WORLD BOOKS, AND A HANDFUL OF OTHERS.



STILL, THE DESIRE TO MEET JACK KIRBY NEVER DIED, AND IN SUMMER 1991, WE TRAVELED TO THE SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON, WHERE I FINALLY MET MY IDOL.

FEBRUARY 7, 1994

Jack Kirby, a hero among superheroes

By David Landis
USA TODAY

Jack Kirby, from whose fertile mind sprang such comic creations as the Fantastic Four and the Incredible Hulk, died Sunday of heart failure in Thousand Oaks, Calif. He was 76.

From Captain America in 1940 to a universe of superheroes for Marvel Comics in the 1960s, Kirby was "kind of a walking idea machine," says TV writer and former Kirby assistant Mark Evanier.

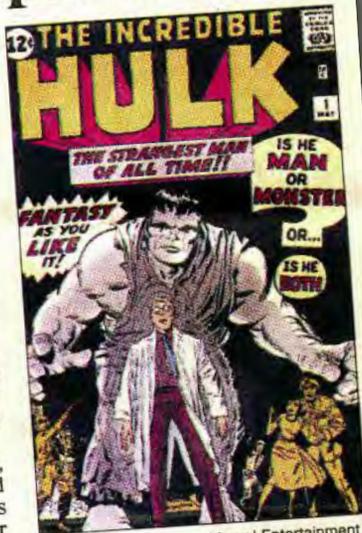
The prolific Kirby, whose career spanned more than 50 years, is credited with creating or co-creating more than 400 characters.

"For someone to have been around that long, and for every decade to have new titles and new characters come out — it's phenomenal," says Jim Salicrup, editor in chief of Topps Comics.

Kirby was best known for his work with writer and editor Stan Lee. They populated the Marvel universe with such superheroes as Silver Surfer, X-Men and the Hulk.

But his hits range back to the early days of comic books when, with Joe Simon, he created Captain America and Boy Commandos.

In a 1993 survey of comic



Marvel Entertainment

APPRECIATION

book creators by *Comics Buyers Guide*, Kirby was voted the most influential creator by a wide margin.

Kirby was one of the artists credited with reinventing superheroes during the late 1950s and '60s by portraying them as more human, even vulnerable.

"Jack managed to do stories about monsters from outer space and people from other planets, but the people in his stories were always recognizable humans for whom he had compassion," says Evanier.

MY OLD COMICS BUDDY WHO'D TRADED ME THAT *KAMANDI* #12, READ OF JACK'S PASSING AND FAXED ME THE *USA TODAY* CLIPPING. I WAS DEVASTATED, BUT GLAD THAT I'D HAD THE CHANCE TO MEET HIM AND EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION.

I TRACKED DOWN A COPY OF *COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE* AND READ INDUSTRY TRIBUTES TO HIM. THAT MOVED ME TO RE-READ MY REMAINING KIRBY COMICS OVER THE SPRING, AND INSPIRED ME TO START A JACK KIRBY FANZINE. I FIGURED, "HEY, IF IT LASTS A HALF-DOZEN ISSUES, IT'LL BE FUN, AND A WAY TO SHARE MY APPRECIATION OF KIRBY WITH OTHER FANS. SURELY HE STILL HAS A FEW OUT THERE..."



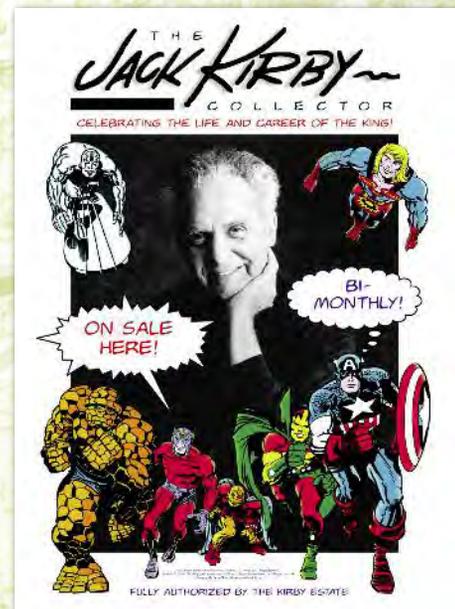
SO I DESIGNED A MODEST 16-PAGE NEWSLETTER, AND SENT IT OFF TO ROZ KIRBY FOR APPROVAL. I HAND-XEROXED 125 COPIES, AND ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1994, MAILED THEM TO PEOPLE WHO'D WRITTEN LETTERS INTO *CBG* WHEN JACK PASSED. THEN I WAITED TO SEE IF IT WOULD GET ANY RESPONSE.

TO SAY I WAS OVERWHELMED WOULD BE A COSMIC UNDERSTATEMENT. MAIL POURED IN: FIRST A FEW LETTERS, THEN DOZENS EACH MONTH, FROM PEOPLE WHO'D DISCOVERED *TJKC* THROUGH WORD OF MOUTH, AND WANTED TO SHARE AN ANECDOTE, OR ART FROM THEIR COLLECTIONS.

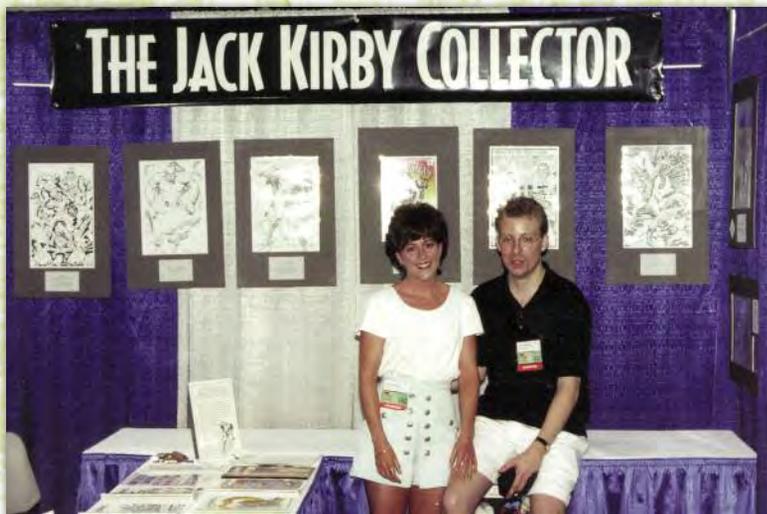
BY ISSUE #6, I TRIED A DOUBLE-SIZE ISSUE, SPOTLIGHTING THE FOURTH WORLD. WITH SO MANY PAGES, XEROXING WAS NO LONGER FEASIBLE, SO I GAMBLED ON HAVING THEM PRINTED.

WE ALSO PRODUCED A COLOR POSTER FOR THE GROWING NUMBER OF RETAILERS WHO WERE ORDERING *TJKC* DIRECTLY FROM US.

BY ISSUE #8, WE HAD COLOR COVERS AND INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION TO COMICS SHOPS.



AS SUMMER 1995 APPROACHED, WITH PRINTING BILLS TO PAY, WE SET OFF TO PROMOTE THE MAG. WE STUFFED AS MANY COPIES OF *TJKC* INTO OUR SUITCASES AS POSSIBLE TO SAVE ON SHIPPING. I HAND-COLORED GIANT B&W XEROXES OF MY FAVORITE ORION AND CAPTAIN AMERICA DRAWINGS. ALONG WITH A MAKESHIFT ART DISPLAY, WE HEADED OFF TO *HEROES CON* IN NORTH CAROLINA, THE *DALLAS FANTASY FAIR*, AND THE *SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON*.



AT EVERY EVENT, WE WERE TREATED LIKE ROYALTY, AS FANS FLOCKED TO OUR BOOTH, SNATCHED UP EVERY COPY WE BROUGHT, AND TALKED KIRBY. THE *SCI-FI CHANNEL* EVEN USED OUR BOOTH AS A BACKDROP FOR A FEATURE THEY WERE FILMING AT COMIC-CON.

WE ADDED HUNDREDS OF SIGNATURES TO *DR. MARK MILLER'S PETITION* TO GET KIRBY CREDIT AT MARVEL COMICS.

Let's give something back to someone who has given us so much. Let's give Jack Kirby something as simple as a little credit!

Please join me in signing your name to the letter below, or write your own letter to Terry Stewart, President of Marvel Comics.

Terry Stewart, President
Marvel Comics Company
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016 USA

Dear Terry,

Count me among the fans of Marvel Comics who feel that Jack Kirby deserves a little credit for helping to create the Marvel Universe. Without the creative teamwork of Stan Lee and Jack Kirby I might never have known a world filled with the Fantastic Four, The Silver Surfer, The X-Men, The Avengers, Thor, Sgt. Fury, or the Hulk. On these titles and with other characters developed by Stan and Jack, I ask that you place the by-line "Created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby." This would serve as a long overdue tribute to the genius of their teamwork. Just as Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster will always be formally identified as the creators of Superman, I would like to see Jack Kirby and Stan Lee afforded a similar tribute for their many contributions to the Marvel Universe.

Sincerely,

Note: This ad copy was prepared prior to Jack's death. For more information regarding this letter writing campaign, please contact:

Dr. Mark Miller
6466 S.W. Barnes Rd.
Portland, OR 97221 USA



BUT THE HIGHLIGHT OF OUR SUMMER CONVENTION TOUR WAS *MEETING JACK'S WIFE ROZ* IN PERSON AT COMIC-CON, AND VISITING HER AT HOME.

ENERGIZED BY IT ALL, I PLUGGED ALONG WITH THE *KIRBY COLLECTOR*, MAKING LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS, AND RELINING WITH OLD ONES. LITTLE BY LITTLE, MY PET PROJECT GREW INTO A FLEDGLING PUBLISHING COMPANY, WITH NEW PUBLICATIONS INSPIRED BY JACK'S LEGACY.



TWOMORROWS KEPT GROWING, EVEN ADDING TWO LITTLE MORROWS TO THE MIX. OUR MAGAZINE LINE GREW AS WELL, FIRST WITH *COMIC BOOK ARTIST*, CONCEIVED BY TJKC ASSOCIATE EDITOR *JON B. COOKE* TO BE A "KIRBY COLLECTOR" FOR OTHER ARTISTS. IT ENDED UP WINNING SEVERAL EISNER AWARDS FOR US.

SADLY, ON DECEMBER 22, 1997, WE LOST *ROZ KIRBY*. SHE WAS LAID TO REST NEXT TO HER BELOVED JACK.



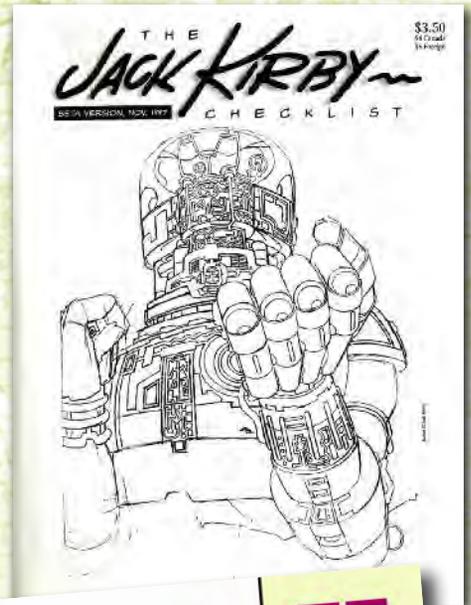
THERE WERE A FEW MISSTEPS ALONG THE WAY. FOR SUBSCRIBERS, I HAND-XEROXED A UNIQUE MAILING ENVELOPE FOR EACH ISSUE. WHEN I USED JACK'S PENCIL DRAWING OF THE RED SKULL FROM *MARVEL PREMIERE* #30'S COVER, I GOT ANGRY LETTERS FROM READERS, WHO WERE WORRIED THEIR MAILMAN WOULD THINK THEY WERE NEO-NAZIS.

(GUESS I SHOULD'VE REMEMBERED THE EXAMPLE OF THAT 1970s *PEOPLE* TABLOID.)

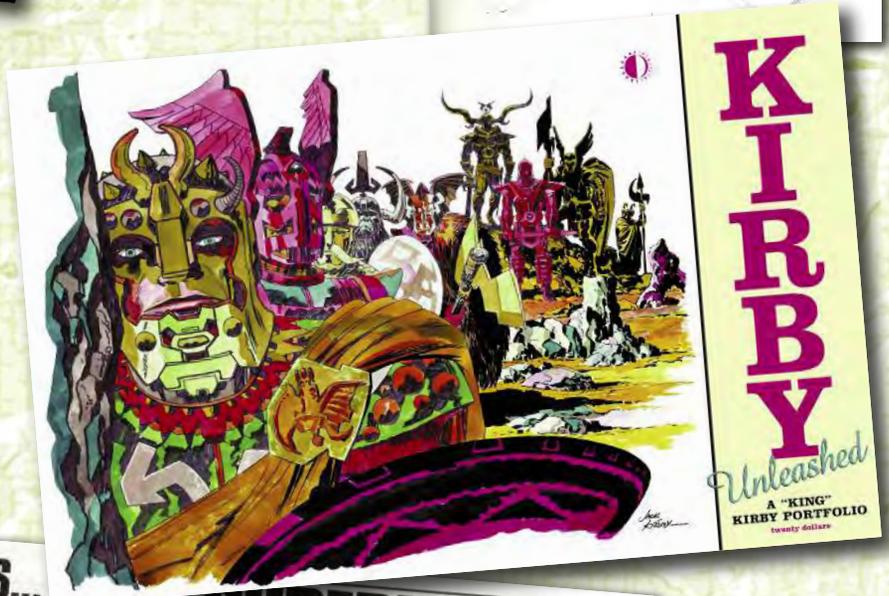
WE DOCUMENTED AS MUCH OF KIRBY'S CREATIVE LEGACY AS POSSIBLE, BY UPDATING THE KIRBY CHECKLIST FROM RAY WYMAN'S *ART OF JACK KIRBY* BOOK.



AND AFTER FINALLY TRACKING DOWN ALL OF JACK'S ORIGINAL NEW GODS CONCEPT DRAWINGS, WE RELEASED A LIMITED EDITION PORTFOLIO OF THOSE PLATES CALLED **DEITIES**.



KIRBY UNLEASHED HAD BEEN A FAVORITE OF MINE, SO TWOMORROWS RELEASED A REMASTERED VERSION, GOING BACK TO THE ORIGINAL ART FOR BETTER REPRODUCTION. FINALLY FANS COULD SEE THE GORGEOUS COVER ART AS JACK DREW IT.



PLUS THESE NEW FEATURES...

SCREENED! a provocative look at movies by HARLAN ELLISON

KYNIN THE FINN The UNCENSORED Exploits of **HELEN DAMNATION**

THE PHONE A New Twist To The BIZARRE!

EMILE FADEOUT • Antique Movie Star •

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CONTRVERSIAL INTERVIEWS A VISUAL LOOK AT EVERYTHING

COPYCAT (by O.G. Bibbs)

SUPERWORLD 1

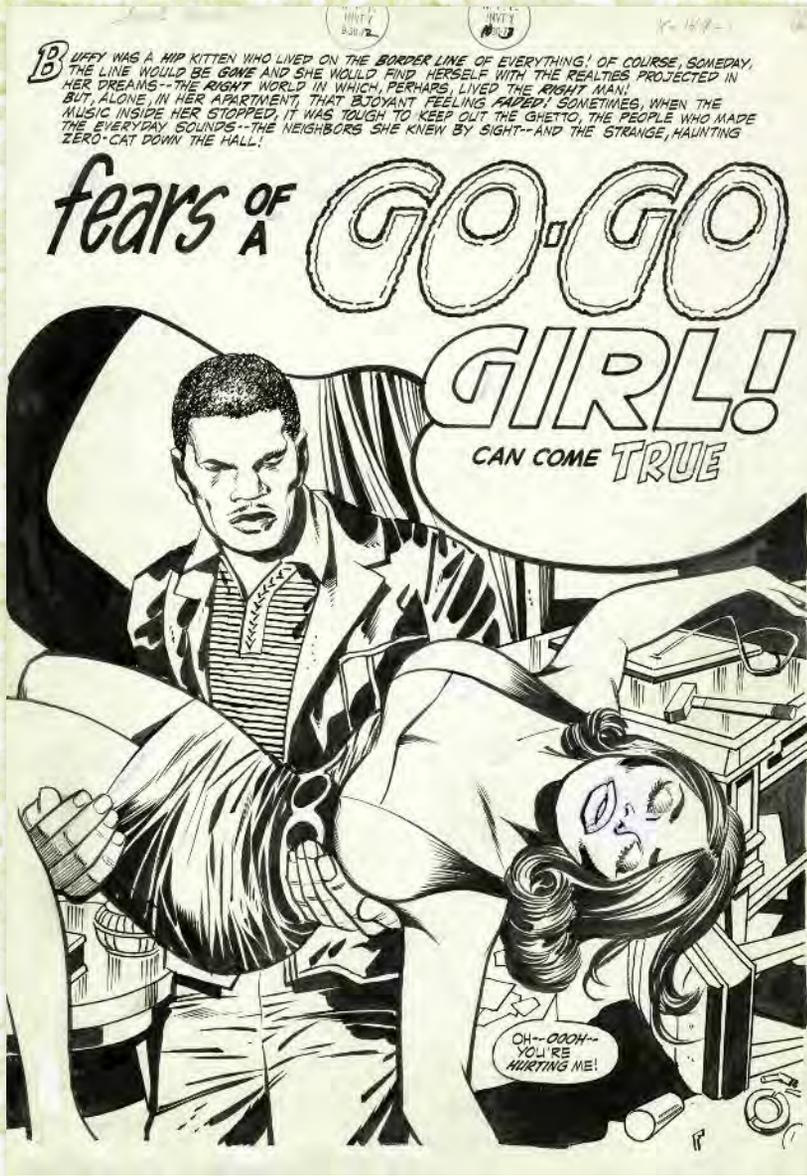
OF EVERYTHING

PHOTO-ADVENTURES! **MOVIES—PAST & PRESENT!**

CONTENTS COPYRIGHT © 1971 BY JACK KIRBY

I'M ESPECIALLY PROUD OF DOCUMENTING OBSCURE ARTIFACTS FROM JACK'S CAREER, SUCH AS *SUPERWORLD OF EVERYTHING*.

(THE BEST THING THAT CAME OUT OF IT HAS TO BE *GALAXY GREEN*, THE CLOSEST JACK EVER GOT TO DOING UNDERGROUND COMIX.)



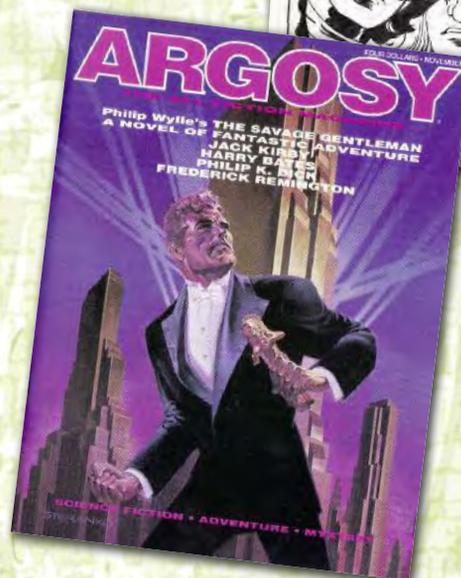
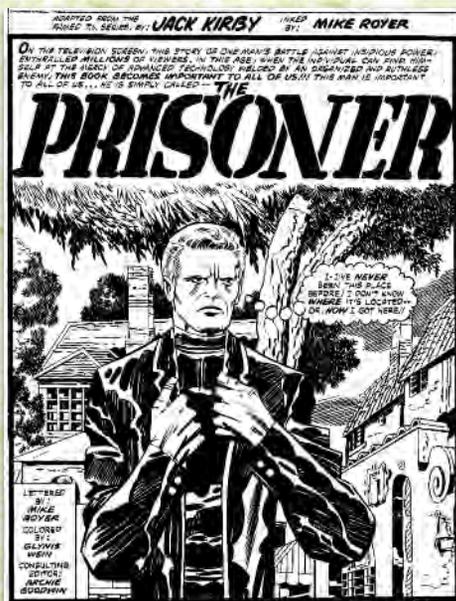
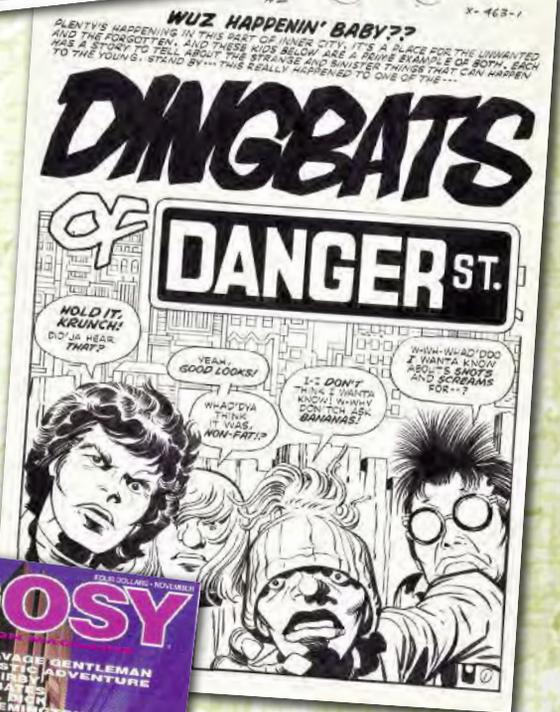
BUFFY WAS A HIP KITTEN WHO LIVED ON THE BORDER LINE OF EVERYTHING! OF COURSE, SOMEDAY, THE LINE WOULD BE GONE AND SHE WOULD FIND HERSELF WITH THE REALITIES PROJECTED IN HER DREAMS--THE RIGHT WORLD IN WHICH, PERHAPS, LIVED THE RIGHT MAN! BUT, ALONE IN HER APARTMENT THAT ELOYANT FEELING RARELY SOMETIMES, WHEN THE MUSIC INSIDE HER STOPPED, IT WAS TOUGH TO KEEP OUT THE GHETTO, THE PEOPLE WHO MADE THE EVERYDAY SOUNDS--THE NEIGHBORS SHE KNEW BY SIGHT--AND THE STRANGE, HAUNTING ZERO-CAT DOWN THE HALL!

EVEN MORE FUN WAS DISCOVERING JACK'S TWO UNPUBLISHED MAGAZINES, **TRUE DIVORCE CASES** AND **SOUL LOVE**. **TRUE DIVORCE** FEATURES SOME OF JACK'S SEXIEST WORK EVER IN COMICS.

(AND **SOUL LOVE**... WELL, IT'S SO BAD, IT'S GOOD.)



I HAVE A WEAKNESS FOR KID GANGS, SO TRACKING DOWN TWO UNPUBLISHED **DINGBATS OF DANGER STREET** STORIES WAS A THRILL. AND JACK'S UNSEEN **PRISONER** STORY WAS ANOTHER AMAZING DISCOVERY.



FEW PEOPLE SAW JACK'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STORY "STREET CODE" IN THE OBSCURE **ARGOSY** MAGAZINE. WE PRESENTED IT TO A MUCH LARGER AUDIENCE IN OUR BOOK **STREETWISE**, WHICH WAS BASED AROUND JACK'S STORY, AND WON ANOTHER EISNER AWARD.

Galaxy

NUMBER FOUR
9.24.79
1.500 COPIES

Shadow of the Falcon
JACK KIRBY & JANET BETHUNER
The Luckiest Man
DREG VOSE
I'm Nibbling
Without You
CYNTHIA WARD
Olympus Bar & Grill
CHUCK FOSTERMAN
Centre Premiere
L.E. SILVERSTONE
Afternoon
KENT BIRCHWATER
Good Night,
Mr. James
CLIFFORD D. SEMAK
My Life Among
The Stars
SLO THIMBLE
Nemo But Lucifer
Conclusion
HORACE L. COULD & L. BRADQUETE CAMP
"Facing Bow"
JEAN MARIE STIER

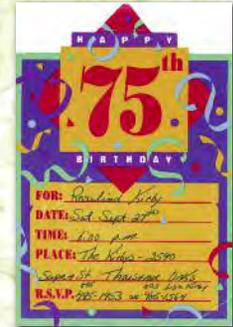


Outline
of
THE HORDE!
by
Jack Kirby

Copyright © 1979 by Jack Kirby

PERHAPS THE LEAST-KNOWN KIRBY PROJECT WE BROUGHT TO LIGHT WAS JACK'S TEXT NOVEL *THE HORDE*. JULIE SCHWARTZ SENT ME A COPY OF THE ISSUE OF *GALAXY MAGAZINE* THAT FEATURED AN EXCERPT FROM IT, AND I WAS ABLE TO CLUE FANS INTO ITS EXISTENCE.

THE KIRBY FAMILY HAS ALWAYS BEEN APPRECIATIVE OF MY EFFORTS TO KEEP JACK'S LEGACY ALIVE. THEY'VE GIFTED ME WITH SOME INTERESTING BITS OF KIRBY MEMORABILIA OVER THE YEARS.



BUT I WAS STUNNED WHEN THEY GAVE ME THE *KLIKLAK* PAGE FROM THE *VALENTINE'S DAY SKETCHBOOK* JACK DREW FOR ROZ IN THE 1970S. NOTHING COULD'VE BEEN MORE FITTING, AND IT'S A CHERISHED ITEM I'LL NEVER PART WITH.



WHEN THE FAMILY WAS SELLING SOME ART SEVERAL YEARS AGO, THE ONLY PIECE I COULD AFFORD WAS A PAGE FROM *CHAMBER OF DARKNESS* #4.

WHEN IT ARRIVED, I NOTICED THE BOTTOM PANEL WAS A PASTE-UP, AND I CAREFULLY REMOVED IT TO FIND *UNUSED KIRBY PENCIL ART UNDERNEATH*.

(I IMMEDIATELY CALLED ROZ AND OFFERED TO SEND IT BACK, SINCE IT WAS WORTH MUCH MORE THAN I'D PAID FOR IT. SHE SAID TO KEEP IT WITH HER BLESSINGS.)



WE'VE ENJOYED FRIENDSHIPS WITH SOME OF THE NICEST PEOPLE IN COMICS...

IT'S BEEN AN HONOR TO HELP THE JACK KIRBY MUSEUM GET OFF THE GROUND. EARLY ON, WE PROVIDED RAND HOPPE SPACE AT OUR CONVENTION BOOTHS FOR SCANNING ART, AND HAVE MADE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP KEEP IT GOING.

(DON'T MAKE RAND SAD; DO YOUR PART TO SUPPORT THE MUSEUM.)



Dear TwoMorrows,
 I received the copy of ALTER EGO. It's not my area of interest so I don't know when I'll get to go through it.
 Regards
 Steve Ditko
 Steve Ditko

...AND EVEN CORRESPONDED WITH A FEW OF THE MORE STAND-OFFISH ONES.



WE'VE GOTTEN TO KNOW MANY OF JACK AND ROZ'S FAMILY MEMBERS AND CLOSEST FRIENDS...



Case 1:10-cv-00141-CM-KNF Document 65-10 Filed 02/25/11 Page 2 of 18

Page 1

JOHN MORROW
 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

-----x

MARVEL WORLDWIDE, INC.,
 MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC.,
 and MLV RIGHTS, LLC,
 Plaintiffs,

vs.

LISA R. KIRBY, BARBARA J. KIRBY, NEAL L. KIRBY and
 SUSAN N. KIRBY,
 Defendants.

-----x

Video Deposition of JOHN MORROW
 (Taken by Plaintiffs)
 Raleigh, North Carolina
 January 10, 2011

reported by: Marisa Kuzos-Vouzakis -
 RMR, CRR and Notary Public

TEG JOB NO. 35702

ESG Reporting - Worldwide 877-702-4880

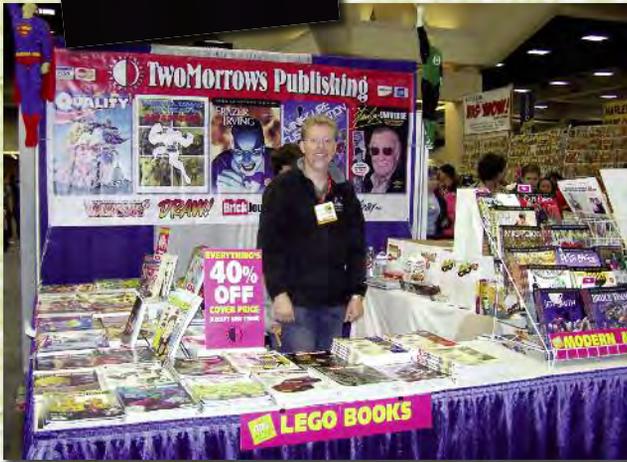
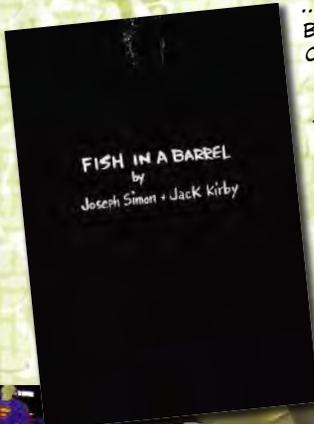
...AND GONE TO BAT TO HELP JACK GET CREDIT FOR HIS CREATIONS.

BUT THERE'S A LONG WAY TO GO WITH **THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR**. WE'RE MAKING NEW DISCOVERIES ALL THE TIME...

...AND OLD ONES, DATING BACK TO THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMICS.

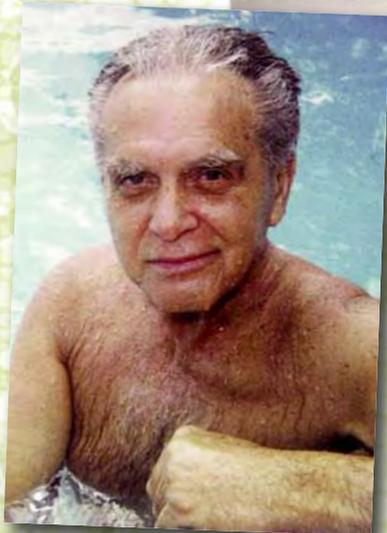
THANKFULLY, WE'VE NEVER RUN OUT OF LOYAL CONTRIBUTORS, FAN AND PRO, WHO WANT TO BE A PART OF **TJKC**.

WITH A LOT OF HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS, TWOMORROWS WILL KEEP ON DOCUMENTING KIRBY'S LEGACY.



AND I NEVER FORGET THAT NO MATTER WHAT OTHER BOOKS WE PUBLISH, OR WHERE IT TAKES US...

...IT ALL COMES BACK TO THIS GUY.



Special thanks go out to everyone who provided photos over the years, including Steve Robertson, Jim Amash, Mark Miller, Shel Dorf, Michael Zuccaro, Mark Blackney, Dennis Johnson, James Van Hise, Jerry Boyd, Rand Hoppe, Joe Frank, and the Kirby Family.



I MET JACK KIRBY.... ...BUT I DID NOT SHOOT THE DEPUTY

by Richard A. Scott

Yes, I am sure you are thinking "yet another remembrance of the King"! Well, if you had experienced the rush of actually meeting this man you would understand. Even the most jaded of us would get weak in the knees or have our brains turn to pools of jelly. (I myself have met 500+ professionals. Meeting Jack has been the highlight.) That is the sort of response that Mr. Kirby would invoke simply by being sighted in a crowd. Now just imagine being in his presence and being able to ask most anything of him. Both the heart and mind race when put to this task!

I met Jack once at the San Diego Comic Con in—please bear with me, I have a Swiss cheese memory. It was 1992 or 1994. I ran across him while he was on his way to another booth to see his legion of fans. Curiously, he was by himself. He had a stack of cards with black-&-white art of his on them. That art was rendered into limited edition bronze statues. The cards had his autograph on them. (See above art.) One was his signature and the other was a copy of his signature on the art.

I saw and stopped Jack (yes, that was rather bold of me indeed). Right then and there time stopped for me. I was basking in

the ever-loving glow of Jack. I have to tell you, I loved every short-lived minute of it. Jack stopped and gave me a few minutes of his time. Oh my God! A personal audience with the King! I got to tell him how much of an influence he has been on my career and life. I got to thank him for all the years of comics material that he produced. I got to tell him how much I appreciated him. After I had my say, he told me a quick story about his run on the *Fantastic Four*. He then informed me that he had to get to the booth he had been heading for. I ended up holding up the line that was waiting for him. (Unintentionally, really!)

I thanked him for his time, as well as telling him what and how much it meant to me. (A lot!) Before he went along his way, he turned and asked me: "Would you like one of my cards?" Of course I quickly said yes! I always wanted to have his signature. Now I had one given directly to me from his very hand! He then went on his way leaving me in his wake, slightly dazed. That is when the bubble that had contained my timeless moment dissipated. Reality then started to creep back into my world. Curiously there was still no one around me in the immediate vicinity. I almost had to question as to whether or not the past few minutes had happened.

Jack was everything everyone who had previously met him had said about him. He was a quiet gentleman who was incredibly giving of his time. If anyone was truly deserving of the title "legend," it was Jack. I will never forget the kindness that he and later Roz (but, that's another story) bestowed upon me that day. There is a reason why Jack will always be fondly remembered. I like to consider myself one of those reasons. ★



FROM
HER...

...TO
HERE?!

INCIDENTAL ICONOGRAPHY

An ongoing analysis of Kirby's visual shorthand, and how he inadvertently used it to develop his characters, by Sean Kleefeld



One of the primary ideas behind the Incidental Iconography column is to examine how Jack designed his characters using some key elements. By watching how Jack altered his depiction of a character over time, we can get a sense of what he felt were the essential visual ingredients for them. So why devote a column to Agatha Harkness, one of the last characters Jack developed from his long run on the *Fantastic Four* and a character he drew for only a single issue? Despite only one appearance of her by Jack, there's something to delve into here.

We know that the character design that was published was not Jack's original take on the character. We have some unused panels from that issue depicting a very different look for Agatha [below]. She has dark hair, a large brimmed hat, and white gloves. Some have claimed that she was patterned after Roz but, frankly, I don't see it. There's also been claims that the design was "too good" for Marvel in the last days of Jack's tenure there; considering how striking the published design ultimately was, I have my doubts here as well.



for both versions of Agatha Harkness.

Compare, if you will, Jack's original design with the suffragette outfit that Glynis Johns wears as Winifred Banks in the movie [below]. Jack lines the sleeves and neck with fur instead of gauze, but the coat, gloves, and hat are remarkably similar in appearance. He's not using any of Andrews' costumes, but he's still able to play off the film's Edwardian veneer to contrast against the ultra-modern, high-tech approach he generally took with the *Fantastic Four* themselves. Whether Jack deliberately wanted to play off the movie without duplicating Andrews' costumes, or he simply misremembered who was wearing what, is a matter of conjecture.

Regarding the "too good" line, that is attributable back to Roz: She was talking about withholding some full-page splashes Jack had done for *Thor* at around the same time. They were later collected in the *Kirby Unleashed*

portfolio and, if you check out those images, there's a much greater sense of epicness than what we see in his original (understated and backgroundless) Agatha panels—which suggests to me that the original Agatha design went unused for some other reason.

My guess is that someone (Roz? Barbara? Stan?) commented that having a younger nanny character with magical powers bore too much



similarity to Mary Poppins, still relatively fresh in the minds of an American media audience. By aging Agatha considerably, she becomes more of a stereotypical witch character, akin to *Bewitched's* "Endora," Agnes Morehead [left], and perhaps more suited to the horror story that *Fantastic Four* #94 wound up being.

Curiously, Agatha's new hairstyle still bears some similarity to what Johns wore in the film, although the visual similarities end there.

This is, as I noted, mostly speculation. I haven't been able to find evidence to support any claims to Agatha's visual origins although, as Jack had just moved to California earlier that year and was already talking to Carmine Infantino about working for DC, I do think it's safe to say that Jack didn't spend a whole lot of time thinking about Agatha's iconography. ★



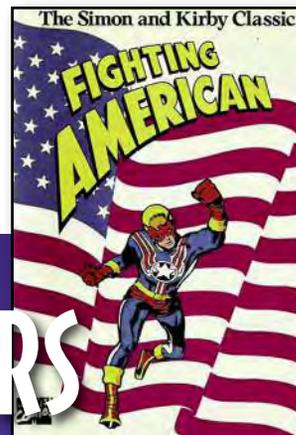
Consider this: Jack created Agatha in 1969 (in *Fantastic Four* #94) as a character to take care of Franklin Richards while his parents were out adventuring. Although she's commonly referred to as a "governess," Stan Lee's dialogue for the original issue only refers to her as a "child-rearing specialist." Another name, which isn't used but I think is significant here, is "nanny."



Arguably, the English language's most famous nanny is Mary Poppins, thanks in large part to the 1964 Disney movie starring Julie Andrews in the title role [left]. The movie was immensely popular and, with his daughter Barbara 12 years old at the time, I can't imagine Jack not seeing it. Although it's just speculation on my part, I think Jack used *Mary Poppins* as his inspiration



In 1989, having interviewed Joe Simon on the imminent release of Marvel's Fighting American hardcover compilation, I followed up by talking to Jack Kirby. Selected quotes from these interviews appeared in several Comics Scene articles on *Fighting American* and *Captain America*. While the full Simon interview later ran in *Comic Book Marketplace*, the complete Kirby transcript has never before seen print. Although this exchange is limited to Kirby's patriotic heroes, he does reflect on his career in general. More importantly, it accurately reflects the indomitable spirit of Jack Kirby in the last years of his life.



INNERVIEW

JACK KIRBY REMEMBERS

Interviewed by Will Murry in 1989 • Thanks to Brian K. Morris for the meticulous transcription.



Fighting American villains, from the mid-1970s Valentine's Day sketchbook Jack drew for wife Roz.

WILL MURRAY: When I was a kid back in the 1960s reading Marvel Comics, I came across a coverless issue of *Fighting American* #3. I was fascinated by it. It was unlike the Marvel Comics, which I did enjoy and still do. There was an element of fun that was only in the earlier Marvel Comics.

JACK KIRBY: The atmosphere at that time was very bleak for everybody, really, because it was right after the war and it was the early 1950s and we were just turning our attention to look for another enemy.

MURRAY: This was the McCarthy era and America was kind of in a panic. And I wondered why in an atmosphere where everybody was looking for Reds under the beds, as it were, you decided to play the Commies as fun, inept villains.

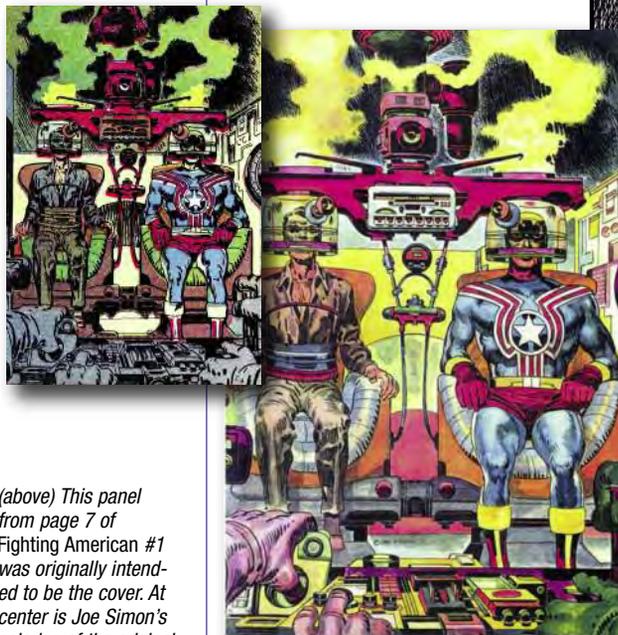
KIRBY: Because I didn't believe they were that serious a challenge—although the Communists, they had one stage and that was the streets. And I was brought up as a city boy and I'd seen Communist parades, and I'd seen union strikes, and all sorts of parades, and that's what it looked like to me. And I think the average American never took them seriously and they never got a foothold here, not in a serious way.

MURRAY: This is true. History's proven you right. In the past year or so, the Communists have proven pretty ineffective.

KIRBY: Sure, Americans never deviate from their own history.

MURRAY: Take me back to 1953, '54 when you and Joe Simon first sat down and came up with the *Fighting American* idea. How did the trend, the conversation go? Do you recall?

KIRBY: Oh, the conversation was—well, the gist of it was, what was current? And that's how we always worked. *Captain America* was a current product of its time and at that time, Hitler was in the news and the Nazis were in the news, Europe was being swallowed up, one country after another, and when were we getting into war? There was a state of hysteria. This was a similar frame except it never got that serious. But there was a state of hysteria about Communism and it



(above) This panel from page 7 of *Fighting American #1* was originally intended to be the cover. At center is Joe Simon's coloring of the original art, and at right is his more recent solo recreation of the scene.

(below) As editor of *SICK* magazine, Joe did a spoof of his own character for the cover of issue #42 (Feb. 1966, at the height of TV "Batmania")—but only knowledgeable comics fans could get the full joke.

(next page) Another Simon recreation, for his book *The Comic Book Makers*. Note how he changed Cap and Bucky to Fighting American and Speedboy, but gave FA a modified Cap shield.



was fostered by our own leaders. So we'd read about it in the papers every day and yet, we—I mean, just speaking for myself, [laughs] I'd had enough of that. I had enough of that stuff and I think everybody else did, and it just never got rooted in the people to have caused any bad accidents or action or anything like that.

MURRAY: But in terms of sitting down with Joe Simon and kicking off the idea, let's do—I guess you'd have to call it a recreation.
KIRBY: When does it see our attitude reflected in the strip?

MURRAY: Right. But in terms of actually creating the physical character—you didn't have to go with a patriotic character, necessarily, to fight Communism. You could have gone with a standard super-hero.

KIRBY: But the patriotic character was us, see?

MURRAY: In what sense?
KIRBY: I mean Fighting American, Speedboy, was always us, just as Captain America was always us. And it was us, looking out at what was taking place and therefore, we always get involved with the action. And the more we did in the case of *Fighting American*, the sillier it became. So we had a lot of fun with it.

MURRAY: But I mean in terms of the—oh, I suppose the mechanics of it. Who first said, "Hey, let's do a new kind of Captain America," and who said, "Let's change, let's do this"? Who came up with the name? How did you come up with the

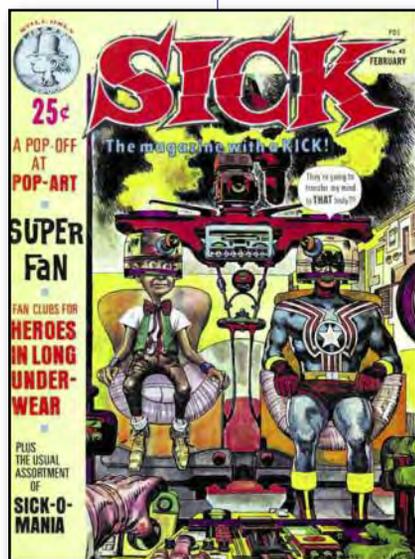
name? How did you kick it around, basically? You know, the process.

KIRBY: Well, we'd kick it around. We did it jointly, you know. And we kicked it around and we had to have the word "American" in it, you know. And "Fighting American" seemed like a perfect name to remember, and it was the kind of a name that had some punch in it, and it worked. And of course, Speedboy. Both of us contributed to all the characters, see? And we just had a lot of fun with it. You know, the character would be kind of a nebulous—sometimes, it would begin with a word and it would just gather nebulous—

MURRAY: That's what I was getting at. Do you remember how it kicked off?

KIRBY: No. You know, when two guys are talking, say, "Hey, how about doing this?" or "How about doing that?"—see? And we'd kick it around and find out if it was funny enough or strong enough to sell the issue—I mean the magazine issue.

MURRAY: Yeah, yeah. Now who decided it would be a satirical strip? That seems not to have been a big part of the first issue. But with the second issue, it was the whole theme.



KIRBY: Well, that was my idea, but Joe agreed, finally.

MURRAY: And what made you decide? Was it doing too many superheroes over too long a period? “Hey, let’s play this one for laughs,” or, “Let’s use this for a—”.

KIRBY: No, I’ll tell you, I think both of us had a bellyful of serious heroes at the time, and the war itself had spent itself inside us and inside everybody else. So we decided to do something different and the field itself demanded it. The field itself demanded a satirical strip, something to laugh at and still be done very well. You know, it’s not easy to do satire. So we put our best foot forward and did the best we could.

MURRAY: Did you ink yourself on these pages, or is that Simon on the *Fighting American* books?

KIRBY: Oh, that would be Joe Simon.

MURRAY: Okay, and did you collaborate on the writing or did you trade off on the writing?

KIRBY: No, circumstances would dictate that.

MURRAY: Yeah, okay. So it was a total collaboration in the sense that it was the two of you just—

KIRBY: Yeah, because we were both responsible for the strip and that’s where the collaboration lies.

MURRAY: When you first sat down and you had your first sketches of *Fighting American*, and your first idea of what it was going to be, and the format of the books—did you have to sit down with Joe and say, “All right, we’ve got to do things to make it not too close to Captain America,” or was that the idea?

KIRBY: No. We wanted it to be Captain America.

MURRAY: A-ha!

KIRBY: Yeah, we wanted it to be Captain America, and Speedboy, we wanted him to be Bucky. And of course, Captain America was like our own trademark.

MURRAY: Right, but you didn’t own him at that time.

KIRBY: Oh, well, no, we didn’t. Ours were lowly creatures [Will chuckles] so everything was owned by the publishers.

MURRAY: So this is the way to have your Captain America and eat it too, so to speak.

KIRBY: Oh, but *Fighting American* was owned by Joe and myself.

MURRAY: Yeah, right.

KIRBY: But yeah, this was our first venture as publishers too.

MURRAY: Oh, really? You were the publishers of this, of *Headline Comics*?

KIRBY: Oh, yes. Yeah. Yeah, we published that.

MURRAY: Oh, I didn’t know that.

KIRBY: Oh, yes.

MURRAY: Oh, okay. So that was a real big step for you guys.

KIRBY: Oh, yes. Just one second please. [speaks to Roz Kirby off-phone] Yes, so we called our publishing house Mainline Comics. [Editor’s Note: Jack got a little confused here, as *Fighting American* was packaged by S&K, but published by Prize, an imprint of Crestwood Publications. Joe and Jack did self-publish other books as Mainline around this time.]

MURRAY: Oh, that brings me to an interesting question, that if you published it, then you cancelled it. And why would you cancel such a wonderful strip?

KIRBY: Well, then, the times were bad for *all* magazines and one magazine was going out of business after another.

MURRAY: So it wasn’t necessarily *Fighting American* itself, it was the line.

KIRBY: No, it wasn’t *Fighting American* itself, it was just flagging capital, see? And everything was in flux. It was fluctuating and going up and down, and we just couldn’t exist in that kind of an atmosphere. Now that went for the larger publishers too, you know. Everybody was having trouble, so *Fighting American* wasn’t—our coffers weren’t overflowing. [laughs] We did the best we could.

MURRAY: Do you have any special memories of doing that run of books? Any stories that stick out in your mind as your favorite?

KIRBY: Well, there’s “Super-Khakalovich” and “Super-Khakalovich” to me—well, he was a stereotype, of course, and the Russians, to me, were always guys who—I mean the average Russian, to me, was a guy who didn’t really possess much. In fact, the reason he fought *Fighting American* was he loved *Fighting American*’s underwear. [Will laughs] He loved good clothes and of course, he couldn’t get it in Russia, and even his costume was secondhand, [Will laughs] so he felt humiliated. And it’s not that he disliked *Fighting American*, he just wanted his uniform, [Will laughs] because it was made of better goods.

MURRAY: When *Fighting American* was revived for that one issue in the ’60s for Harvey, how did that come about? There were a couple or three new stories in it that hadn’t appeared in the original run.

Were those inventory stories left over from the original 1950s?

KIRBY: Well, that’s going far back, but I think that’s so.

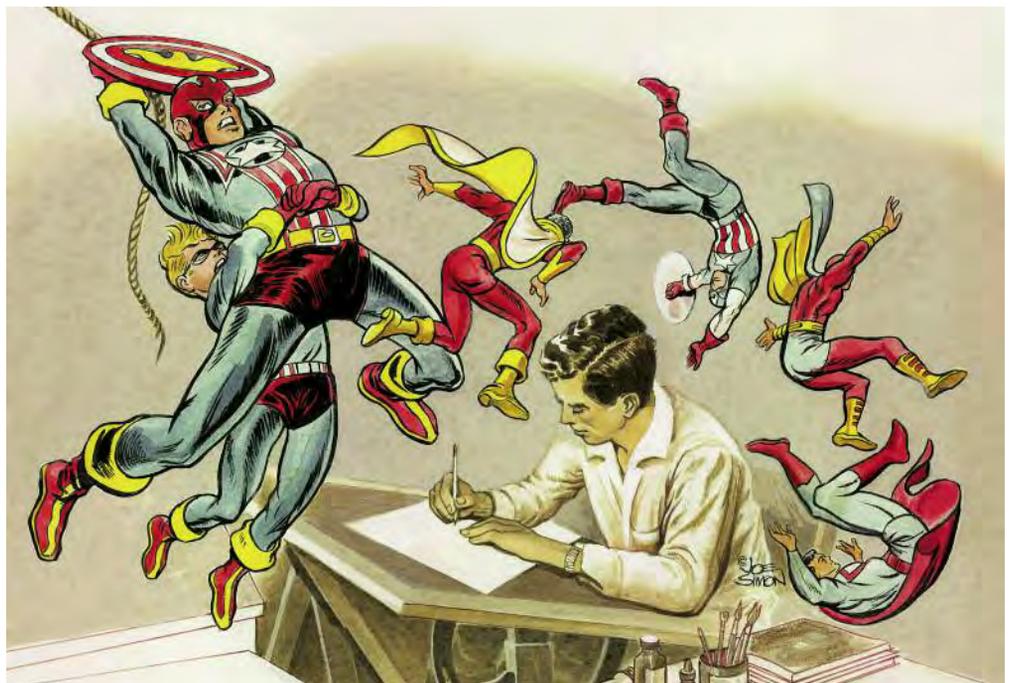
MURRAY: You didn’t sit down in 1966 and do two or three new *Fighting American* stories for the new revival.

KIRBY: No, Al Harvey was a friend of ours, you know, and we did the best we could with Al and he tried to help us.

MURRAY: Why did that last only in one issue, the Harvey revival?

KIRBY: Well, it’s because the publishers could easily see the handwriting on the wall and the handwriting was very, very shaky at the time.

MURRAY: This is in, what, ’66, ’67?



KIRBY: About '66. And it was only the comic books with a lot of capital behind that could survive. And so, of course, that would be DC and Marvel and Al Harvey himself.

MURRAY: If this Marvel Masterworks comes about in the sense of being very successful, would you consider reviving the character? Does he still interest you?

KIRBY: Well, he would be a lot of fun, but I, myself, I'm retired right now.

MURRAY: Really? I thought you still worked for Ruby-Spears. Weren't you in the animation—?

KIRBY: Oh, I'm sorry. I told you we had Mainline Publications, but it was really Headline Publications.

MURRAY: Right. Yeah, that's what my copy says, yeah. But you say you're retired. The last I heard, you were still doing work for Ruby-Spears. Are you retired from that too?

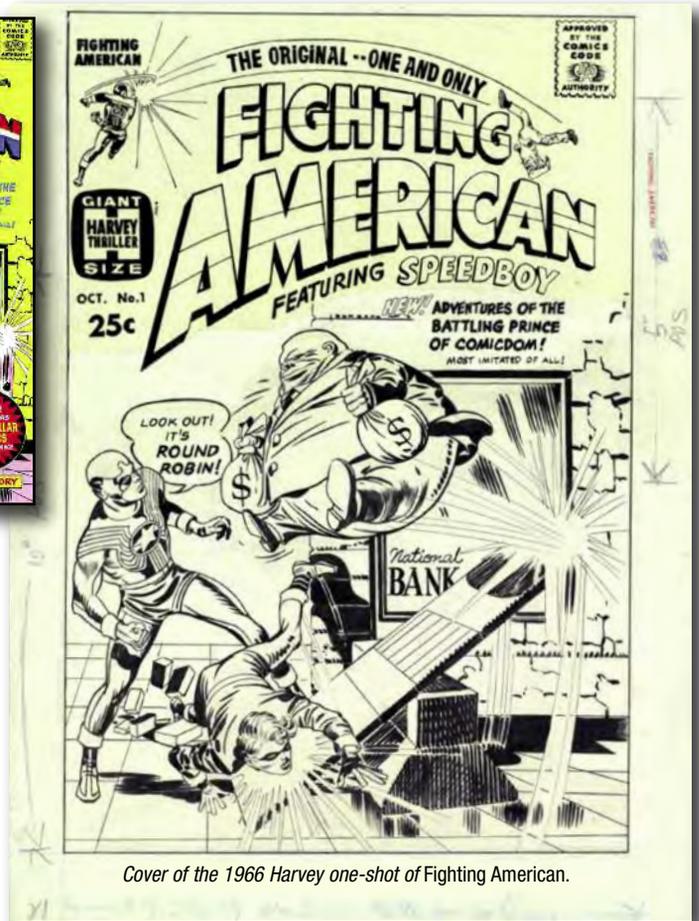
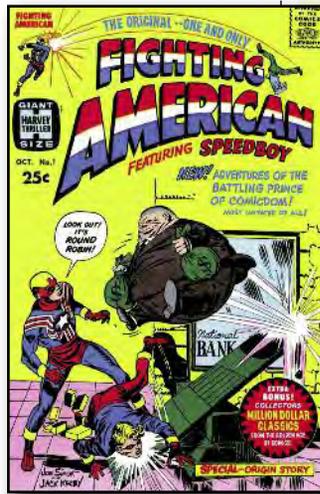
KIRBY: No, no, I wasn't retired from that, but Ruby-Spears was a steady operation, see, and it was a steady routine. I'd bring in my conceptions and I'd go home, and I'd get paid, and it was a routine as simple as that. So naturally, I didn't knock it and I felt it was good for me.

MURRAY: Well, no, my question was are you completely retired in the sense of not doing any work at all?

KIRBY: Yes, I am. It's been a long time. It's been fifty years.

MURRAY: [laughs] I know. I've been reading your work for about thirty of them. I started buying Marvel Comics in what, '61, '62.

KIRBY: Oh, sure. Well, I appreciate that very much.



Cover of the 1966 Harvey one-shot of Fighting American.





(previous page, bottom and here) Ruby-Spears pitched a Thor cartoon series in the 1980s, and since Jack was on the payroll, who better to do the presentation art? Inks by Alfredo Alcala.

MURRAY: Oh, you know, you're my favorite comic artist. I'm real happy to be able to talk to you, especially about *Fighting American*, which is another favorite book of mine, and I'm real happy that the collection's coming out. Tell me, how did that happen? How did it come that Marvel came to you guys and said, "Let's do *Fighting American*"? The current reprint, how did that happen? How did that come about?

KIRBY: Oh, well, my wife takes care of—wait just one moment, please. [talks to Roz off-phone] Yeah, it was Joe Simon. I was just trying to get it accurate. Joe came to me and Marvel had come to Joe. So I agreed with Joe, and we did it.

MURRAY: Ah, so it wasn't the question of you guys going to Marvel and saying, "Would you like to reprint it?" They came to you.

KIRBY: Oh, yes, yes.

MURRAY: Ah, that's interesting. It's very unusual for Marvel to print something that isn't their character, their property.

KIRBY: Oh, no. It was profitable and that counts in any published account.

MURRAY: [laughs] Yeah, of course. So you're completely retired from comics, so even if this book went through the roof, you wouldn't pick up the pen and do it again, huh?

KIRBY: No, I wouldn't, no. You know, I've done every type of comic from satirical to serious, and I've done romance and you name the kind of subject, and I've had a hand in it. [laughs]

MURRAY: Yeah, this is true. You don't get much bigger than Jack Kirby in the comic book field.

KIRBY: No, it's not only that. I'm busy writing a novel.

MURRAY: Oh, really? Can you tell me a little bit about that? Is it something comics fans would be interested in?

KIRBY: Well, it's very timely and they're doing a biography on me too, and I'm helping out with that, certainly. And that kind of thing occupies my time and it's also a lot of fun.

MURRAY: Well, that's what I was going to get to. Are you happy being retired? But you just answered my question; yes, you're happy being retired, but you're not really retired because you're still working.

KIRBY: Well, I'm not working in the sense, yes. And I've got these big lithographs which I did and this company, Art-Med, is making statues of them, statues of the sculptured figures, and they're sculpting these figures straight from the illustrations.

MURRAY: I think I've seen the ads for them. They look quite—

KIRBY: Oh, they're very good, believe me, and they've done well. You know, I went a little Biblical on those. I got one called *Jacob and the Angel*, which seems to attract everybody. So I'm kind of taking a new tack, which I've always done. Like *Fighting American*, and so forth, a departure.

MURRAY: Here's a question: when you came back to *Captain America* in the 1960s, and then again in the 1970s—of course Stan Lee had a lot to do with the 1960s *Captain America*, although you did the 1970s—you kept the character pretty serious. Do you see, fundamentally, as *Captain America* and *Fighting American*, two definitely different characters or definitely different tones?

KIRBY: Yes, they are, of course. *Captain America* is a deadly serious character, just as the average American is deadly serious about his patriotism, and an American would never make light of his own patriotism because it's something that's part of his life there. You know, the Constitution and all the rest of it. And so our patriotism combines all of that. It combines our early training as Americans and it's a nationalistic trait, but every country has it.

MURRAY: But yet *Fighting American*, as humorous as he is, he's also serious about his patriotism.

KIRBY: Well, of course he is. And *Fighting American* is a satire on a lot of old conditions.

MURRAY: But he's more devil-may-care, I guess, in a sense than *Captain America*.

KIRBY: He's almost slapstick, really. And Fighting American is a kind of a burlesque on the patriotic theme.

MURRAY: You know, it's only a few years after *Fighting American* folded, and before you revived Captain America, that you, again, had another patriotic hero, the Shield for the Archie group. Can you tell me about that and why you did that character?

KIRBY: Well, it's the kind of character I did best and I didn't deviate from that because I knew I would do it well. I knew that the magazine would sell and it did, and it came out just fine.

MURRAY: The Shield, what was the title of that book? *The Double Life of Private Strong*. And he was sort of in the middle. He was sort of like a little less serious than Captain America and a little more serious than Fighting American. Was he essentially another attempt to reinvent Captain America?

KIRBY: Well, he was also a product of the times and the times were like that. And I think we were losing—actually, when I was reflecting there, we were losing all that combativeness that was inside us, all that residue from the war. And it reflected in everything we did and it reflected itself in comics as well as other subjects and other ways of life. So we were in that stage. It's hard to describe a series like that because it was after a terrifying era which had spent itself and you'll find a variation of feelings and a variation of visible happenings around you that reflect that change. You know, all changes are gradual, and during that gradual period, the changes kind of combine with each other and you're looking once again for some kind of stability, see? It's a question of looking for stability. And of course, we have all that and we're stronger today and, well, we know where we're going, we know what to do, and we have new generations to launch. And we certainly discovered that all that is history and we watched the hijinks of the new generation and its entertainment.

MURRAY: When you did the Captain America revival with Lee in the 1960s, there was a certain tone that I guess Lee brought to it more than you did. And when you went back to that character in the 1970s, you sort of went back to the old free-wheeling Jack Kirby style where, essentially, it was all action and there wasn't a lot of introspection, the kind of thing that Lee did a lot of, and maybe overdid to some degree. Do you see in your head, maybe, that Stan Lee/Jack Kirby Captain America, the '60s version, as being a little less true to that character than the '40s and even '70s versions that you did?

KIRBY: Yes, I do.

MURRAY: You do? Tell me about that.

KIRBY: Well, I don't know how much Stan Lee's influence was there, but—

MURRAY: Well, he tended to make Captain America like *Hamlet*, in a lot of respects. And you didn't do that in the '40s and you sure didn't do that in the '70s. You had a different take on the character. You had a very specific point of view that did not have Captain America sitting around, saying, "Oh, woe is me."

KIRBY: Well, that's a question you'll have to ask Stan, see? I can't answer for another guy's—

MURRAY: No, but I mean in terms of your—when

you picked up the reins on *Captain America* without Stan Lee in the early '70s, you didn't have him rewriting your stuff, you didn't have him putting in the dialogue, you didn't have him telling you what to do or how to do it in the way when you were working directly with him. *KIRBY:* Well, that's what you were reading and that's why I suggested that you talk to Stan, because you were reading Stan. And I can't comment on that kind of writing style.

MURRAY: Well, what I'm really getting at is do you see his version—the version you did with him is a little less true than your version because you're the creator of the character, you're the co-creator of the character.

KIRBY: Yes, yes.

MURRAY: You have a point of view that you kicked off in the '40s



Last summer, Marvel released King Size Kirby, a slipcased hardcover reprinting Jack's work.

and you came back to in the '70s —of course updated for the '70s— and I just wanted you to talk about the differences between, say, the three Captain Americas: the '40s, the '60s, the '70s.

KIRBY: Well, I can only say that I did the best I could with the illustrations and I turned them in that way. And the illustrations always reflected my own techniques, my own drawing techniques, and my own feelings. But as for the Stan Lee dialogue, it's something that you will have to interview him about.

MURRAY: Okay, well, I'm just asking for your opinion of it.

KIRBY: Yeah, I had nothing to do with the blurbs.

MURRAY: Yeah, I know that. But you read the comics after they were printed, I assume. You knew what was going on.

KIRBY: Well, what I did was write the plot, see? I wrote the plot, I

wrote the entire plot in on the side and Stan Lee would put in his own dialogue.

MURRAY: Well, let me rephrase the question in a much more simple way; if Stan Lee sees Captain America as *Hamlet*—and let's just say for the sake of argument that he does—how do *you* see Captain America in a word or two? [*mutual chuckling*] You see what I'm saying? [*Jack laughs*] If he sees it as *Hamlet*, what do you see him as?

KIRBY: Well, I see Captain America as you and me, okay? And I never saw him any differently. And I could never see Captain America as a ham actor. I saw Captain America as a real person. I saw him as a guy under stress. I saw him as a guy in exuberant moods, and I saw you and me through all kinds of situations. And I happen to love the average guy and if you've read any of my *Captain Americas*, you'll find they're all reflected in the strip. I can't speak for Stan, I don't know what he was trying to do. If you spoke to him, possibly, he could explain it.

MURRAY: Oh, you know, I'm not interested in *his* point of view on the thing because I think I know what it would be. I'm just interested in your point of view in how you see Captain—.

KIRBY: Yeah, my point of view is you and me, all right?

MURRAY: Yeah, okay. That's it succinctly, okay. When you brought back Captain America with Lee in *The Avengers*, in the early '60s, Bucky was killed off. Was that your decision? Were you happy with it? Did you think that was right for the era?

KIRBY: Yes. Because it was a drastic thing to do to a teen that had been around for, what, fifteen years at that time, maybe close to—it was a terrible thing to do. It was a terrible thing to do when you had—it illustrated that some kind of circumstance like that could come about. And it's something that definitely is emotional and I personally felt the emotion myself.

MURRAY: Oh, I did too. Of course, I was eight years old.

KIRBY: I thought the reader might. You know, I was hoping the reader might.

MURRAY: I did and it was a very strong thing.

KIRBY: Because I wanted to do it as a gesture of reality, you know. And that would give the strip itself a kind of a cloak of reality.

MURRAY: Well, it certainly worked because it was a very powerful thing to do for that time and it worked very well. I remember suddenly that before you brought back Captain America—the real Captain America in the early '60s—a few months before, you brought his costume back in a "Human Torch" strip where a villain played Captain America. I guess that was kind of a test to revive the character. This is what, '63, '64, as I recall. It was a "Human Torch" strip in *Strange Tales*.

KIRBY: Yes, I'm trying to recall this.

MURRAY: Yeah, it was basically that the Human Torch had a villain named the Acrobat and suddenly, Captain America came out of nowhere and he was a bad guy. And at the end, after fighting the Human Torch, you unmasked him as the Acrobat. It wasn't the real Captain America, but at the end of the story, you have the Human Torch reading an old *Captain America* comic, saying, "Gee, I wonder



Weighing in at nearly 20 lbs. and over 800 pages, the above image serves as the cover.

whatever happened to him.” And it was about a year later that Captain America came back. I just wondered, was that a test, that you were trying to convince Lee to bring back Captain America?

KIRBY: It was a way of bringing him back and it wasn't an ordinary way of doing it. I tried not to do things in an ordinary way. And in fact, I think the most successful formula is to do something extraordinary, but have it make sense, see?

MURRAY: Well, you sort of did that with Sub-Mariner in an early *Fantastic Four*.

KIRBY: In fact, killing off Bucky was a kind of editorial on missiles themselves, you know, see?

MURRAY: Ah, okay. That didn't register on me until just now.

KIRBY: It was a comment on the terrifying aspect of the missile program. Because that could be your boy, it could be your girl. It's not easy to see a thing like that happen, a bomb go off or a missile go off, and see the real thing happen. It was an emotional time of anger and Bucky died in a very emotional kind of way.

MURRAY: Yeah, yeah. You're a guy who served in World War Two and saw combat, pretty serious combat from what I understand.

KIRBY: Yes.

MURRAY: Before you went off to war, you were writing—you were drawing comics in which there was a lot of fighting and action. And when you came back eventually, you drew a lot of comics, a lot of fighting and action, and I wonder if your war experiences changed or soured or altered your perception of fighting. Did you see it more clearly? You've never shied away from showing combat.

KIRBY: Well, you've got to remember that

I was a kid from the street and when I went to war, I was in my early twenties and when I came back, I was in my twenties. And I just did what I was supposed to do. I did what I've always done. If I got into a street fight, I get into a street fight and I'd win or I'd lose. And if I went to war, if I had to go to war, in fact, I was always grateful that I was drafted. Because none of my friends were around. Joe Simon was in the Coast Guard and everybody else was gone. They were in the service and the streets were kind of empty at night and when I dated my wife, we used to walk around and we'd meet nobody. And



More of Jack's *Fighting American* villains, from Roz's sketchbook.

when I was drafted, it was kind of a relief.

MURRAY: Really? Well, you had to expect it anyway.

KIRBY: Well, I expected it, of course. But I landed on the beaches of France ten days after D-Day, and I can tell you that it affected my entire life.

MURRAY: Yeah, but it didn't seem to affect your work in a way that I measure. You didn't come back and just draw romance comics, saying, "I don't want to draw action, gunfighting, or anything like that."

KIRBY: No.

MURRAY: You went back and got into it. And did it affect your work in any way that you perceive, in the sense of—?

KIRBY: It might have. I think I was maybe a little older and wiser. But no, I was doing the same kind of work.

MURRAY: Hmm, because I remember a quote from, I think, *The New Gods* where a character says a very telling quote, that "There's no glory in war, it's just a cold game with a butcher." And it's one of the most powerful lines you've probably written in your entire career.

KIRBY: Well, I've always felt that it was and that's exactly what it is.

MURRAY: Yet you came back from the war able to draw action in such a way that it was still entertaining and interesting.

KIRBY: Well, I had to do what the formula demanded, see?

MURRAY: Right, but did it bother you? Had you outgrown that? It doesn't seem that way to me.

KIRBY: No, I hadn't outgrown that. In fact, the war rather accentuated it and I can tell you that I saw sights that would stop you in your tracks. But that's going to be in my biography.

MURRAY: Yeah, I don't want to get into that. I guess on the bottom line here, I'm very intrigued by the fact that you could go off to war, see those things, do those things, come out of it and go back and still draw fun action and not either be soured by it or—.

KIRBY: It's the only thing I knew and I had to pick up where I—I had to pick up my tools where I left them, and build the things that I left behind, and renew them in some way. And I did that by trying to catch the tenor of the period, and the tenor of the period was away from war, and it was away from the things I didn't want to think about. And so actually, I did them badly. It was like running away from your own dreams, see?

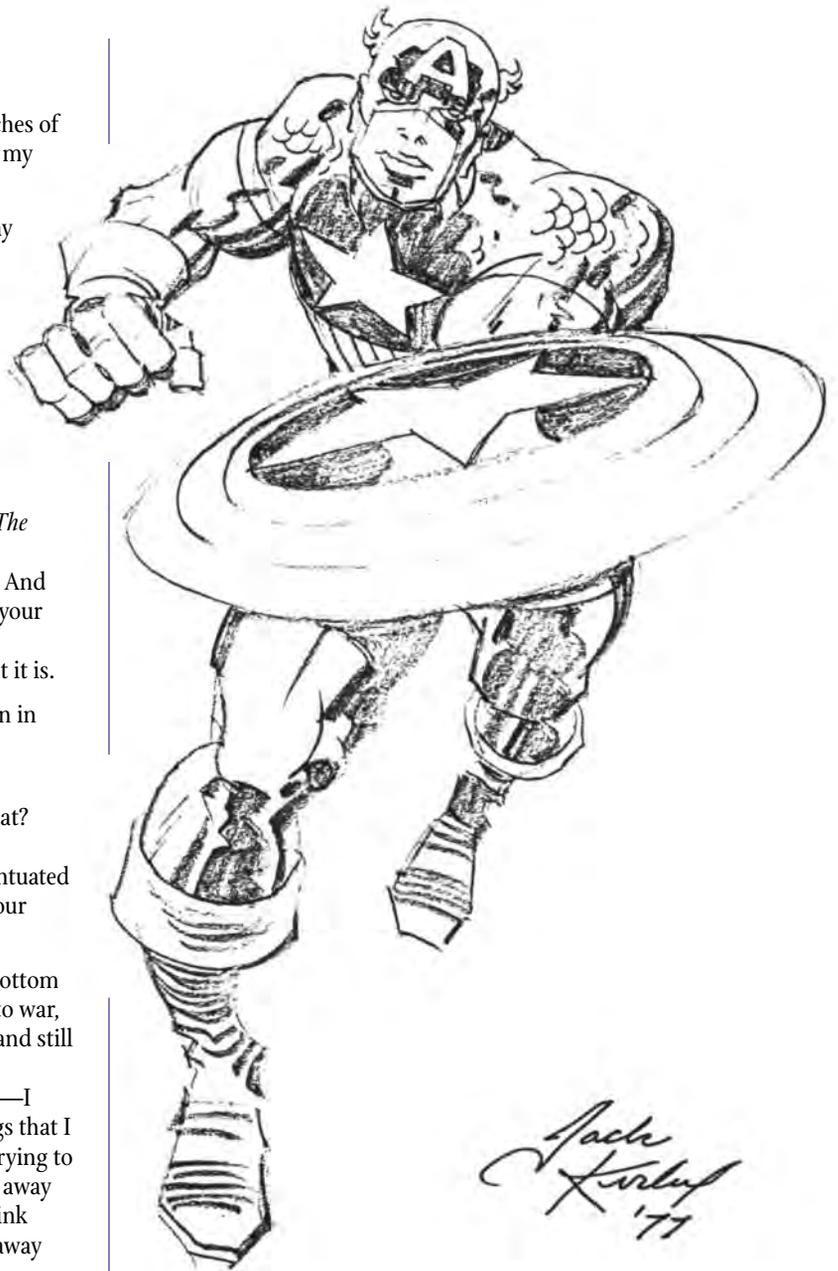
MURRAY: Yeah, hmm. Let's go back to before the war. I mean we're getting close to it, we're now at the 50th anniversary of the beginning of World War II and we're going to be very close to the 50th anniversary of Captain America soon. I guess I should ask you about creating Captain America with Joe Simon. How did that character come about and what do you remember of doing that first ten issues that you did with him?

KIRBY: Well, I can only tell you that Captain America himself was something we did when we were very young and in fact, Joe was just out of college and I was out of the lower East Side. *[laughs]* And we both enjoyed doing Captain America and we just made it kind of a life-long progression.

MURRAY: Would you say he's your greatest creation? That's a tricky question, but he's your earliest big creation.

KIRBY: Well, yeah, he was our big creation and he symbolized an entire period. And in fact, he symbolized things that lasted for many, many years. Like he'd say he went through all the heartaches and all the joy that that particular era symbolized. So yes, Captain America was very, very real. He was a real person, Bucky was real, and I can tell you that Joe and I are real.

MURRAY: I can believe that. *[mutual laughter]*



KIRBY: So the only trick that confronted us was the dialogue and I think we did well on that.

MURRAY: Do you remember the actual creation of the character very well in terms of when you first sat down, and how you bounced the idea around, and how the germ grew into a character?

KIRBY: Well, the germ always grows. We need a heroic character like—Superman was already in progress and the world was becoming aware that the super characters were—at least America was—that super characters were a new vogue, and Joe and I looked at it the same way, and we came up with super characters of our own, and Captain America happened to be it, Captain America and Bucky.

MURRAY: Well, you make it sound simple, but actually, it was a pretty revolutionary concept and no one had grabbed the—.

KIRBY: It was a revolutionary concept and that's the reason why we tackled it, because we felt that was what the day demanded. If you're going to sell something, we've learned the business of selling antiques. We weren't going to draw *Maggie and Jiggs*, see?

MURRAY: *[chuckles]* That's true.

KIRBY: So we were going to draw what was selling and what sold was anything that resembled Superman. And Captain America, in his own right, was different and he was dynamic and Bucky was a

great addition. He represented the younger people and we had what we wanted.

MURRAY: How did the name Captain America come about?

KIRBY: Well, the Fighting American was the product of rethinking, see, of refreshing an old theme.

MURRAY: No, I asked how the name “Captain America” came out. I mean you could have called him any number of things.

KIRBY: Oh, yes, we could have.

MURRAY: I wondered if you had other names that you rejected before you hit upon Captain America.

KIRBY: No, no, Captain America was fine.

MURRAY: He was always Captain America.

KIRBY: Yes, he was always Captain America because it’s a euphonious name. It’s easily pronounceable and easily remembered. And there’s no use going any further with a thing like that when it sounds perfect to you.

MURRAY: Right. The costume design, did you go through several before you hit upon one that worked?

KIRBY: No, I did it right. *[mutual laughter]*

MURRAY: You did it right the first time.

KIRBY: Yeah. You know, they threw me out of several art classes because I thought I was right and they felt that I should have taken thirty days to draw this model. *[Will laughs]* Of course, I was the kind of guy that never drew every muscle in the body and I didn’t expect to draw like Rembrandt because Rembrandt wasn’t selling. *[mutual laughter]*

MURRAY: Good answer. One thing you did change on Captain America is you changed the old triangular shield to a round one. I wonder what caused that change.

KIRBY: Well, the round one was like a discus and I figured a round one, we could use as a gimmick, and we could throw it like a discus, and we could use it in a variety of ways. It was just another gimmick, you see?

MURRAY: Yeah, but basically, you changed it to get more use out of it, to make it more—

KIRBY: Yeah. As a triangle, the uses would congeal, see?

MURRAY: Yeah, you sort of pioneered the Frisbee, in that sense.

KIRBY: Oh, yes, it was a Frisbee. There’s no doubt about it. But you could roll it, you could throw it, and there’s a number of things you could do with a discus that you can’t do with a triangular-shaped object.

MURRAY: Do you have any favorite Captain America stories from the old Simon and Kirby era? Do any of them stick in your mind, or any villains?

KIRBY: Oh, gosh. I haven’t thought about it in all these many years.

MURRAY: All right, but let me ask you about the Red Skull.

KIRBY: Yes, the Red Skull is something I’ll always remember because in a way, he was an anti-hero and as important as the hero himself. So remember, your evil guys are just as important as the virtuous ones.

MURRAY: Oh, yeah. Well, who invented the Red Skull?

KIRBY: Well, the Red Skull? The Red Skull was just a different way of making a Nazi.

MURRAY: I mean, who invented him?

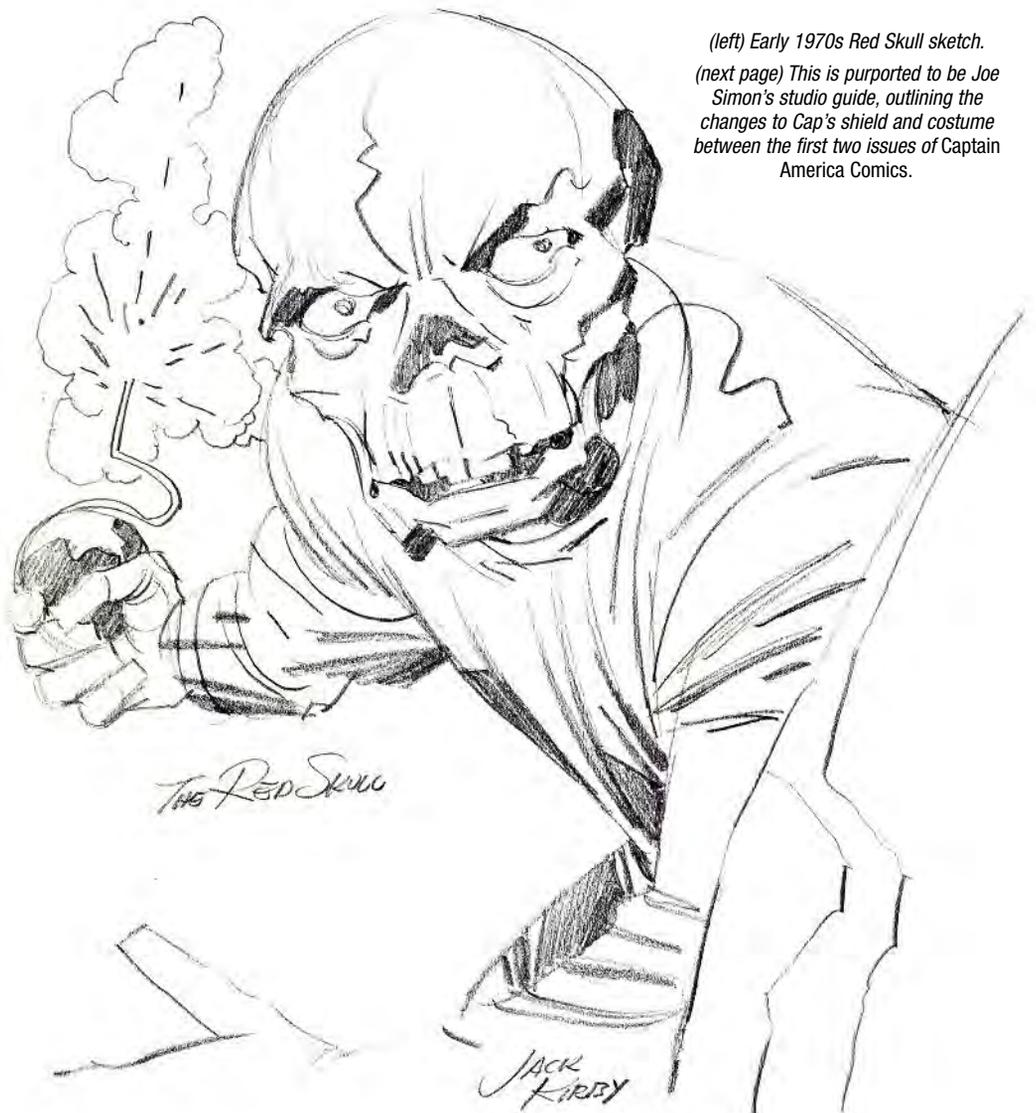
KIRBY: I did.

MURRAY: Oh, you did, okay. And you didn’t wrap him in the Nazi flag. You just put a red skull on his head and put him in green.

KIRBY: No, Hitler put the red skull on his head.

MURRAY: That’s right. Well, that’s true. But in the sense that you didn’t make him an exact opposite, which I find interesting. You didn’t wrap him in the Nazi flag. You made him, basically, his own person, shall we say?

KIRBY: Yes, and we all are, so if we can get back to *Fighting American*, I’ve got to explain a little more on that. *Fighting American* was the same kind of thing. *Fighting American* was our reaction to the Reds and in fact, the Reds weren’t the same. We had to look upon the Reds as the same kind of an enemy as the Nazis. The Nazis were very sure of themselves and they were evil to us because they were the antithesis of everything we stood for. They were going to make slaves of us and we were going to become their puppets and it’s the



(left) Early 1970s Red Skull sketch. (next page) This is purported to be Joe Simon’s studio guide, outlining the changes to Cap’s shield and costume between the first two issues of Captain America Comics.

kind of a life an American can never lead, while the Russians were like Super-Khakalovich. [Will laughs] And Super-Khakalovich, he had one beef, they gave him a second-rate uniform. And there were others.

MURRAY: Well, do you remember, for instance, Square-Hair Malloy from *Fighting American* or “Z Food” or—my favorites were Poison Ivan and his little cohort. Do you remember those guys?

KIRBY: I remember those guys. But remember, Fighting American also fought gangsters and he fought the kind of guys that were everpresent in our society. So the gangsters weren’t as glamorous, but somehow they always had a powerful connotation, so I had him tangling with them.

MURRAY: Well, I don’t know if you’ll agree with this. This is my opinion, but let me throw it at you. Although I like Captain America a lot, and still do, I like Fighting American’s uniform better than Captain America’s uniform. Do you agree with that or do you see it even as a “better or worse” situation? I happen to like the design on Fighting American’s uniform much more than on Captain America’s. KIRBY: Well, Fighting American’s uniform was more elaborate. Listen, I also got a commentary on the Arabs. I had one called “The Sneak of Araby.”

MURRAY: Uh-huh, I haven’t read that one.

KIRBY: Yes, and of course, it was just funny. You know, satirical.

MURRAY: You also did an occasional science-fiction story in *Fighting American* too. Like “Space Face,” I guess, was the famous one.

KIRBY: Yes.

MURRAY: Yeah, what do you remember about that?

KIRBY: Well, “Space Face,” he was our entrancement with the flying saucer. And remember, the flying saucer was the big thing at that period. Everybody was seeing U.F.O.s and of course, we haven’t seen one since. [mutual laughter]

MURRAY: Oh, have you ever seen one?

KIRBY: No, no, and I’m not going to fall into that kind of thing.

MURRAY: I take it you don’t believe in them.

KIRBY: No, I don’t believe in them.

MURRAY: That’s interesting for a guy who uses them a lot in his stories; you don’t believe in them.

KIRBY: No, but I do believe in fantasy. And of course, fantasy comes naturally to me. I come from a family of—my folks’ll be European. If you were peasants, sitting around a fire, waving, and you were telling folk tales after a hard day’s work in the fields, well, you’d come up with things like Dracula and you’d come up with things that were similar to the kind of characters we have in comics today. In fact, that was their own comics. The peasants didn’t publish, but they had their own fantasies, just as we have ours.

MURRAY: You seem to still be able to spin the fantasies at a later point in life after which a lot of people outgrew them. What makes you still be able to reach into the adolescent in you, or the child in you, and still be a storyteller?

KIRBY: Because I can. I’m conditioned to be a storyteller. My mother was a great storyteller and actually, all of my folks were immigrants and I used to listen to their stories all the time. That’s when I wasn’t in a street fight. [mutual laughter]

MURRAY: Now here’s a question for you that’s sort of off the track. I read that your father was a tailor, and he lost his job during the Depression, and you had to help support the family.



KIRBY: Yes, I did.

MURRAY: I wonder what was his opinion of what you decided to do with your—when you first decided to do it. I would think someone who has a very solid job as a tailor would look askance at a son who says, “I’m going to be a cartoonist.”

KIRBY: No, he didn’t look askance at all, as long as I brought the money home, see?

MURRAY: So you had no parental resistance to the career you chose.

KIRBY: Oh, no. My father, actually, he really liked me and he liked my efforts. So yeah, and if, at that time, if you brought your money home, the family was certainly satisfied and they never questioned your veracity.

MURRAY: Yeah, well, I think it would have seemed, back then, a kind of frivolous thing to do, to become a comics artist. But I guess the money was so good, it was different.

KIRBY: Yes.

MURRAY: You know, one thing that really fascinates me about your career is you were one of the pioneers of the comics creators and you created one of the three or four or five, whatever, great comics characters. Let’s say Superman’s one, Wonder Woman’s the other, Batman’s the other, Captain America’s another.

KIRBY: Yeah, I remember Superman came from young fellows, just like myself.

MURRAY: Yeah, but the thing that separates them from you, Bob Kane or Joe Simon or Jerry Siegel—not to take anything away from them, they were pioneers—but they were basically one-hit wonders. They did one great character and left the field relatively early. You kept inventing new characters. You kept going.

KIRBY: Yes, I couldn’t help that, and because I loved doing that, I still do. And that’s why I’m still writing my novel.

MURRAY: But they seemed to never come up with another character as strong as their first character, and you have certainly come up with characters as good as Captain America since that. You seem much more of a fertile person, a much more energetic person, and I wonder where the drive comes—.

KIRBY: Well, that's a difference between people. It's a difference between people and I never let adversity bother me. I know I was my own person and I always knew I could do well if I wanted to, when I wanted to, and I have. I never doubted myself.

MURRAY: Yeah, but you also never rested on your laurels. You probably could have done Captain America for your entire life and not had to do anything else.

KIRBY: Oh, well, I could have easily have done that. That's how, sure, things changed, and I changed with them, but I always did my best because I was always aware of sales. I was the kind of a guy who just loved to make sales and if I did about 750,000, I would cry. [Will chuckles] but if I'd do a million a month, which I did, I was happy that way. It made the publisher happy, it made me happy, and I liked working in that type of an atmosphere.

MURRAY: Do people still come up to you at conventions and say, "Fighting American is one of my favorite characters"? Does that name come up a lot among people who talk to you about your work?

KIRBY: It comes up as much as the others, really.

MURRAY: Which is pretty amazing for, basically, a book that lasted seven issues at a time when comics weren't selling, if you think about it.

KIRBY: Yeah, the name does pop up and I meant it to be every bit as powerful as any of my other characters, except that it had that touch

of satire. The characters were good, the adversaries were good, and they were all unforgettable in their own way.

MURRAY: One interesting wrinkle on *Fighting American*, which I guess you never got into the stories because they were sort of short, was the fact that he took over his brother's body to become Fighting American. It was kind of a twist on the Captain America origin, but a very strong twist with a lot of story potential that was never really realized, that whole business about his brother was short and his mind was transferred into his brother's healthy body, and it never really got into that. But gee, it seems to me that was something that you could have done a lot with.

KIRBY: I believe you're right, but I was so concerned with developing the hero thing, that kind of left that behind.

MURRAY: What would you have done with that if you had explored it, do you think?

KIRBY: Well, I'd probably be exploring, maybe, my own relationship with my brother and that, I never did.

MURRAY: But it was a nice sort of resonance to the character, that that was sort of in the background, that he wasn't the body he was wearing, it was his brother's body he was wearing. I thought that was a nice twist, a very strong way to bring that character into being.

KIRBY: Well, it was a manner of doing it, and it was a human way of doing it, and there was nothing false about it. So I think that's the hallmark of every bit of my work.

MURRAY: Oh, I think so too. By the way, you've probably heard that they're now filming a Captain America movie. Do you have any feelings towards that?

KIRBY: Well, they'll probably use a lot of my images in it. And well,



Jack got a chance to depict the Civil War when he ghosted the Johnny Reb strip in 1957-58 for his friend Frank Giacoia. Inks by Frank; we're unsure of the date.



A really nice mid-1970s Cap sketch.

they're certainly not consulting *me* on it.

MURRAY: Well, let me put it this way, when it comes out, are you going to go see it?

KIRBY: Well, I'll go see it and see the kind of job they did on it. And that's the best I could do.

MURRAY: Well, it doesn't excite you, in other words. Or does it? I mean it is your character more than it is anybody else's character, with the exception of Joe Simon. And I would think there would be some satisfaction in the idea of that character coming to the big screen, even if they're not showing you—

KIRBY: Oh, he's been on the big screen before. And he's been on TV before.

MURRAY: This is true.

KIRBY: It's just a—don't handle him in the wrong way, and my curiosity would be in what that particular way is.

MURRAY: Yeah. Well, it's my understanding they're going a bit more towards your original conception than you might expect. They are doing the reviving him after being in ice for a while, but they're

not getting into a lot of the other things.

KIRBY: Yeah, why, I have no idea what they're going to do with him. I have absolutely no idea. It's their job and they'll probably do it the way they see it.

MURRAY: What did you think of the Captain America TV movies and the serial? Did you have a specific opinion on any of those?

KIRBY: Well, I felt they were done like all serials, see? They were done trite and very quickly. And of course, that's how they came off to me on TV. So you know, their time is limited so they get in their point quick, fast, and that's how they emerge to the viewer.

MURRAY: You weren't consulted on that serial, were you?

KIRBY: No, I wasn't.

MURRAY: How about the TV movies. Did you have an opinion on those?

KIRBY: No.

MURRAY: Did you ever see them?

KIRBY: Oh, I've seen them all.

MURRAY: You've seen them, but you didn't care for the TV movies.

KIRBY: Well, I took them as they made them. *[mutual chuckling]*

MURRAY: I'll take that as a "no comment." *[laughs]*

KIRBY: It's a "no comment."

MURRAY: Yeah, okay, that's fine. Back to Fighting American, this is a very unusual thing for Marvel to do, to print a character that they don't own. Does that signify Marvel becoming a little more responsive to creator's rights, or your rights, specifically? Or did you see this as a different thing?

KIRBY: Well, I think that all new artists—in fact, at conventions, I always felt that the artists should be able to take care of themselves, and if the publisher is entitled to advise, the artist is entitled to advise. And so I think that should be the quest for all artists, to get a fair deal. So if they can do it, I wish them all the luck.

MURRAY: For a guy who has been one of the giants of the field—and we can say that without any boastfulness at all—you've been kicked around a bit in the sense that—

KIRBY: Oh, believe it!

MURRAY:—you've been kicked around a bit, yet it never squashed your enthusiasm, at least as far as the work comes out, where another person, a lesser person, a less motivated person would have—I'm reminded of a story I heard at a convention a number of years ago. Maybe you know this story, maybe you don't. The story goes like this: John Buscema was on a panel—he was talking about when he first went to work for Marvel, doing his super-heroes in the late '60s. He said he was doing a Silver Surfer meets Thor story and he knocked himself out. He said he went to Norse mythology and he tried to do Asgard the way it might have really looked in the Norse version, and he tried to do Odin and Thor in a more naturalistic point of view, and he said he did *his* version. And he brought it in to Stan Lee, and Stan Lee just criticized the thing to death and said, "You should make Asgard look like Jack Kirby's Coney Island," and all these things. And Buscema went away from that, saying, "I will never put the work I put into that story in another story I do for Stan Lee ever again." So basically, in one criticism session, John Buscema's enthusiasm for his work was just totally destroyed, and he just put in his time since then. He does good work, but he lost that spark to go an extra mile. You never lost that spark.

KIRBY: No, I never did.

MURRAY: I'm sure you received just exactly those kinds of comments from editors all—

KIRBY: Stan Lee and I got into a lot of contentious situations, but somehow, they never seemed to phase me. And John might be a little

more sensitive.

MURRAY: Yeah, but that's—any artist—

KIRBY: Yeah, I did it anyway.

MURRAY: But that's still an amazing thing to have the energy you have and the resilience to be able to stand up to the punishing blows of editors and publishers.

KIRBY: Oh, and believe me, that's been going on through the years. That's why I used to bounce back like a yo-yo between publishers.

MURRAY: In some ways, that may be your greatest triumph, the fact that you're the ultimate survivor.

KIRBY: Well, it's the ultimate bull-fulness, really. And I feel I'm important and what I'm doing is important. And what I'm doing is for real guys, for the reader, and that means a lot to me and I'm not going to lay down easily, you know, and just stick to my original purpose. There's no thought in my mind except just doing that.

MURRAY: Do you miss drawing comics at all? I mean you did so for so long and so many hours a day, do you miss it at all?

KIRBY: Maybe after a period of time, I'll miss it. But right now, it's just like a rest period and I take it that way. I do a few, but not very many.

MURRAY: Do you have any regrets when you look back over your career?

KIRBY: Well, I have a few regrets, but I concentrated too much on comics and less on business, see? And a comic artist has to do both, see? And I didn't get—my deals weren't good, but my work was. So that's my only failure.

MURRAY: Still, everything else is such a triumph. That seems, as painful as that is to your readers, it's the work that endures.

KIRBY: It's a triumph for the publisher, himself, too. And it's not that your work is so satisfying to you. It was to me. But the publisher didn't do so badly either. And that's the way of comics.

MURRAY: Let me ask you a question—it's just like a fan question, I guess you could say—your longest run on any comic book was on *The Fantastic Four*. Is that because you loved that book or because circumstances made it necessary for you to stick with that book?

KIRBY: No, *The Fantastic Four* was—I mean yeah, *The Fantastic Four* was important to me, the fact that I liked the characters, but I liked all the characters that I drew, and it was no more important than my other strips.

MURRAY: But you stayed on that the longest, a hundred issues, as I recall. That's a lot!

KIRBY: Yeah, I think it was a hundred and one. [laughs]

MURRAY: Yeah, a hundred and one. I mean that's quite a record, even for a prolific guy like you.

KIRBY: Yeah, well, they were great characters and I loved drawing them.

MURRAY: Is there anything else you want to tell me about *Fighting American* that you remember, any anecdotes from doing the book?

KIRBY: Well, *Fighting American* is like *The Fantastic Four* or any other strip that I've ever

done. They'll keep the publisher alive for 150 to 200 years [Will laughs] and maybe further. And business-wise, that's really their purpose, so no matter how much satisfaction a strip itself gives you, you've got to always remember that aspect of it and that the publisher benefits from it as well as you do. And you've got a lot more than you do, really, because he's got so many more ways of producing it. It's not magazines today, it's movies and television and it's toys. So I've made a lot of publishers rich.

MURRAY: You did. You made a lot of fans rich too, in a different way.

KIRBY: Oh, I made a lot of fans rich. [laughs] Oh, I see what you mean. If I did, I'm grateful for that.

MURRAY: It made me rich, you know.

KIRBY: And I'm grateful for that. And you know, I can only sum it up, saying that I did the best I could. I wasn't the wisest of men, but I had a great time, doing what I did. So I don't know, maybe they cancel each other out. ★



One of the best names for a villain ever! Another of Roz's sketchbook pages.

FOUND LOVES

The things Jack loved most, with commentary by Shane Foley (based on graphic selections by John Morrow)

It's well known now that King Kirby liked voluptuous **WOMEN** (what man doesn't?)—and what better example of a Kirby woman than this 1967 pin-up of Medusa? Both strong and graceful, confronting and feminine. Someone has suggested that these **FF Annual #5** pin-ups were not drawn specifically as pin-ups, but were actually Jack's original concept drawings for the characters. I find this hard to believe since the figure drawing style of these pin-ups is that which Jack developed after **FF #50**. The Black Bolt in the pin-up is not the lithe version of **FF #45 & 46** but more like the heavier version of the 5th Annual and **FF #82**. And Medusa herself, apart from this



apparent style mismatch, sported a headpiece as well as a different mask in her first appearance (**FF #36**) and, judging by the art corrections in **FF #38**, probably in her second as well.

WOMEN



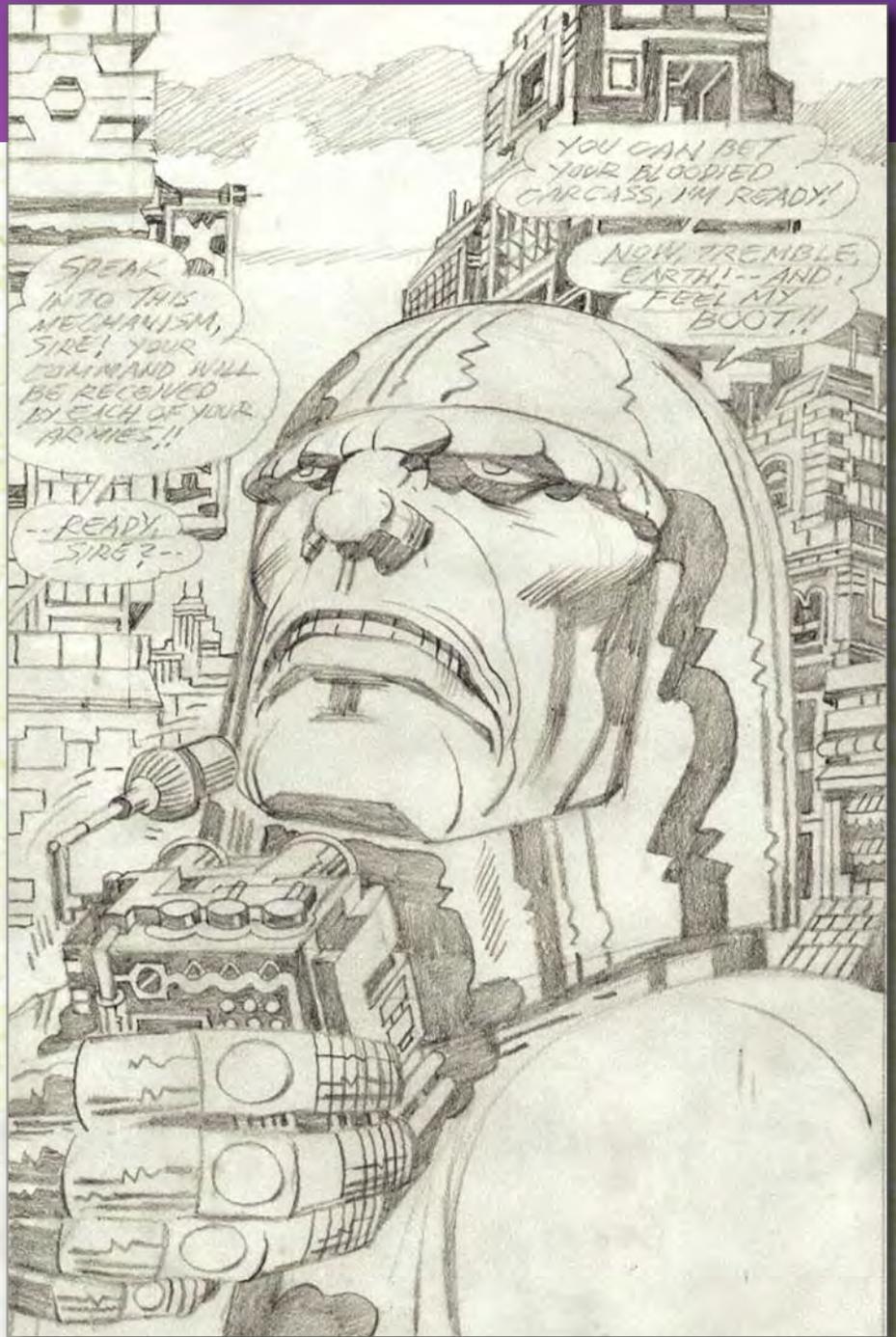
FAMILY

Kirby of course was a very devout **FAMILY** man. Editor John says: "These are all drawings of daughter Lisa. Lisa loved horses and still does, hence these drawings done by her father for her. When I was visiting her house this summer, I saw the big image (in B&W, inked by Mike Royer, which I had colored for this issue by Tom Ziuko), done when she was 14 (circa 1974), and the one in the oval frame, with its beautifully delicate pencil-work, from when she was about 7." The top right image is an undated, quicker sketch of young Lisa by her proud father.





MYTH



From what we've all read, concepts and tales of **MYTH** thrived in Kirby's brain, and he was forever putting those ideas on paper. Many were undeveloped, such as the powerful half-finished piece called simply "The Gods." Kirby had drawn Darkseid holding the Earth in this fashion. Did this piece inspire a later Darkseid illo? Or was this piece inspired by a previous Darkseid pic? Either way, Jack lived in a universe of the gods. (Date unknown.)

Speaking of Darkseid, editor John says, "I've always been taken by how different Darkseid looked late in Jack's career, vs. his early more menacing appearance. The craggy face smoothed considerably over time." These two wonderful pencil examples show he's right. Left is from the early 1970s, and above is from **Super Powers #5** (1984 first series).

Following those is a page of tight, extreme-action pencils from **New Gods #9** (1972). John went on to say, "I saw the original art for this **New Gods #9** page at the CSUN exhibit, and noticed lots of Wite-Out in panel 2 and 4. Jack cared enough to make text corrections to it, and send it back to Mike Royer to re-letter those two balloons, over very minor (but nice) changes. Compare it to the published issue."





FORAGER IS ATTACKED AS PRIME ONE IS LED TO THE CEREMONIAL "KILLING-PIT!"

FORAGER! DO AS I TELL YOU! YOU MAY FAIL TO STOP & MINDS! THE ETERNAL HAS A BETTER CHANCE!

HAVE YOU GONE MAD, FORAGER!! IT'S BLASPHEMY TO INTERFERE!

UGH-!



PRIME ONE WALKS DOWN SLOWLY AND DELIBERATELY TO HIS ROOM! THE "ALL-WIDOW" ALREADY WAITS WITH HER "SACRIFICIAL" ELECTRO-STABBER!

BUT, HOW CAN I HOPE TO TALK TO THIS ETERNAL! I'M A BUG! HE WOULD STAMP ME TO DEATH WITHOUT MERCY!

AAAA-

HE WILL NOT! YOUR LIFE IS A LIE! YOU'RE ONE OF HIS KIND!



NO! I DON'T BELIEVE IT! I'M A BUG! IF YOU ARE A BUG-- THEN-- I AM A BUG!



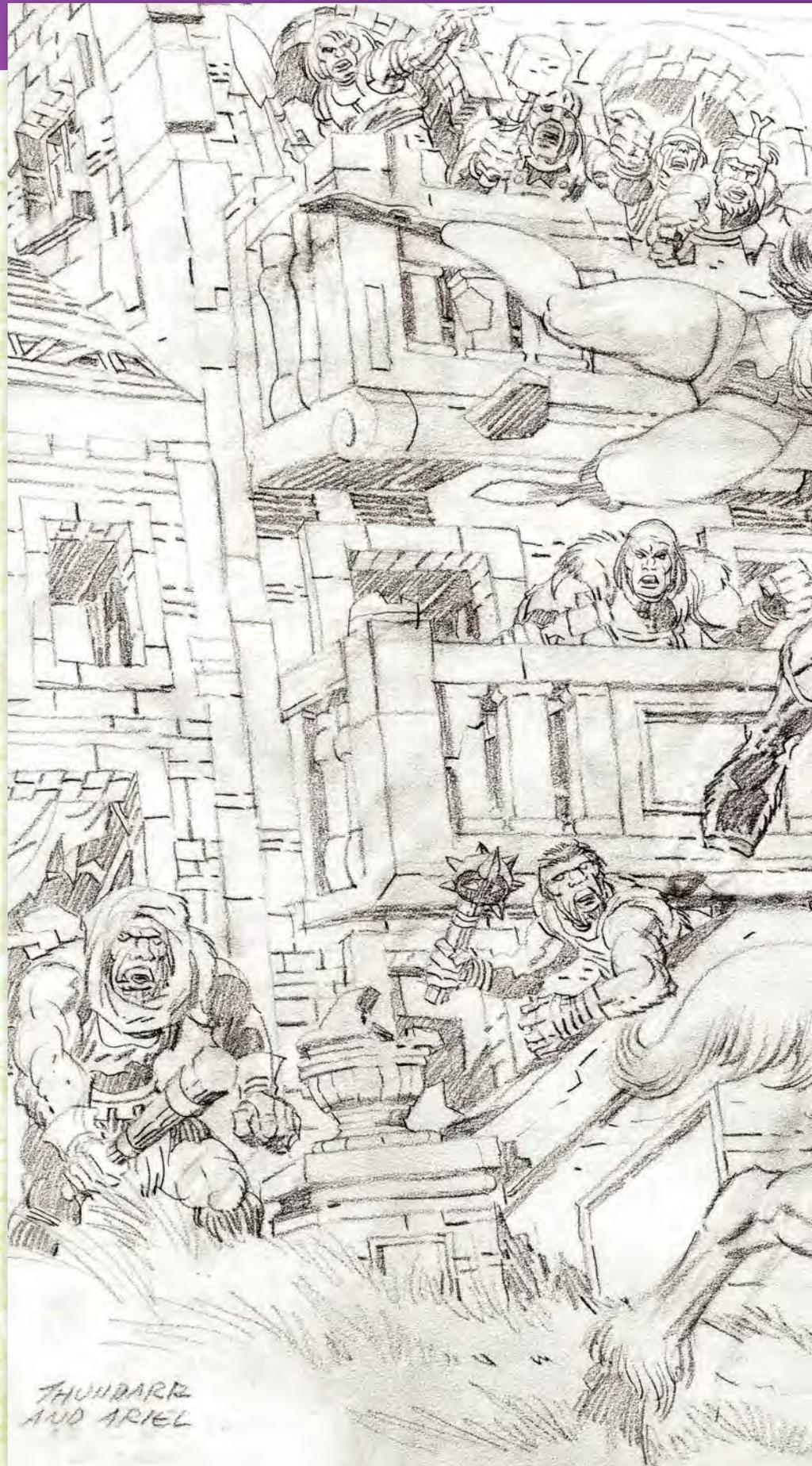
MY LAST WORDS, FORAGER--! END ORION! FIND ORION! FIND ORION!

SILENCE! --IT'S TIME!

1/3

WORK

Since **WORK** and the security it provided were so important to Kirby, it's obvious why his '80s stint drawing and creating animation presentations were a Godsend for him. It not only provided a better income and health care benefits when he needed it, but it gave him lots of creative freedom, and he could draw larger size as his eyesight was failing. It was a perfect fit. Presented here is a beautiful, fully detailed image still in pencil produced for **Thundarr**, as well as an Alcala-linked **Thundarr** image, then that same image in its simplified final form. As editor John says, "(These) show the power he still had, and the work ethic he applied to this stuff, even though it was going to get watered down." (Maybe **Thundarr** is really rescuing daughter Lisa, not Ariel, as they leap to that magnificent horse?)





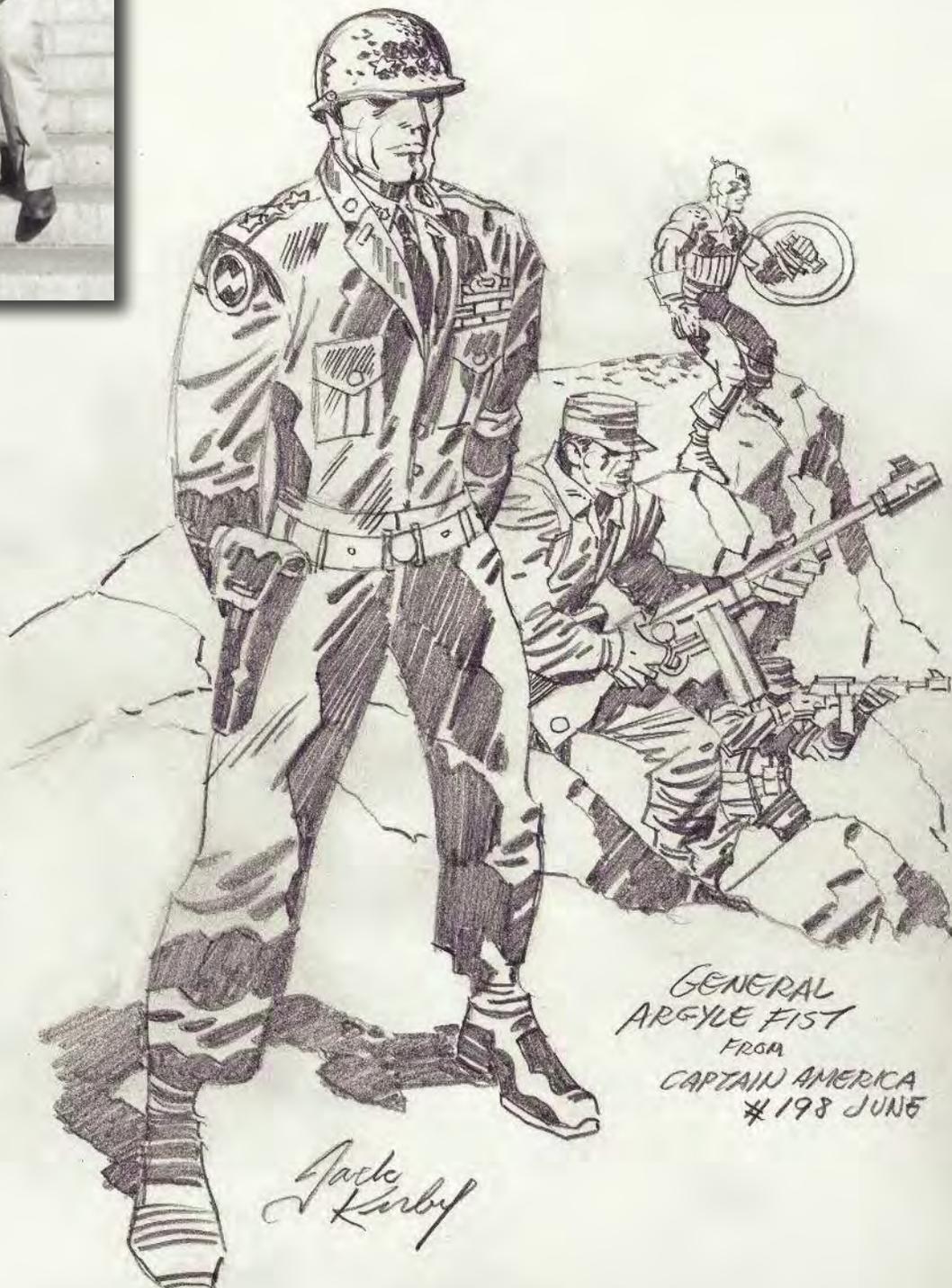


We also know that Jack was proud of his **COUNTRY** and everything America was meant to stand for, intensely disliking the attitude of many that strove to talk it down.

Is this the reason then, that in the sketchbook he drew for Roz, he included General Argyle Fist? Why else would he overlook the wonderful Arnim Zola from the same Captain America run? Or the Swine? Or the Night Flyer? But, perhaps, such was Jack's attachment to his war experience—and the value he placed on guarding his beloved country—that the General was considered worthy for inclusion.

Following this is a tightly penciled page, originally produced for **Our Fighting Forces #151** (1974), but never scripted, inked or published. The note at the top seems to be spot-on as to its original place in the story.

Note how it seems that Kirby's method was to draw fully the main action, but leave backgrounds only roughed in until he knew how much was to be covered by wordage. A delightful page!



COUNTRY

THIS PAGE WAS PULLED FROM STORY - PG 8 - POSSIBLY *To Jeff* -
ISSUE 152 "KILL ME WITH WAGNER" - *THE* LOSERS - *Jack Kirby*



Jack Kirby

KIRBY KINETICS

by Norris Burroughs

An ongoing examination of Kirby's art and compositional skills

(below) Jack Kirby was born August 28, 1917 at the Kurtzberg family tenement apartment at 147 Essex Street. Below is a photo by Tom Kraft of what the building looks like today. Can't you picture young Jack climbing the fire escapes?



THE KING & HIS CITY

Jack Kirby's life force was attuned to the rhythms of New York City. Growing up on the Lower East Side's Essex Street, the King began to inject the flavor and wild exuberance of that neighborhood, as well as the teeming bustle of the greater metropolis, into his earliest stories. One of his most vibrant early series, *Star Spangled Comics*' "Newsboy Legion" was set in Suicide Slum, a fictional version of Kirby's crowded birthplace. The Legion was a motley crew of multi-cultural youths. Their protector, the heroic Guardian, was a costumed hero whose alter ego was police officer Jim Harper.

With the city as its backdrop, the series action exploded throughout the streets, alleys, and rooftops of Suicide Slum. In particular, Kirby seemed to exult in dizzying aerial acrobatic conflicts that spanned the gulfs and canyons of Manhattan. Clearly, such action had been inspired by the artist's vividly remembered inner city experiences. In a *Comics Journal* #134 interview conducted by Gary Groth, Kirby described some of the more unusual gang fights that he had engaged in as a boy.

"A climb-out fight is where you climb a building. You climb fire escapes. You climb to the top of the building. You fight on the roof, and you fight all the way down again."

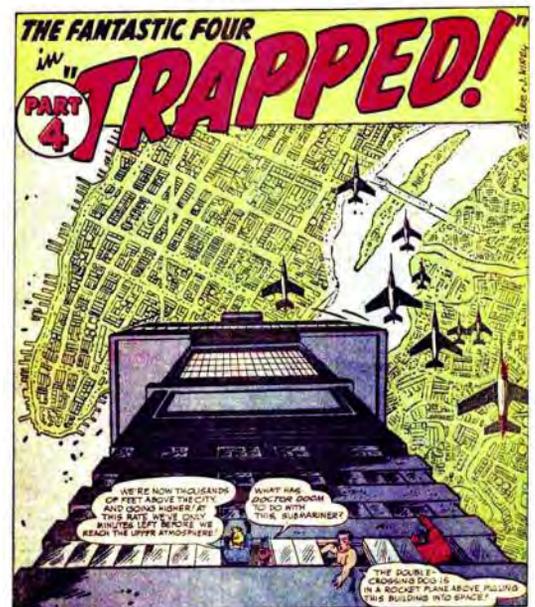
Here on the cover of the May 1942 issue of *Star Spangled Comics* #8, we see just such a scene, as members of the Newsboy Legion create a human bridge between buildings with their connected bodies. The skewed angle of the structures and the lithe dynamic leaping form of the Guardian create a tangible sense of vertigo for the viewer.

Twenty odd years later, *The Fantastic Four* was one of the first comics to be set in New York City, as opposed to a generic town such as *Superman's* Metropolis. In *FF* #4, readers would be astounded to see Johnny Storm, on the run from his teammates, taking refuge in lower Manhattan's Bowery, a neighborhood not too far from Kirby's birthplace. Johnny is surely walking down desolate streets that the King was more than familiar

with. [For more on this amazing story, see TJKC #60's entry, "Dynamic Chemistry."]

In a large Chapter panel from the *FF's* sixth issue,

Kirby gives us incontrovertible evidence that the Four's Baxter Building headquarters was located in Manhattan, before it had been mysteriously levitated above the island. The perspective slant of the structure again gives a strong sense of vertigo, as our angle of vision plunges us earthward. The genius stroke of placing the formation of jets below gives us scale, as well as various directional indication guides. My eye scans directly from the red A in "Trapped" and across the street



below it to the first jet, and then down and around to the figures leaning out of the windows. Kirby's genius again asserts itself in his giving his reader an alternative way of scanning the panel, also connected to the letter A. The eye is equally liable to drop from it straight down the avenue that leads to the front of the Baxter Building, which again takes one directly to the jets. The jets and the stories of the building are spatial levels or lattices that break up the panel into multiple dimensions.



As the perspective of this panel indicated, the direction of *The Fantastic Four* comic seemed to gradually reach ever higher into the cosmos, culminating in the interstellar sagas of Galactus and the Silver Surfer. Still, the FF were not above regularly duking it out in the streets of New York, as this image from *FF #74 [above]* so aptly shows. Kirby took great pleasure in destroying huge blocks of New York while the heroes and villains bashed each other through buildings. As in panel five of this sequence, the Thing would often find himself hovering comically above the landscape, like Wile E. Coyote just before a fall. This was often an opportunity for Kirby to give us a marvelous perspective shot of the buildings below him.

Kirby seemed to love this particular scenario with the *Thing*, seeing as he had already used it fairly recently in this panel from



Fantastic Four #69 [left]. Here the *Thing* has leaped from a building and is seemingly suspended, spread-eagle over the canyons of New York.

It is the beautifully sculpted perspective of the buildings below the *Thing* that insist that his suspension is only temporary, and he will quickly fall. In particular, the artfully positioned black spotting on the *Thing*'s right side leads the eye down to the shadows on the right side of the building, which drop like a plum line to the bottom right side of the panel.

The amazing thing is that this is just a relatively small panel within the context of the story, and yet Kirby goes to the trouble of creating this incredible deep space cityscape background. That is what sets the King apart from the herd.

If I could choose a single image that showcases Kirby's mastery of deep space, combined with awesome architectural structure, it would be this full-page panel from *FF #72 [right]* of the Surfer soaring high above the canyons of Manhattan.

Kirby only approximates the correct perspectives here, bending the rules to suit his vision. The various horizontal, vertical and diagonal shapes create a multiplicity of spatial lattices. One can literally spend an hour studying the complexity of the architectural structures

Kirby has laboriously arranged. The torque of the Surfer's figure, with its varying positioning of arms, legs, head, and torso is situated within a multi-dimensional grid that accentuates its kinetics. Kirby is a master of positioning his figures so that they move three-dimensionally within the two-dimensional space of the panel.

So it is that the Surfer's left arm is moving diagonally towards us initiating the motion of his entire body, while his right arm is counter-posed behind him. This is one of Kirby's best examples of a figure appearing to be on the verge of zooming out of its panel.

The angles of the wall of buildings at the top of the panel are pushing the Surfer forward. The somewhat pentagonal shape behind the Surfer's head accentuates this effect. The row of buildings that border the water on the left optimize the thrust, as do the tiny shapes of the docks. Even the speed trail sweeping behind the surfboard creates a separate level and a dimension that divides the space and positions the figure optimally within it. Kirby gives the figure enough room by opening up the space to the Surfer's right with the body of water, the shape of which also gives the figure more propulsion.

So much of Kirby's work appears deceptively simple until one begins to attempt to understand the workings of the man's mind. It took decades for him to amalgamate the various ways of rendering reality into a uniquely individual and original shorthand technique for depicting four-dimensional space/time. As surely as the Silver Surfer soars above the great metropolis in this awesome tableau, so Kirby's limitless imagination enabled him to transcend the narrow confines of the ghetto that birthed him, and reach the stratospheric heights he was to attain. ★



negroes, and anybody else, because that's all I heard around my neighborhood. But I've never [acted] in a way that would be detrimental to them.

Q: In your comics, do you portray blacks in major roles?

KIRBY: Yes, I feel they have a major role in our society! Just like any of us have...

[An interruption occurs as Jack asks to continue over at his table]

Q: Did you create Captain America?

KIRBY: Yeah, I did.

Q: He's sort of a cultural-political symbol, isn't he?

KIRBY: Captain America is a kind of wish symbol. I've been brought up with patriotic feelings as much as the next guy. I want to see America protected as much as the next guy. Captain America is to me a symbol to protect America; nothing could happen to America if Captain America was there.

To me, it's just a feeling. Like religion is a feeling—the kind of feeling I have when, oh, a man can try to make contact with God. Personally, I believe in God. I have that feeling, but nothing more. I feel part of Him is in me, and if I have that feeling, I've made contact. I'm my own church. I'm my own synagogue, as a living thing. I feel that contact with God because I'm alive. A building isn't alive. A building is something built by me. And if it's built by me, I have responsibility for that contact.

Q: So would you say that Captain America is your symbol of what America should be?

KIRBY: Not what America *should* be. Captain America is a symbol of what America *means* to me. I feel America should be protected. I'd like it to be preserved. So Captain America preserves it for me.

Q: How great an influence do you think such a symbol has on young kids who read your comics?

KIRBY: Captain America, to my mind, is a symbol that can be identified with by anybody. If you're an American, you can identify with Captain America, no matter what your persuasion. Simple as that. I've always kept him that way. He's not categorized, not any particular type of man. He's a representative symbol of what you want.

Q: Did you dislike or resent any of the things Steranko did with your Captain America?

KIRBY: No. I can't either like or dislike it, because it's Steranko's own version. That's something you'll have to [take up] with Steranko. I can't analyze it for Steranko, because it hasn't come out of me. I don't know why Steranko's version is as it is. Only Steranko can [say]. I could analyze it in my own way, if I like, but I don't know if it



Vykin takes center stage in *Forever People* #7 (1972). Hey, do you suppose Jack first named him just Vykin—ie. “Viking”—then subliminally thought of “Eric the Red,” and that’s where “Vykin the Black” came from?

[would be] the correct interpretation.

Q: What do you think of Stan Lee's Daredevil? It's been quite political lately.

KIRBY: If he's getting political, it's strictly from Stan Lee. What you're getting is Stan Lee's politics.

Q: Do you think that's good?

KIRBY: Ah... it's different from [my approach].

Q: Do you think Stan Lee injects more politics into his comics?

KIRBY: Yes.

Q: So he's someone in the comic book industry who's very political.

KIRBY: Yes, I feel that Stan Lee is political. What you're getting is Stan Lee's politics. Simple as that.

Q: Do you think he's doing it conscientiously, or just writing to make a story that will sell?

KIRBY: [perhaps mishearing] I hate to think he's doing it consciously, let's put it that way.

Q: What effect do you think his political views will have on kids?

KIRBY: I have faith in young people. If Stan Lee has something to say, you either believe it or you don't. That should be the way with anybody. You either believe it or you don't. If you're an emotional dumb-dumb, see, and you hang on to an image, you'll go along with that

image, you know, and you'll get your head beat... you understand?

But if you're a rational, well-balanced human being, let the other guy present his argument. You either believe it or you don't. That's the way I've always operated. So I don't inject my politics into cartoons. I don't feel I should. I haven't got the right, and it's not my field.

Q: When you created Captain America, did you have any idea that it would turn into a modern myth?

A: No. You know, I created it as good entertainment. I thought somebody might like it, and they did. And they've been following it ever since, and I'm grateful.

Q: So you feel that since comics are entertainment, they should deal strictly with a fantasy world, and not allude to the real situation of our society?

KIRBY: I say the fantasy world should be the fantasy world. If you try to inject reality into fantasy, and peddle fantasy as reality, see, then you're doing a disservice of some kind. In other words, if you tell someone a fairy tale, and tell them that's the real thing, you're doing him a disservice.

SOMEONE ELSE: Sorry, son, he's got to go change now.

Q: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Kirby!

KIRBY: Ah, yeah—it's my pleasure, really. ★

JACK KIRBY, ART CRITIC

Transcribed and edited by John Morrow

At a mid-1970s San Diego Comic-Con, Jack was approached by fan David "Hambone" Hamilton on the convention floor to request an interview. During the conversation, Kirby



took a few minutes on the spot, to critique Hambone's friend Carl Taylor's artwork. Carl [at left, in a recent photo] had shown his work to Jack before, and as you can see from this mini-inter-

view, Kirby remembered it. But more than a critique, Jack offered Carl some sage advice on how to best profit from his talents. Thanks to Hambone for providing the vintage audio tape recording he made of the encounter, which begins when they show Jack some of Carl's artwork:

JACK KIRBY: You like the fantasy stuff. I remember, you had a lot of paintings, right? Acrylic stuff? Did you ever think of doing anything really big? Instead of, y'know, stuffing it in a comic panel, doing something, say, four or five feet? Did you ever think of that?

CARL TAYLOR: I've only... I did a few...

JACK: I'm not talking about formal art, y'know—art in



the formal sense. Strictly comics. In other words, you take the same comics you have here. If I remember right, your color stuff was about the best I've really seen around.

HAMBONE: He's done some things on glass.

JACK: You ever see these dyes—y'know, the Martin's dyes?

CARL: No.

JACK: They go over inks. In other words, they're color that goes over inks, so you don't lose your ink lines.

CARL: I was using fountain pen ink and food coloring to do this.

JACK: Well, it didn't hide the ink line. These dyes do the same thing, and they're rich as hell.

HAMBONE: Is that what you use? I was wondering how you got that bright color on it.

JACK: Yeah. But you can paint with comics with that stuff. In other words, you keep your ink line and anything you put down. And it comes out terrific as all hell. So what I remember best is the painting you do, which is good. If you could do large stuff, see, I think you'd get about a hundred bucks apiece. I really do. I'd go anywhere; I

bet they'll snap 'em up on you. It's not the regular art alone, see; it's a different type of art. You go up to the guy at a gallery, take 'em up to a gallery. It's not really bullsh*t in a way, [Hambone and Carl laugh] because comics are editorial art. So tell them you're doing editorial art, which is true—because the damn thing comes out of a printing press, what's the difference—whether it comes out of a palette or a printing press?



Hard to believe, but there's no Kirby here. Pencils by Carl Taylor, inks by Sam De La Rosa.

So make about four or five of them if you can, okay? Large stuff. And you take 'em up to the community gallery, and I bet you'd get about a hundred apiece for those.

HAMBONE: But comics is his first love, and that's what he wants to break into.

JACK: That's what he can do. He can do it better on that stuff, than he can do it in comics. Fill it with what you like, with rocketships or super-heroes, or whatever you feel like doing.

CARL: This is a picture I never did finish, of Galactus.

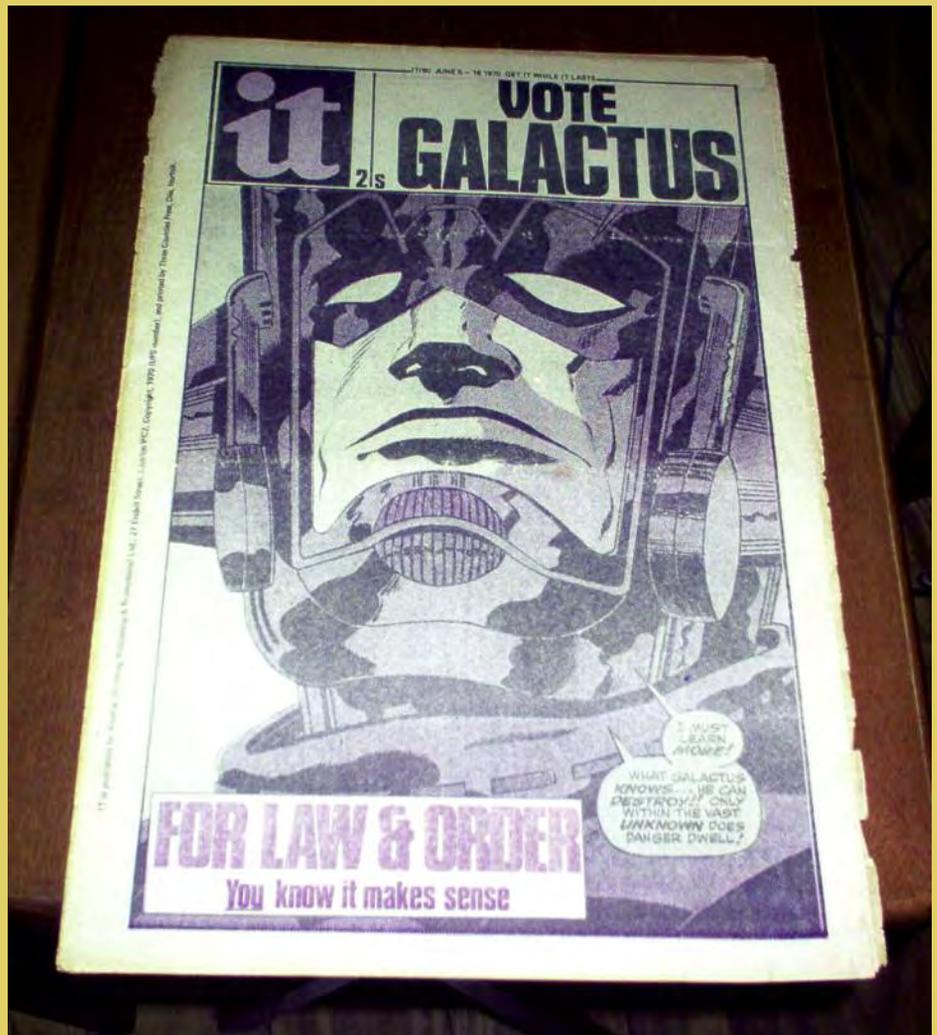
JACK: Yeah! Why don't you finish this thing, or take this thing and make everything a little larger. Just what you have here. It doesn't matter what the heck you put on it. It could be Galactus, or your interpretation of Galactus. Marvel isn't gonna sue you. Put it on this big—it doesn't even have to be a canvas. Get a big illustration board, see, about this size—a double-spread size. This is what I do 'em on. And color 'em up. Get these Martin's dyes and color 'em up. You'll come out with stuff that'll amaze you. It'll really amaze you, and you'll sell it. I mean, what the heck is the difference if you get, say, \$20 a page for four pages, or you get \$100-200 for, y'know, two or three pages? You understand what I mean?

CARL: Probably the only difference would be, I'd only have copies if I made slides.

JACK: I tell you what you do. When you get 'em done, if you can get photostats of them, photographs of them, send 'em to me, okay? And I'll see what I can do, all right? But that's where you really belong. If you start cramming the kind of stuff you do... I've seen your stuff for several years now, at a couple of conventions. If you try to cram your stuff into these damn small panels, you're not gonna make it. I think you're gonna be happiest at doing what you really do. You're an artist, you're a painter. It doesn't matter what the hell you do, whether it's comics or formal art. You don't have to do what Da Vinci did, or anybody else did. If you're good at comics and you like doing comics, and you color 'em up, as a good artist—a good artist is a good artist, no matter what the hell he does. Comics is accepted as art anywhere, in fact even more so. So I'm willing to bet you get 100 to 200 bucks a page for what you've got. I'll stake anything on it. Not only that, once you start selling it, talk to someone about management.

CARL: I had been thinking about doing some oil paintings, but I'm kinda rough on oils, so I never did get back to doing it.

JACK: Don't do the oil paintings. Do the... well, I shouldn't have said that, because



A tabloid in the UK agreed with Jack's advice about large images. Cover of The International Times, June 1970.

actually, oil painting, a lot of guys feel that is the accepted form. Well, it's not the accepted form. The accepted form is what you make.

HAMBONE: This is not as crammed.

JACK: I would work at it the easiest way possible for you to do it. In other words, in the way you like to do it. Not because some other guy says, "Well, to do art, you've got to work in oil," or, "If you're gonna make it, you work in watercolor." Work it the way you like it. The thing I remember is not your sketches, but your paintings, which were very, very good. I remember your costumes were just great.

HAMBONE: Reminiscent of Richard Corben.

JACK: No, he can do this any way, whatever he likes.

CARL: On the other side of this, I have some of my characters.

JACK: Yeah, and that's great. Do paintings like that. I remember the effective ones you did were the space things. Make a bigger one though, okay? Be as careful as you can about layout. If you want to make it simple,

make it simple. If you want to make one big tremendous figure, try that.

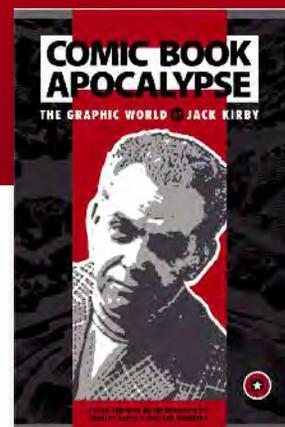
CARL: What I might have to do, is get an opaque projector, and shoot it on there.

JACK: Work it any way you like. But if you get something very powerful and very impressive, I think you'll make a helluva lot more headway that way.

You can do this stuff right now if you wanna. All you have to do is go to New York. You see what the beef is? I just happen to be one of the few guys they'll work with out here. It's only because I've already bumped up the ratings. So even then it's tough; it's not that tough for me, but for you it'll be tough. If you go to New York, you'll land something now if you want to. What you have there is very, very good. You've got a good style. What you really need is just working at it, until you refine it. When I did the first *Captain America*, it wasn't any better than this, I can tell you that. It wasn't any better than this. But you spend about ten years straight in the business, you come out with something very good. ★

CSUN KIRBY PANEL

With opening commentary by Charles Hatfield



For a closer look at the CSUN exhibition itself, be sure to check out last issue's feature.

For a video of this panel, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vixROCnrz1o>

(right) The companion catalog to the exhibition features scholarly essays about Jack's work by Glen David Gold, Diana Schutz, Howard Chaykin, Carla Speed McNeil, and others. It was published by and is available through IDW.

The exhibition *Comic Book Apocalypse: The Graphic World of Jack Kirby* ran from August 24 through October 10, 2015 at the California State University, Northridge Art Galleries in Los Angeles. This show, the largest solo Kirby exhibition yet mounted in the United States, incorporated 107 originals and filled the Main Gallery space, which consists of three rooms, about 3000 square feet, and 300 linear wall feet. *Comic Book Apocalypse* has the distinction of being the best-attended art exhibition in the history of CSU Northridge, drawing some 6200 visitors in its seven weeks. The opening reception, on Saturday, August 29, drew more than 600 people; the gallery talk on the following Monday morning, featuring Mark Evanier, was filled to capacity at about 150; and the show's last big public event, a panel discussion and catalog signing on Saturday, September 26, drew more than 300. On its final afternoon, Saturday, October 10—a period of just four hours—the show drew an additional 350-plus. The Gallery led a record number of tours through the exhibition (more than forty, totaling about 1350 people). I cannot count the number of times I found myself in the Gallery, serving as *de facto* docent or hearing stories full of love and admiration from fans, friends, and colleagues of Jack Kirby—and from people who had never looked at his work before!

I'm not surprised by any of this. Or, rather, I'm surprised and proud that I was able to do my part, but not at all surprised by the sheer enthusiasm for Kirby's art and the big numbers racked up at the Gallery. I think the Gallery team may have been surprised, and that many of my CSUN colleagues were surprised, but to me the idea that people should

want to come see a hundred-plus Kirby originals is a no-brainer.

For me, curating this show fulfilled a lifelong dream, that of acknowledging publicly, somehow, my fascination with, and never-repayable imaginative debt to, the art of Kirby. Ten-year-old me and fifty-year-old, professorial me were arm-in-arm on this one, and delirious with joy to be doing it.

Comic Book Apocalypse was an idea whose time had already past come. During my preparation for the show, I talked or exchanged emails with several other scholars who also wanted to do Kirby shows at their institutions. I got lucky. On the heels of my book, *Hand of Fire: The Comic Art of Jack Kirby* (2011), I got the opportunity to be the first person to curate a Kirby show at a university. This all came about because CSUN Galleries Director Jim Sweeters—a savvy, interested, and generous man—invited me to do it.

What happened was that Jim and I met during the Gallery's big Robert Williams exhibition about six years ago.

On the night Williams—of *Zap Comix* and *Juxtapoz* fame—did the Hans Burkhardt Lecture (named for the abstract expressionist painter and former CSUN teacher) and a signing in the Gallery, I was somehow introduced to Jim. That event got me into the Gallery after too many years away—I should have come long before—and that's how we began to strike up a conversation about doing a comic art show. For the record, that was on March 10, 2010. And then, five days later, incredibly, I ran into Jim again at Pasadena City College, where esteemed artist (and Kirbyphile) Gary Panter was doing a weeklong residency, facilitated by my colleague, PCC Gallery Director Brian Tucker. Serendipity! From then on Jim and I were talking seriously about a comics exhibition. I waffled for a while about what theme to do—Los Angeles cartoonists? Alternative comics? Fantasy comics?—but when *Hand of Fire* bowed at the end of 2011 to good reviews, I allowed myself, finally, to see the obvious: *What I really want to do is a full-on Kirby show.*

Jim said yes, and that's when our roughly three years of concerted work really began. It turned out that we had bit off a lot. For a first-time Main Gallery show devoted to original comic art—and a first-time curatorial effort by yours truly, an English prof—we aimed high. How high,



(above) One of Jack's collages which was on display at CSUN.

(right) The promotional postcard for the exhibit. This Silver Surfer #18 image was also used for a giant mural in the gallery.





I didn't realize until I began seeking out and courting collectors of the original art. The world of comic art collecting is a culture unto itself, and back then I was not very familiar with it, despite having studied comics as reading matter for a good chunk of my life. Fortunately, certain collectors, such as Glen David Gold and Mark Evanier, and certain colleagues, such as my friend Ben Saunders (an experienced curator himself), could act as my Virgils in this underworld, so that I could eventually feel at home. What I've learned about collectors and about the history of comic art during this experience, I can't possibly tell in just a few paragraphs, but suffice to say that gathering the works for this show was a prolonged, sometimes suspenseful, and ultimately very *social* process. I asked for a lot of work because I could not overcome my worry that many of the works we asked for would not materialize. But I was wrong: we got a great many works, a trove really, and then in Summer 2015, with just weeks left until our opening, Jim and I set about figuring out to put all those works into the framework I had envisioned long, long ago.

It was then that I learned that one's existing ideas and arguments must inevitably yield to the sheer visual power of the artworks once you have them—*so many* of them, in house, in hand, and clamoring for space. Certain ideas I loved and pushed for almost from the start, such as creating a reading corner with books in it to stress the readability of comic art, got pushed aside due to the challenge of showing so much Kirby work to advantage in a space that people, we hoped, would enjoy moving through. To take my interests and make them work within a space that visitors could navigate—to make a livelier, more interactive space—that was the trick.

Comic Book Apocalypse benefited a great deal from the help of the Jack Kirby Museum and Research Center, which provided us many images and several crucial design elements, including interactive iPad displays. Thanks to the Museum's leaders, Tom Kraft and Rand Hoppe, our show became much stronger. We also owe many thanks to designer Louis Solis, who adapted a vintage Kirby/Herb Trimpe splash (from *Silver Surfer* #18, 1970) to create the show's branding image, which became the template for the design of the whole space; to David Folkman, for the many wonderful photos; and to mural designer Geoff Grogan, a terrific comics artist and teacher, whose staggering "New Gods" mural inspired me to rethink just where and how many of the works were going to go into the space. Also, the CSUN Galleries team, including exhibition coordinator Michelle Giacomuzzi and assistants Jack Castellanos and Janet Solval, did a tremendous amount of work to get the art on the walls, matted and framed, shown to advantage, and properly documented.

Sixteen lenders—a far cry from the mere handful I originally promised Jim—made the show possible. Without them, we would have had nothing. It was Jim himself, though, who taught me the way to

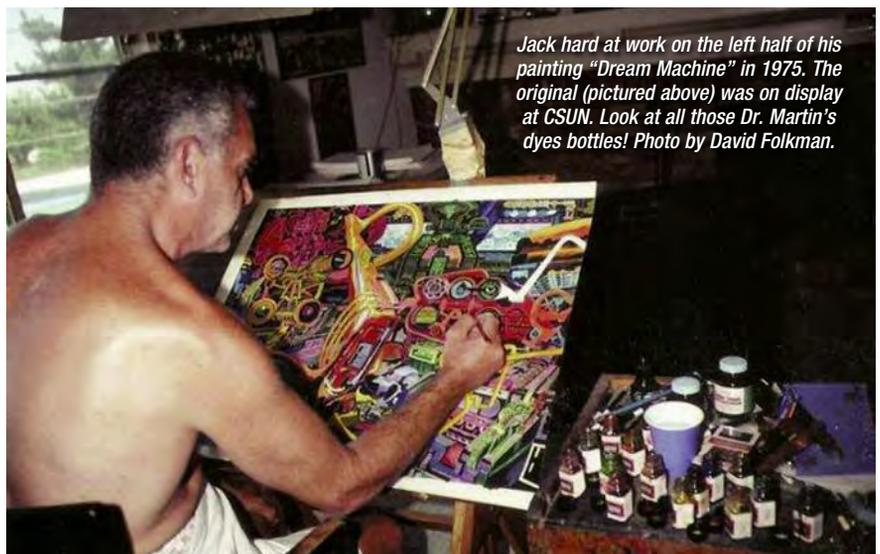
do things in the gallery world, even as I taught him about Kirby. Jim understood the challenge of enlivening a space filled with many objects of nearly the same size and shape, of bringing in color to energize the scene, of taking an intimate form known for its hand feel, the comic book, and blowing it up to gallery scale. Jim's hands-on creativity helped make the show spectacular. It's one thing to sit in your study and spin out arguments about an artist on your laptop; it's quite another to build arguments in three dimensions while making sure not to get in the way of

the viewer's pleasure. Having learned so much through this experience, I'm frankly dying to do more shows.

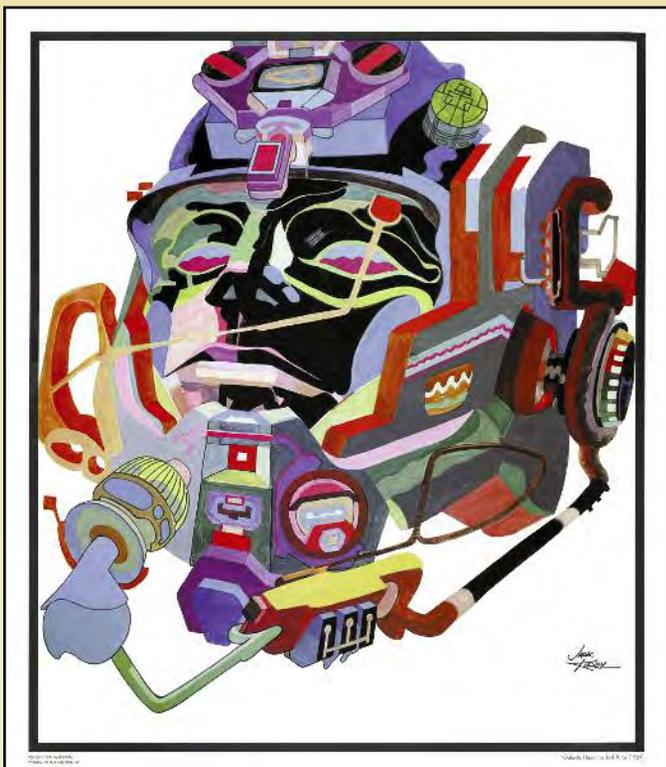
You'll see in the accompanying transcript of our Sept. 26 panel that the status of comic art as *readable*, handheld art, as opposed to spectacular gallery art, was one of my abiding concerns when it came to putting on this show. I wanted *story* to be highlighted as well as art. Fortunately, we were able to fulfill one of my earliest ambitions for the show by displaying all of the originals for a whole issue of *Kamandi* (#14, 1973) in one of the rear galleries, alongside Tom Kraft's brilliant pencils-to-inks iPad display of this same issue; moreover, we were able to display all the originals for *Thor* #155 (1968) in an adjoining gallery. This one-two punch turned out even better than I had hoped, because the differences in style and production between the *Kamandi*, inked and lettered by Mike Royer, and the *Thor*, largely inked by Vince Colletta and lettered by Artie Simek, proved to be very instructive to gallery visitors. To show one story edited by Kirby himself, and another edited by Stan Lee, and to highlight certain features of the original boards that were artifacts of the production process, turned out to be a real coup, for which I am very grateful.

In fact "grateful" describes my entire experience of curating the show and co-editing, with Ben Saunders, its accompanying catalog (co-published by CSUN and IDW under the supervision of Scott Dunbier). To have done these things—to have had the opportunity, and seen the joy that the results brought so many—fills me with thanks and wonder. I only hope it won't be long before the next big Kirby exhibition in the States. We need more, and there is so much more to show.

[The following panel discussion was conducted on September 26, 2015, at California State University, Northridge. It was transcribed by Sean Dulaney, edited by John Morrow, and revised by the panel.]



Jack hard at work on the left half of his painting "Dream Machine" in 1975. The original (pictured above) was on display at CSUN. Look at all those Dr. Martin's dyes bottles! Photo by David Folkman.



JIM SWEETERS: I'm the gallery director here at the CSUN Galleries. Thank you for coming to our panel discussion on Jack Kirby—*Comic Book Apocalypse: The Graphic World of Jack Kirby*. Charles Hatfield, professor of English here on campus, will lead the discussion and curated the exhibition. [applause] He teaches popular culture, graphic novel classes, and comics classes and, as I said, is in the English Department. So, I'm going to let him introduce the panelist—and thank you, panelists, for coming. Thank you all for coming, and we will see you later in the Gallery. [applause]



CHARLES HATFIELD: So, we're flying by the seat of our pants this afternoon. That seems appropriate somehow, given the energy and sense of release or escape that you so often see in the work of the great Jack Kirby. We're grateful to be able to mount an exhibition of Jack's work here at Cal State Northridge, and indeed to mount the largest exhibition of Kirby

that this country has yet seen. It seems unlikely that Cal State Northridge should be the place, but why not? [laughter] And the answer as to how that came about has to do with the generosity of Jim Sweeters, our gallery director, who five years ago—just after meeting me—said, "Hey, how about a comics show?" I don't think Jim knew what he was in for, necessarily. But since that time, we've worked together to bring the *Comic Book Apocalypse* show into our Gallery space.

We have a jam-packed panel of Kirby experts—Kirby *thinkers*: artists and scholars and creators of all stripes. And we're just going to toss back and forth a few broad and, we hope, generative questions this afternoon. Many of the panelists are contributors to the catalog. I hope to introduce them quickly, succinctly. So I'll just start over here on my far left with L.A.-based artist Steve Roden. [applause] Steve is a painter. He's a maker of spaces, of installations. He's a sound artist. He has an exhibition ongoing now at the Pasadena Museum of California Art. He can be found online at inbetweennoise.com. He's also an avid collector of comics art.



Sitting next to Steve is artist, curator, writer, critic, experimental musician—you name it, Doug Harvey, who can be found online at dougharvey.la. [applause] Doug was, for more than a dozen years, the lead art critic at *L.A. Weekly*, and it was his writing about Jack Kirby's Fourth World that really brought him onto my radar perhaps 15 years ago, and we're pleased to have him among our catalog contributors.



Sitting next to Doug is my colleague and good friend, Ben Saunders from the University of Oregon. [applause] Ben is the founder of the Comics and Cartoon Studies program at the University of Oregon, which is this country's first undergraduate liberal arts degree program in comics studies—a first, and a program like no other. He's also a renaissance literature scholar, a pop music scholar, a scholar of comic books and of the superhero narrative, and the co-editor of our catalog, without whom I could do nothing. So, thank you to Ben. [applause]

To my immediate left, Adam McGovern, a prolific writer of cultural criticism and of comic books. You may have seen him at hilowbrow.com or other online critical venues. Among his comic book creations is a deliriously Kirby-esque collaboration with Paolo Leandri on the recent comic book published by Image called *Nightworld*, which is really funky and head-turning and great, so you should check that out. [applause]



To my right, from Indiana University-Bloomington is the art historian and artist, Andrei Molotiu, who is the founder of the newly formed center at IU for the study of comics and sequential art. His publications include *Fragonard's Allegories of Love*, which is the companion to his Getty exhibition he curated here in L.A. some years ago, and also the mind-boggling anthology called *Abstract Comics*. Andrei is the foremost authority and proponent of the abstract comic genre, or movement, and an incredible maker of sequential art in his own right. [applause]



And finally, on the far right of the table, from Stanford University, professor of film and media studies, Scott Bukatman: a fellow comics teacher, and, like so many here on the panel, another catalog contributor. Scott is the author of *The Poetics of Slumberland*, *Terminal Identity*, *Matters of Gravity*, the BFI Film Classics book on *Blade Runner*, and, forthcoming from the University of California Press, an amazing book called *Hellboy's World*. Scott Bukatman. [applause]



So let the record show Steve, Doug, Ben, Adam, myself, Andrei and Scott. More panelists than you can shake a stick at. So I want to start out with a brief question for every panelist, and I'll ask you (though I'm springing this on you all unexpectedly) to answer this as succinctly as you can: [tell us] about your first Kirby comics or Kirby art memory, or an early formative one that sticks in your brain. Whether it was delightful or confounding, whether you loved it or were troubled by it. If there's just something like that early in your experience that you can relate to us. Steve?

STEVE RODEN: Thanks. The first comic book I ever had as a child was from a babysitter named George Levitt, who was completely insane. When my parents left the house and left me alone with him, all kinds of crazy stuff happened. One of the things he gave me that first babysitting night was *Jimmy Olsen*... I think it was #145. It still has, for me, everything that I'm interested in in Kirby's work. It begins with three crazy monsters in the first three pages, and on the fourth page is a monster called "Angry Charlie", who looked like he was made of bubble gum. The images, for an 8-year-old, were so

dynamic, I had no idea what to do with them. I didn't read comics as a kid. I just tried to copy the pictures, but I did it terribly... That's how I became an artist. [laughter]

DOUG HARVEY: Yeah, *Jimmy Olsen*. Me too. I probably had seen Kirby's work before. I read... I definitely read *Silver Surfer* and *Fantastic Four*, but the first thing that hit me consciously was when Kirby took over *Jimmy Olsen*. It blew my mind because it was so strange. The clone of Don Rickles [laughter], hippies living in trees, and flying cars, and so on and so on. It was like suddenly someone was doing something with comics that was a whole world beyond what was already going on. It just seemed to open up... and then close down. [laughter]

BEN SAUNDERS: I grew up in the U.K., so there was no access to American comics, or it was irregular and haphazard. But there was our British Marvel [magazines] and they were reprinting the '60s stuff. So, I couldn't tell you which particular story it was, but it would've been the *Fantastic Four*. The British comics were cheaper and produced in black-&-white, so my early memories of Kirby—and I think this is important in terms of my own connection to him—were that I was seeing the work at a larger size than the American comics, and always without color. There was something about the handling of the ink that made it very easy to fall into the page. So that would be it. I was very young. I'm thinking back to memories of Doctor Doom stealing the Silver Surfer's powers—those kinds of stories. That's probably my first Kirby encounter that I can remember.

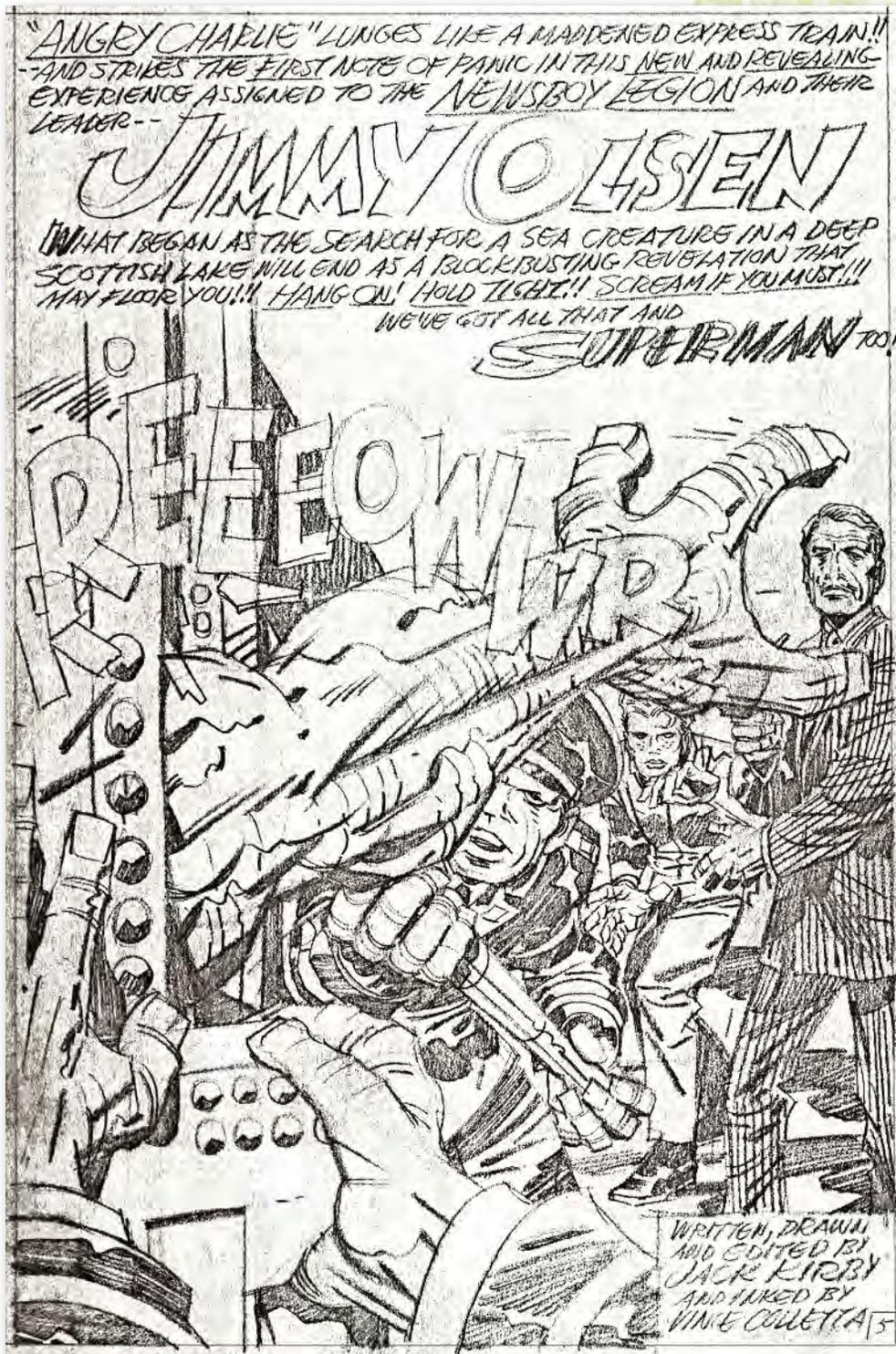
ADAM McGOVERN: I think I was conscious of Kirby before I was acquainted with him. By which I mean, his style is so pervasive that it was instantly recognizable, and *definitive* of comics style. I remember, only now—I have a memory for the first time in like 46 years of envisioning a comic that I wanted to do that I know was patterned on the compositions of Kirby. You know, some hero kicking in the faces of some strangely arranged colonnade of Nazis, this kind of weirdly set up action. And I think... I'm not sure. I must have become aware of who he was—which guy was doing this stuff—with the Fourth World. And the things that stand out to me are, really, kind of like a civic education. I'm a writer, so I approach Kirby from a textual direction and it was kind of like my civic education. Like when Izaya talks about, "Where is Izaya, the servant of those he leads?" You know, all of [these] Nixon-era yearnings for a truer democracy. Or, like when Richard, I think it is, in "The Glory Boat" says, "I'm a conscientious objector, I'm opposed to all killing and violence," and Lightray says, "I know a place where

everyone's like that." Kirby was showing me—that's the kind of future I liked Kirby showing me. A little afield of your question, but that was what made an impact on me.

HATFIELD: I can't remember when I wasn't reading Kirby. I used to say that *Kamandi, The Last Boy on Earth* #32, which was a double-sized issue, was the first one I bought with my own money, my allowance money—which I didn't really earn, but my parents, bless them, gave me. Although I now realize I had a lot of Kirby memories prior to that and I don't know how that's possible. For example, there's a page in the exhibition from *The Demon* #14 which I can remember reading in front of the television at my grandmother's house. I

(previous page) The poster "Galactic Head" is available with your membership to the Jack Kirby Museum: www.kirbymuseum.org.

(below) Page 5 pencils from *Jimmy Olsen* #145 (1972). This mag's editor thinks *Angry Charlie* is Jack's best monster design ever, and worthy of his own book (by Mike Mignola, maybe?).



learned the word “doppelganger” from that page. [laughter] “Dopple-gang-er,” sounding it out. So it seems like that stuff was always there, but became a particular passion of mine when I was old enough to run around, riding my bike, to go buy comics at the age of 10, and it became sort of a quartz vein in my head that stayed there from then on. Andrei?

ANDREI MOLOTIU: Actually I was hoping that Ben would rescue me from this because I seem to have come in a little later than everyone else to Kirby. I grew up reading French comics, and only by coming to America and only when I was about 18, 19, did I even deign to begin reading American comics when *The Dark Knight Returns* and *Watchmen* and all that came out. I realized, my God, everybody’s right. Before that, maybe I had seen one issue of *Spider-Man* and thought, “What’s that compared to French comics?” My path took me circuitous ways, and I think I truly only began to appreciate Kirby at about age 30, or maybe a little later—my early thirties. So, I don’t know if I have a single memory... perhaps *Sandman* #1, which has that amazing silent page? [below] It has five panels and was scripted by Joe Simon. Kirby rarely was that silent, but Simon wrote the silence for him. And five beautiful silent panels, and all of a sudden that is what struck me as “this is what comics can be,” and it was amazing.



SCOTT BUKATMAN: It occurs to me that, while this probably isn’t the first instance of it, I’m now noticeably the oldest guy on the panel. So my memories of Kirby go back a bit further. I was buying the *Fantastic Four* back not only in the 1960s, but around the #60s in the run of the series. And I bought quite a few comics at that time, as many as I could afford—there weren’t as many comics then—and most religiously I bought the *Fantastic Four* and the Stan Lee/John Romita *Amazing Spider-Man* comics. At some point I became very aware of the fact that I was constantly re-reading the *FFs* in a way I was *not* re-reading the *Spider-Mans*, as much as I liked them. There wasn’t as much for me on a second go-around on the *Spider-Mans*, but there was always something new in encountering the Kirby pages again. There was something inexhaustible about what was being opened up there, and that’s been my primary engagement from that time on.

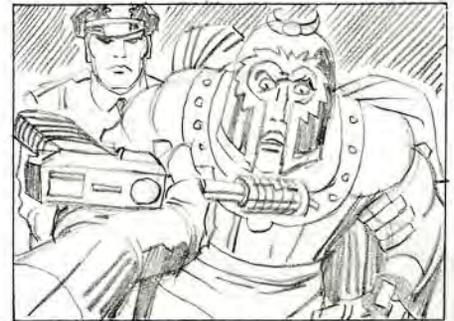
A more specific memory: When I was younger I went to comics conventions—I don’t do that too much anymore—and in my teens my father wanted to know what they were about, so he came with me. He was dumbfounded by the whole experience, but there was a room where Kirby was exhibiting some of his recent DC work. This was just before *The Demon* came out. And I was walking around the room mesmerized by the artwork, but my father and Kirby, who were the same age, began telling war stories to each other. I don’t remember any specific stories that they told. But Kirby was so happy to have a grown-up in the room. [laughter] I felt so glad that I could’ve provided that experience by proxy. [laughter and applause]

HATFIELD: So, I want to pitch a question and start with you first, Andrei, given the fact that your writing has been inspirational for the question—but I want to take the question to everyone.





IT IS JUST A GIMMICK I DREAMED UP



IT ISN'T MADE OF METAL



THAT'S WHY YOUR POWER DIDN'T WORK



I'VE BEEN TRICKED !!!

From the point of view of the curator putting this show together, there's always been this tug-of-war between the comic book as a kind of hand-sized or intimate object—an object designed for reading—and comic art, as something that can fill a gallery and that can shape or define a gallery space, that can be spectacular. That can be on the walls, that seems to get a different kind of attention. You walk through a gallery; you may pay a different kind of attention than you would if the 7" x 10" comic book, for example, were in your hands. So, we're really dealing in our exhibition with work that was designed for comic books or comic strips. The great majority of pieces across the street in the exhibition were made for that purpose, so it's production art. It's not art that was primarily made for exhibition. It's production art, and there's some debate over what that means when you take production art and sort of wrench it from its original purpose or context and transpose it into a different context. So, I've thought about that productive tension between spectacle, or what I hope will be a spectacular gallery experience, and the readability of comics. And that's a question we face increasingly as comic strip and comic book art finds its way into galleries and into museums, the way it hasn't before. Now Andrei, you have written about this more often and more productively I think than other scholars of late, and Andrei has an essay entitled "Permanent Ink" that's available online that really speaks to these issues.* What is gained, and/or lost, by transposing comic books from the readable hand-sized form to the gallery wall?

MOLOTIU: Well, I've written about this so much and thought about it so much, I'll be very brief so that other people can talk about this. But two points I want to

* <http://www.hoodedutilitarian.com/2010/10/permanent-ink-by-andrei-molotiu/>

make. If you've ever seen a Michelangelo drawing in a museum, that was "production art." People did not begin appreciating drawings in their own right until the late 17th/early 18th century when people began collecting them. Actually, literally the collector market—the same as the collector market in original comic art—had a lot to do with that. And we can discuss the historical transformation, but it does begin transforming. I think we are at a point where what once was considered to be purely production art, as we know it—by it being given away or [discarded] in the production process or storage process and so on—begins bringing in a lot of money. Of course, when something starts bringing in a lot of money, it becomes much more valued. But there are a lot of other considerations. For example, there are more and more museum shows of comics. As comics are getting respectability, and therefore cultural institutions are taking notice and wanting to put on shows, a piece of comics art—a one-and-a-half or especially a twice-up of comic art—tends to have a wall presence that a comic book doesn't have. And also you have sort of the autographed hand of the artist, or at least the inker, on there, and therefore you can somehow relate to that work of art as if seeing the motion of the hand, rather than seeing it reduced in the printed comic. But I think from that point of view, in my mind, you end up focusing so much more on the visual and not seeing the creation of the comic as a consumable thing that provides a little quantum of merit, and then you move onto the next one, and the next one. In a way, it forces you to stand there and look at it. I was trying to read the comics in the gallery, and it's much harder to read a comic on the wall than to actually read it again in printed form.

And the last thing I was going to say is that, currently, there are more and more alternative and art comics creators who basically create as much for the wall as for the book. So I think that it goes hand-in-hand with this,

(previous page, bottom) The "silent" page from Sandman #1 (1974).

(previous page, top) This mag's editor also learned the word "Doppelganger" from Jack's Demon. Wonder how many other kids out there did likewise?

(above) Jack's storyboards for the Fantastic Four 1978 cartoon episode "Menace of Magneto." These are technically production art, since animators would take these and only use them as a guide when creating the final, more simplified cels that made the animation move.

And Jack didn't spend as much time on these as on his normal comics pages—but he spent more time than he did when doing only layouts for other Marvel artists to finish in the 1960s. Does that make one any more or less "art" than the others?

At TJKC, we feel that if Jack's hand touched the work, it's art—and it's all good. Comments, readers?

you know. Gary Panter, the people at Fort Thunder, and so on. You know, Paper Rad [the art collective], who are creating comics with the intent of them being as much “museum comics”—“gallery comics”—as of them being book comics. From this point of view, comics is going [through] yet another transformation, same ways as maybe it went with the graphic novel.

HATFIELD: Doug and Steve, I’d like to toss this question over in your direction, given your experience, and then we’ll have other people field the question as well.

RODEN: For me, it’s a tough question. I think, you know, we are all talking about this as original art, or production art. [Should we be] calling it “production junk” or “production stuff?” But they’re things that were drawn by human beings. Sure, seeing a single panel on a wall is not the same as reading/seeing a complete story. But as a visual object these pages can offer multiple stories or meanings.

Certainly you’ll have questions while you experience a lot of unbelievable views of the world, language, architecture... I mean, there is just so much going on in these things that they don’t seem to be anything but art... I collect comic art, so obviously I’m invested in these objects, but they are also meaningful on their own. Like I said, I didn’t read comics when I was a kid. So, obviously, even a single page evoked a lot of visual experiences...!

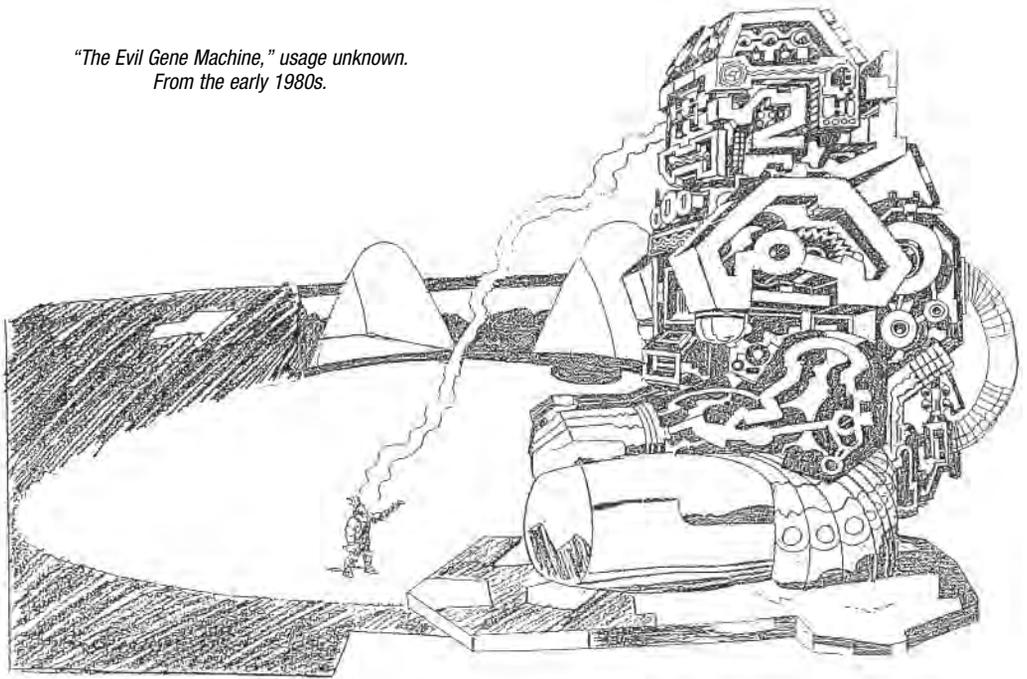
HATFIELD: Would you say that the gazing came before the reading for you?

RODEN: Absolutely. I didn’t know much about comics when I was reading them as a kid, and I didn’t know there were different inkers. I didn’t know why certain characters looked different in different books in different people’s hands. It’s kind of a mess in a way for a kid. Like, Silver Surfer... [seeing] Kirby’s Silver Surfer and then seeing John Buscema’s Silver Surfer. They look so different. Who did this? Why is this like this? I didn’t know any of that stuff until I was probably in my thirties—when I went back to childhood books and realized who the artists were that I responded to as a child. I am a person who has collected junk my entire life, and the value of something is the relationship I have with that object. I don’t want to be hoity-toity, but [Walter] Benjamin talks about book collecting in that way, when he talks about the owner of an object having a deep relationship to that object. He says that a person lives in the object, and you know that relationship’s tight. So when I pull out some of this art and look at it, I notice different things every time.

You know, we don’t want to get into a definition of “art.” Maybe Doug does [laughter], but I’m not going to touch that. But I don’t see the difference. These are things that people made. Either you like what they made or you don’t. They resonate or they don’t. You know, they’re objects, and you have to have some kind of relationship with them in some way. It’s not just nostalgia. I have pages from books I never read; whatever hits you, just like music.

HARVEY: [To Roden] I like your last point on having pages from books you haven’t read. I really don’t like shows of text on the wall. I don’t like [poster artist] Raymond Pettibon shows, comic art shows... I mean, I like them, but I’d rather read a comic book than see the art on a wall. But I think when the narrative gets fragmented

“The Evil Gene Machine,” usage unknown.
From the early 1980s.



and you have pages pulled from here and there, grouped together thematically, it allows you to shift your attention to the art rather than the narrative. Because I find reading comics, I often overlook the art. Even though I’m primarily a visual person, I’ll get sucked into the story and sort of jump ahead without appreciating the subtleties of the artwork. I think that putting it in this kind of context where, except for that *Kamandi* story, everything else is pretty much chopped up...

HATFIELD: We have two complete stories in the show. That might be me, the English professor who wants to encourage reading. [laughter] Although I myself can’t read those stories in the gallery without my feet hurting, because it takes so long to stand and read them. But I wanted them to be there, so...

Ben has curated several comic art shows at the University of Oregon. He’s curating one on EC Comics now. He’s also an English prof like me but has curatorial experience that I lean on very heavily. Ben?

SAUNDERS: I think one of the interesting things about your question is that there is this tension between looking and reading inherent in the form. So it becomes aggravated by the gallery circumstance. But actually, and this is a point that in some respects I owe to Scott’s work on *Hellboy*—a book I would recommend to everybody—one of the things that Scott points out in that book is when you see... you actually pointed this out in a lecture, where you had a comparison between a *Hellboy* battle scene and then a sequence from one of the movies. And the point was not to say the movies were not as good, but that they do... comics are essentially *about* tableau. Even when you’re looking at a very dramatic action scene—you might be looking at one of these double-page Kirby spreads, or even a single-page spread like the opening of *New Gods*, which is in this show—you’re looking at these massed ranks of armies that are *about to* engage in extraordinary battle. But if you turn the page too quickly to find out what is happening next, in some ways... Kirby wants you to *stop*, even at moments of high action, to absorb the action. I think it’s something unique about the form. It’s one of the things I really love about the form, and it’s why—I’ve got nothing against superhero movies for example, but it’s why I’d rather read comics than go to see films a lot of the time. Because the experience is different. Action happens in a different kind of way. It’s the temporal unfolding. I think the gallery experience can actually show us that, and teach us something about what it means to read comics. We can learn that

when we read comics, we're *not* looking a lot of the time because of the way we're being dragged through the narrative.

Another piece about this—I just have to say this because it makes me mad—I think it's really a *crime* that it's taken this long for someone like Kirby to get the due that he's finally getting, and there's a lot more work that could be done and an awful lot more celebration that could be done. And this person gave us not only a visual storytelling vocabulary that has influenced hundreds of people, but he gave us what is a version of the 21st Century imagination. You can't walk into Walmart without finding Kirby images embossed on every imaginable surface. This isn't going to go away, folks. This stuff that mattered to people who read the comics—maybe these comics weren't even selling that well, like *Fourth World* in the '70s—the things you're exposed to when you're five, we've got a whole generation that is now being exposed to this stuff on a daily basis in a different format and they are going to want to know about the source. And they're going to realize the source for much of this is Jack. I think this is just the beginning, and if the big museums in the culture had invested in comic art a long time ago, there would have already been a Kirby show at the MOMA. But because they don't own any of this stuff themselves—these institutions are frankly too corrupt to invest in artists they don't own. So, good for university museums. [applause]

HARVEY: I just want to add that I think that what you are saying is more an indictment of the art world and its claim to having some kind of authority to validate what Jack Kirby did, or any comic artist. It doesn't really carry through that way, and it's kind of an indication of the waning legitimacy of art world institutions rather than their taking time to catch up. I don't think there's any catching up to do. That's on its way out as a model of validating art.

McGOVERN: I, like perhaps many of us—at least who got hand-me-down comics from older siblings—I “read” comics as visuals before I had the ability to read text. And I remember imposing narrative and extracting meaning from, specifically, Kirby comics: *Captain Americas*, *Thors*. Even today—certainly Ben raises a great example of the opening panel of the *New Gods* where—and there's some artists today that I'll do this with as well, like when Erik Larsen did a recent issue of *Savage Dragon* that was all in double-page spreads—and there was not a lot of text, but I found my eye reading the details of the imagery because it was packed with incident. Yet there's kind of like a wavering partition for me between that looking and watching and the *reading* and watching. Interestingly enough, I find that for the stories that are complete in the gallery, I'm just picking out little details and phrases, like the *Kamandi* thing: there's this great scene where he's beating up this gladiatorial foe, and he goes—instead of cursing at him—he's going, “Stupid! Arrogant! Pampered, brutal little tyrant!” Which of course is all of Kirby's rage at the people who abused and exploited him, or who would not see him fulfilled—in the same way that people like Lichtenstein would just extract single definitive statements from comics. You know, the way that certain slogans or ideas will stick in our consciousness out of the stream of media.

To me, comics, even when I'm reading them in my hand, that kind of Pop Art headline is what sticks in my mind. I was quoting some of them in my previous answer. And the monumentality—I don't know. I think that intimacy places you in the scale of the monumental. I mean, when you're holding a comic in your hand it's filling up the world. You're immersed in it. And of course the trend in entertainment is [toward] smaller and smaller frames for things. So I don't think things are necessarily lost or gained because... I'm kind of reliving the monumental experience I felt from a Kirby panorama, whether I see it as a tiny panel in a page on the wall or

blown up like the [gallery] murals are.

BUKATMAN: I think everybody on the panel has made really good points. What I want to talk about touches on a number of them. One thing you might get from the gallery wall and the original artwork is a sense of size and scale. Kirby drew big things. And to see the artwork at its original size is a little more overwhelming, more striking. In working on the *Hellboy* book, the question I asked myself was, “Can comics do the sublime?” Large-scale paintings by Church or Turner do the sublime really well—the overwhelming power of nature on a museum wall. Cinema does the sublime really well. *2001* and *Pacific Rim* do the sublime quite well. Comics though, to use Adam's word, are an intimate medium. You hold them in your hands. They don't seem to have that power to overwhelm that other media do. But the bottom line is that my first experience of the sublime was Jack Kirby—the *Fantastic Four* and *Thor* comics where concepts like “Ego, The Living Planet” and “Negative Zone” and “The Inhumans” were being unleashed on me, not to mention those photo collages where we go into another dimension and another realm of representation. Charles has written beautifully about the subject matter of Kirby's work and how it ties into the technological sublime, but it's also in the form: the way that Kirby would move from a six-panel page to a three-panel page to a full page to a double-page, and just really use the fixed scale of the comic, but vary the size of the panels in a way that opened up onto larger experience. So comics create a really unique experience of intimate sublimity. Not all do, but when the sublime is being deployed, it's a very intimate sublimity and quite unique. So there's something to seeing the art on a wall when it has breathing room and appears outside of its narrative context. But then there's also that extraordinary experience of reading. I'm very fond of both experiences.

MOLOTIU: Can I say something on this? Just one or two comments about this. One, it struck me from what Scott said, it's true that you



1960s fanzine
illo.

need a kind of size [for the sublime], but another place we got the sublime from in the Romantic period was poetry. And again, poetry was found in tiny books in your hand.

BUKATMAN: [snaps fingers] Damn. Now I'll have to go back and edit my book.

MOLOTIU: [laughter] Sorry. [laughter] But secondly, I was trying to read the two stories on the wall. I was able to get through the *Kamandi* pretty well, but I was not able to get through the *Thor* one. And that had to do a lot with Stan Lee's words, which were so many of them on the page. And what struck me is that Kirby—even when he writes—he writes, so to speak, visually. I don't know that this makes sense, but somehow his words are of a piece with the visual progression of the comic itself. And while there's kind of a separation when reading the *Fantastic Four* or *Thor* or whatever, and you actually try to read the heavy captions—I counted one panel had twelve balloons—and you try to get all through that, and it really slows you down. Kirby usually uses fewer words, especially in the word balloons, and actually you get the speed of really going through the panels. And somehow, because you're moving so much faster, it almost becomes animated. You sort of see one visual composition where there's another visual composition, and so on, proceeding in the context of the page. And you have a very different graphic reading experience, in reading things that Kirby wrote and drew himself, rather than things he drew but were scripted or had dialogue by someone else.

HATFIELD: The way I would put this is that Kirby might draw up a story on the boards and have a character like Thor say, "Let's go!" and the end comic might say something like, "Tarry we here no longer, but let us leave forthwith!" [laughter] And that's cool in a way, but it also thickens the reading experience. I mean, one thing that's implicit in the exhibition, because there's a complete story from *Thor* in 1968 and then there's a complete story from the *Kamandi* series about five years later, is you can see how those different comics were produced. *Thor* was produced at Marvel through the office and under the editorship of Stan Lee, through a process that involved many more hands getting on the work, whereas *Kamandi* was produced in a relatively streamlined manner. And if you get a chance, look at those pages and compare and contrast them, see how much marginalia and how much, kind of, "dirt" there is "under the fingernails" of the *Thor* pages and the Marvel comics and how many hands have touched those, and then compare them to some of the ones that, as Andrei mentioned, were more nearly written or entirely written by Kirby himself. It's not to denigrate one or elevate the other, but they were made in different ways. You kind of see this in the exhibition.

BUKATMAN: I have a rejoinder to Andrei. It took me a couple of minutes to think of it. [laughter] Yeah, poetry and the sublime. Yes, check. But the language in comics rarely aspires to sublimity, to the evocation of the sublime, whereas the visual imagery of comics often does. I think it's on the visual level that comics most often aspire to the sublime. And one would think they might be hampered by their size and limitation of scale, and yet, as I was saying... [laughter]

McGOVERN: I much appreciated what Andrei was saying about



there being a visual character to Kirby's writing. And it really is true. It's an aestheticized text in, of course, his infamous overuse of quotation marks—hyphens—you know, he's wrestling with how to describe things, which he's only becoming aware of himself—these kind of fifth-dimensional concepts. And even with the deployment of text; the way that all of the Fourth World stuff and *Kamandi* chapters would start with this, you know, floating text over the first panel, like this kind of proscenium for the story. [Editor's Note: See example above from *Kamandi* #6.] But I also think Kirby was attempting the sublime in this kind of wording too, because he was grappling with a language for something we have no way to process yet.

HATFIELD: Adam, read this. This is from the opening first page of *New Gods* #1. It's the start of Doug's essay in the catalog. Just read that.

McGOVERN: "There came a time when the old gods died. The brave died with the cunning. The noble perished, locked in battle with unleashed evil. It was the last day for them. An ancient era was passing in fiery holocaust."

HATFIELD: Thank you. Great stuff I think.

McGOVERN: And, it's the first page and it starts with "Epilogue," which I always loved. [laughter]

HATFIELD: Yeah. It's a comic that begins with the word "epilogue" and then everything moves forward from there. [To Scott:] I want to go onto something you mentioned specifically, and it's one of the things we're fortunate to have in the exhibition. We do have five of these collages that Jack Kirby created. Scott has written about them eloquently in the catalog. Steve and I have discussed them at length, because [to Steve] you're a collector and great admirer of those. I was asked by an interviewer if the collages were just a sideshow to the main event, or if I saw something really that was crucial in those. We have five collages on the wall. Four of them are actually, once again, production art. That is, they were used for comic books. One of them is a piece that's never seen publication anywhere, and I was given to understand that Jack Kirby made a lot of these at home in his, what, "copious" spare time? [laughter] Drawing and writing 80 to 100 pages of comic book narrative a month was not enough? But he kept a morgue file of clippings around, and as gifts to family or as exercises for himself, he made these things, unbelievably, while he was not working for pay. And I hope that you've had a chance to look at those or will look at them this afternoon. But starting over there with you Steve, I wanted to ask you, what you glean from those—what kind of affinities to other artists, or inspirational elements, do you see in those? Or why those are particularly fascinating. I don't see them as a sideshow; I see them as somehow central, but I'm at pains to explain why.

RODEN: Because they seem to test the visual language of the book. You turn the page, and suddenly everything isn't made up of lines anymore. It's made up of images. I didn't remember seeing those as a kid, but maybe about five years ago I started to look at some of my childhood comic books and looking at stuff on the Internet and I found an image of one of Jack's collages and I was like—well, if I wasn't in this group of people I'd say something else, but "Holy cow!" right? And I didn't remember them, and I hadn't heard anyone talking about them. I didn't know they existed. And so I found an image on the Internet, and then I began to look into the history of the collages and the books. You know some of them were pretty early, and they just got me really excited. I'm really interested in artists who stray—who have a central kind of practice that moves around... well, I'm a painter, but I also work with sound, I collect stuff. I've done all kinds of different things and I think to see someone like Jack stepping away from what his audience knew... My discovery of these experiments meant a lot. And he was such an experimental draftsman, and then to see him experimenting... I mean the collages are very complex and there are tons of little pieces and bits of things, and I think the idea of him trying to integrate those into the books is so interesting, because you can't really talk about them as just frivolous things [as some have said] he made on Sundays in his studio. That is bunk, since he tried many times to insert them into his narratives. For me, I had never really seen anything so unconventional in a regular comic. And so, I think they're incredible. I mean, Victor Hugo made drawings with tea, and there's

a whole history of people doing secondary work that at times is just as interesting, if not more so, than their primary practice. So, I was just completely obsessed with them when I first discovered them. I think they're really underrated.

HATFIELD: We actually have, I think, the last collage that was published in a comic book in Kirby's lifetime in the show [from *The Hunger Dogs*] because Steve loaned it to us. So, you should check that out. [applause] Scott, you want to pick that up?

BUKATMAN: Just quickly about the collages. First of all, one of the reasons you might not have noticed them, reading them in the books, is because they were so badly printed. For me as a kid, these were the pages to sort of... muddle through rather than the ones that really hit. However, when better reproduction came along—or when I saw photographs of the original art—that's when they really blew me away. Then you begin to realize how often, especially in the '70s, he was using it to represent worlds beyond our own and dimensions beyond our own. And what's fascinating about that is in his *2001* [Treasury Edition]—which I liked immediately because it was bigger, so it was more immersive—in that one he uses photo collage in the most banal ways to just put the staid photographs of the various



Rather than use collage, Jack actually drew the pivotal special effects scene in his 1976 adaptation of *2001*.

spaceships together. But in the “Beyond the Infinite” sequence of the film, where Doug Trumbull’s special effects sort of take us out of the realm of representation, Kirby lets loose in drawing. He uses his drawing as the mode of entry into another dimension, rather than a collage, in that work. He inverts his own strategy. It just intrigued me.

HARVEY: I just wanted to throw a couple of ideas out, one about “the sublime,” just to reactivate that. Illuminated manuscripts and Kirby’s *horror vacui* show that the sublime can come from small, intricate, dense information networks, if you shift your attention so it becomes a larger space through contemplative attention. And I also think there’s something sort of fundamentally collage-y about Kirby’s entire approach to writing and drawing, as well as doing collages. I think what you’re saying, Andrei, about his language being visual, I think backs that up. There’s sort of a discontinuity where Stan Lee is very discursive and [*jabs finger emphatically*] sort of “on it” and... [*makes droning jabbering noise*]. Kirby sometimes seems to shift tense and I don’t know what the hell he’s talking about [*laughter*], but it doesn’t matter. And then on another level with the pastiches he gets into in this period, pulling together *Planet of the Apes* and all these other different cultural references and things is sort of, I think, a way of understanding storytelling and visual art and communication that’s rooted in, sort of, the collage revolution in the 20th century.

HATFIELD: I’ve always had this impulse to refer to it as Postmodern, because people say that, but it seems almost like a violation of the spirit to apply that word—which Kirby doesn’t need for our appreciation, but yet, he’s like the mix master *par excellence*. He’s here, there and everywhere.

MOLOTIU: If I may make one quick point about that. In my article in the catalog I talk about a drawing by Kirby, but if you actually look at the drawing itself—I mean, we think of Kirbytech, which basically looks like circuit boards. Almost as if those had been drawn and collaged into it. There are parts of his interesting buildings that look basically taken from blinds, like window blinds. [*laughter*] And there are shadows which you can see look like Holstein cow markings. You can kind of see, cut down, the various little elements that he’s using, and the little bit of collage element to the way he actually builds cities and machines and so on. Which again, you sort of see it in the collages, where he basically takes a washing machine or something and that becomes a propeller or a jet on a spaceship or something. You kind of see the same procedure in the actual drawings.

SAUNDERS: I just think the collage analogy that Doug was coming



up with is very productive. I think Kirby’s just... he’s associative creatively in a Shakespearean way. By which I mean the gift is enormous but I think it’s very instinctive. And I don’t mean that in a... Kirby gets patronized a lot by people who ought to know better. I recently read a comment from Art Spiegelman where he said that he was finally starting to appreciate Kirby’s “primitivism,” or something like that. This is a belated acknowledgment that maybe there’s something there, even if “that idiot didn’t know what he was doing.” [*light laughter*] And I don’t mean it that way. I don’t mean Kirby isn’t a thoughtful creator. I think he is, but I don’t think theory particularly interested him because he’s driven by other forces. A lot of the time he would probably define it commercially...

BUKATMAN: Driven by deadlines.

SAUNDERS: Yes. The desire to make money to feed people. Clearly that's a cover story after a while. The amount of pages he's producing... There's a way in which his foot has been on the gas for so long that he doesn't know how to let it up. When you read something like *Kamandi* and you see that there's sort of a *Planet of the Apes* knock-off, but then he decides, "Oh, this week I'm just going to do the story of *King Kong*. Except it's not really the story of *King Kong*, because the person in the Fay Wray position is actually going to be Kamandi. But I'm not really going to think about what it means to flip the gender here, I'm just going to do it and see what happens." And then at the end, is it funny or is it pastiche by the end when the big ape falls? 'Cause there's no way it's a surprise. You know you're reading *King Kong* by three pages in. But when the ape falls and says—

HATFIELD: "Tiny hurt." [laughter]

SAUNDERS: "I hurt," and "can't play—with—you—no more," and you feel it *here*. I don't take the Shakespeare comparison lightly. I think there are ways in which... You don't have to work with the conscious intent to super-saturate the thing that you are doing with all of these symbolic meanings, for them to be there. They end up being there anyway. Just because the creative process is—because the faucet was just open and the culture is coming out. And Kirby's influences just come out. The experiences come out in this fantastical, very genre-driven, still maybe kind of a children's medium, way. There's *nothing else* like it. So it's endlessly fascinating and I think collage is actually a pretty good metaphor for it.

McGOVERN: Speaking of intuition and the sheer pleasure and wonder of these things, when those collages were being done, I was too young to be dropping acid, so they were my psychedelia. [laughter] Mind-blowing, strange things that I associated with things like sequences in *Yellow Submarine* and stuff like that. I know it's not uncommon to say that Kirby was anticipating Photoshop, and like, "Oh, what would he have done with it?" The collages clearly show him straining against the expressive limits of his medium—though there's something about those limitations that I find really illuminating. I mean the flatness with which things are applied is almost like the best we can see something from a higher dimension. Thus, it speaks to Kirby's sense of there being other realities and just the way... now that I think back, I really liked coming upon those because they'd have these weird pastels. Even some of the printing flaws that we were talking about seemed to aid that. The fact that you're flung from this four-color universe to this weird,

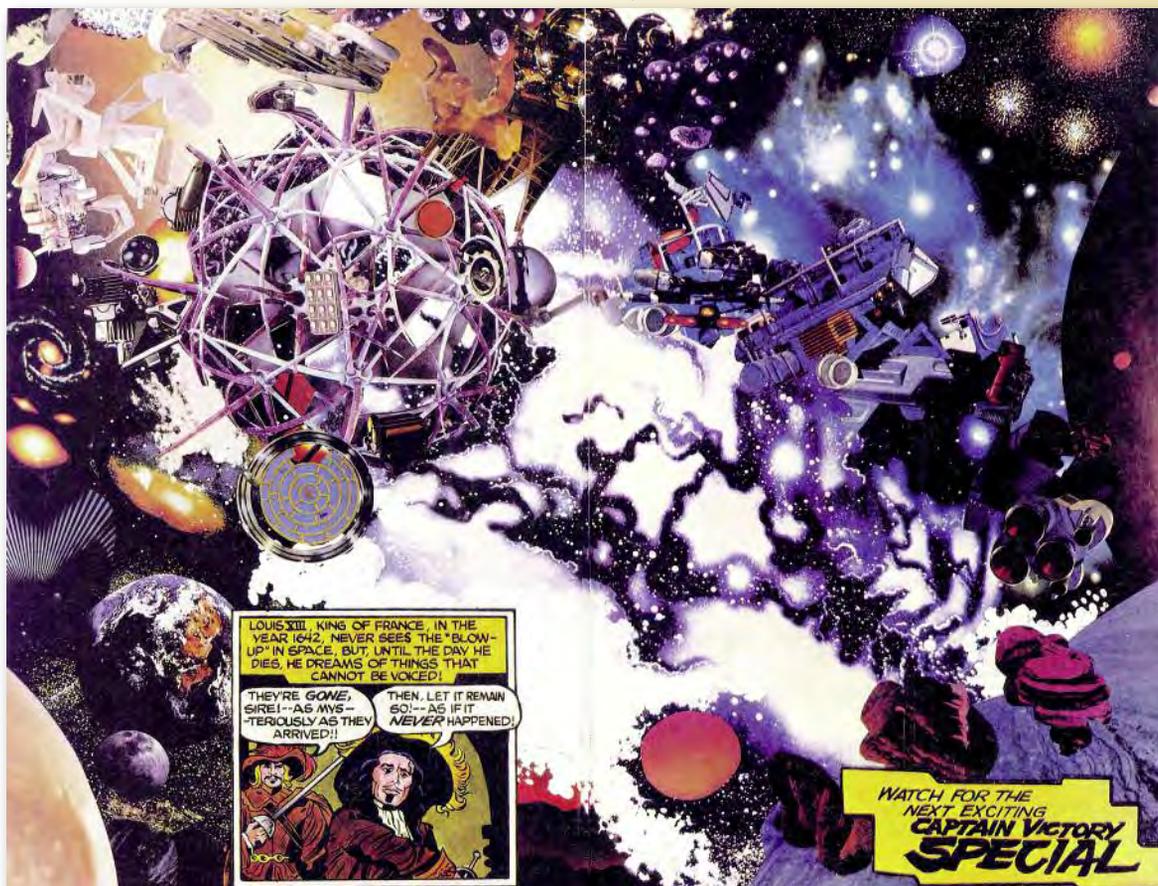
fake newspaper look, and it's Kirby reaching into the broader world of media and our visual and conceptual experience of those times—like they've fallen into a universe of Kirby's cut-up magazines.

MOLOTIU: Why did he never do a collage comic from beginning to end?

HATFIELD: Mark Evanier tells us the Negative Zone, which is a plot point in the *Fantastic Four* series, was conceived with this in mind. Initially, the idea behind the Negative Zone was that it would only ever be rendered in collage. That idea lasted for about one page—[laughter] a beautiful page, right?—because the production standards of comic books, or just the production line at Marvel, could not tolerate this, but he at one time had a notion that he would have whole sequences, stories or chapters that would be set in this... I mean the usual answer given was that it was just too hard production-wise.

MOLOTIU: And was it more time consuming for him to do a collage page than doing a drawing page?

HATFIELD: I know a lot of people when I was young viewed these as "cheats." Like he didn't have to draw a page. That's seems silly to me. I had an experience walking through the gallery with one of our painting instructors here at CSUN who had seen some of the work when he was young. Someone who practices abstract painting, teaches it, and he was sort of reconnecting—or just learning what this stuff looked like—and we walked through the gallery together. He really looked at the collages particularly and said, "Oh, his visual language is the same in the collages as in the drawings"; something, frankly, difficult for me to see, because I've been reading the comics for so long. I said, "Yeah, you're right." And he said, "What, did he spend all of his time in this sort of visual world in his own head?" I said, "Yes. He did. [laughter] I think he did." We usually hear the production impediments were the problem there. I always thought they looked cool myself, in the comics.



(previous page) *Kamandi* #7 pencils (1973). (above) Much better collage reproduction was possible by 1983's *Captain Victory Special* #1.

(below) From *Forever People #7* (1972), the young still respect their elders—in this case, Abe Lincoln. But were Mark Moonrider and Beautiful Dreamer on their way to save him when the police stepped in?

(next page) Jack finally found a way for fish-out-of-water Flippa Dippa to use his scuba skills, in *Jimmy Olsen #144* (1971).

I want to divert to a different issue. I had a delightful experience a few weeks ago when one of the CSUN Arts Council volunteers here started following me around the gallery. Two of my colleagues had come in—folks that I knew from my college—and I was showing them around some of the work, and one of our volunteer docents from the Arts Council, whom we had been speaking to earlier in the day, said, “Is this a guided tour?” and joined in. I had the longest conversation with her. She said she had never seen comics of this type. She had no knowledge of comic books. She was encountering this work for the first time, and she said to me—with reference to one or two or more images in the gallery—“He’s really drawn to the dark side, no?” [laughter] And I thought, “Yeah, but let me show you this touching page with a baby over on the other wall.” She asked me, “Does it not depress you?” I said, “Well, no. And it didn’t when I was ten years old either. It

excited me.” But it made me think about the various claims people make about Kirby—his biographers and his fans. For some, he’s an eternal optimist. He’s sort of an always sunlit kind of personality, because hope is part of what he deals in. I don’t know that I necessarily read the comics that way, and I wonder if among the kind of works we pulled into the gallery—if any of you have a “read” or response to that. Is he Utopian? Dystopian? Is there a vast yawning darkness under your feet when you read them? Is there a brightness? Do any of you have thoughts on that?

MOLOTIU: [chuckles] I just heard Glen Gold talk about this in the gallery, so... [points to crowd].

HATFIELD: Glen—yes? [Glen is in the audience; greetings are exchanged.] Glen David Gold: novelist, catalog contributor, and lender to the show. A big help. Thank you, Glen. [applause]



GLEN DAVID GOLD: [from audience] My own feelings about Kirby, optimism or pessimism, is that I think they are flip sides of the same coin. I think it depends on... The essay I wrote in there is called “The Red Sheet.” It’s about his World War II experiences and about how he brought Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder to *Captain America*. The original essay I wrote was way too long. For the first time in my life, I cut something down. At one point in World War II, he talks about when he came out at Omaha Beach, that’s when he understood that there was a God. And then later in the same war, he understood there was no God. So it was as if it was the flip side of violence, and one side was affirmation to him of there being some sort of guiding light, and at the same time, other types of violence made him think there was none. So I think actually what he was, was a fully-rounded, mature person who understood that sometimes there was cause for optimism and sometimes causes for extreme pessimism.

McGOVERN: I think he almost had a kind of Buddhist understanding of, like, destruction being necessary for regeneration. He deals so much with youth and affirming the youth culture of the times in books like *The Forever People*. I know there is this one opening sequence, in *Forever People #7*, where this council of juniors is appealing to Highfather to reverse some decision of his, and the caption says that on New Genesis, “the young have a voice.” So he’s very much endorsing the 18-year-old vote and other opportunities for participation in society for youth. And I think he really saw... it was a generational story, the Fourth World. He saw those who came after him as the ones who could benefit from what he had fought for. Kind of... I don’t want to go so seriously as to liken it to in [Spiegelman’s] *Maus* where Artie’s shrink tells him that he’s the true survivor, not Vladek, but I think Kirby had that conception that he had fought up to a certain level and there were others who would enjoy the fruits of this. So he was kind of entropic in conceiving of his own fate, but optimistic for subsequent generations.



HATFIELD: Do you remember this bit where Highfather—he’s kind of a Moses-like patriarch—and he tells Orion, the fierce warrior, before they have sort of a war council, or before they talk about serious matters, he says, “First, Orion, we bow to the young.” They sort of bow to this group of children that are there; “We bow to the young because they represent the future.” And then the plot moves on from there, but it’s a very telling moment. Anyone else have thoughts in response to Glen or to the question?

BUKATMAN: I just want to footnote Glen’s point, which is a really good one. But to say that Kirby also didn’t polarize good and evil—it wasn’t like a Manichean dichotomy that just was inviolate. In the *New Gods* saga, which we have been referencing a lot today for obvious reasons, if you’ve read it, the main character Orion is the son of the darkest villain in all of Comickdom. But he is living among the peaceful people, and Mister Miracle, the hero of another book, is the son of the good, Utopian society who was forced to grow up in this dystopia. So this sense of crossing over, of things not being purely

one or the other, I think is really at the core of at least his most interesting characters, if not a whole cosmology.

HARVEY: Maybe George Lucas’s whole cosmology. *[laughter from the panel]*

McGOVERN: Actually I’d like to add one thing too. People oversimplify the Fourth World as being, quote, “about Good and Evil.” Even Doug Wolk has done this. But it was really about Control versus Free Will, and Free Will can lead to a lot of mistakes and itself can lead to evil, but Kirby had the nuanced perspective of people having the choice and hopefully making the right one.

HATFIELD: Shall we entertain some questions from the people who are here? *[to audience member]* Yes, please.

WOMAN IN AUDIENCE: You’re talking about whether or not Kirby is an optimist or pessimist. Could another word for him be “potentialist”? For example, he tends to lean both towards the pessimistic and the optimistic, showing what a better world could be like and also showing how others perceive the natural world to be currently. So would it be accurate to suggest that maybe he’s demonstrating potentials for one side or the other?

McGOVERN: I like that a lot, because so much of what he was doing in the ’70s was a critique of the society he saw around him. I mean Mark Evanier, his biographer, has talked about how people would say, “Who is Darkseid?” and he would say, “Well, it would vary. Sometimes he was Nixon, sometimes he was Martin Goodman,” *[laughter]* or whatever was scarier. But clearly there is always an implication of what could be better. Like when Lightray says he knows a place where everyone is non-violent. New Genesis was always put up as the example of what we should be, and more subtly, of course, he had “The World That’s Coming” in *OMAC*, which was ostensibly very sleek and cool, but is actually completely cold—something that he was afraid of. That’s probably where he

thought we *were* going, and New Genesis probably where he felt we *should* be going, but the kernel was there. I agree with you.

HATFIELD: Others? A response to that question, or...? José?

JOSÉ ALANIZ [from audience]: I came very late to Kirby. In fact it was work that really didn’t speak to me as a kid and I kind of pondered why that is, and this has been illuminating. But I’m curious as to how you guys feel about Kirby’s engagement with his own times, particularly that period in the ’70s. You’ve referenced some of this, but in particular his treatment—maybe utopian, maybe dystopian—of diversity. For example, Ben, you alluded to kind of doing a transgender move without pursuing its logical ends in some sense. In particular, his treatment of racialized kind of types and how there’s this wonderful kind of sense of how Kirby is very much ahead of his time, but there’s also these weird retrograde kind of elements in *Vykin The Black* or *Flippa Dippa* and stuff like that. I’m fascinated by what you guys think about that side of Kirby in the ’70s. Was this

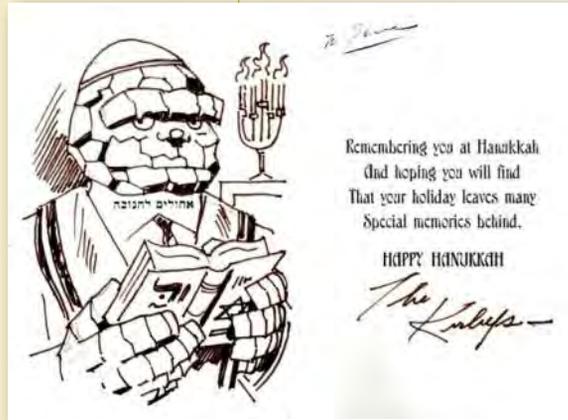
a place that's maybe more open to a critique?

HATFIELD: There's a character in the Fourth World [named] Sonny Sumo, and he's sort of a badly orange-colored Asian brickhouse of a man. He is a Sumo wrestler and he really is built like a house. On one hand, this is a complete cliché, right? "Sonny Sumo"—Kirby decides to introduce an "Asian" character. On the other hand, there's something cosmic and sort of beyond comprehension about Sonny Sumo. He's got a cosmic secret in his brain. He's a character of great nobility. He's a character that's got inside him whatever it is that the bad guy, Darkseid, wants. But Sonny himself is really like an undiluted vision of the good, and to me that's sort of the textbook example of that—when a character seems at first blush maybe even a little embarrassing, or a very dated kind of character, but there's a sense that this character is bearing around inside him something larger than everybody else. It's kind of hard to describe unless you read those comics. So realism's got nothing to do with it, but there's a sense in which Kirby's trying to exalt this character, and if he had his druthers or if there had been an opening in the schedule or if DC had asked, he would have cooked up a *Sonny Sumo* comic book. This is kind of how the Black Panther originates—the same kind of spontaneous response to the times. Anyone else on that question?

McGOVERN: Yeah, Kirby I think of as definitely transitional, but he went further than a lot of comic creators of his generation. I mean, he was vocally remorseful about stereotypes that he participated in in Golden Age comics in ways that it took Will Eisner, supposedly much more sophisticated, decades longer to come to terms with. The signature story for me is "Mile-A-Minute Jones" from *The Losers*, which was not cosmic but was, you know, war stories, and it's about this Jesse Owens-type figure who ends up in a race with the now-Nazi German he faced in the Olympics. There's this one scene that really struck me and I didn't realize why at the time, as a kid reading it, where they end up in a race again, and it's like a white line that gets them through a minefield that they're kind of hallucinating as the old lines on a track where they first met as allies. And Jones says, "I'll show you that a Black man can win!" And at the time I thought, "Wow, this is pretty un-theoretical" and basic, but I realized Kirby was approaching race with a rawness—that it really is a conflict between people with unequal rights—in ways that a lot more self-conscious writers, like Denny O'Neil, were really kind of twisting themselves into knots [over] and being self-congratulatory or inadvertently insulting, where Kirby had that direct sense of conflict. He knew it from when he was brawling with other ethnic groups that weren't him on the Lower East Side. So I think he had an honest conception of it, but was very transitional in terms of being fully enlightened about it.

SAUNDERS: This is a really good question—and it's a difficult one, I think. I'm very acutely conscious that we all seem to be over-forty white guys sitting here [audience laughter], and I think it's something we really tried to address in the catalog, actually. We were self-conscious about trying to make sure we had some articles by women and articles by people of color in the catalog, because my own belief is that—I'm a practitioner of a certain kind of ideological and political criticism, and I also came of age in an era of increased awareness of the vital importance of considering questions of difference when engaging in critical work. And at the same time I have a sufficiently residually humanist sort of faith, as unfashionable as it is, that there are artists who can speak to everybody, and I want to believe that Kirby is one of those artists. I think that he didn't like bullies. I think

that he had a deep investment and interest in the experience of being, or being made to feel, marginal. I think that his own deep conflicts around this are apparent in his own renaming himself. Joe Simon tells this story about confronting him with "Jack Kirby" as a name, saying, "Are you ashamed to be identified as Jewish?" And Kirby, almost not understanding, is saying, "What? You don't like 'Jack Kirby' as a name?" And not getting it. And then you read about... The more I learn about his life, what I see—especially the relationship with Joe Simon is a very clear version of it—is this is a man who consistently did not recognize his own worth. Kirby, consistently throughout his whole career, was underpaid and felt like he needed someone like Joe in the early days to sort of negotiate the business angle of things, because he just wanted to get down to the business of drawing. He bristled at the suggestion that he had changed his name because of some embarrassment over his own Jewishness, but he changed his name. Because there is a—there was a sense in which "Jack Kirby" could do anything. Jacob Kurtzberg, I don't know that he can do what "Jack Kirby" can do. There's a Woody Allen line from one of the later, well, one of the middle period movies now. A character accuses him of being a self-hating Jew and he says, "Don't say that! I hate myself, but not because I'm Jewish." [laughter] And I think that there's an aspect of that in Kirby's own personality. That Kirby absolutely was not at all ashamed of his Jewishness, but he was nonetheless, at some level, ashamed of who he... he felt worried that he didn't measure up.



HATFIELD: Well, it was a class thing, right?

SAUNDERS: It's a class thing.

HATFIELD: He would say something like, "I looked up to Joe because Joe was a middle-class guy and I didn't know any middle-class guys when I grew up."

SAUNDERS: Even knowing how to order things in a restaurant—that kind of insecurity. I think that that part of him, when it wasn't a

source of bitterness and insecurity, was a source of empathy and relation. And I think we can see all these things in the end are relative. Even when the *Fantastic Four* is about a New York that doesn't seem to have any ethnicities in it, there are these moments of identification. This is an anecdotal thing from Tom Orzechowski, who says when he grew up in Detroit and went to a mostly Black school and was friends with a lot of kids, they bonded over *Fantastic Four*, and the character a lot of his Black friends liked the best was the Thing. Now there's both tragedy and power there. It's a tragedy that a community can be so underrepresented in the culture that you identify with the rocky orange monster, because you never actually get to see anyone who looks remotely like you. So on one hand it's kind of criminal, and not something to celebrate. On the other hand, Kirby was thinking about what it meant to really look different and to feel isolated and regarded as... There's a long history in the racist culture of this country of making monsters out of people who look different. Kirby's latching onto that, running with that and using it. So I think within the context of his own historical moment, there's no doubt in my mind if Kirby had lived, that he would be on the same side as all the rest of us on these progressive issues.

MOLOTIU: Well, Kirby identified with the Thing. He basically had a self-portrait as the Thing. So he identified with the monster.

HATFIELD: Look for the story called "Street Code" in the gallery, which shows Jack, in his sixties, recalling what it was like 60 years before to be a poor kid on the streets of the Lower East Side, which

was one of the most crowded neighborhoods on Earth at that time. A place of real privation and struggle, and you can really get a sense of that marginality. You had a question?

DAVID SCHWARTZ [from audience]: A comment actually; some thoughts. My name is David Schwartz. I knew Jack. I knew Jack well, for about ten years. The thing I wanted to add to what you guys are saying is that first and foremost, when it came to his work, Jack was a storyteller. Even when he drew pictures on his wall that were display pieces, if you asked him what the picture meant, he would go into some lengthy story explaining everything about the picture. Now whether that was something by design or just because you asked, he was going to do so. He was always thinking, in a sense. He didn't drive. Basically his wife Roz drove, because there's a story about in Thousand Oaks, he was driving once down the street from where he lived, and he was thinking of some story and ran into a police car [laughter] that was parked. It was parked. [harder laughter] And so Jack didn't drive because he was constantly thinking of things. And when you were talking about how Sonny Sumo and the different characters that were at first simplistic, but also had way more to them when you actually explored the characters—the thing about Jack's work, in my opinion, is that it had real depth. So you could appreciate it on all sorts of different levels. And I think that's also part of the reason it sustains itself so well, as all of us have grown up. Because as children, we were able to read it on one level, and then as adults we can re-read it and go, "Oh my gosh! There's so much more here than we had originally thought."

And my last point is that Jack really revered—or "revered" may be the wrong word—Jack really was good with kids. What happened was in the '60s and '70s, when he was doing, as you guys said, all of these pages, people would find their way to his house because he was Jack Kirby, and people admired him. And instead of just cursory, "Hello, how are you?", he and Roz, his wife, they'd invite these kids in, feed them... and then all of a sudden kids are coming up from San Diego that helped found the San Diego convention. He put them in the *Jimmy Olsen* book. So he's got these kids coming up to his house who were in this club, who he's not only entertaining, he's taking time away from his work, et cetera, and then he puts them in the comic book. I mean, he was really good with that kind of making everyone family. And that's just part and parcel of who he was, and I think a lot of that is represented in *The New Gods* and *Forever People*. It's just very well represented.

HATFIELD: Sir? You want to build on that?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Yeah. I wanted to expand on that too. I used to work for Malibu Comics, which was in Thousand Oaks, and Jack Kirby actually made a trip to our office and had toured our office, and he invited the whole art department to his house. And every week, up until maybe about a week before he passed away, we would go to his house, and he would just tell us stories. And that was our thing on Wednesdays. We would go to the comic book store and then we would go to his house for lunch. Roz would make us lunch and we would just kind of hang out there and he would tell us stories, stories about everything. And he would even give us the artwork of his pages. But then you'd have Roz standing there right at the front door... [laughter] "No. You can't leave with that." That's what he used to do. And he always welcomed us in, until towards the end when Roz said, "He's not feeling good. You guys'll have to come back next time." And that's how it was for us. The whole six months to a year I was at Malibu, from '93 to '95, we would all do that. That was really a fun time in my life, too. On what he just said about Jack welcoming everybody into his house, he did that for everybody, and we would have at least ten of us over to the house, and we would sit there and he would talk and we would just listen, you know. And then we went back to work all hyped and stuff, so that was a good period.

KEVIN DOOLEY [from audience]: Something that has barely been touched on—a little devil's advocate thing here. Kirby's *Fourth World* was just amazing. I loved it when I first read it. I got to be honored to assistant edit on *Mister Miracle* and write *Mister Miracle*. But when it was first posited that we restart *New Gods* and *Mister Miracle*, we were told by the Powers That Be that Kirby's DC work would never sell. And indeed if you look at *New Gods* and *The Forever People*, they didn't even last a year. Some people have averred that he never really sold well on his own, by himself—that he always needed someone else in order to sell well. And that just freaked me out. "What do you mean? But this is the *New Gods*! This is Kirby—how can you say that?" Unfortunately, it bears out that it didn't sell well and I'd love the panel's thoughts on that.

BUKATMAN: I just have a quick response. You could see that as someone who was not as much in touch with the comics buying public as the people who he collaborated with were, perhaps. But you could also make the case, which is borne out by this show, this panel and all of this, that it demonstrates his idiosyncrasy. It demonstrates the way in which he was true to some internal sense of what he wanted to do. And if that wasn't selling, I'm sure he wasn't happy about that, but I also don't think that the ultimate goal was to figure out ways to boost his sales.

DOOLEY: But the other point is that *Fantastic Four* sold so well with Kirby and Lee. People said he didn't sell well on his own.

HATFIELD: When we think about comic books, we think about something where the sales figures become the source of validation. All of us play this game, especially in Los Angeles where we watch the box office receipts of movies we want to do well and see whether they do—whether the receipts accord with our tastes or judgment, as if those numbers are some kind of referendum on our tastes. Some kind of validation of our tastes. I mean, *New Gods* didn't sell *Fantastic Four* numbers, but it still outsold, I bet, almost any comic book published today, forty-odd years later. So these things are kind of relative to context. And we see how generative—it's funny how DC cancelled *New Gods* and *Forever People* within less than two years, and then within five years sought to revive them—and sought to



(above) Kirby, the Thing, and Joe Sinnott in a mid-1970s photo by David Folkman. Jack apparently felt Ben Grimm was Jewish, based on this Kirby family Hanukkah card (previous page) drawn for David Folkman. In 2002, Jeffrey Weiss wrote a wonderful article about the Thing (and Jack's) Jewish heritage for The Dallas Morning News. You can read it at: <http://www.beliefnet.com/News/2002/09/Comic-Faith-The-Things-Religion-Revealed.aspx>

revive them again... and again... and again, often without much long-term success. Doug?

HARVEY: I just wanted to point out how with the Fourth World, I think the only sort of vaguely conventional superhero was *Mister Miracle*, who had a superhero name and some powers a typical adolescent might think were cool, but with *Jimmy Olsen* and the *Newsboy Legion* and then *The Forever People* and *New Gods*, it was like, "How many of them *were* there? They're gods?" They were all very... they weren't, you know, *Invisible Girl* or whatever. So I think maybe Kirby was deliberately trying to expand the mythological vocabulary of the superhero genre. It wasn't allowed to play out. It might have caught on if it had been allowed to stretch out a little bit, but it just wasn't immediately a hit.

BUKATMAN: I think something that the show bears out as well is that Kirby on his own was rougher—more raw and less pretty. When he died, Neil Gaiman wrote that Kirby was a great artist but he wasn't a pretty artist. And so this is really unlovely work in some way. It's not the slickness that Joe Sinnott gave Kirby with his inks. It's not as smooth. The edges are not smoothed down. But I think that's the way he wanted it and I think it's why, surprisingly enough, when I go back to read the Marvel books, I find Stan Lee's writing, which I really used to valorize, almost unreadable. And I find Kirby's writing, that I used to excoriate, really bracing and intriguing. So I just think there was something going on, beyond the drive for commercial acceptance, that maybe he wasn't happy about at the time, but is probably the reason we're here.

HATFIELD: I think we have time for a couple other questions or comments. I've seen a couple of hands. Rand?

RAND HOPPE [from audience]: I just wanted to talk briefly about the comic book business at the time, [when] comics were being distributed on the newsstand—

HATFIELD: This is Rand Hoppe of the Jack Kirby Museum and Research Center, by the way. [applause]

HOPPE: He was [sold] on the newsstand, and at the time there was a burgeoning development of fan comic book dealers who would go into the newsstand distributors and take bales or packages of comics out of the warehouse. Those were not reported as being sold. Money was exchanged, but they weren't reported sold to the comic book publishers. And there's one particular scholar/comic book dealer, Bob Beerbohm, who has reported that in his experience, there were any number of Jack Kirby comics that were taken out of the distributors—being *Forever*

People and *New Gods*—for some reason *Mister Miracle* was not as desired by the comic book dealers. And wouldn't you know, it was *Mister Miracle* that had the good numbers that kept on, but *New Gods* and *Forever People*—which were the ones where the numbers weren't being reported accurately—were the ones that were cancelled. So actually, the comics that were reported by the distributors as being destroyed, and not sold, were actually making it to the comic book fan market.

HATFIELD: Want to follow up, Adam? And then this gentleman over here.

McGOVERN: Sure. And of course Paul Levitz has proclaimed a lot that he looked back at the sales figures and DC thought they were going to get *Superman*-like numbers from Kirby, so they ordered quantities that made it seem like a failure. But it also has to do with



(above) Page 47 ("The Cheater") of *True Divorce Cases*. (next page) *Soul Love's "The Model"*, inks by Vince Colletta. Both 1971.

the churn of popular tastes. It's interesting you mention alternatives to the superhero mythos. Kirby's most unqualified hit at the time was *Kamandi*, which was very far afield of the typical superhero mythos. And also there's a telling and very depressing quote from Carmine Infantino when he's justifying cancelling the Fourth World, saying, "Oh, the college kids were really flaking out over it"—he means "freaking," but whatever. "But you know it just didn't have the sales among the [younger] kids." Of course nowadays you would think, "Let us target that niche—let us select that audience," but that wasn't the mentality of the times.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Yes. You were talking earlier about Kirby's roughness. But earlier in his career he was known for the Romance comics, which...you know, Romance is in a bit of a revival right now. I was wondering if you could talk a bit about his Good Girl Art and when he was drawing the Romance genre.

HATFIELD: Well, we know this—thanks to a scholar named Harry Mendryk, who worked with Joe Simon, even in recent years before Simon, Kirby's longtime partner, passed away. We know that between about 1947 and—'57?—a decade later, Jack Kirby drew more pages of Romance than he did of any other genre, and, in fact, of all the other genres he worked on combined during that period. And we know too that Romance enabled Kirby and Joe Simon to buy houses in the suburbs. Kirby moved his family from Brooklyn to Long Island and had a house right next door or across the street from his partner Joe, and Romance did that. The Romance comics they published with a publisher called Crestwood really did that. We don't tend to think about those comics today, except insofar as they've become part of the Marvel Comics blueprint—sort of soap opera/melodrama and continuing relationship stories. We kind of see that as part of the... if you look closely at the Marvel superhero comics of the '60s, we can see the Romance being in the DNA there, as part of what makes those a different kind of superhero comic. But the truth is that Romance comics, which we tried to note in the exhibition briefly, were maybe one quarter of the entire comic book market by the end of the '40s. Jack Kirby was the first artist known for drawing Romance comics. It's still the case that many people look back on Jack's Romance comics and think that the characters are unlovely; times change, or maybe we read back into them the Kirby that we know from later years. I would say, go into the exhibition and look at the few examples of Romance we have there and think of those alongside the examples of Barda—the sort of superhero that appears in *Mister Miracle* comics. We have several of those [pages], where there's a pin-up-like aspect to it, but there's also a depth to the character. That feels like another deferred response kicking in. You know one of Kirby's unrealized projects in the early '70s was to be a Romance revival called—get this—*True Divorce Cases* [laughter], while he was creating the *New Gods* and *Forever*



People and everything. And another unrealized project from that period was to be an African-American Romance comic called *Soul Love*. [light laughter] He was always willing to go back there. He was not unwilling to go back there. The market was unwilling to return there, I think, in 1970-71, but he was always willing to kind of go at it, especially if the topic might be expanded or the [range of] people represented in the comic might be expanded.

I don't know that I addressed your question, except that Romance comics are really important. They are sort of what connects the Kirby of the '40s to the Kirby of the '60s, in ways that we still haven't studied enough. Diana Schutz, one of our catalog contributors—she is here, or was here, today—has a wonderful essay about Kirby's Romance comics. It's the first essay in the catalog, so we definitely want to call attention to that. [applause] We have a number of contributors to the catalog here that are not on the dais with us, so buttonhole these people and ask them to sign your books when you go across the street.

I think we are out of time and we should give people a chance to revisit the gallery, so thank you for your kind attention... [applause] Go across the street and look at Kirby art. It'll do you good. ★



Barry Forshaw is the author of *British Gothic Cinema* and *The Rough Guide to Crime Fiction* (available from Amazon) and the editor of *Crime Time* (www.crimetime.co.uk). He lives in London.

A regular column focusing on Kirby's least known work, by Barry Forshaw

KIRBY

OBSCURA



KIRBY IN CONTEXT

I hope readers of this magazine will appreciate just what a struggle it was for me not to spell the strapline above alliteratively, with two 'k's, i.e. "Kirby in Kontext." But I resisted. This column will be a slightly different one from the usual *Kirby Obscura*, and to explain why, I have to ask the reader: are you familiar with Patrick McGoohan's cult series *The Prisoner*? One episode did not feature McGoohan himself (apart from a brief final segment), as he was unavailable filming elsewhere (the mind of the character Number Six was transferred to someone else, giving another actor a chance to pinch-hit). In similar fashion, Jack Kirby will be conspicuously absent from this column—but there is a reason. For someone like myself, who holds the heretical view that Kirby produced his best work prior to his Marvel super-hero period, it's impossible not to see him in the context of other comics of the 1950s, even those he did feature in (at the time) such as Stan Lee's fantasy anthology book *Strange Tales*. Kirby was, of course, to transform the book as lead artist in its giant monster period, but it's worth taking a look at an earlier era to put the King's subsequent work in context.

STRANGE TALES BEFORE THE KING

You've just won the lottery. Or an elderly uncle (one you barely knew) has just died and left you his fortune. The point is, you now have scads of disposable income—what is the first luxury item you're going to splurge on? Well, if you are a consumer of *From the Tomb* (and the chances of that are good if you're reading these lines), you might be tempted by a mint set of the first ten issues of *Strange Tales*, the highly influential Stan Lee-edited horror comic from the early 1950s, when the two industry giants who could boast the most stellar illustrating talents were Gaines and Feldstein's EC Comics and Lee and Goodman's Atlas line. Here's a

safe bet: you may well have picked up the odd issue of *Strange Tales*, lured by Bill Everett's jawdropping series of monstrous images and hideous visages (utterly irresistible for the horror comics aficionado), but it's highly unlikely that you've managed to acquire many of those very pricey (and I mean pricey!) initial ten issues—and if you have, it's an equally safe bet that you only managed to get them in tatty or severely distressed state, covers either bleached of colour or held on by half a staple. But here's the good news—wait for it—you don't need to win the lottery or wait for that elderly relative to die. In their very cherishable hardback archive editions,



Marvel Masterworks have finally moved beyond reprinting the exploits of Spider-Man, Daredevil and the Fantastic Four to reproduce some highly desirable comics from the era that preceded the Marvel super-hero revolution—yes, the first ten issues of prime '50s horror title *Strange Tales* may now be purchased in one volume, without having to take out a second mortgage on your house. There were, of course, signs that Marvel was ultimately likely to get around to this era—the reissue program had already moved beyond super-heroes to collect Marvel monster-era titles such as *Tales of Suspense* and *Tales to Astonish* (with that wonderfully exuberant artwork by Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko), so perhaps it was just a matter of time before the reissue program began to celebrate another of the company's great achievements (albeit one that perhaps Marvel is not quite so proud of; as I've said before in these pages, quoting a conversation I once had with Stan Lee, he seemed genuinely surprised when I reminded him that at Atlas he had actually published more horror titles than the market leader EC). In any case, it was clear that Lee (perhaps understandably) preferred to be applauded for his part in the comics revolution that produced



FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS

By the time of *Strange Tales* #6, Atlas is clearly firing on all cylinders. Gone are the diffuse, undramatic covers, and we have the first truly excellent piece of work by another one of the major Atlas artists, the massively talented Russ Heath. A terrified man, down on his knees, pounds at a massive metal door, shrieking, "Let me out!! He's right behind me!! I can hear the footsteps of the ugly man!" (Multiple exclamation marks were *de rigueur* for Stan Lee in his early Atlas days.) Behind the frightened man, a figure in a purple suit stalks towards him. All we can see of this creature is an extended grey-hued hand, covered in scales. Yes, here is the definitive Atlas cover style, refined it to the level of frisson-inducing excitement that guaranteed the sales of the books to GIs and lucky kids of the 1950s (before, that is, the Comics Code did away with such grisliness). And the first story—as if this weren't enough—is more Russ Heath! A man in a blue space suit stumbles across a bleak, cracked alien landscape, arms raised in fear. No blurb, no speech balloon—neither is needed. And the SF tale that follows is delivered in characteristic Heath fashion: powerful, bold lines, strong crosshatching, and brilliant draughtsmanship. Perhaps not yet Russ Heath at his apogee (that was to come a few issues later), but still good enough to blow away most of the competition.

Now the goodies come thick and fast: Maneely's "My Brother Talks to Bats," a first appearance in *ST* for later *Daredevil* artist Gene Colan with

"He Wished He Was a Vampire," a Pete Tomlinson offering in #7 (with a very striking splash panel of a screaming man in flames), Bill Everett's "Hidden Head" cover for *ST* #10, a premier outing in *ST* for Joe Sinnott (featured in an earlier issue of *From the Tomb*), even Bernard Krigstein (though signally lacking—as yet—the remarkable design skill he was to bring to his later EC work), and Jim Mooney's "The Monster's Son," showing that he could handle Frankenstein's creation as capably as he could (later) Supergirl and the Legion of Super-Heroes.



After finishing this volume (all reservations aside), you'll be (as the Crypt Keeper used to say) hungry for another horror helping. Of course, if you want horror Jack Kirby-style, you'll have to look out for those *Black Magic* reprints...★



DOWN WITH THE KING!

by Earl Martin

I first met Jack "King" Kirby at Carl Taylor's 1977 Art and Comics Appreciation Day at the L.A. Library. Also there was Mark Evanier, Scott Shaw, Larry F. Houston, and more great contributors to comics fandom. I was 16 and too shy to show my "hero" my art. So as "The King" was outside getting mobbed, I was in a quiet part of the Library—where I began a friendship with a great artist and legend, Sergio Aragonés.



I was very familiar with his work—the scribbles of his genius on the borders of *MAD*. We shared stories for what seemed hours—he gave me the confidence to go meet my hero. When I went outside, Roz was trying to separate the crowd from Jack, saying ever so politely but sternly, "Honey, it's time to go!" (Of course, the extended family won for a few more minutes!)

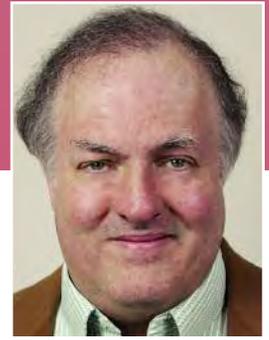
She turned and noticed me there with my painted posters on the outside of my portfolio (Carl Taylor-style). I stood there in

shock. My bud and fellow artist David Phillips blurted out to Roz, "He wants to show Kirby his art, but he's scared!" In that motherly Jewish New Yorker tone, she said, "Let me see." She was impressed by my potential, and after a few questions she took a liking to me. She pulled Jack from the crowd and showed him my art. I remember telling him, "Carl Taylor was a great mentor and friend." Roz and Jack were in agreement. "Keep us updated... when in town, come up!" Being poor, I never made the trip, but we stayed in contact. At the '87 San Diego Con, we reunited and exchanged art, love, and friendship—until his passing.

I forget if it was one or two years later, I got my last motherly kiss and hug from "Ma Kirby." I said, "Roz, what are you doing in that wheelchair?" She was always strong and in charge! She said some personal comments of encouragement to me, and gave me a Captain Victory/Silver Star card signed by Jack. We hugged, and as I walked away, fans and family engulfed her with love and compassion. I was and am proud of the fact Mr. and Mrs. Jack "King" Kirby considered me more than a fan. ★



JACK KIRBY -EARL MARTIN
AKI C-204



The war is over, and now it's just beginning! Following the court settlement, Marvel is now giving Kirby proper credit, as they did heavily on the January 19, 2016 TV special Captain America: 75 Heroic Years—a lead-in to this Spring's pivotal Marvel film Captain America: Civil War.

2015 KIRBY TRIBUTE PANEL

Held at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 12, 2015 at Comic-Con International: San Diego. Featuring Rob Liefeld, Marv Wolfman, J. David Spurlock, and Paul S. Levine, and moderated by Mark Evanier. Transcribed by Steven Tice, edited by John Morrow, and copyedited by Mark Evanier. You can view a video of this panel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewpZ2sAn7F8>

MARK EVANIER: Since we last met, the major change in the— You know, Jack was a man who was rarely ever surprised by anything relating to comics. He was surprised a bit by the business ethics, but the content didn't surprise him. Somebody asked me last year, "Would Jack have been surprised that there was this huge multi-million-dollar movie of the *Avengers*?" No. Would Jack have been



surprised that there was this huge multi-million-dollar movie of *Thor*? No. The other day somebody asked me, "Would Jack have been surprised to see a multi-million-dollar movie of *Ant-Man*?" Maybe. [laughter] I don't know for sure. I think—Ant-Man was the character that Jack cared about the least of anything he had ever worked on, and he got very angry one time—well, not very angry, maybe, on a scale of one to ten, about a five — when somebody remarked, "Obviously, because

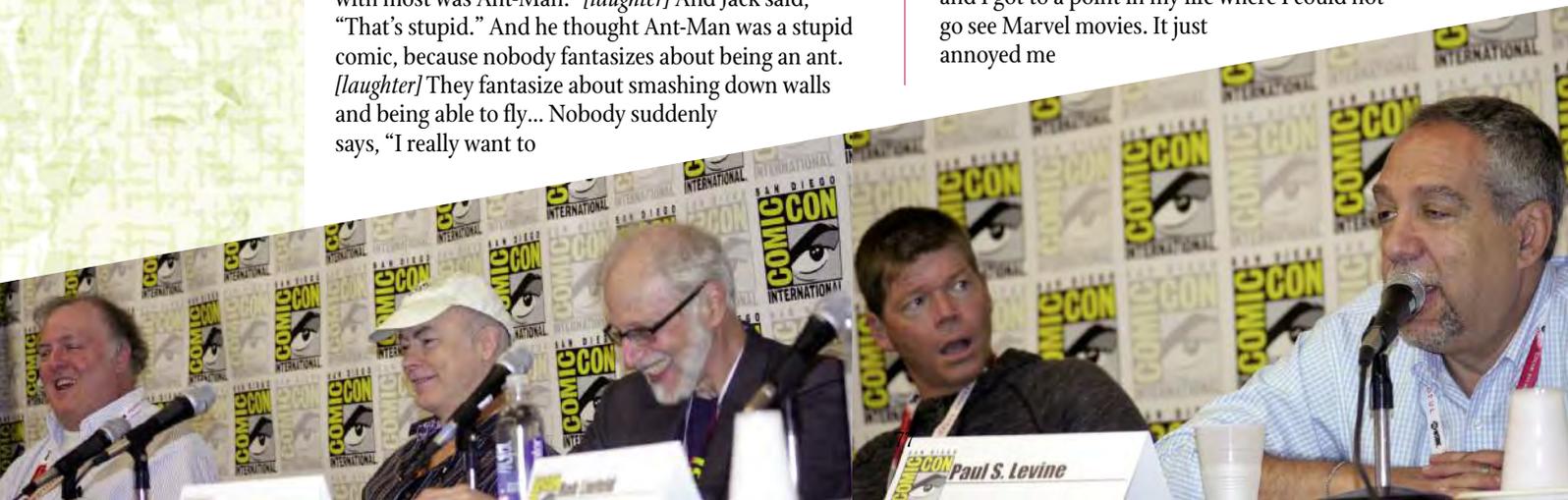
Jack was short, the character he must have identified with most was Ant-Man." [laughter] And Jack said, "That's stupid." And he thought Ant-Man was a stupid comic, because nobody fantasizes about being an ant. [laughter] They fantasize about smashing down walls and being able to fly... Nobody suddenly says, "I really want to

be chased by a caterpillar." [laughter] But with Jack, it was hard to sometimes second-guess where that brain of his was going.

Maybe he would have gone, "Of course *Ant-Man* is a great movie." I don't know that for a fact.

One of the other things that has changed is that a lawsuit was settled. You may have heard about this. And we're not going to talk much about it at all, really. I'm going to say two things about it. One was that I'm real happy, Jack and Roz would have been happy, the Kirby family is happy, everybody around the Kirby family is very happy. Now, you can make an argument that it's too little, too late, Jack and Roz should have been here to see it. Okay, fine. Given. Given the reality of what was possible, I am very happy.

Now, the second thing is a personal matter. I met Jack in July of 1969, almost exactly this time of July, in fact. And he told me at that time, as he told anyone who visited him then, what he felt he had contributed to the Marvel Universe, what he did, how he felt he was being under-credited and not treated very well. And through subsequent visits, as I got to know him better, I learned more and more about that. And I began to realize that—and, of course, I started meeting people like Don Heck, and Steve Ditko, and Joe Sinnott, and Dick Ayers, and Stan Lee, and Sol Brodsky, other people who were around through all that, and I began to realize that Jack's version of the events was essentially correct. One could occasionally quibble with a mistake of memory. Jack would occasionally say "Captain Marvel" when he meant "Captain America," or he'd sometimes confuse Dick Ayers with Joe Sinnott when he was talking about something—the kind of mistakes everybody makes. And he had some different terminology sometimes for words like "creator" or "writing." But I found that Jack was very honest, a very honest man. I never, in my entire association with him, felt he was intentionally lying to me, or to anyone. I never heard Jack lie. I heard him get things wrong—which comic Iron Man was in or something like that—but I never felt that he lied. And over the years, my feeling that he was under-credited, that he was being financially wronged, grew and grew, and I got madder and madder, and I got to a point in my life where I could not go see Marvel movies. It just annoyed me





Speaking of stuntmen, we found this tiny image of a commission piece Jack drew of his Hollywood hero. If you've got a better repro of this, please send it in! Would make a great TJJC cover for someone to ink...

too much. I got stuck going to see the first *X-Men* movie that came out, and I didn't like it. I mean, I didn't like it as a movie, first of all. I have a low tolerance for CGI. I grew up in an era where, if somebody leaped off a building, you knew it wasn't Sean Connery leaping, it was his stuntman, but you knew someone had actually done that. Now I don't believe anything at this point. But I didn't like the movie, and I would have walked out of it except that I was sitting next to Stan Lee at the screening. [laughter]

I was working for Stan Lee Media at the time, a company which has lived on forever in lawsuits, and the entire staff was there. We were basically paid to be there that day, and I was actually paid very well to see that movie. And they cheered when Stan's cameo came on, and I don't begrudge Stan some moments of his own. I think Stan deserves a lot of credit for things he did. But at the end of the movie everybody got up and walked out, and I sat there and waited for the credits. I was waiting for Jack's name. And I'm sitting in this theater at the Cineplex—they'd rented it for the day. And I was sitting there, and ushers were sweeping up popcorn boxes around me, and I'm the only person in the theater who is watching the credits. And I'm determined I am going to stay there until I see Jack's name, even if I have to sit there through *Chicken Run*, which was otherwise playing in that theater. And finally Jack got the smallest, most insignificant credit. He and Stan were credited at the very end, right after the people who had supplied the donuts or something like that. And I got so mad about that, I just—I get mad about once every five years. I got very mad about that, and I have not to this day seen any more of the Marvel movies. So as a personal note, I just want to tell you that a great weight has been lifted off of me by this, and I'm very happy for me, apart from all of the happiness I have for the Kirbys and the people who love them and such. Anyway... [applause]

Let me introduce the dais to you here. First of all, I'm going to start at the far end. Part of the reason that that weight was lifted off me is that Jack has had, finally, in his life, a couple of good lawyers here and there. He did not, at some points, have those, and one of them for a time was this gentleman who, full disclosure, is also my attorney. This is Mr. Paul S. Levine. [applause]

Jack was an enormous fan of entrepreneurialism among artists. That's not the exact word, but it will suffice for this time. You know what I mean. He liked the idea that artists took responsibility for their work and that they reaped the profits on it and such. And one of the things that was interesting about Jack is that he never begrudged the new kids who had more advantages than him. Obviously, a guy who got into comics much later than Jack had a better deal, got better contracts, got percentages and credits, and much better treatment. He never resented the fact that those people got something he hadn't. And when a bunch of creators started getting superstar status and the attendant remuneration, Jack was an absolute cheerleader. There was not a single scintilla of resentment in him. He was a big fan of these people, especially a few of them who turned around and helped the Kirby family out a lot. One of those people



who helped the Kirby family a lot and made them very happy, was Mr. Rob Liefeld. [applause]

Rob is going to have to leave us because he is so popular, he's got another panel double-parked outside. [laughter] But I'm going to get to him in a minute, and I'm going to ask him first to talk about his relationship with Jack and his feelings for him.

I'm going to skip Marv for a second here [laughter], because I'm talking about entrepreneurs,



I'm talking about the artists and writers who also took command of publishing and controlling the work, not just for financial reasons, but for creative reasons.

MARV WOLFMAN: And I was just a minion. [laughter] The little guy with one eye. [Mark stares at Marv] Sorry! [laughter]

EVANIER: I've heard people say less silly things on panels than [that].

[laughter] Thank you, Marv. Anyway, another guy that Jack knew and respected and thought was a hell of a good guy, Mr. J. David Spurlock, ladies and gentlemen. [applause]

[Editor's Note: For space reasons this issue, I've omitted the introductions of people from the audience, and announcements of upcoming Kirby-related projects, all of which have been covered in recent issues of TJJC.]

EVANIER: All right, Rob. Let's talk—

ROB LIEFELD: I'm here until 11:00 o'clock. I just wanted to say, it's such a tremendous honor. When you asked me to come to this, I was so thrilled. As you know, my love for Jack runs so deep. It's eternal, it's forever, and I love that you guys gather every year and remember and talk about him. So thank you for inviting me.

EVANIER: What was your favorite Kirby stuff when you were growing up? What was your favorite Kirby work?

LIEFELD: It shifts on the week. I am 47 years old. I started collecting comics at five years old because my parents gave me *Richie Rich* and *Casper* comics. But my dad took me to the barber, and he had Marvel comics. And the barber liked me, and saw the magic that these comics had on me, and he allowed me to swap my *Richie Riches* and my *Caspers*. [laughter] And I felt like, "I am getting one over on this guy!" [laughter] But I got *Kamandi*, and the *New Gods*, and I want to tell you, a comic will hit you and stay with you your whole life, and you can't explain why, but the One Man Army Corps that is *OMAC* hit me at a young age and I have been trying to recreate *OMAC* my entire life. Honestly, Mark, there is nothing he didn't do that I do not get genuinely thrilled over. Around that time, also, '75, you had the *Eternals*, he was coming back, his *Captain America* run. But my thing with Jack is, he was unbelievable. He was the best storyteller, the best illustrator, and by far the best costume designer that this business or any business has ever seen, ever. And when you see any influence in my work, the first thing I will tell you is Jack, and his headdresses? That dude put the best headdresses on people, ever. [chuckling] Starting with Galactus, and continuing through Orion and Lightray. So, look, I give Jack, I mean—I get very excited over Jack, as you can tell.

EVANIER: Tell us about meeting Jack the first time.

LIEFELD: The first time I met Jack was at a convention in Los Angeles and I was on a panel. I had just started my career. I was about two years into comics, and I was on a panel with Jack and Mike Mignola, and we were just in awe of Jack. But there was one thing that Jack said that, as an artist, just encouraged me that day on the panel, and



it doesn't hold true today because time has changed, but in 1989 he was 100% on the mark. Someone said, "Look, what advantages do you think comic book artists have?" And he said *[in Jack voice]*, "You know, everything we can create we can do with a piece of paper and a pencil. We have unlimited budgets." I mean, I'm a terrible Jack *[laughter]*, but I can remember how, his cadence. And he goes, "Hollywood can't keep up with us. If I want to destroy our entire planet, I can do it on a double-page spread, and it costs me my pencil, and my eraser, and my paper." And I was like, "Yeah!" And nowadays, like Mark said, now the CGI guys can say, "Oh, yeah? Mr. Kirby, watch this!" *[mimics typing on a computer]* And put in some pixels. But they got that from Jack. They got the idea from Jack to do it in the first place, so it all goes back to Jack. *[applause]*

But the *[next]* time I met him, we were walking the halls of San Diego in 1991, so it was the year before Image, and my peers and I had experienced some great success at Marvel, and I was walking through the hall and Roz said, "Hey, could you come here for a second?" And I immediately recognized her as Roz Kirby, and Jack in a dapper suit, and I'm doing him a disservice in my hoodie, and he comes to Comic-Con rockin' a suit. He walks toward me slowly and he said, "I just wanted to tell you how inspired I am by you and your peers and everything that you're doing." And if you don't think that I stopped and I quaked—I'm like, "God just gave me a compliment." *[laughter]* "There is something wrong with this!" It's like Mark said, he was as genuine, and kind, and nice, and I'll tell you, because my kids hear me talk about Jack Kirby all the time—the highlight of my career, it

is the absolute highlight, is when Roz and Jack invited us to their house. And I had a studio at the time, and about six of us, including Eric Stephenson, who is the current publisher of Image Comics, and he will tell you this is one of our magic moments, and I saw Mike Thibodeaux in the audience here, he was there that afternoon. We piled in the car, and we drove to—is it Thousand Oaks?

EVANIER: It was Thousand Oaks, yeah.

LIEFELD: And we went to Jack's house about 2:00 in the afternoon, and I remember sitting around the table at midnight going, "Do we have to go? Because he doesn't seem like he's going to sleep..." *[laughter]* He told us the best stories from World War II through the comics industry, and my mind was so blown. We were touching the hem of God. To me, that was the most important period and day that I had in the comics industry, and everybody in my studio who was with me that day will tell you the same thing. And I just wanted to tell you, like, again, I was just, you understand, Jack Kirby influenced everything about me and my peers' work, and so we're walking—I had never seen all these Biblical drawings he had done, okay? So this was a revelation to me in 1992. And we walked by the first one, he showed us the house, and there's a giant picture of a man with a beard and flowing hair and the cosmic lines that Jack did, and to me, I mean, is this Highfather? Is this Odin? And so we're sitting there, and Jack's standing next to the giant frame, and I said, "So, who's this?" *[nonchalantly]* "Well, that's God." *[laughter]* And I said, "Like, like God?" *[laughter]* And I was like, "Dude!" *[laughter]* And the next drawing is this Jack Kirby

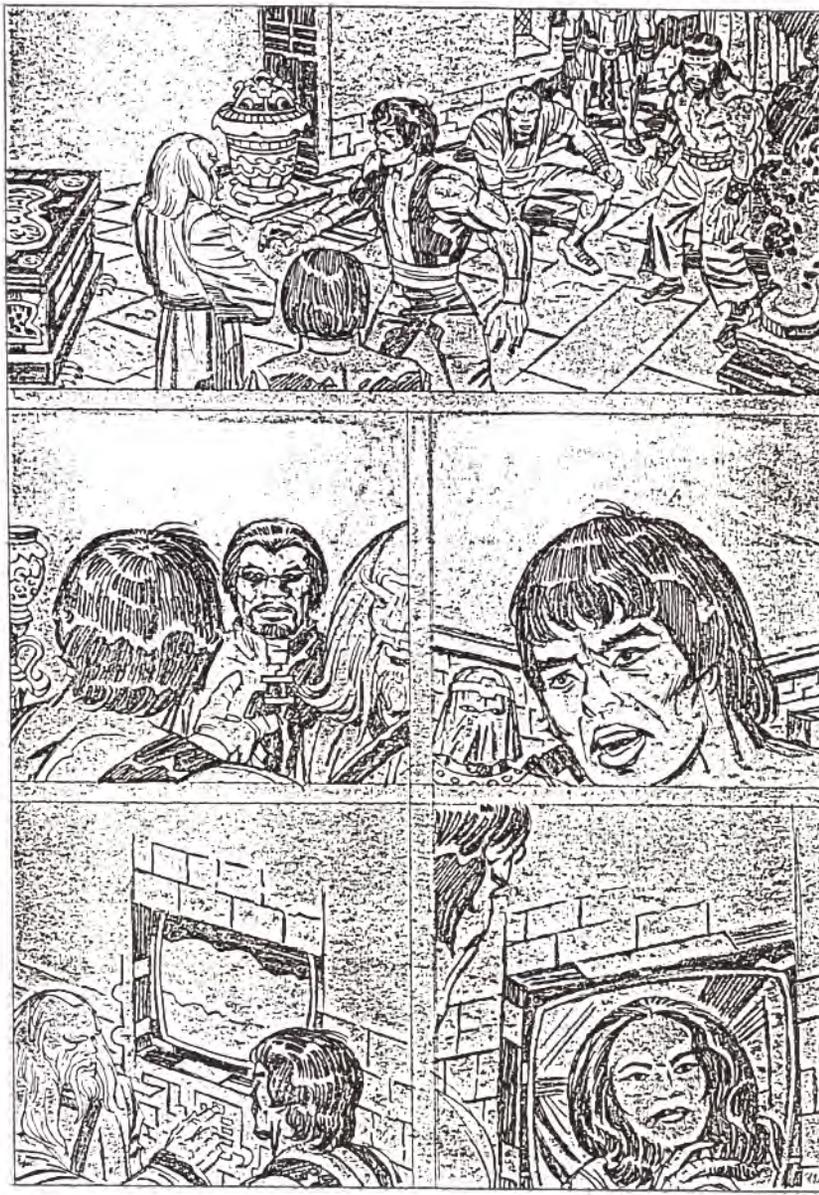


A third of Jack's 1976 "Tribes Trilogy" triptych that was undoubtedly on the walls when Rob visited Jack's house.

machine, like one of his Galactus technology things that could only come out of his imagination, and there's, like, a guy hitting the buttons, and there's these walls falling in the distance, and I said, "Jack, what's this?" And again, casually, like he took the picture and he was there [laughter], "Oh, that's the Battle of Jericho." [laughter] And I went, "They had that friggin' cosmic organ at Jericho?" [laughter]

To this day, the most significant experience was those eight hours. I mean, Roz was so kind and so gentle. She let me go roam through drawers and drawers and drawers of unpublished art, and I saw a sequence of pages, and I was just so excited. Image Comics was very successful at the time, our brand was very strong, and we loved Jack. And I said, "Roz, what if I took these pages and I had all my partners and I ink these pages? What if we then publish this and gave you the proceeds?" And she went and checked with Jack, and Jack gave it the green light, and I called my buddies. I said, "Jim Lee, would you ink Jack Kirby?" "Done." "Todd McFarlane, would you ink Jack Kirby?" "Done." "Jerry Ordway, would you ink Jack Kirby?" "Done." Marc Silvestri, everybody. And, I'll tell you, I think they all were like—I mailed them the original pages, and Todd McFarlane called me and said, "Bud! Hey, is this an original Kirby? And I get to ink it?" And I said, "That's what we talked about. It's not a Xerox, Todd. This is the sh*t!" [laughter]

So that was just a tremendous experience. Like I said, we loved Jack, and I can never repay him for all the great memories he's given us, and I know everyone else here has a story to tell, but I'll tell you, I always think, on Facebook and Twitter, and talk to my peers and fans, and we always talk about the Mt. Rushmore of comics, who's on it? And I'm like, "Jack's not on the Mt. Rushmore of comics. He gets his own mountain, okay?" [scattered applause] And here's the deal. We have to keep talking about him all the time; because Jack passed before all of his creations came to the screen, if we don't talk about him, we can't count on the corporations to do that. And I'm so thrilled about the settlement. Like all of you, I stood up on my couch when it came up on the Internet and I cheered because the Kirbys finally got what was coming to them. But the bottom line is, if you don't talk about him, people don't know who he is, because we live in such a rapid fire, information—I have three kids, 15, 13, and 11, and they consume at such a rapid rate and, literally, [pointing at his head] it's in and out, in and out. "I thought you were into that?" "Oh, that was yesterday. I'm into this now." "What?" [laughter] So things like this are great, and I'll talk about Jack Kirby for the rest of my life because he was the single most important comic book creator, and I think he's—you know, people talk about Steven Spielberg, and I think Jack Kirby should be talked about in the same sentence, so let's keep talking about him. [applause]

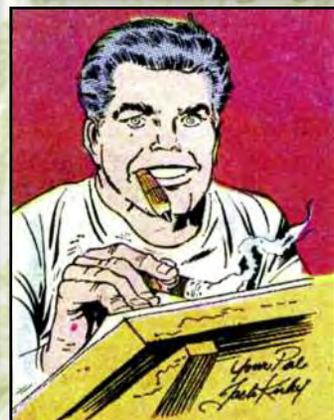
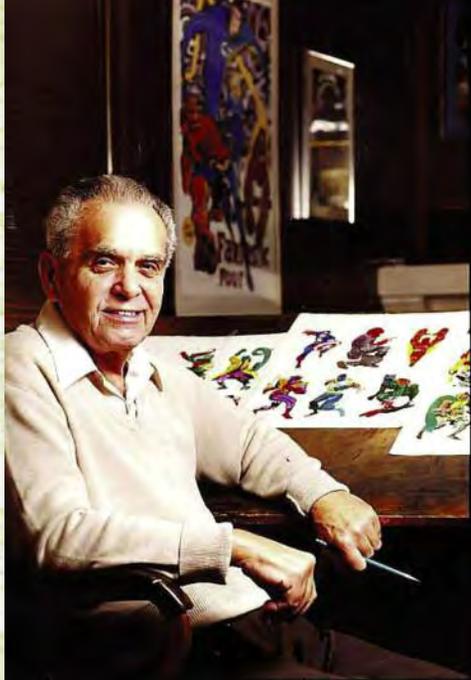


Todd McFarlane inked these unused 1970s "Bruce Lee" pencils for Image's Phantom Force #1.

EVANIER: Rob left one detail out of that story, and I'm going to put it in, because he's probably too modest to put it in. There was a period there, the last ten years or so of Jack's life, when he was getting an awful lot of tributes, and you may have seen comics where people put him in as a character, or they named characters after him, and Jack—what I'm about to say, I don't want anybody to think Jack was not flattered by every one of them. But Roz, to some extent, and a little bit with Jack, they were always kind of conscious of the fact that some of these things were real easy to do. I, personally—this is speaking for me now—I have a little problem with people who inflate minor efforts into major things. This is a bad analogy, but after 9/11, I knew people who thought they struck a blow against the Taliban because they put a flag on their cars. And I thought, no, no. The people who went out and gave blood, who donated money to the victims—Herb Trimpe, who worked at Ground Zero for six months, volunteer work counseling people, those people that made an effort... [applause] Putting a flag in your car was like the dictionary definition of "the least you could do." There is no smaller gesture. It was \$2.98 for the flag. If you put up a \$1.98 flag, you could have less of a gesture, but... There were a lot of people who paid tribute to Jack, and their intentions were always good, and we respect them, but there were a few people who did outstanding things to help the Kirbys. Roz used to occasionally refer to—and this was kind of a little joke with a little meaning under it—somebody would say, "Oh, I just made a character look like you in my comic, Jack." Roz would mutter under her breath, "Oh, good, another tribute with no money attached to it." And the Image guys, Rob and those guys, they gave Jack for that comic a very, very large check, which is something that very few people who have paid tribute to Jack ever did. And to a guy who grew up during the Depression, and to a guy who was financially wronged for much of his life, I think that meant more to Jack than being made a character in a hundred other comics. And thank you, Rob, for that. [applause]

KIRBY CAMEOS

With the possible exception of Stan Lee, Jack may have cameo'ed in more comics and related media than any other creator. We've assembled a few here, from Jack's own work and others'. For extra fun, go to <http://citycyclops.tumblr.com/post/90882247523/photoshopping-jack-kirby-into-some-of-stan-lees> and see how a fan Photoshopped Jack into some of Stan's movie cameos. Characters TM & ©their respective owners



Of course, I have to apologize to Rob, because, as I mentioned earlier, people sometimes say the wrong thing. In the program book, I credited him as the creator of Spawn. *[laughter]*

LIEFELD: That's funny!

EVANIER: Anyway, thank you, Rob. You can leave whenever you have to go. You can stay as long as you can. David, tell us about your first encounter—first of all, David, as you should all know, has a company called Vanguard Publishing. They publish some of the best comic book artists who ever lived. Give us a list of the names of people you've published.

DAVID SPURLOCK: Jim Steranko, Carmine Infantino, Frank Frazetta, Wally Wood, John Romita Sr., John Buscema, Roy Krenkel, Al Williamson, Jeffery Jones, Mike Kaluta—that's the neighborhood.

EVANIER: Anybody good? *[laughter]* Tell us about your meeting with Jack, how Jack came into your life.

SPURLOCK: I met Jack in the mid-to-late '70s at a convention, and it wasn't that big of a convention, so we got a lot of time together. I was a guest at the convention. I was very young, but I was a guest already, and I don't know how to put this. As a joke, the promoter, whom I grew up with and has now passed away, Larry Lankford, we kind of grew up together. But anyway, as kind of a joke, he made me the party guest of honor, so amongst other things I was supposed to keep everyone entertained, so we spent a lot of time in the guest suite. Frank Kelly Freas was there. We started a very close friendship at the time, and the same with Jack. We spent a lot of time together at that convention. And then, after that, the Dallas convention started to grow, and Jack and Roz started coming back practically every year. For a while there were so many signed Kirby comics in the Dallas area, you could find them easily in twenty-five-cent boxes. So every time they would come we would spend some time, and stay in touch, and write letters, and occasionally talk on the phone, and kind of what's already been talked about. One thing that's very important

It's party-time, Kirby-style! "Deep Space Disco" is probably an unused late 1970s animation concept, and Jack's own take on the Star Wars cantina scene.

(next page) Mid-1970s Hulk sketch.



about Jack is... Evanier talked about how he was an extremely honest person. He might make a mistake, an historical mistake when he was relating something, but there was never any kind of manipulation. There is so much of this rampant today, and that's why I want to say it. By saying it, it almost acts like there was something there. The point is, there wasn't. He was just a straight-up guy, and even his persona, his physical persona, kind of related to his artwork. I grew up reading his comics, which he didn't just draw. He wrote those comics. You know, Stan may have dialogued them, but... *[applause]*

If I'm tempted, I could drop some bombshells. You know, sometimes I get wild. *[laughter]* But I'm going to say, he was like the living embodiment of his work. There's a strength in his work, the dynamics, in the way he kind of moved around, kind of stiff like this *[attempts to impersonate Jack]*, and I think Rob did a great imitation of that. *[laughter]* And the only thing is, the neck has to be a little tighter. But there was a strength in there. You could see the Thing, or the Hulk, or even Mr. Fantastic. All of his characters somehow were embodied in Jack himself. But he was just a very solid, straight-up kind of guy, and one thing I like to refer to him to is a fountain. There was an old skit on *Saturday Night Live* about Woody Guthrie being in the hospital before he died, and a very young Bob Dylan was coming in to visit him, and everything that came out of Woody Guthrie's mouth ended up becoming lyrics to Bob Dylan's songs. Bob Dylan's sitting there taking notes of everything that Guthrie uttered from his deathbed. Well, Jack was, likewise, a creative genius. I wish I had a tape recording of every conversation we ever had, because he could barely open his mouth without ideas coming out. In some ways, I'm almost surprised how you could go back and see a theme in the Golden Age, he revives it again in the '60s, he does another take on it in the '70s or even the '80s. Whether it's the kid gangs—I look at the Forever People, and I see the Newsboy Legion. Or Thor—how early was the first appearance of Thor? 1942 or something like that? *[Mark nods]* And then he's got Thor over at Marvel. And the *New Gods* really is an extension of Asgard, in a way. It's like, this is the new thing. So I'm actually kind of surprised with all those revisiting of ideas. Other

people did that, too. Wally Wood's the perfect example. But Kirby could come up with ideas so easily. So there's information coming out today, it's easier to look back in hindsight and kind of figure out what was going on. And he was a great guy, I was very proud to know him, and I was happy to stay in touch with him until pretty much the day he died. *[applause]*

I did all these books, I've worked with these artists. I've basically created a career for myself working with people that I grew up admiring. I wanted not just to—I wasn't just inspired to draw because they inspired me with their art. I also wanted to know them as people and work with them. And I've worked with all these great names. There were a couple of things Jack and I talked about working on. When I first came into publishing about 1990, I talked to him about

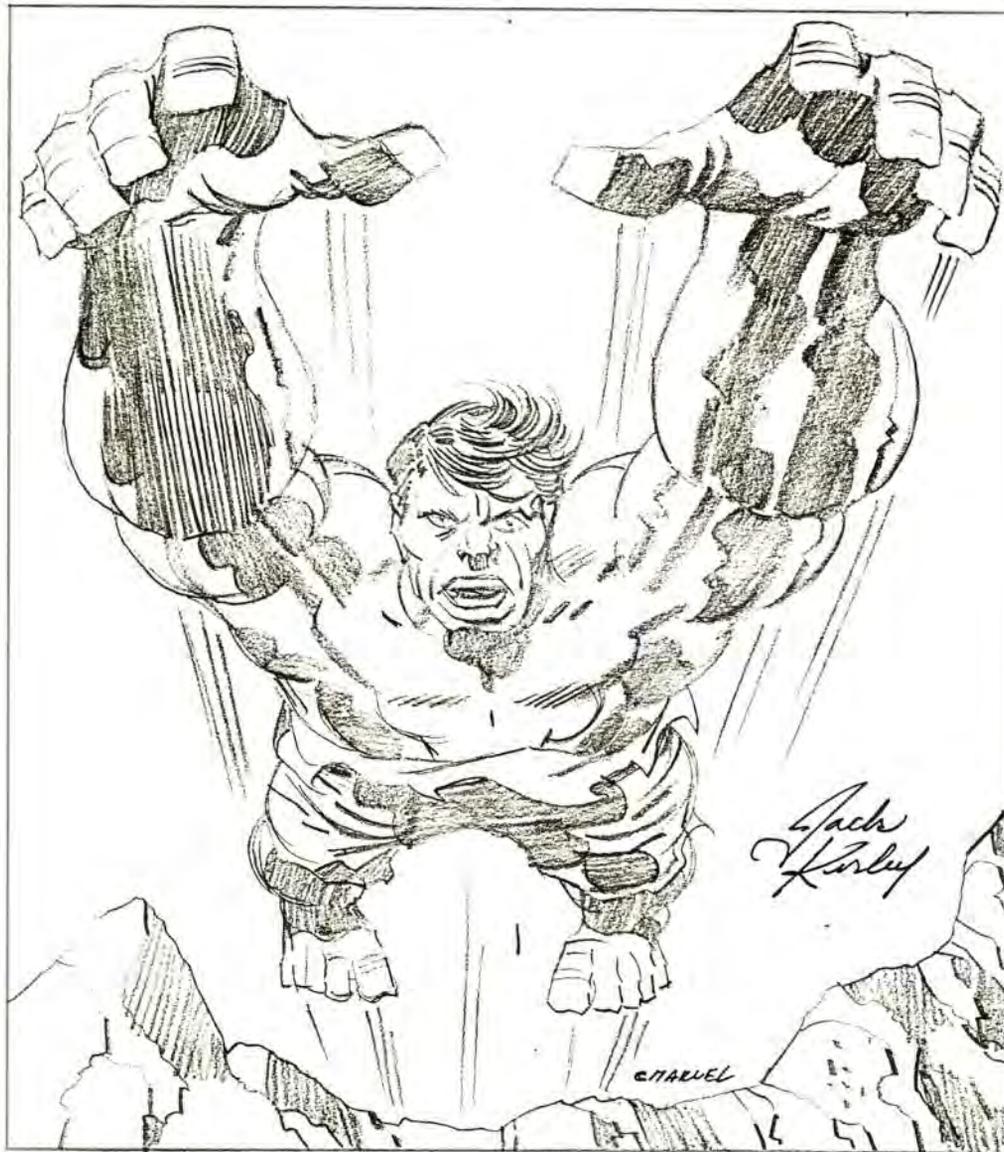
maybe working on the THUNDER Agents. I had a deal with John Carbonaro to do the THUNDER Agents. But anyway, I haven't done a lot of Kirby. Probably the biggest Kirby-related project I've done was I did Joe Simon's book, *The Comic Book Makers*. Joe was very proud of that. And one of the big reasons I wanted to do that was because of the connection, the Kirby connection. But I just wanted to say this for the record, and everything is subjective, and I could debate on this for weeks, months, however long, and there's a lot of artists that I'm very invested into: Wally Wood, Jim Steranko, Carmine Infantino, Wrightson, Frank Frazetta, those all rise to the top of the list. But, for the record, as far as I'm concerned, the greatest comic book creator—not just artist—the greatest comic book creator of all time is Jack Kirby. [applause] The only reason I haven't done more with Kirby is because Mark, and the *Kirby Collector*, do such a fine job. It's like, all right, Kirby's being taken care of. [laughter]

EVANIER: Well, David takes good care of a lot of these people, posthumously, in most cases, unfortunately.

SPURLOCK: They're dying now, they're dying on me. I've got to find a new generation. Joe Kubert, and Carmine Infantino, and Al Plastino... It's like, when I was a kid, the new guys were Neal Adams and Jim Steranko, and now they're suddenly the old guys.

EVANIER: There was a convention, WonderCon, two years ago. I went up to Marv and Len—[to Marv Wolfman] remember this, in the dealers room? I walk up to Marv and Len and I said, "Do you want to hear something frightening, guys?" They said, "Okay, what is it?" I said, "There's 65,000 people at this convention, and the people who have been in comics the longest here are the three of us." Len, Marv, and me. And I still think I got in last Tuesday, so it's amazing.

David, I want to talk about Wally Wood for a couple of minutes here, because Jack and Wally had an intermittently very close relationship. For years they didn't see each other. The two times I spent any time with Wally Wood, he would really not get off the subject of how wonderful Jack Kirby was, both personally and professionally. He kept talking about how well Jack had treated him on *Sky Masters*, and how guilty he felt when he missed deadlines. That was not a great time in his life. He was having some problems with what they call substance abuse and he was late with pages, and Jack had to keep tracking him down and sometimes substituting something for him. And Jack had nothing but fondness for Wally Wood. There was a scene at the last San Diego convention that Wood came to, I don't remember the year, '80 or '81. And I was talking to Mr. Wood in a bar area, and he was nursing one drink the entire time. I am not comfortable around people who drink, I am not comfortable around them a lot of times for reasons that are irrelevant to this panel. And he was going on about how he had not seen Jack at the convention to that moment. And finally we looked out and Jack and Roz were walking up to go to a party, which

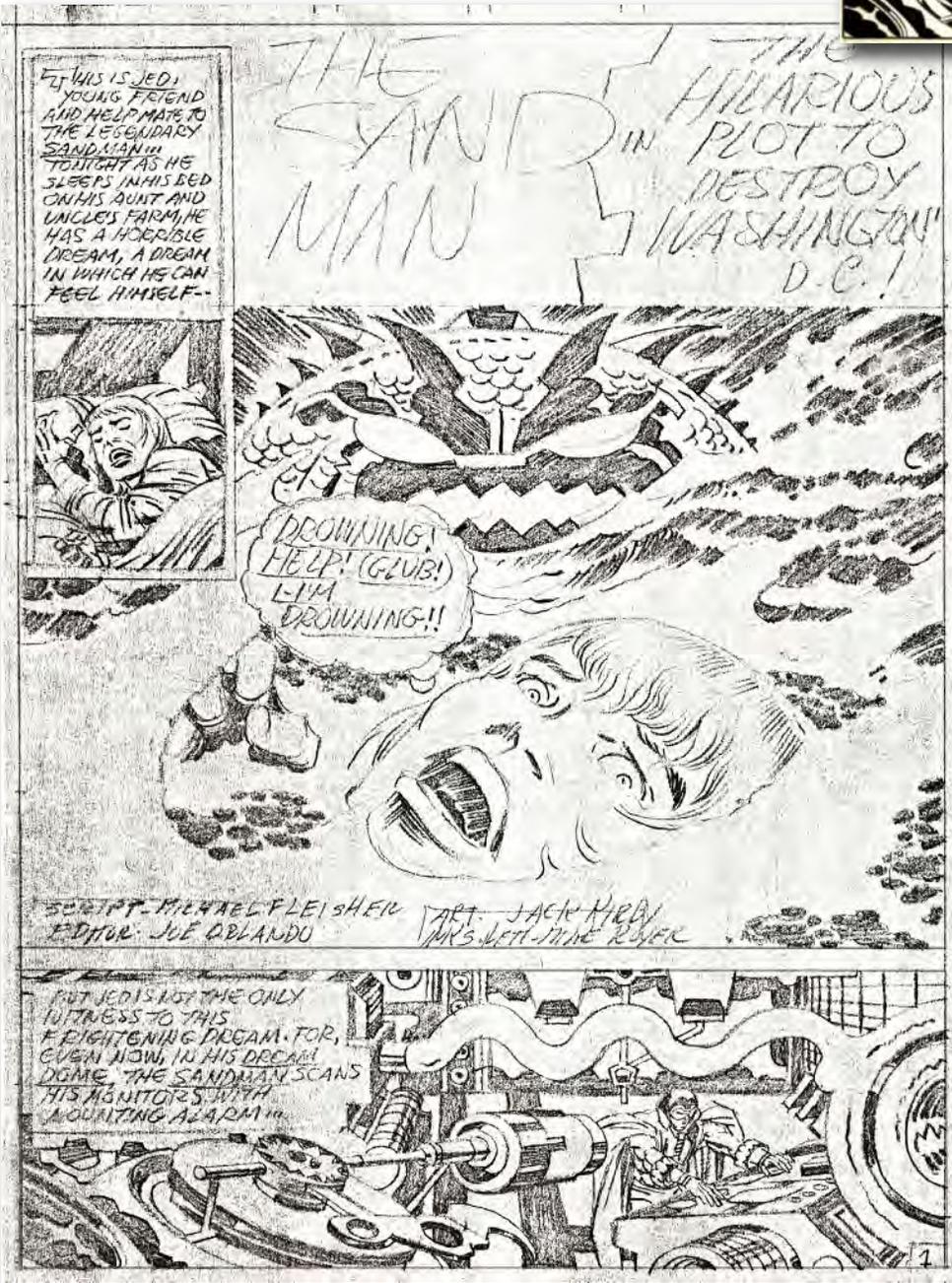


they had to pass us to get to the party. And I said, "There he is," and Wood jumps up. At that time, he was not the most physically able person, but he suddenly had a spring in his body. He jumps up and he goes, "Jack! You're the greatest!" And Jack goes, "No, Wally, you're the greatest!" And Wood says, "No, you're the greatest! You're the greatest artist who ever worked in comics!" And Jack says, "No, Wood, you're the greatest artist who ever worked in comics!" [laughter] And I thought, "This is not a debate that we need to get into." [laughter] And David, in your research about this man, have you found similar examples of the fondness the two guys had for each other? I don't think either one ever said a bad word about the other. They admired each other tremendously. One thing Wood said to me the first time I met him was that he had seen—looking at Joe Sinnott, the inker of the *Fantastic Four*—he said, "That's the way Jack should be inked. I inked too much of Jack." I don't remember the exact quote, but it was like, "I took away some of the stuff Jack did better than me," particularly the faces and the body postures and things like that, and he wanted very much to ink Jack again, but to do it more like... Sinnott had taught him a different approach to inking Jack. So, David, do you have any thoughts on this type of thing?

SPURLOCK: I could write half a dozen books about Jack Kirby and Wally Wood.

EVANIER: Okay. Well, can you talk a little bit about it here for a couple minutes?

SPURLOCK: Well, first of all, I don't think they spent that much time together because artists in those days—it's a very unfortunate thing. They worked a secluded, you know, a secluded work. They worked at home. Now, Wood, on occasion, employed various assistants. A lot of people got to the point where they thought he had assistants all the time. No, he didn't. He worked at EC for 15 years. People think about him hopping around all the time, and later he did hop around a lot. But he was at EC for 15 years, including he was the only artist in every single issue of *Mad* for the first ten years. I don't think they got to spend much time together. But they had the absolute utmost respect for each other. I know Wood didn't just consider Jack a great talent, he considered him a genius. And I consider him a genius. But Jack's work was very foreign to every other style. Wood's working in kind of a little more classical style. He had his own little tropes and techniques, but he was influenced by Eisner, he was influenced by Raymond, he was influenced by Foster. I talked to Kirby and I asked him, "Who were your influences?" He said, "Foster and Raymond," and Ed Cartier, who used to illustrate the *Shadow* pulps. But when you see it through Kirby, you can't see those influences. Jack saw them. In his romance work you may have seen a little bit more of the Raymond, and in the character of the Demon you get some Foster, but it's like Jack's a prism, light comes through, and it only comes out colored Kirby everywhere.



So when inkers inked Jack, they really didn't know what to do. You know, the squiggles—it took years for people to figure out what to do with it, so I understand where he was coming from. It's a sad thing now, and I'm going to get in one of these little political areas. I like to put the group together as Kirby, Ditko, and Wood, okay? And that's a triumvirate. Kirby, Ditko, and Wood, and that was a masterful, powerful triumvirate at Marvel specifically in the year '65. Wood came to Marvel in '64. He left *Mad*, which was selling two million copies a month, and he came over to Marvel and took over *Daredevil*, and he was there for exactly one year—rightly celebrated by Stan on his arrival, unlike any artist ever had been at that time. But all three of those guys, they were plotting their stories, and Stan was dialoguing them. They liked the freedom to work the way they were working there, but there were some issues that arose, and they were all interested in leaving at the same time. Kirby left first. Ditko left within a couple of months.

EVANIER: Wood left first. Kirby left last.

SPURLOCK: I'm sorry, Wood left first. Ditko followed him in a couple of months. They both went over to Tower. Jack had a big family. Those guys, neither one of them had kids. Jack had a lot more responsibility, and he couldn't go back to DC at that time because of the lawsuit with Jack Schiff. And so, if he could have, I think he would have left right there and then, at the same time, if he could have gone to DC, but he wasn't going to go to Tower or a smaller company where he wouldn't really have the security he needed for his family, until Carmine made it possible some years later. I got onto one of my tangents, and I forgot what your

(above) Jack added the word "hilarious" to the title, perhaps showing his dislike of drawing the Sandman series. Here (issue #6 splash, 1975), Wood did his final, very faithful inks over Jack, but was likely using assistants to help out.

question was.

EVANIER: So did I. [laughter]

SPURLOCK: But they had the utmost respect, absolutely, and I'm glad to hear your quote about Jack, even if he was being playful.

EVANIER: Well, they were being playful, but obviously the respect for the two guys for each other, they were two guys who were completely non-competitive. Neither one ever took a job away from the other. I love people who do stuff really, really well and don't flaunt it. They're just good. And Jack was just good. If you'd gone up to Jack and said, "Mr. Kirby, you're my second favorite artist after Gil Kane"—I heard someone say this one time. It didn't bother Jack the slightest bit. "Fine, Gil's terrific!" His ego did not require tearing down anybody else's. He was very confident in himself. Now, one of the other aspects to the relationship between Mr. Wood and Mr. Kirby was they were opposites. After Wood left Marvel quite unhappily, he stayed in contact with Jack. He would phone him every month or two. And one of the main people who was telling Jack "you're getting screwed there" was Wood. And later on he wrote a couple of essays in which he made this quite clear.

SPURLOCK: He actually said that.

EVANIER: And every two or three months, Wood would call Jack, tell him what he was doing, and Jack encouraged Wood, he encouraged him to do *Witzend*. He encouraged him to be, like the things we were talking about earlier, being entrepreneurial—and wished he could do that himself, but his lifestyle did not allow for that. Nor did he really have the business acumen for that.

SPURLOCK: This is the fiftieth anniversary of Wood's biggest super-hero year. Fifty years ago this year, Wally Wood created the red Daredevil costume, and also the cane cable that allowed him to swing through the city. Before that, the only way Daredevil could travel was swinging from a flagpole, and every time he jumped out a window, he hoped and prayed there was a flagpole. [laughter] And it's amazing how many times there was a flagpole. [laughter]

EVANIER: When you're blind, you do things like that. [laughter]

SPURLOCK: So in '65 he did that, and then he went to Tower and created the THUNDER Agents. He actually started creating the



We don't see any Hal Foster influence in these 1972 *Demon* #1 pencils (it came mainly through the title character's design), but wow, this strip was awfully good, considering it was cooked up quickly in the wake of the *Fourth World*'s cancellation.

THUNDER Agents at Marvel, and he considered placing them there, and chose not to, and he placed them over at Tower.

EVANIER: All right, I want to, I'm going to come back to David if we have time, but I want to talk to Marv a bit here. Marv, you've done this panel before, and you've talked about how you and Len used to go over and sit at the feet of Jack and such. Talk a little about later, when you were editor-in-chief at Marvel, and all of a sudden somebody comes in to you one day and says, "Jack's here."

WOULD IT SHARE WITH ALL THOSE STRANGE
STORIES SO COMMON IN EVERY COUNTRY'S
MYTHOLOGY... WERE FIGURE 3

Eternals #3 cover pencils (1976), where Ikaris finally gets a costume.
(next page) What kid wouldn't love to be able to talk to his pet dog?
Pencils from Kamandi #1 (1972).



WOLFMAN: Yeah, the, um... it was Stan. And he comes back in, and it was still very quiet, still fairly secret that Jack was coming back to Marvel, which was the most amazing thing in the world. I was a huge Jack Kirby fan from the point—I didn't even know who the artist was, but there were—I read everything, and back in *Adventure Comics* was the "Green Arrow" strip which was one of the more boring strips ever done, and suddenly there were a whole bunch of Green Arrow stories with giant arrows coming from outer space and all of this stuff, and I went, "Hey, this is really good stuff." Years later, I discovered it was Jack Kirby. Or I'm reading a comic, so I bought *Challengers of the Unknown*. And, again, no credits, and it's by Jack and Wally. And, wow! Where did this come from? This was like no other comic. So I've been a fan of his forever, and we went to his house off and on when we were 13, 14, and 15. He was an endless fount of information. The kindest

human beings you will have ever met. Two little kids come there, the first thing is, Roz insists upon making sandwiches, so we would have eaten before we go down to see Jack, so we ate. We had a nice time. We'd go down. Again, imagine the person who is drawing Galactus at the time—we saw pages with Galactus months before they came out—speaking to little kids, and treating us like adults. It was amazing. So I had been a fan, and I got to work with Jack on covers. I got to work with—the only one I suggested was one *Captain America* cover. You don't tell Jack what to do, but it was the big anniversary of 1776 to 1976, and I said, "We have to do a special cover." And he just did the most amazing stuff. And I think he enjoyed working with me because he knew me, and that was a little bit of a difference. So I only worked with him a few times before everything was moved over to other editors and stuff like that.

EVANIER: Now, I remember you telling me how much you loved the first *Eternals* comic when it came in, didn't you?

WOLFMAN: Well, the *New Gods*. That was at DC.

EVANIER: Yeah, but I'm talking about Marvel.

WOLFMAN: Well, the *Eternals*, I, Jack—first of all, I'm a mythology nut, and Jack created so much about that because of his "Tales of Asgard" stuff, which was the most amazing comic that I had ever seen, and I loved the mythology he created. And I was a huge fan of the *New Gods* artwork and all of that, which, by the way, he had in his house about eight years before it ever appeared, because they were all on the walls of his house. There were all those characters, and he would tell us what the stories were about, and we just kept waiting and waiting and waiting to see when they would come out. *The Eternals* was yet another take—we were talking about revisiting concepts, but taking it in a brand new direction yet again. It was the most amazing stuff. Unfortunately—I was a huge fan of his stuff. Stan was an even larger fan. He really

was. He loved Jack's work, but not all of the editors did, not all of the other people, because his writing wasn't the same flavor as the rest of the Marvel stuff, and I think there were a lot of people who may not have appreciated the work he was doing, as well. But you look at it and go, "Nobody has this imagination. Nobody draws to this scale. The giant characters, and then the little ones, and the endless backgrounds, and the most amazing stuff ever." But am I hitting anything that you wanted me to?

EVANIER: Yes, yes. [laughter] I remembered that discussion when the first *Eternals* came in. First, you were so amazed at—Marv and I one time were talking about the decision at DC to cancel the *New Gods* and *Forever People*, and he said... [pauses]

WOLFMAN: Please tell me, I don't know what I said.

EVANIER: You said one of the things that worked against Jack was he was the only guy in the entire comics industry that you could say to him, "I'm canceling two of your books. Come up with two more tomorrow." And he would replace them with two books that were worthy of publication.

WOLFMAN: Yeah, *Kamandi* was one of my favorites—I think *Kamandi* was one of the best kids' books ever done. [applause] I'm watching it and I'm going, "This is the perfect kids' book." I got a chance to use the *Kamandi* universe in the "Convergence" books a couple months ago, and I was thrilled that they let me do it, because the giant ideas, I had a chance to revisit and reread all those issues. And it's a great kids' book. And I think that people were looking for him to do the next *New Gods* for adults and all this, and he did this great kids' thing that's the most imaginative type of book that kids should be looking at because it can spark their imaginations. Unbelievable. In fact, that would go on to the *Demon*, as well. Yet another genre. Jack was—

SPURLOCK: *Kamandi* was so strong that after Jack returned to Marvel, it continued on. There was a long run with Ayers on it and Joe Kubert doing covers.

WOLFMAN: Yeah, but nobody had the imagination of those stories, and the ability to do—because Jack was willing to do totally absurd concepts that would work in the universe he'd create, and nobody else could bring themselves to do these things, which robs you of imagination. Jack would just go for it. He would go for these absolutely bizarre ideas and somehow make them work. And most of us felt accomplished in different fields, and would go, "We can't do that. How do you make that work? How do you do it without getting people to laugh?" And Jack wanted you to laugh at certain sequences, and you did. It was amazing.

EVANIER: Let me ask you—here's a left field question, Marv. If you had to explain Jack Kirby to somebody with one comic, what would you hand them?

WOLFMAN: Ooh, wow. [pause] *Thor*. And the reason for *Thor* was it was on a scale we had never seen before in comics. It was huge. Any of the Galactus material first run, also, but Jack's sense of scope. He did phenomenal things in the *Fantastic Four*, and he did phenomenal things in *Captain America* and all that, but *Thor* seemed to be—he loved mythology, as you know. He had pictures of gods and everything all over the house, and he loved all of that stuff, and *Thor* gave him the first chance, I think, to do in comics the stuff he loved, himself. And you look at the "Tales of Asgard" material, with the four-panel pages when he still could have done nine panels or something, and I think that would be it. But then you look at *Fighting American*—a brilliant concept after *Captain America*, now doing a parody, almost, of it. There was nothing he didn't do. I have to say, in my office there's only two pieces of artwork that aren't about what I've done. So all of the artwork in my office

is about stuff I've worked on by other artists and stuff, but there's a Jack Kirby *Thor* that he drew for me back in the early '60s, because I thought *Thor*'s costume was brilliant and everything, and it's a beautiful, large picture of *Thor*, like this [gestures to indicate size]. And there's one other picture, and that's it. The only two things.

EVANIER: What's the other picture?

WOLFMAN: It's actually a Sunday *Li'l Abner* from 1938. I'm a huge *Li'l Abner* fan, and it was a 1938 *Li'l Abner* where a mad scientist is turning *Li'l Abner* into Superman. And it was August of 1938. And I had to have that one up there.

EVANIER: We only have a couple more minutes here. Rob, David, what would you show, the one thing you handed [to explain] Jack Kirby? Rob, what comic would you show to explain Kirby? David, I'm going to ask you the same thing.



LIEFELD: Well, honestly, I would give them the Galactus saga, and I'll tell you why. I had a studio with Jim Valentino, a good friend of mine, in 1988-89. He did *Shadowhawk* and *normalman*, a very accomplished cartoonist. We shared a studio, and the two things he did... In 1988, '89, [*I'm*] 20, 21, and he came in and he goes, "The music you listen to is crap. Here. Here's all these Beatles albums. You have one week to listen to them and give them back to me."

The next day, he came in and said, "Dude, you were raised on George Pérez, and you don't have to do full panels every time you draw a comic." He said, "Here's Jack Kirby. Here's *Fantastic Four* #1-100. Absorb this, and we'll talk." [*laughter*] He was right, and he showed me that what George did for George Pérez—and George was brilliant with full panels, and did what no one else can do with full panels, because his mind and his cadence works that way—to imitate him is Fool's Gold. With Jack, [*he*] never put too much or too little into a panel. He always gave you exactly what that panel and that story needed, and he didn't overload it. So when you look at these panels and the way they flowed—when I read the *Fantastic Four*, you could see Jack becoming the Jack that we all love... he was brilliant before then, but that *Fantastic Four* stretch for me, was when you go, "Holy crap." He's putting it together. I mean the Silver Surfer, Galactus, the entire drama between the *Fantastic Four* and Reed and the Ultimate Nullifier, I think that is the ultimate imaginative, super-hero/bad guy—and then Silver Surfer, this new antagonist/protagonist character. It has the cosmic, it came to the planet, so Jack did cosmic, but it was grounded. When I read that, looking back—I'd read it as a kid, but as a 21-year-old absorbing it, and even now, it was brilliant. And Jim Valentino told me, "Everything Marv and George did, you don't get there without *Fantastic Four*."

WOLFMAN: Exactly.

LIEFELD: And I understood it. And he goes, "Rob, look at this." And every issue, "It's Black Panther. It's the Inhumans. It's Silver Surfer." So my answer to you is, it's not one comic, it's the *Fantastic Four* run. See, I changed it from the Silver Surfer, now I'm saying the *Fantastic Four*. Okay. I cheated, I'm sorry. [*laughter*]

EVANIER: David?

SPURLOCK: Well, we never heard from Paul [*Levine*] really.

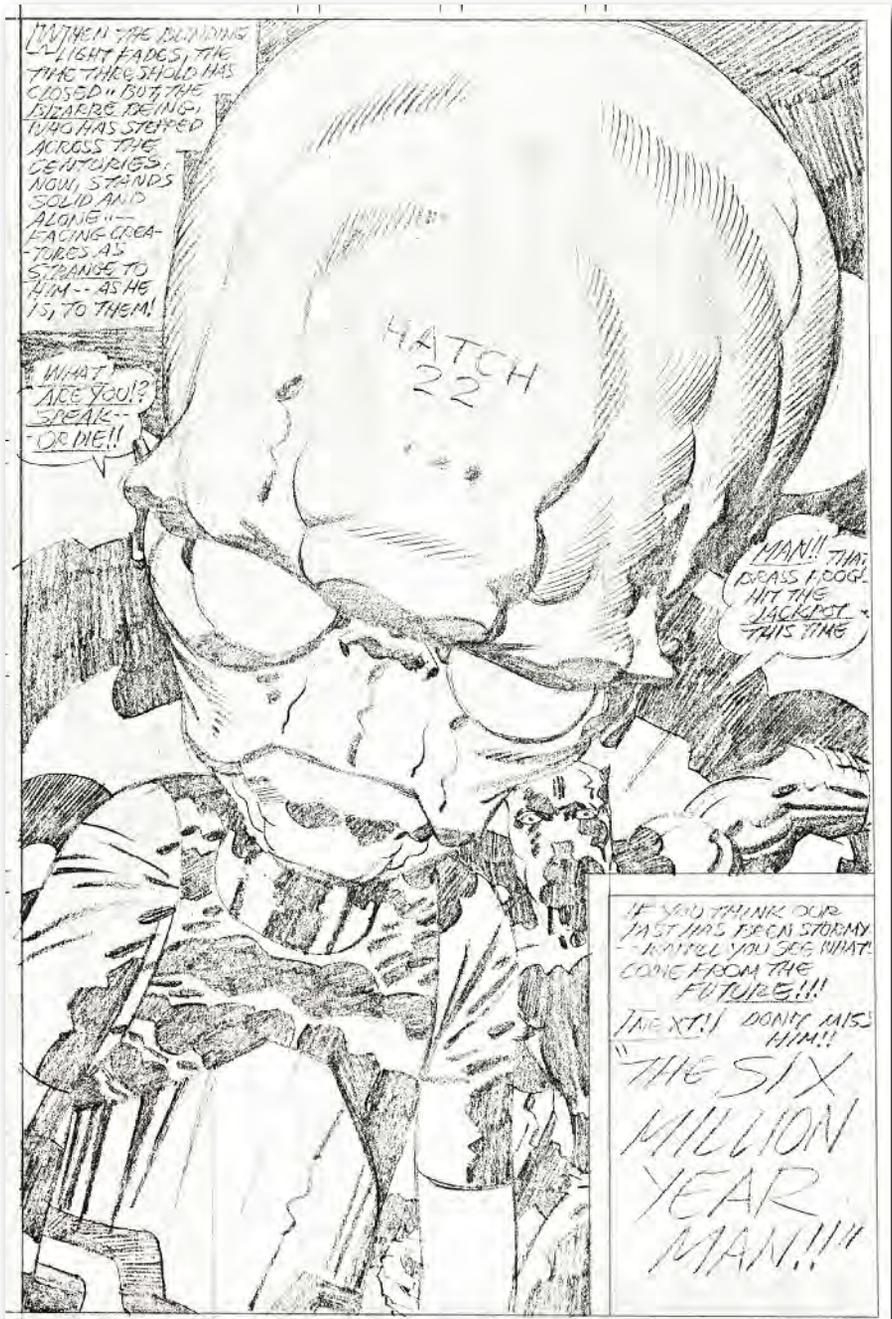
PAUL LEVINE: That's all right. [*laughter*]

SPURLOCK: Well, I think it's an impossible question, but when I ponder that question, I find that some of the things I'm going through—the Galactus Trilogy, and *New Gods* #6—that's an all-time favorite. And these are not the ultimate examples of his art, but these are his great storytelling. These are his great concepts and stories, themes that he's telling that I'm drawn to. Separate from that, I'm a big Wood enthusiast, I would also say the work he did with Wood: *Challengers of the Unknown* and *Sky Masters*. I like to say that's just the epitome of Americana in comics, and compare it to film. Had there ever been a film with John Wayne and Elvis in the same film, or Elvis and Marilyn Monroe in the same film, but in comics we actually had it. It was Jack Kirby and Wally Wood in *Sky Masters* and *Challengers of the Unknown*.

LEVINE: Here's how I would describe Jack Kirby. I wouldn't hand anybody a comic book of his, because I don't know anything about his comics. I knew Jack from a lawyer and a business position. For me, the way I would explain Jack Kirby is I would point to credits on the screen of movies where he got credit, because I or somebody else negotiated with the studio to give him the proper credit. He cared about credit, not money. [*applause*]

SPURLOCK: Speaking of credit, Wally Wood didn't get any credit on the Netflix *Daredevil* series, so I want to ask everyone to write letters to Marvel and Netflix and say, "Hey, where's Wally Wood's credit on the Netflix *Daredevil* series?" [*applause*]

EVANIER: An enthusiastic but brief thank you to Mike Thibodeaux who's here, for all his fine work. Everybody go spread the word of Kirby. Those of you who came in to get seats for the next panel, I hope you know who Jack Kirby was. If you don't, you should find out. We'll see you next year. [*applause*] ★



As the *Black Panther* is about to make his big-screen debut in *Civil War*, enjoy these pencils from #1 of his 1977 solo book. Somehow Jack references both the 1970 film *Catch-22* and TV's *Six Million Dollar Man* here.

JACK KIRBY MUSEUM

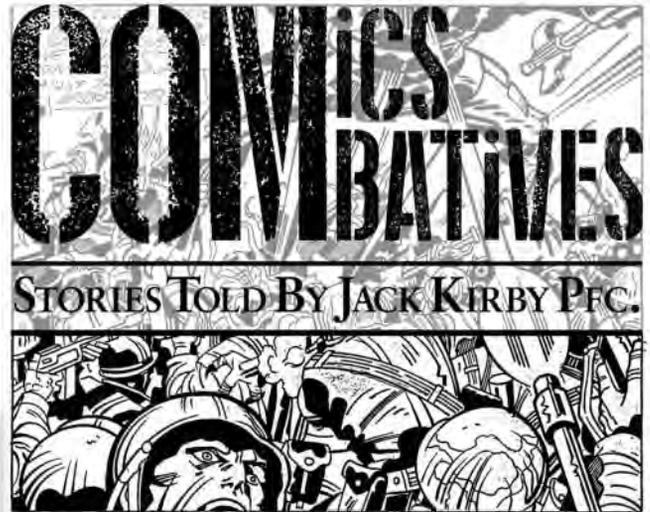
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Comics Combatives

Whew! In case you didn't know, we had a three-week exhibit on New York City's Lower East Side this past November. Thanks to our friends at miLES City, who helped us two years ago with Prototype: Alpha, we were able to set up a display at 103 Allen Street. Titled "Comics Combatives: Stories Told By Jack Kirby Pfc.," we soft-

opened on Veterans Day, Nov. 11th with high-quality replicas of Kirby art painstakingly produced by Tom Kraft from assets in



our Kirby Digital Archive. "Combatives" is a military term for hand-to-hand combat, so we featured Kirby art with fighting, action, and combat. We displayed the complete story "Booby Trap!" from *Foxhole* #2 (1956), as well as pages from "Street Code," *Kamandi*, "The Losers," *Captain America* (from the 1960s and



Photos by Tom Kraft

'70s) and "Tales of Asgard." John Morrow, Arlen Schumer, and Guy Dorian, Jr., all offered presentations; we hosted a "Comic Book Club" podcast; and a reading of Ger Apeldoorn's play "The King And Me" with a killer performance by Geoff Grimwood.

Needless to say, we had an absolute blast, and are making plans to set up another as soon as possible.



TJKC Edition
Spring 2016

The Jack Kirby Museum and Research Center is organized exclusively for educational purposes; more specifically, to promote and encourage the study, understanding, preservation and appreciation of the work of Jack Kirby by:

- illustrating the scope of Kirby's multi-faceted career,
- communicating the stories, inspirations and influences of Jack Kirby,
- celebrating the life of Jack Kirby and his creations, and
- building understanding of comic books and comic book creators.

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[First off, let me fix an error from last issue's feature on the Kirby Exhibit at CSUN. On page 27, I incorrectly labeled one of the attendees of the opening reception as Marty Pasko. It was actually Elliot S! Maggin, who—like Pasko (thus my error)—was a major Bronze Age DC comics writer. My apologies, Elliot! Now letters:]



Elliot S! Maggin

About that Kirby interview in TJCK #66 by Leonard Pitts, Jr.—is it my imagination or was that the greatest interview Kirby ever gave? "...I wrote it in my house..."! Wow. And Roz is such a telling presence; it makes all the difference in the world that she's there too, doesn't it?

The Kate Willaert piece ("Kirby Without Words") was dandy. The concentration seemed to be on those instances where the visual and the textual elements are at odds with each other, but what about those instances where the imagery supplies room for more than one textual extenuation (if that's the proper term) of a situation?

Is there, for example, the hint of an initially more viscerally horrific edge to Jack's delineation of the events comprising Thor's first encounter with the Grey Gargoyle (JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #107, Aug. '64) than Stan permitted? Look at page 8, and the way the victims of the Gargoyle are given a reprieve from permanent petrification through the contents of the dialogue balloons. Kirby doesn't show us the cab driver returning to normal. We learn that his petrification isn't permanent from what Nurse Foster says to Doc Blake and what he, in turn, says to her—so that, for all we know, it's Kirby's intention to present to the reader (at least at this point of the story) the possibility that what has happened to the cab driver—and to all the Gargoyle's victims—is something with fatal consequences! Lee has Blake report to Jane that he detects a very faint heartbeat from within the petrified figure of the cab driver. For all we know, Kirby was showing us Blake attempting to discover a heartbeat to no avail!

The visual narration is shaped, directed, "toned" by the text. Lee makes the moment "less scary" by setting a time limit to the petrification, whereas Kirby's intention in showing us a close-up of Don Blake's face in panel 3 might've been to underscore just at how much of a loss he was in his professional capacity as a physician to be able to explain what he was looking at, or to be able to present any kind of a hopeful frame of reference. Lee's dialogue "calms the waters" significantly, "reining in" the chaos that one can imagine Kirby is gleefully stoking.

Same story, page 6, panel 2 (above): the temporary nature of the petrification is delivered by word balloon, and isn't supported by visual evidence. Nowhere in the story is the temporary aspect of the transformation supported by any visual evidence of a victim of the Gargoyle returning to normal—suggesting that, as far as the artist was concerned, no such conditional marginalizing of the Gargoyle's power was intended.

Or how about this: FANTASTIC FOUR #33 (Dec. '64): "Side-by-Side with Sub-Mariner," page 7, panels 2 and 3 (also above)?

Reed sprays the team with a chemical solution of his own concoction that'll enable them to breathe underwater, and Ben dunks his head into a fish-filled tabletop aquarium to satisfy himself that it works. Lee's dialogue has Reed encouraging him to do it ("Don't take my word for it! Try it out!"), but what if Kirby meant to show us a rigidly self-absorbed Reed who fully expects the team to "take [his] word for it," dowsing them with his formula without a moment's forewarning, followed by a peeved Ben dunking his head in the fish tank just to wash the dad-blamed goop off him, and in the process, discovering that the stuff—holy cow!—actually works!

It's a relatively subtle change, granted, but I think it qualifies as a viable "alternate" reading.

These examples aren't about dissonance between word and picture, but about alternative texts possible to existing narrative imagery; one more category of "Kirby Without Words"—



inviting the viewer (doesn't all true art?) to look more closely.



Ted Krasniewski, Jersey City, NJ

Another great issue—I don't know how you keep turning out such brilliant issues with such regularity, but you do, and for that I'm grateful.

Two minor points about the art attributions in issue #66:

Page 16: Shane Foley's attribution of the redrawn Thor figure is surely wrong—it's the most clear cut example of John Buscema art. Look at the right arm and hand—100% Buscema, even the feathering of the muscles, that's not Johnny Romita. And as for the left arm.

And the editorial note on Page 59: That pasted-on Spider-Man... it's not from the cover of SPIDER-MAN #19. The hands are in different positions, and the left leg is completely different. (As is the right leg, more subtly.) In fact, none of it is the same. It is possible it was reworked but it's not a straight photostat. This erroneous attribution is something I've read several times, but it just ain't so.

I love getting KIRBY COLLECTOR, and I prefer the latest all-color editions, just in case anyone's asking.

Nigel Parkinson, UK

I finally got around to picking up another issue (#63) of the JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR recently, and was pleasantly surprised to see it remains as interesting as ever. How does a publication devoted to just one man do it? This is surely not just a testament to Kirby's unparalleled creativity but also to the endless enthusiasm of his fans and the publisher.

I was amazed to see this edition included general plot outlines from Lee, which seemed remarkably consistent with comments he was making in the mid-late 1960s. But where did they come from? Were these some of the ones

found by Kirby's estate and given to Mark Evanier that included the synopsis for AVENGERS #4? I did email Mark about those once, but he said they were provided to him by the Kirby family under restrictions that meant he wasn't able to publish them in full. Is this no longer the case now that the Kirby court case has been finalized with Marvel? If so, will we see more of them?

Another highlight for me was Richard Kolkman's observation that, by issue #116, Marvel was actually seeking FF plots from readers. It was both funny and sad. I couldn't help but think it would have been a great opportunity to insert a relevant quote from Kirby himself, as cited in Will Murray's excellent article from issue #54:

"An idea can come from me, it can come from Stan, it can come from a reader. Sometimes we'll get ideas expressed in letters from readers that we utilize in the comic. We'll build a plot around that type of story." (By the way, Murray gets my vote as a consultant on any future issue that may concentrate on the Lee/Kirby relationship, as he appears from his articles to have an extraordinary knowledge not just of Kirby, but also his old partner.)

This brings me to my only real qualm about this issue. While recognizing it is a fan magazine, it could really have benefitted from some stronger editing. There were simply too many times when feature writers made assumptions or missed their chance to help construct a consistent history.

An example: Mark Alexander mentions comments by Lee that he killed off the Bucky Barnes character because he abhorred the idea of a 'teen side-kick'. He then asks (if this was the case) why the Hulk and Captain America would get teen side-kicks. Lee, of course, specifically addressed this issue (at least in relation to why he accepted Rick Jones in the HULK strip) way back in ORIGINS OF MARVEL COMICS. This was a great opportunity to provide some cross-referencing. After all, why (kind of) quote Lee to set up the question, then exclude Lee's explanation (and in a Marvel themed issue to boot)?

For that matter, Kirby himself is on record as stating the decision to kill Bucky wasn't his. Why not mention it for readers who are unaware of this? [Yet Jack states this issue that Bucky's death was indeed his idea. — Editor]

Another example involves Mark's suggestion (presented as fact?) that Don Heck was responsible for having a cabinet used as a weapon against Iron Man in his debut tale, with Lee adding a comment about it being weighed with rocks. Larry Lieber was the scripter for this tale (he even named Tony Stark). And Lieber is on record as stating he did full scripts (in TwoMorrows' ALTER EGO #2 as one example), so why attribute the idea to Heck?

Finally, Shane Foley mentions on page 37 that the original pencils for page 13 of FANTASTIC FOUR #61 confirm previous speculation that Romita added the heads of Peter Parker and Mary Jane in a crowd scene after Kirby had completed the page. This could have been nicely tied in with a quote from Lee talking about making this very change during a 1968 interview (published by TwoMorrows in the STAN LEE UNIVERSE). Again, this would have made perfect sense in a Marvel themed issue.

Of course, none of this spoiled my reading experience, though I feel sorry for newer readers who may be getting an incomplete (or sometimes inaccurate) picture. I'll also admit that it didn't leave me feeling particularly confident that the upcoming Kirby/Lee themed issue would be as well-researched as I'd like, but I still have a good feeling about it and I've already ordered my copy.

Ross Morrison, Western Australia

As always I loved the latest issue, #65. But please do NOT shelve your chronological examination of Jack and Stan's comments about their respective contributions. I was anxiously awaiting that issue and if you read various Facebook groups there is still tremendous interest in setting the record straight. Please reconsider.

Don Rhoden, Plattsburgh, NE

[Not to worry, Don. I'm still planning to do that examination. But it'll be such a labor-intensive issue, that it may be 2017—Jack's centennial year—before it sees print, though. Gotta make sure my research makes all our readers—especially Ross Morrison above—happy!]

#66 was your most jam-packed issue in many years, I think. Well done. I'm really liking the focus on deconstructing the Marvel Method to see a little more clear-headedly who did what.

As I'm tallying up comments:



Page 8: That FF #20, p. 17 panel at the very bottom? Those erasures are not adequately described. It's not Reed and Ben's faces—it's full body shots of all four characters. Johnny is to the far far right, between Ben's legs. Sue is half-hidden behind Ben's right foot.

Glen David Gold

I am skimming the new issue (#64) of the KIRBY COLLECTOR, and noticed your request for themes for upcoming issues. Kirby was the master of dynamic figures. How about an entire issue devoted to fights! Fight scenes between super-heroes, good guys, bad guys, robots, soldiers, gangsters, molls.

How do they compare? Did Kirby show the same poses over and over, or was he inventing new battles every time? How did he show mass and weight, and power? What vantage point did he favor, and did this change during his career?

Alan Spinney, Moncton, NB, CANADA

Some peaks and valleys with TJKC #66.

I loved the look at changed Kirby covers. My first thought was, if the drawings required alterations, why wait until the ink stage to make them? Many seemed minor or puzzling. Not significantly better because of the last-minute revisions. Really, only the Swordsman's headgear, on AVENGERS #19, seems an outright improvement.

I had to laugh that the Comics Code thought Kang's enlarged hand (AVENGERS #23) was too threatening. What, fifteen times normal size is overly menacing, but ten times is okay?

One cover was actually worse. The FF #79, as printed, looked open. The reprint, with added blurbs over the art and moved down to fit a new format, seemed a lesser version.

Also very much enjoyed the forum on Jack's writing. Personally, I rarely had a problem with it. Oh, I remember a dubious caption with "Solar soap suds!" in CAPTAIN VICTORY, but so what? It worked for me in nearly all of his solo books. It was exactly the story and dialogue as Jack desired it told. So, no masking meaning or intent by altering what he wanted the characters to say and the story to ultimately convey.

I'd rather have a story told intact than veering off in directions never intended, or in conflict with the plot as submitted. I was happy Jack had his own voice and direction.

Doubt I could have loved ETERNALS, OMAC, KAMANDI and other solo favorites more had others been enlisted to spice up the dialogue and, in so doing, change what Jack wished to impart.

When it comes to "writing," what is meant? The plot? The direction? The dialogue? Jack phrased what he wanted to emphasize in his own way. Why should that be seen as a detriment instead of a plus?

When I hear complaints—and everyone's entitled to their opinion—I wonder if someone would've really preferred Jack to not have his own voice or forum. Would they prefer him less involved; a mere illustrator? No concepts, input, direction or captions? At the mercy of other writers and editors? Following rather than leading?

Few could have accomplished as much alone.

Liked the Kirby interview—though I diverged with portions—in that it was Jack opening up about his views. To Jack, in a collaboration, his plot was the script. I disagree. He innovated structure and direction, but not the actual words in the dialogue balloons. A major contribution, no question, but not the entire equation. I think both men deserve admiration and acknowledgement in such a co-creator situation.

Same for the assertion his "Spiderman" concept was "practically the same" (as the popular Lee/Ditko rendition). No, it wasn't: a child with a magic ring and far different costume. Jack might have suggested the name or brought an old idea in redrawn. But it wasn't close, aside from the title, to what was accepted and became a hit.

I also had issues in a few other areas, John:

Your assertion that Jack's "Spiderman," if accepted and published, could have been a moderate success, based on all the concepts in that era going over well. Well, remember, there was also Dr. Doom and Ant-Man. Neither, at the time, set the world on fire.

Plus, if it was that close to the Fly in concept, maybe it would have been legal threats that kept

it a short-run hero?

I, too, would love to see pages from Jack's aborted version, but don't see how they would enhance either Stan or Jack in any way. It would contradict Jack in being "practically the same." Likewise, how could Jack be drawing an entirely different tale if Stan was the one who handed the well-known story off to him?

Stan, along with Steve Ditko, may be the co-creator, but that doesn't mean Lee's version of the events is historically accurate either.

The other article where I found little evidence and lots of theories was, again, about Spider-Man: Jack's three 1963 published stories featuring the character being proof of anything.

Some were asserted to have been meant for elsewhere. But the lead feature in AMAZING FANTASY wasn't six pages, nor was the "Torch" strip in STRANGE TALES. So, the notion they signify something more is inconclusive at best.

To me, Jack drew them because they all guest-starred the Fantastic Four (or, with the second STRANGE TALES ANNUAL, two members thereof)—that simple.

No Jonah, Aunt May, or classmates. A mere glimpse of Peter Parker. Otherwise, entirely costumed action.

Additionally, even had Jack been called back on SPIDER-MAN, on a subsequent chapter, Stan and Steve would still be the co-creators.

I don't agree that Jack's rendition of Spider-Man in the wedding of Reed and Sue was a Ditko paste-up to placate Steve in some way. The character had been drawn by Jack in other comics (AVENGERS #3; the covers to AVENGERS #11 and TALES TO ASTONISH #57), as had Ditko's Dr. Strange (JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #108 and FF #27).

Millie and Patsy were also paste-ups by other artists in that FF ANNUAL #3. Could it be Stan simply wanted them to look more like their stylized renderings elsewhere?

Plus, Jack redrew part of the cover to SPIDER-MAN #10. So, it wasn't unprecedented, just not as impressive.

At least we agree on the main point, John: "While Jack (and Joe) fit that description for a Spiderman, it's not the same character. The credit should go to Lee and Ditko."

I'm delighted Marvel finally acknowledges Jack's massive contributions to their success. It's simply that I don't want to see them shortchange anyone else in the process. That's why it's nice to see Stan and Steve now credited for Spider-Man.

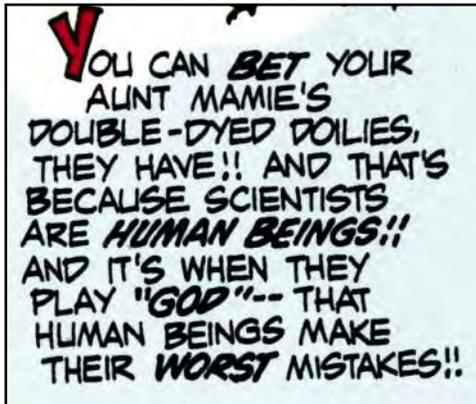
If someone wishes to argue that Jack brought the name to Marvel, fine. But the finished character, the one who was a hit, was far more than just a name.

Joe Frank, Scottsdale, AZ

Some random thoughts inspired by your recent "Kirby @ DC" issue (#62):

1) To say that Jack's writing style was idiosyncratic was putting it mildly. Jack plotted like no one else, wrote scripts like no one else, and his dialogue was

something that few others even dared to try to duplicate. It was so individual, so iconoclastic, so... so "Jack"! NO ONE else could've gotten away with what is to me my all-time favorite "Jack line"—not the oft-repeated but still worthy "Don't ask... just BUY it!," but the caption in "Genocide Spray" (JIMMY OLSEN #143) that follows:



"You can bet your Aunt Mamie's double-dyed doilies they have!!" To this day that line struck me as so outrageous (not to mention memorable), that I have my lead heroine in my currently in post-production mobisodes/no-budget DVD movie THE ADVENTURES OF KAITLYN "KITTY KAT" KAY, (a.k.a. KKKay) utter that very line in her Facebook trailer. (I would've LOVED to've seen THAT pop up in one of Jack's margin notes that he gave 'ol Stan in their stories back in the day. Must be how they "tawked" in ol' Flatbush, eh wot?)

2) But it wasn't just his dialogue/captions overall that made young kidlet moi take notice. You mentioned his cover blurbs—NOBODY wrote 'last panel/next issue blurbs' like Jack. See JIMMY OLSEN #141, and especially MISTER MIRACLE #4—never saw the next issue VILLAIN try to entice you into buying an issue before, hah? Which leads me to one of the few brickbats I wanna send here—and no, I'm not blaming this specifically on you, John; it looks like policy here.

To wit: considering all the complaints I read at the "Jack Kirby: King of Comics" FB group I'm a member of, not to mention numerous other places about the Murphy Anderson-heads added throughout Jack's JO books (ignoring, ironically enough, the one added to LOIS LANE artist John Rosenberger's Superman in the example of the JLA printed—it WASN'T JUST Jack's heads, folks!), catalogists don't seem to have any trouble altering Jack's INTENDED titles for some of the issues he wrote, upon reflection. (E.g. the KAMANDI tale referred to herein as "The Monster Fetish" was ACTUALLY titled by Jack himself, via 'next issue blurb' "The United States of Lions." Similarly, MM #15's "The Secret Gun" as listed was actually called by Jack "The Real Big Barda.") Now I realize some of Jack's blurbs didn't totally sync up to what he later wrote when he did the actual story... but fair is fair, right?

Another amazing issue.

Darrell McNeil, Los Angeles, CA

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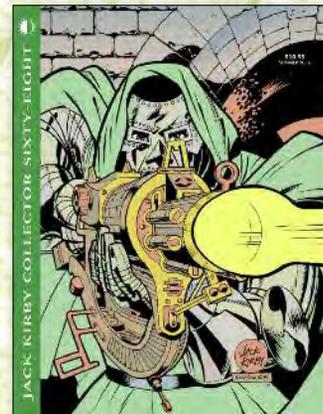
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Here's a tentative list of upcoming themes, but we treat these themes very loosely, and anything you submit may fit somewhere. So get writing, and send us copies of your art!

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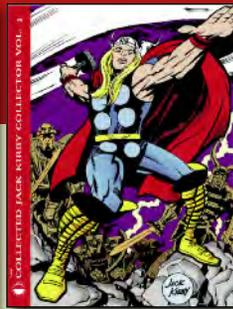
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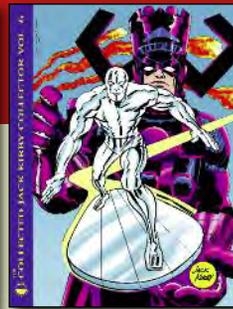
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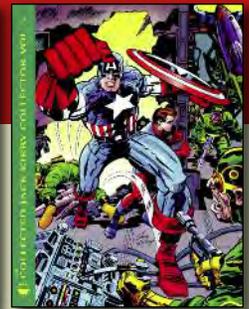
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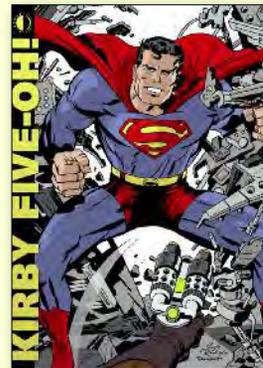
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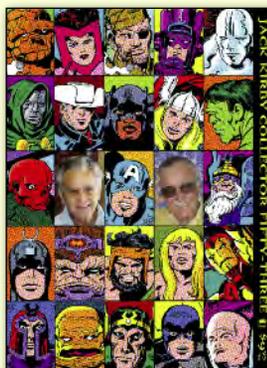
KIRBY COLLECTOR #50
KIRBY FIVE-OH! covers the best of Kirby's 50-year career in comics: BEST KIRBY STORIES, COVERS, CHARACTER DESIGNS, UNUSED ART, and profiles of/commentary by the 50 PEOPLE MOST INFLUENCED BY KIRBY'S WORK! Plus a 50-PAGE PENCIL ART GALLERY and a COLOR SECTION! Kirby cover inked by DARWYN COOKE, and introduction by MARK EVANIER.
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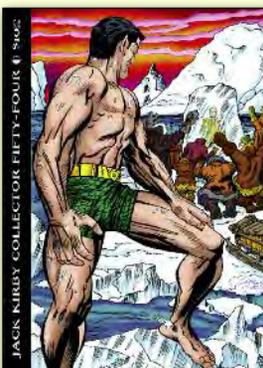
KIRBY COLLECTOR #51
Bombastic EVERYTHING GOES issue, with a wealth of great submissions that couldn't be pigeonholed into a "theme" issue! Includes a rare KIRBY interview, new interviews with JIM LEE and ADAM HUGHES, MARK EVANIER's column, huge pencil art galleries, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, two COLOR UNPUBLISHED KIRBY COVERS, and more!
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #52
Spotlights Kirby's most obscure work: an UNUSED THOR STORY, BRUCE LEE comic, animation work, stage play, unaltered pages from KAMANDI, DEMON, DESTROYER DUCK, and more, including a feature examining the last page of his final issue of various series BEFORE EDITORIAL TAMPERING (with lots of surprises)! Color Kirby cover inked by DON HECK!
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #53
THE MAGIC OF STAN & JACK! New interview with STAN LEE, walking tour of New York where Lee & Kirby lived and worked, re-evaluation of the "Lost" FF #108 story (including a new page that just surfaced), "What if Jack Hadn't Left Marvel in 1970?," plus MARK EVANIER's regular column, a Kirby pencil art gallery, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, and more, behind a color Kirby cover inked by GEORGE PÉREZ!
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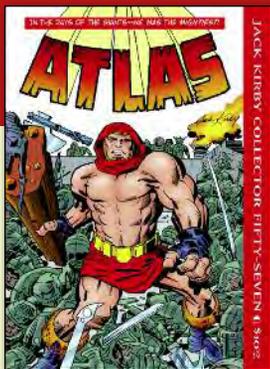
KIRBY COLLECTOR #54
STAN & JACK PART TWO! More on the co-creators of the Marvel Universe, final interview (and cover inks) by GEORGE TUSKA, differences between KIRBY and DITKO's approaches, WILL MURRAY on the origin of the FF, the mystery of Marvel cover dates, MARK EVANIER's regular column, a Kirby pencil art gallery, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, and more, plus Kirby back cover inked by JOE SINNOTT!
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #55
"Kirby Goes To Hollywood!" SERGIO ARAGONES and MELL LAZARUS recall Kirby's BOB NEWHART TV show cameo, comparing the recent STAR WARS films to New Gods, RUBY & SPEARS interviewed, Jack's encounters with FRANK ZAPPA, PAUL MCCARTNEY, and JOHN LENNON, MARK EVANIER's regular column, a Kirby pencil art gallery, a Golden Age Kirby story, and more! Kirby cover inked by PAUL SMITH!
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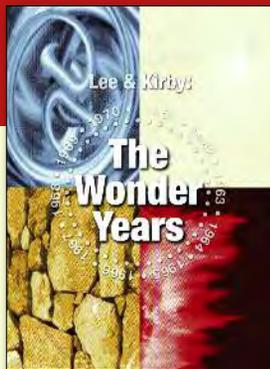
KIRBY COLLECTOR #56
"Unfinished Sagas"—series, stories, and arcs Kirby never finished. TRUE DIVORCE CASES, RAAM THE MAN MOUNTAIN, KOBRA, DINGBATS, a complete story from SOUL LOVE, complete Boy Explorers story, two Kirby Tribute Panels, MARK EVANIER and other regular columnists, pencil art galleries, and more, with Kirby's "Galaxy Green" cover inked by ROYER, and the unseen cover for SOUL LOVE #1!
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #57

"Legendary Kirby"—how Jack put his spin on classic folklore! **TONY ISABELLA** on **SATAN'S SIX** (with Kirby's unseen layouts), Biblical inspirations of **DEVIL DINOSAUR**, **THOR** through the eyes of mythologist **JOSEPH CAMPBELL**, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, rare Kirby interview, **MARK EVANIER** and our other regular columnists, pencil art from **ETERNALS**, **DEMON**, **NEW GODS**, **THOR**, and Jack's **ATLAS** cover!

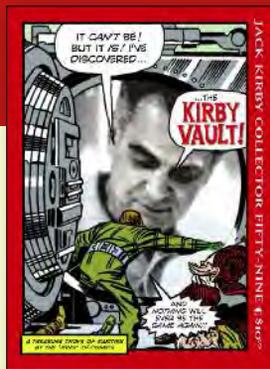
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #58

LEE & KIRBY: THE WONDER YEARS! Traces their history at Marvel, and what led them to conceive the Fantastic Four in 1961. Also documents the evolution of the FF throughout the 1960s, with plenty of Kirby art, plus previously unknown details about Lee and Kirby's working relationship, and their eventual parting of ways in 1970.

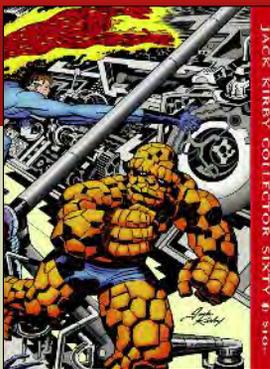
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #59

"Kirby Vault!" Rareties from the "King" of comics: Personal correspondence, private photos, collages, rare Marvelmania art, bootleg album covers, sketches, transcript of a **1969 VISIT TO THE KIRBY HOME** (where Jack answers the questions YOU'D ask in '69), **MARK EVANIER**, pencil art from the **FOURTH WORLD**, **CAPTAIN AMERICA**, **MACHINE MAN**, **SILVER SURFER GRAPHIC NOVEL**, and more!

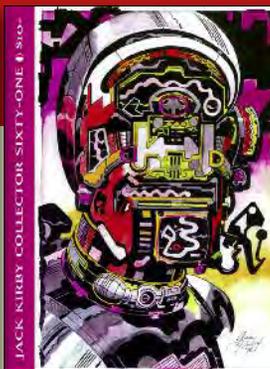
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #60

FANTASTIC FOUR FOLLOW-UP to #58's **THE WONDER YEARS!** Never-seen FF wraparound cover, interview between FF inkers **JOE SINNOTT** and **DICK AYERS**, rare **LEE & KIRBY** interview, comparison of a Jack and Stan FF story conference to Stan's final script and Jack's penciled pages, **MARK EVANIER** and other columnists, gallery of **KIRBY FF ART**, pencils from **BLACK PANTHER**, **SILVER SURFER**, & more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #61

JACK KIRBY: WRITER! Examines quirks of Kirby's wordsmithing, from the **FOURTH WORLD** to **ROMANCE** and beyond! Lengthy Kirby interview, **MARK EVANIER** and other columnists, **LARRY LIEBER**'s scripting for Jack at 1960s Marvel Comics, **RAY ZONE** on 3-D work with Kirby, comparing **STEVE GERBER**'s Destroyer Duck scripts to Jack's pencils, Kirby's best promo blurbs, Kirby pencil art gallery, & more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #62

KIRBY AT DC! Kirby interview, **MARK EVANIER** and our other regular columnists, updated "X-Numbers" list of Kirby's DC assignments (revealing some surprises), **JERRY BOYD**'s insights on Kirby's DC work, a look at **KEY 1970s EVENTS IN JACK'S LIFE AND CAREER**, Challengers vs. the FF, pencil art galleries from **FOREVER PEOPLE**, **OMAC**, and **THE DEMON**, Kirby cover inked by **MIKE ROYER**, and more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #63

MARVEL UNIVERSE! Featuring **MARK ALEXANDER**'s pivotal Lee/Kirby essay "A Universe A'Boorning," **MARK EVANIER** interviews **ROY THOMAS**, **STAN GOLDBERG** and **JOE SINNOTT**, a look at key late-1970s, '80s, and '90s events in Kirby's life and career, **STAN LEE** script pages, unseen Kirby pencils and unused art from **THOR**, **NICK FURY AGENT OF SHIELD**, and **FANTASTIC FOUR**, and more!

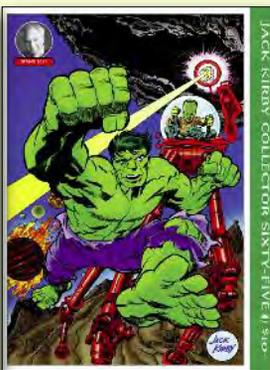
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #64

SUPER-SOLDIERS! We declassify Captain America, Fighting American, Sgt. Fury, The Losers, Pvt. Strong, Boy Commandos, and a tribute to Simon & Kirby! **PLUS:** A Kirby interview about Captain America, **MARK EVANIER** and other columnists, key 1940s-'50s events in Kirby's career, unseen pencils and unused art from **OMAC**, **SILVER STAR**, **CAPTAIN AMERICA** (in the 1960s AND '70s), the **LOSERS**, & more! **KIRBY** cover!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #65

ANYTHING GOES (AGAIN)! A potpourri issue, with anything and everything from Jack's 50-year career, including a head-to-head comparison of the genius of **KIRBY** and **ALEX TOTH!** Plus a lengthy **KIRBY** interview, **MARK EVANIER** and our other regular columnists, unseen and unused Kirby art from **JIMMY OLSEN**, **KAMANDI**, **MARVELMANIA**, his **COMIC STRIP & ANIMATION WORK**, and more!

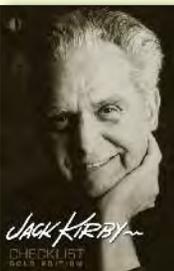
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #66

DOUBLE-TAKES ISSUE! Features oddities, coincidences, and reworkings by both Jack and Stan Lee: the **Galactus Origin** you didn't see, **Ditko's vs. Kirby's Spider-Man**, how Lee and Kirby viewed "writing" differently, plus a rare **KIRBY** interview, **MARK EVANIER** and our other regular columnists, unseen and unused pencil art from **FANTASTIC FOUR**, 2001, **CAPTAIN VICTORY**, **BRUCE LEE**, & more!

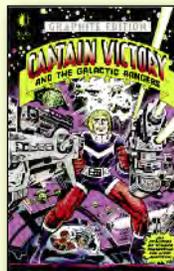
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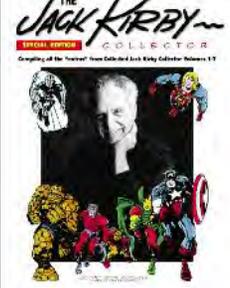


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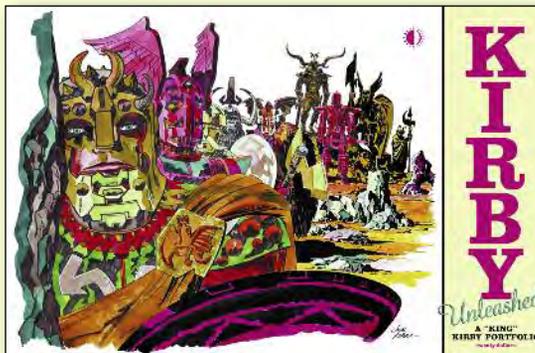
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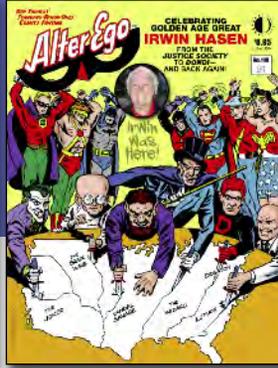
Starting this month, all our new magazines will be listed in the COMICS section (ie. front half) of Diamond Comic Distributors' PREVIEWS catalog with our books (instead of in the "Magazine" section as in the past). Look for the TWOMORROWS PUBLISHING section, alphabetically under the letter "T"—now with everything in one place, for easy ordering through your local comics shop.



ALTER EGO #139

JIM AMASH interviews ROY THOMAS about his 1990s work on Conan, the still-born Marvel/Excelsior line launched by STAN LEE, writing for Cross Plains, Topps, DC, and others! Art by KAYANAN, DITKO, BUSCEMA, MAROTO, GIORDANO, ST. AUBIN, SIMONSON, MIGNOLA, LARK, secrets of Dr. Strange's sorcerous "177A Bleeker Street" address, and more! Cover by RAFAEL KAYANAN!

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Golden Age great IRWIN HASEN spotlight, adapted from DAN MAKARA's film documentary on Hasen, the 1940s artist of the Justice Society, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, Wildcat, Holyoke's Cat-Man, and numerous other classic heroes—and, for 30 years, the artist of the famous DONDI newspaper strip! Bonus art by his buddies JOE KUBERT, ALEX TOTI, CARMINE INFANTINO, and SHELLY MAYER!

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ALTER EGO #141

From Detroit to Deathlok, we cover the career of artist RICH BUCKLER: Fantastic Four, The Avengers, Black Panther, Ka-Zar, Dracula, Morbius, a zillion Marvel covers—Batman, Hawkman, and other DC stars—Creepy and Eerie horror—and that's just in the first half of the 1970s! Plus Mr. Monster, BILL SCHELLY, FCA, and comics expert HAMES WARE on fabulous Golden Age artist RAFAEL ASTARITA!

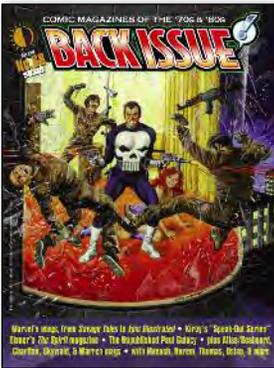
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DAVID SIEGEL talks to RICHARD ARNDT about how, from 1991-2005, he brought the greatest artists of the Golden Age to the San Diego Comic-Con! With art and artifacts by FRADON, GIELLA, MOLDOFF, LAMPERT, CUIDERA, FLESSEL, NORRIS, SULLIVAN, NOVICK, SCHAFFENBERGER, GROTHKOPF, and others! Plus how writer JOHN BROOME got to the Con, Mr. Monster's Comic Crypt, FCA, and more!

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BACK ISSUE #88

"Comics Magazines of the '70s and '80s" From Savage Tales to Epic Illustrated, KIRBY'S "Speak-Out Series," EISNER'S Spirit magazine, Unpublished PAUL GULACY, MICHAEL USLAN on the Shadow magazine you didn't see, plus B&Ws from Atlas/Seaboard, Charlton, Skywald, and Warren. Featuring work by NEAL ADAMS, JOHN BOLTON, ARCHIE GOODWIN, DOUG MOENCH, EARL NOREM, ROY THOMAS, and more. Cover by GRAY MORROW!

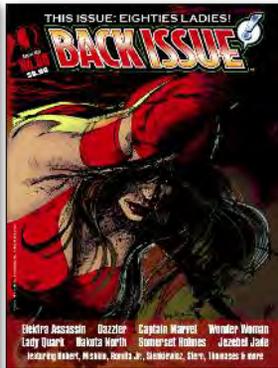
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BACK ISSUE #89

"Bronze Age Adaptations!" The Shadow, Korak: Son of Tarzan, Battlerstar Galactica, The Black Hole, 2001: A Space Odyssey, Worlds Unknown, and Marvel's 1980s movie adaptations. Plus: PAUL KUPPERBERG surveys prose adaptations of comics! With work by JACK KIRBY, DENNY O'NEIL, FRANK ROBBINS, MICHAEL W. KALUTA, FRANK THORNE, MICHAEL USLAN, and sporting an alternate Kaluta cover produced for DC's Shadow series!

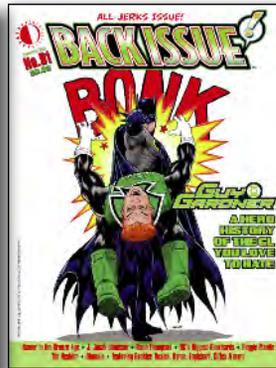
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BACK ISSUE #90

"Eighties Ladies!" MILLER & SIENKIEWICZ's Elektra: Assassin, Dazzler, Captain Marvel (Monica Rambeau), Lady Quark, DAN MISHKIN's Wonder Woman, WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS and ADAM KUBERT's Jezebel Jade, Somerset Holmes, and a look back at Marvel's Dakota North! Featuring the work of BRUCE JONES, JOHN ROMITA JR., ROGER STERN, and many more, plus a previously unpublished cover by SIENKIEWICZ.

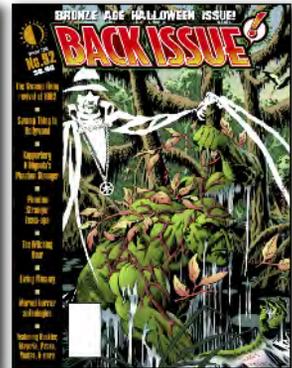
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BACK ISSUE #91

"All-Jerks Issue!" Guy Gardner, Namor in the Bronze Age, J. Jonah Jameson, Flash Thompson, DC's Biggest Blowhards, the Heckler, Obnoxio the Clown, and Archie's "pal" Reggie Mantle! Featuring the work of (non-jerks) RICH BUCKLER, KURT BUSIEK, JOHN BYRNE, STEVE ENGLEHART, KEITH GIFFEN, ALAN KUPPERBERG, and many more. Cover-featuring KEVIN MAGUIRE's iconic Batman/Guy Gardner "One Punch"!

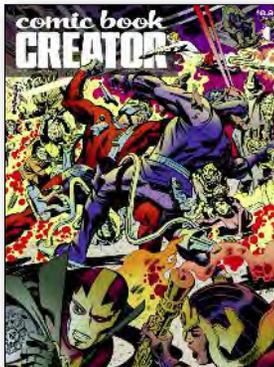
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BACK ISSUE #92

"Bronze Age Halloween!" The Swamp Thing revival of 1982, Swamp Thing in Hollywood, Phantom Stranger team-ups, KUPPERBERG & MIGNOLA's Phantom Stranger miniseries, DC's The Witching Hour, the Living Mummy, and an index of Marvel's 1970s' horror anthologies! Featuring the work of RICH BUCKLER, ANDY MANGELS, VAL MAYERIK, MARTIN PASKO, MICHAEL USLAN, TOM YEATES, and many more. Cover by YEATES.

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COMIC BOOK CREATOR #12

JACK KIRBY'S mid-life work examined, from Fantastic Four and Thor at Marvel in the middle '60s to the Fourth World at DC (including the real-life background drama that unfolded during that tumultuous era)! Plus a career-spanning interview with underground comic pioneer HOWARD CRUSE, the extraordinary cartoonist and graphic novelist of the award-winning Stuck Rubber Baby! Cover by STEVE RUDE!

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COMIC BOOK CREATOR #13

MICHAEL W. KALUTA feature interview covering his early fans days THE SHADOW, STARSTRUCK, the STUDIO, and Vertigo cover work! Plus RAMONA FRADON talks about her 65+ years in the comic book business on AQUAMAN, METAMORPHO, SUPER-FRIENDS, and SPONGEBOB! Also JAY LYNCH reveals the WACKY PACK MEN who created the Topps trading cards that influenced an entire generation!

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DRAW! #32

Super-star DC penciler HOWARD PORTER discusses his creative process, and JAMAL IGLE demoes everything from storyboarding to penciling as he gives a breakdown of his working methods. Plus there's Crusty Critic JAMAR NICHOLAS reviewing art supplies, JERRY ORDWAY showing the Ord-Way of doing comics, and Comic Art Bootcamp lessons with BRET BLEVINS and Draw! editor MIKE MANLEY! Mature readers only.

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BRICKJOURNAL #39

LEGO DINOSAURS! Builder WILLIAM PUGH discusses building prehistoric creatures, a LEGO Jurassic World by DIEGO MAXIMINO PRIETO ALVAREZ, and dino bones by MATT SAILORS! Plus: Minifigure Customization by JARED K. BURKS, step-by-step "You Can Build It!" instructions by CHRISTOPHER DECK, DIY Fan Art by BrickNerd TOMMY WILLIAMSON, MIND-STORMS robotics lessons, and more!

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PARTING SHOT

Here's a beautiful concept drawing Jack probably produced for animation. Inks look to be by Alfredo Alcalá. After years toiling at a page rate in the comics industry—with no health insurance or benefits—Jack finally found a perfect creative outlet near the end of his career, which provided him financial stability, and let his imagination run free.

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